

Introducing the Aro Valley Community Centre Preliminary Design

March 2018

Introduction

This section details:

- What a Preliminary Design is, and where to find the designs.
- Background to the design process.
- Main features in the proposed Preliminary Designs for the Aro Valley Community Centre Upgrade, in particular the answers to some of the questions asked by the community in previous engagement events.
- Constraints and other considerations which have informed the design.

What is a preliminary design?

Preliminary designs aim to resolve the needs and issues on a site into a plan for the spaces. It's a balancing act between different types of issues, and sets in place the main design moves. These will be refined further in the developed and detailed design stages.

You can take a look at the Preliminary Design drawings, and see where Preliminary Design fits in to the Project Timeline on the Aro Valley Site Development section of www.arovalley.org.nz.

Background to the design process

Since October 2016, Aro Valley Community has engaged in the development of plans for the upgrade of the community centre. Technical advisors and site investigations have also taken place. Together these have informed the designs.

The main issues the designers have taken into account in developing the proposed Preliminary Design are:

Community Priorities

Identity: What the community has said about its identity, and what this place means to them e.g. incorporating features that reference the social history of the site, which encourage play and connect people to nature, and materials and aesthetic that fits into Aro Valley.

Resolving existing issues: What the community says it needs to feel welcome and safe and to enjoy the site. This includes how we resolve particular issues on the site, for example finding a better way to include different users e.g. so children can play safely, whilst cyclists pass through.

Facilities: What additional facilities are needed for the community. For example, a whanau space inside the community centre, and a larger kitchen to cater for shared community meals.

Site Considerations and Project Constraints

There are a wide range of considerations and constraints on this site. These include:

- Where there is infrastructure e.g. pipes running under the site.
- Consideration of issues experienced by local residents.
- Regulations and laws governing activities e.g. how close to a boundary we can build, how we need to build to

take account of natural hazards, and council zoning considerations such as noise restrictions.

- The budget: finding the best way to resolve the community's needs within all of these constraints.

To read a more detailed summary of the site considerations and project constraints which have shaped the design, have a look at 'Aro Valley Community Centre: Site Considerations and Project Constraints', in the Aro Valley Site Development section of www.arovalley.org.nz.



The Main Features of the Preliminary Design

The preliminary design relates to the building. The landscape designs are being developed now the site's constraints have been clarified.

Enhance Aro Valley's welcome and well-being

- Circulation is improved to take account of children playing whilst adults commute to and from the city.
- The Palmer Street access will be widened to improve temporary vehicle access for loading and unloading, while retaining the playground at its current size.

Develop this site's identity as Aro Valley's Community Hub

- The connection of the centre to the landscape is being improved, to unite these spaces for the community. There are a number of additional doors, decks and windows that connect people inside and out.
- A more distinctive entrance will be more visible and welcoming from the park.

Enhance the centre's capacity to bring people together

- The kitchen is enlarged and connected to other spaces in which the community can gather and eat.
- The hall offers more flexibility. It can be converted into two spaces for concurrent events or large crowds.
- The foyer and whanau room provide places for people to drop in and connect.
- The offices are in the community centre. Here they can provide information and orientation both for the centre and wider Aro Valley activities.
- There is improved storage, accessible for activities both inside the space and in the surrounding area.
- The washroom facilities are improved, to include more diverse users.

The need to balance different types of issues while developing the preliminary design has led to a number of decisions which we'd like to make clear to you.

Decision 1: Where the centre is on the site

That the upgraded community centre should be located in a similar position to the existing centre.

This is to allow the size of the community centre to be expanded without affecting the congestion point

or 'pinch-point' between the centre and the pre-school.

Decision 2: Circulation route

To adjust the circulation on site.

This is to further improve pedestrian safety, especially for children, around the community centre and park. The Preliminary Design proposes to create better circulation by shifting and enlarging the community centre entrance, proposing a change in location for the pre-school entry, calming measures to slow cycle commuters and further restricting vehicle access.

Decision 3: Reuse of Existing Building

To make use of the existing building.

Once constraints were established on the site a costing exercise was undertaken. All of the concept options came in over budget. However these concepts were presented to gain feedback on a portfolio of ideas, so the engagement acted as a strong guide to the preliminary design development. Re-using suitable features, such as the roof from the existing building, not only reduces waste from the build, but leaves more of the budget for features the community has requested, such as the additional facilities and landscape.

Decision 4: Pavilion Demolition

Not to regenerate the tennis pavilion, also known as the bunker, into useable community space.

The pavilion has played a part in the

community life of Aro Valley since its construction in 1937, however it is un-occupiable in its current state. The roof and interior space would require large and costly renovations to make it safe and useful to future generations in Aro Valley. For this reason the Preliminary Design proposes its removal. The majority of community participants who voiced opinions on the pavilion were in support of its demolition but we know there will be some who want its contribution recognised. We intend to consider how its contribution to Aro Valley can be memorialised, without having to retain it.

Your views matter: The next opportunity to give feedback

The next opportunity for you to inform the design development will be at a general meeting in the Aro Valley Community Centre. There you will be able to inform the decision whether to proceed with the preliminary design.

The date for that meeting will be announced by the Aro Valley Community Council. If you'd like to be kept up to date with the project, sign up for the Aro Valley Community Council monthly e-newsletter at the bottom of the homepage at www.arovalley.org.nz.

Do you want further information?: Start by reading our FAQs

You'll find them in the Aro Valley Site Development section of www.arovalley.org.nz