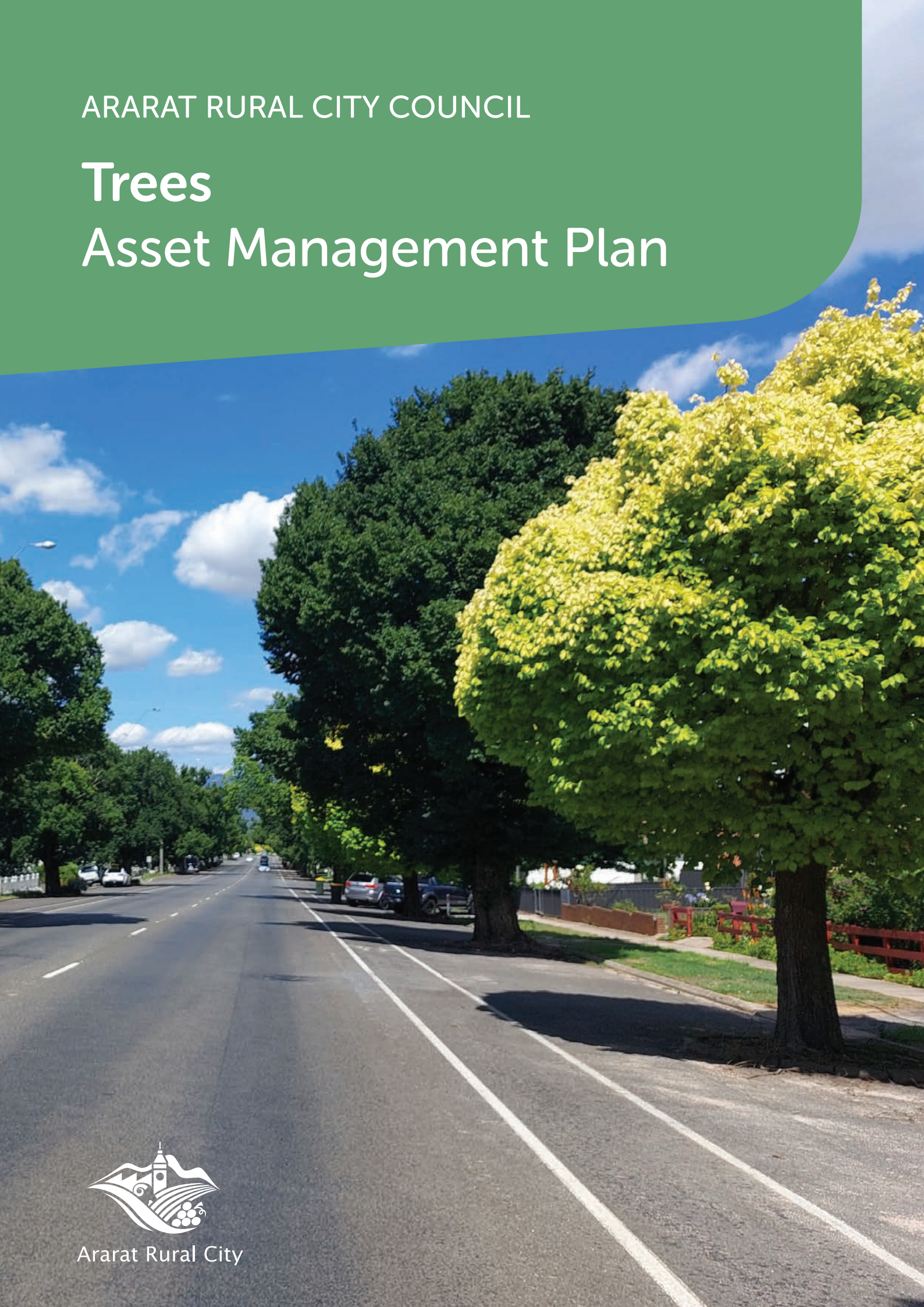
ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL

Trees
Asset Management Plan



Ararat Rural City

CONTENTS

1 PLAN INTENTION AND STRUCTURE

The intent of this document is to outline the approach used by Ararat Rural City Council in managing its Tree network. This plan covers the entire lifecycle of all elements of managing the Tree network including but not limited to:

- Construction and Capital Works
- Maintenance
- Inspection and Health Assessment
- Asset Register and Data
- End of life/Renewal
- Valuation
- Incident Management
- Reporting

Ararat Rural City Council will execute the management of its tree network aligned with the approach outlined in this plan.

This plan is structured into components representing operational areas of the council called 'services'. The responsibilities that exist within those services combine towards a whole of organisation approach to asset management.

Council service lines included in this plan are:

- Asset Management
- Depot Operations
- Finance
- Engineering
- Procurement
- Customer Services
- Governance
- Occupational Risk and Safety
- Organisational Transformation

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Tree Asset Class

The Ararat Rural City Council (Council) has a very wide diversity of trees in terms of species, age, size, and density. There are seven Avenues of Honour which contain 187 culturally significant trees and many others are within the Alexandra Gardens, major parks and national park land.

There is limited detail on the total number, species, and condition of the tree population in the municipality. Collection and recording of data on Council's trees is commencing but completing this and maintaining up to date records requires significant resources to protect and enhance the overall tree assets in the Ararat municipality. Trees are an essential part of the urban and rural landscape, providing economic, social, and ecological benefits. They are highly important and should be managed similarly to other Council assets. Trees are however living assets and need to be managed accordingly.

2.2 Key stakeholders

Trees, like any other asset, need to be managed to maximise their benefits and minimise adverse effects. As biological assets, trees do not behave evenly over their life and are prone to many factors outside the control of the tree owner e.g. drought, weather, site conditions, contractor/service provider interference and disease. Their life cycle can vary enormously, is not easy to predict and require ongoing assessment.

Trees take many years to develop to maturity and provide maximum benefits to the community and the local ecology. They cannot be quickly replaced. The retention and protection of larger trees is important, especially in an expanding and everchanging urban environment as they provide the maximum community benefit.

Ararat Rural City Council is committed to the efficient and effective management of trees within the municipality, however given the number of trees, it is not possible to completely address all risks associated with trees at any one time, as such, the inspection and maintenance of the tree network is conducted on a risk basis.

Trees are assessed based on their location, any identifiable defects, the probability of the defects resulting in limb or trunk failure and the likely consequences if failure occurs. Proactive and reactive works will always need to be managed carefully when the level of resources is limited.

A basic inventory of trees which includes their location, species, condition, size and surrounding environment provides the basis for making qualified decisions. It is also essential to be able to interrogate the data and keep the information up to date. To this end it is important that any works conducted are recorded in Council's asset management system, "Confirm". Council continues these efforts to map and assess the large number of trees within the municipality. Currency and completeness of inventory data is also essential for good long term strategic assessment, direction and plan development.

3 ASSET MANAGEMENT

The Asset Management service is responsible for the delivery of the following core items.

- Local Government Act 2020 and 1989
- Asset Management System
- Asset Class Definition
- Asset Data Structure and Schema
- Intervention Definitions
- Condition Definition and Inspection
- Asset Attribute Data Collection and upkeep
- General Asset Reporting

3.1 Asset Management System

Ararat Rural City Council uses an Asset System called Confirm. Confirm has two modules that act as extensions to the Confirm software, Confirm Connect and Confirm WorkZone.

Confirm Connect is a mobility enabled software module that is built for the specific purpose of 'in the field' use. The software works on a tablet or phone and can work in both online (internet connected) and offline (blackspot or offline) modes. Primarily the software is used by operators to complete 'in the field' activities such as condition inspections, defect inspections or asset attribute data collection.

Confirm WorkZone is used as a management interface to schedule works. This allows for works in similar locations to be grouped, so works can be executed by a crew whilst in a specific region or zone.

3.2 Tree Class Definition

Ararat Rural City Council Tree are broken down into Tree different classes. This breakdown serves as both a separator for type and a means to value the Tree network.

Code	Description
1	Street Trees - Trees that are located on nature strips throughout the community
2	Park Trees - Trees located in parks in the community.
3	Heritage Trees - Significant for their age or size or acting as a living memorial to events that are important to people and communities.
4	Native Bushland - Areas of high conservative value to fauna.

Asset Class	Asset Type	Asset Component	Asset Subcomponent
Natural Assets	Vegetation	Roadside reserve Riparian reserves	Trees Shrubs Grasses
	Trees	Street trees Roadside trees Reserves	
	Water ways	Creek River Ocean Estuary Lake Wetland Pond	Riparian edge Weir Bed Water Bank Aquatic vegetation

3 ASSET MANAGEMENT

Where more data is available, include:

- Tree useful life - (derived from historical council data relating to the life of roadside tree assets, or from published data). For other asset classes, useful life is a key input to decision making, particularly predicting the timing of an asset renewal. For roadside trees, this data may not be as useful but may assist in long term planning.
- Fauna inhabiting or relying on the tree
- Tree age
- Health
- Historic significance
- Significant Tree Register
- Presence of hollows

3.3 Stakeholders

Internal stakeholders for the roadside tree sites, include:

- Council
- Asset managers
- Environmental scientists/managers
- Weed officers
- Roadside maintenance crews
- Compliance officers
- Planners
- Subject matter experts
- Emergency management staff
- Financial managers

External stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Adjacent landowners
- Regulators
- Special interest groups
- Emergency services
- Landcare groups
- Department of Transport
- Utilities
- Biodiversity and Conservation Trusts
- Parks Victoria
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DECCA)

3.4 Applicability

This Tree Asset Management Plan will be applicable to the following:

- Street trees planted by Council or for which Council has assumed responsibility.
- Parkland trees planted by Council or for which Council has assumed responsibility located in Council managed parks and reserves.
- Trees located in other Council owned for managed properties.

Excluded from the tree asset management plan are the following:

- Private trees located on private land.
- Roadside trees pursuant to Section 107 of the Road Management Act 2004[1]

3.5 Data Schema

The following structure outlines the mandatory and optional attribute data collected specific to the Ararat Rural City Council Tree Network

MANDATORY DATA

- Genus
- Species, Height, Spread, DBH
- Date planted.
- Age
- Condition
- Photos

OPTIONAL DATA

- Canopy area?

3.5.1 Spatial Data

The Ararat Rural City Council Tree network is captured spatially by position (latitude and longitude) and can be displayed on a mapping environment however the spatial representation of the tree as a three-dimensional model (using LiDAR etc) is not available at this time.

[1] Council has no Statutory or Common Law duty to inspect roadside trees, inspections and mitigation works are conducted when resources allow for such works or in the event of a reactive inspection.

3 ASSET MANAGEMENT

3.6 Tree Inspection

Council will endeavour to assess all applicable trees within the Municipality to determine their potential for public risk with inspection frequencies determined by that potential. Trees in "high risk" areas will warrant more frequent inspections. To enable Council to effectively monitor and maintain its tree assets, Council must maintain an up-to-date inventory of applicable trees within its Confirm Asset Management System. Each tree in Confirm is uniquely identified and assigned a category in the hierarchy relevant to its location. Information contained within this inventory is defined within Council's data standards.

Condition inspections occur via one of the following methods.

- Level 1 Routine Maintenance Inspection (Asset officer or Maintenance staff)
- Level 2 Condition Inspection (Asset Officer)
- Level 3 Technical/Professional - as required utilising external expertise (Arborist)

3.6.1 Condition Definition

Street Trees

Condition	Description
Very Good	Healthy tree in correct shape for species and location. Well maintained with no significant defects and no evidence of deterioration. No work required.
Good	As grade 1 but showing slight defects and deterioration e.g., <5%-10% bark damage, <10% deadwood, but no dead branches. Deterioration has no significant impact on health, safety and appearance of the tree. Only minor works required.
Fair	Tree generally sound but appearance affect by minor defects e.g., vandalism, 5-10% bark damage, 10-15% deadwood, inappropriate shape, some rubbing and dead branches but no safety risk. Some deterioration beginning to affect the health, and appearance of the tree. Some work required. Replacement/ rejuvenation possible within 3-6 years.
Poor	Tree has significant defects e.g. 10-15% bark damage, 15-25% deadwood, broken branches, some rot and disease, poor shape and up to 5% dead or rubbing branches, causing a marked deterioration in appearance, health and safety of the tree. Impact from adjacent paths or kerbing. Significant work required replacement/ rejuvenation needed within 1-3 years.
Very Poor	Unhealthy tree with serious defects and has died or is about to die in the near future e.g., >15% bark damage, >25% deadwood, >5% dead branches, significant disease and rot resulting in unacceptable deterioration in appearance, health and safety. Priority replacement required.

3 ASSET MANAGEMENT

Park Trees

Condition	Description
Very Good	Healthy tree in correct shape for species and location. Well maintained with no significant defects and no evidence of deterioration. No work required.
Good	As grade 1 but showing slight defects and deterioration e.g., <5%-10% bark damage, <10% deadwood, but no dead branches. Deterioration has no significant impact on health, safety, and appearance of the tree. Only minor works required.
Fair	Tree generally sound but appearance affect by minor defects e.g. vandalism, 5-10% bark damage, 10-15% deadwood, inappropriate shape, some rubbing and dead branches but no safety risk. Some deterioration beginning to affect the health, and appearance of the tree. Some work required. Replacement/ rejuvenation possible within 6-10 years.
Poor	Tree has significant defects e.g., 10-15% bark damage, 15-25% deadwood, broken branches, some rot and disease, poor shape and up to 5% dead or rubbing branches, causing a marked deterioration in appearance, health and safety of the tree. Impact on roots from adjacent paths or foundations. Significant work required replacement/rejuvenation needed within 2-5 years.
Very Poor	Unhealthy tree with serious defects and has died or is about to die in the near future e.g., >15% bark damage, >25% deadwood, >5% dead branches, significant disease and rot resulting in unacceptable deterioration in appearance, health and safety. Priority replacement required.

3 ASSET MANAGEMENT

Bush/Natural Vegetation

Condition	Description
Very Good	Healthy plants with 100% coverage, no significant defects, and no evidence of deterioration. Evidence of native fauna occupying the habitat in a symbolic relationship. No work required.
Good	As grade 1 but, showing slight defects and deterioration e.g., 5% unhealthy plants, 5% affected by pests & disease. Deterioration has no significant impact on health and appearance of the bush. Only minor works required.
Fair	Plants generally sound but appearance affected by minor defects e.g., 5-10% plants dead or damaged, some pests & disease, noticeable gaps in coverage. Some deterioration beginning to affect the health and appearance of the bush. Some work required. Replacement/ rejuvenation needed within 3-10 years.
Poor	Boardwalk functioning but with problems due to significant defects e.g. impact damage, rotting/splitting of timber, loosening of fastening and supports, degradation of non-slip features, causing a marked deterioration in strength, stability, functionality and appearance. Likely to require renewal within 1-2 years.
Very Poor	Unhealthy plants with serious defects, which have died or are about to die soon e.g., >25% deadwood, significant pests, disease and rot resulting in unacceptable deterioration in appearance and health. Priority replacement/rejuvenation required.

3.6.2 Condition Inspection Routine

Inspection Description	Rate
Condition 1-3	Once annually
Condition 4	Twice annually
Condition 5	Quarterly annually

3.7 Attribute Collection

Asset staff will utilise Confirm Connect to check current asset attribute data and update as necessary whilst in the field assessing/visiting an asset (i.e., for a condition inspection). New assets will be recorded in confirm based on design specifications and then checked and updated in the field. Asset Attribute data collection will be in line with mandatory data collection requirements.

3.8 General Asset Reporting

Asset staff are required to provide annual asset reporting for valuations and grant application requirements. These specific reports include but are not limited to:

- Tree asset including attribute
- Tree spatial mapping
- Tree condition report
- Tree maintenance report

3.9 Internal Auditing of Process

The processes that are to be audited internally per annum are as follows:

- Collection and storage of condition information.
- Recording of complaints/requests in the manner required.
- Complaint/request is inspected and/or assessed in relation to risk/safety & specified maintenance intervention levels.
- Proactive inspections are carried out as scheduled.
- Relevant inspection reporting and recording mechanisms are in place.
- Reported defects are being properly recorded in the system.
- Appropriate rectification responses are determined, and Works Orders issued.
- Record of maintenance activities is made against the asset.
- Management system in place to record and respond to customer enquiries; and
- Asset handover/update process is being managed as required

3.10 Existing Tree Controls and Regulations

There are existing laws and regulations that control the removal and pruning of both native and exotic vegetation on private and public land. The policies and procedures in this Plan are in support of those laws and regulations and need to be viewed as being in addition to those laws and regulations.

It is the responsibility of all persons to ensure they do not do anything that is in contravention of any existing laws and regulations. The following information is provided to assist you in determining what laws and regulations may apply to various situations.

3.10.1 State Government

There is State Government legislation which controls what may or may not be done with vegetation e.g., the Planning and Environment Act 1987. More information on this Act and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's Native Vegetation Management Framework (NVMF) can be found at www.dwelp.vic.gov.au/planning.

3.10.2 Local Government

The Ararat Rural City Council has a variety of planning scheme requirements and local laws that specify what may or may not be undertaken with certain types of vegetation. Some of the requirements in the planning scheme are included in the following provisions:

All Vegetation	Clause
Environmental Significance Overlays	Clause 42.01
Vegetation Protection Overlays	Clause 42.02
Significant Landscape Overlays	Clause 42.03
Heritage Overlay	Clause 43.01
Public Acquisition Overlay	Clause 45.01

Native Vegetation	Clause
Native Vegetation Precinct Plan	Clause 52.16
Native Vegetation	Clause 52.17

Local laws specific to vegetation are included in the following provisions	Clause
Unsightly and Dangerous Properties	Clause 12
Trees and Plants Not to Obstruct or Obscure	Clause 16
Trees or Plants Causing Damage to a Municipal Place	Clause 20
Vegetation on Nature Strips	Clause 21

3.11 Exceptional Circumstances

Trees are a living organism and the environment in which they live can change quickly. Council will make every endeavour to meet all aspects of its Tree Asset Management Plan. However, in the event of natural disasters and other events including, but not limited to, storms, fires, floods, droughts, a lack of Council staff or suitably qualified Contractors and the like, Council reserves the right to suspend compliance with its Tree Management Plan.

The Chief Executive Officer and Council's Risk and Governance department will be advised any suspensions or reactivations of the Tree Asset Management Plan.

4 DEPOT OPERATIONS

The core responsibilities of council's depot operations with relation to Tree is the identification of tree defects and the rectification of those defects through routine and responsive maintenance. Defects are identified through an inspection process and assessed against intervention definitions.

4.1 Proactive Inspection

These inspections are scheduled in accordance with Item 4.5.1. A qualified Arborist will inspect the tree for any defects which may impact the structural integrity of the tree. Any mitigation works logged on the tree will be determined in accordance with the location of the tree, the type of defect identified, the likelihood that the defect will result in trunk or branch failure and the likely consequences if failure occurs. Mitigation works will be referred for further action in accordance with Item 4.4.1.

4.2 Reactive Inspection

These inspections come about after Council is notified of:

1. An incident related to an insurance claim.
2. A report of an issue by the community; or
3. Identification of an issue by a Council employee.

Depending on the Risk Assessment, within 2 – 30 working days of Council's team becoming aware of an issue, an appropriately qualified Arborist will carry out an inspection and confirm any defects or issues and then refer these for further action in accordance with the time frames stipulated in Item 4.5.2. The reactive inspection timeframe will be determined by the location of the tree and the nature of the defect or incident.

4.3 Defect Definition

The following table is used to identify if any defect exists when undertaking a tree defect inspection.

Should a defect be identified it is logged as a defect within Confirm Connect which will trigger the creation of the job for works to be undertaken to rectify the defect identified.

4.4 Defect Inspection Routine

The following table outlines the defect inspection timeframe intervals.

Tree	Defect Inspection Interval	Customer Request Inspection
Heritage Trees	1 year	5 days
Park Trees	2 years	10 days
Street Trees	5 years	14 days
Native Bushland	5 years	30days

- Link inspections occur at least every 12 months.
- Preventative maintenance includes proactive maintenance and plans maintenance. Simple maintenance tasks.
- Reactive maintenance includes corrective maintenance and unplanned maintenance. This will extend the life of asset instead of further deterioration.

4.5 Tree Maintenance

Tree Maintenance is triggered via response to a complaint, enquiry or event (reactive maintenance) or is routine in nature, based schedule of maintenance events.

Tree inspections are aligned with the Victorian State Government's Road structures inspection manual.

4.5.1 Routine Maintenance

Routine maintenance is scheduled maintenance applied to a tree outside of reactive maintenance, where a tree maintenance team will visit a tree onsite and complete any maintenance works required on the tree where any defects exist outside of intervention levels.

Routine maintenance scheduling operates as per the table below:

Tree	Maintenance Interval	Responsibility
Heritage Trees	1 year	Depot Operations
Park Trees	2 years	Depot Operations
Street Trees	2 years	Depot Operations
Native Bushland	5 years	Depot Operations

4.5.2 Reactive Maintenance

Reactive tree maintenance is undertaken by the depot operations team. It is packaged via a works coordinator who distributes jobs using Confirm WorkZone for execution by crews in Confirm Connect based on identified defects through the inspection process.

Tree	Timeframe	Responsibility
Heritage Trees	5 days	Depot Operations
Park Trees	20 days	Depot Operations
Street Trees	50 days	Depot Operations
Native Bushland	100 days	Depot Operations

4.6 Tree Selection and Planting

Street and parkland tree planting should be done in a programmed and sustainable manner. This is a sound approach both environmentally and economically. Due to lead times associated with the production of tree stock it is essential to forward plan to determine what tree stock will be needed to be assured of obtaining the right species, acceptable quality of stock and availability at the right time.

A "sustained amenity" approach which results in lanced diversity of tree ages and sizes across the municipality, should be followed to achieve long term stability of the tree population and landscape character.

The right mix of species and age diversity are vital components of a sustainable tree population. An accepted rule for achieving this is for a single genus to not make up any more than ten percent of the whole tree population. The age of trees should also be spread evenly across the municipality with variation between young and old trees to lessen the impact of, or need, to remove large areas of trees.

Priority for tree planting by the Council should be given to:

- areas with a lack of trees.
- areas where residents or community groups have requested trees.
- high profile and high use areas.
- areas where there are high percentages of old aged trees, low species diversity and/or trees in poor condition; and
- sites where trees have been removed.

When selecting species for street and parkland tree planting the following factors must be considered:

- Preferred "Landscape Character".
- Adopted masterplans, strategies, and development plans.
- The significance of previous history of tree planting.
- Drought tolerance/low water usage.
- Longevity.
- Growth habit, size and structural integrity.
- Tolerance to harsh urban environments.
- Soil type and structure.
- Root growth characteristics and tolerances.
- Pruning requirements.
- Amount and type of debris shed.
- Proximity and form of surrounding existing and future below ground and above ground infrastructure.
- Powerline assets
- Solar radiation/orientation.
- Pest and disease susceptibility.
- Existing and future use of the surrounding area;
- Habitat value.
- Suitability to a public environment i.e., allergens or pathogens
- Weed potential.
- Existing and likely future adjacent land use; and
- Future planning for expected climate change.

New tree planting should reinforce the existing character of municipal areas, consisting of "Exotic"; "Mixed (exotic and native)"; and "native (preferably indigenous)" type trees. Council must be consulted and give approval for any tree planting within streets and parklands it controls or will take control of as Council will ultimately become responsible for their maintenance and any problems that may arise. Refer AS 2303:2018 Tree Stock for Landscape Use.

4 DEPOT OPERATIONS

4.7 Tree Removal

Trees can take many years to develop fully and once removed cannot be quickly replaced. Urban trees are living organisms with a finite life span; they often grow in non-ideal environments; they can be subject to numerous forms of physical damage; and can become a potential risk. Removal of trees will therefore be a regular and necessary process of Council's tree management program. Tree removal decisions must be undertaken systematically and with due consideration of all factors.

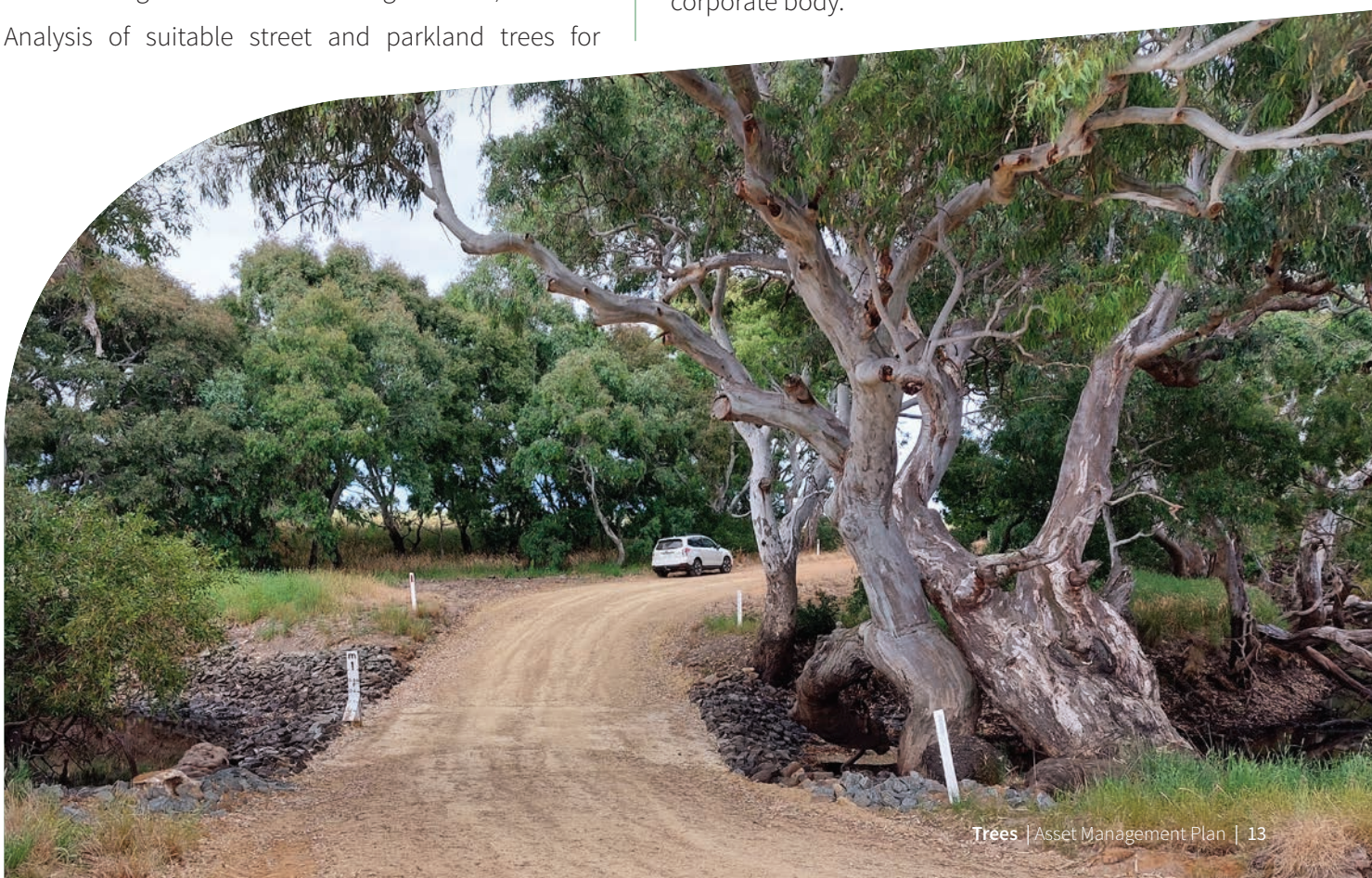
Prior to tree removal in most instances an attempt will be made to inform adjacent residents of the removal works. Notification will generally be in the form of an informational letter, either physical or electronic, to the residence. Council officers will also 'door knock' prior to works starting where possible.

Exceptions to the notification process are when there is an immediate "High risk" to the public or property. In these cases, tree removal will occur as a priority to ensure public safety. Additionally, trees assessed by a qualified Arborists as being an immediate high risk to public safety are exempt from the requirement for a planning permit.

All State and local planning requirements controlling the removal of trees must be adhered to (see Clause 15.1 "Existing Tree Controls and Regulations").

Analysis of suitable street and parkland trees for Council and ongoing assessment of the health and structure of existing trees is undertaken to identify priorities for tree removal. Where possible Council tree removals should involve some form of consultation with directly affected parties unless there is an immediate risk to public safety. In these instances, all assessment documentation and photographs should be added in Confirm and forwarded to Council's Risk and Compliance department which will liaise with stakeholders in relation to any queries regarding the removal of the tree. When consultation is possible and practicable, written or verbal notification of Council's intention to remove the tree will be given to the residence directly adjacent to the tree. Any trees removed should be replaced, when possible, in order to maintain the sustainability of the overall tree asset. Any decision to remove a tree will be based on the best long-term outcome for the local community.

In the event of any unauthorised removal, damage, application of herbicide or any impact leading to the death or irreversible damage to public trees any costs incurred by Council for the removal, reinstatement and replanting including aftercare will be recouped from the responsible persons or corporate body. Any costs incurred by Council for removal and reinstatement resulting from unauthorised landscaping, planting or other unauthorised works in a Council Road reserve will be recouped from the responsible persons or corporate body.



4 DEPOT OPERATIONS

4.8 Tree Protection

All work on and around trees must comply with:

- AS 4373-2007 Pruning of amenity trees; and
- AS 4970-2009 Protection of trees on development sites

Trees and infrastructure are essential items in a modern environment. It is not possible to avoid all potential conflicts, however they can be minimised through innovative design and correct management of maintenance activities.

Trees may be subject to damage, above and below ground, from civil works. Where any civil works are proposed in the vicinity of trees, an assessment and works plan is essential to ensure tree damage is avoided or minimised.

Large tree specimens that may have local or cultural significance may require protection measures that are not general practice for most street and park trees. Protection measures for these trees may include fencing, mulching, greater clearances from adjoining works and structural assistance measures such as propping or cable bracing to protect from damage or disturbance.

Over the trafficable lane of a road reserve, Council has a legal obligation to provide adequate tree clearance for traffic but not for telecommunication cables. Clearance around telecommunications cables is the responsibility of the telecommunications provider. Works within the vicinity of a Council tree or trees that will become the responsibility of Council should comply with AS 4970-2009.

4.9 Infrastructure Protection

Infrastructure may be subject to damage/interference from adjacent trees. When any tree plantings are proposed in the vicinity of above and below ground infrastructure, careful consideration of species selection, soil type, planting technique, available root space and the appropriateness of root control measures are needed to ensure damage is avoided or minimised. In the vicinity will mean within the expected mature “drip-line” of a tree or at least a radius from the centre of the trunk equal to 12 times the mature trunk diameter, whichever is the greater.

Tree roots are not invasive by nature but do rely upon soil moisture for growth and survival. If sub-surface drainage pipes are seeping, damaged or leaking, tree roots in the vicinity may be encouraged to develop more prolifically. The responsibility for unblocking and repair of the private house drainage pipes remains with the property owner.

Tree roots can, on occasions cause damage to vehicle crossovers, fences and other private infrastructure. Upon being informed of such damage, Council shall inspect the tree and, if appropriate, undertake remediation works which may include arranging for a root prune and installation of a root barrier.

4 DEPOT OPERATIONS

4.10 Electric Line Clearance

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) is responsible authority for ensuring electrical safety of the power distribution system in Victoria. The Ararat Rural City Council has a statutory obligation under the Electricity Safety Act (1998) for maintaining clearance of public trees from overhead power lines within the "Declared Area" of the City.

Refer to the "Ararat Rural City Electric Line Clearance Management Plan" for details on how this is managed and "Declared Area" maps.

Maintaining overhead electric line clearances for all trees outside of the 'Declared Area' is the responsibility of the local power distribution company which is Powercor. In some case private land owners are responsible for the clearance of trees from powerlines.

4.11 Tree Maintenance

Tree maintenance should be based on a risk priority basis. High priority maintenance works must take precedence over reactionary or lower priority requests. Due to the specialised nature of tree works, only experienced Council staff and or approved contractors are to undertake maintenance works on Council trees, Refer Australian Standard AS 4373-2007.

Formative tree works on young and developing trees has the potential to significantly reduce the future risks and costs associated with mature trees. Formative works on young street trees should aim to develop a straight single trunked tree that is clear of side branching up to approximately 2.5 meters from the base. Refer Australian Standard AS 4373-2007.

5 ENGINEERING AND PROJECTS

5.1 Tree Intervention Definitions

The purpose of Tree intervention definitions is to describe the level of a defect which subsequently requires maintenance to rectify.

The following table outlines the response time to a tree defect dependant on the road hierarchy that the tree resides within. Roads with higher utility are graded with higher response objectives specific to items requiring maintenance. Intervention response times will be generated in relation to defects for heritage trees, park trees, street trees and native bushland for inclusion in this plan and within Confirm.

Intervention response times apply from the time of defect identification by council that exceeds the stated intervention level. Identification by Council may be through proactive inspection, reactive inspection following a customer request, or other responsive notification. Where an interim response has been made, the intervention response time shall apply from the time the interim response is completed.

Where multiple defects exceeding intervention levels are identified, intervention shall be prioritised in asset hierarchy order. Where resources are constrained (availability of funds, materials, specialist contractors or specialist equipment), the intervention response times may be extended subject to risks being managed through temporary treatment provisions.

The identification of a defect that exceeds the stated intervention level does not oblige Council to upgrade or maintain the asset to a standard higher than that which it was constructed.

Council endeavours to identify defects that exceed the stated intervention thresholds. Where intervention thresholds are exceeded, treatment will be undertaken in accordance with the timeframes identified and subject to available resources.

5.2 Renewal and Capital Works Planning

- Council tree assets approaching end-of-life or no longer meet community needs, will be considered for renewal.
- Risk Assessment based on priority of renewal factors by engineers.
- Decision matrix based on the priority of renewal factors with relevant scaling decided by the engineers.

6 CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT

6.1 Tender Process

The tender process for all asset management types will be in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy. Procurement Policy FINAL 30 May 2023.pdf

6.2 Financial Tracking of Renewal Projects

Financial Tracking of contracts is undertaken through Council's financial system and associated tracking numbers.

6.3 Project Milestone Reporting

Project Milestone Reporting will be undertaken in compliance with funding milestone requirements and contract hold points and key performance indicators.

7 FINANCE AND VALUATIONS

This section references councils Valuations Policy – Major Asset Classes.

7.1 Asset Valuation

Ararat Rural City Council has a responsibility to financially represent its network of tree assets to fair value. Tree valuation is conducted by assigning unit rates to those classes on an annual basis based on real word values and multiplying the area of each individual tree structure to the assigned unit rate.

7.2 Asset Capitalisation

All assets captured and represented within the Asset Management System are capitalised assets within councils financial reporting.

7.3 Asset Written Down Value

The current written down value of the tree asset is defined as the current cost of replacement minus the amount the asset has already depreciated.

7.4 Recurrent and Non-Recurrent Assets

All tree assets are treated as recurrent and financially planned for as a renewal asset.

7.5 Asset Depreciation

Tree Asset Depreciation is the value ($) of the already consumed portion of the tree asset. For example, if the tree asset is expected to last 30 years and it is currently 15 years old then it is determined that 50% of the asset is already depreciated. It is calculated in by taking the current unit rate of replacement and multiplying it against the unit rate of replacement connected to the asset and then against the percentage of the asset already consumed.

7.6 Representation of Asset Costings within Finance System

Trees renewal projects are tracked within the council finance system using tracking categories. Maintenance and general works expenses are tracked at a network layer within the finance system; however, individual works costs can also be reported through the Asset Management System (Confirm).

8 CUSTOMER SERVICE

8.1 Complaints

Complaints will be logged via Council's customer request management system (CRMS).

8.2 Request for Service

Customer request for service will be logged via Council's customer request management system (CRMS). Examples of request for service specific to trees are:

- Overgrown trees
- Fallen limbs

8.3 Feedback

General feedback is captured by customer service via email.

8.4 Customer Request Management System (CRMS)

Council's customer request system (CRMS) will be used to report and record customer/public requests related to Council assets, including trees. Customers can log a request online, or phone the request into customer service, who log the request on the customer's behalf. The request is then assessed by the responsible member of staff, and work scheduled accordingly. Once the request is complete, Council staff will notify the customer.

9 RISK/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

9.1 Safety and Risk Management

All management and operational work related to asset management (including risk, incident reporting and safe work methods) will be undertaken in accordance with Council's OH&S Policy and associated procedures.
OHS Policy FINAL 19 January 2021.

10 GOVERNANCE/CEO'S OFFICE

10.1 Management of Plan

This plan will be adopted and managed on a formal four-year cycle of review.

This plan will be stored under council's Governance SharePoint policy manual, owned by the Office of the CEO and be subject to out of cycle review at the discretion of the CEO.

10.2 Audit

This plan will be available for all standard audit requirements.

11 ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

11.1 Asset Digital Monitoring

Taking a 'Smart Cities' approach Ararat Rural City Council looks to take advantage of technology that supports the use of Asset Monitoring in particular the ability to:

- Enhance the accuracy of estimated remaining useful life.
- Enhance the accuracy of current asset condition.
- Enhance the accuracy of measuring asset health.

It is Ararat Rural City Council's intent to trial and implement various technology related to monitoring of assets that may assist in process efficiencies in this space.

11.2 Asset Alerting Services

Taking a 'Smart Cities' approach Ararat Rural City Council looks to take advantage of technology that supports the use of automated alerting specific to council assets.

Current examples of this include alerting when a public bin along Barkly Street reaches a fullness threshold, or when certain storm water systems exceed volume and flow thresholds.

It is Ararat Rural City Councils intent to trial and implement various technology related to monitoring of assets that may assist in process efficiencies in this space.

11.3 Public Data Access

Road based bridge structures are publicly displayed through the public roads register.

Ararat Rural City Council is currently undertaking an assessment to establish additional data sets related to trees that may be considered for future public access including:

- Condition.
- Attribute.
- Defect.
- Maintenance.
- Financial.
- Spatial.
- Civil and Design.

11.4 Predictive Asset Management

The Rural Councils Transformation Program is a state government funded initiative that is funding the current development of Ararat Rural Councils predictive asset management platform. The platform is intended to have development completed in Q3 2023 ready for testing and organisational use in Q4 2023. The core functions of the predicative asset management platform are:

- Analytics at both a network and individual asset level to determine if useful life estimates are trending accurately to current useful life valuation predictions.
- Asset in the annual construction of asset financial valuations for calculated assets.
- Forward predict a rolling 10-year roads and bridge capital works program based on current degradation rates of council assets.
- Detailed reporting including spatial insights across asset classes.

11.5 Key Performance Indicator Platform

The management of all Council's assets will be measured and tracked via Council's service level key performance indicator system within PowerBI. This system will enable monthly tracking of data identified as critical to success related to the Assets service. This key performance indicator information is viewed and monitored by the CEO.

Ararat Rural City

CONTACT

Should you have any queries regarding this handbook or attachments please contact the Ararat Rural City Council on 03 5355 0200 or council@ararat.vic.gov.au