

Urban Tree Policy

PLACES

3.3 OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT CREATES VIBRANT AND INVITING PUBLIC SPACES

Adoption Date:	23 May 2018
Council Reference:	MN 193/18
Policy Owner:	Manager Infrastructure Services
Next review date:	June 2020
File Reference:	900/2
Related Policies/Legislation:	Development Control Plans <i>Civil Liability Act 2002</i> <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017</i>
Related Documents:	Wingecarribee Street Tree Master Plan 2016 (STMP) Wingecarribee Street Tree Implementation Plan 2016 (STIP) Wingecarribee Tree Risk Management Plan 2018 (TRMP) Wingecarribee Parks Strategy 2016 Council Environmental Assessment Procedure, under Part 5 of the EP&A Act. Council Standard drawings for roadside vegetation pruning
Superseded Policy:	Management of trees on Public Land Policy 2009 WSC Road Side Management Plan and Procedure Manual 2009



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OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are:

- Promote and recognise the value of the urban forest as fundamental and intrinsic landscape elements amongst the community, developers and Council staff;
- Protect trees which contribute to the historical, social, and environmental value of the region;
- Maintain and increase the species, age diversity and canopy cover and function of the urban forest and streetscapes to moderate or reduce climate change and urban heat island effects;
- Improve local streetscapes by introducing trees appropriate to the local environment and urban services present;
- Determine the strategic direction and a balanced approach to tree management;
- Prioritise the systematic management, maintenance, and consistent protection of Council controlled trees;
- Mitigate property, infrastructure, and community risks in accordance with the provisions of Council's Tree Risk Management Plan.

SCOPE

The provisions of the Urban Tree Policy are applicable to all Council controlled trees located on urban roads, streets and across the public open space network in towns and villages, with the exception of bushland reserves. The open space network is outlined within the Street Tree Master Plan 2016 and the Tree Risk Management Plan.

POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to providing an appealing, livable region with a diverse and healthy tree population that promotes and delivers economic, ecological, and social benefits to the community. The urban forest is viewed by Council as a significant piece of public infrastructure.

COUNCIL TREE MANAGEMENT

Trees are an important natural asset that improve the amenity of our local streets and increase the value and character of the open space network. The Urban Tree Policy aims to protect, enhance and maintain the existing landscape character provided by trees across the Wingecarribee Shire.



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The retention and protection of Council controlled trees shall be given a high priority when performing routine maintenance activities, delivery of infrastructure and during the assessment of development applications.

Disclaimer

A tree is a dynamic living organism which provides numerous environmental, economic, aesthetic and social benefits to the region and community. Unpredictable events can cause significant damage to trees which will require prioritisation over programmed works.

Wingecarribee Shire Council endeavours to meet the community's expectations to provide tree management works (as outlined below). Council acknowledges that works to be undertaken are subject to available financial and other resources.

Asset Management

Council appreciates that trees are living assets, subject to growth and decay. As assets, they will be managed by adopting a holistic approach that plans for maintenance and renewal, within designated resources and levels of service.

Council will conduct routine maintenance tasks in accordance with *Australian Standard 4373-2007 - Pruning of amenity trees*. Maintenance tasks will consist of tree pruning and related activities, aimed at risk mitigation, improving tree health, structure, and maintaining clearance zones for buildings and for pedestrian and vehicular traffic as per STMP.

All routine maintenance tasks will be conducted in line with the *Environmental Assessment Procedure, under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and other relevant State and Federal legislation.

Council will keep up-to-date with new technology relating to tree management, with the aim of incorporating new industry standards into Council's management and maintenance approach within its financial means and resources.

Whilst Council will seek to promote habitat creation where appropriate when performing tree removal or pruning works within the open space network. Priority will be given to safety and amenity.

Illegal Tree Removal, Modification and Poisoning

Council will investigate and if appropriate, pursue legal action, where sufficient evidence can be collected, against any person(s) or corporation(s) that removes, damages or modifies a Council controlled tree without prior approval from Council. Council will consider, when appropriate, installing signs identifying vandalised trees.

Tree Risk Management Plan

Council's TRMP outlines the procedure for assessing risk through inspecting, recording and addressing tree related issues. The plan aims to reduce future infrastructure problems by planting suitable tree species, as per the STMP.



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Council will develop and maintain an inventory of urban trees, to provide strategic and long-term tree management options, risk management solutions, resource prioritisation and archival record keeping of maintenance.

Tree Planting and Selection

Tree selection and planting will be in accordance with the STMP, the STIP and the WSC Parks Strategy 2016.

Council will require street tree plantings in all new sub divisions as part of the development application process and associated approval. Trees planted in all new subdivisions shall be in accordance with the STMP and STIP, or a negotiated outcome between Council and the applicant. The minimum provision requirement for new street trees is to be one (1) new tree per newly created lot.

Tree Pruning, Removal and Replacement

All tree pruning or removal on Council controlled land will be completed in accordance with the STMP and TRMP.

Community Notification

Wingecarribee Shire Council values the local community's input and undertakes consultation and communication about tree management and the urban forest activities in accordance with the STMP.

Tree management staff will engage with Council's Heritage Officer, Heritage Advisor and Heritage Committee, where appropriate, on tree removal and management decisions related to heritage items and tree management works planned within "Heritage Conservation areas".

Due to the unpredictable nature of trees, Council will be required to undertake risk mitigation actions without engaging with the community and internal stakeholders when managing unacceptable tree risks, such as during storm events.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Tree	As defined in Council's relevant DCPs.
Open Space Network	Means the land that is publicly accessible for general recreation use including, urban roads, streets, parks and reserves which are defined in the STMP and TRMP as part of the public open space network.
Consulting Arborist	Means a specialist in the cultivation and care of trees, including tree surgery, diagnosis, treatment, prevention and management of tree diseases. Council considers a Consulting Arborist to be an individual who has obtained a minimum of AQF level 5 in Arboriculture.
Council Controlled Land	Means land under Council ownership or Crown Land managed by Council.
Delegated	Means a person delegated by the General Manager to provide approval



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Person	on behalf of Wingecarribee Shire Council.
Council Controlled Tree	Means any tree managed by Council which is located on urban roads, streets and across the open space network (excluding bushland reserves).
Urban Forest	Means for the purpose of this document the sum of all trees and associated vegetation in and around towns and villages which are managed by Council for the purpose of improving the urban environment.
Tree Structure	Reference to the whole tree including the root system, trunk and canopy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities for implementing this policy are shared between Councillors, Executive and staff as follows:

Position	Responsibilities
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To lead the community in understanding this policy.
Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of and compliance with this Policy. To communicate, implement and comply with this Policy. To approve resources to develop, implement and review this Policy.
Manager of Open Spaces, Recreation and Building Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating the Policy. Allocating appropriate resources to comply with the Policy. Leadership of staff to follow policy.
Coordinator Open Spaces, Recreation and Building Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinating and undertaking reviews of the Policy.
Tree and Vegetation Management Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring implementation and adherence to this Policy. Assisting the Coordinator of Open Spaces, Recreation & Building Maintenance to maintain the Policy.
Tree and Vegetation Maintenance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseeing daily operational duties or tasks as delegated.
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To comply with this Policy and related plans.



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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The success of this policy will be measured by the following:

- Council conformance with the overall policy objectives
- Delivery of the Street Tree Implementation Plan

APPROVED BY:

WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL

23/05/2018

REVIEW:

Revision History:

Policy Version	Revision Date	Approval Date
Version 1 Draft	9/05/2018	28/02/2018
Version 2 Draft for Adoption	1/05/2020	23/05/2018

