

8. GOULD RESERVE LANDSCAPE UPGRADE

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment, DDI 941 8608
Officer responsible:	Transport and Greenspace Unit Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board for the concept plan for the landscape upgrade of Gould Reserve following consultation with the local community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Board members will recall that the concept plan for the landscape upgrade of Gould Reserve was presented to Board seminars on 17 February 2010 and 5 May 2010 prior to the Capital Development Unit carrying out consultation with the local community. Additional information on the reserve requested by Board members was also provided in a memorandum dated 5 March 2010.
3. The public information leaflet was distributed to approximately 120 households, absentee property owners, and other stakeholders in the vicinity of the reserve. There was a relatively low response from the local community with a total of eight residents returning the comment form.
4. Overall we received a positive response from the community with all respondents indicating their support for the plan, and some offering additional feedback on various issues. Further details are provided in the 'Consultation Fulfilment' section of this report, paragraph 14 to 21 refers.
5. In recognition of this feedback, and further technical advice, the Transport and Greenspace Unit proposes that this proposal be approved and implemented without further amendment (refer **attached**).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. Funding for the proposed development is provided within the 2009-19 LTCCP Neighbourhood Parks renewal and Replacements Programme as shown below.
 - (a) 2009/10 \$2,500
 - (b) 2010/11 \$30,000

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?

7. Yes, as above.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8. No legal considerations have been identified. No resource or building consent issues have been identified.

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

9. No legal considerations have been identified.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

10. The project aligns with the Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019:

Parks, Open Spaces and Waterways

- (a) Safety - by ensuring that our Parks, open spaces and waterways are healthy and safe places.
- (b) Community - by providing spaces for communities to gather and interact.
- (c) Environment - by enabling people to contribute to projects that improve our environment.
- (d) Governance - by involving people in decision-making about parks, open spaces and waterways.
- (e) Health - by providing areas for people to engage in healthy activities.
- (f) Recreation - by offering a range of recreational opportunities in parks, open spaces and waterways.
- (g) City Development - by providing an inviting, pleasant and well cared for environment.

Measures

- (h) Neighbourhood Parks are satisfactorily maintained.
- (i) Overall customer satisfaction with neighbourhood parks.

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2009-19 LTCCP?

11. Yes, as above.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

12. This project has primary alignment with the following Council strategies and policies:
- (a) Safer Christchurch Strategy
 - (b) Parks and Waterways Access Policy
 - (c) Environmental Policy Statement

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

13. As above.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

14. Consultation was undertaken with the local community on the proposed concept plan for the playground upgrade. The public information leaflet was distributed to approximately 120 households, absentee property owners and other stakeholders in the vicinity of the reserve. The plan was also available through local libraries and service centres, and the Councils 'Have Your Say' website. A total of eight comment forms were returned.
15. Overall we received a very positive response from the community with all respondents clearly indicating their support for the plan, and some offering additional feedback on various issues.

16. One submitter expressed concerns about the potential of the post and cable fencing, and surfacing of the path with grit and paving inserts, to hinder access to the park for people with disabilities. The design and width of the two entranceways to the reserve complies with accessibility standards in the Council's *Parks and Waterways Access Policy (2002)*. The use of compacted chip or crusher dust, and paving inserts, to form a continuous surface on the path also complies with these standards. The post and cable fencing, or bollards, have been proposed to address the issue of vehicles parking in the reserve.
17. One submitter has asked for more seating in the lawn area of the reserve believing that three is not sufficient for the river area. The project budget does not allow for additional seating over and above the three provided in the proposed concept plan. Provision of seating for the Heathcote River bank is also outside the scope of this project. A request to investigate the provision of adequate seating along the river bank in this area has been forwarded to appropriate staff in the Transport and Greenspace Unit for investigation.
18. One submitter has asked for childrens' playground equipment to be provided in the reserve. Gould Reserve is a small reserve of only 394 square metres in area, and with a maximum width of approximately 13.5 metres. It is therefore too small to install play equipment and associated under-surfacing in compliance with the minimum setback distance from neighbours required under the provisions of the Christchurch City Plan, and New Zealand Standard NZS 5828:2004 *Playground equipment and surfacing*. The reserve is more ideally suited to passive rather than active recreation.
19. One submitter has suggested that even with the proposed upgrade, the reserve is an unlikely place for people to go and relax. The submitter suggests that planting a number of fruit trees on the reserve would provide a reason for people to visit the area. Staff have advised that the reserve is currently used by the local Gould Crescent children for play activities, by walking groups that sometimes meet there, and by other casual users who have been observed to bring deck chairs to picnic. Staff anticipate that this usage will increase once the reserve has been upgraded.

In general, fruit tree species do not meet the primary need for shade and shelter. In addition, there are a number of issues to be considered in planting fruit trees in public parks including:

- (a) The high level of horticultural care, and a long period to establish, to the point where the trees produce fruit for harvest;
- (b) The high ongoing maintenance requirements, for example, pruning, feeding and spraying for pest and disease control;
- (c) Park maintenance and public amenity issues, for example, fallen over-ripe fruit that rots on the ground, attracting wasps and flies, and gets trampled underfoot, and;
- (d) Inequities in the distribution of fruit.
- (e) All trees planted on reserves need to have their lower branches pruned up for visibility and clear sight lines, making fruit inaccessible.

Some nut trees such as chestnuts, walnuts and hazelnuts require less maintenance, so are sometimes planted in public parks. However in this situation, the park is not considered to be an appropriate location for nut trees, due to its small size, and riverside native planting theme.

20. One submitter has suggested that the other corner of the river bank is upgraded also as many people walk here. This area is part of the road reserve at the end of Long Street by the Woolston Cut gates on the opposite bank. Currently there is no funding allocated for new landscaping of this area however the proposal has been forwarded for investigation of funding in future LTCCP rounds.

21. All respondents who provided contact details have been sent a final letter of reply thanking them for their input. The letter has also informed respondents that the final plan would be presented to the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board for approval. Details of the meeting were provided so that any interested people could attend.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board approve the proposed concept plan for the landscape upgrade of Gould Reserve and the City Environment and Capital Programme Groups commence the construction programme.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be adopted.