



Christchurch City Council  
Civic Offices  
53 Hereford Street  
Christchurch

**Submission on:** Christchurch City 3 Year Plan 2013 – 2016 (Draft)

**Response by:** Avon/Otakaro Network  
9 Stable Way  
Belfast  
Christchurch  
Co-Chairs Mark Gibson and Evan Smith

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**The Avon-Ōtakaro Network [AvON]**, is a network of individuals and organisations promoting the future use of the residential red zone lands as an ecological and recreational reserve. We wish to establish a community-driven science-informed living memorial to rejuvenate and nurture the long-term environmental, economic, community and spiritual wellbeing of the eastern suburbs and of those living throughout greater Christchurch. Our aim is to turn a tragedy into an opportunity, a polluted drain into a vibrant river system, and exhaustion and despair into hope and inspiration.

The Draft

The Avon-Ōtakaro Network wishes to congratulate the Christchurch City Council on the Christchurch City 3 Year Plan Draft and in particular the following:

Community Outcomes (p7),

With regard to the urban environment, the Draft requests urban areas to be “well-designed and meet the needs of the community” and “Streetscapes, public open spaces and public buildings enhance the look and function of the city.” .....

and under Healthy Environments (p 38) “Christchurch’s unique landscapes and indigenous biodiversity are protected and enhanced, water quality and quantity are protected and restored:

- Water quality in rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands is improved
- Groundwater is safeguarded from the effects of land use
- Stream and river flows are maintained”

And (p39) “the Council works with a wide range of community groups and other agencies so that it can achieve these outcomes....”

The Draft calls for:

- Our urban landscape to be protected - The Avon River is a major component of our urban landscape. The Draft provides for the protection of urban landscapes such as neighbourhood parks, sports parks, garden and heritage parks, cemeteries and regional parks. The addition of a river park along the lower Avon corridor to the diverse parks and open spaces Christchurch has to offer would enrich our experiences of nature, add to community engagement with nature, build social capital and protect ecosystems and the services they provide.
- Indigenous biodiversity is to be protected and enhanced – this and the protection of urban landscapes in turn ensures that water quality and quantity are to be protected and restored, groundwater is safeguarded from the effects of land use and river flows are to be maintained. There is very little in this Draft which will act to mitigate the negative effects of contaminant laden stormwater entering the Avon River, little to maintain river flows, protection from flooding, or protect ground water from land use.

One present “function” of the Avon River is to transport contaminant laden stormwater from the urban environment to the sea – this activity has proven to have high levels of negative effects on nature's services i.e. water quality, biodiversity, flow regimes, flood control, community wellbeing, research and education. We recognise that wetlands are diverse ecosystems, benefiting not only wetland species of flora and fauna but also many other aspects of our environment and way of life. The construction of wetlands in the residential red zone of the Avon/Otakaro River catchment will greatly assist in the improvement of water quality and flow regimes of the Avon River, enhance biodiversity and provide sites for research and places for people to gather.

### **Submission - Outline**

1. Avon-Ōtakaro Network requests that CCC acknowledges the potential future use of the Christchurch residential red zone lands as an ecological and recreational reserve– a river park to add to the diversity of parks and open spaces Christchurch has to offer - such that no projects or works within the 3-year plan compromise this.
2. Avon-Ōtakaro Network requests the construction of wetlands within the residential red zone of the Avon/Otakaro River catchment – the wetlands to act as filters, intercepting stormwater before it enters the Avon River.

3. Avon-Ōtakaro Network requests that CCC makes provision for this by increasing the budget allocated for enhancement work in the infrastructure rebuild, particularly as it pertains to preventing the need for stormwater outflows and sewage overflows during high rainfall events into the lower Avon.

## Submission - Detail

Issues/Topics	Comments
<p>Christchurch Recovery and Rebuild Issues and Challenges (p15-21)</p>	<p>Avon-Otakaro Network is an umbrella network of many different interests that share a common and popular vision to turn the Avon Otakaro River red zone lands into an ecological and recreational river park when the home owners have to leave.</p> <p>The AvON vision encompasses a number of areas of recovery and redevelopment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River Health and Environment</li> <li>• River Culture</li> <li>• River Recreation</li> <li>• River Sustenance</li> <li>• River Communities</li> <li>• River Economies.</li> </ul> <p>The submission relates these components to the “Activities” set out in the Draft Three Year Plan.</p> <p>AvON sees the Avon Otakaro Corridor park concept as consistent with many of the rebuild issues and challenges identified by the Council including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration wastewater networks, stormwater systems, and flood protection works (p17)</li> <li>• Investment in walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure (p17)</li> <li>• Resourcing and supporting communities as they recover and develop (p18)</li> <li>• Repairing waterways and restoring ecosystems (p20)</li> <li>• Waterway basins detention and treatment programmes (p20)</li> <li>• Ensuring good ongoing public engagement, participation and deliberation (p20).</li> </ul> <p>AvON endorses the work in the CBD on the Avon River Precinct and sees the Avon Otakaro River Park as a logical extension to connect the CBD to the eastern suburbs and the coast.</p>
<p>Stormwater drainage activities (p86) Water quality in rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands is improved</p>	<p>Improvement in stormwater quality in existing urban areas can be achieved through retrofitting low impact urban design measures, such as swales, detention basins, rain gardens and constructed wetlands. The availability of land in existing urban areas has been a major constraint in the past on introducing wetland treatment of stormwater prior to discharge to the Avon Otakaro River. There is a unique opportunity with the red-zoned land to put in place wetlands for stormwater discharge. AvON recommends the inclusion in the three year plan of stormwater treatment systems being incorporated in the Avon Otakaro Corridor in red-zoned land.</p>
<p>Wastewater treatment and disposal (94) Negative effects of sewage overflows during wet weather.</p>	<p>Christchurch has a high frequency of raw sewage overflows into the Avon Otakaro River. The introduction of sewage overflow ponds at overflow points can significantly reduce the volume of sewage entering the river. Liquid from the ponds can be tankered for treatment. AvON recommends the inclusion in the three year plan of sewage overflow ponds at overflow points using red-zoned land in the Avon Otakaro Corridor.</p>
<p>Active travel (p102) Providing cycle networks</p>	<p>AvON endorses the active travel activities indicated in the three year plan.</p>

and walking networks	AvON recommends the introduction of cycle networks incorporating a cycle trail along the Avon Otakaro Corridor. AvON also recommends the introduction of a walking network incorporating a walking trail along the Avon Otakaro Corridor.
Parks and Open Spaces (p160) Garden and heritage parks; Regional parks.	AvON endorses the parks and open spaces activities in the three year plan. AvON recommends that the Avon Otakaro Corridor incorporate garden and heritage parks including community gardens, cultural heritage parks and earthquake memorials relevant to former residents of the red zone. AvON also recommends the establishment of a broad, continuous and self-sustaining biodiversity corridor along the Avon Otakaro Corridor which is integrated into biosanctuary and provides sustainable links to other biodiversity corridors within Christchurch.
Democracy and Governance (p198) Decisions take account of community views	AvON endorses the concept of the Council decisions taking account of community views. There is strong community support for the establishment of the Avon-Otakaro corridor as an ecological and recreational river park on red-zoned land. AvON recommends the establishment of an interim management group for the Avon Otakaro Corridor to facilitate the development and implementation a community-driven, science-informed plan for the Avon Otakaro Corridor.
Community support (p219) People actively involved in their communities	AvON endorses the concept of people being actively involved in their communities. The development of the Avon Otakaro Corridor is a suitable project as a community development project that warrants Council support to facilitate “the growth of strong, active, resourceful and resilient communities”.
City Planning and Development (p243)	AvON endorses the Council contributing to community outcomes by fully taking the “the opportunities given by the earthquakes to rethink the shape of the city. AvON sees the establishment of an ecological and recreational river park on the Avon Otakaro Corridor red-zoned land as an example of turning a tragedy into an opportunity, a polluted drain into a vibrant river system, and exhaustion and despair into hope and inspiration.

We wish to be heard.

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Mark Gibson Co-Chair - Avon/Otakaro Network

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Evan Smith Co-Chair – Avon/Otakaro Network

Date: