

# STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Community Services Committee  
**FROM:** District Librarian  
**DATE:** 14 March 2006  
**SUBJECT:** Takaka Memorial Library Building Replacement Project

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## PURPOSE/REASON FOR REPORT

At the recent Enterprise Committee meeting there was a discussion on the proposed new Takaka Library. Therefore staff have prepared the following report to provide Councillors with more information on why a new library is needed in Takaka.

## WHY DOES THE LIBRARY NEED REPLACEMENT?

The existing building is too small for the needs to community, not only for the future but currently. The total floor area of the existing building is 262 m<sup>2</sup> while the proposed new library will have a floor area of 428 m<sup>2</sup>.

## BOOK STOCK

The current shelf capacity for the basic book stock (adults' fiction, non-fiction and large print, children's fiction and non-fiction and young adults' fiction and non-fiction) is 12,150. Despite some radical weeding of the fiction and children's collections over the past few months to make some room on the shelves they are currently crammed with 14,753 books (18,276 total less 3,523 on loan). When shelves are overfilled this leads to mis-shelving, damage to books and makes it difficult for customers to find items. In order to serve the current population at a reasonable standard the stock should total 19,000 and the projected requirement for 2020 is 23,000 items.

There should be a minimum width of 1,500 mm between shelving units to allow adequate customer access. Currently only one aisle reaches this minimum with three aisles as narrow as 1,100 mm and 1,200 mm.

Before the recent weeding of the fiction area the books were stacked up so high as to be out of reach of short people without the assistance of a step up.

Some bookshelves are located above the ramp from the lower to the upper area of the Library and this means that customers have to stand on an angled surface while browsing those shelves.

The children's area is very small. There is no seating, inadequate space for the book stock, especially the picture books and nowhere to hold story time sessions. The young adult area is equally cramped and is shared with other purposes. If young people are to be motivated to read and acquire a reasonable standard of literacy, the Library needs to offer them an attractive, useable and welcoming space.

Communities expect that Public Libraries today will offer a "living room away from home" – a space they can use and relax in. Libraries are an important resource for informal learning in a world in which ongoing learning has become the norm. Space is needed for people to be able to use the information resources both in print and electronic form. Adequate computer access is needed to enable people to use electronic sources of information. The existing Takaka Library has virtually no space for either study areas or relaxed seating for reading and computer access is minimal.

### **WORKROOM, STAFF AREAS AND STORE ROOM**

The existing library has a workroom/storeroom/tearoom of 30 m<sup>2</sup>, a Librarian's "office" of 4.9 m<sup>2</sup> and a toilet area/cleaner's store of 6.5 m<sup>2</sup>. The staff complement consists of two full-time and three part-time staff totalling 3.5 FTE plus a story-time presenter and two student shelvers. For the 3.5 FTE's a minimum office area of 50 m<sup>2</sup> is required. Space is also required for storage, a staff tea room and a staff toilet.

The existing customer service counter only has enough space to allow service to one customer at a time. This leads to bottlenecks in service provision when the Library is busy and unnecessary delays for customers.

### **SECURITY**

The young adult and magazine area is completely out the sight of the staff member at the service counter. There is poor visibility of the fiction area and the non-fiction area behind the first row of shelves. The children's area is difficult to access from the service counter.

### **COMMUNITY VALUE**

<i>Statistics:</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Door counts</i>
1999-2000	99,698	62482
2000-2001	98,347	69,920
2001-2002	100,947	68,496
2002-2003	100,801	74,072
2003-2004	105,588	79,916
2004-2005	104,473	73,022

Notes: 1. door count figure for 1999-2000 estimated upwards to allow for one month when the counter was out of operation. 2. issue statistics before 2003 adjusted to remove administrative transactions no longer counted by Spydus after conversion in May 2003.

These figures provide a crude measure of the use the community makes of the Library. There are many other activities ranging from information requests to children's story time, which also add value to the community but are more difficult to measure.

Librarians have long believed that when the economy goes down, public library use goes up. The United States has recently experienced an economic cycle contrary to New Zealand with a recession starting in 2001. In 2002, the American Library Association contracted with the University of Illinois Library Research Center (LRC) to study library use over the last five years, at the twenty-five U.S. public libraries serving populations of 1 million or more. Using data from eighteen of those large libraries, the study found that circulation has increased significantly since March 2001, when the National Bureau of Economic Research pegged the beginning of the latest recession. Using statistical analysis, the LRC found that circulation in March 2001 was 8.3% higher than would be expected from the trend line that started in January 1997. It stayed well above that trend line, an average of 9% above, for the rest of the year.

In the draft LTCCP some themes common to both the interim community outcomes (2004) and the draft community outcomes (2006) are highlighted. The second part of the statement under the heading *Cultural development and culture* gives an indication of why adequate Library buildings are so important to the community –

*The second part of community development involves recreational and social issues such as creating safe 'hang-outs' for youth and providing safe communal areas for people to gather and interact. There is strong support for parks, reserves, and recreational facilities and substantial support for the development of further community facilities.*

## **CAN THE EXISTING BUILDING BE EXTENDED**

Extension to the back:

- There are protected trees in the way.
- It would make the building very long and narrow.
- Such a building would create a library difficult to run effectively and efficiently.

Extension to the side:

- This would encroach on the memorial rose garden.
- It would impede or block access to the public toilets.
- It would impede or block access to the reserve, playground and skateboard park.
- It would be structurally difficult and therefore expensive.

Extension upwards:

- Construction will be costly.

- It will require a lift.
- It has staffing implications.

## **PROJECT HEADLINES**

- The project was deferred in favour of the Motueka Library extension in 2003-2004.
- This is an approved project in the 2005-2006 Annual Plan with a budget of \$500,000.
- Commercial sources indicate the availability of tenants for the existing building with an indicative rental of \$20,000.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the report be received.

Brian Paterson  
District Librarian

<http://tdctoday:82/shared documents/meetings/council/committees and subcommittees/community services committee/reports/2006/rcs060322 report takaka memorial library building project.doc>