



Christchurch City Council

RICCARTON/WIGRAM COMMUNITY BOARD

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008

AT 5.00PM

AT SOCKBURN SERVICE CENTRE

**IN THE BOARDROOM,
149 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, CHRISTCHURCH**

Community Board: Peter Laloli (Chairperson), Helen Broughton, Jimmy Chen, Beth Dunn, Judy Kirk, Mike Mora and Bob Shearing.

Community Board Adviser
Graham Sutherland
Telephone: 941-6728
Email: graham.sutherland@ccc.govt.nz

- PART A - MATTERS REQUIRING A COUNCIL DECISION**
- PART B - REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**
- PART C - DELEGATED DECISIONS**

INDEX

	PAGE NO	CLAUSE	
PART B	2	1.	APOLOGIES
PART B	2	2.	DEPUTATIONS BY APPOINTMENT
PART B	2	3.	CORRESPONDENCE
PART B	2	4.	BRIEFINGS
PART C	3	5.	JAMELL PLACE SILVER BIRCH TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION
PART B	22	6.	ELECTED MEMBERS INFORMATION EXCHANGE

7. 8. 2008

2

1. APOLOGIES

Peter Laloli.

2. DEPUTATIONS BY APPOINTMENT

3. CORRESPONDENCE

4. BRIEFINGS

5. JAMELL PLACE SILVER BIRCH TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment, Jane Parfitt, DDI 941 8608
Officer responsible:	Transport and Greenspace Unit Manager
Author:	Lorraine Correia, Consultation Leader – Greenspace & Jonathan Hansen, Arborist

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to consider a resident's request for the removal of three Silver Birch trees located outside 12 & 14 Jamell Place, Avonhead.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. A request has been made to the Riccarton-Wigram Community Board, from Gordon and Heather Scandrett, the owners of 12 Jamell Place, to remove the three Silver Birch trees outside their property. The trees are located on road reserve. Correspondence received by the Community Board from Mr. and Mrs. Scandrett, was tabled on 15 April 2008 and a deputation to the Board was made on 5th June 2008.
3. The owners of 12 Jamell Place continue to have the following concerns about the trees:
 - The catkin seeds blocking their gutters and roof spouting which have in the past created property damage and requires frequent maintenance, these issues are increased with a Northwest wind.
 - The inability to leave windows open because of the seeds constantly being blow into their house.
 - The trees block off the natural sunlight from filtering into their home for most of the day.
 - Concerns about possible allergies from Silver Birch trees.
 - The storm water drain and gutter gets blocked with the seeds.
 - Being unable to have a barbeque outdoors.
4. Attached to the correspondence Mr. and Mrs. Scandrett had sent to the Community Board in April 2008, was a list of three neighbours in support of their request, photographs of the catkin seeds in their property and newspaper clippings of various articles relating to problems faced by Silver Birch pollen.
5. In order to make a decision on whether these trees should be removed, the Community Board has requested that staff consult with the residents of Jamell Place. The majority of the affected residents support the removal of the trees, however two residents that live nearby are strongly opposed to their removal.
6. There are currently 20 street trees in Jamell Place, 10 of which are mature Silver Birch trees which were planted in 1973. Silver Birch trees are deciduous and shed their leaves and catkins (spike-like flower) in autumn.
7. There is also a large, mature deciduous tree on Mr. & Mrs. Scandrett's property that would contribute to the shading of their home.
8. Photographs of the three Silver Birch trees and 12 Jamell Place are **attached** for your information and ease of reference (**Attachment 1**).
9. An arboricultural assessment of the tree removal request, including photographs has been undertaken and a copy is **attached (Attachment 2)**. The assessment indicates that all three trees have reached maturity with approximate heights ranging from 12 to 14 metres. The canopies of the three trees are approximately 10 metres each. The tree roots on the tree outside number 14 are causing minor cracks on the footpath as well as minor damage to the storm water pipe. The report concludes that the Silver Birch trees are healthy and that approval would therefore be required from the Community Board if they were to be removed.

5 Cont'd

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. The estimated cost for the removal of the three trees is \$5,210.
11. The estimated cost for replacing two of the trees is \$600.
12. Funding from Council for the removal of the trees could be provided from the "Street Tree Maintenance" budget and the replacement could be provided from the "Street Tree Renewals" budget.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

13. Yes. Funding could be provided from within the Transport and Greenspace Street Tree Maintenance and Replacements budgets.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

14. There are no legal considerations that would have a direct impact on this proposal. None of the trees identified for removal are listed in the City Plan as Protected or Notable Trees.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

15. Yes. As per above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

16. Funding for trees that are no longer an appropriate species or those that are no longer appropriate in their current position is available from the Transport & Greenspace Unit Street Tree Capital Renewals budget for their removal and replacement.
17. Removal and replacement of the tree is consistent with the Activity Management Plan.
18. Retention of the tree is consistent with the Activity Management Plan provided the tree is structurally sound and healthy.
19. LTCCP 2006 -16
City Development – page 93
 - Health – By developing the urban environment in a manner that enables people to live healthy lifestyles.

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

20. Yes, as per above.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

21. Social wellbeing.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

22. Yes, as per above.

5 Cont'd

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

23. In June 2008 a publicity pamphlet, refer **Attachment 3**, was distributed to all 27 residents directly associated with Jamell Place. This pamphlet which was also a feedback form, included a letter to each resident outlining the proposal and concerns raised by Mr. & Mrs. Scandrett. The residents were also informed that the responses on this proposal would be submitted to the Board at their Environment Committee Meeting on 7 August 2008. The project team sought feedback from the community to see whether the proposal was generally supported.
24. The consultation received 15 responses and community feedback was generally very positive for the removal of the 3 Silver Birch trees, refer **Attachment 4**.
 - 13 submitters responded "YES" – that they supported the removal of the 3 Silver Birch trees
 - 2 submitters responded "NO" – they did not support the removal of the trees
25. This consultation feedback provides a strong indication that the majority of the directly affected community supports the removal of the three trees located outside 12 & 14 Jamell Place (including Denley Gardens). This is a further breakdown from the 13 who have responded 'YES':
 - 5 submitters have requested that all the Silver Birch trees in the street be removed and replaced
 - 3 submitters have requested for the removal of only 3 Silver Birches outside Jamell Place and have strongly requested that no more be removed
 - 5 submitters agreed to have only 3 Silver Birches removed
26. However, there was also strong opposition on the removal of any Silver Birch trees from Jamell Place by other two residents who indicated that the trees were a big part of the attractiveness of the area and they added charm, value and character.
27. We note from some responses that this consultation is resurfacing street tension and concerns that there would be further requests for removals of the Silver Birches. There was a strong request that this would be the last they hear of any further removals of Silver Birches on Jamell Place.
28. All respondents have been sent a final reply letter thanking them for their input, including a copy of the comments received from this consultation process. The letter informed respondents that the submission would be presented to the Riccarton-Wigram Community Board for their approval. Details of the meeting (date, time and venue) were also provided so that any interested residents could attend or address the Board prior to the decision being made. Residents have also been made aware of the suggestion of Manna Ash being the proposed replacement; these trees are smaller and are less likely to fail in the longer term.

BACKGROUND ON THE SILVER BIRCH TREES

29. Issues were raised in 2001 requesting the removal and replanting of all the Silver Birch Trees along the street. Council had consulted on this and the feedback received was mixed. The decision made by the Board at the time was to retain the trees as they were healthy trees. However, some of the trees that were damaged by a severe storm were removed and replaced with Claret Ash.
30. In April 2005, in response to the residents concerns about shading caused by the trees and the slippery condition of the footpath, the residents were advised by the Council Arborist that the three trees were healthy and that there was very little pruning which could be done to alleviate the residents concerns. The residents were also advised to approach their neighbours and request that they prune their trees to reduce the perceived problem.

5 Cont'd

31. Again in October 2007, following concerns raised by the residents, Council's City Arborist advised that Silver Birch trees are structurally sound or healthy and can not be removed without Board approval.
32. In April 2008, Council Contractors, City Care Ltd, were employed to carry out a crown lifting operation (remove lower branches and sucker growth) on all trees in the street including the three Silver Birch trees in question.

OPTIONS

33. Option 1 – Retain the Silver Birch Trees (funded from operational budget)

All of the Silver Birch trees could remain. If none of the trees were removed Council staff would undertake the routine removal of dead wood, damaged branches and clearance over the footpath and road would be operational.

34. Option 2 – Removal of one Silver Birch tree (Estimated Cost of \$2,050)

The Silver Birch tree closest to 10 Jamell Place could be removed. This may help to alleviate some of the shading and catkin at 12 Jamell Place (especially with a Norwest wind). There would only be one replacement tree in an appropriate position. While the resident has requested that the trees be replaced with Claret Ash, staff would recommend replacement with one Manna Ash tree.

35. Option 3 – Removal of two Silver Birch trees (Estimated Cost of \$4,100)

The Silver Birch tree closest to 10 Jamell Place and the tree directly in front of 12 Jamell Place could be removed. This may help to alleviate the shading and catkin issues at 12 Jamell Place. There would only be one replacement Manna Ash tree in an appropriate position.

36. Option 4 – Removal of the three Silver Birch trees (Estimated Cost of \$5,810)

All three Silver Birch trees could be removed. At present, there is no arboricultural/ health and safety reason to remove the healthy Silver Birch trees but there is some community desire to have these three trees removed. Replacement with two Manna Ash trees.

PREFERRED OPTION

37. The preferred option is:

Option 2 – Removal of one Silver Birch tree (Estimated Cost of \$2,050)

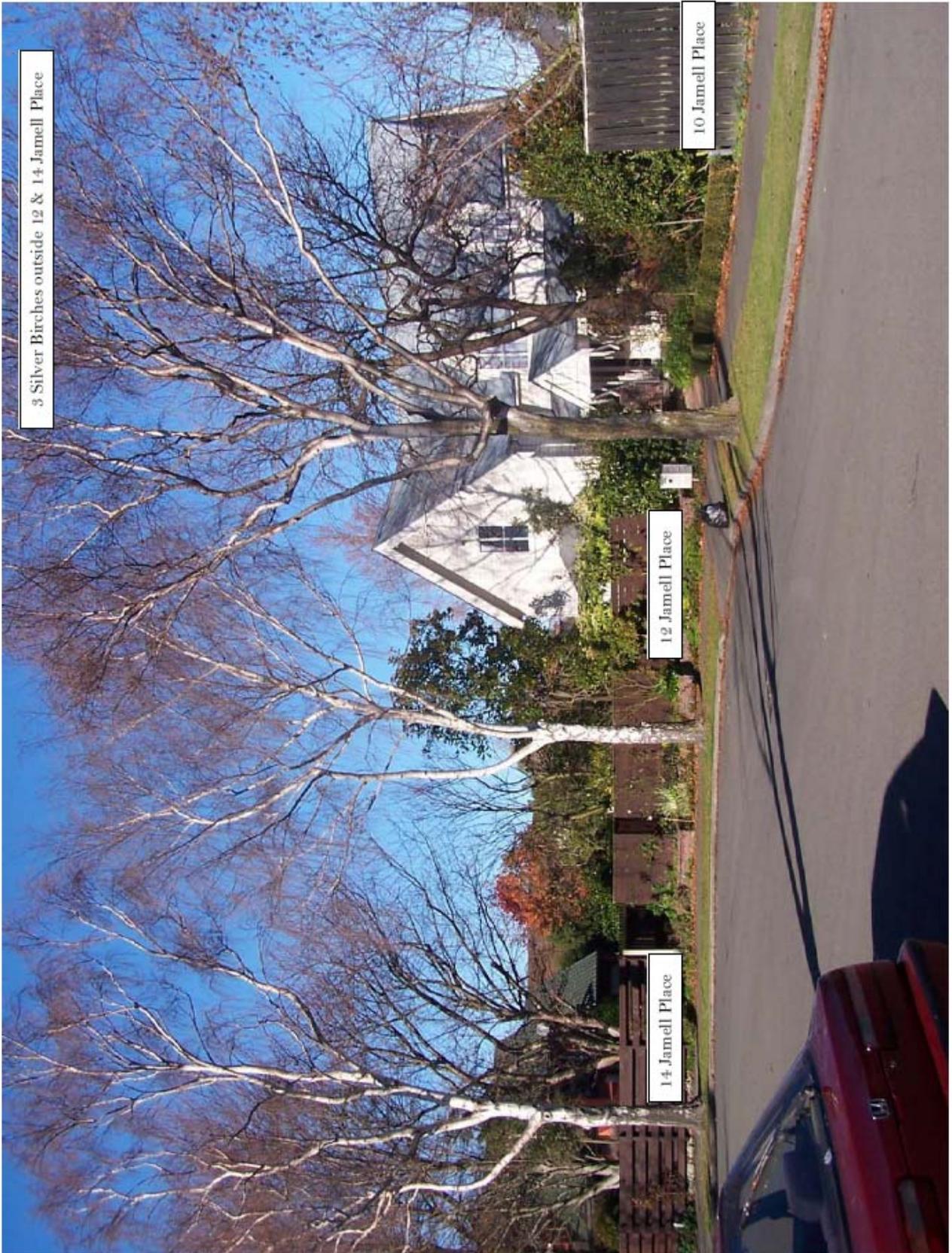
- (a) Remove the Silver Birch tree closest to 10 Jamell Place – this may help alleviate some of the shading and catkin issues faced by the owners of 12 Jamell Place (especially with the Norwest Wind)
- (b) There will be one replacement of Manna Ash tree in an appropriate position.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommend to the Board to remove the Silver Birch tree in front of 12 Jamell Place (closest to 10 Jamell Place) and be replaced with a Manna Ash tree.

7. 8. 2008

7

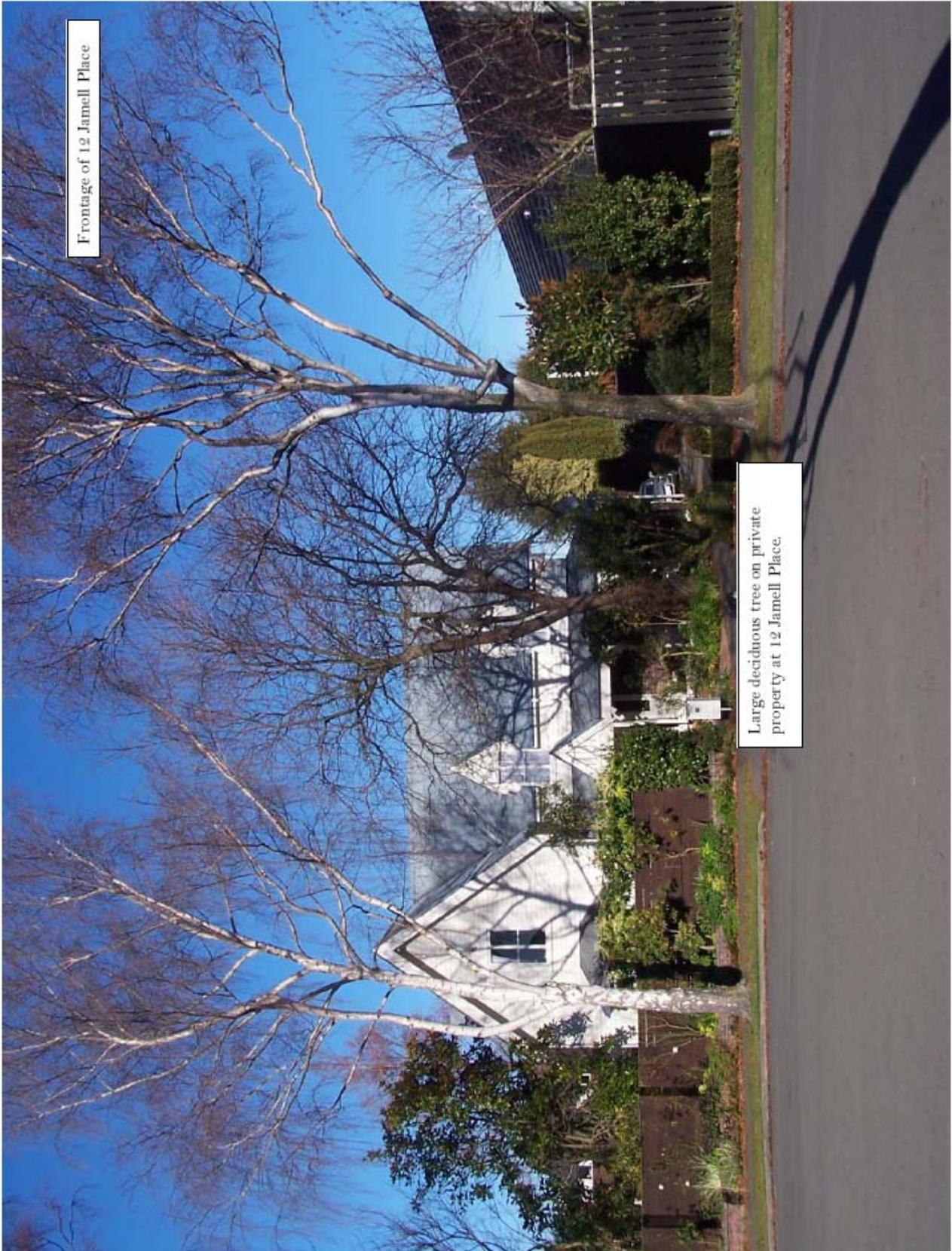


3 Silver Birches outside 12 & 14 Jamell Place

10 Jamell Place

12 Jamell Place

14 Jamell Place



Frontage of 12 Jamell Place

Large deciduous tree on private property at 12 Jamell Place.

Aerial view of Jamell Place



1 : 1000

Produced by 153.111.128.163 17:56 14/07/2008



The accuracy of this plan and the measurements shown are not guaranteed but should be verified by inspection.

© Copyright reserved 2002 reproduction prohibited. Aerial Photos: Copyright Terralink International Limited

12 JAMELL PLACE: STREET TREE REMOVAL

ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT

Background

A history of events show that Council Arborist Tony Armstrong met the residents on site in April 2005 in response to the residents concerns about shading caused by the trees and the slippery condition of the footpath. Tony Armstrong advised the residents that the three trees were healthy and that there was very little pruning which could be done to alleviate the residents concerns. Tony advised the residents to approach their neighbours and request that they prune their trees to reduce the perceived problem. I cannot provide any more information about this recommendation. The next response to the residents concerns occurred in October 2007 from City Arborist Shane Moohan advising Council's direction is that Silver Birch trees are not to be removed unless they are structurally unsound or unhealthy. In April 2008, Council Contractors City Care Ltd, were employed to carry out a crown lifting operation (remove lower branches and sucker growth) on all trees in the street including the three Silver Birch trees in question.

Therefore the purpose of this memo is to address the arboricultural issues of health and safety and tree maintenance.



Observations

The three Silver Birch trees in question are illustrated in the above photograph. They are situated on the Council owned grass berm outside numbers 12 and 14 Jamell Place and are located on the northern aspect of the property of number 12. All three trees have reached maturity with approximate heights ranging from 12 to 14 metres.

The canopies of the three trees are approximately 10 metres each. The diameter at breast height ranges from 1.1 to 1.3 metres. The three trees are significant to the landscape of the street and compliment the surrounding mature trees which are located on private property. There are currently 20 trees in this street under ownership of the Council, 10 of which are mature Silver Birch trees which were planted in 1973 and are of similar dimensions to the trees outside number 12 and 14. The remaining 10 street trees are juvenile Claret Ash and these were planted from 2001 onwards as replacement plantings.

Visual Tree Assessment

The rootzone, trunk and canopy of the three trees, have been inspected from the ground using recognised visual tree assessment practices.



Rootzone Assessment

The rootzone's of all three trees appear in good condition and are normal for this type of species. Small cracks in the footpath are visible in the above photograph. These are minor cracks and do not present a health and safety issue. The cracks can be repaired as part of the footpath maintenance programme in the event that these become a safety hazard. The tree roots on the tree outside number 14 do appear to be causing minor damage to the storm water pipe. This is shown in the below photograph.

7. 8. 2008

12

- 3 -



Trunk Assessment

Based on a visual assessment, the trunks of the three trees appear to be in good condition with evidence to suggest branches have been removed in the past to address such issues as footpath and road clearance. The removal of these branches have created pockets of decay however these pockets do not appear to compromise the overall condition of the trees and are consistent with the lifecycle of the Silver Birch tree. The trunk on the tree outside number 14 is on a slight lean (refer to above photograph), however this is common when trees are in competition with surrounding trees on private property and this does not compromise the structural integrity of the tree.



Canopy Assessment

The overall condition of the canopies of all three trees is good. The above photograph, taken in April 2007 illustrates that the canopies are upright and well distributed when in full leaf on all three trees. The canopy structure on all three trees is normal with good scaffold branching, however there is one lower branch on the northern side of the tree closest to number 10, which could be removed due to previous branch removals which have created an unusual angle. When the trees were assessed (July 2008) they had lost all leaves.

Residents Concerns

With regard to the concerns of the residents in relation to the reasons for removing the trees, I can comment as follows.

- **Debris** - This can be another negative effect experienced typically in autumn, but also periodically throughout the year, with the tree dropping varying sized branches and/or seeds etc, and often being weather dependent. Debris from trees is an accepted part of a trees lifecycle and where it proves to be a problem this can be addressed by maintenance of both tree and affected property, with the onus on respective property owners for this. Presently, it is not Council policy or practice to maintain private property due to debris from adjacent Council owned trees.
- **Shade** - The residents are concerned that the trees in question block out sunlight for a large part of the day and affect their enjoyment of their property. The trees are deciduous so the likely period of adverse effect would be during autumn, however, it is acknowledged that being close to the property on the northern aspect this would be exacerbated. Shading is a difficult issue to address, as, although measurable, it can often be subjective. As one of the positive effects of trees in the urban environment is the provision of shade in summer a balance can be difficult to achieve.
- **Issues relating to perceived Silver Birch allergies** - The direction from Council dated 14th of August 2007 states that there is to be no city wide removal and replacement of Silver Birches for supposed health associations. The removal of Silver Birches or similar, are to be evaluated on a case by case basis and only to be removed for tree health and safety reasons, with them being replaced by another tree species.

Conclusions

There appears to be no arboricultural reason to remove the three Silver Birch trees at present. The trees have had a history of pruning due to some reactive work and programmed street tree maintenance.

The three trees in question greatly contribute to the landscape of Jamell Place and compliment the other mature trees in this location

Further maintenance will occur in the future to remove dead wood, damaged branches and to achieve clearance over the footpath and road. The effect of this pruning regime would be partially beneficial to the residents in addressing some of the concerns they have regarding, in particular, shading, debris and health and safety

To reduce the perceived shading created by the trees, the removal of the northern Silver Birch tree next to number 10 Jamell place, may help alleviate this problem, whilst retaining the other trees.

The complete removal of all three trees would be the only assurance of completely negating nuisance and any potential health and safety issues.

Further consultation of Jamell Place residents may allow another perspective on the issue.

Recommendations

There is no arboricultural reason to remove these trees, therefore I would recommend the retention of all three trees and the future programming of work to occur as part of a regular street tree maintenance programme.

The Community Board may perhaps wish to consider the removal of the northern Silver Birch tree closest to number 10. This may help to alleviate the perceived shading issue on the property at number 12. There is an adjacent mature tree on private property which would compensate for the removal of this council owned Silver Birch tree.

Jonathan Hansen
Street Tree Arborist
Transport and Greenspace
Christchurch City Council
Phone: (03) 9418328 Mobile: (027) 2130040
Email: Jonathan.Hansen@ccc.govt.nz

Attachment 4

Jameil Place - Silver Birch Street Trees

Support Plan YES	Do NOT Support Plan	Comments on the Proposal	Project Team Response
1		Our postal address is as below, however, we have a 25 metre frontage to Jameil Place. We would very much like to see all silver birch trees in Jameil Place removed. We are shaded by 5 of them. In addition to the reasons for removal advanced by the owners of 12 Jameil Place, I would add health issues with the trees causing major hay fever problems in spring/early summer. Happy to have Claret Ash replacements. If removal of silver birch not supported, would request they be topped by 50% of height. Thanks	This is a request for a removal of 3 Silver Birch trees only and a replanting.
1		I suggest you remove all the silver birch trees in Jameil Place if possible due to the same reason. Please explain to me of the Claret Ash Tree?	Claret Ash was planted in 2001 after a severe storm damaged a few Silver Birch trees, this was suggested by the owner of 12 Jameil Pl. However, Council are recommending the planting of Manna Ash which are smaller and less likely to fall in the longer term.
1		Please plant big (as big as possible) and strong Claret Ashes. We only support the REPLACEMENT of the trees and not a mere removal. It is quite sad to see such lovely trees killed, but we also understand the problems they cause.	This is a request for a removal and a replanting.
1		22 trees in Jameil Pl is a lot, over the top. The Silver Birches opposite our place cause us hundreds of dollars of damage to our pool equipment every year. (8 Jameil Place). I believe all the large trees in Jameil need to be removed as they cause more of a Carbon Footprint problem than they remove. The road sweeper has to do 4 goes to remove all leaves etc. Seeds to be done twice a month. Trees damage roads & footpaths also & cause flooding. As trees are a problem, who pays for damage to private property, Developers or Council. Could you please advise.	Should damage occur in private property you are to report it to the Christchurch City Council's, Customer Service on 941 6333 - who will forward your concerns on to the relevant department.

7. 8. 2008

18

Attachment 4

Jamell Place - Silver Birch Street Trees

Support Plan YES	Do NOT Support Plan	Comments on the Proposal	Project Team Response
1		I notice that no mention was made of documented health risk of silver birch trees.	The possible health risk was not mentioned in the feedback form because the Christchurch City Council states that there should not be any city wide removal and replacement of Silver Birches for supposed health associations.
	1	The concerns of No 12 re the trees are petty and maybe the owners should have thought about this before the purchase of their house. Other residents of the street are more tolerant. The current trees are well established and beautiful. The street has already suffered the loss of a number of its trees. If the people of No 12 really do not want a silver birch street tree surely its replacement (of a similar size tree) should be at their expense. As a resident of Jamell Place I passionately oppose the suggestion to remove three trees that line my street. The trees add value, charm and character which would take years to compensate with new trees which are going to shed and block sunlight anyway. Many residents throughout ChCh maintain street trees without complaint, recognising the above mentions benefits to the public. I hope you take this into consideration in your decision.	There will be a replanting. Your comments will be copied to the Riccarton-Wigram Community Board Members.
1		Nil	Nil
1		Sounds great - the Silver Birch are really messy	Nil
1		Nil	Nil

Jamell Place - Silver Birch Street Trees

Support Plan YES	Do NOT Support Plan	Comments on the Proposal	Project Team Response
1		<p>I support the removal of the trees outside 12 Jamell Place. However, my consent is also conditional upon this being the END of the matter of trees being removed in Jamell Place. We cannot keep on having these remaining Silver Birch trees removed as it would be detrimental to the ambience of Jamell Place. I moved to Jamell Place because of the lovely Silver Birch trees and have never complained. If any other residents, especially new ones, start again to try to have them all removed, I will ABSOLUTELY REFUSE. If you move into a street, you must accept your surroundings. I am only supporting the removal of the trees outside No 12 Jamell Place as they are one of the original owners and have been resident for over 25 years in the street.</p>	<p>Nil</p>
1		<p>Like the resident of 12 Jamell, I find that at times one cannot have windows open because of the seeds. They fly in at every opportunity & even the bath has to be 'dusted' before use. Also the problem of gutters & spoutings. Even the car (which is garaged) falls victim and when the air-conditioning is turned on, the seeds come flying out of the vents. I would love to see the birches removed and replaced with the Ash. We certainly wouldn't want a treeless Cul-de-sac. I really feel, in finishing, that all the birch trees in the street should be replaced, not just the 3 in front of 12 Jamell, as the seeds fly all over the place. Thank you.</p>	<p>At present this process is for the removal of only 3 Silver Birch trees and their replacement.</p>
1		<p>There seems no point replacing the trees in the same position as the original as eventually they will block out the sun too. Maybe change the positions. I would support all Silver Birch to go to aid asthma sufferers. I would support native Silver Beech over Claret Ash which has no association with Avonhead. How about developing Jamell Place as an experimental edible street - extended grass areas into street and plant with a mixture of edible plants such as olive, lemons, dwarf apple, fig, walnut, cherry, blueberry, feijoa. The community could maintain it in exchange for free produce.</p>	<p>The Arborist will decide on the position and the number of trees to be replanted. The trees considered for replanting are Manna Ash and are a smaller species.</p>

Jamell Place - Silver Birch Street Trees

Support Plan YES	Do NOT Support Plan	Comments on the Proposal	Project Team Response
1		<p>We are the original family who put the subdivision in and had Boffat Miskell landscape with silver birches. We were sand to see them fall when the storm blew so many down. Now the Claret Ash are bigger, we are reluctantly agreeable to the 3 outside 12 Jamell be replaced. We only want these 3, and are scared that this exercise could escalate!! As good neighbours to 12 Jamell, they definitely are affected (light/rubbish) and want to help them. The street looks so lovely when you come in seeing the silver trunks, and do want them to remain other than the 3 outside our section + 12 Jamell Pl. PS. This is resurfacing street tensions again which is not conducive to neighbourly relationships. Please let this be the last time for this issue. The tree (1:3) outside our empty section will have to come down as we are to sell the section and the tree is stopping access to the section - 14 Jamell.</p> <p>The other tree in front at 12 Jamell definitely blocks light and drops so much rubbish. When we sit outside with the 'Scandretts' it is really unpleasant with all the catkins, please. we don't everyone else getting on the bandwagon, other wise we will be forced to vote against the removal. This survey is just for 3 trees. Please let this be the final referrals as it is very divisive to our lovely street.</p>	<p>This is a request for a removal of 3 Silver Birch trees only and a replanting. We have addressed your comments with regards to the tree in front of number 14.</p>
	1	<p>Please do NOT cut down the trees. The trees are a big part of the attractiveness of the area - an attraction for us when we spent considerable money purchasing in Denley gardens. I believe the trees are non-negotiable. There is a cost to the beauty of nature - it the residents of 12 Jamell Place don't like them, tell them to go and buy in a suburb without trees - Aranui. We have a big silver birch on our property at 8 Denley Gardens. yes, we do get the seeds and they are annoying. But the seeds fall for a short period of time - the price of removing the trees is too expensive and far outweighs the advantages. Trees add to the value of the properties around - there is no doubt about that, eg Fendalton.</p>	<p>Nil</p>

Attachment 4

Jamell Place - Silver Birch Street Trees

Support Plan YES	Do NOT Support Plan	Comments on the Proposal	Project Team Response
1		We fully support the request. We joined with the owners of No 12 in 2001 to have this problem resolved and appeared at a Community Board meeting. We have exactly the same problems except for the sunlight issue and as a result of the blockages caused by the silver birches we have had to spend \$22,000 on a re-roof to widen the gutters to try and overcome the problems. I have also had complaints from Denley Garden residents about the rubbish that blows down the lane but I explained I did not own the trees. How can I instigate a similar action to the owners of No 12.	You will need to contact the Community Board Adviser for the Riccarton-Wigram Community Board.
13	2	TOTALS	

7. 8. 2008

22

6. ELECTED MEMBERS INFORMATION EXCHANGE