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**PUBLIC CONSULTATION SURVEY REGARDING
THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE**

Report prepared for Hutt City Council

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1. INTRODUCTION

As part of a wider review of reserve land on the floor of the Hutt Valley, Hutt City Council has decided to consult with the community about the future of the Molesworth Street Reserve in Pomare. It has identified that the future of this reserve should be considered due to changing usage patterns and low reserve value.

The Molesworth Street Reserve is a neighbourhood park immediately adjacent to the Pomare School playing fields. With new reserves recently developed in Pomare, the need to retain this neighbourhood park is questionable.

Hutt City Council has put together a consultation plan, with regard to this reserve. The plan includes direct consultation with relevant stakeholders, e.g. neighbours and iwi (which Council Officers will undertake), as well as seeking the wider views of Hutt City residents.

As part of the consultation process, Peter Glen Research has been commissioned to undertake a random survey of Hutt City residents, the objectives of which are outlined below. The results of the survey are presented in this report.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the survey were defined as follows:

- a) To determine the awareness and usage levels of the Molesworth Street Reserve among a general cross-section of Hutt City residents
- b) To ascertain public opinion about future possible uses for this park, which can complement the Hutt City Council's other consultation processes
- c) To gain an indication of the types of uses Hutt City residents would like to see for the Molesworth Street Reserve, including uses other than for reserve purposes
- d) To enable feedback to be obtained from the wider community, identifying any questions or concerns that they may have.

3. METHOD

The citywide survey was undertaken among a stratified random sample of 250 Hutt City residents.

The survey participants were recruited using random selection procedures, but sample quotas were set to ensure that the survey was proportionately representative of the Hutt City adult population (16+ years of age) by age, gender and ethnicity.

The interviews were spread over the six geographic areas (wards) within the city, to ensure that a proper cross-section of the community was represented. The sample was therefore structured as follows:

WARDS	SURVEY SAMPLE		POPULATION
	No.	%	%
Northern Ward	39	15.6	15.6
Harbour Ward	44	17.6	17.6
Western Ward	32	12.8	12.7
Wainuiomata Ward	44	17.6	17.6
Eastern Ward	43	17.2	17.3
Central Ward	48	19.2	19.1
TOTAL INTERVIEWS	250	100.0%	100.0%

It is estimated that this provides a sampling variance, on a citywide basis, of $\pm 5.2\%$ at the 90% confidence level. It should be noted that the survey was designed to obtain a strongly indicative reading of public opinion amongst a general cross-section of Hutt City residents.

The survey was conducted using a combination of contact approaches and interviewing procedures. The majority of interviews were undertaken by way of telephone interviewing (landline and mobile), with some face-to-face interviews, where necessary, to meet stratified sample quotas and to ensure that a proper cross-section of the community was engaged.

At enrolment, the purpose of the survey was outlined and an appointment arranged to call back, if the selected respondent was unable to complete the interview at the time of initial contact.

The interview was administered by way of a structured questionnaire, which was developed in consultation with Hutt City Council.

A team of experienced interviewers employed by Peter Glen Research conducted the interviewing.

The results of the survey show the citywide response, as well as the response obtained from local and neighbouring residents. That is, the Molesworth Street Reserve results compare the responses obtained from Taita and Pomare residents, with those of the total Hutt City.

4. TIMING

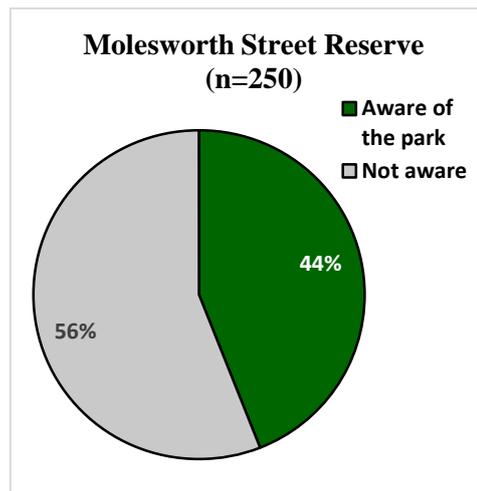
Fieldwork for this research was undertaken from 12 August to 16 September 2017.

5. THE RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1. AWARENESS OF THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE

5.1.1. CITYWIDE AWARENESS

44% of the total Hutt City residents interviewed claimed they had heard or were aware of the Molesworth Street Reserve in Pomare (situated next door to Pomare School). That is:



It can be noted that this is a ‘prompted awareness’ level, derived in answer to the question ‘have you heard of the Molesworth Street Reserve, which is situated next to Pomare School?’ ‘Free awareness’ of the park (i.e. the public’s ability to spontaneously recall the Molesworth Street Reserve) would likely be somewhat lower.

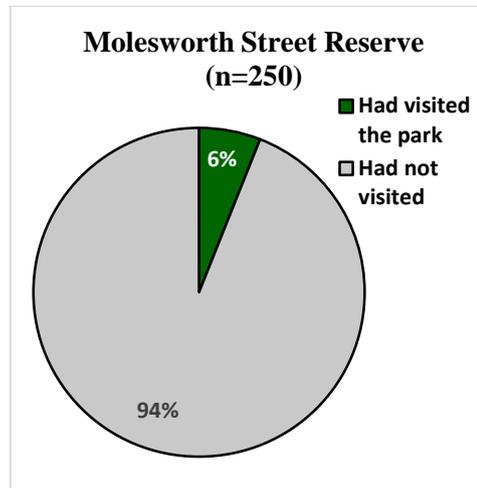
5.1.2. AWARENESS OF THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE AMONG LOCAL & NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTS

The random survey of 250 Hutt City residents provided a sub-sample of 15 respondents who lived in the Taita, Pomare area. 86% of these residents were aware of the Molesworth Street Reserve.

5.2. VISITATION OF THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE

5.2.1. THE CITYWIDE RESULT

6% of the total Hutt City residents interviewed claimed they had visited the Molesworth Street Reserve in the past twelve months or so.



5.2.2. VISITATION OF MOLESWORTH RESERVE BY LOCAL & NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTS

Two-thirds of the Taita/Pomare residents interviewed (10 out of 15) stated they had visited the Molesworth Street Reserve in the past twelve months. When this result is compared with that of the total sample, it is clear that the majority of the Molesworth Street Reserve users are local residents.

This is reflected in the following chart, which shows where the visitors reside and the purposes for which they use the park.

Molesworth Street Reserve used for:	TOTAL		RESIDENTS FROM	
			Local & neighbouring areas	Other suburbs
	(n=250)		(n=10)	
	No.	%	No.	No.
A shortcut/access way (to shops, family, home)	5	2	5	-
Walking/exercising	5	2	3	2
Dog walking	2	1	1	1
Playing with children	2	1	1	1
Touch practise	1	x	-	1
TOTAL USERS OF MOLESWORTH ST. RESERVE	15	6%	10	5

The above table shows that the Molesworth Street Reserve is mainly used as a 'shortcut/access way' and for 'walking/exercising'.

Whilst there are a number of local residents who apparently use the reserve on a regular or frequent basis, the majority of users indicated that their use had been limited to between one and four times in the past twelve months. That is:

Frequency of visiting Molesworth Street Reserve in past twelve months:	TOTAL		RESIDENTS FROM	
			Local & neighbouring areas	Other suburbs
	(n=250)		(n=10)	(n=5)
	No.	%	No.	No.
Once	4	2	2	2
Twice	4	2	2	2
Three or four times	2	1	2	-
Five or six times	1	x	1	-
Seven or eight times	-	-	-	-
Nine or ten times	-	-	-	-
Eleven or twelve times	1	x	1	-
Weekly (or more frequently)	3	1	2	1
TOTAL USERS OF MOLESWORTH ST. RESERVE	15	6%	10	5

5.3. INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE MOLESWORTH

STREET RESERVE

The survey participants were asked a series of questions regarding what they had heard about the future of the Molesworth Street Reserve and specifically whether they could recall seeing or receiving any information from Hutt City Council about it.

Awareness of information was largely confined to the local and neighbouring residents.

Only two of the fifteen Taita/Pomare residents could recall receiving any information about the future of the Molesworth Street Reserve. They stated they had received the information from a 'letterbox drop' and the 'Hutt News'. That is:

INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM:	MOLEWORTH STREET RESERVE
	No.
A letterbox drop/leaflet (and submission sheet)	1
The Hutt News	1
Information on HCC website	-
Spoke to someone from the Council about it	-
AWARE OF INFORMATION	2
NOT AWARE	13
TOTAL LOCAL RESIDENTS OF EACH PARK	15

The Taita/Pomare residents included in the survey seemed to have a low awareness of public information about the future of the Molesworth Street Reserve. This could, in part, be related to the timing of the survey relative to the distribution of information, or to a lower retention rate of the leaflet and less coverage/reference to media information. It can also be noted that this area of Hutt City is ethnically diverse (see Section 5.7 regarding the respondent profile of the survey), which may have some bearing on the result.

5.4. THE PUBLIC’S THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FUTURE USE OF THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE

The research participants were given the following background explanation about Hutt City Council’s consultation process, before proceeding with the remainder of the interview.

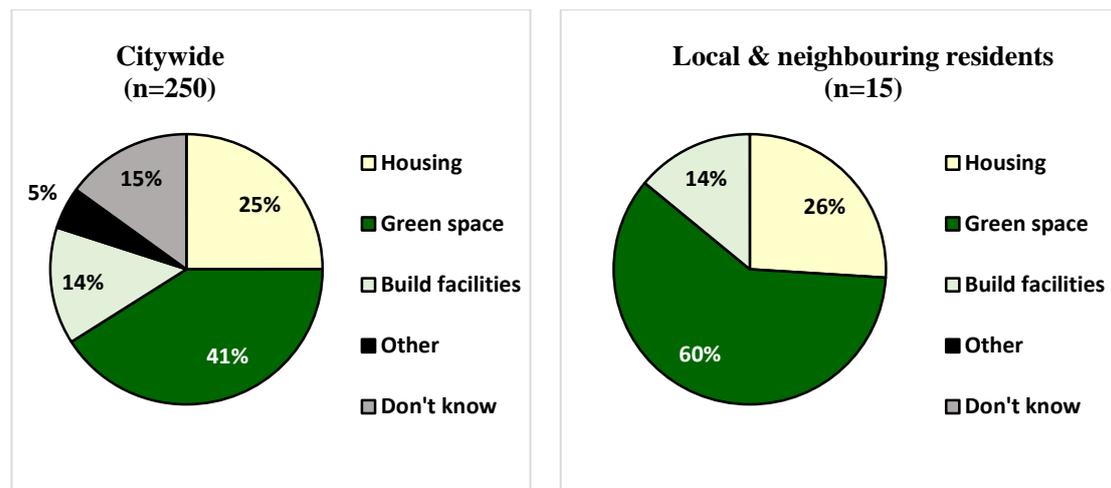
“Council has decided to consult with the community about the future of the Molesworth Street Reserve in Pomare. It is part of a wider review of reserve land on the floor of the Hutt Valley.”

“The purpose of the review is to help with future decision-making. Before making a decision on the future of the Molesworth Street Reserve, Hutt City Council wishes to obtain input from the community regarding its future use.”

“By way of background, it can be noted that the Molesworth Street Reserve is a neighbourhood park with a low reserve value. It is immediately adjacent to the Pomare School playing fields. With new reserves recently developed in Pomare, the need to retain this neighbourhood park is questionable.”

Respondents were then asked to convey their thoughts and ideas as to what purposes the vacant land should be considered. The results were as follows:

The predominant view, both on a citywide basis and among local Taita/Pomare residents, was that the Molesworth Street Reserve should be retained as a green space. Nevertheless, a quarter of respondents freely expressed the view that the vacant land should be considered for residential housing (if there is room). A further 14% of respondents suggested building some sort of facility on the land (e.g. a skateboard park, a community centre/youth centre, a swimming pool, or a childcare centre).



The research participants who favoured retaining the Molesworth Street Reserve as a green space, indicated a number of potential uses that could apply. That is:

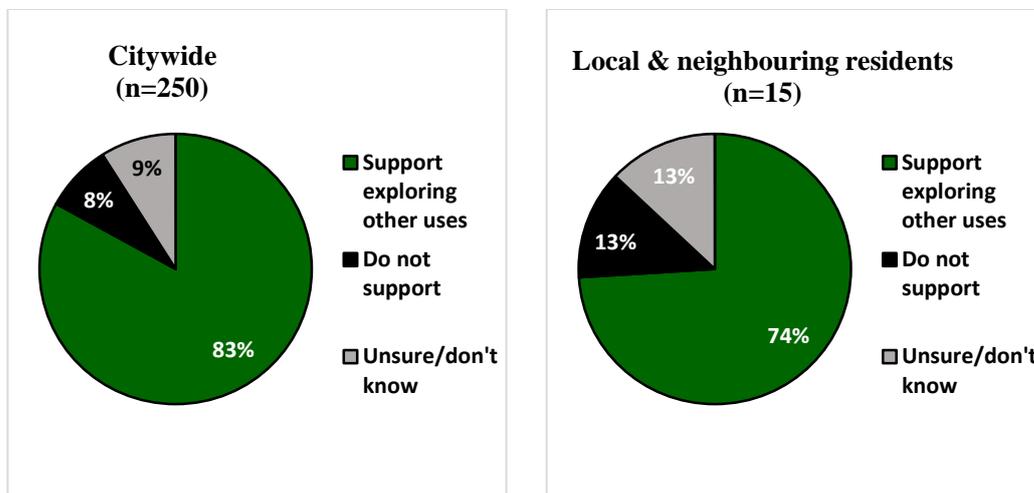
SUGGESTED USE OF MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE AS A GREEN SPACE	Citywide (n=250)		Local & neighbouring residents (n=15)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Give it/add it to the school (so the school and community can still use the space)	29	12	4	26
Keep it as a green area/park for people/families to enjoy, play & exercise	31	12	3	20
For sports and recreation (family sport, touch, cricket, training/practises, etc)	25	10	1	7
Develop a small garden area for people to visit and enjoy	17	7	1	7
RESPONDENTS SUGGESTING THAT MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE BE RETAINED AS A GREEN AREA	102	41%	9	60%

5.5. TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE PUBLIC SUPPORT THE IDEA OF EXPLORING OTHER POSSIBLE USES FOR THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE

The research participants were next asked the question:

“Given the changing usage patterns of the Molesworth Street Reserve, do you support or not support the idea of exploring other possible uses for the park?”

Just over 80% of the total Hutt City residents interviewed were in favour of exploring other possible uses. This figure was slightly lower among the local Taita/Pomare residents at 74%. That is:



Respondents were further questioned as to whether they would support or not support the Molesworth Street Reserve review covering each of the following possible uses. The table below shows the percentage of respondents who support the review covering each particular area of investigation.

<u>USES THAT COULD POSSIBLY BE INVESTIGATED FOR THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE</u>	Citywide (n=250)		Local & neighbouring residents (n=15)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Low cost, affordable housing	184	74	11	74
Housing that reflects the property values in the area	173	69	7	47
Other community and/or recreational uses (that are not housing based)	165	66	10	67
OVERALL LEVEL OF SUPPORT	208	83%	11	74%

REASONS FOR SUPPORTING A REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE USES FOR THE
MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE

Over half the respondents (56%) who supported the idea of exploring other possible uses for the park, expressed the following rationale:

“I support them looking at the options/getting positive ideas about what could be done with the parks – it is a sensible thing to do.”

And/or:

“It is better to use the land than leave it vacant.”

“It gives the land a purpose/makes it useful.”

“It avoids the problem of the vacant land becoming rundown/not looked after/getting vandalised.”

A further 20% of respondents who supported a review of alternative uses for the park focused specifically on the possibility of using the land for housing. They made a number of points that can be summarised as follows:

“Population is increasing/is going to increase and land is needed for housing.”

“Housing is a priority/is where the greatest need is at present.”

“There is a shortage of houses and affordable houses in particular.”

“There is a shortage of houses and that is pushing up prices. Many people cannot afford a house these days.”

“Rents are increasing/becoming prohibitive. We need more housing.”

“We need community housing, to help get the homeless of the streets.”

Approximately 15% of respondents supported the idea of exploring other possible uses for the park, but stressed that their support was primarily for retaining it as a ‘green space’.

Other respondents (7%) supported a review, with the proviso that:

“The community is involved in/is properly consulted before any final decision is made.”

And:

“Future use of the park benefits, and/or is accepted by, the local community.”

5.5.4. REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING A REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE USES FOR
THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE

The Hutt City residents who did not support the idea of exploring other possible uses for the Molesworth Street Reserve (approximately 10%) mainly expressed one or more of the following views:

“I do not support it, because communities need green areas; leave these green areas alone.”

“There is too much intensification now, which I don’t like/don’t support.”

“The council would sell the land to developers who would profit; it would not help the people who need help.”

“They should not create low cost housing areas/another ‘Farmers Crescent’ and repeat the social problems that go with it.”

“Low cost housing may impact/is likely to have an effect on property values.”

5.6. QUESTIONS THAT RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO ASK HUTT CITY COUNCIL ABOUT THE MOLESWORTH STREET RESERVE AND/OR ITS FUTURE USAGE

The research participants were invited to identify a question they would like to ask Hutt City Council about the Molesworth Street Reserve and/or its future use. A number of points were identified and these are summarised below. Some questions were expressed by several respondents.

“What is the timeline? When will it be announced what Council has decided to do with the park?”

“Is there going to be a public meeting to discuss the options?”

“What is the Council doing to ensure that all parties and interest groups (e.g. residents, users, Maori) are included in the discussions and decisions that are taken?”

“We need parks and green areas. What is the Council’s plan to create/retain these?”

“What factors will Council be taking into account, when evaluating what the park will be used for?”

“Will the social and environmental needs of the community be taken into account, not just the need for housing?”

“What is the value of the land involved?”

“How much is the vacant land costing the ratepayer now?”

“What type of housing does the Council have in mind?”

“Why doesn’t the Council commit to more State or Council housing, rather than give it to the property developers?”

“Who is making money from these developments?”

“What is the Council doing to prevent another ‘Farmers Crescent’/social disaster with low cost housing?”

“Is the Molesworth Street Reserve big enough to develop/is there enough land for housing?”

5.7. RESPONDENT PROFILE

The chart below confirms that a broad cross-section of Hutt City residents participated in the survey.

PROFILE BY GENDER, AGE & ETHNICITY	TOTAL Citywide (n=250)	Local & Neighbouring Residents of Molesworth St Reserve (n=15)
	%	%
<u>GENDER</u>		
Male	48	47
Female	52	53
TOTAL	100%	100%
<u>AGE GROUPS</u>		
16 to 39 years	36	33
40 to 59 years	31	27
60 years and over	33	40
TOTAL	100%	100%
<u>ETHNICITY</u>		
NZ European/New Zealander	68	33
British	3	-
Other European	1	-
NZ Maori	17	33
Pacific Island/Pacifica	10	33
Asian (Chinese, Indian, Other)	11	20
Other groups	2	7
TOTAL	112%	126%

Note that the ethnicity count adds to more than one hundred percent, because some respondents indicated that more than one ethnicity group applied to them.

5.8. CONCLUSION

The results of the survey reveal that the Molesworth Street Reserve is known to approximately 44% of Hutt City residents. The survey also indicates that 6% of residents on a citywide basis claim they have visited the Molesworth Street Reserve in the past twelve months. The park appears to be visited mainly by local and neighbouring residents, who use it on an occasional or infrequent basis.

When respondents were asked for their ideas regarding what purposes the Molesworth Street Reserve could be considered for, a variety of possible uses were identified. Whilst housing freely featured as an important possible use for the park (25% of Hutt City residents), there was a higher level of initial support for it being retained as a green space (41%). Green space use was freely given a higher level of support (60%) by residents in the local and neighbouring suburb of Taita/Pomare.

In total, just over 80% of the Hutt City residents interviewed supported the idea of exploring other possible uses for the Molesworth Street Reserve. Support was mainly based on the premise that *'it is a good idea to at least look at the options, whether it be for housing or other (mainly green) purposes'*. Over half the Hutt City residents interviewed expressed this view.

Many of the other respondents qualified their support, to some degree, by stating that they favoured the review being primarily about the use of the parks for housing or green space, whichever they preferred.

Some respondents stressed that the review should provide effective consultation with the local communities. In that regard, it is clear that local residents (i.e. those in the local and neighbouring areas around the Molesworth Street Reserve) will need to be consulted with, and their interests carefully considered, before proceeding with a final decision on the future of the park. At the same time, it will be important to engage with a broader cross-section of Hutt City residents, as the current interest level in the city's growth, the general housing shortage and green issues are prominent in the public's mind.