

**ASPIRING ATHLETES CLUB HEARING SUBMISSION**  
**11 AUGUST 2020, 2.20pm – 2.30pm ARMSTRONG ROOM LAKE WANAKA CENTRE**

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. My name is Barbara Beable, and I represent the Aspiring Athletes Club, Wanaka.

Our submission supports the development of the Active Space and Recreation Zone (ASRZ) at Ballantyne Road and agrees with the findings of the consulted QLDC expert, Mr. Elias Matthee, in his recommendations to this Hearing Panel.

The development of this entire site is for the benefit of the Wanaka community. Our argument is based on the need for active sport facilities to cater for the demand which has already outgrown the currently available spaces, as well as future-proofing the needs of the community, as population predictions dictate.

The rationale for our argument is as follows:

1. The recently developed Three Parks Recreation Space is already too small or inadequate to provide for the current demand.
  - These grounds are used for:
    - 2 Football fields
    - One 6 lane athletic track (summer only) - rented by the club from QLDC.
    - One marked 400m lane (winter only)- the surface of which is deteriorating significantly.
  - The limitations of the Three Parks facility are noted here:
    - The grass surface is constantly being damaged by high usage football as 2 competition football fields are marked over the top of the athletic track surface. As there are only two fields, these areas are in high demand throughout the winter training and competition season, the grass doesn't ever get a chance to recover from week to week. (see appendix #1).
    - Athletics training on what space is left through the winter, is fitted in around the football training and game schedules. This exposes the athletes to having to use what space is available, often in subzero temperatures.
    - A 6-lane grass track is not suitable for holding recognized competitions and placement of flood-lighting poles on the

eastern boundary has eliminated any possibility of extending the number of lanes.

- 3 lanes in the summer 400m track set up, have in-ground irrigation control panels within them, rendering lanes 3, 4, 5 unsafe and unusable.
  - A vertical jump pit is currently available. Published plans to extend the neighbouring all weather hockey surface over the top of this long jump pit will require an alternative jumps area to be established.
  - Throwing circles or essential safety nets that accompany them, and a high jump apron have been overlooked in any planning to date.
2. To overcome these limitations, developing the Ballantyne Road space, is the next logical and common-sense solution. This site is in a prime position to enhance the connections to existing public recreation facilities and reserves, open space and active transport networks.
3. Accessibility to these facilities is key to them being used by the community. Adjacent to the 3 Parks Recreation Centre, and within easy biking distance from the town center, the new Primary School, the planned low, medium and high-density housing in the immediate surrounding area, **this green space must be retained**. QLDC strategic planning documents calls for "a high-quality network of open spaces and community facilities and to be integrated with existing and planned infrastructure". This site would fulfill these goals.
- Our vision is the establishment of multi-use arena on this green space. The area is large enough to accommodate both football or rugby **and** with an all-weather (9 lane) athletics track incorporated in the development. Properly aligned, (wider bends and shorter straights – e.g. Wellington's Newtown Park, plus multiple major stadiums across the world...) these all-weather tracks can fit a full football field within its perimeters and with the addition of a stand would enable the Wanaka community to enjoy the benefits such a top facility would offer.
  - A spectator stand that would also be used for larger community events e.g. outdoor concerts etc. as well as providing flexible indoor spaces, is a project worth aiming for. Such a venue is lacking in the current Wanaka landscape.
  - Co-operative partnerships between sports are the future for this development and the current football/athletics co-existence is proof

that a viable and successful working relationship already exists between these 2 vibrant codes.

4. An all-weather track, and football/rugby fields, all in one area would enable Wanaka to host Regional and National Football/ Rugby tournaments, **and** Athletic competitions such as National Championships, Colgate Games, Masters Tournaments, Para Competitions etc. The obvious spin-off of visitors, for the retail and accommodation interests, would further enhance and support the local community.
5. To explain why we feel that athletics be given a fit for purpose facility. can be summarized briefly as follows:
  - Firstly, it must be remembered that Track and Field is still the most medalled sport in NZ Sporting history at Olympic level.
  - Athletics is a "foundation sport" and is recognized globally as the developmental stepping-stone for all sports.
  - To highlight what we have achieved so far:
    - Mt Aspiring College are the current NZ Secondary Schools' Champions in both the Junior Girls Relays 4 X 100m and 4 X 400m. with nationally ranked performers in 100m, 200m 400m High, Long and Triple jumps.
    - The Aspiring Athletes Club is divided into 2 sections – a strong children's section who compete through the summer, and a dedicated high-performance group that train for 11 months of the year and travel to Dunedin and beyond to compete throughout the competitive season as finances allow. Athletes already travel to Wanaka for the quality coaching available. Wanaka is where the fit for purpose facilities need to be developed.
6. Many casual runners, for example triathletes and recreational joggers, team sports requiring measured distances for fitness and testing protocols, use the track further degrading its already fragile surface.
7. Commercial, business and/industrial opponents argue that reinstatement of the 'poo ponds' for sporting use is unsafe. ..." that the land is only suitable for industrial development" is an argument that, in my opinion, has no basis in fact. I am not a soil expert but from my previous Wellington life, I am aware that many of parks and reserves that enhance and adorn the Wellington landscape were once rubbish landfills.


- Rendering the correct treatment to this soil, as outlined by the work QLDC would undertake prior to any development, therefore making it safe for human use, negates this argument.

8. The visual impact of the green space in such a developing high-density area is also another valid argument that supports our submission.

In summary, the Aspiring Athletes Club fully supports the Proposed District Plan to develop this area known as the Active Space and Recreation Zone (ASRZ) in its entirety. Aligned with and complementing the existing and planned facilities at Three Parks, this large site and its proximity to key growth areas and transport, must be retained. This is the common-sense solution and is our last chance to future-proof such a green space for Wanaka's current and future generations.

On behalf of the Aspiring Athletes Club - thank you for this opportunity.

Barbara Beable  
Aspiring Athletes Club  
Wanaka, August 2020

 11/8/20  

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**APPENDIX:**

**#1:**

**3 PARKS SURFACE – Wanaka (July 2020)**

**Sprig marks damage on lane 1 on track (not spikes)**

