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CLIENT DETAILS

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THE SANDS

TORQUAY 3228 VICTORIA

Street Tree Assessment 2018

This report has been commissioned by:

The Owners Corporation The Sands, Torquay

In reference to: Health Assessment of Trees on Residential Naturestrips

March 2018



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1.0 Key Objectives

This report has been commissioned by the owner's corporation, The Sands, Torquay, for the undertaking of a visual tree assessment of trees on the naturestrips of dwellings within The Sands Estate, Torquay.

It is to determine the health of trees on the naturestrips of allotments, make remarks and document findings so as a sound course of management of the trees can be established and followed for the ongoing sound retention of trees on the site.

No trees within private allotments are included in this report and all trees are located on municipal naturestrips within the area of the estate.

2.0 Methodology

The inspection for this report was performed on site, on the 13th of March 2018, by Matthew Branagh level 5 Consulting Arborist from Let's Talk About Trees.

A ground-based Visual Tree Assessment was performed on the aboveground section of the trees, in line with modern Arboricultural Practices and Principles, many years of education, practical experience, AS 4970 – 2009 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites and AS 4373 – 2007 – Pruning of Amenity Trees.

All photographs were taken at the time of the inspection, and shall be used within this report for referencing or identification purposes.

3.0 Observations / Discussions

The Sands Resort is a residential housing estate around the Torquay Golf Course.

The streets of the estate were planted approximately 15 years ago using a mono cultured style of planting.

The selected species identified as *Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak.*

An Australian native indigenous to the area the tree grows to a mature height of 10 metres and has a spread of around 4 metres. It has a life expectancy which in some cases can extend beyond 100 years of age, although 70 – 80 years is more common. Tree is the natural landscape seldom die once past 5 years of age, and death is commonly caused by structural failure.

The tree is a species which commonly grows in open woodlands in its natural setting and the seed pods of the trees form a primary food source of the *Glossy Black Cockatoo – Calyptorhynchus lathami*.

The trees are rather unique in that they present as being male or female. That is some specimens are adorned with enormous numbers of male flowers which swell at the ends of the cylindrical leaflets in late autumn, presenting as yellow tassels. Other trees present with small red inconspicuous and rather less showy flowers along the outer woody limbs of the trees canopy.

These are the receptive flowers and in due course present as the abundant seed capsules seen on specimens which are considered the females.

As such some trees seen in the estate present with the catkin like flowers and others with large amounts of seed capsules.

Whilst this male and female idea presents as a sound argument when visually assessing the trees, in actual fact all trees present both male and female parts however for whatever evolutionary reason different trees carry rather more male or female parts than others.

I have seen trees which present as both, and I have also seen trees heavy in seed capsules one season and flowers the next. As such it is clear that the trees do present as having a single role in the sexual activity of the species however undertake role change in varying seasons.

As such in the monoculture of this landscape it is not truly feasible to remove all 'female' trees to address capsule numbers as 'male' trees may

well take over this role, although in my experience with many less capsules than a tree which establishes as 'female'.

The species is also used commonly in landscapes and as urban street trees. Specimens used for this purpose are difficult to establish into old age. Specimens are commonly removed due to large scaffold failings or poor developmental form. In stating this I have rarely seen the species impact urban structures in a major way and as such the species does have a place as an urban landscape specimen.

The street scape of the estate unfortunately has been established as a mono culture. Using a single species is rather like placing all ones eggs in a single basket, and when things go wrong it is in a large way.

In the case of the plantings of the estate, it can already be seen that trees are failing in storm events due to structural issues minor impacts to street assets, and many trees requiring major pruning works to remove adventitious limbs which are following the low natural spread of the species canopies.

The records in the following table indicate works required at the time of the inspection, offer a comment and a place a priority on the works.

The works identified are related to tree health, impact to the trees, growing environment and indicative failings which require addressing to maintain sound street assets.

	No.	Identification	Comment	Priority
	1	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 255 The Esplanade Extension. Trim branch stubs left after past pruning low in the canopy to maintain future tree health.	М
	2	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 271 The Esplanade Extension. Tree shows poor structure and is a highly likely future failure. Plan as a selected removal and replacement.	L
PRIORITY RATING H = HIGH Requires immediate planning and completion M = MEDIUM Requires planning for within the next 12 months L = LOW Requires planning within described time frame	3	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 23 St Annes Drive. Poor structure multi stemmed from base. Plan as a selected removal and replacement.	L
	4	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located beside 240 Sands Boulevard. Trim branch stubs left after past pruning low in the canopy to maintain future tree health.	М
	5	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 21 Sands Boulevard Dead Tree Requires Removal	н
	6	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 33 Sands Boulevard Very poor structure – Plan as a selected removal and replacement.	М
	7	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 67 Sands Boulevard Included bark to ground level. Crack radiating lower than ground level. Tree has failed and is an eminent failure. Removal required before	Н
	8	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	likely high wind failure event. Located in front of 85 Sands Boulevard Bifurcated with included bark. Exposed roots, poor leaf mass over stem ratio. Tree is an eminent high wind failure and will fail into the property. Removal Required before failure.	Н

	No.	Identification	Comment	Priority
	9	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 70 St Georges Way. Major past limb failings. Likely storm event related. Wounds in main scaffold and branch union of main scaffolds. Tree will not recover and will fail further in the future.	Ц
PRIORITY RATING H = HIGH Requires immediate planning and completion	10	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 79 St Georges Way. Major invasion has occurred into the trees structural root plate. This is in order to repair a failed pipe. Tree roots have accessed a failed pipe. This tree will likely not recover from this impacted root loss.	
M = MEDIUM Requires planning for within the next 12 months L = LOW Requires planning within described time frame	11	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Recommend removal of the tree and replacement. Located in front of 75 St Georges Way. Significant dieback has caused significant epicormic regrowth in the canopy of this young tree. The tree will never take good form or structure. Requires removal followed by a replacement planting.	M
	12	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 21 Ballyliffen Crescent. Part failed tree with very poor structure. Requires removal and replacement.	Μ
	13	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 6 Loch - Lamond Crescent. Major structural branch defect. This tree now poses a high potential failure risk. Removal Required	Н
	14	Allocasuarina verticillata – Drooping Sheoak	Located in front of 33 Gleneagles Close. Poorly structured tree with 3 major past limb failings. Tree will not structurally recover and poses an increased failure risk. Removal Required	Н

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4.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the trees show the effects of being established in an open exposed urban site. The species has performed well given the evident coastal exposure of some areas which is evident in leaning tree canopies.

Some tree failings and other structural issues are identified in the table in this report. Whilst these form a management list the species has performed well given the number of trees which remain unimpacted in the streets of the site.

This report has raised issues in its discussions regarding the suitability of the species as a street tree. It is my belief that the species is suitable as a street tree species in selected locations, however not a suitable for every location.

I also have a low opinion of the suitability of the species for successfully street scaping in a mono cultured way. The species failings are too high to ever form a sound stable street scape. As such consideration should be given to selecting a group of species which are known to perform well I the area with less issues and impacts. These should then be utilised as the replacement species for the trees lost.

It was noted that some diversity has already been introduced into the street scape either intentionally or by default. Species such as Banksia integrifolia – Silver banksia and Acacia melonoxylon – Black Wattle were seen.

The Banksia species will perform well as a naturestrip tree amenity. This is also evidenced in private gardens across the estate where the species is seen growing with good vigour.

Acacia Melonoxylon however is a species which prefers higher rainfall and deeper loamy soils. This species will grow in this location however will develop with a stunted growth habit and will not enjoy the long life expectancy the species is renowned for when grown in better deeper soils.

As such removing the mono culture will prove a sound long term decision.

Dealing with other issues which will arise such as excessive seed capsule loss form 'female' trees will see trees removed. Further limb failings, wind losses and drought or dryness deaths will occur over the coming season. Before to many random tree species are incorporated into the street scape of the estate decisions involving the responsible authorities should be made so as the planting future of the site can be established with a long term approach.

No trees in the estate stand out as significant to the site, and many show characteristics which place them in a situation of decline. These trees will be the first to be removed due to natural attrition. In the meantime the management of these trees is through commissioned reported such as this which highlight issues as they begin to develop. This reduces and manages risks as well as is possible.

This report has looked at all trees on the site, and many are in sound condition and require no maintenance at the time of the inspection. As such these have not been included in this report.

In the past developments on the various sites have impacted tree assets. This now sees these assets as failing, impacted and requiring removal. Management of trees moving forward should involve the knowledge of an arborist in both being involved in making decisions around tree matters and also in pruning, trimming, selecting and planting.

It must be remembered in further developing this estate, consideration should be given to tree root plates of trees.

They should be managed using AS4970-2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites as a guide, and follow recommendations made during planning for a development on site by a suitably qualified arborist.

When removing trees from the site the root plates of all trees should be ground out using modern stump grinding methods.

5.0 Recommendation

The recommendation of this report is as follows;

In order that the tree assets of the site be managed in a sound condition moving forward, it is recommended an asset report such as this one is undertaken annually. This ensures tree assets are managed in a sound way and failure risks are eliminated where possible ensuring a sound well managed arboricultural site.

Works should now be undertaken as guided by the table within this report.

In undertaking these works the risks associated to the trees of the site will be well managed.

Where trees are determined as removals they should be removed to ground level, and the stumps of these trees ground out using modern stump removal methods.

All trees should be managed to meet the requirements of AS 4970 – 2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites, and this be done using this report and AS 4970 – 2011 Pruning of Amenity Trees.

The site Arborist should be engaged to site to manage any and all tree issues which are seen or noted as time moves forward. In undertaking this practice all assets will be managed in a sound state.

A committee should be formed to plan and receive required approvals from the various authorities for a selected and decided street scape species list.

This committee should also be empowered to make informed decisions as to the retention and removal of trees which cause issues within the estate. It should also have some controls over trees species selected for use in urban gardens of the estate and the control of such plantings or removals.

A committee with such controls is able to ensure a sound established street scape is formed, managed and maintained.

Trees be they be good or bad in health and quality, offer an overall aesthetics to the site. As such where this report recommends the removal of vegetation from the site, it also encourages the use of canopy tree assets in replacement of lost tree amenities. All works carried out on the trees should be undertaken by a qualified arborist as per the guideline of Australian Standard AS4970 – 2009 Protection of Trees on Construction Sites.

6.0 Appendices

6.1 Photographs

Pictures are indicative of site vegetation



Poor Tree selection (left) will never produce sound trees (right)



Poorly pruned and managed young stock planting results in poor quality high failure risk tree assets.



Good stock selection and pruning avoids bad stem to canopy ratio and failing of trees latter in time



'Male' trees and 'female' trees. Avoiding species with bad traits can solve many issues related to street trees.



Trees not managed for a single trunk or poorly pruned when young often develop major vascular issues, cannot with stand dry soils and often fail or die when they should be in their growing prime.



Bifurcated trunks on trees often fail and remain upright as dangerous trees before failing expectantly. Exposed roots are resultant of low quality stock or poor planting hole preparation. Stock selection and correct planting is very important when trees are required to perform for a long useful life.



Trees with deadwood in the upper or lower canopy at a young age have major root issues. Once in a state of advanced decline such as this tree (left) Retention is fruitless and tree loss inevitable, it's often best to cut your losses and start over. The same is the case when major structural limbs are lost and failure wounds enter deep into vascular and structural tissues (right).



Major impacts in to a tree root zone and not following best practice as out lined in AS4970-2009 Protection of trees on development sites often results in very serious tree impacts. Retention of such trees often sees trees die over time or fail because of the seriousness of burring structurally deficient impacted tree root plates. This tree should be removed, the issue sorted and a replacement tree replanted.





Sound selection of stock and sound early maintenance results in an evenly grown and canopied street. (above)

Alternative species selection avoids mono-culturing and all the issues associated with such a proactive. Alternative species also offer sounder assets with longer useful lives. (below)

6.2 Site Detail

Streets involved in the scope of this report.



6.3 Terms of Descriptor's

Definitions Descriptor's used for throughout this report.

AGE

Category	Description
Young Semi Mature Mature Senescent	Juvenile or recently planted approximately 1-7 years. Tree actively growing. Tree has reached expected size in situation. Tree is over mature and has started to decline.
HEALTH	
Good	Foliage of tree is entire, with good colour, very little sign of pathogens and of good density. Growth indicators are good ie. Extension growth of twigs and wound wood development. Minimal or no canopy die back (deadwood).
Fair	Tree is showing one or more of the following symptoms; < 25% dead wood, minor canopy die back, foliage generally with good colour though some imperfections may be present. Minor pathogen damage present, with growth indicators such as leaf size, canopy density and twig extension growth typical for the species in this location.
Poor	Tree is showing one or more of the following symptoms of tree decline; > 25% deadwood, canopy die back is observable, discoloured or distorted leaves. Pathogens present, stress symptoms are observable as reduced leaf size, extension growth and canopy density.
Dead or dying	Tree is in severe decline; > 55% deadwood, very little foliage, possibly epicormic shoots, minimal extension growth.
STRUCTURE	
Good	Trunk and scaffold branches show good taper and attachment with minor or no structural defects. Tree is a good example of the species with a well-developed form showing no obvious root problems or pests and diseases.
Fair	Tree shows some minor structural defects or minor damage to trunk eg. bark missing, there could be cavities present. Minimal damage to structural roots. Tree could be seen as typical for this species.
Poor	There are major structural defects, damage to trunk or bark missing. Co-dominant stems could be present or poor structure with likely points of failure. Girdling or damaged roots obvious. Tree is structurally problematic.
Hazardous	Tree is an immediate hazard with potential to fail, this should be rectified as soon as possible.

HAZARD

Hazard is rated into three levels; LOW, MEDIUM, and HIGH.

- 1. **LOW;** Tree appears to be structurally sound, is healthy with no signs of pests or disease, has good vigour and is clear of any hazards.
- 2. **MEDIUM;** Tree displays signs of structural problems, evidence of pests or disease, signs of low vigour, deadwood, decay, may be growing into an area that could create a hazard.
- 3. **HIGH;** Tree is an immediate hazard with the potential to fail, this should be rectified as soon as possible.

USEFUL LIFE EXPEECTANCY – ULE

- **LONG ULE;** Trees that appears to be retainable with an acceptable level of risk for more than 40 years.
 - 1. Structurally sound trees located in positions that can accommodate future growth.
 - 2. Storm damaged or defective trees that could be made suitable for retention in the long term by remedial tree surgery.
 - 3. Trees of special significance for historical, commemorative or rarity reasons that would warrant extraordinary efforts to secure their long-term retention.

MEDIUM ULE; Trees that appear to be retainable with an acceptable level of risk for 15 to 40 years.

- 1. Trees that may only live between 15 and 40 years.
- 2. Trees that may live for more than 40 years but would be removed to allow the safe development of more suitable individuals.
- 3. Trees that may live for more than 40 years but would be removed during the course of normal management for safety and nuisance reasons.
- 4. Storm damage or defective trees that can be made suitable for retention in the medium term by remedial work.

SHORT ULE; Trees that appear to be retainable with an acceptable level of risk for 5 to 15 years.

- 1. Trees that may live for 5 to 15 years.
- 2. Trees that may live for more than 15 years but would be removed to allow the safe development of more suitable individuals.
- 3. Trees that may live for more than 15 years but would be removed during the course of normal management for safety and nuisance reasons.
- 4. Storm damaged or defective trees that require substantial remedial work to make safe and are only suitable for retention in the short term.

REMOVE; Trees with a high level of risk that would need removal within the next 5 years.

- 1. Dead trees.
- 2. Dying or suppressed and declining trees through disease or inhospitable conditions.
- 3. Dangerous trees through instability or recent loss of adjacent trees.
- 4. Dangerous trees through structural defects including cavities, decay, included bark, wounds or poor form.
- 5. Damaged trees that are considered unsafe to retain.
- 6. Trees that will become dangerous after removal of other trees for the above reasons.

SIGNIFICANCE / RETENTION VALUE

Significance is rated into three levels; LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH.

- **LOW;** Trees that offer little in terms of contributing to the future landscape for the reasons of poor health or structural condition, species suitability in relation to unacceptable growth habit, noxious, poisonous or weed species or ULE, or a combination of these characteristics. Should be considered for removal.
- **MODERATE;** Trees with some beneficial attributes that may benefit the site in relation to botanical, horticultural, historical or local significance but may be limited to some degree by their future growth potential at the site by maintenance requirements now or in the future. These trees should be considered for retention if possible within the development design, they may be modified to allow for construction. (eg. pruning, etc;)
- **HIGH;** Trees with the potential to positively contribute to the site due to their botanical, horticultural, historical or local significance in combination with good characteristics of structure, health and future development. Should be considered for inclusion within development plans.

6.4 Structural Root Zone & Tree Protection Zone.



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6.5 Tree Protection Zone Encroachment Examples

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AS 4970-2009

APPENDIX D

ENCROACHMENT INTO TREE PROTECTION ZONE

(Informative)

Encroachment into the tree protection zone (TPZ) is sometimes unavoidable. Figure D1 provides examples of TPZ encroachment by area, to assist in reducing the impact of such incursions.



NOTE: Less than 10% TPZ area and outside SRZ. Any loss of TPZ compensated for elsewhere.

FIGURE D1 EXAMPLES OF MINOR ENCROACHMENT INTO TPZ

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6.6 Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) Signs

4.4 SIGNS

Signs identifying the TPZ should be placed around the edge of the TPZ and be visible from within the development site (refer Figure 3). The lettering on the sign should comply with AS 1319. Appendix C provides an example of a suitable TPZ sign.



LEGEND:

- 1 Chain wire mesh panels with shade cloth (if required) attached, held in place with concrete feet.
- 2 Alternative plywood or wooden paling fence panels. This fencing material also prevents building materials or soil entering the TPZ.
- 3 Mulch installation across surface of TPZ (at the discretion of the project arborist). No excavation, construction activity, grade changes, surface treatment or storage of materials of any kind is permitted within the TPZ.
- 4 Bracing is permissible within the TPZ. Installation of supports should avoid damaging roots.

FIGURE 3 PROTECTIVE FENCING

(Extract from AS4970 – 2009 Protection of trees on Development sites)

6.7 Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) Example

AS 4970-2009

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APPENDIX C

TREE PROTECTION ZONE SIGN EXAMPLE

(Informative)

A TPZ sign provides clear and readily accessible information to indicate that a TPZ has been established. Figure C1 provides an example of a suitable sign.



FIGURE C1 TREE PROTECTION ZONE SIGN

(Extract from AS4970 – 2009 Protection of trees on Development sites)

6.8 Indicative Stages in Development

	Tree Management Process		
Stage in Development	Matters for Consideration	Actions and Certificates	
Planning (Sections 2 and 3)		
Site acquisition	Legal constraints		
Detail surveys	Council plans and policies Planning instruments and controls Heritage Threatened species	Existing trees accurately plotted on survey plan.	
Preliminary tree assessment	Hazard/risks Tree retention value	Evaluate trees suitable for retention and mark on plan Provide preliminary arboricultural report and indicative TPZs to guide development layout.	
Preliminary development design	Condition of trees Proximity to buildings Location of services Roads Level changes Building operations space Long-term management	Planning selection of trees for retention Design review by proponent Design modifications to minimise impact to trees.	
Development submission	Identify trees for retention through comprehensive arboricultural impact assessment of proposed construction. Determine tree protection measures. Landscape design.	Provide arboricultural impact assessment including tree protection plan (drawing) and specification.	
Development approval	Development controls Conditions of consent	Review consent conditions relating to trees.	
Pre-construction (Sections 4 and 5)			
Initial site preparation	State based OHS requirements for tree work Approved retention/removal Refer to AS 4373 for the requirements on the pruning of amenity trees Specifications for tree protection measures.	Compliance with conditions of consent. Tree removal/tree retention/transplanting Tree pruning Certification of tree removal and pruning. Establish/delineate TPZ Install protective measures Certification of tree protection measures.	

	Tree Management Process		
Stage in Development	Matters for Consideration	Actions and Certificates	
Construction (Sections 4 a	nd 5)		
Site establishment	Temporary infrastructure Demolition, bulk earthworks, hydrology	Locate temporary infrastructure to minimise impact on related trees. Maintain protective measures Certification of tree protection measures.	
Construction work	Liaison with site manager, compliance Deviation from approved plan	Maintain or amend protective measures Supervision and monitoring	
Implement hard and soft landscape works	Installation of irrigation services Control of compaction work Installation of pavement and retaining walls	Remove selected protective measures as necessary Remedial tree works Supervision and monitoring	
Practical completion	Tree vigour and structure	Remove all remaining tree protection measures Certification of tree protection	
Post Construction (Section 5)			
Defects liability / maintenance period	Tree vigour and structure	Maintenance and monitoring Final remedial tree works Final certification of tree condition	

NOTES:

- 1. Owing to variations in planning legislation, this Table is a general indication of the process only
- 2. Certification of tree protection and condition should be carried out by the project Arborist.

Extract from Australian Standard 4970 – 2009 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites.

The above Table shows clearly the process of tree protection on development sites as set out in the Australian Standard. It can also serve as a guide to the set up and management of new and replacement plantings.

This Table should be followed in the management of all trees on development sites.

Depending on the stage of the project you are undertaking, the type of project you are undertaking and specific other requirements of various planning departments, in some instances additional reports may be required.

The above Table serves as an indicative guide to the process of managing and protecting trees.

7.0 References

Australian Standard® **AS4970-2009**, **Protection of trees on development sites**, 2009, Sydney

Australian Standard® AS4373-2007, Pruning of Amenity Trees, 2007, Sydney

Writings within the report are of the author's personal knowledge and belief. The information and knowledge released in the report when referenced should be referenced to

Matt Branagh, Dip.App.Sci – Horticulture/Arboriculture – Let's Talk About Trees.

8.0 Terms and Limitations of the Report

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- In no way is this report biased or weighted. The content of the report is written in the full, honest opinion of the Let's Talk About Trees Consulting Arborist.
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- This report is developed around the information provided by our client in the project brief. Only issues covered by the project brief are discussed in this report.
- All details, information and advice contained in this report have been researched and referenced. Where no reference is included, it is the author's learned opinion, experience and observations.

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