

Tree of Knowledge – Q&A

Why is there limited access to the Tree of Knowledge structure?

The protective structure surrounding the Tree of Knowledge has been temporarily limited while Council undertakes detailed structural investigations and planning work. Engineering advice has confirmed that further assessment and work are required before the structure can safely reopen to the public. Public safety is Council's highest priority.

Is the tree damaged?

No. Independent heritage advice confirms that the tree itself is the primary heritage element of the site and remains Council's non-negotiable priority for protection. The current investigations relate to the surrounding canopy structure - not the tree itself.

Is the structure unsafe?

Engineering inspections have identified works that must be completed before the structure can safely reopen completely to the public. As a precaution, and in line with that advice, the site remains closed while those requirements are addressed.

Why has this happened now?

The structure completed constructed in 2009 and has reached a natural point in its lifecycle where significant re-living and refitting works are expected. This is standard for major structures of this age and complexity. It is not unexpected, nor is it a failure; it is a normal and responsible stage in infrastructure management.

Why can't engineers fully inspect the structure?

Due to the design and height of the canopy and current work health and safety requirements, accessing every timber member is technically complex. This has been a consistent challenge across inspections since the structure was constructed. A full inspection of all elements is required before reopening, and Council is working through options to achieve this safely and responsibly.

Why wasn't this identified earlier?

The need for ongoing inspection and maintenance has always been recognised. The current engineering advice confirms the structure is now at approximately its half-life point, meaning more substantial re-living works are expected at this stage. This is part of responsible long-term asset management.

What funding is available?

Council is currently working through an Australian Heritage Grant to:

- Undertake structural condition assessments
- Develop a Conservation Management Plan
- Identify works required to ensure safety

While some funding remains, it is not sufficient to deliver full structural rectification works. The next stage will require concept development, costings and further funding applications.

Will the structure be replaced?

No decision has been made about long-term structural solutions at this stage. The current focus is on fully understanding the condition of the existing structure, ensuring public safety, and preparing a responsible plan for the next phase of works. Any significant change to the site would require heritage approval and community consultation.

Will fencing or netting be installed?

Heritage advice confirms that fencing or netting would only be considered a temporary public safety measure - not a permanent solution. Council's priority is to take a measured and responsible approach rather than implement short-term fixes that do not address long-term structural requirements.

What does this mean for upcoming events?

Upcoming events, including the Queensland Music Festival event on 28 April and the Tree of Knowledge Festival from 1–4 May, are being planned in line with current site conditions. The structure itself remains with limited access, and event arrangements will reflect that status. Further event-specific information will be provided closer to the dates.

When will the site reopen?

At this stage, there is no confirmed date for full access to be restored.

The structure will remain at limited access until:

- A full structural assessment is completed
- Required works are identified
- Public safety requirements are satisfied

Council will provide updates as milestones are reached.

What is Council's commitment moving forward?

Council is committed to being responsible, transparent and proactive in managing this nationally significant heritage site. The tree is the primary heritage element and its protection is non-negotiable. The structure is at a natural re-living point in its lifecycle. This is expected and manageable, and Council is working through a staged and responsible process to determine the next steps.