

## 11. ELY STREET – PROPERTY PURCHASE

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The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to purchase the property at 44 Ely Street as an addition to Moa Reserve. The property will provide a large open frontage to Moa Reserve, and open up a relatively secluded area of the park, providing a safer environment with greater recreational appeal.

### PARK LOCALITY AND CATCHMENT

Moa Reserve (2008m<sup>2</sup>) is situated between Ely, Moa and Melrose Streets in a high-density housing area. Because it does not have a large road frontage on Ely and Melrose Streets, the reserve is relatively secluded. The existing reserve was created in 1990 to help compensate for the loss of open space associated with urban renewal of the area. High-density apartment redevelopments continue to be popular in this inner city area.

Moa Reserve is an important local park in an area which, because of in-fill housing, is still increasing in population. It serves a local catchment area bounded by Salisbury Street and Madras Street.



### RESERVE USE

As a small “pocket” park, Moa Reserve’s main feature is its pleasant walking connection between Moa, Melrose and Ely Streets. A small playground area is located opposite the Moa Street entrance. The park provides an important, quiet refuge from the busy roads and small living areas of the surrounding apartments. The local community comprises a mix of young professionals, retired people and some families.



The southern reserve entrance on Ely Street is off-set from the main park area and has a narrow 3m connection. The addition of 44 Ely Street would not only increase this connection by 17m, giving a clear view into the park, but would also add 566m<sup>2</sup> to the 2,008m<sup>2</sup> reserve.

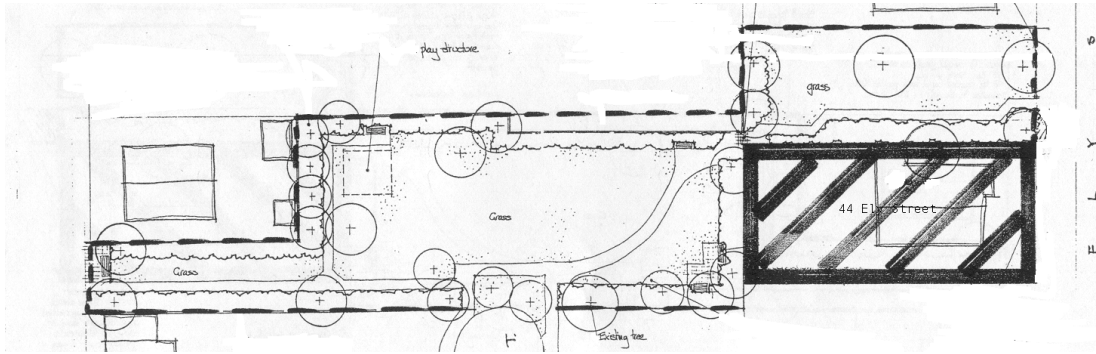
The effect of the property purchase would be to enlarge the park quite dramatically. The existing secluded area of the park would be opened up, providing a safer environment with greater recreational appeal.



#### **PARK LAYOUT AND SAFETY**

The park is relatively enclosed by neighbouring residential properties. The layout is contrary to the Council's "Safer Parks" objectives and is an example of what we are trying to avoid in terms of new park layout and design.

### Existing Moa Reserve with 44 Ely Street shaded



The Ely Street and Melrose Street ends of the park are set some distance back from the remaining park and have very poor sight lines which allow little casual surveillance from passers-by. This area has been left undeveloped for this reason to date. Security from properties surrounding the park has increased, however, with recent infill town houses having formal living areas that overlook this area. With the Ely property used as a larger open frontage security would increase.

### COMMUNITY CHANGES

Increasingly, the local community is changing in terms of older houses with larger sections being replaced with multi-unit developments with very small areas of open space. There does need to be an investment of open space to offset these changes. In essence, the reserve is the large "back garden" for the whole neighbourhood. Moa Reserve is a community-based park where local residents can spend time in a more friendly garden-type reserve and where large trees can be planted.

### PROPERTY PURCHASE

To assess the property's value the Council engaged the services of Ford Baker, Registered Public Valuers, and following discussions with the owners agreement has been reached to acquire the property subject to Council approval. The details of the settlement are covered in the public excluded section of this report.



## **SOURCE OF FUNDS**

Provision has been included within the Neighbourhood Reserve Purchase Fund for the purchase of the property in the current financial year. If this purchase and the Scarborough purchase proceed, \$340,000 will be available for the remainder of the current year for neighbourhood reserve purchases.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Parks and Waterways Unit has been aware of the undesirable layout of Moa Reserve for some time. Property acquisition to improve the layout, safety and usage of the reserve is justified. Furthermore, this area of the city is one of the areas of relatively low open space provision. It is important to note that opportunities do not always arise in the highest priority areas first with changes in the local community. It is paramount that reserve contributions from unit developments are used to provide more space for the local community.

The Parks and Waterway Unit recommends that the property at 44 Ely Street be purchased as an addition to Moa Reserve, to improve the design and layout of the existing park, thus providing a safer, more attractive park environment for all users.

The above proposal was supported by the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board at its meeting on 5 September 2001.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the property at 44 Ely Street be purchased for the purpose of recreation reserve in accordance with the settlement details outlined in the public excluded section of this report.
  2. That, subject to (1) above, the Council resolve to classify the reserve, pursuant to Section 16 of the Reserves Act 1977, as a Recreation Reserve under Section 17 of the Act.

(Note: Councillor Baker abstained from the discussion and voting on this clause.)