

## 15. 38 COURTENAY STREET – DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN GREEN SPACE

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The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of the results of meetings with residents in the vicinity of 38 Courtenay Street about this piece of vacant land being held by City Streets Unit for possible road widening/realignment purposes.

A meeting with local residents was held at St Albans Primary School on 2 October 2000 to discuss their concerns about the state of the property and what they felt should be done to it. It was determined by them that it should be developed as if it were a park with such features as a path being formed along an existing “desire line”, a barbecue and seating area, and a play area catering mainly to preschool children (a flying fox for older children was promoted) and further planting especially around the perimeter. The provision of edible fruit trees was also suggested. The residents were of an opinion that a community garden would not succeed on this site. With these ideas in mind an indicative draft plan was drawn up and circulated to all those who attended.

Within a week of the meeting the land was sprayed to kill the grass and weeds etc prior to levelling and rubbish removal. This work has now been done along with the removal of a section of the low concrete fence along the Courtenay Street frontage.

A second meeting was arranged for 6 November 2000 and a flier was circulated in the area along with a copy of the draft plan.

The response of those attending the meeting was unanimous in the praise of what they saw as a vast improvement to the site with just the preliminary landscaping having been done. The draft plan also found favour and this was discussed at length. The Area Engineer, City Streets, gave a report on the further works proposed by City Streets Unit. Also in attendance was an officer from Water Services who undertook to give consideration to the development of the area around the stream, possibly as a project in partnership with the school.

The meeting moved that the next step should be the development of a final draft plan, that this is discussed with the adjoining property owners and tenants, and subject to any concerns being addressed, this be presented to a further meeting of residents.

It was pointed out that this would be an ongoing project and the completion of the project could take some time. Those in attendance accepted this and also undertook to assist in maintaining and developing the site.

The feeling of both meetings was one of positivity and a willingness to get together and work in partnership with all parties involved.

Another outcome of the meeting was interest expressed in reinstating the Neighbourhood Support scheme in Courtenay Street and Westminster Street.

**Recommendation:** That the board considers funding a suitable project identified in the final plan from its 2000/01 Discretionary Funds and/or 2001/02 Project Funds.

**Chairperson’s Recommendation:** That the officer’s recommendation be adopted.