


COUNCIL POLICY

Vegetation Vandalism	Adopted By Council:	05/04/05	
	Date/s Revised:	18/10/11, 24/04/13, 25/05/17; 17/02/21	
	Next Review Date:	01/2024	
	Document No:	CP020	
	Directorate:	Planning & Infrastructure	
	Responsible Officer:	Infrastructure and Roads Engineer	

CONTEXT

Trees and vegetation are important and unique public assets which contribute significantly to the identity and urban character of the Borough of Queenscliffe.

Council views vegetation vandalism as a very serious matter. Every case of vegetation vandalism costs ratepayers. Depending on the severity of the case, the cost to the community can be significant for investigation, signage, replacement and remediation every time it happens.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to highlight the importance and value Council places on the protection and preservation of vegetation on Council Land within the Borough of Queenscliffe.

DEFINITIONS

Vegetation Vandalism means wilful and unlawful damage, injury or destruction of vegetation from Council Land, including poisoning, pruning, removal and ringbarking.

Vegetation means any native or exotic tree or plant, regardless of height or maturity.

Council Land means land, buildings and facilities which are owned, occupied or vested in the Council or in respect of which the Council has the care and management (for example as Committee of Management) and to which the public has access whether an entry fee is paid or not and includes a Public place.

POLICY

1. Council's aim is to retain in healthy condition and in natural shape and form, vegetation that is currently or which will become visually, historically, horticulturally or environmentally valuable to the community of the Borough of Queenscliffe.
2. Only approved Council staff or contractors may undertake removal or pruning works on vegetation on Council Land.
3. Any person who is responsible for Vegetation Vandalism shall be guilty of an offence and liable to prosecution to the full extent of the law and will be actively pursued for the recovery of costs.

It should be noted that full extent of the law includes fines under Council's Local Law, the Planning and Environment Act or any relevant state or federal legislation such as the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, depending on the circumstances of each incident.

4. Where Council identifies or suspects an act of vegetation vandalism the Council will take action in accordance with the SOP020 Vegetation Vandalism standard operating procedures, which may include preventative measures such as installing security cameras.
5. Council will continue to educate the community and actively promote the significance and importance of vegetation on Council Land, particularly remnant vegetation, through the local media, Council website and brochures.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This policy will be reviewed on a continuous basis, but as a minimum every three years from the date of adoption.

OTHER REFERENCES

SOP020 Vegetation Vandalism

Borough of Queenscliffe General Local Law 2021

Queenscliffe Planning Scheme

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

END