

Petition: Officers' Response

Title: Extending planting of waterfront shade trees

Primary Petitioner: Curtis Nixon, Wellington
Total Signatures: 7 (via ePetition)

Presented by: Curtis Nixon
Contact officer: Amber Bill
Director responsible: Greg Orchard

Officers' recommendation:

Officers recommend that the Committee:

1. *Receive the petition.*
2. *Note the environmental constraints on the successful establishment of shade trees around Wellington's unique south coast environment mean that implementing this is not practicable.*

Background:

The ePetition "Extending planting of waterfront shade trees" was initiated by Curtis Nixon on 20 December 2013 and closed on 20 January 2014.

The purpose of the petition is to request that the Council extend the plantings of shade trees around all the city beaches to provide shade from the sun to beach goers. In particular this should be done along the foreshores of Seatoun Beach, Lyall Bay, Princess Bay, Houghton Bay and Island Bay; as well as any other suitable beaches in Wellington. I suggest Norfolk pines and northern rata as suitable tree species.

The petition was open to all members of the public with internet access to the Council's website. It received 7 signatures.

Officers' response:

The Wellington coast line is a very challenging environment for successfully growing specimen and shade trees. The naturally occurring coastal vegetation is low growing, salt and wind tolerant species – for example taupata. Larger trees are adapted to grow collectively in a coastal forest environment rather than succeed as specimen trees (e.g. northern rata, ngaio, olearia, larger hebe, rangiora). The Norfolk pines and pohutukawa specimen trees will survive in the relatively sheltered bays (e.g. Oriental Bay and Karaka Bay to Shelly Bay), but not along the south coast and other exposed coastal environments. As an example, pohutukawa trees at Lyall Bay Parade (to the rear of Briscoes) are extremely wind-shorn, while others within the tree cages have been struggling for many years. Our focus on coastal vegetation in these south coast environments is coastal foredune and backdune restoration, and on the landward side of the road, coastal forest restoration where possible.

Historically there have been trials with establishing shade and street trees in the coastal environment, however there have been no notable successes.