

12. RICHMOND PARK – TEMPORARY USE OF RESERVE

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Corporate Plan Output: Consents; Sub-output leases (9.4.10)	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The primary purpose of this report is to gain Council approval to an application by Marian College to temporarily relocate a prefab classroom building onto Richmond Park, off Woodchester Street, for a period of approximately nine months whilst a new two storey classroom block is constructed upon the vacated site within the school grounds.

The second purpose is to gain Council approval to an application by the school to gain temporary access across Richmond Park from Woodchester Street to the Marian College construction site during the winter sports period, for heavy construction and trade vehicles.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Marian College buildings layout, and vehicle access routes off the roading network make it very difficult to undertake any major building work within the school to upgrade, and increase the schools accommodation, which presently is fully occupied. The best option from the schools perspective is to gain access through Richmond Park, which is adjacent to the school, for heavy trade vehicles only. The present prefab classroom, which must be moved off the site to allow the new building to be built, is still required until the new building is operational. This prefab can be temporarily located upon the park.

This proposal if approved, will cause temporary disruption to passive users of the park, however the sporting codes who use the park, Cricket, and Rugby, and lessees who occupy the park will not have their activities disrupted.

Marian College will fully compensate the Council for all costs associated with this application, the application having to be publicly advertised in accordance with the requirements of the Reserves Act 1977.

Officers are recommending the application be allowed, subject to 16 conditions that protect the council's and residents interests.

CONTEXT OF REPORT

The part of Richmond Park on which the temporary building is proposed to be relocated, is recreation reserve (Reserve 4805 of 2.8302 hectares, being gazetted as such in NZ Gazette 1969, Page 1429).

The Council is able to allow the use of a recreation reserve for other than recreation purposes in accordance with Section 73 of the Reserves Act 1977, which requires the proposal to be Council approved, publicly notified and also approved by the Department of Conservation. The Community Board have the delegated authority from Council to make this decision.

The issue of allowing temporary access over the park in order to construct the new building upon the school grounds is one for Council alone, approval not requiring Department of Conservation consent. This authority is delegated to officers, however, in this case, because the length of time access will be required, and the access being required over the winter months, officers are referring the application to the Board for their decision.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The school has thoroughly researched available access options to the construction site using the existing access points to the school, and access available to the site within the confines of the school grounds. Access to the site from North Parade is limited by a bridge with a maximum loading capacity of 8000 kg, and a route which is not suitable for large heavy vehicles. Internal roading within the school is not only narrow but obstructed by overhanging rooflines. The Poulton Avenue access is not suitable due to the contorted route through the school, the presence of overhanging rooflines, and the disruptions this would cause to the day to day operations of the school.

An alternative site within the school grounds for the temporary location of the classroom is not an option due to the compact layout of the school buildings, specifically the narrow distance between the buildings. This will not allow the building to be relocated upon the school grounds easily, and the requirement to remove the prefab from the site once the new building is commissioned without, if at all possible, completely dismantling it.

Officers have discussed with the school possible siting options for temporarily relocating the prefab classroom upon the park, and have agreed with a position at the northern end of the Park, adjacent to the tennis courts (refer to the attached plan). It is the intention of the college to connect the services required for the relocated building into schools existing services, and fully fence the temporarily relocated prefab off from the rest of the park to enable mutually satisfactory health and safety requirements to be maintained for both school and park users. The building is to be sited 2 metres away from the existing shrubbery, which screens the tennis courts from the balance of the park. The fence to fence off the temporary building is to be placed one metre off the building to allow for pedestrian access to the tennis club's top gate. Two gates are to be placed in the schools temporary fence, to allow the tennis club to obtain vehicle access to their top gate when required. The Tennis Club only requires vehicle access to the courts through this gate occasionally to service the courts.

Ten mature shrubs from beneath the large trees at the north end of the park will need to be removed in order to gain entry to the school property from the park. It will not be possible to salvage these plants without severely damaging the roots of the large trees. The mature shrubs will be replaced with small specimens at the schools expense once the new building has been constructed. The value of the plants which will need to be removed, has been assessed at \$1,065 using accepted valuation methods. The cost of replacement planting, watering and maintenance for a year has been assessed at \$320, making a total cost of \$1,385 that the school will be required to pay before contractors gain entry to the site.

The roots of the large trees will need to be protected against the effects of heavy vehicle traffic travelling over them, by the use of large sheets of heavy steel plate. Some pruning of the large trees will be required to allow the prefab to be removed. This will not alter the character or cause any harm to the trees. This work will be undertaken by the Council at the applicants cost.

A temporary access road will need to be constructed to take the heavy vehicles across the Park. This will be removed and the ground beneath reinstated at the applicants costs. The route will cross the sealed area inside the Woodchester Street Park entrance which will need to be adequately protected with sheets of heavy steel plate. However, should any damage occur to the driveway the Council will require reinstatement to be undertaken at the applicants cost to the satisfaction of the Parks and Waterways Manager.

There is a risk of damage occurring to the park, caused by the relocation and eventual removal of the classroom and from the construction of the accessway to the school building site. Officers will therefore be recommending a bond of \$20,000 be posted by the applicant to the Council prior to gaining access to the park.

To minimise Woodchester Street resident's possible concerns over the increased traffic using the street, a condition will be placed upon the use of the temporary access road across the park, restricting it's use to heavy construction and trade vehicles only. Light trade vehicles are to access the building site using the school's normal entrances.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

If the project is approved, disruption to the park environment will occur for approximately nine months duration.

While disruption to the park will naturally occur, it is recognised that the school is part of the community and as such uses the park on a regular basis. As can be seen from the report above, the options for relocating the classroom are extremely limited because of the existing school layout.

The temporary road, whilst not impacting significantly upon the winter sports playing-field layout, will impact upon the summer cricket playing field, because the construction access-way would be located inside the cricket field boundary. It is for this reason that access across the park for heavy vehicles will be permitted only during the winter playing season, ensuring no disruption to cricket in the summer. Richmond Park is the home ground for the Richmond Cricket Club.

Increased traffic, particularly heavy construction vehicles will impact significantly on the already large numbers of vehicles using Woodchester Street, many of which are people attending the Bowling, Tennis, and Cricket Clubs. For this reason, approval will be granted for heavy construction and trade vehicles only to use this entrance over a limited time frame. All other service vehicles are to use the existing school entrances off North Parade, and Poulson Avenue, which will minimise the impact of the increased traffic flow on Woodchester Street residents.

Because of the unusual nature of this application, officers have sought advice from the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the Council In-house Solicitors prior to the preparation of this report. This is to ensure that the Council can legally grant the approvals sought, and to ensure that the proposal meets DOC's approval.

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

Consultation has not been undertaken as yet. However, if Council approves the application, Section 73 of the Reserves Act 1977 requires that public notification be undertaken and approval granted by the Minister of Conservation prior to the application being finally approved. The Reserves Act 1977 requires that in accordance with section 120 of the act, Council gives full consideration to the objections and submissions made by submitters before finally approving or rejecting the application, prior to obtaining DOC's approval.

CONCLUSIONS

The present layout of the school buildings, coupled with the access limitations to the site from North Parade, and Poulson Avenue make it very difficult for the school to undertake the proposed building programme without obtaining access through Richmond Park. The school require the use of the relocated classroom whilst the two storied block is being constructed, because of the full roll at the school, and to enable it to meet the school's future enrolment obligations.

The temporary classroom will no longer be required once the new building is operational and will be removed via Woodchester Street. For the above reasons officers are recommending that Council approve Marion College's application for a temporary lease of part of Richmond Park upon which to relocate the prefab classroom, and to allow heavy vehicle access across Richmond Park subject to the following conditions.

1. Public notification and subsequent approval by the Minister of Conservation.
2. The satisfactory outcome of the public consultation process.
3. Marian College to obtain all the necessary Resource and Building Consents before any development commences upon the site.
4. The lease terms being negotiated by the Property Manager in consultation with the Parks & Waterways Policy & Leasing Administrator.
5. The lease/construction area being maintained by Marian College and it's contractors in a safe and tidy condition at all times.
6. All costs associated with obtaining approval of the application, resulting development, and subsequent maintenance of the associated buildings and structures upon the site being paid for by Marian College.
7. Before any tenders are let or work commences upon the site, discussions are to be held with the Parks Manager's designate, the Parks & Waterways Area Advocate to ascertain the Council's requirements through the development phase of the construction of the facility.

8. A bond of \$ 20,000 is to be paid by Marian College or successful principle contractor to the Christchurch City Council - Parks & Waterways Area Advocate before work commences upon the site. The bond less any expenses incurred by the Council will be refunded to the payee upon the completion of the work.
9. Marian College is to pay \$1,385 to recompense the Council for the loss of the ten large shrubs, and to enable the council to replace them after the work is completed and to maintain them for a year.
10. Marian College is to pay for any pruning required to the large trees to enable the prefab to be moved out onto the park. The pruning is to be undertaken by the Council's contractors.
11. The access right for heavy construction and trade vehicles is to be allowed until the end of the winter sports season (end of September 2002).
12. Marian College is to protect the sealed driveway at the entrance to the park, and the roots of the trees along the northern boundary of the park from the impact of heavy vehicles by covering the areas with large sheets of heavy steel plate, to the satisfaction of the Parks & Waterways Manager or their designate.
13. Marian College contacting the Council to ascertain the location of sports field services eg irrigation pipes to ensure that the location of the temporary access is located clear of these services.
14. Marian College reinstate the park to its prior condition to the satisfaction of the Parks Manager or their designate at the applicants cost.
15. All services required to be connected to the temporarily relocated prefab to be laid under the park and trees by underground thrusting and boring.
16. The perimeter fence around the temporary school prefab site to have two gates placed in it to allow the tennis club to gain vehicle access to their courts. The fence is to be placed one metre away from the adjacent shrubbery, to allow pedestrian access to the tennis courts top gate at all times.

Recommendation: That Council resolve:

1. To temporarily lease approximately 326 square metres of Richmond Park to Marian College to temporarily relocate a prefab classroom for a period of up to 12 months in accordance with Section 73 of the Reserves Act 1977.
2. That Marian College be granted temporary access for heavy construction and trade vehicles from Woodchester Street subject to consultation with residents, across Richmond Park to the school, during the winter sports period, on the route defined in the attached plan.
3. That these approvals be subject to Marian College complying with conditions 1 to 16 as outlined above.

Chairperson's Recommendation:

That the Board support this proposal subject to the following:

1. That entry of heavy vehicles to the park take place only between the hours 7.30 am to 5.30 pm, Monday to Friday only.
2. That consultation take place immediately with Richmond Neighbourhood Cottage.
3. That door-to-door consultation be undertaken with residents of Woodchester Street.
4. That Shirley Board members take part in the door-to-door consultation.

5. That this situation be a one-off only, and that Marian College consider improving access off North Parade for any future development.