

MEDIA RELEASE

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Securing Addington Raceway's future

The New Zealand Metropolitan Trotting Club (NZMTC) is progressing long-term planning for its 24-hectare Addington Raceway site, with a vision to make better use of the land while securing the future of racing at Addington for generations to come.

The long-term planning work explores how parts of the site could progressively be developed to provide new housing, commercial and hospitality development, community facilities, public spaces and improved transport connections, alongside continued investment in racing and events.

NZMTC Chief Executive Brian Thompson said the Club was focused on securing Addington's long-term future.

"Addington has been synonymous with harness racing for more than a century. Our responsibility is to make sure it remains at the heart of harness racing for generations to come," Thompson said.

"We have 24 hectares in an outstanding location close to central Christchurch. The opportunity is to make better use of that asset to create sustainable revenue for the Club while also creating something of real value for Christchurch.

"This isn't about moving away from racing. It's about giving Addington the financial strength to keep investing in racing, our facilities and the experience we provide."

The Club's long-term planning comes as the New Zealand racing industry considers the future of its racing infrastructure following the release of Project Stamina, the national infrastructure review undertaken for Harness Racing New Zealand and New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing with the support of TAB NZ.

Project Stamina proposes concentrating future investment into fewer, higher-quality racing venues to help create a more financially sustainable and resilient racing network.

Addington has been identified as having an important ongoing metropolitan role in the future harness racing network.

NZMTC Chair John Hartnell said Project Stamina and Addington's long-term planning were separate pieces of work but shared a clear focus on long-term sustainability.

"Project Stamina confirms Addington has an important place in the future of New Zealand racing.

"Our responsibility is to make sure Addington has the financial strength, infrastructure and facilities to fulfil that role.

"Unlocking the value of parts of our property over time provides an opportunity to create sustainable revenue that can be reinvested in racing and events," said John Hartnell.

The long-term planning work could also make a significant contribution to Christchurch's future growth.

Potential development includes new homes, commercial and retail activity, hospitality and visitor accommodation, community facilities, public spaces and improved walking, cycling and transport connections.

"This is much more than a raceway development," Brian Thompson said.

"We have a significant piece of strategically located urban land. There is an opportunity to provide more housing close to central Christchurch, encourage private investment and employment, improve connections through the area and create new public spaces while retaining a nationally important racing and events destination.

"We believe those things can complement each other."

The long-term vision is conceptual. No final decisions have been made on individual developments, and any redevelopment would occur progressively over many years.

NZMTC has begun discussions with Christchurch City Council about the long-term vision and the planning, infrastructure and transport requirements associated with it.

The Club believes there is also merit in considering how the wider Addington precinct could evolve, including adjoining Council-owned land such as the Apollo Projects Stadium site.

"We recognise Apollo Projects Stadium is a Council-owned asset and decisions about its future rest entirely with Council," Brian Thompson said.

"If Council determines at some point in the future that the land is surplus to its requirements, we would welcome a discussion about the options, whether that involved acquisition, a land exchange or another partnership arrangement.

"A coordinated approach could potentially achieve better outcomes for transport, infrastructure, housing and public spaces across the wider precinct."

The next formal step is expected to be the lodgement of a private plan change in late September, seeking changes to the zoning of parts of the Addington Raceway site.

That will involve detailed technical assessments, further engagement with Christchurch City Council and a formal statutory process providing opportunities for public submissions and feedback.

"We're not announcing a development that starts tomorrow. We're setting out a long-term vision for what Addington could become.

"Addington has been part of Christchurch for generations. We want it to remain one of New Zealand's great racing and events destinations while becoming an even more valuable part of the city around it," said Brian Thompson.

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