

BELFAST AREA PLAN

Phase 1 Report - An Assessment of Community Facilities

July 2009



CHRISTCHURCH
CITY COUNCIL - YOUR PEOPLE - YOUR CITY

Lead Author

Doru Hozias Subdivision Assistant, Environmental Policy and Approvals Unit

Matt Bonis Consultant, Planit Associates

Contributors

Marie Lopez Policy Planner, Strategy and Planning Group

Ivan Thomson Team Leader, Strategy and Planning Group

DISCLAIMER

The Council does not guarantee the accuracy of the data or information contained in this Phase 1 Report. Whilst every endeavour has been made to compile data and information that is up to date and relevant, not all of it has been, or is capable of being verified. This Phase 1 Report on an Assessment of Community Facilities, and others for the Belfast Area Plan, should not be relied upon for the purposes of any proposed property transaction, including subdivision or land use approvals and building consents. The recommendations provided in this report do not guarantee that any or all of the land is suitable for development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A good and healthy community can develop only within a safe environment, with attractive settings and by being close to public facilities such as schools, shops, open space and public transport.

It is the Council's role to set objectives that are going to meet these expectations and to promote consistently planning and funding procedures to provide community facilities and services.

This report addresses aspects of "liveability" and of those services that are in place to support, assist and provide for the social needs and liveability of individuals as well as for the whole community.

The identity and viability of a community is reinforced by its social infrastructure. The purpose of this report is to outline the basic social infrastructure needs that Belfast community has in terms of health, safety and security, social connectedness, cultural expression, education and standard of living.

The community structure in terms of social fabric and nature of household is defined by demographic drivers as well as other significant social characteristics. There have been numerous consultation processes in the local area on the topic of social infrastructure provision, including that carried out in 2003 by the Christchurch City Council.

The report identifies key community issues as:

- **Increasing number of children and young people.** The young generation has limited recreational and community facilities to cater exclusively for it.
- **Demand for additional education centre/services.** Based on natural growth, but with the added impetus of continued urban expansion, the need (in the relatively short term) for an additional education facility (as extension of existent school or as a new development) and a community library is identified.
- **The community is lacking a well defined 'sense of place'.** The community needs a community centre (as a separate special designated building or integrated with other major social development, such as in conjunction with the new primary school or a new library).
- **Community needs more integration not separation.** The new Greenfield subdivisions should integrate and participate to Belfast community life, and can be sustained only if facilities and associated programs are developed in a balanced way. Additionally, the level of efficiency and further development of the current services need to align to what the Council offers to any suburbs within the city area. There is a need to improve public transport services (as new connections and in terms of an increase of the frequency and quality of operational service).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	6
2.0	LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT	7
2.1	Local Government Act 2002	7
2.2	Resource Management Act	8
2.3	Christchurch City Plan	8
3.0	PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT	10
3.1	Community Health	10
3.2	Safety and Security (crime stats)	10
3.3	Social Connectedness	11
3.4	Cultural Expression	12
3.5	Development and Planning Principles	12
3.6	Community and Cultural Development	13
4.0	ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR PLANNING COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN THE CITY	13
4.1	Definitions	13
4.2	Trends	14
4.3	Existing City Planning	14
4.4	City-Wide Gaps and Issues	15
4.5	Summary and Implications for Belfast	17
5.0	DEMOGRAPHICS	18
5.1	Population Growth	18
5.2	Age	19
5.3	New Developments	20
5.4	Culture and Race	22
5.5	Migration	22
5.6	Deprivation	22
5.7	Greenfield Developments	23
5.8	Summary	25
6.0	NORTH-WEST COMMUNITY FACILITY PROVISION	25
6.1	Childcare/Schools	25
6.2	Sports Clubs and Facilities	25
6.3	Churches	26
6.4	Council Housing	26
6.5	Major Public Community Facilities	27
6.6	Commercial Centres	27
6.7	Transportation	27
6.8	North-West summary and implications	28
7.0	BELFAST FACILITIES	31
7.1	Childcare/Schools	31
7.2	Sports Clubs and Facilities	31
7.3	Churches	31
7.4	Medical Facilities	31

7.5	Other Community Facilities/Services	31
7.6	Belfast Community Network	32
7.7	Council Housing	32
7.8	Libraries	32
7.9	Parks and Playgrounds	32
7.10	Parks and Reserves	33
7.11	Transportation	33
7.12	Belfast summary and implications	33
8.0	CONSULTATION	36
8.1	Belfast Area Plan Consultation	36
8.2	Belfast Surveys	37
8.3	Consultation Summary	39
9.0	ISSUE SUMMARY AND IMPLEMENTATION	40
9.1	Growth Issues	40
9.2	Growth Principles:	41
9.3	Implications and Mechanisms	42
10.0	THE COUNCIL'S ROLE	45
10.1	Summary and Implications for Belfast	47
11.0	CONCLUSIONS	48
12.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY	49

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Crime Statistics – Belfast 1 July 2005 – 30 June 2006.....	11
Figure 2	Belfast Population Growth, 1991 – 2006.	18
Figure 3	Christchurch City/Belfast Population Growth, 1991 – 2006.....	18
Figure 4	Christchurch City/Belfast Age cohort comparison.....	19
Figure 5	Christchurch City/Belfast Age cohort comparison.....	20
Figure 6	Belfast-Building Consents Issued for new dwellings, 1991 to 2006	20
Figure 7	Wider Belfast-Building Consents Issued for new dwellings, 1991 to 2006	21
Figure 8	Ethnicity of Belfast Residents.....	22
Figure 9	Christchurch City Deprivation Index.....	23
Figure 10	Christchurch City/Belfast - Household composition	24
Figure 11	Sports grounds and facilities	26
Figure 12	Significant community facilities in the north-west of Christchurch	29
Figure 13	Community services and sports groups.....	30
Figure 14	Belfast Community Childcare Facilities.....	31
Figure 15	Belfast Community Network, Organised Activities – December 2006.....	32
Figure 16	Belfast - Council Community Facilities.....	34
Figure 17	Non-Council Community Facilities	35
Figure 18	Belfast Community Consultation Anticipated Outcomes 2003/2004	36
Figure 19	2004 Community Needs Research Project results	38

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Belfast has changed substantially especially over the last ten years, and, in future, will continue to undergo considerable change, in line with the Urban Development Strategy and its implementation as a consequence of Change 1 to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement. Belfast's population is rapidly increasing, the area being one of Christchurch's suburbs with a rapid population growth (the population increase was 80 per cent for the period between 1996 and 2006). Its character was once considered to be akin to a 'country town', but Belfast is being transformed to an outer suburb of Christchurch. As Belfast continues to grow, there is a need to ensure that Belfast remains 'socially sustainable' which involves ensuring access to appropriate and effective community facilities.

One of the key desired outcomes of the Belfast Area Plan (BAP) in terms of managing the growth of this area is to achieve "liveability". Both existing and future residents should expect their living environments to be safe and healthy, have attractive settings, and be within convenient distances of community facilities such as schools, shops and open space, and close to public transport.

Common community facilities include places of worship, pre-school centres, schools, halls and meeting places, community police stations and centres offering medical, voluntary and welfare services. They may also include resource centres like visitors' centres, museums and libraries, and recreational facilities such as bowling clubs and sports parks.

Community facilities are of fundamental importance to a community's well-being for a number of reasons. They provide:

- the vehicle through which a range of services or programs are delivered to the community;
- space for important Council facilities;
- meeting places and a focus for local residents;
- office space for community organisations, volunteers and funded services;
- activity space for recreational and social activities; and
- function space for private parties, meetings and exhibitions (and thus also a source of revenue generation for the community).

Community facilities also help to create a sense of identity with the local environment and its residents and the communities long-term viability. Without appropriate facilities, the people in the area may find it difficult to function as a true community, losing their feelings of self-reliance and feeling isolated from the wider community. There are also many other 'social and financial costs' associated with the loss of, or lack of appropriate facilities, such as lack of access to educational resources, increased vehicle costs and decreased social interaction among local residents.

The Christchurch City Council, in partnership with community groups, other organisations and the local community, must be proactive in ensuring that Belfast remains a socially sustainable community now and into the future. While it is important that the Council take leadership in this matter in assisting with the delivery and support of these facilities and services, the key to success will be in developing and maintaining important relationships with the community, service providers and other organisations. This will become even more evident as Council develops and implements its Long Term Council Community Plan under the wider powers provided in the newly enacted Local Government Act 2002.

The purpose of this document is highlight the likely changes that will occur to Belfast as it grows; discuss these implications in terms of consultation already undertaken in the area; and then define how these social issues can be addressed, and what level and type of community facilities and services would be needed to match likely growth.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Local Government Act 2002

The Local Government Act 1974 has recently undergone significant review with the new Act being passed into legislation in December 2002. The Act states the purpose of Local Authorities to be “to enable local decision-making, by, and on behalf of, individuals in their communities, to democratically promote and action their social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being in the present and for the future”.

The Act establishes Councils, provides them with powers and requires them to operate in specified ways in terms of their governance and management and the ways in which they make decisions. The overall philosophy underlying the Act is that elected councils should be able to do whatever they consider is most appropriate to meet the needs and aspirations of their community. While being empowered to do this, Council decisions must be made carefully with consideration given to: alternatives; wider implications (in terms of social, economic, cultural and environmental outcomes); and with consideration given to community views. There is also a strong framework requiring councils to work with other agencies at least in its wider planning processes if not in more routine decision-making.

The Act also introduces a new planning instrument, that of Long-term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs). The LTCCP sets out the Council’s intentions for the future of Christchurch and it must be prepared every three years.

The Plan will:

- include identification of community needs and how the council proposes to meet those needs;
- provide the community with a clear indication of future direction of the Council; and
- should result in a strategy owned and accepted by the community.

However, the Act enables through LTCCP the achievement (based on community related strategies) of those needs, outcomes, that a community think are most important for its well-being.

The Community Outcomes requirements as stated within the 2009 – 2019 Christchurch City LTCCP are:

- a. A safe city;
- b. A city of inclusive and diverse communities;
- c. A city of people who value and protect the natural environment;
- d. A well-governed city;
- e. A prosperous city;
- f. A city for recreation, fun and creativity;
- g. A city of lifelong learning;
- h. An attractive and well designed city.

The Vision for the 2009-2019 LTCCP is expressed as:

*“Our future Christchurch is a world-class boutique city,
where people enjoy a sustainable lifestyle, a healthy environment,
a strong economic base and the diverse landscapes of the city and peninsula”.*

Overall, the Act and the development of LTCCPs should greatly improve achieving the needs and aspirations of the community, improve processes to enable greater and more effective consultation, and substantially improve the development of partnerships with non-council agencies and organisations. The wide ranging powers allowed by the Act will also provide a mandate for Council leadership in areas of community well-being which to date have not been widely provided for under the previous legislation.

The way the Council is implementing the community outcomes is through strategies, policies and plans drafted adequate to each strategic directions. Some of the main ones, dealing with community issues, had or could have influence over the future development of Belfast community area:

- Recreation Policy and Strategy – To assure future development of open space and recreation facilities;
- Housing Policy and Strategy – Defines the strategic measures for future development in line with demand for social housing;
- Libraries Strategy (Libraries 2025 Facilities Plan) – Acknowledging that demographic and spatial growth will highlight the need for a new library in Belfast. Specifically the Plan expressly indicates a community of interest with a radius of 2-2.5km;
- Children Policy;
- Youth Policy;
- Community Plan;
- Council Housing Strategy;
- Aquatic Facility Plan – The Plan is accepting the fact that some of the swimming pool facilities are not economically managed and realistic measures have to be implemented by the Council in order to increase attendance (interest). Aligning the development policy (new pools or modernisation of the existing) with the demand that is determined from spatial distribution of the most likely pool users (under 15-age group) is one of the Council's priorities;
- Events Strategy; and
- Culture and Identity Strategy.

2.2 Resource Management Act

The Resource Management Act is New Zealand's primary resource management statute. While the Act does not specifically deal with social and community issues as such, its purpose is stated as, "to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources". Section 5 of the Act states that sustainable management means managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety, while –

- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and
- (b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and
- (c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

The second schedule of the Act makes specific mention of a Council's ability to address issues relevant to groups in the community, including minorities. Special recognition is given to Tikanga Maori and development for the Maori Community including Papakainga Housing. In addition, the needs of other ethnic communities, such as the rapidly growing Asian community, are also recognised.

The Resource Management Act is therefore an important mechanism for assisting in achieving sustainable communities. While the Act is concerned primarily with considering urban sustainability initially from the biophysical/ecological perspective, within this framework, regard can be given to the economic and social effects of the use of natural and physical resources.

In addition to this, Council may undertake functions in its service delivery and non-regulatory roles which can include social and economic goals consistent with a sustainable Christchurch as indicated in section 2.1 above.

2.3 Christchurch City Plan

The Christchurch City Plan, prepared under Section 73 of the RMA is one vehicle that the Council uses to manage the effects of activities on natural and physical resources to ensure the sustainability of both the environment and the people that it supports.

The Council, through its role of monitoring development and administering the development process, can help to co-ordinate community facilities and control the level of social impact of development proposals. The Council can also assist in the development and enhancement of communities and their well-being. Council can influence their location to reinforce communities and community focal points, minimise environmental impacts of these facilities, and suggest that land is set aside in new housing areas for future community activities.

The City Plan has a number of objectives and policies relating to community facilities and identity relevant to a study of Belfast Community Facilities. The key objectives and policies are outlined below:

Objective: Local Community Facilities

9.1 Provision for accessible community facilities to meet educational, spiritual, health, and other local needs.

Policy: Location

9.1.1 To provide for local community facilities to be located within living areas of the City, but particularly in close proximity to suburban centres or on arterial roads.

Policy: Multiple Use

9.1.2 To promote the multiple use of local community facilities.

Policy: Co-location

9.1.3 To promote the provision of local community facilities within suburban centres.

Policy: Urban Growth

9.1.4 To co-ordinate urban growth with the provision of local community facilities.

Policy: Managing Effects

9.1.5 To ensure the effects of local community facilities are managed in a way which maintains amenity and in particular residential amenity and coherence.

Objective: Community and Cultural Development

9.3 Opportunities for community and cultural development

Policy: Community Consultation

9.3.1 To encourage active consultation between the Council and communities and the formation and development of neighbourhood groups and community organisations.

Policy: Recognition of Community Needs

9.3.2 To encourage the provision and use of community facilities and centres which take into account the needs of various sectors of the community.

Policy: Community Identity and Participation

9.3.3 To reinforce neighbourhoods and their individual sense of identity through the recognition of residents' groups, their boundaries and activity centres and to support the involvement of local communities in the planning and management of local community services and neighbourhood improvements.

Environment Canterbury (ECAN – the Regional Council) is also involved, along the Council, in implementation of Public Transport Strategy and some of the new bus routes now in service are the result of Belfast community feedback to strategy's consultation phase.

3.0 PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Community Health

Community health is influenced by a range of factors; these can be categorised as either internal or external factors, as shown below. It is noted that many of these factors are inter-related. For example a well-designed built environment can vastly improve the feelings of safety and security of people who live, work or play in that area.

Internal	External
Physical (age, family composition)	Environment
Physical and Mental Health	Air & Water Quality
Economic (standard of housing, income)	Open Spaces
Education	
Feeling of safety and security.	

Ensuring the planning, development and provision of health services is largely the responsibility of the Canterbury District Health Board in partnership with a range of other private and community health care providers. The role of the Council is ensuring community health is maintained in accordance with its statutory obligations, and promoting healthy environments through sound environmental planning.

Health and implicitly the people's quality of life can be affected by any one of several planning related factors:

- lack of social integration and connectedness;
- social isolation and loneliness;
- poor housing, overcrowding and housing affordability; and
- economic disparities: income, employment, education.

Those areas with good community health tend to have a strong community identity, cohesion as well as value diversity, and promote interaction and participation. They also tend to have strong social networks, programs and facilities; and have access to a range of venues and opportunities for physical activity.

However, further development of organisations and activities is important in encouraging larger participation and interaction (to care and foster a community's social skills and needs) and is essential in maintaining high level of mental and physical health, the well-being of individuals and of community as well.

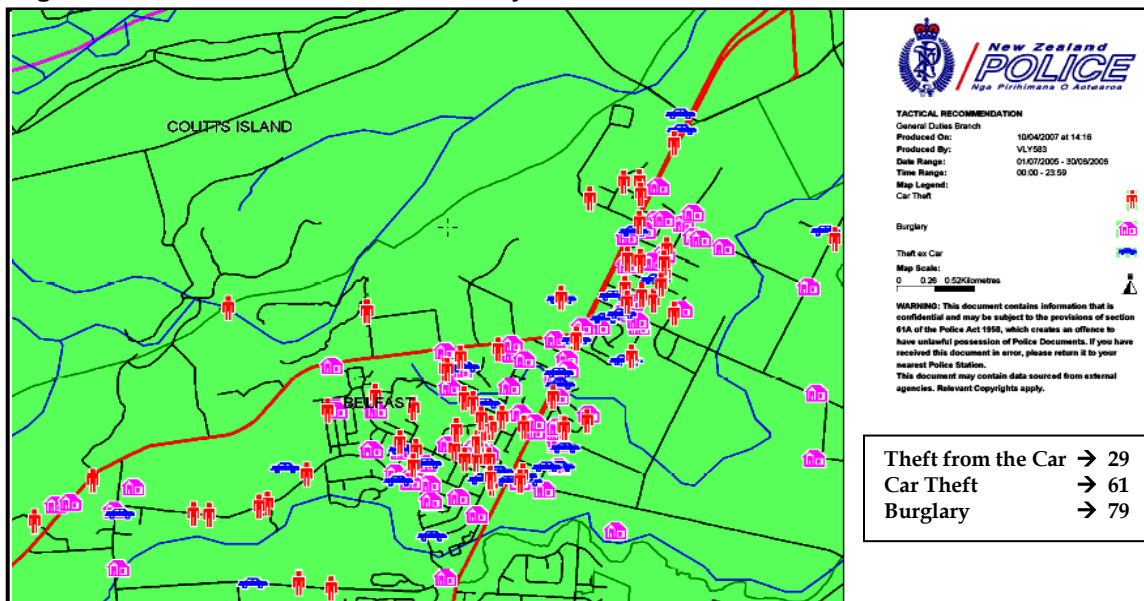
3.2 Safety and Security (crime stats)

Feeling and being safe and secure is key to the overall health of the community. If people feel they are unsafe then they will unlikely be part of community life.

There is a strong relationship between level of crime and quality of urban and socio-economic environment. This is determined by several important socio-economic factors (inter-related): low level or lack of educational achievement, low socio-economic status (poverty driven), negative attitude (youngsters mainly related issue).

Levels of crime within Belfast are similar to those that occur in most suburbs within the City. Individual statistics for the Belfast area alone (i.e. Redwood is not included) are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Crime Statistics – Belfast 1 July 2005 – 30 June 2006.



Source: New Zealand Police Christchurch - Canterbury District Intelligence Group, April 2007

Fear of crime is a significant issue within communities and it affects personal well-being by raising anxieties, restricting social and physical access and threatening the cohesiveness of communities. While generally, people over-estimate the risk of being a victim of crime, steps can be taken in environmental design to lessen risks and alter residents' perceptions about safety in their community. The City Council has developed a design guide, "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)", which should be used as a basis for the design and layout of new neighbourhoods in the Belfast area.

3.3 Social Connectedness

Constructive relationships with others in communities, and workplaces add to peoples' quality of life. Although personal well-being is not directly affected by the prosperity of community you belong to, it is however directly affected by the social community connectedness. Participating in society through, for example, in unpaid work for sports, arts, and other recreational activities contributes to social connectedness and is valued.

Factors that can foster connectedness include:

- Common concerns such as a 'threat' to the local environment e.g. and Not In My Back Yard syndrome (NIMBY);
- Common interests such as a local school or sports team;
- Common values;
- Active community advocates that facilitate connectedness through organizing / advertising local events and issues;
- Regular contact with other members of the community;
- Mutual trust between community members; and
- Increased capacity of getting in touch with each others, directly (using private or public transportation means) or indirectly (using phones, internet or other ways).

Trends that are tending to discourage connectedness are:

- Lack of time, through work or other pressures, to get involved in community;
- Activities;
- Increasing locational mobility where people are moving houses more frequently, and living in neighbourhoods for shorter periods of time, can discourage familiarity and connections with people and places;
- Increasing use of electronic communications that results in reduced face-to-face social interaction but can also increase people's ability to develop and maintain connections;

- Polarization in society due to for example, widening income gaps and social stratification; and
- Lack of local facilities that act as a “focal point”.

3.4 Cultural Expression

A community needs to express itself, to find its identity and keep itself glue together.

The cultural avenues (performing arts, visual arts, literature, crafts and handwork, etc) are the easy ways to achieve that. If a community has capacity to sustain creation and support arts (on daily basis) then it can be considered a strong and healthy community.

By encouraging cultural expression the community will inherently promote cultural diversity as well. Christchurch is already culturally diverse and the values that each ethnic groups promotes needs to be protected and supported to increase understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity. With respect to that, future provisions have to be ensured at the policy and infrastructure level (community services) in order to accommodate special cultural related needs.

3.5 Development and Planning Principles

There has long been a tendency for community facilities to prefer locations adjacent to larger shopping centres, or on arterial roads. This is a pattern of establishment which the Christchurch City Plan strongly promotes, because of the public convenience of co-location of services offered in community and commercial facilities, whilst minimising adverse impacts on the character, cohesiveness and pleasantness of the living environment. Accordingly, community facilities are promoted adjacent to larger suburban centres and on arterial routes as this enhances accessibility, community awareness of the availability of the services, minimises the impacts on residential coherence and acknowledges the lower standards of amenity often found in such locations compared with other areas of the living environment.

Promoting community facilities in these locations reinforces suburban centres and enhances convenience for local residents by co-location. Such provision is especially important for the elderly, children or those without access to cars, as public transport serves many of these centres. The scale of such facilities however, is controlled through provisions in the Plan where the level of traffic generation is significant and could adversely affect the efficient and safe functioning of arterial roads.

It is often practicable to utilise some community facilities such as school halls, gymnasiums and clubrooms for a range of community service activities. This is desirable as a means of maximising the use of existing facilities which are conveniently distributed in living areas. It also may avoid duplication of facilities and makes use of facilities such as school halls that may otherwise lie idle.

There are advantages to the community in the co-location of local community services and business activities in suburban centres, which act as community focal points. From issues related to time constraints (affecting community members) it is desirable if facilities are provided as a “one stop shop” integrated development to include halls, libraries, those incorporating government services or facilities geared to particular groups in the community such as children, the elderly, teenagers or the unemployed. Community facilities within suburban centres reinforce the viability of such centres, contribute to the diversity of activity within centres and enhance the convenience of facilities to local residents. Such centres are in most cases served by public transport improving their accessibility to many residents. However, there may be a number of reasons why an “in-centre” location may not be appropriate for all community facilities, especially where nearest commercial locality would not maximise accessibility for the community of interest, and / or not building an existing critical mass of community facilities in an area.

With increasing mobility and ownership of motor vehicles, it can be difficult to establish or require community facilities to establish in areas of “Greenfield” residential growth. There are however, community facilities established close to the urban periphery which can be better utilised if further urban development were to take place within their catchments. Better use of existing facilities is often likely to be a more realistic option than requiring provision for new facilities, but the latter will certainly be encouraged in areas where substantial new growth is anticipated, whether this is on the urban periphery or through infill or redevelopment.

Community facilities can have adverse effects on adjoining activities, particularly residential activity. Effects on amenity can result wherever community facilities locate, but this is particularly significant within or adjoining living areas as sensitive environments. However in many instances there needs to be recognition that community facilities frequently seek such a location to serve the needs of the local catchment. The extent of these effects is generally related to the type, location, scale, traffic generation and hours of operation of the activity.

3.6 Community and Cultural Development

The City as a whole benefits from the existence of communities which have become largely self-reliant and motivated towards meeting their own needs. This process involves building a sense of identity and an understanding about their environment and possibilities for improving it. The City also benefits from the recognition and development of its cultural diversity, including minority groups.

The Council, through its community boards is accessible to local communities and able to respond to its needs through identifying and supporting issues of local concern.

Community development is a process through which communities organise themselves together for planning and action, define their individual and community needs and work together towards solving issues affecting them. Resolution is undertaken with a maximum reliance on community effort. The role of Community Boards includes active liaison with residents/business/special interest groups in the community to expand the existing neighbourhood committee programme. Boards have an ongoing obligation to keep the Council informed as to community aspirations and level of satisfaction with the service provided, and continuing involvement in functional areas such as amenity improvements (including Urban Renewal Projects to improve public spaces in neighbourhoods).

In addition, groups within society such as teenagers, young children or the elderly, need to be considered in the processes affecting the development of communities. Many of these matters will be addressed through group initiatives and Government and Council services provision.

City plan policies clearly encourage the grouping of facilities and services in suburban centres for reasons of reinforcing community identity, vitality, viability and convenience. It also assists with energy efficiency in transport and accessibility.

There is a relationship between community identity and participation, the location of community centres and the definition of community boundaries by physical features in the City, including major roads, rivers and hills.

4.0 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR PLANNING COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN THE CITY

4.1 Definitions

For the purpose of the Area Plan Strategies being prepared around the City, community facilities are considered to include:

- Community Centre Halls;
- Aquatic/Leisure centres;
- Recreational and Sports facilities;
- Libraries;
- Schools;
- Heath facilities; and
- Social Housing Stock

It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Canterbury District Health Board who have the mandate for the planning of education and health facilities respectively.

4.2 Trends

Physical Activity

Whilst levels of physical activity are relatively stable amongst adults, some ethnic groupings such as Pacific Islanders and Asians tend to be less active than Maori or European groupings. Amongst children levels of physical activity are generally decreasing, and as a result levels of obesity amongst children and young adults are on the rise.

Aquatic/Leisure

Public expectations as to the quality and level of activities provided by an Aquatic/Leisure facility have increased. For example the public now expect an aquatic facility to provide a leisure pool, spa pools, steam rooms etc, rather than just a traditional lap pool. A simple pool complex is generally considered less acceptable and hence the development of such facilities in the future would be unlikely.

People on lower incomes and the aged are generally under represented as facility users. Whilst participation by lower income groups in swimming pool usage is on the increase, gymnasium and recreational programmes are still infrequently utilised. This can partially be attributed to cost and access issues, however there are also additional constraints to greater usage from these groups. The implication of the growth in the older population and their relatively low level of attendance at aquatic/leisure facilities is that future provision needs to be deliberately focused to attract this demographic group.

Major Recreational and Sports facilities

International specifications and standards for these facilities are a key driver by sporting bodies who wish to hold national and international sporting fixtures. This has also led to the specialisation of some facilities which has resulted in the exclusion of other activities.

Libraries

As a result of the current technological age, the expectation and usage of Public Libraries has dramatically altered over the last decade. Public expectation both of service levels and the types of facility provided is now extremely high, with the public expecting to be able to access information and communications technology as well as the traditional core library functions. There is also a demand for seven day accessibility to library services, which means libraries will need to move towards providing opportunities for people to access services on all seven days of the week.

Social Housing

Historically the Council housing stock used to accommodate the needs for older people and low income people. Only just recently the Council has been involved in taking care of people with disabilities by providing them with long-term accommodation. As Belfast population is ageing (following the general trend) the need for more social housing will become stringent in the future (next 20 years). However, the median age in Belfast is 36 years (15 per cent less than the median age calculated for the whole city) and that is rough indication that the need to accommodate more older people is not yet as high as the demand for elderly housing across the City. It is also noted that within Belfast area there are also few privately supplied elderly person's complexes.

4.3 Existing City Planning

Aquatic/Leisure

The Council has \$9.1m in its LTCCP plan for the development of the Graham Condon aquatic/leisure facility, starting in 2010. The area proposed as the location for a new swimming pool (including the Belfast residential catchment) is the Papanui High School grounds and the development will take place in partnership with Papanui High School. Other areas for aquatic developments have been identified on south-west Christchurch, and refurbishment of the Centennial complex.

Whilst the current maintenance of the existing outdoor Belfast Pool has been stated as uneconomical, in terms of operational costs, levels of maintenance, and that the pool is reaching the

end of its structural life, the Council is not considering the imminent decommissioning of the current pool facility even when the new Papanui Indoor Leisure Centre (community pool) is completed in 2011. It is understood that the Belfast School is assisting with the ongoing management and operation of the Belfast Swimming Pool. There are no plans for the establishment of an aquatic / leisure facility at Belfast.

It is also noted that the 8km distance to the Kaiapoi Leisure Centre, north of Belfast allows the Belfast residents to make use of an alternative, relatively new and modern facility. Kaiapoi Leisure Centre is a 10-year old complex with six lane pools, indoor sauna, hydrotherapy pool and other ancillary facilities.

Major Recreational and Sports facilities

Christchurch City Council has identified and prioritised the major sport and recreational facilities needed over the next 20 or so years. The development of these has not been programmed, nor geographical locations identified for them. However, the LTCCP identifies \$76million in funding over the next 10 years for developing neighbourhood parks in Christchurch (including Banks Peninsula).

Libraries

Over the past 12 years the Council has been renewing its library infrastructure, either by building new facilities or extending and remodelling existing facilities. This programme will result in approximately 80 per cent of the City being within two kilometres of a library.

The trend in building during this period has been:

- More room for people to study, relax, use computers and meet together;
- The location of other Council facilities in the same building;
- Meeting rooms for community use;
- Specialised services such as Café or learning centres;
- Increased computers for public use; and
- A move towards self service.

The community has been consulted on the ongoing provision of the City's Libraries through the 2025 City Council Libraries Plan. The 2025 Libraries Plan was adopted in March 2008. It is likely that the ongoing role of the Redwood Library will be examined after the commissioning of the Belfast Library earmarked for a \$9.7million budget over the 2017-2019 time period.

4.4 City-Wide Gaps and Issues

Aquatic/Leisure

The Council has determined that the decision on where to locate the future aquatic facility will be based on the following factors:

- The population base and the potential population growth for the areas;
- The population demographics of the proposed area focusing on target groups (children, youth, elderly, those with disabilities and low socio-economic factors);
- The distance to other aquatic facilities (4 km radius) and level of service by public transport;
- The capital budget impacts for the Council taking into account potential closures of other aquatic facilities;
- The potential for partnerships in provision and operation (local authorities, commercial providers schools etc); and
- The potential impact on other aquatic facilities both Council operated and others.

Major Sport and Recreational facilities

The location of major recreational and sporting facilities can result in potential conflict between the use of the facilities and the use of adjoining land. Some recreational and sporting activities can result in relatively high levels of noise, glare or other nuisance effects. It is important that robust buffer zones are in place between significant recreational /sporting facilities and residential zones.

Many major recreational and sporting facilities are developed in partnership with sports organisations and other voluntary bodies. At times the development of needed facilities is driven by the ability of the sports organisation to enter into a satisfactory partnership with the City Council.

Libraries

A report regarding "Community and Recreation Needs Analysis and Community Facility Plan" produced for Belfast Community Network acknowledge that a community library is second most popular community facility desired by residents in the area. While the land acquisition for a library development didn't take place as part of the major development within the new Greenfield areas (from reasons linked to planning, land ownership or simply because acquisition was prohibitively expensive or simply not possible) the main (significant) issue is the lack of available development funds. As discussed the Council has earmarked the commissioning of a library in the Belfast Area in 2017-2019, the location of which is still to be determined.

4.5 Summary and Implications for Belfast

There is a growing level of weight related problems for residents across Christchurch as a whole, that is more discernable amongst children and young adults. Coupled with an aging and sedentary population there is a need for more community facilities, well-located and designed as a friendly environment with mass appeal for a diversity of recreation and social uses.

The public requirements for high level of service and quality in relation to aquatic/leisure facilities and libraries will mean that the Council is unlikely to provide infrastructure for simple or temporary facilities therefore strategic decisions with regard to location and associated funding needs to be made. This is likely to result in the centralised provision of new facilities, or the reconfiguration of existing facilities to maximise the appeal and usage of the network. New facilities may be provided in locations where they will contribute to the existing network of facilities with easy access for the people of the area . It is anticipated that where there is significant residential growth new facilities may be provided to be accessible to these catchments.

Given the increasing nature of specialisation involved and the wide appeal of major recreational and sporting/leisure facilities for Christchurch residents, locations will be selected such that will firstly meet the expectations and needs of users, with accessibility being less of determining factor. Planning for such 'big ticket' items will generally involve the public, and it will be important that appropriate buffer treatment is provided between such facilities and residential areas.

The implications from strategic planning of these facilities within Belfast area are:

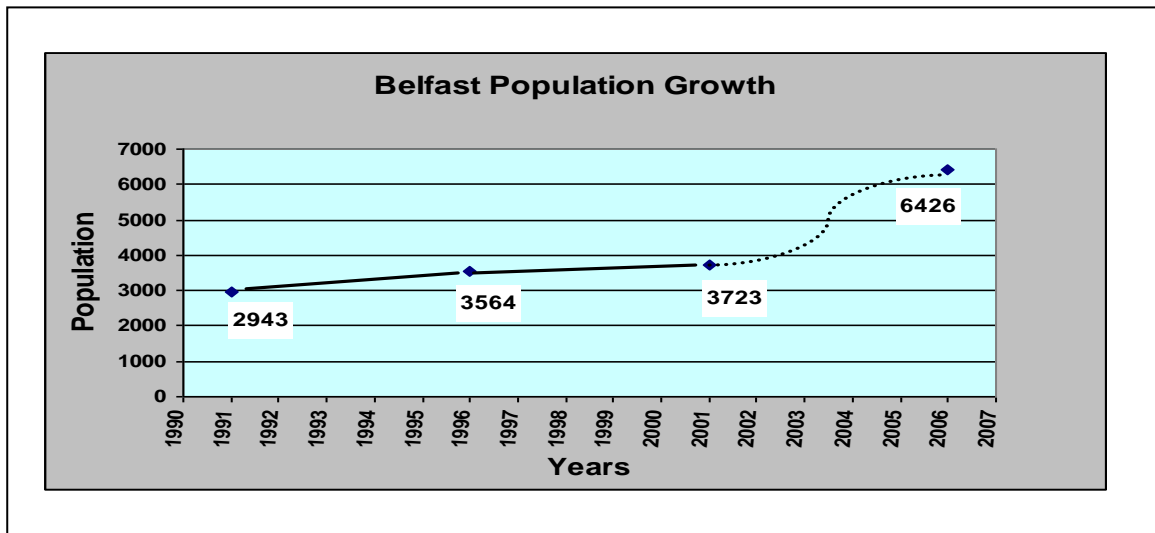
- There is no incentive for the Council to develop a replacement for the Belfast Swimming Pool should it cease functions in future. The operation of the new Graham Condon facility (4.5km south from central Belfast) will be generally accessible to Belfast. There are no plans to cease the operations of the Belfast Swimming Pool, but its increasing operational and maintenance costs are acknowledged.
- That as the population grows a Library facility will be provided for the community. Such a facility should provide the full range of activities including community rooms, with computers to meet the needs of the community in this area. The Library should be located in a centralised position within Belfast area. Its placement would have implications on the long term future of the Redwood facility within the overall library network of the City.
- Major recreational and sporting facilities are more difficult to predict for this area. Although it is acknowledged that the Clearwater Resort, the Groynes Recreational area and the Waimakariri River open spaces and recreationally aimed facilities provide significant recreational and sporting attributes within the Belfast area.

5.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

5.1 Population Growth

Identification of the likely demand for community facilities is a key component in establishing facility development feasibility within the Belfast study area. It is important to analyse and understand the likely demand for community facilities in the area. Coupled with the potential costs and constraints of such development provide the complete picture for understanding the likelihood of such development ever taking place. This section provides growth trends, demographic information and social trends for the Belfast area.

Figure 2 Belfast Population Growth, 1991 – 2006.



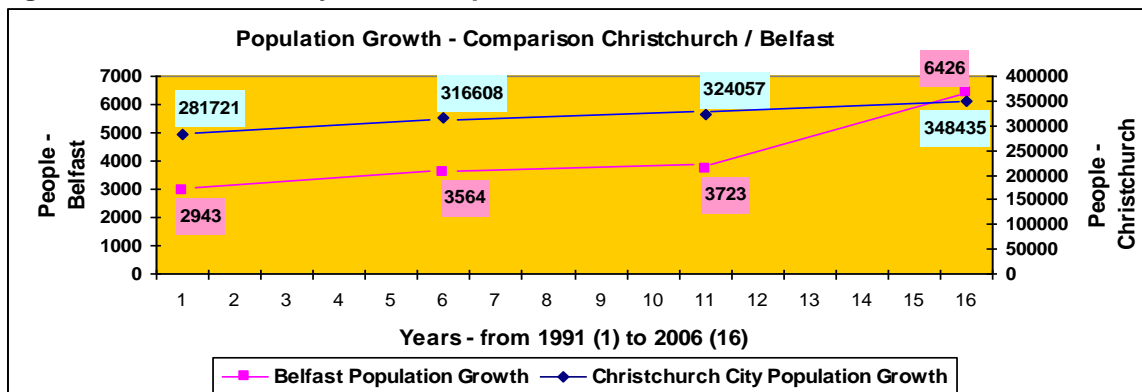
Source: Statistics New Zealand Census.

The population of Christchurch City increased by 10 per cent between 1996 and 2006, with the population reaching 348,435. Belfast grew in size over the same period from 3564 to 6426, an increase of 80 per cent as shown in Figure 2. This was mainly due to the new Northwood subdivision, which due to its development between 2001 and 2006 accounts for a significant proportion of Belfast’s residential growth during this period.

On this basis, Belfast had an annual average population growth of 4.2 per cent for the period 1991-1996, less than 1 per cent between 1996 and 2001, and up to 14.5 per cent (average) between 2001 and 2006. The City as a whole had an annual growth rate of around 2.48 per cent for the period between 1991 and 1996, around 0.47 per cent for the period 1996-2001, and of 1.5 per cent (average) for each of the last five years (2001-2006).

Figure 3 below illustrates the comparison in terms of population growth between Christchurch City and Belfast:

Figure 3 Christchurch City/Belfast Population Growth, 1991 – 2006



Source: Statistics New Zealand Census.

5.2 Age

The median age of Christchurch City's population has increased substantially over recent decades from just less than 28 years in 1976, to 36 years in 2006. By 2021 the median age is expected to reach 41.6 years (Source – Statistics New Zealand Census). This patterns illustrates a similar pattern to the aging population trend currently seen throughout New Zealand. At the same time the child cohort (0 to 14 years) to elderly cohort (+ 60 years) ratio dropped progressively from two children for every older resident in 1981, to 1.4:1 in 2001 and 1.05:1 in 2006. From 2016, the elderly will outnumber children in Christchurch.

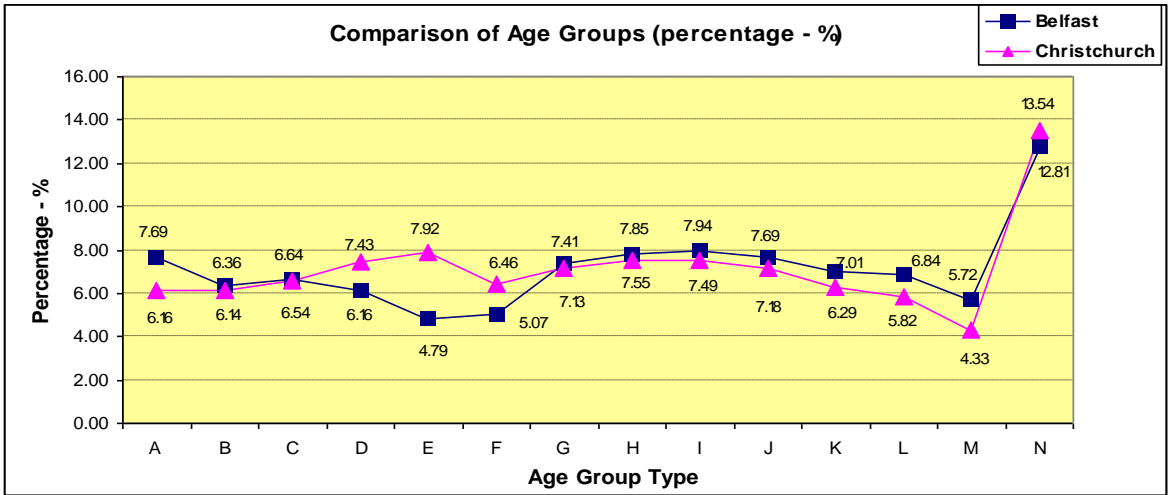
Figure 4 Christchurch City/Belfast Age cohort comparison

Age Groups		Belfast		Christchurch	
		Total	Total (%)	Total	Total (%)
Less than 5	A	573	7.69	21,477	6.16
5 to 9	B	474	6.36	21,396	6.14
10 to 14	C	495	6.64	22,797	6.54
15 to 19	D	459	6.16	25,875	7.43
20 to 24	E	357	4.79	27,600	7.92
25 to 29	F	378	5.07	22,503	6.46
30 to 34	G	552	7.41	24,858	7.13
35 to 39 – Median Age	H	582	7.85	26,310	7.55
40 to 44	I	591	7.94	26,091	7.49
45 to 49	J	573	7.69	25,008	7.18
50 to 54	K	522	7.01	21,927	6.29
55 to 59	L	510	6.84	20,313	5.82
60 to 64	M	426	5.72	15,084	4.33
Over 65	N	954	12.81	47,193	13.54
Total		7,446	100.00	348,432	100.00

Source: Statistics New Zealand Census.

In Belfast the median age is 36. Figure 4 illustrates the age comparison between the Belfast population and that of the rest of the City (Census 2006). The graph below illustrates in a comparative way that there are two main clusters of population groupings within the Study Area that do not follow the same trend as the remainder of the City. For children aged 0-5 there is a disproportionate ratio to family groups when compared to the City as a whole, that is, based on a per household ratio, there is a greater proportion of families with younger children in the City (per household) in comparison to Belfast. However, between the ages of 5 to 14 the ratio (per household) between Christchurch and Belfast is fairly similar. The New Zealand Census (2006) also demonstrates that you young adults, that is the 15 – 29 age group there is a disproportionate decrease in this household ratio when compared to Christchurch City as a whole. Overall family groups are the generally the same in composition and age as family groups in Christchurch City, and hence the demand for community facilities should be at a similar level of service provision. There could however be less demand for such facilities such as pre-schools, or those that would cater for the 15 – 29 age group.

Figure 5 Christchurch City/Belfast Age cohort comparison

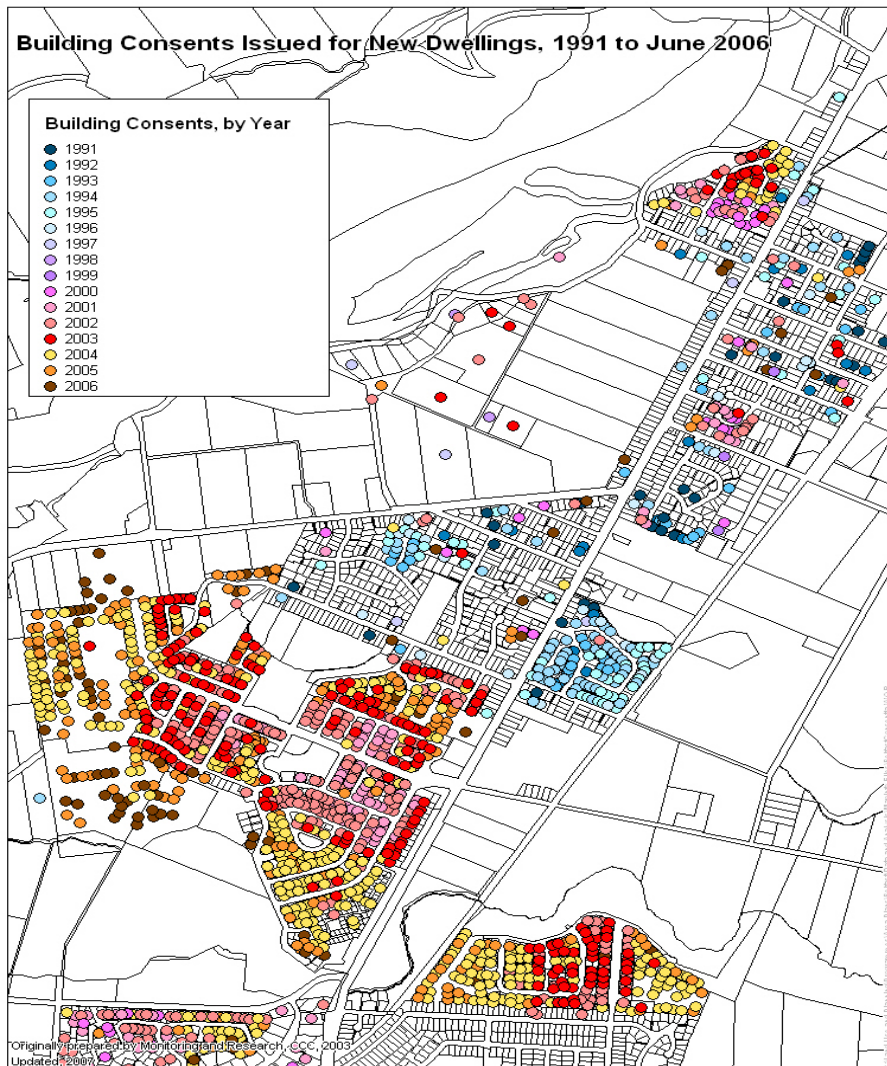


Source: Statistics New Zealand Census.

5.3 New Developments

During the last 15 years the increase in consent numbers for new dwelling (as identified in Figure 6 below) has been more accentuated for the period 1994-1994 and for a period between 2006 and 2006 as well.

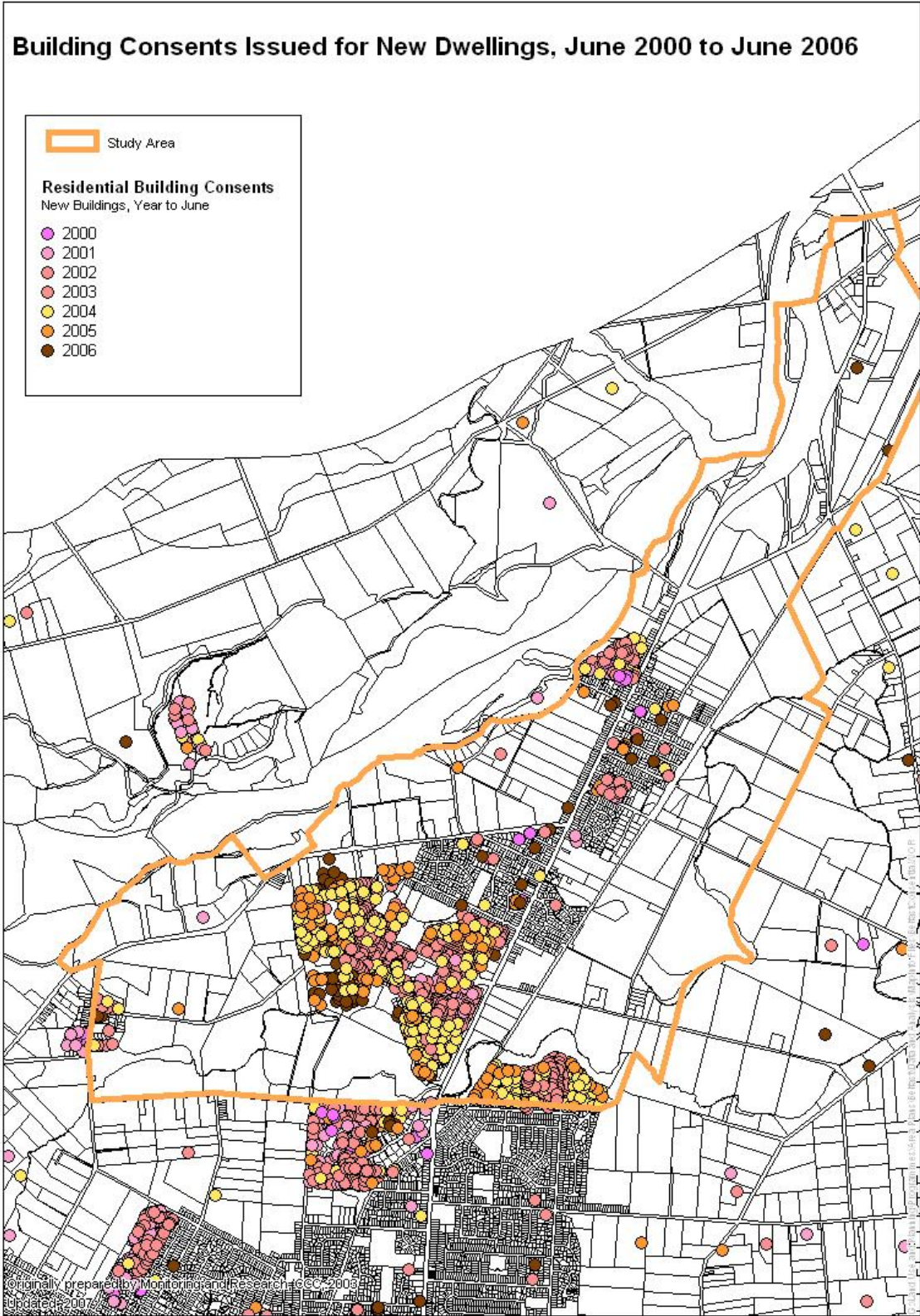
Figure 6 Belfast-Building Consents Issued for new dwellings, 1991 to 2006



Source: Christchurch City Council, Building Consent data.

In the period between 2000 and June 2006, 1287 new homes (units and houses) were developed in the immediate Belfast area as identified in Figure 6.

Figure 7 Wider Belfast-Building Consents Issued for new dwellings, 1991 to 2006



Source: *Christchurch City Council, Building Consent data.*

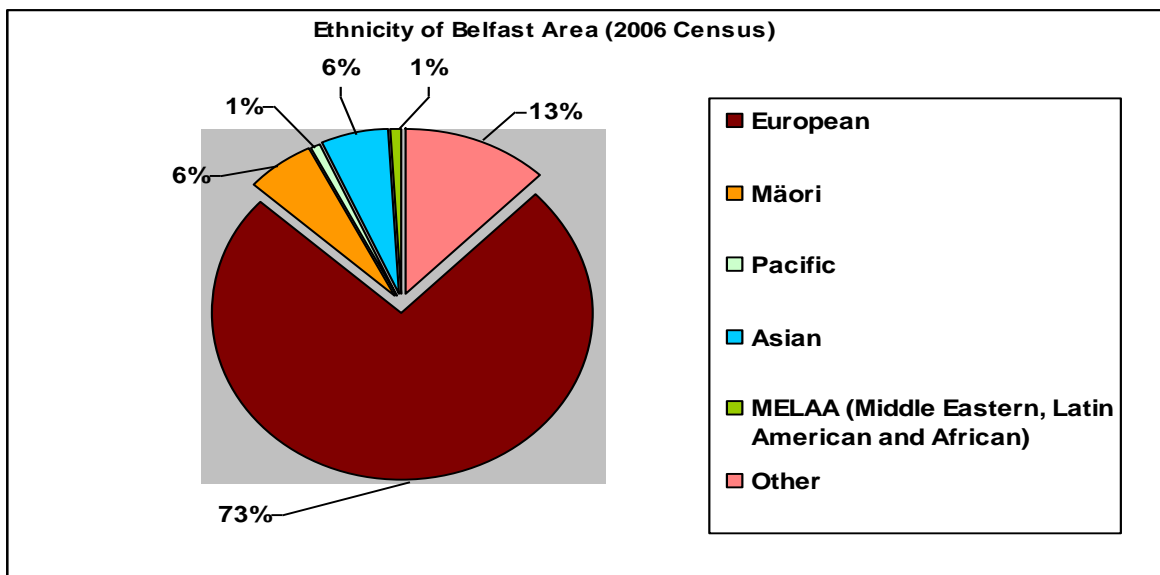
Of the large households within Belfast, it is noted that these tend to be clustered towards the Northwoods development and Englefield Park, the north-west around Darroch Street and Rushmore

Drive, the fairly new subdivision around Coolspring Way and finally the residential area surrounding Sheldon Park. Within the wider area as identified in Figure 7 there has also been substantial residential increases at Clearwater, north east Redwood (Regent's Park Drive) and Willowview Drive.

5.4 Culture and Race

Figure 8 below identifies the ethnicity of the residents within the Belfast Area statistical mesh blocks. As ethnicity, the majority of population in Belfast (study area) is of European descent (73 per cent). This is followed by Maori and Asian population at 6 per cent each, Polynesians/Pacific Island and people from Middle Eastern Latin American and African countries with only 1 per cent each. A fairly important part (13 per cent) is made of people of other ethnicity. The ethnicities across all of Christchurch are: European (70 per cent), Maori (7.2 per cent), Pacific Island (2.6 per cent), Asian (7.4 per cent), people from MELAA countries (0.8 per cent) and people of other ethnicities with 12 per cent.

Figure 8 Ethnicity of Belfast Residents



Source: Statistics New Zealand Census, 2006.

5.5 Migration

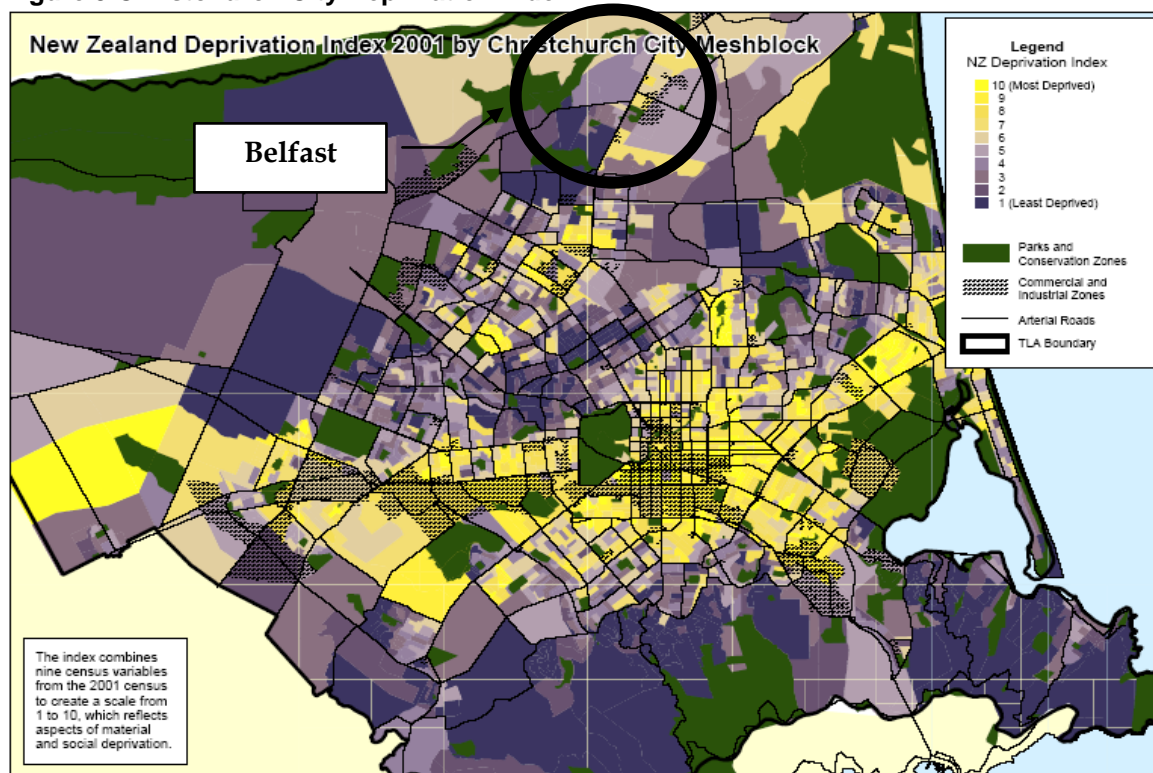
Migration has played a major role in the growth and composition of Christchurch's population in recent years. There has been significant increase in overseas migration, particularly from Asia, but it is uncertain if this trend will continue into the long term. Similarly, Christchurch traditionally has gained from internal migration, albeit fluctuating. Whether this trend continues depends on many factors, including its ability to compete with other NZ regions as an attractive place to move to.

Many people from the City have also migrated to Belfast in recent years. Much of this had had to do with new developments within the area which provide a new and diverse range of living environments.

5.6 Deprivation

The index of deprivation (based on 2001 Census figures) is mapped (below) and it illustrates that the City has distinct areas of high deprivation (those not well-off - deciles 9 and 10) and areas of low deprivation (those well-off deciles 1 and 2).

Figure 9 Christchurch City Deprivation Index.



Source: Statistics New Zealand Census, 2001.

Belfast generally doesn't have the extremes of deprivation (no deciles 1, 2, 9 or 10); although there is a geographical split with those that have a higher level of deprivation to the east, and those with a lesser level of deprivation to the west. Given the new developments at Northwood, Englefield and Coolspring Way, it is likely that this division has grown.

5.7 Greenfield Developments

Major growth of Belfast area has taken place to the west of Main North road. Several new subdivisions have been developed on land known previously as Applefields. The new developments have almost closed the gap between the City and the Belfast settlement.

There are four recent subdivisions that have occurred within the scope of the Belfast Area Plan: Northwood; Englefield; Styx Mill Country Club; and Kaputone Springs (Skipio). Greenfield Residential Survey Reports have been produced in 2006 for some of these new subdivisions, based on survey data collected in 2004, and utilising a methodology which examined societal attitudes towards living in a new subdivision. These results provide some context for the social attitudes of new residents within such Greenfield subdivision areas within Belfast.

It is noted that the summary results provided below from the 2006 Reports relate solely to the Northwood and Englefield residents. However, it is considered that such results would be generally applicable to all new residents within the Belfast Greenfield development areas.

Based on the Greenfield Survey 2006, below is a comparative profile of the respondents' households of the two Greenfield subdivisions:

1. A higher proportion of children (under 15) have been found in Northwood (21 per cent) than Englefield (10 per cent). The overall percentage (for Christchurch) was 19 per cent. However the number of households with no children is, in both subdivisions, higher than at least two thirds of the total households for the City or Belfast. In Northwood there are a high proportion of young family groups within dwellings. In Englefield there is a higher proportion of elderly couple based family groupings (retired couples, childless couples, or families with children that have grown up and left home);

2. The number of young adults (younger than 24 years of age) in Northwood is 40 per cent, higher than those in Englefield subdivision and (as a percentage) is comparable with Christchurch's young age population cohort (refer Figure 5);
3. The 65+ age group of residents is three times bigger in the Englefield development when compared to the Northwood development;
4. The average occupancy rate per household is 10 per cent higher in Northwood (2.68 people/household) than Englefield (2.41 people/household);
5. More than three quarters of households in Englefield had no children, with the remaining 24 per cent of households having just one child. In Northwood more than two thirds of households had no children at the time of survey, with the remaining households having one or two children;
6. The median income range for households within the Northwood development was between \$60,000 – \$100,000, and between \$20,000 – \$60,000 for the Englefield subdivision;
7. More than half (58 per cent) from the households in Northwood built their house (from new) compared to 65 per cent of households in Englefield. More than a quarter of residents from the households in Northwood purchased their dwelling after construction. That is almost double compared to Englefield (12 per cent). Englefield has the highest proportion of residents (compared to other Greenfield subdivisions in the city) who rented their house (18 per cent); and
8. Both subdivisions had generally two motor vehicles available for each household surveyed and there were no households without access to a motor vehicle.

Figure 10 (below) shows a comparative household composition data between these two main subdivisions (2004, survey) and Christchurch City (2001, Census):

Figure 10 Christchurch City/Belfast - Household composition

	Christchurch	Belfast	Northwood	Englefield
	Census 2006	Census 2006	Survey 2004	Survey 2004
Household Composition	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.4
Family of Two (couples, etc.)	41%	44%	47%	65%
Households with children aged 0 to 14	19%	20%	21%	10%

Based on the above it is considered that people living in Northwood subdivision represent a younger segment of the population, and are generally good wage earners with a household composition above the Christchurch average of 2.6. In comparison, the Englefield area residents tend to belong to an older segment of population, with family groupings having less or no dependents (retired) in comparison to the City as a whole.

As consequences of these report based findings for the Belfast area, especially due to the Northwood residents there will soon be a need for more community facilities to accommodate pre-school education and care needs (due in main to increased pressure from the young families in Northwood), primary school needs (as school age population in Northwood is growing) and for more generally open space and sport related fields/parks.

The older segment of the population within the two subdivisions will probably look for better and more accessible health facilities, as well as for community hall/centre where they can participate to community based activities. The green space needs of such populations tend to be less formalised, resulting in pressure for the development of linear walkway paths rather than formal sports fields.

These results should be considered within the context of the demographic assessment provided in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 above. Overall, from the City-wide 2006 Census results and population age projections it is considered that the City will have an aging population. As identified above, this will place a greater importance on the provision of linear parks and the provision of accessible health and service facilities. However, based on the greenfield survey results, especially for Northwood, there is a trend for family groups to be settling on the lower density subdivisions that these developments are providing. This trend will provide ongoing pressure for pre and school aged facilities as well as more formal parks and associated play equipment. In terms of providing some direction for the Belfast Area Plan, new residential developments should continue with the provision of semi-formal green spaces, but ensure that these are well linked in a linear network to provide for non-formal recreational opportunities. A well-distributed network of local centres and community footprints should also be

provided; this is to ensure that an accessible range of health and service provision is enabled within the area.

5.8 Summary

These trends reveal a high rate of growth of residential activity in the area, catering mainly for family groups. This will lead to pressure for the provision of services and community infrastructure within the area to provide for the requirements of this expanding population. Christchurch also has an aging population with older age groups increasing in terms of size of population and proportion of population, this will result in pressure for the development of social and community facilities that can be accessed and are readily utilised by the elderly.

Ethnicities within Belfast are more bi-cultural between European and Maori, with less representation from other cultures.

There are some inequalities within different areas within Belfast. It will be important that any services or community facilities developed within the area recognise these inequalities and are able to be accessed and utilised by all groups within the Belfast community.

6.0 NORTH-WEST COMMUNITY FACILITY PROVISION

As provided for in Objective 9.1 of the City Plan, it is the Council's objective to enable the provision of accessible community facilities to meet educational, spiritual, health and other local needs.

There are a number of Council's community facilities which currently exist in the City's north-west area to meet such needs. There are also a number of facilities that are not provided or managed by the Council, but are operating in the area (through community, voluntary and business or private organisations) and assist in the provision of services and facilities to meet educational, spiritual, health and other local needs. The location of all these community facilities are shown on the below Figure 12 and Figure 13.

Following is a list of the community services and groups operating from the area:

6.1 Childcare/Schools

There are primary, intermediate and high schools within this section of the City. These include Belfast School, Redwood School, Northcote School, Papanui School, St. Joseph School, Casebrook Intermediate School, Papanui Intermediate school, Papanui High School and St Bedes College. The Community Needs Analysis (1998) identified that schools are viewed as central points to their community. There are also a number of pre-schools within the wider area, including Belfast Playcentre, Belfast Free-kindergarten, Northcote Free-kindergarten, Learning Curves Preschool, Redwood Plunket Playgroup and Redwood Playcentre.

Identified educational needs and associated issues include:

- The number of Belfast school children being taught at schools outside of Belfast;
- Safety around School crossings generally, although especially at Belfast School; and
- Upgrading of parks in the nearby vicinity to schools.

6.2 Sports Clubs and Facilities

There are a number of sports facilities, areas and activities to the Northwest of the City (within 4km of Sheldon Park). Figure 11 illustrates the major sports fields, whilst Figure 12 and 13 illustrate the location of particular activities. The Community Needs Analysis for the area identified that:

- There was a lack of recreational facilities for youth and children which is a key reason for most of them going to spend their free time at Northlands Mall on a regular basis;
- There was a lack of opportunities for caregivers with small children to meet and take part in community/recreational activities;
- The elderly utilise library services in the area (Redwood Library and Mobile Library) to a large extent; and
- There is a need for more opportunities, possibly through the development of a large multi-purpose recreational centre in the area.

Figure 11 Sports grounds and facilities

Sports grounds and facilities	Area	Location
Redwood (Sports) Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cricket, Soccer (Juniors and Seniors) • Play Structure • Toilet 	7 Ha	1 km south of Styx River Bridge
Murchison Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-play structure 	4 Ha	250 m south-east of Styx River bridge
Owen Mitchell (Sports) Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soccer Seniors • Toilet 	4 Ha	1.700 m south-east of Styx River bridge
Papanui Domain (Sports Park) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rugby League (Seniors) • Softball • Toilet 	3 Ha	Located within the limit defined by a 4 km. radius
Tulett (Sports) Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cricket • Soccer (Juniors and Seniors) • Softball and Touch • Multi-play Structure 	8 Ha	Located 2.200 m south-west of Styx River bridge
Englefield (Sports) Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-play structure 	4 Ha	Located within Belfast study area
Sheldon Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cricket, Rugby (Juniors and Seniors) • Touch • Multi-play structure • Toilet • Skateboard area 	10 Ha	Located within Belfast study area

6.3 Churches

There are a number of Churches within the area, although a more significant cluster is found within north Belfast. A number of these places of worship also contain facilities such as halls that are available for wider community use. A number of Churches also run programmes and community services such as budgeting services, and programmes for Mothers and preschoolers. Many are actively involved in establishing Community Needs research to identify and respond to unmet needs within the Community. The most recent case of such research is the 'Belfast Speaks Out' analysis (2004), which was established through the combined churches of Redwood/Belfast, in conjunction with the Family and Community Development Division of Anglican Care. Some of the significant results from this analysis are discussed in Section 8 of this report.

6.4 Council Housing

Christchurch City Council owns and manages areas of houses within Barnes Road; Main North Road; Daniels Road and Tyrone and Cleveland Streets. At present the Council has no intention of either increasing or decreasing its stock of community social housing in this area.

6.5 Major Public Community Facilities

Belfast does not have a library. The north-west of the City is primarily served by Papanui, which together with Redwood (Redwood has a catchment of approx. 7,600 people) serves a total catchment of approximately 25 000 people.

A City Council Service Centre is also located within Papanui. This is the location of the Shirley Papanui Community Board, and it also houses Community Advocates for the Papanui area who can provide advice on Council planning, services and networks.

Significant aquatic centres being the Centennial Pools and QE II are located some 6 km. to 7 km. respectively from the corner of Cranford Street and Main North Road.

6.6 Commercial Centres

The most significant commercial centre in the North West of the City is the Northlands Mall. The Mall is 40,000m² in size and is currently one of the largest enclosed shopping centre in Christchurch. The centre provides a range of social activities such as a cinema complex, shopping, café's and restaurants.

The next largest commercial area is the Supa Centa at Belfast which has a more limited social focus given its focus on large format retailing and a supermarket, although there are also restaurants and some limited community facilities present. There are however restaurants and a gym. Smaller commercial activities are found along Main North Road, and a small convenience based complex is located at the north of Belfast which also contains two tavern/restaurants. A stand alone supermarket is located adjacent to the Northwood residential development.

6.7 Transportation

The major transportation links in the area is along Cranford Street, Papanui Road and Main North Road. All of these links suffer from levels of congestion at peak times.

The main North South railway line, linking Christchurch to Picton, also lies adjacent to the Northlands Shopping Mall. Its role is limited to long distance haulage of freight and passengers.

There is a relatively efficient Public Transport system servicing the area. 'The Orbiter' provides services linking together Northlands Mall with the other City's large commercial malls as well as with the Central City other significant facilities six times an hour between 8am and 5pm and less frequently at other times. There are also a range of other bus services from central Christchurch to the north west of the City these include the number 8, 11, 12, and 16 and the 90 – 92, Rangiora direct services. Bus shelters in this area and indeed in the remainder of the City are typically not provided, and seating is infrequent.

The Canterbury Regional Council has recently rolled out new and more frequent public transport systems to the north-west of the City, and have recently provided for 'bus only' lanes along Papanui Road and Main North Road. The Regional Council is also expecting to make redundant any of its non Super Low Floor Buses (SLFB's) over the next five years, so that all buses will be able to kneel on request and are wheel chair accessible. This should result in an efficient and accessible public transport system servicing the north-west of the City.

6.8 North-West summary and implications

There is currently a lack of recreational and community facilities, especially for youth and children. The pressure for additional facilities to meet the existing needs will be further exacerbated, especially with significant urban growth predicted for both Belfast and also the Upper Styx/Harewood areas of the City. This growth will need to be taken into account now to future proof and meet the demands for future community facilities, services and recreational areas. This will ensure that opportunities are not lost for potentially viable and well placed facilities.

Youth and children will need to be provided for with places to meet, parks with challenging equipment, places for entertainment, and other recreational facilities. Strategic decisions to close existing Council facilities which specifically cater to the youth market, will need to seriously consider the loss of such a facility within a network currently deficient of activities for the youth of the area.

There is currently a good network of schools in the north-west, with the exception of Belfast. Schools are currently viewed as central points within the Community; as such the programming of new schools would ideally be located as part of a wider focal point and relate to predicted urban growth around Belfast and the Upper Styx/Harewood areas.

Improved public transport services, frequency and fleet as programmed by the Canterbury Regional Council will result in an efficient and accessible public transport system servicing the north west of the City. Issues of congestion on the main arterial roads will worsen, further fragmenting the community in this area and creating delays for motorists.

Growth areas and population projections will need to be provided to private community service providers such as the 'Belfast Community Network', sports groups and relevant Government Ministries. This will help such groups with forward planning for the expected needs of these communities. Where possible the Council should assist such groups in determining appropriate locations for their facilities and services.

Figure 12 Significant community facilities in the north-west of Christchurch

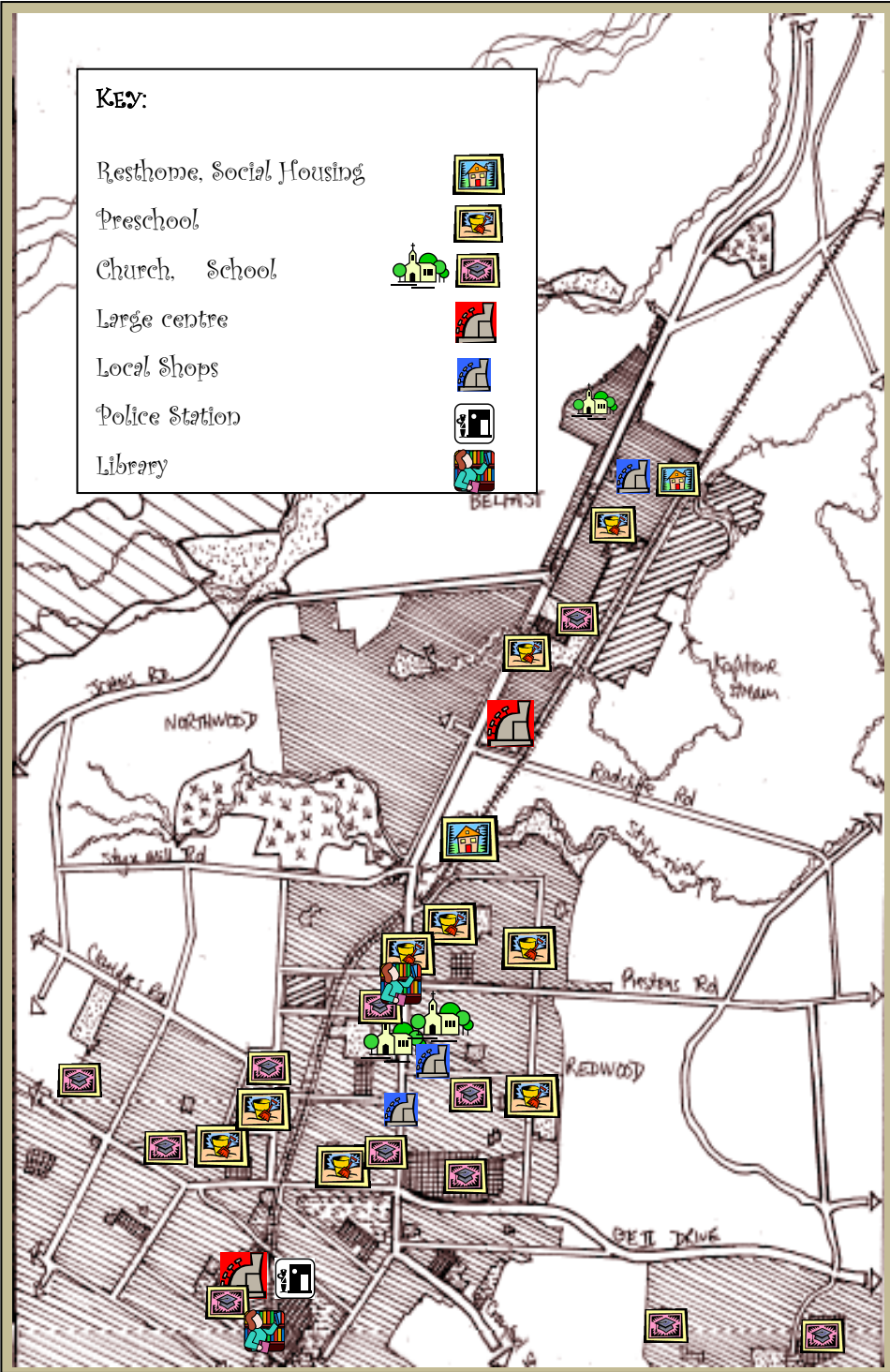
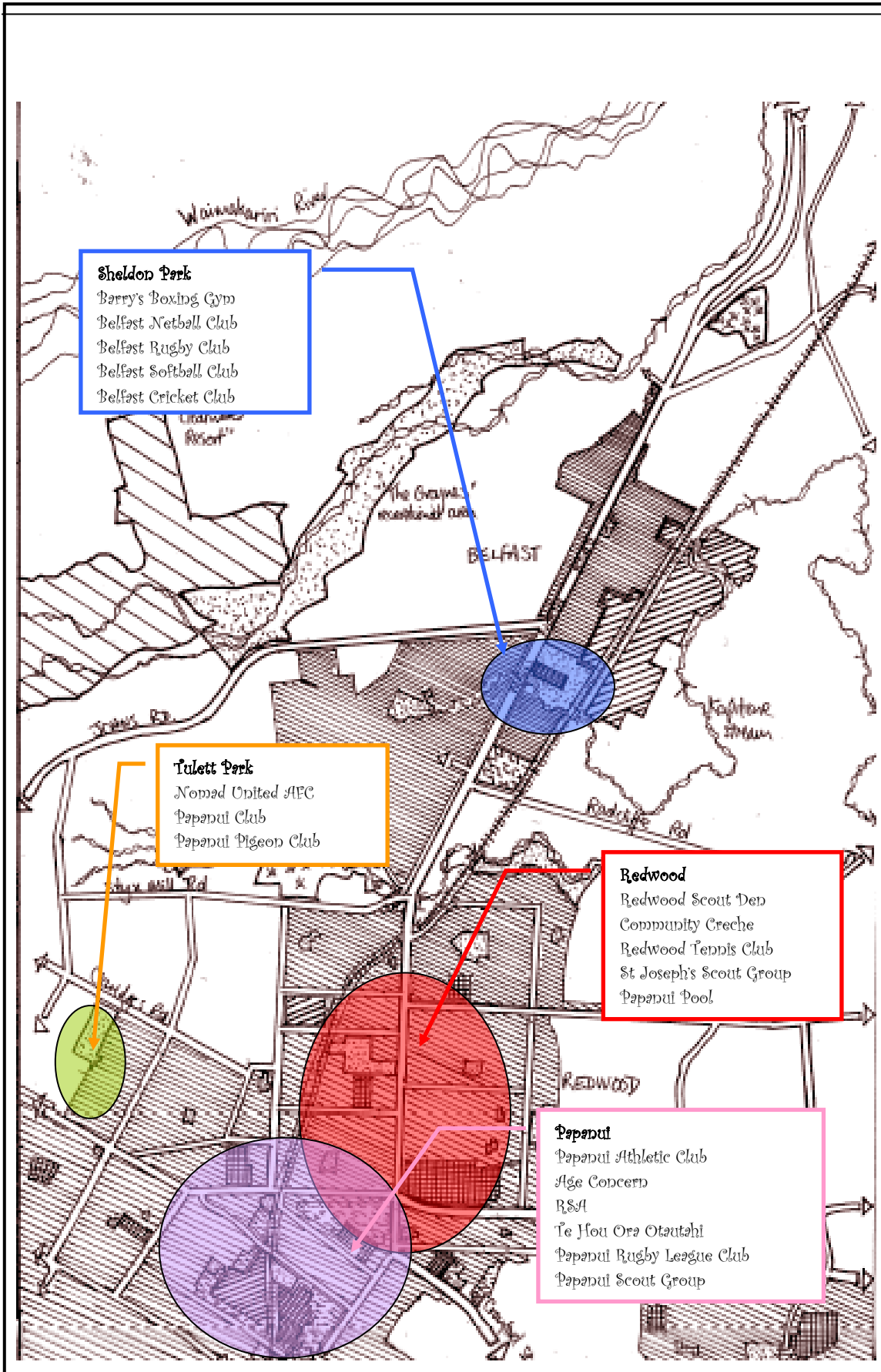


Figure 13 Community services and sports groups



7.0 BELFAST FACILITIES

There are a number of community facilities which currently exist in Belfast to meet the needs of its residents. These can be categorised into those community facilities that are provided for or managed by the Christchurch City Council and those that are not. Community facilities within Belfast are illustrated in Figure 16 (Council-owned/managed) and Figure 17 (Non Council-owned/managed). The facilities themselves are noted below:

7.1 Childcare/Schools

Belfast has a kindergarten, preschool and play centre, all located along Main North Road. Plunket also operates from Belfast Road. A nursery and preschool has recently established in the new Northwood subdivision. There is no intermediate or secondary school in the immediate area although there are a number located in nearby localities. Belfast Primary School is also the base for OSCAR Programme (which incorporates children from the Belfast and Oruhua area).

Figure 14 Belfast Community Childcare Facilities

Community Childcare Facility	Location
Belfast Playcentre	Sheldon Park Pavillion; Main North Rd
Belfast Free Kindergarten	672 Main North Road
ABC Learning Centre - Belfast Pre-School	796 Main North Road
Punanga O Te Reo – Early Childhood Care and Education	803 Main North Road, Elim Church of New Zealand
Belfast School	700 Main North Road
Northwood Creche @ Pro-fitness (private)	Northwood Supa Centa, Cnr. Main North and Radcliffe Rd.
Northwood Nursery and Pre-School (private)	1, O'Neill Avenue

7.2 Sports Clubs and Facilities

There are a number of sports facilities of note within the Belfast area, most of which are located in the vicinity of Sheldon Park. These include the Belfast Rugby Football Club and Belfast Touch Club, Belfast Netball Club, Belfast Tennis Club, Belfast Bowling Club, Barry's Boxing Gymnasium and the Belfast Pool. The latter is operated by the City Council with a community liaison committee. Englefield Park is also one of the Council's facility (95, Englefield Road), equipped with a rugby field (and multi-play structure). Also, there is a Brownies and Guides Organisation based from the Belfast School Hall. There are a number of other sport related activities accommodate by different (private) organisations/associations on private venues, including the: Canterbury Catholic Indoor Bowls Association, Belfast Pony Club, and Pro-Fitness at the Northwood Supa Centa etc.

7.3 Churches

The Salvation Army (2, Daniel Road), St David's Anglican Church, Christchurch North Elim Church (803, Main North Road.) and Riverlands Seventh Day Adventists (700, Main North Road. – Belfast Primary Hall) are all located in Belfast. A number of these places of worship also contain facilities such as halls which are available for wider community use.

7.4 Medical Facilities

The Belfast Medical Centre is located in Richell Street and the Belfast North Mediquel Doctors are situated on Main North Road. The St Johns Ambulance bases itself at the Elim Church premises. Care for the elderly can be found at the Cunliffe House Rest Home in Cunliffe Road. A new rest home is operating on 7 Cunliffe Road, close to Styx River overbridge (south corner of the study area).

7.5 Other Community Facilities/Services

Belfast has its own District Museum based on the site of the Kapuatohe Reserve. It also has a Rotary and Friendly Club, Leisure Club for Older Adults and a Garden Club. An Environment Trust exists to inform the public of environmental issues of concern in the Belfast area. A Belfast Resident's Association meets once a month at the Bowling Club at Sheldon Park.

The 'Te Waipounamu Wharekauri Trust' is located in Johns Road. While not for the specific service of the Belfast Community, the Trust assists unemployed Maori progress into the workforce.

7.6 Belfast Community Network

A 'Belfast Community Network' ('BCN') has existed in Belfast since 2004, and is not directly affiliated and funded by the Christchurch City Council, although the Council does support the aims of the BCN. At a minimum there are usually two office staff on site, at a maximum four staff plus 35 'visitors'.

The network currently represents over 12 different groups and organisations including four churches, residents group, Plunket, the local school and sports groups. The network co-ordinator is currently based at St Philips Church, Main North Road, although the current premises of BCN are threatened by development.

In relation to the current suite of programmes and services that are provided by BCN, these include:

Figure 15 Belfast Community Network, Organised Activities – December 2006

Day	Activity
Monday to Friday	Intermediate age OSCAR
Monday nights	Toast Masters
Tuesday Afternoon	Craft
Tuesday nights	Kapa Haka
Wednesday	Hip Hop
Thursday morning	Toddlers play and music
Thursday	Girl Guides
Fridays	Play group
Friday nights	Youth Café
School Holidays	One week Holiday programmes (max 30 people)
When required	Meetings

In discussions with BCN staff they have identified that a more purpose built facility and location is desirable. The criteria expressed for such a location includes:

- A site of some 1800m²;
- High visibility being considered critical, with a preferred location fronting Main North Road;
- Connection / proximity to Sheldon Park and the Belfast School. This is to provide some ease of access and safety for those children attending OSCAR programmes;
- Proximity to the movement patterns of people in Belfast; and
- To find a permanent location, rather than an interim solution.

7.7 Council Housing

The Christchurch City Council owns to areas of housing within the Belfast Study Area. These are located in Cleland Street and Tyrone Street.

7.8 Libraries

Belfast itself does not have a library. The nearest facility is located in Redwood. However, the area is supported by the mobile library service which makes two stops in Belfast every Friday afternoon. The stops are at Englefield Road/Main North Road and then Third Street/Main North Road.

7.9 Parks and Playgrounds

Within the Belfast study area there are several neighbourhood parks zoned open space, totalling four hectares in area. In addition, there are two district parks, that of Englefield and Sheldon Park.

A new reserve (2.89 Ha), adjacent to Englefield Park is being created as part of the new Northwood subdivision development.

7.10 Parks and Reserves

Styx Mill Reserve and Wilson’s Swamp/Otukaikino Reserve both lie within the study area and have significant recreational, cultural, ecological and other natural values. The Groynes Recreational Reserve is located nearby along Johns Road, as are the private open spaces of Rosebank and Clearwater resort, which while not public assets, nonetheless contribute to the City’s open space network.

7.11 Transportation

The major transportation links of State highways 1 and 7, Main North Road and the South Island Main Trunk Railway, run through the Belfast study area. The SH1 route follows the motorway from the four lane bridge over the Waimakariri River, along Main North Road and Johns Road. The SH74 begins at the intersection and follows Main North Road south, through the length of the study area. In Belfast, Main North Road forms a major junction with John’s Road, which also serves as a by-pass to the main urban area of Christchurch and Airport service and industrial area.

7.12 Belfast summary and implications

There is currently a lack of recreational and community facilities, especially for youth and children. Growth within Belfast will need to be taken into account now to future proof and meet the demands for future community facilities, health, educational and social services, and recreational areas. This will ensure that opportunities are not lost for potentially viable and well placed facilities.

The increase in school children expected in the area as a result of urban growth in the area will place pressure for an extension of Belfast School. The Ministry for Education has advised that even with the projected growth in population of the area that they will not develop a Secondary School within the area.

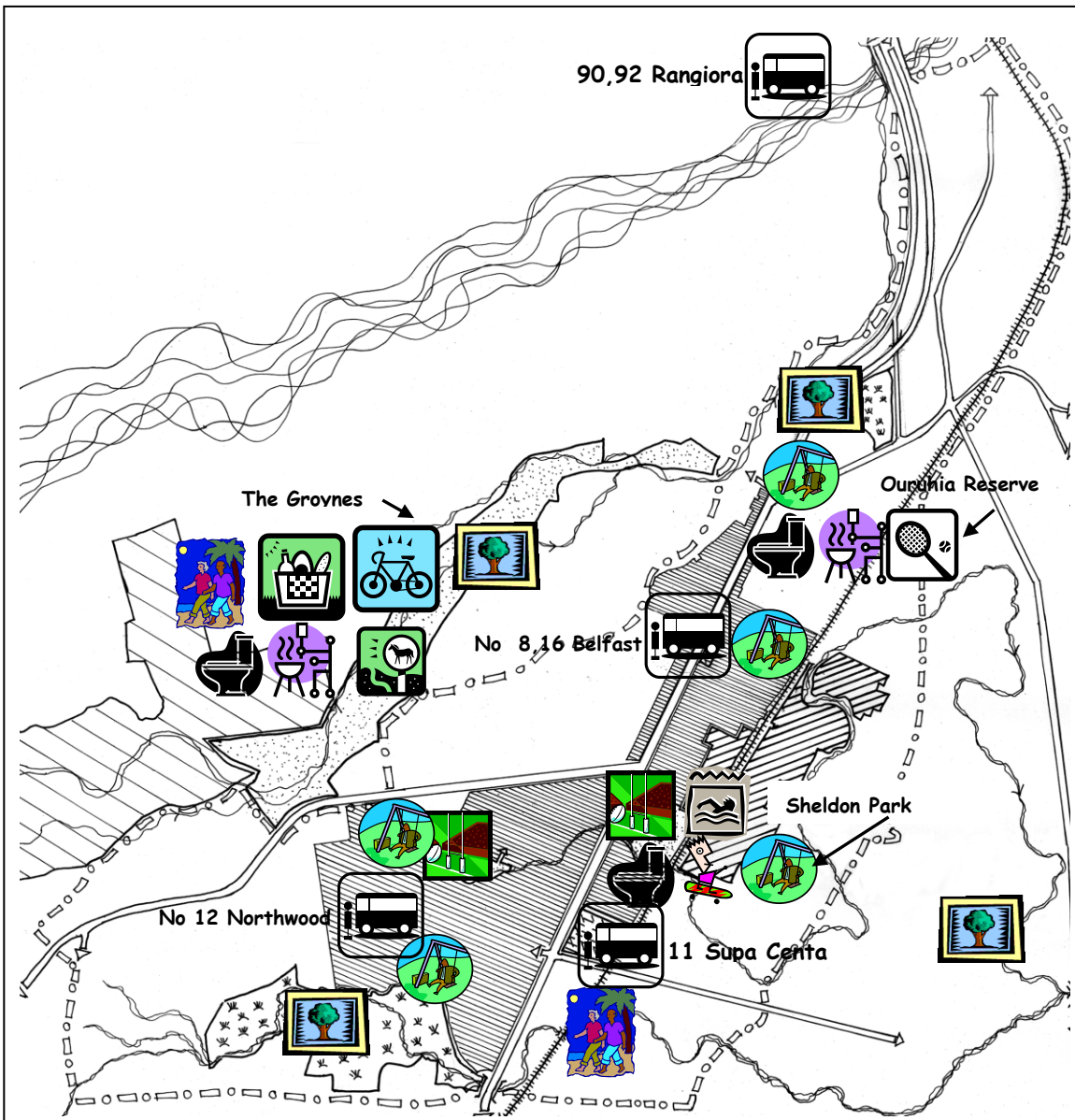
Improved public transport services, frequency and fleet as programmed by the Canterbury Regional Council will result in an efficient and accessible public transport system servicing the Belfast Area. The principle of permeable and integrated residential subdivision will be pursued at the Council Policy level to ensure that additional bus services and frequencies can be efficiently provided to service new residential developments.

An improved venue and facility should be facilitated for the Belfast Community Network. It is likely that the Council cannot play a strong role in securing a site or funding associated infrastructure, but the City Council should take a role in ensuring the future proofing of a suitable site through the Area Plan process.

Issues of congestion on the main arterial roads will worsen, further fragmenting the community in this area and creating delays for motorists. Council will be working with Transit New Zealand to ensure appropriate improvements are made to transport network in this area. This will include the Northern Bypass, Western Bypass, and for the Council improvements to Cranford Street.

The Council will need to provide information to community groups, churches and relevant Government Ministries to outline the likely potential for growth in the area, and the resultant pressures for services and activities.

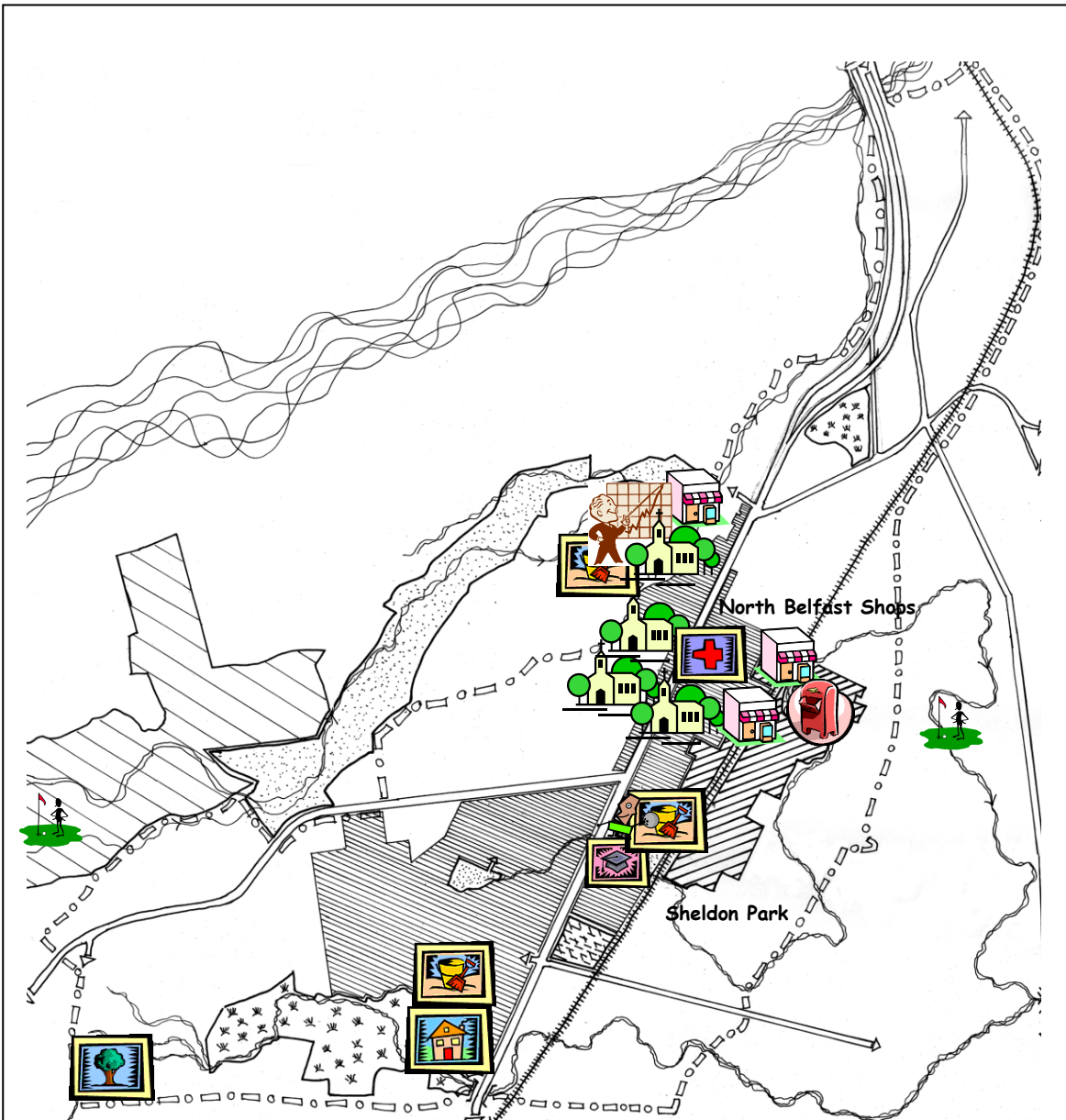
Figure 16 Belfast - Council Community Facilities



Council - Community and Recreational Facilities

Key:					
Bus Routes	→ 	Reserve walkways	→ 	Toilets	→ 
Wildlife Reserve	→ 	Horse riding trails	→ 	Swim pool	→ 
Play Equipment / Local reserve	→ 	Skateboarding area	→ 	Bike tracks	→ 
Formal Sports field	→ 	Nature Reserve	→ 		
BBQ facilities	→ 	Picnic facilities	→ 		

Figure 17 Non-Council Community Facilities



Non Council - Community and Recreational Facilities

Key:			
Childcare Centre →		Doctors Surgery →	
School Church →		Rest Homes →	
Golf Course →		Tavern Bowling Club →	
Nature Reserve →		Community Advocate →	
Post Office →			

8.0 CONSULTATION

There are two types of consultation relevant to this document. The first is consultation undertaken as a direct result of the preparation of the Belfast Area Plan. The second was consultation undertaken by the combined churches of Belfast/Redwood, in conjunction with the Family and Community Division of Anglican Care with the aim of clarifying unmet community needs within the area.

8.1 Belfast Area Plan Consultation

Undertaken in 2004, a number of issues arose constantly throughout this consultation process. The community identified that they wanted Belfast to be a village community, with a strong community heart centred around the Sheldon Park area. It should also keep its rural character by protecting the green belt and historical sites. The community expressed that there be more effort in developing the area in a manner which links together recreational areas such as the Styx River, Wilson's Swamp, Clearwater and the Groyne Reserves by paths, walkways and cycle-ways.

The adults specifically identified the following key issues:

- To develop an integrated village character for Belfast, as distinct from Christchurch City;
- To develop a community 'heart' for the area, centred around the existing Sheldon Park;
- To improve public transport, both within Belfast and into the City;
- To develop the physical environment through enhancing the rural feel of area;
- To co-ordinate improvements to, and the linking of, parks and reserves.

In the future the Adults would like to see a number of elements in the Belfast Area. These are listed in Figure 18 below:

Figure 18 Belfast Community Consultation Anticipated Outcomes 2003/2004

Environmental/Opportunities	Land use and development
Improve public transport into and around Belfast	Ensure that all new development integrates well into Belfast – no more fragmentation;
Improving paths, walkways and cycle-ways between recreational areas	Develop a central community focal point
Ensure that the separation from Christchurch City is apparent and maintained	Meeting the demands for retirement and aged care
Completing motorway developments, including the Northern Arterial and the proposed Johns Road diversion	Parks and Reserves
Re-examining the northern and southern gateways into 'Belfast'	Retention of a strong rural – urban boundary
Sense of history, i.e. buildings	Making the Main North Road bridge four lanes
Providing new plantings along Main North Road	Roading Improvements to reduce division of Belfast
Community Spirit, Feel and Pride	Greenbelts (to emphasise and retain rural boundaries)
A safe, caring environment for families	

Children in the area commented that they liked the sports facilities available in the area, with easy access to the swimming pool, basketball, touch and rugby. They commented that there was not a great deal to do within Belfast and that youth facility to go to (play pool, listen to music and meet people) would be a requirement for the area.

8.2 Belfast Surveys

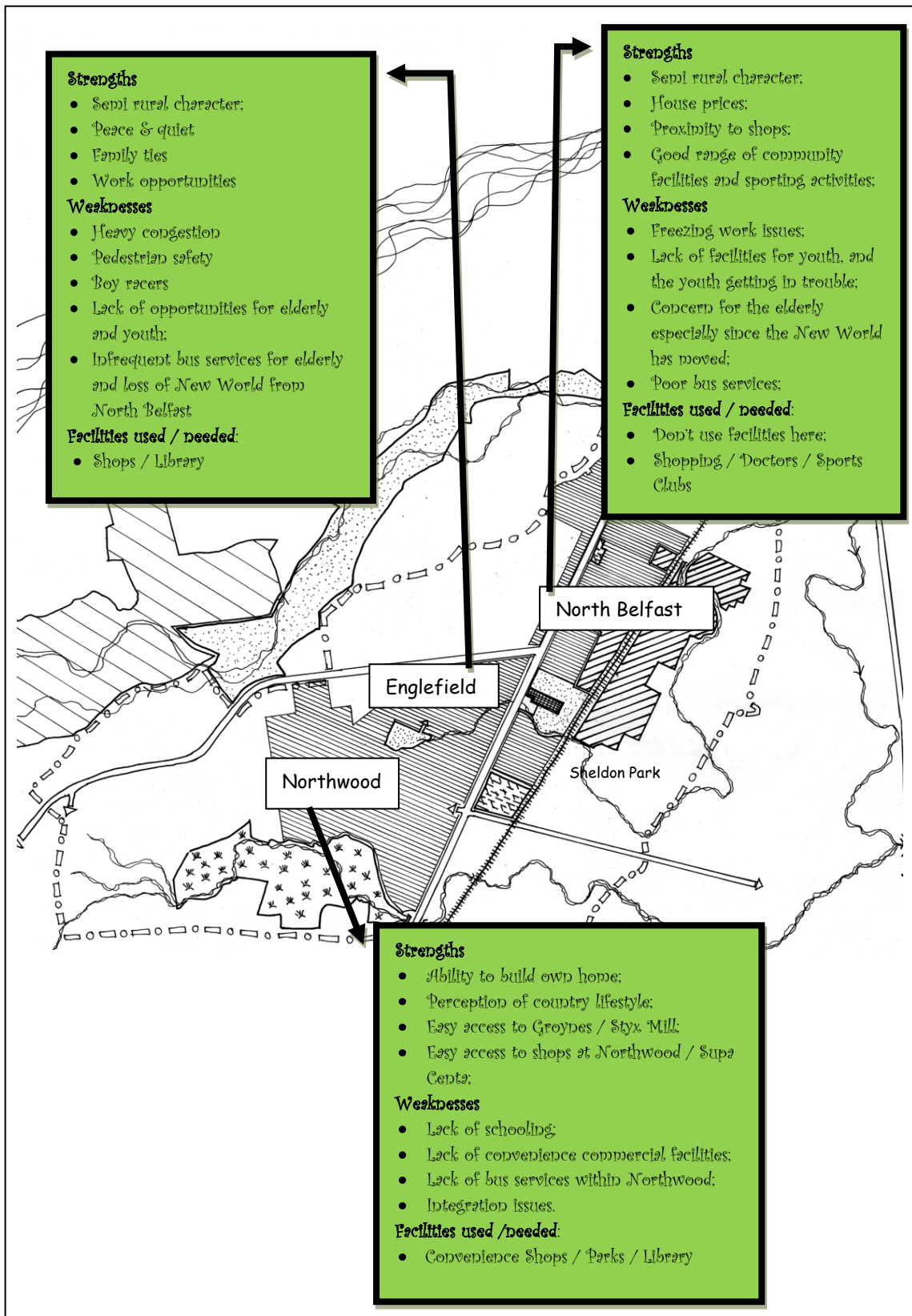
Community Needs Survey 2004

In June of 2004, a Community Needs Research Project was established through the combined churches of Belfast/Redwood, in conjunction with the Family and Community Division of Anglican Care 105 people were interviewed in Belfast by way of door to door interviews with the aim of clarifying unmet community needs within the area. The results for each of the three areas within Belfast (Northwood, Englefield and Belfast North) is outlined in Figure 7.

The general results of the surveys indicated that:

- Northwood is generally self contained with good access to parks, preschools and playgrounds. There was a perceived need for some small shops/café to improve social activities within the area;
- Northwood and the Supa Centa are the main commercial facilities utilised, with a subsequent decrease in the social interaction undertaken at the north Belfast shops (and the old Brown's store). The loss of the Supermarket and closure of the other shops has contributed to a loss of community feeling according to some of the residents, particularly the elderly;
- Transportation is a significant issue (with associated safety issues). The Main North Road acts to fragment the community, and creates safety issues for the elderly and children. The lack of frequent bus services was also perceived to be a negative;
- The semi-ruralness, and separation from Christchurch was seen by many as a positive. Many residents mentioned that it was important to try and retain this character as new development occurs in Belfast;
- Whilst access to recreational areas such as the Styx Mill Reserve and the Groynes was seen by many as a positive, access to such Parks especially from those in the north was seen as being something that needed improvement; and
- A shortage of activities for youth in the area.

Figure 19: 2004 Community Needs Research Project results



Community Needs Survey 2006

A report produced by Belfast Community Trust ("Belfast Community and Recreational Needs Analysis, 2006) is summarising the community needs and issues as follows:

1. Recreation Needs:
 - Retaining of Redwood Library and provision for a new library closer to Belfast centre (investment correlated to future population growth);
 - Community Hall ("heart of Belfast") and special auxiliary rooms (multi-use space) to accommodate recreational needs for young people (visual and performing arts), provide space for community based organisations, become an information hub and to be used as a community meeting space facility; and
 - A need for improved connections (walking tracks and safer walking routes) for existing parks and green spaces. Sheldon Park is perceived to be the main park in the area and residents want more sports facilities and leisure activities opportunities to be host there (add more play structure and components).
2. Safety Issues:
 - Not enough safe crossing points over the Main North Road;
 - The western by-pass identified as solution to reduce traffic through the main part of the neighbourhood and as a solution for road safety problems; and
 - Sheldon Park has been identified as unsafe (poor visibility and surveillance).
3. Social issues:
 - Dependency on cars for most of the Belfast residents; and
 - There is a lack of choice with regard to education facilities.

8.3 Consultation Summary

Each consultation exercise has provided a number of consistent themes in terms of the community facility needs expressed by the community. Whilst there are some slight differences dependent on the location of those surveyed, all agreed that:

- The semi rural character of Belfast was a major point of difference, and a real positive for residents;
- The frequency, volume and speed of traffic on Main North Road acted to fragment the Belfast community;
- There was a desire to integrate Belfast more (although this was less desirable for those in Northwood and Styx Mill subdivisions), especially for new areas of residential development, and perhaps develop a community 'heart' for the area located in the centre of Belfast;
- To improve public transport, both within Belfast and into the City;
- To improve accessibility to parks and reserves;
- To promote community facilities and activities for the youth of the area; and
- To provide a better commercial centre for the area that contains convenience shopping and social activities.

9.0 ISSUE SUMMARY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Belfast is a diverse community – one which has a variety of cultural, social and economic needs, and a range of community facilities and recreational areas at its communities disposal. It has a range of health providers, community organisations, and a high level of community pride. Belfast is also socially fragmented, has little to offer the youth of the area, and does not contain a strong community heart. Belfast needs to achieve a higher level of community integration than is currently attained.

9.1 Growth Issues

1. Migration is one of the demographic factors that can drive a rapid growth in the metropolitan area of Christchurch and, over the next 20 years, Belfast will be one of the key areas to accommodate such growth, as identified in the Urban Development Strategy (2007) and within Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement. The population as a whole will age significantly and Belfast itself is an area where growth in the number of families and children will continue as well (currently the property market in Belfast is fairly accessible for young families and first home buyers, and it is anticipated that this will be maintained). Needs within the community will evolve over time as a result of the changing social trends of an increasingly older population.

2. Indicators for the area show that Belfast is suffering from spatial and social fragmentation, due in part to significant transportation barriers (i.e. Main North Road) and from disparities related to the level of social condition (between residents of old suburb and residents of the new west located subdivisions). There is also considerable economic and social demographic disparity between the north and south of Belfast.

A fragmented community will have limited success in achieving a coherent identity, in maximising utilisation of community facilities and support networks.

3. People value a sense of community (especially the residents of the older parts of Belfast). Permeability will need to be ensured for new residential developments, as well as shared community facilities to enhance community interaction and connectivity. This can be achieved through good urban design that encourages permeability and walkability, as well as integrated developments, and through the provision of central accessible meeting and activity spaces.

4. Community development agencies have difficulty with co-ordination and have limited capacity to respond quickly to urban growth and development. Community development agencies need support for re-sourcing and facilities, capacity and co-ordination of future planning needs. The Council will need to take an active role in engaging with community development agencies as to the likely urban growth scenarios. Community agencies will seek participation through the community engagement process.

5. Youth and children will need to be provided with places to meet, parks with challenging equipment, places for entertainment and other recreational facilities. Given the current deficit of activities for the youth of the area, any strategic decision to close existing Council facilities in this area which specifically cater to the youth market will need to consider the impacts on this age group.

6. The expansion of Belfast School is likely to be needed in the long term.

7. The Council needs to work with Transit New Zealand to ensure appropriate improvements are made to the transport network in this area. These should include: the Northern Bypass, Western Bypass, and for Council improvements to Cranford Street. Influences from the alignment of proposed Northern Arterial need also assessment against the current transport network in the area.

8. The Council needs to plan for the potential development of a library facility within Belfast. Such a facility should be located in a centralised location (or within a multiple purpose community building) to facilitate improved community interaction and connectivity.

9.2 Growth Objectives:

Objective 1

Ensure a variety of accessible and affordable community facilities are provided within Belfast, including:

- ~ A new library;
- ~ Sports grounds and associated facilities;
- ~ Community and care centres;
- ~ Elderly persons housing developments;
- ~ Schools and learning centres; and
- ~ Spiritual facilities and centres.

Objective 2

Ensure key recreational infrastructure is co-located around Sheldon Park, with appropriate community and social facilities, to maximise the accessibility and efficiency of this location, while:

- ~ Recognising sufficient opportunities should be provided within the Radcliffe District Centre and local centres for community infrastructure and services; and
- ~ Creating key walking and cycling connections to link Sheldon Park and the Radcliffe District Centre.

Objective 3

Promote community facilities and services of sufficient capacity to meet current and projected populations and changing demographics. This includes:

- ~ Ensuring such facilities are publicly accessible;
- ~ Meeting the need for recreational facilities for young people;
- ~ Ensuring facilities and infrastructure are resilient and can adapt to Belfast's ageing population demographic; and
- ~ Providing community infrastructure to meet a diverse range of opportunities and purposes.

Objective 4

Ensure all community facilities, including sports and recreational fields, specifically those supporting the Belfast area as a whole, are accessible by walking, cycling, and public transport.

Objective 5

Encourage local community initiatives, such as the Belfast Community Network, and also foster greater utilisation of existing facilities and services.

Objective 6

Ensure the location, design and scale of community facilities is appropriate for its proposed use.

9.3 Implications and Mechanisms

The recommendations put forward are on the basis of potential phased works, ranging from short to long term. The implementation mechanisms to achieve such works are set out below and include: where such works will involve regulatory and non-regulatory means; relevant agencies such as the Council and other Stakeholders. Where relevant and possible, costs for each mechanism has been identified.

Short Term (0-5 years):

Action	Lead agency	Secondary/ support agencies.	Cost estimate (\$)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CCC will communicate with Government agencies, iwi, and non-profit agencies to ensure co-ordinated planning for service delivery (educational, health or social), to meet the community facility needs of the Belfast and wider community. 	CCC	Government Agencies	N/A
	Ministry for Education	Ngai Tahu	
	Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB)	Belfast Community Network	
		Non-Profit Agencies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Council development related Strategies are investigating issues arising from an aging population, including consideration within Strategies / Plans relating to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Social and Elderly people housing needs; Leisure and Recreational needs; Social needs; Transportation planning; Community and safety; and Access to amenities, shopping, health services and social centres. 	CCC	Age Concern	Part of existing strategy budgets.
	Environment Canterbury (ECAN)	Grey-Power	
		Elderly residents.	

Action	Lead agency	Secondary/ support agencies.	Cost estimate (\$)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the role and function of special designated community meeting space within Belfast (a hub that could integrate or be integrated by a library facility (in a centralised location) – if changes in policies related to the library system service stress the viability of a new library). Need to future proof an appropriate development site. 	CCC	Relevant land owners (if land is not owned by the Council).	Cost of land purchase (if location is not on Council land)
			Development Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Council strategies regarding potential closure of youth facilities, recognises the deficit of youth activities within the area. 	CCC	Belfast Community Network.	Part of existing strategy budgets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the growth potential of Belfast is incorporated within any determination of the provision of future aquatic facilities in Christchurch. 	CCC		N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with Transit NZ on the future development pressures on the transport infrastructure of Belfast, and try to secure funding. required to analyse the western and northern Bypass options. 	Transit New Zealand	CCC	To be determined.
		Relevant land owners	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to work collaboratively with other public or private service providers in order for them to integrate Belfast community (residents) needs within their current business development plans, to make their services (banking, post office, dentist, etc.) available within Belfast area around the existing commercial areas (SupaCentre, ex-New World site, etc). 	CCC	NZ Post	N/A
		District Health Board	
		Major Banks	

Medium Term (5-10 years)

Action	Lead agency	Secondary / support agencies.	Cost estimate (\$)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for the expansion of the Belfast School. 	CCC	Ministry of Education	Not yet determined.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the feasibility linking facility development to Sheldon Park to provide for a strong Community Focal Point within Belfast. 	CCC	Belfast Community Network	Not yet determined.
		Belfast Sports Groups.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where supported through residential development and a sustainable transport network, support a more social and convenience related function to the existing Supa Centa. 	Land owner	CCC	City Plan Process.

Long Term (10 years +)

Action	Lead agency	Secondary / support agencies.	Cost estimate (\$)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the feasibility of a public transport interchange including for rail and bus services in the vicinity of the central focus. 	CCC	ECAN	Not yet determined.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate and increase engagement into removing the heavy traffic from central Belfast (Western Belfast Bypass, the motorway re-alignment). 	Transit New Zealand	CCC	Not yet determined.

Ongoing (present – onwards)

- Ensure that planning controls are engaged into:
 - Reinforcing the urban – rural boundary of Belfast;
 - Ensuring appropriate buffer treatment for any major recreational or sports facilities developed in the area to protect residential character and amenity.
- Provide on-going opportunities for the Council to increase its involvement in the design of new subdivisions, particularly to increase interconnectedness and permeability between developments.

10.0 THE COUNCIL'S ROLE

The 2009-2019 Long Term Council Community Plan (refer Section 2.1), stated the long term outcomes and strategic directions for the City as a whole.

The challenge for area planning in terms of taking these City-wide outcomes and directions and applying them at a localised level is to ensure that resources that are managed centrally are made accessible to local communities on an equitable basis. This will inevitably involve Council, Community Boards, or Community Groups having to make a case to the Council (or relevant agency in terms of the Health and Education sectors) for special treatment on the basis of a particular local issue that needs to be resolved. By way of example, the Belfast School Board of Trustees are attempting to make such a case to the Ministry of Education in order to obtain additional classroom space.

There are two further challenges for area planning. First, resources need to be managed to meet a diverse range of often conflicting needs. For example, while a new library incorporating state of the art technology will be appreciated and used by younger people, the elderly in the population could have difficulty in accessing and using such a facility. The second challenge is creating a "feeling" of community. Urban design may go some way to forge this outcome but more effective means are probably likely to exist through community development programmes.

Within this context the following social and community issues are matters that are going to have to be addressed either as part of the Area Plans work or subsequently through public programmes and partnerships as neighbourhoods evolve.

Access to Health Facilities

The Area Plan process has a limited role here but can have an indirect influence through making the Council and other public agencies aware of issues as they arise. This can be achieved through monitoring of the long term Council Community Plan.

Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle

The Council has a direct role here though the provision of open space and leisure facilities, together with associated community recreation programmes. This doesn't mean that future residents will automatically use these facilities but is obligatory on the Council to ensure that the opportunities are there. A fundamental requirement is the advance acquisition of open space that is multi functional, and accessible.

Recreation and cultural activities

Recreation and cultural activities plays a major role to improve connectedness and sustainability of the community and avoid exclusion and isolation. It can help build self esteem and respect for others, develop communications skills and teamwork and foster discipline. The role of recreation, cultural groups and activities should be recognized within social inclusion strategies.

Safety and Security

The Council has a statutory role under the Resource Management Act, the Local Government Act, Health Act and other legislation to ensure that communities are protected from existing and potential hazards. The Area Plans will be dealing with these matters through such methods as identifying contaminated sites, floodplain management, traffic management and through its usual building and environmental health regulations. In addition to these matters there are a suite of issues surrounding public safety and security for vulnerable groups in society such as children and the elderly. Sensible and practical measures can be taken in neighbourhood design to minimise the risk from crime and increase the feeling of safety and security. These can be supported through community watch schemes, community policing and other community based initiatives.

Education and Childcare Facilities

Depending on the demographic makeup of future households, there is likely to be a significant increase in demand for childcare facilities and early learning centres. Trends for longer working hours and the number of parents in full / part time work will also result in pressures for the development of facilities for both preschool facilities and after school care for children up to the age of around 14 (it is noted that the Belfast School currently has an OSCAR program operating from its buildings for the after school care of children on the school role.).

Increasing school aged children in the area will put pressures on the capacity of the existing Primary School, which currently has a roll of some 360 students.

The need for either a new primary school or the extension of Belfast School has already been identified by the Ministry of Education (as development fund executor), although it is unlikely that this will extend to investigations regarding the development of a Secondary School in the area. School facilities are likely to be developed along major arterial roads as these facilities generally require good visibility, and an accessible location which can be a part of a parent's journey to and from work.

There should be also recognition for the integrator role that a new school facility can play, if well located, between the old Belfast community area, the new Northwood subdivision, and any further residential Greenfield developments.

The size of the area (3 to 3.5 Ha) required for new education facilities (early learning centre and a primary school) within Belfast area is a major issue as such school provision historically has not been a consideration in association with substantial residential development. An example of this is the Northwood subdivision which has greatly increased the numbers of school aged children within the Belfast Area.

A potential site for the development of a new primary school facility has been identified by the Ministry for Education west of Main North Road within that block of land between Johns Road and Main North Road (also known as the Applefields/Devondale Estates block). It is considered by the Ministry that such a facility located in this area would cater easily for an influx from new residential development and potential growth, including the wider already established Harewood area.

Social Cohesion

Feeling as being part of a community is likely to increase the pride in the community and reduce crime. The Council's role here will be to proactively work with voluntary groups and schools in establishing programmes providing recreation, leisure, community education and other activities based in the community.

Affordable Housing

This is not an area where the Council can have a great deal of influence. Housing prices in the Belfast area will be determined by the market and based on socio economic perceptions, and demand factors such as interest rates and bank lending policies. As part of its public housing programme, the Council can work with Housing New Zealand or have its own initiatives to address specific issues at the local level as the need arises. Obvious needs, likely to arise are accommodation for social disadvantaged (social housing) and for elderly persons housing. The Council and/or Housing New Zealand may want to take the opportunity to acquire land in advance of development so that it is in a position to respond to demand in years to come.

Employment

Access to job opportunities will largely determine the health of future neighbourhoods in this growth area. For example, the availability of part time work will enable women in particular to retain an income stream while raising families. The Council can have a significant influence on the availability of employment opportunities through its City Plan. For example, it can create employment opportunities through appropriate commercial and industrial zoning and through providing for a range of non residential uses in a living zone. Whether such opportunities are taken up by potential employers however is something in which the Council has very little influence over.

10.1 Summary and Implications for Belfast

Key Points

- Community or “neighbourhood” building is not merely a physical planning exercise. While urban design, asset management and sound statutory processes are all important, they are largely ineffective without an underlying “social infrastructure”. Community advocates are going to be playing a key role in highlighting and addressing community development in the new growth areas;
- New housing areas will undergo a “demographic transition” over the next 10-20 years as households “mature”. As yet we do not know what will emerge demographically because much will depend on how the new area is perceived by different social groups. As a broad generalisation though, we can expect a continuation of family based households because that is what the majority of houses are built for. Depending again on future demands, there could be a situation where retiring people wanting smaller households will find difficulty in firstly selling their existing family homes, and secondly finding suitable housing in that area;
- In developing our concepts we need to incorporate CPTED principles, promote sustainable development, and ensure that there are multi-functional and safe linkages through new growth areas. However, we shouldn’t impose a community identity – rather we need to work with future communities to help them establish their own (within clearly defined parameters); and
- The location and distribution of community facilities in the Belfast Plan area is shown in the attachment. It is not just the location and accessibility of these facilities that are important, but how they are used and managed. This will partly depend on how successful the community is at building social networks that need facilities to operate from. Conversely, facilities are likely to act as a catalyst for networks. In summary, the Council and other relevant agencies need to be gearing up for establishing partnerships, monitoring community change and ensuring we understand values in the new communities.

Implications for Belfast

The main implications with Belfast Area Plan of the demographic changes predicted for the future are:

- The increasing demand for schools in the short term and their reuse for other purposes once the current growth rate has subsided, and as households and communities ‘mature’;
- How to meet demands of a growing number of elderly people, not only obvious health facilities, but also in areas continuing education, recreation and leisure, and transport;
- Need to ensure that housing stock and land parcels in which they are sited continue to provide for different social needs over the next three decades;
- Ensuring that communities do not become fragmented or severed through haphazard and poorly planned growth. This requires an integrated and staged approach to future residential development in the area; and
- New residential developments should continue with the provision of semi-formal green spaces, but ensure that these are well linked in a linear network to provide for non-formal recreational opportunities. A well distributed network of local centres and community footprints should also be provided; this is to ensure that an accessible range of health and service provision is enabled within the area.

11.0 CONCLUSIONS

Belfast is undergoing considerable change in both its population and land use development as one of Christchurch's most rapidly expanding urban areas. Its character was once considered to be akin to a 'country town', but Belfast is being transformed to an outer suburb of Christchurch (although for many people that live in Christchurch south of the Styx Mill Bridge, not so much a destination but rather a thoroughfare area). As Belfast continues to grow, there is a need to ensure that Belfast remains 'socially sustainable' which involves ensuring access to appropriate and effective community facilities.

Community facilities are of fundamental importance to a community's well-being for a number of reasons.

They provide:

- the vehicle through which a range of services or programs are delivered to the community;
- space for important Council facilities;
- meeting places and focus for local residents;
- office space for community organisations, volunteers and funded services;
- activity space for recreational and social activities; and
- function space for private parties, meetings and exhibitions (and thus also a source of revenue generation for the community).

Community facilities also help to create a sense of identity with the local environment and its residents and the communities long-term viability. Without appropriate facilities, the community may find it difficult to function as a true community, losing their feelings of self-reliance and feeling isolated from the wider community.

There are also many other 'social and financial costs' associated with the loss of or lack of appropriate facilities, such as lack of access to educational resources, increased travel/connectivity (transportation) costs and diminished social interaction among local residents. The Council has responsibilities, primarily through the Local Government Act 2002 to promote and action communities social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being in the present and for the future.

The main mechanism for achieving these aims will be through the Long-term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) which need to identify community needs and how the Council proposes to meet these needs. The Council will also need to manage the future development of the Belfast area through the Resource Management Act 1991 to assist in achieving a well planned and sustainable community in the area.

This will done primarily by managing growth within the area, and providing direction on the types and location of community facilities which reinforce community focal points and minimise the environmental impacts of such facilities. To this end the principles of community health, safety through urban design, increased permeability and social connectedness and the enablement of community facilities, will all be encouraged where possible through the application of the Christchurch City Plan to the growth and development of Belfast.

12.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Community Development Strategy, Christchurch City Council, – Draft, October 2006

Community Research Report (Recreational Needs Analysis), produced by Sarah Wylie, December 2006, for Belfast Community Network (BCN)

Planning Evidence Report (before Environment Court in relation to Apple Field Ltd. submission), produced by Christiane Elisabeth Sargent, 2006, for Ministry of Education

Community Issues related Evidence (before Environment Court in relation to Apple Field Ltd. submission), produced by Sarah Margaret Carter, 2006, for Belfast Community Network

Belfast Speaks Out, a community survey report by Phillipa Renouf and Megan Gully, published by the *Family and Community Development Division of Anglican Care*, October 2003

New Subdivision Residents' Survey Reports for Northwood and Englefield Subdivision, produced by Strategy and Planning Group, Christchurch City Council, 2007

Belfast Community Profile – Data from Statistic New Zealand

www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/CommProfiles.nsf

Northwood Residential Area – Data from www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/urban-design-case-studies-mar05/html/

LTCCP Policy Summary – Christchurch City Council (Aquatic Facility Strategy, Libraries 2025 Facilities Plan, Community Facility Plan, ECAN Public Transport Data)