

My name is Sarah Bell- President of this Taihape Tennis Club.

Background

We welcome the proposed Amenities Block as it shows the Council's commitment to sport in the community, as well as commitment to Taihape.

Our submission is about revitalising tennis in Taihape, working together with the Council to upgrade existing infrastructure and realising the growth of tennis in our community

Taihape Tennis's vision is to be a vibrant and thriving, whanau-oriented tennis club where our community can play, learn, grow, and socialise.

Our club was established in 1908. In the last few years, we have experienced growing membership and interest in tennis. The rise of community awareness around health, fitness and mental wellbeing are important but also tennis is a popular, accessible, and inexpensive sport. It plays a crucial role for our largely rural membership.

We currently have 120 members including juniors. We have experienced around 10% growth year on year over the last 5 years., almost 50:50 men and women with 43% Maori membership.

We hold club nights on Thursdays during summer from October to March (16 weeks) providing both competitive and social competitions. We have wide attendance by families .We have also provided intensive training for juniors year round with a professional coach from Wanganui.

It is clear to our members and committee that our facilities are insufficient and inadequate for the number of people wanting to play tennis in Taihape. Currently, we have six tennis courts (5 that are useable) and the lease of a small administration and storage space underneath the Taihape Squash building. One court is to be decommissioned to make way for the new Amenities Block. We also use four courts at Taihape Area School. In the 20/21 summer season, we had to turn away some of the locals wanting to participate due to a lack of facilities.

Opportunity

We propose that Taihape Tennis become the primary user of a renovated and upgraded Kokako Street Hall with two new tennis courts being built directly in front of the hall and two greenspace areas being developed on either sides of the courts.

We envisage that Taihape Tennis and the Council would co-manage the usage of the Hall to ensure that all current user groups have access to the spaces for meetings, community events and storage, although we are open to any arrangement that the Council considers is most appropriate.

We also believe that the upgrading of the Hall and the development of greenspace areas will provide opportunities for broader use of the Hall for larger community functions or private events.

Our proposal would provide the following facilities for tennis:

- Seven tennis courts overall. (2 new and 5 existing)
- Taihape Tennis clubrooms at Kokako Street Hall.

Kokako St Hall Upgrades

- Large double glazed sliding doors
- A new larger deck and veranda with steps down to the two new courts.
- Refresh and upgrade of the main room, bathroom, kitchen and storage areas.

- Exterior painting. And Roof replacement.

We think that this proposal is a win, win, for tennis, the Taihape community, and the Council.

Some of the benefits are:

For tennis:

- Improved facilities that attract members and coaches to the area
- We can host regional and national tournaments, as well as holiday programmes and special tennis events.
- Enhances relationship between the Council, schools, and the community.

For the community – it will

- Revive the Kokako Street Hall and bowling club area for community and private use
- Pleasant and suitable meeting space with functioning bar, kitchen, and deck area.

Benefits to the Council are:

- Reinvigorates Council land and buildings which are in a state of disrepair.
- Allows the Council's investment to be maximised as Tennis will be able to apply for funding from separate sources.
- Strengthens and enhances the community relationships and connections.
- Consistent with the Memorial Park Management Plan - Part One: Policies 1, 2 and 3.¹

We propose that this project is funded jointly between Rangitikei District Council and Taihape Tennis.

We will seek funds for this proposal through existing funds, grants, and other fundraising.

Approximate costs:

Tennis Courts and Landscaping - \$340,000

Kokako St Hall revitalisation - \$335,000

Total project costs - \$ 675,000

We request the Rangitikei District Council:

- investigates our proposal for the development of two new tennis courts and upgrade of the Kokako St Hall as detailed in our submission; and
- agree to lease the area in front of the Kokako St Hall to Taihape Tennis to construct 2 new tennis courts.

To conclude:

We would like to work in partnership with Rangitikei District Council to create two new tennis courts on the bowling green/croquet area outside the Kokako Street Hall and to upgrade the facilities in and around the Kokako St Hall. We propose co-management and administration of the Hall, but we are open to any different arrangements. Our proposal ensures that there will be no change to the

¹ Rangitikei District Council Taihape Memorial Park Management Plan 2010 (10/RDC/085)

function and storage for current groups using the Hall, and offers a modern, new space for other community and private events.

We are very excited to be able to put this proposal to you for consideration. Thank you for the opportunity.

* I would like to ask the Taihape Community Board to put a resolution to Council for Taihape Tennis to be involved in the Parks, Open Spaces & Sporting Facilities Strategy steering group.

* I would also ask the TCB to ask ~~the~~ RDC to consider & approve the ~~upgrade~~ of drainage & upgrade of the tennis court surface as part of the Amenities Block build project