

Final Tree Management Policy (Draft)

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1 PURPOSE

This policy has been developed for the ongoing management of trees in public spaces within the City of Whitehorse in line with Council's Urban Forest Strategy 2021 – 2031.

This policy replaces the previous Interim Urban Forest Policy and Tree Management Plan 2020.

2 OBJECTIVES

Council recognises the environmental, social, economic, and aesthetic benefits that trees contribute to the local area, and the health and wellbeing benefits they afford to residents. Effective and sustainable management of trees within the Urban Forest is complex and must consider a range of regulations and standards.

This policy aims to ensure the effective and efficient management of trees on public land and ensure alignment to Council's Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all trees on public land managed by Council including street trees, park trees and trees within Council facilities. This policy does not apply to trees on private land or trees managed by other authorities.

4 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Street Tree	A Council managed tree planted in a nature strip or median strip along a roadway.
Streetscape	The combination of all trees, plants and built infrastructure within a street.
Tree Amenity	The desirable quality or benefit a tree provides to its surroundings and to people, encompassing its aesthetic contribution to the landscape, its role in providing shelter or comfort, and the overall positive impact on the quality of a place.
Cyclic Program	Proactive inspection and pruning program of all street trees within a block or suburb. Includes compliance pruning around power lines.

Useful Life Expectancy	The estimated period a tree can be retained in a landscape while providing amenity value and remaining safe for its location and surrounding environment.
Topiary Tree	Small tree pruned and maintained to a specific shape. Typically small ball shaped trees in shopping centre precincts.
Noxious Weed	A plant designated by government authorities as harmful to agriculture, health, or the environment.
Environmental Weed	A plant that invades and disrupts native ecosystems by displacing indigenous species and their habitats.

5 POLICY

This Tree Management Policy supports the delivery of the Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031 on land that is owned and managed by Council, by protecting existing Council trees and establishing new Council trees.

- Council will meet its electric line clearance obligations.
- Council will maintain road and footpath clearance zones.
- Council will require other authorities or parties working near Council trees to protect those trees.
- Council will mitigate public safety risks relating to Council trees.
- Council will inspect Council trees and maintain a database as part of managing the tree population.
- Council will have a process for assessing tree pruning or removals requested by members of the public.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES

The management and review of this policy is the responsibility of the Manager Parks and Natural Environment, in consultation with the Coordinator Arbor.

7 RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

This policy has been developed with consideration to the following:

- Planning and Environment Act 1989
- Local Government Act 2020
- Electricity Safety Act 1998 and Electricity Safety (Electrical Line Clearance) Regulations 2020
- Whitehorse City Council Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (ELCMP)

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Whitehorse Community Vision 2040
- Whitehorse Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029
- Whitehorse Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031
- Whitehorse Integrated Water Management Strategy 2022-2042
- Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025
- Whitehorse Cycling Strategy 2016
- Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011
- Australian Standard Pruning Amenity Trees AS4373
- Australian Standard Protection of Trees on Development Sites AS4970
- Australian Standard AS2303 - Tree Stock for Landscape Use

8 TREE PROTECTION

All Council managed trees will be protected from construction or development works that may adversely affect their health and/or structure in accordance with Australian Standard AS 4970 - Protection of trees on development sites.

Trees must not be pruned, removed or altered in any way unless authorised by Council's Arborists. Any pruning undertaken on Council trees must conform to AS 4373. Pruning of trees will only be organised and undertaken by qualified Arborists engaged by Council.

Council aims to protect and retain all existing street and park trees where practicable. Removal of mature or established trees will not be considered as part of a new residential vehicle crossover application unless no other options exist. It is the property owner's responsibility to ensure the building design and permit application considers existing Council trees and other assets on public land and develops the design around these. It is recommended to utilise the existing residential crossover alignment in all circumstances. If no other options exist and a Council tree is authorised for removal because of a new vehicle crossover application, any costs (including amenity value) associated with the removal and replanting will be borne by the applicant. Council will plant two new trees for every one removed where space permits. Council will not excessively prune existing trees as a result of a new building or crossover being built closer to an existing Council tree, and any pruning will comply with Council's tree clearance standards.

Council will undertake investigations and may elect to prosecute any occurrence where a Council tree is vandalised or poisoned. Any vandalised or poisoned tree will be retained where safe to do so and all measures to remediate the tree will be undertaken. If a mature Council tree requires removal due to poisoning, Council will aim to replace the tree with two new trees in the same location to compensate for canopy loss. If a juvenile Council tree is vandalised it will be replaced in the same location with further protection installed.

9 TREE RISK MANAGEMENT

Council's tree risk management framework is based on the best practice methods developed by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).

All Council trees are inspected through programs based on a risk mitigation approach. Inspections, conditions, and works are recorded against each tree asset in Council's Tree Management database. In addition to proactive inspections, tree related risks are managed as part of the reactive service of responding to customer requests and staff assessments.

Inspection frequencies:

Category	Inspection Frequency
Street trees	Minimum of once every two years
Street trees in Council designated Avenue Streetscapes	Minimum of once every year
Trees in Council owned car parks	Minimum of once every two years
Trees in Council owned facilities	Minimum of once every two years
Park trees around Playspaces	Minimum of once every two years
Park trees in high profile parks and in high use areas	Minimum of once every four years
Park trees in low usage areas	Reactive inspections only
Park trees in hard to access areas	Reactive inspections only
Bushland trees in high use areas	Minimum of once every four years
Bushland trees in low use dense areas	Reactive inspections only

10 TREE ASSESSMENTS

Council Arborists and authorised contractors are qualified to undertake tree assessments to assess tree health and structure. Risk assessments are completed using the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) methodology and/or current industry best practice methodology.

Assessments are undertaken to quantify the tree risk defined as the combination of the likelihood of an event and the severity of the potential consequences. Tree risk combines the likelihood of a failure (whole or part of the tree) occurring and affecting a target with the severity of associated consequences including personal injury, property damage or disruption of an activity or activities.

11 TREE NOTIFICATIONS

Trees declared by Council's Arborists to be an immediate hazard with significant risk may be removed without community notification to ensure public safety.

Residents will be notified a minimum of one week prior to all other works being undertaken on Council managed trees via the following methods.

Category	Notification Method	Notification Period
Tree pruning	Notification card delivered to the letter box of the adjacent property	Min 1 week
Tree Removal – Small tree less than 5m tall with limited streetscape character	Notification card delivered to the letter box of the adjacent property	Min 1 week
Tree Removal – Large tree greater than 5m tall with some streetscape character	Notification card delivered to the letter box of the adjacent property, and to the letter box of all visually impacted properties	Min 2 weeks
Tree Removal – Large tree greater than 10m tall with significant streetscape character	Notification card delivered to the letter box of the adjacent property, and to the letter box of visually impacted properties, and signage installed on the specific tree to be removed.	Min 2 weeks
Street Tree Planting	Notification card delivered to the letter box of the adjacent property	Min 2 weeks
Park Tree Planting	Site signage installed in the park	Min 1 week

12 TREE CLASSIFICATIONS

12.1 Avenue Streetscapes

An Avenue Streetscape within the City of Whitehorse is defined as a street identified by Council's arborists to have been historically planted with trees of the same species or cultivar to give a uniform appearance along the full length of the street.

The criteria used by Council's arborists for classification as an Avenue Streetscape is:

- The street has more than 20 trees in total and,
- The majority of trees are over 30 years old and,
- Every tree in the street is the same species or,
- There are two alternating tree species throughout the whole street or,
- There is one type of tree species under power lines, and one type of tree species not under powerlines throughout the whole street.

Council recognises the historical importance of these streetscapes and their contribution to neighbourhood character. There are challenges managing trees within these streetscapes including:

- The mature age of the trees and decline in health due to age and/or historical pruning practices when the trees were young
- Changing regulations regarding power line clearance during the life of the trees
- Potential infrastructure damage from tree root systems

Council aims to undertake replacement plantings within these streets with the existing species to retain the integrity and consistency of the avenue where practicable as per the below criteria. Established trees within these avenues will be inspected annually to assess their health, structure and any change to their useful life expectancy (ULE). In the case of significant health and/or structural issues to more than 75% of the trees within the streetscape, Council may investigate a Streetscape Tree Upgrade as per this policy.

12.2 National Trust Streetscape

A National Trust Streetscape within the City of Whitehorse is defined as a street that is registered under the National Trust for environmental purposes. Trees within these registered streets may have different management requirements including modified pruning programs, clearances and planting regimes to preserve the streetscape character.

12.3 Nature Reserve Streetscape

A Nature Reserve Streetscape within the City of Whitehorse is defined as a street that has significant environmental character including remnant indigenous trees and

biodiversity that supports local wildlife. Trees within these streets may have different management requirements including modified clearances and planting regimes.

12.4 Park and Open Space Trees

Council will maximise tree canopy while supporting the effective use of open space for all activities including passive and active recreation. Not all park and open space areas can have extensive tree planting, and site-specific inspections are undertaken to determine the requirements to achieve a balance between vegetated area and open space.

12.5 Bushland Trees

Council manages bushland parks and biodiverse conservation areas in public spaces throughout the municipality. These areas have remnant trees and vegetation and are managed sensitively to provide habitat for local wildlife and ensure that local indigenous vegetation is preserved.

12.6 Woody Weeds

Woody weeds are tree species that have a detrimental effect to the local flora and environment. They can be declared noxious or environmental weeds or known local weed species.

Council undertakes an annual woody weed removal program to continually eradicate known problem species. Removal of these trees improves biodiversity and habitat, enables replacement space for local species, and lowers the amount of weed seed generated in the local environment.

13 TREE PLANTING AND ESTABLISHMENT

Tree planting is undertaken with the aim to increase urban tree canopy and improve the environment through strategic planting of appropriate tree species. All tree stock will be grown in accordance with Australian Standard 2303 Tree Stock for Landscape Use. Trees are planted in accordance with the following guidelines.

13.1 Street Tree Planting

- A minimum of one tree planted within the nature strip of every house frontage.
- A minimum of one tree planted within both nature strips of corner properties.
- Multiple trees planted on longer nature strips to achieve canopy density.

13.2 Street Tree Planting Densities

- Small Tree spacings approximately 6m apart where practicable
- Large Tree spacings approximately 10m apart where practicable

13.3 Street Tree Mature Tree Sizes

Council will plant street trees to maximise canopy within the available space. Powerline clearance requirements is a critical factor in determining appropriate tree species.

Where planting is undertaken directly under powerlines, smaller tree species less than 10m tall at mature height will typically be used unless part of an existing avenue or clearance pruning can be achieved. Additional smaller trees will be planted to maximise canopy potential.

Where planting is undertaken not directly under powerlines, large canopy trees greater than 10m tall at mature height will be used.

Where space is available Council will select large canopy trees to maximise canopy potential.

13.4 Street Tree Planting Constraints

Minimum distances of new trees planted from objects where possible will be:

- 2.0 metres from driveways and crossovers
- 2.0 metres from power poles
- 5.0 metres from road intersections
- 1.0 metre from fire hydrants
- 1.0 metre from service pits

Trees will not be planted over known gas or water services or legal points of discharge to private properties where possible.

In some cases, a nature strip may not be able to have a tree planted due to physical constraints such as insufficient size, presence of underground services and traffic sight distances.

13.5 Street Tree Planting Program

Council's street tree planting program will be updated each year in line with endorsed Council budgets.

Where a street tree is removed, a replacement tree will be planted in the same location or in the most appropriate space available, within one future planting season where possible.

13.6 Street Tree Species Selection

Council's Arborists will undertake the selection of tree species for each site with consideration to the following:

- Tree size at maturity.
- Powerline clearance requirements.
- Historical and neighbourhood character of the street, including historical avenue plantings as stated in the Avenue Streetscapes component of this policy.
- Tree species resistance to pests and diseases.
- Neighbourhood and Municipal tree population resilience.
- Adaptability to drought and climate change.
- Continuity of existing streetscape plantings where appropriate.
- Growing conditions and constraints relating to all surrounding infrastructure and soils.
- New species trials.
- Contribution to urban biodiversity.
- Linkages to natural corridors and opportunities to strengthen indigenous species and habitat
- Commercial availability of species.

Residents may request a specific tree species for planting in the nature strip adjacent to their private property where it is in line with this policy and the local streetscape. Requests will be taken into consideration by Council's Arborists along with all other factors. Not all requests can be accommodated, and Council's Arborists will have the final decision.

13.7 Street Tree Stock

Council will only use quality nursery stock from approved suppliers according to best practice and Australian Standards (AS 2303:2018 – *Tree stock for landscape use*). All tree suppliers will conform to standards set by the Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA) and be grown by Accredited nurseries where possible.

Council does not accept offerings of tree stock from residents or other parties and trees planted by third parties within a nature strip or publicly managed land may be removed at Council's discretion.

Council will typically not select fruit trees that produce significant fruit or large berries given the risks associated with ground accumulation and pedestrian slips and falls and the propensity for vermin attraction.

13.8 Street Tree Establishment

Once tree planting has occurred, Council will undertake a minimum establishment period of two years which includes seasonal watering, mulching, staking, formative pruning and general care as required.

After the establishment period, all trees become part of the cyclic inspection and pruning program.

13.9 Streetscape Upgrade

Council officers may elect to undertake a partial or whole streetscape upgrade where major canopy benefits can be achieved in line with Council's Urban Forest Strategy. Criteria for any upgrade includes:

- Greater than 75% of the trees within the street have a Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) of 10 years or less.
- Noxious or environmental weeds exist within the streetscape.
- An overall significant increase in canopy cover can be achieved.

Residents may request Council to investigate the potential for a streetscape upgrade within the street they live where this criterion is demonstrated. Council will assess each tree, and trees will only be considered for removal where they meet this criterion and/or the Tree Removal Criteria within this policy.

Council may undertake a complete streetscape upgrade, or staged upgrade over several years depending on existing tree health and potential canopy benefits.

13.10 Park Tree Planting Program

An annual park tree planting program will be updated each year in line with endorsed Council budgets. The focus of park tree planting is to continually renew canopy cover within parks and enhance biodiversity and local character.

Council's preference is to plant local indigenous tree species in most parks to retain the character of the local area and provide appropriate habitat. Local neighbourhood character will be considered during tree species selection. Parks with a strong existing theme of exotic tree species will continue to be planted as predominantly exotic parks. Utilisation of deciduous species to enable winter sun into spaces will be considered where appropriate.

Replacement tree planting will be undertaken to replace any lost or removed park tree where possible within two future planting seasons.

Indigenous tree succession planting will be undertaken annually to ensure the continual renewal of indigenous trees in parks.

13.11 Park Tree Species Selection

Council's qualified Horticulturalists will undertake the selection of tree species for each site with consideration to the following:

- Potential tree size at maturity
- Local character of the park and neighbourhood
- Site specific planting conditions
- Corridor connectivity, habitat and biodiversity enhancement
- Local provenance
- Shading and cooling
- Utilisation of open space for all activities
- Impact on neighbouring properties

13.12 Park Tree Planting Constraints

Minimum distances of canopy tree planting from objects where possible will be:

- 4.0 metres from residential boundary fences
- 6.0 metres from sporting fields
- 3.0 metres from buildings
- 1.0 metre from service pits

13.13 Council Facility Trees

Council's goal is to maximise tree canopy for shading, cooling and aesthetics while supporting the effective use of the space for required activities. Not all Council Facilities can have extensive tree planting, and site-specific inspections are undertaken to determine the requirements. Replacement tree planting will be undertaken to replace any removed tree where possible within one future planting season. Requests for additional facility tree planting will be investigated on a case-by-case basis.

14 TREE PRUNING

Prior to any pruning, trees will be inspected by Council's Arborists and any pruning deemed to be required will be undertaken in accordance with relevant Australian Standards and the principles of modern arboriculture.

Best arboriculture practice will be applied to promote a healthy and safe tree. All pruning will be undertaken by a suitably qualified arborist in accordance with Australian Standard 4373 Pruning of Amenity Trees, to enhance tree health and safety, ensuring adequate clearances for pathways, roads, buildings, and all other infrastructure.

Tree inspections and pruning will be carried out to adhere to the current Electric Line Clearance Regulations, and all other statutory obligations.

14.1 Formative Pruning

Young trees require formative pruning to achieve and maintain clearance from infrastructure and for the development of a strong scaffold branch structure.

To protect and enhance Council's tree population, all tree formative pruning will be carried out using industry best practice standards within the first two years post planting.

14.2 Street Tree Clearances

Street trees will be pruned a minimum of every two years to achieve the following clearances in line with relevant standards and legislation:

- 2.5 metres high over footpaths
- 2.5 metres high over nature strips
- 2.5 metres high over residential gardens
- 3.0 metres high over driveways
- 4.3 metres high over Council managed roadways
- 4.5 metres high over arterial roadways
- 3.5 meters high over National Trust Streetscape roadways
- 3.8 meters high over Nature Reserve Streetscape roadways
- Clear visibility for traffic lights and traffic signage

14.3 Private Property Clearances

Residents may request Council to prune street or park tree branches or foliage away from their private buildings. Where possible, pruning shall be undertaken to achieve a building clearance of up to two metres, unless pruning would have an adverse effect on the health and structure of the subject tree. All requests will be inspected by Council's Arborists and assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Council does not maintain vegetation around private communication wires and Council's Arborists may elect not to prune trees around them.

14.4 Streetlight Clearances

Tree foliage around streetlights will be cleared to enable reasonable lighting levels at ground level at night.

14.5 Topiary Tree Pruning

Topiary trees within shopping centre precincts shall be pruned seasonally to maintain their round ball shape.

14.6 National Trust and Nature Reserve Streetscapes

The pruning within these roads will be undertaken annually with the aim to maintain streetscape character. Council may be required to perform additional reactive pruning of these roads outside of the annual program.

15 TREE REMOVAL

Council will retain and manage all trees where possible. Tree removal is only considered as a last resort.

To consider a tree removal, Council's qualified Arborists will assess numerous factors and may undertake an industry best practice Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) to determine appropriate options.

15.1 Tree Removal Criteria

Trees will only be removed if one or more of the following Tree Removal Criteria are met. Declaration of a dead, dying or hazardous tree or any tree requiring removal will only be determined by Council's qualified Arborists.

- The tree is dead
 - more than 85% of the tree canopy is necrotic or dead and will not recover
- The tree is dying
 - in a state of senescence or severe decline
 - irreparably damaged or diseased
 - no further practical remedial action to prolong the tree is possible
- The tree is hazardous
 - causing an immediate public safety risk
 - likely to fail in the immediate or near future
 - no reasonable other intervention is possible

- The tree is causing significant damage to public property and the cost of ongoing remedial work is more than the amenity and environmental value of the tree, and there is no reasonable alternative to resolve ongoing damage.
- The tree is causing damage or hinderance to service assets or utilities and the ability to maintain the service is compromised and there is no reasonable alternative to resolve the service provision.
- The tree has been indicated to be removed as part of an upgrade program approved by Council.
- The tree is located where powerlines have been removed and the tree health or form is no longer appropriate, and a new tree will provide greater benefit and canopy.
- The tree does not comply with ELC regulations, and all other management options have been exhausted.
- The tree is located within a new Council project site that will provide community benefits through improved green space or infrastructure which would not be possible without the removal of tree. A planning permit may be required in some cases.
- The Council tree has been endorsed for removal as part of a Planning Permit relating to an adjacent private property development plan approved by a Council Arborist.
- The tree is a locally declared noxious or environmental weed and Council officers have determined its removal will have environmental benefits.

Council Arborists will assess tree removal requests from residents, a government body, authority, or primary service utility on a case-by-case basis. Council reserves the right to refuse a tree removal request if the tree can be retained and where an alternative method of infrastructure or construction can be accommodated.

The Director Infrastructure and Sustainability may approve the removal of a tree that does not comply with the Tree Removal Criteria under exceptional circumstances only. Residents may make an application in writing to the Director Infrastructure and Sustainability to have a decision by an Arborist not to remove a tree reviewed.

The decision review process includes:

- Is the decision consistent with Council policy
- Is the decision in the best interest of the community
- Has public safety been accurately assessed and steps to mitigate risk been undertaken
- Does the impact of the removal of the tree on nearby properties outweigh the environmental and community benefits, and amenity value of the tree?
- Does the removal of the tree require a planning permit?

In very exceptional circumstances, and where a tree is not protected under the Whitehorse Planning Scheme, the Director of Infrastructure and Sustainability can consider for approval additional pruning outside this Policy's specifications, or removal

of a healthy tree where it continues to cause a significant problem that has not been remedied or mitigated through other actions. In these circumstances a resident will be asked to contribute to the cost of the additional pruning/removal, and in the event of removal, the cost of Amenity value of the tree and planting and establishing new trees over a two-year period at the location. Assessment will only be made after all other avenues of remedy or mitigation have been exhausted, and where more than 75% canopy replacement of any removed tree can be achieved through replacement trees.

Applicants requesting this action are expected to consider the long-term tree canopy, biodiversity, and environmental loss, and the loss to neighbourhood character and amenity enjoyed by the community for their single benefit as a result of this pruning or removal. This option is not available to new developments or newly planted trees, and it is expected that residents/developers work with and around existing trees and other assets.

Council's Complaints Policy and process is available if further review is sought.

15.2 Habitat Trees

Council will seek to retain dead or dying trees in conservation or bushland park areas if it is assessed as having a significant habitat value. These trees may be pruned to reduce risk and enable retention of habitat.

The criteria for retaining these trees include;

- The tree has significant habitat value such as trunk hollows.
- There is a lack of other large canopy trees for fauna habitat.
- The tree is not located close to paths, playgrounds or other high usage areas.
- If the tree was to fall it would not pose any significant safety risk to the community.

If a tree is assessed as an unacceptable risk, it will be removed.

15.3 Tree Amenity Valuations

When the removal of a Council tree is deemed necessary for private construction, development or works, all associated costs will be paid by the property owner, developer or applicant prior to removal, including the tree amenity value. Tree replacement will be required on a two for one basis where Council officers determine there is suitable space within the property nature strip.

Total cost for street tree removal includes amenity value of the tree plus tree and stump removal costs plus planting and maintaining the new tree or trees for two years. Council officers calculate the amenity value utilising the City of Melbourne method of tree amenity valuation.

15.4 Tree Bond

Where a Council tree is in the vicinity of private construction, development or works, an Asset Protection Bond will be paid by the property owner, developer or applicant for the tree and other assets as determined by Council, prior to commencement of any works.

16 TREE OBJECTIONS

Council's Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031 recognises the importance of trees in the landscape, and the liveability and health and wellbeing benefit they provide for residents and the whole community. Trees are a living organism which can create emotive responses. Council Officers will inspect all reasonable requests and seek to find appropriate solutions to requests. Trees will be assessed in line with this Policy and Council will not remove trees, significantly prune trees, lop trees, or delay planting of trees based on any of the following or similar objections.

- Tree litter related to leaves, twigs, seeds, berries, fruits or other debris.
- A resident's perception of an inappropriate species.
- A perceived danger that a tree might fall, including in a storm.
- A desire to re-landscape a private property or lack of grass health on a nature strip or in a private garden.
- Previous failures of limbs resulting in a perceived higher risk.
- Tree aesthetics.
- Tree size and/or origin of a particular species.
- Solar access for solar panels or to increase the capacity of solar panels.
- House re locations.
- House alterations requiring the relocation of the vehicle crossing and or a second vehicle crossing.
- Swimming pool installation and perceived problems with roots and/or falling leaves.
- Shading of lawns, pools, gardens, courtyards, clotheslines or any other private property.
- Improvement of views.
- Improvement of visibility of advertising or commercial signage.
- To reduce the impact from any bird, bat, or other animal's waste or noise.
- To reduce allergenic or irritant responses.
- To enable relocation of utility services including powerlines and service wires.
- Unjustified or unproven property damage claims.
- To reduce or remove tree root intrusion into gardens.
- To reduce any insects.

- To reduce the overhang of foliage over properties in excess of the distances as set within this policy.
- The perceived height or damage a newly planted tree may cause in the future.
- An aversion to the species of a newly planted tree.
- Location of newly planted or existing tree.

17 TREE PROPERTY DAMAGE

17.1 Infrastructure Conflicts

It is recognised that the interface between trees and other assets can result in damage to one or other of the assets.

Council maintains publicly managed assets, identifies ongoing remedial measures, and responds to service requests for damaged infrastructure such as footpaths.

Remedial tree works such as root pruning, non-destructive hydro excavation, and root barriers will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Council aims to protect and retain trees as per this Policy and the Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031.

Tree removal will only be assessed as per the Tree Removal Criteria in this Policy.

17.2 Private Property Damage Claims

Residents who claim private property damage from a street or park tree must follow the claims process outlined on Council's website. Tree removal will not automatically be undertaken due to claims of private property damage.

Tree removal will be considered where the tree is causing significant damage to private property and the cost of ongoing remedial work is more than the amenity and environmental value of the tree, all other practical measures to mitigate damage have been exhausted, and the cost to maintain the tree and mitigate further damage outweighs the value of the tree, and there is no reasonable alternative to resolve ongoing private property damage.

18 TREES AND POWERLINES

Council must comply with the Electricity Safety Electric Line Clearance Regulations. The regulations stipulate clearance requirements from trees to power lines which Council must maintain. This includes all trees on public land, within all road reserves, within all parks and within all Council owned facilities.

Council will prune trees around overhead electrical distribution supply lines to achieve compliance with Regulator and Council's Electric Line Clearance Management Plan.

Council will continue to review its Electric Line Clearance Management Plan in accordance with regulatory requirements and the plan will be made available to residents and Energy Safe Victoria via Council's corporate website.

19 TREE HEALTH

19.1 Pest and Disease

Managing pests and disease is vital in maintaining and expanding the canopy coverage of the Urban Forest. Council will undertake routine monitoring, containment, treatment, and eradication where required.

Where pest and disease eradication are required to protect the infected tree and/or other trees, Council will employ a best practice integrated pest management approach. Biological control is the preferred option. Where chemical application is required, best practice chemical management is employed including its use and application in the community.

Council continues to review its use of chemicals to ensure practices are in accordance with all relevant legislation, best practice guidelines and regulatory bodies. The chemicals used by Council and its contractors are approved for the purpose by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) and WorkSafe Victoria.

Council undertakes active programmed treatment to control Elm Leaf Beetle.

19.2 Possums

Where appropriate and if required, possum guards will be installed on Council managed trees to protect trees from significant possum damage. Trees will be assessed and monitored by Council Arborists to determine ongoing management options.

20 APPENDICES

National Trust and Nature Reserve Streetscape locations include:

- Linum Street, Blackburn
- Laurel Grove North, Blackburn
- Boongarry Avenue, Blackburn
- Waratah Crescent, Blackburn
- Myrtle Grove South, Blackburn
- Hill Street, Blackburn
- Acacia Avenue, Blackburn
- Furness Street, Blackburn
- Jeffery Street, Blackburn
- Sanders Road, Box Hill
- Hovea Street, Mitcham
- Irvine Street, Mitcham
- The Glade, Mitcham
- Grove Street, Vermont
- Moore Road, Vermont
- Canowindra Close, Vermont South