

A guide to **PRUNING HERITAGE TREES** in the Queenstown Lakes District.



This brochure is designed to offer guidelines to clarify the threshold at which the trimming of a heritage tree becomes significant. Pruning that is significant requires resource consent.

- **What's a heritage tree?**
- **What constitutes significant trimming?**
- **Are any funding options available?**
- **Where do I find an approved and informed arborist?**

WHAT'S A HERITAGE TREE?

Private property owners who have heritage trees (as listed in the Queenstown-Lakes District Council Partially Operative District Plan - Appendix A3, "Inventory of Protected Features") located on their property are required to obtain resource consent to carry out significant trimming of the tree. This is to ensure that protected trees are maintained according to best arboricultural practice.

WHAT CONSTITUTES SIGNIFICANT TRIMMING?

The District Plan does not define "significant trimming". This brochure provides guidance as to what constitutes significant trimming so owners can have a greater level of certainty about when the trimming of a tree will require resource consent.

Trimming of a heritage tree is not considered to be "significant" if done to conduct **routine maintenance pruning** to promote a tree in a safe, healthy and natural form where pruning is restricted to less than 10% of the canopy of the tree.

Routine maintenance pruning may also include any one or more of the following works provided that total pruning shall be restricted to less than 10% of the canopy of the tree:

- The removal of identified broken branches and/or wood that is damaged, diseased or dead and where removal of branches is confined to those that are not part of the main canopy structure, and does not include major live limb removal;
- The pruning of branches toward the outer canopy (drip line) of the tree that are interfering with overhanging buildings or structures, but only up to a distance of 1.0 to 1.5 meters from the external walls or roof of the building.
- The clearance of branches from power wires and lines, but only to provide a clearance distance in accordance with the requirements of the Electricity (Hazards from Trees Regulations) 2003 (or any legislation in substitution or replacement thereof)
- The removal of sucker growth up to 4 years old from the main stem or on areas where previous pruning cuts have occurred.

Note: Pruning is not to occur more frequently than biannually or triennially if the full 10% of canopy has been pruned during the most recent maintenance.

It is recommended that an approved arborist undertake all routine maintenance pruning. If no resource consent is obtained, it is highly recommended that photos of the subject tree be taken before and after pruning, and retained by the owner and/or arborist in the event that questions arise about the extent of the pruning conducted.

If in doubt about the level of trimming required for a particular tree, owners are advised to contact the Council's Parks Manager, or an approved arborist.

ARE ANY FUNDING OPTIONS AVAILABLE?

In May 2006 the Council adopted the Heritage Incentive Policy, which provides for grants for reimbursement of consent costs and professional advisor fees (i.e. arborist reports) of up to \$3,000 for Category 2 items, which include heritage trees.

If a heritage tree requires significant trimming, then this resource is available to assist in mitigating the costs related to obtaining an arborist's report and consent costs.

WHERE DO I FIND AN APPROVED AND INFORMED ARBORIST?

At this time, there are two recommended arborists in the Queenstown Lakes District area. They are NZ Tree Care and Asplundh.

Both companies have been involved in the development of these guidelines which follow best practice formulated by the New Zealand Arboriculture Association. Other arborists may be added from time to time. Please contact the Parks Manager for an updated list.



QUEENSTOWN
LAKES DISTRICT
COUNCIL

www.qldc.govt.nz

CONTACT DETAILS

For further information on Heritage Trees, please contact:
QLDC parks manager Gordon Bailey,
03 441 0499 email gordonb@qldc.govt.nz

For further information on Heritage Incentive Grants, please contact:
QLDC senior policy analyst Scott Figenshow,
03 441 0499 email scottf@qldc.govt.nz

For maintenance pruning or trimming services, contact:

- NZ Tree Care - Dave Finlin
0274 334 845 or 03 442 8633
email: nztreecare@xtra.co.nz
- Asplundh Tree Expert Ltd.
- Nick Houghton 09 570 8041
email: NewZealand@asplundh.com

All trimming and pruning costs are the responsibility of the property owner