

ITEM MAYORAL MINUTE - TREE MANAGEMENT ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

Trees provide shade and shelter, improve air quality, absorb carbon and rainfall, cool local environments, and support wildlife. Trees also play an important role in creating attractive neighbourhoods and memorable landmarks.

The Eastern City District Plan requires Council to expand the urban tree canopy and ensure appropriate guidelines are in place to increase the number of trees on public and private land.

At present, the Canada Bay Development Control Plan specifies the circumstances when a tree may be removed. In general, trees should not be removed where they are over four metres in height, have a trunk with a girth of 500mm or are a cycad or a mangrove.

Specific exemptions are granted where the tree is dead, the tree is an exempt species, such as bamboo, or where the tree is a noxious weed. Trees can also be removed where the tree is in decline, has caused significant structural damage or where it can be demonstrated that there is an ongoing problem with the tree and no other course of action will rectify the problem.

It is important for Council's tree preservation guidelines to be kept up to date and ensure that the relevant guidelines reflect the expectations of the community. This includes clear guidance as to when trees on private properties may be removed as well as clear guidance as to when trees must be retained.

The creation of a Tree Management document which provides a clear understanding of how to comply with the requirements of Council's Development Control Plan would be a valuable tool for our community.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT a review be undertaken by staff on the circumstances where a tree may be removed on private property, and a Tree Management document be developed by staff to complement Council's Development Control Plan.
2. THAT a report be brought back to Council with the Tree Management document for adoption, providing detailed guidelines to inform the removal and retention of trees on private property in the City of Canada Bay.