

## POPLAR TREE(S) – FERRIER PARK

**Officer responsible**  
Anne Greenup

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The purpose of this report is to inform the board of the situation with regard to a (poplar) tree in Ferrier Park, and, to outline the intended management of the trees in that park.

### Background

Mr Inkster of 31 Balrudry Street, has requested that a (poplar) tree located in Ferrier Park be removed. It is understood that initially, the request related to the resident's concern about overhanging branches and the potential for causing injury or damage to person or property if such branches failed. The tree has been pruned to address this but the resident is still expressing concern about the safety of the tree and is complaining about its effect on his wellbeing and that of his family. Mr Inkster is requesting the tree to be removed.

### Tree assessment

The tree is located along the northern boundary of the park, on the southern side of the Mr Inkster's property and approx 3-4m from the fence line. The tree is singular but one of several mature trees located around the perimeter of the park. It is a poplar, a black poplar hybrid (*Populus nigra x deltoides*).

The tree has been visually assessed by Council and independent arborists to determine its condition. The assessments are that the tree does not exhibit any signs that suggest that it may be an immediate health and safety risk. The roots, trunk and canopy all appear to be normal for a tree of this species, age and size. There does not appear to be an arboricultural reason for its immediate removal. Notwithstanding a catastrophic event, the tree still has a useful life expectancy.

### Tree management

The tree in question has been pruned back to remove/reduce overhanging branches, lift the canopy and remove major deadwood. Other trees in the park have also been pruned for similar reasons, as well as remedial work eg broken branches resulting from storm damage.

Due to the nature and condition of the general tree population in the park, and in particular the poplars, it is intended to survey and assess all the trees as part of Council's ongoing management and maintenance of the urban tree asset. This is budgeted for this financial year, as part of Council capital works programme. The full survey and assessment will take place in the late spring/early summer and, following consultation with the local community, the result and any recommended tree work will be reported to the Community Board in late summer/early autumn.

Although the result of this cannot be anticipated, it is likely that removal of poplar trees will be recommended, along with a replacement planting programme. This assumption is based upon the nature of the tree (species), their proximity to property boundaries and the limited maintenance options in the long term due to this.

### Risk management

In managing risk, isolating, minimising or removal of hazards are prime considerations. In the case of the tree adjacent to Mr Inksters property, neither the tree nor target can be isolated. Pruning has minimised the risk, however, the amount and frequency of pruning is limited as the tree continues to grow. Given the circumstances outlined in this report, removal is probably the most prudent option in the long term.

### Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Poplar tree in Ferrier Park adjacent to Mr Inkster's property (31 Balrudry St) be removed.
  2. That the removal take place as part of a wider programme of work determined by an independent survey and assessment, following consultation with the local community.