

14. TRUMAN ROAD OAK TREE

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The purpose of this report is to outline the concerns of the two residents at 51 and 53 Truman Road with regards the Oak tree planted in their footpath.

BACKGROUND

The following letter has been received from Mrs Diane Mora and Mrs Noeline Packman of 51 and 53 Truman Road.

"We are writing this letter regarding the tree on the berm between 51 and 53 Truman Road. This tree has become a nuisance to both the Council and us for many years and has now become so big it is causing us a lot of worry, our main worry is the large cracks in our drive and not being able to get a clear look as we are backing out of our drive. About 10 years ago we agreed with the Council to reposition the drive at our expense to avoid hitting the tree and about 5 or 6 years ago the Council had to dig up our sewer and put in a plastic one as the old one was broken with tree roots. The Drainage Board looked after that on our behalf, as well, the stormwater outlet has had to be moved twice.

I do not want our drive dug up again as we are both in our 70's now and cannot afford such an expense at this time of our life and would appreciate this matter being attended to before the new footpaths are relaid.

As we have lived here for 45 years as ratepayers, we would be grateful if this matter was looked into as soon as possible."

DISCUSSION

Members should be aware that the original subdivision would have been constructed by the former Ministry of Works with narrow berms and streets. No garages or driveways were built with these government houses, so the trees were planted without access in mind.

The Oak in question is 700m wide at the trunk and 1.5 metres wide at the base and was planted (approximately 1948) in line with a fence that separates the two driveways. It projects into the driveways to such an extent that one has to check its position as you are reversing out otherwise you may hit it. There are approximately 58 oaks in the street, with none in a similar position.

As the letter describes, the driveway of No 53. has been modified and resealed in the past. In fact another sewer blockage occurred early in July this year which necessitated similar work at the expense of the Council.

The driveway cracks are hairline but extensive (not dangerous) and it is understandable how they would be of concern to the residents. The residents live on the outside of the corner, so when backing out the drive there is adequate opportunity to stop at an appropriate place to ensure no vehicles are approaching before continuing out onto the road. Similar problems occur with most other houses in the city with large trees or telegraph poles outside on the berm or footpath.

The Parks and Waterways Unit acknowledges that trees would not be planted these days in a similar position and have a lot of sympathy for the residents. The Unit advises that a realignment of the driveway at no 51 can be attended to when the footpaths and vehicle entrances are resealed and have offered to construct a fence or wall and/or a garden at the end of no 53 to better indicate the position of the tree. This work would be in private property and at the expense of the Unit. Removal of the tree would be expensive but the Unit advises the funds would be better spent on retaining the tree.

PENDING STREETWORKS

The Council has recently let a contract for the resurfacing of the footpaths in the street and this work will be undertaken this Spring. Associated work such as reconstructing vehicle entrances and kerb and channel which is damaged will also be undertaken. If a decision to remove the tree was to be made, then this would be an appropriate time.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The four photographs (attached) are taken from inside the properties showing views down the driveways towards the tree and to the east and north along Truman Road from this corner showing the views available.

COMMUNITY BOARD COMMENTS

This matter was also considered at the 31 July 2001 meeting of the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board and the recommendation below supported.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the tree outside 51 and 53 Truman Road not be removed.
 2. That the Parks and Waterways Unit be requested to offer whatever assistance it can give the residents in realigning their driveways to give better clearance from the tree.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the matter be referred to a subcommittee consisting of the Chairman of the City Services Committee, Councillors Evans and Wright and the Chairman of the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board to inspect a site and report back to the City Services Committee.