

Neighbourhood Play System

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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The tamariki, staff and community of
 Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School.

Figure 1: Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School campus junior playground.



Executive Summary

The Sport Canterbury Play Unit has embarked on a new journey in its mahi to grow and strengthen play within the Waitaha Canterbury region, alongside Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa and ARUP, a sustainable development company, to define and develop our region's neighbourhoods through the context of play. This work is called the Neighbourhood Play System.

In 2023, Sport Canterbury completed three Neighbourhood Play System reports, including this one at Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School. The Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Neighbourhood Play System report provides a comprehensive analysis of the current state of play of the neighbourhood surrounding Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School and identifies opportunities for strengthening and enhancing play in the Hei Hei neighbourhood. Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa and Sport Canterbury believes that embedding play in neighbourhoods throughout the motu will support wellbeing, people and places, and therefore, well-connected communities within the neighbourhood.

A Neighbourhood Play System project involves an in-depth analysis of the current state and quality of play opportunities at the neighbourhood level, within an 800m catchment area of a local school. To understand how the various school and urban systems impact the play experiences, particularly that of tamariki, the Sport Canterbury Play Unit and Healthy Active Learning team drew on their existing relationships with the school and its community, engaging in kōrero and consultation with neighbourhood partners.

The Neighbourhood Play System is a truly locally led approach to play and urban design. It places the key stakeholder – the tamariki – at the centre of the design process. Providing tamariki with the opportunity to share their voice and have us listen to what they were identifying as enablers, barriers, and opportunities for play within their school and neighbourhood was critical to this project. The Neighbourhood Play System also recognises the importance of gathering the voice of the community who live within this neighbourhood, as play is not just for tamariki.

Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School was identified for a Neighbourhood Play System project based on its existing positive relationship with Sport Canterbury through the Healthy Active Learning initiative. Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School, part of the Healthy Active Learning Phase One rollout in Waitaha Canterbury, has benefitted hugely from the initiative. Hei Hei and Hornby have also been identified by Christchurch City Council, through the Local Play Advocate and Parks and Transport team as areas needing prioritisation, support and investment for play.

Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School is a Years 1–6 primary school nestled in the suburb of Hei Hei within the city of Ōtautahi Christchurch. As at November 2022, the school roll is 207 students and shows that 22% of tamariki identify as Māori, with the rest identifying European/Pākehā, Asian, and Pacific students. The school is proud to have such diversity in their school roll and celebrates this on a regular basis. When speaking with the staff at the school, there is a real sense that as a school they strive to make every single student and their whānau welcome, safe and at home when they enrol at Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School.

Play opportunities

Within school gates, a variety of play opportunities are on offer to tamariki, both within and outside curriculum time, to cater to the needs of their three different learning hubs:

- Te Ara Whakatau – Years 1–2
- Te Ara Takitini – Years 3–5
- Te Ara Angitu – Years 5–6.

“ We don't stop kids from exploring and engaging in play at Gilberthorpe. If you want to climb a tree, climb a tree. ”

Teacher



Play is valued significantly at Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School, during and after school hours. The school is fortunate to have a number of play champions who work together to encourage participation and encourage tamariki to give things a go. Play is also one of the school's four values. The Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Fish! Philosophy values says, "We also value having fun when at Ara Tū Whakatā Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School. Fun with our classmates, with our teachers, and our whole community."

However, outside the school gates tells a different story, with the opportunities for play effectively stopping when tamariki leave the school grounds. The rapid growth and development of west and south Christchurch has seen Hornby, and subsequently Hei Hei, transformed into areas for motor and heavy vehicles to use at high speeds, resulting in significant challenges and barriers for play, and access to play, for this neighbourhood.

Through kōrero and consultation with tamariki, whānau, and community partners, there is a sense that the people, especially the tamariki, of Hei Hei have been forgotten about. There was little sense of connection or place when speaking to tamariki about their neighbourhood environment. Many were unable to identify play spaces, play opportunities, or green spaces within the neighbourhood, and very few students used active transport methods to get to and from school.

There are a total of eight play and green spaces within an 800m walking radius of the school, yet through our kōrero and consultation with tamariki, none of them could name these parks, nor did they identify these spaces as areas they play at, or had played at, when we asked them how and where they liked to play.

With the neighbourhood becoming more and more car-centric, and further roading developments happening, the utilisation of these spaces and access to play opportunities has reduced significantly. There is great concern from teachers and whānau about the lack of play at a community level in Hei Hei.

Recognising tamariki

This Neighbourhood Play System report recognises tamariki as valued members of society in their school, their community and Aotearoa New Zealand. By taking this approach throughout this project and in our engagement with tamariki, we were able to create relationships built on trust, and from this we could gain insight into what would improve play in Hei Hei.

From these insights and evaluation, we have developed a range of short-, medium-, and long-term opportunities to support and grow play at a community level in Hei Hei. These opportunities were developed in line with the local Hornby Board community vision and the Christchurch City Council Long Term Plan, linking opportunities to framework streams, which ensures they align at both a community and council strategic level. Being able to turn these opportunities into action will require partnership and collaboration between the school, local play champions, local community board members, local play champions, local community board members, community stakeholders, Christchurch City Council and Sport Canterbury. These partners will also need to commit to continuing to value tamariki voice, otherwise, 10 years from now, this community may find itself in the same position as now.

Introduction

Kaupapa/Purpose

The Neighbourhood Play System model has been developed to explore a more sustainable approach to developing and managing a local play system. The model has been developed to reflect the understanding that play is not confined to defined areas, and encompasses a wide community system, including driveways, streets, parks and alleys.

While the model is not intended to be a step-by-step guide, it explains the many steps that need to take place to support the governance, funding, technical design, and monitoring of child-friendly urban environments.

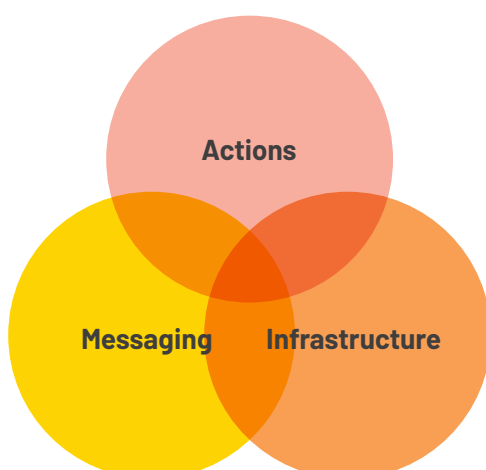
Improving the quality of, and access to, play systems on a local scale, facilitated through the development of an integrated play strategy, will encourage all tamariki to develop a love of play and being physically active.

The model seeks to fill some of our knowledge gaps around the planning, design and delivery of informal play systems, to facilitate the activation of places and communities, and deliver positive play outcomes.

The model will operate in tandem with activation plans, opportunities, and a kaupapa Māori play model to ensure a holistic approach is taken that reflects and responds to Aotearoa New Zealand's unique cultural, social, and environmental context.

This Neighbourhood Play System report highlights some of the key issues, and sets out the current play context at a city, neighbourhood, and school level within, and surrounding, Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School. It proposes a set of recommendations that can be implemented by enablers of play through integrated actions, messaging, and infrastructure, which promotes play and independent active mobility of tamariki (Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: The three key elements of work which will sustainably grow play – Sport NZ.



Actions

Actions are short-term activations, programmes, projects, and events, which drive action. These are often at low to no cost, are temporary, and may include Play Streets or the activation of school and community play spaces.

Messaging

Messaging is about how we shape systems, communities, and places for play. This involves council documents, perceptions, and the ongoing impacts and/or context of spaces. We try to develop case studies of, and learn from, locally led approaches into policies, strategies, and plans.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is about the transformation of our public spaces to create playable communities. This recognises the value that play has in the lives of tamariki and whānau, and how we think about and design urban environments to be 'child-friendly'. For example, to address road safety concerns, infrastructure could include installing safe pedestrian crossings with messaging (policies) aimed at reducing vehicle speed in the area. The actions would be to educate tamariki and the community about road safety and the benefits of active and independent mobility for play.

The significance of play

What is play?

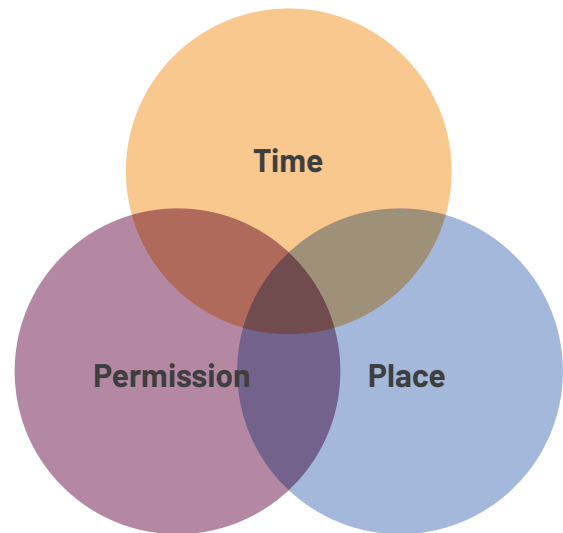
Play is spontaneous, intrinsically motivated, and self-directed. It is freely chosen with no predetermined outcome, fun, accessible, challenging, social, and repeatable. It is usually highly active with elements of challenge and risk that test boundaries in an imaginative way.

Play allows tamariki the space to practice, learn, and develop the skills they need to be active for life. including fundamental movement skills, self-directed creativity and innovation, social and emotional connections, resilience, independence, leadership, and informed risk taking.

The right to play

Children have the right to play, and this right is encapsulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 31: “That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.”

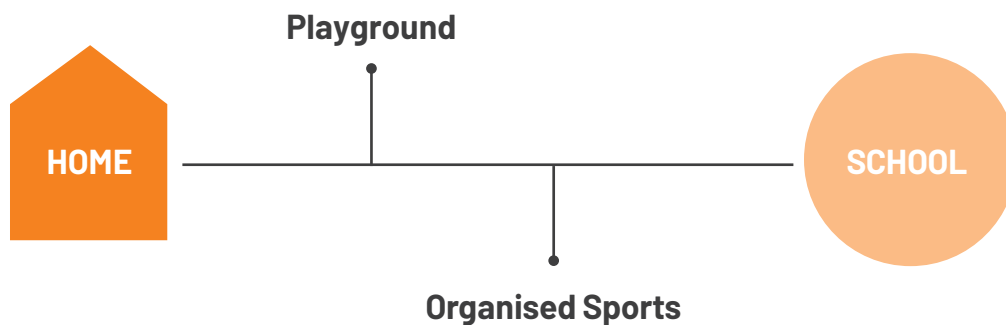
Figure 3: Time, space, permission – Sport NZ.



Play is under threat

The playful upbringing enjoyed by previous generations is no longer as accessible to many tamariki due to changing social, environmental, technological, and economic pressures. Young people need the time, space, and permission to play. But, with increasingly structured lives and reduced free time, the loss of traditional play spaces – such as streets and driveways – heightened fears around safety and risk, and a loss of societal connections means play deprivation is increasingly becoming a national and international concern. Play spaces and play locations have become car-centric destinations, which whānau need to drive tamariki to for play to occur (see Figure 4 below). For too many tamariki, however, access to these play spaces and play locations is determined by systemic barriers such as income and postcode.

Figure 4: Car-centric play system.



The neighbourhood footprint

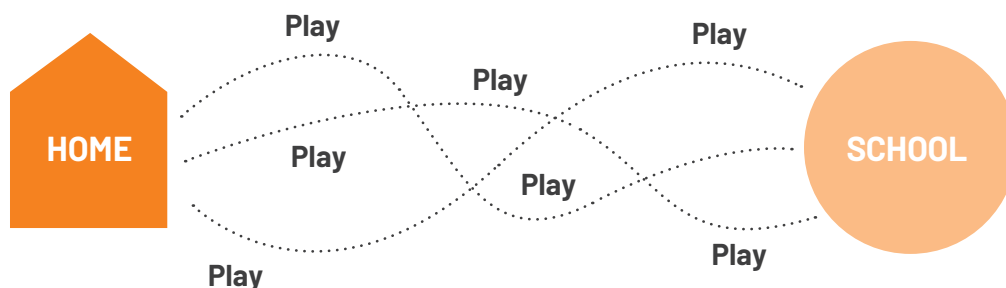
Tamariki and whānau need safe and clean streets, access to green spaces, clean air, things to do, the ability to get around, the freedom to see friends, and somewhere to call home. Each neighbourhood across Ōtautahi Christchurch has the opportunity to build upon its own cultural, political, socio-economic, and environmental contexts to realise the benefits of play through child-friendly urban planning.

Schools are usually located at the heart of neighbourhoods and communities, but more and more often, school grounds are not publicly accessible after hours (with many schools fenced and gated), therefore dramatically decreasing play opportunities.

The neighbourhood footprint surrounding a school is important in creating a liveable and playful city for our tamariki and their whānau. As tamariki spend most of their time at home or at school, these two settings should be used as anchor points for play within the neighbourhood footprint.

Providing safe travel routes to enable independence and creating a network of opportunities to ‘play on the way’ and in every space available helps form the foundations of a truly child-friendly city.

Figure 5: Walkable play system – Sport NZ.



The Neighbourhood Play System approach

The Neighbourhood Play System provides a blueprint to identify key barriers and opportunities for tamariki to play in their school and surrounding neighbourhood. Key to this approach is to look through the eyes of tamariki and their whānau who live, work and play in that neighbourhood. This can only be achieved by taking the time to build relationships with these community members and being willing to listen to their voice.

The blueprint seeks to link with local plans and funding opportunities and considers how to embed play elements across school grounds, footpaths, streets, alleyways, green spaces, waterways, industrial zones, marae, churches and shops to promote play, every day.

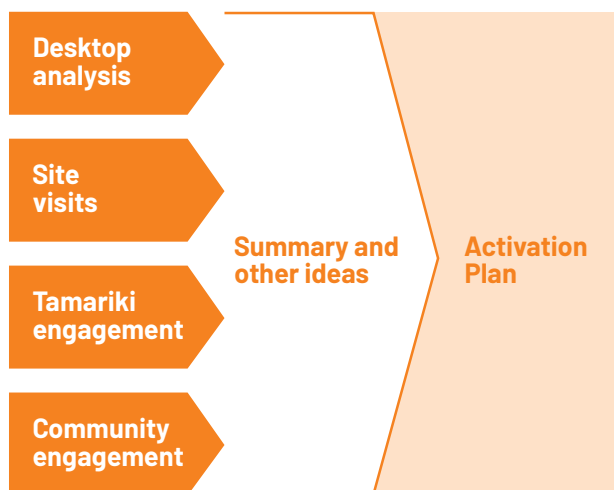


Figure 6: Neighbourhood Play System approach.



Desktop analysis

Sport Canterbury's Play and Active Recreation Coordinator, supported by Sport Canterbury's Regional Play Lead, Christchurch City Council's Local Play Advocate, and Ara Institute of Canterbury third-year intern students conducted a desktop analysis, involving data collection on spatial and supporting information, to paint a picture of the Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School catchment. Three levels of scale were investigated, including the school, neighbourhood and city.

School scale:

- student roll data
- available play assets
- before and after school care provision
- use of outside providers
- Education Review Office report.

Neighbourhood scale:

- Census data (for example, population demographics), crime data, and deprivation data).
- Transport routes (roads, bus routes, cycle paths, pedestrian access ways, pedestrian and/or raised crossings) and other transport information (speeds, crash data, and planned upgrades).
- Purpose-built play areas (parks, reserves, playgrounds) and their official purposes (for example, sports park) and information about what sports clubs lease and utilise the parks.
- Community facilities (including education providers, health, religious, and commercial providers) and their services.
- Soft infrastructure (such as toilets, seating, rubbish bins, and drinking fountains).
- Residential catchment for those living more than 500m from a local park or reserve.

City scale:

- city-wide strategies, policies, and plans
- Christchurch City Council Long Term Plan capital investment and operational renewals
- large-scale programmes, projects, and business cases
- political interest, development, and high-level stakeholders working in the area.

Site visits and observations

This involved a number of visits to the school before, during, and after school times, mainly during break times, to gain a sense of how students at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School liked to play on a day-to-day basis. We were able to gain insight into the kind of play students liked to engage with, whether they played in groups or by themselves more, what equipment was the most popular, and, overall, how play was promoted within the school. We observed the following during these visits:

- The condition and appearance of play spaces and play locations at the school (for example, playgrounds, equipment, and natural resources).
- Any physical barriers that might reduce tamariki access to play spaces and play locations.
- How tamariki liked or preferred to play (for example, with friends, individually, games, and risky play).
- How play was supported and encouraged at the school by kaiako and support staff.

Site visits within the 800m catchment were also conducted to assess the conditions of the natural and built environment. This included its accessibility, safety, opportunities for play, as well as potential barriers to play, and independent mobility for tamariki, their whānau and the neighbourhood. The following was observed during these visits:

- The condition and appearance of play spaces and facilities (for example, new equipment, broken equipment, and vandalised areas).
- Any physical barriers that might reduce tamariki access to play spaces and opportunities (for example, busy roads, difficulty using footpaths, high-speed areas, uneven pavement, high curbs, bollards, poor street lighting, cycleways or lack of, and vandalised areas).
- Amount of protection from environmental hazards (for example, shade and shelter, tree canopy, and places to rest).
- If there were any 'bumping zones' for tamariki and whānau to connect on their way to places.

Community engagement

It was vital to gather the voice of the community throughout this project, specifically around the concerns they have about the neighbourhood for tamariki, the barriers they face to play, and also their hopes and aspirations for making Hei Hei a playful neighbourhood. Community voice was gathered through the following methods:

- Whānau responses via the Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Travel Survey.
- Various face-to-face and online hui with community stakeholders and organisations (for example, EPIC Sports Project, local Early Childhood Centres).
- Wānanga with Kaimahi of Te Horomako o Te Huruheru Kōhanga Reo.

Surveys

The Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Travel Survey via Christchurch City Council Community Travel Advisors was carried out.

Tamariki engagement

In order to capture the voice of tamariki, it was important to establish relationships with them based on trust. Taking the time to undertake whakawhanaungatanga with tamariki provided a shared sense of connection and purpose, as well as creating a safe and trusted environment for the voices of our youngest stakeholders to be heard. This was essential to capture their perceptions about barriers and/or opportunities they experience in their school and neighbourhood. A workshop with the school's Physical Activity Leaders (PALs) was run, and the following questions were posed to the leaders:

- How and where do you like to play at school?
- How and where do you like to play when you're not at school?
- What stops you from playing more?
- Who helps you to play?
- What would a playful neighbourhood look like? Feel like? Sound like?

In this session, tamariki were provided with a range of tools and resources to support how they wanted to articulate their answer best, including pens, paper, Lego, playdough, and kōrero. The key considerations for this engagement included:

- Ensuring tamariki felt comfortable sharing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
- Ensuring all voices were heard and captured.
- Ensuring tamariki were informed of why they were being asked these questions and what kaupapa of mahi it was contributing to.



Current conditions

On a city-wide scale, the kaupapa of play in Ōtautahi Christchurch is driven predominantly by two key groups – Sport Canterbury and Christchurch City Council. Through a combination of plans, strategies, initiatives, projects and resources, Sport Canterbury and Christchurch City Council advocate for and deliver initiatives to support well people and places through play.

While Christchurch City Council doesn't currently have a play strategy of its own, it's committed to ensuring play is considered, advocated for, and invested in throughout the city through various initiatives, plans, and projects, such as the Long Term Plan 2021–31.

In early 2022, Christchurch City Council was also a part of the Local Play Workforce Project pilot by Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa, which saw Local Play Advocate roles placed in councils throughout the motu as part of a phased approach, with the intent of increasing and developing the dedicated workforce for play in Aotearoa. The establishment of the role in Christchurch City Council has allowed play to be considered and implemented on a greater scale and deeper level in community projects.



Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School and Hei Hei

Figure 7: Hornby Ward tree canopy covering - 6.51% (the lowest in the Christchurch region).

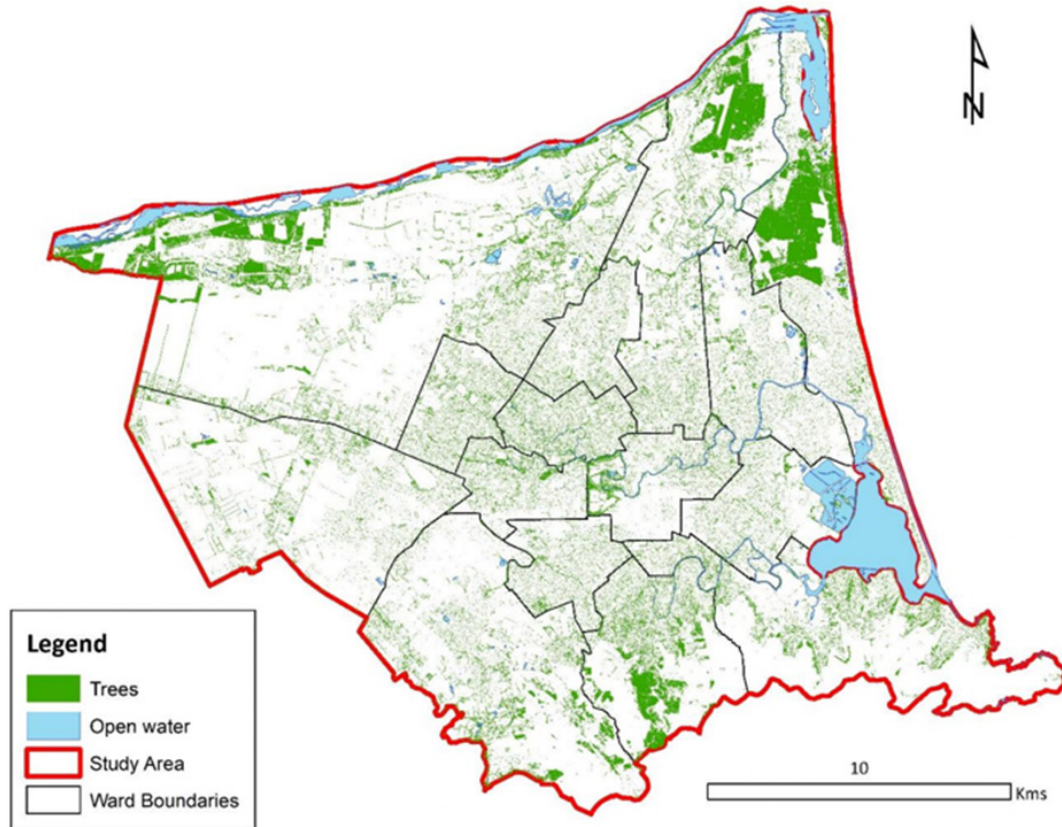


Figure 8: Tree Canopy Data 2.

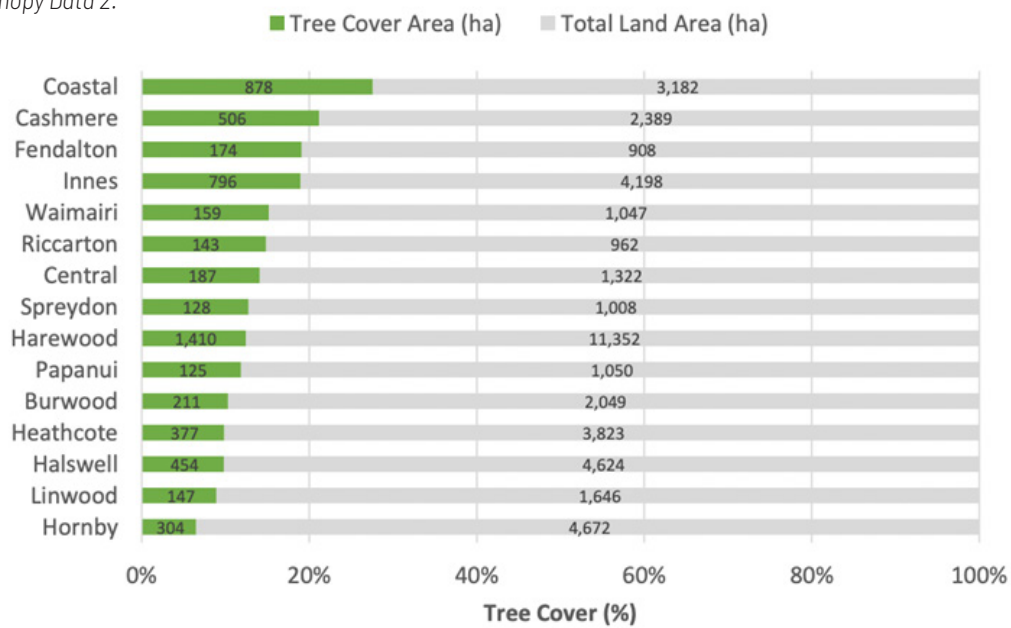


Figure 9: Hei Hei deprivation map.

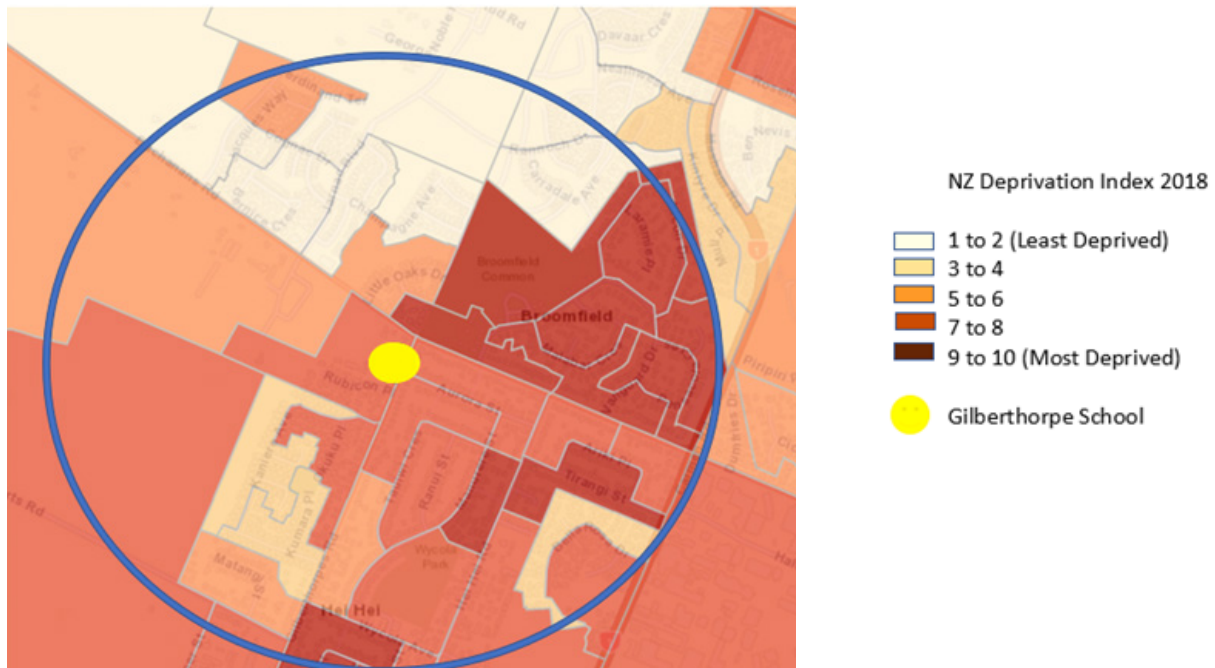


Figure 10: 800m diameter around Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School with recreation spaces.



Figure 11: Representation of commercial landscape in Hei Hei.

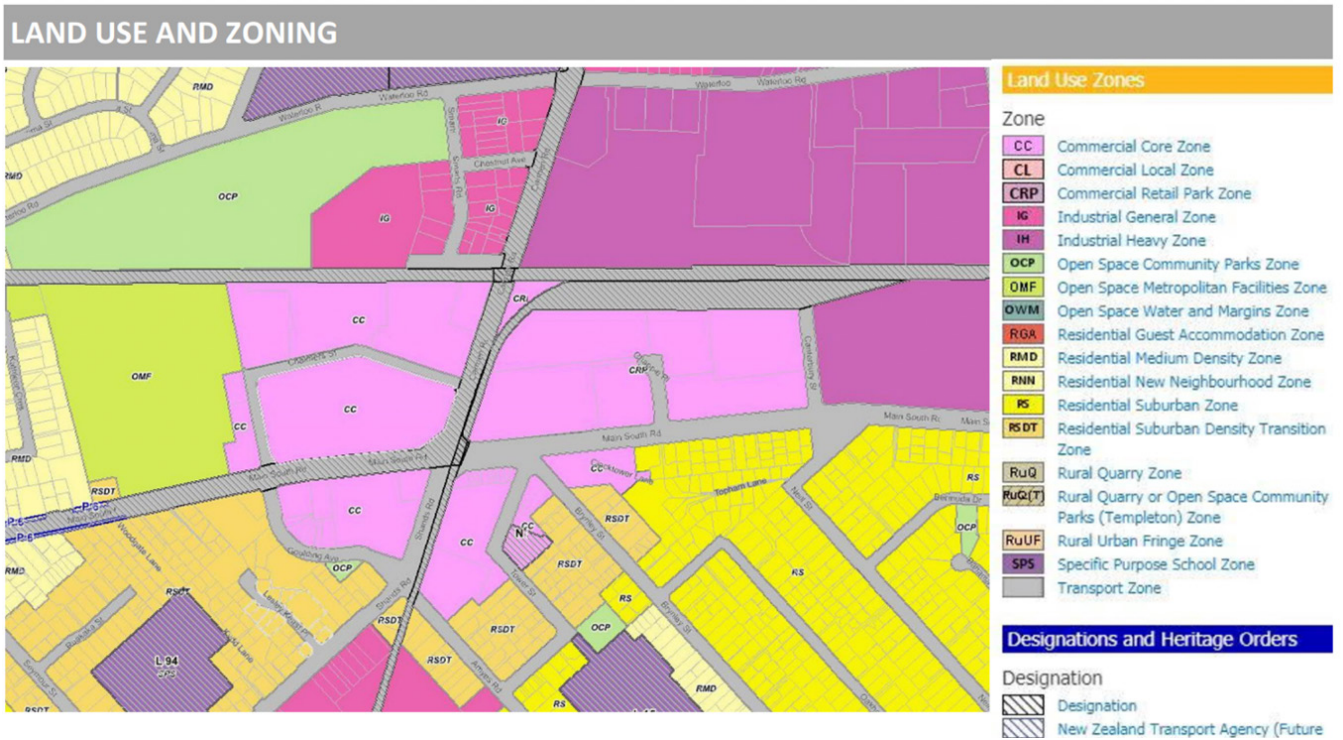
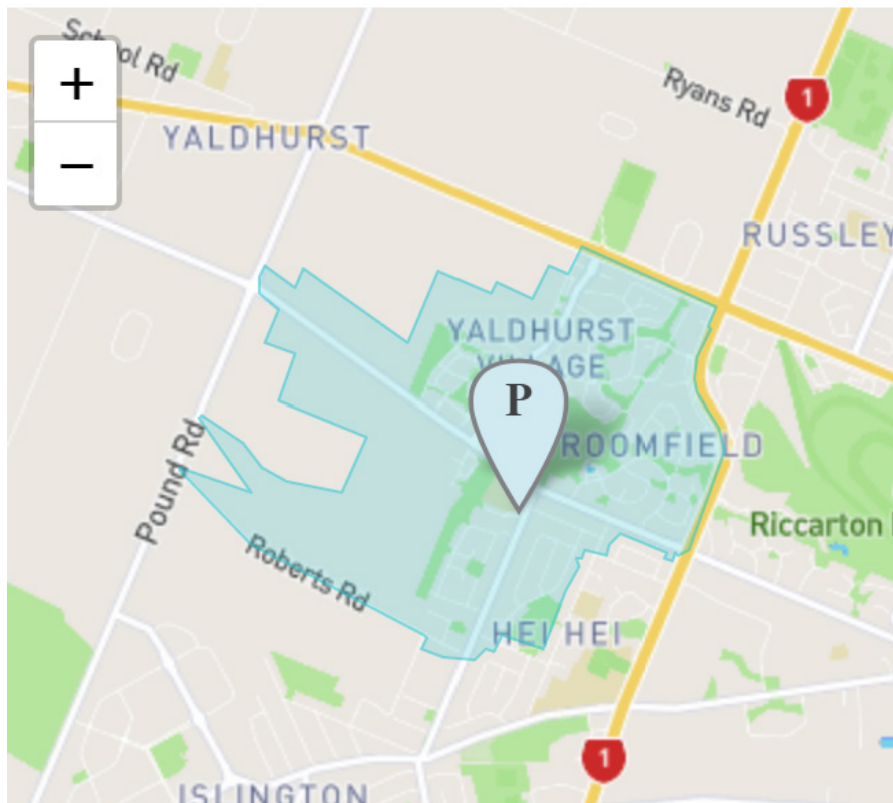


Figure 12: Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School zone.



History of Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School is situated adjacent to a site where Māori once rested on what was the banks of the Waimakariri River. In 1860, the Gilberthorpes, from Hull in England, purchased the site for farming. The original homestead was on the site where Te Puawaitanga ki Ōtautahi Trust is situated today. The school itself was constructed in 1956 and opened its doors for the first students in 1957. Te Taumutu Rūnanga named the school "Ara Tū Whakatā", a stopping place on the pathway for refreshment (Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School, 2023).

Spatial development

Hei Hei is a community in the Hornby Ward on the west side of Ōtautahi Christchurch and the part of the city that welcomes those entering Christchurch from the west and the south. At the centre of the ward is the main road junction of Main South Road, Carmen Road and Shands Road, where State Highway 1 does a sharp turn to link the northern corridors with the southern. Further across the ward to the north, State Highway 73, which leads to the west along Yaldhurst Road, forms much of the ward's northern boundary. The existence of the Wigram Aerodrome and industrial estates in Sockburn previously led to Hornby occasionally being considered a town. However, as adjacent suburbs have developed, along with the expansion of the commercial sector, that separation no longer exists. The development of areas between Hornby is also decreasing the separation of Templeton with the other parts of the ward (Christchurch City Council, 2022).

Hornby Ward is home to a number of large-scale facilities, such as Templeton Golf Course, Ruapuna Motorsport Park and the cycling velodrome at Denton Park. A new Hornby library, customer services, and recreation and sports centre called Matatiki: Hornby Centre is under construction at Kyle Park in Hornby for the growing southwest community.

Matatiki means spring of water in te reo Māori. The name expresses the importance of water as a source of life and wellbeing. It also reflects the unique landscape and history of Christchurch's southwest. Matatiki: Hornby Centre is located near the spring-fed headwaters of the Ōpāwaho Heathcote and Ōtākaro Avon Rivers. Historically, the waters were central to the way of life for Ngāi Tahu and an area of mahinga kai – an interconnected system that produces food and sustains life. The Hornby area also sits over deep gravel layers, which contain the underground aquifers that supply much of the city with fresh drinking water. The name Matatiki was gifted by Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Matapopore, and brings together aspects of the region's past, acknowledging the importance of the natural landscape for mana whenua, and the future benefits that the Matatiki: Hornby Centre will provide to the community as a

place of wellbeing and togetherness. Matatiki: Hornby Centre is due to open in late 2023 (Christchurch City Council, 2022).

According to 2018 Census data, the number of residents in Hei Hei has grown only slightly between 2006 and 2018. In 2006, there were 3,114 residents in Hei Hei, which increased to 3,471 in 2018. A population growth of 357 (11.5%) over a 12-year period, compared to the national growth of 16.8% in the same time period, places Hei Hei as one of the slower-developing neighbourhoods of Ōtautahi Christchurch.

Māori population in Hei Hei has seen a slightly higher increase in population over the same 12-year span, with a reported 390 people identifying as Māori in 2006, and 501 identifying as Māori in 2018, indicating an increase of 28.5%. There has been a significant increase in those identifying as Asian in the Hei Hei community, with an increase of 13.3% over the 12-year span.

The median age of the Hei Hei community is 34.4 years, and roughly 20% of the community are aged 15 years or under.

The percentage of te reo Māori speakers in Hei Hei is 3.4%, with 0.9% signing with New Zealand Sign Language, and 95.1% speaking English.

Hornby is fortunate to have a number of groups providing community development and support to the community, mainly in Hornby and Hei Hei. Co-located with Christchurch City Council's Hornby Library is Hornby Community Care Centre. The centre's coordinator facilitates monthly community worker meetings, which are well-patronised by local community organisations interested in the Hornby area. The Hornby Ward is also well served by organisations who work with young people. Community Development Network Trust and Hope Youth collaborate to provide the Hornby Youth Hangout. The Graham Dingle Foundation, Uru Manuka Trust, and Joshua Foundation also support young people in the area.

Te Puawaitanga ki Ōtautahi Trust is based out of the former Hornby Multicultural Centre facility in Gilberthorpes Road. The Trust is a kaupapa Māori provider of a range of health, education, and social services available for whānau, and delivered largely in homes. The Hornby Community Care Centre Trust and the Hornby Library share the same building in Goulding Ave. In addition to facilitating monthly connection meetings, the centre also provides an opportunity shop, as well as drop-in sessions for services. They have also employed a community activator to work with community organisations in the Hornby area. Two of the initiatives implemented to provide connections in the Hornby area are a quarterly newsletter and the successful Hello Hornby event. Hello Hornby, held in March each year, is run by a collaborative of organisations.

Demographics and statistics

Ethnicity

Ethnicity of Hei Hei residents	2006 %	2018 %
European	72.4	67.8
Māori	12.8	14.4
Pacific peoples	6.7	9.6
Asian	4.9	18.2
Middle Eastern / Latin American / African	0.9	1.7
Other ethnicity	12.1	2.1

(Stats NZ, 2018)

Economic

- The median rent of Hei Hei is \$370 per week.
- 4.4% of Hei Hei residents are unemployed – the national average is 5%.
- Median income is \$32,400 – the national median is \$31,000.
- 9.4% of residents earn over \$70,000.
- 26.6% of residents hold no form of qualification (over 15 years old). A level 7 qualification / bachelor’s degree or higher is held by 8.7% of residents over 15 years of age.
- 84.8% of residents have internet access in their dwellings, and 92.7% have access to a mobile phone.

Health information (15 years and older)

- 19.8% are regular smokers – 10.8% of which are male and 9% female. This can be compared to 12.4% of Christchurch residents that are regular smokers.
- 7.9% have ‘a lot of difficulty’ or ‘cannot do at all’ one or more of the following activities: walking, seeing, hearing, cognition, self-care, and communication.
- 6.3% of under-15 year olds have some of the above activity limitations compared to Christchurch’s 3%.

Ōtautahi Christchurch

12%

Māori residents

19.6%

Residents aged 0-15 years

52%

Own or partly own their home

Hei Hei

14.4%

Māori residents

20%

Residents aged 0-15 years

62.4%

Own or partly own their home

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

24%

Māori tamariki

191

Tamariki

491

Equity rating

(Stats NZ, 2018)

Relevant plans, policies and projects

Te Whare Awhero – Hope House longitudinal whānau support project

Layer one: long-term whānau support

Te Whare Awhero, originally known as Hornby Presbyterian Community Trust, is a faith-based charity for the Hornby community. It provides services and support to those who are facing life's challenges, empower them in achieving tino rangatiratanga, and enrich the community with manaakitanga to positively influence a society where people can mutually uplift one another.

In 2022, Te Whare Awhero began their longitudinal whānau support project – a long-term whānau support service that aims to journey with isolated whānau in the Hei Hei and Broomfield communities. The vision for this project was for core workers to walk alongside whānau from when their tamariki are five years old until they turn 20. During this time, core workers would support whānau to identify goals, build on strengths, and create new connections and opportunities. This project utilised a whānau-centred approach, acknowledging the capacity of whānau to support each other to achieve individual and collective goals, long-term change, and stability.

During the first phase of the project, Te Whare Awhero partnered with Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School to meet some of the needs of Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School āko, and their whānau. This phase was about building

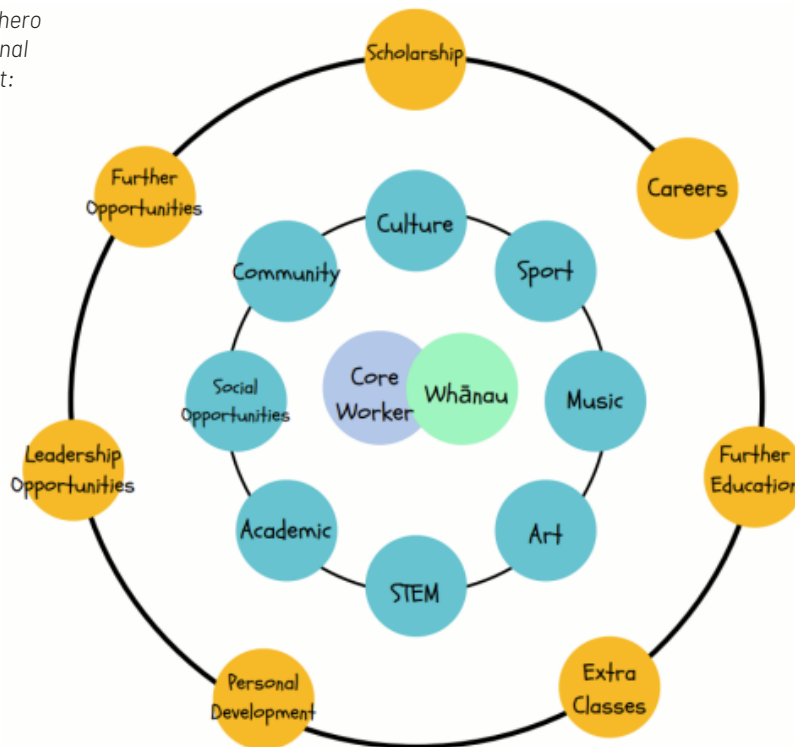
networks and connections and providing accessible resources and services to the local community. At the beginning of 2021, a community survey was undertaken by Te Whare Awhero within the Greater Hornby area. This survey sought to answer the questions:

- Who lives in this community?
- How are people currently connected to each other, groups, and organisations?
- What do people see as the strengths and challenges for the community?
- What additional services would people like to see in the area?

A wide range of recommendations for additional services were given by survey participants, including support for children, youth, young adults, whānau, and older adults, as well as more wellbeing services for struggling whānau, and more opportunities for community connections. To meet some of these identified needs, Te Whare Awhero began a partnership with Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School at the beginning of 2022. Through this partnership, Te Whare Awhero has worked with the school to begin drama and taiaha groups, provide a counsellor, implement an Out of School Care and Recreation (OSCAR) before- and after-school programme, Tuning in to Kids parenting courses, and offers sporting opportunities in collaboration with EPIC Sports Trust.



Figure 13: Te Whare Awhero
– Hope House Longitudinal
Whānau Support Project:
Whānau Voice graphic



Layer two: connections and opportunities

The second layer of the longitudinal whānau support project framework consists of 'opportunity hubs', which will be based around three primary schools (Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School, St Bernadette's School, and Hornby Primary School) and Hornby High School. This layer will work with schools to directly provide programmes, and support other groups to provide programmes through schools.

These programmes will be open to anyone in that community, however, core workers will work especially with core whānau to identify things their tamariki may be interested in, then reduce the barriers to accessing them. These opportunities could be anything like sports, social groups, and cultural connectors, and would be directed by the child and their interests.

These opportunity hubs would also provide opportunities for other members of the whānau. This could include things such as workshops that may cover topics from drug and alcohol education to growing a vegetable garden, parenting courses, and community groups. As with their work with tamariki, core workers will support whānau to access workshops, courses, and groups by identifying barriers and working to reduce them.

Layer three: community advisory panel

The final layer of the longitudinal whānau support project framework is a community advisory panel. This panel will be made up of representatives of the project's target community and will have two purposes.

The first purpose is to provide the project with guidance, insight, direction, and, if required, redirection. Community members are best placed to provide insight, identify the needs of the community, troubleshoot challenges, and advise core workers on what to focus on first.

The second purpose of the panel is to identify and take on projects that would have value for the community. These projects would be resourced and supported by the longitudinal whānau support project, and planned and undertaken by the panel. This would not only give whānau a say in what happens in the project and their community, but it would create pathways for whānau to take on leadership roles and develop their skills and experience.

To inform and support this project, qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used to gather data and insights from the lived experiences of tamariki and whānau. The focus groups were called the Child Voice Hui. One focus group was held at a primary school in the local area with a total of five child participants between the ages of 9 and 10. A switch from one-on-one interviews to focus groups was made for this group of participants as focus groups offer a more flexible, engaging, and developmentally appropriate method of data collection for children (Kennedy et al., 2001). The focus group was conducted using a mixture of creative activities and group discussions (Te Whare Awhero, 2022).

Hornby Community Vision

In terms of local strategy, following the earthquakes, the Hornby community gathered together for a constructive discussion about local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. There were many positives from the process, including the draft completion of the Hornby Community Vision.

Below is a condensed version of the Hornby vision, with a series of pillars that may guide our work and the impact of this paper. Each of our proposed opportunities will align to the Hornby Community Vision, as we consider there is buy-in already for this approach and unity around its direction. Also, many of the conversations with students and staff reinforce this approach.

Key pillars of the Hornby Community Vision relevant to the Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Neighbourhood Play System project:

Safety

All of the community feel safe in Hornby.

Equity

Everyone has access to safe, quality, and affordable opportunities regardless of nationality or socioeconomic status.

Youth

Hornby youth are connected and engaged in the community, and are supported to realise their potential.

Culture

All cultures that make up Hornby's diverse community are valued, well-connected, and represented. There is a strong connection with tangata whenua, and this is shown in relationships, storytelling, and infrastructure.

Tidy streets / Beautification

Hornby streets and community spaces are vibrant, clean, and tidy.

Partnerships and community

Hornby organisations and businesses are well-connected, communicate with each other well, and collaborate effectively.

Environment

People in Hornby are able to live, work, and play in an area free from air, noise, and water pollution.

Recreation and events

Hornby has well-maintained and inviting parks and green spaces for the community to play, rest, and connect in. Hornby has a thriving event calendar.

Transport

Hornby has safe roads for vehicles and pedestrians, with reduced trucks and cars on the road, and more people using bike lanes.

Social

Everyone in the community, including residents, community organisations, schools, and businesses are well-connected and informed.

Facilities

Hornby has good access to community facilities that are well-serviced and maintained.

Community pride

Hornby is a place where people want to live, and there is a strong sense of Hornby pride.

Christchurch City Council Physical Recreation and Sport Strategy

The aim of the Christchurch City Council Physical Recreation and Sport Strategy is to help organisations involved in physical recreation and sport to move in a common direction. The case for increasing participation in physical recreation and sport is compelling. Positive participation in physical recreation and sport means people will be in better health and reduce healthcare costs. It is a key element for human development at all ages and helps to build strong families and communities. Furthermore, it generates economic benefits and very importantly contributes to people’s quality of life (Christchurch City Council, 2021).

Christchurch City Council Strengthening Communities Together Strategy

Strong communities give people a sense of belonging, and encourage them to take part in social, cultural, economic, and political life. This refreshed strategy focuses on impact and outcomes, with more emphasis on collaboration and partnership to address the needs of Ōtautahi Christchurch communities. The strategy contains four pillars that set out Christchurch City Council’s commitment to working alongside the community over the next 10 years (Christchurch City Council, 2021).

Figure 14: Te Pou Pillars Christchurch City Council, 2021 Te Haumako; Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy Overview document.



Te Pou Tuatahi: Te Tāngata Pillar 1: People

Actively promote a culture of equity by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion across communities and generations.

Objective 1.1: Develop and enhance relationships with tangata whenua via mana whenua and Te Hononga.

Objective 1.2: Build, nurture and strengthen relationships with Pacific communities.

Objective 1.3: Continue to build on the relationships and achievements developed with multi-ethnic and multicultural communities through the Multicultural Strategy – Our Future Together.

Objective 1.4: Harness the strengths of diverse communities and address issues of social exclusion.

Objective 1.5: Support groups involved in providing access to arts, culture, heritage, recreation, and those who care for the environment.

Objective 1.6: Facilitate and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Objective 1.7: Work with others to reduce loneliness and social isolation, with particular focus on intergenerational approaches.



Te Pou Tuarua: Te Whenua Pillar 2: Place

Support and help build connections between communities to foster a sense of local identity, shared experience and stewardship.

Objective 2.1: Encourage communities to create and sustain a sense of local identity and ownership.

Objective 2.2: Work with new and changing communities in both rural and urban areas to build a sense of belonging.

Objective 2.3: Support the community activation and kaitiakitanga of public places and spaces.



Te Pou Tuawhā: Te Takatū Pillar 4: Preparedness

People feel safe in their communities and neighbourhoods and work together to understand, adapt and thrive in the context of change and disruption.

Objective 4.1: Work with communities to prepare for and respond to emergencies, and also increase climate resilience and adaptation action.

Objective 4.2: Support the capacity of the community and voluntary sector to plan, adapt and respond to risk, disruption and change.

Objective 4.3: Support neighbourhood and city-wide initiatives aimed at increasing a sense of neighbourliness.



Te Pou Tuatoru: Te Mahi Pillar 3: Participation

Residents and groups in the wider community are socially and actively engaged and able to initiate and influence decisions affecting their lives.

Objective 3.1: Empower and equip residents and groups to participate in decisions affecting their communities and neighbourhoods.

Objective 3.2: Increase general understanding of Council’s decision-making processes and support people to have their say. We want more people to get involved in decision-making, and to feel that their views are heard.

Objective 3.3: Provide well-informed support and advice to staff and elected members for effective decision-making and community engagement.

Objective 3.4: Increase volunteering opportunities across the Council and the wider community and support the organisations providing such opportunities.

Christchurch City Council Urban Development Strategy

The Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy is a plan for managing urban development that protects water, enhances open spaces, improves transport links, creates more liveable centres, and manages population growth in a sustainable way. The strategy provides the primary strategic direction for the Greater Christchurch area, including the location of future housing, development of social and retail activity centres, areas for new employment, and integration with transport networks. It also establishes a basis for all organisations (not just the strategy partners) and the community to work collaboratively to manage growth (Christchurch City Council, 2021).

Sport Canterbury Healthy Families Ōtautahi team’s Access to Play for Tamariki During and Beyond a Crisis, Phases 1 and 2

The Access to Play for Tamariki During and Beyond a Crisis Phase 1 and 2 resources have been developed by Sport Canterbury and its Healthy Families Ōtautahi team on behalf of Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa to provide a strategic approach to play, particularly in times of crisis. This set of resources, which include reports, frameworks and toolkits, informs the preservation and enhancement of play for tamariki in Aotearoa New Zealand to support positive wellbeing during and beyond a crisis. It is hoped that these resources will help whānau, communities, and organisations (including territorial authorities and central government departments) support the wellbeing and recovery of those affected by, and those providing support through, trauma during and beyond a crisis.

Sport Canterbury’s theory of change for play

Sport Canterbury believes, “If we support equitable partnerships to protect accessibility to, equity of, and inclusivity of play by amplifying and connecting a range of opportunities at neighbourhood, local government, and regional levels, then this will support participation in more play enablement, and eventually lead to a play-centric region that helps support well people and places.”

Christchurch City Council Strategic Framework Development Strategy

The strategic framework provides a big-picture view of what Christchurch City Council is trying to achieve for Ōtautahi Christchurch. It provides the foundation for the Long Term Plan, guiding how it works and where funding is allocated. The Local Government Act requires all councils to identify the rationale for their work in the form of community outcomes. These outcomes capture what Christchurch City Council aims to achieve in promoting the wellbeing of people and places in the city of Ōtautahi Christchurch (Christchurch City Council, 2021).

Figure 15: Christchurch City Council, 2021 Te Haumako; Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy Overview infographic.

Ōtautahi–Christchurch is a city of opportunity for all

Open to new ideas, new people and new ways of doing things – a city where anything is possible

Community Outcomes			
<p>Resilient communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong sense of community Active participation in civic life Safe and healthy communities Celebration of our identity through arts, culture, heritage, sport and recreation Valuing the voices of all cultures and ages (including children) 	<p>Liveable city</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vibrant and thriving city centre Sustainable suburban and rural centres A well connected and accessible city promoting active and public transport Sufficient supply of, and access to, a range of housing 21st century garden city we are proud to live in 	<p>Healthy environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy water bodies High quality drinking water Unique landscapes and indigenous biodiversity are valued and stewardship exercised Sustainable use of resources and minimising waste 	<p>Prosperous economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great place for people, business and investment An inclusive, equitable economy with broad-based prosperity for all A productive, adaptive and resilient economic base Modern and robust city infrastructure and community facilities

Current state of play

Play at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

When entering the gates of Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School, you are met with an almost rural or country feel, despite the school being located in a bustling suburban area. The school offers a range of 'traditional' play assets, infrastructure, and opportunities for their tamariki, feeding into the 'rural' school sense.

The two playgrounds are popular spaces for play, particularly the playground closest to the school hall, which offers a basket swing and other more accessible equipment pieces. There is further provision through a sandpit, basketball/netball court, an amphitheatre, swimming pool, and dirt mound for bikes and scooters. The school owns 10 bikes and 10 scooters, which remain at the school for tamariki to use, as well as a large lockable shed full of equipment and sports gear, which is available during break times and lunch times.

The bikes and scooters provided by the school are incredibly popular with the tamariki at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School. If you were to visit before school hours, during break time or lunchtime, or even after school, you would see tamariki whizzing around at great speeds over the dirt mound or on the field. 'Bike tag' is the ever-popular school game, with large numbers of students getting involved in the game. The school's Healthy Active Learning Lead hopes to get funding for a bike pump track on the back field to further encourage and support play.



A few years ago, the school decided to separate year groups' break and lunch times as they were seeing an increase in behavioural issues, such as bullying and mistreatment of equipment. Break times are broken up into the following:

Morning tea:

Junior hub (Years 1–2): 10.20am–10.40am

Middle hub (Years 3, 4, and 5): 10.40am–11am

Senior hub (Years 7–8): 11am–11.20am

Lunchtime:

Junior hub: 12pm–12.30pm

Middle hub: 12.30pm–1pm

Senior hub: 1pm–1.30pm

After implementing this separation, Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School saw an 80% drop in behavioural issues, and tamariki were more active due more equipment and spaces being available during their break time.

The school's senior leadership and the Board recognised the importance of allowing students to have their say, and surveyed the students after a short trial of the new break-time system to see whether they liked it or not. The majority of students were in favour of the new break system, with the main reason being they had "more time to play with their favourite thing".

The school saw a significant improvement in student participation, engagement, and enjoyment in physical activity opportunities when they offered more unstructured opportunities or have-a-go sessions. The school's Healthy Active Learning Lead said that once they adopted this approach, tamariki were willing to give anything a go, whereas previously they were reluctant to do so.

Play in the neighbourhood

The principal explained that moving around the neighbourhood, including but not limited to Buchanans Road, has limitations. With nearby subdivision development and growth of the neighbourhood, there is an opportunity to have some focus on independent mobility. Improvements to a footpath length, and a safe-crossing area can support this. It should be noted that since the implementation of the bike track at the school, many tamariki have learnt to ride a bike and regularly use the bike track. Most whānau, however, will bring their bikes in their cars to school, as cycling to school is deemed unsafe by many.

What we heard – tamariki

Play at school

We asked tamariki how they like to play when they're at school. The most popular ways to play at school were:

- swimming
- dancing
- kapa haka
- bike and scooter track ('bike tag')
- basketball
- playground – free play and student-led games.

“ I like to dance like the stars. ”

“ We don't play tag – that's basic. ”

Play outside of school

We asked tamariki to share with us how they liked to play when they weren't at school (for example, before school, after school and school holidays). We were interested to see if how they played at school was consistent with how they preferred to play at home and in their neighbourhood, or if there were differences in how they played between these spaces and places. This insight would support our understanding of the enablers and barriers to access to play for tamariki of Hei Hei. The most popular ways to play when they weren't at school were:

- Devices: tablet, phone, gaming system, TV, computer, laptop.
- Local sports teams: rugby and rugby league were popular options.
- Card and board games: Uno Flip and Roblox (online learning video game).
- McDonald's playground.
- Backyard: running around, trampoline, playhouse.
- Swimming pool access: The cost of swimming pool access is too expensive for some whānau. (Note, the school is currently addressing this barrier).

“ If I have to go outside, I'll just take my laptop out there. ”

“ I like to run in the back paddock! ”

“ Murder Mystery 2 is the best thing to do ever! Oh and also Roblox is the best! ”

Moving around the neighborhood

We asked the tamariki how they usually get to and from school, and why they used the chosen methods. They shared the following:

- car
- scooter and/or bike
- walking.

“ My sister drives to school so she drops me off on the way. ”

“ Me and my friends got chased by a crazy dog once, and now I don't like walking. ”

“ There's this one house I hate going past, it's a shambles! ”



Barriers to play

We asked the tamariki what barriers stood between them and play, or, as they said, what “killed the vibe” while playing. They shared with us the barriers that they faced within the school, at home with whānau, and in the neighbourhood. The main barriers were as follows:

- Whānau: mainly parents would stop them from playing, especially when on devices.
- Teachers: commenting on certain games at lunch time.
- Too busy: chores, after-school activities, such as swimming, sport, et cetera.
- Friends: discussed as both a barrier to and an enabler of play. Sometimes friends would help them to play, but also would stop them from playing if they were being ‘annoying’.
- Playtimes behaviour: Some tamariki have negative playtime experiences due to various behaviour of others. (Note, the introduction of staggered break times has helped limit this occurring).
- School work and class time.

“ I broke my arm last year and now my Mum won't let me play as much. ”

“ Teachers tell us not to be silly sometimes when we are playing, but we're kids! We're supposed to be silly. ”



Play enablers

Tamariki told us who encourages them to play, plays with them, and helps them to play. This could be both at school and at home. Tamariki identified the following people:

- Whānau: parents, siblings, grandparents, cousins will play with them "when they have time".
- Friends: lunchtime, after school, on the weekends, school holidays.
- Teachers can encourage them to burn some energy outside of the classroom.
- Sport and recreation facilitators.

" My Dad plays with me when he has the energy, but he's always at work and it makes him tired. "

" Sometimes when I don't have anyone to play with, I'll just play on my own. "

" The best neighbourhood would have nothing in it except for devices. "

What we heard – whānau and community

Exploring the Hei Hei neighbourhood

We spent an afternoon walking around the Hei Hei neighbourhood to experience what it's like firsthand. The following was observed:

- Poorly lit parks and pathways.
- Shrubbery growing over paths on public walk throughs.
- Significant amounts of rubbish scattered around green spaces, especially Wycola Park.
- There is no footpath outside the Gilberthorpe Road entrance to the school heading south.
- Wycola Park recently received new equipment, and the skate park was actively used.
- There are a significant number of abandoned buildings and homes – the majority were boarded up and their gardens were overgrown, interfering with pedestrian paths and pavements.

“ I like to dance like the stars. ”

“ I love swimming – I wish we had a key to the pool but it's too expensive. ”

“ We don't play tag – that's basic. ”

Te Whare Awhero – Hope House – Longitudinal Whānau Support Project

Through the Longitudinal Whānau Support Project, tamariki, rangatahi, and whānau of the Hei Hei community were asked a range of questions. The answers to these questions provided staff at Te Whare Awhero insights into what the community's needs are and how, as an organisation, they can best support these needs.

Participants in the programme were asked the question, 'What does thriving look like for your whānau?' Their responses were as follows:

- Access to resources – cover 'the basics' such as household bills and groceries.
- Access to opportunities – pathways for tamariki to explore their interests, passions, and just be kids.
- Access to social opportunities – building and maintaining a rich community and whānau life.

“ Opportunities to access things outside of school, like your sport and your music. ”

“ I think there are a lot of families that don't want to admit that they need help. ”

“ We know it well – we've seen it grow over the years ... and we'll always just think of it as home. ”

Hei Hei resident referring to the sense of 'Hornby pride'.

Christchurch City Council School Travel Survey

We partnered with the Christchurch City Council Travel Demand team to facilitate the online School Travel Survey for Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School to help establish key travel modes and travel issues for the school. The survey also asked questions about the Sport Canterbury Neighbourhood Play System project.

Responses to the survey came from 38 parents, 19 staff and 59 students.

School travel planning is an internationally recognised process where a school – working in conjunction with its local city council – determines how it can promote safer and more sustainable travel options for its students. School travel plans equip young road users with the skills to be safe and competent on the road. If more children walk and cycle, and appreciate the importance of the road rules, then they are likely to have a better understanding of how they should behave around pedestrians and cyclists if they choose to drive later in life.

Figure 16: Student barriers to active transport.

Cars travel too fast	70%
A lack of pedestrian crossing points	60%
Inconsiderate and dangerous driving by other road users	36%
There are too many cars on the road	36%
The quality of footpaths	27%
The pedestrian crossing points are not in the correct place	27%
Poor personal security on walking routes (i.e. poor street lighting and visibility)	16%
The quality of roads	5%
There are not enough separated on-road bike lanes	6%
Other	20%

- Children are crossing when cars are trying to turn. More road awareness and slow down signage.
- Not enough parking, another crossing is needed.
- Having to have a staff member or parent man the crossing.
- Council has not even put a footpath outside our school!

Figure 17: Parking issues outside the school.

Too many vehicles trying to park	84%
Unsafe parking (e.g. on the berm)	39%
Double parking	39%
Parking on no parking lines	38%
Parking over driveways	28%
Parking over the time limit	26%
No parking time limits (kiss and drop, P3, etc.)	26%
Other (please specify)	8%

Figure 18: Modes of transport.

	Years 0/1	Years 2	Years 3	Years 4	Years 5	Years 6	Years 7
Car	77%	33%	67%	40%	33%	43%	53%
Walk	8%	17%	11%	20%	11%	0%	10%
Scoot	8%	17%	0%	20%	22%	43%	16%
Bike	8%	17%	11%	20%	33%	14%	16%
Other	0%	17%	11%	0%	0%	0%	4%



EPIC Sports Project

EPIC Sports Project is a local community organisation that use sport and recreation to help young people develop a sense of value, belonging, and self-worth in low socioeconomic communities. Recently, EPIC has been coming to Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School to deliver play opportunities during and outside curriculum time, running a combination of organised games and have-a-go opportunities for tamariki. Since EPIC has been facilitating these opportunities for students at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School, teachers and staff have noticed a significant decline in behaviour issues and more students engaging in physical activity.

Bernadine Bezuidenhout, Founder and CEO of EPIC Sports Project, said, "We offer a range of opportunities to Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School students. We have partnered with Hornby Hockey Club to run have-a-go hockey sessions. These were a massive hit with the kids – majority of them had never seen a hockey stick before and when we were able to provide them with one of their own, their wee faces just lit up. We partner with Te Whare Awhero to deliver hip-hop classes at the school on Mondays as part of our Get Active initiative.

"The perception of danger in the Hei Hei community is a huge barrier to play. After we started activating Wycola Park, local police reported an 85% decrease in crime at the park and in the neighbourhood.

"What we focus on at EPIC is not creating the next Black Fern or White Fern, it's about just having fun and giving things a go. As soon as we remove the perception that physical activity isn't always about winning or being the best, and allow kids to just play, explore, and give things a go, they enjoy it so much more and they come back for more.

"We need to highlight and showcase the positive stories in Hei Hei more. Often you only hear about the negative things happening in this community, but there is so much positive stuff going on that we need to showcase."



EPIC Sports Project

Te Horomako o Te Huruheru Kōhanga Reo

Te Horomako o Te Huruheru Kōhanga Reo is a community-based kōhanga reo catering for ages zero to five years. It is located just down the road from Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School. We were able to engage with the kōhanga through a colleague's connection, and explore what play looks like and means through a te ao Māori lens.

Throughout the Neighbourhood Play System journey, we were keen to gather insights and learning of whānau Māori, who live, learn, work, or play in the Hei Hei area to attempt to honour a bicultural approach to this kaupapa. While the kōhanga is outside the 800m radius of the Neighbourhood Play System, it is still situated in the Hei Hei neighbourhood, and some mokopuna of the kōhanga may transition to Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School.

The following sections detail the pātai we asked kaimahi of the kōhanga, and the kōrero we had from these pātai:

How do you engage in play and tākarō from a te ao Māori perspective?

We have set times of "play" with two different structures/meanings to accomplish the same goal, which is activeness in our mokopuna:

Tahi: "Kori Tinana"

- These play times are used for exercise, to stimulate the brain, tau (calm) ngā mokopuna, and to exert energy before starting our kaupapa activities.
- Rua: "Wā Tākarō"
- These play times are of a free movement nature. Mokopuna take the lead on what it is they would like to do during this time with the supervision and encouragement of kaimahi. This is a good time for mokopuna to build up their social skills and learn to build on them.

Pūrākau

- Stories, histories, and narratives are used during the daily timetable to not only educate mokopuna, but to provide an avenue for mokopuna to explore play formally and informally.
- Ahead of Waitangi Day, we explored the history of Captain Cook. Mokopuna made binoculars to explore with and waka (The Endeavour) out of kai, which they later ate.
- Another example is the recent celebration of Matariki, where mokopuna performed (played with) waiata, haka, and utilised props to personify the different attributes of the stars.
- Tamariki are often personifying atua (deities) within te taiao. This can be seen and heard through karakia, recognising the weather patterns for the day, and during free play on the papa tākarō as well as in the māra (garden).

"Play is for whakawhanaungatanga with one another and the taiao."

Kaimahi

"We try to connect with the taiao as much as possible, however, health and safety makes this incredibly hard to do."

Kaimahi

"Mokopuna are more receptive to the kaupapa when they've had the chance to release their energy outside."

Kaimahi

What does play mean for you as a kōhanga?

As a kōhanga, play is a vital and integral part of our daily wātaka throughout the year. Our kura kaupapa Māori utilise play-based learning in their curriculum, and we need to ensure we support this type of learning in the early years to make the transition for our tuakana mokopuna to kura kaupapa Māori less daunting. It helps with the development of each of our mokopuna within their whānau daily living, background, and own activity at home. Mokopuna and whānau are always guaranteed that there will be times of play for mokopuna.

We utilise kēmu to support the goals our kura kaupapa Māori have for each mokopuna when transitioning. These goals are as follows:

- Looking after belongings (we have a relay kēmu for this).
- Treating each other and others kindly and respectfully (we utilise hand actions/words to support this kaupapa called Aroha).
- Being independent with putting on shoes/clothes (we have a kēmu for this).
- With the new lot of mahere ako being developed this week for the next year, we are planning on introducing more hākinakina-based activities.

What opportunities does your kōhanga engage with for play within the neighbourhood?

We utilise the parks and domains that are provided, and accessible, in our wāhi. We go for local hīkoi at least once a week, taking the bikes up and down our street. We would love the opportunity to engage more with the community of Hei Hei and Hornby like we have in the past.

What are your hopes for play within the neighbourhood, and what do you hear from whānau of the kōhanga that they want for play in the neighbourhood?

A particular whānau of our kōhanga is wanting to establish a softball league tournament strictly for mokopuna o te kōhanga reo. Sports equipment that's age appropriate, expanding our knowledge of Māori-based sports. More opportunities for our whānau to attend sports events that are age-appropriate for our mokopuna, like the aforementioned softball league that supports, embraces, and enhances the use of te reo me ōnā tikanga. We have many tournaments, clubs, et cetera, that some of our mokopuna are members of currently, but we would love to see and hear an entire game of any sport be commentated in te reo in real-time. More Māori-inspired play equipment for kōhanga to purchase would also be great, and also seeing this in local parks and play spaces.

Wānanga for kaimahi o te kaupapa that meets our needs, for example, te reo Māori I ngā wā katoa that encompasses the following:

- Why is play important?
- What are we looking for when mokopuna are playing?
- What types of kēmu can we utilise and encourage in our kōhanga?
- Places and events to attend that support our need and use of te reo Māori.

It was evident from our kōrero with kaimahi of the kōhanga that play, tākaro, and kēmu are woven through day-to-day life at the kōhanga. The kōhanga takes a te ao Māori approach to its calendar, with its schedule aligned to the seasons, thus reiterating the importance and connection to te taiao. Play and connection to te taiao is a natural weave to learning for the kōhanga, and it is a vital way of being. Kaimahi expressed how play is critical, not only for mokopuna, but also for kaimahi. Play helps mokopuna release built up energy and get to a tau (settled) state, which supports their ability to take in and retain learning.



Local early childhood centre

We had a kōrero with the manager of a local early childhood centre on Buchanans Road to hear the centre's thoughts on play in the Hei Hei neighbourhood. BestStart Buchanans Road Manager Sonya expressed that a lot of parents ask her what play, recreation, and sport opportunities there are in Hei Hei to get their tamariki involved with. Sonya struggles to provide whānau with this information – the only organisation to engage with the centre has been Hornby United AFC (football club). She also made the point that it is difficult for little ones to play outside in the area as there are no organised activities. She would love to see more organisations drop information to her centre, and when we called her, the first thing she said was, "Are you going to come do some play things with the kids? That would be amazing!"



What does success look like?

Access and movement

This aspect of the Neighbourhood Play System blueprint refers to the degree to which tamariki of all ages and abilities, and their whānau, can feel safe and are able to freely access play opportunities in their communities.

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

Tamariki attending Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School can journey safely and independently to and from school. Pedestrian crossings on Gilberthorpes Road provide access to the school during and after hours.

Hei Hei

Tamariki can freely and safely move and play throughout the neighbourhood, particularly between home and school. Footpaths through the neighbourhood are wide and well maintained. Streets, lighting, and cycling facilities create a connected network of safe streets throughout Hei Hei. Traffic-calming devices, including speed restrictions, encourage motorists to drive slowly on residential streets. Alleyways provide safe and direct connections, encouraging tamariki to explore the neighbourhood and play-on-the-way opportunities throughout the neighbourhood.

Ōtautahi | Christchurch

Tamariki have enough space to play. There is somewhere for everyone to play. The city's transport network is safe and accessible, connecting tamariki with play opportunities across the city. Signage reflects the culture and diversity of the city, and tamariki and their whānau are empowered to connect to the broader play network through high-quality active and public transport links.

Built and natural environment

This aspect refers to the degree to which local built and natural environments facilitate a variety of play opportunities suitable for tamariki of all ages and abilities, and their whānau.

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

The built and natural environment at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School is inviting and well maintained for all tamariki. The playground is accessible and features a diverse range of play equipment suitable for all ages and abilities. The field, bike track, playgrounds, courts, and turf are available for adventure play and are age appropriate.

Hei Hei

Tamariki living in Hei Hei have access to a diverse range of formal and informal play opportunities across the neighbourhood. Playgrounds in the neighbourhood's parks have diverse high-quality and well-maintained play equipment. Public spaces are adorned with tamariki artwork, reflecting the neighbourhood's culture and heritage.

Ōtautahi | Christchurch

There is a diverse range of playgrounds and play-on-the-way infrastructure across Ōtautahi Christchurch, creating a network of play opportunities connected by safe and accessible active transport routes. Art and stories depicted throughout the city reflect the local natural and cultural heritage.



Awareness and agency

This aspect of the Neighbourhood Play System blueprint refers to the degree to which play is actively supported and encouraged (through time, space and permission) by tamariki and their whānau, as well as community members and city authorities.

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

Tamariki of all ages are engaged with, encouraging play in the school grounds and when they leave. Play opportunities, including Play Streets and community events, are supported by the school.

Hei Hei

Community groups champion play in Hei Hei, developing a play-supportive culture and encouraging the community to access and support local play. This is supported by community partners and leaders.

Ōtautahi | Christchurch

Christchurch City Council is actively championing play throughout the city, working with the community to create play solutions and investing in accessible play infrastructure. A play strategy prioritises play and ensures it is embedded in, and integrated, across other Christchurch City Council plans and strategies.

Enjoyment

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School

The Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School playground is accessible with play opportunities provided for tamariki of all ages and abilities. Broken equipment is repaired and upgraded quickly. Tamariki are encouraged to explore a diverse range of play activities within the school grounds.

Hei Hei

The neighbourhood of Hei Hei is a welcoming and inviting place for all tamariki, who feel safe exploring the areas around their homes, schools, and play spaces.

Ōtautahi | Christchurch

Play spaces across Ōtautahi Christchurch reflect the unique cultures and needs of the community, with the stories of the region woven into the urban fabric. Tamariki have access to accessible and safe playgrounds wherever they live.

Opportunities

The Hei Hei community faces many challenges that affect the ability for tamariki, rangatahi, and their whānau to play safely and independently. Despite these challenges, a number of opportunities to support play and provide access to play for tamariki exist within this community. The following opportunities have been identified to strengthen play sufficiency in the Hei Hei neighbourhood. We have attempted to link these opportunities with the relevant pillars of the Hornby Community Vision, in the hope that this will support these opportunities to be brought to life at a local level:

Bike track/scooter track

The 20 bikes and scooters that Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School provide tamariki are incredibly popular play assets. They also support the kaupapa of encouraging active transport modes. A bike track/scooter track could be created along the outer boundary of the school field, providing further opportunities for play and education around safe active transport modes. This track could also be used by tamariki and whānau who walk, bike, scooter, or use other forms of active transport to get to and from school, as currently there is no path for them along this entrance. It would also increase the accessibility of the school, providing play and active transport opportunities for those requiring wheelchairs. A Tū Manawa application could support this, as well as the Christchurch City Council Community Travel Advisor for the area.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- **Transport**
- **Social**
- **Safety**
- **Youth**

Improve footpath functionality and safe-crossing options

Numerous spaces around the Hei Hei neighbourhood are in need of upgrade, and beginning to impact residents' feelings of safety and the ability to be independently mobile within the neighbourhood. Tamariki shared with us that overgrown shrubbery is preventing them from using their bikes and scooters on footpaths, making this a direct barrier to their ability to play and access play opportunities. Some options on Buchanans Road near the school include:

- Extending the footpath (school side of the road) heading west.
- Providing a safe-crossing option, such as a pedestrian crossing and/or extending the existing median refuge (to accommodate multiple people/bikes/strollers/wheelchairs/mobility scooters).
- Resurfacing footpaths in the catchment area would improve the surface for wheeled play and the accessibility for active transport. Play and wayfinding stencils could be added to some footpaths to enhance the play journey.

These opportunities would not only benefit the tamariki but the whole community, including those with visual impairments and physical disabilities, as well as wheelchair or mobility scooter users. Although longer-term opportunities, addressing these could improve the accessibility within the neighbourhood.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- **Safety**
- **Tidy Streets/Beautification**
- **Environment**
- **Transport**



Improved lighting at local parks and reserves

Review current lighting infrastructure and look to install more lighting at local parks and reserves to increase play opportunities and feelings of safety and security within these spaces. For example, Wycola Park has recently had new equipment, basketball courts, and a skatepark installed, however there is minimal lighting within this space to enable residents to use the facilities beyond daylight hours.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- Facilities
- Recreation and Events
- Environment
- Tidy Streets/Beautification
- Youth
- Safety

Increased tree canopy across Hei Hei and greater Hornby

From scoping the natural environment of the Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School area through data and insights, it was evident that the Hei Hei and Hornby area has the least amount of tree canopy in Ōtautahi Christchurch. Tree canopy is incredibly important for the health and wellbeing of people and places. Trees provide natural shade and shelter, improve the air quality, and, thus, improve immune system functioning, as well providing opportunity for free play. Opportunities to involve Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School in tree planting, and other flora and fauna-based projects, to increase the tree canopy and natural landscape of the Hei Hei area should be investigated further.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- Tidy Streets/Beautification
- Environment
- Facilities



Annual community play event

With Hei Hei becoming an incredibly diverse neighbourhood, an annual event to celebrate play within the area would grow play and promote connection within Hei Hei. This event could be hosted on the school grounds, or at a local community space, such as Kaniere Reserve or Kumara Reserve. This event could, and should, initiate more events of its type, working towards normalising play for all across the neighbourhood. Tamariki should be involved in the creation and planning of this event, with input and support from local enablers such as, Christchurch City Council, Sport Canterbury's Healthy Active Learning Connectors and Facilitators, and community organisations.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- Community Pride
- Social
- Recreation and Events
- Youth
- Partnerships and Community
- Culture
- Equity



Strengthen connections and partnerships with local enablers

Through surveying whānau and engaging in kōrero with tamariki, it was clear that there is a lack of understanding about what lies within the Gilberthorpe neighbourhood for play. Whānau felt that unless they knew what play opportunities they wanted to engage with, and sought these opportunities out themselves, then they wouldn't know what is out there in their community for play. Strengthening knowledge and understanding about what play opportunities are available to the Hei Hei community will help foster greater connection to both people and places within this community and neighbourhood – something that has been identified as 'lost' following the pandemic.

This could be achieved through a 'Welcome to Hei Hei' information pack that is given to tamariki and their whānau when they enrol at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School. This could be a booklet or even be an app-based information platform that lists all play opportunities and facilities that lie within an 800–1000m radius of the school, including parks, reserves, clubs, facilities, programmes, organisations, and events. This information could also be provided to local early childhood centres, and other community centres, which would support play at its foundational level. There is a strong link with a number of units at Christchurch City Council through the Neighbourhood Play System, including, but not limited to, the Christchurch City Council Play Advocate, the Community Travel Advisor team, and the Parks team. This provides an opportunity to understand, and actualise, various opportunities within this Neighbourhood Play System, which require guidance, collaboration, and approval from, and with, Christchurch City Council.

Play enablers and partnerships for the Hei Hei community include (but are not limited to):

- Hei Hei Community Centre
- Matatiki: Hornby Centre
- EPIC Sports Project
- Te Horomako o Te Huruwuru Kōhanga Reo
- Hornby High School
- Kia Kori Waitaha
- Waka Kotahi
- Christchurch City Council Local Council Play Advocate
- Christchurch City Council Community Travel Advisor
- Christchurch City Council Community Recreation Advisor
- Sport Canterbury Healthy Active Learning Community Connector
- Sport Canterbury Healthy Active Learning Facilitator
- Sport Canterbury Regional Play Lead.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- **Partnerships and Community**
- **Recreation and Events**
- **Facilities**
- **Social**
- **Community Pride**
- **Equity**

Neighbourhood play trails and increasing play-on-the-way opportunities

Neighbourhood or community play trails are an excellent way of increasing access to play, and normalising play across a neighbourhood. Play trails and play-on-the-way opportunities include play stencils, pop-up activations, markings, artwork, murals, nature play, and more. They encourage people to engage with their environment. Play trails encourage residents to explore their neighbourhood using active transport modes, helping to foster a sense of connection and belonging to places through the eyes of tamariki, recognising tamariki as active citizens in their neighbourhood.

Hei Hei has a multitude of play assets and spaces, however, these are currently positioned as destinations for play, instilling the belief that play can only take place within these spaces. Play trails and play-on-the-way opportunities link directly to Christchurch City Council's Enliven Places Programme (formerly Transitional Cities Programme), which looks to transform underutilised sites into vibrant and welcoming spaces.

Opportunities for play trails or play-on-the-way opportunities include (but are not limited to):

- Kumara Reserve play trail (beginning at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School, head southwest on Gilberthorpes Road toward Aurora Street. Turn right onto Kaniere Avenue, left onto Okuku Place, and then left onto Kumara Place. This play trail would be 550m long, taking roughly seven minutes to walk and requires minimal road crossing.
- Explore opportunities to host Play Streets – Rubicon Place or Marymere Place are potential locations for this.
- Engage with kaimahi and mokopuna of Te Horomako o Te Huruwuru Kōhanga Reo to co-design a play trail leading to Gilberthorpes Reserve – a reserve they frequently take their mokopuna to.
- Engage with tamariki using co-design to develop play-on-the-way opportunities and the components of a play trail.
- Engage with local iwi, mana whenua, and diversity and inclusion groups to ensure the play trail is representative of the cultural narrative of the area, and is also accessible and inclusive for all.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- Youth
- Safety
- Tidy Streets/Beautification
- Culture
- Environment
- Transport
- Recreation and Events
- Community Pride
- Social

Improve independent mobility and active transport modes

Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School is gridlocked by busy roads, and the majority of whānau expressed major concerns for the safety of all residents, no matter their age or ability, when it comes to using active transport modes. Whānau stated they would encourage their tamariki to use active transport methods if traffic-calming interventions were put in place to protect pedestrians.

Addressing safety and accessibility for independent mobility in Hei Hei include (but are not limited to):

- Establishing a Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Working Group for Travel Safety in partnership with the Christchurch City Council Community Travel Advisor to support the development and implementation of the School Travel Plan.
- Calming motor vehicle speed to 30km per hour along Gilberthorpes Road and Buchanans Road between 8.00am and 5.00pm.
- Installing traffic lights or a pedestrian crossing outside the Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Buchanans Road entrance to allow more spaces for safer road crossing.
- Installing a further two speed humps along the Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Buchanans Road entrance.
- Extend the footpath outside the Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School Buchanans Road entrance turning right.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- Safety
- Tidy Streets/Beautification
- Environment
- Transport

Increasing tamariki voice in the design and decision-making process on kaupapa that impact them

Tamariki, their whānau, and the wider Hei Hei community need to not only be consulted on projects and issues relevant to their residence in the Hei Hei area, but invited to be part of co-design practices to acknowledge and support their needs. Surface-level consultation is likely to fail to truly understand the barriers to play and access to play on a day-to-day basis for residents, particularly those marginalised by race, culture, disability, age, and other differences.

If residents feel their needs, wants, hopes, and aspirations are being considered in relation to their play experiences (and access to these experiences), then this will contribute towards improving the sense of connection and belonging within the Hei Hei neighbourhood, supporting well people and places. Community-led engagement and ongoing participation across different levels of decision-making are crucial in ensuring that any changes respond to the specific, place-based needs of residents. This could be in relation to the following elements:

- community events
- pedestrian crossings
- cycleways
- removal or trimming of trees to improve lines of sight
- signs which promote awareness
- general improvements to footpaths.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- **Youth**
- **Partnerships and Community**
- **Community Pride**

Cultural representation within the Hei Hei neighbourhood

Hei Hei has become an incredibly culturally diverse neighbourhood, and it is critical that tamariki (and their whānau) can feel their culture is represented within their neighbourhood, not just at their school or within the confines of their home. When people feel their culture is represented within their community, this impacts positively on their wellbeing through fostering their sense of belonging and connection.

If tamariki can see, hear, and feel their culture represented within their neighbourhood and play spaces, and not just at school or in their home, then they experience more consistent environments, which allows them to thrive and develop their sense of belonging.

Exploring ways to represent cultures through street art, murals, play-on-the-way activations, information signage, and road marking should take place. This will help to encourage tamariki and their whānau to engage more with their neighbourhood, utilising active transport methods.

It is encouraged to consider a te ao Māori perspective in the consideration of spaces and places in the neighbourhood through invitation to, and learning from, local iwi and mana whenua. This stems from building and fostering relationships with local iwi and mana whenua.

Opportunities to improve cultural representation within the Hei Hei neighbourhood include (but are not limited to):

- Local iwi, mana whenua, and residents (particularly tamariki and rangatahi) are engaged with, consulted with, and involved in the renewal and future development of playgrounds and play spaces within the Hei Hei area.
- Placemaking and place beautification through street art, murals, road markings, and information signs adopt a cultural lens, particularly engaging with local iwi and mana whenua to ensure the cultural history and narrative of the whenua is encapsulated in this.

Pillars of the Hornby Community Vision this opportunity links to:

- **Youth**
- **Social**
- **Culture**
- **Community Pride**
- **Partnerships and Community**
- **Safety**
- **Equity**

Conclusion

Access to quality, enjoyable, and fun play experiences is vital to the wellbeing and development of tamariki. Countless amounts of research has proven the cognitive benefits of play for tamariki from a young age, but play also provides opportunities for physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social development, as well as fostering creativity, imagination, and problem-solving. When these opportunities are experienced on a consistent basis, the foundations are laid for tamariki to lead productive and fulfilling lives as adults.

Completing a Neighbourhood Play System at Ara Tū Whakatā Gilberthorpe School allowed us to gain insight into the day-to-day lives of tamariki living in the Hei Hei neighbourhood. We were able to capture a snapshot of the current conditions for time, space, and permission tamariki are afforded for play in this neighbourhood. We heard a range of perspectives and stories about the state of play within Hei Hei, particularly in relation to the parks, playgrounds, facilities, events, and activations.

Tamariki and whānau recognise that Hei Hei holds a number of play assets, however don't necessarily connect with these spaces and opportunities due to a lack of safety and accessibility measures.

Overall, tamariki enjoy the play assets within the neighbourhood catchment, however express a desire for more creative, innovative, and accessible play opportunities that promote imagination, risky play, and connection to the natural environment.

A significant review of the current systems in place for managing play spaces and facilities, such as Wycola Park, needs to take priority. A review into the current and future projects and plans for mobility within this neighbourhood also needs to occur, placing pedestrians' needs (especially tamariki) at the forefront of any future developments, not the motor vehicle. Once these reviews take place, we must then consider policies that will establish the foundations for a playable future.

Understanding tamariki play preferences and patterns by engaging with tamariki can help adults appreciate how to design spaces that support tamariki to play. A child's right to move and play freely within their local environment needs to be protected. What we have proposed in this document is a range of opportunities and considerations, based on the insights and suggestions of the tamariki of Hei Hei and their whānau, which will begin to make the neighbourhood more playable.

We hope that this report showcases how placing the voice of the participant at the centre of community development and interventions, allows for the true needs of the community to be met and sustainable outcomes to be reached. If we can identify how to unlock play through community strengths, we become another step closer to ensuring that play is equitable in Aotearoa.





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