

Native trees stolen

Six native grass trees (*Xanthorrhoea australis*) were stolen from McIndoe Park in Leongatha two weeks ago.

The sensitive, slow-growing trees were planted in 2013 as part of Council's beautification works in the area and had only just started to get established.

Staff are extremely disappointed, having spent many hours watering and mulching the trees, estimated to cost \$3,000.

Parks and Gardens Coordinator, Steve Missen, said this was a selfish act.

"The people responsible for this have stolen from each one of us as ratepayers," he explained. "The sad thing is that the likelihood of them surviving having being moved is very low if at all."

Xanthorrhoea australis has a very shallow root system which means it does not easily tolerate major disturbances. Cultivation of the species is also difficult as its slow growth rate means that many years of care are required before the plant is mature.

At this point, Council will not be replacing the grass trees.

Anyone with information as to the whereabouts of the trees is encouraged to contact Council on 5662 9200.

Captions

Photo 1 - Council staff maintaining the trees before they were stolen.

Photo 2 – Council believes the trees were stolen in the week of 18 January.

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