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Corporate Plan Output: Parks Plans and Policy Statements and New Assets – Reserve Purchases	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Council purchase a property in Hillary Crescent for a local community reserve. The report has been submitted to the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board for comment.

INTRODUCTION

In 1998 a local community needs analysis was undertaken in the Upper Riccarton area. The resultant report has identified a community, which is characterised by several significant features, namely high population increase since 1991, low incomes, and high ethnic diversity. A ‘community house’ at 40 Hillary Crescent managed by Fijian Social Services Trust has provided a range of children’s and adult recreation and training programmes for the community. The facilities are no longer adequate to service the areas needs. Consideration is now being given to the creation of a pocket community park of approximately 1800m² to serve the special needs of the strongly multi-cultural community of the Upper Riccarton area and especially the residents of Hillary Crescent and Roche Street in the medium to long term.

An opportunity to acquire a suitable property to meet the immediate needs has now arisen the details of which are included within this report.

LOCATION

Hillary Crescent is a short loop road off Curletts Road in Upper Riccarton. It lies in the block between Blenheim Road to the south, Main South Road to the north, Curletts Road to the west and Hansen Lane on the east. Hillary Crescent is connected to Roche Street by a narrow right-of-way.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The population of the study area has increased at twice the rate of the city-wide population since 1991. The area has significantly higher than city averages of household incomes lower than \$15,000 per annum, unemployed, those with ‘no qualifications’, one-parent families, rental properties, Housing New Zealand properties, transient students, young people aged between 19-24, households with no access to a telephone, as well as a higher population of Maori, Pacific Island, Asian and other ethnic groups, with only 66.3% of the population identifying as ‘European Only’, compared with 83.6% city-wide.

The area is bounded by an industrial zone and four main, busy roads, with a high proportion of large trucks using Main South Road, Curletts Road and Hansens Lane on a regular basis. The closest shopping area is at Upper Riccarton and generally, residents like the convenience of this area with most facilities being within walking distance. For swimming and library facilities, most residents go to Hornby (Hornby Library and Sockburn Pool). This area reflects a greater cultural mix than most other parts of Christchurch, with 13 ethnic backgrounds already represented in the programmes running out of 40 Hillary Crescent.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE CONTEXT

Generally the above area has adequate provision of local green space, with Vicki Street Reserve and Hansens Lane Reserve providing the two areas of local park. However, the Hillary Crescent area is isolated from the Vicki Street Reserve by Curletts Road which carries high traffic volumes and trucks etc. Hansens Lane Reserve is right at the margin of the recommended 400m travel radius distance from a park via the street system from Hillary Crescent.

From a parks point of view the request to create more reserve space in the area has been evaluated from a slightly wider social perspective than normal given the extra information available on the socio-economic/cultural characteristics of this area.

A COMMUNITY POCKET PARK FOR HILLARY CRESCENT

The success of the 'Community House' at 40 Hillary Crescent and a need for a new location points to joint community – park solution which would provide greater overall benefit to the area than either facility alone.

A small community park associated with a community building with play facilities for younger children and an attractive setting would be beneficial in the Hillary Crescent area. This would alleviate some of the social needs of the area by providing a local meeting place with space for play opportunities for younger children. More challenging facilities for older children would be better incorporated in either Vicki Street and or Hansens Lane Reserves. Hillary Crescent would be suitable for a small park and adjacent community building.

CONCLUSION – OBJECTIVES

The main purchase objective is to create a better local community facility in the Hillary Crescent area which combines aesthetic factors such as planting, children's play and wider social objectives than would occur if a park or community building were to occur in isolation. Results from the Local Community Needs Analysis report indicate that a pocket community park associated with an adjoining community house would be a needed and well used addition for the people of Upper Riccarton.

PROPERTY DETAILS AND SETTLEMENT

As shown on the attached plan the property in question is a regular shaped site of 673m² facing west on Hillary Crescent with a frontage of 17.6m. It is level in contour layed with a concrete strip driveway, concrete paths, lawns, shrubs and gardens. The improvements comprise a single storeyed two bedroom residential dwelling built in the 1950s era with durock sidings, concrete tile roof and both timber and aluminium joinery. Other improvements include a modern double garage and a free standing flat containing a kitchen, bathroom and bed-sitting area. Both the house and flat are currently let.

The property has been valued on the Council's behalf by George Anderson and Company Limited the details of which are included in the public excluded section of this report. Agreement has been reached with the owner requiring the Council to confirm by 31 August 1999 its intention to purchase. As such approval is sought to acquire the land as a reserve.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

The purchase will be funded from the Reserve Purchase Fund in the 1999/2000 Corporate Plan.

The above report was considered at the 4 August 1999 meeting of the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board. Both the following recommendation and the public excluded recommendation were unanimously supported by the Board.

The Committee endorsed a suggestion by Councillor Sheriff that, in future, reports proposing the acquisition of land for reserve purposes include not only the source of funds but also the balance of the reserve purchase budget and the priority of the proposed purchase in terms of the Local Parks Acquisition Strategy.

Recommendation: That the property in Hillary Crescent be acquired for a recreation reserve on the terms and conditions outlined in the public excluded section of this report.