

Appendix 11: Redcliffs School Community Engagement Newsletter

NEWSBOARD

NEWS FROM THE REDCLIFFS SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kia ora koutou katoa.

Hello from the Redcliffs School Board of Trustees. The new Board is now almost one year old, and it's been a busy twelve months. We are currently working on our new strategic plan, and we want to thank all of you who have contributed to this process by attending our focus group evening and completing the community survey online last term.

As you would expect, one of our foremost priorities over the last year has been working with the Ministry of Education, CCC, CERA and other groups, on the analysis of our Redcliffs site. In this *Newsboard* we want to update you on this process and seek some feedback on returning to Redcliffs.

Returning to Redcliffs

It's been a huge journey for our community, but we are now closer than we have ever been to making a decision on returning to our original site. Before we make that decision we need to share some important information with you and we want you to let us know what you think. The starting point for this discussion must always be the safety of our children.

If we return to Redcliffs what assurances do we have that the site is safe?

Our students' safety is of the greatest importance in any decision to return to our Redcliffs site. The Board and the Ministry of Education would never entertain the idea of returning without a detailed and scientific investigation of the risks involved.

Over the past two years consultants have been working on a report that investigates the viability of the site and the protection solutions that would be required for the site to reopen. The Board has recently received a **draft** version of that report.

What does the report examine?

The report applies rock-fall modelling to the information that GNS have gathered about the cliffs behind the school. It then uses that information to draw life-risk contours onto the school's footprint. It also looks at the types of protection that could be used to ensure the safety of the site.

What does the report recommend?

The report recommends that approximately 10% of the school's land area should be abandoned. The retained area roughly corresponds to the current configuration of the school inside the tall fence line in front of the hall.

The report suggests that the life-risk on the school-side of that line, in any future event, *is the same as the background life-risk to all New Zealanders in everyday life.*

If you would like to gain a better understanding of life-risk analysis CCC has some helpful information: http://resources.ccc.govt.nz/files/Homeliving/civildefence/chcheearthquake/gns_ph_Summary1_3web.pdf

Is there a way to make the school even safer?

In recognition of how paramount the safety of our children is, the report also recommends the construction of an engineered **protection bund** on the school boundary. The report gives an example of what this bund would look like and where it would be situated.

Why is the report still a draft report?

Our report is still in draft form because the CCC Land Mass Movement Report, from which it draws some of its conclusions, is still being peer reviewed. This process should be complete in the next 4-6 weeks. If nothing changes as a result of that review process, then our report will be issued in its final form.

What about the demolition of the houses on the top of the cliff?

Demolition of red-zoned houses in the Bays area has already begun. While the school could not be occupied during a demolition, the work needed to construct the protection bund can be carried out in parallel with the demolition process.

What happens next?

If new information comes to light in the peer review process then it will have to be factored into the report. If nothing changes, then our report will be finalised and a detailed plan for returning to site will be drawn up and sent to the Minister of Education for her consideration. This plan will include design details and costings of the protection bund and any reconfiguration of the school as well as demographic information about our school community.

We also need to let the Minister know how you feel about going back. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to do this in the near future so don't hesitate to talk to us.

What would going back look like?

Our school may look and feel quite different to the one that we left in 2011. The Ministry of Education is investing in new infrastructure and modern classroom spaces. The idea of these "modern learning environments" is that classrooms should reflect the changing nature of learning and teaching philosophies. Many of the new schools being built around Christchurch are taking advantage of these design changes, and it would be great for us to be part of this development.



The school needs Redcliffs and Redcliffs needs a school

Even though we remain out of our zone we have recently seen a slight increase in our projected roll. It's a testament to our whole school community – our students and families, our leadership and wonderful staff – that we are still together and offering our kids a high quality education.

After three years off site we have stable student numbers and continuing new enrolments. We have an amazing staff and a glowing ERO report. Imagine how much better it will be with our school back in the heart of our community.

Not only do we need to be back in Redcliffs but Redcliffs' residents need us back as well. Having a local school will ensure the ongoing desirability of the area, as well as providing the social glue that holds our community together.

We look forward to talking with you soon.

Ka kite ano

The Board of Trustees

Protection Bund Version 2

Some of the newer members of our school community may not realise that the school has already built one protection bund in the past. After the first earthquake in 2010, the Board lobbied the Department of Conservation to build a protection bund out of the available rock behind the school. The bund is no longer visible because it is full of material that collapsed in the February and June quakes. While it was not a fully engineered solution, it did do its job, and as a Board we look back on that decision with huge relief.

Let us know what you think

If you want to know more about what we've explained here you can send any questions that you have or feedback that you want to give us to:

Board@redcliffs.school.nz

Once the report is finalised we will also organise an information evening and get some of the experts along to explain the report and answer any questions you may have.