



Item 7.2 Petition Response – Safety Issues, Linton Street, Balaclava

A Petition was previously received from 11 residents of Linton Street, Balaclava

The Petition states the following:-

Action petitioned for:

- *Improvement to footpaths on both sides of Linton Street Balaclava*
- *Improved street lighting along both sides of Linton Street Balaclava*
- *Replace trees currently located on Linton Street footpaths with appropriate trees that are not inhabited by possums (E.g. ornamental pear)*

Petition summary and background:

As residents of Linton Street Balaclava, we are asking that the council commit to the multiple objectives of this petition. We are bundling these improvements as we believe they are closely linked and will mutually support each other when complete. Rationale for all improvements:

- *Improved road and footpath safety*
- *Improve the perception of street safety and security*
- *Increase leisure activity after dark*
- *Encourage walking, cycling and pram use on footpaths*
- *Develop safer routes to local schools*
- *Create a quality environment for residents and visitors*
- *Aid and sustain community satisfaction, comfort and pride*
- *Substantially reduce animal excrement on cars, footpaths, roads and other common property*

OFFICER COMMENT

1. Linton Street: Footpath maintenance works

Council footpath inspection and civil maintenance engineers carried out an assessment of the area on 5 October 2021 and a work program for rectification and improvement works was developed and has since been completed.

Details of the works completed in Linton Street are as follows:

1. Footpath maintenance works identified by Councils footpath inspector on 5 October 2021 at the following locations was completed on 18 November 2021 (WO M016387):
 - i) The work locations were outside of 2, 4a, 2/6, 14, 26 (even side) and 7, 17, 21, 27-29 Linton Street.
 - ii) Total area of footpath works completed was 102m². Works carried out was mostly in and around the existing tree squares located within the Asphalt footpath.
2. Asset protection work for damage caused by Building activity outside 8 Linton Street was completed 8 December comprising 12m². This work was funded by the developer.



Linton Street footpath type, design, size and materials used is now consistent with other footpaths in the Balaclava area and meets Council technical service standards.

Officers recommendation: No further action is required.

2. Linton Street: The current state of the streetlights

Council Officers undertook a night-time audit of the lighting and lux levels in Linton Street on the 6th October 2021. The audit has identified:

- 1 major road light on the corner of Linton Street and Inkerman Street
 - 70W LED streetlight – Category V Streetlight; installed in 2019.
- 5 minor road lights from the intersections with laneways (R3819; R3815) to Goodenia Lane
 - 14W Fluorescent streetlights
 - Standard Category P Streetlight
 - Light globes replaced in 2019; retain strong light output
 - 4 streetlights are mounted on short (50cm) brackets
 - 1 streetlight mounted on a 3m bracket (Goodenia Lane intersection).
- Linton Street is ~165m with a streetlight every ~27m.

The streetlight spacing and the streetlight technology is consistent with nearby streets.

Light Levels

A 2020 desktop lighting compliance assessment returned that the streetlights in Linton Street (when factoring in spacing, street width and technology type) returned light levels that are consistent with an appropriate lighting category in the relevant Australia standard, i.e. Lighting category PR3 and PR5 from AS1158.3.1 -2020 Lighting for roads and public spaces Pedestrian area (Category P) lighting. Noting, the desktop assessment didn't factor the impact of street trees on light spill.

Impact of Street Trees:

Officers attended Linton Street and conducted a lighting assessment using light meters which measure the Lux level of luminaires. The results showed that:

- Street trees interrupt the light spill from 3 streetlights
- The impacted streetlights are mounted on short, 50cm brackets; located next to street trees.
- The street trees block light spill onto both the road and the footpath.

In summary, the streetlights are satisfactory – the technology type and spacing are appropriate for Linton Street. The challenge is how to best address the trees blocking the light spill from the streetlights.

Proposed Solution:

1. No change on three streetlights



- a. Three streetlights do not need to be altered (cnr Inkerman, cnr Goodenia lane, and the intersections with laneways - R3819, R3815).
 - b. Light levels are satisfactory with no/limited interruption of light spill.
2. Replace brackets on three interrupted streetlights
- a. The brackets on the three interrupted streetlights could be addressed.
 - b. The proposal would be to remove the short, 50cm brackets and replace them with ~3m long brackets.

The 3m long brackets will position the streetlights above the road surface and would improve light spill along the road surface and parts of the footpath. However, tree trunks and lower branches will block light spill along the footpath and pruning will be required to optimise light spill along the street and the footpath.

Further, parked cars will also block light from reaching the footpath. So, restricting parking could be another measure, but this is not preferred as the footpath is considered low risk with Linton Street carrying minimal foot traffic and the majority of users are residents who live in the street and should be aware of the conditions.

Officers recommendation: Council proceeds to engage lighting design to ascertain if it is feasible to replace brackets on three affected streetlights in Linton Street. The proposal would be to remove the short, 50cm brackets and replace them with ~3m long brackets.

Project risks to be noted

If the project proceeds, CitiPower would be engaged to do detailed design.

An unknown and unquantified risk to installing 3m brackets is the existing electrical cabling is very busy on 2 light poles – multiple houses (on the opposite side of street) receive their electricity supply from each pole. It may not be possible to install a longer bracket and attain safe distances between electrical cables and the bracket.

Note: As the existing streetlights are no longer on CitiPower's standard materials list, if we remove an existing streetlight it will need to be replaced with an equal streetlight from CitiPower standard material list. In this instance, the 14W fluorescent light would be replaced with a similar LED streetlight.

Project Scope, Cost and Timing.

Project Scope:

- CitiPower detailed design and specification.
 - Detailed design: ~\$12k.
 - Time: 8-12 weeks.
- CitiPower works to remove, supply and install bracket and streetlights
 - Remove the short brackets, supply and install ~3m brackets and 3 streetlights
 - Estimate of CitiPower costs: ~\$40k-\$50k ex GST



- Removal: \$10k
- Supply and install new brackets: \$25k
- Supply and install new streetlights: \$6k
- Plus contingency
- Timing: 22-25 weeks - 18 weeks from signing recoverable works contract; plus a few weeks for council transaction costs.

In summary, the project cost is expected to be in the \$60-\$70k range, and, take ~37 weeks to complete.

Street lighting is a single service contract in Victoria. Council has no option but to engage CitiPower on their terms and conditions.

3. Linton Street: Tree Condition and Assessment

There are 24 street trees on Linton Street, the trees are mature *Melaleuca Linariifolia* (Snow in Summer), a native evergreen tree. The trees are generally healthy and form a cohesive avenue with excellent canopy coverage (20-50% Street Tree Planting Guide 2017-2022 map p.35).

The estimated amenity value of the trees is \$688,000 (average approx. \$29,000 each).

The Greening Port Phillip Strategy (GPP) states that 'the City of Port Phillip values all trees within its boundaries and will seek to protect all trees in the public realm and significant trees in the private realm' (Policy Statement 1.1).

The GPP includes specific policies for tree removal and replacement. The policy states that the City of Port Phillip seeks to avoid tree removal wherever possible. Tree removal may occur for human health and safety, to protect infrastructure, to facilitate approved development and infrastructure improvements, to maintain a healthy urban forest or for ecological restoration. The relevant policy statements are:

Policy statement 3.1 all tree management options will be investigated prior to the removal of a tree/s and includes the action that Tree removal will only be approved if there are no other viable options.

Policy statement 3.2: trees will be removed in a timely manner where they no longer contribute to the streetscape due to poor health or condition. Action: Identify and strategically replace senescent trees that no longer contribute to the amenity of streetscapes and/or park.

The trees in Linton Street are:

- structurally sound and in generally good health and condition,
- contribute to significant tree canopy coverage, and
- are an aesthetically uniform avenue that contributes to the streetscape character.

As such, there are no grounds to consider tree removal and replacement in Linton St Balaclava. There is considerable reputational risk to removing a street of healthy trees that provide excellent canopy coverage.



Tree inhabitants

Possoms are protected under the Wildlife Act 1975. Some legal control options are available for brushtail possum populations in parks or if brushtail possums reside in roofs. No legal control options exist for ringtail possums, except with permits.

If trees are removed, some possums will disperse to surrounding areas. If all suitable territories are already occupied, some possums may die

(https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/92471/Managing-Brushtail-Possoms-municipal-parks-and-gardens.pdf). Additionally, relocated possums have a low chance of survival (<https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/managing-wildlife/possums>).

Tree removal to deliberately cause possum displacement has the potential to be considered disturbing protected wildlife and may be an offence against the Wildlife Act 1975.

Officers recommendation: No further action is required.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Thanks the community for their petition.
2. Notes the works already undertaken by Officers in relation to footpath maintenance.
3. Notes that Council policy is to retain healthy and structurally sound trees, and to only consider removal if there are no other viable options.
4. Denies the request for tree removal consistent with Council's Greening Port Phillip Strategy.
5. Refers consideration of budget for \$70,000 to engage CitiPower to undertake street lighting design to ascertain if 3m extension brackets can be installed on the 3 identified poles as part of the 2022/23 budget process.

ATTACHMENTS 1. Annexure A-Site Photos  