

To the expert panel 14/12/22

Re TREES

I feel when a tree becomes notable in an area and is seen as a community asset that the community through the Local Council offer to care for the tree and compensate the owner through a rates rebate for the loss of usage of the trees impact on the property.

If the owner agrees to this and receives a rebate they then would need to protect that tree from any impact of development.

The Council would have its arborists care for the tree including trimming and insurance cover for any damage it may cause.

There is a problem with the regulated tree – significant tree protection as it now is that if a land owner has a tree that is almost of a size to qualify it is in their financial interest to have it removed rather than let it get to a point where it is protected under the act. Banding the tree at the 1.5 metre height to prevent it growing to a diameter that would qualify would be an option but not in the best interest of the health of the tree. If it was possible for the land owner to enter into an agreement that they won't have it cut down providing it doesn't fall under the act by leaving it standing that would mean the community continues to enjoy its amenity.

If we continue leaving the full cost and responsibility of a tree to the land owner on which it stands the community should have no rights to its existence. They want full value of the amenity for free.

As for blocks being totally cleared to build a new house the problem is the footing engineers remove any risk to them that a tree root could affect the foundation. There is no consideration of the different types of tree that are in the close vicinity which may never cause a problem. It should be a consideration for the footing engineers in conjunction with arborists and Council as to how the maximum number of existing trees can be saved without compromising the footings.

I have had experience where land agents have recommended the complete clearance of a vacant block before putting it up for sale as they say it increases the value

Happy to discuss further

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