

Prime land on offer

By LAUREN PRIESTLEY

A PRIME pocket of land that has sat bare for more than a century is up for grabs.

The 2.5-hectare site at 188 St Johns Rd in Meadowbank, known as Parsons' Paddock, was acquired by the Bishop of Selwyn in 1884.

In 1859 it was transferred to the St John's College Trust Board which is now looking for someone to lease it.

Proposals for a 127-year lease on the property open next week and the tender process will run until May 12.

The land has sparked a lot of interest over the years, trust chairman Stephen Jacobi says.

"It's a question of how best are these assets used.

"It'll definitely be a change but it will be part of an expanding community."

The property is zoned for residential development in the operative district and proposed unitary plans.

It was once used for gardening, playing cricket and rugby as well as horse grazing.

The size and location would lend itself to a retirement village but a housing development is not out of the question, Jacobi says.

It is adjacent to the 6.1-hectare St John's College site so the trust will take a keen interest in any development proposals, he says.

"We are the next door neighbours.

"And we're going to get the land back in 127 years.

"We've called for proposals for how this is going to be used . . . a decision will be mindful of economic return but also what the land will be used for.

"It will be a mix of the two." Trust secretary Grant Hope says the lease timeframe will give an organisation about two years to build before reaping the rewards for 125 years.

The paddock is the only piece of residential land the trust owns, apart from the



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housing for staff and students included on the college site.

The trust is not disclosing the price of the lease but it will be paid up front, he says.

The money will be added to the \$14 million the trust currently spends on educational

activities throughout the country, Hope says.

"For years we've had people coming to us with proposals.

"Now it's an official process."

An Auckland Council

spokesperson says the council has not received any applications for redevelopment on the site yet.

Go to personspaddock.cbreinvest.co.nz for more information.

■ Above, St John's College Trust chairman Stephen Jacobi and secretary Grant Hope are ready for action to happen on the empty Parsons' Paddock.

■ Right, The 2.5-hectare plot of land could see a retirement village or housing development go up in the next few years.

