



**Press Statement: For immediate release**

**Monday 28 April 2008**

### **Eden Park project remains on track**

Eden Park Redevelopment Board chairman, John Waller, today said that efforts would continue to ensure that the redevelopment of the Park for Rugby World Cup 2011 followed a fair and open process.

Mr Waller's comments followed recent comments reported in the media regarding the level of public input to the redevelopment and the consenting processes which have been followed.

Mr Waller said, "We have undertaken extensive public communication and done everything reasonably possible to work with the local residents and to ensure that the redevelopment process has been fair to all stakeholders."

He added, "In December 2007, we announced that the Government had approved an enhanced design for Rugby World Cup 2011 and beyond, and we remain firmly on track to achieving this."

He said that community initiatives to date included several public meetings; meetings with the Mt Eden Community Liaison Group; one-on-one meetings with affected neighbours; and providing key documents (such as high level design plans and technical reports) to interested persons.

"We are also co-hosting an Expo for the community at Eden Park on the weekend of May 10 and 11 where local residents will be able to come and talk directly to the architects, builders and Redevelopment Board executive."

Mr Waller said that it was unfortunate that some recent media reports contained errors regarding the process which was being followed to secure resource consents and design aspects. [*Specific details regarding these errors are appended to this release.*]

"Over past months the redevelopment and the design has been subjected to a high level of public, media and regulatory scrutiny. This has required an enormous investment of time, but it is necessary and

worthwhile to ensure that people are confident that no short-cuts are being taken regarding proper public consultation.”

Mr Waller stressed that every aspect of the redevelopment remained on track and that with the Auckland City Council advising that a decision on variation to the South Stand design was “imminent” the Redevelopment Board were ready for demolition of the South and South-west Stands after the Bledisloe Cup in early August, ahead of construction in December.

**For further information contact the Eden Park Redevelopment Board chief**

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## Appendix:

### Eden Park Redevelopment Process

**Assertion:** *The South Stand has gone from two tiers to three tiers and, by implication, got bigger.*

**Facts:** The South Stand design has always contained three tiers. Moreover, the amended design has reduced the overall height of the South Stand by 3.9m, and it is also set back a further 7m from the Park boundary, compared to the design which was given resource consent last year.

**Assertion:** *The terraces were not meant to be increased in height.*

**Facts:** The original design applied for by the Eden Park Trust and consented in 2007 by independent commissioners ("the 2007 design") did not propose the retention of the terraces, but rather had them replaced by a East Stand of approximately 26m height (from pitch level). The subsequent design which was initially approved by the Crown ("the baseline design") proposed retaining the terraces. However in late 2007, the Auckland City Council (ACC) indicated that

retention of the terraces would be fatal to successfully securing resource consent as they would have additional adverse effects on pedestrian circulation within the ground. The enhanced design which was approved by the Crown in December 2007 proposes replacing the terraces with a more modest East Stand (in terms of capacity and bulk) to that which had already been consented in 2007.

The new East Stand is only slightly higher than the current terraces (by 4.5m), and is considered to be a better outcome for the Park and the residents. It is lower (by approximately 7m) than the currently consented East Stand. The structure will also be set back further (by 12m) from the current boundary which will further reduce its visual impact on Cricket Avenue.

More significantly, the current terraces represent all that is outdated in modern sports stadium and, due to their age, would in any event have to be condemned around 2015. By comparison the new East Stand will be a significant aesthetic improvement; will be buffered by new landscaping; and will provide a far-improved quality of seating that should see a reduction in the disruptive element that has plagued the Park's management and local residents alike.

***Assertion:*** A "huge" acoustic barrier will be built behind the East Stand.

**Facts:** The Park has to operate under some of the most restrictive noise limits of any international stadium. (By comparison, other suburban stadiums , such as Lansdowne Rd in Dublin and Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane, have noise operating limits 50% or higher than Eden Park).

The only way the Park can operate as a stadium within these rules is to erect some form of structure to contain noise. The proposed new East Stand, being lower than the consented East Stand, has reduced the adverse effects of visual impact and shading. However it is too small to contain all noise which would spill from the Park during an event. Consequently something needs to be added to the structure to act as a noise barrier.

The proposed barrier is at the lowest possible height to contain noise to meet the very stringent requirements of the District Plan and is still 2m lower than the East Stand design which has been consented. It not only meets the requirements of the District Plan, but will also be an integral part of the stadium's design and will enhance rather than detract from its visual impact. (A copy of the current design is attached.)

**Assertion:** *The transport hub has been removed*

**Facts:** The original design contained a transport hub on the No.2 Cricket Ground. The Auckland Cricket Association (ACA) is no longer shifting and so an alternative transport facility has been designed for the south-west corner of the ground. The Board's transport planners (who provided transport planning for the Sydney Olympics) have advised that they are confident that this new location will provide a transport solution that is equally effective.

**Assertion:** *There is no longer an internal concourse.*

**Facts:** The new design continues to provide a full concourse which will allow spectators to circulate within the ground. As the West Stand is no longer being demolished, the concourse will be behind the Stand but is designed in a manner that enables it to become an internal concourse if/when that Stand is replaced.

**Assertion:** *Internal plazas have been removed.*

**Facts:** The internal areas of the new stands make the same provision for internal space and pedestrian circulation as the consented 2007 design.

***Assertion:*** *There has been a loss of open space and car parks*

***Facts:*** Opening up the No. 2 Ground was always dependent on ACA shifting its playing venue. They alone have the right to decide whether to move and have chosen to remain at Eden Park. Therefore the playing surface will continue to be fenced off.

The number of car parks provided for under the current design do not differ from those currently consented.

***Assertion:*** *The Redevelopment Board has not disclosed plans to develop commercial opportunities around other parts of the Park.*

***Facts:*** The Redevelopment Board has provided both the residents and the media with copies of both the immediate design plans and possible long term “legacy” plans. It has noted that there are no approved plans to develop anything other than the stadium itself.

However, the Board has also noted that the Park has suffered ad hoc development for decades. Consequently, in order to avoid this being repeated, some form of long term planning is appropriate. The plan which has been prepared by the Board’s architects simply contains provision for completing the stadium’s upgrade (e.g. replacement of

the ageing West Stand) and the surrounding Park precinct. The plan does not promote any particular solution, nor does it contain commercial developments. It notes that future development will be dependent on funding and regulatory approvals and will be a matter for the new Trust Board.

***Assertion:** Resource consent rules have been manipulated for Eden Park's benefit and there has been no chance for public input.*

***Facts:*** The Park's consents have gone through a level of public and regulatory scrutiny that far surpasses most projects. The Park was granted consent last year for a design which would have had greater (albeit still minor) impacts on residents; i.e. the consented scheme was higher; larger; and with a greater spectator capacity than the new design.

The Redevelopment Board is seeking variations to this consent based on the new design elements. However, both the substantive design changes to the baseline design, and the process for seeking variation approval to the consented 2007 design, were made at the ACC's behest.

In particular, seeking variations to the consented design by means of a staged approach was proposed by the ACC. Some of these variations are expected to be non-notified (i.e. not requiring further public comment) on the basis that they have improved, positive effects on the neighbourhood to those features already consented (or at least no greater adverse effects). Others are likely to require further public notification on the basis that they have greater or at least less than minor additional effects. If such impacts are identified, the Redevelopment Board will be encouraging comment from all residents to ensure that all design options are looked at.

***Assertion:** The Board has not prepared a shading mitigation plan and nor has reasonable mitigation been offered to residents affected by shading.*

***Facts:*** The Redevelopment Board commissioned professional engineers (Connell Wagner) to analyse the shading impacts and propose a reasonable mitigation package. This report and recommendation was approved by the Council. The Redevelopment Board, on its own initiative, has increased the mitigation offer made to the worst affected neighbours. A number of neighbours have already accepted these offers.

***Assertion:*** *The shading impact does not analyse all shading impacts.*

***Facts:*** The analysis uses highly sophisticated computer models based on actual sunlight data. It models shading impacts for the peak daylight highs and lows (in summer and winter) as well as the two equinoxes. Copies of the shading reports for both the East and South Stands are publicly available.

**Ends.**

*View of East Stand and acoustic barrier from cnr Walters Rd and*

