

10. 9. 99

CORRESPONDENCE

1. QUEEN ELIZABETH II POOLS REDEVELOPMENT

The following letter has been received from Dr John Hellemans, the Head of Sports Medicine/Sports Science Facilities at QEII Sports Stadium:

“I am concerned to hear the news that the Christchurch City Council might reconsider their earlier decision to build a new ten-lane 50 metre pool at the QEII Sports Stadium. It is only recently that with great foresight the Council approved the first step of the upgrading of the QEII Sports Stadium, including the new 50 metre pool. It is well known that the QEII Sports Stadium, in its current form, needs to be either demolished or undergo a full and significant refurbishment. One of the main aims of the proposed refurbishment is for Christchurch to regain its leading edge in sports training and recreational facilities for the benefit of the general population as well as the more serious athletes. The proposed new facilities will not only incorporate a 50 metre training for competition and recreation but also a wave-pool, to be enjoyed by all ages and abilities. The current 50 metre pool is outdated and inferior to most facilities established at other major centres in New Zealand, to the detriment of activities and events held at the QEII Pool.

As you know a working committee is currently looking at establishing a Canterbury Sports Training Institute at the QEII Sports Stadium. An essential component will be the facilities on offer with the new pool as a major focus. A Sports Institute training facility will not only benefit the Christchurch based athletes but also attract athletes from other regions as well as from overseas, adding to the appeal and therefore economic infrastructure of the Garden City.

The sports infrastructure in Christchurch is in need of a boost and the vision and foresight of people like Alan Direen, Alistair Graham and yourself can make that happen with the QEII Sports Stadium as the central focus. Not to go ahead with the planned facilities, including the 50 metre pool, would be a significant step backwards, leaving Christchurch for the next decade with a second-rate, or worse, no 50 metre pool facility. I appreciate that the City Council has to justify the spending on projects like these but I hope and trust that common sense and foresight prevails so that the QEII Sports Stadium will, once again, become one of the leading sports training and recreational facilities in New Zealand.”