

	<b>Policy - Tree Management (Council Managed Land)</b>	<b>2.3</b>	
		<b>Version</b> 3	<b>Date</b> 27/9/16
<b>Minutes Dated</b> 27 <sup>th</sup> <b>September,</b> 2016	<b>Approved By : Council</b>  <b>Decision No. 129/16</b>	<b>Review Date -</b> <b>As required but no</b> <b>later than 2020</b>	

## 1. OBJECTIVE

- To provide a quality environment for residents, ratepayers and visitors and recognise the importance of trees to the quality of the local environment.
- To provide a practical and balanced approach to tree 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 Glamorgan Spring Bay.
- To address the issues of tree management, tree planting, tree removal, tree pruning and damage caused by trees on Council managed land.
- To provide clear guidelines for Council officers as they respond to tree related enquiries, to ensure that any associated risks are managed or controlled.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy relates to all areas within the municipal area for which Council has ownership or care and control, except where there is a separate provision for a Native Flora and Fauna Management Plan for a particular area.

Native Flora and Fauna Management Plans 2014-2019 ([www.gsbc.tas.gov.au/services/NRM](http://www.gsbc.tas.gov.au/services/NRM)) provide Council with a strategic approach to the management of natural values within reserves, whilst recognising and considering significant cultural and social values of reserves.

## 3. POLICY

### 3.1 TREE ASSESSMENTS AND RECORDS

- a) In high use areas and identified problem areas, (i.e. parks and reserve areas) tree assessments are recorded containing all relevant information. Information on at least the location, origin, species, approximate age and health is recorded and maintained. This assists Council's risk management process for required assessment.

- b) All complaints or notification of problems with trees are recorded against the property location. Remedial action, maintenance and other work is also recorded against the property location to build up a history of the work carried out.

### **3.2 TREE PLANTING**

- a) Planting of trees and/or shrubs in park and reserve areas will be carried out in conjunction with Council and relevant community groups to determine type and location.
- b) Planting of street trees by residents is not permitted without the prior written approval of the General Manager, and provided that:
- A plan is submitted with the request showing location and details.
  - Council approves the species to be 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.

### **3.3 TREE REMOVAL**

A person cannot remove, poison or otherwise destroy any species of tree or shrub on public land, owned, or under the care and control of Council, without the written approval of the General Manager.

**If a healthy tree 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 initial tree assessment, the removal of the said tree and root system, and pay for purchase and planting of a suitable replacement at a location agreed with Council.**

#### ***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 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.

**b) TREE REMOVAL AUTHORISATION**

A decision regarding removal or retention of a tree on Council managed 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 Council officer.

Removal of trees of significance requires Council approval.

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

- i. For the purposes of bushfire hazard reduction work.
- ii. Power line clearance.
- iii. Emergency works – any work carried out by Council, the State Emergency Services or a public authority in response to an emergency.
- iv. Tree works carried out by Council or its 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.
- v. Dead tree removals carried out by Council or its agent to ensure that associated risks are managed or controlled.
- vi. Tree removal approved by a current Development Approval issued by Council.

**TREE PRUNING**

Tree pruning shall only be carried out by qualified Council officers or an approved contractor engaged by Council with the appropriate qualifications.

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:

- a) Maintain public safety through the removal of structurally unsound limbs.
- b) Maintain tree health through the removal of dead or diseased material.

- c) Maintain prescribed clearances from services e.g. powerlines, over roads, footpaths and driveways.
- d) Ensure traffic safety and visibility of street signs; and
- e) Minimise future work requirements through the removal of potential problems at an early stage.

**i. CLEARANCES**

As a guide trees shall be pruned to maintain the following clearances:

Over Footpaths	2.5 m to the lowest foliage or limb.
Over Driveways	4.5 m to the lowest foliage or limb.
Over Roadways	1.0 m behind line of kerb (may vary in some circumstances) and 6.0 m over road to the lowest structural limb.
Street Signs	To be visible 50 m in either direction.

**ii. PRUNING OF COUNCIL TREES BY RESIDENTS**

Pruning of Council owned trees, by anyone other than qualified Council officers or approved 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 process is outlined below.

**i. FOOTPATHS, ROADS, KERB AND CHANNEL**

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

**ii. VEHICLE CROSSOVERS / DRIVEWAYS**

Although vehicle crossovers traverse Council managed 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.

**iii. FENCES**

**iv. HOUSEHOLD STORMWATER PIPES**

**v. DWELLINGS**

Council’s response to these types of damage is:

- a) Damage inspected by Manager Works or authorised representative.
- b) If repair is required, the damaged section shall be removed and the offending roots exposed.
- c) In some instances a professional inspection/assessment and report may be required at the property owner’s expense.
- d) The damage must be reported in writing to the General Manager so that details can be forwarded to Council’s insurer to determine liability.
- e) If no other option is practical, the tree may be removed.
- f) Further damage shall be prevented by root pruning or, where necessary, installation of an appropriate root barrier or removal of tree (see 3.3b).

- g) 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.

**vi. 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 and be reported to Council for information purposes.

**4. IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation of the policy is carried out by the Manager Works.

**5. DELEGATION**

Extract from Manager Works - INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION under SECTION 64, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993:

- 26 To remove dangerous trees on Council properties and trees on construction sites under the control of his/her Department where such removal is necessary to allow work to proceed immediately.*

**6. RESPONSIBILITY**

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

**7. REPORTING**

Insurance claims are reported in the Ordinary Meeting of Council Agenda.

**8. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

N/A

**9. REFERENCES**

- i. Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Native Flora and Fauna Management Plans 2014-2019 ([www.gsbc.tas.gov.au/services/NRM](http://www.gsbc.tas.gov.au/services/NRM)).
- ii. Forest Practices Act 1985 stipulates that a Forest Practices Plan is required for the following forest practices, including land clearing:
  - harvesting and regenerating native forest
  - harvesting and/or establishing plantations
  - clearing forest for other purposes
  - clearing and converting threatened native vegetation communities
  - constructing roads and quarries for the above purposes
  - harvesting tree ferns

These are assessed and issued by the Forest Practices Authority and are completely separate from any council approval.

**10. ATTACHMENTS**

N/A