

Warringah Council Policy

Policy No. Number

Draft Urban Forest Policy

2014/343229

1 Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a principle framework to guide in the planned, systematic and integrated approach to managing Warringah's Urban Forest.

An Urban Forest can contribute to air quality, prevent soil erosion and assist in improving; water quality, carbon sequestration, storm water retention, energy conservation, noise reduction, urban heat and habitat for local wildlife.

Council is committed to establishing a culture of sustainability in relation to tree and shrub management. This includes balancing the protection and enhancement of the Urban Forest whilst managing risks.

2 Principles

- a) to recognise Warringah's Urban Forest as an asset with economic, environmental, social and aesthetic benefit.
- b) to manage Warringah's Urban Forest via Urban Forest principles to optimise its health and condition.
- c) to maintain canopy coverage across the Local Government Area at 2013 levels excluding National Parks. The Policy recognises that there will be a decline in canopy coverage over the next decade before it is restored to 2013 levels.
- d) to manage risk to life and property through best practice tree planting and maintenance.
- e) to promote the retention and planting of trees and shrubs which will enable plant and animal communities to survive.
- f) to recognise and enhance the role that the Urban Forest has in habitat connectivity, particularly in Wildlife Corridors.
- g) to develop and implement an Urban Forest Strategy that articulates these principles and translates them into actions.

3 Authorisation

This Policy was adopted by Council on [insert date].

It is effective from [insert date].

It is due for review on [insert date].

4 Amendments

This Policy was last amended on [insert date].



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5 Who is responsible for implementing this Policy?

All Council staff involved in urban forest related activities.

6 Document owner

Group Manager Parks Reserves and Foreshores

7 Related Council Policies

- a) Street Tree Planting Policy PL 416.
- b) Removal of private trees threatening Council stormwater pipes. PL 415.
- c) Bushland Policy ENV – PL 005.
- d) Protection of Waterways and Riparian Land Policy PL 740.
- e) Environmental Sustainability Policy STR-PL 830.
- f) Enterprise Risk Management Framework Policy PL 700.

8 Legislation and references

- a) Warringah Natural Area Survey, August 2005
- b) Warringah Local Environment Plan 2000
- c) Development Control Plan

9 Definitions

Canopy coverage: an indicator of the quantity of Urban Forest often used as a measure of an Urban Forest’s general capacity to provide economic, social, environmental and aesthetic benefits.

Urban Forest: the totality of trees and shrubs on all public and private land in and around urban areas (including bushland, parkland, gardens and street trees) and is measured as a canopy cover percentage of the total area, and is recognised as a primary component of the urban ecosystem.

Urban Forest Principles: a planned, systematic and integrated approach to managing the Urban Forest. The principles can be broadly broken down into the following:

- Planned Management – A strategic plan is fundamental to achieving the optimal development and quality of the urban forest.
- Systematic Management – Adequate resourcing is invested and these are managed effectively and efficiently.
- Integrated Management – All relevant stakeholders must work in an integrated manner to achieve the best outcomes for urban areas.

Habitat connectivity: a measure of the degree of interconnection of habitat. It is an important issue for managing remnant native vegetation in a unified manner across different land tenure units.

Wildlife corridor: a vegetation feature (preferably remnant bushland, but may include remnant trees, native plantings, weed thickets and gardens) that connects larger areas of remnant bushland and facilitates fauna movement between them. Fauna movement allows



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dispersal, interbreeding and recolonisation to occur, making fauna populations more viable in the long term. Fauna movement also facilitates pollen and seed dispersal, enhancing the viability of plant populations. Continuous corridors are preferable, but discontinuous corridors still contribute to fauna movement, and can potentially be improved through habitat enhancement.