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## Media release

13 August 2019

### Ageing trees need urgent safety audit

Leading public safety advocates Maurice Blackburn Lawyers have called for an urgent safety audit of ageing trees across Melbourne following a tragic death caused by a falling tree this week.

Reports suggest many trees across inner Melbourne may pose safety threats as they near the end of their lives.

Maurice Blackburn Principal lawyer Alison Barrett called for an urgent safety audit of all trees on public land to avoid future tragedies.

“Questions need to be asked about whether any of the trees in question, or parts of the trees, should be removed completely, noting many of these ageing trees are located in areas that are heavily used by people exercising or as a thoroughfare,” Ms Barrett said.

“This may be appropriate in light of the fact that it has been identified a number of these trees are dying and are unlikely to remain where they are located longer term.

“People’s safety must be a priority in any of these considerations and in ensuring that all trees are carefully and regularly monitored for safety risks.

“While such monitoring does occur to varying extents, this week’s events make clear that monitoring must be conducted regularly, with proper consideration of relevant or changing factors that may impact on safety including a tree’s age, likely weather events and any nearby construction or road works.

“This is particularly important for trees located close to footpaths and other public spaces where people may be at risk,” she said.

**Media inquiries:** Paddy Murphy at Maurice Blackburn Lawyers on 0490 297 391