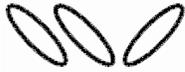


Urban Tree Management Policy

Policy, procedure, protocol	Policy
Document version	1.0 Final
Policy number	1.83
Keyword classification	Urban trees, urban forest, tree vandalism, public views
Adoption date	
Approving authority	Council
Minute number	
Consultation period	August 2011 to September 2011
Review due date	June 2014
Review adoption date	
Date revoked	
Documents superseded	Nil
Related documents	Clarence Valley Biodiversity Strategy Draft Urban Tree Management Strategy Draft Yamba Street Tree Masterplan Enforcement Policy Rewards Policy
Relevant delegations	
Responsible officer	Manager Environment and Open Spaces



1. Purpose

This policy provides guidance on the management of the urban tree landscape in the Clarence Valley.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Council acknowledges the important contribution that urban trees make to the quality of our built environment.
- 2.2 The conglomerate of trees within urban areas includes those trees within private and public land and is often referred to as the urban forest. Council has direct control over trees in streets, parks, reserves, and public open spaces and indirect control (planning control) over trees on private land and those managed by other public authorities.
- 2.3 The whole collection of trees is a shared community asset that contributes to the amenity, visual character, heritage and ecological values of the Clarence Valley.
- 2.4 Careful management is needed to ensure the sustainability of urban tree assets as the resource is vulnerable to a variety of threats. Council is committed to managing these important assets.

3. Legislation and Definitions

The Local Government Tree Resources Association has prepared an Urban Tree Management Policy endorsed by the Local Government and Shires Association of NSW. Council has considered the principles for management contained within this policy and has applied those in preparing this policy and its Urban Tree Management Strategy.

'Urban Forest' means the conglomerate of trees within urban areas and includes trees located on both private and public land.

4. Background

Council's urban forest is made up of a diverse range of species and age groups planted over a number of historic periods, creating a mosaic of plantings interwoven with remnant locally indigenous trees. Grafton City alone has more than 7,000 street and park trees.

Tree management over such a large area is a significant task. It takes considerable planning and effort to ensure that trees are properly maintained to provide a safe environment for the community.

Long term planning is required to ensure the preservation, enhancement and sustainability of the urban forest for future generations. This involves long term decisions about tree planting, maintenance protection and removal.

5. Planning and Management

Council will manage the urban tree environment in accordance with the framework and direction outlined in Council's Urban Tree Management Strategy that includes Street Tree Masterplans, Asset Management Plans, Development Control Plans, Park Plans of Management and related plans.

6. Management of Views for Public Benefit

Council acknowledges that views for public benefit are a consideration in the management of urban trees and vegetation.

Council has managed vegetation for views for public benefit at key vantage points and lookouts such as Maclean Lookout, Flinders Park Yamba, Pilot Hill Yamba and Angourie Point. These areas may be monitored through photo imagery and mapped for identification purposes.

Council shall give consideration to the following criteria when considering other areas for public view management –

1. Level of built and service infrastructure at the location.
2. Level of public and tourist use of these areas.
3. Type of view and land/seascape.
4. Environmental impact and sensitivity for any coastal dunal systems.
5. Requirements of any related Plans of Management for reserves in the locality.
6. Financial cost and benefit to maintain the areas.

It is acknowledged that there are many other areas, especially along the Clarence coastline, that are key vantage points for public views. Practically it is difficult to identify all these locations. In some cases management will involve active pruning and/or lopping while in other scenarios it will simply require selection of appropriate species that do not impede views that provide a public benefit.

It is intended that as Street Tree Masterplans or Vegetation Management Plans for reserves are developed that the areas to be managed for public views will be identified through those Plans. For example the Yamba Street Tree Masterplan has identified certain locations for the provision and maintenance of public views.



7. Tree Vandalism

Council is not insensitive to the value of views to private landowners. When undertaking new plantings, Council will endeavour to select species that do not substantially detract from private views.

Vandalism to trees and vegetation has been an ongoing issue for coastal councils over many years and will not be tolerated by Council. Council will respond to vandalism against trees and vegetation in accordance with its Enforcement Policy and Rewards Policy.

Acts of vandalism to Council trees will be reported to Council for appropriate action. Council will consider a range of actions to mitigate tree vandalism that could include –

- managing views for public benefit only at approved locations,
- planting species that will enable views to be substantially retained in locations where those views may be enjoyed by the public,
- public awareness and education initiatives,
- installation of signage at the vandalised area,
- installation of view screens or containers at the vandalised area,
- rehabilitation of the vandalised area.