

Stadiums Auckland

A TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

ISSUES PAPER FOR STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION
PREPARED BY REGIONAL FACILITIES AUCKLAND

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THE CHALLENGE:

AUCKLAND HAS THREE MAJOR STADIUMS AT EDEN PARK, NORTH HARBOUR AND MOUNT SMART THAT PROVIDE THE CITY WITH MANY SPORTING FACILITY OPTIONS. YET THEY ARE CURRENTLY UNDERUTILISED AND OPERATING UNDER FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS.

AUCKLANDERS DESERVE SPORTING FACILITIES THAT PROVIDE MAXIMUM COMMUNITY BENEFITS AND MAXIMISE SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT.

THE CHALLENGE FOR THE REGION IS TO UNLOCK THE EXISTING POTENTIAL OF ITS STADIUM ASSETS THROUGH A NEW APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT AND UTILISATION.

A TRANSFORMATIONAL OPPORTUNITY EXISTS.

WITH THIS ISSUES PAPER, DEVELOPED AFTER ENGAGEMENT WITH A NUMBER OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS, RFA SEEKS TO GENERATE A CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSION ON A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR AUCKLAND'S STADIUMS AND SPORTING SECTOR.

One of this city's great experiences is to join tens of thousands of other Aucklanders at a sports event, festival, or concert. These events help make Auckland a vibrant liveable city, and build community between all of us lucky enough to live in and around the isthmus.

The regional network of stadiums host many of the city's major events, and the creation of the supercity has given us the opportunity to develop a strong regional stadiums sector to serve our growing population. That's an exciting challenge.

So what do we want from our stadiums?

We want our stadiums to be attractive places for community connection and celebration. We want more people to come and enjoy the fun and excitement of seeing the game or the festival or concert - live. So our stadiums have to deliver the outstanding experiences that result from a combination of excellent services, facilities, and inspiring events.

We need our stadiums to work well for sporting codes and their local professional franchises, promoters, and festival organisers. They are our partners in delivering events to Aucklanders, so we want to do all we can to help them be successful.

Our stadiums network should also provide first class training facilities for the city's top sportspeople. In a world in which our professional sports franchises increasingly compete for players with their rivals in Australia and throughout the world, we have to make sure our city can hold on to its homegrown stars, and attract outstanding players from overseas. One way we can do that is to create in Auckland high performance sports clusters which will provide the conditions in which winners can thrive. The nucleus of a regional high performance sports cluster has already been created with the development of the Millennium Institute of Health and Sport in Albany. We can add to the region's high performance training capacity as we begin to transform our stadiums.

Finally, our stadiums need to have the capacity to host outstanding national and international events. The Rugby World Cup was one of the most exciting and memorable events ever for Aucklanders. We want to build on its success. That means ensuring that our stadiums are well-positioned to compete for events against stadiums in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, as well as stadiums in other parts of New Zealand.

The Issues Paper developed by Regional Facilities Auckland Ltd (RFA) suggests there are some fantastic opportunities for our stadiums sector to deliver a lot more to Auckland. We now want to share the RFA's review to the stakeholders in our stadiums so you can help us think through the options to make our stadiums work better.

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The Rugby World Cup was an exceptional example of what a successful stadiums sector can deliver to a city. While an event of this scale is rare, its success tells us much about what makes stadiums work.

The Cup events confirmed that the success of stadiums is only in part about facilities and services. Success is also about the quality of the events on offer, the marketing, the ticketing, and the event management. All these factors combine to draw the crowds.

The marketing around the Cup built and sustained public interest, which helped draw capacity crowds. The marketers had something inspiring to offer – the chance to see high performing teams playing at their best. The experience of attending a Cup match was not confined to seeing the teams run out on the field and play. The Cup's event management made all aspects of attending the game enjoyable, from walking the fan trail to seeing some spectacular staging in and around the matches at Eden Park and North Harbour.

Even Aucklanders who didn't go to any Cup games were drawn into the Cup experience. Fan zones brought people together to enjoy televised games in a social setting. Schools adopted teams, various ethnic communities turned out in force to welcome their teams, people painted their faces in the colours of their teams, hung flags outside their houses and offices, and generally used the Cup as an opportunity to celebrate.

Auckland came alive.

The Rugby World Cup was a reminder of the value of investment in stadium infrastructure and services.

As Auckland grows, and further public sector investment in our stadiums is required, we need to ensure that investment is made strategically in the network to create a strong regional resource which can deliver outstanding events and experiences for both Aucklanders and domestic and overseas visitors.

In the latter part of 2011 RFA and Council conducted a series of consultation workshops with all of the key players in Auckland's sporting and stadium sectors. One of the elements that came from those sectors loud and clear, was the need to transform how Auckland stadiums function.

The argument for transformation of Auckland's stadiums sector is not new.

Prior to the establishment of the new Auckland Council in 2010, various reports on the region's sports and event facilities were produced. These included a substantive discussion paper produced for the Auckland Regional Physical Activity and Sport Strategy (ARPASS) in 2008. This identified a range of issues which are largely unchanged in 2012. These included: A significant number of major sports facilities in the region but limited coordinated planning, management or integrated development; significant increasing operating costs for many venues requiring on-going facility subsidy; potential capitalisation and financial sustainability issues for major facilities.

The ARPASS discussion paper noted "there is a clear need to develop future governance and funding that can think and act regionally as well as locally." The creation of the new Council, and the establishment of Regional Facilities Auckland (RFA) has delivered that regional perspective, and an opportunity for considered investment, and better governance, management and utilisation of the regions many facilities.

Following its establishment, the RFA reviewed previous analyses of the region's facilities, such as the ARPASS report, and carried out its own analysis to identify priorities for action. The transformation of Auckland's stadiums sector emerged as the top priority.

Some stakeholders have advocated building a new stadium on the waterfront. Given current economic conditions and infrastructure funding priorities, this is most unlikely to be funded either by local or central Government. At best, a waterfront stadium can only therefore be considered a much longer term proposition. The focus at this time needs to be on optimising the three major playing field-based stadiums, Eden Park, North Harbour, and Mt Smart. These are the major stadiums used by four of the region's most popular sporting codes: rugby, rugby league, cricket and football.

Eden Park, North Harbour and Mt Smart

Eden Park, North Harbour, and Mt Smart all require substantial continuing financial support. Eden Park must service a debt of \$55 million. Mt Smart requires ongoing capital upgrades to its ageing infrastructure. Without the continuing support of Auckland Council, Mt Smart and North Harbour would not be financially viable and Eden Park is running close to a cash breakeven with no surplus capacity.

There are a number of reasons why the stadiums are not performing as well for Auckland as they could.

The assets and operations of the stadiums are not managed in an integrated manner. Each stadium operates largely in isolation under separate ownership and governance. All face the challenge of escalating costs, sub-optimal utilisation and competition for events. As a consequence, in staging events sports organisations incur high overhead costs reducing the funds available for marketing and event enhancement.

Years of ad hoc development means training facilities at the stadiums and elsewhere for major sporting code clients are not up to the required standard. This potentially reduces the ability of the city's major professional sports franchises and aspects of high performance sports to attract and retain talent given these costs and inefficiencies are ultimately borne by them.

Auckland's Stadiums are not as well positioned for future competition, as are other stadiums in the Australasian region. Unless transformation happens, the sector will have lesser capacity to retain and sustain major professional franchises in Auckland and to deliver the range and quality of events required to maintain Auckland's liveable city status as the city's population grows.

The challenges these stadiums face are clear, and the creation of the supercity now provides us the opportunity to do things differently. The RFA's view is that these stadiums can be transformed into an effective regional resource, and positioned to serve an increasing population, requiring an acceptable level of additional investment to that already required to maintain the status quo over upcoming years. Funding mechanisms however will require further detailed work.

Key stakeholders in the sector agree that the need for change is pressing. Preliminary discussions with stakeholders have established that there is considerable interest in considering transformation proposals. These preliminary discussions have helped inform the initial proposals for transformation outlined in this Issues Paper.

While the primary focus of transformation is Eden Park, North Harbour, and Mt Smart, opportunities to improve the functioning of other regional facilities may emerge as proposals are developed.

Support for High Performance Sport

Transformation to improve support to the sporting codes that have Eden Park, North Harbour and Mt Smart as their home bases, will provide an opportunity to develop high performance sport clusters in the region. This will benefit a wider range of codes in the region, including netball, basketball, and football.

Support for high performance sport is an increased priority for central government and local government, for the range of cultural and economic benefits it can provide. Central government has put in additional resources to high performance sport and created High Performance Sport New Zealand to deliver these resources. Government investment in the national high performance training centre at the Millennium Institute in Mairangi Bay, aims to help more New Zealand athletes win on the world stage.

Development of high performance training facilities at the region's stadiums would be planned to complement what is on offer at the Millennium Institute

The Transformational Opportunity

The RFA has identified two main opportunities for transformation:

- Collaborative or integrated management of the assets and operations of Eden Park, North Harbour and Mt Smart stadiums
- Focusing the business operations of the three main stadiums around specialised functions

By taking advantage of these opportunities we can improve the economic viability of the stadiums, which will result in a more efficient and effective use of public sector funding.

These opportunities are detailed further in this Issues Paper.

Developing the Transformation Projects

More work now needs to be done to build on RFA's preliminary analysis and the options identified for transformation. RFA will work closely with the sector's stakeholders to draw on their expertise to create a plan for a transformation that will achieve the best possible outcomes for Auckland, the community, the sporting codes, and other stadium clients.

The RFA review of the current status of Eden Park, Mt Smart, and North Harbour stadiums shows each is financially constrained. Eden Park has a substantial debt to service, Mt Smart requires ongoing capital upgrades to ageing infrastructure to continue in its present role and, as with North Harbour, requires continuing Council funding to maintain financial viability.

Eden Park

The facility: Eden Park comprises two main playing arenas, the main stadium and the number two field which is primarily used as a cricket venue. There are associated training facilities for cricket adjacent to the number two field. Eden Park is currently the home ground of Auckland Rugby and Auckland Cricket which have their administration offices located there.

Governance: Eden Park is operated by the Eden Park Trust Board, which comprises nine trustees, five of whom are appointed by government, two from the previous Eden Park Trust Board (until September 2012) and one each from Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby respectively. In September 2012 the two remaining trustees from the previous trust board are to be replaced by one extra trustee from each of Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby.

Current issues: Eden Park had a significant (more than \$250m) capital upgrade in preparation for the Rugby World Cup, leaving it with a debt of \$55m. Eden Park remains under-utilised which means an unsustainable proportion of its income is used to service its debt.

North Harbour Stadium

The facility: North Harbour comprises 23 hectares of land with one main stadium and five other playing fields including a FIFA-approved artificial turf pitch. It is the home ground of North Harbour Rugby Union. Administration offices for North Harbour Rugby, New Zealand Football and the Northern Football Federation are located at the property. Harbour Sport (the North Auckland Regional Sports Trust), and Marist North Harbour Rugby Club are also tenants.

Governance: North Harbour is owned and operated by the North Shore Domain and North Harbour Stadium Trust Board, which is comprised of nine trustees. RFA has contractual/funding obligations which were inherited from the previous local government arrangements.

Current issues: The stadium occupies a significant land area, its facilities are in good condition and it seeks further opportunities to increase its facilities and uses. The Stadium Trust Board has developed a compelling long term vision for the facility which includes a retractable roof. North Harbour Stadium relies on ongoing Council funding to ensure financial viability.

Mount Smart Stadium

The facility: Mt Smart comprises 22 hectares of land which is leased from the Crown by Auckland Council, with two arenas. Arena 1 is the home venue of the New Zealand Warriors Limited Rugby League Club and Auckland Rugby League, and is also used for outdoor concerts and festivals. Arena 2 is home to Athletics Auckland. Mt Smart is also part of a recent Treaty settlement and going forward will be managed in partnership with the Tamaki Collective.

Auckland Football and Athletics Auckland administration offices are located at the Stadium as are New Zealand Warriors administration and player operations and the offices and residential training centre of the Oceania Football Confederation.

Governance: The stadium is a fully integrated business unit of RFA and employs approximately twenty full time equivalent staff. The stadium occupies 22.4 hectares of land and encompasses two large Stadium precincts (one with an athletics track) suitable for sporting and entertainment events along with a further three training fields.

Current issues: Mt Smart requires ongoing capital upgrades if it is to adequately continue its current role into the future. The venue also requires significant financial support to continue its day-to-day operations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STADIUMS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

Any transformation proposal should aim to ensure:

- Existing infrastructure is used efficiently.
- Public sector investment is directed strategically to create a strong regional stadiums sector optimising network benefits.
- Overhead costs for the major clients of the stadiums are reduced.
- The financial viability of the sector and its major clients is improved.
- Dependence on ratepayer funding is reduced.
- The conditions for regional high performance sports clusters are created.
- Auckland is competitively positioned to compete for sports events against other Australasian stadiums available to rugby, cricket and rugby league.

The goal of transformation is to strengthen the city's stadiums sector to ensure Aucklanders continue to enjoy access to high quality events which enhance the city's liveability, and attract domestic and international visitors.

The RFA's review has identified the following two opportunities that would be generated by transformation:

1. Collaborative strategies or possibly integration of assets and management to:
 - Streamline governance.
 - Improve operational effectiveness and economic efficiency.
 - Enhance long term social, cultural and economic outcomes.
 - Streamline and re-focus public sector investment.

2. Specialisation of functions at Mt Smart, Eden Park, North Harbour Stadium which may include:
 - Eden Park being positioned as New Zealand's premier competition venue for rugby union, limited-overs cricket, and bigger rugby league events (over 20,000 spectators).
 - Mt Smart and North Harbour Stadium facilities being upgraded for sports events, including rugby league.
 - Mt Smart and North Harbour offering state-of-the-art training facilities to high performing teams from a range of sporting codes
 - Mt Smart being upgraded to function as New Zealand's premier outdoor festival and concert venue.

Collaborative Management

The collaborative or possibly integration of the assets and management of Eden Park, and North Harbour and Mt Smart stadiums is recommended for consideration by stakeholders.

Subject to resolution of any competition issues and the support of Central Government and Council, an integrated model would be designed to:

Enhance governance

- An improved regional focus on the stadiums governance and operations.

Improve operational effectiveness and economic efficiency

- Integrated management would allow for better utilisation of resources and assets across venues. Currently staff and assets are duplicated across the venues, resulting in higher overhead costs than is necessary. Any change in staffing levels or roles would be subject to consultation with staff and their representatives.

- The three stadiums jointly would achieve economies of scale and increase their purchasing power. Currently each has separate arrangements for items such as turf management, security, catering, ticketing, and temporary events infrastructure such as fencing and seating.
- There would be greater flexibility to move events to the most suitable venues, allowing for optimum use of venues.
- An enhanced transferable membership model would help maximise sales across venues and increase attendance at sports events.
- Enhanced opportunities for generating revenue for the stadiums.
- Expertise across the wider RFA portfolio of facilities would be leveraged. Each stadium currently operates, for example, function and conference facilities as an adjunct to their main activities. Under an integrated management model, there would be scope for Auckland Conventions to work with the venues to develop their functions and conventions activities.

Enhance the capacity of the stadiums to deliver long-term social, cultural and economic outcomes

- Integrated management would facilitate a coordinated approach to marketing Auckland's venues to attract high profile sporting events
- Development of high performance training facilities would increase Auckland's capacity to retain existing professional franchises and high performing teams, and attract high performing individuals and teams and other high performance sporting organisations to Auckland.

Streamline and re-focus investment

- Public sector investment could be directed strategically to develop the three stadiums into a strong regional resource
- The stadiums sector would be in a stronger position to attract public, private and philanthropic investment.

SPECIALISATION OF FUNCTIONS

Reorganising the business operations of the three main stadiums around specialised functions is recommended.

Specialisation would allow investment to be focused to deliver higher quality match venues and more 'fit for purpose' training facilities.

As an illustration, options for specialisation could include developing:

- Eden Park as a competition stadium only, with Mt Smart Stadium and North Harbour Stadium providing facilities for sports events such as rugby league where Eden Park is either unsuitable (eg. too large) or unavailable.
- North Harbour Stadium's oval as a bespoke test cricket arena.
- Mount Smart as New Zealand's premier outdoor concert and festival venue and administrative and training base for the NZ Warriors and Auckland Rugby League
- High performance sports clusters at North Harbour and Mt Smart.

Specialisation Option 1

Eden Park – New Zealand's National Sports Events Destination

Under a specialisation model and consistent with applicable resource consents, Eden Park could be positioned as New Zealand's premier stadium for major rugby, cricket, rugby league and football events including:

- Super 15 Rugby and the Auckland ITM cup – where commercially viable based on spectator numbers
- International Rugby including IRB Sevens tournaments
- International Cricket (T20, One Day matches)
- National Rugby League (NZ Warriors) – for games over 20,000 spectators where commercially viable
- International Rugby League Events
- International Football
- One-off events (e.g. State of Origin, NFL competition game, Major League Baseball game)

Significant consultation would need to be undertaken with the Eden Park Residents Association and other key stakeholders in respect to this proposal.

Eden Park is already an international brand. Specialisation would facilitate the use of this brand to market Auckland across Australasia and internationally as a sports events centre, and strengthen the city's ability to compete against other Australasian stadiums to win international events.

It is acknowledged that significant efforts will need to be made in reducing the overall costs of staging events at Eden Park .

Specialisation Option 2

Mt Smart Stadium – Rugby League/High Performance Training/Outdoor Concert and Festival Venue/Speedway

Mt Smart would be enhanced as the administrative and training base for the NZ Warriors, Auckland Rugby League and New Zealand's premier international major concert and festival venue.

Investment would be focused to develop facilities that would make Mt Smart more attractive to international music acts, and develop its capacity to host events such as Pasifika and Christmas in the Park.

Development would need to include or provide for:

- Capital investment for refurbishment of the Colin Kay Stand.
- Provision of temporary and portable all-weather roofing options for concerts.
- Future proofing to accommodate infrastructure for events such as a future Commonwealth Games.
- Hosting NZ Warriors rugby league games for up to 20,000 spectators.
- High performance training facilities and administration offices.
- A new athletics track.

It should be noted that NZ Warriors have flagged the possibility of playing some home games at North Harbour Stadium and RFA is willing to consider this in negotiation with the Warriors under the existing agreement.

Development at Mt Smart could also incorporate new speedway facilities (most likely in Arena 2) to replace the Western Springs facility and this option should be canvassed with stakeholders. Mt Smart is situated in an industrial area with no nearby residents, has ample car parking, good public transport links, and as such may provide a better long-term home for speedway in the Auckland region (see Appendix). Alternatively, speedway could relocate

to Colin Dale Park in Manukau. However the operators of speedway, Western Springs Promotions, have indicated they do not support this option.

With revamped facilities, Mt Smart would also continue to be the centre for Athletics.

Specialisation Option 3

North Harbour Stadium – International Test Cricket Arena

Specialisation could see the development of the outer oval at North Harbour Stadium as an International test cricket venue. The oval was originally developed with the intention of accommodating cricket, and some of the basic elements of a cricket venue are already in place.

As well as accommodating test cricket, North Harbour would have the capability to host international T20 and one-day matches where it is not feasible or of sufficient scale to utilise Eden Park.

North Harbour Stadium would remain home to North Harbour Rugby events. Rugby League and football matches could also be played there.

It should be noted however that the Auckland Cricket Association has expressed a strong intention to remain at Eden Park.

Specialisation Option 4

Mt Smart and North Harbour – High Performance Sports Clusters

Specialisation would see the development of high performance centres for elite training at Mt Smart and North Harbour. These centres would bring together a number of sports to share facilities such as gymnasiums, hydrotherapy and rehabilitation facilities, medical treatment areas, sport science laboratories, and superior training fields. This would reduce the cost of duplication of these services across a number of facilities, and allow for investment to be focused on providing excellent services and equipment.

Mt Smart High Performance Centre

Mt Smart to be developed to provide high performance training facilities alongside five to seven playing fields. It could offer training and administration bases for:

- Auckland Rugby League
- New Zealand Warriors
- New Zealand Rugby League

- Northern Mystics (ANZ Championship franchise – trans Tasman competition)

North Harbour High Performance Centre

North Harbour to be developed to provide a high performance training facility alongside six playing fields, including a FIFA-approved artificial pitch. The Centre could potentially offer training and administration bases for a range of Auckland sporting codes. Strong links are already in place between North Harbour and the Millennium Institute of Sport & Health (MISH). A proposed community sports village at the current Albany Tennis Centre offers another opportunity to be explored.

Both high performance centres will be developed in a manner that enables other sporting codes to be incorporated over time.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS FROM TRANSFORMATION

- Governance of Auckland's stadiums sector enhanced and becomes more effective and efficient to allow better delivery of regional outcomes.
- Auckland's stadiums sector is positioned to deliver high quality, cost effective services and facilities to sporting codes, promoters and festival organisers.
- First class training facilities provide the conditions for the development of high performance sport clusters
- Simplified management of the assets and operations of key stadiums reduces overhead costs for the stadiums' major clients, and allows for greater investment in marketing and event management.
- Integrated management of the assets co-ordinates and maximises the utilisation of public sector investment.
- Investment in event management improves event experience and increases the number of people attending major sports events, concerts, and festivals.
- Robust sustainable income streams boost the financial viability of the stadiums' major clients minimise the financial support required by Auckland ratepayers.
- Integrated management of the assets improves the economic viability of the stadiums.
- An increasingly rich array of events is made available to Auckland by sporting codes, community organisations, and promoters.
- Auckland's reputation for delivering outstanding sports events, outdoor concerts, and event such as Pasifika, adds to our reputation as being one of the world's most livable cities.

Purpose

Subject to stakeholder consultation and shareholder endorsement, the following is an overview of the proposed project methodology for the further development and implementation of the stadiums transformation strategy.

Scope

The scope of this project encompasses:

- Reform of Auckland stadium management and governance;
- Stadium specialisation and use;
- Implementation of optimal business models for Auckland stadiums;
- Provision of high performance training centres for Auckland based professional sports codes; and
- Identification and evaluation of funding options.

Approach

The transformation of venues and training facilities for professional sporting codes will take some time, potentially up to five years. Given this, the project has been designed to support the implementation of initial gains in the 2012-13 financial year. This will boost stakeholder confidence and also provide some support for currently constrained stadium business models.

Historically, development in the sector has lacked coordination with the result being a series of sub-optimal commercial arrangements which overall undermine the financial viability of the sector as a whole. It is desirable therefore, that any unaligned proposed development taking place across the stadiums and professional sporting codes is made subject to the outcomes of this project.

The four major stages of implementation

Stage 1: Release of this issues paper, stakeholder consultation and preparation of a stadiums 'blue print' for the future.

Stage 2: Collaborative or integrated management and governance of Eden Park, Mt Smart and North Harbour.

Stage 3: Detailed design, development studies, resource consents, funding commitments, tendering etc for training facilities and other infrastructure components.

Stage 4: Development/construction of approved infrastructure/facilities.

Development of an integrated approach to the management of the three major stadiums (Eden Park, Mt Smart, and North Harbour) is seen as being the first of three major implementation stages, which may overlap or operate in parallel from time to time as the project rolls out.

Integrated stadium management will quickly demonstrate a number of initial gains comprising:

- The ability to move games to the most suitable location;
- Reduced overhead costs from efficiency gains and removal of duplication;
- Greater ability to leverage improved services and cost reductions; and
- Improved revenue generation.

The timelines within the plan ensure that long-term decision-making is aligned with the development of and consultation on the 2013-14 and 2014-15 Auckland Council Annual Plans. This provides a mechanism for public consultation and Council decision making on the long-term funding implications of the project.

The success of the project is dependent upon achieving success across five key factors, these being:

1. Support from the Mayor, Councillors and relevant Local Boards;
2. Support of the Eden Park, North Harbour Stadium and RFA Boards;
3. Support from Central Government;
4. Alignment with the strategic goals of professional sporting codes in Auckland; and
5. Acceptance by Auckland ratepayers.

Correspondingly, the project plan will encompass a range of mechanisms to engage stakeholders at various levels.

Eden Park No. 2 Oval

In the context of a potential Test Cricket oval being established at North Harbour Stadium and major limited–overs cricket being played at the main Eden Park ground, the issue arises as to the future of the adjoining land on which the current cricket facility at Eden Park No. 2 is located.

Western Springs

Western Springs is not a primary focus of the stadiums transformation project. Any redevelopment of Mt Smart, however, could include the development of new speedway facilities. This opportunity should be explored with major stakeholders in the context of the stadiums transformation.

The current status of Western Springs is as follows:

The facility: The stadium occupies approximately ten hectares of land with one main stadium venue which houses a speedway track and one playing field and two other playing fields. The administration buildings house Ponsonby Rugby Club who has a lease until October 2012, which is currently being renegotiated. The stadium is subject to a promotions agreement with Springs Promotion Limited (SPL) who promote speedway and other events at the stadium. The promotions agreement operates until June 2014.

Current issues: Western Springs requires a significant capital upgrade but has limited utility as a speedway and concert venue due to noise impacts with nearby residential housing. The promotions agreement applying to the venue expires in only 2014.

Governance: Western Springs is a fully integrated business unit of RFA. The stadium is managed on a day-to-day basis by City Parks Services under legacy arrangements from Auckland City Council. These will be reviewed prior to 1 July 2012 when new arrangements/contracts will be put into place.