

Tree Preservation Policy

Policy Owner:	Planning and Development
Distribution:	All Employees
Implementation:	01 July 2004
Reviewed:	01 July 2006. Reviewed 8 August 2006 (GS01-08/06).
Next Review:	July 2008

Objective

To provide a mechanism to protect significant trees of the City within the following specified areas:

- vacant land and bushland which will be subject to future development; and
- existing and proposed public open space reserves.

This Policy does not apply to existing developed private property, however the City will promote the *principles* of the Policy when considering future development which may affect significant individual trees located within existing developed areas of the district, as well as all publicly-owned land.

Statement

The City of Wanneroo, being an outer Metropolitan local authority, is characterised by its remnant native vegetation, its pockets of large native trees, and in some areas, its semi-rural nature.

The City considers the trees within the district to be a major community resource, and part of its local heritage. It is common for trees to add value to property, and to contribute significantly to the amenity of the City. Trees also provide shade and shelter from winds, provide habitat for wildlife, reduce the likelihood of soil erosion and salinity, and filter dust and traffic noise. The value of trees to the community is therefore multi-faceted.

The loss of trees is becoming an increasing community concern, and the City has noted that wide-spread clearing of trees is a common practice. This is most noticeable on larger landholdings being prepared for subdivision and development.

There are increasing expectations from the community that the City will preserve and enhance the amenity of their localities by addressing this issue.

This Policy may be considered by the City, along with other matters, when it considers applications for:

- (i) proposed Structure Plans;
- (ii) the subdivision of land referred to the City by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC); and

- (iii) planning approval involving major earthworks.

While all applications for (i), (ii) and (iii) above will be tested against the Policy as a matter of course, the Policy is aimed principally at the orderly and proper subdivision and development of larger bushland sites, and publicly owned land, containing endemic or local native trees.

Circumstances Under Which This Policy Shall Be Applied:

The City expects that every endeavour will be made in the course of assessing applications (including structure plans, subdivisions and applications for planning approval) to save and protect significant individual trees and groups of trees.

Structure Plans, Subdivision and Planning Approval

Subdivision design shall carefully locate future public open space areas to accommodate significant groups of trees. *Wherever possible and practicable*, significant individual trees shall be preserved on private lots and retained appropriately within proposed road reserves, public open space reserves and within car parks.

In applying the policy, the City shall not require subdividers to provide public open space areas greater than the 8 or 10 percent requirement under WAPC subdivision policies, however there will be an opportunity for negotiated outcomes in specific cases.

Any application for planning approval involving major earthworks or proposed new structure plan involving any bushland or any uncleared land shall include as an integral part of the supporting information a suitably scaled, accurate site plan and/or aerial photograph showing the location of all trees, and highlighting significant trees and groups of trees, and the reasons for that classification.

The City recognises that the WAPC is the decision making authority for subdivisions and will encourage the WAPC to require that the location of significant trees on subdivision plans is similarly marked.

Where necessary, the City will recommend to the WAPC the imposition of appropriate conditions on subdivision applications to ensure adherence to the provisions of this Policy occurs.

Public Open Space Reserves

Wherever possible and practicable, the City of Wanneroo will protect existing significant individual trees and groups of trees located on public open space reserves. Any necessary development on open space reserves (for public buildings, infrastructure, etc.) will be located and designed in such a way as to ensure that the loss of significant trees will be minimised. In the event that significant tree loss is unavoidable, the City shall plant suitable replacement trees (preferably local native species) in sufficient quantities and in appropriate locations to compensate for any losses.

Replacement of Trees

The removal of significant trees shall be regarded as a last resort and only undertaken after all other options have been considered and rejected as impractical. "Expedience" shall not be considered as sufficient grounds for removing a significant tree or group of trees.

It is recognised that space for trees within the City will diminish as urban development occurs, and as residential densities increase. Therefore, where approval is given under this Policy for a tree or trees to be removed, the City may require a suitable replacement endemic tree or trees to be planted elsewhere on a site.

Recording

Significant trees identified as a result of application of this policy will be recorded on the City's property information system.

Definitions:

Significant: The City may at its discretion deem that a tree or group of trees is "significant" on any of the following grounds:

- i) age and condition;
- ii) height;
- iii) spread;
- iv) girth;
- v) species, whether rare and endangered or not;
- vi) historical association;
- vii) habitat value;
- viii) landscape amenity value;
- ix) by the request of the relevant landowner;

Responsibility for Implementation

Chief Executive Officer, all Directors and Managers