

12. ENVIRONS OF WAINONI PARK, ARANUI

Officer responsible Jonathan Fletcher, Director of Policy	Authors Janet Reeves - Urban Designer, DDI 941-8351 Dennis Morgan - Community Advocate; Ian McKenzie - Project Manager; Kelly Hansen - Parks and Waterways Planner; Yu Yi - Urban Designer; Chris Fourie - Parks and Waterways Area Advocate; Dave Falls - Property Services Officer; Malcolm Taylor - Area Engineer, City Streets
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The purpose of this report is to provide the Board and the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee with information on options for the effective renewal of the centre of Aranui, through major restructuring of the housing surrounding Wainoni Park, as a basis for deciding which option the Board/Committee wishes to be progressed for budget consideration.

BACKGROUND

In July 2000 the Christchurch City Council entered into a partnership agreement with Housing New Zealand (HNZ) to progressively renew the social, physical and economic structure of the Aranui community.

One key aspect of the Aranui Community Renewal project is the upgrading of the physical environment, that is buildings and spaces. The primary objectives of upgrading are to improve the appearance, safety and security of the community, to provide facilities to meet the needs of the community, and to foster a pride and neighbourliness in the community.

The potential areas for change are:

1. **HNZ Rental Properties**

Budget has been allocated for the improvement of HNZ stock. Redevelopment can take place on HNZ sites. This has the effect of providing better quality housing and garden areas, uplifting the area immediately around it. The first redevelopment in Portsmouth Street is now underway.

2. **City Council Streets, Footpaths and Berms**

Streets in Aranui are generally in good condition. Kerbs and channels are the new style flat channel design and are not likely to be replaced for 40-45 years. Trees are planted in many of the berms. There is a local area traffic management scheme (LATM) prepared in 1997. There is no funding for street improvement works in Aranui, although it was requested through the 2001/02 Annual Plan process.

3. **City Council Reserves**

The improvement of Wainoni Park has been highlighted as a priority. The Parks and Waterways Unit is currently reshaping the space, carrying out new planting and relocating the children's play area. Similar improvements have been undertaken in the past. The impact of improvements to the park alone is likely to be limited, unless changes are made to the way the park relates to the neighbouring environment.

4. **Privately Owned Businesses**

The shops and other non-residential buildings on the corner of Hampshire Street and Portsmouth Street are in a run down condition and some are vacant. The back lane is an eyesore and the area behind the shops is a hidden and unsavoury place which feels unsafe. The buildings are in private ownership and no funding is available to upgrade or redevelop them.

5. **Privately Owned Residences**

Private houses are generally in reasonable condition and the scope for change is limited. Attention could be paid to fencing and front gardens, but no funding is available to assist private owners.

In summary, the effect of the improvements that are possible, given the current funding, is likely to be limited. This needs to be acknowledged. If the renewal initiative is to have any real physical impact structurally significant changes rather than cosmetic ones will be necessary.

The area considered to be most in need of significant change is the area around Wainoni Park because the park is in the centre of Aranui, in a high profile location alongside Hampshire Street (the main road through the suburb) and is a major focus for the community. In order to have a real impact on the appearance, use, safety and security of the park and provide a new focal point for the community a major restructure of the surrounding properties has been mooted. A proposal of rearranging housing so that houses front onto all sides of the park was presented to a seminar on 7 December 2001, to which all Councillors and Burwood/Pegasus Community Board members were invited. Elected members present generally supported the proposal.

CONSULTATION AND FEEDBACK

Prior to the seminar the views of the community about Aranui, were sought through a series of meetings, discussions, surveys, etc. as follows:

- Community Day in Wainoni Park, December 2000.
- Survey about the park by letterbox drop, March 2001.
- Community Hui, March 2001.
- Community Needs Analysis, Towards Aranui Community Renewal, report by Stephanie Kelly for HNZ August 2001.
- Aranui Youth Forum, September 2001.
- Schools Arts Projects, November 2001.
- Aranui Community Renewal Committee input, 2001.

Wainoni Park and the surrounding area was consistently identified as one of the priorities for community renewal.

In addition, as part of the Aranui Community Renewal, a Design Group from the local community was established in September 2001 to work with Council staff to prepare a design plan for Wainoni Park. Ideas and suggestions about how to improve the Park were gathered from many sources over a period of time, and have been addressed by the Design Group.

The Design Group has held four workshops and considered solutions to some of the issues identified such as graffiti and vandalism problems, access and facilities, safety and lighting, sports areas, a skate park, gardens and pathways, BBQs and picnic areas, toilets, playgrounds, a stage for music and break dancing.

As a result a Park Concept Plan was prepared to respond to the needs and aspirations of the community, and was displayed at a community day held in Wainoni Park on 15 December 2001. At the same time the concept of restructuring the housing around the park was floated with the community. There was a further opportunity for the community to see the proposals and ask questions at the Aranui Community Hui in April 2002. Plans were displayed and Parks staff were available to explain the plans and the idea has been raised informally on other occasions. House visits to affected private owners are being conducted. The general consensus coming through from all this discussion is support for the restructuring concept.

Annual Plan submissions were made in relation to the park and environs as follows:

Aranui Community Renewal Committee

"It is vital to the Aranui Renewal Project that a substantial commitment is made by the Christchurch City Council to Wainoni Park when subsequent stages of the redevelopment are presented for inclusion in the Annual Plan",

Burwood/Pegasus Community Board

"The Board requests that this level of support continue and that the Council also considers favourably the provision for funding for capital works projects in this community, the Wainoni Park redevelopment being a major contribution",

and

Housing New Zealand

"Follow through on progressing the investigation and planning of the medium term vision of opening up Wainoni Park to the surrounding streets and the wider community... This is a major physical infrastructure improvement identified as necessary in extensive consultation... The staged redevelopment of Wainoni Park has major implications for surrounding housing, most of which is owned by Housing New Zealand, and is therefore a major financial component in the renewal partnership. This requires the parties to clearly demonstrate their commitment to the concept and overall aims of the community renewal project. Request ... provision of funding for staged capital works to be acknowledged in 2003/04, 2004/05".

The process for progressing the restructuring of the surroundings of Wainoni Park was put to the Board on 25 March 2002, the Community Plans Special Committee on 30 April 2002, and approved by the Council at its 23 May 2002 meeting. In accordance with the agreed process, approval to proceed to the next stage is now being sought. It is important for the Council to decide at this stage whether it is willing to support the concept financially, before embarking on further consultation with residents and negotiations with property owners.

There are three basic alternatives for the Council: (1) Do nothing; (2) Remove some houses and build new ones (the park remains approximately the same size but of a different shape); and (3) Remove some houses and enlarge the park.

The advantages and disadvantages of each option, together with the financial implications are outlined below. The concepts are illustrated diagrammatically on attachment 1.

OPTIONS FOR RESTRUCTURING THE EDGES OF WAINONI PARK

Option 1: Do nothing (Existing Park on Attachment 1)

Advantages

- Does not involve the outlay of City Council resources.

Disadvantages

- The safety, security and image issues in the area are not addressed.
- The improvement of the physical environment will be limited to upgrading the park itself and this may not be sufficient to have any real impact on the physical or social renewal of the area.
- Partners to the agreement (the Aranui community and HNZ) may feel let down by the Council's lack of visible and financial commitment to the project.

Costs

No financial costs.

Option 2: (Ideas 2, 3 and 4 on Attachment 1)

This is the concept presented to the seminar last year. It is based on the idea of rearranging housing around the park so that the park becomes the focal point of Aranui and is overlooked all the way around from adjoining properties. It entails a land swap between residential use and park use, but the net area of each remains approximately the same.

The concept requires the construction of two access roads, relocating or demolishing 14 existing buildings (some containing more than one unit) and erecting 18 new houses. The project could be divided into two stages. There are numerous variations of this concept, which could be explored further if necessary. Two other alternatives are included in the diagram.

Advantages

- Will bring drastic change in the physical environment of Wainoni Park. The danger spots and back-fences (with graffiti) will be eliminated and the image of Wainoni Park will be enhanced considerably.
- As the area of park will remain approximately the same the legal process relating to the Reserves Act 1977 should not be onerous.
- Provides an opportunity to have new houses with higher amenity value by providing mountain views and park views.
- The revised shape of the park will enable more efficient recreational use.
- Will demonstrate the Council's commitment to the renewal of Aranui.
- A large impact for relatively minor net cost.
- Could provide an opportunity to reduce State housing stock in this area and bring some changes in the socio-economic structure of residents.

Disadvantages

- Four private properties will be involved and will need to be purchased for the redevelopment.
- Some existing HNZ stock will need to be demolished or relocated.
- Some existing properties will no longer be directly adjacent to the park, but will back onto new residential properties.

Costs

To simplify the cost calculation it is based upon the assumption that all of the new houses are three bedroom stand alone houses. However, some variety in housing size and format would be expected. There are obviously other negative and positive influences on the cost calculations such as rent lost during construction, financial carrying costs and property value increases as a result of significant improvement of the physical and social character of the area.

The calculation indicates the overall cost of the project and the resultant value of assets. The allocation of costs and assets between the Council, HNZ and the private sector would need to be agreed as the project progresses.

	Number	Price/Unit	Cost	Asset Value
Purchase of Private Property (inc. fees)	4		330,000	
Value of HNZ Property (inc. land)	10		1,186,000	
Construction of Road	390	620	241,800	
Construction of New Houses (Standard L1)	18	118,000	2,257,500	
Incidental costs - marketing, reinstating park etc			150,000	
Total Cost			4,165,300	
Value of New Houses	18	150,000		2,700,000
Net Cost			1,465,300	

Legal Implications

Wainoni Park is owned by the Christchurch City Council and held under the Reserves Act 1977. The relocation of the open space will need to be approved by the Department of Conservation, which can be a lengthy process (c.12 months).

Wainoni Park is zoned O2 Open Space 2 (District Recreation and Open Space) in the Proposed Christchurch City Plan. The surrounding area is zoned Living 1 and is a Comprehensive Housing Improvement Area¹. The proposal will involve establishing housing on an open space zone and using land zoned Living 1 for recreational purposes. This change could be sought either by way of a Variation (or Plan Change once the City Plan is operative) or by way of a Non-complying Resource Consent. Both processes will require public notification. The former is a lengthier and more involved process but would resolve the zoning, whereas if consent were granted via a resource consent then the housing and park would still be non-complying with their zoning. The Regulatory and Consents Committee would need to be consulted at an early stage to establish the desirability, or otherwise, of promoting a Variation.

Option 3: (Idea 1 on Attachment 1)

- This option involves removing all of the residential properties that back onto Wainoni Park, so that a larger park is created surrounded by existing houses which front directly onto it.

Advantages

- The park area will be enlarged.
- Back fences and danger spots will be eliminated.
- There could be some reduction in State housing stock.

¹ There are specific areas identified within Living 1 zones where the Council considers that there is a place for housing renewal and improvement. This is one such area, where comprehensive integrated design can be achieved by aggregating land which is in common ownership for design purposes. The zoning provisions allow housing to a slightly higher density than a standard L1 zone.

Disadvantages

- Decrease of State housing stock may be interpreted as a lack of faith in the area.
- Current usage does not demonstrate a need to enlarge the park. A larger, less intensely used park is potentially less safe.
- Financial cost will be substantial.

Costs

	Number	Price/Unit	Cost
Purchase of Private Property (inc. fees)	10		949,000
Value of HNZ Property (inc. land)	23		2,475,000
Incidental costs - marketing, reinstating park etc	33		150,000
Total			3,574,000

SUMMARY

This report sets out three options for the environs of Wainoni Park, Aranui as part of the Aranui Community Renewal Project. The project is a partnership between HNZ and Christchurch City Council. HNZ staff have been involved in the formulation of the restructuring concept. Option 2 and Option 3 involve total net costs in the order of \$1.5 million and \$3.6 million respectively. It is likely that costs will be shared between the Council and HNZ, but not necessarily equally. Before the precise details of the share of the financial commitment required by the Council can be determined, the proposal will need to be assessed in considerable depth, in conjunction with HNZ.

NATURAL + PEOPLE + ECONOMIC STEP ASSESSMENT

#	CONDITION:	Meets condition ✓✓0*	HOW IT HELPS MEET CONDITION:
The Natural Step			
N1	Reduce non-renewable resource use	0	
N2	Eliminate emission of harmful substances	0	
N3	Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems	0	
N4	People needs met fairly and efficiently	NA	NA - See People Step + Economic Step.
The People Step			
P1	Basic needs met	0	
P2	Full potential developed	✓	Makes the space more useable.
P3	Social capital enhanced	✓✓	Improves safety and security.
P4	Culture and identity protected	✓	Emphasises the centre of the community.
P5	Governance and participatory democracy strengthened	✓	Part of the Aranui Community renewal project.
The Economic Step			
E1	Effective and efficient use of all resources	✓	Better use of park.
E2	Job rich local economy	✓	Will create jobs during construction period.
E3	Financial sustainability	✓	Potential for arresting decline in value of adjoining housing stock.

Staff

- Recommendations:**
1. That the Board/Committee identify its preferred option.
 2. That should either Option 2 or 3 be preferred, then a detailed analysis be undertaken by staff of the costs, engineering issues, funding and staging so that a comprehensive report may be brought to the 2003 Annual Plan process, requesting allocation of funds in future financial years.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the Board support further investigation and detailed funding and engineering analysis of options 2 and 3 for the environs of Wainoni Park.