

Submission re: LTCCP
16 April 2009
Hand delivered to Civic Offices
Re: Edgware Pool Land

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I would respectfully ask Christchurch City Council to consider several issues related to this issue:

1 The important need to retain space for community use, particularly land that was originally gifted to the community for their use.

1a The important heritage and history related to the land and pool should be considered in any final decision and consultation leading to that final decision.

2 There are fantastic indoor pool facilities in ChCh however some children and adults cannot use these because of the chemicals which cause skin irritation and recurring sinus problems. We are no longer able to use pools in ChCh as the indoor pools cause these problems.

3 I am unable to rationalise the logic behind selling land that has been put aside for community use, and that would no doubt be impossible to ever regain in the Edgware area. Then spending \$700,000 in 2009-2010, over one million dollars in 2010-2011, more than a million dollars in 2011-2012 and \$776,000 in 2012-2013 which would have ensured the future of an outdoor / indoor pool community complex on the pool land.

4 A pool on this land would ensure children from the nearby schools and pre-schools could continue swimming in their own community (without the need of buses to other pools, which costs financially and environmentally). Eighty school pools a year are closing in New Zealand at present which is extremely worrying considering our poor drowning statistics. Twenty-seven people have drowned in New Zealand so far this year - eight more than the same time last year and the highest number of recreational drownings since 1994.

A pool on this land, would also ensure that families in the community are able to socialise with children and families they know, further strengthening the Edgware community, something that makes a community safer and desirable to live in.

5 To sell the land and therefore remove any chance of a pool being re-established in Edgware / St Albans, would be in conflict with council policy on several levels, including the Policy of Determining Significance. The

bulldozing of Edgeware Pool was certainly not "easily reversible" and the action could be seen to suggest that decisions had already been made with regards to the pool / land's future, without proper consultation having been carried out.

6 To keep the land and use it to develop a pool / community centre is in keeping with Christchurch City Council strategy. For example:

- The Healthy Christchurch project
- The Children's Policy
- Aquatic Strategy (generally and specifically)
- Urban Development Strategy
- Recreation and Sport Policy
- Social Wellbeing Policy
- Heritage Conservation Policy (8.1)

to name but a few.

7 To suggest that a pool is no longer on the agenda (Working Party Recommendation, Feb 2009), is to assume that this position had been reached via a process to that point that had been clear, transparent, fair and "above board". I would respectfully challenge this and am concerned at suggestions from key members of the working party that they were unclear on what they were being asked to do and felt they had to take the "second best choice" because that is the impression they were given by council staff. Even if it can be shown that staff did not give this impression or advice to working party members, it needs to be clarified whether those charged with the responsibility of making a recommendation to the City Council (working party members) still believed it was a direction they had been given by council staff which therefore still affected the working party's final recommendation.

8 I understand that the issue of CPTED, (CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN) has been raised at the very late stages of the "consultation process" with regards to cost of keeping the land for community use or even a pool on the site. That the Edgeware Pool site is not suitable for a greenspace because it is not visible from the street and therefore council would be required to purchase properties on Edgeware Rd in order to make the site 'safe'. This of course will add hundreds of thousands of dollars to the cost of retaining the site.

Exceptions to CPTED guidelines have been made in decision made previously, there are exception precedents already set. The principles behind CPTED do not mean that the literal interpretation of "being seen from the street" always need to be applied, indeed I would argue that is absolutely impractical in some cases, this being one. Where the security and safety of the site can be ensured using other means, the issue of "being in view of the street" may not apply. This has not been a part of the consultation process at all. In fact, the issue of CPTED is a new issue only raised after the working party had made its recent recommendation (Feb 2009).

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Conclusion:

The strength of Christchurch City depends on the strength of its communities and the people within those communities. Not only does consultation have to be done, it has to be seen to be done and there are many unanswered questions relating to the Edgware Pool issue. This is not a personal issue and should never become one. It is an issue of democracy (perceived or otherwise) and transparency.

The council is required to not only engage with its people, (Local Govt. Act) but to be seen to “be prepared to start afresh if necessary” and working parties should work from “a statement that is not already decided upon”, (quoted from Wellington International Airport Limited and others v Air New Zealand [1993]) which CCC senior manager Michael Aitken’s alleged statement and what some members of the working party understood (rightly or wrongly), may call this legal definition of consultation, when applied to the Edgware Pool consultation, into serious question.

This engagement, which can be passionate (particularly where family, community and history are involved) must be able to withstand the highest scrutiny and I believe respect for the consultation process applied in the Edgware Pool case, is under threat and will remain so until questions are answered fairly, transparently and to the satisfaction of intelligent and fair minded people - both within and outside the Christchurch City Council.