

Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods)  Introduced by the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods	Executive Cabinet	13/11/2008

## PETITION RE: TREES AT BLACK CROFT

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report was previously presented to the Council meeting of 23 September 2008. It brings to the attention of Members a set of letters received from the residents of Black Croft and, whilst treating the letters as a petition in accordance with Council policy, the report advises of the response made to the residents on the issue.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. It is recommended that Members note that the matter has been dealt with in line with the content of the letters sent in reply to the residents' letters, a copy of which is attached to this report.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

3. It is clearly necessary for the Council to adopt a consistent approach in these matters. The shelter belts themselves are extensive and the problems perceived by residents living near to trees are, of course, not confined to these areas.

### BACKGROUND

4. As is explained in the letter (attached) responding to the request, the planting was originally put in place as part of the plans of the Central Lancashire New Town, to screen residential property from the intrusive effects of traffic on the adjacent road system. In order to achieve this the New Town chose species that grow quite vigorously and achieve an effect in a relatively short space of time. Unfortunately, the only way to control the height and spread would have been to start many years ago to treat these areas as hedges – which would now be wholly impractical and inappropriate given the species and sizes of many of the trees.

### RESPONSE

5. The reply points out that, whilst they have been quite effective in screening the property, they are a substantial burden to the Council. Our resources would not cover the level of maintenance the residents are suggesting for all of the shelter belts of this type in the Borough. Stretched end to end they would add up to several miles and any serious attempt at systematic control of these and other similar areas would incur costs running into tens of thousands of pounds each year.

6. We make every effort to maintain the lower growth in a reasonable and presentable condition and will deal with overhanging branches where this is necessary. However, it has been the Council's practice for a number of years not to carry out work to reduce the size of trees to deal with the sort of problem identified at Black Croft. The Council produced a guide explaining its approach some years ago.

ISHBEL MURRAY  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR (NEIGHBOURHOODS)

There are no background papers to this report.

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