
Tree and Nature Strip Management Policy



May 2024



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Tree and Nature Strip Management Policy



Council Policy

Responsible director	Director Infrastructure and Amenity
Responsible officer	Manager Operations
Functional area	Parks and Gardens
Date adopted by Council	May 2024
Review date	May 2028

Purpose

The aim of the policy is to provide a framework for making structured, consistent, and environmentally sound management decisions, for all Council owned or managed street and roadside trees, open space trees, and nature strips.

Background

Northern Grampians Shire Council is committed to the efficient and effective management of trees and nature strips on Council-owned or managed land including street and open space trees. Good planning and appropriate maintenance are vital for safe and manageable street and roadside trees that will provide aesthetic, material, environmental and ecological benefits to the community.

Urban trees, including street trees, and nature strips offer major benefits to the community. It is Council's role to manage these trees in a safe, effective, and efficient manner.

Street trees also grow amongst people and property and as such pose management challenges as a result of community expectations for amenity, functionality, and safety. The impact of the artificial growing environment and the community requirements of street trees is that street trees require intensive management.

This policy and *Tree and Nature Strip Management Plan* provide a framework for the management of the Council's Street and urban roadside trees and nature strips in a consistent manner across the shire.

Rural roadside trees need to be managed to maintain appropriate road envelope clearances for vehicle access. These requirements are determined and governed by Council's *Road Management Plan 2021*.

Scope

The scope of this policy is to:

- establish the Northern Grampians Shire Council's commitment and future strategic direction for tree planting, protection, management, and maintenance for its streets and open spaces.
- address open space and urban tree and nature strip management and maintenance issues faced by the Council.
- provide a rationale for decision-making to ensure consistency in the management of open space, urban trees, and nature strips as per the Council's Tree and Nature Strip Management Plan.

Stakeholders affected by this policy, but not limited to:

- Community
- Council
- Parks and Gardens

Responsibilities:

- Director Infrastructure and Amenity is responsible for the policy.
- Manager Operations is responsible for the implementation and review of the policy.
- Coordinator Parks and Facilities for execution and performance of the policy.

Policy Objective

- Council Plan - Enhance Lifestyle and Community
- Council Plan - Provide Sustainable Infrastructure

Policy

The Northern Grampians Shire Council *Tree and Nature Strip Management Plan* supports the *Tree and Nature Strip Management Policy* by providing guidance on how Northern Grampians Shire Council will undertake urban tree management and maintenance.

Street trees help to create softness and beauty in otherwise harsh streetscapes. As such, they add significantly to the enjoyment of our urban environment and to the value of properties. By applying appropriate levels of resources and best practice management, the Council will develop streetscapes of attractive, healthy, and safe trees for the benefit of the entire community, both now and into the future.

The objective of the plan is to:

- acknowledge the important role trees play in our lives and environment.
- provide a framework for the protection and enhancement of street, roadside and open space trees.
- provide a clearly defined and consistent approach to the way the Council manages the tree and nature strip issues.
- assist council in determining priorities for tree programs.
- provide the information for what the requirements are for Nature Strip Management.

The Tree and Nature Strip Management Plan will provide principles and procedures for following issues:

- Tree Management
- Risk Identification and Mitigation
- Tree Selection and Planting
- Tree Removal
- Significant Tree Protection
- Infrastructure Protection
- Electric Line Clearance
- Tree Maintenance
- Environmental and Community Imperatives
- Pest and Disease Control

Further to tree management on the Council managed nature strips, council will maintain nature strips adjoining or within:

- public reserve areas such as parks and gardens
- council facilities such as public buildings and recreation grounds

Parks and Garden staff will maintain above mentioned nature strips as per the annual maintenance program. The annual maintenance program will be prepared as per adopted budget and available resources.

Review

This policy and related management plan will be reviewed every four years.

Communication and implementation

This policy review had been undertaken in line with the Council's policy development and approval procedures. The policy will be communicated to stakeholders through the EDRMS and Council's website.

References

- *Tree and Nature Strip Management Plan 2024*
- *Road Management Plan 2021*
- *Electrical Line Clearance Management Plan 24-25*

Compliance

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Electricity Safety Act 1998*
- *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2015*
- *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

Privacy and Data Protection compliance

This policy is not impacted by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Victorian Protective Data Security (VPDSS) Standards*

Gender Equality compliance

As required under Part 3 of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* officers have considered the gender impact and deem that the assessment is not applicable to this policy.

Charter of Human Rights compliance

It is considered that this policy does not impact on any [human rights](#) identified in the *Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Definitions

Policy	A formal statement by the organisation of its intentions and principles that establishes the frameworks for action. A policy does not have a procedural content.
Management Plan	A management plan contains procedures, rules and controls needed to implement a policy.

Review history

Date	Review details	Action
1 June 2015	4 June 2018	This policy and related management plan will be reviewed in three years.
6 August 2018	Reviewed – Changes made in format and review period set for 4 years. Adopted by Council.	To be reviewed in July 2022.
June 2022	Reviewed – Minor changes made to align with the policy, development and approval framework procedure for October 2021. Additional compliance and references added.	To be reviewed July 2026
April 2024	Reviewed. – Change of title and Minor Changes made to align with the Plan. Dates adjusted to match current documents.	To be reviewed May 2028