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Corporate Plan Output: Parks Plans and Policy Statement	

The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of the proposed Nga Puna Wai Reserve Development Concept Plan and ask the Board to make a recommendation to the Parks and Reserves Committee on its release for public comment.

### **History**

In 1986 the Council purchased a 25 ha block adjacent to Curletts Road from the Crown for recreational purposes. The site remained in an undeveloped state since its purchase, due to problems associated with access off the busy Curletts Road. This land was therefore exchanged for 28 ha of Canterbury A&P owned land on the other side of the Retention Basin at the end of Templetons Road. This exchange made it possible to enable the Canterbury Saleyards and A&P Showgrounds to relocate their functions from within the city where they had been situated for over 100 years. An Agribusiness Centre on the site bounded by Curletts Road, Wigram Road, Wigram Retention Basin and the Heathcote River was established in consequence.

The land exchange solved a number of problems. It allowed the Canterbury Saleyards and A&P Showgrounds to relocate to a larger site which would have less adverse effects on surrounding activities. Also, a Recreation Reserve could now be established with access from a less busy road than Curletts Road.

### **Purpose and Location**

Landscape plans are documents which define the Council's management objectives and policies. They provide a framework within which all future management will be carried out and are subject to periodic review, usually every five years.

This Landscape Plan presents some of the history and background issues for the Council owned land between the Upper Heathcote River and Wigram Road known as Nga Puna Wai Reserve (formerly Curletts Reserve). The proposed reserve also includes the wet pond of the Wigram Retention Basin and a ribbon of esplanade reserve running from St John of God to Curletts Road. The Park has significant natural assets as well as being an important metropolitan park with potential for expansion up the Heathcote River into the proposed Halswell growth area.

## **Legal Status**

Currently Nga Puna Wai Reserve comprises land with three different zone classifications:

1. O3C – Open Space 3C (Agribusiness Centre)
2. O2 – Open Space 2 (District Recreation and Open Space)
3. C3 – Conservation 3 (Waterway Conservation)

It should be noted that an extension to the Christchurch Southern Motorway (SH.73) is also planned along the north-west side of the Reserve.

## **Reserve Name**

The name Nga Puna Wai (many spring waters) has been suggested as a name for the Reserve, to replace the title of Curletts Reserve. Feedback is being asked for in the consultation process.

## **Design Concept**

The design concept comprises of four recognisable zones with distinct characteristics and use.

### *(a) Active Sports and Recreation Zone*

This area comprises four significant event areas – cricket (summer) and rugby (winter) with allocation of junior sports grounds and opportunities for other codes (eg, rugby league, softball, etc) if demand requires.

### *(b) Passive Open Space*

This zone will provide opportunities for informal recreational events such as horse-riding (horse and pony clubs), cross country events, and picnics. This will act as a buffer zone between the highly maintained and structured sportsground and the native habitat wetland of Wigram Retention Basin. It will also continue the rural character into the site from the northern rural blocks owned by Canterbury A&P Association.

### *(c) Wigram Retention Basin – Native Wetland Habitat and Revegetation*

This zone will continue to be enhanced for plant and wetland habitat. Wildlife and vegetation considerations will be paramount, and recreational activities such as walking will have to be controlled to ensure that ecological values are not compromised. There will be restricted access to some areas, and there may be “no go” areas during certain times of the year, eg during nesting seasons.

(d) *Upper Heathcote River Corridor – Riparian Revegetation Zone*

This zone will eventually extend further along the Upper Heathcote past St John of God, as well as branching off northwards along Dry Stream to Wigram Road. This extension will increase the ecological value of the revegetation upstream, as well as adding to the riparian revegetation carried out so far along the terraces of the Upper Heathcote passing through Nga Puna Wai Reserve.

Public use of these corridors will be encouraged through the introduction of a series of walkways and also some cycle links. Public access to these corridors is important, allowing local residents and visitors to view and appreciate the natural river environment. However, where the plantings are particularly wide, it will be possible to isolate some of the planting from excessive foot traffic and improve its value as wildlife habitat.

### **Consultation**

The consultation process will consist of:

1. Letterbox drop of proposed Development Concept Plan and site information in the local area and to interest groups, eg sporting associations, clubs.
2. Landscape plan and site information to be placed on the Reserve site.
3. Information provided to local press.

The Development Concept Plan will be circulated for comment until mid-November.

**Recommendation:** That the Board recommend to the Parks and Recreation Committee that the Concept Plan be distributed for consultation.