Tree Management Guidelines

These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with Gannawarra Shire Council Policy No. 065 - Trees.

1. SCOPE

These guidelines apply only to trees located on Council owned or managed land.

2. GUIDELINES

Community Consultation

Council will provide information regarding major tree projects to affected residents, interest groups and the local community.
Community consultation regarding tree matters will include information on the process to appeal a decision of Council to remove or retain a tree, or other tree management decisions on major tree projects.

Tree Protection

- Trees will be protected from development, construction, temporary works and other activities that may have a negative impact upon their health. Impact on trees will take priority when considering applications for new developments.
- Tree protection barriers will be used when works being undertaken have potential to negatively impact the health of a tree or trees.
- Council will enforce tree protection measures and seek compensation from third parties for cost of repair or replacement of trees damaged by works or actions, based on commercial rates.

Tree Selection

Trees will be selected for planting based on their suitability for the site (including possible adverse effects to infrastructure and/or utilities), current and projected climate and the required characteristics of the species, as determined by The Cool It program and Council.

Tree Planting

- All resident requests for street tree planting will be considered and evaluated.
- Where opportunities exist, the number of trees within town limits will be increased.
- The community will be consulted about all major projects involving tree planting.

Tree Establishment

- Mulch will be used to support the establishment of newly planted trees.
- A regular watering program will operate, as required between October and March on newly planted trees.
- Residents will be encouraged to assist with the watering of nature strip trees.

Tree Risk Assessment

Tree inspections will be undertaken as required utilising good judgement based on sound arboriculture experience and a range or combination of tree assessment methods in consultation with Manager Operational Services. Additional professional independent advice may also be required.

- The risk associated with trees is a combination of the condition of the tree and the use in the vicinity of the tree.
- Trees have an inherent risk which must be managed effectively.
- Risk assessment/potential should be the overriding factor in determining priority for works and allocating resources.
- Tree risk assessment methods generally consider tree failure, risk-target value, probability of failure and impact potential.
- Details of inspections and any subsequent assessments are to be documented in Council's Records and Asset Management System.

Tree Inspections

Council conducts annual inspections on trees in high risk areas. High risk areas are generally those in parks and reserves where equipment has been installed by Council and the public is encouraged to gather, these locations are listed below. Other locations will be inspected as determined.

- Cohuna Apex Park
- Cohuna Caravan Park
- Cohuna Garden Park
- Cohuna Kings Park
- Cohuna Pre-school
- Cohuna Recreation Reserve (selected areas)
- Cohuna RV Camping area (selected areas)
- Cohuna Swimming Pool
- Cohuna Young Park
- Kerang Atkinson Park
- Kerang Children's Centre
- Kerang Egg Park
- Kerang Lyall Avenue Park
- Kerang McCann Crescent Park
- Kerang Swimming Pool
- Kerang Victoria Street Square
- Koondrook Apex Park
- Koondrook Caravan Park
- Koondrook Nature Based Tourism Hub
- Koondrook Wharf
- Lalbert Park
- Leitchville Lions Park
- Leitchville Pool
- Leitchville Pre-school
- Leitchville RV Camping Area
- Murrabit Market (selected areas)
- Murrabit Playground
- Quambatook Guthrie Street Playground
- Quambatook Caravan Park

Tree Removal

- Tree removal may be required to ensure public health and safety, protect infrastructure, facilitate approved development and infrastructure improvements, maintain a healthy urban forest or for ecological restoration.
- Nuisance trees which drop debris such as berries, seed pods etc. is not sufficient justification to remove a healthy tree however an assessment will be conducted to determine the potential risk to the community which may result in tree removal.
- Perceived danger that a tree may fall in a storm is not sufficient justification to remove a healthy tree.
- Council's Director Infrastructure and Development will authorise the removal of a street tree.

Council staff will:

- Investigate all tree management options, including consultation with the Planning Department to determine if planning permit is required under the Gannawarra Planning Scheme, prior to the removal of a tree.
- Actively investigate the removal of poor performing trees in order that the municipality's landscapes are reinvigorated and maintained with regard to safety and amenity.
- Consult and inform the community about all major projects involving tree removal.

Pursue unauthorised tree removal and investigate enforcement action under the Gannawarra Planning Scheme.

Street Tree Pruning

- Street tree pruning will only be undertaken by authorised personnel using techniques to maintain the health of trees.
- Street tree pruning will be undertaken as required to meet statutory requirements for power line clearances.
- Under-pruning of street trees may be undertaken to maintain clearance of roadways, footpaths and signage.

3. FURTHER INFORMATION

Any enquiries in relation to this document should be directed to the Director Infrastructure and Development on (03) 5450 9333.