

12. DRAFT BELFAST AREA PLAN



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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval of the draft Belfast Area Plan for public consultation. The Belfast Area Plan (the Area Plan) provides the framework for land use planning and Council expenditure, reflects how both the local community and the wider City wishes the area to develop, and ensures that growth is integrated and collaborative.
2. Following consultation, the Council will be presented with a final Area Plan. If adopted by the Council, the Area Plan will lead to changes in future LTCCPs, capital programmes, budgets, development contributions, and changes to the Christchurch City Plan to implement the Area Plan. The development of the Belfast area is Christchurch's second key greenfields development area behind South West Christchurch.

Note: This report was considered by the Regulatory and Planning Committee in the Public Excluded section of its meeting. Staff advise that this report can now be considered by the Council in the open section of the agenda.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3. The Council is required to consult with affected and interested parties on issues, plans and strategies that may directly or indirectly affect them. Since 2004 the public have been consulted on a series of outcomes and visions for the Belfast area, concurrently the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and its enactment pursuant to Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement ('RPS') have identified the land use and staging for the area. Overall, the land use options, staging and visions were supported by respondents, and have since been developed into the draft Area Plan. It is acknowledged that: *there are submissions against the staging identified within Change 1 to the RPS; and Plan Change 22 identifies a 'Sub Regional Centre' for that area adjoining Radcliffe and Main North Road.*
4. Greater detail and direction as to how the area will be managed over the next 35+ years is provided in the draft Area Plan. The purpose of this next phase of consultation is to gain community feedback on this detail. While the draft Area Plan does not bind the Council in any way, it is a non-statutory document that will have potential implications for future LTCCPs, and as an 'Other Matter' with regard to RMA statutory plans and processes. Consequently, Council approval to commence consultation on the draft Area Plan is important in this regard.
5. The draft Area Plan promotes new centres, high quality business environments and employment opportunities. New neighbourhoods will be developed around: an extensive open space network built on the existing natural values of the Styx and Kaputone River system: *providing recreation opportunities; and facilitating ease of movement between centres, employment destinations and public open space.*
6. The uniqueness of the Belfast area will be celebrated through restored habitats and its tangata whenua values. The Plan also fosters the incorporation of key landscape features and European heritage into urban development and public open space. Neighbourhoods will be supported by a range of services and facilities and people will have genuine multi-modal transport choices. Infrastructure and services will be designed, constructed and managed to be resilient and adaptable to the unpredictability of factors such as climate change, the global economy, and energy supply. **Attachment A** includes the draft text of the Area Plan; **Attachment B** provides the vision statement of the draft Area Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. The Area Plan has no financial implications, its implementation will be addressed through changes to the City Plan, and through the 2009/19 LTCCP capital infrastructure programme through which service funding aligned with the UDS has already been placed.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8. The Area Plan will assist the Council in carrying out its functions under both the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and Local Government Act, by:
- (a) Ensuring sustainable management of the area's natural and physical resources
 - (b) Facilitating the integrated planning of Council-managed services
 - (c) Identifying opportunities for land development
 - (d) Providing direction for Council's acquisition of strategic land areas
 - (e) Providing a framework for the collection of development contributions.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-19 LTCCP?

9. Yes. The draft Area Plan will assist in achieving a number of community and Council outcomes under the LTCCP, in particular planning for the future growth of the city.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

10. The relevant Council strategies are as follows:
- (a) Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS) – Belfast has been confirmed as a major Greenfield urban growth area under this strategy. The draft Area Plan demonstrates how the level of urban growth projected under the UDS will be managed and accommodated.
 - (b) Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and Proposed Plan Change 1 – The draft Area Plan takes into account the wider regional objectives of the RPS and Proposed Plan Change 1 (as amended by Variation 4), in particular those relating to settlement and the built environment, the urban limit, transport, matters of regional significance to tangata whenua, landscape, ecology, heritage, and rivers.
 - (c) Christchurch City Plan – The objectives and policies of the draft Area Plan have been influenced by the relevant objectives and policies of the City Plan, in particular those relating to urban growth, flood risk, open space and recreation, Tangata Whenua, European heritage, and natural values. The Area Plan will also provide a basis for any new objectives, policies and rezoning introduced through changes to the City Plan.
 - (d) The Styx Vision 2000 – 2040 - The Five 'Visions' for the Styx Catchment and River Corridor has influenced the outcomes anticipated by the Area Plan. In particular, the need to ensure the retention of increased natural character and ecological enhancement for the Styx River, Kaputone Stream and other spring fed tributaries.
 - (e) Waterways and Wetlands Asset Management Strategy – Objectives 1 to 6 of the draft Area Plan provides further grounding to the initiatives promoted in this strategy, namely achieving a value-based approach to land development and the restoration of waterways and wetlands.
 - (f) Christchurch City Biodiversity Strategy – The Strategic Vision identifies the Styx River Corridor as "An outstanding example of riparian and estuarine wetlands with high potential for re-establishment of native wetland birds and increased protection of existing species such as bittern and marsh crane".
 - (g) Proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan and the Surface Water Management Protocol – Objective 1 contained in the draft Area Plan represents the Integrated Catchment Management Plan, is considered to meet the objectives of the proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan and Surface Water Management Protocol.
 - (h) Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy (CRLTS, 2005-15) – Objective 9.1 and 9.3 of the draft Area Plan is considered to meet the objectives and policies of the CRLTS.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

11. The engagement of key stakeholders (i.e. affected and/or interested parties) at this stage of the Area Plan process, is fundamental to the Council meeting its duty under the first schedule of the RMA and sections 78 (Community views in relation to decisions) and 82 (Principles of consultation) of the LGA.
12. A consultation plan has been prepared for this final phase of the consultation process, and sets out a programme (over October and November 2009) and methods of consultation. Key steps will include:
 - (a) Continuation of the provision in the next series of newsletters informing key stakeholders about the draft Area Plan and how to provide feedback. Accompanying the newsletter will be a summary brochure of the draft Area Plan.
 - (b) Belfast based information sessions with the general public and media releases.
 - (c) Hui with local hapu and runanga. This will be undertaken principally by Mahaanui Kurataiao Limited (MKT).
 - (d) Presentations to Environment Canterbury, New Zealand Transport Agency, Waimakariri District Council, and the Urban Development Strategy Implementation Committee. These organisations have been kept informed throughout the Area Plan process and involved on relevant matters.
 - (e) An update to the Belfast Website.
13. It is not intended to formally hear feedback to the draft Area Plan, but written feedback will be received and considered. If the feedback suggests that any significant variance to the draft Area Plan is warranted, these matters will be referred to the Regulatory and Planning Committee for direction. It is intended that the final draft of the Area Plan will be presented to the Council for adoption in early December 2009.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Regulatory and Planning Committee recommend to the Council that it **approve** the draft Belfast Area Plan for consultation with key stakeholders (including directly affected landowners, land developers, and community, government and environmental organisations), subject to staff conducting an editorial review of the draft Belfast Area Plan and associated maps to ensure they are suitable for a public audience prior to consultation.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Regulatory and Planning Committee recommend to the Council that it **approve** the draft Belfast Area Plan for public consultation.

The Committee requested staff provide legends for maps and demarcate constrained and unconstrained aquifers on relevant maps.

BACKGROUND (THE ISSUES)

14. Belfast is identified in both the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, and the Christchurch City Plan, as a major urban growth area. Over the next thirty-five years the area is expected to accommodate over 2,900 new houses, and approximately 110 hectares of new industrial development. The sequencing of land development will be broadly as follows (in accordance with the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy):
 - (a) Applefields (Belfast s293) to be mostly developed in the short term (2007–2016)
 - (b) Development of a moderate scale (3 hectares) District Centre at Radcliffe Road to be developed in the short term (2007–2016)
 - (c) Development and redevelopment of central and north eastern Belfast Industrial Areas in the short term (2007–2016)
 - (d) The extension of residential development to the east of the Main North Rail corridor in the Medium term (2017–2026)
 - (e) Small scale residential development close to the Styx Mill Reserve to be developed in the Medium term (2017–2026).
15. The Area Plan establishes a vision for the area, and objectives based on sustainable development and management principles. Page 25 of the draft Area Plan establishes a vision for the area and sets out the main goals and objectives to achieve the vision. A series of plans support the objectives and policies, representing the proposed stormwater management scheme (which in time will form part of the wider Styx Integrated Catchment Management Plan), public open space network, land-use pattern (including residential neighbourhoods, activity, neighbourhood and local centres, business land and community facilities), roading hierarchy, and the public transport network.
16. The Area Plan will be accompanied by an Implementation Plan which provides a detailed programme of the actions and key tasks to achieve the Area Plan objectives and policies, prioritisation of actions, timeframes for delivery, required resources, and performance measures.