

Date: Thursday 1 May 2025
Time: 9.30 pm
Meeting Room: Upper Harbour Local Board Office
Venue: 6-8 Munroe Lane
Albany
Auckland 0632 and Via Microsoft Teams

Upper Harbour Local Board

OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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7 April 2025

Mayor Wayne Brown
All Auckland Councillors
cc: David Rankin - Chief Executive, Eke Panuku
Allan Young - General Manager Development, Eke Panuku

Urgent request to pause the sale of the Wasp Hangar, Hobsonville and investigate opportunities for community outcomes

Summary

We are writing to urgently request that the Governing Body instruct Eke Panuku to pause the sale of the Wasp Hangar in Hobsonville and direct staff to investigate opportunities for community use.

The Wasp Hangar is a large building originally housing wasp helicopters, it is one of the few links to the military past in Hobsonville. There is a severe shortage of indoor courts in Auckland and in 2020 the 'unlock Hobsonville' plans by Eke Panuku identified this building to provide indoor sports facilities and the area outside the building to be repurposed for public amenity. However, despite those plans the building is now currently for sale.

Given the following factors we request that the Governing Body instruct Eke Panuku to pause the sale and to investigate opportunities for community use:

- a) the shortage of indoor and community facilities in the fast-growing area,
- b) councils desire to deliver differently,
- c) interest by community partners and
- d) community views and needs

Context

In March 2020 the local board allocated \$500,000 of its own capital budget to support the Wasp Hangar being developed into a community recreation facility and had major support from across codes and residents as outlined in the report. Unfortunately, due to the impacts of COVID and the emergency budget this funding was absorbed in council savings. [The full report can be found here.](#)

While we acknowledge the Auckland Council's Planning Committee decision of April 2021: [found here](#) to sell the site, we remain deeply concerned that the decision does not adequately reflect consideration of community needs, particularly in the light of the massive growth and ongoing shortage of community sports facilities in Hobsonville and the wider Auckland Region.

Hobsonville Point has developed with far greater intensity than originally planned and despite this rapid growth community infrastructure has not kept pace. Auckland currently faces a deficit of 72 indoor courts and retaining the Wasp Hangar presents an opportunity to address some of this shortfall in a way that benefits both the local and regional communities.

Since the 2021 council decision to proceed the sale, the approach to community partnerships and funding has evolved. Auckland Council strategic policy now places a greater emphasis on collaboration and partnerships to delivery community outcomes **and deliver differently**. We are seeing this approach being delivered with projects such as the Albany multisport courts project where community groups, sports organisations and external funders are partnering with council to provide vital facilities with the majority of the funding being from outside of council. The Wasp Hangar could follow a similar pathway.

We believe that if we hit 'pause' on the sale of the Wasp Hangar it would give us potential to think about options like this one. We have been approached by community partners who have indicated a willingness to be involved in this redevelopment, the sole costs do not have to fall on council.

Proceeding with the sale without thorough consideration of alternatives for our community will result in a lost opportunity and one that we may look back on with regret as we continue to struggle with a shortage of indoor sports facilities and community spaces. We fear that in the future as council and community partners attempt to fill this gap it will cost more than the repurposing of this existing building. The opportunity cost doesn't seem to be factored into current calculations.

Our community is crying out for space, and it is reflected in the Annual Budget 2025/2026 submissions.

We urge the Governing Body to:

1. Listen to the community views
2. Pause the sale process of the Wasp Hangar
3. Instruct staff to explore viable options for repurposing the hangar through partnership models

Regards,



Anna Atkinson
Chairperson
Upper Harbour Local Board



Uzra Casuri Balouch
Deputy Chairperson
Upper Harbour Local Board



Sylvia Yang
Local Board Member
Upper Harbour Local Board



Callum Blair
Local Board Member
Upper Harbour Local Board



John McLean
Local Board Member
Upper Harbour Local Board



Kyle Parker
Local Board Member
Upper Harbour Local Board