

CLASSIFIED TREE REGISTER FACT SHEET

Trees can be very long-lived and often contribute to the sense of character and identity of an area. They can also reduce the impact of an increasingly urbanised environment by: storing and filtering stormwater; reducing the heat island effect resulting in lower ambient temperatures; filtering airborne pollutants thereby creating cleaner air; providing habitat for local fauna; and contributing to the psychological wellbeing of the community.

Some trees, through age, size, and rarity of planting or association with historical events offer a greater level of benefit to the community than others on public and private land, and we are committed to acknowledging and documenting their existence.

Trees that display one or more of the characteristics listed in the *Categories of Significance* in Appendix 1 of the *Classified Tree Policy (Policy)*, may be eligible for inclusion on the *Classified Tree Register (Register)*. To view the *Policy* and the *Register*, visit : www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/classified-trees

We are committed to protecting trees on the *Register* because these trees are regarded as integral to local identity, the environment and underlying land values. Recent research has confirmed that tree canopy is gradually being eroded. Trees that are potentially eligible for inclusion on the *Register* are being lost due to land development, risk aversion, climate change, natural attrition, and pests and diseases.

The increasing density of urban development in our City has reduced the number of trees on private land that may be eligible for the *Register*. Therefore, protecting the health and sustainability of the remaining trees that meet the *Categories of Significance* is becoming increasingly important.

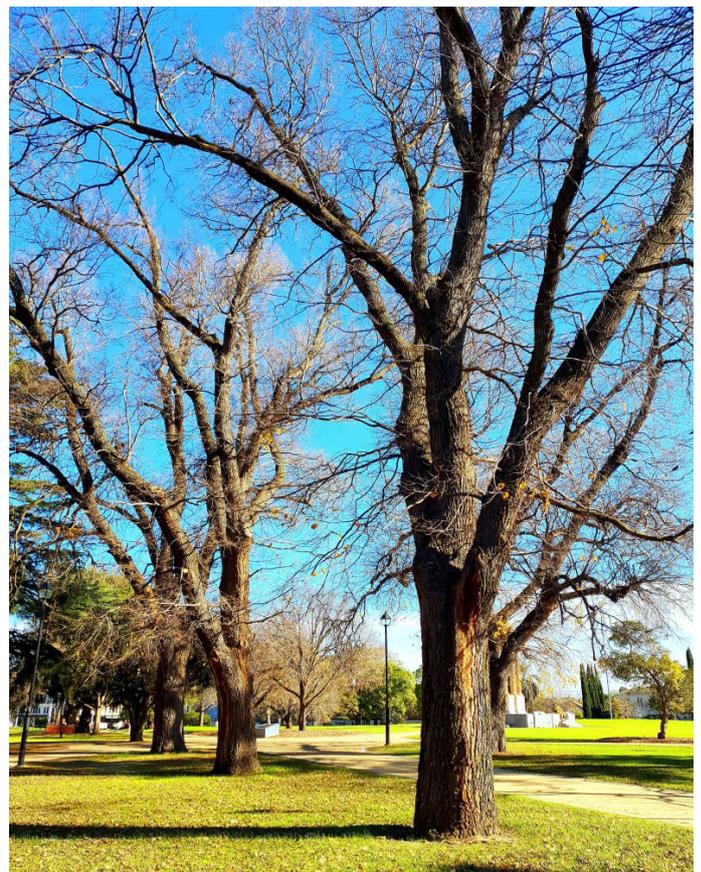
We are committed to providing an attractive and sustainable environment for the local community and visitors to our City, as well as future generations. A proactive approach to protecting and enhancing trees that meet the *Categories of Significance* is needed to maintain the high levels of amenity, environmental benefits and the character of our suburbs.

What is a Classified Tree?

Classified Trees may be growing on Council or private land. Only trees which are assessed as meeting strict criteria are included on the *Register*. The criteria used for assessment is based on the National Trust of Australia criteria for the classification of trees. Some examples of the criteria include trees with horticultural, environmental and aesthetic value, as well as trees that have links to historical significance and Aboriginal culture.

Will the Register be updated often?

Our urban forest is dynamic, with natural cycles of tree growth, maturation, and death, and we recognise the need for the *Register* to be regularly updated to reflect this. The first round of nominations of trees commenced on 3 September 2020 and will be open until 31 March 2021. Further rounds of nominations will open after we have considered the trees nominated in the previous round. Additionally, an application to delist a tree from the *Register* may occur at any time if required.



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Why would I want to protect a tree on my property?

The *Register* provides an opportunity to promote, share and protect the most valuable and important trees in the municipality. Owners of properties where Classified Trees are located play an important role in caring for a valuable community asset. Not only do Classified Trees provide substantial environmental and community benefits, they can also help to reduce energy costs, increase property values and provide aesthetic and amenity value.

How are Classified Trees protected?

Each Classified Tree has a Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) which is an area around, below and above the tree. Any building works within a TPZ requires a permit. A permit is also required for any significant pruning, lopping or removal of a Classified Tree. The application of the new controls does not mean that building works cannot take place, but that the health of the Classified Tree will need careful consideration before approval for any works can be given. The need for a permit enables consideration of the impact that the proposed activity may have on the health of the Classified Tree.

Does the Classified Tree Local Law apply to all trees?

No. It only applies to trees on the *Register*.

Who assesses the nominations?

Suitably qualified arborists employed by us will undertake assessments of nominations. If the assessing officer decides that the nomination is potentially eligible for inclusion on the *Register*, then a notice will be provided to relevant landholders.

What if I am not happy with the notice?

You can apply for an internal review. A senior staff member undertakes this review. You also have the option to apply for a further review to be undertaken by our Manager Parks Services. They will engage an independent arborist to provide a report before deciding on whether the tree should be recommended for inclusion on the *Register*.

Who makes the final decision on whether to include a tree on the Register?

Council makes the final decision at a meeting which is open to the public.

Can a Classified Tree be removed?

While Classified Trees will be protected, it is recognised that sometimes a tree may need to be removed. This could be due to the poor health of the tree; a tree that has been irreparably damaged because of a storm; a tree that has died of natural causes; or a tree that poses an unacceptable safety risk to surrounding residents. Our arborists will be responsible for reviewing these applications and will make a report to Council if they decide the tree is no longer eligible for protection. The *Classified Tree Local Law* aims to provide a balanced approach between the protection of healthy trees and providing flexibility to residents who need to remove a tree on their property.

How often will you check the condition of Classified Trees?

We will conduct audits every two years. If the audit indicates that a tree no longer meets the criteria for inclusion on the *Register*, our arborists will notify the relevant landholders and prepare a recommendation for the tree to be delisted from the *Register*.

How will I know if a tree is on the Register?

We will write to landholders about any valid nominations of a tree on their property. Members of the public can view a copy of the *Register* on our website. A prospective purchaser of a property can also access Council's *Property Information Certificate*, which is usually contained in a section 32 *Vendor Statement*, containing details of any Classified Trees located on the sale property.

