





## PART THREE: KEY GOALS

The key goals outline the ways in which the river's natural and cultural heritage can be protected and enjoyed by present and future generations.

# KEY GOALS

Based on the vision, goals and objectives gathered through community consultation, the following key goals were identified:

## 01. Natural Heritage

Protect and improve the health, ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity of the river and its corridor.

## 02. Cultural Heritage

Provide for Ngāi Tahu's cultural associations with the river and foster the unique qualities that contribute to people's sense of place along the Heathcote River / Ōpawaho through sensitive landscape design, art, and historic interpretation.

## 03. Community Use and Enjoyment

Improve the use and enjoyment of the river and its corridor for the variety of communities who value or have an interest in the river.

## 04. Communication

Raise people's awareness of the river and improve people's knowledge of actions that may be taken to minimise their effects on the river.



The Council is committed to protecting and improving the health and wairua (spirit) of the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho.

# 01 WAYS TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS NATURAL HERITAGE

Protect and improve the health, ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity of the river and its corridor.

## Explanation

The Council is committed to protecting and improving the health and mauri (life force) of the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho. This commitment includes the riverbed and bank edges, and their suitability as a habitat for a variety of fish, birds and insects, while maintaining the river's function as a major stormwater drain and flood relief channel for Christchurch.

A number of policies relating to the City's waterways are outlined in the Christchurch City Plan. These policies aim to maintain and improve amenity, scenic and ecological values. The Council's management of the City's waterways, including the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho, is based on six values: landscape, ecology, recreation, heritage, culture and drainage. The Council's proposed Biodiversity Strategy (2008-2035) for Christchurch also commits to conserve and restore the city's indigenous biodiversity.

The importance of the river as mahinga kai to Ngāi Tahu is recognised in the Council's commitment to improving habitats along and within the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho.



# WAYS TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## NATURAL HERITAGE

### Methods

#### LANDSCAPE

- Identify and protect natural landforms.
- Enhance the existing landscape character.
- Widen the river corridor by street design, tree planting and walkways.
- Recognise linkages to the Port Hills in hill waterways and green spaces.

#### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

- Continue to use the river channel to drain stormwater from its urban catchment.
- Ensure that the river retains the ability to carry floodwaters and that features within the flood way can cope with being flooded from time to time.
- Replace existing high stormwater outlets with lower outlets or a rockwork cascade, in order to reduce the impact of water on the Heathcote River/ Ōpawaho riverbed.

#### WATER QUALITY

- Liaise with Environment Canterbury in order to reduce the amount of contaminants entering the river, and to monitor success.
- Have input to the Surface Water Strategy advocating reduction of contaminants entering the Heathcote River/ Ōpawaho.
- Where possible include contaminant reduction measures into new works, such as treating sources of contaminants and first flush treatment for run-off from roads and other hard surfaces.
- Communicate with residents about the problems caused by everyday activities that lead to non-point source pollution of the waterway and how these can be avoided.

#### FLOODING MITIGATION

- Do not obstruct the flood way (including by riparian or berm planting) unless compensatory channel widening is carried out.

#### WATER FLOW

- If possible, increase the variety of riffles and pools and restore stretches of gravels that encourage fish spawning by altering the shape of the river channel where appropriate.
- Re-grade selected river banks, giving a wider upper channel without altering the flowing water zone.
- Cut and re-grade sections of the bank above normal water line to create floodable lower terraces.

#### RIVER BED HABITAT

- Narrow the river channel in some places to speed up the water flow. The narrower, faster flowing sections of the river provide better habitat for fish and freshwater invertebrates.
- If possible, create riffle sections along straight river reaches to provide habitat for fish that prefer fast flowing water.
- Remove unwanted aquatic macrophytes annually in places where weed growth has covered fish spawning gravels, taking care to prevent sediments being washed downstream.
- Retain and plant riparian rush and sedge beds for refuge habitat for small fish (i.e. inanga, bullies) and to provide sediment trapping.
- Manage aggressive riparian pest plants (e.g. reed canary grass, reed sweet grass, yellow flag, giant sedge) to ensure that habitats of value remain.



The Heathcote River/Ōpawaho: Council policies aim to maintain and improve amenity, scenic and ecological values.

# WAYS TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## NATURAL HERITAGE

### RIVER BANKS AND BANK HABITAT

Map and monitor natural changes in the vegetation along the banks.

- Adopt design guidelines for river bank reconstruction and repair that will increase refuge and food sources for in-stream life, birds and insects. See Appendix B: River Profiles and Details for guidance.
- Retain and if necessary create areas of gently sloping banks where people can see and get down to the river.
- Stabilise stream banks using gravel for lower bank support, cribwalling etc.
- Reduce bank angles, particularly on the insides of bends, where this can be done in conjunction with tree replacement.
- Stabilise river banks by creating low terraces and planting a variety of low growing shrubs, rushes, sedges and ferns along selected areas of the river. Some areas may require crib-walling which can be screened from view with vegetation.
- Protect stream bank and aquatic vegetation from weed invasion.
- Plant low growing native riparian vegetation close to the water along most of the river to provide habitat for fish and invertebrates and to create links between existing and future stands of native shrubs/trees.

### TRIBUTARIES

- Turn existing drains and piped springs into attractive features, recognising their contribution to the main flow of the river.

### TREE AND RIPARIAN PLANTING

- Maintain and enhance the planting along the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho corridor, in particular trees of significance (e.g. Willows).
- Adopt a planting strategy to provide a manageable and sustainable tree canopy through succession planting and diversity.
- Provide tree planting for amenity and landscape values e.g. shade, shelter, screening and for seasonal attributes.
- Plant and maintain trees, shrubs, riparian vegetation and ground covers for habitat and as a wildlife corridor.
- Plan tree planting and maintenance, to correlate with other river, roading and open space developments and existing links to parkland and public areas .
- Increase native planting of trees and shrubs that once grew along the Heathcote River / Ōpawaho to create a balance between exotic and native plants, and to reflect the natural heritage of the area.
- Use native plantings to restore the indigenous character and biodiversity in places of cultural significance to Ngāi Tahu.
- Vary long straight reaches by varying the thickness of bank vegetation and the planting of riparian vegetation in wider sections.

# 02 WAY TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

Provide for Ngāi Tahu's cultural associations with the river and foster the unique qualities that contribute to people's sense of place along the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho through sensitive landscape design, art, and historic interpretation.

### Explanation

The river corridor expresses the values of natural heritage, Ngāi Tahu cultural heritage, the cultural heritage of early European settlement and the subsequent development of a cross-cultural Aotearoa New Zealand heritage.

Ngāi Tahu has a long cultural and spiritual association with the river, and value it as a wāhi taonga (treasured place). This stretch of the river contains a number of important Waitaha, Ngāti Mamoe and Ngāi Tahu sites, and several historic trails run through the corridor, marking access routes for Māori between catchments and from the city through to Lyttelton via Rāpaki Track.

The area also marks the sites of historic bridges, several brickworks, a flax mill, malt house, an early wheat production area and the plant nursery of New Zealand's first landscape architect, Alfred Buxton.

Within this setting, the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho offers the opportunity to explore and reveal the deep cultural traditions from which our contemporary urban setting has evolved.

Archaeological sites provide a connection to past generations and are sources of information on previous activities. In terms of the Historic Places Act 1993, the definition of an archaeological site is a 'place associated with pre-1900 human activity, where there may be evidence relating to the history of New Zealand.' The protection of these sites is regulated by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. While there are at present no formally recorded archaeological sites along the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho corridor, sites may be unearthed in the future. In this eventuality, an archaeological authority is required from the Historic Places Trust before works can be undertaken which may destroy, damage or modify an archaeological site. Any proposal to modify such sites must also involve consultation with Ngāi Tahu.



# WAY TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

### Methods

#### NGAI TAHU HERITAGE

- Liaise with Ngāi Tahu through Rāpaki and Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga during decision making about the management and development of the waterway and riverside banks within this section of the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho corridor.
- Identify, protect and restore sites of importance to Ngāi Tahu and where appropriate highlight their significance through site design, interpretation, Māori art and sculpture, and planting appropriate native vegetation.
- Ensure that changes will conserve and, if appropriate, restore Ngāi Tahu relationships with the waterway, its mahinga kai species and other fish, bird and plant species of importance to Ngāi Tahu.
- Acknowledge, interpret and celebrate the spiritual significance of protecting natural heritage and indigenous biodiversity within the corridor.
- Provide for traditional activities and resource use such as food gathering, weaving and canoeing to be undertaken by Ngāi Tahu now and in the future.
- Involve Ngāi Tahu through Rāpaki and Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga in the interpretation of their cultural history, and identification, protection and restoration of sites of importance.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

- Consult with Ngāi Tahu through Rāpaki and Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga in relation to any proposal to modify or destroy an archaeological site within the Linear River Park.

#### LISTED HERITAGE BUILDINGS, PLACES AND OBJECTS

- Prepare and carry out plans in order to conserve the existing heritage values of those buildings, places and objects which are protected by listing in the City Plan or the New Zealand Historic Places Trust register.
- Plans should aim to increase public enjoyment and appreciation of the river corridor through conveying the historical significance of buildings, places and objects. Important historical sites are marked on the proposed plans within Part 4 of this document.



Historic bridge detail on Colombo Street bridge.

# WAY TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

### SETTINGS OF HERITAGE BUILDINGS, PLACES AND OBJECTS

- Include the historic setting of each listed heritage building, place and object in the conservation plan for the feature. If the evidence of a historic setting no longer exists, aim to construct a setting based on physical and documentary evidence of the original setting.

### PROTECTED TREES

- Trees within the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho corridor are to be managed to ensure public safety with selected removals and replacements required as part of the ongoing city wide tree maintenance and renewal programme.

### LANDSCAPE FURNITURE AND LIGHTING

- Identify existing lighting and furniture of heritage significance.

### ARTWORKS

- Use artwork to record the stories of the river, its drainage, and vegetation patterns, cultural features and landmarks.
- New artworks may enhance the river corridor in accordance with the Art in Public Places policy (2002), which outlines 3 categories:
  - **Urban and Environmental Artwork –**  
Suggested locations for these will be developed as plans progress. Each artwork must be assessed to make sure that it is appropriate for its proposed location.
  - **Integrated Artwork -**  
Their incorporation into the suite of landscape furniture and lighting shall be encouraged, as a method of achieving a unity of style and reinforcing the heritage identity of the river corridor, as outlined under Goal 3 Community Use and Enjoyment.
  - **Community Artwork –**  
These may be considered for placement in river bank areas, when their creation is a key feature of a community commemoration or a heritage event of a city-wide significance. Each artwork must be assessed to ensure that it is appropriate for its proposed location



"Engage" by Graham Bennett at South Library. The curves reflect those of the meandering Heathcote River/Ōpawaho at the library's doorstep, the braided Waimakariri riverbed on the floodplain of which Christchurch is built and the backdrop of the undulating Port Hills.

# 03 WAYS TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## COMMUNITY USE AND ENJOYMENT

Improve the use and enjoyment of the river and it's corridor for a diversity of communities who value or have an interest in the river.

### Explanation

The Heathcote River/Ōpawaho corridor is an important amenity linkage and its character contributes to the local identity of its neighbourhoods and the wider city.

Improvements to the river corridor should focus on encouraging the appreciation and enjoyment of the river corridor as a place of relaxation and 'community', increasing its use as a green pedestrian and cycling corridor. The installation of interpretation material aims to increase popular understanding of the river's natural and cultural significance.

Improvements will focus on making the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho accessible to all, promoting the inclusive nature of the Council's management of the city's parks and waterways.



# WAYS TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## COMMUNITY USE AND ENJOYMENT

### Methods

#### PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE CIRCULATION

- Provide a continuous river park walkway along the banks of the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho from Colombo St to Opawa Road with circular walking links within this stretch of the river.
- Ensure that all pathways and nearby vegetation comply with the Safer Canterbury Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design guidelines co-produced by the Christchurch City Council in 2004.
- Provide clear marking and signs to minimise conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists, and devices to reduce cyclists' speed where required for safety reasons.

#### VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

- Continue to use the roads that border and cross the corridor as an integral part of the road hierarchy of the adjacent neighbourhood.
- Explore ways to reduce the dominance of roads and increase the recreational enjoyment of the river corridor.
- Explore ways of increasing recreational use by means including reduction of carriageway widths, slow speed roads, one way entry and exit points, shared carriageways and the closing of intersections to create culs-de-sac for local access only.

#### COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

- Only where the activities are quiet, passive in nature, do not disturb public use or enjoyment of the corridor and can be enjoyed by the general public, will any leases, licences and concessions for commercial activities and their associated support be considered.
- Any of the activities mentioned above would be considered through the standard Environment Canterbury and CCC Resource Consents process.

#### USE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE WATERWAY

- Provide a range of facilities including walkway routes, boating facilities, cycleways and natural play areas.
- Provide and maintain gently sloping river bank areas where people can access the water. These areas may also be suitable for launching canoes.
- Provide a clear indication of access routes on public land where private occupancy extends into or across the esplanade reserve.
- Retain open views to the waterway from surrounding areas, (e.g. using lawn areas that run down to the river edge and low planting) to ensure public surveillance of the waterway.
- Use areas of dense vegetation to frame views rather than continuous belts, obstructing them.

#### CAR PARKING

- Provide associated vehicle parking bays in specific areas along the river, to minimise the dominance of motor vehicles within the river corridor.
- These car parking areas are to be selected according to river depths, hard surface areas, river flow and ecological values.

#### LANDSCAPE FURNITURE AND LIGHTING

- Develop a co-ordinated palette of landscape furniture including seating, lighting, bollards, drinking fountains, cycle stands, rubbish bins, artwork and way-making to establish a unity of style and reinforce the identity of the river corridor. This should be consistent throughout and compliment any commemorative areas or existing furniture of heritage significance.
- Install landscape furniture including replacement of existing furniture deemed inappropriate.
- Establish a programme for the installation of interpretation panels, signs and feature lighting that is consistent throughout the river corridor. This information should guide visitors and reveal and celebrate the river's rich natural and cultural heritage.

# 04 WAYS TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS COMMUNICATION

Raise people's awareness of the river and improve people's knowledge of actions that may be taken to minimise their effects on the river.

## Explanation

Consultation with the local community has identified that the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho corridor is currently highly valued for aesthetic, recreational, historic, cultural and ecological reasons. It is the intention of this Masterplan to ensure that the local community continue to understand the environment within which they live and to ensure that they can take ownership of the habitats they live within.

To enable this to occur it is important that works outlined by this Masterplan (e.g. new tree planting) are introduced to the community in a number of ways including:

- consultation to provide a forum for discussion,
- education as the feeling of ownership will increase as the community becomes more aware of how the river habitat functions,
- interpretive information to guide people on walks and provide ecological, cultural and archaeological information; and
- through partnerships with organisations linked to the river corridor (e.g. schools).



# WAYS TO ACHIEVE KEY GOALS

## COMMUNICATION

### PROMOTION

- Strengthen the identity of the river and raise its profile as a quiet, low key, meandering river.
- Use a wide variety of communication tools to promote the river corridor such as newsletters, publications, websites, notice boards etc.
- Utilise other forms of promotion such as advocacy, education, events and links with school groups to further highlight and celebrate the corridor's natural character and heritage values.

### EDUCATION

- Improve knowledge of actions to be taken to minimise negative effects on the river.
- Educate residents in co-ordination with Environment Canterbury who have established education programmes (e.g. River Guardians) about activities that lead to non-point source pollution of the waterway and how they can be avoided.
- Raise awareness of the river corridor as a potential flood plain.

### INTERPRETATION

- Encourage public understanding, appreciation and celebration of the natural and cultural heritage of the river and its setting, and improve way-finding along the river corridor. Incorporate innovative, interpretive signs and publications as well as integrated art on site.
- Establish a programme of events to celebrate and increase people's enjoyment, appreciation and understanding of the river and its setting. Planning must ensure that all damage caused by such events is made good.

### PARTNERSHIPS

- Establish partnerships, as appropriate, with Ngāi Tahu the community, schools, universities, professional organisations as well as local and national government organisations (e.g. Environment Canterbury), to carry out the goals of this vision.



South Library and retention pond planting along Hunter Terrace.



Eel sculpture by Bing Dawe at Farnley Reserve, the site of the old Farnley Brick and Tile Works.

# ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Once the strategies are implemented, the Heathcote River/Ōpawaho corridor will be improved in the following ways:

- There will be increased opportunities for tree planting following bank widening. This will provide for future large scale tree planting (of trees that will be large at maturity), reflective of the existing scale and number of trees currently present.
- The overhead tree canopy will be maintained and strengthened by new planting.
- Grassed areas will feature along the river banks in many places. This will be interspersed with an improved balance between native and exotic planting.
- Expansion of greenspace for recreation with improved views and access to the water.
- Reduction in vehicle speed, with more formed walkways and provision of cycleways.
- Continuous low growing native riparian planting will provide in-stream habitat for fish, birds and insects, while maintaining existing flood capacity.

Areas of native planting will feature along the river banks, including the large forest trees that historically grew along the Heathcote River/ Ōpawaho.

- The ecological health of the river will gradually be restored through management practices that reduce sediment inputs and improve water quality and instream habitat.
- There will be more areas of indigenous planting along the banks of the river.
- The cultural and heritage values of the river corridor will be acknowledged.
- More integrated artwork along the riverbank, celebrating the natural and cultural heritage of the river.