

1. BACKGROUND

Coonamble Shire Council is committed to managing the trees within its urban streetscapes and public open spaces to ensure the character and amenity of the region is preserved and enhanced for future generations.

In formulating this policy, Council recognises the significant contribution trees make to our scenic amenity and the important role trees play in providing:

- shade and cooling;
- habitat for local wildlife and corridors for wildlife movement;
- consumption of carbon dioxide and production of oxygen;
- wind reduction and noise abatement;
- filter rainwater and reduce stormwater runoff;
- improved property value;
- a contribution to cultural history and local identity

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assist with the management of street trees in accordance with the character and amenity of the region, while minimising the risk trees pose to people, services and property, particularly during storms. It is Council's intention to minimise these risks and the possible consequences.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVE

To enhance the appearance, environmental quality and amenity of streets and public places areas in the Coonamble Local Government Area.

4. LEGISLATION

Trees (Disputes Between Neighbours) Act 2006

Roads Act 1993

5. APPLICATION/SCOPE

This policy applies to all managers, employees, and contractors of Coonamble Shire Council, involved in the management of street trees, urban streetscapes and open spaces and to any member of the public who intends planting or removing a tree from a nature strip or Council-controlled public area.

6. POLICY

Tree Planting

Council authorises residents to plant trees on the nature strip/street verge in front of their homes provided that:

- a written application is made for such plantings, containing an undertaking from the applicant that the trees, once planted, will be watered and otherwise maintained by the applicant;
- the trees to be planted are on Council's 'Suitable Species' list (see Appendix A),
- the total number of trees on any section of nature strip (including existing trees) does not exceed two (2) for each property frontage, except where the Manager may determine that additional trees are warranted, where the property frontage is significantly longer than normal or other unusual circumstances exist; and
- plantings are located so as to minimise future problems in regard to Council's facilities (such as kerb and gutter, water mains etc) and unlikely to create a future hazard for pedestrians or traffic.

Guidelines for planting

Trees are to be planted:

- at least 6m apart (measured from each tree's centre; species dependent)
- at least 10m from a street intersection.
- at least 3m from the edge of any driveway.
- at least 3m from the centre of any power or light pole.
- at least 2m from the edge of a pit lintel of any storm water inlet.
- at least 3m from the edge of any major underground service junction box.
- at least 15m from the approach to any bus stop and at least 3m from the departure side.
- at least 10m from the pole supporting any traffic lights.

Tree Removal

- For the safety of the public (and insurance considerations) any tree on Council-controlled property, such as a nature strip or public place, is to be removed only by Council or a contractor engaged by Council; please send a request to Council in the first instance.
- Requests for the removal of living trees must be received in writing, stating the reason for the request.
- Phone requests (for removal of dead trees) will be registered as a Customer Request in Council's electronic Customer Request Management System, as a point of reference and statistical data.
- All requests for tree removal will be assessed by the Manager Urban Services, who will seek advice from arboriculture-qualified contractors, if required, before agreeing to any further action.
- Trees will only be removed if one or more of the following criteria is met:
 - The structural condition of the tree poses a high risk to person or property and the cost of maintaining or remediating the risk to a low level is considered excessive;
 - The tree is dead, or the health of the tree is in irreversible decline (except in a reserve where the tree is providing a nesting habitat);
 - The tree impinges on an approved development of Council land;
 - The roots or other parts of the tree are causing damage to property and the damage caused by the tree cannot be reasonably abated or remedied through accepted arboricultural treatment or reasonable re-design;
 - The tree is hazardous to motorists or pedestrians due to obstruction of sightlines causing an unsafe traffic or pedestrian environment;
 - The tree is affected by road works (eg. new road, road widening, service location and/or re-location, etc.) and all other options to retain the tree have been deemed inappropriate;
 - The tree is contributing to a widespread environmental issue (eg. fruit fly infestation)
 - The tree is in danger of contact with overhead powerlines and selective pruning is not practical.
- Members of the public are not permitted to damage, remove or cause the removal of trees from Council-controlled property; any such action may result in legal proceedings.

- The following are not considered sufficient reasons for the removal of trees from Council-controlled property:
 - To improve views from private property;
 - Members of the public dislike the tree species;
 - The tree is blocking the sun or solar access to a property;
 - The tree causes allergy or other health problems for some individuals;
 - The tree is causing leaf litter problems for private swimming pools or gutters;
 - The tree is obscuring advertising billboards;
 - The tree is in the way of a non-essential property access and/or verge paving option.

- Where a tree, having met the above criteria, is removed from Council-controlled property it will be replaced with an alternative species, suitable for the site, if possible, in a location as close as possible to the original.

6. NOTIFICATION

Where a tree, having met the above criteria, is proposed to be removed from a highly visible public place (eg a nature strip) the surrounding property owners will be notified prior to the tree being removed, unless it has been determined that the tree poses an immediate and high risk to person or property. Where a tree, having met the above criteria, is proposed to be removed from within or immediately next to one of Council's major parks or sporting fields, Council will notify members of the community through appropriate media outlets.

7. APPROVED SPECIES

A table of approved species is provided in Appendix A.

Appendix A

Suitable Species List

Species suitable to plant beneath powerlines		
Botanical name	Common name	Height approx
Acacia Pendula	Weeping Myall	8m
Acacia Stenophylla	Eumong, River Cooba	5-10m
Acer Negundo	Box Elder Maple	8m
Acer Palmatum	Japanese Maple	5m
Backhousia Citriodora	Lemon Scented Myrtle	6m
Callistemon species	Bottlebrush species	5-10m
Fraxinus Griffithii	Himalayan Ash	6-8m
Geijera Parvifolia	Wilga	8m
Lagerstroemia indica	Crepe Myrtle	7m
Melaleuca linaraifolia	Snow in Summer	8m
Photinia Glabra	Photinia	4-6m
Prunus Cerasifera Nigra	Black Cherry plum	5-6m

Species suitable to plant where no height restriction is necessary		
Botanical name	Common name	Height approx
Brachychiton species	Kurrajong, Bottle Tree	10-20m
Callitis Glauca	White Cypress	12-15m
Celtis Occidentalis	Hackberry	12-18m
Eucalyptus Blakelyi	Blakely's Red Gum	10-24m
Eucalyptus Leucoxydon	Yellow Gum	10-20m
Eucalyptus Mannifera	Red Spotted Gum	10-20m
Eucalyptus Melliodora	Yellow Box	15-25m
Eucalyptus Microcarpa	Grey Box	10-20m
Eucalyptus Polyanthemos	Red Box	10-20m
Eucalyptus Sideroxydon	Red Ironbark	15-20m
Fraxinus Raywood	Claret Ash	12m
Jacaranda Mimosifolia	Jacaranda	12-15m
Lophostemon Confertus	Brush Box	15-20m
Pyrus Calleryana	Callery Pear	12m
Ulmus Parvifolia	Chinese Elm	12m
Zelkova Serrata	Zelkova 'Green Vase'	12m

Title: Street Tree Policy		
Department: Infrastructure		
Version	Date	Author
1	14 December 2022	D Noble
Review Date: December 2025		
Amendments in the release:		
Amendment History	Date	Detail
Adopted: 14 December 2022		
Ross Earl General Manager		