



Tree management policy

Classification	Policy
Strategic reference	Goal 1: An engaged community Goal 3: Sustainable infrastructure and services
Relevant legislation	Local Government Act 1999 Native Vegetation Act 1991
Relevant documents	Roadside Vegetation Management Plan 2013
Responsible officer	Manager Infrastructure Services
Date adopted	March 2022
Next review date	March 2025

1. Introduction

This policy provides guidance in relation to general planting, maintenance, retention and removal of trees on Council managed land and roads. The policy is intended to be utilised within the scope of relevant legislation.

2. Purpose

The policy provides guidelines to manage, develop, protect and conserve the environment of the Council area, in a manner that is reasonable, transparent and consistent. The policy promotes the principles of sustainable development within the resource allocation provided by Council.

The policy will apply to all relevant Council operations and includes commitment to:

- Meet Council's legislative obligations in relation to the management of trees;
- Meet Council's obligations in relation to trees pursuant to the strategic management plan;
- Meet Council's obligations in relation to trees in alignment with the environmental action plan;
- Ensure that trees on roads, community land and other landscapes are planted, maintained and protected in a consistent and reasonable manner underpinned by risk management principles and resource availability;
- Ensure that trees on roads, community land and other landscapes are planted and maintained in a reasonable manner and continue to provide amenity to the local community;
- Protect our environment ensuring its long-term sustainability and acknowledging the positive impacts of encouraging biodiversity within the landscape.

3. Scope

The policy shall apply to all trees under the care, control and management of the Council and within the scope of legislation.

4. Definitions

Community land: Local Government land classified as community land pursuant to the Local Government Act. Does not include roads or land excluded from Community Land classification.

Council: Southern Mallee District Council

Council managed land: Land used or under the care or control and management of Council.

Environmental action plan: Identifies Council's key focus areas and actions in relation to the environment over a period of time (the *relevant period*).

Landscape: Used to describe a particular piece of geography located in the Council.

Planting: The installation of a tree at an identified site.

Regulated tree:

- a tree, or a tree within a class of trees, declared to be regulated by the regulations
- (whether or not the tree also constitutes a significant tree under the regulations); or
- a tree declared to be a significant tree, or a tree within a stand of trees declared to be significant trees, by a development plan (whether or not the tree is also declared to be a regulated tree, or also falls within a class of trees declared to be regulated trees, by the regulations).

Road: Means a public or private street, road or thoroughfare to which public access is available on a continuous or substantially continuous basis to vehicles or pedestrians or both and includes –

- a bridge, viaduct or subway; or
- an alley, laneway or walkway.

Reserve: Includes parks, gardens, reserves, playgrounds, ovals, and other areas such as water retention locations.

Risk management: Coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk.

Strategic management plan: Identifies a Council's objectives for the area over a period of at least 4 years (the *relevant period*).

Street trees: Trees planted in a road reserve but not including naturally occurring or self-sown trees growing in a road reserve.

Tree: A woody perennial plant, including palms that can have one or more trunks and a distinct elevated crown or lateral branches.

5. Key principles

The key principles of the policy are to:

- Ensure that Council effectively and reasonably manages trees on Council managed land;
- Provide for effective planting, maintenance, retention and removal of trees through functional programs that consider public safety and allow for controlled development;
- Coordinate and ensure that resources are reasonably allocated and efficiently managed so that Council meets its strategic and operational obligations;
- Manage the requirements related to the legislative framework;
- Recognise the important role trees play in the provision of amenity, biodiversity and environmental sustainability;
- Protect and maintain suitable species of healthy established trees on Council managed land;
- Acknowledge managing trees as a significant asset for future generations as well as for present stakeholders;
- Recognise the importance of providing attractive parks, gardens and open spaces to meet community need for informal recreation and community activity;
- Minimise and consider issues of conflict between trees and Council infrastructure using the principles of risk management;
- Consider the ongoing impacts of external stakeholders, including SA Power Networks and other authorities;
- Preserve economic development in our wider region by ensuring that street trees which may host fruit fly are not planted on Council land;
- Provide guidance in ensuring the selection of new tree plantings are suited to the local climate and have regard for future maintenance requirements;
- Provide the administration with a framework for which operational procedures can be developed.

6. Framework

The key principles outlined above will guide all decisions regarding tree management scenarios:

6.1 Planting of trees

6.1.1 Private tree plantings on Council land

Council does not allow private planting of trees on Council land. The planting of trees on Council managed land is to be carried out only by Council staff or contractors engaged by Council staff. An exemption to plant a tree by a private persons/organisation can be granted by Manager of Infrastructure Services. All exemption requests must be received through a customer service request or in writing. Requests will be assessed on an individual basis.

6.1.2 Planting of trees by Council

Where Council intends to plant new trees on Council land, 'Appendix A: *Trees approved for planting on Council land*' will be referred to as a list of suitable trees. The approved tree list has been developed as a guide of trees that are appropriate in different situations and suited to our climate. Trees that pose a risk for infestation by fruit fly are not considered for planting on Council land.

6.1.3 Whole of street tree plantings

Where a planting program involves a whole street or a major part of a street (ie is not a replacement program involving individual trees), Council will consult with property owners in the street in accordance with the public consultation policy.

6.2 Tree trimming, pruning and maintenance

6.6.1 Requests for tree trimming, pruning and maintenance on Council land

Council does not allow private tree trimming, pruning or maintenance works to trees on Council land. Tree trimming, pruning and maintenance is to be carried out only by Council staff or contractors engaged by Council staff.

Tree trimming, pruning and maintenance works can be requested to be undertaken by Council. All requests must be submitted through a customer service request or in writing, addressed to Manager Infrastructure Services. Requests will be assessed on an individual basis. Priority will be given where requests are from owner or occupier of adjoining property regarding safety of property or person.

6.6.2 Tree trimming, pruning and maintenance works by Council

Council may cut, prune or trim including pollarding where Council considers it appropriate to do so in accordance with the principles of this policy.

6.3 Treating trees for disease or infestation

6.3.1 Requests for treatment of trees for disease or infestation.

Council does not allow private persons/organisations to treat trees with disease or infestation on Council land. Works can be requested to be undertaken by Council. All requests must be submitted through a customer service request or in writing, addressed to Manager Infrastructure Services. Requests will be assessed on an individual basis. Priority will be given where requests are from owner or occupier of adjoining property regarding safety of property or person.

6.3.2 Treating trees for disease or infestation by Council

Council will undertake all necessary treatment of trees for disease or infestation. If the appropriate treatment includes the use of toxic chemicals the treatment will only be carried out by persons qualified to use those chemicals and after adjoining residents have been notified.

In circumstances where white ants are affecting a street tree and an adjoining property, Council may provide the property owner with approval in writing to treat a street tree or trees in conjunction with the adjoining property at the expense of the owner of the adjoining property.

6.4 Removal of trees

6.4.1 Requests for tree removal

The removal of trees on Council managed land is to be carried out only by Council staff or contractors engaged by Council staff. Permission will not be given for any other persons to carry out the removal of any trees on Council property.

Tree removal can be requested to be undertaken by Council. All requests must be submitted through a customer service request or in writing, addressed to Manager Infrastructure Services. Requests will be assessed on an individual basis. Priority will be given where requests are from owner or occupier of adjoining property regarding safety of property or person.

6.4.2 Tree removal works by Council

Council may remove a tree on Council managed land where Council considers it appropriate to do so in accordance with the principles of this policy. Trees that are deemed as dangerous will be removed as soon as practically possible.

6.4.3 Whole of street tree removal by Council

Where removal of healthy established trees is being considered by Council along whole of street or a major part of a street (ie is not a removal program involving individual trees), Council will:

- consider the appropriateness in accordance with the principles of this policy, and;
- undertake consultation in accordance with the public consultation policy.

Public consultation will not be required where the tree species is considered unsuitable due to safety concerns.

7. Policy review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed every three years or as necessary.

8. Further information

This document is available on Council's website www.southernmallee.sa.gov.au and at the principal office of the Southern Mallee District Council at Day Street, Pinnaroo SA 5304.

A copy of this document may be purchased from Council.

APPENDIX A: Trees approved for planting on Council land

The approved tree list has been developed as a guide of trees that are appropriate in different situations and suited to our climate.

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	EXPECTED MAX.HEIGHT	ORIGIN	NATURE	POWERLINE FRIENDLY	SEWAGE REQUIREMENTS
Acacia pycnantha	Golden Wattle	8m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	**
Acer negundo 'Sensation'	Box Elder Maple	10m	Non-native	Deciduous	No	
Allocasuarina verticillata	Drooping Sheoak	8m	Native	Evergreen	No	
Calistemon citrinus 'Splendens'	Bottlebrush	4m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	*
Calistemon citrinus 'Kings Park Special'	Kings Park Special	5m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	*
Calistemon viminalis 'Dawson River Weeper'	Dawson River Weeper Bottle Brush	6m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	*
Eucalyptus dumosa	White Mallee / Dumosa Mallee	10m	Native	Evergreen	No	
Eucalyptus erythrocorys	Illyarrie / Red-Capped Gum	10m	Native	Evergreen	No	
Eucalyptus erythronema	Red Flowing Mallee	6m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	*
Eucalyptus gracilis	White Mallee / Yorrell	20m	Native	Evergreen	No	
Eucalyptus kruseana	Book-leaf Mallee	6m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	**
Eucalyptus lansdowneana	Crimson Mallee Box	6m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	***
Eucalyptus socialis	Red Mallee / Grey Mallee	12m	Native	Evergreen	No	
Ficus 'Hillii'	Hills Fig	15m	Native	Evergreen	No	
Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywoodii'	Claret Ash	15m	Non-native	Deciduous	No	
Geijera parviflora	Wilga	<9m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	*
Hibiscus tiliaceus 'Rubra'	Red Cotton Tree	8m	Non-native	Evergreen	Yes	*
Jacaranda mimosifolia	Blue Jacaranda	15m	Non-native	Deciduous	No	
Lagerstroemia indica 'Natchez'	Crepe Myrtle	6m	Non-native	Deciduous	Yes	*
Melaleuca halmaturorum	KI Paperbark	6m	Native	Evergreen	Yes	***
Pistacia chinensis	Chinese pistachio	12m	Non-native	Deciduous	Yes	****
Prunus cerasifera 'Nigra'	Purple-leaved Cherry Plum	6m	Non-native	Deciduous	Yes	*
Prunus cerasifera 'Oakville Crimson Spire'	Flowering Plum	6m	Non-native	Deciduous	Yes	*
Pyrus calleryana	Ornamental Pear	7m	Non-native	Deciduous	Yes	****
Pyrus calleryana x betulaefolia 'Edgedell'	Ornamental Pear	8m	Non-native	Deciduous	Yes	****
Sophora japonica	Japanese pagoda tree	6m	Non-native	Deciduous	Yes	***

APPENDIX A: Trees approved for planting on Council land

Sewage Requirements Key

- * May be planted in verge but not closer than 2 metres to any sewer or connections.
- ** May be planted in verge but not closer than 2 metres to any sewer or connections AND written approval from SA Water is required.
- *** May be planted in any street or road but not closer than 3.5 metres to any sewer or connection.
- **** May be planted in verge but not closer than 3.5 metres to any sewer or connections AND written approval from SA Water is required.

Powerline Friendly

In the table the trees identified as powerline friendly are consistent with:

- Powerline Friendly Trees - SA Power Networks (sapowernetworks.com.au) – accessed October 2021.
- Trees and Powerlines - Office of the Technical Regulator - Government of South Australia (sa.gov.au/energysafe) – accessed October 2021.