



TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

DIVISION: SUSTAINABILITY

BRANCH: RECREATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Trees are important elements that transform the amenity and aesthetics of the area, while providing environmental, cultural and economic benefits to the community. In the long term, trees create a sense of place and enhance the streetscape.
- 1.2 Some of the important environmental, social and economic benefits trees provide, include but not limited to:
- a) Increased sense of wellbeing within Communities
 - b) Shade
 - c) Deflecting strong winds
 - d) Improving air quality by absorbing air pollutants
 - e) Reducing soil erosion and run-off
 - f) Habitat for local fauna
 - g) Softening the built environment
 - h) Reflecting natural and cultural values
- 1.3 Projected urban growth will have a transformative effect on the future shape and character of Camden. There are many competing pressures on available land to accommodate varied and affordable housing, service infrastructure and provision of a green amenity.
- 1.4 Placing a street tree in front of every residential lot is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve due to a combination of factors including reduced lot size, and narrow lot frontages. There is also less opportunity to establish upper canopy trees on private land making it even more important for trees to be installed on public land, it is a big challenge but one that can be done through good selection.
- 1.5 It is timely for Council to formally adopt a Tree Management Policy to ensure that the value Camden residents place on its trees is reflected through the use of tree species with known qualities and performance and that are relevant to our natural and cultural heritage and vision for how Camden will look in the future.

2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 The objective of this policy is to provide guidelines to ensure consistency in the management of tree assets and tree selection within the Camden Local Government Area (LGA).
- 2.2 To provide an indicative species palette suitable for planting in public and private open space within Camden LGA.
- 2.3 To ensure the species palette draws on our unique natural heritage and rich culturally historic landscapes and the experience and input of dedicated groups and individuals.
- 2.4 To identify plant species not suitable for use on public land and not recommended for planting on private land within the Camden LGA.
- 2.5 To promote the Tree Management Policy as a resource to assist Landscape Architects, Developers, Public Authorities (including Council) and Residents to make informed decisions about tree selection.
- 2.6 To update and supplement the species palette with new varieties that have proven characteristics and performance suited for use within Camden LGA.
- 2.7 To ensure that suitable trees are chosen for the intended location.
- 2.8 To ensure trees located on private land are managed in accordance with relevant legislation, namely Clause 5.9 of Camden Local Environmental Plan 2010 and Section B1.5 of Camden Development Control Plan 2011.
- 2.9 For Council to:
 - a) Manage, enhance and conserve the amenity of the streetscape and/or open space;
 - b) Acknowledge trees as important components of the urban/rural landscape;
 - c) Ensure public trees are managed to best practices;
 - d) Meet Council and Community expectations;within the limitations of Council's resources (excluding emergency works/storm damage).

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to all departments within Council and is a principle source for tree species to be used within Camden LGA.
- 3.2 Council encourages stakeholders, land owners, landscape architects and developers to incorporate the species palette endorsed by Council, where tree planting is proposed for public and private open space.

3.3 The Tree Management Policy is intended for use by:

- a) Camden Council employees and contractors – as a guide for the provision and management of street trees and trees within parks and reserves;
- b) Landowners and developers – To assist in the selection of tree species and understanding of Council’s management of trees; and
- c) The Community – To foster better understanding of tree management.

4. DEFINITIONS

Community	Includes residents, businesses, schools, Camden Council staff, and visitors to the area;
Danger	Potential for a tree’s imminent failure and collapse in full or part, posing an immediate risk of hazard to the safety of persons or damage to property;
Hazard	The threat of danger to persons or property from a tree or tree part resulting from changes in the physical condition, growing environment, or existing physical attributes of a tree;
Public Open Space	Open space in a public ownership that is usually accessible to the public, eg. Parks, bushland reserves, cemeteries;
Public Tree	A tree that is managed and owned by Council;
Tree Management	Planned protection, conservation, maintenance and enhancement of a population of trees;
Risk	The random or potentially foreseeable probability that a hazard will cause harm or damage;
Urban Forest	A single or group of trees that stand within the urban environment.

PART 2 - POLICY STATEMENT

5. GUIDELINES FOR TREE MANAGEMENT – PUBLIC LAND

- 5.1 This policy has been developed to establish the framework for the management and maintenance of trees in streets, parks and reserves within the Camden LGA.
- 5.2 Council is committed to managing and maintaining public trees in accordance with best practices to ensure public safety minimise nuisance and benefit of the community. Trees constitute an important element to the amenity of Camden and are a considerable asset.
- 5.3 Develop management principles for public trees.
- 5.4 Manage public trees in accordance with Council's Tree Management Strategy (Public Land) ie, removal, replacement, identification of additional planting locations, etc.
- 5.5 Ensure all public tree management and maintenance practices are carried out in a safe manner.
- 5.6 Educate the community on the environmental and social benefits of trees.
- 5.7 Consult with the community on large tree management projects that have a significant or direct impact on the community.
- 5.8 Manage public trees that are of significant historic, cultural, commemorative or aesthetic importance and those that define the character of an area.
- 5.9 Recognise and preserve canopy cover and corridors and vistas.
- 5.10 Protect and enhance habitat and wildlife corridors in conjunction with Councils management of natural areas.
- 5.11 The Land and Environment Court (LEC), has published a tree dispute principle in case *Barker v Kyriakides* 2007 LEC 292 which states:

For people who live in urban environments, it is appropriate to expect that some degree of house exterior and grounds maintenance will be required in order to appreciate and retain the aesthetic and environmental benefits of having trees in such an urban environment. In particular, it is reasonable to expect people living in such an environment might need to clean the gutters and the surrounds of their houses on a regular basis.

The dropping of leaves, flowers, fruit, seeds or small elements of deadwood by urban trees ordinarily will not provide the basis for ordering removal of or intervention with an urban tree.

Council adopts and applies this principle.

- 5.12 Council acknowledges that it is excluded from the Trees (Disputes between Neighbours) Act 2006 as per section 4(2)(a), however will manage and coordinate works on public land as outlined in Council's Tree Management Strategy (Public Land) to ensure the best outcome is achieved for the community.

- 5.13 Tree management is a way of mitigating potential risks to property and the community due to interference with below or above ground infrastructure and/or other assets such as buildings or services, trees require effective and coordinated management to maximise their benefits to the community and the environment against their risks.

6. GUIDELINES FOR TREE PRESERVATION

- 6.1 Trees or other vegetation located on private property within Camden Local Government Area are protected by legislation. Detail on Camden's tree preservation controls are prescribed under Clause 5.9 of Camden Local Environment Plan 2010.
- 6.2 A person must not ringbark, cut down, top, lop, remove, injure or wilfully destroy any tree or other vegetation without first obtaining;
- (a) development consent, or
 - (b) a permit granted by the Council
- 6.3 A tree or vegetation is prescribed as being any tree, sapling or shrub which meets or exceeds one of the following;
- (a) is 3 metres or more in height;
 - (b) has a circumference of 300mm (100mm diameter) or more at a height of 1 metre above natural ground surface; or
 - (c) has a branch span of 3 metres or more..
- 6.4 Some exemptions apply and are detailed under Section B1.5 of Camden Development Control Plan 2011
- 6.5 These controls are in place to provide criteria for permitting removal and appropriate ongoing management of prescribed trees and vegetation, establish exemptions that may apply under certain circumstances, ensure that stakeholders are notified where proposals involving tree removal are likely to impact on local amenity and ensure where appropriate tree removals are offset by replacement planting so that overtime there is no net loss of Camden's biomass.
- 6.6 Enquires concerning Tree Preservation can be directed to Council's Vegetation Management Officer

7. GUIDELINES FOR TREE SELECTION

- 7.1 The Tree Management Policy shall be used as the principle source for tree species to be used in Camden LGA.
- 7.2 Council encourages stakeholders, land owners, landscape architects and developers to incorporate the species espoused in the 'Tree and Landscape Species List' where tree planting is proposed for public and private open space.
- 7.3 The species will be selected for their suitability for specific application such as street trees or for open space.

- 7.4 Council will not approve the planting of street trees or tree planting on public land using tree species identified as not being suitable and will discourage private land owners from planting unsuitable trees.
- 7.5 The onus will be on the proponent to demonstrate that an alternate species can reliably perform within known constraints associated with the proposed use or intended location.
- 7.6 Council takes a whole of life approach to tree management and understands that trees need room to grow, will require formative pruning when young, that they may cause superficial damage to hard structures that have shorter lifespans like footpaths and guttering and that for many decades will not require any maintenance and then at some distant point in the future will need to be pruned or removed to allow for succession planting.

8. REVIEW

- 8.1 This policy is to be reviewed every four (4) years by Council, to ensure it aligns with Camden Council's vision and strategies.
- 8.2 Appendices to this policy including the 'Tree and Landscape Species List' will be reviewed on a regular basis and updated accordingly. All updates will be forwarded to Council's Executive Leadership Group (ELG) for approval and adoption.

9. APPENDICES

- A. Tree Management – Tree and Landscape Species List;
- B. Tree Management – History of Camden Trees and Landscape.

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RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

- a) Environment and Planning Assessment Act 1979
- b) Local Government Act 1993
- c) Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- d) National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- e) Roads Act 1993

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- a) Camden 2040
- b) Camden Council Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2010
- c) Camden Council Development Control Plan (DCP) 2011

- d) Tree Management Strategy (Public Land)
- e) Local Biodiversity Strategy for Camden LGA
- f) Sydney Region Growth Centres State Environmental Planning Policy
- g) Camden Growth Centre Precincts Development Control Plan 2013
- h) Oran Park and Turner Road Development Control Plan

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: **Manager Recreation and Sustainability**

APPROVALS ELG and Council

NEXT REVIEW DATE: Month and Year

RECORD KEEPING NOTES:

CONFIDENTIALITY/PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS: List is available to the public and where available.

HISTORY:

PREVIOUS POLICY

ADOPTED:

MINUTE: