

INFORMATION

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CONTENTS

1.0	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	4	6.0	THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL	33
2.0	INTRODUCTION	11	6.1	Overview	33
2.1	Introduction	11	6.2	Use Trends	34
2.2	Purpose of the Report	11	6.3	Pattern of Use	35
2.3	Approach	11	6.4	Activities	36
2.4	Background Context	12	6.5	Issues / Challenges	38
2.5	Development Drivers	14	7.0	AQUATIC PARTICIPATION	39
3.0	STRATEGIC CONTEXT	15	7.1	General Interest in Swimming	39
3.1	Thames-Coromandel	15	7.2	Drowning	39
3.2	Hauraki District Council	18	7.3	School Swimming	39
3.3	Sport Waikato	18	7.4	Local Swimming Clubs	40
3.4	Waikato Regional Aquatic Facilities Plan (2017)	19	7.5	Insights	40
4.0	DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT	21	8.0	ENGAGEMENT	41
4.1	Focus Areas	21	8.1	Summary of Engagement	41
4.2	Population	21	8.2	Mana Whenua Engagement	41
4.3	Age Profile	22	8.3	Hauraki District Council	41
4.4	Ethnicity Profile	23	8.4	Aquatic Groups Engagement	42
4.5	Personal Income	23	8.5	Community Survey	43
4.6	Vehicle Ownership	24	9.0	NEEDS ANALYSIS	49
4.7	Socio-Economic Context	24	9.1	Development Drivers	49
5.0	AQUATIC NETWORK	25	9.2	Sub-Regional Vs Local Provision	49
5.1	Sub-Regional Aquatic Network	25	9.3	Aquatic Markets	51
5.2	Sub-Regional Aquatic Functions	27	9.4	Operational Considerations	52
5.3	Public Aquatic Network	28	9.5	Key Success Factors	52
5.4	Thames Aquatic network	32	10.0	CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	53
			10.1	Conclusions	53
			10.2	Recommendations	54
			APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONDENTS	56	



**SUMMARY
OF FINDINGS**



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PURPOSE OF THE THAMES AND WIDER SUB-REGION AQUATIC PROVISION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Assess the needs for future aquatic provision in Thames and the wider sub-region acknowledging there has already been a commitment to relocate Thames Centennial Pool.

KEY DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

The key development drivers have already been clearly established following a decade of previous work.

IMPENDING CLOSURE OF THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

Thames Centennial Pool is located on an urupa (burial ground) and under the agreement between Ngāti Maru and Thames-Coromandel District Council, it has been agreed the facility will be relocated by 2027 and the land returned to Ngāti Maru. At 50 years old the Thames Centennial Pool is reaching the end of its useful life and investment would have been needed to address its condition in the very near future.

WAIKATO REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN 2017

Issues with current aquatic provision in the Waikato Region:

- Limited access to year-round indoor water at the local level.
- Aging facility network.
- Lack of flexible, warm water and learn to swim provision.
- Growing aging population require access to warm, year-round water.
- **Key gaps:** TCDC / Hauraki DC provision of year-round facilities, replacement of aging assets and meet needs of an aging population.
- **Recommends:** additional 987m² of pool area to serve both districts developed through a partnership approach with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.
- New facilities include flexible / future-proof spaces.
- Include learn to swim, warmer programme water and income generation within aquatic facilities.
- Careful balance between competition/training and other aquatic users.

OTHER STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In addition to the Waikato Regional Aquatic Facilities Plan, the needs assessment has been undertaken against the backdrop of the following strategic context.

FUNDING

TCDC LONG-TERM PLAN 2021-2031

- A vibrant district, A connected district, A sustainable district.
- Funding for aquatic like for like development 2025-2026.

SPATIAL

THAMES & SURROUNDS DRAFT SPATIAL PLAN

- Three Major Challenges:
- 1) More Housing.
- 2) Economic Development.
- 3) Coastal inundation - Shoreline Management Plan.

SPORT

THAMES-COROMANDEL DISTRICT SPORT & ACTIVE RECREATION PLAN

- Priority action to investigate aquatic provision.

HAURAKI

LONG-TERM PLAN 2021-2031

- Considering options to provide funds for transport, to enable people to travel to a sub-regional aquatic facilities (e.g., Thames) when the outdoor pools are closed.

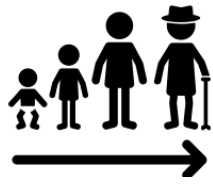
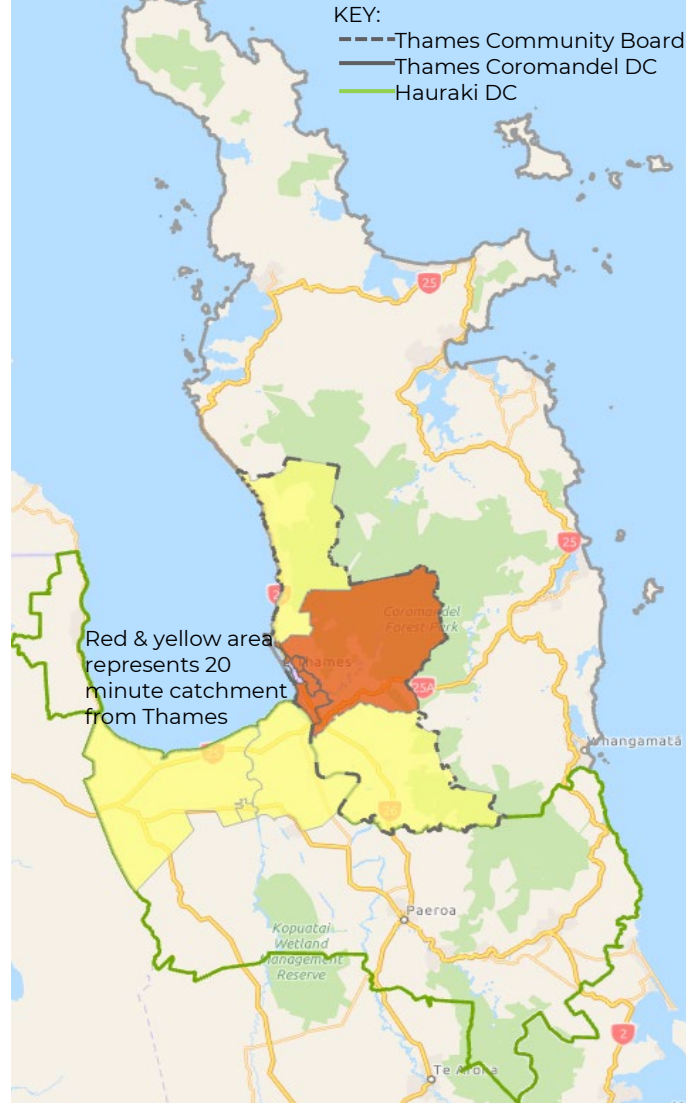
REGION

WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN

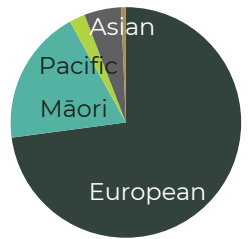
- Strategic framework for facility planning and optimisation.
- Encourages collaboration.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

THAMES 20MIN CATCHMENT	SUB-REGION
2018 14,616	2018 49,917
2048 15,210	2048 54,600



AGING PROFILE
 People over 65 years are forecast to increase by 32% in Thame catchment and sub-region by 2048.



ETHNICITY PROFILE
 Thames Town has a higher proportion of Māori compared to the district and New Zealand. Forecast for more Māori to live in Thames.

MEDIAN INCOME
 Thames Town median income is \$25,560 indicating high socio-economic constraints.

THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

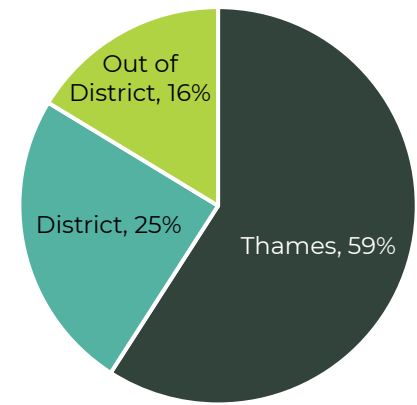


Thames Centennial Pool was constructed in 1970s by a group of passionate residents, with the building added in 1973. It includes:

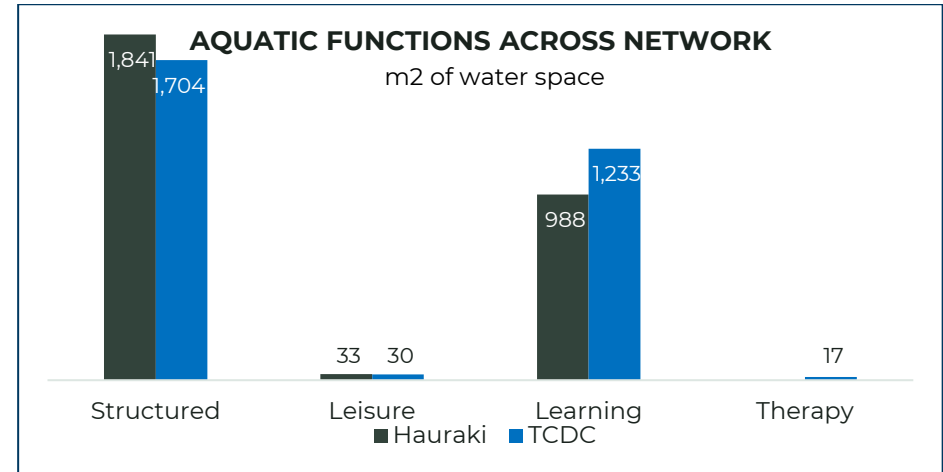
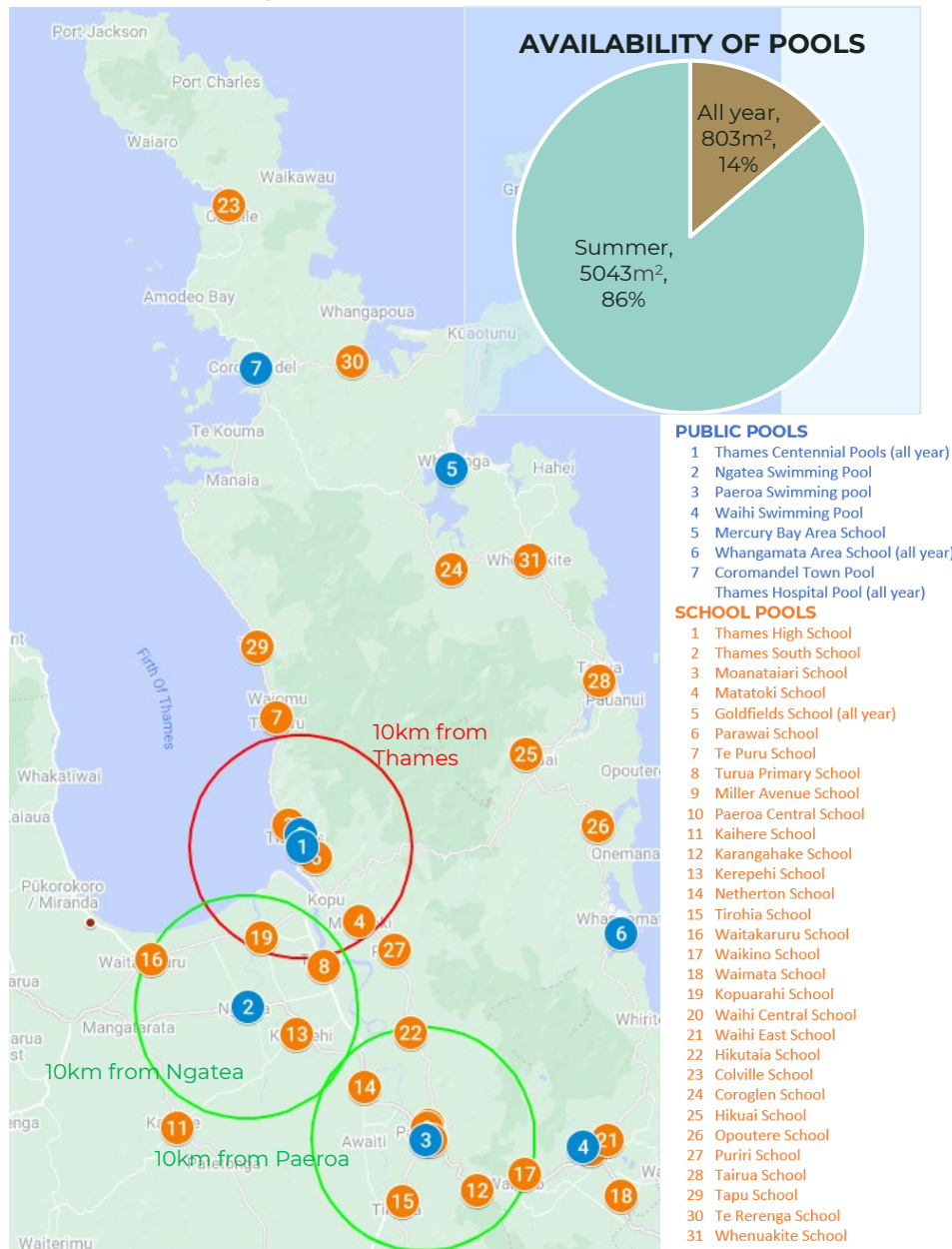
- 25m x 7 lane outdoor heated pool at 28 degrees.
- A small outdoor splash-pad (recently added).
- One building housing changing rooms, office and plantroom on the lower level and grandstand and clubroom on the upper floor.
- Set in a park setting with grass and ample storage facilities.

Historically, attracted 30,000 visits per annum, but this has declined in the last few years due to the Covid Pandemic. Learn to swim accounts for 30% of visits, followed by squad swimming (22%) and concessions (13%).

HOME LOCATION OF POOL VISITS 2020-2022



SUB-REGIONAL AQUATIC NETWORK



The map shows all public pools (blue dots) and school pools (orange dots) along with 10km distance circles for pools in Thames, Ngatea and Paeroa.

Insights on sub-region aquatic provision:

- The aquatic network across Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki is almost exclusively outdoor and available only in summer months. This means the community misses out on aquatic opportunities in the winter months.
- Only four pools in the sub-region are available all year (14% of the water-space): Thames Centennial Pool and Whangamata Pool (both outdoor heated), Goldfields Pool (indoor learning) and Thames Hospital Pool (indoor therapy).
- More than half the network (54%) is in school pools. Many school pools are aging with most built between 1920 and 1970. This represents a significant risk to asset failure and loss of provision.
- The network's provision is dominated by structured and learning pools with hardly any provision of leisure or therapy pools. Given the aging population, the lack of therapy options is a significant gap, as is lack of leisure provision for children, youth, and families.
- The network's learning function is almost exclusively located in school pools. While learn to swim does occur in structured pools, the depth is often not suited to learning and portable in-water platforms are used. Given the age of the school pools, this represents a significant risk of declining provision for the development of the essential life-skill.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

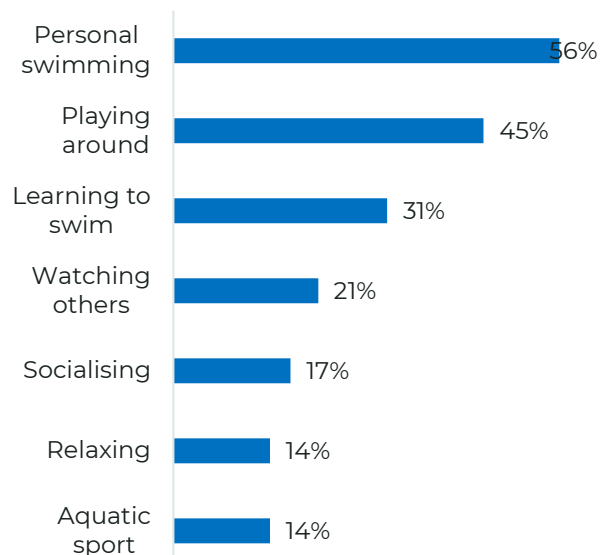
Pool, 347 Sports, 267 **494 total responses**

88% of respondents used Thames Centennial Pool, 12% used other pools. Thames Pool respondents use other pools, 16% Ngatea Pool, 5% Paeroa Pool and 2% others. 10% of Thames Pool respondents came from outside the local 20 minute catchment.

HOME LOCATIONS OF RESPONDENTS

	% THAMES POOL USERS	% ALL POOL USERS
Thames Town	72	68
Wider Thames 20m Catchment	16	15
Other Hauraki District	6	8
Other Thames-Coromandel District	4	9
Beyond Local Districts	0	1

ACTIVITIES AT THAMES POOL



LIKE ABOUT THAMES POOL

38% convenient location.
23% friendly staff.
19% heated pool.

DON'T LIKE ABOUT THAMES POOL

39% cold experience.
28% outdoor pool.
19% no cover.
16% run-down.

90% SUPPORT FOR IMPROVED AQUATIC PROVISION IN THAMES

IMPORTANCE OF FUTURE ACTIVITIES / 5

Activity	Score
Personal swimming	4.09
Learn to swim	4.05
Playing around	3.80
Relaxing	3.74
Aquatic sport	3.57
Socialising	3.44

Future desired activities

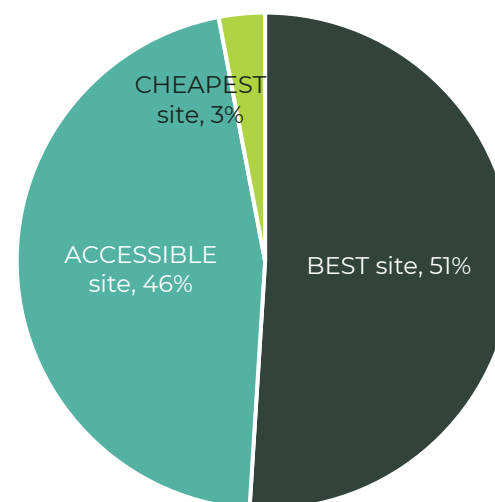
IMPORTANCE OF FUTURE FACILITIES / 5

Facility	Score
Learn to swim	4.11
Lap pool	4.07
Shallow pool	4.02
Indoor pools	4.01
Outdoor areas	3.86
Hydro pool	3.4
Deep pool	3.34
Splash-pad	3.26
Spa pool	3.18
Function area	3.14

Clear priorities for local aquatic provision

Desire for sub-regional aquatic provision

SITE SELECTION



LOCATION IS CRITICAL

Need to identify a site that is both the best site for a swimming pool and is accessible to the community.

Being free from the risk of flooding is also another factor.

CONCLUSIONS

This needs assessment has been undertaken to understand the need for improved aquatic provision facilities in Thames. The drivers for development have already been clearly established through over a decade of previous work.

DRIVER 1: IMPENDING CLOSURE OF THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

The Thames Centennial Pool is located on an urupa (burial ground) and under the agreement between Ngāti Maru and Thames-Coromandel District Council, it has been agreed the facility will be relocated by 2027 and the land returned to Ngāti Maru. At 50 years old the Thames Centennial Pool is reaching the end of its useful life and investment would have been needed to address its condition in the very near future.

DRIVER 2: GAP IN PROVISION OF ALL-YEAR AQUATIC PROVISION

The Waikato Regional Aquatic Plan 2017 (supported by other investigation work) confirms under-supply of all-year aquatic provision in the Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts. The Plan recommends additional 987m² of pool area to serve both districts developed through a partnership approach with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.

KEY QUESTION: SUB-REGIONAL VERSUS LOCAL PROVISION

A key question identified in this needs assessment is resolving the purpose of the facility to serve either a local or sub-regional catchment. The Waikato Regional Aquatic Facility Plan provides clear direction to consider a facility to service the entire sub-region and developed in partnership with Hauraki District Council.

There is good evidence to support a sub-regional approach with Thames Centennial Pool already appearing to perform a sub-regional function with 60% of visits from Thames and 40% from a wider catchment.

However, a sub-regional approach suggests a partnership with Hauraki District Council to be effective. To enable Hauraki to consider this question, analysis of the location, scope and cost of potential sub-regional aquatic facility is required to provide the robust information to inform both Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki's decision-making. It is recommended this work is undertaken in the feasibility study and is shared with Hauraki District Council to support their conclusion about a potential partnership.

INDOOR POOL

Regardless of whether the pool is sub-regional or local, there is a clear call for quality indoor aquatic provision for all-year access. The minimum scope to serve the local catchment, there is strong support to provide:

- Learn to swim for children and adults.
- Structured pool which provides for personal swimming (to provide for fitness, health, and well-being) and aquatic sport training.
- Casual play opportunities for families, children, and youth.

For a sub-regional facility, consideration of:

- More substantial provision for aquatic sport activities.
- Hydrotherapy options including a spa and/or hydrotherapy pool.
- Leisure features to ensure the facility provides for a wide cross-section of the community, recognising the current aquatic network has almost no leisure aquatic provision.

AGING POPULATION

As Thames and the sub-region is forecast to become increasingly older, it is important to include appropriate warm water and all-pool accessibility to cater for this age-group.

LOCATION IS CRITICAL

Finding a site that is accessible and the best site for an aquatic facility is critical, which is also free from flooding risk.

AFFORDABILITY

Given the socio-demographic make-up of the local and sub-regional catchment, the affordability of aquatic provision, in terms of the capital cost, the ongoing operational cost, the cost of entry and the cost of transport are all critical elements to the success of future aquatic provision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Thames Aquatic Facilities Needs Assessment recommends:

1. The Thames-Coromandel District Council endorse the key drivers for aquatic development are:
 - The Thames Centennial Pool is located on a urupa and the Council has agreed with Ngati Maru to relocate the facility by 2027 recognising the facility is coming to the end of its useful life at over 50 years old.
 - The Waikato Regional Aquatic Plan 2017 recommends development of sub-regional aquatic provision to serve Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts developed through a partnership approach, with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.
2. While the needs assessment has found there is good evidence to support Thames being the location for a sub-regional aquatic facility, there needs to be further consideration and discussion with Hauraki District Council to determine if future aquatic provision in Thames should be scaled to serve a sub-regional or local catchment.
3. The next stage of the process, being the Thames Aquatic Facilities Feasibility Study should consider the location, scope, and cost of sub-regional versus local aquatic provision.
4. The analysis in the feasibility study should be shared with Hauraki District Council to help inform potential partnership discussions and decisions regarding sub-regional aquatic provision.

5. Thames-Coromandel District Council adopts the following key success factors to inform the next stage of considerations in the feasibility study.

SUB-REGIONAL CONSIDERATION

Test as the first priority, the potential location, scope and scale of sub-regional provision compared with local provision. Engage with Hauraki District Council and complete financial analysis to inform this decision-making.

BEST AND MOST ACCESSIBLE LOCATION

Find the best and most accessible location for aquatic provision, whether local or sub-regional, which is not at risk of flooding.

INDOOR QUALITY PROVISION

Indoor all-year provision which provides opportunities for learn to swim, personal swimming, aquatic training, and casual play. If sub-regional provision is determined, then consideration of aquatic sport, hydrotherapy, and leisure provision.

DIVERSE COMMUNITY NEEDS

Reflecting on the aging population now and into the future ensure there is sufficient warm water provision to suit the needs of older people, and taking account of the needs of families, children, and youth.

COMPLEMENTARY

Ensure there is a range of complementary amenities to support high use of the aquatic facility.

AFFORDABILITY

The goal is delivering the most affordable development, both in terms of the capital cost to develop facilities, the on-going affordability to maintain and operate facilities and the cost for users to access aquatic opportunities.



**CONTEXT &
ANALYSIS**



2.0 INTRODUCTION

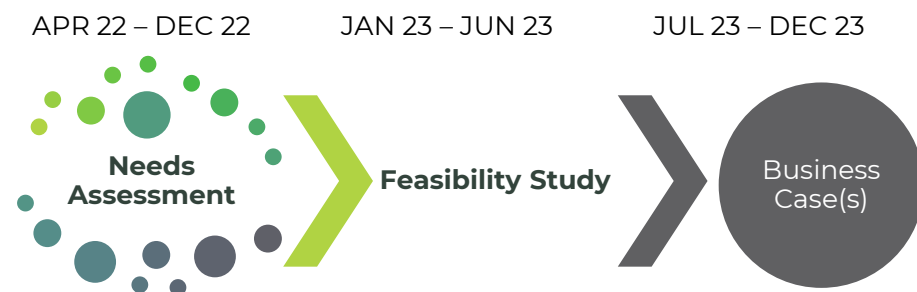
2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Thames-Coromandel Long Term Plan 2021 – 2031 includes two key locally funded projects for Thames:

- 1) A like for like replacement of Thames Centennial Pool (2025/26 to 2026/27). Council will also remove the existing swimming pool facilities at Taipari Park, and land ownership will be transferred to Ngāti Maru, in accordance with the Thames and Thames Coast Reserves Management Plan (2020).
- 2) Thames sports precinct (2026/27 to 2027/28) with the intention of a sports partnership / hub for sports groups that are currently based at Rhodes Park. Within this report this is referred to as the Thames Sports Partnership Project.

In line with Sport New Zealand’s and Sport Waikato’s planning process for sport and recreation facilities, Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC) has commissioned a needs assessment, feasibility study and business case for the aquatic and sport facility projects. Due to the potential synergies between the projects, the Council is undertaking the investigations in parallel, with the possibility the projects may merge at some point (or remaining as two separate projects depending on decisions). Figure 2.1 outlines the overall process.

FIGURE 2.1 PLANNING PROCESS



2.2 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report outlines the needs assessment for aquatic provision in Thames and the Eastern Waikato sub-region. The report provides:

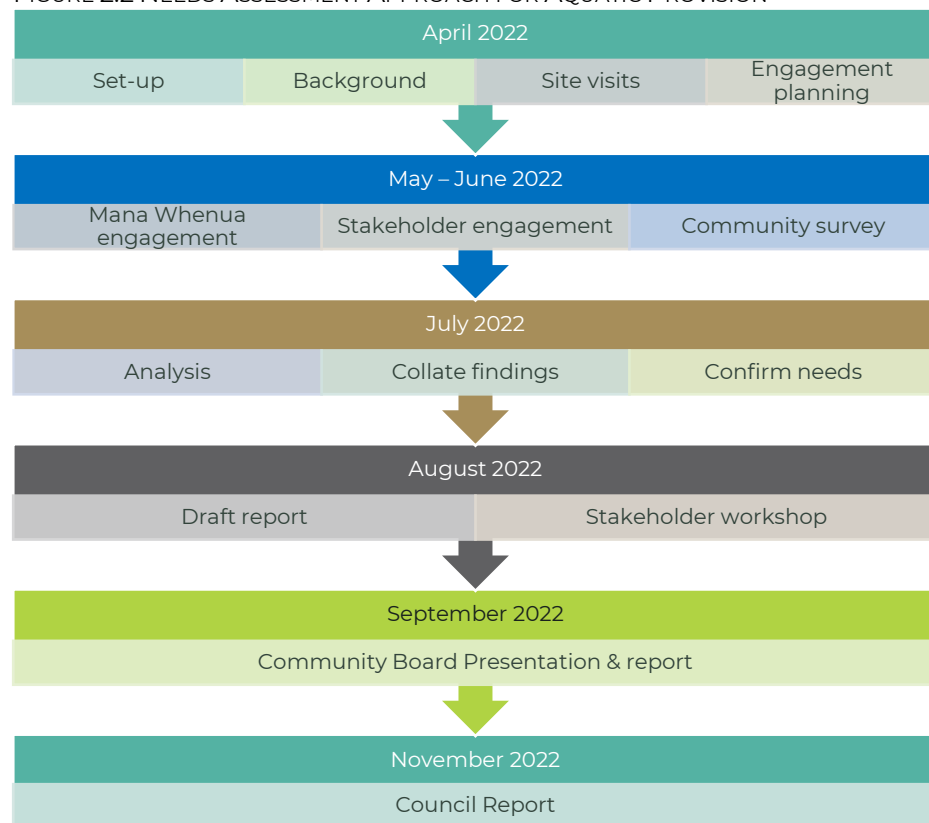
- Strategic context.
- Demographic context.
- Review of the aquatic network in Thames and Eastern Waikato.
- Review of aquatic participation.
- Summary of the engagement undertaken for this study.
- Needs analysis which collates the findings and provides further considerations.
- Summary and recommendations.

2.3 APPROACH

Figure 2.2 (next page) summarises the approach for the aquatic needs assessment, which has included:

- Review of the strategic context relevant to this study.
- Review of the demographic context to understand the composition of Thames and the sub-region now and in the future.
- Aquatic provision – collation of previous analysis on aquatic provision. This includes up to date information on Thames Centennial Pool particularly regarding its use and catchment.
- Aquatic participation – collation of previous work on participation.
- Site visits to relevant aquatic facilities to understand current context and condition.
- Initial Mana Whenua engagement.
- Engagement with Hauraki District Council and Sport Waikato.
- Engagement with aquatic stakeholder groups.
- An open survey to hear from users and the wider community about current views and future aspirations.
- Analysis of the aquatic network, provision and use, alongside other important aquatic provision considerations.

FIGURE 2.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPROACH FOR AQUATIC PROVISION



2.4 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

It is acknowledged there is considerable background to the question of aquatic provision in Thames and Eastern Waikato sub-region. This previous work has contributed significantly to this aquatic needs assessment and has been extended with the additional engagement and analysis undertaken in 2022. A list of the previous work is summarised below, with the relevant content included throughout the relevant sections in this report.

THAMES COROMANDEL DISTRICT COUNCIL LONG-TERM PLANS

Replacing Thames Centennial Pool was initially signalled in the TCDC 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan. The plan states further evaluation was required at the time, to assess when the pool should be replaced.

A review of long-term plans since 2009 is summarised below:

- 2009-2019 LTP - the expected useful life of the Thames Pool was estimated to be beyond the 2009 – 2019 Ten Year Plan. Funds were budgeted for 2014/2015 to investigate the pool replacement.
- 2012–2022 LTP - Council budgeted \$5m for pool replacement in 2020/2021.
- 2015–2025 LTP - no significant capex was budgeted; \$175,000 was budgeted for renewal work in 2020/2021.
- 2018–2028 LTP - refers to the intention to replace the pool by 2027 acknowledging the agreement with Ngāti Maru. The budget does not include funds for planning for a swimming pool.
- 2021–2031 LTP - \$14m is budgeted for a renewal (like-for-like) in 2025/2026 (\$6,922) and 2026/2027 (\$7,078).

THAMES COMMUNITY LEISURE CENTRE REPORT 2009

SGL Group were commissioned to review the needs and options for the development of a community indoor court facility (recommended on Thames High School). The options analysis also considered the development of a future aquatic facility, contemplated over a longer 10 year timeframe. The report considered an outdoor 25m lane pool with support amenities as the minimum like for like replacement and recommended consideration of other possible options which include an indoor hot water programme pool, fitness centre and indoor lane pool. The preliminary (high-level) options envisioned development on Thames High School, but acknowledged this needed further examination.

2013 THAMES SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES REVIEW AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

SGL Group were commissioned to provide a comprehensive review of Thames sport and recreation facilities provision including skate, indoor court, aquatic and sport facilities.

The report provides an outline of general aquatic demands, markets and trends which informs consideration for the type of aquatic facilities and concludes further analysis is required to consider district wide provision, if not wider sub-regional provision. The report examines potential sites

for aquatic provision in Thames but made no conclusions regarding a preferred site. It provides an indicative schedule of facilities and staging and identifies the potential cost at around \$14 to \$15m at 2013 dollars. The report indicated aquatic provision in the future, anticipated 2020 onwards.

WAIKATO REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN 2017

Sport Waikato completed this plan to consider the need for aquatic provision across the Waikato region. This report highlights a range of issues including a gap in the provision all-year provision in Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki District.

The plan recommends development of additional 987m² of pool area to serve both Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki District undertaken through a partnership approach with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.

EASTERN WAIKATO SUB-REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITY FEASIBILITY DISCUSSION REPORT 2017

Visitor Solutions were commissioned by TCDC to undertake a feasibility study and business modelling for the development of a sub-regional pool to serve the Eastern Waikato area. The report was intended to help progress discussions around sub-regional partnership approach and should be considered a conceptual starting point for provision.

The report examined the network provision and population demand across Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts. A range of sites in Thames / Hauraki were examined with three sites in Thames shortlisted.

Preliminary concept design were developed and costed between \$18 to \$22 million (2017 dollars) and an initial business model identified the conceptual facility would required an operational subsidy between \$1.3 to \$1.4 million per annum.

2018 SITE PLANNING

Architecture HDT were commissioned by TCDC to progress concept plans for a sub-regional pool to serve the Eastern Waikato area. The work contemplated a site south of the airfield. The high-level concept design contemplated a large sport and recreation hub which included an indoor aquatic facility, multi-sport clubroom and sport fields/courts (as a potential replacement to the sport facilities on Rhodes Park).

EASTERN WAIKATO SUB-REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITY BUSINESS CASE 2019

Visitor solutions were commissioned by TCDC to prepare a business case for the development of a sub-regional aquatic facility in Thames. The report was intended to inform considerations in the 2021-2031 long-term planning process.

The business case outlines the strategic case for aquatic provision based on the strategic direction in the Waikato Regional Aquatic Facilities Plan and the need for all-year round provision to serve the Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts.

The business case outlined two design options on land south of the airfield which included a core aquatic facility (25m lap pool, programme pool and leisure pool) and an enhanced option (which included a hydroslide, external splash-pad and function space). The report outlined the likely capital costs, operational costs and the net financial impact including depreciation and the cost of capital based on these options.

THAMES AND THAMES COAST RESERVES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019

Confirms the land comprising Taipari Park where the Thames Centennial Pool is located was originally the site of a major burial ground (urupa) for Te Kauaeranga Pa. Under an agreement between Ngāti Maru and Council, the swimming pool will be removed from this site by 2027 and the land returned to Ngāti Maru.

2020 THAMES-COROMANDEL DISTRICT SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION PLAN

Developed in collaboration between TCDC and Sport Waikato to provide a coordinated, collaborative, and clear plan to lead, enable, and guide future provision of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities for the people of Thames-Coromandel District.

This plan recommends for Thames Replacement Pool / Sub-Regional Pool “continued investigation and development of business case to confirm the scale of facility to meet the needs of the community. Collaboration with Hauraki District to promote the concept of sub-regional facility with the inclusion of users from other districts”.

2.5 DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

Based on the extensive work completed over the last decade into aquatic provision in the Thames / Eastern Waikato sub-region, the drivers for aquatic development are fundamentally clear from the outset of this needs assessment.

DRIVER 1: IMPENDING CLOSURE OF THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

The Thames Centennial Pool is located on an urupa (burial ground) and under the agreement between Ngāti Maru and Thames-Coromandel District Council, it has been agreed the facility will be relocated by 2027 and the land returned to Ngāti Maru.

At 50 years old the Thames Centennial Pool is reaching the end of its useful life and investment would have been needed to address its condition in the very near future.

DRIVER 2: GAP IN PROVISION OF ALL-YEAR AQUATIC PROVISION

The Waikato Regional Aquatic Plan 2017 (supported by other investigation work) confirms a gap in the provision of all-year provision in the Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts. The Plan recommends additional 987m² of pool area to serve both districts developed through a partnership approach with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.



3.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This section provides a summary of the strategic context for aquatic provision.

3.1 THAMES-COROMANDEL

2021 – 2031 LONG TERM PLAN / TE MAHERE PAE TAWHITI

Council's vision / Moemoeā-a-Kaunihera

Council will provide reliable services to support a vibrant, connected, and sustainable district through strong governance.

Council's Outcomes | Ngā hua o Te Kaunihera

A vibrant district |
He takiwā hihiri

- The Coromandel Peninsula is a desirable place to live, work and play.
- Our district has thriving, resilient communities.
- We support and encourage culturally diverse and inclusive communities.

A connected district |
He takiwā tuia

- Our communities are supported through accessible infrastructure and services.
- We use our influence and networks to advocate for our communities.
- We recognise our relationships and partnerships with the district's iwi and will work towards ensuring they are enduring, effective and valued.

A sustainable district |
He takiwā toitū

- The Coromandel Peninsula's natural and built environments are managed sustainably and provide a unique sense of place.
- We recognise and celebrate the vital role our natural environment plays in supporting well-being in the district.

The Thames-Coromandel District Council 2021 – 2031 Long Term Plan / Te Mahere Pae Tawhiti, includes the following locally funded projects within the Community Spaces and Development section for Thames:

A like for like replacement of Thames Centennial Pool (2025/26 to 2026/27). Council will also remove the existing swimming pool facilities at Taipari Park, and land ownership will be transferred to Ngāti Maru, in accordance with the Thames and Thames Coast Reserves Management Plan (2020).

THAMES-COROMANDEL DISTRICT SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION PLAN 2020

The Thames-Coromandel District Sport and Active Recreation Plan provides a strategic approach to achieving sport and recreation outcomes through the development of sports facilities in the district.

The plan identifies a range of challenges including:

- Existing assets – the need to optimise, refurbish and rationalise some facilities.
- Growth of older population and considering their needs.
- Partnerships – working collaboration to achieve the greatest benefits from investment.
- Financial sustainability – ensuring the long-term affordability for users and organisations.
- Future facilities – ensure there is sound planning for any new facilities including needs assessment, feasibility studies and includes whole of life costing.

The plan confirms Thames Centennial Pool is near the end of its asset life cycle and the pool is located on an urupa. There are four swimming clubs affiliated with Swimming Waikato that operate in the Thames Coromandel area, located in Coromandel, Mercury Bay, Whangamata, and Thames. The Thames Swimming Club is the largest in the district and the only club that operates all-year-round.

Relevant to future aquatic provision, the plan recommends:

- Continued investigation and development of business case to confirm the scale of facility to meet the needs of the community. Collaboration with Hauraki District to promote concept of sub-regional facility with the inclusion of users from other districts.
- The needs of the community should be identified as part of facility planning. This includes the needs of older users due to the projected growth in the older age groups
- For cross-boundary projects, ensure facilities receive support from each local authority commensurate with the level of benefit to each authority's community.

Sport Waikato is working with Thames-Coromandel District Council to review the Sport and Recreation Plan with an updated action plan anticipated in 2023.

COMMUNITY PLANS (2020-2030)

Several communities in Thames-Coromandel have developed a community plan to identify and prioritise focus areas for the 10 year period from 2020-2030.

Thames

Relevant concerns raised by the Thames community include:

- Retain youth in the area.
- Local history and sense of place are important.
- Improving existing reserve spaces.
- Communities need safe footpaths and cycleways.
- Community needs to be resilient in the face of natural disasters.
- Improved directional and bilingual signage.

Whangamata

The Whangamata community has identified an aquatic facility project in its community plan, to cover the swimming pool located at Whangamata Area School, to enable all-year round swimming.

THAMES AND SURROUNDS DRAFT SPATIAL PLAN (2022)

The spatial plan is a high-level blueprint for the future showing what should go where and how each part should interact with the others.

The Spatial Plan is intended to inform the District Plan changes. The draft plan was released in December 2021 to support community engagement and feedback. An updated version was released in 2022 for public consultation. The Spatial plan identifies:

- The need for more housing in Thames to meet demand. There is a high cost to access infrastructure and access to developable land due to terrain.
- Thames is the economic powerhouse of the Coromandel, but businesses struggle to recruit workers due to lack of housing.
- Thames will be impacted by coastal inundation due to rising sea levels in the future. The Shoreline Management Plan identifies draft strategies to respond to these challenges.

The Spatial Plan provides some indication for several parcels of land which may be suitable for future development. The final plan will need to be referred to inform the feasibility stage for aquatic provision.

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022

Thames-Coromandel District Council is undertaking a three-year project to understand the inundation and erosion risks to the District's coastlines. Sea-level is a significant challenge facing many councils and in particular Thames-Coromandel given the 400km of coastline in the district.

The Shoreline Management Plan analyses the risks associated with sea-level rise and then considers potential options to respond to these options. The plan is not statutory, but the potential responses will likely inform other work like the Spatial Plan, District Plan and Long-term Plans. Potential responses include:

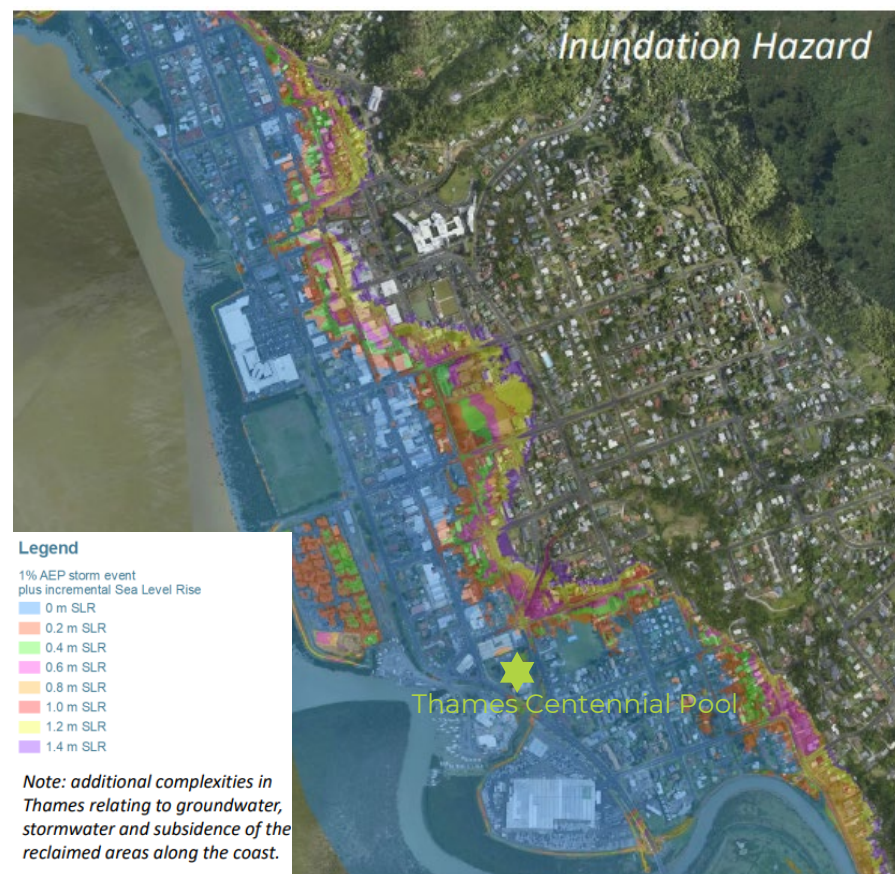
- Be prepared – providing regular information and hazard warning.
- No active intervention – no action is necessary as the risk is acceptable.
- Accommodate – maintain natural protections such as beaches, sand dunes, foreshore vegetation, saltmarsh, and other features. This may include retrofitting buildings to be more resilient to climate change.
- Hold the line (protect) – enhance natural protections; improve the resilience of existing coastal protection assets (e.g. increasing

seawalls); construct flood barriers or undertake new coastal protection works (e.g. build new seawalls).

- Managed Retreat – change planning practices over the longer term to minimise development, designate areas where redevelopment or infill development is not acceptable and relocate assets and infrastructure.

Thames-Coromandel District Council released updated Adaptation Options in 2022. The report highlights a significant portion of Thames is at risk of coastal inundation as illustrated by Figure 3.1. The Shoreline Management Plan will be important to inform future site considerations in the feasibility study phase for aquatic facility provision.

FIGURE 3.1 THAMES SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN INUNDATION HAZARD



THAMES AND THAMES COAST: RESERVES MANAGEMENT PLAN (2019)

Reserve management plans are an important tool under the Reserve Management Act to manage use and development of reserves.

Taipari Park

Located at 105 Mackay Street, Thames.

- This land was originally the site of a major burial ground (urupa) for Te Kauaeranga Pa.
- Some-time later a sawmill operated from the site.
- The land was acquired by Council in 1951 as a public reserve.
- A Borough Centennial monument was erected in 1972 to mark 150 years anniversary of the Thames Goldfields being opened.
- The swimming pool and a public roller-skating ring were opened in the 1970's.
- Under an agreement between Ngāti Maru and the Council, the swimming pool will be removed from this site by 2027 and the land returned to Ngāti Maru.

POSITIVE AGING STRATEGY 2012

The Positive Aging Strategy recognises older people will make up a growing share of the population in the medium term (see section 4.0 for further details). Relevant to this investigation, the strategy identifies:

- Participation of older people in a range of recreation and leisure opportunities.
- Ability for people to feel socially connected.
- Access to transport is critical
- Feeling safe and secure is important.
- The needs of older people are expected to become more diverse.

YOUTH STRATEGY 2013

The Youth Strategy outlines a vision which is based on:

- Young people are safe and valued.
- Their voices are heard.
- Their issues and needs are understood.
- Local work opportunities are available and interesting.
- A place they would be happy to return to.

3.2 HAURAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL

LONG-TERM PLANS

Hauraki District Council provides three outdoor pools. Within its 2018 – 2028 long term plan, the Council intended to develop an aquatic strategy to consider its role in providing funding for pool services, including the level of service communities would like and are willing to pay for.

An aquatic strategy did not eventuate however the Hauraki District Sport and Active Recreation Facility Plan 2018-2028 was adopted by Council in August 2019 (see below).

Within the Hauraki District Council 2021 – 2031 Long Term Plan, the Council has indicated it will be considering options to provide funds for transport, to enable people to travel to a sub-regional aquatic facilities (e.g., Thames) when the outdoor pools are closed.

HAURAKI DISTRICT SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITY PLAN 2018 - 2028.

Hauraki District Council adopted the Hauraki District Sport and Active Recreation Facility Plan in August 2019. The purpose of the plan is to guide facility development and investment, ensuring a strategic approach to future provision.

The plan refers to the proposed cross-boundary partnership project listed in the Waikato Regional Sports Facilities Plan 2017 (see below) indoor 25m community pool (potential Thames-Coromandel, Hauraki and/or Matamata Piako District Councils). The report highlights this may have cross-boundary implications for Hauraki.

The report outlines there are two swimming clubs in the district. For the 2017 season, Ngatea Swimming Club had 93 members and Waihi Swimming had 277 members. There is no membership data for Paeroa Swimming Club which was operating at the time.

Other aquatic recommendations include:

- investigating options to provide future community swimming pool services in Waihi.
- developing partnerships with schools, neighbouring councils, the Department of Conservation, and local Iwi to provide adequate community spaces and places.

3.3 SPORT WAIKATO

Sport Waikato is the regional sport trust for the Thames-Coromandel District and provide important strategic context for sport and recreation.

MOVING WAIKATO, 2020

Vision: Everyone out there and active.

Priorities:

- Our People – focus on provision of quality opportunities that meet the needs of the people of our region.
- Building Communities – focus on quality local delivery of play, active recreation, and sport experiences.
- Regional Leadership – focus on regional and national partners working together to lead change and enhance outcomes.

Focus area: Rangatahi (12-17 years), Tamariki (5-11 years) and Tamariki Mokopuna (0-4 years).

WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN 2021

[The Waikato Regional Active Spaces Plan provides a high-level strategic framework for play, active recreation and sport facilities and spaces and places planning and optimisation across the region.](#)

Key principles for facility planning and provision:

- Meet needs – meet an identified need and be fit-for-purpose.
- Sustainable – requires consideration of the ongoing operating and maintenance costs of the facility and how these will be funded.
- Collaborative – best outcomes are achieved when partnerships are developed with education, health, iwi, and/or the private sector. Increases the likelihood facilities are used to their full potential.
- Integrated – sharing, creating multi-use facilities/hubs or co-location.
- Flexible – designed to accommodate changing community profiles, trends and needs over time.
- Inclusive – consider the needs or a wide range of the community, focusing on ethnic, financial and ability barriers.

The process for developing facilities reflects the Sport New Zealand Sporting Facilities Framework six stages: concept, plan, design, build, operate and improve. The plan also provides a decision criterion which should be applied at the feasibility study phase (refer Appendix B).

TABLE 3.1 WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN RECOMMENDATION

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT	Sub regional aquatic facility – Thames Coromandel
YEARS	3-5 years
FOCUS	Complete a business case to determine appropriate sub-regional need. Waikato Regional Aquatics Plan (2017) to inform decision making.
KEY PARTNERS	Thames Coromandel District Council Neighbouring territorial local authorities

ACTIVE NEW ZEALAND SURVEY 2020-21 – WAIKATO REGION

The Active New Zealand Survey provides insights on participation in sport and recreation activities.

The following data was taken from the 2020-21 survey for Thames-Coromandel District Council:

- 81% of adults over 18 years see physical activity as an essential part of their life, with 87% recognising being physically active is important for their mental health and wellbeing.
- 34% of adults undertook swimming in the last 7 days, one of the top five activities in the district. This is distinctly different from other districts, where jogging or playing games featured highly.
- For young people under 18 years, 94% of young people were physically active in the last 7 days but swimming did not feature in the top five activities.
- However, swimming events like ocean swims were one of the top 5 activities for events for young people.
- Key implications for providers include catering for differences in gender, ethnicity, and age, cater for a diverse range of motivations, provide exclusive offers, consider barriers and make it fun.

3.4 WAIKATO REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN (2017)

The Waikato Regional Aquatic Facilities Plan outlines the best-practice aquatic facilities network to meet the current and future needs of the Waikato Region’s communities.

KEY AQUATIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Accessibility - the network provides accessible opportunities to acquire education and water survival skills, contribute to healthy lifestyles by providing opportunities for participation leading to increased physical activity levels.

Quality of Experience - the network provides residents and visitors with a supervised and safe environment to have fun and to enjoy social interaction with friends and family.

Partnerships - investment partners including local authorities, private providers, education providers and funding partners will seek opportunities to work together and share both capital and operational costs to improve levels of service for the benefit of their communities.

Flexibility/ Adaptability/ Creativity - the network of aquatic provision will be flexible and adaptable to meet the changing demographic profile and aquatic needs of a wide cross section of the population.

Quality Planning - the first stage of any potential aquatic facility development project (new or refurbishment) is to develop a clear rationale of for the project, consideration of the position in the hierarchy and clear identification how the proposed investment meets the changing community needs.

Network Approach - provision should focus on the development of a regional network that complements current and planned provision by neighbouring partners and provides a composition and balance that is coordinated and reflects evident current and foreseeable demand at National, Regional and Local level.

The plan identifies the following challenges for the Waikato network:

- Average age of a community pool is 40 years old (does not include school pools where the average age is 54 years).

- Aquatic accessibility is limited as many pools are outdoor and unheated with seasonal access only.
- There are few dedicated learn-to-swim pools.
- A growing aging population require flexible pool areas and access to warmer, year-round water.
- Lack of flexible, warm water to cater for the range of community needs.

Key trends identified:

- Swimming remains is one of the most popular sport and recreation activities among NZ adults with 3 out of 10 adults participating.
- However, participation in swimming activity has declined nationally in most age groups, with the only increase in the 50-64 year age group.
- Eighty to ninety percent of demand for facilities is community-based non-competitive recreational swimming.
- The Waikato Region appears to have strong representation in secondary school swimming with 15% of national swimmers coming from the region.
- Despite this, the Waikato Region has declining competitive swimmers.

The plan outlines the following implications for aquatic provision:

- **The very young:** provision for essential for learn to swim, survival skills and aquatic play facilities.
- **Teenagers:** innovative provision of aquatic space for teens is a consistent need.
- **Early to mid 20's:** Fewer provision opportunities needed.
- **Late 20's early 30's:** Less of a target for aquatic space
- **Mid 30's to late 40's:** Family oriented community space.
- **50' to retirement:** empty nesters are likely increased users of aquatic space for health benefits.
- **65 plus:** increasing users of warm water aquatic space, particularly for health and maintaining physical mobility.

FUTURE AQUATIC SPACE REQUIREMENTS

For provincial centres, there is a recommended benchmark for carrying capacity of 35 people per square metre of indoor water space. The analysis identifies both Thames Coromandel and Hauraki Districts are well below this recommendation for all year indoor provision with only 375m² currently available through Thames Centennial Pool. Table 3.2 summarises the recommended all-year indoor aquatic space required according to 2017 and forecast 2038 population levels.

TABLE 3.2 FUTURE AQUATIC SPACE REQUIREMENTS TO MEET AQUATIC RATIOS

DISTRICT	2017 INDOOR SPACE REQUIRED	2038 INDOOR SPACE REQUIRED
Thames-Coromandel	780m ²	833m ²
Hauraki	531m ²	555m ²
Total	1,311m²	1,388m²

SUB-REGIONAL FACILITY

A facility with the ability to draw significant numbers of teams/competitors from across adjacent boundaries for competition or training. Leisure features including limited leisure/play apparatus.

Drive time catchment of 30 minutes.

Year-round indoor heated pools with learn to swim, lane swimming, therapy / rehabilitation, relaxation spa and some aquatic sport training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the next 10 years an additional 987m² of pool area is required to meet the identified shortfall in the Thames Coromandel District Council / Hauraki District Council areas. A partnership approach should be considered with a focus on meeting the needs of the aging population.

Facility Design: All new or refurbished facilities should:

- Prioritise flexible spaces to future proof facilities to meet the needs of an aging population.
- Include learn to swim, warmer programme water and other income generating activities e.g. fitness and activity rooms
- Careful consideration of the balance between competition / training and other aquatic users.

4.0

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

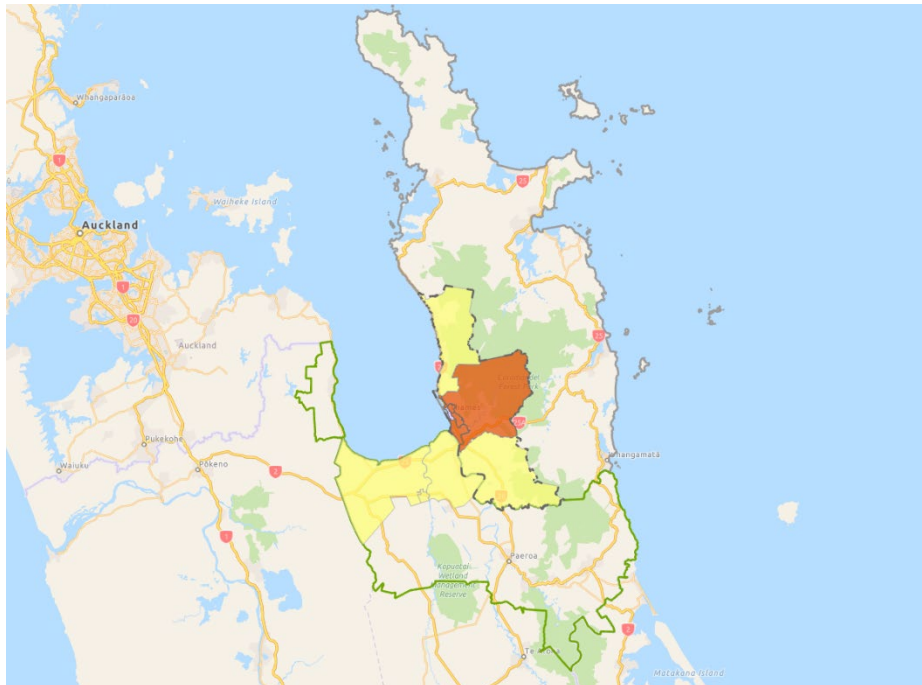
This section outlines the current and future demographic composition of Thames and the wider catchment.

4.1 FOCUS AREAS

The analysis has focused on five geographic areas, shown in Figure 4.1:

- Core Thames township (red shaded area).
- Thames Ward (grey dotted line).
- Wider Thames Catchment, approximately 20 minutes drive to Thames (yellow shaded area).
- Thames-Coromandel District Council (grey line).
- Hauraki District Council (green line) (Both districts = sub-region).

FIGURE 4.1 THAMES AREA AND THE WIDER CATCHMENT



4.2 POPULATION

Table 4.1 outlines the population for each catchment area from the last three censuses, along with the Statistics NZ forecasts for the next 25 years. The population forecasts are based on the 2018 census and do not take account of any development changes being considered through the Thames Spatial Plan (which identifies housing supply is constraining growth). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge future population forecasts may be higher once additional housing supply is addressed.

TABLE 4.1 POPULATION AND FORECASTS

	2006	2018	2023	2048
Thames Town	7,461	7,881	8,270	8,130
Thames Ward	10,233	10,644	11,200	11,360
Wider Thames Catchment	13,842	14,616	15,430	15,210
Thames-Coromandel District	25,938	29,895	32,400	32,800
Hauraki District	17,856	20,022	21,800	21,800

Key population points:

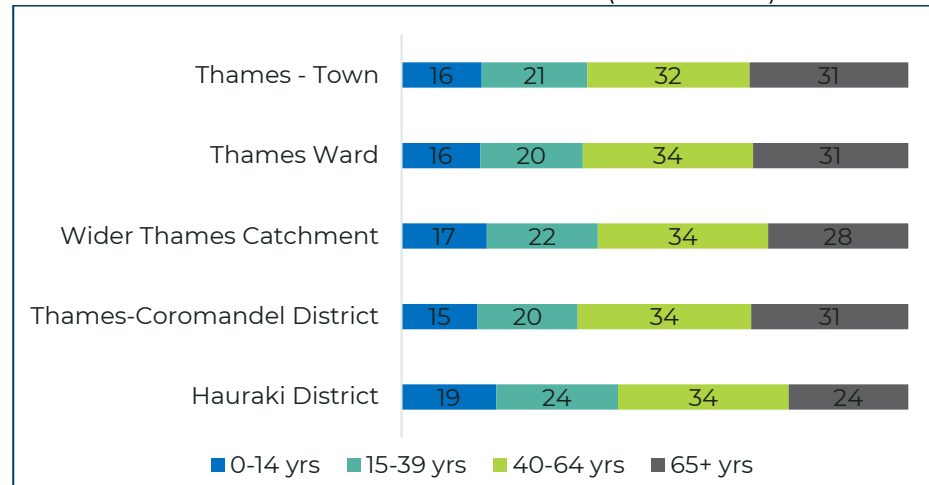
- There was 6% growth in Thames and the Wider Catchment between 2006 and 2018. Thames Ward grew by a similar amount.
- At the same time there was 15% growth in Thames-Coromandel District, and 12% in Hauraki District.
- Based on current population growth forecasts, the immediate catchment around Thames is not forecast with large growth over the next 25 years. However, the wider Thames Ward is forecast to grow slightly by 1% where the land constraints are not as significant.
- The Thames and Surrounds Spatial Plan has indicated potential growth areas to the south of Thames which could facilitate higher growth in the immediate town.
- Across the sub-region, the combined Thames-Coromandel-Hauraki population was 49,917 in 2018 and forecast to grow to 54,600 (9% growth) by 2048.
- Growth is forecast across the districts with slightly more metric growth around Whitianga and Tairua/Pauanui.

4.3 AGE PROFILE

Figure 4.2 shows the age profile for each catchment area. Key points are:

- The median age in Thames is 49 years and 48 years in the Wider Thames Catchment. Both are younger than the Thames-Coromandel District at 54 years and Hauraki at 47 years.
- However, all catchments are much older compared to New Zealand which has a median age of 38 years.

FIGURE 4.2 AGE PROFILE OF CATCHMENT AREAS 2018 (PERCENTAGES)



Looking forward, all catchment areas are forecast to get older (which is similar to New Zealand overall). Figure 4.3 and 4.4 shows the forecasts for different age-groups in the Wider Thames Catchment and the combined Thames-Coromandel / Hauraki districts. Key points are:

- All age-groups under 65 years are forecast to decline in numbers and overall proportion of the population.
- Those aged over 65 years are forecast to increase by 32% in the Wider Thames Catchment. Importantly, those over 75 years will increase the most in this age-group.
- For the sub-regional catchment with both Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts, it is a similar aging pattern. While the pattern is similar, interestingly, Hauraki District will age significantly more (41% change in 65+ years) compared to Thames-Coromandel (27%).

FIGURE 4.3 AGE PROJECTION FOR THE WIDER THAMES CATCHMENT

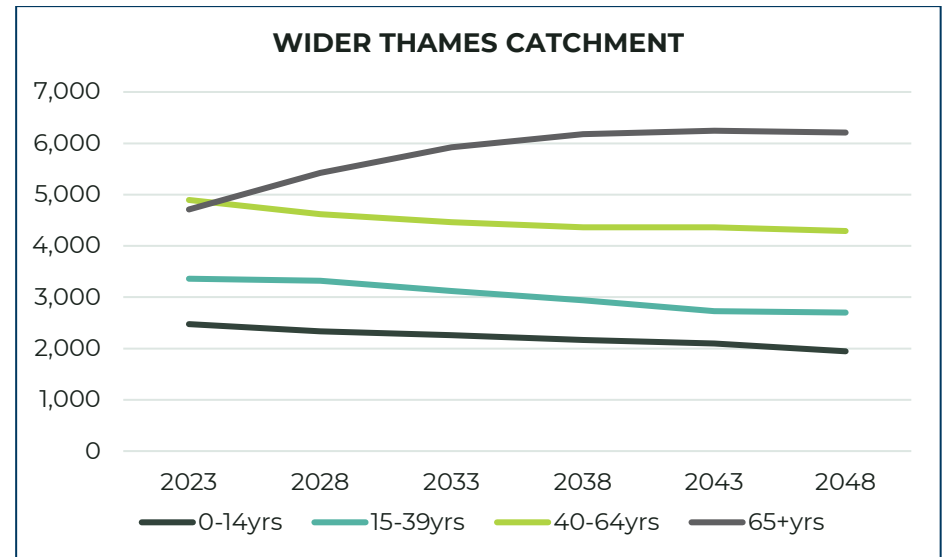
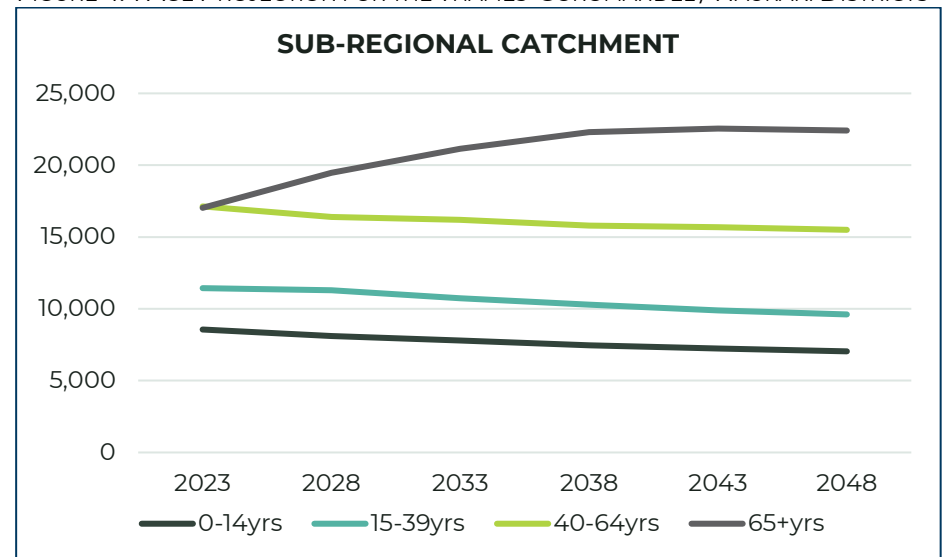


FIGURE 4.4 AGE PROJECTION FOR THE THAMES-COROMANDEL / HAURAKI DISTRICTS

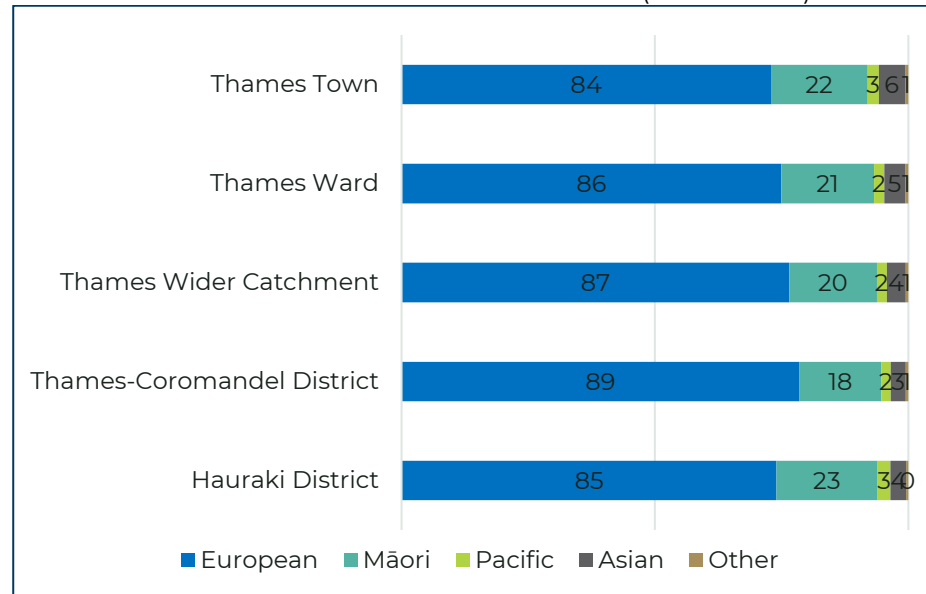


4.4 ETHNICITY PROFILE

Figure 4.5 provides the ethnic profile for the catchment areas. Key points are:

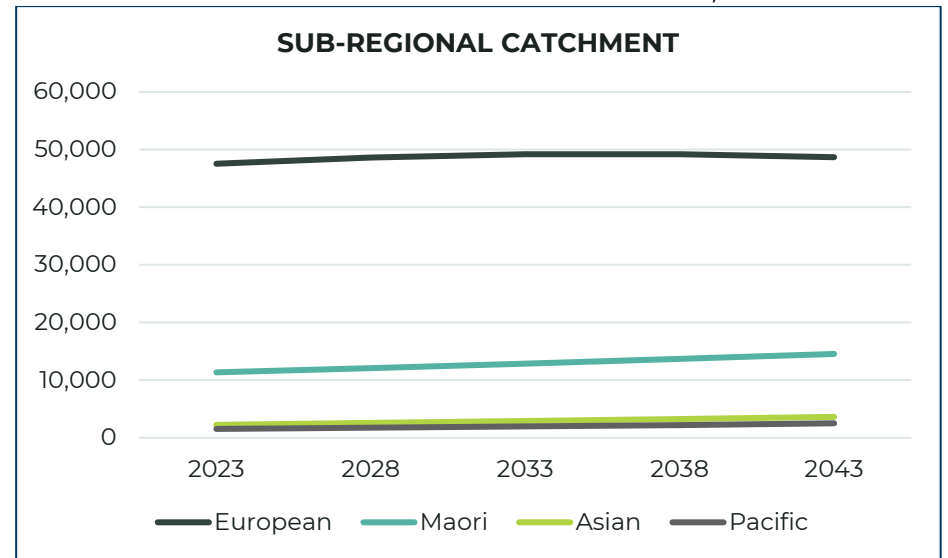
- Thames township is the most diverse of the four catchment areas with 84% European, 22% Māori and 9% other ethnicities.
- The proportion of Māori living in Thames and the wider Thames catchment is significantly higher compared to New Zealand where Māori make up only 17% of the population.
- The proportion of Europeans is also significantly higher in all catchments compared to New Zealand where Europeans make up 70% of New Zealand's population.
- The key ethnic difference in these catchment areas have lower proportions of Pacific and Asian population groups.

FIGURE 4.5 ETHNIC PROFILE OF CATCHMENT AREAS 2018 (PERCENTAGES)



Future forecasts for ethnicity are only available at the district level. For the Thames-Coromandel District, the Māori population is forecast to increase slightly (from 19% in 2023 to 23% in 2043) while all other ethnic groups will remain similar. It is a similar forecast for Hauraki District. Figure 4.6 provides the ethnicity forecast for the sub-regional catchment.

FIGURE 4.6 ETHNICITY PROJECTION FOR THAMES-COROMANDEL/HAURAKI DISTRICTS



4.5 PERSONAL INCOME

Table 4.2 outlines the median personal income for each of the catchment areas, which shows all areas have considerably lower median incomes compared to New Zealand. This will be particularly important to consider in terms of accessibility (via transport) and affordability of future aquatic provision.

FIGURE 4.2 MEDIAN PERSONAL INCOME

MEDIAN PERSONAL INCOME	
Thames Town	\$25,560
Thames Ward	\$26,214
Thames Wider Catchment	\$27,890
Thames-Coromandel District	\$24,900
Hauraki District	\$24,600
New Zealand	\$31,800

4.6 VEHICLE OWNERSHIP

Table 4.3 outlines the proportion of households in the catchment areas with access to vehicles. This shows Thames Town, and the wider catchment has the highest proportion of households with no vehicles.

TABLE 4.3 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH VEHICLES

	NONE	1	2	3+
Thames Town	8	44	33	14
Thames Ward	7	40	36	16
Thames Wider Catchment	6	38	39	9
Thames-Coromandel District	5	39	41	15
Hauraki District	5	37	39	19

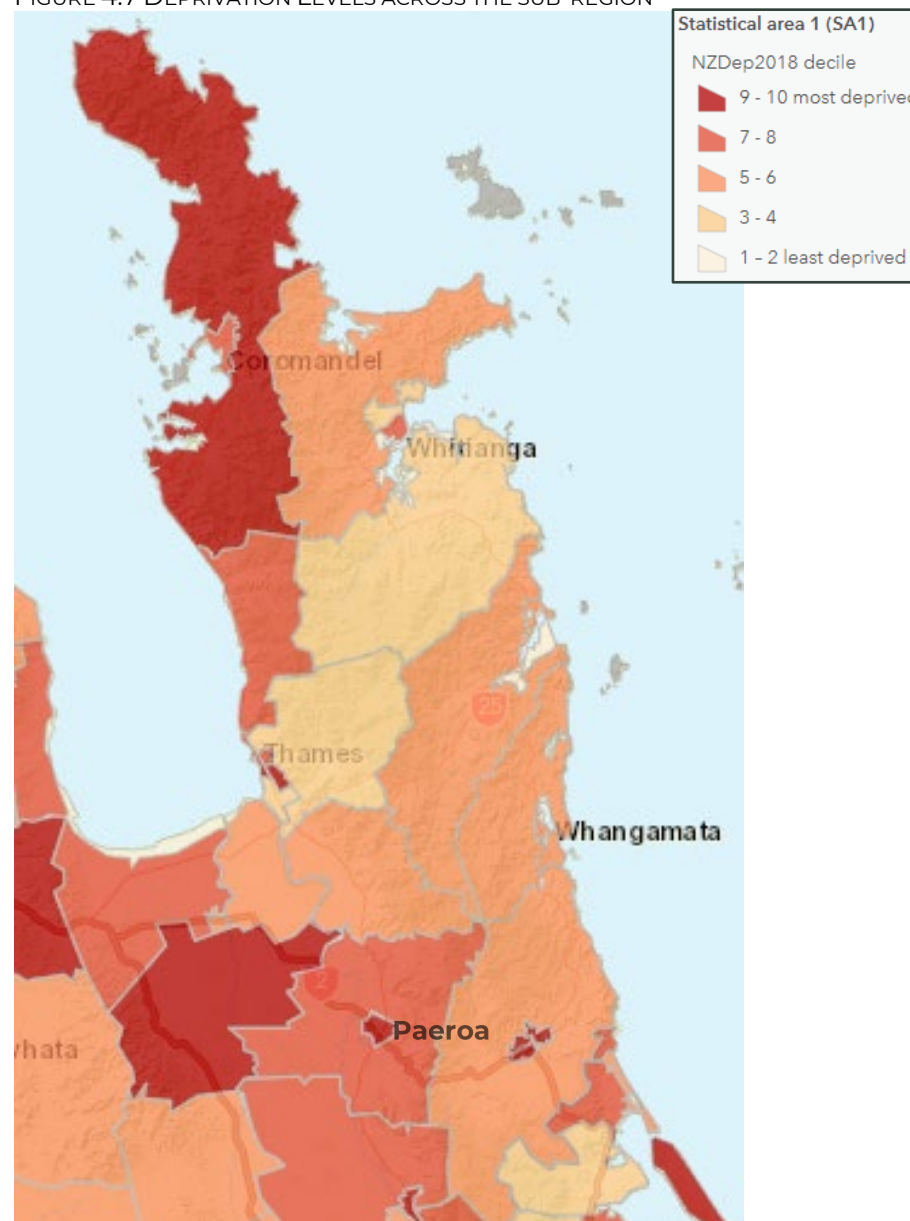
4.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Key indicators of socio-economic conditions in a community are provided by socio-economic indexes. The indexes are derived from various sources of official statistics and the 'New Zealand Index of Deprivation (NZDep) developed by Otago University. This socio-economic indicator uses a combination of 9 Statistics NZ Census 2018 variables (which includes home internet access; means-tested benefits; incomes; employment; qualifications; home ownership; family situations; households occupancy) to assign relative deprivation scores shown in Figure 4.7.

Key points are:

- Generally higher levels of deprivation (darker shades in Figure 4.7) are evident in the immediate Thames township, in the northern areas of the Coromandel Peninsula and south in Hauraki District.
- This indicates people living in these areas are experiencing relatively higher levels of socio-economic constraints.
- This reinforces the need to consider accessibility and affordability of provision for the future aquatic provision.

FIGURE 4.7 DEPRIVATION LEVELS ACROSS THE SUB-REGION



5.0 AQUATIC NETWORK

This section outlines the current aquatic provision network, including detailed outline of Thames Centennial Pool.

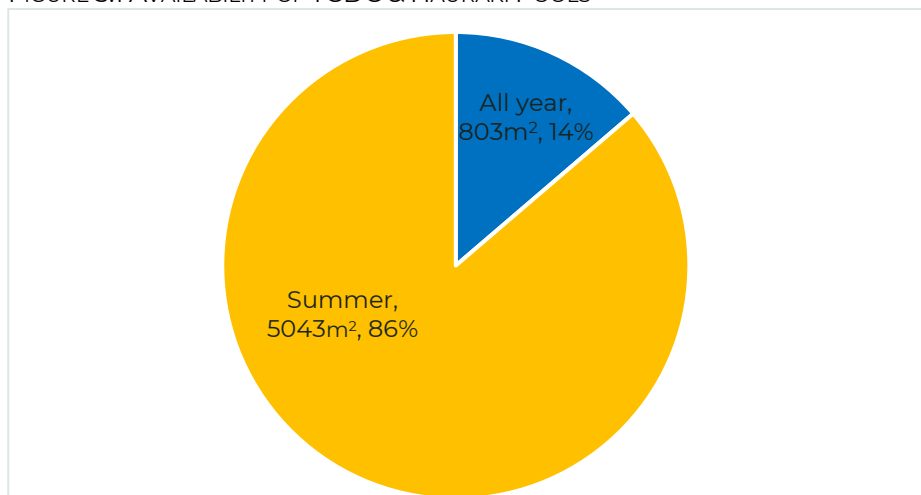
5.1 SUB-REGIONAL AQUATIC NETWORK

The aquatic network in Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts is almost completely comprised of outdoor pools. There are only two small indoor pools (Thames Hospital and Goldfields School in Paeroa). As Thames Centennial Pool is heated and available all-year round, 7% of the total aquatic space is available all year as shown in Figure 5.1.

The aquatic provision is predominantly a combination of public and school facilities. Table 5.1 on the next page outlines the aquatic facilities within the sub-regional catchment, which are shown on the map in Figure 5.2 on the following page. The map includes 10km distance circles for Thames Centennial Pool, Ngatea Pool and Paeroa Pool.

Note Miranda Hot Pools are currently closed with no clear indication if they will reopen, therefore it is not included in the list.

FIGURE 5.1 AVAILABILITY OF TCDC & HAURAKI POOLS



LOCATION OF AQUATIC SPACE

Figure 5.3 highlights where aquatic provision is located across the sub-region and each district. Across the sub-region, 54% (3,167m²) of the network is situated in schools, with both districts reliant on school provision. In Thames Coromandel, public provision is relatively even with schools but in Hauraki there is higher amount located in schools.

FIGURE 5.3 LOCATION OF TCDC & HAURAKI POOLS

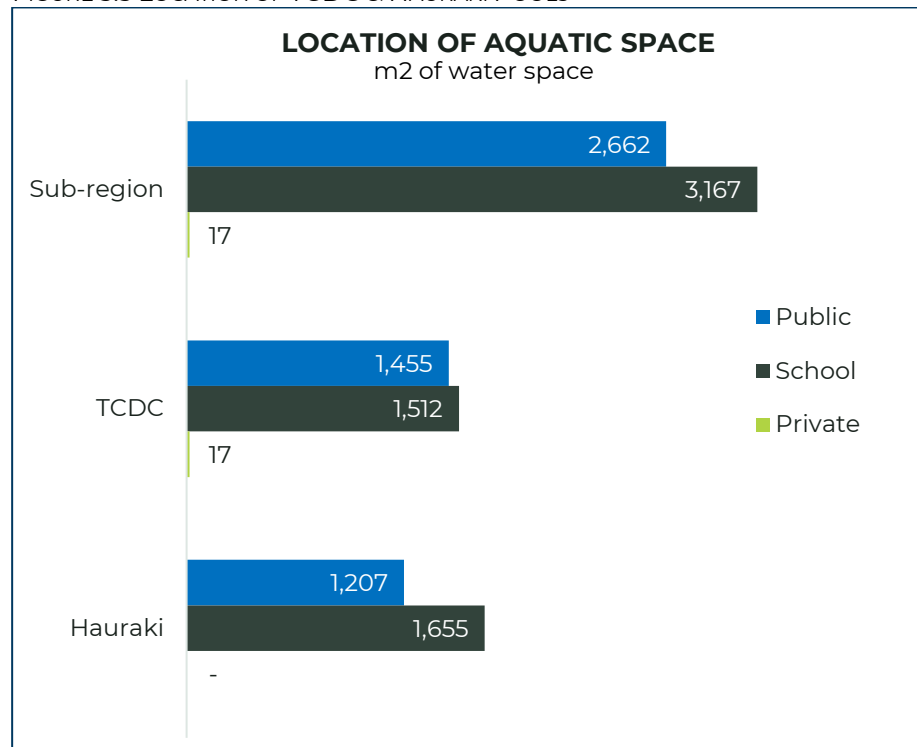
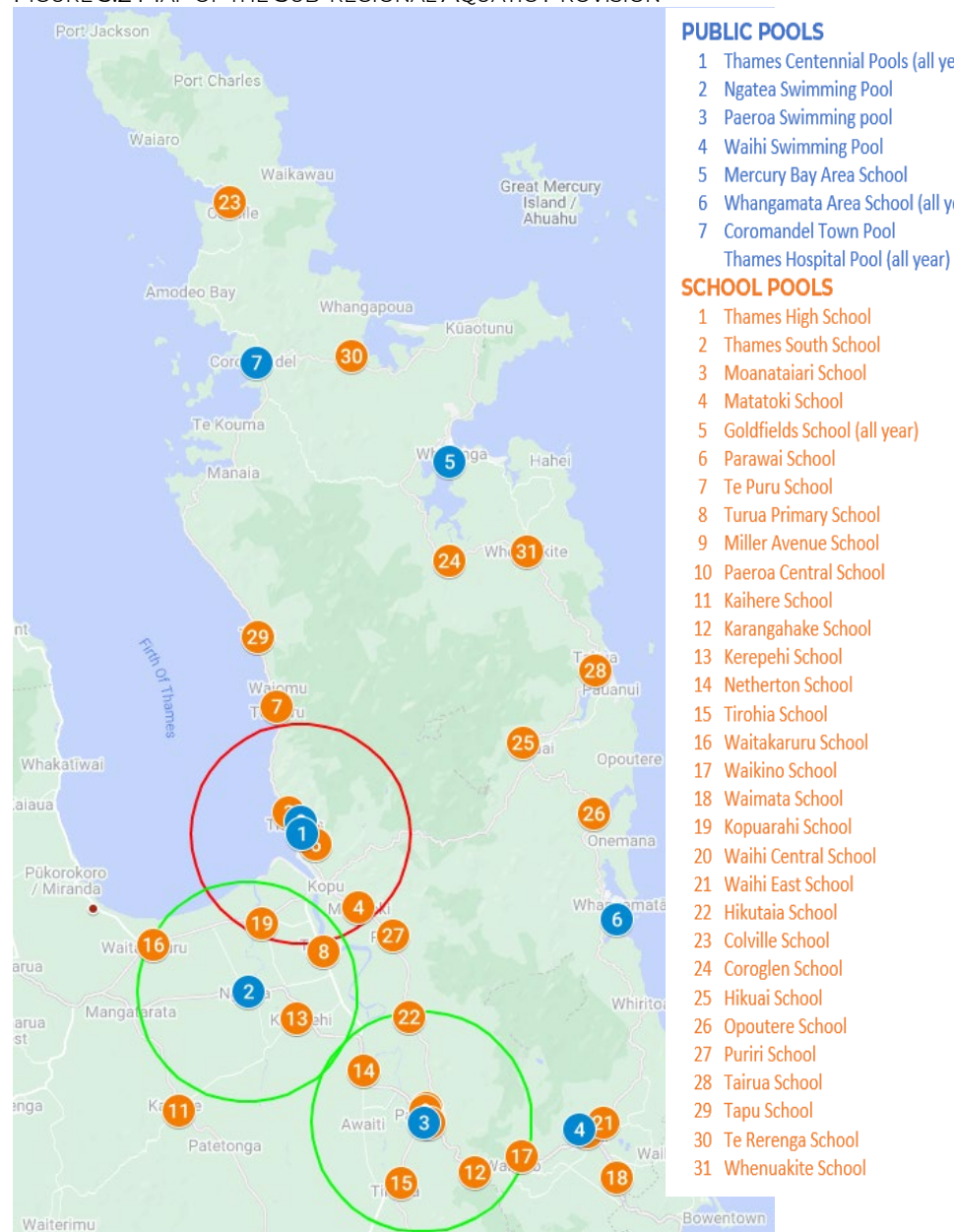


TABLE 5.1 SWIMMING POOLS IN THAMES-COROMANDEL & HAURAKI DISTRICTS (MAP REF REFERS TO FACILITY MARKERS IN FIGURE 5.2)

MAP REF	POOL	LOCATION	TYPE	TA	AGE	BUILDING	HEATING	SEASON	DESIGN
1	Thames Centennial Pools	Thames	Public	TCDC	1976	Outdoor	Heated	All year	25 x 7 lanes
7	Coromandel Town Pool	Coromandel	Public	TCDC	1999	Outdoor	Heated	Summer	25m x 6 lanes
5	Mercury Bay Area School	Whitianga	Public	TCDC	1977	Outdoor	Heated	Summer	25m x 12m
6	Whangamata Area School	Whangamata	Public	TCDC	1991	Outdoor	Heated	All year	15m x 15m
	Thames Hospital Pool	Thames	Private	TCDC		Indoor	Heated	All year	5.5m x 3m
23	Colville School	Colville	School	TCDC	1970	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	10m x 4m
24	Coroglen School	Whitianga	School	TCDC	1965	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 4m
25	Hikuai School	Hikuai	School	TCDC	1941	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	12m x 5m
22	Hikutaia School	Hikutaia	School	TCDC	1950	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	22m x 6m
4	Matatoki School	Matatoki	School	TCDC	1974	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	18m x 6m
3	Moanataiari School	Thames	School	TCDC	1972	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	15m x 6m
26	Opoutere School	Whangamata	School	TCDC	1979	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	9m x 3m
6	Parawai School	Thames	School	TCDC	1959	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	15m x 6m
27	Puriri School	Thames	School	TCDC	1966	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	22m x 6m
28	Tairua School	Tairua	School	TCDC	1955	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	12m x 6m
29	Tapu School	Thames	School	TCDC	1947	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 4m
7	Te Puru School	Thames	School	TCDC	1966	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 4m
30	Te Rerenga School	Coromandel	School	TCDC	1967	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 4m
1	Thames High School	Thames	School	TCDC	1961	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	31m x 9m
2	Thames South School	Thames	School	TCDC	1922	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	18m x 4m
8	Turua Primary School	Thames	School	TCDC	1971	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	22m x 7m
31	Whenuakite School	Whitianga	School	TCDC	1971	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	12m x 4m
2	Ngatea Swimming Pool	Ngatea	Public	Hauraki	1961	Outdoor	Heated	Summer	33 x 6 lanes
3	Paeroa Swimming pool	Paeroa	Public	Hauraki		Outdoor	Heated	Summer	25 x 6 lanes
4	Waihi Swimming Pool	Waihi	Public	Hauraki		Outdoor	Heated	Summer	33 x 6 lanes
5	Goldfields School	Paeroa	School	Hauraki	1975	Indoor	Heated	All year	9m x 4m
11	Kaihere School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1947	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 4 m
12	Karangahake School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1916	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	8m x 4m
13	Kerepehi School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1940	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	25m x 9m
19	Kopuarahi School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1966	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 4m
9	Miller Avenue School	Paeroa	School	Hauraki	1973	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	15m x 6m
14	Netherton School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1955	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	18m x 6m
10	Paeroa Central School	Paeroa	School	Hauraki	1955	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 6m
15	Tirohia School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1965	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	11m x 4 m
20	Waihi Central School	Waihi	School	Hauraki	1952	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	25m x 12m
21	Waihi East School	Waihi	School	Hauraki	1979	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	13m x 4m
17	Waikino School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1982	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	9m x 4m
18	Waimata School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1966	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	12m x 4m
16	Waitakaruru School	Rural	School	Hauraki	1927	Outdoor	Unheated	Summer	15m x 4m

FIGURE 5.2 MAP OF THE SUB-REGIONAL AQUATIC PROVISION



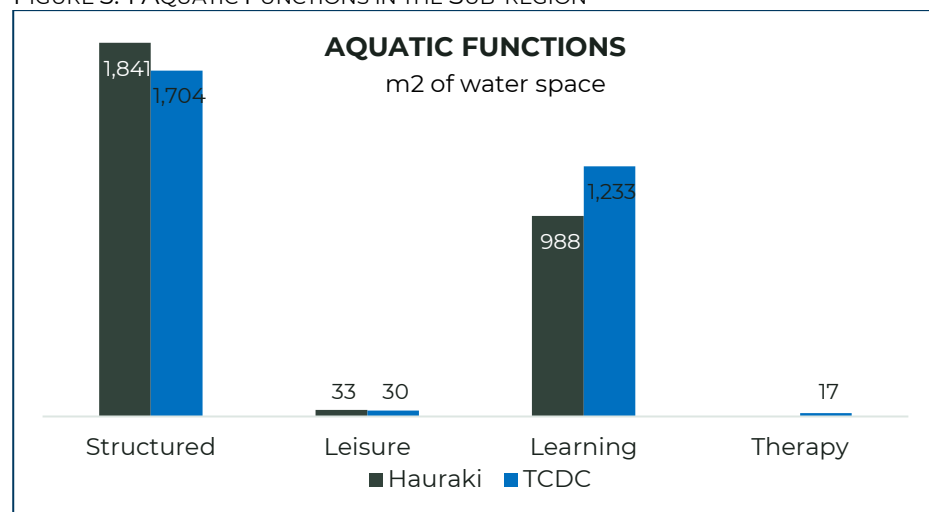
5.2 SUB-REGIONAL AQUATIC FUNCTIONS

In the past swimming pools were almost exclusively designed as lap-pools. While this design can be used for a variety of activities, modern facilities have a range of pools suited to different activities, where the size, depth and temperature of the pool all play a role in a quality experience. Table 5.2 describes the four aquatic functions, while Figure 5. outlines provision by these functions across the sub-region.

TABLE 5.2 AQUATIC FUNCTIONS & POOL DESIGN

FUNCTION	POOL DESIGN & ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
Structured	<p>Lap pool: typically 25m x 2.5m lanes (or 50m length) Depth: 1.4m to 2m Temp: 25-28°C</p> <p>Personal fitness In-water fitness such as lane-swimming, aqua-jogging, aqua-aerobics and in-water exercises.</p> <p>Aquatic Sport Competitive swimming, water polo, flipper-ball, underwater hockey, synchronised swimming etc</p>
Leisure	<p>Freeform pools: 100m² to 300m² or larger Depth: beach to 2m Temp: 32°C to 34°C</p> <p>Unstructured water-play and use of water features eg water toys, beach, waves, hydro-slides, splash-pads, play-structures or dive-boards for manus. Aqua runs can be used in a structured pool to provide temporary leisure.</p>
Learning	<p>Teaching pool: 10-15m x 10-25m Depth: 0.6 to 1.2m Temp: 32°C to 34°C</p> <p>Building water confidence and teaching the skill of swimming. To be most effective, learn to swim is delivered in a separate enclosed environment.</p>
Therapy	<p>Relaxation Use of spas, saunas, steam-rooms and warm water for soaking.</p> <p>Hydrotherapy Hydro pool: 10-15m x 10-25m Depth: 1m to 1.4m Temp: 32°C to 34°C Dedicated hydro-therapy pools and/or warm water used for therapy or rehabilitation purposes.</p>

FIGURE 5.4 AQUATIC FUNCTIONS IN THE SUB-REGION



INSIGHTS ABOUT SUB-REGIONAL PROVISION

- The aquatic network across Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki is almost exclusively outdoor and available only in summer months. This means the community misses out on aquatic opportunities in the winter months.
- Only four pools in the sub-region are available all year (14% of the network): Thames Centennial Pool and Whangamata Area School (outdoor heated), Goldfields Pool (learning), Thames Hospital Pool (therapy).
- More than half the network (54%) is in school pools. Noting many school pools are aging with most built between 1920 and 1970. This represents a significant risk to asset failure and loss of provision.
- The network's provision is dominated by structured and learning pools with hardly any provision of leisure or therapy pools. Given the aging population, the lack of therapy options is a significant gap, as is lack of leisure provision for children, youth, and families.
- The network's learning function is almost exclusively located in school pools. While learn to swim does occur in structured pools, the depth is often not suited to learning and portable in-water platforms are used. Given the age of the school pools, this represents a significant risk of declining provision for development of the essential life-skill.

5.3 PUBLIC AQUATIC NETWORK

Table 5.3 on the following page provides more detail on the public aquatic facilities in the sub-region.



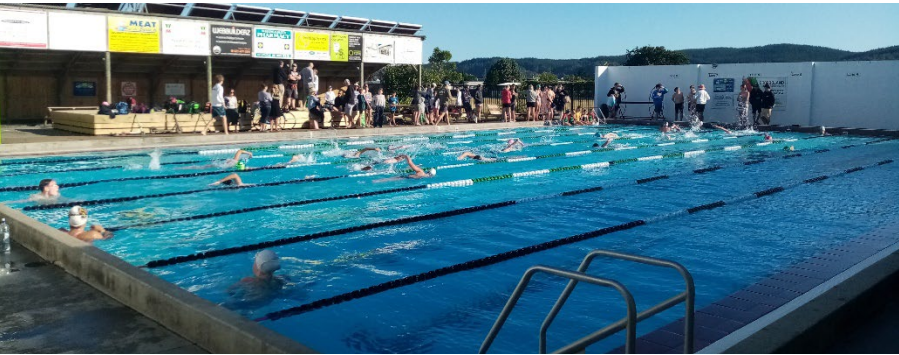
Two non-public facilities are included on this list as they make a significant contribution to the network, these are:

- Goldfields School Pool – this is the only indoor teaching pool in the sub-region and offers all-year learn to swim lessons. Feedback from the Paeroa Swim School advise users travel across the sub-region to access the indoor learn to swim offering.
- Thames Hospital Pool – this is the only indoor hydrotherapy pool in the sub-region and is mainly use by the hospital for hydrotherapy purposes. Feedback from the hospital staff indicate there is high demand from physiotherapists and users who want to access the warm deeper water for hydrotherapy purposes.




INSIGHTS ABOUT PUBLIC NETWORK




- The public network is entirely outdoor, although heated.
- All public pools are structured in design.
- Only two non-public pools provide indoor/all-year learning and therapy activity.
- There is no dedicated provision of learning pools in the public network. In-water platforms are used to support learn to swim in deeper pools. However, this means there is limited support of learning to swim in the public network and there is a significant reliance on school pools for this aquatic need. Given the national priority on learning to swim, this is a significant gap.
- There is no substantial leisure provision anywhere in the public network. While aqua-runs and other equipment is used to support aquatic play in structured pools, this is often not the priority and is only provided when fitness and sport is not in demand. This is a substantial gap meaning children, youth and families are missing out of aquatic play.
- There is no substantial therapy provision anywhere in the public network. Given the growing aging population, this represents a significant gap.
- Thames Centennial Pool is essentially functioning as the sub-regional aquatic facility.

TABLE 5.3 PUBLIC AQUATIC NETWORK

FACILITY	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE ¹	
Thames Centennial Pool	Thames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operated by Thames Coromandel District Council. Outdoor pool, heated and available all- year. 25m pool with 7 lanes. See section 6.0 for more detail. 	<p>0km</p> <p>24km</p>	
Mercury Bay Community Pool	Whitianga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located at Mercury Bay Area School. Managed by the Mercury Bay Community Pool Trust with support from Mercury Bay Community Board Outdoor pool, available summer season. 25 metre six lane solar heated pool (27°C) with lifeguards. Community run swimming club offers learn to swim, aqua fitness, and squad swimming. 	<p>62km</p> <p>87km</p>	
Whangamatā Community Pool	Whangamatā	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opened in 1991. Located at Whangamatā Area School. Owned by community and operated by committee. 25 metre solar heated pool with 7 lanes. Community run swim coaching. Recently heated to enable all year operation. 	<p>58 km</p> <p>70km</p>	

¹ First distance is from Thames. Second distance is from Paeroa. Distance determined by google maps.

FACILITY	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE ¹	
Coromandel Town Community swimming pool	Coromandel Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to Coromandel Area School. • Operated by a not-for-profit community group. • Outdoor 25 metre pool, 6 lanes, heated to 28°C • Smaller heated toddlers' pool. • Open in the summer season. • Community run swimming club: learn to swim, squad swimming and aqua-aerobics. • Coromandel Swimming Club are based at this facility. 	54km 79 km	
Ngatea Swimming Pool	Ngatea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located Hugh Hayward Domain. • Owned and operated by Hauraki District Council. • Outdoor pool, heated and summer season. • Main pool 30.5m x 6 lanes heated to 27°C • Small teaching pool. • Mix of opening hours for public and school swimming. 	25km 23km	
Tony Richards Paeroa Swimming Pool	Paeroa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in Paeroa township. • Operated by Hauraki District Council. • Outdoor pool, heated and summer season. • Main pool is 25metres with six lanes heated to 27°C (outdoor) • Mix of opening hours for public and school swimming. 	32 km 0km	

FACILITY	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE ¹	
Waihi College Swimming Pool	Waihi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located at Waihi College. • Operated by Hauraki District Council. • Outdoor pool, heated and summer season. • Main pool is 25metres with seven lanes heated to 27°C (outdoor) • Mix of opening hours for public and school swimming. • Waihi Swimming Club is a volunteer run swimming club which offers learn to swim lessons, squads and swimfit. 	53km 22km	
Goldfields School Pool	Paeroa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located at Goldfields School • Operated by the school with Paeroa Swim School. • Indoor pool, heated and available all year. • Teaching pool 10m x 5m, depth 0.6m to 1.2m. • School use during the day and swim school after school and weekends. 	32 km 0km	
Thames Hospital Pool	Thames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located on Thames Hospital • Operated by the Hospital. • Indoor pool, salt water, 5.5m x 3m at 1.3m deep. • Pool temperature 32-32 degrees. • Used for hydrotherapy activities. • High demand with active waiting list. • Public access is available for 2.5 hours on Thursday morning where volunteers are available to support hydrotherapy use. 	0km 33km	

5.4 THAMES AQUATIC NETWORK

Table 5.4 summarises the list of pools located in Thames township which includes public, private and school pools. This analysis was undertaken to assess the functionality of the network in Thames. Figure 5.5 shows the location of these pools.

FIGURE 5.5 THAMES SWIMMING POOLS

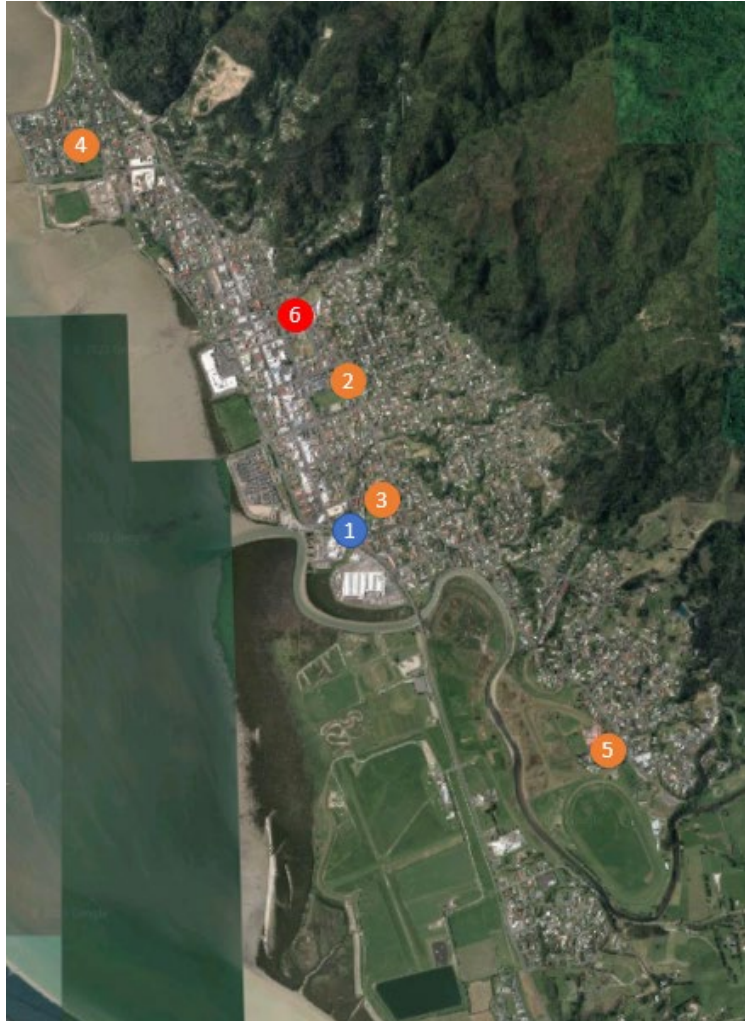
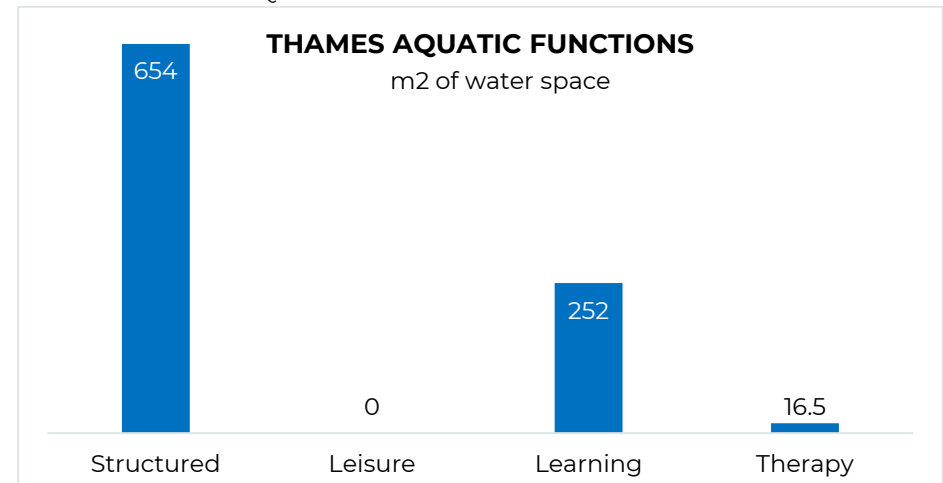


TABLE 5.4 POOLS IN THE IMMEDIATE THAMES TOWNSHIP

FACILITY	TYPE	FUNCTION	AQUATIC ACTIVITIES
1. Thames Centennial Pool	Public	• Structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to swim • Aquatic fitness • Sport training • Aquatic play (when not used for above)
2. Thames High School	School	• Structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School swimming • Selected aquatic sports
3. Thames South School	School	• Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to swim
4. Moanataiari School	School	• Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to swim
5. Parawai School	School	• Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to swim
6. Thames Hospital Pool	Private	• Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrotherapy

The Thames aquatic network comprises 922m² of total water space, with the functional allocation shown in Figure 5.4. **The distinct lack of leisure and therapy provision is clear.**

FIGURE 5.4 THAMES AQUATIC FUNCTIONS



6.0 THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

This section provides a more detailed outline of Thames Centennial Pool as the only facility currently serving as sub-regional aquatic provision.

6.1 OVERVIEW

FIGURE 6.1 THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL



Thames Centennial Pool was constructed by a group of residents in the 1970s. The two storey administration building was designed in 1973 and added to in 1976. The facility includes:

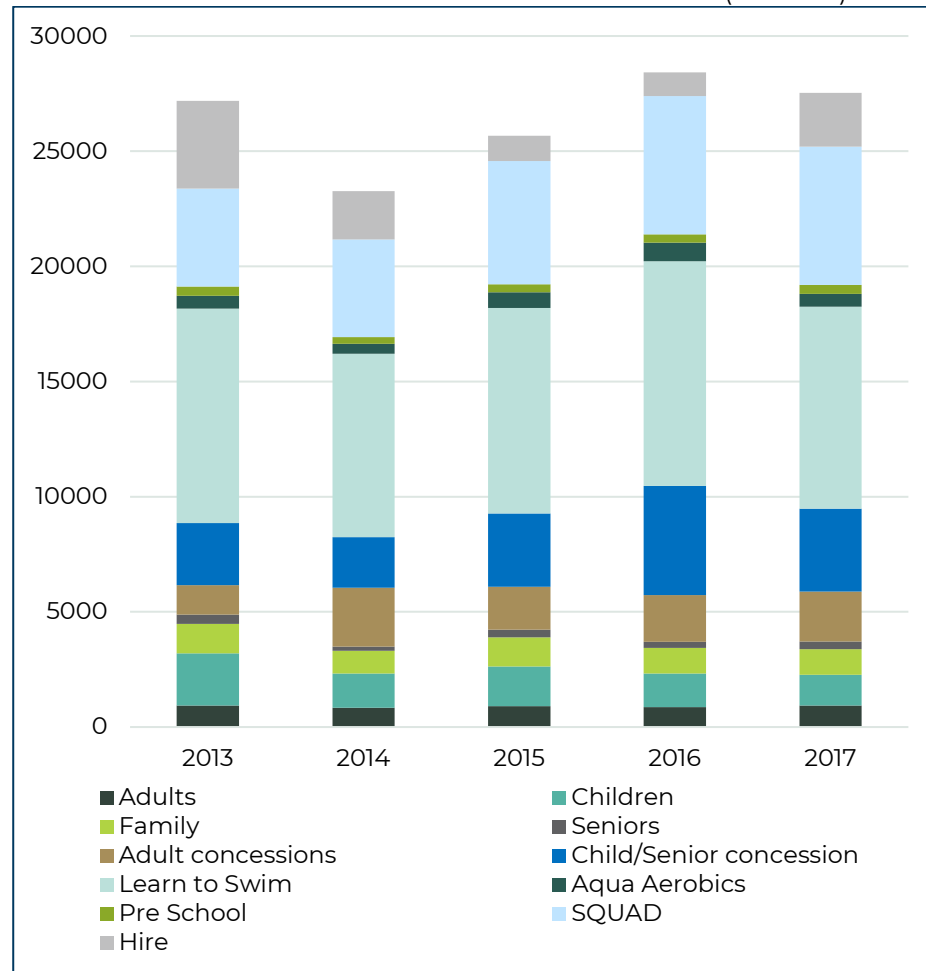
- 25 metre x seven lane outdoor heated pool. The pool is heated by electric heat pumps and delivers temperatures around 28 degrees.
- A new outdoor splash-pad replaced the aging and leaking Toddler Pool and provides a very small level of dedicated leisure provision.
- There is one main building. The lower-level houses changing rooms, office and plantroom and the upper level includes a covered grandstand and small clubroom area.
- The pool is surrounded by a concrete concourse and a large grass area which has outdoor picnic areas with substantial trees.
- A large storage building houses learn to swim equipment, lane-ropes, covers and large inflatables which are used for leisure play.

6.2 USE TRENDS

HISTORICAL TRENDS 2013-2017

Data provided by Thames Coromandel District Council indicates Thames Centennial Pool attracts just under 30,000 visits per annum. Figure 6.2 shows the annual trend between 2013 and 2017 (data was not collected in 2018 and 2019 and data collection changed in 2020).

FIGURE 6.2 THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL HISTORICAL USE TRENDS (NUMBERS)



Based on the data in Figure 6.2:

- Average monthly visits were around 2,000 to 2,200 per month.
- Learn to swim comprises around 30% of visits 8,000-9,000 annually.
- Squad swimming comprises 22% of visits, 5,000 - 6,000 annually.
- Child / senior concession make up 13% of visits, 3,500-4,000 annually.
- Hire of the pool makes up around 8% of visits.
- Most visitor-groups are fairly static in the annual trend with child/senior concession the most variable.

MONTHLY CATCHMENT DATA 2020-2022

From 2020, Thames Coromandel District Council has collected data based on where visitors come from. This was undertaken to provide an indication of the catchment of the Thames Centennial Pool. It is important to note visits between 2020 and 2022 has been significantly impacted by lockdowns and number restrictions required under the COVID-19 pandemic response.

Figure 6.3 on the next page outlines the monthly visits to Thames Pool. Note the pool was closed in February/March 2020 for the nation-wide Lockdown and data was not collected from April to June 2020 and the facility closed in January 2021 for maintenance works. Figure 6.4 below shows the proportion of visits from Thames, the District and out of the District.

FIGURE 6.4 PROPORTION OF VISITS TO THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

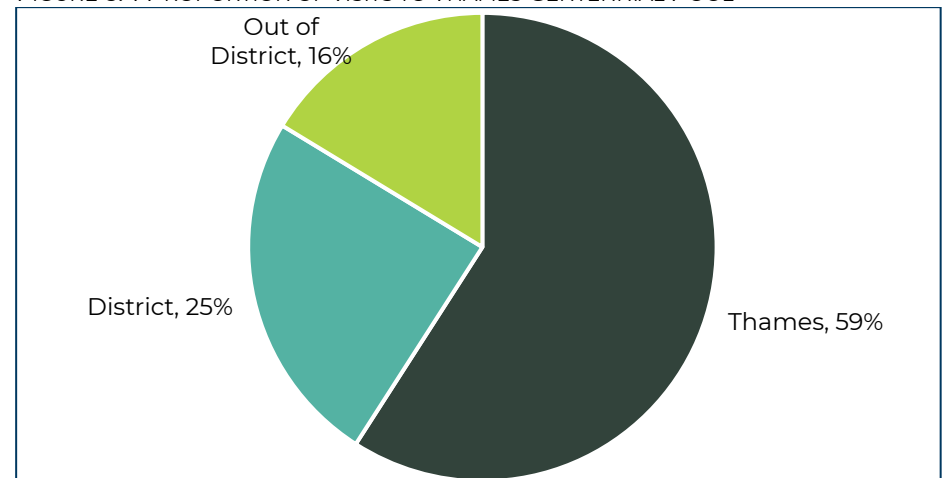
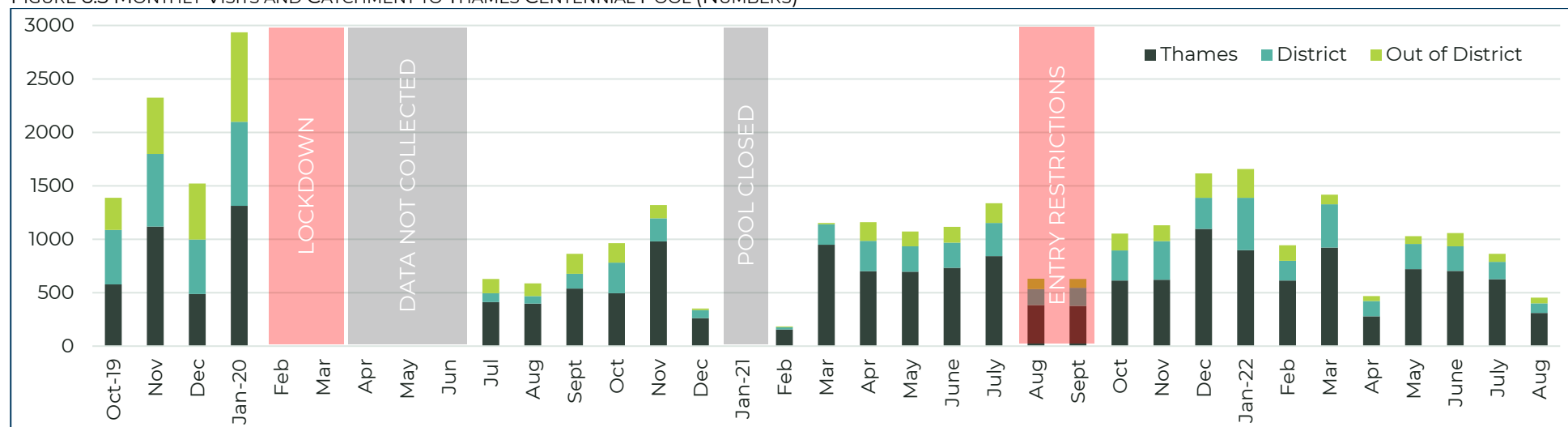


FIGURE 6.3 MONTHLY VISITS AND CATCHMENT TO THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL (NUMBERS)



Insights about use of Thames Centennial Pool:

- Historically, the pool attracts around 30,000 visits per annum, although this appears to have decreased in recent years.
- Typically, the pool attracts around 1,500-3,000 visits per month in summer months and around 1,000 visits in winter months.
- The monthly visits appear to have declined since the February 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic commenced. A similar impact has been felt across many aquatic facilities in New Zealand, particularly those with higher proportions of older vulnerable communities.
- Visits from users located in Thames make up approximately 60% of total visits, whereas the wider District makes up 25% and out of Thames Coromandel District makes up 16%.
- Overall, it appears around 60% of Thames Centennial Pool visits are locally based while 40% are sub-regionally based. This trend has remained relatively consistent across the period with only the odd month which is significantly different.

6.3 PATTERN OF USE

The pool manager of Thames Centennial Pool comments the daily pattern of use is outlined in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1 – THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL PATTERN OF USE - MONDAY TO FRIDAY

TIME OF DAY	DESCRIPTION OF USERS
6.00am–8.00am	Most days the pool is very busy and most visitors are people who work during the day
8.00am–12 noon	The pool is mainly used by retirees, semi-retired and mothers.
12.00pm–2.00pm	Visitors are mainly workers who use the pool for a swim during their lunch break
2.00pm – 3.30pm	Mainly casual swimmers and typically quiet
3.30pm – 5.00pm	Very busy period. Used for Learn to Swim, squad swimmers and public swimming.

6.4 ACTIVITIES

LEARN TO SWIM

Learn to Swim classes are held for pre-schoolers (5% of participants), school-aged children (90% of participants) and adults (5% of participants). The programme is led by the Learn to Swim Co-ordinator who is employed by Thames-Coromandel District Council.

Classes are held from 3.30pm – 5.00pm on weekdays in the main pool using in-water platforms when required. Classes are held at the same time as squad training and public swimming. This can be problematic:

- Some children lose confidence when squad swimmers are in the adjacent lane.
- Sometimes children can't hear their instructor due to the noise around the class.
- Wave surges from the public/ squad swimmers.
- Space is limited due to the squad training and public swimming. More children could enrol if there was more time and/or space available.

Another key challenge for the delivery of the learn to swim programme at Thames is the outdoor pool. While the pool is heated, children can get cold from air temperature. Best practice for learn to swim is delivery indoors where the air and water temperature can be controlled to ensure children do not get cold and the learning environment is fully optimised.

The Learn to Swim Co-ordinator advised up until March 2020, approximately 50% of enrolments were from the Hauraki District. During the Covid period, enrolments decreased from previous years. There are no swimming lessons offered at Ngatea Pool so many children travel to Thames for swimming lessons. There are swimming lessons available in Paeroa, delivered by a Paeroa Swim School at Goldfields Pool.

The number of enrolments in the Learn to Swim programme is dependent on the number of instructors available. Demand exceeds supply and on average there are 10 children on a waiting list and 10-15 adults on a waiting list. The Learn to Swim Co-ordinator advised the maximum number of enrolments per term pre Covid was 350 – 400.

One of the main challenges is managing demand. There is no promotion of the learn to swim programme as it is at capacity and has been for several years.

The Learn to Swim Co-ordinator commented as the Learn to Swim staff are working outside, it is important from a health and safety perspective to minimise the effect of the natural /environmental elements such as wind and sun.

TABLE 6.1 THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL LEARN TO SWIM ENROLMENTS

	TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3	TERM 4	TOTAL
2019	300	300	360	350	1,310
2020	220	195	160	-	575
2021	160	160	120	162	602

WATER SAFETY TRAINING

In week nine of each term, a water safety programme is delivered at the pool. An inflatable boat is used during training. Forty life jackets are used during the programme. The inflatable boat and life jackets are stored in the storage shed. Council are partnering with Swim Waikato to provide a drowning prevention programme due to start in Term 4 of 2022.

THAMES AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB INC

Council employs a Head Swimming Coach and a part-time coach to provide training for members of the Thames Amateur Swimming Club. The Head Swim Coach advises the squad numbers have increased from 37 in July 2021 to 70 in 2022. The coach indicates potential capacity for the squad is up to 400 members.

The squad programmes follow the completion on from the learn to swim programme. Children and young people are coached based on ability rather than age-groups.

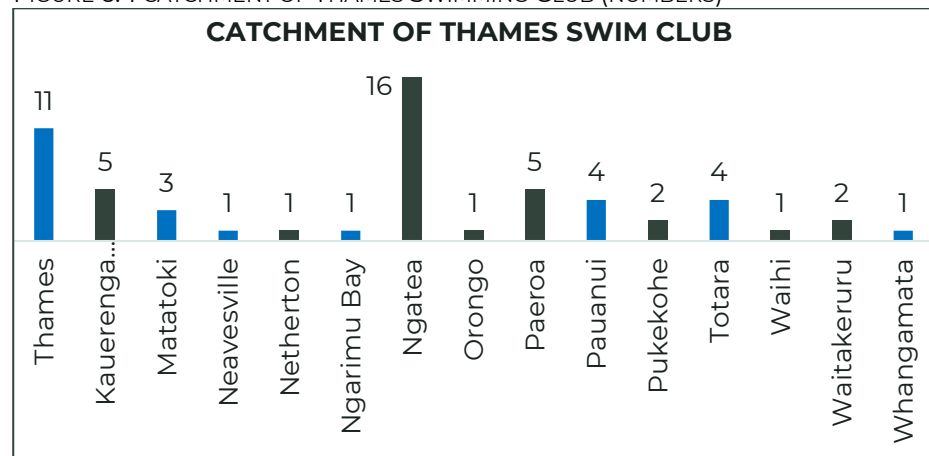
The Head Coach advises the squad requires the following amenities:

- Poolside seating for spectators (which would also be used by squad swimmers when they take part in competitions). Tiered seating is preferred.
- Meeting room space of adequate size to accommodate meetings and indoor programming.
- Ideally a separate learn to swim pool so squad members don't impact on the learn to swim programme. The coach advised squad swimmers impact the confidence of learn to swim users.
- Storage for equipment.

- Diving blocks and good quality lane ropes.

The home location of the swimmers in the club is shown in Figure 6.4, colour coded within or outside TCDC boundaries. This reinforces other data around the wide catchment of the facility.

FIGURE 6.4 CATCHMENT OF THAMES SWIMMING CLUB (NUMBERS)



AQUA AEROBICS GROUP

Classes are held across two swimming lanes with up to 25 participants per session. The emphasis is on low-impact, high energy, fun exercise. The classes are delivered by Thames-Coromandel District Council staff member. There is a loyal following of users who are predominantly older adults and some working age adults for the Monday evening class.

Users come from a wide catchment, with some commenting this is an important weekly activity. The coordinator reports numbers range from 18-30 in the summer months and 10-20 in winter months.

Sessions are on delivered on:

- Monday evening 6.15pm – 7.15pm,
- Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 11am – 12.00pm.

SCHOOL USE OF CENTENNIAL POOL – LOCAL SCHOOLS

During February and March, Centennial Pool is closed during the day for six to eight days for school swimming sports. Schools book the pool for swimming sports include:

- Te Puru,
- Tapu,
- Parawai,
- St Francis,
- Thames South,
- Moanataiari,
- Matatoke,
- Puriri.
- Thames High School

The pool is used for the Thames Valley primary schools swimming sports and the Thames Valley secondary school swimming sports.

St Francis School regularly books the pool for regular aquatic activities as they do not have a school pool.

SMALL INFORMAL GROUPS

The Pool manager reports there are several small informal user groups from across the Thames- Coromandel District as follows:

- Seven to ten residents from Whangamata travel to Thames at least twice a week during winter as the pool at Whangamata Area School is closed.
- Up to six residents from Whitianga travel to Thames 2-3 times a week in the winter as the pool at Mercury Bay Area School is closed.
- Hauraki Lifestyle Trust – six to eight lifestyle users use the pool from 11am – 12pm each day.
- A group of women travel from Tairua three times a week all year round.
- A group of six swimmers from Tairua travel to Thames to use the pool on Tuesdays.

6.5 ISSUES / CHALLENGES

There are several challenges with Thames Centennial Pool which are summarised in Table 6.2

TABLE 6.2 – CURRENT ISSUES – CENTENNIAL POOL THAMES

ISSUE	COMMENTARY
Constructed on an urupa.	Council has previously agreed with Ngāti Maru when the pool was to be renewed, it would be relocated. The wider area on which the pool is located is well known as an old burial site. Feedback from staff indicates many Māori will not visit the pool due to cultural inappropriateness, which means these users are missing out on aquatic opportunities.
At the end of asset life	At over 50 years old, the pool is nearing the end of its asset life. There are a range of challenges the age presents.
Outdoors	Previously the pool had an inflatable dome which was used in the winter months to provide some protection from the colder winter months. When the dome came to the end of its life, it was removed, and the Council agreed to operate the pool all-year as an outdoor pool. This means the heating costs have increased due to the radiant loss of pool temperature. It also means users do not receive a quality experience for an all-year facility.
Water table	Due to the high-water table in this area, when water levels rise in the river during and after a storm, the ground around and under the pool becomes sodden.
Poor condition	Council has not invested in upgrading ancillary facilities as the pool is at the end of its asset life and it was known the pool was going to be relocated.

IMPACT OF THE POOL LOCATION

The impact of Thames Centennial Pool's location on an urupa is well expressed by one of the comments in the community survey:

If I said that I was sad because the Centennial Pool is located on urupa it would be an understatement.

It is a gross miscarriage of justice. I swim there as my mobility is limited, and swimming in the Firth is tidal and I cannot regularly use the sea.

Moving the pool to a well researched more suitable site is appropriate. This pool is not accessible for local iwi because they will not swim there.

Accessibility includes all members of our community. It would be my expectation that someone takes the time to research the cultural context of the placement of the new pool. Our community deserves an accessible (I don't just mean in terms of distance) pool on a well researched site, that all whanau can enjoy.



7.0 AQUATIC PARTICIPATION

This section outlines the current aquatic participation relevant to the Thames and sub-regional catchment.

7.1 GENERAL INTEREST IN SWIMMING

Sport New Zealand undertake research through the Active NZ Survey to provide insight in the level of interest in different sport and recreation activities.

Swimming is highlighted in the top 10 recreation activities and as a sport across the Waikato Region:

- For Tamariki / children – number 4 activity and number 1 sport – 41%
- Rangatahi / youth – number 5 activity and number 2 sport - 26%
- Pakeke / adults – number 5 activity and number 1 sport – 32%

In Thames-Coromandel District Council:

- Swimming is in the top 10 activities for adults
- Swimming is the number 6 activity for children, with 42% of 5-11 year olds and 39% of 12-17 year olds.

Combined these insights indicate swimming is an activity valued or undertaken by between 20% to 30% of the population.

7.2 DROWNING

The ability to swim is one of the preventable measures to reduce incidents of drowning. The Waikato region has the second highest number of preventable drownings in New Zealand (Water Safety New Zealand 2019).

There are 10 preventable drownings in the Waikato Region on average, every year from 2014 to 2018.

Aquatic facilities are an important venue for learning to swim and developing water confidence. Learn to Swim continues to grow (6% across the region between 2015-2019), especially as schools have moved away from providing learn to swim opportunities.

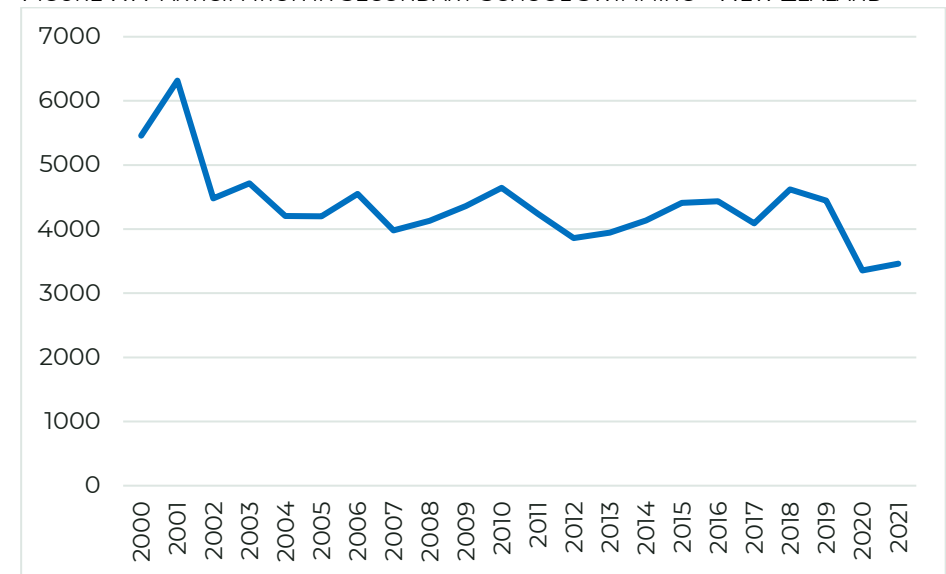
7.3 SCHOOL SWIMMING

The New Zealand Secondary School Sport census indicates there are 625 secondary school students from the Waikato Region participating in swimming within the secondary school setting. This represents 18% of the national school participants involved in swimming. The Waikato Regional Aquatic Facilities Plan indicated this was a high level of participation for the region.

Unfortunately, there is no breakdown available at the local authority level.

Figure 7.1 provides a picture of declining participation in secondary school participation in swimming across New Zealand.

FIGURE 7.1 PARTICIPATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL SWIMMING – NEW ZEALAND



7.4 LOCAL SWIMMING CLUBS

TABLE 7.2 – SWIMMING CLUBS LOCATED IN THE SUB-REGION

SWIMMING CLUB	OPERATION	POOL	SWIMMERS
Thames Amateur Swimming Club Inc	All year	Thames Centennial Pool	77
Coromandel Swimming Club	Spring / summer	Coromandel Town Community Pool	78
Mercury Bay Amateur Swimming Club Inc.	Spring / summer	Mercury Bay Community Pool	64
Whangamata Swimming Club	Spring / summer	Whangamata Pool	29
Waihi Swimming Club Inc	Spring / summer	Waihi College Pool	274
Paeroa Swimming Club	Spring / summer	Paeroa Pool	20
Ngatea Swimming Club	Spring / summer	Ngatea Pool	18

Feedback from the swimming clubs report the interest in swimming remains high. The availability of all-year round indoor provision is one of the constraints for growing the club membership.

7.5 INSIGHTS

Combined with the use of the Thames Centennial Pool outlined in Section 6.2, the following insights can be drawn regarding aquatic participation:

- Thames Centennial Pool is attracting roughly 30,000 visits annually, with 60% coming from Thames and 40% from across the region.
- The largest group of visits for Thames Centennial Pool is from learn to swim, followed by squad swimming then child/senior concessions.
- Across the Thames Coromandel District, there is interest in swimming as an activity.
- Nationally, participation in the sport of swimming is declining although reports from local swimming clubs indicate consistent demand, with availability of indoor pool one of the constraining factors.



8.0 ENGAGEMENT

This section outlines engagement undertaken and key findings.

8.1 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT

It is important to seek input from a wide range of stakeholders to understand the needs and aspirations for aquatic provision. Table 8.1 outlines the engagement undertaken for the study.

FIGURE 8.1 ENGAGEMENT UNDERTAKEN FOR THE SPORT FACILITIES

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT METHODS
Mana Whenua Ngāti Maru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative on the Project Steering Group. • Initial hui to introduce project and discuss opportunities and concerns. • Ongoing involvement and input through project development.
Thames Aquatic Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thames Amateur Swimming Club. • Aquafit coordinator and users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings face to face to discuss their views, concerns, opportunities, and future aspirations.
Wider Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community survey distributed widely across the Thames community.
Regional Sports Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input through Sport Waikato surveys to clubs, RSOs and schools.

8.2 MANA WHENUA ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with Ngāti Maru is an ongoing process which reflects the Council's partnership approach. A representative of Ngāti Maru is included on the Project Steering Group to provide ongoing input through the project.

Initial feedback provided in the early hui stages identified the following considerations, although it is anticipated further considerations will be identified as the project progresses:

- Ngāti Maru Rūnanga will be guided by the hapū members who live in the Totara area as one of the last remaining traditional papa kāinga in the area.
- The location of the future aquatic facility is the primary concern and depending on this location, may require engagement with hapū members.

8.3 HAURAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Hauraki District Council Long Term Plan 2012-2031 acknowledges it cannot meet the aquatic needs of its residents when its pools are closed over winter. This is evidenced by the preference to consider funding options for transport, to enable swimmers to travel to Thames when outdoor pools in the Hauraki District are closed.

An initial meeting was held with the Officer at Hauraki District Council which canvassed a wide range of topics relevant to aquatic provision. The council indicated a key issue is the provision and support of learn to swim opportunities. It is acknowledged indoor aquatic provision is a key enabler of quality learn to swim programmes. Potentially considering undertaking a feasibility to assess how this can be achieved either through covering, partnering or other options.

Reference to the higher deprivation across much of Hauraki District indicates it will be important to consider the accessibility and affordability of any future aquatic provision. Provision of transport options as indicated by the Council's Long-term Plan could be an option.

Growth within Hauraki District is focused around Paeroa with some growth around Ngatea and Paeroa.

The Hauraki District Council is open to a partnership approach as already evidence by the partnership in Hauraki Rail Trail.

8.4 AQUATIC GROUPS ENGAGEMENT

THAMES AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB

The Thames Amateur Swimming Club is based at Thames Centennial Pool. The Council employs the head coach who runs the training programme for club members. The club has gone through a period of intensive growth going from 36 members 10 months ago to now 77 members. The club members range in age mainly from 7 to 14 years. The club attracts users from a wide catchment including Ngatea, Paeroa and Pukekohe. Figure 6.4 on page 38 illustrates the wide catchment area.

The squads train morning and evening all year round. The coach acknowledges the winter period is particularly hard due to the colder weather. Although the warmer temperature of the pool water (27-28°C) can be challenging as the swimmers get too hot when training.

A key issue for the squad is the availability of space as after school is a peak time for the pool with learn to swim, squad training and lap swimmers all needing space. The Club see with more space and particularly indoor provision the number of members would grow substantially.

Aspirations for future aquatic provision includes:

- Larger 25m pool, ideally indoor, preferably 8-10 lanes.
- Would prefer the pool to be 24-25 degrees and there is a separate learn to swim pool.
- Would like to have a spectator area around the pools so the Club can hold swim events and to support school activity at the facility.
- Would like to have an additional pool which can be used as warm-up/down pool during events. This could be a dive or programme pool.
- Would like to have an administration space for the club.
- Shared dry-land space and space that functions like a clubroom.
- The club would also like to develop swim programmes for adults and seniors. Keen to see the casual swimming community also grow.
- Support the need for a hydrotherapy / programme pool to enable more senior to undertake aquatic activities.
- Support the idea of a community and sport hub. Would be keen to work with other codes to look at scheduling and timetables to ensure participants can participate in multiple activities and don't have to choose between sports based on scheduling issues.

AQUAFIT PARTICIPANTS

Loyal following of aquafit classes at Thames Centennial Pool. The users indicated they are very grateful to have a pool to be able to use all year round. Users come from a wide catchment including Tairua and Paeroa. Many come for gentle water-based exercise, socialisation and body rehabilitation.

Aspirations for future aquatic provision include:

- Pool must be heated and have a good depth to facilitate aquafit.
- Would prefer an indoor facility but also like the outdoor environment.
- See the provision of quality learn to swim as critically important, not just children but adults as well.
- Need to support participation in water for older people and people with disabilities. Need to make sure any future pool is fully accessible with ramps rather than stairs.
- Changing rooms would prefer to have good showers and cubicles.
- Would support a café or coffee cart as it promotes a family and community atmosphere.
- Would like a splashpad which is freely available so people who can't pay can still enjoy aquatic participation.
- Support the idea of a community and sport hub but see accessibility is critically important. Ability to connect with walkway or cycling track. Need to think about how children will access the park.
- Pool entry charges need to remain affordable.
- Would like to consider dry fitness opportunities to provide all forms of gentle exercise.

8.5 COMMUNITY SURVEY

OVERVIEW

To gather the views of sport participants and the wider community, an open survey was undertaken to explore the potential improved and/or new aquatic and sport facilities in Thames. The survey was undertaken from 13 June to 4 July providing 21 days. The survey was distributed by Council through email distribution to the sports clubs and a wide community database. Promotion included local newspapers, social media, Council's website, and hard-copies available in the library, at the swimming pool and Council sites.

The survey focused on separate questions which respectively addressed:

- Aquatic provision and the future of **Thames Centennial Pool**.
- Sport facility provision with a focus on **Rhodes Park**.

There were 494 survey responses, including 432 complete returns and 62 partial responses (not all questions were answered fully). Of all responses:

- 347 relating to aquatic provision - 70% of respondents.
- 267 relating to sport facility provision – 54% of respondents.

The results for aquatic facility provision are summarised below with open comments in Appendix A.

POOL USERS VERSUS NON-POOL USERS

Of the 494 respondents, 399 (80%) indicated they used a pool. The reasons for not using a pool are listed below

REASONS FOR NOT USING POOLS	COUNT	%
Not interested in swimming/aquatic activities.	37	39
Types of pools available don't suit my needs.	21	22
Facility quality is not good	16	17
Pool water is too cold.	15	16
Pool locations not convenient/ too far way.	13	14
Don't like outdoor pools.	11	12
Opening hours are not convenient.	11	12
Don't like where the pools are located.	9	9
Pools are too expensive.	6	6
Other reasons.	18	19
20% of survey respondents	(n=95)	

POOLS USED BY RESPONDENTS

For the 399 who did use pools, 347 (88%) use Thames Centennial Pool. This indicates a high proportion of survey respondents are already users of the pool. The table below shows the pools used by all survey respondents and those that use Thames Centennial Pool.

POOL USED (LISTED)	THAMES POOL USERS	% THAMES POOL USERS	ALL POOL USERS	% ALL POOL USERS
Thames Centennial Pool	347	100	347	88
Ngatea Pool	56	16	65	16
Paeroa Pool	17	5	25	6
Mercury Bay Pool	7	2	19	5
Whangamatā Pool	7	2	13	3
Coromandel Town Pool	6	2	7	2
Waihi College Pool	1	0	3	1
Other Pools (below)	23	7	39	10
		(n=347)		(n=396)

'Other' Pools used include:

- Te Aroha community pools (including hot pools) 8
- Goldfields School 3
- Thames High School 3
- Thames South School 2
- Matatoki School 2
- Miranda Hot Springs 2
- Cambridge 1
- Tairua School Pool 1
- Colville School Pool 1
- Thames Hospital Hydrotherapy Pool 1
- Matamata Pool

PROFILE OF POOL USERS

The profile of pool users is shown by:

- Those that used **Thames Centennial Pool**,
- Those that used any pools in the wider local area (**All pool users**).

HOME LOCATIONS

SUMMARY OF LOCATIONS	THAMES POOL USERS	% THAMES POOL USERS	ALL POOL USERS	% ALL POOL USERS
Thames Town	247	72	260	68
Wider Thames Catchment ²	56	16	59	15
Other Hauraki District	22	6	30	8
Other Thames-Coromandel District	15	4	34	9
Beyond Local Districts	1	0	2	1
	341	(n=341)	385	(n=385)

- Virtually all respondents who used Thames Centennial Pool (88%) were either from Thames or the immediate surrounding catchment areas (see footnote 2). Just over 10% who had used Thames Centennial Pool were from further afield in Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts.
- This home distribution pattern was largely consistent with that for all pool users responding to the survey overall (including pool-users who didn't include Thames Pool).

GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

	THAMES POOL USERS	% THAMES POOL USERS	ALL POOL USERS	% ALL POOL USERS
Female	244	70	272	70
Male	95	27	113	29
Other	8	2	1	0
	347	(n=347)	386	(n=386)

² An area surrounding Thames Town within 20 minutes' drive taking in areas northwards up the Thames Coast, southwards through Matatoki/ Hikutaia, and westwards across the Hauraki Plains towards Ngatea.

AGE-GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS

	THAMES POOL USERS	% THAMES POOL USERS	ALL POOL USERS	% ALL POOL USERS
10-19yrs	19	5	20	5
20-29yrs	19	5	24	6
30-39yrs	60	17	69	17
40-49yrs	94	27	105	27
50-59yrs	77	22	90	23
60-69yrs	51	15	58	15
70+yrs	27	8	30	8
	347	(n=347)	396	(n=396)

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS

	HOUSEHOLDS %	ADULTS %	UNDER 15	OVER 15
None			48	80
1	8	13	19	14
2	28	72	23	6
3	18	10	8	0
4	28	4	1	0
5+	18	1	1	0
	(n=345)	(n=334)	(n=346)	100

Overview of pool respondents:

- A higher proportion of female respondents compared to male. This is quite typical of open surveys.
- The majority of respondents residing in Thames town, although 18% of respondents reside from outside the 20 minute local catchment.
- 50% of respondents are aged between 40-59 years, although a high proportion of respondents do not have children in the household.

ABOUT THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

These results focus on respondents who visit Thames Centennial Pool.

FREQUENCY OF VISITING

- Over 40% used the pool more than once a week, with almost 20% regular high frequency users.

	COUNT	%
3+ days a week	59	18
1-2 times a week	83	25
1-2 times a month	75	22
1-2 times a year	90	27
Less frequently	28	8
		(n=335)

USUAL POOL ACTIVITIES

- Respondents could tick multiple option boxes.
- Personal and casual uses predominated, with only a few competitive uses.

USUAL POOL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN	COUNT	%
Personal swimming, aqua-walking or aqua-jogging for general fitness / wellbeing	195	56
Playing around / having fun in the water	155	45
Learning to swim	108	31
Watching others I've taken to the pool do their activities	74	21
Connecting with friends and family such as birthday parties or family gatherings	60	17
Soaking or relaxing or rehabilitating in the water	50	14
Competitive swimming or playing water-sports (including training)	47	14
		(n=347)

MAIN THINGS LIKED ABOUT THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

All Thames Pool users were asked an open-ended question about what they liked about the pool.

- The close central location of the pool to Thames and its surrounding areas was the most liked feature.
- Staff were the main secondary positive feature.

	COUNT	%
Location/ close to home /convenient access	115	38
Good/ friendly staff	70	23
Heated	58	19
Clean/ tidy/ maintained / good condition	40	13
Good size/ capacity/ uncrowded	32	11
Classes/ programmes available	31	10
Kids facilities /opportunities	26	9
Nice setting/ environment / atmosphere /park	26	9
Aquatic activities possible	25	8
Caters for all/ kid-family friendly	23	8
Outdoor pool	23	8
All year use	18	6
Outdoor social spaces /facilities	16	5
General positive	14	5
Winter cover	13	4
Afford able	13	4
Changing rooms/ showers	11	4
Safe setting	7	2
Community feel/ atmosphere; Parking; Good pool depth; Well-run; Well used	All 5 or under	All 2% or under
Other miscellaneous (incl. some negatives)	18	6
		(n=270)

MAIN THINGS NOT LIKED ABOUT THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

All Thames Pool users were asked an open-ended question about what they least liked about the pool.

- Collectively, negative perceptions of cold-related, outdoor, water temperature were the dominant dislike theme
- By comparison other reasons were significantly less.

	COUNT	%
GENERAL Cold experiences	104	39
Outdoor pool/ cold winter use	75	28
Lack of cover/ indoor pool	51	19
Run down/ old/ dated	42	16
Limited activity options /kid options	42	16
Quality of changing rooms, showers, toilets	39	14
Limited pool size/ capacity	36	13
Specific facility/ activity lack/issue	31	11
Crowding - balance of lane uses and other uses	27	10
Temperature of changing rooms and access	24	9
Opening hours	20	7
Programming timing and constraints	20	7
Parking	19	7
Cold water / not heated enough	17	6
Limited depth	16	6
No summer shade over/ beside pool	14	5
Closures/ breakdowns	13	5
Outdoor spaces/ facilities/ layout	12	4
Bad location (urupa)	9	3
Negative Dome issues	5	2
OK as is	13	5

VOLUNTARY COMMENTS ABOUT THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

Only 46 respondents provided voluntary comments about Thames Centennial Pool, with 9% commenting positively on the current pool, 8% wanting more provision for children and 7% stating aquatic provision is important to the community.

IMPROVED AQUATIC/POOL FACILITIES IN THAMES

All survey respondents (including non-pool users) were asked if they would like to see improved pool facilities in Thames, with 90% of respondents stating they would like improved aquatic provision, noting:

- Highest support (97%) was amongst Thames Pool Users
- All Pool Users (94%) positive support
- Also, relatively high (73%) among the respondents who didn't use any pools, suggesting a wider community support level

IMPROVED PROVISION	ALL SURVEY	THAMES POOL USERS	ALL POOL USERS	NON-POOL USERS
Yes	90	97	94	73
No	10	3	6	27
	(n=475)	(n=331)	(n=379)	(n=92)

Overall, there were 48 respondents across the whole survey who did not want to see improved pool facilities. They were asked to choose their main reasons for why not from a list of options provided (multiple reasons could be indicated). Respondents were then asked to list their number one reason which is summarised in descending order below. The main concerns were with costs, potential impact of sea level rise and those not benefiting as they don't live close to Thames.

NUMBER ONE REASON FOR NOT SUPPORTING SPORT FACILITIES	COUNT	%
Cost to ratepayers	10	24
Proposed location threatened by sea level rise	9	22
Non-Thames residents don't benefit	8	20
Wouldn't use it/ live far away	5	12
Current facility OK	4	10
Spend on other needs	3	7
Spend on other recreation facilities	2	5
Don't do aquatic activities	2	5
Wasted spend	2	5
Like outdoor pools	1	2
Proposed location is less convenient	1	2
		(n=41)

IMPORTANCE OF NEW FACILITY FEATURES

Respondents wanting improved pool provision (n=427) were asked to rate the importance of listed possible activities and features in aquatic provision with the percentages listed using the following rating scale:

- Not Important - 1
- Low importance – 2
- Average importance – 3
- High importance – 4
- Essential - 5

The percentage high collates those rated essential and high importance.

ACTIVITIES	1	2	3	4	5	N	% HIGH	SCORE
Personal fitness swimming	1	6	16	37	40	390	77	4.09
Learning to swim	9	7	6	25	52	388	78	4.05
Playing around	4	9	21	32	33	397	65	3.80
Soaking or relaxing	4	6	29	33	28	385	61	3.74
Water-sports	10	13	19	26	32	389	58	3.57
Socialising	6	15	30	29	21	387	50	3.44

FACILITIES	1	2	3	4	5	N	% HIGH	SCORE
Learn to swim pool	5	5	11	31	48	389	79	4.11
Lap pool	3	6	17	31	44	395	74	4.07
Shallow pool	6	7	12	31	45	391	76	4.02
Indoor pools	3	4	19	36	38	393	74	4.01
Outdoor areas	3	6	23	37	31	389	68	3.86
Outdoor pools	3	8	25	35	29	391	64	3.80
Hydrotherapy pool	8	14	30	29	20	384	49	3.40
Deeper pool for bombing	9	17	28	23	23	384	46	3.34
Splash-pad	9	17	29	28	17	383	45	3.26
Spa Pool	11	19	28	21	20	384	41	3.18
Indoor function area	9	21	33	20	17	383	36	3.14

There were 46 'Other activity' responses suggested which include:

- Changing room/ toilet improvements 8
- Deep-water sport facilities (dive/polo) 5
- Hydrolides 4
- Disability access 4

TRANSPORT TO POOL FACILITIES

Respondents were asked how they would prefer to travel to any new aquatic facility. Respondents could tick multiple options

	COUNT	%
Car	264	76
Walking/ running	145	42
Cycle	125	36
Bus	35	10
Other	8	2
		(n=347)

NEW FACILITY SITING – PRIORITY FACTORS

Respondents wanting improved pool provision were asked to confirm their preference around facility siting priorities:

“There are a range of factors to consider in locating a new facility, please select ONE statement which you think is most important.”

The table outlines the results and includes the sport response for comparison. The majority in both surveys favoured the **best quality site** over the most accessible or cheapest site. However, the difference between best and accessible site for aquatic provision was much closer.

PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE FACILITY LOCATION	SPORT FACILITY COUNT	%	POOL FACILITY COUNT	%
Located on the <u>BEST</u> quality site for a facility	242	64	155	51
Located on the site that is most <u>ACCESSIBLE</u> to Thames	133	35	139	46
Located on the <u>CHEAPEST</u> development site	6	2	10	3
		n=381		n=304

FINAL VOLUNTARY COMMENTS

At the end of the survey, all respondents were able to provide any voluntary comments about future aquatic provision, of which 79 responded. Percentages are provided on the total sample wanting improved aquatic facilities. Appendix A includes the raw responses which are coded and summarised in the table below.

VOLUNTARY COMMENTS	COUNT	%	%
Sited in flood/ sea level free area	12	17	2%
Access for all/ all abilities, ages etc	10	14	2%
Thames needs an improved facility	10	14	2%
More activity-facility types	9	13	2%
Regional level facility	8	12	1.5%
Other Town pool need	8	12	1.5%
Sited centrally/ convenient	7	10	1.5%
Specific facility request	7	10	1.5%
Appropriate scale/ content	6	9	1%
Development cost concerns	5	7	1%
Site suggestions	5	7	1%
Other	42	61	
		(n=79)	(n=475)

Other miscellaneous comment themes were each stated by under 5 respondents, and included:

- Pool facility is essential;
- Better parking;
- Site suggestion;
- Needs to be part of a wider hub;
- Better heating;
- Retain at least what is offered now;
- OK as is, just improve;
- Need covered pool;
- Better hours/ availability;
- Bigger pool /50m;

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

From the engagement, the following findings have been identified:

- **Strong support** – for improved aquatic provision with 90% of respondents supporting and high support from aquatic stakeholders. There is even strong support from non-pool users which indicates broad community support.
- **Outdoor / cold experience** is a key reason for not liking the current aquatic experience in Thames. While the hardy users continue to use the pool during winter because they value aquatic participation, almost all would prefer warmer provision
- **Indoor provision** - there is clear support for indoor aquatic provision available all year round and provides warmer experiences.
- **Clear support for basic aquatic provision** to support:
 - Learning to swim for children and adults;
 - Personal swimming to improve fitness, health and well-being;
 - Casual playing around in water, including shallow water for young children.
- Support for but a lower priority for sub-regional aquatic features such as:
 - Facilities greater aquatic sport use – although there is clear support from aquatic sport users.
 - Spa and hydrotherapy pools – although there was clear support on the need from older stakeholders
 - Other features like water play features, indoor or outdoor function spaces.
- **Location is critical.** Finding a site that is accessible and the best site will be important, which is also free from flooding risk.
- **Accessibility and affordability** is important.



9.0 NEEDS ANALYSIS

This section brings together the findings outlined in the previous sections, supported by other relevant information to consider the future aquatic facility needs.

9.1 DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

The development drivers for improved aquatic provision have already been well established based on the extension work completed over the last decade into aquatic provision in the Thames / Eastern Waikato sub-region.

DRIVER 1: IMPENDING CLOSURE OF THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

The Thames Centennial Pool is located on an urupa (burial ground) and under the agreement between Ngāti Maru and Thames-Coromandel District Council, it has been agreed the facility will be relocated by 2027 and the land returned to Ngāti Maru.

At 50 years old the Thames Centennial Pool is reaching the end of its useful life and investment would have been needed to address its condition in the very near future.

DRIVER 2: GAP IN PROVISION OF ALL-YEAR AQUATIC PROVISION

The Waikato Regional Aquatic Plan 2017 (supported by other investigation work) confirms a gap in the provision of all-year provision in the Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts. The Plan recommends additional 987m² of pool area to serve both districts developed through a partnership approach with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.

THE KEY QUESTION FOR RESOLUTION:

Purpose of the facility – should aquatic provision be developed to service the entire sub-region and developed in partnership with Hauraki District Council (population circa 50,000) which would be consistent with the regional strategy OR should aquatic provision be focused on servicing a smaller catchment of approximately 15-20 minutes (population circa \$15,000). This would impact both the scale and cost of the facility.

9.2 SUB-REGIONAL VS LOCAL PROVISION

A key question which has arisen in this needs assessment is determining the purpose of the facility to serve either a local or sub-regional catchment. The Waikato Regional Aquatic Facility Plan (2017) provides the following descriptions for sub-regional and local facilities:

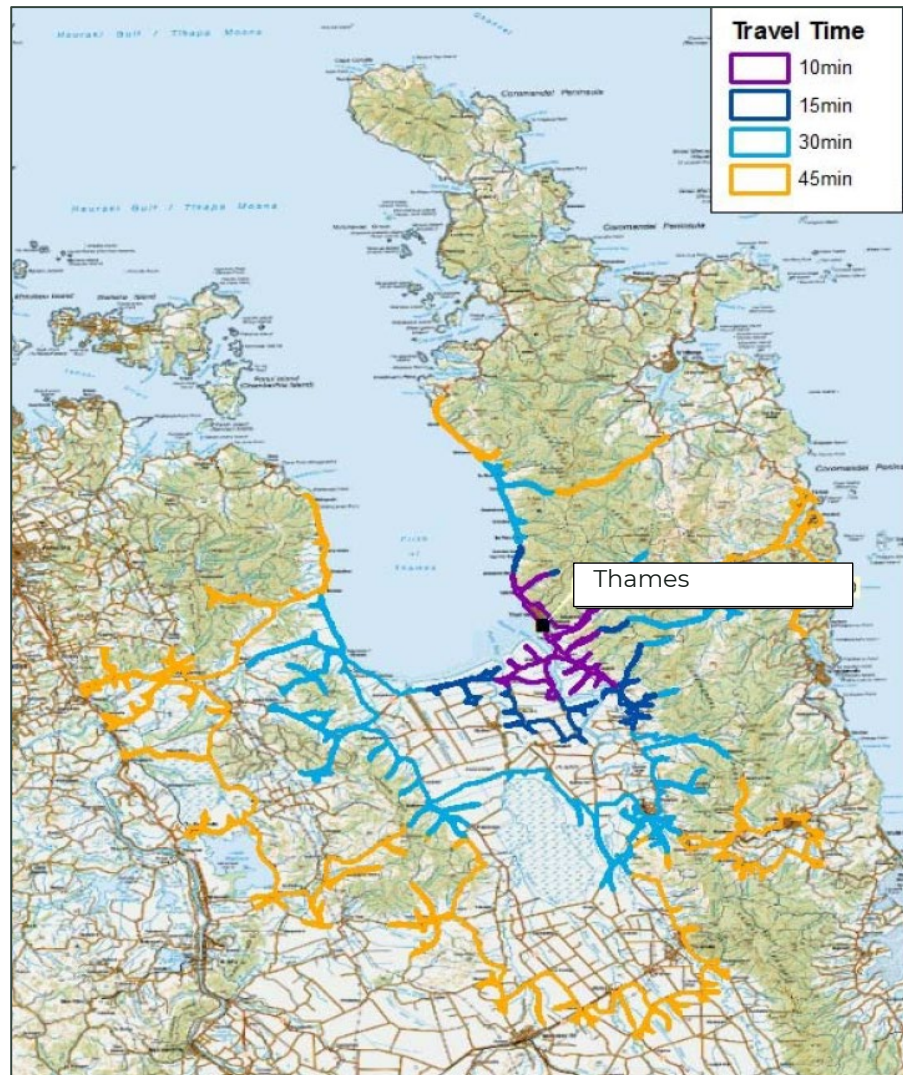
LOCAL FACILITY	SUB-REGIONAL FACILITY
A facility with the ability to serve a local catchment's basic sporting needs. this catchment will predominantly be drawn from within a single territorial authority.	A facility with the ability to draw significant numbers of teams/competitors from across adjacent boundaries for competition or training.
Indoor or outdoor pool with learn to swim, lane swimming, casual access and some aquatic sport training. Limited leisure features eg splashpad.	Year round indoor heated pools with learn to swim, lane swimming, therapy / rehabilitation, relaxation spa and some aquatic sport training. Leisure features including limited leisure/play apparatus.
Drive time 20 minutes	Drive time 30 minutes

Figure 9.1 outlines potential catchment areas for a facility located in Thames showing both the local and wider sub-regional catchment. The Waikato Regional Aquatic Facility Plan also outlines the provision metric is 35 people per square metre of indoor water space. Table 9.1 compares the level of provision for sub-regional versus local facilities.

TABLE 9.1 ASSESSMENT OF AQUATIC PROVISION – LOCAL & SUB-REGIONAL

	LOCAL	SUB-REGIONAL
2018 population	14,616	49,917
Aquatic provision – 35/m²	418m ²	1,426m ²
2048 forecast population	15,210	54,600
Aquatic provision – 35/m²	435m ²	1,560m ²

FIGURE 9.1 POTENTIAL CATCHMENT AREA OF A POOL IN THAMES



SUB-REGIONAL VERSUS LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The clear direction of the Waikato Regional Aquatic Facility Plan is developing the larger sub-regional, working in partnership with Hauraki District Council. While discussions have commenced with Hauraki District Council, further analysis is required, particularly around the potential location, scope/scale/cost of a sub-regional aquatic facility which needs to be confirmed before this decision can be made.

Of relevance to this consideration, is the clear driver that the Thames Centennial Pool must be replaced, and Thames Coromandel District Council has already committed funding towards its development. While it can be tested in the feasibility, it is well known one larger quality/fit-for-purpose aquatic facility will be more cost-effective compared with two small aquatic facilities, both in terms of capital and operational costs. On this basis then the most economic option is likely to be the sub-regional facility.

Another factor is the role that Thames Centennial Pool is already performing a sub-regional facility, with evidence of 60% of visits come from Thames town while 40% of visits come from the wider catchment. There is evidence of people car-pooling and traveling from Ngatea, Tairua, Paeroa and further afield to use Thames Centennial Pool on a regular basis.

It is recommended the feasibility study undertakes:

- Broad location assessment (including sites outside of Thames) to determine the most appropriate site to serve a sub-regional catchment, compared with the best site to serve the Thames local catchment.
- Assessment of facility scope and scale to serve a local catchment versus sub-regional catchment. This should include understanding the capital and operational costs.
- Financial and operational analysis to consider how costs can be shared in a sub-regional context or the premium (if any) of a localised provision.

This process requires further engagement with Hauraki District Council and sharing the outcomes in order for Hauraki to consider whether a partnership approach is viable.

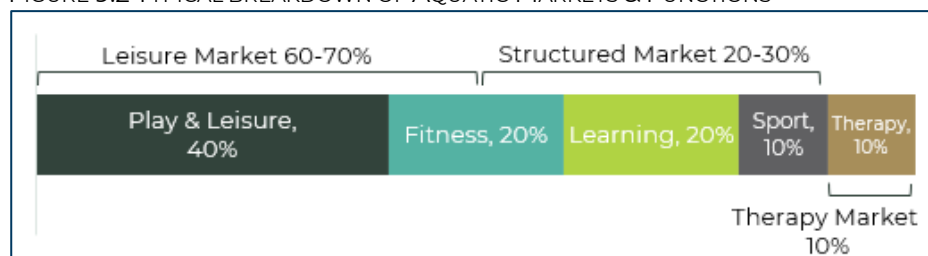
9.3 AQUATIC MARKETS

There are three distinct markets for aquatic facilities:

- Recreation and leisure market: (60-70% of users) usually made up of families, people coming with friends and groups for fun, fitness, and social activity.
- Structured market: (20-30% of users) usually made up of people attending facilities alone or in small groups for structured learning, fitness or aquatic sport training and competitions.
- Therapy market: (10% of users) usually made up of older adults and health groups, such as those with arthritis or mobility conditions.

Figure 9.2 provides a representation of the typical breakdown of aquatic users by aquatic functions. This breakdown will vary from facility to facility and region to region depending on provision and users.

FIGURE 9.2 TYPICAL BREAKDOWN OF AQUATIC MARKETS & FUNCTIONS



Research throughout New Zealand and overseas indicates the recreation and leisure will continue to be the largest aquatic market as it contains people of all ages, abilities, interests, gender, and ethnicity. Children in a household are typically strong drivers for using aquatic facilities but provision of aquatic leisure for all age-levels is important. Willingness to pay within this market tends to be higher in comparison to other user groups. The frequency of visits is generally lower but has a wide user base. This market will generate around 50% of the facility revenue, where the leisure provision is strong.

The structured market represent a group of important users of aquatic facilities. While these users visit frequently, it is not a large group. This group typically pays the lowest cost per visit as they take advantage of frequent visitor or membership payment options. Consequently, revenue

generated from the fitness and sport aspects of the structured market is lower compared to the capacity utilised.

The learning market is a strong market and generates strong revenue. A teaching pool is typically one of the most utilised and profitable pool tanks in an aquatic facility and has a high turn-over of children/people which contributes to both high visitation and revenue.

The therapy market is becoming increasingly important, with more people with mobility issues and a growing population of older people seeking low-impact health and wellness opportunities. While typically not a high revenue generator, this user group typically want to use the facility in off-peak periods, which is beneficial for public aquatic facilities.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THAMES PROVISION?

In considering the future of aquatic provision in Thames, it is important to ensure the facility is sized and provides the appropriate aquatic functions for the local catchment population.

If the facility is focused at the local level, then the core requirements of learning, fitness, play and some therapy elements like a spa are recommended given the demographic composition of the population.

Providing these functions should ensure the facility appeals to a wide cross-section of the community. Some play provision would be beneficial to attract children and families and attract a broader cross-section of the community. Similarly, providing warm water / spa should attract the growing older population.

However, if the wider sub-regional provision is considered then inclusion of a hydrotherapy/programme pool to meet the needs of the growing older population is a strong consideration. In addition, sizing the lap pool to accommodate sub-regional aquatic sports with 8-10 lane pool would be appropriate.

9.4 OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Almost all public aquatic facilities do not generate sufficient revenue to cover annual operating costs. To improve financial viability, the recommended best practice is to:

- Provide programmes to increase utilisation during off-peak periods.
- Consider cost saving opportunities to reduce energy consumption.
- Provide a strong learn to swim programme.
- Provide health and fitness facilities which generally result in higher revenue for limited operating costs.
- Consider complementary revenue generating opportunities including spa, sauna, food, retail, childcare and meeting spaces.
- Develop facilities co-located with other community facilities to create social infrastructure hubs and drive cross-patronage.

When considering the development of a new or upgraded aquatic facility, the 2015 National Aquatic Facilities Guidelines identify the following best practice approaches:

- **Needs-driven** – ensure any development is supported by well researched markets, trends, and projections.
- **Long-term horizon** – planning for demand changes and utilising robust aquatic design and high-quality materials to provide longevity in the facility use and operations.
- **Flexibility** – ensure the layout, depths, temperatures, and equipment provide flexibility to accommodate a wide range of activities.
- **Revenue generating** – consider opportunities to generate revenue and increase revenue in off-peak periods from aquatic and ancillary or complementary services.
- **Operationally efficient** – ensure design and material selection provides for ease of operation, management, and maintenance.
- **External integration** with the outdoor environment and facility setting and consider partnership opportunities.
- **Optimal location** for market accessibility, exposure, visibility, transport connections and collocation with complementary offers.
- **Economically sustainable** – consider opportunities to optimise operating costs, improve revenue and leverage funding opportunities.

9.5 KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Recognising the development drivers and considering the feedback gained through this study, the following key success factors have been identified to inform future aquatic facility provision.

SUB-REGIONAL CONSIDERATION

Test as the first priority, the potential location, scope and scale of sub-regional provision compared against local provision. Engage with Hauraki District Council and complete financial analysis to inform this decision-making.

BEST AND MOST ACCESSIBLE LOCATION

Find the best and most accessible location for aquatic provision, whether local or sub-regional, which is not at risk of flooding.

INDOOR QUALITY PROVISION

Indoor all-year provision which provides opportunities for learn to swim, personal swimming, aquatic training, and casual play. If sub-regional provision is determined, then consideration of aquatic sport, hydrotherapy, and leisure provision.

DIVERSE COMMUNITY NEEDS

Reflecting on the aging population now and into the future ensure there is sufficient warm water provision to suit the needs of older people, and taking account of the needs of families, children, and youth.

COMPLEMENTARY

Ensure there is a range of complementary amenities to support high use of the aquatic facility.

AFFORDABILITY

The goal is delivering the most affordable development, both in terms of the capital cost to develop any facilities, the on-going affordability to maintain and operate any facilities and the cost for users to access aquatic opportunities.



10.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 CONCLUSIONS

This needs assessment has been undertaken to understand the requirement for improved aquatic provision facilities in Thames. The drivers for development have already been clearly established through over a decade of previous work.

DRIVER 1: IMPENDING CLOSURE OF THAMES CENTENNIAL POOL

The Thames Centennial Pool is located on an urupa (burial ground) and under the agreement between Ngāti Maru and Thames-Coromandel District Council, it has been agreed the facility will be relocated by 2027 and the land returned to Ngāti Maru. At 50 years old the Thames Centennial Pool is reaching the end of its useful life and investment would have been needed to address its condition in the very near future.

DRIVER 2: GAP IN PROVISION OF ALL-YEAR AQUATIC PROVISION

The Waikato Regional Aquatic Plan 2017 (supported by other investigation work) confirms under-supply of all-year aquatic provision in the Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts. The Plan recommends additional 987m² of pool area to serve both districts developed through a partnership approach with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.

KEY QUESTION: SUB-REGIONAL VERSUS LOCAL PROVISION

A key question identified in this needs assessment is resolving the purpose of the facility to serve either a local or sub-regional catchment. The Waikato Regional Aquatic Facility Plan provides clear direction to consider a facility to service the entire sub-region and developed in partnership with Hauraki District Council.

There is good evidence to support a sub-regional approach with Thames Centennial Pool already appearing to perform a sub-regional function with 60% of visits from Thames and 40% from a wider catchment.

However, a sub-regional approach suggests a partnership with Hauraki District Council to be effective. To enable Hauraki to consider this question, analysis of the location, scope and cost of potential sub-regional

aquatic facility is required to provide the robust information to inform both Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki's decision-making. It is recommended this work is undertaken in the feasibility study and is shared with Hauraki District Council to support their conclusion about a potential partnership.

INDOOR POOL

Regardless of whether the pool is sub-regional or local, there is a clear call for quality indoor aquatic provision for all-year access. The minimum scope to serve the local catchment, there is strong support to provide:

- Learn to swim for children and adults.
- Structured pool which provides for personal swimming (to provide for fitness, health, and well-being) and aquatic sport training.
- Casual play opportunities for families, children, and youth.

For a sub-regional facility, consideration of:

- More substantial provision for aquatic sport activities.
- Hydrotherapy options including a spa and/or hydrotherapy pool.
- Leisure features to ensure the facility provides for a wide cross-section of the community, recognising the current aquatic network has almost no leisure aquatic provision.

AGING POPULATION

As Thames and the sub-region is forecast to become increasingly older, it is important to include appropriate warm water and all-pool accessibility to cater for this age-group.

LOCATION IS CRITICAL

Finding a site that is accessible and the best site for an aquatic facility is critical, which is also free from flooding risk.

AFFORDABILITY

Given the socio-demographic make-up of the local and sub-regional catchment, the affordability of aquatic provision, in terms of the capital cost, the ongoing operational cost, the cost of entry and the cost of transport are all critical elements to the success of future aquatic provision.

10.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Thames Aquatic Facilities Needs Assessment recommends:

1. The Thames-Coromandel District Council endorse the key drivers for aquatic development are:
 - The Thames Centennial Pool is located on a urupa and the Council has agreed with Ngati Maru to relocate the facility by 2027 recognising the facility is coming to the end of its useful life at over 50 years old.
 - The Waikato Regional Aquatic Plan 2017 recommends development of sub-regional aquatic provision to serve Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki Districts developed through a partnership approach, with a focus on meeting the needs of an aging population.
2. While the needs assessment has found there is good evidence to support Thames being the location for a sub-regional aquatic facility, there needs to be further consideration and discussion with Hauraki District Council to determine in future aquatic provision in Thames should be scaled to serve a sub-regional or local catchment.
3. The next stage of the process, being the Thames Aquatic Facilities Feasibility Study should consider the location, scope, and cost of sub-regional versus local provision.
4. The feasibility study analysis should be shared with Hauraki District Council to help inform potential partnership discussions and the decisions regarding sub-regional aquatic provision.

5. Thames-Coromandel District Council adopts the following key success factors to inform the next stage of considerations in the feasibility study.

SUB-REGIONAL CONSIDERATION

Test as the first priority, the potential location, scope and scale of sub-regional provision compared against local provision. Engage with Hauraki District Council and complete financial analysis to inform this decision-making.

BEST AND MOST ACCESSIBLE LOCATION

Find the best and most accessible location for aquatic provision, whether local or sub-regional, which is not at risk of flooding.

INDOOR QUALITY PROVISION

Indoor all-year provision which provides opportunities for learn to swim, personal swimming, aquatic training, and casual play. If sub-regional provision is determined, then consideration of aquatic sport, hydrotherapy, and leisure provision.

DIVERSE COMMUNITY NEEDS

Reflecting on the aging population now and into the future ensure there is sufficient warm water provision to suit the needs of older people, and taking account of the needs of families, children, and youth.

COMPLEMENTARY

Ensure there is a range of complementary amenities to support high use of the aquatic facility.

AFFORDABILITY

The goal is delivering the most affordable development, both in terms of the capital cost to develop any facilities, the on-going affordability to maintain and operate any facilities and the cost for users to access aquatic opportunities.



APPENDIX

APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

THAMES POOL USERS – FINAL COMMENTS – RAW TEXT
A pool is essential for all age groups in any community so please make it an awesome facility for everyone to use and enjoy
Access for all is essential. Not just the able bodied. Sadly that is not even in the questionnaire. It is better to have a purpose built Aquatic Centre than a complete everything sports zone. It needs to be located where children and the disabled can independently access it.
Any future site must incorporate flood & sea level rise modelling in order to ensure long term viability (in line with NZ SeaRise data)
Consider parking, mobility access(obvious ones) landscaping against wind directions, perhaps indoor parking for mobility / disability users. Also consider an outdoor theatre, adjacent which might appeal to younger users and a skating rink. Could be ice skating in future. Things to give teenagers and university students reason to stay in Thames for fun.
Council should build this complex either in Totata Valley area, above flood Plains.
Don't do it on the cheap. If we are going to build something, build something significant and future proof it!
Even though I am past Learn to swim classes with children, I think it should be a high priority for a new pool .
Given the lack of good quality indoor aquatic facilities in the whole Coromandel & Thames Valley area, we should aim to fill this gap.
Good parking facilities would be helpful with plenty of parking. Also a sauna - steam and dry as in Porirua
having an aquatic park that is good enough and big enough for the entire area would be ideal, espically if it could be incorporated into all sporting facilities, say the old race course, all sports could be played there as well as an aquatic center, creating a sporting hub for all sports, an event center, outdoor sports ground and aquatic center that can be utilized all year long, issues with current sports clubs is they cost lots to upkeep and are only utilized for only several months of the year, being smart on how sport facilities & aquatic centers can be used all year long using the ability to cross pollinate between codes, equipment and events has to be good for all.
How about using Danby Field. Buy it from the high school as it's virtually unused. Use part for a pool and parking. Subdivide the rest and sell as housing sections "on the flat within walking distance to town". These are the rarest type of section in town! Sale of sections could help to finance the land purchase.
I support my disabled adult swimming it is an important activity for his well being
I would like the current pool kept as long as possible while any new pool is being built. In my experience, once a pool is closed, nothing takes its place and for Thames people, this will mean Ngatea us closest.
If I said that I was sad because the centennial pool is located on urupa it would be an understatement. It is a gross miscarriage of justice. I swim there as my mobility is limited, and swimming in the firth is tidal and I cannot regularly use the sea. Moving the pool to a well researched more suitable site is appropriate. This pool is not accessible for local iwi because they will not swim there. Accessibility includes all members of our community. It would be my expectation that someone takes the time to research the cultural context of the placement of the new pool. Our community deserves an accessible (I don't just mean in terms of distance) pool on a well researched site, that all whanau can enjoy.
If you want an aquatic centre then get sponsorship outside ratepayers
I'm not fussed about whether they're improved or not but please just relocate it. It's been known that it's an unacceptable location for so long
Is Danby field unfit for a pool complex? It has been unfit for use since day 1, but could it be fixed for use?? Cost?
It is essential that we have a facility like this in the area
It is very very important that a swimming facility exists at all times for Thames
It must be appealing to tourists and families. A quality Cafe would be great as well on site.
It needs to be walkable from Thames for Thames South school kids, or at least a bus running out there

THAMES POOL USERS – FINAL COMMENTS – RAW TEXT

It needs to ensure that all ages are taken into access for the pool I am noting our elderly population Ensuring that there is disabled parking there is a 1 route and a place for scooters

It would also be useful to have a hydro slide to attract locals and visitors to the pool. People staying north of Thames don't have anywhere to go on wet raining days (which do happen). They could come over spend the day at the pool stopping to get something to eat in town before travelling back over the hill. It would be great for birthday parties and gatherings too.

It's a great community facility for a small town. Our family understand the consideration for a regional facility, including Hauraki...but we do love the pool as it is, if it were in another location.

Land earmarked for the aquatic centre is in a flood zone. Even though the thames race course is in a flood zone also it lends itself to a multi sports facility

Let's have an incredible facility that brings people to Thames to enjoy the pools and to spend money in our town. Too many families with kids have to go out of town for fun family activities. Especially in winter.

Many of these questions have already been asked. Would be excellent to have progress!

Must be safe for children to get to facilities from Thames Township

My parents are looking at investing in a covered heated pool in Whitianga. You could work together to make this happen

Need to make it accessible for disabled, and for other people to travel from surrounding areas

Needs to be accessible by all

Needs to have the capacity for surrounding townships and decent changing facilities.

Negotiate to keep pool in same place

Obviously with cost involved of a new pool, it has to be somewhere not affected by flooding I guess

One big pool with plenty of options for kids and adults; play and learning would be awesome! The ones around here are all small and quickly 1y

Pool needs to be close to thames

Quality change room facilities.

Racecourse would be location, not too far away from town centre and raised from flooding. Or Dickson holiday park land. The land is TCDC owned already and safe from flooding. When developed in the 1870s it was a place for picnics and families to gather and swim in river. It is a beautiful location and would-be beautiful for a pool.

Sauna, steam room

Stop talking about it and get on with it. Borrow the funds, get stage one done. It will pay for itself if done well as it will draw outsiders to Thames who will spend cash. This is the last chance. Every time it gets discussed and not actioned dilutes the idea and creates distrust and therefore weakens support.

That it takes into consideration the cultural heritage of the proposed Totara site, moving the pool from an Urupa to a Battlezone where Maori remains lay makes no sense

The pool Thames has is very good. It has great facilities and the new play area for kids is fantastic. Dont throw that away. Add onto what you have

The TCDC area needs a good swimming facility. It should be in Thames because it would be more financially viable. It would attract people and competition swimmers.

There is no indoor pool around us so I would be happy even if it is little bit further away from Thames

Think of teenagers please. A Manu pool, a diving platform, a hangout area, pool movie nights, decently large obstacle blow up structures during holidays. And please BE OPEN on weekends and holidays

This is 5 for Thames, we need a place we can take our kids to learn to swim but also to learn to play and love the water all year round

Utilize the Thames Race Course area.

THAMES POOL USERS – FINAL COMMENTS – RAW TEXT

We need an Olympic size pool (50m) which will be great for training (my son was a competitive swimmer) and attract tourists. Please make sure there is decent parking and EV chargers too.

When deciding where to put such a facility, climate change and coastal inundation must be deciding factors. It is a poor use of resources to put any new facility on areas that will be under water in the next few years.

Whitianga is expanding rapidly - the Eastern seaboard should be represented with similar opportunities

Why are we waiting for yet another generation to grow up and leave Thames for a new aquatic facility to be built. Some vocal minority discussion around sea level rises - this is going to happen, but it may take 50-100 years to have any impact on Thames. A pool facility will last for 50 years - better to build a pool facility now in a good location, knowing that in the long term future it may in-undated with rising water levels.

Would be great to have up to date swimming pool and slides for kids and a fun area

you are never going to please everyone, we all have to travel for sport/training these days and that's it

A pool should be in the heart of Thames town and accessible to everyone for swimming, exercising , learning how to swim. All fancy aqua games are too expensive for a small community like Coromandel peninsula and will not be used by the Thames or around community. This style of Centre should be reserved for big city like Hamilton, Tauranga etc€, I swim several days per weeks at the Thames pool, the location is great, the pool is clean and warm and the staff is very welcome and kind, so very happy with this pool.

An outdoor heated pool would be great. With Miranda closed there would be a gap in the market for this. Over winter we would drive from Thames to Miranda at least once every 2 weeks after work.

As previously stated...My concern is the proposed site is low lying and, given climate change and sea level rise, is a poor option in the medium term.

Concentrate your efforts on adapting to Thames' known flood risk which is going to cost hundred's of \$millions rather than this harebrained pool idea

Dear god please just make it better. Swimming is my favourite form of exercise and I can't do it here!

Have them as accessible as possible for a broad range of people. If you plan on charging a fee, have flexible rates. make in inclusive whatever incomes are.

I hear there are big expensive issues coming at Thames with sea flooding. Please concentrate on this not some vanity pool idea

I used Graham Condon swimming pool in Christchurch, fantastic would love a similar complex in Thames

If the Thames facility needs replacing Thames ratepayers should pay for a similar local pool- I DO NOT SUPPORT A REGIONAL SWIM FACILITY

It won't just benefit Thames it'll benefit multiple districts with growing populations. Do it once and do it right. There's many excellent examples around NZ e.g Bay Wave Tauranga, AC Baths Taupo. Consider sustainability and environmental impacts.

It would be great to see how this can be a space that engages the whole family. Spaces for families and youth is really missing in Thames.

Like to see a pool in Tairua or Pauanui

Make it big enough for the district, from the start, or we will outgrow the facility

Mana Whenua must be leading this development as it will be on their land.

My children spent a number of years travelling to the Thames pool for squad training during winter because there is no winter training facility in Whitianga. I know for a fact that there was a large number of Hauraki residents using the pool as part of the training squads. What contributions will they be paying towards an aquatic facility upgrade if they do not pay rates in the area?

Nothing against Thames as such but would much rather see the facilities in Waihi improved.

Only a question - has the town not already purchased land for the relocation and development of the swimming complex? If this is so, why conduct this survey?

Please move the pool off the urupa to a site that will not flood in next 50 years due to climate chaos - it's going to be more extreme by than predicted !

Public transport is 5 to make it accessible for all. And also reasonable prices for families. e.g. less than \$5 / visit.

THAMES POOL USERS – FINAL COMMENTS – RAW TEXT

Should not be built in flood risk sea level rise area. Should be an appropriate size cost for Thames community. Should not be built just as a requirement for elite/ sport athletes
Should not burden Thames ratepayers.

The eastern seaboard - Whitianga specifically - needs a facility. 95kms to drive is just not practicable. You should be talking to the Lost Spring about utilising their water and building an indoor public facility on the School Road reserve. Something that will be usable for the very young and the elderly as well as providing a year round healthy activity for our youth.

The site chosen for development must cater for a combination of aquatic centre - playing fields - indoor facilities that would provide for netball & the like

there is a lack of deep water facilities in New Zealand. By providing a deep water pool you could attract the 3 predominant sports that require it to set up local clubs as well as attract training camps and competitions bringing visitors and money into the region.

There needs to be a minimum of an indoor pool. Those who have a disability or immune compromised, are not wanting or able to use the outdoor pool over winter

Where you are looking at putting it is a flood zone and below predicated sea level rise

Whitianga deserves a decent pool supported by TCDC. There is nowhere to swim year round and the pool is too cold for baby learn to swim classes. There is no provision for the ageing population. There is the potential for tapping into geothermal activity for heating... it defies belief that the Mercury Bay Community Pool is servicing the size and range of its community