

Civic Trust Awards 2007



Award

**Waterway Enhancement,
Christchurch City Council**

Awarded for the enhancement of Baxter's Creek from the Disraeli/Selwyn Street corner through the back of Addington Cemetery. Encouraging future projects of a similar nature.



Award

South of Lichfield

David Henderson, Property Ventures Ltd

Awarded for the precinct that includes restoration of Category 1 buildings and creates retail and entertainment in a pedestrian environment. A true revival of the inner city.



Award

**Buddhist Community Centre
International Buddhist Association
South Island New Zealand**

Awarded for the creation of community facilities that includes a gallery, meditation hall, classrooms, accommodation, offices and courtyard. A contemporary solution by Taiwanese architects, sculptors and local architects. Providing a multi cultural environment for the city.



Award

**76 Park Terrace – House
Restoration by Anton Tritt, architect
And Clive Barrington, builder.**

This significant house has been carefully restored and is a superb example of keeping the character of this inner city residential neighborhood.



Award

**Pump Station, 11 Bass Street
Christchurch City Council**

Essential new infrastructure of pumping sewerage has been interestingly integrated into the residential neighbourhood together with open spaces for public use.



Award

**Little River Rail Trail
The Little River Rail Trust**

The development of the old unused Christchurch to Little River railway into a walking and cycling trail. A fine effort by the Trust to engage the community, local and national authorities. We encourage the ongoing work of this trust.



Commendation

**Lyttelton Coffee Company
London Street, Lyttelton**

Commended for their contribution to the life of the Lyttelton community, by restoring a heritage commercial premises, converting it into a character-full café and creating a social centre for the township.



Commendation

**Lord's Home
399 Papanui Road**

Commended for the effort put in to retaining successfully a substantial period house and spacious grounds, thereby showing that it is possible to adapt buildings to changing times. A further level of value is added to that of being a family home: it is also a community asset.

*You are cordially invited to attend the presentation of the above
2007 Civic Trust Awards
to be held at the Great Hall, Christchurch Arts Centre
on Wednesday, 7th November at 5:30pm for 6:00pm*

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year for the Christchurch Civic Trust has been one of both achievements and challenges.

"CITY AND PENINSULA"

Following almost 12 months of endeavours, in June 2007 an excellent book under the title of *City and Peninsula – The Historic Places of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula* – authored by Dr. John Wilson – was published under the banners of the Christchurch Civic Trust and the Akaroa Civic Trust. The book was produced with generous financial support from the Christchurch City the Christchurch Heritage Trust, the Caversham Foundation, the NZ Lottery Grants Board, the Southern Trust, the NZ Historic Places Trust, Misty Peaks Ltd., the Canterbury Community Trust, the Lion Foundation and Skope Industries Ltd. Thanks are also due to Kerry Walker and Duncan Shaw-Brown for their excellent photographic work.

2,600 books were printed by Rainbow Print of Christchurch with 1,000 copies being made available to the Christchurch City Council, predominantly for distribution to delegates attending the UNESCO Congress of the World Heritage Committee held at the City Hall June/July last. The balance of 1600 books have been marketed through Nationwide Book Distributors with net revenues shared 50:50 between the two Civic Trusts. So far, book sales have been encouraging and should help considerably to broaden public awareness of the need for the conservation of the city's reasonably abundant stock of heritage assets.

GREATER CHRISTCHURCH URBAN

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN 2007.

Members may recall that in February 2003, the Trust held a well-attended one-day seminar workshop relating to the long-term planning and infrastructure needs of metropolitan Christchurch. The principal thrust of that event was to reinforce the need for a strategic land use – transport framework within which to rationalize long-term urban growth in ways that would be cost-effective and environmentally acceptable.

It is therefore encouraging that, in June 2007 the Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury, the Selwyn District Council, the Waimakariri District Council and Transit New Zealand jointly issued a publication under the title of "**Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan 2007.**"

The Christchurch Civic Trust fully supports this groundbreaking initiative and looks forward to being closely involved in providing assistance within its means to facilitate the creation of a better planned metropolitan area.

CENTRAL CITY REVITALISATION

The UDS also assumes a vision-based objective to the effect that by the year 2041... ..

1. Greater Christchurch has a vibrant inner city and suburban centres surrounded by thriving rural communities and towns, connected by efficient and sustainable infrastructure.

In that context, in September 2006 the Christchurch City

Council identified the following priorities for the revitalisation of our Central City:

- Increasing the residential population;
- stimulating the growth of the business and commercial sectors;
- enhancing vital public spaces;
- redeveloping underutilised sites; and
- improving the transport network.

To achieve those objectives, the City Council has recently confirmed proposals to establish an **Urban Regeneration Agency (URA)** to move forward in collaboration with other appropriate bodies with the preparation and implementation of carefully composed plans and staged programmes for project implementation. On that account, steps are being taken by Lincoln University – in association with the Civic Trust – to set before the Council outline proposals for the launching of a survey to identify areas that display a need and opportunities for upgrading/redevelopment.

OTHER KEY ISSUES

It has recently been publicly notified that the former Post Office Sorting Centre in Hereford Road will be converted into a Head Quarters for the Council in partnership with Ngai Tahu. That building is of sturdy construction with high floor – ceiling headrooms that would facilitate its adaptation to new uses related to city administration and other appropriate functions. The Trust supports that initiative with the added thought that consideration might also be given to integration with new development on the former adjoining King Edward's Barracks site.

Also, close by is the Arts Centre the Trust Board for which is in the process of examining options for developing new facilities that would enhance its future viability and value to the general community in ways that would respect its unique Neo Gothic attributes. To that end, the Civic Trust believes that a master plan needs to be formulated, and anticipates further discussions with the Arts Centre Trust Board.

Another matter of consequence relates to issues and options relating to future development in L4 residential zones that occupy large areas of inner Christchurch. Within these zones a considerable amount of random infill redevelopment has taken place. Resultant outcomes have raised a number of urban design concerns, which the Trust has put before the City Council for close consideration.

Finally, members will recall that the Trust fought long and hard against proposals for the "revitalisation" of the Canterbury Museum, on the general grounds that such proposals would have had serious adverse effects on the heritage value of the Neo Gothic buildings. The Courts upheld that view but there are, as yet, no apparent signs of what options are now likely to be considered. The Trust will keep a watching brief.

Ted Pryor, Deputy Chairman



Award

Public Open Space,
Summit Road - Barnett Park – Richmond Hill
Clifton Hill Neighborhood Committee

Awarded for the tremendous community-driven effort put into effect the purchase of this large area of strategically valuable land by the Christchurch City Council. This achieved limitations being placed on urban sprawl.



Award

Air Force Museum
Former Wigram Airbase

Awarded for the skill and effort put into providing an impressively presented, publicly accessible display of a significant part of New Zealand history. It is housed in an appealing purpose-designed building and converted hanger and is located, appropriately, on land occupied by the original Wigram Air force Base



Award

Quail Island Restoration
Otamahua/Quail Island Restoration Trust

Awarded for its valuable contribution to the environment of the Lyttleton basin, restoring the island's ecological life through reforestation, encouraging repopulation of bird, insect and reptile life, while preserving historic sites and encouraging recreational and educational use of the island.



Award

Project Port Lyttelton
Community Initiative

Awarded for the development of a sustainable local community; through activities such as the community garden and composting projects, effective energy projects, the local farmers market, a time bank, educational projects and community festivals.

THE CENTRAL PLAINS WATER ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

- A Commentary on Associated Statutory Aspects -

In recent years, agricultural activities in Canterbury have been undergoing a transformation from “dry-land” farming on the one hand (e.g. for sheep rearing and grain crops) to dairy farming on the other – the latter being heavily dependent on increased irrigation utilizing both underground (aquifer) water supplies and the diversion of flows from major rivers.

Many irrigation schemes of relatively small scale have hitherto been planned and developed independently. Whilst acknowledging the initiatives taken to make better economic use of valuable land resources, environmental stresses in terms of falling groundwater levels and low flows in spring fed streams are evident. Additionally, there has been a shift in values within communities towards greater recognition of the Tangata Whenua’s values for water, increased protection of the natural environment and maintenance of bio-diversity.

A bolder and more rational approach toward dairy farming (with higher financial and economic returns) is now in the making under the comprehensively conceived “Central Plains Water Enhancement Scheme” (CPWES). A primary objective that scheme is to provide a network of distribution races served by a water storage reservoir capable of irrigating about 60,000ha of land between the Waimakariri and Rakaia Rivers. That, in turn, is expected to promote substantially the productive capacity of the land for a range of agricultural activities with dairy farming taking a lead role. Here, it is to be noted that in 2006, the number of dairy cows in Canterbury stood at 656,000 – an increase of 8.4% over the previous year (source :The Press 070607).

Whilst it is to be anticipated that the CPWES would produce enhanced fiscal/economic benefits that could have a range of positive “knock-on” outcomes, concerns also have been raised from various quarters over associated environmental impacts that enlarged and more intensive dairy farming operations could have on the quality of water in certain aquifers, rivers and streams, with possible adverse consequences on human health. There also are concerns over maintaining sustainable supplies of water for other general community use/activities (e.g. town potable water supplies, recreational fishing, water sports, power generation et alia).

Key Provisions of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

Since the CPWES is a project of major dimensions that could be expected to have a range of impacts on the environment, it is necessary to have a clear understanding as to what constitutes the “environment” and “sustainable development.” The definitions under the RMA are as follows:

Environment includes:

- (a) ecosystems and their constituent parts, including people and communities;
- (b) all natural and physical resources;
- (c) amenity values; and
- (d) the social economic, aesthetic and cultural conditions which affect the matters stated in paragraphs (a) to(c) of this definition or which are affected by those matters.

Sustainable Management means:

.....managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while:

- (a) sustaining the potential of natural and physioresources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations;
- (b) safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and
- (c) avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

The logic behind such sustainable management principles (based on the Brundtland Report , 1987) is self-evident and calls for careful evaluations in terms of potentially significant economic, social, and environmental implications.

It is a requirement of section 88(2) of the RMA that an application for a resource consent must include, in accordance with Schedule 4, an assessment of environmental effects in such detail as corresponds with the scale and significance of the effects that the activity may have on the environment. In turn, where it is likely that an activity will result in any significant adverse effect on the environment, Schedule 4 of the RMA requires a description of any possible alternative locations or methods for undertaking the activity.

At the same time, however, section 104 (2) of the RMA states that – when forming an opinion on the effects on the environment of allowing a proposed activity – a consent authority may disregard an adverse effect of the activity on the environment if the plan of the relevant territorial authority permits an activity with that effect. That raises a question as to whether such a provision could undermine the integrity of a principal purpose of the RMA, namely to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

Key Provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA)

Alongside the above noted provisions of the RMA, the Local Government Act 2002 mandates that in the course of decision-making a local authority is required to:

- seek to identify all reasonably practicable options for the achievement of the objective of a decision;
- assess those options by considering:
 - i. the benefits and costs of each option in terms of the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the district or region;
 - ii. the extent to which community outcomes would be promoted or achieved in an integrated and efficient manner by each option;
 - iii. the impact of each option on the local authority's capacity to meet present and future needs in relation to any statutory responsibility of the local authority; and
 - iv. any other matters that, in the opinion of the local authority, are relevant.

The LGA also appropriately recognises the need for the community in general to be given an opportunity to consider project proposals at various stages, namely:

- (a) the stage at which the problems and objectives related to the matter are defined;
- (b) the stage at which the options that may be reasonably practicable options of achieving an objective are identified;
- (c) the stage at which reasonably practicable options are assessed and proposals developed; and
- (d) the stage at which proposals of the kind described in paragraph (c) are adopted.

Need for Resolution

Putting the RMA and the LGA alongside each other, a question arises as to which of the two statutes should be "the chicken or the egg" or as to whether it would be practical for two streams of statutory processes to proceed in parallel. The opinion of this author is that the rational "exploratory-led" processes under the LGA should come first. Additionally, it is questioned whether section 104 (2) of the RMA is compatible with the purpose and intent of the RMA to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment may have a view to offer on these matters on the basis that he has a remit to *investigate any matter where the environment may be or has been adversely affectedand to advise on preventative measures or remedial action, and report to the House (i.e. Parliament).*

Conclusion

It is perceived that the CPWES has the potential to enhance the economic and social welfare of the general community. On the other hand, concerns have been raised regarding potential impacts on the quality and sustained provision of water for a range of community needs. Such issues will need to be resolved in equitable and balanced ways (inter alia) by rational dialogue in the context of relevant statutory requirements. On that latter account, it is the view of this author that the respective roles of legislative processes under the RMA 1991 and LGA 2002 need to be reviewed and functionally co-ordinated to facilitate the rational and timely achievement of a finally conceived scheme that would produce satisfactory sustainable environmental out-comes. The LGA also appropriately recognises the need for the community in general to be given an opportunity to consider project proposals at various stages, namely:

- (a) *the stage at which the problems and objectives related to the matter are defined;*
- (b) *the stage at which the options that may be reasonably practicable options of achieving an objective are identified;*
- (c) *the stage at which reasonably practicable options are assessed and proposals developed; and*
- (d) *the stage at which proposals of the kind described in paragraph (c) are adopted.*

—By Ted Pryor

Welcome to new Civic Trust members

Mr Brendan Ryan, Mr Graham Broom,
Mrs Doona Broom, Mrs Elsie Barnard,
Ms Jennie Hamilton, Prof C Kissling,
Debbie Wilson, Mr Bernie Fitzharris,
Mr & Mrs Mack, Ms Richardson,
Mr R Lear, Mrs Anna Bullen.
Graeme & Maureen Daniels,
Mr Cory Bedford.