

## 12. 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 2 sites chosen by the Board in April 2004.

### BACKGROUND:

Following a deputation from the Merrivale 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, it was decided that all Community Boards would choose 2 riverside planting sites in their area for review by an independent landscape architect. The sites chosen by the Shirley/Papanui Community Board were:-

#### Site 1: Papanui Stream \_ Erica Reserve

#### Site 2: Papanui Stream – between Grants Road and Halliwell Avenue

When reviewing **Site 1**, matters raised for consideration in the review included :-

*Vegetation which is completely blocking out views and access to the stream.*

*Where there is an access point to the stream, it is completely obscured by high vegetation and is considered a hazard for parents supervising small children.*

In more general terms:-

*Design considerations such as appropriate planting for each site. At the moment it seems like there is a single planting strategy that does not take into account the site, surrounding community of interest or future maintenance and safety considerations. Also, planting strategies and streamside enhancements don't seem to be aligned with current policy i.e. safer parks, disabled access policy.*

*Maintenance requirements are either not being carried out, or monitored and enforced (according to contractual agreement ) in terms of safety, pruning/clearing, weeds and rubbish.*

*Why does the Council go ahead with further enhancements when there is obviously not enough funding/manpower to maintain the existing sites we have.*

### 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.

### CONCLUSION:

#### Site 1: Papanui Stream - Erica Reserve

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

- 3.1 Remove, through thinning and pruning, dense vegetation around access points to the water edge
- 3.2 Consider creating visual access points to the stream by removing some low dense vegetation such as Koromiko and Carex and replacing with lower species that will only grow to a maximum of 0.5m. Raise the canopy of certain trees to provide an open void between tree canopy and ground level.
- 3.3 Ascertain where dense vegetation groups can remain
- 3.4 An interesting landscape can be achieved by creating a diversity in form, density, scale and texture of planting which provides the public with a range of spatial and visual experiences

- 3.5 The combination of species used in riparian planting is becoming repetitive throughout the city. It is producing a sameness in form and character which is starting to have a detrimental effect when it comes to limiting physical and visual access to the waterways.

**Site 2: Papanui Stream – between Grants Road and Halliwell Avenue**

When reviewing **Site 2**, matters raised for consideration in the review included :-

*Concern that the view of the stream will become obliterated by dense planting*

*Some of the grasses overhanging the footpath are becoming a hazard to pedestrians*

*Inadequate maintenance of planting and watercourse*

**CONCLUSION:**

The conclusions are stated in **3.1 Opportunities for mitigation through design and maintenance:**

- 3.1.1 Site maintenance is first priority for this site to remove weed growth in the waterway and throughout some of the planted areas, plus rubbish removal
- 3.1.2 Assess and monitor the rapid growth and spread of *Juncus* sp. and determine how much and where this should be removed, to allow access to the watercourse and footpath edge
- 3.1.3 Relocate large species such as *Coprosma robusta* away from the edge of the footpath

**Staff**

- Recommendation:**
- 1. That the information be received
  - 2. That remedial work be carried out on sites 1 and 2 as recommended in the report, funded by the Greenspace Unit
  - 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 the report conclusions be passed on to the Greenspace Utilities and Maintenance Team
  - 5. That riverside planting at these 2 sites is maintained in such a way that the detractions outlined in the report are not repeated in the future

**Chairperson's**

- Recommendation:** That the staff recommendation be adopted.