

5. HILLS ROAD/INNES ROAD - TREE REMOVAL

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to remove a tree at the intersection of Hills Road/Innes Road in order to meet obligations under the safe city strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The trees on the road reserve at the north west corner of the intersection of Hills Road and Innes Road prevents the primary lantern for the traffic signals from being seen by traffic approaching on Innes Road. The project team has considered several options for increasing the visibility. The recommendation is that the tree be removed .

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

3. The installation of the traffic signals at the Hills Road/Innes Road intersection is part of the Transport and City Streets Unit capital works programme and has already been approved and the project's contract let. The cost of removing the tree can be met from the project budget.
4. There are no legal implications associated with this recommendation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Community Board:

Approve the removal of a street tree on the north west corner of the intersection of Hills Road and Innes Road.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be adopted in the best interest of safety.

BACKGROUND

5. In March 2002 the (then) City Streets Unit was approached by Mairehau High School to consider remedial work at the intersection to improve the safety of the students. A new residential subdivision to be established east of Hills Road was believed to exacerbate the current safety issues at the Hills Road/Innes Road intersection because of additional vehicle movements.
6. Staff had concluded that the existing traffic safety concerns combined with the anticipated increase to traffic volumes with the new residential subdivision and the future development of a new 'link' road to the north of the school, warranted the installation of traffic signals to improve the safety of all road users in the area. The Shirley/Papanui Community Board supported this and subsequently the 'Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee' recommended to the Annual Plan Working Party that this be a high priority for inclusion in the 2003/04 Annual Plan.
7. In September 2004 Council approved the implementation of the safety improvements at the Hills Road / Innes Road intersection and the project went to final design.
8. The final design for the installation of the traffic signals has highlighted a issue of visibility of the primary lantern on the Innes Road approach. There is a street trees on the north west corner of the intersection that will overhang the new kerb alignment and obscure the primary lantern on this approach. This tree is not a particularly good specimen and as the corner adjoins Walter Park, which has a number of good trees, the effects will be minimal.

OPTIONS

9. Do nothing. This option cannot be considered because the traffic signal standards require a primary lantern with 6.0 m visibility from the middle of the lane and this requirement would not be met.
10. Alter the position of the primary lantern. It is not possible to alter the primary lantern and still meet the sightline standard of 60 metres visibility from the middle of the lane. This can not be recommended as an option.
11. Provide an additional primary lantern overhead mast arm. This is feasible but not the preferred technical solution, as a primary lantern pole will still need to be installed and will still be obscured. It should be noted that there is more work programmed for this intersection in the future with the Northern Arterial and the mast arm would likely be removed with that work. The cost of this option \$5,000 approximately.
12. Relocate the tree. Adjoining this intersection is Walter Park. There are trees along the park boundary near the intersection. The tree could be trimmed at the time the signals are installed and during the winter months when it is dormant relocated it into Walter Park. Tony Armstrong, Arborist, does not recommend this option as the tree is not a good specimen.
13. Remove the tree. Removing the tree will allow the required visibility of the primary lantern. The tree would have to be removed in the future as part of the work required with the Northern Arterial. The corner will not be completely denuded of vegetation with there being trees in Walter Park which adjoins the intersection. Due to the standards that are required for visibility of the primary lantern, the costs involved and the Arborist's comments, tree removal is the recommended option.