

Proposed Mt Roskill Community Artificial Turf Facility social value report

Social return on investment study

Introduction

This report presents a forecast social return on investment assessment for the proposed Mt Roskill Community Artificial Turf facility. It estimates the social value that could be created if the project improves reliable access to a high-quality, year-round playing surface for local schools, sports clubs and community groups.

The assessment focuses on the wider outcomes that can flow from better access to sport and physical activity, including increased participation, improved wellbeing, stronger social connection, youth development and volunteer contribution. It also aligns with Sport NZ's [Guidance for Sports Field Development](#) by considering the problem being solved, who benefits, expected utilisation, reliability, sustainability and the value generated relative to investment.

The results should be read as a forecast estimate, based on the assumptions set out in this report. They are designed to complement, rather than replace, other evidence such as demand analysis, feasibility findings, governance arrangements, lifecycle costs and local strategic priorities.

This study was completed by Sport New Zealand in August 2026 to estimate the forecast social value of the proposed Mt Roskill Community Artificial Turf facility. It uses a Social Return on Investment approach to consider how improved access to a reliable, year-round playing surface could contribute to participation, wellbeing, youth development, volunteering and stronger community connection.

The opportunity

For the Auckland suburb of Mt Roskill, demand for quality sports fields is increasing, but available space is limited.

Grass fields can close during winter or after bad weather. This makes it harder for schools, clubs and community groups to plan training, games and activities. A full-size artificial turf with lighting would provide a more dependable place for people to play, train and connect. The artificial turf would be operated by a trust with a lease on the school site at Mt Roskill Intermediate School. It would give local schools, clubs and community groups more reliable access to a quality sports field throughout the year, while making the best use of limited urban space.

Current state	Proposed future state
Winter field closures	Year-round playable surfaces
Cancelled training sessions	Increased field capacity
Competition for limited field space	Reliable school and community access
Lost participation opportunities	More evening and winter use
Reduced reliability for schools and clubs	Consistent participation opportunities
	Improved community outcomes

Why reliability matters

The [Guidance for Sports Field Development](#), which includes insights on feasibility and best practice, shows that reliable access matters. For communities, knowing that activities can go ahead as planned can be just as important as having more field time available.

When sessions consistently proceed as planned:

- participants remain engaged
- schools can schedule activities confidently
- clubs can plan seasons more effectively
- volunteer effort is not wasted
- participation pathways become more stable.

For Mt Roskill, the benefit is not only more playable hours. It also gives schools, clubs and communities greater certainty that the field will be available when they need it.

How the investment creates value

Theory of change

All-weather turf facility – how investment translates into lasting community impact.

1. Inputs

- Capital funding
 - School land
 - Partner governance
 - Club and school programming
 - Volunteer time
 - Facility management
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2. Activities and outputs

- Construction and operation of a full-size all-weather turf and supporting facilities
 - Shared school and community access
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3. Short-term outcomes

- Reduced cancellations
 - Increased usable hours
 - Improved access
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4. Medium-term outcomes

- More consistent participation
 - Stronger club and school engagement
 - Improved volunteer experience
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5. Longer-term contribution

- Youth development
 - Social connection
 - Community cohesion
 - Improved wellbeing – physical and mental
 - Access to quality sport and recreation infrastructure
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This simple theory of change was used to estimate the wider social value of the proposed facility, alongside more traditional planning and cost information.

Measuring Community Value

Alongside traditional demand, utilisation and cost analysis, Sport NZ undertook a forecast Social Return on Investment (SROI) assessment to estimate the wider community value generated by the facility.

How to read the results

This report presents a one-year forecast SROI for the 2032 operating year, which is expected to be the first full year of operation for the proposed Mt Roskill Community Artificial Turf.

The main result is based on the proposed 4th generation non-infill turf, operating at around 60 hours' use per week. A third-generation infill turf option is also reported separately, based on 50 hours' use per week.

Both options are forecast to create positive community value by providing more reliable, inclusive and consistent access to football and physical activity. The proposed turf could reduce weather-related cancellations, increase usable hours, support school and community use, and strengthen participation pathways for young people and adults across the local catchment. Therefore, the results should be read by surface type.

Where the value comes from

Improved physical activity	More people participating more regularly in sport and recreation.
Increased wellbeing	Improved mental wellbeing, resilience and quality of life through regular participation.
Stronger social connection	Greater sense of belonging and stronger community networks.
Youth development	Positive outcomes through sport participation, leadership, confidence and skill development.
Volunteer contribution	Growth in volunteering and community engagement.

If use rises above 60 hours per week, social value may increase. However, higher use may also increase maintenance costs and could mean the turf needs to be replaced sooner.

The headline ratio should be read as an estimate, based on the current annualised one-year cost input.

Forecast results

The SROI model compares two possible artificial turf options. Both would provide a more reliable playing surface than grass, but they differ in construction, expected use and the level of community value they could support.

Preferred option

Fourth-generation non-infill artificial turf operating at approximately 60 hours of use each week.

This newer non-infill surface is the preferred scenario for Mt Roskill because it supports higher weekly use, reduces maintenance and infill-related issues, and provides a reliable basis for year-round community access.

3,647 people benefit

\$2.19m

Total social value created

\$1.8m

Net social value created

6.16:1

Social return on investment

This means that every \$1 invested is expected to create about **\$6.16 in social value for the community**, through more reliable access, greater participation, improved wellbeing and stronger community connections.

Alternative option

Third-generation artificial turf operating at approximately 50 hours of use each week.

The third-generation artificial turf is a more established synthetic surface that commonly uses infill. While it would still provide a reliable, all-weather playing surface, the model assumes lower weekly use and therefore a lower overall social value return.

3,647 people benefit

\$1.72m

Total social value created

\$1.35m

Net social value created

4.85:1

Social return on investment

This means that every \$1 invested is expected to create about **\$4.85 in social value for the community**, through more reliable access, greater participation, improved wellbeing and stronger community connections.

The comparison is not about whether one option creates value and the other does not. Both options are forecast to generate positive community value. For most communities, a third-generation turf is likely to be sufficient to provide a reliable, all-weather surface that supports community sport and physical activity. The fourth-generation option produces a higher forecast return in this case because it is modelled to support more usable hours each week. Communities considering an artificial turf should refer to [Sport NZ's Guidance for Sports Field Development](#) when assessing their needs and selecting the most appropriate surface.

Conclusion

The Mt Roskill report shows that artificial turf investment can create strong community value when it improves reliable access to sport and physical activity. The value is not simply about adding another field. It comes from giving schools, clubs and community groups greater certainty that activities can go ahead, especially during winter and periods of high demand.

Overall, the proposed Mt Roskill Community Artificial Turf is forecast to generate positive social value by supporting more consistent participation, improved wellbeing, stronger community connection and better outcomes for young people. The preferred fourth-generation non-infill option should be reported as the headline scenario, based on 60 hours of use each week, with an estimated \$2.19 million in total social value, \$1.8 million in net social value and an SROI ratio of 6.16:1.

The third-generation infill option also creates positive social value and provides a useful comparison point. However, because it is modelled at 50 hours of use each week, the forecast return is lower, with \$1.72 million in total social value, \$1.35 million in net social value and an SROI ratio of 4.85:1. The results should therefore be read by surface type and operating assumption, not as a direct like-for-like comparison.

For funding partners, the project offers an opportunity to invest in infrastructure that can support both participation benefits and broader social outcomes. The forecast SROI provides useful evidence, but it should be considered alongside governance, long-term maintenance, equitable access, operating model, confirmed partner contributions and the ability to sustain high-quality community use over time.

Key takeaways

Reliability creates value



When activities are less likely to be cancelled, people have more chances to stay involved and active.

Shared use improves returns



When schools and community groups can share a facility, more people can benefit from the same piece of land.

Utilisation drives value



The more the field is used well, the more value it can create. This depends on good scheduling, strong partnerships and effective day-to-day management.

Infrastructure alone is not enough



The greatest benefits come when the facility is supported by good initiatives and programmes, coaching, volunteers and local partnerships.

Recommendations

1

Confirm the operating model before final investment decisions, including booking priorities, school and community access, pricing, maintenance responsibilities and partner contributions.

2

Protect equitable access by ensuring the facility is available to local schools, clubs and community groups, not only high-paying or peak-time users.

3

Plan for lifecycle and maintenance costs, particularly if use is expected to exceed 60 hours' use per week, as higher utilisation may increase maintenance costs and shorten the replacement cycle.

4

Use the SROI alongside wider decision-making evidence, including demand analysis, feasibility findings, environmental considerations, governance arrangements and local strategic priorities.



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