

### 3. CATHEDRAL SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT

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The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress with Cathedral Square redevelopment, to further consider the ideas put forward by the Ian Athfield study and to make recommendations in respect of road repairs, Stage V works and longer term concepts.

#### BACKGROUND

It will be recalled that in the early part of 2001, a study of Cathedral Square was undertaken by a team led by Ian Athfield and James Lunday together with extensive public consultation (including The Press "fix it" campaign). At a Council seminar meeting in May 2001 the Athfield-Lunday proposals for Cathedral Square were presented and discussed ("Towards completing the Square") and the Council subsequently decided to proceed to the next stage of design concept investigations, including repairs/changes to the road behind the Cathedral. Work then also proceeded on the installation of a major planter beside the BNZ, new trees at the northern entrance to the Square, and additional grass under the Godley Statue trees.

In February 2002 following consultation with a group of property owners and businesses operating from the Square, the Cathedral Square Stakeholders Group was formed with the purpose of increasing the communication with local businesses and property owners and their level of involvement in promoting and making the Square a more vibrant place. The Stakeholders Group has set up three subcommittees to concentrate on specific issues as follows. These are marketing and promotion, operations, and redevelopment issues and since coming in to being have made representations to the Council's Annual Plan, met with contractors on cleaning issues, reviewed access to the north-east corner and identified opportunities for bringing more people into the Square. The vibrancy and enthusiasm of the Stakeholders group is a reflection of how well the Square is revitalising as previously empty or under-utilised buildings around the perimeter have been refurbished and repopulated.

Further Council seminars were held in March and August of this year to discuss and provide feedback on the further development of the Athfield ideas, including costings and options for repair or replacement of the failed granite pavers on the road carriageway. As will be described further below, implementation of the whole of the Athfield proposal is not possible within existing allocated budgets.

While no clear consensus emerged at the seminars concerning the design elements identified in and developed from the earlier Athfield report, there was a clear message that work to be undertaken at this time would need to fit within existing budgets. The staff team have been working through the options since that time and now wish to formally present these to the Council.

#### CURRENT ISSUES

While the Athfield proposals attempted a comprehensive overview of all the public space within Cathedral Square (and beyond), given the financial constraints, there is a need, at least in the short to medium term, to focus on those parts of the Square which have not so far been refurbished, and in any other areas where specific problems have arisen since refurbishment. The key issues for consideration are therefore firstly the remedial work required to the existing granite roadway and secondly the completion of Stage V and beyond. The following sections of this report deal with these issues, including the financial implications.

#### REMEDIAL WORK

There are two major issues with the existing granite surfacing on the road in Cathedral Square. They are firstly safety concerns about the slipperiness of the pavers when they are wet and secondly ongoing maintenance costs and the structural failure of the road surface.

#### Safety

As reported previously the Council has received letters from the LTSA and the Police expressing concern about the number of accidents occurring in wet conditions in the Square. They attribute this to the nature of the granite pavers when they are wet.

This has been addressed by installing additional large signs advising of the slippery surface at the entrances to the Square and by roughening the pavers using a high pressure water cutter every three months. This water cutting could continue for a number of years but there is an ongoing cost and eventually the pavers will have to be replaced.

There are other safety issues related to the road that should also be addressed as part of any remedial work. These include:

- Poorly defined pedestrian crossing points
- The very narrow 'footpath' on the Cathedral side of the road
- Poor definition between the road and pedestrian space

## **Maintenance**

Since installation, the granite pavers in the roadway have not performed as envisaged. "Lock-up" of the pavers has not occurred and substantial lateral movement has taken place which is allowing water to enter into the metal base courses. This ingress of water has allowed failure of the base course to occur resulting in an uneven surface and potholing in various places. Several of the concrete header strips have also failed and require replacement. There is a considerable amount of work which cannot be delayed much longer. The extent of the failure is such that significant repair work/upgrading is required if the granite is to remain on the road surface.

Given the extent of the failure it was considered prudent to review possible options for the road surface before proceeding with repairs. This work has been done in parallel with Ian Athfield developing his proposals for the completion of the Square.

## **REPAIR OPTIONS**

A range of replacement options has been considered and were discussed at the August seminar. Details on each option are attached. In summary these are:

- Relay the existing granite pavers (estimated cost of \$285,000).
- Replace the granite pavers with a combination of concrete and asphalt as per the Athfield proposal (\$630,000).
- Replace the granite pavers with concrete pavers which could be either grey, as in Worcester Street (\$300,000) or granite coloured (\$390,000).
- Replace the granite with asphaltic concrete (\$195,000).

Relaying the granite, either on sand or concrete is not preferred by City Streets. They would continue to need "cutting" to maintain a suitable level of roughness and there is considerable doubt as to whether they could ever be made to lock up or bond to concrete in the high stress parts of the road.

The asphaltic concrete would provide a very suitable road surface at the lowest cost. It would also be quite clearly defined as "road" for all pedestrians. However at the August seminar there was considerable discomfort from many Councillors to reintroducing asphaltic concrete into this part of the Square.

The concrete pavers would maintain the paved theme compared to a smooth asphaltic surface and they would be structurally very suitable. The standard grey concrete paver is a different colour to the granite but Firth Industries can produce a granite look-alike concrete paver. A small trial area of this granite look-alike paving has been laid behind the Cathedral. There is little visual difference but the concrete paver does not reflect light the same way the granite does. The granite look-alike is approximately 25% more expensive (laid) than standard concrete pavers. The concrete pavers have the added advantage that a different colour could be used to identify pedestrian crossing points.

The trial with the concrete pavers has also shown that the work can be done satisfactorily in sections as needed with the Square being closed to traffic on Saturdays and Sundays only.

The replacement of the granite can be funded from the pavement renewal budget by deferring other planned pavement repairs for a year.

## STAGE V AND BEYOND

The Stage V area can be defined as that part of the Square in the north-west quadrant, which has not so far been resurfaced in granite. It includes the area below the Four Ships Court steps, and then the area generally north of the tram tracks. For budget purposes it was also deemed to include those parts of Stages I-IV not completed, and this in particular referred to lighting.

The work done to date (BNZ planter, Godley area grass, new trees in Colombo Street north entrance to the Square, concept design by Ian Athfield and preliminary costings for Stage V) was funded from the Stage V budget. The remaining budget for Stage V currently stands at \$1,500,000. To complete the Athfield plan, which as indicated above included areas beyond the defined Stage V area has been estimated at \$4,608,500 excluding the areas of "repair" (see previous section).

"Towards completing the Square" identified some six distinctive areas for which possible design solutions were suggested, plus some designs for features or objects to be located throughout the Square (eg bollards, lighting standards) . A discussion on each of these now follows:

### 1. Introductions to the Square

This referred to the Gloucester-Colombo Streets intersection to the north and the Hereford-Colombo Streets intersection to the south which were regarded as the main entranceways to the Square and which are clearly in need of refurbishment. It also raised concerns about the unco-ordinated signage leading into the Square, the low quality appearance of the green painted pavers, and the general lack of any proper definition, by way of signs, of Cathedral Square as a place.

Estimated cost: \$376,000.

**Comment:** While it is accepted that these matters require attention, treatment of the two intersections is not part of the Cathedral Square budget and should be considered either as a maintenance issue or as part of a future Colombo Street upgrade. There is room for improvement to signage leading into the Square and some provision for this could be included in the Stage V budget.

### 2. Threshold of Repair

This has already been considered above.

### 3. Western Grove

This is part of the north-west quadrant and proposes some 19 trees located north of the Four Ships Court steps across to Chancery Lane and the old Westend Theatre. It was envisaged that some car parking could be provided under the trees. It also includes a water feature, in very basic conceptual form as a "moat" with a bridge for tram and motor traffic. The report recommends the roadway be reduced to one-way north bound as recommended by the Cathedral Square Traffic Subcommittee in March 2001.

Estimated cost: \$1,144,000. (includes paving for whole of NW quadrant)

**Comment:** While to date there has been only limited consultation about this proposal, there are concerns about the practicality of combining the Athfield design with the need to accommodate vehicles servicing in particular the Visitor Information Centre (coaches, shuttles, taxis etc) plus short term car parking and drop-offs. There are also concerns about the cost and practicality of the water feature, although it is acknowledged that no detailed design has yet been undertaken. The water feature could not be constructed within existing budgets. The use of asphaltic concrete for paving much of this area may not be seen as acceptable. For this area more design work is required, probably with fewer trees and some accommodation for buses and coaches. Further consultation would then need to follow.

#### 4. **Market Square**

This is the other part of the north-west quadrant, east of the Tower building, and the Athfield plan envisaged relocation of the Cathedral Square market to this area, with provision made for removable poles to allow the creation of covered or walled market stalls.

Estimated cost: \$46,000 (pole bases, power outlets only, paving inc. in Western Grove above)

**Comment:** This proposal has received unfavourable comment from the present market operators and others as it is regarded as a shady part of the Square and also not central enough. Because the Tower building remains the last of the major Cathedral Square buildings to be refurbished and reoccupied there has been a reluctance to commit to a particular design for this area, given that the options range from hotel, to office, to education, to residential. The use requirements for the public space adjacent would vary for each of these options and it is considered prudent to wait the outcome of current attempts to revitalise the building.

#### 5. **Garden of Four Seasons**

This was a proposal to improve and add colour to the area around the Citizens War Memorial by replacing the present grassed area with a garden incorporating planting which would change over the seasons each year. A pathway to the memorial and a water area was also proposed.

Estimated cost: \$126,500 (based on Athfield's alternative idea of improved levels and access – see below)

**Comment:** This part of Cathedral Square is Cathedral land and in addition to requiring the co-operation and consent of the Cathedral authorities, the armed services organisations, including the Christchurch RSA, are interested parties. Preliminary consultation, mainly with the former Dean (John Bluck) and the Cathedral Chapter raised some issues about this proposal, and an alternative idea which concentrated more on improving the levels and access around the War Memorial and the Cathedral Visitors Centre has been suggested by Ian Athfield. This has not so far been discussed in detail with any of the affected parties.

#### 6. **The Pavilions**

The proposal here was for two buildings. Firstly the “Northern Pavilion” which would replace both the existing Police kiosk and the tram shelter, as a two storey building with a small Police base on top and on the ground floor a 24 hour café, volunteer counter, unisex toilets, tram shelter and chess set storage. The “Southern Pavilion” would be located in the centre of the entertainment area east of the old Post Office as a permanent building for the various food stall holders, with the roof above to act as a stage for events and concerts.

Estimated cost: \$628,500 (Northern Pavilion only)

**Comment:** The “Southern Pavilion” concept is not favoured because it would limit the flexibility of the usage of the entertainment area, is not considered to be the most suitable location for an events stage, and because at least in the short term stall holders, as required by the Council, have made significant investment in upgrading their own portable stalls. While there are advantages in “corralling” them in close proximity, this can be done without constructing a permanent building. The “Northern Pavilion” idea on the other hand does seem to have some real possibilities and is worthy of further exploration including ongoing consultation with affected parties (Christchurch Police, Community Volunteers, Christchurch Tramway, Cathedral Square Stakeholders Group). Funding will be an issue as there is insufficient money within the current budget to construct this building. There has been a recent suggestion that if a commercial activity could be established on the ground floor, the building may be able to be funded privately and this warrants further investigation.

#### 7. **Bollards**

These were proposed to be large, heavy (probably cast iron), relocatable by fork-lift, but not requiring to be anchored to the ground. As well as controlling vehicle access, parking etc, they could be readily adapted to incorporate planters, signs, lights, heater and bike stands. A mock-up has been made and is currently on display at Our City with the Cathedral Square model.

Estimated cost: \$529,000

**Comment:** While the current design may be controversial and not universally favoured, the idea of a heavy bollard is still worth considering. However they are not inexpensive and their number could be reduced from that originally suggested in the Athfield proposal.

## 8. Other Ideas and Suggestions

These ranged from further developing and improving lighting in the Square (both public and private), to the refurbishment of the lanes leading into the Square, to working with adjacent property owners and tenants to encourage better use of frontage properties including spilling out into the Square with tables and chairs etc. One particular idea was a silent movie screen located in the vicinity of the old Savoy theatre site by Warners. Other street furniture suggested includes seats, plant holders and up to three additional permanent planters similar to the BNZ planter and signage

Estimated cost: \$1,758,500 (includes three large planters, lighting, seating, plant holders and refurbishing lanes, \$552,000 of which is for lighting).

**Comment:** There were some very good ideas here and some have in fact been implemented (eg the cinema screen (in a modified form) by Warners Hotel). It is acknowledged that improvements are needed to the various lanes, and it is pleasing to note improvements already being made to some by their owners (eg Chancery Lane). While this is outside of the scope of the agreed Stage V area, encouragement of owners should continue, and some Council funding sourced from other budgets where appropriate. The report (including public feedback) did draw attention to the need to complete the lighting plan for the Square and subsequent work by Ian Athfield made some suggestions for adapting the present light standards. These proposals have been further investigated by Council staff and lighting consultants resulting in a revised lighting plan for the Square now being developed as one of the priorities for early implementation.

### FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

As noted above the total cost of implementing all of the Athfield proposals is \$4,608,500. This figure far exceeds the available \$1.5m budget. Some elements of the Athfield plans are more costly than early proposals for the Square while others (eg using asphaltic concrete) are less expensive. There is a need to agree on what are the high priority items and the design/materials to be used. Two scenarios for completing the paving of the Square, plus lighting within the available \$1.5m budget include:

#### 1. Concrete pavers

Paving the north-west quadrant in "granite-look" special concrete pavers, with standard pavers used for the roadway	\$880,000
Additional trees (10)	\$33,000
Lighting	\$552,000
Signage	\$50,000
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	<u>\$1,515,000</u>

#### 2. Granite + standard pavers

Paving the north-west quadrant in granite with standard pavers used for the roadway	\$1,140,000
Lighting (reduced extent)	\$310,000
Signage	\$50,000
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	<u>\$1,500,000</u>

### CONCLUSION

There is now an urgent need to move forward on the remedial work issue and from the above it can be seen there are clear advantages in adopting concrete pavers for roading areas. It is possible to create pavers with a similar appearance to granite, although conventional pavers would cost less and would provide a better contrast between roadway and pedestrian areas. For these reasons the standard pavers are recommended.

In respect of Stage V priority needs to be given to completing the lighting (whole of Square) and it is suggested that attention then be given to completing the north-west quadrant. Further design studies need to be undertaken, progressing the one way north bound road (materials to be the same as Cathedral Square road), plus options for the spaces between the road and the buildings to the north. A basic decision which needs to be made here is whether to follow the rest of the Square and complete the paving in granite or to change to other materials such as concrete pavers. Alternatives to the market, taking into account future uses in adjacent buildings, with some provision for vehicles are suggested. An indication of whether further work should be done on water feature options would also be helpful. Consultation on proposals once developed will need to follow. The ideas for a new kiosk, possibly privately funded, should be explored further, along with discussions with the Cathedral authorities concerning improvements around the War Memorial. The Athfield ideas relating to the entranceways to the Square should be added into the Colombo Street planning process, or could be funded as a future maintenance item. Discussions should proceed with the owners of the private laneways concerning their refurbishment.

#### **Staff**

#### **Recommendation:**

1. That, in respect of the remedial work, the Council approve replacing of the granite pavers in the road with standard concrete pavers. The work is to be done progressively to match repair needs and the pavement renewal budget.
2. That work proceed on completing a design for the north-west quadrant, noting:
  - (a) that relocating the Cathedral Square market to this location is not favoured;
  - (b) that there will be a need to accommodate the short term stopping of coaches, shuttles, taxis and other vehicles plus some short term parking;
  - (c) that there should be a reduction in the number of trees proposed for the Western Grove;
  - (d) that the idea of a water feature in this area requires debate and resolution; and
  - (e) that discussions need to continue with the owners of adjacent buildings (particularly the Tower building) concerning future uses to assist in planning the public spaces, and the form and design of the materials to be used.
3. That the undertaking of Stage V and beyond works be funded and prioritised as set out below.
  - (a) Elements to be undertaken within the current Cathedral Square budget:
    - (i) Completion and implementation of the lighting plan for the Square.
    - (ii) Completion of design and paving of the north-western quadrant, following a decision on the materials to be used. Standard pavers to be used for the roadway.
    - (iii) Cathedral Square entrance identification signage.
    - (iv) Additional trees, planters and seating (if budget available).
  - (b) Elements identified as desirable and to be either the subject of future bids for funding in the longer term, or alternatively funded (eg by sponsorship).
    - (i) Heavy relocatable bollards (alternative designs to be explored).
    - (ii) Changes in the vicinity of the War Memorial (need for ongoing dialogue with the Cathedral Chapter and Armed Forces organisations).
    - (iii) Water feature, (if agreed, to be further developed from the Athfield "moat" concept).

- (iv) Northern pavilion to replace present Police Kiosk (pursue ideas with stakeholders, including private funding concept).
    - (v) Improvements to the Gloucester-Colombo and Hereford-Colombo intersections (to be considered as part of the Colombo Street upgrade, or as future maintenance (renewals)).
    - (vi) Investigations into improving the laneways into the Square (including discussions with affected property owners and funding options).
  - (c) Elements which are not favoured and on which no further work will be done.
    - (i) Market Square as proposed by Athfield.
    - (ii) The southern pavilion.
    - (iii) Athfield ideas for paving the Square, including road repairs.
4. That the Council acknowledge with approval the formation of the Cathedral Square Stakeholders Group and encourage ongoing liaison in respect of both future planning and day-to-day Cathedral Square operation.
5. That the implementation of detail design and construction now pass to the Property and Major Projects Committee provided that details of traffic engineering first be approved by the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee.

**Chair's**

**Recommendation:**

That the above recommendation be adopted.