

RICCARTON/WIGRAM COMMUNITY BOARD

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

MONDAY 20 APRIL 2009

AT 8.00AM

AT SOCKBURN SERVICE CENTRE

**IN THE BOARDROOM,
149 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, CHRISTCHURCH**

Community Board: Beth Dunn (Chairperson), Helen Broughton, Jimmy Chen, Judy Kirk,
Peter Laloli, Mike Mora and Bob Shearing.

Community Board Adviser

Liz Beaven

Telephone: 941-6501

Email: liz.beaven@ccc.govt.nz

PART A - MATTERS REQUIRING A COUNCIL DECISION

PART B - REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

PART C - DELEGATED DECISIONS

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1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DEPUTATIONS BY APPOINTMENT**
3. **CORRESPONDENCE**
4. **BRIEFINGS**

5. EUCALYPTUS (GUM) TREE REMOVAL OUTSIDE 154 BUCHANANS ROAD

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment, DDI 941 8608
Officer responsible:	Transport and Greenspace Manager
Author:	Jonathan Hansen, Arborist and Tara Smith, Consultation Leader Greenspace

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's recommendation to the Board on the removal and replacement of a Eucalyptus (Gum) tree from outside 154 Buchanans Road in Hei Hei. (**Attachments 1 and 2**).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Council has received ongoing feedback regarding the future of this tree. The tree is large in size and contributes to the landscape of Buchanans Road.
3. The tree is now 29 years old and fairly typical for this species. The tree has experienced a fast growth rate and it can be expected to almost double in size over the next 30 to 40 years.
4. An arboricultural assessment was carried out to evaluate the health, condition, value and hazard rating of the tree.
5. In summary there are currently no major health and safety concerns associated with this tree which would warrant the Council to initiate its removal; however it has been noted that the tree has dropped medium sized branches in the past. This has been identified by the presence of wounds in the upper canopy of the tree.
6. The dropping of various sized branches from Eucalyptus trees is not an uncommon phenomenon as it is especially prevalent during the dryer summer months and is known as sudden limb drop. This phenomenon is often associated during or following hot, calm summer afternoons and is sometimes associated with calm weather following on from a period of heavy rain in times of already dry soils. A tree that has already lost one branch is more likely to experience sudden limb drop when compared to a nearby tree of the same species which has never experienced this phenomenon. It is difficult to predict when sudden limb drop will occur and often the best management practice is to minimise the possible damage that this may create.
7. The Council does anticipate that there will be a number of management issues with the tree in regards to:
 - (a) the mature size of the tree in relation to the close proximity of the property at number 154 Buchanan's Road;
 - (b) the potential for branch failures to occur in the future; and
 - (c) the impending maintenance the tree will require.
8. One of the possible future options for Buchanans Road is the provision of separate cycle lanes in this wide berm area. This could either include widening the existing footpath, but the footpath may be included in the new cycleway, or a new alignment between the existing footpath and the road edge. Therefore placement of any new or replacement planting along this section of Buchanans Road would be best placed midway of the large berms. This option is likely to be safer as there will be less shading of the road carriageway as the road runs in a generally east west direction and provides more separation to protect the trees and vehicles.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9. The cost to remove and replace the tree with a PB95 grade tree is estimated at \$1,966.07.
10. The valuation for the tree using STEM is \$14,700.

5 Cont'd.

11. STEM (A Standard Tree Evaluation Method) is the New Zealand national arboricultural industry standard for evaluation and valuing amenity trees by assessing their condition and contribution to amenity along with other distinguishable attributes such as stature, historic or scientific significance. STEM is used as a valuation tool by other Councils such as Auckland, Tauranga, Lower Hutt and Wellington.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

12. Yes the recommendations align with the current LTCCP budgets. If the Community Board decide to have the tree removed and replanted funding would come from:
 - (a) General Tree Maintenance budget - Tree Removal.
 - (b) Street Tree Capital Replacement budget - Tree Replacement.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

13. The Transport and Greenspace Manager has the following delegation with respect to trees:

“In consultation with any other units affected and the relevant Community Board, authorise the planting or removal of trees from any reserve or other property under the Manager’s control”.
14. While the Transport and Greenspace Manager has the delegation to remove the Gum tree current practice is that in most cases requests to remove healthy and structurally sound trees are placed before the appropriate Community Board for a decision.
15. Under the delegations to Community Boards, the Board has the authority to “plant, maintain and remove trees on reserves, parks and roads” under the control of the Council within the policy set by the Council.
16. Protected street trees can only be removed by a successful application under the Resource Management Act. This tree is not listed as protected under the provision of the Christchurch City Plan.
17. Council has a responsibility under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 to provide a healthy and safe environment. This extends to public spaces under its administration and ownership.
18. City Plan Volume 2 Section 14.3.2 Policy: “Garden City” Image Identity states:

“To acknowledge and promote the “Garden City” identity of the City by protecting, maintaining and extending planting which compliments this image”.
19. The District Court can order the pruning or removal of a tree under the Property Law Amendment Act 1975.
20. Any work carried out in relation to this Gum tree to be completed by a Council approved contractor.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

21. Yes, as per above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

22. LTCCP 2006-16, Streets and Transport – page 151
 - (a) City Development – By providing a well-designed, efficient transport system and attractive street landscapes

5 Cont'd.

23. Funding is available in the Transport and Greenspace Unit Street Tree Capital Renewals budget for the removal and replacement of trees which are no longer appropriate species or no longer appropriate in their current position.
24. Retention of the tree is consistent with the Activity Management Plan provided the tree is structurally sound and healthy.
25. Removal and replacement of the tree is consistent with the Activity Management Plan.
26. Removing and not replacing the tree is not consistent with the Activity Management Plan.

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

27. Yes, as per above.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

28. Social Wellbeing Policy - Engage citizens and communities in decision making and policy implementation. Increase and maintain living standards sufficient to ensure everyone can participate in the life of the community and live lives they find fulfilling.
29. Removing and replacing the tree would be consistent with the Living Streets Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy.
30. Removing and replacing the tree would be consistent with the Christchurch Urban Design Vision.
31. Removing and replacing the tree would be in keeping with the Garden City Image as per the City Plan.
32. Removing and not replacing the tree would not be in keeping with the Garden City Image as per the City Plan Volume 2 Section 14.3.2.
33. There is currently no policy for the pruning or removing of trees in public places. A Draft Tree Policy is being worked on.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

34. Yes, as per above.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

35. The consultation on the potential removal of this tree was carried out in February 2009. A letter and a questionnaire were sent to 25 residents surrounding the area of the Gum tree. **(Attachment 3).**
36. Submitters were asked whether they support or do not support the removal of the Gum tree.
37. Thirteen submissions were received. Nine (69%) supported the removal of the Gum tree, four (31%) did not support the removal of the Gum tree. **(Attachment 4).**
38. In summary those who supported the removal of the tree were most concerned with sudden limb drop and the potential this has to injure members of the public. Those who did not support the tree removal liked the aesthetic value of the tree, although one resident noted that if the tree was dangerous they would support its removal.
39. Those who responded to the questionnaire were also advised of the decision making process and how they could be involved. **(Attachment 5).**

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5 Cont'd.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee recommend to the Board to remove the Eucalyptus (Gum) tree and replace it with a suitable PB95 grade tree and plant it in the centre of the berm in front of 153 Buchanans Road.

**Clause 5 - Attachment 1:
Images of Eucalyptus (Gum) Tree**



Image 1.1. This photograph illustrates the Gum tree at number 154 Buchanans Road, in context to surrounding vegetation and property.



Image 1.2. This photograph illustrates the Gum tree in relation to its location within the Council owned grass berm area.

Clause 5 - Attachment 2:
CCC webmap image



Image 2.1. This illustrates the Gum Tree at 154 Buchanans Road in the Council's webmap programme 2007.

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**Clause 5 - Attachment 3:
Letter and Questionnaire**

3 February 2009

To the occupier

CHRISTCHURCH

Dear Sir/Madam

Buchanans Road – Overgrown Eucalyptus (Gum) Tree

The Christchurch City Council has received correspondence raising issues regarding the overgrown Eucalyptus tree located outside 154 Buchanans Road. The tree is now 29 years old and fairly typical for this species. The tree has experienced a fast growth rate and we can expect it to almost double in size over the next 30 to 40 years.

There are currently no major health and safety concerns associated with this tree which would warrant the Council to initiate its removal; however it has been noted that the tree has dropped medium sized branches in the past. This has been identified by the presence of wounds in the upper canopy of the tree.

The dropping of various sized branches from Eucalyptus trees is not uncommon it is normally during the dryer summer months this can occur and is known as sudden limb drop. This is often associated during or following hot, calm summer afternoons and is sometimes associated with calm weather following on from a period of heavy rain in times of already dry soils. A tree that has already lost one branch is more likely to experience sudden limb drop when compared to a nearby tree of the same species which has never experienced this. It is difficult to predict when sudden limb drop will occur and often the best management practice is to minimise the possible damage that this may create.

The Council does anticipate that there will be a number of management issues with the tree in regards to:

- The mature size of the tree in relation to the close proximity of the property at number 154 Buchannan's Road.
- The potential for branch failures to occur in the future.
- And the impending maintenance the tree will require.

Part of the reporting process is to gain feedback from local residents on the proposal of the possible removal of this gum tree. This feedback is valuable to us in ascertaining the feeling of the local community prior to any decision being made.

If the majority of the residents support the removal of the tree, this information will make up part of the report to be presented to the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board, who have delegated authority to make the final decision. The above tree assessment will make up the other part of the report.

Your feedback is very important to us so I would appreciate it if you could indicate your preferred option on the attached questionnaire and return it in the prepaid envelope by **Monday 23rd February 2009**.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this proposal, please feel free to contact me at the Sockburn Service Centre, phone 941 6510.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the questionnaire.

Yours sincerely



Tara Smith
Consultation Leader – Greenspace

REPLY FORM PROPOSED REMOVAL OF EUCALYPTUS TREE OUTSIDE 154 BUCHANANS ROAD



I/we support the removal of the gum tree

I/we do not support the removal of the gum tree

Additional comments

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK
Please return by Monday 23 February 2009 to Tara Smith, Consultation Leader, Sockburn Service Centre, PO Box 11 011, Sockburn, Christchurch

Privacy Act: The Capital Development Unit of the Christchurch City Council wishes to collect the personal information requested above for the purposes of communicating with you in regard to the development of open space. Providing this information is not compulsory. The information will be held by the Capital Development Unit and may be shared with other Council Units for the purpose of contacting you on related Council matters. You have the right to access and correct this information.

BUCHANANS ROAD – PROPOSED GUM TREE REMOVAL Consultation Summary

The consultation on this project was carried out in February 2009 and sent to 25 residents around the immediate perimeter of the Gum tree outside 154 Buchanans Road. There was a 52% response rate with thirteen questionnaires returned.

Submitters were asked whether they support or do not support the removal of the Gum tree.

Gum Tree Removal	Number of Responses	Percentage
<i>Yes – I support the removal of the gum tree</i>	9	69 %
<i>No – I do not support the removal of the gum tree</i>	4	31 %

While these figures indicate strong support for the removal of the gum tree, the following issues were also identified:

- That if the tree is removed it be replaced
- Two residents who do not support the tree removal also made comments about its potential danger
- Residents are concerned that school children may be at risk from sudden limb drops from this tree

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**Clause 5 - Attachment 5:
Letter to those who responded to questionnaire**

February 2009

Dear Sir/Madam

Gum Tree Removal Outside 154 Buchanans Road – Hei Hei

Thank you for responding to my questionnaire of 3 February 2009 regarding the removal of the Gum tree outside 154 Buchanans Road.

Results from the consultation were as follows:

- 25 households received the questionnaire
- 13 responded
- 9 were in support of the removal of the tree
- 4 were not in support of the removal of the tree

Both the consultation information and the arboricultural assessment has been included in the report which will be presented to the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board. The Community Board have delegated authority to then make a final decision on whether the tree will be removed or not.

The Riccarton/Wigram Community Board meeting will take place on Tuesday 7th April 2009, 5 pm at the Sockburn Service Centre (upstairs in boardroom), 149 Main South Road. This is a public meeting and you are more than welcome to attend.

Anyone wishing to speak at the meeting in relation to this report should contact the Community Board Advisor, Liz Beaven, on phone 941 6501, no later than Tuesday 31st March 2009 to request speaking rights.

Should you have any further enquiries please feel free to contact me at the Sockburn Service Centre on phone 941 6510.

Yours sincerely



Tara Smith
Consultation Leader – Greenspace

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6. ELECTED MEMBERS' INFORMATION EXCHANGE