

12. DENTON PARK (WESTERN SIDE)/KATHLEEN CRESCENT - RESIDENTS' PETITION FOR BOUNDARY LANDSCAPING

Officer responsible Parks Manager	Author Roger Cave, Community Secretary, DDI 372 2502
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The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's consideration to the approval of a landscaping concept plan to meet concerns expressed by local residents by way of a petition to the Community Board.

As the concept plan involves removal of trees on the reserve the Board is referring this to the Parks and Recreation Committee for their consideration and final agreement. The Committee has delegated authority to approve the removal of trees from reserves land.

At its September 2000 meeting, the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board received three letters and a petition (of 26 signatures) from residents of Kathleen Crescent whose properties bordered the western side of Denton Park, Hornby.

The prayer of the petition (abridged) asks the Council to:

"...rectify the problem of the trees at the eastern end (read 'Western') of Denton Park; related problems are....a wind tunnel effect has been created causing a larger than normal buildup of pine needles, and rubbish.....resolved by lower plantings....replacing the trees with another species...."

The letters also alluded to:

- blocking out of sunlight
- house dampness
- spouting blockages
- health problems, pollen etc
- personal safety issues

Board members undertook an on-site inspection of the park; the trees in question were seen as being (probably) problematic to residents, but the trees did form a good feature of the park boundary.

The Council's Arboriculturist and our Area Parks Officer were required to report back to the Board (via its Environment Committee) on the petition, with options in respect of the trees and landscaping opportunities.

The Community Board met with Parks staff to discuss options. The decision was made to have a draft landscape plan drawn up in consultation with the Parks Unit Arboriculturist.

The following has been provided by the Arboriculturist, Walter Fielding-Cotterell:

"The conifers concerned are a shelter belt of Deodar (Indian) Cedars planted along the south boundary of the park. The trees are aged about 25 - 30 years with heights ranging from 8 - 10 metres.

The cedars have been planted very close together in rows 3.0 metres apart, in the manner of a farm or horticultural shelter planting rather than individual amenity or landscape plantings. The vigorous growth of these closely planted trees has now resulted in a dense barrier of foliage which excludes most of the sunlight from a northerly direction.

The closely grown nature of the plantings has also resulted in the growth suppression of less vigorous trees and die-back of inner branches.

Thinning the shelter belt by removing 43 of the poorer trees will be beneficial to the remaining 29 trees by reducing root and light competition. This will allow them to develop into healthier more attractive individual specimens. As well as increasing the amount of sunlight to the adjacent properties.

No trees will be removed from that part of the shelter belt that extends near the children's play area.

The 35 metre section of the shelter belt nearest the Main South Road consists of two or three rows of trees, the removal of trees adjacent to the boundary in this section will therefore not be noticeable from the park."

A plan has been circulated to residents for comment. Twenty-three affected households were sent the draft plan.

The plan shows the removal of 43 trees, with 29 to be retained, a total of 72 trees.

The plan also includes the planting of more trees, further from the fence line as well as shrubs and ground cover.

The conifer trees remaining will still offer protection to the park and neighbours from wind as well as still being visually appealing from the road and the park.

10 households responded. All supported the draft concept plan.

BOARD CONSIDERATION

The final concept plan was received by the Board at its May meeting. It was noted that very good support was received to the concept plan from the residents affected.

Subject to final agreement from the Council (Parks and Recreation Committee) the Community Board has allocated project funds to enable this work to be undertaken as soon as practicable.

It is estimated that the felling operation will cost around \$20,000, with the funds being provided from the Local Park Tree Felling and Maintenance City Wide budget vote. In the case of the replacement landscape planting work, the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board have contributed \$7,000 to this project.

The concept plan will be available at the meeting.

Recommendation: That the Parks and Recreation Committee agree to the Denton Park Kathleen Crescent boundary landscaping plan.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.