

1. POPLAR STREET-ASH STREET (LICHFIELD LANES)

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

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval to implementation of the first stage of the proposed street upgrade on Poplar and Ash Streets (known locally as Lichfield Lanes).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. This initial stage of the upgrade focuses on the intersection of Poplar and Ash Streets where it is proposed to form a new piazza, (**see Attachment 1**). This area will have a high quality paving finish, which allows for easier access to services. Poplar Street will also be upgraded with a new drainage channel and asphalt finish.
3. Part of the proposed works will involve Council funds being spent on land in private ownership. A cost share and maintenance agreement has been finalised, as well as easement rights over this private land. This has been formulated and agreed by the Legal Unit of the Council and solicitors acting on behalf of the local property owners. The agreement is contained in (**Attachment 2**).
4. In proceeding with this project no changes to the function of these two mentioned streets are envisaged, however, with time and given the nature of developments currently taking place, how these streets are used in the future may change as they become more pedestrian orientated.
5. With financial support from the Council's Art in Public Places Fund, \$20,000 will be used to fund a fountain and seating area at the corner of Poplar and Ash Streets, see Attachment 1.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

6. A legal agreement has been signed by both parties formally recognising easement rights over private land before any works can proceed; the key points of the agreement are as follows:
 - (a) An easement agreement will be registered with Land Information New Zealand as mentioned above before works commence.
 - (b) The easement is for 80 years, the expected asset life of the proposed works.
 - (c) This will be a Right of Way easement in gross favour of the Council.
 - (d) Maintenance costs on the 63m² of privately owned land mentioned in section 8 will be shared 50/50 between the property owner and Council.
 - (e) Maintenance costs for the fountain will be funded fully by the Business Building Systems (BBS) Group (land owners) for a period of five years from the date the easement is agreed. After this time Council, through the Transport and Greenspace Unit, will maintain this city artwork for the remainder of the easement period.
 - (f) The easement document prohibits any additional works on the 63m² of privately owned land mentioned in section 8 which could interfere with the proposed upgrade finish and layout without approval from the Christchurch City Council for the duration of the easement period.
7. The anticipated cost for the street upgrade is \$193,000 to be funded by the Transport and Greenspace, Major Amenity, Service Lane budget.
8. The estimated area of works on privately owned land equates to 142m², 79m² will be fully funded by the BBS Group of Companies with Council funding the remaining 63m².

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Council approve implementation of the first stage of the proposed street upgrade on Poplar and Ash Streets (known locally as Lichfield Lanes).

BOARD RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be adopted.

BACKGROUND

9. This project was instigated by the need to upgrade and re-vitalise parts of the Central City in line with the Central City Revitalisation Project and in collaboration with the BBS Group, Athfield Architects and the Mayoral Forum. The streets of Poplar and Ash were chosen to be a catalyst for other similar central city re-development projects.
10. Poplar Street runs on a north-south axis between Tuam and Lichfield Street and intersects Ash Street mid block which runs in an easterly direction towards Madras Street. Development of the lanes by private developers has seen a number of new businesses open and prosper mirroring closely the revival of High Street.
11. Part of the proposed works will involve Council funds being spent on land in private ownership. A cost share and maintenance agreement has been finalised, as well as easement rights over this private land. This has been formulated and agreed by the Legal Unit of the Council and solicitors acting on behalf of the local property owners. The agreement can be viewed in **Attachment 2**.
12. Development still continues in other private lanes off Poplar Street and all contribute to this exciting development. Already hailed a success in many quarters, future proposed upgrades to Ash Street will strengthen an alternate route to the Turners and Growers site.
13. In addition as part of the street renewal project on Madras Street, programmed for 2006/07, a mid block crossing point adjacent to Ash Street will be investigated as part of the scheme development. Further more Athfield Architects are considering this link as part of their design development which will lead into the very heart of the Turners and Growers Development.
14. Future funding for Ash Street could be sought through the Central City Development Strategy and prioritised within the 'Small Lane and Streets' Plan presented to Council on 15 August 2006.
15. With financial support from the Council's Art in Public Places fund, \$20,000 has been allocated to fund a fountain and seating area at the corner of Poplar and Ash Streets. The design is illustrated in **Attachment 1**.

CONSULTATION

16. A leaflet outlining the upgrade proposal was delivered to property owners and residents in the area bounded by Lichfield Street/Tuam Street/High Street and Madras Street. Responses to this proposal were positive. There were some concerns raised with regard to parking, however, the proposal does not change the parking arrangements in the area.
17. The initial consultation material did not include the fountain and seating area. This addition to the project was communicated to the stakeholders via letter. No negative feedback has been received on this change.

OPTIONS

18. Three options were considered for this project.
19. **Option 1: Do Nothing**

This project was born out of direction from the old Mayoral forum and a need to revitalise the central city as part of the Council revitalisation Project Stage 1. The 'Do Nothing' option would prevent further development of an appropriate framework to working in partnership with local developers. This partnership and the setting of clear guidelines is vital if other projects are to be considered throughout the central city.

20. **Option 2: Initial Piazza Concept**

This option formed the basis for the Athfield Architect design which was initially presented to the Community Board, property owners and residents of this area. This option called for a high quality concrete finish square to be constructed at the corner of Ash Street and at the mid section of Poplar Street to form a piazza, or open space on which a variety of events could potentially be held.

This option was discounted due to budget overruns, and the inability of both Orion and the City Water and Waste Unit to gain easy access to their services without additional cost and unacceptable damage to the overall finish.

21. **Option 3: Piazza with Fountain**

This is now the preferred option. This will be a high quality paver, similar to that used in another central city development in His Lordships Lane although a 'grid pattern' will maintain the uniqueness sought for this area. The paver has gained widespread acceptance from many units within Council and provides the accessibility required by service authorities. There will also be savings from using this product as opposed to the concrete. This is also the preferred material choice currently being considered in other central city projects of this nature and by this continued use, cost relating to actual supply can be further reduced.

PREFERRED OPTION

22. Option 3 is the preferred option to implement as soon as possible in order to complete all planned Stage 1 construction work before the summer tourist season develops in full.
23. Sufficient funding is available to proceed to tender Stage 1 of this project.