

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the possibility of injury from falling coconuts in parks and public areas under Council's control is minimised.

This Coconut Management Policy supersedes the Coconut Trees – Existing and Future Plantings Policy adopted by Council on Thursday 12 July 2001.

## 2. Scope

This Policy and its associated documentation applies to Coconut Palms under Council's direct responsibility located on public land within the Hinchinbrook Shire.

This Policy does not apply to:

- Coconut Palms on private property;
- Coconut Palms on land controlled by Council for conservation purposes including bushland reserves except where they abut private land; and
- Coconut Palms on public land not controlled by Council e.g. National Parks.

This Policy does not replace requirements determined by legislation and associated regulations, local laws or planning scheme requirements.

## 3. Responsibility

This Policy applies to all Council Officers involved in the management of Coconut Palms on Council controlled lands.

The Natural Assets Team is responsible for developing and maintaining this Policy in consultation with Councillors and staff.

## 4. Definitions

**Coconut Reduction Strategy** refers to the Report to Council, whereby Council will reduce the number of Coconut Palms to approximately 300 within its parks and public spaces by removing one Coconut Palm for every three de-nutted Coconut Palms (one in four) over a period of three years.

**De-nutting** is the removal of fruit and/or flowers to prevent the production of coconuts large enough to cause significant injury to persons or property.

**Removal** involves the cutting down of standing trees to ensure that they do not regrow and pose a liability risk to the Council. The base and roots of these trees may or may not be removed as part of this process, dependent on its relative position in the landscape, risk to the public and functional role that the root ball/stump may provide (e.g. aid in establishment of new vegetation or prevent erosion).

## 5. Policy

The Coconut Management Policy includes the Coconut Reduction Strategy that was endorsed by Council at the General Meeting held on Tuesday 26 April 2022. It aims to reduce the number of Coconut Palms in Council's parks and public spaces to less than 330 Coconut Palms requiring maintenance, in order to reduce its liabilities and maintenance costs.

### 5.1 Planting of Coconut Palms

Planting of Coconut Palms or dumping of fruit (or fronds) on land under Council control is strictly prohibited.

## 5.2 Coconut De-nutting

Where existing Coconut Palms may threaten people or property should fruit fall, they are to be pruned of coconuts and maintained in a fruit-free condition.

## 5.3 Coconut Palm Removal


In parks that receive high public use, or where the risk of injury is considered high, Coconut Palms shall be progressively removed and may be replaced with other suitable tree species.

## 6. Legal Parameters

- *Local Government Act 2009;*
- *Local Government Regulation 2012;*
- *Queensland Environment Protection Act 1994;*
- *Queensland Land Act 1994;*
- *Queensland Nature Conservation Act 1992;*
- *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999; and*
- *Australia Standard 4373: Pruning of Amenity Trees.*

## 7. Associated Documents

- Tree Management on Public Land Policy; and
- Local Law 4 – Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads 2012.

DOCUMENT HISTORY AND STATUS					
Action	Name		Position	Signed	Date
Approved by Council	Kelvin Tytherleigh		CEO		25/10/2022
Policy Version	2	Initial Version Adopted	12/07/2001	Current Version Adopted	25/10/2022
Maintained By	Infrastructure and Utility Services			Next Review Date	25/10/2024
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