

DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN

*Topic summary:*

# NOTABLE TREES

## KEY OUTCOMES

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- *Leveraging our heritage*
- *Great urban areas*



## INTRODUCTION

*Napier's urban trees contribute to a memorable and liveable city. They provide a sense of place, shade, a home for a wide range of fauna including birds and insects, a connection to our past, and contribute to clean air.*

Notable trees are those that demonstrate characteristics such as rarity, excellence in form and stature, a connection to a significant event or person, or those that are landmarks in their own right. They are trees that - should they ever be cut down - people would feel aggrieved.

## OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT PROVISIONS

The Resource Management Act identifies the protection of historic heritage as a matter of national importance and requires that Councils identify and appropriately manage historic heritage. Notable trees are considered to be part of historic heritage.

Napier's current District Plan already protects 30 notable trees, all located on Council-owned reserves.

Periodically, it is important to review and update this list, to delete those trees that have died or been removed, and to include additional trees that warrant protection.

Provisions of the District Plan in relation to notable trees are designed to provide for the maintenance of these trees, prevent any possible damage and protect them from destruction without proper assessment.

## KEY ISSUES AND CHANGES

The current District Plan rules are working well for notable trees located on Council-owned property. As it stands, only trees located on Council-owned property can be identified as notable. This policy has been in place for many years and has helped Council address any issues relating to ease of management and access, health and safety, and liability.

Council also has a policy of replacing those notable trees that have been removed for legitimate reasons with the same species, if possible. This policy means each tree's significance in the community can be continued through its notable tree status.

Council recently reviewed the current list and deleted those trees that have died or been removed (generally because of ill health or safety concerns). An initial scan of the city resulted in a further 206 trees being assessed using the best practice Standard Tree Evaluation Method (STEM) assessment method.

Those trees that achieved a STEM score above a defined threshold were put forward for inclusion in the notable trees schedule. This process has given us a total of 68 notable trees, or groups of trees, in Napier. All additional trees assessed are located on Council-owned public land.

Where individual trees did not achieve this STEM threshold, but were a part of an avenue of trees that included trees that did achieve the STEM threshold, the entire avenue has been recommended for inclusion.

Provisions to manage these protected trees will remain similar to the current District Plan rules. This means tree maintenance and upkeep can occur, but anything beyond this must go through a formal assessment.