

<p>Officer responsible Parks Manager</p>	<p>Author Kelvin McMillan, Parks Planner (Policy) Roger Cave, Committee Secretary, Sockburn Bill Morgan Property Services Officer</p>
<p>Corporate Plan Output: Parks Plans and Policy Statements and New Assets – Reserve Purchases</p>	

This report is being submitted to the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board for its comment and to the Parks Committee for its consideration and recommendation to Council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend City Council purchase a property in Hillary Crescent for a local community reserve.

INTRODUCTION

A Local Community Needs Analysis report (1998) was undertaken in the Upper Riccarton area. A Working Party comprising representatives of the local community and organisations was established to consider the outcomes of the report and to consider various options and solutions to the gaps identified.

The report identified a community, which is characterised by several significant features, namely high population increase since 1991, low incomes, and high ethnic diversity. The Fijian Social Services Trust, based at 40 Hillary Crescent, has provided a range of children’s and adult recreation and training programmes for the local community. In order for these programmes to expand and thus address the growing needs of the local residents, a larger venue is required. Consideration is now being given to the creation of a pocket community park of approximately 1800m² to serve the unique needs of this strongly multi-cultural community in Upper Riccarton, especially the residents of Hillary Crescent and Roche Avenue, in the medium to long term.

An opportunity to acquire a suitable property to meet the immediate open recreation needs has now arisen the details of which are included within this report.

LOCATION

Hillary Crescent is a short loop road off Curletts Road in Upper Riccarton. It lies in the block between Blenheim Road to the south, Main South Road to the north, Curletts Road to the west and Hansen Lane on the east. Hillary Crescent is connected to Roche Avenue by a narrow right-of-way.

COMMUNITY PROFILE – TRENDS – NEEDS

The population of the study area has increased at twice the rate of the city-wide population since 1991. The area has significantly higher than city averages of household incomes lower than \$15,000 per annum, unemployed, those with 'no qualifications', one-parent families, rental properties, Housing New Zealand properties, transient students, young people aged between 19-24, households with no access to a telephone, as well as a higher population of Maori, Pacific Island, Asian and other ethnic groups, with only 66.3% of the population identifying as 'European Only', compared with 83.6% city-wide.

The area is bounded by an industrial zone and four main, busy roads, with a high proportion of large trucks using Main South Road, Curletts Road and Hansens Lane on a regular basis. The closest shopping area is at Upper Riccarton and generally, residents like the convenience of this area with most facilities being within walking distance. For swimming and library facilities, most residents go to Hornby (Hornby Library and Sockburn Pool).

This area reflects a greater cultural mix than most other parts of Christchurch, with thirteen ethnic backgrounds already represented in the programmes running out of 40 Hillary Crescent. The most predominant ethnicity's are European, Pacific Island, Maori and Chinese, but there are also several Vietnamese, Cambodian, Egyptian, Indian families living in this area. The primary social needs of these communities are quite different in many ways from those of the European community. While the key issues identified by European residents can be categorised around need for local community facility, traffic concerns, needs for improved park facilities and recreational facilities for children and youth, isolation, unemployment and perceptions of university students creating noise and damaging property in the area. The issues identified by migrant families include language and cultural barriers to participating in their communities, isolation, unemployment, need for more information about services, need for more information about and contact with countries of origin.

Many residents across all ages and ethnic backgrounds feel isolated from their wider community. Caregivers of small children (particularly those with cultural and language barriers to community participation) and the elderly (particularly elderly Chinese again, due to the additional elements of cultural and language barriers) are particularly affected by feelings of isolation. Lack of access to a telephone is one factor that may contribute to residents' feeling of isolation. 10.7 percent of Upper Riccarton residents had no access to a telephone, this compares with 3.2 percent city wide. 13 percent of all survey respondents said that they had felt isolated over the last 12 months. 50 percent of all Asians and 50 percent of women between the ages of 25 and 35 said that they felt isolated. In addition transient people over the age of 25 were more likely to experience feelings of isolation.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE CONTEXT

Generally the above area has adequate provision of local green space, with Vicki Street Reserve and Hansens Lane Reserve providing the two areas of local park. However, the Hillary Crescent area is isolated from the Vicki Street Reserve by Curletts Road which carries high traffic volumes and trucks etc. Hansens Lane Reserve is right at the margin of the recommended 400m travel radius distance from a park via the street system from Hillary Crescent.

From a parks point of view the request to create more reserve space in the area has been evaluated from a slightly wider social perspective than normal given the extra information available on the socio-economic / cultural characteristics of this area.

A COMMUNITY POCKET PARK FOR HILLARY CRESCENT

The success of the programmes based at 40 Hillary Crescent and a need for a new location points to joint community-park solution which would provide greater overall benefit to the area than either facility alone. The development of this dual purpose concept was well supported by members of the Upper Riccarton Working Party.

The Community Needs Analysis identified a number of requests from Upper Riccarton children including:

- bigger, better parks (27% of children)
- more activities for children (15% of children)
- a skateboard park (10 percent of children)

Caregivers of small children would like to have places they can go and have a coffee, learn a craft/skill or take part in an exercise class/walking group, while their pre-schoolers have a stimulating area to play.

Some caregivers of small children would like a facility in the area which offers low cost, casual childcare, for times when they need to be out for appointments, job searching etc. The Bishopdale Creche, located beside Bishopdale Mall provides a model, which could be emulated in this area.

A small community park associated with a community building with play facilities for younger children and an attractive setting would be beneficial in the Hillary Crescent area. This would alleviate some of the social needs of the area by providing a local meeting place with space for play opportunities for younger children. More challenging facilities for older children would be better incorporated in either Vicki Street and or Hansens Lane Reserves.

Hillary Crescent would be suitable for a small park and adjacent community building for the following reasons:

It is situated in an area on the ideal limit of assessable (400m) walking distance from a local reserve Hansens Lane Reserve and 'cut off' from Vicki Street reserve by Curletts Road.

It is a quiet loop road with a right-of-way connection through to Roche Street thus increasing potential user access and providing a focus around which a park could be built.

Current programmes provided for the local community at 40 Hillary Crescent by the Fijian Social Services Trust have been highly successful. However, as stated previously, a larger venue is required in order to meet the ongoing needs of local residents.

The Hillary Crescent – Roche Street right-of-way is narrow and ideally should be widened to improve pedestrian safety.

CONCLUSION – OBJECTIVES

The main purchase objective is to create a better local community facility in the Hillary Crescent area which combines aesthetic factors such as planting, children's play and wider social objectives than would occur if a park or community building were to occur in isolation. Results from the Local Community Needs Analysis report indicate that a pocket community park associated with an adjoining community building would be a needed and well used addition for the people of Upper Riccarton.

PROPERTY DETAILS AND SETTLEMENT

The property in question is a regular shaped site of 673m² facing west on Hillary Crescent with a frontage of 17.6m. It is level in contour layed with a concrete strip driveway, concrete paths, lawns, shrubs and gardens. The improvements comprise a single storeyed two bedroom residential dwelling built in the 1950's era with durock sidings, concrete tile roof and both timber and aluminium joinery. Other improvements include a modern double garage and a free standing flat containing a kitchen, bathroom and bed-sitting area. Both the house and flat are currently let.

The property has been valued on the Council's behalf by George Anderson and Company Limited the details of which are included in the public excluded section of this report. Agreement has been reached with the owner requiring the Council to confirm by 31 August 1999 its intention to purchase. As such approval is sought to acquire the land as a reserve.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

The purchase will be funded from the Reserve Purchase Fund page 9.4.65 in the 1999/2000 Corporate Plan.

Recommendation: That the property in Hillary Crescent be acquired as part of the first stage of a recreation reserve on the terms and conditions outlined in the public excluded section of this report.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the officer's recommendation be adopted by Council.