

3. PROPOSAL FOR BISHOPDALE MULTI-PURPOSE FACILITY

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of a possible partnership option with the YMCA, and of the opportunity to develop a multi-purpose community and leisure facility at Bishopdale.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 1999 the Christchurch YMCA approached the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board with a request for consideration of a partnership option with the Council. This approach had been based on the wish to dispose of their now outdated, and over committed, leisure facility in Greers Road. The YMCA has stated that it would be happy to invest the net proceeds from the sale of its present site in a new facility. The YMCA has also stated its interest in managing any new facility based on its current expertise in the management of both community and leisure facilities.

In consideration of the options for co-locating, the Community Board has resolved that the best site is at Bishopdale, where there are already a number of Council activities operating, including the Bishopdale Community Centre which is managed, under contract, by the YMCA. Other Council facilities which could be included in a joint facility include the Bishopdale Community Library, the Bishopdale Community Creche and public toilets. The Council also has a role at Bishopdale in accommodating a number of community support organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Plunket, the Bishopdale Pottery Group and the local Community Constable.

Following on from the Community Board's decision to pursue further investigation of Bishopdale as the site of a multi-purpose facility, officers have conducted a series of validating focus group exercises to confirm it as the preferred site, and have commissioned a spatial relationship study that indicated future needs could be accommodated at this site. (It should be noted that the Council owns a vacant Local Purpose (Community Buildings) Reserve which is immediately adjacent to its main existing buildings.)

The Community Board, at its meeting on 29 January 2002, adopted the following recommendations from its Community Services Committee:

- "1. That the outcomes from the study be adopted by the Board.
2. That an appropriate report be prepared for presentation to the February meeting of the Council's Community and Leisure Committee.
3. That the Board, and the YMCA, seek speaking rights before the Committee, in support of the outcomes from the study, and a recommendation for further action.
4. That the Community and Leisure Committee be requested to endorse the opportunity for the partnership between the YMCA and the Council.
5. That the Community and Leisure Committee be requested to include the study outcomes in the upcoming Major Facilities Study and that, to assist YMCA planning for a replacement to its Greers Road site, the completion of the Major Facilities Study be given priority."

The Board's Committee considers that the current outcomes represent the limit of work within the Board's area of responsibility, and that it is now necessary for the Council to endorse the partnership proposal, and to progress the further work required in planning for such a multi-purpose facility. Subject to the Board's adoption of the Committee's recommendations speaking rights for the Board, and the YMCA, will be sought for the Community and Leisure Committee meeting on 11 February.

2. BACKGROUND TO PROPOSAL

2.1 Description of Bishopdale Community Activities

The Bishopdale Community Centre, while owned by the Council, is managed under contract by the Christchurch YMCA.

The facility was opened in 1976 and is sited adjacent to the privately owned shops comprising Bishopdale Mall. The Centre users share the extensive existing car park with the Mall users.

The facility caters for community activities on the first floor, where the CAB, Community Constable and Centre Manager are also accommodated. The Community Library and Pottery Group are accommodated on the ground floor.

The Bishopdale Community Pre-school and Plunket operate from adjacent Council owned sites, and the existing public toilets operate from an adjacent leased area.

A plan detailing the layout of these activities together with the Local Purpose Reserve, and existing Mall shops, is attached (Attachment 1). It should be noted that there have also been a number of recent retail developments at Bishopdale although these are not detailed on the plan. It should also be noted that Council owns all of the pedestrian ways and car parking within the main Mall complex.

2.2 **Review of Suitability of Bishopdale Community Centre**

In 1998 the Community Board commissioned a consultant's review of the Bishopdale Community Centre, and an associated Community Needs Analysis.

The following is a summary of the report outcomes:

- Concerns were expressed regarding the building's capacity and compliance hence the review. Disability access and fire egress was also a concern.
- A study was carried out to investigate whether facility programmes and the facility itself met local needs.
- Recommendations for the future direction of the building were made.
- The report noted the facility had the highest usage rate of any Council citywide facility.
- Facility users tended to be women over 50 years. Minimal use from other sectors of the community (ie youth, ethnic groups, etc) occurred.
- Well-managed, good location, affordable programmes.
- Evacuation concerns, lack of space for additional demand (particularly at peak times).
- The report identified a number of barriers that included the uninviting entry point. (The entry serves access to the upstairs areas, as well as the library. Use of the foyer is also restricted because of an additional room used from time to time for storage or short term accommodation.)
- As well a range of recreation opportunities were sought that were not currently available for children, youth and families. A lack of programmes and services that could include the growing Asian community was also indicated.

The report concluded with three recommendations:

- (a) Carry out a Bishopdale Community Centre redesign feasibility study.
- (b) Proposal to increase recreation aimed at youth and families.
- (c) Establish a project team to oversee implementation of the above.

Because of other priorities and staff availability no work was advanced on the recommendations up to the time of the approach from the YMCA in late 1999.

2.3 **Approach from YMCA for Partnership Option and Consolidation Away from their Bryndwr Site**

As stated in the Executive Summary the YMCA first approached the Community Board in late 1999 regarding their concern at the need to provide an updated leisure facility because of the age and demand of the (then) 38 year old facility. The YMCA has, since the initial approach, been involved in discussion regarding options available for the future and has, more recently, confirmed the interest in partnership within a multi-purpose facility at Bishopdale. A copy of the YMCA's letter of 1 November 2001 is attached, for information, as Attachment 2 to this report.

While the financial and management particulars of any possible partnership have not been worked through, the Community Board is seeking the Council's support in principle for the option to be further considered in conjunction with a city-wide examination of future leisure needs.

The following aspects tend to offer much support for the combined proposal:

- The Christchurch YMCA has signalled a willingness to provide equity, along with management and programming expertise, towards a new district joint Council/YMCA proposal.
- The current Bryndwr facility meets a district demand, with the majority of its programme participants signifying they would support the Y's re-establishment at Bishopdale.
- The YMCA's programmes successfully meet a community need as illustrated by attendance figures in the study both at Bishopdale and Bryndwr.
- The YMCA has successfully managed the Bishopdale Community Centre since 1991, under contract to the Council.
- The community positively supports and values the YMCA's philosophies of providing a range of affordable family based activity programmes.
- A successful arrangement exists with a range of district sporting organisations utilising the current Bryndwr facility.

2.4 Summary of Recent Research Outcomes

Following the approach from the YMCA in late 1999 the Tourism Leisure Group (TLG) was contracted to carry out a Fendalton/Waimairi Community Centre "needs Analysis". This study was carried out in conjunction with similar work commissioned by the Shirley/Papanui Community Board.

In June 2000 TLG presented its report outcomes which included a verification of the need for a north/north west facility. There were also a number of other recommendations, including the use of the former Fendalton Library as an extension to the existing Fendalton Community Hall, and the need for the establishment of wider (Council, plus "community") database of facilities available for community use.

(The latter point, later, became the subject of an in-house exercise identifying such facilities on a city wide basis.)

In September 2000 TLG completed a site evaluation study which recommended the Bishopdale site as the preferred location for a consolidated facility.

During 2001 the Fendalton/Waimairi Advocacy Team has worked through phases of a validation exercise, including a large number of consultative stages with stakeholder focus groups. This latest study has confirmed a shortfall of, and the demand for, a multi-purpose facility in the north-west which can meet community activity and physical recreation and sport needs. The proposed facility is seen as having a focus for both neighbourhood and district needs.

The opportunity to consider a multi-purpose facility at Bishopdale is enhanced by the following:

- Available space to meet facility user demands as outlined in Skews Ussher Spatial and Relationship Review as well as the study outcomes.
- The existing demand for community activity programmes as currently provided at Bishopdale by the Christchurch YMCA.
- The continued support and long term utilisation of the Bishopdale Community Centre by a varied range of community activity groups.
- The synergy between the current stakeholders (Library, CAB, Community Police, Pottery Club, Bishopdale Childcare Centre and the Bishopdale Plunket) with a recommendation to continue their association in a community complex.
- The ongoing support by the community and the mall's business sector for a continued co-location and to maintain or re-develop the existing community facility.
- Support that the Bishopdale Mall and Community Centre is a preferred destination venue because of ease of access via arterial routes and parking availability.
- The spaciousness and shared nature of the existing car park.

A copy of the Fendalton/Waimairi Multi-Purpose Facility Summary Report and Proposal submitted to the Community Board's Committee, is attached (Attachment 3).

3. DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

This review, involving the proposed re-development of the Bishopdale Community Centre and a possible partnership with the Christchurch YMCA meets a number of outcomes indicated in the Council's draft Recreation and Sport Strategy "Vision".

There is a prime opportunity to combine community recreation and sport needs (adopting and promoting the YMCA's philosophy for family recreation opportunities) by developing a facility that meets both neighbourhood services, recreation activity needs, as well as that which caters for district sport requirements.

The opportunity for partnership as far as financial and ongoing management needs are concerned, is one that should receive endorsement by the Council, subject to further evaluation, and confirmation of the city's future major facility requirements.

The proposal for accommodation on already owned Council land is also highly merited.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Community and Leisure Committee recognise the opportunity for a partnership between the YMCA and the Council.
 2. That the Committee include the recent study outcomes, resulting from the YMCA and Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board's initiatives, in the Council's upcoming Major Facilities Study.
 3. That, in order to assist the YMCA in its planning for a replacement for the existing Greers Road facility, the completion of the above study be given priority.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the report be referred to the Pools and Stadia Subcommittee for favourable consideration and that the Subcommittee also be briefed on the Papanui project.