

Memorandum

TO: Laura Mulder – Planner, Resource Consents
FROM: Mark Roberts – Arborist, Roberts Consulting Ltd
DATE: May 4, 2026
SUBJECT: LUC-2026-113. 4 Cemetery Road East Taieri (East Taieri Presbyterian Church)

Dear Laura,

As per your request of April 21, please find my arboricultural comments for application LUC-2026-113. The application is for the removal of three (3) scheduled trees.

Tree(s) in consideration

LUC-2026-113 relates to three scheduled trees. The three trees are described in Appendix A1.3 of the DCC 2nd Generation District Plan as T052, *Quercus robur*, Oak; T053, *Quercus robur*, Oak; and T054, *Quercus robur*, Oak, at 4 Cemetery Road, East Taieri.

Summary of the proposal

The application is to remove three significant oak trees that were damaged in the storm in October 2025 and are now deemed dangerous.

There is an arborist report attached to the application written by Paul Velte (D M Holdings Ltd). Mr Velte has undertaken an assessment and considers that full removal of all three trees represents the most appropriate and responsible course of action.

Mr Velte describes the trees as Tree 1 – English Oak (Western-most tree), Tree 2 – English Oak (Central tree), and Tree 3 – English Oak (Southern-most tree). He does not assign scheduled tree numbers to the trees in his report.

I undertook a site visit on Wednesday, April 29, and met with the applicant, Leeanne McKinlay. I was shown three trees, all of which were to the north of the church, and all exhibited storm damage. Those trees were scheduled tree T053, scheduled tree T054, and a third oak tree to the west of T054 that does not appear to be a scheduled tree (image one). I assessed the condition of those three trees on the afternoon of April 29.

The photos and descriptions of damage to each of the three trees in Mr Velte's report match the three trees to the north of the church [his report aligns with the trees that I was shown and then condition assessed]. Unfortunately, Mr Velte's southern-most tree, described as tree 3, is the western-most tree of the three trees. He describes that tree as tree 1.

To complicate matters, T052 is also an oak tree, and it was also damaged in the October 2025 storms. T052 is on the south side of the church buildings and could also be considered to be the southern-most tree (Mr Velte's tree 3). The damage to this tree is very minor, and the removal of this tree was not specifically raised on the afternoon of April 29.

Site Inspection

A site visit was undertaken on the afternoon of April 29, 2026. I met with Leeanne McKinlay (the applicant) and was directed to look at three oak trees in a field below the church. Mrs McKinlay was aware that there were other scheduled trees on the property, and these were discussed in passing.

I assessed the condition of the three oak trees in the field to the north of the church.

- The canopies of the three trees touch, the row extends for about 50m and runs basically from the south-west to the north-east.
- Each of the three trees had suffered significant storm damage. The damage wasn't fresh.
- Due to the distance from the church and the occupancy of the field, it is unlikely that trees could pose a risk to parishioners and/or property. But the current state of the trees prevents safe use and full access to the land under them.

General observations of the three trees in the field to the north of the church (image two)

- The western-most tree is a free-standing specimen and there is no indication that it is, or has ever been, a scheduled tree. Although the tree has sustained storm damage, I do not believe that the Council has authority over this tree as it falls outside the scheduling regime.
- The middle tree (T054) had some broken and damaged limbs. It had a phototrophic lean towards the north and bark inclusions on both sides of the trunk from about 2.5m down to ground level (image three). This tree is not in terminal decline.
- The eastern-most tree (T053) had considerable damage and had possibly lost 40 to 50% of its upper canopy (image four). This tree is not in terminal decline.
- Tree T052 is to the south of the church buildings. This tree does not form part of the row and is not in the field to the north of the church. T052 suffered minor damage in the storm(s) and did not appear to require any remedial work. This tree is not in terminal decline.

Summary of effects on the tree(s)

The application is to remove three trees: T052, T053, and T054.

- The removal of scheduled trees T053 and T054 would be terminal (they would no longer be there). Neither tree is in terminal decline, nor do they present an imminent or elevated risk to persons or property. However, the remedial works necessary to address existing storm damage and restore safe usability of the area beneath the canopy are unlikely to produce long-term structurally stable trees — particularly in the event that the westernmost specimen is removed. The extent of this work would reduce the trees' overall value to a point where they would no longer meet the criteria for inclusion on the DCC's scheduled tree list.
- The removal of scheduled tree T052 would be terminal (it would no longer be there). This tree is not in terminal decline; it did not pose an imminent or elevated risk to people and/or property, nor did it appear to require any remedial work.

Recommendations

I recommend partial support of the application LUC-2026-113.

Considering the current condition of scheduled trees T053 and T054, and the extent of work that would be needed to make the land beneath them safe to use, I agree with the applicant's arborist that removing both trees is the most appropriate course of action.

- I recommend the removal of scheduled trees T053 and T054 as they pose a significant risk to personal/public safety [Policy 7.2.1.2]

Based on the condition of scheduled tree T052 and the works required to enable safe use of the land under it, I cannot recommend the removal of this tree.

- I do not recommend the removal of scheduled tree T052
- If maintenance is required on scheduled trees T052 to remove any broken or caught-up branches, those branches can be removed (but no further pruning works shall take place without the granting of a resource consent).

Advice Notes

The applicant's arborist has suggested that new trees be planted to make up for the loss of canopy and to preserve the character and amenity of the area over time.

- I recommend that the applicant be encouraged to plant a row of three to five English Oaks (*Quercus robur*) in the field to the north of the church. This would help replace and restore the visual and environmental value lost as a result of any tree removal in that field.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Roberts

Arborist
Roberts Consulting Ltd



Image one: Image showing the location of the 2GP Scheduled trees at 4 Cemetery Road East Taieri as seen on the DCC Dunedin Maps ArcGIS page (May 4, 2026). The three trees discussed in the consent application LUC-2026-113 can be seen in the top of the image. T052 is at the bottom of the image – completely separated from T053 and T054.



Image two: Photo of the three storm damaged oak trees in field to the north of the (the western-most tree is tree 1)



Image three: Photo of T054 (the centre tree) shown the bark inclusion and the lean towards the north



Image four: Photo of T053 (the eastern-most tree) showing the extent of the damage (the lost upper canopy)