

## 17. RICHMOND HILL ROAD – STREET TREE REMOVAL

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Corporate Plan Output: Neighbourhood Improvements	

The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to recommend to the City Services Committee that approval be gained for the removal and replacement of plane street trees in Richmond Hill Road.

Over the years a number of complaints have been received from residents concerning the plane trees in the footpath at the eastern end of Richmond Hill Road. The complaints referred to properties being shaded by the trees and the damage the trees are causing to footpaths, kerbs and channels, and drainage systems.

The trees have been pruned over the years to clear the power lines and alleviate the shade problem. They have the potential to grow to a much greater size than they are at present and require a greater growing space than the narrow fully sealed footpath provides.

In February 1998 Walter Fielding-Cotterell, Parks Arboriculturist, surveyed the residents living in the vicinity of the trees in Richmond Hill Road and found that nine residents wanted the trees removed and three wanted the trees to remain. He recommended to City Services that the existing 11 plane trees be removed and be replaced with a suitable smaller growing species.

City Services resolved that the existing plane trees (11) in Richmond Hill Road remain and that the issue be reconsidered with the replacement of kerbs and channels and footpath maintenance. Adopted by Council 25. 3. 98.

The kerb and channel is to be replaced in the lower section of Richmond Hill Road in 2000/2001 and in Nayland Street (from Wakefield Ave to Marriner Street) in 2001/2002. As part of the initial consultation for this work a questionnaire was distributed to all residents and property owners in the lower section of Richmond Hill Road and Nayland Street (from Wakefield Ave to Marriner Street) asking whether the trees be retained or removed.

Results of the questionnaire:

33 replies received and 22 (66%) were in favour of the removal of the trees and 11 (33%) wish the trees to be retained.

When these replies were divided into residents and owners in Richmond Hill Road only the results were the same, two thirds in favour of removal to one third for retaining them and the same result for residents from Nayland Street.

A visit to the area with Craig Taylor, Parks Unit, confirmed that out of the 15 trees in Nayland Street and the lower section of Richmond Hill Road, two are in good condition and could be left, six will probably last another five years and seven should be removed immediately. Because the trees have been topped they are now decaying in the crown area and on the western side of Richmond Hill Road the power lines go through the trees.

Considering the Parks Officer recommendation and the residents' and owners' responses, it is recommended that the plane street trees in the lower section of Richmond Hill Road and Nayland Street (from Wakefield Avenue to Marriner Street) be removed as part of the kerb and channel renewal.

**Recommendation:** That the Board recommend to City Services Committee that all 15 of the existing plane trees in Richmond Hill Road and Nayland Street (from Wakefield Avenue to Marriner Street) be removed and replaced with a suitable smaller growing species.

**Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the officer's recommendation be adopted.