

CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Sport and Recreation Committee

MEETING DATE: 11 March 2019

TITLE: Artificial Football Turf - site recommendation

DATE: 22 February 2019

PRESENTED BY: Ann-Marie Mori, Policy Analyst, Strategy and Planning
Kathy Dever-Tod, Parks and Reserves Manager, Infrastructure

APPROVED BY: Sheryl Bryant, General Manager - Strategy & Planning
Tom Williams, Chief Infrastructure Officer

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

It is recommended that this report be considered with the public excluded, as permitted by the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, because:

s7(2)(i) Negotiations

RECOMMENDATION(S) TO COUNCIL

- 1. That the Council endorse the assessment team's recommendation to site the artificial football turf at Central Energy Trust Arena.**
- 2. That the Chief Executive advise those parties that made a proposal, and the Central Football Federation, of the outcome.**
- 3. That the report and decision is released to Part I once parties have been advised of the outcome.**

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The project was first mooted by Central Football Federation in 2010 as part of a regional or national talent centre proposal. Various iterations of Central Football Federation's proposal were considered by Council staff between 2013 and 2015 with several possible turf sites scoped by Council, including Council parks, schools, and university options. Possible financial support from New Zealand Football (via its international governing body, FIFA and the 'Football First Fund') has been a feature of Central Football Federation's approaches to the Council, offering a significant potential funding source for the project.
- 1.2 In 2015 the Council included a capital programme (#1133 – artificial football field) in the 2015/25 10 Year Plan to construct an artificial football field after a number of approaches from the regional sports organisation for football, Central Football Federation. The programme assumed the turf would be located at a Council site and half of the capital costs would be met through external funding; Central Football Federation had indicated financial support for the turf facility from New Zealand Football via its governing body, FIFA. At this stage Council had not decided on a location for the football turf, except that it was determined to be a capital project constructed on Council land.
- 1.3 The 2016 Recreation Needs Assessment (RNA) confirmed that there is a need for improved playing facilities for football in Palmerston North and concluded that two artificial turfs for the City were required. This was due Council's current grass sportsfield provision having varying durability and capacity due to poor drainage.
- 1.4 The RNA also stated that: *"Football clubs in Palmerston North are dissatisfied with the quality and durability of football field playing surfaces. Game cancellations impact strongly on the quality of the football season because the season is just 20 weeks, and there is limited ability to reschedule cancelled games due to other demand on the fields. Currently the top-level football teams travel to play in Wellington where artificial turf surfaces provide a more reliable and higher quality game and playing surface. Central Football Federation would like artificial Tiger Turf to provide a more reliable quality playing surface for local games, and for regional and national tournaments."*
- 1.5 Football is one of New Zealand's growth sports. The demand for facilities to support the growth of football in the City is growing and this is evidenced through the update to New Zealand Football's National Facilities Strategy Update (June 2016).
- 1.6 Following a further submission from the Central Football Federation to the Council's Annual Plan 2017/18, the Council indicated that it required direction on location options for the artificial football turf. This was largely due to the Central Football Federation indicating a preference for the football turf to be located at Massey University with an aspiration to create a 'Home of Football'. In its submission Central Football Federation also requested that the funding be brought forward to

align with the FIFA funding opportunity. In its submission the Central Football Federation indicated that its preferred venue was Massey University. Council resolved to 'seek to bring forward the Artificial Football Turf request for information process into the 2017/18 year' but did not change the funding timeframes. Council officers understand that during deliberations on Central Football Federation's submission Councillors were seeking direction on location options and resultant potential partnership arrangements.

- 1.7 Given Central Football Federation's preference not to locate the turf on Council land, and the fact that Council had budgeted for the turf as a capital project, more financial analysis of the project, examining rating and asset management impacts, was carried out. In April 2018 the Council decided that should the turf be constructed on a non-Council site then the funding would be as an operational grant of \$550,000. In this scenario, a memorandum of understanding, or similar legal agreement, would need to be entered into to confirm the responsibilities of the partnering organisations for both the construction phase and on-going management of the turf facility. There are other examples of 'partnered' sports facilities such as the Manawatū Community Athletics Track at Massey University and Freyberg Pool at Freyberg High School.
- 1.8 Council's 10 Year Plan for 2018-28 was adopted on 25 June 2018. The timing of the funding for the project was reconsidered through this process and provision was made for \$83,000 for design and consenting in 2019/20 and \$1,670,000 for the turf's construction in 2021/22 (subject to part external funding for a turf constructed on Council land). This programme is based on an estimated cost of \$1.7 million for an artificial turf including floodlights, but excluding any car parking and changing facilities.
- 1.9 Alongside this, a re-prioritisation of projects in the Arena Master Plan resulted in one of two planned artificial turfs being included in Year 1 of the 10 Year Plan (2018/19). A second artificial turf is shown in the Arena Master Plan, however, no funding has currently been allocated for it in the 10 Year Plan timeframe. The construction of the first artificial turf (to cater for multiple sports codes) at Central Energy Trust Arena is planned to commence this financial year, once external funding targets have been met.
- 1.10 A decision on the site will allow the football turf facility project to proceed to the next stages, including facility management and fundraising plans.

2. PREVIOUS COUNCIL DECISIONS

- 2.1 Following Central Football Federation's submission to the Council's Annual Plan 2017/18, in December 2017 staff gave an update of a proposed process to select a site for the turf and recommended a modified version of the process used to decide a location for the third hockey turf (in Part II – Confidential). Staff reported again in

March 2018 confirming a process but the report was left on the table pending the need for more financial analysis.

- 2.2 In April 2018 a Part II – Confidential report on artificial football pitch funding costs was presented to the Finance and Performance Committee. The impact of this report was a change in funding approach that reflected the potential for the turf to be located either on a Council site or on non-Council land.
- 2.3 In May 2018 the ‘Artificial Football Turf - Process for Location Selection’ report was uplifted and presented to Sport and Recreation Committee in Part II – Confidential. In summary, the process involved calling for proposals from land owners responsible for five short-listed sites (two council owned and three education sites) and to provide evidence against a set of evaluation criteria. These criteria were developed with initial input from Central Football Federation, then refined by staff and an assessment team.
- 2.4 In August 2018 proposals were invited from three educational institutions and two Council departments to respond to the criteria. In September 2018 proposals were received from Massey University, PNCC (for Central Energy Trust Arena) and the PNCC (for Ashhurst Domain); the educational institutions chose not to put proposals in (noting both schools had previously included the provision of artificial turfs within their school development plans).

3. SITE SELECTION PROCESS

- 3.1 Sport New Zealand has given advice to the assessment team throughout the process and provided an assessment tool to assist the process. This has ensured that a robust method has been used to assess proposals and follows similar facility options assessment processes used elsewhere in the country.
- 3.2 Assessment team members scored each proposal individually then met in October 2018 to review and discuss scores. From this process the Massey University and CETA sites scored highest, with Ashhurst Domain considered not worthy of further assessment. The assessment team decided to hold interviews with organisation representatives to clarify information contained in proposals. These interviews were held in December 2018. Assessment team members revised and confirmed their scores based on all available information. Descriptions of the process stages are in Attachment 1.

4. ASSESSMENT TEAM RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Based on the application of the process described above, the assessment team recommends that the **Central Energy Trust Arena** is selected as the site for the artificial football turf.

4.2 The assessment team has recommended a turf at this location due to it scoring the highest against the assessment criteria. Key reasons for this are:

- Fit with the Arena Master Plan vision for two artificial turfs;
- Access to grass fields and other facilities at the Central Energy Trust Arena;
- A strong funding and facility management model, including provision for ongoing maintenance costs being met by Council;
- Benefits of having two artificial pitches adjacent to one another (a successful model elsewhere in NZ).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 This recommendation is made on the basis that Council's financial contribution to the turf project is \$550,000 (refer to the Finance and Performance Committee's April 2018 recommendation). The 'partner contribution' attribute was, therefore, considered to be the same for both sites (i.e. the estimated project cost less the Council's contribution specified in the 10 Year Plan through programme #1133).

5.2 To achieve full funding of the cost to construct the artificial football turf would require a significant fundraising effort from non-Council/external sources of over \$1million. The Council will need to work in close association with the Central Football Federation to agree on a fundraising plan (noting any funding will need to be considered in the context of other Arena Master Plan projects requiring external funding). At the time of writing this report, there are still significant doubts about the reliance on any FIFA funding being available to the project.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Demand for an artificial football turf has been expressed by the football community for many years through the Central Football Federation, football's regional organisation representing the Central North Island. The Central Football Federation successfully lobbied the Council for the inclusion of an artificial turf in Council's 10 Year Plan (2015-25) and since then discussion has focused on where to best locate the facility.

6.2 The 10 Year Plan has re-prioritised the funding allocation for this project, moving construction budget to 2021/22 (from 2020/21). A process involving an assessment team has now confirmed a location for the turf. Confirmation of the Central Energy Trust Arena as the site for the artificial turf will give certainty to key partners (particularly the Central Football Federation), key stakeholders, and the wider community.

7. NEXT ACTIONS

- 7.1 If Council agrees with the assessment team’s recommendation, staff will move into the implementation phase for programme #1133 with the completion of the artificial football turf planned for 2021/22.

COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide? If Yes quote relevant clause(s) from Delegations Manual <Enter clause>	No
Are the decisions significant?	No
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	No
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	No
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	No
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these actions?	Yes
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council’s policies or plans?	No
The recommendations contribute to Goal 2: A Creative and Exciting City	
The recommendations contribute to the outcomes of the Creative and Liveable Strategy	
The recommendations contribute to the achievement of action/actions in the Active Community Plan	
The action is: Facilitate sports code-led developments where there is demonstrated community benefit.	
Contribution to strategic direction	Selection of the proposed artificial football turf site will enable participation and result in improved facility infrastructure for a growth sport, contributing to Council’s active community priorities.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Process used by Assessment Team to Select Site