

7. BURNSIDE PARK – REMOVAL OF TREES FOR INTERNATIONAL BOWLS COMPETITIONS

General Manager responsible:	General Manager, City Environment
Officer responsible:	Greenspace Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to approve an application by the Burnside Bowling Club to remove a number of trees and shrubs which are within or in close proximity to the Burnside Bowling Club lease area. This will enable the Club to erect the required grandstand for the World Bowls Championship in 2008, while also contributing to the easier management of the Club's world class greens in the future. These greens are being used for a number of international competitions, for example the Asia Pacific Bowls Championship in January 2007 and World Bowls Championship in 2008.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Club has made an application to remove a number of trees and shrubs which are within or in close proximity to the Club's lease area to enable the Club to erect the required grandstand for the World Bowls Championship in 2008, while also contributing to the easier management of the Club's world class greens in the future.
3. Staff are recommending that the Board approve the removal of various shrubs, five trees outside the Club's lease area, and three within, staff being of the view that the trees which are being recommended for removal will not significantly impact upon the landscape that the present tree groupings have on the landscape. Some of the trees that are proposed to be removed are not specified in the Clubs application, but are being recommended for removal in the long term interest of the long term sustainability of the tree grouping behind the Club's lease area and in recognition of the Club's concerns.
4. Staff are recommending that the Club pay for appropriate replacement plantings for the shrubs that need to be removed for the temporary seating in the vicinity of the Club's premises, being mindful that the Club's fence may have to be removed in the future to enable seating to be placed around Orchard Green, this planting is to occur after completion of the management plan review process currently underway.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

5. The Community Board has been delegated authority from the Council to consider applications for the removal of healthy trees from park and reserve land the authority being:

To plant maintain and remove trees on reserves parks and roads under the control of Council within the policy set by the Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board, under delegated authority of Council, approve the removal of the following trees and shrubs:-

- (a) Thirty eight various trees/shrubs eg Holly, Photinia, Magnolia, Griselinia, Laurel around the Club's boundary fence, highlighted in yellow in the attached aerial photograph "Burnside Bowling Club Trees" to enable the construction of a temporary grandstand around Orchard Green to accommodate 3,000 spectators as required by World Bowls for the World Championship in 2008.
- (b) Two Liquidambar within the Club's lease area, as highlighted in blue in the attached aerial photograph labelled "Burnside Bowling Club Trees" because of the adverse effect (shade, roots, and debris) these trees have on the adjacent green.
- (c) One Maytenus within the Club's lease area, highlighted in blue in the attached aerial photograph labelled "Burnside Bowling Club Trees" situated beside the Avonhead Road entrance to the Club's car-park beside the Bowling Green fence, principally because of shading.

- (d) Two other eucalypts, which are not particular good specimens, one oak, one cherry, and various shrubs (buddleia, photinia, and euonymus), highlighted in yellow in the attached aerial photograph "Burnside Bowling Club Trees" along the boundary between the Club and park.
- (e) That the Club pay for appropriate replacement plantings in the vicinity of the Club's premises, this to include the plantings that need to be removed for the temporary seating in the vicinity of the Club's premises being mindful that the Club's fence may have to be removed in the future to enable seating to be placed around Orchard Green, after completion of the Management Plan review process currently underway.
- (f) Council and the Club continue to negotiate about tree protection issues.
- (g) A tree maintenance programme as indicated in the report be implemented prior to summer 2007/2008.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendations be adopted.

BACKGROUND

6. The Club is hosting the 11th World Bowls Championship in 2008 at the Club's premises at Burnside Park. There are a number of requirements that the Club is required to comply with when hosting the world event, such as having a green available around which 3,000 spectators can be seated to watch the final games. This requirement will be complied with by erecting approximately 17 rows of temporary tiered seating around the north, east, and south sides of the back green (Orchard Green) as viewed from Avonhead Road, the area involved being shown as "A" on the attached aerial photograph labelled "Burnside Park Seating/Officials Area World Bowls Championships 2008", being of approximately 1473 square metres in area. On the plan, labelled "Temporary Seating" (attached) the seating area is shown, and an elevation of the proposed temporary seating. The extra seating will not be required for the 2007 Asia Pacific Bowls Championship.
7. The Board will recall that staff informed the Board that they were going to canvass adjacent residents about the possibility of leasing to the Club the area on which the temporary seating is to be located. This was because staff in the interests of the long term management of the park believe that one option is to add the area of land on which the temporary seats are to be erected, to the present leased area, thereby allowing this area to be used for temporary facilities to be provided for the visiting teams, officials, and trade displays, for national, and Australasian competitions, and for temporary tiered seating for major international events if required in the future. It would therefore only be necessary to temporarily encroach on a larger area of the park to accommodate these types of facilities for Asian Pacific type competitions and larger events, which only take place in New Zealand infrequently. This addition would also allow the Club's lease boundary to be permanently fenced on the new boundary, thereby allowing temporary tiered seating to be erected in the future without the boundary fence having to be removed. The added advantage of this arrangement is that the boundary landscaping could be established without being mindful of the fact that it may have to be removed in the future to accommodate another world tournament.
8. With the above advantages in mind, whilst acknowledging the agreement made between the Council and the Club some 15 years ago, staff canvassed adjacent residents by letter to see if they would agree to a small increase in the Club's lease area, to enable the temporary seating area as outlined above to be included in the Club's lease area, inviting them to comment on an attached reply form and return it to the authors of the report, by self addressed envelope.
9. Of the 25 replies received, only one was in favour of the minimally enlarged lease area, and therefore staff have not persevered with this option. In response to the issues raised in the letter to residents, nine respondents indicated specifically that the shrubbery be replanted upon the existing planted area, and 4 mentioned that the gumtree in question should not be removed, the temporary seating being built around it. Only one respondent was not in favour of the shrubbery being removed, all others appreciating the necessity of removal to erect the temporary seating.

The Club's request to remove the following trees and shrubs:-

10. Thirty eight various trees/shrubs eg Holly, Photinia, Magnolia, Griselinia, Laurel because of the requirement to construct a temporary grandstand around Orchard green. The Council arborist for the area comments that the trees and shrubs in question presently provide screening of the Club's fence between the Club's lease area and the park and therefore have an amenity value, however, they do not represent a significant or irreplaceable selection of trees and shrubs. Although the grandstand is proposed as a temporary installation, the conflict for space is not easily resolved without the removal of the vegetation. If not removed the trees and shrubs will at the very least be damaged, become a nuisance and severely restrict where the grandstand can be placed and hence the enjoyment of the event be compromised.
11. One Large eucalypt (and others alluded to), due to the alleged adverse effects from roots, debris and potential hazard (falling branches). The Council arborist comments that the issue of roots and debris and their effect on the green is historic and previously documented. The proposed new activity i.e. installation of a grandstand within the drip-line of the tree is in direct conflict with the tree. In both cases there are alternatives to be considered.
 - (a) In the case of the roots, the green is beyond the drip-line of the tree, and there are other impediments between the tree and the green e.g. change in ground conditions, levels and structures and other vegetation between. An option previously put forward to address the problem is to undertake root pruning outside the drip-line of the tree(s), between the tree(s) and the green(s) and install a root barrier. Officers have agreed to undertake this work.

- (b) Debris, mostly leaf, can be an annoyance for maintenance but can of course be addressed by maintenance. The plans provided for the proposed temporary grandstand appear to have some flexibility in construction detail i.e. the stands are in sections and so it appears that the overall design could incorporate the existing tree. The tree has been assessed as mature and in good condition and therefore because of its location provides significant amenity value to the wider park environment. Therefore, the request to remove the tree, given the alternatives, does not appear to be reasonable.
12. On site discussions between the report authors, and Club officials has enabled a satisfactory solution to the tree issues to be arrived at, this being subject to Community Board approval. This includes the removal of two other eucalypts, which are not particularly good specimens, one oak, one cherry, and various shrubs (buddleia, photinia, and euonymus), between the boundary of the Club and park. This compromise will satisfy the needs of the Club, by allowing more air, to circulate across the greens, thereby allowing the morning dew to dry off the greens quickly which will assist with disease prevention, and allow more light to filter through onto the front green in the morning thereby assisting with its health. The removal of the selected trees from the group as shown on the attached aerial photograph labelled "Burnside Bowling Club Trees" will have minimal effect on the significant amenity value of the tree grouping.
 13. Two Liquidambar, due to the alleged adverse effect these trees have on the use of the green i.e. from shade, roots and debris. These trees, which are semi-mature, are located within the Club's leased area. The Council arborist comments that at present they do not contribute significantly to the wider amenity value of the park, their value and effects therefore should be considered only in relation to a localised area. One of the trees is not a good specimen (structure) and should be removed. The other has the potential to become a reasonable specimen tree however, its location is not considered suitable for such a species. This tree is likely to become more of a problem in the future. Given its location and present size, coupled with the logistics of transplanting it which will prove difficult and potential costly, the removal of the tree is considered a reasonable request and option.
 14. One Maytenus is proposed principally due to (adverse) shade. This tree is located within the Club's lease area beside the greens fence by the Avonhead Road entrance to the car-park, and therefore has some amenity value as a feature tree. The tree is assessed as in reasonable health and condition, however, the species appears as a weed in the Christchurch City Council Weed Guide (September 2003). In this particular case under the circumstances, the request to remove the tree is considered to be reasonable. To mitigate for the loss of amenity, replacement planting is an option.
 15. Other than the specific requests made by the Club to remove trees, there are 3 Poplars east of Orchard Green and the proposed temporary grandstand area which the arborist has identified as having potential health and safety issues, especially in the event of the increased use of the park in the vicinity of the Club. These trees will be removed as part of the general tree maintenance program to ensure the safety of the public using the park prior to the 2007/2008 summer, health and safety issues concerning trees being delegated to staff to address.
 16. Also of concern is the potential health and safety of the avenue of poplars alongside the pathway to the east of the Burnside Tennis Club's tennis courts. Although these trees are not directly part of this assessment, because of the wider use of the park, in particular the extended use of the nearby ground for car parking during the World Bowls Championship, which will result in an increase in the pedestrian activity in and around these trees, these trees will be addressed separately to this report, but as part of the tree maintenance programme prior to 2007/08 summer.
 17. Staff believe that it is appropriate that the Club pay for the planting of appropriate trees and shrubs to replace the ones removed in the vicinity of the Club's lease area, being mindful that the Club's fence may have to be removed in the future to enable seating to be placed around Orchard Green. When choosing replacement plantings it is important that the species chosen are suitable for the site in relation to the adjacent bowling greens.
 18. The review of the Burnside Park Management Plan is underway, and therefore it is important that any plantings chosen in relation to the removal of trees and shrubs around the Club's lease area be considered in the wider context of the landscape of the park, this being considered as part of the management plan review process. Staff therefore recommend that no "replacement plantings" are undertaken until the management plan review process is completed.