

**TO:** CITY MANAGER

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**SUBJECT:** ISSUES REGARDING THE CENTRAL VALLEY SPORTS COMPLEX DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

**PURPOSE:** To respond to issues raised by Mr. Mancinelli at Council and in correspondence on the Central Valley Sports Complex Plan.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. Steve Mancinelli at 5610 Georgia St., Burnaby, B.C. V5B 1V6

**REPORT**

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

At its meeting of 1996 September 30, Council heard the delegation of Mr. Steve Mancinelli who expressed concern regarding the revised Central Valley Sports Complex Development Plan which was adopted by Council at its meeting of 1996 September 23. The issues raised by Mr. Mancinelli are reiterated in a letter to Council and relate primarily to the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed development. Council requested that staff address the issues raised by Mr. Mancinelli. This report responds to the issues raised in Mr. Mancinelli's letter and presentation to Council.

**2.0 ISSUES AND RESPONSES**

While a variety of more specific issues are raised by Mr. Mancinelli, the letter expresses general concern regarding overall environmental impacts associated with development and the loss of habitat.

The proposed plan for the Central Valley Sports Complex attempts to respond to and balance the demonstrated need for sports fields and the long standing commitment of Council to protect and enhance Burnaby's natural environment. As noted, the development will involve the loss of some vegetation and habitat, however, significant efforts have been made to minimize environmental impacts and to create an environmentally sensitive design for the project. This process involved extensive input from various City departments including: Environmental Health, Parks, Planning and Engineering as well as from environmental, geotechnical and design consultants. A detailed survey and assessment of sports field supply and demand which is discussed in Section 2.2 in this report also provided input. More specific issues raised by Mr. Mancinelli are discussed below.

## **2.1 Location/Accessibility**

Mr. Mancinelli's letter identifies the central location of the proposed facility as problematic based on the nature of it being accessible mainly by automobile thereby requiring extensive parking facilities.

Based on a comprehensive review of the demand and availability of sports field facilities in Burnaby (see Section 2.2), the proposed Central Valley sports complex location is seen as the most appropriate location to accommodate the type of development proposed. As the facility is proposed for local, City-wide and regional tournament use, the location is central within Burnaby.

Intensive sports facility development has been planned for the site for many years as reflected in the 1976 plan for the area. The 1996 conceptual development plan for the area involves a much smaller developed area while maximizing the efficiency of proposed facilities and seizing opportunities to minimize environmental impacts or enhance areas of the site to compensate for lost habitat. Parking facilities associated with the sports complex would consume only approximately 2.7 acres of the entire site which includes the over 200m wide Still Creek conservation area located between the proposed fields and Still Creek (see Figures 1 and 2).

It is felt that there are a variety of benefits associated with concentrating sports field development in this central area of Burnaby. As the proposed sports complex is not located adjacent to a residential area, the potential impacts such as noise, traffic, and intense lighting are minimized. Facilities such as the field house, change rooms, parking facilities can also be used more efficiently in a concentrated multi-use sports complex. Economic and tourism benefits are envisioned in providing a first class facility appropriate for regulation tournament play.

The potential environmental impacts of the proposed parking facilities are discussed in greater detail in Section 2.3 of this report.

## **2.2 Sports Field Supply**

Mr. Mancinelli questions the need to meet the demand for sports fields in Burnaby due to the potential environmental impacts and suggests alternative solutions to addressing this demand such as more intensive use of existing facilities, upgrading existing facilities and alternative programming options.

A detailed study of field sport supply and demand in Burnaby was conducted by Parks and Recreation staff in May 1996, where the supply of sports fields and ball diamonds in public parks and schools was inventoried. Demand was determined by establishing the current use patterns of user groups through detailed registration data and specifics about game scheduling and practice requirements. This information was considered with projected population projections for Burnaby to the year 2006 to estimate the need for sports fields. The study concluded that an additional 7 grass fields and 31 ball

diamonds are needed to meet current demand, and an additional 15 fields and 53 ball diamonds are needed in total by the year 2006 if estimated demands are to be met. These figures do not consider the limited usability of existing fields due to deteriorated turf resulting from overuse which would increase demand further.

The proposed sports complex attempts to maximize the efficiency of sports fields on site as well as throughout Burnaby. The proposal involves 3 artificial fields in the southern portion of the site where appropriate soil conditions exist for their construction. These fields can provide approximately 4.5 times the playability of sand-based turf fields. Although the proposed artificial fields do not accommodate baseball, they would accommodate intensive, potentially round-the-clock use for field hockey, soccer, lacrosse and Canadian football (1 field only) thereby facilitating opportunities to adapt existing sports fields in the community to meet the demand for baseball fields.

It was determined that the most pressing user demands for field sports in Burnaby are for field hockey, women's and adult soccer, youth and adult baseball, youth and adult softball, youth football, adult touch football and field lacrosse. The construction of artificial sports fields early in the development would be part of a two-step process to meet current and future demand city-wide. Early use of the artificial fields would allow scheduled renovations to take place on existing fields in other parts of Burnaby without disruption to the user groups. By the time the renovations are completed, the proposed artificial sports fields would be available to better meet current and future demands.

## **2.3 Environmental Issues**

### **2.3.1 Kensington - Norland Connector:**

The roadway identified in the City Manager's report no. 23, Council meeting 1996 September 09 which connects Darnley St. with Kensington is seen as undesirable and problematic in Mr. Mancinelli's letter .

At its meeting held 1996 September 23, Council approved the proposed conceptual plans for the sports complex with the exclusion of this roadway (see Figure 2). The configuration and sizing of fields 4 and 5 north of Darnley St. have also been adjusted in the adopted plan to increase the conservation area east of the fields adjacent to Kensington. From an environmental perspective, it is felt that removing the proposed connector will enhance the conservation area and greenway areas (vegetation/wildlife corridors) on site while improving the safety of the sports complex area. With this revision made, it is noted that the adopted plan fairly closely reflects the most recent proposed plan submitted by Mr. Mancinelli in his letter.

### **2.3.2 Impact on Hydrology and Watercourses**

The potential impacts of the development on the local hydrology of Burnaby Lake and the Brunette River is identified as an issue in Mr. Mancinelli's letter.

Significant efforts have been made to minimize negative impacts of the development on local hydrology. The 3 artificial fields in the southern portion of the development (see Figure 2, fields 1,2,3) are not built over peat thereby reducing impacts on groundwater. These fields are permeable and require no fertilizers or herbicides for their maintenance. Runoff may be contained and recirculated for field maintenance or dispersed amongst local subsurface groundwater thereby providing recharge opportunities.

Due to the geotechnical constraints of the site which involve soft peat soils ranging in depth from 2-9 meters with poor bearing capacity throughout much of the site, only 3 artificial fields could be accommodated in the design of the sports complex. Artificial fields are highly sensitive to differential soil settling and are only suitable in locations where adequate soil bearing can be reasonably accessed. This potential has been maximized on the site and is represented by the 3 artificial fields in the southern portion of the development.

The 3 fields proposed north of Darnley St. (See Figure 2, fields 4,5,6) are a sand based, turf construction, reflecting the geotechnical constraints of the site. The proposed location of these fields is on land which has largely been disturbed due to clearing and the temporary storage of clean fill. By concentrating the development of the 3 turf fields on this portion of the site, a large contiguous conservation area can be provided east of the proposed fields while precluding development on a former landfill site seen as unsuitable for development. A water feature with sediment control and potential biofiltration capabilities is proposed north of these fields to treat runoff entering Still Creek to minimize impacts on local water quality and hydrology. This engineered wetland feature could also serve to enhance wetland habitat on site.

In general, permeability of the development site has been maximized in the design proposal. Approximately 80 acres or 64% of the total site is conservation area; of this 60 acres is the conservation area located between the north edge of the site and Still Creek while an additional 17.3 acres is proposed between the two field development areas along the west side of Kensington. An additional approximate 2.4 acres is proposed as natural greenway/wildlife corridor where natural vegetation will be retained between the southern most parking facilities and proposed private development sites west of Kensington. Alternatively, parking area and road allowances account for approximately 2.7 acres or 2.2% of the area, which is considered conservative. Parking facilities would also contain requisite oil and grease interceptors to treat runoff entering the storm drainage system. A storm water management plan involving minimizing impacts on receiving waters will be developed during the detailed design phase of the project.

Overall, the impact of the development on local hydrology and water quality is considered minimal.

### **2.3.3 Red and Blue Listed Species**

In regard to potential impacts on wildlife, Mr. Mancinelli's letter requests an explanation of the red and blue species lists referred to in the report and inquires if these species will be affected in the development. These lists represent Provincial designations from the Ministry of Environment. Red listed wildlife species are those with low abundance which are legally designated as either threatened or endangered or are being considered as potential designates for such status because they run the risk of extinction. Blue listed species are sensitive/vulnerable indigenous species which are not threatened but are particularly at risk. Reasons include low or declining numbers or occurrence at the fringe of their range or in restricted areas.

No red or blue listed species were identified in a preliminary environmental overview study and subsequent environmental review of the development proposal by an environmental consultant. Although this does not preclude the presence of these species on the site, modifications were made to the design of the sports complex development to minimize potential impacts to wildlife. These include the maximization of a contiguous conservation area on the site, relocation of fields to retain a riparian area and water channel flowing into Still Creek along the northwest portion of the site, the inclusion of vegetated buffers/ wildlife corridors where possible as well as significant tree plantings around parking areas. Although the consultant's report identifies that wildlife will be displaced as a result of lost habitat associated with the development, it notes that new edge habitat will be created along interfaces between natural areas and sports fields which is desirable for songbirds. Overall, the design was seen to minimize impact to wildlife.

## **3.0 CONCLUSION**

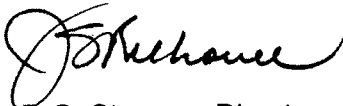
This report responds to issues raised by Mr. Mancinelli regarding the environmental impacts associated with the proposed Central Valley Sports Complex which has been approved by Council. While the development proposal will involve some environmental impacts associated with the loss of wildlife habitat, this report describes how extensive effort has been made to develop an environmentally sensitive design plan for the facility to minimize these impacts while providing a sports field facility whose need has been well demonstrated.

Development in the Central Valley Sports Complex previous to the adoption of the present plan was guided by a plan adopted in 1976.

The 1976 and 1996 development plans for the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex both propose a network of recreation uses for the area west of Kensington. However, the form of the recreation facilities and the attention to environmental issues are fundamentally different. The 1976 plan proposes an urban sports center with a number of private, predominantly indoor recreation facilities for such activities as indoor racquet sports and gymnastics. To be realized the plan would require a variety of buildings, parking lots and local roads that

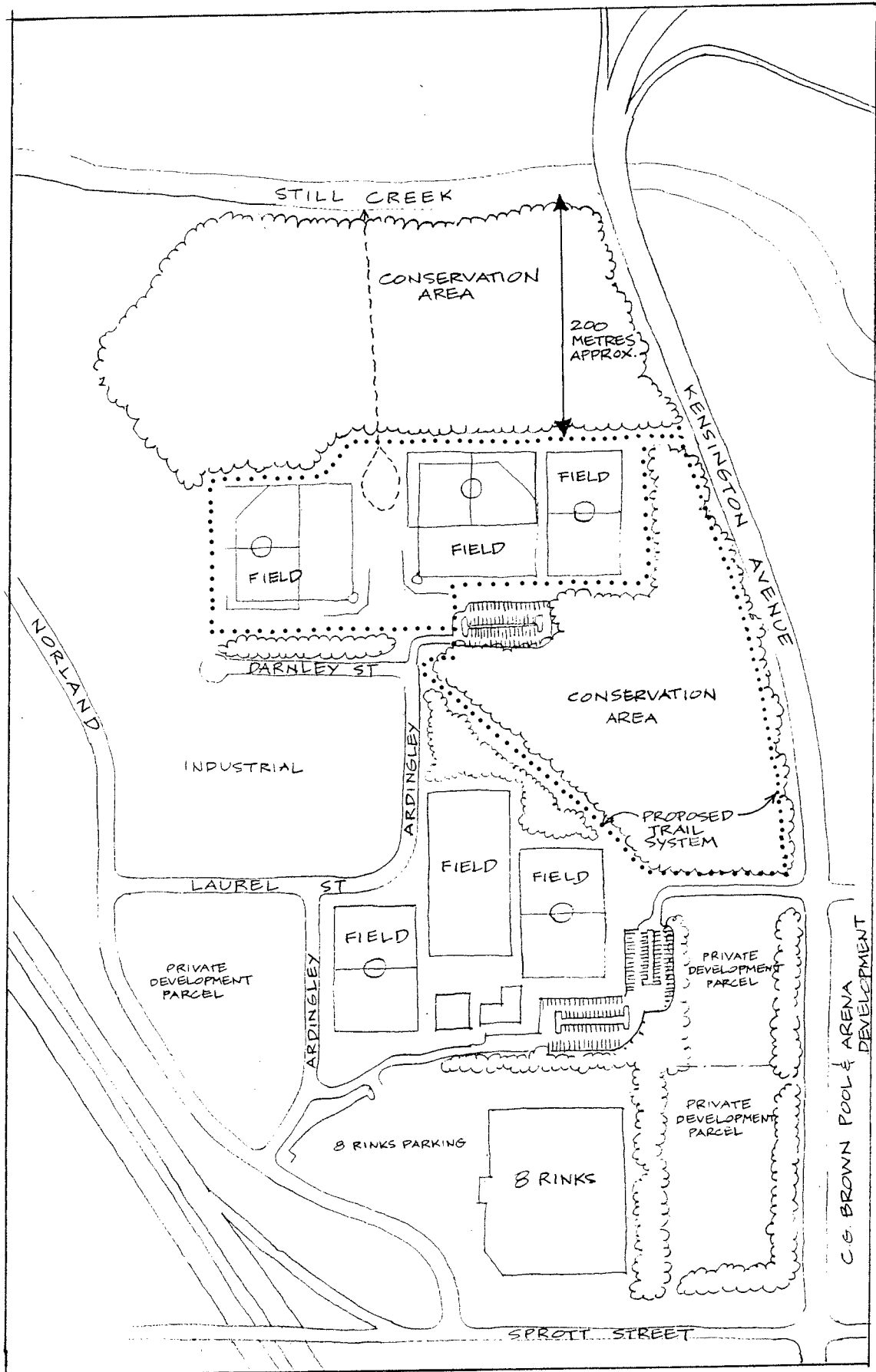
collectively would cover the majority of the development site. In so doing, the plan made few provisions for preserving open space for wildlife habitat, nor did it explore opportunities for providing wildlife corridors through the development.

The 1996 plan has attempted to strike a balance between the obvious need for recreation facilities and the long standing commitment of Council to protecting and enhancing the natural environment. The 1996 plan is fundamentally different from the 1976 plan in the form that it delivers these recreational facilities and its attention to environmental stewardship. The combination of artificial and natural turf fields occupies significantly less of the site than the 1976 scheme thereby providing opportunities to create large conservation areas, include wildlife corridors and mitigate the impact of stormwater run-off prior it entering Still Creek.

  
D.G. Stenson, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

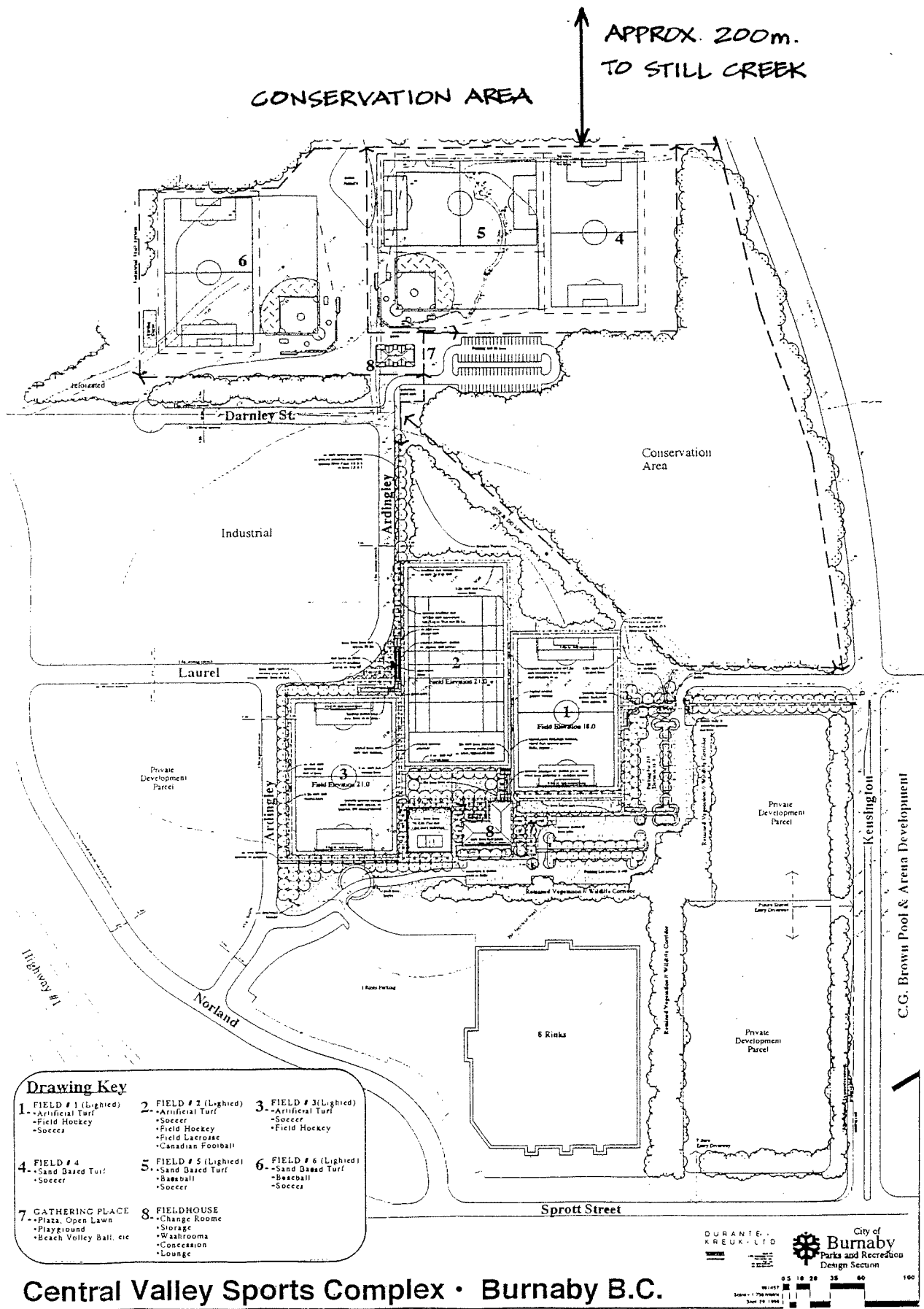
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Attachments (2)

cc: Director Engineering  
Director Recreation & Cultural Services  
Chief Environmental Health Officer  
Deputy Manager, Corporate Labor Relations



CENTRAL VALLEY SPORTS COMPLEX  
 CONCEPT SKETCH

FIGURE 1



Central Valley Sports Complex • Burnaby B.C.

FIGURE 2