

Hawthorn Aquatic & Leisure Centre Survey Report (December 2009)

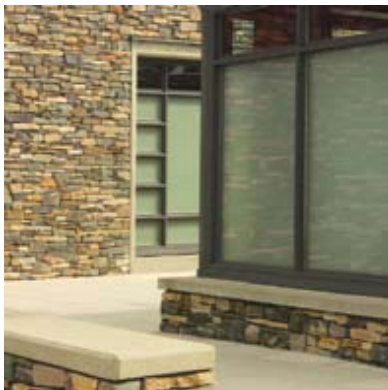
In addition to face-to-face surveys with HALC users, printed surveys were made available at HALC, to the general public via libraries, Council's customer service areas, and via an 8,000 mailout to nearby residents and businesses. A total of 710 surveys were returned.

Architectural look and feel

Respondents were asked to nominate the kind of architectural look and feel they would prefer for HALC. They were given an option of seven types of architecture (with photos) or could nominate their own. The most popular choice was Glass and Steel (40%), closely followed by Emphasising Stone (33%).



Glass and Steel



Emphasising Stone

Overall, 25% wanted an emphasis on wood, but some segments of the community preferred wood over glass and steel and stone. Thirty-two percent of those who were long-term users of HALC (10 or more years), and those who were older (33% of those aged 65 years and over) preferred wood.



Emphasising Wood

In the 'other' category, 9% added that they would like the building to be environmentally sustainable.

What is valued about the current HALC

The second question was an open-ended question asking respondents what they valued about the current look and feel of HALC that they felt Council should take into consideration in the new design.

The most popular response (23%) was that they valued 'nothing' about the current centre and wanted nothing retained, with comments such as 'the building is terrible', or 'the building needs an overhaul'.

There were a number of other comments on what was valued. The main responses were:

- current natural surroundings (39%)
- pool (29%)
- relaxed, friendly and accessible atmosphere (28%)
- current service provided by the YMCA (4%)
- location and access (4%)

Comments on the proposed components

The third question outlined the proposed components planned for the centre and asked if they thought if any components should be different to those proposed. Most of the responses were in relation to the pool (42%) and included a range of suggestions including some that were already included in the survey list. The pool responses included:

- Larger pool
- Hydrotherapy pool
- Keep the current outdoor pool
- Improve the pool
- Diving board

- Deeper pool for water polo
- Saltwater pool
- Water fountains and slides

A further 7% said they would like to have improved gym and exercise areas. Seven percent said they would like to have the stadium space improved. Of these, four percent specifically mentioned basketball, one percent netball, and one percent badminton. Five percent said they wanted squash courts, or improved squash courts.

A small number of people made suggestions to include:

- Spa/Jacuzzi
- Sauna
- Meeting rooms
- Internet cafe
- Table tennis area
- Kiosk
- First aid room

Some respondents suggested that the following did not need to be included in the new design:

- Cafe (7%)
- Consulting rooms (3%)
- Crèche (1%)

Public buildings that could provide inspiration

The fourth question asked respondents if they would like to recommend any other public buildings they were aware of that the architects should consider when designing HALC, and which aspects of the buildings they liked. Buildings mentioned were:

- Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre (MSAC) (4%)
- Federation Square (2%)
- Michael Tuck Stand (4%)
- Balwyn Leisure Centre (2%)
- Hawthorn Town Hall (2%)
- Kew Recreation Centre (1%)
- Melbourne Museum (1%)

The most common feature named was 'environmental sustainability' (3%).

What kind of building would be inappropriate

By far the most common response to the question of what kind of building would be inappropriate was 'heritage style' (18%). However, there were others who did not like some of the other architectural types mentioned in question one: glass and steel (11%), and emphasising wood (4%). Eleven percent did not want the building to be modern.

- Heritage style (18%)
- Glass and steel (11%)
- Emphasising wood (4%)
- Modern (11%)
- Like Federation Square (3%)

About the respondents

There was a higher response from males than females to the survey (65% compared to 35%). There was a good representation of age groups except for those aged 16-24 years.

