

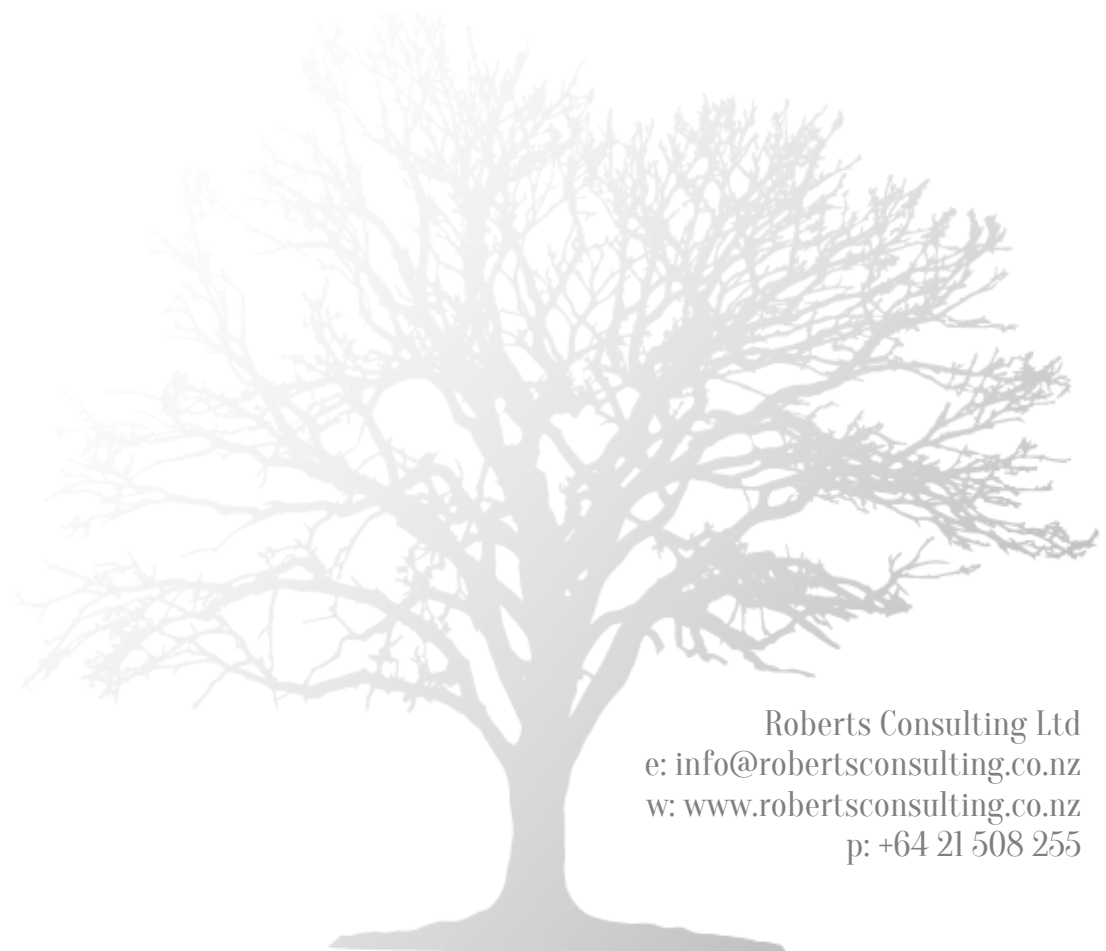
Arboricultural Report

LUC-2024-297 - Request for comment

Prepared for: Madeline Seeley (DCC Consent Planner)

Prepared by: Roberts Consulting Ltd

Date: September 9, 2024



Roberts Consulting Ltd
e: info@robertsconsulting.co.nz
w: www.robertsconsulting.co.nz
p: +64 21 508 255

Author:

My name is Mark Roberts and I am the director of Roberts Consulting Limited. Roberts Consulting Limited is an arboricultural collective that provides independent consultancy on arboriculture and tree-related matters including tree risk and hazard assessment, resource consent applications, tree management and maintenance plans, expert witness, Council hearing and mediation, quality and system auditing, and policy and procedure development.

I am an Accredited Member of the Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists, I hold qualifications in horticulture, arboriculture, science (botany), and tree risk assessment. I am a past president of the New Zealand Arboricultural Association and the International Society of Arboriculture and have over 25 years of professional experience.

While this arboricultural report is not for a Court hearing, I confirm that I have read the Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses, and this report complies with the instructions of that code. I have considered all the material facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

This report covers both arboricultural matters and other matters. With regards to arboricultural matters, these are within my area of expertise, however, any comments regarding non-arboricultural matters are to be read as lay comments.

Scope of Work:

I have been contacted by Madeline Seeley (DCC Consent Planner) and asked to provide arboricultural comment on consent application LUC-2024-297, which is an application to remove the scheduled pohutukawa tree T454.

I have been provided with the background documents and a copy of the application.

Summary

Based on the assessment undertaken and the characteristics of the tree species my conclusions and recommendations include:

- a) The tree is in good health, appeared structurally stable and did not pose an imminent risk to people or property
- b) I did not see any evidence of the tree causing damage to the foundations of the house, but it is likely to cause, be causing, and/or continue to cause superficial damage to paths, non-loadbearing retaining walls and enter the stormwater drainage system
- c) [if and when the time is right] The tree will have to be trimmed back from the sides of the house to accommodate scaffolding
- d) Height reduction pruning is unlikely to be successful as it will likely create future problems and destroy the integrity of the tree.
and
- e) [at some point in the future] The tree is likely to compromise a Category 2 Heritage New Zealand Historic building

September 6, 2024

Madeline Seeley
Planner, Resource Consents
Dunedin City Council
PO Box 5045
Dunedin 9054

RE: Application to remove a scheduled tree at 2 Fifield Street (LUC-2024-297)

Dear Madeline

As per your August 29 email request, I have conducted a site visit to number 2 Fifield Street Dunedin to inspect the significant tree T454. The tree is described in the Council's 2GP District Plan Appendix A1.3 as a Pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*). The purpose of the visit was to assess the condition of the tree, specifically in relation to consent application LUC-2024-297, which is an application to remove the tree.

A site visit was conducted on the afternoon of September 4, 2024. I have previously assessed this tree in conjunction with planning application LUC-2021-63.

1 Condition assessment and observations

- 1.1 In general, at the time of the visit the tree looked to be in good health and exhibited vigour and vitality consistent for a tree of this species and age (image one).
- 1.2 The tree appears to have had some pruning work undertaken on it in the past which looks to have been carried out in accordance with industry-accepted pruning standards. This includes clearance from the powerlines running along the northern side of the street (image one).
- 1.3 The tree had six or seven stems originating from the base (being multi-trunked from that base is not uncommon for the species).
- 1.4 The root plate appeared to be stable, and I saw no indication of any recent movement or soil disturbance.
- 1.5 I saw no obvious issues to suggest that whole or partial tree failure was imminent or likely in the near future
- 1.6 The tree was not dead or in terminal decline.
- 1.7 The tree did not pose an imminent risk to personal/public safety or property

A general comment about pohutukawa

Pohutukawa are typically a coastal colonising species that is well adapted for growth on unstable ground. They can become large spreading trees wider than tall^(a) and tend to develop relatively dense but shallow canopies which are held at the ends of long flexible stems. The foliage including flowers and fruit is comparatively heavy. They are a species that retains large numbers of active adventitious buds. These buds sit under the bark and can become roots or shoots depending on what is required. They have a vigorous root system that tends to exploit easily accessible places^(b).

2 Request for comment

I have been asked to provide comments on the following points

2.1 *If pohutukawa are known for damaging paths, retaining walls, and/or other structures?*

In the urban environment, pohutukawa are not known to be more problematic than other tree species. Their roots will lift and crack footpaths and find their way into pipes; particularly older earthenware or damaged pipes (this does not seem to be a problem with PVC type systems)^(c).

2.2 *If pohutukawa are known for damaging foundations?*

Pohutukawa root problems seem to be mainly associated with superficial damage (damage to footpaths and non-loadbearing retaining walls). Damage is often caused by the mass of smaller adsorbing roots more so than large structural roots. They are not renowned for lifting 'slab' type flooring or pushing houses off pile foundations.

2.3 *What is the typical life expectancy and growth rate?*

In the natural environment, it is probable that they can live for 1000 years or more. In the urban environment, many of the original plantings are still alive so it would be reasonable to expect that they could live for more than 100 years.

Young pohutukawa can grow very quickly (at around 300mm per year in height and 50 to 100mm in diameter). Older trees gain around 100mm in height and 2mm in diameter a year^(d).

For the past five or six years T454 has been consistently producing about 100mm of top-growth each year.

2.4 *What is their typical form how are they likely to fail?*

Typically, trees are multi-stemmed from the base, with long branches that arch over the ground. They are often wider than tall. In the North Island, it is not uncommon to find them over 20m tall and 35m wide^(d).

They tend to be incredibly strong but on occasion, long 'over-extended' branches can fail under their own weight. Where failure occurs it tends to be at the base. Such failures often result in the fallen limb remaining partially attached, new roots and shoots may develop from adventitious buds and the fallen stem can continue to grow^(a).

2.5 *How do they respond to pruning?*

In the natural environment, they produce dense canopies that shade the internal structures of the tree. When a gap appears in the canopy (i.e., through natural branch failure) light can stimulate the adventitious buds and shoots start to grow from the newly exposed stems.

In the urban environment, they often respond vigorously to a heavy pruning and can produce a mass of new growth along exposed stems. As a rule of thumb, they should only be pruned lightly, or they need to be pruned frequently to control and manage the regrowth.

2.6 *What are the roots likely to do (will they keep spreading and if so in what direction)?*

All tree roots are opportunistic, growing and spreading in response to where the available water and nutrients are. Root diameter tends to rapidly drop away once the roots extend beyond two to three times the trunk diameter (the zone of rapid taper)^(e). Beyond that zone, the majority of roots tend to become fibrous and shallow.

At number 2 Fifield Street there is exposed and available soil to the south and east. To the north, the available soil is under the house which would be relatively dry with low levels of organic matter. To the west, there is the footpath and road, both of which are built on a compacted basecourse and have low permeability for water and air. On the balance of probability I would expect the majority of the roots to grow towards the south and east.

Almost directly under the base of the tree is a capped pipe. There is a reference to this pipe in the applicant's arborist report (that it indicates the presence of an old underground diesel tank). The tree does not appear to be affected by the presence of the tank.

Between the base of the tree and house is an exposed point where the stormwater down-pipe connects with the drainage system. The drain at that point is earthenware piped and there were a number of surface roots in close proximity to these pipes (image two). It is probable that roots from the tree have or will enter the stormwater drainage system at or near this point.

2.7 *Where or will there be an ongoing/future conflict between the tree and house?*

There are a number of likely possibilities;

- a) The tree is very close to the sides of the house and unless maintained clear, it will make contact with and rub against the outside of the house. If left unchecked, damage is likely to occur.
 - b) If it hasn't done so already, roots from the tree are likely to enter the stormwater drainage system.
 - c) Tree roots are likely to continue to cause damage to the paths and low retaining walls.
 - d) I do not believe that the tree roots currently are, or will compromise the foundations of the house
 - e) Natural growth of the tree is inhibited to the north (due to the house) and to the west (due to the powerlines) therefore the mass of the tree will develop towards the south and east. Being exposed from the west (due to the requirements of powerline clearance) the tree is likely to fail where the majority of the weight will be; towards the east. It is possible that stem failure in this direction may impact part of the house.
 - f) It is possible, but less likely [and its presence will need to be confirmed] that the eventual mass of the tree may compromise the old diesel tank to the point where the tree may drop into the void and become unstable, or cause the contents inside the tank to be released into the environment.
-

3 Comments on the reports provide

- 3.1 *That the tree is causing damage to the houses' foundations/exerting pressure on the foundation walls, potentially compromising the structural integrity of the building.*

I did not see any evidence of this occurring. This is not something that I would expect from a tree of this type, size, and distance from the house/building.

- 3.2 *That the tree is blocking access for scaffolding to be erected.*

The minimum width requirement for scaffolding is 1.125m (based on a bay width of at least 675 mm and a minimum 450 mm of clear access) plus the distance from the structure itself will create a working area of around 1.4m⁽¹⁾.

To be able to erect scaffolding along that section of the house, the tree will have to be trimmed back to accommodate it. Some of that trimming will require the removal of large limbs.

- 3.3 *That the tree's root system has severed arterial roots and exposed roots on both sides.*

The tree was not showing any signs or symptoms associated with root damage. The number of cut and/or exposed roots is not something that I considered as problematic - an arterial root is not a biological term that I am familiar with so I am not sure how to comment on this statement.

- 3.4 *That height reduction pruning is unlikely to be successful as the tree has matured past a height that could be successfully pruned to the second-floor windows and retain sufficient canopy to ensure the tree's health.*

I disagree with this statement to a point.

The tree could easily be cut back to below the height of the second floor window and the tree is healthy enough to recover. But in doing this, the tree would lose its integrity and no longer have sufficient size and/or stature to be retained as a scheduled tree. The resulting regrowth would most likely be vigorous and grow to form a dense wall of vegetation creating a long-term problem.

In my opinion, height reduction pruning is unlikely to be successful because it will create future problems and destroy the integrity of the tree.

4 I also note that:

- 4.1 Council's records show a STEM (Standard Tree Evaluation Form) assessment of T454 was conducted in April (2001) and the tree scored a total of 144 points. However, the tree was re-evaluated in December of (2001) tree scored 150 points. I wonder if the difference could be attributed to the tree not being in flower in April.
- 4.2 The house (named Mahara) has a Heritage New Zealand Historic Place Category 2 classification. The extent of the Heritage NZ listing includes the entire external building envelope.

The house was built in the Queen Anne revival style tree appears to have been planted sometime after the house was built. It is unlikely that a Pohutukawa was part of the original landscape planting plan.

5 Conclusion and recommendations

- 5.1 The tree is not dead or in terminal decline, or did it pose an imminent risk to personal/public safety or property.
- 5.2 Pohutukawa are commonly associated with superficial damage (damage to footpaths, old pipes, and non-loadbearing retaining walls), but they are not normally known for lifting 'slab' type flooring or pushing houses off pile foundations.
- 5.3 The tree has slowed its growth and is only growing about 100mm in height each year.
- 5.4 Pohutukawa will often respond vigorously to heavy pruning and can produce a mass of new growth along exposed stems.
- 5.5 I would expect the majority of the roots to grow away from the house, but it is probable that roots from the tree have, or will get into the stormwater drainage system.
- 5.6 I did not see any evidence of the tree causing damage to the houses' foundations
- 5.7 The tree will have to be trimmed back from the sides of the house to accommodate scaffolding.
- 5.8 Height reduction pruning is unlikely to be successful because it will create future problems and destroy the integrity of the tree.
- 5.9 The tree is likely to compromise a Category 2 Heritage New Zealand Historic Place at some stage, and the tree is unlikely to have been part of the original planting.

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



Mark Roberts
Roberts Consulting Ltd



Image one: Image showing the Pohutukawa T454 form Fifield Street looking into number 2 Fifield Street. The powerlines and powerline-clearance pruning can be seen (regrowth from adventitious buds along the exposed stems can also be seen).



Image two: Image showing the top of the stormwater pipe where the down-pipe (not visible) connects with the stormwater drainage system. Surface roots can be seen running towards this junction.

Information and references

- a) <https://projectcrimson.org.nz/about-the-trees/growing-and-transplanting/>
- b) Simpson P. (1994) Biodiversity and Pohutukawa. Conservation Advisory Science Notes 100. Department of Conservation.
- c) Wellington City Council (various)
- d) Bergin D, Hosking E, (2006). Pohutukawa Ecology, Establishment, Growth and Management, (FRI) New Zealand Indigenous Tree Bulletin Series No. 4
- e) Dobson M. (1995) Tree Root Systems. Arboricultural Advisory and Information Services. The Department of the Environment (UK)
- f) Good Practice Guidelines for Scaffolding in New Zealand (WorkSafe, November 2016).

TO:	Madeline Seeley, Planner
FROM:	Luke McKinlay, Landscape Architect
DATE:	19-September-2024
SUBJECT	LUC-2024-297 – 2 FIFIELD STREET- LA comments

Kia ora Maddy,

This memo is in response to your request for comment on the above application to remove a scheduled tree at 2 Fifiel St (T454 – Pohutukawa (Metrosideros excelsa)).

I have undertaken a site visit to the area surrounding the subject tree to determine the likely effect of the proposed removal of T454 on existing visual and streetscape amenity values and to consider the potential effects of pruning. Photographs taken at the time of the site visit are appended to this memo as Attachment 1. Weather conditions during the site visit were slightly overcast, however, there was sufficient visibility to review the STEM assessment.

I note that there are two STEM forms attached to the council record for this tree. One is dated 24/3/2001 and has a total score of 144. A subsequent assessment was undertaken on 12/12/2001, which resulted in a score of 150. This later re-evaluation is above the required 145 threshold for inclusion on the schedule.

The Proposal

The applicant has requested to remove the scheduled tree, T454. The reasons for the proposed removal are as follows:

- The potential for the roots to damage the foundations of the historic dwelling.
- The tree is near the dwelling and requires regular trimming to avoid contact between the tree and the dwelling.
- The dwelling is weatherboard, which requires regular maintenance, and the tree is an obstruction to scaffolding being erected.
- The applicant also states that the removal of the tree will improve the extent of daylight within the dwelling, improve views from the upstairs bedroom, and the visual amenity of the interior spaces.

Site Context

The site is located on the corner of Fifiel and Tweed Streets within a residential area between Highgate and the town belt. The surrounding area of Māori Hill consists largely of private residential sections, however there are schools (Columba College, Kaikorai Primary) and a retirement village (Yvette Williams) with a 250m radius of the site. Most residential sections in this area are occupied by one or two storey stand-alone dwellings, some of which are substantial and located on generously sized sections. A wide range of architectural styles are represented in the neighbourhood. Front boundary treatments are varied, including timber and wrought iron fences and clipped evergreen hedges.

There are no street trees on Tweed or Fifiel Streets, however, there are several mature trees within private properties on these streets, many of which are visible from surrounding public locations.

In addition to the Pohutukawa, there is a scheduled red beech (T453) on the subject site, a group of elm's (G040 & T455) at 12A Fifiel St and a copper beech (T1138) at 28 Tweed St. The dense bush of the town belt also contributes to the "green", well-vegetated character of wider surrounding area.

Potential effects associated with additional pruning.

While the application is for the removal of the tree, the following considers potential effects associated with additional pruning if it is established that on-going maintenance of the tree is reasonable and could avoid risk to the building (Policies 7.2.1.2. b & c). As I understand it, council's consultant arborist has recommended that 1.4m of clearance between the tree and building is required to enable scaffolding to be constructed for maintenance purposes. If this were to occur, parts of the north-western side of the tree's canopy, including some large limbs, would need to be removed. This would reduce the overall canopy size and would further emphasize the asymmetry of the canopy caused by pruning already undertaken to clear nearby powerlines on Fifiel Street.

It is noted that council's consultant arborist has identified the following points regarding pruning this tree:

- *Height reduction pruning is unlikely to be successful as it will likely create future problems and destroy the integrity of the tree, and*
- *In the urban environment, they often respond vigorously to a heavy pruning and can produce a mass of new growth along exposed stems. As a rule of thumb, they should only be pruned lightly, or they need to be pruned frequently to control and manage the regrowth.*

In terms of effects on amenity, pruning to provide 1.4m clearance of the house would likely have some minor-moderate adverse effects on the amenity value of the tree, related to increasing the asymmetry of the canopy. The tree would likely have a more lop-sided appearance following this work. Views of the tree from Fifiel Street would be most adversely affected given that pruning to provide clearance of the house and nearby powerlines would be more prominent from this aspect.

Potential effects associated with tree removal

As a healthy, substantial tree that is relatively prominent from the immediate surrounding area, the removal of T454 would have adverse effects on the amenity of the surrounding area. As a large natural feature, it currently provides a natural counterpoint to the surrounding built environment. Its' removal would reduce the contribution that large mature trees, such as this, make to the balance of natural versus built elements in this neighbourhood.

If it is determined that tree removal is required to maintain the integrity of the scheduled heritage building, then it is noted that the removal of the tree would enable improved views of the primary façade of the building from surrounding public locations. This facade would likely become a primary focal feature of the immediate surrounding streetscape, with positive effects on streetscape values related to the visual amenity of heritage architecture.

It is also noted that other mature vegetation will be retained on the subject site, including a scheduled tree - a red beech (T453).

As such, while the removal of T454 will have adverse effects on streetscape amenity, if removal is necessary, these effects will likely be moderate and will be balanced, to a certain extent, by positive effects related to revealing views of a heritage building.

STEM Assessment

The 2001 council STEM assessment of T454 resulted in a total amenity 'score' of 75.

It is considered that if pruning to maintain 1.4m clearance of the building was undertaken, this may result in a reduction in the "role" criteria score, which was assessed in 2001 as being "significant". The role criteria relates to a tree or trees' value in a setting or as part of a composition. It is considered that, in general, T454 makes a positive contribution to the amenity of the surrounding area. Due to its stature and location near the street front boundary, it is a primary focal feature of the surrounding streetscape. However, its role is also related to its setting within a garden surrounding a heritage dwelling. Once pruned on two sides, T454 will be somewhat lop-sided and it will become more apparent that its potentially broad canopy is compromised by a cramped, corner location, where it is constrained by both powerlines and the dwelling itself. Modification to its "natural" canopy form will limit its contribution to the amenity of the surrounding area. In my assessment, it is likely that the tree would lose some points for this criteria, if it were re-assessed following the recommended extent of pruning. It would likely have an "important" rather than "significant" score for this criteria.

Lastly, it is considered that the visibility assessment may also reduce if the STEM was re-assessed. It is considered that the current assessment (visible at 2km), is at the uppermost extent based on current visibility. I found it difficult to find a location where this tree is currently visible at this distance. The dwelling itself and surrounding dwellings screen most views from the west and north. From CBD locations, views of the tree are typically screened by intervening topography or other structures. With a further reduced canopy, a visibility rating of 1km, at most, seems likely.

The remaining criteria – proximity, climate and stature would likely remain unchanged.

In conclusion, if the STEM assessment was undertaken following the required extent of pruning, it is likely that T454 would lose 6-12 points.

Conclusions

- As a large natural feature, T454 currently has a positive impact on streetscape amenity. It provides a natural counterpoint to the surrounding built environment. Its' removal would reduce the contribution that large mature trees such as this make to the balance of natural versus built elements in this neighbourhood.
- When considering the site-specific context, it is acknowledged that the removal of T454 would enable views of the front façade of a scheduled heritage building from surrounding public locations. This will likely have some positive effects on streetscape amenity related to the amenity contribution of heritage architecture.
- The subject site will retain other mature vegetation, including another scheduled tree on the site, a red beech (T453).
- If pruning to maintain 1.4m clearance of the building was undertaken, it is likely that T454 would lose 6-12 points from its STEM amenity evaluation, if re-assessed.

Kā mihi,

Luke McKinlay
Landscape Architect

Attachment 1: Site Photographs



Figure 1. View towards T454 from south of the site on Tweed St.



Figure 2. View towards T454 from south of the site on Fifield St.



Figure 3. View towards T454 from west of the site on Fifield St.



Figure 3. View towards T454 from southeast of the site on Fifield St.



Figure 1: View towards T454 from Sligo terrace (approximately 365m from the site)

TO: Madeline Seeley

FROM: Mark Mawdsley, Heritage Advisor & Team Leader Advisory Services

DATE: 10 September 2024

SUBJECT: **LUC-2024-297 – 2 FIFIELD STREET**

Dear Madeline,

Please find my comments for application LUC-2024-297 for the removal of the scheduled pōhutukawa a 2 Fifield Steet.

The activity has been considered against the heritage provisions of the partially operative 2GP, it is deemed that the heritage provisions are fully operative. The activity has been assessed as a non-complying activity.

This discussion is limited to aspects of the application that effect, or have the potential to effect, the scheduled heritage building at 2 Fifield Street. Council's consulting arborist is reviewing the application concurrently.

Site Inspection

I am familiar with the property, having met with the owner on-site in April 2023 to discuss another matter.

Heritage Status & Values

The subject building is identified in the 2GP as scheduled heritage building *B099 Residential Building*. Protection is afforded to the '*Entire external building envelope*'. It is not located within a heritage precinct.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT) identifies the subject building as a Category 2 historic place (Mahara, Entry No. 2161). Therefore, HNZPT should be considered an affected party.

The following historic overview has been reproduced from the HNZPT website:

Mahara is one of a pair of elegant timber mansions in Dunedin designed by E.W. Walden in 1905 and built for prominent businessman Andrew Lees' daughters. Of enormous aesthetic appeal, architectural grandeur and historical associations, Mahara makes a significant contribution to our understanding of turn-of-the century residences and Dunedin's elite.

Andrew Lees (1833-1904) arrived in 1859 in Dunedin and 'established one of the most successful firms in New Zealand' specialising in paint, wallpaper and glass. On Andrew's death in 1904, his married daughters Catherine Smith Melville (1869-1953) and Annie Millar Blakely (1865-1918) kept

two sections from his estate bordering Tweed Street. They commissioned noted architect Edward Walter Walden (1870-1944) to design two adjacent residences.

Annie Blakely's residence, like her sister's next door, was designed in the Queen Anne Revival style, distinguishable by its pointed turret. The grand interior showcased stained glass art, designed and created by Robert Fraser (1868-1947). Fraser was 'a highly skilled artist' and one of the first artists in New Zealand to produce painted and fired stained glass windows. The house was complete by October 1905 and named 'Mahara' (meaning to remember or recall). Catherine named her house 'Leebank'.

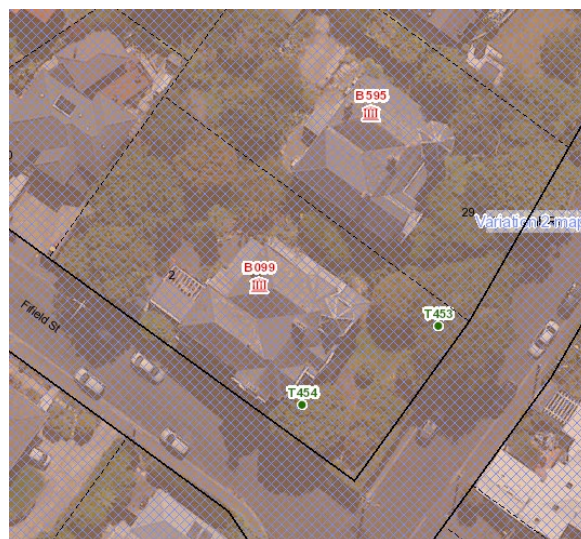
On 13 January 1918 Annie, aged 52, was found dead on the floor of her bedroom. In her will Annie left most of her estate to charity; nothing was left to her husband. Three weeks later, Mahara and all its furniture and furnishings were advertised for sale. Described as a 'Magnificent Residence. Beautifully Situated in Littlebourne, Commanding Lovely View of Harbour and City...Fashionable 9-roomed residence, full quarter-acre Corner Section, Motor Garage, Greenhouse, all Modern Conveniences, Electric Light, Gas...'.

Over the intervening century, Mahara has passed through various hands - yet it remains an elegant and grand mansion. Gracing the Littlebourne hill with its sister house Leebank, they stand as a testament to the Lees' family wealth.

Scheduled Trees on the Subject Site

There are two protected trees on the subject site:

- T453 Red Beech
- T454 Pōhutukawa



DCC 2GP Planning Maps

The Proposal

It is proposed to remove the scheduled pōhutukawa tree. The following reasons are relevant to the long-term retention of the scheduled heritage building:

- The potential for the roots to damage the foundations of the historic dwelling.
- The tree is in close proximity to the dwelling and requires regular trimming to avoid the two being in contact.
- The two-storey dwelling is weatherboard which requires regular maintenance. The tree is an obstruction to scaffolding being erected.

Other aspects stated in the application include improved daylight, improved views, and visual amenity of the interior spaces. I have not considered the merits of these aspects in my comments.

The arborist report provided with the application states that substantial reduction of the size of the tree, specifically to allow views from the second floor, is not possible. I have assumed that reducing the size of the scheduled tree to mitigate the conflict between the tree and the dwelling is not possible; however, this is subject to the advice of Council's arborist.

Commentary

1. The dwelling is a scheduled heritage building (SHB) in the 2GP district plan. **Objective 13.2.1** is that *'scheduled heritage buildings and structures are protected'*.
2. The 2GP policies seek to avoid the demolition of SHB and removal of scheduled trees and it is preferable that both are retained where possible. Removal of a scheduled tree is to be avoided unless it poses a substantial risk to a SHB (**Policy 7.2.1.2.b**) or a moderate to significant risk to a building generally (**Policy 7.2.1.2.c**). Under these policies, removal of the scheduled pōhutukawa can be supported if it can be demonstrated that the tree poses a 'substantial risk to the SHB' or a 'moderate to significant risk to the building'.
3. For the ongoing retention of the SHB, it is important to identify and resolve potential issues that will affect the building fabric at the earliest opportunity. Removal before substantial damage occurs is preferable. It is also important that exterior maintenance of timber construction is carried out in a timely and scheduled manner.
4. Assuming that the tree will continue to grow and remain stable (subject to the advice of Council's arborist), the following issues have the potential to affect the future condition of the historic dwelling:
 - a. The root system may cause gradual damage the foundations of the dwelling. It is assumed that the potential for foundation damage will increase as the root system develops.
 - b. The normal wetting and drying cycle of the external wall (timber construction) will be compromised by reduced sunlight and ventilation caused by the pōhutukawa being in so close to the dwelling. This is likely to result in higher moisture levels that may negatively affect the timber construction over the long term.
 - c. If scaffolding cannot be erected, regular maintenance may be deferred. Degradation of the timber construction may be compounded by reduced sunlight and ventilation to assist with drying as noted above.
 - d. Damage to the painted finish of the external cladding is likely to occur if new growth is not kept clear of the dwelling. Maintaining the paint finish is important to keeping moisture out of the timber construction.
5. If Council's arborist is confident that the issues identified in paragraph four can be satisfactorily resolved, both at present and also for the foreseeable lifespan of both the dwelling and the tree, then there is potential for the scheduled tree and SHB to continue to coexist. If not, then removal of the pōhutukawa will be advantageous in enabling the owner to maintain the SHB in good condition.
6. In addition to the above, consideration around the setting and visibility of the dwelling may also be considered:
 - a. The subject dwelling, and its corresponding neighbour have established garden settings containing mature vegetation. The garden setting of the dwelling would remain, albeit with one less mature tree, if the pōhutukawa was removed. The

- scheduled copper beech, also in the front garden, will be retained and continue to demonstrate the maturity of planting on the subject property.
- b. The SHB protection extends only to the external building envelope. With the exception of subdivision, the setting of the dwelling is not protected by the rules applying to SHB.
 - c. The pōhutukawa partially obscures views of the principal elevation of the dwelling. The visibility of the principal elevation from the public domain is likely to be improved, at least in the short term.
7. In my view, the considerations around setting and visibility are not substantial matters that contribute to resolving the issue of the scheduled tree posing a risk to the SHB.

Summary

8. The application proposes to remove a scheduled pōhutukawa from the property at 2 Fifield Street. The application cites the proximity of the protected tree to the scheduled heritage building (B099) as one of the reasons for removing the tree. The dwelling, known as 'Mahara' is also identified by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga as a Category 2 Historic Place.
9. The scheduled pōhutukawa is approximately three metres from the dwelling and as it continues to grow has the potential to damage the foundations and external cladding of the dwelling. It is also creating difficulties for maintaining the weatherboard cladding and timber detailing. The canopy of the tree is an obstruction to both sunlight and ventilation and will prolong drying out of the external cladding after inclement weather. There is a clear advantage to the SHB in permitting the removal the pōhutukawa.
10. If Council's arborist is confident that these issues can be satisfactorily resolved, both at present and also for the foreseeable lifespan of both the dwelling and the tree, then there is potential for the scheduled tree and SHB to continue to coexist.
11. If not, it will be beneficial to remove the pōhutukawa before foreseeable issues materialise and cause damage to the scheduled heritage building. Removal of the pōhutukawa to avoid this risk will assist in protecting the scheduled heritage building in accordance with **Objective 13.2.1.**

Yours sincerely,



Mark Mawdsley
Heritage Advisor
Team Leader Advisory Services
City Development

Finn Campbell

From: Joe Fitzsimmons
Sent: Wednesday, 25 September 2024 09:37 a.m.
To: Madeline Seeley
Subject: RE: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment

Good morning Maddy,

Apologies for my very late response.

Please see my response below:

1 Inspected the foundations of the dwelling and conclude that the tree root system has not compromised the structural integrity of the dwelling at this time.
2 The erection of a scaffold would be difficult due to the tree canopy being close to the dwelling.
3 Cracking of the small retaining wall and path is minimalistic and may be attributable by the tree root system. These areas are old and some of the cracking may be historic.
4 The tree proximity to the building in future times may make it more difficult to service and maintain the area of the building.
The building owner must monitor the root system to ensure the foundation is not compromised.
Servicing the cladding and leaves entering the spouting and roof area will be difficult due to the height of the dwelling and the tree canopy proximity.

Kind regards

Joe Fitzsimmons

**Team Leader Inspections
Regulatory Services**

P 03 477 4000 | DD 03 474 3712 | M 027 482 7053 | E Joe.Fitzsimmons@dcc.govt.nz

Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Dunedin

PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054

New Zealand

www.dunedin.govt.nz

From: Madeline Seeley <Madeline.Seeley@dcc.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 25 September 2024 9:04 a.m.
To: Joe Fitzsimmons <Joe.Fitzsimmons@dcc.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment

Hi Joe,

Hope all is well. I'm sorry to keep asking, but wondering if you could please write up some comments on this application/our site visit? We are wanting to notify this application and I have comment from the arborist, heritage and the landscape architect now, so hoping to have yours so we can notify. Sorry to add work to your busy schedule. The comments can be brief but hoping you could answer the questions below.

Thank you,
Maddy.

From: Madeline Seeley
Sent: Friday, 6 September 2024 9:56 a.m.
To: Joe Fitzsimmons <Joe.Fitzsimmons@dcc.govt.nz>
Subject: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment

Hi Joe,

Thanks very much for attending the site visit yesterday. Regarding providing me with some comment, I did have some specific questions I wanted you to answer, if ok:

- Did you see any evidence of cracking of the foundation wall as alluded to in the Building Inspector's report attached to the application (dated 23 May 2024)?
- Do you believe that scaffolding can be erected between the house and the tree (safely)?
- What evidence of cracking to retaining walls or pathways were seen/could be attributed to the tree?
- Any other observations regarding the effect of the tree on the structural integrity/ ongoing life of the building/ surrounding structures?

The Building Inspector's report also notes that the tree / canopy has caused significant maintenance and repair issues. The applicant did mention having to replace (cladding I believe and recently painted) that corner of the house due to mould, I'm unsure if this is attributed to the tree (I do note that corner of the house is due south) but interested if you have any comment there.

Thanks again for your help on this.

Kā mihi,
Madeline Seeley
PLANNER/KAIMAHERE
RESOURCE CONSENTS/TOHU WHAKAMAHI RAWA

P 03 477 4000 | **DD** 03 474 3699 | **E** madeline.seeley@dcc.govt.nz
Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Ōtepoti
PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054
New Zealand
www.dunedin.govt.nz

Finn Campbell

From: mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz
Sent: Wednesday, 11 September 2024 10:02 a.m.
To: Luke McKinlay
Cc: Madeline Seeley
Subject: Re: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment

Hi Luke - just a heads up re the pohutukawa (T454) at number 2 Fifield St. Which may come across your desk, if it hasn't already.

I've just responded to Mark Mawdsley's comments and I pointed out, *that if the tree were to be pruned and maintained to to accomodate the building it would would lose STEM points on Form and Function as well as Stature and Visibility - with a drop in those sections, I do not bieleve that the tree would have or maintain the required points for inclusion on the schedule of trees.*

Having said that, I'd not done a STEM condition evaluation on it and I've only seen the score(s) not how the points were attributed. For what its worth, I've just done one now based on how I see it today - if it were cut clear of the house, those points would drop 12 to 51 (down to 3 for Form and 3 for Function).

See you tomorrow - ngā mihi
Mark

STEM calculator

Condition Evaluation						
POINTS	3	9	15	21	27	SCORE
Form	Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Specimen	9
Occurrence	Predominant	Common	Infrequent	Rare	Very rare	15
Vigour & Vitality	Poor	Some	Good	Very good	Excellent	15
Function	Minor	Useful	Important	Significant	Major	9
Age (yr)	10 yrs. +	20 yrs.+	40 yrs. +	80 yrs. +	100 yrs. +	15
sub-total points						63

Mark Roberts | [Phone](#) | [Web](#) | [Blog](#)



On 11/09/2024, at 09:39, mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz wrote:

Hi Mark/Maddy

I am in general agreement with Mark's points 4 a. to 4 d. and noted similar issues in my report. Point 5 is slightly more problematic - ongoing and continuous work could be undertaken on the tree to 'satisfactorily resolve' the issues and the tree could be dimensionally managed thereafter indefinitely... but I don't think that it is reasonable to expect or impose that on the tree owner.

Deciding what is reasonable and what is not, is a can of worms that I'd not want to open. Personally, I would not see it as reasonable to expect or impose that level of ongoing tree management on a tree owner. But... if the tree were cut back and managed below the second floor window and 1.4m from the sides of the house the tree would lose STEM points on Form and Function as well as Stature and Visibility - with a drop in those sections, I do not believe that the tree would have or maintain the required points for inclusion on the schedule of trees.

Kind regards
Mark

Mark Roberts | [Phone](#) | [Web](#) | [Blog](#)

<Screen Shot 2023-10-08 at 15.57.10.png>

Finn Campbell

From: Mark Mawdsley
Sent: Tuesday, 10 September 2024 05:01 p.m.
To: Madeline Seeley; Mark Roberts
Subject: RE: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment
Attachments: 240910_2 Fifield Street_Resource Consent Heritage Memo.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Kia ora Maddy,

Comments attached.

Mark R - See below, I'm happy to defer to your advice if you think it is possible for the tree to be retained alongside the dwelling.

4. Assuming that the tree will continue to grow and remain stable (subject to the advice of Council's arborist), the following issues have the potential to affect the future condition of the historic dwelling:
 - a. The root system may cause gradual damage the foundations of the dwelling. It is assumed that the potential for foundation damage will increase as the root system develops.
 - b. The normal wetting and drying cycle of the external wall (timber construction) will be compromised by reduced sunlight and ventilation caused by the pōhutukawa being in so close to the dwelling. This is likely to result in higher moisture levels that may negatively affect the timber construction over the long term.
 - c. If scaffolding cannot be erected, regular maintenance may be deferred. Degradation of the timber construction may be compounded by reduced sunlight and ventilation to assist with drying as noted above.
 - d. Damage to the painted finish of the external cladding is likely to occur if new growth is not kept clear of the dwelling. Maintaining the paint finish is important to keeping moisture out of the timber construction.
5. If Council's arborist is confident that the issues identified in paragraph four can be satisfactorily resolved, both at present and also for the foreseeable lifespan of both the dwelling and the tree, then there is potential for the scheduled tree and SHB to continue to coexist. If not, then removal of the pōhutukawa will be advantageous in enabling the owner to maintain the SHB in good condition.

Regards,

Mark Mawdsley

HERITAGE ADVISOR

TEAM LEADER ADVISORY SERVICES

CITY DEVELOPMENT

M 027 6258 394 | DD 03 474 3459 | E mark.mawdsley@dcc.govt.nz

Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Dunedin

PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054
New Zealand
www.dunedin.govt.nz

From: Madeline Seeley <Madeline.Seeley@dcc.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 29 August 2024 2:21 p.m.
To: Mark Roberts <mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz>; Mark Mawdsley <Mark.Mawdsley@dcc.govt.nz>
Subject: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment

Kia ora Mark + Mark,

Please find attached an application to remove a scheduled tree from the property at 2 Fifield Street. I have attached the arborist's report and photographs in support of the application. Please provide comments within 2 weeks. This will be publicly notified as required by the 2GP.

Kā mihi,
Madeline Seeley
PLANNER/KAIMAHERE
RESOURCE CONSENTS/TOHU WHAKAMAHI RAWA

P 03 477 4000 | DD 03 474 3699 | E madeline.seeley@dcc.govt.nz
Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Ōtepoti
PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054
New Zealand
www.dunedin.govt.nz

APPLICATION LUC-2024-297: 2 FIFIELD STREET, DUNEDIN

Department: Resource Consents

BACKGROUND

Council's records show a STEM (Standard Tree Evaluation Form) assessment of T454 from 24 April 2001. The tree scored a total of 144 points, however a post-it note on the form notes that the tree was re-evaluated in December of 2001 and thus the tree was recommended for inclusion on the schedule. On the second evaluation form from December 2001, the tree scored 150 points.

In addition to the above, the only other record relating to the scheduled tree is a '2GP audit', which simply contains a photograph of the tree from outside of the property and its entry into Council's records dates to 6th May 2013. This photograph is copied here:



In February 2021, resource consent LUC-2021-63 was granted for minor work on a tree – specifically pruning on both T453 & T454. No issues were raised within the arborist’s comments on the trees at the time.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

Resource consent is sought for the removal of a Pōhutukawa Tree at 2 Fifield Street, Dunedin. The Pōhutukawa tree (*sp. Metrosideros excelsa*) is scheduled within the Second Generation Dunedin City District Plan (the 2GP) as item T454. The tree was also scheduled in the Dunedin City District Plan that preceded the current District Plan. From Council’s records it is understood that the tree entered the scheduled list in 2001/2002 after it’s 2001 assessment scored enough points for the tree to be entered on the schedule.

The application states that the tree’s removal is sought due to it being:

“too large, causing damage to the houses’ foundations, obstructing the view from the main bedroom and blocking access for scaffolding to be erected.”

The property also contains a Scheduled Heritage house, named *Mahara*. The Heritage New Zealand website states the house was designed by E.W. Walden in 1905 and built for prominent businessman Andrew Lees’ daughters. The dwelling, similar to the dwelling on the adjoining site established at the same time, has a Heritage New Zealand Historic Place Category 2 classification. The extent of the Heritage NZ listing includes:

the land described as Lot 2 DP 308 (RT OT139/139), Otago Land District, and the building known as Mahara thereon.

The dwelling’s listing in the schedule is B099 and the entire external building envelope is protected.

The application makes reference to the heritage status of the dwelling on site and the high amount of maintenance required. The application states the tree was planted 3 metres from the dwelling and has 7 trunks and that the tree is so large with a massive canopy that reducing its size will not solve any of the problems listed above. The application states that the best outcome for the continued preservation of the landmark house, is the tree’s removal.

The application includes:

- A letter from a building inspector, dated 23 May 2024. The letter is in support of removing the tree and lists the damage to the dwelling (land, bank, pathways and retaining walls) caused by the tree.
- An arborist's report. This is dated 6th August 2024 and is also in support of removal of the tree to protect property but also notes on-site amenity and risk management.
- Photographs of the tree and the dwelling, including from a bedroom within the house.

The subject site is a corner site at the bottom of Fifield Street, while Tweed Street runs along its south-eastern boundary at the bottom of the site. A large heritage mansion sits centrally on the site, with lawn and large established trees and gardens on the south and north sides. Another scheduled tree, a red Beech, is located to the northeast of the Pōhutukawa tree.

The subject site is legally described as Lot 2, DP 308 (held in Record of Title OT139/139) and has an area of 1118m².

REASONS FOR APPLICATION

Technically, Dunedin has two district plans: the Operative Dunedin City District Plan 2006 (the "District Plan 2006"), and the Proposed Second Generation Dunedin City District Plan (the "Proposed 2GP"). However, from 19 August 2024, the Proposed 2GP became partially operative and almost completely superseded the District Plan 2006, except for specific provisions and identified areas that are still subject to appeal. Where these provisions and appeals are relevant, the District Plan 2006 must still be considered.

Accordingly, this application has been processed with reference to the 2GP only.

The activity status of the application is fixed by the rule provisions in place when the application was first lodged, pursuant to section 88A of the Resource Management Act 1991. However, it is the rule provisions in force at the time of the decision that must be had regard to when assessing the application.

The subject site is zoned **General Residential 2** and the site is within the **Variation 2 Mapped Area**. The site also contains the following items:

- Scheduled building B099
- Scheduled tree T453
- Scheduled Tree T454

The Proposed 2GP was notified on 26 September 2015, and some Proposed 2GP rules had immediate legal effect from this date. Some rules became fully operative following the close of submissions, where no submissions were received. Additional rules came into legal effect upon the release of decisions. Those additional rules become fully operative if no appeals are lodged or once any appeals have been resolved.

The proposal falls under the following city-wide activity section:

Scheduled Trees

Only the City-wide Activities rules in the 2GP need consideration as it is strictly the tree removal being sought.

In accordance with Rule 7.3.2.3; Removal and any other work on a scheduled tree that will lead to the death or terminal decline of a scheduled tree is a **non-complying activity**. Council's discretion is not restricted.

Finn Campbell

From: mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz
Sent: Wednesday, 11 September 2024 09:40 a.m.
To: Mark Mawdsley
Cc: Madeline Seeley
Subject: Re: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment

Hi Mark/Maddy

I am in general agreement with Mark's points 4 a. to 4 d. and noted similar issues in my report. Point 5 is slightly more problematic - ongoing and continuous work could be undertaken on the tree to 'satisfactorily resolve' the issues and the tree could be dimensionally managed thereafter indefinitely... but I don't think that it is reasonable to expect or impose that on the tree owner.

Deciding what is reasonable and what is not, is a can of worms that I'd not want to open. Personally, I would not see it as reasonable to expect or impose that level of ongoing tree management on a tree owner. But... if the tree were cut back and managed below the second floor window and 1.4m from the sides of the house the tree would lose STEM points on Form and Function as well as Stature and Visibility - with a drop in those sections, I do not believe that the tree would have or maintain the required points for inclusion on the schedule of trees.

Kind regards
Mark

Mark Roberts | [Phone](#) | [Web](#) | [Blog](#)



On 10/09/2024, at 17:01, Mark Mawdsley <Mark.Mawdsley@dcc.govt.nz> wrote:

Kia ora Maddy,

Comments attached.

Mark R - See below, I'm happy to defer to your advice if you think it is possible for the tree to be retained alongside the dwelling.

<image002.png>

Regards,

[Mark Mawdsley](#)

HERITAGE ADVISOR

TEAM LEADER ADVISORY SERVICES

CITY DEVELOPMENT

M 027 6258 394 | **DD** 03 474 3459 | **E** mark.mawdsley@dcc.govt.nz

Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Dunedin

PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054

New Zealand

www.dunedin.govt.nz

[<0.png>](#)

If this message is not intended for you please delete it and notify us immediately; you are warned that any further use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this material by you is prohibited..

From: Madeline Seeley <Madeline.Seeley@dcc.govt.nz>

Sent: Thursday, 29 August 2024 2:21 p.m.

To: Mark Roberts <mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz>; Mark Mawdsley <Mark.Mawdsley@dcc.govt.nz>

Subject: LUC-2024-297 - request for comment

Kia ora Mark + Mark,

Please find attached an application to remove a scheduled tree from the property at 2 Fifield Street. I have attached the arborist's report and photographs in support of the application. Please provide comments within 2 weeks. This will be publicly notified as required by the 2GP.

Kā mihi,

Madeline Seeley

PLANNER/KAIMAHERE

RESOURCE CONSENTS/TOHU WHAKAMAHI RAWA

P 03 477 4000 | DD 03 474 3699 | E madeline.seeley@dcc.govt.nz

Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Ōtepoti

PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054

New Zealand

www.dunedin.govt.nz

APPLICATION LUC-2024-297: 2 FIFIELD STREET, DUNEDIN

Department: Resource Consents

BACKGROUND

Council's records show a STEM (Standard Tree Evaluation Form) assessment of T454 from 24 April 2001. The tree scored a total of 144 points, however a post-it note on the form notes that the tree was re-evaluated in December of 2001 and thus the tree was recommended for inclusion on the schedule. On the second evaluation form from December 2001, the tree scored 150 points.

In addition to the above, the only other record relating to the scheduled tree is a '2GP audit', which simply contains a photograph of the tree from outside of the property and its entry into Council's records dates to 6th May 2013. This photograph is copied here:

<image001.png>

In February 2021, resource consent LUC-2021-63 was granted for minor work on a tree – specifically pruning on both T453 & T454. No issues were raised within the arborist's comments on the trees at the time.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

Resource consent is sought for the removal of a Pōhutukawa Tree at 2 Fifield Street, Dunedin. The Pōhutukawa tree (*sp. Metrosideros excelsa*) is scheduled within the Second Generation Dunedin City District Plan (the 2GP) as item T454. The tree was also scheduled in the Dunedin City District Plan that preceded the current District Plan. From Council's records it is understood that the tree entered the scheduled list in 2001/2002 after it's 2001 assessment scored enough points for the tree to be entered on the schedule.

The application states that the tree's removal is sought due to it being:

"too large, causing damage to the houses' foundations, obstructing the view from the main bedroom and blocking access for scaffolding to be erected."

The property also contains a Scheduled Heritage house, named *Mahara*. The Heritage New Zealand website states the house was designed by E.W. Walden in 1905 and built for prominent businessman Andrew Lees' daughters. The dwelling, similar to the dwelling on the adjoining site established at the same time, has a Heritage New Zealand Historic Place Category 2 classification. The extent of the Heritage NZ listing includes:

the land described as Lot 2 DP 308 (RT OT139/139), Otago Land District, and the building known as Mahara thereon.

The dwelling's listing in the schedule is B099 and the entire external building envelope is protected. The application makes reference to the heritage status of the dwelling on site and the high amount of maintenance required. The application states the tree was planted 3 metres from the dwelling and has 7 trunks and that the tree is so large with a massive canopy that reducing its size will not solve any of the problems listed above. The application states that the best outcome for the continued preservation of the landmark house, is the tree's removal.

The application includes:

- A letter from a building inspector, dated 23 May 2024. The letter is in support of removing the tree and lists the damage to the dwelling (land, bank, pathways and retaining walls) caused by the tree.
- An arborist's report. This is dated 6th August 2024 and is also in support of removal of the tree to protect property but also notes on-site amenity and risk management.
- Photographs of the tree and the dwelling, including from a bedroom within the house.

The subject site is a corner site at the bottom of Fifield Street, while Tweed Street runs along its south-eastern boundary at the bottom of the site. A large heritage mansion sits centrally on the site, with lawn and large established trees and gardens on the south and north sides. Another scheduled tree, a red Beech, is located to the northeast of the Pōhutukawa tree.

The subject site is legally described as Lot 2, DP 308 (held in Record of Title OT139/139) and has an area of 1118m².

REASONS FOR APPLICATION

Technically, Dunedin has two district plans: the Operative Dunedin City District Plan 2006 (the "District Plan 2006"), and the Proposed Second Generation Dunedin City District Plan (the "Proposed 2GP"). However, from 19 August 2024, the Proposed 2GP became partially operative and almost completely superseded the District Plan 2006, except for specific provisions and identified areas that are still subject to appeal. Where these provisions and appeals are relevant, the District Plan 2006 must still be considered.

Accordingly, this application has been processed with reference to the 2GP only.

The activity status of the application is fixed by the rule provisions in place when the application was first lodged, pursuant to section 88A of the Resource Management Act 1991. However, it is the rule provisions in force at the time of the decision that must be had regard to when assessing the application.

The subject site is zoned **General Residential 2** and the site is within the **Variation 2 Mapped Area**.

The site also contains the following items:

- Scheduled building B099
- Scheduled tree T453
- Scheduled Tree T454

The Proposed 2GP was notified on 26 September 2015, and some Proposed 2GP rules had immediate legal effect from this date. Some rules became fully operative following the close of submissions, where no submissions were received. Additional rules came into legal effect upon the release of decisions. Those additional rules become fully operative if no appeals are lodged or once any appeals have been resolved.

The proposal falls under the following city-wide activity section:

Scheduled Trees

Only the City-wide Activities rules in the 2GP need consideration as it is strictly the tree removal being sought.

In accordance with Rule 7.3.2.3; Removal and any other work on a scheduled tree that will lead to the death or terminal decline of a scheduled tree is a **non-complying activity**. Council's discretion is not restricted.

<240910_2 Fifield Street_Resource Consent Heritage Memo.pdf>

Finn Campbell

From: mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz
Sent: Tuesday, 14 January 2025 10:55 a.m.
To: Finn Campbell
Subject: Re: LUC-2024-297 2 Fifield

All good.

Short answer;

if the tree was trimmed to provide the minimum required clearance between the house and the tree to accommodate the scaffolding;

a) it is unlikely that the stability of the tree would be compromised

b) it is unlikely that the tree would go into terminal decline, **but**

c) it is likely that the resulting and on-going shape of the tree would 'devalue' its STEM score below the threshold required for inclusion on the list of scheduled trees (*yes - the tree would not only be hacked back, but kept being hacked back such that it will not warrant its scheduled status*)

Other consideration (my concerns).

The point that differs with this tree in this particular situation, as opposed to other trees is the implication that the Council may end up imposing a requirement on the home owner that is above what would be considered normal. I don't know how to defend that. It is realistic to expect that a home owner will undertake maintenance on their house (i.e. paint it every 5 to 10 years) and a car owner to service their car (i.e. change the oil every so-many kms). It is also realistic to expect that a tree owner would undertake maintenance on their trees (i.e. remove the deadwood every 8 to 10 years). But in this situation, if the tree were retained the home owner would have to undertake maintenance on the house and on the tree in greatly reduced cycles (maybe every 2 to 3 years). The cost of doing so would be excessively high due to the historic nature of the house and location of the tree, and the timeframe is indefinite - the maintenance costs would go on every 2 to 3 years for as long as the tree grown and the house stands...

My thoughts
M

Mark Roberts | [Phone](#) | [Web](#) | [Blog](#)

Roberts Consulting Ltd
The collective knowledge of qualified arborists
www.robertsconsulting.co.nz



On 14/01/2025, at 09:51, Finn Campbell <Finn.Campbell@dcc.govt.nz> wrote:

Kia ora Mark,

Thanks for this.

Just to pin down this scaffolding discussion.

1. In a situation where the tree is trimmed to accommodate the scaffolding.
 - a. Will this also compromise the tree (hack it back) such that it will not warrant its scheduled status?
 - b. Is there anything else to consider/add to the discussion when making room for this scaffolding? (such as stability of the tree)

Cheers,
Finn

[<0.png>](#)

If this message is not intended for you please delete it and notify us immediately; you are warned that any further use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this material by you is prohibited..

From: mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz <mark@robertsconsulting.co.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 14 January 2025 9:33 a.m.

To: Finn Campbell <Finn.Campbell@dcc.govt.nz>

Subject: Re: LUC-2024-297 2 Fifiield

Morena Finn - welcome back and happy to help

The likely compromises to the house (5.9) are those that are currently minor, but will increase over time - hence the term 'Likely'. Due the size and proximity of the tree to the house, these current and/or potential issues cannot be realistically managed going forward while maintaining the integrity of the tree. In other words - to stop the tree being a problem to the house it will have to be pruned in such a way that the resulting shape of the tree will no longer reach the criteria of a scheduled tree (i.e. it'll have to be hacked back and it'll look ugly).

Those current and/or potential issues are the conflicts noted in 2.7 (a. will make contact with and rub against the outside of the house' b. roots are likely to enter the stormwater drainage system, c. roots are likely to continue to cause damage to the paths and low retaining walls, and e. possible that stem failure in the direction of the house - *due to the restricted growth options*). Further to that, due to the size and proximity of the tree to the house, tree is blocking access for scaffolding to be erected (3.2).

The concern around blocking access for scaffolding (3.2) means that any maintenance on that side of the building is prevented. Due to the powerlines it would be unrealistic to work from a crane parked on the street, and the sloping slate roof means it is unrealistic to work from ropes hanging down. Due to access into the front yard, the topography of the yard and the tree, that area of the house cannot be access with a mobile-lift positioned in the front yard. And due to working-at-height restrictions and the tree, ladders cannot be worked-off on that area of the house. The only realistic (professional) means of being able to safely undertake any future and ongoing maintenance on that side of the building is to erect scaffolding - but the there isn't enough room to do that.

- in theory, scaffolding might be able to be erected between the branches, but it would be a massively complex and costly affair and I'm unsure that the work platforms created would be compliant or realistically able to be effectively worked from. And then... if the tree wasn't trimmed and the scaffolding somehow threaded through it, we're back at 2.7 a. 'the tree will make contact with and rub against the outside of the house' The tree contacting the house will (in due course) damage it, therefore maintenance will be required which will require scaffolding - *an ongoing maintenance loop will be required which presumably the home owner will be required to fund.*

I hope that this helps, feel free to call me to discuss.

Kind regards, ngā mihi
Mark

Mark Roberts | [Phone](#) | [Web](#) | [Blog](#)

<image001.png>

On 13/01/2025, at 13:47, Finn Campbell <Finn.Campbell@dcc.govt.nz> wrote:

Kia ora Mark,

I have taken over this tree consent. I am looking through your report and wished to clarify the following:

- *“5.9 the tree is likely to compromise a Category 2 Heritage New Zealand Historic Place at some stage, and the tree is unlikely to have been part of the original planting.”*

Would you be able to clarify the nature of this compromise? I can't find any other details in the report to pin down as specific to this comment and was hoping you could expand this comment.

- *“3.2 the tree is blocking access for scaffolding to be erected
The minimum width requirement for scaffolding is 1.125m (based on a bay width of at least 675 mm and a minimum 450 mm of clear access) plus the distance from the structure itself will create a working area of around 1.4m(f).
To be able to erect scaffolding along that section of the house, the tree will have to be trimmed back to accommodate it. Some of that trimming will require the removal of large limbs.”*

Will this trimming likely compromise the stability of the tree or impact on its status as a scheduled tree? I'm just trying to establish if scaffolding can reasonably occur, and if any necessary trimming will not compromise the tree.

That's all I can think of for now.

Cheers,

Finn Campbell

Graduate Planner

Resource Consents

P 03 477 4000 | **DD** 03 474 3448 | finn.campbell@dcc.govt.nz

Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Dunedin

PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054

New Zealand

www.dunedin.govt.nz

[<0.png>](#)

If this message is not intended for you please delete it and notify us immediately; you are warned that any further use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this material by you is prohibited..