

8. PROPOSED LIBRARY IN UPPER RICCARTON

Officer responsible Libraries Manager	Author Sue Sutherland, Libraries Manager DDI 372-7851
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The purpose of this report is to seek approval in principle to partner with the Riccarton High School to build a joint school/community library on land owned by the school. This report should be read in conjunction with the full report by Nicki Moen, Area Manager, Christchurch City Libraries, which has been separately circulated. That report establishes that the best location for a library in the west of the City is centred on Church Corner and evaluates the financial, environmental and social benefits of partnering with the school.

LOCATION OF THE LIBRARY IN UPPER RICCARTON

A study of the demographic and community profiles of the Upper Riccarton and Avonhead catchments leads to the following general conclusions:

- A new library in the Upper Riccarton area would serve a much larger catchment population than a library sited in the Avonhead area.
- Residents from the Avonhead area use the Fendalton Library and the Mobile Library service. Most would also be able to easily access a new library in Upper Riccarton.
- Feeder roads and excellent public transport systems conveniently lead people to Church Corner in the Upper Riccarton area.
- There is a noticeably higher number in the 15 to 24 age range in the Upper Riccarton areas compared with the city average.
- One intermediate school, four secondary schools and two tertiary institutions are located in the Upper Riccarton area.
- The areas of Avonhead and Riccarton are culturally diverse and these areas, in particular, reflect a particularly high Asian population. The Pacific Island population living in the wider Riccarton area is higher than the city average.
- The median family income in the Upper Riccarton area is less than the Christchurch average.

This information that the best location for a library in the west of the City is centred on the Church Corner area.

OPPORTUNITY TO PARTNER WITH RICCARTON HIGH SCHOOL

From the Christchurch City Libraries' perspective Riccarton High School is a highly desirable location. Apart from the financial benefits associated with the proposed partnership, there are significant social, economic and environmental benefits.

The key benefits of combined community library and school library on the Riccarton High School grounds are:

- The library would be located in the heart of the community, in close proximity to Church Corner, shopping facilities, primary and secondary schools, rest homes, tertiary institutions and rental housing. Christchurch City Libraries would work in collaboration with local primary, secondary and tertiary institutions to develop programmes for community learning.
- The land would be available at no cost to the Council and the school would contribute to the cost of the building and on-going operational costs.
- The location and size of the site meet community library requirements, and Christchurch City Libraries will benefit from working in partnership with education providers to enhance community learning and information literacy programmes.
- This project enables Riccarton High School to offer a better and extended service for their students.
- One building would be built instead of two.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the Council wishes to proceed with this partnership, we are required to confirm our intention to the school no later than mid July. It is proposed that the new library would be completed by December 2005 which requires the capital and operational funding to be brought forward by two years to the 2004/05 and 2005/06 financial years. This proposal has been considered by the Annual Plan Working Party at its meeting of 1 March 2002, and approved to be brought forward.

The capital currently available in the annual plan is sufficient to build a library of 1500 square meters with a capital contribution from the school of \$550,000. In addition, the school would provide the land. The current budget is not sufficient to acquire land and build a 1,100m² library should the Council decide against this proposal.

The Riccarton/Wigram Community Board considered the report at its meeting on 27 February 2002. They were unanimous in their approval of the recommendation outlined.

Recommendation: That the Council support in principle the partnership with Riccarton High School to build a joint community/school library on the Riccarton High School land subject to:

- (a) Consultation in the 2002 / 2003 Annual Plan.
- (b) Satisfactory resolution of legal, land ownership and lease issues.
- (c) Bringing forward funding for the Riccarton Library to 2004/05 (25%) and 2005/06 (75%).

Chairman's Recommendation: That the officer's recommendation be supported.