

### 3. TREE REMOVAL HEATHCOTE RIVERBANK – CASHMERE ROAD

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the need to remove two willow trees and to gain approval for the removal of two other willow trees, all on the riverbank opposite Princess Margaret Hospital on Cashmere Road.

#### BACKGROUND

It has been identified by the Parks & Waterways Unit's Senior Contract Manager that four willow trees on the Heathcote Riverbank on Cashmere Road, opposite Princess Margaret Hospital, need removing. Two of the trees need to be removed for health and safety reasons. While not a significant health and safety risk, the removal of the two remaining willows at the same time would have benefits both financially and environmentally for the riverbank landscape. The latter two willow trees require Board approval.

#### TREE STATUS

##### Tree 1

This tree is located approximately 100 metres upstream from the footbridge opposite the hospital (picture attached). The tree has a large amount of dieback and would require significant crown and end weight reduction if it were to be retained. It is not a good specimen and detracts from the surrounding landscape. The condition of the willow tree indicates that within the next two years the tree will become a health and safety concern and will require removal. If the tree is removed it will create a wonderful picnic area, with the existing plantings of mature exotics and open space. The Parks and Waterways Unit will arrange the installation a picnic table in the new space.

This tree requires Community Board approval for removal.

##### Tree 2

This tree is located next to the footbridge opposite the hospital (picture attached). This tree has severe dieback including decaying cavities and poor branch attachments and poses a significant health and safety risk. For these reasons this tree will be removed as part of our ongoing maintenance under health and safety.

There are other excellent mature specimens within the immediate vicinity there is no need to replace this tree and it will open up the view through for the residents of Cashmere View Hospital.

##### Tree 3

This tree is located next to the first picnic table downstream from the footbridge opposite the hospital (picture attached). As with Tree Number 1, this tree also has significant dieback and would require extensive crown and end weight reduction if it were to be retained. Once again the condition of the Willow tree indicates that within the next two years the tree will become a health and safety concern and will require removal. Should this tree be removed there is space to replant with two semi-mature trees, these would be exotics in keeping with the existing landscape.

This tree requires Community Board approval for removal.

##### Tree 4

This tree is the last willow tree downstream from the footbridge before you get to the bridge at Fairview Street. As with Tree Number 2, this tree has severe dieback including decaying cavities and poor branch attachments, is diseased and poses a severe health and safety risk. For these reasons the tree will be removed as part of the Units health and safety maintenance programme. (Picture attached.)

There is an oak tree directly in front of this willow tree and the removal of this tree will allow the oak to grow to its full potential. There is also a tree very close on either side of the willow which would also benefit from the removal of this tree. Due to the close proximity of existing planting there is no need to replace this tree.

#### CONCLUSION

From a financial perspective and the impact this work would create, staff would recommend that all four trees are removed as one contract. With replacement planting, the installation of picnic tables, the opening of views and the benefits of existing trees becoming more established, the overall visual impact would not be too severe.

Residents living on the riverbank opposite will be advised of all work prior to commencing.

**Staff**

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Board receive the information related to the removal of the tree numbers 1 and 2 (as per the report) due to health and safety risks.
  2. That the Board approve the removal of tree numbers 1 and 3 (as per the report), as per the reasons outlined.

**Chairperson's**

**Recommendation:** For discussion.