

## 9. BELFAST AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Officer responsible**  
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### INTRODUCTION

The Belfast area is undergoing rapid change, partly due to recent decisions in the City Plan to rezone large areas for urban growth, and in part because of population changes and land developments.

In the 1995 Christchurch City Plan as notified, 132.9 hectares of land was zoned residential. As a result of decisions on submissions to the Proposed City Plan, and the resolution of a number of the urban growth references for the City, some 252 hectares of land is now zoned residential within the study area.

The recent Environment Court decision *C78 / 2002 Applefields Ltd and the Canterbury Regional Council vs. Christchurch City Council* has also earmarked a 93 ha area between Main North Road and the Otukaikino Creek for potential residential development.

There is a need to assess the opportunities, constraints and social consequences for such rapid land use change within the Belfast area. Such assessment would involve identifying the strategic issues that will arise for the area, and provide for development that would meet the aspirations of the local community. There is also a need to identify and protect key resources and attributes that will help define and shape the environment in the study area over the next 30 years.

There will also be a need to ensure that opportunities for employment and community social services will meet the needs of the increasing population of the area.

### WHAT IS AN AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The 'Area Development Plan' is a non statutory document that acts as the most effective means of reconciling the demand for development and the protection of the environment.

The Plan provides a broad level strategic and land use planning tool for the Council and the local community to define and make decisions as to the future shape and context of development within the study area. It should generally contain information on the following elements:

- The principle physical and economic characteristics of the area;
- The size, composition and distribution of the population of the area;
- The communications, transport network and potential traffic generation within the area;
- The conservation and improvement of the natural and built environment, through better urban design;
- The improvement of the physical environment (i.e. regeneration / renewal of existing urban areas);
- The existing statutory and policy framework that relates to the study area;
- Water supply, waste and sewage treatment options and constraints; and
- The effects of growth of the study area on the surrounding environment, and the effects of growth of the surrounding environment on the study area.

The Plan should then make conclusions on the following:

- Analysis of the feasibility of development within the study area;
- A broad strategy and direction as to the management of growth in the area;
- Recommendations on appropriate land uses for future expansion, costs and funding for such growth; and
- Implementation strategies through statutory (City Plan and Annual Plan) and non-statutory (establishment of guidance, conservation covenants, and no environmental change) mechanisms.

### THE BENEFITS

The benefits of undertaking an Area Plan process for the whole of Belfast would allow for the integration of the following issues:

- Policy implications for, and environmental effects of, proposed residential, business and open space development within the Belfast including the Devondale/Applefields land.
- Capacity of infrastructure, including roading, to accommodate residential, business and recreational development in the area plan area. It is noted that existing sewerage infrastructure capacity and associated discharge consents will hamper subsequent development in the area.
- Opportunities and threats relating to open space and waterways, including the ability to link and reinforce existing conservation and recreation areas such as the Groyne and the Styx Mill reserve.

- Implications for the Main North Road (SH 74 and SH1) and the inclusion of the recommendations for the NROSS report to be 'dovetailed' to strategic land use planning for the area.
- Implications for the development of a community focal point(s) related to new development and threats from the establishment of the Supa-Centre and the Northwood retail area.
- Links to the LTCCP in terms of the provision of social infrastructure and land use planning.
- Community consultation relating to new Greenfield expansion in the area and the relationship of the proposed Belfast Bypass to the residents of Belfast.

## **THE PROCESS**

There are two stages to this project:

- Preparation of a structure/concept plan.
- Promotion of any variation / plan change through Council needed to implement the project.

The first stage is anticipated to take 4 - 5 months. The second stage will require 5 - 6 months approximately to get to the Council Hearing stage. Any references to the Council decision on such a variation would be dependent upon the timetable of the Environment Court.

I have appended to this document the project management process chart for the Area Plan. This process chart outlines in detail the steps and work that will be required to finalise the Area Plan. It is also important to note that the consultation process is dovetailed within the technical process; this is to ensure that any feedback from the residents or interest groups can be incorporated within the Plan, and also that the public can be made aware of any physical or infrastructure constraints that would curb development within the area.

To date the following has been achieved:

- General threats and opportunities identified.
- Consultant briefs established and distributed.
- Demographics, employment figures and trends established – implications identified.
- Policy context evaluated.
- Discussions and context have taken place with Community Advocates and consultation links established for consultation process.

Over the next four / five months it is hoped that the following can be achieved:

- Consultation process established and initiated (feedback into Specialist work).
- Definition of principles of urban growth and form.
- Draft of completion of non-engineering constraint work completed (i.e. landscape, cultural assessment, ecology and recreational assessments).
- Broad placement and costings for engineering work completed.
- Study Area objective and draft 'concept map' completed and reviewed through community liaison.

## **WHAT DO WE KNOW?**

Trends and demographics for the area reveal the demand for development, and the types and likely pressures to be placed on the area. The trends and statistics for the area reveal that the area is expanding rapidly, and is generally catering for family groups. Other statistics also reveal that clusters of these 'family' groupings are located around existing parks, the Northwood subdivision and Belfast School. This would tend to indicate that strategic planning would be needed in the area in terms of formal recreational areas, community focal point/s and social facilities such as library services. The increased pressure and long term demands for infrastructure capacity such as sewerage and storm water run-off would also need to be closely examined with regard to the rapid Greenfield expansion.

Other issues that have also been identified include:

In the short term:

- Replacement of 'Belfast Sign' at Styx Mill Bridge.
- Enhancement of Tyrone Reserve margins.
- Increased frequency of Mobile Library to the area.

In the longer term:

- Potential use of vacated New World site as community focal point.
- Footpath creation from Redwood to Supa-Centre.
- Linkages to Clearwater Area Development Plan. Links to Johns Road, Stormwater and competing uses.
- Currently the Freezing Works discharge into the Waimakariri River. Their discharge consent ceases in 2010. The Freezing Works will need to consider their options regarding the discharge at that time.
- Waimakariri Flood Plain Management will have implications for development options for Belfast.
- Northern Roding options and access to Clearwater Resort will have implications for Belfast.
- the need for a long term community plan that links together the Economic/Social/Environmental issues of the area. Especially with the advent of Long Term Community Consultation Plan's (LTCCP) under the Local Government Amendment Bill.
- Understanding of the effects that the Northwood Shopping Centre is having on the area.

## **SUMMARY**

The Council is currently carrying out a process of developing a 30 year long term area plan for Belfast this is being led by the Council's City Development Group This plan is considered necessary in light of the substantial urban growth, recent Environment Court directions regarding the area, and recommendations within the (NROSS) Northern Roding Options Scoping Study.

The Plan will bring together technical data regarding the feasibility of the area for development, whilst ensuring that the residents of the area are provided with an input into the process and its outcomes. The Papanui/Shirley Community Board will be advised on progress of the Area Plan on a regular basis. Any input from the Community Board will be utilised as a component of the consultation process that will be occurring throughout the formation of the Area Plan.

Whilst non-regulatory initiatives are of most benefit in achieving quality infrastructure and improvements to public land, regulatory mechanisms are key to managing the activities on private land. The key statutory instruments in this regard are the Resource Management Act 1991 and the City Plan. Both statutory and non-statutory mechanisms will be necessary to implement the conclusions and recommendations from the Area Plan over the next 30 years.

## **Staff**

**Recommendation:** That the report be received for information.

## **Chairperson's**

- Recommendation:**
1. That enhancement work be considered on Kapuatohe Stream along with other work already identified.
  2. That the Board continue to work with Transit on Main North Road issues.
  3. That a Board workshop take place on this to allow further discussion.
  4. That information be referred back to the Board every three months on the Plan.