

## 23. LO-017-001-226 – SCOTTS VALLEY PURCHASE

<b>Officer responsible</b> Parks Manager	<b>Author</b> Bill Morgan, Property Services Officer DDI 371-158 Kelvin McMillan
Corporate Plan Output: Strategic Reserve Purchases	

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

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to exercise a first right of refusal to purchase 10.5900ha of land for addition to Scotts Valley Reserve.

### BACKGROUND

The Council in 1999 approved and acquired 126.1535ha of land adjoining Castle Rock Reserve from Scotts Valley Limited for scenic reserve purposes. The area acquired is shown and depicted on the attached plan as Lot 2.

The purchase was a key part of the grassland part of the Port Hills Regional Park concept adopted by the Council in April 1999. It has local visual and recreational importance to the residence of Heathcote Valley as well as metropolitan importance. The purchase links 5 Council reserves together and provides visual ecological and recreation continuity between John Britten reserve in the east with Castle Rock in the west. The property forms the hills backdrop to the Heathcote Valley and is visible from central and eastern Christchurch. It is an area of high quality landscape and vertical cliffs uncluttered by buildings and has very high natural ecological values.

### CURRENT PROPOSAL

At the time the land was acquired the lower portion of the property was the subject of a city plan decision restricting residential development to a relatively small portion of the applicant's property off Bridle Path Road. The proposal to zone the land for residential purposes was opposed by other submitters to the city plan process. The owner subsequently lodged an appeal against the decision seeking to enlarge the residential area. This matter has now been resolved with the consent of all the parties concerned and the area rezoned LHA as depicted as parcels B and C on the attached plan S3163.

At the time of purchase of the reserve the owner reserved from sale lot 1DP82647 as depicted on the attached plan to provide a buffer between the reserve and the land rezoned LHA. As part of the negotiations the Council secured a first right of refusal to acquire this land should the owner wish to dispose of it. From the Council's point of view the protection of this area was seen as important in order to protect from residential development the virtually un-incumbered open space panorama stretching from Mt Pleasant to Castle Rock reserve. The area also contains a four wheel drive track, which was seen as important in order to develop a walkway system around the reserve. To provide a further track further up the hill on the current boundary would be difficult given the steep nature of the land and the rocky bluffs and outcrops. The track runs from the homestead around the valley to link with the gondola. The area also contains a large number of trees including an extensive area planted within the last 4 to 5 years.

The owner is currently in discussion with a number of developers over the potential disposal of the LHA land and has approached the Council to determine whether it wishes to acquire part of the buffer zone as shown as Lot 2 on the attached plan. If not secured by the Council this land could be attached to residential allotments to be created in the LHA zone and subsequently disposed of. The subsequent visual impact of this could be considerable given the potential for a variety of plantings to be established on the area and more importantly the four wheel drive track and the opportunity to utilise it as a walkway system would be lost to the Council.

As a consequence of this negotiations have been held with the owner and agreement reached subject to formal Council approval to acquire the land on the terms and conditions contained in the public excluded section of this report.

## **SOURCE OF FUNDS**

Provision has been included within the 2000/2001 Parks purchasing programme to meet the deposit payable under the agreement with the balance of the purchase price being allowed for within the 2001/2002 budget.

**Recommendation:** That Lot 2 on the attached plan containing 10.4900ha be acquired for scenic reserve purposes on the terms and conditions contained within the public excluded section of this report.

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