

Frequently Asked Questions – Tree Retention and Provision Policy (LPP13)

Why did the Town introduce this policy?

Trees are essential for keeping Bassendean cool, green and full of life. They clean our air, reduce heat, support wildlife, and make our neighbourhoods more beautiful.

This policy helps protect mature trees on private land and reflects what our community told us - that growing and protecting our tree canopy is a top priority.

What kind of trees are protected?

Trees are considered *regulated* if they meet any of the following:

- Over 8 metres tall
- Canopy wider than 6 metres
- Trunk circumference of 1.5 metres or more (measured 1.4 metres above ground)
- Not listed as a weed species

What does “tree-damaging activity” mean?

This refers to major works that could harm a regulated tree, such as:

- Removing the tree
- Cutting large branches or the trunk
- Ringbarking, topping or lopping
- Any other significant damage

Minor pruning or trimming is usually fine - just check with us first if you're unsure.

Where does the policy apply?

It applies to all land zoned under the Town of Bassendean Local Planning Scheme No. 11.

Do I always need approval to work on a tree?

Not always. You don't need approval if:

- The tree doesn't meet the regulated tree criteria
- The work is urgently needed for safety or essential services

- It's part of an approved bushfire management plan
- You're doing minor pruning or trimming, or trimming overhanging branches or roots to the property boundary
- The tree is on the Town's unwanted species list.

What counts as “maintenance pruning”?

Maintenance pruning is light work that keeps a tree healthy and safe. It includes:

- Removing dead or diseased wood
- Pruning fruit trees for fruit production
- Minor thinning that doesn't harm the tree's health or general appearance.

What if my neighbour's tree is overhanging into my yard?

You can trim branches or roots that cross into your property - but only up to the boundary. We also recommend chatting with your neighbour to make sure everyone's on the same page.

How were the tree criteria decided?

The criteria are based on expert advice from WALGA and focus on protecting large canopy trees that make the biggest impact on our environment and community wellbeing.

Since the Town adopted our policy, several other metropolitan local governments have followed suit, so we're not alone in recognising the value of mature trees on private property.

How do I apply for approval to remove or prune a regulated tree?

You'll need to submit a development application with:

- A completed application form
- A site plan showing the tree's location
- Supporting documents (e.g. arborist report, justification for the works)

We're happy to guide you through the process, or simply head to:

www.bassendean.wa.gov.au/trees-on-private-property.aspx

Is there a fee to apply?

Yes. Fees for development applications are set out in the Town's Schedule of Fees and Charges. A copy of this document is available on the Town's website:

<https://www.bassendean.wa.gov.au/documents/budget-fees-and-charges>

How is my application assessed?

The following are key considerations when reviewing applications for tree removal and tree damaging activities:

- Health, maturity, species, and location of the tree
- Ecological, biodiversity and environmental values of the tree
- Contribution of the tree to the streetscape
- The preservation of any other regulated tree on the subject site
- The location of the tree within the development site and capacity for a modified building design or subdivision to maximise tree retention
- Any existing development on the site
- Design and location of proposed crossovers
- Topography and the potential impact from excavation/fill
- Possible safety risks due to tree limb failure and infrastructure and/or structural damage associated with the retaining the tree
- Tree Protection Zone(s) (as per AS4970)
- Tree replacement and/or planting proposed
- Recommendations of an Arborist Report; and
- The objectives of the Tree Retention and Provision Policy.

What if my application isn't approved?

You can request a review through the State Administrative Tribunal.

What happens if a regulated tree is removed without approval?

We always prefer to work with residents to find solutions. However, removing a regulated tree without approval is a serious matter and may result in penalties under the Planning and Development Act 2005.

Still have questions?

We're here to help.

- Call us on 9377 8000
- Email mail@bassendean.wa.gov.au
- Visit www.bassendean.wa.gov.au/trees-on-private-property.aspx