

34. AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN APPROVAL FOR INCLUSION IN THE DRAFT 2006/2016 LTCCP



| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| General Manager responsible: | General Manager Community Services |
| Officer responsible: | Recreation Facilities Manager |
| Author: | John Filsell, DDI 941-8303 |

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Council endorse the draft Aquatic Facilities Plan for inclusion in the draft 2006/2016 LTCCP for consultation as per the process agreed by the Council on 17 November 2005.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Aquatic Facilities Plan arose in response to the Council's request for a city-wide planning framework to assist the provision of aquatic facilities to meet current and future needs.
3. The Aquatic Facility Plan is a city-wide plan setting out how the city's pools and associated facilities can be provided over the next 30 years. This plan recognises existing Council and provision by others.
4. The Plan, if adopted, will:
 - Determine the future number and location of aquatic facilities
 - Outline the type, size and priority order of facilities to be developed
 - Explore options for collaboration with others
 - Include plans for dealing with aging facilities.
5. Christchurch City already has a network of aquatic facilities. The plan shows how this network can be developed to meet current and future community demand. By identifying gaps in today's network, the plan should ensure that, as far as possible, the city will have a relatively uniform spread of core aquatic facility features across the city.
6. It also considers facilities that, in time, are no longer required to serve the Council's aims. For instance, a new modern facility in an area can be expected to supplant a need to keep older outdoor pools in the area operating. In such cases, the plan recommends their closure.
7. This plan is a long-term framework to help Council decision-making. It will not automatically mean every project the plan sets out will be built. Rather, each project identified in this plan will come to the Council as a specific business case, as part of the LTCCP process for funding decisions.
8. To ensure the plan remains current and reflects community changes and city growth, it will be reviewed every five years and, if necessary, updated.
9. The plan has been developed over the past year through extensive research with stakeholder and community input. In November 2005 the Council approved the plan for stakeholder consultation between 21 November and 31 December 2005.
10. Sixty five submissions were received from Community Boards, community groups, schools, sports clubs, pool committees, other providers and individuals. Also included are the Council's decisions relating to aquatic facilities in the LTCCP process during 13 to 17 February 2006. Submissions were very positive overall. The community approved of the Council's city-wide approach and 30 year planning framework with five yearly reviews. There were no challenges to the quality or amount of information. Many submitters tended to advocate for their particular interest group or locality within the city.
11. Council endorsement is needed for the final draft of the Aquatic Facilities Plan to be included in the 2006/2016 draft LTCCP process for formal public consultation. The plan will provide a logical framework for Council decision making and allow the public to understand the rationale behind the Council's decisions. An updated draft plan is attached to this report.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

12. This report recommends that the Council endorse the plan for inclusion in the draft 2006/2016 LTCCP. The Council will not be asked to make any decisions with a financial or legal impact.
13. The plan will act as a decision making framework rather than binding the Council in absolute terms. However the plan will clearly signal the Council's intentions subject to available funding. Each project identified in the plan will come back to the Council with a separate business case, as part of the LTCCP process for funding decisions.
14. The plan contains estimates of the capital cost (in today's dollars) of proposed development options into the future. The costs are a contractor estimate with a number of qualifications. The sums are indicative only for planning purposes and will be firmed up as the planning process proceeds.
15. CAPEX and OPEX scenarios are included (in today's dollars) under the assumptions covered in section 4 of this report.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council endorse the Aquatic Facilities Plan (Draft for LTCCP Consultation document as attached) for inclusion in the draft 2006/2016 LTCCP for public consultation.

BACKGROUND ON THE AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN

16. The Aquatic Facilities Plan:

- Confirms the first order of business is to ensure the city's existing facilities are properly maintained and, where it suits the plans/priorities, redeveloped. It says new developments should add to the existing indoor pools network and not merely shift participation from an existing facility to itself.
- Will be reviewed every five years over its 30-year horizon to ensure it remains current with community needs and preferences.
- Takes account of the planned Jellie Park redevelopment, and its effect on city-wide demand for aquatic facilities. Even so, it suggests new facilities will be needed to cope with population and demand growth.
- Takes a city-wide view and aims to provide access to an indoor facility in each major area of the city for the majority of residents.
- Makes a priority of ensuring access for children, youth, older adults, people with disabilities and families on lower incomes or limited access to private transport. Areas of the city which are further away from existing indoor pools and which have higher proportions of people in those target groups are given priority for new facilities.
- Takes account of expected city growth and its changing demographics as outlined in the Urban Development Strategy. It also recommends that new facilities be built close to major hubs, such as malls, and transport routes.
- Identifies facilities that, as the network develops, will no longer meet community need and so should be closed.
- Encourages consideration of partnerships, including co-location with other public recreation facilities, schools and other providers. It says that, where possible, new aquatic facilities should be located with, or nearby, other Council facilities, such as libraries.

A Network of Aquatic Facilities for Christchurch in 2021

17. This plan signals the Council's intention to create a comprehensive network of aquatic facilities that meets the community need by about 2021 and into the future. If the plan was followed, the network in another 15 years might look like this:

| City Area | Aquatic Facility Description | |
|--------------|------------------------------|---|
| Central | Existing | Centennial Leisure Centre |
| Central-west | Existing | Wharenui Pool and Stadium |
| West | New | Likely to be a slightly larger pool than Centennial |
| North-west | Existing | The redeveloped new facility with deep water |
| North-west | Existing | Jellie Park outdoor |
| North | New | Slightly smaller scale pool than Centennial |
| North-east | Existing | QEII |
| East | Existing | Waltham Pool |
| East | New or Existing | Similar in size to Centennial or the retention of Aquagym |
| South | Existing | Pioneer Leisure Centre |
| | New | Add a children's pool at Pioneer |
| South-west | Existing | Halswell Pool |

Proposed Developments and Closures

18. The plan identifies new developments and closures of existing facilities; it reflects the Council's decisions on the draft LTCCP 13–17 February 2006. Each decision will be made by the Council on a case by case basis.

| City Area | Major Actions | Timing | Suggested Closures | Timing |
|------------|--|-------------------|---|-------------|
| North-west | Complete the Jellie Park redevelopment | 2004/05-2006/07 | Sockburn | 2006 onward |
| North | Negotiate a land and support partnership with Papanui High School and Northlands Mall for an aquatic facility and school gym at Papanui High | 2006/07-2008/09 | Papanui, Belfast, Edgware | 2006 onward |
| South | Add a children's shallow pool to existing Pioneer facility | 2008/09 – 2009/10 | | |
| West | Develop new area facility in the Hornby or Halswell area | 2015/16 - 2017/18 | Templeton. Review asset condition of Wharenui | 2006 onward |
| East | Develop new area facility in Linwood Woolston area when Aquagym reaches the end of its life. | 2017/18-2019/2020 | Woolston | 2006 onward |

Council Consideration to Date

19. The Council's Creating Strong Communities Portfolio Group considered the plan on 1 September 2005. The feedback received and subsequent actions are summarised below:

| Portfolio Group Feedback | Action |
|---|--|
| Land bank suitable sites in the east and west of the city. | Recommended in page 34 of the plan. |
| Incorporate "Art in public Places" to the design and features of new or redeveloped facilities. | Has been included into the updated RFP for the Jellie Park redevelopment. Incorporated into the northern corridor partnership. |
| Allow for the possibility that the priorities for developments will shift over time. | Plan will be reviewed every five years. Plan is a framework for decision making only. |
| Offer the Council the option of closing Sockburn Pool when the Jellie Park redevelopment opens. | Done. Page 28 of the plan. |
| Could the local community board fund a children's/toddler's pool at Pioneer. | Community Board funding may not be appropriate as this is a metropolitan plan with facilities that have a citywide appeal. |

20. The Plan was considered at a Council seminar on 20 September 2005. The feedback received and subsequent actions are summarised below:

| Council Seminar Feedback | Action |
|--|--|
| Investigate ways of supporting existing school pools rather than build new pools. | Non asset solutions and ways of supporting schools have been included in pages 32 and 40 of the plan. |
| Can schools be encouraged to issue pool keys to allow public access? | The Council will incur legal risks if it supports this practice; it contravenes health and safety regulations. |
| Fully investigate "hubbing" where a facility forms part of a multi dimensional infrastructure with different partners. | This concept has been investigated, the first potential partnership is at Papanui High, hubs with other community services have also been considered on page 22 of the plan. |

| Council Seminar Feedback | Action |
|--|---|
| Consider locations out west other than Goulding Avenue. | Other locations considered included Denton Park, Kyle Park, Wigram and Halswell Domain. Goulding Avenue does have some limitations and a site investigation remains in progress. The project team are aware of limitations on the Goulding Avenue site. |
| Clarify argument for closing Sockburn when Jellie is redeveloped. | Considerations for closing a facility are listed on page 25 of the plan. The option to close Sockburn was included at Councillor request. The plan is a framework, if adopted; a detailed appraisal of Sockburn with options will be put to the Council. |
| Why have 2km and 3km radii been used by the mapping tool? | The 2km and 3km radii are necessary to better identify the populations of the groups the Council asked to be included. These distances provide a more sensitive and robust analysis in identifying target groups who have access and mobility issues. If larger radii are used on this mapping tool it corrupts the results. The two and three km radii are more consistent with assumptions for transport analysis, 2km is the limit of a "short trip" (NZ Transport Survey). |
| Can Councillors see the mapping tool with 4km radii? | Copy will be circulated at the meeting |
| Provide information on numbers using the Orbiter/Metro Star to get to QEII from the north of the city. | Figures are commercially sensitive but we have ascertained that on average about 100 adults and 100 children get on a bus at QEII daily. Improved bus services are strongly recommended in the plan, page 39. |
| Is a pool in the northern corridor likely to cause customers to switch participation from QEII to the same extent as a pool in the east will switch participation from Aquagym, Centennial and QEII? | Any additional facility will cause a certain amount of customer switching. The plan focuses on facilities that will best target an existing need and future city growth. The pool on the northern corridor is considered best able to do this. An additional pool out east would be positioned too close to Centennial and Aquagym. The east of the city does not have the same growth expectation at this time than the north and west. The Council has already invested heavily in the east and central-east sectors at QEII, Centennial and Waltham. All these facilities have spare capacity for more swimmers. |
| Have land banking costs been included? | A financial allowance for land banking has not been included. Land banking is detailed on page 34. The plan has endeavoured to recommend suitable sites that the Council owns or that can be included in partnerships ie Papanui High. |
| The plan outlines CAPEX costs in today's dollars, what are future costs likely to be? | This is a corporate calculation that should be applied to all projects in the LTCCP. Current information will be presented at the meeting. |
| Can an outdoor pool be covered? | None of our outdoor pools can be covered for regulatory and climatic reasons. It is better to build new. |
| Has appropriate provision been made for asset management in operational and capital budgets? | The asset management plan is nearing completion, unless this identifies something "left field", we feel adequate provision has been made. |

| Council Seminar Feedback | Action |
|--|--|
| What will Northlands get out of a partnership with Council/Papanui High? | Northlands have offered a sum of money to assist in the development of scoping plans that will allow the company to determine exactly what's in it for them. |
| Has brown field as well as green field future growth and development been considered? | All the tools used to predict the cities growth are based on those being used for all other planning purposes. Brown field development is considered, see page 12 of the plan for the map of projected population growth in 2026. The five yearly review will take heed of any changing patterns of development. |
| Will the government announcement of \$32 million for sports stadia be considered for funding? | Our research indicates the intent of this funding is for nationally significant stadia, not community facilities. It is a nationwide fund; the chances of qualifying are slim. |
| Non asset solutions need to be considered especially as the availability of facilities does not lead automatically to increased participation. | Page 41 of the plan details non asset actions. |

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ON THE AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN

21. The Aquatic Facilities Plan stakeholder consultation resulted in 65 submissions between 21 November and 31 December 2005. Submitters included Community Boards and community groups, schools, sports clubs, pool committees, other providers and individuals. The updated Aquatic Facilities Plan, Draft for LTCCP consultation, is attached to this report.
22. Submissions were very positive overall. The community approved of the Council's city-wide approach and 30 year planning framework with five yearly reviews. There were no challenges to the quality or amount of information. Many submitters tended to advocate for their particular interest group or locality within the city. The Council's decisions relating to aquatic facilities in the LTCCP process are included. Some advocated for the Council to change the criteria governing the review approved by the Council in the Aquatic Facilities Strategy Criteria report in March 2005; eg that non-Council providers be excluded.
23. Section 23 of this report, below, summarises stakeholder feedback in respect of the proposed provision of facilities in each geographical sector of the city.

North-West:

Twenty-four responses, 18 supporting Jellie Park upgrade, considered a worthwhile development on the western side of town.

Nine comments received on Sockburn Pool, mostly concerned with the lack of access the closure of Sockburn Pool would bring to Hornby and other western suburb residents. Most recommended retaining Sockburn Pool until pool in the west was built, although some noted that Sockburn Pool needs to be closed.

North:

Twenty-five responses, 15 supporting the proposed pool. Seen as needed in a growing area of town. Recognised as a good replacement for the three nearby suburban pools. Partnership with school and mall considered a good idea.

Two responses noting that Belfast pool be kept open until northern pool built, one other response for keeping Edgeware pool open as provides some deep water.

Two responses not in favour, seeing QEII and Jellie as catering for this area.

Two responses suggesting a partnership with YMCA at Bishopdale instead.

West:

Twenty-eight responses, 19 indicating support for a pool out west.

Three responses wanting a higher priority for the west.

Two responses saying Sockburn Pool should be upgraded instead of building new elsewhere, two responses saying Sockburn Pool should remain open until a new pool is built.

Some support for closing various surrounding pools if they are uneconomic, but that they need to be replaced with something else.

Two replies not in favour of a new pool.

East:

Twenty-three responses, 12 in favour of a new pool, two responses noting there is high need that needs to be met sooner.

Three responses suggesting the Linwood area as a preferred location.

Two wanting Aquagym to be retained.

Two noting that a new pool is necessary if Aquagym closes.

Two comments calling for upgrading existing pools.

Two replies wanting retention of Woolston Pool.

South:

Eighteen responses, strong support of proposed action (14 replies).

One request to delay this action until a new pool in Hornby is built.

No objections to the children's pool proposal.

24. The table below, identifies the main themes of stakeholder feedback, offers comment, and details how, or if the plan has changed:

| Stakeholder Feedback Issues | | |
|---|---|--|
| Issue | Officer Comment | Impact on draft Aquatic Facility Plan |
| Goulding Avenue site not suitable for any facility development. | Valid reasons include competing interests for the land, access issues, alternative sites in close proximity and a pending housing development. | Goulding Avenue removed as a preferred site. Recommendation to identify alternative sites including, Denton Park, Wigram and Halswell. |
| Retain smaller suburban pools especially Edgware. | Smaller suburban pools should be replaced when new developments are confirmed or completed. Edgware pool does not meet NZS 4441 in relation to the standard of pool plant. It is in extremely frail condition and could fail at any time. | Suburban pools should be replaced when new developments are confirmed or completed; or earlier if the Council sees fit. |
| Sockburn pool closing when Jellie Park is redeveloped and before a new western pool is built will remove a valuable social service. | The Council has specifically asked for the opportunity to review Sockburn pool when Jellie park is redeveloped. Sockburn pool attracted 22,964 users during 2004/2005. Many of these were school groups that can easily be transported to Jellie Park. Sockburn is quoted as providing an essential social service. However the low user numbers do not support this. | The Council has asked for and will be given the opportunity to close Sockburn Pool when Jellie Park is redeveloped. The decision is the Council's. |
| Access to facilities becoming less affordable to those on lower incomes city-wide. | The plan does contain a number of non asset solutions. Some targeted at affordability. Affordability of facilities city wide should be considered as a separate issue. | Retain non asset solutions in the plan. |

| Issue | Officer Comment | Impact on draft Aquatic Facility Plan |
|---|--|--|
| Hydrotherapy only really emphasised as a narrow health issue, should be given more significance as a wellness issue as the population ages. | Hydrotherapy is a much boarder wellness issue. The population is aging. Many need hydrotherapy to prevent injury and existing medical conditions becoming more serious. There may be opportunities for partnerships. | Re-emphasise hydrotherapy as a wellness issue. Advocate a partnership approach to provision with the DHB similar to the recent development in Wellington |
| Concern at any "implied" meaning of the intention to review the asset condition of Wharenuui in 2015 | There is no "implied" meaning. This action will support the asset management plan in ensuring Wharenuui remains structurally and mechanically fit to deliver the outcomes the Council wants. | Retain and clarify the asset review of Wharenuui. |
| Concern at the 2km radii used on target population maps, should be 4km. | The 2km and 3km radii are necessary to better identify the populations of the groups the Council asked to be included. These distances provide a more sensitive and robust analysis in identifying target groups who have access and mobility issues. If larger radii are used on this mapping tool it corrupts the results. The two and three km radii are more consistent with assumptions for transport analysis, 2km is the limit of a "short trip" (NZ Transport Survey). | This has been debated at Portfolio Group and the Council. Retain the 2km radii. |
| Insufficient time to make submissions due to the consultation period ending 31 December | This is the timeframe agreed by the Council to meet LTCCP deadlines. There has been a proactive media campaign and a direct mail out to over 300 stakeholders. 65 high quality submissions were received. There is a further opportunity for comment in the formal public consultation. | Formal public consultation as part of the LTCCP. |
| Aquagym should not be included in the assessment of current provision. | The Council specifically asked for and approved all other providers to be included in any assessment of current provision. (AFS Criteria Report March 2005) The public survey carried out whilst researching the plan showed the community's priorities for services provided by aquatic facilities were: swim education, school swim education, health and fitness and recreation. Aquagym provides three out of four very well. The Leisure Parks and Waterways survey specifically excluded non-Council provision; the Council is not the only provider. The Council has asked for a city-wide plan; this is not achievable without including all providers. What, if any, other providers should the Council exclude? | Retain the criteria asked for and approved by the Council in the Aquatic Facility Strategy Criteria Report March 2005. |

| Issue | Officer Comment | Impact on draft Aquatic Facility Plan |
|--|---|--|
| Provision for schools is limited in the East | Many schools use Aquagym, Waltham QEII and Centennial. There is spare capacity at Waltham, QEII and Centennial. | Proactively work with schools to make all aspects of swim education more attainable. Better transport, programmes and pool access. |
| There will be no effect on usage at Aquagym, QEII and Centennial if there is a new pool in the East. Centennial pool is over capacity. | Historically there was a serious effect on Aquagym when Centennial opened. There are numerous examples nationwide where the opening of a pool in close proximity has impacted on user numbers of neighbouring pools eg Stokes Valley pool lost 35% of its custom when Upper Hutt pool opened 15 km away. Aquagym would be affected the most. Centennial pool is currently running under capacity, developments at QEII have affected patronage; Jellie Park redevelopment will release further capacity at QEII and Centennial. | Retain the understanding that a new facility in the East will affect the patronage at Aquagym, QEII and Centennial. |
| A limited "window" of opportunity to secure a site at Papanui should not influence the timeframe for development. | The suitability of the Papanui High site was not influenced by a limited window of opportunity. There are limited sites available on the northern corridor and a site closer to the city centre better suits community travel patterns. The evidence from all the criteria identified by the Council contributed to the northern corridor being identified as a priority, availability of a site (along with other factors) has only influenced timing. | Retain the current criteria approved by the Council in the Aquatic Facility Strategy Criteria Report March 2005. Retain the existing priorities arising from this. |
| Jellie Park has better existing public transport provision than other areas. People tend not to use or afford public transport. | The present public transport networks will alter over time to reflect demand trends. The present network was not identified in the project brief or by the Council as criteria to base a decision to locate a facility. The plan envisages non-asset actions such as a subsidisation of transport, a change in transport routes and direct incentives to schools to assist with transport difficulties | Retain and re-emphasise the non asset based actions. Investigate better ways of targeting those who have genuine difficulty travelling to a facility no matter where they live. Target specific solutions with specific schools. |