

TREE AND/OR VEGETATION VANDALISM POLICY

COMMUNITY POLICY

1. Scope

This policy applies to all Council-managed land in Livingstone Shire including parks, reserves and road reserves.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote a consistent approach to deterring and responding to the loss of trees or vegetation, on Council-managed land, arising from vandalism.

3. References (legislation/related documents)

Legislative reference

Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995

Environmental Protection Act 1994

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Fisheries Act 1994

LSC Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011

LSC Local Law No. 4 (Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads) 2011

LSC Subordinate Local Law No. 1.1 (Alteration or Improvement to Local Government Controlled Areas or Roads) 2011

LSC Subordinate Local Law No. 4 (Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads) 2011

Nature Conservation Act 1992

Vegetation Management Act 1999

Related documents

Coastal Vegetation and Sand Dunes Information Sheet

Livingstone Shoreline Management Plan (2007)

Management of Vegetation on Council Controlled Land Policy

Management of Vegetation on Council Controlled Land Procedure

Our Living Coast Strategy

Our Living Environment Strategy (*Under Development*)

4. Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Council	The Mayor and Councillors of Livingstone Shire Council
Council-Managed Land	Land managed by Livingstone Shire Council (LSC) including land for which LSC is the:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • freehold title owner; and • day-to-day manager i.e. parks, reserves and road reserves.
Tree and Vegetation Vandalism	<p>The unlawful destruction, damage or injury to trees and vegetation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poisoning • mowing (particularly of the native understory) • pruning • removal • destruction • lopping • topping • ringbarking

5. Policy Statement

This policy has been developed in response to numerous instances of removal or vandalism of trees and vegetation on Council-managed land across the region.

In particular the coastal zone, where development pressure and conflicts between sea views and vegetation, has seen the removal or vandalism of trees and vegetation on public land under the control and management of Livingstone Shire Council.

Tree and vegetation vandalism has a significant and cumulative impact on the region including:

- reduced visual and community amenity;
- loss of environmental services such as wind-breaks and erosion control; and
- loss of wildlife habitat.

Such vandalism can also have substantial financial and human-resource costs for Local Government including the:

- direct loss of the asset value of the trees or vegetation;
- cost of the investigation;
- rehabilitation and repair costs; and
- cost of implementing potential deterrence measures.

Principles

Council is responsible for ensuring the natural assets on Council-managed areas are effectively protected from damage and are retained in their natural state for the benefit of the community.

To ensure protection of these assets, the application of this Policy and the supporting procedure, will be defined, guided and supported by the following principles:

- a) The long-term protection of trees and vegetation on Council-managed land is important in maintaining the economic, cultural, environmental, recreational and social values of the region;
- b) The identification and prosecution of perpetrators of tree or vegetation vandalism should be consistent throughout the region;
- c) Vandalism of trees or vegetation on Council-managed land is a serious offence;
- d) Community education is a key strategy to promote the protection of trees and vegetation and to encourage the reporting of vandalism;

- e) Offenders should not be advantaged by tree or vegetation vandalism and where possible offenders should be prosecuted.
- f) Enforcement, signage, leaving dead trees in place (where safe to do so) and replanting at higher density can be key strategies to ensure no advantage is gained.

6. Changes to this Policy

This Policy is to remain in force until any of the following occur:

- 1. The related information is amended/replaced; or
- 2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council

7. Repeals/Amendments

Version	Date	Action
1.0	18/05/2022	New Policy – Adopted

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