

Tree Management Policy

Policy Administration

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Appendices	Appendix 1 – IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS) Appendix 2 – Sub-criteria for the Assessment of Tree for inclusion within the Significant Tree Register
References & Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> • <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development) 2008</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021</i> • <i>NSW Rural Fires Amendment (Vegetation Clearing) Act 2014</i> • <i>10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice</i> • <i>Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan</i> • <i>Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021</i> • <i>Roads Act 1993</i> • <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> • <i>Electricity Supply Act 1995</i> • <i>Australian Standard AS 4373 – Pruning of Amenity Trees</i> • <i>Australian Standard AS 4970 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Georges River Council Schedule Fees and Charges</i>
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Breaches of Policy	Breaches of any policy will be dealt with and responded to in accordance with adopted codes and/or relevant legislation.
Record Keeping	All documents and information obtained in relation to the implementation of this policy will be kept in accordance with the NSW State Records Act 1998, Georges River Council's Corporate Records Policy and adopted internal procedures.

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Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide direction and a consistent approach to the management of trees on both public and private lands within the Georges River Local Government Area.

Our vision is to adopt best practice principles in tree management to ensure the urban tree canopy across the LGA is enhanced through practicable tree retention and revegetation.

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Recognise the importance of the tree canopy across the LGA through a holistic framework for protection and management.
- Increase and enhance the extent of urban tree canopy to facilitate the delivery of endorsed canopy cover targets.
- Improve the diversity and quality of canopy cover to maximise the benefits of trees in the urban landscape.
- Provide workable assessment criteria for the management of trees on private and public land.
- Provide a consistent methodology for managing and enhancing the canopy cover on private land.
- Outline Council's procedures and processes for maintaining, managing and increasing tree canopy on public land.
- Guide Council's actions on unauthorised works on trees on private and public land.

Scope

The Policy applies to all trees located within the Georges River LGA – on both private and public land.

Definition of Terms

Term	Meaning
Authorised person	Person who has been permitted to undertake required works by the relevant statutory authority, owner or custodian relevant to the infrastructure, asset, or utility.
Canopy cover	The area of land covered by tree canopy when viewed from above. This is often represented as a percentage (%).
LGA	Local Government Area
Significant Tree (as nominated by the <i>Significant Tree</i>)	A tree deemed significant in accordance with the defined categories of significance, including: visual/aesthetic significance, botanic/scientific significance, ecological significance and historical, commemorative,

Register)	cultural or social significance.
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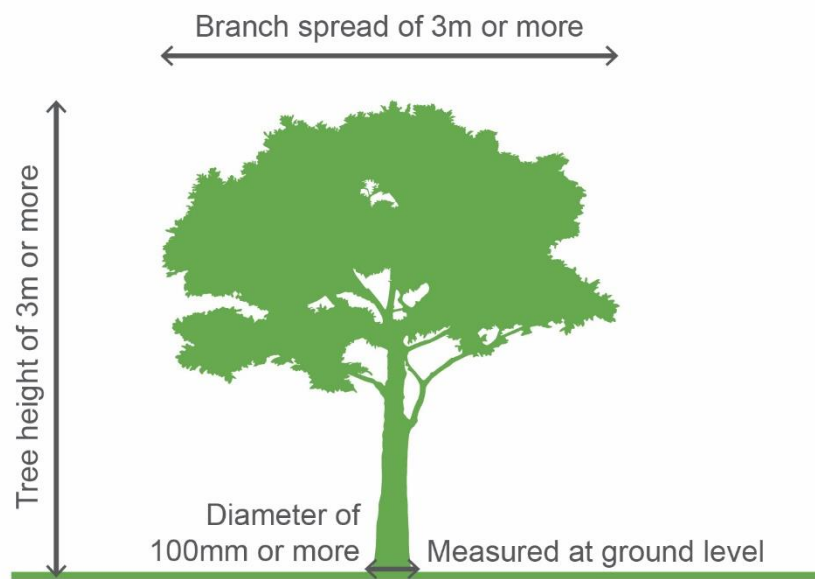
Tree

A tree is defined as vegetation having a:

- Height of 3 metres or more, or
- Diameter of 100mm or more when measured at ground level, or
- Branch spread of 3 metres or more.

Note: This definition relates to this Policy only and other definitions may be used in other policies.

See diagram below for visual reference of what is defined as a tree.



Policy Statement

1. Policy Context

The Georges River LGA is approximately 38 square kilometres covering an undulating landform with a distinct ridgeline close to the foreshore edge. It is predominantly residential, complemented by industrial, commercial and recreational areas.

1.1 Benefits of Trees

Trees and bushland are highly valued by the Georges River community for their ecological, aesthetic, social and economic contribution.

Trees play an important role in creating a healthy and attractive urban environment, providing a sense of place for the community, reducing impacts of the urban heat island effect and sustaining the local wildlife population.

1.2 Existing Canopy Cover

The LGA has an estimated urban canopy cover of 29.17% not including mangroves, or 35% including mangroves (Vegetation Mapping Report 2018). The majority of the existing canopy cover is being provided on public land, including street trees (there are more than 32,000 street trees in the LGA), reserves and bushlands.

1.3 Canopy Cover Target

Council has an adopted target of achieving 40% urban canopy cover by 2038 in line with the *Greater Sydney Region Plan*.

Council has a *Street Tree Master Plan* aimed at enhancing the tree canopy cover on public land to achieve the maximum ecological, aesthetic, economic and social benefits of trees. The plantings are guided by the findings of the *Vegetation Mapping Report (2018)*.

Whilst Council is responsible for increasing tree planting on public land, the enhancement of canopy cover on private land is equally as important to achieve the adopted urban canopy cover target.

1.4 Practical Retention and Revegetation

The ecological, aesthetic, social and economic contribution of trees in the urban landscape is widely recognised by the community. Everyone plays a part in contributing to the urban forest by managing the trees on their land – Council for trees on public land and residents for trees on private land.

Despite the significant benefits delivered by trees, there will also be costs and issues associated with the presence of trees including the potential damage to footpaths and buildings by their roots and invasive species threatening indigenous biodiversity. It is therefore acknowledged tree retention may not be practicable in all scenarios.

Nonetheless, it is crucial that an appropriate revegetation framework is in place to ensure trees are replenished in areas with a deficiency in canopy cover so the adopted urban canopy cover target can be achieved.

Indigenous tree species are highly valued by the community for the habitats they provide for native fauna. However, having a low species diversity is likely to make the LGA more vulnerable to diseases and pests. To maximise the sustainability and resilience of the urban forest across the LGA, a diverse mix of appropriate tree species including locally indigenous, native, exotic, evergreen and deciduous trees is necessary.

2. Determination Framework for the Management of Trees

Council has an obligation to preserve trees and vegetation under legislation. This Policy sets out when a permit is required for pruning or removing a tree and when no Council approval is needed (i.e. exempt works).

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021* requires a permit to be issued by Council for the clearing of vegetation within the Georges River LGA,

including tree removal and pruning.

Additionally, threatened species and threatened ecological communities are protected under the *NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and/or the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Approval from the NSW Department of Planning or relevant agency may be required for the pruning or removal of these species and communities. The record of threatened species communities is accessible on Council's website.

The NSW Rural Fire Services (RFS) *10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice* permits some extent of vegetation clearing on bushfire prone land. The eligibility of the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Scheme is determined by RFS and can be verified on the RFS website.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the provisions of the following Council plans and guidelines:

- *Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021*
- *Georges River Development Control Plan 2021*
- *Georges River Street Tree Master Plan*
- *Significant Tree Register*

The approval requirements for undertaking work (removal or pruning) on any part of a tree (above or below ground) are outlined under the respective headings of **Section 3 Trees on Private Land** and **Section 4 Trees on Public Land**.

3. Trees on Private Land

Council approval is required for works to any part of a tree, above or below ground, with the exception of exempt works.

This section of the Policy outlines the management framework for trees located on private land and contains the following:

- Exempt works
- Tree works that require approval
- Complying development and trees
- Vegetation clearing under RFS 10/50
- Native vegetation clearing under the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme
- Assessment of proposed works
- Replacement of trees
- Trees and views
- Tree disputes between neighbours
- Private trees overhanging public land
- Review of a tree decision
- Penalties and compliance
- Tree vandalism.

3.1 Exempt Works

The following works to trees located on private land (i.e. privately owned tree) are Exempt Works and can be carried out without approval from Council (i.e. via a development consent or a tree permit):

- Pruning and reshaping of hedges.
 - A hedge is defined as two or more trees planted in close proximity that have been deliberately established and maintained through continued pruning and shaping.
- Pruning to remove deadwood (i.e. dead branches or dead fronds) only.
 - Deadwood is specified as dead branches, which are non-conductive branches devoid of any live green leaves, buds, flowers, or living cambium,
 - This work must not include the removal of dying or dead trees, and
 - This work must be undertaken in accordance with *AS 4373 Pruning of Amenity Trees*.
- Pruning or removal of any commercial or domestic tree grown for the purpose of fruit or fodder production, excluding native tree species such as Macadamia (*Macadamia integrifolia*), Lilly Pilly (*Acmena spp*, *Syzygium spp*), Blueberry Ash (*Elaeocarpus spp*).
- Pruning or removal of trees recognised as Priority Weeds by the Greater Sydney Local Land Services Regional Weed Management Plan under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

- Pruning or removal of trees that have been declared “exempt species” by this Policy – see **Table 1** below.
- Removal of imminently dangerous trees as assessed by an AQF5 arborist and accompanied by the completion and submission of the **Exempt Tree Works Form** within 72 hours of the tree’s removal.
 - To show the tree is in this condition, the following must be provided:
 - A record of the tree’s condition, including photographs detailing the issue,
 - The high and imminent level of risk the tree presents,
 - A statement from a qualified arborist with a minimum AQF5 in Arboriculture, verifying how current or future works are the minimum actions necessary to manage the risk.
 - In incidences where a tree has been or is suspected to have been vandalised, this exemption does not apply.
 - Failure to submit the **Exempt Tree Works Form** will result in the tree removal being treated as tree vandalism.
 - The **Exempt Tree Works Form** is available on Council’s website.
- Trees subject to an order under the *Local Government Act 1993*, *Land and Environment Court Act 1979*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and *Trees (Disputes between Neighbours) Act 2006*.
- Tree work in response to an emergency undertaken by Council, State Emergency Service (SES), Rural Fire Service of NSW, when undertaken by an authorised person. Evidence of attendance (e.g. SES) at site with reference numbers must be provided.
- Pruning of branches from electrical wires as required by the *Electrical Supply Act 1995* when undertaken by an authorised person.
- The removal/trimming of trees and vegetation is in accordance with the *Roads Act 1993* when undertaken by an authorised person.
- Works carried out by state or federal government departments or authorities under current legislative requirements.

Note: *Landowners carrying out exempt works are required to keep suitable evidence for a minimum of 2 years to prove the condition of the tree and the works undertaken in the event of a subsequent inspection by Council.*

Table 1 Exempt Species List

Common Name	Botanical Name
Bamboo	<i>Bambusa spp</i>
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
Black Mulberry	<i>Morus nigra</i>
Camphor Laurel (<i>with height < 6m</i>)	<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>
Canary Island Date Palm (<i>with height < 6m</i>)	<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>
Chinese Hackberry (<i>with height < 6m</i>)	<i>Celtis sinensis</i>
Cocos Palm	<i>Syagrus romanzoffianum</i>
Common Willow	<i>Salix babylonica</i>
Contoneaster	<i>Contoneaster spp.</i>
Cootamundra Wattle	<i>Acacia baileyana</i>
Coral Tree	<i>Erythrina x sykesii</i>
Cockspur Coral Tree	<i>Erythrina crista-galli</i>
Hibiscus, excluding: - Native Rosella - Cottonwood Hibiscus	<i>Hibiscus spp, excluding:</i> - <i>Hibiscus heterophyllus</i> - <i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>
Honey Locust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>
Norfolk Island Hibiscus	<i>Lagunaria patersonii</i>
Lombardy Poplar	<i>Populus nigra 'Italica'</i>
Oleander	<i>Nerium oleander</i>
Privet – broad leaf	<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>
Privet – narrow leaf	<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>
Running bamboo	<i>Phyllostachys spp</i>
Rhus tree	<i>Toxicodendron spp</i>
Rubber Tree	<i>Ficus elastica</i>
Silky Oak (<i>with height < 6m</i>)	<i>Grevillea robusta</i>
Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>
Umbrella Tree	<i>Schefflera actinophylla</i>
Wild Olive/African Olive	<i>Olea europaea subsp cuspidata</i>

3.2 Tree Works that Require Approval

Works to any part of a tree, above or below ground will require approval, except for those works listed in **Section 3.1 Exempt Works**.

Council will not grant approval for tree works such as removing or pruning of trees to:

- Improve a view or vista.
- Reduce blockage to pipes, sewer or drainage lines – where the roots of trees that have entered the drainage or sewer systems where the system is found to be earthenware, in poor condition or disrepair.
- Reduce debris occurring through the shedding of leaves, flower, fruit, bark and small branches. The shedding of debris is a natural part of a tree's lifecycle.
- Reduce litter from fauna naturally inhabiting the tree.
- Reduce causing or likely to cause minor damage to driveways and paths.
- When the request for the works is not substantiated or considered appropriate.

Approval is granted through either the issuing of a **tree permit** or a **development consent** as part of a development application. The following tree works require approval from Council:

- Removal of dying and dead trees.
- Removal of hazardous trees where remedial pruning/treatment will not eliminate the hazard.
- Pruning of the live canopy of a tree.
- Selective pruning to remove branches in structural conflict with existing or proposed built structures, where all engineering alternatives have been considered and not feasible.
- Root pruning.
- Installation of root barriers.
- Removal of tree(s) in conflict with built structures, where all engineering and practicable management alternatives have been considered and are not feasible.
- Removal of tree(s) for construction or extension of buildings where there is no feasible alternative that will allow for the retention of the tree(s).

Note: in incidences where a tree is suspected to have been vandalised, enforcement investigation will be undertaken by Council.

3.2.1 Tree Permit

If the proposed works cannot be carried out as Exempt Works, approval through a Tree Permit is required for the following:

- Pruning or removal of a tree, including trees which are:
 - Located on a private property,
 - Listed on the Significant Tree Register and located on a private property,
 - Located within a Heritage Conservation Area under the *Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021*,
- Pruning only of a tree located within a listed State Heritage Item, Heritage Item or

- Interim Heritage Order under the *Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021*,
- Tree works that are beyond the development standards specified by the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development) 2008*.

The following works cannot be carried out through a Tree Permit:

- Removal of a tree located within a listed State Heritage Item, Heritage Item or Interim Heritage Order under the *Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021*,
- Tree works on any site containing a threatened ecological community (TEC), or classified as being part of a vulnerable threatened or endangered ecological community, or has the potential to provide habitat for native fauna under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*,
- Tree works that accompany proposed development activity on a property.

Details on the information required to be submitted with a Tree Permit application to Council is outlined on Council's website.

3.2.2 Development Consent

If the proposed works cannot be carried out as Exempt Works, approval through a Development Consent (i.e. lodgement of a development application) is required for the following:

- Removal of a tree located within a listed State Heritage Item, Heritage Item or Interim Heritage Order under the *Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021*,
- Tree works on any site containing a threatened ecological community (TEC), or classified as being part of a vulnerable threatened or endangered ecological community, or has the potential to provide habitat for native fauna under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*,
- Tree works that accompany proposed development activity on a property.

Details on the information required to be submitted with a development application (DA) to Council is outlined in the DA Guide on Council's website.

Where development activity on a property has the potential to impact trees on public land (e.g. the removal of a public tree), refer to **Section 4.4 Request for Tree Pruning and Removal** for requirements relating to trees on public land.

3.3 Complying Development and Trees

If development is being undertaken as complying development under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development) 2008* (the Codes SEPP), approval to undertake works to a tree beyond the development standards specified by the Codes SEPP is required to be obtained through a tree permit.

Work to a public or street tree will also require approval from Council as the Codes SEPP does not apply to these trees. Information on requesting street tree works and the approval framework is found in **Section 4.4 Request for Tree Pruning and Removal**.

3.4 Vegetation Clearing under RFS 10/50

The NSW Rural Fire Services (RFS) *10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice* permits some extent of vegetation clearing on bushfire prone land. The eligibility of the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Scheme is determined by RFS and can be verified on the RFS website.

It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure all works under this scheme comply with the relevant legislation and requirements.

3.5 Native Vegetation clearing under the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

The clearing of any native vegetation on an area mapped on the biodiversity values map is regulated by the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*. The map forms part of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme threshold, which is one of the factors for determining whether the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) applies to a clearing or development proposal.

The biodiversity values map and threshold tool are used to determine if a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) must accompany a development application. The area clearing thresholds are set out in clause 7.2(1) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017*. It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure all works under the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme comply with the relevant legislation and requirements.

3.6 Assessment of Proposed Works

Assessment by Council of proposed works to trees is based on two primary considerations:

3.6.1 Visual Tree Assessment (VTA)

This is a widely accepted arboricultural industry standard of assessing trees. It is an assessment looking for external signs of decay, physical damage, pest and diseases, potential structural defects, and the health and vigour of the tree.

In some instances, Council may require diagnostic methods that are beyond the VTA.

3.6.2 Arboricultural Significance Assessment

This is an assessment of the tree within its location and the contribution the tree makes to the local area. This can include the trees age, its size, contribution to the character of the area, uniqueness, habitat link or food source for native fauna and/or its heritage value.

The significance of a tree in the landscape is determined through best industry practice using the *IACA Significance of a Tree Assessment Rating System (STARS)* or *TreeAZ* methods.

The assessment may include a hazard and risk assessment using best practice and industry recognised methods such as *Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ)* or *Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA)* and if required, further investigation or testing may be necessary.

3.6.3 Additional Considerations

Considerations will also be given towards the following:

- For trees located on properties containing a listed State Heritage Item, Heritage Item or Interim Heritage Order under the *Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021* or located within a Heritage Conservation Area under the *Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2021*, whether the proposed tree works will affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area in accordance with Clause 2.10 of the *SEPP Biodiversity and Conservation 2021*.
- Whether the tree is part of a threatened, vulnerable or ecologically protected community or part of a wildlife corridor identified in Council's *Vegetation Mapping Report 2018*.
- The occurrence (or lack of) other vegetation nearby and whether appropriate replacement species can be planted.
- Whether the tree is the identified cause of structural damage to a building, ancillary structure, water main or sewer and if all alternative options of remedying the damage have been considered and exhausted.
- Damage to the tree following a significant storm event and whether this damage compromises the integrity and structure of the tree.
- Whether alternate management strategies can be considered such as redesign of a development in order to protect the tree.
- Impact on the health, stability and natural form of trees on neighbouring properties and/or public land.

3.6.4 Historical Issues

Where an application to undertake pruning or removal is based on historic problems or hazards not evident at the time of inspection i.e. damage to buildings, blocked sewers, previously fallen branches, etc, it is the applicant's responsibility to provide sufficient information and background to support the application. This information may be in the form of a report from an AQF level 5 arborist, a registered building inspector, or structural engineer depending on the nature of the problem.

If there is insufficient information, the tree permit or development application may be refused or deferred until further evidence is supplied.

Further details on the information required to be submitted with an application to Council is outlined on Council's website.

3.7 Replacement of Trees

The enhancement of canopy cover on private land is an important part of achieving Council's adopted urban canopy cover target. Appropriate replacement plantings must be provided to ensure there is always a net increase in tree canopy in the Georges River LGA.

3.7.1 Replacement Ratio

To ensure the urban tree canopy cover within the LGA is maintained and enhanced to meet Council's adopted targets, consent for tree removal may be granted subject to the provision

of replacement trees at a ratio of 2:1 on the subject property – two (2) replacement trees are to be provided for each tree removed.

The replacement ratio may be reduced by Council in exceptional circumstances subject to considerations of the remaining tree canopy cover on the subject property and Council's adopted canopy targets. Alternative understorey planting will be encouraged in circumstances where the replacement ratio requirement is reduced by Council.

3.7.2 Replacement Planting Requirements

The replacement tree must have a minimum pot size of 45L at the time of planting and must be maintained until the minimum mature height is attained for the selected species.

Conditions will be imposed by Council at the issue of the consent to specify the required minimum mature height of the replacement tree in accordance with the following categories:

- Small tree: 3-7m high, up to 4m crown spread at maturity
- Medium tree: 7-12m high, up to 8m crown spread at maturity
- Large tree: 12-18m high, up to 16m crown spread at maturity

Refer to Council's website for a list of recommended species for replacement tree(s).

Council may impose conditions specifying timeframes for planting, species and locations of replacement plantings. The planting is to occur within six (6) weeks from the date of removal, or in accordance with the timeline as outlined by the consent.

Audits for the replacement plantings may be carried out by Council.

3.7.3 Offset Fee

Council may determine the payment of an offset fee in lieu of the provision of some or all of the replacement trees. Applicants cannot elect this option.

The offset fee will only be offered by Council where the site conditions do not allow for adequate soil volumes to be provided for some or all of the required replacement plantings. The offset fee enables Council to provide the replacement tree(s) on public land and ensure establishment and maintenance is ongoing.

The offset fee is charged in accordance with the replacement ratio of 2:1 (i.e. two replacement trees must be provided for every tree approved for removal).

The calculation of the offset fee of each replacement tree is based on the significance of the tree approved for removal as evaluated by Council. The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with the Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists (IACA) *Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)*¹. Refer to **Appendix 1** for the IACA STARS document.

¹ Source: IACA, 2010, *IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating Systems (STARS)*, Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists, Australia, www.iaca.org.au

The offset fee of each replacement tree is determined based on the level of significance assigned to the tree approved for removal, which is as follows:

Tree Approved for Removal - Level of Significance	Offset Fee per Replacement Tree as set out by Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges
Low	Low Significance Tree Replacement Fee
Medium	Medium Significance Tree Replacement Fee
High	High Significance Tree Replacement Fee

The payment of any offset fee will be levied through the execution of a Deed of Agreement with Council. A Deed of Agreement must be executed with Council prior to the issue of consent for tree removal.

All offset fees collected will be dedicated to the planting and maintenance of public trees.

3.8 Tree Disputes Between Neighbours

Neighbours have the right to prune the branches of a tree overhanging their property, however they must ensure any pruning work is permissible through a tree permit application or classified as exempt works under **Section 3.1 Exempt Works**. It is advisable to approach the neighbour prior to pruning.

Conflict over the management of private trees on neighbouring properties is the responsibility of both neighbours to discuss and resolve. Council does not have the regulatory powers to compel neighbours to prune or remove trees that may be causing damage or a nuisance to their neighbour, nor can Council mediate in disputes.

Residents are firstly advised to contact their local Community Justice Centre to seek mediation. If that avenue is unsuccessful they can make an application to the Land and Environment Court under the *Trees (Disputes between Neighbours) Act 2006*. The Act only applies to trees on private property and not trees on public land.

3.9 Private Trees Overhanging Public Land

Private trees and vegetation that overhang Council property or public land, footpaths or roadways are the owner's responsibility. Where it is found that private trees and vegetation are causing an obstruction to footpaths or roadways or is a risk to public safety, Council will issue notice that the owner must undertake pruning of their trees.

Should the owner not comply with the notice, Council will undertake the necessary enforcement steps or undertake the required tree works and then recover the cost of the works from the tree owner.

3.10 Review of a Tree Decision

3.10.1 Review of a Development Application Determination

Under the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)*, an applicant may ask Council to review the determination of development consent or a condition within that consent:

- If they are dissatisfied with Council's assessment of their tree, they can submit an application for Review of Tree Determination.
- The application must provide a report from a consulting arborist (AQF5) with any additional reports requested by Council relevant to the stated problem e.g. a structural engineer or licensed plumber report.
- The review of the original determination will then be conducted by another Council Official or consent authority.

Should the review uphold the original determination there is a right to appeal the decision in the Land and Environment Court.

3.10.2 Review of a Tree Permit Determination

If an applicant is unsatisfied with the outcome of a private tree permit assessment, they can request a review of the determination of the application for tree works. Please note the following:

- The review/appeal must be lodged within 6 months of the date of determination,
- The review/appeal must be accompanied by additional information or report(s) not already provided in support of the application,
- A fee applies to all reviews/appeals in accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

The review process has 2 stages:

Stage 1 - The review will be undertaken by an alternate qualified and delegated Council Officer, who will review the provided information and may undertake an additional assessment of the tree, including:

- The environmental, cultural and amenity value of the tree.
- The effect on the health of the tree from branch and/or root pruning.
- Whether the tree shows poor form and shape/vigour typical of the species.
- Whether the tree is located in a habitat corridor and provides habitat or fauna canopy connectivity.

Stage 2 - If a person is not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 1 Review, they can request, via a Review Tree Management Application Form and associated fee, a Stage 2 Review – where the determination is reviewed by an Internal Panel comprising of senior staff from across Council.

The Panel will review the determination based on criteria such as:

- Contribution to the streetscape.
- The evaluation and recommendations of any arborist reports.
- The occurrence (or lack of) other vegetation nearby and whether appropriate replacement species can be planted.
- Part of a group or series of street trees.
- Applicant's reason for requiring the works to the tree – pruning or removal.
- Assessment and recommendation of the Tree Management Team.
- Whether the tree is located in a habitat corridor and provides habitat or fauna canopy connectivity.

3.11 Penalties and Compliance

Any work carried out on trees without approval or not in accordance with a tree permit approval or development consent will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant legislation and Council's Enforcement Policy. This may result in a Penalty Notice or legal action through either the Local Court or the Land and Environment Court against all parties involved.

Penalties vary depending on the severity of the offence. Penalties can be up to a maximum of \$5 million for an offence under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Where penalties have been applied and the developer or landholder is required by the Court to plant a replacement tree, Council will enforce compliance in this matter and will require written proof and photographic evidence of the replacement trees' ongoing health and maintenance from an AQF5 arborist.

3.12 Tree Vandalism

Council investigates incidents of tree vandalism in accordance with Council's internal investigation procedures. Council will gather information and undertake the required actions to rectify the situation. Legal action including prosecutions will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant legislation.

4. Trees on Public Land

Where a tree is located on public land, any works that involve the pruning or removing of any tree and/or its roots requires prior approval by Council.

This part of the Policy contains the following in relation to trees on public land:

- Exempt works
- Street tree species and selection
- Canopy clearances and pruning standards
- Request for tree pruning and removal
- Street tree replacement
- Tree assessment and approval framework
- Review of a Council decision on works to a street tree
- Tree vandalism and penalties
- Compliance

4.1 Exempt Works

The following works to trees located on public land (e.g. Council-owned tree) do not require approval via a development consent or a permit:

- Pruning of branches from electrical wires as required by the *Electrical Supply Act 1995* when undertaken by an authorised person.
- The removal/trimming of trees and vegetation, in accordance with the *Roads Act 1993* when undertaken by an authorised person.
- Works carried out by state or federal government departments or authorities under current legislative requirements.
- Works carried out by Council that relate to:
 - Pruning/ removal of dead wood and crown raising for vehicle and pedestrian access.
 - Pruning to remove storm damaged, dead, or crossing branches; and
 - Removal of trees if causing property damage.
- Removal of trees to allow room for public infrastructure projects.
- Works undertaken by persons authorised by Council where it can be demonstrated that the tree is dying, dead or has become dangerous to properties or persons and is undertaken in accordance with relevant Australian Standards.
- Works to trees completed by Council on public land for the purpose of maintaining tree health or public safety.

4.2 Street Tree Species and Selection

Appropriate species selection is the most effective way of reducing the potential for damage caused by trees to the built environment such as footpaths, sewers and storm water infrastructure.

In considering suitable species selection at a site, criteria include:

- Width of planting opportunity on nature strip
- Street orientation and aspect for shade and sun
- Existing character or 'avenue of trees' in the street
- Traffic volume and speed
- Location of crossings, traffic lights and road signage
- Overhead obstructions or constraints and underground services
- Pedestrian and vehicle use and need for visibility
- Access for street cleaning equipment and service vehicles

In species selection, criteria include:

- Habit of growth
- Physical form
- Visibility around trunk and canopy
- Growth rate and longevity
- Leaf or fruit drop and invasive roots

New tree plantings undertaken on any land owned or managed by Council are to be undertaken in accord with the following Council documents:

- 1) *Street Tree Master Plan* - provides species type and location of street tree plantings for ongoing and future street tree planting themes, preventing conflict with footpaths, roads and infrastructure.
- 2) *Tree Planting Specification* - ensures all trees planted within the LGA are done in a manner that is consistent with industry best practice and to ensure successful future tree canopy establishment.

4.3 Canopy Clearances and Pruning Standards

Council aims to manage its street tree program to ensure, where possible the following canopy clearances and pruning standards are maintained:

- **Buildings** - 3m height clearance from any approved building (where possible), measured from the surface of the structural component, such as a wall or roof on the building's edge.
- **Major Arterial Road** - 4.5m height clearance above the kerb and roadway.
- **Local Roads** - 3.5m height clearance above the kerb and roadway.
- **Council Pedestrian Footpaths** - 2.5m height clearance above the footpath.
- **Telecommunication Lines** - 500mm minimum clearance from the service line.

- **Traffic Lights** - a clear line of sight for visibility of the traffic lights must be achieved with a 1m clearance around the lighting bracket.
- **Streetlights** - 1m clearance around the light and in some cases to allow light dissipation to the ground.
- **Street and Parking Signage** - 1m clearance around the sign to allow visibility of the sign.
- **Deadwood** - removal of canopy deadwood with a diameter of 30mm and greater.
- **Epicormic Growth** (basal and aerial) - removal of epicormic growth at the base, on the trunk or within the canopy.

Pruning practices are aimed principally at preserving the overall health and vigour of the tree. All pruning works are undertaken in accordance with Australian Standard *AS 4373 Pruning of Amenity Trees*.

Pruning under electricity cables to the minimum clearances is authorised under Section 48 of the *Electricity Supply Act 1995* which effectively overrules Tree Preservation Orders or Development Control Plans and other environmental planning instruments, but not State heritage or protection orders. Pruning works within 3m of power lines can only be carried out by qualified service provider authorised personnel.

4.4 Request for Tree Pruning and Removal

The majority of urban trees have a life span of between 20 to 80 years due to the constraints of growing in a built environment. Trees may need to be removed for a variety of reasons including, poor species performance, damage to underground utilities that cannot be repaired and associated risk beyond practical management options.

The pruning of street trees can be instigated by Council or can be requested by the community. Council's arborist will consider the following in relation to pruning requests:

- The pruning history of the tree e.g. previous pruning in response to branch failure or request,
- Location of the tree in relation to buildings and structures,
- Whether the tree forms part of an avenue planting or habitat corridor, and
- The suitability of the species to the location.

Unplanned (reactive) tree works may occur to trees that are damaged, have branch failures and/or where substantiated issues have been raised by residents. Council will assess and specify appropriate works.

Removal of a street tree will be considered if the tree poses significant risk to public safety, due to it being damaged or in poor health.

4.4.1 Notification of Tree Removal

If a coordinated removal of two or more street trees in close succession is approved, notification of residents in the street will be undertaken via a sign placed on the trees prior to the scheduled removal.

Where a single street tree that is 10 metres or higher is approved for removal, notification is undertaken via a sign placed on the tree prior to the scheduled removal.

4.4.2 Trees for Habitat

In line with Council's commitment to the preservation of native fauna habitat, where trees in parks, reserves and bushlands are dead or in decline, an assessment of the tree's location relevant to the roads and footpaths will be undertaken. Where possible and when assessed as low risk potential to cause harm to persons or damage to property, dead trees will be left in situ and allowed to naturally decay providing food and habitat for native fauna.

4.4.3 Augmentation and Habitat Creation

When located in bushland, reserves, or areas of low pedestrian activity and following assessment of the structural stability, the augmentation to create hollows within a stag tree will be considered. Street trees will not be considered for habitat augmentation.

4.4.4 Tree Pruning or Removal for Development

Council is under no obligation to prune or remove a Council tree to accommodate development or installation of services. Where a request to prune or remove a public tree for development is received, Council will undertake an assessment of the proposal and the health and structural condition of the public tree in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and **Section 4.6 Tree Assessment and Approval Framework** of this Policy.

If approval is granted, all costs associated with pruning or removal and replacement are at the applicant's expense. The applicant will be required complete and submit an **Application to Prune or Remove Tree(s) on Public Land for Development** and pay the associated fees. Council will then provide a permit outlining the relevant specifications and conditions of the consent. The pruning or removal of a public tree must be undertaken by one of council's approved contractors provided with the permit. The pruning or removal of a public tree without the appropriate public tree permit or by others not approved by Council will result in the works being treated as unauthorised works penalties will apply.

If development is being undertaken as complying development under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008*, approval to undertake works to a tree beyond the development standards specified is required to be obtained through a **Tree Permit Application** prior to any site works or clearing.

Any work to a public or street tree will require prior approval from Council. *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008* does not apply to trees on public owned or managed land. Circumstances where publicly owned or managed trees may be impacted by exempt and complying development, it is advised that the development should be designed to minimise impacts on the subject trees.

4.4.5 Development Activity, Vehicle Access and Cross-Overs

Development activity, vehicle access and driveways can sometimes generate issues relating to mature and established trees on public land. Construction activity associated with the

development of a site such as truck movements, storage of materials and approaches to construction can compromise the health and vitality of a tree.

Where any development works are being undertaken within 5 metres of a public tree, tree protection including trunk and branch protection in accordance with *AS4970 Protection of trees on development sites* must be installed prior to commencement of any site works.

Applications for crossovers and driveways which will impact trees on public land will be assessed by Council on its merits. Consideration will be given to alternatives to vehicle crossovers including amending designs to maintain the tree or to ensure on going vitality.

To allow a comprehensive assessment of the proposed works, the applicant may be required to provide a Tree Impact Assessment Report including root mapping by a qualified AQF5 Arborist.

4.4.6 Tree Removal for Infrastructure Upgrades or State Significant Works

Where it is required to remove a Council tree for vital infrastructure upgrade works such as a State Significant Infrastructure development, Council will require the loss of the tree to be compensated by the public agency / authority responsible for the proposed works. In accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges, the tree asset value will be determined via the Thyer Tree Valuation Method.

4.5 Street Tree Replacement

To ensure there is no net loss of urban canopy cover as trees are removed, replacement tree planting will be undertaken as soon as practicable. If tree removal occurs late in the planting season, replacement planting(s) may be held over until the planting next season. Planting season is typically in the cooler months of the year.

Where a private view is likely to be affected by the planting or replacing of trees in a street or park, Council will continue its policy that no individual exclusively owns a view, but rather that the amenity provided by trees outweighs the amenity of views. New planting in public open spaces will consider the impact on views and species will be selected and placed to frame and complement views.

Occasionally, residents may request a replacement tree, which is unable to be planted. Street trees may not be able to be planted where there is:

- Sightline restrictions
- A history of damage to underground services that are unable to be repaired adequately to allow for replacement tree planting
- Insufficient clearance from utilities
- Shop awnings and other structures
- Existing trees or canopies that are likely to cause overcrowding.

4.6 Tree Assessment and Approval Framework

Council's qualified arborists conduct inspections using the following:

4.6.1 Visual Tree Assessment (VTA)

This is a widely accepted arboricultural industry standard of assessing trees. It is an assessment looking for external signs of decay, physical damage, pest and diseases, potential structural defects, and the health and vigour of the tree.

The significance of a tree in the landscape is determined through best industry practice using the *IACA Significance of a Tree Assessment Rating System (STARS)* or *TreeAZ* methods.

The assessment may include a hazard and risk assessment using best practice and industry recognised methods such as *Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ)* or *Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA)* and if required, further investigation or testing may be necessary.

4.6.2 Arboricultural Significance Assessment

This is an assessment of the tree within its location and the contribution the tree makes to the local area. This can include the tree's age, its size, contribution to the character of the area, uniqueness, habitat link or food source for native fauna and its heritage value.

4.6.3 Approval Framework

The procedure for the approval process for works to public trees is outlined below:

- The approval for the removal of a tree under 10 metres is determined by a qualified and delegated Council Officer from the Tree Management team.
- The approval for the pruning to the canopy and works to the root system of a tree is determined by a qualified and delegated Council Officer from the Tree Management team.
- The approval for the removal of a tree 10 metres and over is determined by the Director Assets and Infrastructure following advice and recommendation from a qualified and delegated Council Officer from the Tree Management team and documented tree assessment report. Record of Director's approval and tree assessment report is to be recorded on Council's record management system.
- The approval for the removal of multiple street trees (two or more) over 10 metres in a single street is determined by the Director of Assets and Infrastructure.
- The approval for the removal of trees proposed as part of Council's capital works tree replacement program is determined by the Director of Assets and Infrastructure.
- The removal of a public tree in an emergency is to be documented and determined by a qualified and delegated Council Officer from the Tree Management Department.

4.7 Review of a Council Decision on Works to a Street Tree

A review of Council's decision can be requested in writing to Council including information and evidence relating to the subject tree.

4.8 Tree Vandalism

Vandalism of public and private trees not only affects adjacent neighbours but also whole streetscapes. The wider community also suffers through the gradual attrition of mature trees from the urban landscape.

Where Council identifies or suspects that a public tree has been vandalised, it will undertake appropriate action to investigate the matter in accordance with Council's internal investigation procedures. Legal action including prosecutions will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant legislation.

In dealing with vandalised trees, Council will reduce any risk the tree may pose to public safety. However, Council will not remove the tree or allow for any development or activities that will benefit from the removal of the tree.

If a public tree is found or suspected to have died as a result of vandalism, Council will undertake reduction of the tree to reduce any risk associated with tree parts falling, however, the structural scaffolding of the tree will be left in situ for as long as the tree remains a low risk. The tree will be registered on Council's Tree Vandalism Database and an annual inspection will be undertaken.

Depending on the severity of the incident, Council will consider the installation of signage informing the community of the vandalism and the installation of banners within the vandalised trees for a period no less than 12 months or until the area has revegetated or recovered.

4.9 Penalties and Compliance

Any work carried out on trees without approval will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant legislation and Councils Enforcement Policy. This may result in a Penalty Notice or legal action through either the Local Court or the Land and Environment Court against all parties involved.

Penalties vary depending on the severity of the offence. Penalties can be up to a maximum of \$5 million for an offence under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

5. Significant Tree Register

The Significant Tree Register is designed to list all trees of significance across the LGA.

5.1 Assessment of Tree for inclusion within Council's Significant Tree Register

Council has established four criteria used to determine the significance of a tree;

1. Visual/Aesthetic
2. Botanic/Scientific
3. Ecological
4. Historical/Commemorative/Cultural/Social.

An independent qualified consultant will be engaged to undertake the assessment of significant tree nominations aligned with the above assessment criteria through a combination of detailed research, desktop analysis, field work and documentation. Where further information is required to satisfy the criteria, an on-site Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) will be carried out to inspect the tree.

Trees considered for inclusion within the Significant Tree Register must satisfy a minimum of two (2) sub-criteria within each category. The sub-criteria are detailed in **Appendix 2**.

5.2 Exclusions to the Significant Tree Register

Exclusions may be updated from time and time. A complete list of exclusions will be published on Council's website.

5.3 The Published Register

The Significant Tree Register will be published on Council's website.

A Significant Tree located on private land will also be included on the Section 10.7(5) Planning Certificate for the applicable Lot.

5.4 Management of Significant Trees

Trees listed on the Significant Tree Register will be protected and managed like all other trees in the LGA under this Policy.

Removal and/or addition of Significant Trees (on both private and public land) will require review by the Internal Panel comprising senior staff from across Council.

Additional information regarding the management of Significant Trees will be published on Council's website.

Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Director Assets & Infrastructure	Maintenance and review of this Policy.
Tree Maintenance Team	Implementation of this Policy.
Compliance Team	Implementation of this Policy.
Environmental Sustainability & Waste Team	Maintenance and implementation of <i>Significant Tree Register</i> .
Strategic Planning Team	Maintenance of the <i>Georges River Development Control Plan 2021</i> – any updates to this Policy must be referred to Strategic Planning.

Version Control and Change History

Version	Amendment Details	Policy Owner	Period Active
1.0	Complete new Georges River Council Interim Tree Management Policy (Council Resolution ENV003-19)	Director Assets and Infrastructure	25/02/2019 – 22/04/2019
2.0	Amendments to Interim policy addressing the resolutions of Council at its meeting on 25/2/19. Policy no longer considered 'interim' & re-named "Tree Management Policy".	Director Assets and Infrastructure	23/04/2019 – 09/06/2024
3.0	Commencement of revised Tree Management Policy as adopted by Council at its meeting dated 27 May 2024 (Council Resolution ENV018-24)	Director Assets and Infrastructure	10/06/2024 - ongoing

Appendix 1 – IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)

IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)© (IACA 2010)©

In the development of this document IACA acknowledges the contribution and original concept of the Footprint Green Tree Significance & Retention Value Matrix, developed by Footprint Green Pty Ltd in June 2001.

The landscape significance of a tree is an essential criterion to establish the importance that a particular tree may have on a site. However, rating the significance of a tree becomes subjective and difficult to ascertain in a consistent and repetitive fashion due to assessor bias. It is therefore necessary to have a rating system utilising structured qualitative criteria to assist in determining the retention value for a tree. To assist this process all definitions for terms used in the *Tree Significance - Assessment Criteria and Tree Retention Value - Priority Matrix*, are taken from the IACA Dictionary for Managing Trees in Urban Environments 2009.

This rating system will assist in the planning processes for proposed works, above and below ground where trees are to be retained on or adjacent a development site. The system uses a scale of *High, Medium* and *Low* significance in the landscape. Once the landscape significance of an individual tree has been defined, the retention value can be determined. An example of its use in an Arboricultural report is shown as Appendix A.

Tree Significance - Assessment Criteria



1. High Significance in landscape

- The tree is in good condition and good vigour;
- The tree has a form typical for the species;
- The tree is a remnant or is a planted locally indigenous specimen and/or is rare or uncommon in the local area or of botanical interest or of substantial age;
- The tree is listed as a Heritage Item, Threatened Species or part of an Endangered ecological community or listed on Councils significant Tree Register;
- The tree is visually prominent and visible from a considerable distance when viewed from most directions within the landscape due to its size and scale and makes a positive contribution to the local amenity;
- The tree supports social and cultural sentiments or spiritual associations, reflected by the broader population or community group or has commemorative values;
- The tree's growth is unrestricted by above and below ground influences, supporting its ability to reach dimensions typical for the taxa *in situ* - tree is appropriate to the site conditions.

2. Medium Significance in landscape

- The tree is in fair-good condition and good or low vigour;
- The tree has form typical or atypical of the species;
- The tree is a planted locally indigenous or a common species with its taxa commonly planted in the local area
- The tree is visible from surrounding properties, although not visually prominent as partially obstructed by other vegetation or buildings when viewed from the street,
- The tree provides a fair contribution to the visual character and amenity of the local area,
- The tree's growth is moderately restricted by above or below ground influences, reducing its ability to reach dimensions typical for the taxa *in situ*.

3. Low Significance in landscape

- The tree is in fair-poor condition and good or low vigour;
- The tree has form atypical of the species;
- The tree is not visible or is partly visible from surrounding properties as obstructed by other vegetation or buildings,
- The tree provides a minor contribution or has a negative impact on the visual character and amenity of the local area,
- The tree is a young specimen which may or may not have reached dimension to be protected by local Tree Preservation orders or similar protection mechanisms and can easily be replaced with a suitable specimen,
- The tree's growth is severely restricted by above or below ground influences, unlikely to reach dimensions typical for the taxa *in situ* - tree is inappropriate to the site conditions,
- The tree is listed as exempt under the provisions of the local Council Tree Preservation Order or similar protection mechanisms,
- The tree has a wound or defect that has potential to become structurally unsound.

Environmental Pest / Noxious Weed Species

- The tree is an Environmental Pest Species due to its invasiveness or poisonous/ allergenic properties,
- The tree is a declared noxious weed by legislation.

Hazardous/Irreversible Decline


- The tree is structurally unsound and/or unstable and is considered potentially dangerous,
- The tree is dead, or is in irreversible decline, or has the potential to fail or collapse in full or part in the immediate to short term.

The tree is to have a minimum of three (3) criteria in a category to be classified in that group.

Note: The assessment criteria are for individual trees only, however, can be applied to a monocultural stand in its entirety e.g. hedge.

IACA 2010, *IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)*, Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists, www.iaca.org.au

Table 1.0 Tree Retention Value - Priority Matrix.

		Significance				
		1. High	2. Medium	3. Low		
		Significance in Landscape	Significance in Landscape	Significance in Landscape	Environmental Pest / Noxious Weed Species	Hazardous / Irreversible Decline
Estimated Life Expectancy	1. Long >40 years					
	2. Medium 15-40 Years					
	3. Short <1-15 Years					
	Dead					
<p><u>Legend for Matrix Assessment</u></p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>						
	<p>Priority for Retention (High) - These trees are considered important for retention and should be retained and protected. Design modification or re-location of building/s should be considered to accommodate the setbacks as prescribed by the Australian Standard AS4970 <i>Protection of trees on development sites</i>. Tree sensitive construction measures must be implemented e.g. pier and beam etc if works are to proceed within the Tree Protection Zone.</p>					
	<p>Consider for Retention (Medium) - These trees may be retained and protected. These are considered less critical; however their retention should remain priority with removal considered only if adversely affecting the proposed building/works and all other alternatives have been considered and exhausted.</p>					
	<p>Consider for Removal (Low) - These trees are not considered important for retention, nor require special works or design modification to be implemented for their retention.</p>					
	<p>Priority for Removal - These trees are considered hazardous, or in irreversible decline, or weeds and should be removed irrespective of development.</p>					

USE OF THIS DOCUMENT AND REFERENCING

The IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS) is free to use, but only in its entirety and must be cited as follows:

IACA, 2010, *IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)*, Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists, Australia, www.iaca.org.au

REFERENCES

Australia ICOMOS Inc. 1999, *The Burra Charter – The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, International Council of Monuments and Sites, www.icomos.org/australia

Draper BD and Richards PA 2009, *Dictionary for Managing Trees in Urban Environments*, Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists (IACA), CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Victoria, Australia.

Footprint Green Pty Ltd 2001, *Footprint Green Tree Significance & Retention Value Matrix*, Avalon, NSW Australia, www.footprintgreen.com.au

IACA 2010, *IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)*, Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists, www.iaca.org.au

Appendix A

The following example shows the IACA **Significance** of a **Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)** used in an Arboricultural report.

Tree Significance

Determined by using the Tree Significance - Assessment Criteria of the *IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)*© (IACA, 2010), Appendix B.

Trees 14, 16, 17/3, 19 and 20/4 are of high significance with the remaining majority of medium significance and a few of low significance. Tree 14 is significant as a prominent specimen and a food source for indigenous avian fauna. Tree 16 as a non-locally indigenous planting is of good form and prominent *in situ*; Tree 17/3 as a stand of 6 street trees along the Davey Street frontage screening views to and from the site and contiguous with trees in Victoria Park extending the aesthetic influence of the urban canopy to the site. Similarly for Trees 20/4 as street trees in Long Road and Tree 19 as an extant exotic planting as a senescent component of the original landscaping. The trees of low significance are recent plantings as fruit trees – Avocados, and 1 Cootamundra Wattle as a non-locally indigenous tree in irreversible decline and potentially structurally unsound.

Significance Scale

- 1 – High
- 2 – Medium
- 3 – Low

Significance Scale	1	2	3
Tree No. / Stand No.	14, 16, 17/3, 19, 20/4	1/1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12/2, 15, 18, 21/5	3, 13, 22

Tree Retention Value

Determined by using the Retention Value - Priority Matrix of the *IACA Significance of a Tree, Assessment Rating System (STARS)*© (IACA, 2010), Appendix B.

Retention Value

- High** – Priority for Retention
- Medium** – Consider for Retention
- Low** – Consider for Removal
- Remove** - Priority for Removal

Retention Value	High Priority for Retention	Medium Consider for Retention	Low Consider for Removal	Remove Priority for Removal
Tree No. / Stand No.	1/1, 5, 17/3*, 19	2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20/4*, 21/5	3, 12/2, 13,	22

* Trees located within the neighbouring property and should be retained and protected.

Appendix 2 – Sub-criteria for the Assessment of Tree for inclusion within the Significant Tree Register



Significant Tree Register Assessment Criteria

Significant Tree Assessment Criteria:

VISUAL / AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Trees whose age, size, form, seasonal beauty and/or placement is such that they are not only magnificent examples of their species but are also a significant aesthetic component of the streetscape, park, garden or natural landscape in which they grow. This includes trees that:

- a) Are outstanding for their height, trunk circumference or canopy spread;
- b) Occur in a prominent location (such as civic spaces or reserves);
- c) Contribute significantly to the landscape in which they grow [including streetscapes, parks, gardens or natural landscapes];
- d) Form part of a significant avenue or group;
- e) Exhibit an unusual growth form or physical feature; or
- f) Are particularly old or vulnerable.

BOTANIC / SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Trees that could provide important and valuable propagating stock for scientific research, forestry or horticulture industries because their genetic characteristics differ from those typically associated with the species. Including trees that:

- a) Are of important genetic value which could provide valuable propagating stock. This could include unique specimens that are particularly resistant to disease or climatic extremes or have a particular growth form; or
- b) Are unique and have the capacity to act as an information resource that will contribute to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site.



ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Trees that have outstanding value as habitat for indigenous wildlife, including providing breeding, foraging or roosting habitat, or forming a key part of a wildlife corridor including trees that:

- a) Are priority, rare, threatened or locally uncommon species or ecological community;
- b) Indigenous remnant trees that predate the urban development in its immediate proximity;
- c) Make a significant contribution to the integrity of an ecological community, including its role as a seed source or specialised habitat;
- d) Are a remnant specimen now reduced in range or abundance, which indicates the former extent of the species, particularly range limits; or
- e) Are a significant natural habitat element for rare, threatened, priority or locally uncommon or common native species.

Note: Advice from a suitably qualified Ecologist may be required in order to demonstrate the Ecological significant of a nominated tree.

HISTORICAL, COMMEMORATIVE, CULTURAL OR SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Trees that commemorate, are associated with or are reminders of, cultural practices, historic events or notable people including trees that:

- a) Are associated with public significance or important historical event;
- b) Are highly valued by the community or cultural group for reasons of strong religious, spiritual, cultural or other social associations, including trees associated with aboriginal heritage and culture;
- c) Are associated with a heritage listed place and representative of that same historic era; or
- d) Have local significance and are important to the local community and/or are recognised features of the immediate landscape.

Note: Advice from a suitably qualified heritage expert as well as local community/cultural groups may be required to demonstrate the Historical, Commemorative, Cultural or Social significant of a nominated tree

