



Council Policy

Tree Management Policy

Department/Unit	Field Services	First Implemented	21 July 2009	Review Date	December 2029
Origin	Manager Field Services	Reviewed	September 2025	Version	4
Authorising Officer	Endorsement of Council	Effective From	16 December 2025	Records Reference	E4322

Purpose/Objective

This policy establishes the governance framework for tree management on land managed or maintained by Mansfield Shire Council (Council). It sets out the guiding principles and objectives that inform all tree-related decisions and activities undertaken by Council, contractors, consultants, volunteers and other authorised personnel.

It aims to ensure that tree management is risk-aware, consistent and sustainable while also recognising the distinct values and tree-related risks associated with different types of public spaces. These varying contexts, such as roads, parks, and facilities, require a tailored approach delivered through a tiered tree management framework.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- ▶ Minimise tree-related risks to people and property.
- ▶ Support consistent and sustainable tree management practices.
- ▶ Enhance urban amenity and liveability.
- ▶ Protect and strengthen biodiversity.
- ▶ Ensure compliance with legislative and strategic requirements.

Policy Statement

Council recognises that trees are valuable public assets that contribute to the health, wellbeing, character and resilience of the community and local environment. Council is committed to the active and sustainable management of trees across all land under its care, guided by the principles of public safety, environmental sustainability and community engagement.

This policy provides the strategic direction for all tree management activities and establishes the governance framework within which operational decisions are made. It ensures that tree

management is informed by evidence, compliant with legislation and aligned with Council's broader strategic objectives.

Implementation of this policy is delivered through the *Mansfield Shire Tree Management Plan* which contains the operational procedures, technical standards and decision-making processes that guide tree management activities. This includes:

- ▶ Assessment and management of tree hazards and tree-related risk.
- ▶ Tree planting, maintenance, and removal.
- ▶ Species selection and planting standards.
- ▶ Asset management and record-keeping.
- ▶ Community consultation processes.

Council's approach to tree management is applied with consideration of the tree location with four categories identified below in this scope. This means that tree management practices may vary depending on the setting to ensure that decisions and resources are appropriately tailored to the characteristics, values and risks associated with different types of public spaces.

The management categories, and the standards that apply to each, are defined in the Tree Management Plan.

All tree management activities must comply with both this policy and the Tree Management Plan to ensure a risk-aware, consistent, sustainable and transparent approach is maintained.

Scope

This policy applies to all trees located on land managed or maintained by Mansfield Shire Council, including but not limited to:

- ▶ Street trees
- ▶ Trees on roadsides
- ▶ Trees in open spaces, parks, and reserves
- ▶ Trees near Council buildings or structures

Definitions

Term	Definition
Tree	A tree is a woody plant with generally a single perennial trunk at least 75 millimetres in diameter at standard height (DSH). Most trees have formed crowns of foliage and attain heights exceeding four (4) metres.
Tree Hazard	A tree hazard refers to a structural defect, condition, or situation involving a tree (or part of a tree) that poses a potential risk to the safety of people, property, or infrastructure.

Term	Definition
Tree Related Risk	Tree-related risk is the likelihood of a tree or part of a tree failing and the potential consequences of that failure. Risk is typically assessed using a risk matrix or framework aligned with standards such as AS ISO 31000:2018 – Risk Management.
Urban Trees	Trees according to the Mansfield Planning Strategy that exist in the Main Service Centre (Mansfield town), Towns and Townships.
Street Tree	A tree located within an urban area that has at least a half of its base located within a road verge/road reserve and less than a half in private property and/or that is located on a road reserve within the 50 kms or less speed limit zones.
Trees on roadsides	Trees located on the road reserve that have not been planted by Council or trees for which Council has not assumed responsibility – typically rural roads and unused road reserves.
Trees in Open Spaces, Parks, and Reserves	Any tree in Council owned or managed land that is set aside primarily for recreation, nature conservation, passive outdoor enjoyment, and public gatherings.
Trees near Council buildings or structures	Trees located near buildings or structures owned or managed by Council (e.g. community centres).

Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the application of this Policy is held by the Chief Executive Officer.

Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff comply with the principles, practices and any associated procedures of this policy. Management, employees, contractors and volunteers are to be familiar with, and competent in, the application of this Policy and are accountable for the delivery of Tree Management within their areas of responsibility.

Council's Field Services Department is the owner of this policy. Any reviews of this Policy must be made in consultation with the Executive Manager Capital Works & Operations, Manager of Field Services, Coordinator Parks and Gardens, Environment Officer and Inspection Arborist.

References / Related Policies

- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Community Initiated Project Policy
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Community Engagement Policy
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Environment Strategy
- ▶ Mansfield Open Space Strategy

- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Plan
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Road Management Plan
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Road Register
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Roadside Conservation Management Plan 2014
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Planning Strategy 2022
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Tree Management Plan
- ▶ Mansfield Shire Council Local Laws

Gender Impact Assessment

Street Tree Policy has had a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) completed and is compliant with the obligations and objectives of the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020.

Implementation

This Policy is effective from 16 December 2025.

Review Date

This Policy is to be reviewed by December 2029.

Authorisation to Implement Policy

Signed: 
Councillor

Witnessed: 
Chief Executive Officer

Approval dated: 16 December 2025

Mansfield Shire Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this Policy at any time.