

Tree Preservation Order/ Urban Forest Management
Procedure information

Trees are a vital and important part of Penrith City. Trees beautify, reduce pollution, provide shade, habitat, protection from the elements and reduce the effects of strong winds and floods. Trees increase the value of property within the area. Penrith City Council is constantly replanting trees to ensure the environmental, aesthetic, habitat and amenity values are maintained and improved.

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) applies to the whole of the Penrith Local Government Area to ensure the long-term survival of the landscape character of the area. It promotes the replanting and good management of trees, whilst prohibiting the ring-barking, cutting down, topping, lopping, removing, injuring or willful destruction of any trees having a height greater than 3m with a girth of 30cm measured 40cm above the ground except with the written consent of Council. Fines for pruning, removal or failure to comply with conditions range from an on the spot fine of \$1500 to \$1,100,000 through the Courts.

The Tree Preservation order applies to all trees on private property contact Councils Parks Department for issues relating to street trees and trees on public property

A poorly pruned tree can result in the tree dying off, becoming unbalanced, stressed and/or being susceptible to pathogen/insect infestations which in turn weaken the tree and may cause its decline. Trees generally do not benefit from pruning. Pruning is for our benefit.

Tree pruning / removal process

The Tree Preservation Order prohibits the pruning or removal of any tree over 3 metres tall without consent from Council. A formal application must be submitted. The application is assessed. The tree is inspected and a determination made. A permit (refusal or approval) will be left in your letterbox on the day. A letter will be sent if the application cannot be resolved at the time of inspection.

An application must be made to Council.

Application forms are available from:

- ❖ The internet (www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au – Your Council – A-Z Council Services – T for Tree Preservation – Inspection Request form).
- ❖ From Council offices at Penrith or St Marys
- ❖ Or by ringing the Parks Section of Council on 4732 7559.

Ensure all sections of the application are addressed. Provide as much information as is possible. Include reasons/justification and attachments (Tree Reports, photos, etc) to support the application. A lack of information can delay the process.

There is an administration fee for the application:

\$39.00

Once the application is submitted your application is determined within 2-3 weeks (in the majority of cases). To deal promptly with applications appointments are not initially made. It is anticipated that no one will be home at the time of inspection. If access is difficult (locked property, protective dogs) then arrangements will be made for the inspection.

A Council Officer assesses your application. Assessment is based on the information on your application. A rudimentary visual assessment of the tree/s is done in accordance with your application and the following:

- Health of the tree;
- Condition of the tree;
- Problems the tree may be causing;
- Target area (the area under the tree and frequency of its use).

All alternatives to removal must be considered. If there is insufficient information on your application to justify the proposed removal / pruning further information may be required. This may be a Tree Report from an independent consulting arborist.

Standard Conditions:

If approval is granted to prune or remove the tree/s the following conditions will be imposed.

A replacement tree must be planted on the property in a more suitable location for each tree removed. Trees must be pruned or removed in accordance with Australian Standards on Pruning Amenity Trees AS4373-2007 and as specified, Workcover Code of Practices Amenity Tree Industry 1998. Approvals are valid for 12 Months.

NB: Council Policy can change at any time and it is recommended that you check directly with Council.