

# BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL – STREET TREE SPECIES SELECTION GUIDE

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## 1 OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Purpose

Brisbane City Council has made Brisbane's Landscape Character Precinct map freely available to download and use through Council's [Open Data website](#).

The purpose of this street tree species selection guide is to outline how any proposed street tree planting site is to be identified and how individual tree species selection for each tree planting site should occur within the Brisbane City Council local government area, including:

- the relevant street tree planting site clearance requirements to infrastructure items, utilities and other elements of street furniture in the road environment
- how tree species selection is made using Brisbane's Landscape Character Precincts map
- how relevant considerations are applied to optimise the size of each new tree's canopy for shade and cooling outcomes
- how urban design principles may be applied to ensure trees are sited in optimal spaces for the long term.

### 1.2 Objectives

The objectives of Council's street tree planting program are to:

- select the right tree in the right place
- improve shade and increase cooling effects to mitigate urban heat island effects thereby fostering healthy lifestyles for physical and mental wellbeing
- assist in mitigation and adaptation to climate change
- enhance the local 'sense of place' through selecting tree species which naturally occur in that location
- create habitat and shelter for our iconic wildlife
- contribute to better air quality and reduce stormwater runoff.

## 2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER PRECINCTS

### 2.1 Tree species selection by Landscape Character Precinct

Council has adopted an approach to tree planting based upon landscape character precincts. Six different Landscape Character Precincts (LCPs) for Brisbane have been identified based on elevation and geography across the city including:

- coastal: by the Moreton Bay coast
- wetlands: flooded lands like Boondall Wetlands
- riparian: creek side areas along citywide waterways
- undulating plains: suburban plains and rolling hills
- higher land: elevated prominent hills
- arterial road: high-traffic major roads (contains two subsets: medians and roundabouts; and verges).

Each street tree planting site is included in only one of the landscape character precincts. The approved street tree species have been allocated for use in an LCP based on where the species naturally occurs in the landscape and on its ability to enhance the 'sense of place' within the precinct.



The [Street tree species](#) dataset contains the list of approved street tree species for use in each of the LCPs. The dataset also identifies specific contextual planting situations where certain tree species are suitable (e.g. narrow footpath/street verge widths, planting under powerlines, bus stops, etc.).

Certain tree species in the [Street tree species](#) dataset have the potential to become invasive species in Brisbane's environmentally sensitive areas. Such tree species have specified limitations to their planting (i.e. not to be planted within 1 km of environmentally sensitive areas, as shown on the Biodiversity areas overlay map in the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*).

## 2.2 Identifying a new street tree planting site

When setting out to identify each possible new street tree planting site:

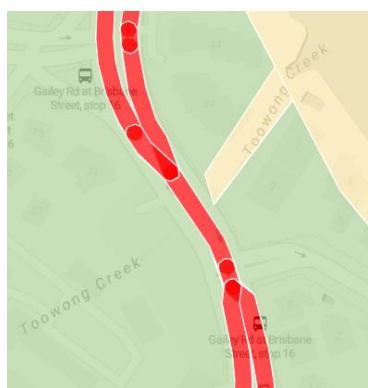
- All sites must comply with the street tree planting clearance requirements listed in 'Appendix A – Street tree planting clearance requirements'.
- Particular attention should be given to identifying all tree planting opportunities at locations where the community congregates and interacts, including bus stops, active travel routes to schools, shopping centres, commercial precincts and public transport.
- Where a new tree planting site has several available options, identify all options and recommend one site in the Proposed Street Tree Planting Plan based on an assessment of which space will deliver better urban design outcomes, including:
  - placement within the streetscape
  - proximity to or separation from driveways and property boundaries
  - placement in comparison with the siting of private development on the adjoining property (e.g. right in front of a residential property's front door or gate is not a good placement).

## 2.3 Tree Species Selection for Each Street Tree Planting Site

It is recommended that a qualified arborist (i.e. qualified to Australian Qualification Framework – Arboriculture – Level 5) is engaged to select new tree species.

At each possible new street tree planting site, the following process is to be applied when selecting new tree species:

1. Identify the relevant Landscape Character Precinct for the selected new tree planting site as shown on the map in Council's [Street tree landscape character precincts](#) dataset.
  - For sites included in the Arterial Road precinct, the map in the [Street tree landscape character precincts](#) dataset shows indicative linework form this precinct. However, the precinct includes all land in the road corridor from the property boundary on one side of the road to the property boundary on the other side of the road.



2. Assess the new street tree planting site for further tree species considerations, including the presence of overhead powerlines, the width of the street verge or proximity to a bus stop.
3. From the street tree species listed in the [Street tree species](#) dataset for the relevant LCP, select the tree species which:
  - is powerline friendly, where required
  - will maximise the tree's canopy at maturity
  - is compatible with any existing predominant tree species in the street whilst aiming to optimise diversity.

### **3 Seeking approval for your Proposed Street Tree Planting Plan**

Document your proposed street tree planting, including tree species and their location, in a Proposed Street Tree Planting Plan and submit to Council's Public Space Operations' Arboriculture Planning Team for approval.

These plans may be emailed to: [ISG-CS-PPI-PLANNING-ARB@Brisbane.qld.gov.au](mailto:ISG-CS-PPI-PLANNING-ARB@Brisbane.qld.gov.au).

## Appendix A – Street tree planting clearance requirements

The following guidelines set out the relevant clearances for new street trees from existing infrastructure items (i.e. avoid new tree planting within the relevant clearance distance) and spacing between street trees.

### 1. Street tree planting clearance requirements

Street tree planting **must be avoided** in the following locations:

- Where house services occur (e.g. storm water drains/gas lines, inspection pit box for underground services, below overhead wires connected to private residences and property entrance gate), no closer than 1.5 m either side.
- For different road verge widths, clearances are as follows:
  - where in a road verge or median, plant only where 2.5 m wide or wider.
  - where in a standard 3.5 m wide street verge, a minimum of 450 mm from the kerb and channelling (i.e. nominal face of kerb (NFK)).
  - where the street verge is wider than the standard 3.5 m, plant trees 3 m from the property boundary.
- Within 2.5 m\* from an existing vehicle crossing / driveway (\* except for *Delonix regia* (poinciana) which requires 5 m clearance from an existing vehicle crossing / driveway).
- Within 3 m of:
  - a power pole
  - an Energex pad mounted transformer
  - fire hydrants
  - water valves.
- Adjacent to a pedestrian crossing:
  - within 15 m from the approach side of the crossing and from the approach corner.
  - within 6 m from the departure side of the crossing.
- Within 7 m of:
  - a streetlight
  - traffic signals
  - Slow for SAM infrastructure
  - oOh!media bus stop advertising billboard
  - a 110V concrete pole (contact Energex to identify earth cables).
- Within 10 m of the departure from a standard road corner or street intersection. Note: a street intersection with a large area of road verge could accommodate a new street tree away from the road carriageway where adequate sightlines can be provided.
- Where near a bus stop:
  - approach side: within 20 m before the bus stop (adjacent to the kerb and channel) measured from the bus stop marker or where 75-degree line of sight from the back of the bus stop intersects with the kerb
  - departure side: within 8 m after the bus stop (measured from the bus stop marker)
  - 850 mm from the nominal face of the kerb (adjacent to the kerb and channel)
  - bus shelter: within 3 m from the concrete slab of a bus shelter. Note – contact Council to consider options for non-standard alignments closer to bus shelters.
- In front of a park on the street verge. Trees are to be planted within the park frontage alignment (unless necessary to provide maximum shade near a bus stop).
- Within an agreed clearance zone of an Energex sub-station (Note – contact Energex to determine agreed area).
- Within 5 m from the perimeter (i.e. coping) of an existing swimming pool. Any new species must be an evergreen type with insignificant flowers or fruits.
- Where there are existing solar panels, tree species are to be selected so that when the trees reach maturity, they do not cast shade on the solar panels between 9am to 3pm.
- Under existing tree canopies.

### 2. Spacing requirements between street trees

The recommended spacing between trees is:

- 5 m for a small crown width
- 7 m for a medium crown width
- 10 m for a large crown width
- 20 m for a very large crown width (e.g. fig trees).