



12th October 2021

Hayley Ashworth
City Of Mitcham
Sport and Recreation Officer
131 Belair Road, Torrens Park SA 5062

Re: Hours of Use Consultation - Information Required

Dear Hayley,

I refer to your emails of 24 Sep and 1 Oct, together with our meeting on Friday 8th October.

In addition to the response already provided by the Unley Cricket Club for the 'summer' months, we are pleased to submit, to the best of current knowledge, our proposed football hours of use for the remainder of the draft lease period for your consideration.

Day	8am – 3.30pm	3.30pm – 4.30pm	4.30- 5.30pm	5.30- 6.30pm	6.30- 7.30pm	7.30- 8.30pm	8.30- 9.30pm
Monday	0	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training
Tuesday	0	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training
Wednesday	0	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training
Thursday	0	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training	Training
Friday	0	Training	Training	Training	Training / games	Training / games	Training / games
Saturday	Senior club matches	Senior club matches	Senior club matches	Senior club matches	Senior club matches*	Senior club matches*	0
Sunday	Junior club matches	Junior club matches	Junior club matches	0	0	0	0

As discussed at the 8th October meeting, we would ask that the final Council report provide the following added context regarding proposed football usage:-

1. The club's copy of the draft 2019 lease document does not specify hours of use and section 1.2 in Schedule 3 of the SPORTING GROUND/COURT(S) LICENCE has been left blank.
2. The proposed hours detailed in the above table represent minimal change from the current use of the oval, with the exception of the Saturday evening matches (marked in yellow) which is a planned second senior woman's team commencing in 2023.
3. The club has expanded in recent years, predominantly due to community demand for girls and women's teams. We also have a planned commencement of an Under 17.5 boys' team due to widespread demand from club members and ratepayers.



4. There are many variables to the above table which are outside of the football club's control. These include:-
 - a. Adelaide Football League scheduling of senior men's games.
 - This is normally finalised in March and the Unley Football Club is just one of 67 member clubs in Adelaide where we are told when our home and away games will be played. Typically, the 3 senior men's teams play triple headers. Depending on team performance finals games and training extending may extend into late August/early September.
 - b. Adelaide Football League scheduling of senior women's games.
 - This is also normally finalised in March, with the season running from mid- April to mid- August (then finals). Last year the League scheduled 7 home games at Kingswood, 6 of which commenced at 4:45 immediately following the men's games. *Note- senior women's games are much shorter and are usually finished around 6.30.* Increasing numbers of women in the Mitcham council area are seeking to playing football. Due to this demand, we see this as our main area for expanded oval use going forward. The later Saturday night games (highlighted in yellow above) represent one of the few time slots available. As a community focused organisation, the Unley Jets Football Club remains committed to women's sport.
 - c. SANFL scheduling of junior games.
 - The Unley Football Club is one of the largest junior clubs in Adelaide and has a long history of providing a safe and fun sporting environment. We are significantly larger than any other club in the City of Mitcham's catchment area with approx. with just under 30 junior teams. The introduction of girl's football over the past 8 to 10 years has also resulted in significant membership growth and oval usage. Junior boys and girls games usually occur from late April to late August, then finals. Games are played virtually every Sunday (excluding school holidays) with almost non-stop daylight use of Kingswood Oval plus 2 of the smaller Mercedes ovals.

Significantly we note that, junior football has been played since the mid 1980's at Kingswood oval, with continuous usage for the past 19 years involving Friday night and Sunday training and games usage. Parents tend to come and go all day as their own child plays a scheduled timeslot.
 - d. The Unley Jets expanded its 50 year plus Unley High partnership to add Mercedes College in 2011.
 - The partnership with Mercedes is now a mature relationship, and a reciprocally beneficial relationship. It should also be noted that for the last ten years the Jets have been the designated old scholar's organisation for the Mercedes Old Scholars wishing to continue playing football. Old scholars are made up of male and female footballers. This is a non-paid arrangement with reciprocal benefits. It is paramount this relationship continues to ensure the use of Mercedes ovals to facilitate the current demand from our junior and senior footballers. Mercedes require the occasionally use of oval space during mid-week. We seek Councils consent to continue this shared oval usage as we have no other current options for green space. Scheduling of the occasional Mercedes school games are set by the Sports Association for Adelaide Schools and not under our control.

The Unley Football Club is currently conducting meetings with residents, and we remain committed to meeting with and engaging immediate neighbours. We will continue to be reactive to feedback, and to discuss areas for improvement on any concerns (as applicable).

At our most recent meeting of Sat 9th October, oval usage was discussed. As reported by the resident's



representative the issue of weekend parking was highlighted as the single biggest issue. We note that that parking limitations adjacent to Kingswood Oval have stayed fundamentally the same for the past 19 years and that hours of use have changed minimally in that time.

During the last discussions we signalled the increased use of Kingswood oval and there was mutual agreement that both parties would seek a meeting with councillor Adriana Christopoulos on the following basis.

- Parking remains the main issue during oval usage
- The Unley Jets are desirous of extending oval usage
- Both parties agree to hold further discussions to compromise to allow improve parking for residents and to facilitate extended oval usage by the Unley Jets.
- Both parties understand that while giving ground will have undesirable push back for both it is a way forward to compromise and allow the significant outcomes for both parties to be achieved.

It was further reported at the above meeting that resident concerns on noise and lighting are subordinate to stated parking issue.

Please note that our Club Values (all policies and values available on www.unleyjets.com.au), are Community, Sustainability & Achievement. The first of these is and always will be Community.

To expand on our lighting needs and future requirements, LED's (if approved) would be advantageous from environmental and cost points of view as well as reducing light spill into adjacent streets. However, this would not increase the football clubs hours or type of use beyond the table above.

The Unley Football Club does not sub-let the oval for profitable gain. In recent years we have hosted football games and training sessions for Mercedes College and the charity organisation Reclink (training only) refer <https://reclink.org>. We wish to continue both arrangements but scheduling can be ad hoc. The usage by both organisations is minimal and they would typically fall within the hours proposed in the table above.

The over-riding concern we have is our chronic lack of green space, and indeed we believe Mitcham Council is chronically short of oval space generally. Our club is urgently seeking another oval. This is a critical point and ask that this be highlighted heavily in the Council report.

Any solution which seeks to reduce the oval usage would have an immediate and drastic impact on the club's ability to service the community. We understand that Waite Oval is SA Govt owned, but there appears to be a good deal of unused space on the eastern end in the winter months. Anything the Council can do to facilitate discussions with this space (or any other green space) would be invaluable.

In summary, we seek Councils ongoing consent to endorse ongoing football usage at Kingswood Oval as per the hours proposed. Finalising licence/lease documents is also important to us.

Can you also please advise, at your earliest convenience, the upcoming survey (via Council's engagement platform).

We would welcome the opportunity to hold further talks with council should you be considering any adverse recommendations to elected members. Indeed, we are available to attend any meetings or discussions relating to any aspect of neighbourhood feedback, leasing, or oval usage. We thank the Council for the opportunity to provide this feedback, and look forward to your response.

Kind Regards

David Heaslip
President
Unley Mercedes Football Club Inc.