

Library and community Hubs – Dargaville and Mangawhai concepts

Meeting: Council Briefing
Date of meeting: 03 February 2025
Reporting officer: Samantha McKeown, Project Manager Business Delivery

Purpose | Ngā whāinga

To update the Council regarding plans for a library and community hub in both Dargaville and Mangawhai.

Context | Horopaki

Kaipara District Council (KDC) has identified the need for a library and community hub in both Mangawhai and Dargaville. This need has been consulted on and supported by the community and is listed in the 2021/31 Long-Term Plan (LTP).

In its LTP consultation for 2024-2027 the Council sought community feed-in to the proposal which has helped inform the facilities to be in the two community hubs. Based on the consultation, the hubs should include library functions, meetings spaces and facilitate a variety of modern community hub activities. The buildings will allow for varied uses through good flexibility, adaptability, and modern technology.

Initial DIA Better off Funding assigned to the community hubs was significantly reduced and redistributed to 3 waters projects to support Government direction on Local Water Done Well. The remaining funding has been used to develop concepts and feasibility studies for three sites (one in Dargaville, two in Mangawhai) to inform decisions around budget, timing, and site selection.

Discussion | Ngā kōrerorero

Libraries of Kaipara

There are five libraries in the Kaipara District: Dargaville and Mangawhai libraries, which are Council run library services, and three community libraries at Paparoa, Kaiwaka and Maungaturoto run by volunteers. The Kaipara District Council Library strategy adopted in 2022 indicated the amount of library space and numbers of staff per capita in Kaipara are the lowest compared to those of similar sized rural districts of similar population and well below what is recommended for our population.

Modern library services provide materials for reading, enjoyment and information. Their role in lifelong learning encompasses bridging the digital divide providing access to the devices and tools people need to access the internet and experience new technologies for themselves. Libraries are places for people to meet, connect, create, learn new skills, study, work away from home, discuss, debate and be inspired and entertained through innovative programmes and events.

The Council confirmed its support for arts, culture and heritage with the adoption of *He Rautaki Toi ā Rohe o Kaipara: an arts, culture and heritage strategy for the Kaipara District, 2022-2026*. The strategy has goals which include:

- growing Ngā Toi Māori (Māori art, culture, and creativity) practice and delivery,
- creating cultural infrastructure
- providing more opportunities to share rich heritage and build capability through opportunities for learning skills
- engaging youth and providing pathways for them in the creative industries.

Libraries and Community Hubs are essential for providing opportunities such as those described in the strategy while providing equitable learning opportunities ensuring that Kaipara's communities can access the resources and support, they need to reach their full potential.

Current situation and limitations to service

The lack of space in both Dargaville (266 sqm) and Mangawhai (91 sqm) libraries limits the ability to introduce new services, programmes or events. Issues with access mean some community members cannot use the services provided. The following considerations contribute to the need for updated facilities:

Health and safety of staff

- Several aggressive incidents have occurred resulting in people being trespassed from the Dargaville site. A new configuration has been required to mitigate the possibility of further serious incidents and provide for the safety of staff.
- In Dargaville the staff workroom and breakroom are undersized, crowded, noisy and cramped. In Mangawhai they do not have running water in their breakroom. This space doubles as an office and storage area – it has been converted from a storage closet. There is no staff workroom in Mangawhai.
- The Dargaville staff toilet doubles as storage with the need for additional storage offsite. Mangawhai has no public toilet, and the staff share a toilet with the hall next door.
- There is no space for meetings or private conversations in either library.

Accessibility

- Wheelchair users are unable to access much of the collections in both libraries.
- Parts of the collection are inaccessible to many in our community due to the constraints of the buildings.
- Mobility scooters need to be left at the door on the street.
- People using pushchairs or walkers have difficulty using the space.
- Limited on-street parking

Variety of use

- Lack of seating and study spaces.
- Limited variety of collections.
- No display of local taonga, heritage and genealogy.
- No spaces to allow for private meetings or gatherings for the community.
- There are challenges for young families, youth, and older customers sharing the same small spaces.

Dargaville Library

Dargaville Library moved to its current location in 2010. The relocation into this smaller space occurred with no fitout budget, reusing fixtures from the previous space. The community have been continually vocal about the lack of space. This lack of space has implications for the health and safety of the staff and patrons, accessibility and varied use of the library.

In 2018 it was decided to investigate placing the library adjacent to the town hall, creating an anchor building for a civic precinct. After community consultation as part of the previous LTP 2021 - 2031, Council agreed to investigate developing a new building adjacent to the Northern Wairoa War Memorial Hall and Municipal Building to house a community hub and library. Council also indicated that it would look to form a community trust to facilitate the development of the community hub and library in Dargaville. Until recently the Dargaville Library has been the only professional library in the district and has provided support to the voluntary libraries.

Mangawhai Library

Mangawhai is the fastest growing settlement in Kaipara, due to its proximity to Auckland and high recreational and scenic value. Until recently, the library was run by volunteers. In December 2023 Council agreed to establish Mangawhai as a branch library with paid professional staff commencing July 2024. While this has improved services, staffing and hours of operation are limited. Two sites are being considered for the Library and Community Hub: one at Mangawhai Community Park and the other at Urlich Park. Supported by the rapid population growth and development of Mangawhai, the Council could look to fund the build of the library and community hub in Mangawhai with future development contributions and debt.

Iwi engagement

Iwi were engaged and helped develop the Kaipara Libraries Strategy. Their aspirations at the time of strategy development were a contributing factor to progressing the projects and applying for funding. This early engagement also informed the library and community hub design briefs. Further feedback was also received from Te Uri o Hau via the LTP consultation.

As required as part of the Better off Funding application, Iwi were engaged and supported the Community Hub developments in principle, subject to further discussion and review during the planning and design process. The criteria for the Better off funding package recognises that local authorities are expected to engage with iwi/Māori in determining how it will use its funding allocation. Information has been shared with Mana Whenua on the concept development for the community hubs in both Mangawhai and Dargaville.

The relevant parties identified in respect to each project/initiative are as follows:

- Mangawhai Community Hub: Te Uri O Hau, Ngāti Whātua, Ngāti Manuhiri
- Dargaville Community Hub: Te Uri O Hau, Te Roroa, Te Kuihi, Ngāti Whatua

Design brief and concept development

Working alongside the Kaipara Libraries' team, Sue Sutherland Consulting has provided the brief for the library and community hub. Sue has sound knowledge of the current library situation in Kaipara having developed the Kaipara Libraries Strategy. Sue developed the design briefs for both Dargaville and Mangawhai with consideration of the amenity requested by the community, young people, staff and elected members taking into account the square metre spatial requirements for each function in each building. Sue has provided advice as the concepts have been developed using her extensive knowledge of library and community hubs in NZ and overseas to offer realistic concepts.

Athfield Architects have been engaged to provide the concepts for the Dargaville and Mangawhai Library and Community Hubs. Athfield Architects have a long history of designing libraries and civic buildings across New Zealand. Their approach to the concept design development and early consideration of site complexities ensures that the design responds not only to the design brief but to the site conditions and environment of each building and mitigates the potential for redesign.

Choosing architectural design over a design-build company or a prefabricated building for a library and community hub offers several other advantages, particularly when considering the complexity and operational requirements of such a multifaceted project. While design-build companies and prefabricated buildings can offer certain advantages, such as speed, they often lack the level of customisation and flexibility required for complex projects like a library and community hub. Architectural design provides a tailored approach that addresses the specific operational requirements, flexibility for current use, future adaptability and responds to the location and environment in which the building will be located.

As noted above, engagement with Mana Whenua to coordinate on design principles is a requirement by BOF/DIA. This engagement and collaborative approach is best facilitated by designers with experience in interpreting our whole communities' feedback into the design and provide an opportunity to create a facility strongly connected to place.

Dargaville Town Hall site

Kaipara District 'Roadmap to Recovery' Long Term Plan 2024-2027 Consultation Document asked: *Q1 Aside from library services, what facilities or functions do you think are important to provide in the Dargaville Community Hub?*

Respondents highlighted the need for a variety of key facilities in the proposed community hub. Meeting rooms were the most frequently mentioned, followed by spaces for events, cafés, and spaces to access technology. Other important facilities included arts and crafts spaces, dedicated youth spaces, theatre spaces, information centres, and multipurpose facilities. Art galleries, spaces for studying and learning, sports and recreation facilities, swimming pools, and community kitchens were also seen as valuable additions. Less frequently mentioned but still considered important were cultural spaces, spaces for hire, town halls, dedicated spaces for young children, libraries,

parking facilities, quiet spaces, central emergency hubs, medical facilities, accessible spaces, public toilets/showers, and storage.

Many of these functions requested by the community, young people, staff and elected members have been captured in the brief and the square metre spatial requirements have been considered to feed into the design. The resulting Dargaville concept integrates with the surrounding Municipal Building, the rear Wairoa Hall building and adjoining spaces maximising the service offered by the current buildings and any future building creating a space for the whole community for a variety of activities.

The concept for the Dargaville site is a two and a half storey structure bridging three distinct levels of the memorial precinct. Sited adjacent to the Wairoa Memorial Hall it connects the Jaycee Park edge (tamariki space) up to the landing level of the Hall and the Municipal Chambers. This level is home to activity spaces, some library collections, a commercial kitchen serving both the Community Hub and Wairoa Hall, and a café that can open out onto the landing square. The upper level houses the library collections alongside co-working space, a maker space, youth space and a digital hub.

Opportunities

- Positive profile and identity.
- Good edges to all sides.
- Positive sheltered edge to Portland St link.
- Integration with Memorial Hall.
- New (sheltered) entry plaza to Memorial Hall, Cinema and Community Hub.
- Potential for multiple entries including one from the playground frontage.
- Positive relationship to RSA and War Memorial.
- Combined servicing with Memorial Hall.

Challenges

- Multiple levels to staff and manage.
- Existing building interfaces.

Cost and funding (Dargaville concept)

At this very early concept stage, indicative pricing for such a building provided by an independent quantity surveyor is estimated to be in the range of \$14m to \$16m. The estimate shown below considers the following:

Included allowances

- Building works
- Land remediation (disposal of contaminated soil)
- Contingency allowances

Exclusions

- Demolition of existing dwellings
- Upgrade of existing services infrastructure
- Diversion of existing services on site
- Professional & Council consent costs
- Escalation
- Seismic strengthening to neighbouring buildings
- GST
- Temporary accommodation and relocation costs
- Information Technology, hardware etc.
- Fixtures, fittings and equipment other than those stated
- Possible transformer upgrade/relocation
- Local infrastructure contributions
- Whiteware
- No allowances have been included for potential costs associated with new Government Legislation/initiatives, disrupted supply chains, procurement complications or labour inefficiencies in relation to the COVID-19 or similar Pandemics

Item	Description	Total (\$) + GST
1	Construction Cost	\$ 9,289,355.00
2	Preliminary and General Costs	\$ 1,114,723.00
3	Margin	\$780,306.00
4	Construction Contingencies	\$2,963,862.00
5	Professional Fees & Council Costs	Excluded
6	Escalation	Excluded
7	Rounding	\$755.00
Estimated Project Total:		\$ 14,149,000

Staff recommend funding for the physical build of the Dargaville Community Hub could be sought through the formation of a Trust or by seeking external funding streams, as consulted on and agreed as part of the [2021 – 2031 Long Term Plan](#).

Site options in Mangawhai

Kaipara District 'Roadmap to Recovery' Long Term Plan 2024–2027 Consultation Document asked: *Q1 Aside from library services, what facilities or functions do you think are important to provide in the Mangawhai Community Hub?*

Respondents expressed the importance of varied facilities in the community hub in Mangawhai. Key aspects highlighted include the need for versatile spaces, such as meeting rooms and multi-purpose flexible spaces, arts and craft studios, health and wellness centres, technology hubs, outdoor spaces, and a café. Other important facilities mentioned include a community gym, swimming pool, sport and recreational facilities, meeting venues, and a youth centre.

Respondents highlighted the importance of various functions for the community. These include customer services that are accessible on weekends and the need for after-school programmes. With growth forecast in the Mangawhai area to be 8,247 by 2027, and urban expansion planned, the population of Mangawhai has outgrown its current recreational and community facilities. Residents want to see council investment in venues for community groups to meet, places to co-work and better facilities for youth and young children.

These functions have been captured in the brief and the square metre spatial requirements to meet community needs have been considered in the concept designs.

Site option 1 – Mangawhai Community Park

Mangawhai Community Park is a 34-hectare site on Molesworth Drive which has a number of attractions, sport and recreational facilities for all ages and community groups. As well as the Mangawhai Activity Zone, the park is home to the Fire and Ambulance stations, Mangawhai Museum and Historic Village, the Bowling Club and a wastewater treatment plant. Mangawhai Golf Club and course are also part of the park. There are a number of valuable natural features within the park including native trees and a sandstone gully.

Development of the park is guided by a Master Plan that was created with the community. The park has changed significantly since the plan was adopted in 2014 and has recently undergone review. This site is being investigated for its potential to develop the community hub and library in a location of the park that has been earmarked for potential development.

Located in Mangawhai Heads, the Mangawhai Community Park Library and Community Hub concept integrates with the surrounding natural environment and adjacent recreational amenity. The shared path means the site is within walking and cycling distance of Tara Creek estuary, Mangawhai Central shopping and future residential precinct and the Wood Street shops.

Opportunities

- Ability to contribute to a vibrant community precinct.
- Leverage established pedestrian connections.
- Contribute to / enhance a high value natural environment.

Challenges

- Site constraints associated with topography and drainage flow.
- Isolation / distance from broader community / village centres. e.g. Mangawhai Village.
- Multiple levels to staff and manage
- Traffic impacts
- Site also considered for civic building and service centre to house council staff

Site option 2 – Urlich Park

Urlich Park has been selected as a site for investigation as a location for the Library and Community Hub. The site was purchased by Council in 2022 using Reserve Contribution Funding. Located in Mangawhai Village, it is in close proximity to the current library, Mangawhai Beach School, school bus drop-off and pick up and the Mangawhai Domain.

Urlich Park is 5.8 hectares of mostly flat land, with a section that is steep and sloping. The lower area of the site has been found to have the potential to flood. The concept considers the best possible location on the site for a Library and Community Hub and associated parking to allow for buildability and reduce the need for ground disturbance and retaining on the site. The location also achieves good connectivity to the village amenity, street frontage and accessibility for a great number of the community to easily use the facilities. It considers the best possible use for the balance of the land for sports and recreation activities.

The concept for this lower part of Urlich Park is a single storey structure lifted off the ground. A simple raked roof to the east creates a double height space taking advantage of good natural light. A café is located on the street front by the entry and gathering space. Lower height rooms are located along the spine of the building for work and staff functions, meeting spaces, parenting room, activity and creator spaces. The library functions will be provided for in the large open plan space. The concept considers options available to build out of and mitigate flooding risk through the finished floor level and features like swales for water retention.

Lower Urlich Opportunities

- Good profile, address and approach.
- Good building edges to all sides.
- Good carparking.
- Potential for future community facilities precinct.
- Well positioned to link to new shared pathway.
- Single level building
- Close to Mangawhai Village, school bus stops and schools.

Lower Urlich Challenges

- Flooding risk
- Potential impact on playing field flexibility.

Alternative location on Urlich Park

Early in the concept development phase, a design was considered for the upper area of Urlich Park that provided more challenges than opportunities. Due to the complexity of developing in this part of the site, the potential costs of associated groundwork (levelling and retaining) and its disconnection from the village amenities, the concept was not further developed.

Upper Urlich Opportunities

- Elevated position with great outlook.
- No impact on playing field arrangement.

Upper Urlich Challenges

- Limited ability to establish community precinct.
- Isolated from Mangawhai Village.
- Exposed.
- Challenging carparking provision.
- Steep, sloped site may require multiple building levels and significant enabling works.
- Poor approach/entry.

Cost and funding (Mangawhai Community Park and Urlich Park)

At this very early concept stage, indicative pricing for such a building provided by an independent quantity surveyor is estimated to be in the range of \$12m to \$14m for Mangawhai Community Park and \$10m to \$12m for Urlich Park. The estimates shown below considers the following:

Included allowances

- Building works
- Land remediation (disposal of contaminated soil)
- Contingency allowances

Exclusions

- Demolition of existing dwellings
- Landscaping
- Upgrade of existing services infrastructure
- Diversion of existing services on site
- Professional & Council consent costs
- Escalation
- GST
- Temporary accommodation and relocation costs
- Information Technology, hardware etc.
- Fixtures, fittings and equipment other than those stated
- Possible transformer upgrade/relocation
- Local infrastructure contributions
- Whiteware
- No allowances have been included for potential costs associated with new Government Legislation/initiatives, disrupted supply chains, procurement complications or labour inefficiencies in relation to the COVID-19 or similar Pandemics

Mangawhai Community Park (MCP)

Item	Description	Total (\$) + GST
1	Construction Cost	\$ 8,504,055.00
2	Preliminary and General Costs	\$ 1,020,487.00
3	Margin	\$ 714,341.00
4	Construction Contingencies	\$ 2,713,304.00
5	Professional Fees & Council Costs	Excluded
6	Escalation	Excluded
7	Rounding	\$ 813.00
	Estimated Project Total:	\$ 12,953,000

Urlich Drive

Item	Description	Total (\$) + GST
1	Construction Cost	\$ 6,665,665.00
2	Preliminary and General Costs	\$ 799,880.00
3	Margin	\$559,916.00
4	Construction Contingencies	\$2,126,747.00
5	Professional Fees & Council Costs	Excluded
6	Escalation	Excluded
7	Rounding	\$792.00
	Estimated Project Total:	\$ 10,153,000

Staff have forecasted a budget of \$6m from Development Contributions already collected for the build of the Mangawhai Community Hub in Year 4 of the LTP (2028).

Sports and recreation at Urlich Park

The Mangawhai Domain is the present site which provides for Mangawhai's competition level sporting facilities. Urlich Park was purchased by Council to accommodate the communities future sporting needs, recognising the growth Mangawhai is experiencing. Planning and developing Urlich Park into a sports park will therefore be progressed incrementally over the coming years as noted in the [Long-Term Plan 2024-2027 Deliberations & Decision Making](#). By contrast, a new library and community hub is a present need.

If the Library and Community hub is to be located at Urlich Park, it will be done so in a way that does not restrict the future development of the site as a space for sport and recreation. Playing fields and sports facilities will be located at Urlich Park and how they will be laid out will be worked through with the community at a later date. This will be done via the development of a Reserve Management Plan for Urlich Park. The Sports and Recreation concept shown alongside the Library and Community Hub concepts aims to provide an understanding of what can be achieved on the site considering it as a whole community destination.

Urlich Park Reserve designation

Following the decision to purchase the land at Urlich Park on 28th September 2022, pursuant to section 14(2) of the Reserves Act 1977, Council gave [notice](#) of its intention to vest the reserve as Local Purpose Reserve (Sports and Recreation). This was notified on the 26 February 2024. No objections were received and Council decided at a meeting on [3 April 2024](#):

"Subject to no objections or submissions being received by the date of this meeting, Council resolves to vest the land at 96 Moir Street as Local Purpose Reserve-Sports and Recreation."

A Gazette Notice declaring the land to be a reserve was published on 24 May 2024.

Officers have sought advice on the development of the land at Urlich Park due to the restrictive nature of the reserve status prescribed to the land. In order to provide a multi-functional community park, Council could seek to amend the purpose of the reserve under s24A of the Reserves Act 1997 to *Local Purpose Sport and Recreation and Community Buildings* to provide for the development of the Library and Community Hub. This would remove the possibility or risk of judicial proceedings due to the nature of the development on the site falling outside what may be considered *sports or recreation*.

Staff propose to inform the community that a redesignation of the reserve status of the land at Urlich Park will be required in order to develop such a building on the site. Redesignation of the site will require community consultation and a decision by Council.

Ōmokoroa Library and Service Centre and Sports Pavilion

Ōmokoroa and Mangawhai have both gone from being small, rural holiday villages to become home to larger populations of permanent residents. Both towns are experiencing continued, rapid growth and as a result, have outgrown their library offerings. The solution for the Ōmokoroa Library and Service Centre has seen it move from its previous location to a 207m² specific addition to the Ōmokoroa Sports Pavilion which was developed in 2020. The building also houses other community spaces such as meeting rooms, community kitchens, activity spaces and public toilets. Changing rooms for the sports offerings are closed to the public and managed by the sports groups that use the facility and grounds.

In addition to providing book collections, the library provides a variety of functions and activities including after school and holiday programmes and workspaces with internet access. The new location of the library initially caused concern as it is further from the school, but community usage grew quickly. The library is stymied by the absence of space for providing a greater variety of services to its growing community. However, this is not a permanent solution for the Ōmokoroa library. The space added to the Sports Pavilion for the library will later revert to providing for the sports functions of the facility and a new library will be developed elsewhere. Some lessons learned from Ōmokoroa Library and Service Centre development include:

- Planning for growth; ensuring any facility developed can provide for population increases and the demand for a variety of functions and services.
- Complementary facilities; ensuring services offered provide a unique experience and improve the function of a space rather than detract.
- Adaptability; provide a building solution that is futureproofed by its ability to adjust and respond to changing needs of the community.
- Destination/cornerstone building; providing convenient access to compelling experiences, quality spaces, and varied services to attract visitation.

Next steps | E whaiake nei

Following direction on the Mangawhai Library and Community Hub location, the balance of the Better Off Funding will be used to further develop the concepts for the chosen location. We will continue to consult with the community for feedback on the developing concepts to ensure we have captured and are responding to community needs.

If Urlich Park is Council's preferred site, redesignation of the site will require community consultation. A paper will be provided to receive a decision by Council.

Staff will return to Council to seek approval for the Dargaville concept in principle. The remaining Better Off Funding can then be used to further develop the concept designs. Developed design can be used to inform future planning and decisions around budget, funding and timing to enable a community trust to undertake the development, which will come back to a later briefing towards the end of Financial Year.

Mentioned in this report but outside the scope of the Library and Community Hub design is the development of the Urlich Park Reserve Management Plan. Further work is required to understand the high-level needs, wants and aspirations of the community to develop a concept plan for Urlich Park. Allocation of \$200k is in the LTP 2025-2026 year, funded with financial contributions and staff will report on this work separately at a later date.

Attachments | Ngā tapiritanga

	Title
A	Dargaville and Mangawhai Library and community hub: Summary Concept design
B	Dargaville Library and community hub: Concept design
C	Mangawhai Library and community hub: Concept design
D	Dargaville Library and community hub: Design brief
E	Mangawhai Library and community hub: Design brief
F	Urlich Park Reserve Concept design