

10. ECO-INFO - BALANCING TREE PRESERVATION WITH DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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Wyong Council is dedicated to maintaining, as far as possible, the existing tree coverage and species diversity within the Shire. The main obstacle to implementing this aim exists in balancing tree preservation and reasonable development in residential areas. Trees on a development site can create problems during development and be costly to remove. Nevertheless, healthy trees can add significantly to the value of properties and beauty of the development.

In an attempt to avoid some of the time delays and misunderstandings regarding the number and location of trees on a property, Wyong Council has adopted the following requirements for all applications lodged for any building works. These requirements apply to all works, including dwellings, additions, pools, decks and verandahs.

- The site plan is to accurately number and show the location of all trees within the property, whether intended for removal or retention, and the canopy coverage. (See example.) For rural dwellings on larger lots, all trees within 20 metres of the house plus those within 10 metres of the driveway and septic disposal area are to be similarly plotted.
- Where no trees are located upon the site, this is to be clearly stated on the site plan.
- All trees intended for removal or lopping are to be clearly marked as such and numbered on the site plan.
- Any plans which do not show the information required above will not be accepted by Council. Similarly, should Council's site inspection reveal trees which have not been marked on the site plan, the application may be returned for correction.
- Proposed retaining walls and driveways, as well as the extent of any cut and fill, is to be accurately plotted on the site plan in order to allow the assessment of the likely impact of these works upon existing trees.
- If a significant tree (i.e. a keystone species or identified habitat tree) is to be removed, Council may require a report from a Wildlife Consultant concerning the relocation of any wildlife living in the tree or

from an arborist regarding the tree's health. Such reports will be at the applicant's expense and are required prior to the determination of any application.

Council frequently seeks amendments of proposals to preserve trees. This may include, but not be limited to, increased or reduced building lines, mirror reversal, or step downs and deepened edge beams for raft slab construction. Full consideration of these issues and discussion with Council prior to plan preparation may avoid this imposition.

Where trees are to be preserved on a site, information regarding proposed placement of services such as stormwater, sewer and electricity may be required. This will avoid cutting through the root system of significant trees, thus severely weakening them.

If you have any questions regarding the maintenance or removal of trees, please contact Council's Customer Service Staff on (02) 4350 5555.
