COUNCIL POLICY

Street Trees

Policy Number: 7.4

Policy Subject: Street Trees

Objective: To provide a framework for the planting, protection, maintenance and removal of street trees within Shire-managed road reserves, recognising their contribution to public amenity, environmental value, shade, streetscape character and community wellbeing while protecting public safety and infrastructure.

Scope: This policy applies to trees located, or proposed to be located, within road reserves under the care, control or management of the Shire.
It applies to works undertaken by Shire employees, contractors, developers, service authorities, property owners and members of the public.

Policy: The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for administering this policy and may delegate or authorise appropriately qualified Shire employees or contractors to assess, plant, protect, inspect, maintain, prune or remove street trees.

1) A person must not plant, prune, remove, poison, damage or otherwise interfere with a street tree without the Shire's prior written approval.
2) Street trees must be positioned having regard to the dimensions of the road reserve, the mature size and form of the selected species, existing streetscape patterns, property access, underground and overhead services, drainage infrastructure, footpaths, road safety and reasonable maintenance requirements. As a general guide, trees should be planted between 1.5 metres and 3 metres from the adjoining property boundary and approximately 10 metres apart, unless otherwise approved by an authorised Shire officer.
3) Consideration for vehicle driver visibility must be considered when planting new trees. Street trees must not be planted where they would unreasonably obstruct sightlines for drivers, cyclists or pedestrians, interfere with traffic-control devices, or create an unacceptable road-safety risk. Planting near intersections, crossovers and pedestrian crossing points must comply with applicable sight-distance requirements and any Shire engineering specifications.
4) Street-tree species will be selected by an authorised Shire officer having regard to site conditions, available growing space, mature dimensions, climatic suitability, water requirements, biodiversity and habitat value, root behaviour, proximity to infrastructure, road safety, maintenance requirements and existing or desired streetscape character.

5) Planting near overhead or underground infrastructure must be undertaken only where the selected species and location are compatible with applicable infrastructure-owner requirements and reasonable future maintenance obligations.
6) Every effort should be made to identify and maintain heritage trees.
7) The Shire may undertake immediate pruning or removal where reasonably necessary to address an urgent risk to public safety, property, roads or essential infrastructure. The reason for the action must be documented.
8) Where a street tree is removed, replacement planting will be considered having regard to site suitability, available space, infrastructure constraints, adopted streetscape objectives and available resources.
9) Street-tree removal may be approved where the tree is dead, dying, structurally unsound, seriously diseased, presents an unacceptable safety risk, causes significant damage that cannot reasonably be managed, conflicts with approved infrastructure works, or is demonstrably unsuitable for its location.
   Normal leaf, bark, flower, fruit or seed drop, shading, obstruction of views and other ordinary characteristics of trees will not generally constitute sufficient grounds for removal.
10) Street trees affected by development, utility works or construction must be identified and protected in accordance with Shire requirements. Removal must not occur without prior written approval, except where immediate emergency action is necessary.

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