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Tairua Rugby & Sports Club Inc - 15 March 2022

Cory Wright Domain Update

Dear Members of Tairua Rugby & Sports Club Inc,

You will be aware that Cory Park Domain has been nominated the preferred site for a skatepark following consultations, and TCDC are now asking for any formal submissions on this recommendation. The Management team have already written to Councillors expressing our concern on the process and the lack of consultation particularly around the decision to shorten the rugby field to accommodate the skatepark. In the Veros report they recommend taking 500m² off the field and surrounds to squeeze in a 700m² skatepark without ever consulting with the Club, who are the biggest users of the field. This action was not discussed with the Club at all and instead erroneous statements have been made in the Veros recommendation to Council and in the public domain stating that the existing field is currently non compliant. We wish to strongly refute that!

The rugby field at Cory Wright Domain was gifted to the community by Harold Cory Wright as a "FULL SIZE RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL FIELD." An exceptional field capable of playing all grades of rugby and meets all requirements of World Rugby. For safety reasons on game day, 3 of the light poles require padding similar to the goal post pads which are actually in the field of play. Also a small section of the St John's fence needs padding. Rugby has been played on this field for close to 80 years. Harold gifted a full size Rugby field his legacy should be protected and respected for future generations.

The Club will be making a formal submission to Council on this issue, and others, and will be appearing in person to ensure our views are heard and respected. We encourage all members to make a submission to Council on this decision which you can do online [here](#)

In direct response to the newsletter:

- *The Management team have already written to Councillors expressing our concern on the process and the lack of consultation particularly around the decision to shorten the rugby field to accommodate the skatepark. This action was not discussed with the Club at all and instead erroneous statements have been made in the Veros recommendation to Council and in the public domain stating that the existing field is currently non compliant. We wish to strongly refute that!*
 - ◆ Veros acknowledges that an explicit discussion with the TRSC regarding a reduction in field dimensions did not occur.
 - The TRSC continuously informed Veros of the need to have a full-sized rugby playing field, as reiterated in the TRSC newsletter. The field adjustment recommended maintains a full-sized field as clearly outlined by the World Rugby 'Laws of the Game' as applied by the NZRU throughout NZ. In fact, the recommended dimensions for each part of the field are above the World Rugby minimum field dimensions.
 - High-level research was carried out online by Veros as to the pros and cons of playing areas at the shorter or longer spectrums of the permissible dimensions. This included online exploration of rugby forums and blogs as well as informal conversations with rugby professionals.
 - The most significant difference to gameplay anecdotally, being the difference in very long in-goal areas versus very short areas; with the longer in-goal allowing greater opportunity for 'kick and chase' type situations, and the offensive team also able to attack the in-goal area at greater pace with a lower risk of over-running the dead-ball line.
 - ◆ The recommendation to reduce the current field size was due to:
 - the existing area hazards, namely the fence at the north-west aspect of the field, and the footpath running along the north-eastern aspect of the field.
 - Removing any need to buffer any part of the possible skatepark, as the TRSC told Veros that padding was not their preferred option.
 - Change to dimensions which would result in the need to only relocate one set of crossbars rather than both.
 - ◆ World Rugby Law 1 states that the perimeter area should not be less than five metres wide where practicable. Regardless of if a skatepark is built on Cory Park Domain, it is practicable to reduce the length of the field to achieve the minimum perimeter of 5m, without hazards, at each end of the field.
 - The statement made to members of the TRSC via this newsletter in regard to recommendations and observations made by Veros are inaccurate.
- *In the Veros report they recommend taking 500m² off the field and surrounds to squeeze in a 700m² skatepark without ever consulting with the Club, who are the biggest users of the field.*
 - ◆ Veros directly consulted with TRSC throughout the project process, including in-person meetings with club leadership, on-site open day opportunities (which were attended by club members and leadership), and several instances of email correspondence. The TRSC made it clear that one of their key concerns was the potential hazard presented by the interface between the field and the skatepark. The recommendation to reduce the field size, while maintaining a full-sized field mitigates this concern.

- ◆ Veros have recommended a total area reduction of 428.4m² (see the table below).
 - There is a range of field applications that could be applied to Cory Park Domain which can accommodate a skatepark and a full-size rugby field.
 - The minimum area for a full-size rugby field required is 7,208m²
 - The current field area is 8,194m²
 - Veros area recommendation is 7,765m²
 - A greater setback from the proposed skatepark site could be achieved if the rugby field was reduced to the minimum permissible size under World Rugby Law 1, which would meet all concerns and requirements raised by the TRSC and wider community who are majority in favour of a skatepark development in Tairua.

- *The rugby field at Cory Wright Domain was gifted to the community by Harold Cory Wright as a "FULL SIZE RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL FIELD." An exceptional field capable of playing all grades of rugby and meets all requirements of World Rugby.*
 - ◆ A "FULL SIZE RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL FIELD" would be maintained, capable of hosting all grades of rugby, meeting all requirements of World Rugby 'Law 1 The Ground'.
 - ◆ Additionally, the dimensions recommended would also comply with full-size football field dimension requirements should this be a requirement of the TRSC and community.

- *For safety reasons on game day, 3 of the light poles require padding similar to the goal post pads which are actually in the field of play. Also a small section of the St John's fence needs padding.*
 - ◆ The 3 light posts are within the 5m perimeter along the side-lines of the field. As the field width is already at the minimum permissible dimension, it is not practicable to further reduce the field width to accommodate the field perimeter minimum.
 - The padding is a good solution and the perimeter in this instance would be considered compliant, as all practicable measures have been taken.
 - ◆ The small section of fencing encroaches the perimeter by 1.5m and has done since the construction of the fence (approximately 2012).
 - The fence is steel on concrete nub wall construction, providing hazardous hard edges and surfaces which players could collide with.
 - The field length can be reduced to mitigate this risk. Therefore, it is practical to establish and maintain a 5m perimeter at the western end of the field.

- *Rugby has been played on this field for close to 80 years. Harold gifted a full size Rugby field his legacy should be protected and respected for future generations.*
 - ◆ The reserve was vested to Council by the Cory-Wright family for the use of sport and recreation opportunities for the Tairua area.
 - ◆ TP-RMP policy for this reserve includes the requirement to maintain a full-sized rugby playing field to be used for a variety of sports.
 - ◆ Rugby has been played at Cory Park Domain for over 80 years.
 - ◆ The recommendation maintains a full-sized field.

Further spatial context is displayed in the table below.

	World Rugby max field dimensions m	World Rugby Min field dimensions m	Current field dimension m	Recommended dimensions m	Total reduction m	Total % change
Width of field	70	68	68	68	0	0 %
Field of Play	100	94	100.5	99.2	1.3	-1.3 %
In-goal (W)	22	6	10	7.5	2.5	-25.0 %
In-goal (E)			10	7.5	2.5	-25.0 %
Total field length	144	106	120.5	114.2	6.3	-5.2 %
Total field Area	10,080 m ²	7,208 m ²	8,194 m ²	7,765.6 m ²	428.4 m ²	
West setback		5 <i>(Where practicable)</i>	3.5	5.7 <i>(To retain current goalpost position)</i>	-2.2	+62.9 %
East Setback		5 <i>(Where practicable)</i>	0.9 <i>(To footpath)</i>	5	-4.1	+455.6 %

Veros provided an indicative set of field zone reduction dimensions which only require relocation of one set of crossbars. There is a 114.9m total length to utilise for the field of play and both in-goal areas, as the table above states the minimum compliant length of these areas is 106m.

How the field is set up should be negotiated between TCDC and the TRSC directly. Additional length of .7m can also be added to the Veros recommended dimensions if both sets of goalposts are moved, this may result in a better outcome.

Additional context regarding the TRSC and Cory Park Domain discussions:

To date, Veros have heard the following issues raised by TRSC specifically regarding developing a skatepark on Cory Park Domain:

- 1) Too close to rugby field, creating a risk of rugby players colliding with concrete structures.
- 2) The TRSC cannot resurface the tennis courts with an artificial surface in order to be suitable for sports such as tennis, futsal, hockey etc. as skaters will damage the surface.
- 3) The skatepark will be too small.

In response:

- 1) The World Rugby recommended minimum rugby field perimeter can be met whilst maintaining a full-sized rugby playing field and a 700m² skatepark development site.
 - a. Additionally, the perimeter of the skatepark (within the 700m² site) can be landscaped to have the ground-level sloped and built up, providing seating to watch rugby games and a further safety buffer for rugby players and skaters, removing direct exposure of concrete edges and flat surfaces for rugby players.
- 2) Inline wheeled devices such as skateboards and scooters do not roll well on artificial surfaces and therefore provide a disincentive for skaters to utilise the surface. The provision of a skatepark immediately adjacent to the courts provides a more attractive option for skaters and further disincentivises any attempt to skate on the court surface.

- a. There is budget in the 2022/23 year to resurface the courts.
- 3) Like rugby fields, skateparks across NZ vary significantly in size, including skateparks in similar sized townships, from significantly smaller, to significantly larger than the proposed development, the skatepark needs to be right sized for the Tairua community, this was checked and confirmed through the first community survey in 2021.
- The TRSC do not hold a lease for the field on Cory Park Domain.
 - TCDC policy requires that a full-sized rugby field be maintained on Cory Park Domain.
 - A rugby field which exceeds the minimum requirements for a full-sized field can be maintained alongside co-locating a skatepark on Cory Park Domain.
 - TCDC are not required to accommodate the TRSC on Cory Park Domain beyond the conditions of the leases between the parties.
 - TCDC policy requires that a full-sized rugby field be maintained on Cory Park Domain.
 - A small reduction in playing field will enable the provision of additional sporting facilities on Cory Park Domain.

Cory Park Domain is owned and administered by TCDC and is available for development that meets all applicable legislation and zone rules. There are three leases in place on the reserve, however the proposed skatepark development will not interfere with the areas of the reserve under lease.

The Tairua-Pāuanui Reserve Management Plan, May 2014 requires that a full-sized rugby field be maintained on Cory Park Domain.

In summary, Cory Park Domain is owned and administered by TCDC, there is no conflict with existing leases and the proposed skatepark facility development, and the proposed field dimension changes are compliant with football field requirements and increases compliance with rugby field dimension requirements compared with the current field layout (with the only remaining issue being the perimeter encroachment by the field lighting, of which the TRSC implement a practical solution for).

We encourage all concerned individuals and stakeholder groups to seek all relevant information prior to, and in order to make an informed submission to TCDC on the statement of proposal. The [‘Site Selection Consolidated Report | Statement of Proposal Recommendation | January 2022’](#) provides comprehensive information on the project and process and recommendations made. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to engage directly with TCDC elected members, staff, and Veros staff at this weekend’s open day on Cory Park Domain. Alternatively, take up the offer previously made directly to all stakeholder groups and individuals who asked to be kept up to date, for an online or private meeting.