



# Auburn City Council Tree Policy and Framework Plan

March 2012



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# Summary

## Auburn's Urban Forest

- *Council supports and will promote the benefits of sustaining a well-forested urban environment with aesthetic, environmental and financial gains for the Auburn LGA*
- *Council will continue to seek new opportunities for tree planting and aim to increase the tree canopy across the Auburn LGA*
- *The dropping of leaves, flowers, fruit, seeds or small elements of deadwood by urban trees ordinarily will not provide the basis for the removal of or intervention with an urban tree*
- *The obstruction of light by a street tree is, in itself, not justify its removal or substantive pruning*
- *The use of a tree for habitat by native birds, possums, bats, ants and the like does not provide the basis for tree removal*

## Public Trees

- *Council's trees will be proactively inspected and maintained in accordance with relevant standards as well as Council's Formative Pruning Standard*
- *Council will establish a tree inventory to improve the management of its tree assets in accordance with its Asset Management Policy*
- *Consistent assessment criteria will be used when considering requests to undertake tree works*
  - *The authorised removal of public trees shall be undertaken by suitably qualified arborist*
- *New public tree planting will occur each autumn and spring when opportunities for successful establishment is highest*
- *Council will increase the diversity of tree species planted to include predominately locally occurring native as well as exotic species*
- *Species selection for streets will be prescribed by the Auburn Street Tree Masterplan*
- *Council reserves the right to remove any trees that have been planted without authorisation*
- *Council will ensure the protection and reinstatement of public trees affected by the development process through the imposition of bonds*
- *Council shall pursue cooperation with Ausgrid and local developments, to improve tree maintenance standards, underground powerlines and replace trees in conflict with powerlines with more suitable species*
- *Council will not consider removing healthy trees that enter drainage or sewer system, where the system is found to be in poor condition or not regularly maintained*
- *Council will effectively manage evidence based claims concerning Council owned trees*
- *Council will discourage deliberate damage caused to trees using legal and other deterrents*
- *Council will consult with residents regarding large scale tree replacement or new planting works and promote participation in tree planting activities*

## Private Trees

- *Council will regulate tree pruning and removal activities through the Tree Preservation Section of the Auburn DCP*
- *Council will ensure that Development Applications include all requisite information to allow comprehensive assessment and the imposition of conditions to protect and enhance the tree canopy*
- *Council will consider reassessing tree related requests in cases where additional supporting information is provided*

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Aim of Policy

This Policy and Framework Plan outlines how structured, consistent and environmentally sound management decisions are made for the Auburn City Council's urban tree population. It addresses recent trends in the closely linked fields of tree management and risk management.

The arboriculture industry has advanced dramatically over the past ten years. Many traditional practices have been replaced by improved tree health-management techniques to assist risk management processes. These changes create a need to review and amend existing practices and procedures.

The benefits of sustaining a well-forested urban environment are well established with aesthetic, environmental and financial improvements for the area.

In preparing the Auburn City Community Strategic Plan 2021, resident feedback suggested *"more trees are needed across our city"*.

This policy aims to promote good tree management the emphasis will be on:

- Retaining trees of value and setting the direction for the future tree population
- Ensuring a consistency in tree management across the organisation
- Defining Council's responsibilities with respect to the protection, retention and replacement of trees throughout the City.
- Ensuring that proper consideration is given to trees in relation to developments
- Facilitate the removal of trees considered to be pest plants or dangerous, and replace them with well-selected species that will be aesthetically pleasing and ecologically sustainable
- Provide an educational tool for elected members, Council employees, residents, community groups, government and other agencies
- Document procedures for risk management outline the tasks and actions that will be undertaken by Council to incorporate these methods and procedures into daily activities
- Specify resources are required to achieve these objectives.
- To assist the implementation of the Street Tree Masterplan, which will provide improvements to the City's character, value (fiscal) and environmental contribution.

This Plan will also be supported with the drafting of a *Tree Strategy* and *Street Tree Masterplan* which will outline how many of these policies will be implemented.

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## 1.2 Background

The Auburn Local Government Area (LGA) is located 17 kilometres west of the Sydney CBD, and has a population of approximately 77,000. It covers an area of 31 square kilometres and shares boundaries with Parramatta, Bankstown, Strathfield, Ryde and Canada Bay LGAs.

Approximately 60% of the Auburn LGA is comprised of residential, industrial and commercial development. The remaining 40% includes open space, Sydney Olympic Park, and Rookwood Cemetery. Auburn has 211 kilometres of roads.

The Auburn LGA has nine suburbs, Auburn, Berala, Homebush Bay, Lidcombe, Newington, Regents Park, Rookwood, Silverwater and Wentworth Point.

There are five distinct town centres being:

- Auburn
- Lidcombe
- Berala
- Newington
- Regents Park

Currently the population has a broad a range of cultural diversity and this must be taken into consideration when developing and reviewing this Plan.

This policy in particular responds to how to manage a tree population with a community where nearly 60% of its residents have been born overseas. In many cases new migrants have completely different attitudes and prior learning regarding trees and their value in the urban environment.

In Auburn's longer established areas, the tree population has limited species diversity, which from aesthetic view provides limited variation in character and restricted visual interest. This type of situation can lead to a lack of interest by the local community to see the range of benefits and value trees add in the urban landscape. Alternatively, the relatively new residential areas such as Newington and the for former Lidcombe Hospital site retain a young, diverse and establishing tree population.

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## 1.3 Policy Objectives

- To develop a framework that allows Council to be responsive to residential issues in relation to trees
- To outline the benefits of a balanced use of natives and exotic in delivering an urban canopy
- To increase the diversity of street trees used in the municipality
- To optimise the capacity of the urban forest to provide both present and future residents with environmental, economic, and social benefits
- To achieve a balance between minimising risks and liabilities to the community whilst delivering a sustainable urban tree cover
- To achieve efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable management of the city's trees by coordinating efforts across Council and others programs
- To minimise the way that trees interfere with existing above and below ground services, signage, street lighting, public and private structures
- To engage the community by encouraging ownership through programmes such as annual free tree giveaway, National Tree Planting Day, etc.
- To provide open and accountable decision making and encourage stewardship in tree management
- To encourage and support sustainable development and management practices

Meeting these objectives also ensures Council achieves one of its *Delivery Program 2001-2014* measures, which is to increase Auburn's total tree cover.

### **Policy Statement**

Council will continue to seek new opportunities for tree planting and aim to increase the tree canopy across the Auburn LGA

## 2. Auburn's Urban Canopy

Trees can benefit the area in many ways.

### Aesthetic benefits

- trees create a 'sense of place' and provide a distinctive character to an area
- trees can visually soften hard surfacing of the built environment and screen undesirable sights
- trees help create social wellbeing through seasonal variations of foliage colour and floral displays
- trees reflect cultural preferences and particular architectural and historical periods of an areas development

### Environmental benefits

- trees provide habitat for birds, possums, insects and other native animals
- trees help absorb water and reduce the volume of water run-off entering the Parramatta River
- trees reduce ultra-violet radiation and reduce heat energy absorption from surfaces such as bitumen or concrete areas
- trees absorb carbon dioxide, entrap airborne pollutants and return oxygen back to the atmosphere
- trees provide shade to residents and pedestrian using public footpaths as well as cars parked in the street

### Financial benefits

- trees can keep summer temperatures lower and reduce the need for energy consuming air conditioners. This also saves money
- tree-lined streets and well maintained gardens with trees enhance economic land value. In other words our houses are worth more money
- 'leafy suburbs' are recognised as maintaining higher land value than those areas without trees

For some of Auburn's resident, particularly some of those born overseas, the benefits of urban trees are not well understood or valued.

#### Policy Statement

Council supports and will promote the benefits of sustaining a well-forested urban environment with aesthetic, environmental and financial gains for the Auburn LGA



Evans Avenue, Newington



Tree planting along the Duck River Corridor

## 2.1 Background to trees in Auburn

Prior to European settlement, the Auburn LGA contained a variety of bushland communities ranging from salt marsh wetlands through to drier Cumberland Plain Woodland communities.

The vast majority of Auburn's remnant vegetation was removed to initially support rural interests such as grazing and then later clearing and filling of the lower lying land was undertaken to support industrial uses. Residential development commenced in the early 1900's and the pace quickened in the 1930 – 40's.

Adopted as a legacy from the "Garden City Movement" of the early 1900's, much of the nation's suburban residential streets are designed to cater for landscaping in the front of the property as well as relatively wide 'nature reserves' to sustain trees along the street. This was in contrast to the previously heavily built, side-by-side character of the former town planning system that produced examples such as terrace housing and narrow public footways. The *Garden City Movement* principals are reflected in the Auburn DCP controls today for low density residential areas which retain landscape area between dwelling and the street designed to cater for gardens areas including trees.

In the development of Sydney some municipalities were quicker than others to take up the tree planting initiative. In the Auburn LGA large land holdings, many government owned, embraced tree planting such as at Rookwood Necropolis and Lidcombe Hospital.

Whilst many of the wealthier parts of Sydney were being actively 'greened' by their local authorities under the guidance of the Royal Botanic Gardens during the 1920's to 1940's (eg, suburbs in the Eastern suburbs as well as neighbouring areas such as Strathfield), major public tree planting did not commence in Auburn until the late 1960's and 1970's. The planting palette used at that time was very limited and relied upon Brushbox, Paperbark and Bottlebrush Trees. The majority of Auburn's street tree population was planted at this time.

During the mid 1970's the Auburn Botanic Gardens was established which transformed a former landfill site into a cultivated landscape showpiece. The Botanic Gardens retains important remnant bushland together with a collection of Australian native and exotic trees.

During the 1980's and 1990's, Council commenced to undertake substantial tree planting in parks and along the Duck River corridor using native plants and in particular using plants that are retained or once naturally occurred in the Auburn area.



1948 Commemorative tree planting by Hon Clive Evatt Minister for Housing at Lidcombe



Early cattle grazing at Lidcombe



Lidcombe Hospital was established with early plantings of Australian pines



# 3. Public Tree Management

## 3.1 Tree Maintenance

Previously Council had been undertaking tree maintenance in streets and parks in a strictly reactive manner, performing pruning or removal works without a planned or agreed standard for these works.

In 2011 a tree maintenance program commenced using a set of Formative Pruning Standards in accordance with AS 4373 Pruning of Amenity.

Trees are pruned to provide clearance that will addresses a number of issues such as:

- Pedestrian access provided with a clearance height of 2.4 metres
- Vehicle access to the edge of kerb provided at 3.5 metres gradually increasing to 4.6 metres at the carriage way centre
- Branches overhang into adjoining properties maintained providing a minimum of 2 metre clearance from any adjoining structures

Street trees are to be 'proactively' inspected every two years at which time any necessary maintenance pruning will be undertaken. This will provide a better service maintenance and improve the quality of the street trees in the area overall. This program will help to reduce the number of 'reactive' requests received by residents.

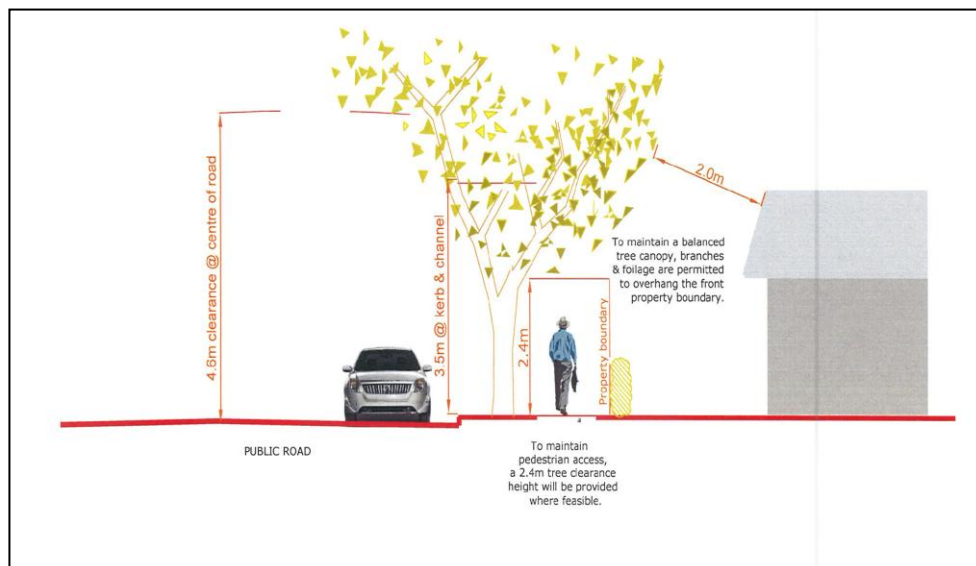
Park trees located in areas of relatively high visitation will also be assessed on a rolling two-year inspection program.

### Policy Statement

Council's trees will be proactively inspected and maintained in accordance with relevant standards as well as Council's Formative Pruning Standard (see below)



Removing a hazardous tree, Auburn Botanic Gardens



Auburn Formative Pruning Standard

## 3.2 Requests for Tree Works

Residents may request Council undertake public tree pruning or removal works by contacting Council's Customer Service Centre (02) 9735 1222, or auburncouncil@auburn.nsw.gov.au

### 3.2.1 Assessment Process

Council's Arborist will assess all tree related requests. The inspection method used is typically consistent with Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) or aerial inspection if further investigation is required. All tree assessments will follow Council's Assessment Criteria and supporting checklist.

## 3.3 Assessment Criteria

**For requests to prune or remove a tree**, the following assessment criteria will be considered:

- Potential risk of injury
- Potential risk of damage to buildings and structures
- The trees health, growth potential, and structural soundness
- The effect upon the streetscape and the tree's amenity value to the local area
- Whether the tree forms part of an avenue planting
- Whether the tree forms part of a green corridor, remnant species, provides native habitat
- Suitability of the species to the location
- Whether the tree is visually or culturally significant

### Policy Statement

Consistent assessment criteria will be used when considering requests to undertake tree works

## Requests we will not carry out

### 3.3.1 Fall leaves and fruit

As part of a tree's natural growth, all will shed to a varying degree leaves, flowers, fruit, bark and the like. It is appropriate to expect some amount of grounds maintenance in order to appreciate and retain the aesthetic and environmental benefits of having trees in an urban environment. The very fact that a tree does drop leaves from time to time does not warrant its removal.

### Policy Statement

The dropping of leaves, flowers, fruit, seeds or small elements of deadwood by urban trees ordinarily will not provide the basis for the removal of or intervention with an urban tree

### 3.3.2 Solar access

To a greater or lesser extent, every tree blocks sunlight. If requests to remove or substantially interfere with a tree for solar access were applied, there could be considerable loss of public tree canopy across the whole LGA. Whilst generating shade may be a disadvantage in winter, in the summer the cooling effects of shade are obvious.

#### Policy Statement

The obstruction of light by a street tree is, in itself, does not justify its removal or substantive pruning

### 3.3.3 Native animal habitat

Trees provide food and shelter for native wildlife, which has numerous environmental benefits as well as community benefits gained from positive interactions with native animals.

#### Policy Statement

The use of a tree for habitat by native birds, possums, bats, ants and the like does not provide the basis for tree removal

The removal of trees on the basis of leaf drop, solar access or native animal habitat would result in significant loss of tree canopy and prevent the re-establishment of a new tree population. This tree loss would result in poorer health for residents, dramatic losses to the local environment, and decrease in amenity as well as property values.

## 3.4 Appeals and Re-inspections

Council will consider a review of a tree assessment decision if there is provision of any additional supporting information. This information must be relevant to the request, clear and concise and provided as an:

- Arboricultural Tree Report; and/or
- Engineering report.

Provision of this supporting information does not essentially ensure the initial decision to be changed or altered, but will assist with the process and provide additional information not otherwise available at the time of the original assessment.

#### Policy Statement

Council will consider reassessing tree related requests in cases where additional supporting information is provided

## 3.5 Tree Removals

Any approved tree removals will be undertaken in a timely and programmed manner. All approved tree removals will be determined based upon the Assessment Principles above and accepted Arboricultural Standards.



Paperbark trees Elm Road, Auburn



Bottlebrush trees, Carnegie Street, Auburn



Brushbox trees, Johns Street, Lidcombe

Paperbark trees Elm Road, Auburn

Bottlebrush trees, Carnegie Street, Auburn

Brushbox trees, Johns Street, Lidcombe Auburn City Council Tree Policy & Framework Plan 2012 Page | 10

Any approved Tree removal will result in a suitable replacement planting if the location permits, and species selection will be determined using Council's Street Tree Masterplan). Any authorised removals will be undertaken by either council staff or contractor with a minimum AQF Certificate 3 (trade) level qualification in Arboriculture, under the supervision of a Diploma qualified Arborist.

1. Any works carried out without an approval may be liable to prosecution
2. All works must be undertaken in compliance with Australian Standard AS4373-20076 Pruning of Amenity Trees and WorkCover Code of Practice 'Amenity Tree Industry', 1998.
3. All works must be undertaken by a qualified arborist suitably insured.
4. All works near overhead power lines must be undertaken by a qualified arborist with a current Powerline Awareness Certificate.
5. Any tree removal shall require a Replacement Planting where space permits. Replanting is to be completed within three (12) months of any tree removal.

#### Policy Statement

The authorised removal of public trees shall be undertaken by suitably qualified arborist's

### 3.6 Managing trees as assets

Currently Auburn does not have a database or inventory of existing Street and Park trees. In 2011 an electronic collection of street tree data commenced to develop a street tree inventory. The Street Tree Inventory data will be utilised to manage the lifecycle of trees consistent with Council's Asset Management Policy.

The application of a GPS based inventory will map and record the attributes of all Council's street and park trees. Council can then use asset management principles to identify species and streets where trees are causing problems both now and where potential problems may exist in the future. Some of the types of data that will be collated include:

- Species listing; dominant species
- Identification of species that is performing or under-performing.
- Projected life spans for the city's trees, including replacing removed trees and planning for deteriorating and ageing street and park trees

- Programmed and reactive works undertaken
- Asset valuation
- When the tree was planted

#### Policy Statement

Council will establish a tree inventory to improve the management of its tree assets in accordance with its Asset Management Policy

### 3.7 Tree Replacement

#### 3.7.1 New Tree Plantings

The requirements for new plantings will be based on the Street Tree Masterplan that has identified streets that are currently lacking trees, or the urban canopy is poorly represented.

All new plantings will be undertaken staff, or by contractual services using current industry best practices, where possible new technologies or techniques and quality nursery stock to ensure optimum establishment and long term performance.

Planting will occur each autumn and early spring as this will provide a period where trees can more successfully establish prior to the heat of summer.

Residents seeking public tree planting are encouraged to contact Council.

#### Policy Statement

New public tree planting will occur each autumn and spring when opportunities for successful establishment is highest

#### 3.7.2 Species selection

Tree selection in streets need to take into consideration a number of issues including:

The growing environment and space available – many street environments have compacted soils, restricted access to water and nutrients, exposed to air pollutants, extremes of summer temperature associated with radiated heat from roadways, footpaths etc. The physical width of the verge is also variable.

Compatibility with services - trees compete with access and sightline requirements for vehicles and pedestrians, as well as overhead and underground services.

Adjoining land uses and built form – trees help screen or soften the built form, particularly in high-density areas. Consideration is also given to avoiding potential conflict with the adjoining property users.



Tree planting adjacent to Auburn North Primary School



Community Pride Tree Planting event Railway Parade, Auburn

Tree planting adjacent to Auburn North Primary School

Community Pride Tree Planting event Railway Parade

Street character and context – where existing trees are successful, the opportunity exists to retain the species with new infill planting. Alternatively, in streets where trees have not established, or have been in conflict with services, the opportunity exists to adopt new, more suitable species.

- Tree characteristics – The growth rate, habit, size, longevity, potential risk and future maintenance costs.
- Diversity – Auburn’s existing street trees lack diversity overall which generates monotony. The opportunity exists to use a mix of native and exotic tree species with new planting to create local variation and interest.

The Street Tree Masterplan will detail proposed tree species for each neighbourhood and specific streets.

#### **Policy Statement**

Species selection for streets will be prescribed by the Auburn Street Tree Masterplan

### **3.7.3 Inappropriate planting**

Other than street planting undertaken in conjunction with a Development Consent, Council will not permit the planting of trees by residents on Council managed land. This is to ensure:

- underground services are protected;
- appropriate species are selected; and
- the location for planting is suitable when considering sightlines, public services, etc.

#### **Policy Statement**

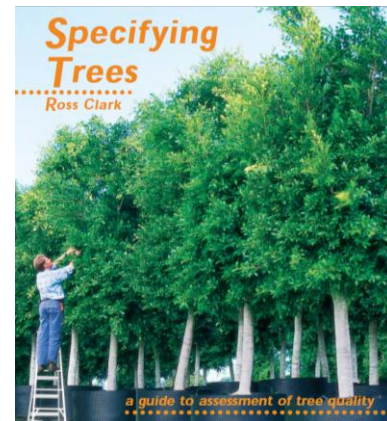
Council reserves the right to remove any trees that have been planted without authorisation

### **3.7.4 Tree Stock**

Generally Council will seek to acquire new trees compliant with NATSPEC guidelines.

To address issues relating to potential vandalism the following applies:

- Trees for planting should be no taller than two metres in height and 50-80 mm wide in trunk calliper (at ground level).
- Tree species, height and calliper specifications will vary according to the supply of stock.



- No tree stock for planting will be greater than that grown in a 45 Litre container.

Some variation to the container size may be required in some cases and these Individual requirements and specifications will be site-specific and will allow for variable conditions such as verge width, existing service locations and surrounding infrastructure.

Any request or planned planting where selected stock is either not available or at the specified size by council will be automatically deferred on Council's tree replacement program for the following planting season.

### **3.7.5 Bonds for public trees**

Bonds may be placed on public trees considered to add amenity value to the landscape character through the development process. Bonds are calculated using the Theyer Tree Evaluation System.

If trees are wilfully or accidentally damaged during the development process the bond will be retained and the damaged tree/s repaired or replaced.

#### **Policy Statement**

Council will ensure the protection and reinstatement of public trees affected by the development process through the imposition of bonds

## **3.8 Trees and Services / Structures**

### **3.8.1 Electrical Overhead Services**

Historically some tall growing trees were inappropriately planted beneath powerline services. Poor tree selection practices of the past are not being repeated today with smaller growing species being chosen.

Legislation exists that allow service providers such as Ausgrid to maintain their assets without being impacted by trees. In the Auburn LGA, Ausgrid is responsible for maintaining clearances for overhead powerlines. Auburn City Council Tree Policy & Framework Plan 2012 Page | 14

In some cases the pruning standard applied by Ausgrid's contractors is questionable and needs to be improved.

The opportunity exists to work with Ausgrid and new developments in the area to:

- Improve the standard of Ausgrid's tree maintenance works
- Install underground services to reduce the need for continual pruning
- Remove trees disfigured or made unsafe by pruning works and replacement with new trees that will not impact upon service lines.

### **Policy Statement**

Council shall pursue cooperation with Ausgrid and local developments, to improve tree maintenance standards, underground powerlines and replace trees in conflict with powerlines with more suitable species

Residents concerned about trees interfering with powerlines are encouraged to contact Ausgrid's Customer Service Centre directly 13 15 35, or <http://www.ausgrid.com.au>

### **3.8.2 Sewer and Storm Water**

Property owners are responsible for the maintenance and repair of the structures and below ground pipes on their land. If there is a problem with roots, the removal of trees, whether they are on Council land or private land, will not necessarily resolve the problem.

It is noted that in the long established areas of the Auburn LGA, the majority of its underground pipe system comprises mostly of clay pipes that are possibly between 40- 60 years old and may warrant removal and replacing due to natural degradation of the pipes and seals. Tree roots cannot enter below ground pipes that are intact. Once a pipe has broken or its seal has perished, roots can enter from any source. For tree roots to enter below ground pipes, the pipes need to have been broken already by another cause. This is seen as a maintenance issue and the responsibility of the landowners to remove and repair such items on their property.

Tree roots from Council or private trees will not interfere with service pipes, providing the systems including pipe seals are maintained and in good working order.

Sewer and stormwater pipes which run from a property either to Sydney Water's main sewer or to some other discharge point belong to the owners of the property and it is the owner's responsibility to maintain the pipes in good working condition.

### **Policy Statement**

Council will not consider removing healthy trees that enter drainage or sewer system, where the system is found to be in poor condition or not regularly maintained

### **3.8.3 Trees and structures**

With a limited budget and resources Council manages an estimated 20,000 trees. In managing this tree population it also balances the



degree of tree related risk to the public and property with the resources available. Council has a process for dealing with alleged damaged caused by public trees and deals with these matters in accordance with risk management considerations. Where a tree is alleged to have caused damage to property, the onus is upon the claimant to substantively prove the case. This may include the need for investigative excavations to demonstrate interference by roots. Where a public tree has been confirmed to cause damage to a structure Council will initiate steps to abate the nuisance.

Residents who believe a Council managed tree has damaged their property and wish to enquire about claiming against Council, may contact Council's Customer Service Centre.

### **Policy Statement**

Council will effectively manage evidence based claims concerning Council owned trees

### **3.9 Vandalism**

The community accepts the need for responses to tree related vandalism and that each situation will require a different response. There is a need to educate the community in regard to the potential outcomes of this type of behaviour such as:

- The prosecution of people proven to have wilfully destroyed or damaged trees. This will entail the financial burden of a fine consistent with the amenity value of the tree in question (assessed using the Theyer Methodology) and the cost of replanting another tree including the associated establishment costs
- Where a tree is poisoned it will have all the branches removed and the stump left for a minimum 12 month period. A public notification process will be undertaken to inform local residents
- For every tree vandalised council will aim to plant two replacements where space permits
- In appropriate circumstances signs or banners will be erected by Council in the affected trees or within the locality

### **Policy Statement**

Council will discourage deliberate damage caused to trees using legal and other deterrents

A vandalised public tree has been made safe and retained as a deterrent

## **4. Private Tree Management**



A vandalised public tree has been made safe and retained as a deterrent



## 4.1 Tree Preservation

Historically Auburn City Council has held a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to assist in the regulation and protection of the urban canopy. The aim of the TPO was to protect and promote the retention of trees with a view to increasing amenity and providing a range of benefits to the community as a whole.

In 2010, Council adopted a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP). The DCP replaced the TPO and now prescribes the Tree Preservation Guidelines applicable across the LGA.

This places the management of private trees in the same area as the development application process. This will ensure the preservation of existing and implemented trees within the urban landscape.

Residents seeking to prune or remove a tree protected by Council's DCP and which is located on private property need to submit to Council a Tree Permit Application.

All applications to prune or remove trees must have the consent of all the owner/s of the property on which the tree stands.

Upon receipt of completed application a Council Arborist inspects the site to assess the tree and the merits of the application before a determination can be made. The assessment criteria used are consistent with those applied for public trees in Section 3.3.

In circumstances where trees are permitted to be removed, consideration will be given to requiring that a replacement tree be provided in the interest of maintaining tree canopy.

In circumstances where a tree is growing on a neighbour's property the owners of the property on which the tree stands must sign the application before it will be considered by Council.

Council does not mediate disputes between neighbours regarding trees. Conflict over the management of private trees in neighbouring properties is the responsibility of both neighbours to resolve.

Where attempts for mediation between parties has failed, the opportunity exists for an owner of land to apply to the NSW Land and Environment Court, under the provisions of the Tree (Disputes Between Neighbours) Act 2006 (The Act), for an order to remedy, restrain or prevent damage to the owner's property, or to prevent injury, as a consequence of a tree situated on adjoining land.

### Policy Statement

Council will regulate tree pruning and removal activities through the Tree Preservation Section of the Auburn DCP

## 4.2 Trees and Development Assessments



Trees that are adjacent or located on, a development site that may be impacted by the development process are required to be provided with protection measures in accordance with Australian standard AS 4970-2009 (Protection of Trees on Development Sites).

Trees potentially impacted by new development will require an Arboricultural Impact Statement/Report with the Development Application which provides appropriate recommendations for tree protection. The report format should be in compliance with Council's Guidelines for the Preparation of Arborist Reports.

The submission of an Arboricultural Impact Statement/Report may assist and shorten the duration of the development's assessment process.

Conditions relating to replacement and new planting will also be placed on new developments with a view to protecting and enhancing Auburn's tree canopy.

### **Policy Statement**

Council will ensure that Development Applications include all requisite information to allow comprehensive assessment and the imposition of conditions to protect and enhance the tree canopy

### **4.3 Storm Events/Emergency Situations**

Storm related tree works may be undertaken by authorised emergency workers, where a tree poses imminent threat of life or damage to property. In the case of Street Trees, emergency workers, or Council staff may undertake removal as soon as possible.

To contact emergency workers during a storm event call the State Emergency Service 132 500.

# 5. Community Participation

## 5.1 Street tree renewal

Where substantial tree removal and/or planting are proposed in streets and parks, adjoining residents will be consulted.

## 5.2 National Tree Planting day and other community planting days

Each year Council promotes community participation in National Tree Planting Day, which occurs in the last week in July. During this week over 2,500 trees and shrubs are planted and provided to local schools. Council also coordinates a Community Pride Program that includes various events throughout the year including tree-planting activities.

## 5.3 Free plant giveaway

The aim of this initiative is to assist Auburn ratepayers in accessing native and locally occurring trees and shrubs. The inaugural give-away week was conducted in September 2011 and over 2,000 plants were collected from Council's nursery.

The program is proposed to be an annual event hosted in the first week of September each year.

### Policy Statement

Council will consult with residents regarding large scale tree replacement or new planting works and promote participation in tree planting activities

2011 National Tree Planting Day Auburn Botanic Gardens

2011 Plant giveaway event at Council's nursery



2011 National Tree Planting Day Auburn Botanic Gardens



2011 Plant giveaway event at Council's nursery