
Sent: 6/12/2013 7:33:41 PM

Subject: 'Submission: Draft WDCP - Private Property Tree Management'

'Submission: Draft WDCP - Private Property Tree Management' with the responses below. A full report of all survey submissions is available within the activity report. TRIM PEX2013/0007

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Do you support the proposed changes allowing trees within 3 metres of a building or structure to be removed without requiring approval?	Yes
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Comments.

I support this BUT is this really far enough if the tree is over 50 metres tall and has a girth of 1700 or even 2400 mm. Trees of this size have enormous punch when they come down or bits fall off. How does the three metre rule address the issue that prompted the Council's review in the first place, namely the Norfolk Island pine at Allambie Heights? Trees that are 50 metres tall can smack into buildings 40-50 metres away.

Do you support the proposed changes to include a further 9 tree species to the list of trees that can be removed without approval? (see full list in library)

Yes

Comments

Yes, but does this go far enough? I note that four options were canvassed: OPTION 1 Protect Locally Indigenous Species Only OPTION 2 Protect Locally Indigenous Species and native trees in Wildlife Corridors and Core Bushland Areas Only OPTION 3 Maintain Existing Provisions OPTION 4 Existing Provisions, plus expand the Exempt Species List and Introduce a Setback In my opinion the pros and cons of each option are poorly explained and reasoned. If I was given this as a first year university paper, the student would fail for not making the cases clearly and fairly, and allowing the reader to make a judgment before the student offered theirs. Given the review was started by the falling tree at Allambie Heights the examination of the four options does not mention the Allambie incident once. How would each option have prevented, or not prevented the Allambie incident? There's no consideration of the Norfolk Island Pine species that caused the Allambie accident. The reason for including it is obvious (it caused the Allambie accident) but the reason of not including it is not there. The Norfolk Island Hibiscus is NOT a Norfolk Island Pine!!!!

Do you support the proposed changes to increase the minimum height of a tree that requires approval to be removed, from 5 metres to 6 metres?

Yes

comments

There's no justification for going from 5 to 6 metres. Where did this figure come from. The report does not explain or justify it. Why not from 5 to 50 metres? This may have helped the Allambie Height resident, from 5 to 6 metres would not have helped.

Any other comments on the proposed changes?

I think the report to council, containing the recommendations is: ** poorly constructed- it has no thread that it follows from introduction (the Allambie incident) to a conclusion (Option 4), ** has not clearly justified rejecting or adopting any of the four options (eg "Option 2 negative- Most

tree applications are on residential properties not in these areas" does not make sense). ** contains sections that spoil the flow and should have been footnotes or in the final parts of the report. For example, Warringah Local Environment Plan and Warringah Development Control Plan are pointless immediately after the Background. They should be amongst the report pro forma items such as Timing and Financial Impact. They totally throw the reader as they are not questions raised by the Background. In addition: The section "Review of Tree Fall Incident" does not explain the incident and apparently absolves everybody by saying "conditions would not have been visually obvious without 'conducting further advanced Arboricultural investigations'". So...? What is Council going to do about it? How will it prevent Allambie-type incidents happening again? Surely, using arborist is not the total solution. If Council is going to prevent residents from removing what some see as a danger to life and property, surely Council has a responsibility for its decision. It can't be all care and no responsibility in these cases. Currently, the resident has no choice but all the responsibility. A resident can't be responsible for something they can't control. It is interesting to note that the report recommends retaining the existing tree assessment method. Given the report says no one was at fault for not spotting that the Allambie tree would fall over I would have thought that the recommendation should be that the Visual Tree Assessment method (VTA) be supplemented to try and avoid future incidents. I'm not a tree expert but what about a OH&R risk assessment? Assess a tree's potential to fall over (high, medium, low) and the impact if it does happen (large, moderate, small). Hence, examples of some of the possible ratings are: high risk/low impact, medium risk/high impact, etc. To push this further, risk can have a percentage put against it, and impact could have a \$ figure put against it. Examples of ratings would then come out like 70% risk, \$300,000 impact; 40% risk, \$500,000 impact. Single scores can be derived by multiplying percentage risk by value of impact: 70% risk of \$300,000 impact is 210,000. Another addition to the VTA method would be weight of tree and distance from building or structure. The weight is height times average diameter times density of species. Add to this a factor for limbs. What is the impact of this tree falling on any structure within its reach? Large trees on public land is fine because they have Council to look after them. Large trees on private land are an issue if the owner perceives them as an issue. Their mental health (anxiety from living with a threatening tree), costs (maintaining the tree and cleaning up paths and gutters), especially for pensioners, and embittered neighbours (who want the tree addressed but the owner is powerless). Something I've always wanted to raise in relation to trees on private land is the fact that to maintain a tree a resident must complete a development application. Please! the terminology. Developers submit development applications. By all means use the same form but please call it something that relates to residents wishing to maintain their property. It's well known that property developers and councils are combative, and while one tries to get around rules by fair or unfair methods the other is on guard against rule breakers and assumes all applications are tricks. Residents who have lived on their properties for many years and need to take action to preserve mental health, lower threats of danger, manage their property costs and maintain good neighbourly relations, need to be treated as residents in need of assistance rather than yet more dishonest citizens. Cooperative support rather than combative interactions. I'm glad Council is looking at the DCPs for trees on private land BUT I don't think the recommended changes go far enough. There's insufficient reasons in the report to judge why the recommendations are what they are. This is the first time I've responded to a proposed change. I apologise if, at times, my criticisms have been harsh but sometimes, stating opposing opinions is simply hard and harsh. I hope all feedback is made public, I'd like to see what others have written. Greg

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