



Australian Tree Care – TAS

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AGENDA ITEM 8.11 - ATTACHMENT

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ABRIDGED INTERIM REPORT, REGENT SQUARE, AVENUE OF POPLARS

Brief: Present an abridged interim report on the avenue of Poplars located over and beside a concrete pathway in Regent Square.

As an abridged report the usual comprehensive data of statistics and methodology for hazard assessment shall largely be omitted.

Tree Inspection

The trees were visually inspected from ground level on 9/08/14.

Tree Identification – *Populus alba*, Silver or White Poplar. This deciduous species is found from Morocco through to Asia, and is classed as a weed in some parts of Australia.

It is a hardy tree and is salt tolerant to a degree, growing up to 25 meters in height with a potential trunk diameter of 2 meters.

Situation – I counted 21 trees forming an avenue beside and over a concrete pathway located in Regent Square. Due to the irregular spacing, I assume some trees have been removed from the avenue.

Dimensions – the average Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) is approximately 400 – 500mm, **Height** – averaging 14 meters, **Canopy Spread** – averaging 7-8 meters with canopies shaped to the south and east by strong winds, **Age** – approaching maturity (with potential to almost double in size, with trunks to 2 meters), **Root Plate** – some are poor with exposed roots with some evidence of damage and decay,

some specimens exhibit pronounced leans indicative of failing root plates due to high winds and water logged grounds

Health – poor to good, some specimens exhibit various amounts of decay in exposed roots and in trunks and limbs

Structure – poor to good, some specimens exhibit significant bark inclusions (an inherent weakness of compressed bark located in the fork of a trunk, limb or branch which may predispose the structure to failure), some specimens exhibit elongated weight loaded lateral limbs and branches which can be predisposed to failure in strong weather conditions, some specimens exhibit diseased and degraded trunks and limbs (some have a combination of all the above)

Potential Hazard

At present the trees pose a substantial hazard in strong weather conditions due to the weaknesses described above. Wet conditions and high winds are a potent combination which can cause entire trees, or sections of the canopy to fail (as the recent extreme conditions have shown).

In the event of strong weather, I would advise the council to restrict access to the avenue for public safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In brief, I suggest that there are a total of 9 trees that need to be removed from the avenue because of health and structural issues (as outlined above).

The question then arises; should the entire avenue be removed, or should the trees be remedially attended to and retained as a continuing amenity.

- 1. Removal** I suggest that complete removal of all trees is in the final analysis the best option since the avenue will be substantially degraded with the amount of trees lost, the trees will become significantly larger and become more difficult and expensive to maintain into the future with public safety in mind, the loss of up to 9 trees will expose the remaining trees to potential storm damage (as a domino effect), in maturity these species are prone to increasing failure, proposed changes to the pathway may damage and undermine root systems
- 2. Retention** with remedial works carried out (removing damaged and or diseased trees, removing 'hangers' and broken branches, weight reducing heavy limbs and branches, reshaping canopies, removing dead wood), a number of trees may still provide a degree of attractiveness to the vicinity

Yours truly, Frank Rosol (See images on following pages)



Showing leans and extended limbs



Example of bark inclusion



Example of failed branch suspended in degraded canopy



Hazardous lean



Exposed and degraded roots and hazardous lean



Trunk cavity with fungal pathogen