

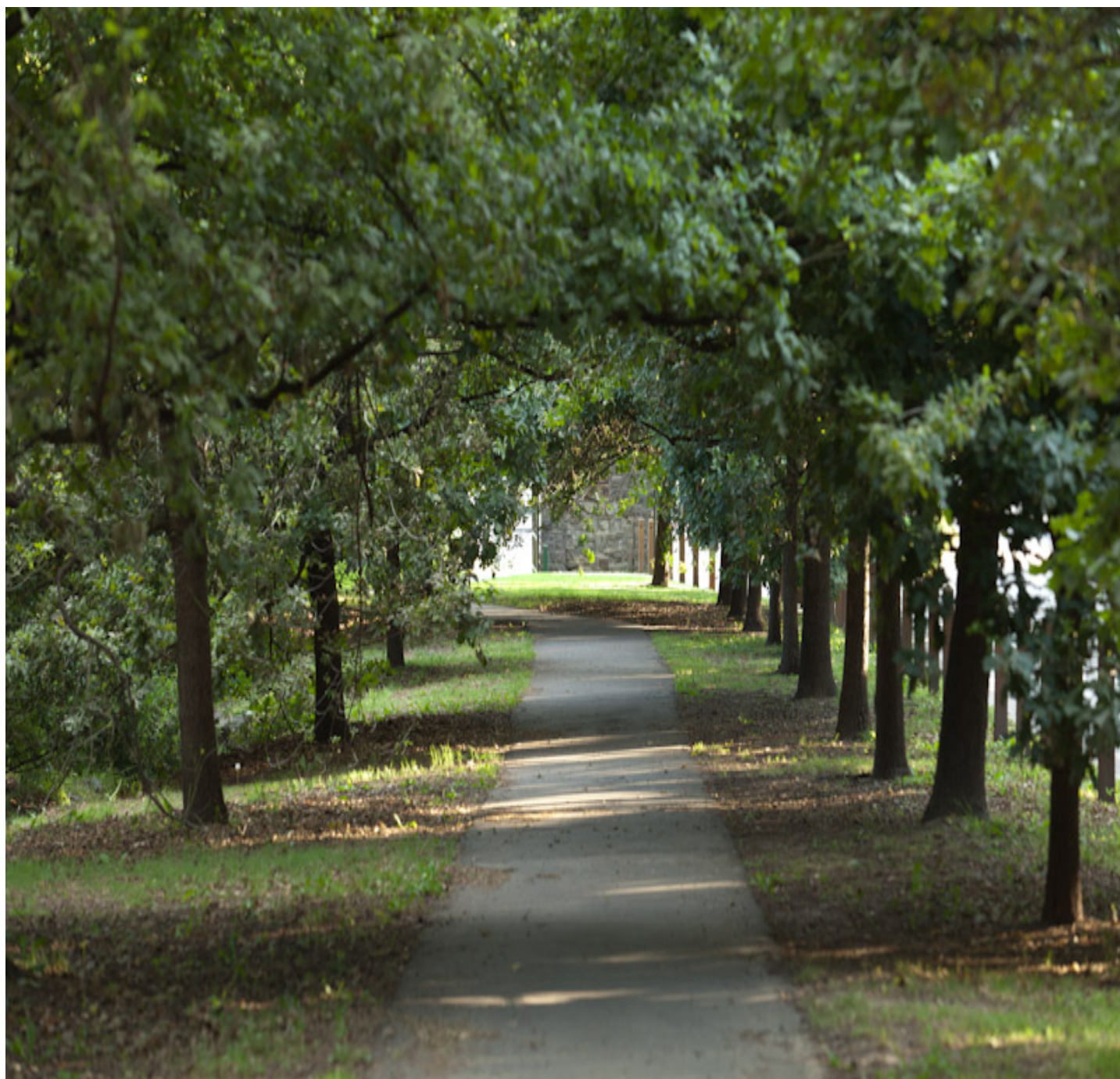
# City of Casey Tree Guide

**Version:** 2.1

**Date updated:** Adopted 16 December 2014

**Responsible Department:** Parks & Reserves

A guide for living with trees



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Treed landscapes are highly valued by the City of Casey. There are an estimated 250,000 trees growing in streets, parklands and several hundred thousand on private land across the municipality and Casey is committed to the preservation and expansion of its urban forest, which includes the City's streets and reserves and those trees on private land.

The City of Casey is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Australia and will become one of the five most highly populated municipalities in Australia. In response to this development there is a need to address the issue of tree management while promoting a green landscape through the creation and maintenance of the urban forest; an important step in providing a beneficial and enduring asset that will contribute to Casey's liveability.

This guide is designed to assist residents, property owners, and those working in the City of Casey to understand street tree policies and to provide a guide to living with trees in the City of Casey.



## 2. THE VALUE OF TREES

Trees are highly valued in the City of Casey and there is overwhelming support for the provision of green, treed landscapes. Trees are important to the liveability and identity of the city, and provide fundamental contribution to the amenity of our streets and parks. Trees provide the following positive benefits:

- » Soften the look of buildings and create a more pleasing environment for pedestrians and motorists. Trees can provide privacy, screen out or enhance views, act as natural sound barriers, reduce glare and reflection and complement architecture.
- » Provide aesthetic benefits creating seasonal change, striking leaf colour, flower and scent, which bring our streets to life. Trees can attract birds and provide wildlife corridors through our suburbs and to the natural environment; this is especially important for children and nature play
- » Reinforce the identity of landscapes; provide structure, continuity and diversity. Trees can provide a sense of place and assist with the interpretation of neighbourhood identity to the urban environment.
- » Provide researched benefits for human health with noted health benefits, such as improving people's levels of concentration, reducing stress and helping people to create a more positive outlook on life.
- » Add economic value to properties and increase the liveability of a neighbourhood. Trees increase the attractiveness of commercial areas and can moderate the otherwise stark appearance of industrial areas.



- » Help to lower temperatures in suburban environments by reducing the heat island effect and reducing sun glare and radiation. Provide cooling shade and shelter from the sun, wind and rain as well as cleaning the air through filtering dust and pollution capturing and using rainwater to reduce run off into stormwater drains.
- » Trees help to reduce residential energy bills as planting trees to provide natural shade over the summer months can significantly reduce air-conditioning requirements and trees can also provide natural wind breaks from cold winter winds. This energy saving directly benefits the resident.



### 3. TREE GUIDE OBJECTIVES

#### Tree Guide Objective Aims

This guide is designed to help residents, property owners and developers and those working with Council to understand the City's requirements for tree management.

The aim of the tree guide is to provide information about Council's Urban Forest, which consists of streetscapes and parks throughout the municipality. This is done by:

- » Establishing and maintaining healthy tree population within the City.
- » Promoting efficient and cost-effective management of the urban forest.
- » Integrating tree management with Council's Vision and other policy objectives.

- » Maintaining trees in a healthy condition through appropriate and recognised arboricultural practices.
- » Providing criteria for the selection of trees for planting in streets and parklands that provides a more liveable approach for the residents of the City.
- » Selecting, planting, and maintaining trees appropriately to maximize their benefits and liveability for residents.
- » Providing management to ensure space for the planting of trees within the suburban development process.
- » To provide information regarding the listing and management of significant trees within Casey.
- » Informing and educating the community in regard to public tree management.

## 4. TREE GUIDE INFORMATION

### Tree Planting

Casey's tree population will be enhanced through plantings in streets and parks, as well as the landscape on private property. Casey will plant trees within streets and parklands when opportunities exist in order to achieve a healthy and diverse tree population within the City including an optimal level of age and species diversity. For further information, refer to Casey Tree Planting Guidelines.

### Tree Planting – General

To ensure a high level of consistency in tree quality and to assist with tree management Casey has investigated and produced an extensive though not exhaustive list of recommended tree species for use in streets and parks throughout the municipality. These trees have been selected for their ability to positively contribute to the livability of the City.

### Design Principle Guidelines for Street and Parkland Planting

Planting within Casey will enhance the urban forest by:

- » By using a diverse range of species including a selection of both exotic and native tree species suited to the varied environments found throughout the city.
- » Selecting appropriate species according to the opportunities and constraints presented within a site; right tree, right location.
- » In a standard residential nature strip a small tree species will be planted.
- » Using single-species plantings in streets to provide unity in the landscape. Reinforce and extend existing plantings, and identify new opportunities for plantings.

Council places an emphasis toward informing, consulting and where appropriate, involving the community in tree initiatives. This will include where possible:

- » Informing residents through letter box drops of planned large scale tree removals.
- » Informing residents of proposed street and parkland developments through public displays.

- » Organising public meetings when broad community objection on Council initiated tree management decisions occur to provide a forum for public comment and understanding of the issues involved.
- » Where appropriate, provide a public consultation phase for new parklands and park redevelopments are proposed.

### Tree Planting by Property owners and Residents

Residents must first seek and obtain permission from Council before planting trees and shrubs within naturestrip or other sites within the road reserve or within a council managed park or any other public open space.

Residents can request Council to undertake tree planting within their street or reserve. Council officers will advise the appropriateness and priority for tree planting and designate suitable tree species based on any relevant site masterplan or existing street tree theme.

Council may be obliged to remove unauthorised plantings in naturestrips or other sites within the road reserve or within a council managed park or any other public open space.

No compensation will be available to persons for the removal of shrubs or trees planted without Council permission.

Where unauthorised planted material is required to be removed, Council will provide notification to allow residents to remove planted material. If a removal request provided by council is not actioned within four weeks, Council staff or contractors will remove the unauthorised planting.

## 5. TREE PRUNING

Council will maintain appropriate tree management standards.

Council contractors prune Casey's street trees on a three (3) year cycle.



All pruning undertaken on trees within the City of Casey will comply with the Australian Standard AS4373-2007: Pruning of amenity trees and be undertaken by qualified arborists. This Standard describes methods for pruning of trees and encourages correct and uniform practices aligned with the arboricultural industry and professionally qualified arborists. It is intended for use on amenity trees and includes formative pruning, hazard reduction, selective pruning and thinning.

Council will prune trees beneath overhead electrical supply lines electrical in compliance with Energy Safe Victoria and the current Electric Line Clearing Regulations.

If a resident requires pruning of a Council tree, residents or property owners are advised to contact Council's Customer Service Department on (03) 9705 5200.

Should a resident or property owner damage a Council Street or park tree, makes the tree structurally unsound or compromise the aesthetics of the tree, Council will seek reimbursement of the damage for loss of amenity and value of that tree.

## 6. TREE REMOVALS – GENERAL

City of Casey will maintain healthy, safe and aesthetically pleasing landscapes by removing dead, poor performing, hazardous and inappropriate trees.

Council will only authorise the removal of trees when one or more of the criteria set out in the Tree Technical Manual (2014) is addressed. This may include but is not restricted to dead or dying trees, trees that demonstrate an extreme public nuisance, trees included in the street tree rejuvenation programs, trees that pose a hazard to public safety.

Residents may request the removal of a tree within public land by submitting a request for removal to the Council Parks and Reserves Department. Residents should always call Customer Service to request a tree inspection by Council's arborist as the first step in this procedure.

Council will inform and consult with residents and affected persons on street tree removal decisions prior to major works being undertaken in a road reserve. Residents may make written submissions objecting to the decision to remove a tree, which will be considered before any works occur.

### Tree Removals in Parklands and Other Council Managed Land

Council may choose to inform and consult with residents and affected persons on tree removal decisions prior to the works being undertaken in parklands and other council managed land.

### Tree Removals – Dead or Dangerous Trees

Where a street tree, or tree in parkland or other council managed land is determined by Council or an approved contractor to be dead or diseased or pose a risk, Council is not obliged to inform affected residents.

The rationale for this is that the tree is dangerous and poses a hazard to public safety. Under these circumstances written follow-up advice for residents immediately adjoining or adjacent to the site ("visually" affected by the trees removal) may be undertaken by Council.

### Tree Removals Associated with Infrastructure Improvements by Council or Public Authority

There will be instances where utilities, Council and other public authorities require the removal of trees to facilitate the construction of new infrastructure or the maintenance of existing infrastructure.

When alternatives to tree removal cannot be satisfied and the infrastructure works require the removal of the trees or the works will have detrimental impact on the health and structure of the trees the affected residents may be notified of the proposed tree removal.



## 7. TREE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT

A fundamental aspect to the successful establishment of new trees and preservation and management of existing urban trees is the provision of sufficient space to allow trees to grow and develop without conflicting with surrounding infrastructure. This includes the protection of established trees from damage when changes to their surrounding environment occur.

To assist with the preservation of Casey's urban forest, protection of trees suitable for retention within development sites and those trees adjacent development sites identified as potentially being impacted by such development will require protection. Property owners therefore will be required to protect identified trees.

The Australian Standard AS 4970-2009 Protection of trees on development sites has been developed for use in protecting trees on or close to development/construction sites. This Standard provides guidance for arborists, architects, builders, engineers, land managers, landscape architects and contractors, planners, building surveyors, those concerned with the care and protection of trees, and all others interested in integration between trees and construction. This document describes the best practices for the planning and protection of trees on development sites.

This Australian Standard should be used as a reference document when any information is required on trees as part of any development or construction.

The Australian Standard states, "Early identification and protection of important trees on development sites is essential from the outset and will minimize the problems of retaining inappropriate trees. Successful long term retention of trees on development sites depends on an acceptance and acknowledgment of the constraints and benefits that existing trees generate. Protecting trees in accordance with this Standard may influence design and construction costs and this should be considered in project budgets and contracts. The gains and benefits of retaining trees will accrue if the measures detailed in this Standard are applied."

## 8. TREE ROOT MANAGEMENT

Council has priorities and strategies for solving conflicts between trees, structures and street infrastructure.

Tree related damage to street infrastructure, particularly concrete footpaths and roadside kerb and channel may occur in urban settings where space for uninhibited root growth is limited.

Although tree roots are often blamed for the cracking and lifting of adjacent infrastructure, affected structures can also fail because they have not been engineered to function in a landscape that contain stresses from developing tree root systems.

Avoiding conflict is the most practical solution to avoiding tree root damage to infrastructure and can be achieved through applying the following principles.

- » Appropriate tree selection. Tree selection should be used to place the most appropriate sized tree considering the site constraints while meeting aesthetic/design requirements.
- » Providing adequate growing space for root systems keeping trees and structures at sufficient distances to avoid conflict.
- » Constructing 'root-resistant' pavements, foundations and pipes where practicable.
- » Containing tree roots within a defined area whilst providing for its growth requirements.

## Tree Root Damage to Private Structures

Many factors can be involved in property damage claims relating to infrastructure including inadequate sewer lines, poor quality construction, seasonal soil shrinkage, changed moisture levels, and soil moisture loss through transpiration.

Where tree roots from a Council owned tree are alleged to be causing damage to a structure a site assessment will be undertaken to investigate the claim and inform the resident of the outcome.

A request for further information may be requested of the resident to enable Council to better assess the claim.

The types of information generally required to substantiate claims include:

- » The age and construction type of affected structures.
- » Geotechnical report indicating variation soil moisture levels soil moisture levels in the vicinity of the affected structures.
- » Engineers report substantiating reasons for structural damage
- » A layout plan of all existing and past (5 years) vegetation on site
- » A plumbing report indicating active Council tree roots in the sewer line;
- » Condition report of existing sewer line and depth;
- » all previous sewer repairs over the past 5 years;
- » Conditions and discharge points for stormwater; and
- » Layout plan of all utility services on site.

Should you require additional information on tree root claims, please call or contact Casey Customer Service on 9705 5200.

## 9. SIGNIFICANT TREES

### Preservation and Protection of Significant Trees

Significant trees within the City of Casey have been identified and these listed trees and a tree protection zone at the base of the identified trees is proposed to be protected through an appropriate planning scheme overlay control.

The significant tree study is not a register of all significant trees in Casey. The identified lists have been compiled reflecting community nominations. Excluded are significant trees already protected by other mechanisms such as the Heritage Overlay, where tree controls apply.

The assessed value of significant trees in the City of Casey may include:

- » Horticultural Value
- » Location or Landscape Context
- » Rare or Localised Species
- » Particularly Old
- » Outstanding Size
- » Aesthetic Value
- » Curious Growth Form



- » Historic Value
- » Aboriginal Culture
- » Outstanding Example of a Species
- » Remnant River Red gums, and
- » Significant Exotic and other Native trees.

The Significant Tree Study and its related Planning Scheme and Environmental Significance Overlay can be found at: [www.casey.vic.gov.au](http://www.casey.vic.gov.au)



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### How often is my street tree pruned?

The City of Casey's street tree population is pruned on a three yearly cycle in accordance with the Australian Standard (4373) for the Pruning of Amenity Trees. For young trees this can mean much formative pruning in the early years and some cuts may appear radical but rest assured we only work with qualified arborists to undertake this work as there are important considerations for the pruning of street trees such as traffic site lines.

### Do I need to care for my street tree?

Council will prune and maintain your street tree however it is fine to water your street tree over the hot summer months.

### Why does my street tree shed leaves?

This could be for a few reasons:

Your street tree could be deciduous; meaning that it sheds all of its leaves in autumn, is bare over winter, grows new leaves over spring and has a full canopy over summer.

Some evergreen trees will shed small amounts during seasonal growth (spring) and during very hot weather trees will shed leaves as a mechanism for dealing with extreme conditions.

Leaves can be collected and used as mulch on your garden or street tree, added to your compost (in small amounts) or deposited in your green waste bin.

To protect your gutters from excess dirt, leaf and litter build up; a mesh gutter guard will alleviate most problems. Think of this as a screen for your roof similar to a screen door on your house.

### I have installed solar panels on my roof and I think the street tree is blocking some of the panels.

If considering solar panels please discuss in depth with the installer the best position on your roof – this should take into account existing structures including street and park trees.

Efficiency of solar panels can alter over days of dense cloud cover, periods of bad weather and some shading by trees. Tree shading should not be a significant issue as the arc of the sun changes throughout the course of the day and solar panels will not be in shade all of the time. It is also worth noting that not all panels need to be in full sun for the whole day to efficiently charge and provide energy to your home. Council does not prune trees for solar panels.

### I can't seem to grow any front lawn is this because of my naturestrip tree?

Lawns are a key component to a home landscape as a whole. A beautiful, well-maintained lawn can enhance a home's appearance, and its value, as well as provide environmental benefits.

The height of the lawn in shade is critical, the more shade the higher the height of the lawn 75-100mm is common. Scalping is one of the worst things to do, that is where the mower is set too low or the undulation of the ground causes the mower to cut in and remove all of the green foliage.

Mowing in shady areas causes a major setback in the condition of the lawn and therefore should only be done 4-6 weeks in summer and maybe not at all during winter. Don't mow your lawn just to pick up leaves, this causes stress and takes a while to recover.

Over fertilizing in shady areas burns off all new growth, so only fertilize when lawn is losing colour not when it is thinning out as this is most likely to be from lack of light. Lawn in shade requires less fertilizer than an area that is in full sun, the same applies for water.

Over watering prevents oxygen from reaching the root zone, so only water when lawn is not moist.

Poor drainage causes the soil to become stagnate; soil should be able to breath.

Cool season grasses are much more tolerant of shade than are warm season grasses. Cool season lawns usually contain a mixture of Bluegrass, Perennial Ryegrass and Fescues. Look at your local garden centre for a seed blend which includes a mix of these grass types.

Unlike their cool season counterparts, warm season grasses love the heat. Their peak growing time is mid-summer when the temperatures are the hottest. Drought tolerant warm season grasses have the ability to survive on little water during these peak growing times. If your naturestrip area has little shade, consider one of these grass types Kikuyu, Couch or Buffalo. These types are best established using instant turf.

### **I have no street tree in front of my house and would like one planted, what do I do?**

If possible Council will plant a tree on your naturestrip however there are some situations that may prevent a tree being planted at your property such as underground services and street corner blocks (we need to maintain site lines for traffic).

Every year in late autumn through spring Council undertakes street tree planting across the municipality. This is the best time for trees to establish over the cooler months and gives them the best chance of survival through the following summer. If you would like a street tree to be planted on your naturestrip please call Customer Service on 9705 5200 to have your request assessed and added to the street tree planting register.

### **There are insects in my tree and I am not sure if they are supposed to be there, what should I do?**

Most insect populations are seasonal and may increase during spring and summer months but will go away in the autumn and spring. The weather can affect and increase certain insect populations however on most occasions they will be moderated by a change in the weather or another insect (predator) e.g. aphids are a favourite food source for ladybirds and caterpillars are often eaten by birds. If the infestation is severe and the tree is in decline please call customer service and a Council arborist will investigate further.

### **General maintenance**

If a Council tree has dropped a branch, appears diseased or dead and if there is a stump that needs removal you can call Customer Service on 9705 5200 and report your concerns. Time frames for tree maintenance requests such as these may alter due to emergency situations as these will take precedent over other issues.

On occasion street trees are removed or pruned without permission or vandalised; please note that these offences are taken seriously by Council and steps are taken to prosecute those responsible.



## General enquires

If you would like to know more about your street tree such as what kind of tree it is, if it is bird attracting, will it have flowers etc please call the City of Casey Customer Service on 9705 5200.

If you require an arborist to prune your private tree, the local newspapers or the yellow pages will give you a selection of professionals to choose from.

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### Contact City of Casey

03 9705 5200

**NRS:** 133 677 (for the deaf, hearing or speech impaired)

**TIS:** 131 450 (Translating and Interpreting Service)

[caseycc@casey.vic.gov.au](mailto:caseycc@casey.vic.gov.au)

[casey.vic.gov.au](http://casey.vic.gov.au)

 [facebook.com/CityOfCasey](https://facebook.com/CityOfCasey)

 [@CityOfCasey](https://twitter.com/CityOfCasey)

PO Box 1000  
Narre Warren VIC 3805

### Customer Service Centres

#### Cranbourne

Cranbourne Park Shopping Centre

#### Narre Warren

Magid Drive

#### Narre Warren South

Amberly Park Shopping Centre