

Policy number	Policy 255
Policy title	Street trees
Strategic outcomes supported	EN6 – Appropriate, inviting and sustainable green spaces for everyone that are well maintained and managed. EN7 – Increased vegetation and tree canopy.

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

To provide for the management of trees on road reserves managed by the Town.

POLICY SCOPE:

This policy applies in relation to road reserves managed by the Town.

DEFINITIONS:

Nil.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Pruning and Maintenance

1. The Town is responsible for the maintenance of street trees situated within the Crown Land road reserve. Pruning is undertaken by qualified tree surgeons in a way to ensure the long-term survival of the trees and protect them for future generations.
2. The Town has a planned approach to street tree pruning whereby the Town is divided into pruning sectors. Programmed pruning includes lifting the canopies to enable pedestrian movement and allow vehicles vision clearance.
3. The pruning of trees under power lines is done by requirement and is initiated with Western Power liaison. The Town's contracted tree surgeons work through each sector selectively pruning the canopies from overhead power lines.
4. Consideration may be given to reduce the canopy overhang to a property boundary on the request of the adjoining property owner. These individual property line pruning requests are recorded, and then initiated when the tree surgeons are working through the applicable sector.
5. The Town will prune street trees only for the following reasons:
 - a. To remove or avoid conflict with public utility services;
 - b. To promote the health of the tree;
 - c. To remove or avoid a hazard to pedestrians, cyclists or motor vehicles;
 - d. To remove or avoid damage to adjoining property;

- e. To allow access to a building site that would otherwise harm the tree. The cost of pruning a verge tree(s) necessitated by adjacent property development shall be the responsibility of the developer; and
- f. Pruning of trees during spring months is to be undertaken in such a manner as to minimise the impact on flora and fauna and shall be done in accordance with the Tree Pruning Procedure.

Planting of Street Trees

1. The Town will provide and plant, at no charge, one or more street trees on the road verge adjacent to a private property upon the written request of the owner of that property.
2. The Town undertakes an annual tree planting program during the winter months or until appropriate soil moisture conditions as a result of rainfall has been achieved. Owners can request that their property frontage be listed for consideration within the program.
3. Requested locations are checked just prior to winter to determine the species and amount of trees that can be planted. To maintain unity within the streetscapes, species selection is required to be in accordance with the dominant healthy tree species already occurring within the street or district. The Town will maintain and water the tree(s) for three successive summers following the planting;
4. Applications for street tree planting can be made through the Town's Renew Life program and the request will be considered within the suitable planting program.
5. The Town's TREEPLAN was developed after an extensive process of public consultation and only the tree species specified for the particular street will be approved for planting;

Street Tree Removal

6. Owing to the hazardous nature of the task, owners, residents, developers/builders or occupants are not permitted to remove street trees themselves.
7. The Town recognises the significant contribution made by street trees to both the aesthetic and environmental aspects of existing streetscapes within the Town. It also recognises that in some cases, tree retention may not be desirable, feasible or reasonable, owing to the condition, location or species of the tree, its implications for development on abutting site or the achievement of other Town objectives.
8. The Town wishes to avoid removal of street trees except where retention is considered undesirable or unreasonable. In accordance with this policy, the Town may remove, or approve a request from an adjacent property owner or his/her authorised agent for the removal of any street tree that:
 - a. Poses a significant nuisance or hazard to adjacent property or has the potential to become a significant nuisance or hazard. It is the responsibility of the property owner to provide appropriate proof (i.e. Arborist report) of any significant nuisance or hazard;
 - b. Is causing damage or has the potential to cause damage or conflict with adjacent property, underground or overhead services;
 - c. The tree is dead, significantly dying or diseased beyond remedial treatment;

- d. The tree has been assessed by the Town is structurally weak and dangerous placing the public at risk;
 - e. The tree has been irreparably damaged by a storm or mechanical means;
 - f. Is incompatible with its environment or the provisions of the TREEPLAN,
 - g. Obstructs vehicular access or building development provided the owner/developer is able to demonstrate that it is not feasible to redesign the access or development to avoid the tree removal;
 - h. Is a hazard or has the potential to become a hazard to road users and/or traffic safety;
 - i. Where the owner/developer is able to demonstrate that it is not possible to retain the tree:
 - i. When a redesign of the access is not feasible; and
 - ii. The tree is still impeding the development.
 - j. Where the tree is dead, or due to pest and disease, poor health and growth, and will not return to full vigour.
9. Street trees will not be removed for the following reasons:
- a. The tree obscures or potentially obscures views (other than traffic and pedestrian sight lines)
 - b. The tree variety is disliked;
 - c. The tree variety causes nuisance by way of leaf, fruit or bark shedding or the like;
 - d. The tree causes allergy or health problems. In cases of extreme medical condition, the Town may consider removal of the tree, subject to appropriate certification from a medical practitioner confirming an allergy.
 - e. The tree is in the way of a non-essential crossover or verge paving options; and
 - f. The tree shades private gardens, solar installations or the like.

Pruning and Maintenance

10. All requests for pruning and maintenance to be submitted in writing or via the Town's Service Request system.

Planting of street trees

11. Following a written request from the owner of a property, the Town will arrange an onsite meeting to discuss the number and location(s) of the tree(s) sought and the Town will advise the species of tree(s) that are intended for those locations under the Town's adopted TREEPLAN.
12. The Town TREEPLAN was developed after extensive process of public consultation and only the tree species specified for the particular street will be approved for planting;
13. Street trees shall be located with due consideration to the proximity of existing and possible future public utility services, crossovers and footpaths;
14. Request for street trees will be received at any time throughout the year but planting will not be undertaken until appropriate soil moisture conditions as a result of rainfall has been achieved, i.e. Autumn/Winter;

15. As a rule the Town will plant one street tree for every 15-20 metres of frontage and generally in the centre of a 15-20 metre frontage lot; and
16. The Town will provide and plant street tree(s) requested by an owner on the condition the applicant maintains and waters the tree(s) for at least two (2) successive summers following the planting.

Street Tree Removal

17. Any decision to remove a mature tree from a road verge is to be communicated to the owners and occupiers of four (4) properties on either side of the tree, on both sides of the road, not less than two (2) weeks prior to the intended removal, unless the removal is or becomes, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, urgent.
18. Any decision to remove a tree, either under 2.0 metres or a mature tree, that is clearly dead, can be removed without community consultation providing a 'Delegation of Authority' application has been approved.
19. Urgent removals after hours because of immediate safety concerns will be assessed by appropriate Town Officers at the time.
20. Owing to the hazardous nature of the task, owners, residents or occupants are not permitted to remove street trees themselves;
21. Notification of the removal shall be in writing to the owners and occupiers stating the approximate removal date and reasons for the removal; and
22. The full cost of removing a verge tree(s) necessitated by adjacent property development shall be the responsibility of the Developer in accordance with the amount shown in the Schedule of Fees and Charges contained within the Annual Budget.
23. The Town assesses these requests as part of the standard application process. Applicants should consider that developments are required to have minimal impacts on the streetscapes and should primarily design for the retention of street trees.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Nil.

Policy manager	Manager – Infrastructure Operations
Responsible officers	-
Approval authority	Council
Next Evaluation Date	

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved, Amended, Rescinded or Reviewed	Date	Authority	Resolution Number	Key Changes/Notes
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1	Approved	12/08/1997	Council	-	Item 14.3
1	Reviewed	15/08/2006	Council	-	Item 4.1
1	Reviewed	09/07/2013	Council	-	Item 10.1
1	Reviewed	11/08/2015	Council	-	Item 10.1
2	Reviewed and Amended	20/08/2019	Council	148/2019	Item 10.1

