



**CARTERTON DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**URBAN  
STREET TREE  
POLICY**

**JULY 2006**

# **CONTENTS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	PAGE. 2.
INTRODUCTION.....	PAGE. 3.
SECTION 1. STREET TREE PLANTING & MAINT.....	PAGE. 4.
SECTION 2. STREET TREE REMOVAL.....	PAGE. 7.
SECTION 3. TREE PROTECTION .....	PAGE. 9.
APPENDIX A. LIST OF SUITABLE TREES.....	PAGE. 11.
APPENDIX B. LIST OF UNSUITABLE TREES.....	PAGE. 12.
APPENDIX C. LIST OF PROTECTED TREES.....	PAGE. 13.
ATTACHMENT A. STREET TREE CONCERN DOCUMENT.....	PAGE. 14.

## INTRODUCTION

### **The purpose of this document is to:**

- Provide consistent guidelines as to the ongoing maintenance requirements of existing trees and plantings on road reserves within the urban area.
- Provide consistent guidelines as to the selection, siting, planting and maintenance requirements of future street tree plantings on road reserves within the urban area.
- Provide consistent procedures and approaches regarding the removal of trees on Council owned road reserves.
- Provide guidelines as to the assessment of and the ongoing maintenance of Protected, Historic and Notable trees growing within the district.

### **History:**

A survey and report on the street trees growing on road reserves within the urban area was, conducted, completed and presented to council in August 2005. One of the areas of concern identified by this report is that the council has no street tree policy document within the district plan. Several concerns have arisen from the lack of such a document:

- Trees planted in inappropriate situations (above or below services, too close to kerbs, under street lighting, wrong tree for the site etc).
- Haphazard planting schemes, residents planting and or pruning street trees.
- Requirement for the identification and maintenance of protected trees.

It is envisaged that proposed future plantings proceed only after consulting this document.

# SECTION 1

## STREET TREE PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE

### STRATEGY

The main objectives of these policies are to enhance the image of the town's streets and improve the streetscape while minimising negative effects to public utilities and activities.

Trees fulfil many important functions within the street. They provide shade, filter wind, and add oxygen. They lessen the effect on traffic noise and help filter fumes. They can also frame and direct lines of sight, which is especially important when landscaping town entrances and main arterial routes.

Due to financial limitations and other physical constraints (width of berms etc), Council recognises that it will not be able to accommodate tree planting in many of the smaller streets. Although recognition should be given to submissions from residents which request street tree planting, encouragement should be given for such areas to be undertaken as a community initiative as they will be considered a lesser priority under this policy.

Developers of subdivisions should be encouraged to plant streets with suitable species and follow the procedures and recommendations set down in these policies.

Trees must be chosen for their appropriateness and character as many of the areas of public concern often relate to trees becoming too large for the available space or they become a nuisance by blocking sight and access ways and or create a large amount of debris.

Road and berm widths will also help determine which species may be planted, but constraints through underground and/or overhead services may result in some streets where no planting is permitted.

Appendices are attached that identify suitable and unsuitable trees. The list is not exhaustive but should be used in most cases for plantings when choosing species for a new streetscape (**see appendices A and B, pages 10 and 11**).

Street tree maintenance is an ongoing requirement to ensure the longevity and health of the trees and to minimise the risk of harm or damage to people, property, services and to the trees themselves.

Parks Departments need to prepare annual budgets. It is therefore necessary to establish the likely cost of tree maintenance and new plantings. An evaluation together with a valuation method, which is a standard, will give reassurance that both financial and amenity responsibilities to the community are upheld.

The maintenance cost of a street tree in 1996 was \$32.50 per annum (Dunedin City Council- 1996, quoted from "A Standard Tree Evaluation Method", by Ron Flook 1996).

## POLICIES

1. Street tree plantings must be appropriate in size, density and position to ensure traffic visibility and personal safety is not compromised.
2. New street plantings are to be chosen from the core list of trees as listed in appendix A (**page 10**).
3. The council develop and encourage single species plantings along streets.
4. Residents are encouraged on advice of appropriate species and to undertake street tree planting as a community initiative.
5. Maintenance and pruning be carried out by council staff or a council approved contractor only, as per the ongoing maintenance programme.
6. That before tree maintenance occurs residents on the affected streets be informed of the intent to carry out this work by way of a letter prior to work commencing.
7. Council undertake no further plantings of streets with overhead services.
8. Appropriate root barriers are installed where underground services or kerbs are likely to get damaged.
9. Trees are to be planted at least 700mm away from any kerb.
10. Trees are to be planted 3 meters away from any sewer or water lateral.
11. Liaise with reticulation staff to identify any possible concerns with underground services or storm water flow.
12. Trees should be centrally located between streetlights wherever possible and should not be planted where they will negatively impact on the light spread from the streetlight.
13. Developers of subdivisions are encouraged to establish trees as part of the streetscape (**see appendix A, page 10**).
14. New plantings may require a mowing strip to be installed around every tree to create a buffer zone to help eliminate damage from machinery.
15. Newly planted trees should be staked with at least two stakes and these are to be installed in an east-west configuration to reduce the effects of the prevailing westerly winds. Stakes should be made of tanalised timber not less than 50mm x 50mm and should be of an appropriate length so as to secure it during strong winds. Trees should be tied to the stake in such a manner as to be appropriately secure but not damage it, ties should be made of a material that will not damage the tree (no bare wire).
16. That a Street Tree Concern Document (**STCD, see attachment A, page 13**) is available to the public to formally address any concerns in writing to the Community & Recreational Services Assets Manager.
17. That residents may submit a request in writing using the Street Tree Concern Document (**see attachment A, page 13**) to have trees maintained, pruned or planted on their street. A decision would be made by the Community & Recreational Services Assets Manager who will use his professional judgement and discretion.
18. That any Street Tree Concern Document received by any person be looked at as soon as practicable and a prompt reply regarding the decision be forwarded to the concerned person(s).

19. All received Street Tree Concern Documents are to be kept on file.

## **SECTION 2**

### **TREE REMOVAL ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND**

#### **STRATEGY**

Trees have a high amenity value within the landscape and should be retained wherever possible. The Council should be seen as an organisation which is taking a proactive stance by retaining trees within the environment.

Dead, severely diseased and unstable trees are conditions where tree removal will be required to be undertaken.

Some streets have been planted with a mix of varieties in their early stage of development and to ensure these plantings develop into avenues of single species some rogue plants will have to be removed.

Some trees create a nuisance value by generating large amounts of leaf debris, restricting sight, excessive seed dispersal and excessive shade; it is recommended that periodic pruning be advocated rather than removal in these situations. In situations where pruning to reduce shade is required, reduction in tree height should not be permissible if it results in the loss of the natural habit or form of the tree. This means pollarding and severe crown reduction where regeneration will not allow for natural form to be retained are not acceptable treatment forms.

#### **POLICIES**

1. That wherever possible council will support the retention of trees on council owned land.
2. That when retention is not possible, transplanting the specimen should be considered before removal.
3. All tree removals must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**), who can then delegate responsibility to carry out the tree removal to the Parks and Recreational Services Assets Manager.
4. The removal of trees on Council owned land is to be carried out by Council staff or Council approved contractors only.
5. The tree removal policy should only be considered where:
  - a. The tree in question constitutes a danger to persons or property.
  - b. The tree in question impacts on the primary purpose for which the land was originally acquired and restricts that development.
  - c. The tree in question has a detrimental effect on roadways, foot paths, storm water or drainage flows, underground or overhead services.
  - d. The tree in question has reached a stage in its lifecycle where it is not fulfilling the purpose for which it was originally planted.

- e. There are rogue trees that are detracting from single species plantings, and Council reserves the right of removal of any tree it considers to be a rogue tree.
6. That trees on Council owned land may not be removed where access is required for infill subdivision or house removals without prior written permission from Council.
  7. That trees that constitute a nuisance value because of leaf fall, tree size, loss of vision or shading should not necessarily be considered for removal, but may require periodic pruning.
  8. That residents may submit a request to have trees removed or concerns remedied using the Street Tree Concern Document (**STCD, see attachment A, page 13**), an evaluation of the concerns will be conducted by the Community & Recreational Services Assets Manager who will use his discretion and professional judgement. Any required tree removal must first be approved by the Chief Executive Officer, who will sign the document.
  9. That any Street Tree Concern Document received by any person is looked at as soon as practicable and a prompt reply regarding the decision be forwarded to the concerned person(s).
  10. All received Street Tree Concern Documents are to be kept on file.
  11. That where residents have planted their own tree on Council owned road reserves, the Council reserves the right of removal and the recovery of the costs related to its removal.
  12. That where tree removal has occurred;
    - a. A replacement specimen be selected that conforms to the schedule of trees listed as Suitable Trees for Core Plantings in Streets (**see appendix A, page 10**).
    - b. And a replacement tree is not a viable option, the stump should be removed and the ground reinstated so as not to become a hazard for people or property.



## SECTION 3

### TREE PROTECTION

#### STRATEGY

There are three categories of protection afforded to trees that have been evaluated and have been considered to be of enough importance to the environment and the community to be listed as Protected, Historic, or Notable. The Resource Management Act (**RMA**) 1991 offers protection to trees providing they are a proven and realistic asset for the local community. They do not need to be listed within the District Plan.

The wider interests of the community now have to be acknowledged through the RMA 1991. The Act requires Local Authorities maintain inventories of items of local amenity and heritage importance.

Protection for important trees can be sought by way of a Heritage Order under Section 189 of the Resource Management Act 1991.

There are trees that are listed as 'Protected' and given protection within the District Plan (**see appendix C, page 12**).

The N.Z Historic Places Act 1993, clause 23 offers protection to trees that are considered to have historic or notable value by the Historic Places Trust.

The process of tree evaluation for the purpose of establishing its historic or notable importance should be carried out by a professional with knowledge of tree matters. This person would be able to identify the tree species, establish its rate of growth and appraise the health and appearance of the tree and its importance to the community.

The Standard Tree Evaluation Method (**STEM**) by Ron Flook, 1996, system for evaluating trees would be used by this professional to establish its condition, amenity and notability.

STEM is a nationally recognised system used by many councils and recommended by the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (**RNZIH**).

STEM has been used in court cases and has proved effective in gaining costs and decisions for tree retention.

The RNZIH has a required set of criteria before a tree can be registered as a Notable Tree in the RNZIH Notable Tree Register. These criteria apply to any tree being considered as notable in STEM.

Notable trees or groups of notable trees are those that have been evaluated against STEM (**Standard Tree Evaluation Method**), which assesses the tree against the three criteria (Condition, Amenity, Notability) and a corresponding score is recorded. If the combined score of the three criteria areas is above 160 points, the tree becomes eligible to be registered as a notable tree.

Due to the nationally recognised value of such trees, any tree work that may be required should only be undertaken by *qualified* arborists.

The Council has two groups of Notable trees growing on Council owned land, one group consisting of five 'Italian Cypress' *Cupressus sempervirens*, which are growing at the Cemetery.

The other group consists of sixty three 'Bartrams Oak' *Quercus x heterophylla*, which are growing on a road reserve in Norman Avenue.

The Bartrams oaks in Norman Ave. are in an area that is intensively utilised as a commercial zone, and the proposed developments that that may occur in this area in the future mean that the road may see an increase in usage, therefore it is important that a regular maintenance program be undertaken to ensure the long term health of these trees, and to minimise the risk of damage to persons, property, or the trees themselves.

A report from a qualified Arborist may be required to identify any possible risks that would adversely affect the future health of the trees due to increased commercial development of this area.

## **POLICIES**

1. That the STEM method of evaluation be adopted as the means of establishing a trees value and importance.
2. That the evaluation of proposed protected trees is carried out by an expert in tree matters who is familiar and competent with the STEM system.
3. That the value of protected trees is recognised, and a commitment made to upkeep the health and longevity of these trees by instigating a regular maintenance programme if the trees require it.
4. That any work that is required to be undertaken on protected trees, be done so only after a request in writing from the Parks Assets Manager, who will outline exactly the work to done.
5. That any work that that is required on Notable Trees, be done so by a Council approved, qualified Arborist only.
6. That any work that is required on protected trees(other than Notable Trees) within the District Plan and that are growing on council owned land be done so by a Council approved contractor or qualified Horticulturalist only.
7. That the area of protection of a Historic or Notable tree include the trees root zone extending out to the drip line.
8. That any correspondence relating to any work required or done be stored, so as a record of maintenance can be kept.
9. That after the commissioning of a report any recommendations received by a qualified Arborist regarding the future health and well being of notable trees be actioned as soon as practicable.

## APPENDIX A

### SUITABLE TREES FOR CORE PLANTINGS IN STREETS

<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	<i>Albizzia julibrissen</i> Silk tree
<i>Michelia doltsopa</i>	<i>Betula papyrifera</i> Paperbark Birch
<i>Amerlancheir canadensis</i> Junes Berry	<i>Cercis siliquastrum</i> Judas Tree
<i>Cornus sp.</i> Dogwoods	<i>Garrya eliptica</i> 'James Roof'
<i>Embrothrium coccineum</i> Chilean Fire Bush	<i>Fraxinus ornus</i> Manna Ash
<i>Gleditsia tricanthos</i> Honey Locust	<i>Melia azedarach</i> Indian Lilac
<i>Styrax japonica</i> Japanese Snowbell	<i>Zelkova serrata</i>
<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>	<i>Magnolia sp.</i>
<i>Sophora Microphylla</i>	<i>Sophora tetraptera</i>
<i>Fraxinus sp.</i>	<i>Sorbus sp.</i>

**NOTE:**

(This list is not exhaustive and other trees may be considered as suitable if they comply with the established criteria of being effective without causing concerns such as damage to persons, property and or services.)

## APPENDIX B

### LIST OF TREES UNSUITABLE FOR PLANTING IN STREETS

LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	MAJOR CONCERN
<i>Prunus nigra</i>	Purple Plum	Disease
<i>Acer pseudoplatinus</i>	Sycamore	Seeds
<i>Aesculus hippocastenum</i>	Horse Chestnut	Wide crown/seed
<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>	Canary Island Palm	Thorns
<i>Laburnum anagyroides</i>	Laburnum	Poison seeds
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry tree	Fruit/shade/Disease
<i>Camellia japonica</i>	Camellia	Visibility problems
<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Gums	Shading/Wind/Roots
<i>Hoheria sextylosa</i>	Lacebark	Gall Disease
<i>Juglans regia</i>	Walnut	Nuts/spreading crown
<i>Malus sp.</i>	Crab Apples	Disease/Fruit
<i>Maytenus boaria</i>	Mayten	Suckers
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	Suckers/Roots
<i>Pittosporum sp.</i>	Lemonwood/Kohukohu	Visibility
<i>Platinus sp.</i>	London Plane	Anthracnose
<i>Populus sp.</i>	Poplars	Seeds/Roots
<i>Prunus sp.</i>	Cherries	Fruit /Disease
<i>Salix alba/matsudana</i>	Willow/Tortured Willow	Roots
<i>Tilia sp.</i>	Limes	Honeydew/Roots
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	Wych Elm	Disease
<i>Cupressus sp.</i>	Cypress	Visibility
<i>Chamaecyparis sp.</i>	Lawsons Cypress	Visibility
<i>Pinus sp.</i>	Pines	Excessive growth/Roots
<i>Thuja sp.</i>	Thuja	Visibility
<i>Gingko biloba (female)</i>	Maidenhair	Seeds/Fruit
<i>Acacia sp.</i>	Wattles	Wind/Roots
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	False Acacia	Thorns/Wind
<i>Myoporum laetum</i>	Ngaio	Wind/Spreading habit
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	Roots/Seeds
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Common Alder	Roots/Seeds

## APPENDIX C

### LIST OF PROTECTED TREES WITHIN THE CARTERTON DISTRICT

LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	LOCATION	CLASSIFICATION
<i>Quercus x heterophylla</i>	Bartrams Oak (63)	Norman Avenue.	Notable, Protected
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	Italian Cypress (5)	Clareville Cemetery.	Notable, Protected
<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pinn Oak (1)	10 Armstrong Ave.	Protected
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	English Elm (4)	Park road.	Protected
<i>Quercus sp.</i>	Oak (1)	S.H. 2 (south)	Protected

**Attachment A**



**Carterton District Council**

**STREET TREE CONCERN DOCUMENT**

**NAME.....DATE.....**  
**ADDRESS.....**  
**POSTAL ADDRESS.....**  
**PHONE.....FAX.....**  
**E MAIL.....**

**CONCERNS/COMMENT.....**  
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**ACTION TO BE TAKEN (CDC use only).....**  
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**Community & Recreational Services Assets Manager.**  
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**Chief Executive Officer (signature required for tree removal).**  
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**Carterton District Council. P. O Box 9. Carterton. 06 379-6626.**

