



# CITY OF MITCHAM

## City of Mitcham Tree Plan



## **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. The Benefits and Challenges of Trees
3. Reserve, Street Trees, and Tree Character Precincts
4. Key Stakeholders of the Tree Plan
5. Legislative Requirements and Key Corporate Documents
6. Criteria and Tree Species Selection
7. Tree Character Precinct Plans and Suburb Tree Planting Guide
8. Tree Risk Management
9. Tree Asset Registers

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Mitcham is proud custodian of approximately 75,000 trees, comprised of 55,000 in our streets and over 20,000 in our reserves and open spaces.

Trees are much-loved assets which visually dominate the City of Mitcham's streets, parks and reserves; they help to define the City's character. Well-maintained trees that suit their surroundings deliver ongoing benefit and substantial value to the community.

Increasing tree canopy cover into the future through integrated and considered design of streets and community spaces, by complimenting trees and 'green' engineering to meet community needs, will ensure that the City of Mitcham maximizes its returns on its investment in trees for the long term.

The City of Mitcham has developed this **Tree Plan** to ensure the needs and aspirations of the community are met in delivering the commitments made in the City of Mitcham's **Tree Strategy 2016 – 2025** and beyond. It details the tree species selected for planting in our suburbs and streetscapes into the future. It also summarises the constraints on planting which influenced these species selections and explains tree management activities such as Council's tree auditing process for risk and tree management purposes.

This Tree Plan refers to planting of trees on Council owned land only. It is understood that in order to increase canopy coverage in the City, enhanced tree planting on private land will have to take place, and this can present challenges. However, City of Mitcham initiatives such as the annual Arbor Day tree voucher giveaways and continued education and promotion of the benefits of tree planting to our residents through initiatives such as our Tree Trails in Soldiers Memorial Gardens and Mitcham Reserve, hopes to address this need.

Tree species selected for planting in Council's streets into the future include climate-hardy types and smaller species which are suitable for planting beneath powerlines. To sustain a diverse urban forest, trees must be planted, established, pruned, protected, assessed, and eventually removed and replaced. The management of our urban forest is an ongoing process.

This Tree Plan, together with integrated tree management practices at the City of Mitcham will ensure a sustainable, diverse and much-loved urban forest to be enjoyed for generations to come.



## 2. BENEFITS OF TREES

The City of Mitcham's residents are aware of the benefits of trees in urban areas – Mitcham's tree-lined streets are a major reason many people live in the City – but trees provide many benefits which aren't so widely known. A summary of key benefits are listed below:

### *Human health*

Trees visually dominate our landscapes. Attractive environments encourage and support activity and exercise. Green, leafy environments are strongly linked to better human health (physical and mental) and wellbeing.

### *Community*

People are attracted to and tend to dwell in attractive, shady environments. Green, leafy parks and avenues help people to get to know others in their local community. Improved social networks help communities to function and result in reduced stress and anxiety. Crime rates are lower, traffic is calmer, and property values are generally higher in greener neighbourhoods.

### *Environmental*

Trees act as filters and windbreaks, slowing and purifying the air we breathe. They transpire water drawn from the soil to reduce summer temperatures. Shading further reduces the need for energy for cooling, which reduces pollution resulting from electricity generation. Trees intercept rainfall, which reduces and delays flood peaks and erosion of creeks and riverbanks. By absorbing carbon as they grow, trees directly combat the greenhouse effect. Leaves also absorb other pollutants, including carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and fine particulates. Trees attract and support wildlife, with increased biodiversity increasing ecosystem stability and adding to quality of life of residents.

### *Economic*

Reduced energy costs for cooling during summer and reduced asset costs for stormwater management are direct economic benefits provided by trees. To the benefit of local economies, it has long been known that customers are willing to travel further to shop in leafy, greener areas and they typically stay longer and spend more while there. Home prices have also been linked to the level of tree cover in the street, with between 5 and 20% of the cost of homes in tree-lined streets being attributed to the presence of the avenue of trees.

## CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH TREES

It must also be acknowledged that trees also have several perceived negative aspects. Some of these are summarised below:

### *Safety*

Unexpected branch failure can occur and become an issue when observed within areas of high use or causing damage to property. However, personal injury from branch failure is rare. Allergies from pollen and other tree parts can also be a potential nuisance issue. Or if species inappropriate for the location are planted.

### *Property damage*

Root activity can cause disturbance and damage to underground services and structures. Damage from tree roots to property can occur when trees are not provided sufficient space to grow to their full potential.

### *Nuisance*

Nuisance is another known issue raised. Impedance of sunlight, obscuring views, bird noise, leaf, seed and bark litter are some of the common nuisance complaints.

For further information on the benefits and perceived negative impacts of trees, please

see:

Arboriculture Australia

<https://arboriculture.org.au/about-trees/why-we-need-trees>

Government of South Australia

Department for Environment and Water

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/park-management/statewide-park-strategies/healthy-parks-healthy-people/five-ways-wellbeing-nature>

Trees are Good Organisation

<https://www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/benefitsoftrees>

### **Space for tree planting**

As mentioned above, this Tree Plan refers to and applies to tree planting on Council owned land in the City of Mitcham only. It is understood that in order to increase and enhance tree canopy coverage in the City, planting on privately owned land, State and Federal Government owned land will have to be increased. Urban infill presents a challenge as generally block sizes decrease with fewer opportunities to plant suitable trees.

In February 2023 the City of Mitcham responded to South Australian Parliament's Inquiry into the Urban Forest, lead by the Environment, Resources and Development Committee. This was an opportunity to provide comment on best practice and innovative measures for enhancing the urban forest in the State overall, legislative and regulatory options for protection of existing trees and incentivisation and promotion of tree planting on private land, and other related matters that ultimately contribute to the challenge of enhancing an urban forest at the current time.

It is hoped that in time a greater appreciation for the requirement of an interconnected and healthy urban forest over private and publicly owned land will be gained by all parties.

### 3. RESERVE TREES

The City of Mitcham encompasses a total land area of about 76 square kilometres and is made up of 32 individual suburbs. The Council manages approximately over 9 square kilometres of open space and has a population of approximately 67,400 residents

The Council area also has 84 developed parks and reserves which range in size and vary in density and species of trees therein.

The Council has over 20,000 reserve trees under its care and control.

The plains suburbs have a distribution of many ‘pocket parks’ which are home to populations of native and exotic trees. The hills areas have many larger native woodland reserves and undeveloped road reserves. Not all reserve tree data has been collected, which is primarily due to the sheer number of trees in the hills area’s larger reserves.

The City of Mitcham is also home to some remaining stands of remnant Grey Box grassy woodland which has a state conservation rating. Some patches are classified nationally as an endangered ecological community.

Other important remnant trees in the City of Mitcham include Cup Gum, Drooping Sheoak, Manna Gum, Native Apricot, Native Cherry, Native Pine, Pink Gum, Red Gum, SA Blue Gum and Stringybark.

Along with street tree planting, reserve tree planting remains a focus of Council and reserves are individually assessed for planting opportunities. Considerations include increasing canopy cover, shade, biodiversity and habitat opportunities. Tree planting in reserves offers an opportunity to vary species diversity and mature growth sizes.

While declining and dead trees are replaced as required, reserve planting is often a

feature of reserve upgrades where new play equipment, paths and seating areas require the future shade and amenity that trees can provide. It should also be noted that certain trees, once determined to be dead, may still present a habitat value in certain circumstances.

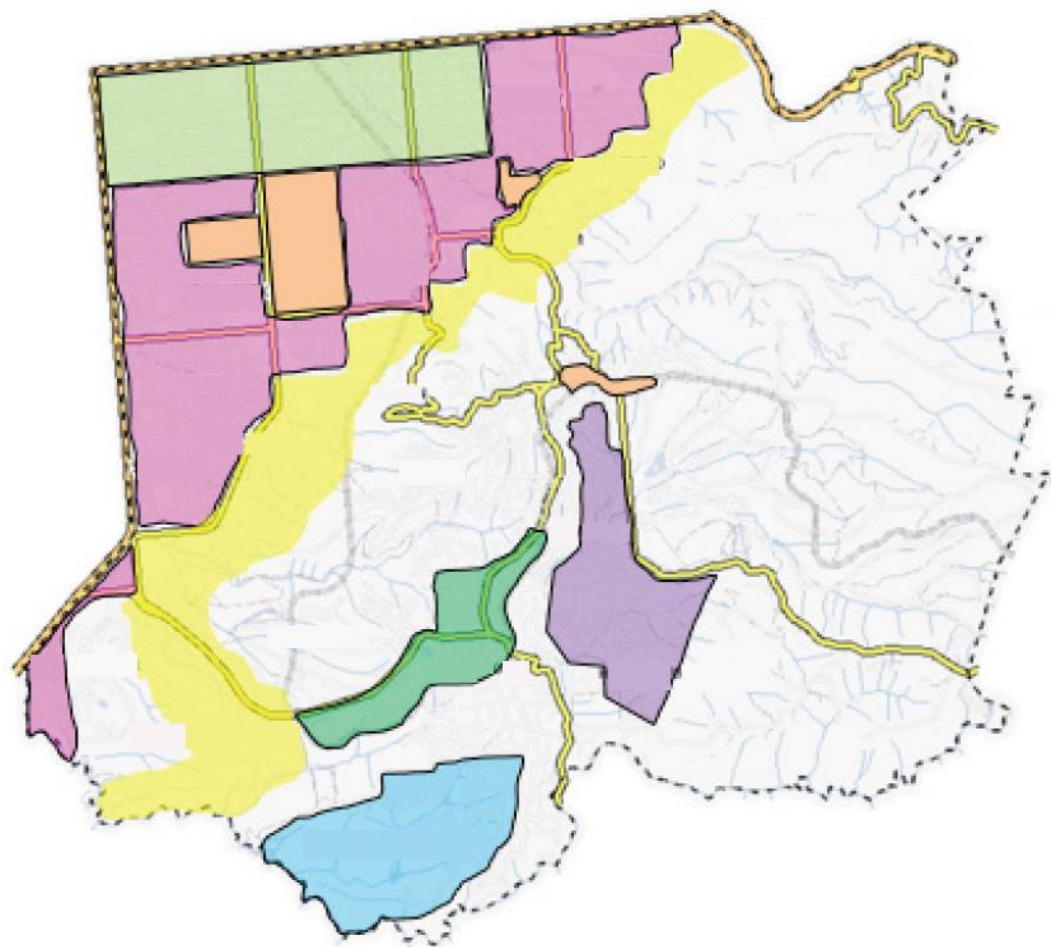
### STREET TREES AND PRECINCTS

City of Mitcham has approximately 55,000 street trees under its care and control. These assets require ongoing maintenance and management to ensure their continued health and to maintain an acceptable level of risk.

The species composition and age of the tree population varies greatly across the various suburbs found within the City area. These variations are due in part to the variety of growing conditions and the character of various suburban areas. As mentioned above, the City of Mitcham is also home to some stands of remnant Grey Box vegetation in the metropolitan area.

The suburbs of the City of Mitcham include Bedford Park (part), Belair (part), Bellevue Heights, Birksgate, Blackwood, Brown Hill Creek, Clapham, Clarence Gardens, Colonel Light Gardens, Coromandel Valley (part), Crafers West (part), Craigburn Farm, Cumberland Park, Daw Park, Eden Hills, Glenalta, Hawthorn, Hawthorndene, Kingswood, Leawood Gardens (part), Lower Mitcham, Lynton, Melrose Park, Mitcham, Netherby, Panorama, Pasadena, Springfield, St Marys, Torrens Park, Upper Sturt (part), Urrbrae and Westbourne Park.

Many of these suburbs have a distinct tree character or feel which has been represented in the tree character map that was part of the **2016 City of Mitcham Tree Strategy** as seen below:



- Preserve established avenues (primarily Jacaranda and White Cedar)*
- Heritage themes: Colonel Light Gardens, Mitcham and Belair Villages*
- Improve aesthetics in residential plains undergoing urban consolidation*
- Enhance planting in Blackwood central zone consistent with current themes*
- Consolidate reserve planting, enhance streetscape planting*
- Woodland (native and exotic mix) in valley areas*
- Enhance amenity and manage bushfire risk in lower foothills*
- Enhance amenity and manage bushfire risk in hills woodland areas*

**Image 1: Tree character Map developed as part of the City of Mitcham Tree Strategy 2016**

The Tree character map that was part of the **City of Mitcham 2016 Tree Strategy** (Image 1 above) and has been used as a guide for development of this Tree Plan.

All new planting in the City of Mitcham will be based on a precinct approach where tree species selection and planting will reinforce the distinct physical character of each area and be responsive to its unique environmental conditions. Suburbs which are similar in-built form, character, age, topography, tree cover type have been grouped into precincts.

Seven precincts have been identified and include:

- Tree Character Precinct A
- Tree Character Precinct B
- Tree Character Precinct C
- Tree Character Precinct D
- Tree Character Precinct E
- Tree Character Precinct F
- Colonel Light Gardens

Below we have provided tree data relating to each precinct. The data relating to approximate tree numbers is based upon Council's tree data register as of July 2023.

In order to provide an overview of the character and nature of each Precinct, also included in each section below, is an excerpt from the **City of Mitcham Development Plan 2020**, which has since been superseded by the **Planning and Design Code in 2021**. However, the descriptions are still relevant and valid.

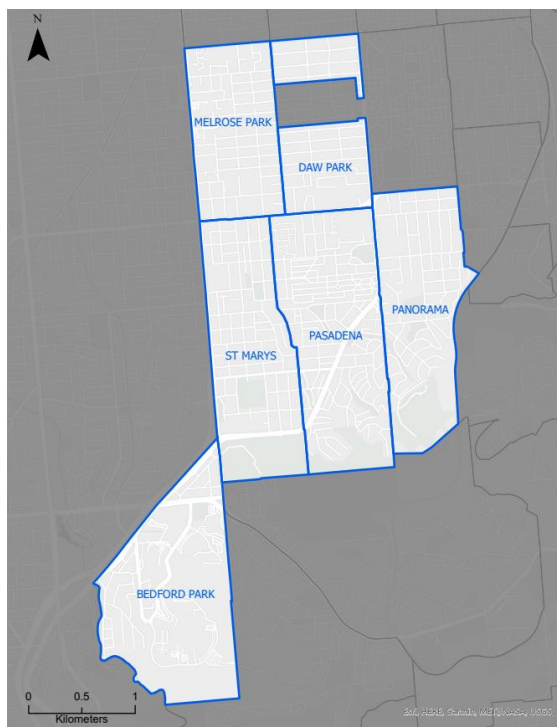
## **TREE AUDITING**

In the City of Mitcham reserves a cyclic tree risk audit is conducted and aims to audit the majority of reserves every 3 years, with certain reserves being audited annually. Street trees are subject to a cyclic tree risk audit which aims to audit the Council street trees every 5 years. Immediate risks identified in the audits are managed and scheduled for required works.

This audit process provides staff with a broad overview and understanding of the reserve topography, tree species and population, which all have a direct bearing on planting opportunities. It is intended to further improve reporting of trees audited across the City, to produce data that will assist with long term management of our trees and any risks presented.



### Tree Character Precinct A:



#### Approximate tree population:

11325 Street Trees

**Suburbs:** St Marys, Melrose Park, Daw Park, Panorama, Bedford Park, Pasadena

#### Precinct Character:

From page 97 of the City of Mitcham Development Plan 2020:

*'This precinct is characterized by dwellings constructed mainly between the years 1920 to 1970. The predominant dwelling style comprises a mix of villas, bungalows and tudors built generally prior to 1940....*

The precinct has *'...distinctive low-density character with generous proportions of open space, both in front of and behind dwellings, and wide and spacious streetscapes dominated by a combination of street trees and landscaped front gardens.*

Top 5 tree species that contribute to tree character in this precinct:

- Gawler hybrid bottlebrush (*Callistemon 'Harkness'*)
- Golden Rain (*Koelreuteria paniculata*)
- Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*)
- Dwarf SA Blue gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*)
- Southern hackberry (*Celtis australis*)

Approximate tree numbers:

- Bedford Park contains 860 street trees of 25 species
- St Marys contains 2270 street trees of 69 species
- Melrose Park contains 2000 street trees of 70 species
- Daw Park contains 1570 street trees of 43 species
- Panorama contains 1900 street trees of 52 species
- Pasadena contains 2215 street trees of 104 species

## Tree Character Precinct B:



**Approximate tree population:**  
8500 Street Trees

**Suburbs:** Clarence Gardens,  
Cumberland Park, Westbourne Park,  
Hawthorn, Kingswood

### Precinct Character:

From page 98 of the City of Mitcham  
Development Plan 2020:

*The area ‘...retains an important and distinctive character due to a very high proportion of single storey detached housing constructed predominantly in the period from 1880’s to the 1940’s and a relatively intact sub-division pattern....*

*‘...The existing high ratio of private open space to building area allows most allotments to be generously landscaped, many with substantial trees, which adds significantly to the character of the area.’*

The predominant streetscapes of this precinct are intact and mature avenues of exotics and introduced natives. The uniform canopy species, and tree spacing throughout the streets of this precinct provide a strong streetscape character.

Top 5 tree species that contribute to tree character in this precinct:

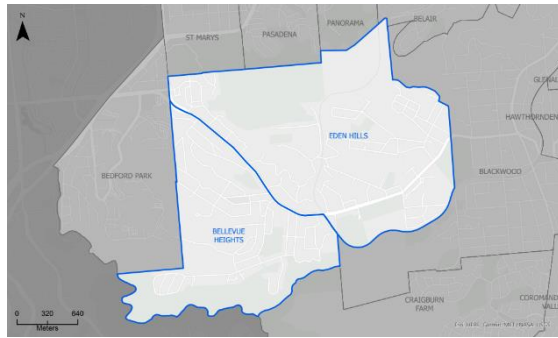
- Golden Rain (*Koelreuteria paniculate*)

- Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*)
- Southern hackberry (*Celtis australis*)
- Jacaranda (*Jacaranda mimosifolia*)
- White cedar (*Melia azedarach*)

### Approximate tree numbers:

- Clarence Gardens contains 1590 street trees of 47 species
- Cumberland Park contains 1615 street trees of 42 species
- Westbourne Park contains 1550 street trees of 43 species
- Hawthorn contains 1990 street trees of 51 species
- Kingswood contains 1785 street trees of 40 species

### Tree Character Precinct C:



**Approximate Tree population:**  
4690 Street trees

**Suburbs:** Bellevue Heights, Eden Hills

**Precinct character:**  
From page 116 of the City of Mitcham Development Plan 2020:

*'The zone generally comprises the residential suburbs of the City of Mitcham that are situated in the Mount Lofty Ranges. The area has developed a special character in response to a range of physical and environmental attributes including generally rugged topography, an abundance of vegetation, the absence of a deep drainage sewer system in the early years of settlement, the relatively low availability of and access to a range of services and facilities, and a relatively limited road system in terms of capacity and convenience....'*

The irregular allotment patterns and less formal streetscapes are dominated by remnant Grey box overstorey that draws links to the recreation and conservation reserves and open spaces surrounding this precinct. The amalgamation of public and private vegetation in this precinct softens the presence of property boundaries.

In precincts within the Mitcham hills area, the primary consideration when maintaining tree canopy and

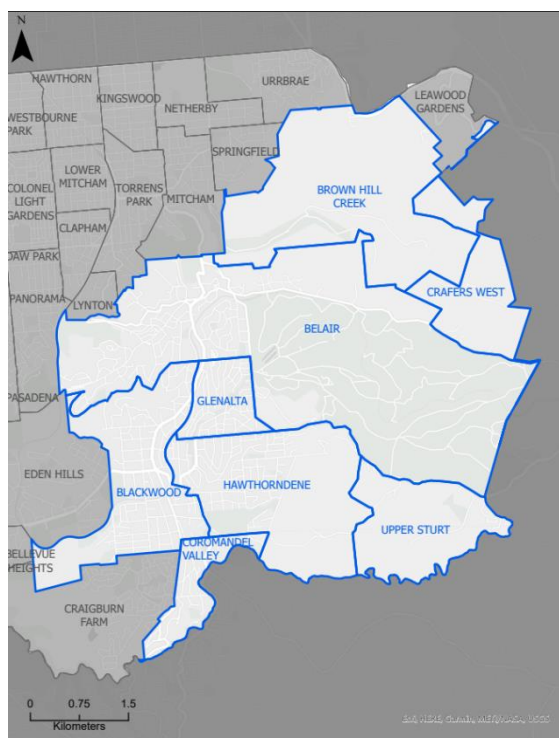
environmental values on public land is the impact that additional vegetation and the type of vegetation will have on asset protection in a bushfire prone area. Council supports the CFS position that appropriately planted and managed vegetation within 20 metres of a building does not pose a significant fire risk to a building.

#### Top 5 species currently planted

- Gawler hybrid bottlebrush (*Callistemon* 'Harkness')
- Dwarf SA Blue gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*)
- WA Willow myrtle (*Agonis flexuosa*)
- Grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*)
- Drooping sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*)

- Bellevue Heights contains 1635 street trees of 63 species
- Eden Hills contains 3055 street trees of 63 species

## Tree Character Precinct D:



### Approximate Tree population:

16960 Street trees

**Suburbs:** Belair (part), Glenalta, Hawthorndene, Blackwood, Coromandel Valley (part), Upper Sturt (part), Crafrers West (part), Leawood Gardens (part)

### Precinct character:

The Hills precinct contains the Adelaide Hills Face Zone, an area of rugged landscape along the western footslopes of the ranges protected by legislation introduced in the early 1960's to preserve and enhance its natural heritage values.

The precinct contains historic quarries, Belair National Park, and the Adelaide Hills Railway which contributes several well-preserved structures like tunnels and bridges.

The vegetation of this precinct is dominated by the undeveloped areas of Grey Box Grassy Woodlands, a nationally listed threatened ecological community.

There are many shared use cycling and walking trails throughout Belair and the surrounding suburbs as part of Mitcham's Shared Use Trails network and Belair National Park.

As stated for Tree Character Precinct C, In precincts within the Mitcham hills area, the primary consideration when maintaining tree canopy and environmental values on public land is the impact that additional vegetation and the type of vegetation will have on asset protection in a bushfire prone area. Council supports the CFS position that appropriately planted and managed vegetation within 20 metres of a building does not pose a significant fire risk to a building.

Top 5 tree species that contribute to tree character in this precinct:

- Dwarf SA Blue gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*)
- Desert Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*)
- Grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*)
- River red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)
- Acacia sp.

The Desert Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*) is now a declared species and can no longer be planted. It is abundant in the landscape and provides significant canopy throughout the hills. It has been used widely in the past as a street and park tree but its abundance is due to its success as a weed. Weed control undertaken in the City of Mitcham is concentrated in locations of high biodiversity.

Approximate tree numbers:

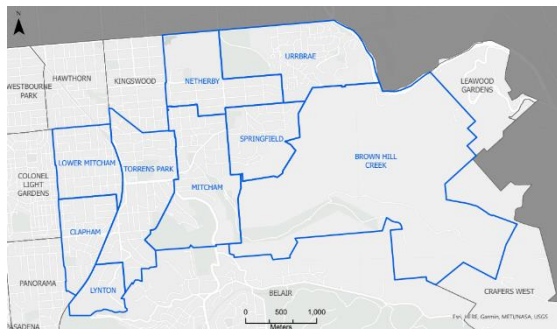
- Belair (part) contains 4775 street trees of 131 species
- Glenalta contains 2025 street trees of 111 species

- Hawthorndene contains 4430 street trees of 86 species
- Blackwood contains 5240 street trees of 74 species
- Coromandel Valley (part) contains 490 street trees of 54 species

Tree data is yet to be comprehensively collected in Upper Sturt (part), Crafers West (part) and Leawood Gardens (part). These suburbs provide challenges with regards to safe data collection due to densely vegetated verges in close proximity to busy roads (such as Upper Sturt Road and Sheoak Road), and boundary line challenges in certain areas. It is intended to enhance the City of Mitcham's tree database with data from these suburbs in due course.



## Tree Character Precinct E:



### Approximate Tree numbers

9185 Street trees

**Suburbs:** Mitcham, Lower Mitcham, Torrens Park, Netherby, Urrbrae, Clapham, Brown Hill Creek, Springfield, Lynton

### Precinct character:

From page 93 of the City of Mitcham Development Plan 2020:

*'The area is also notably characterized by high quality streetscapes which result from the presence of well-maintained street verges, large mature street trees, and extensive landscaping undertaken on the frontage of most allotments...'*

*'The area is situated at the foot of the eastern escarpment of the Hills Face Zone, providing an open and natural backdrop.'*

The mature trees form stunning shaded avenues which are to be maintained and replaced to preserve the unique tree character of the precinct.

Top 5 tree species that contribute to tree character in this precinct:

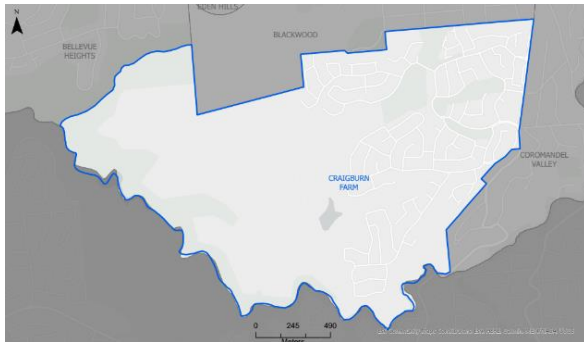
- Golden Rain (*Koelreuteria paniculata*)
- Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*)
- Jacaranda (*Jacaranda mimosifolia*)

- SA Blue gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*)
- Ornamental pear (*Pyrus calleryana*)

Approximate tree numbers:

- Mitcham contains 1270 street trees of 73 species
- Lower Mitcham contains 1770 street trees of 56 species
- Torrens Park contains 2055 street trees of 91 species
- Netherby contains 1310 street trees of 69 species
- Urrbrae contains 665 street trees of 67 species
- Brown Hill Creek have not been included in Council's tree register
- Springfield contains 645 street trees of 87 species
- Lynton contains 160 street trees of 33 species

## Tree Character Precinct F



- Craigburn Farm contains 1360 street trees of 31 species

### Approximate Tree numbers

1360 Street trees

**Suburbs:** Craigburn Farm

### Precinct character:

Craigburn Farm was predominantly farming land prior to becoming a suburb in 1995. Housing in the suburb is almost exclusively large detached family homes that are owner-occupied. The estate consists of three distinct 'nodes', each divided by tree-lined gullies. Large, native River red gums and South Australian Blue Gums that were once paddock trees are now landscape features of generous areas of open space. The southern border of the suburb is the Sturt River and Sturt Gorge Recreation Park. The suburb has a master planned feel, and the street tree character is dominated by introduced northern hemisphere vegetation such as oaks, Ash and Crepe Myrtle.

Top 5 tree species that contribute to tree character in this precinct:

- Oak species (*Quercus* sp.)
- Ornamental pear (*Pyrus calleryana*)
- Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*)
- South Australian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus laevoxylon*)
- Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*)

Approximate tree numbers:

## Colonel Light Gardens Precinct:



**Approximate Tree population:**  
3190 Street trees

**Suburbs:** Colonel Light Gardens

**Precinct Character:**  
From page 135 of the City of Mitcham Development Plan 2020:

*'In June 1915 the State Government purchased the property 'Grange Farm', south of Adelaide, to establish a 'model garden suburb'.*

*Planning for the area was guided by the garden city movement principles which aimed to improve the lifestyle and residential environment of all classes of people and Colonel Light Gardens clearly reflects those principles in its design.*

*The garden suburb included radial street patterns, street reserves and gardens; wider main streets and narrower streets for residential areas which discouraged through traffic; zoning of areas according to their best use; designated residential and commercial areas; utility ways for sewerage, gas mains and power cables; allotments with wide frontages and space for recreation and gardening.*

Generally, streetscapes consist of one line of street trees, a variety of mainly exotic large canopy species, regularly

spaced and one species per street. Some remnant clumps of Eucalyptus were retained when the Garden Suburb was developed. The future direction for its streetscapes is to maintain the garden suburb plan of uniformity in structure and form.

Top 5 tree species that currently contribute to tree character in this precinct:

- Black locust, (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)
- Desert ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*)
- Dutch elm (*Ulmus hollandica*)
- White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*)
- Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*)

Approximate tree numbers:

- Colonel Light Gardens contains 2900 street trees of 66 species

## Important note regarding Colonel Light Gardens Tree Planting

**Heritage Standards for the Public Realm (2022)** were endorsed by the City of Mitcham in August 2022. Consequently, tree planting in the suburb of Colonel Light Gardens will be managed independent of this Tree Plan. This is due to the specific heritage requirements and considerations of the suburb.

The City of Mitcham intends to develop a suburb specific Tree Plan for Colonel Light Gardens in due course.

#### **4. KEY STAKEHOLDERS OF THE TREE PLAN**

All tree assets are owned by the City of Mitcham and they are planted and maintained by internal teams at the City of Mitcham.

Regarding powerline clearance, it is important to note that the City of Mitcham maintains the trees it owns, and SA Power Networks (SAPN) are responsible for maintaining clearance around powerlines, and are therefore not undertaking maintenance as such, rather necessary safety modifications.

Street and Reserve Trees are utilised by all residents and visitors to the City, who therefore constitute the customer base.

There are also numerous external stakeholders involved in the effective management of the trees under Councils' care and control.

The list below details the groups that influence the management of Council's trees. The effect each has can vary from the direct provision of a service (Service Providers) to relevant legislative bodies through to purely an influence that must be considered when planning activities or works trees.

The group shown as Partners are individuals and bodies with which Council has a strong partnership relationship.

The following key stakeholders have been identified:

##### **GOVERNMENT BODIES**

- SA State Emergency Services (SES)
- Public Utilities such as SA Power Networks (SAPN), Australian Gas Networks Ltd and SA Water.
- SA Department of Infrastructure and Transport (DIT)
- Green Adelaide (SA Government)
- Adjoining and local Councils

#### **CORPORATE POLICY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING**

- City of Mitcham Asset Management Services
- City of Mitcham Community Services Team
- City of Mitcham Councillors
- City of Mitcham Executive Leadership Group (ELG)
- City of Mitcham Planning Services

##### **SERVICE PROVIDERS**

- City of Mitcham Operations Department
- City of Mitcham Community Wellbeing team
- City of Mitcham Property Department
- External arborist and tree management consultants & contractors

##### **PARTNERS**

- City of Mitcham Residents
- Community tree related groups
  - Bush for Life
  - Trees for Life
  - Treenet

The City of Mitcham is proud to work with over 100 individual open space volunteers. Although not engaged in specific tree management works (pruning for example), they assist with beautifying reserves and complimenting the planting of trees in spaces, by managing weeds, planting suitable understory species and recording hazards and opportunities for improvements.

##### **OTHER STAKEHOLDERS**

- Property Developers
- Businesses in the City of Mitcham

## 5. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND KEY CORPORATE DOCUMENTS

The Tree Plan provides the link between the City of Mitcham's strategic objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan 'Mitcham 2030' and the tree related activities and work that is required to meet these objectives.

In preparing this plan, the organisation's approved strategies and programmes were examined with a view to understanding the effects these might have on tree planting activities into the future. Conversely the development of, and review of these corporate strategies and programmes must take account any tree specific issues.

Additionally, this plan is to be read and implemented in conjunction with other relevant Local, State Federal Acts and Council policies, strategies and documents, including:

### Local Government Act 1999 - [LINK](#)

- Sections 196 to 199 Community land management plans
- Section 213 Recovery of costs of roadwork
- Section 221 Alteration of road
- Section 232 Trees
- Section 233 Damage
- Section 244 Liability for injury, damage or loss on community land
- Section 245 Liability for injury, damage or loss by certain trees
- Section 299 Vegetation clearance
- Councils existing Policies including Public Consultation which reflects the requirements of the Local Government Act 1999

### State and Federal Acts

- Planning and Design Code in 2021 - [LINK](#)
- Codes of Design and Development 2021
- Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 - [LINK](#)
- Electricity Act 1996 - [LINK](#)
- Heritage Act 1993 - [LINK](#)
- Water Industry Act 2012 - [LINK](#)
- Environment Protection Act 1993 - [LINK](#)
- Animal and Pest plant Control (Agricultural Protection and Other Purposes) Act 1986 - [LINK](#)
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988 - [LINK](#)
- The 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide 2017 Update - [LINK](#)

### External Guidelines:

- Guidelines for the Management of Roadside Native Vegetation and Regrowth Vegetation – Native Vegetation Council (2019) - [LINK](#)

### City of Mitcham Strategic Documents and Plans

- Annual Business Plans
- Strategic Management Plan – Mitcham 2030
- Community Land Management Plans for all community land in the City of Mitcham
- Colonel Light Gardens Conservation Management Plan (CLMP) (2005)
- City of Mitcham Public Realm Heritage Guidelines: Colonel Light Gardens State Heritage Area (2022)
- Springfield Estate Management Plan (2005)
- Blackwood Central Area Report (2006)
- Mitcham Village Heritage Implementation Plan (2009)
- Approved Fire Breaks



## **City of Mitcham Policies**

- Tree Policy (2005)
- Asset Management (2009)
- Biodiversity (2000)
- Budget Management (2022)
- Community Gardens (2016)
- Conditions for use of Nature Strips/verges (1997)
- Footpaths/Paving (1996)
- Open Space Acquisition, Development and Disposal (2000)
- Public Consultation (2000)
- Reserves – Management of Woodland Using Waitparinga Procedures (1997)
- Reserves – Special use of Reserves & Sporting Facilities by Various Groups (2001)
- Roadside Marker System (RSM) sites – Significant native vegetation
- Signs – Criteria for Sponsorship on Sporting Grounds (1989)
- Street Lighting - Energy Efficiency (2000)
- Water Use and Catchment Protection (2001)

## 6. CRITERIA AND SPECIES SELECTION

Council considers many factors to ensure the tree species planted in streets and parks thrive and deliver the benefits they're planted to provide.

Tree species selected for planting in Mitcham's suburbs and streets will need to endure in the changing built environment and uncertain climate, survive in close proximity to infrastructure and utilities, and comply with regulatory constraints. These and some other considerations which influence the selection of tree species used by Council are described below.

### Legislative And Regulatory Constraints

Council's tree species selections must also comply with relevant legislation and regulations. Planting is regulated by provisions of the **Water Industry Regulations 2012** and the **Electricity (Principles of Vegetation Clearance) Regulations 2021**. These regulations prescribe species that may be planted in certain circumstances and dictate minimum separation distances from electricity and water supply infrastructure. Compliance with these regulations severely limits the tree species which can be planted in most streets and in some of Council's parks.

Certain regulations prevent Council's replacement of many existing trees, particularly in hills areas. As an example, the Grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) species which dominates the hills cannot be legally planted within 12 metres of some overhead powerlines. In some streets this regulation prevents planting of Grey box on the opposite side of the road to powerlines. This can result in a requirement to plant smaller species only in these locations, which can then lead to an overall 'miniaturisation' of the urban forest in those areas, with subsequent cost implications for stock purchase, maintenance and management.

When Grey box eventually need to be removed from these hills streets due to their death or decay, replacement species selections will be limited to small species listed in the Electricity (Principles of Vegetation Clearance) Regulations 2010. Compliance with these regulations will alter Mitcham's urban forest character.

### Maintaining Consistency with Existing Trees

Council's involvement in selecting tree species for planting is recorded in minutes of meetings dating from the late 1800s and decisions on selections have been ongoing since those early times. The City's local native vegetation combined with early plantings has created a highly diverse urban forest. Some of Mitcham's original plantings still thrive today and much of the hills remains dominated by local native vegetation.

Maintaining consistency with these established trees has been a goal of planting projects over past decades. Selection of species in established street planting, in most cases, is an extension of the dominant existing species if that species has been deemed to be suitable in scale, growth habit and appropriate due to the changing environment.

Selecting the same species will provide a uniform visual character for each street, a sense of identity that compliments architectural forms and provides streets with a distinctive and recognisable character.

### Historic/cultural associations

The selection of species may have natural, historical or cultural associations with the locality. New plantings aim to consider the historical context of the locality. If appropriate, street tree planting can be sympathetic to the heritage values of the built environment to further strengthen the sense of place for these areas.

## Amenity

Trees can significantly alter urban environments providing shade and shelter, as well as visual enjoyment and a reference to nature. The selection of species aims to consider these provisions, with the selection of evergreen or deciduous trees being made on the basis of shade and access to winter sun, and shelter from prevailing winds. Visual amenity is considered in terms of the wider urban landscape and the extent of vegetation within the area.

## Functional and Botanical Considerations

Other factors considered when selecting tree species include:

availability	utilities proximity	infrastructure proximity
canopy area (shading)	regulatory requirements	size at maturity
ease of establishment	heritage requirements	solar access (exposure)
legal status e.g. weediness	water requirements	deciduous or evergreen
soil type & depth	accessible soil volume	disease resistance
accessibility for maintenance	insect pests	soil moisture regime
species abundance	site drainage	adjacent land use
space for growth	site land use	sight lines (traffic signals)
clearance (pedestrian)	clearance (vehicle)	pruning requirements
vehicle sight lines	tree growth habit	species growth rate
species longevity	species life-cycle cost	foliage density
habitat value - nectar	habitat value - hollows	maintenance needs
shade	susceptibility to vandalism	earlier plantings near site
flower colour & time	recent plantings near site	seed production/ viability
foliage colour	deciduous/ evergreen	
suckering (basal or root)	hazard (thorns, toxins)	

## Colour, Form and Texture

Tree selection can be based on colour, form and texture that add to the urban landscape character. Selections aim to complement existing landscape characters, as well as providing opportunities for contrast, particularly in relation to the development of gateways, entrances or prominent landscapes.

Enhancement of key cultural and commercial areas is also a criterion when selecting species. Whilst largely residential the City of Mitcham has a number of key commercial areas including the Blackwood and Mitcham Centres with neighbourhood shopping in other areas. Industrial activities occur on the western boundary of the City adjacent to South Road. These commercial strips will be enhanced and distinguished through special tree planting.

## Constraints and Considerations

Selecting tree species for planting in public areas is subject to many considerations. Trees must be resilient in Mitcham's current and changing environment, must suit any constraints of the planting site, not harm and preferably enhance Council's natural and built heritage, be cost effective to establish and maintain and they must meet the needs of the community and achieve the purposes for which they are planted now and into the future. These factors are considered when species are selected to plant near a home or along a street.

Managing a large number of trees across such an area carries a level of risk. If a pest or disease problem arises which can impact a species which is in abundance, then tree loss and resulting environmental and financial impacts could be high. Managing such risk requires planting of relatively small numbers of a broad range of species. Council must show consideration to the planting of any one species, including popular selections which become highly fashionable from time to time.

## Native and Exotic Species

The City of Mitcham carefully considers the species types selected for each tree planting program. In the tree planting programs of the last 3 years, native and exotic species have comprised an approximately 50/50 split. The City is currently home to a significant population of both native and exotic species, that subsequently define its precincts' characters.

Council also considers resident expectations when selecting trees and accepts that there are differing views on the topic of native and exotic tree selection. Native species are favoured by some based on considered environmental benefits and suitability to the local environment. Limiting planting to native or indigenous species may fail to consider altered conditions from urban development and if a species is 'fit for purpose' close to infrastructure.

Many native species including Drooping sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*), Southern cypress pine (*Callitris gracilis*), Queensland box (*Lophostemon confertus*), Wilga (*Geijera parviflora*) and Western Australian willow myrtle (*Agonis flexuosa*) provide relatively low habitat value when planted as specimen trees in street situations. Others like the South Australian blue gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*) and River red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) provide greater habitat values but opportunities to plant them are often limited by regulations and site constraints.

Leaf litter falling from deciduous trees and entering stormwater sometimes results in favouring evergreen native species. Interestingly, deciduous trees typically withdraw nutrients from leaves before shedding, and that autumn leaf-fall coincides with increasing stormwater stream flows so impacts are further reduced. This contrasts with evergreen species which increase leaf fall in response to water stress during summer when short-

duration intense storms can concentrate their nutrient-rich, oil-filled contents in creeks with minimal ongoing flow to clear them. Drainage systems that transport leaf litter from streets into creeks are far from ideal environmentally, and Council's research into more water sensitive practices is working to address this.

From an environmental perspective the use of deciduous shade trees can be highly beneficial. By permitting solar access during winter and providing summer shade they reduce energy consumption and can help residents save on power bills. By shedding their leaves in autumn, water use by deciduous trees reduces greatly which allows soil moisture to recharge more fully than beneath evergreen trees. Increased soil moisture available to deciduous trees then helps them to provide more evaporative cooling during summer.

## Climate considerations

As described above, a number of considerations must be made when choosing trees for planting in the City of Mitcham. It is anticipated that with global temperature increases, Australia can expect more heatwave events and of a greater intensity. To help us better understand which tree species should be planted in areas vulnerable to heatwave events, the Council works with external research bodies, such as Universities on tree projects in the City. One such project seeks to understand the cooling potential of specific tree species, so that trees with recorded higher cooling potential during heatwaves can be considered for prioritisation over street tree species of lower cooling capacity.

## Availability

Due to tree stock availability or discontinuation by used suppliers, alternative tree species may required in some instances. As such, this tree plan will be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect the change in species used.

## **7. PRECINCT PLANS PLANTING GUIDE**

The Precinct Plan with Suburb Tree Planting Guides can be found on page 23.

can be found on the Plan SA website (<https://plan.sa.gov.au/>) and will be considered in ongoing tree planting programs.

### **Colonel Light Gardens Precinct**

This data will be updated upon completion of the development of the Tree Plan specifically for Colonel Light Gardens, which will consider requirements of the Heritage Standards of the Public Realm document.

Due to constraints listed in Section 6, the species in the above lists of future species to be selected may be subject to change.

### **Special Residential Character Areas Code Amendment 2022**

In March 2022 Ministerial approval was granted for amendments to the Planning and Design Code ('The Code'), which intended to better recognise and maintain residential character in parts of the City of Mitcham. Changes to The Code include 'Character Area Overlays' added to the Code in parts of Belair, Blackwood, Coromandel Valley, Cumberland Park, Eden Hills, Hawthorn, Springfield and Westbourne Park. 'Character Areas' do not necessarily represent a cultural legacy of history but capture a desired visual appearance.

As mentioned in Section 4, in areas where planting under powerlines is required, Council's tree planting must adhere to applicable laws, namely the Electricity (Principles of Vegetation Clearance) Regulations 2021. As such it is important to balance and consider both the Character Area Overlays and requisite legislation when undertaking tree planting.

The relevant policies and planning overlays pertaining to specific streets and suburbs



## Precinct Plan – Suburb Tree Planting Guide

Common replacement street trees in the City of Mitcham		Size	Character	Tree Character Precinct							Approved under powerlines		
Common Name	Botanical Name	S (small) M (medium) L (large)		Tree Character Precinct A	Tree Character Precinct B	Tree Character Precinct C	Colonel Light Gardens	Tree Character Precinct D	Tree Character Precinct E	Tree Character Precinct F	Non-Bushfire Risk Area	Insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area	Not insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area
Slaty sheoak	<i>Allocasuarina muelleriana</i>	S	Native, evergreen	y		y		y	y		y	y	y
Drooping sheoak	<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	M	Native, evergreen	y		y		y			y		
Smooth-barked apple-myrtle	<i>Angophora costata</i>	L	Native, evergreen	y	y			y		y			
Rough-barked apple-myrtle	<i>Angophora floribunda</i>	L	Native, evergreen	y					y				
Flame tree	<i>Brachychiton acerifolium</i>	M	Native, evergreen	y									
Kurrajong	<i>Brachychiton populneus</i>	L	Native, evergreen					y					
Gawler hybrid bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon 'Harkness'</i>	M	Native, evergreen	y	y	y		y	y		y	y	
Southern hackberry	<i>Celtis australis</i>	L	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y				y				
Spotted gum ST-1 Lowanna	<i>Corymbia maculata</i> ST-1 Lowanna	L	Native, evergreen						y	y			
Port Lincoln mallee	<i>Eucalyptus albopurpurea</i>	S	Native, Evergreen	y							y		
River red gum	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	L	Native, evergreen		y								
Cup gum	<i>Eucalyptus cosmophylla</i>	M	Native, evergreen			y		y	y	y	y		
Tall sand mallee	<i>Eucalyptus eremophila</i>	M	Native, evergreen	y									
Red-flowered mallee	<i>Eucalyptus erythronema</i> ssp <i>erythronema</i>	M	Native, evergreen	y	y	y		y	y	y	y		
Fuchsia gum	<i>Eucalyptus forrestiana</i>	M	Native, evergreen	y		y		y	y		y		
Goldfields blackbutt	<i>Eucalyptus lesouefii</i>	M	Native, evergreen	y									
Euky Dwarf	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i> 'Euky Dwarf'	M	Native, evergreen	y	y	y		y	y		y		

Common replacement street trees in the City of Mitcham		Size	Character	Tree Character Precinct							Approved under powerlines		
Common Name	Botanical Name	S (small) M (medium) L (large)		Tree Character Precinct A	Tree Character Precinct B	Tree Character Precinct C	Colonel Light Gardens	Tree Character Precinct D	Tree Character Precinct E	Tree Character Precinct F	Non-Bushfire Risk Area	Insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area	Not insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area
Large-fruited SA blue gum	Eucalyptus leucoxylon subspecies megalocarpa	M	Native, evergreen	y	y					y			
South Australian blue gum	Eucalyptus leucoxylon subspecies leucoxylon	L	Native, evergreen	y	y	y		y	y	y			
Grey box	Eucalyptus microcarpa	L	Native, evergreen	y		y		y	y	y			
Red-flowered moort	Eucalyptus nutans	S	Native, evergreen			y		y			y	y	y
Round-leaved mallee	Eucalyptus orbifolia	S	Native, evergreen	y		y		y	y		y		
Bell-fruited mallee	Eucalyptus preissiana	S	Native, evergreen			y		y			y	y	y
Coral gum	Eucalyptus torquata	M	Native, evergreen	y									
Lemon-flowering gum	Eucalyptus woodwardii	M	Native, evergreen	y					y				
Claret ash	Fraxinus angustifolia 'Raywood'	L	Exotic, Deciduous		y	y		y	y				
Dwarf claret ash	Fraxinus angustifolia 'Raywood' grafted to F. ornus rootstock	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y	y		y	y	y	y		
Manna ash	Fraxinus ornus	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y				y	y	y		
Wilga	Geijera parviflora	M	Native, Evergreen	y	y	y		y	y		y		
Maidenhair tree	Ginkgo biloba	L	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y			y	y	y			
Shademaster Honey-locust	Gleditsia triacanthos 'Shademaster'	L	Exotic, Deciduous	y									
Bottlebrush hakea	Hakea francisiana	S	Native, evergreen	y		y		y		y	y	y	y
Jacaranda	Jacaranda mimosifolia	L	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y	y		y	y				
Chinese flame	Koelreuteria bipinnata	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y				y				

Common replacement street trees in the City of Mitcham		Size	Character	Tree Character Precinct							Approved under powerlines		
Common Name	Botanical Name	S (small) M (medium) L (large)		Tree Character Precinct A	Tree Character Precinct B	Tree Character Precinct C	Colonel Light Gardens	Tree Character Precinct D	Tree Character Precinct E	Tree Character Precinct F	Non-Bushfire Risk Area	Insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area	Not insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area
Golden rain	Koelreuteria paniculata	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y				y		y		
Indian Summer crepe myrtles	Lagerstroemia indica x fauriei cultivars	S	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y	y		y	y	y	y	y	
Liquidambar	Liquidambar styraciflua	M	Exotic, Deciduous						y				
Queensland box	Lophostemon confertus	M	Native, evergreen		y				y				
Bull Bay magnolia	Magnolia grandiflora	M	Exotic, evergreen						y	y			
Low-fruiting White cedar	Melia azedarach 'Elite'	L	Native, Deciduous		y				y				
Chinese pistachio	Pistacia chinensis	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y				y	y			
Native apricot	Pittosporum angustifolium	S	Native, evergreen			y		y	y	y	y		
London plane	Platanus x hispanica cv. 'Acerifolia'	L	Exotic, Deciduous		y				y				
Purple-leaf plum	Prunus cerasifera 'Nigra'	S	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y	y		y	y	y	y	y	
Capital callery pear	Pyrus calleryana 'Capital'	M	Exotic, Deciduous		y						y	y	
Chanticleer callery pear	Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y				y	y	y	y	
Callery pear	Pyrus calleryana selected seedling form	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y	y	y		y	y	y	y	y	
Snow pear	Pyrus nivalis	M	Exotic, Deciduous						y	y	y		
Manchurian pear	Pyrus ussuriensis var ovoidea	M	Exotic, Deciduous						y		y		
Algerian oak	Quercus canariensis	L	Exotic, Deciduous		y				y	y			
Scholar tree	Sophora japonica	M	Exotic, Deciduous							y			
Chinese tallow	Triadica sebifera	M	Exotic, Deciduous	y					y	y			
Chinese elm	Ulmus parvifolia	M	Exotic, Deciduous		y				y				

Common replacement street trees in the City of Mitcham		Size	Character	Tree Character Precinct							Approved under powerlines		
Common Name	Botanical Name	S (small) M (medium) L (large)		Tree Character Precinct A	Tree Character Precinct B	Tree Character Precinct C	Colonel Light Gardens	Tree Character Precinct D	Tree Character Precinct E	Tree Character Precinct F	Non- Bushfire Risk Area	Insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area	Not insulated conductors Bushfire Risk Area
Sapporo Autumn Gold' elm	Ulmus 'Sapporo Autumn Gold'	M	Exotic, Deciduous						y				
Japanese zelkova	Zelkova serrata	M	Exotic, Deciduous						y	y			

## **8. TREE RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **Tree Inspection Procedure**

Council's arborists and independent contractors annually audit the City's street trees and many trees in parks and reserves. These tree audits are cyclical and aim to assess the majority of the City's trees within a 5 year period. They are performed by competent arborists and defects that require maintenance works are recorded and programmed for actioning.

A brief overview of the auditing process and the various levels it covers, is provided below:

#### **Level 1: Limited visual assessment**

Level 1 limited visual assessments aim to cover large areas in a short period of time. Arborists conducting level 1 assessments remain on the ground and typically walk past and around each trees to check the canopy, trunk and stump for signs of structural or health issues which might present a heightened degree of risk. Level 1 assessments routinely confirm that most trees present an acceptably low level of risk such that further investigation and assessment is unnecessary.

If further investigation is required to determine the level of risk or appropriate remedial measures, a higher level of assessment may be recommended.

#### **Level 2: Basic assessment**

If an arborist requires more information than can be obtained with a limited visual assessment then a Level 2 assessment may be conducted using basic tools and methods. Using a nylon headed 'sounding hammer', experienced arborists can determine the location and extent of decay in a tree's stump, trunk or low branches in the same way an engineer is able to use a steel hammer to detect flaws in concrete or metal. An arborist may use additional tools and equipment, such as a probe and tape

measure, to determine the depth of a cavity or the proportion of the trunk circumference occupied by a cavity opening. This information might allow the arborist to determine the level of risk to inform remedial works, or a more intensive Level 3 examination may be required.

#### **Level 3: Advanced assessment**

Relatively few trees require Level 3 advanced assessment to evaluate risk and inform risk-management and remedial treatments. Techniques applied in advanced assessments include aerial inspections conducted by climbing arborists or involving elevated work platforms, root inspections using hydrovac or air spade equipment, measuring the extent, depth and location of decay with a sonic tomograph or resistograph, or collecting samples for testing in a laboratory to identify pathogens. Level 3 assessments can incur relatively high cost so are typically limited to providing the information needed to maintain and manage high-profile trees and trees of significance.

For further information on tree audit and assessment procedures and techniques, please see:

<https://arboriculture.org.au/about-trees/managing-risks>

<https://www.isa-arbor.com/Credentials/ISA-Tree-Risk-Assessment-Qualification>



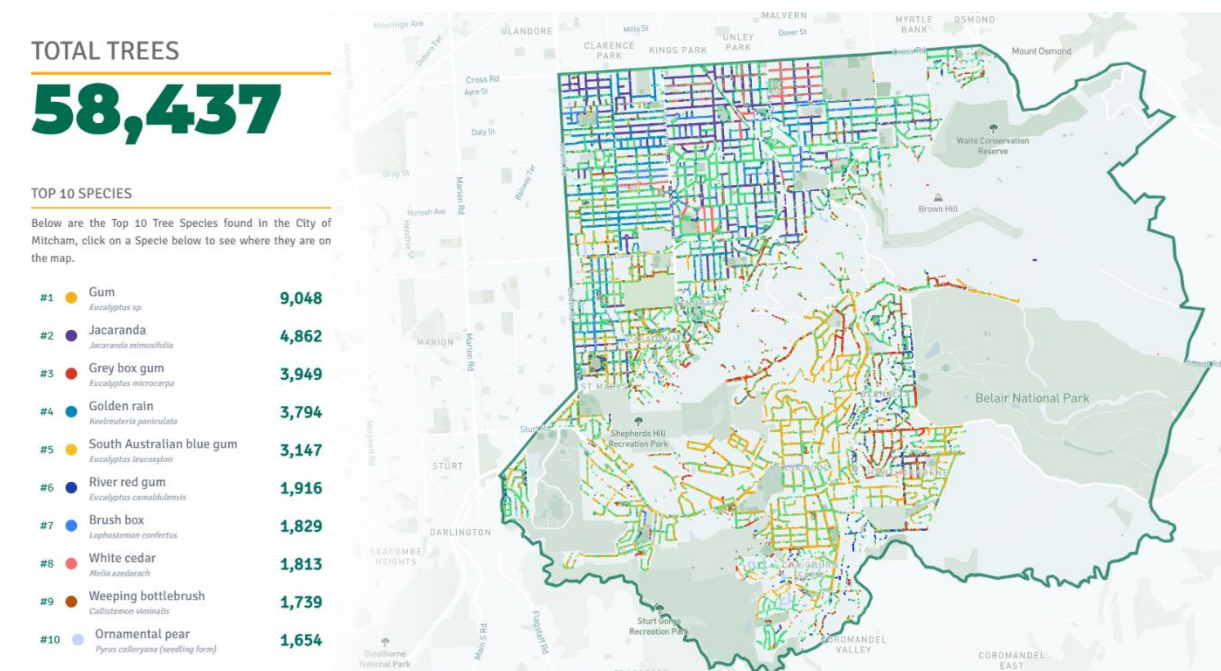
## 9. TREE ASSET REGISTER

Council maintains an electronic tree asset register to record information relating to its trees. Primary data including species and location are recorded for each tree, and depending on the tree further information such as its age category or planting date, trunk circumference, canopy height and spread, health assessment, structural assessment, life expectancy and risk assessment may be recorded. Compiling and maintaining the tree asset register is an iterative and ongoing process.

Council audits its street trees on a continual basis. Street tree data is aimed to be updated every 5 years and the majority of reserve trees every 3 years. The tree asset register available for our community to view at the below address:

<https://dev.forestree.studio/mitcham#trees>

An image of the system is below



planting, watering, pruning, and removal. This new system ensures that data accuracy progressively improves. Tree auditing remains essential to maintain public safety, but the new system allows also for improved day to day tree management including planning of planting projects.

Tree works and audits are ongoing but the number of trees under Council's care make auditing a substantial task. Most trees in woodland reserves are not audited and have not been included in the asset register as yet, but those near facilities like gateways, benches, signs and other assets where people might congregate or catch their breath are regularly inspected.

Trees in metropolitan areas are inspected at intervals not exceeding five years. Street trees on rural roads and on some streets in the hills face zone are not routinely audited in the same manner, due largely to safety and access concerns and in many cases difficulties in identifying the location of property boundaries (only trees under Council's care and control are audited, not

Council has recently commissioned the above tree management system which allows data to be updated in 'real time' to reflect day to day actions including tree

trees on private property). Street trees in the suburbs of Brown Hill Creek, Crafers West, Leawood Gardens and Upper Sturt have not been audited. Trees on these roadsides in

these areas undergo periodic assessment beginning with a drive-by inspection, with further investigation of individual trees or stands of trees if required. This approach allows Council to best manage risk most cost-effectively.

## Document Control

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Last Reviewed	7 December 2023
Version Control	<b>V1.1 - April 2023</b>
	<b>V1.2.1 - June 2023</b> – Incorporation of initial feedback.
	<b>V1.2.2 – August 2023</b> – – Incorporation of further feedback. Document for Community Consultation
	<b>V1.2.3 – September 2023</b> – Minor updates
	<b>V1.3.1 - December 2023</b> - Minor amendments after community consultation
	<b>V1.4.1 – February 2023</b> - Final version after Council Resolution 13 February 2024 (Item 10.5)
	<b>V1.4.2 – February 2024</b> – Minor spelling correction
Next Review	TBC
Document Owner	Mason Willis – Manager Open Space
ECM Number	
Executive Officer	