

NESE Submission to the Draft Recovery Strategy for Greater Christchurch.

October 2010

1) We've highlighted the most important lessons we've learnt since the earthquakes began - but are there others?

Secondary education planning for greater Christchurch was already a focus of change before the earthquakes. Plans established before the earthquake should not be abandoned without direct consultation with affected communities and stakeholders.

Communities that were already short of facilities before the earthquake are now uncertain. However, the Education Strategy Review has encouraged education sector input and empowered individuals and communities to envisage their education future.

The Christchurch North East Secondary Education Committee Inc. has been actively engaging with the community in North East Christchurch for three years. We promote and advocate to advance secondary education in the North East of Christchurch. We are an advocate for parents and children in the North East of Christchurch. We currently have 1078 subscribing families who urgently look for increased secondary education provision as a pivotal factor in their decision on whether to stay here or move away.

2) Together, do these goals describe the recovered greater Christchurch that you want?

Yes.

All communities in greater Christchurch will now have the opportunity to reassess their educational needs and focus on secondary school sites so suburban areas can secure increased investment.

Services including education will need to be coupled to housing areas and be accessible to their communities.

A focus would be for active transport in each suburb, linking services, businesses and schooling.

The natural environment would become a focus for learning with schools situated so that the natural environment is incorporated into the curriculum and the vision of sustainable communities can be fulfilled.

2B) Are there other key goals we should seek to achieve?

Other goals would include:-

Make suburbs “whole” through provision of all the amenities and services required for sustainable living.

Make living locally including shopping, education, sports and recreation a priority in each suburb.

Creating a revered and desirable image of local community secondary education where a good education at any secondary school across Christchurch is viewed as being of equal value.

Prioritize local secondary schooling.

Use this unique situation to attach communities back to their local secondary school.

Arrange for all High schools to finish co-sharing and return to normal teaching hours and a regular length of school day so families can return to a more normal life.

3) Given demands on resources, do you support the priorities identified?

Yes.

Early wins will be stronger wins with new comprehensive constructions, ahead of replacement projects.

We need to carefully consider infrastructure provision in new areas where families will be relocating to. Even if significant amounts of the orange zone will no longer be residential, the proposed replacement subdivisions in North East Christchurch are in close proximity to these orange areas. Significantly, the current demand for services in this area will increase if these orange areas go green. The population in this area will demand shops, schools and facilities.

Prior to the earthquake North East Christchurch had the advantage of every other amenity and facility required to sustain a community except a secondary school. Building a secondary school would make a focal point, provide all the amenities the community needs and it could be paid for with a PPP. Creating a local secondary school as a community facility would provide the school hall, gym, pool and classrooms to be used for extended learning possibilities for primary schools, adults and the community. This would create a community of learners. The whole of North East Christchurch would then be an “Early Win”.

4) There’s no perfect number of Recovery Plans, so if you think we need other plans tell us what and why.

We are pleased to see the Education Renewal Recovery Plan is one of your six key priorities. The Ministry of Education must forward plan to provide areas with comprehensive education services from early childhood through to secondary education as well as continuing education provision.

5) Recovery requires confidence - of insurers, banks, developers, investors, business owners, residents and visitors. Will the proposed Plans provide sufficient confidence for people to progress recovery?

Land zoning will affect many decisions. Residents will need to continue their current lifestyle. They will remain in Christchurch if they can be confident that their basic needs are provided for, namely employment, housing, family life and access to a full range of education services.

6) What will ensure decision makers deliver the recovery we want, as soon as we need it, at a cost we can afford?

Communities need to be given the opportunity to be involved with developing the different recovery plans. Decision makers need to communicate with communities at a grass roots level. Recognizing a community's history, current culture and social norms will be an important part of rebuilding its future. We suggest contacting a wide spectrum of groups directly via the Christchurch City Council Networking Forum database.

We need to make our rebuild money stretch far across Christchurch City. It is important that comprehensive plans for developments are not turned into personal statements by architects. Basic function should be the priority. Common sense decisions need to be made promptly. Embellishment and extravagance have no place in the City's early rebuilding phase.

7) What else needs to be assessed when monitoring the Recovery Strategy?

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8) Are there any circumstances when a review of the Recovery Strategy may be required?

Significant population increase in any area.

9) Do you have any other comments about the Draft Recovery strategy?

Development of the Education Renewal Recovery Plan should include consideration of two documents our Committee wrote prior to the earthquake. These remain valid sources of comprehensive information on secondary school education in North East Christchurch. Please refer to NESE's website www.nese.org.co.nz to view "Proposal to Build a New High School in the North East of Christchurch Following Investigation into Secondary Education Requirements" which NESE committee members presented to Parliament's Education Select Committee, along with NESE's "Report to the Ministry of Education for Consideration in Conjunction with the Area Report on North East Christchurch".