

LTCCP 2006-16 Submission - Received by Email

Name:	Neil O'Brien [obrien.nj@xtra.co.nz]
CC:	
Sent:	Wed 26/04/2006 08:41
Your Submission:	<p>Community Plan Submission. PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND WATERWAYS</p> <p>Contact Name: Neil J. O'Brien, Contact Address: 1/31 Main Road, Redcliffs, Christchurch 8008. Phone 03 384 609</p> <p>e-mail address: obrien.nj@xtra.co.nz</p> <p>I am making this submission on my own behalf but as a long time member of Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens I consider I have some insight into the functioning of the Gardens in my capacity as a volunteer plant propagator and in selling those plants, and as a Guide. Guiding both locals and overseas travellers puts me in a position to receive much feedback. Most of this is very positive and people are lavish in their praise of our Gardens. I am keen to see to see this position maintained.</p> <p>Our Botanic Gardens is one of the most visited sites within the city. What visitors see here will surely be taken away to many other countries around the world. We must work hard to enhance and improve this facility; if we are not going forward we are surely slipping back.</p> <p>In my view there is now is now need for many changes if this Crown in the City's Jewels is to retain its justifiable reputation.</p> <p>We need to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. enhance the Gardens as a place for recreation and rest for all who seek it.2. create an environment for education at all levels, for all people, especially the young.3. maintain and enhance the role of conservation, to preserve not only our native flora but also that which is of particular interest from other countries e.g. those species whose existence is endangered. I would further urge for more collections of plants from our own region. i.e. The plains and foothills and the establishment of an alpine garden.4. promote the remarkable history of the Gardens.5. ensure that the scientific aspects of the Gardens is enhanced and promoted. Make it place where the conservation of threatened plant species be encouraged and practiced, plant biodiversity be at the forefront of study and that education at all levels be of prime importance. The keeping of scientific records, a herbarium and a library properly maintained and accessible to all who have a need, is essential.6. leave a rich heritage for generations to come. Our forebears had the vision that they were passing on something we would treasure for ever.7. ensure that staffing levels are increased and maintained at a satisfactory level and that the facilities needed to maintain this level are provided. Increased educational professional opportunities for staff.8. seriously consider increasing the range of the Gardens by calling in some contiguous land from Hagley Park and repositioning some recreational areas such as the tennis courts. Proposed necessary new buildings should not encroach too much into the existing Gardens.

**Your Submission
(Cont'd):**

9. consider adding outliers to the Gardens for specialist plantings. e.g.. at Victoria Park. There are precedents for this, a.g. Sydney Botanic Gardens.

10. **Buildings.** Present buildings no longer function adequately for the efficient day to day running of the Gardens. New buildings should include a new Information Centre, extended Library, a properly equipped herbarium. There is a great need for meeting rooms, displays and other educational facilities, i.e. lecture rooms with audio/visual equipment.

11. **Tree Renewal.** Of the \$17m, I urge that the Council divert the greater share of this into tree renewal in the Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park. In the Gardens this matter is urgent. An ongoing programme over the next few years is imperative so that there is no visible impact on the overall scene. Trees left too long are a menace to all and may cause severe damage to existing plants.

12. Of the \$10m or so set aside for the Gardens care should be taken that too much is not spent on buildings alone leaving little for the real work of restructuring and maintaining the actual Gardens.

I fully support the proposals for access to open spaces, parks, recreation areas and landscaping around our beautiful city.

Neil O'Brien