

# Aquatic Centre Project

## Answers to your questions

There was a good public response to the updated plans for the proposed Aquatic Centre. Most people responded with thoughtful, positive questions or suggestions. We have reviewed the questions and provided the answers under a number of broad themes, as there are a lot of similarities in what people are asking. Some questions did not relate to the concept plans and are not covered here. There were a number of people who made comments rather than asked questions. These comments will be taken into consideration when a final project consultation report is provided to Council.

*Note: we suggest you keep these pages as a reference for when you fill out the submission form, which will be printed in this publication on 3 December.*

### Facilities

The proposed Aquatic Centre is more than a swimming pool. It is a versatile multi-use facility, incorporating a twin hydroslide, steam, sauna and spa facilities, a leisure and play area for children, a lap pool, a passive hot pool, as well as indoor and outdoor recreational areas. The depths of the pools range from zero on ramps to 1.8m to cater for a full range of uses.

### The Fitness Centre

A number of people have asked for a Fitness Centre to be included in the proposal but others have questioned whether it is necessary. Most Aquatic Centres, however, have a gym or fitness facilities, as people appear to like to have a choice or even combine 'dry' and 'wet' exercise.

No decision has been on how or who will operate the Fitness Centre. It could be aligned with an existing gym.

The Fitness Centre capital cost is around \$1.7 million. Its operating cost, however, is offset by membership: with 700 members it would be cost neutral and with more than 700 members it would actually reduce the ongoing rate input for the Aquatic Centre.

### Wellness and disabled facilities

The Aquatic Centre has a real focus on wellness and catering for people of all abilities and ages. This has included significant thought on how to provide access and facilities to enable disabled people to use the Aquatic Centre. For instance the therapeutic passive hot pool has a ramp to enable easy access, a beach entry provides access to the leisure pool, and a hoist-seat provides entry to the lap-pool. One of the changing rooms will also be set up with facilities for disabled people, including an adult change table and hoist.

The wellness focus is appropriate in our community, which has a higher than average number of people aged 65 and over.

### Diving and wave pools

Diving and wave pools have been ruled out at this stage because of practicality and cost. Both types of pool would add significant building cost, while wave pools are particularly expensive to operate. A diving pool could be added to the facility in the future.

### The lap pool

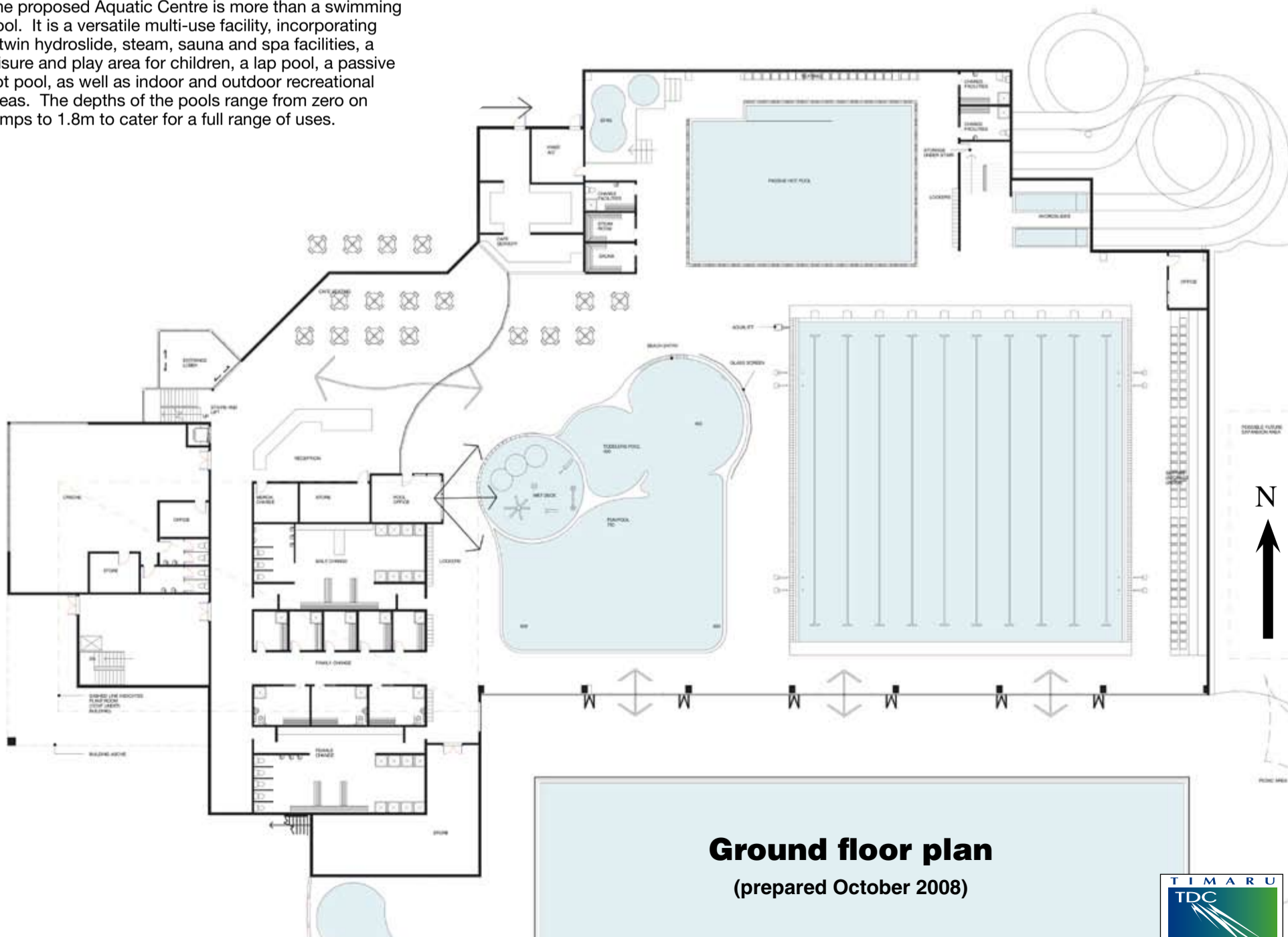
The 25 metre lap pool has 10 lanes - a couple more than most 50 metre pools - and provides a good size for swimming and other uses. A 50 metre pool would be significantly more expensive - to build and to operate- a major consideration for Council. Major swim meets are increasingly confined to bigger cities, for logistical and travel reasons, with very little opportunity for Timaru to secure these events, even if a 50 metre pool existed.

### Outdoor area and car-parking

An outdoor seating area, with sunshade cover, will be provided on the northwest face of the centre, connected to the indoor café seating area. Car-parking will also be provided in the area to the northwest of the facility, adjacent to the main entry.

### Maori Park pool

The remaining life-span of the existing Maori Park pool, according to expert advice, is around 10 years provided necessary repairs and maintenance are carried out. Council will review the options for this pool as part of its long-term strategic planning process in six years time.



**Ground floor plan**  
(prepared October 2008)

# Aquatic Centre Project

## Consultation timeline

### 22-27 November

- Answers to questions published

### 29 November – 12 December

- Public feedback via questionnaire

### Early 2009

- Council will make a decision on whether or not to proceed with the proposed Aquatic Centre

## Learn to swim

The Aquatic Centre will include a number of pools with different temperatures and depths to cater for people of all ages and stages of learning to swim.

The large fun pool and smaller toddlers pool will be ideal for teaching toddlers to swim, depending on their age and progress. The lap pool will be large enough to accommodate learn-to-swim classes, lap swimming, as well as aqua-joggers.

## Pedestrian and cycle accessibility

The Timaru District Council is working closely with the New Zealand Transport Agency to ensure access to the Aquatic Centre is safe for everyone.

Upgrades to the Evans/Te Weka intersection may be necessary to accommodate the increased foot, cycle and vehicle traffic.

It is also likely that cycle lanes will be created to encourage more people to bike to the centre and cycle stands will be available for visitors to securely store their bikes.

## District facilities

All existing district pool facilities (Temuka, Geraldine, Pleasant Point) will remain open for the foreseeable future. The Pleasant Point pool will be upgraded within 12 months. The new pool liner has already been ordered.

The district pool facilities are mainly 'summer pools', and only open for around four months of the year. The proposed Aquatic Centre will give Timaru district residents year-round access to an excellent indoor pool and leisure facility.

## Resource use and sustainability

The Aquatic Centre is being designed taking into account sustainability principles and an additional \$500,000 has been allowed in the project budget to

ensure appropriate materials and techniques are used.

The water used in the Aquatic Centre will be recycled indefinitely through high-quality filters, so apart from the initial filling of the pools water use is minimal.

The water-heating method has yet to be determined and will be investigated during the detailed design phase. The cost of heating, however, has been included in the operating cost budget.

## Money matters

The Timaru District Council has considered carefully how to fund the proposed Aquatic Centre in a fair and sustainable way.

The funding model proposed for the Aquatic Centre is similar to that already used for a number of existing Council facilities which contribute to general community well-being, and which are paid for by a mixture of user-charges and rate contributions.

The projected capital cost of the Aquatic Centre is \$23.5 million. This figure has been independently assessed and peer reviewed. All costs have been calculated in 2011 dollars and the figure includes costs incurred during the consultation stage. This means costs are realistic, transparent and take into account all reasonable contingencies.

## Funding mix

A mixture of revenue sources will be used to raise the \$23.5 million needed to construct the Aquatic Centre.

Council reserves will contribute around \$3.3 million. This will be drawn from an existing special fund that the Council has set aside for projects such as this.

Around \$11 million will come from loans that will be paid back over 30 years – so that future rate-payers also contribute rather than existing rate-payers meeting the whole capital cost.

An external fundraising strategy is in place to explore funding opportunities, including applications to organisations such as the Lotteries Commission. Funding will also come from a mix of sponsorships, donations and bequests. Between \$8 and \$9 million will need to be secured in this way for the project to go ahead.

The proposed year 1 (2011/12) rate charge of \$102 (which will reduce with time) will go towards repaying the \$11 million loan as well as meeting ongoing operating costs for the Aquatic Centre.

## Operating revenue and costs

Revenue from the Aquatic Centre will help meet operating costs and reduce the annual rate charge.

The following table shows the projected Aquatic Centre

revenue as well as the rates contribution in years one and seven:

	Revenue	Rates
Year 1	\$2.03 million	\$2.02 million
Year 7	\$2.98 million	\$1.65 million

Revenue streams include the fitness centre, the café, a merchandise shop, the hydroslide, swimming lessons, as well as swimming clubs and other organisations hiring specific facilities for events (it is not expected the Aquatic Centre will be totally closed for private events).

Revenues have been calculated using conservative and realistic assumptions and it is not expected the rate charge will need to be increased.

## Pool charges

The Timaru District Council has proposed a modest entry charge of \$5 per adult and \$3 per child. There will also be membership charges for the Fitness Centre.

Concession ticket options will be offered to encourage regular usage. Consideration will also be given to providing reduced charges for Community Service Card holders, students and Super Gold Card holders.

ACC do not provide capital funding, however, it may cover a portion of entry costs for its clients using the therapeutic facilities.

## Operational costs

A costs analysis, based on expected annual admissions of 287,000 in year one rising to 322,000 by year seven, has calculated operational expenses, which has been used to determine the ongoing rates charge. Operational expenses are:

- Staffing
- Energy
- Water treatment
- Maintenance
- Depreciation
- Interest on loans
- Promotion
- Consumables

As with revenues, these costs have been calculated using conservation and realistic assumptions, with advice and input from experts in managing aquatic centres.

## Economic uncertainty

In times of economic uncertainty, the proposed Aquatic Centre can be seen as a positive investment in our local economy. It will create local employment and provide a facility that will benefit the wider community.

The global economic situation will be monitored closely by Timaru District Council and any adverse effects taken into account when it makes the final decision in early 2009. By the time the Aquatic Centre is completed in 2011, economists believe the global financial crisis will have eased.



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