

Title of Policy	SMRC Policy 180 – Tree Management		
Responsible Department	Recreation	Document Register ID	250.2016.180.1
Policy Owner	Recreation & Property Technical Officer	Review Date	3 March 2020
Date of Council Meeting	22 February 2017	Resolution Number	17/17
Legislation, Australian Standards, Code of Practice	AS 4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000 Occupational Health & Safety Regulation 2001 StateWide Best Practice Manual Trees and Tree Roots		
Aim	To provide clear direction for the management and maintenance of trees that are located on Council managed land and to ensure consistency in decision making.		

This policy refers to trees located on land that is under the control and management of Snowy Monaro Regional Council and within the boundaries of its towns and villages. This policy does not apply to the management of trees on private property or to rural roadside trees beyond the extent of any legislative functions applicable to Council.

Snowy Monaro Regional Council recognises that trees are major assets that make a significant contribution to the character of its towns and villages. Tree management within urban environments is about recognising the benefits that trees provide and finding a balance between these and the various risks that may arise in order to ensure the best outcome for the community.

1 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- a) To adopt a consistent approach to tree management, protection and maintenance.
- b) To manage and maintain trees in a manner which promotes healthy trees.
- c) To ensure that all pruning and maintenance work is carried out to an appropriate standard by suitably trained staff and contractors.
- d) To ensure new trees are planted, pruned and located appropriately to minimise ongoing maintenance issues and damage/disruption to existing infrastructure, services and property.

2 Tree planting

Generally Council will place an annual tree order with planting to be undertaken by staff during the winter months. Trees are to be planted appropriately to ensure successful establishment.

- a) Location of existing services and infrastructure is to be identified prior to any new tree planting. This will influence the species of tree selected.
- b) Tree planting on Council land will be determined by budgetary resources and Council's capacity to maintain them.
- c) Where possible new infrastructure and development work is to be designed around existing trees.
- d) Trees are only to be planted by the public within public streets and community land with the written approval of Council.

3 Maintenance

Council staff or approved contractors will undertake pruning work and will ensure that best practise tree management is applied to all Council managed trees and that all pruning is carried out to an appropriate standard. Tree pruning and maintenance will be undertaken in order to improve tree health, structure and to provide nominal clearances for pathways, urban streets and other services. Residents are not permitted to undertake work on Council trees without written approval. Residents are encouraged to report any defects or issues relating to trees.

4 Tree Removal

Requests for tree removal will be considered on an individual basis. Council will not grant permission for trees to be removed from Council land in order to facilitate/improve views (including advertising or business signs), for off-street parking, the installation of solar panels or due to the natural attributes of the tree such as leaf /flower/fruit drop.

Council views the removal of healthy, established trees as undesirable but recognises it may be required on occasion. The removal of a healthy tree will be treated by Council as the last option and on an individual basis. Some reasons that may necessitate tree removal include:

- a) The tree is in poor condition or has a significant amount of dead wood and may pose a risk to people or property if it fails.
- b) The tree is damaging existing infrastructure or property to an unacceptable level and no other alternative is suitable. Damage caused by tree roots is to be managed using strategies outlined in the Tree Management Procedure. The Council will seek to apply measures other than removing trees, unless the alternatives are not within budgetary limits or are unlikely to be effective in the long term.
- c) The tree is a safety hazard due to its location such as presenting a line of sight issue for road/pedestrian traffic.
- d) The tree is inappropriate and is affecting the amenity of a property to an unacceptable level i.e. through shading of the majority of the living area of a property for a considerable portion of the day. All costs associated with the removal of a tree for this reason will be met by the affected property owner and approval from Council must be granted. In considering this type of request, if the tree is consistent with the overall streetscape or is in a heritage listed or major traffic route, approval will not be given.
- e) The installation of new infrastructure or development will affect the health or stability of the tree and all other possible alternatives to retain the tree have been considered. Development Applications are to consider the location of existing trees at the initial planning stages to prevent unnecessary tree removal.

If a significant tree is scheduled for removal Council will inform adjacent residents and property owners at least seven (7) days prior to its removal unless there is an imminent threat to persons or property, in which case as much notice as possible will be given.

5 Tree Replacement

Any trees removed from Council land will, if appropriate, be replaced in accordance with the Tree Management Procedure and existing streetscape. A list of recommended trees is available in the Trees and Shrubs Suitable for Snowy Monaro Booklet. Council will endeavour to replace any street trees that have been removed in the same location however close proximity to services or other infrastructure may mean that this is not possible. Tree selection will be dependent on the characteristics of each site, the existing streetscape and any approved plans.

Documentation

List the name and document reference number of any other document referred to in this document, including any related policies and procedures

- 250.2016.181.1 Tree Management Procedure
 Trees and Shrubs suitable for Snowy Monaro Booklet
- 250.2016.218.1 Tree Hazard Evaluation Form

Variation

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy and should be reviewed periodically to ensure it is relevant and appropriate.