

Treeskills Tree Report

prepared for Far North District Council

Morton Bay Fig

Ficus macrophylla



33 The Strand, Russell

Conducted 07.10.2022

Overview

A visual inspection of this tree was carried out by Roger Gale, Treeskills, at the request of Nina Gobie.

The purpose of the inspection was to confirm the condition of the tree and report on any remedial work required to remove H&S risks and to promote tree health. An on-ground and climbing-based assessment was carried out to identify any particular issues and concerns.

This report summarises the findings, including photographs.

The inspection was done from ground level and from the crown of the tree. Photographs are attached to illustrate points of note.

Any questions or queries please contact the author directly at roger@treeskills.co.nz

Inspection Details

Date/time of Inspection: 07 October 2022, 1015hrs.

Address: 33 The Strand, Russell.

Tree Species: *Ficus macrophylla*

Weather conditions: Overcast/ calm.

General Health

This 140-year-old tree has had a long and chequered life and survived numerous assaults on its wellbeing, mainly from human interference. It is situated in an exposed coastal site where wind can come from numerous angles.

The tree grows on a gentle rise that has adequate drainage, however a significant proportion of its root zone is covered by impermeable asphalt. The tree has a clear lean towards the sea.

The tree has a girth of 10.1 meters, an average crown width of 30 meters and a height of 12 meters.

The density of the tree's foliage has continued to decline, and to a significant degree during last summer.

The significant issues identified by the inspection will be addressed one by one.



Figure 1: Showing vigorous aerial rooting.

This species of tree is able to cope with hard-to-access nutrient sources. It commonly grows on cliffs and as an epiphyte in the crown of other trees.



Figure 2: Showing extensive historic damage to root plate.

Obvious root damage is evident around the circumference of the root plate and raises the possibility of the root plate becoming unsound if this should continue to spread.



Figure 3: Showing poor wound healing.

The lower scaffolding in the crown has many wounds where the stubs have not healed due to slow growth. This has allowed decay to begin to make inroads into the remaining wood.



Figure 4: Showing Upper side of the scaffolding.

The load bearing side of the tree's scaffolding (i.e. the top of the limbs) is in excellent health and indicates that the upper structure of the tree is sound.



Figure 5: Showing the sparse canopy.

This old tree is hanging in there having plateaued out at a sustainable level at present.



Figure 6: Showing a relatively healthy section of lower scaffold.

Viewing the tree from the ground and looking up at slow healing old cuts with minor decay, it is easy to get a biased impression of this tree. As a species, *Ficus macrophylla* is good at compartmentalising decay, so the effect is minimised on the rest of the tree.





Viewed from the canopy, the tree displays sound structure and minimal damage.

Summary

This tree is reasonably stable but remains vulnerable to drought-induced stress, scale and other pests, high winds, etc. The root damage seems to be stable and minor. The remedial work done on this tree in 2021 included airspading the root area, application of humates, and a crown reduction, and has improved its overall health and stability

Summary of Work Recommended (Hazard rating: 1 = minor, 5 = extreme).

All recommendations in this report need to be actioned, but especially the hazard ratings above 3:

-  Figure 2: Continue monitoring the periphery of the root plate, especially the clear problems seen in the photos, and in particular any lifting of the root plate.
Hazard rating: 2
-  Figure 3: Monitor the wounds that have not yet healed in case decay begins to penetrate sound wood. This species does not decay easily so this is unlikely.
Hazard rating: 1
-  Figure 5: Monitor the foliage density. This will vary with the seasons, but foliage will fall before the limbs decay. If the tree dies and all the leaves fall there will be an adequate window to dismantle the tree before it becomes unsound.
Hazard rating: 2
-  In my opinion under regular weather conditions there is only a moderate risk posed to this tree. Annual checks need to be maintained.

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Disclaimer: The tree referred to in this report is a living entity and is therefore subject to natural processes, and changes to its environment caused by human's activities and by exceptional weather conditions. The inspection undertaken relies on the visual attributes of tree health and structure which can be ascertained from a visual inspection. Hidden defects which are not readily visible may not be detected. The condition and safety of the tree inspected cannot be guaranteed beyond what can be reasonably assessed from the procedures used. It is recommended that all significant trees are regularly inspected. Treeskills can advise on the suitable frequency of these inspections.