

20. OPAWA/ST MARTINS PLUNKET TOY LIBRARY

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The purpose of this report is to update Board members on the proposed building extension to the Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library and to seek support for a proposal to extend the Landsdowne Community Centre.

BACKGROUND

At the Spreydon/Heathcote Board meeting held on 28 February 2002, the Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library made a deputation. Chris Payne and Yvonne McDonald from the Toy Library attended the meeting for discussions on an application for funding to assist with building an extension to the present toy library, by way of a 6.5 x 5.4m garage.

In signalling its support to the objectives of the Plunket Toy Library the Board decided to request the Property Unit investigate alternative options to the above proposal. The Board also requested that the necessary consents/approvals and costs be researched in tandem with the investigation.

PRESENT SITUATION

Opawa/St Martins Plunket Toy Library is a non-profit, voluntarily-run organisation serving the needs of the south eastern suburbs of Christchurch (refer Attachment 1).

At present the Library has 145 members (220-plus children) and have a waiting list of 20. They also run a temporary membership list, on which they normally have five temporary members (temporary members are normally grandparents who have their grandchildren staying for short periods of time). It currently draws from Opawa, St Martins, Beckenham, Woolston, Cashmere and Hunstbury.

The library has been operating for nine years and provides toys for children 0 to 10 years.

There is an annual subscription of \$25.00. A charge per toy of 50 cents to \$3.00, depending on the type of toy or video.

The library has just employed a paid librarian (@ \$10.00 per hour) all other staffing is voluntary.

Opening Hours

Friday 9.30 am to 10.30 am

Saturday 10.00 am to 11.30 am

Tuesday 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm

(Saturday and Tuesday are very popular times)

NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS

The library is in urgent need of expansion in order to suit current activity. At present the toy library is located in a small disused workshop/shed, on Risingholme Park grounds in Cholmondeley Avenue. This building was used as a garage and is approximately 30 square metres in size (see Attachment 2).

Over the last two years numbers of members have been steadily growing and so have the number of toys, particularly the larger ones. The library has undertaken a lot of reorganisation within the building to give themselves as much space as possible, ie adequate shelving and better toy packaging. At present there are no facilities for washing toys and tea/coffee facilities are limited and bordering on unsafe.

CURRENT PROPOSAL

The Toy Library would like to expand on the Risingholme site by adding a single size garage/shed to the rear of the building (see Attachment 3).

The Parks and Waterways Unit and Property Unit do not support this proposal.

1. Risingholme Park is a Heritage Park. Any extension would have to match the materials, colour and form of the existing shed. Features such as windows, roof pitch, fascias, bargeboards and colour would need to be replicated. It would seem unlikely that this would be achieved with a standard Versatile Garage, but perhaps with some care the extension could be made visually compatible. A quote has been received at \$28,440 plus GST plus additional costs for consent and professional fees. This has been priced using the same materials as the existing building and does not include any work on the inside.
2. At present cars are not allowed in the park although there is a small car park for users of the Community Centre and gates are only opened at the discretion of the custodian. The Toy Library is sited further into park approximately ten minutes walk from the road. At present cars using the Toy Library are allowed to park on the driveway in the park down near the Toy Library. Unfortunately some members are parking on the grass which has caused quite a bit of damage. Because of the distance to the library, and the weight and size of the toys, it is easier to park closer. Also the library has a late night, parking near the building makes it safer for users.
3. The present building/shed is not suitable to be a Toy Library. It is cramped, cold (building is not insulated) and not designed for children. A gate has been attached at the front door to prevent children leaving without supervision.

The Toy Library has been operating for the last nine years and is well used. The question needs to be asked if this is this right site for them. Council staff believe that the Toy Library should be shifted to a different site which would:

1. Provide adequate parking
2. Be a more secure site
3. Provide toilet facilities
4. Be a better location for the community and be available to more users
5. Be associated with other users that provide similar activities
6. Provide better storage, and a user-friendly building to adults and well as children.

RELOCATION OF THE TOY LIBRARY

A team of Council staff from Parks and Waterways, Property Unit, City Solutions and staff from Beckenham Service Centre have been looking into other options for relocation of the Toy Library.

SCHOOL SITE

The Ministry of Education has no school buildings available in the Spreydon Heathcote area. This is due to the increasing numbers of children attending schools in our area.

VACANT COUNCIL BUILDING

It has been suggested by the members of the Beckenham Voluntary Library that once the new library on the Beckenham Service Centre site opens, the voluntary library will close. At present they are looking at April 2003 to close down. At this time the Property Unit will advertise the empty building, and at that time we will be able to put in a request for the building. Rent money will need to be sought. The Toy Library could not afford the market rent on the library building. The inside of the library will need to be refitted to accommodate a Toy Library.

LANDSDOWNE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Landsdowne Community Centre has been identified as the building with the most potential to relocate the Toy Library to.

Advantages

- 40 car park spaces
- A very strong playgroup in operation
- A toddler group in operation
- A Management Group supportive of the ideas of a Toy Library
- Toilets on site, including a disabled toilet and parent room
- Central location
- Good size, well developed reserve next door

Disadvantages

The team has looked at various ways of fitting the toy library into the existing building with existing users, with the main problem being the Playgroup equipment. When the playgroup is in session it uses the entire hall.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE TOY LIBRARY

The area must be permanently set out and must be secure when not in use. They require an in and an out desk. This limits the use of the area to other groups.

PROPOSED EXTENSION TO LANDSDOWNE COMMUNITY CENTRE TO INCLUDE THE TOY LIBRARY

To include the Toy Library at Landsdowne Community Centre an extension would be required. Attachment 4 is a plan of the proposed extension which includes a separate entrance and access into the Community Centre. The cost of the proposed extension is \$70,000.00

TOY LIBRARIES IN CHRISTCHURCH

There are 15 Toy Libraries in Christchurch, two of which are church-based. Four are based in local schools. Nine are based in Christchurch City Council buildings. Attachment 5 shows the names of the Toy Libraries and their locations.

FUNDING OF TOY LIBRARIES

The Ministry of Education does not fund Toy Libraries. The Toy Library Federation of New Zealand supports Toy Libraries. The Toy Library Federation acts as an adviser to new and existing Toy Libraries, offering advice on toy selection, toy maintenance, and all aspects of running a Toy Library. Membership is open to anyone interested in not for profit Libraries. The Federation looks after 196 Toy Libraries. The Toy Library Federation can assist in obtaining grants from Lottery Youth etc. (Attachment 6 contains more information about the Toy Library Federation).

TOY LIBRARIES IN THE SPREYDON HEATHCOTE AREA

There are four Toy Libraries in the Spreydon Heathcote area:

1. **Waltham Toy Library.**

Based at Waltham Cottage.

Open: Saturday 10.00 am to 12.00 pm

Present membership: 30 families

Maximum membership: 50 families

Subscription: \$25.00 per year or \$40.00 if member doesn't want to be rostered on for duty.

Rental: 50 cents to \$3.00 per toy.

At present the Waltham Toy Library has plenty of toys and videos. They have just received a grant from Lotto Youth for toys. They would like some more members. At present they are working with the Opawa/St Martins group to take some of their over flow members.

1. **Addington Toy Library**

Based at Manuka Cottage.

Open: Tuesday 12.00 pm to 1.30 pm

Saturday 10.00 am to 11.30 am

Present membership: 73 families

Subscription: \$25.00 per year (can pay off \$25.00 or do extra volunteering work)

Rental: 50 cents to \$1.00.

There are two paid co-ordinators. There seems to be a drop off in members. Perhaps due to the transient nature of the area. They feel that they are cramped for space. They have received a grant from the Spreydon Heathcote Community Board and the Community Trust for new toys.

2. Christchurch South Community Toy Library

Based at Spreydon School

Open: Tuesday 7.00 pm to 8.30 pm

Wednesday and Saturday 9.30 am to 11.00 am

Present Membership: 170 families (maximum 180)

Subscription: \$40.00 per year.

Rental: some free, \$1.00 to \$3.00

This group is running well and they have no trouble attracting members. At present very much self-funding. They have made no applications for money. At present the Library is looking to relocate. Spreydon School roll has gone up and require the classroom that the Toy Library is in. At present the Library is looking at relocating to West Spreydon School.

COUNCIL POLICY

At present there is no policy on what type of support a Toy Library should receive from the City Council. Toy Libraries do fall under the Early Childhood Education Policy (see Attachment 7).

All Toy Libraries who are based in Christchurch City Council buildings are effectively partially subsidised. There are nine Toy Libraries based in Council buildings.

Over the last few years Christchurch Toy Libraries have received funding from Council Boards:

- Promotion and call minder
- Safety fence
- Conference attendance
- Play equipment
- Toys
- Toys and equipment
- Administration system for allocations
- Beebos House Toy Library received \$4,000 for a new portable building (Shirley/Papanui Board 1999/2000)
- Rent subsidy, which is mainly due to being in a Council building and not paying market rates

CONCLUSION

The site at Landsdowne is ideal for the toy library for the following reasons:

- It will only use part of the community facility and not limit its overall use.
- Works in well with other activities at Landsdowne, eg playgroup, toddler group.
- Will increase the usage of the Community Hall (200 families will be using the toy library)
- Adequate parking and a family-friendly park adjacent

NATURAL + PEOPLE + ECONOMIC STEP ASSESSMENT

| # | CONDITION: | Meets condition ✓✓0x | HOW IT HELPS MEET CONDITION: |
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| The Natural Step | | | |
| N1 | Reduce non-renewable resource use | ✓✓ | Re-using resources to fit out the building that are no longer required at the old Beckenham Service Centre |
| N2 | Eliminate emission of harmful substances | N/A | |
| N3 | Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems | ✓ | By adding onto an existing building within a reserve there is less intrusion onto the reserve environment than if we built a whole new building |
| N4 | People needs met fairly and efficiently | NA | NA - See People Step + Economic Step |

| The People Step | | | |
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| P1 | Basic needs met | ✓ | An increased service will be provided to the local community within a safe environment |
| P2 | Full potential developed | ✓ | Helps children/adults to develop interpersonal and social skills in a relaxed environment as well as providing educational opportunities for the children in the toys they hire out |
| P3 | Social capital enhanced | ✓ | Creating a place for people to come together informally outside of the home. There is a common connection between two groups on the site, Toy Library and the Playgroup |
| P4 | Culture and identity protected | ✓ | Brings together various cultural families |
| P5 | Governance and participatory democracy strengthened | N/A | |
| The Economic Step | | | |
| E1 | Effective and efficient use of all resources | ✓ | By adding on to an existing building it will reduce costs by not building a whole new building |
| E2 | Job rich local economy | N/A | |
| E3 | Financial sustainability | ✓ | The design will minimise long term operational expenditure |

Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Spreydon Heathcote Community Board support the proposed extension of the Landsdowne Community Centre.
 2. That application for funding this project be made to the City Council Property Unit.
 3. That all necessary Resource and Building Consents be obtained before the construction of the new building and alterations to existing facilities begins.
 4. That the design, colour and appearance of the new building be approved by the Parks and Waterways Manager, or her designate, prior to construction upon the site.
 5. That the lease terms and conditions be negotiated by the Property Manager in consultation with the Parks and Waterways Policy and Leasing Administrator.
 6. That the leased area be maintained in a safe and tidy condition at all times by the applicant, or principal contractor.

Chairman's

Recommendation: Not seen by Chairman.