

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS
APPOINTED BY THE HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of an application for subdivision and land use consent
for the Amberfied development

BETWEEN **WESTON LEA LIMITED**
Applicant

AND **HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL**
Consent authority

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JAMIE SIRL ON BEHALF OF HAMILTON CITY
COUNCIL**

Dated 23rd April 2019

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INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is James (Jamie) Grant Sirl. I hold the position of Senior Planner, within the Community Group, for the Hamilton City Council (HCC). I have held this position for 3 years.
2. I hold the qualifications of Master of Planning Practice and Bachelor of Arts majoring in Geography. I am an associate member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and member of the New Zealand Recreation Association. I have had approximately 8 years' experience in planning and compliance roles in Local Government. The bulk of my experience has involved providing specialist parks and open space input into the Council's assessment of resource consent applications under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), and strategic planning and policy development relating to parks and open spaces under the Reserves Act 1977 and Local Government Act 2002.
3. In my role as Senior Planner, Community Group I am responsible for a number of aspects of park provision and management. More recently this has included leading specialist parks input into plan changes, resource consent applications for residential subdivisions (particularly where there are requirements for land vesting for reserve purposes), and open space provision policy development. Much of my current focus is planning, and working with developers to ensure quality parks and open spaces are delivered in the Peacocke area of Hamilton.
4. I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court's Practice Note dated 2014. I have complied with that Code when preparing my written statement of evidence. This evidence is within my area of expertise, however where I have relied on the evidence of others it has been acknowledged.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

5. I have considered the justification for requiring a sports park to be provided as part of the proposed Amberfield development in Peacocke area of Hamilton.

Assessment of land requirements for sports parks in Peacocke

6. I have considered a number of Hamilton City Council and external documents in preparing my evidence. The following two reports have strongly informed my evidence:
 - a) Provision of Sports Parks within the Peacocke Structure Plan area (prepared by Xyst Limited on behalf of Hamilton City Council) (Xyst report). This report is referred to in the evidence of Robin Rawson dated 23rd April 2019..
 - b) Peacocke Active Sports Parks – Location Assessment (prepared by City Planning Unit, Hamilton City Council) (Location Assessment). This report is referred to in the evidence of Mark Roberts dated 23rd April 2019..
7. In considering the Xyst report and the Location Assessment, I concur with the methodology and conclusions of both reports.
8. My assessment of the need for a sports park within Amberfield concludes that:
 - a) The 1.2ha per 1000 residents (total 24ha based on a projected population of 20,000) recommended by the Xyst report is an appropriate starting point for land provision for sports parks in Peacocke.

- b) The 1.2ha per 1000 residents has been informed by a current level of service for HCC winter field provision. This model is an appropriate approach to determining land requirements for sports parks.
- c) Sports parks provide for a range of functions and activities beyond their capacity for winter fields; the exercise to determine land requirements should not be reduced to an assessment of how to accommodate a projected winter field requirement for Amberfield or Peacocke population.
- d) If the projected household yield or population of Peacocke is lower than the estimates used to inform the Xyst report it would not, even in the case of a significant reduction in yield or population, negate the need for two sports parks in Peacocke based on the 1.2ha per 1000 residents level of service.
- e) In considering the Xyst finding that demand generated by Amberfield (based on an estimated population of 2,300 results in a requirement of 2.76ha), it is not appropriate to consider this demand in isolation of the wider sports park needs of Peacocke.
- f) Providing for large scale infrastructure in the form of sports parks to meet the wider sports park needs of Peacocke requires a strategic approach to infrastructure delivery. One that considers the most appropriate locations for sports parks and securing these locations to ensure that HCC can provide for the future needs of the area.
- g) The Location Assessment concludes that, on the basis that two parks are required, that the sites currently identified in the

Peacocke Structure Plan are the preferred sites based on their ability to accommodate large scale sports parks, location in relation to the planned transportation network and distribution within the wider Peacocke area.

- h) In applying the Xyst report findings as a guide to required levels of provisions, HCC's Open Spaces and Facilities Unit hold the view that an approximately 7ha area of land within the Amberfield development is required.
- i) In addition to the 7ha sports park in Amberfield, HCC has progressed the preparation of a notice of requirement for the northern site identified in the Peacocke Structure Plan and supported by the Location Assessment. The area of the northern sports park is approximately 14ha. This would result in a total of 21 ha of sports park land in Peacocke.
- j) My view is that this total is consistent with the Xyst recommendations, representing a conservative but appropriate level of land allocation for sports parks.
- k) The effect of not providing for a 7ha sports park in Amberfield would impact the ability of HCC to adequately provide for the needs of Peacocke. This is primarily due to the lack of appropriate alternative sites.
- l) The long-term result of this would place additional demand on existing sports park and field infrastructure, in addition to the demands of infill growth. In my view this is an inappropriate approach to dealing with the effects of Amberfield, and wider Peacocke. There is no existing capacity within our current winter fields, and any potential capacity in the form of upgraded

infrastructure or new fields should be allocated meet the demand of infill growth. Reliance on existing infrastructure also to some degree shifts the costs of responding to the demand from Peacocke to the wider city.

- m) My recommendation is that to ensure that the required sports park infrastructure can be provided to meet the needs of Amberfield and the Peacocke area, granting of a consent that requires the vesting of the proposed 7ha area of sports park is required. This recommendation is on the basis that HCC acknowledges that the negotiations with Amberfield regarding what compensation might be payable is a separate conversation and subject to a separate process. I have proceeded on the basis that this process is confined to an examination of the proposed land uses in the area and determining the strategic infrastructure, including parks, which is necessary and essential to service those land uses.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

9. In the context of the Weston Lea application (Amberfield), my involvement to date has included attending the applicant-led concept planning exercise in 2017, on-going pre- lodgement consultation and advice to the applicant, and initial review of the application for s92 matters, and taking part in meetings with the applicant as part of private developer agreement discussions.
10. Part way through the regulatory assessment process, HCC, in their role of infrastructure provision and management, determined that, due to the approach taken by the applicant in respect of the provision of active sports parks, it was necessary to lodge a submission opposing the application in part. At this point my involvement in the process was

limited to coordinating the Open Spaces and Facilities Unit related aspects of the HCC submission, as the unit responsible for the provision and management of parks and open spaces.

11. I am familiar with the Amberfield site and the wider Peacocke area having walked over the application site twice and visited the wider Peacocke area numerous times.
12. The scope of my evidence relates to the Open Spaces and Facilities Unit aspects of the submission made on the Amberfield Application on behalf of HCC. In particular, the requirement for the provision of an approximate 7ha area of land for an active recreation reserve/sports park (sports park) within the Amberfield development site.
13. My evidence is prepared on the basis that Open Spaces and Facilities Unit are generally supportive of proposed open space network as outlined in the 'Amberfield Open Space Framework' and supporting information provided as part of the application, including additional information provided under s92 of the RMA.
14. This support is on the understanding that the Applicant is providing the parks and reserves as set out in its Resource Consent Applications, at their cost, provided to avoid, mitigate, and remedy the effects of the proposal.
15. In preparing my evidence I have relied on two reports which inform my view on the need for an approximately 7ha sports park:
 - a) Provision of Sports Parks within the Peacocke Structure Plan area (prepared by Xyst Limited on behalf of Hamilton City Council), Attached as Appendix A.

- b) Peacocke Active Sports Parks – Location Assessment (prepared by City Planning Unit, Hamilton City Council), Attached as Appendix B.

16. I have also considered the following information:

- a) Hamilton City Council Long-term Plan 2018-2028
- b) Hamilton City Council 2018-48 Infrastructure Strategy, Volume 2.
- c) Hamilton City Council Open Spaces Plan 2013
- d) Hamilton City Council Open Spaces Provision Policy 2018
- e) Hamilton City Council, Operative Sports Park Management Plan 2009
- f) Hamilton City Council, Reserves in Peacocke (Draft) 2006
- g) Hamilton City Council, 2018-28 Parks and Open Spaces Activity Management Plan
- h) Hamilton City Council, Play Strategy 2019
- i) Hamilton City Council, Hamilton's Housing Market and Economy Growth Indicator Report March 2019.
- j) Hamilton City Council, Operative District Plan 2017.
- k) Hamilton City Council Peacocke Structure Plan 2007.
- l) Hamilton City Winter Sports Fields: Capacity and Demand 2013 prepared by Momentum Research and Evaluation Limited on behalf

of Hamilton City Council).

- m) Peacocke Structure Plan Landscape and Urban Design Assessment prepared by Boffa Miskell for Hamilton City Council, June 2006.
- n) Sport New Zealand, Community Sport Strategy 2015-20
- o) Sport New Zealand, Active NZ 2017
- p) Sport Waikato, Moving Waikato 2025
- q) University of Waikato, National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis, NIDEA Low Nov 2016 population figures.
- r) World Health Organisation, Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-30

CONTEXT

Parks and Open Spaces Legislative and Strategic Framework

17. In preparing my evidence I have considered HCC's role in ensuring the delivery of parks and open space for residents of Hamilton. This includes HCC's planning and policy framework with respect of parks and open spaces. My evidence also touches on the importance of open space provision in contributing to the wellbeing of communities.
18. Council's obligations in respect to the provision of sports parks, facilities and related infrastructure are under the Local Government Act 2002 (Act). Section 11A (e) of the Act specifies reserves, recreational and community amenities as a core service that Council should have particular regard to in performing its role. As such, Council must meet the current and future needs of the Hamilton community for good

quality parks and open spaces, in an efficient and effective way.

19. By meeting this LGA requirement, we also meet our obligations under the Reserves Act 1977.
20. Under the Reserves Act the Council has a responsibility to provide for the preservation and management of reserve land for the benefit and enjoyment and access of the public; to ensure preservation of indigenous flora and fauna and natural ecosystems and landscapes and to ensure the protection of the natural character of lakes and rivers.

Open Spaces Plan 2013

21. Council's overarching strategy for open space is outlined in the Council's Open Spaces Plan. This plan is a commitment to the community on Council's 50-year strategic direction for Hamilton's parks and open spaces.
22. As outlined in the Open Space Plan, open space is a critical component of ensuring quality of life for communities.
23. Open spaces contribute to social wellbeing of communities through providing places to socialise and connect.
24. Sport and recreation plays a positive role in individual's lives, within communities and leads to many long-term benefits including health, social, environmental and cultural outcomes.

Open Spaces Provision Policy 2018

25. Council's Open Spaces Provision Policy 2018 outlines the general level of service and approach to open space provision. With regard to sports

parks, the intention is that these will be provided as multi-functional community parks. The policy guidance is that a minimum 7ha park is recommended where a community park is to provide for sports fields and facilities. HCC has a level of service established in the Open Space Provision Policy that community parks will be within a 1500m walking distance of all residents.

Play Strategy 2019

26. Acknowledging that the Play Strategy was only recently adopted and has not directly informed the need for sports parks in Peacocke, it signals HCC's most current strategy on providing for active recreation opportunities. The Play Strategy outlines a broad direction for organised sport and other recreational activities in Hamilton. In terms of Council's purpose, it ensures the provision of spaces, facilities and services to enable everyone to play and be active. The strategy also takes account of changing sport and recreation trends as well as population change and growth.

2018-28 Parks and Open Spaces Activity Management Plan

27. The Council's 2018-28 Parks and Open Spaces Activity Management Plan outlines the issues and implications relating to the provision of sports parks and facilities in response to growth, including:
 - a) Poor provision and quality of parks and open spaces in growth areas, resulting in poor access to recreation, social and environmental experiences; and
 - b) Lost opportunity to acquire undeveloped land; retrofitting is cost prohibitive.

Long-term Plan 2018-28 and 2018-48 Infrastructure Strategy

28. Council approved funding for land purchase and development of parks in Peacocke in the 2018-28 Long-term Plan. This was the first time Council had funded the purchase of land and development for sports parks for the Peacocke area. This aligned funding and delivery of other core infrastructure such as the strategic roading network and utilities required to enable urban residential development, with an ability to fund and secure land for sports parks in Peacocke. Currently the bulk of the funding for land purchase for two sports parks is in the 2020/21 and 2027/28 financial years.
29. The funding for the development of the first sports park is currently phased as basic development to ensure the park is useable for informal recreation in 2022/23, with field and building infrastructure in 2026/27.
30. The funding for the development of the second sports park is currently outside of the 2018- 28 Long-term Plan. In Council's 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy, the basic development is signalled in financial year 2029/30, with field and building infrastructure in 2031/32.
31. The basic rationale informing the timing of funding is that land for sports parks needs to be secured early, with the timing of the development of the sports parks deferred on the basis that a resident population and associated demand for local sports fields and facilities will take some time to establish. No detailed analysis of the estimated rate of residential uptake has been undertaken to inform the timing of the development of fields and facilities to date.

Council's Community Outcomes

32. The Council's Community Outcomes are vital in guiding the plans,

strategies, services and projects we deliver to the city and its residents. The Community Outcomes are fundamental to our operations and our decision-making.

- a) A great river city Our city embraces its natural environment and has green spaces, features and community facilities that make it a great place to live, work, play and visit.
- b) A city that embraces growth Our city has infrastructure that meets our current demands, supports growth and helps build a strong economy.

Value of sports parks and facilities to community wellbeing

- 33. The importance of providing for active recreation reserve/organised sport open space in contributing to wellbeing is well-established and well-documented.
- 34. World Health Organisation Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-30 sets a vision for more active people for a healthier world with a mission to ensure that all people have access to safe and enabling environments and to diverse opportunities to be physically active in their daily lives, as a means of improving individual and community health and contributing to the social, cultural and economic development of all nations. WHO recognise the importance of enabling physical activity for the wellbeing of communities. The provision of sports parks and facilities is one component of enabling active people.
- 35. Sport New Zealand's Community Sport Strategy 2015-20 outlines the value of sport in contributing to healthier bodies and minds, enhancing communities, and benefits to the economy.

36. SportNZ Active NZ 2017, found Participants and non-participants want to participate more. Sixty-four per cent of young people and 74 per cent of adults want to increase their participation.
37. Sport Waikato Moving Waikato 2025 recognises the importance of working together to grow participation in sport, recreation and physical activity within the Waikato region. HCC are a key partner in achieving the outcomes of Sport Waikato.
38. HCC's role is to ensure that infrastructure is provided to facilitate active communities. The adequate and accessible provision of sports parks is a key part of this.

Function of Sports Parks

39. The primary function of sports parks is to provide for sports fields and facilities. In addition to sports fields and facilities, these larger parks provide large flat useable grass area for informal recreation and spaces for community facilities, activities and events. Most of Council's sports parks also provide a community park function.

Current provision of sports parks and fields

40. Across the city there is approximately 500ha of sports park across 45 parks which equates to approximately 3ha per 1000 residents.
41. The sports park category that makes up the 500ha includes a range of sizes, configuration topography and activities including activities in addition to sport and recreation.
42. On face value this may indicate that there is a significant supply of

undeveloped sports park land, however that is not the case.

43. To provide context, the following are examples of sports parks that make up the 500ha that do not provide exclusively for winter sports fields, but do play an important role in providing for other sports codes, recreation opportunities and other areas such as vegetated gully areas of ecological value:

- a) Fairfield Park (7ha) includes skatepark and community buildings;
- b) Innes Common (24ha) includes yacht club and hockey turfs;
- c) Lugton Park (9ha) which includes a number of indoor facilities and tennis courts;
- d) Mahoe Park (8ha) Under development for baseball;
- e) Minogue Park (43ha) includes netball, BMX track and lake area;
- f) Pukete Farm Park (72ha) Equestrian area and mountain biking tracks.

44. There are also sports parks used exclusively, and efficiently for winter sports fields, for example:

- a) Discovery Park (3 winter fields, 5 hectares);
- b) Elliot Park (5 winter fields, 7ha);
- c) Flagstaff Park (3 winter fields, 6ha);
- d) Galloway Park (4.5 winter fields, 7ha);

- e) Gower Park (7.5 winter fields, 15ha);
 - f) Jansen Park (5.5 winter fields, 11ha).
45. Within HCC's 45 sports parks there are 96 developed and bookable (grass) winter fields. This is at a senior-sized equivalent. HCC currently provides two sand-carpet fields (Gower Park and Porritt Stadium).
46. Current winter field provision is at capacity (Momentum report 2013, and subsequent staff analysis), with recently funded irrigation and drainage renewals and upgrades to existing winter fields required to begin to bring fields up to an appropriate quality.
47. Winter fields are currently under development, planned and funded in response to increasing demand from growth outside of Peacocke. For example, the Rototuna area of the city has 5 fields currently under development (Rototuna Sports Park, 12ha) and another 4 fields planned (Hare Puke Park, 9ha) for development in 2020/21 financial year. These field developments are in response to demand generated from the Rototuna population.

Weston Lea development (Amberfield) and wider Peacocke area

48. The Peacocke area is 720ha, which HCC has projected to accommodate approximately 8,400 households with an approximate population of 18-20,000 people. These population and household projections are consistent with the demand-based work undertaken by Waikato's National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis (NIDEA low 2016).
49. The Amberfield proposal includes 805 residential lots (approximately

690 on the basis that the active recreation reserve is provided) and covers 105ha which accounts for approximately 15% of the Peacocke area.

50. The character of Peacocke is a mix of riverfront terracing, rolling hillside and a significant network of gully.
51. The application proposes to vest a high-quality network that provides for a range of open space functions but does not propose to vest land for a sports park as indicated by the Peacocke Structure Plan.

Hamilton City Council Operative District Plan - Peacocke Structure Plan

52. The Peacocke Structure Plan Identifies two sports parks in indicative locations to serve the wider Peacocke area.
53. The locations are informed primarily by topography, and the anticipated road network and general distribution and accessibility.
54. The two indicative locations in the structure plan are large flat areas that can easily accommodate large flat parks without significant land modification. This approach is consistent with the objectives of the Peacocke Structure Plan which look to minimise modification of the existing landforms (3.4.1.3 and 3.4.1.3b; 3.4.1.11 and 3.4.1.11a in particular).
55. The 2007 Structure Plan (notified and decisions versions) identified areas for two active recreation reserves – approximately six-hectare northern reserve and a ten-hectare southern reserve. A Peacocke Structure Plan Landscape and Urban Design Assessment prepared by Boffa Miskell for Hamilton City Council (June 2006) section 12 page 32 identified slopes less than 2 degrees of a minimum 5 ha. This assessment

informed the two optimal locations for sports parks identified in the Structure Plan.

56. Land area requirements were initially informed by 2006 citywide level of service (fields/1000 population) and population projections.
57. The 2006 level of service was 0.78 senior winter sports fields per 1000 population.
58. On this basis, 16 fields were required for the demand generated by Peacocke (at estimated 20,000 residents). 7 of these fields were anticipated at the time to be accommodated within existing sports parks (Mahoe Park, Te Anau Park and Fitzroy Park) in the vicinity of Peacocke, but outside of the Peacocke Structure Plan Area.
59. The remaining 9 fields informed the need for two parks in Peacocke, three within the six- hectare northern reserve and 6 within the ten- hectare southern reserve.

Pre-lodgement consultation

60. During initial consultation between HCC and consultants acting on behalf of Weston Lea Ltd, HCC staff advised that a minimum 7ha park was required in the general location identified in the Structure Plan.
61. A request for a 7ha sports park was informed by the initial work (2006) undertaken to inform the Peacocke Structure Plan, and HCC's draft Open Space Provision Policy. The advice on the southern park was also on the basis that discussion during the Amberfield concept plan development established agreement that the indicative northern location for a sports park would be better placed to accommodate the

larger of the two parks.

62. The following guidance was provided to the Applicant (Luke O'Dwyer email 15 November 2017) as a guide to inform master planning/concept planning:

- The size of the two parks is not fixed, an approximate 7ha/9ha split is suggested as a minimum.
- A well-configured 9ha park would accommodate 6 fields and associated facilities and open space functionality. Configuration should provide 2x3 winter fields/3 cricket. Approximate envelope of 340m x 150m.
- A well-configured 7ha park would accommodate 4 fields and associated facilities and open space functionality. Configuration should provide 2x2 winter fields/2 cricket. Approximate envelope of 260m x 150m.
- A total of 16ha for the projected 18,000 residents would equate to .88ha per 1000 population. Noting that the two parks would be configured to provide efficient use of land to meet the community's needs.

63. An email sent to Council on behalf of the applicant dated 12 February 2018 confirmed that the application to be lodged would not include vesting of a sports park on the basis that 'HCC have discussed the sports park requirement but not formalised an acquisition process'.

64. HCC have in the recent past (over the last 10 years) acquired land for sports parks identified in structure plans for greenfield areas through negotiation with landowners, with land vesting as part of subdivision applications. The one exception is Te Manatu Park in Rototuna, which was designated to protect the land for a sports park in 2003.

ASSESSMENT OF SPORTS PARK LAND REQUIREMENTS IN PEACOCKE

65. A Hamilton City Council adopted level of provision for sports parks or

sports field provision does not currently exist to inform land requirements in greenfield areas.

66. To ensure a well-informed position on sports park land needs in Peacocke, a review of HCC's approach to sports park provision in Peacocke was undertaken. My evidence relies on two reports:
- a) Provision of Sports Parks within the Peacocke Structure Plan area (prepared by Xyst Limited on behalf of Hamilton City Council), Attached as Appendix A.
 - b) Peacocke Active Sports Parks – Location Assessment (prepared by City Planning Unit, Hamilton City Council), Attached as Appendix B.
67. Both Xyst Limited's Mrs Rawson, HCC's City Planning Unit's Mark Roberts have presented evidence at this hearing, however I have summarised the findings of these reports in my evidence to support my findings.

Sports park land area requirements

68. As previously outlined in my evidence, historically HCC has used a current winter field level of service to project future land requirements in greenfield development areas.
69. Council's current level of service for winter fields based on an estimated citywide population of 161,000 (2018) is approximately 0.6 fields/1000 residents.
70. Xyst Limited were engaged to undertake an independent assessment of how to best forecast the land requirements to meet the sports park

needs of the Peacocke area. The purpose of this was to help in determining whether HCC's historic approach of projecting land requirements for sports parks in greenfield areas was appropriate and provide recommendations on an appropriate level of provision.

71. The Xyst report confirms:

- a) the HCC current level of service for winter fields is an appropriate indicator for land requirements for sports parks;
- b) replicating HCC current level of service for sports park land (park land categorised as having a sports park function) is not an appropriate indicator of land requirements for sports parks;
- c) HCC's level of service of 0.6 fields/1000 is below the mean and median of comparative New Zealand's territorial authorities; and
- d) benchmarking across New Zealand's territorial authorities confirms that a ratio of land to fields to result in a functional overall park is approximately 2:1.

72. The Xyst report recommends:

- a) 1.2ha per 1000 population be used to inform land requirements for sports parks in Peacocke to maintain HCC level of service; and
- b) As a starting point 24ha of land is required for sports parks to meet a projected population of 20,000 to maintain HCC level of service.

73. I accept the finding of the Xyst report and I have adopted the

recommendations to inform my view as a starting point for determining the sports park land requirements in Peacocke. This is on the basis that a reduction in projected population would broadly correspond in a reduction of land requirements. It is also on the basis that the projected land requirement from the Amberfield development is not to be considered in isolation, in that it would be not be suitable for Weston Lea to provide the equivalent of a 2.76ha sports park as this would not result in a functional or efficient sports park.

74. A review of the recommended ratio of 1.2ha per 1000 residents level of service applied (using Census 2013 household average residents of 2.7 per household) on the basis that predicted yield of Peacocke is not achieved is presented in the below table.

Estimated residential yield	Projected population (Av 2.7 per HAU residents per dwelling)	Land area for sports park (at 1.2ha per 1000 residents)
5,000	13,500	16.2
6,000	16,200	19.4
7,000	18,900	22.7
8,000	21,600	25.9
8,400	22,680	27.2
9,000	24,300	29.2

75. In considering a significant reduction in projected yield, for example reducing from 8,400 to 6,000 residential dwellings (29% reduction) the above analysis indicates that approximately 19 hectares would be required. My view is that even in the case of a relatively significant reduction in yield or population there would remain a justified need for two sports parks in Peacocke, due to the feasibility of accommodating a

19ha sports park in Peacocke.

76. The resulting question is then whether HCC is at risk of under provision of sports parks if the yield or population in Peacocke exceeds projections. Under this scenario, I am confident that HCC would have adequate time to consider options to address the potential need for an increased amount of land as either an extension of the southern sports park or a third sports park potentially in the southern area of Peacocke currently located in Waipa.

Sports park location options

77. The indicative locations and background informing the location of active recreation reserves within the Peacocke Structure Plan Area has been outlined in section 5.48 to 5.56 of my evidence.
78. HCC's Open Spaces and Facilities Unit engaged HCC's City Planning Unit to undertake a review of potential site locations for sports park in Peacocke area.
79. As outlined in Mr Roberts' evidence, this exercise concluded that the two indicative active recreation reserves identified in the current Peacocke Structure Plan are the most logical and feasible locations on the basis there is a need to accommodate two sports parks.
80. These two locations ensure an appropriate distribution across the Peacocke area, particularly from a walkability perspective.

Discussion

81. The following points are made to ensure there is a clear understanding of the HCC approach towards the projected land requirements and

delivery of sports parks to meet the recreational demands from the Peacocke community:

- a) HCC have established a base land requirement to ensure that the future Peacocke community, including Amberfield, is adequately serviced with sports parks. It is not simply a matter of projecting winter sports field requirements associated with the Amberfield, or wider Peacocke area, and then understanding how to accommodate the winter fields within an existing or future parks network.
- b) It is also not a matter of establishing the demand associated with the Amberfield development and providing for this in the form of land in isolation of the wider needs of the future Peacocke community for sports parks. If we were to only consider the demands of each residential subdivision, this would result in a fragmented and inefficiently small sports parks. The strategic approach of determining the long-term needs of the Peacocke catchment and responding to this demand through the delivery of large scale sports park infrastructure is considered the most appropriate and efficient approach.
- c) The approach used informs land requirements to ensure appropriate levels of overall sports park provision for Peacocke. The result being the acquisition of enough land to cater appropriately for all sporting codes, not just winter sporting codes. As winter codes generate the greatest demand for land area, this approach is the most reliable available to ensure an appropriate level of flexibility of these sports parks to cater to changing trends in recreation. There is also the added efficiency and wider community benefit of the sports park providing for multi-functional facilities and use that contributes to connected local

communities.

- d) Winter field demand associated from Amberfield, or the wider Peacocke area should not be assumed to be able to be accommodated within existing sports parks. This would place pressure on the existing network of sports parks and infrastructure additional the demands from intensification and infill growth. Approximately 50% of Hamilton's population growth is currently occurring within the existing urban area. On this basis the potential to increase the capacity of existing fields and infrastructure through upgrades or new infrastructure in my view is a separate matter to providing parks in Peacocke. The assumption that the existing sports field network can accommodate the needs of Peacocke also neglects to consider the impacts of distribution and accessibility on participation and use of facilities.
- e) Alternatives to natural turf fields (grass) such as sand or artificial turf do provide an option to increase hours of field capacity, as does the addition of flood lighting. However, to argue that sports parks in Peacocke may not be required due the potential to increase winter field capacity within existing parks ignores that winter field projections are used to inform land for sports park that provide a range of activities in addition to winter fields. This type of infrastructure will be considered when developing detailed plans for the proposed Peacocke sports park where appropriate to best utilise the park to meet the needs of Peacocke.
- f) Timing of securing land for sports parks is supported by the approved funding within Council's 2018-28 Long-term Plan. Deferral of securing land, particularly due to the limited sites available in Peacocke that can accommodate a large sports park

without significant land modification, reduces the certainty and likelihood of HCC being able to provide this infrastructure. One reason for this is that the value of land will only increase as enabling infrastructure is constructed, and the Peacocke area is developed. From an HCC perspective planning, funding and acquiring land for sports park as soon as possible will provide the most certainty of delivery of an adequate provision of sports parks in Peacocke.

Assessment of land requirements for sports parks and location

82. Acknowledging that yield and population projections are subject to change due to a range of factors, my professional opinion is that we are already applying the conservative end of the range of land provision requirements per population.
83. We are applying a current level of service for winter fields (0.6ha/1000 residents) that is below what it was when the Peacocke Structure Plan was first developed (0.78/1000 residents, and also below a mean level of service of comparable Territorial Authorities established by Xyst (0.78/1000 residents).
84. However, it is acknowledged the land area requirement compared to the notified version of the 2009 Peacocke Structure Plan has increased. This is a result of a more robust analysis of land requirements, in the form of the Xyst recommendations.
85. Also, to a smaller degree due to a shift in approach in terms of the ability to accommodate some of the demand generated from Peacocke within the surrounding sports parks. This is in part due to a shift in terms of expecting greenfield growth areas to provide for the demand generated from the residential development of these areas, and that any potential capacity in the existing parks network is required to provide for the

demand generated from infill growth. Of the surrounding sports parks identified in the *Reserves in Peacocke (Draft) 2006* as having capacity available to respond to the initial stage one of Peacocke (approximately 500 dwellings) Mahoe Park has now been allocated exclusively for baseball, there are two fields on Fitzroy Park currently used, and Te Anau Park presents challenges for senior grade use.

86. The Xyst report establishes a general 1 field to 2ha ratio as a guide to result in a functional sports park. I agree with this finding, which is reinforced by the examples of existing parks outlined in section 5.38. However, these examples do illustrate that depending on the characteristics of the site and surrounding land, and configuration of the park, greater efficiency in land from a sports field perspective can be achieved.
87. Informed by both the Xyst report and the HCC Location Assessment, in addition to the requirement for 7ha within Amberfield, HCC have progressed a notice of requirement process to secure the northern sports park location. The concept plan for the proposed northern sports park is approximately 14ha accommodating 6 winter fields and associated facilities and informal recreation area. HCC have worked closely with the Ministry of Education on their aspirations for this site for a school. The concept for the 7ha southern park prepared by the Applicant suggests that the park can adequately accommodate four winter fields.
88. The total area of land required for sports park being approximately 21ha, accommodating up to 10 winter fields.
89. Of the two parks, the larger of the two parks is located at the northern location (approximately 14ha) in closer proximity to the existing urban area, with the smaller of the two the southern park (approximately 7ha)

located within the Amberfield development and within close proximity to the suburban centre.

90. The provision of both parks will service the majority of the Peacocke community with a community park function within a 1500m walking catchment.

Effects of not vesting the 7ha sports park

91. Due to a lack of suitable site options to accommodate an appropriately sized sports park, not providing for the 7ha sports park within Amberfield compromises the ability of HCC to provide for the future sports field and facility needs, and community park needs of the future residents of Amberfield and wider Peacocke community.
92. A sub-optimal provision of sports parks in Peacocke would require HCC rely on the existing network of sports parks and fields cater to the demands from future Peacocke residents. This approach gives no consideration to the demand generated from infill growth. It would likely result in a combination of adversely impacting on HCC's ability to maintain the current level of service for winter fields, providing for other sporting codes, and a reduction of sports park area used for activities other than organised sport. Poor access to sports parks and facilities could result in lower participation rates. It will also give rise to inefficient transportation and connectivity outcomes for the community.
93. Contrary to the position of the Applicant, approving the proposed residential development without the vesting of the 7ha sports park for residential dwellings increases the uncertainty of HCC being able to acquire the land.

CONCLUSIONS

94. Not providing for the 7ha sports park as part of the Weston Lea application will impact HCC's ability to ensure that adequate open space active recreation of open space that provide a range of activities will have an adverse impact on the opportunities for the Peacocke.
95. My professional opinion is that the ability of HCC to obtain certainty would be severely compromised if the application was approved without requiring the provision of the 7ha sports park.
96. HCC acknowledge that the provision of a 7ha area of land for a sports park is required to cater to the demands of an area greater than the Weston Lea application, and therefore accept that compensation for the purchase of the area of land is required.

Relief sought

97. If consent is granted, it only be granted if the proposal is amended to provide for the 7ha active recreation reserve at the location indicated on the structure plan, by removing the current subdivision and residential land uses from that area as depicted in the proposal and replacing it with an open space. The overall subdivision will need to be reconfigured to provide for this essential structure plan requirement.
98. I have also considered the option of creating flexibility within the subdivision for the two alternative land uses on the basis that the land is established as a sports park, but that if HCC does not exercise rights to acquire and develop the land within a certain time frame, that it could revert to residential land use. I understand that approach may require an *Augiers* condition, but note that HCC would be open to this kind of

solution.

Dated this 23rd day of April 2019

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J Sirl', written in a light grey or blue ink.

J Sirl