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Thames Sport Facilities Needs Assessment



INFORMATION

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1.0

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PURPOSE OF THE THAMES SPORT FACILITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Understand the drivers and needs for sport facility development to serve the sports at Rhodes Park and across Thames.



Kauaeranga River in Flood March 2017
All of Rhodes Park under flood waters
Picture source: RNZ

FLOODING OF RHODES PARK IS A MAJOR RISK

Rhodes Park is located inside the spillway of the Kauaeranga River Flood Protection Scheme, which protects 13,000 hectares of highlighted land.



The draft Thames-Coromandel Shoreline Management Plan identifies the area including Rhodes Park sits at 0m sea-level, therefore at risk of coastal inundation. This means 0.1m of sea-level rise the fields are expected to be come largely unplayable, therefore it suggests relocation of sporting fields is considered.

There is little or no mitigation measures to reduce the risk from either river or coastal flooding on Rhodes Park, as this would cause flow-on impacts to the protected housing on the neighbouring banks.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The study has been undertaken against the backdrop of the following strategic context.

FUNDING

TCDC LONG-TERM PLAN 2021-2031

- A vibrant district
- A connected district
- A sustainable district
- Funding for sport precinct 2026-2028

SPATIAL

THAMES & SURROUNDS DRAFT SPATIAL PLAN

- 3 Major Challenges:
- 1) More Housing
- 2) Economic Development
- 3) Coastal inundation

SPORT

THAMES-COROMANDEL DISTRICT SPORT & ACTIVE RECREATION PLAN

- Priority action to investigate future of Rhodes Park - consider relocation.
- Consider options for multi-use, hubbing, adaptable flexible spaces

COMMUNITY

THAMES COMMUNITY PLAN 2020-2030

- Rhodes Park grandstand and clubrooms are key projects the community “would like to see happen”
- Consider objectives of Youth Strategy and Positive Aging Strategy

REGION

WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN

- Strategic framework for facility planning and optimisation
- Encourages collaboration
- Quality infrastructure to support participation

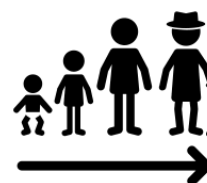
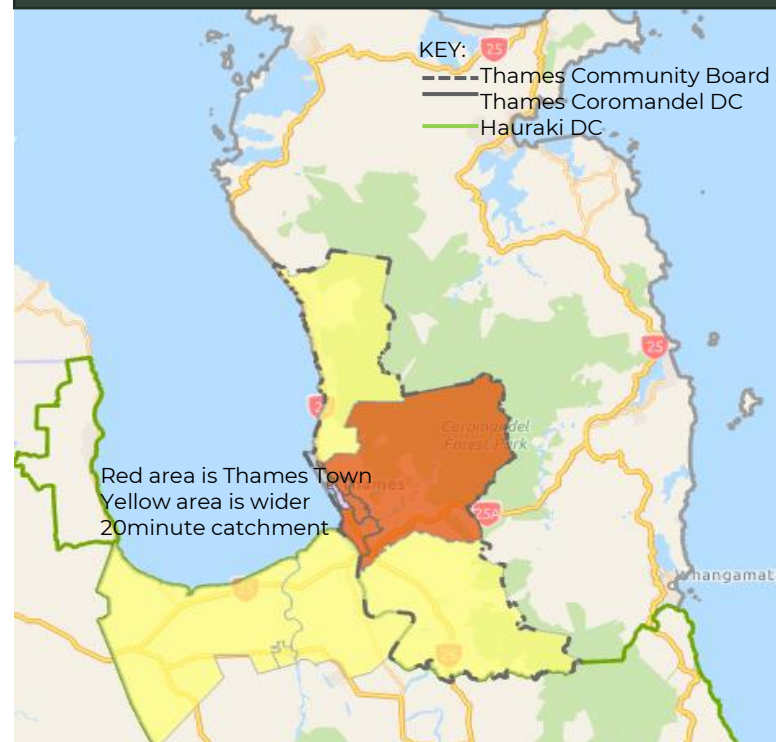
DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

THAMES TOWN

2018 7,881
2048 8,130

WIDER CATCHMENT

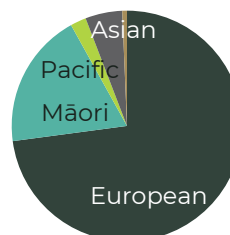
2018 14,616
2048 15,210



AGE PROFILE

Playing age, 5-35 years, makes up 28% of Thames / 29% of Wider Catchment. Forecast to decrease to 23% by 2048.

People over 65 years are forecast to increase by 30% in Thames and 32% in Wider Catchment.



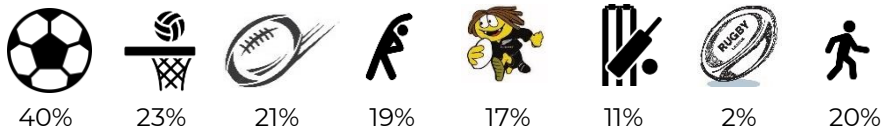
ETHNICITY PROFILE

Proportion of Māori living in Thames / Wider Catchment is higher compared to District and New Zealand. Forecast for more Māori to live in Thames.

MEDIAN INCOME

Thames Town \$25,560.

COMMUNITY SURVEY



43% were members of multiple clubs, 16% members of 3+ clubs

RATING OF CURRENT RHODES PARK FACILITIES ARE LOW

Facility ratings	/5	
Netball courts	3.2	
Carparks	3.1	2.6 for Netball
Playing fields	3.0	1.9 for Football
Playground	2.9	
Clubrooms	2.8	1.9 for Football
Toilets	2.5	
Grandstand	2.3	
Changing rooms	2.2	1.9 Fitness & Football

LIKE ABOUT RHODES PARK

45% Access/location

26% Grouped facilities

DON'T LIKE ABOUT RHODES PARK

30% Field flooding

22% Poor football facilities

13% Inequity of provision

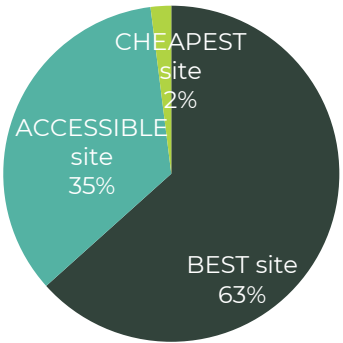
SUPPORT FOR IMPROVED SPORTING FACILITIES IS STRONG

88% (383 of 436 respondents) support improved sport facilities in Thames.
12% don't want improved sport facilities due to concerns about costs.

Importance of future facilities	/5	Essential/High Importance
Toilets	4.4	91%
Quality fields	4.4	89%
Not flooding prone	4.3	84%
Outdoor courts	4.2	84%
Changing rooms	4.2	83%
Multi-sport hub	4.2	81%
Spectator seating	4.0	70%
Playground	3.8	62%
Clubrooms	3.7	57%
Walking tracks	3.6	57%

Other desired facilities include: more indoor or a dedicated active space and a hockey turf.

FUTURE SITE SELECTION



VOLUNTARY COMMENTS ON OTHER MATTERS TO CONSIDER:

(of all 383 wanting improved facilities)
4% want equity of access addressed
3% support multi-sport/sharing/hub
3% want a site not flood prone
2% want sub-regional benefits considered

OVERALL ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

- **Quality of Rhodes Park provision** – there are a range of issues with current facilities at Rhodes Park. Flooding of the fields and capacity/quality of facilities for each code are key.
- **Fairness and equity** between sports codes and current allocation of space is a major issue that needs to be addressed in the short term, regardless of any future development.
- **Multi-sport hub** – there is positive support across the codes for a multi-sport hub, although each code has different perspectives around how this is achieved. Most acknowledge working together will achieve stronger outcomes compared to working alone.
- **Best location free from flooding** – there is positive support for finding a site that is the best site, not at risk of flooding.
- **Comprehensive development** – most agree any development must be comprehensive in terms of the range of facilities and amenities, this includes changing rooms, toilets, carparking, clubroom/social space, transport connections and an active space (could be turf and/or indoor activity space).
- **Affordability** – vital to consider the cost of any development, given the demographic make-up of Thames / district.

CONCLUSIONS

FLOODING RISK IS THE PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT DRIVER

- The primary development driver is the current and increasing flood risk to Rhodes Park from both the Kauaeranga River and the coast through sea-level rise.
- The impact of these issues are already being felt with regular (weekly) flooding of some fields at Rhodes Park in winter.
- Consequently, Rhodes Park is a constrained and compromised location for secure sporting facilities. In time, Rhodes Park's ability to function as a sports park will be compromised by flooding. There is little, if no, mitigation options without flow-on impacts to the housing areas in Thames.
- The feasibility study for sporting facilities needs to consider the risks/costs/benefits of staying at the current location versus relocation to determine what is the most appropriate way forward.
- Any decision to remain at Rhodes Park would need to acknowledge the ongoing impacts of flooding (which are unavoidable) and the likely limitations on further development, and eventually on reliable playing facilities.
- Should the feasibility study determine relocation is the most appropriate option, there needs to be consideration to including croquet given the potential impact of likely protection works at Victoria Park. This may also need to consider squash and tennis.

QUALITY OF SPORTING FACILITIES

- The quality of existing sports facilities at Rhodes Park are perceived as poor, mainly related to the current flooding issues. However, many of the current facilities are also rated lowly by stakeholders.

EQUITY OF SPORT FACILITY ACCESS

- Equity of access between the sport codes at Rhodes Park is a significant issue. This is due to history, longer tenure and lack of engagement/annual review of field allocations. Most clubs are dissatisfied with the current arrangements, and it needs to be addressed, regardless of any future development.
- Most clubs acknowledge working together will deliver stronger outcomes than working alone.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Whilst acknowledging current housing constraints is likely a factor, current forecasts do not envisage significant population growth in and around Thames.
- However, Thames is forecast to become increasingly older and this needs to be considered as part of future sporting provision.
- Thames has low median incomes which means the affordability of any development, both for ratepayers and users, is important.

MULTI-SPORT PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

- There is strong support for pursuing a comprehensive multi-sport precinct development which provides wide ranging benefits.
- Finding the best location, free from flooding risk, is critical.
- Quality facilities and amenities are vital including playing surfaces, changing rooms, toilets, carparks and transport connections, social space, active space, seating and play amenities.
- Any future development needs to have sufficient capacity to meet current and future demand, assessed on an hourly/weekly basis in this study. The amount of space for codes is somewhat determined by the type of facilities/location and will need to be finalised in the feasibility study once the preferred location is confirmed.
- The feasibility should consider the opportunity of any development to provide wider regional value/benefit (such as for tournaments) but this must be carefully balanced with affordability and viability.
- There may be a need for a turf to accommodate growing hockey demand, but this needs to be considered alongside potential development at Thames High School and not undermine current hockey turf provision in Ngatea.

The needs assessment has reached these conclusions based on the data and analysis conducted to date. Given the complexity of the sport facility project, it is anticipated further information may be identified in the next stage of the project (feasibility study) which may supplement or extend the above conclusions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Thames Sport Facilities Needs Assessment recommends:

1. The Thames-Coromandel District Council endorse the key conclusions from the report, these being:
 - The primary development driver is the current and increasing flood risk to Rhodes Park from both the Kauaeranga River and the coast through sea-level rise. Consequently, Rhodes Park is a constrained and compromised location for secure sporting facilities. In time, Rhodes Park's ability to function as a sport park will be compromised by flooding.
 - The current quality (and allocation) of sport facilities at Rhodes Park are also another consideration for development of sport facilities.
2. The next stage of the process, being the Thames Sport Facilities Feasibility Study, considers the cost/benefit/risks of relocating the sporting facilities at Rhodes Park versus the cost/benefit/risks of remaining on the site.
3. If a new location is identified as preferred, then the investigation should explore the opportunity to develop a multi-sport precinct which provides quality and sufficient playing facilities to meet the identified needs. This exploration should include review of recent sport hubs case studies and Sport New Zealand's Sport Hub guidelines.
4. If a new location is identified, then consider the inclusion of croquet in the multi-sport precinct, given the potential impact of likely sea-wall protection works at Victoria Park. This may also need to consider squash and tennis.
5. If the existing Rhodes Park location is identified as preferred, then it must be acknowledged minimal development is possible, and eventually, there will be consequences for reliable playing surfaces. However, there may be some interventions, such as raising buildings, which could be explored to minimise some risks of staying.

6. Thames-Coromandel District Council adopts the following key success factors to inform the next stage of considerations in the feasibility study.

BEST LOCATION

Find the best location(s) for sport facilities which are not at risk of flooding but considers the accessibility for participants, particularly young people.

EQUITY

Work towards establishing equity in the quantity and quality of sport facilities to enable each code to thrive.

COLLABORATION

Foster and support greater collaboration between sport codes to gain efficiencies and enable each code to thrive.

CAPACITY

Ensure there is sufficient playing capacity to support community sport participation, recognising potential changes in demand and preferences in the future.

COMPLEMENTARY

Ensure there is a range of complementary amenities to support high utilisation of the playing capacity.

AFFORDABILITY

The goal is delivering the most affordable development, both in terms of the capital cost to develop any facilities and the on-going affordability to maintain and operate any facilities.

7. That regardless of any future development, Thames-Coromandel District Council and Sport Waikato (and others) continue to work with the sports clubs domiciled at Rhodes Park to address concerns around the current inequities between sports.



CONTEXT & ANALYSIS



2.0 INTRODUCTION

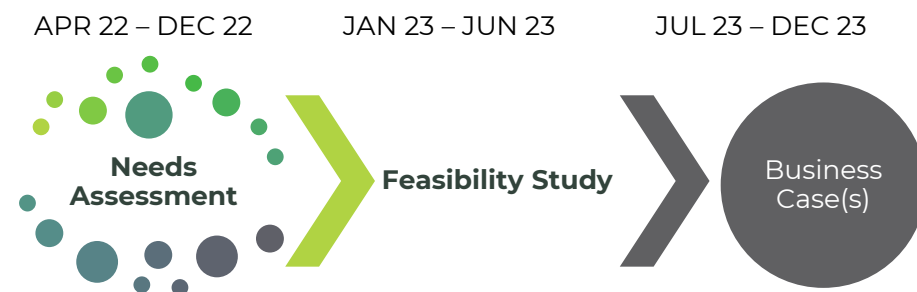
2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Thames-Coromandel Long Term Plan 2021 – 2031 includes two key locally funded projects for Thames:

- 1) A like for like replacement of Thames Centennial Pool (2025/26 to 2026/27). Council will also remove the existing swimming pool facilities at Taipari Park, and land ownership will be transferred to Ngāti Maru, in accordance with the Thames and Thames Coast Reserves Management Plan (2020).
- 2) Thames sports precinct (2026/27 to 2027/28) with the intention of a sports partnership / hub for sports groups that are currently based at Rhodes Park. Within this report this is referred to as the Thames Sports Partnership Project.

In line with Sport New Zealand's and Sport Waikato's planning process for sport and recreation facilities, Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC) has commissioned a needs assessment, feasibility study and business case for the aquatic and sport facility projects. Due to the potential synergies between the projects, the Council is undertaking the investigations in parallel, with the possibility the projects may merge at some point (or remaining as two separate projects depending on decisions). Figure 2.1 outlines the overall process.

FIGURE 2.1 PLANNING PROCESS



2.2 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report outlines the needs assessment for the sports facilities in Thames. The report provides:

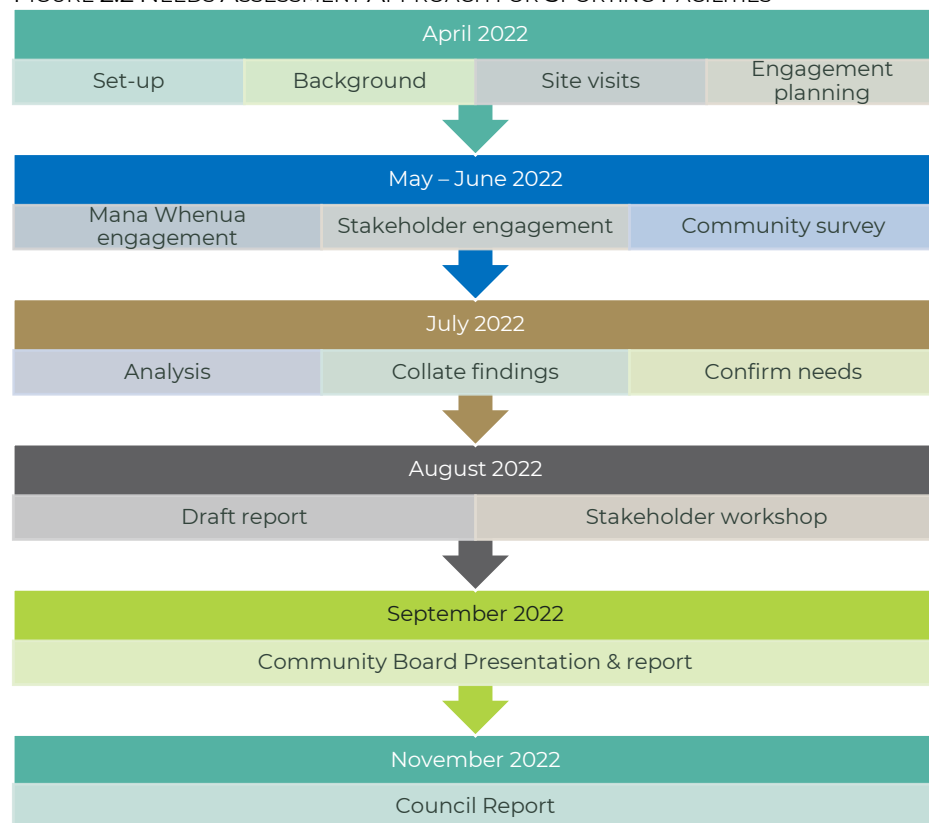
- Strategic context
- Demographic context
- Flooding context for Thames as this is a key driver for the study.
- Thames sport context outlining current sport facility provision relevant to this study
- Summary of the engagement undertaken for this study
- Needs analysis which collates the findings and provides further considerations
- Summary and recommendations.

2.3 APPROACH

Figure 2.2 (next page) summarises the approach for the needs assessment, which has included:

- Review of the strategic context relevant to this study
- Review of the demographic context to understand the composition of Thames now and into the future.
- Flooding context – engagement with staff at TCDC and Waikato Regional Council regarding the current and future flooding risks to Thames and Rhodes Park. This included review of several technical documents and desktop exercise to understand the scale of flooding impacts.
- Site visits to all relevant sporting facilities to understand current context and condition.
- Mana Whenua engagement.
- Sport stakeholder engagement with meetings and two workshops.
- An open survey to hear from users and the wider community about current views and future aspirations.
- Analysis of provision and use, alongside other considerations.

FIGURE 2.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPROACH FOR SPORTING FACILITIES



2.4 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

It is acknowledged there has been considerable background to this study which has been reviewed and relevant points will be taken forward in the study. This work has included the following.

2013 THAMES SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES REVIEW AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- A comprehensive review of Thames sport and recreation facilities provision including skate, indoor court, aquatic and sport facilities.
- This report references work undertaken by Thames Rugby and Sport Club in 2010 to plan the development of a new grandstand

and clubroom development on Rhodes Park. The indicative cost was \$6.5 million.

- The report confirmed the importance of Rhodes Park in providing sporting facilities, particularly being very busy in winter months, and the need for facility improvements.
- Recommended a staged development of Rhodes Park which involved converting the existing “bunker” into changing rooms with a single-storey clubroom and uncovered seating. This was costed at approximately \$2.6 million.

2018 SPORT STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & PLAN

- In 2018 the flooding risks to Rhodes Park was starting to become apparent, particularly following significant storms which had a notable impact on the sports facilities.
- Alongside work being undertaken for the future aquatic facility, engagement with Rhodes Park sport users was undertaken around a future Thames Sport Precinct. This resulted in a concept design for a sport hub based on land south of the airfield.
- This work led to the flooding issues around Rhodes Park needing greater understanding and attention.

2020 THAMES-COROMANDEL DISTRICT SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION PLAN

- Developed in collaboration between TCDC and Sport Waikato.
- The purpose of the plan is a coordinated, collaborative and clear plan to lead, enable, and guide future provision of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities for the people of Thames-Coromandel District.
- This plan recommends “investigation into relocation of clubs from Rhodes Park, developed with the intention of multi-use, hubbing and adaptable and flexible spaces that will provide future changes in sport and recreation delivery”.

THAMES-COROMANDEL DISTRICT COUNCIL 2021–2031 LONG TERM PLAN

- Thames sports precinct (2026/2027 to 2027/2028), with the intention of a sports partnership / hub for sports groups that are currently based at Rhodes Park.



3.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This section provides a summary of the strategic context for the Thames sport facility development.

3.1 THAMES-COROMANDEL

2021 – 2031 LONG TERM PLAN / TE MAHERE PAE TAWHITI Council's vision / Moemoeā-a-Kaunihera

Council will provide reliable services to support a vibrant, connected and sustainable district through strong governance.

Council's Outcomes | Ngā hua o Te Kaunihera

- | | |
|---|--|
| A vibrant district
He takiwā hihiri | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Coromandel Peninsula is a desirable place to live, work and play.• Our district has thriving, resilient communities.• We support and encourage culturally diverse and inclusive communities. |
| A connected district
He takiwā tuia | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our communities are supported through accessible infrastructure and services.• We use our influence and networks to advocate for our communities.• We recognise our relationships and partnerships with the District's iwi and will work towards ensuring they are enduring, effective and valued. |
| A sustainable district
He takiwā toitū | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Coromandel Peninsula's natural and built environments are managed sustainably and provide a unique sense of place.• We recognise and celebrate the vital role our natural environment plays in supporting well-being in the District. |

The Thames-Coromandel District Council 2021 – 2031 Long Term Plan / Te Mahere Pae Tawhiti, includes the following locally funded projects within the Community Spaces and Development section for Thames:

Thames sports precinct (2026/2027 to 2027/2028), with the intention of a sports partnership / hub for sports groups that are currently based at Rhodes Park. Within this report this is referred to as the Thames Sports Partnership Project. The above project was identified in the Thames-Coromandel District Sport and Active Recreation Plan (2020).

THAMES-COROMANDEL DISTRICT SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION PLAN 2020

The Thames-Coromandel District Sport and Active Recreation Plan provides a strategic approach to achieving sport and recreation outcomes through the development of sports facilities in the district.

The plan identifies a range of challenges including:

- Existing assets – the need to optimise, refurbish and rationalise some facilities.
- Growth of older population and considering their needs.
- Partnerships – working collaboration to achieve the greatest benefits from investment.
- Financial sustainability – ensuring the long-term affordability for users and organisations.
- Future facilities – ensure there is sound planning for any new facilities including needs assessment, feasibility studies and includes whole of life costing.

The plan outlines the following which is relevant to this investigation:

- Investigation into the relocation of sports groups based at Rhodes Park to a new facility including the natural hazards at the Park.
- The intention is a new facility will accommodate several groups with the intention of multi-use, hubbing, and adaptable and flexible spaces that will provide for future changes in sport and recreation delivery.

- Sports to be considered include all those based at Rhodes Park and Thames Tennis, Squash and Croquet.

Sport Waikato are working with Thames-Coromandel District Council to review the Sport and Recreation Plan with an updated action plan anticipated in 2023.

THAMES COMMUNITY PLAN (2020-2030)

The Thames Community Plan outlines what is important to the community and helps to inform Council decision-making.

Relevant concerns raised by the Community for this investigation include:

- Retain youth in the area.
- Local history and sense of place are important.
- Improving existing reserve spaces.
- Communities need safe footpaths and cycleways.
- Community needs to be resilient in the face of natural disasters.
- Improved directional and bilingual signage.

The plan identifies the Rhodes Park grandstand and clubrooms as a key project the community “would like to see happen”.

THAMES AND SURROUNDS DRAFT SPATIAL PLAN (2021)

The spatial plan is a high-level blueprint for the future showing what should go where and how each part should interact with the others. The Spatial Plan is intended to inform the District Plan changes. The draft plan was released in December 2021 to support community engagement and feedback. An updated version is anticipated in 2022.

The Spatial plan identifies:

- The need for more housing in Thames to meet demand. There is a high cost to access infrastructure and access to developable land due to terrain.
- Thames is the economic powerhouse of the Coromandel, but businesses struggle to recruit workers due to lack of housing.
- Thames will be impacted by coastal inundation due to rising sea levels in the future. The Shoreline Management Plan identifies draft strategies to respond to these challenges (discussed further in Section 5.0 Flooding).

The Spatial Plan identifies Rhodes Park as highly constrained land and signals the intention for this area to continue to be used as spillway / flood overflow.

The Spatial Plan provides some indication for several parcels of land which may be suitable for future development. The final plan will need to be consulted to inform the feasibility stage of the Sport Facility investigation.

THAMES AND THAMES COAST: RESERVES MANAGEMENT PLAN (2019)

Reserve management plans are an important tool under the Reserve Management Act to manage use and development of reserves.

Rhodes Park

Rhodes Park is a sport and recreation reserve within the Plan. There are three leases/licences noted with Thames Rugby and Sports Club, Thames Netball Association and Thames Football Club Association.

FIGURE 3.1 RHODES PARK



The plan records the following for Rhodes Park:

- Originally opened as a rugby ground in 1928 and was gifted to the Rugby Football Union in 1938 and then to the Thames Coromandel District Council in 1988.
- Thames World War I Memorial Forest was established in the northern corner of the reserve fronting Ngāti Maru Highway; with 247 trees planted in 2015, to honour the people from Thames who died in the war.
- Rhodes Park is low-lying and much of the reserve lies within the overland flow path (spillway) for the Kauaeranga River. In peak flood periods the sport fields may be unusable for several weeks after an event.
- The spillway is an important part of the Kauaeranga flood protection scheme which protects the Thames urban area. It would be difficult to protect the site from inundation, without compromising the operation of the flood protection scheme.
- During king tides saltwater backflows through the drains and damages the turf on the sport fields.
- In the future, as sea levels rise, and storm events increase Rhodes Park is unlikely to continue to be viable as a sports park. •

The plan includes an action to consider an alternative location for a future integrated sports hub complex.

Another portion of Rhodes Park is Outdoor Adventure shown in Figure 3.2, which is leased to the Thames Valley Motorcycle Club for a motocross track.

FIGURE 3.2 RHODES PARK – OUTDOOR ADVENTURE AREA



Victoria Park is a neighbourhood Park. There are listed leases/licences for Thames Croquet Club, Thames Tennis Club, Thames Squash Club, Thames Bridge Club, Thames Small Gauge Railway.

FIGURE 3.3 VICTORIA PARK



The plan records the following for Victoria Park:

- The area includes land known as the Kauaeranga Block, which is said to contain several urupa sites.
- The band rotunda is registered on the Heritage New Zealand List/Rārangī Korero (Category 2) and is also listed in the Thames-Coromandel District Plan. The South African War Memorial (troopers' memorial), is also registered on the Heritage New Zealand List/Rārangī Korero (Category 2) and is listed in the Thames-Coromandel District Plan.
- The area leased to the Thames Croquet Club contains a listed archaeological site and could contain subsurface remains of the activities which took place on the site.
- Victoria Park includes part of the Thames Coastal Walkway which runs along the top of the embankment adjacent to the sea wall.
- Parts of the reserve are subject to erosion and inundation during weather events which has resulted in damage to playing surfaces.

POSITIVE AGING STRATEGY 2012

The Positive Aging Strategy recognises older people will make up a growing share of the population in the medium term (see section 4.0 for further details). Relevant to this investigation, the strategy identifies:

- Participation of older people in a range of recreation and leisure opportunities.
- Ability for people to feel socially connected.
- Access to transport is critical
- Feeling safe and secure is important.
- The needs of older people are expected to become more diverse.

YOUTH STRATEGY 2013

The Youth Strategy outlines a vision which is based on:

- Young people are safe and valued.
- Their voices are heard.
- Their issues and needs are understood.
- Local work opportunities are available and interesting.
- A place they would be happy to return to.

For leisure and social, the main focus areas are:

- Move beyond wish lists and develop a rich and vibrant range of social and leisure options for young people.
- Cater for immediate needs using innovation and imagination.
- Legacy initiatives for future generations of young people.

3.2 SPORT WAIKATO

Sport Waikato are the regional sport trust for the Thames-Coromandel District and provide important strategic context for sport and recreation.

MOVING WAIKATO, 2020

Vision: Everyone out there and active.

Priorities:

- Our People – focus on provision of quality opportunities that meet the needs of the people of our region.
- Building Communities – focus on quality local delivery of play, active recreation and sport experiences.
- Regional Leadership – focus on regional and national partners working together to lead change and enhance outcomes.

Focus area: Rangatahi (12-17 years), Tamariki (5-11 years) and Tamariki Mokopuna (0-4 years).

WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN 2021

The Waikato Regional Active Spaces Plan provides a high-level strategic framework for play, active recreation and sport facilities and spaces and places planning and optimisation across the region.

Key principles for facility planning and provision:

- Meet needs – meet an identified need and be fit-for-purpose.
- Sustainable – requires consideration of the ongoing operating and maintenance costs of the facility and how these will be funded.
- Collaborative – best outcomes are achieved when partnerships are developed with education, health, iwi, and/or the private sector. Increases the likelihood facilities are used to their full potential.
- Integrated – sharing, creating multi-use facilities/hubs or co-location.
- Flexible – designed to accommodate changing community profiles, trends and needs over time.
- Inclusive – consider the needs of a wide range of the community, focusing on ethnic, financial and ability barriers.

The process for developing facilities reflects the Sport New Zealand Sporting Facilities Framework six stages: concept, plan, design, build,

operate and improve. The plan also provides a decision criterion which should be applied at the feasibility study phase (refer Appendix B).

Key facility developments and recommendations of relevance include:

- Encourage collaboration across users to support shared field usage.
- Upgrade support infrastructure such as toilets and changing rooms to facilitate high utilisation of existing sports fields where need is identified.

VOICE OF THE PARTICIPANT SURVEY 2020-21 – WAIKATO REGION

The Voice of the Participant survey provides insights from sport participants about their participation experiences. The following data were taken from the 2020-21 survey and applies to the whole region:

- The respondents include young people (28%), youth (18%), young adults (12%), adults 35+ (42%).
- Male respondents comprised 75%, while female 25%.
- 68% of respondents were very or extremely satisfied with their club with 87% likely to very likely to re-join next season.
- Top reasons for belonging to a club are:
 - To have fun / to play socially
 - To learn and improve skills
 - To play competitively
- Top three things that members would improve at their club:
 - Player development programmes (18%)
 - Facilities e.g. clubrooms, changing rooms and toilets (14%)
 - Playing / training venues / fields / courts (9%)
- 63% of respondents were satisfied with “having clean and well-maintained facilities”.
- 65% of respondents were satisfied with “having well-maintained playing / training venues”.

These results highlight the overall importance of quality facilities to participants experiences in sport and recreation. While current members are relatively satisfied with their club experience, it is important to consider the non-participants and understand what factors are contributing to their participation.



4.0 DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

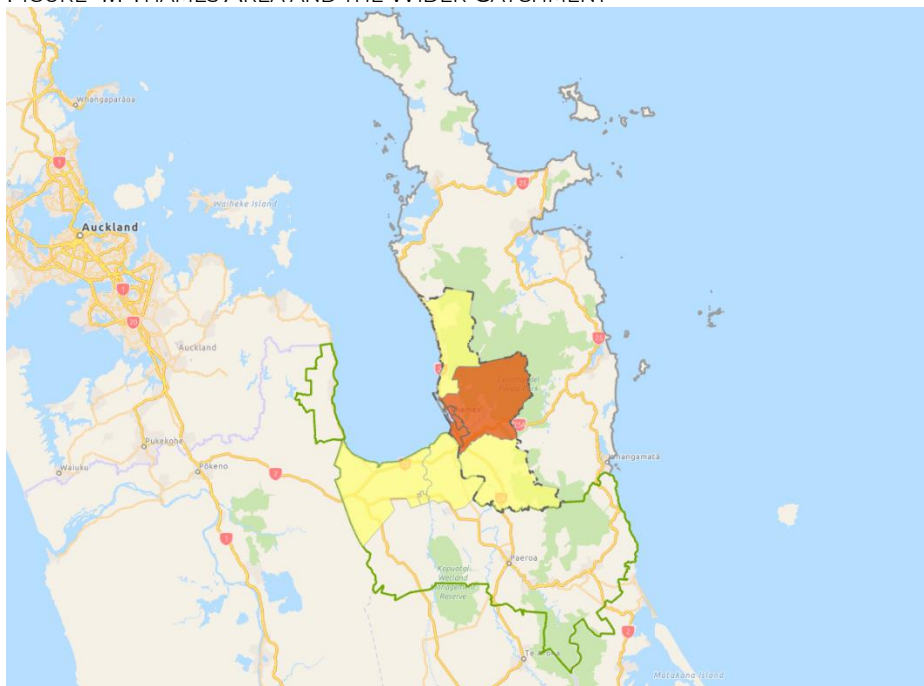
This section outlines the current and future demographic composition of Thames and the wider catchment.

4.1 FOCUS AREAS

The analysis has focused on five geographic areas, shown in Figure 4.1:

- Core Thames township (red shaded area)
- Thames Ward (grey dotted line)
- Wider Thames Catchment, approximately 20 minutes drive to Thames (yellow shaded area)
- Thames-Coromandel District Council (grey line)
- Hauraki District Council (green line)

FIGURE 4.1 THAMES AREA AND THE WIDER CATCHMENT



4.2 POPULATION

Table 4.1 outlines the population for each catchment area from the last three censuses, along with the Statistics NZ forecasts for the next 25 years. The population forecasts are based on the 2018 census and do not take account of any development changes being considered through the Thames Spatial Plan. The Spatial Plan identifies housing supply is constraining development and growth in Thames. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge future population forecasts may be higher once additional housing supply is addressed.

TABLE 4.1 POPULATION AND FORECASTS

	2006	2018	2023	2048
Thames Town	7,461	7,881	8,270	8,130
Thames Ward	10,233	10,644	11,200	11,360
Wider Thames Catchment	13,842	14,616	15,430	15,210
Thames-Coromandel District	25,938	29,895	32,400	32,800
Hauraki District	17,856	20,022	21,800	21,800

Key population points:

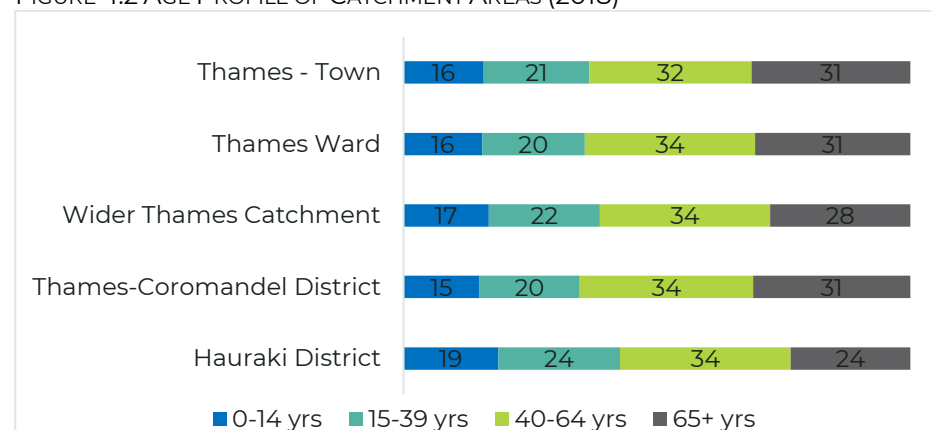
- There was 6% growth in Thames and the Wider Thames Catchment between 2006 and 2018. Thames Ward grew by a similar amount.
- At the same time there was 15% growth in Thames-Coromandel District, and 12% in Hauraki District.
- Based on current forecasts, the immediate Thames and wider Thames catchment are not forecast with large growth over the next 25 years. However, the wider Thames Ward is forecast to grow slightly by 1% where the land constraints are not as significant.
- The Thames and Surrounds Spatial Plan has indicated potential growth areas to the south of Thames which could facilitate higher growth in the immediate town.
- There is some growth forecast for the wider districts.

4.3 AGE PROFILE

Figure 4.2 shows the age profile for each catchment area. Key points are:

- The median age in Thames is 49 years and 48 years in the Wider Thames Catchment. Both are younger than the Thames-Coromandel District at 54 years.
- Overall, the Thames population is much older compared to New Zealand which has a median age of 38 years.
- The playing age group, 5 to 35 years, comprises 28% of the Thames population and 29% of the Wider Thames Catchment.

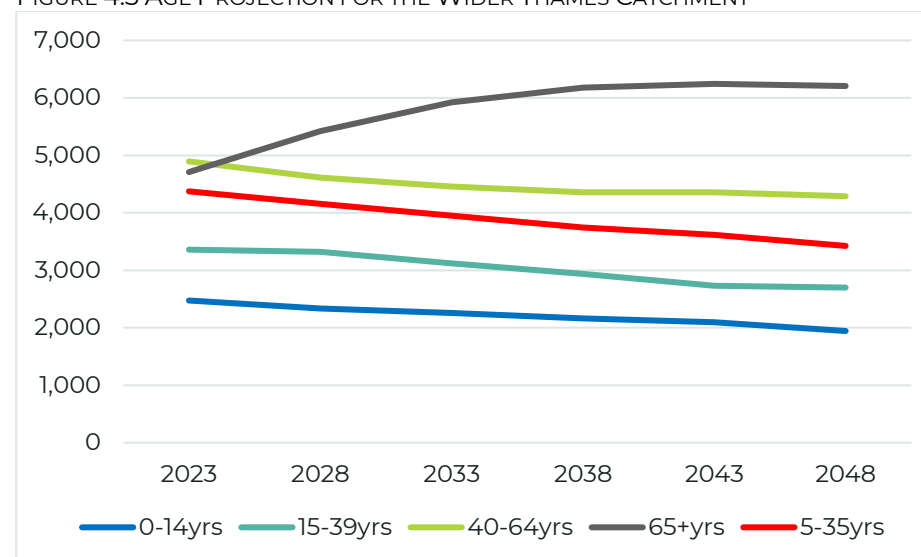
FIGURE 4.2 AGE PROFILE OF CATCHMENT AREAS (2018)



Looking forward, all catchment areas are forecast to get older (which is similar to New Zealand overall). Figure 4.3 shows the forecasts for different age-groups in the Wider Thames Catchment (which is very similar to Thames). Key points are:

- All age-groups under 65 years are forecast to decline in numbers and overall proportion of the population.
- Those aged over 65 years are forecast to increase by 30% in Thames and 32% in the Wider Thames Catchment. Importantly, those over 75 years will increase the most in this age-group.
- The playing age-group (5-35 years) is forecast to decline as well and will make up 23% of the population by 2048.

FIGURE 4.3 AGE PROJECTION FOR THE WIDER THAMES CATCHMENT

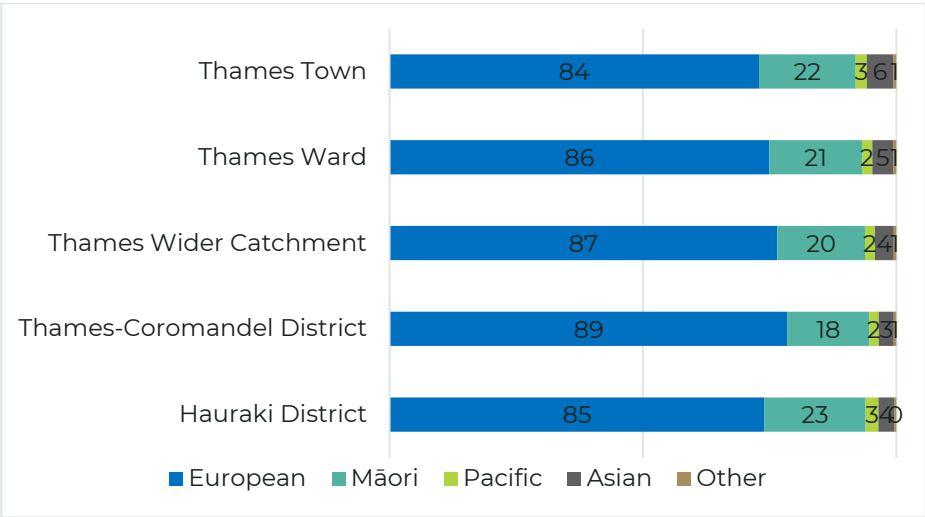


4.4 ETHNICITY PROFILE

Figure 4.4 on the next page provides the ethnic profile for the catchment areas. Key points are:

- Thames township is the most diverse of the four catchment areas with 84% European, 22% Māori and 9% other ethnicities.
- The proportion of Māori living in Thames and the wider Thames catchment is significantly higher compared to New Zealand where Māori make up only 17% of the population.
- The proportion of Europeans is also significantly higher in all catchments compared to New Zealand where Europeans make up 70% of the population.
- The key ethnic difference in these catchment areas have lower proportions of Pacific and Asian population groups.

FIGURE 4.4 ETHNIC PROFILE OF CATCHMENT AREAS 2018



Future forecasts for ethnicity are only available at the district level. For the Thames-Coromandel District, the Māori population is forecast to increase slightly (from 19% in 2023 to 23% in 2043) while all other ethnic groups will remain similar. It is a similar forecast for Hauraki District.

4.5 PERSONAL INCOME

Table 4.2 outlines the median personal income for each of the catchment areas, which shows all areas have considerably lower median incomes compared to New Zealand.

FIGURE 4.2 MEDIAN PERSONAL INCOME

MEDIAN PERSONAL INCOME	
Thames Town	\$25,560
Thames Ward	\$26,214
Thames Wider Catchment	\$27,890
Thames-Coromandel District	\$24,900
Hauraki District	\$24,600
New Zealand	\$31,800

4.6 VEHICLE OWNERSHIP

Table 4.3 outlines the proportion of households in the catchment areas with access to vehicles. This shows Thames Town and the wider catchment has the highest proportion of households with no vehicles.

TABLE 4.3 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH VEHICLES

	NONE	1	2	3+
Thames Town	8	44	33	14
Thames Ward	7	40	36	16
Thames Wider Catchment	6	38	39	9
Thames-Coromandel District	5	39	41	15
Hauraki District	5	37	39	19

4.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Key indicators of socio-economic conditions in a community are provided by socio-economic indexes. A number are derived from various sources of official statistics and the 'New Zealand Index of Deprivation (NZDep) developed by Otago University. This socio-economic indicator uses a combination of 9 Statistics NZ Census 2018 variables (which includes home internet access; means-tested benefits; incomes; employment; qualifications; home ownership; family situations; households occupancy) to assign relative deprivation scores shown in Figure 4.5.

Key points are:

- Generally higher levels of deprivation (darker shades in Figure 4.5 on the following page) are evident in the immediate Thames township although the surrounding area has lower deprivation. This indicates some of Thames residents may be experiencing relatively higher levels of socio-economic constraints in financial capacities.
- The wider Thames catchment has average levels of deprivation shown by the lighter shades in Figure 4.5.

5.0

FLOODING CONTEXT

This section outlines the current and future context for flooding around Rhodes Park as this is a key variable for this study.

5.1 KAUAERANGA RIVER FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME

Rhodes Park is part of the Kauaeranga River Flood Protection Scheme as shown in Figure 5.1. The Flood Protection Scheme is designed to protect Thames from flood events and in particular the houses situated on the Northern and Eastern sides of the river from flood damage.

FIGURE 5.1 KAUAERANGA RIVER FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME & RHODES PARK



The Kauaeranga River Flood Protection Scheme is managed by the Waikato Regional Council. The Council's documents outline:

- "The Kauaeranga River is the third largest river system within the Waihou Valley Scheme.
- The Pinnacles rain gauge at the head of the catchment records 4,000mm of rainfall per annum, one of the highest in the region.
- The steep catchments in this section of the Coromandel Ranges produce very high peak flood flows. Consequently, the Kauaeranga River floods frequently and is vulnerable to flash flooding. Flood events can bring down a large amount of debris.
- The Flood Protection Scheme provides a variety of functions to protect from river flooding, tidal flooding, and controlled spilling.
- There are 1.9km of stopbanks and the Waikato Regional Council has a sensor on the river to monitor flows.
- The Kaureranga spillway, immediately upstream of SH 25, is essential for reducing flood risk to Thames.
- The Harris Stopbank to the north of Rhodes Park is designed to provide partial protection, while the Groyne redirect flows.
- The stopbank adjacent to SH25 has been raised to keep the State Highway open as long as possible in a flood event to retain access to Thames and the hospital.
- The flood scheme operates under the Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of 20% where there is a 20% probability of flood water will go over the top of the spillway.
- Controlled release through a spillway are preferred because they reduce the risk of catastrophic stopbank failure at an unknown weak point or minimise the risk of breaching stopbank heights."

Rhodes Park is positioned within the spillway. Protecting the spillway capacity provides important protection to the housing on the northern and eastern sides of the River. Development inside in the spillway can impact on the ability of the Flood Protection Scheme to provide the necessary protection in an event. The Thames-Coromandel District Plan already provides some building controls on Rhodes Park to protect the function of the spillway. [Data sourced from Waikato Regional Council].

5.2 SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Thames-Coromandel District Council is undertaking a three-year project to understand the inundation and erosion risks to the district's coastlines. Sea-level is a significant challenge facing many councils and in particular Thames-Coromandel given the 400km of coastline in the district.

The Shoreline Management Plan analyses the risks associated with sea-level rise and then considers potential options to respond to these options. The plan is not statutory but the potential responses will likely inform other work like the Spatial Plan, District Plan and Long-term Plans. Potential responses include:

- Be prepared – providing regular information and hazard warning systems.
- No active intervention – no action is necessary as the risk is acceptable.
- Accommodate – maintain natural protections such as beaches, sand dunes, foreshore vegetation, saltmarsh and other features. This may include retrofitting buildings to be more resilient to climate change.
- Hold the line (protect) – enhance natural protections; improve the resilience of existing coastal protection assets (e.g. increasing seawalls); construct flood barriers or undertake new coastal protection works (e.g. build new seawalls).
- Managed Retreat – change planning practices over the longer term to minimise development, designate areas where redevelopment or infill development is not acceptable and relocate assets and infrastructure.

Thames-Coromandel District Council released updated Adaptation Options in 2022. The following sections provides an overview of these options for Rhodes Park and Victoria Park where squash, tennis and croquet are located.

RHODES PARK

The Shoreline Management Plan has identified Rhodes Park is located at 0m sea level rise. This means 0.1m of sea-level rise the fields are expected to be come largely unplayable. The Rhodes Park sports-groups are already reporting flooding issues as a regular occurrence in winter. Figure 5.2 on the following page outlines the proposed adaptation strategy.

The plan outlines the proposed response for the area (although noting further engagement with NZTA is ongoing):

- In the short to medium term, ensure the district plan restricts development that is not appropriate to the flood plan.
- Continued use as sports fields is appropriate but with 0.1m of sea-level rise, the sporting fields are expected to become unplayable.
- Therefore it is appropriate to initiate a planning process to consider relocation. The existing location could have other uses with demountable or mobile infrastructure.
- Longer term, protections for SH 25 are recommended but aside from this, the plan suggests allowing coastal habitats to roll back into the open space.

VICTORIA PARK

Victoria Park is located in the core of Thames town and is included in Figure 5.3 (with a star located for Victoria Park). Victoria Park is also located at 0m Sea Level Rise and poses similar inundation risk. Similarly, a small level of sea-level rise will impact on the functionality of the land to function as currently used.

Feedback from the sport clubs located on Victoria Park identified a major storm event in 2018 which resulted in water coming over the seawall and causing flooding and damage to the tennis courts and croquet lawns.

The Shoreline Management Plan proposed adaptation response for this area includes the following:

- Maintain / rehabilitate the mangroves.
- Improve existing defences and pumping capacity.
- New stop bank along entire frontage, except where there are appropriate existing structures to be build up in phases (with 0.4m increments in sea level) and include amenity features.

Work is required to determine the design and timing of the potential stop bank along the entire frontage. However, some designs have the potential to encroach on existing sport assets for croquet, tennis and squash, given their proximity to the coastline. Further clarity is required on this potential impact on sport facilities. Depending on the outcomes, it may be necessary to consider the facility needs of croquet, tennis, and squash alongside those of Rhodes Park.

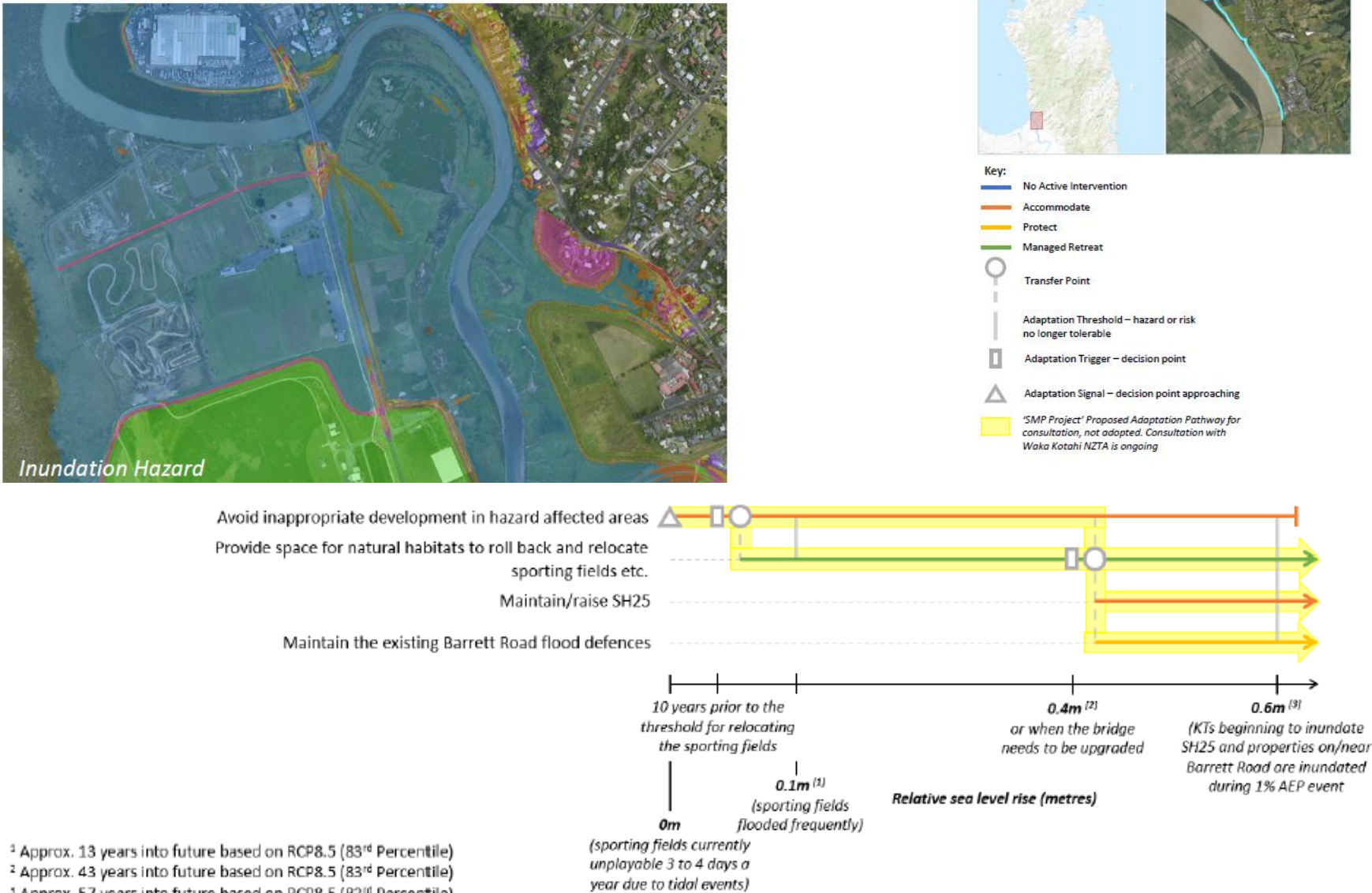
[All data sources from the Thames-Coromandel District Council draft Shoreline Management Plan].

FIGURE 5.2 RHODES PARK COASTAL ADAPTATION PATHWAY

Coastal Adaptation Pathway

Policy Unit 1: Kopu – Rhodes Park

Coastal Panel - Thames Coast



Coastal Adaptation Pathway

Policy Unit 2: Thames

Coastal Panel - Thames Coast

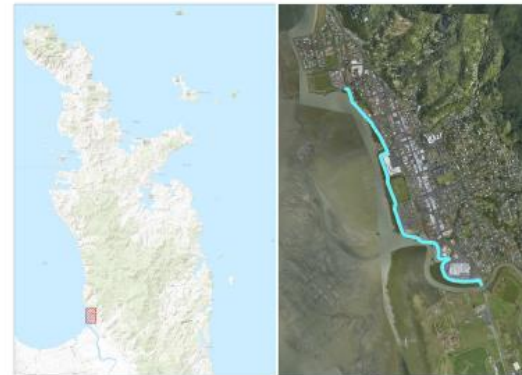


Legend

1% AEP storm event plus incremental Sea Level Rise

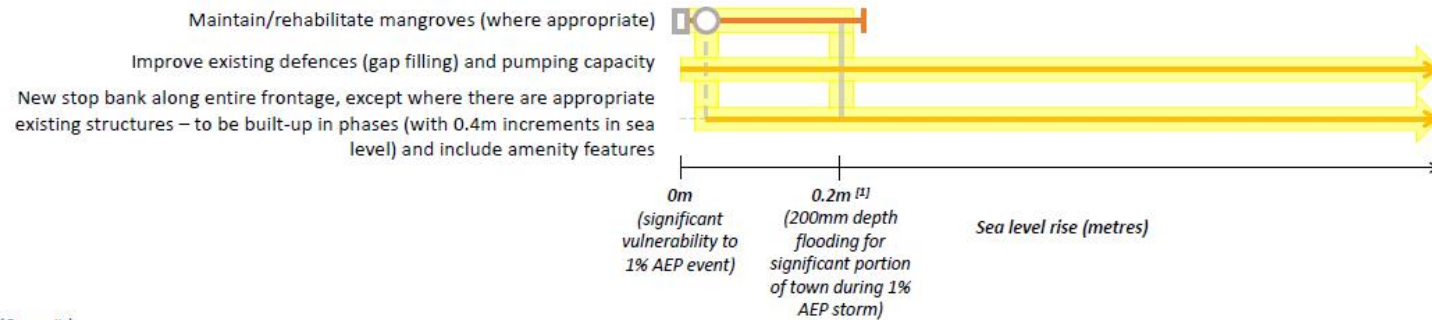
- 0 m SLR
- 0.2 m SLR
- 0.4 m SLR
- 0.6 m SLR
- 0.8 m SLR
- 1.0 m SLR
- 1.2 m SLR
- 1.4 m SLR

Note: additional complexities in Thames relating to groundwater, stormwater and subsidence of the reclaimed areas along the coast.



Key:

- No Active Intervention
- Accommodate
- Protect
- Managed Retreat
- Transfer Point
- Adaptation Threshold – hazard or risk no longer tolerable
- Adaptation Trigger – decision point
- Adaptation Signal – decision point approaching
- 'SMP Project' Proposed Adaptation Pathway for consultation, not adopted




△ Signal – the January 2018 storm

¹ Approx. 24 years into future based on RCP8.5 (83rd Percentile)

5.3 IMPACT OF FLOODING

This study attempted to collect data on the impact of flooding on Rhodes Park, in terms of the number of events and the cost of those events. Unfortunately, this data was not readily available. To provide some context on the scale of flooding around Rhodes Park, a review of recent media records provides a summary of recent events (noting older records did not surface through desktop search).

TABLE 5.1 MEDIA RECORDS OF FLOODING IN THAMES (INTERNET SEARCH)

TIMING	SOURCE	MEDIA COMMENTS
2010	TCDC officers	Flooding on Rhodes Park damaged the netball courts, fences and playing fields
18 July 2014	HDC News	In Thames, the Kauaeranga River rose quickly through the alarm levels to peak at 11.8m – the highest level since the construction of the stopbanks in the early 1990s. The state highway spillway at Totara operated, with wind-driven waves over the stopbank as high as anyone had seen.
8 March 2017	Otago Daily Times	 <p>The Kauaeranga River submerges SH25 into Thames this morning, cutting the town off. Photo/TCDC</p> <p>The Coromandel Peninsula has been cut off from the rest of the country. The rising Kauaeranga River has meant there is no access into Thames, while debris and flooding litter the Thames Coast Rd.</p>

TIMING	SOURCE	MEDIA COMMENTS
11 March 2017	NZ Herald	The MetService have warned the Kauaeranga spillway may need to be activated if the river reaches 10m.
4 April 2017	Waikato Regional Council news	Watching the potential for road closures near Thames if the Kauaeranga River spillway operates and also State Highway 25 at Hikuai on the east coast of the Coromandel.
15 July 2018	NZ Herald	The Coromandel Peninsula remained completely cut off with the flooding and slips causing both state highways to be closed. The Waikato Regional Council activated the Kauaeranga spillway on SH25 and, with excessive amounts of water in the Kauaeranga Valley, the road could be closed. Locals were also reporting Main Rd into Thames at Rhodes Park was under water with the level continuing to rise as the tide came in.
15 October 2019	NZ Herald	The Coromandel region has had the worst of it, copping 130mm of rain from 5pm - 5am. Power is out in parts of the Coromandel and major flooding closed some sections of State Highway 25, but by 9.30am the road had reopened as the waters subsided.
2 June 2020	NZ Herald	The regional council is "closely monitoring the Kauaeranga River and spillway on SH25, the approach to Thames opposite the sports ground". "Should the spillway operate that will restrict traffic entering and leaving Thames. If the spillway operates it will be around high tide at 1500 hours [3pm]," it said. As it turned out, the spillway did not need to open.
25 June 2020	BOP Times	There is mounting concern about the swollen Kauaeranga River and this morning's high tide. Contractors are on site and would remain until high tide passed after 10am. It was possible the spillway may be activated.

IMPACT OF FLOODING FOR THE SPORTS

Most of the sports situated at Rhodes Park (and Victoria Park) provided feedback on the impact of flooding on their respective sports, which is summarised in Table 5.2.

TABLE 5.2 FEEDBACK FROM SPORTS CODES ON IMPACT OF FLOODING

CODE	FEEDBACK ON FLOODING
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the spillway is activated, the damage to Rhodes Park can range from minimal to severe. Sometimes when the spillway is activated in summer, the impact can be beneficial to the grounds from the soaking and silt. At the other end of the spectrum, when flooding occurs in large volumes, this can result in large amounts of silt and gravel dumped on the fields. The grass dies off and there is significant cost to remove debris and resow the grass. These events can also result in gravel and small stones being left creating a hazard for players and mowing. Past flood events have caused damage to the playing fields, netball courts, public toilets and carparks (in addition to some of the clubrooms). Saltwater inundation (from sea-level rise) also has the potential to impact grass-growing on the most seaward facing fields. Any loss in capacity will increase playing demand on existing fields.
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The north-western fields on Rhodes Park are impacted by flooding regularly in winter. The Club indicated this could be a combination of high ground-water, drainage and high tides. Photos in Figure 5.4 show the impact of regular and consistent flooding challenges at the park. The impact of regular flooding on the fields is also highlighted by the survey respondents (see Section 7.0). The depth of high flood events (particularly in 2018) is shown in Figure 5.5 where the flood levels are clearly visible inside the Football Clubroom on Rhodes Park.

CODE	FEEDBACK ON FLOODING
Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past flood events have caused serious impacts to the netball courts. A 2010 flood event resulted in undermining the courts and damaged fences, which had to be largely reinstated after the event. As the netball clubrooms are raised about 2 metres off ground level there has not been serious impact on the clubrooms.
Rugby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least once a year the flood waters from the Kauaeranga River used to flood the clubrooms. However, since upgrades to the stopbanks around the park (Harris Stop bank and SH 25 Stop bank), this has not occurred. The fields closest to the coast (number one and four) can get flooded from coastal water.
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2018 storm resulted in the sea coming over the seawall and flooding both the tennis courts and croquet greens. The flood waters initially lifted the astro-turf, caused some cracks in the underlying surface and left a large amount of silt. A large volunteer effort was required to quickly remove the silt to prevent it damaging the astro-turf which was fortunately saved. While the tennis and squash clubrooms were not encroached during the 2018 event, the flood waters came very close. Tennis advise a major challenge for the Club is determining whether to invest in renewing the astro-turf while there continues to be uncertainty regarding the long-term security of the site from storm and sea-level rise.
Croquet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2018 storm event also impacted the croquet greens on Victoria Park. Feedback from the club confirmed they are only now getting the resources together to address the damaged greens.

FIGURE 5.4 REGULAR FLOODING ON RHODES PARK (NOT FLOOD EVENTS)



FIGURE 5.5 IMPACT OF FLOODING EVENTS INSIDE THE FOOTBALL CLUBROOMS



5.4 FINDINGS ABOUT FLOODING

The current and future flooding context is a major issue for the future of sport facilities domiciled at Rhodes Park. Key evidence are:

- Rhodes Park is situated within the spillway for the Kauaeranga River Flood Protection Scheme. The Scheme (and spillway) are designed to protect the Thames residential areas on the northern and eastern side of the river from flooding.
 - Major flood events from the Kauaeranga River has caused damage to the sport facilities on Rhodes Park ranging from minimal to severe.
 - It appears from media reports, major flood events are occurring on a fairly regular basis every 2-5 years.
 - The Shoreline Management Plan states Rhodes Park sits at 0m sea-level and is consequently at risk of coastal inundation. With 0.1m of sea-level rise, the sporting fields are expected to become unplayable.
 - The draft Shoreline Management Plan outlines a proposed adaptation strategy to investigate relocating the sport fields in the future and allow the coastal habitats to roll back into the open-space.
- The impact of sea-level rise is already being felt with regular (weekly) flooding of some fields at Rhodes Park and park users have raised concerns about the impact this has on the quality of sport facilities.
 - In addition, the tennis, squash, and croquet sports facilities located at Victoria Park sit at 0m sea-level and therefore also at risk of coastal inundation. While the Shoreline Management Plan proposes protections it is unclear whether the design of these protection works may impact on the sporting facilities given the proximity to the coast. On this basis, it is advisable to consider croquet needs and possibly tennis and squash in any relocation considerations.

The following conclusions are reached:

- From the combined risks of flooding from the Kauaeranga River and coastal inundation, it is clear Rhodes Park is a very constrained and compromised location for secure sporting facilities.
- In time, Rhodes Park's ability to function as a sports park will be compromised by flooding. There is little, if no, mitigation options without flow-on impacts to the housing areas in Thames.
- The feasibility study for sporting facilities needs to consider the risks/costs/benefits of staying at the current location versus relocation to determine what is the most appropriate way forward.
- Any decision to remain at the current location would need to acknowledge the ongoing impact of flood damage (which are unavoidable) and the likely limitations of undertaking any further developments on this site.
- Should the feasibility study determine relocation is the most appropriate option, consideration should include croquet given they are likely to be impacted by any protection works at Victoria Park. Depending on the extent of the protection works, this may also need to consider squash and tennis as part of possible options.



6.0 THAMES SPORTS CONTEXT

This section outlines the current provision of sport facilities in Thames (relevant to this study) and the current state of relevant codes (including specific feedback).

6.1 THAMES SPORTING FACILITIES

Figure 6.1 and Table 6.1 outline the key sporting facilities in Thames which are relevant to this study (acknowledging there are other sport facilities in Thames which have not been considered in this study).

TABLE 6.1 SPORT FACILITIES IN THAMES RELEVANT TO THIS STUDY

REF	SITE	FACILITY/ CLUB
1	Rhodes Park	Thames Rugby & Sport Club Thames Football Club Thames Netball Centre Thames Cricket Club Thames Junior Rugby Club Fitness Co-op [Thames Valley Motorcycle Club is domiciled by not included in the study]
2	Victoria Park	Thames Croquet Club Thames Tennis Club Thames Squash Rackets Club
3	Thames High School	Jack McLean Community Recreation Centre Sports grounds
4	Taipari Park	Thames Centennial Pool

FIGURE 6.1 THAMES SPORT FACILITIES



6.2 RHODES PARK

Rhodes Park opened as a rugby ground in 1928 with the land gifted to the Rugby Football Union in 1938 by Reginald Rhodes. Thames Rugby Union gifted the land to the Thames Coromandel District Council in 1988 with the Council guaranteeing repayment of a debt of Thames Rugby Union to the NZ Rugby Union.

Figure 6.2 and Table 6.2 outlines the key facilities on Rhodes Park, which are further described in each sport.

TABLE 6.2 RHODES PARK FACILITIES

SPORT	FACILITIES
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 cricket wickets – TCDC Lease to Thames Cricket Club for cricket nets
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 football fields – TCDC Partially lit training field Lease to Thames Football Club for building
Netball	Lease to Thames Netball Centre for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 asphalt netball courts, fenced & lit Raised netball pavilion 28 carparks shown in dotted area
Rugby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 rugby fields – TCDC 1 lit rugby field and rugby training area – lights owned by TR&SC Lease to Thames Rugby & Sports Club for 2 buildings. Fitness Co-op occupy 1 building
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grandstand building and change rooms underneath – TCDC Public Toilets – TCDC Playground - TCDC Sealed and unsealed carparks

FIGURE 6.2 RHODES PARK LAYOUT



6.3 THAMES CRICKET CLUB

Date of Incorporation	20 May 2021
Number of players	100
Playing trends	Relatively stable, Covid impacts
Facilities	2 cricket ovals with 2 artificial wickets Cricket nets under construction
Lease	2 x 5 year terms to 31 March 2032

OVERVIEW

While Thames Cricket Club was recently incorporated, cricket has been played in Thames over many years. This was typically through the schools before going into recess for a period. The current club has been active for the last 3 years and provides for both junior and senior players.

FACILITIES

The Club has allocated use of two cricket ovals with artificial wickets during the summer months. The main facility challenge is the quality of grass on the cricket ovals. With a high proportion of kikuyu the playing surface is very slow and uneven.

The Club has recently signed a 10 year lease to occupy the north-west portion of the Park to develop cricket nets, see Figure 6.3. The Club fundraised \$50,000 for the development. The construction has considered potential relocation in the future if needed.

The Club use the Thames Rugby and Sports Clubrooms for meetings.

PLAYING NUMBERS

The Club report there is currently about 100 players spread across 4-5 junior teams and 1-2 senior teams. Prior to Covid, there was 130 players.

FUTURE NEEDS

- Ideally would like 3 pitches, 2 junior (45m) and 1 senior (60m), with the ability to use all three for tournaments. Artificial wickets are appropriate but would like improved grass outer field.
- Cricket nets with 3 lanes.
- Storage for equipment.
- Access to open and accessible toilets.

- No need for floodlighting.
- Support multi-sport hub where each club is on equal standing.

FIGURE 6.3 CRICKET NETS



6.4 THAMES FOOTBALL CLUB

Date of Incorporation	23 March 2013
Number of players	237
Playing trends	Increasing
Facilities	2 full-sized football pitches 1 training area under partial lighting Building
Lease	10 years to 30 April 2032

OVERVIEW

Football in Thames has been through several iterations with the current club incorporated in 2013. The club provides for junior, secondary school and senior players, and provides futsal at the Jack McLean Centre in terms 1 and 4.

FACILITIES

The Club has allocated use of two full-size playing fields on the northern side of the park. These fields are divided into multiple junior fields. The club report these fields are boggy and impacted by tide flooding on a weekly basis. Juniors typically train after school and play Saturday mornings. Men's games are played Saturday afternoon and women's game on Sunday. Home games will typically use the changing rooms under the grandstand, however, there can be scheduling challenges with rugby regarding access to the changing rooms.

Football use the floodlit area west of the netball courts for training. This is a soil-based field and can also get very muddy mainly due to the high loading during the week and weekends. The club pays \$345 to Thames Rugby & Sports Club for the lights (owned by the rugby club). Training is typically Tuesday (men's) and Thursday (women's).

The Club also have a lease for building named the "bunker". This basic facility accommodates indoor archery and provides storage plus basic facilities as visible in Figure 6.4. There are no toilets or running water.

The Club have used the Thames Rugby and Sports Clubrooms in the past for meetings, after-match functions and prizegiving, but the cost of access has been an issue.

PLAYING NUMBERS

The Club report growth in interest in playing football with the following:

- Juniors (up to year 8) – 128 players grown from 70 3 years ago.
- Secondary School (Year 9-13) – 64 players.
- Seniors – 45 players. There has been growth in women's participation with a second female team likely.

The club also deliver an Academy for skill development between 9 and 16 year olds. This is delivered by a volunteer coach.

FUTURE NEEDS

- Need increased field capacity for football – ideally need two full-sized fields, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ fields and 4 junior fields.
- Training capacity under lights able to withstand 15+ hours per week.
- Allocation of fields based on playing numbers and demand.
- Storage for equipment.
- Access to open and accessible toilets.
- Support multi-sport hub where each club is on equal standing.

FIGURE 6.4 BUNKER CLUBROOMS AND STORAGE FOR FOOTBALL



6.5 THAMES NETBALL CENTRE

Date of Incorporation	7 October 1980
Number of players	260
Playing trends	Relatively stable, covid impacted
Facilities	6 asphalt courts, floodlit & fenced 1 raised pavilion with toilets
Lease	21 years until 30 March 2033

OVERVIEW

Thames Netball Centre is affiliated to Netball Waikato Bay of Plenty Zone and is also one of 8 centres in the Thames Valley Netball cluster which extends to Morrinsville. Junior games are played on Thursday after school and seniors play on Wednesday. The Thames Valley league games are played in the Jack McLean Centre on Friday nights. There are also games played on Saturday morning on the outdoor courts. The Centre also delivers summer netball and walking netball programmes.

FACILITIES

The Centre has 6 asphalt courts, which are fenced and floodlit. The Centre report the courts are in reasonable condition although require annual spraying (sometimes twice annually) to remove debris caused by the neighbouring trees. The most significant issue is the drainage with leaves blocking the drains and needing to be regularly cleared.

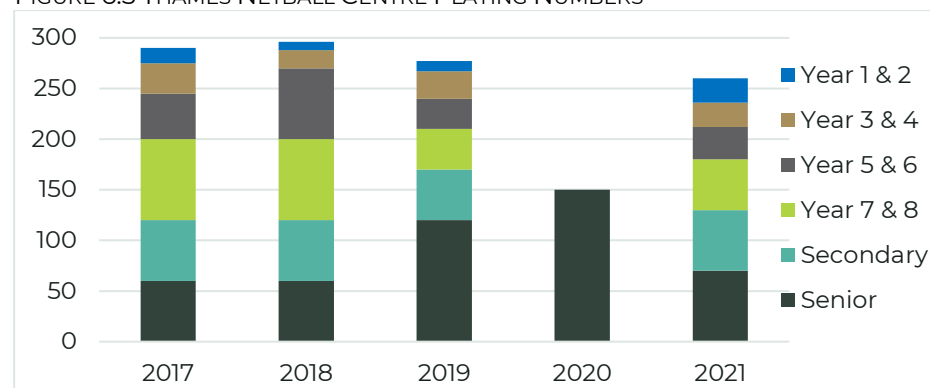
The pavilion is owned by the Centre and includes a medium sized meeting space, kitchen, control room, toilets/change rooms, and first aid. With the building raised 2 metres above ground, there has been minimal damage from flooding.

The Centre has 28 allocated carparks adjoining the courts shown in Figure 6.6.

PLAYING NUMBERS

The Centre is in a process of rebuilding participation particularly after the impact of Covid in 2020. In 2021, there were 260 participants, which is not significantly lower than 290 in 2018. The most notable drop-off has been in the senior players, which the Centre reports cost and travel as being the major reasons.

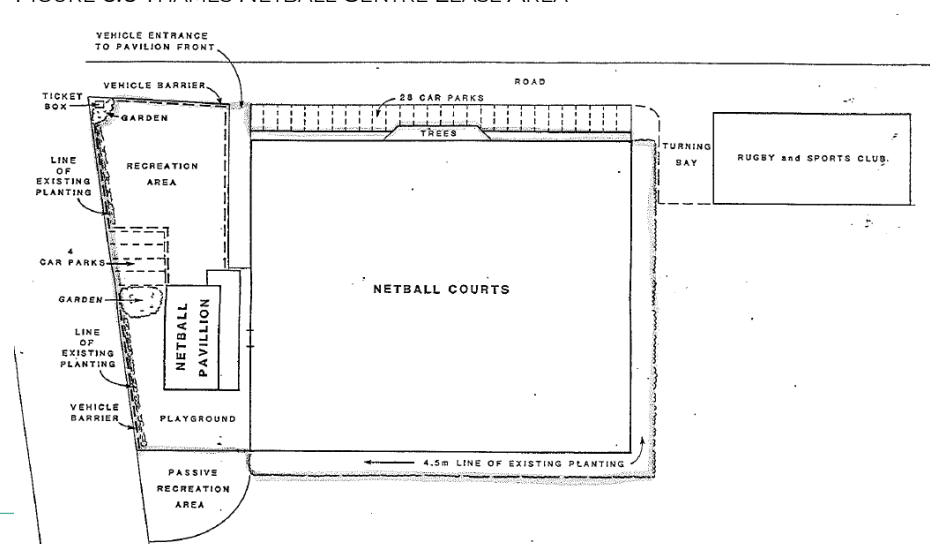
FIGURE 6.5 THAMES NETBALL CENTRE PLAYING NUMBERS



FUTURE NEEDS

- Want their own separate building and would be prepared to relocate current building as it provides everything they need. An elevated tower is required to observe the courts.
- Need 6 netball courts but are open to not owning the courts. Would like improved surface to provide cushioning for players.
- Playground is important but needs clear viewing.
- Support multi-sport hub where families can gather and participate in a wide range of activities. Like the idea of a combined administrator to support multiple clubs. However, need to ensure sports have ability to determine their own future (such as funding).

FIGURE 6.6 THAMES NETBALL CENTRE LEASE AREA



6.6 THAMES RUGBY & SPORTS CLUB

Date of Incorporation	24 June 1983
Number of players	72 senior
Playing trends	Stable
Facilities	4 full sized fields and 1 training area Club owned 13 light towers
Lease	Expires 29 June 2030 with right of renewal

OVERVIEW

Rugby has a long history in Thames with the club celebrating its 150th Reunion in 2021. Thames Rugby & Sports Club fields two senior teams in the Thames Valley Rugby Union competition. The club has four netball teams which play in the Thames Netball Centre competitions.

FACILITIES

There are four full sized rugby fields on Rhodes Park. The number one field in front of the grandstand is used for senior games. The number two field has drainage and lights and is primarily used for training. The club report high tide can impact the western and southern ends of the fields.

The 13 lighting towers on the park are owned by the Club, of these six are LED lights. The club received \$45,000 grant funding in 2021 to undertake lighting upgrades. The football and junior rugby clubs pay fees to rugby for use of the lit fields. Moving to LED has reduced power costs.

The club owns two buildings (see Figures 6.7 and 6.8). The main clubrooms have two levels with an upper seating area and a lower bar/kitchen area. The club employs four bar managers and generates profit from its bar/kitchen. The clubroom also has two changing rooms. The club received \$25,000 funding for roof replacement in 2021. The clubrooms have been used / booked by cricket, junior rugby, football, and Thames High School for their activities. The club charges either \$5 per head or booking fee for this use.

The second building is hired to Fitness Co-op (see Section 6.8). There are also two 20-foot shipping containers on site which are used for storage.

Thames-Coromandel District Council has confirmed the grandstand is owned by council. Work was completed by the Council on the

grandstand in 2019. There are changing rooms in the lower portion of the grandstand which are managed and maintained by the Council.

The lease indicates the unsealed carpark between the two rugby buildings is inside the leased area of the rugby club, but the club report this carpark is the responsibility of the Council.

RELEVANT LEASE PROVISIONS

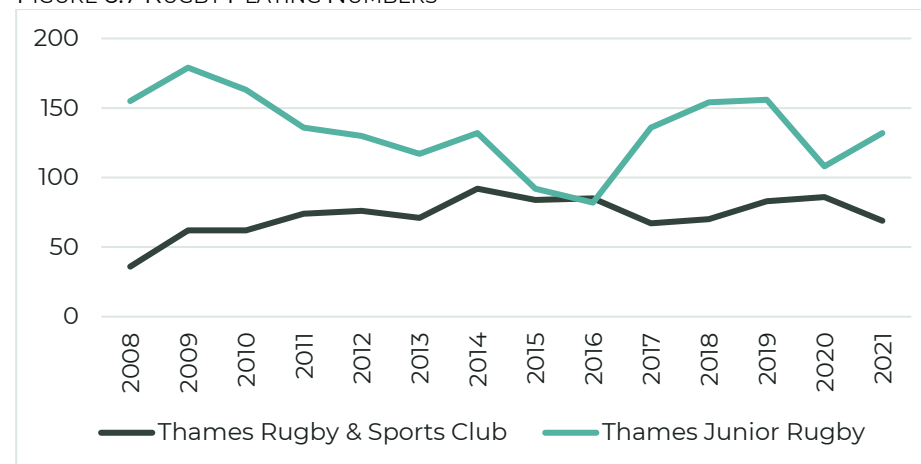
Clause 10: the Lessor will annually consult with appropriate sport parent bodies to determine field allocation based on annual fixture draws. Preference for fields will always be exercised with a view to retaining the presentation of an appropriate service for the allocated use. It is acknowledged that the Lessee has predominant user rights over grounds 1,2,3,4 and 5 and the area immediately joining its clubrooms as shown in Figure 6.7.

PLAYING NUMBERS

The club advised there are two senior teams with 32 players in the A team and approximately 40 in the B team. Thames High School has 2 rugby teams which play at the park on Saturdays and use the rugby clubroom facilities. There used to be touch played in the summer, but this died away due to lack of volunteers.

Figure 6.7 outlines rugby playing numbers for both senior and junior rugby sourced from Rugby NZ Insights Tool.

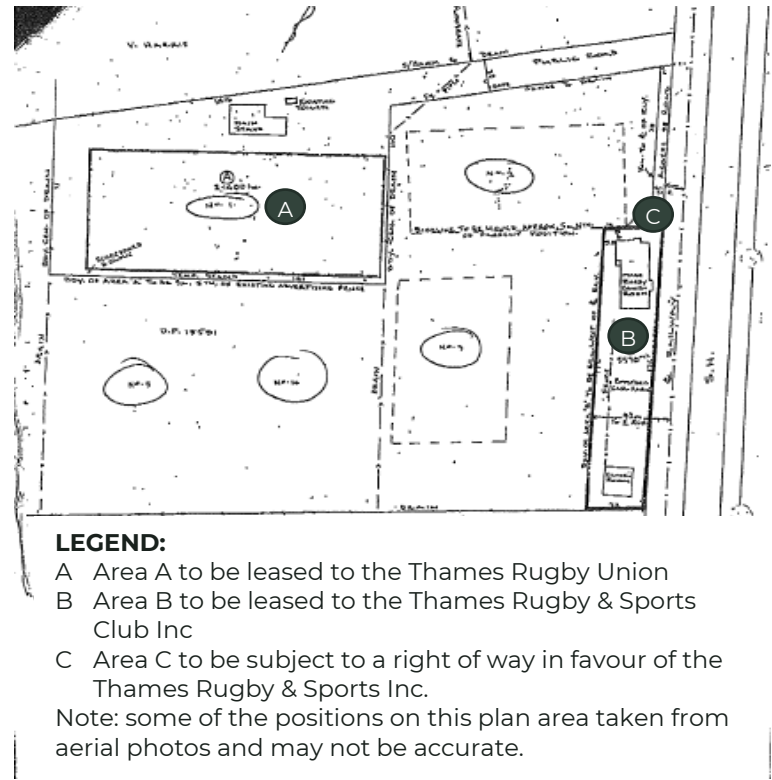
FIGURE 6.7 RUGBY PLAYING NUMBERS



FUTURE NEEDS

- The club wanted to increase cover on the grandstand but did not progress due to building coverage exceeding the District Plan.
- The club would like the number one field to be floodlit at an anticipated cost of \$350,000 to \$400,000.
- Looking forward, the Club outline a need for 4 fields to support 2 senior teams, 1-2 secondary teams and 5-6 junior rugby teams. There would need to be at least 2 floodlit fields for training.
- Hybrid or artificial turf to take higher loadings could be considered.
- 8 changing rooms to support the fields.
- Portable grandstand seating.
- Clubrooms of a similar size to the current facility but more cohesive with other facilities.

FIGURE 6.7 LEASED AREAS FOR THAMES RUGBY & SPORTS CLUB



6.7 THAMES JUNIOR RUGBY CLUB

Date of Incorporation	15 March 2010
Number of players	180 junior
Playing trends	Growing in recent years
Facilities	Use of rugby 4 fields and clubrooms
Lease	None

OVERVIEW

Thames Junior Rugby Club was incorporated in 2010 to promote and encourage rugby as a sport for the primary school children of Thames under 14 years. They are affiliated with Thames Rugby & Sports Club.

FACILITIES

The junior rugby club use the same playing fields as senior rugby except for the number one field. The junior teams train Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday after school and rippa rugby (junior) is played on Friday nights. All other teams play on Saturday mornings.

The kitchen in the rugby clubrooms is in high use on Saturday mornings and Friday nights as part of Rippa Rugby. The junior club also uses the rugby clubrooms for meetings, administration and prizegiving. There is some storage in containers.

The Junior Rugby Club provided feedback on the current facilities including the disconnect between the changing rooms, toilets, playing fields and clubrooms, this is particularly a challenge for the younger participants. The floodlighting is good but would like to see more fields with floodlights. The quality of the carpark is less than desired.

PLAYING NUMBERS

The Club report approximately 130 participants made up of:

- Between 40-50 rippa rugby players (years 0 to 2).
- About 60 players for Year 3 to 6.
- About 25 players in Years 7 and 8.

There has been steady growth across all grades in recent years.

FUTURE NEEDS

- Would like any development to provide close proximity between changing rooms / toilets and playing fields for junior participants.
- Don't need any change in existing capacity but need to ensure the quality of the facilities.
- Storage is critical.
- Integrated clubrooms and grandstand.
- Provision of administration / office facilities.
- Support the concept of a multi-sport hub with the ability to have shared resources around funding, communication etc.

FIGURE 6.8 THAMES RUGBY AND SPORTS CLUB BUILDINGS



FIGURE 6.9 INSIDE THAMES RUGBY AND SPORTS CLUB



6.8 FITNESS CO-OP

The Fitness Co-op is an independent fitness business which hires the second building from the Thames Rugby & Sports Club. There is no formal arrangement but a loose agreement to hire and occupy the building. The current operator is currently looking for another group to take over the fitness programmes / activities.

The fitness programme attracts numbers up to around 20 people per session. Sessions are casual and paid \$5 per session. Currently sessions offered include:

- Early morning – twice a week
- Mid morning – twice a week
- Evening – four sessions a week
- Youth sessions – once a week

As participation is on a casual basis, it is not possible to confirm the overall numbers, however, social media following indicates interest from 600 to 700 people.

The retiring operator is supportive of Thames Rugby and Sports Club and would like to see development of sport facilities which will benefit the club and Thames overall.

6.9 VICTORIA PARK

Victoria Park is situated on the waterfront, adjacent to Brown Street / Beach Road. The land was transferred from the Crown to Council in the early 1900's. The park has historical and archaeological sites (see Section 3.1) and includes part of the Thames Coastal Walkway.

Figure 6.10 and Table 6.3 outlines the key facilities on Victoria Park, which are further described in each sport.

TABLE 6.3 RHODES PARK FACILITIES

SPORT	FACILITIES
Croquet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lease to Thames Croquet Club for an area which includes 5 croquet greens, pavilion building and other smaller shelter structures.
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lease to Thames Tennis Club for 5 tennis courts.
Squash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lease to Thames Squash Rackets Club for the clubroom and squash building.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lease to Thames Small Gauge Railway for a model railway.Lease to Thames Bridge Club.Band Rotanda and War Memorial.Small playground.

FIGURE 6.10 VICTORIA PARK



6.10 THAMES TENNIS CLUB

Date of Incorporation	7 March 2005
Number of players	140
Playing trends	Stable
Facilities	5 astro turf courts Building with clubrooms and changing rooms joint with squash
Lease	Up to 30 September 2040

OVERVIEW

Thames Tennis Club has been located on Victoria Park since 1978. The club occupy the ground floor space in a combined building with Thames Squash & Rackets Club but has a separate lease for the tennis courts.

The tennis and squash clubs are currently working through an amalgamation to bring the two clubs into one entity. The goal is to improve the overall efficiency and reduce the volunteer burden by streamlining the executive positions and improving administration.

FACILITIES

There are 5 astro-turf tennis courts on Victoria Park, which are fenced and floodlit. Currently there is a clubroom and toilet facilities in the building.

In 2018 a significant storm encroached over the seawall and flooded the courts. During the flooding it appeared the astro-turf was floating but settled back into place once the flood waters receded. The flooding caused some cracks in the underlying asphalt and left a large amount of silt. A significant volunteer effort was needed to remove the silt before it hardened. The flooding came very close to entering into the building.

A key issue for the club is determining how to manage the tennis court assets knowing the vulnerability of the site to further storm inundation and potential damage. The courts require resurfacing in a few years and need to replace the floodlights, but it is unclear whether the club should pursue the fundraising and planning given these risks.

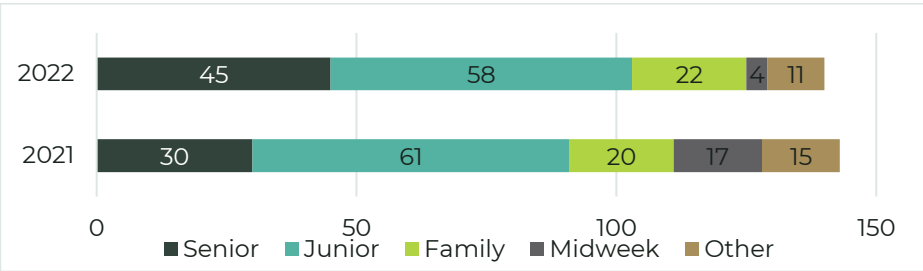
In the short-term the club could continue but need to understand the medium to long-term plans for protecting the site from coastal

inundation in order to provide certainty for any investment in the sport facilities.

PLAYING NUMBERS

The club report the playing numbers are stable with a strong junior programme and active seniors as shown in Figure 6.11.

FIGURE 6.11 THAMES TENNIS CLUB PARTICIPATION NUMBERS



FUTURE NEEDS

- Given the uncertainties of the site, the Club is open to looking at a new site. They indicate need for a similar scope of facilities with 5 astro-turf floodlit courts and shared clubroom facility.
- Would prefer to have single marked courts as they are used all year round and difficulties putting up/down nets.
- Consider sharing turf courts if multiple markings are not required.

FIGURE 6.12 THAMES TENNIS CLUB



6.11 THAMES SQUASH RACKETS CLUB

Date of Incorporation	26 July 1971
Number of players	112
Playing trends	Growing in recent years
Facilities	3 squash courts and clubrooms
Lease	Perpetual 21 years right of renewal

OVERVIEW

Thames Squash Rackets Club has been located on Victoria Park since 1977. The combined building houses the squash courts and clubrooms for tennis and squash. The tennis club currently occupy the ground floor of the building and the squash lounge is on the upper floor overlooking the squash courts.

The tennis and squash clubs are currently working through an amalgamation to bring the two clubs into one entity as noted in Section 6.10. The process is likely to be come into effect in 2023.

FACILITIES

There are three squash courts with one being glass backed. The upper floor of the building contains a lounge, bar, and kitchen with toilets on the lower floor. In 2018, the interior was refurbished and exterior deck overlooking the tennis courts was added. Further refurbishment works are planned with fundraising underway. However, the building and squash courts are noted in good condition.

The 2018 storm did encroach into the building but the damage was minimal with drying out and cleaning required.

PLAYING NUMBERS

Figure 6.13 shows the playing numbers for Thames Squash Club (sourced from Squash NZ). The graph shows squash participation has been relatively stable for both graded and leisure players with growth in recent years (apart from Covid impacted 2020). The number of participants for the number of courts are in line with benchmarks being established in the Squash NZ Facility Plan (currently under development).

FIGURE 6.13 THAMES SQUASH RACKETS CLUB PARTICIPATION NUMBERS



FUTURE NEEDS

- The Club are keen to consider the development of a fourth court.
- The Club would also like to employ a club manager but currently this is unaffordable.
- In terms of the future of the facility, this has not been extensively discussed by the club but indicatively they would open to relocation provided there was the same level of access to facilities.
- Like tennis, part of the future is likely to depend on the security of the site from a coastal inundation perspective.

6.12 THAMES CROQUET CLUB

Date of Incorporation	8 February 1989
Number of players	30
Playing trends	Stable
Facilities	5 grass greens and several buildings
Lease	Expires September 2032

OVERVIEW

It appears from lease documents that the Thames Croquet Club has been located on Victoria Park since 1990. It was not possible to engage directly with the club but the following information was sourced through a discussion with a club member and other sources.

FACILITIES

There are 5 grass greens located directly adjacent to the coastal seawall. There are several buildings within the lease area with one used as a clubroom and another likely used for storage and maintenance. There are also several shelter structures. See Figure 6.13.

FIGURE 6.13 THAMES CROQUET CLUB



It is understood the 2018 storm which impacted the neighbouring tennis courts also caused significant damage to the greens. The extent of this damage is unknown. Discussions with a club member noted the club is only just getting into a position to address the damage. The club member also noted the neighbouring Pohutukawa Trees cause damage through the tree roots.

Previously, it has been noted the availability of 5 greens has meant the club has hosted larger croquet tournaments. This provides income from the tournaments.

PLAYING NUMBERS

The club report they currently have 30 full members and 6 associated members. Membership remains steady. Each year the club gains a few new members but also lose some through retirement due to age or health.

As croquet is a low-impact sport it is popular with older participants. Given the growing number of older people living in Thames, croquet has the potential to provide an important sport/recreation opportunity for this age-group.

FUTURE NEEDS

- Further discussions are needed with the club to understand their needs, particularly in relation to capacity of greens required.
- Critical to the future of croquet facilities at this location, is understanding the scope and extent of any protection works to the seawall bordering the croquet greens. Neither the timing or design of seawall protection works have been confirmed. TCDC Officers have suggested raising the sea wall by 0.4m may require spreading back landward by 4m. This has the potential to encroach on the croquet greens. Therefore, the future of the greens largely depends on the timing and extent of potential future protection works.

6.13 THAMES HOCKEY

Date of Incorporation	16 August 2022
Number of players	77
Playing trends	Growing
Facilities	Competitions at hockey turf in Ngatea Training at school facilities
Lease	None

OVERVIEW

Thames Hockey Club recently affiliated and play in the Thames Valley Hockey Association competition, which are based in Ngatea at the full-sized hockey turf owned by the Thames Valley Turf Society.

FACILITIES

Thames Hockey currently use the astro-turf surfaces at St Francis School and Parawai School for hockey development and training. While grateful for these surfaces in Thames, they are not ideal being small, no lights and limited/no hockey goals, markings etc. The club uses the school facilities for approximately 5 hours a week as access is limited. There is also a high number of participants on the small space, which is challenging.

The club team compete in the Thames Valley Hockey Association competitions based at the hockey turf in Ngatea. This competition serves clubs across Waihi to Te Aroha. The club report the Ngatea turf is heavily used seven days a week and has very little to no spare capacity. The Waikato Regional Active Spaces Plan does not identify a need for hockey development in the Thames Valley area.

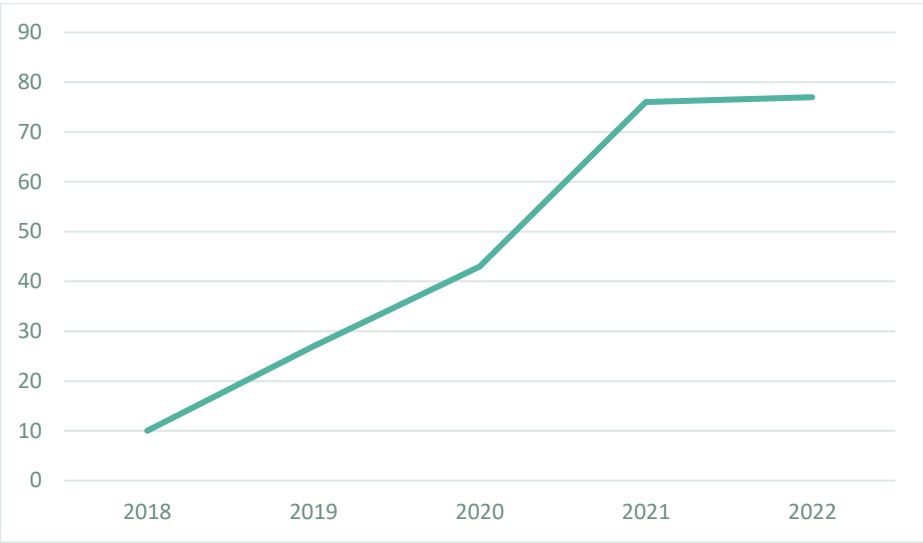
PLAYING NUMBERS

Figure 6.13 outlines the playing numbers for Thames Hockey Club. This shows strong growth over the last 5 years.

The club report they are working on establishing a women's adult team and working with Thames High School to support training and development of these players.

The club is working on establishing coaching clinics and development programmes to help build the transition of junior participation to secondary school level.

FIGURE 6.13 THAMES HOCKEY CLUB PARTICIPATION NUMBERS



FUTURE NEEDS

- The club would like to see the development of a hockey turf in Thames to support hockey development in the town.
- Would not need to be a full-size turf as the club would not want to undermine the viability of the Ngatea Hockey turf. However, it would need to be a surface which has basic hockey markings and goals.
- Would be very happy to share turf with other codes as appropriate.
- Would also like storage capacity (currently no storage provision).

6.14 THAMES HIGH SCHOOL

OVERVIEW

Thames High School is a state secondary school for years 9 to 15. The school occupies a block between Sealey Street, Rolleston Street, Richmond Street, and Mackay Street. In 2021, the school had a total roll of 424 students.

FACILITIES

Figure 6.14 provides an overview of the School and its sporting facilities, which include:

- Jack McLean Centre – in 2018 the school, Council and community opened the new indoor sports facility, which is comprised of the original school indoor court, development of one new court and a large meeting room. The Council manages community bookings to the facility. There is mixed access to the facility, as outlined in Table 6.3 below. The school and Council work together on accommodating requests outside these hours.
- Pool – 33m outdoor pool.
- Fields – a large grass field which has a marked grass athletics track and other spaces for field sports.
- Old courts – old asphalt netball and tennis courts bordering the Richmond Road frontage. There has been some initial discussion around redeveloping this area for a turf, however, there is no firm proposal at this stage. This potential development needs to be understood further as it might have some bearing on the future sport facilities particularly in relation to a hockey turf.

TABLE 6.2 ALLOCATION OF JACK MCLEAN CENTRE

	MON / TUE	WED-FRI	WEEKENDS / HOLIDAYS
Court 1/Meeting room 8.30am-3.30pm	Community	School	Community
3.30pm+		Community	
Court 2 6.30am – 7.30pm	School	School	Community

FIGURE 6.14 THAMES HIGH SCHOOL FACILITIES





7.0 ENGAGEMENT

This section outlines engagement undertaken and key findings.

7.1 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT

It is important to seek input from a wide range of stakeholders to understand the needs and aspirations for sport facility development. Table 7.1 outlines the engagement undertaken for the study.

FIGURE 7.1 ENGAGEMENT UNDERTAKEN FOR THE SPORT FACILITIES

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT METHODS
Mana Whenua Ngāti Maru	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Representative on the Project Steering Group.• Initial hui to introduce project and discuss opportunities and concerns.• Ongoing involvement and input through project development.
Rhodes Park Clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thames Netball Club• Thames Rugby & Sport• Thames Junior Rugby• Fitness Co-op• Thames Football• Thames Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings face to face to discuss current state, concerns, opportunities, and future aspirations.• Workshop to discuss cross-collaboration opportunities• Workshop to present initial findings and receive feedback.
Victoria Park Clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thames Squash• Thames Tennis• Thames Croquet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invitation to meet and discuss current state, concerns, opportunities and future aspirations (only tennis was able to meet in the timeframes).• Invitation to attend sport workshops, attended by tennis and croquet
Wider Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community survey distributed widely across the Thames community.
Regional Sports Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Input through Sport Waikato surveys to clubs, RSOs and schools.

7.2 MANA WHENUA ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with Ngāti Maru is an ongoing process which reflects the Council's partnership approach. A representative of Ngāti Maru is included on the Project Steering Group to provide ongoing input through the project.

Initial feedback provided in the early hui stages identified the following considerations, although it is anticipated further considerations will be identified as the project progresses:

- Ngāti Maru Rūnanga will be guided by the hapū members who live in the Totara area as one of the last remaining traditional papa kāinga in the area.
- Need to understand the key drivers for considering change for the sport facilities. Previous work has considered relocation of sports facilities but need to understand the imperatives for any relocation.
- If a sports hub is a potential outcome, need to consider how facilities will be shared. Observations that sharing does not always work and causes more administrative issues. It is acknowledged many of the clubs like their independence.

Need to check with Kelly if there are any further comments she would want to make at this point in the process.

7.3 SPORT CLUB ENGAGEMENT

CODE ENGAGEMENT

The individual code section in Section 6.0 provide background information for each sport club engaged in this study. Table 7.2 summaries the key issues for sport facility development identified from the individual code engagement (note, not all codes contributed to this process and therefore are not reflected in this table).

TABLE 7.2 KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY INDIVIDUAL SPORT CODES

CODE	KEY SPORT FACILITY ISSUES
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of the fields is the primary issue. • Would like 3 cricket ovals with artificial wickets. • Cricket nets with 3 lanes. • Storage for equipment. • Support multi-sport hub to provide clubroom, change rooms and toilets but must be accessible to all clubs on an equal footing.
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity and equality of access are the key issues. • Would like two full-sized fields, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ fields and 4 junior fields. • Training capacity under lights for 15+ hours per week. • Storage for equipment. • Support multi-sport hub to provide clubroom, change rooms and toilets but must be accessible to all clubs on an equal footing.
Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and specification of courts are the key issues. • Want their own separate space and would consider relocating their current building if required. • Need 6 netball courts, ideally with improved surface which provides cushioning for participants. • Playground with clear viewing. • Support multi-sport hub and opportunities for combined administration but would like to retain code independence.

CODE	KEY SPORT FACILITY ISSUES
Senior Rugby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining current provision and progressing development are the key issues. • Would like 4 fields to support junior and senior teams with at least 2 floodlit. • Consideration for hybrid or artificial turf to take higher loadings. • 8 changing rooms to support the fields. • Portable grandstand seating. • Clubrooms of a similar size to the current facility but more cohesive with other facilities.
Junior Rugby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need close proximity between changing rooms / toilets and playing fields for junior participants. • Storage is critical. • Integrated clubrooms and grandstand, with the provision of administration / office facilities. • Support the concept of a multi-sport hub with the ability to have shared resources around funding, communication etc.
Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to retain a space to enable continued fitness activities.
Tennis (Squash)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need clarity around the future protection of their site from coastal inundation. • Open to relocation if necessary. • Need 5 astro-turf floodlit courts and shared clubroom facility with squash. • Single marked courts but would consider sharing if multiple markings are not required.
Hockey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like a turf to support hockey development but does not necessarily need to be full-size. • Willing to share with other codes. • Storage is essential. <p>[Note: the High School are exploring a turf development which needs to be understood].</p>
Croquet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need clarity around the future protection of their site from coastal inundation.

WORKSHOPS

Two workshops were held with sports codes as part of the needs assessment to explore:

- **Workshop 1** – bring the codes to together to provide an overview of the study, explore the purpose of each organisation and consider opportunities to address common challenges.
- **Workshop 2** – report back to the codes on initial findings with an opportunity to provide feedback and then explore potential future objectives. The notes from this exercise are outlined in Section 7.5.

COMMON OBJECTIVES OF SPORT CODES

As part of workshop one, the sports codes were asked to consider why their organisations exist and what are they trying to achieve. The exercise showed sport codes have very similar reasons and therefore there was a large amount of common objectives. Figure 7.1 summarises the common objectives across the sports identified.

FIGURE 7.1 COMMON SPORT OBJECTIVES ACROSS CODES



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPORT CODES

The second part of workshop one explored current challenges for sport codes and potential opportunities to address these challenges going forward. The exercise showed most sports experience common challenges and there are many opportunities for sports to work together in addressing these challenges. Figure 7.2 summarises the high-level challenges identified and potential opportunities to respond.

A common point raised in this discussion was ensuring all sports are on an equal footing and there is no hierarchy within the sport codes. Other comments included focusing on the common objectives and ensuring every sport code is successful.

FIGURE 7.2 COMMON SPORT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS

Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shared coaching coordinator• Share knowledge, and learnings
Declining volunteer support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent representatives for each team
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing executive tasks• Funding coordination• Marketing, promotion, communications
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shared facilities, dual markings, lighting• Scheduling• Need better communications
Bulk Buying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uniforms• Equipment
Events / Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint delivery• Friday nights

7.4 COMMUNITY SURVEY

OVERVIEW

To gather the views of sport participants and the wider community, an open survey was undertaken to explore the potential improved and/or new aquatic and sport facilities in Thames. The survey was undertaken from 13 June to 4 July providing 21 days. The survey was distributed by Council through email distribution to the sports clubs and a wide community database. Promotion included local newspapers, social media, Council's website and hard-copies available in the library, at the swimming pool and Council sites.

The survey focused on separate questions which respectively addressed:

- Aquatic provision and the future of **Thames Centennial Pool**.
- Sport facility provision with a focus on **Rhodes Park**.

There were 494 survey responses, including 432 complete returns and 62 partial responses (not all questions were answered fully). Of all responses:

- 347 relating to aquatic provision - 70% of respondents.
- 267 relating to sport facility provision – 54% of respondents.

The results for sport facility provision summarised with open comments in Appendix A.

CLUB MEMBERSHIPS/INVOLVEMENTS AT RHODES PARK

CLUB MEMBERS/INVOLVEMENT	COUNT	%
Thames Football	104	40
Thames Netball Centre	61	23
Thames Rugby Club	56	21
Fitness Co-op (at Rhodes Park)	51	19
Thames Junior Rugby Club	44	17
Thames Cricket	29	11
Hoterini Rugby League	4	2
None of these/ other activities	52	20
		n=262

Other activities at Rhodes Park (summarised from text responses, counts):

- Walking 11
- Spectating/ supporting kids 11
- Spectating/ supporting general 9
- Casual /other personal fitness 7
- Played away games 5
- Other included playground; family/ kids casual play; running; past sport; dog walking

Of those 210 who were members of formal clubs, 43% were members of more than one (16% 3 or more).

REASONS FOR NON-USE OF RHODES PARK

For the 189 respondents who did not use Rhodes Park, the response levels for the listed non-use reason options are summarised below. Respondents could tick multiple options

REASONS FOR NOT USING RHODES PARK	COUNT	%
Not interested in the sports available there	120	63
Don't like the quality of the facilities	19	10
The park location is not convenient/ too far way	26	14
Don't like the park location	7	4
Other	45	24
		(n=189)

Other reasons (summarised from text responses, counts)

- No need/ connection /interest 11
- Not active in any sports there 10
- Played/used in past 6
- Activities elsewhere/ live distant 5
- Not the right sports /facilities there for me 4
- Don't know what is there 4
- Spectator/ take kids 3
- Casual users 1
- Use other parks 1
- Other 8

FACILITY QUALITY RATINGS AT RHODES PARK

All Rhodes Park users were asked to rate the quality of listed Rhodes Park facilities, using the following ratings:

- Very poor – 1
- Poor – 2
- Average / Ok – 3
- Good – 4
- Excellent - 5

The overall ratings only feature two facility types rated above the "Average/OK" (level 3), and these barely exceeded (netball courts 3.2, and carparks 3.1). The average facility rating for 'Playing fields' was 3.0, with all other facility types receiving lower than average ratings. None had a combined 'Excellent/Good' percentage rating greater than 40%, indicating few respondents felt these facilities were exceptional. Most indications suggest respondent perceptions of the current facilities are just adequate. For 5 of the facility types, the proportion rating them 'Very Poor/Poor' exceeded the proportion rating them 'Excellent /Good'.

The lowest rated facilities were 'Changing rooms', with an average rating of 2.2, featuring a combined 'Very Poor/ Poor' score of 64% and only 6% 'Excellent/Good'. Next lowest was the 'Grandstand' and Toilets'.

FACILITY RATINGS	1	2	3	4	5	N	% VERY POOR/ POOR	% EXCELLENT/ GOOD	RATING SCORE
Netball courts	4	13	50	29	5	242	16	34	3.2
Carparks	6	17	38	33	6	197	24	38	3.1
Playing fields	12	16	42	27	4	203	27	31	3.0
Playground	9	22	42	26	1	230	31	27	2.9
Clubrooms	18	15	44	19	3	221	33	23	2.8
Toilets	19	30	38	12	1	223	48	13	2.5
Grandstand	21	33	39	6	1	252	53	7	2.3
Changing rooms	26	38	31	5	0	206	64	6	2.2

FACILITY RATINGS OF SPECIFIC FACILITIES

The ratings of some facility types were examined further to determine how they varied according to different club/sport perspectives. Summary information is presented for the common facility types where different clubs could be compared including clubrooms; changing rooms; carparks; and playing fields. Due to limited cross utilisation 'netball court' or 'grandstand' comparisons were not made.

CLUBROOMS (CLUB-SPECIFIC RATINGS)

The overall ratings of 'Clubroom' facilities by respondents associated with different clubs reveals some differences. While the term 'clubrooms' refers to different spaces for different clubs, these results indicate that no clubs are highly positive towards 'clubrooms', with most assigning below average overall ratings. Thames Rugby & Sport Club appear the most positive (3.3, 37% excellent/good) while Thames Football are the most negative towards clubrooms (2.7,51% very poor/poor).

CLUBROOMS BY CLUB MEMBERS	1	2	3	4	5	N	% VERY POOR /POOR	% EXCELLENT/ GOOD	RATING SCORE
Thames Rugby Club	2	12	49	27	10	51	14	37	3.3
Thames Junior Rugby Club	7	16	60	14	2	43	23	16	2.9
Fitness Co-op	18	9	56	16	2	45	27	18	2.8
Thames Cricket	18	4	64	14	0	28	21	14	2.8
Thames Netball Centre	15	17	53	11	4	53	32	15	2.7
Thames Football Club	23	28	14	30	5	102	51	35	2.7

Respondents were asked in the survey which particular clubrooms they were rating (this was only asked for Clubrooms). The table below outlines the results for Rugby, Netball and Football Clubrooms respectively. This highlights the finding that the least satisfied with the clubroom facilities were those who were referred to the Thames Football Clubrooms. They cited by far the lowest average rating of only 1.9, with 70% indicating those clubrooms were 'Very Poor/Poor'. By contrast the Rugby and Netball Clubrooms were rated much higher (although these ratings were not particularly positive overall either).

CLUBROOMS REFERENCED	1	2	3	4	5	N
General (All responses)	18	15	44	19	3	206
Thames Rugby & Sport	8	12	51	25	5	120
Thames Netball Centre	11	11	58	16	5	38
Thames Football	49	21	25	4	2	57

CHANGING ROOMS (CLUB-SPECIFIC RATINGS)

The overall ratings of 'Changing rooms' facilities by respondents associated with different clubs reveals some differences. While the term 'Changing rooms' refers to different spaces for different clubs and may overlap with Clubrooms. Notably over 60% across all clubs gave 'Very Poor/ Poor' ratings for 'Changing rooms' with the Fitness Co-op (76%) and Thames Football (70%) being most negative.

CHANGING ROOMS BY CLUB MEMBERS	1	2	3	4	5	N	% VERY POOR/POOR	% EXCELLENT/GOOD	RATING SCORE
Thames Rugby Club	20	43	30	7	0	46	63	7	2.2
Thames Cricket	33	21	42	0	4	24	54	4	2.2
Thames Netball Centre	25	43	21	11	0	53	68	11	2.2
Thames Junior Rugby Club	24	39	37	0	0	38	63	0	2.1
Fitness Co-op	36	40	20	4	0	45	76	4	1.9
Thames Football Club	39	32	30	0	0	88	70	0	1.9

CARPARKS (CLUB-SPECIFIC RATINGS)

The overall ratings of 'Carpark' facilities by respondents associated with different clubs reveals many are moderately positive towards their carparking options. Four of the six clubs gave slightly higher than 'Average/OK' ratings and the proportions of 'Excellent/ Very Good' ratings were between 30-40%. That said, the proportions of 'Excellent' ratings were not very high with most well under 10%. The least positive rating was from Thames Netball Centre respondents, with an average rating of 2.6 and only 18% 'Excellent/ Good'. This suggests no clubs are highly positive towards 'Carparks', with barely over average overall ratings.

CARPARKS RATED BY USER CLUB MEMBERS	1	2	3	4	5	N	% VERY POOR/POOR	% EXCELLENT/GOOD	RATING SCORE
Thames Junior Rugby Club	8	12	39	36	6	104	19	41	3.2
Thames Cricket	10	14	38	28	10	29	24	38	3.1
Thames Football	8	15	43	27	7	60	23	33	3.1
Thames Rugby Club	11	20	32	32	5	56	30	38	3.0
Fitness Co-op	14	22	34	28	2	50	36	30	2.8
Thames Netball Centre	14	32	36	14	5	44	45	18	2.6

PLAYING FIELDS (CLUB-SPECIFIC RATINGS)

The overall ratings of 'Playing Fields' facilities by respondents associated with Rugby, Football and Cricket clubs reveals some differences in the table below. These results indicate no clubs are highly positive towards 'Playing fields', most assigning barely above average ratings.

Thames Football was the most negative with an average rating of 2.5 and with 44% giving 'Very Poor/ Poor' ratings and only 19% 'Excellent /Good' ratings. Overall, the football responses (and to a lesser extent the cricket responses) were much more negative than the rugby responses.

PLAYING FIELDS RATED BY USER CLUB MEMBERS	1	2	3	4	5	N	% VERY POOR/POOR	% EXCELLENT/GOOD	RATING SCORE
Thames Rugby Club	4	9	39	46	2	54	13	48	3.3
Thames Junior Rugby Club	7	11	39	43	0	44	18	43	3.2
Thames Cricket	14	17	24	38	7	29	31	45	3.1
Thames Football	21	22	37	17	2	103	44	19	2.6

MAIN THINGS LIKED ABOUT RHODES PARK

Rhodes Park users were asked an open-ended text question about what they most liked about it. These have been coded and collated in the table below, with key features being:

- The close central location of the park to most of Thames and its surrounding areas was clearly the most liked feature.
- The grouped facilities at Rhodes Park and the size/numbers of fields were the main secondary positive feature themes.

LIKED THEMES	COUNT	%
Accessibility /Location /Convenient	99	45
Layout / grouped facilities	57	26
Field numbers /size /availability	43	20
Parking	25	11
Not much liked	12	5
Field quality	11	5
Open space / place for casual play/ activity	11	5
Community feeling/ atmosphere	10	5
Non sport facilities/activities; Fitness facilities; Lights; Well managed/ safe/ clean; High visibility; Specific facility liked	Under 5	All 2% or under
Other miscellaneous (incl. some negatives)	20	9
		n=219

There was no stand-out difference on 'liked features' between different club groups, age-groups or genders.

MAIN THINGS NOT LIKED ABOUT RHODES PARK

Rhodes Park users were asked an open-ended text question about what they least liked about Rhodes Park. The survey respondents highlighted the following themes:

- **'Poor drainage/flooding'** was the most disliked feature of Rhodes Park and relates to a theme of 'poor field quality/ surfaces'.

- A **code-specific theme for football** was very apparent, with 22% of all respondents citing 'Poor football facilities'. When isolated, 44% of football members indicated high dissatisfaction.
- This is related to a common dislike theme of **perceived inequity in the facility provisions** for different codes at Rhodes Park, with 13% (not just football) indicating they felt there was a bias/priority towards rugby for facility provision. 23% of Thames Football respondents identified this as a major disliked theme.
- Poor carparking was identified by 22% of responses with quality more of an issue than capacity.

DISLIKED THEMES	COUNT	%
Poor drainage / flooding	60	30
Poor football facilities	45	22
Poor carparks/ car access/ driveways	45	22
Run down/ dated	33	16
Poor field quality/ surfaces	31	15
Equity of facility provision / rugby priority	26	13
Poor toilet facilities	24	12
Poor changing facilities	23	11
Grandstand and facilities	18	9
Clubroom utility /activity limitations	17	8
Exposed / no shelter / seating	15	7
Poor facility / field layouts	11	5
Poor lights	11	5
Lack of maintenance	9	4
Poor netball facilities	9	4
Poor playground; poor clubrooms buildings; Poor cricket facilities	Under 5	2% or under
OK as is	2	5
Other miscellaneous	24	10
		n=202

IMPROVED SPORTS FACILITIES IN THAMES

All survey respondents (including Rhodes Park non-users) were asked if they would like to see improved sports facilities in Thames, with 88% of respondents indicating strong support (noting only 54% of respondents were current users of Rhodes Park).

LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED SPORT FACILITIES	SURVEY RESPONDENTS	%
Yes	383	88
No	53	12
		n=436

There were 53 respondents across the whole survey who did not want to see improved sport facilities at Thames. They were asked to choose their main reasons they did not support development from a list of options provided (multiple reasons could be indicated). Their responses are summarised in the table below in descending order. The main concerns were with costs and the impacts on ratepayers and there were ample other facilities and priorities. Some respondents referred to not living near Thames and therefore were not benefiting from any improved facilities.

WHY NOT LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED SPORT FACILITIES?	COUNT	%
I am worried about the cost of development.	35	67
I am worried about the impact on rates.	32	62
There are plenty of sport facility options already	27	52
There are other more important things to spend on before sports facilities.	19	37
I live too far away from Thames to use any improved facility there.	14	27
I don't think sports facilities are important in general.	2	4
Other	14	44
		n=53

Other themes (counts)

- Not relevant to me/ don't use 9
- Flooding risk 3
- OK as is 2

When asked what their number one reason for not wanting improved facilities, the following themes emerged from the written text responses.

NUMBER ONE REASON FOR NOT SUPPORTING IMPROVED SPORT FACILITIES	COUNT	%
Cost to ratepayers	10	26
Not applicable to me	8	21
Plenty of facilities already	7	18
Non-Thames residents don't benefit	5	13
Wouldn't use it/ live far away	5	13
Don't do sport activities	4	10
Current facility OK	2	5
Proposed location threatened by sea level rise	2	5
Spend on other needs	2	5
Spend on other recreation facilities	2	5
Other	2	5
		n=41

IMPORTANCE OF NEW FACILITY FEATURES

Respondents wanting sports facility improvements (n=383) were asked to rate the importance of listed possible features in sport facility provision with the percentage responses using the following rating scale:

- Not Important - 1
- Low importance - 2
- Average importance - 3
- High importance - 4
- Essential - 5

Overall, there was strong support for all list features, with most rated 4 or above (High Importance/ Essential). Around 50% of respondents felt the following facility improvements were essential:

- 'Good quality public toilets' 51% 'Essential' (92% high importance)
- 'Good quality sports fields' 48% 'Essential' (89% high importance)
- 'In a location not susceptible to flooding' 46% 'Essential' (85% high.

IMPORTANCE OF LISTED SPORT FEATURES	1	2	3	4	5	N	% LOW ¹	% HIGH ¹	SCORE
Good quality public toilets	0	0	8	40	51	375	0	92	4.4
Good quality sports fields	0	0	11	41	48	371	0	89	4.4
Location not susceptible to flooding	1	2	12	38	46	375	3	85	4.3
Good quality outdoor courts	1	1	13	42	42	365	2	85	4.2
Good quality changing rooms	0	2	15	43	40	372	2	83	4.2
Multi-sport hub	1	3	16	41	40	367	4	81	4.2
Having spectator seating	1	5	24	37	33	372	6	70	4.0
Playground facilities	2	7	28	35	27	364	10	62	3.8
Bigger club room spaces	1	8	34	32	25	351	9	57	3.7
Walking/cycling tracks	3	11	29	33	24	372	14	57	3.6

There were 32 'Other activity' responses entered as text with the most prominent themes being (counts):

- Hockey turf (9)
- Field lighting (8)
- Multisport facilities - fields/clubrooms/ administration (8)
- Indoor gym/ courts/ facilities (7)
- Better football fields/facilities (4)

¹ Low importance is a combined proportion of not important and low importance.
High importance is a combined proportion of high importance and essential.

Responses from different club members were compared, but general overall consistency was evident. The major variation noted was in 'Providing bigger clubroom spaces', with overall respondents rating this 25%, but Thames Football Club respondents rated it 39% Essential.

OTHER DESIRED FACILITIES

When asked, 37% of respondents (n=135) indicated there were other facilities they would like to see in any future sports facility. The following table summarises the facility themes from the open-ended question.

OTHER DESIRED FACILITY FEATURES	COUNT	%
Indoor courts/ gym/ spaces / activities	29	21
Hockey turf	25	19
Multisport / multi-use facilities	24	18
Facility / activity equity	18	13
Better Lighting	13	10
Better clubroom options	10	7
Better toilets/ changing rooms	10	7
Food/ café /BBQ facilities	10	7
Other outdoor activities	8	6
Better football facilities	7	5
Artificial fields	7	5
Cycleway /bike /BMX facilities	7	5
Better spectator spaces	6	4
Pool complex	6	4
Outdoor courts (tennis/ netball)	4	3
Miscellaneous other	29	21
		(n=135)

The Never Surrender Boxing Club also submitted on the desire to find a new premises to accommodate boxing activities for up to 40 participants.

TRANSPORT TO SPORT FACILITIES

Respondents wanting new sports facility improvements were asked how they would prefer to travel to any new sports facility in Thames. Respondents could tick multiple options. While cars were clearly the primary travel mode, walking and cycling were secondary preferences.

TRAVEL MODE PREFERENCE	COUNT	%
Car	328	87
Walking/ running	194	51
Cycle	172	46
Bus	51	13
Other	8	2
		(n=378)

NEW FACILITY SITING – PRIORITY FACTORS

Respondents wanting sports facility improvements were asked to confirm their preference around facility siting priorities:

“There are a range of factors to consider in locating a new facility, please select ONE statement which you think is most important.”

The table outlines the results and includes the aquatic response for comparison with the sports facility response. The majority in both samples favoured the **best quality site** over the most accessible or cheapest site (the latter of which was favoured by virtually none). This preference was stronger for sports facility respondents.

PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE FACILITY LOCATION	SPORT COUNT	%	POOL COUNT	%
Located on the <u>BEST</u> quality site for a facility	242	64	155	51
Located on the site that is most ACCESSIBLE to Thames	133	35	139	46
Located on the <u>CHEAPEST</u> development site	6	2	10	3
		n=381		n=304

FINAL VOLUNTARY COMMENTS

The end of the survey allowed all respondents to comment about future sport facilities, of which 56 responded. Percentages are also provided on the total sample wanting improved sports facilities. Appendix A includes the raw responses which are coded and summarised in the table below.

VOLUNTARY COMMENTS	COUNT	%	%
Need equity in facility / activity provision	18	32	4%
Need a Multisport centre /hub	13	23	3%
Other site needed / not flood risk	12	21	3%
Value to Thames / Regional through events	8	14	2%
Specific activity request	4	7	1%
Okay at Rhodes Park	3	5	1%
Indoor courts / space / covered options	3	5	1%
Food / café options	3	5	1%
Better clubroom options	2	4	1%
Good lighting	2	4	1%
Better toilet/ change options	2	4	1%
Consultation with iwi	2	4	1%
Miscellaneous other	16	29	4%
		n=56	n=383

7.5 SPORT STAKEHOLDER REACTIONS

At the second workshop held in August 2022, the initial findings from the analysis (including strategic context, demographic context, flooding context and the community survey) was presented to the sport stakeholder groups. The purpose of this workshop was to provide an opportunity for feedback on the findings and help shape future objectives for sport facilities.

SPORT CODE REACTION TO INITIAL FINDINGS

The sport codes attending the workshop provided the following feedback on the initial findings:

- Most were not surprised by the initial findings.
- Some clubs were surprised the inequity of space allocation at Rhodes Park was such an issue (although this was no surprise to many clubs, particularly football).
- Need to acknowledge Rhodes Park was mangroves before a sports field, which contributes to the flooding issues.
- Didn't realise the function of the spillway was to protect Thames and if the spillway didn't operate properly then this could lead to more flooding in Thames.
- If the sea-level is going to keep rising, then do we need to look further from Thames or multiple sites?
- The aging population in Thames was a surprise and the subsequent impact on playing numbers and income levels in Thames.
- Future development needs to be considering the rates impact particularly with the increasing older population.
- For a small town like Thames the idea of sharing makes sense. Evident that sharing facilities, administration, coaching resources is a good idea. Clubs appear ready to share (whereas 10 years ago they wouldn't have been). Support one facility but need to make sure the challenges are addressed.
- Need to consider how to manage all code needs. May need to consider season length and crossovers.

FUTURE OBJECTIVES CONSIDERATIONS

The sport codes attending the workshop also explored potential future objectives for sports facility provision.

A large proportion of the discussion focused on where land could be identified which was not flood prone but was also accessible for Thames. It is acknowledged Thames is very constrained from an available land point of view. Bus transport was discussed as a mechanism to improve accessibility.

Another aspect considered was how to move forward and provide equity across all codes, particularly given the history. Many agreed there needs to be a focus on participation numbers as a basis for establishing equity. It was agreed the value of working together would provide a stronger outcome for all sports.

Overall, the goal was for all sports to be successful, then sport needed to work together with transparent communication and collective objectives.

7.6 ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

From the engagement, the following findings have been identified:

- **Quality of Rhodes Park provision** – there are a range of issues with current facilities at Rhodes Park. Flooding of the fields and capacity/quality are key issues.
- **Fairness and equity** – major issue that will need to be addressed in the short term, regardless of any future development.
- **Multi-sport hub** – there is positive support across the codes for a multi-sport hub, although each code has different perspectives around how this is delivered. Most acknowledge working together will achieve stronger outcomes compared to working alone.
- **Best location free from flooding** – there is positive support for finding the best site that is not at risk of flooding.
- **Comprehensive development** – most agree any development must be comprehensive and takes the long-term view in terms of the range of facilities and amenities, this includes changing rooms, toilets, carparking, clubrooms/social space, and an active space (could be turf and/or indoor space).
- **Affordability** – vital to consider the cost of any development, particularly given the demographic make-up of Thames / district.



8.0 NEEDS ANALYSIS

This section brings together the findings outlined in the previous sections, supported by other relevant information to consider the future sport facility needs.

8.1 DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

PRIMARY DRIVER: FLOODING OF RHODES PARK

Rhodes Park is at strong risk of flooding from both the Kauaeranga River and the coast through sea-level rise. There is evidence that in time Rhodes Park will not be able to function as a sport facility as the playing fields will be flooded. There appears to be very few options to mitigate the risks without having a flow-on consequence of impacting the security of other land in Thames i.e. flood protection for Rhodes Park would appear to place residential housing on the northern and eastern side of Kauaeranga River at greater risk of flooding.

The impact of flooding at Rhodes Park is already being felt by sport users and this is forecast to get worse. There appears to be support from stakeholders and the community to relocate sport facilities.

Coastal inundation is also a risk for Victoria Park with potential impact on the three sports located at this site. Clarity is required on potential protections and the possible impact on these sports. This may mean it is necessary to include these sports into future thinking.

SUB-DRIVER 1: QUALITY OF SPORTING FACILITIES

The quality of existing sport facilities at Rhodes Park is perceived as poor with much of this caused by the current flooding issues. However, many of the current facilities are rated lowly by stakeholders.

SUB-DRIVER 2: EQUITY OF SPORT FACILITY ACCESS

Equity of access between the sport codes at Rhodes Park is a significant current issue. This is a result of history and preferential rights established with longer tenure. Lack of engagement with parent sport bodies to review fields allocations has also contributed to the current situation. It is clear clubs are dissatisfied with current arrangements and needs to be addressed regardless of any future development.

8.2 KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Recognising the development drivers and taking into account the feedback gained through this study, the following key success factors have been identified to inform future sport facility development.

BEST LOCATION

Find the best location(s) for sport facilities which are not at risk of flooding but considers the accessibility for participants particularly young people.

EQUITY

Work towards establishing equity in the quantity and quality of sport facilities to enable each code to thrive.

COLLABORATION

Foster and support greater collaboration between sport codes to gain efficiencies and enable each code to thrive.

CAPACITY

Ensure there is sufficient playing capacity to support community sport participation, recognising potential changes in demand and preferences in the future.

COMPLEMENTARY

Ensure there is a range of complementary amenities to support high utilisation of the playing capacity.

AFFORDABILITY

The goal is delivering the most affordable development, both in terms of the capital cost to develop any facilities and the on-going affordability to maintain and operate any facilities.

8.3 CAPACITY CONSIDERATIONS

All the sport codes have outlined a desire for more capacity (in some way), therefore, it is important to consider the quantity of provision that is required now and considering potential future demand.

CURRENT LIKELY DEMAND

Table 8.1 outlines current code playing numbers, teams, and likely playing / training demands associated with each code. These assumptions have been circulated with the codes and validated by cricket and netball. The playing demands of football and rugby will need to be verified in the feasibility study stage.

TABLE 8.1 CURRENT LIKELY SPORT DEMAND AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

CODE	PLAYING NUMBERS	TEAMS	TRAINING ASSUMPTIONS	WEEKDAY HOURS	COMPETITION ASSUMPTIONS	WEEKEND HOURS	FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS
Cricket	100	5 junior	1.5 hour session once a week	7.5	4 hour games on weekends	20	Small growth as club is rebuilding
		1 secondary	1.5 hour session once a week	1.5	6 hour games on weekend	6	
		2 senior	1.5 hour session per week	1.5	2 x 6 hour games weekends	12	
Likely Cricket demand on playing fields				10.5		38	
Football	240	12 junior	1.5 hour session once a week	18	1.5 hour game on weekends	18	Small growth in accordance with national growth, particularly females
		6 secondary	2 hour session twice a week	24	2 hour game on weekends	12	
		4 senior	2 hour session twice a week	16	2 hour game on weekends	8	
Likely Football demand on playing fields				58		38	
Rugby	200	10 rippa	-	-	1 hour game on ¼ field	2.5	Numbers likely to stay similar in accordance with national patterns
		8 teams	1 hour once a week	8	2 hour game on weekends	16	
		2 senior	2 hour session twice a week	8	3 hour game on weekends	6	
Likely Rugby demand on playing fields				16		24.5	
Netball	260	11 Year 1-4	-		1 hour once a week	12 court hrs	Some growth as in a rebuilding phase
		9 Year 5-8	1 hour once a week	9	1 hour once a week	9 court hrs	
		13 secondary & senior	1.5 hours twice a week	39	3 hours once a week	39 court hrs	
Likely Netball demand on courts				48		60	

POTENTIAL FUTURE CAPACITY REQUIRED

Using the assumption in Table 8.1 on current likely sport demand, Table 8.2 considers the potential demand and how this may translate into the required capacity to meet current and future demand. These hours will be need be tested further in the feasibility study.

TABLE 8.2 POTENTIAL FUTURE SPORT FACILITY CAPACITY

TYPE	HOURS	CONSIDERATIONS	CAPACITY
Cricket training	10.5	Cricket training typically focused around cricket nets with some activity on wickets. 4 potential training days at 3 hours each day (assumes no floodlights).	3 net lanes
Cricket competition	38	Junior cricket is typically played Saturday morning for around 4 hours. Senior cricket varies in format but assuming 6 hour weekend games. As additional secondary or senior team forms, then likely demand for 3 ovals.	2 artificial wickets / ovals with potential for 3 rd subject to growth
Playing fields – training	74	Training is typically spread with two teams using half a field. Junior teams on quarter fields. 4 training days @ 4 hours assuming 3 hours floodlights.	See notes on playing field loadings
Playing fields – competition	62.5	Games can be played Friday nights under floodlights, Saturday/Sunday @ 7-8 hours.	
Netball courts	108	Training and games are spread across the week and Saturday. Assuming 3 hours weekday under floodlights and 5 hours Saturday equates to 5.5 courts. 6 courts optimal layout for efficient netball delivery.	6 courts

Determining how many playing fields are required will depend on the type of fields (and amount of floodlighting), as different field types have different loadings as per:

- Soil fields typically can take 8-10 hours per week.
- Sand fields with drainage typically can take 18-20 hours loading per week.
- Hybrid fields typically can take 25-30 hours loading per week. Note recent examples have shown higher maintenance is often required to achieve these loadings.
- Artificial fields typically can take 40-50 hours loading per week. Artificial fields require a change in playing scheduling to achieve these loading hours, so they are typically used weekends 8am-6pm and weekdays 4pm to 9pm.

Sport Field Development Guide 2020, Sport New Zealand

The Sports Field Development Guide provides information and a robust process to support decision-making for sport field development. The guide provides a comprehensive description of the considerations and costs for development of different surfaces and should be consulted as part of the feasibility study stage. The guide recommends a four stage process as follows:

- Needs analysis – considering the supply and demand and site considerations.
- Sport field options – assessing different types of sport field surface options.
- Cost analysis – assessing the whole of life cost of the sport field option.
- Way forward – engaging experience consultant/contractor for implementation.

POSSIBLE NEED FOR TURF

Hockey has raised the need for a hockey turf within Thames. Current growth in hockey playing numbers seems to substantiate the need for some level of provision, although this may be achievable through modification of existing turf facilities in schools. It is also understood a turf development is being considered by Thames High School. The feasibility study needs to determine what this development may entail and how it may complement (or not) future sport facilities.

8.4 AMENITY CONSIDERATIONS

Alongside the playing capacity, any future sport facility development needs to also consider the amenities required to support participation. This includes:

- **Changing rooms** – there needs to be sufficient changing rooms for the associated playing fields. The changing rooms need to be designed to be unisex and inclusive (in accordance with Sport NZ guide below). The number of changing rooms is largely determined by the number of playing fields and the associated scheduling. Not all playing fields and teams require access to changing rooms. Careful placement of the changing rooms is also required for safety and accessibility reasons.
- **Public toilets** – There is a clear need for accessible public toilets as part of the development. These need to be placed in easy access to the playing areas but also in a safe position. There also needs to be consideration for how public toilets are accessible when sport is not active for other activities like walking.
- **Carparks** – while there is an increasing desire to improve other transport modes, a large proportion of users expect to travel to the sport facilities by car. Carparks need to be safe but don't always need to be right next to the sport facilities.
- **Transport connections** - while car transport will remain important, walking, biking and running to the sport facilities were also identified as important. Therefore, bike storage and pathway connections to the sport facility will be important.
- **Social space / clubrooms / kitchen / café / bar** – a key role of sports clubs is provide an avenue for different parts of the community to come together, socialise and build connections. Provision of a social space, with adjoining kitchen or café and bar facilitates this activity. The provision of social space may also extend externally with provision of BBQs or picnic spaces.
- **Active space** – the engagement process identified some in the community see value in the provision of an activity space which supports continuation of fitness space and could bring other activities like boxing. This space will need to have flexibility to accommodate a range of activities.
- **Storage** – often the most overlooked component but also vital for sport and activity.

- **Administration** – space for codes to store records and perform administration tasks. The scale of this may also depend on sports hub considerations.
- **Playground** – the current playground at the park is valued. There was also some call for bike play opportunities. The needs assessment has not explored the wider provision of bike play in Thames, but this should be undertaken before the feasibility study commences to consider if this is needed.
- **Seating** – ability for spectators to view playing. It is desired that at some of the seating is covered or protected from the weather.

Sport NZ Design and Specifications Approach (guide only)

Reflecting the following principles through design and development will be key to achieving welcoming, successful, and functional facilities that support use and participation by all users and specifically for females. These principles should be considered and used when designing and specifying project scope and developing design solutions for new developments or upgrading existing facilities.

1. **Fit for purpose.** While promoting a flexible and multi-use approach, ensure female friendly design elements and specific requirements meet the level and type of activities being delivered, as well as occupant, club, or tenant needs.
2. **Multi and shared use.** Infrastructure should be efficiently designed to promote equitable and flexible use by a mixture of users capable of sharing facilities and usage times. In particular, the facility space planning and design of public spaces should adopt a multipurpose approach.
3. **Compatibility.** Identification of compatible sports, teams, activities, clubs or organisations with similar objectives and requirements for facility design, use and management should be promoted.
4. **Inclusive Design.** The principles of Inclusive Design should be applied to community sport and recreation facilities so that they accommodate users of all ages, gender, ability, and cultural backgrounds.
5. **Public Safety.** Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) takes into consideration the relationship between users and the physical environment in the design of public spaces in crime prevention and assists with public safety.

6. Health and safety. Security and safety of users should be paramount. Community sport and active recreation facilities and their surrounds should be designed, built, and maintained in accordance with relevant occupational health and safety standards. They should also incorporate child safe and safer design principles into facility design.

7. Functionality. Facility design and layout should promote safe and optimal functionality to accommodate formal, competitive, social, and recreational forms of usage and participation.

8.5 SPORT HUB CONSIDERATIONS

Over the last twenty years, more of New Zealand's sport facility developments have focused on sport hubs, where multiple sports are located together and often share clubroom and other amenities rather than having stand-alone facilities. There are now many different examples of sports hubs and the feasibility study should explore relevant case studies.

There are many benefits of sports hubs including:

- Shared facilities usually have higher utilisation as use is spread across multiple user groups.
- With higher utilisation means the cost of shared facilities can be spread across more people.
- Hub arrangements can support the employment of shared administration which can reduce the burden on volunteers.
- Combined administration can seek to optimise facilities when not used by member clubs by developing programmes, events and facilitating hireage outside of typical sport activity. This can generate revenue to reduce the burden on sports and can spread the benefit across more people in the community.

An acknowledged challenge for some sport hubs is the change in mindset to share facilities and consequential modification to scheduling that is required. Communication and equity are important components to address this challenge.

The Thames Sport and Education Trust and Sport Waikato held a preliminary workshop with sports groups on the concept of a sports hub last year. There was a strong interest from the 10-12 sport codes that

participated in the workshop. This is also supported by the results of the community survey and stakeholder engagement outlined in section 7.0.

8.6 VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

With any development, it is becoming increasingly important to consider ongoing viability. The feasibility study will need to carefully consider both the capital costs and ongoing operating costs associated with any development.

There is a tendency to believe “build it bigger” means facilities will be able to attract tournaments and events of a higher regional, national, or even international standing. There is a belief the ability to attract these events will bring significant value to the facility and/or town. While it is true many large events have the potential to bring visitors to town and fill accommodation. The benefit needs to be carefully considered against the cost of building bigger facilities – both in terms of the cost of capital and the cost of maintaining and operating these facilities.

The advice from Sport NZ and Sport Waikato is to carefully consider the whole of cost (capital and operational) and ensure alignment to core identified needs. Accommodating any additional capacity or specification should not add additional financial burden if this cannot be recovered through revenue.



9.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 CONCLUSIONS

This needs assessment has been undertaken to understand the drivers and needs for sport facilities in Thames. The following conclusions are based on the data and analysis conducted to date. Given the complexity of the project, it is anticipated further information may be identified in the next stage of the project (feasibility study) which may supplement or extend the conclusions. The key conclusions are:

FLOODING RISK IS THE PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT DRIVER

- The primary development driver is the current and increasing flood risk to Rhodes Park from both the Kauaeranga River and the coast through sea-level rise.
- The impact of these issues are already being felt with regular (weekly) flooding of some fields at Rhodes Park.
- Consequently, Rhodes Park is a constrained and compromised location for secure sporting facilities. In time, Rhodes Park's ability to function as a sports park will be compromised by flooding. There is little, if no, mitigation options without flow-on impacts to the housing areas in Thames.
- The feasibility study for sporting facilities needs to consider the risks/costs/benefits of staying at the current location versus relocation to determine what is the most appropriate way forward.
- Any decision to remain at Rhodes Park would need to acknowledge the ongoing impacts of flooding (which are unavoidable) and the likely limitations on further development, and eventually on reliable playing facilities.
- Should the feasibility study determine relocation is the most appropriate option, there needs to be consideration to including croquet given the potential impact of likely protection works at Victoria Park. This may also need to consider squash and tennis.

QUALITY OF SPORTING FACILITIES

- The quality of existing sports facilities at Rhodes Park are perceived as poor, mainly related to the current flooding issues. However, many of the current facilities are also rated lowly by stakeholders.

EQUITY OF SPORT FACILITY ACCESS

- Equity of access between the sport codes at Rhodes Park is a significant issue. This is due to history, longer tenure and lack of engagement/annual review of field allocations. Most clubs are dissatisfied with the current arrangements, and it needs to be addressed, regardless of any future development.
- Most clubs acknowledge working together will deliver stronger outcomes than working alone.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Whilst acknowledging current housing constraints is likely a factor, current forecasts do not envisage significant population growth in and around Thames.
- However, Thames is forecast to become increasingly older and this needs to be considered as part of future sporting provision.
- Thames has low median incomes which means the affordability of any development, both for ratepayers and users, is important.

MULTI-SPORT PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

- There is strong support for pursuing a comprehensive multi-sport precinct development which provides wide ranging benefits.
- Finding the best location, free from flooding risk, is critical.
- Quality facilities and amenities are vital including playing surfaces, changing rooms, toilets, carparks and transport connections, social space, active space, seating and play amenities.
- Any future development needs to have sufficient capacity to meet current and future demand, assessed on an hourly/weekly basis in this study. The amount of space for codes is somewhat determined by the type of facilities/location and will need to be finalised in the feasibility study once the preferred location is confirmed.

- The feasibility should consider the opportunity of any development to provide wider regional value/benefit (such as for tournaments) but this must be carefully balanced with affordability and viability.
- There may be a need for a turf to accommodate growing hockey demand, but this needs to be considered alongside potential development at Thames High School and not undermine current provision in Ngatea.

9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Thames Sport Facilities Needs Assessment recommends:

1. The Thames-Coromandel District Council endorse the key conclusions from the report, these being:
 - The primary development driver is the current and increasing flood risk to Rhodes Park from both the Kauaeranga River and the coast through sea-level rise. Consequently, Rhodes Park is a constrained and compromised location for secure sporting facilities. In time, Rhodes Park's ability to function as a sport park will be compromised by flooding.
 - The current quality (and allocation) of sport facilities at Rhodes Park are also another consideration for development of sport facilities.
2. The next stage of the process, being the Thames Sport Facilities Feasibility Study, considers the cost/benefit/risks of relocating the sporting facilities at Rhodes Park versus the cost/benefit/risks of remaining on the site.
3. If a new location is identified as preferred, then the investigation should explore the opportunity to develop a multi-sport precinct which provides quality and sufficient playing facilities to meet the identified needs. This exploration should include review of recent sport hubs case studies and Sport New Zealand's Sport Hub guidelines.
4. If a new location is identified, then consider the inclusion of croquet in the multi-sport precinct, given the potential impact of likely sea-wall protection works at Victoria Park. This may also need to consider squash and tennis.

5. If the existing Rhodes Park location is identified as preferred, then it must be acknowledged minimal development is possible, and eventually, there will be consequences for reliable playing surfaces. However, there may be some interventions, such as raising buildings, which could be explored to minimise some risks of staying.
6. Thames-Coromandel District Council adopts the following key success factors to inform the next stage of considerations in the feasibility study.

BEST LOCATION

Find the best location(s) for sport facilities which are not at risk of flooding but considers the accessibility for participants, particularly young people.

EQUITY

Work towards establishing equity in the quantity and quality of sport facilities to enable each code to thrive.

COLLABORATION

Foster and support greater collaboration between sport codes to gain efficiencies and enable each code to thrive.

CAPACITY

Ensure there is sufficient playing capacity to support community sport participation, recognising potential changes in demand and preferences in the future.

COMPLEMENTARY

Ensure there is a range of complementary amenities to support high utilisation of the playing capacity.

AFFORDABILITY

The goal is delivering the most affordable development, both in terms of the capital cost to develop any facilities and the on-going affordability to maintain and operate any facilities.

7. That regardless of any future development, Thames-Coromandel District Council and Sport Waikato (and others) continue to work with the sports clubs domiciled at Rhodes Park to address concerns around the current inequities between sports.



APPENDIX

APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY SURVEY COMMENTS

FINAL COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS ABOUT SPORT FACILITIES (RAW TEXT, N=56)
A modern centre that accommodates a wide range of sports and fitness is essential to inspire the people to visit and use the facilities as much as possible.
A multi-sports facility is the ONLY way forward. The clubrooms to provide a commercial kitchen and bar for all codes.
A new sporting hub needs to be user friendly and welcoming for all clubs and codes not one club having the majority dominance. A field booking system that is fair to everyone. It would be good to have club rooms that can be booked by all and shared.
Again, that we respect local Māori and do not develop on the proposed Totara lots.
An all weather, well lit, multi-sport turf, roofed if possible.
Build a facility that is future proofed and big enough to host regional or international events. This will draw people in from outside our region which will support our local economy. We are in a prime position being right in the centre of the golden triangle!
Costs to current ratepayers as many elderly with limited income. Thought this survey has already been done several years ago. Duplication again. And thought land had already been purchased.
Don't build them on any land that is flood prone and whatever future climate change may bring.
Encourage you to make this happen now, rather than wait another 10-15 years.
Find a site that is not going to flood in the next 100 years.
Happy to keep sports at Rhodes park - just need to redesign and development it. Understand it's in a flood zone, however surely there are tricks you can do to minimize the flooding. Too many rugby fields.
Has the local Iwi been consulted, the infrastructure/roadings will probably will also require consultations with local Iwis. The Eastern seaboard will probably object to help fund a Thames Sports Complex.
Hockey.
I prefer it to be located as close as possible to the people that use it. Lots of kids need to get there after school for sports practice. When I was at school, we found Rhodes Park close to town and easy to get to.
I'd like to see a survey about participation in the Arts in the area. There are more people in NZ that participate in the arts than have a sports focus.
Important to have a football ground that has light completely around that isn't impacted by another sport, also more than one training area so damaged area can rest, separate club rooms so different sports and have their own private after matches.
Include everyone in decision making not just the big clubs. Change the name to Thames Sports Club - take out word Rugby so they don't have majority and all the say!
Inclusion of as many sports and recreational areas as possible.
It is 5 to have this in our area.
It is better to have separate sports facilities for separate sports that provide walking and one access for all ages including children and people with Dr rather than lump them all onto one site.

FINAL COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS ABOUT SPORT FACILITIES (RAW TEXT, N=56)

It is no secret that our local high school's roll has fallen in recent years. It is my belief that sports plays a key part in retaining future students and the health, social and mental well-being of our youth. As a sports volunteer that has given their time for free for many years (and continues to do so), by committing to the resources we need to ensure we can make the utmost positive difference of the lives of our players and participants - would be a great investment by our Council and ratepayers. One that would be directly or indirectly beneficial to our community.

Its not all about rugby. other clubs need the same opportunity.

I've made them already - why the repeat question?

Just not too far away but if can include all sports worth it.

Make it fair and equitable. Rugby ain't the be all and end all.

More bike areas for the young.

Must include covered netball courts, physio rooms, bar/cafe, BMX track & weights gym.

Needs to be in Thames to attract people from outside the TCDC as well as in the TCDC area.

No matter where it is It should Be flood protected.

No one's is concerned about the football club in Thames. Our field is never looked after, often ruined by the rugby team using it as a warm up pitch. Let's have a place at Rhodes park where the football can comfortably train and play and not be embarrassed when we turn up. Also some proper goal posts and nets PLEASE.

One sports hub that caters for all sports, including a hockey turf. Flood lights on all fields to cater for different sports.

Perhaps at kopu area as its more central.

Please consider a Sports hub that caters for most sports and can also cater for the obscure ones as well, try and incorporate as many clubs as possible, then no-one is fighting for the same money and more of it can be utilized on all sports, the sports hub model works well overseas, more money to the sports, facilities are utilized all year long people have access to other sports/activities and will give it a go.

Public toilets made 24hr accessibility. Water drinking fountains. Bicycle parking Safe playground area. Children's training track. Bmx track. Connections to cycle ways. Nice quality change room facilities. Covered bbq area.

Rugby gets far too much facility power. Other sports are pushed aside with no regard and left the scrap ends. Such as only allowed access to changing rooms when there's space on quiet right days, charged to use lights for training once a week, no club rooms, poor funding, no advertisement,

Seems to be some sort of agenda to build 'bigger and better'. Given the current financial climate (inflation etc) pensioners and other low income groups will potentially be shafted (again). If people want new facilities, let the users pay, not the ratepayers.

Similar to my comments on the aquatic facility. There's many good examples to model from. Do it once, do it right. Whitianga sports park is making good progress but has taken a while to get there.

Site must be chosen in accordance with flood/sea level rise modelling as indicated by NZ SeaRise data.

Support all sports.

Support existing sites. What about improved community use around high school pool with increase in facility type low scale- very central.

FINAL COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS ABOUT SPORT FACILITIES (RAW TEXT, N=56)

TCDC should abandon its fixation with the airfield site for large capital expenditure for the aquatic centre. With hundreds of millions of dollars required in the short term for protection works and /or managed retreat due to river and coastal flooding/sea level rise -- focus your full attention on these present day existential threats to the whole township. A swimming pool in a flood risk area is just plain crazy and to continue with it is irresponsible.

Thames is extremely well positioned to capitalise on a regional need. The additional 20min travel to Paeroa or Ngatea can mean the difference between a coromandel team travelling for sport or not. This NEEDS to be understood.

That all codes have a say in the Complex/facilities That once decided upon, there will be no delaying as this has taken far too long to happen.

The park you have now is great and a huge asset to Thames. It could easily be made more user friendly for all users not just the sports ground players. Its the best spot to start / finish the cycleway as there is ample parking - so it needs changing rooms, toilets and cold showers open all day long, to encourage this.

The Thames racecourse is the ideal place to fit all sporting activities. It's in town with lots of room and existing facilities that could be upgraded. Only a small area might need a stop bank for some fields. It's not going to be affected by rising sea levels. It is the perfect place for a Pool complex.

There should be a space made available for the local boxing gym, that is accessible enough for kids that walk themselves to training, and with plenty of car parks for parents and other adults. Boxing isn't a seasonal sport, and the Never Surrender Club attracts over 20-30 children per training during winter, and over 40 kids per training during summer. Boxing is so important to our community. It's important to our adults competing and representing Thames-Coromandel, Hauraki and Aotearoa on an international stage, to our adults and rangatahi competing all over Aotearoa and to the rangatahi and tamariki the club supports in ways other sports clubs in the area can't. It supports parents by running a koha based tamariki training, so they only pay a donation IF they can afford it, and all equipment is supplied by the club. Never Surrender has helped at-risk youths turn their lives around - one now being a professional boxer, inspiring our tamariki and rangatahi to keep training hard. This is all run by coaches who DON'T GET PAID A CENT FOR THIS. They do it because they love the sport and community. I can't think of another club/sport more deserving of a safe space in Thames to continue supporting our tamariki, rangatahi and community.

This is our opportunity to create something really great not just for now, but will cater for the future of Thames. Do us proud, team! :-)

To have a great sports facility/hub requires all sport clubs to be invited to utilise the space. Having a space for many sports activities in one place, that is easy to access - its well known that sports strengthens communities and putting it in one place supports a community connected.

We currently have the shittiest facilities in the Waikato.

We need an accessible location. Racecourse or Dicksin Holiday Park (TCDC owned land) should be considered.

We need to ensure that it is affordable as a fixed income ratepayer is already faced with very high rates.

Where is the business case for additional expenditure on sports facilities - for example, economic benefit to be derived to the town, number of users of the current facilities and[consequent?] shortfall in facilities yardy yardy yah. We only need look to the Whitianga example to demonstrate the need for caution.

Whitianga needs an indoor multi-purpose facility that can be used and booked for groups looking to start new services.

Why should Thames always play second fiddle to Whitianga.

With vision this could be a sub-regional sports hub for the wider Coromandel-East Waikato. There is a massive opportunity here to make this work with regard to the economic benefit of Thames being a sports events destination. The ability to hold 2nd tier regional events or tier 1 minor national events that can attract regular visitor numbers. Towns are fooled into thinking that annual niche attraction events are the ones that make money. Not so. It is a regular smaller scale events that have new folk from a wider demographic come into the town that will make a difference to the local accommodation and retail sectors. A new sports and recreation facility at Totara that council also markets the Jack MacLean Centre and the Thames Civic Centre along with it under the umbrella of a sub-regional sports hub should be the wider schematic concept.

WRC needs to increase its commitment to discussion and consideration regarding provision for sports facilities for our town.

APPENDIX B – WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN

Purpose: Provide a high-level strategic framework for play, active recreation and sport facilities and spaces and places planning and optimisation across the region.

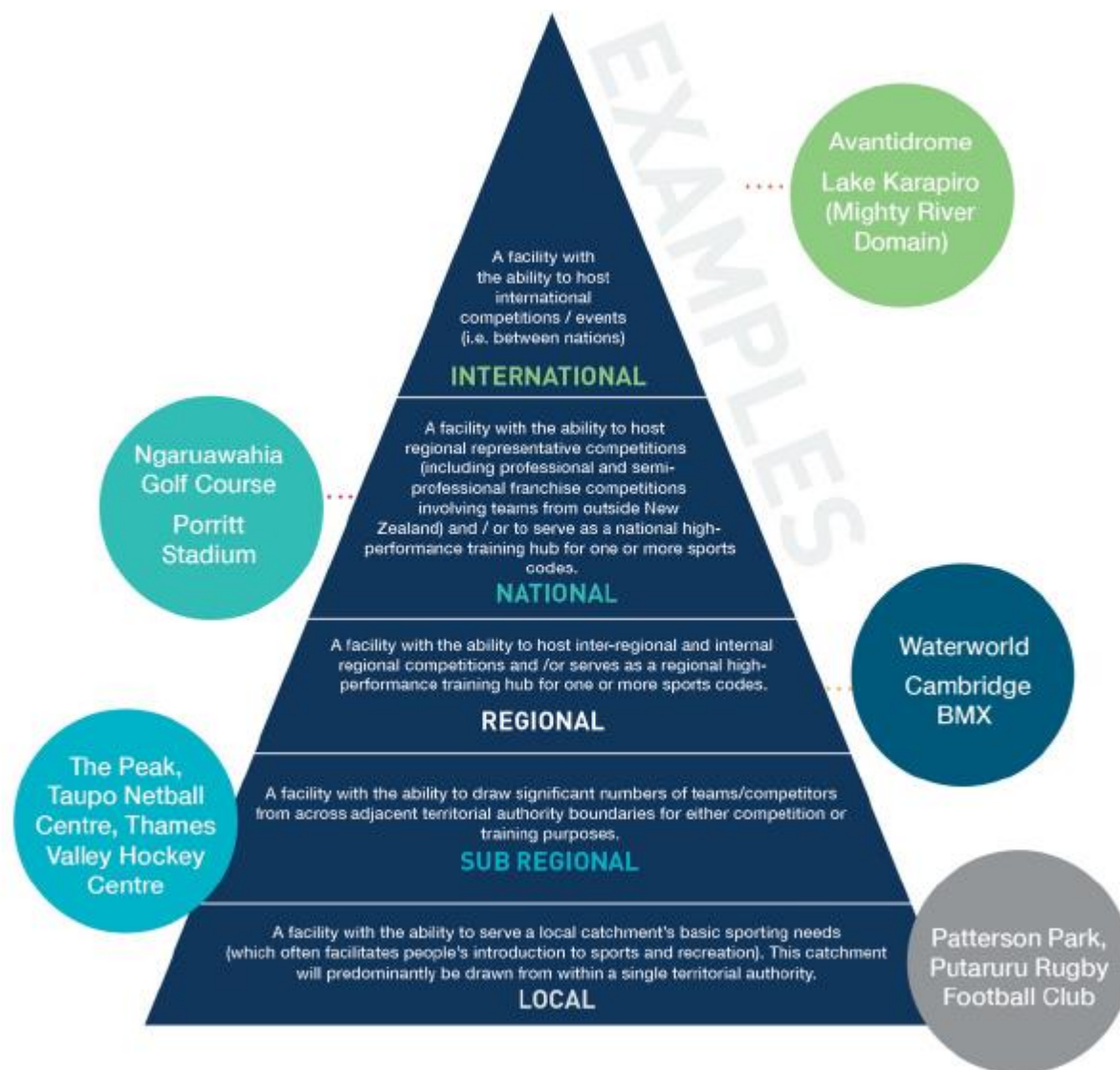
Key principles for facility planning and provision:

- Meet needs – meet an identified need and be fit-for-purpose.
- Sustainable – requires consideration of the ongoing operating and maintenance costs of the facility and how these will be funded.
- Collaborative – best outcomes are achieved when partnerships are developed with education, health, iwi, and/or the private sector. Increases the likelihood facilities used to their full potential.
- Integrated – best outcomes are achieved by sharing, creating multi-use facilities/hubs or co-locating.
- Flexible – designed to accommodate changing community profiles, trends and needs over time.
- Inclusive – consider the needs of a wide range of the community, focusing on ethnic, financial and ability barriers.

The process for developing facility planning process reflects the Sport New Zealand Sporting Facilities Framework six stages outlined in the table below.

Concept	Identifying the need for a facility and develop the strategic case for doing so, including assessing the specific need in the wider context of the desired facility network.
Plan	Ensure the facility will be fit for purpose, sustainable and future-proof. Assess and determine financial feasibility based on the facility mix. a. Concept Plan – Two page high level document outlining the need in the wider context of the desired facility network b. Feasibility Plan - Assess market dynamics, including demographics and changing sport and participant needs (feasibility assessment) c. Business Case - Critique and review key thinking. Include detailed assessment of capital and operational budget and funding plan.
Design	Develop the detailed functional and spatial requirements of the facility based on the facility mix. Details are confirmed and estimates finalised. Secure funding for capital and operational investment and expenditure.
Build	Construct the facility.
Operate	Manage and maintain the facility to ensure it delivers a quality experience. Develop the most effective and efficient operating model and the programming of the facility.
Improve	Evaluate the success of the facility, how it has delivered on the identified outcomes and objectives, what improvements can be made and any experience or learnings that can be shared.

THE FACILITY HIERARCHY



WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN DECISION CRITERIA

LEVEL 1 CRITERIA	
Strategic Alignment	The degree of alignment a facility or proposed facility has with national, regional and local facility strategies and wider strategic documents and plans. Include those concerned with urban planning, infrastructure development, tourism, economic development, and transport networks
Projected users and needs	The degree to which any existing or proposed facility matches the projected needs of the community within its core catchment area. In the case of facilities with wide utilisation (such as aquatics facilities) this involves consideration of all potential and existing users from general recreational users through to members of formal sports codes, ethnic, financial and ability barriers including but not limited to age and disability.
LEVEL 2 CRITERIA	
Stakeholder partnerships	The potential for operational and/or capital partnerships between multiple Stakeholders The potential for wider partnerships (beyond operational and capital) between multiple stakeholders to allow inclusion of other user groups or those with different physical, mental or social abilities.
Network considerations	The degree to which a facility or proposed facility compliments rather than duplicates the existing network, contributes to network optimisation and builds on the Waikato region's strengths
Demand	The degree to which current and forecast demand exceeds potential supply (once all existing facilities are being run at an optimal operational level) and the facility or proposed facility can meet the identified gap
Operational sustainability	The degree to which the existing or proposed facility is operationally sustainable. The assessment takes a whole of lifecycle approach which looks at operational and maintenance costs throughout the facility's life.
Return on Investment	The return on investment that the facility, or proposed facility, can generate. This includes social, economic, environmental and cultural impacts.
LEVEL 3 CRITERIA	
Best practice	The ability of the facility or proposed facility to reflect international and national best practice in its location, design and subsequent operation
Progress objectives	The ability of the facility or proposed facility to progress the play, active recreation and sport objectives of the Waikato region and wider New Zealand society