



**WHANGANUI
DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Te Kaunihera a Rohe o Whanganui

Consultation Document
for the
Land Purchase at Durie Hill
(3 and 9 Blyth Street)

1. SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

Whanganui District Council (“Council”) is seeking feedback on the purchase of properties at 3 Blyth Street and 9 Blyth Street for the purpose of use as a recreation reserve.

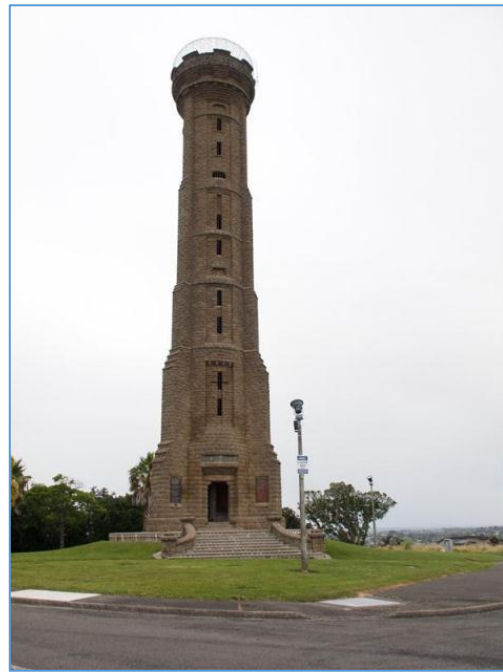
Private development of 3 and/or 9 Blyth Street has the potential to affect the view shafts from the lower levels of the Durie Hill War Memorial Tower, as well as the general sense of ‘openness’ in the Durie Hill Reserve area.

Purchase of the properties would require debt funded unbudgeted expenditure and is not required to comply with the levels of service for reserves set in the Long Term Plan 2018-2028.

Submissions on the proposal close at 5.00pm on Wednesday, 30 September 2020

2. BACKGROUND AND REASONS FOR CONSULTATION

Durie Hill War Memorial Tower and the Durie Hill Elevator are iconic destinations within Whanganui for both residents and visitors alike, with over 35,000 trips a year in the Durie Hill Elevator.

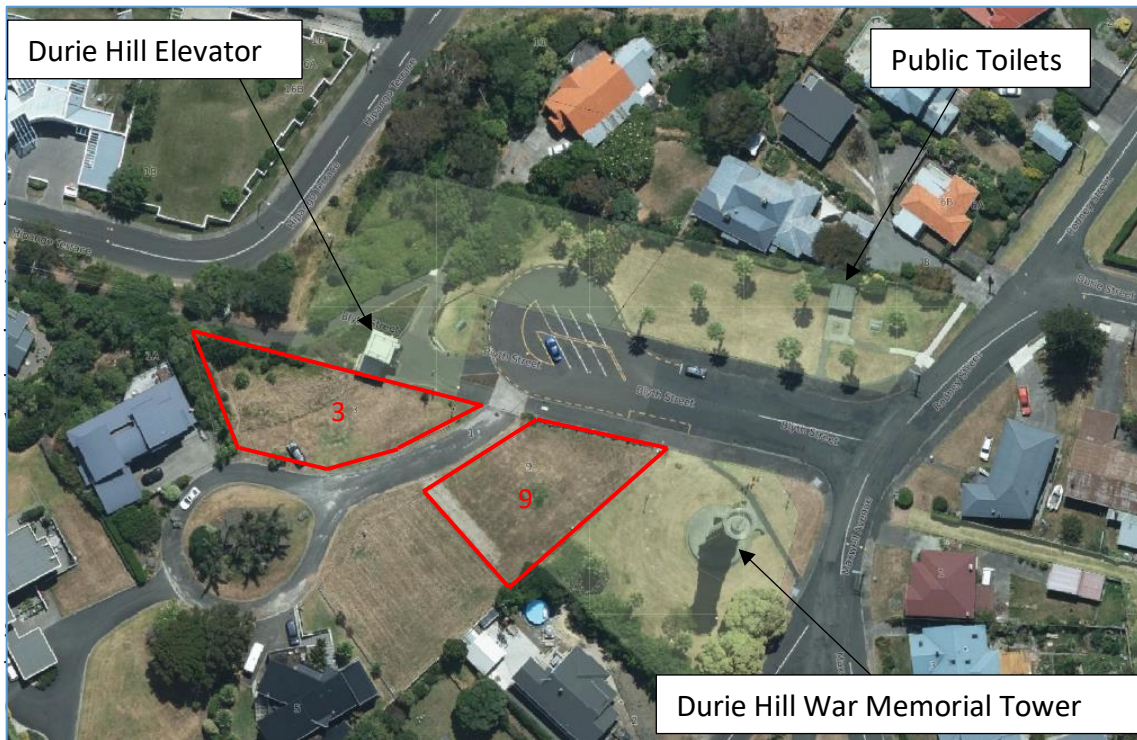


Council currently owns land in Blyth Street which surrounds and services the Durie Hill Elevator upper entrance and the Durie Hill War Memorial Tower. This reserve land is adjacent to, and opposite, 9 Blyth Street.

Council is considering the purchase of 3 and 9 Blyth Street (circa \$0.5M debt funded) as Council reserve in order to protect the iconic views from the lower levels of the Durie Hill War Memorial Tower, as well as the general sense of 'openness' in the Durie Hill Reserve area.

9 Blyth Street is located directly next to, and below, the Durie Hill War Memorial Tower. The property consists of 740m² of land, has services provided, and due to the slight sloping contour, is fully usable.

3 Blyth Street is located directly next to the Durie Hill Elevator upper entrance and viewing platform. The property consists of 660m² of land. Of this, approximately 400 m² has a flat usable contour, with the remainder steep and unusable beyond planting and view protection.



3. Options for Consideration

Option 1 – Purchase of both 3 and 9 Blyth Street (Preferred Option)

Under this option, Council would purchase 3 and 9 Blyth Street (circa \$0.5M debt funded), with the land to be vested as Council reserve.

Advantages

- Durie Hill is a district wide attraction for Whanganui and the purchase of 3 and 9 Blyth Street would provide security of views across the entire City.
- In addition, the purchase of 9 Blyth Street will ensure the retention of an 'openness' at the base of the Durie Hill War Memorial Tower and provide additional opportunities for future use, including local events.

Disadvantages

- The purchase of these properties would require unbudgeted expenditure and would need to be debt funded. Ongoing annual costs are expected to be forgone rates and debt servicing.
- The additional reserve land is not required to comply with the levels of service for open space set in the Long Term Plan. This means that Durie Hill currently has enough open space to meet the targets set.

Option 2 – Purchase of 9 Blyth Street only

Under this option, Council would only purchase 9 Blyth Street with the land to be vested as Council reserve.

Advantages

- The purchase of this property will ensure the retention of a sense of openness at the base of the Durie Hill War Memorial Tower and provide additional opportunities for future use, including local events.
- Although the purchase of this land alone does not guarantee views cross the City or south-west Whanganui, in the event that 3 Blyth Street is privately developed, improvements could be made on land already owned by Council at this location to ensure those views were possible.

Disadvantages

- The purchase of 9 Blyth Street alone does not guarantee views across the City or south-west Whanganui in the event that 3 Blyth Street is privately developed.
- Purchase of these properties would require unbudgeted expenditure and would need to be debt funded. Ongoing annual costs are expected to be forgone rates and debt servicing.

- The additional reserve land is not required to comply with the levels of service for open space set in the Long Term Plan. This means that Durie Hill currently has enough open space to meet the targets set.

Option 3 – Status Quo (do not purchase further land)

Council already owns some land on Blyth Street. Under this option, there would be no further purchase of land on Blyth Street.

Advantages

- There would be no unbudgeted cost implications.
- There would be no change to the levels of service set under the current Long Term Plan.
- The subdivision to create 3 and 9 Blyth Street was completed in 2010. 9 Blyth Street, while relatively flat, has been on the market for a number of years and would be a challenge to effectively develop due to ‘overlooking’ and noise from Durie Hill Tower.

Disadvantages

- If purchased by someone else, development on 3 and 9 Blyth Street could impact view shafts at the lower levels of Durie Hill Tower.
- 9 Blyth Street would not be available to provide additional opportunities for future use, including local events.

4. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSION

A copy of the Consultation Document, including information about making a submission, can be obtained from the Council website www.whanganui.govt.nz

You can make a submission online at www.whanganui.govt.nz/Have-Your-Say or alternatively submission forms are available from the Whanganui District Council Customer Service counter at the main municipal building located at 101 Guyton Street, the Davis Central City Library and Gonville Library. Please indicate whether you would like to speak to your submission and include contact details.

People who wish to be heard by Council will be given the opportunity to do so. The hearing of submissions is scheduled for **late-October 2020** at the main municipal building located at 101 Guyton Street.

For any queries please contact Justin Walters, Senior Policy Analyst on (06) 349 0001.

The period for making submissions is from 26 August until 5.00pm Wednesday, 30 September 2020.