
TO:	Jane O'Dea, Planner
FROM:	Luke McKinlay, Landscape Architect
DATE:	22-August-2023
SUBJECT	Land Use Consent – Removal of Scheduled Tree T402 LUC-2023-282 – 2 Montecillo Lane, Dunedin. LA Comment

Hi Jane,

The following is in response to your request for comment on the above application for the removal of the Schedule Tree T402 (Oak – *Quercus robur*) at 2 Montecillo Lane.

The application is supported by any arborist assessment.

I undertook a site visit on Thursday, 13 July to inform the following comments. Site photographs are attached in Appendix 1.

Comments

Background

This tree has had an unfortunate history following the closure of Montecillo War Veterans home. As outlined in the Arborist's report, prepared for the applicant by Samuel Ritchie, the ground level around the western side of T402 was built up sometime after 2013. Subsequently, significant works (construction of a house, driveway, retaining wall) were then undertaken within the dripline of this tree. Significant pruning work has also been undertaken on several occasions since 2013, including the removal of large lower branches. These works appear to have had a cumulative effect on both the health and appearance of the tree.

Current Amenity Values

This oak has a significantly reduced canopy from that shown in the existing STEM assessment and aerial images from 2013. Pruning has progressively reduced the canopy of T402 to the upper most parts of the tree only. As noted in Mr Ritchie's report, lower branches to a height of approximately 12m have been removed. Wind broken stubs also appear to indicate that parts of the canopy have been lost due to wind damage. In terms of the visual amenity of the tree, its top heavy, somewhat lop-sided form has significantly reduced the contribution this tree makes to the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

While visible from some Patrick Street locations due to its height (refer figure 2), it is not particularly prominent from Eglinton Road. Following removal of nearby vegetation over the years, T402 now stands apart from the tree-lined entrance of Monticello Lane, where its much-reduced form is visible from both the approach on Monticello Lane and from Patrick Street. It no longer has a harmonious relationship with this remaining area of trees on the site.

The severely reduced canopy means that this tree now only has a minor influence on the climate of the surrounding area. While viewed in August, when the tree was not in leaf, it appears that even when in leaf this tree would offer little shade or shelter.

Given the poor overall form of this tree, its severely reduced canopy, and its apparent decline in health, it is considered that its removal would have a relatively low impact on the amenity of the surrounding area.

Regards,

Luke McKinlay
Landscape Architect
CITY PLANNING

Appendix 1: Site Photographs



Figure 1: View of T402 from the east on Montecillo Lane.



Figure 2: View of T402 from the west on Patrick Street.