

## 16. MOA RESERVE – 22 MELROSE STREET PROPERTY PURCHASE

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Corporate Plan Output: Neighbourhood Reserve Purchase	

The purpose of this report is to obtain Community Board support and Council approval to purchase the property at 22 Melrose Street as an addition to Moa Reserve. The property will provide a new large open frontage to Moa Reserve, and open up a relatively secluded area of the park providing a safer environment with greater recreational appeal. It will be recalled that the Council recently purchased a similar property on Ely Street to increase the reserves frontage on that street. This purchase will complete the reserve which has been progressively developed over the last 20 years as part of the area's residential redevelopment.

### PARK LOCALITY AND CATCHMENT

Moa Reserve (2572m<sup>2</sup>) is situated between Ely, Moa and Melrose Streets without a large road frontage on Melrose Street. The reserve is relatively secluded and small. Situated in a high density housing area the existing reserve was created in 1990 to help compensate for the loss of open space associated with urban renewal of the area. High density apartment redevelopments continue to be popular in this inner city area.

Moa Reserve is an important local park in an area still increasing in population with infill housing. It serves a local catchment area bounded by Salisbury Street and Madras Street.



*Infill Housing Surrounding Reserve*

### RESERVE USE

As a small "local park", Moa Reserve's main feature is its pleasant walking connection between Moa, Melrose and Ely streets. A small playground area is located opposite the Moa entrance. The park provides an important quiet refuge from the busy roads and small living areas of the surrounding apartments. The local community comprises a mix of young professionals and retired people and some families.

The northern reserve entrance on Melrose Street has a narrow 5m connection. The addition of the Melrose Street property will increase this frontage by 15m giving a clear view into the park and also add 384m<sup>2</sup> to the 2572m<sup>2</sup> reserve.

The alignment of the property with the main reserve means the effect of the property purchase would be to enlarge the park quite dramatically. The existing secluded playground area of the park will be opened up and provide a safer environment with greater recreational appeal.

The property is also one of the last old single storey houses which once were common to the area and the building value is low relative to the land value.



*Melrose Entrance*



*Proposed Property Purchase*

#### **PARK LAYOUT AND SAFETY**

The Park is relatively enclosed by neighbouring residential properties. The layout is contrary to the Council's "Safer Parks" objectives and is an example of what we are trying to avoid in terms of new park layout and design.



*View North to Melrose Street Property*

The Melrose Street end of the park is set some distance back off the remaining park and has very poor sight lines which allows little casual surveillance from people passing by. Security from properties surrounding the Park has increased, with recent infill town houses being built with formal living areas that overlook this area. With the Melrose Street property used as a larger open frontage security will increase.

#### **COMMUNITY CHANGES**

Increasingly the local community is changing in terms of older houses with larger sections being replaced with multi-unit developments with very small areas of open space. There does need to be an investment of open space to offset these changes: in essence the reserve is the large "back garden" for the whole neighbourhood. Mōa Reserve is a more community-based park where local residents can spend time in a more friendly garden type where social interaction can take place outdoors. It is a place where large trees can be grown.

## PROPERTY PURCHASE

To assess the property's value the Council engaged the services of Ford Baker, Registered Public Valuers, and following discussions with the owners agreement has been reached to acquire the property subject to Council approval. The details of the settlement are covered in the Public Excluded section of this report.



*Melrose Street Reserve*

## SOURCE OF FUNDS

Provision has been included within the Neighbourhood Reserve Purchase Fund for the purchase of the property in the current financial year.

## CONCLUSION

The Parks and Waterways Unit has been aware of the undesirable layout of Moa Reserve and has pursued property acquisition to improve the layout, safety and usage of the reserve. Purchase on the grounds of the "Safer Parks" policy is justifiable and it is one of the areas of relatively low open space provision. It is important to note that opportunities do not always arise in the highest priority areas first with changes in the local community. As a consequence of greater infill housing occurring it is paramount that we re-invest reserve contributions taken from unit developments and provide more space for the local community where greater levels of social engagement can take place.

The Parks and Waterway Unit recommends that the property at 22 Melrose Street be purchased as an addition to Moa Reserve, to improve the design and layout of the existing park thus providing a safer more attractive park environment for all users.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the property at 22 Melrose Street be purchased for the purpose of Recreation Reserve in accordance with the settlement details outlined in the Public Excluded section of this report.
  2. That subject to (1) above, the Council resolves to classify the reserve pursuant Section 16 of the Reserves Act 1977 as a Recreation Reserve under Section 17 of the Act.

**Chairperson's Recommendation:** That the recommendations be adopted.