

Central Coast Council

Vegetation Management Policy

June 2023

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POLICY

The Vegetation Management Policy is to support the Council's vision and strategic objectives to ensure that a high standard of vegetation management is achieved and to also provide a consistent and sustainable approach towards the management of vegetation.

With much of the community supporting native vegetation, forestry, and agricultural land, only a relatively small percentage of land falls under Council management, either owned directly or managed through leasing from the Tasmanian State Government.

Placing a high importance on protecting and enhance existing vegetation, identifying opportunities for new vegetation\landscaping and ensuring community safety through risk management practices.

Well managed vegetation provides an abundance of benefits including social, aesthetic, economic, environmental, and health benefits. Vegetation enhances our open spaces; it creates a sense of place and provides important habitat for fauna. Vegetation aids in erosion control, provides oxygen for us to breath and helps to improve water quality.

Vegetation types vary and can range from grassy roadside verges, intrusive weed species, large majestic mature trees in a park or a beautiful, secluded bush reserve they all have different management requirements but are all equally important to manage.

PURPOSE OF POLICY

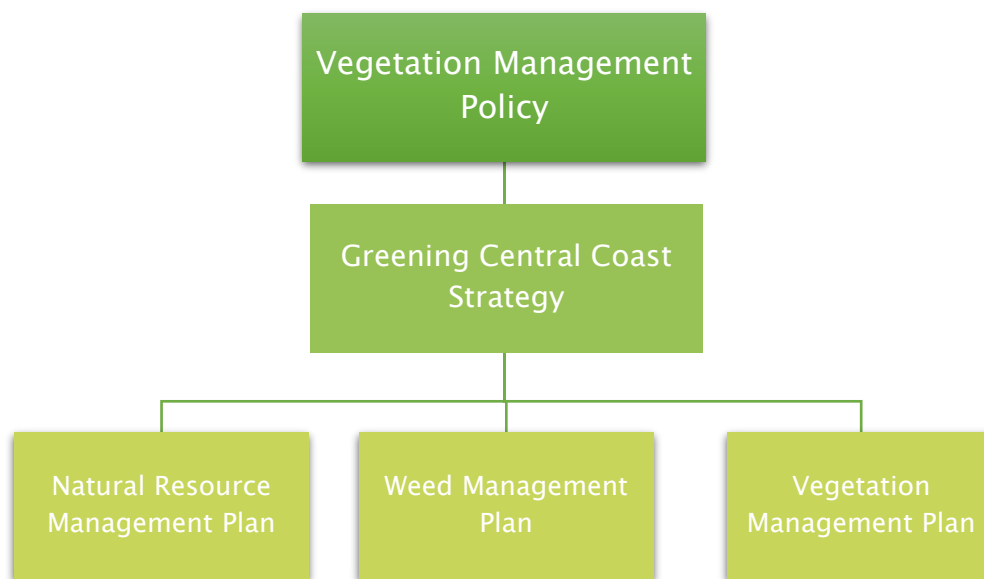
The purpose of this Policy is to set out guidelines for the management, maintenance and preservation of vegetation on all Council owned and/or managed land.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all vegetation on Council owned and/or managed land.

Vegetation is a term used to encompass the following areas, but is not limited to:

Rural and urban trees, park and street trees, roadside vegetation, natural areas such as foreshore, inland and riparian reserves, perennial and annual gardens, grass and weed species.



The Vegetation Management Framework provides alignment between the key documents from the strategic level to the operational level to ensure a consistent approach is applied in vegetation managed by Council.

The vision of the Greening Central Coast Strategy is for an increase in the Green Infrastructure of the Central Coast municipality. The aspirational target of 30% canopy cover by 2030 will enhance the Central Coast's unique identity, landscape and lifestyle and will be delivered through key objectives including Enhancement, Identity, Landscape and Community.

The Natural Resource Management Plan focuses on identifying at risk vegetation communities (including riparian areas), as well as conserving and enhancing areas within the municipality that are highly valued by its residents. It outlines twenty identified sites for prioritised natural resource management in managing threats to protect environmental, social, cultural, and economic values.

The Weed Management Plan specifically covers weed management on Council managed land; owned and/or leased. It directly links the Natural Resource Management Plan and the Vegetation Management Plan because weed incursions do not adhere to administrative boundaries. The goals for the Weed Management Plan are shared responsibility, sustainable landscapes and collaborative leadership and innovation.

The Vegetation Management Plan focuses on Council operations and supporting Council staff in structured, consistent and environmentally sound decisions for all vegetation that is growing on Council owned and managed land. It will provide vegetation management that is consistent with community expectations and public safety risks while at the same time working within resource parameters.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Policy are to:

- Provide a cost-effective framework for making structured, consistent and environmentally sound management decisions for vegetation that is growing on Council owned and managed land.
- Implement the Greening Central Coast Strategy 2021 actions to achieve its vision.
- Preserve, manage and enhance vegetation to maximise the benefits to the community whilst minimising associated public safety risks and costs;
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity and natural values of coastal, riparian and inland native bush reserves;
- Provide vegetation management that is consistent with the Tasmania Planning Scheme – Central Coast.
- Ensure vegetation is managed to a high standard using best practice.
- Manage vegetation as part of the Council's overall Risk Management Policy 2016 and continue to address tree risk through the Council's Annual Tree Inspection Program and root zone assessments.
- Prevent unnecessary removal of vegetation.
- Protect trees that are known to have heritage significance.
- Protect vegetation where possible and encourage new green spaces during development, guided by the Guidelines for Tree Protection on Development Sites.
- As practically as possible, resolve conflicting requirements of trees and infrastructure in accordance with *AS4970-2009: Protection of Trees on Development Sites* and *AS 4373-2007: Pruning of Amenity Trees*.
- Manage weed species effectively through the Central Coast Council Weed Management Plan 2023.
- Consult and inform residents about all major projects involving vegetation removal, planting, spraying and pest and disease management where necessary.
- Continue to support environmental groups and schools with environmental activities.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Vegetation Management Policy complements and builds upon the Council's Strategic Plan 2014–2024 as follows:

Strategic Direction 1.1

- Improve the value and use of open space

Strategic Direction 4.1

- Invest in and leverage opportunities from our natural environment

Strategic Direction 4.4

- Contribute to the preservation of the natural environment

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years, unless organisational and legislative changes require more frequent modification.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Central Coast Strategic Plan 2014–2024
- Tasmania Planning Scheme – Central Coast
- Central Coast Weed Management Plan 2023
- Risk Management Policy 2016
- Open Space and Recreation Plan 2012–2022
- Greening Central Coast Strategy 2021
- Vegetation Management Strategy 2019
- Natural Resource Management Plan 2023
- Vegetation Damage Signage Policy 2021
- Specific Area Management Plans
- Applicable Works Procedures
- Planning Permit Guidelines for Trees and Development

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Approved by:

