



Draft Balranald Shire Council Urban Tree Management Plan 2025-2029



Balranald Shire Council
70 Market Street
Balranald
NSW 2715



About this release

Document Number: D20.43064 Edition 1 / Revision 1
 Title: Balranald Shire Council Urban Tree Management Plan 2025-2029
 Author:

Issue	Date	Revision Description	Authorised by
Ed 0 / Rev 1	6 October 2020	New Plan	

Management Review

Planned Review Date	Scope	Review By	Review Record Ref no. Date
November 2025			
1 October 2028			

Endorsement of Balranald Shire Council Urban Tree Management Plan 2025-2029

/ /
Date

Chief Executive Officer

/ /
Date

Director of Infrastructure & Planning Services



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1. Purpose

The Urban Tree Management Plan harmonises management of urban trees by Balranald Shire Council.

The Tree Management Plan provides principles and reference policies for how the Balranald Shire Council addresses:

- tree management;
- risk identification and mitigation;
- tree inspections and assessments;
- tree selection and planting;
- tree removal;
- tree replacement;
- tree protection;
- infrastructure protection;
- electric line clearance;
- tree maintenance

Established trees of good health represent an asset to any environment. Protection and continuous management of new and existing trees is crucial.

2. Relevant Documents

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Heritage Act 1977

Roads Act 1993

Balranald Shire Councils Roads Policy

Balranald Shire Council Noxious Weeds Policy

Australian Standard AS4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees

Australian Standard AS 4970 2009 - Protection of Trees on Development Sites

Vegetation Management Near Powerlines - Essential Energy

Local Government Act 1993

3. Background

There are many trees significant to Balranald that are not specifically listed in the attached Tree Intervention Works by Enspec, Balranald & Euston Tree Registers nor formally recognised or protected.

The urban area of Balranald and Euston contain several trees in public areas. Some 1550 Balranald & 350 Euston Street trees have been identified and assessed over the last 5 years. Currently, there is somewhat limited detail on the total number, species and condition of the tree population in Balranald, Euston and no recent data for Kyalite.

Council recognises that in the interests of:

1. Public safety
2. Environment
3. Amenity
4. Aesthetics
5. Heritage value
6. Economics
7. Air quality
8. Sense of place
9. Historical and
10. And any other stakeholder concerns.

The attached Tree Intervention Works by Enspec, Balranald & Euston Tree Registers need review and updating.

4. Communication Plan – Tree Management

This communications plan will be implemented to raise public awareness of tree management issues within Balranald Shire.

Where	What	Frequency/when	Measure
Facebook	Concerned about a tree? – Outline the process for raising concerns about street trees	After every 6 months	Completion after every 6 months
Facebook	Tree work in area	Ongoing	Consistency of completion
Council Newsletter	Tree management update and reminder of reporting process	After every 6 months	Completion after every 6 months
Council Website	Basic enquiry form - Contact Us	Ongoing	Timely receipt and response to requests

5. Definitions

Street Tree

- A plant that is at least three (3) metres high;
- Has a canopy spread of at least two (2) metres;
- Has a trunk circumference of at least 300 mm measured at 1.5 m above ground level;
- Located on a road reserve within the 40 km – 50 km speed limit zones;

Significant Tree

- A mature native plant that is at least five metres high and;
- Has a canopy spread of at least four (4) metres and;
- Has a trunk circumference of at least one (1) metre measured at 1.5m above ground level or;
- A mature established exotic species located in a high-risk area;
- And/or whose planting can be linked to a significant event or person;
- A tree nominated as significant and approved by Council by a member of the Balranald Shire community

Significant Tree Avenue

- A series of trees planted in a symmetrical formation along an urban roadside.

High Risk Areas (*to mean public*)

- shopping precincts
- playgrounds
- schools
- parks and gardens
- community/council buildings
- swimming pool
- recreation and sports facilities
- reserves
- walking tracks
- Transport for NSW owned Roads
- Council owned underground infrastructure
- Roads with overhead and underground power cabling
- dual use or shared footpaths and
- any other public areas

(see attached Tree Intervention Works by Enspec, Balranald & Euston Tree Registers)

UTMP – Urban Tree Management Plan

Street Trees – trees planted by Council/philanthropist, or for which Council has assumed responsibility, located in the road reserve where council has vested interest.

Parkland Trees – trees planted by Council/philanthropist, or for which Council has assumed responsibility, on land located in public parks and reserves where Council has vested interest.

Private Trees – trees located on private property where Council has no vested interest.

Rural Road Trees – trees located on the road reserve which have not been planted by Council or trees for which Council has not assumed responsibility – typically rural roads or where the State have vested interest.

Arborist (qualified) – a person with a Certificate 3 in Arboriculture as a minimum (or

equivalent qualification), and a minimum of three years of relevant industry experience. Consulting and inspecting (Certificate 5 or diploma or higher)

Structural Defect – A weak point in or on a tree causing its structural deterioration diminishing its stability in full or part.

Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) – a measurement taken at 1.4 metres above the ground, that being a convenient height at which to measure a tree's diameter. For trees on slopes, multi-trunked trees, leaning trees or where branches interfere with measuring at 1.4 metres, refer to the International Society of Arboriculture's "Simplified Guide to Measuring DBH".

Immediate risk – a qualified Arborist has determined that the structural integrity of the tree is in such poor condition that it creates a risk of failure in the near future and may cause injury to the public or damage to property.

Subservient Definitions

- Hazardous Trees - trees with deadwood greater than 30mm in diameter, poor structural form, major cavities and other defects. The location of the tree and the extent of the defects will determine the hazard potential and priority rating of the tree.

Responsibility

- The Manager of Engineering is to ensure that 3–5-year maintenance program is monitored and reviewed annually
- The development and co-ordination of the maintenance program will be the responsibility of the Towns Maintenance Overseer

Guidelines

- All dead branches, with a diameter of 30mm or greater, are to be removed when overhanging pathways, roads, park furniture and playgrounds.
- In relation to pathways - all trees are to be remedially pruned where their height and physical characteristics could threaten designated path and track users (see pruning of trees - statutory/distances pro-forma).
- In relation to seats, tables, play areas, other park facilities and designated car parking areas - all trees for a distance of five metres from the outer edge of any single item/area are to be remedially pruned depending on their height and physical characteristics.

Reactive response

Inspection and/or maintenance of trees prompted by a resident or staff request

Proactive maintenance

Regular planned maintenance to mitigate risk to trees, infrastructure and residents

Tree Management Responsibilities

The tree management responsibilities defined within this document are applicable only to those areas directly under the control of the Balranald Shire Council or Councils contractors

6. Plan Review and amendment

This Urban Tree Management Plan is a living document as such is open to the process of continuous improvement and will be reviewed every four (4) years.

7. Tree Management Issues

Balranald Shire Council is committed to the efficient and effective management of trees within its Municipality, however given the number of trees, it is not possible to address all risks associated with trees at any one time. As such, the inspection and maintenance of the tree network is conducted on a risk basis and in some situation ad-hoc.

Trees are assessed based on their location, any identifiable defects, the probability of the defects resulting in limb or trunk failure and the likely consequences if failure occurs. Proactive and reactive works will always need to be managed carefully as resources are limited.

Information within Tree Registers includes (see also attached Tree Registers for Balranald & Euston):

- Location
- Species
- Condition
- Age
- Size
- Surrounding environment and
- Relation to surrounding environment.

Tree Registers and reports provide the basis for making qualified decisions. It is also essential to be able to interrogate the data and keep the information up to date.

8. Risk Management

The Australian Standard, (AS/NZS 4360-2004 Risk Management), provides a sound methodology for managing risk. Risk assessment is the overriding factor in determining priority for works in allocating resources.

8.1 Proactive Inspections

These inspections are scheduled in accordance with the proposed 3–5-year maintenance program. A qualified Arborist (as required) or Councils Parks & Gardens will inspect the tree for any defects which may impact the structural integrity of the tree. Any mitigation works logged on the tree will be

determined in accordance with (AS/NZS 4360-2004 Risk Management) and will have due regard for matters raised earlier in the background.

8.2 Reactive Inspections

These inspections come about after Council is notified of:

- An incident related to an insurance claim;
- Emergency event;
- A report of an issue by the community; or
- Identification of an issue by a Council employee.

Depending on the Risk Assessment, within 2 – 30 working days of Council's Parks & Gardens Team becoming aware of an issue, an inspection will be undertaken to confirm any defects or issues and then refer these for further action with operations and concerned stakeholders.

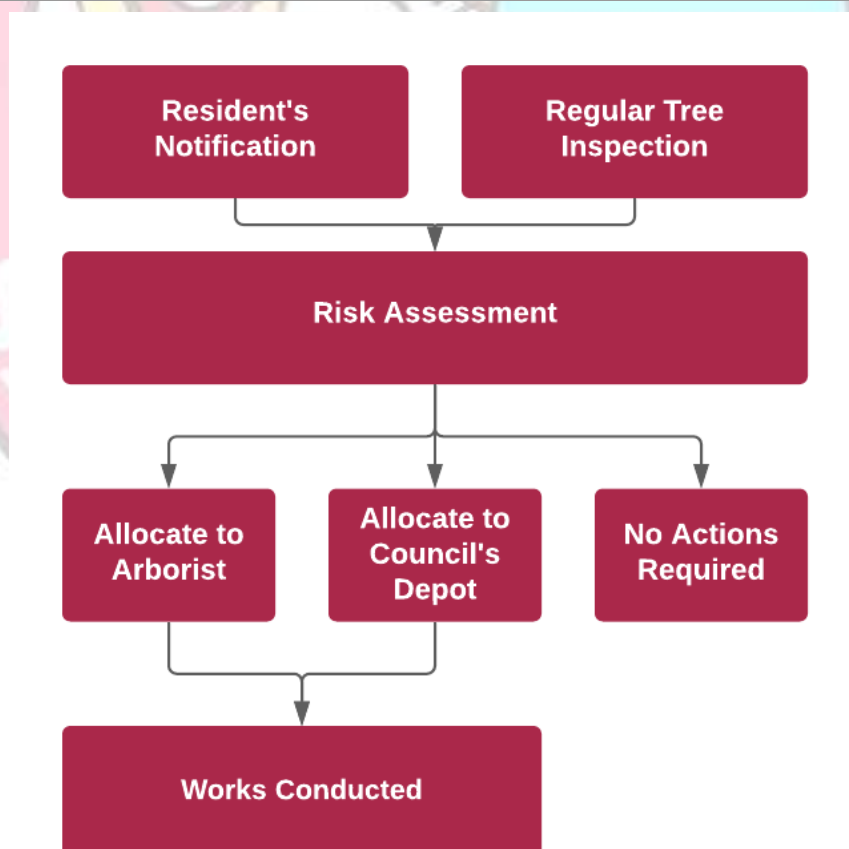
8.3 Document Management System

Related Documents

Risk Management AS/NZS 4360:2004.

Balranald Shire Council Risk Management Policy.

8.4 Workflow



9. Access to Document

This document is available to the public at the following locations:

Online at www.balranald.nsw.gov.au/

Balranald Shire Council
70 Market Street
Balranald

10. Tree Inspections

Council will endeavour to assess all applicable trees within the Municipality to determine their potential for public risk with inspection frequencies determined by that potential. Trees in “high risk” areas will warrant more frequent inspections.

Appendix A details the composition of these “high risk” areas, and provides a hierarchy for further tree inspections.

11. Tree Selection and Planting

A “sustained amenity” approach which results in diversity of tree ages and sizes across the municipality, taking into account the following:

- areas with a lack of trees;
- areas where residents or community groups have requested trees;
- community consultation where required;
- areas where there are high percentages of old aged trees, low species diversity;
- sites where trees have been removed to accommodate development or other reasons;
- Preferred “Landscape Character”;
- Adopted masterplans, strategies and development plans;
- Drought tolerance/low water usage;
- Tolerance to harsh urban environments;
- Soil type and structure;
- Root growth characteristics and tolerances;
- Pruning requirements;
- Amount and type of debris shed;
- Proximity and form of surrounding existing and future below ground and above
- Ground infrastructure;
- Pest and disease susceptibility;
- Suitability to a public environment i.e. allergens or pathogens
- Existing and likely future adjacent land use; and
- Future planning for expected climate change.

12. Tree Removal

Removal of trees will therefore be a regular and necessary process of Council’s Urban Tree Management Plan.

Prior to tree removal in most instances an attempt will be made to inform adjacent residents of the removal works. Notification will generally be in the form of an informational letter, either physical or electronic, to the residence. Council officers will also ‘door knock’ prior to works starting where possible.

Exceptions to the notification process are when there is an immediate risk to the public or property. In these cases, tree removal will occur as a priority to ensure public safety.

13. Tree Protection

All work on and around trees must comply with:

- AS 4373-2007 Pruning of amenity trees; and
- AS 4970-2009 Protection of trees on development sites

Trees and infrastructure are essential items in a modern environment. It is simply not possible to avoid all potential conflicts. They can be minimised however through innovative design and correct management of maintenance activities.

Trees may be subject to damage, above and below ground, from civil works. Where any civil works are proposed in the vicinity of trees, an assessment and works plan is essential to ensure tree damage is avoided or minimized.

Large tree specimens that may have local or cultural significance may require protection measures that are not general practice for most street and park trees. Protection measures for these trees may include fencing, mulching, greater clearances from adjoining works and structural assistance measures such as propping or cable bracing to protect from damage or disturbance.

14. Infrastructure Protection

Infrastructure may be subject to damage/ interference from adjacent trees. When any tree plantings are proposed in the vicinity of above and below ground infrastructure, careful consideration of species selection, soil type, planting technique, available root space and the appropriateness of root control measures are needed to ensure damage is avoided or minimised.

Tree roots can, on occasions cause damage to vehicle crossovers, fences and other private infrastructure.

Upon being informed of such damage, Council shall inspect the tree and, if appropriate, undertake remediation works which may include arranging for a root prune and installation of a root barrier.

- All proposed tree planting or tree maintenance works likely to impact on, or affect, Council infrastructure, must be referred to Council's Engineering Services for comment at the design or planning stage.
- Any person or organisation wishing to plant trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, or undertake any landscaping within a road reserve, park or other land under the control of Council must have permission in writing from Council.
- All designs for roads, streets, and/or parklands under, or that will become under the control of Council, must include adequate capacity for tree planting and growth whilst minimising conflicts with other infrastructure to the satisfaction of Council.

Refer Australian Standard AS2870 – Residential Slabs and Footings

15. Tree Maintenance

Tree maintenance will be based on a risk priority basis. Due to the specialised nature of tree works only experienced Council staff and or approved contractors are to undertake maintenance works on Council trees.



Appendix A - Council Preferred and Approved Trees

Botanical Name	Common Name	Canopy m Height m	Category	Native or Exotic	Evergreen or Deciduous	Bird Attracting	Characteristics
Acacia salicina	Cooba	3-20	Wattle	Native		Yes	
Acacia pendula	Weeping Myall	12 H	Wattle	Native		Yes	
Acacia ligulata	Sandhill	1-5	Wattle	Native		Yes	
Kings Park	Bottlebrush	4-4		Native		yes	
Callistemon sieberi	Bottlebrush	2.5 H		Native		Yes	Drought tolerant
Lagerstroemia indica	Crepe myrtle	(8-3) (3-4)		Native		Yes	
Lemon myrtle	Myrtle	6-4					
Eremophila	Emu Bush	3-3		Native		Yes	Hardy shrubs with beautiful flowers, great for dry climates
Callistemon citrinus		4-2		Native		Yes	
Dodonaea viscosa	Hop Bush	3-3		Native		Yes	Tolerates poor soils and dry conditions
Adenanthos Sericea	Albany woolly bush	5-2		Nativ		Yes	
Melaleuca lanceolata	Moonah	7-3		Native		Yes	Hardy and salt-tolerant, good for verge planting
Lagerstroemia	Twilight magic	4-2.5		Native		Yes	
Brachychiton populneus	Kurrajong	15-12		Native		Yes	Small tree with deep roots, drought-resistant
Brachychiton	Bella Donna	6-3		Native		Yes	
Banksia Marginata		2-2		Native		yes	

Ground covering and Low Shrubs that can be deployed for erosion control

- *Dianella revoluta* (Blue Flax Lily)
- *Lomandra longifolia* (Mat Rush)
- *Myoporum parvifolium* (Creeping Boobialla)
- *Scaevola aemula* (Fan Flower)



Appendix B – Tree Hazard Evaluation Form

General

Site Address				
☐ Private	☐ Council	☐ Park	☐ Reserve	☐ Nature strip
Inspector				

Tree Characteristics and Tree Health

Tree #	Species			
Number of Trunks	Height		Spread	
Live Crown Ratio ____%	☐ Young	☐ Semi Mature	☐ Mature	☐ Over Matured

Pruning History

☐ Crown cleaned	☐ Excessively thinned		☐ Topped	
☐ Crown raised	☐ Pollarded	☐ Crown reduced		☐ Flush cuts
☐ Cable/braced	☐ None		☐ Multiple pruning events	
☐ Approximate dates:				

Growth Obstructions

Epicormics	☐ Yes	☐ No	Twig dieback	☐ Yes	☐ No
Major pests/diseases		☐ White ant infestation		☐ Allergy reactions	

Site Conditions Pavement Lifted

☐ Yes	☐ No
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Obstructions

☐ Lights	☐ Signs	☐ Line of sight	☐ View
☐ Traffic	☐ Overhead Lines	☐ Underground Services	☐ Adjacent Vegetation

Commercial Development

☐ Existing	Impact	Yes ☐ No ☐	Advertising Sign	Yes ☐ No ☐
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Target Use Under Tree

☐ Building	☐ Parking	☐ Traffic
☐ Pedestrian	☐ Recreation	☐ Landscape
☐ Powerlines		

Occupancy

☐ Occasional use	☐ Intermitant use	☐ Frequent use	☐ Constant use
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Botanical name	Common name
Acacia species (large)	Wattle
Acer species	Maples - not Japanese
Acmena species	Lilly pilly or Bush Cherry
Alnus species	Black & Evergreen alder
Araucaria species	Bunya-Bunya, Hoop or Norfolk Island Pine
Bambusa species	Bamboo
Banksia species (large)	Banksia
Betula species	Birch
Brachychiton species	Lacebark, Flame & Kurrajong
Caesalpinia ferrea	Leopard tree
Casuarina species	She-Oaks
Cedrus species	Cedar, also Fir & Spruce
Celtis species	Nettle-tree
Cinnamomum camphora	Camphor laurel
Cupressus species	Cypress trees
Delonix regia	Poinciana or Flamboyant
Erythrina species	Coral-tree
Eucalyptus species (large)	Gum trees
Ficus species	Fig trees
Fraxinus species	Ash
Gleditsia species	Honey Locust
Grevillia robusta	Silky Oak
Hymenosporum flavum	Native Frangipani
Jacaranda mimosifolia	Jacaranda
Ligustrum species	Privet
Liquidambar species	Liquidambar
Lophostemon confertus	Brush box
Magnolia grandiflora	Bull Bay Magnolia
Melaleuca species (large)	Paperbarks
Melia azedarach	White cedar
Palm species	Palm
Pinus species	Pine
Platanus species	Plane tree
Populus species	Poplar
Quercus species	Oak
Salix species	Willow
Schinus species	Pepper-corn tree
Stenocarpus sinuatus	Qld. Firewheel tree
Syncarpia glomulifera	Turpentine
Syzygium species	Lilly pilly or bush cherry
Tamarix aphylla	Athel pine
Tilia species	Linden or lime tree
Tipuana tipu	Race-horse tree
Ulmus species	Elm
Zelkova serrata	Japanese Elm
ALL	Tall growing fruit & nut trees

The above table is a list from Essential Energy of unsuitable tree for planting under power lines

Hazard Rating

Tree part most likely to fail: _____			
Inspection Period	☐ Annual	☐ Biannual	☐ Other

Risk Assessment Matrix		Consequences				
		Negligible No injuries or not requiring first aid	Minor First aid needed	Moderate Medical treatment	Major Serious injury	Severe Death or permanent disability.
Likelihood	Certain to occur Expected to occur in most circumstances	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Very Likely Will probably occur in most circumstances	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible May occur occasionally	Low	Medium	Medium	Extreme	Extreme
	Unlikely Could happen at some time	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
	Rare May happen only in exceptional circumstances	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
Risk Level		Recommended Actions				
Extreme		Immediate action required – Activity must not proceed until steps are taken to reduce risk to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of controls				
High		Risk control measures required to reduce risks to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of controls				
Medium		Review risk assessment and ensure control measures to reduce risk to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of controls				
Low		Manage risks by routine procedures and monitor				

Hazard Abatement

Extreme or High Risk

- Isolate area.
- Move target.
- Request approval from CEO for removal.

Medium Risk

- Request approval from Council Parks and Reserves Committee to remove.
- Isolate area.
- Move target.

Low Risk

- Do nothing.
- Include in annual inspection if safety issue.

Recommendation or Comment
