
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON THE DISPOSAL OF PART OF 11 VENNELL STREET

1. Purpose of this paper

This paper provides supplementary information to the Council on a proposal received from Spirit Taekwon-Do Group Incorporated to lease 11 Vennell Street and to provide officer feedback to the proposal.

2. Executive Summary

SPC agreed to recommend to Council to dispose part of 11 Vennell Street on 9 April 2009. Since this time Spirit Taekwon-Do Group Incorporated approached Council with a proposal to build a recreation facility and enter into a ground lease with the Council.

In addition to Spirit Taekwon-Do Group Incorporated, Vogelmorn Kingston Residents Association was given the opportunity to provide Council with a proposal for the site. The resident's association did not provide a proposal.

Spirit Taekwon-Do Group Incorporated's proposal had been assessed and Council officers do not support the request to lease the vacant land at 11 Vennell Street for a recreation facility.

3. Background

A paper was presented on 7 August 2008 to the Strategy and Policy Committee (SPC) to obtain approval from Council that a portion of land at 11 Vennell Street is no longer required for a public work purpose. The paper also sought authorisation for Council officers to proceed with offer back investigations, subdivision and subsequent disposal of the land. This approval is pursuant to section 40 of the Public Works Act 1981 (PWA),

The vacant land was held (until 2005) for a Works Depot used by the Council's CitiOps Business Unit, which it is no longer required for. The depot was moved in 2005 and the site has been vacant since this time,

Council Officers propose the site be subdivided from the bowling green and community hall.

Before making a decision SPC requested that officers consult with the Vogelmorn Municipal Tennis Club (VMTC) and Vogelmorn Kingston Residents Association (VKRA) and report back to the Committee with the outcomes of this consultation.

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Council officers presented a report to SPC on 9 April 2009, after consulting with the above groups and a nominee of Ridgway School. The paper had the same recommendations as those presented on 7 August 2008. It also included details of the objections/comments from the consultation.

SPC agreed to recommend to Council to dispose of part of 11 Vennell Street on 9 April 2009. However, after the SPC meeting Council officers became aware that Spirit Taekwon-Do Group Incorporated (STDGI) wished to submit a proposal for an alternative use of the land. Officers decided to postpone putting the recommendations to Council to allow STDGI time to submit a formal proposal on the future use of the vacant land at 11 Vennell Street (refer to Appendix 1,2 and 3).

At this time Council officers offered the VKRA a further opportunity to submit a formal proposal on their thoughts for the future use of the site.

Council officers did not receive a formal proposal from the VKRA. Previous objections/comments from the VKRA are included in the paper presented to SPC on 9 April 2009. A VKRA representative, Mr Bernard Harris, presented concerns to Councillors at the meeting of SPC 9 April 2009.

4. Spirit Taekwon-Do Group Inc Proposal

STDGI has used the existing Vogelmorn Hall since July 1995. The club is run entirely by volunteers.

STDGI wish to expand their Club and believe a larger facility and more training times will facilitate that expansion. The proposal they have submitted (refer to Appendix 1) would use the vacant land at 11 Vennell Street to build one of the two options shown in Appendix 2 and 3 (both options include building a new hall facility). Option 1 uses the garage that is currently being leased to the Bowling Club as a new changing room and ablution block. Option 2 moves the changing room and ablution block to the front of the new facility.

5. Leases Policy for Community and Recreation Groups

The normal approval process for leases to recreation and community groups is via the Regulatory Process Committee, however given the previous papers regarding the disposal of part of Vennell Street, this proposal may be considered in conjunction with the Recommendations of 9 April 2009 SPC meeting.

STDGI has proposed that Wellington City Council lease the land to them at a nominal peppercorn rental for a period of 25 years subject to:

- The premises are made available to the community, when not required by the club,
- The premises are maintained in good order,
- The premises may be used as an educational facility,
- STDGI will maintain and own the building for the period of the original lease,
- A right of renewal for a further period of 25 years, or a standard community group lease back to STDGI

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- After the first 25 year, ownership and maintenance of the facility will be transferred to the Council.

STDGI have only undertaken a preliminary investigation at this stage into the needs of the local community, however they have been in contact with the VKRA.

STDGI has identified the times and days they would require dedicated use of the new facility, any free slot would be offered to other community organisations. (Refer to Appendix 1 under “Community” for full breakdown of times)

No financial information has been provided, but STDGI has requested another year to carry out a full feasibility study including a funding strategy.

6. Assessment

6.1 Leases Policy

STDGI’s proposal, if supported, will eventuate into a request for a ground lease under the Council’s Leases Policy for Community and Recreation Groups (Leases Policy). Therefore this has been considered against the Leases Policy. Applications for fresh leases are assessed against the following criteria.

6.1.1 Strategic Fit

Appendix one to the Leases Policy explains that assessment of strategic fit should consider the Council's most up-to-date strategic statements and relevant strategies. The following are particularly relevant for this application:

- Social and Recreation Policy

Social and Recreation Strategy

The Social and Recreation Strategy identifies strong communities as those that:

Have a robust social infrastructure; that is, there is sound provision of amenities, facilities and key social services; and
Are cohesive; that is, there is a high level of community participation, strong networks and empowered community groups.

In this context infrastructure can be considered as buildings and organisations and cohesion can be considered as relationships and engagement. Both aspects are interdependent and critical to strong communities.

Officer feedback to this proposal: There is no a need for a new recreation facility within this area as there is currently a community hall situated on the same site. The Vogelmorn Hall is not heavily used, with seven (7) regular users and without including the ‘one off’ hall users the average use is 61 hours a month (Of this approximately half of this is used by STDGI).

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While the hall is not heavily used at the moment there is a good mix of activities that meet the needs of the local community. There is scope for the hall to be utilised significantly more by community groups and planning for increased marketing is underway. The addition of a separate building offering space for the community to use would compete with the existing facility which is already under utilised.

6.1.2 Activity Sustainability

Appendix one of the Leases Policy states that judgement is needed as to how sustainable the group or activity is for both the short and medium term. This has a membership, usage, and financial components.

Officer feedback to this proposal: The NZ Societies and Trust website contains information relating to the STDGI financial position. Officers note STDGI have approximately \$7,000 in available funds as at March 2009. SSTDGI has not secured funding for the new facility and have requested up to a further year to achieve this. Therefore the financial sustainability of the proposal can not be assessed at this stage.

6.1.3 Optimal Use of Resources

This criteria is concerned with the level of use of the buildings needs to be considered. Recognition should be given to any circumstances where other factors may limit the ability to expand use such as resource consent conditions.

Officer feedback to this proposal: While STDGI will utilise the new facility very well, their dedicated demand for the building may seriously limit the availability to other community groups or organisations.

STDGI have indicated their facility would be available for other potential users between 8am and 3:30pm daily. These are currently the available hours the existing community hall struggles to fill. During the weekend the new recreational facility would be available most Saturday's. The existing community hall is currently utilised between the hours of 8:30am and 1pm on Saturday and STDGI are the only users on Sunday.

STDGI have advised that they would require the new facility up to ten (10) Saturdays or Sunday's a year for seminars, gradings and combined trainings.

6.1.4 Environmental Impact

Land that is subject to leases is first and foremost for the use of the public. It is therefore important to assess the level of impact that the activity will have on the public use of the land.

Officer feedback to this proposal: It is anticipated issues such as noise, parking, conflict with other uses and the proximity of the new building to surrounding residential properties would need to be considered further.

The application would also need to provide detailed information about the hours of operation and the nature of the activities and uses of the building.

6.1.5 Demonstrated Need and Support from the Community

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The level of support for the activity needs to be assessed. Activities that provide services across the community are likely to provide more community benefit. Consideration should be given to whether other similar activities are available nearby.

Officer feedback to this proposal: No indication has been given as to what other community organisations would use this facility. Use of the existing smaller hall is only 61 hours per month. This indicates there is plenty of opportunity for alternative community groups or organisations to utilise the existing hall if there was a need identified.

The table below shows the current hours the community hall is utilised.

Vogelmorn Hall - Regular Users	
Activity	Scheduled Days 2009
Dancing Classes	Saturdays 12pm - 1pm
Martial Arts Club (STDGI)	Mondays 7th & 14th Sep, 5th & 12th Oct, 2nd & 9th Nov - Evenings Thursdays 5pm - 8:45pm Sundays 3pm - 6:45pm
Tai Chi Classes	Saturdays - 8:30am - 10am
Dance Lessons	Saturdays - 10:30am - 11:30am
Dance Classes	Wednesdays 4:30pm- 9pm
School	No regular time but usually during the week 1:30pm-2:30pm
Badminton	Tuesdays - 5:45pm- 6:45pm
Singing	Mondays - 7:30pm - 9pm

6.1.6 Need for a Lease

Appendix one of the Leases Policy sets out the following questions that should be considered under this criteria:

Is Council support needed for the activity to occur?

Is open space/public land required?

Is a lease the best option?

Officer feedback to this proposal: Given the low user numbers of the existing hall it is questionable whether there is a need for increased community space. While the proposed facility will be considerably larger, with modern amenities it will not necessarily support the breadth of activities needed to respond to a local need, if there is one. A barrier to participation is often cost of access and again it is not clear how cost of access would be determined for the new facility or if there would be a way to ensure low cost usage for other community groups.

The new facility would be primarily for STDGI and other activities would have to coexist comfortably. The proposed facility could potentially pull existing or new hall hire customers and revenue away from the community hall reducing usage further.

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Although there isn't a need or requirement to lease the vacant area of 11 Vennell Street due to the existing community hall being available, other options have been brought to our attention.

A similar proposal already sits in Council about the upgrading of an existing facility on Council land on Bell Road with Brooklyn Northern United Football Club (BNU). The BNU are looking for partners to share in the redevelopment of this building. In addition officers are aware of a number of buildings within the area that have leases to community or recreational groups where there is opportunity for other groups to share their facilities.

In terms of management of Council assets and use of community facilities, we believe that the addition of another building on Council land is not appropriate. It would be to the detriment of the usage of the existing Community Hall next door and potentially take usage away from an existing Council facility.

The fact that the building would default back to Council ownership after 25 years is not ideal, as there is already a Community Hall at the site that services the local community. An additional building is a significant asset for Council to have to manage in the long term.

7. Conclusion

On full consideration of the STDGI proposal, although there may be benefits to STDGI having a new recreational facility on the vacant site at Vennell Street, Council officers do not support STDGI's request to lease the vacant land at 11 Vennell Street for a recreation facility.

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