

2.44 Street Trees

POLICY TITLE: STREET TREES
FILE REF: SC171
EXPIRY DATE: DECEMBER 2026

OBJECTIVE

This policy provides a framework for the controlled planting and maintenance of street trees within Lockhart Shire to:

- improve the coordination and aesthetics of urban streetscapes;
- ensure the health and safety of shire residents;
- alleviate issues regarding the legal responsibility of Council and residents in relation to street trees and urban landscapes; and
- avoid conflict over requests for removal of street trees and possible adverse effect on streetscape due to established street trees obstructing access to new or altered buildings or where general application is made for the removal of a tree.

POLICY

1. Associated Legislation

Roads Act 1993
Local Government Act 1993

2. Related Documents

Lockhart Shire Council Street Tree Plan and Procedures

3. Policy Content

3.1 Legal Obligations

Council is responsible for the planting and maintenance of street trees, including the selection of species, regular health and safety checks, pruning, and removal and replanting requirements.

Residents may assist Council by providing supplementary watering and mulching as required.

3.2 Street Tree Plan and Procedures

The Lockhart Shire Council Street Tree Plan and Procedures is a document created originally in 2003 following consultations between Lockhart Shire Council and various community groups. Information presented in the Plan and Procedures document allows Council staff to work towards developing attractive, uniform and congruent streetscapes, while providing straightforward procedures for shire residents in relation to all matters regarding street trees in Lockhart Shire, including information presented under sections 3.2.1 - 3.2.4.

3.2.1 Street Tree Planting

- i. Planting will be undertaken by Lockhart Shire Council Staff on a periodic basis, with consideration given to environmental conditions, progress of civic works, time and budgetary constraints.
- ii. Council will generally water new trees for the first two years after planting, at a rate of no more than one watering per week.
- iii. Standard frontage house blocks will be allocated one (1) tree, larger/double blocks will be allocated two (2) trees, and each side of a corner block is to be treated as a standard frontage, or as otherwise directed by a member of Council staff.

3.2.2 Street Tree Species List

The selection of appropriate street trees will be based on the following conditions:

- drought tolerance;
- potential to cause issues regarding occupational health and safety;
- potential to become invasive;

2.44 Street Tree Policy

- appropriateness relative to dominance of existing street trees;
- past success of a species; and
- suitability relevant to soil type and climatic conditions.

3.2.3 Street Tree Removal

- i. Existing specimens that have died or had to be removed, and are not on the Street Tree Species List, will be replaced under the conditions set out in sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2.
- ii. Trees will generally not be removed until they reach the end of their life; represent an occupational hazard, or as otherwise defined during periodic/random inspections by a qualified Council staff member.
- iii. Where residents have planted trees/shrubs on their nature strips without approval, Council reserves the right to remove the specimens without compensation, after written consultation with the resident.
- iv. The construction of any building, driveway or the like located in such a manner as to possibly be an interference to a tree on land controlled by the Council should not be approved without referral to Council's Director of Engineering or delegate. If a viable alternative regarding the location of proposed construction is available, then this should be pursued. Alternatively, conditional approval may be granted with the applicant being responsible for the payment for removal and/or replacement of the tree prior to a building approval being granted.
- v. That upon any general request for removal of street trees applicants be informed it is Council policy to only permit removal of street trees where good cause be shown and in cases where Council so determines subject to the applicant to be responsible for the full cost of such removal and/or replacement.

3.2.4 Trees of Significance

Several streets in the Shire contain trees that, although not on the Street Tree Species List, have a historical connection to the area. Such specimens may include Athel Pines, Peppercorns and Kurrajongs. In this instance, these specimens will be retained and not replaced until necessary, in which case their replacement will be defined by the conditions set out in 3.2.1 and 3.2.2.

3.3 Requests

Issues presented to residents regarding street trees, including species selection, maintenance and/or removal should be made in writing and addressed to the General Manager. Such issues will be resolved based on financial and time restraints, in cooperation with the information provided in the Street Tree Plan and Procedures.

*Adopted by Council – 18 December 2023
Refer Minute No. 235/23*

*Adopted by Council – 17 August 2020
Refer Minute No. 161/20*

Adopted by Council – 22 March 2013

*Adopted by Council – 16 July 2012
Refer Minute No – 64/13*