

Frequently Asked Questions

Maintenance

Concern

- The synthetic surface specified for the Proposal requires regular maintenance which uses chemicals, algaecides and herbicides.

Response

- Council does not use any chemicals on its existing two synthetic fields.
- This is in marked contrast to a natural surface which will require regular application of fertilizers, herbicides, and occasional application of both fungicides and insecticides all of which have the potential to leach into and have a deleterious effect on the environment.
- The synthetic surface is to be installed on top of a freely draining aggregate base course. Synthetic fields constructed in this manner dry out immediately after rain events leaving little or no moisture in the infill layer to support vegetative growth.
- The freely draining base course is to be laid over a fully welded impermeable geocomposite membrane which will prevent any surface water from infiltrating the sub-grade.

Cork Infill

Concern

- The use of cork infill has the potential for microbial activity and the likelihood that cork may to break down over time. Further there is concern that the Infill will migrate from the field into the surrounding environment.

Response

- Cork is derived from the bark of trees. The cork is an organic, recyclable and sustainable product that is harvested from the cork oak tree, *Quercus suber*, every nine years without harming the trees.
- The Suberin component of cork is anti-microbial and anti-allergenic and will repel pests, mould and prevent cork from rotting. It therefore has a strong hygienic value and is completely recyclable.
- Construction of a 200mm high concrete kerb around the entire perimeter of the synthetic field; provision of shoe cleaning grates; installation of silt baskets into all drainage sumps surrounding the field; and the provision stormwater management infrastructure such as check dams in potential waterways will eliminate the risk of migration of cork into the surrounding environment.
- The synthetic turf to be installed at the Norman Griffiths Oval will be a product that is the latest development of synthetic turf incorporating two different fibres. Resilient monofilament fibres remain erect to provide unsurpassed playability, ball performance and durability, whilst fibrillated fibres, in alternate rows of stitching, fold over on the surface to encapsulate the infill and prevent its displacement.

Fire Risk

Concerns

- The NSW Rural Fire Service classifies the park as bushfire prone, and every few years there are major bushfires in the surrounding area with consequent danger to the STIF arising from floating embers on high temperature days.

- The Proposal materially increases the fire risk to the STIF.
- The proposal to install synthetic grass a surface whose flammability and radiant heat characteristics pose a new and serious bushfire risk to the STIF.

Response

- In contradiction to the assertion that the use of the synthetic turf has the potential to increase the fire risk, unlike natural turf the synthetic turf and its infill components are non-flammable. Whilst surface will melt if subjected to temperatures exceeding the melting point of the polymer it has been tested and shown not to propagate flame. Sand infill is not flammable, and the cork infill is fire retardant, the material charring but not catching fire.

Impact on Flood Risk

Concern

- The Proposal poses an unacceptable flood risk which would cause serious damage to the environment.

Response:

- The new field has been designed not to flood even at the 1% AEP.
- The design incorporates on-site detention by way of deep layers of aggregate to temporarily store and detain up to 2.4 megalitres. In addition, under field conduits will channel flood volume exceeding the detained volume downstream.
- In addition, all water flowing down Quarry Creek will be channelled through an over-sized gross pollution trap of the latest design, removing both gross pollutants and entrained sediment.
- It is expected that post-development downstream water quality will be vastly improved as a result.

Impact on Listed Threatened Species and Ecological Communities

Concern

- The Proposal poses significant harms to threatened species and endangered ecological communities listed under NSW and Commonwealth biodiversity legislation.

Response:

- All areas where threatened species and endangered ecological communities exist will be fenced off, prior to the construction phase. Further protection will be provided to the sensitive ecological communities behind the sandstone bleachers through the provision of a 2.4m high bio-security fence.