



# Campbelltown Tree Planting Guide



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# Tree Planting Guide



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## ***Introduction and Purpose of the Guide***

Trees are a very important part of our City. They provide a number of benefits for both people and the environment, and they also play an important role in creating the character or feel of a suburb or locality.

However, trees can cause a number of problems if planted in an unsuitable position. They can cause damage to footpaths, underground pipes, buildings and can also create problems for neighbours by blocking sunlight or dropping leaves and branches. With some simple planning, you can prevent many of these problems from occurring.



The purpose of this Guide is to help people choose the right type of tree for their property, and find the right place to plant it. Please note that this Guide only relates to private land, and that **people must not plant trees or shrubs on the nature strip, or other Council property such as Reserves and Parks.**

Please read through the Guide and think about how the topics relate to your property. Identifying possible problems and addressing them before a tree is planted is a much better option than dealing with problems in the future.

If you have any further questions about selecting trees for your garden, please talk to your local nursery. Their staff may be able to assist you.

## ***Other Tree Related Information Provided by Council***

As well as this Tree Planting Guide, Council also has a series of Fact Sheets on tree related topics including:

- Removal of Fallen Trees and Branches Following Storm Events
- Neighbourhood Tree Disputes
- Native Gardening Guide for the Campbelltown Local Government Area



These fact sheets are available on Council's website, and from Council's Civic Centre and branch libraries.

Council is currently reviewing its requirements for the removal or trimming of trees within the City. Once this has been completed, a "Trimming and Removing Trees" fact sheet will also be available.

## ***Why Plant Trees?***

Trees benefit the environment and our community in a number of ways, and can also provide financial benefits to residents by reducing cooling costs. Listed over the page are some of the ways in which trees benefit the Campbelltown area.



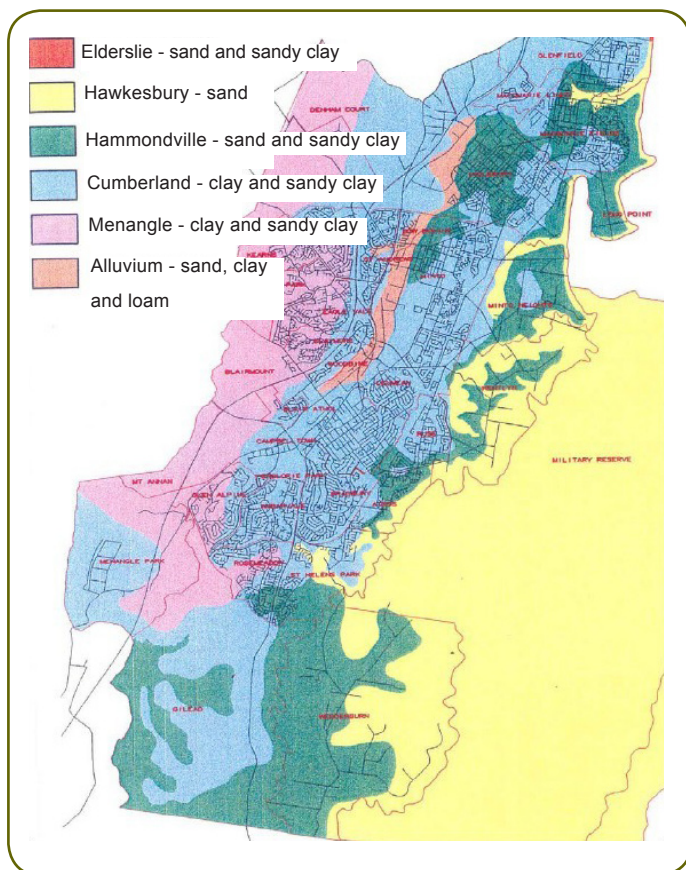
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- Trees create shade for streets and backyards. In Summer this helps to lower the temperature and make these areas more comfortable.
- Trees can create privacy for residents.
- Trees native to the local area can provide habitat for native animals such as koalas, birds, insects and other native animals.
- Planting local native trees may help to discourage feral pests such as the Indian Myna bird.
- Trees add a pleasant atmosphere to streets and gardens. They promote a sense of neighbourhood amenity.
- Trees can be used to frame views or to complement building design. A well designed and maintained garden with trees may add value to a property.
- Trees and their flowers can create delicate scents in the garden.
- Trees can create a place for children to play. This encourages children to be active and to use their imaginations in a natural setting.
- Trees help to improve the quality of stormwater. They do this by preventing soil erosion and encouraging water to soak into the soil, which reduces the amount of surface run off.
- Trees improve the atmosphere. They do this by absorbing carbon dioxide and airborne pollutants, and releasing oxygen to the air.
- Trees help to create the character of our local suburbs.



## Trees Need The Right Soil

The Campbelltown area has a number of soil types, which have different characteristics. Plants are often suited to particular soil conditions. If you know your soil type, you can choose trees appropriate for your garden. Below is a map showing the main soil types in Campbelltown.



However, in many residential situations the characteristics of the soil may have changed, and may require the addition of a suitable top soil. Please contact your local nursery if you need help in determining the soil type at your property.

## ***What Tree to Plant Where***

It is important to plant a tree which is suitable for the chosen location. Simple planning can reduce the likelihood of problems occurring in the future. The following are some factors to consider before planting a tree.

### ***Planting Near Overhead Lines***

Care should be taken when planting trees near overhead powerlines. Trees planted in this location are extremely difficult to maintain and pose a safety threat to both people and property. Do not plant a tree directly underneath overhead lines.



When planting a tree near overhead lines, you need to choose the species carefully. Tall species or those with a large canopy can interfere with overhead lines, even when they are not planted immediately adjacent to them.

### ***Planting Near Footpaths and Underground Services***

Many people establish trees and other plants too close to footpaths and services such as underground pipes and wiring. This can cause problems which can be dangerous and costly to repair.

Residents in older suburbs should be particularly careful when choosing which tree species to plant. Many older suburbs have earthenware drainage and sewerage pipes which are particularly prone to leakage. This, in turn, attracts tree roots which then can cause further damage to pipes.



As a guide, small trees and shrubs should be planted at least 3 metres away from underground services. Trees with a mature height of over 8 metres should be planted at least 5 metres away from underground services. For further information, contact your local nursery.

One way of locating underground services on private property is to call “Dial before you dig” on 1100 and request plans of any underground services on the property. Please note that not all service providers participate in this programme, and that additional services may have been installed without the knowledge of the relevant authorities. For this reason, exercise caution when planting trees and shrubs adjacent to or near to underground services.



Make sure you allow enough room for access to items such as manhole covers and water meters. These may need to be accessed at any time, so clear access needs to be maintained.

Take care when planting trees near footpaths. Large root systems can disturb and damage them, and branches can interfere with people walking along the footpath. It is the resident’s responsibility to ensure that there is a 2.2m clearance above the footpath, and that the roots from the tree do not interfere with the path.

As mentioned previously, **residents are not authorised to plant trees on the nature strip.**

### ***Dropping Leaves and Seeds***

When planting a tree or shrub consider how much maintenance it will require, whether its seeds will create a safety hazard on footpaths and whether its leaves will fall into a neighbour’s property.

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Debris from plants can pose a safety problem when they land on footpaths or areas that are commonly used by people. Sticks can pose a trip hazard, and things like seed pods and gum nuts can be slippery under foot. These are particularly hazardous for elderly people and people with limited mobility. Therefore, avoid planting trees which will drop these objects near footpaths or other areas which are used regularly.

Another common mistake is for people to plant trees which drop a lot of leaves or seeds near swimming pools. This requires more work in maintaining a pool, and creates more work for pool chemicals and equipment.

People should also consider whether items from the tree that is to be planted are likely to drop or be blown into a neighbour's yard.



## ***Planting Near Buildings***

Large trees can present a hazard in storms and have the potential to cause major damage to property. When planting a large tree near a house, place it at least half its mature height away from any building.

For example, if a tree grows to a mature height of 10 metres, plant the tree at least 5 metres away from any building. This will reduce the potential impact from a future fall.

Once a tree is 3m in height, or the trunk has a diameter of 150mm or more, you must apply to Council to have it trimmed or removed. The fact that you have planted a tree does not give you authority to trim or remove the tree.

### ***Planting Near Driveways***

One issue that is commonly overlooked when planting a tree is allowing sufficient 'line of sight' for both an individual's and the neighbours' driveways. Care should be taken to ensure that ample vision is provided for all driveway users to see both the roadway and the footpath when either leaving or entering a property. This will minimise the risk of an accident or injury, and also makes entering and exiting a property easier.

### ***Consider Your Neighbours***

When planning a garden, consider what impact it might have on neighbours and their property. Considering potential problems can avoid conflict. Why not discuss your gardening plans with your neighbours before you begin?

Some issues to consider:

- Will trees block the sunlight on a neighbour's property?
- Will trees block the view from a neighbour's property?
- Is a tree likely to hang over the fence, or drop leaves or seeds into an adjoining yard?
- Are the roots from a tree likely to spread under the fence and create problems in a neighbour's yard?



## ***Planting Local Native Species***

Planting native species is a popular option for many residents as it promotes local biodiversity. Choosing plants which are naturally found in the local area will encourage local wildlife into gardens. Local species are also suited to local soil and rainfall conditions.

Council has prepared a “Native Gardening Guide for The Campbelltown Local Government Area”. The Guide includes hints on planting native species, and also includes a list of native species which are best suited to the Campbelltown area. The list is categorised according to species size, and includes information on features of the tree and whether it is animal attracting. The guide is available both on Council’s website, and from Council’s Civic Centre and branch libraries.

## ***Mixing Exotic and Native Species***

There are a number of reasons why people may wish to plant introduced species rather than native species. Whatever the personal preference, choose species appropriate for the specific garden location.

Care should be taken when mixing exotic and native species, as often they will have differing requirements for water and fertiliser. Generally, native species do not like to grow in a soil high in nutrients and water. However, these conditions are preferred by many exotic species. This is particularly important when planting shrubs and flowers around an established native tree, as adding lots of nutrients to the soil for exotic species can negatively affect the health and condition of the established tree.



## ***Inappropriate Species to Plant***

There is an immense range of species to consider when deciding upon which plants to use in a private garden. The

selection of an appropriate species will depend on personal preference and the characteristics of each property. Remember, what is appropriate for one property may not be appropriate for another. However, there are a number of species which are very likely to create problems when planted in the Campbelltown area.



The following species should be avoided:

- The Large Leaf Privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*) and the Small Leaf Privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) are both invasive weeds. Under the Noxious Weed Act (1993), these plants must not be sold, propagated or knowingly distributed, and must be prevented from flowering or fruiting.
- The Rubber tree (*Ficus elastica*) is also a particularly invasive weed. It is declared a noxious weed in some parts of NSW.
- Camphor laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*) is another invasive weed, and impacts on the health of some members of the community. It is declared a noxious weed in some parts of NSW.
- The Leyland Cypress (*Cypress Leylandii*) (also commonly called Leighton Green) is a fast growing species commonly used for hedges.

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This tree is unsuitable for urban areas, given its dense foliage and a mature height of over 30m. Council strongly discourages the planting of this species in suburban gardens.

- The Cocos Island or Queen Palm (*Syagrus romanzoffianum*) is an invasive species which can grow up to 12m, and its many seeds germinate quickly, meaning it can rapidly spread to bushland areas and threaten local biodiversity.

**Cocos Island Palm**



**Large Leaf Privet**



**Rubber Tree**



**Leyland Cypress**



**Camphor Laurel**

## **Hedges**

Hedges can provide a number of benefits for your property. They are good for framing views, complementing buildings, and adding a pleasant atmosphere to streets and gardens. More commonly

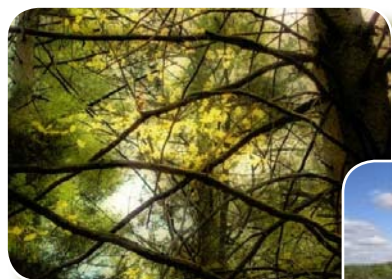
however, they are used to create shade for your property, and to create privacy. When planned well, a hedge can be a central element in your garden.

However, an inappropriately planted hedge can block your neighbour's views, block sunlight, and even cause damage to your neighbour's property. When planning your hedge, please take time to consider the impact that your hedge may have on your neighbour.

Consider the height to which the hedge will grow, and how dense the mature foliage will be.

### ***Termites***

Residents should regularly have both their house and the trees inspected for termites or signs of termite activity. Termites can cause significant and expensive damage to a property. Please consult local pest controllers to determine the level of risk of termite damage to individual properties, and consider having a property regularly inspected.



**For further information contact:  
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