

## 8. RESULTS OF REVIEW OF RIVERSIDE PLANTING SITES

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the results of the review of riverside planting at two sites chosen by the Board in May 2004.

### BACKGROUND

Following a deputation from the Merivale Precinct Society to the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee in February 2004 expressing concerns about the effects of native planting along the banks of the Avon River adjacent to Little Hagley Park, the Board chose this and another site for review by an independent landscape architect.

The two sites are:

1. site 1: Avon River – south side from Helmores Lane Bridge to Carlton Mill Bridge; and
2. site 2: Heathcote River – section in Clarendon Terrace opposite numbers 107 to 139.

The matters raised for consideration in the review included:

1. Access to the water's edge
2. Safety for pedestrians using the area
3. Preservation of attractive views
4. Appropriate siting of seats
5. Appropriate maintenance practices
6. Density, shading or intrusion upon other significant vegetation

The Board asked that the heritage values of site 1 also be considered.

### REVIEW

The review was carried out by Jenny Moore, ANZILA. Jenny carried out a site analysis, including river character, vegetation character and site character. She then proceeded to explore opportunities to mitigate, through design and maintenance, any detracting outcomes of the planting. The report includes photographs of the plantings, with notations.

### CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions are stated below in *3.0 Opportunities for mitigation through design and maintenance*.

#### **Site 1: Avon River – south side from Helmores Lane Bridge to Carlton Mill Bridge**

##### **3.1**

The presence of native vegetation along the river bank should not be seen as a negative situation. From Harper Avenue the existence of the river is only discernible at a few points, where the road crosses it and where the river and road come together. The native vegetation provides a visual indication that the river exists, especially when it is hidden below steep banks.

##### **3.2**

Design plays an important part in riverbank restoration and there are many factors that need to be considered, such as:

- Size and location of plants
- Growth rate and form of plants for the site
- Maintenance and management of plants to respond to plant growth, e.g. thinning, pruning, shaping, replacements
- Response to river profile, providing access to the water's edge
- Maintain vistas and frame views
- Site character and that of surrounding areas

**Site 2: Heathcote River – section in Clarendon Terrace opposite numbers 107 to 139**

**3.0 Opportunities for mitigation through design and maintenance:**

- Assess where the key view points to the river must be retained and ensure that future planting respect the need for visual access to the river
- Consider low growing species for river bank stabilisation
- Prune and limb up trees where they are beginning to block out views to the river
- Develop a management plan which considers maintenance needs for this particular stretch of river and replacement planting of existing mature trees
- When drawing up restoration planting plans for specific stretches of river in Christchurch it is important to evaluate the existing surrounding landscape character and to consider the needs of the community

**Staff**

- Recommendation:**
1. That the information be received.
  2. That remedial work be carried out at sites 1 and 2 as recommended in the report.
  3. That the report conclusions be shared with all designers who have an input into riverside planting projects in Christchurch, in order to design more appropriately for future plantings.
  4. That riverside planting be maintained in such a way that the detractions outlined in the report are not repeated in the future.

**Chairperson's**

- Recommendation:** That the recommendations be adopted.