

2. OWLES TERRACE: PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH ECO VILLAGE

Officer responsible Community Advocate, Dennis Morgan	Author Community Secretary
Corporate Plan Output: Property: Asset Management	

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the Burwood/Pegasus Community Gardens Subcommittee's recommendation to investigate the feasibility of establishing an Eco Village at Owles Terrace.

INTRODUCTION

The Community Gardens Subcommittee evolved from a report "Growing Communities – Organic Resources for Social Needs" presented to the Board's 22 November 1999 meeting. The purpose of the Subcommittee was to investigate the establishment of community gardens and composting schemes within the Burwood/Pegasus area. The aim of these gardens is to provide a sustainable means of disposal for kitchen waste, encourage the sharing of knowledge in composting and gardening and to create places of engagement for local communities. The Subcommittee is comprised of Chrissie Williams, Glenda Burt, Caroline Kellaway, Carole Evans, Don Rowlands, Andrew Livingstone (PEEEPS), George Watson (Mature Employment Services), Eric Park (Waste Management Unit), Michael McNabb (Community Development Adviser) and Kaye Edens (Community Technical Adviser).

ECO VILLAGE

The Subcommittee has already established a number of composting and community garden pilots, however discussions have broadened to develop the concept to an Eco Village. Initial discussions have been undertaken between the Subcommittee and Property Unit over the feasibility of establishing the Owles Terrace site as an Eco Village. The site, owned by the Council, had its zoning changed under the City Plan Hearings process to allow for residential uses in the northern section of the park. The Council currently owns the site and its Property Unit is investigating means of developing the designated area for residential uses. The Subcommittee saw this as a prime opportunity to establish the City's first Eco Village as a pilot for other schemes in future years to enhance objectives such as zero waste and energy efficiency. It was felt that it would be important to investigate ways and means that business interests may be able to meet the Property Unit's financial objectives and timeframes for sale of the site. Further investigations would also have to be undertaken to establish a model for an Eco Village which would include a wide contingency of factors such as energy efficiency standards, waste minimisation standards, site feasibility and design plans. The Subcommittee felt that to move on from this initial concept idea it would be important to establish a separate Working Party. It is proposed that the Working Party include Chrissie Williams, Carole Evans, Don Rowlands, Caroline Kellaway, Glenda Burt, Sally Buck, Anna Crighton, Eric Park (Waste Management Unit) and Pam Ellis (Property Unit).

At its 1 May 2000 meeting the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board supported the Subcommittee's recommendation to explore the concept of an Eco Village on this Council owned land. It saw the project as a great chance for the Council to take the lead in ecologically sensitive housing that could act as a model for private developers in the future.

The Committee also considered the following report tabled at the meeting by the Property Projects Manager:

The purpose of this memorandum is to advise the Property Unit's concerns with regard to the report to be presented to the Projects and Property Committee on Friday 12 May with respect to an Eco Village at Owles Terrace. The current report and recommendation could be misleading in that it creates the impression that such a use of the site is already pre-determined.

By way of background in 1993, after full public consultation, the Council adopted a concept for redevelopment of the old yard and existing reserve areas at Owles Terrace. The consequential rezoning of the recreation and residential areas was incorporated into the proposed City Plan.

The concept provided for residential development, together with open space suitable for playing fields and community/sports buildings. Submissions to the proposed City Plan zoning were considered by a Commissioner who amended the proposed Living/Open Space boundaries to accommodate the concerns of the submitters. The Commissioner's decision was subsequently adopted by the Council.

From a property perspective the Owles Terrace yard is contained within the Property Unit's surplus property budget for recovery of an estimated \$1.5m net revenue from property development and sales. You will recall that the Projects and Property Committee have requested we progress this matter with some expediency. Our intention is to present the Committee with an "options report" to do this. Essentially we propose to outline how the Council can maximise its return from the portion zoned Living 1 and attend to the recreational and open space areas with a lesser degree of urgency as these portions have significant issues with consultation and existing occupancies which have been slowing the process to date.

We view Eco Village developments as one of a number of options that can be considered. It is therefore premature to be investigating and sanctioning this option at this stage prior to a full options report being presented.

We would suggest that the recommendation be altered to reflect that a full options report will be progressed in due course which will investigate an Eco Village as one option.

Members of the Committee agreed that it would be premature to approve the eco village concept until a full report on the options for the development of this site had been considered by the Council. The Property Manager advised that although the Property Unit would prepare an "options" report on the highest and best uses for the site, it would be up to the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board or some other agency to prepare a full report on the eco village concept, which could then be measured against the "highest and best" use.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the establishment of a use for the residentially zoned portion of the Owles Terrace site be the subject of a full "options report" by the Property Manager, as required by Council policy, and that such report be submitted to the July meeting.
 2. That the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board be invited to submit a detailed proposal for the establishment of an eco village on this site, such report to be considered in conjunction with the Property Manager's "options" report.