

4. POOL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL – EDGEWARE POOL

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The purpose of this report is to update the Community and Leisure Committee on options relating to the recent deputation by Mr John Davies on behalf of the Canterbury Water Polo Association for upgrading Edgeware Pool for use as a water polo training centre – summer months only. The presentation identified that Edgeware Pool may be a suitable venue for the Association to develop in conjunction with the Council. Council staff were then asked to report back to the Committee on the proposal, including costs and demolition costs, existing usage rights, staffing, any other private/Council proposals and where this would fit into the Aquatic Facility Strategy which is being developed for the Council.

NEED FOR ADDITIONAL DEEP WATER FOR WATER POLO

At the present time the only suitable depth facilities available for water polo in Christchurch is at Queen Elizabeth II Park in the dive well and 50 metre pool. The use of water space by polo excludes other users – so this has an impact on the facility and availability for other users. The boom at QEII to convert the 51m pool to 2 metre x 25 metre pools is only used for specific events – not everyday use. Water polo has therefore indicated the need for additional water space in the city. They also advised that this space should be located preferably away from QEII to provide access for schools and participants on the western side of the city and to enable clubs to be established from other venues.

Alan Direen the Manager of QEII made the following comments on the availability and use of deep water at QEII.

“The dive pool at QEII is an extremely valuable pool for aquatic sports in Christchurch. There is no doubt that Christchurch is short of deep water. The dive pool caters for diving, water polo, underwater hockey, synchronised swimming, rehabilitation programmes, canoe polo, schools programmes, and aquajogging/lane swimming when the 10-lane pool is booked for events. From a design perspective, we should learn from the fact that it is a stand-alone pool with inherent advantages because of that.

Schools and rehab, in particular, make good and growing demand within 9am-3pm daytime hours. Outside of those times, the dive pool is under considerable bookings pressure. Water polo and diving gain preference for the most sought-after hours. Hockey, canoe and synchronised swimming make-do with "second-choice" time. Water polo and diving though do work together under compromise in order that they both gain access during peak-demand times.

There is clear evidence that water polo numbers have grown consistently over the past 4-5 years. Provision of additional deep water, however, would need to be accompanied by accountability and controlled bookings and usage processes. That space needs to be on the opposite side of Christchurch to QEII. Jellie Park or Hornby would be immeasurably preferable to Edgeware.

Such space is not just needed for water polo. It should be shared with canoe polo and underwater hockey. At least of equal importance is the need for recreational/rehabilitation/aquajogging and swim teaching facilities on a multiple scale throughout Christchurch. Provision of aquatic facilities is not a simple matter.”

Clarification of Requirements

Following the presentation by Canterbury Water Polo on 10 May, staff met with John Davies to further clarify a number of issues in relation to Edgeware Pool and the needs for water polo. The presentation by water polo indicated that they would contribute to redeveloping the facility at Edgeware Pool for water polo. The facility that they require is a 33¹/₃ metre length pool, 25 metres wide and 2 metres depth over the full length of the pool. While water polo have indicated that they have funds available to build the pool, the cost of covering it at a later date would come from future fundraising activities.

Item	Contributor
Demolish existing pool	CCC
Build new outdoor pool and pipework	Polo
New plant room/filters	CCC
Use existing heating system	CCC
Cover facility at later date	Polo
Upgrade changing rooms	CCC
Upgrade car parking	CCC
Planning costs	CCC/Polo

The Edgeware Pool itself is 75 years old with outbuildings constructed over a period of time and now in poor condition. The reason the Edgeware facility is considered attractive to water polo is because of the good condition of the heating system and its relatively central location. The reality of any development at Edgeware is that it would ultimately result in the total facility requiring upgrading – if not straight away, certainly in the near future. Therefore it is important that the full cost to bring the facility up to standard is considered at this earlier time.

While water polo were prepared to commit to funding the pool and covering it at a later date, to undertake a partial development would only bring forward the need to develop the rest of the facility at a cost to the Council.

PLANNING ISSUES

Canterbury Water Polo have undertaken a preliminary review of the planning requirements that could be a barrier to developing the facility.

Adjoining Properties

The site is bound by Council City Housing at one end and residences on the three other sides. The Open Space zone 2 requires all buildings to be set back from boundaries by at least 10 metres. This would not be achievable for the construction of the pool and relocated plant room. Given the possible noise factor from users and plant this could create difficulties or additional costs to resolve.

Car Parking Requirements

Parking for the facility would be required as follows:

Pool space 825 m²

Visitors	1 park/10m ² of pool space	82 car parks
Staff	1 park/200m ² of pool space	4 car parks
Cycles	1 space/10m ² of pool space	82 cycle spaces
Loading	1 HGV bay/20000m ² of pool space	1 loading bay area.

Buildings and Greenspace

Open Space 2 zone requires a maximum area of any site covered by a single building to be 100m², the maximum percentage of the net area covered by buildings to be 1%, and the maximum percentage of the net area of the site covered by impervious surfaces to be 30%. The impervious surfaces exclude footpaths, playing surfaces, cycle tracks, and buildings. Any development on this site would exceed the 1% site coverage requiring a resource consent before it could take place.

COSTING

Please note that the following costs are indicative only at this stage based on staff experience of other refitting projects:

Item	Cost
Demolish existing pool	30,000
New plant room/filters	140,000
New balance tank	40,000
Relocate heating system/ electrical	20,000
Upgrade changing rooms	80,000
Upgrade car parking	75,000
Contingency	130,000
Planning costs	100,000
Total CCC share of redevelopment	\$615,000
Build new outdoor pool and pipework *	100,000
Cover facility at later date *	150,000
Water Polo's share of development	\$250,000
Total cost	\$865,000

Note * The cost of building the pool and covering are based on the figures supplied by Canterbury Water Polo during their presentation. Currently the suitability of materials and construction proposed has not been examined.

Operational

No consideration has been given by Canterbury Water Polo to identify the ongoing operating costs of this facility. They indicated that they would cover the operating expenses associated with this facility. We have no knowledge of their financial resources or ability to manage and operate such a facility.

Existing Usage Rights

The pool is currently operated as a suburban pool and was open during the last season from 1 December 2003 to 15 February 2004, a total of 77 days. The total attendances for that period were 4,854 or approx 63 people per day including school usage. Of the total usage 3,915 or 81% were children. While the operation of the pool for water polo would extend the usage period to 4–5 months of the year, until the facility was enclosed, casual usage would not increase due to a reluctance of people to swim in outdoor pools except on the warmer days. The increased depth of the pool would probably reduce the number of children using the facility during that period. The issue of access to the public would need to be worked through during that traditional period.

ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONS.

When meeting with John Davies to discuss the proposal and the suitability of Edgware Pool it became evident that water polo has no strong preference for Edgware over other alternatives. It was considered suitable due to its location, existing use and the availability of a good water heating system. If alternative options which would provide additional water space for water polo in Christchurch to compliment the space at QEII were provided, this would equally be considered.

AQUATIC FACILITIES STRATEGY

At present the Council has received proposals from two private providers for a partnership with the Council to develop aquatic facilities in two areas of the city – Halswell and Belfast/Redwood area. The Council also has committed funding in its LTCCP for the redevelopment of Jellie Park (\$6.2M) – completion 2005/06 and a new Leisure Centre (\$10.M) completion 2008/09. Now that funding for a new facility has been identified commencing in the next 3–4 years an Aquatic Facilities Strategy to determine the location of future facilities is being prepared. The need for deep water will be considered as part of this Strategy.

JELLIE PARK REDEVELOPMENT

The opportunity currently exists to include deep water within the Jellie Park redevelopment as an option. However, this would significantly add to the cost of this project. Additional funding would need to be added to this project for it to happen. Staff are currently examining the costs and benefits of this option and will be report to the Committee as soon as practicable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There would be a significant capital cost to the Council of the vicinity identified above if it considered developing Edgeware Pool as a deep water facility for water polo. It is also likely that the Council would have an ongoing maintenance responsibility and possibly an operational contribution to its running, especially if the facility was to be used for public swimming during the summer months. This could in part be offset by the existing operating costs of Edgeware Pool. Any additional hours of operation would require additional staffing and wages to be paid which are the main contributor to costs.

CONCLUSION

While it is evident that there is a lack of deep water within the city for use by water polo and for other recreational activities, the possibility of using Edgeware Pool for this development would be expensive and fraught with planning and operational difficulties. The facility would not be available all year round – and would not benefit the community particularly well as the pool would be two metres deep and not suitable for pre schoolers or persons with limited swimming ability. An upgraded facility would add to the Council's infrastructure and benefit only a small number of the aquatic users. Due to the age and condition of Edgeware Pool, its proximity to Centennial Pool and the cost of redevelopment to extend its life expectancy, there are better alternatives available to the Council to provide additional deep water space. This need will be taken into account as part of the Aquatic Facilities Strategy and as part of the current planning for the redevelopment of Jellie Park Pool.

Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That Canterbury Water Polo be advised that Edgeware Pool is not considered a suitable site for the provision of additional deep water in the city.
 2. That the Aquatic Facilities Strategy currently being prepared address the issue of the shortage of deep water space.
 3. That the Jellie Park Project Control Group undertake preliminary estimates to determine the cost of including an 8 lane x 25 metre x 2m depth pool suitable for water polo and other aquatic activities requiring deep water as an option for the redevelopment of Jellie Park and report to the Committee as soon as practicable.

Chairman's

- Recommendation:** That the above recommendation be adopted.