

3. STREET TREE REMOVAL REQUEST – BRODIE STREET

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
Officer responsible:	Greenspace Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the removal of a street tree situated on the grass berm outside number 45 Brodie Street, for the purposes of constructing a vehicle access to a new dwelling. Resource and building consents have been approved for the dwelling, however, the applicant did not indicate the street tree at the planning stage and so approval is now sought subsequent to the building of the dwelling including the driveway access.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. A new dwelling has been built at 45 Brodie Street and vehicle access is now required crossing the grass berm.
3. On the grass berm directly in the pathway for the proposed vehicle crossing is a street tree, an ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) approximately 4m in height.
4. The tree is healthy and there is no arboricultural reason for its removal.
5. A request to remove the tree has been received, as using the existing vehicle crossing (or modifying it) is not considered practical by the applicant.
6. Transplanting of the tree using a 'treespade' was investigated. This option became problematic once sub surface rock obstructed shift of the tree. Hence this option was abandoned.
7. As an alternative option to transplanting by 'treespade', a more traditional method was investigated. However, the cost for this work was estimated at a level that the applicant was not prepared to accept, given that the transplanting by this method did not offer a guarantee of a successful shift.
8. The remaining option, to remove the tree, is now requested as being the most practical and cost effective solution to completion of the construction works.
9. The agent, on behalf of the owner, has accepted that a replacement tree will need to be planted, either on the berm in closest possible proximity or on an adjacent site including the nearby park.
10. To create a potential replanting site and improve the general landscape amenity of the berm, the original vehicle crossing will need to be re-instated back to berm once a new vehicle crossing is constructed. This would include the removal of surface and sub surface of the crossing, installing kerb, soil and grass to the Christchurch City Council standards and specification.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

11. Funding for the tree removal and replacement planting, including full re-instatement of the berm, will be met by the owner of the property as part of the new vehicle crossing construction.
12. The tree is not listed as protected under the City Plan and no resource consent is required for this work. However, a separate vehicle crossing permit will be required and it is understood that that has already been applied and paid for, and is pending the approval for the tree removal.
13. All treework will be carried out by a Council approved contractor with the appropriate health and safety and work site management controls in place.

OPTIONS

14. There are three possible options:

- (a) Do nothing/status quo i.e. decline the request to remove the tree.

This is not considered a viable option, as it would leave Council exposed to a charge of being unreasonable or obstructive to access to the new dwelling.

- (b) Decline the request to remove the tree but allow for the transplanting of it.

This option has been investigated using 2 methods that have proved prohibitive from a practical or financial perspective, and without any form of guarantee for a successful operation. This option is therefore not realistic or reasonable and is therefore not recommended.

- (c) Approve the removal of the tree.

This option will provide the simplest, cheapest and quickest solution. However, in mitigation to replace the tree, and improve the general landscape amenity of the berm, the original vehicle crossing will need to be re-instated back to berm once a new vehicle crossing is constructed. All costs of this operation shall be met by the applicant.

PREFERRED OPTION

15. The preferred option is option (c).

16. Under this option the proposed course of action would be as follows;

- (a) Removal of the street tree (including stump/roots)
- (b) Removal of surface and sub surface of the existing crossing, installing kerb, soil and grass to the Christchurch City Council standards
- (c) Replacement planting with a new tree to the Christchurch City Council standards. The species and site for the new tree shall be determined in liaison with a Greenspace arborist.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Riccarton Wigram Community Board approve option (c) as outlined in the section headed "Preferred Option"

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

For discussion