	Street Tree and Tree Management Policy	Version No:	4.2
		Issued:	August 2007
		Last Review:	29 June 2026
		Next Review:	29 June 2027

Name of Council:	Wudinna District Council
File Reference:	5.63
Responsibility:	Environmental Management
Minutes Reference:	21 July 2026 – 11.2.4
Next Review Date:	Council will endeavour to review this policy every 4 years, including within 12 months following Council election
Applicable Legislation:	Electricity Act 1996 Electricity (Principles of Vegetation Clearance) Regulations 2021 Local Government Act 1999 Native Vegetation Act 1991 Planning, Development & Infrastructure Act 2016 Road Traffic Act 1961 Water Industry Act & Regulations 2012 Work Health and Safety Act 2012 & Regulations 2012
Related Policies:	Public Consultation Policy Risk Management Policy
Related References:	Austroads – Guide to Road Design Part 3: Geometric Design 2026 LGA Mutual Liability Scheme - Tree Management Guidelines 2013 SA Power Networks – Powerline Friendly Trees 2018
Australian Standards:	AS/NZ 4360:2009 – Risk Management AS 4373:2007 - Pruning Amenity Trees AS 4970 -2009 – Protection of trees on development sites

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1. INTRODUCTION

Wudinna District Council recognises the significant contribution that street trees make in providing practical and aesthetic benefits to communities. Trees provide practical amenity and add character, providing a range of environmental, social and economic benefits.

Under the *Local Government Act 1999*, Council has an obligation to ensure the correct management of street trees. Trees can add to the beauty of our towns, but trees of the wrong type, or growing in the wrong place, can create

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problems and risks that are not reasonable. Tree Management is all about managing the various risks and benefits of trees to ensure the best community outcomes.

The following policy is a set of guidelines to be adhered to when residents make requests for removal, planting or pruning of street trees in the Council streets, parks and reserves and also assessments made by Council Officers.

2. OBJECTIVES

Council will deliver a service in the management of street trees in an efficient economic and innovative way. Officers from Council will assess each request independently and on merit.

The Policy will apply to all relevant Council operations and includes commitment to the following;

- To ensure that Council effectively and reasonably manages trees on roads, community land and across the landscape;
- To coordinate and ensure that resources are allocated so that Council meets in its strategic and operational obligations;
- To ensure that trees on roads, community land and other Council owned landscapes are planted and maintained in a consistent and reasonable manner underpinned by risk management principles and resources that are made available;
- To ensure that trees on roads, community land and other landscapes are planted and maintained in an equitable manner and continue to provide amenity to the local community;
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, reasonably allocated to maintain and manage trees across the Council landscape;
- To ensure that trees are nurtured and protected utilising risk management principles with the legislative framework;
- To consider the ongoing impacts of external stakeholders including SA Power Networks and other authorities;
- Ensure tree removal and planting is in accordance with adopted guidelines;
- To minimise and consider issues of conflict between trees and Council infrastructure using the principles of risk management.

3. TREE PLANTING ON ROADSIDES AND COUNCIL LAND

The Council does not plant street trees as a matter of course. Rather, streetscape planting is considered on a case by case basis and is generally done for amenity reasons in a planned manner.

Before planting or authorising the planting of vegetation in a road, Council must consider the requirements of Section 232 of the *Local Government Act 1999,* amongst other considerations.

New tree plantings will consider:

- The surrounding vegetation composition and any environmental or aesthetic considerations;
- The purpose of the road as well as the construction of the road and any impact the trees may have on it, or surrounding structures;
- The impacts the proposed trees may have on any services present, above or below the ground, taking into account Legislative requirements eg. *Electricity Act 1996*, *Road Traffic Act 1961*;
- The type of traffic using the road and potential impacts of road safety;
- The possible impacts on the safety of the public;
- Tree Management Guidelines to determine species and suitability of species;
- Any other matters which may be pertinent to the site.

Where the proposed vegetation may have significant impact on residents, Council will follow the steps in its Public Consultation Policy.

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4. PLANTING ON ROADS BY RESIDENTS

4.1. Planting or replanting of trees and vegetation by residents on Council land may only be undertaken with the involvement of Council Officers. Participation of residents in the beautification of the Council area is encouraged, but unauthorised planting or replanting by residents is not permitted. Planting on Council land requires approval under Section 221 of the *Local Government Act 1999*.

4.2. All requests for tree or shrubs planting by residents of Wudinna District Council, must be submitted via a "Section 221 – Authorisation to Alter a Public Road" form and presented at the Council Office whereby authorisation may be given.

Requests should include:

a) Details of the area to be planted in the form of a suitable map or drawing including Street Number or Section Numbers and Hundred;
b) Names and numbers of the Species of trees, shrubs or ground covers;
c) Written consent of adjoining land owner, if required.

4.3. No street tree shall be planted by persons other than Council Employees unless prior written permission has been obtained. Such permission shall set out the conditions of permission and shall state:

a) That the street tree shall become the property of Council;
b) That the resident shall care for the tree;
c) Any damage to public utilities resulting from the activities of any applicant shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

4.4. The planting of non-prescribed trees or shrubs will not be permitted without the express consent of Council.

5. SPECIES SELECTION

5.1. The selection of tree species for planting and replanting shall be based on the likely ongoing impacts of water restrictions and climate change and include consideration of:

- Existing landscape/streetscape character;
- Environmental conditions;
- The size and long-term effect of the tree when mature;
- Submissions by residents/stakeholders;
- Effect on local fauna.

5.2. Where possible, flexibility is to be exercised and residents' preferences fully considered. Residents are to be encouraged to assist in the care of newly planted trees.

5.3. Lists of appropriate species of trees for planting under powerlines will be provided to the community (Refer to Appendix A). Should planting not be occurring under a powerline, the General Manager Works and Infrastructure has the authority to approve other species at their discretion, providing the species is appropriate for the location.

6. TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT

Prudent management of Council's trees is essential if the Council is to fulfil its responsibilities and manage its liabilities in relation to Section 245 of the *Local Government Act 1999*. It is acknowledged that trees are not permanent fixtures for all time. They have a life cycle and there comes a time when trees decline to a stage where they must be removed, or when disease or damage means that replacement of trees is the most responsible long-term approach.

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6.1. It is Council's policy to retain all trees which are growing on its land except in the following circumstances:

- The tree is considered to be a danger to the public;
- Where there is an immediate risk to life or property created by the condition of the tree (e.g. storm or accident damage), any member of any emergency services organisation, or resident may take action to reduce or eliminate that risk, including pruning or removal of the tree;
- The tree is dead, diseased or not thriving and offers limited habitat for wildlife;
- The tree is unsuitable for the location;
- The tree has caused or has reasonable potential to cause damage to Council's assets;
- The tree affects public utilities in a way which requires such harsh pruning that will limit the future development of the tree;
- The tree obstructs the view of oncoming traffic such that sight lines in accordance with Austroads Guidelines cannot be achieved;
- Where trees affect Council infrastructure in any way, including footpaths, kerb and gutter and the tree is impacting;
- The tree is on a surveyed fence line.

In these instances, Council will remove the tree at its cost and replace (where necessary) in accordance with this Policy.

6.2. Ratepayers shall not remove any tree or trees from any road reserve or any place until they have first obtained written approval from Council. Removal of a tree is subject to meeting the requirements of the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.

6.3. All requests for removal of any Council tree by the landowner only must be accompanied by a valid reason, in writing. Written requests for tree removal of any tree on Council property by a resident are to be assessed by the Council's General Manager Works and Infrastructure.

6.4. Where, at the written request of a resident, the General Manager Works and Infrastructure Services will authorise the removal of a tree and form the opinion that the removal is for the sole benefit of the resident, the removal and replacement will be at the resident's expense and payment must be received before work commences. If deemed necessary, the request may be put to Council for a decision.

6.5. The General Manager Works and Infrastructure shall have the authority to remove trees from streets and carriageways, where it is necessary to do so to facilitate roadworks, including footpaths, kerb, gutter and drainage, subject to all relevant acts and regulations.

6.6. Currently Council does not have any trees listed as "Regulated" or "Significant" pursuant to legislation. If that situation were to change, such trees are not to be pruned, trimmed, lopped or removed unless in accordance with that legislation and pursuant to a Council Resolution.

7. TREE MAINTENANCE OBJECTIVES

Maintenance programs will be developed to ensure continuing maintenance of trees on roads and reserve areas.

The allocation of resources by Council for maintaining trees will determine the extent of implementation of any maintenance programs developed for the purpose. Therefore, the implementation of maintenance programs will be prioritised on the level of funding and resources available.

Maintenance programs will be developed to ensure that reasonable clearance envelopes are provided to:

- Prevent any risk to the public;
- Prevent the impact or damage to property;
- Correct development of young trees, provided it is under Council supervision and within current guidelines.

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Pruning of trees by delegated contractors of SA Power Networks will be conducted as required within the *Electricity Regulations (Principles of Vegetation Clearance) 2010* and in consultation with Council.

8. TREE DAMAGE

Trees from private property may inadvertently fall onto public roads and land under the Council's care and control. The Council considers public safety to be paramount in these situations.

Without removing responsibility or liability which rests with the owner of the tree, the Council may act in the interests of public safety to clear fallen trees from roads and land under the Council's care and control. The Council will clear fallen trees only to the extent required to avert immediate risks to public safety. The tree owner is still considered to be responsible for the tree and will be expected to clear the remainder of the tree. If not undertaken within the specified time, the Council will arrange the works at the landowner's expense.

9. 'ADOPT A TREE' PROGRAM

Council encourage residents to assist in beautifying our district and create healthier, happier and closer communities. The 'Adopt a Tree' program is open to all towns across Wudinna District Council. Residents are required to register their interest for the yearly planting program which will be advertised by Council Staff.

Works Department staff will undertake an assessment of all registrations and determine the most appropriate species from the 'Approved Tree Species for Planting' for the requested location. Council staff may consult with the resident about the tree species to be planted but Council will make the ultimate decision as to what type of tree is to be planted.

Council's Parks and Gardens team will plant the trees, and then rely on the resident to water and care for the tree as per the instructions that will be provided in a care brochure. Council will carry out any formative pruning that is required to encourage good form and health of the tree.

Any trees planted under the 'Adopt a Tree' program will remain the property of Council and will be managed in accordance with this Policy.

10. AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

This Policy will be available for inspection at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours and on the Council's website www.wudinna.sa.gov.au. Copies will also be provided to interested members of the community upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

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ANNEXURE A

APPROVED TREE SPECIES FOR PLANTING UNDER POWERLINES

Trees and shrubs recommended for planting under powerlines and in all Council areas can be found on the SA Government website.
https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/energy-and-environment/safe-energy-use/powerline-safety/vegetation-clearance-near-powerlines/list-of-trees-that-can-be-planted-near-powerlines
Should planting not be occurring under a powerline, the General Manager Works and Infrastructure has the authority to approve other species at their discretion, provided the species is appropriate for the location.

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