

	<b>POLICY - VEGETATION MANAGEMENT COLES BAY</b>	<b>2.4</b>	
		<b>Version 1</b>	<b>Date 25/9/07</b>
<b>Minutes Dated 23 March 2009</b>	<b>Approved by: - Council Decision No : 064/09</b>	<b>Review Date - As required</b>	

## **1. OBJECTIVE**

Provide a natural, quality environment for the residents and visitors of Coles Bay, whilst recognising the importance of trees and vegetation to the quality of the local environment.

This policy aims to provide a practical and balanced approach to tree / vegetation management that seeks to ensure public safety whilst striving to preserve and maintain, in a safe and healthy condition, those trees which are currently or which will become visually, historically, or environmentally valuable to the community of Coles Bay.

The major areas of concern to Council and its residents as they relate to tree management are tree / vegetation preservation, tree planting / pruning / removal and damage caused by trees.

This policy seeks to address the issues underlying these concerns and provide clear guidelines for Council officers to ensure that any associated risks are managed or controlled as they respond to tree and vegetation related enquiries.

## **2. SCOPE**

This policy relates to parts of the Coles Bay area which Council has ownership or care and control. Vegetation Management issues within licensed or leased areas will be referred to the relevant agency e.g. Parks and Wildlife Services.

## **3. POLICY**

### **TREE INVENTORY AND DOCUMENTATION**

- a) Starting with high use areas and known problem areas, i.e parks and reserve areas where people frequent, an inventory of significant trees should be drawn up containing all relevant information including at least the location, origin, species, approximate age and health. This will also assist in Council's Risk Management process for required assessment.
- b) All complaints or notification of problems with trees from residents should be recorded against the tree inventory or property location. Remedial action, maintenance and other work should also be recorded against the inventory or property location to build up a history of the work carried out.

### **VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

A. A vegetation survey will be undertaken and management plan developed for roadsides and within parks and reserves owned or leased / licensed by Council incorporating:

- Vegetation communities;
- Threatened Species;
- Weed threats.

The management plan with respect to crown land reserves leased / licensed by Council will be in line with the Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice 2003.

B. Community involvement, in partnership with Parks and Wildlife will be encouraged to appropriately manage vegetation, including undertaking weed control and revegetation activities in line with the vegetation management plan.

C. Education and awareness program to be undertake with support from community and Parks and Wildlife on vegetation values which will complement the actions identified in the Coles Bay Weed Action Plan.

## **TREE PLANTING**

- a) Planting of vegetation in park and reserve areas will be carried out in conjunction with Council and relevant Community Groups in line with the vegetation management plan.
- b) Unauthorised planting of street trees / vegetation by residents is not permitted, but recently planted trees, i.e. less than 3 years old, shall be allowed to remain provided that they are:
  - of a suitable species which is compatible with the surrounding streetscape;
  - good quality specimens;
  - in a suitable location; and
  - planted to Council standards.

Where a tree does not meet these conditions, the resident who planted the tree shall be asked to remove or relocate the tree. If this request is not complied with, the tree will be removed by Council staff.

- c) Planting of vegetation by residents on the nature strip fronting their property must only be undertaken with the prior written approval of the General Manager, and provided that:
  - A plan is submitted with the request showing location and details
  - An approved species is used
  - Plants do not or will not interfere with traffic visibility or infrastructure services
  - No hazard is created
  - The planting style is compatible with the surrounding landscape
  - Trees are maintained by the resident to a standard approved by the General Manager.

## **TREE REMOVAL**

A resident cannot remove any species of tree / shrub or vegetation on public land, owned, or under the care and control of Council, without the written approval of the General Manager unless they are Declared or Environmental Weeds as determined in the Glamorgan Spring Bay Weed Management Plan.

**If a healthy tree, determined via a standard tree assessment, is requested to be removed by a property owner as a result of driveway alterations or development etc. and approved by Council, the owner of the property shall incur all costs associated with the removal of the said tree and root system and pay for purchase and planting of a suitable replacement.**

## **NUISANCE vs RISK**

Council acknowledges that it is the intrinsic nature of trees to shed leaves, bark, sticks, flowers, fruit and exudates as part of their normal lifecycle.

These issues will not generally constitute justification for tree removal.

Generally Council will promote remedial actions rather than tree removal.

### ***a) TREE ASSESSMENT AND SIGNIFICANCE***

Upon receipt of a request to remove a tree, a suitably qualified and duly authorised agent of Council shall assess the tree for its:

Condition, based on:

- health;
- structure;
- form;
- life expectancy and amenity;
- safety; and
- damage caused or potential for damage.

Suitability, based on:

- compatibility with the surrounding landscape;
- potential to cause damage;
- potential to cause nuisance; and
- characteristics of species to growing space and conditions.

Significance, based on whether it:

- has a major impact on the landscape;
- has outstanding visual appeal;
- is very large (more than 15m high or 15m wide);
- is very old (more than 40 years);
- is one of a significant species;
- provides a significant habitat for native fauna;
- has historical associations.
- or is listed as a “threatened species”

### ***b) TREE REMOVAL AUTHORISATION***

A decision regarding removal or retention of a tree on Council land will be made on the basis of the assessment criteria outlined above unless otherwise stated, authority for removal will rest with the General Manager or a duly authorised representative.

Circumstances where tree works do not require an approval under this Policy:

- Tree works for the purposes of Bushfire Hazard Reduction Work (as outlined in an approved Bushfire Management Plan).
- Power line clearance
- Emergency Works – any work carried out by Council, the State Emergency Services or a public authority in response to an emergency.
- Tree Works carried out by Council or it's agents on land owned or under the care and control of Council, provided that assessment of the tree work has been carried out in accordance with this policy.
- Dead tree removals carried out by Council or it's agent to ensure that associated risks are managed or controlled.
- Tree removal approved by a current Development Approval issued by Council.

## **TREE PRUNING**

Tree pruning shall only be carried out by Council Officers or an approved Contractor engaged by Council.

An essential component of the management of Council's tree asset is the maintenance of individual trees in a safe and visually appealing condition. Once established, the major maintenance requirement of a tree is pruning.

As a general rule, the pruning of trees should be minimised as all pruning cuts are potentially injurious and trees look more appealing when left to develop into their natural shape.

## **TREE PRUNING GUIDELINES**

Council trees shall be pruned to:

- maintain public safety through the removal of structurally unsound limbs;
- maintain tree health through the removal of dead or diseased material;
- maintain minimal clearances from services e.g. powerlines, over roads, footpaths and driveways;
- ensure traffic safety and visibility of street signs; and
- minimise future work requirements through the removal of potential problems at an early stage.

## **PRUNING OF COUNCIL TREES BY RESIDENTS**

Pruning of Council owned trees, by anyone other than Council staff or contractors engaged by Council, shall only be permitted by way of written authority from the General Manager.

## **DAMAGE CAUSED BY TREES**

The response by Council to damage caused by trees will vary according to the type and extent of the damage. The most commonly reported types of damage and Council's response to each are outlined below.

**a) FOOTPATHS, ROADS, KERB AND CHANNEL**

Council is responsible for the maintenance of both the tree and road reserve structures.

Council's response to this type of damage shall be:

- Damage inspected by Manager Works and Services or authorised representative.
- If repair is required, the damaged section shall be removed and the offending roots exposed.
- If no other option is practical, the tree may be removed in accordance with the Tree Removal Guidelines.

**b) VEHICLE CROSSOVERS / DRIVEWAYS**

Although vehicle crossovers traverse Council land, their maintenance and repair is the responsibility of the owner of the property that they serve. The issue of liability for damage to these structures must therefore be addressed before repairs are authorised.

Council's response to this type of damage shall be as follows:

- The damage shall be inspected by the Manager Works and Services or the authorised representative.
- The damage must be reported in writing to the General Manager so that details can be forwarded to Council's insurer to determine liability.
- Further damage shall be prevented by root pruning or, where necessary, installation of an appropriate root barrier or removal of tree.

**c) FENCES**

Where allegations of tree root damage are brought to Council's attention, the General Manager must be informed in writing so that details can be forwarded to Council's insurer to determine liability.

Inspection and a report are required.

If a professional assessment is required to be carried out to determine the cause of damage, the property owner may be required to pay for all associated costs if the damage is reported not to be caused by the said Council tree.

**d) HOUSEHOLD WATER SERVICE AND STORMWATER PIPES**

Council's response to claims of damage to household water service or stormwater pipes shall be:

- The damage shall be inspected by the Manager Works and Services, or the authorised representative and a report be prepared.
- The damage must be reported to the General Manager so that details can be forwarded to Council's insurer to determine liability.

**e) DWELLINGS**

Claims against Council for damage to dwellings and built structures on private property by tree roots from trees on Council land, must be referred to the General Manager in writing, so that details can be forwarded to Council's insurer to determine liability.

In addition, an inspection report is required to be carried out by a professional, appointed by Council to determine cause of damage.

If the professional assessment determines that the damage is not caused by a Council tree, the property owner may be required to pay for all associated assessment costs.

**f) OTHER DAMAGE**

Claims against Council for damage caused by fallen trees, fallen limbs, objects colliding with trees or any other damage caused by the above ground parts of trees shall be routinely referred to the General Manager so that details can be forwarded to Council's insurer to determine liability.

#### **4. IMPLEMENTATION**

- The policy will be implemented immediately following endorsement by Council.
- The Reserves By-Law which allows enforcement of this Policy and enables the issue of penalties.

#### **5. DELEGATION**

N A

#### **6. RESPONSIBILITY**

The compliance of this policy is the responsibility of the General Manager and Manager Works and Services.

#### **7. REPORTING**

N A

#### **8. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Threatened Species Protection Act 1995, Weed Management Act 1999

#### **9. REFERENCES**

Glamorgan Spring Bay Weed Management Plan, Coles Bay Weed Action Plan, Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice 2003

#### **10. ATTACHMENTS**

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