

20. HERITAGE AND NOTABLE PROTECTED TREES

Officer responsible Parks and Waterways Manager	Author W Fielding-Cotterell, DDI 941 8630 David Mountfort, DDI 941 8669
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The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of the current situation regarding adding more trees to the Heritage and Notable protected tree list in the proposed City Plan.

This report has been prepared in response to concerns raised by the Packe Street residents group, Friends of the Park, regarding the present situation of tree protection following the recent felling of a large Eucalypt noted for future protection near the Park.

David Mountfort, City Plan Team Leader, commented on the situation as follows:

The City Plan Team is aware of the need for a variation to the City Plan to add a number of further trees to the list of protected trees. This is one of quite a large number of potential variations. However, Council has had to give priority to dealing with Environment Court references on the City Plan, in order to meet timetables set down by the Court. This has meant that to date there have been no staff available to progress this variation.

There is now a widespread desire to complete this phase of the City Plan preparation and to make as much as possible of the Plan operative. This will decrease workloads and complexities for staff, Councillors and the public. Variations that are likely to be contentious have the potential to delay the operative date. For this reason the Regulatory and Consents Committee has permitted only urgently needed or essential variations to proceed at this time. I do not believe the Committee would see this as urgent or essential at this time. Other matters will proceed as Plan Changes after the Plan becomes operative. This is likely to be in the latter part of 2004. It would be possible for a Plan Change to be prepared in advance and publicly notified shortly after the Plan becomes operative.

Several years ago, the areas of Riccarton, Merivale, St Albans, Fendalton, Bryndwr, Spreydon and Heathcote were surveyed to record additional trees that were worthy of protection as Heritage and Notable trees. From this survey about 1,300 trees were recorded as being worthy of protection. Since the surveys, the Parks and Waterways Unit have become aware of about a dozen or so of these trees being removed, one of these being the Eucalyptus tree near Packe Street Park.

The current list and relevant details of trees proposed to be protected, is ready for inclusion in any Plan variation that may be prepared in advance of the City Plan becoming operative.

Staff

Recommendation: That the Board recommend to the Regulatory and Consents Committee that the current list of trees proposed to be protected, be included in a Plan variation to be prepared in advance of the City Plan becoming operative.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the staff recommendation be adopted.