





## Tree Management Policy (Revision 1)

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
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Authorised By	John Scarce	General Manager		14 September 2023

### Document Revision History

Previous Policies	Murrumbidgee Shire Council A.301 Urban Tree Removal 18 April 1996 - Minute # 131
	Murrumbidgee Shire Council A.302 Urban Tree Planting
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## **1. Purpose**

This policy defines how Murrumbidgee Council will manage trees in the Local Government Area, and will assist residents, property owners, authorities, Council officers, contractors, developers, and those working with the Council to understand the requirements for the management of street and reserve trees.

Street and reserve trees contribute to the appearance of the area through their aesthetic value, by providing identity and character. In addition, trees contribute to improving urban environments by absorbing heat, providing shade, reducing solar radiation, providing habitat, utilising stormwater run-off, and assisting in air purification.

The purpose of this policy is to formalise Council's management of trees including:

- Tree selection and planting
- Risk assessment
- Maintenance and tree removal
- Preservation

Murrumbidgee Council LGA encompasses an area of 6500 square kilometres. Operated or controlled land is exposed to varying degrees of risk associated with the hazards which exist on the land - both natural hazards and hazards related to developed facilities.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all trees and shrubs that are growing on any property under Council's control, including operational land, community land, nature strips, road reserves, and public reserves. It covers:

- Tree selection and location
- Tree removal
- Maintenance and preservation

## **3. Legislation**

- Australian Standard "Pruning of Amenity Trees" AS4373 – 2007
- NSW Roads Act 1993
- Local Government Act 1993 No 30

### **3.1 Essential Energy**

Council acknowledge Essential Energy's obligations under the Electricity Supply Act 1995 (NSW) and encourages them to engage with the local community as they enact those powers.

## **4. Tree Planting**

### **4.1 Residents**

Council will advise suitable trees to plant on nature strips, but will also authorise residents to plant trees, provided that:

- a written application is made for such planting, containing an undertaking from the applicant that the trees, once planted, will be watered and otherwise maintained by the applicant;
- the trees will be of a type that is listed in Council's Preferred Species List - Appendix 1;

The total number of trees on any section of the nature strip (including existing trees) does not exceed two (2) for each property frontage, except where the Director of Infrastructure may determine that additional trees are warranted, where the property frontage is significantly longer than normal or other unusual circumstances exist.

Residents or land owners may seek approval from the Director of Infrastructure to provide and plant additional trees on nature strips at their own cost, provided that such trees are of a type listed on the Council's Preferred Species List (Appendix 1) and provided that such plantings are located to minimise future problems regarding Council infrastructure, other services and the safety of pedestrians and traffic.

A resident or land owner may be required to remove or relocate any nature strip tree planted without prior approval, if the location or type of tree may cause problems in the future.

### **4.2 Tree Planting and Maintenance in New Subdivision Developments**

Where a developer is required to plant trees as part of the planning permit process for new developments, Council will oversee the planting and establishment.

Approved landscape plans must conform to site assessments and Council's Preferred Species List - Appendix 1.

### **4.3 Tree Planting – Council**

To ensure the long-term success of tree planting, a detailed analysis of site conditions and design constraints is required. The objective is to minimise the risk associated with trees, by selecting trees that will have minimal impact on their new environment.

### **4.4 Existing Trees**

A map of tree types within the Council's urban areas will be progressively developed. This will provide a general overview of trees that currently exist on Council's nature strips, within parks and reserves, and surrounding Council-controlled areas.

Council will also progressively build a register of trees under Council control within urban areas. The Tree Register will identify:

- Tree species and common name
- Location
- Approximate height of the tree

- Approximate width of the tree
- Approximate age of the tree
- Assessment of the vitality of the tree
- Other information include surrounding infrastructure, risk assessment, and recommendations.

As trees are replaced, or new plantings occur, the new tree is added to the Tree Register, and the existing tree is noted as removed (or other relevant comments).

## **5. Tree Removal**

Whilst tree removal is the last resort management option, public safety always takes priority.

Urban tree removal will not be considered in the following instances:

- If there is a safe and practical means for tree retention
- For solar access
- For unjustified property or infrastructure damage claims
- To reduce leaf, fruit, and debris litter
- If the tree provides an important biodiversity function such as high conservation road reserves
- For personal aesthetic preference
- dropping of leaves, twigs, or other litter,
- overshadowing of property,
- obscures or otherwise detracts from advertising signage

Urban tree removal may be considered under the following circumstances:

- All hazardous trees will be removed as soon as practical
- Trees that are unviable, structurally unsound, and high probability of failure
- Trees that are dead, dying, or in severe decline
- A tree with a defect that cannot be rectified
- Trees are proven to be causing damage to infrastructure
- As part of a treescape upgrade or capital works program
- In such a position as to interfere with the construction of a building or a driveway
- Dead or diseased or damaged in such a way as to be unsightly or dangerous
- Causing damage to or interfering with the proper maintenance of buildings, fences, paths, and drains
- Deemed unsuitable for the proposed development of the land, in which case removed trees are to be replaced by suitable varieties as shown on a comprehensive landscape plan submitted for approval
- No tree removal is to take place before the receipt of written approval by the Council's (Director of Infrastructure)

## **6. Tree Risk Assessments**

All trees under Council control located in urban areas will gradually, and as resources permit, undergo a risk assessment and will be included on the Tree Register with follow-up inspections scheduled by the results of the risk assessment. Priority will be given to those trees where:

- Complaints have been received
- There are obvious declines in tree health
- The tree has been damaged
- The tree or its roots are affecting Council services or infrastructure
- Planned Council works are in the vicinity

When assessing trees, factors used in the analysis include:

- The likelihood of limb or whole tree failure
- The location and the activity occurring at that location where the tree/limb may fail
- The maximum size of the tree or limb identified as having the potential to fail

Recommendations for mitigation works or tree removal are usually made where the risks are high or very high, and there is minimal environmental or historical value in retaining the tree. Where doubt exists, or where further assessment is required, Council will enlist the services of a qualified arborist.

## **7. Pest and Disease Management**

When pest and disease outbreaks compromise the health or increase the risks associated with trees, Council will only intervene where the trees in question have been planted by Council.

In these circumstances the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of available treatments will be assessed and, if justified, the appropriate integrated pest management techniques will be undertaken.

Where affected trees are privately owned, and Council has been made aware, they will advise the owner so that the owner may take the appropriate action.

### **7.1 Termite Activity**

The presence of pests in trees is not always apparent, and this is the case with termite activity. The Council will treat Council planted trees where it has knowledge, or has been advised, of termite activity within those trees.

Due to the nomadic nature of termites, the place of origin of termites cannot be attributed to any particular tree and therefore Council will not be held responsible for any third-party property damage.

## **8. Road Reserve Trees and Vegetation**

Council, as the Road Authority under the Roads Act 1993, has a duty of care to the travelling public to, as far as reasonably practicable, ensure that trees and vegetation in the road reserve do not present a risk to life or property. To fulfil its duty of care, it will be necessary for staff involved in road construction, maintenance, and road inspections to be aware of trees and other vegetation that may present a risk to road users. This will be especially important following high wind or storm events.

As the Road Authority, Council must:

- Maintain and, where necessary, enhance roadside conservation value roadsides
- Increase public awareness of the importance of roadside vegetation
- Encourage community involvement in roadside conservation projects
- Provide management guidelines for roadside vegetation

## **9. Species List**

Appendix 1 - Murrumbidgee Council Preferred Species List

## **10. Policy Review**

This Policy:

- To be reviewed within the first year of the new Council term;
- May be reviewed and amended at any time at Council's discretion (or if legislative or State Government policy changes occur).

## APPENDIX 1



# Preferred Tree Species List

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## 1.0 Introduction

In accordance with Council's Tree Management Policy, preferred species is defined as the trees that Council would select for planting after considering various factors including environmental, proximity to infrastructure, and ongoing maintenance.

The following procedure outlines how Council assesses trees and their proposed locations to determine the most appropriate species. The Preferred Species List lists possible trees according to their size and includes tree characteristics to assist in determining site suitability.

## 2.0 Zone Areas

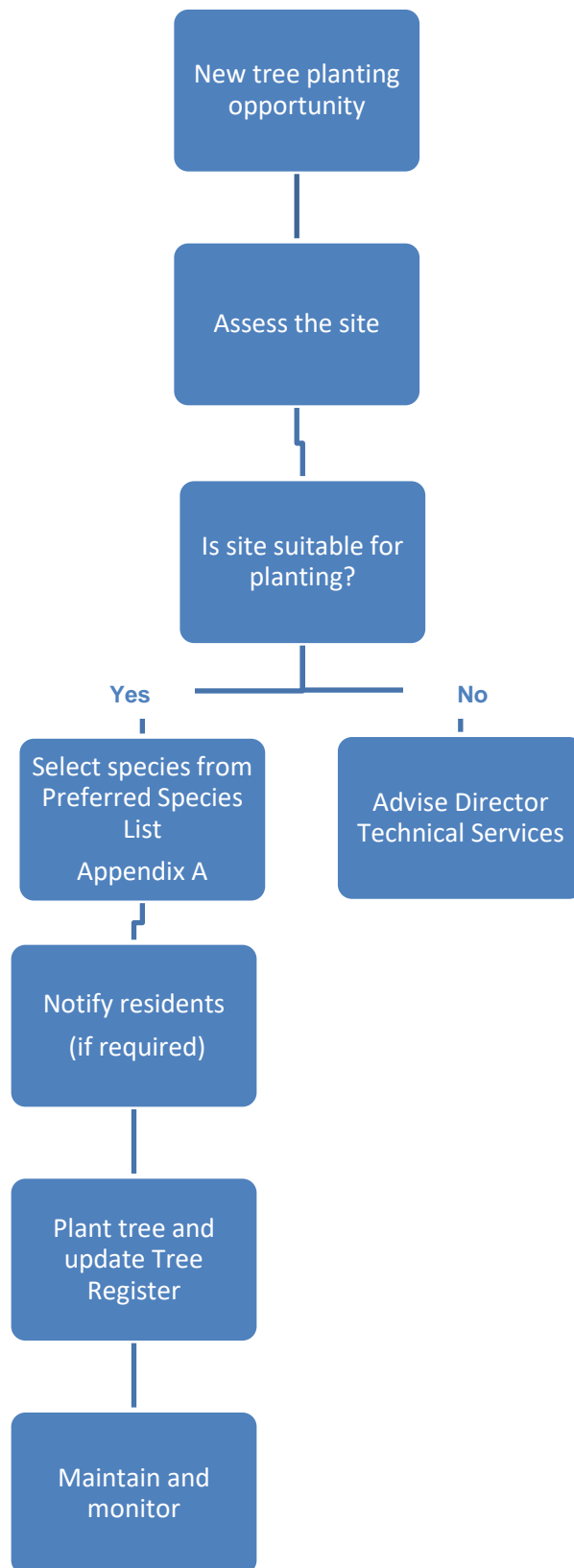
When assessing the site and determining the type of tree to plant, consideration must be given to the following risk zones:

<b>Site Characteristic</b>	<b>Zone A <i>Most constraints (High to Very High Risk)</i></b>	<b>Zone B <i>Moderate constraints (Medium Risk)</i></b>	<b>Zone C <i>Fewest constraints (Low Risk)</i></b>
Electrical and telecommunications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uninsulated low and high voltage wires;</li><li>• Bushfire prone area</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bundled cables;</li><li>• Insulated cables</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No powerlines</li></ul>
Below ground services – typical layouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fibre optic cables;</li><li>• High voltage power</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bundled cables;</li><li>• Insulated cables;</li><li>• Water conduits;</li><li>• Sewer conduits</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No powerlines;</li><li>• No conduits</li></ul>
Slope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Steep slope</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moderate slope</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Generally flat ground</li></ul>
Paved areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paved area;</li><li>• Sealed surface</li><li>• Brick pavers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partially paved areas;</li><li>• Non reinforced concrete</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grassy area</li></ul>
Verge width	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Less than 3.0m</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From 3 to 4m</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4m or wider</li></ul>
Building set back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Less than 6m</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 6m or greater</li></ul>
Street lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Over pedestrian crossings;</li><li>• Traffic intersections</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Street lighting other than crossings and intersections</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No street lighting</li></ul>
Signage (i.e. traffic signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arterial roads;</li><li>• High density residential streets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medium density residential streets;</li><li>• Arterial roads in rural zones</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Low density rural/residential streets</li></ul>
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large volumes of heavy vehicles</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heavy vehicles in moderate volumes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Residential traffic in low volumes;</li><li>• Cul-de-sacs</li></ul>




<b>Site Characteristic</b>	<b>Zone A <i>Most constraints (High to Very High Risk)</i></b>	<b>Zone B <i>Moderate constraints (Medium Risk)</i></b>	<b>Zone C <i>Fewest constraints (Low Risk)</i></b>
Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severely compacted;</li> <li>• Shallow;</li> <li>• Reactive clay;</li> <li>• Acid sulphate;</li> <li>• Poor drainage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderately compacted;</li> <li>• Urban fill;</li> <li>• Moderate drainage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undisturbed soil;</li> <li>• Deep profile;</li> <li>• Medium texture;</li> <li>• Good natural drainage</li> </ul>
Water table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate depth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep water table</li> </ul>



Identify the zone and the constraints that exist at the identified site, and then select a tree from the Preferred Species List, that is suitable to that Zone, climatic conditions, wildlife habitat, landscaping principles, and aesthetic value. For example if you have identified an area for tree planting where fibre optic cables are present, you would not be planting trees that have been identified in the Preferred Species List that have extensive root systems.

## 2.1 New Tree Assessment Flow Diagram







### 3.0 Preferred Species List





SMALL TREES – LESS THAN 10M											
Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
					Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width				
	<i>Eucalyptus eximia</i> “Nana”	Dwarf Yellow Bloodwood	E		Yes	8m	6m	Yes	No - >6m	Moderate	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Spring flowering. Tolerates a wide range of soils.										
	<i>Lagerstreomia indica</i>	Crepe Myrtle	D		Yes	6 - 8m	5 – 6m	Yes	Yes but >4.0m	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Tree can adapt to a range of soils and prefers full sun.										
	<i>Pistacia chinensis</i>	Chinese Pistachio	D		Yes	10m	10m	Yes	Yes but >3.5m	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Adapts to most soil textures.										





SMALL TREES – LESS THAN 10M											
Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
					Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width				
	Melaleuca incana	Grey Honey Wattle	E		Yes	3m	2m	Yes	Yes	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Small weeping type shrub with bottlebrush type flowers. Tolerant of drought and prefers well drained soils and sunny positions.										
	Callistemon citrinus	Crimson bottlebrush	E		Yes	3m	2m	Yes	Yes but >2.0m	Moderate	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Very hardy plants requiring minimal maintenance with bright red flowers										

**MEDIUM TREES – 10 – 20 METRES IN HEIGHT**

Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
					Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width				
	<i>Eucalyptus eximia</i>	Yellow Bloodwood	E		Yes	10 - 12m	4 – 6m	No	No	High	Low – particularly when young
	<b>Note:</b> Spring flowering gum. Fast growing. Able to succeed on poor, gravelly or sandy soils.										
	<i>Hymenosporum flavum</i>	Native Frangipani	E		Yes	6 – 10m	4 – 6m	No	Yes but >4.0m	Moderate	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Adaptable species tolerating a range of soil conditions										
	<i>Jacaranda mimosaeifolia</i>	Jacaranda	D		Yes	15m	10m	No	No – extensive root system >6.0m	Moderate	Low
	<b>Notes:</b> Prefers rich well drained soils. Needs protection from frost when young. Suitable for parks not streetscapes.										
	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Tupelo	D		Not suitabl near footpaths	11m	6m	Yes	No - >6m	Low	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Slow growing tree with a high tolerance of wet soils and flooding.										


**MEDIUM TREES – 10 – 20 METRES IN HEIGHT**





Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
	<i>Pyrus spp</i>	Ornamental Pear (varieties)	D		Yes	10m	10m	Yes – but need to assess all varieties	Yes but >6.0m	Moderate	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Moderate tolerance of waterlogged sites. Hardy plant.										
	<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>	Chinese Elm	D		Yes	0m	1m	No	Yes but >6.0m	Moderate	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Adaptable tree capable of growing well in a wide variety of sites. Performs best in well drained soils, but will tolerate compacted conditions.										
	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	Honey locust	D		Yes	15m	10m	Yes	No > 10m	Moderate	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Hardy, very adaptable and easy to grow. Tolerant of a wide range of soil conditions										
	<i>Acer x freemanii</i> ‘	<i>Jeffersred’ Autumn Blaze Maple</i>	D		Yes	13	10	No	No	Moderate	Low
	<b>Notes:</b> Well structured, adaptable tree. Suitable to car parks, amenity areas around buildings, street and park plantings.										





MEDIUM TREES – 10 – 20 METRES IN HEIGHT												
Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability								
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant	
	Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width									
	Melaleuca lanceolata	Moonah	E		Yes	7m	5m	Yes	No	Moderate	Moderate	
	Notes: Good for use in gardens and parks. Can be used as a windbreak or for shade. Low maintenance and fast growing											
	Geijera parviflora	Wilga	E		Yes	9m	8m	Yes	No	High	Moderate	
	Notes: Very good shade and shelter tree but very slow growing											
	Acmena smithii	Lilly Pilly	E		Yes but need to keep in mind that this tree bears fruit	5m	5m	No	No >20m	Low	High	
	Notes: Suitable for streetscapes – fruit attracts birds and other wildlife. Tree can also be pruned into a hedge.											
	Pittosporum phylliraeoides	Butterbush	E		No	6m	4m	Yes	>6.0m	Moderate	High	
	Notes: Slow growing but long living suitable for parks and gardens											










**MEDIUM TREES – 10 – 20 METRES IN HEIGHT**

Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
					Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width				
	<i>Corimbia ficifolia</i>	Red-flowering gum	E		Yes	10m	5m	Yes	No	Moderate	Low
	<b>Notes:</b> Hardy and fast growing and rarely requires pruning – does not like waterlogged sites										


LARGE TREES – GREATER THAN 20 METRES											
Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
					Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width				
	<i>Callitris glauca</i>	White Cypress Pine	E		Not for pedestrian areas – seed cones	0 – 0m	6m	No	Yes but >3.5m – has the potential for an invasive root system	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Prefers well drained sandy soils and has a low salt tolerance										
	<i>Eucalyptus albens</i>	White Box	E		No	18 – 25m	12 – 15m	No	No - >20m	Moderate	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Will grow in a range of soils but uses a large amount of ground water. A very useful tree for erosion control with large spreading roots.										
	<i>Eucalyptus citriodora</i>	Lemon scented gum	E		No	15 -30m	10-25m	No	No	Moderate	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Must be pruned in early stages to remove wayward limbs and to promote vertical growth to avoid limb failure.										
	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon ssp. Pruinosa</i>	Yellow Gum	E		No	15-25m	5-10m	No	No >6m	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> This tree has many different forms and varieties – moderately fast growing and excellent shade, shelter and wind erosion control.										

LARGE TREES – GREATER THAN 20 METRES											
Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
					Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width				
	<i>Eucalyptus maculata</i>	Spotted gum	E		No	35m	10m	No	No	Moderate	Low
	<b>Notes:</b> Fast growth but does require some formative pruning to address limb failure in advanced trees.										
	<i>Eucalyptus melliodora</i>	Yellow Box	E		No	20 – 30m	8 – 10m	No	No	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Fast growing tree not suitable to shady areas or small compact areas. Does not tolerate water-logging.										
	<i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i>	Grey Box	E		No	25m	8 – 10m	No	No	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Suitable for park areas – it is a good shade tree and is useful as an upper canopy tree in windbreak plantings.										
	<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Mugga Ironbark	E		Yes	10 – 25m	Up to 15m	No	No	High	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Black barked tree with white, pink or red flowers – good ornamental street tree.										

LARGE TREES – GREATER THAN 20 METRES											
Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
					Suitability	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Width				
	<i>Grevillia robusta</i>	Silky Oak	E		No	18 – 35m	5 – 14m	No	No >20m	High	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Fast growing tree with golden orange bottlebrush flowers										
	<i>Acacia salicina</i>	Willow wattle	E		Yes	5 – 12m	10m	Yes	No - <4.0m	Moderate	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Fast growing tree suitable for erosion control.										
	<i>Acacia pendula</i>	Weeping Myall or Boree	E		Yes	6 – 12m	4 – 6m	No	No - <4.0m	High	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Hardy tree which can tolerate drought and occasional flooding. Slow to moderate growth rate.										
	<i>Melaleuca stypheliodes</i>	Prickly-leaved Paperbark	E		Yes	8 – 10m	6 – 8m	No	No - <4.0m	Moderate	Moderate
	<b>Notes:</b> Hardy native tree with prickly foliage and profuse flowers during spring/summer										

LARGE TREES – GREATER THAN 20 METRES											
Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip		Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant	
					Suitability	Ultimate Height					Ultimate Width
	<i>Melaleuca armilaris</i>	Bracelet honey myrtle	E		Yes	8m	7m	Yes	No - <3.5m	High	Low
	<b>Notes:</b> Fast growing and adaptable to most soils. Pruning required to keep it healthy.										
	<i>Casuarina cunninghamiana</i>	River She-Oak	E		Yes	15 – 35m	6m	No	No	High	Low
	<b>Notes:</b> Slow growing tree. Use as a windbreak.										
	<i>Metrosideros excelsa</i>	Pohutakawa (New Zealand Christmas Tree)	E		Yes	12 – 25m	9 – 12m	No	No - > 6m	Moderate	Low
	<b>Notes:</b> Can survive in a range of soil types with unusual root system. Has been known to have invasive roots.										

# LARGE TREES – GREATER THAN 20 METRES

Image	Botanical Name	Common Name	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Site Suitability							
				Zone (A,B,C)	Nature Strip			Under Powerlines	Underground Services	Drought Tolerant	Frost Tolerant
	<i>Platanus orientalis 'Digitata'</i>	Cut Leaf Plane	D		No – has prickly fruit and root systems can lift and damage footpaths and kerbing	25 – 30m	20m	No	No >10m	Moderate	High
	<b>Notes:</b> Will tolerate exposed sites. Not prone to insects that cause obvious damage to foliage. Seen to have good tolerance of pruning and can handle root disturbance.										