

22.1023/02/2017
C187**RIVER RED GUM PROTECTION POLICY**

This policy applies to the protection of River Red Gums located in urban and rural areas.

Policy Basis

Mature River Red Gums in an open plains grassland environment are generally recognised as the most important visual and environmental feature of this municipality. Many of the River Red Gums within the urban areas have been estimated to be between 200-800 years of age.

Existing and future urban areas such as Mill Park, South Morang, Mernda/Doreen and Wollert contain significant River Red Gum habitat. Council's experience has been that very few of the original River Red Gums survive the surrounding encroachment of urban development, unless careful site assessment and planning occurs. It is therefore essential that existing River Red Gums are properly assessed and treated as an integral part of development design. This policy aims to provide guidance to applicants in the design of development proposals to ensure that River Red Gums are assessed and incorporated into development design.

Objective

To ensure that the development of urban and rural areas takes into account the presence, retention, enhancement and long term viability of River Red Gums in urban areas.

Policy

It is policy to:

- Recognise the intrinsic value of River Red Gums in establishing character and identity in urban and rural areas.
- Request a comprehensive site analysis and arborist's report with any planning proposal for development on land which contains one or more remnant River Red Gums.
- Encourage that the majority of River Red Gums proposed for retention are sited in public open space reserves and/or road reserves.
- Ensure that, where a tree is to be located in a lot, the lot is large enough to accommodate a suitable development envelope that does not disturb the tree or its root system.
- Ensure that, where feasible, areas of significant River Red Gum regeneration are protected in any development proposal.
- Encourage tree removal to be generally limited to only those trees independently assessed as presenting a danger to people and property.
- Appropriately protect trees identified for retention during the construction phase, and thereafter ensure that their health is regularly monitored by an appropriate environmental consultant where located on public land.
- Ensure that any tree nominated on a development and/or subdivision plan for protection is located within an appropriate tree protection zone. The protection zone must be large enough to ensure that the trunk and canopy remain intact and that the root system is not severely damaged or destroyed during the construction phase.
- Ensure that any planning permit for subdivision which contains a protected tree on a lot includes a requirement that the protected tree, protection envelope, development envelope and any conditions relating thereto be nominated on the relevant title.

Policy Reference

River Red Gum Protection Policy