

# Whitianga Social Services Trust

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**TO** Mercury Bay Community Board  
**FROM** Allan Tiplady - Acting Area Manager  
**DATE** 3 November 2015  
**SUBJECT** **Whitianga Social Services Trust**

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## 1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to further consider the report to the Community Board by the Property Officer at its meeting on 11 August 2015, a presentation to the Community Board workshop on 29 September by the Trust and the Board visit to the site on 13 October 2015 and to make a decision on the extent of the lease to be granted to the Trust.

## 2 Background

The Social Services Trust (the Trust) has been established for 33 years, providing support to people in need in the Whitianga and wider Mercury Bay area. The current service provided meets those needs through the premises located a 2 Cook Drive on land leased from the Council. The report prepared by the Property Officer sets out the detail in relation to the situation with the lease. This is **Attachment A**.

## 3 Issue

The key issues that have arisen in the discussion on the matter are:

- a) The area of the lease is not currently accurate. It is confined to a small portion of the site and does not cover the area currently occupied by the Trust.
- b) To consider if there are other short or long term uses of the land that would have priority over the needs of the Trust.
- c) Whether to approve the Trust's request to add a further building of 192m<sup>2</sup>, adding a further 12 metres to the space currently occupied by the Trust.

## 4 Discussion

The following discusses the issues identified.

- a) The current lease needs to be amended to reflect the area actually occupied by the Social Services Trust buildings. This will ensure accuracy for the current reality on the ground. If the Community Board wishes to approve the extension to accommodate the proposed additional building the lease plan would need to be amended to reflect this also.
- b) The land which the Trust wishes to occupy is contiguous with the site where their buildings and services are currently housed. The land is Local Purpose (Community) Reserve. The Reserves Management Plan provides that its purpose is to *"Allow for community based facilities to be developed on this reserve."* The issue to be addressed by the Community Board is whether the use proposed by the Trust is the most appropriate *"community based facility"* to occupy the part of the reserve requested. In discussions to date the only other potential use identified is the Mercury Bay Area School and whether it could be used in the future for a school related activity. This could potentially take the form of car parking or a special activity provided by the school. At this point no formal approach has been received in this regard. The other option would be to retain it as open space for future community use, if the case of the Trust is not considered to be justified at this time.

If the Trust proposal is approved it would leave a residual area of approximately 30x20 metres for future use.

- c) The Trust's proposed use of the new building is for housing of the OSCAR (after school) programme and provision for further clinics, meeting rooms, community groups and the growth of its services. A copy of the Trusts presentation to the Community Board on 29 September, together with additional information supplied subsequently, is **Attachment B**. In support of its proposal the Trust advise that the after school programme and demand for the community rooms are both at the capacity of the current buildings and that there is demand that would occupy the expanded space. The after school care is licenced and has demand for 40 children but only has space for 20. Bookings for the community rooms in the 2014/15 year were 1,464, which occupies the current buildings 5 days / evenings plus most Saturdays every week. This means that use for the social services own service provision is not able to use the rooms.

The Trust has considered other options on the site:

- There is a possibility the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) may vacate the rooms it occupies on the site. If this happens the income they currently generate, which is used to fund the "Youth Space" on the corner of Cook Drive and Bryce Street, would be lost, meaning the youth service would need to relocate to the MSD space. As a result the MSD space would not be available for the uses proposed for the new building.
- The possibility of building up on the site was also explored, but this wasn't considered practicable.

The Trust has not requested any funding support from the Council for the development or operation of the new building.

Relevant issues regarding the tenure, term, rental etc. are addressed in the Property Officer report (Attachment A).

In considering the proposal the principle question to consider is whether to accommodate the identified immediate needs of the Social Services Trust or to retain the land in question as vacant land for a yet to be determined Local Purpose (Community) Reserve use in the future. It appears that the need of the Trust is well founded, with other options yet to be promulgated. If the area is committed to the Trust it would be for a period that aligns with the current lease, which expires on 31 March 2029.

## 5 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Mercury Bay Community Board:

1. Receives the report.
2. Recommends to Council that it approve development of a new building of approximately 192m<sup>2</sup> by the Whitianga Community Services Trust on the area of land of the Cook Drive Reserve immediately adjacent, to the south, of the existing building on the site occupied by the Trust and as shown hatched on the plan attached to the report to the Mercury Bay Community Board meeting on 3 November 2015.
3. Recommends to the Council that it approve a variation to the area of land leased to the Whitianga Community Services Trust as shown on the plan, outlined in light blue, attached to the report to the Mercury Bay Community Board meeting on 3 November 2015.

## References-Tabled/Agenda Attachments

**Attachment A** *Report by the Property Officer dated 20 July 2015, with attachments*

**Attachment B** *Presentation by the Trust to the Community Board on 29 September 2015, together with additional information supplied subsequently.*

**Attachment A - Social Services**

**Attachment B - Social Services**