

8. AVICE HILL RESERVE – FRONTAGE ENHANCEMENT

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the results of consultation regarding the proposed enhancement of the frontage.

Members will recall the Avice Hill Reserve enhancement plan was considered at the 14 April 2004 meeting of the Works, Traffic and Environment Committee with the recommendation that the plan be circulated to neighbours and users of the reserve.

BACKGROUND

Avice Hill Reserve is a 5,800 square metre reserve located on a very high profile site on Memorial Avenue. Inside the property is a weatherboard building originally built as a residence but now utilised as a community facility mainly for arts and crafts tuition.

Currently, the frontage of the reserve has a remnant hedge of Pittosporums and a chain mesh fence with a backdrop of large established trees. The existing planting is dense and there are few views into and out of the reserve.

Members will recall that in September 2003, funding was allocated by the Board to enhance the frontage of the reserve subject to the acceptance of a planting plan for the area.

FEATURES OF THE PLAN

The main features of the proposed planting plan are the removal of the existing chain mesh fence, and the partial removal of the old Pittosporum planting which forms a dense screen between the reserve and Memorial Avenue.

It is proposed to replace the existing fence with stone plinths using similar materials to those utilised on the driveway entrance. These plinths would be linked with chain and timber posts. It is also proposed to restore the old existing gateposts on the frontage of the property, and add a new wooden gate to allow pedestrian access into the garden.

The proposed renovation of the area will enhance the special character of the site by the selective removal of some existing shrubs in order to allow some views into and out of the area. Further enhancement of the area is proposed with the addition of flowering shrubs and perennials to accentuate the heritage garden aspect.

CONSULTATION

The proposed enhancement plans were tabled at the committee meetings of the Avice Hill Herb Society, and the Canterbury Potters Association which is based at Avice Hill. Both organisations are very supportive and complimentary of the proposal. The immediate neighbours to the reserve frontage are also supportive of the project and all those contacted are looking forward to the Memorial Avenue frontage being enhanced.

FUNDING

The Board has allocated the following funding for the Avice Hill Reserve frontage area

September 2003	\$3,500	Avice Hill Reserve - removal of fence and planting of frontage
January 2004	\$8,000	Avice Hill Reserve - stone plinths and semi-mature tree replacements

PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME

It is anticipated work would begin on the frontage in mid June with the initial clearing and removal of the old fence.

The new stone plinths and timber posts would then be installed together with the restored gateposts and new gate. Once the construction projects are completed, the area would be planted and mulched to finish the garden areas.

CONCLUSION

The Avice Hill Reserve will benefit enormously from greater integration into the wider Memorial Avenue area. It is anticipated that patronage of the reserve area will also increase as the public becomes more aware of the garden surrounding the community facility.

The proposed planting of flowering shrubs and perennials, and the integration of the original gateposts and entrance to the garden area will also enhance the old fashioned garden concept this reserve is noted for.

Staff

Recommendation: That the proposed frontage enhancement plan for the Avice Hill Reserve be approved for construction and implementation.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.