

Street Tree Fact Sheet

The Central Coast Council is currently working towards achieving a co-ordinated, consistent and strategic approach to street tree management. The Council is responsible for the planting and maintenance of street trees on all road reserves throughout the municipal area.

Planting

The planting of street trees is carried out by Council staff. Individuals or groups are not permitted to plant trees in the road reserve. The Council will ask that any unauthorised and inappropriate trees are removed. If the location is appropriate the Council will supply suitable replacement street trees. Street tree plantings are carried out during the winter planting season (June– August) for optimum survival rates.

Street trees are chosen carefully and a range of criteria are used so that the right tree for the right location is planted. Species that are chosen will include a range of exotics and Australian natives that:-

- Do least damage to footpaths, kerb and channel and underground infrastructure.
- Have limited impact on overhead power lines.
- Are easily pruned for the maintenance of line of sight for signage and traffic and pedestrian clearances.
- Create an attractive landscape and fit with the surrounding area.
- Tolerate climatic and geographic conditions.
- Have an appropriate height and width for the location.

Streets which have been selected for required plantings are identified in the Council's Street Tree Strategy, a copy of this document is available for viewing on the Council's website. Residents are encouraged to request a street tree for their nature strip in all other streets not identified in the plan.

Maintenance

Maintenance of all newly established advanced trees planted in streets identified for required plantings will be undertaken by Council staff. This maintenance program will include watering during summer, weeding of mulched areas, formal pruning and canopy lifting if required and maintenance to the tree surround, stakes and ties. Maintenance of trees established in non-designated streets will be undertaken also, however, less frequently.

Pruning

Correct pruning which ensures a safe, vigorous and attractive tree must only be carried out by Council staff. Street trees will be pruned to:

- Remove any dead, dying, dangerous or defective branches.
- Uplift the canopy to allow pedestrian and road clearance.
- Selective pruning to allow appropriate building clearance of branches in conflict with adjoining buildings.
- Selective pruning around light poles and powerlines for clearances.
- Formative pruning to improve the trees structural stability, health and appearance.
- Selective pruning to allow sightlines for vehicles and traffic signs.

Removal

Street trees may be removed only by Council staff if:-

- A report is received from a suitably qualified arborist identifying a tree with potential structural weakness, decay or other diseases.
- Severe and damaging impact on infrastructure/services and no alternative solutions are available such as relocation of tree/services/infrastructure or installation of a root barrier.
- Storm damage has occurred.
- The tree has been identified for removal through Councils Annual Tree Inspection program.

Limitations

Street trees will not be pruned or removed to:-

- Allow or improve a view.
- To reduce fruit fall, leaf litter, sap drop, bird droppings or similar.
- To increase street lighting onto private property.
- Pruning of trees contrary to Australian Standard AS4373:2007 *Pruning of amenity trees*.

The Council receives many requests for trees to be removed but is committed to protecting the streetscape for a number of social, environmental and economic benefits and must adhere to strict guidelines as to what can and can not be removed. For example dropping of leaves is considered a nuisance and not a danger and is not a sufficient reason for removing a tree. There is to be no pruning or removal of a street tree by a resident as serious issues can result from a tree being pruned by an unqualified person such as exposing the tree to disease and creating tree stability issues.

Annual Tree Assessment

A tree health and safety assessment is carried out in May each year for all urban street trees. Any subsequent pruning or removal works identified are carried out after the assessment.

Enquiries and Information

If you require further information regarding any of the above areas, please phone the Council's Engineering Services Department on tel. 6429 8970 for assistance.