

7. STYX RIVER CONSERVATION RESERVE (REDWOOD SPRINGS) PLAYGROUND

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment Group DDI 941-8656
Officer responsible:	Transport and Greenspace Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Board to proceed to detailed design and construction/implementation of the Styx River Conservation Reserve (Redwood Springs) playground.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Styx River Conservation Reserve (Redwood Springs) is located in Redwood at the northern termination of Grimseys Road. Redwood Springs is named for the many springs along the adjacent Styx River. A pond at the western end of the reserve adjacent to the main walkway and railway line has a number of springs bubbling up within it.
3. Vaughan and Alwyn Reserve are close by but are quite small and, of these, only the latter includes play equipment. The nearby Murchison Park had a development plan finalised in July 2007, which included a substantial new playground that will be installed later this year. The consultation on this project indicated a strong desire for the development at Redwood Springs to proceed as soon as possible.

Previous planning work at Redwood Springs

4. A proposal was developed for the Styx River Conservation Reserve (Redwood Springs) in 2005/06 that incorporated wildlife habitat, walkways, access to the water's edge, and features being made of the springs, previous history and children's play areas. This development plan was approved by the Board in April 2006, subject to further consultation being undertaken regarding the proposed playground and interpretation structure and monitoring of parking in the area.
5. The above proposal originally located the playground at the eastern end of the reserve and included a large area to kick a ball around in, a water play area associated with an existing well, and an obstacle course. Concerns were raised during consultation about the playground's location (parking requirements, motorway) and elements of its design (the proposed rope structure). In response to this, the concept was amended by relocating the playground more centrally to the large grass space at the end of Riverwood Boulevard and seeking further consultation on the design of the playground.
6. The above development plan for the reserve will be implemented over a five year period beginning in 2006. For reference, a proposed timeline for the next two years is included below.

Construction in 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground equipment, picnic tables and paths around play area (<i>subject to Board approvals</i>) • Springs lookout, boardwalk and jetty at western end of reserve
Construction in 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting around play area • Specimen trees - orchard trees • Lookout by walnut trees • Two jetties, boardwalks and tracks • Swale and retention basin • Continuation of bush and wetland planting

7. The previous planning work informed the project objectives, which were to:
- To provide interesting play equipment that promotes physical activity, is adventures, encourages social and communication skills and helps develop fundamental movement skills and meets the local communities' needs, within the available funds
 - To provide a creative play space that interacts with the surrounding natural environment
 - To ensure that the playground is consistent with the development plan for the area
 - To consider the visual effects of the proposed playground on the surrounding properties
 - To ensure that the playground is consistent with New Zealand Playground Standards
8. The project team developed a concept to meet these objectives, which included the following:
- Dual flying fox
 - Tyre swing
 - Wooden climbing frame (includes items such as a rope ladder, spinning bar, gym rings)
 - Small timber tower and slide
 - Maypole
 - Rope suspension bridges
 - Water pump with water play activities on a timber deck and seating
 - Junior mountain bike track
 - Asphalt paths to connect play areas and provide hard surface's for learning to bike, rollerblade etc.
 - Transition areas between play equipment to include such as stepping stones/balance logs
 - Picnic/seating area and landscaping

This concept plan was developed to appeal to a wide range of children, have minimum visual impact on surrounding neighbours and to be in keeping with the overall vision for this reserve.

9. In July/August 2007 a publicity pamphlet was distributed to approximately 280 residences and key stakeholders (refer **attachment 1**). This pamphlet included a summary of the concept, an initial concept plan and a feedback form. The project team sought feedback from the community to see whether the proposal was generally supported.
10. The consultation received a 24% response rate (66 responses). Community feedback was generally very positive. The consultation outcome and project team responses are included in **attachment 2**.
- Sixty-two of the 66 respondents (94%) responded "YES – I generally support the plan"
 - four of the 66 respondents (6%) responded "NO – I do not support the plan", because:

Reason for opposition to plan	Project team response
Use the money elsewhere: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on a walkway along the river linking the Main North Road from Styx Mill Road downstream toward Marshlands Road • on a bridge linking Redwood Springs to Northwood and the Supa Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding set aside in the LTCCP for this playground • Planning is underway for a Source to Sea walkway, as part of the 2000-2040 Styx Vision • A linkage between Redwood Springs and Northwood is beyond the scope of this project. This will be considered as the land north of the Styx is developed
Playground not necessary/wanted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will drive away wildlife • Local kids can use Murchison Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A playground in this area has been approved by Council and funding set aside in the LTCCP for this facility
Location opposed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential flooding in the area poses a health hazard to children, adults and pets • Styx River poses a safety hazard to children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frequency and intensity of flood events has been taken into consideration. Play equipment will be located in higher areas • The river and springs in this area are known to the local community. The location of the playground was determined in the development plan. The playground is in a clearly defined area which can be monitored

Design aspects opposed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flying fox is unlikely to be well used Children will not just cycle on the track; they will be all over the grass and plantings. Has the stranger danger been taken into account? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The feedback on the recent Murchison Park consultation included a number of requests for a flying fox Any damage to the proposed plantings will be addressed, as necessary The concept was developed in accordance with CPTED principles
Car parking on Willowview Drive will create safety hazard - parking bays needed	The need for car parking will be monitored
Toilets needed	Toilets are usually only provided on sports parks, which have a number of users at one time

11. In terms of the proposed playground development, the main requests made by submitters were for:
- more play equipment for toddlers (14 submitters)
 - a pedestrian/cycle link to Northwood/Supa Centre to be planned for (13 submitters)
 - consideration to be given to potential pressure for parking and congestion in Willow View Drive (eight submitters)
 - addition of a toilet (five submitters)
12. The project team considered the feedback from consultation and revised the concept plan by including the installation of a:
- two-bay toddler swing, a Fantail and a see-saw
 - bike stand/hitching post
 - rubbish bin
 - park signage
 - new section of path (linking to the eastern kerb cut down)
 - yellow 'no-stopping' lines in intersection
13. Willow View Drive is a relatively narrow local road that, if cars are parked on both sides of the road, only allows for the passage of one vehicle. This roading design slows traffic speeds and provides some traffic safety benefits. However the community has raised concerns about car parking and the potential for traffic congestion. In response to consultation, this proposal will include yellow 'no-stopping' lines around the intersection of Riverwood Boulevard and Willow View Drive (where parking is not permitted under the road code) and also adjoining the playground's park frontage to ensure that these areas do not become congested. In addition, once the playground is installed, these issues will be monitored and addressed, as necessary.
14. In general toilets are included in sports parks, to cater for peak demand by large numbers of users that often travel some distance to the park. This is a local playground, which is anticipated will be used by local residents and, as such, a toilet has not been included in the development plan for this reserve.
15. The consultation feedback included a number of queries and requests with regard to the development plan. In particular, a number of submitters requested the removal of the willows on the Styx river bank. These will be gradually removed to allow for habitat restoration of the waterway, in accordance with the development plan.
16. A pedestrian/cycle linkage between Redwood Springs and Northwood was requested by a number of residents but is beyond the scope of this project or the current Styx River Conservation Reserve development plan. As such, funding has not been set aside in the Long Term Council Community Plan for a bridge across the Styx at this point. However the need for a pedestrian/cycleway to Northwood will be considered by Council as the land to the north of the Styx is developed and opportunities to provide linkages arises.

17. The recommended concept plan is included as **attachment 3**. Styx River Conservation Reserve (Redwood Springs) concept plan will be implemented over two stages, (1) the play equipment, paths, seating and picnic area will be constructed in the period of December 2007 to February 2008 (2) the landscaping within the playground will be completed in April 2008.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. The funding from council is being provided from the Transport and Greenspace Capital Programme. Specifically:

2007/08 \$220,000

Redwood Springs (Styx Esplanade Reserves) – Waterways and Wetlands Restorations.

19. It is estimated that the proposed playground concept, including the play equipment, park furniture, paths and landscaping, will cost in the order of \$175,000.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

20. Yes. Funding is provided from within the Transport and Greenspace Capital Programme in the 2006-16 LTCCP.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

21. Nil.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

22. **LTCCP 2006-2016**

Parks, Open Spaces and Waterways – Page 123

- (a) Recreation – By offering a range of active and passive recreation and leisure opportunities
- (b) Health – By providing areas for people to engage in healthy activities

Recreation and Leisure – Page 131

- (a) Recreation – By encouraging more people to participate in leisure, physical and sporting activities

23. **Parks and Open Spaces Activity Management Plan**

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

24. Social Wellbeing and Youth Strategy and Safer Parks Policy

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

25. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with the local community via a letterbox drop and comment form to the local community.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board:

- (a) Approve the plan in **attachment 3** in order to proceed to detailed design and construction/implementation of the Styx River Conservation Reserve (Redwood Springs) playground;
- (b) Resolve that the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at anytime on:
 - (i) The south side of Willow View Drive commencing from its intersection with Riverwood Boulevard and extending in a westerly direction for a distance of 14.0 metres.
 - (ii) The south side of Willow View Drive commencing from its intersection with Riverwood Boulevard and extending in a easterly direction for a distance of 30.0 metres.
 - (iii) The north side of Willow View Drive commencing at a point 12.0 metres west of Riverwood Boulevard and proceeding in an easterly direction for a distance of 65.0 metres.
 - (iv) The east side of Riverwood Boulevard commencing from its intersection with Willow View Drive and proceeding in a southerly direction for a distance of 15.0 metres.
 - (v) The west side of Riverwood Boulevard commencing from its intersection with Willow View Drive and proceeding in a southerly direction for a distance of 10.5 metres.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be adopted.