

9. PARKS STORM DAMAGE

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Corporate Plan Output:	

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the cleanup and other actions being taken by the Parks Unit following the 12 October storm.

INTRODUCTION

The general approach taken by the Council was to inspect all requests or notifications of tree damage and prioritise each request. Priority for action was taken on the danger to life and property in the first instance with lower priority given to trees that were already on the ground or deemed safe.

The city arborist, Walter Fielding-Cotterell, with assistance from our Area Parks Officers and City Care, has successfully attended to all requests and notifications. In most cases branch material has been chipped with the larger branch material and trunks being left for firewood. Large stumps will be removed later or stump chipped. All tree losses have been recorded and noted for replacement. This includes all street trees which will be replaced next season depending upon available stock. Early requests will be made throughout the nursery industry for restocking prior to planting. Provision has been made in the draft 2001/02 budget for replacement planting in streets and reserves suffering tree losses due to the storm.

SPORTS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

Damage was not heavy in these areas due to trees being mainly deciduous and not in full leaf. Nearly all parks are now safe with only a few still having taped off areas awaiting tree surgery and pruning. The worst effected were Nicholson and Brownlee Reserves which contain mainly evergreens and conifers.

GROYNES

The main damage was willow trees being toppled over leaving large root areas exposed or limbs broken blocking walking tracks and car park areas. All have been cleared and the area is now open to the public.

BOTTLE LAKE

The main windfall was across the mountain bike and walking tracks. Selwyn Plantation Board assisted in clearing the roads and ranger staff cleared all other areas. The area is now available to the public.

SPENCER PARK

The park suffered extensive tree damage and this associated with a very high tide made it difficult for staff to clear damaged trees and maintain picnic areas. Areas are still unavailable to the public and it will be several months before all areas are open. The high water table may take two months to abate. In the meantime, the rangers and contract staff are continuing with the general cleanup.

BOWENVALE

This area consists of two plantations of conifers that have been seriously damaged with extensive plantation windfall. The area will remain closed until complete clear felling can be arranged. It is unlikely that the mountain bike track will be reopened until all clear felling is completed. The present risk in this area is extremely high and signs have been installed to warn the public of the danger.

VICTORIA PARK - INCLUDING SUMMIT ROAD RESERVES

Victoria Park has had some work done and the remaining wind damaged and exposed trees around the visitor centre and office are being felled and transported away for sale as milling timber or paper pulp.

The large pine near the house is still untouched but will be worked on soon. There will be work continuing in the park over the next few weeks removing and mitigating hazards. The upper east side area has numerous fallen trees that we are picking off as we can.

The top plateau area is also badly affected by wind throw and many trees waiting decision from Walter Fielding-Cotterell on their future. Trees between Sugarloaf and the Kiwi are also awaiting removal and will be of some value as some are Douglas fir (oregon) and *Pinus radiata*.

Dyers Pass Road pines below Victoria Park have suffered severe wind throw and breakage. The remaining pines are now fully exposed to the wind and present a potential hazard. It is proposed therefore to remove all the remaining standing old pines in the vicinity of the road. This work will go out to contract as soon as possible.

MARY DUNCAN PARK

Approximately six acres of 15-20 year pines were extensively damaged with approximately 90% trees now lying on the ground. This plantation area has been fenced off and the Ferrymead Pony Club have been notified of the danger. Our approach will be to clearfell or log the whole area and return the area to native plantings. The area will require replanting as it is a soil stabilisation site. It is hoped that recovery of log material will cover any cleanup costs.

BOTANIC GARDENS

Trees blown over include: three mature *Quercus coccinea*, two *Crataegus* sp., one *Agathus australis* and one young *Araucaria*. Branches from a *Pinus pinaster* fell onto garden seats and broke them. In addition, numerous trees throughout the gardens lost small branches, but none of these trees will be permanently disfigured. The ladder system on Cunningham House was blown off its tracking rails.

HAGLEY PARK

While several major branches broke from trees throughout the park, the storm damage was confined mainly to small parts of branches. Three large trees in South Hagley were blown over and still await removal.

MONA VALE

A major branch of the willow by the bridge near homestead broke and lodged in the river. This tree has now been completely removed.

Other mature tree losses included a *Betula pendula*, *Pittosporum tenuifolium*, *Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Podocarpus totara* 'Aurea' and *Ulmus parvifolia*. These trees have now been removed.

HAREWOOD NURSERY

Seven trees in the boundary shelterbelt were blown over. Twenty 14 year old *Quercus* were destroyed by fallen shelter belt trees. Numerous young trees were blown onto an angle by winds and will require straightening and roots firming if possible.

LINWOOD NURSERY

Shade cloth was blown from one wall of shade house, one wind protection fence within the nursery was damaged and glass within cold frame covers was broken.

SOUTH BRIGHTON PARK

Because of the saturated ground conditions and the shallow rooted habit of plantation pines/macrocarpas in the South Brighton area, many trees were lost in the storm. Of particular concern were the trees which were uprooted in the vicinity of the boundary with the Estuary Road properties, where trees fell through fences and threatened houses, and the motor camp where trees fell into the camp crushing four caravans.

HEATHCOTE RIVER

Many trees were lost and damaged along the Heathcote River bank and extensive replanting will be required.

STREET TREES

There were no large scale losses of the larger, mature street trees but many young trees and those of an intermediate age were badly damaged or uprooted in some areas, particularly where soils had become saturated. Provision has been made in the 2001/02 draft budget for the increased costs of the replacement planting next winter season.

It is proposed to present indicative prices for storm tree works at the meeting.

**Chairman's
Recommendation:** That the information be received.