

SUBMISSION ON DRAFT SUBURBAN RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN, OCTOBER 2014

FROM CRESWICK VALLEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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I am making this submission on behalf of the Creswick Valley Residents' Association (CVRA).

SUBMISSION

This submission will provide comments on the relevant sections of the draft Plan.

Creswick Valley Residents Association has an interest in the following reserves: Old Karori Road reserve, the Chaytor Street reserve, the Creswick Terrace Play Area, Ian Galloway Park and the Albermarle Reserve. All of these reserves are located within the Kaiwharawhara catchment and contribute to the amenity values of the Creswick Valley, overlooked by parts of Karori, Northland and Wilton.

Chapter 1 Introduction

In section 1.4, the statement is made that “retaining flexibility of use and providing for multiple values in each space needs to be a key attribute of all reserves to maximize the value of each space”.

We would submit that for some reserves, the attributes of ecology and connectivity will be of higher priority than flexibility of use.

We recommend that the statement above be augmented to state that for those reserves where connectivity is a key attribute, there would not be the same level of flexibility of use that other reserves may have.

In addition, CVRA values open spaces for their undeveloped character and that attribute should be an important part of landscape values of reserves.

Chapter 2 Objectives and Policies

In general the objectives and policies for reserves look sensible and practicable. Comments on some policies follow.

Policy 2.1.1 Protect and enhance corridors of vegetation to provide visual coherence and unifying themes across the landscape.

CVRA agrees that focusing on the connectedness of ecosystems and enhancing the ecology of individual reserves (p9 Summary Document) is of vital concern to the city and should be strongly reflected in the proposed actions in this draft Plan and in the day-to day management of each relevant reserve.

We also consider that the policy should refer to corridors of open space as well as to corridors of vegetation.

Policy 2.1.2 The Council will work with developers to establish reserves that recognize significant landscape and amenity values and contribute to a wider landscape connectedness and coherence.

The policy is laudable but there are some real constraints as to whether reserves can be established without firstly, a system of early warning from Council's planning teams to Council's reserves planners that such an opportunity may exist. Council planners do not seem to have given effect to any of the "Future Initiatives" published by Council in 2004 for potential new or added reserves.

Secondly, it requires a "willing" developer to work with local communities and with Council and to appreciate the value of the vegetation on their land, and the value of adjacent reserves of regional or local significance.

The policy should be amended to read "communities and developers" to identify and establish reserves....."

Thirdly, developers may allege that the vegetation on a particular piece of land is of no value and can be removed, whereas the ecological function of such vegetation can be significant and can "buffer" an adjacent reserve.

If Council is serious about implementing this policy, we submit that early consultation with communities and developers is required and where regionally significant vegetation with connectedness values are identified, then a developer is required to seek expert advice in order to establish a new reserve and to consult with local communities and with Council.

Chapter 3

Section 3.3.3 Dog exercise area in Ian Galloway Park

There is a proposal to relocate the dog exercise area in Ian Galloway Park to the adjoining larger training area to the north.

Although CVRA supports the relocation of the dog exercise in principle, in practice, however, drainage at this site needs extensive work before the area is suitable for a dog exercise area.

In addition, Council should investigate the provision of a pedestrian crossing from the residential side of Curtis Street to the Park side in the vicinity of the relocated dog exercise area, for the safety of residents and their dogs.

As the draft Reserves Plan envisages that Karori residents would also use the relocated dog exercise area, provision of additional car parking on the western side of the road would be required. However, the provision of parking will need to be considered with some care, given the parking requirements for regional BMX events so that the safety of all park users and local traffic is not compromised and any negative impacts on local amenity values are avoided.

The CVRA would be interested in contributing to the detailed design of the dog exercise area in due course.

Section 3.3.5 Ecology and biodiversity

Old Karori Road Reserve

The CVRA has taken a particular interest in the Old Karori Road reserve and the potential for this reserve to be compromised by an application by a developer to fill the valley adjacent to the reserve.

The Wildlands Report (Ecological Assessment of 55-85 Curtis Street Stage Two, prepared for the Wellington City Council, November 2012) emphasizes the tenuous nature of the connectivity corridor between Zealandia and Otari-Wilton's Bush at the 55-85 Curtis Street site that is adjacent to the Old Karori Road reserve.

The proposal to remove much of the vegetation on the western escarpment of the 55-85 Curtis Street site would, if granted, have a significant effect on the Old Karori Road reserve by opening up the vegetation to sun and wind, thus affecting the glow worm colonies that are present in the seepage wetlands.

The relevant action: "Protect and enhance the biodiversity values of the Old Karori Road corridor and the contribution it makes to connectivity between Zealandia and Otari-Wilton's Bush", is insufficient in CVRA's view and should be strengthened to include protecting the buffer vegetation on the western escarpment as well.

The CVRA urges the re-classification of this area is progressed from legal road to a reserve as a Council priority. It is 26 years since the road was stopped and the area planted. Given the regionally significant ecological values of this area, greater protection of this actual reserve is urgently needed.

Section 3.3.7 Community groups and partnerships

Albermarle Reserve

The CVRA supports the action in this section to work with the local community and adjacent schools to restore the native vegetation in Albermarle Reserve.

The CVRA also supports the re-classification of parts of Albermarle Reserve to Scenic B, as a priority action, to better reflect the restoration of native vegetation and the landscape values of this reserve.

Creswick Terrace Play Area

The CVRA has been instrumental in planting native vegetation on the bank of the Creswick Terrace Play Area so that, in time, the bank will be stabilized and will enhance the reserve's current values.

There is a proposed action to provide a second point of access from higher up on Creswick Terrace to improve access and better connect the park to the local walking route network.

CVRA does not support this proposed action. A set of steps would be costly to build and save perhaps 3 minutes of walking to the Play Area.

Section 3.4.5 Ecology and biodiversity

Chaytor Street Reserve

Although not mentioned in the text, the Chaytor Street reserve is a critical connectivity link between Zealandia and Otari-Wilton's Bush. The CVRA endorses the statement in the draft Reserves Plan that

"Protecting and enhancing opportunities for ecological connectivity in the spaces between them [Zealandia and Otari-Wilton's Bush] is essential."

The CVRA supports the reclassification of the Chaytor Street reserve to Scenic B to better reflect the ecological and connectivity values of this reserve in this context.

The CVRA would also support the classification of the western escarpment above Appleton Park which is contiguous with this reserve, to Scenic B to protect the connectivity values of Appleton Park.

We consider both these reclassifications as high priority actions for the Council.