

BEFORE THE SELWYN DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act
1991

AND

IN THE MATTER an application by Selwyn District
Council to designate land for
recreation reserve purposes at 27
Hamptons Road, Prebbleton

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF PHILLIP GORDON MILLAR

Introduction

1. My name is Phillip Gordon Millar. I am the Land Development Project Manager for Selwyn District Council (SDC). I have been in this role since 2016. I am authorised to give this evidence on behalf of Selwyn District Council.
2. I hold a degree in Landscape Architecture (Hons) from Lincoln University, conferred on me in 1997. I am a registered member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, and a member of the New Zealand Recreation Association.

Scope of Evidence

3. This evidence addresses the following:
 - (a) Selwyn District Council Objectives for the New Park;
 - (b) Background;
 - (c) New Park Proposal;
 - (d) Other Planning Documents; and
 - (e) Operational and Nuisance Matters raised by Submitters.

Council's Objectives

4. Selwyn District Council is a local authority which has financial responsibility for public recreation facilities, so may give the territorial authority (Council) a notice of requirement for a designation for a recreation reserve.
5. The recreation reserve subject to this notice is required to provide open space and facilitate recreation opportunities, particularly organised sport for the Prebbleton and Lincoln communities and wider Springs Ward area. Accordingly, establishment of a new recreation reserve is reasonably necessary for the provision of additional open space and recreation facilities for the Prebbleton and Lincoln communities and wider Springs Ward area.
6. Designation is considered to be the appropriate mechanism to provide for the establishment and on-going use of the reserve for its proposed purpose. The Council

requires ongoing certainty that the site can be developed and used for this purpose. Designation provides the necessary long-term certainty and flexibility for recreation activities on the site, while also identifying the use of the site to the general public.

7. A number of existing large recreation reserves within Selwyn District Council's jurisdiction are already designated. The remainder are currently going through the District Plan Review process with the aim that they will likely be designated in the near future.

Background

8. The Selwyn District Council Open Space Strategy was written in April 2015. The purpose of the Open Spaces Strategy was to set the direction for provision of an open space network that will meet the District's needs for the next 30 years. In developing this Strategy the Council carefully considered unique factors impacting the rate of population growth and how best to achieve the community's needs and aspirations.
9. Although the Open Space Strategy was not a legislative document, it was strongly influenced by national legislation (and subsequently regional and local regulation) particularly through the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002, the Reserves Act 1977, National Water Conservation (Te Waihora/ Lake Ellesmere) Order 1990, and the Resource Management Act 1991.
10. One of the overarching goals of the Open Spaces Strategy is to ensure we have enough space to meet growth as it occurs and provide for the future, by;
 - Keeping up with rapid District growth
 - Future proofing provision
 - Increase intensification of use without degrading the experience or environment
 - Creating hubs for recreation
 - Working with neighbours/partners to achieve provision levels
 - Reducing existing deficiencies in provision
11. In response to population growth analysis, page 33 of the Open Space Strategy stated a strategic goal was to *'Pursue potential open space purchase in Prebbleton (10 – 12*

ha)'. The Open Space Strategy also recognised a significant Sports Park space deficit in nearby Lincoln. At the time Prebbleton's population was expected to grow from around 4,500 to reach 5,200 in 2025. In the same timeframe, Lincoln's population was forecast to grow from around 6,500 to 9,400.

12. In April 2015 Opus International Consultants Ltd carried out investigation into possible sites for a new Reserve in or near Prebbleton. The 'Prebbleton Sports Grounds – Site Options Assessment' Report commissioned by SDC sought to undertake a preliminary site options assessment to evaluate the suitability of four sites identified by SDC for sports ground purchase/development purposes. A weighted decision matrix was then developed and used to determine the most suitable site for potential purchase and investigation into the development into a sports ground. Site Three (Leadleys/Birches Road) was identified as the preferred site option for the location of a new sports ground. Site Three provided opportunity for the establishment of at least four north-south orientated rugby pitches as well as additional amenities. The site was identified as having good connections to the 'Rail Trail', being close in proximity to residential development in Prebbleton and within close proximity to Lincoln (5 minute drive).
13. Selwyn District Council purchased Site Three, the 22 hectare site at 27 Hamptons Road, in early 2016, with the aim to develop the land into a park. The location of the proposed new park is 1 kilometre south of Prebbleton town centre and around 4 kilometres north of Lincoln and will be developed to provide open space for these growing towns.
14. A recreation needs assessment for the Prebbleton-Lincoln area completed in 2018 identified the following key community needs:
 - more diversity in play experiences and settings, in particular for nature/ wilderness/ adventure play with a point of difference, especially for older children and teenagers (youth)
 - more access and provision for informal basketball
 - safer bike opportunities within a park setting away from vehicle traffic, particularly for learning riders
 - an off-lead dog exercise area
 - additional fields for sporting activities, particularly junior games and club training

15. During 2019 four specialist reports were carried out to seek recommendations on Traffic, Noise, Ecology and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). A draft masterplan for the new park was then developed, incorporating the key features identified in the needs assessment and specialist reports.
16. In November 2019, a first stage of community consultation was carried out following a mailout of the draft masterplan to Lincoln, Prebbleton and surrounds. The draft masterplan and questionnaire was also released on the Council website. A total of 58 submissions were received from individuals and various groups (Croquet, Fistball, Cycling, Football and Rail Trail Trust). Submissions were overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the draft masterplan. Many submissions also gave ideas of features or elements that they would like to see in the reserve.
17. Some of the key messages received by the community in their submissions regarding what they wanted to see in the new park were:
 - a strong sense of place reflected in native planting and an emphasis on the rural character and Prebbleton history
 - provision of playground features, picnic areas, shade trees, wide footpaths and amenities (drinking fountains, toilets, seating, BBQ areas etc)
 - a sufficient number of carparks
 - provision for a wide variety of sports, organized and informal uses
 - a cycling theme throughout the park with various bike or scooter trails linking to the Rail Trail
 - strong support for the proposed dog park with many submissions requesting an area for small dogs
 - requests for a feature to be made of the waterway, but some submissions cautioned regarding making sure the water is kept clean
18. Birchs Road Park is in the rohe of Te Taumutu Rūnanga. This site is upstream of the significant coastal lagoon Te Waihora/ Lake Ellesmere, and in close proximity to a network of mahinga kai cultural harvest sites. The Rūnanga have provided a representative for this project, who has given high level guidance and shown support for the initiatives proposed in the masterplan. Specific elements of interest to the Rūnanga have been identified as the Pā Harakeke, enhanced waterway and the

project's desire for a genuine local native planting palette (to be developed). Also identified was that the park supports wider initiatives within the Rūnanga, such as promoting health and wellbeing of whānau. Engagement with the Rūnanga will continue as the project progresses.

New Park Proposal

19. The Selwyn District Council current ten year plan includes funding for the new park that will provide additional recreation space for primarily the Prebbleton and Lincoln communities whose current recreational space is oversubscribed.
20. Latest population forecasts have Prebbleton growing from 4,873 (2021) to 6,568 (2030), and Lincoln from 7,688 (2021) to 10,396 (2030) (Data is Sourced from the Selwyn Growth Model).
21. SDC have adopted the industry standards developed by New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA) with regards to the recommended provision of Sportfields (Refer to 'NZ Parks Categories and Levels of Service' Document commissioned by NZRA). The minimum standard for provision of sports parks is 3.0 hectares per 1000 people. Currently the Lincoln, Prebbleton and Broadfield catchment provision of sports parks is approximately 2.4 hectares per 1000 people. It is projected that when the Park is completed, around 2030/31, the Lincoln, Prebbleton and Broadfield catchment provision of sports parks will be approximately 3.9 hectares per 1000 people.
22. In response to the 58 submissions received and input from Rūnanga, the draft masterplan was updated in early 2020. The revised masterplan sets out sports fields and a dog park, alongside active play and recreation spaces. It provides access for all ages and abilities via a network of pathways, and encourages community/ whānau gathering in grassed areas, sheltered by surrounding vegetation. The park will have a strong framework of native planting.
23. The new park on Birchs Road will be a large scale community park that aims to promote adventure, wilderness and play. In addition to providing local community benefit aspects of the park's design will provide unique recreational opportunities for the whole of the Selwyn community. The park will have a focus on:

- **Ecological function**

Improved biodiversity, habitat, naturalised waterway and surrounds, restoration planting, cultural harvest and public foraging opportunities

- **Community function**

Active recreation, cycle and play, sport and associated facilities, gathering spaces, dog exercise, a local attraction

- **Flexibility**

Unallocated space for future development, large scale multi-use fields, public facilities

24. Designed to service a diverse group of users, the new park will encourage interaction between all sorts of people. Spaces and facilities are provided for large and small gatherings, sports, dog exercise, and community based events. Located adjacent the Little River Rail Trail, the park is readily accessible from Prebbleton and Lincoln by means of cycle or foot. Ample car parking will be provided for those requiring vehicle access.
25. The new park will be differentiated from Prebbleton Domain and other parks in the area in that it will provide a distinctly native rustic rural style parkland experience for active recreation and play users.
26. The existing waterway will be significantly enhanced from an ecological and recreational perspective. The edges of the waterway will be re-graded and planted with native vegetation. There will be multiple opportunities for local school or community groups to be involved on site with planting days, water quality learning, fish surveys, long term monitoring and the like.
27. Sports fields will be developed to enable Council to allocate this new capacity to manage demand for field based sport in this area of the District.
28. The concept plan also provides for approximately 285 - 295 carparks around the 22Ha park – 220 in the main carpark off Birchs Road and 65 - 75 at the south of the dog park. There will also be approximately 70 – 80 carparks alongside Leadleys Road. For context, the existing Prebbleton Domain has approximately 185 carparks on site, and is around 13Ha in size.

29. Key features of the proposed masterplan include:

- a natural, rural and rustic character throughout the site reflected in the materials and features chosen (furniture, boardwalks, bridges etc), and the sweeping paths, large areas of native planting, and naturalised waterway feature
- a creation of a destination for families and groups, sports teams and social gatherings with the provision of multiple sheltered and shaded areas for picnics and informal group gatherings
- a network of pathways and tracks with provision for walking, running, pushchairs, wheelchairs, bikes, trikes, scooters and mobility scooters
- a strong bike component with provision of a variety track options catering for a wide range of ages and abilities, with connection to the rail trail
- numerous large grassed open spaces (irrigated), that will cater for organized sports and informal use, with the largest space provided with sports field lighting for year round use up to 10pm
- provision of multiple playground features including free and natural play areas along the naturalised waterway that allow for imaginative and creative play for children or all ages and abilities
- provision of utilities (change rooms, public toilets, carparks, maintenance area) and amenities (drinking fountains, toilets, seating, BBQ areas etc)
- a fenced dog park with provision of multiple items of dog exercise equipment and a fenced separate area for small dogs, with a carpark provided adjacent to the dog park

Other Planning Documents

Reserve Management Plan

30. The Reserves Act 1977 requires local authorities to develop management plans for reserves which are subject to the Reserves Act and for which the local authority is the administering body. Section 41(3) requires that a management plan “provides for and ensures” the following:

- use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection, and preservation of the reserve(s) as the case may require;
- development (as appropriate) of the reserve(s) to the extent that the administering body’s resources permit, for the purpose for which each reserve is classified.

31. This provides the community with certainty about the future development of parks and reserves, and enables the Council to manage them effectively.
32. Assuming the new park is designated for recreation purposes, it is anticipated that the new Prebbleton Park will be formally gazetted and classified as Recreation Reserve (based on its primary purpose), subject to the Reserves Act 1977.
33. A Reserve Management Plan will then be required to be developed for the new Prebbleton Park, which will provide direction for the day-to-day management of the Park, detail impacting factors, and establish a clear direction for future management and development where appropriate.
34. Further input from community members, interest groups and sports clubs will be sought during the process of developing a draft Reserve Management Plan. The draft management plan is then subject to a statutory submission and hearing process, before final adoption by Council. The Reserves Act (Section 41(4)) also requires that the management plan be subject to continuous review to address new issues and opportunities as they arise.

Outline Development Plan

35. Application for Outline Plan Approval will need to be lodged with SDC prior to any stages of work being carried out at the new park (assuming the new park is designated for Recreation purposes under the NOR process).
36. The outline plan approval process assesses the proposed works in accordance with section 176A of the Resource Management Act 1991. Subject to subsection (2), an outline plan of the public work, project, or work to be constructed on designated land must be submitted by the requiring authority to the territorial authority to allow the territorial authority to request changes before construction is commenced.
37. The matters that may be considered are set out in Section 176A(3) which states that:
An outline plan must show
 - (a) The height, shape, and bulk of the public work, project, or work; and
 - (b) The location on the site of the public work, project, or work; and
 - (c) The likely finished contour of the site; and

- (d) The vehicular access, circulation, and the provision for parking; and
- (f) The landscaping proposed; and
- (g) Any other matters to avoid, remedy, or mitigate any adverse effects on the environment.

38. The SDC planners will assess the outline plan application in line with the above criteria, compliance with the designation conditions, and District Plan standards as a guideline.

Parks and Reserves Bylaw, Council Policy, Leases and Licences

39. Council Bylaws are rules or regulations that apply to places controlled or managed by the Council. Their role is to protect the public from nuisance, minimise the potential for offensive behaviour in public places and protect, promote, and maintain public health and safety. Bylaws relevant to the new park are; Parks and Reserves, Public Places, Dog Control.
40. SDC Parks and Reserves Bylaw 2009 (amended 2019) applies to parks and reserves vested in or under the control of SDC for the benefit and enjoyment of all users. The Parks and Reserves Bylaw 2009 covers the following:
- Behaviour in Parks and Reserves
 - Conduct in Facilities
 - Vehicle control within Parks and Reserves
 - Animal Control
 - Fire
 - Camping
 - Aircraft and Drones
 - Organised Sports Games
 - Offences and Penalties
41. All recreational users and visitors of the new park in Prebbleton will need to abide by the Parks and Reserves Bylaw 2009 (assuming the new park is designated for Recreation purposes under the NOR process).
42. In addition to the above Bylaw controls, the following Council Policy documents are currently relevant to the new park: Smoke free policy, tree and vegetation policy, CPTED policy, graffiti removal policy, camping on reserves policy, and dog control policy.

43. Leases and licences are another mechanism by which activities on parks can be controlled. For example, access and use of reserves may also be controlled through leases, licenses, permits, covenants and other similar means as appropriate to the type to reserve.

Operational and Nuisance Matters raised by Submitters

44. Many details regarding how the park will operate are still to be determined during the period in which the development of the Reserve Management Plan will be carried out (detailed above).
45. However, I am happy to respond below to many of the operational and nuisance concerns raised by the submitters regarding security, lighting, alcohol and smoking.

Security Concerns

46. Concerns were raised regarding increased security measures required as a result of the new park. Some submitters suggested that locked gates be required to the carparks, hours of park use be restricted and security cameras be installed to deter vandalism and other negative behaviour, especially after hours.
47. As stated above, these submitter's suggestions will be considered in detail during the formation of the Reserve Management Plan. However, our preliminary thoughts are that we do not initially propose to lock carparks at night. Most carparks in our district are not locked, and we do not anticipate the need to install gates to the 2 main carparks proposed. However, we do commit to supply power to the 2 carpark access points, so that in the future, should behaviour deem that these are required, automatic gates can be installed should they be necessary. If automatic gates were to be installed in the future we recommend that they be closed at 10:30pm, to enable park users to exit the carpark after sports lights be turned off at 10.00pm (See lighting below).
48. Regarding restricting hours of use of the reserve, it must be noted that there a general requirement in the Reserves Act that the public shall have freedom of entry and access to the reserve (section 17). Also, the SDC Parks and Reserves Bylaw 2009 Section 5.1

states that *‘Reserves are open to the public at all times except: (a) When the Council has determined that a Reserve or any part of a Reserve should be closed temporarily, or during such hours as may be nominated by the Council’*. We do not anticipate needing to restrict hours of use of the park through the SDC Bylaw, however we intend to restrict the hours of sport field lighting (See lighting below), which will restrict the hours of active sports use within the park.

49. Regarding security cameras, we intend to install these around the carparks and buildings proposed, in order to deter vandalism and other negative behaviour, especially after hours.

Lighting Concerns

50. Some submitters raised concerns regarding light spill and operating hours.
51. Modern LED Sports lights are very efficient and directional, having very little light spill. We propose to use LED sports lights and we propose that sports lighting be restricted to the 3x full sized fields and 1x Junior field, and restrict hours to 10pm. This is consistent with other Parks in the district (eg. Foster Park, Rolleston) that have directional LED Sports Lights and have restricted use to 10:00pm.
52. The LED sports lighting system will need to be fully designed with light spill analysis drawings produced prior to lodging the Outline Plan Approval Consent application. The lighting design will be assessed against the District Plan lighting conditions.

Alcohol and Smoking Concerns

53. Some submitters raised issues regarding alcohol and smoking within the park.
54. The park will be a non-smoking environment as per the SDC Smoke free policy with no-smoking symbol and ‘Smokefree Aotearoa NZ 2025’ on the signs around the park.
55. Regarding alcohol, as per the SDC Parks and Reserves Bylaw 2009 Section 7.1.d the park will be alcohol free within building facilities, however, alcohol will be allowed to be consumed outdoors within the park, although intoxication is banned (6.1.g).

Conclusion

56. The recreation reserve subject to this notice is required to provide open space and facilitate recreation opportunities, particularly organised sport for the Prebbleton and Lincoln communities and wider Springs Ward area. Accordingly, establishment of a new recreation reserve is reasonably necessary for the provision of additional open space and recreation facilities for the Prebbleton and Lincoln communities and wider Springs Ward area.
57. Designation is considered to be the appropriate mechanism to provide for the establishment and on-going use of the reserve for its proposed purpose. The Council requires ongoing certainty that the site can be developed and used for this purpose. Designation provides the necessary long-term certainty and flexibility for recreation activities on the site, while also identifying the use of the site to the general public.
58. The Selwyn District Council current ten year plan includes funding for the new park that will provide additional recreation space for primarily the Prebbleton and Lincoln, and wider Springs Ward communities whose current recreational space is oversubscribed. In addition to providing local community benefit aspects of the park's design will provide unique recreational opportunities for the whole of the Selwyn community.

Phillip Millar – 18 September 2020