

## Appendix 5.

Resident  
River Walk  
Southampton  
SO18 2DP

Direct dial: 023 8083 3005  
Please ask for: Gary Claydon-Bone  
Our ref: 50011603  
Date: 10 December 2014

### **RE: Hornbeam Trees along River Walk**

Over the years there have been numerous complaints made with regard to the line of Fastigiata Hornbeam trees growing in the grass verge along River Walk.

The essence of the complaints are that the trees block light, cause obstruction to the road and footpath and have canopies which extend within close proximity of some of the properties. These trees do have a very dense canopy which has grown together, due to the close spacing in which they were planted.

The trees are to the north of the properties and therefore do not block the sun although the sheer size and proximity to some of the houses will cause some loss of ambient light. Any works therefore will only reduce visual impact, not shading. The trees are regularly inspected and any health and safety works are undertaken. This includes crown lifting to raise the canopy above the road and footpath where necessary.

The Council do not consider crown reduction of all the trees as an option. This species of tree would not be one suitable to reduce whilst maintaining an attractive feature in the area. The reduction work would also only provide a short term solution to the perceived shading issues as the trees will naturally put on profuse growth in reaction to the pruning. This would very quickly make the trees denser and more likely to block ambient light, which in turn would mean that the trees would require a cyclical management regime of reductions to maintain them at a desired size. This costly exercise would be detrimental to the trees health and is not financially sustainable.

The Council therefore considers there to be three management options, and these are as follows.

- A. Do nothing – Do not fell any trees but ensure they are continued to be maintained under the Southampton Tree Operational Risk Management System (STORMS) in good health and safety following their routine regular inspections. (No additional cost to the City Council as the current management of the trees is funded)
- B. Remove alternate trees to the front of the properties who are closest, which would be from property 1 to 10 (the trees on the park side would not be felled). The remaining trees from number 11 to 23 River Walk would not be removed. This option would give space between the remaining trees and may allow more ambient light to penetrate the adjacent properties. (Approximate cost £6000)
- C. Remove alternate trees (excluding the trees on the park side) along the entire length of River Walk, so as to keep the balance of tree spacing equal. (Approximate cost £12,200)

Options B & C are not part of the City Council's health and safety management of the Council's trees and therefore would require additional funding. The felling of these trees would be considered a low priority for budget spend and health & safety works will be prioritised above this work. Therefore, even if agreed, the works could only be undertaken if an additional source of funding can be found.

The above management proposals will be put forward to a Planning & Rights of Way Panel meeting for the elected members to vote on. I am therefore writing to you to ask your opinion on the suggested management options.

Once we have the opinion of the residents of River Walk, any comments received can be summarised in the panel report to give the members a clearer idea on the resident's views.

Please respond by the **20th December 2014**, stating whether you **support** or **object** to any of the above management proposals.

You can contact the trees team in writing by using the address at the top of this letter. Alternatively you can contact the tree team by email at [trees@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:trees@southampton.gov.uk).

If you require any further information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the tree team.

Yours sincerely

Gary Claydon-Bone  
City Tree Officer  
[trees@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:trees@southampton.gov.uk)

If you would like this letter sent to you in another format or language, please contact the number at the top of this letter.