

## 6. STREET TREE REMOVALS – 36 SEFTON STREET

<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager City Environment
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Transport and Greenspace Unit Manager
<b>Author:</b>	Graham Clark DDI: 941 8630

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's approval to the removal of (potentially) two trees for the purpose of installation of a new vehicle crossing at 36 Sefton Street.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. In March 2006 Anne Gane and Graeme Skellerup ("the applicants") approached the Council with a request to remove one silver birch (*Betula pendula*) street tree, on the berm at 36 Sefton Street to allow a new vehicle crossing to be constructed. The proposed new vehicle crossing location directly conflicts with location of the street tree(s).
3. The applicants are requesting permission to remove the tree(s) prior to resubmitting an Resource Management Act application to add a garage to the section (current application in respect of this is suspended awaiting a decision on the tree(s)).
4. The tree which the applicant would like removed is a maturing silver birch. The silver birch has good vigour and vitality, is of reasonable size (approximately 5 metres in height with a canopy spread of 4 metres) and moderate form. The tree is situated mid-way across the grass berm in front of the property and contributes to the amenity of the street landscape (see attachment 1). It is one of a group of nine trees of a mixture of birch and ash species. These trees create an avenue affect for this section of the street.
5. The tree(s) on the berm were identified by the applicant on the design plans submitted for the proposed development.
6. Following a site inspection it was discovered that the proposed crossing point as shown on submitted designs would, in fact, affect two trees on site. If the proposed crossing point remains unchanged the silver birch tree will require removal and the adjacent red ash *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* would have its root system affected by the construction of the new crossing point. The red ash has poor form, poor vigour and poor vitality. It is of reasonable size (approximately 4 metres in height with a canopy spread of 3.5 metres). If the crossing point is relocated by about 1.5 metres to the north or south it will only significantly affect one tree making it possible to retain the other tree.
7. Should the removal(s) be approved in principal by the Community Board, Christchurch City Council would like to replace the lost amenity value of the removed tree(s) by planting a replacement tree(s) elsewhere in the street. There are suitable planting locations in other sections of Sefton Street. The species proposed as replacement(s) being Red ash, *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* which would compliment the existing species in the street.
8. Adjacent and opposite neighbours will be notified prior to any work taking place.

### FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

9. Any healthy street tree can only be removed with approval from the appropriate Community Board and any protected street tree can only be removed by a successful application under the Resource Management Act. These trees are not listed as protected under the provisions of the Christchurch City Plan.
10. The actual cost to remove the trees and replace them with pb95 grade trees is:
  - (a) Removal and replacement of red ash \$415
  - (b) Removal and replacement of silver birch \$415
  - (c) Removal and replacement of both red ash and silver birch \$530

11. The summary of valuations for the trees affected using STEM are:
 

(a) Silver birch	\$ 5,400
(b) Red ash	\$ 4,000
12. STEM is the national arboricultural industry standard for evaluating and valuing amenity trees. STEM is used as a valuation tool by other Councils such as Auckland, Tauranga, Lower Hutt and Wellington.
13. STEM valuations on the trees concerned are detailed on the attached valuation sheets.
14. Removing and replacing the trees without obtaining reimbursement from the applicant is inconsistent with the current LTCCP as funding has not been allocated in the Transport and Greenspace Unit operational budget for the removal of healthy trees to allow for vehicle crossings.
15. Obtaining reimbursement from the applicant to remove and replace the trees is consistent with the current LTCCP.
16. All tree work will be carried out by the Council's Street Tree Maintenance Contractor.

#### **OPTIONS**

##### **Option (A)**

17. Remove both the silver birch and red ash trees affected and replace them with red ash trees subject to the applicant gaining planning permission to complete their proposed development.
18. Actual cost of \$530 excluding GST to remove and replace both of the trees is borne by the applicants.
19. The applicants to be charged the full STEM valuation for the silver birch tree of \$5,400. No charge to be made in respect of the red ash due its condition.

##### **Option (B)**

20. Remove the red ash only and replace it with another red ash tree at an alternate location within Sefton Street subject to the applicants gaining planning permission to complete their proposed development. The applicants to redesign their application for driveway to take account of the retention of the silver birch tree and resubmit it to Council.
21. Actual cost of \$415 excluding GST to remove and replace the red ash tree is borne by the applicants.
22. The applicants are not to be charged the full STEM valuation for the red ash tree due to trees condition.

##### **Option (C)**

23. Remove the silver birch only and replace it with a red ash tree at an alternate location within Sefton Street subject to the applicants gaining planning permission to complete their proposed development.
24. Actual cost of \$415 excluding GST to remove and replace the silver birch tree is borne by the applicants.
25. The applicants to be charged the full STEM valuation for the silver birch tree of \$5,400.

##### **Option (D)**

26. Status quo. Do not remove either silver birch or red ash trees. Trees are to be maintained to accepted international arboricultural standards. Potential development is to be declined or redesigned so that it does not interfere with either the roots or the canopy of either of the two trees.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Shirley/Papanui Community Board adopts Option (B) and approves:

- (a) That the red ash tree located on the Sefton Street berm outside 36 Sefton Street be removed to allow for vehicle crossings to be constructed if the pending associated planning consent is approved by Council post amending to ensure the silver birch tree is retained and protected.
- (b) That the silver birch tree be retained, left to grow true to form and will be maintained by Council to internationally accepted arboricultural standards.
- (c) That the red ash once removed is replaced with another pb95 grade red ash at an alternate location in close proximity to the original tree in Sefton Street.
- (d) That the actual costs of \$415 excluding GST for removing the tree and replacing it with a pb95 grade red ash is borne by the applicants.
- (e) That the driveway design will require altering to accommodate the retention of the silver birch tree.
- (f) That due to the overall poor condition of the red ash the STEM valuation is not utilised for reimbursement considerations.

## **CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION**

That the staff recommendations be adopted.