Arbor Survey

ARBORICULTURAL DOCUMENTATION

SERVICES GUIDE

Our reports, methods and typical timeframes.

Document
Arbor Survey Services Guide

Issued
June 2026

Version
2.0

Issued with every fee proposal

arborsurvey.com.au

office@arborsurvey.com.au

0407 851 852

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

Item	Detail
Document	Arbor Survey Services Guide
Version	2.0
Issued	June 2026
Prepared by	Arbor Survey Pty Ltd
Brand reference	Arbor Survey Brand Guidelines v2.3
Review	Annually, or on a material change to services

1 ABOUT ARBOR SURVEY

Arbor Survey Pty Ltd is a Victorian arboricultural consulting firm. We assess trees on development sites and write the reports that Councils, developers and private owners rely on through planning, construction and beyond. We have operated since 2010 (previously as Tridimensional Consulting) and as a company since 2016.

Most tree reports are never challenged. We write every report as though it will be. We act for Councils and for the applicants they assess, often on opposite sides of the same kind of matter, and the findings read the same, whoever instructs us. That independence is the reason the work holds up under cross-examination and why both sides keep engaging with us.

Our work follows AS 4970:2025 (Protection of trees on development sites), AS 4373-2007 (Pruning of amenity trees) and the Victorian statutory framework, including the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Local Government Act 2020. Technical terms are defined on first use, positions are taken where the evidence supports them, and the conclusion is put first.

We carry $20 million public liability and $10 million professional indemnity insurance. Certificates of Currency are available on our website at **www.arborsurvey.com.au**.

1.1 Consultants

1.1.1 Mark Reynolds, Director and Principal Consulting Arborist

Over 20 years in arboriculture across private consulting and senior Local Government roles (Boroondara, Cardinia Shire, Kingston, Bayside, Frankston), including as a Senior Statutory Planning Arborist. Mark has given expert evidence at VCAT more than 45 times since 2004, for Councils and applicants alike.

- Bachelor of Applied Science (Horticulture), University of Melbourne (Burnley Campus)
- Diploma of Arboriculture
- Registered Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) user
- ISA TRAQ Registered User
- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40116)
- Certificate IV in Drafting and Design

1.1.2 Claudine Reynolds, Senior Arborist

Over 8 years in arboriculture. Awarded the Scott Sharpe Award for Arboricultural Excellence in 2019.

- Graduate Certificate in Arboriculture, University of Melbourne (Burnley Campus)
- Diploma of Horticulture, Holmesglen Institute
- Bachelor of Science / Commerce, Monash University
- Registered QTRA user
- ISA TRAQ Registered User

Full consultant profiles, our schedule of VCAT matters, and an interactive map of where we work are on our website at **arborsurvey.com.au**.

2 HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This document sits behind every fee proposal we issue. It describes each report type, the process we follow, and what you should expect from engagement through final delivery.

Read the entry that matches the report named on your fee proposal. Most arboricultural work tracks the life of a development, from the question of whether a site is suitable for development, up to the final tree-protection sign-off. Section 3 sets out the lifecycle and shows where each report fits within it. Sections 4 to 6 describe every report in detail. Sections 8 to 11 cover timeframes, what we need from you, what falls outside a standard report, and how to proceed.

If you are not sure which report you need, call us before signing the acceptance page. The website at **arborsurvey.com.au** uses the same structure as this guide, with case examples.

Who we work for

Local Government: Statutory-grade assessment that stands up at Planning Panels, Standing Advisory Committees and VCAT, with overlay and Local Law literacy and full methodology.

Developers and commercial: Council-compliant impact assessments, tree protection that survives the build, and supervision through construction.

Private landowners: Plain-language advice on the trees on your land, what you can and cannot do, and the report you need for a permit.

3 SERVICES AT A GLANCE

Our services follow the tree protection process set out in AS 4970:2025, from early planning through to post-construction certification. Six stages make up the development lifecycle. A separate set of services runs outside that cycle, for site managers, asset owners, legal practitioners and Councils. A further set of specialist reports supports both.

3.1 The development lifecycle

The stages below follow the tree protection process in AS 4970:2025. The reports listed against each stage are the documents Arbor Survey produces at that point. Not every project uses every stage. A routine impact assessment for a home extension often covers the assessment, impact and protection stages as a single package.

1 **Pre-purchase & feasibility** What the trees allow before you commit. Preliminary Tree Assessment · Arboricultural Condition Report	2 **Arboricultural impact** What the build does to each tree, to AS 4970:2025. Arboricultural Impact Assessment · Construction Impact Assessment
3 **Permit & VCAT** When the permit is decided or contested. Overlay & Local Law advice · Permit support · Local Law Review · VCAT Expert Evidence Statement	4 **Tree protection** Plans and specifications are written to be built and enforced. Tree Protection Plan · Tree Protection Specification
5 **Supervision** On-site while the machines are working. Site attendance & monitoring · Written site directions	6 **Certification** Sign off at each stage that the work was done. Stage 1–5 Supervision Certifications · Final completion certificate

Figure 1 – The Arbor Survey development lifecycle

Table 1 – The development lifecycle and the reports produced at each stage

Stage	What happens	Arbor Survey reports
1. Pre-purchase and feasibility	A first read of what is on the site and what it constrains, before money is committed.	Preliminary Tree Assessment; Arboricultural Condition Report
2. Arboricultural impact	What the development does to each tree, and how to manage it through design and construction.	Arboricultural Impact Assessment; Construction Impact Assessment
3. Permit and VCAT	Securing the permit, responding to the Council, and giving evidence where a matter is contested.	Planning Overlay and Local Law advice; Planning and permit support; Local Law Review; VCAT Expert Evidence Statement
4. Tree protection	Setting the on-ground protection the design and the build must work around.	Tree Protection Plan; Tree Protection Specification
5. Supervision	On-site attendance at the points that matter during construction.	Site attendance and monitoring; written site directions
6. Certification	Stage sign-off and the final certification a Council needs to clear conditions and release bonds.	Stage 1 to 5 Supervision Certifications; final completion certificate

3.2 Work that is outside the development lifecycle

Not every job is tied to a build. Tree risk assessment, investigation and diagnostics, tree valuation, and GIS mapping and data collection stand on their own. They are described in Section 5. A range of further specialist reports is in Section 6.

4 THE DEVELOPMENT LIFECYCLE IN DETAIL

4.1 Stage 1. Pre-purchase and feasibility

Early-stage work that tells you what the trees on a site allow before the design is fixed or the money is committed. Taking a first principles approach and assessing the tree constraints on the plan reduces the cost and risk of later redesign.

4.1.1 Preliminary Tree Assessment (PTA)

What it is. A first read of the trees on a site and what they constrain. The PTA sets out the Notional Root Zones (NRZ) and Structural Root Zone (SRZ) for each tree so the design team can work around them from the start. This is usually combined with the Arboricultural Condition Report (ACR) – see 4.1.2.

When you need it. Before you engage a draftsperson or architect, or when you are weighing up whether a site suits the development you have in mind.

What you receive.

- Tree schedule with stem diameter (DSH), height and spread
- Calculated TPZ, SRZ and NRZ per tree
- Commentary on which trees should drive the design
- An early constraints and opportunities summary
- An annotated site plan showing Notional Root Zones (NRZ), where a Feature and Level survey is available

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 clauses 3.2 to 3.4.

Typical timeframe: Survey within 5 to 10 business days from acceptance, report preparation 2- 5 days from completion of survey (Total <15 business days).

4.1.2 Arboricultural Condition Report (ACR)

What it is. A tree-by-tree assessment of health, structure, useful life expectancy and retention priorities, to AS 4970:2025 and AS 4373-2007. The ACR sets the retention priorities that should guide the design.

When you need it. When you need a clear read on the condition and retention priority of the trees on a site, ahead of design or as a standalone record. This report will guide the design and is not intended for submission as part of a package to Council.

What you receive.

- Tree identification table
- Health and structural condition rating per tree
- Useful life expectancy rating
- Landscape contribution, habitat value, site suitability
- Retention priority for each tree
- Photographs of each tree
- Written recommendations

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025, AS 4373-2007, Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) principles.

Typical timeframe. Survey within 5 to 10 business days from acceptance, report preparation 2- 5 days from completion of survey (Total <15 business days). Larger sites scale proportionally. In these cases, timeframes will vary depending on the work required and access.

4.2 Stage 2. Arboricultural impact

The core planning work: quantifying what the proposal does to each tree and setting out how to manage the impact. This is the report that a Council assesses against the tree controls. This report should be created after an initial survey has been completed and the design has considered the trees on the site. These reports will accompany a submission to the Council for a future development or construction project.

4.2.1 Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)

What it is. The standard report Councils require for a planning application where trees will be retained, pruned or removed. An AIA quantifies the impact of the proposed works on each tree and provides guidance on retention, removal, and protection.

When you need it. When a Council 'Request for Information' (RFI) asks for an AIA, or when your application triggers any tree control (VPO, ESO, SLO, HO or Clause 52.37). Most developments/ construction projects on a treed site need one.

What you receive.

- Full tree schedule with condition, useful life expectancy and arboricultural value
- NRZ and SRZ calculation per tree
- Encroachment analysis against the proposed works, classified as 'Minor', 'Moderate' or ' Major ' per AS 4970:2025
- Written recommendations for retention, removal or remedial works
- A site plan overlay showing tree locations, NRZs and the development footprint
- Photographic plates per tree

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025, AS 4373-2007, and the relevant Planning Scheme provisions.

Typical timeframe. Generally, 7 to 14 business days from receipt of all required documents, including 3 to 5 business days to review plans and prepare the final report. See Section 8. Note: It is important that final plans are provided well in advance of the anticipated submission date to Council, as Council will check that the impact assessment has assessed the impacts against the submitted plans, not initial concept plans or drafts. The preparation of this report cannot be undertaken within a short timeframe, as it requires careful analysis of the existing versus proposed conditions and the likely impact on tree condition. Arbor Survey is thorough, and we do not simply conduct a basic assessment as most other arborists do. We take the time to get it right, the first time.

4.2.2 Construction Impact Assessment (CIA)

What it is. A detailed assessment of construction methods where works fall inside the NRZ, so the build can proceed without harming the tree. The CIA also scales to larger infrastructure projects: road upgrades, rail corridors, subdivision civil works, and stormwater and sewer installations.

When you need it. When works are proposed within the NRZ of a retained tree, or when trees sit across a corridor or precinct rather than a single lot. Typical triggers include VicRoads projects, Local Government Civil and Capital works projects, Level Crossing Removal works, service authority projects and subdivisions with retained vegetation.

What you receive.

- The deliverables of an AIA, applied across all affected trees
- Construction-method assessment for works inside the NRZ
- Construction staging advice
- Commentary on cumulative impacts across a corridor, where relevant

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025, and the relevant authority technical specifications (VicRoads, Yarra Valley Water, Level Crossing Removal Project, etc.), where they apply.

Typical timeframe. Single-site CIAs follow the AIA timeframe. Larger corridors are project-dependent: 10 to 30 trees in 2 to 3 weeks, larger corridors in 4 to 8 weeks. We confirm in writing once the brief is set.

Stage 3. Permit and VCAT

Securing the permit, answering the Council, and giving independent expert evidence where a matter is contested.

4.2.3 Planning Overlay and Local Law advice

What it is. A clear read of how the controls on a site work, and which trees carry real retention priority. Covers planning overlays (VPO, ESO, SLO, HO, Clause 52.37) and a Council's Local Law tree controls.

When you need it. Before you commit to a design, or when you need to understand what a permit will and will not allow on a treed site.

What you receive.

- A desktop review of the overlays and Local Law controls that apply
- Plain-language advice on what the controls require
- Identification of the trees that carry retention priority

Standards and methods. The relevant Planning Scheme provisions and Council Local Laws.

Typical timeframe. 3 to 5 business days.

4.2.4 Planning and permit support

What it is. Responses to Council officer requests and permit conditions, written to be acted on. Keeps an application moving when the officer comes back with questions.

When you need it. When a Council issues a Request for Information (RFI) or applies conditions that relate to trees, and you need a clear, evidence-based response.

What you receive.

- A written response to the officer's tree-related requests or conditions
- Supporting assessment or revised recommendations where required
- Plain-language advice on the practical effect of the conditions

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 and the relevant Planning Scheme provisions.

Typical timeframe. Scoped to the request. Generally, 3 to 7 business days.

4.2.5 Local Law Review

What it is. A tree-removal assessment under a Council's Local Law tree controls, prepared to the Council's required format and criteria.

When you need it. When a Council Local Law requires an arborist assessment to support a tree removal or works application.

What you receive.

- Site inspection and assessment against the Local Law criteria
- A clear position on the application, with reasons
- Photographs and supporting evidence

Standards and methods. The relevant Council Local Law and industry standards.

Typical timeframe: 5 to 10 business days.

4.2.6 VCAT Expert Evidence Statement

What it is. Independent expert evidence for the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, in the numbered-paragraph format, compliant with the Expert Witness Code of Conduct and Practice Note PNVCAT2.

When you need it. VCAT planning appeals, and Joint Expert Conclaves.

What you receive.

- An expert statement compliant with VCAT Practice Note PNVCAT2
- Supporting photographs and evidence
- Site plans and technical diagrams as required
- Availability for a Joint Expert Conclave
- Attendance at hearing (charged separately, see below)

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025, AS 4373-2007, VCAT Practice Note PNVCAT2, and the relevant Planning Scheme provisions.

Typical timeframe. Typically, 10 to 20 business days from receipt of the hearing brief and plans. Hearing days and conclaves are scheduled and charged separately.

Why VCAT expert evidence is priced as specialist work

Reports prepared for the Tribunal are not standard arboricultural assessments. They follow specific legal requirements, carry personal liability, and stand up to cross-examination. Every statement must comply with the Tribunal's Expert Witness Code of Conduct: declaring independence, setting out methodology in detail, citing primary sources, and identifying the facts and assumptions relied on.

The work behind the document takes more time than a standard report. Plans, engineering drawings, Council reports and other expert evidence all need to be reviewed and addressed. Cross-examination changes the stakes: a mistake in a standard report costs a client time, while a mistake in a VCAT statement exposes the witness to costs orders and professional consequences.

Tribunal representation is priced independently of the statement. Conferences, mediations, expert conclaves and pre-hearing briefings bill at the specialist hourly rate. Where a prior Arbor Survey assessment already covers the trees in question, the statement is quoted directly rather than at the listed fee. Contact us for a fee proposal.

4.3 Stage 4. Tree protection

The documentation that tells the builder exactly what to do to protect retained trees through demolition and construction.

4.3.1 Tree Protection Plan (TPP)

What it is. A scaled plan with the NRZ and SRZ set on it, showing the tree protection zone (TPZ), the design and the build must work around: fencing lines, exclusion zones, site access and signage locations.

When you need it. After the AIA is accepted and a permit is issued. Most Councils require a TPS and TPP as a permit condition; some require it before the permit issues.

What you receive.

- A scaled TPP drawing showing TPZ fencing, site access, exclusion zones and signage locations
- Tree protection zones set against the proposed works
- A monitoring and reporting schedule

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 Sections 4 and 5, and Appendix C (TPZ sign specification).

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days once the AIA is accepted and final construction plans are provided.

4.3.2 Tree Protection Specification (TPS)

What it is. The written specification of the on-ground protection measures: fencing, signage, ground protection and root protection, set to AS 4970:2025 Section 4. The TPS is the companion document to the TPP.

When you need it. Alongside the TPP, where a Council or the works require a written specification of the protection measures for each retained tree.

What you receive.

- A written specification listing every protection measure per tree
- Ground protection, trunk wrapping and root protection specifications where required
- Monitoring and certification requirements

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 Sections 4 and 5.

Typical timeframe. Prepared with the TPP, within the same 5 to 10 business days.

4.4 Stage 5. Supervision

Site attendance during construction that affects or encroaches on the NRZ of a retained tree. We observe, document and direct works at the points that matter.

4.4.1 Site attendance and monitoring

What it is. On-site supervision at the points that matter: excavation near roots, installation of protection, and works inside the NRZ. We observe, record and sign off.

When you need it. When a permit condition names a Project Arborist, or when any works are proposed within a NRZ (hand excavation, root investigation, service installation, scaffolding).

What you receive.

- A pre-construction inspection confirming protection measures are installed as per the TPP
- Supervised works sign-off during construction (root encounters, pruning, ground works)
- A practical completion inspection

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 Section 5 (monitoring and certification).

Typical timeframe. Booked per visit. Standard lead time is 3 to 5 business days. For an urgent callout where a site shutdown is in play, we can usually attend within 48 hours at our standard callout rate.

4.4.2 Written site directions

What it is. Directions issued when conditions change near retained trees, so the plan is followed once the machines arrive.

When you need it. During construction, when a root encounter, a design change or an unexpected site condition needs a documented arboricultural direction.

What you receive.

- A written direction recording the condition, the required action and the reasoning
- Photographic record where relevant
- Notification to the site manager and, where required, the Council

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 Section 5.

Typical timeframe. Issued within the supervision booking, usually same day or next day.

4.5 Stage 6. Certification

Stage sign-off and the final certification a Council needs to clear permit conditions and release bonds.

4.5.1 Stage 1 to 5 Supervision Certifications

What it is. Project-arborist sign-off at each stage of the works, the documentation a Council needs to clear permit conditions as the project moves through demolition, construction and landscaping.

When you need it. Where a permit conditions staged certification of tree protection by the Project Arborist.

What you receive.

- A certification at each defined stage, confirming protection was in place and works complied
- Photographic record per stage
- Documentation issued to the Council as each stage is cleared

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 Section 5.

Typical timeframe. Issued within the supervision booking, usually same day or next day.

4.5.2 Final completion certificate

What it is. The closing certification that protection measures were in place and conditions were met, to release bonds at the end of the job.

When you need it. At practical completion and at the end of the defects liability period, where a Council requires final certification.

What you receive.

- A practical completion certificate
- Final certification to the Council at the end of the defects liability period
- A record of the protection outcome for each retained tree

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 Section 5.

Typical timeframe. Booked per visit, 3 to 5 business days lead time.

5 WORK OUTSIDE THE DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

This work stands on its own, for site managers, asset owners, legal practitioners and Councils. It is not tied to a planning application, though it often supports one.

5.1 Tree Risk Assessment

What it is. A quantified assessment of the risk a tree poses to people or property. Risk is the product of target value, likelihood of failure and likelihood of impact, expressed as a defensible numeric rating (QTRA) or a value risk rating.

When you need it. Trees above private or public targets (e.g. Buildings, schools, playgrounds, parks, pedestrian and vehicle routes). Post-storm or post-failure reviews. Trees with visible defects where ongoing management is in question. Duty of Care holder and asset-owner obligations.

What you receive.

- An individual tree or tree-group assessment
- A numeric risk output (for example 1/1,000 or 1/10,000 for QTRA) or a value risk rating
- A classification of the risk
- Recommended actions per tree (e.g. monitor, prune, reduce, remove)
- An inspection frequency schedule

Standards and methods. QTRA; ISA TRAQ; VALID. MIS501

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days, depending on tree count and site complexity.

5.2 Investigation and diagnostics

What it is. Looking inside the tree and below ground, not just at the surface. We run non-destructive root investigation (NDRI), Resistograph drilling and sonic tomography, diagnostics. If we can do it we work closely with collaborative partners in the industry.

When you need it. When a retention or works decision turns on what is inside the trunk or where the roots actually run: setbacks, service routes, suspected internal decay, or a defect that a visual inspection cannot resolve.

What you receive.

- Non-destructive root investigation to establish root position and condition
- Resistograph drilling to measure internal wood condition
- Sonic tomography to map internal decay
- A report interpreting the findings against the retention or works decision

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025; recognised diagnostic methods (NDRI, Resistograph, sonic tomography).

Typical timeframe. Scoped to the investigation. The on-site work is usually a single visit; the report follows in 5 to 10 business days.

5.3 Tree Valuation

What it is. Amenity value and loss-and-damage figures that stand up to challenge. We can apply one or many recognised valuation methods and select the one that fits the matter. All methods are recognised in the Minimum Industry Standards (MIS506).

When you need it. Insurance claims, loss-and-damage disputes, asset valuation for a Council or owner, and matters headed to court or VCAT.

What you receive.

- A valuation by individual tree or across a whole site
- The method applied and the reasoning for selecting it

- Supporting data and photographs
- A figure prepared to withstand challenge

Standards and methods. The seven recognised tree valuation methods (MIS506), selected to suit the matter.

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days, depending on tree count and the method required.

5.4 GIS mapping and data collection

What it is. Tree inventories and spatial datasets, a capability most firms outsource. We collect tree data in the field and deliver it as a usable spatial dataset, mapped and ready for asset management.

When you need it. When a Council or asset owner needs a tree inventory, canopy or asset dataset, or wants existing tree data brought into a spatial system they can maintain.

What you receive.

- A field-collected tree inventory
- A spatial dataset compatible with Council asset systems
- Condition and, where required, risk ratings against each tree
- Site canopy cover mapping where required

Standards and methods. Council asset data standards; field survey.

Typical timeframe. Project-dependent. We confirm in writing once the dataset and site are scoped.

6 OTHER REPORTS WE PRODUCE

A range of specialist reports beyond the core lifecycle, prepared to the same standard.

6.1 Health and Condition Report

What it is. A visual assessment of a tree's health and structural condition, with clear management recommendations. Distinct from the Arboricultural Condition Report in Section 4: this is a standalone report outside a development context.

When you need it. Outside a development context. Common reasons include insurance claims, neighbour or boundary disputes, strata committee reviews, Council tree register evidence, and before-and-after records of nearby works.

What you receive.

- Tree identification table
- Health and structural condition rating per tree
- Useful life expectancy rating
- Photographs of each tree
- Written recommendations (retention, remedial works, monitoring)

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025, AS 4373-2007, Visual Tree Assessment principles.

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days.

6.2 Works Report

What it is. A report documenting the arboricultural works carried out on a tree or site, confirming they were done as specified.

When you need it. When a Council, owner or insurer needs confirmation that specified tree works were completed correctly, or a record of works for a compliance file.

What you receive.

- A description of the works carried out

- Confirmation the works met the specification and AS 4373-2007
- Photographic record

Standards and methods. AS 4373-2007.

Typical timeframe. 3 to 5 business days after the works are inspected.

6.3 Vegetation Management Strategy

What it is. A site-wide plan for retaining, managing and replacing vegetation over time. Covers basic native vegetation removal and offset assessment under Planning Provisions Clause 52.17 where it applies.

When you need it. For a site or precinct that needs a forward plan for its trees and vegetation, or any proposal to remove native vegetation that triggers a planning permit.

What you receive.

- Vegetation mapping and extent
- A management and replacement plan over time
- A summary of likely permit conditions

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025; VPP Clause 52.17; Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (2017).

Typical timeframe. 10 to 20 business days, depending on site size and the assessment pathway. Detailed assessments requiring fauna or habitat surveys are scoped separately.

6.4 Species Selection Report

What it is. Replacement or new-planting species matched to the site and its constraints: soil, space, climate, services and the role the tree needs to play.

When you need it. When a permit requires replacement planting, or when an owner or Council wants the right species chosen for a site rather than a default.

What you receive.

- Recommended species with the reasoning for each
- Site and constraint analysis (soil, space, services, exposure)
- Planting and establishment guidance

Standards and methods. Recognised species-selection and urban-tree establishment practice.

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days.

6.5 Pre-purchase Report

What it is. An assessment of the trees on a property before you buy: the constraints they create, the permits they may require, and the likely costs.

When you need it. Before auction or private sale, and for due diligence on a property with notable trees or development potential.

What you receive.

- A desktop review of overlays (VPO, ESO, SLO, HO) and Local significant-tree registers
- A visual site inspection
- A summary of constraints and trees of higher retention priority
- Commentary on development potential around retained trees

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025 visual inspection principles; the relevant Planning Scheme provisions.

Typical timeframe. 3 to 5 business days.

6.6 Pest and Disease Report

What it is. Identification of a pest or disease problem and a plan to manage it.

When you need it. When a tree shows signs of decline, infestation or infection and you need a diagnosis and a treatment or management plan.

What you receive.

- Identification of the pest or disease
- An assessment of its effect on the tree
- A management or treatment plan
- Photographs and supporting evidence

Standards and methods. Recognised diagnostic practice; AS 4970:2025 and AS 4373-2007 where works follow.

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days. Laboratory analysis, where required, is scoped separately.

6.7 Root Investigation Report (NDRI)

What it is. Non-destructive investigation of root position and condition, to settle setbacks and works near trees. This is the report output of the investigation and diagnostics capability in Section 5.

When you need it. When a setback, service route or footing near a retained tree relies on where the roots actually run, and a visual inspection cannot resolve it.

What you receive.

- Non-destructive exposure of roots (air or hydro excavation by others, observed and recorded by us)
- A record of root position, size and condition
- An assessment against the proposed works and AS 4970:2025
- Recommendations for design or construction method

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025; non-destructive root investigation method.

Typical timeframe. The on-site work is usually a single visit; the report follows in 5 to 10 business days. Excavation is arranged separately.

6.8 Significant Tree Assessment

What it is. An assessment of a tree against the National Trust Significant Tree criteria or a Council's own register.

When you need it. When a tree may meet significant-tree criteria, when a nomination or register listing is in question, or when significance affects a development or works decision.

What you receive.

- An assessment against the relevant significant-tree criteria or register
- A clear position on whether the tree qualifies, with reasons
- Supporting measurement, photographs and evidence

Standards and methods. The relevant significant-tree criteria or Council register; AS 4970:2025 inspection principles.

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days.

6.9 Transplant Method Statement

What it is. An assessment of whether a tree can be relocated, and the method to do it, from preparation through to aftercare.

When you need it. When a development or works proposal raises the option of moving a tree rather than removing it, and you need to know whether it is viable and how it would be done.

What you receive.

- An assessment of transplant viability for the tree and species

- A staged method from root preparation to lifting, replanting and aftercare
- Equipment, timing and aftercare requirements

Standards and methods. Recognised transplanting practice; AS 4970:2025.

Typical timeframe. 5 to 10 business days.

6.10 Tree Audit Report

What it is. An inventory of the trees across a site, with condition and, where needed, risk ratings.

When you need it. When a Council, body corporate or asset owner needs a current inventory and condition record of the trees across a site or portfolio.

What you receive.

- A tree-by-tree inventory
- Condition ratings and, where required, risk ratings
- A prioritised actions and inspection schedule
- A spatial dataset where required (see Section 5)

Standards and methods. AS 4970:2025; QTRA or ISA TRAQ where risk is rated.

Typical timeframe. Project-dependent. We confirm in writing once tree count and site are scoped.

6.11 Works History Report

What it is. A documented record of the works and management a tree or site has had over time.

When you need it. When a dispute, claim or compliance file needs an evidenced history of the works and management carried out on a tree or site.

What you receive.

- A chronological record of works and management
- Supporting documentation and photographs where available
- Commentary on the effect of past works on current condition

Standards and methods. AS 4373-2007 and AS 4970:2025 where relevant.

Typical timeframe. Scoped to the available records. Generally 5 to 10 business days.

6.12 Strategy and Policy Development

What it is. Tree and vegetation strategy or policy for a Council or organisation.

When you need it. When a Council or organisation needs an evidence-based tree strategy, urban forest policy, or a review of its existing controls and processes.

What you receive.

- A review of current controls, data and practice
- A drafted strategy or policy with the reasoning behind it
- Implementation and review recommendations

Standards and methods. Current arboricultural and urban-forestry practice; the relevant statutory framework.

Typical timeframe. Project-dependent. Scoped and confirmed in writing.

7 WHAT WE RECORD ON SITE

Every survey captures a consistent set of observations and measurements for each tree or group. The same record supports our condition rating, root-zone calculations, risk assessment and tree valuation, so a tree is only ever surveyed once. The fields collected are:

Group	Fields recorded on site	Feeds
Project and tree details	Job number, site address, zone or property, surveyor, date, GPS location, tree tag number	All reports
Identification	Botanical name (genus, species), common name, origin, tree type, ownership	Rating, valuation
Dimensions (measured)	Stem count; diameter at standard height (DSH, 1.4 m) for up to four stems; basal diameter; height; canopy spread	Root zones, valuation
Condition (observed)	Health, structure, form, age class, establishment, visible hollows	Rating, valuation, risk
Context and significance	Landscape contribution, habitat value, heritage and cultural significance, site conflicts	Retention priority
Constraints and management	Regulatory protection (overlay, local law, register), recommended action, works priority, comments	Rating, planning advice
Risk inputs (when a tree risk assessment is commissioned)	Part assessed, target and occupancy, size of part, likelihood of failure, likelihood of impact, consequences (QTRA or TRAQ)	Risk rating

From these, we then calculate, rather than record separately, the combined DSH and the AS 4970:2025 root zones (NRZ, TPZ and SRZ) and encroachment; condition, useful life expectancy, arboricultural value and retention priority; and, where commissioned, the QTRA or TRAQ risk rating. A tree valuation reuses the trunk diameter, height, canopy spread, condition and species above as the size and condition inputs to the selected valuation method.

8 TYPICAL TIMEFRAMES AND DEPENDENCIES

Timeframes depend on two things: when we can schedule the site inspection, and when you give us the documents we need. Once we have received your fee proposal signed acceptance form and received all required files, we will schedule and attend the inspection within 5 to 10 business days, sooner where the project timeline demands it, and issue the report within the typical timeframe stated for that service. Please note that due to workload at times, typical timeframes cannot be met and this will be discussed with the client over email.

For impact assessments (AIA and CIA), we need a minimum of 3 to 5 business days to review plans and prepare the final report after receipt of all finalised documents that will be submitted to Council. Complex sites or large tree counts extend this, and we confirm the date in writing.

Things that affect the schedule

- Weather affects site inspection scheduling.
- Root investigations require excavation by others and are scheduled separately.
- Plans provided in PDF only, with no CAD, may increase timeframes.
- Changes to the development design after inspection require a report revision, charged at our standard hourly rate (see the terms in your Xero fee proposal).
- Council pre-application meetings, mediation sessions and hearing days are booked against the calendar of the relevant authority or tribunal, which may sit outside our control.

9 WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

To keep the project on schedule, send the following with your signed fee proposal acceptance:

- Site access details: contact name and number, gate codes, and a tenant contact where applicable.
- Property ownership confirmation .
- The current Feature and Level survey in CAD or DWG format and PDF.
- Development plans in PDF, and CAD where available (architectural, civil, landscape).
- Council correspondence, Requests for Information (RFI's) and permit conditions relating to trees.
- Previous arboricultural reports or tree removal applications for the site.
- Any other relevant information important to the project (we will discuss this with you)

If the site is tenanted or has restricted access, we need a contact to arrange a suitable inspection time. A minimum two-hour callout fee applies where a scheduled inspection cannot proceed because access was not available.

10 WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

Unless expressly stated in the Xero fee proposal, the following fall outside a standard report. Several are available as separate services, noted below.

- Aerial or climbing inspections (arranged separately)
- Decay detection and diagnostics (Sonic Tomography, Resistograph, Increment Boring etc). Available as a separate service, see Section 5.
- Root investigation excavation. We attend to observe and record; the excavation is arranged by others. The investigation report is a separate service, see Sections 5 and 6.
- Tree works (removal, pruning, stump grinding).
- Supply or installation of TPZ fencing, signage or ground protection materials.
- Post-report meetings beyond one 30-minute follow-up call.
- Attendance at Council pre-application meetings.
- Revisions to a delivered report beyond the scope of the original instructions.

Any of the above can be added to the scope at our standard hourly rate. The rate and minimum charges are set out in the Xero fee proposal.

11 NEXT STEPS

Review the Xero fee proposal together with this guide. Then:

- Sign the Fee Proposal Acceptance page and return it to **office@arborsurvey.com.au.**
- Send the documents listed in Section 9 at the same time.
- We schedule your inspection and confirm delivery dates in writing.

If you have questions before signing, call us on 03 8521 4966 or email office@arborsurvey.com.au. More on our work, including case examples and where we work, is at **arborsurvey.com.au**.