

Memorandum

TO:	Lucy Collins, Planner
FROM:	Luke McKinlay, Urban Designer
DATE:	18-September-2018
SUBJECT	Land Use Consent – Scheduled Tree LUC-2018-367 – 27 Falkland Street

Hi Lucy,

This memorandum is in response to a request for comment on the application to remove a scheduled tree, identified as T442 - *Cedrus deodara*, (Himalayan cedar) in Schedule 25.3 of the Dunedin City District Plan. Reasons given in the application for the trees removal include health and safety concerns, property damage and nuisance. The original STEM assessment, a copy of which is attached to this memo, was made in 2001 and the tree scored 150, which is just above the required 147 “pass” total.

The proposal is a discretionary activity pursuant to Rule 15.5.1(i). In assessing a resource consent application, council will have regard to the health and quality of the tree, the reason for the proposed work, any alternatives and the impact of the removal upon the amenity of the locality and values of the tree.

Background

When an assessment of a resource consent application for the removal of a significant tree is required, an updated STEM assessment is usually completed by the in-house landscape architect and by a consultant arborist.

There are two broad assessment categories to a STEM report – condition (health) and amenity (community benefit). My role in the assessment of applications to remove a scheduled tree or group of trees is to comment on the amenity related matters.

In the case of this application, Mark Roberts was engaged by council to provide an expert arborists condition assessment. He has provided a thorough set of comments and, while critical of certain aspects of the application, supports the proposed removal of the tree.

I visited the site on 13 July 2018.

General Comment

It is my opinion that while T442 retains certain amenity values which contribute positively to Falkland Street, these values must be weighed against the potential adverse effects of the tree on property and health and safety matters.

The tree appears to be contributing to the failure of the adjacent retaining wall. It is the professional opinion of the applicant's engineer that the wall will eventually fall onto the footpath. While it is agreed with Mr Roberts that the removal of the tree is not the “only option”, as recommended by the engineer, it is likely the most reasonable option, if accompanied by replacement planting of smaller tree species, set back further from the front boundary.

STEM Assessment

The amenity component of the STEM assessment considers five factors; stature, visibility, proximity, role and climate. My comments below relate to these factors.

The stature of T442, was estimated at between 9-14m at the time of the 2001 assessment. The tree has increased in height since this time and is now approximately 20m tall, which results in an increase in the stature evaluation of 6 points. At its current height, T442 forms a prominent local feature, particularly given its location near the front boundary of this site.

The remaining existing STEM ratings appear valid. Site inspection revealed that while predominant views of the tree are largely contained within a 500m radius, the tree is likely to be visible from 1km. Further, while in the proximity of smaller shrub species, the tree is clearly a solitary specimen and, for this reason, its removal will be highly noticeable.

The stature and largely symmetrical canopy of T442 make it a prominent feature of Falkland Street. It provides 'natural' impact and contrast with built development in this residential suburb. It also provides vertical habitat and shelter for birds and other wildlife.

Concluding Comments

While I do not agree with the applicant's contention that the tree is *not in-keeping with the surroundings*, it is agreed that the removal of the tree is acceptable given its apparent contribution to the failure of the adjacent retaining wall if replacement planting is undertaken.

While the removal of T442 will result in a highly noticeable change to the streetscape, given its prominent location and vertical form, it is acknowledged that the wider streetscape contains several mature trees, including street trees, which will continue to contribute to the amenity and quality of the surrounding environment. It is agreed with Mr Roberts that replacement planting of at least two smaller trees on this site, further back from the front boundary, will also go some way to maintaining wider streetscape amenity values. His suggested replacement tree species - Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) or strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) are considered appropriate for this neighbourhood, but the applicant need not be restricted to these.

Regards,

Luke McKinlay

CITY PLANNING

STEM EVALUATION FORM

T442

Date	13.03.2001					
Tree	Cedrus deodara					
Address	27 Falkland St					
Height (m)	Radius		Diameter (mm) @ 1.2m			
CONDITION EVALUATION						
Points	3	9	15	21	27	Score
Form	Poor	Moderate	Good	Very Good	Specimen	21
Occurrence	Predominant	Common	Infrequent	Rare	Very Rare	15
Vigour & Vitality	Poor	Some	Good	Very Good	Excellent	15
Function	Minor	Useful	Important	Significant	Major	21
Age (Yr)	10 Yrs+	20 Yrs +	40 Yrs +	80 Yrs +	100 Yrs+	15
Subtotal						87
AMENITY EVALUATION						
Points	3	9	15	21	27	
Stature (m)	3-8	9-14	15-20	21-26	27+	9
Visibility (km)	0.5	1.0	2.0	4.0	8.0	9
Proximity	Forest	Parkland	Group 10+	Group 3+	Solitary	27
Role	Minor	Moderate	Important	Significant	Major	15
Climate	Minor	Moderate	Important	Significant	Major	3
Subtotal						63
NOTABLE EVALUATION						
Recognition	Local	District	Regional	National	International	Score
Points	3	9	15	21	27	
Stature						
Feature						
Form						
Historic						
Age 100+						
Association						
Commemoration						
Remnant						
Relict						
Scientific						
Source						
Rarity						
Endangered						
Subtotal						
Total						150

STEM EVALUATION FORM

T442

Date	13.07.2018					
Tree	Cedrus deodara					
Address	27 Falkland St					
Height (m)	Radius		Diameter (mm) @ 1.2m			
CONDITION EVALUATION						
Points	3	9	15	21	27	Score
Form	Poor	Moderate	Good	Very Good	Specimen	21
Occurrence	Predominant	Common	Infrequent	Rare	Very Rare	15
Vigour & Vitality	Poor	Some	Good	Very Good	Excellent	15
Function	Minor	Useful	Important	Significant	Major	21
Age (Yr)	10 Yrs+	20 Yrs +	40 Yrs +	80 Yrs +	100 Yrs+	15
Subtotal						87
AMENITY EVALUATION						
Points	3	9	15	21	27	
Stature (m)	3-8	9-14	15-20	21-26	27+	15
Visibility (km)	0.5	1.0	2.0	4.0	8.0	9
Proximity	Forest	Parkland	Group 10+	Group 3+	Solitary	27
Role	Minor	Moderate	Important	Significant	Major	15
Climate	Minor	Moderate	Important	Significant	Major	3
Subtotal						69
NOTABLE EVALUATION						
Recognition	Local	District	Regional	National	International	Score
Points	3	9	15	21	27	
Stature						
Feature						
Form						
Historic						
Age 100+						
Association						
Commemoration						
Remnant						
Relict						
Scientific						
Source						
Rarity						
Endangered						
Subtotal						
Total						156

Attachment 3. Site Photograph.



Figure 1. View of T442 from near 27 Falkland Street.