



Title: Street Tree Management Policy

Category: Operating process – all steps

Key words: Street tree, management plan, tree removal notification, aerial bundled cables, Street Tree Information Sheet and Application Form

File number: T-36-10

Policy owner: Director City Works (Works)

Authorisation: Street Tree Management Plan Council 9 July 1998 Minute 400

Review date: 1 July 2017

Modification history: City Services Committee 12 November 2009 Minute No. 328; City Services Committee 11 February 2010 Minute No. 8; City Services Committee 5 December 2013 Minute No. 446

Related legislation: Heritage Act 1977, Native Vegetation Act 2003, Noxious Weeds Act 1993, Roads Act 1993, Electricity Supply Act 1995, Electricity Supply (General) Regulation 2001, Pesticide Act 1999, Pesticide Regulation 2009

Related procedures: Street Tree Management Plan (including Action Plan and Code of Practice Manual)

Related forms: Street Tree Information Sheet and Application Form, Nature Strip Garden Information Sheet And Application Form

Contents:

- 1. Purpose**
 - 1.1. Background
 - 1.2. Rationale
- 2. Objectives**
- 3. Scope**
- 4. Definitions**
- 5. Principles**
- 6. Responsibilities**
- 7. Procedures**
 - 7.1. Vandalism of Council Trees
 - 7.2. Street Tree Planting

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is the management of the street trees in accordance with the Street Tree Management Plan and the Code of Practice for Street Tree Management and to consolidate the street tree policies.

1.1 Background

In 2010, Council resolved to include the adopted procedure for dealing with the vandalism and poisoning of trees on Council land in the Street Tree Management Policy.

In 2009, Council adopted the Street Tree Management Policy.

In 1998, Council adopted the Canterbury City Council Street Tree Management Plan, the concept of the Code of Practice Manual and resolved to implement an aerial bundled cables installation program.

In 1998, Council resolved to allow residents to plant street trees in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Street Tree Management Plan. In 1999 Council adopted the Street Tree Planting Information Sheet and Application Form, and the Nature Strip Garden Information Sheet and Application Form. In 2000, Council adopted the revised Nature Strip Garden Information Sheet and Application Form.

In 1984, Council resolved that prior to the removal of street trees, the surrounding residents be informed of Councils intentions.

1.2 Rationale

The need for the Street Tree Management Plan arose as a result of a trend for increases in the costs of street tree management, insurance claims and a greater focus by the general community in relation to tree matters, and in particular the following issues:

- Street tree removals including replacement species
- Overhead powerlines and street trees
- Development of policies in relation to planting, pruning and tree root management
- Community involvement

2. Objectives

The Street Tree Management Plan was prepared to provide a basis for the management of the street trees. It examined the present situation, both in terms of the physical resource and management practices, proposed a vision for the street trees in the City, and outlined a strategic framework and key actions to achieve this vision.

The vision for the future was expressed as follows:

- The cost of growing healthy, useful street trees can be seen as worthwhile and should be borne
- There can be more larger, darker, denser trees
- There can be greater species diversity
- Street trees are a major urban design element and can be used to reinforce neighbourhood definition
- People will be broadly consulted and informed about street trees

3. Scope

The Street Tree Management Plan is divided into:

1. Action Plan, including Appendices
2. Code of Practice Manual

The Action Plan provides four policy principles advising both residents and staff on resource allocation, planning and design, consultation and best practice required to achieve the vision.

The Code of Practice Manual is a working document for use by Council staff.

The Code of Practice Manual is a repository for information on street tree management issues detailing industry standards, technical data and procedures and the standard procedures to be undertaken by Council staff relating to an issue, such as street tree removal notification and aerial bundled cables.

The Street Tree Management Plan and the Code of Practice Manual is available for viewing at Campsie Central Library.

4. Definitions

Aerial bundled cables (ABC) are overhead power lines that are insulated and bound tightly together, in contrast to un-insulated power lines separated by air gaps. ABC have a reduced vegetation clearance allowing better pruning practices that improve tree health and form.

5. Principles

As a means of achieving the street tree vision the four policy principles form the basis to the management of the street trees:

1. RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Evaluate the works required to establish and maintain a healthy and appropriate tree population, and undertake ongoing monitoring and reassessment of tree condition and work practices to determine the most appropriate and timely actions and allocation of resources
- Ensure Council is applying current industry best practice standards to the management of the street tree resource by keeping up to date with developments in information, technology and techniques
- Consider and ensure protection and enhancement of the street resource in all planning, development and maintenance operations
- Ensure staff structure and expertise is appropriate for developing and maintaining a healthy and appropriate population of street trees
- Be pro-active rather than reactive in management of the tree resource

2. PLANNING

- Undertake a broad range of new works and new techniques as possible, encompassing both local neighbourhoods and high profile locations

3. CONSULTATION

- Develop greater community involvement in street tree planning and management issues
- Encourage other authorities with an interest in roads to undertake planning, development and maintenance operations with a view to protecting and enhancing the street tree resource

4. BEST PRACTICE

- Undertake tree removals as part of a tree management program to eradicate dangerous, poor performing or inappropriate trees
- Undertake pruning procedures which produce a suitable form for the situation, reduce risk and promote tree health, in the most efficient manner possible
- Undertake preventative and remedial root management practices which minimise the occurrence of damage to public and private property while promoting tree health and stability
- Replenish and enhance the street tree resource by undertaking new tree plantings which make a positive contribution to the streetscape and are appropriate to the site
- Undertake after planting maintenance procedures for new plantings to ensure the successful establishment of young trees
- Consider site modification works to as a means to protect existing significant trees, or to facilitate establishment of new trees where it is appropriate to the circumstance

6. Responsibilities

The Director of City Works is in charge of overall responsibility for street tree management.

The Works Manager is responsible for managing the street tree operations and reports to the Director of City Works.

The Parks and Property Coordinator is responsible for coordinating street tree management operations, implementation of the Street Tree Management Plan, signed correspondence relating to street tree issues as per delegated authority, vandalism of Council trees and reports to the Works Manager.

The Team Leader Trees is responsible for directing street tree maintenance operations including responding to customer service requests, programming the cyclic maintenance program and the street tree inventory data collection, allocating and directing operational staff and reports to the Coordinator Parks and Property.

The Design Manager is responsible for considering street trees issues in the design of new or upgraded infrastructure including roads, footpaths, stormwater drains, vehicle crossings, kerb and gutters and reports to the Director of City Works.

The Landscape Architect considers street tree issues affected by Development Applications. The Landscape Architect is in the City Planning Division.

7. Procedures

Most of the procedures that give effect to this Policy are contained in the Street Tree Management Plan. The following additional procedures also apply.

7.1 Vandalism of Council Trees

When minor vandalism of Council trees occur, such as inconsequential trimming of a tree, the procedure is to discuss the matter with the resident concerned, advising that future trimming requests be referred to Council for attention.

When major and willful vandalism of Council trees occur the procedure is:

1. Send a letter to the property owner in closest proximity to the vandalised tree and other property owners / occupiers in the vicinity to notify them of the vandalism and seeking information that would enable the person(s) responsible to be identified so that a prosecution can be initiated
2. Undertake remedial tree work, or if the tree has died or is likely to die, to trim the tree to retain a two metre trunk
3. Plant a replacement tree if appropriate
4. Monitor and retain the tree trunk until the replacement tree grows to a size that contributes to the local streetscape or the stump needs to be removed for safety reasons

When major and willful vandalism of Council trees occur and the offender has not been identified to enable a prosecution to be commenced:

1. The matter is to be reported to the Police
2. Media releases are to be issued
3. A notice is to be erected on the tree or stump

Tree shrouding is to be only considered in exceptional cases if the work can be undertaken in a safe manner with no risk to the community.

7.2 Street Tree Planting

Street trees selected for planting underneath:

1. Bare low voltage power lines are not to grow to a height where they will encroach into the vegetation safety clearance of the power lines unless the planting design determines it is appropriate to do so.
2. ABC and insulated service wires can grow to a height where they encroach into the vegetation safety clearances of these power lines provided they can be formatively trained around the power lines, retain their natural form and do not require extensive pruning to maintain vegetation safety clearances.

Native trees should be the first choice used so as to encourage and support bird life.