

2. BECKENHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY OPTIONS REPORT

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The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval for the future use of the building situated at 65 Sandwich Road (Beckenham Public Library). This report has been considered by the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board.

CONTEXT OF THE REPORT

In accordance with the Council's policy, the property has been internally notified as being available.

In the current 2003/04 financial budget \$6,632 has been provided for operational costs. The Property Unit formerly received \$12,000 pa by way of internal rent from the libraries budget. No provision has been made for capital improvements or for the disposal of the land and building.

This report summarises those groups who have expressed interest and outlines the options available.

BACKGROUND

The property at 65 Sandwich Road was purchased in 1928 by the Council in fee simple in trust for the purpose of a library site.

The legal description; PT Lot 1 DP 2623 (In Trust) T185078), Certificate Title 412/9 originally 286/224 (refer attached). The Beckenham Public Library has been closed for the last two months.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The property at 65 Sandwich Road was acquired from the Canterbury Education Board by the Council for library purposes.

Council staff have been made aware that the building is no longer required by the library with the completion of the South Christchurch Library, and therefore in determining the future use of the property the Council needs to firstly consider whether there are other community or Council uses/needs. This report outlines internal options compared to other options.

RELEVANT CURRENT POLICY

Council Policy

There are two policy issues relevant to this project:

1. Future use of properties that are no longer required for operational purposes must be determined in accordance with the "property decision making flow chart". The main steps in this process are:
 - Step 1 Identifying that a property asset is no longer required for operational purposes or is under-utilised.
 - Step 2 Assessment of the property, ie features, legal status etc.
 - Step 3 Internal circularisation for the purpose of establishing whether there are other Council/public uses.
 - Step 4 Property Unit assessment of internal/public submissions and preparation of an Options Report.
 - Step 5 Council resolution on future use or sale.
2. Should the Council resolve to sell the property this will need to be conducted in a public manner, ie *"That, in principle, the Council should publicly tender properties for sale unless there is a clear reason for doing otherwise"*.

Through the process of internally notifying Council units that the building is available we received only one internal submission, from the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Advocate.

DESCRIPTION OF OPTIONS

Option 1 - Retain the property for use by a Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library

Through the internal process an expression of interest was received from the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Advocate, suggesting that the building be used to rehouse the Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library, which is presently occupying the former parks garage at Risingholme Park. This group has been in existence for over 12 years and currently services 170 families. The garage is now too small to store the number of toys the group has to lend.

A report submitted nearly two years ago to the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board discussed the idea of increasing the size of the present building at Risingholme. Because of the cost the Board asked that other options be considered.

Although many options were looked at it became evident that the integration of a toy library within another community facility was impracticable because of the storage requirements. The Beckenham Public Library building would satisfy this need.

This option is supported by the Community Relations Manager as it meets the needs of the community and is cost neutral to the Council as the \$12,000 rent and \$6,632 operational costs are included in the 2003/04 financial budget. Although this is not going through the public process, there is a good reason why we are dealing unilaterally with this. The Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library is an existing tenant which has outgrown its premises and this is an opportunity to relocate it.

Option 2 - Used by Beckenham School

The Property Unit has received an inquiry from the Beckenham Primary School whose property adjoins 65 Sandwich Road. At the time of writing this report the school has not clarified its proposed use of the building so at this point officers are unsure of the school's intentions.

Option 3 - Tender out the building seeking Request for Proposals

The Council invites proposals from interested parties to submit concepts for the use of the building. At this point the public have not been given this opportunity.

Option 4 - To sell the Property

Should the Council resolve to declare the property surplus to requirements it would firstly have to offer back the property to Mr John Butler or his successor under his will pursuant to section 40 and 50(1) of the Public Works Act 1981, before any other form of disposal was considered.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES

Option 1 - Retain the property for use by the Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding provided in budget.• Internal alteration costs met by Toy Library.• Toy Library willing to pay rent.• Suitable building to accommodate Toy Library.• Frees up smaller area that could be used for smaller group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ties premises to one group.• Council responsible for future operational and capital costs.• At present operating hours are two day a week. With new premises this would increase.• Beckenham School may consider that we have dealt unilaterally and they should have been offered the opportunity.

Option 2 - Used by Beckenham School

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School next door to property.• School may consider working in with community group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unwillingness of school or Ministry of Education to pay rent.• Council responsible for operational and capital costs.

Option 3 - Tender out the building seeking Request for Proposals

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wider community would be able to participate in the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cost to Council – operational/capital.Minimal rent return.

Option 4 - To sell the property

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Obtain money on the sale.Would not be faced with ongoing operational or capital costs.Reducing number of properties held by the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Council would have to offer property back to John Butler or his successors pursuant to Section 40 and 50(1) Public Works Act 1981.Undertake planning, consultation and decision process set out in Local Government Act 2002.Foregone possible sale return. Current GV \$107,000.

CONCLUSION

The main issue the Council currently needs to decide is whether or not it wishes to retain ownership of the property, even though there is a defined need. The officers have asked if this need will stand up to scrutiny given it is one of Council's objectives to divest itself of surplus land.

SPREYDON/HEATHCOTE COMMUNITY BOARD'S RECOMMENDATION

The Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board has considered this report. In view of previous discussions and comments made to the Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library, the Board supports the retention of the Beckenham Public Library at 65 Sandwich Road for the relocation of the Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library.

Recommendation: That the Council retain the Beckenham Public Library at 65 Sandwich Road for the relocation of the Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library.