

## 6. BRIDLE PATH ROAD AREA PLAN CONSULTATION REPORT

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Regulatory and Planning Committee on the findings of public consultation on the Bridle Path Road Area Plan.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. In March of this year, the Regulatory and Planning Committee approved the draft Bridle Path Road Area Plan and four development options for consultation. The consultation findings were to be reported back to the Regulatory and Planning Committee in the first instance, prior to presenting the final Plan to the Council for adoption. This report outlines the consultation process and key feedback received; the final Area Plan will be presented to the Committee in November. A full report describing the consultation process and providing details on the findings is appended as Attachment 1.
3. The draft Area Plan identified a preferred option ('Option 2') that would allow for the development of approximately 100-135 sections within the 'low hazard' zone only. The Council preferred Option 2 mainly because it offered the least expensive rockfall mitigation option, thereby minimising the risk to the Council should circumstances arise that required the Council to pay for the mitigation. Development would be in general accordance with LHA zone standards (minimum section size 1,500m<sup>2</sup>), with higher density (450-550m<sup>2</sup>) allotments within 90m of Bridle Path Road.

### Consultation methods and response rate

4. Public consultation was undertaken with landowners and the Heathcote Valley community by:
  - Sending out introduction letters and copies of the draft Area Plan to landowners and community groups, including the Heathcote Valley Residents Association. A copy of the summary document for consultation, which was also made available to the public, is attached.
  - Holding a public meeting in Heathcote.
  - Meeting with landowners (three landowners took the opportunity to meet with Council staff on-site).
  - Providing copies of the draft Area Plan and summary document at service centres, libraries and on the Council website.
  - Advertising through a media release and a public notice in local newspapers.
  - Providing feedback forms for stakeholders to submit feedback on the plan.
5. A total of 115 feedback forms, emails and letters were received during the consultation period. A breakdown of respondents revealed that few responses came from groups or individuals outside of the Heathcote area, indicating that this is a local rather than metropolitan issue.

### Summary of findings

6. A summary of the key feedback received during the consultation process is outlined as follows:
  - (i) **Housing density and building line.** A significant portion of submitters preferred a lower density development than that specified in the preferred option, Option 2. Only two people supported Option 2 as it was. Eighty-six submitters identified a new preferred option, which would enable larger allotments across the site but primarily limit this type of development to the low hazard zone. Overall, a lower density development (around 750m<sup>2</sup> per section) was preferred, with the development of less than 100 new allotments in total.

- (ii) **Style of development and building controls.** A significant amount of feedback was received on how the development should look and/or be controlled, including controls on: building design and layout, landscaping and planting, and the retention of mature trees.
- (iii) **Traffic, roading and access.** Many people were concerned about the impact that 100 or more new households would have on the amount of traffic on local roads, including Bridle Path Road, the Ferrymead Bridge, and Martindales/Port Hills Roads.
- (v) **Surplus land, reserves and walkways.** Overwhelmingly, submitters requested that any surplus land above the development be acquired by Council as a reserve in order to allow public access, encourage birdlife and vegetation, help prevent rockfall, and improve visual amenity.
- (vi) **Stormwater, flooding and waterways.** The proposed swale and roadway corridor were supported by most, however there was some concern that the proposed option did not adequately address stormwater issues.
- (vii) **Landowner aspirations.** Landowners were generally concerned as to whether the low hazard line represents a suitable building line, as limiting development to this zone 'ignores' existing residential development in the neighbouring 'higher' hazard zones in adjacent subdivisions (eg Morgans Valley). Landowners also expressed a desire to subdivide parts of their land, prior to the co-ordinated development advocated for in the Area Plan.

### **Implications of the Feedback.**

- 7 The tenor of the feedback from the local community is that there is unlikely to be significant resistance to development provided it is at a lower density than proposed in Option 2. The resulting development would mean less and larger sections, reducing the impact on local infrastructure (including community facilities), and providing greater opportunities for open space, planting and walkways. These outcomes are seen by the local community as being more in line with the existing character of this part of the Valley than Option 2 (as presented in the Draft Area Plan).
- 8 However, such a development pattern presents two key challenges. Firstly, a significant reduction in section yield will almost certainly adversely affect the financial feasibility of this development. Secondly, lower densities may be seen as being contrary to the objectives of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, and in particular, proposed Plan Change 1 to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement. In regard to the latter concern, the following should be noted:
  - The subject land is already inside the urban limits, and therefore not affected by the provisions of Proposed Change 1 relating to greenfields development;
  - Greater weight should be given to the City Plan at the present time and this document already provides for several areas of lower density development in and around the Port Hills, including Heathcote Valley;
  - The Consent Order signed by the parties to the original appeals signalled a low density Living HA Zone or some variant of it, although the Council would not be bound by this if some other development scenario were to be promoted through a Plan change.
- 9 As a result of the feedback received from landowners, further geotechnical and landscape assessments have been commissioned to determine if a more appropriate building line and lot density is achievable having particular regard to the objectives and policies of the City Plan. If the geotechnical assessment determines that that the risk from rockfall can be mitigated using a bunding system further up-slope than was originally advised by the geotechnical consultant, and the effects on the landscape of such a development were assessed as being acceptable in terms of the City Plan, then there will be a strong resource management case to develop to a higher contour. This would enable lower and/or a greater range of densities to be developed, while keeping the total number of lots at the lower end of what was feasible under Option 2, (less than 100 new dwellings). Preliminary results from these investigations suggest this may be the case.

### **Possible amendments to the Area Plan arising out of the consultation process**

- 10 It would be premature for this report to suggest what form and scale development might take on the subject site based solely on the consultation process. There are still several technical issues to be worked through, and final reports on hazard mitigation and landscape effects of development occurring to a higher upper limit have yet to be completed. Also, as the selected option will form the basis of a change to the City Plan, it needs to be underpinned by sound resource management evidence, and be subject to further scrutiny by the public at large when the Plan change is publicly notified next year. Recommendations on the preferred development option will be made to the November meeting of this Committee.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. There are no direct financial implications.

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

12. Not applicable.

### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?**

13. There are no direct legal considerations.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS**

14. Not applicable.

### **Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?**

15. Not applicable.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES**

16. Not applicable.

### **Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?**

17. Not applicable.

### **CONSULTATION FULFILMENT**

18. Not applicable.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council receive this report for information.