



IN ZONE: The group advocating for a new school in the city's northeast. Standing from left: Rae Willis, North East Secondary Education committee chair Amanda Williams and Angela Wilson. Front: Elissa Smith and Kerri Rowlands.

Continuity of education big goal of group

EVERY HOME in greater Christchurch should have a primary and secondary school for which they are zoned, a city education lobby says.

The North East Secondary Education Committee (NESE) says school zones should be logically placed to enhance their communities and allow safe travel to school.

The committee, an arm of the Pariklands Residents' Association, is preparing a submission to the Ministry of Education's *Directions for Education Renewal in Greater Christchurch* document.

NESE was originally established to advocate for a new local secondary school in the fast-growing northeastern suburbs.

Spokeswoman Elissa Smith said the link between primary and secondary schools was a key component in the vision of lifelong learning.

"A network encompassing all education services from early childhood to tertiary education also builds stronger communities," she said.

Committee members had attended consultations at local schools and meetings where Education Minister

Hekia Parata had spoken. Several primary schools were already running in the northeast sector of the city," Mrs Smith said.

"Several of these are facing proposed closure or merger. From the community consultation meetings we understand that communities want answers from the Ministry on how the overall plan will provide better education for all children.

"We feel the education plan should include stronger direction for secondary education in north east Christchurch," Mrs Smith said.

Indications pointed to a continued high population of school-age children in the northeast, with its strong recreational focus and affordable housing.

"The population in the northeast is still high enough for a viable secondary school," she said.

"We support education being easily accessible through local schooling, active transport and with schools as community facilities.

"We are trying to be involved in education to bring our knowledge, passion and connection to this area."

In brief

Town Hall showdown

The city council looks headed for a showdown with Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee over its \$127.7 million plan to save the Christchurch Town Hall. The council voted unanimously to repair the 40-year-old building on the quake-damaged Avon riverbank.

However, Mr Brownlee believed the decision was made without all the relevant geotechnical information. He said further discussions were needed before any decision was made.

It was understood the town hall was highly compromised and left in a disastrous state, and preliminary information indicated the ground was in a "pretty bad condition".

Mr Brownlee wants to talk with the council and has not ruled out Cera overriding the council decision. A performing arts centre was in the central city rebuild plan.

Avondale bridge out of action until mid-year

The Avondale bridge will be closed to road traffic from mid-January for eight months for repairs and rebuild.

It is one of nine road bridges across the Avon River linking New Brighton Rd with Avondale Rd. A temporary shingle path is being built out into the river for heavy machinery access.

The bridge will be open to traffic during the path work but McConnell Dowell says stop/go traffic management will operate when material has to be lowered by crane over the side.

During works next year, pedestrians, people with buggies, mobility scooter riders and cyclists will still be able to cross by using a temporary pedestrian bridge.

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