NOTES ON SAFE USEFUL LIFE EXPECTANCY (SULE RATING) AS USED IN TREE DESCRIPTION TABLE

In a planning context the time a tree can expect to be usefully retained is the most important long-term consideration. Safe Useful Life Expectancy (SULE) is the life expectancy of the tree modified first by its age, health, condition, safety and location (to give safe life expectancy), then by economics, effects on better trees and sustained amenity (Barrel! 1993 and 1995). Trees with short SULE may at present be making a contribution to the landscape but their value to the local amenity will decrease rapidly towards the end of this period, prior to their being removed for safety or aesthetic reasons.

SULE categories

	1 LONG SULE	2 MEDIUM SULE	3 SHORTSULE	4 REMOVALS	5 MOVED OR REPLACED
A	Long: appeared to be retainable alt the time of assessment for over 40 years with an acceptable degree of risk, assuming reasonable maintenance.	Medium: appeared to be retainable at the time of assessment for 15 to 40 years with an acceptable degree of risk, assuming reasonable maintenance.	Short- appeared to be retainable at the time of assessment for 5 to 15 years with an acceptable degree of risk, assuming reasonable maintenance.	Removal: trees which should be removed within the next 5 years.	Moved or Replaced: Trees which can be readily moved or replaced
B	Structurally sound trees located in positions that can accommodate future growth	Trees that may only live between 15 and 40 more years	Trees that may only live between 5 and 1 5 more years.	Dead, dying, suppressed or declining trees through disease or inhospitable conditions	Small trees less than 5 metres (m) in height
C	Trees that could be made suitable for long-term retention by remedial tree care.	Trees that may live for more than 40 years but would be removed for safety or nuisance reasons.	Trees that may live for more than 15 years but would be removed for safety or nuisance reasons.	Dangerous trees through damage, structural defect, instability or recent toss of adjacent trees.	Young trees less than 1 5 years old but over 5m in height
D	Trees of special significance for historical, commemorative or rarity reasons that would warrant extraordinary efforts to secure their long term retention.	Trees that may live for more than 40 years but should be removed to prevent interference with more suitable individuals or to provide space for new planting.	Trees that may live for more than 15 years but should be removed to prevent interference with more suitable individuals or to provide space for new planting.	Dangerous trees through structural detects including cavities, decay, included bark, wounds or poor form.	Trees that have been regularly pruned to artificially control growth'
E		Trees that could be made suitable for retention in the medium term by remedial tree care	Trees that require substantial remedial tree care and are only suitable for retention in the short term.	Damaged trees that are' clearly not safe to retain	
F				Trees that may live for more than 5 years but should be removed to prevent interference with more suitable individuals or to provide space for new planting	
G				Trees that are damaging or may cause damage to existing structures within 5 years	
H				Trees that will become dangerous after removal of other trees for the reasons given in A) to F).	