

9. FISHING FROM THE NEW BRIGHTON PIER

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To report back to the Council on a former decision to consult the community on the potential impact of banning fishing from the New Brighton Pier and investigate the placing of a purpose built fishing gantry under the Pier.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Since the rebuilt New Brighton Pier opened in 1997, some aspects of fisher behaviour have been in conflict with the expectations of other pier users and supporters. A growing number of complaints from members of the community and pier visitors have focused on the mess that irresponsible fishers leave behind them, the disregard for the 'no fishing' area at the end of the pier and unsafe fishing practises, such as overhead casting.
3. The Council decided in November 2006 to consult with the community on the preferred option to manage fishing from the pier for the future.
4. The options identified for how the Council could manage fishing off the pier were:
 - (a) No change - current unrestricted access and fishing rules apply, with limited enforcement.
 - (b) Increased enforcement and communication - on-site supervision, supported by a public education programme.
 - (c) Restricted fishing - allow fishing only at specified times or days.
 - (d) Total ban on fishing - with on-site enforcement.
 - (e) Structural addition to the pier - an additional platform to separate sightseers and fishers.
5. Public consultation took place from 4 November to 8 December 2006 with the above options details with explanations for and against.
6. The preferred option identified from public consultation and staff is for:
 - (a) Increased enforcement and communication - on-site supervision, supported by a public education programme.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. Increased enforcement is not currently budgeted for. Funding of \$25,000 would enable part-time staff to be employed at the appropriate times, especially weekends and peak use times. The cost of developing a communication plan will be covered within existing staff resources.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

8. Not specifically mentioned.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

9. Whoever is employed to enforce the rules on the pier will need to have delegation to issue Trespass Notices.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

10. Yes see above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

11. Aligns with objective "To provide a network of parks, open-space, waterways and wetlands that meet community and environmental needs" and "providing a variety of recreation opportunities and facilities in parks".

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

12. N/A

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

13. Recreation and Sports Strategy, Parks Access Policy.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

14. Yes.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

15. Consultation took place over a 4½ week period, with 280 responses received. The existing pier users and members of the general community were consulted (**Attachment 1**). A breakdown of the number of submitters preferring each option is shown in the diagram (**Attachment 2**).

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board recommend to Council to:

- (a) Budget to enable increased enforcement on the Pier.
- (b) Develop an communication/education plan, including signage to increase awareness of the rules of using the pier. This would enable the pier to continue to be used for what it was built for in the most cost-effective way. Fishing can continue but it will be better managed. A staff presence would minimise the conflict between groups such as fishers and sightseers.

BACKGROUND (THE ISSUES)

16. The pier is used by residents throughout Christchurch and was constructed partly by community raised funds, thus consultation was extensive. Consultation took place from Saturday 4 November until Friday 8 December 2006.
17. The following activities were included in the consultation programme:
 - Approximately 3,500 (including a submission form) were distributed via Council Service Centres and Libraries, New Brighton shops, events and direct mail.
 - Some members of the public were interviewed, to obtain the same information as the brochure submission form. This was particularly focused on obtaining the views of people fishing off the pier including non-English speaking people.
 - The Council website featured the pier consultation on its homepage during most of the consultation period, and further web pages included the information in the brochure, plus an on-line submission form.
 - Two displays in the New Brighton Library - including brochures.
 - Meetings were held with the Pier and Foreshore Society, and staff at the New Brighton Library, to inform them and listen to their suggestions relating to the consultation. One public meeting was held on 22 November to discuss the consultation and the issues.
 - Council staff attended some events in New Brighton, with an information stall, to talk to members of the public and distribute brochures. Events included two New Brighton market days, Take a Kid Fishing (Owles Terrace), and an Asian church market.
 - Article in the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board's December newsletter.
 - Direct mail to approximately 200 stakeholders, including all residents' groups and schools in Burwood/Pegasus ward, names provided from Pier and Foreshore Society, list of important stakeholders, all fishing shops in Christchurch and other potentially interested parties/organisations.
 - Use the Council's "Our Christchurch" page in The Star.
 - Advertisements placed in local community papers to supplement coverage in Our Christchurch (Eastern Mail, Pegasus Post).
 - Advertisements on Plains FM in Korean and Chinese programmes, in their own language.
 - Media releases were distributed at key points in the consultation process.
 - A special briefing was held with programme makers of the Chinese programme on Plains FM.
 - Key messages were formatted into FAQs for Customer Services staff.

Consultation Results

18. An analysis of the 280 submission forms received indicates that most submitters (70%) support the continuation of fishing off the pier, however 65% of all respondents say they want better management of it. The option most favoured by submitters was Option 2, increased enforcement and communication, which was chosen by 89 submitters (representing nearly a third of submissions received).
19. The option least favoured (7% of submissions) was Option 1, continuation of the status quo, whereby fishing is largely unrestricted and there is limited enforcement of the rules. Banning fishing off the pier (Option 4) was chosen by 84 submitters or 30%. The breakdown of the number of submitters preferring each option is as follows:
 - (a) Option 1 (No changes) - 19 submissions, or 7%
 - (b) Option 2 (Increased enforcement and communication) - 89 submissions, or 32%
 - (c) Option 3 (Restricted fishing) - 42 submissions, or 15%
 - (d) Option 4 (Total ban on fishing) - 84 submissions, or 30%
 - (e) Option 5 (Structural addition to the pier) - 50 submissions, or 17%

20. A high percentage of pier visitors experienced inconsiderate behaviour by fisherman - the follow table explains the nature of complaints.

Nature of the inconsiderate behaviour:

Overhead Casting/ inconsiderate casting	Fishing in the no-fishing zone	Fishing crowding out other pier visitors	Fishing mess/ smell	General inconsiderate behaviour	Creating dangerous/ hazardous situation	Use of drugs/ alcohol
19.16%	16.54%	9.71%	22.83%	7.09%	2.89%	1.84%

Use of bad language/ abuse directed at others	Littering	Cutting on handrails/ seats	Breaking fishing rules	Cruel/inhuman e treatment of fish	Too many rods per angler
8.66%	1.05%	4.20%	2.10%	2.10%	1.84%

THE OBJECTIVES

21. The objective is to manage the New Brighton Pier in the most effective way for the enjoyment of all visitors.

THE OPTIONS

Option 1

22. No change - continue to allow fishing - current unrestricted access and fishing rules apply, with limited enforcement.

Option 2

23. Increased enforcement and communication. This would necessitate the employment of a part-time person who would be present only at the high use times to oversee the behaviour of pier visitors - provide general information - issue trespass notices if need be, report any maintenance issues, ensure the general area is at an acceptable standard. It is timely to also review the signage and other information about the pier. A communication plan would be developed to assist with education of pier users. This plan would cover signage, publications, web information and other publicly accessible information. The additional enforcement could be achieved through contracting a security firm, or preferably by employing a part-time staff member who would be supervised by the Coastal Park Ranger Team.

Option 3

24. Restricted fishing - allow fishing only at specified times or days. This option would be administratively onerous. It could be confusing for visitors to know when they could or could not fish, it may necessitate the addition of signage and could be open for ongoing debate about when fishing is allowed and not. Increased enforcement would also be necessary to ensure fishers were following the set times.

Option 4

25. Total ban on fishing. This option would no doubt solve a number of problems associated with the existing misuse of the pier and conflict between recreationists. However, it would necessitate enforcement as people would not continue to fish until forced not to. It would also remove one of the benefits of the pier - to be able to easily fish over the water. Christchurch City has limited facilities for this activity.

Option 5

26. Structural addition to the pier. The Board requested the option for a gantry under the pier be investigated to provide a separate fishing area where fishing can continue without disturbing people using the pier for other recreational purposes. An engineering feasibility report showed that this could cost up to \$1 million. Consultation showed this that was not the most preferred option. It is the option that would cost the most and may still require some additional enforcement to ensure fishers kept to their allocated space. A central platform above the end of the pier may also be constructed at a lesser cost.

THE PREFERRED OPTION

27. Option 2, increased enforcement and communication.

ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS

The Preferred Option

28. Option 2 - increased enforcement and communication - on-site supervision, supported by a public education programme.

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
Social	Fishing can continue. Information provided by a person and through signage and publications about the pier, fishing and the general area will increase enjoyment to visitors.	
Cultural		
Environmental	A staff presence would increase the compliance of fishing regulations.	
Economic	There may be a reduction in maintenance costs as staff presence may reduce vandalism.	Increased employment cost.
<p>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</p> <p>The option contributes to “A Safe City and A City for Recreation, Fun and Creativity”.</p> <p>Impact on the Council’s capacity and responsibilities:</p> <p>This will increase the Council’s efficacy managing conflict on the pier.</p> <p>Effects on Maori:</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Consistency with existing Council policies:</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</p> <p>This is the most preferred option of those who took part in consultation.</p> <p>Other relevant matters:</p> <p>N/A</p>		

Maintain the Status Quo (if not preferred option)

29. No change. Continue to allow fishing - current unrestricted access and fishing rules apply, with limited enforcement.

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
Social	Fishing will continue.	Conflict and complaints will continue.
Cultural		
Environmental		
Economic	No extra cost for enforcement.	On going maintenance costs for cleaning and vandalism.
<p>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</p> <p>The option contributes to “A City of Recreation Fun and Creativity”.</p> <p>Impact on the Council’s capacity and responsibilities:</p> <p>The Council would be seen to be doing nothing about an issue the community has raised.</p> <p>Effects on Maori:</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Consistency with existing Council policies:</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</p> <p>This is not the preferred option of those consulted.</p> <p>Other relevant matters:</p> <p>N/A</p>		

At Least one Other Option (or an explanation of why another option has not been considered)

30. Option 4. Total Ban on Fishing

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
Social		Loss of a popular recreation activity.
Cultural		
Environmental	Less fish taken.	
Economic	There will be less maintenance costs as there will be less fish mess to clean.	There will be costs to enforce a fishing ban.
<p>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</p> <p>This option is aligned to “A Safe City , but not a City for Recreation, Fun and Creativity”.</p> <p>Impact on the Council’s capacity and responsibilities:</p> <p>This option does not encourage recreation and outdoor use.</p> <p>Effects on Maori:</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Consistency with existing Council policies:</p> <p>Goes against encouraging physical activity.</p> <p>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</p> <p>This is not the preferred option of those consulted.</p> <p>Other relevant matters:</p> <p>N/A</p>		

31. Option 5. Structural Addition to the pier.

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
Social	Provides a better opportunity to separate fishing and non-fishing visitors to the pier.	Construction may impact on the current use of the pier.
Cultural		
Environmental		Construction could have an impact on the environment.
Economic	May increase visitor attraction and overall visitor numbers.	This option is the most expensive. Maintenance costs would also be increased.
<p>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</p> <p>This aligns to “A Safe City and A City for Recreation, Fun and Creativity”.</p> <p>Impact on the Council’s capacity and responsibilities:</p> <p>The Council has not budgeted or planned for a structural addition.</p> <p>Effects on Maori:</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Consistency with existing Council policies:</p> <p>Not specified.</p> <p>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</p> <p>This is not the most preferred option.</p> <p>Other relevant matters:</p> <p>N/A</p>		