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**Waihoru/  
Spreydon-Cashmere Community Board  
MINUTES ATTACHMENTS**

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**Date:** Wednesday 14 April 2021  
**Time:** 8.04am  
**Venue:** Boardroom, Beckenham Service Centre,  
66 Colombo Street, Beckenham

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**PAGE**

**4.2 Public Forum - New Developments**

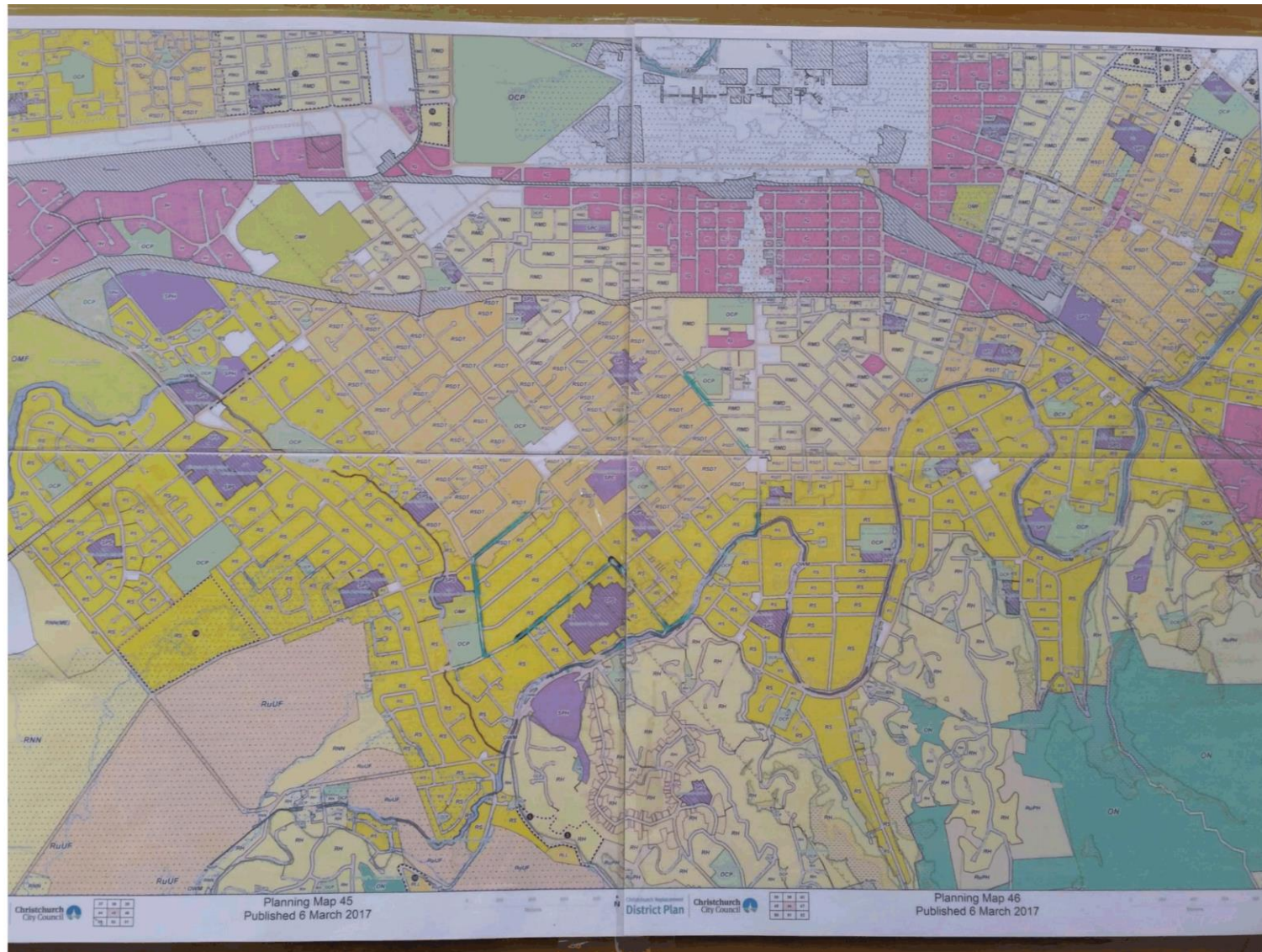
A. Public Forum Presentation - New Developments - 14 April 2021 ..... 3

**4.3 Shalamar Drive**

A. Public Forum Presentation - 110 Shalamar Drive - 14 April 2021 ..... 21

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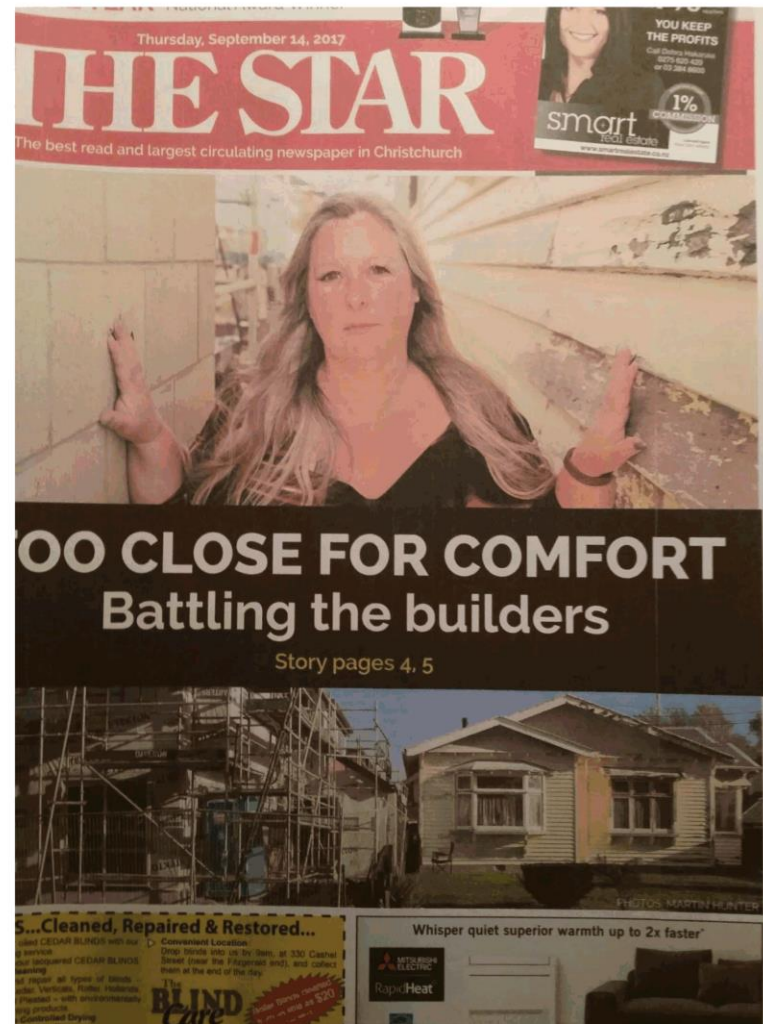














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# News

## Woman feels crushed as new

By Bridget Rutherford and Andrew King

KIM MEHLHOPT bought her Spreydon home 15 years ago because she liked the neighbourhood, privacy and the character houses.

But now, five two-storey townhouses are being built next door to her Bolton Ave home – the garage less than 1m away – has made the 50-year-old very, very angry.

The city council says the effect on her property is less than minor.

When finished, the residents living next door will look out of their windows directly into her front yard, living room, a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and back yard.

"It is so close, they'll be able to hear me peeing, and I will be able to hear them humping," Ms Mehlhopt said.

She says the development will devalue her home, cost her privacy and the street's family appeal. It would also make access to her underground drains running between the two properties, and her fire exits, difficult, she said.

But it is compliant with the city council's District Plan zoning, developed following the earthquakes.

**DANGER:** Kim Mehlhopt laid a complaint with WorkSafe after she photographed a contractor standing on the fence on Tuesday while working on the townhouses.

So Ms Mehlhopt has taken matters into her own hands by trespassing contractors from her property, calling police, and laying complaints with WorkSafe for contractor practices.

JSJ Investments bought the neighbouring property a couple of years ago.

Director Nick Johnston, who also owns the NRJ Construction which is building the townhouses, said the development was compliant because the land was zoned L3. The zone allows for residential medium density housing.

He said the reason it was so close was because Ms Mehlhopt's home had been built too close to the boundary.

The proximity of her home was not considered when designing the townhouses, he said.

"In L3 you build the max site coverage."

But Ms Mehlhopt said "working to the letter of the law doesn't make it right."

"They have not been sensitive to the needs of the neighbourhood."

She said her 121-year-old house's location had never been an issue, and the city council must have placed the boundary around it after it was built.

Ms Mehlhopt said she knew nothing about the townhouses until contractors started working on site a couple of months ago.

She said she should have been consulted.

**CONTRAST:** The two Bolton Ave houses used to be separated by a driveway, and now there is little room between the two properties (right).



Christchurch Casino Golden Oldies Sports Celebration

Winston Peters

WEKA PASS RAILWAY

## townhouses go up

But city council head of resource consents John Higgins said the adverse effects were considered "less than minor", so it did not need to be notified.

He said the development was compliant and all inspections had passed.

The District Plan did not require garages to have a setback, as long as it did not exceed 10.1m in length along the boundary, he said. The setback for other buildings was 1m, he said.

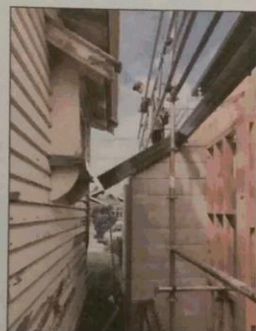
The decision to allow the development could only be overturned by the courts, if there had been an error in the processing, he said.

Ms Mehlhopt said on Tuesday a contractor put his ladder on her front lawn to install the spoutings next door because there was no room over the fence.

She said she asked him to leave three times, and verbally trespassed him.

"If the city council consents to this, they must know you can't complete the project without touching somebody else's land."

The contractor then stood on the fence separating the two properties to do the work, ini-



tially without wearing a harness, she said. Ms Mehlhopt reported it to WorkSafe.

A WorkSafe spokeswoman said it would write to the business concerned seeking a response.

She said it did not meet the criteria for an immediate on-site visit because it did not pose an imminent risk.

Ms Mehlhopt said she also phoned police who said it would be difficult to enforce a blanket trespass on contractors because there were so many coming and going.

Spreydon-Cashmere Commu-

nity Board chairwoman Karolin Potter said "terrible" situations like this were happening more frequently, which was concerning.

"It's so unfair for people who have bought a house thinking the symmetry of the street will stay the same."

Ms Mehlhopt met with Labour Wigram MP Megan Woods yesterday.

Dr Woods said she would follow it up with the city council, and would also have a broader discussion with Spreydon residents about it happening all over the suburb.

"That's very high density and very close."

Ms Mehlhopt, who is currently unemployed, said she requested the townhouse plans and would tee up a visit with a city council planner to discuss it.

She said her earthquake-damaged house was in a poor state, but until EQC re-levelled the house piles, she could not do any maintenance.

**HAVE YOUR SAY:** Do you think these developments should be allowed in suburban areas? Email [bridget.rutherford@starmedia.kiwi](mailto:bridget.rutherford@starmedia.kiwi)

## Burning log causes Airbnb house fire

By Andrew King

A BURNING log falling out of a fireplace caused the huge house fire which hospitalised six tourists in Sumner.

The wooden, three-storey house on Clifton Tce went up in flames about 8.30pm on Sunday while a Malaysian family of 10, renting it through Airbnb, were upstairs praying.

Specialist fire investigator Mark Thomas told *The Star* yesterday material falling from the fire had caused the blaze.

"The place had a lot of modern furniture, which has a heavy fuel load, and the house was timber-framed with timber cladding. That, combined with the furniture, is why it went up so fast, but that is not unusual in house fires. They can get very big, very fast," he said.

Of the six taken to Christchurch Hospital, four had moderate injuries and two had minor injuries, mainly smoke inhalation, a St John spokesman said.

Mr Thomas said the family was alerted to the blaze by a smoke alarm which saved them from serious injury or worse.



**GUTTED:** The three-storey house will have to be pulled down after a fire ripped through it on Friday.

PHOTO: GEOFF SLOAN

"One of the men tried to smother the flames but they overcame his efforts and he suffered burns to his arm," Mr Thomas said.

The family escaped through the back door, as flames had blocked the front, he said.

"Once they were outside their yelling alerted one of the neighbours, who phoned 111, which is exactly what we want people to do," he said.

Mr Thomas praised the fact the house had working smoke alarms.

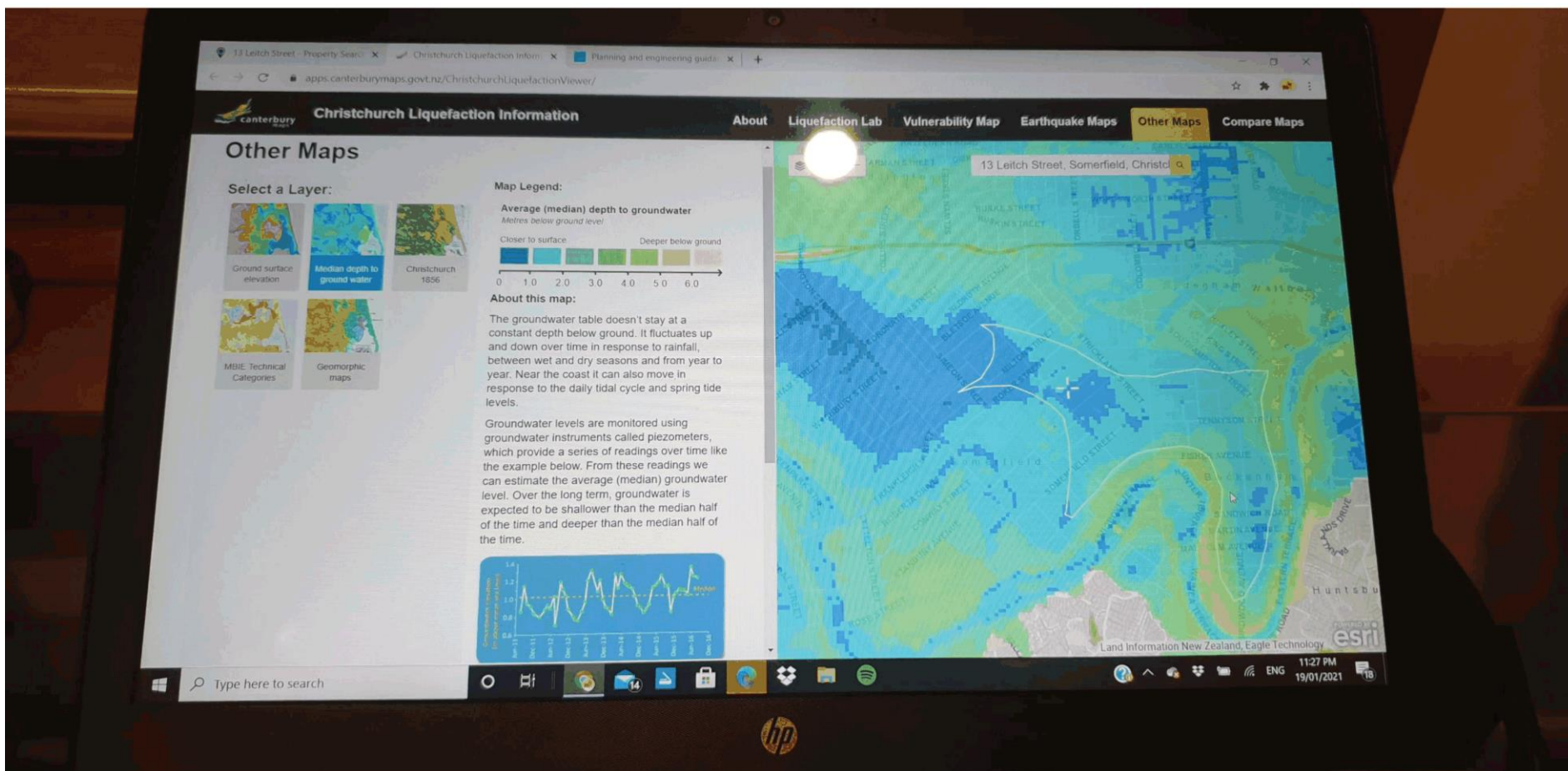
The owners of the house, Bryce and Kate Jenkins, do not live in Christchurch.

•Airbnb's popularity, p16-17

Lady Wigram Retirement Village









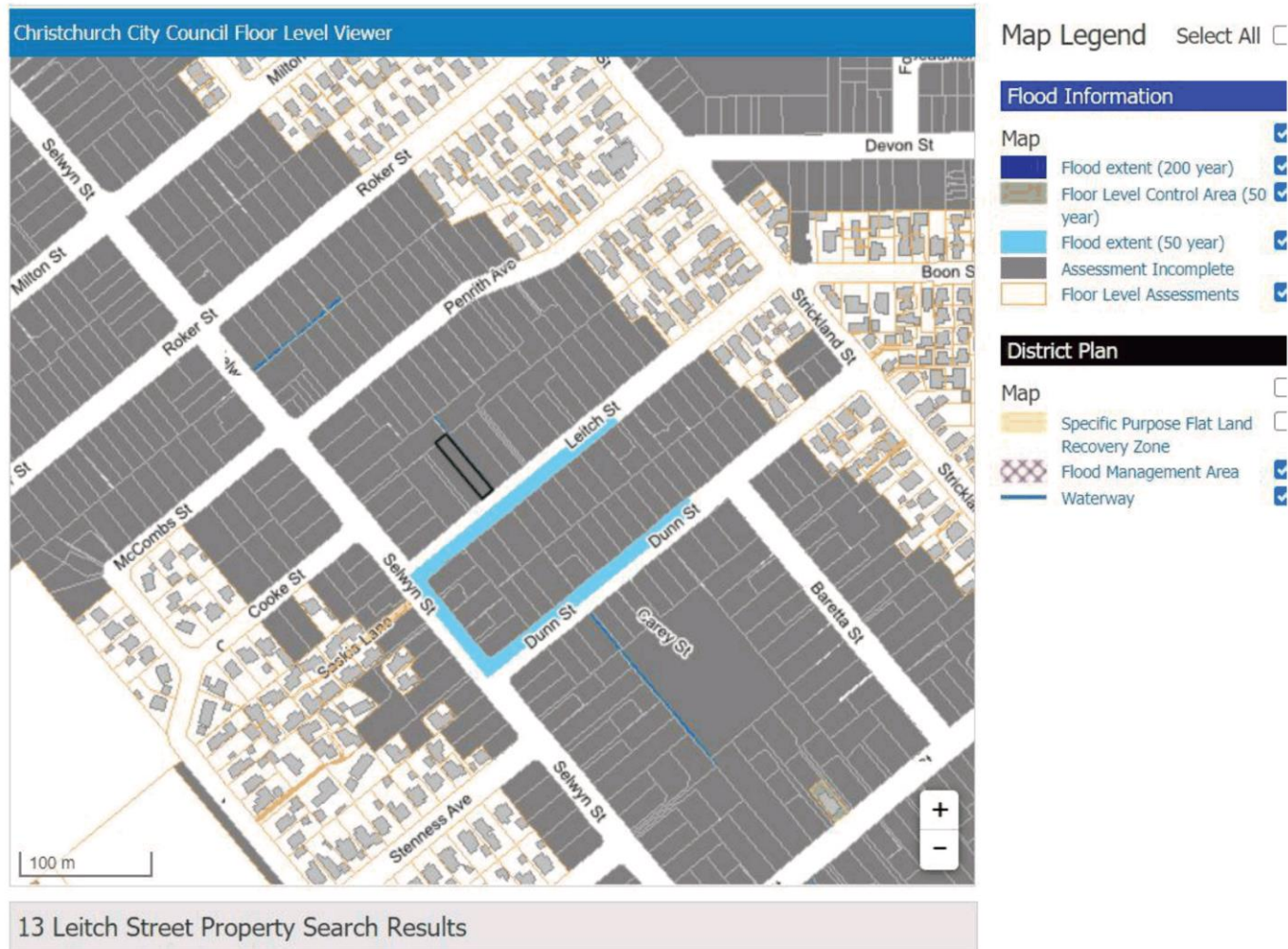








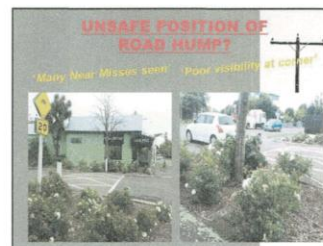
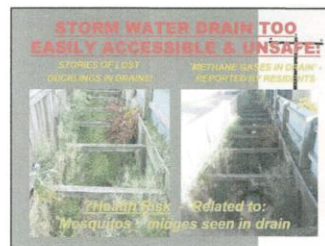






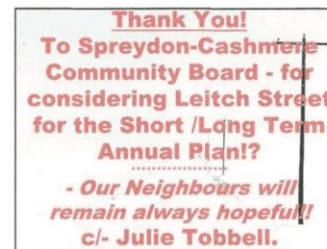


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2

24/03/2017









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