

9. REALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO PAPANUI MEMORIAL RESERVE ROSE BED AND TREE REMOVAL

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
Officer responsible:	Greenspace Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the reallocation of funding from the garden park investigation project to Papanui Memorial Reserve for the revitalisation of the memorial rose garden. This project may necessitate the removal of two Silver Birch trees, also requiring Board approval.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Greenspace Unit capital budget has \$5,000 allocated in the current financial year to investigate the feasibility of a garden park within the Papanui ward (the Papanui garden park investigation project). No appropriate sites have been found to suit this purpose, and on balance, it is considered that funding would be best spent on developing an existing heritage garden, such as the Papanui Memorial Reserve's memorial rose garden.
3. Papanui Memorial Reserve is located in the Papanui shopping centre on Papanui Road. The Reserve includes a memorial rose bed, Papanui War Memorial, flagpole and a fountain donated by the Papanui Rotary Club. The Reserve is a destination for the annual parade and commemoration of ANZAC day on 25 April. The rose bed is of great significance to the Returned Services Association (RSA).
4. The memorial garden, which contains 57 "*Lest we Forget*" roses (one for every name on the commemorative plaque) also contains two Silver Birch trees. The Reserve was upgraded in 2004 with the removal of a number of trees to make it more open and the replanting of the rose bed, which had not thrived due to the dominance and competition of the Silver Birch trees. The upgrade to the reserve included a public planting day in March 2004. The attached photographs refer.
5. Five options to improve the vitality of the rose bed were considered. These were:
 - a) Remove the roses/bedding from the reserve completely.
 - b) Relocate the roses/bedding on site and establish turf (down) under the Silver Birches.
 - c) Remove Silver Birches and prepare the bed for replanting of roses/bedding.
 - d) Install root barriers around the Silver Birches and prepare the bed for replanting of roses/bedding.
 - e) Status quo – continue to maintain current bedding.
6. The preferred option was C, to remove Silver Birches and prepare the bed for replanting of roses/bedding.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7. The proposed investigation into the feasibility of a garden park for Papanui ward (the garden park investigation project) is programmed in the Greenspace Unit's Capital budget, for use over the 2005/2006 financial year. This funding has been carried forward from Board Funding, allocated in 2004/2005.

Specifically:
\$5, 000 Redwood Park Concept Plan
8. Should the Board recommend the reallocation of funds, the transfer can be actioned under the Greenspace Unit Manager's delegated authority.
9. These trees are not protected under the City Plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) It is recommended that the Board approve the reallocation of \$5,000 from the Papanui garden park investigation project to the proposed revitalisation of the Papanui Memorial Reserve memorial rose garden.
- (b) It is recommended that the Board approve the removal the two Silver Birch trees from the Papanui Memorial Reserve rose garden to allow the roses to thrive.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendations be adopted.

BACKGROUND ON THE PAPANUI MEMORIAL RESERVE ROSE BED

Papanui Memorial Reserve

10. Papanui Memorial Reserve is located in the Papanui shopping centre on Papanui Road at its intersection with Horner Street. The Reserve includes a memorial rose garden with a commemorative plaque, flagpole, Papanui War Memorial, a fountain (donated by the Papanui Rotary Club), seating, grassed and paved areas, and toilet block. The Reserve is an important site for the annual commemoration of ANZAC day on 25 April.
11. The memorial rose bed is at the northwest corner of the reserve and contains 57 "*Lest we Forget*" roses (one for every name on the commemorative plaque) and two Silver Birch trees. There have been issues with the unsuccessful establishment of the rose bed.
12. The Reserve was upgraded by Council in 2004 with the removal of a number of trees to make it more open and the replanting of the rose bed. This included a public planting day in March 2004. The attached photographs refer. At this time, the RSA agreed to contribute towards the cost of the roses (\$20 per rose plant), however this money has not been sought, due to the fact that the roses have not yet become established. The RSA are concerned that the commemorative rose bed is not thriving. This was confirmed in a recent audit of Council's (garden) annual bedding sites beds.

Proposal

13. Greenspace staff have investigated a number of options that will improve the vitality of the memorial rose garden. The key issue with regard to this bed is the lack of moisture that is available to the roses. While irrigation may help, it is considered that this would not overcome the moisture depleting effect of the Silver Birches, which are shallow rooted, and as such dominate the bed and uptake large quantities of moisture. It is considered that while the Silver Birches dominate this site the rose bed will not be able to thrive. Shading is also an issue, due to the dominance of the mature trees in the bed.
14. The Council's Arborist was consulted about the potential tree removal. He was of the view that the two trees needed to be removed in order to allow the rose bed to thrive. As roses and Silver Birches are both gross feeders, they do not tend to be successful companion plants. In this environment these trees have not thrived and, as such, are not considered to be significant specimens. He also recommends some trimming of the Oak tree to the east of the plot to allow side light onto the rose bed.
15. It is proposed that the two Silver Birch trees, their stumps and as much of the roots as possible be removed. A third stump will also need to be ground out. The holes left by the stump grinding will be filled and the bed levelled. The rose bed will be cultivated, composted and fertilised. After the roses have been planted a compost layer would be added, as a mulch. This is expected to provide an environment in which the commemorative roses can thrive.
16. Consultation on the proposed plans to revitalise the rose bed has been carried out with the Papanui RSA, the key stakeholder for this reserve, in order to ascertain the level of support for the preferred option. They agree that the current location of the memorial rose bed is ideal and it would be preferable that it remains in this location. Ideally they would like to see the trees removed for aesthetic reasons as it would give prominence to the memorial rose bed. However they would accept any solution that resulted in a healthy and vigorous rose bed.

PROPOSED SOURCE OF FUNDS - PAPANUI GARDEN PARK INVESTIGATION PROJECT

17. Funding of \$5,000 was allocated this financial year to investigate the feasibility of a garden park for the Papanui area. No appropriate sites have been found to suit this purpose, and on balance, it is considered that funding would be best spent on developing an existing heritage garden, such as the Papanui Memorial Reserve. Should the Board approve the reallocation of funds, the Greenspace Unit will be able to finance the revitalisation of the Papanui Memorial Reserve rose bed in the 2005/06 financial year.
18. It is anticipated that the revitalisation of the memorial rose bed can be achieved within a \$5,000 budget.

OPTIONS

19. Five options were considered
 - a) Remove the roses/bedding from the reserve completely. This option would not be acceptable to the key stakeholder, the RSA, who have contributed towards the provision of roses in this reserve.
 - b) Relocate the roses/bedding on site and turf down under the Silver Birches. An alternative site, between the flagpole and the memorial was investigated. It was considered that this could impede the flow of foot traffic during the ANZAC day memorial service and was not in keeping with the open layout of the reserve. The current location of the memorial rose garden is considered to be ideal as it is in a prominent location and is highly visible and has good sunshine hours potential.
 - c) Remove Silver Birches and prepare the bed for replanting of roses/bedding. This would reduce root competition with the roses and would accentuate the visibility of the memorial rose garden. There are a number of mature trees in this reserve and in the adjacent streets, mitigating the removal of these trees. This option will remove shading effect.
 - d) Install root barriers around the Silver Birches and prepare the bed for replanting of roses/bedding. This would reduce root competition with the roses but decrease the amount of garden available for the roses. It would allow the retention of the two mature trees. It would not further accentuate the visibility to the rose bed. Shading would remain and increase with growth of the trees.
 - e) Status quo – continue to maintain current bedding. This option would not resolve the issues with this garden that have been identified by the community and Council staff.

PREFERRED OPTION

20. The preferred option is C, which is consistent with the views of the key stakeholder the RSA, and Council staff.

CONCLUSION

21. The funding allocated to the investigation of the feasibility of a heritage/garden park for Papanui area presents Council with an opportunity to use this money to revitalise the existing memorial rose garden at the Papanui Memorial Reserve. This move is supported by the RSA, which is the major stakeholder of the park and relies on this space for its public commemoration of ANZAC day.
22. By reallocating the available funds from the Garden park investigation project, an area of need could be fulfilled without impacting on future budget requirements.