

# **Carterton District Council**



## **Urban Street Tree Policy – updated November 2020**

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## INTRODUCTION

We should appreciate the many benefits of trees while taking care to manage street trees in the urban environment. 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.

### **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 on-going 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 and presented to council in August 2005.

One of the areas of concern identified in the report is that the council has no street tree policy document within the district plan.

Several concerns have arisen from a lack of planning:

- 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.

## Part 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.

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. We recognise that the community may request street tree plant from time to time and consideration needs to be given around the impact on current council priorities and being responsive to the community needs.

Developers of subdivisions are encouraged to plan street trees as part of their submission plan, purchase and plant trees of a 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 12 and 14**).

Street tree maintenance is an on-going 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.

The Parks and Reserves team 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.

## 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 12).
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. 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.
6. Council undertake no further plantings of streets with overhead services.
7. Appropriate root barriers are installed where underground services or kerbs are likely to get damaged.
8. Trees are to be planted at least 700mm away from any kerb.
9. Trees are to be planted a minimum of 3 meters away from any sewer or water lateral.
10. Liaise with reticulation staff to identify any possible concerns with underground services or storm water flow.
11. Liaise with electricity and telecommunications companies to identify any possible concerns with underground services.
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. It is envisaged that proposed future plantings proceed only after consulting this document and any future developments by developers may not proceed without first consulting this document.
14. Developers of subdivisions are encouraged to establish trees as part of the streetscape (see appendix A, page 12).
15. New plantings may require a mowing strip to be installed around every tree to create a buffer zone to help eliminate damage from machinery.

16. Newly planted tree specimens must be semi-mature and of a reasonable size when planting.
17. Newly planted trees should be staked with at least two stakes. 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).
18. That a Street Tree Concern Document (**STCD, see attachment A, page 17**) is available to the public to formally address any concerns in writing to the Community Services and Facilities Manager.
19. That residents may submit a request in writing using the Street Tree Concern Document (**see attachment A, page 17**) to have trees maintained, pruned or planted on their street. A decision would be made by the Community Services and Facilities Manager who will use their professional judgement and discretion.
20. 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).
21. All received Street Tree Concern Documents are to be kept on file.

Note: As there is an iron pan throughout much of the Carterton township, developers are encouraged to use best practices when planting street trees. When preparing planting hole, it should be dug deep enough to break the pan to encourage root development downwards mitigating damage to surrounding kerbs and footpaths.

## Part 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 Community Services and Facilities 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. Where rogue trees (trees that have self-seeded or planted by residents without Council consultation) that are detracting from single species plantings. Council reserves the right of removal of any tree it considers to be a rogue tree.
6. That trees growing 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 which 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 page 17**), an evaluation of the concerns will be conducted by the Community Services and Facilities Manager who will use their 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 12**).
  - 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.



## Part 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.

Below is a list of trees that are listed as 'Protected' and given protection within the District Plan (**see appendix C, page 16**).

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 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 and Reserves 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 wellbeing of notable trees be actioned as soon as practicable.

| Species   | Height   | Characteristics  |
|---|----------|--|
| <i>Albizia julibrissen</i><br>Silk tree           | 5m x 4m  | Deciduous with masses of pink fluffy flowers                                     |
| <i>Amelanchier canadensis</i><br>Junes Berry      | 4m x 3m  | Deciduous. Dainty white flowers.   |
| <i>Betula papyrifera</i><br>Paperbark Birch       |          |  |
| <i>Cercis siliquastrum</i><br>Judas Tree          | 3m x 3m  | Small round headed tree.<br>Red to dark purple leaves.<br>Pink flowers           |
| <i>Cornus florida</i><br>Dogwood                  | 4m x 3m  | Deciduous. Attractive flowers.   |
| <i>Embrothrium coccineum</i><br>Chilean Fire Bush | 6m x 3m  | Evergreen. Vivid flame red flowers.  |
| <i>Fraxinus ornus</i><br>Manna Ash                | 10m x 5m | Deciduous  |
| <i>Garrya eliptica</i><br>Catkin Bush             |          |  |
| <i>Ginko biloba</i><br>Maidenhair tree            | 7m x 4m  | Deciduous upright tree. Plant male trees only.                                   |
| <i>Gleditsia tricanthos</i><br>Honey Locust       | 6m x 5m  | Deciduous. Small green leaves turning yellow.                                    |
| <i>Magnolia sp.</i>                               |          | Wide range of species of varying heights, deciduous and evergreen. Showy flowers |
| <i>Melia azedarach</i><br>Indian Lilac            | 7m x 5m  | Deciduous. Attractive flowers and decorative fruit. Withstands wind and drought. |
| <i>Parrottia persica</i><br>Persian Witch Hazel   | 5m x 4m  | Deciduous with great autumn colour.  |

|   |         |  |
|---|---------|--|
| <b><i>Sophora microphylla</i></b><br>Kowhai             | 5m x 3m | Semi deciduous with masses of yellow flowers. Smaller leaflets than Kowhai tetraptera. |
| <b><i>Sophora tetraptera</i></b><br>NZ kowhai           | 5m x 3m | Native. Semi deciduous with masses of yellow flowers                                   |
| <b><i>Sorbus sp.</i></b>                                |         | Deciduous trees with colourful ornamental fruit  |
| <b><i>Styrax japonica</i></b><br>Japanese Snowdrop tree | 4m x 3m | Deciduous, small leafed tree with clusters of pendulous white fragrant flowers.        |
| <b><i>Ulmus parvifolia</i></b><br>Chinese Elm           | 6m x 4m | Semi-deciduous small leafed tree supplying autumn colour.                              |

Note: - This list is not exhaustive with numerous other trees may be considered as suitable provided they comply with the established criteria of being effective without causing concerns such as damage to persons, property and/or services, keeping in mind that there may be many more trees suitable for street but due to climatic conditions may not be suitable in Carterton.

**Appendix B**  
**LIST OF TREES UNSUITABLE FOR PLANTING IN STREETS**

| <u>Species</u>                                  | <u>Major Concerns</u>                  |
|---|--|
| <i>Acacia sp.</i><br>Wattles                    | Pollen may create respiratory problems |
| <i>Acer pseudoplatinus</i><br>Sycamore          | Seed, size                             |
| <i>Aesculus hippocastenum</i><br>Horse Chestnut | Fruit/seed, size                       |
| <i>Ailanthus altissima</i><br>Tree of Heaven    | Suckers, root upheaval, size           |
| <i>Alnus glutinosa</i><br>Common Alder          |  |
| <i>Arbutus unedo</i><br>Strawberry tree         | Fruit                                  |
| <i>Betula pendula</i><br>Silver Birch           | Seeds and roots                        |
| <i>Camellia japonica</i><br>Camellia            | Visibility problems                    |
| <i>Chamaecyparis sp.</i><br>Lawsons Cypress     | Visibility problems                    |
| <i>Cupressus sp.</i><br>Cypress                 | Visibility problems                    |
| <i>Eucalyptus sp.</i><br>Gums                   | Roots, wind damage, size               |
| <i>Ginkgo biloba (female)</i><br>Maidenhair     | Foul smelling fruit                    |
| <i>Hoheria sp.</i><br>Lacebark                  | Galls, short lived                     |
| <i>Juglans regia</i><br>Walnut                  | Fruit/nuts, size                       |

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Laburnum anagyroides</i><br>Laburnum               | Seeds poisonous                   |
| <i>Malus sp.</i><br>Crab Apples                       | Fruit, disease                    |
| <i>Maytenus boaria</i><br>Mayten                      | Suckers                           |
| <i>Myoporum laetum</i><br>Ngaio                       | Spreading habit                   |
| <i>Phoenix canariensis</i><br>Canary Island Palm      | Very long sharp thorn-like leaves |
| <i>Pittosporum sp.</i><br>Lemonwood/Kohukohu          | Visibility                        |
| <i>Platanus sp.</i><br>Plane trees                    | Size, fruit                       |
| <i>Populus sp.</i><br>Poplars                         | Size, suckers                     |
| <i>Prunus nigra</i><br>Purple Plum                    | Disease                           |
| <i>Prunus sp.</i><br>Cherries                         |                                   |
| <i>Salix alba/matsudana</i><br>Willow/Tortured Willow |                                   |
| <i>Tilia sp.</i><br>Limes                             |                                   |
| <i>Ulmus glabra</i><br>Wych Elm                       |                                   |
| <i>Pinus sp.</i><br>Pines                             |                                   |
| <i>Thuja sp.</i><br>Thuya                             | Visibility                        |
| <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i><br>False Acacia           | Thorns                            |

## LIST OF PROTECTED TREES WITHIN THE CARTERTON DISTRICT

| Species                                       | Location                       | Classification      |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Quercus x heterophylla</i><br>Bartrams Oak | Norman Avenue<br>63 trees      | Notable. Protected. |
| <i>Cupressus sempervirens</i><br>Pencil Pine  | Clareville Cemetery<br>5 trees | Notable. Protected. |
| <i>Quercus sp.</i>                            | S.H. 2(south)                  | Protected.          |



# CARTERTON DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Street Tree Concern Document

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONCERNS / COMMENTS

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### Action to be taken (CDC use only)

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**Community Facilities Manager** (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Executive Office** (Signature required for tree removal)

\_\_\_\_\_