

**Nelson City and Tasman  
District Council  
Draft Saxton  
Management Plan  
Review 2019-2020**

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## **Submitter details**

1. Nelson Marlborough Health (Nelson Marlborough District Health Board) (NMH) is a key organisation involved in the health and wellbeing of the people within Te Tau Ihu. NMH appreciates the opportunity to comment from a public health perspective on the Nelson City (NCC) and Tasman District Councils' (TDC) Saxton Field Management Plan Review.
2. NMH makes this submission in recognition of its responsibilities to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and the Health Act 1956.
3. This submission sets out particular matters of interest to NMH.

## **General Comments**

4. Saxton Field is an important community resource that provides for a wide range of recreational activities. The availability of public open space provides the opportunity for people to gather and socialise which has many health and wellbeing benefits.<sup>1</sup> NMH supports updating the management plan which will lead to actions that will improved ecological health, and increase people's enjoyment of Saxton Field, as this will facilitate people's mental and physical health.

## **Specific Comments**

5. NMH would support the enhancement of recreational amenities such as toilets, shade sails and seating at Saxton Field.
6. Given that the district is one of the sunniest in the country, consideration could be given to increasing drinking fountains in Saxton Fields. Adequate hydration is important especially in the warmer months. Increasing the number of drinking fountains is a way that NCC and TDC can contribute to the health and wellbeing of its citizens by giving people the option of free easily accessible water in public places.
7. NMH recommends that consideration is given to the provision of more plantings or structures at Saxton Field for shelter and shade to alleviate the effects of

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Public Health (2010) *Healthy Open Spaces: A summary of the impact of open spaces on health and wellbeing*. Regional Public Health, Wellington. Retrieved from <http://www.rph.org.nz/content/d893f45e-9d35-4906-bde7-c4912036c97e.cmr> 27 July 2017



extreme heat by providing shade and allow cooler air to accumulate and circulate at ground level.<sup>2</sup> This will enable more people to get refuge from the sun.

8. It is also recommended that if existing trees are being replaced or new trees are planted, then the species of trees and plants chosen are limited to those that don't produce pollen that causes significant allergy problems.
9. Saxton Field has a good selection of walkways and cycleways. Investment in these type of paths deliver a range of social and environmental benefits which increase health and wellbeing. NMH recommends that the walkways and cycleways are extended through to the Velodrome. In addition, the lighting of cycleways in Saxton Field should be considered to increase safety on the routes especially in the winter months. This would encourage more cycling between Richmond and Nelson.
10. NMH recommends that the level and type of good quality cycle parking is reviewed and the amount of on-site cycle parking is increased to ensure that Saxton Field supports those that choose cycle.
11. Given Nelson/Tasman's ageing population, it is important that the Council assesses the level of public seating. Seating in public spaces is important because it gives people a place to rest and socialise. Seating spaces need to have a plain design and be easily recognised as chairs to help those people with sight impairments and dementia.<sup>3</sup> Public benches need to include a centre handrail so that people can easily get in and out of seats.
12. Consideration should be given to the level of smokefree signage in Saxton Field particularly in playgrounds. Smokefree signage helps to protect people from exposure to tobacco smoke, reduces littering, and denormalises smoking. Smokefree signage can also reinforce fire risk messaging during drought periods.
13. On site refuse facilities should provide for general rubbish and recycling. Consideration could be given to providing a green waste option for rubbish disposal so that organic material does not go to landfill.
14. NMH notes that there are vending machines within the Saxton Fields. It has been well established that over 50% of New Zealanders exceed the WHO recommendations in relation to the consumption of added sugars and this has an impact on people's health in terms of unhealthy weight gains and dental caries.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Health (2018) *Heat Health Plans* <https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/heat-health-plans-guidelines-dec18.docx>

<sup>3</sup> Alzheimer's Australia Vic (2016) *Creating Dementia-friendly communities: A toolkit for local government* Commonwealth and Victoria Government's Home and Community Care program  
<https://www.fightdementia.org.au/files/NATIONAL/documents/Dementia-friendly-communities-toolkit-for-local-government.pdf>

These conditions place a burden on not just the individual but on their community as well as the health system. In 2017, obesity rates for adults in New Zealand were 32% (Maori 50% and Pacific adults 69%) in 2016-2017. NMH recommends that NCC and any contractor providing vending machines on site adopt a water-only policy because of the health benefits of drinking water as opposed to artificially sweetened beverages or juices. NMH also recommends that any food vending machines increase the proportion of healthier food options.

## **Conclusion**

15. NMH thanks TDC and NCC for the opportunity to comment on the Saxton Field Management Plan Review.

Yours sincerely



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