

1. HEATHCOTE VALLEY PARK: WATERWAYS, WETLANDS AND DRAINAGE COST SHARING SCHEME – PURCHASE OF LAND WITHIN 41 AND 61 TRUSCOTTS ROAD

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Corporate Plan Output: Waterways and Wetlands Restoration and Protection	

The purpose of this report is to recommend to the Council the proposed purchase of three parcels of land within the Heathcote Valley floodplain as drainage and amenity corridors.

LOCATION

The proposed purchases are located on the low-lying paddocks within the Heathcote Valley Floodplain, adjacent to, or close to Truscotts Road and north of Martindales Road. The parcels of land sought are currently part of two larger blocks Pt RS19, 61 Truscotts Road and Lot 1 DP50146, 41 Truscotts Road, zoned SP (Ferrymead) and Living 1B. In total they comprise 1.91 ha or thereabouts; 1.25 ha within the SP (Ferrymead) zone and 0.66 within the Living 1B zone. The Living 1B parcels are part of the waterway corridors identified in the Zone's Development Plan shown conceptually in Appendix 3I of the City Plan. These corridors are identified as the Truscotts and Cooktown waterway corridors.

BACKGROUND

The Heathcote Valley is located within the Christchurch City Urban Area, southeast of the central city at the base of the Port Hills. It is the last contributing stormwater catchment to the Heathcote River, prior to its confluence with the Avon-Heathcote Estuary.

Most of the catchment remains rural, and large tracts of open low-lying pasture remain largely undeveloped over the lower floodplain.

The floor of the valley is generally low-lying. Without the existing stopbanking and tidal control structures along the Heathcote River margin, much of the low-lying land would be subject to regular tidal inundation. The lower valley floor is also prone to flooding from catchment runoff during severe storms coinciding with high tides.

To date, floodwater ponding on the lower valley floor has been a nuisance rather than a major problem for grazing and horse-riding activities. However, with a large area of residential development pending as a result of rezoning decisions through the City Plan process, a comprehensive upgrade of the drainage system is necessary to facilitate future development.

In addition to the residential development expected over the Upper Valley and on the Port Hills surrounding the Valley, planning is well-advanced on the "Heathcote Valley Park" concept for the Lower Valley floor. This visionary private/Council partnership incorporating Ferrymead Historic Park, a 9-hole golf course and driving range, Tamaki Maori Village, sports fields, waterways and wetlands restoration, and floodplain management was last reported to the Board and Council in September 2001. Overall the response to the plan was positive and supportive from not only elected members, but also from the public who made submissions.

To implement the 'Park' concept, Council has already made strategic purchases within the Lower Valley floor (Ferrymead Trust purchase in 1996 and Truscotts Road/Ferrymead Park Drive Block reported in January 2001). The parcels of land considered for purchase now are the last corridor links Council must acquire to complete the proposed Cooktown and Truscotts waterway connections between upper Bridle Path Road, Martindales Road, the Valley floodplain and the Heathcote River.

Along with further complementary land acquisition of roadway and reserve land within the L1B zone, through the subdivision process and development of the L1B land (Scheme plan approved 4 December 2001), this purchase will allow the implementation of the comprehensive flood plain management scheme for the Lower Heathcote Valley, last reported to the Board and the Council in September 2001.

HEATHCOTE VALLEY WATERWAYS, WETLANDS AND DRAINAGE COST SHARING SCHEME

This scheme which includes the establishment of a formal cost sharing area will be reported to the Board later this year. The need for a cost sharing scheme was originally identified by Council Officers in the City Plan Hearings for the Heathcote Valley in 1998 and has been included as a Project in the Port Hills section of the Waterways and Wetland Natural Asset Management Strategy adopted by Council in October 2000. The scheme will provide:

- (a) An open waterway/green corridor network through the Heathcote Valley floodplain to the sea;
- (b) Stormwater treatment on the valley floor for runoff from the entire catchment;
- (c) Flood detention on the valley floor for all storm discharges connected directly to the drainage network.

The land purchases contemplated today along with the earlier strategic purchases made by the Council will provide the space necessary to

- (a) Mitigate adverse water quantity and quality effects from new residential development;
- (b) Realise many components of the "Heathcote Valley Heritage Park" vision;
- (c) Prevent inappropriate development within a hazardous coastal area.

The purchase needs to be made now. Funds are available within Parks and Waterways Unit's budget.

The establishment of a cost sharing scheme in future will provide the opportunity to recoup some of this cost through developer contributions.

PROPERTY DETAILS

Property details are contained in a separate report in the Public Excluded section of this report.

Recommendation: That the Council acquire the three parcels of land identified in the officer's report as required waterway corridors, shown as PT RS 19 and Lot 1 DP 50146 situated at 41-61 Truscotts Road on the terms and conditions detailed in the public excluded section of this report.