



Town of Cottesloe

Our ref: SUB/2434
Enquiries: Joshua Lappan

11 May 2021

Dear Resident

Verge Street Tree Infill Planting Program

We will be commencing our street tree verge planting to infill verges that either do not have a tree or that have large open spaces. This will commence in June 2021 and includes areas that residents have previously opted not to have trees planted within Council verges.

Our approach this year is consistent with Council's newly adopted Street Tree Policy that is committed towards increasing the Town of Cottesloe's canopy and requires a minimum of one tree to be planted on every verge adjacent to each property. Residents may nominate a position for the new tree and would need to notify the Town of this preferred location within the verge. We will accommodate where possible. A stake will be placed on the verge to identify the location of the tree prior to planting.

The Town's Street Tree Masterplan, can be found on our website - <https://www.cottesloe.wa.gov.au/reference-documents.aspx> this has pre-determined tree species for each street.

All street trees are the Town of Cottesloe's (Local Government) property. The Council will seek to recover all related replanting costs associated for any damage, unauthorised removal and pruning. We ask that you contact us should you require any maintenance or have any concerns with the trees.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr Joshua Lappan, Acting Coordinator Parks and Operations, on (08) 9285 5000 or via email on town@cottesloe.wa.gov.au should your require any further information.

Thank you

Yours Sincerely



Shaun Kan

Director Engineering Services



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Arboricultural Advice

Site Inspection date: 4th of August 2021

Location: Torrens Court, Cottesloe

RE: Verge Tree Species Selection

Scope

- To review and provide a professional opinion regarding the proposed planting of *Agonis flexuosa* (WA Weeping Peppermint) within the Torrens Court verges by the Town of Cottesloe.
- This consultant confirms attending the site on the 4th of August 2021.

Site observations



Figure 1 Displaying Torrens Court, Cottesloe and indicating the *Erythrina x sykesii* (Coral Tree) recently removed (arrowed) and remaining trees within the verge adjacent nos. 1 & 4 (circled). The existing *Agonis flexuosa* adjacent no 5 Torrens St is also evident

- Torrens Court is a cul-de-sac located within the northern ward of the Town of Cottesloe.
- The street is oriented in an east-west direction and is located on an easterly facing slope and thereby relatively sheltered from prevailing onshore winds.
- Torrens Court appears to be the address of 5 residential properties - Nos. 1 - 4 in which the residences are oriented to the Torrens Court boundary and no. 6, which is oriented to Torrens St with a side boundary on Torrens Court. The property indicated as no. 5 appears to relate to Torrens Street (Figure 1).
- The Torrens Court roadway is 5.7m wide. The Local Authority verge is 5.0m wide on the southern side and 4.0m wide on the northern side of the roadway.
- The verges are predominantly turfed to complement garden areas which appeared in good condition and well maintained (Figures 2 – 4).
- Street trees currently consist of two grafted forms of *Corymbia ficifolia* (Red Flowering Gum) planted in alignment within the northern verge adjacent no. 4 Torrens Court and two *Olea europaea* (European Olive) forming a screen adjacent no. 1 Torrens Court
- Recent removal of a mature *Erythrina x sykesii* (syn. *Erythrina indica*) (Coral Tree) from the northern verge adjacent no. 2 Torrens Court was also evident with the stump remaining. This tree is understood to have been removed due to root intrusion into adjacent water supply infrastructure.

Discussion

- *Erythrina x sykesii* (syn. *Erythrina indica*) (Coral Tree) was found be listed within the current Draft Street Tree Master Plan prepared for the Town of Cottesloe by Arbor Carbon P/L as the proposed street tree for Torres Court, however this consultant understands *Agonis flexuosa* (WA Weeping Peppermint) is now proposed to be planted in these verges.
- *Agonis flexuosa* is endemic to coastal areas of South West Western Australia, including the Cottesloe area, and is generally considered to be a medium sized tree up to approximately 10m in height, but is recognised as reaching a height of approximately 15m in better growing conditions (<http://anpsa.org.au/a-fle.html>).
- The species typically develops a broad crown and multiple main limbs developing low in the canopy to form the crown structure.
- *Agonis flexuosa* is listed as both the current and proposed street tree species for nearby Torrens Street and an example of the species is located adjacent no. 5 Torrens St near the intersection with Torrens Court (Figures 1 & 5).
- This mature tree was found to be in good health and condition with a height measurement of 14.4m, a canopy spread of approximately 14.0m and a trunk diameter of 1.06m measured 0.3m above ground level.
- This tree is located within a 6.6m wide verge with ground level at the base below the level within the adjacent property.
- This suggests a strong likelihood that trees of the species planted in Torrens Court will attain a similar height, canopy spread and trunk diameter as they would be subject to similar soil and microclimate conditions.

Street Tree Master Plan

The current Draft Street Tree Master Plan of the Town of Cottesloe makes the following points within its introduction regarding the importance of a street tree selection:

- 'When selecting trees for the urban environment it is critical to identify species that can grow into healthy, long lived trees while minimizing conflicts between trees and the surrounding urban infrastructure, residents and road users.'
- Aims for the 'Provision of safe and attractive street trees that enhance the amenity of residents, pedestrians and buildings plus are sensitive to the landscape, infrastructure and environmental conditions'.
- 'Trees are often blamed for damaging infrastructure due to the expansion of roots under roads and pathways as well as disturbance of underground services. In many cases this is the result of poor species selection for the location.'
- 'Matching the size of tree to the scale of the street and planting area is important. A tree which is too large is likely to cause damage to road and pavement surfaces as the tree grows and cause conflict with adjacent residents.'

Conclusion

Agonis flexuosa is considered by this consultant to be an inappropriate species for planting within the Torrens Court verge due to the width of both the roadway and verge and advises that the planting of the species in this location is likely to cause ongoing issues due to property encroachment, reduction of solar access, disruption of pavements and garden structures and decline of existing garden and lawn areas due to overshadowing.

This consultant therefore respectfully suggests that the planting of *Agonis flexuosa* within the Torrens Court verges is inconsistent with the Draft Street Tree Master Plan for the Town of Cottesloe.



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Limitation of liability

Trees can be managed, but they cannot be controlled. To live or work near a tree involves a degree of risk.

This report only covers identifiable defects present at the time of inspection. Paperbark Technologies accepts no responsibility and cannot be held liable for any structural defect or unforeseen event/situation or adverse weather conditions that may occur after the time of inspection. Paperbark Technologies cannot guarantee that the tree/s contained within this report will be structurally sound under all circumstances, and is not able to detect every condition that may possibly lead to the structural failure of a tree. Paperbark Technologies cannot guarantee that the recommendations made will categorically result in the tree being made safe. Unless specifically mentioned this report will only be concerned with above ground inspections, as such all observations have been visually assessed from ground level. Trees are living organisms and as such cannot be classified as safe under any circumstances. Trees fail in ways that the arboriculture industry does not fully understand. The recommendations are made on the basis of what can be reasonably identified at the time of inspection therefore Paperbark Technologies accepts no liability for any recommendations made.

All care has been taken to obtain information from reliable sources, however Paperbark Technologies can neither guarantee nor be responsible for the accuracy of information provided by others. In the event that reinspection of the tree/s is recommended it is the client's responsibility to make arrangements with Paperbark Technologies.