



**PAPAIOEA**  
PALMERSTON  
NORTH  
CITY

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# **PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL**

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AGENDA

## **SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE**

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**2.00PM, WEDNESDAY 15 APRIL 2026**  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, FIRST FLOOR, CIVIC ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
32 THE SQUARE, PALMERSTON NORTH

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# MEMBERS

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**William Wood (Chairperson)**

**Leonie Hapeta (Deputy Chairperson)**

**Grant Smith (The Mayor)**

**Mark Arnott**

**Brent Barrett**

**Vaughan Dennison**

**Low Findlay (QSM)**

**Hayden Fitzgerald**

**Bonnie Kuru**

**Debi Marshall-Lobb**

**Billy Meehan**

**Orphée Mickalad**

AGENDA ITEMS, IF NOT ATTACHED, CAN BE VIEWED AT

[pncc.govt.nz](http://pncc.govt.nz) | Civic Administration Building, 32 The Square  
City Library | Ashhurst Community Library | Linton Library

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**Waid Crockett**

**Chief Executive | PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL**

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## **SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

15 April 2026

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**1. Karakia Timatanga**

**2. Apologies**

**3. Notification of Additional Items**

Pursuant to Sections 46A(7) and 46A(7A) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, to receive the Chairperson's explanation that specified item(s), which do not appear on the Agenda of this meeting and/or the meeting to be held with the public excluded, will be discussed.

Any additions in accordance with Section 46A(7) must be approved by resolution with an explanation as to why they cannot be delayed until a future meeting.

Any additions in accordance with Section 46A(7A) may be received or referred to a subsequent meeting for further discussion. No resolution, decision or recommendation can be made in respect of a minor item.

**4. Declarations of Interest (if any)**

Members are reminded of their duty to give a general notice of any interest of items to be considered on this agenda and the need to declare these interests.

**5. Public Comment**

To receive comments from members of the public on matters specified on this Agenda or, if time permits, on other Committee matters.

- |            |  |         |
|------------|--|---------|
| <b>6.</b>  | <b>Presentation - New Zealand Rural Games 2026</b>   | Page 7  |
|            | Presentation by Daniel O'Regan, Marketing & Communications Manager and Sponsorship Support, and James Stewart, Chair of the New Zealand Rural Games Trust. |         |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>Presentation - Sport Manawatū</b>   | Page 9  |
|            | Presentation by Kelly Shanks, Chief Executive and Carl Johnstone, General Manager - Partnerships from Sport Manawatū.                                      |         |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>Confirmation of Minutes</b>   | Page 11 |
|            | That the minutes of the Sport & Recreation Committee meeting of 25 February 2026 Part I Public be confirmed as a true and correct record.                  |         |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>Manawatū Community Athletics Track - Annual Report 2025</b>   | Page 15 |
|            | Memorandum, presented by Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks.   |         |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>Hockey Turf at Massey University - Annual Report</b>  | Page 27 |
|            | Memorandum, presented by Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks.   |         |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Manawatū River - Esplanade Strip/Reserve Purchase Akers Road</b>  | Page 37 |
|            | Report, presented by Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks.   |         |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge - Ashhurst Loop Track progress</b>  | Page 47 |
|            | Memorandum, presented by Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks.   |         |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>Committee Work Schedule - April 2026</b>  | Page 55 |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>Karakia Whakamutunga</b>  |         |

**15. Exclusion of Public**

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting listed in the table below.

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for passing this resolution

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public as stated in the above table.



## **PRESENTATION**

**TO:** Sport & Recreation Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 15 April 2026

**TITLE:** Presentation - New Zealand Rural Games 2026

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### **RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE**

- 1. That the Sport & Recreation Committee receive the presentation for information.**
- 

### **SUMMARY**

Daniel O'Regan, Marketing & Communications Manager and Sponsorship Support, and James Stewart, Chair of the New Zealand Rural Games Trust will present the outcomes of the NZ Rural Games, held in Palmerston North 12-14 March 2026.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil



## **PRESENTATION**

**TO:** Sport & Recreation Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 15 April 2026

**TITLE:** Presentation - Sport Manawatū

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### **RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE**

- 1. That the Committee receive the presentation for information.**
- 

### **SUMMARY**

Kelly Shanks, Chief Executive and Carl Johnstone, General Manager - Partnerships from Sport Manawatū will update the Committee on the sport sector.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil



## **PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Sport & Recreation Committee Meeting Part I Public, held in the Council Chamber, First Floor, Civic Administration Building, 32 The Square, Palmerston North on 25 February 2026, commencing at 2.00pm**

- Members Present:** Councillors William Wood (in the Chair), Leonie Hapeta, Mark Arnott, Brent Barrett, Vaughan Dennison, Hayden Fitzgerald, Bonnie Kuru, Debi Marshall-Lobb and Billy Meehan.
- Member Present online:** Lew Findlay.
- Non Members:** Councillors Rachel Bowen and Karen Naylor.
- Apologies:** The Mayor (Grant Smith) (absent on Council business).

#### **Karakia Timatanga**

Councillor Debi Marshall-Lobb opened the meeting with karakia.

#### **1-26 Apologies**

Moved William Wood, seconded Leonie Hapeta.

#### **The COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive the apologies.

Clause 1-26 above was carried 12 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

#### **For:**

Councillors William Wood, Leonie Hapeta, Mark Arnott, Brent Barrett, Vaughan Dennison, Lew Findlay, Hayden Fitzgerald, Bonnie Kuru, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Billy Meehan, Rachel Bowen and Karen Naylor.

Councillor Orphée Mickalad entered the meeting at 2.04pm.

#### **2-26 Public Comment**

The Chair increased the Public Comment speaking time to five (5) minutes.

**James Veitch**, Badminton New Zealand updated the Committee on upcoming events in Palmerston North, noting the organisation is looking forward to CET Arena expansion. James thanked Council for its continued support of Badminton New Zealand events.

**Jenine Scoon**, Chair Manawatū Softball updated the Committee on recent

initiatives and activities aimed at increasing participation in the community, along with upcoming tournaments and funding. Jenine spoke about the initiative promoting better sideline behaviour to create a supportive and positive environment for all involved (refer flyer appended to these Minutes).

Moved William Wood, seconded Leonie Hapeta.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive the public comments.

Clause 2-26 above was carried 13 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

**For:**

Councillors William Wood, Leonie Hapeta, Mark Arnott, Brent Barrett, Vaughan Dennison, Lew Findlay, Hayden Fitzgerald, Bonnie Kuru, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Billy Meehan, Orphée Mickalad, Rachel Bowen and Karen Naylor.

**3-26 Sport Manawatū Charitable Trust - Six-month report for July to December 2025**

Memorandum, presented by Ann-Marie Mori, Policy Analyst, Kelly Shanks, CEO, Sport Manawatū, Carl Johnson, General Manager Partnerships – Environments, Sport Manawatū and David King, Community Partnership Advisor, Sport Manawatū.

Moved William Wood, seconded Leonie Hapeta.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive the Sport Manawatū Charitable Trust: Six-Month Report to Palmerston North City Council for July to December 2025 (Attachment 1).

Clause 3-26 above was carried 13 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

**For:**

Councillors William Wood, Leonie Hapeta, Mark Arnott, Brent Barrett, Vaughan Dennison, Lew Findlay, Hayden Fitzgerald, Bonnie Kuru, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Billy Meehan, Orphée Mickalad, Rachel Bowen and Karen Naylor.

**4-26 Marriner Reserve - Proposal to Grant an Easement on Reserve Land to Powerco**

Report, presented by Perene Green, Property Officer.

Councillor Lew Findlay left the meeting at 3.02pm.

Moved William Wood, seconded Leonie Hapeta.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee approve notifying the public of the proposal to grant an easement at Marriner Reserve, to convey electricity, in accordance with Section 48 of the Reserves Act 1977.

2. That the Committee note that the land area affected by the easement for Powerco is described as Lot 3 DP 29419.

Clause 4-26 above was carried 12 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

**For:**

Councillors William Wood, Leonie Hapeta, Mark Arnott, Brent Barrett, Vaughan Dennison, Hayden Fitzgerald, Bonnie Kuru, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Billy Meehan, Orphée Mickalad, Rachel Bowen and Karen Naylor.

## **5-26 Committee Work Schedule - February 2026**

Moved William Wood, seconded Leonie Hapeta.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive its Work Schedule dated February 2026.

Clause 5-26 above was carried 12 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

**For:**

Councillors William Wood, Leonie Hapeta, Mark Arnott, Brent Barrett, Vaughan Dennison, Hayden Fitzgerald, Bonnie Kuru, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Billy Meehan, Orphée Mickalad, Rachel Bowen and Karen Naylor.

### **Karakia Whakamutunga**

Councillor Debi Marshall-Lobb closed the meeting with karakia.

The meeting finished at 3.08pm.

Confirmed 15 April 2026

**Chairperson**



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Sport & Recreation Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 15 April 2026

**TITLE:** Manawatū Community Athletics Track - Annual Report 2025

**PRESENTED BY:** Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks

**APPROVED BY:** Glen O'Connor, Acting General Manager Infrastructure

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### RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee receive the Manawatū Community Athletics Track Annual Report 2025, presented on 15 April 2026.
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#### 1. ISSUE

- 1.1 The Manawatū Community Athletics Track was established on Massey University's Turitea Campus in 2001 as a partnership between the athletics community, Massey University and the Palmerston North City Council (PNCC).
- 1.2 This memorandum provides commentary on the 2025 Annual Report from the Advisory Committee.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The facility is operated under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was agreed in 2000. The MOU was reviewed and updated in 2021.
- 2.2 Under the MOU, an Advisory Committee oversees the track governance with appointments from Massey University, Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) and Palmerston North Athletic and Harrier Club (PNA&HC).
- 2.3 In 2025, Palmerston North City Council was represented by Councillor Billy Meehan and the Activities Manager – Parks, Aaron Phillips.
- 2.4 The Council contributed \$90,670.03 + GST<sup>1</sup> for the maintenance and renewals of the track.

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<sup>1</sup> includes inflation adjustment made annually.

- 2.5 Massey University provides day-to-day facility administration, management, maintenance and security services, as well as sharing in maintenance and renewal costs.
- 2.6 PNA&HC provides track and field equipment and often assists with events and school use.
- 2.7 The 2025 Annual Report (Attachment 1):
  - The committee focused on renewal items such as re-marking the track lines and preparing for the renewal of the track lighting including converting to LEDs. There is a risk that funding applications to Central Energy Trust for replacement lighting and conversation to LED may have a timing conflict with development of the artificial football pitch at Massey. This will need to be managed proactively.
  - PNA&HC continues to manage the equipment well and equipment fees charged to users are passed on to PNA&HC. The achievements at the elite level are noted in the PNA&HC section of the report.
  - The report contains statistics and graphs about users and bookings that enable the use of the track to be understood.

2.8 Figure 1 shows the annual number of bookings<sup>2</sup> since 2010.

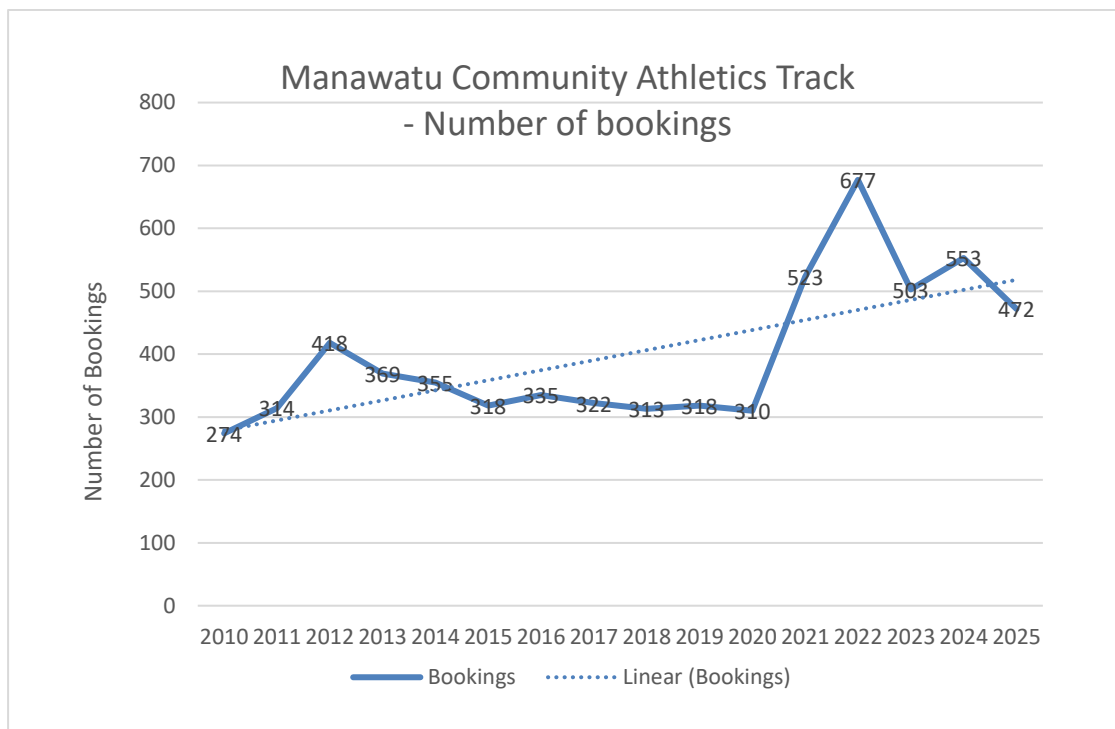


Figure 1: MCAT booking numbers since 2010

<sup>2</sup> Includes football use of the infield, of which there were over 50 uses in 2025.

- 2.9 Bookings have reduced slightly but are still at high levels with an average of more than one booked use per day. Bookings by month are consistent through the year with football use picking up in the winter as athletics use reduces.
- 2.10 The figures for the estimated number of users excluding casuals (Figure 2), show the ‘bounce back’ in use that occurred in 2024 has been maintained.

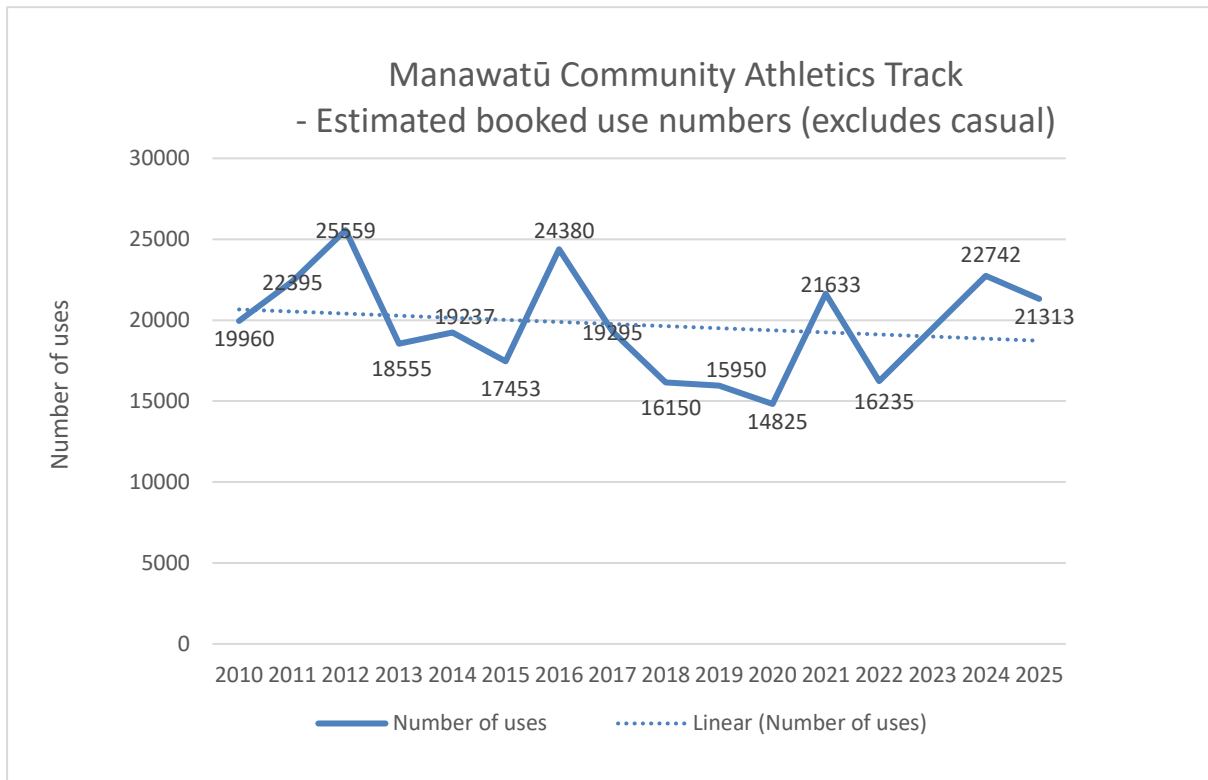


Figure 2: MCAT estimated numbers of booked users excluding casual

- 2.11 Casual uses are not counted. To give some indication through a range, assuming between an average of between 5 and 20 casual uses per day would add 1,825 to 7,300 additional community uses per year to the booked uses estimate.
- 2.12 In December 2025, Councillor Meehan was confirmed council’s representative for the new Council term, with Councillor Arnott the substitute when Councillor Meehan is unable attend.

**3. NEXT STEPS**

- 3.1 Thank the Advisory Committee and their organisations for their work in providing the facility for Palmerston North and the wider Manawatū.

**4. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide	<b>Yes</b>
Are the decisions significant?	<b>No</b>
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	<b>No</b>
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	<b>No</b>
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	<b>No</b>
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	<b>Yes</b>
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council’s policies or plans?	<b>No</b>
The recommendations contribute to: Whāinga 2: He tāone whakaihiihi, tapatapahi ana Goal 2: A creative and exciting city	
The recommendations contribute to this plan: 6. Mahere rēhia 6. Recreation and Play Plan The objective is: Support community access to sports facilities at Massey University	
Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being	Provides recreation facilities for the athletics community and casual recreation. Supports attracting events.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Manawatū Community Athletics Track Annual Report 2025 [↓](#) 



TE KUNENGA  
KI PUREHUROA  
**MASSEY**  
UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND



# MANAWATŪ COMMUNITY ATHLETICS TRACK 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

*Prepared by the  
Manawatū Community Athletics Track Advisory Committee*

**Contents:**

1. Executive Summary	2
2. Palmerston North Athletic and Harrier Club Report	3
3. Community and Schools Report	4
5. Bookings and Users Statistics	6



**TE KUNENGA | MASSEY**  
**KI PŪREHUROA | UNIVERSITY**  
 UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the 24<sup>th</sup> annual report provided by the Manawatū Community Athletics Track (MCAT) Advisory Committee to the Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) and Massey University (Massey). The provision of this report fulfils part of the requirement of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Advisory Committee to formally report to both the PNCC and Massey.

As seen in the report, supported by a few comments from community and sports coordinators, the facility continues to provide a fantastic venue, principally for athletics but also a range of other activities such as football, Tough Guy/Gal Mud runs, cross country and even NZ Defence Force logistical training. Historically, the open site has made it difficult to ascertain actual user numbers. The growth of the eastern suburbs of Palmerston North has seen more casual users at the facility, often not reflected in the official figures. Large numbers of school children are also accessing the facility as their sports days expand and other events become too big to host within the school grounds. Increasingly, schools will choose Massey and the MCAT for these events.

During 2025, thanks to funding from Central Energy Trust, a structural assessment by WSP consultants of the existing four 30 metre lighting columns was undertaken to enable replacement of the heads with LED units. Unfortunately, the assessment deemed the columns insufficient to withstand the additional loading, and so the Advisory Group needs to consider other options to ensure we continue to provide the necessary illumination.

PNAHC managed to source an international supplier for the throw cage netting, and replacements were purchased. It is hoped the new netting will be in place for the High School Sports Events in early March 2026. The PNAHC continues to maintain a significant inventory of athletic equipment for users to hire whilst hosting events at the track.

Routine maintenance of the facility continues with regular cleaning and replacement of consumables, as well as minor repairs to plumbing, building/guttering cleans, and the access ramp leading into the timing shed being fully replaced. The grounds team undertook regular mowing for the arena and spectator banks, shelter hedging, fertiliser applications, mowing and keeping the long jump pit sand topped up.

A big thank you to Rhys McKinlay for organising the PNAHC working bees at the track, with notable success in cleaning up the artificial grass around the jump run-ups. Finally, to all those who served on the MCAT advisory committee during 2025, I am especially grateful to Barry Harlen, who stepped in as interim chair pending the recruitment of a new Executive Director of Estates.

### **Andy Allison**

*Massey University – Executive Director Estates*

*Manawatū Community Athletics Track Advisory Committee – Chairperson*



## PALMERSTON NORTH ATHLETIC AND HARRIERS CLUB REPORT

The 2024/25 season was, as usual, busy and demanding. Schools continued to hold events at the track, with peak periods occurring in March for secondary schools and in November for primary schools.

There was a lot of work this season to upgrade the Manawatū Community Athletic Track at Massey University. In late November, the re-marking of the track was completed, which resulted in the loss of two club nights and cost approximately \$39,000. The cost was covered from the Massey University and Council maintenance contributions. We also replaced the 24-year-old photo-timing equipment at a cost of around \$27,000. Many thanks to the Lion Foundation and the Masters group for their contributions. Upgrades to the Hammer and Discus throws cage are currently in progress, with the nets being shipped to New Zealand at this time.

The Palmerston North Athletic and Harrier Club/User Group appreciates the ongoing support of the Palmerston North City Council and the work of the team at Massey University.

The reason the club exists is to promote athletes. So, it is pleasing to note that we have had another great year, winning the Central Team Athletics Competition

The National Championships, Track and Field and Cross Country, brought a harvest of medals.

### **Gold:**

- Annika Nelson – Senior Women, 3000m Walk
- Juliet McKinlay – W18, Heptathlon
- Justin Cunningham – M18, Cross Country

### **Silver:**

- Jarvis Shaw – M18, 2000m Steeplechase
- Juliet McKinlay, Tayler Trow, Emma Verry, Athena Fovakis – W18, 4x100m
- Tayler Trow – W18, High Jump
- Courtney Fitzgibbon – W20, 3000m Steeplechase
- Juliet McKinlay – W18, 100m Hurdles
- Amber Trow – W20, High Jump
- Emma Verry – W18, 400m
- Hana Symes – W16, 400m
- William Rolfe – M18, 400m
- Juliet McKinlay – W18, Long Jump
- Annika Nelson – Senior Women, 10,000m Walk
- Ben Langton Burnell – Senior Men, Javelin

### **Bronze:**

- Tayler Trow – W18, 300m Hurdles
- Juliet McKinlay – W18, Triple Jump
- Justin Cunningham – M18, 1500m
- Juliet McKinlay – W18, Javelin

- Justin Cunningham & William Rolfe – Senior Men, 4x400m
- Emma Verry & Vanessa Hodge – Senior Women, 4x400m

Our Masters athletes have also achieved some impressive results this year. Highlights include:

- Hannah Callesen – Gold medals in the 60m, 100m, 200m and 80m Hurdles at the NZ Masters Championships
- James Conwell – Gold medals in the 1500m and 5000m at the NZ Masters Championships
- Brayden Grant – Oceania Gold medals in the 200m and 400m, including a New Zealand record in the 400m
- Vanessa Hodge – World Indoor Masters Gold, 800m
- Dale McMillan – Bronze medals in Javelin and Pentathlon at the Oceania Championships
- Hayden Robinson – Oceania Gold in the 400m and a New Zealand record
- Kate Robinson – Oceania Bronze in the 5000m

I must mention Hamish Kerr, who was a club member for four years. It takes a community to get an athlete to the top. Without our facilities and the work of club members, and particularly Anne Thomson, his career would have ended when he left Auckland.

Hamish has now won a Diamond League final, Commonwealth Games, World Indoor, World Championships and an Olympic final.

Congratulations on another great year. I wish to thank the committee, coaches, officials, athletes, parents and supporters.

We look forward to another successful athletics season.

### **George McConachy**

*President – Palmerston North Athletic and Harrier Club*

## **COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS REPORT**

*We have had another year of having the Massey Community Athletics Track as our home base. Having such a wide catchment area, this is the central point and therefore pivotal to our small club.*

*We manage to hold club nights weekly throughout the summer – now a training night rather than competition, and usually shared with unbooked MOA and Triathlon athletes, and school athletes from Nga Tawa. We have also held several meets during weekends, the largest of which brings athletes from Wellington, Taranaki and Hawkes Bay/Gisborne centres to challenge for a Shield. This is held in January every year and hopefully will grow in numbers. Currently, including spectators, we expect 60-80 people.*

*MCAT is the only safe place for our club to train for throwing events, with the city not having any other dedicated throwing circles, and we look forward to the new nets being installed on the main circle.*

*We have donated \$5000 toward the new photo-timing equipment being purchased and installed, and we upgraded the curtains in the timing shed. The Masters 4<sup>th</sup> World Games Trust has also donated funds toward improvements. We look forward to the upgrades.*

### **Jen Fee**

*Secretary, Manawatu Wanganui Masters Athletics*

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*I am writing in support of the MCAT 2025 review from a football perspective. The PNBHS 1<sup>st</sup> XI football team used the floodlit venue for training sessions throughout the 2025 season. The exceptional lighting, ease of access and flexibility of time slots that were available made it invaluable during preparations.*

*The 2025 New Zealand Secondary Schools Football Association (NZSSFA) Boys Premier National Tournament was held at Massey University, where the MCAT pitch was utilised. The 2026 edition of the tournament will also be held at Massey University, with the MCAT pitch being an asset for running the tournament successfully. It is a great facility, worthy of hosting national competition games and should continue to be invested in for maintenance and improvements.*

**Adam Miller**

*Master in Charge of Football PNBHS  
Executive Committee member of NZSSFA*

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*The Manawatū Community Athletics Track (MCAT) continues to serve as a fantastic sport facility for the wider Manawatu community". Palmerston North Boys High School uses the track and all the equipment for our annual Finals Athletics and Marching Day. This event has the whole school involved and is arguably one of the biggest single-day Athletics meetings around.*

*Within that same timeframe, the annual MISSA meet attracts over 500 athletes (normally about 100 boys from PNBHS) and is held here, hosting High schools from the Manawatu, Horowhenua and Tararua. Moving this event to mid-weekday has increased the participation rate and is a welcome innovation. Aside from the obvious benefits to the athletes involved, it has in recent years provided insightful Professional Development for each school who 'run' a particular event.*

*The school has many boys who are involved weekly at the track with the MAHC throughout the Athletics season. We have historically had students involved in the Special Olympics Secondary School competitions. The North Island Secondary Schools Athletics champs have been hosted here several times, very successfully, over the last couple of years.*

*The quality of the resource, its accessibility, the helpful support staff/volunteers and costs are all factors in a positive experience for all involved.*

**Peter Finch**

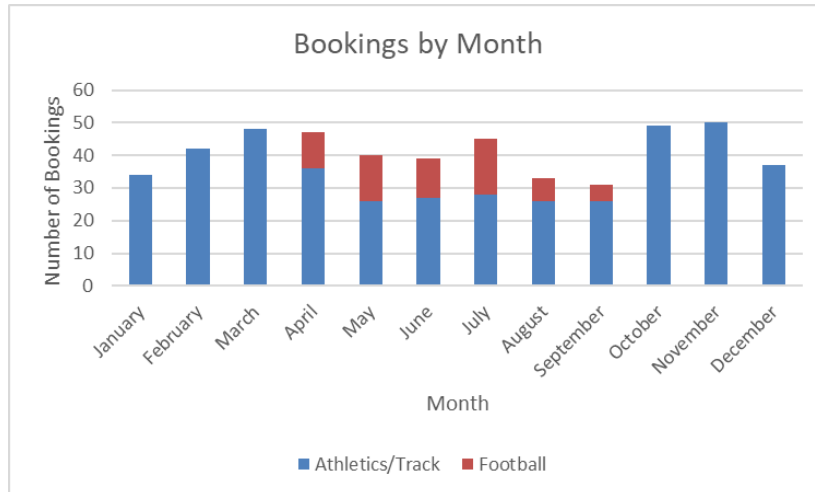
*Director of Sport  
PNBHS*

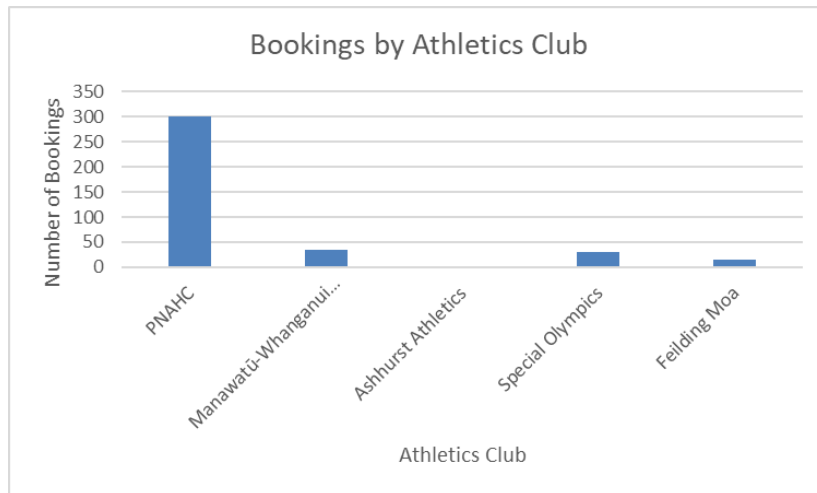
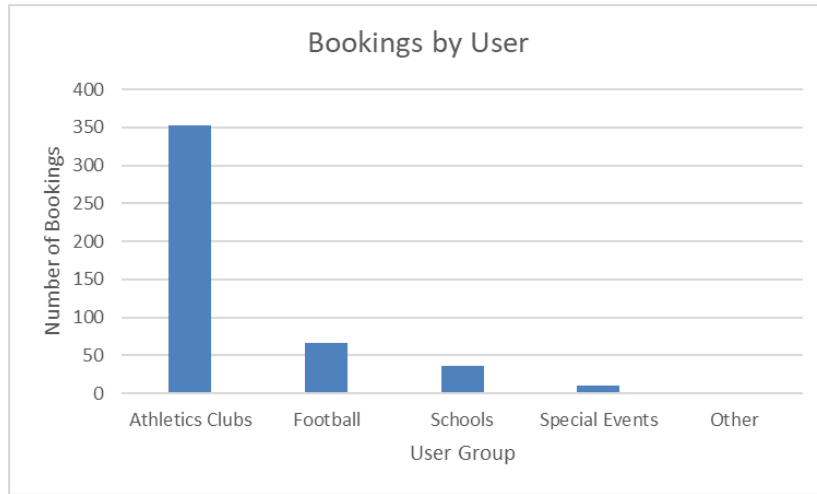
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## Bookings and User Statistics 2025

### 2025 MCAT Number of Users per Month

Month	Athletics Clubs	Football	Schools	Special Olympics	Special Events	Other	Total
Jan	455			80			535
Feb	500		948	80			1,528
Mar	600		5,200	220	1,000		7,020
Apr	555	260	40			10	865
May	335	180	20			20	555
Jun	520	240	20		150		930
Jul	410	340					770
Aug	395	140				20	535
Sep	295	100		60		25	480
Oct	530		200	210	170	60	1,170
Nov	515		2740	80	500	70	3,905
Dec	450		700	100	1,065	705	3,020
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,560</b>	<b>1,260</b>	<b>9,868</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>2,885</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>21,313</b>





**NOTES:**

1. The number of users has been captured. This is an estimate prior to the booking of the number of spectators, coaches and participants. This does not include casual use of people showing up without a booking.
2. The MCAT field (inside the athletics track) was used regularly for football training in 2025. From April - September (between and around athletics seasons) the field was used Tuesday-Thursday for 2-3 hours per afternoon/night by either the Massey Club or PN United FC. There were five games played on that field during the year too.



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Sport & Recreation Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 15 April 2026

**TITLE:** Hockey Turf at Massey University - Annual Report

**PRESENTED BY:** Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks

**APPROVED BY:** Glen O'Connor, Acting General Manager Infrastructure

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### RECOMMENDATION TO SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee receive the 2025 Annual Report for the Hockey Turf at Massey University (Attachment 1).
- 

#### 1. ISSUE

This memorandum presents the Annual Report for 2025 for the Hockey Turf at Massey University.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

In the 2015/25 Long-Term Plan Council allocated \$500,000 contribution to a third hockey turf in the City. Following needs and location assessment the decision was made to support a turf at Massey University.

Council entered into an [Agreement for Shared Use](#) of a Hockey Turf at Massey University in 2020.

Council is represented by Councillors Arnott and Meehan on the Steering Group that provides oversight alongside representatives from Massey University and Hockey Manawatu.

#### 3. 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Attachment 1 contains the 2025 Annual Report. The report notes:

- 215 bookings for trainings and trials and 39 bookings for games spread through schools, Hockey Manawatu and clubs, and Massey University uses.
- There was no tournament use in 2025. The turf was used for regional teams (Falcons) and the Toa Whakaihuwaka inter-school event.

- A 2.3% increase in hours of use from 2024 to 559.5 hours. Figure 1 shows hours of use by year since 2022.

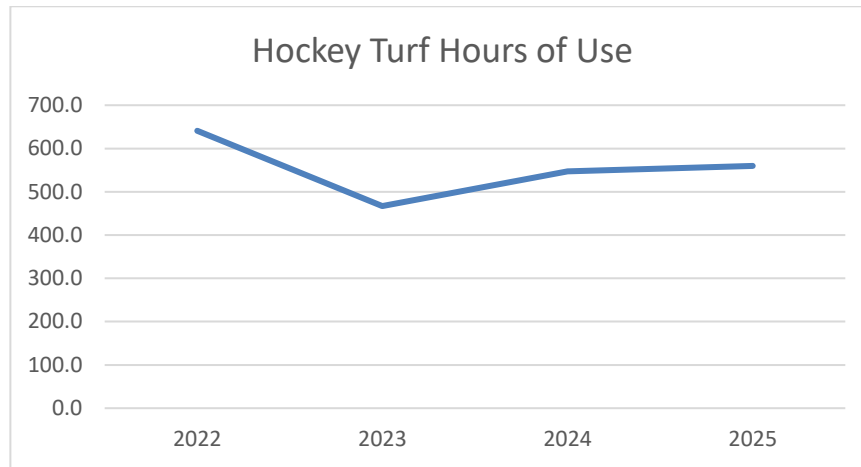


Figure 1: Hours of use

- The lack of changing rooms and toilets remains an issue to be addressed. While outside the reporting period it is noted that Massey University have recently approved \$200,000 for changing rooms and toilet facilities at the Turf.

**4. NEXT STEPS**

Continue to support the operation of the Hockey Turf.

**5. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide?	<b>Yes</b>
Are the decisions significant?	<b>No</b>
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	<b>No</b>
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	<b>No</b>
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	<b>No</b>
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	<b>Yes</b>
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council’s policies or plans?	<b>Yes</b>
The recommendations contribute to: Whāinga 1: He tāone auaha, he tāone tiputipu Goal 1: An innovative and growing city Whāinga 2: He tāone whakaihiihi, tapatapahi ana Goal 2: A creative and exciting city	
The recommendations contribute to this plan: 2. Mahere whakawhanake ohaoha 2. Economic Development Plan 6. Mahere rēhia	

<p>6. Recreation and Play Plan</p> <p>The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract major events to the city, including national secondary school events</li> <li>• Provide sportsfields and facilities</li> </ul>	
<p>Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being</p>	<p>The Hockey Turf at Massey University provides for hockey leagues, trainings and tournaments.</p>

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Hockey Turf at Massey University - 2025 Annual Report [↓](#) 



# HMI HOCKEY TURF AT MASSEY UNIVERSITY

## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



<b>Contents:</b>	
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## HOCKEY STEERING GROUP CHAIR SUMMARY

This is the sixth annual report provided by the Hockey Turf at Massey University Steering Group. The purpose of this group is to oversee the direction and management of the turf at Massey to ensure that the interests of the parties – Massey University (Massey), Palmerston North City Council (PNCC), and Hockey Manawatū (HMI) – are being met. This document formally satisfies a requirement of the Steering Group to report to HMI, PNCC and Massey.

This has been another successful year with turf usage continuing to grow despite no major hockey tournament use within the year. However, it has continued to be an important part of the city-wide and regional sport offer, contributing to community use and multi-sports tournaments such as the Toa Whakaihuwaka intermediate schools tournament. The success of these events positions HMI as a potential host for future national and international events, including the Masters tournament in 2026, as well as showcasing both the city and region, as well as Massey University, to visitors and potential students

I would like to thank both Richard Lloyd and Barry Harlen for acting in the role of Chair of the Steering Group during the process to recruit a new Executive Director, Estates.

Thank you also to the Steering Group members, Cllrs Billy Meehan and Mark Arnott (PNCC), Dilan Raj & Fiona Chard (HMI) and Frances Duffin (MU) – who contributed their time and energy to oversee turf governance in 2025. A further thank you to the staff at both HMI and Massey (Recreation, Sport Massey, Commercial Services and Grounds) for their combined efforts in ensuring the smooth operation of the turf. The joint effort of these organisations and individuals ensures that the Turf at Massey University is a key hockey (and recreation) facility in the Manawatū.

As the new Chair, I look forward to supporting the work of the Steering group through 2026 and beyond and am confident that we will continue to see the facility go from strength to strength.

**Andy Allison**

*Massey University – Executive Director Estates*

*Massey University Hockey Turf Steering Group – Chairperson*

HOCKEY MANAWATŪ REPORT



2025 was a year of steady and reliable utilisation at the Massey University Hockey Turf, with total hours rising to 559.5, a 2.3% increase on the 547 hours recorded in 2024. This incremental growth occurred despite the absence of a major national tournament such as the National Hockey Championship (NHC), which in 2024 contributed 83 hours of September game time. The overall rise in usage reflects continued demand across community hockey, club activity, school programmes, and representative pathways at Hockey Manawatu. Usage of the Massey Turf represented 32% of all HMI competition and training activities, which is in accordance with our MOU turf usage agreement allocating one third of activity across the three venues.

Strong utilisation from March through July offset the expected September decline, with June reaching a peak of 110.5 hours, surpassing 2024’s high point in May.

**Tournaments and Events**

In 2025, tournaments were limited. The Eveline Hankers Cup Secondary School Girls Tournament was delivered at Twin Turfs due to facility requirements. Without a major event such as the NHC, September usage normalised to 7 hours compared with 83 hours in 2024.

**Massey Hockey Club Integration**

Although previously not included in reporting, the Massey Hockey Club is inherently tied to the Massey Turf facility. In 2025, the Massey Men’s Premier team faced possible relegation from Hockey Manawatu Premier 1 and the Inter City Competition. HMI worked alongside the students, club and Massey’s Ron Werner to implement matchday support and off field capability so players could focus on performance. With this strategy, HMI made a strategic decision to keep Massey Men in Premier 1 for 2025. A similar vision extends to Massey Women, whose long-term success is tied to organisational support from the University. We will continue to provide support in 2026.

**Infrastructure and Facilities**

No progress was made in 2025 on the long-standing need for changing rooms and toilets at the Massey Turf. Staffing changes slowed leadership focus and delayed planning. Appropriate facilities remain essential for a consistent player experience and for attracting tournaments that allow Hockey Manawatu to compete with larger regions.

**Acknowledgements**

Thank you to Richard Llyod, who took over from Jacob Oram as Steering Committee lead and guided us before departing mid-year. Thank you to Barry Harlen for holding the fort during the transition

period, and welcome to Andy Allison who stepped into the role in December. Operational thanks go to Ron Werner (Massey) and Frances Healy (HMI), whose daily operational work drives the strategy.

Additional thanks to Mark Arnott and Billy Meehan from the Council for their leadership and ongoing support. Special thanks also to Lois Edwards and Renee Gardiner for their administrative support of the Steering Committee.

**Looking Ahead**

As we move into 2026, Hockey Manawatu will continue to work with Massey on facility enhancements, particularly improving changing rooms and toilet infrastructure. These upgrades are essential to competing with larger regions and attracting high value tournaments.

We will also explore additional accommodation partnerships to bundle with Hockey Manawatu multi-year tournament opportunities across all three turfs, strengthening our event bids and driving additional usage during shoulder months. These are separate to Hockey New Zealand events, which are rotated around the country and does not carry year to year hosting guarantees

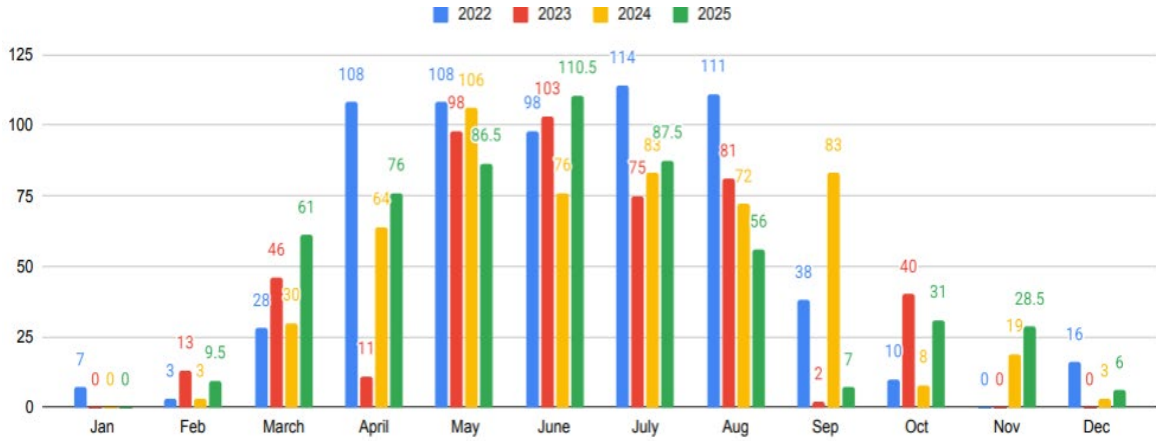
With strengthened governance, improved facilities, and proactive club support, Hockey Manawatu aims to grow turf utilisation across Twin Turfs and Massey to deliver high-quality outcomes for the wider hockey community.

**Dilan Raj**

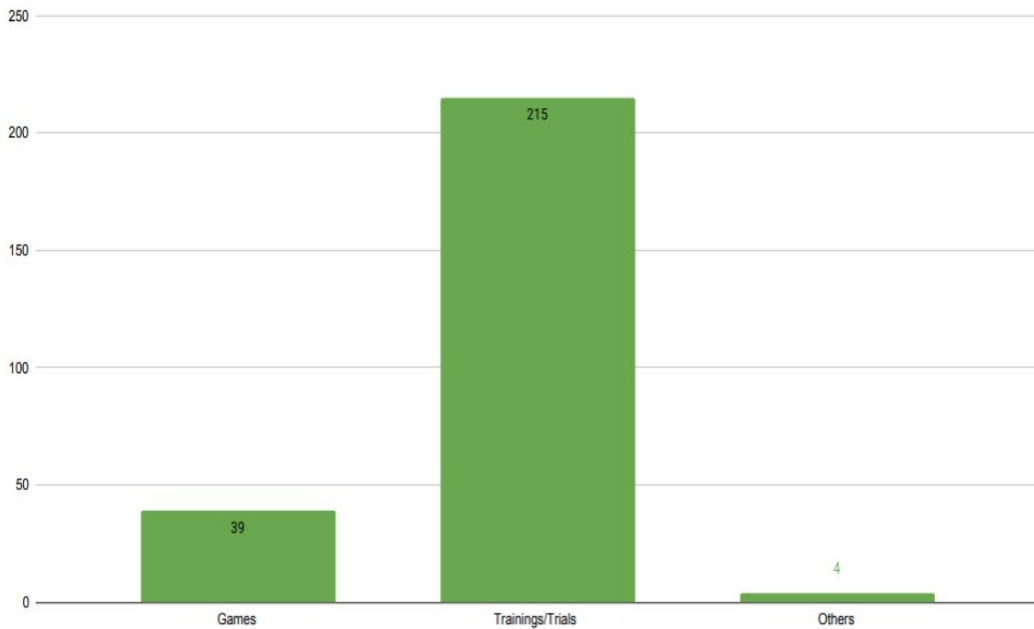
*General Manager – Hockey Manawatū Incorporated (HMI)*

2025 TURF USAGE

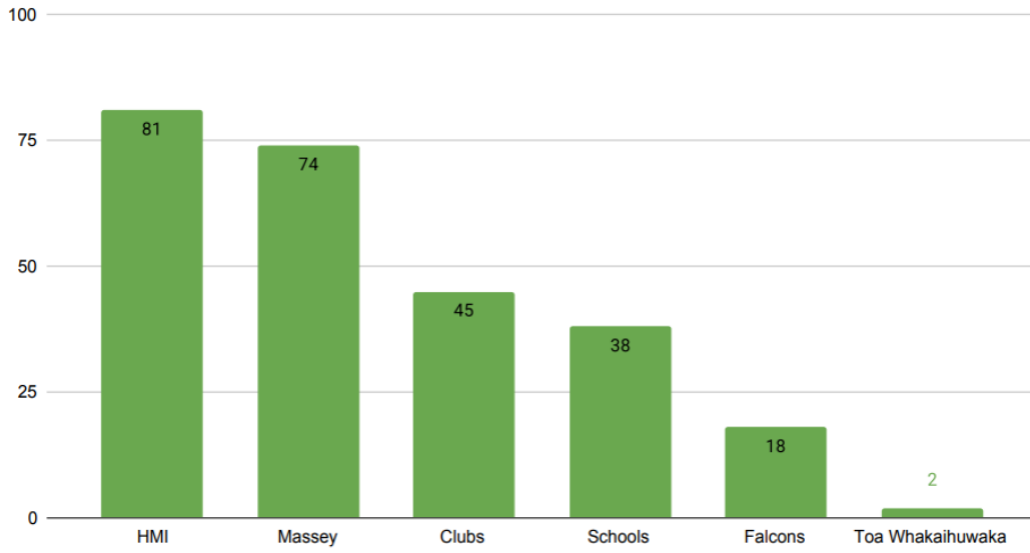
Turf Usage 2022-2025 (Hours Versus Months)



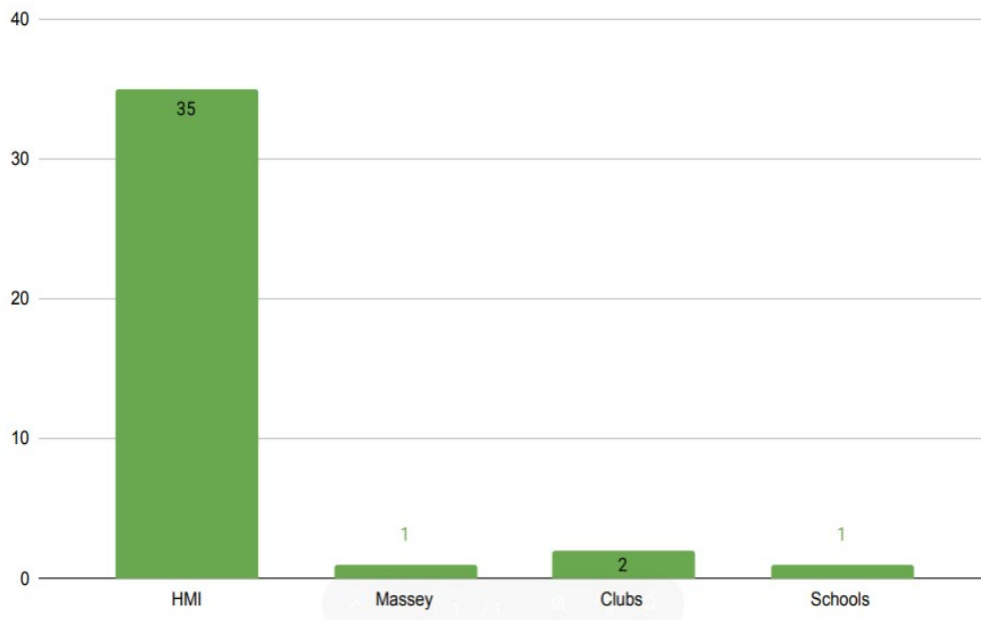
Turf Bookings by Activities (Number of Bookings Vs Activities)



Turf Bookings by Organisation (Number of Bookings Vs Organisation)



Nature of Games (Number of Bookings)





## REPORT

**TO:** Sport & Recreation Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 15 April 2026

**TITLE:** Manawatū River - Esplanade Strip/Reserve Purchase Akers Road

**PRESENTED BY:** Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks

**APPROVED BY:** Glen O'Connor, Acting General Manager Infrastructure  
Cameron McKay, General Manager Corporate Services

### RECOMMENDATION TO SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee refer the purchase of an Esplanade Strip along the Manawatū River at 182 – 226 Akers Road, Linton, to the 2026/27 Annual Budget deliberations.

### SUMMARY OF OPTIONS ANALYSIS FOR

<p><b>Problem or Opportunity</b></p>	<p>The District Plan and Resource Management Act provides Council the opportunity to acquisition of Esplanade Reserves or strips along the Manawatū and Pohangina Rivers; and the Turitea, Mangaone and Kahuterawa Streams.</p> <p>The purpose of acquiring Esplanade Reserves and strips, as defined in the Resource Management Act, is to enhance the natural function of rivers, maintaining or enhancing water quality, protecting natural values and enabling public access.</p> <p>Council has had a long-term programme of purchasing Esplanade Reserves or strips along the Manawatū River.</p> <p>Reserves and/or strips are acquired as part of the subdivision of land adjoining these waterways.</p> <p>In the past these acquisitions were funded under Programme 1846. The unpredictable nature of subdivision forecasting meant the budget was often under or overspent. In recent years the budget has been deferred. Decisions are currently made on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>A subdivision application has been received for the property at 182-226 Akers Road Linton. The site includes approximately 1.5 km of the southern or true left banks of the Manawatū River.</p> <p>Council could purchase this river margin to secure the potential to carry out ecological and recreation activities in the future.</p>
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	The purpose of this report is for Committee to decide whether to refer the purchase of this land to the Annual Budget deliberation process. to enable the purchase to be considered alongside other Council priorities.
<b>OPTION 1:</b>	<b>Refer the purchase an Esplanade Strip along the Manawatū River at 182 – 226 Akers Road, Linton, to the 2026/27 Annual Budget deliberations.</b>
Community Views	Community views have not been sought on this proposal.  Rangitāne o Manawatū Settlement Trust supports the acquisition of an esplanade reserve or strip.
Benefits	Allows Council to make its decision in the wider context of the 2026/27 budget decisions.  If approved, secures the river margin for future biodiversity opportunities and provide potential recreational (fishing) access.
Risks	There is no risk in referring the decision to the 2026/27 deliberations.
Financial	If approved, there would be an initial cost for the land purchase – estimated to be in the order of \$100K (to be confirmed by a land valuation)  \$5K per annum in interest costs, over 30 years.  Potential future costs (if works are undertaken): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant pest control, planting fencing \$100k</li> <li>• Maintenance \$10k per year for 3-5 years.</li> </ul> These costs are likely to be outside of the 10 Year Plan period and would be considered through future asset management planning.
<b>OPTION 2:</b>	<b>Not purchase the Esplanade Strip along the Manawatū River at 182 – 226 Akers Road, Linton. (status quo)</b>
Community Views	Community views have not been sought on this proposal.
Benefits	Reduces Council borrowing and operational costs.  No impact on rates.
Risks	There is a risk there are no future rural subdivisions in this location that provides the opportunity to secure the river margin.
Financial	None.

**RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1. OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY**

- 1.1 The Palmerston North City Council (Council) [District Plan](#) and Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) directs the acquisition of Esplanade Reserves or strips along the Manawatū and Pohangina Rivers and the Mangaone, Turitea and Kahuterawa Streams.
- 1.2 A subdivision application for 182-226 Akers Road Linton includes 1.5 km of the true left bank<sup>3</sup> of the Manawatū River. Council could acquire this river margin as part of the subdivision process to secure further lengths of the Manawatū River for recreation access such as fishing, and future ecological development work addressing pest plants and biodiversity planting.
- 1.3 As there is no budget to purchase the land, officers recommend that the creation of an esplanade strip be considered as part of the Annual Budget deliberation process.

**2. BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS COUNCIL DECISIONS**

- 2.1 [Section 229](#) of the RMA, outlines the purpose of Esplanade Reserves and Strips, including enhancing the natural function of rivers, maintaining or enhancing water quality, protecting natural values and enabling public access.
- 2.2 The Turitea Stream “Green Corridor” provides an example of existing esplanade reserves and strips that have been developed for biodiversity and recreation access.
- 2.3 Section 7 Subdivision of the District Plan [Objective 4](#) is “*To ensure that the subdivision process secures the provision of esplanade reserves and esplanade strips in appropriate areas*”.
- 2.4 *Matters recognised for under section 4.3.3. of the District Plan* are:
  - i. ecological values, including riparian vegetation, water quality, potential for erosion and the impact of flooding and the enhancement of aquatic and terrestrial habitat; and
  - ii. social values, including values for public access to and along rivers and lakes, and the need for public access to and along water bodies; and
  - iii. enhancement of landscape, recreational and/or wilderness experiences; and
  - iv. the protection of archaeological and registered historic sites, wahi tapu, provision of access to areas of importance to Tangata Whenua; and

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<sup>3</sup> In river terminology true left is the left-hand bank as you look downstream in the particular river or stream.

- v. the value for education and interpretation with regard to the functioning of natural ecosystems; and
- vi. the reduction of downstream risks and costs to landowners and communities; and
- vii. the benefits and costs of provision and maintenance of esplanade reserves and esplanade strips, including the costs of compensation for any increased width of reserve.

- 2.5 Programme 1846 makes an annual provision for the purchase and development of land for esplanade reserves and walkways. The unpredictable nature of subdivision forecasting meant the budget was often under or overspent. The budget associated with programme 1846 was deferred in both the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Annual Budgets.
- 2.6 The draft 2026/27 Annual Budget proposes further deferring the budget for programme 1846 to 2027/28.

**3. DESCRIPTION OF OPTIONS**

Option 1: Refer the purchase of an Esplanade Strip along the Manawatū River at 182 – 226 Akers Road, Linton, to the 2026/27 Annual Budget deliberations.

- 3.1 The proposed purchase is situated on the true left bank of the Manawatū River between the rail corridor and Akers Road. The site lies downstream of an existing esplanade reserve, between Camp Road and Eyre Road. The location is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Esplanade Strip location

- 3.2 The Esplanade Strip would be 20m wide and approximately 1.5 km long with an area of approximately 3 ha.
- 3.3 Due to the location showing signs of erosion, an Esplanade Strip is preferred rather than a fixed Esplanade Reserve. An Esplanade Strip maintains the width of the nominated area but moves relatively with any movement of the river.
- 3.4 The terms and conditions of the land acquisition would be negotiated in accordance with [Schedule 10](#) of the RMA and cover:
- Council right to fence, plant and provide for recreation access.
  - Prohibitions that may need to put in place such as lighting fires, camping, firearms, vehicles and damaging plants.
- 3.5 There are 7 reserves or strips of this nature between Ashhurst and Linton currently totalling 7 km long and ranging from 400m to 2.3 km long each.
- 3.6 Typically, with a relatively remote reserve, Council does not normally carry out any fencing, plant pest control, planting or recreation access developments in the short or medium term. The purchase is to secure the potential to carry out ecological and recreation activities in the future (“land banking”).
- 3.7 Council officers did enquire with the landowner as to whether they would be willing to sell a larger area that aligned with the existing landform and farm fencing layout. The landowner declined this alternative option.

Option 2: Not purchase the Esplanade Strip along the Manawatū River at 182 – 226 Akers Road, Linton (status quo).

- 3.8 Under Option 2 the Committee could recommend to Council that it decline the purchase opportunity.
- 3.9 [Policy 4.3](#) of the District Plan allows Council to waive its right to purchase an esplanade strip or reserve, provided a reason is given. In this case, officers suggest the reason could be because the costs of acquisition and maintenance are considered to outweigh the benefits.
- 3.10 Should this be the will of the Committee, a recommendation should be put to Council not to acquire giving the reasons for that recommendation.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Option 1: Refer the purchase of an Esplanade Strip along the Manawatū River at 182 – 226 Akers Road, Linton, to the 2026/27 Annual Budget deliberations.

##### 4.1 Benefits:

- If approved in the final Annual Budget would secure further lengths of the Manawatū River for recreation access such as fishing, and future ecological development work addressing pest plants and biodiversity planting.
- Option 1 allows Council to consider the proposed land purchase in the context of its wider budget decisions for 2026/2027 during deliberations on 6 and 7 May 2026.

If supported in the final 2026/27 Annual Budget the benefits would be:

- Continues long terms programme of acquiring river margins along the Manawatū River.
- Preserves longer term opportunity to improve biodiversity and/or recreation access along the river.
- Would likely be identified by Fish and Game as a fishing access point on their [Lower Manawatū River Access](#) information website.

##### 4.2 Risk and costs:

- Considering previous purchase of similar nature, a price in the order of \$95,000 to \$105,000 is estimated once allowance is made for legal costs. It is noted that the cost estimate carries some risk as the valuation has yet to be completed. Officers are endeavouring to have the valuation completed in time for the draft Annual Plan deliberations. Whether or not the land owner accepts the valuation is unknown.
- Interest costs on borrowing would be \$5,000 per year, over 30 years.

Possible medium-long term maintenance costs could include:

- Fencing (if requested by landowner): Costs could range from \$30,000 to \$80,000 depending on the fencing requirements.
- Pest eradication costs: There are substantial plant pests in the area being acquired. Council’s plant pest work would be in other areas, however if work were advanced, it could cost \$10,000 to \$15,000 for initial control work.
- Biodiversity planting and establishment: If advanced, an initial investment could cost up to \$50,000. Planting maintenance over the first 3 years in the

order of \$5,000 to \$10,000 for plant replacements, releasing and staying on top of plant pests.

If the fencing and planting works were to occur in a shorter or medium term and cost \$100,000 then the interest costs on borrowing would be an additional \$5,000 per year.

Option 2: Not purchase the Esplanade Strip along the Manawatū River at 182 – 226 Akers Road, Linton.

4.3 Benefits:

- Reduces Council's borrowing costs and long-term operational costs.

4.4 Risk and costs:

- Council's reason for not acquiring the esplanade strip as part of the land subdivision, is not supported by the community.
- It is unlikely a compulsory acquisition opportunity through subdivision will arise in the foreseeable future at this location.

**5. CONCLUSION**

5.1 The opportunity to acquire esplanade reserves along the Manawatū River is driven by subdivision processes.

5.2 The current opportunity is a significant river margin length, which carries associated costs.

5.3 Referring the decision to the deliberations of the 2026/27 Annual Budget allows the Council to consider the purchase with full cost information alongside wider budget decisions.

**6. NEXT STEPS**

6.1 Complete the valuation report and refer the findings to the 2026/27 Annual Budget deliberations.

**7. OUTLINE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

7.1 No community engagement was undertaken for this report.

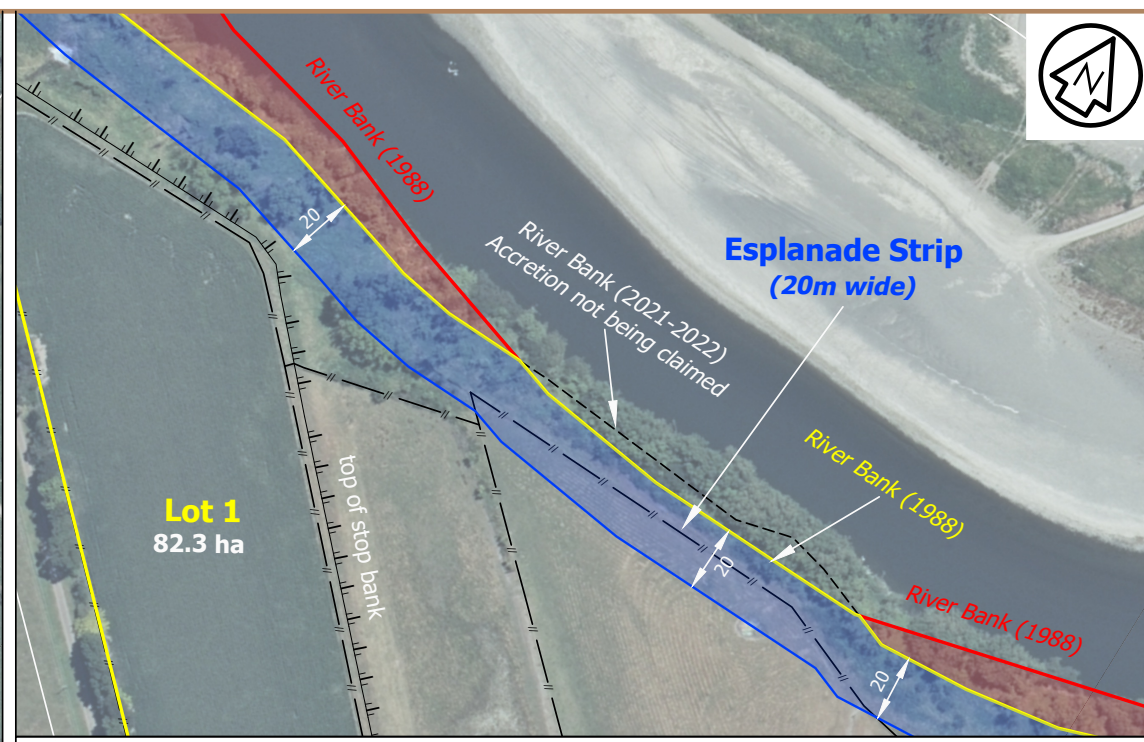
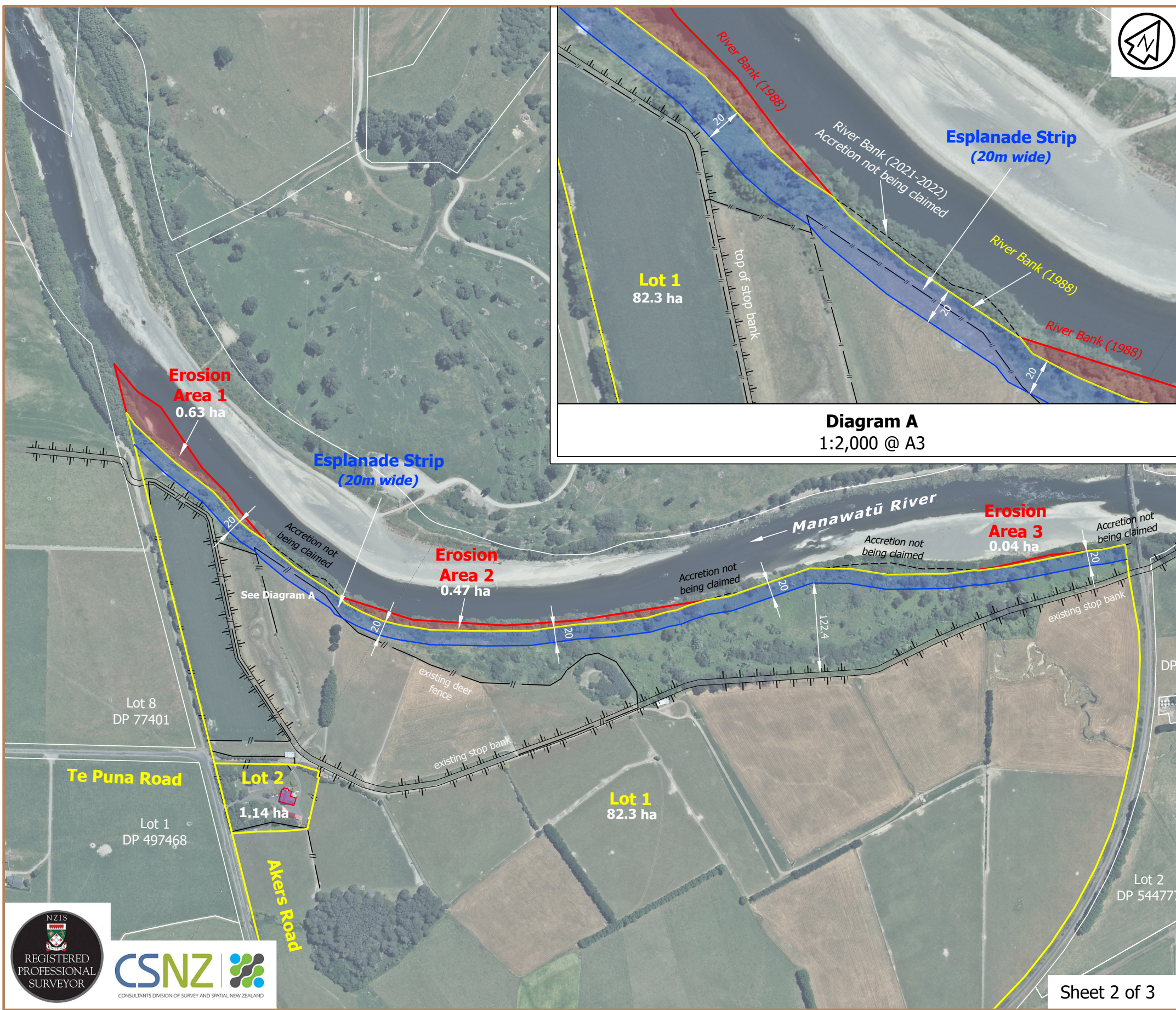
7.2 Rangitāne o Manawatū Settlement Trust supports the acquisition of an esplanade reserve or strip.

**8. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide?	<b>Yes</b>
Are the decisions significant?	<b>No</b>
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	<b>No</b>
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	<b>No</b>
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	<b>No</b>
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council’s policies or plans?	<b>No</b>
<p>The recommendations contribute to:</p> <p>Whāinga 2: He tāone whakaihiihi, tapatapahi ana Goal 2: A creative and exciting city</p> <p>Whāinga 4: He tāone toitū, he tāone manawaroa Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city</p>	
<p>The recommendations contribute to this plan:</p> <p>6. Mahere rēhia</p> <p>6. Recreation and Play Plan</p> <p>11. Mahere mō te kanorau koiora me Te Awa o Manawatū</p> <p>11. Biodiversity and the Manawatū River Plan</p> <p>The objective is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop biodiversity corridors</li> <li>• Protect and restore the mauri of the Manawatū Awa and coastal lagoons, tributaries and connections</li> <li>• Provide and facilitate multiple points of access to the Manawatū River</li> </ul>	
Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being.	Provides a future opportunity to contribute to the environmental outcomes for the Manawatu River and recreational access in the shorter term for fishing.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. 182 - 226 Akers Road Esplanade Strip [↓](#)



**Diagram A**  
1:2,000 @ A3



**Notes & Disclaimers:**

1. Horizontal Datum: New Zealand GD2000 (Wanganui Circuit).
2. Not all public and private services are necessarily shown on this plan.
3. Contractors must verify the position of all services prior to commencing works on site.
4. The aerial photograph shown hereon is sourced from the LINZ Data Service and is dated 2021-2022. Aerial photographs are subject to various distortions and inaccuracies and should not be wholly relied upon.
5. The boundaries shown hereon have been calculated from DP 77400. If the position of legal boundaries is critical a boundary redefinition survey should be undertaken to identify these on site.
6. This plan has been prepared for the client & local authority named hereon for the sole purpose of obtaining Subdivision Consent under the Resource Management Act 1991. Geoworks Limited accepts no responsibility for its use for any other purpose, or by any other parties.
7. The areas and dimensions shown on this plan have not been checked and are likely to change upon final survey. This plan should not be attached to any sale & purchase agreement without an appropriate condition to cover such variations.

**AREAS & DIMENSIONS  
SUBJECT TO FINAL SURVEY**

Registered Owners: Te Puna Station Limited  
 Title Reference: WN44D/926  
 Total Area: 86.1500 ha  
 Local Authority: Palmerston North City Council  
 District Plan Zone: Rural & Flood Protection

Client & Site  
 Te Puna Station Limited  
 182-226 Akers Road  
 Linton

Project  
 Proposed Subdivision of  
 Lot 7 DP 77400

Rev	Date	Amendment	By
A	27/02/26	Original	AB
B	20/03/26	20m Wide Esplanade Strip	AB

Surveyed ---	---	Approved for issue
Checked BC	27/02/26	<i>Alister Fisher</i>

Drawing  
**Subdivision Scheme Plan**

CAD File Name: 26-598-SC-B.dwg | Scale: 1:5,000 @ A3

Drawing Number: **26-598-SC-002** | Rev: **B**

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Sport & Recreation Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 15 April 2026

**TITLE:** Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge - Ashhurst Loop Track progress

**PRESENTED BY:** Aaron Phillips, Activities Manager - Parks

**APPROVED BY:** Glen O'Connor, Acting General Manager Infrastructure

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### RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee receive the update report on progress on the Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge - Ashhurst Loop Track
- 

#### 1. ISSUE

- 1.1 Council has budgeted \$155,000 for The Terrace path component of the Ashhurst Loop Track identified in the Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Masterplan under programme 2349. 100% of the work is to be externally funded.
- 1.2 In July 2025 Council was unsuccessful in securing funding from the New Zealand Transport Authority Waka Kotahi (NZTA) Te Ahu a Turanga Highway Recreation Fund.
- 1.3 Council officers have since identified an alternative external funding opportunity and an application has been made for the funding.
- 1.4 This memo updates Council on progress.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The background section of the update [report](#) to Rangitāne o Manawatū Committee in April 2024 provides a summary of the wider background and Council involvement in the Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge that may be useful.
- 2.2 New Zealand Transport Authority Waka Kotahi (NZTA) established a Recreation Pathways Fund (Recreation Fund) as part of the Te Ahu a Turanga Highway Project (the Highway).
- 2.3 Palmerston North City Council (Council) applied to the fund for selected components of the Ashhurst Loop Track (the Loop) project. The Loop, shown in Attachment 1, is

one of projects of the Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Masterplan and Council is identified as the lead on this project.

- 2.4 Council was successful in securing \$156,875 from the Recreation Fund for the investigation into 3 major choke points in the development of the Loop.
- 2.5 The results of those investigations were reported to the [Strategy and Finance Committee in May 2024](#). The findings were:
  - The Pembroke Rail Overbridge from the Ashhurst Domain would cost in the order of \$1.5 million.
  - Reinstatement of the former McCrae’s Bush ramp would cost \$1.3 million but an alternative could be to negotiate access on the neighbouring land which has an existing unused track.
  - The Saddle Road Bridge could not have a clip-on pedestrian/cycle/equestrian facility added to it. A separated walking facility with some benefit for novice or junior cyclists, but unsuitable for equestrian users, could be added. It would be a narrow facility, similar to that on the State Highway bridge at Bulls. This would cost \$3 million *plus* the costs of access to it from either side which were not estimated in this piece of work.
- 2.6 Council approved officers entering negotiations with a private landowner to secure a land purchase that would provide a more affordable alternative to spending \$1.3m to reinstate the former McCrae’s Bush pony trail ramp.
- 2.7 Figures 1 and 2 show the privately owned alternative ramp.



Figure 1: Farm Track ramp acquisition image



Figure 2: Farm track ramp location

- 2.8 A [report](#) in April 2025 outlined the final price the landowner was willing accept. The Sale and Purchase Agreement was finalised in July 2025.
- 2.9 As part of the Sale and Purchase Agreement the vendor requested conditions of sale including a new boundary fence in a deer fence style, planting and some window tinting to screen visibility into the property. They also required modifications to a culvert to allow for an escape route across a drain and up the ramp in the event of an emergency such as flooding.
- 2.10 The farm ramp purchase has been completed and works covering the condition of sale will be completed by the end of the 2025/26 year.
- 2.11 In July 2025 the Council's application for further funding from the NZTA Recreation Fund for path construction and fencing relocation along the Terrace and path works down the ramp (Attachment 2) was declined. Officers had delayed applying to the fund until the Terrace to McCrae's Bush ramp purchase negotiations were concluded in case they were unsuccessful, which may have required a change to the scope of the application. However, when the highway opened in June 2025, the fund was closed. NZTA also advised officers at that the fund had been allocated to other community projects and there were no more funds available.
- 2.12 An alternative external funding opportunity has been identified and an application has been submitted. It is possible that that outcome of that application will be known at the time the Sport and Recreation Committee receive this update report.
- 2.13 If the funding is approved there is a moderate risk that some or all of the construction works will need to be carried forward into 2026/27. This will depend on the timing of the grant decision, weather and workforce capacity for the final months of the financial year.

- 2.14 If the funding is declined officers will report back on options.
- 2.15 A proposed programme of work for progressing the Ashhurst Loop further and contributing to other Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Masterplan projects where Council may wish to play a role will be developed for consideration in the draft 2027/37 Long Term Plan.

**3. NEXT STEPS**

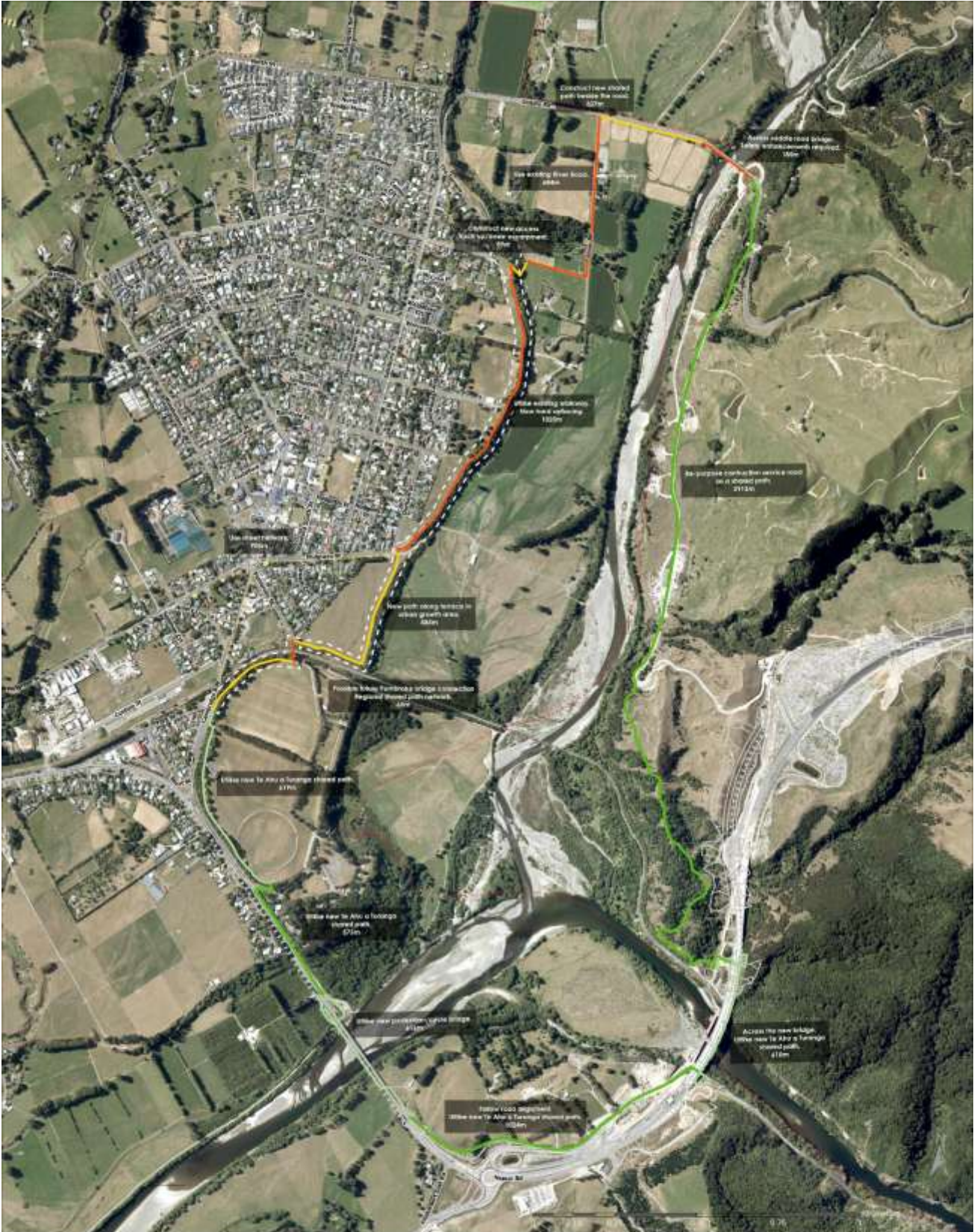
- 3.1 Carry out works or report back depending on funding decision.
- 3.2 Prepare draft 2027/37 Long Term Plan programme proposals.

**4. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide?	<b>Yes</b>
Are the decisions significant?	<b>No</b>
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	<b>No</b>
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	<b>No</b>
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	<b>No</b>
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	<b>Yes</b>
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council’s policies or plans?	<b>No</b>
The recommendations contribute to: Whāinga 2: He tāone whakaihihi, tapatapahi ana Goal 2: A creative and exciting city	
The recommendations contribute to this plan: 6. Mahere rēhia 6. Recreation and Play Plan The objective is: Provide walkways and shared paths	
Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being	Contributing to the Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge development under the Masterplan supports opportunities for local and regional recreation, enhances biodiversity, and supports development of visitor experiences and attraction. The Terrace Path enhances recreation opportunities as part of progressing the Ashhurst Loop.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Map - Ashhurst Loop - Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Masterplan [↓](#) 
2. Map - Ashhurst Loop - The Terrace Project portion [↓](#) 



# Ashhurst Loop track

## Te Apiti Masterplan

March 2026





## COMMITTEE WORK SCHEDULE

TO: Sport & Recreation Committee

MEETING DATE: 15 April 2026

TITLE: Committee Work Schedule - April 2026

### RECOMMENDATION TO SPORT & RECREATION COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee receive its Work Schedule dated April 2026.

### COMMITTEE WORK SCHEDULE – APRIL 2026

	Estimated Report Date	Subject	Officer Responsible	Current Position	Date of Instruction
1	<del>15 April 2026</del>	<del>NZ Rural Games – Annual presentation</del>	-		<del>31 May 2023 Clause 88.11-23</del>
2	<del>15 April 2026</del>	<del>Te Āpiti Master plan – progress report</del>	GM Infrastructure		<del>26 April 2023 Clause 4 – 23</del>
3	<del>15 April 2026</del>	<del>Hockey Turf – Annual Report</del>	GM Infrastructure		
4	<del>15 April 2026</del>	<del>Manawatū Athletics Track – Annual Report</del>	GM Infrastructure		
5	<del>15 April</del> 12 August 2026	Draft General Policy Reserve Management Plan - Deliberations	GM Infrastructure		25 September 2024 Clause 34-24
6	12 August 2026	Play Policy Annual Implementation Monitoring Report	GM Customer & Community		Policy Action Plan
7	12 August 2026	Annual Report: Sport Manawatū 2025/2026	GM Strategic Planning		Terms of Reference
8	12 November	PNCC Events - Annual Summary of	GM Customer		25 October 2023 Clause 60-23

	2026	Economic Impact and Benefits 2025/26	& Community		
9	TBC 2026	Community Funding Allocation for sport groups - Annual Report.	GM Customer & Community		
10	24 March 2027	Six Month Report: Sport Manawatū	GM Strategic Planning		Terms of Reference