

9. PURCHASE OF ESPLANADE RESERVE - KNIGHTS STREAM

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Corporate Plan Output: New Assets (Waterways and Wetlands 9.3.45)	

The purpose of this report is to consider the purchase of an esplanade reserve along the bank of Knights Stream in order to protect and enhance it.

BACKGROUND

Knights Stream is an upper tributary of the Halswell River and in this locality follows its natural path entrenched within the adjacent banks and highlighted in the wider flat rural landscape by large trees growing along its banks. Downstream of Marshs Road there is a continual base flow provided by a stock water race and natural springs in the stream bed. This waterway has significance to the Tangata Whenua and is part of a historical route used when travelling by boat from the Avon/Heathcote Estuary to Lake Ellesmere.

The City Plan identifies a proposed walkway alongside Knights Stream while the Waterways and Wetland Natural Asset Management Strategy identifies this waterway as providing an important green corridor that will achieve the following:

- The corridor will allow the development of a walkway linking the Heathcote River to Knights Stream.
- Form an important landscape feature in an otherwise flat featureless landscape.
- The corridor will highlight the historical route used by the Tangata Whenua when travelling by boat from the Avon/Heathcote Estuary to Lake Ellesmere.
- Form part of a wide green corridor that will provide habitat for native bush birds when they move down from the Port Hills to the plain during the winter months.
- Provide a buffer between the waterway and adjacent land use resulting in improved water quality and habitat.
- Provide the minimum area necessary for a viable ecosystem of plants and animals.
- Provide a sheltering effect for surrounding urban areas that will be located in an exposed open plains area.
- Provide space for the ponds and wetlands required for the attenuation of the adverse effects of urban runoff on water quality and quantity.

PROPERTY DETAILS

The subject property is located to the eastern side of Fountains Road between the intercepting roadways of Marshs Road to the north and Hodgins Road to the south. Knights Stream forms the eastern boundary to the property as depicted on the tabled plan 17152S. Subdivision consent is held to subdivide this property into three lifestyle blocks and agreement has been reached with the owner to acquire lot 4 on the plan as an esplanade reserve. Surrounding developments comprise vacant and improved lifestyle holdings with this area undertaking intensive subdivision over recent years and now regarded as a most saleable lifestyle location. In respect of amenities the property is well situated with the Halswell area providing a good array of shopping facilities, primary schools, recreational areas etc.

The area of land to be acquired comprises a strip approximately 33m in width adjoining the stream and extending along the full rear boundary of the subject property. A total area of approximately 1.17ha is to be acquired. The cover currently comprises established pasture which is currently farmed as one lifestyle block.

Zoning

The property is zoned Rural 2 under the Operative Transitional District Plan of the former Paparua County Council and is zoned Rural 2 under the Proposed City Plan. In terms of subdivision the minimum site area is now 4ha. However the previous City Plan had the location contained within a horticultural zone whereby subdivision down to 2ha was permitted. As the owners had applied for subdivision consent prior to the public notification of the Proposed City Plan they are holding consent to subdivide down to the 2ha minimum requirements.

PROPERTY SETTLEMENT

The property was valued for the Council by Ford Baker, registered public valuers, and for the owners by Binns, Barber and Keenan, the details of which are included in the public excluded section of this report. An agreement has been entered into to be confirmed by 25 February 2000 to acquire the area concerned.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

The purchase will be funded from the Water Services Unit, Waterway and Wetland Enhancement Fund. The allocation for the 1999/2000 financial year is \$1.105m of which to date a total of approximately \$680,000 has been expended. It is not known whether the purchase price will come to charge this financial year, given that the survey of the property has to be completed before title can be issued. However should title be available prior to 30 June 2000, sufficient funds are held to complete the purchase.

The above report was considered by the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board at its meeting on 2 February 2000. The Board endorsed the proposal to acquire the above land for an esplanade reserve.

Recommendation: That lot 4 on plan 17152S containing approximately 1.17ha and being part of the land comprised and described in Certificate of Title 37A/1235 be acquired by the Council as a Esplanade Reserve subject to the terms and conditions outlined in the public excluded section of this report.