

10. ACQUISITION FOR RESERVE – POULSON STREET

Officer responsible Parks & Waterways Manager	Author Chris Freeman, DDI 371-1638
Corporate Plan Output: New Reserves	

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to the purchase of 2,134m² for a local park next to the old Addington Prison on Lincoln Road, and to create pedestrian a linkage between Poulson Street and Lincoln Roads.

INTRODUCTION

Addington Prison is the subject of a sale and purchase contract to two private development companies. Lincoln Investments are project managing the Lincoln Road frontage on behalf of the new owners, and a private residential subdivision is proposed on the Poulson Street frontage.

Lincoln Investments are currently marketing a two story retail/office complex on Lincoln Road, which includes a clear view of the historic prison and access via a entrance and car park. The exact future use of the prison has yet to be determined.

The residential area to the south of the prison is to be subdivided into seven lots and a road created to service these new sections. Lot1 2,134m² has been offered to the Council as a park (see attached plan). It is likely that further subdivision of the six lots will occur to realise medium to high density of housing.

HERITAGE VALUE

Addington Prison was built between 1874-76 to relieve the overcrowding at the Lyttelton Jail; the less than adequate prisoner cells next to the Police Station in Market (now Victoria Square); and the 'lock-up' in Hereford Street. Though it was planned as early as 1860, little constructive action appears to have been taken until 1870, when pre-eminent Gothic Revival architect Benjamin Woolfield Mountfort (1825-1898), was commissioned to provide plans for a prison "...to serve as a place for female confinement." By 1870-71 a building (now demolished) to accommodate 40 female prisoners was constructed, and so began the history of the Addington site as a penal institution.

Mountfort, who arrived on the first of the Canterbury Association ships, the *Charlotte Jane*, in 1850, was described by Henry Sewell in 1852 as "the architect of Canterbury". He was responsible for the overriding architectural aesthetic that gives Christchurch its special character and position in New Zealand architectural history as a Gothic-inspired city.

In 1872 Mountfort produced the design for the Gothic-detailed Addington Prison of today as a permanent block for male prisoners. The construction of this wing was begun in 1874 and completed in 1876.

Addington Prison remains today in near original condition and is an outstanding example of a colonial Victorian penal institution, built in its day to the most up-to-date plan using the new building technology of concrete construction.

It is pleasing to see the original Mountfort prison building retained as part of the subdivision of this site, in particular the inclusion of the former prison yards which will allow clear views of the prison to the north and west. However, the land to the east and south is not part of the land tied to the prison building in the subdivision of the site. The eastern and southern facades are in original condition, and if green space were retained in this area, it would not only allow clear vistas of the building, but allow it to stand on its own merits without being compromised by additional buildings. Equally, it would allow a clear appreciation and reading of this significant building when approached from the original entrance to the north on Lincoln Road.

RESERVE POTENTIAL

The proposed reserve would provide:

- Space to view the historic building from the north side
- An off-road pedestrian link from residential Poulson Street to shops on Lincoln Road
- Potential for local recreation for residents, shoppers and workers
- Potential to complement future uses of the prison building

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Details of the sale and purchase agreement are contained in the Public Excluded section of the agenda.

The source of funds would be the Neighbourhood Reserve Purchase funds 2001-2.

It should be noted that additional cash revenues are likely from the future subdivision of both commercial and residential areas, therefore the purchase of the proposed reserve could be recovered by future revenues, and can be justified as an investment of reserve contributions from the prison land alone.

CONCLUSION

Addington Prison's future has been the subject of a number of Council plans and discussions with owners over the last few years, and current developments are generally supported. The proposed reserve will complement the significant heritage value of the building and add to the recreation and amenity value of the Addington Prison's developing commercial and residential areas adjacent.

Recommendation: That Lot 1 on the attached scheme plan be acquired by the Council as a recreation reserve on the terms and conditions as outlined in the Public Excluded section of this report.