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| POLICY:- | |
| Policy Title: | Tree Management – Rural Roads |
| File reference: | 11.5.4 |
| Date Policy was adopted by Council initially: | 26 April 2007 |
| Resolution Number: | 121/07 |
| Other Review Dates: | 19 February 2012 |
| Resolution Number: | 07/12 |
| Current Policy adopted by Council: | 19 February 2012 |
| Resolution Number: | 07/12 |
| Next Policy Review Date: | 2014 |

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| PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES:- | |
| Date procedure/guideline was developed; | |
| Procedure/guideline reference number: | |

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| RESPONSIBILITY:- | |
| Draft Policy Developed by: | Asset & Risk Coordinator |
| Committee/s (if any) consulted in the development of this policy:: | |
| Responsibility for implementation: | Director of Works |
| Responsibility for review of Policy: | Director of Works |

ULSC Tree Management – Rural Roads Policy

Adopted: 19 January 2012

1. BACKGROUND

Council has approximately 1885kms of Local and Regional Roads that from time to time require clearing for road construction and maintenance purposes. On many roads timber is close to the road formation and overhanging the road. Roadside drainage and line of sight are often impeded by timber growth and vegetation growth.

The extent of tree and vegetation clearing required to provide an acceptable clearance from the road formations greatly exceeds the funds allocated in the annual Management Plan for these works.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- 2.1.** To undertake tree clearing and roadside vegetation clearing in a responsible manner to:
 - 2.1.1 Improve motorist safety by improving the line of sight and road side clearance zone
 - 2.1.2 Maintain the integrity of Council's road asset by the clearing of timber and vegetation from roadside drainage lines
 - 2.1.3 Reduce Council's risk potential.
- 2.2.** To provide guidance to staff in the management and disposal of tree and tree loppings during tree maintenance and clearing for construction works.
- 2.3.** To provide landowners and residents with a better understanding of Council's tree management criteria for rural roads.
- 2.4.** To endeavour to minimise objection to Council's rural roads tree management practices by the implementation of a risk management approach.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- 3.1.** This policy applies to tree maintenance and clearing for road works on:
 - 3.1.1. All Local Rural Roads.
 - 3.1.2. All Regional Main Roads.
 - 3.1.3. All rural subdivision road works.

4. PROVISIONS

4.1. Maintenance Works

- 4.1.1. To undertake clearing of trees and vegetation encroaching on rural roads that impede line of sight or reduces effective pavement width.
- 4.1.2. To undertake clearing of branches and limbs that overhangs rural roads and cause a potential hazard to heavy vehicles or falling across the roadway.
- 4.1.3. Timber and vegetation to be cleared back to the line of the existing mature trees or outside the tree \ vegetation clearance envelope. Diagram 1
- 4.1.4. The removal of hazardous trees / vegetation that have been identified, assessed and or drawn to both Council's and the landholder's attention.

4.2. Construction Works

- 4.2.1. Clearing works are to be undertaken in accordance with environmental safeguards applying to the works. All trees / vegetation for removal shall be identified and marked
- 4.2.2. The clearing envelope for construction work is generally from top of cut batter and toe of fill batter plus any drainage area.
- 4.2.3. Clearing is generally only what is required to complete the works. However to achieve adequate line of sight around corners these limits may be increased within the road reserve.

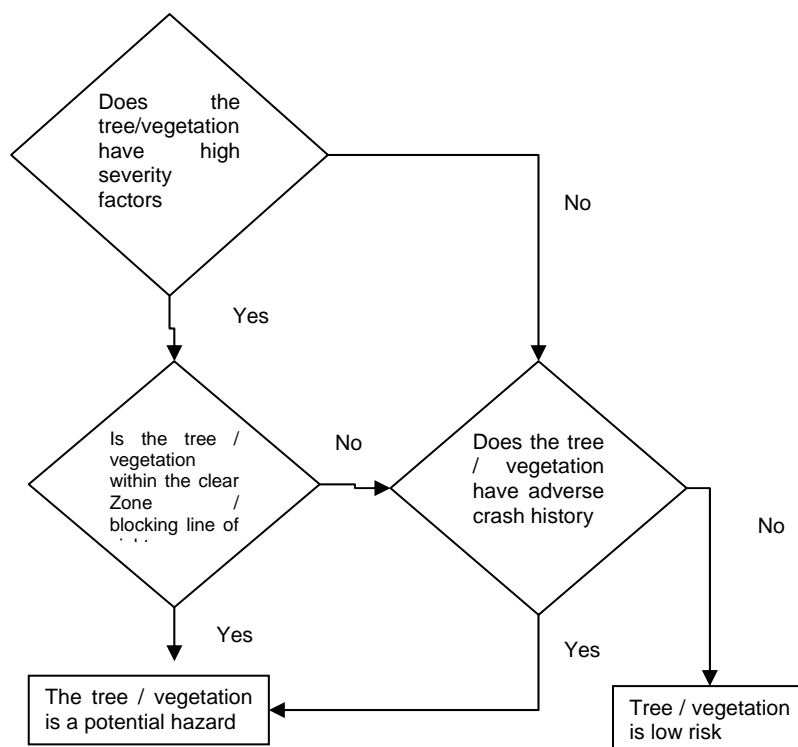
4.3. Environmental Controls / Safeguards

- 4.3.1. Council act in accordance with any Review of Environmental Factors (REF) that may be prepared for the works.
- 4.3.2. Council act in accordance with the provisions of the NSW Vegetation Act 2003 (Native Vegetation Regulation 2005).
- 4.3.3. Council act in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Environmental Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
- 4.3.4. Council act in accordance with the provisions of the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995.

4.4. Tree / vegetation risk review process

The risk process is reviewing the hazardous tree within the local environment, road clear zone and line of sight requirements.

Risk review flow chart (Modified Austroads 2010 part



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4.5. Severity factors

The tree / vegetation shall be assessed individually and in relation to the surrounding environment. The following criteria are used to determine the severity factors of a tree / vegetation identified as a potential hazard.

| Criteria | Low = 1 | Med= 2 | High=3 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Tree size | <100mm dia | >100 <500 | >500 |
| Location in Clear Zone | >3m | >1.5m | <1.5m |
| Road width | > 8m | 8-6m | 6-4m |
| Road volume | ≤50 vpd | 100-50 vpd | >100 vpd |
| Line of sight | >220m | >140m | <140m |
| Speed limit | 100-80km | 80-60km | 100km |
| | | | |

It should be noted that a calculated score value has no meaning other than a basis for comparing with other tree / vegetation hazards providing the system is used.

4.5. Sight distance

Sight distances can be grouped into various categories. For roadside vegetation the main ones to be considered are:

- Stopping sight distance
- Horizontal sight distance
- Sight distance on vertical curvature
- Intersection sight distances (include property entrances)

Sight distance must be at least equal to that required for a vehicle to stop.

4.6. Stopping Sight Distance

Is based on the SSD Stopping Sight distance for an alert driver, travelling at the design speed on wet pavement, to perceive, react and brake to a stop before reaching a hazard.

Increased allowances are required for unsealed road due to reduced surface friction.

4.7. Clear Zone

A Clear Zone is a defined area beside the road that will contain the majority of hazards that are of interest. This involves defining a width from the nearest travelled lane with which the risk of all hazards should be assessed.

A clear zone should be as wide as practicable within the constraints of cost, terrain, right-of-way or potential social and environmental impacts.



Diagram 1 – A Tree / vegetation clearance envelope

5. DISPOSAL OF TIMBER AND LOPPINGS

5.1 Disposal of timber and loppings will be undertaken in the following manner of preference;

- 5.1.1. By agreement of the adjoining property owners to place timber and lopping on the adjoining property owners land.
- 5.1.2. To stockpile on the roadside no closer to the road formation than 3m from the back of the table drain. Stockpiles are to be no higher than 2m with smaller lopping on the bottom to prevent being blown onto the road.
- 5.1.3. By Expression of Interest (EOI) from registered wood cutters / suppliers (where quantities are economical) to remove from the site. Crowns and trunks to be stockpiled no closer to the road formation than 3m from the back of the table drain.
- 5.1.4. Wood chipping where quantities and demand establish an economical opportunity.
- 5.1.5. Under no circumstances is timber to be stockpiled within 50m of rural property entrance or in such a manner so as to impede motorist line of sight at property entrance and at road intersections.

6. TREE PLANTINGS ON RURAL ROADS

- 6.1.** New tree planting may be undertaken on roadsides where clearing has occurred provided suitable areas are available.
- 6.2.** New tree plantings are to be of species that are suitable for the area and do not impose future maintenance liabilities.
- 6.3.** Where clearing has been undertaken in association with new road works that affects adjoining properties, new tree plantings on the adjoining properties will be considered in compensation negotiations.
- 6.4.** New tree planting on roadsides by adjoining property owners are not permitted unless approved by the Director of Works.

7. LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

- Local Government Act 1993;
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005;
- Local Government (Tendering) Regulation 1999;
- Roads Act N.S.W. 1993
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998;
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009;
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979;
- Independent Commission against Corruption Act 1988;
- Anti Discrimination Act 1977;
- Council's Code of Conduct;
- Council's Code of Business Practice;
- Council's Integrated Plans; including Community Strategic Plan, Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan;
- Council's Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy;
- Bribes, Gifts and Benefits Policy;
- Disciplinary Policy;
- Complaints Management Policy; and

8. VARIATIONS

- 8.1** Council reserves the right to review this policy and amend it as considered necessary.