

25. PIPING COLLEGE DRAIN, PRESTONS ROAD



Officer responsible Water Services Manager	Authors Ken Couling Bob Hopkins
Corporate Plan Output: Utilities Restoration, Vol IV p.9.3.50 (1999 edition)	

The purpose of this report is to seek Community Board approval for substituting the piping of College Drain, Prestons Road, for Styx Drain timber renewal in the Water Services utility improvement programme for 2000/01.

INTRODUCTION

College Drain is an open waterway 88m long draining to Prestons Road between number 51 and Redwood Primary School. The drain intercepts stormwater runoff from the school and adjoining properties. The waterway is timber-lined and the timbering is still in sound condition.

DISCUSSION

The issue of piping College Drain has a long history. In November 1994 the City Council adopted the Utility Waterway Improvement programme which included College Drain as a Priority Two waterway for improvement. At the level of funding approved at the time for the overall programme it was expected to take approximately eight years to complete improvements on Priority One waterways listed.

Mr Oulds, 51b Prestons Road, petitioned the Shirley/Papanui Community Board for College Drain improvements to be moved from Priority Two category to Priority One. The petition was supported by the Community Board at their June 1995 meeting where they requested that the Water Services Unit consider carrying out piping of College Drain before 1998/99.

In response to further submissions from Mr Oulds requesting immediate action on piping, the Water Services Unit in November 1996 offered to meet half the cost of piping in front of his property at 51b Prestons Road if he wished to proceed with pipe installation during the preceding 12 months. Mr Oulds did not take up this offer. In November 1997 he was advised in writing that the piping of College Drain at full cost to the City Council was programmed for the 1999/2000 financial year. This advice was based on the assumption that existing funding levels for the Utility Waterway Improvement programme would be maintained. However the outcome of the Annual Plan and Budget process for the current financial year resulted in a significant reduction of funds available for capital works on utility waterways. The current reduced level of funding throughout the improved ten-year capital works programme has the effect of postponing the piping of College Drain to the 2003/04 financial year. Based on asset condition there are still seven Priority One waterways in more urgent need of improvement of College Drain which has timber lining still in sound condition.

It is easy to understand Mr Oulds' frustration with the postponement in piping College Drain. The postponement of College Drain improvements was not an arbitrary action but one in direct response to a reduction in financial allocation to the Utility Waterway Improvement programme.

In adopting its Annual Plan each year, the Council makes it clear that projects in Year 1 are committed, and projects in Years 2-5 are supported but should not be regarded as committed. In most cases, projects in Years 2-5 that are not carried out in their specific year are deferred by no more than one or two years. In this case, however, the deferment has been much longer, to 2003-2004. For this reason the Mayor asked Water Services staff to review the priority of piping College Drain.

Piping College Drain is estimated to cost approximately \$20,000. The work could be funded by substitution, postponing Styx Drain timbering renewal (estimated cost \$20,000) provided for in the draft 2000/01 budget. The consequences of postponing Styx Drain project is possible failure of the timber lining which is in poor condition. In the event of failure the timbering would be removed to prevent blockage resulting in some slumping of bank material which may need to be excavated and removed from site.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the piping of College Drain, Prestons Road, (estimated cost \$20,000) be substituted for Styx Drain timber renewal in the utility waterway improvement programme for 2000/01.

For discussion.