



Pinelands Hockey Club (est 1937)

2b St Stephens Road, Pinelands, Cape Town, 7405

The Oval Sportsgrounds

www.pinelandshockey.co.za

Pinelands Hockey Club Statement - 13 March 2026

Dear Pinelands Community,

In 2022, our proposal to all the sports clubs in Pinelands was... **“Let’s work together and build a Pinelands Sports Club for the benefit of the Pinelands Community!”**

Core to this was changing 20% of The Oval surface from grass to hockey astro turf with a R9million investment into this community sports facility, the biggest not-for-profit investment in Pinelands in decades outside of the CID. The City indicated that proposals demonstrating strong utilisation and investment would receive consideration. In our view, this was always a no-brainer.

PHC recognises that The Oval is an important community space for Pinelands residents. Our intention is to invest in sports infrastructure that strengthens the facility while preserving its accessibility.

PHC would welcome opportunities to:

- support youth development and school hockey programmes,
- collaborate with other sports clubs and community organisations,
- ensure continued community access to the wider Oval fields for informal recreation.

The proposed astro facility represents an investment into a public sports asset that will remain owned by the City and serve the broader Pinelands community.

We are now in the 30 day public participation period of the lease application and endeavour to provide everyone further details of our plans.

Over the last decade of discussing this with many members who are Pinelands residents, we believe we have addressed the community's concerns. The loss of a 2nd cricket field is un-avoidable but this has been mitigated by having already secured access to a second field, elsewhere with soccer, frisbee and recreation still being accommodated.

This is a **city-wide infrastructure issue** with a serious lack of sports fields available for use. This is a **sports evolution problem** as hockey is no longer played on grass. This is a massive **community investment opportunity** which will boost and uplift Pinelands.

Pic (right): Example of WPCC Club Astro in Rondebosch with a FULL grass soccer field & hockey astro turf adjacent allowing both sports to participate on a former cricket field smaller than the Lower Oval.



THE FACTS ABOUT THE OVAL SPORTSGROUNDS

The Hockey and Cricket clubs formed the Pinelands Sports Club (PSC) in the 1980s. This was to work together in operating the fields and the clubhouse.

There are FOUR x resident clubs at the Oval with 10 + year usage namely:

- Pinelands Hockey Club (PHC) - affiliated to PSC since 1980s
- Pinelands Cricket Club (PCC) - affiliated to PSC since 1980s
- Ultimate Chilli Frisbee Club (UC) - affiliated to PSC since 2022
- Pinelands Athletics Club (PAC) - not affiliated to PSC.

Current leases - The Oval Sportsfields (top and bottom Ovals) are NOT leased to any club and the City controls ALL bookings on the grass fields currently. Pinelands Sports Club (PSC) held a lease previously on the fields however that expired a very long time ago. No other club has applied to lease any portion of the Oval at this time.

Subletting - All clubs are required to book the fields legally with the City for usage. There have been concerns raised regarding the booking and sub-letting of fields which fall under the City's booking system. These matters are ultimately regulated and enforced by the City.

PSC Clubhouse lease - PSC has a lease on the clubhouse only on top Oval which is a 10 year lease and it was signed recently. PSC has a valid on-consumption liquor license. PHC has covered the majority of the costs of this clubhouse for the last 25+ years. This is because PHC is a bigger club membership wise than both Frisbee and Cricket combined. Hence, PHC pays the majority of the affiliation fees required to cover the clubhouse expenses (insurance, DSTV, armed response, gas for hot showers etc).

PAC Clubhouse lease - PAC has their own lease on their clubhouse at the bottom Oval.

PHC Floodlights - PHC paid for and installed floodlights for the top Oval in the 1980s via member donations and personal sureties. It was a game changer that allowed both cricket and hockey to be played after hours when adults were available for club sport. Without PHC granting UC usage of the PHC floodlights, the frisbee club would not have been able to play at The Oval. PHC is exploring ways to extract value out of these lights to help with funding our astro.

Mutual Soccer entry - All clubs agreed to try to assist Mutual Soccer Club with field / clubhouse access when they were kicked off the Old Mutual fields. PHC has been supporting the soccer club with access to the bar, toilets, change rooms etc. during our hockey / winter season.

Govt dept - The Oval is classified public open space and designated for SENIOR CLUB SPORT under the auspices of the Dept of Recreation and Parks. The Dept employs a grounds keeper and maintains both top / bottom Oval fields at their expense.

Places for club sport - The Oval is the last place in Pinelands a club is able to access full size sports fields for senior club sport. Clyde fields (fully utilised by other resident clubs) are the only other sports fields for club sport controlled by Dept of Recreation & Parks. However they are now included in the Mowbray King David Golf Course re-development which will take years to finalise. So when you see open fields in and around Pinelands - we have investigated them ALL. They are not viable or accessible. The game of "why don't you build the astro over there!" has been played for 10+ years now. The Oval is the only place we realistically have access and rights to, to apply for a lease.

City capacity issue - There is a serious lack of sports fields in Pinelands for ALL sports. We have an abundance of smaller parks unfortunately none of which can be used for formal senior sport training / matches. The City indicated that they have no more available fields for any sports clubs at this time. They further indicated that there are many clubs without fields currently.

Utilisation - Although the primary use of the Oval is for sport, the community (residents / people walking dogs etc.) and the sports clubs have happily co-existed. We do not expect this to change at all. However as the Oval is maintained for booked / organised senior sports, the City looks at utilisation through its official bookings system. Per our last meeting with the City, UC and Mutual Soccer have been booking the facility formally, however, PCC has not booked the fields legally. Based on available booking data, the bottom field appears to have periods of under-utilisation relative to other sports. Also utilisation of the fields for Veterans or Masters Cricket World Cups have no standing - there are plenty of existing facilities to host these kinds of events and the City Dept focuses on delivering facilities for CLUBS and RESIDENTS that use the facility every single day / week. They can't prioritise international events that are ultimately ad-hoc. Youth Sport can also be played at school grounds / facilities.

Capacity - PHC used to have FOUR hockey fields marked and used at the Oval. Two hockey fields on the bottom Oval and two hockey fields on the TOP Oval on either side of the cricket field. We went to zero fields as we are required to play hockey on ASTRO now. There are NO grass hockey leagues played anymore in club hockey. We are proposing to move back to ONE field. Cricket will go from TWO fields down to ONE field. This is unfortunate but unavoidable in the absence of any other realistic plan to accommodate both sports at the Oval. As hockey has done, we were forced to play ALL matches at third party facilities. Cricket is only being asked to play SOME matches at third party facilities as they will still have access to their main home venue.

CITY WIDE - This situation is NOT unique to Pinelands or The Oval. Cricket and Hockey facilities used to work together nicely when we all used grass. Now across the City, the City has had to manage cricket clubs and hockey clubs "de-coupling". As an example, Bergvliet Sports Association now has one cricket field and one hockey astro turf. One of the cricket fields was converted to an astro turf. As they run a central club system, the central club has benefited greatly from the hockey traffic and members in the club.



THE HOCKEY CLUB POSITION

Pinelands gets modern sports facilities - The proposed astro turf represents a R9 million private investment into public sports infrastructure that will remain owned by the City of Cape Town. A giant “gift” to Pinelands / The City as once hockey puts it down, we can’t take it back.

Pinelands sports facilities under-funded - Without investment from community sports organisations, facilities like The Oval will remain limited by the City’s constrained infrastructure budgets. The City indicated there are other lower income areas with a greater need. Without this project and hockey’s involvement, the Oval facility may decline if the status quo remains.

Pinelands is our home - Established in 1937 we have a deep history and roots in Pinelands. Every club needs a home and a sports specific facility. Bowls need bowls greens. Tennis needs tennis courts. Hockey needs a hockey field (now astro turf). We have survived by securing limited astro time at other facilities with costly rentals. However we are NOT able to grow further or maintain sustainability without our own field / clubhouse.

Compared to other communities- Most other areas have their own astro - WPCC (Rondebosch), UCT, Central HC (Athlone), Maties (Stellenbosch), Bellville HC, Constantiaberg HC (Berglvet) etc. Pinelands is being left behind and under-funded. Langa has a community club astro turf.

Hockey’s continued contribution to Pinelands - We have helped maintain the PSC Clubhouse (on top Oval) by contributing the majority of the affiliation fees for clubhouse expenses and upgrades for the last 35+ years. Plus we heavily invested in the grass fields during the almost 30 years we used them. We are a not-for-profit and provide the cheapest possible access to the sport of field hockey for the whole community.

Youth development - astro facilities enable schools, youth programmes and community clubs to access modern sports infrastructure close to home.

It’s not Hockey vs Cricket - this is sports infrastructure evolution. Hockey moved from four grass fields at the Oval to zero fields when the sport transitioned to astro surfaces. Cricket will still retain access to a home field. Hockey will regain access to a single home field.

Access for the whole community - We have never proposed fencing off the Oval or restricting access to the public. Other clubs, dog walkers and people walking will still have access to both top and bottom Oval fields and we have only proposed to fence off the astro itself.

Four x proposed positions of ASTRO on Lower Oval - See Appendix A or this [link](#). The astro would be built on the bottom Oval field subject to geological surveys on the ground to prove suitable. So the exact position can’t be determined upfront. However, we would want to make space for two fields ultimately with the other half of the field remaining open for soccer / frisbee.

Other usage? - PHC proposed padel tennis for the Oval as a way to generate income to fund future upgrades. Padel looks somewhat saturated now, however PHC remains open to working with other sports organisations and community groups to maximise utilisation of the facility.

Other concerns

- **Light spillage** - New floodlights will not spill any light over into residents' backyards. Modern floodlights are great in that they are much lower and very direct. There are many examples in Cape Town with brand new lights that can demonstrate this (for example Conberg HC).

- **Parking** - considering that hockey previously played on the multiple fields for many years, it would stand to reason that there is sufficient parking in existing parking lots in and around The Oval. This is first prize. (For context, hockey teams normally comprise a max of 16 players per team (32 players plus umpires and coaches)). However, the fact that those same parking lots are now used on weekends for other surrounding community purposes means that there *could* be additional parking needs in the future. For the sake of comprehensive thinking, the proposal includes this consideration, however would not be the initial stand point. PAC already uses the grass next to their clubhouse for parking on a weekly basis without any known objection. There is no wish to unnecessarily turn grass into tarmac.
- **Access / fencing** - answered above. The border of the lease does NOT represent a fence. On the document, it simply represents a demarcation of space.
- **Cricket needs two fields for league status** - We have got in writing that a second field is available a short distance away at NO charge whatsoever. Many clubs only have one field.
- **Environmental issues** - modern astro turf facilities are widely used locally and internationally and comply with current sports infrastructure standards.
- **Oval being lost** - approximately half the total Oval is requested to be leased with only 20% used for an astro. Community users of the Oval will be minimally impacted. This ultimately only affects cricket with the impact already mitigated.
- **This is NOT privatisation** - Leases are structured community use. The City will remain the full owner of the land and effectively the facility. The proposed lease simply allows a community sports club to fund and maintain infrastructure that the City cannot currently afford to build. The City also has the ability to terminate the lease.

PRE-CONSULTATION WITH ALL CLUBS

Our initial informal meetings with resident clubs started back in 2016. Then in 2022/2023 we submitted a formal proposal to the City and this started a pre-consultation process amongst the resident clubs at The Oval overseen by the Dept of Recreation and Parks who is the custodian of the Oval Sportsground.

All resident clubs have had multiple opportunities to make proposals to the City. Every club was asked to present proposals, give input, correct any mistakes and discuss with their members.

None of the other sports clubs we engaged actively shared our vision for creating a joint Pinelands Community Sports Club together. The clubs could not all come to agreement on usage.

We had a very long almost two-year consultation process with ALL resident clubs on the Oval, with five official documented meetings with the City and many informal meetings amongst clubs.

The City was then required to make a decision. Hockey's proposal was ultimately accepted "in principle" by the City subject to further processes such as the lease application.

The City sent all clubs [THIS LETTER](#) which paved the way for Pinelands Hockey Club to apply for a lease directly on The Oval which we did in November 2023.

The City Department of Recreation and Parks frequently leases land to sports clubs in this manner.



LEGAL LEASE PROCESS

Please refer to Appendix B or this [link](#) for the official legal lease process as outlined and followed by the City.

A resident (unknown to us) wrote publicly the following:

“On the lease of the Oval. There are a series of steps / processes in motion. Before any building or upgrade or change of any kind, the Hockey club needs to secure the land through a long term lease. That is where the process is now. The club intends to build an Astro and has sought out support for that upgrade in principle from the City. That is wise as it is their land and the hockey club would want to know that upfront before undertaking the lease. That is not an approval. It's to say that in the future the City would be happy to receive such an application for consideration subject to all boxes being ticked. One of those boxes is public participation now for the land acquisition AND later when the actual detailed development proposal is put forward. Objections to the lease would need to be based on something substantive. As much as the "vibe" of the oval is really special, it's not enough for an application to be turned down in my opinion. I would suggest rather that objections are focused on conditions for the lease that ensure public access etc. These would guide the development plans in future. ”

The City advised us as the PHC, NOT to contact residents directly. We should not be running a parallel consultation process that has no legal standing; the City would handle the public participation process formally. We have duly conformed to this process.

Our lease application is currently within the City's formal public participation process, where all residents are invited for 30 days to provide input before any decision is made. The lease process is supposed to take 18 months on average, however it's been on-going for 2.5 years now.

In closing...

There have been several conflicting claims circulating in the community. Our view is that without private investment from community sports clubs, facilities like The Oval will remain underdeveloped because the City does not currently have the funding to build new sports infrastructure. It's a use it or lose it approach - and we would prefer sports fields to be leased to sports clubs which allow investment.

The Oval has long served both organised sport and informal recreation, and this proposal aims to preserve that balance while upgrading the sports infrastructure.

We remain committed to following the lease process legally and being open with our plans for investment in Pinelands and The Oval.

Yours faithfully in community sport,

Issued by The Pinelands Hockey Club Committee on behalf of The Pinelands Hockey Club

Pinelands Hockey Club established in 1937

Appendix A



Rough drawing of four possible positions of the hockey astro turf on The Oval bottom field.

Geological surveys will need to be conducted on the ground to determine if all the land or only parts of the land are suitable for a change of surface from grass to astro.



In all cases, we want to ensure that movement around the field is still possible and that the other half of the field is a **FULL size sports field that still usable (i.e. the astro is not plonked in the middle of the bottom Oval)**

PROCESS ROUTE: LEASE OF NON-VIABLE LAND

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT:
PROPERTY HOLDING BRANCH

An illustration of the statutory route that an application to lease non-viable City owned land has to follow:



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
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Making progress possible. Together.



DATE	2023-10-27
RE	Pinelands Community Sports Club Proposal

Dear Sir/Madam

The Recreation and Parks Department has investigate the proposal received by Pinelands Hockey Club to develop an astro turf on the lower Cricket Oval. As such the City engaged users and provided an opportunity to comment on the proposal– refer Annexure A.

A meeting was subsequently held on the 18th October 2023 to provide feedback on comments. A proposal received by the Cricket Club was to erect the astroturf on along St Stephens Road and demolish the Scouts Hall. This is not considered a viable option as it would also require the demolition of the existing Clubhouse and also reduce the playing field of the Main Oval to a junior size field.

As such, the Department of Recreation of Parks will accept the proposal of Pinelands Hockey Club to erect an astroturf on the bottom oval, subject to further processes, i.e. application to lease the land. This process will include a formal Public Participation for all relevant stakeholders.

Siraaj Slamang
Recreation and Parks

Annexure A



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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HEALTH
RECREATION AND PARKS

Sirraj Slamang
Property Optimisation and Compliance

T: 021 400 3281 C: 072 548 7753
E: Sirraj.slamang@capetown.gov.za

DATE	2023-05-12
RE	Pinelands Community Sports Club Proposal

Dear Sir/Madam

The Recreation and Parks Department hereby confirms that a proposal was received by Pinelands Hockey Club to enhance the Pinelands Oval.

The City of Cape Town has a duty to deliver its mandatory functions (services and infrastructure) to its community in the most efficient and cost-effective (optimal) manner. As such, the City welcomes the initiative from the Pinelands Hockey Club for collaborative planning to develop new management models for multi-use, multi-ownership social facilities (sharing) and the intensification of immovable assets.

The City also encourages Public Participation and as such, the proposal is attached for your review, a meeting is scheduled for the 31st May 2023 to discuss the proposal in more detail, thereafter the City will request comments to be submitted in writing by the **23 June 2023**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Slamang'.

Sirraj Slamang
Recreation and Parks