

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

4 APRIL 2018

AGENDA ITEM D5

PROPOSED USE OF MARTINBOROUGH GOLF CLUB AS A CAMPGROUND FOR SELF-CONTAINED VEHICLES

Purpose of Report

To inform councillors of the proposal of Martinborough Golf Club to operate a campground for self-contained vehicles, and the steps proposed to mitigate any possible visual impact on Barlow Road neighbours.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receives the Proposed use of Martinborough Golf Club as a Campground for Self-contained Vehicles Report.*

1. Executive Summary

Martinborough Golf Club is on land leased to it by the Council. For some years the Club has been allowing overnight stays on the grounds by self-contained camper vehicles. Many of these people are members of allied golf clubs who also "play" the course as part of their visit to Martinborough. The presence of a large group of campers for the weekend of the March Martinborough Fair caused the owner of a neighbouring property to complain to Council as to the Golf Club operating this way and whether the premises were registered as a campground. While there is nothing in the lease to prevent this activity, officers have discussed and agreed that registration as a campground is required. However as this will be for self-contained vehicles only, an exemption from the Camping Ground Regulations 1985 can be considered. It is an operational decision to proceed with campground registration and exemption. However, given the neighbour's complaint and Council's ownership of the land, the Council is being advised of the steps being taken to mitigate their concerns.

2. Background

The Martinborough Golf Course is a block of approximately 40 hectares, and was originally bounded by farmland on all four sides. It is bounded to the north and west by Hinakura and Todds roads. The farmland on the southern boundary has been developed as the Martinborough Estate, and

there are several residential properties on the boundary on Barlow Road. It is the owner of one of these properties who has raised the concerns. Both the Martinborough Estate and the Golf Course land are zoned rural. The inclusion of a camping ground within the Golf Course property is a permitted activity under the Combined District Plan.

Martinborough Golf Club has been providing overnight parking to self-contained camping vehicles for several years. The majority of golf clubs around New Zealand offer this service, as they have both space and attractive grounds for campers to enjoy. At Martinborough, a donation is requested from campers, who are able to make use of the club-house facilities. Around 20% of the campers are travelling golfers, who pay green fees to play on the golf course in addition to their donation. SWDC receives a small percentage of all green fees paid to the Club. Generally, the numbers are small, with only one or two vehicles a night; however for the March Martinborough Fair, an organised group of 19 vehicles was booked in so that group members could enjoy the Fair and Martinborough's many other attractions.

3. Discussion

3.1 Camping Ground Regulations 1985

The Camping Ground Regulations 1985 are made pursuant to S.120B of the Health Act 1956, and are administered by the Council's Environmental Services Team. Under the regulations, a territorial authority issues a certificate of registration under the Health (Registration of Premises) Regulations 1966. The intent of the regulations is to ensure that camping grounds meet required standards for health and hygiene. By regulation 14 of the Camping Ground Regulations, a territorial authority can grant an exemption from registration under the Health (Registration of Premises) Regulations. The grounds for doing so are either the remoteness of the camp site, or that undue hardship would be caused to the campground operator by the application of the regulations. It is the practice of Council's Planning and Environment Department to grant such exemptions to campgrounds that provide for self-contained vehicles only.

3.2 Provisions of the lease

The Martinborough Golf Club has leased the land since 1969. The current lease is for 21 years from 1 November 2001. The land is specifically leased for the purposes of a golf course, with the sub-lease to Martinborough Squash Club being permitted. The lease pre-dates the Freedom Camping Act 2011, which recognised the significant increase in self-contained camping vehicles in New Zealand. The possible use of the grounds by such vehicles was not recognised by the lease.

The only possible relevant clause of the lease is clause 4, which states that the "Lessee will at all times maintain the said Golf Course as a golf course or ground for playing the game of golf, and for no other purpose; provided however that the Lessee may graze sheep or permit sheep to be grazed on any part of the said Golf Course but so that such grazing shall not prevent or interfere with the use of the said Golf Course for the playing of golf thereon...." The intent of this clause is clearly to ensure that at all times the bulk of the land is maintained for the purposes of playing golf; this clause is

not breached by the Club permitting overnight parking away from the actual course.

3.3 Impact on neighbours

The Golf Course is adjoined by eleven residential properties on the north side of Barlow Road and the extension of Oxford Street. The majority of these properties exceed 0.6 hectare in size, with living accommodation generally placed at the furthest distance from the golf course. In addition, four residential properties on the south side of Barlow Road have a view across the road onto the Golf Course (See Appendix 1). The concerned neighbour occupies one of these properties.

Camping vehicles are generally parked along the south side of the Golf Course driveway under trees near the clubhouse, where golfers' vehicles are also generally parked (marked in red on the attached plan). At the time of the March Martinborough Fair, around nineteen campervans were parked in this location, where they were visible to the properties on Barlow Road.

Officers have discussed the visual impact of the camping vehicles with the Acting President of the Golf Club and have agreed a two-step plan for mitigation of the visual impact:

1. the Golf Club will endeavour to locate camping vehicles elsewhere on the property and away from Barlow Road, particularly if a large group is booked;
2. the Golf Club and council will work together to plant additional screening trees on that part of the boundary which directly adjoins Barlow Road (marked in orange on the attached plan).

4. Conclusion

The Martinborough Golf Club will apply for registration as a campground, and this application will likely be granted by Council, along with an exemption from registration under the Health (Registration of Premises) Regulations 1966. In order to mitigate the concerns expressed by a Barlow Road resident, the Club and the council will work together to ensure camping vehicles are generally located away from Barlow Road, and that screen planting is developed at the boundary with Barlow Road.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Aerial view of Martinborough Golf Course

Contact Officer: Helen McNaught, Amenities Manager

Reviewed By: Murray Buchanan, Group Manager Planning and Environment

Reviewed By: Mark Allingham, Group Manager Infrastructure Services

Appendix 1 – Aerial View of Martinborough Golf Course

Martinborough Golf Course



March 23, 2018

1:2,000



Martinborough Golf Course



March 23, 2018

1:2,000

