

8. CATHEDRAL SQUARE – CHILDREN’S INTERACTIVE ART PIECES

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| Officer responsible Environmental Policy and Planning Manager | Author John Dryden Environmental Policy and Planning Manager |
| Corporate Plan Output: Cathedral Square | |

The Council gave approval for “Children’s Features” for Cathedral Square in December 1998. A total of \$100,000 (\$50,000 in 1998/99 and 2000/01) was allowed for a heritage trail, interactive art pieces and a water feature.

As part of the “Children’s Feature”, freestanding interactive pieces of art designed to appeal to children were proposed. In reviewing the budget it was considered that a water feature of the scale required for the location was not realistically achievable and would be more appropriate as a separate future project. The focus has therefore been on development of interactive art works and heritage trail within the budget of \$100,000.

A brief was prepared and three local artists were invited to respond. The brief referred to artworks that contain a sense of discovery and included the following criteria:

- *Must appear friendly and appeal to children of all ages.*
- *Be of a size that children can relate to, ie life size.*
- *An emphasis on being interactive - objects that can be touched, climbed onto and provide opportunity for play.*
- *Must be robust – pieces are to permanent therefore should be constructed of materials that will last and be vandal-proof.*
- *Must be safe for children – pieces should be stable, not sharp and, if designed to be climbed on, low to the ground.*
- *Must take into account the context of the Square as a heritage place, pedestrian precinct and significant public space.*
- *Ability to complement the proposed children’s heritage/discovery trail being developed.*
- *Take account of the other major artworks planned for the Cathedral Square Redevelopment.*
- *Take account of health and safety regulations.*

After a reviewing a range of concepts two proposals were selected for detailed design work. The Art in Public Places Working Party has considered the proposals commenting positively on the first work and decided not to continue with the second. Further proposals are being sought.

The first work is a collaborative project by Evan Webb and John Tullett. The work consists of life size kea cast in bronze atop an existing lamppost, squabbling and in the throes of dismantling the lamp. The kea would be sound activated sculpture with an audio response. A sound sensitive switch at the base of the lamp standard will activate an electronic recording of Kea sounds. The existing light will illuminate the work at night.

It is proposed to locate the work on the South side of the Square between the planter boxes. This area has been selected due to being sunny, safe for children (away from traffic), there is parent comfort (seats) and it is an area with high people activity.

The next step in the process is consultation with adjoining landowners.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.