

OIR: 2223/479

16 March 2023

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Request for Information under the Local Government and Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) (the LGOIMA)

Thank you for your email of 1 March 2023 requesting the following information:

- 1. Who decides what trees and where they are to be planted on public land in Kapiti? I mean on roadside berms, parks and in front of buildings. I do not mean in reserves.***

Technically, roadside berms and parks are usually reserves under the Reserves Act 1977.

Planting decisions depend on the location and situation. We sometimes get requests from the public to plant fruit trees or other species within parks which sits with the Parks, Open Space and Environment Team. Street tree plantings are determined in a collaboration between the Access and Transport (Roding) Team and the Parks, Open Space and Environment Team.

Roadside plantings must take into account safety, sight lines and underground services as the ultimate determiner of tree suitability and location. Trees around new buildings/redevelopments are generally planted as part of the overall project design and are decided on during the landscape design phase, often overseen by the Project Management Office. For routine tree replacement in front of buildings etc, this is decided on an ad-hoc basis in terms of like-for-like by our Parks Operations Team with support from our Parks, Open Space and Environment Team.

- 2. What criteria are used in making decisions about planting, protecting, trimming or felling of native and exotic trees in public spaces?***

These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, using information and the recommendations supplied by qualified arborists, the public and Council staff depending on the nature and scale of the issue. Public safety is the most important factor when deciding on any course of management to be taken.

Protection of native and exotic trees is carried out under the District Plan process. The public can submit to protect notable trees while specific species of native trees of a certain size are protected by default under District Plan rules.

3. *What qualifications does the person who makes these decisions have?*

All officers with the delegation to recommend a decision, or to make a decision, hold suitable expertise to do so in their respective areas of accountability. Where a higher profile or risk necessitates more expertise than we have in-house, then we would contract in that service.

This usually happens when tree management is required on trees in excess of 4m in height, in which case assessments and works are carried out and/or supervised by qualified (Level 4 or above) arborists.

If you have a specific issue you wish to discuss, please let me know. You can email me directly at: mike.mendonca@kapiticoast.govt.nz

Ngā mihi



Mike Mendonça

Acting Group Manager Place and Space
Te Kaiwhakahaere roopu, Takiwa me te Waahi