

5. SUNNYSIDE RESERVES LAND ACQUISITION

Officer responsible Parks and Waterways Manager	Author Derek Roozen, Parks & Waterways Planner, DDI 371-1798
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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the proposed acquisition of land for reserve purposes, and a heritage building and the land it is on, at the ex-Sunnyside Hospital site, and to seek the Board's support for recommendation for settlement of these acquisitions to be made to the Parks and Recreation Committee at its meeting on 11 April 2001.

LOCATION

The land and building proposed to be acquired is located within the south eastern portion of the ex-Sunnyside Hospital site situated between Annex Road and Sylvan Street, north of Lincoln Road (see Appendix A (attached) for a photo plan of the overall area).

BACKGROUND

The overall area in question, formerly part of Sunnyside Hospital, which contains the land and building proposed to be acquired for reserve purposes, will be transferred from HealthLink South Limited and Ngai Tahu Property Group Limited to Brian Gillman Limited, which has applied for resource consent to subdivide and develop the area for residential purposes.

Within this area, significant heritage and arboricultural values have been identified.

These are:

- A complex of heritage buildings, designed by three government architects (Benjamin Mountfort, Thomas Cane and John Campbell), built between 1871 and 1892. The whole complex was listed in the Christchurch City Council Transitional Plan as a Group 2 protected item. Following submission to the proposed Christchurch City Plan, only the Administration Building in the complex has retained its protected status under the plan. However, the Mountford designed buildings in the complex (the west wing), are recognised by the Historic Places Trust and registered as a Category II protected place.
- A large number of protected (including those listed as "notable" in the proposed Christchurch City Plan and those identified as "significant" as a condition of subdivision approval) and unprotected trees, some of which are significant in size, are present in separate parts of the area. The majority of the protected trees are located within the following places:
 - A wedge-shaped area fronting Annex Road (containing 63 notable or significant trees).
 - A group of trees off where the end of the heritage building's east wing (now removed) used to be (comprising six notable or significant trees).
 - An avenue of trees at the existing (and proposed) entrance off Sylvan Street (consisting of eighteen notable or significant trees).

There are also another fifteen notable or significant trees within the site.

PROPOSALS

The outcome of the Council's subdivision consent application assessment process has been the identification of a number of measures that should be taken to protect the important values described above. To achieve these a number of proposals within the frameworks of reserve contribution and outright purchase, are recommended as follows (these recommendations are discussed in more detail in the subsequent sections and costings are covered separately in the 'Public Excluded' section of this report):

1. Ensure effective ongoing protection of the Administration Building through the Council purchasing the building, and the proposed subdivision lot on which it sits (proposed Lot 72 area is 1,275 m²), then vesting that land as an historic reserve and upgrading the building for its use as a community facility.
2. Establishment of a wedge-shaped recreation reserve encompassing the existing major accumulation of trees fronting Annex Road. This will comprise proposed Lots 74 and 75 (12,063 m² in total) and will exceed the developer's maximum reserve contribution obligation. The proposed reserve will retain most of the protected trees in the subdivision.

3. Council to purchase proposed Lots 28, 29 and 30 (total area is 1,772 m²) in order to ensure retention of six protected trees on those lots. The developers have advised that (otherwise) it is unlikely to be economically viable for them to retain the trees on the lots.

A. HISTORIC BUILDING PURCHASE

Photo 1: Administration Building



Rationale

The Administration Building, for many years the public entry to Sunnyside Hospital, is now the only protected part of a previously large, rambling complex of heritage buildings. It is likely to be in the future, the only surviving part of the complex as the bulk of the buildings are due for demolition.

There are a number of potential options for future use of the building, ranging from craft studios to a cafeteria, to accommodation. Certainly, its potential role as an important community facility can be promoted. The successful alternative development and use of other Christchurch heritage buildings, such as the Rose Historic Chapel on Colombo Street and the Nurses Memorial Chapel on Riccarton Avenue, are examples that could be emulated.

The issues of owner obligation to ensure protection, appropriate use and implementation of required improvement and maintenance of such an important heritage building supports Council ownership of it. Regardless of who the owner is, Council will have some responsibility for the building, so it is to the Council's advantage to own it, and the land on which it rests, in order to direct the best management and use of the resource for the benefit of the public.

Proposal

1. For Council to purchase the Administration Building, and the proposed subdivision lot (Lot 72) that it is located on, for the amount that has been mutually agreed upon.
2. Council to undertake an exterior upgrade, or fund works to be carried out by the developers, to make the building safe and weatherproof with an appearance deemed satisfactory for a residential subdivision.

B. RESERVE CONTRIBUTION



Photo 2: Proposed recreation reserve fronting Annex Road

Rationale

Negotiation has been undertaken to protect the largest body of tall trees, fronting Annex Road, by acquiring the land that contains them, through reserve contribution on the subdivision, and vesting it as a recreation reserve. The proposed lots formed for this reserve are Lots 74 and 75, with a total area of 12,063 m².

Photo 3: Fountain



Many of the trees on the proposed reserve are substantial and will immediately provide a large “garden setting” for the reserve. The amenity of the reserve will also be enhanced through:

- An extensive frontage to Annex Road, which is an important link in the city’s cycle network.
- Development of pedestrian walkways through the reserve.
- Rounding around the reserve, thereby maximising the reserve’s street frontage, and meaning that there will be no residential lots backing on to it.

The reserve contribution calculated on the proposed residential subdivision of 71 residential allotments created (including a credit of one lot for the underlying title), based on the maximum of 130 m² per lot, is 9,230 m². The reserve area proposed to be provided by the developer is 12,063 m², meaning the developer has contributed an excess of reserve contribution of 2,833 m². The developers have requested that this be taken as a reserve contribution credit, which equates to 22 credits.

It is proposed that the stormwater swale for the subdivision to be constructed in a “naturalised” form outside the main reserve and within the area of legal road between Annex Road and the Heathcote River. An estimate of 900–1000 m² has been indicated as being required for the swale, although the final area requirement may differ. A debit to the developer’s reserve contribution credit of six credits has been suggested by the developer to provide for this swale, though this level equates to just 780m² of Council land being taken for drainage purposes, based on a reserve contribution rate of 130m² per lot, the final figures are subject to change depending upon the final design and land area required to treat the stormwater. This reduces the developer’s reserve contribution credit balance to 16 credits.

In addition, the developer will be required to develop the swale at their cost and to Council’s specifications, although development and maintenance cost obligations may be negotiable.

On the basis that the reserve contribution credit balance of 16 credits is too large to be appropriately carried over to a future residential development, it has been agreed that the credit balance may be taken as both cash and credit for future development (see the Public Excluded section of this report for financial calculations).

Reserve calculation

Reserve to vest on subdivision (proposed Lots 74 and 75)	12,063 m ²	
Minus land required (71 lots @ 130 m ² per lot)	- <u>9,230 m²</u>	
Proposed reserve credit	2,833 m ²	= 22 reserve credits
Minus Council land used for drainage from the subdivision	- <u>1,000 m²</u>	- 6 reserve credits
Adjusted reserve credit	<u>1,833 m²</u>	= 16 reserve credits

C. PURCHASE OF PROPOSED LOTS 28, 29 AND 30



Photo 4: Proposed land purchase for reserve

Rationale

Purchase of this land by Council is recommended in order to protect the one significant and five notable trees. If the land is not purchased, it is likely that the developers will seek to remove the trees to make it viable to sell the lots for residential purposes (the trees may be too large and take up too much of the lot areas to permit erection of residences on these lots).

The developers have requested that purchase of the lots be based on the retail value of the lots less costs not incurred by them to service those lots. See the 'Public Excluded' section for the financial calculation.

D. RESERVE AND TREE WORK

Agreement has been reached that the developers will meet the costs to relocate notable or significant trees to allow development works on the subdivision site and that Council will cover all maintenance and improvement works, including the trees on the proposed reserve areas.

CONCLUSION

It can be argued that the proposals detailed above will serve to allow the Council to optimise the provision of community recreational open space for the proposed subdivision at the ex- Sunnyside Hospital site, while also achieving the following key benefits for both the future local community and the city as a whole:

1. The retention of public ownership of an important heritage building remnant (the Sunnyside Hospital Administration Building) permitting its ongoing management and use that:
 - (i) Is in the best interests of the city's residents, as well as the future local community.
 - (ii) Complies with the building's status as a Group 2 protected building.
 - (iii) Is sustainable.
2. Ensuring the protection of a large number of large protected trees on publicly owned and administered (rather than privately owned) land. Also, that the land is of a sufficiently large size (meaning, in this case that the area contributed by the developers will exceed their reserve contribution obligation allowing them to receive a credit) to result in a reserve that is viable and sustainable, both in social and environmental terms (that is, formation of a big enough park fronting Annex Road for people to recreate comfortably in and for the health of the trees present to be maintained).
3. Achieve retention on a smaller site of a small group of trees, through land purchase, when otherwise they will likely be removed to make way for housing.
4. Potentially allowing the stormwater drainage system for the subdivision to be established on other Council land (that is, the legal road between Annex Road and the Heathcote River) with benefits being:
 - (i) Reduction of the developer's reserve credit.
 - (ii) Avoidance of the need to use the large proposed reserve fronting Annex Reserve for stormwater drainage purposes.
 - (iii) Having the option to naturalise any stormwater swale on the legal road area.

Recommendations: That the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board:

1. Receive the information.
2. Recommend to the Council's Parks and Recreation Committee that it should approve the proposed building and land purchases on the ex-Sunnyside Hospital site and that Council should proceed to achieve full and final settlement of same.
3. Advise the Parks and Recreation Committee of:
 - (a) Its support for the establishment of the large reserve fronting Annex Road.
 - (b) Any comments and suggestions for future use of the Administration Building.