



Tree Management Policy

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A – PREAMBLE

1. The City of Salisbury acknowledges that trees form an integral part of the landscape and public domain within the City of Salisbury providing a wide range of social, cultural, functional and environmental benefits for the City and wider community.
2. Trees within urban environments can also present a level of risk and can be an emotive issue for communities, with conflict commonly occurring when trees contribute to infrastructure damage. Trees can also be perceived as creating nuisance in urban environments.
3. The City of Salisbury has sole responsibility for the development and management of the City’s landscapes. All vegetation planted on land owned or controlled by the Council is the responsibility of the Council.

Local Government authorities have legislative obligations with respect to the protection of trees, and responsibilities relating to damage or injury associated with the presence, failure or growth of trees.

B - SCOPE

1. This policy provides strategic direction and guidance in relation to the management of trees under the care, control and management of Council.
2. This Tree Management Policy is one of a suite of documents used to manage trees in the City of Salisbury and should be read in conjunction with related plans, policies and procedures. Refer to Section H for a list of associated documents that form part of the City of Salisbury’s Tree Management Framework.

C – POLICY PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

1. To provide strategic directions and guiding principles that form the foundation of Council’s Tree Management Framework to enable clarity and consistency in the management of Salisbury’s urban forest.
2. To ensure community needs and expectations are understood and considered.
3. Where the community do not agree with the decision, that the Tree Management Appeal Process is followed, concluding with the Tree Management Appeals Sub-committee.
4. Maintain and enhance the tree canopy cover within the City
5. To broaden the emphasis of urban tree management to include urban forestry principles whereby trees are viewed and managed as a collected asset.
6. To ensure that trees on roads, community land and other landscape areas are planted and maintained in a consistent and reasonable manner underpinned by risk management principles, in accordance with relevant legislation, and in conjunction with resources that are made available.
7. To ensure alignment of tree management strategies and practices with Council’s strategic directions and other related policies, plans and strategies.
8. To reinforce the City of Salisbury’s commitment to the sustainable management of the urban forest through recognition that the urban forest is an intergenerational asset that needs to be managed and enhanced to preserve its value to the community now and in the future.
9. To strike an appropriate balance between the benefits and positive values of trees and the potential risks and nuisances they can create.
10. To increase awareness and educate the community, developers and Council staff on the value of trees in the urban environment.
11. To ensure trees are managed to meet legislative requirements.

D - DEFINITIONS

1. **Tree** – long lived woody perennial plant greater than (or usually greater than) 4 metres in height at maturity, with one or relatively few main erect stems or trunks.
2. **Urban Forest** – is defined as all trees growing throughout the City of Salisbury area; irrespective of origin (native/exotic), location (streets, reserves, schools) or ownership and control (public & private).

The Urban Forest comprises the cumulative benefits of the entire tree population across the City of Salisbury area and can be described as the management of trees in an urban environment to maximise the benefits that trees provide to the community.

3. **Landmark Tree Register** – a list of trees significant to the City of Salisbury due to their environmental, cultural, historical or social attributes.

4. **Arborist** – a person with formalised training to a minimum AQF Level 3 in Arboriculture.
5. **Regulated/Significant Trees** – as defined in the Development Act 1993.

E - POLICY STATEMENT

Tree Planting

1. The Tree Management Procedure will be utilised to detail technical specifications, installation techniques and items to be considered and/or assessed when undertaking tree planting and establishment activities. All tree planting will be undertaken in accordance with such this procedure.
2. A variety of tree species will be used to maintain an urban forest to; reinforce/strengthen precinct identity, attract a diverse array of wildlife, create visual interest and improve the amenity of the public realm, provide a tree canopy that is diverse, robust and resilient.
3. An approved planting list will be maintained as part of Council's Tree Management Framework; comprising reserve and street tree planting lists. The following criteria shall be used in selecting species for inclusion to the planting list:
 - Site suitability (including potential impacts to infrastructure)
 - Aesthetic, functional and biological attributes
 - Supports biodiversity and community wellbeing
 - Performance
 - Maintenance requirements
 - Longevity
 - Stock availability
 - Tolerance to low water environments
 - Adaptive to future changes in climate

Tree Protection

4. Trees that contribute to the cultural and social character of the City are to be placed on a Landmark Tree Register. The protection and retention of these trees will be given high priority where their retention is considered worthy.
5. The protection of Council trees will be given high priority in all aspects of the City's operations and maintenance activities.
6. Proposed developments should consider the impacts on trees. Proponents of developments should explore options for the retention of trees as part of development considerations.
7. Development applications will include all necessary information to allow full assessment of potential impacts on trees to be retained and an appropriate standard and space for planting new trees.

8. Trees that are to be retained will be protected from construction works and other activities/events that threaten tree health and stability. The Australian Standard (AS4970) will be used to achieve consistency in tree protection requirements.
9. Where there is evidence of unauthorised poisoning, pruning, or tree removal, the matter will be investigated and appropriate action undertaken in accordance with Council's Enforcement Policy and relevant legislation or civil action.

Tree Removal

10. The removal of trees under certain circumstances is a relevant tree management tool in mitigating risks and ensuring an appropriate balance between the benefits and nuisances of trees in the urban environment.
11. A Tree Removal Procedure will detail the criteria and process by which tree removal requests are to be considered.

Tree Asset Management

12. The City of Salisbury recognises that trees are a valuable community asset and play an important role in contributing to the amenity, character and liveability of our city.
13. The City of Salisbury is committed to maintain a functional and sustainable urban forest that enhances the character and amenity of the City.
14. The City of Salisbury will develop and implement practices that seek to effectively maintain and enhance the quality of the City's urban forest in accordance with the following specific objectives:
 - a. Minimising risks and nuisances to the community
 - b. Maximising the benefits of trees and their life expectancy
 - c. Improved degree of tree diversity (target maximum 40% of any family, 30% of any genus, 15% of any species) for resilience and robustness
 - d. Improved spread of age classes to minimise large number of trees senescing within close timeframes
 - e. Maintain and enhance the existing levels of tree canopy cover
 - f. Tolerance to low water environments
 - g. Improved colour, form and habit of streetscape plantings
 - h. Protection and enhancement of biodiversity outcomes
15. The City of Salisbury is committed to renewing its street tree population and will develop and maintain a Street Tree Asset Management Plan that will include:
 - a. Clear vision and objectives particular to streetscapes that are aligned with the City's strategic directions and objectives.
 - b. Renewal strategies and actions incorporating funding levels and life cycles, planning processes, service levels, community consultation, targets for quantity of trees to be replaced, criteria and methods for prioritising streets and tree removal criteria specific to the street tree renewal program.

16. Trees on Council reserves will be renewed through a range of practices including but not limited to the annual tree planting program, reserve upgrade projects, community planting initiatives and other capital work projects.
17. The City of Salisbury will undertake a range of proactive and reactive tree services to maintain the health and structure of trees and address risks and nuisances to the community. Tree Management Procedures will be utilised to guide Council's tree maintenance operations and activities to provide clear guidance in decision making and record keeping processes.
18. The extent of tree maintenance operations will be determined by the level of funding and allocation of resources for managing trees and will be monitored and reported to Council if service level changes are required. Priorities will be based on the level of risk to minimise the potential for harm caused by trees.
19. The Development Act 1993 (as amended) defines parameters under which trees may qualify as Regulated or Significant Trees and stipulates certain activities affecting such trees require Development Approval. Significant/Regulated trees will be managed in accordance with relevant legislation and the City of Salisbury Development Plan which contains the principles of development control.

Community Consultation and Engagement

20. The City of Salisbury will inform and consult with the community about tree removals and major tree projects in accordance with Council's community engagement strategy.
21. Consideration of any previous requests by community members for tree removals will be included in relevant street tree projects, and a summary of those requests will be provided to the appropriate Ward Councillors.
22. The City of Salisbury will increase community knowledge about the benefits of trees and the urban forest through the provision of accurate information that is intentionally marketed to staff, key stakeholders and the community.
23. The City of Salisbury will encourage community involvement in tree planting activities.
24. The City of Salisbury will meet statutory community consultation and engagement requirements relating to Regulated and Significant Trees.

Risk Management

25. The City of Salisbury is committed to a systematic approach to tree risk management and will undertake regular tree safety inspections by suitably qualified Arborists to identify and manage potential tree hazards.
26. Tree Risk Management Procedures will be utilised to guide the analysis of tree risks and the development and implementation of proactive tree inspection and maintenance plans.

F - LEGISLATION

1. Local Government Act 1999
2. Development Act 1993
3. Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
4. Natural Resource Management Act 2004
5. Environment Protection Act 1993
6. Electricity Act 1996
7. Heritage Places Act 1993
8. Road Traffic Act 1961
9. Native Vegetation Act 1991
10. Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988
11. Water Industry Act 2012

G - REFERENCES

1. Tree Management 'Risk Management Guidelines for Local Government', Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme, 2013.

H - ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

1. Landscape Design Policy
2. City Landscape Plan
3. Street Tree Asset Management Plan
4. Tree Management Procedures
5. Tree Removal Procedure

Document Control

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