Foxton Pool Feasibility Study

Information Sheet

Introduction

In the 2019//2020 financial year, Horowhenua District Council commissioned Visitor Solutions Limited to develop an Aquatic Facility Strategy to provide a blueprint for future development of its aquatic facilities. Key findings from the Strategy were:

- Current provision of all-year water-space is low and additional water-space will be needed to meet demand from population growth.
- A gap in the provision of leisure water-space exists.
- There is a high demand from aquatic water sports.
- A growing older population supports demand for hydrotherapy.
- Levin Aquatic Centre is under sized and needs to be expanded.
- Foxton Pool have critical building issues and have low use.
- Jubilee Park Paddling Pool is ageing and unsupervised.

The Council resolved to undertake a three part feasibility study to explore future options for Foxton Pool, Levin Aquatic Centre and Jubilee Park Paddling Pool.

This report summarises the Foxton Pool feasibility study which was progressed more quickly due to the urgency of the building issues, and the need to inform the Long Term Plan 2021- 2041.

Foxton Pool

Foxton Swimming Baths originally opened in 1927 as an outdoor pool on Easton Park, Main Street, Foxton. In December 2007, an indoor facility was opened including a 25x10metre (4 lane) pool, 10x5metre teaching pool and small toddlers' pool. The outdoor pools were closed sometime after 2007 but were never demolished.

The pool building was constructed without a vapour barrier, thermal insulation, or mechanical ventilation. This design directly contributes to high condensation and variable internal temperatures. Excessive condensation has led to high moisture, promoting the risk of fungi and structural decay. The building is performing poorly, accelerating the deterioration of the structure, plant, and equipment. While not a current risk, in time it will become a safety issue.

Use of Foxton Pool

Foxton Pool serves a local catchment including Foxton, Waitārere, Himatangi and Shannon. It currently attracts approximately 2,000 visits per month / 17,000 for an 8-month season. Best practice suggests visits for this type of facility should be around 20,000 to 25,000 visits; equivalent to approximately 3,300 to 4,000 per month. The condition and structured nature of the facility are two likely reasons for low use and limited appeal.

Strategic Alignment

Foxton Pool contributes to Horowhenua District Council's community outcomes of Thriving Communities, An Exuberant Economy, Enabling Infrastructure and Vibrant Cultures. Foxton Pool is strategically located opposite Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom. An appealing aquatic facility which is attractive to visitors could contribute to strategic

objectives to grow visitors as part of the Foxton Futures Economic and Destination Development Plan. Changes to State Highway 1 over the next 10 years have the potential to increase the number of visitors to Foxton (being a major interchange for the proposed motorway). A more appealing aquatic facility could contribute to the attractiveness of Foxton to visit and stay.

Demographic Changes

Horowhenua district is going through an exciting period of growth, with the population forecast to grow from 33,300 in 2018 to 81,000 by 2050. The Foxton Pool catchment is expected to grow from 9,100 to 14,500 over the next 20 years – over 60% growth. This growth is expected across all age groups, with more families and children and a significant older population. The ethnic breakdown of Foxton Pool catchment is not expected to change, with mainly European and Māori residents. The catchment size and profile support the need for aquatic provision providing water play, learning, fitness and relaxation (warm water) opportunities.

Community Views

During October and November 2020, engagement with aquatic stakeholders and the wider Foxton community was undertaken to understand preferences for addressing the issues at Foxton Pool. 676 responses were received, which is a high response rate.

Three potential development options were outlined, with responses:

- 9% of respondents supported the basic option to rebuild the building.
- 10% of respondents supported removing the building to create an outdoor seasonal facility with added leisure components.
- 81% of respondents supported a hybrid approach to rebuild the building and add leisure components to increase the appeal.

Respondent's ratings of important factors were:

- 81% of respondents want a swimming pool retained in Foxton.
- 71% of respondents want an all-year round indoor facility.
- 66% of respondents want the appeal of the facility to be addressed.

Needs Analysis

The feasibility study explored several factors to consider the future of Foxton Pool.

Key Drivers

- Address the deteriorating condition and underlying design issues of Foxton Pool to ensure the facility is safe and fit for purpose.
- Increase the appeal of the facility to improve utilisation and cater for all sectors of the growing population around Foxton.
- Resolve the future of the abandoned outdoor pool area.

Providing for Population Growth

To accommodate potential demand from population growth, the facility could be expanded up to 450m2 of water-space (from 300m2 currently). This would assist in providing increased capacity for the Horowhenua district.

Improving Use and Appeal

To improve use of the facility, there needs to be a strong focus on increasing the appeal for families and young people, and older people by providing better opportunities for water play, learning, fitness and relaxation (warm water) functions.

Increasing Revenue Generation

Providing opportunities for the facility to drive increased revenue through quality learn to swim programmes, dry fitness opportunities, a variety of aquatic programmes and appealing facility.

Options

Using the outcomes of the community engagement and needs assessment, five options were developed for Foxton Pool feasibility study:

Option 1

Indoor and Outdoor Leisure Pool

Building Changes

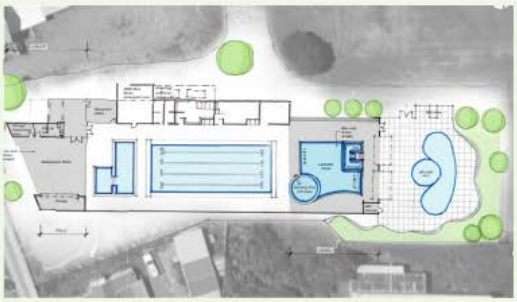
- Demolish and rebuild building.
- Extend building at front for multi-purpose room.
- Extend building at rear to include new leisure pool.
- No change to existing pools.
- Add indoor leisure pool.
- Add splashpad and landscaping at rear.
- Upgrade change rooms.

Operational Changes

- 12 month operation.
- Increase in operating hours: 6am-7pm weekdays and 8am-6pm weekends.
- Expected to increase use of the pool by residents and visitors to Foxton.

Build cost: $9.4 million across the first three years of the LTP (2021 – 2024).

Rates Impact: $44.53 per year from 2024/25



Option 2

Basic All-year Pool

Building Changes

- Demolish and rebuild building.
- No change to pools.
- Upgrade change rooms.
- Restore abandoned outdoor area to grass

Operational Changes

- 12 month operation.
- Increase operating hours: 6am-7pm weekdays and 8am-6pm weekends.
- Not expected to change level of use.

Build cost: $2.6 million across the first two years of the LTP (2021 – 2023).

Rates Impact: $26.61 per year from 2024/25

Option 3

Seasonal Outdoor Leisure Pool

Building Changes

- Demolish existing building.
- Rebuild change room and admin building.
- Upgrade change rooms.
- Existing pools become outdoor heated pools.
- Add outdoor leisure pool.
- Add outdoor splashpad.
- Cover over the teaching/toddler pool.
- Abandoned outdoor area becomes landscaped space.

Operational Changes

- 5 months operation (mid October - March)
- 10am-7pm opening hours (slightly longer).
- Forecast to increase the number of visits.
- 1 term learn to swim.
- 1 holiday learn to swim.
- Reduce aquacise.

Build cost: $4.4 million across the first three years of the LTP (2021 – 2024).

Rates Impact: $22.00 per year from 2024/25

Option 4

Seasonal Outdoor Basic Pool

Building Changes

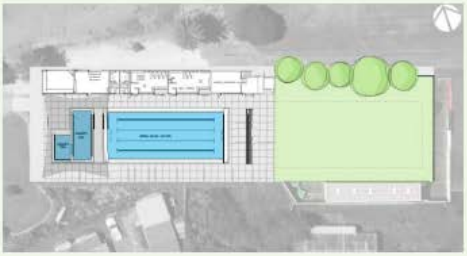
- Demolish existing building.
- Rebuild change room and admin building.
- Upgrade change rooms.
- Existing pools become outdoor heated pools.
- Cover over the teaching/toddler pool.
- Restore abandoned outdoor area to grass.

Operational Changes

- 5 months operation (mid October - March).
- 10am-7pm opening hours (slightly longer).
- Forecast to decrease the number of visits.
- 1 term learn to swim.
- 1 holiday learn to swim.
- Reduce aquacise.

Build cost: $1.9 million across the first three years of the LTP (2021 – 2024).

Rates Impact: $16.02 per year from 2024/25



Option 5

Permanently Close Facility

Building Changes

- Remove indoor pool building and pools.
- Remove outdoor pool.
- Restore to grass.

Operational Changes

- Cease current operations.
- Likely to increase use of Levin Aquatic Centre.

Closure cost: $350,000 in 2021.

Rates Impact: saving of $12.49 per year from 2021/22

	Option 1 All-Year Leisure	Option 2 All-Year Basic	Option 3 Seasonal Leisure	Option 4 Seasonal Basic	Option 5 Close the pool
Indoor provision – All-year	✓	✓			
Outdoor provision – Seasonal			✓	✓	
25m Pool	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Leisure Pool	✓		✓		
Teacher/Toddler Pools	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Splashpad	✓		✓		
Upgrade change rooms	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Cover over Teaching/Toddler Pools	✓		✓	✓	
Outdoor landscaping/BBQ area	✓		✓		
Multi-purpose room	✓				
Rates impact	$44.53	$26.61	$22.00	$16.02	-$12.49

Feasibility Study Evaluation of Options

While financial impacts are very important, the feasibility study assessment considered other factors including the impact on the aquatic network, participants, functionality, wider community returns and visitor appeal.

Considering all factors within the feasibility study, Option 1 had the highest evaluation score. While the overall costs of this option are higher than Option 2, it provides strong benefits including:

- Providing an all-year round facility which the community supports.
- Improving the appeal of the facility which the community supports.
- Providing new leisure and relaxation opportunities which expands the appeal of the facility across the community and to visitors.
- Will help reduce demand pressure on Levin Aquatic Centre and accommodate demand from population growth.
- Increases the efficiency of the water-space.
- Includes a flexible fitness space which will help drive revenue.

Overall, Option 1 provides a comprehensive facility which will meet a wide cross section of community needs, and is sized appropriately for the population now and into the future.

Option 2, which rebuilds the facility with no changes to the pool, was selected by Horowhenua District Council (HDC) as the preferred option in the draft Long Term Plan. Option 2 provides community benefit by retaining a swimming pool in Foxton but will not deliver the wide range of benefits delivered by Option 1.

Option 3, making the facility an outdoor pool has benefits, but likely to have less community support due to the seasonal operation. Both Option 4 (basic outdoor pool) and Option 5 (close facility) are likely to have high community opposition.

Why we are consulting

In November 2020 aquatic stakeholders and the wider Foxton community were asked for feedback on the redevelopment of Foxton Pool. Over 650 community members provided feedback with strong support for a redevelopment that included both indoor and outdoor aquatic provision. The community feedback refined the options that would be explored in the feasibility study.

The completed feasibility study provides detailed analysis on each of the five options, including the build cost and rates impact. Council are proposing Option 2 Basic All-Year pool in the LTP 2021-41 Consultation Document, and want to hear from the community if they agree with the proposed option.

Where you can find out more information and have your say

- Online: www.horowhenua.govt.nz/GrowingOurFutureTogether
- By email: ltp@horowhenua.govt.nz
- On paper:
    - By dropping your submission into the Horowhenua District Council Office in Levin, Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō in Levin, or Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom in Foxton.
    - By posting your submission to Horowhenua District Council, Private Bag 4002, Levin 5540.

Note: The submission form has been combined with the LTP 2021-41 Consultation Document.

Horowhenua DISTRICT COUNCIL

SUMMARY OF FOXTON POOLS DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS – SCOPE, COSTS, OUTCOMES & ASSESSMENT

	OPTION 1 ALL-YEAR LEISURE	OPTION 2 ALL-YEAR BASIC	OPTION 3 SEASONAL LEISURE	OPTION 4 SEASONAL BASIC	OPTION 5 CLOSE FACILITY
Scope	Indoor lap pool Indoor teaching pool Indoor leisure & spa pool Outdoor splashpad Outdoor landscaped area Multi-purpose fitness space	Indoor lap pool Indoor teaching pool	Outdoor lap pool Covered teaching pool Outdoor leisure & spa pool Outdoor splashpad Outdoor landscaped area	Outdoor lap pool Covered teaching pool Outdoor grass space (no landscaping)	Demolish & close facility
Operation	12-month operation Weekdays 6am to 7pm Weekends 8am to 6pm	12-month operation Weekdays 6am to 7pm Weekends 8am to 6pm	22 weeks operation Every day 10am to 7pm	22 weeks operation Every day 10am to 7pm	No operations
Capex Cost	$9.4 million	$2.6 million	$4.4 million	$1.9 million	$350,000
Year 1 visits	59,132	26,607	21,274	10,616	Loss of 17,000 visits
Opex Cost	$345,000 per annum	$350,000 per annum	$190,000 per annum	$200,000 per annum	Saving of $230,000
Outcomes	✓ Address condition & design issues. ✓ Increase appeal & use. ✓ Resolve outdoor area. ✓ Increase capacity for population growth. ✓ Provide all core functions. ✓ All-year facility ✓ Improve revenue	✓ Address condition & design issues. ✓ Resolve outdoor area. ✓ All-year facility. × No additional appeal & use. × No capacity for growth. × Limited core functions. × No additional revenue.	✓ Address condition issues. ✓ Increase appeal & use. ✓ Resolve outdoor area. ✓ Increase capacity for population growth. ✓ Provide all core functions. × Seasonal facility. × Limited revenue generation.	✓ Address condition issues. ✓ Resolve outdoor area. × No additional appeal & use. × No capacity for growth. × Limited core functions. × Seasonal facility. × No revenue generation.	✓ Address condition issues. ✓ Resolve outdoor area. × No aquatic facility to meet community needs. × No capacity for growth.
Assessment	• Strongest outcomes for improved use, utilisation, and efficiency. • Highest capital cost. • Higher operating costs. • Net impact on rates of ~1.37% 30-year average.	• Increases the total visits but efficiency does not improve as the visits are spread over 12 months. • Low capital cost. • Higher operating costs. • Net impact on rates of ~0.58% 30-year average.	• Increases use, utilisation and improves efficiency. • Lowest operating costs (reduces current costs). • Mid-range capital cost. • Not heavily supported by community.	• Reduces use, utilisation, and efficiency. • Lower operating costs. • Lowest capital cost. • Likely strong opposition by the community.	• No facility will be a significant community loss. • Strong community opposition anticipated. • Eliminates operating costs.
Conclusion	**Strongest overall option**, whilst the highest cost, provides strongest and wide-reaching benefits.	Third best option, low capital cost but higher operating costs. No additional benefit.	Second best option, mid-range costs, increases appeal, but likely to have less community support.	Weakest development option and likely to generate community opposition.	Weakest option and likely to generate strong community opposition.