

11. UPPER RICCARTON TENNIS CLUB PROPOSED EXTENSION UPDATE

Officer responsible Parks and Waterways Manager	Author Rod Whearty, Parks and Waterways Area Advocate, DDI 372 2510
Corporate Plan Output: Leases and Applications	

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on progress regarding the proposed extension of the Upper Riccarton Tennis Club. The report also includes a recommendation to approve an allocation of the Board's Projects Funds to enable the relocation of the Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club which has come about as a result of consultation and discussions on the future development of the Domain.

BACKGROUND

Board members will recall that the Parks and Waterways Unit circulated a questionnaire to consult local residents on the future development of Upper Riccarton Domain in August last year following an application by the Riccarton Domain Tennis Club to extend their existing leased area to construct 2 additional courts, with one being a public court to be funded by Council.

The consultation drew a very big response from local residents including a resident initiated public meeting at Villa Maria College to discuss concerns some residents had with the proposal. The consultation feedback was outlined in an interim report to the September 2001 meeting of the Board.

Around that time representatives from Villa Maria Board of Trustees had also approached the Council regarding potential partnerships that could lead to facilities on their site being made available for wider community use including a proposal for community sports courts on their site.

The Board agreed through its Environment Committee, to invite representatives from Villa Maria College to outline their future development proposals which subsequently took place, prior to a meeting with other sports code groups who utilise Upper Riccarton Domain.

MEETING WITH SPORTS CLUBS

The Parks and Waterways Unit invited all sports clubs based on the park to a meeting which was held on Wednesday 24 October 2001 and facilitated by the Community Advocate. The meeting was attended by all clubs present on the park except the Upper Riccarton Cricket Club. The Canterbury Soccer Association and Suburban Cricket Association also attended along with some past and present Community Board members.

The Tennis Club outlined their proposal and the fact that some changes to the current sports field layout would be required to accommodate their proposal. Whilst no guarantee was given by any of the parties present there was a general willingness on the part of all clubs present to hold further discussions regarding potential changes to field layout in order to achieve the Tennis Clubs proposal.

Council staff advised that any proposed changes to the current sports field layout would require agreement between all the affected clubs and associations. Peter Reyland (Riccarton Domain Tennis Club) undertook to arrange a meeting(s) with the relevant clubs and associations with the intention that any sports field alterations would be formalised through a written agreement signed by all affected parties coming back to Council.

These discussions were to take place in the weeks following the meeting and that the Council would be advised of the outcome prior to Christmas. This would enable the results of those discussions and negotiations to be included in a progress report to the first meeting of the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board in 2002 which staff undertook to do.

Staff also pointed out that whilst agreement may be reached between the clubs there was also the views of local residents to be considered and that further meeting(s) with the community would be required so that they were not by-passed in the process.

There was an exciting turn towards the end of that meeting where representatives from the Winter Bowling Club indicated that they were currently considering their future options and that they may be prepared to relocate from their current site. Potentially this offers some excellent outcomes for both the park and the community as a whole and the Council took up the clubs offer to hold further discussions on the matter.

RICCARTON DOMAIN WINTER BOWLING CLUB

The Parks and Waterways Advocate and the Sports Development Team Leader met with representatives of the Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club and the Riccarton Racecourse Bowling Club on 8 November 2001. The Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club outlined the issues they were facing in terms of an aging facility and playing surface and that there was a strong demand for a good quality all weather playing surface in the north west area.

The two clubs had already been involved in discussions about potential amalgamation and already have some members that belong to both clubs. At present both clubs operate seasonally with Riccarton Racecourse active over the summer and the Winter Bowling Club operative obviously during the winter.

The amalgamation of both clubs makes a lot of sense and would be a far more cost effective use of the combined resources of both clubs. Both clubs would benefit financially from an amalgamation in the long term. The all weather surface necessary for winter play would also be usable during the summer providing much needed additional capacity for the summer members.

Both bowling clubs indicated a willingness to pursue the possible relocation of bowls off the Domain however they advised that there were funding issues that would need to be addressed in order to achieve the desired outcome and that they would be looking towards Council for some assistance in that area.

The meeting concluded with staff requesting the clubs to hold further discussions with their respective members on the matter with the intention of bringing back a formal proposal to Council along with estimated costs and timeframes.

BOWLING CLUBS JOINT PROPOSAL

The Riccarton Racecourse Bowling Club and the Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club presented a joint proposal to a meeting held at the Sockburn Service Centre on the 13 December 2001. The meeting was attended by the following Council staff and elected members, Sockburn Community Advocate and Committee Secretary, Chairman of the Riccarton/Wigram Environment Committee, Parks and Waterways Advocate and the Leisure Unit's Sport Development Team Leader.

The two clubs have reached an agreement which provides for both clubs to be based on the current site of the Riccarton Racecourse Bowling Club. A copy of the clubs proposal appears as an attachment to the report.

The Riccarton Racecourse Bowling Club operate on a leased site on the Riccarton Race Course and will require an extension to their existing leased area to undertake the development. Riccarton Racecourse Management informally have given the club an encouraging and favourable response to their proposal. However the club has held off formally approaching Management until the Council's response is known following the outcome of this report.

In short, the clubs are seeking financial assistance to construct an all weather playing surface at the Riccarton Racecourse Bowling Club which will allow the Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club to surrender their existing lease on Upper Riccarton Domain allowing the area to be re-integrated back into the park as freely available public open space.

All parties present at the meeting acknowledged the merits of the proposal and the potential for significant benefits to the wider community not only in terms of the park but also increased recreational opportunities for local residents and particularly some of the senior members in our community. The meeting concluded with staff undertaking to go back to their respective Units with the intention of securing funding to allow the proposal to go ahead.

While both clubs have indicated a willingness to work with Council to achieve what will ultimately be a very good community outcome they have also stressed that they have had to put other programmed developments on hold and they are only interested if it is not a long drawn out process.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST

The proposal showed an all up total of \$170,000 to establish an all weather playing surface at the Riccarton Racecourse Bowling Club. This does not include removing buildings or any re-instatement of the Winter Bowling Club site on Upper Riccarton Domain. However there is provision within the Parks and Waterways Maintenance Budget to undertake this work although that would not include any future development of the site.

The \$170,000 estimate was derived through a combination of known and unknown costs. The construction cost for simply forming and laying the playing surface has been identified at \$120,000 based on previous quotes and information from another club in Canterbury who recently constructed an all weather surface.

The Club has allowed a further \$50,000 for site clearance, excavation, drainage, fencing, professional and legal fees etc which brings the total to \$170,000.

FUNDING SOURCES

The club is proposing the following cost share arrangement to finance the project.

Club Contribution	\$65,000
Council Contribution	<u>\$105,000</u>
Total	<u>\$170,000</u>

The Club has already lodged some funding applications for the project which have been accompanied with letters of support for the project from Council.

The Parks and Waterways Unit proposes the following sources of funds to achieve the Councils commitment to the project.

Riccarton/Wigram Community Board Environment Committee Project Funds 2001/2002 (currently \$35,000 available)	\$20,000
Riccarton/Wigram Community Board Project Funds 2002/2003	\$20,000
Parks and Waterways Unit Budget Programme 2002/2003	<u>\$65,000</u>
Total	<u>\$105,000</u>

Obviously the Councils commitment will be subject to the Club coming up with their share of the project and the Winter Bowling Club surrendering their current lease following confirmation from all parties that they are able to proceed with the project.

Any funding commitments made by Council will be held and retained with Council until the clubs have raised their financial contribution, tendered the project and confirmed they are in a position to undertake the development including the placement of any necessary legal measures, lease extensions , etc to protect the interests of all parties.

CONCLUSION

The Parks and Waterways Unit is very enthusiastic about the current proposal as it holds the key to resolving a very difficult issue which has clearly divided the local community. The relocation of the Winter Bowling Club provides significant benefits for the wider community and extends beyond simply those issues associated with the future use and development of Upper Riccarton Domain.

Staff and Elected Members are well aware of the issues associated with this site and the fact that the Domain has very poor road frontage and visibility from Yaldhurst Road due to the location and presence of various sports clubs.

Effectively there was little chance of addressing those issues without the co-operation of the club as the site tenure of all clubs is protected through their lease agreements. Opportunities such as this are very rare and there are far too many beneficial outcomes to simply walk away from this proposal.

To some degree this proposal has overtaken the Tennis Clubs application. However decisions need to be taken on this proposal prior to finalising a position on the Tennis Clubs application as it has a significant influence on the future development options and opportunities for the Domain.

It is important to note that while the Tennis Club application and the Bowling Club proposal are linked to a certain degree, the Bowling Club proposal provides a significant number of benefits to the park and wider community and stands on its own merit. The Parks and Waterways Unit would still be actively pursuing the Bowling Club proposal even in the absence of any application from the Tennis Club.

Accordingly the Parks and Waterways Unit will be recommending the funding proposal outlined earlier in this report

Recommendation: That the Riccarton Wigram Community Board allocate \$20,000 from their 2001/02 Environment Committee Project Funds and a further \$20,000 from their 2002/03 Project Funds to assist with the relocation of the Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club subject to the following conditions.

1. The Park, Gardens and Waterways Committee approve the proposed \$65,000 contribution from the Parks and Waterways Unit's 2002/03 Budget.
2. That all Council funding commitments to be held by Council until such time the Clubs have made all the necessary financial, legal and lease arrangements to be able to undertake and complete the development
3. The Riccarton Racecourse Bowling Club and the Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club raise sufficient funds to fully complete the project and obtain any necessary lease extensions, Statutory Consents and approvals to undertake the development.
4. The Riccarton Domain Winter Bowling Club surrendering their existing lease on Upper Riccarton Domain once they are in a position to proceed with the development and the area to be retained as freely available public open space.
5. The Club may remove any improvements from their existing leased area at their cost prior to surrendering their lease and there shall be no compensation or contribution to the Club by Council for any improvements to the leased area once surrendered.
6. All approvals including any Council Funding commitments to be withdrawn if the development is not completed within 2 years of when the Councils full funding commitment is available.
7. That the above Council commitments are the full and final Council contribution in respect of this project.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the Officer's recommendations be adopted.