

TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the manner in which Council will manage trees situated on Council land, road reservations, parks and most other Council-controlled areas. Council is required to obtain permission from Crown Land Services to remove any tree situated on Crown land held under lease or license, pursuant to the *Crown Lands Act 1976*.
- 1.2 It is recognised that trees and associated vegetation form an integral component of the natural environment:
- (a) Provide a habitat for fauna;
 - (b) Provide a pleasing vista in our streets and may provide a distinctive 'local character' for certain streets;
 - (c) Make parks and reserves a pleasant place to visit;
 - (d) Maintain or improve air quality;
 - (e) May have heritage values;
 - (f) Blend new developments with the established environment; and
 - (g) In some instances, trees may represent the last areas of remnant vegetation.
- 1.3. There is a need to ensure the impact of trees on the built environment and human activity is managed to minimize the possibility of damage and injury occurring.
- 1.4. The task of maintaining balance between the needs of the natural environment and that of the built environment is a difficult one for the Council and the establishment of policies for the care and management of its tree stock will provide a consistent approach.

2.0 Objective

- 2.1 The objective of this policy is to provide direction and guidance to Council staff in relation to the management of trees under Council control.

3.0 Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to the entire stock of trees situated on land owned or controlled by Council including all Council reserves, road reservations, parks and other Council controlled areas. Council is required to obtain permission from Crown Land Services to remove any tree situated on Crown land held under leases or license
- 3.2 Council will develop a procedures manual which will outline the following matters as described in section 4.0 and 5.0 of this policy:
- (a) New/Re-planting species selection;
 - (b) Determination of High-Risk Areas;
 - (c) Determination of High-Risk trees;
 - (d) Inspection program;
 - (e) Replacement, regular pruning and maintenance strategies, with timeframes;
 - (f) Allocation of resources, and
 - (g) Management of electricity line clearance.

Policy
3.1 Development of Tree Inventory and Inspection Programs

- 4.1.1 Council's aim is to create a Tree Inventory, with detailed information about significant trees and trees in areas identified by Council as being potentially of high risk.
- 4.1.2 As the stock of trees on Council owned or controlled land is large, and Council has limited resources, a practical approach to the establishment and maintenance of a Tree Inventory and inspection programming is to be used.
- 4.1.3 This approach will allow staff to target the areas of highest risk to Council and Community within the resources that are allocated.
- 4.1.4 During inspections officers take into consideration power line clearance.
- 4.1.5 The level of inspections proposed is:
- (i) Annual inspection of trees in areas with high pedestrian use or activity and/or the possible impact of trees on assets, both Council and non-Council; and
 - (ii) Reactive inspections on an as needed basis upon notification or complaint from customer.

3.2 Maintenance and Works Programs
4.2.1 Allocation of work / works programs

- (a) Tree management works will normally originate from an inspection program or from customer requests. The Works Program will be developed jointly by the Engineering Services and Works & Services Departments.

4.2.2 Prioritisation of work / works programs

- (a) Given the resource limitations of Council, works will be prioritised based upon the extent of defect category and the location:
 - (i) Location of tree – high pedestrian use area, proximity to buildings and transport network; and
 - (ii) Extent of defect:

Urgent	Major	Minor
Significant risk to property or life (e.g.: from significant structural defect or fire hazard)	Significant impact on infrastructure assets	Significant impact on sightlines or other type of obstruction

3.3 Community Input and Feedback

- 4.3.1 All Customer complaints, notifications of potential problem trees and any other requests in relation to Council controlled trees are to be investigated.
- 3.3.1 Complaints and requests are investigated as follows:
- (a) The issue is initially recorded in the Customer Response System;
 - (b) An inspection is conducted, and any required action determined;
 - (c) If considered necessary, a qualified arborist may be engaged to provide a detailed inspection and any required action determined;
 - (d) The requestor is advised of the outcome of the inspection(s); and
 - (e) Any works required are prioritised and placed on works programs.
- 3.3.2 Requests for removal or major trimming of sound trees may arise for several reasons including a dislike of the tree species, the tree dropping foliage, sap or blossom, blocked views or shading of properties. Requests of this nature will be investigated but usually no works are to be carried out on such trees unless the tree is dying or diseased, poses a high risk to public safety, poses a high risk to public infrastructure or other nuisance according to the definition in the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- 3.3.3 Council will not be responsible to take any action in relation to any non-Council controlled trees
- 3.3.4 Where an issue concerns another Government authority, Council will forward full details to that authority as soon as practicable.

3.4 Plantings

3.4.1 Planting Guidelines

For the information of residents and staff, Council will provide a brochure as a guide to the planting and management of trees on Council controlled land. Issues applicable to private lands may also be addressed in the brochure.

The brochure will include:

- (a) Suggested guidelines for planting in streets and reserves,
- (b) Constraints on planting in easements,
- (c) Areas of Council responsibility for tree maintenance,
- (d) Areas of non-Council responsibility including boundary trees and power line clearances,
- (e) The process for lodging a request for works,
- (f) Frequently Asked Questions,
- (g) Other tree-related issues upon which Council will not usually act; and
- (h) such as blocked views and blossom, sap or leaf litter nuisance.

3.4.2 Species Suitability

When undertaking new plantings Council will take account of any current guidelines for the Waratah-Wynyard municipal area related to environmental weeds, together with any site-specific considerations such as existing plantings, heritage zones etc.

3.4.3 Noxious Plants

Council will not plant any tree species listed as either Weeds of National Significance under the National Weed Strategy or Declared Weeds under the Tasmanian *Weed Management Act 1999*.

3.4.4 Root Barriers

Council will not normally install root barriers retrospectively to reduce the impact of root intrusion on Council assets and private property. When new plantings are carried out, the selection of the tree species, and the potential intrusiveness of the root system given the location of each tree, will dictate whether root barriers are to be used.

3.5 Existing unsuitable tree species

3.5.1 Council will not remove existing trees on Council controlled land purely based on the tree species being unsuitable.

3.6 Trees on non-Council controlled land

3.6.1 Existing or proposed trees situated on non-Council controlled property are not covered by this Policy. These trees may be subject to the provisions of the Waratah-Wynyard Planning Scheme and/or State or Federal legislation. Council's Development Services Department will be able to advise of any requirements.

5.0 Resources

5.1 Council to allocate sufficient resources to meet requirements of this policy.

LEGISLATION AND OTHER AUTHORITIES

Waratah-Wynyard Planning Scheme 2000
By-Law No 1 of 2016 Highway, Public Reserves, Parking and Stormwater
Local Government (Highways) Act 1982
Crown Lands Act 1976
Local Government Act 1993
AS/NZS 31000:2009 "Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines"

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Tree Management Guidelines