

# CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

## Draft LTCCP 2009-19

**- Received via Web**

Submissions close on 16 April 2009

**I do NOT wish to present my submission at the hearing, and ask that this written submission be considered**

**Are you completing this submission:**

For yourself

**If you are representing, how many people do you represent?**

**Name:**

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**Date:**

31 March 2009

**Your Submission:**

As a mother of two daughters playing hockey in Christchurch, I plead with the Christchurch City Council to make funding available for an additional turf. Canterbury hockey has a desperate shortage of turf facilities. The basis of my request includes the following:

The existing turfs are unable to accommodate existing members effectively with teams playing and practicing at times that are considered unsocial, undesirable and unsafe. My youngest, at only fourteen has to train unsafe hours, often returning home far too late for a child. Primary children's games can start at 7.55am, meaning children have to be at the turf in the middle of winter by 7.30am. It is pitch dark at this hour, often with heavy frosts until the sun comes up. Sunday night games finish at 9.30 at night for high school children. No other sports have games starting at 8.00am and until 9.30 at night. I am concerned parents will find trainings and games are at these ridiculous times and the children will leave the sport if they have been playing hockey all their lives it will be difficult to take up other sports and they could be lost to sport completely.

The existing fields cannot accommodate all requests for use of the existing fields, with over one-third of training time requests turned down in both 2008 and again this year. Some clubs have up to four teams practising on one turf at a time! My daughters coach an 11 aside team who have to train at a school turf the size of 2 tennis courts. This is unacceptable for a sport which is increasing in numbers. Hockey can't even support existing players let alone continue to grow. We should not be relying on our public schools to have to provide training surfaces for our club based teams. Again, I am concerned parents and the players themselves will find trainings at poor

facilities or on grass ridiculous and the children will leave the sport.

The existing fields are used to such an extent that it is not possible to accommodate national team requirements for local players in national squads to trial or train on a regular basis. Recently my daughter attended a Canterbury trial where 3 teams were to be selected. 92 girls showed up to trial on one turf. No additional trials could be scheduled when they knew so many girls were turning up. Any other trials would have had to have been held after 9.00pm to find any extra time!

Council policy identifies a commitment to encouraging participation in sport and recreation as it has a positive benefit on the community, so should support the development of additional hockey facilities that will be well used and result in increased participation. Our family encourages a commitment to sport, particularly team sports, but the current situation is so difficult. Hockey is one of the few winter sports which you can start in an all-girls team at a young age. Netball is only available for girls who are in year 5, and other sports such as football, rugby, basketball are only available in mixed teams. If you want girls to play all-girl sports, hockey is the best choice, but the turf availability is now limiting the teams.

Council policy states that it is a priority to ensure communities have access to community facilities that meet their needs and this is not the case presently for hockey.

Council policy states that it is a priority to increase participation in sport programmes and hockey is a sport capable of significant increase (30% increase achieved in only four years after the last field was established in 2002).

Developing artificial fields decreases increasing demand on already limited grass fields required by other sports and is more cost effective for Council with the annual cost of maintaining an artificial field less than that of maintaining 15 grass fields required to handle the same number of practices and matches.

Unlike so many other sport projects that have been included in the Plan, the case for additional hockey fields is based on meeting the needs of the sport. Other projects are about improving existing facilities or upgrading them, with no realistic likelihood of increased use of the facilities.

There were funds in the Council budget for development of another field in 2007, so it was recognised at that time as an appropriate project. Now the time has come for funding to be utilised, those funds need to be made available.