

## 7. MARBLE WOOD DRIVE PRECINCT: RESERVE ENHANCEMENT AND STREET TREE REPLACEMENT

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The purpose of this report is to update the Board on the proposed Marble Wood Reserve enhancement and concurrent street tree replacement in Marble Wood Drive, following consultation with local residents.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Board members will recall the budget allocation in the current financial year for enhancement in Marble Wood Reserve. While this funding was originally itemised for children's play equipment, a submission to the annual plan in 2002 by a resident indicated that the community would prefer extra planting and/or a pergola structure. Staff commissioned a conceptual drawing of a pergola structure and for comparison, play equipment, with both examples superimposed onto a Marble Wood Reserve photo. Some tree removals will also occur in the reserve this financial year, programmed as part of a health and safety audit.

The existing street trees (plane - *Platanus orientalis*) have been identified as inappropriate for the small berm size in Marble Wood Drive, eventually growing large enough to cause constant street and footpath maintenance problems. The street trees can be removed and replacement trees planted this financial year.

The proposals for Marble Wood precinct were tabled at the 17 September 2003 seminar meeting of the Shirley/Papanui Community Board with the recommendation that the proposals be circulated to local residents for their comments and feedback.

### PROPOSALS

Residents were asked to comment on having either a pergola and shrub beds, or play equipment developed within Marble Wood Reserve. The option of having no change to the reserve was also offered.

The same feedback form also presented three street tree options for residents' choice – with the most popular choice then used as replacement street trees. The alternative suggestions were South Island kowhai (*Sophora microphylla*) or Fastigate cherry (*Prunus 'Amanogawa'*) or Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*).

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

A public information leaflet (PIL) showing a concept plan of the proposed refurbishment was distributed for comment to those residents in Marble Wood Drive and Mission Lane, and to other households near the reserve. Staff were in attendance at the Marble Wood precinct barbeque in November to circulate information. Details of the proposals were also presented at the Golden Age Rest Home and Wesley Care Rest Home. The information circulation was 120 copies with a mailed return rate of 54 (45%).

Key features of the feedback received included:

- A general consensus that low key planting and a pergola structure would suit the reserve.
- Many respondents asked for seats and picnic tables to enhance the family atmosphere of the reserve.
- A suggestion from the Wesley Home was for raised gardens with scented plants to benefit those with disabilities of body or sight.
- A common view was that play equipment would be inappropriate for this reserve and may encourage a noisy and disruptive element to this area.
- The majority of residents asked for a maple as the replacement street tree species.
- Other issues noting traffic speed and maintenance requirements have been passed on for action.

## PLAN AMENDMENTS

The substitution of general shrub beds for raised, semi-circular beds around the pergola structure is proposed. Potentially, many of the people who will take the opportunity to sit under the pergola will be elderly persons from the two nearby rest homes. Having the proposed (scented) planting at an easily accessible level is inclusive for all park user groups.

Extra seating will be spaced throughout the park as per residents' requests.

## DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND FUTURE FUNDING

The Greenspace Unit will be able to fund all of this development in the 2003/2004/2005 financial years through the Capital Works Programme.

The Greenspace Unit five-year Capital Works Programme has the following allocated for Marble Wood Reserve landscape enhancement:

<b>2003/04</b>	<b>\$13,500</b>	<b>Greenspace Capital Works Programme</b>
<b>2004/05</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>Greenspace Capital Works Programme</b>
<b>2004/05</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>Greenspace Capital Works Programme - Street Tree Replacements</b>

## CONCLUSION

The local community takes great pride in Marble Wood Reserve, and considers that the tranquillity it offers as paramount to their quality of life. The addition of a pergola, extra seating and garden beds will encourage people to linger in the reserve, and enhances the community, environmental and heritage aspects of the area.

The replacement of the existing street trees is both an urgent and necessary exercise. Escalating maintenance requirements for footpaths and kerbs caused by the trees meant that it was most cost effective to remove these trees at an early stage. As with many issues, these tree removals have flagged a need for better communication with developers so future subdivision amenities are handed to Council to an appropriate standard.

### Staff

- Recommendations:**
1. That the Board approve plans for the addition of a pergola and associated landscaping to Marble Wood Reserve.
  2. That the proposed street tree removal and subsequent replacement tree planting are approved for implementation.

### Chairperson's

**Recommendation:** That the staff recommendation be adopted.