



RECYCLING GOODNESS: Kauri trunks and foliage have been left on the forest floor in Brooklands Park to keep the nutrients in the soil. Photo: ADRIAN MALLOCH

Logic to council's tree-felling plan

By SARAH STEVENS

THE New Plymouth District Council is defending its decision to cut down kauri trees in Brooklands Park and leave them where they fall.

Bryan Gould, NPDC manager of premier parks, said the maintenance work was important to ensure the long-term health of the trees and public safety.

"People shouldn't have any concerns about the trees on the ground, it is all part and parcel of the good work which has been done."

He said the felled trees were carefully selected.

They were either damaged or weak, causing a safety hazard to the public, or they were suppressed by healthier trees.

He said a few healthy trees were removed to ensure optimum spacing.

Some critics have claimed that the trees should be left to grow naturally and that they could be found closer together in natural forests.

The trees were planted in 1935 as one of the first experiments in native tree forestry.

"These trees were planted in rows, they were always intended to be managed," Mr Gould said.

"Now that the canopy is thinner this can become a self-sustaining group of trees."

Mr Gould said the council would not remove the felled trunks.

"We will reposition some of the logs to ensure that they are stable and won't roll away.

"But they will be left there to recycle the nutrients back into the soil. The leaves and foliage will rot away."

Removing the trunks could damage the soil and remaining plants, he said.

George Fuller, curator of Pukekura

and Brooklands parks from 1965-1990, said he has been trying to get the council to carry out maintenance on the trees for a long time.

"You can't just put in native trees and forget about them. They need to be cared for.

"I am thrilled to see it happening. I never expected this work to be done in my lifetime.

"I was very impressed with the way the council consulted with the public about the matter. They held a public forum free of charge."

Mr Fuller said he was impressed by the skill of the team which cut down the trees.

"What people forget is that those trees are there for a thousand-year cycle. A few bits on the ground for a few years is of very little consequence."

The council is also planning to thin the kauri trees in Barrett Domain.

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Daily News 27th June 2003.