

Policy number	Policy 255
Policy title	Trees
Strategic outcomes supported	EN6 – Appropriate, inviting and sustainable green spaces for everyone that are well maintained and managed. EN7 – Increased vegetation and tree canopy.

## POLICY OBJECTIVE:

To provide for the management of trees ~~on road reserves~~ that are managed by the Town.

## POLICY SCOPE:

This policy applies in relation to road reserves, ~~parks and public spaces~~ and assets managed by the Town.

**Commented [v1]:** Proposed expansion of scope from street trees to all town managed trees and a change of the policy title to 255 Tree Policy to reflect the scope.

## DEFINITIONS:

Full cost, in relation to the removal of a tree means Helliwell or other appropriate valuation system, plus costs of removal, replacement & establishment, maintenance for 3 years.

~~Nil~~ Significant canopy means more 25m<sup>2</sup> of canopy cover.

## POLICY STATEMENT:

### POLICY:

#### Pruning and Maintenance

1. The Town is responsible for the maintenance of ~~street~~-trees situated within the Crown Land road reserves, ~~parks, public spaces and assets managed by the Town~~. Pruning is undertaken by qualified arborists in a way to ensure the long-term survival of the trees and protect them for future generations.
2. The Town has a planned approach to ~~street~~-tree pruning whereby the Town is divided into pruning precincts. Programmed pruning includes lifting the canopies to enable pedestrian movement and allow clear sight lines for road users.
3. All requests for pruning and maintenance of a tree are to be submitted in writing to the Town.
4. Tree root encroachment and suspected damage to adjoining infrastructure shall be assessed on a case by case basis and actioned accordingly.
5. The Town may arrange for a detailed Arborist Assessment or further investigation as required.

**Commented [v2]:** Contemporary terminology

**Commented [v3]:** Precinct terminology not sections currently in use.

6. Trees will be pruned clear of Western Power infrastructure as per compliance requirements.

**Commented [v4]:** Simplification of statement

7. Requests for pruning of Town trees overhanging a property boundary will be assessed on an individual basis. If work is approved it will be undertaken by the Town's contracted service provider.

8. The Town will prune ~~street~~ trees only for the following reasons:

**Commented [v5]:** This allows timely response to customers' needs rather than waiting for the pruning round and clarifies that assessment is required.

**Commented [v6]:** The Parks team recommend this expansion of when and how the Town will perform maintenance on street trees

- a. To remove or avoid conflict with public utility services;
- b. To promote and improve the health and form of the tree and to allow for improved health of understorey planting;
- c. To remove or avoid a hazard to pedestrians, cyclists or motor vehicles;
- d. To ensure CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles can be maintained;
- e. To remove or avoid damage to adjoining property; and
- f. To allow access to a building site that would otherwise harm the tree. The cost of pruning a verge tree(s) necessitated by adjacent property development shall be the responsibility of the developer;

9. Any unauthorised pruning, removal or deliberate damage of Town tree assets is an offence and prosecution can occur under [the Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading in Thoroughfares and Public Places Local Law 2000](#).

**Commented [v7]:** This is difficult to apply as there are trees flowering at different times of the year across the town. In addition individual trees are not usually pruned every year, aside from compliance pruning (which would take precedence), therefore the impact would be minimal.

[All requests for pruning and maintenance to be submitted in writing to the Town.](#)

[Tree root encroachment and suspected damage to adjoining infrastructure shall be assessed on a case by case basis and actioned accordingly.](#)

[The Town may arrange for a detailed Arborist Assessment or further investigation as required.](#)

**Commented [v8]:** The Parks team feel this should be clarified in the street tree policy to raise awareness and discourage this activity. This is particularly important given the increases to street tree planting programs directed by the UFS and the potential for opposition to street trees leading to vandalism.

10. Pruning and maintenance shall be undertaken in accordance with AS4373-2009 Pruning of Amenity Trees and Guidelines for the Management of Vegetation near Power Lines (Government of Western Australia);  
2.—

## Planting of Street Trees Planting

### Annual Tree Planting Program

11. ~~Street t~~rees are increasingly being recognised and managed throughout Australia as important community assets as the benefits they deliver are progressively identified, understood and measured. The extent of benefit provided, in most circumstances, is directly linked to the combined area of canopy cover, which in turn is linked to the number, type and size of ~~street~~ trees.

**Commented [v9]:** It is recommended this planting of street trees is split into the Annual Tree Planting Program and Street Tree Requests to communicate the different and improve their management.

**Commented [v10]:** Addition of description of policy intent, from Town of Nedlands policy review wording.

12. The Town undertakes an annual ~~street~~-tree planting program during the winter months or until appropriate soil moisture conditions as a result of rainfall has been achieved.

**Commented [v11]:** Included in request section

13. [Suitable road reserve planting locations will be selected by the Town for the program in accordance with the Urban Forest Strategy.](#)

3.—

14. Tree planting to ensure continuity of street tree provision will take precedence over adjoining property owner's refusal to accommodate street trees.

**Commented [v12]:** The Parks team has encountered opposition towards street tree planting by adjacent residents and propose this inclusion for consideration by the policy committee.

15. Adjacent land owners will be informed of the Town's intention to plant trees within the road reserve at least 2 weeks prior to planting.

16. Species selection will be determined by the Town in accordance with the Urban Forest Strategy.

17. Large-growing species will be planted wherever possible due to the superior ecosystem services they provide and increased contribution to canopy coverage targets outlined in the Urban Forest Strategy.

18. Local, native species will be planted wherever possible due to the ecosystem services they provide, as outlined in the Urban Forest Strategy.

**Commented [v13]:** Annual Tree planting procedure updated to allow implementation of the UFS and significant increase to tree canopy on public land.

4.—

#### Street Tree Requests

19. In addition private property owners can request that the verge adjacent their property be listed for consideration within the Annual Tree Planting Program. The Town will provide and plant, at no charge, one or more street trees on the road verge adjacent to a private property. It is a requirement the applicant waters the tree(s) a minimum of once per week for at least three (3) successive summers following the planting.

20. Applications for street tree planting can be made in writing by filling out the online form or emailingshall be made in writing to the Town and the request will be considered within the planting program. Requested locations are checked to determine the species and amount of trees that can be planted.

**Commented [v14]:** They are checked as the request is received

5-21. Requests for street trees will be received at any time throughout the year but planting will not be undertaken until appropriate soil moisture conditions as a result of rainfall has been achieved (i.e. Autumn/Winter) and is subject to appropriate available stock. Street trees shall be located with due consideration to services, sightlines and alignment of existing vegetation.

**Commented [v15]:** This is not always the case as some dominant species in streets are not planted anymore (eg queensland brush box) and with improved planting techniques the team is aiming to reduce this watering duration on some species.

**Commented [v16]:** Wording retained but reordered and reference to TREEPLAN removed.

**Commented [v17]:** Included in policy section

**Commented [v18]:** Wording updated and included in point 4.

#### Street Tree Removal

22. Owing to the hazardous nature of the task, owners, residents, developers/builders or occupants are not permitted to remove street trees or any other Town managed trees themselves.

**Commented [v19]:** Species selection is proposed to be included in the procedure section.

23. The Town recognises the significant contribution made by street trees to both the aesthetic and environmental aspects of existing streetscapes within the Town.

24. It also recognises that in some cases, tree retention may not be possible owing due to the condition, location or species of the tree, or the achievement of other Town objectives for broader community benefit.

25. Applications for street tree removal shall be made in writing to the Town.

~~Individual cases where trees with significant canopy are proposed for removal may be referred to council for final determination.~~

26. The Town wishes to avoid removal of street trees. In accordance with this policy, the Town may remove, or approve a request from an adjacent property owner or ~~his/her~~ their authorised agent for the removal of any street tree which:

- a. ~~Is~~ causing significant damage to adjacent property, infrastructure, underground or overhead services; ~~A property owner may request a decision regarding tree removals be reviewed by a more senior officer.~~
- b. Is dead, or due to pest and disease, poor health and growth, and will not return to full vigour
  - i. Being dead - having less than 10% photosynthetic material or live tissue present in the canopy mass;
  - ii. Being diseased and unlikely to respond to treatment within the scope of approved modern arboricultural management practices
- c. Has been assessed by the Town is structurally weak and dangerous placing the public at risk;
- d. Has been irreparably damaged by a storm or mechanical means;
- e. Is incompatible with its environment or the direction of the Urban Forest Strategy;
- f. ~~Is a hazard to road reserve users and/or traffic safety.~~

27. ~~Individual cases where trees with significant canopy are proposed for removal may be referred to Council for final determination.~~

28. ~~Where the Town refuses a request to remove a street tree, a review of that decision may be requested in accordance with the relevant policies and management practices relating to the review of decisions.~~

7. ~~Is a hazard to road reserve users and/or traffic safety.~~

8. ~~Applicants are required to design developments to retain and protect street trees. Applicants should take all measures to design developments to retain and protect street trees.~~

30. Removal of street trees for new crossovers will only be considered where all other design options have been exhausted.

9.

31. The full cost of removal and replacement of a verge tree(s) necessitated by adjacent property development shall be the responsibility of the Developer in accordance with the amount shown in the Schedule of Fees and Charges contained within the Annual Budget. ~~Full cost = Helliwell or other appropriate valuation system, plus costs of removal, replacement & establishment, maintenance for 3 years.~~

**Commented [v20]:** Replace desirable feasible or reasonable with possible. The existing wording is ambiguous and has been used to request tree removals for perceived lack of desirability. Changing the wording to possible removes this ambiguity and strengthens tree protection.

**Commented [v21]:** It is proposed that this statement is removed to encourage private development to be designed and constructed in a manner that supports tree retention.

**Commented [v22]:** Proposed addition to policy

**Commented [v23]:** As above removal of this wording is recommended.

**Commented [v24]:** Recommend removal of this statement based on differing interpretation of the term nuisance.

**Commented [v25]:** Change wording to reduce ambiguity and differing interpretations.

**Commented [v26]:** Addition of option to request decision is reviewed.

**Commented [v27]:** Update wording to current strategic document.

**Commented [v28]:** Difficult to define "not feasible" and against the Town's preference for reduced crossovers in new developments

**Commented [v29]:** Proposed addition to policy

**Commented [v30]:** Recommend removing this wording based on difficulty interpreting "potential to become a hazard"

**Commented [v31]:** Proposed rewording

32. Street trees will not be removed for the following reasons:

- a. The tree obscures or potentially obscures views (other than traffic and pedestrian sight lines)
- b. The tree variety is disliked;
- c. The tree variety causes nuisance by way of leaf, fruit or bark shedding or the like;
- d. The tree causes allergy or health problems. In cases of ~~extreme~~ diagnosed medical condition, the Town may consider removal of the tree, subject to appropriate certification and allergy testing from an appropriate medical practitioner confirming an allergy.
- e. The tree is in the way of a non-essential crossover or verge paving options; and
- f. The tree shades private gardens, solar installations or the like.

**Commented [v32]:** This has been queried by an IWG member as potentially too strong, eg Lagunaria (itchy bomb) trees on start street.

**Commented [v33]:** Proposed inclusion for consideration by policy committee

33. Any decision to remove a mature living tree from a road verge is to be communicated to the owners and occupiers of four (4) properties on either side of the tree, on both sides of the road, not less than two (2) weeks prior to the intended removal, unless the removal is or becomes urgent in the view of the Town.

34. A tree that is clearly dead, can be removed without community consultation.

## **PROCEDURE:**

**Commented [v34]:** Separate procedure section has been removed and the content moved above and included as a single policy section

### **Pruning and Maintenance**

10. All requests for pruning and maintenance to be submitted in writing or via the Town's Service Request system.
11. Tree root encroachment and suspected damage to adjoining infrastructure shall be assessed on a case by case basis and actioned accordingly.
12. The Town may arrange for a detailed Arborist Assessment or further investigation as required.
13. Pruning and maintenance shall be undertaken:
14. In accordance with AS4373-2009 Pruning of Amenity Trees and Guidelines for the Management of Vegetation near Power Lines (Government of Western Australia);
15. To clear infrastructure such as street lights, street signs and Town-controlled CCTV;
16. To clear overhead powerlines and other utility services.

### **Planting of trees**

#### **Annual Tree Planting Program**

17. Suitable road reserve planting locations will be selected by Parks Operations for the annual tree planting program based on the direction of the Urban Forest Strategy.
18. Adjacent land owners will be informed of the Town's intention to plant trees within the road reserve at least 2 weeks prior to planting.
19. Species selection will be determined by Parks Operations and will align with the direction of the Urban Forest Strategy for the specific area.

20. Large-growing species will be planted wherever possible due to the superior ecosystem services they provide and increased contribution to canopy coverage targets outlined in the Urban Forest Strategy.
21. If a hardstand verge treatment is installed, a minimum 4 metres square (2m x 2m) clearance must be made accessible to allow planting. The Town will advise the most suitable position prior to the tree well being created.

#### Street Tree Requests

22. Following a written request from the owner of a property, the Town will arrange an onsite meeting to discuss the number and location(s) of the tree(s) sought and the Town will advise the species of tree(s) that are intended for those locations.
23. Requests for street trees will be received at any time throughout the year but planting will not be undertaken until appropriate soil moisture conditions as a result of rainfall has been achieved, i.e. Autumn/Winter. Street trees shall be located with due consideration to services, sightlines and alignment of existing vegetation.;

#### Street Tree Removal

24. Any decision to remove a mature tree from a road verge is to be communicated to the owners and occupiers of four (4) properties on either side of the tree, on both sides of the road, not less than two (2) weeks prior to the intended removal, unless the removal is or becomes, in the view of the Chief Operations Officer, urgent.
25. Any decision to remove a tree that is clearly dead, can be removed without community consultation providing a 'Delegation of Authority' application has been approved by Manager Infrastructure Operations.
26. Emergency removals due to immediate safety concerns will be assessed by appropriate Town Officers at the time and actioned including removal if required.
27. Owing to the hazardous nature of the task, owners, residents or occupants are not permitted to remove street trees themselves;

#### RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Nil.

Policy manager	Manager – Infrastructure Operations
Responsible officers	-
Approval authority	Council

Next Evaluation Date

## REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved, Amended, Rescinded or Reviewed	Date	Authority	Resolution Number	Key Changes/Notes
1	Approved	12/08/1997	Council	-	Item 14.3
1	Reviewed	15/08/2006	Council	-	Item 4.1
1	Reviewed	09/07/2013	Council	-	Item 10.1
1	Reviewed	11/08/2015	Council	-	Item 10.1
2	Reviewed and Amended	20/08/2019	Council	148/2019	Item 10.1
<a href="#">3</a>	<a href="#">Reviewed and Amended</a>		<a href="#">Council</a>		