

*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* an application by Ryman Healthcare Limited for resource consent to establish and operate a comprehensive care retirement village at 100-104 Park Terrace and 20 Dorset Street, and 78 Park Terrace, Christchurch

*between:* Ryman Healthcare Limited  
*Applicant*

*and:* Christchurch City Council  
*Consent Authority*

Summary of evidence of Jennifer Geraldine Dray on behalf  
of Christchurch City Council

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Dated: 29 January 2021

# SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF JENNIFER GERALDINE DRAY ON BEHALF OF CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

## Introduction

1. My full name is Jennifer Geraldine Dray. My qualifications and experience are set out in my statement of evidence dated 2 December 2020. I repeat the code of conduct statement contained in my statement of evidence.
2. My summary statement provides a summary of the proposed landscape treatment and tree planting, and in particular amendments made to the tree planting plan in response to the Council Officer's reports. I refer to the summary of evidence of Mr Dixon, Landscape Architect for the applicant. I also make reference to the revised planting plans and detailed drawings, dated 19 January 2021.
3. For the purposes of my Statement of Evidence, I focussed my comments more generally on the proposed tree planting in terms of their ability to assist with visual amenity and surrounding context, and their capacity to provide landscape amenity in perpetuity.
4. The ability to establish large trees on the perimeter and internally within the site is considered by both myself and Ms Schröder as an important element in addressing the existing site context, and contributing to visual amenity beyond both of the sites in terms of mitigating the visible scale of the buildings, and providing amenity at street level. That is to say, in my assessment, there is multiple reasoning for the establishment of larger scale trees.
5. In terms of the existing site context, it is generally agreed this includes both the immediate neighbourhood (residential and commercial), the surrounding streetscape, and the large open space of Hagley Park and the Ōtakaro Avon River. Surrounding residential properties contain a mix of tree and garden plantings, with the treed environment being composed of a variety of large and small trees, deciduous and evergreen. The neighbouring Hagley Park is predominantly planted with large English-style deciduous trees, mostly with large spreading canopies. The Ōtakaro Avon River is also lined with large trees, typically weeping willows, which are valued for both their landscape character and historical associations.
6. While increasing residential intensity has reduced the available area for established gardens and large tree species, the Ōtakaro Avon River and Hagley Park still remains an important contributor to the overall treed environment and natural character of the surrounding neighbourhood. An appropriate landscape response to this treed environment would be to represent the surrounding landscape by planting a similar combination of tree species, replicating the tree heights and growth forms.
7. In terms of contributing to visual amenity beyond both of the sites in order to mitigate the visible scale of the buildings, the trees must be of an adequate size to form a meaningful relationship to the buildings, when viewed from a distance. In addition to the trees providing amenity for street users, I would also expect that the trees provide a similar level of visual amenity from further afield. That is from residential areas, the neighbouring streets, and from Hagley Park and the associated footpath network.
8. Where reference is made to trees being required to mitigate building scale, this is in relation to the breaking down of the building bulk and height, the relief of the verticality of the buildings, integration of the buildings into their surroundings, and the provision of a natural environment in contrast to the built form. In order to achieve this, the trees must be of both a height and spread that is meaningful in relation to the building, and create an impact within the surrounding environment, and lend a sense of place. The spacings, or density of tree planting, can be adjusted to provide this effect, without creating a dense vegetated screen. The requirement is not to create a full visual screen, or somehow hide the buildings completely, but to provide a filtered view while also providing amenity at street level.
9. The creation of amenity at street level is important for reasons of assisting with privacy (particularly outdoor courtyards), provision of shade (an overhanging canopy would generally

be required), signalling of public and private areas, and providing a more contextual approach with the integration of the buildings into the surrounding landscape.

#### Revised Planting Plan and Tree Planting Schedule

10. A summary of the revised tree and landscape planting has been provided and we have heard discussion around this from Mr Dixon.
11. Amended tree schedules have also been provided, detailing revised tree species and maintained heights. As a part of these revisions, a small number of trees have been identified to be allowed to grow to their full height, in response to Council Officer Reports. The reason for requesting that some trees be allowed to grow to their full height is to ensure a more contextual response to the surrounding treed environment. Trees in the natural environment grow to a variety of heights and canopy widths. I am now comfortable that the revised proposal includes at least 2 trees to be grown to their natural height on the Park Terrace frontage of both the Peterborough and the Bishopspark site. These trees should also be allowed to grow to their full natural spread. I also suggest that a note be added to the planting plans which explicitly identifies these trees and this specific landscape treatment (i.e. that these trees be allowed to grow to full natural height and spread without being topped or reduced in height).
12. The construction and planting methodology has been provided, detailing three differing styles of engineered raised tree planters and tree pits. I defer to Council Arborist Mr John Thornton to comment further (who also more latterly relied on the comments of Council Arborist Mr Laurie Gordon).
13. A Landscape Management Plan has been supplied detailing the maintenance which is to be undertaken with respect to the proposed trees, which are to be monitored and trimmed annually. I will defer to comments from Mr Thornton regarding this.

#### Outstanding Matters

14. The trees species to be provided on the Salisbury Street frontage of building B07 of the Peterborough site have been revised from Fastigate Oaks to *Prunus* 'Amanogawa' which is a flowering cherry with an upright growth form. The applicant has indicated that these would be allowed to grow to their natural height, which has been estimated at 7.0m. These trees are smaller than the Oaks and are likely to thrive more successfully in these planting containers than the Oaks. They are likely however to require some trimming to ensure their canopy does not contact with the buildings, as they will be positioned within approximately 700-800mm of the northern elevation of the apartment building.
15. In my opinion, while these trees are likely to establish more successfully in these growth conditions, and will provide enhanced amenity at street level, they are unlikely to provide a similar level of visual amenity from further afield, or provide the anticipated high quality environment. The general urban design assessment appears to be that the Building B07 frontage to Salisbury Street presents a lower level of modulation, and some visual dominance effects. In my opinion, this is an outstanding matter. The provision of several larger trees that can reach a mature height of 12m would assist with this. This may be achieved by providing further setback or width for the tree planting area.

#### Other Matters

16. The Council recommended that the trees to be planted along the boundary shared with 76 Park Terrace be moved to the northern side of the driveway. This recommendation was in fact a response to ensuring a more filtered view of the southern elevation of Building B07 (especially when viewed by oncoming motorists and pedestrians travelling north), in addition to reducing shading effects to 76 Park Terrace. I accept however the applicant's position, that it isn't

necessary in terms of shading to 79 Park Terrace, and do not consider this an outstanding matter.

17. The Council recommended a large tree to either side of the Park Terrace entrance to the Bishopspark site. The tree planting scheme has since been revised to provide a *Liquidambar* tree which would be allowed to mature to full natural height. No further "gateway" trees are proposed as Mr Dixon considers enough of a gateway experience is provided for with the Oak tree at 90 Park Terrace and the avenue of Magnolia trees proposed to line either side of the driveway. I am comfortable with this proposal and no longer consider it an outstanding matter.
18. On the boundary shared with residences at 13 to 17 Salisbury Street, *Liriodendron tulipifera* 'Fastigiata' were proposed to be planted in tree and garden planters over the basement car park podium. These have been replaced with an upright purple Beech tree which is to be allowed to grow to its natural height of 8-10m. I am comfortable with this.
19. Building B03 encroaches on the 2m setback from the Dorset Street boundary. A row of four upright purple European Beech were proposed, situated on the northern side of the apartments. The revised tree planting scheme is that the bed width has been widened from approximately 800mm to 1080mm, Stratavault Cell tree pits are to be provided for additional root capacity, and the tree species replaced with *Prunus* 'Amanogawa' to be grown at its natural height of approximately 7.0m. I am comfortable that this is a better outcome, particularly as Stratavault cell tree pits are to be provided.
20. Fastigate Ginkgo trees were proposed for the northern elevation of the Building B01 (behind Dorset Street flats), to be grown in tree and garden planters that appear to be approximately 1.0m in width. The planting strategy has since been revised to provide upright purple European Beech in a landscape strip that has been re-located away from the building elevation, to the opposite side of the adjacent path. These trees are to be allowed to grow to their natural height of 8-10m. I am comfortable that this is an improved outcome, as these trees will have additional room to allow their canopy to establish.
21. The tree planting strategy on the Park Terrace frontage of the Peterborough site has been revised to provide a Red maple to either side of the driveway to be allowed to grow to their natural height, and an upright Oak tree to be grown to its full height in the NW corner. I consider that these additional tree species, grown to their natural dimensions, provide a more appropriate reflection of the Hagley Park and Avon River park-like treescape. Again, these trees should be allowed to both their natural height and spread, without being topped or reduced in height.
22. I noted discussions with Mr Dixon regarding the predominant use of exotic and deciduous trees. I am in agreement with Mr Dixon that deciduous trees provide a greater range of tree forms, as well as seasonal colour. I also consider that in the winter months, a well formed tree can provide mitigation by way of its scale and form, notwithstanding the branches are bare of leaves.
23. With regards to native tree species, I understand that at detail design, a number of native shrubs and plants will be specified as under-planting. While this will assist with bio-diversity and complexity, care must be taken that large shrubs do not comprise CPTED issues. This is likely to be addressed by a proposed condition (Condition 59) in relation to the provision to the Council for certification a Detailed Planting Plan and Planting, and an Implementation and Maintenance Strategy.

## Conclusion

24. I conclude that overall additional amenity has been added within the site and for the benefit of the street interface by way of tree and landscape planting. There remains a concern for me that while the revised tree species on the Salisbury Street frontage will likely thrive more successfully, and will provide enhanced amenity at street level, they are unlikely to provide a similar level of visual amenity from further afield.