

11. SHELDON PARK TREE RENEWAL

General Manager responsible:	General Manager, City Environment Group DDI 941-8608
Officer responsible:	Transport and Greenspace Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the approval for the Sheldon Park Tree renewal development plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Sheldon Park is located in Belfast and future planning in the draft Belfast Area Plan identifies the park as the 'hub' of the area. The trees in Sheldon Park have been surveyed and assessed in order to identify trees for immediate and longer term removal and replacement. Landscape issues such as screening and shelter/shade are a focus for tree maintenance, removal and planting in order to maintain and improve upon the general amenity of the park.
3. A tree removal and replacement plan was prepared and circulated to the affected community. The plan aims to:
 - (a) Preserve and enhance the Redwood tree theme in the park.
 - (b) Sustain an effective and attractive screen along eastern boundary, near the railway line.
 - (c) Maintain an appropriate planting along the waterway area to the south.
 - (d) Maintain safe planting in the vicinity of the playground in the south west of the park.
 - (e) Address the declining condition of the Silver birch trees outside the rugby clubrooms and in the north east corner in general. Note: the removal of the two Silver birch trees immediately east of the Belfast Rugby Club's changing rooms has already been approved as part of an application to extend the club's leased area.
 - (f) Plan for the long term removal/replacement of Lombardy poplars at south western entrance.
 - (g) Plan for removal/replacement of trees in Area 15 and general enhancement of trees surrounding open space and other recreational areas.
4. It is proposed to remove trees in poor or declining condition as a high priority. Where trees exist in inappropriate or conflicting locations with residential, school, club or other park areas, they have been considered for future replacement. A mixture of tree species has been chosen for the site. Native trees, such as Kowhai and Totara will be planted near the waterway, the accesses and near the tennis courts. A number of exotic tree species are suggested to complement the existing trees in the park.
5. The public consultation in March/April 2010 indicated a good level of support for the proposed concept. The final concept plan, which has been amended slightly in response to feedback from the community, is included as **attachment 1** and recommended for approval by the Community Board.
6. Implementation of the proposal will take approximately 5-10 years to complete. Priority tree removals are scheduled as follows:
 - (a) Tree maintenance will begin next summer (October 2010 to March 2011).
 - (b) Replacement planting will proceed in the subsequent winter (May-August 2011).
 - (c) Future work will proceed each subsequent year as funding is prioritised.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. The priority works in Sheldon Park are programmed in the LTCCP for implementation in the 2011/12 and 2012/13 financial years.
8. Based on current estimates, staff believe there is sufficient funding in the budget to implement the proposed plan.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?

9. Yes. Funding is provided from within the Park Tree Renewal Programme in the 2009-19 LTCCP

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

10. The Community Boards have the following delegation with respect to trees:

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

11. The following City Plan Policies apply –

Volume 2 : Section 4 City Identity

4.2.1 Policy: Tree Cover

To promote amenity values in the urban area by maintaining and enhancing the tree cover present in the City.

4.2.2 Policy: Garden City

To recognise and promote the “Garden City” identity, heritage and character of Christchurch

4.3.2 Policy: “Garden City” image identity

To acknowledge and promote the “Garden City” identity of the City by protecting, maintaining and extending planting which compliments this image

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

12. All work will be carried out by a Council approved contractor with the appropriate health and safety and work site management controls in place.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

13. **LTCCP 2009-2019
Parks, Open Spaces and Waterways – Page 116**

Safety – by ensuring our parks, open spaces and waterways are healthy and safe places;

Community – by providing welcoming areas for communities to gather and interact;

Governance – by involving people in decision-making about parks, open spaces and waterways;

Health – By providing areas for people to engage in healthy activities;

Recreation – by offering a range of recreational opportunities in parks, open spaces and waterways;

City Development – by providing an inviting, pleasant and well cared-for environment

14. **Parks and Open Spaces Activity Management Plan**

The Council’s objective with urban parks is to provide and manage Community Parks, Garden and Heritage Parks, Sports Parks and Riverbanks and Conservation Areas throughout the city that provide amenity values, areas for recreation and organised sport, garden environments and green corridors, that contribute to the city’s natural form, character, heritage and Garden City image.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES**15. Safer Christchurch Strategy**

This strategy aligns injury prevention, road safety and crime prevention under the overarching aim of Christchurch becoming the safest city in New Zealand. One of the goals of this strategy is to enhance safety from crime through preventative and supportive actions, such as:

- (a) Ensure the phased adoption of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles (CPTED) into city-wide planning and policy;
- (b) To promote CPTED principles for application by owners and occupiers of existing buildings and spaces;
- (c) Provide active support to locally led initiatives that make significant contributions to reducing the incidence and effect of crime.

16. Parks and Waterways Access Policy

Improved access to parks and open space will increase equity as promoted by the City Council Policy on Equity and Access for People with Disabilities. Additionally, improved access has the potential to increase park use by enhancing comfort and convenience for all users and providing significant safety benefits.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT**Consultation Process**

17. The project team developed a concept plan and advised the Community Board, at a seminar on 17 February 2010, that they would be seeking public feedback on this. This seminar also sought feedback from Board members about stakeholders in this project.
18. The community consultation was open from 24 March to 12 May 2010. A public information leaflet was delivered to approximately 380 local residents and a number of other interest groups and key stakeholders. This leaflet included a summary of the concept, an initial concept plan and a feedback form. The project team sought feedback from the community to see whether the proposal was supported and asked for any comments. Also included was an offer to meet onsite, if requested. The proposal was posted on the CCC Have Your Say website.
19. Each submission received an interim reply letter, which acknowledged that the submission had been received and that it would be considered, once the consultation period had closed. Submitters were also advised that they would receive further correspondence prior to a decision being made. This would outline the outcome of consultation, the project team's preferred concept plan, the decision making process and how they could be involved in this and the expected timeline for the project.

Consultation Outcome

20. The consultation on the concept plan received 23 responses (6% response rate), which is a low response to this proposed concept. The feedback received was largely supportive of the proposal, as indicated by the following:

Number of respondents	Feedback option selected
14 respondents (61%)	<i>"YES – I fully support the proposal"</i>
8 respondents (35%)	<i>"MIXED VIEWS – I have some concerns that I would like to be considered"</i>
0 respondents (0%)	<i>"NO – I completely oppose the proposal"</i>

1 respondents (4%)	No preference indicated
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21. The quantitative responses above clearly indicate support for the proposal, with 61% indicating that they fully support the proposal and 0% completely opposed to it. Numerous positive comments were also received about this proposal.
22. A range of issues were raised in the consultation and each of these has been responded to by the project team. A schedule of the community feedback and project team responses will be circulated to submitters and elected members, prior to the meeting.
23. Two submitters sought the retention of the willow near the southern entrance to the park – the project team notes that immediate removal of the willow is not required, but it will be pruned as required and if it loses a limb or dies back it will need to be removed. It is proposed to replace it with a Dawn Redwood, which will also provide shade.
24. Belfast School has sought the removal of at least two, and ideally four, large Redwood trees that are located boundary of the school (between the pool and the school). The Arborist and Consultation Leader met with the principal of the school to discuss their concerns and aspirations about these trees. The school's primary concern is that the line of large Redwood trees create shading on the school's hard court area, creating an issue with ice on this play area, restricts light to the classrooms and does not allow an open view into the pool area. They have asked that two to four of these trees be removed. The Arborist advised that these trees have significant landscape values for the area and are an integral part of the park's treescape. The Arborist does not recommend that any of these trees be removed but advised that these trees will be monitored and pruned as required. He advised that considerable benefit could be gained by removing other large trees which are on the school's boundary. It is noted by the project team that the retention of the Redwoods was one of the aims of the project and this has been supported by feedback received from the community.
25. The project team considered this consultation feedback and revised the concept in the following way:
 - (a) In response to feedback from the community, an alternative species to Kowhai, such as Cherry, will be planned for Area one.
 - (b) Clarification of species to such as Dogwood and Magnolia will be planned in Area two, in response to feedback from the community.
 - (c) A setback of three metres of the fence line adjacent to Area four will be maintained, to ensure a visible area to the adjacent storage facility is retained for security reasons (this allows for a two metre planting strip and a three metre setback for playing field).
 - (d) In response to feedback from the community, no additional planting in Area 10.
 - (e) In Area 11 two groups of six kowhai will be planted, grouped either side of entrance, in order to replace existing exotic trees to be removed because of poor condition.
 - (f) An additional Alder on the southern boundary of the park, adjacent to Area 12, will be tagged for removal, as a result of a resident request.
26. The final concept plan, which includes the above amendments, is included as **attachment 1**.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Shirley/Papanui Community Board approve the **attached** plan in order to implement the Sheldon Park Tree renewal project.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

For discussion.