

**MEDIA RELEASE
DEVELOPMENT CHRISTCHURCH LIMITED (DCL)****2 NOVEMBER 2017****Iconic New Brighton Whale to be cloned this summer.**

New Brighton's iconic whale has delighted residents of the seaside suburb for decades, but engineers' inspections have revealed that the whale is too fragile to be moved to its new playground home.

Development Christchurch Limited (DCL) is leading the development of the new Beachside Playground, which includes a prominent spot for the whale in its designs. DCL Chief Executive Rob Hall says the importance of the whale has always been at the forefront of the Beachside Playground design. "The whale has long been a family favourite in the area so right from the start of this project it has been an integral feature. In fact, we have basically built the playground around it."

"However, during recent investigations, it has become clear that it is not a simple exercise to move the whale. We've had the engineers look at numerous solutions as we know how important it is to the community. However due to the age and fragility of the whale it is highly unlikely that it can be moved to its new splash-pad home successfully, so we had to find a new solution. New Brighton without a whale was never a solution so a new replica whale is being made", Mr. Hall says.

A fiberglass mould is being taken of the existing whale and this will then be strengthened and reinforced in the factory. A new replica will be constructed and installed into the splash-pad at the new Beachside Playground in December. The existing whale will remain in place for the summer.

"The team are in the process of cloning the whale, and this summer will see two whales in residence in New Brighton for children to play on."

Arrangements will be made next year for the original whale's departure, and DCL will discuss this with the community closer to the time.

The Beachside Playground is the first in a series of initiatives to kick-start New Brighton's revitalisation. The New Brighton Regeneration Project aims to draw people into the village centre through the development of attractions such as the new playground and the Christchurch Hot Pools, as well as by making improvements to Marine Parade and Brighton Mall. A contribution to the New Brighton Surf Club rebuild is also included in the project, alongside transport and parking improvements.

Public feedback is now being sought for early designs for the Christchurch Hot Pools, and engagement closes on 10 November 2017. The new Beachside Playground is due to open to the public in December 2017.

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