

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN

SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF SYLVIA LUKEY AND THE KENNEDYS BUSH ROAD ASSOCIATION INC

INTRODUCTION

The future of Christchurch cannot be seen in isolation. Thus the LTCCP should not only reflect the values of the people in the city but also the ways in which the council can work co-operatively with the Regional Council, the surrounding councils, other authorities and various Government Ministries to attain the community outcomes outlined in the vision statement. The often touted 'Peoples Republic of Christchurch' does nothing to engender either pride in the city or confidence that Metro strategic planning is possible.

A well governed city is something all citizens would wish for. The results that are espoused in the draft document as indicating success are - 'everybody actively participates in public decision making' and 'everybody feels represented by their decision makers'. Unfortunately the first of the two statements is something that is not close to happening as a large number of people feel that consultation amounts to little more than lip service. This indicates a level of distrust where one of trust should prevail. More work needs to be done to ensure that links at grass-roots level are fostered and a more collaborative approach is used. In our case the blatant ignoring of the rules in the Halswell Quarry Management Plan in relation to activity in the park serves illustrate the lack of respect for the Association and people in the neighbourhood and the fact that compromises were made on the Associations part when the plan was re-written. I have no doubt that the Plan will be re-written again to suit those who choose to ignore the present plan.

Services and activities

Overall the savings from reduction of activities are relatively small and look a bit like window dressing.

Reducing community halls by 20% seems to be a poor way of deciding what halls need to be closed. If the aim of the council is to build 'community' then closure should only occur after that particular community has been alerted to the possibility and shows no interest in taking any responsibility for increasing usage.

Closing of community libraries: - oppose

This is in direct opposition to the community outcome of having a city of lifelong learning. If the motive for closure is declining usage then perhaps there needs to be an investigation of ways to increase usage. The Bishopdale and Spreydon libraries are situated adjacent to shopping malls, thus there is people volume and an audience. Suggestions

- Book displays in the malls to encourage use and awareness
- Opening hours that suit the particular community.
- Incorporate other activities – eg homework clubs – computer rooms, family evenings.

Collaborate with schools and find ways to get more usage.

Closing of the mobile library: oppose

Investigate routes and times of operation – fit in with society's changing needs.

Pool closings. – oppose

No closings should occur until all possibilities have been investigated.

e.g. Sockburn Pool – investigate shared costs for covering pool with surrounding schools (Ministry of Ed). For example the community already share facilities with Riccarton High. The same goes for the recreation centre –investigate partnerships.

Templeton Pool is in a growing area and pool use is likely to increase especially if covered. Developers need to pay their share of upgrading facilities and establishing infrastructure.

Outsourcing of Council payments – oppose

We agree with Beckenham Neighbourhood Association and wonder at the ultimate motives of this proposal

It appears that this proposal may lead to a reduction in staff at service centres and a consequent following effect in downsizing to the point where some service centres may no longer have the staff necessary to build relationships with people in the community. This proposal has implications that go far beyond any question of what savings in expenditure might accrue. It touches on the local interface between the Council and residents, and one of its effects will be to reduce the scope of local staff interactions and dialogue with local people. The underlying intention would appear to be to move towards stripping service centres altogether of the key function of revenue collection—as an obvious first step towards and as-yet-undeclared goal of closing service centres altogether.

We see this proposal as being not so much about money as about centralization of the interface between the Council and the public—making the Council more remote and less accessible to local people. This is ultimately about the centralization of power, and this causes us to have serious misgivings.

Investment in City Mall renovation.

Increasing parking fees may discourage people from visiting the city centre and thus it needs to be looked at in the context of encouraging people to keep the heart of the city alive and add to the diversity of shopping experience. The proliferation of cloned malls and lack of planning by the council has contributed to the decline of the centre city shopping activity. Further mall proliferation should not be allowed at the expense of the inner city infrastructure.

Community support;

The council must take care not to take on the role of government agencies. More effort and lobbying is required to ensure that the council is not taking on responsibilities for which Government is responsible and further burden ratepayers.

Parks, open spaces and waterways.

Council must ensure that development does not degrade waterways and that resource consents to discharge water into rivers and streams are obtained before development is approved and goes ahead. Closer monitoring should occur to ensure that plans submitted and approved are followed. All detrimental effects of developments should be paid for by the developers and they should be liable into the future. Ratepayers of the city should not be left to pick up the costs of development or the results of poor development.

Refuse minimisation and disposal

Encourage further waste minimisation. Investigate yearly large item collections.

Transport :

Practice Metro strategic planning to ensure the ratepayers of the city are not left to shoulder the costs of traffic strategies and road upgrades due to burgeoning satellite towns. e.g. Pegasus and Rolleston. Put in place strategies to ensure developers pay their fair share of infrastructure costs. We have living in the city a Professor Kissling who is a renowned expert in transport matters and the council should use his services to get expert input to matters of transport and traffic.

Wastewater collection and treatment

Once again ensure that development plays its part in sharing of costs.

Cycleways – safety:

Have a proactive plan to extend cycleways and construct in such a way as to ensure the safety of cyclists. Investigate opportunities to share footpaths with cyclists. Investigate ways to extend the width of footpaths when doing major curbing and roading projects. Widening the footpath could take cyclists off the road onto a safer environment and encourage more cycle use. Incorporate into

Discretionary spending – oppose

We do not want the amount lifted from 500,000 to 1,000,00 as this leads to less scrutiny by the public on spending.

ESSENTIAL PROJECTS we have concerns about the following:-

- New Bus exchange –ensure that new exchange is properly researched unlike the fiasco with the existing one where it appeared that the bus exchange served primarily to ensure the success of the developers project but in the end has proved unsatisfactory.
- New Civil Defence building – How will the existing civil defence bunker be utilised ?

“NON-PRIORITY” DISCRETIONARY PROJECTS (VOL. 1, PP74~75)

We would request that the following be redesignated as priority discretionary projects

- Water re-use feasibility studies
- Halswell Library – Investigate partnerships with Ministry of Education ie perhaps locating library at proposed new school. Developers to pay their share. The same applies to other facilities that need upgrading – find ways to share the cost with other builders of infrastructure.

FINDING THE FUNDS

Savings could be made by -

- Review estimates and/or timescale of major capital projects
- Reduce spending – Sister Cities. (Christchurch spends considerably more than other major cities).
- Reduce/eliminate/“de-prioritize” spending on discretionary items currently designated as “priority”
(possible candidates: Botanic Gardens Visitors Centre
- Ensure that roading upgrades in instances where roading has been degraded by heavy traffic movement associated with subdivision is paid for by the developer or cost shared with council
- Lobbying Government to provide funds for welfare projects.

POLICY ON DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE (VOL. 1 pp 290~294)

Once again we agree with the Beckenham Neighbourhood mAssociation on this matter.

It is in this area of the LTCCP that we see the greatest cause for concern. The underlying thrust of this section appears to us to be aimed at enlarging the scope of action by the City Council or its staff that will be "off limits" to any public consultation or debate and hence rendered impervious to any expression of public opinion. The general scope inherent in the significance criteria appears to be such as to enable action to be taken without consultation either with the people of Christchurch or their elected representatives, and for those criteria to be used (especially by the bureaucracy) to fend off objections to action being taken without consultation.

The specific issues that particularly concern us are:

Re-classification of the Redbus Limited and City Care as non-strategic assets (especially the bus company)

Quite apart from being surprised that the transport services provided by the bus company should be deemed a less "irreplaceable part of the city's infrastructure" than the Council's interest in the Jade Stadium, we are opposed to the apparent intention to make it easier for the bus company in particular to be privatized without consultation.

- **Criteria to be used in determining significance**

We agree with the following comments below as stated by the Beckenham Neighbourhood Association.

Our concern here relates most of all to the first of the bullet-point items on p. 292, namely the "extent to which the decision flows logically and consequentially from a significant decision already made or from a decision in the LTCCP (as amended). As an example of the kind of concern this creates: if service centres have their revenue-collecting function stripped away as envisaged in the draft LTCCP, then subsequently it might be deemed "logical and consequential" to get rid of service centres altogether; and the same "logical and consequential" argument might subsequently be applied to the abolition of community boards. In this way, the "flows logically and consequentially" criterion appears capable of being used as an enabling clause for actions and agendas that are as yet undeclared.

Such concern is strengthened when we look at the way in which service centres and community boards have been treated under the current regime. There seems to be no sign of appreciation of the role that service centres and their staff have in the processes of local grassroots interaction with local people, and in the quality of local grassroots democracy. Community Boards too appear to have been treated with belittling contempt, as too has the concept of "community advocacy".

Professions of concern for democracy and of commitment to transparency are no substitute for democracy and transparency in practice. The draft LTCCP gives us no reassurance on this score. This, in the long run, we see as being of far greater significance than a few dollars either way on the rates.

Private Plan changes

Implement strategies to ensure that the community is not put under continual stress having to defend the objectives in the City Plan in relation to private plan changes. I.e. our Association is continually having to defend the boundaries of the urban edge. While we appreciate the fact that the City Plan provides for environmental compensation, this comes at the expense of the integrity of the plan when neighbourhoods have to continually defend the plan against assaults.

Finally, we wish to reiterate the importance of Metro strategic planning to the LTCCP and the two very important concepts of *concurrency* and *consistency*. (As stated in the article by Lindsay Gow 'Curbing the Sprawl: Urban growth management in the United States – lessons for New Zealand) - *Effectively they mean that big infrastructure should be built and available for development when development happens (development and infrastructure are concurrent one with another), and that policies among different authorities are consistent (the same rules of infrastructure provision apply everywhere in the urban environment). Further, big infrastructure provision is tied to and linked with urban growth directions and limits. And rules prohibit development without infrastructure. And further – Local communities come under big pressures to allow new developments, and they this not always ensuring that the full costs are assessed or paid or fully budgeted. Plans get changed and planning requirements get rearranged and muddied. Related to this is the tension caused by not wanting (politically) to put the full costs on new development, but then having to spread the costs that have to be paid across the whole community. Every year communities juggle with who pays for what. The net effect seems to be that not all costs are covered. Thus a bow wave of costs get pushed forward into the future.*

We wish to be heard in respect of this submission. The relevant direct contact details are set out below.

5 May 2006

Sylvia Lukey
Kennedys Bush Neighbourhood Association
C/o 208 Kennedys Bush Road
Christchurch
Ph 3228281