



Central Coast Council

Vegetation Management Plan

JUNE 2026

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1. Introduction and Purpose

Central Coast Council manages a wide range of vegetation across parks, reserves, roadsides, nature strips, open spaces, coastal areas and other public land. This vegetation provides important environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits, while also interacting with infrastructure, assets and public safety.

The purpose of this Vegetation Management Plan is to provide a coherent, practical framework for how Council manages vegetation across the municipality. The Plan supports informed, consistent and defensible vegetation management decisions by Council staff, contractors and agents.

This Plan:

- translates Council's strategic intent into practical guidance
- supports the protection and enhancement of valuable vegetation assets
- assists in balancing environmental values with safety, infrastructure and service delivery
- provides a basis for consistent responses to vegetation-related issues and requests

The Plan applies across Council functions, including open space management, infrastructure delivery, asset management, planning and compliance.

2. Objectives of the Plan

The objectives of the Vegetation Management Plan are to:

- a) Guide consistent and effective management of vegetation on Council-managed land
- b) Protect and enhance indigenous vegetation, biodiversity and ecological values where practicable
- c) Support climate resilience and adaptation through appropriate vegetation retention, establishment and management
- d) Balance vegetation protection with public safety, infrastructure integrity and service delivery requirements
- e) Provide clarity for staff and contractors regarding vegetation management expectations
- f) Support and complement the implementation of Council's Greening Central Coast Strategy, Weed Management Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan through the Vegetation Management Framework.

3. Scope and Application

This Plan applies to vegetation management activities undertaken, required or authorised by Central Coast Council. The scope of this Plan includes:

Vegetation on **Council-managed land**, including:

- parks and reserves
- roadsides and nature strips
- open space and recreational areas
- coastal and riparian corridors
- drainage and infrastructure reserves

Council activities that may affect vegetation, including:

- maintenance and renewal works
- capital works and infrastructure projects
- vegetation planting, pruning and removal
- responses to safety, risk and emergency situations

Detailed procedures, site-specific management plans and operational work instructions will be developed and applied separately where required.

4. Governance Framework and Responsibilities

Vegetation management undertaken by Central Coast Council occurs within a complex legislative, strategic and operational environment.

This section outlines the governance framework and responsibilities that support the implementation of this Vegetation Management Plan.

While this Plan provides guidance for vegetation management activities, it does not replace or override statutory requirements. Council officers, contractors and agents must ensure that all activities comply with relevant legislation, statutory instruments and regulatory obligations.

4.1 Legislative and Strategic Context

Key legislation relevant to vegetation management within the Central Coast municipality includes, but is not limited to:

Crown Lands Act 1976 (Tas)

Most of the coastal zone and significant areas of the Leven, Gawler and Forth River are leased by the Council from the Crown as Public Recreational Areas. Crown land activities in public reserves are governed by the Crown Lands Act 1976.

Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Coast

Regulates land use and development across the municipality, including vegetation impacts associated with development in particular the Natural Assets Code.

Local Government (Highways) Act 1982 (Tas)

Provides Council with powers and responsibilities relating to vegetation on or adjacent to roads and highways, including the management of vegetation that may affect safety, sightlines, infrastructure or adjoining land.

Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 (Tas)

Provides for the protection of threatened flora and fauna species. Vegetation management activities may trigger requirements where threatened species or communities are present.

Nature Conservation Act 2002 (Tas)

Establishes a framework for the conservation and protection of Tasmania's natural values, including reserved land and protected vegetation communities.

Forest Practices Act 1985 (Tas)

Regulates certain clearing and management activities involving native vegetation, including requirements for Forest Practices Plans in prescribed circumstances.

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)

Applies where vegetation management activities may significantly impact matters of national environmental significance.

Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975 (Tas)

Protects Aboriginal heritage values that may be associated with vegetation and landscape features.

Where legislative approval, consultation or certification is required, these processes must be completed prior to vegetation management works being undertaken.

4.2 Application of Australian Standards

In addition to legislative requirements, Council will apply relevant Australian Standards to support consistent and defensible vegetation management practices.

Key standards include:

- AS 4970:2025 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites
- AS 4373:2007 – Pruning of Amenity Trees
- AS 2303:2018 – Tree Stock for Landscape Use

These standards support best practice in the protection, establishment and maintenance of vegetation, particularly in relation to development, construction, tree retention and pruning activities.

4.3 Vegetation Management Framework

This Vegetation Management Framework supports and complements a range of Council strategies, plans and policies, including:

- Vegetation Management Policy 2023 is designed to support the Council's vision and strategic objectives to ensure that a high standard of vegetation management is achieved.
- Greening Central Coast Strategy 2021, which provides overarching strategic direction for increasing canopy cover with an aspirational target of 30% canopy cover by 2030.
- Weed Management Plan 2023, which guides the management of declared and environmental weeds across Council managed land.
- Natural Resource Management Plan 2023, which supports biodiversity conservation and landscape resilience through the Biodiversity Index and key NRM sites.



Figure 1: Central Coast Council Vegetation Management Framework

This Plan provides practical guidance to support the implementation of these documents and assists in aligning vegetation management activities across Council functions.

Other key documents supporting the Vegetation Management Framework include;

- Nature Strip Guidelines, which provide specific guidance for vegetation within road reserves and urban streetscapes
- Precinct Planting Palettes 2024, tree species have been identified in 'themes' across each precinct addressing street tree establishment program.
- Vegetation Damage Signage Policy 2021, which addresses deterrence and response to unauthorised vegetation damage
- Open Space Plan 2025-2035, which informs the function and management of parks, reserves and public open space

4.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Effective vegetation management relies on clear roles and responsibilities across Council.

4.3.1 Council Responsibilities

Council is responsible for:

- Adopting and reviewing policies and strategies that guide vegetation management
- Providing strategic direction for vegetation outcomes across the municipality
- Ensuring vegetation management aligns with broader Council objectives, including environmental, community and infrastructure priorities

4.3.2 Executive and Management Responsibilities

Executive and senior management are responsible for:

- Ensuring this Plan is implemented consistently across relevant Council functions
- Integrating vegetation management considerations into asset management, capital works, planning and operational programs
- Allocating appropriate resources to support implementation of the Plan

- Ensuring vegetation-related risks are appropriately identified and managed

4.3.3 Operational Responsibilities

Council officers, contractors and service providers are responsible for:

- Implementing vegetation management activities in accordance with this Plan
- Applying the decision-making and risk framework outlined in this document
- Complying with relevant legislation, planning requirements and approvals
- Having regard to applicable Australian Standards and Council guidelines
- Undertaking works in a manner that is safe, consistent and environmentally responsible
- Following contract specifications and Council directions

5. Guiding Principles

Vegetation within the Central Coast municipality provides a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits. These values underpin all vegetation management activities undertaken by Council.

The Greening Central Coast Strategy 2021 establishes Council's strategic framework for increasing canopy cover and the broader benefits of vegetation across the municipality and provides the foundation for this Plan.

Vegetation management undertaken by Council will be guided by the following principles:

- **Environmental Stewardship**
Council will aim to protect and enhance indigenous vegetation and ecological values wherever reasonably practicable.
- **Avoid, Minimise and Mitigate Impacts**
Impacts on vegetation will be managed using the Vegetation Management Hierarchy (as outlined in Section 6):
 - **Avoid** unnecessary removal wherever practicable
 - **Minimise** impacts where avoidance is not possible
 - **Mitigate** impacts where removal or modification is unavoidable
- **Climate Resilience**
Vegetation will be recognised and managed as essential green infrastructure that supports climate adaptation.
- **Risk-Based and Balanced Decision Making**
Vegetation management decisions will balance environmental, social, safety and infrastructure considerations.
- **Consistency and Transparency**
Vegetation management decisions will be made in a consistent and transparent manner.
- **Shared Responsibility**
Effective vegetation management relies on cooperation between Council, the community and other organisations.

In practice, tree removal is considered a **last resort** where other management options exist, and replacement planting or rehabilitation may be required.

6. Decision-Making Framework

Vegetation management decisions undertaken by Central Coast Council require the balancing of multiple, and sometimes competing, considerations.

This section establishes a structured decision-making and risk framework to support consistent, transparent and defensible vegetation management outcomes.

Vegetation management decisions must consider the context in which vegetation is located.

Council will apply the following Vegetation Management Hierarchy (VMH) when managing impacts on vegetation:

1. **Avoid** - retain vegetation wherever reasonably practicable
2. **Minimise** - reduce impacts where avoidance is not achievable
3. **Mitigate** - address impacts where removal or modification is unavoidable

In general:

- **High use urban areas** → higher intervention and lower tolerance for unmanaged risk
- **Natural and bushland areas** → lower intervention and higher priority for ecological outcomes
- **Infrastructure corridors** → safety and asset function are primary drivers, typically requiring higher levels of intervention

Where vegetation contexts overlap, decisions will prioritise:

1. Public safety/regulatory requirements
2. Asset function
3. Environmental and landscape values

Decision-making will be proportionate to the scale and significance of the issue, with higher levels of assessment applied where risks or values are greater.

More detailed assessment or escalation may be required where vegetation management situations trigger consideration of the following:

1. Vegetation communities
2. Cross boundary impacts
3. Council staff visual assessment not conclusive.

The use of specialist advice from appropriately qualified professionals (e.g. arborists, environmental specialists) will be sought if detailed assessments are required.

7. Vegetation Contexts

Vegetation across the Central Coast municipality occurs in a range of physical, environmental and land-use contexts. Each context presents different values, risks and management requirements.

This section defines the primary vegetation contexts managed by Council and establishes **context-specific management approaches** to support consistent and appropriate decision-making.

Understanding the context in which vegetation occurs is critical to determining:

- appropriate levels of intervention
- acceptable risk thresholds
- maintenance and inspection requirements
- planting and replacement approaches

For the purposes of this Plan, Council-managed vegetation is grouped into the following key contexts:

1. Urban Infrastructure Corridor Vegetation
2. Parks and Open Space Vegetation
3. Natural, Bushland and Coastal Vegetation
4. Rural Infrastructure Corridor Vegetation

These contexts are not mutually exclusive and may overlap. In such cases, management decisions will reflect the **dominant function and highest priority values or risks**.

7.1 Urban Infrastructure Corridor Vegetation

Description

Vegetation located in urban environments, including:

- road verges and shoulders
- transport corridors
- utility corridors
- drainage lines and stormwater infrastructure

Key Values

- Amenity and streetscape character
- Shade and urban cooling
- Community wellbeing and liveability
- Contribution to identified precinct identity

Key Considerations (Asset Function)

- Sightlines and safe clear zones
- Interaction with utilities and services
- Maintenance access requirements
- Fire risk, particularly in bushland interface areas
- Drainage function, water movement and maintenance access
- Balancing vegetation retention with safety and operational requirements

Management Approach

- Vegetation will be regularly inspected to assess condition, safety risks and interaction with infrastructure
- Vegetation will be managed to minimise damage to and interference with infrastructure in priority order:
 - public safety (particularly in higher use areas, lower risk tolerance, maintain sightlines)
 - asset function (higher maintenance standards)
 - environmental and landscape values
- Vegetation will be managed to maintain:
 - safe access and clearances
 - visibility for road users
 - access for maintenance and emergency response
- Pruning and maintenance will be undertaken in accordance with AS 4373 – Pruning of Amenity Trees, where applicable
- Where relevant, vegetation associated with works or development will be managed in accordance with AS 4970 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites
- Plantings will be guided by Council's Precinct Planting Palettes.
- Where environmental values are present, vegetation retention will be considered where it does not conflict with safety or infrastructure requirements.
- Vegetation will be managed to support fire risk reduction where required, particularly in urban-bushland interface areas
- The establishment of tree avenues along priority streets will continue to be implemented through Council's Urban Street Tree Program. The Strategy identifies priority streets and appropriate species for planting. All residents are encouraged to request nature strip trees.
- If a resident decides and/or advises the Council that they are no longer going to mow and maintain their nature strip, they are to be advised that the Council will add this to the roadside slashing program.
- Tree/s with a diameter over 300mm adjacent to a building facility, will be automatically added to the Tree Inspection program for monitoring.
- Decisions will align with Council's asset management principles and service level

7.2 Parks and Open Space Vegetation

Description

Vegetation within Council parks, reserves and recreational areas, including:

- active recreation spaces
- passive parks
- community spaces
- landscaped reserves

Key Values

- Recreation and usability
- Amenity and visual appeal
- Shade and comfort
- Community access and safety

Key Considerations (Asset Function)

- Level of use (high vs low use spaces)
- Function of the park (sporting vs passive)
- User safety and visibility
- Maintenance resources

Management Approach

Vegetation management will reflect the function and classification of open space as identified in the Open Space Plan 2025-2035.

Higher-use areas will have:

- lower tolerance for risk (eg. close to playgrounds)
- higher maintenance standards

Vegetation will be managed to:

- support safe access and circulation
- maintain sightlines and visibility

Planting and renewal will consider:

- suitability for use
- maintenance requirements
- Vegetation with identified environmental value will be retained and managed where practicable to support habitat, biodiversity and ecological function.
- Vegetation management will consider fire risk, particularly in higher risk areas and interfaces with natural vegetation
- All suitable green waste produced from vegetation maintenance works will be chipped into mulch for further use within the Council's parks and gardens.
- Tree/s with a diameter over 300mm adjacent to a building facility, will be automatically added to the Tree Inspection program for monitoring.
- Decisions will align with Council's asset management principles and service levels

7.3 Natural, Bushland and Coastal Vegetation

Description

Vegetation within natural or semi-natural environments, including:

- bushland reserves
- remnant native vegetation
- conservation areas
- coastal and foreshore environments

Vegetation management in these areas includes the protection and enhancement of natural values, as well as the management of weeds and degraded environments.

Key Values

- Biodiversity and habitat
- Ecological processes
- Landscape integrity
- Coastal stability and erosion control
- Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded vegetation areas
- Soil stability and erosion control

Key Considerations (Asset Function)

- Ecological sensitivity
- Presence of threatened species or communities
- Natural regeneration processes
- Soil stability, erosion and water movement
- Legislative requirements

Management Approach

- Activities will be guided by Council's Natural Resource Management Plan and prioritised using the Biodiversity Index.
- Retention of vegetation will be prioritised with vegetation removal will be a last resort
- Intervention will generally be limited to:
 - risk mitigation (e.g. hazardous trees in high-use areas, beach access maintenance)
 - weed control and rehabilitation
- Higher tolerance for natural processes is accepted, including:
 - Driftwood on beaches
 - Cut and paint deadwood
- Weed management will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Weed Management Plan.
- Works in coastal areas will aim to adhere to the Tasmanian State Coastal Policy:
 - minimise disturbance
 - maintain stabilisation functions
 - protect sensitive environments
- Vegetation management will support fire risk mitigation where required, while balancing ecological values and natural processes
- Tree/s with a diameter over 300mm adjacent to a building facility, will be automatically added to the Tree Inspection program for monitoring.

7.4 Rural Infrastructure Corridor Vegetation

Description

Vegetation associated with rural infrastructure corridors, including:

- road verges and shoulders
- transport corridors
- utility corridors
- drainage lines and stormwater infrastructure within rural road reserves

Key Values

- Corridors support safe and efficient movement of people and goods
- Road safety and visibility
- Infrastructure protection and functionality
- Landscape character and rural amenity
- Ecological connectivity in some locations

Key Considerations (Asset Function)

- Sightlines and safe clear zones
- Interaction with utilities and services
- Maintenance access requirements
- Fire risk, particularly in bushland interface areas
- Drainage function, water movement and maintenance access
- Balancing vegetation retention with safety and operational requirements

Management Approach

- Vegetation will be regularly inspected to assess condition, safety risks and interaction with infrastructure (refer to arborist activity).
- Vegetation will be managed to minimise damage to and interference with infrastructure in priority order:
 - public safety (particularly in higher use areas, lower risk tolerance, maintain sightlines)
 - asset function (higher maintenance standards)
 - environmental and landscape values
- Vegetation will be managed to maintain:
 - safe access and clearances
 - visibility for road users
 - access for maintenance and emergency response
- Council powers under relevant legislation will be applied where vegetation presents a safety risk or obstruction
- Maintenance regimes (e.g. mowing, slashing, spraying) will be applied strategically based on:
 - risk
 - location
 - seasonal conditions
- Vegetation will be managed to support drainage function, including maintaining flow paths and access for maintenance where required
- Root intrusion, canopy conflict and damage to roads, drainage systems and other assets will be addressed
- Vegetation will be managed to reduce fire hazards, including fuel load management and maintenance of clear zones in accordance with Council's Fire Abatement Policy
- Tree/s with a diameter over 300mm adjacent to a building facility, will be automatically added to the Tree Inspection program for monitoring.
- Decisions will align with Council's asset management principles and service levels occur when any of these triggers are identified.

8. Vegetation Management Activities

Central Coast Council undertakes a range of vegetation management activities to maintain, protect and enhance vegetation across Council-managed land.

These activities are guided by the **values, principles, contexts and risk framework** established in this Plan and are implemented through works programs, maintenance activities and Council operations.

Vegetation management activities undertaken by Central Coast Council include:

- Tree Inspection and Assessment
- Tree Risk Assessment
- Pruning and maintenance
- Tree and vegetation removal
- Planting and replacement
- Vegetation management associated with works and infrastructure
- Weed management and environmental rehabilitation
- Fire hazard reduction and vegetation clearance
- Response to community requests and service requests

8.1 Tree Inspection and Assessment

Description

Council undertakes inspections to assess the condition, function and risk associated with vegetation.

Application

Inspections may occur:

- on a programmed basis
- in response to service requests
- prior to works or development
- following storms or emergency events

Management Approach

Assessments will consider:

- structural condition
- risk to people or property
- infrastructure interaction
- environmental value

Higher-risk locations (e.g. urban areas, roadsides, high-use parks) will receive greater attention

Where required, **qualified arborists or specialists** will be engaged.

8.2 Tree Risk Assessment

Description

A tree risk assessment that meets the Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) principles will be used to evaluate the likelihood of a tree or its parts failing and the potential consequences if they do.

This process involves identifying the tree and its location, assessing surrounding targets such as people, property, or infrastructure, and inspecting the tree's condition (including crown health, trunk defects, and root stability). The assessor then determines the likelihood of failure and the severity of impact to assign a risk rating, ranging from low to extreme. Based on this rating, clear management actions are recommended, such as pruning, monitoring, or removal. To be considered valid, the assessment must be carried out by a qualified professional using a recognised methodology and provide evidence-based, defensible conclusions with documented outcomes and follow-up requirements.

Application

Inspections may occur:

- on a programmed basis
- in response to service requests
- prior to works or development
- following storms or emergency events

These methodologies generally assess risk based on:

- the likelihood of tree or branch failure
- the likelihood of impact on a target
- the consequences of failure

The outcome is typically expressed as a risk rating (e.g. low, moderate, high or extreme), which informs appropriate management actions.

Management Approach

Council will consider arborist assessments prepared using such methodologies in conjunction with the decision-making framework outlined in this Plan.

More detailed assessment or escalation may be required where:

- vegetation is identified as significant (environmental, landscape or community value)
- there is potential impact on threatened species or communities
- vegetation removal is proposed in high-visibility or sensitive locations
- there are conflicting priorities (e.g. safety vs environmental value)
- complaints, disputes or reputational risks are present

Vegetation management decisions will be:

- documented
- capable of being clearly explained to the community

8.3 Pruning and Maintenance

Description

Pruning and maintenance activities are undertaken to support:

- tree health and structure
- public safety
- infrastructure clearance

Management Approach

Pruning will be undertaken in accordance with AS 4373 – Pruning of Amenity Trees

Vegetation will be managed to maintain:

- clearances over roads and paths
- visibility for road users and pedestrians
- separation from buildings and services
- Maintenance frequency will reflect:
- context (urban vs natural areas)
- risk and level of use

All vegetation that is trimmed will be removed from site.

8.4 Vegetation Removal

Description

Vegetation removal is sometimes necessary but is carefully managed.

Management Approach

Vegetation removal may occur where:

- vegetation presents an unacceptable safety risk
- vegetation causes significant and ongoing infrastructure damage
- vegetation contributes to an unmanageable fire hazard
- vegetation is unsuitable for the site and cannot be reasonably managed
- works or development require removal and no suitable alternatives exist
- in emergency response situations.

In all cases:

- removal will follow the Vegetation Management Hierarchy (Section 6)
- alternative management options will be considered first
- removal will be proportionate to risk and context

Vegetation will not be removed solely on the basis of nuisance factors, including but not limited to leaf litter, fruit drop, shading, amenity views, sap, or bird activity. Any removals undertaken through the Council's Tree Assessment Program will be off-set through planting and replacement as outlined in section 8.5.

8.5 Planting and Replacement

Description

Planting and vegetation replacement are essential components of long-term vegetation management.

The Council has a Tree Replacement Program; this means for every tree removed at least 150% canopy replacement will be planted in its place. The location of the replacement planting and tree species is determined on a case by case basis.

Management Approach

Replacement planting will be undertaken where appropriate using species selection guided by:

- Precinct Planting Palettes
- NRM Planting Guides
- Infrastructure constraints

8.6 Vegetation and Infrastructure Interaction

Description

Vegetation frequently interacts with Council infrastructure and assets.

Management Approach

Vegetation will be managed to minimise damage to and interference with infrastructure in priority order:

- public safety (particularly in higher use areas, lower risk tolerance, maintain sightlines)
- asset function (higher maintenance standards)
- environmental and landscape values

Vegetation will be managed to maintain:

- safe access and clearances
- visibility for road users
- access for maintenance and emergency response

Works involving vegetation and infrastructure must:

- consider tree protection requirements (e.g AS 4970 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites)
- integrate vegetation outcomes where practicable

8.7 Fire Hazard Reduction

Description

Vegetation contributes to fuel loads and may create fire hazards in certain contexts.

Management Approach

Vegetation will be managed in accordance with:

- Council's Fire Abatement Policy
- relevant fire management and emergency planning requirements

Activities may include:

- slashing and mowing
- removal of hazardous vegetation
- maintenance of vegetation buffers

Fire risk is a key consideration in:

- roadside corridors
- bushland-urban interfaces

Council will also implement and enforce fire hazard abatement requirements for private land where necessary

8.8 Weed Management

Description

Weeds are invasive plant species that threaten biodiversity, agriculture, infrastructure and community amenity and throughout the Urban Infrastructure Corridor, Parks and Open Space, Natural, Bushland and Coastal and Rural Infrastructure Corridor Vegetation areas.

Each have their own respective management approaches due to the weed species present, size of infestation, type on control used and environmental values.

Management Approach

All weed management will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Municipal Weed Management Plan and the Code of Practice for Spraying in Public Places setting the minimum standard for spraying contractors and employees when applying chemical products for weed and pest control in public places.

In most situations, weed follow up control and ongoing maintenance will be required which could include mulching, grass seeding and rehabilitation of native plant species to provide competition against the weed species.

Weed management in the Urban Infrastructure Corridor vegetation area may include;

- Engagement with a suitably qualified contractor
- Mechanical control via slashing
- Targeted herbicide use
- Road verge 1m width control

Weed management in Parks and Open Space vegetation area may include;

- Hand pull/digging out
- Mechanical removal
- Targeted herbicide use

Weed management in Natural, Bushland and Coastal vegetation area includes;

- Implementation of Council's Natural Resource Management Plan.
- Engagement with a suitably qualified contractor
- Refer to the Coastal Weeds of Tasmania booklet for weed identification and control techniques.

Weed management in the Rural Infrastructure Corridor may include;

- Mechanical control via slashing
- Targeted herbicide use
- Road verge 1m width control

9. Development, Works and Infrastructure Interface

Vegetation management is closely integrated with Council's infrastructure, asset management and development functions. Many vegetation impacts occur as a result of construction, capital works, maintenance activities and private development.

This section establishes how vegetation is considered and managed in these contexts to ensure outcomes are consistent, balanced and aligned with Council objectives.

9.1 Overview

Vegetation may be affected by:

- Council capital works and infrastructure projects
- Routine maintenance and renewal programs
- Subdivision and development activities
- Utility and service authority works

These activities have the potential to result in:

- removal or modification of vegetation
- impacts to tree health and stability
- long-term conflicts between vegetation and infrastructure

Vegetation management in these contexts must balance in priority order:

- public safety and risk considerations
- asset function and service delivery
- environmental and landscape values

9.2 Development, Works and Infrastructure Interface

Description

Vegetation management is closely integrated with Council's infrastructure, asset management and development functions. Vegetation may be affected by capital works, maintenance programs, private development and utility works.

These activities have the potential to result in:

- removal or modification of vegetation
- impacts to tree health and stability
- long-term conflicts between vegetation and infrastructure

Vegetation management in these contexts must balance the Vegetation Management Hierarchy:

- Public safety and risk considerations
- Asset function and service delivery
- Environmental and landscape values

Management Approach

Vegetation will be considered at the planning and design stage of all works and development.

Opportunities to:

- retain existing vegetation
- integrate new planting
- enhance landscape outcomes will be explored wherever practicable

Works will aim to avoid unnecessary vegetation loss through:

- design using the Tasmanian Infrastructure Design Guidelines – November 2025
- works and development located within vegetation context

9.3 Application of Vegetation Management Hierarchy

In planning and delivery of works and development, Council will apply the Vegetation Management Hierarchy outlined in Section 6.

In practice:

Tree and vegetation removal is considered a last resort with alternative options will be considered wherever practicable, including:

- pruning and canopy management
- establishment of tree protection or exclusion zones (see section 9.4)
- modification of design or alignment
- relocation or adjustment of infrastructure (where feasible)

9.4 Tree Protection During Works

Tree protection measures will be applied in accordance with AS 4970 – Protection of Trees on Development Sites, where applicable

Measures may include:

- establishment of Tree Protection Zones (TPZ)
- fencing and exclusion areas
- protection of root systems and soil structure
- restriction of construction activities within protected areas

Tree protection requirements will be incorporated into:

- project specifications
- contract documentation
- site management practices

9.5 Development and Subdivision

Development proposals will be assessed in accordance with:

- Tasmanian Planning Scheme
- Tasmanian Development Manual (TDM) November 2025
- Tasmanian Infrastructure Design Guidelines – November 2025

Vegetation impacts will be considered early in the design process and where required, applicants may be expected to:

- retain existing vegetation
- modify layouts to reduce impacts
- implement tree protection measures

Where removal is approved:

- replacement planting may be required
- planting will align with site conditions and Council Precinct Planting Palettes

9.6 Utilities and Service Authority Works

Utility providers and external organisations undertaking works that may affect vegetation are expected to:

- notify Council where vegetation may be impacted
- comply with relevant legislation and standards

Vegetation works undertaken by utilities will:

- minimise impacts on vegetation health and structure
- align with AS 4373 – Pruning of Amenity Trees, where applicable

Council will liaise with service providers to:

- coordinate works
- manage impacts
- avoid unnecessary vegetation removal

9.7 Post-Works and Restoration

Following works, sites will be assessed for impacts to vegetation

Where required, actions may include:

- remediation of soil and root zones
- replacement planting
- establishment and maintenance

Restoration outcomes will aim to:

- re-establish vegetation cover
- maintain landscape character
- support environmental function where relevant

10. Weeds and Natural Resource Management

Vegetation management undertaken by Central Coast Council supports the protection and enhancement of environmental values across Council-managed land.

This includes the management of weeds, rehabilitation of degraded areas and the protection of biodiversity and ecological function.

Environmental considerations are integrated into vegetation management through the application of:

- vegetation context (Section 7)
- decision-making framework (Section 6)
- Biodiversity Index spatial dataset available on Council's GIS
- Natural Resource Management Plan 2023
- Council's operational practices and programs

10.1 Weed Management

Description

Weeds are invasive plant species that can negatively impact biodiversity, infrastructure, agricultural land and community amenity.

Weed management will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Weed Management Plan and Code of Practice for Spraying in Public Places.

10.2 Natural Resource Management

Description

Vegetation management activities will align with Council's Natural Resource Management Plan and will be prioritised using the Biodiversity Index with a 'Very High' rating given the highest priority and a 'Low' rating given the lowest priority.

11. Community Interface, Compliance and Vegetation Damage

Vegetation management undertaken by Central Coast Council occurs in a highly visible public setting and often involves interaction with the community, landowners and other stakeholders.

This section outlines how Council manages community expectations, responds to requests, and addresses unauthorised vegetation damage through consistent and transparent processes.

11.1 Community Expectations and Interaction

Description

Central Coast Council manages vegetation-related enquiries, requests, complaints and incidents through a structured decision-making framework.

This framework is outlined in the Vegetation Management Decision Workflow (figure 1 2 below) and supported by the Decision-Making Framework (Section 6).

The framework ensures that all vegetation-related matters are:

- assessed consistently
- aligned with Council policy and strategic direction
- informed by risk, context and environmental considerations
- managed in a transparent and defensible manner

The framework applies to:

- service requests (e.g. pruning, removal, planting)
- reports of vegetation damage
- compliance matters
- community concerns regarding safety, amenity or environmental impacts

Application

In all cases, Council will:

- assess the vegetation context (Section 7)
- apply the decision-making and risk framework (Section 6)
- determine an appropriate response based on risk, value and site conditions

Where unauthorised damage, non-compliance or complex issues are identified, appropriate investigation and follow-up actions will be undertaken (Section 11.2).

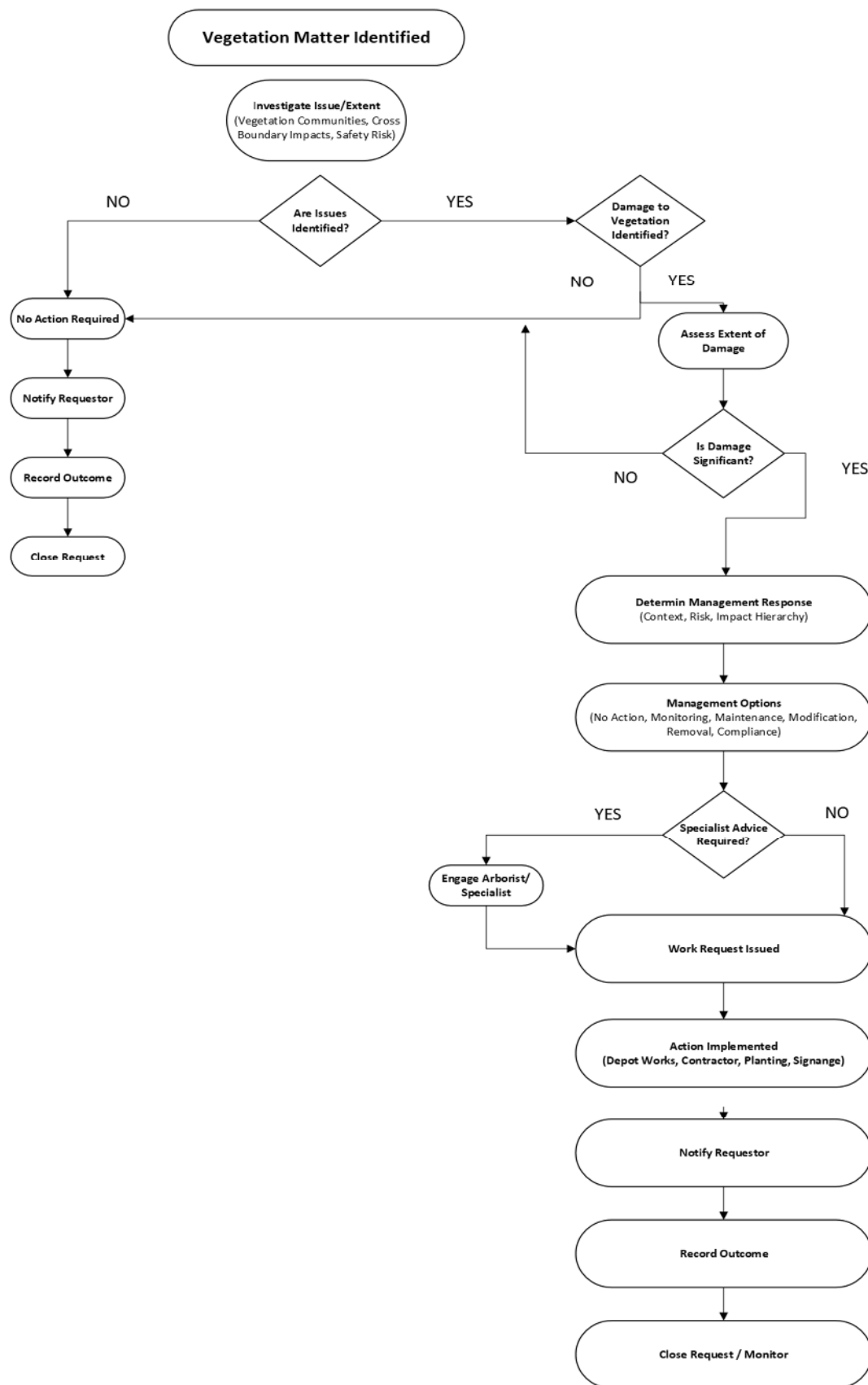


Figure 2: Vegetation Management Decision Framework

11.2 Vegetation Damage and Unauthorised Works

Description

Unauthorised damage to vegetation may occur on Council-managed land, including:

- removal or clearing
- pruning or cutting
- poisoning or vandalism

Management Approach

Council will:

- implement Council's Vegetation Damage Signage Policy
- investigate reported instances of damage
- record and assess impacts
- take appropriate action to address the issue

Responses may include:

- site remediation and revegetation
- installation of Vegetation Damage Signage
- community communication
- compliance action where appropriate

11.3 Compliance and Enforcement

Description

Council has legislative and regulatory powers to address vegetation-related issues and enforce compliance.

Management Approach

Compliance activities may include:

- issuing notices and directions
- undertaking works at owner cost (where legislation permits)
- applying penalties for non-compliance

This includes enforcement of:

- Nature Conservation Act 2002
- Central Coast Council Fire Abatement Policy
- Works on or affecting Council-managed land
- Crown Land Act 1976
- State Coastal Policy 1996
- Threatened Species Protection Act 1995
- Forest Practices Act 1985
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975

Compliance responses will be:

- proportionate
- consistent with legislation
- aligned with Council policies

11.4 Fire Abatement and Private Land Responsibilities

Description

Vegetation on private land can present a fire risk to the broader community.

Management Approach

Council will:

- implement Council's Fire Abatement Policy
- identify properties posing a fire hazard
- issue abatement notices requiring vegetation management

Property owners are responsible for:

- maintaining vegetation to reduce fire risk
- complying with Council directions within specified timeframes

Where compliance is not achieved:

- Council may undertake works
- costs may be recovered by Council
- penalties may apply

These activities support broader community safety and emergency management objectives.

11.5 Communication and Education

Description

Public understanding plays an important role in effective vegetation management.

Management Approach

Council will support community awareness through:

- provision of clear information on:
 - vegetation management practices
 - Council policies and requirements
- promotion of:
 - appropriate planting and maintenance practices
 - environmental values and benefits of vegetation
- engagement with:
 - community members
 - Landcare and Coastcare organisations
 - NGO's and state government agencies

Effective communication will assist in:

- reducing conflict
- improving compliance
- supporting positive vegetation outcomes

11.6 Managing Conflict and Expectations

Description

Conflicts may arise between individual preferences and broader community or environmental outcomes.

Management Approach

Where competing interests exist, Council will apply the Decision-Making Framework (Section 6) to prioritise:

1. Public safety/regulatory requirements
2. Asset function
3. Environmental and landscape values

This will ensure decisions are:

- consistent
- transparent
- capable of being explained

Vegetation will not be removed solely on the basis of nuisance factors, including but not limited to leaf litter, fruit drop, shading, amenity views, sap, or bird activity.

12. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Central Coast Council will ensure that vegetation management practices remain effective, relevant and aligned with evolving legislative, environmental and community expectations.

This section outlines how the implementation of this Plan will be monitored and reviewed, and how continuous improvement will be supported over time.

12.1 Monitoring of Vegetation Management Activities

Description

Vegetation management activities will be monitored through Council's operational and asset management processes and effectiveness is reflected in a range of environmental, operational and community outcomes.

Management Approach

Monitoring will occur through:

- routine maintenance and inspection programs
- implementation of works and capital projects
- service request and customer feedback processes
- environmental monitoring and Natural Resource Management activities

Outcomes may be evaluated through:

- condition and performance of vegetation assets
- reduction in safety risks and incidents
- maintenance of vegetation in key locations (e.g. parks, roadsides, reserves)
- progress in weed management and site rehabilitation
- community feedback and satisfaction

This monitoring supports:

- identification of emerging issues
- evaluation of management effectiveness
- prioritisation of future works

12.2 Continuous Improvement

Description

Vegetation management practices will evolve over time in response to experience, feedback and changing conditions.

Management Approach

Continuous improvement will be supported through:

- incorporation of lessons learned from operational activities
- feedback from staff, contractors and the community
- updates to supporting procedures, guidelines and workflows
- adoption of improved practices, technologies or methodologies

Where necessary, updates to this Plan or supporting documents will be made to reflect improved approaches.