

4. ALDER TREE REMOVAL – 99 ROBERTA DRIVE

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| General Manager responsible: | General Manager City Environment |
| Officer responsible: | Greenspace Manager |
| Author: | Ann Liggett, Parks & Waterways Area Advocate Spreydon/Heathcote, DDI 941-5111 |

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's approval to remove an alder tree on the street berm outside 99 Roberta Drive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. In September 2004 the resident at 99 Roberta Drive approached the Council with a request to remove the street tree on the berm outside her property.
3. The reasons for the removal request relate to the large amount of debris deposited by the tree and, particularly the catkins, which have created a slipping hazard causing the elderly resident to have a number of falls in the past. The tree also deposits leaf, twig and seed debris on the lawn and in the gutters of the resident's property creating maintenance difficulties.
4. The tree is a maturing alder (*Alnus* spp.) which appears to be healthy and of reasonable size (approx 7m in height with a canopy spread of 4m) and form.
5. The tree is situated mid-way across the grass berm in front of the property and contributes to the amenity of the street landscape (photos attached). Roberta Drive is planted with a mixture of street tree species however, this is the only tree of this type in the street.
6. The tree's location on a relatively small sloping berm close to the footpath, driveway and property has contributed to the problems experienced by the resident.
7. Although the debris drop from the tree is seasonal and this can be maintained, the tree is not fully mature and the problem is therefore likely to increase and perpetuate. It also has the potential, within a 10 year time frame, to cause future damage to the driveway and footpath as the tree's root system expands.
8. Should removal be approved, replanting could be considered, however, the site and selection of a suitable replacement will need further investigation which would involve consultation with the resident. The closest street tree to this property is an ash tree planted approximately 5m away.
9. Adjacent and opposite neighbours will be notified prior to any work taking place, however it is anticipated the effect will be minimal due to the locality of the tree.
10. Options considered include:
 - (i) Reduction of the existing canopy to reduce the amount of litter fall. This option may have some short-term benefit by reducing the volume of debris but this will continue to increase as the tree grows and would require long-term management that would never fully solve the issues with the tree.
 - (ii) Take no action and leave the tree in its current state. This option does not address the issues raised by the resident nor the longer-term problems related to the location of the tree.
 - (iii) Removal of the tree and investigate suitable replacement. (the preferred option). This option alleviates both the resident's concerns and location suitability issues and also enables investigation of a replacement tree more suited to the site.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

11. Should removal be approved, funding to undertake the required works is available in the Greenspace Unit operational budget under Street Tree Maintenance.
12. The tree is not listed as protected under the City Plan.

13. All work will be carried out by a Council approved contractor.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the removal of the alder tree outside 99 Roberta Drive and that a possible replacement be investigated.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be supported.