

Clubhouse at Onepoto Domain

Situation

The clubhouse is situated in the centre of Onepoto Domain alongside the toilet and changing room block. The Domain has no lighting apart from one on the toilets and is currently closed at night.

The building is isolated, unlit and without any telephone connection for an alarm system. It is thus vulnerable to vandalism and burglary.

Clubhouse Origins

The clubhouse was built between 1993 and 1998 by the Northcote Soccer Club to act as a junior club for boys and girls living in the area and to support their junior and midget teams that played on the grounds¹.

The ground that the clubhouse was sited on was leased to the club for a peppercorn rental of \$1.00 per year but this lease imposed restrictions on usage and required that the building be kept in good order.

The Northcote Soccer Club was taken over by the Glenfield Rovers, and while they currently use the fields they make little or no use of the clubhouse.

The clubrooms have been available to other organisations for a fee payable to the soccer club.

Removal

The Community Board resolved that the clubhouse be removed and the ground restored. This would have cost the club a substantial amount in removal or demolition costs. Selling the building may have covered these costs but a buyer prepared to pay a reasonable price could not be found.

Current Proposal

The Soccer Club has offered the building at no capital cost to the Council who could then use it for community activities or lease it to another group.

While this involves no capital expenditure it does make the council liable for ongoing direct costs of maintenance, repairs for any damage, insurance, water and electricity supply, and a liability for the inevitable future removal, demolition or replacement costs.

Costs and Accrued Liabilities

Removal costs could be substantial, perhaps \$20,000 as this may require the gates to be demolished and rebuilt. Demolition costs should be less but still significant. Accruing these over a ten year lease would require accounting for one or two thousand dollars a year.

Maintenance has not been done on the clubrooms for some time and it is

likely that repainting is necessary to bring it back to the required standard.

The council will need to insure the building or accrue an amount to cover loss or damage.

Because the building is wood and fibre panelling it could easily be damaged or broken into. The costs involved should be assessed and allowed for.

AAFL

The AAFL wish to lease the building and to relax the restrictions on this by extending the hours of use and the days it can be used. They also want to obtain a Liquor Licence so that they can sell alcohol at their social events.

The AAFL require a large field for their games and there are few parks that can accommodate them. They did have their goal posts erected at Onepoto last year and they played some games there, but I have not seen their posts or any games played this winter.

AFL Games are played for approximately 5 months during winter. In these months the nightfall is early in the evening and the gates are currently locked around nightfall or soon after.

The AAFL propose that they would use the clubhouse for social gatherings after their games. However, they wish to extend the hours of use to 10pm and to be able to sell alcohol. This tends to indicate that they intend to have social gatherings (parties) which are more than just 'after the game'.

Any parties with alcohol in the Domain would attract itinerants who are not members of the club. Because the area is public, has no lighting and is surrounded by bush areas, it would be difficult to control.

The building would be impossible to secure as it is lightly constructed and any storing of alcohol, or the assumption that it may be stored there, would lead to break-ins, damage or vandalism.

Management Control

The proposal for the clubrooms includes a 'Management Committee' made up of the lease holders and interested parties such as representatives of the Residents Association, the Council, and other domain users.

It is unclear whether the lease holders will have control over when or who will use of the building, or whether the 'Management Committee' will have veto rights over any or all activities.

It is also not specified where any revenue from third party renting will go, or who will be responsible for any resulting damage or cleaning costs.

Equitable Access

If the costs and accrued liabilities are not covered by the lease, then the AAFL will be subsidized by the Council. Other sports groups and other users of the park should also be able to be subsidized in a similar way. For example there are school holiday programs, bike safety programs and several other sports groups that may find the clubrooms useful. While the building is owned by the Soccer Club it is reasonable that any revenue go to them. If the Council owns the building and allows it to be used for less than the costs they will incur then this should be available to all groups, especially local ones that have used the park for several years, on similar terms.

This may preclude any exclusive lease unless it on an unsubsidized basis. Any usage should be granted by a Management Committee and use, by anyone, paid for on a day to day basis. The committee should be made up of representatives from council, residents association, sports groups and volunteer groups operating in the Domain.

Auckland City Transition

The obtaining of the clubhouse will incur ongoing costs and accrued liabilities, such as removal, demolition or replacement, for a number of years. This may be subject to approval by the transition committee.

Objections

The clubrooms were allowed initially for promoting junior and midget soccer for the residents of the Northcote area. Any continuing use should be on the same basis. The AAFL are not juniors nor are they locally based in Northcote.

The cost of the lease, and other rental, should cover the council's costs and liabilities that will accrue from ownership of the building. While the \$1 lease for the land was reasonable when the building and its costs and liabilities were the responsibility of the Northcote Soccer Club, it should be expected that the new lease should cover the Council's potential liability. This may mean a leasing cost of, say, \$2,000 a year or more.

If the lease does not cover the costs and accrued liabilities then this would represent a subsidy of the AAFL to sell alcohol and hold parties. If, in addition, the AAFL collects revenue from other groups to use the clubhouse then this would be inequitable, they would be further subsidizing the AAFL rather than reimbursing the Council.

This leasing cost would mean that AAFL would need to recover these costs by sub-letting the building and selling alcohol. The current restrictions on hours and days of use would unduly limit the ability to obtain revenue, and thus they would lobby for additional extensions.

The social activities, alcohol, and additional hours of the park being open will attract unwanted itinerants not only from the North Shore but, due to

the park's easy access to and from the Harbour Bridge, also from other areas. This will increase the amount of litter, vandalism and other problems in the park at night.

The area cannot be controlled as it is isolated and unlit.

The building is lightweight, intended for junior activities and is unsuitable for the purposes to which the AAFL wish to use it.