



Tree Vandalism **Policy**

1/06/2022

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Purpose

Policy summary

- Outline the actions that the Community Association may take in response to tree vandalism on Community Association property.
- Provide the Community Association Committee and staff with guidelines for a consistent and appropriate response to acts of tree vandalism.

Objectives

- Protect the Breakfast Point amenity
- Minimise instances of tree vandalism
- Promote community awareness of the value of trees
- Encourage the community to provide the Community Association with information regarding acts of tree vandalism

Application

This policy applies to any trees vandalised on land owned or managed by the Community Association DP270347.

Definition

Tree vandalism is the unlawful destruction, damage or injury to trees through methods including, but not limited to poisoning, pruning, cutting, ringbarking or removal.

Background

This policy has been developed in response to an increase in the incidents of tree vandalism on Community Association Land.

Trees are damaged for various reasons. Motives for removing or damaging trees include; increasing views; dislike of the vegetation and removing a range of perceived potential hazards.

Trees are protected by provisions of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017 (Vegetation SEPP). It is also an offence under the Pesticides Act 1999 to use herbicides in a malicious manner to damage property of another person.

Pruning and removal of trees in the City of Canada Bay is regulated by State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017 (the Vegetation SEPP) and the City of Canada Bay Development Control Plan (DCP). A person must not ringbark, cut down, top, lop, remove, injure, or wilfully destroy any tree or other vegetation to which the DCP applies if:

- a. The tree has a height of, or greater than, four (4) metres;
- b. The tree has a trunk girth of, or greater than, 500mm at any point; or
- c. The tree is a cycad or mangrove, irrespective of its dimensions without a permit granted by the Council.

If the tree or other vegetation is or forms part of a Heritage Item or is within a Heritage Conservation Area, then development consent is required.

Landscape was identified as a major defining characteristic of Breakfast Point. The planting principles are;

- An informal, indigenous planting palette will be adopted for informal, passive open space areas, foreshore reserve and to the major recreation centre open space.
- A formal planting palette will be adopted for streets, squares and areas of strong urban character. Deciduous species will be used extensively for solar access and shade control and to provide seasonal variety and colour.

Any deliberate act that results in changing this characteristic of Breakfast Point or deliberate act to impact of trees and vegetation on Community association property will not be tolerated.

This policy provides a framework for Community Association responses to tree vandalism that are consistent with the Breakfast Point Tree Management Policy.

General

Provisions

The Community Association will implement the appropriate actions listed below according to the severity of the vandalism.

6.1. Low impact incidents

Examples may include unauthorised pruning of small trees or the repeated removal of recently planted street trees or landscaping.

- Letter box drop to surrounding properties notifying residents of the vandalism and requesting information.
- Install a small temporary sign (A1 size) at the site pointing out the damage and requesting information from the public. Signs are to remain until replacement trees have been installed or public amenity and environmental conditions have been restored to council's satisfaction.
- Rehabilitate the site or re-plant trees.

6.2. Medium impact incidents

Examples may include illegal pruning of tree limbs or clearing or poisoning of understory vegetation.

- Letter box drop to surrounding properties notifying residents of the vandalism and requesting information.
- Investigate and interview relevant persons.
- Install temporary signs at the site pointing out the damage and requesting information from the public. Signs are to remain until damaged trees have regrown or public amenity and environmental conditions have been restored to the Community Association's satisfaction.
- Rehabilitate the site or re-plant trees at a ratio of up to 2 replacement trees for every tree damaged.
- Canada Bay Council to issue infringement notices where appropriate.

6.3. High impact incidents

Examples may include poisoning, ringbarking or removal of mature trees or damage to large areas of native vegetation. The vandalism has a significant visual impact to other residents and the public.

- Letter box drop to surrounding properties notifying residents of the vandalism and requesting information.
- Investigate and interview relevant persons.
- Erect a large sign (1.8m x 1.2m) on the ground and/ or in the tree canopy. Signs or banners are to remain until replacement trees have reached the height of the tree/s removed or public amenity and environmental conditions have been restored to the Community Association's satisfaction. Alternatively, signs will be in place for a period of 12 months.
- Where large trees have died from poisoning branches, limbs or the trunk will be painted with a yellow stencil: "Poisoned".
- Retain dead trunks as long as safety concerns are satisfied by the Community Association.
- Re-plant replacement trees at a ratio of up to 3 replacement trees for every tree damaged.
- Canada Bay Council to issue infringement notices where appropriate.
- Consider legal proceedings if sufficient evidence exists.

Review

Compliance, monitoring and review

This policy is to be reviewed by the Community association Committee on an annual basis, or as required.

History of revisions

Policy amendment history and version details

| Amendment history | Details |
|--|---|
| Original approval authority details | 17/6/2022 CA Committee endorsement |

Version #

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