

10. MEMORIAL/RUSSLEY/HAWTHORNDEN AREA PLAN - UPDATE

Officer responsible Director of Information and Planning Environmental Services Manager	Author Janine Sowerby – Senior Planner, City Development Group DDI 941 8814 Glenda Dixon – Planner, City Plan, DDI 941 6203
Corporate Plan Output: Area Plans	

The purpose of this report is to update the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board on progress with preparation of the Memorial-Russley-Hawthornden Area Plan since the staff presentation to it on 19 November 2002. A similar report will also be presented to the Urban Planning and Growth Special Committee in September 2003.

BACKGROUND

The future of undeveloped land on the city side of Russley Road between Memorial Avenue, Avonhead Park and Hawthornden/Withells Roads is being looked at by the City Council. It is preparing an area plan in response to references (appeals) to the Environment Court against Council decisions in 1999 to keep rural and low-density residential zoning over the study area. The Memorial-Russley-Hawthornden Area Plan will form the basis for any future variation to the Proposed City Plan, if rezoning the subject land from rural to urban is determined to be appropriate. It will also determine to what extent rezoning should occur and outline the timing and pattern of any development.

Area Plan preparation is a 10-step process:

1. Update/collate/complete information base.
2. SWOT analysis.
3. Internal consultation with Council staff.
4. External consultation with community.
5. Develop and evaluate future land use options.
6. Obtain more detailed information on component parts of preferred land use options.
7. Prepare implementation plan.
8. Prepare area plan (based on either 50 or 55 dBA Ldn noise contours, still to be determined by the Environment Court).
9. Project closure.
10. Project review.

The first phase of community consultation (Step 4), to see how people see the study area developing (if at all) and to gather any other information that may help the Council to decide if the study area is suitable for rezoning, has been completed.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Although a non-statutory planning project, in accordance with the Council's Seeking Community Views Policy, community consultation was considered necessary to:

1. Alert the community to the fact that an Area Plan is being developed, and to explain what it is and why it is being developed.
2. Identify their values and aspirations (i.e. how the community would like to see the study area develop).
3. Gather any further information they may have that would assist the Council to determine whether the study area is suitable for urban rezoning.

Given the number of people involved, in order to make consultation with the community manageable, the decision was made to consult first with:

1. Group 1 (landowners and occupiers in the study area) and Group 2 (other people/organisations with a specific interest in the study area, including immediately adjoining landowners and occupiers); then on the basis of more detailed information to include;
2. Group 3 - landowners and occupiers in the wider vicinity.

Community consultation to date has involved:

- Early December 2002 and early February 2003 - 'profile raising' articles in the Christchurch City Scene.
- Late January/early February 2003 - information sent to, and opportunity for, Group 1 and 2 people to make initial written comments only, and advise whether they wished to be kept informed and/or meet to have their say.

- Ongoing responses to individual queries and individual meetings with key landowners and organisations.
- May/June 2003 - 5 meetings for Group 1 and 2 people to discuss the issues and respond to questions aimed at how everyone's different views might be brought together to set out principles for any rezoning and development that may occur. Attendance at the meetings varied from 17 to 99 people.

While there was no overall consensus as to how people see the individual blocks and overall study area developing, with divergent views as to where the 'urban boundary' should be, some strong themes did emerge, including amongst others:

- The area has an environment with a rural or semi-rural character and recreational opportunities which many people would like to preserve.
- Traffic noise, volumes and safety are more significant to many people than airport noise, at least at current noise levels.
- However most people support the current operation of the airport and recognise its economic importance to the region.
- The Memorial Ave/Russley Rd corner is a 'gateway' to the City and should be treated as such.

Useful comments were also made about possible mitigation measures if any rezoning and development did occur.

A copy of the general principles/themes and ideas for implementation/mitigation that have emerged from community consultation to date are scheduled below.

WHERE TO FROM HERE

The views expressed will assist staff during the next step in the process - development and evaluation of possible future land use options. Further community consultation in order to identify the preferred future land use option will include:

- A small representative group to discuss/comment upon details when developing and evaluating possible future land use options (including the option of no change) as necessary;
- Further City Scene articles and public meeting/s when further input will be sought from the wider community as to the preferred future land use options developed.
- Formal/statutory consultation, submissions, hearing and references in association with preparation of any resulting variation to the Proposed City Plan if any rezoning is determined to be appropriate.

The Area Plan will include an appendix documenting the outcome of community consultation; whether it has been incorporated into the Memorial-Russley-Hawthornden Area Plan; and, where it is unable to be incorporated, why not and where it has been redirected for action.

Completion of the Area Plan is dependent upon the Environment Court's decision on whether the 50 or 55 dBA Ldn noise contour should be the delimiter of noise-sensitive activities. The hearing of this preliminary matter is expected to begin on 24 November 2003 and be completed by Christmas. As release of the decision may be some months into 2004, the earliest the site-specific zoning references, including those relating to the Memorial-Russley-Hawthornden area, are now likely to be heard is mid 2004.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES/THEMES	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION/MITIGATION
<p>Amenity</p> <p>The area has an established community now with a lifestyle they chose.</p> <p>The area has an environment with a rural or semi-rural character, and recreational opportunities which many people would like to preserve.</p> <p>Traffic volumes, noise and safety are more significant to many people than aircraft noise.</p> <p>The Memorial/Russley corner is a "gateway" to the City and should be treated as such.</p> <p>Russley Road needs measures to reduce current and future traffic noise and provide a green corridor entrance to the City.</p>	<p>No rezoning.</p> <p>Include parks and open space.</p> <p>Memorial Ave corner - big setbacks on frontage and corner, tree and landscape planting, gateway concept.</p> <p>Low-rise buildings, good building design.</p> <p>Russley Road – at least 20m setbacks, maybe more, mounding and landscaping.</p> <p>Low-density housing, e.g. 2000m²=half acre, or 4000m²=one acre, or 8000m²=2 acre site sizes.</p> <p>Speed humps on Avonhead Rd and Hawthornden Rd.</p>

Traffic/roading	
<p>Four-laning of State Highway 1 (Russley Road) will increase traffic noise and require measures to reduce the effects on people living in the vicinity.</p> <p>Safety concerns at the Avonhead Road/State Highway 1 intersection do mean that most people favour the left-in left-out proposal.</p> <p>Most people do not want to see <u>any</u> traffic increase within the study area.</p>	<p>As above. At least 20m setbacks on Russley Rd, maybe more, mounding and landscaping.</p> <p>No rezoning</p> <p>No minor arterial connection from Russley Rd through Block B to Merrin St.</p> <p>Prevent right turning across lanes at Avonhead Rd/SH1, e.g. median barrier.</p>
Airport	
<p>At the moment at current noise levels most existing residents are not especially bothered about airport noise, with the exception of engine testing.</p> <p>Most people support the current operation of the airport and recognise its economic importance to the region.</p> <p>Nevertheless people want to know more about the airport's future intentions, e.g:</p> <p>(a) with respect to building up the area south of Avonhead Road and west of SH 1.</p> <p>(b) with respect to usage of the northwest runway; and</p> <p>(c) with respect to future airport noise levels.</p> <p>People wish to be reassured that the noise contour lines in the Proposed City Plan are accurate, in terms of location and projected noise levels.</p>	<p>Information from CIAL on the airport's future intentions both at meetings such as this, and in the future on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Confirmation that the noise contour lines in the Proposed City Plan are accurate, in terms of location and projected noise levels.</p>
Urban boundary	
<p>There are divergent views as to where the urban boundary should be, i.e. Hawthornden Road or Russley Road. Many people favour Hawthornden Road, and some people favour Russley Road.</p> <p>There have been few suggestions of any position in between, other than low-density development across Blocks B and D (and maybe Block A).</p>	<p>Permanent urban boundary at either Hawthornden or Russley Road. Make this clear in the City Plan.</p> <p>Ensure there is a buffer between the urban area and Russley Road/the airport.</p>
Natural features and services	
<p>Soils are of good quality, but in Block B there are some conflicts between farming and housing nearby, as well as some benefits to residents, e.g. open space, rural outlook.</p> <p>Farming small blocks is not economic. Most of the study area (other than the Franks' property) is already a lifestyle or rural-residential area.</p> <p>Groundwater quality must be protected.</p> <p>There are constraints on disposing of storm water. The type of development that could occur will need to reflect this.</p>	<p>Preserve open space/rural outlook somehow.</p> <p>Protect groundwater quality somehow.</p> <p>Dispose of storm water without compromising aquifers.</p>

Block A	
<p>If the 50 dBA line ends up being the delimiter of noise sensitive development, the developer would seek bulk retail and office park development on Block A. However there is substantial opposition to retail from residents on traffic and need grounds.</p> <p>Some people have suggested a low-density technology park with extensive landscaping, or other commercial development.</p> <p>If the 55 dBA line ends up being the delimiter of noise sensitive development, no clear view has emerged as to the acceptability of residential here, although some people suggested low density.</p> <p>The Memorial Ave/Russley Rd corner is a "gateway" or tourist entrance to the City and should be treated as such. What happens behind the corner and associated visual treatment is of less concern.</p>	<p>Big setbacks on Memorial Ave frontage and corner, tree and landscape planting.</p> <p>Develop a gateway concept.</p> <p>Low-rise buildings, low site coverage, good building design.</p> <p>Exclude retail.</p>
Block C	
<p>Owners and some residents around Block C don't see the loss of this rural area as an issue.</p> <p>Owners would now accept the 25 extra lots in the Proposed City Plan provisions, with any development over and above this prevented. There is some willingness to work together to plan development on an integrated, rather than site by site, basis.</p> <p>Most people think it would be OK to have the area as lifestyle blocks (as in the Proposed City Plan), possibly no complaints covenants on extra houses, but some think it should be left as is/rural.</p>	<p>Proposed City Plan provisions as they stand (25 additional lots) if Environment Court will agree.</p> <p>All owners to work together to plan development on an integrated basis.</p>
Block B	
<p>People recognise the possible conflicts between farming and residential and the poor economics of farming but still want a rural outlook and little change.</p> <p>The Hawthornden Residents Group in particular does not see a need for rezoning.</p> <p>Low-density residential development with lots of open space (e.g. cemetery expansion/parks) is seen as a possible compromise.</p> <p>There is no backing for business development in Block B, as there would be too many conflicts with residential, and aquifer and traffic issues.</p>	<p>No rezoning. Allow only one house per 4 ha (existing Rural 5 provisions).</p> <p>Low density housing, e.g. 2000m² – 8000m².</p> <p>Lots of open space, e.g. cemetery expansion, parks.</p> <p>Big setbacks on Russley Road with noise mitigation and landscaping.</p> <p>No minor arterial connection from Russley Road to Merrin Street.</p> <p>Ensure that there is a buffer between the urban area and Russley Road.</p> <p>Buffer between Henridge Place and any development to the north on Block B.</p> <p>Establish a clear and permanent urban boundary.</p>

Block D	
<p>Less conflicts between farming and residential as there is little farming anyway – this is essentially a lifestyle/rural-residential area.</p> <p>There is not much backing for business as there would be too many conflicts with the lifestyle character of the area, and restrictions on access to and from State Highway 1.</p> <p>Additional lots and houses would be opposed by CIAL, etc, because of the location of the area under the approaches to the north-west runway, so little change is likely here.</p>	<p>Check if any further low-density housing could be acceptable.</p> <p>If not little change likely here.</p>

Staff

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.