

ELECTRICAL LINE CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2023-24



CITY OF GREATER
BENDIGO

ELECTRICITY SAFETY (ELECTRICAL LINE CLEARANCE) REGULATIONS
2020

Authorised by:	Suzanne Johnstone
Date:	20.03.2023

Table of Contents

ELECTRICAL LINE CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2023/24	1
Table of Contents.....	2
Appendices.....	4
Definitions.....	5
Structure of Plan.....	6
Part 2 – Prescribed Code of Practice and related provisions	6
Section 9 - Preparation of management Plan	6
9(2) Before 31 March in each year, a responsible person must ensure that a management plan relating to compliance with the Code for the next financial year is prepared.....	6
9(3) Submit for approval.....	7
9(4) Management Plan specifications.	7
9(4)(a) Name, Address and Telephone Number of the Responsible Person:	7
9(4)(b) The name, position, address and telephone number of the individual who was responsible for the preparation of the management plan:.....	8
9(4)(c) Name, position, address and telephone number of the persons who are responsible for carrying out the plan:	8
9(4)(d) The telephone number of a person who can be contacted in an emergency that requires clearance of a tree from an electric line that the responsible person is required to keep clear of trees:	9
9(4)(e) The objectives of the management plan:	9
9(4)(f) The land to which the management plan applies:.....	12
9(4)(g) Each area that the responsible person knows contains a tree that the responsible person may need to cut or remove to ensure compliance with the Code that is-	13
9(4)(h) The means by which the responsible person is required to use to identify a tree specified in paragraph (g):.....	13
9(4)(i) The means by which the responsible person is required to use to identify a tree specified in paragraph (h).....	15

9(4)(j) The management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the Code, which must-	20
9(4)(k) The procedures to be adopted if it is not practicable to comply with the requirements of AS 4373 while cutting a tree in accordance with the Code:	25
9(4)(l) A description of each alternative compliance mechanism in respect of which the responsible person has applied, or proposes to apply, for approval under clause 31 of the Code.....	27
9(4)(m) The details of each approval for an alternative compliance mechanism that -	26
9(4)(n) A description of the measures that must be used to assess the performance of the responsible person under the management plan:	27
9(4)(o) Details of the audit processes that must be used to determine the responsible person's compliance with the Code:	27
9(4)(p) The qualifications and experience that the responsible person must require of the persons who are to carry out the inspection, cutting or removal of trees in accordance with the Code:	30
9(4)(q) Notification and consultation procedures, including the form of the notice to be given in accordance with Division 3 of Part 2 of the Code:	32
9(4)(r) Dispute resolution procedures.....	32
9(4)(s) Exemption Granted under Regulation 11.....	32
10(6) A responsible person must ensure that a copy of the management plan is published on website:.....	32
Schedule 1- Code of practice for Electric Line Clearance Part 2 – Clearance responsibilities Division 1 – Roles of responsible person.....	33
4. Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines.	34
5. Exception to minimum clearance space for small branches around insulated low voltage electric lines.	33
6. Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas (LBRA)	33
Table 1. Location of Asset identification of Structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric line being managed under the Exception.....	33
8. Responsible person may cut or remove hazard trees.....	35

Appendices

1. Map showing; 9(3)(f)
 - the 'Declared Urban Area' of Greater Bendigo;
 - Locations of high and low voltage powerlines.
2. Map showing trees of cultural or environmental significance within the Declared Urban Area including.
 - trees on the City of Greater Bendigo's Significant Tree Register; and;
 - trees covered in an overlay as part of City of Greater Bendigo's Planning Scheme (Check this one)
3. City of Greater Bendigo, Tree Asset Management Program.
4. City of Greater Bendigo, *Technical Procedure for Tree Inspections*.
5. Minimum clearance spaces Division 1 and 2.
6. City of Greater Bendigo - Urban Tree Management Policy.
7. Pro-active works specification 2020.
8. City of Greater Bendigo Customer Service Charter.
9. Urban declared area, urban area - Low Bushfire Risk Area (LBRA)
10. Urban growth area – Low Bushfire Risk Area (LBRA).
11. Urban declared area, City of greater Bendigo – Low Bushfire Risk Area (LBRA).
12. Sample audit forms.
13. Sample Public notice.
14. City's of Greater Bendigo's ELC Emergency Procedure
15. PD Coordinator of Arboriculture & Environmental Management

Definitions

AS4373-2007	Australian Standard- Pruning of amenity trees, as published or amended from time to time.
CFA	Country Fire Authority
Council	In this document 'Council' refers to the City of Greater Bendigo
Declared Area	The area Council is responsible for vegetation clearance from power lines.
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
ELCMP	Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (this document).
HBRA	High Bushfire Risk Area
LBRA	Low Bushfire Risk Area
Responsible Person	A person or organisation that has responsibility for keeping the whole or any part of a tree clear of an electric line under Subdivision 1 or Division 2 or Part 8 of The Act.
Sag	Refers to the vertical displacement of an electric line cable below the pint at which the cable is attached.
Sway	Refers to the horizontal displacement of an electric line cable.
SWMS	(City of Greater Bendigo's) Safe Work Method Statements
The Act	Refers to the Electricity Safety Act 1998.
The Code	Refers to the prescribed Code of Practice and related provisions under the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.
The Regulations	Refers to the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020
VFRR-B	Victorian Fire Risk Register- Bushfire
Victorian Government Gazette	The publishing of official notification or decisions or actions taken by, or information from, the Governor of Victoria, Government Authorities, Government Departments, Local Councils, companies and individuals.

Structure of Plan

This Management Plan has been structured to align with the relevant clauses of the Regulations. The corresponding section of the Plan is numbered identically to the section of the Regulations to allow for cross referencing.

This document describes the City of Greater Bendigo compliance with Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020, S.R. No. 50/2020.

Part 2 – Prescribed Code of Practice and related provisions

Section 9 - Preparation of management Plan

9(2) Before 31 March in each year, a responsible person must ensure that a management plan relating to compliance with the Code for the next financial year is prepared.

The City of Greater Bendigo is a 'Responsible Person', required to prepare the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (ELCMP) for the purpose of the Regulations. This document is prepared in accordance with Section 9 of the Regulations.

A formal review of the ELCMP is conducted prior to March 31 annually and updated for the proceeding financial year. During this review the following are revised and updated accordingly:

- The relevant regulations, codes and referenced standards
- Any changes required to improve performance
- Any internal processes and policies pertaining to the successful compliance with the regulations
- Any updates to data, assets and spatial information

It is the responsibility of the **Coordinator Arboriculture and Environment** to review and prepare the ELCMP annually.

Following the formal review, the ELCMP must be authorised by the **Director of Presentation and Assets**.

It is the responsibility of the **Coordinator Arboriculture and Environment** to ensure that the ELCMP is authorised and made publicly available with any superseded documents removed.

9(3) Submit for approval

The responsible person will prepare this document and any others relating to compliance. An exact copy of this Management Plan, relating to compliance with the code for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2026, will be submitted for approval to Energy Safe Victoria by the 31st of March. All other Council documents are available upon request from Customer Service.

9(4) Management Plan Specifications

9(4)(a) Name, Address and Telephone Number of the Responsible

Person:	Andrew Cooney
Name:	City of Greater Bendigo
Address:	Galkangu – Bendigo GovHub 189 – 229 Lyttleton Terrace, Bendigo
Postal Address:	P.O. Box 733, BENDIGO VIC 3552
Office Telephone No.:	1300 002 642
Email:	requests@bendigo.vic.gov.au
Chief Executive Officer:	Andrew Cooney

9(4)(b) T

The name, position, address and telephone number of the individual who was responsible for the preparation of the management plan:

Name: Brian Westly
Position: Director, Presentation & Assets
Postal Address: P.O. Box 733 Bendigo
Telephone No.: 1300 002 642

9(4)(c) Name, position, address and telephone number of the persons who are responsible for the carrying out of the plan:

Name: Chris Mitchell
Position: Manager, Parks & Open Space
Postal Address: 64-90 Adam St, GOLDEN SQUARE, VIC 3555
Telephone No.: 1300 002 642

Name: Suzanne Johnstone
Position: Coordinator, Arboriculture and Environment,
Site Address: 64-90 Adam St, GOLDEN SQUARE, VIC 3555
Telephone No.: 1300 002 642

9(4)(d) The telephone number of a person who can be contacted in an emergency that requires clearance of a tree from an electric line that the responsible person is required to keep clear of trees:

Name: City of Greater Bendigo, Emergency Contact Number (business and after hours)

Number: 1300 002 642

9(4)(e) The objectives of the management plan:

The following are identified as the key objectives of this management plan:

- To provide this management plan relating to the Code and
- To provide for other matters authorized under the Electrical Safety Act 1998;
- To make consequential amendment of the Electrical Safety (Bushfire Mitigation Regulations 2013);
- To ensure public safety at all times in relation to fire risk, human injury and continuity of supply resulting from the contact between power lines and vegetation;
- To achieve compliance with the Electricity Safety Act 1998 and the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020;
- To outline Council's commitment to electrical safety;
- A requirement that certain responsible persons prepare management procedures to minimise the danger of trees contacting electric lines and causing fire or electrocution or interruptions to electricity supply;

- To minimise the risk of fire starts associated with vegetation contact with electric lines;
- To provide a safe work place for employees and contractors undertaking vegetation clearance pruning and any employee or contractors who conduct other maintenance vegetation works within the vicinity of powerlines;
- Standards and practices to be adopted and observed in tree cutting or removal in the vicinity of electric lines and keeping of the whole or part of any tree clear of electric lines, including standards and practices to protect the health of trees that require cutting in accordance with the Code;
- To ensure protection and of areas of important local, indigenous and significant vegetation throughout the Council's Declared Area. This protection includes, but is not limited to, sites containing botanically, historically or culturally important vegetation, or vegetation of outstanding aesthetic or ecological significance, and/or the habitat of rare or endangered species;
- To protect the health of our existing trees, whether indigenous or exotic species;
- To require responsible persons to minimise the impacts of cutting on indigenous and significant trees and the habitat of threatened fauna;
- Establishing an open dialogue with relevant distribution company(s) vegetation management group to ensure both parties have a clear understanding of each other's priorities;
- To ensure the provision of an industry accepted standard of tree pruning that minimise the risk of structural failure and decline in tree health;
- To ensure the provision of aesthetically pleasing roadside (and associated) vegetation;

- To ensure community satisfaction with the manner in which the necessary works are carried out.

Compliance with these objectives is measured by an ongoing process of auditing and Contract performance monitoring as detailed in the relevant sections of this Plan.

9(4)(f) The land to which the management plan applies:

The Declared Area of City of Greater Bendigo is confined to the urban area of Bendigo. The land to which this plan applies is shown in red in the following map.

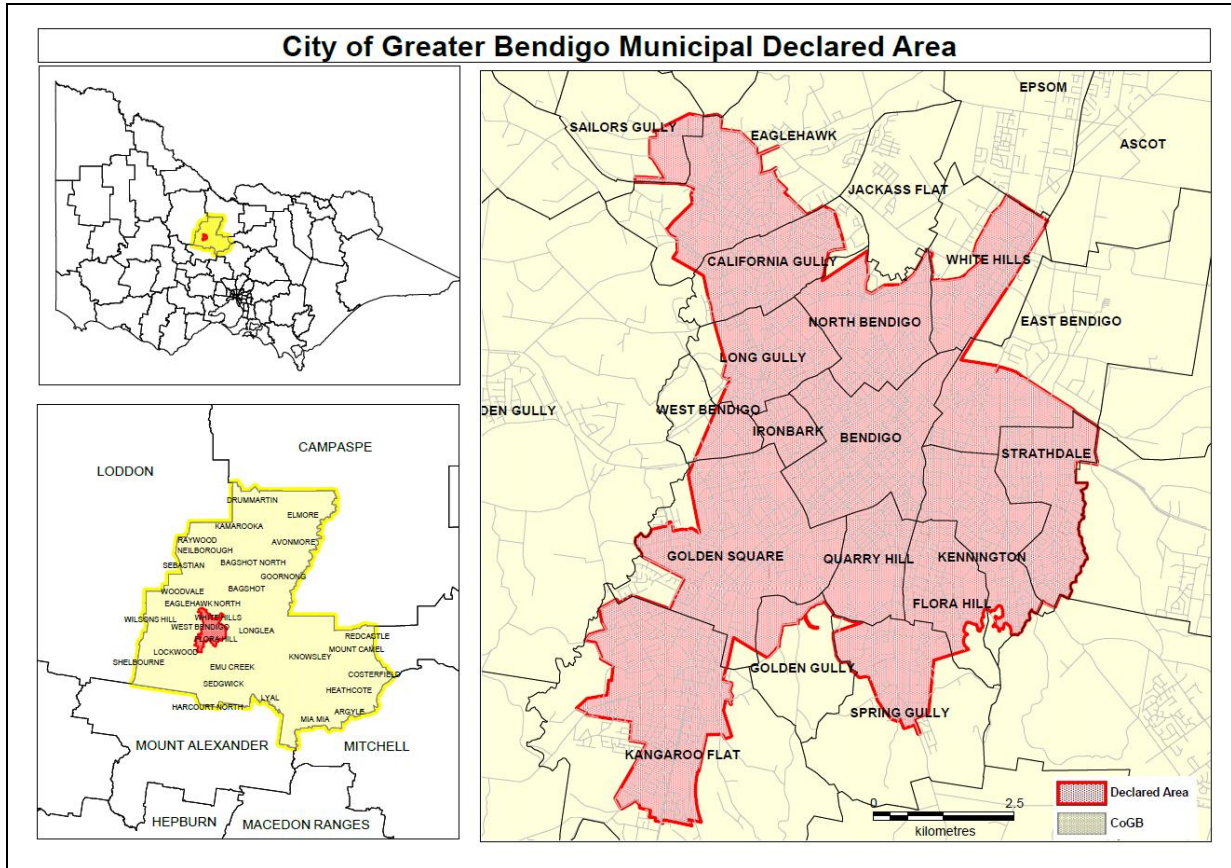


Figure 1 Urban Declared Area for Powerline Clearance in the City of Greater Bendigo

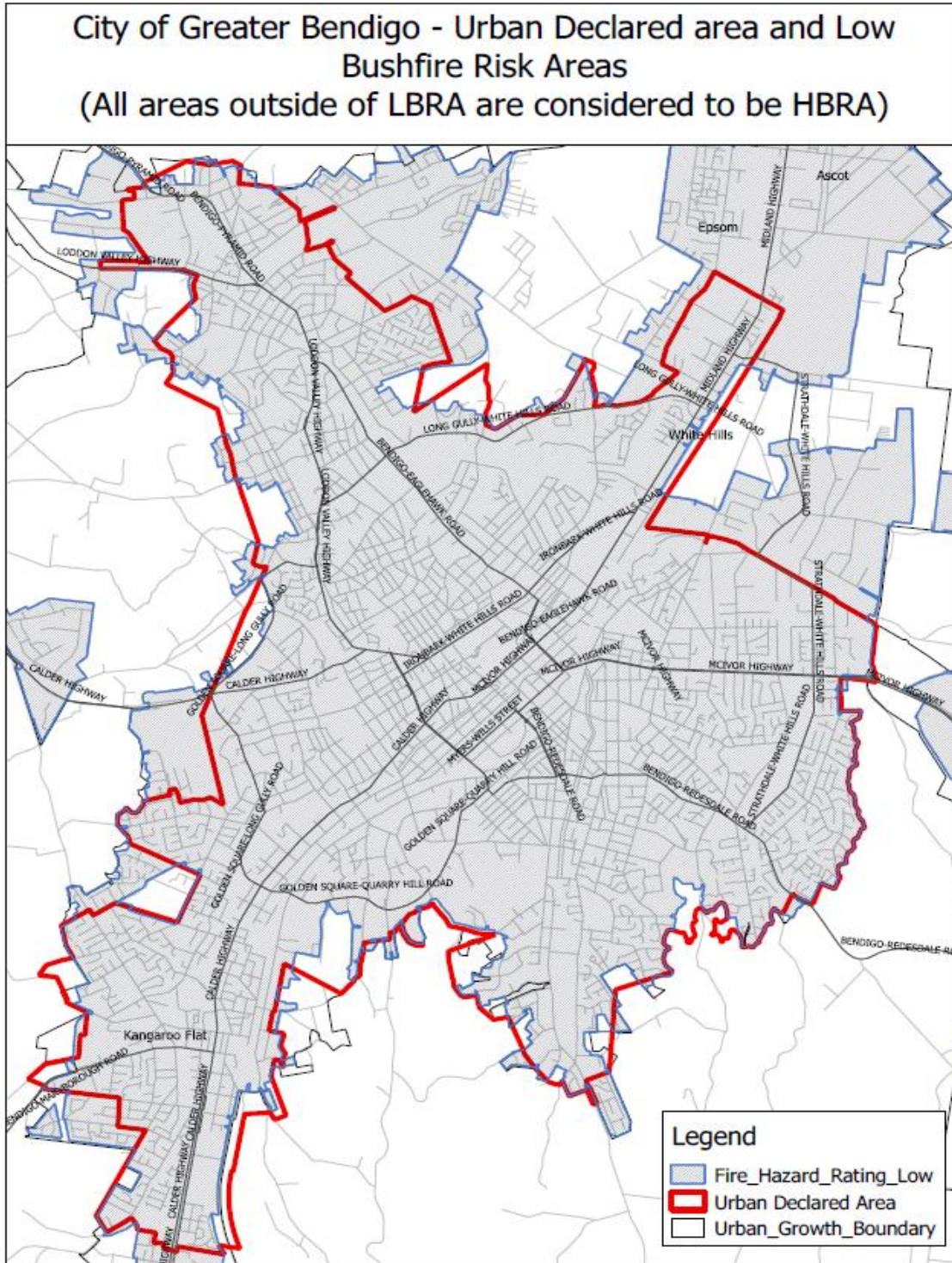
It is the responsibility of the distribution business to maintain vegetation clear of electrical conductors within the City of Greater Bendigo outside of the Urban Declared Area.

As part of the preparation of the ELCMP, Council will consult with the CFA prior to March 31 annually for the most up-to-date and accurate information of HBRA and LBRA areas. CFA maintains a GIS data base that shows the Low Bushfire Rated Areas (LBRA) and the High Bushfire Rated Areas (HBRA) in relation to electric lines. To access this information visit <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/electric-line-vegetation-clearance> or e-mail fire-hzd-ratings@cfa.vic.gov.au

The most up to date maps are attached as Appendix 9, 10, and 11.

9(4)(g) Hazardous bushfire risk areas and low bushfire risk areas in the land which applies to this management plan

City of Greater Bendigo - Urban Declared area and Low Bushfire Risk Areas
(All areas outside of LBRA are considered as HBRA)



9(4)(h) Each area that the responsible person knows contains a tree that the responsible person may need to cut or remove to ensure compliance with the Code that is-

i. Indigenous to Victoria;

All Council managed trees are recorded as such in Council's asset database. The data base contains information on each tree including tree genus, species, age, origin, health, size and condition. Tree origin is categorised as: "Exotic"- species originating outside Australia; "Indigenous"- Australian tree species or "Victorian"- species that are indigenous to Victoria or the Greater Bendigo region.

However, for the purpose of this plan, the term "indigenous" shall mean vegetation that is indigenous, remnant or endemic to the Bendigo area.

The urban tree population throughout the Declared Urban Area of the City of Greater Bendigo is a varied mix of Victorian, indigenous and exotic tree species, many of which are planted nursery stock. Appendix 1 shows the location of all Exotic, Indigenous and Council managed trees throughout the declared area.

There are no known trees of habitat significance for rare or endangered species listed in Council's Declared Area within the vicinity of powerlines that require pruning or clearing to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice.

Any tree, regardless of species, that requires removal to comply with the code needs to be authorised by a suitably qualified City of Greater Bendigo Arborist.

There are no known trees in the Declared Area to be managed by this Plan that are:

- on a Threatened Flora List; or
- on a Threatened Invertebrate Fauna List; or
- on a Threatened Vertebrate Fauna List; or
- on a flora or fauna listed as threatened with a status of 'vulnerable', 'endangered' or 'critically endangered'

Council will use any relevant spatial data sets for street trees and powerline assets in the Urban Declared Area to facilitate better planning and identification of affected trees and significant vegetation as Council's tree data inventory is updated. Additional resources available to identify significant indigenous trees are listed in 9(3)(h).

Council will review each of these resources on an annual basis when this Plan is revised and again at the 5-year review of the Regulations.

ii. Listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance:

The City of Greater Bendigo has a number of planning overlays in which tree controls apply. These include;

- HO – Heritage Overlay
- VPO – Vegetation protection overlays
- SLO – Significant Landscape Overlay
- ESO - Environmental Significance Overlay

Appendix 2 shows the various overlays with tree controls within the Urban Declared Area to which this Plan pertains.

iii. A tree of cultural or environmental significance:

In addition to the previous planning controls, approximately 800 known trees of cultural or environmental significance are identified in the City of Greater Bendigo's Significant Tree Register, shown in Appendix 2.

Any tree of cultural or environmental significance that requires removal to comply with the code must be authorised by a suitably qualified City of Greater Bendigo Arborist.

No habitat trees for rare or endangered species are known to exist in the area to which the management plan applies. Breeding seasons for endangered species therefore do not need to be considered at this time.

This Plan will be amended annually subsequent to the compilation or identification of any additional information.

9(4)(i) The means by which the responsible person is required to use to identify a tree specified in paragraph (h), (i, ii, iii):

Appendix 2 of this management plan provides the means by which the responsible person uses to identify any tree; categorized as an indigenous tree, of cultural or environmental significance.

Before electric line clearance works commence, tree management personnel are made aware of the known locations of the trees listed in paragraph **9(4)(h)** either internally through their onsite inductions, or externally through the contractor engagement process.

All pruning will take place in accordance with Council's Urban Tree Management Policy, *AS-4373, Pruning of Amenity Trees*, and any other methods available to minimise overall site damage. Council will, as far as practicable, restrict cutting or removal of indigenous trees and/or trees of cultural or environmental significance, to the minimum extent necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Code or to make an unsafe situation safe. All removals are to be authorised by a suitably qualified City of Greater Bendigo Arborist.

All staff and contractors engaged to undertake Electrical Line Clearance activities are obliged to familiarise themselves with the contents of this Plan. As per Council's Proactive Tree Maintenance program and Urban Tree Management Policy, staff and contractors will endeavour to relocate indigenous fauna that will be displaced from maintenance activities or alternatively leave the task to the end of the breeding season if it is safe and practical to do so.

As there has been previous powerline clearance pruning around existing trees in the Urban Declared Area, there are no known trees from clause **(h)** that will be significantly adversely affected by future powerline clearance works.

The location of the vegetation referred to in section (h), and any additional detail resulting from review processes, will be made available each year to those undertaking powerline pruning.

(i) Indigenous to Victoria

The City of Greater Bendigo has over 100,000 trees within its tree management database. All Council managed trees within the database which contains information on each tree including tree genus, species, age, origin, health, size, condition and proximity to electrical lines and conductor types. All employees and contractors engaged by the City of Greater Bendigo for the undertaking of pruning to clear vegetation from electrical conductors have live access to Council's tree database via the Pozi / *Konect* app. It is a requirement that all staff and contractors electronically record each tree visited as part of a maintenance regime within these Apps which links to the City of Greater Bendigo tree asset database. Pozi is an open online mapping service that can be found on the City's website or at <https://bendigo.pozi.com>.

Job Safety Analysis forms and pre / post work check lists are contained in the *Konect* app, either embedded in programed defects or as a standalone form. It is a requirement for all personnel undertaking Power line clearance works to fill out these checklists.

SWMS and all Work Instructions relevant to Power line Clearance works are controlled documents maintained by the City of Greater Bendigo's System Management Coordinator and are available to staff either by the Sugarsync App or via email or paper copies for contractors.

All employees and contractors engaged by the City of Greater Bendigo for the undertaking of pruning to clear vegetation from electrical conductors are required to be suitably qualified Arborists who obtained a minimum level of training that includes tree identification.

(ii) Listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance;

The City of Greater Bendigo has a number of planning overlays in which tree controls apply. Greater Bendigo's entire planning scheme is available from <http://planning-schemes.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/greaterbendigo>

Planning zones and overlays within Greater Bendigo's Planning Scheme are geographically displayed as layers in Council's map interface applications, to which Council staff have access.

(iii) A tree of cultural or environmental significance;

The City of Greater Bendigo's Significant Tree Register is geographically displayed as a layer in Council's map interface applications and linked to Council's tree asset database, to which Council staff have access.

Additional resources available to identify significant indigenous trees are;

- The Victorian Heritage Register <http://heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/heritage-protection/levels-of-protection/>
- The National Trust Significant Tree register <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/>
- The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register as established under section 144 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. <https://www.vic.gov.au/aboriginalvictoria/heritage/heritage-tools-and-publications/victorian-aboriginal-heritage-register.html>
- Areas of Cultural Sensitivity available from Planning Maps Online <http://services.land.vic.gov.au/>
- Flora or habitat of fauna listed as threatened in accordance with section 10 of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 can be found in advisory lists as published by DELWP <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/about/epbc-act-lists#species>

These resources are reviewed annually and updated prior to the completion of the ELCMP before March 31st each year.

Appendix 2 of this management plan provides the means by which the responsible person uses to identify a tree of cultural or environmental significance.

Before electric line clearance works commence, tree management personnel are made aware of the known locations of the trees listed in paragraph **9(4)(h)** either internally through their onsite inductions, or externally through the contractor engagement process.

All pruning will take place in accordance with Council's Urban Tree Management Policy, *AS-4373, Pruning of Amenity Trees*, and any other methods available to minimise overall site damage. Council will, as far as practicable, restrict cutting or removal of indigenous trees and/or trees of cultural or environmental significance, to the minimum extent necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Code or to make an unsafe situation safe. All removals are to be authorised by a suitably qualified City of Greater Bendigo Arborist.

All staff and contractors engaged to undertake Electrical Line Clearance activities are obliged to familiarise themselves with the contents of this Plan. As per Council's Proactive Tree Maintenance program and Urban Tree Management Policy, staff and contractors will endeavour to relocate indigenous fauna that will be displaced from maintenance activities or alternatively leave the task to the end of the breeding season if it is safe and practical to do so.

As there has been previous powerline clearance pruning around existing trees in the Urban Declared Area, there are no known trees from clause (h) that will be significantly adversely affected by future powerline clearance works.

The location of the vegetation referred to in section (h), and any additional detail resulting from review processes, will be made available each year to those undertaking powerline pruning.

9(4)(j) The management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the Code, which must-

(i) Methods to be adopted for managing trees and maintaining a minimum clearance space as required by the Code; and

The minimum clearances required between trees and powerlines (excluding an allowance for regrowth) are set out in Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

- Schedule 1—Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance: Part 3 – Minimum clearance space; and
- Schedule 2—Applicable distance for middle two thirds of a span of an electric line.

These are supplied as Appendix 5.

The need to apply additional allowance for sag and sway to the clearance space detailed in the graphs in schedule 2 of the code when calculating the minimum clearance space in accordance with Division 1 of part 3 of the Code is also required.

Note that these are minimum safe clearances only and on top of these clearances an additional allowance for regrowth until the next programmed cutting (normally two year) is required. Unless otherwise specified by the Supervisor, any work undertaken shall be to a minimum of these clearances plus an allowance for two years regrowth.

The City of Greater Bendigo declared area has short span distances between 40 - 60 metres and the utilisation of sag and sway distance is marginal. Consultation to determine additional span distance can be received by phoning the Council Liaison Officer at Powercor on 03 96834851.

If any non-conformance is identified due to the increased minimum clearance distance due to sag and sway, the supervisor shall act with priority and take the necessary action to rectify the non-conformance. The required extra clearance distances and

resulting works are to be recorded and sent to works crews via the Konect app and permanently stored on council's current asset management data base.

Council adopted the Urban Tree Management Policy in August 2017 which governs the management of urban trees by the City of Greater Bendigo. The Urban Tree Management Policy (Appendix 6) provides a rationale and framework for an equitable, transparent and consistent approach to the management of urban trees by the City of Greater Bendigo.

The City's Proactive Tree Management Program aims to provide the necessary maintenance of tree assets as described by this policy. All urban trees managed by the City of Greater Bendigo are inspected using the *City of Greater Bendigo – Technical Procedure for Tree Inspections*, detailed in Appendix 4 and maintained on a regular cycle by qualified arborists with each tree asset inspected and serviced regularly according to the prescribed rotation period for each particular zone. Council's Proactive Tree Management Program is detailed in Appendix 3.

As part of the program;

- All City trees within Bendigo's urban declared area will be inspected and works programmed.
 - Annually as a part of HBRA Inspection and Works Program and High Voltage feeders Inspection and Works Program. All High Voltage inspection and clearance works are to commence in mid-September and be completed by the 1st of December or the start of the declared fire danger period, whichever comes first.
 - Biennially as part of the Electrical Line Clearance Management Plan (LBRA areas) and as part of the Proactive Tree Management Program. Low voltage clearance works commence in early spring each year and should be complete by mid-February.
 - At least once every four years as part of the Proactive Tree Management Program. Proactive pruning works commence on or around July 1st each

year with the aim of completing all assigned zones by mid-February the following year.

- Trees in Bendigo's CBD, major parks and nominated childcare centres, recreation facilities and City managed properties will be inspected annually and works programmed accordingly.
- All rural maintenance zones will be inspected and works programmed no less than once every five years. No Powerline clearance works are required to be undertaken outside the Declared Urban Area.

The visit to every tree, regardless of it requiring works or not, is to be electronically recorded in the City's asset management system, *Konect*.

Additionally, all High Voltage feeders throughout Greater Bendigo's Urban Declared Area undergo an audit conducted by contractors in September each year. All clearance pruning requirements are to be completed prior to December 1 or the declaration of the coming fire season. Appendix 1 demonstrates the location of Council managed trees within the declared urban area in proximity to overhead electric lines.

A copy of the current specification for the provision of proactive tree management works, including powerline clearance work, can be found in Appendix 7. This specification outlines the City's audit process and the skills and qualifications that are required of all contractors engaged by the City to carry out such work.

Minimum clearance requirements are determined in accordance with the Code:

- Schedule 1—Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance: Part 3 – Minimum clearance space; and
- Schedule 2—Applicable distance for middle two thirds of a span of an electric line.

These are supplied as Appendix 5.

Council's Coordinator Arboriculture and Environment shall arrange to meet with representatives from the Distribution Business at least twice annually. Any issues that

may arise in relation to powerline management should be discussed at these meetings and appropriate resolutions sought.

All reactive works and requests for tree maintenance outside of the Proactive Tree Management Program will be handled as per clause 4.6 of Council's Urban Tree Management Policy. Council's Inspection Arborist will, at the time of assessment, allocate a timeframe for any required works based on the urgency, risk and severity of the defect. All tree inspections carried out by Council Arborists must be undertaken in accordance with the City of Greater Bendigo's Procedure for Tree Inspection, see Appendix 4.

The planting of new tree assets by the City of Greater Bendigo is governed by the requirements of section 5 of Council's Urban Tree Management Policy (Appendix 6). This policy outlines 14 key requirements to consider when selecting appropriate tree species and locations for future tree assets including the need to minimise interference with above and below-ground infrastructure.

All customer service requests will be responded to in a timely manner in accordance with The City of Greater Bendigo's Customer Service Charter, see Appendix 8. As per clause 2.1.2.a of the Urban Tree Management Policy, all trees deemed hazardous by a suitably qualified Arborist will be removed as soon as reasonably practicable.

Requests for clearance forwarded on from the Distribution Business will also be considered a priority for follow-up inspections, as will the inspection of potential encroachment or contact issues reported by the public.

(ii) Procedures for determining a minimum clearance space in accordance with Division 1 of Part 3 of the Code –

Minimum clearance requirements are determined in accordance with Schedule 2 of *Electrical Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020*. See Appendix 5.

The Code details minimum clearance space for spans up to 100m within LBRA inclusive of sag and sway. Where spans are identified in LBRA that exceed 100m in length, Council will seek advice from the Distribution Business on the proper

calculation to allow for sag and sway in accordance with 21 (2) - page 36 of the regulations.

The Code details minimum clearance space for spans up to 45m within HBRA inclusive of sag and sway. Where spans are identified in HBRA that exceed 45m in length, Council will seek advice from the Distribution Business on the proper calculation to allow for sag and sway in accordance with 21 (2) - page 36 of the regulations.

Pruning or alternative solutions to maintain the appropriate clearance will be conducted in accordance with the advice received.

(A) Method for determining an additional distance that allows for conductor sag and sway;

The need to apply additional allowance for sag and sway to the clearance space detailed in the graphs in Schedule 2 of the code when calculating the minimum clearance space in accordance with Division 1 of part 3 of the Code is also required.

Note that these are minimum safe clearances only and on top of these clearances an additional allowance for regrowth until the next programmed cutting (normally two year) is required. Unless otherwise specified by the Supervisor, any work undertaken shall be to a minimum of these clearances plus an allowance for two years regrowth.

(B) Providing for different additional distances to be determined for different part of an electric span;

The City of Greater Bendigo declared area has short span distances between 40 - 60 metres and the utilisation of sag and sway distance is therefore marginal. Consultation to determine additional span distance can be received by phoning the Council Liaison Officer at Powercor on 03 96834851.

If any non-conformance is identified due to the increased minimum clearance distance due to sag and sway, the supervisor shall act with priority and take the necessary action to rectify the non-conformance. The required extra clearance distances and

resulting works are to be recorded and sent to works crews via the *Konect* app and permanently stored on council's current asset management data base.

9(4)(k) The procedures to be adopted if it is not practicable to comply with the requirements of AS 4373 while cutting a tree in accordance with the Code:

In order to achieve pruning of acceptable quality, all pruning personnel engaged by the City of Greater Bendigo, either Council employees or contractors, must have the following at a minimum;

- Formal training as outlined in **9(4)(p)** that incorporates modern tree pruning practices including awareness of AS4373 and natural target pruning principles.
- Project induction including awareness training in the Code of Practice and this Management Plan.

As part of Council's normal contract management processes, pruning quality will be assessed by the Contract Supervisor and poor performance will be identified. Normal contract management processes will be used to address poor performance, including contract meetings, increased compliance audits, remedial training and, where necessary, application of contract non-conformance penalties.

Only plant, tools and personal protective equipment that have been deemed appropriate for vegetation clearance of powerlines shall be used. Energy Safe Victoria's document "Electrical safety rules for vegetation work near overhead Powerlines by non-electrical workers" has been used to provide guidance.

The Contractor's performance will be reviewed by Council against the following criteria:

- Minimum clearance requirements compliance with Code and this Management Plan
- Quality of workmanship being provided (presentation, conduct & product)
- Compliance with OH&S regulations/requirements
- Compliance with Industry and Australian Standards

- Cooperation with CoGB staff, other Contractors and the public
- Availability for both regular and urgent works
- Completion of services within required time frames

If the Contractor does not meet the required performance standards, as determined by the Superintendent, the Contractor shall receive a written warning from the Contract Supervisor.

If, after two (2) warnings in writing, performance does not improve, the Contractor will be given seven (7) days' notice to show cause why the contract should not be terminated in accordance with the General Conditions of the contract.

Council requires that compliance with *AS 4373* be achieved whenever reasonably practicable and that the amount of canopy removed shall be the least amount required to achieve and maintain compliance. Where it is not practicable to prune to the requirements of *AS 4373* in order to comply with the Code, Council's Team Leader - Arboriculture is to be notified by the works crew or contractor to determine if the tree meets the criteria for:

- Exemption;
- Higher frequency pruning;
- Alternative engineering solutions; or
- Removal.

9(4)(l) A description of each alternative compliance mechanism in respect of which the responsible person has applied, or proposes to apply, for approval under clause 31 of the Code.

The City of Greater Bendigo has currently applied for alternative compliance mechanisms under Clause 31 of the Code at the time of preparation of this plan.

The City of Greater Bendigo does have exceptions in place and intends to utilise exceptions relating to the clearance space between structural branches and low voltage, uninsulated electric lines for the life of this plan.

See Table 1. (Page 33) Location and Asset identification of Structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines being managed under the Exception.

9(4)(m) The details of each approval for an alternative compliance mechanism that-

(i) the responsible person holds; and

The City of Greater Bendigo has currently applied for alternative compliance mechanisms under Clause 31 of the Code.

See Table 1. Location and Asset identification of Structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines being managed under the Exception

(ii) is in effect

The City of Greater Bendigo has currently applied for any alternative compliance mechanisms under Clause 31 of the Code.

See Table 1. Location and Asset identification of Structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines being managed under the Exception

9(4)(n) A description of the measures that must be used to assess the performance of the responsible person under the management plan:

The following will be used to assess Council's performance under this Plan:

- Provision of a compliant Electric Line Clearance Management Plan.
- Compliance with a compliant Electric Line Clearance Management Plan.
- Completion of annual zone pruning, and auditing works according to Council's Tree Asset Management Program.
- Management of contractor performance through regular audits. The Team Leader of Arboriculture undertakes regular spot audits of works being carried out and a total audit of each zone as it is completed. All non-compliances are recorded on Konect and a hard copy of the audit is also supplied to the contractor for actioning (see appendix 12). Results of all audits are discussed at monthly contractor meetings and all non-compliances are to be rectified before the zone is signed off as completed.
- Additional 'Out of cycle' audits conducted by an independent and qualified contractor.
- Distribution business audit results of Council trees within the Declared Urban Area. All DB notifications are received, actioned, response supplied and stored by the Coordinator of Arboriculture and Environment. All notices and correspondence are stored in [U:\Parks\Arboriculture Unit \(2018 onwards\)\Electrical Line Clearance\2020\Notifications](#). These notifications can be monitored from year to year to gauge improvement efforts.
- Pruning requests via the general public that attract unscheduled powerline clearance works via Council's Customer Request System. The number of these requests can be monitored from year to year to gauge improvement.

9(4)(o) Details of the audit processes that must be used to determine the responsible person's compliance with the Code:

Records of the qualifications and training of all persons engaged by the City of Greater Bendigo, to undertake the clearing of vegetation in proximity to overhead electrical conductors, are kept at the office of The Coordinator of Arboriculture and Environment and is stored in *U:\Parks\Arboriculture Unit (2018 onwards)\Contracts\aaProvision of*

Tree Maintenance Works\2020 - Provision of Tree Maintenance Works 2020. This information is required to be updated annually or as required as per Provision of Tree Maintenance Contract CT000523.

Council's Team Leader - Arboriculture is responsible for undertaking random audits of the current cycle of the works crews and contractors engaged to undertake vegetation clearance of electrical conductors. The audit assesses several criteria including; the pruning works to confirm compliance with *AS 4373* and the *Electric Line Clearing Code of Practice*. In the event of a non-compliance with the Code, Council will work with the Contractor to help them become compliant as soon as possible. These audits are conducted randomly at the discretion of the Team Leader Arboriculture or as requested by the Coordinator Arboriculture and Environment, however a minimum of two audits per zone are required.

All information gathered during an audit is recorded on an Arboricultural OH&S checklist. Non-compliances are recorded on a *Fix It Form*, also an *Instruction to Contractor form* (see appendix 12).

Monthly meetings are held with contractors to discuss audit results and remedial actions that may be required. Minutes of these meetings are stored in [U:\Parks\Arboriculture Unit \(2018 onwards\)\Electrical Line Clearance\2020\Meetings_Monthly](U:\Parks\Arboriculture Unit (2018 onwards)\Electrical Line Clearance\2020\Meetings_Monthly). Further follow up audits may be required to ensure compliance.

If the Contractor continually does not meet the required performance standards, as determined by the auditor, the Contractor shall receive a written warning from the Contract Supervisor.

If, after two (2) warnings in writing, performance does not improve, the Contractor will be given seven (7) days' notice to show cause why the contract should not be terminated in accordance with the General Conditions of the contract.

Audit records are maintained according to the organisations internal Integrated Management System by the Systems Manager. All contractors will keep records in accordance with the terms and conditions clearly set out in their contractual agreement.

Where assistance is required by others such as the distribution company, then a consultation process shall be used to assist in attending to the non-compliance as soon as possible.

An 'out of cycle' audit will also be conducted by an independent consultant to ensure that the previous zones remains compliant until 'in cycle'. Any non-compliance identified in the 'out of cycle' audit will be immediately targeted for works, to ensure the zones remain compliance.

9(4)(p) The qualifications and experience that the responsible person must require of the persons who are to carry out the inspection, cutting or removal of trees in accordance with the Code:

The qualifications and expertise required of the persons engaged to carry out tree inspections may vary according to the levels of responsibility, as stated in Council's, *Technical Procedure for Tree Inspections* (Appendix 4).

In summary, regular tree inspection and pruning works may be undertaken by an Arborist with a minimum AQF Level III Horticulture (Arboriculture), or (for trainees or apprentices) be under the direct supervision of an employee who has that qualification as a minimum.

Otherwise a suitably qualified Arborist is required to undertake advanced tree assessments, in accordance with Appendix 4 and sub-regulation 9 (4) (j) of the Code.

All staff engaged by the City of Greater Bendigo to undertake line clearance in accordance with this plan are acting as Authorised Persons in accordance with Electricity Safety (installations) Regulations.

Additionally, persons carrying out tree pruning, and removal works are required to obtain the following qualifications through a nationally recognised Registered Training Organisation (RTO),

- UET20312 Certificate II in ESI (Powerline Vegetation Control)
- Operate and maintain Chainsaws – AHCARB205A

- Fell small trees – AHCARB202A
- Operate a Wood Chipper – FWPHAR22206
- Manual handling training
- Hearing conservation training
- First aid training
- High risk work license with an EWP endorsement
- Emergency procedures training (including EWP escape training)
- Victorian Driver's License (endorsed accordingly)
- OH&S Red Card or an equivalent
- Control traffic with a stop/slow bat – RIIWHS205D
- Implement traffic management plan – RIIWHS302D

Refresher training for UET20312 Certificate II in ESI (powerline vegetation control) must be undertaken annually by all staff and contractors engaged in Powerline clearance works. Training must be conducted by a nationally recognised RTO.

All contractor qualifications will be maintained in a training matrix. All staff qualifications are maintained in their personal files by the People and Performance department.

Council auditors will ensure that all staff and contractors follow the minimum distances specified in the Electricity Safety (Installation) Regulations 2009 (specifically outlined in regulation 318 and 319) when undertaking tree clearing works and comply with all the requirements outlined in the Blue Book, including limits of approach. Notification of affected parties will also be undertaken as per the requirements of the code.

Staff and contractors who are found to be on site without the specified training or qualifications will be removed from the worksite immediately. Depending on the

severity of the incident, the result may involve a warning, review of procedures and safe work systems, further training and possible dismissal or cancellation of contract.

9(4)(q) Notification and consultation procedures, including the form of the notice to be given in accordance with Division 3 of Part 2 of the Code:

Council will publish notice on its website, <http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/> at least 14 days before powerline clearance works begin in the urban declared area. This information will be updated regularly as the crews move from suburb to suburb. If the required pruning works in a single suburb are estimated to take longer than 8 weeks (56 days), a second notice will be published with an updated proposed end date. A sample notice is attached as Appendix 13.

The Coordinator Arboriculture and Environment is responsible for publishing a written notice in accordance with Division 3, Clause 16 of the code before cutting or removing trees unless the works are urgently required for a reason specified in clause 18(1) of Division 3 Part 2 of the Code.

9(4)(r) Dispute resolution procedures

Disputes arising between Council, Distribution Business's (DB's) and/or members of the public relating to issues with the pruning of Council trees to comply with the Code will be resolved as per Council's Customer Service charter, See Appendix 8, and the City's Complaint Handling Policy and procedure which can be found on the City of Greater Bendigo website by visiting <http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/About/Document-Library/city-greater-bendigo-complaint-handling-policy>

This plan will be available for inspection from the City of Greater Bendigo's website.

If Council's dispute resolution process is unsuccessful in resolving the issue, the customer will be referred to the local distribution company (Powercor), Energy Safe Victoria or the Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria, whichever is most relevant.

Powercor (Epsom):

Name: Leo Hourigan

Position: Council Liaison Officer

Site Address: 740 Ballarat Road, Ardeer, Victoria.

Contact number: 03 96834851

Email: lhourigan@powercor.com.au

Website: www.powercor.com.au

Energy Safe Victoria:

Call: (03) 9203 9700

Email: <mailto:info@esv.vic.gov.au>

Website: www.esv.vic.gov.au

Post: 4 Riverside Quay, Southbank Vic 3006

Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria:

Call: 1800 500 509 (Free call)

Email: ewovinfo@ewov.com.au

Website: www.ewov.com.au

Post: GPO Box 469 Melbourne Vic 3001

9(4)(s) Exemption Granted under Regulation 11

No exemption granted under Regulation 11

10(6) A responsible person must ensure that a copy of the management plan is: Published on the responsible person's Internet Site

The Coordinator Arboriculture and Environment is responsible for publishing the ELCMP on the Council's website for inspection by July 1 each year and ensuring that all superseded ELCMPs are removed.

The ELCMP is available at <http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/Services/Sports-Parks-Recreation/Tree-Management/Trees-and-clearing-powerlines>

Schedule 1 Code of Practice for Electrical Line Clearance Part 2 – Clearance responsibilities Division 1 – Roles and Responsibilities

4. Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines.

The City of Greater Bendigo does not have any exceptions in place or intends to utilise any exceptions relating to the clearance space between structural branches and low voltage, insulated electric lines for the life of this plan.

5. Exception to minimum clearance space for small branches around insulated low voltage electric lines.

The City of Greater Bendigo does not have any exceptions in place or intends to utilise any exceptions relating to the clearance space between small branches and low voltage, insulated electric lines for the life of this plan.

6. Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas (LBRA)

The City of Greater Bendigo does have exceptions in place and intends to utilise exceptions relating to the clearance space between structural branches and low voltage, uninsulated electric lines for the life of this plan.

Table 1: Location and Asset identification of Structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines being managed under the Exception

Location	City Tree Asset Number
93, 91A, 91 Vine Street, Bendigo	329,499
	329,428
	239,501

267, 263 Eaglehawk Road, Long Gully	284,302
	284,243
14-26 Daly Street, Long Gully	281,866

Further information regarding exceptions can be found on the Powercor website at <https://www.powercor.com.au/keeping-you-safe/bushfire-mitigation/vegetation-management/>

8. Responsible person may cut or remove hazard trees

For the purpose of this plan, a “hazard tree” is a tree that –

1. Has already or is likely to fail and in doing so will contact an electric line.
2. Will regrow into the clearance space before the next scheduled visit.
3. Any vegetation found within the clearance space in a High Bushfire Risk Area after the declaration of the bushfire risk season.

A tree that has been identified as a “hazard tree” will be inspected by a suitably qualified Arborist as a matter of urgency. This inspection will be carried out in accordance with the City of Greater Bendigo’s – *Technical Procedure for Tree Inspection*, see appendix 4. The inspection must take into account the trees health, location, present defects, growth rate and vigour, prevailing winds and possible future failures. The results of the inspection will be permanently recorded on the Konnect app.

Any clearance works that are required as a result of this inspection to make the tree compliant with the code will be carried out by either council’s in-house crew, or an authorised contractor, with the highest priority.

It must be noted that the City of Greater Bendigo has **no** responsibility for inspecting or pruning privately owned trees near live conductors or pruning Council owned trees near live conductors outside the declared urban area.