

9.6 Aorangi Park Master Plan

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Recommendation

That Council adopts the Aorangi Park Master Plan.

Purpose of Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present Council with the draft Aorangi Park Master Plan for adoption.

Assessment of Significance and Engagement

- 2 Aorangi Park is recognised as a regionally and locally significant sports hub. It is the home of a number of regional facilities for sports, including netball, basketball, volleyball, hockey and cricket. It is also a well utilised neighbourhood park. The number of people and groups impacted by the Master Plan is therefore assessed as being medium.
- 3 The cost associated with the proposed development at Aorangi Park has been assessed as high in relation to the overall financial impact on Council and the rating impact on the community.
- 4 In response to this assessment of significance Council has and will continue to undertake a considerable community engagement on the proposed future development of Aorangi Park.
- 5 In 2017 Council, in partnership with Sport Canterbury and the Waimate and Mackenzie District Councils, undertook a review of sport and active recreation spaces and places across South Canterbury. The aim of this activity was to assess the facility needs and priorities across the region. This review and the development of the South Canterbury Spaces and Places Strategy, involved significance engagement with the sports and active recreation facility users and groups, including the wider community. The outcomes of this Strategy in relation to Aorangi Park are discussed below.
- 6 Further engagement has been undertaken with current and potentially future stakeholders to ensure the Master Plan has been informed by the challenges and needs of these groups and clubs. See section 7 of the Master Plan for details of these stakeholders.
- 7 The Master Plan proposes a staged approach to the future development of the Park, including a feasibility study and business case for the proposed indoor court extension. Further engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community would be undertaken as part of this work.
- 8 Should Council wish to include the key stages of the proposed Master Plan in the 2021-31 Long Term Plan, feedback will be sought from the community through the consultation process.

Background

- 9 In 2008, recognising the strategic importance of Aorangi Park and large capital investment from both Council and sporting codes, Council developed a Master Plan for the Park. Stage 1

of this Master Plan has been implemented. This involved a second hockey turf and minor improvements to the Southern Trust Events Centre. The 2008 Master Plan is attached for reference. Stages 2 and 3 of the Plan were not adopted by Council.

- 10 A key recommendation of the 2018 South Canterbury Spaces and Places Strategy was for an update of the then ten year old Aorangi Park Master Plan to effectively guide the future development of the park.
- 11 In 2020, in response to this recommendation, and issues raised by existing users of the Park, Council and Sport Canterbury engaged Recreation, Sport, Leisure Consultancy Limited (RSL) to undertake an update of the Master Plan for Aorangi Park.
- 12 The purpose of this Plan is to provide the long term (25 year) direction for Aorangi Park in terms of priority uses and the related priority infrastructure requirement. Further, the Plan will provide decision-makers (Council, user groups, tenants and potential future users) with direction for future investment.
- 13 The Plan is prefaced by a high level analysis of the current and future requirements of the Park, based on demographics, sports trend analysis and consultation with users. It aims to show how the Park could be optimised with a co-ordinated planning approach to avoid costly and less beneficial ad-hoc development.
- 14 The updated Plan has been developed with the premise that the existing layout of the Park is still considered effective for the majority of users, and thus the proposed approach detailed in the Plan has been based on optimising the site with as little impact as possible of the existing assets.
- 15 The Plan is not a detailed needs analysis or feasibility study of any proposed facility development identified within the report. Full feasibility work will need to be undertaken to determine the viability and refined details of major facility developments before proceeding.
- 16 Further background to Aorangi Park, including the Aorangi Park Management Plan Objectives (2006), and the development of this proposed Master Plan is provided in the Master Plan Report attached.

Discussion

- 17 The updated Aorangi Park Master Plan presented to Council combines analysis of the current and future demography of the Timaru District, local and national sport trend data and engagement with user groups on needs and challenges.
- 18 Key challenges and considerations have been identified through this analysis and include:
 - 18.1 Current user peak time capacity issues with the indoor court space provided at Southern Trust Event Centre
 - 18.2 Goal of Netball South Canterbury to deliver all senior competition indoors, currently unable to be achieved due to indoor capacity issues;
 - 18.3 Replacement of South Canterbury Hockey wett turf required within the next three years;
 - 18.4 The desire for greater and improved administration and official's spaces across a number of users.
 - 18.5 Ongoing and improved provision of training facilities for football;
 - 18.6 Ongoing future provision for all current sports users;
 - 18.7 Tension between hosting of large events and scheduled indoor sports competitions;

18.8 Ongoing provision of open (informal) green space.

- 19 The findings of this analysis have then been used to develop the updated Master Plan proper, the purpose of which is to allow discussions to proceed between Council and partners, stakeholders and funding agencies for future investment. It is anticipated that the updated Master Plan will be the first step in the design process, and may be modified and refined as specific projects progress.

Facility Developments

- 20 At a high level, the Plan identifies the following proposed facility developments:
- 20.1 Indoor court extension;
 - 20.2 Relocation of wett hockey turf (number 2 turf);
 - 20.3 Realignment of outdoor netball courts (with provision for future canopy cover of two outdoor courts);
 - 20.4 Future outdoor courtyard space (adjacent to indoor court extension);
 - 20.5 Reconfiguration of Aorangi Lounge into multisport space; and
 - 20.6 New internal road and parking layout.
- 21 The 'Preliminary Sketch Floor Plan' for the extension of the indoor court space identifies the following proposed facility developments:
- 21.1 Three indoor courts at the larger netball court size (allowing the ability to convert to up to six $\frac{3}{4}$ basketball courts);
 - 21.2 New plant and storage space for indoor extension;
 - 21.3 Main entrance with new foyer, office space and changing facilities;
 - 21.4 Kiosk space for wider community use (e.g. coffee cart);
 - 21.5 Sports house space; and
 - 21.6 Additional new changing rooms for hockey and other users.
- 22 Preliminary sketches have been provided to indicate possible layouts and design to incorporate these features.
- 23 The updated Master Plan, if approved, will require a detailed planning approach with regards to the implementation of these identified facility recommendations. A staged approach is proposed, recognising that the extension of the indoor court facility is a major capital undertaking, that will require a more detailed feasibility study and business case, as well as requiring a consequential developments at the Park (for example the relocation of the hockey turf and the road realignment).
- 24 The Plan also provides some high level capital and operational funding considerations, benchmarking the Plan against comparable recent developments across New Zealand. These are discussed below.

Options and Preferred Option

- 25 **Option One** – Council adopts the Aorangi Park Master Plan as presented, with or without amendments. This is the preferred option.

- 26 The Master Plan presented has been prepared by qualified sport and recreation facility planners using a robust methodology including reviewing existing plans, consultation with key stakeholders and analysis of local and national sporting trends and data, along with Timaru District population and demographic projections.
- 27 This option will provide Council and other stakeholders with a clear direction for investment and development at Aorangi Park over the next 25 years.
- 28 There is currently no budget allocated for the development of Aorangi Park, and adopting the Master Plan as presented does not commit Council to any immediate budget.
- 29 The Master Plan sets out a staged approach to future development, which includes the development of a funding plan and a feasibility study and business case for the major capital expense of extending the indoor court space. It is envisaged that once this work has been completed, budgetary considerations can occur.
- 30 **Option Two** – Council does not adopt the Aorangi Park Master Plan. Council may wish to undertake further analysis of the future requirements of Aorangi Park and the wider sport and recreation, and event facility network across the District before adopting a Master Plan. This is not the preferred option.
- 31 This option could delay any future plans to undertake development at Aorangi Park, or could lead to ad-hoc development which fails to meet the long term desired outcomes for Council, users and the wider community.

Relevant Legislation, Council Policy and Plans

- 32 Long Term Plan 2018-28: The current LTP does not include budget for any significant development at Aorangi Park in the years 2021-28.
- 33 South Canterbury Spaces and Places Strategy: This Strategy, adopted by Council in 2018, recommended the Aorangi Master Plan be updated to effectively guide the future development of the Park. The Strategy found that, during traditional peak times (after school and evenings), Southern Trust Event Centre is often at full capacity, and its use for sporting competitions could be interrupted for events. It also noted that there was an under supply of indoor netball courts given the national trend for senior competitions to move indoors, and consequentially a potential over supply of outdoor courts should the move to indoor senior competitions be made possible.
- 34 The Strategy does also recommend greater coordination and collaboration between indoor sport users and indoor sport facility providers (including schools) to more effectively utilise existing spaces; and that indoor court demand and capacity is effectively monitored to enable the more detailed planning requirements to determine if there is an actual need for additional indoor courts.
- 35 The Strategy is available online at – [South Canterbury Spaces and Places Strategy](#)
- 36 Aorangi Park is a gazetted Recreation Reserve pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977 meaning that the operation and any development is required to comply with the provisions of the Act. The Master Plan identifies sporting and recreation activities and facilities which are consistent with the Act.

Financial and Funding Implications

- 37 As noted above, there is currently no funding allocated in the 2018-28 Long Term Plan for the development of facilities at Aorangi Park.

- 38 While the adoption of this Master Plan does not commit Council to the immediate implementation of the proposed developments in the 2021-31 Long Term Plan, currently being developed, it does signal a commitment from Council to the development of the Park to meet the current and future needs of users and the wider community over the next 25 years.
- 39 The Master Plan does not provide costings for the proposed developments, however it does provide some benchmarking capital costs for indoor court facility developments across New Zealand.
- 40 The Plan also notes that any extension to the current indoor facility would also result in a significant increase to operating budgets relating to both the management of the facility and ongoing repairs and maintenance.
- 41 Any commitment by Council to facility development would require a detailed assessment of capital and operating costs.

Other Considerations

- 42 While the development of the Master Plan was undertaken with consideration for the needs of users and the community over the next 25 year the Plan does not commit Council to a prescribed timeframe for the staged development. That is, in adopting the Plan, Council is not committing to implementing the plan immediately, recognising the significant costs associated, and the competing priorities of Council and the Timaru District.

Attachments

- 1. Aorangi Park Master Plan 2008 and Briefing Report**
- 2. Final Draft Aorangi Park Master Plan February 2021**