

8. FUTURE CITY PLAN HERITAGE LISTINGS

Officer responsible Director of Information and Planning	Author Neil Carrie, Senior Planner, Urban Design and Heritage, DDI 941-8643 Amanda Ross, Assistant Heritage Planner, DDI 941-6388
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The purpose of this report is to advise of the process for researching, assessing and including new heritage items in the City Plan heritage listings.

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ADDITIONS TO THE CITY PLAN HERITAGE LISTINGS

Potential additions to the heritage listings in Appendix 1, Part 10, Volume 3 of the Proposed City Plan are brought to the attention of heritage staff by members of the public, property owners, groups such as the Civic Trust, local history groups and residents' associations. Heritage staff also identify buildings, places and objects as possible future additions to the heritage listings and are currently looking at thematic based approaches to identifying new listings. For example we are currently researching and investigating the history of corner shops in Christchurch and identifying surviving examples. This thematic approach provides an in depth historical and architectural context for a building place or object and is an aid to ensuring that a wide range of sites are considered as possible future heritage listings. Liaison with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga with regard to their list of buildings proposed for registration has also been established, thus ensuring an exchange of information between both parties.

Once a property has been identified as a possible future addition to the heritage listings, it is added to our register of properties requiring research. Sufficient research under each of the assessment criteria identified in Part 2, 4.3.1 of the Proposed City Plan (Historical/Social, Cultural/Spiritual, Architectural/Artistic, Group/Setting, Landmark, Archaeological, Technology/Craftsmanship) is required in order to carry out an accurate assessment of the heritage significance of a building place or object.

Heritage research can be a lengthy process and involves sourcing original architectural plans where possible, photographs of the heritage item over time, descriptions of the item in contemporary newspaper articles, historical information about the people who lived in and/or owned the property and about the businesses which operated out of the building, as well as information about the architect and architectural style of the building. A site visit is necessary to determine the architectural integrity of the item and identify construction methods and materials, as well as additions and alterations.

Currently there are approximately 40 buildings under consideration for additions to the City Plan heritage listings, including the Richmond Methodist Church and Sunday School, the Christchurch Golf Club in Shirley, and the former St Joseph's Orphanage in Halswell. Heritage staff aim to have these researched and assessed in time for a future plan change in approximately two years time. Due to the timing of the plan change and pressure on staff resources, one of the buildings identified as a possible future addition to the heritage listings, the former Public Works Department in Blenheim Road, was unable to be researched and assessed before its recent demolition.

THE CITY PLAN PROCESS

The listing of heritage Items in Chapter 10, Appendix 1 forms an integral part of the City Plan. The status of this information included in the City Plan has therefore the same statutory constraints as any other section of the Plan. The Appendices cannot be amended by inclusion of further items without following the processes set out in the Resource Management Act.

When the City Plan has been notified, public submissions made, decisions by Council on submissions and where necessary references on these decisions to the Environment Court have been completed then the City Plan becomes operative. Prior to completion of this process the heritage listing may have items removed or added by submission, or by reference to the Environment Court with resolution by consent order or by the decision of the Environment Court. The alternative for amending the City Plan during this process is by Variation. A similar statutory process to the initial notification of the Plan is followed for Variations which however have the potential effect of extending the time before the Plan becomes operative or require a staging of the sections of the Plan to become operative.

The Council has decided that wherever possible no further Variations will be considered to ensure that the Plan becomes operative without further delay. Where variations are urgently needed in the public interest, or would not create overall delay to the operative date, then variations may be considered. It is likely that the majority of the Plan will be made operative during 2004. Some provisions will not be able to be made operative at that time but it is important that as much as possible be made operative.

It is possible, depending upon priorities and resources, for changes to the Plan to be prepared prior to the operative date and notified immediately afterwards.

When the City Plan becomes operative then a Plan Change is required to amend any part, including the heritage items detailed in the current Chapter 10 Appendix 1. A Plan Change will require a similar statutory process to be followed as for the initial notification.

The City Council does have a policy for entering into conservation covenants for non-listed heritage properties. The criteria applied under this policy are the same as for listed heritage items but the significance may be assessed on more limited grounds. Where a property meets the conditions of this policy a covenant could provide effective protection without an established value sufficient for heritage listing in the City Plan. This approach would require a willing owner to be a party to the conservation covenant and may therefore be of limited application.

CONCLUSIONS

The combination of the statutory constraints on changes to the City Plan, as well as the time and resources required for research and assessment, means that although the identification of further potential inclusions and the review of the current listing is an on-going process, changes to the City Plan heritage listings are subject to limitations in time, resources and statutory processes which will not always be able to meet immediate threats to non-listed heritage items.

Staff

Recommendation: For information.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the Regulatory and Consents Committee be asked to expedite making the City Plan operative as soon as possible, so that the heritage listings plan change can be initiated without delay.