

3. PROPOSED TREE REMOVAL – GARLANDS RESERVE, 124 GARLANDS ROAD

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
Officer responsible:	Greenspace Manager
Author:	Ann Liggett, Parks and Waterways Area Advocate, DDI 941-5111 and Tony Armstrong, Arborist, DDI 941 8578

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to respond to a request to remove four willow trees (salix spp.) along the northern boundary of Garlands Reserve as a result of Mr Steve Bush's (166 Opawa Road) deputation to the Board's meeting of 5 April 2005.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. A request has been received, via the Community Board, from the resident of 166 Opawa Road, to remove four willow trees on the northern boundary of Garlands Reserve.
3. Garlands Reserve, a small local reserve, is located at 124 Garlands Road and is used principally by Opawa Rapaki Scouts.
4. In 2004 Mr Steve Bush raised concerns about some trees overhanging his property from the reserve to the south, these are the willow trees in question.
5. The trees were subsequently assessed and in early 2005 ten were removed, leaving the remaining four. The remaining four trees were 'cleaned out' of deadwood and pruned back, including lower branches being lifted from the residents' boundary.
6. In March 2005, Christchurch experienced strong southerly winds which damaged the four remaining willow trees resulting in debris being blown into Mr Bush's property. Hence Mr Bush raised his concerns again and is now requesting that the remaining trees be removed.
7. The four willow trees are approximately 18 metres in height and are situated close to the fence line. They are healthy trees and not yet fully mature, providing some screening and shading to the park and neighbouring residents.
8. The trees have been maintained as part of the ongoing tree maintenance programme, as well as responding to requests for pruning, together with other trees in the reserve. However, given the concerns about the nature of the willow trees, i.e. their propensity for failure, a degree of risk is present due to this, and their proximity to the property.
9. The proposal to remove the trees is therefore a question of assessing the specific concerns of the affected resident and the contribution the trees make to the amenity of the reserve. As part of the request, the resident has offered to donate trees to replant.
10. A planting plan was submitted and has been assessed as appropriate and is an improvement to the present planting. There is also some other vegetation which will be considered for removal to improve the amenity of the reserve, namely some elder bushes, an unidentified conifer and the remainder of a privet hedge.
11. Consultation was undertaken by way of letter and a copy of the planting plan with a feedback form to the residents of Garlands Road, Opawa Road and several local interest groups.
12. The results were:
 - 32 letters sent out for feedback
 - 13 submissions received
 -

- Part of the back fence needs repairs/replacement
 - Concern regarding the density of the proposed planting.
14. Some of the plant species have been changed or added to reflect the feedback received.
 15. The option to do nothing and leave the trees was considered by staff, however, this is an opportunity to remove and replace some trees which are potentially an ongoing nuisance and threat to the neighbouring resident, as well as a maintenance issue to the City. The trees are healthy and not yet mature but are likely to continue to be problematic and potentially a risk in the longer term.
 16. Staff believe the option of removal is the best solution in order to eliminate any risk and recreate the amenity of the reserve with planting. This view is substantially supported by the community feedback received.
 17. Should approval be granted for the removal of the four willows, it is proposed that the tree removal and replanting preparation are carried out during the winter of 2005 with the planting being completed before spring 2005.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

18. Funding for the removal of the trees, ground preparation, and mulching of the site will be met by the 2005/06 operational budget for the Greenspace Unit. Replanting is being arranged by Trees for Canterbury at no cost to the Council.
19. The trees are not listed as protected under the City Plan.
20. All work will be carried out by a Council approved contractor.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Board agree to removal of the four willow trees on the northern boundary of Garlands Reserve, with the replacement planting of natives donated by Trees for Canterbury.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the officer's recommendation be supported.