

EA Networks Centre & Surrounding Land 30 Year Masterplan

2024

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Introduction

The EA Networks Centre is 100% owned and operated by Council. It features four indoor pools, four indoor courts, two outdoor courts and a fully equipped fitness centre.

The EA Networks Centre was opened on 9 May 2015, it was a \$35 million, council-community project that had been in the making since 2007. The Ashburton Stadium Complex Trust drove fundraising efforts and together with the community, raised \$5 million dollars.

The initial site selection, building design and subsequent land purchases by Council were made with an eye to the future, with the intention of expanding the current centre to create a larger sporting hub.

EA Networks Centre plays an important role in making our district a great place to live. We know that this asset is valued by the community, it contributes to our wellbeing and provides significant economic benefit for our district when larger events are held.

To get the best outcome for generations to come, we have developed a plan that ensures development at the site is logical, supported by the community and keeps the centre relevant to our growing and changing district.

About the Plan

Why do we need a plan?

The Play, Active Recreation and Sport Strategy adopted in 2022 identified the need to complete a stocktake of sporting groups' current and future needs. In 2023, we completed a utilisation study of sports facilities and Council land across the district. The study showed that some areas of the EA Networks Centre are already being used at capacity during peak times, and that the growth of some sports will be limited due to the size of current facilities. This shows there is a need for more space for both current and future generations.

While the Masterplan aims to increase capacity for areas struggling to meet current and projected demand (such as the indoor court space), we also wanted to add more active recreation and play activities within the plan to join the existing disc golf course and outdoor court space (such as a mini golf course, a hydroslide and allocated space for play within the stadium).

The purpose of the Masterplan is to create a vision of what can be achieved on the land we currently own. It will ensure staged development of the proposed projects, resulting in a future-proofed, cohesive and well utilised community asset. The plan will also prevent adhoc, unplanned development and help us to maximise the space available. While the plan shows the likely locations of proposed projects, as the plan is refined over time and more information is gathered, these locations may be adjusted.

How will this plan be actioned?

This plan proposes where we see the development of EA Networks Centre heading over the next 30 years. It aims to provide an overall vision to help guide future projects in the area.

It is important to note that many of the individual projects identified within this plan are not currently funded. When the need exists and funding is available, the identified projects will be included in a future Long-Term Plan or Annual Plan, and community consultation will occur as part of this process.

What do we have to think about?

Consultation feedback on the Draft Masterplan

We undertook consultation with the community on a draft version of this Masterplan in March/April 2024. In response to consultation we received 67 submissions. A majority of the feedback we received supported the Masterplan and its overall vision, and therefore there were no major changes made to the plan as it was consulted on. Council did however, decide to mention in the plan that a climbing wall may be considered as part of the stadium extension.

Long Term Plan 2024-34 consultation feedback

We undertook consultation on our draft Long Term Plan (LTP) in March/April 2024, alongside the draft Masterplan. As part of the LTP we asked the community for the feedback on the proposed stadium extension and the proposed outdoor pool.

Stadium extension

As part of the Long Term Plan 2024-34, we asked the community which option they would prefer out of the following: Two court extension, three court extension, or do nothing.

The majority of submitters (52%) supported the three court extension option, and therefore this option was included in the final Long Term Plan and this Masterplan.

Aquatic extension/outdoor pool

As part of the Long Term Plan 2024-34, we asked the community which option they would prefer out of the following: Refurbishing Tinwald Pool, creating a waterplay area at Ashburton Domain, building an outdoor pool at EA Networks Centre, or do nothing.

While there were a lot of submitters who supported the outdoor pool at EA Networks Centre (29%), Council ultimately decided not to include any aquatic projects in the plan due to the current economic environment.

The aquatic extension, including the outdoor pool option, is still included in this Masterplan but at this stage isn't expected to happen within the next 10 years (2024-2034).

The Plan



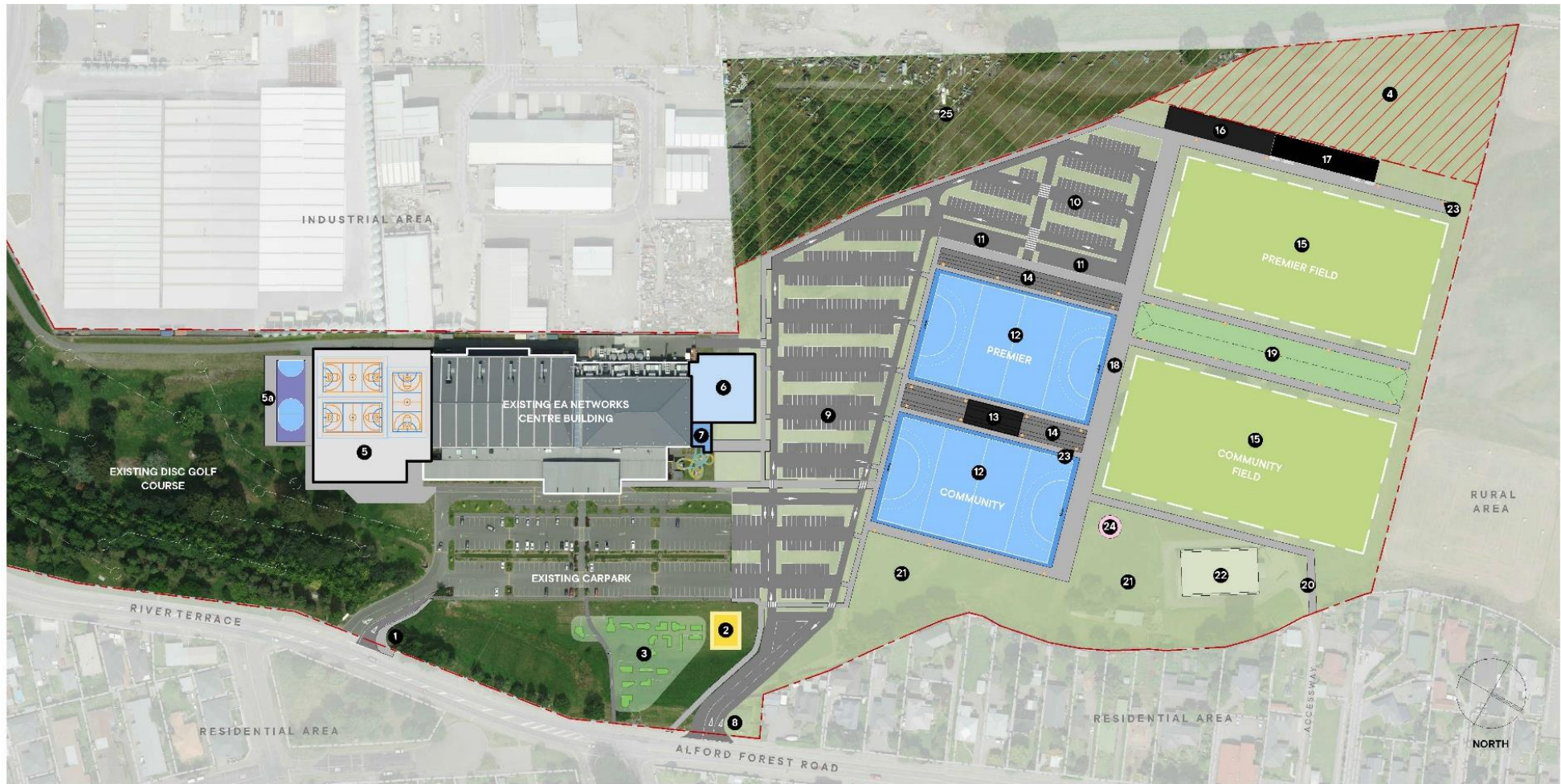
STAGE 1 - 2025 - 2033

- 1 EXISTING VEHICLE ENTRANCE WIDENED - ADDED EXIT LANE - 2025
- 2 SAND COURT - 2026
- 3 MINI GOLF COURSE - 2026
- 4 SOLAR FARM AREA (1 HECTARE) - 2030
- 5 STADIUM ADDITION - 2033
- 5a OUTDOOR BASKETBALL - 3 HALF-COURTS - 2033



NOTES:

1. STAGE 2 IS INDICATIVE ONLY. POSITIONING AND ARRANGEMENT SUBJECT TO CHANGE.



STAGE 1 - 2025 - 2033

- 1 EXISTING VEHICLE ENTRANCE WIDENED - ADDED EXIT LANE - 2025
- 2 SAND COURSE - 2026
- 3 MINI GOLF COURSE - 2026
- 4 SOLAR FARM AREA (1 HECTARE) - 2030
- 5 STADIUM ADDITION - 2033
- 5a OUTDOOR BASKETBALL - 3 HALF COURTS - 2033

STAGE 2 - 2034+

- 6 AQUATICS EXTENSION
- 7 HYDROSLIDE
- 8 ADDITIONAL VEHICLE ENTRANCE
- 9 ADDITIONAL CAR PARK AREA A - APPROX 297
- 10 ADDITIONAL CAR PARK AREA B - APPROX 106
- 11 BUS DROP OFF AREA
- 12 HOCKEY TURF
- 13 TEAM SHELTER

- 14 STEPPED TERRACE SEATING
- 15 SPORTS FIELD
- 16 CHANGING ROOMS AND PUBLIC TOILETS (~680m²)
- 17 SPECTATOR STAND - 500 SEATS
- 18 PROMENADE - ACCESS/SERVICE WAY (10m WIDE)
- 19 GRASS EMBANKMENT
- 20 PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY CONNECTION
- 21 MULTI USE GREEN SPACE (EVENT SPACE, OVERFLOW CARPARK)

- 22 EXISTING SHED CONVERSION (EVENT SPACE)
- 23 OUTDOOR LIGHTING TO SPORTS FIELDS AND TURF
- 24 PLAY EQUIPMENT
- 25 DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION LAND - POSSIBLE FUTURE INCLUSION



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Projects

Map number	Project name	About the project	Proposed for	Completed
1	Existing vehicle entrance widened	It is proposed to widen the current vehicle entrance and add an exit lane.	2025	Scheduled Works
2	Sand court	An outdoor sand court is included in this project for the community to use. This could be used for sports such as volleyball.	2025	Scheduled Works
3	Mini golf course	The plan includes a mini golf course. It is proposed to be unstaffed, and users could either bring their own golf balls and clubs or hire them from reception at the EA Networks Centre, which is the same model as the disc golf course at Smallbone Drive. This project is included as a low/no cost activity that has been identified as a gap in the district.	2025	Scheduled Works
4	Solar farm area	A one hectare solar farm is included in the plan and has been designed to produce enough electricity to power the EA Networks Centre and secure the financial energy spend of the facility. In time, this is expected to increase sustainability and fix a key operating cost for the facility.	Early preparatory work 2027/28	No
5	Stadium extension	A stadium extension of three multipurpose courts is allowed for in the plan. The extension is envisioned to be a separated area to the current stadium. The new area may be identified as event/show court area with proposed seating for up to 1500 people, including a mezzanine viewing area and provision for TV cameras, allowing for the ability to host national and regional sporting events. This project may also include other equipment such as a climbing wall.	2031-33	No
5a	Outdoor basketball courts	Three half outdoor courts are included in the plan. As part of the plan the existing outdoor courts need to be relocated to allow for the stadium extension project. These community courts will remain free	2031-33	No

Projects

Map number	Project name	About the project	Proposed for	Completed
		for all to use. When tournaments are on these courts will also be used as warm up areas.		
6 & 7	Aquatics area extension	Land allocation has been included in the masterplan for a proposed aquatic extension. What exactly this would include is yet to be determined but may include an additional outdoor or indoor pool, a hydroslide, a wet/dry climbing wall, a wet obstacle course and a splash deck area designed for older children.	No date specified	No
8	Additional vehicle entrance	An additional vehicle entrance has been included as part of this plan.	No date specified	No
9	Additional car park area (a)	Two additional car park areas have been included as part of this plan. This area would provide approximately 297 spaces.	No date specified	No
10	Additional car park area (b)	Two additional car park areas have been included as part of this plan. This area would provide approximately 106 spaces.	No date specified	No
11	Bus drop off area	An extra bus drop off area is included as part of this plan, next to the proposed hockey turfs and multi-use sports fields.	No date specified	No
12	Hockey turf	Two new artificial turfs are included in this plan which could service hockey, turf sports and other recreation opportunities. The turfs are proposed to be orientated for optimal daylight conditions.	No date specified	No
13	Team shelter	A team shelter is included in the plan to be located between the two turfs.	No date specified	No
14	Stepped terrace seating	Stepped terrace seating proposed to be next to the premier turf to accommodate spectators.	No date specified	No
15	Multi-purpose sports fields	Two multi-use sports fields are included as part of the plan. It is expected that these fields could be used for a variety of sports such as	No date specified	No

Projects

Map number	Project name	About the project	Proposed for	Completed
		rugby, league, football and softball. The sports fields are proposed to be orientated for optimal daylight conditions.		
16	Changing rooms and public toilets	Changing rooms and public toilets are proposed to be 680m ² , and sit behind the premier sports field.	No date specified	No
17	Spectator stand	A spectator stand is proposed to be next to the premier sport field to accommodate 500 spectators.	No date specified	No
18	Promenade – access/service way	This promenade is proposed to be 10m wide and sit between the two artificial turfs and the two sports fields.	No date specified	No
19	Grass embankment	The grass embankment sits between the two proposed multi-purpose sports fields.	No date specified	No
20	Pedestrian walkway connection	This pedestrian walkway is included in the plan to allow for more access, particularly to the turfs and multi-use sports fields.	No date specified	No
21	Multi-use green space	This green space may be used in future for things like an event space or an overflow car park.	-	-
22	Existing shed conversion	This is an existing shed that in future may be converted to an event space.	No date specified	No
23	Outdoor lighting	Outdoor lighting is included in the plan for the proposed sports fields and turfs.	No date specified	No
24	Playground equipment	Playground equipment has been included to provide an opportunity for spontaneous play and entertainment for younger family members.	No date specified	No
25	Possible future inclusion	Crown derived Recreation Reserve (Rifle Range)	-	-

Appendices

Appendix A - Review

The plan may be reviewed every three years or as required to coincide with Council's Long-Term Plan.

Appendix B – Others involved in developing this Masterplan

The following groups were directly involved in or consulted on during the development of the initial Masterplan (prior to consultation):

- Basketball Mid Canterbury
- Mid Canterbury Hockey
- Mid Canterbury Netball
- Mid Canterbury Rugby
- Sport Canterbury

A wider range of groups were consulted as part of the public engagement in March/April 2024, and we received feedback from the following additional groups:

- Ashburton Range Users Association
- Hampstead Rugby Club
- Methven Netball Club
- Mid Canterbury Cricket