
REPORT 9

APPROVAL FOR WATER SUPPLY FACILITY EASEMENT (MELROSE RESERVOIR) ON TOWN BELT – MT ALBERT PARK

1. Purpose of report

To seek the Committee's approval to grant an easement for the renewal of an existing water reservoir to be reconstructed on the Wellington Town Belt at Mt Albert Park. Please refer to appendix 1, 2 and 3 for the aerial plans.

2. Executive summary

Capacity is proposing to replace the existing rectangular No. 1 Reservoir (built in 1911) on Mt Albert with a new and larger reservoir. The new Reservoir will be buried with the exception of the north eastern corner which is only partially buried to allow for a maintenance entrance to the water supply controls and pipe work. The new reservoir will meet current seismic requirements which the old one doesn't. The new reservoir will service Melrose, Southgate, Houghton Bay and Island Bay.

The proposed easement area is shown highlighted orange and yellow on the aerial photo in appendix 2. This easement is for the replacement of an existing reservoir and will not result in permanent damage to the reserve. The rights of the public in respect of the reserve will not be permanently affected with access and amenity values maintained and enhanced. In accordance with Section 9.4.6 of the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013 and Section 48(3) of the Reserves Act 1977, a request is made to waive the requirement for public notification.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Environment Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Approve the granting of an easement relating to a water reservoir and associated works in perpetuity over parts of the Wellington Town Belt at Mt Albert (part of Part DP 10181 CT WN19B/861), pursuant to the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013 and Section 48 of the Reserves Act 1977.*
3. *Waive the requirement for public notification under Section 48 (2) of the Reserves Act 1977 in accordance with Section 48(3) of the Reserves Act 1977, as the Wellington Town Belt is not likely to be permanently damaged and the rights of the public are not likely to be permanently affected by the granting of the easement.*

4. *Waive the requirement for public consultation under Section 9.4.6 of the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013 as the proposal will not significantly alter the nature, scale or intensity of effect on the Wellington Town Belt.*
5. *Note that the easement works are also subject to resource consent. In addition, mitigation and remediation plans and park management/work plans will be approved by Council officers prior to commencing construction.*

4. Background

Capacity Services Ltd supplies water to all of Wellington City and has customers in both the Wellington and Hutt Valley regions. There are two existing reservoirs on Mt Albert with the No. 1 Reservoir built circa 1911 and the adjacent No. 2 Reservoir built in the 1940s. The No. 1 Reservoir is rectangular in shape and does not meet current seismic standards. The capacity of the old reservoir is 0.85ML and the new one will be 2.2ML.

The older reservoir to be replaced, supplies water to the suburbs of Melrose, Southgate, Houghton Bay and Island Bay.

The Wellington Town Belt is managed in accordance with the Town Belt Deed 1873 and Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013, and is a reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. The Wellington Town Belt is zoned Open Space C under the District Plan.

In accordance with the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013 and Section 48 of the Reserves Act 1977, the Environment Committee has delegated authority to grant approval for easements over the Wellington Town Belt.

5. Discussion

There is currently no easement in place for the two existing reservoirs at Mt Albert. The proposed easement will encompass the existing reservoir and the newly upgraded reservoir sites as required by policy in the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013 (WTBMP). Section 9.5.4 of the WTBMP outlines decision making guidelines.

5.1 Impacts on the Open Space Values of the Proposed Easement

The proposed replacement reservoir will measure 16 metres wide by 24 metres long with approximately two and half times more water capacity. The water supply is an essential service to the public.

The finished roof level will be up to 0.9 metres higher than the existing reservoir level but will be buried and landscaped with the exception of the north eastern corner where the corner wall height will be 4 metres at its highest point. The exposed reservoir wall will be stone faced to deter graffiti and help minimise effects on reserve amenity.

The proposed reservoir will be sited in the same location as the existing reservoir and utilise the smallest possible rectangular plan dimensions to achieve the required 2.2ML. The land will be properly remediated by a Council-approved contractor under the supervision of Parks, Sport and Recreation (Parks). Once remediated, the land will be usable by recreational users in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Wellington Town Belt.

In consultation with Parks, the proposed reservoir has been agreed as the lowest impact alternative as it avoids significant vegetation and is almost entirely under ground. The majority of the area to be disturbed during construction has a cover of grass and/or weed species. The site will be extensively replanted in native species and that coupled with removal of the old concrete tank will result in improved amenity at the site for reserve users. Planting will be used to soften and screen the finished reservoir.

The Southern Walkway traverses the reservoir site and public access will be maintained during the construction period by the provision of a temporary track diverting walkers away from the fenced off construction site.

There is no practical alternative reservoir site other than on the Wellington Town Belt in its current location.

Capacity has engaged the services of a landscape architect who will, in consultation with Parks, ensure the site is properly rehabilitated after the reservoir is completed. Once all work associated with the reservoir upgrade is completed and new planting established, effects on reserve open space values will be well mitigated.

Any maintenance works are to be strictly controlled by the wording of the easement.

5.2 Consultation and Engagement

The intention of the Wellington Town Belt is to forever provide a public recreation ground for the inhabitants of the City of Wellington. As this easement will not permanently damage the reserve land, nor affect the recreational qualities of the land a request is made to waive the requirement for public notification. This is in accordance with Section 48(3) of the Reserves Act.

The proposed easement will not significantly alter the nature, scale or intensity of the effect of the reservoirs on the Wellington Town Belt. Section 9.4.6 of the WTBM allows for non-notification on that basis.

The Council has previously agreed to waive public notification under Section 48(3) in situations such as this on Wellington Town Belt land particularly where the public benefits derived are great (enhanced capacity and security of long term water supply) and long term impacts are not significant.

The applicant (Capacity) has discussed the proposal with Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust and the Friends of the Wellington Town Belt. The Kawakawa Commons community group manage a garden and restoration planting scheme in the gully below the site. The Kawakawa Commons group have been advised

of the reservoir proposal and expressed concerns that any water discharge from the reservoir is appropriately piped or dissipated to avoid flooding problems down the eastern gully to Hornsey Road.

5.3 Process

If the Committee agrees with the Report's recommendation the following steps will be taken in the process:

- Capacity has applied for land owner approval
- Capacity will apply for resource consent;
- Capacity to install the reservoir and rehabilitate the site to Council's satisfaction; and
- Survey and registration of the easement (at Capacity's cost).

5.4 Financial Considerations

All costs associated with the preparation and registering and valuation of this easement will be borne by Capacity. Capacity will be responsible for all costs associated with construction, landscaping, mitigation measures and supervision.

5.5 Climate change impacts and considerations

There are no climate change impacts.

5.6 Long-term plan considerations

There are no impacts on the Long Term Plan.

6. Conclusion

The proposed Reservoir is essential to continuing and improved water supply to the Southern suburbs. This is consistent with the Council's commitment to maintaining and upgrading city infrastructure. Effects of the proposed upgrade on the open space value and recreation use of the site will be well mitigated.

Officers recommend that the easement be approved and that public consultation requirement is waived as permitted in the Reserves Act 1977 and the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013.

Contact Officer: *John Vriens, Senior Property Advisor*

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1) Strategic fit / Strategic outcome

Agreement to the easement will contribute to Council meeting the city's resilience objectives.

2) LTP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

The project is fully funded by Capacity.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

There are no Treaty of Waitangi considerations.

4) Decision-making

This is not a significant decision. The proposed easement is consistent with the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013 (WTBMP) and the Reserves Act 1977.

5) Consultation

a) General consultation

As the Town Belt is not likely to be permanently damaged and the rights of the public are not likely to be permanently affected by the granting of the easement. General consultation can be waived by the Committee under section 48 (3) of the Reserves Act 1977 and Section 9.4.6 of the WTBMP.

b) Consultation with Maori

Local iwi would be consulted with through the resource consent process and the proposal has already been discussed with PNBST by Capacity.

6) Legal implications

Council's lawyers have been consulted during the development of this report.

7) Consistency with existing policy

The measures proposed by Capacity are consistent with the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan 2013.

APPENDIX 1 - Melrose Reservoir location map

Areas shaded are Town Belt land.



