4.2.4 Vegetation Damage Management

Type:	Operations – Streetscapes, Parks & Reserves
Legislation:	Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law 2016 Penalty Units Local Law 2016
Delegation:	N/A
Other Related Document:	Nil

Objective

The objective of this policy is to protect vegetation within public places by providing a clear, consistent and proportionate framework for responding to unauthorised damage to trees, shrubs and other vegetation under the care and control of the Town of East Fremantle.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all vegetation located within public places managed by the Town, including but not limited to:

- parks and reserves;
- environmental restoration areas;
- road reserves and verges; and
- other public land under the Town's control.

The policy applies to trees, shrubs, understory and other plantings, whether planted, regenerated or naturally occurring.

Policy

The Town of East Fremantle does not support unauthorised damage to vegetation in public places.

Vegetation within public places is a shared community asset that contributes to environmental, safety, amenity and landscape outcomes across the Town. Damage to vegetation, regardless of motivation, can undermine these outcomes and result in inequitable impacts on the wider community.

The Town will respond to unauthorised vegetation damage in a manner that is:

- proportionate to the nature and extent of the damage;
- focused on vegetation recovery and protection; and
- practical to administer without unnecessary reliance on enforcement action.

Guiding Principles

In administering this policy, the Town will be guided by the following principles:

Outcome-Focused Management

Responses will prioritise recovery, regeneration and protection of vegetation rather than attribution of blame.

Proportionality
Management responses will be commensurate with the scale, location and impact of the vegetation damage.

Equity
Public vegetation will be managed in a manner that balances individual preferences with the interests of the broader community.

Transparency
Where practical, the Town will communicate its response to vegetation damage in a factual and non-accusatory manner.

Management Responses
Where unauthorised damage to vegetation is identified, the Town may implement one or more of the following responses, as appropriate:

- regeneration, reinstatement or replacement planting of vegetation, including replacement planting at a ratio of up to three plants for each plant damaged or removed where considered appropriate;
- monitoring of affected areas; and
- protective measures to support re-establishment;
- site-based signage for the duration of re-establishment;
- referral to enforcement processes where warranted.

The selection of management measures will not depend on identifying the individual or persons responsible for the damage.

Use of Temporary Signage
Temporary signage or structures may be installed at sites where vegetation has been damaged, removed, poisoned, pruned without authorisation or otherwise impacted by intentional or unauthorised actions to:

- inform the community that vegetation damage has occurred;
- explain that regeneration, reinstatement or replacement planting is underway or proposed; and
- indicate that the signage or structures will be removed at the discretion of the Town once vegetation has sufficiently re-established or the site-based management purpose has been achieved.

Signage or structures installed under this policy will:

- be factual and non-accusatory in tone;
- remain in place for the period considered necessary by the Town;
- be used as a site-based management tool to discourage ongoing or repeat vegetation damage, including damage intended to create or maintain private views or amenity benefits.

As a site-based management tool, temporary signage or structures may be designed, located and sized to obscure or reduce any private view, outlook or amenity benefit created by the vegetation damage. The Town may also use signage or structures to identify that vegetation has been damaged and that the Town is aware of, and actively managing, the site. This response may be used before,

during or after replacement planting or regeneration works, and may be particularly appropriate where there is insufficient evidence to support enforcement action, or where a practical management response is considered more proportionate.

Relationship to Other Policies

This policy operates alongside, and does not replace, other Town policies relating to:

- tree management and protection;
- verge treatments and streetscape management; and
- public place management and local laws.

Where more than one policy applies, officers will exercise judgement to ensure a coordinated and consistent response.

Review and Continuous Improvement

The Town will periodically review the operation of this policy, at least every 5 years, to ensure it remains effective, proportionate and aligned with community expectations and contemporary practice.

Responsible Directorate	Technical Services
Reviewing Officer	Executive Manager Technical Services
Decision Making Authority	Council
Policy Adopted	20/10/26
Policy Amended/Reviewed	