

24. LO-017-001-152/02 ACQUISITION OF LAND SCARBOROUGH

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Corporate Plan Output: Reserve Purchases – New Assets	

This report is being referred to the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board for its comment and to the Parks and Recreation committee for its recommendation to the Council.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to consider the purchase of section 3 on the attached plan to provide future access to the Scarborough Reserve.

BACKGROUND

As Councillors will be aware the Council in 1997 acquired what is known as Scarborough Farm as a recreation reserve. The reserve contains an area of 221 hectares and is bounded by Evans Pass Road and lies north and south of the Summit Road and adjoins to the east Godley Head reserve.

Scarborough Hill was once an open farm grazing sheep and allowing public access. Over the years this has been compromised as rural land use has changed and residential subdivision has proceeded. The Onepoto or Heritage Trail, which attempted to formalise public access through the farm in 1990, has now been closed for 2 years at the farmer's request because of deer grazing etc. Council officers have had consistent requests by the public over the years to re-establish walking links both over the Heritage Trail and up the hill on a farm track from Godley Drive to the Summit Road.

Scarborough Hill residents and visitors are effectively cut off from Scarborough Farm Reserve, the Summit Road and the historic walking links to Taylors Mistake and Sumner.

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION

At its May meeting the Committee considered a report relating to the acquisition of sections 1 and 2 on the plan through the granting of reserve contribution credits. The Committee was advised that the acquisition of section 1 would provide public access from Heberden Avenue upto the concrete steps to the first hairpin on Scarborough Road while the acquisition of section 2 would provide security of tenure for the new reservoirs to be placed on the site. The Committee approved the report and recommended to the Council that it acquire the respective parcels.

CURRENT PROPOSAL

Negotiations have been proceeding over the years to try and re-establish public access through the owners property to the reserve.

This will involve purchasing the existing formed farm access road to Scarborough Farm Reserve. This route is proposed to be fenced off from the farm area planted with some trees and shrubs and provide a generous walking and cycling route. (see attached plan) The shingle road could also provide emergency, maintenance and possibly some recreation vehicle access e.g. approved paragliders who currently have to go through Sumner to collect people for the bottom of the hill at Taylors Mistake.

Agreement with the owner has not been reached but an understanding was given to place this matter before the Council for its consideration. Currently there is a wide disparity between the owner's asking price for the area concerned and the Council assessment the details of which are included in the public excluded section of this report. In addition to the value of the land the owner is also tying the sale of section 3 to a successful resource consent application to subdivide the balance of this rural land into 2 separate parcels with one residential building site guaranteed on each area. A further condition is that the land, should agreement be reached, be transferred to Council as road and formed to a rural standard. In addition there is to be no public use of the land until the road is fully formed and the boundaries fenced.

With respect to the matter relating to the subdivision of the rural land the Council officers concerned did not consider that they could bind the Council to an approval but were prepared to accept the condition subject to due process being complied with.

In the circumstances this matter is being referred to the Committee for its consideration.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

The purchase has been included in the strategic reserve purchase programme for the 2001/2002 year which is potentially over committed.

Recommendation: That the Committee consider whether it wishes to acquire section 3 and resolve accordingly.

**Chairman's
Recommendation:** That the officer's recommendation be adopted.