

## 6. BIRDLINGS FLAT PLAYGROUND AND TOILET UPGRADE - PLAN APPROVAL REPORT

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to approve the plan for upgrading the playground and public toilet facility at Birdlings Flat, following consultation with the local community.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Board members will recall the concept plan for upgrading the existing playground and public toilet at Birdlings Flat was presented to the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board on Wednesday 25 October 2006, prior to carrying out consultation with the local community.
3. The proposed plan was circulated to all 130 residential properties (approximate) within the Birdlings Flat settlement. In addition to this, the plan was also sent to a number of external stakeholders who have a key interest in the area around the reserve such as the Wairewa Rununga, Department of Conservation and the Historic Places Trust. Staff had also met with the Wairewa Rununga prior to the proposal going out to the general public to ascertain any specific concerns or requirements they may have had.
4. There was a good response from the local community with a total of thirty four (34) individual residents returning the comment form providing feedback on the proposed plan (See attached comments).
5. Overall the response from the local community was very positive and supportive of the proposed plan. Any concerns with the proposed plan were relatively minor and generally related to one or two specific elements within the overall plan. There was some consistency in the feedback and suggested changes generally fell into one of the three areas shown below. They are not listed in any order of priority.

#### **Location of the toilet block.**

- (a) One or two respondents questioned co-location of toilets and playground facilities from a child safety aspect and suggested the existing toilet site should be used. One or two expressed reservations related to the "visual impact" of the facility saying the proposed site was very central on the reserve as you approached the beach when driving along oranui Road.

#### **Staff response:**

- (i) The new toilets have an "enclosed" waste disposal system with holding tanks that provide partial treatment of waste with **no** waste to ground discharges. There is insufficient room on the existing site to accommodate the new facility and all the necessary components of the waste treatment/holding system. The proposed location also has a sharp change in ground level which is useful for providing the optimum amount of "fall" between the toilet and holding/treatment tanks. These factors strongly favour the location of the toilet on the reserve is the most practical long term option.
- (ii) In terms of "Child safety". There are numerous examples in other reserves where toilets have been installed and operate successfully in close proximity to children's play areas. Location of the toilets will be undertaken using current CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles and practices.

- (iii) CPTED primarily focuses on the location and design of these type of facilities to ensure they are sited in locations that provide good visibility and opportunities for casual observation from other park users and members of the public. The proposed location will meet all those requirements and staff are confident that the location of the toilets on the reserve will not create any adverse impact or unacceptable risk to children using the reserve and/or users of the toilet facility.
- (iv) The “visual impact” of the proposed facility can be addressed by setting the toilet block further back into the reserve. This will lower the visual impact of the facility on the reserve without adversely compromising user safety.

**Location of the basketball hoop.**

- (b) Some respondents questioned the proximity of the basketball hoop (attached to the water tank stand) in relation to the toilet, suggesting that it was a little bit close to the facility.

**Staff response.**

- (i) The water tank stand does not have to be located immediately adjacent to the toilet block. Staff support this view which can be addressed by locating the tank stand further away from the toilet facility, thereby providing a more desirable level of separation.

**Car parking provision**

- (c) Feedback has indicated that on some occasions the area can be very busy with a large number of cars using the informal car park area with one respondent suggesting the car park be extended.

**Staff Response.**

- (i) The existing informal car park is located on land that is a combination of legal road (unformed), recreation reserve, and a small area of land owned and administered by the Department of Conservation.
- (ii) It is not practical to extend the car park seaward of the existing area that is currently used. The surrounding area falls away sharply and consists of very loose moving shingle making any extension in this direction both impractical and very expensive.
- (iii) The original proposal showed a small portion of the existing parking area adjacent to the reserve being returned back into the reserve. However in light of the feedback, the alignment of the low post and cable fence will now retain all the existing area that is currently used for car parking. This minor change will have no detrimental impact on recreational opportunities for the reserve.
- (iv) In addition to this, a small area opposite the reserve which is sparsely covered in rambling lupins will be cleared to provide additional car parking opportunities. This area is on legal road and already partly used for that purpose. Clearing of the existing wilding weed species and some minor re-levelling will maximise the use of the existing area.

- 6. The concept plan showed two possible options for the playground design and residents were given the opportunity to indicate their preferred option. The feedback indicated a clear preference for option 2. The actual result was 7 or 25% preferring option 1, while 21 or 75% preferred option 2 (see table below). The total for both options (28) is less than the total number of replies (34) because 6 of the respondents did not indicate a preference either way.

<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Rope/climbing type play structure, including swings and slide</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Conventional modular type play structure, including swings and slide</b>	<b>21</b>

7. In recognition of the residents feedback, the City Environment Group proposes to make a number of minor changes to the original plan (see attached plan). The changes are listed below.

**Proposed Changes**

- (a) Locating the toilet block slightly further back into the reserve to reduce the visual impact of the facility when approaching the beach along Poranui Road.
  - (b) Shifting the location of the water tank stand and basketball hoop to provide a greater degree of separation from the toilet block.
  - (c) Minor alteration to the post and cable fence so that there is no reduction in the current area available for car parking.
  - (d) Minor re-levelling of a small area opposite the reserve (on legal road) to provide some additional car parking opportunities.
  - (e) Relocating the old shed currently on the reserve, to an area beside the mail boxes at the corner of Poranui Road and Coates Road as a shelter for children waiting for the school bus.
  - (f) Shifting the location of some of the picnic tables from the open gravel area as shown on the original plan, an area closer to the play equipment.
  - (g) The existing see-saw will be retained as part of the playground development, although its current location on the reserve will change.
8. All respondents have been sent a final reply letter thanking them for their input, including an A3 colour copy of the finalised plan. The letter informed respondents that the plan would be presented to the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board for approval. Details of the meeting (Time, date, venue etc) were also provided so that any interested people could attend.

**FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

9. The City Environment Groups Capital Works Programme has funding available in the current 2006/07 financial year to undertake the Birdlings Flat Playground and Toilet Upgrade. The toilet and playground components still have to be ordered, however staff are confident the project will be completed within the current financial year and within the available funding.
10. The Department of Conservation has been consulted regarding the layout of the car park which current utilises a small area of land under their responsibility. The organisation has formerly responded to confirm they are comfortable with the proposal which simply formalises the current and existing use of that area.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) It is recommended that the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board approve the attached plan for upgrading the Birdlings Flat Playground and Public Toilet
- (b) That the City Environment Group commence work on implementing the construction programme.