

8. REMOVAL OF TREE: LINWOOD PARK

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The purpose of this report is to obtain the Board's consent for the removal of a tree affected by the construction of a Council pressure main pipeline to be installed across Linwood Park.

The pipeline, a 1200 millimetre diameter (sewer) pressure main, is to be installed along Hay Street turning north into Linwood Avenue then across the median at a right angle into Linwood Park, just north of the tennis club premises.

To install the pipeline requires a trench to be excavated two (2.0) metres wide, plus an additional width of five hundred (500) millimetres for the installation of "well points" to provide for the trench to be drained of collected groundwater.

The only park tree significantly affected by the operation is a tall pine situated near the road boundary with Linwood Avenue. This tree is an Austrian pine some thirty-two (32) metres in height with a trunk about six hundred (600) millimetres in diameter. The tree is thought to be about eighty (80) years old. The condition of the pine is poor, the sparse foliage indicating that the tree is over-mature and starting to decline. The trunk of the pine is bare of branches for three quarters of its height so it is not considered to be an attractive specimen. The tree also has a slight lean diagonally towards the road. The useful/safe future life expectancy of the pine is estimated as ten (10) years.

The nearest edge of the pipeline trench is to be excavated just two metres from the trunk of the pine. The tree has most of its lateral support roots close to the surface of the soil. This excavation work will therefore destroy about 35% of its roots providing ground anchorage in tension. Given the extremely exposed position of the pine to strong winds from all directions, particularly the north west, the loss of root anchorage will make the tree much more susceptible to wind-throw. Strong north west winds combined with the loss of root support on that side of the tree, could blow the tree into the road.

There are young trees growing each side of the pine, a cedar and an ash, that are considered to be more desirable specimens. It would be preferable to sacrifice the aging, declining pine than jeopardising either of these two trees by attempting to shift the pipeline. Shifting the pipeline would also have an increased effect on the elms on the Linwood Avenue median which are considered to be of great importance in the landscape. The pipeline has been planned to pass midway between these trees.

It is proposed that the pine will be replaced by planting two large nursery stock trees.

Staff

Recommendation: That the Board approve the removal of the pine and replacement planting of two large nursery stock trees.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the recommendation be adopted.