

7. DECLARATION OF A SPECIAL USE AREA – SPEAKERS’ CORNER

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The purpose of this report is to declare an area of Cathedral Square as the Speakers’ Corner under the Christchurch City Public Places and Signs Bylaw 1992

INTRODUCTION

The work on Cathedral Square is largely completed and the layout has been significantly changed since the area known as Speakers’ Corner was first introduced in 1975.

It is considered that a new area should be designated as a Special Use Area under the bylaw for the purpose of public speaking. This area should be known as Speakers’ Corner for the purposes of continuity and the positioning of this takes into account the other uses in Cathedral Square. It also enables some free space to be available for other public functions that may occur from time to time.

The Christchurch City Public Places and Signs Bylaw 1992 makes the following provision for declaring specified parts of public places being set-aside for public speaking. The Council may declare the area as that for use in general and may set down conditions for the use.

13. SPECIAL USE AREAS

(1) The Council may declare, from time to time by resolution publicly notified, that any public place or any specified part of such public place, has been set aside for a distinct or special use or uses such as public meetings, rallies, entertainments, public speaking, exhibitions of art and artefacts. Such declaration may be for an occasion or in general and may set down conditions for such special use.

(2) No person shall make such special use of any public place outside or apart from any area declared by the Council to be set aside for such special use under sub-clause (1) of this clause.

(3) The Council may from time to time restrict or alter the permitted use of any area declared pursuant to sub-clause (1) of this clause either for an occasion or in general, and shall give public notice of any such restricted or altered use.

(4) The applicant for any restriction or alteration in the use of a special use area shall pay to the Council all costs involved in giving public notice of such restricted or altered use.

CONCLUSION

The selection of the particular area has been made in consultation with the Senior Heritage Planner as being the most suitable within the Square at this time. This area is as defined on the attached plan. It has a number of advantages in that seating is close by and the trees provide some provision for shade. It adjoins the areas set aside for busking, the area used for the outdoor chess set, and the area assigned for the market. It is a reasonable distance from the entertainment area. It is considered that provision should be made for conditions to apply to the use of the area. These should include:

- no amplification of any kind may be used by speakers
- the retention of the Council’s right to close the area for public speaking for the purpose of using the area for other public events.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the area defined on the attached plan be declared as Speakers’ Corner for the purposes of public speaking as a Special Use Area under the Christchurch City Public Places and Signs Bylaw 1991.
 2. That all previous declarations by the Council setting aside any public place or part thereof for public speaking be revoked.

Chairman’s

Recommendation: That the officer’s recommendation be approved.