

APPENDIX 3:
MARK ROBERTS CONSULTING REPORT

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ROBERTS
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November 20, 2020

RE: Application to remove scheduled trees T608 and T609 (LUC-2020-341)

Lily Burrows
City Planning
Dunedin City Council
PO Box 5045
Dunedin 9058

Dear Lily,

In response to your November 9, email request to provide comment on whether or not I consider the two scheduled trees at number 516 Highgate, Dunedin, (DCC Scheduled tree numbers T608 and T609) to be in a terminal state of decline, and if any remedial works could address this. I have also been asked to provide comment on whether or not I think the trees will still be good examples of a spreading elm and English beech (and presumably remain worth of inclusion on the scheduled tree list in their current state).

I have assessed the trees at 516 Highgate several times over the past few years, most recently on September 2 and January 23 of this year. I have copies of the Treescape June 2017 report undertaken by Elene O'Neill (which references assessments undertaken in May and February of 2017). The trees can be viewed on Google Maps (Street View) with the trees visible in January 2008, December 2012, August 2017, September 2018 and September 2020. There are also images of the trees on the initial 2001 DCC Standard Tree Evaluation Form used to list the trees on what is now the 2GP Schedule of trees (Appendix A1.3).

Collectively there are over 19 years of documentation on these trees which I have called upon to provide this comment.

Question One; Is the elm T608 and the English beech T609 in a terminal state of decline?

Yes.

Based on the photographic evidence noted above, the trees appear to have entered a state of decline in or about 2009 and if these trees were left to their own devices (if no intervention occurred) then the decline of both of these trees will be terminal.

Question two; Could remedial works could address the decline of the elm T608 and the English beech T609?

Possibly.

I believe that it might be possible to halt or reverse the decline of these trees. For this to happen, the required works would be substantial (reconfiguring the landscaping to create and improve drainage, improving soil structure and the addition of soil amendments). Even with the works, it is possible that the trees may not fully recover, and/or if they did it is possible that residual form of these trees may not be acceptable in terms of aesthetics or risk.

Any actions undertaken by the tree owner or recommendations given by an arborist would need to be given on that understanding the trees may not recover.

Question three; are these trees good examples of a spreading elm and English beech?

As of November 2020;

- o the spreading elm (T608) has poor form, it has reduced vigour and limited vitality. Based on the current condition of this tree, I do not believe that it would meet the criteria for inclusion on the DCC 2GP Schedule of trees (Appendix A1.3) and based on the current rate of decline I believe that it is unlikely that this tree will be able to meet the criteria for inclusion at a future date.
- o The English beech has an acceptable form, but it has reduced vigour and limited vitality. Based on the current condition of this tree, I believe that it is unlikely to meet the criteria for inclusion on the DCC 2GP Schedule of trees (Appendix A1.3) and based on the current rate of decline I do not believe that it would be able to meet the criteria for inclusion at a future date.

As per your request, I have provided a relatively concise report. If you require an explanation of any of the recommendations provided, or documentary evidence to support any of the content in this report please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MR', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Roberts
Roberts Consulting Ltd