



Women make council back down

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The Auckland Council has bowed to pressure from women's groups and is set to change plans for upgraded access through Khartoum PI, in the inner city, to include the Women's Suffrage Centenary Project Mural.

Now, instead of a Spanish steps design leading from the Auckland Art Gallery to Lorne St, a scaled-back design to fit in with the memorial tiles will be built in coming months.

The design got sign off from the Regional Development and Operations Committee yesterday but still needs approval from Auckland Transport.

In April last year a Zonta women's group called for the mural to be included in the district plan as a heritage site after the council indicated Khartoum PI would be developed and the memorial removed.

In September the council approved a feasibility study into the mural being preserved with a mid-level staircase constructed to provide access.

Councillor Cathy Casey said the move to protect the mural had been a long time coming and it now fitted well with the new design.

"It's the best option for Khartoum Place without any destruction and opening it up - the development design is what we [the National Women's Council and the Auckland Council] are happy with," Casey said.

"There was no opposition because it is working with the memorial to benefit everyone."

The project is estimated to cost around \$1 million and can be covered under the council's budget.

Councillor Cameron Brewer said the project had been much debated.

"It will certainly improve the memorial while at the same time respect the artwork."

Brewer said Khartoum PI would become a great place for the 120th anniversary of Women's Suffrage in September 2013 as a result of the development.

The committee also passed a resolution to protect the memorial in the Unitary Plan.



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