

## TAURANGA CROQUET CLUB SUBMISSION November 9 2022

We thank you for this opportunity to express some of our concerns and we attend this meeting without prejudice.

The Tauranga Croquet Club was established in 1922 after 14 years as part of the Tauranga Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club. Croquet was first played on the Tauranga Domain November 1902.

Our club is the result of over 100 years of hard work by teams of dedicated volunteers past and present and it is very distressing to be facing possible relocation without any consultation or indication of where we may be relocated to.

We have a lease for our current site until 2029.

Interesting to note in the Minutes of Tauranga City Council meeting held October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022 Item 11.5 - Key Points "staff will continue to engage with affected stakeholders".

Any "engagement" we have had with Council staff has been at our request.

At the initial meeting held at the Armitage Hotel involving all Domain stakeholders on December 15<sup>th</sup> we were all advised we would have one- on- one consultations before the end of the year. That didn't happen.

January 2022 there was an onsite meeting at the Tauranga Domain with a representative from Visitor Solutions involving all Domain stakeholders and a further promise of one-on-one consultations was made. That did not happen

March 1 we finally had a one-on-one meeting with Huge Hutchison at our request. At this meeting we were reassured we would be consulted every step of the way.

May 2<sup>nd</sup> a further meeting at the Armitage where the proposed plans for the Community Stadium were unveiled. At this meeting it was proposed that a forum of Domain stakeholders would be formed. What has happened to this?

We requested a further one- on- one consultation as we felt our concerns were not being addressed in any way. We met with Chelsea Brett & Huge Hutchison at the Croquet Club and advised them of the nature and history of our club.

Late September we met with Chelsea Brett following contact we had from the tennis club when they were offered space on our lawns for 2 courts which were to replace the 2 they were to lose should the proposed changes to the Domain go ahead. We needed to know what was going on but there was still no indication of any possible relocation sites.

We do not consider any of these meetings were "consultation" in any way.

It is concerning to read a report which states that with or without the Tauranga Community Stadium the majority of actions identified in the masterplan would be beneficial to the overall function and community use of the site. Those actions identified include relocation of the Tauranga Lawn Bowls, the Tauranga Croquet Club and the athletics track. At no time has this recommendation been discussed with us and have been led to believe relocation was only a possibility if the Stadium was to go ahead.

There seems to be little regard for our club's history. There is also little regard for what our club contributes to the community. We have over 5,000 players through our club in 12 months. Are those

numbers not considered as good use of a community space? We may be a croquet club which carries the image to the uninformed of the occasional gathering of a bunch of little old ladies but that is far from the reality. We have an increasing and extremely active membership and continually welcoming new members. We are one of the larger clubs in New Zealand.

Our lawns are used 6 days a week which only leaves one day for maintenance – which we carry out ourselves. Our lawns are used regularly by groups other than club members, as is our club house. We are a well-used community facility in many ways.

We hold many tournaments which bring interest from other clubs throughout NZ. These visitors contribute to the local economy by way of using accommodation, hospitality and local attractions.

It is vital that the Tauranga Croquet Club lawns are retained in close proximity to the lawns at Mount Maunganui. With these 2 clubs closely located and both with excellent playing surfaces we have become the priority location in New Zealand to host major national and international events. We already have a proud history of hosting world events such as the World Women's Golf Croquet Championships and the World Golf Croquet Championships. We were to host the World Golf Croquet Championships again in 2020 but Covid restrictions caused that event to be postponed. We are to host the World Under 21 Golf Croquet Championships in February 2023.

At no time have we been consulted over what is required to establish top quality croquet lawns such as we have at the Tauranga Domain. Developing top quality croquet lawns is not achieved over night. It requires specialised work. If we are to be relocated between now and 2024/25 as per RESOLUTION CO18/22/8, in the minutes of the Council meeting held October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022, that work needs to be started now. The Tauranga Croquet Club cannot be left without lawns while waiting for new ones to be developed.

Have the costs of establishing a minimum of 4 croquet lawns been factored into any budget? If so, how have these figures been established without any consultation with us over our requirements?

Whilst our main focus is to ensure we do not lose the Tauranga Croquet Club, at the same time as citizens of Tauranga we do not want central Tauranga to lose the beautiful, historic and well used community facility that is the Tauranga Domain. The Athletics tracks is used all day everyday by many locals and schools. I did an impromptu survey of several families using the track on Sunday afternoon. None of them realised that the Domain in its present form is to be destroyed and the athletics track removed. They were all appalled at the thought and would be unlikely to use any track at Bay Park.

Our questions to you are -

Do you know how well used the Tauranga Croquet Club is and the impact it does have on the local community?

What locations are being considered as possible future sites for the Tauranga Croquet Club?

Can the Commissioner please tell us how removing the Tauranga Croquet Club and the Tauranga Bowling Club and replacing them with paved carparking is going to provide more space for community use. To remove these clubs and the athletics track will be removing well used top class community facilities and destroy what is currently an open green space. There will be nothing to replace them which will enhance the Tauranga Domain and improve community use in any way.

Once they have gone, they can never be replaced.

You are going to pave paradise and turn it into a parking lot.