



METHODOLOGY FOR HAZARDOUS TREE REMOVAL

This work applies only to roadsides that have been impacted by the Bayindeen Rocky Road Fire.

First Stage works

Before any tree removal occurs:

1. Trees are to be assessed by a qualified and experienced arborist to determine whether there is an immediate risk of personal injury or damage to property, including to road users, as a result of the fire impact to the tree. Each assessment is to be documented in a report for Council. Where the assessment is that there is an immediate risk, the assessment will record whether it relates to the whole tree or only a part of it.
2. Trees that have been assessed are to be tagged and numbered and identified for either:
 - a. Removal (where the whole of a tree poses an immediate risk)
 - b. Pruning (to remove the section posing an immediate risk)
 - c. Retention (not an immediate risk)
3. A secondary assessment is to be undertaken by crew team leader (who is also an arborist with significant experience) prior to any “first stage works” to:
 - a. Confirm the initial assessment (that the tag on the tree and the arborist report match)
 - b. Identify if the tree is considered an immediate risk and in close proximity to the road carriageway (at risk of falling on the carriageway). Generally, “close proximity” is defined as being within 6 meters of the edge of the carriageway, though exceptions may be made at the discretion of the crew team leader where other factors impacting the level of risk are present. These factors include higher traffic volumes, which occur on roads such as Raglan-Elmhurst Road.
 - c. Trees identified as a lesser risk based on the above criteria are to be considered in second stage works.

4. Where trees have been identified as an immediate risk and assessed as being in close proximity to the road carriageway then:
 - a. Remove the tree if the arborist assessment is to remove.
 - b. Prune the tree in accordance with arborists recommendations to remove the hazard, if the arborist assessment is to prune.
 - c. Avoid any unnecessary disturbance of the roadside in the removal works. Work may involve access to roadsides with heavy plant and equipment to the extent that is reasonably necessary to remove the hazard.
 - d. Where appropriate, some trees recommended for removal will have trunks retained to provide habitat. Large hollow logs will also be retained within the road reserve to provide habitat wherever possible and appropriate.

5. Where trees have been “flagged” by another party:
 - a. These are to be considered as part of the secondary assessment process (step 3 above).
 - b. If the tree is not a “large old tree with significant hollows” present, then it may be removed following the secondary assessment process (step 3).
 - c. If the tree is a large old tree with significant hollows, it shall be considered for conservation value before any works occur with the tree in the Second Stage Work.
 - d. If the tree is a large old tree and is considered an immediate risk in close proximity to the road carriageway, it may be removed as part of the First Stage Work.

6. The secondary assessment (step 3 above) of risk-posing trees (in addition to other considerations) shall also have regard to the road classification, traffic volume and usual traffic speed.

7. It is expected that the first stage works will involve the removal of up to approximately 50% of the trees identified for removal (in step 1 and 2).

8. To the extent that it is possible, effort will be made to provide notice of works ahead of first stage removal taking place. A schedule will be published and updated periodically on Council’s website at:
<https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/Emergencies/Bayindeen-fire-recovery-information/Hazardous-tree-removal-updates#WorksProgram>

9. A large tree is defined as a native canopy tree with a Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) greater than or equal to the large tree benchmark for the relevant bioregional EVC. The DBH can be determined by measuring the diameter (in meters) of a tree at 1.3 metres above ground level. (Refer DEECA website for EVC classifications)

Second Stage works

Methodology for these works shall be developed in consultation with DEECA. This work will involve the removal or pruning of trees that have not been removed or pruned in the First Stage Works, but which also present an unacceptable risk to road users.

Note that this methodology may be modified by Council following any updated advice.