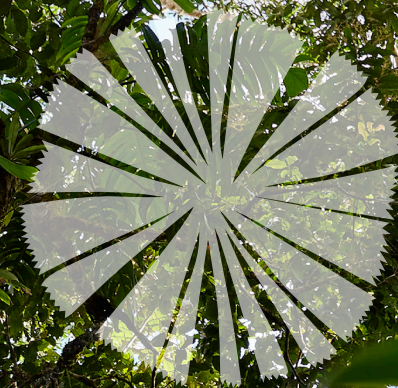




Cassowary Coast
REGIONAL COUNCIL

TREE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES



Purpose

The purpose of this Guideline is to support the implementation of the Tree Management Policy, to provide Community with information, and to form the basis for consistency among Council workers and contractors in decision making, resource allocation and overall tree management on Council controlled land.

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the principles and definitions in the Tree Management Policy and relevant legislation.

Tree Management

Tree Planting

Council will plant the “right tree, for the right location” with consideration given to their whole of life maintenance requirements and the possible impacts to private and Council infrastructure, and public safety. Tree planting throughout the region will be undertaken to support and enhance existing avenues, establish new avenues and increase canopy cover across the Open Space network.

- Species selection is based on careful consideration to the environmental, social, and historic character of individual urban areas and townships across the region. An approved list of suitable species is located in the Council Planning scheme.
- Council prefers the planting of sizable and long-lived tree species, where environmental conditions, community support and site factors allow.
- Council will consider the growing characteristics of tree species before they are planted, to reduce the potential for conflict between services, infrastructure and trees.
- All approved Public Tree removals will be offset by Offset Tree Plantings, which should achieve no net canopy loss within three (3) years of the approved Public Tree removal. The canopy area of the original Public Tree shall be used to determine the quantity of replacement trees required.

Tree Protection

To realise the benefits provided by public trees, their protection and retention shall be given a high priority during the assessment of development applications, delivery of infrastructure, performing maintenance activities and when assessing event applications likely to cause impact to public trees.

Tree Asset Maintenance

Council is committed to managing its tree assets in a proactive and efficient manner to maximise tree asset longevity, enhance amenity and achieve excellent tree health outcomes whilst managing risks to public safety, property or infrastructure.



Tree Pruning or Removal

Council regularly receives requests to remove part or all of trees on land under its control. Decisions as to whether to act on these requests will be made by Council's qualified staff and/or consultant arborists. Trees will only be removed or pruned after consideration of potential risks and benefits.

Council may agree to the following works if the risk presented outweighs the benefit:

- Removal of trees that have been professionally assessed as presenting an unacceptable hazard.
- Removal of trees in conflict with utilities and built structures if there are no other practicable solutions available.
- Maintenance pruning to remove dead, dying, diseased or defective branches only where they present and unacceptable safety risk.
- Selective pruning to remove branches causing conflict i.e., encroachment onto buildings.
- Vegetation works above and below ground service connections (water/sewer/power/telecommunications).
- Vegetation works to reduce unacceptable hazards to pedestrians or vehicular access.
- Pruning for vehicle sight lines, public signage and the requirements of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the Australian Standard, the Queensland Guide to Temporary Traffic Management and Austroads.
- Root pruning of trees to ameliorate damage to built or natural structures.

Minimal vegetation works to trees that are identified as providing habitat to specific species. Council will remove the minimum amount determined to make it safe, whilst still retaining habitat value (e.g., leaving a hollow stump for nesting birds, roost trees).

Council will not undertake the following works:

- Removal or pruning of trees to benefit private views
- Pruning of trees for private and commercial signage
- Vegetation works that will cause the tree health to decline or die.
- Removal of trees to provide benefit to private views.
- Removal of trees for leaves, flower, fruit, minor branch or sap drop, or animal faeces
- Removal of trees which are inhibiting grass growth, shading property, or shading solar panels
- Removal of trees which are claimed to be damaging buildings, water, or sewage pipes, unless certified evidence is provided that indicates that tree roots are the cause of the damage
- Removal of trees for private insurance purposes
- Removal of healthy and stable trees that do not present an unacceptable risk.
- Removal of trees to facilitate private construction works including fences.

Unlawful Tree Removal

Council is committed to ensuring that trees on Council controlled land are protected from interference to maintain the regions biodiversity, conservation, scenic, amenity and cultural value.

Activities on reserves, esplanades and foreshores are regulated under a range of State legislation and Local Laws. The majority of the esplanades and foreshores within the coastal and urban areas of the Cassowary Coast are reserves with management authority vested in Council. Many of these areas are adjacent to or opposite private property and over time there has been unlawful removal of vegetation for private gain such as establishing views or extending lawn and garden areas.


- Council will investigate all instances of interference with trees on public land and manage in accordance with Local Laws and relevant legislation.
- At all sites identified by council officers as being unlawfully cleared, a visible barrier (para webbing) is to be erected immediately surrounding area with a sign stating unlawful vegetation removal has been detected in this area and is currently under investigation.
- Council is authorised to revegetate in whatever manner seems appropriate and may erect a visible barrier or shade cloth screens to the pre-existing vegetation height until the new vegetation is established.



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