



Voice of the Community – Part 2

Naenae pool & fitness centre

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Background

Returning a pool to Naenae has been a priority for the council since earthquake risks closed the original pool in 2019. The pool and fitness suite had been a hub for residents across Lower Hutt and a resource for aquatic sports groups from across the region for 65 years. We know its closure has been felt not just within Naenae, but throughout the region and we are focused on returning the best facility we can for our communities.

We have worked to engage with our local and regional communities to understand requirements of the new facility, delivering a centre that once again becomes the heart of Naenae.

Hillary Court



While the pool is an important piece of the work to re-energise the Naenae town centre we also took the opportunity during the initial Voice of the Community engagement in 2019 to gather the views of local residents looking at the whole town centre. It was clear the people of Naenae had specific views on how they wanted their community to be able to work, socialise and come together and the role of the town centre and facilities as part of that.

You asked for a group that could help keep community needs central to this project ongoing, so we established a Community Advisory Group – a representative group of local people. They have supported us by keeping the voice of the community alive as we progress with the design of the new pool and the wider work to revitalise the Naenae town centre.

In October 2021, we came back out to residents and key users of the pool to present the draft designs for the new Naenae Pool and Fitness Centre which had been developed with input from mana whenua, the Community Advisory Group and aquatic sport groups. This report outlines the feedback themes we got back from Lower Hutt residents and aquatic sports groups. This feedback was considered before finalising plans for construction in 2022.



The design brief

Brief

The 2019 Voice of the Community report, along with feedback from the Community Advisory Group, clearly showed key areas on which the new pool needed to deliver.

This facility is more than just a pool, it is a focal point to the town centre adding a vitality and pulse to areas around Hillary Court and to the community itself.

The community was clear, the new pool must:

- Contribute to revitalising Naenae town-centre.
- Restore the 50m pool and providing for aquatic sports and schools.
- Retain a zoom-tube for everyone to enjoy.
- Provide enough space for large groups to visit, relax, and get together.
- Be sustainable and affordable.

Inspiration

Our local people were clear that any new centre should represent Naenae, its cultural story and modern history. Inspiration for the look, and how the building sits within the landscape, came from the cultural narrative shared by Kura Moeahu of Te Āti Awa and the cultural design by Len Hetet.

The ancient and metaphysical beings

The guardians summonsed by the Mountain Clan

The battle that scarred our mother earth

To fashion upon her skin the land known as Te Ngaengae (Naenae).

The waters that feed, sustain and nourish the land be exhumed form the rivers Te Awamutu and Waiwhetu to this very day.

Gifted by the ancient ones.



Naenae's modern history as a model suburb is based on the 'garden city movement'. Hillary Court was intended as the focus of community life.

These stories can be seen in the design by the Kaka- Bold architecture with strong lines, hard angles, and fractured shapes. This represents the tectonic forces and fissures evoking the tupua who have the power to uplift the land and create waterways. The proposed simple, modern building also links to the Modernist building heritage of the area, ensuring both the Māori and non-Māori history is celebrated.

The design also seeks to form Honohono - Connections, connects the sea, land, and people, connects communities, connects people to stories, connects the building to the town-centre. The design creates Manaaki - Shared landscape, celebrating Mana Whenua values, celebrating modern history, inviting touch, wanting to be a part of something special and building future interaction.

The approach

Thanks to the extensive community input from 2019 we had strong ideas for the design of the new pool and fitness centre. With the draft concept plan developed, we came back out to our local communities and key stakeholders to gather thoughts on the design.

We started gathering feedback at the Naenae Markets from 16 October, running across four weekends and closing on 8 November. During this time, we took the opportunity to:

- Speak directly with local people at the Naenae Library, Naenae Saturday Markets, meetings with key pool user groups, Naenae Club House and the Community Advisory Group
- Meet with mana whenua
- Used Council and Naenae local social media, digital newsletters to encourage people to fill in the feedback form
- Promoted the online feedback form on havehoursay.huttcity.govt.nz/naenae
- Delivered a hard copy to all homes in Naenae and printed it in the Hutt News as well as having copies at Naenae Library, Huia and Stokes Valley Pools.
- Used the Hutt News to promote the feedback and draft concept plans

400+

responses

from people across Lower Hutt and wider aquatic sports users.

39%

are connected to an aquatic sport

1/3rd

of respondents were from Naenae

A good mix of age groups is represented from those under 20 years old right through to those aged 70 plus and even some children sent us their pictures of ideas for the kids play pool.



What you said

Overall feedback on the design was positive with some of your comments describing a modern, light, spacious and airy centre that is welcoming and reflects your community.

People were pleased to see a connection to the town centre, that we were keeping the 50m pool and had made it possible for the centre to be flexible to cater for multiple activities.

You also liked that we had provided good facilities for young children, the layout offered more space between the main pool and children's area and we had a better design of the outdoor area.

Overall, most people felt the new design will provide a centre for all the community, delivering relaxed fun times, while also delivering on things like learn to swim for schools and the ability for a variety of aquatic sports teams to use the space.

Looking at feedback under some of the big themes we have grouped some comments under the following sections.

"I like the whole proposed design is to make Naenae very popular and alive."

"Simple and appropriate to the location. Functional, flexible, futureproof, not too flashy, Architecture and design reflects local story especially the diverse history."

"I really like that it is family friendly, with space for families to have Birthdays indoors and outdoors."

"Modern, community focussed, homage to the old pool."

"I love the natural light and the fact that the entrance is far more open and has space for groups and multiple people to move around..."



Transport

There were some concerns regarding the number and location of carparks and provision for bike storage.

Many of the decisions around the impact of transport to and from the centre are still being worked through. These decisions will take into consideration the access and availability of all forms of transport servicing the area around the Pool and Fitness Centre.

This includes public transport, cycleways, as well as parking around Hillary Court (more than 200 carparks around the Hillary Court mall). As we get closer to these decisions, we will consider feedback for safe drop off zones, access from the carpark for those with disabilities, sufficient carparks for competition events and safe storage for bikes.

Accessibility

Many of you thought the plan showed a great improvement to accessible access for people with disabilities, those with young children and large groups.

Each of these groups have different requirements, and we will continue to make sure the new pool works for all these needs.

Some of the things we will look at include single level entry, wide spaces for wheelchairs and prams, non-slip floor surfaces, spacious changing facilities, sufficient showers, sufficient storage, warm water and ramp access into the pools.

Cost

The ongoing cost of operating the facility is an important consideration. This includes how the centre can be used, the number of people accessing the facilities but also included is the sustainability of the design and the impact of ongoing running costs.

A key consideration within these decisions is the cost of entry for all users and in particular local residents. Further work is being undertaken on cost and sustainability.



Facilities

Similarly, like finding the balance between aquatic sports and community, we also need to manage what amenities can be included in the space and budget.

This means while we have had suggestions for additional amenities such as a spa pool and sauna, additional bulkhead or extra zoom tube at this stage the budget will not be able to accommodate additional components. Once there is better clarity of the costs, the addition of these components will be reviewed.

We are making the design as flexible as possible to allow for growth and be adaptable to the changing needs of our communities.

Competition capacity

We understand the importance of Naenae Pool for our aquatic sports users within Lower Hutt and the wider Wellington region to have access to competition quality facilities. We are focused on finding the balance in the design to offer the best community and aquatic sports facility we can. Finding this balance means the design must enable the centre to work as hard as it can to benefit all users.

The design as it stands will be able to host regular school and club activities for swimming, water polo, underwater hockey and canoe polo including local and regional events.

Based on feedback, we have continued to review where improvements can be made to provide more seating for competitors and supporters and more flexible use of the main pool for sports such as water polo.

We are unable to build a facility to accommodate all aquatic events as other facilities in New Zealand have been designed for these large-scale events. Some aquatic sports like diving will not be able to be held in the future facility. We have looked at budget, finding the balance between community, sports, and sustainability, while also taking the wider view of how the Naenae Centre fits within the wider regional and national aquatic facility network.



Outside fitness centre



Park side of pool complex



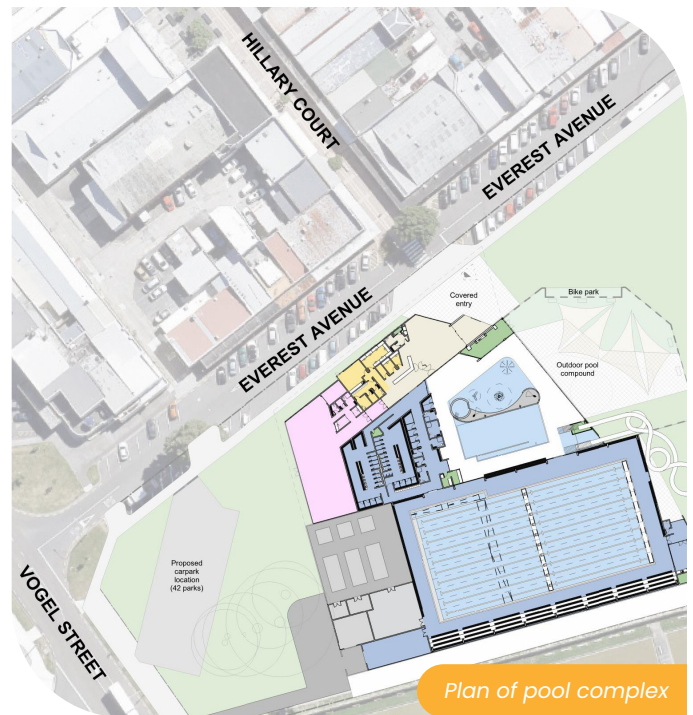
Main pool - 50m

Ongoing development of concept design

Your feedback has confirmed we have many things right.

Based on the feedback, we have made improvements to the areas we can within our budget predictions such as changing rooms and showers, freestanding seating that can be put up for special sporting events and a focus on future proofing running costs to ensure the centre is affordable for everyone.

We will continue to look at changes to the design if they fit withing the overall cost of the project.



Summary

We are pleased the most recent feedback for the new Naenae Pool and Fitness Centre shows we have got the right mix of community needs alongside those for our aquatic sports and fitness users. Feedback shows most people are happy with the design and simply keen for construction to get underway.

We are proud the design will reflect Naenae's heritage and the diversity and history of the community. The return of this important facility is an important part of the revitalisation of the Naenae town centre.

Next steps

Following the community feedback, final design will be compiled along with cost exercise. Detailed design is in progress and construction will start in mid 2022.

Demolition is due to be completed by May 2022, when enabling works on the site will commence.

The new Naenae Pool and Fitness Centre is scheduled for completion in 2024.

It is our vision for a lively, functional town centre with multiple spaces and facilities that are connected and work together to deliver the needs of the local community. This work is more than just a pool it is about us supporting community and breathing life back into the heart of Naenae's town centre.

Stay in touch

You can stay in touch with progress on the pool at:

www.hutt.city/naenaepool

or

Pop in and talk to the team at Naenae Library

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