

#### 4. REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF STREET TREE – 15 WOODBRIDGE ROAD

<b>Officer responsible</b> Parks & Waterways Manager	<b>Author</b> Ann Liggett, Parks & Waterways Area Advocate, DDI 941-5112 Tony Armstrong, Parks & Waterways Arborist, DDI 941-8578
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The purpose of this report is for the Board to consider a request received from Mr Ray Richardson for the removal of a street tree outside 15 Woodbridge Road. Mr Richardson has been granted speaking rights to address the Board regarding this matter.

##### BACKGROUND

On 21 September 2003 a letter was received from Mr Ray Richardson (copy attached) requesting the removal of a lime tree outside 15 Woodbridge Road. Mr Richardson is proposing to subdivide the property, allowing for two separate driveway entrances (refer attached plan). On 8 October 2003 a site meeting was held with Mr Richardson, the Parks & Waterways Area Advocate and the Parks & Waterways Unit Arborist. Mr Richardson outlined what his proposal entailed and the positioning of the houses on the existing property in relation to where the driveways were to be situated. Mr Richardson was advised at this meeting that the Parks & Waterways Unit would not support the removal of the tree and it was suggested that other alternatives be explored. A second letter was sent to the Council on 10 October 2003 (copy attached), giving further information on the proposal and details of the design in order to meet Council requirements. Mr Richardson has also stated that he would be willing to replace the tree by planting a three metre high tree approximately 1.5 metres to the side of the new driveway.

To date no building consent has been lodged with the Christchurch City Council.

##### ARBORIST'S COMMENTS

###### Tree species

Common Name: Lime  
Botanical Name: Tilia x europaea

###### Tree Size

Height: 9m approximately  
Girth (at 1.4m above ground): 2.15m  
Canopy Spread: 8m approximately

###### History/Comment

- From the record it is estimated that this tree was planted in the 1930s as part of an avenue of mixed exotic species comprising of Elm, Plane, Chestnut, Beech and Lime, of which there are six listed.
- Most, if not all of these trees, have been pollarded and exhibit typical form and regrowth as a result of this practice.
- This tree, therefore, has been assessed not only as an individual, but as part of an avenue of mature street trees.

###### Inspection/Observation

- The tree appears to be generally healthy and in stable condition, having had pruning maintenance relatively recently. However, the tree has been previously pollarded and so there needs to be a more regular maintenance and monitoring programme to ensure its sustainability. In this case decay is evident in the limb structure and at the trunk/root collar, which suggests that the longevity of the tree is in question, despite no major signs of decline.
- The request to remove the tree for a reason other than tree health/condition needs to be evaluated in consideration with other criteria, eg tree value, tree location and any alternative means in achieving the desired outcome for site development.
- A valuation of the tree has not been carried out, but the location of the tree in the street berm and the proposed site access appears to create a conflict for space.
- Regardless of the tree's longevity, it occupies an important location in the street berm, being part of an established avenue.
- The canopy of the tree can be pruned to provide access to the site. The tree cannot be moved; however, alternative site access appears feasible from the street aspect if the tree is not removed.

## Conclusion

- The tree is an amenity asset in the street environment.
- The tree has not been valued but conflict has been created for the space it occupies as a result of the proposed site development.
- The tree is mature, relatively healthy and in reasonable condition; there are no immediate reasons for its removal and maintenance and monitoring of the tree can continue to help sustain its useful lifespan.
- The request to remove the tree seems premature, although pruning for access is possible.
- Alternative access to the site could be reconsidered in order to retain tree and planting space.

## CONCLUSION

It is acknowledged that to utilise the section to its full potential, the driveway is best located on the northwest boundary. However, serious consideration must also be given to the overall value of the street tree as per the arborist's report.

**Note:** The Council is in the process of completing a policy for dealing with the above situations. However, at present each situation is assessed on a case by case basis, taking into account a number of different criteria, eg street aesthetics, health of the tree and future maintenance, as covered in the arborist's report.

## Staff

**Recommendation:** That the application for the removal of the street tree outside 15 Woodbridge Road be declined.

## Chairperson's

**Recommendation:** For discussion, including reconsideration of the suggestion of alternative access.