

### 3. KENNEDYS BUSH ROAD PROPERTIES

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The purpose of this report is to provide background information on the two Council-owned properties in Kennedys Bush Road which are currently being circulated to business units of Council and Community Boards, as part of the Surplus Property Decision-Making Flow Chart process, for possible registration of interest to retain the properties for a proven need.

The properties are:

- the block of approx 1 hectare zoned Living Hills with frontage to Kennedys Bush Road above the Quarry Park; and
- the house and gardens of the former Halswell Quarry Manager.

#### VACANT RESIDENTIAL BLOCK OF ADJOINING LAND

The status report containing the basic details has been circulated in accordance with the Council-adopted process for decision-making on surplus property. It is appropriate however that any radically new proposals for this block of land should be considered in the context of the extensive public consultation already undertaken through the Quarry Park Management Plan and the City Plan and the measure of agreement reached on its future use for residential development.

The proposal that this land be set aside as surplus to the Quarry Park was included in the original 1991 Management Plan. Following its adoption, the rezoning of this area to Living Hills A was included in the Proposed City Plan. This has now been confirmed in the City Plan. Consultation was undertaken and submissions received and considered through both these Plans.

Importantly, the Kennedys Bush Road Neighbourhood Association (Chairperson, Sylvia Lukey) gave its early support to the property proposals in its letter of 27 April 1992, the relevant parts of which are repeated as follows:

*“The Kennedys Bush Neighbourhood Association is in broad agreement with the direction of the Halswell Quarry Management Plan which has finally been released to the public. This submission concerns the planned sale of Patterson’s House and the Council property uphill from the House to the water tank below 239 Kennedys Bush Road. The Association has always accepted that the sale of certain pieces of Council land is reasonable and the land in question does seem appropriate for urban development being near urban services and already set in a built up area.”*

The Association went on to urge retention of the Quarry Manager’s House and this aspect is being referred to in the next section of this report. The Association also said:

*“If the remaining area of approx 1.8 hectare is to be subdivided the Association would like to see reasonable sized sections created, perhaps five to one acre in size. This would be in keeping with the surrounding residential land and would allow for reasonable sized gardens and full sized trees, thus forming a good buffer zone next to the planned native bush area of the quarry reserve immediately to the east. The existing weatherboard Council houses should be sold rather than retained for rental as houses or flats, in an effort to safeguard future property maintenance and enhancement.”*

The area now rezoned for Living Hills is somewhat less than that originally proposed. The Association’s suggestions regarding the existing houses and section sizes are worthy of consideration in the final planning.

#### **HALSWELL QUARRY MANAGER’S HOUSE & GARDENS**

The Quarry Manager’s House which is located in a prominent position close to the entrance of Halswell Quarry Park is a substantial stone villa built in 1927. Known as “Patterson’s House”, it was the home of Ned Patterson who was a long time Quarry Manager. The house once had a magnificent rock garden, traces of which are still visible. The house and garden are registered as a Category II historic place under the Historic Places Act. The house, until recently, has been tenanted for residential purposes.

The 1991 Management Plan identified this site for disposal along with the adjoining open land. The submission dated 27 April 1992 from the Kennedys Bush Road Neighbourhood Association sought to retain the House as part of the proposed Park:

*“...but failing that we would still favour some future for the property whereby the public has some access to the place. We strongly support the view that in any sale of the Manager’s House, restrictions be placed on modifications to this building so that its exterior appearance is preserved and that in any subdivision of land the existing house and extensive garden is sold as one section...”*

In the updated 1998 Management Plan it has been decided to retain the house site and gardens in Council ownership but recognising its potential for a use to complement the recreational activities of the Park. Objectives in the updated 1998 Halswell Quarry Park Management Plan include promoting an awareness and appreciation of the historic significance of the area and to preserve the historic areas of the Quarry, the farmland and buildings. The Plan’s policies recognise the inclusion of commercial activities in the Park development and “establishment of permanent commercial activities under a negotiated lease with the Council”.

The Halswell Quarry Park is also the site for the Sister Cities Garden Park and the Patterson House and garden will be formed as the Christchurch-England Garden containing a combination of three garden styles: formal, herbaceous and woodland. A copy of the landscape concept plan is attached, together with a photograph of the house taken in the early 1990s.

The house and garden is a high profile elevated site which lends itself to a commercial or other use which will complement the Quarry Park activities and at the same time retain the historic and botanical nature of the house site. The property has become surplus to its current use as a residence. As the first step in the Surplus Property Decision-Making Flow Chart a status report is now being circulated.

A Conservation Plan is currently being prepared for the house and any alterations or upgrading for a changed use will need to meet the requirements of that Plan and resource consent conditions. In addition, while the area of the grounds to be used may be negotiable, these will also need to be essentially in accordance with the Landscape Concept Plan for the Christchurch-England Sister City Garden.

## **CONCLUSION**

In reaching the stage of now circularising Council business units and Community Boards, considerable planning work has already been undertaken in accordance with decisions reached through two Quarry Management Plans and subsequent City Plan. Changes in the latest Quarry Park Management Plan have recognised the merits of submissions received, especially from the Neighbourhood Association. To a certain point, decisions have been made which should not be materially altered unless there is very good reason to do so. There is however opportunity for registrations of interest in respect of these properties for retention in Council ownership for a proven need. Such registrations will require to be followed up by the proposers with a fully-developed proposal which is supported by a needs analysis and by the relevant controlling unit of Council, together with details of funding (both capital and operational) and timeframes.

Any such proposals received will be included in the final options report to be prepared by the Property Unit and a recommendation on a preferred option will then be submitted through the appropriate Committee for approval by Council.

**Recommendation:** That the information be received.

### **Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the Board give consideration to the future of the one hectare block on Kennedys Bush Road and the former Quarry Manager's house and gardens.