Wellington Aquatic Facilities Plan

Final Report

Prepared for Wellington City Council

Prepared by: SGL Group New Zealand Limited

April 2011

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REFERENCES

The following references and associated documents have been used in the formation of this report:

1. Demographic data has been derived from Councils website information and demographic reports.

2. Section three of the report is a summary of previous reports to Council including:

    - Swimming Pools Discussion Paper presented to the Wellington City Council Strategy and Policy Committee in May 2008.
    - Wellington City Council LTCCP 2009 to 2019
    - Review of School Pools - Lumin Limited September 2009

3. In section five of the report reference is made to the National Swimming Strategy which is in draft format and is prepared for Swimming New Zealand (SNZ)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SGL Group New Zealand Limited would like to acknowledge the excellent assistance and support of the Wellington Aquatics Team and in particular Council Officer support from the following people:

- Neville Brown
- Julian Todd
- Jim Warwick
- Jamie Delich

Support is also acknowledged by local, regional and national water sports groups as well as and residents who gave the time to complete the aquatics telephone surveys.

All of these parties have assisted SGL Group with the completion of this comprehensive aquatic facilities Plan for Wellington City Council.

1 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND AREA REVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

The Wellington City Council carries out work in seven strategic areas that will enable it to remain globally competitive. The Social and Recreation Strategy includes those activities that contribute to a successful city that can be measured by the well-being of its people and strength of its communities.

As the city's biggest provider of recreation facilities the Wellington City Council is guided by its Recreation Policy and aims to promote healthy lifestyles and build strong communities. The city's population is growing and ageing and are becoming more culturally diverse.

Growth is occurring in different ways with the spread of suburbs in the northern and central areas of the city likely to challenge the city's sense of community and placing increasing pressure on the services and facilities that underpin that 'sense of place'.

Wellington City Council currently operates seven swimming pools being five indoor pools:

- Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre, Kilbirnie (WRAC)
- Freyberg Pool, Oriental Bay (FP)
- Karori Pool, Karori (KP)
- Keith Spry Pool, Johnsonville (KSP)
- Tawa Pool (TP)

Council also operates two summer seasonal pools at Thorndon and Khandallah.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE 2011 AQUATIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN

In June 2008 a Pools Discussion paper presented to the Council outlined current trends and issues facing the network of swimming pools. One of the key outcomes from the pools discussion document was the requirement to review the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre based in Kilbirnie for a deep water pool (2.0m +) for training, development and competition for swimming and other aquatic activities.

Another key area was a review of the provision of aquatic facilities and to research appropriate future development options that satisfy 'future' demand and increasing customer expectations to inform Councils LTCCP. The studies core elements included:

- A review of relevant background information and current documentation
- A review of critical assessment of the current organisational approach/thinking to project
- Undertake any relevant market research analysis and socio demographic characteristics
- Carry out any relevant community and sports clubs consultation
- Review key stakeholders interest in this project and consult with them
- Identify social impacts or trends
- Consider the impact of any expanded facilities on existing facilities and usage
- Establish justification for the project and examine alternatives
- Identify the relevant components required and development of programmes/ services

- To test the willingness of future users of a new deep water pool to pay increased user charges of 100% more than is currently imposed.

1.3 Aquatic Facilities Plan 2011 Project Methodology

SGL Group New Zealand Limited – leisure and tourism planners were appointed in late November 2010 to complete this study which was then conducted in four interrelated stages being:

- Stage One: Background Review
- Stage Two: Research and Consultation
- Stage Three: Redevelopment and New Development Opportunities and Options
- Stage Four: Future Aquatic Facilities and Services Strategy

1.4 PROJECT AREA POPULATION TRENDS

Council's website provides a detailed summary of Wellington and its current population profile and future population projections as well. Wellington City is the capital of New Zealand. Wellington City is located at the south-western tip of New Zealand's North Island. Wellington City is bounded by Porirua City in the north, Lower Hutt City in the north-east, Wellington Harbour in the south-east, Cook Strait in the south and the Tasman Sea in the west.

Wellington City includes the suburbs and localities of Aro Valley, Berhampore, Breaker Bay, Broadmeadows, Brooklyn, Churton Park, Crofton Downs, Glenside, Grenada North, Grenada Village, Hataitai, Highbury, Horokiwi, Houghton Bay, Island Bay, Johnsonville, Kaiwharawhara, Karaka Bays, Karori, Kelburn, Khandallah, Kilbirnie, Kingston, Lyall Bay, Makara, Makara Beach, Maupuia, Melrose, Miramar, Moa Point, Mornington, Mt Cook, Mt Victoria, Newlands, Newtown, Ngaio, Ngauranga, Northland, Ohariu, Oriental Bay, Owhiro Bay, Paparangi, Pipitea, Rongotai, Roseneath, Seatoun, Southgate, Strathmore Park, Takapu Valley, Tawa, Te Aro, Thorndon, Vogeltown, Wadestown, Wellington Central, Wilton and Woodridge.

Wellington City features both urban and rural areas. The urban areas include residential, commercial and industrial land use. Rural land is used largely for farming. The City covers a land area of 290 square kilometres, including areas of coastline, parkland and bushland.

Wellington City has a steadily growing population which increased by 7,800 between 2006 and 2009 to 195,500 people. The city's population accounts for 4.45% of the New Zealand population and is expected to see steady growth over the next decade.

Wellington city's population is young with 55.9% aged 18 to 49 years (2006) compared with 45.1% in New Zealand generally. Wellington City has higher proportions of Europeans (76.8%) and Asians (12.7%) than New Zealand as a whole, and lower proportions of Māori (7.4%) and Pacific peoples (6.6%).

Over one-third (33%) of Wellington residents have a bachelor degree or higher qualification - the highest in the country. Incomes in Wellington City are well above the average for New Zealand with over 40% of households having annual incomes of over $89,000. The average hourly wage in Wellington city is $31.90, the highest in the country (as of December 2009).

There were 102,627 employed residents in Wellington city in 2006 in a diverse range of industries. Property and business services provide the greatest number of jobs (21,819), followed by government administration and defense (12,699).

There are 68,901 dwellings in Wellington city, with 54.3% of these owned. One-quarter of dwellings are one-person households. The average house value in Wellington city is $538,000 with a median weekly mortgage payment of $340.

There are 25,284 Wellington-based businesses and there has been a 22% growth in business units here since 2000. Nearly half (46%) of Wellington city workers are employed in businesses with more than 100 employees.

Wellington is experiencing considerable increases in population in both the central city and along the northern spine, particularly between Johnsonville and the northern city boundaries. Many of these new residents have young families and are therefore the target communities for aquatic education, recreation and leisure.

1.4.1 Age Profile of Residents

The following tables summarise the current census data on Wellington City Residents compared to the Wellington Region Population.

Age structure Five year age groups	Wellington City						
Years	number	%	Wellington Region %	number	%	Wellington Region %	2001 to 2006
0 to 4	11,109	6.2	6.8	10,638	6.5	7.2	471
5 to 9	10,152	5.7	6.8	9,969	6.1	7.3	183
10 to 14	10,515	5.9	7.0	9,753	6.0	7.3	762
15 to 19	13,134	7.3	7.3	11,184	6.8	6.8	1,950
20 to 24	18,546	10.3	7.3	15,630	9.5	7.0	2,916
25 to 29	16,233	9.0	6.7	15,615	9.5	7.4	618
30 to 34	16,323	9.1	7.5	15,939	9.7	8.2	384
35 to 39	15,495	8.6	7.9	14,916	9.1	8.4	579
40 to 44	14,682	8.2	7.9	12,789	7.8	7.7	1,893
45 to 49	12,540	7.0	7.2	10,776	6.6	6.6	1,764
50 to 54	10,338	5.8	6.1	9,912	6.1	6.3	426
55 to 59	9,081	5.1	5.7	7,155	4.4	4.7	1,926
60 to 64	6,279	3.5	4.2	5,469	3.3	3.9	810
65 to 69	4,674	2.6	3.4	4,176	2.5	3.2	498
70 to 74	3,549	2.0	2.7	3,558	2.2	2.9	-9
75 to 79	2,844	1.6	2.3	2,889	1.8	2.3	-45
80 to 84	2,184	1.2	1.7	1,830	1.1	1.5	354
85 to 89	1,158	0.6	0.9	1,089	0.7	0.8	69
95 and over	615	0.3	0.4	546	0.3	0.4	69

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings, 2006, 2001 and 1996.

Analysis of the age structure of Wellington City in 2006 compared to Wellington Region shows that there was a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (0 to 14) as well as a lower proportion of people in the older age groups (60+). Overall, 17.7% of the population was aged between 0 and 14yrs, and 11.8% were aged 60 years and over, compared with

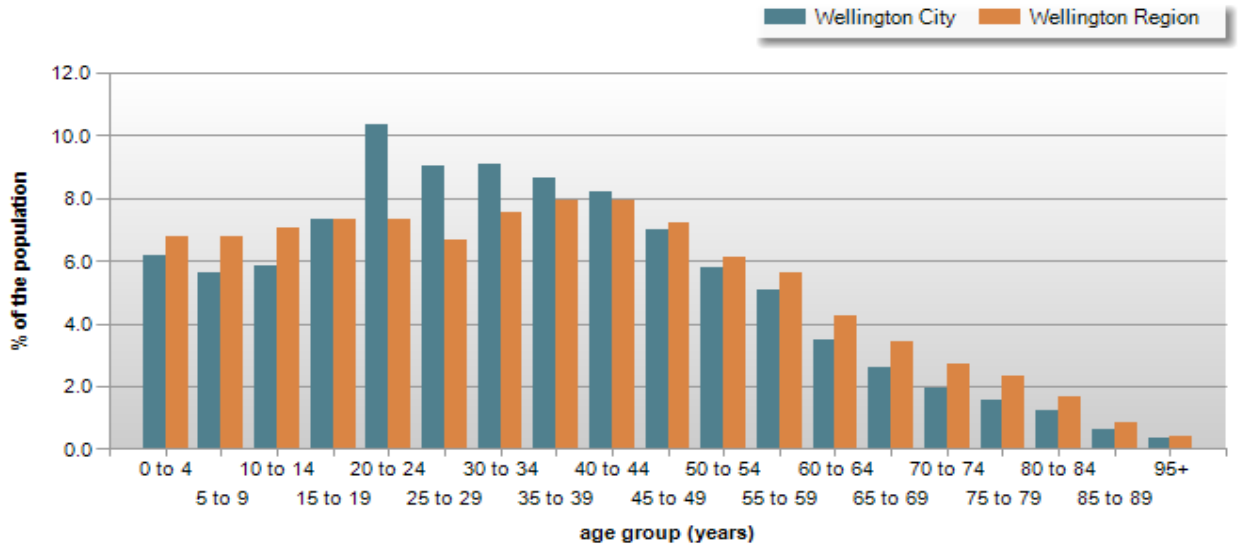
20.6% and 15.7% respectively for Wellington Region. The major differences between the age structure of Wellington City and Wellington Region were:

- A larger percentage of 20 to 24 (10.3% compared to 7.3%);
- A larger percentage of 25 to 29 (9.0% compared to 6.7%);
- A larger percentage of 30 to 34 (9.1% compared to 7.5%), and;
- A smaller percentage of 10 to 14 (5.9% compared to 7.0%).

The largest changes in age structure from 2001 to 2006 were in the age groups:

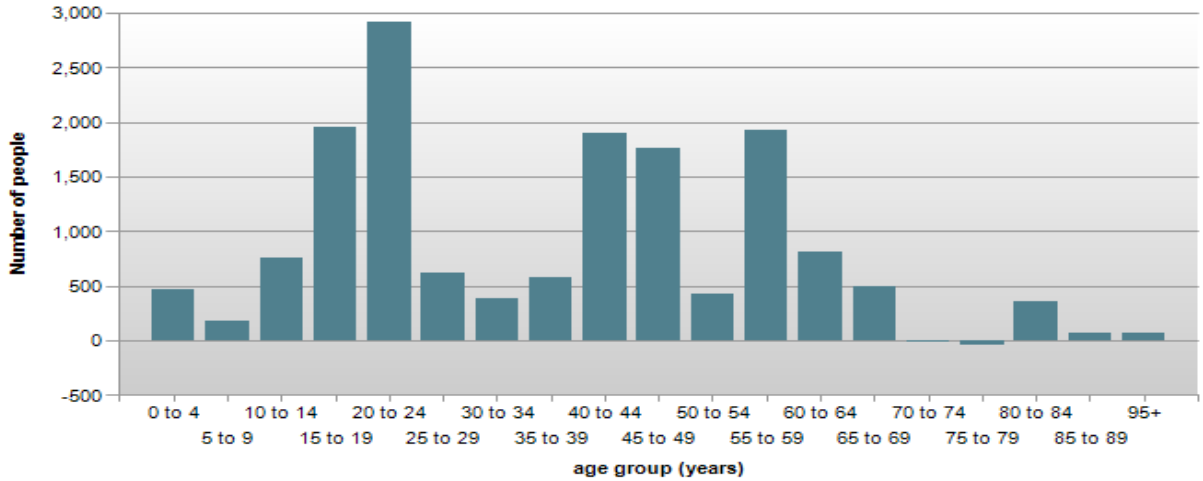
- 20 to 24 (+2,916 persons);
- 15 to 19 (+1,950 persons);
- 55 to 59 (+1,926 persons), and;
- 40 to 44 (+1,893 persons).

Age structure of Wellington City and Wellington Region, 2006 (Usual residence)



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings 2006

Change in age structure of Wellington City, 2001 to 2006 (Usual residence)



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings 2006 and 2001

1.4.2 Population Change and Future Swimming Pool Demand

The following suburbs had, at the last census, high densities of children aged 0 – 4 years and therefore likely to have high demand for learn to swim pools. These children are now either currently in school or soon to be starting school.

10 – 12% Takapu

8 - 10% Grenada North, Churton, Newlands South Ngaio, Wadestown
Happy Valley/Owhiro Bay, Island Bay East & West, Strathmore Park

In addition, those communities with a predominantly older population (50 years and older) could also benefit from local, easily accessible warm water pools.

20 – 25% Oriental Bay

15 – 20% Kilbirnie East, Raroa

10 – 15% Grenada North,Tawa Central, Tawa South, Linden, Johnsonville East and South, Te Kainga , Karori North, Karori East, Berhampore, Miramar South Miramar North, Seatoun

It should be noted that some areas are affected by the concentration of Retirement Villages in Kilbirnie, Raroa, Karori East and Berhampore. It is important to note that some of these suburbs will have a 'transformation' as the population ages. Typically older adults occupy more established family homes. When these are sold, families with young children often purchase them. This means that many of the suburbs highlighted above as having high densities of older adults are may have an increase in pre-schoolers in next decades and will require also Learn to Swim pools.

1.4.3 Suburbs Likely to Change Age Profile Mixes

In addition to the analysis above of both communities with currently high levels of young children and those areas with higher densities of older adults, the following suburbs are likely to intensify the number of families with young children living there.

Suburbs with likely increases in young children

- Newlands North
- Newlands South
- Ngaio
- Wadestown
- Mount Cook
- Owhiro Bay/Happy Valley
- Berhampore
- Newtown West
- Hataitai
- Kilbirnie West
- Lyall Bay

Suburbs have decreasing numbers of children and greater aging population

- Linden
- Greenacres
- Tawa
- Tawa South
- Grenada North
- Karori East
- Karori South
- Kelburn
- Seatoun

1.4.4 Future Wellington City Population and City Development Trends

National census projections show that Wellington city's population will grow by approximately 20,000 over the next two decades, reaching about 205,000 by 2026. At the same time, the average household size will continue to shrink to approx 2.4 people per household by 2021. This indicates based on current pool usage trends that around 12,000 extra pool users will need to be catered for as part of predicted population growth.

Some 14,000 additional dwellings will be required over the next two decades – 60 percent (8,400) of these will be either apartments or multi unit houses. The remaining 40 percent (5,600) will be single detached houses.

1.4.4.1 Place-Based Planning Projects in Key Population Areas

The Council is working on several 'place-based' plans and projects. When proposals for the city's 'growth spine' have been completed, the Council will look to develop concept plans for specific areas of the city. These include:

- Adelaide Road
- Churton Park Neighbourhood
- Johnsonville Town Centre
- Lincolnshire Farm
- Newlands Town Centre
- Kilbirnie Town Centre

Central City Apartment Growth

There are approximately 5,500 apartments in the central city area. By 2026 it's estimated that an additional 6,000 people will be living in the central city. The majority of this growth will be accommodated by new apartment developments.

In April / May 2008, the Council undertook a survey of apartment residents to better understand the community of approximately 12,000 people who live in the central city. This information will help the Council plan more effectively for central city living.

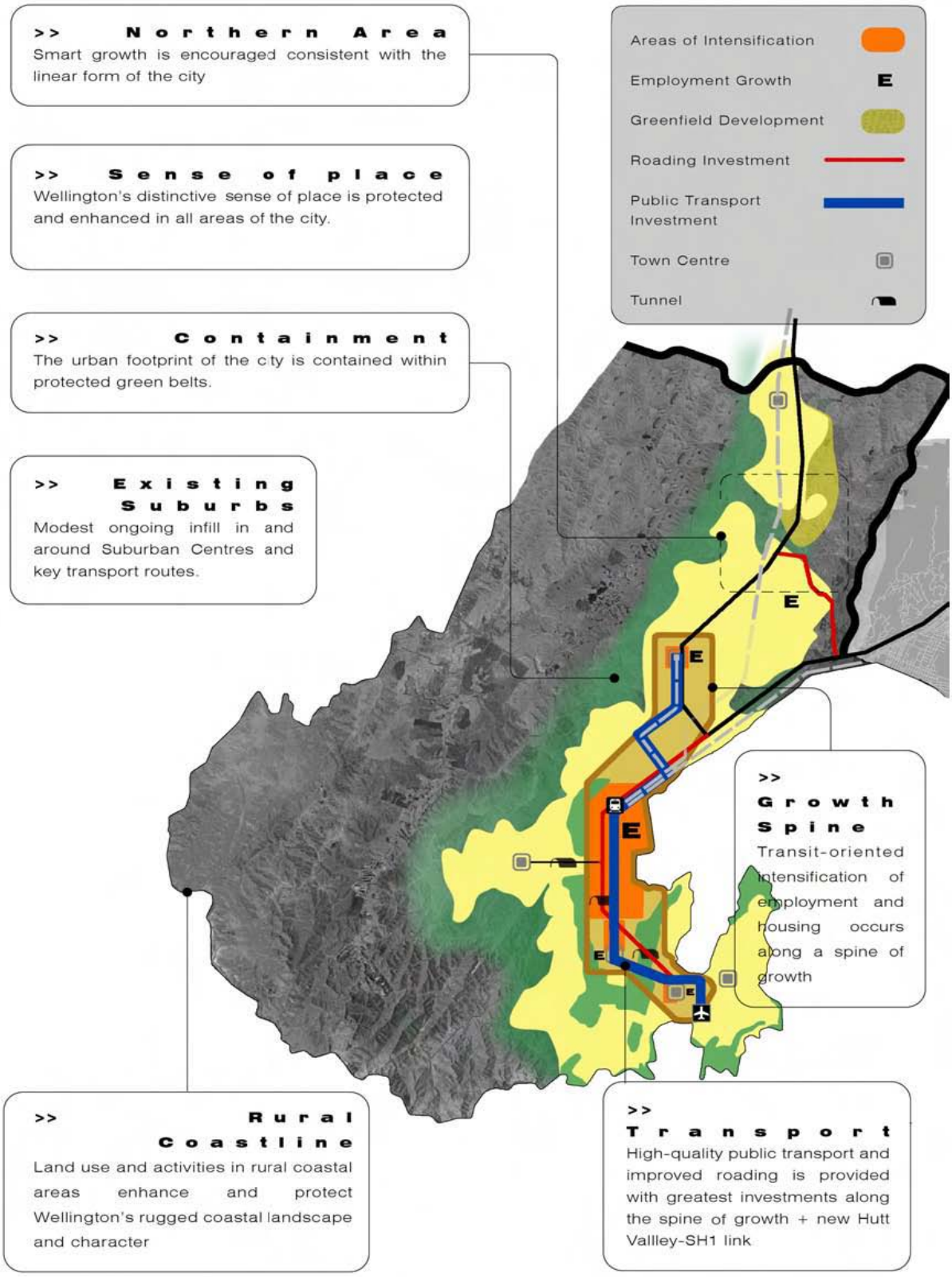
Urban Development Strategy

The Urban Development Strategy sets out the Council's approach to managing growth and change for Wellington city. This strategy is built around a 50-year growth concept that reinforces the distinct physical and spatial characteristics of Wellington.

This concept is based on the idea of **a 'growth spine'** (see graphic next page) – a strip of land along which more intensive urban development is encouraged. The concept encourages development in Johnsonville, the Central Area, Adelaide Road and Kilbirnie, supported by improved public transport and roading solutions along the spine. Directing growth in this manner and improving the quality of development will contribute to making the city:

- **Safer and more liveable -** by increasing lifestyle choices and the quality of places.
- **More sustainable -** by using less energy, generating less pollution, and being more resilient.
- **Better connected -** by strengthening road and public transport linkages.
- **More prosperous -** by directing growth to areas where the marginal costs are lower and allowing building owners and developers to respond readily to changing market needs.

- **More compact -** by building on the contained urban form that residents value so much.
- **More memorable and distinctive -** by enhancing urban amenity and sense of place.



2 AQUATIC FACILITIES REVIEW

Wellington City Council has a long association with the provision of swimming pools since the late 1800s when salt water pools were located on the harbours edge. The 2008 Swimming Pools Discussion Paper highlighted the following key facility development trends:

- **Thorndon Outdoor Seasonal Pool** was opened in 1924 to replace the turn of the century Wellington Harbour Salt Water Pool.
- **Khandallah Outdoor Seasonal Pool** was developed in 1925 as part of the park facilities and to service the local area population.
- **Karori Outdoor Seasonal Pool** was opened in 1936 to service the western suburbs. This pool was substantially redeveloped in 2000 into an all year round indoor heated pool.
- **Freyberg Indoor Pool** was opened in 1963 and became the cities first indoor pool.
- **Tawa Indoor Pool** was opened in 1973 to service this local catchment area.
- **Keith Spry Indoor Pool** was opened in Johnsonville in 1982 to service this local catchment area.
- **Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre** was opened in 1989 as a Local/national/international and regional event and community swimming facility that not only services city wide need for these specialist facilities but has also been redeveloped with leisure water/health and fitness facilities to serve community needs of the population of eastern/southern suburbs.

Since the early 1900s Council has been a major developer and provider of public swimming facilities and independently a hierarchy or network of pools has evolved which now sees the following provision and categorisation:

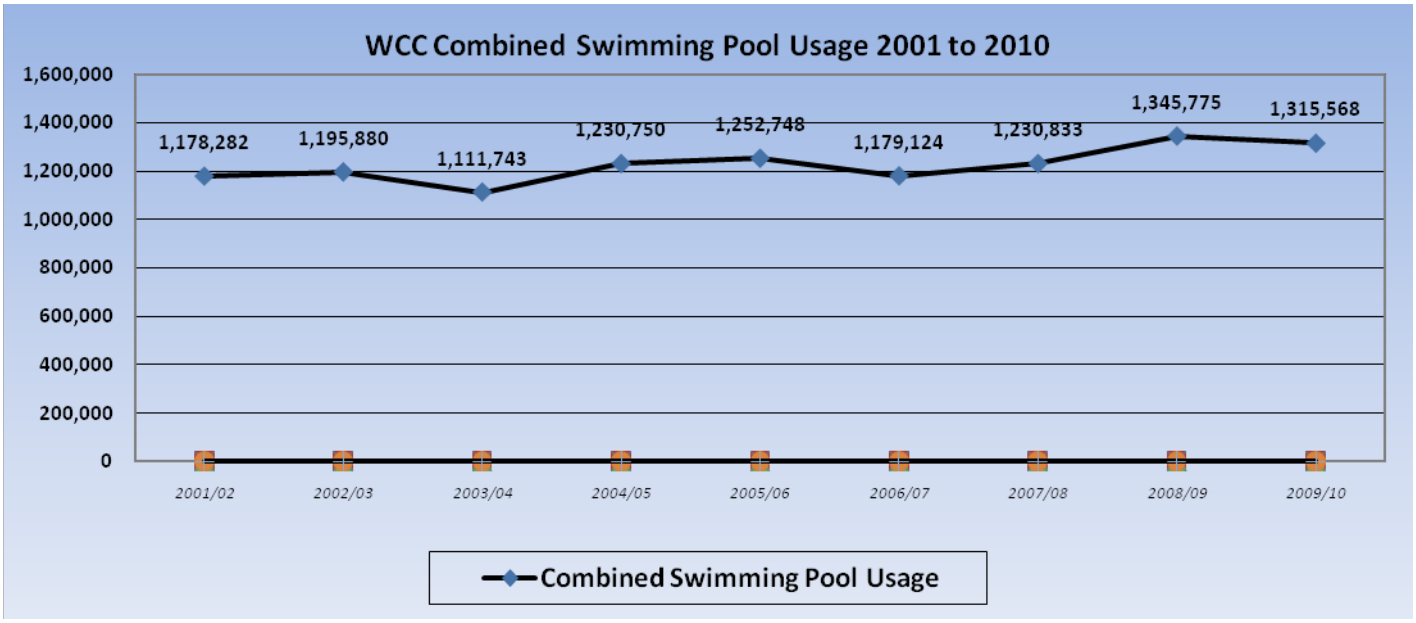
- **Local/Regional Centre – Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre** offers facilities that can be used from local to international event level.
- **District Aquatic Centres – Keith Spry Pool and Freyberg Pool** provides facilities and pools for multiple suburbs.
- **Community Local Swimming Pools – Tawa Pool and Karori Pool** and now provide pools for more localised communities of interest.
- **Seasonal Pools – Thorndon Pool and Khandallah Pool** both are summer seasonal outdoor pools and both of these are now over 85 years old.

2.1 WELLINGTON SWIMMING POOLS USAGE TRENDS 2001 to 2010

In line with this study a review of usage of the seven Wellington City Council swimming pools has been completed between 2001 and 2010 and is summarised in the following sections.

2.1.1 WCC Combined Swimming Pool Usage Trends 2001 to 2010

The following graph highlights the combined seven WCC Swimming Pools usage ***(all centre users including health and fitness and programmes)*** between 2001 and 2010



The combined Swimming Pools usage review 2001 to 2010 indicates:

- Usage has increased over the 9 year period ranging from 1.178M visits in 2001/02 through to a high of 1.345M visits in 2008/09. This slightly reduced to 1.315M visits in 2009/10 due to a significant maintenance closure at WRAC.
- Between 2001and 2010 there have been an increase of 137,286 extra visits to swimming pools which is an increase of 11.7%.

2.1.2 Usage of Individual WCC Swimming Pools 2001 to 2010

The graph on the next page highlights usage trends for each individual WCC Swimming Pool and a review of the data indicates the following usage trends:

- **WRAC** is the most used swimming pool ranging from 533,619 visits in 2001 and increasing to 566,284 visits by 2010. This is an increase of 32,665 more pool visits.

- The next most used swimming pool is **Freyberg Pool** with 208,443 visits in 2001/02 and increasing to 228,124 visits in 2009/10. This is an increase of 19,681 more visits.

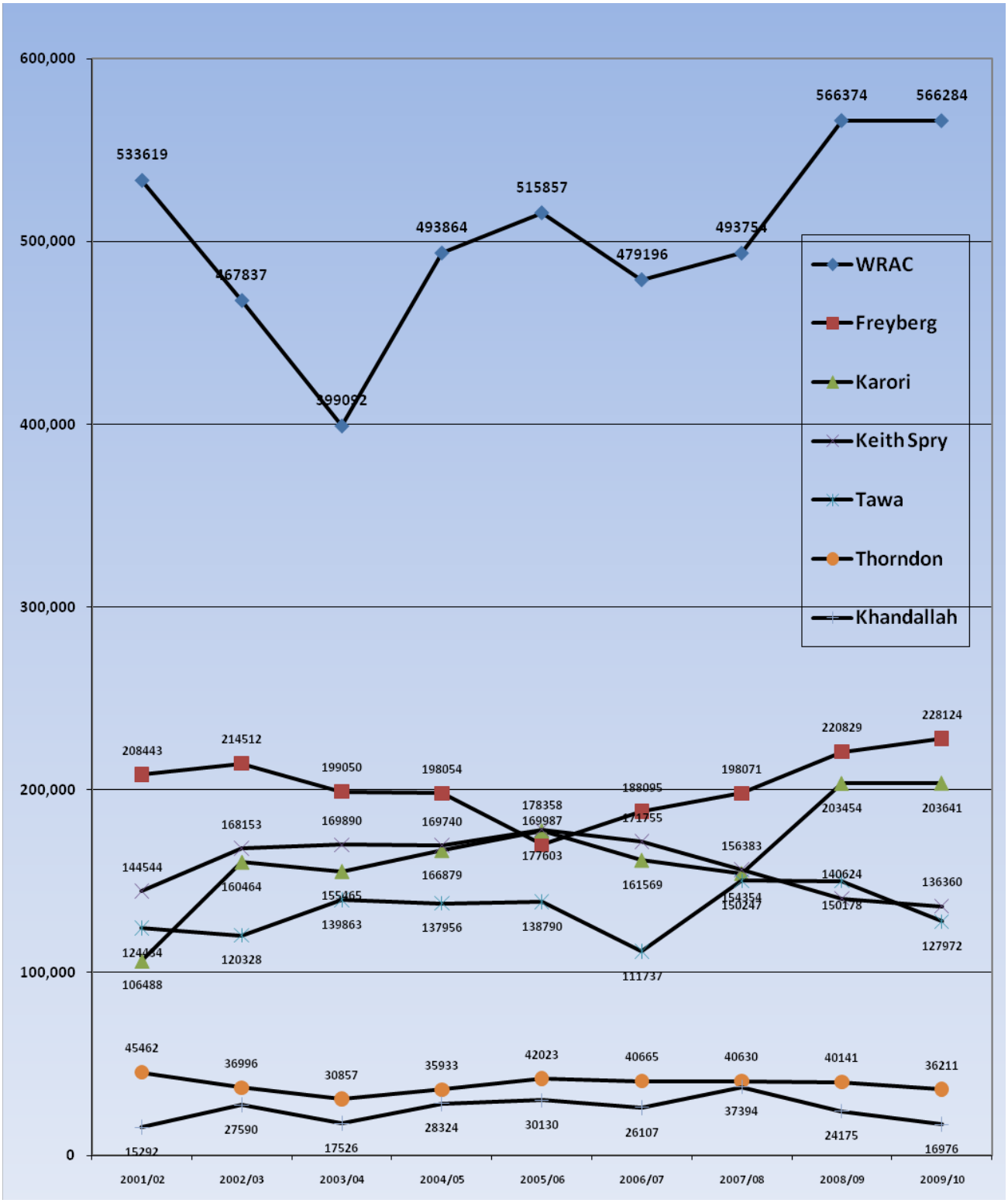
- The third most used swimming pool is **Karori Pool** with 124,343 visits in 2001/02 and increasing to 203,641 by 2009/10. This is an increase of 79,298 more pool visits.

- The fourth most used swimming pool is **Keith Spry** with 144,544 visits in 2001/02 and reducing to 136,360 by 2009/10. This is a decrease of 8,184 less visits to this pool.

- The fifth most used pool is **Tawa Pool** with 124,434 visits in 2001/02 and increasing to 127,972 by 2009/10. This is an increase of 3,538 visits

- The sixth most used swimming pool is **Thorndon Pool** with 45,462 visits in 2001/02 and reducing to 36,211 by 2009/10. This is a decrease of 9,251 less pool visits (can be impacted by weather condition due to outdoor seasonal pool).

- The lowest used swimming pool was **Khandallah Pool** with 15,293 visits in 2001/02 and increasing to 16,976 by 2009/10. This is an increase of 1,683 pool visits. (can be impacted by weather conditions due to outdoor seasonal pool



Note: Karori SC opened November 2001,
Range of pools usage impacted by closures for maintenance/repairs over this period

2.2 WCC SWIMMING POOLS FINANCIAL REVIEW 2007/08 TO 2010/11

The following table summarises the WCC Swimming Pools operational performance between 2007/08 and 2010/11.

Table 2.1
WCC Swimming Pools Financial Results 2007 to 2010

WCC Swimming Pool Financial Results	2007/08 $	2008/09 $	2009/10 $
WRAC			
Net Revenue	2,447,292	2,962,586	2,971,896
Net Expenditure	7,042,352	7,972,152	8,235,164
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**(S4,595,039)**	**($5,009,566)**	**($5,263,268)**
FREYBERG POOL			
Net Revenue	1,219,898	1,409,837	1,480,399
Net Expenditure	2,110,117	2,222,899	2,219,648
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($890,219)**	**($813,061)**	**($739,249)**
KARORI POOL			
Net Revenue	586,576.	790,437	881,902
Net Expenditure	2,113,833	2,020,303	1,972,480
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($1,527,258)**	**($1,229,866)**	**($1,090,578)**
KEITH SPRY POOL			
Net Revenue	599,836	587,928	679,531
Net Expenditure	1,959,504	1,963,733	1,963,287
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($1,359,658)**	**($1,375,805)**	**($1,283,756)**
TAWA POOL			
Net Revenue	511,471	582,815	585,542
Net Expenditure	1,777,155	1,882,509	1,871,800
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($1,265,684)**	**($1,299,694)**	**(1,286,259)**
THORNDON POOL			
Net Revenue	128,785	127,015	144,017
Net Expenditure	552,149	557,553	548,280
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($423,364)**	**($430,537)**	**($404,263)**
KHANDALLAH POOL			
Net Revenue	391	560	15,011
Net Expenditure	202,199	213,447	212,004
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($201,808)**	**($212,886)**	**($196,993)**

The WCC Swimming Pool operational financial review indicates:

- All WCC swimming pools operate at significant annual operating deficits even though they have increased their revenue in each of the three review years.
- Operating expenditure has fluctuated each year but in all pools is increasing at a higher rate than operational revenue increases.

The financial results when combined across all centres see the following financial trends for swimming pool operations:

Table 2.2
Net Combined WCC Swimming Pools Financial Performance 2007 to 2010

Financial Review Category	2007/08 $	2008/09 $	2009/10 $
Net Combined Swimming Pools Operating Revenue	5,494,249	6,461,178	6,758,298
Net Combined Swimming Pools Operating Expenditure	15,757,309	16,832,596	17,022,663
Net Combined Swimming Pools Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	**($10,263,060)**	**(10,371,418)**	**($10,264,365)**

2.3 WCC COMBINED SWIMMING POOL USAGE AND BUSINESS INDICATORS

The past three years of WCC combined swimming pool usage and operations and associated financial results have been reviewed and summarised in the following table.

Table 2.3
Combined Facilities Swimming Pools Usage and Business Indicators

Review Category	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Combined Pools usage	1,230,833	1,345,775	1,315,568
Combined Pools Revenue	5,494,249	6,461,178	6,758,298
Net Revenue per user	$4.46/user	$4.80/user	$5,13/user
Combined Pools Expenditure	15,757,309	16,832,596	17,022,663
Net Expenditure per user	$12.80/user	$12.50/user	$12.93/user
Combined Pools Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	**($10,263,060)**	**(10,371,418)**	**($10,264,365)**
Net Surplus/(deficit) per user	($8.33/user)	($7,70/user)	($7.80/user)
Revenue as a % of Operating Expenditure	34.7%	38.0%	39.7%

The combined WCC Swimming pool operational budget review indicates.

- Revenue has increased from $5.494m in 2007/08 to $6,758m in 2009/10. This is an increase of $1,264,000 in operating revenue or 23% increase.
- Expenditure has increased from $15,757m in 2007/08 to $17,022M in 2009/10. This is an increase of $1,265M in operating expenditure or 8.0% increase.
- The net operating deficit has remained relatively the same at around $10.265m to $10.300m
- The revenue as a percentage of expenditure trends is showing improved financial performance with revenue representing 34.7% of expenditure in 2007/08 and increasing to 39.7% in 2009/10.

2.4 PLANNED AQUATIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

In a report to SPC on reviewing current aquatic facility needs in December 2009 recommendations were made that existing funding within the LTCCP for aquatic facilities (swimming pools) should be reprioritized to meet the following strategic priorities:

- Improved opportunities for learn to swim
- Providing more facilities/opportunities to meet the demand of aquatic sport
- Making the most of existing pool space (demand management)

Current planned aquatic facility improvements under the Council approved new strategic priorities (June 2010) are summarized as follows:

2.4.1 Improved Opportunities for Learn to Swim

Council currently delivers learn to swim opportunities through four swim schools located at WRAC, Keith Spry Pool, Tawa Pool and Karori Pool. The Public Swim School programme generates a positive financial surplus which assists the business unit to meet its revenue and funding target and also assists to subsidise the cost of the schools aquatic education and learn to swim programme.

There has been an increase in public swim school numbers over the last couple of years especially at the community pools and as a consequence of the TSW commercial learn to swim programme at the Boys and Girls Institute ceasing operation.

The Councils programmes operate each term of the school year for 10 weeks and block courses of lessons during the school holidays excluding public holidays and Christmas week. On average, there are 4,000 LTS customers per term over the four pools.

Current pool space allocation policy restricts space made available for structured programmes such as Learn to Swim. The current policy provides for 50% of available pool space being retained at all times for casual public recreation and leisure use where possible. To meet increased demand in the short term it has been suggested at peak times (3.30pm – 6.00pm) the percentage of pool space can be varied at each pool for delivering learn to swim and aquatic sports needs.

In the longer term increasing water space especially dedicated space for learn to swim will ultimately benefit all facility users and not necessitate the need for a sessionalised approach to the allocation of pool space.

The expansion of learn to swim space at the Councils pools would also support greater schools use in the event there is no investment in a school pools network but would require a greater commitment and funding to provide transport solutions.

In response to the strategic priority of improved opportunity for learn to swim the following upgrades for the Councils pool network were approved in June 2010:

Karori Pool

The existing indoor community pool for Karori replaced the 65 year old outdoor summer only pool in 2001.

The development of pool space was restricted as a result of the existing constrained site and there was some public pressure to retain and outdoor sunbathing area. The teaching area at the pool is not currently able to satisfy demand and the quality of delivery is diminished as a result of shared use with recreation and water play activity especially at peak times.

It is proposed to develop a dedicated indoor teaching pool in the area currently designated as outdoor deck on the western side of the pool hall which provides an enclosed a 9.4m x 3.8m teaching pool at an estimated cost of $585k.

Keith Spry Pool

As part of a Feasibility Study completed in 2007 for the re-development of Keith Spry Pool a dedicated Learn to Swim space was identified as a priority. In the proposed upgrade planning since the study a multi-use pool that provides for a 15m x 10m learn to swim and hydrotherapy pool as part of the overall development concept has been included.

As final development decisions are still being investigated for this facility it was agreed in June 2010 that staged development would commence.

Stage one works approved respond to immediate pool space needs; teaching and hydrotherapy pool, leisure and water play pool. Stage Two provides a new entry, changing facilities that would be integrated with the development of a new Library for Johnsonville if developed in the future.

Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre

Recent extensions that included leisure and water play areas (SPRAY) were completed in 2007. The development of dedicated recreation and play space was intended to re-locate those activities out of the main pool areas used for aquatic sports use and in the learners pool.

The original proposal included the provision of a dedicated hydrotherapy pool but due to insufficient funding the existing learners pool was converted to provide for school and public learn to swim programmes, as well as public and Capital and Coast District Health Board

hydrotherapy and rehabilitation. As a consequence the schools programme and public programme is conflicted and public access to the hydrotherapy pool limited.

It is proposed to build a 13m x 11.5m x 1.5m deep dedicated hydrotherapy pool to improve general public access and so free up the learners' pool to fully meet demand for school and public learn to swim programmes. The estimated cost for this development is $2.1m and construction works are expected to commence in June 2011.

School Pool Redevelopment/Development Partnerships

Since the advent of Tomorrows Schools Model in the late 1980's, reduced funding for learn to swim, pool infrastructure / maintenance and changes to the physical education curriculum have resulted in a lower priority for learn to swim in schools according to Water Safety New Zealand. This has resulted in a significant reduction in swimming skills and water safety knowledge among New Zealand children.

Access to learn to swim opportunities has lessened as school pools continue to be decommissioned or demolished. Schools have identified the barriers to participating in LTS at public facilities as cost of transport and time spent out of the classroom. Taking learn to swim back into the school environment and/or extending the capacity of public pools may provide the solution but requires significant capital investment.

Schools and their boards of trustees do not want the burden of maintaining and operating the school pool. Partnering with schools, clubs and commercial providers to upgrade existing or construct new purpose built teaching pools located strategically throughout the city is not fully the role and responsibility of the Council.

A new partnership model was approved that saw a new school pool grant funding scheme implemented where Council will make available grants to part fund strategically located school pools for school and community use (school is responsible for ongoing management and operational costs). This scheme has been set up to operate over the next three years and $2.0M has been allocated to this scheme and applications called for the first round of funding is now underway

2.4.2 Providing Facilities to Meet Public and Aquatic Sports Demand

Participating in swimming as an activity for sport, health, fitness and enjoyment and trying new activities is increasing. Aquatic sports clubs are also recognising the need for them to market and promote themselves in new ways and have all assisted in growing the base numbers of those taking part in water based sports.

Officers have regularly engaged with representatives of aquatic sports including swimming, diving, water polo, canoe polo, synchronized Swimming and underwater hockey. All codes continue to express the need for greater pool space and time and maintain their sports are restricted in the ability to grow as a result.

New Zealand Swimming is made up of 16 regions. Wellington has the largest membership base of any region in the country at over 2,300. Wellington swimming clubs continually request additional lane space at peak times of use but none exists to give.

Wellington underwater hockey reports demand exceeding supply in school leagues. Since 1998 the number of teams increased from 12 to 32 in 2004 and at that time a cap on teams was required due to the lack of space for training and competition.

Wellington Diving and the Wellington High Performance Aquatics – Diving have been incredibly successful despite having limited access to time in the diving pool at WRAC. Divers spend time in simulated dry land training facilities to compensate for time that should be spent in the pool. Any additional pool space for other aquatic sports has the benefit of potentially providing greater access to the diving pool.

Nationally water polo as a sport continues to grow incrementally each year. The sport is dominated by Auckland clubs at a national level as a direct result in the investment in appropriate pool facilities. Most recent developments in Auckland have been in partnership with colleges and to which Council have contributed from its Community Facilities Partnership Fund.

The two clubs in Wellington City share equally the amount of available pool time but compete for the only deep water pool space at WRAC with diving, underwater hockey and synchronized swimming recently re-introduced to the centre after an absence of 8 years.

When asked what development opportunities existed for increasing access and pool space for aquatic sport and what were the future pool needs for training and competition, sports codes held the unanimous view that the addition of another competitive pool (35m x 25m x 2.1m) managed and operated in conjunction with existing facilities at the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre was the most desired outcome for the future of aquatic sport in Wellington.

Other suggested options included an upgrade of existing college pool at Wellington East Girls College and/or Rongotai College as training venues would also provide opportunity to increase access water space, grow aquatic sport and lessen the demand on public pool space.

Capital Swimming Club and Harbour City Water Polo Club have previously developed proposals for the upgrade and use of these two existing college pools and have requested funding support from the Council.

As part of the review of development options for the existing network of Council owned and operated swimming pools a range of options that responded to the priority of meeting the growth and needs of aquatic sport were considered and include:

Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre (being considered in further detail in this strategy report)

The development of a second competition pool for the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre has been investigated and various concepts considered. The construction of a 35m x 25m x 2.1m deep pool could be accommodated on the eastern side of the existing 50m main pool and would utilise the existing eastern side entry and programme pool and hydrotherapy pool changing facilities and services.

The proposal would also include a high performance dry land training facility and additional storage for aquatic sports equipment. The additional deep water pool would provide 14 additional 25m lanes for swimming, international sized areas of play for men's and women's water polo, two international sized underwater hockey fields of play, competition and training space for canoe polo and synchronized Swimming.

The transfer of water polo out of the existing dive pool would improve overall accessibility and pool time for diving training and competition along with public lane swimming access.

Thorndon Pool (being considered in detail in this strategy report)

There is a lack of pool space in the inner city. Freyberg Pool and Thorndon Pool provide a total of 720m2 of water space (11 lanes). Neither pool has pool facilities for use by children.

Thorndon Pool is the city's oldest operating public swimming pool and is available for only five months (November – March) use each year. It is very popular as an outdoor pool and at 86 years old has a level of heritage value.

To increase the availability of pool space in the city consideration to extending the operation of Thorndon Pool to up to nine or ten months each year could be achieved by providing a retractable roofing structure that was sensitive to retaining the outdoor nature and experience of the existing pool. ***Note: Since this strategy was adopted the high cost of covering this pool has been identified and is now not recommended as a future option)***

Other inner city solutions suggested include upgrading and covering the existing Wellington East Girls College 30m x 13m (6 lane) pool **(which is now being considered as an application under the schools partnership programme)** and/or the development of a new indoor pool for city primary schools and community at Te Aro School on the Terrace.

2.4.3 Making the Most of Existing Pool Space (Demand Management)

This includes a number of initiatives to maintain and improve existing pools including:

- Bringing forward the renewal of the Tawa Pool roof and installation of a vapour proof barrier to ensure the facility remains open and available for the local surrounding area. The estimated cost of these works is $1.6M and was approved in June 2010 to be brought forward and is currently planned for commencement in October 2011

- Reallocating lane space in peak times (3.30pm to 6.30pm weekdays) at relevant Council swimming pools.

- Development of the WRAC Hydrotherapy pool to free up the former learn to swim pool for dedicated use for public and schools LTS programmes.

3 REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH AND REPORTS

This section covers a review of all relevant research and reviews of Council strategic reports/documents related to swimming pools and aquatic facilities.

3.1 Wellington City Council LTCCP 2009 to 2019 Swimming Pools

Wellington City Councils (WCC) current LTCCP is based on facility and service provision from 2009 to 2019 with the activity of swimming pools coming under its social and recreation strategy which is guided by:

"Building strong, safe and healthy communities for a better quality of life"

As the city's biggest provider of recreation facilities it aims to promote healthy lifestyles and build strong communities. Social and recreational operational expenditure is currently funded under the Wellington City Council LTCCP 2009 to 2019 based on:

- General rates: 60%
- User fees: 27%
- Residential targeted rates: 13%

The community outcome of providing and operating Councils seven swimming pools is based on facilities and services contributing to the outcomes that " opportunities for active and passive recreation are diverse, safe, affordable, accessible and attractive" and that " Wellingtons communities will have ready access to multi-use indoor and outdoor facilities and spaces.

Under the current LTCCP swimming pool benefits are assessed as:

- Individuals: 80%
- Whole community 20%

3.1.1 Swimming Pool Operations Funding

Under this planning process swimming pools mainly benefit the people who use them. These people gain access to high quality facilities for recreation, fitness and relaxation. The benefits are private and exclusive and therefore it is appropriate and acceptable under this rationale to charge people to use the swimming pools.

However there are also significant benefits to the community by providing such facilities and the pools help increase overall residents levels of health as well as provide economic and social benefits. They also provide important community focal points as well as health and recreation programmes that bring people together.

Under the current LTCCP Council has assessed who should pay as:

- Whole community: 60%
- Individuals: 40%

The benefits to the community from swimming pools as well as widespread and established community support for these facilities justify a significant ratepayer contribution for this activity. Council also recognises that there are other pools in the city but the Council ones are unique in size and user capacity and are located to service the diverse community needs

and are not in competition with the private sector as they are public facilities encouraging broad use and accessibility.

3.1.2 Swimming Pool Capital Funding

Capital expenditure for swimming pools is funded from depreciation, development contributions, capital subsidies and restricted funds or through new or extended borrowings based on:

- If capital expenditure relates to replacement or renewal of an existing asset it is funded from depreciation.
- If capital expenditure relates to the construction or purchase of a new asset or extended existing asset that is normally funded from borrowings.
- On some projects Council may determine to set a targeted rate to repay borrowings.

Council may also use capital subsidises from third parties to fund investment or upgraded assets whilst for special project by project occasions Council may use sale of surplus assets as a capital contribution. Development contributions are primarily used to fund projects in population growth areas.

3.2 WCC SWIMMING POOLS 2008 DISCUSSION PAPER

A Swimming Pools Discussion Paper was presented to the Wellington City Council Strategy and Policy Committee in May 2008.

The purpose of the pools discussion paper was to inform the Committee of current issues impacting aquatic services and involve Councillors in discussion around the role of the Council in future provision of facilities, programmes and services.

The review helped guide and inform the Councils future strategic direction, policies and project priorities for investment in this activity. The discussion paper noted:

- Public swimming pools are highly valued by residents and have been part of Wellingtonians lives for almost 100 years.
- They are an important contributor to Community and Council's Outcomes but required significant capital and operational investment to build, maintain and operate.
- The city currently has a network of seven pools, five indoor which operate all year round and two summer only outdoor pools. Nearly 60% of Wellington's population currently use a public swimming pool and combined facility attendances average around1.2 million each year.

The paper also noted the nature and use of public swimming pools has changed over time and these changes and the wider industry trends that have influenced the development of facilities, programmes and services.

Traditional ways of managing and operating pools to meet demand may need to change especially at peak times of use. Demographic shifts in population growth in parts of the city and the actions of other providers have impacted on the Councils pools ability to meet some of the expectations of the different communities of interest.

The paper investigated what the Council roles are and what they might be going forward. The cost of delivering aquatic services and developing the pools network continues to increase, testing the ability to achieve the revenue and financing outcomes and thinking in respect to the public versus private good benefits.

Affordability and accessibility to swimming pool facilities and services is of increasing concern to some which the paper highlighted. The swimming pools activity has an Asset Management Plan which was also reviewed and changed to respond to the agreed differing upgrade and renewal needs for pools.

The paper also presented information on where changes have been made to capital and operational budgets, new projects or opportunities that have emerged and how these influence or impact longer term development strategies.

Key Outcomes from the 2008 Aquatics Discussion Paper included:

- Agreement on the main issues impacting the swimming pools activity.
- Tighter definition of the roles of the Council in providing public swimming pool assets programmes and services delivery.
- Identify and update current development strategies and projects being considered.
- Identify development and delivery options for creating capacity to meet growing demand and expectations.
- Confirm the future strategic direction and reprioritized existing funding for investment in swimming pools.

3.2.1 Main Issues Impacting on Swimming Pools in 2008

Council has been faced with continued pressure to provide swimming facilities that meet increased demand resulting from:

- Population and demographic change
- General leisure trends which encourage people to be more active at any age
- Growth in swimming as a safe activity with direct fitness, health and recreation outcomes
- Increased demand for aquatic education and learn to swim programmes
- Growth of participation of organized aquatic sports
- Gradual closure of school and other provider pools in the city
- Increased customer expectations, quality/availability/access.

3.3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES POLICY

In 2010 Wellington City Council reviewed its policy on Community facilities which included Council libraries, swimming pools, recreation centres, community centres and community halls.

A draft policy was developed and put out for community consultation and review in May 2010. Councils Strategy and Policy Committee reviewed the feedback from the consultation in June 2010 and following recommended changes adopted the new policy and recommended in line with this policy changes to the draft implementation plan for inclusion in the 2010/11 Annual Plan, 2011/12 Annual plan and a review of the LTCCP 2012.

The overall objective of the new Community Facilities Policy is to make sure facilities and services are in place so that everyone in Wellington has the chance to take part in activities and services that meet their needs.

The aim of the policy is also to make sure community facilities can be flexible, multi-use spaces that are safe and easy to use, affordable and accessible. They should also support community identity and sense of belonging.

3.3.1 Location of Community Facilities

Community facilities will be located in suburban centres wherever possible to reinforce these as focal points for community life.

In the two larger town centres – Johnsonville and Kilbirnie – community facilities will be located together wherever possible to create community hubs, a 'destination' and a greater sense of place and to strengthen the sense of community in these areas.

Community facilities will be designed to allow the best possible access by the community. They will be located in suburban centres. Facilities include: Tawa Pool, Keith Spry Pool in Johnsonville, Karori Pool, Khandallah Pool, Thorndon Pool, Freyberg Pool and Fitness Centre and the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre, Kilbirnie.

The city's seven pools provide 44 lanes for lap swimming, teaching pools, toddlers' pools, water play spaces, hydrotherapy pool, spas, saunas and steam room.

Two facilities – Freyberg Pool and the WRAC have fitness centres and WRAC also has a crèche and café.

3.3.2 Quality, Design and Functionality

Successful community facilities are valued by their community, and good design will help create a sense of ownership and pride for the local community. Community facilities should be places that are welcoming and inclusive, and include spaces where people can come together formally and informally.

Community facilities will meet consistent quality standards across the city, while maintaining the uniqueness and history of buildings. Quality standards should also apply to the technical performance, functionality and appeal of a building. Facilities will be designed with particular emphasis on energy efficiency, waste minimization, and integrated land use and transport planning.

Reuse of heritage buildings and spaces will be encouraged. Facilities will be multi-use, providing different spaces and activities to support a wide range of choice for users.

3.3.3 Managing Future Demand for Community Facilities

The facilities provided in centres will be based on a hierarchy, with larger centres providing services to a wider population catchment as well as their local population. Larger centres are expected to provide a full range of facilities from libraries, swimming pools and community spaces while, at the other end of the spectrum, small neighborhood centres will have only a single multipurpose and flexible space for use by the community, which may or may not be provided by the Council.

The type and the scale of the facility will be determined by the population within the catchment, with the size of libraries and community spaces determined according to set formulae. The layout and functionality of facilities will be robust and flexible, enabling the facility to be used in a way that responds to changing community needs.

3.3.4 Swimming Pool Strategic Priorities

Over the past 20 years, the number of school swimming pools in Wellington has dropped from 48 to 22, and only 11 of these still remain in some form of limited use. As pools have closed,

pressure on the Council's pools has increased and the opportunities for children to learn to swim in the city have reduced.

On top of this, the level of interest and participation in aquatic sports has risen sharply and the existing pool space is inadequate to meet this new demand, especially at peak times.
The strategic priorities for swimming pools are (see section 2.4 of this report for details) to:

- Manage demand and make the most of the current available pool space. Improve opportunities for aquatic education and Learn-to-swim activities.
- Provide facilities to meet the demand and growth in aquatic sport.

3.3.5 Community Facilities Policy and New Strategic Directions

The Community Facilities Implementation Plan proposed to reallocate the current LTCCP and Annual plan funding for swimming pools to help meet the new strategic directions and priorities. These are to be delivered under key community facilities objectives and strategies:

- ***Encouraging Partnerships:*** Extending WCC grants programmes to enable more facility renewal or new facility development partnerships particularly schools to occur.

- ***Make the Most of the Facilities We Have Now:*** Many swimming pools are under pressure from increased interest in aquatic sports and a greater demand for learn to swim programmes run at Councils pools. This will see as a priority new learn to swim pools built or support provided for school pools that can be upgraded for these purposes. At Council facilities this will include a new LTS pools at Karori Pool, Keith Spry Pool and full dedicated use of the existing learners pool at WRAC.

- **Inner City and District Population Growth:** The population of the inner city is expected to increase significantly in the next 20 years and will be responsible for 25% of all population increases. This will see the need for upgrades to Thorndon Pool and additional pool spaces in the city. The Keith Spry Pool services a large district area and needs to be redeveloped and expanded to meet expected population growth.

- ***Older Adult and Wellness Facilities:*** There is a lack of warm and hot water programme pools so it is proposed to construct a small dedicated hydrotherapy pool at WRAC and as part of the Keith Spry Pool Redevelopment as these facilities service the largest user base

3.3.6 Community Facilities Swimming Pools Implementation Plan

In line with adopting the new Community Facilities Policy there was agreement to reallocate some of the 2010/11 and 2011/12 Annual Plans and LTCCP 2009 to 2019 swimming pool funding. This saw the following recommendations adopted in June 2010:

(a) Additional teaching pool space at the Karori Pool ($0.585m -10/11);
(b) A dedicated hydrotherapy pool at the WRAC ($2.1m 2010/11)
(c) Planning and implementation of an upgrade of the Keith Spry Pool in Johnsonville ($0.180m -2010/11, $3.0m - 2011/12, $1.7m -2012/13);
(d) Replacement of the Tawa Pool roof ($1.6m – 2011/12)
(e) Installation of a retractable roof to extend the operational use of the Thorndon outdoor pool ($0.050m – 2010/11, $1.250m – 2013/14).

Other agreed changes to the draft Community Facilities Policy and Implementation Plan for aquatics for inclusion in the 2010/11 and subsequent Annual Plans was increasing the total

funding for partnering for school pool upgrades through the Social and Recreation Grants pool fund from $500k over two years starting in 2011/12 to $2.0m as follows:

- $0.5m – 2010/11,
- $1.0m – 2011/12
- $0.5m – 2012/13

3.4 AQUATIC FACILITIES PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS

Wellington City Council commissioned Lumin Limited in 2009 to complete a review of school pools. This project was completed in September 2009 and the projects key recommendations were adopted by Council in 2010.

The purpose of the research was to identify the existing network of school pools, where and how schools currently get their aquatic education needs met, the future preferences of schools with respect to having a pool, and the willingness or otherwise to partner with others in making the pool available to the wider community.

Of the 83 schools surveyed a total of 52% responded to the survey. The results indicated:

- Seventeen (40%) of the schools currently have a pool with variable conditions.
- Twelve of these pools were operational and 5 of the pools were non-operational.
- Only 26% or 22 schools in the Wellington City Council boundaries still have a school swimming pool and of those only 12 are currently operating.
- This compares with 58% or 48 school pools prior to the introduction of the Tomorrows' Schools funding model in the early 1980's.

The study found the current network of school pools was variable. When access to all school and council pools is analysed, many schools do not have easy access to a pool within 15 minutes walk. The gaps in the pool network are:

- The eastern suburbs (Miramar, Strathmore Park, Seatoun, Worser Bay)
- Southern coastal and hill suburbs (Owhiro, Island and Houghton Bays, Mornington, Brooklyn),
- Western hill suburbs (Crofton Downs, Otari, Northland, Wilton),
- Some northern suburbs (Churton Park, Paparangi, Newlands, Woodridge).
- The city schools (Clifton Terrace, Te Aro, Mt Cook, Clyde Quay, Roseneath, Wellington College and Wellington High) are also poorly served.

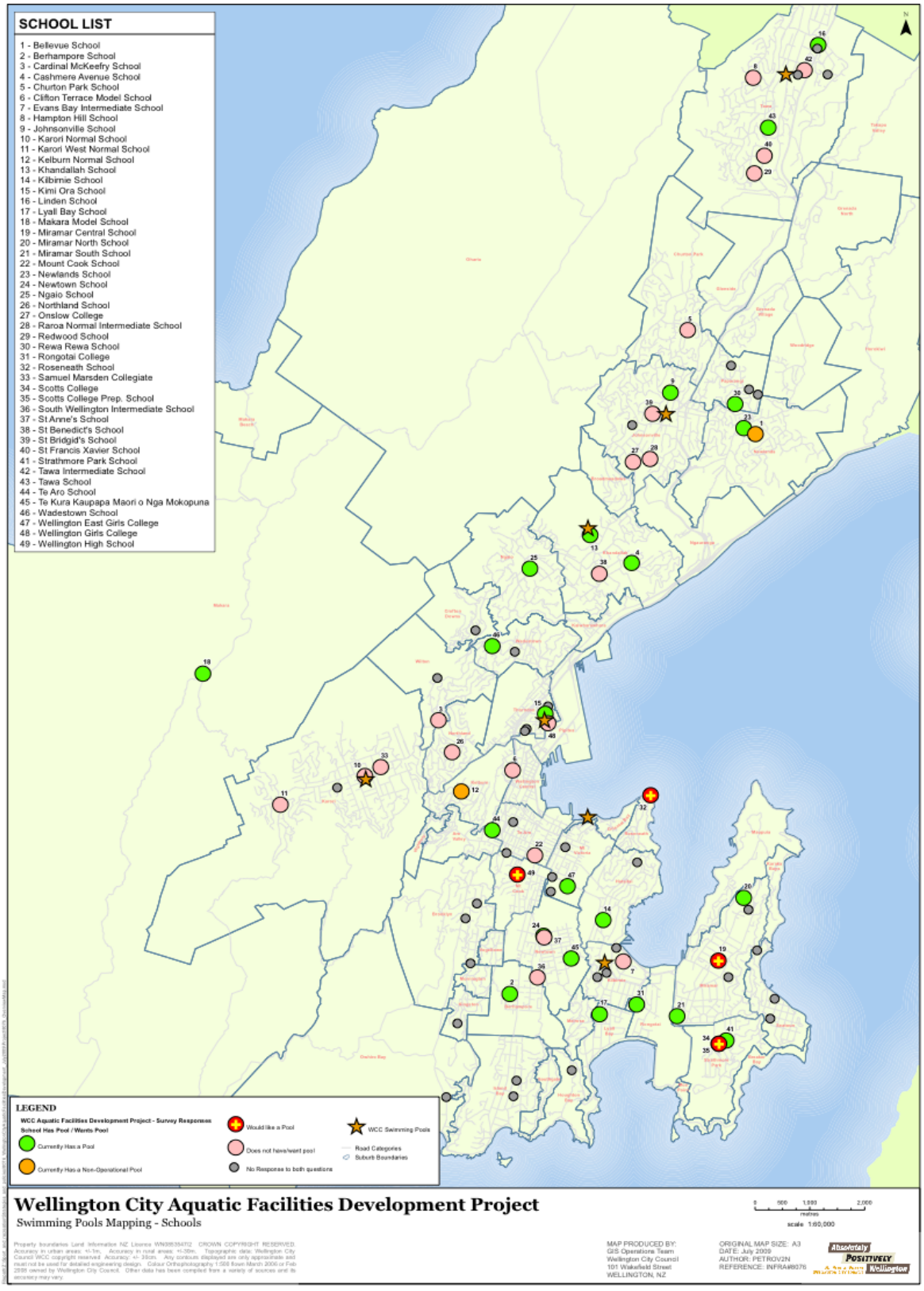
An analysis of the current network of pools, existing gaps and potential gaps through school pool closure resulted in some areas of priority including:

- ***Communities currently lacking in pools suitable for aquatic education are:*** Grenada North, Churton Park, Newlands central, Otari/Northland, Island Bay and Seatoun.

- ***Communities with school pools that are key to the network and could provide wider community use are:*** Linden School, Rewa Rewa School, Bellevue School, Newlands School, Te Aro School, Newtown School, Wellington East Girls College, Miramar North School, Miramar South School, and Rongotai College.

The study found many schools are meeting their basic aquatic education needs through their own school pools. It is efficient if they continue to do this and they could benefit from support in ongoing maintenance and operation of their pool. These schools are: Tawa School, Cashmere Ave School, Khandallah School, Ngaio School, Wadestown School, Kilbirnie School, Lyall Bay School, Strathmore Community School, and Te Kura Kaupapa Maori O Nga Mokopuna.

The map below shows existing pools marked in green and schools that expressed an interest in having a pool in the future are listed with a red circle and yellow cross. The study also identified the Ministry of Education is not intending on building any new pools, and provides limited support for maintenance and operation of existing pools.



Those schools interested in having a pool were prepared to partner with a range of agencies: Wellington City Council, commercial swim provider, and swimming clubs.

Managing a pool in partnership would require clear lines of communication, active relationship management including designated personnel, clear commitments regarding cost, facility maintenance and management and some way of ensuring ongoing control of use.

Schools with pools primarily intend using them for learn to swim and aquatic education, both of which are requirements of the New Zealand Curriculum.

Schools currently experience high levels of use by the community and are willing to continue sharing their facilities with others. Predominant users include musical teachers, sports clubs and groups, OSCAR[1] programmes, language and dance teachers and learn to swim providers. One fifth of schools currently have no private of community providers using their facilities, only 1 (2%) was not at all interested in future use.

Most schools currently used Wellington City Council aquatic facilities to meet some of their aquatic education needs. Current concerns regarding this use related to the cost and time associated with transporting children to the swimming pool, and the availability of the pool and teaching staff at times that suited the school timetable. Areas where schools want improvements relate to: bookings, programme design, assessment and reporting, instructor consistency and quality of teaching.

Schools undertake annual and term based programme planning and need longer lead times and transparent booking processes that enable this to occur.

There were also suggestions regarding ways of better structuring student pre-programme assessment, programmes for non-swimmers and highly competent swimmers, and the needs of specific target groups. Schools were keen to ensure high quality teaching and processes that fostered a better planning and reporting relationship so that student records could be linked between programmes and achievement reported promptly to the school.

The following gaps have emerged through the investigation. These gaps should be remedied as a priority. The gaps exist because of poor existing access to a suitable aquatic education facility. It assumes support for the ongoing maintenance of existing school pools.

The following information summarises the key future facility improvement and development priorities:

Best Development Opportunities of New School Pools

- Grenada North
- Churton Park
- Newlands central
- Otari/Northland
- Island Bay
- Seatoun

Best Options for Active Support and Development of Existing Pools for Wider Community Use

A) HIGHER PRIORITY POOLS CRITICAL TO THE NETWORK

- Linden School
- Rewa Rewa School
- Bellevue School
- Newlands School

- Te Aro School
- Newtown School
- Wellington East Girls College
- Miramar North School
- Miramar South School
- Strathmore Community School
- Rongotai College

B) LOWER PRIORITY POOLS AS PART OF THE NETWORK

- Tawa School
- Cashmere Ave School
- Khandallah School
- Ngaio School
- Wadestown School
- Lyall Bay School
- Te Kura Kaupapa Maori O Nga Mokopuna

4 MARKET RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION

This section of the report summarises the extensive market research and local consultation completed as part of involving residents and key stakeholders in reviewing the current and future aquatic needs of the Wellington City Council area. It covers the key areas of:

- Resident Aquatic Facilities Survey
- Stakeholder and Key Informant

4.1 RESIDENT HOUSEHOLD SWIMMING POOLS SURVEY

This report summarises the key findings from the resident household telephone survey conducted in January 2011. The survey was commissioned by Wellington City Council and undertaken by Key Research Limited, under the direction of the SGL Group New Zealand Limited.

A sample of 300 randomly selected residents was interviewed by telephone survey to provide an independent sample of people living in the Wellington City Council area.

They were asked to provide information about current and future aquatic facilities (swimming pools) and services and priority future facility components and activities.

Due to the complexity of the survey questions and Institute of Market Research Ethical Guidelines, survey involvement was limited to people living in the Wellington City Council area who were aged 15 years or over. The survey questionnaire was set up and administered using three interrelated sections being:

- Current use or non-use of swimming pools.
- Future use or non-use of swimming pools including priority future facility improvements, programs and services.
- Survey respondent profiles including gender, age and area of residence (allowing cross tabulation of survey results by these different categories).

The questions were based on a range of aquatic participation surveys completed in New Zealand by SGL Group New Zealand Limited during the past 10 years as well as local facility and aquatic service issues.

The survey also included questions on how users rated the Councils swimming pools

4.1.1 Respondent Profile

The table on the next page summarises the Wellington City Council Resident Household Swimming Pool Telephone Survey respondent sample by:

- Age group
- Gender
- Area of residence

Table 4.1
Resident Household Telephone Survey Respondent Sample

CATEGORY	SUB-GROUP	NUMBER	PERCENT
Gender	Male	144	47.5
	Female	160	52.5
Age Range	15-19 years	28	9.4
	20 - 29 years	70	23.0
	30 - 39 years	66	21.7
	40 - 49 years	56	18.5
	50 - 59 years	40	13.1
	60 - 69 years	22	7.4
	70 years plus	21	6.9
	Refused	0	0.0
Council Ward	Eastern Ward	63	20.9
	Lambton Ward	55	18.1
	Northern Ward	66	21.9
	Onslow-Western Ward	77	25.3
	Southern Ward	42	13.8

A review of the survey respondent sample profiles indicates:

Gender
The female (52.5%) response is higher than males (47.5%) response.

Age profiles
Approximately 54.1% of respondents are aged 15 to 39 years (most active ages). There are approximately 31.6% of respondents aged 40 to 59 years. There are approximately (14.3%) of respondents aged 60 years or greater. These age category percentages indicate a reasonable sample across all age groups with a basis on 20 to 39 years old.

Area of residence
The respondent sample is evenly split between the five Council wards ranging from 13.8% in Southern Ward to 25.3% in Onslow Western Ward.

4.1.2 Current Use of Aquatic Facilities

Survey respondents were questioned on their use of public aquatic facilities (swimming pools) in the past 12 months. Council, school and commercial centres, but not home swimming pools.

A slightly above average use of aquatic facilities by people in the Wellington City Council area was identified through the survey responses.

A total of 175 (57.5%) of people had used or visited an aquatic centre in the past 12 months. A total of 129 or (42.5%) of survey respondents had not used or visited an aquatic facility in the past 12 months.

These results see an average use of aquatic facilities by survey respondents with slightly under 6 out of 10 respondents visiting pools compared to other Council areas surveyed in New Zealand which generally see ranges of between 4 and 6 out of 10 people surveyed using pools. ***When comparing these results to the Wellington estimated population based on 195,000 residents this would equate to approximately 117,000 residents currently using pools.***

4.1.2.1 Aquatic Facility User Profile Comparisons

Usage of swimming pools does change by gender and age profile as the following results indicate:

Table 4.2
Usage of Swimming Pool Variances against Sample Average

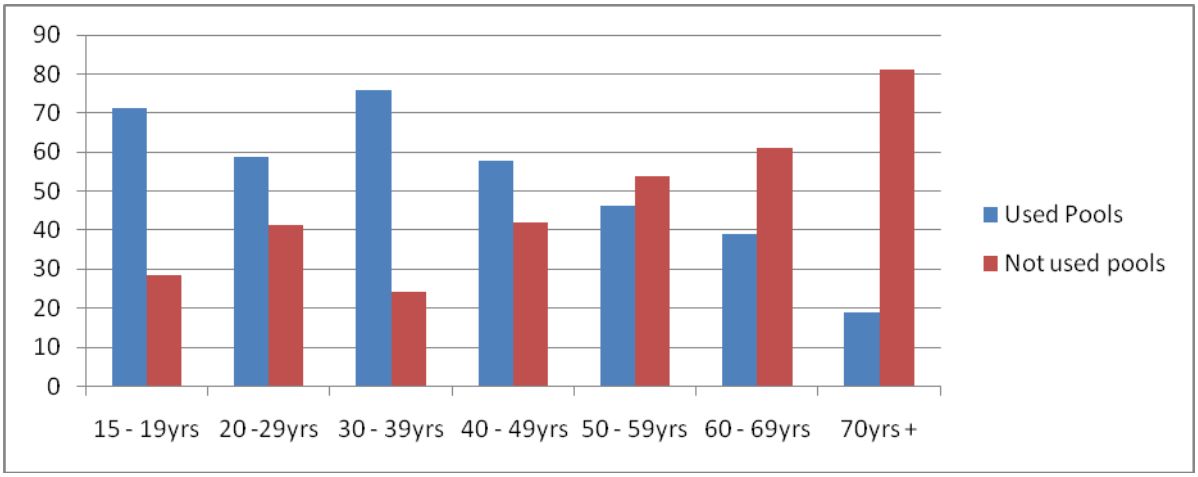
CATEGORY	SUB-GROUP	% USED POOLS IN PAST 12 MONTHS (57.5% Average)	VARIANCE AGAINST AVERAGE	% NOT USED POOLS IN PAST 12 MONTHS (42.5% Average)
Gender	Male	52.8%	-4.7%	47.2%
	Female	61.9%	+4.4%	38.1%
Age Range	15-19 years	71.4%	+13.9%	28.6%
	20-29 years	58.6%	+1.1%	41.4%
	30-39 years	75.8%	+18.3%	24.2%
	40-49 years	57.9%	+0.4%	42.1%
	50-59 years	46.2%	-11.3%	53.8%
	60-69 years	39.1%	-18.4%	60.9%
	70 years +	19.0%	-38.5%	81.0%

The pool user and non user results by survey respondent profile indicate:

- Females (61.9%) make slightly more use of pools than males (52.8%).
- This trend is similar to other aquatic participation surveys we have completed in other areas of New Zealand where females are usually the highest users of such facilities when compared to males.
- People in their most active years (15-39 years old) make higher than average use of swimming pools, i.e.:
  - Area average : 57.5%
  - 15 - 19 years : 74.4%
  - 20 - 29 years : 58.6%
  - 30 – 39 years : 75.8%

  Average 68.6% (+11.1% above City average)
- Pool usage participation rates drop considerably as people age as the following results indicate:
  - Area average: 57.5%
  - 50 - 59 years: 46.2%
  - 60 – 69 years: 39.1%
  - 70 years +: 19.0%

Figure 1 Use and Non Use of Pools



4.1.3 Use of Aquatic Facilities by Area of Residence

The following table summarises the use of aquatic facilities by where people live to highlight any use or non-use trends by residential location.

Table 4.3
Use of Non-use of Aquatic Facilities by Area of Residence

Category	City Wide Average	Eastern Ward	Lambton Ward	Northern Ward	Onslow-Western Ward	Southern Ward
Used a Swimming Pool in the past 12 months	57.5%	51.6%	58.1%	49.2%	60.6%	73.4%
Not used Swimming Pool in the past 12 months	42.5%	48.4%	41.9%	50.8%	39.4%	26.6%

These results indicate higher than average use of Aquatic Facilities was made by people living in:

- Southern Ward 73.4% (+15.9% above city average)
- On-slow Western Ward 60.6% (+3.1% above city average)
- Lambton Ward 58.1% (+0.6% above city average)

Lower than average use of Aquatic Facilities was made by people living in:

- Eastern Ward 51.6% (-5.9% below city average)
- Northern Ward 49.2% (-6.39% below city average)

4.2 REASONS FOR NON-USE OF AQUATIC FACILITIES

Slightly less than five out of ten respondents (46.0% of survey sample), had not used a swimming pool in the past 12 months. The main reasons respondents gave for non-uses were:

Table 4.4
Reasons for Current Non Use of Swimming Pools

Reason for Non-Use of Swimming Pools	% Response
Not Interested	32.1%
Do Not Like Swimming	22.2%
Too busy	18.3%
Go to Beach	13.3%
Health Problems	10.4%
Cannot Swim	9.6%
Too Old	7.0%
No Value for Money	4.3%

The results indicate:

- The two main constraints to pool use were "Do not like swimming" (22.2%) and "Not Interested" (32.1%) and as these are time and interest related such respondents are unlikely to change their opinions and use facilities in the future.
- Approximately 25% respondents indicated they were constrained by being too old (7.0%) followed by Too busy (18.3%) whilst up to 9.6% said they could not swim or they had health problems (10.4%).
- These constraints indicate there are some potential people who could become future swimming pool users (subject to facility improvements and specific programs) include people who were constrained by being too old (7.0%), health issues (10.4%) and lack of swimming skill (9.6%). This represents approximately 27% of non-users that could be attracted to use pools in the future if improvements in facilities and specific need programs were made.

4.2.1 Most Popular Aquatic Facilities

The usage rates of people using Aquatic Facilities appear to be very much based on current facility provision and where people live. Respondents who had used an aquatic facility in the past 12 months listed 20 different facilities they had used.

A summary of the most aquatic facilities used, compared to the facility people nominated as the one they use the most, is detailed in the table on the following page.

Table 4.5
Most Popular/Used Aquatic Facilities/Health and Fitness Centres

SWIMMING POOL	USED IN PAST 12 MONTHS *	USED THE MOST IN PAST 12 MONTHS
Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre	53.9%	30.8%
Karori Pool	22.2%	22.6%
Freyberg Pool and Fitness Centre	18.6%	6.1%
Thorndon Summer Pool	17.2%	11.8%
Keith Fry Pool Johnsonville	17.0%	13.6%
Khandallah Summer Pool	14.7%	6.1%
Porirua Aquatic Leisure Centre	11.7%	2.9%
H2O Extreme	6.0%	0.9%

*** NOTE: Users can nominate more than one pool used in past 12 months which is why total respondents are greater than 100%**

The most popular and most used swimming pools results indicate:

- The Wellington City Council swimming pools are the most used facilities from all of the facilities nominated. The Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre was the most popular at 53.9% whilst Karori Pool was next at 22.2% followed by Thorndon Summer Pool at 17.2%.
- When looking at the most popular pools people use the most the results were:

  - Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre 30.8%
  - Karori Pool 22.6%
  - Keith Spry – Johnsonville 13.6%
  - Thorndon Summer Pool 11.8%

4.2.2 Reason for Choice of Aquatic Facility

To provide a guide to why people choose their most used pools, key user profile data was identified, as follows:

Table 4.6
Reasons for choice of pool

Reason for choosing pool	Average response	Males	Females
Close to home	54.0%	58.3%	50.7%
Good Facilities	8.1%	7.6%	8.5%
Children pools and facilities	7.5%	7.4%	7.6%
Close to work and school	4.3%	2.5%	5.6%
Take part in fitness activities	3.7%	5.5%	5.6%
Take child to aquatic program	3.7%	1.2%	2.2%

The main reasons gave for choosing a popular pool was it was close to home (50.7%), it had good facilities (8.1%), has children's pools on site (7.5%).

4.2.3 Main Activities That Attract Users

To provide a guide to the main activities that attract users at the most popular aquatic facilities people use, the following profile data was identified:

Table 4.7
Main activities that attract users to the swimming pool of their choice

MAIN ACTIVITIES PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN		User Type					
		Males	Females	15-29 yrs	30-49 yrs	50-69 yrs	70 yrs +
Recreation/Swimming/Fun and Leisure Fun Play activities	53.1%	56.3%	47.5%	55.2%	51.4%	47.5%	25.1%
Lap Swim/Fitness	33.8%	35.6%	32.4%	40.7%	31.4%	35.4%	49.1%
Take Child to Pool	17.2%	20.6%	14.5%	18.2%	19.7%	20.6%	0.0%
Take Child to Learn to Swim Class	11.1%	9.5%	12.1%	18.2%	18.3%	8.3%	0.0%
Spa/Sauna	7.0%	4.7%	8.7%	4.7%	11.2%	8.2%	0.0%
Use Health and Fitness Areas	4.6%	3.1%	5.58%	5.1%	9.2%	9.5%	9.7%

Note: Pool users could nominate up to 3 activities they did regularly.

The main activities that attract people to their main swimming pool of choice, results indicate:

- Recreation swimming/fun attracts the most pool users and therefore has the highest user market attraction with 53.1% of people using pools for recreation and fun and play activities. This activity has double the user market than the next user market and supports ongoing need for leisure and play water.

- Lap swimming/fitness (33.8%) was the second most popular activity at pools users. People who go to pools for lap swimming/fitness are usually males (36.0%) and younger people.

- The third highest activity to attract people to pools was take child to a pool (17.2%). Younger people and males were more likely to take a child to a pool.

- Take a child to a pool for learn to swim was the next highest activity at 11.1%

- The fifth highest activity to attract people to pools was spa and sauna (7.0%). Middle age to older age people 39 years plus and males were more likely to use spas and saunas.

The survey results clearly indicate the biggest market attractor facilities are aquatic and leisure facilities that provide for a broad range of water areas that can cater for recreation swimming/fun, lap swimming/fitness and learn to swim with adventure water and programmable water areas. Lap swimming facilities are also important as are areas for learn to swim and spaces for relaxation such as learn to swim etc.

4.2.4 Use and Rating of Council Pools

If respondents had used a Wellington City Council Pool in the area in the past 12 months, they were asked how the facility rated and what facilities they were unhappy with. The results show very high satisfaction ratings as follows:

- Excellent: 36.6%
- Good: 51.8%
- Adequate: 10.7%
- Poor: 1.0%

4.2.5 Facilities and Services Unhappy with at the Swimming Pool use the most

The main issues people raised they were unhappy with at the pool they used the most were:

- Costs too much to use 28.1%
- Poor condition of change rooms 26.9%
- Small change facilities 19.5%
- Pools too crowded 14.8%
- Not enough pools/water areas 11.3%

4.2.6 Frequency of Use of Swimming Pools

The survey results indicate about half the swimmers use pools very frequently (50.7% use pools weekly or greater) indicating good opportunities to use pools all year round. The frequency visitation results for peoples most used pool were:

- Daily visits 1.4%
- 2-3 times a week 17.4%
- 4-6 times a week 4.6%
- Weekly visits 27.3%
- Fortnightly 7.9%
- Monthly 15.8%
- Less than monthly 24.0%

These results indicate high numbers of regular users and then a mix of non regular users visiting monthly or greater (39.8%).

4.2.7 Swimming Pool User Profiles

The following information summarises a range of information about swimming pool users that will be used to assist in determining key future facility components, features and programs.

(i) Travel to Most Used Facility

The majority of pool users travel to facilities by car either on their own (42.6%) or by car with others (35.1%). This sees a total of 77.7% of pool user's visit by car and indicates need for adequate car parking at each pool.

A total of 19.1% walk to pools which shows the provision close to where people live is important whilst low use is made of buses (5.0%) or cycling (0.6%) to get to pools of their choice.

(ii) Usually Visit Centre With

The survey results indicate most people visit the pool with other people (71.6%) being with 1 other person (20.3%), 2 other people (18.8%), 3 other people (18.5%) and 4 or more people (13.1%) A total of 28.4% of pool users visit on their own.

It is also important that more people visiting pools together reduce the need for car parking to cater for people visiting on their own.

This represents a combined response of (86.0%) coming to the Centre with other people and supports the need for a varied range of water spaces at the one site (i.e. age and interest differences to be catered for). People coming with other people also tend to use social and relaxation facilities with their visitors (i.e. food/beverage, lounge areas, etc).

4.2.8 Future Use of Aquatic Facilities

To assist in identifying the level of demand for future use of swimming pools, respondents were asked if they would like to make greater use of swimming pools in the future.

Slightly less than six out of ten (58.2%) respondents indicated they would like to make greater use of swimming pools in the future, while just more than four out of ten people (41.8%) did not. These results see a minimal increase in swimming pool users from current usage levels with the potential market increase from current users (57.6%) being +0.6% future usage take up.

A future usage rate of 58.2% of people would see approximately 117,500 residents using pools based on 2009 population estimates. As the city population increases by a further 20,000 people by 2026 this number of future pool users would expect to increase to around 132,000 residents using pools. This will create significant new demand for more water space in the city's aquatic facility network.

The future pool user profiles are summarised in the following table.

Table 4.8
Current and Future Pool User Comparisons

Category Gender	Future Pool Users	Current Pool Users	Variance of Future Use
Future Pool Users	58.2%	57.6%	+0.6%
Male	53.7%	52.8%	+0.9%
Female	62.3%	61.9%	+0.4%
Age:			
15-19	62.5%	71.4%	-8.9%
20-29	66.8%	58.6%	+8.2%
30-39	69.0%	75.8%	-6.8%
40-49	59.5%	57.9%	+1.6%
50-59	51.6%	46.2%	+5.4%
60-69	39.7%	39.1%	+0.6%
70+	19.0%	19.0%	0.0%

The results indicate above average future use of pools (future area average 58.2%) is likely to be made by females and people aged 20 to 29 years and 40 years and over.

The future pool user comparisons with current pool users indicate limited opportunity to attract more residents to use pools in the future (+0.6%) so demand will primarily come from new residents. Some growth is expected to come from attracting non users through health and wellness campaigns as well as new people moving into the various growth areas in line with population trends (+20,000 extra residents expected by 2026).

The only user category indicating significant negative usage in the future is the 15 to 19 year old age range with a projected drop of 8.9% less users. This indicates a need to complete consultation with younger people to see what features they would like to see developed at pools to encourage their use. Waterslides and adventure water have been identified by this age group as future priorities.

All other age/gender and residential area categories are indicating increased use of pools in the future.

4.2.9 Facilities/Features That Would Encourage Future Use of Swimming Pools

Respondents who indicated they would like to make greater future use of swimming pools were asked to nominate up to three features that would encourage more use. There were 65 features/improvements nominated with the most popular responses being:

Priority Facility Improvement/Features/Services

- More membership packages/discount offers 7.5%
- More waterslides 6.5%
- More spas/saunas 6.3%
- Expanded Learn to swim programmes 5.9%
- More family change rooms 5.8%
- Health and Fitness Programmes Area/Classes/larger Gym 5.8%
- Longer opening hours 4.6%
- Social/Food/Café areas 4.6%
- Cleaner more hygienic updated facilities 4.5%
- More car parking 4.0%
- Indoor hot water programme/hydrotherapy pools 3.8%
- Better fitted out change rooms 3.2%

These results are consistent with the current user market for why people use pools findings that most people use pools for recreation and fun/play as well as for fitness/lap swimming and health/education/therapy. The top 2 to 6 priorities relate to adding facilities such as water slides, spa/sauna, Health and Fitness areas and learn to swim programmes.

Low requests are made for outdoor seasonal pool facilities (less than 1%) and this is a strong indicator to Council of the need to consider all year round aquatic leisure facilities to attract maximum markets.

4.2.10 Constraints to Future Use of Swimming Pools

Respondents who did not wish to use swimming pools in the future (133 people, 33.3%) indicated the following reasons:

- Not interested 31.8%
- Do not like swimming 18.3%
- Too busy 15.4%
- Too old 8.8%
- Cannot swim 7.6%
- Go to beach 6.8%
- Health Problems 4.2%

The main reasons people do not wish to use swimming pools in the future indicate many of these respondents are unlikely to be attracted to make greater use of swimming pools in the future as they are not interested or do not like swimming (50.1%).

There are a range of people who feel they are too old or have health problems (11.2%) that could be attracted if hot water programme facilities and spa and saunas and specialist health programmes specific to their needs were developed (as planned at WRAC).

4.2.11 Demand for Future Upgrades/Expansion of Health and Fitness Facilities

A separate section of the resident survey was set up to explore interest and support for upgraded and improved health and fitness facilities. Respondents were asked a range of questions on this topic and the results are as follows.

4.2.12 Currently Member of a Health and Fitness Club/local Gym

Respondents were asked if they were a current member of a health and fitness club or use a local gym and the results

- Yes member of a health and fitness Club/use a local gym 19.9%
- No are not a member or do not use a local gym 80.1%

The most used health and fitness facilities by the people who were members were:

- Less Mills Taranaki Street 17.2%
- City Fitness Johnsonville 6.5%
- City Fitness Willeston Street 4.7%
- Configure Womens Gym Lampton Quay 4.4%
- Club Active Kilburnie 3.6%
- Habit Plantinum 3.1%

These results indicate low membership take up by swimmers at Councils health and fitness facilities at WRAC and Freyberg Pool and indicate an opportunity to attract more members if these facilities are improved in the future.

4.3 SUMMARY OF RESIDENT SURVEY FINDINGS AND IMPACTS ON FUTURE AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN

The resident survey indicates high existing usage of swimming pools by residents with some 57.6% of people surveyed having used a swimming pool in the past 12 months. When this usage of swimming pools is extrapolated to the current population it indicates up to 117,000 residents currently using swimming pools which makes this service area one of the most used.

Though limited future participation rates (+0.6% increase) were recorded as the city's population increases by another 20,000 people by 2026, the likely number of residents using pools could increase to 132,000 people (58.3% of 215,000 predicted residents by 2026).

These results clearly indicate steady ongoing increased users to Councils aquatic facility network in the future which in turn will create greater demand on already high use water spaces and health and fitness facilities. It is therefore essential that plans are put in place for more water areas at high uses centres as well as new water areas to the future population growth areas.

4.4 ACTIVE AQUATIC SPORTS STAKEHOLDER FORUM

A forum was held with a large range of local, regional and national active aquatic sports stakeholder representatives in February 2011. A total of 20 people attended and represented all water sport codes being.

Capital Swim Club
Diving New Zealand
Harbour Capital Master Swimmers
Harbour City Water Polo
Island Bay Divers
Maranui Surf Lifesaving Club

Maranui Water polo Club Inc
New Zealand Underwater Hockey
Swimming New Zealand
Swimming Wellington
Underwater Rugby
Wellington Diving Club
Wellington High Performance Aquatics
Wellington Swimming Association
Wellington Underwater Hockey Association

These representatives raised the follow key issues in relation to active aquatic sports future needs:

- Strongly support the need for an additional active pool at the WRAC to enable more specialist water space to be made available for their specialist training needs. This new pool would allow a lot of training activities to be relocated and free up water space in the main competition pool

- Such a pool needed to be deep water of 2.1m or greater. To cater for as many groups as possible.

- Preferably the new pool would be long course 53 metres long x 25 metres wide with multiple (2 x 1.5m) moveable booms so it can be set in a range of different configurations.

- If the existing 50 metre pool could be deepened at the shallow end (1.2m deep currently) to a minimum of 1.35m then the current pool would meet national and international standards for swimming events and would be the best facility in the country to host events. Currently FINA regulations do not allow major swimming events to be held at centres that do not meet the 1.350mm depth to dive off a diving block.

- Though there were no promises of how many events such a change to the main pool would bring, it was noted with the loss of the QE11 pool at Christchurch for an unknown period, Wellington could benefit from at least 3 to 5 more events a year.

- The key reason for extending the proposed active pool to a larger water area is to future proof it. The current WRAC is now 22 years old and has served the active sports well but with high community use there is a lack of available water space at peak use times. Building a long course pool with moveable booms is a better longer term investment.

- It was agreed that the new active pool is a training pool and does not need spectator or event support facilities as the best pool for events was the existing 50m pool. It was also agreed that there appeared to be enough changing facilities/amenities in the centre already so there was no need for more of these areas unless building code required them.

- Currently there is no aquatic facility in the country that can meet national and international swimming meet regulations so dispensation has to be given for use of the only venues that come close. These are WRAC in Wellington, QE11 in Christchurch (since closed with the Christchurch Earthquake damage) and West Wave in Auckland.

- With the closure of QE11 and the uncertainty of its reopening there is now greater need as well as opportunity for significant National Government funding support to add the new active training pool and modify the depth of the main pool to enable WRAC to become the National Swimming Centre and home of the majority of major new Zealand Swimming Events. This is consistent with Wellington City's Event Strategy directions and such improvements would bring significant events to the City on a regular basis.

- These events were usually held in school holiday periods and attracted 300 to 500 competitors and 1,000 to 1,500 spectators. This would see a significant number of accommodation bookings from such events as well as economic benefits from people staying in the area for a number of days.

- Additional facilities will require improved site car parking and improved access to the new pool and direct links to the existing 50 metre pool (for event warm up and cool down activities). This leads to the need to consider a major redevelopment of the site and placement of the development on the adjoining bowling club area.

- Integrated dry diving training facilities also need to be considered as part of any new water areas as these were essential in a training centre. Currently a temporary facility is being planned close to WRAC and diving organisations are seeking funding for this development.

When asked about contributing to the capital and operating costs of such a development most organisations indicated they do not have any funds but would be happy to work with Council on a funding strategy and seek grants and donations for such a high profile project.

When asked if all users were prepared to pay higher entry fees for such facilities there was a mixed reaction with many groups indicating they already pay high user fees and as the majority of users were juniors it was unlikely that they could pay much more.

There as a general understanding that such facilities would cost more to operate and where possible they would accept higher fee; levels or try and provide some funding support.

5 FUTURE AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN KEY FINDINGS

The research and consultation findings listed in sections 1 to 4 have identified a range of key findings that will direct the future Wellington City Council Aquatic Facilities Plan. These are summarised in section five of this report as follows.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Wellington City has a steadily increasing population which increased by 7,800 between 2006 and 2009 to 195,500 people. The city's population accounts for 4.45% of the New Zealand population and is expected to see steady growth over the next decade.

Wellington city's population is young with 55.9% aged 18 to 49 years (2006) compared with 45.1% in New Zealand generally. Wellington City has higher proportions of Europeans (76.8%) and Asians (12.7%) than New Zealand as a whole, and lower proportions of Māori (7.4%) and Pacific peoples (6.6%).

National census projections show that Wellington City's population will grow by approximately 20,000 more people over the next two decades, reaching about 205,000 by 2026 and 215,000 by 2031. Some 14,000 additional dwellings will be required over the next two decades – 60 percent (8,400) of these will be either apartments or multi unit houses. The remaining 40 percent (5,600) will be single detached houses.

5.2 CURRENT AQUATIC FACILITIES PROVISION AND USAGE

The aquatic facilities plan review indicates Wellington City Council has developed and provides ongoing support for a significant and well used aquatics service that annually attracts more than 1.340 million visits across Councils seven swimming pools.

The review has also identified the location of facilities is also well planned around key communities and population settlements. The recent high population increases in the City centre with higher density infill and apartment living have been identified as the only major facility provision gap with all other communities currently well serviced.

The resident survey indicated that around 57.5% of people surveyed had used a swimming pool in the past 12 months which further confirms swimming pools are highly used and valued by the community. Based on the 2009 estimated population of around 195,000 people this would see around 117,000 residents currently using swimming pools presently.

Future usage trends matched to population growth indicates as the City's population increases by a further 20,000 people that water space will be inadequate for projected users and will require increased water space development. This will be in the areas of:

- Learn to swim water for younger children
- Adventure and fun water for youth
- Training water for water sports groups
- Warm water programme pools for older adults and therapy users

The new school pools grant scheme should assist in targeting new water suitable for learn to swim whilst they might also assist with redeveloped facilities in the city centre to meet this new population demand.

5.3 CURRENT AQUATIC FACILITIES OPERATIONAL COST TRENDS

Though Councils current aquatic facilities network is well used and highly rated by users the annual operating cost is significant/increasing annually as the following results indicates:

Table 5.1
WCC Aquatic Facilities Network Operational and Usage Business Indicators 2007 to 2010

Review Category	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Combined Pools Usage	1,230,833	1,345,775	1,315,568
Combined Pools Revenue	5,494,249	6,461,178	6,758,298
Net Pools Revenue per user	$4.46/user	$4.80/user	$5,13/user
Combined Pools Expenditure	15,757,309	16,832,596	17,022,663
Net Pools Expenditure per user	$12.80/user	$12.50/user	$12.93/user
Combined Pools Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	**($10,263,060)**	**(10,371,418)**	**($10,264,365)**
Net Surplus/(Deficit) per user	($8.33/user)	($7,70/user)	($7.80/user)
Revenue as a % of Operating Expenditure	34.7%	38.0%	39.7%

The combined WCC Swimming pool operational budget review indicates.

- Revenue has increased from $5.494m in 2007/08 to $6,758m in 2009/10. This is an increase of $1,264,000 in operating revenue or 23% increase.
- Expenditure has increased from $15,757m in 2007/08 to $17,022M in 2009/10. This is an increase of $1,265M in operating expenditure or 8.0% increase.
- The net operating deficit has remained relatively the same at $10.265m to $10.300m
- The revenue as a percentage of expenditure trends are showing improved financial performance with revenue representing 34.7% of expenditure in 2007/08 and increasing to 39.7% in 2009/10.

It is the planning teams opinion that the future aquatics strategy must accept with increasing costs and limited new revenue opportunities it will be essential to consider adding more profitable improvements to high use facilities but considering reviewing the effectiveness of low use summer seasonal pools (against the cost and community benefit).

5.4 RESIDENT SURVEY CURRENT AND FUTURE AQUATIC FACILITY DEMAND

The resident survey indicated existing high use of swimming pools by residents with slightly less than six out of 10 people (57.6%) surveyed having used a swimming pool in the past 12 months. People in their younger years (under 49 years old) are the highest users of these facilities with lower use by people aged 50 years and over.

Users rate Councils swimming pools highly with the most used pools being:

- Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre 53.9% of users
- Karori Pool 22.2% of users
- Freyberg Pool and Fitness Centre 18.6% of users
- Thorndon Summer Pool 17.2% of users
- Keith Spry Pool 17.0% of users

Users also rate Councils facilities highly with ***88.4% of users rating them as good or excellent*** with a further 10% rating them as adequate and only 1.0% rating them as poor.

Though the survey found resident use of swimming pools high it appears future use of swimming pools will be very similar to current use with only a 0.8% increase in users identified. The new demand will come from new residents with 20,000 extra people by 2026 and at least 6 out of 10 of these likely to want to make use of swimming pools in the future.

Current resident future increased use is likely to come from people aged 50 years and older as well as more females interested in using such facilities.

A key issue identified from possible future pool use is a projected drop off of use from younger people 15 to 19 years (-8.6%) and 30 to 39 years (-6.9%). This drop off is impacting on future use projections and it is recommended that more detailed research is completed with these age groups to identify key issues and what improvements/features could occur to minimise tis drop off of use. These groups indicated a future interest in adventure water and items such as water slides and rapid rivers etc.

The highest future facility, programme and services improvements suggested by the resident survey respondents included:

- More membership packages/discount offers 7.5%
- More waterslides 6.5%
- More spas/saunas 6.3%
- Expanded Learn to swim programmes 5.9%
- More family change rooms 5.8%
- Health and Fitness Programmes Area/Classes/larger Gym 5.8%
- Longer opening hours 4.6%
- Social/Food/Café areas 4.6%

5.5 FUTURE AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN FRAMEWORK

The study's findings clearly support Councils current aquatic facilities plan directions of prioritising:

- Improved opportunities for learn to swim
- Providing more facilities/opportunities to meet the demand of aquatic sports
- Making the most of existing facilities and pool space through redevelopment

The initiatives approved in June 2010 with redirected LTCCP funding will be completed over the next year and start to meet the current service pressure points from late 2012/2013 on.

The study team therefore propose for the future aquatic strategy framework to continue this excellent planning and implementation process by using the same priority format for recommended improvements from 2012/2013 onwards.

5.5.1 Improved Opportunities for Learn to Swim

Following the development of new learn to swim facilities at Karori Pool and WRAC in 2011 and Keith Spry Pool in 2012/13 it is likely the best options for increased learn to swim water space will come from strategically located school pools that can be improved through the School Pools Grant Scheme.

Based on reviews of the school pools report and information collected through the schools survey, the facility inventory mapping exercise and the assessment of key facilities the following areas should be considered when grant applications are being reviewed.

5.5.1.1 Northern Suburbs Opportunities and Priorities

Tawa is well served through the Council's Tawa Pool and Tawa Primary School pool. Tawa pool is within 15 minutes walk of five schools and provides key learn to swim services.

Suburban development on the eastern side the motorway could see demand for a new primary school in the future. This may be the most appropriate site for an additional school pool.

Churton Park School and the planned Amesbury Drive School are poorly served. With planning underway for the new school, this could provide a community facility that meets the needs of the Churton Park suburb, with its increasing density of children.

Keith Spry pool is accessible to five schools within 15 minutes walk including Raroa Intermediate and Onslow College. It remains a key part of the aquatic education network and the proposed upgrades to this pool will assist in meeting future demand.

There are three school pools in the greater Newlands area: Rewa Rewa School, Newlands School and Bellevue School. While none of these pools are currently operational, any could potentially service the others if upgraded. Currently Bellevue Primary does not want to retain their pool in the long term. Alternatively a new pool central to all schools would ideally be located at Newlands Intermediate.

5.5.1.2 Western Suburbs Opportunities and Priorities

Ngaio School and Wadestown Side School currently have a pool and are likely to increase their rolls because the suburb has a high density of children. Wadestown main school has removed its pool and the side school's existing pool is not adequate to deliver a learn to swim programme.

Pools poorly serve the schools along the western perimeter of the city. Otari, Cardinal McKeefry and Northland Schools are in close proximity with Cardinal McKeefry equidistant between the schools. This could be considered a site for a pool.

There is no pool within easy walking distance of Karori West, but they use Karori Pool. They currently make use of the public bus service for one direction of their travel, and walk the other journey. Consideration of this could be given when supporting their aquatic education programme. Karori Pool services several schools within easy walking distance.

5.5.1.3 City Suburbs Opportunities and Priorities

The central city is poorly served by learn to swim opportunities, with the only existing pool at Te Aro School. No other central city school has access to any pool within a 15 minute walk.

A pool at Te Aro School could service Kelburn Normal and Mount Cook Primary as well as Moriah College. Its close proximity to Victoria University and student halls of residence provides a variety of opportunities.

While Clyde Quay School is close to Freyberg Pool this is not suitable for aquatic education. Clifton Terrace Model School is about 1.4km away from their closest pool – Thorndon summer pool. A facility with heritage value, it is less suitable for teaching swimming because of its depth.

Wellington High is interested in a pool; although they are not the priority focus for learn to swim and aquatic education. Wellington East Girls School (WEGS) does have a 30m x 12m operational pool but which only operates in term one.

Its location would make it conceivable that it could service the needs of WEGC, Wellington High School and Wellington College and the wider aquatic community needs.

Roseneath School is a small school with no indication of roll growth. While they are close to Freyberg they are unlikely to find this suitable for aquatic education. They will need alternative arrangements for their aquatic education.

5.5.1.4 Southern Suburbs Opportunities and Priorities

There are no school or community pools on the southern ridge of the city. This currently affects about 680 children. These suburbs are not likely to have significant increases in children and will have to make alternative arrangements.

There are no school pools currently in the southern bay suburbs of Wellington. The poorly served schools have a combined roll of nearly 1,000 students. Two of these suburbs in particular are likely to have increasing numbers of young children. A priority would be to fill the gap in the Island Bay area, with a pool at or near to Island Bay School.

5.5.1.5 Eastern Suburbs Opportunities and Priorities

While Hataitai School doesn't have a swimming pool and is slightly outside the 15 minutes walking zone to Kilbirnie Primary, it may be able to access this facility. Neither of the two centrally located schools in Miramar have a swimming pool. Worser Bay School, on the eastern ridge, had a pool that has subsequently been demolished.

The closest pools are at Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Nga Mokopuna, Miramar South and Miramar North, all of which are about 1.5km away.

Strathmore Community School has a swimming pool, and is an area with increasing children. It is also within walking distance of Miramar South. Scots College are keen to add a pool to their campus as well. There is currently only one pool (not operational) beyond the eastern ridge at Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Nga Mokopuna with more than 500 children attending in the immediate vicinity. To fill this gap in the network, consideration could be given to utilising the Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Nga Mokopuna site or Seatoun School.

5.5.2 Providing Facilities/Opportunities to Meet Future Aquatic Sport Demand

SGL Group New Zealand Limited has reviewed all documentation in relation to the proposed concept of developing a new aquatic sports pool at WRAC. Previous reviews have identified the opportunity to develop a new pool 25m x 35m x 2.1m deep to meet the needs of swimming, water polo, underwater hockey, canoe polo and synchronised swimming.

Though a large justification is more water space to meet current unmet needs, provision of a new water sports pool will also assist with being able to cater for increasing users of the centre looking for use of the main pool once some of the current user groups relocate training activities to this new water area.

Development of this new water sports pool at WRAC will also assist diving as moving some of the regular use sports out of the shared main pool will enable diving to gain more user training time in the main pool.

In line with completing a detailed review of best facility mix to meet maximum aquatic sports SGL have completed:

- Stakeholder interviews with National, Regional and Local water sports organisations

- Reviewed the consultation draft for the National Facilities Strategy Swimming New Zealand (January 2011) prepared for the SNZ Project Working Party to look at where WRAC is positioned to other event and competition pools in New Zealand (see 5.5.2.3)
- Completed site reviews and developed broad layout and cost plans for two facility options.
- Considered integrated development opportunities for the surrounding Kilbirnie Recreation Reserve including future car parking and event facility linkages
- Reviewed funding opportunities for such a project including options to develop WRAC as the countries National Aquatics High Performance Centre.

This work has identified two potential facility development options that are summarised as follows in the table below.

Table 5.2
WRAC Active Water Sports Pool Options

Facility Option	Details	Opportunities	Impacts	Likely Cost
1. Short Course Water Sports Activity/Training Pool	• 35m x 25m pool with 2m moveable boom • 2.1m depth (TBC) • Area take up 1,600m2 approx	• Meets training needs of all water sports excluding diving • Diving benefits from greater access to main pool with relocation of some water sports bookings to new pool • Can be used as a warm up/cool events pool • Adds 13 short course lap lanes and new competition areas for of water polo, underwater hockey etc	• Requires closure of bowling facilities to provide land for development • May require more car parking to meet resource management Act requirements. • Need new entry point to link to 50 metre pool/secondary entrance when events held • Requires new plant room and access to change/amenities	• Detailed plans and finishes need to be completed but estimated to cost n the order of $14.8m to $16.9M • Will require new car park provision and entry link to WRAC at an extra cost
2.Long Course Water Sports Activity Training Pool	• 53m x 25m pool with 2 x 1.5m wide moveable booms • 2.1m depth (TBC) to 3m depth (TBC) • Area take up 2,100 m2 approx	• Meets training needs of all water sports excluding diving • Diving benefits from greater access to main pool with relocation of some water sports bookings to new pool • Can be used as a warm up/cool down event pool • Adds 20 short course lap lanes and new competition areas for of water polo, underwater hockey etc	• Requires closure of bowling facilities to provide land for development • May require more car parking to meet resource management Act requirements. • Need new entry point to link to 50 metre pool/secondary entrance when events held • Requires new plant room and access to change/amenities	• Detailed plans and finishes need to be completed but estimated to cost n the order of $19.3M to $22.1M • Will require new car park provision and entry link to WRAC at an extra cost • 31% + floor area than option 1

As indicated from the table of options summary SGL Group believe there are significant benefits in considering and comparing both facility options to ensure any new pool is future proofed and can meet expanding active sports demand as well as expected population increase demand for many years to come.

When comparing options please note the long course option 2 requires approximately 31% more development area than option1. The added advantage of expanding the active pool to the larger long course water area would also include:

- Opportunity in association with deepening the existing 50m pool to 1.35m deep to redevelop the WRAC as New Zealand's only Internationally compliant water sports complex and thus possibly make the project more attractive for national government funding support consideration.
- Opportunity to attract the majority of significant water sport events to Wellington if this facility status can be achieved.

- Locate at the centre a proposed national high performance water sports academy as part of the funding and development mix.
- Provide more multi-use lanes of active water training and competition areas.

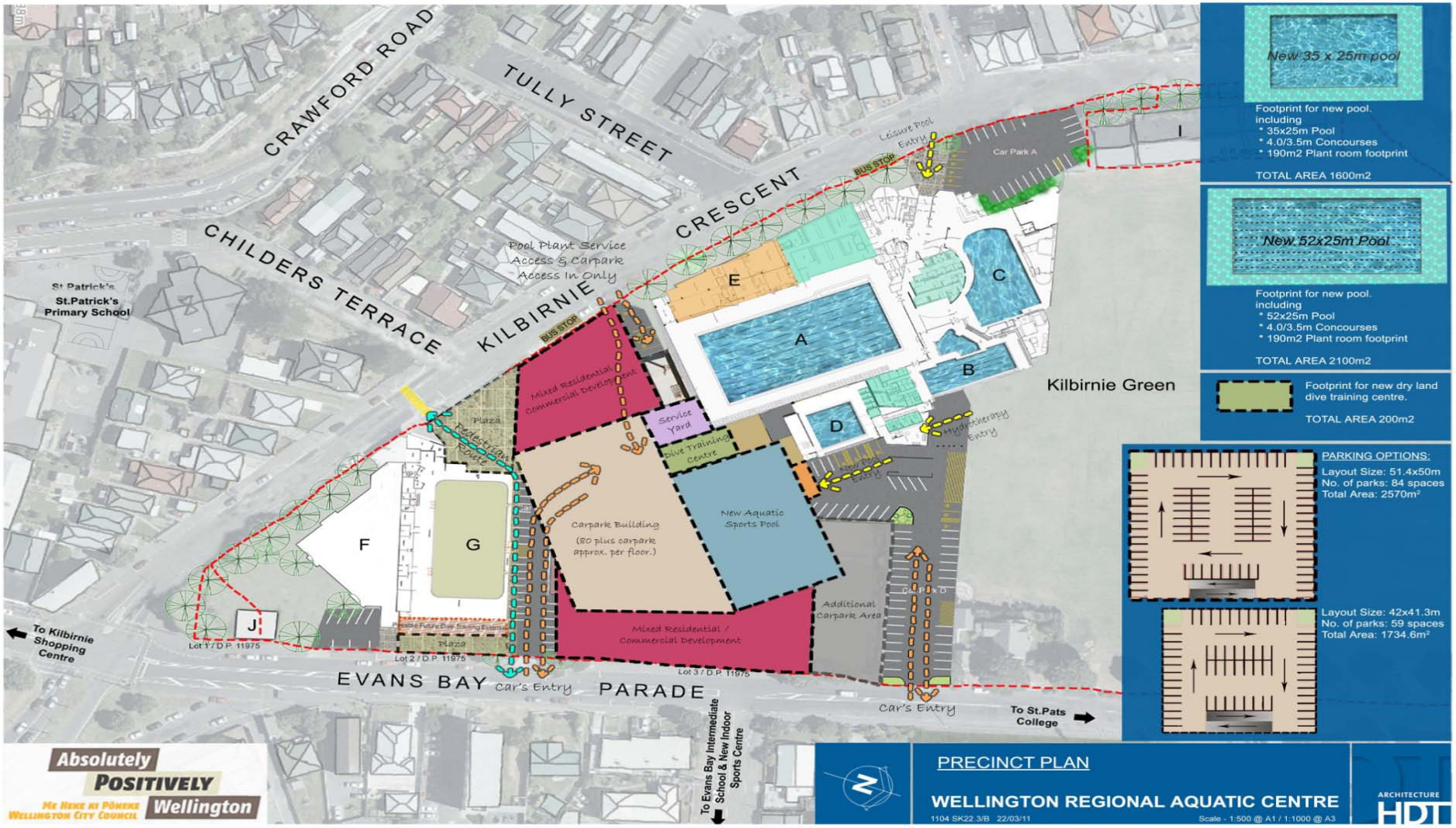
5.5.2.1 Proposed facility Options layout Schematic Concept

The project team have developed a layout plan of the two facility options to show possible land take up and site impacts.

This shows both options with improved car parking and support and service areas can be accommodated if the bowling club site is linked to the development.

We have also included for discussion purposes a number of other development opportunities to assist with servicing user's needs as well as opportunities for potential revenue generation to assist in development funding support. These include:

- New Car Park building with access off Evans Bay Parade. This building could be multi-deck with capacity for 80 cars per level.
- New additional car park area at ground level (approx 40 extra car parks) to service both events entry to WRAC, Hydrotherapy Pool and Kilbirnie Park playing fields.
- New aquatic sports hall being:
    - option 1 35m x 25m pool, plant and concourse – 1,600m2
    - Option 2 52m x 25m pool, plant and concourse – 2,100m2
- New dry diving centre approximately 200m2 of floor space (actual size to be determined as part of future feasibility analysis and level of funding provided by diving).
- Expanded service yard with entry from Kilbirnie Crescent
- Mixed residential/commercial/community development zones facing Kilbirnie Crescent and Evans Bay Parade.
- Potential Kilbirnie library and associated community facilities expansion area.
- New pedestrian trail through site between Kilbirnie Crescent and Evans Bay Parade.


CRAWFORD ROAD
TULLY STREET
CRESCENT
CHILDERS TERRACE
KILBIRNIE
EVANS BAY PARADE
St Patrick's
St.Patrick's Primary School
Pool Plant Service Access & Carpark Access In Only
Leisure Pool Entry
Car Park A
BUS STOP
Kilbirnie Green
Mixed Residential Commercial Development
Service Yard
Dive Training Centre
Hydrotherapy Entry
Plaza
Pedestrian Route
Carpark Building (80 plus carpark approx. per floor.)
New Aquatic Sports Pool
Additional Carpark Area
Mixed Residential / Commercial Development
Lot 1 / D.P. 11975
Lot 2 / D.P. 11975
Lot 3 / D.P. 11975
Car's Entry
To Kilbirnie Shopping Centre
To St.Pats College
To Evans Bay Intermediate School & New Indoor Sports Centre
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
I
J
New 35 x 25m pool
Footprint for new pool. including
* 35x25m Pool
* 4.0/3.5m Concourses
* 190m2 Plant room footprint
TOTAL AREA 1600m2
New 52x25m Pool
Footprint for new pool. including
* 52x25m Pool
* 4.0/3.5m Concourses
* 190m2 Plant room footprint
TOTAL AREA 2100m2
Footprint for new dry land dive training centre.
TOTAL AREA 200m2
PARKING OPTIONS:
Layout Size: 51.4x50m
No. of parks: 84 spaces
Total Area: 2570m²
Layout Size: 42x41.3m
No. of parks: 59 spaces
Total Area: 1734.6m²
Absolutely POSITIVELY Wellington
Me Heke Ki Pōneke Wellington City Council
PRECINCT PLAN
WELLINGTON REGIONAL AQUATIC CENTRE
1104 SK22.3/B 22/03/11
Scale - 1:500 @ A1 / 1:1000 @ A3
ARCHITECTURE HDT

5.5.2.2 Active Pool Options Indicative Capital Cost

Architecture HDT have developed indicative cost plans for the option one plan at $12.6M to $14.5M (average $13.6M) in November 2009. Based on escalation to say November 2011 plus allowances for professional fees this would see a further 16.5% this would see the estimated cost for the development be completed in the order of $14.8M to $16.9M

Option 2 with the larger water sports area of 2,100m2 floor/pool space is 31% larger in floor/water space and the indicative capital cost is estimated at between $19.3M and $22.1M.

All other support spaces have not been costed at this stage until final sizes and sharing of development zones are determined.

5.5.2.3 National Swimming Facilities Strategy

The National Swimming Strategy for Swimming New Zealand (SNZ) is being developed as a working document and is now out in the consultation phase with input sought from SNZ Board, Regions and Clubs. The planning team have reviewed a copy of the consultation draft which when completed will replace the National Swimming Facility Strategy 2002.

Swimming New Zealand has developed as part of the 2002 strategy which identified the 5 facilities that will be used from 2002 for national competitions. Of these the following three pools will receive the most use due to their spectator capacity being:

- Westwave – Waitakere (669 permanent seats and 400 temporary on deck)
- Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre – Kilbirnie (665 in grandstand and 279 terrace seats)
- QE11 – Christchurch (1,031 seats all on pool deck)

Other 50 metre pools that have events capacity but 500 or less seats are:

- Rotorua Aquatic Centre – Rotorua
- Splash Palace – Invercargill
- Te Rapa Waterworld – Hamilton
- Moana Pool – Dunedin

The Swimming New Zealand National Facilities Strategy 2010 indicates the absence of an international standard event pool is a significant impairment in New Zealand's ability to fully prepare its elite athletes for international competition. While the Millennium Institute of Sport and Health (MISH) provides a FINA compliant Olympic Pool for training purposes it lacks the necessary seating and car parking for event purposes.

The recently announced $40M development programme for MISH includes a new international event pool with suitable seating capacity for national events with ability to increase capacity if required to host major events. It will have some limitations though which includes distance between the existing pool and new pool and other water competition requirements for sports such as diving etc,

This facility will take a number of years to be completed and whilst this draft national strategy is up for consultation Wellington City Council could have WRAC considered as a better

national swimming and other water sports event facility if it was able to provide an alternative warm up and cool down pool and deepen the shallow end of the main pool from 1.2m to 1.35m deep.

Consideration for extra event spectator seating would also need to be considered as the future strategy will be looking to a venue that has ability to provide between 1,400 and 2,800 seats. Currently the draft strategy indicates WRAC is not considered as a long term event facility Wellington is not the best place due to current venue limitations being:

- Only 1.2m deep at shallow end
- Warm up and warm down currently occurs in shallow programme pool
- Cannot be used for NZ Opens because too shallow and no access to Sky TV

With the QE11 pool in Christchurch now closed and likely to require demolition there will be a significant period when the South island will not be able to be serviced by a major event pool so investing in WRAC upgrades would appear a low cost opportunity to build off this significant facility. At this stage these works are not in the national swimming strategy plan so Council has a limited time to try and have them included (so as to create a better case for support funding for national projects).

In relation to High Performance Training Centres (HPC) the strategy recommends three Performance Development Centres (PDC) are suggested to supplement the SNZ HPC at MISC These are to be up and running by 2015 with the first one being QE11 at Christchurch (which is now unlikely due to earthquake damage) and the second one at WRAC. The third was to be decided between Dunedin (Moana Pool) and Hamilton (Te Rapa) both of which have 50 metre pools and are university cities.

If WRAC becomes a PDC then the extra aquatic sports pool is essential and the larger the water area that can be provided the more future proofed the redeveloped WRAC will be.

It should be noticed that construction of such a facility will increase annual operational costs as the pool will require more services, staffing and maintenance. It is unlikely as is the case with all other aquatic areas that user groups will meet these extra costs so operationally this will require higher ratepayer subsidy or inclusion of profitable activities at the centre to balance the increased costs.

5.5.2.4 Funding Opportunities

Council's current support of aquatics with seven pools provided in Wellington City as well as funding schemes now in place to support strategically located school pools is strongly supporting growing the swimming community. So this base of support places Wellington City Council as one of the major providers of aquatic participation opportunities in the country.

The provision of one of the best event facilities in the country at WRAC that though aged and restricted by changes to sport event criteria water depths has stood the test of time and is a well placed facility to meet local, regional and national aquatic sports needs.

This indicates an opportunity to make representation to Swimming New Zealand to consider suggested upgrades to WRAC and with QE11 off line positioning this centre to service the lower North Island and majority of the South Island Aquatic Event and Competition and High Performance Training needs.

Such development requires more than WCC funding support as the centre has a wider role than just providing for Wellington City Council residents needs. As the SNZ strategy is already in draft format and out for consultation it will be essential that WCC reviews and adopts a WRAC redevelopment strategy that could receive other levels of funding support from Government, aquatic sports and commercial sponsors.

Regionally WCC is also providing a significant regional venue that does not receive funding from any other surrounding Territorial Authorities and therefore the cost of capitalising and operating WRAC has always been a WCC ratepayer responsibility. If WRAC was to be further upgraded this will reduce the need for any other regional aquatic facilities and therefore could justify exploring a regional amenities levy (similarly to the one currently operating in Auckland (Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act 2008) prior to recent Council amalgamations to the Auckland Super City concept.

5.5.2.5 New Event and Economic Impacts

Wellington City Council supports a wide range of events, attractions and city promotions to position Wellington as an internationally competitive city and aim to maximise economic value from promoting and hosting high profile events.

More than 500,000 people now visit Wellington each year and the city's vibrant central city and significant events have been shown to be major attractors to increasing these visitations.

As WCC has grown its event and visitor markets other regional areas around the country have now invested in emulating these features and there is significant competition to ensuring people still see visiting Wellington is still appealing.

Redevelopment of WRAC to host more events and competitions is a significant long term strategy to attract ongoing aquatic events for swimming, diving, water polo, under water hockey and synchronised swimming.

These groups indicate collectively Wellington could attract between 3 and 5 new events a year (on average held over 3 days) with such events attracting between 300 and 500m competitors and 1,000 to 1,500 spectators and associated travellers. Subject to the period of the year when such events could be attracted these would have significant economic benefits to the accommodation, hospitality and entertainment sectors.

Economic modelling will need to be completed on such impacts but based on 3 new events a year being held on average for three days with 1,500 people on average staying in Wellington and spending on industry average $150 to $175/day this would see more than $675,000 of spending generated per event and more than $1.8M spending generated over 3 events.

5.5.2.6 Recommended WRAC Redevelopment Strategy

The project team supports redevelopment of WRAC to include the larger water space as it will better future proof the centre against increasing aquatic sports future growth whilst also making the WRAC a significant events facility in national aquatic infrastructure provision.

The longer course training and competition pool though providing 31% more water space than the short course version the capital cost difference between option 1 short course and option 2 long course is in the order of $4.5M to $5.2M extra capital required. On a $20M project this is only between 23% and 25% of the total project cost compared to the shorter course option.

WCC could mount a significant case for national funding support (especially as QE11 looks like it will be closed for a long period of time) and this may be for the outstanding cost of say $$5M to upgrade the facility to national and international standard. We therefore have recommended that WCC complete design and cost plans and then seek funding and Aquatic NSO support for the project.

5.5.3 Making the Most of Existing Facilities through Redevelopment

This section covers a range of proposed new initiatives as well as redevelopment and facility improvements that aim to build off existing facilities to minimise and improve the current increasing operational costs whilst also supporting high use of such facilities.

5.5.3.1 Health and Fitness Facility Improvements

Health and fitness facilities are currently operated at WRAC and Freyberg Pool and fitness Centre and are marketed and managed under the ***Club Active Brand***. Both facilities have high membership take up but are currently experiencing limited growth due to restricted floor space and associated lack of extra equipment provision.

Membership history over the past three years is summarised in the following table.

Year	Freyberg	WRAC	Total
Apr-09	1,134	1,349	2,483
Apr-10	1,094	1,232	2,326
Apr-11	1,054	1,116	2,170

The original business plan for the development of Club Active worked on the basis of a membership of 2500 members though this was not set as ceiling because management was aware that there was a significant opportunity available in respect of off-peak memberships.

Residents who were surveyed and were members of either centre indicated that in their opinion both centres are overcrowded and have low level facilities compared to many competitor gyms and health clubs.

The following health and fitness improvements at these key centres plus new development at district centres are therefore recommended to assist in increasing centre annual revenue and adding more profitable activities to the aquatics facility network.

1) WRAC Health and Fitness (Club Active) Area Changes

The WRAC currently has a split health and fitness venue issue with a range of different rooms with equipment and programmes spread in a number of locations in non purpose built spaces. Key recommendations to be investigated in a health and fitness facility review include:

- Consolidation of weights and cardio equipment into one larger area is recommended as there is limited capacity for new membership sales with current floor space and equipment provision.
- Increased dry programme rooms to enable multiple programmes to be run at the same time. Currently WRAC operates approximately 24 classes a week out of the programme room and this requires a lot of equipment set up and pack down.

Both these initiatives would provide new member and casual user capacity which in turn would assist in reducing the annual increasing operating deficit of this centre once capital improvements were paid for.

There are opportunities to consider consolidated weights and cardio areas in the current first floor crèche and programmes room whilst possible new building areas for the aquatic sports pool plant and amenities and entrance areas could see first floor extensions above such spaces.

It is recommended in 2011/12 that reviews be completed on all current and future opportunity spaces with an aim of increasing areas to attract a further 1,000 to 1,500 members (aimed to be achieved over a 3 year period once new areas were opened).

2) Freyberg Pool and Fitness Centre

A significant number of schemes have been looked at over the years to expand and improve health and fitness facilities at this stunningly located centre adjacent to Oriental Bay. Though heritage issues will stop any increased building area there is opportunity to increase first floor space for health and fitness by building over the void in the foyer/entry reception.

Though this will reduce vision into the roof space it will assist in controlling internal and external noise disturbance and improve climate control whilst also proving low cost extra usable floor space for more weights and cardio equipment. This area could be ether fitted out as an open floor space for cardio equipment which would be best away from pool air corrosion or it could be segmented and a small spin and exercise programme room be created.

We understand such concepts have been investigated previously but we feel that as new membership and more equipment is now stagnant that this extra floor area (provided at a low cost inside the existing building) should be revisited as a way of also increasing membership at this centre.

3) Investigate Feasibility of Karori Pool Weights and Fitness Facility

The review of WCC aquatic facility attendances indicates the third most used swimming pool was **Karori Pool** with 124,343 visits in 2001/02 and increasing to 203,641 by 2009/10. This is an increase of 89,207 more pool visits during this time.

This centre has achieved attendances well above its feasibility projections and due to this the centre does experience higher than expected operational costs and associated high and increasing annual deficits. For example the past three years operations showed the following business results:

KARORI POOL	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Net Revenue	$586,576.	$790,437	$881,902
Net Expenditure	$2,113,833	$2,020,303	$1,972,480
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($1,527,258)**	**($1,229,866)**	**($1,090,578)**

Note: Pool closure occurred in which saw low revenue and high expenditure in 2007/08

These results show a reducing deficit (2007/08 had a pool closure impacting on its financial result) but still a high annual cost to operate this facility of more than $1m a year. The reduced deficit has come about from increased revenue generation linked to reducing operating expenditure.

The original master plan for the centre had a longer term proposed health and fitness centre adjoining the sideline of the aquatic hall and built over the former outdoor pool spectator terracing.

It is recommended that a review is completed including concept options, capital costs and business projections to determine the feasibility of developing a health and fitness area at this pool. A key issue that needs to be noted as part of this review is any capacity for increased car parking which is a significant constraint to using the site now and would need to be improved if such facilities attracting more users were to occur.

4) Keith Spry Pool Health and Fitness Facilities

The 2008 feasibility study identified the opportunity to develop health and fitness facilities at a redeveloped site and recommended such development due to the large catchment area the centre serviced as well as it close proximity to the future shopping mall.

This site has opportunities for either direct management under the WCC Club Active brand or possibly a leased site to existing area health and fitness operators.

Currently the centre also has annual high operating costs and needs to have some high revenue generating activities to try and reduce these negative business trends. The past three years operational results included:

KEITH SPRY POOL	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Net Revenue	$599,836	$587,928	$679,531
Net Expenditure	$1,959,504	$1,963,733	$1,963,287
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($1,359,658)**	**($1,375,805)**	**($1,283,756)**

Note: Pool closure in 2008/09 impacted on financial result

Though the inclusion of a new learn to swim pool may bring in some increased revenue the development of health and fitness facilities will have the most positive business impacts and reduce operating losses significantly once established.

Ensuring in future stages that the health and fitness facilities are built will be critical to reducing a likely increasing annual operating cost for tis centre.

5.5.3.2 Youth Adventure Facilities (Hydro Slides)

The market research indicated that people aged 15 to 19 years and 20 to 29 years made lower than average use of pools for these age ranges. Many people in these age ranges are looking for fun and adventure at pools and inclusion of hydro slides that can be used all year round have found to attract such age ranges as well as generate significant revenue.

The key to high use is multiple slides off the one tower to reduce operating staff costs whilst also providing ride variety and challenge.

New ways of charging especially when these facilities can be linked to leisure water at say the WRAC can see all users at peak times (when such facilities are operating pay a higher entry fee) and the lower fee is at times they are not operating. This new charging policy has capacity to raise significant more entry fees than the traditional a pay per ride model.

For example a traditional slide may attract $100,000 in user fees a year if people pay per ride or pay per hour ride is operating (using wrist band model). This revenue can be increased considerably if an extra dollar is charged at peak times that hydro slides and water play is

operating. If this covers say 300,000 visits at this time then revenue can be increased considerably by this everyone pays policy to say $200,000 to $300,000 year.

Under this charging policy the capital cost of hydro slides can be repaid in a 2 to 3 year operating period.

The project team therefore recommends a feasibility review be completed on adding 2 to 4 hydro slides to the WRAC as part of the review of adding other new aquatic areas.

5.5.3.3 Expanded Food, Beverage and Merchandising Services Review

There are more than 1.300 million annual visits to WCC aquatic facilities in 2009/10 and this would normally see a significant opportunity to attract a large secondary spend to help generate increased revenue from food, beverage and merchandising sales.

Currently the offers at various centres are managed under different arrangements with such services regarded not as revenue and profitable activities but rather as a service which in many cases has been leased off or has a restricted sales and stock model.

The project team has reviewed the offers and management arrangements and believes there is significant improved revenue and associated surpluses after costs to be generated if these services are linked together across the centres and bulk purchasing and more self service food and beverage models are developed.

It is therefore recommended that a specialist retail and food and beverage business company be engaged to review the services and facilities and offers at each centre and an improved combined centres secondary spend service be considered.

Any centre that has 100,000 plus visits should be able to generate significant secondary spend revenue and these should also operate profitably. A key initiative where possible is to remodel and relocate food, beverage and retail merchandise areas to link with reception so all sales can occur in one location

5.5.3.4 Wellington Aquatic Leisure Card to Generate New Revenue Streams

There are more than 1.3 million visits to WCC Aquatic facilities but a large portion of these users are casual visitors that pay a single user fee and may or may not be regular users. There is limited data on the majority of customers and no way of directly promoting or making special offers to them.

Though there are annual membership categories for health and fitness and aquatic memberships and programme/classes attendees for learn to swim and dry programmes it is estimated that 40% to 60% of centre users are likely to be casual users.

A recent new innovation in the leisure industry is trying to link these casual users to special offers to assist them in making more use of such facilities which in turn will assist in greater revenue generation.

The best way to do this is to package special use and discount offers and offer this under a loyalty or regular user card. With improved technologies linking this card to a smart card with redraw and top up options means that people purchasing the special offer card can use the card for all centre transactions. When they want to add more funds to the card they can do this through a kiosk or recharge machine in the foyer.

Currently WCC has the Wellington Leisure Card which is personalised membership that allows discounted entry into a range of recreation services. The card provides recreational opportunities for people where price is a barrier to participation. People qualify for the card if you are:

- A Wellington City resident and
- A Community Services Card holder or
- On the invalids or sickness benefit or
- A recent migrant (within last six months) or
- On the Green Prescription (GRx) scheme or
- A city housing tenant or
- A Super Gold Card holder.

With so many users non identified we believe a key initiative to attract more users is to develop a Wellington Aquatic and Leisure Card that can be purchased to enable the user special discounts on entry, programmes, memberships and sales/retail discounts plus special offers on a monthly basis.

The loyalty card offer is now at a number of major aquatic leisure centres and set up cost is around $5/card to cover the chip technology (usually this can be covered by a card brand sponsor) and then the offer in the card for discounts will enable a price for a card purchase to be set which in the first few years is going to be around the $30 to $35 level. There are also opportunities to link the card to commercial sponsors or supplier offers.

The value of the card is not only in the purchase price but also the regular use people make of the offer plus also storing cash on their card and then using this in the WCC aquatic facilities. Most importantly the purchase of the card provides contact details on the user and allows for special offers and special deals to be forwarded on a regular basis.

The most important feature is that using the card allows centres to provide direct entry gates and reduces the need for reception staff once large numbers of people take up the special card offers. If the card can reduce customer entry charge handling by 20% to 30% then this will start to see significant reception staff salary savings.

This technology is now working well in a large range of Australian aquatic leisure centres and is being introduced to New Centres in 2011. The project team believe that such a card would be well received in Wellington City Council aquatic and leisure centres and recommend reviewing and trialling such initiatives

5.5.4 Other Recommended Aquatic Facility Improvement Strategies

There are a range of other aquatic facility improvement strategies that have been identified in the course of this study and these are identified as follows:

1) Khandallah Outdoor Seasonal Pool

Khandallah Outdoor Seasonal Pool was developed in 1925 as part of the park facilities and to service the local area population. This facility is now 86 years old and though unique in layout, water depth and pool configuration is well below the current built aquatic facility standards.

Attendances at the pool have remained very similar for a large number of years. It currently is the lowest used swimming pool with 15,293 visits in 2001/02 and increasing slightly to 16,976 by 2009/10. This is an increase of 1,683 pool visits.

Though visits have increased slightly the operating costs of this limited seasonal pool trends are as follows for the past three financial years:

KHANDALLAH POOL	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Net Revenue	391	560	15,011
Net Expenditure	202,199	213,447	212,004
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	**($201,808)**	**($212,886)**	**($196,993)**

These results indicate that the average spend per user in 2009/10 was $0.88 and the average cost/expenditure per user was $12.48/user. This saw an average deficit per user of $11.60.

These results combined with the age of the pool and the issues of shallow to deep water in the same vessel of water lead us to suggest a review of this facility is warranted. We are sure there are residents close by that grew up with the local pool and will be concerned about change but it is time to look at options and opportunities that will better serve this community for summer seasonal pools and cool off areas.

These may include developing a pool in the park with splash pad and water play features to create a modern and fun family water play area to linking the entrance of the redeveloped pool to the park cafe so it can be operated as a one business model to reduce costs of labour and reception staff.

2 Tawa Pool Programme Room and Children's Pool

The upstairs area of the Tawa Pool appears underutilised and is locked up for club use only. Subject to access conditions that can be negotiated with the swim club there are opportunities to share use of this space and centre management looking at offering dry programmes such as gently exercise for adults, yoga, Tai Chi, children's kinder gym and play sessions etc.

The children's pool also appears very popular with families and new water play equipment should be looked at to modernise this ageing area.

5.6 FUTURE WCC AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table summarises the Wellington Aquatic Facilities Plan Recommendations as identified by SGL Group. At this early stage of future facility plan review we have not allocated any timelines for these recommendations nor costed out the impact which would require more detailed feasibility for a number of the recommendations:

We have listed the recommendations under the key headings of:

- Improved opportunities for Learn to Swim
- Providing more facilities and opportunities to meet the demand of Aquatic sports
- Making the most of existing facilities and pool space through redevelopment

Table 5.3
Wellington City Council Future Aquatic Facilities Plan Recommendations

Plan Category/Area	Recommendation	Actions	LTCCP Impact
1. Improved opportunities for learn to swim	A) Priority School Pools Improvement Grants Scheme	1. Applications for school pool improvement grants should be assessed against the schemes guidelines and key funding criteria but also by reviewing the key learn to swim facility gaps in the relative area of Wellington City as detailed in section 5.5.1 of this report	Already budgeted for in the revised LTCCP
2. Providing more facilities and opportunities to meet the demand of Aquatic sports	A) New WRAC Aquatic Sports Pool	1. Detailed schematic designs and costings be developed for both option 1 – short course and option – 2 long course aquatics sports pool and associated areas	Funds to be reallocated
		2. Council representatives to liaise with Swimming New Zealand and SPARC to test support and funding availability for either option 1 or 2 aquatic sports pool at WRAC	Needs to be developed into a presentation
		3. WCC to complete Kilbirnie Precinct Master Plan showing best layout of all proposed new facilities and zones including car parking, new entrance ways, plant areas, extended community facilities and access	Funds to be reallocated
		4. Final business, funding and feasibility review on aquatic sports pool options and master plan layouts be completed for Council review	Funds to be reallocated
		5. WCC to adopt final recommended facility option for WRAC aquatic sports pool and associated Kilbirnie Precinct and allocate funds for development	Funds to be reallocated
3. Making the most of existing facilities and pool space through redevelopment	A) WRAC Health and Fitness (Club Active) Area Changes	1. Review opportunities for expanding health and fitness areas at WRAC and implications of relocating other activities. This to also include consideration of new areas in the proposed aquatic sports pool development zone.	No direct Cost
		2. Based on findings develop new layout plans for proposed health and fitness expansion at WRAC.	Funds to be allocated
		3. Complete business and operational projections for expanded health and fitness at WRAC	No direct cost
		4. Seek capital funding proposal for LTCCP funding of WRAC health and fitness expansion	Funds to be allocated
	b) Freyberg Pool and Fitness Centre	1. Review the opportunity and suitability of enclosing part or all of the void over reception/entry to create extended health and fitness floor area	
		2. Subject to suitability and meeting any heritage issues complete a capital cost plan for the works and notional health and fitness layout plans and feasibility for operations impact.	Allocation required
		3. Complete works and set up extended health and fitness area	TBD
	C) Investigate Feasibility of Karori Pool Weights and Fitness Facility	1. Complete site and building assessment to determine potential size of development and indicative capital cost. Review to also include car parking and access options.	Allocation required
		2. Subject to area able to be made available complete feasibility and business impact study on developing health and fitness facilities at Karori Pool	Allocation required
		3. Subject to findings from the feasibility and business plan study commence development of health and fitness facilities	TBD

Plan Category/Area	Recommendation	Actions	LTCCP Impact
	D) Keith Spry Pool Health and Fitness Facilities	1. Continue to investigate best option for delivery of health and fitness facilities at Keith Spry Pool as part of staged development	Allocation required
	E) Youth Adventure Facilities (Hydro slides)	1. Complete a feasibility and design review for developing a new youth adventure water activity area at WRAC	Allocation required
		2. Subject to capital cost and operational return results look at funding and programming development over next 3 years.	Allocation required
	F) Expanded Food, Beverage and Merchandising Services Review	1. Review food, beverage and merchandising models across facility network and develop business opportunity report	Allocation required
		2. Develop short list of priority improvements that maximise returns and improve profitability of key sales model at each centre	TBD
	F Wellington Aquatic Leisure Card to Generate New Revenue Streams	1. Retain loyalty card specialist company to review the opportunity and associated cost and revenue impacts associated with implementation and management of a new Wellington Leisure Ca rd.	Allocation required
		2. Subject to findings of the loyalty card review develop an implementation programme short list of priority improvements that maximise returns and improve profitability of key sales model at each centre	Allocation required for start up
	G. Khandallah Outdoor Seasonal Pool	1. Complete options and opportunity review of Khandallah Pool to assist in determining best future development option	Allocation required
	H, Tawa Pool Programme Room and Children's Pool water pl	1. Complete options and opportunity review of Tawa Pool to assist in determining best future development options for the upstairs programme room and children's pool water play area	Allocation required