

9. ACQUISITION OF LAND - QUAIFES ROAD

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Corporate Plan Output: Waterways & Wetlands - New Assets	

The purpose of this report is to enable the Council to take a further step in the realisation of its vision and strategy for the Halswell/Wigram area by recommending the purchase of land in Quaifes Road which will be part of the Springlands concept.

INTRODUCTION

'Springlands' lies within a low-lying area near the base of the Port Hills where ground water emerges as springs. The springs are vital to the natural surface waters of Knights Stream and the Halswell River. They are a manifestation of ground water from the north-west that is sustained by rainfall and lateral seepage from the Waimakariri entering the permeable gravels of the plains.

At present the springs are within dairy pasture and are regarded as a liability rather than an asset.

VISION AND STRATEGY

The vision and strategy for the Halswell/Wigram urban growth area is appended to this report. It will be recalled that it forms part of the Council's Natural Asset Management Strategy for Waterways and Wetlands adopted in October 2000.

This area was identified in the City Plan as the most suitable area for urban growth in the longer-term subject to transportation and water-related issues being resolved. The latter was concerned with ground water quality protection and the management of the natural floodplains and ponding areas within the catchments of both the Heathcote and Halswell Rivers. The vision and strategy defines the way in which the Council will address the issues and at the same time provide a network of green space that will enclose both natural and living environments.

'Springlands' will provide future generations with the opportunity to appreciate a treasured natural asset in a tranquil setting. It also provides sufficient space for future development to mitigate the adverse effects of urban run-off using retention and treatment ponds. These mitigating measures together with a portion of the land would be cost shared amongst developers.

DISCUSSION

Land purchase for 'Springlands' is an investment that has medium and long-term benefits. The investment needs to occur now because the present owners of the land would otherwise subdivide it into 4ha lifestyle blocks, on which houses and other private assets would be developed, making 'Springlands' very costly or impossible to achieve in the future. 'Springlands' is part of a well-founded vision and strategy that achieves the objectives and policies of the City Plan, regional policies and, more recently, the in-house "Strategic Planning Study" document proposed by the Environmental Policy and Planning Unit earlier this year.

In the immediate future the land would be leased for grazing. In due course the springs would be fenced off.

Tangata Whenua identify the area as the base of the rainbow. The rainbow is seen as an aesthetic and good sign that things are right in the full spectrum of life and water. The names 'Nga Punawai' and 'Aniwaniwa' are associated with the area, which is one of four 'gateway' into the Christchurch locality. 'Springlands' appears to have potential to be celebrated as a site of significance to present and future generations.

PROPERTY DETAILS

The property comprises a reasonably level 7.9940ha block of land situated on Quaifes Road opposite the intersection with Murphys Road and just west of the Halswell residential suburb. The overall block is virtually rectangular and is somewhat low-lying and contains a number of important springs which feed two significant water races through the Halswell district. Currently the property is utilised as a dairy farm run-off.

ZONING

The land is zoned rural under the proposed Christchurch City Plan, which essentially provides for a wide range of farming and horticultural uses and subdivision down to 4ha.

RATING VALUATION

As at 1 December 1988:

Land value \$290,000

Improvements \$10,000

Capital value \$300,000

AGREEMENT

The property was valued on the Council's behalf by Fright Aubrey, Registered Public Valuers and, following discussions with the owners, agreement has been reached to acquire the land on the terms and conditions contained within the public excluded section of this report.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Provision has been included in the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 financial years for the property purchase.

Recommendation: That, subject to the terms and conditions contained within the public excluded section of this report, the property, being all the land contained within the Certificate of Title 30K/1107 as depicted on the attached plan, be purchased.