A STUDY into the proposed merger of Unley and Pasadena high schools has finished, however the State Government is remaining tight-lipped on its findings.

Education Department spokesman Ross Treadwell said the report would be given to the two schools’ principals and governing councils’ representatives during this school term.

“Should the schools wish to proceed further with the voluntary amalgamation a consultation program will be undertaken with the school community,” Mr Treadwell said.

The Mitcham & Hills Messenger reported in January that Pasadena High could close and merge with Unley High’s Netherby campus.

Education Minister Susan Close said at the time parts of Pasadena’s Dawes Rd campus could be sold for tens of millions of dollars and the funds used to upgrade Unley High’s Kitchener St grounds.

She said it would be up to the governing councils and parent bodies of each school to vote on whether a merger was the best option.

The schools both expressed interest in a merger in November.

Pasadena High School principal Wendy Close said she would lodge a request with the Education Department to find out when she would receive the findings.

A Mitcham spokeswoman said the second arborist, who inspected the Flinders Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, tree to confirm it poses a danger to the community.

The council refused to say how much the two reports were costing ratepayers, but said the second inspection was needed because so many people said the 25m tree should stay.

Flinders Ave resident Clive Nelson, who wrote to the council in defence of the tree, hoped the second investigation would take its heritage value into account.

“I sort of breathe a sigh of relief. I only hope that the second … arborist is ap- praised of the issues that have been raised by the other people,” Mr Nelson said.

“I could only hope that they are looking at it with wider open eyes.”

Mr Nelson, who has lived in the tree for 46 years, said it was home to a plethora of wildlife.

“It is such a solid part of the environment of the landscape and to go and get rid of it just like that is astonishing,” he said.

“There has been a pair of birds using it as a home for 25 years and there are koalas that go up there on a regular basis.”

In December an arborist told the council that the tree was “structurally unsafe” and liable to drop branches.

The tree dropped a branch on the Reade Park Croquet Club gate last year.

The club president Tom Mayer said the club supported felling the tree if it posed a significant risk.

“My feeling is that (the council) had made the right decision purely from a safety point of view,” Mr Mayer said.

“We would be saddened if the tree is removed, but if it is necessary we would accept it.”

A Mitcham spokeswoman said the second arborist’s in- vestigation will provide a more detailed analysis.

The arborist’s report will be presented to the council this month.

BLACKWOOD

James Gratton

AMES Day was caught off guard when she received a text message from her netball coach that simply read “Congratulations”.

After replying to the message, Amelia, 17, of Blackwood, learnt she had been selected as part of Australia’s under-17 development squash which will take part in a training camp at Netball Australia’s Centre of Excellence later this month.

“I had no idea about what was happening. Apparently they had just sent it out through an email, but Mum wasn’t checking her emails all day I kind of found out through everyone else,” Amelia says.

During the three-day trip to Canberra, the squad will be mentored by Centre of Excellence head coach Jill McIntosh and Australian Diamonds coach Lisa Alexander. The Mercedes College Year 12 student is one of six South Australians selected for the squad.

The players were all a part of the SA team that defeated New South Wales by five points in the under-17 National championships final in April.

Amelia says sharing the victory with close friends made it more satisfying.

“It was incredible, probably the most amazing feeling I have felt in my life. “The goal shooter says she is willing to juggle her studies and netball to pursue her dream of playing at the highest level.

“I have to give up a little bit of my social life, but that is okay because I do it for netball because I love it,” she says.

“Netball is a social life for me. I go out there and I get to hang with some pretty awesome girls.”

James Gratton

A great day for netballer

James Gratton

AMELIA Day is in Australia’s under-17 development squad.

Amelia Day is in Australia’s under-17 development squad.

SECOND OPINION NEEDED ON TREE

DETAILED ANALYSIS TO COME

James Gratton

A 100-year-old river red gum has been granted a stay of execution after people power forced Mitcham Council to seek a second opinion before chopping it down.

The council has called for a second arborist to inspect the Flinders Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, tree to confirm it poses a danger to the community.

The council refused to say how much the two reports were costing ratepayers, but said the second inspection was needed because so many people said the 25m tree should stay.

Flinders Ave resident Clive Nelson, who wrote to the council in defence of the tree, hoped the second investigation would take its heritage value into account.

“My feeling is that (the council) had made the right decision purely from a safety point of view,” Mr Mayer said.

“We would be saddened if the tree is removed, but if it is necessary we would accept it.”

A Mitcham spokeswoman said the second arborist’s investigation will provide a more detailed analysis.

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