



WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL

The Heart of Gippsland

ELECTRIC LINE CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

2026-2027

Version Control

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Disclaimer:

This Electric Line Clearance Management Plan ('Plan') has been developed by the Wellington Shire Council to inform Wellington Shire Council, Energy Distribution Businesses (DB's) and all other interested parties about the vegetation management processes and strategies undertaken by the Wellington Shire Council to care for its trees that are in the vicinity electricity assets. This Plan is to satisfy the requirements of the *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025* (Vic).

Wellington Shire Council notifies users of this Plan that some of the content / statements made in this Plan are based on assumptions, estimates, predictions and projections made as part of the Wellington Shire Council's Tree Management planning / development process and some of the content / statements are based on actions that the Wellington Shire Council intends to take in the future. The Wellington Shire Council may decide to take different actions to those it currently intends to take if circumstances change, or assumptions and estimates prove to be inaccurate and events do not occur as predicted or projected. The users of this Plan accept responsibility and all risk for using material in this document. The users should seek expert advice in relation to their own circumstances and must rely solely on their own judgement and expert advice obtained.

The Wellington Shire Council does not guarantee and will not be liable for, whether in contract, tort (including negligence), equity or otherwise, to compensate or indemnify any person for any loss, injury or damage arising directly or indirectly from any person using or relying on any content / statements in this Plan.

STRUCTURE OF PLAN

The 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.

DISTRIBUTION BUSINESSES

The names and contact details for the Distribution Businesses that operate within the Shire of Wellington are:

Ausnet Services

Name:	Richard Kelaart
Position:	Vegetation Field Officer – Rural East
Distribution Company:	AusNet Services
Telephone Number:	0439 143 047
Email:	Richard.kelaart@ausnetservices.com.au

PART 2 SECTION9 PREPARATION OF A MANAGEMENT PLAN

9(2) PREPARATION OF A MANAGEMENT PLAN BY MARCH 31ST

Shire of Wellington is a Responsible Person required to prepare an Electric Line Clearance Management Plan for the purpose of the Regulations. This document is prepared in accordance with Section 9 of the Regulations.

The document has been prepared consistent with Council's Tree Management Plan 2025-2035. The Plan articulates Council's Tree Planting objectives and Removal Policy, including the aim to minimise conflict with infrastructure.

The implementation and review of the Plan is part of Council's strategic reporting framework and is reported within the Business Unit's monthly report.

- Council will conduct a review by the 28th February annually to address any changes in personnel, policy or programs.
- When the new annual Plan is uploaded, Council will remove the superseded plan at the same time.
- A complete review of the Plan will also be implemented should there be a change of Contractor or Contract methodology. This review could occur at any time.
- The amended Plan and the requirement to comply with the Plan will be brought to the attention of Council's contractors annually at the monthly contract meeting following the review.
- The amended Plan and the requirement to comply with the Plan will be brought to the attention of relevant Council personnel following each annual review.
- If requested by Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) a copy of the ELCMP will be submitted by the WSC's Senior Arborist within the usual 14 days via the requested means.

Council reviews its Plan annually and prepares a new or amended plan as required by March 31st of each year. The Plan is stored in Council's document management system and will be available on the Council's website <http://www.wellington.vic.gov.au> from 1 July each year.

As part of the above annual review Council will ensure that all specific policies relevant documents, personnel documentation, training, program and resourcing requirements are reviewed and updated as required to ensure compliance with the Regulations.

No exemptions are in operation and therefore none are required to be displayed. Council reviews the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan prior to the March 31st deadline each year to confirm compliance requirements and the status of the Plan's implementation. Such reviews will be recorded and reported to Council's Authorising Officer.

9(4) MANAGEMENT PLAN REQUIREMENTS

9(4)(a) NAME, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON:

Name: David Morcom, CEO, Shire of Wellington Shire Council

Address: 18 Desailly Street, Sale 3850

Telephone Number: 1300 366 244

Electronic signature:

Date:

The CEO is Council's principle representative in its role as a Responsible Person under the Electricity Safety Act 1998.

9(4)(b) NAME, POSITION, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE PERSON WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE PLAN:

General Manager – Built & Natural Environment: Chris Hastie

Address: 18 Desailly Street, Sale 3850

Telephone Number: 1300 366 244

9(4)(c) NAME, POSITION, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE PERSONS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CARRYING OUT THE PLAN:

Name: David Harper

Position: Manager Natural Environment and Parks

Address: 18 Desailly Street, Sale 3850

Telephone Number: 1300 366 244

9(4)(d) THE TELEPHONE NUMBER OF A PERSON WHO CAN BE CONTACTED IN AN EMERGENCY THAT REQUIRES CLEARANCE OF AN ELECTRIC LINE THAT THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON IS REQUIRED TO KEEP CLEAR OF TREES OR PARTS OF TREES.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE No: 1300 366 244 (24 hours, 7 days a week)

9(4)(e) THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN:

The following are identified as the key objectives of this Plan:

- 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.
- Where reasonably practicable and within their level of competence, Council employees and contractors will aim to ensure Electricity Safety.
- To achieve compliance with the Electricity Safety Act 1998 and the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025 and the incorporated Code of Practice.
- To maintain the health and amenity of the community's trees by applying appropriate standards and practices. Where practicable within the limitations imposed by the Regulations our tree management will be best industry practice.
- In the unlikely event that compliance cannot be readily achieved by pruning, Council will implement a documented process of 6-monthly inspections on these trees while developing an alternative engineering solution in conjunction with the Distribution Business.
- To ensure protection of areas of important local 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.
- Establishing an open dialogue with relevant distribution company(s) vegetation management group to ensure both parties have a clear understanding of each other priorities. This will be achieved through an annual meeting with relevant distribution company(s) managers and Shire of Wellington's responsible employee.
- To ensure effective management of vegetation to maximise the amenity value of the city's trees and ensure shading of pathways is continually increased to encourage physical activity in the community.
- To ensure provision of a safe working 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.

- 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 section 9(4)(n) of this Plan.

9(4)(f) THE LAND TO WHICH THE MANAGEMENT PLAN APPLIES TO - MAPS

Areas of Sale, Maffra and Heyfield are Declared Areas within Wellington Shire and these are shown on the plans included in Appendix 1.

The majority of the Declared Area managed by Council is rated Low Bushfire Risk (LBRA) based on the CFA Fire Hazard Ratings.

Council has an inventory of street trees and has identified that there are ~3,300 trees in the vicinity of powerlines in the Declared Area. Since 2014, Council has engaged an independent annual audit of these trees. As a result of this program, the number of trees requiring pruning has reduced from >1000 trees previously, to 930 in 2014, 738 in 2015 and is now typically 400-500 trees per annum.

Council's Emergency Management Risk and Performance personnel meet quarterly with the local CFA brigade management. Any amendments to the boundary or Hazardous Bushfire Risk Areas (HBRA) are discussed at these meetings.

9(4)(g) ANY HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS AND LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS IN THE LAND REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH (f);

Several small areas in the Declared Area of Sale, Wurruk and Heyfield are rated as Hazardous Bushfire Risk (HBRA). The Declared Area is shown on the plans included in Appendix 1 of this document.

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 AND THAT IS –

(i) Indigenous to Victoria

For the purposes of this Plan, Native vegetation is taken to mean species locally indigenous to the Council area and does not include commercial and ornamental Australian native species, which are commonly planted as street trees.

Council's Declared Area consists of mixed local native species, commercial native varieties and introduced species. Areas of historical, cultural, environmental, ecological and aesthetical importance have been identified throughout the municipality and included as Heritage and Environmental Significance Overlays in Council's Planning Scheme.

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.

As there has been as long-term and ongoing powerline clearance program around existing native trees, there are no known native trees that will be adversely affected by future works.

Additional resources available to identify significant native trees are -

- a. Reference to the Heritage Register as per the meaning of the Heritage Act 1995 <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/>
- b. Reference to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage register [Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register | First Peoples - State Relations](http://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-aboriginal-heritage-register) (firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au)
- c. Reference to the National Trust Register and regular communication with the Local History Officer <http://trusttrees.org.au/>
- d. Reference to the Threatened Species Advisory Lists as published by the relevant State department [Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act Threatened List](http://www.environment.vic.gov.au/flora-and-fauna-guarantee-act-threatened-list) (environment.vic.gov.au)

No additional trees of significance have been identified since the previous Plan.

The person responsible for the preparation of the Plan regularly liaises with Council's Environmental Planner on changes to native vegetation mapping, controls and other relevant matters. The amended Plan and any changes as a result of this briefing will be raised with Council's contractors at the contract meetings.

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

Based on the historical annual line clearance program no trees of significance have been identified in the Declared Area that will be affected by electric line clearance. The Environmental Significance Overlay applies to native trees around Lake Guthridge and surrounds including the Sale Botanic Gardens and Robert Wain Reserve. This could impact on powerlines within this area. Tree controls apply to some listings in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay within the Declared Area.

Appendix 3 contains a list of trees Wellington Shire considers Significant Tree. These trees comply with criteria established by the National Trust. The locations of those trees on Council land are listed in Appendix 3. Two Aboriginal sites are known within the Declared Area; both are scarred trees. None of these trees requires management to comply with the Electric Line Clearance Regulations.

The Wellington Shire overlays do not require a permit under these overlays for works to keep vegetation clear of an electric line in accordance with a code of practice prepared under Part 8 of the *Electricity Safety Act 1998*.

No additional trees of significance have been identified since the previous Plan.

(iii) Trees of cultural or environmental significance

Trees of Cultural or Environmental Significance for the purposes of the Plan are defined as any tree protected as Significant or Heritage by relevant State legislation or local planning controls. Based on the historical annual line clearance program, there are no identified areas of special or cultural vegetation identified in the Declared Area that will be affected by electric line clearance.

Appendix 3 contains a list of trees Wellington Shire considers Significant Tree. These trees comply with criteria established by the National Trust. The locations of those trees on Council land are listed in Appendix 3. Two Aboriginal sites are known within the Declared Area; both are scarred trees. None of these trees requires management to comply with the Electric Line Clearance Regulations.

By their nature, these types of vegetation do not change quickly in normal circumstances. Council will review the Planning Scheme and consult with Council's Planning Department to identify any changes in State controls when this Plan is revised as described in 9(2). The amended Plan and any changes as a result of this briefing will be raised with Council's contractors at the monthly contract meetings.

No additional trees of significance have been identified since the previous Plan.

9(4)(i) THE MEANS WHICH THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL USE TO IDENTIFY A TREE OF A KIND SPECIFIED IN PARAGRAPH (h)(i), (ii) OR (iii)

As there has been an ongoing powerline clearance program around existing trees, there are no known trees from clause 9(4)(h) that will be significantly adversely affected by future powerline clearance works.

There are no known trees of habitat significance for rare or endangered species listed in Council's Declared Area within the vicinity of electric lines that require pruning or clearing to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice. The presence of any previously unidentified tree of significance will be reviewed as part of the annual review of this Plan using the processes and resources outlined in 9(4)(h).

In 2015-16 Council implemented a recurrent Capital Program for replacing open wire LV with ABC in heritage streetscapes. This has occurred and will continue to occur. Examples of completed streets are; are Guthridge Pde, Sale between Raglan St and Dawson St, Foster St, Sale between Reeve St and Desailly St and Thomson St, Maffra.

If a specimen of high value, or a tree with or likely to contain habitat hollows, is identified by Council or its Contractors as being non-compliant, the tree will be individually assessed to ensure that pruning is minimised and the environmental value of the tree is preserved. This may include managing the tree in line with Clauses 4, 5, 6 or 7 of the Code, on an increased inspection or pruning cycle. If any are identified in the future, they will be plotted on Council's mapping system and monitored to ensure that minimal impact is made in the event of works being required. If Council intends to cut or, on the advice of a suitably qualified arborist, remove a tree that has been identified in 9(4)(h) as known habitat for fauna listed as

- a) threatened in accordance with section 10 of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 or
- b) listed in the Threatened Species Advisory Lists with a conservation status in Victoria of "vulnerable", "endangered" or "critically endangered" or

Council will undertake cutting or removal of the tree outside of the breeding season for that species. Where it is not practicable to undertake cutting or removal of the tree outside of the breeding season for that species, translocation of the fauna will be undertaken wherever practicable.

All records will be filed in Council's document management system and kept for a minimum of 5 years.

If pruning or removal is programmed, that work will be undertaken outside the breeding season when the tree is not being used by fauna.

In exceptional circumstances, fauna may be required to be relocated. This is not Council's preferred option and will be used only as a last resort, for example, if the tree is assessed to be a hazard tree.

All pruning will take place in accordance with industry Best Practice and where practicable, pruning may be undertaken using Elevated Work Platforms (EWPs) or other similar methods to minimise overall site damage. Council will as far as practicable, restrict cutting or removal of native trees or of cultural or environmental significance to the minimum extent necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Code, the schedule to the Code or to make an unsafe situation safe.

9 (4)(j) THE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES THAT THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON IS REQUIRED TO ADOPT TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE

- (i) Include details of the methods to be adopted for managing trees and maintaining a minimum clearance space as required by the Code:

Identification of Work Required

Council has in place an annual inspection and pruning program for trees within the vicinity of powerlines in the Declared Area. This annual inspection program is a key tool in ensuring that trees are pruned on a regular basis and clearance spaces are maintained whilst ensuring tree amenity is considered.

Cutting will be undertaken in order as per the identified priority levels as well as considering bushfire risk areas. HBRA is considered a higher priority than LBRA.

- All Priority 1,s (P1) (currently in code or hard contact) are considered the highest priority and cutting will take place as soon as reasonably practicable after receiving the annual audit.
- All HBRA cutting will be completed prior to the official start of the bushfire season announced by the CFA
- All Priority 2's (P2) (likely to be in code within a month) are considered a priority behind P1's and HBRA trees, however, regarding HBRA trees this is depending on the official start date of the bushfire risk season, P2 will commence prior to HBRA trees, if not, HBRA trees will be considered a higher priority.
- All P2-6 (Likely to be within code within six months) trees will be cut within five months of receiving the annual audit.

The annual assessment and pruning of trees in the vicinity of powerlines is undertaken on the schedule below.

Program element	Trees	Start	Finish
Inspection Audit	All in proximity to powerlines	July	September
HBRA	All priority identified trees	On receipt of audit or depending on list of identified priorities	Declaration of the Fire season
Wurruk Declared areas 100% HBRA	All priority identified trees in order of identified Priorities	Same as HBRA	Declaration of the Fire season
Sale Declared areas	All priority identified trees in order of identified Priorities	Same as HBRA	May
Maffra Declared Areas	All priority identified trees in order of identified Priorities	Same as HBRA	May
Heyfield Declared areas	All priority identified trees in order of identified Priorities	Same as HBRA	May

Each non-compliant tree or tree otherwise requiring compliance pruning is recorded electronically and spatially by the independent Assessor. Reports of the assessment are provided to Council as part of the audit report.

Trees that the Assessor believes cannot be successfully pruned in accordance with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025 will be brought to the attention of Council. The Council will then inspect the tree and if they believe the tree cannot be pruned to comply with the Code, Council will investigate and implement an alternative method to ensure safety and continuity of supply.

The Assessor will also assess –

- the voltage and length of the span visually to determine the correct Applicable Distance for clearance for the middle 2/3 of each span. Longer span lengths will be verified using laser measurement or aerial photography.
- the species of the vegetation to ascertain the regrowth potential
- the tree for any other potential hazards.

In addition, any trees that are determined to be likely to breach the Code within the inspection cycle are also to be identified. This inspection also includes the identification of any hazards outside the clearance and regrowth spaces that may require assessment or correction. These trees are reported to WSC's Senior Arborist for further assessment. Non-compliant trees shall be recorded in the audit report.

A hard-copy work program is produced for the tree pruning Contractor from the assessment provided by the independent assessor. Records of each pruning undertaken on each tree are recorded on the hard copy report, which is scanned and stored in Council's electronic document management system.

Hazardous trees identified during these routine inspections are programmed for pruning or removal and scheduled for according to their hazard potential.

Emergency or reactive works are recorded in the Asset Management System (Conquest), CRM and Forestree and closed out in that system once completed.

Reports of non-compliance from relevant distribution company(s), residents or other sources will be investigated by a suitably qualified Council employee or contractor. Once the investigation has been completed the Contractor will carry out any pruning action to rectify a confirmed non-compliance.

Where necessary, the Council Supervisor will liaise with the Contractor to determine the cause of the non-compliance. Where the non-compliance is a failure to follow the Contract specification, this will be documented as a contact non-conformance in the monthly Contract meeting. Where the non-compliance is caused by unanticipated regrowth, the species and growing conditions will be identified to determine if this is likely to occur again, or with other trees in the vicinity of powerlines. Appropriate inspection regimes will be implemented to address any identified issues.

Consultation is regularly undertaken with the AusNet representative shown on page 5 to maintain open communication and discuss clearance issues regarding the following:

- Prior to scheduled works near low and high voltage lines.
- Requesting of assistance for suppressions and shutdowns.
- Clarification of declared area responsibilities.
- Changes to regulations.
- Urgent or non-compliant works.
- Prior to the completion of each ELCMP.
- Other issues as they arise.

Hazard Trees

The Electricity Safety Act 1998 (Victoria) Section 86B provides that a municipal council must specify, within its Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP):

- (a) procedures and criteria for the identification of trees that are likely to fall onto, or come into contact with, an electric line (**hazard trees**); and
- (b) procedures for the notification of responsible persons of trees that are hazard trees in relation to electric lines for which they are responsible.

Shire of Wellington's Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP) refers to this Electric Line Clearance Management Plan in relation to Hazard trees.

During the inspection of the Declared Area, the Assessor will also inspect areas adjacent to the clearance space or regrowth space for trees that could become a hazard to the lines under adverse weather conditions.

Note: For the purpose of this Plan, a hazard tree is a tree that possesses hazardous faults which, if not actioned, will negatively impact distribution assets. These trees may possess characteristics such as large cavities, severe decay, major cracks etc.

In a situation where a tree is identified that is likely to fall onto or otherwise come into contact with an electric line, Council will assess the tree using a suitably qualified arborist who holds the qualification of AQF Level IV in Arboriculture, including the "Assess Trees" module, or an equivalent qualification and at least three years of field experience in assessing trees.

In situations where the arborist's assessment confirms the likelihood of contact with the electric line having regard to foreseeable local conditions including weather and ground instability, Council will remove or cut the hazard tree as per the Code. In the event of a hazard tree being identified as a culturally significant, environmentally significant or habitat tree, Council will where possible minimise the impact on the tree or fauna as previously outlined, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the code, the schedule to the code or to make an unsafe situation safe. This may include regrowth into the clearance space before the next scheduled visit or vegetation in HBRA found in clearance after fire season declaration. To make an unsafe situation safe can occur at anytime regardless of the type or category of tree it is.

Assessment of Regrowth Space

As part of the inspection of the Declared Area, the amount of clearance achieved during pruning is assessed to determine its suitability to the required clearance. Analysis of the clearance achieved is assessed in conjunction with such factors as species and soil type and rainfall rates to provide additional information on the adequacy of clearing cycles and clearances.

The responsible person assessing the vegetation will have a minimum qualification of AQF Level IV in arboriculture; this will ensure the assessor has basic knowledge in tree physiology and biology of the common species in the municipality.

Utilising this knowledge, the assessor will monitor the amount of regrowth for each species pruned. Tree pruning frequencies depending on the significance of the tree will be adjusted in light of these observed growth rates to achieve compliance with the Code.

The formula used to calculate the amount of vegetation to be removed is

Clearance (m) = regrowth (m/year) X cycle (1 or 2 years)

Examples of this formula -

Melaleuca linariifolia

- *regrowth 30cm per annum X 12 months = 30cm clear of the Clearance Space*

Quercus robur

- *regrowth 80cm per annum X 12 months = 80cm clear of the Clearance Space*

Fraxinus Raywood

- *regrowth 120cm per annum X 12 months = 120cm clear of the Clearance Space*

Based on the 2014 audit, the top 15 street tree species that require pruning for electric line clearance in this municipality are, in order of prevalence:

<i>Lophostemon confertus</i>	<i>Eucalyptus nicholii</i>
<i>Melaleuca styphelioides</i>	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxydon</i>
<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	<i>Fraxinus Raywood</i>
<i>Melaleuca linariifolia</i>	<i>Corymbia ficifolia</i>
<i>Quercus robur</i>	<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>
<i>Ulmus procera</i>	<i>Lagunaria patersonii</i>
<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa</i>	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>
<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	

Typically,

- Species in red are capable of rapid regrowth rates
- Species in black have moderate regrowth rates
- Species in green have slow regrowth rates and/or are unlikely to grow into the Clearance Space

Pruning to maintain the Clearance Space

Clearance pruning is undertaken by a pre-qualified Contractor under Contract No. 2024-079 - Urban and Rural Tree Management 2024-2026.

The Contractor will implement the pruning program to clear trees identified as being in, or likely to grow into, the Clearance Space as identified in Council's assessment.

A hard-copy work program is produced for the tree pruning Contractor from the assessment provided by the independent assessor. Records of each pruning undertaken on each tree are recorded on the hard copy report, which is scanned and stored in Council's electronic document management system.

Hazardous trees identified during these routine inspections are programmed for pruning or removal and scheduled for according to their hazard potential.

Emergency or reactive works are recorded in the Asset Management System (Conquest), CRM and Forestree then closed out in that system once completed.

All pruning works will be undertaken in accordance with industry Best Practice methods. Detailed assessment of the specific pruning requirements of each tree will

be assessed and recorded during the initial inspection. Council's contractor will be directed to prune each tree in accordance with the work instructions issued by Council. The regrowth space required beyond the minimum recommended clearance space detailed within the Code will be forecast in accordance with species type, local conditions and pruning frequency.

Contractors and other staff working on behalf of Council shall at all times comply with the safe approach distances contained in the Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019. Council acknowledges its role of supervising staff and contractors to ensure that work is performed safely and consistently with the Regulations.

In the event that the safe approach distances cannot be maintained at any time work shall cease immediately and advice from the relevant power authority will be sought. This may involve shutdown or the use of live line workers with suppression of the auto reclose system.

As part of its normal contract reporting, Council will ensure that the Contractor has appropriately trained and inducted its employees into these requirements.

Alternative methods that may be adopted to maintain the clearance space

In the unlikely event that compliance cannot be readily achieved by pruning, Council will implement a documented process of 6-monthly risk assessments on these trees while developing an alternative engineering solution in conjunction with the Distribution Business.

Council's Tree Management Plan 2025-2035 Council's Tree Planting objectives including the aim to minimise conflict with infrastructure. In selecting trees for planting around powerlines, Council will consider the available growing space and the constraints of powerlines when choosing new species of trees to plant.

Council has already replaced some open wire LV with ABC in heritage streetscapes as described in 9(4)(i).

Where a significant tree is to be severely affected, or an affected person objects to the pruning or clearing of vegetation near powerlines, Council Officers will consult with the affected person to determine alternatives, such as removal and replanting with suitable species or alternative pruning methods. Where an affected person requests the relocation or provision of alternate services such as aerial bundle conductor, Council will refer the matter to the distribution company for further consideration.

Council may undertake a cost benefit analysis on a case by case basis where vegetation significance or public need dictates an alternative course should be pursued.

The following alternative methods may be adopted for maintaining clearance if a person objects to the methods proposed by Council:

- Reduced pruning cycle
- Removal/Replacement with suitable species
- Use of Aerial Bundled Cable
- Powerlines to be re-routed
- Undergrounding of powerlines
- Other engineering solutions

ii Specify the method for determining an additional distance that allows for cable sag and sway

Council will maintain minimum clearances in compliance with the distances in the clearance graphs in Schedule 2 of the Code. Council will refer to graphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 2 of the Regulations for LBRA and graphs 5 and 6 for HBRA to confirm requirements. Refer to Appendix 4 for the graphs.

In the Declared Area, long spans will require additional allowance for sag and sway. The number of spans affected is likely to be minimal. For spans greater than 100m in LBRA and 45m in HBRA within Wellington's Declared Area the RP will contact the DB who is required to provide the minimum clearance (including the additional allowance for sag and sway) for that span. Council will liaise with the Distribution Business to identify any Uninsulated spans over 100m in LBRA and 45m in HBRA length where additional sag and sway allowances will be required, and once received from the DB this list of these spans and allowances will be available to all relevant personnel and contractors.

Spans requiring additional sag and sway allowances will be mapped in Council's GIS system (Geocortex) and recorded in a permanent register maintained in Council's electronic document management system.

Council notes under Division 4 (21) that an owner, operator or distribution company that is consulted by a Council must assist the Council by determining the additional distance.

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.

Compliance with AS4373-2007 *Pruning of amenity trees (AS4373)* requires observation of several factors when undertaking pruning.

These factors include

- Formative pruning of young trees
 - This is a critical requirement for trees under powerlines to develop canopy shapes that can be managed for Compliance when the tree matures.
- The amount and distribution of canopy removed
 - This is dictated by the Compliance requirements
 - The amount of canopy removed shall be the least amount required to achieve and maintain compliance, or to manage the tree in line with Clause 9(4)(j)(i) of this Plan and the canopy will be shaped to create a weight and canopy distribution as close to normal as possible.

- The size of the limb to which the pruning cut is made
- The angle of the final pruning cut

The current version, AS4373-2007, was reconfirmed by Standards Australia in 2019.

Council acknowledges that compliance with AS4373, especially in relation to the final pruning cut, cannot always be achieved. Council requires that compliance with AS4373 be achieved whenever reasonably practicable while also ensuring:

- safe approach distances are maintained
- a safe work environment when working at heights
- minimum clearance is achieved
- an affordable level of productivity.

In order to achieve pruning of acceptable quality, all pruning personnel, either Council employees or contractors, must have the following as a minimum –

- Formal training as outlined in 9(O) 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 Open Space Arborist and poor performance will be identified based on the standards in 9(4)(o). 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.

Should non-compliance to AS4373 be identified on multiple occasions without reasonable justification, contractors will be requested to provide evidence of refresher training and/or alternatively demonstrate an understanding by all staff of AS4373. Further non-compliance could potentially result in the loss of the contract. If compliance of AS4373 is unable to be achieved the following solutions will be investigated.

Short-term:

- Request for assistance from DB, including,
- A suppression,
- Shut-down, or
- Live-linesman to complete clearance,
- Increased inspection and pruning cycles,
- Tree removal and replacement with a more suitable alternative,
- Tree removal with no replacement.

Long-term:

- Installation of Aerial Bundle Cabling (ABC),
- Request for alternative cross-arm configurations,
- Underground cabling.

9(4)(I) 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.

Council does not intend to apply for any alternative compliance mechanisms at the time of preparation of this Plan.

9(4)(m) THE DETAILS OF EACH APPROVAL FOR AN ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE MECHANISM

(i) that the Responsible Person holds -

Council does not intend to apply for any alternative compliance mechanisms at the time of preparation of this Plan.

(ii) that is in effect

Council has no alternative compliance mechanisms in effect at the time of preparation of this Plan.

9(4)(n) A DESCRIPTION OF THE MEASUREMENTS THAT MUST BE USED TO ASSESS THE PERFORMANCE OF THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON UNDER THE MANAGEMENT PLAN:

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

Criteria	Measurement method	KPI
Completion of the annual inspection and pruning program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment records Audit Contract compliance records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% on-time completion of program
Minimisation of fire risk and maintain continuity of supply through compliance with the Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor performance audits & Contractor monthly reports Records of annual inspection of Exceptions (if necessary) recorded in works management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% on-time completion of reporting
Response times in regard to requests to investigate or notifications of non-compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Requests System internal reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet corporate customer service benchmarks
Safety of public and workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident reports & Contractor monthly reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reportable incidents
Quality of Work (Pruning Techniques)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor performance audits Annual audit of contractor staff qualifications and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% completion of Contract benchmarks 100% Compliance with 9(4)(o) of this Plan
Documentation & Notification of Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor performance audits Customer Requests System internal reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% compliance with notification requirements
Number of complaints received regarding the Contractor's work (Council's customer request system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Requests System internal reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No year-on-year increase requests received
Number of substantiated notifications of breaches of the Code from DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports received and actioned Recorded in works management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No year-on-year increase requests received

Number of substantiated requests for pruning from residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Requests System internal reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No year-on-year increase requests received
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The Contractor’s supervisory personnel responsible for implementing the relevant sections of the Plan are advised of the performance standards under the Plan at the annual briefing following the Plan review (see 9(2)) and these performance standards are assessed at each monthly contract meeting.

9(4)(o) DETAILS OF THE AUDIT PROCESSES THAT MUST BE USED TO DETERMINE THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON’S COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE:

Council’s compliance with this part of the Plan is dependent on the performance of its tree maintenance contractor. The Contractor, and by extension, Council as a Responsible Person, will be measured/assessed through the contract performance process. This involves –

- Reports from the Contractor listing trees pruned, incident reports and complaints received
- During work onsite workplace ELC audit by Council’s Senior Arborist and Parks Administrative Support Officer. (Refer to Appendix 5)
- Post-work audit of each assessed area by the Council’s Senior Arborist
- Issue of contract non-conformance for trees that do not meet the code identified in the post-work audit

Council’s Senior Arborist in conjunction with Council’s Parks Administrative Support Officer, will undertake one (1) onsite Electrical Line Clearance (ELC) audit, per pruning cycle, for contractors in Maffra, Heyfield and Wurruk and two (2) onsite ELC audits, per pruning cycle, for contractors in Sale. Audit results including any corrective actions will be recorded in Council’s ECM.

Following investigation of a non-compliance and the establishment of the cause, the importance of compliance with this Plan and the Code will be drawn to the attention of the persons concerned.

- The Senior Arborist can and will shut down works immediately if major breaches have been found. i.e., Out of date or no certificates for EWP operation and ESI Vegetation management, out of date EWP testing, no or inadequate earth chain. Notification will be given in writing.
- For all other non-compliance, on the first occasion they will be given verbal instruction and the incident recorded on file.
- If a second occasion occurs the notification shall be in writing, and the incident recorded on file.
- After a third occasion, the training program will be reviewed and more serious action considered if it is the same offender.

Council’s Senior Arborist conducts a 10% random audit of pruning works as each pruning identified priority is completed (i.e. 10% audit on P1, HBRA, P2 and P2-6) based on the standards in this section to ensure that all requirements outlined in this Plan are being met and any non-conformity with the Code is identified and promptly resolved. Completion schedules of each area is outlined under section 9(4)(j). The completion audits are undertaken as soon as reasonably practicable after the completion of the pruning works.

The audit results are discussed at the contract meetings and saved in Council's records database. Contractors are required to address any areas of non-compliance identified within 21 working days.

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.

Following investigation of a non-compliance and the establishment of the cause, the importance of compliance with this Plan and the Code will be drawn to the attention of the persons concerned.

- On the first occasion they will be given verbal instruction and the incident recorded on file.
- If a second occasion occurs the notification shall be in writing, and the incident recorded on file.
- After a third occasion, the training program will be reviewed, and more serious action considered if it is the same offender.

All contractors or personnel undertaking line clearance pruning will be audited on the following criteria -

Statutory Clearance of Vegetation

100 % compliance

All trees pruned must comply with the clearance requirements as stipulated in the tender document and the current Code of Practice unless a specific management option has been approved for that tree, such as applying Clause 4, 5, 6 or 7 of the Code of Practice.

Council's objective is to achieve a 1-year cycle. If this clearance results in the aesthetics of the tree being dramatically altered, or the tree permanently damaged, the Contractor must notify the Open Space Arborist. Council will then conduct a site inspection and make the final decision as to the correct clearance for the tree, or if removal is the only option.

Failure to follow this instruction will result in a Non-conformance being issued. Any tree that cannot be pruned to achieve the minimum clearance must be referred to Council for review.

Local Outcomes and Requirements

95 % compliance

No branches that have been pruned are to be left in the tree's canopy; these are commonly known as hangers.

All trees listed must be pruned; any tree claimed but not actually pruned will result in a Non-conformance being issued.

Failure to follow these two previous instructions will result in a Non-conformance being issued.

Pruning Techniques

95% compliance

A minimum of 95% of final pruning cuts must be compliant with AS 4373 Pruning of amenity trees and best management practices on each tree pruned.

Failure to meet this requirement will result in a Non-compliance notice being issued to the Contractor.

Site Condition

95 % compliance

All sites must be left tidy with no debris visible.

Record keeping

All records will be stored in Council's document management system. The Contractor will keep all records in accordance with the terms and conditions clearly set out in the contractual agreement.

9(4)(p) THE QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE THAT THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON MUST REQUIRE OF THE PERSONS WHO ARE TO CARRY OUT THE PRUNING OR REMOVAL OF TREES:

The Council shall ensure that all trees are pruned according to industry Best Practice as a minimum standard. They shall further ensure that all contractors and employees are appropriately qualified and trained and holding appropriate certificates for both themselves and their equipment that legally entitles them to undertake the work. A record of the sighting of these documents shall be kept by the Council and shall be updated annually.

A skills matrix for personnel working on Council's line clearance program is provided below.

Role	Qualification(s)	Licences/Electives/Training/Refresher
EWP operator/Arborist Tree pruning and removal near powerlines	UET20319 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control Certificate III Arboriculture or equivalent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All training and refreshers must be undertaken by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) • Safe Approach Distances – Vegetation Work (annual refresher) • Safe Approach Distances to SWER • Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (HLTAID009) • Control Vegetation Using Pruning Techniques UETDRVC007 • Provide First Aid on and ESI environment (UETDRRF10) • Licence to operate a boom-type elevating work platform (boom length 11 metres or more) (TLILIC0005) • Control vegetation in the vicinity of live electrical apparatus from an elevated work platform. (UETDRVC004) • Perform EWP rescue (UETDRRF03) • Perform EWP controlled descent escape (UETDRRF08) • Elevated Work Platforms High Risk Work Licence. (Renew every 5 years) • Operate A Mobile Chipper FWPHAR2206 • Chainsaw accreditation equivalent to AHCARB205A • Manual Handling Training (TLID1001) • Noise Conservation • Sun Smart training • Heavy rigid truck licence • Construction Induction (white card) • Traffic management – Apply Traffic Control Plans

Role	Qualification(s)	Licences/Electives/Training/Refresher
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic management – Select and modify Traffic Control Plans • Traffic management – Design and Modify Traffic Control Plans • Yarra trams OH & Track Appreciation Card
<p>Supervisor</p> <p>Tree pruning and removal near powerlines</p>	<p>UET20319 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control</p> <p>Certificate III Arboriculture or equivalent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Approach Distances – Vegetation Work • Safe Approach Distances to SWER • Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (HLTAID001) • Provide First Aid on and ESI environment (UETDRRF007) • Licence to operate a boom-type elevating work platform (boom length 11 metres or more) (TLILIC0005) • Use elevated platform to cut vegetation above ground level near live electrical apparatus (UETDRVC25) • Perform EWP rescue (UETDRRF002) • Perform EWP controlled descent escape (UETDRRF08) • Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment (UETDRVC002) • Elevated Work Platforms High Risk Work Licence • Operate A Mobile Chipper FWPHAR2208 • Chainsaw accreditation equivalent to AHCARB213 • Construction Induction (white card) • Manual Handling Training (TLID0020) • Noise Conservation • Sun Smart training • Heavy rigid truck licence • Traffic management – Apply Traffic Control Plans • Traffic management – Select and modify Traffic Control Plans • Traffic management – Design and Modify Traffic Control Plans • Yarra trams OH & Track Appreciation Card • Experienced and competent in the supervision of a large group of employees.
<p>Assessing Arborist (Line Clearance) (Suitably qualified arborist)</p>	<p>Certificate III Arboriculture + Assess Trees Module or equivalent and Perform a ground based tree defect evaluation Module or equivalent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid Level 2 certificate • Construction Induction (white card) • Certificate 11 in ESI Powerline vegetation Control • Driver's licence • 5 years industry experience

Role	Qualification(s)	Licences/Electives/Training/Refresher
Safety Observer	UET20319 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have the same qualifications, licenses/training/electives/refreshers as the tree pruner who clears and removes vegetation near and around powerlines but not necessarily Certificate 111 in Arboriculture.
Hazard tree and risk assessment	Diploma in Arboriculture preferred, Level III in Arboriculture including the “Assess Trees” module acceptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid Level 2 certificate • Construction Induction (white card) • Sun Smart training • Driver’s licence • 5 years industry experience

Council’s employees or Contractors must also follow the minimum distances specified in the Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019 (specifically outlined in regulation 616) when undertaking tree clearing works and comply with the limits of approach as outlined in the Blue Book and *ESV Electrical Safety Rules for Vegetation Management Work Near Overhead Powerlines by Non-Electrical Workers*. Notification of affected parties will also be undertaken as per the requirements of the code.

Council does not require persons undertaking tree cutting works to have a minimum level of experience in order to undertake the work. As long as individuals have the required training and operate to the training and safety standards outlined in the required training and within the Regulations, a minimum level of experience is not required by Council. All personnel undertaking pruning will be made aware of the pruning quality requirements in 9(4)(k) during worksite induction.

The exception to this is in a situation where a tree that is likely to fall onto or otherwise come into contact with an electric line is identified. In this situation the tree will be assessed by a suitably qualified arborist that holds a qualification of AQF Diploma in Arboriculture (Level III in Arboriculture (including the “Assess Trees” module is acceptable if a Diploma qualified arborist is not practically available) or an equivalent qualification and at least three years of field experience in assessing trees. The assessment will take into account foreseeable local conditions and consider the classification of the tree. Based on the Arborist’s assessment and recommendations, the hazard tree will be actioned in compliance with the Code.

The Council shall inspect the work carried out by the Contractor throughout the period that active pruning is taking place. A record of these inspections shall be kept, citing any evidence of sub-standard pruning practice and filed at the Council’s office as per the Code.

Wellington has an automatic notification system (RAPID) that identifies lapsed insurance, certificates and training and requires that the Contractor provide updated records of these.

The annual refresher required to conduct vegetation clearance around powerlines has now been identified in RAPID as a mandatory requirement for WSC’s identified ELC contractors (currently, Benson’s Group Contractors and Batt Bros Vegetation Management). These contractors get a reminder email from RAPID 30 days prior for

their identified WSC ELC personal expiring to upload their latest refresher training certification. (List of contractors WSC authorised personal are provided in their training matrix stored in RAPID). If they fail to do so, these two contractors are automatically marked as “Non-Compliant” in RAPID and are suspended from working for WSC until the refresher training certification is provided.

Council’s Administrative Support and Risk Officer conducts a monthly desk top audit of all our contractors pertaining to depot operations (this includes ELC contractors). During this audit, training certificates and qualifications are reviewed for currency and reported in an Excel spreadsheet every month. This is stored in Council’s s drive: **S:\BNE\NEP\Parks Services\Admin Support Officer\OHS\RAPID CONTRACTOR AUDITS**

Contractor personnel found not to be appropriately trained for the designated task must be removed from all council worksites as specified in the Contract.

9(4)(q) NOTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION PROCEDURES

Council understands the importance of providing notification of programmed tree pruning works to affected persons.

Council will make available the tree pruning programme to all residents which can be obtained on the Council website.

Notifications will be made on Council’s website no less than 14 and no more than 60 days prior to the commencement of works. (See Appendix 6). Should cutting not proceed within the requested notification period re-notification will occur.

Any tree removals are notified as per Council’s Open Space Plan.

9(4)(r) DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES.

The following dispute resolution procedure is in place for internal and external disputes that may arise during the period of this plan;

a. Internal Dispute Resolution

Disputes between Council and the public relating to issues with the pruning of Council trees to comply with the Regulations will be resolved in accordance with Council Policy and Tree Management Guidelines.

OUR COMPLAINT PROCESS AND TIMEFRAMES

All complaints submitted to Council or through a Councillor will be taken seriously and in accordance with our Privacy policy and guidelines.

All complaints will be recorded in our records management system and directed to the appropriate Business Unit Manager for investigation.

In alignment with our Customer Service Charter, we will respond to your complaint within 10 working days and aim to resolve your complaint within 28 days. If this is not possible due to the complexity of the complaint or due to circumstances outside our control, this will be explained to you.

Throughout the process, we may need to contact you to discuss your concerns or to ask for more information. Providing us with your current contact details will ensure that we provide you a response as soon as possible.

Once an outcome has been reached, a formal letter outlining Council's response will be provided to you. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your request you can lodge a complaint with the Victorian Ombudsman.

In line with Council policy, disputes will be referred to the Manager Natural Environment and Parks.

b. External Dispute Resolution

If Council has been unsuccessful in resolving the dispute the person will be referred to the Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria (EWOV) and escalation to Energy Safe Victoria if required.

PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

DIVISION 1 – ROLE OF RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

(4) EXCEPTION TO MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACE FOR STRUCTURAL BRANCHES AROUND INSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES

Council may identify trees within the Declared Area that meet the requirements for exception as outlined in Section 4 of Schedule 1 of the Code. The exception relates to a structural branch with a part that is >130mm diameter within the Clearance Space for spans that are:

- (i) Less than or equal to 40m in length and the branch is >150mm from the line, or
- (ii) Greater than 40m in length and the branch is >300mm from the line and will only be considered on insulated LV in both circumstances.

Where these situations are identified and removal of the branch will significantly alter the shape of the tree or compromise its structure, Council will undertake an individual risk assessment of the tree to determine whether an Exception to the normal clearance requirements is appropriate under Division1 Part 2 (4) of the Code.

All assessments for trees to which this exception may be or is applied will be undertaken by an arborist with a minimum of AQF Level 5 in Arboriculture, or equivalent, and with all relevant training as detailed in Part 1 9(4)p.

Where the assessment determines that the limb is a low risk of impacting on the powerlines, the tree will be added to a register of trees to which this exception is being applied. The register will be held in Council's Asset Management System. All trees on the register will be re-assessed annually.

All assessment records will be held as per Council's data retention policies, but for a period of no less than 5 years.

(5) EXCEPTION TO MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACE FOR SMALL BRANCHES AROUND INSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES

As part of Council's annual pruning program, Council's Contractor has been requested to identify all trees within the Declared Areas that meet the requirements for exception as outlined in Section 5 of Schedule 1 of the Code. Where it is identified that foliage and branches less than 10mm in diameter have grown within the Clearance Space of an insulated low voltage line, the pruning records for the tree will be reviewed to ensure the tree has been pruned to comply with the minimum Clearance Space in the previous 12 months.

If it has, the tree will be noted as requiring pruning during the next cycle of the annual clearance program. If it has not, Council requires all vegetation that does not qualify for an exception to be pruned to maintain clearance spaces for a period of one year. Any breaches of this clearance are responded to reactively and are entered into Council's record management systems and actioned within 28 business days of receiving notification of the breach.

(6) EXCEPTION TO MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACE FOR SMALL BRANCHES UNDER UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS

As part of Council's annual pruning program, Council's Contractor has been requested to identify all trees within the Declared Areas that meet the requirements for exception as outlined in Section 6 of Schedule 1 of the Code. Which is;

- (i) An uninsulated cable; and
- (ii) A low voltage electric line and
- (iii) Located in a low bushfire risk area

Where it is identified by a suitably qualified Arborist that foliage and branches less than 10mm in diameter have grown no more than 500mm within the Clearance Space under an uninsulated low voltage line, and if it is within the middle 2/3 of the span the span is fitted;

- (i) One conductor spreader if the length of the span does not exceed 45 meters; or
- (ii) Two conductor spreaders if the length of the span exceeds 45 meters and;

Note: A spreader is not required to be fitted to the span if the branch comes within the minimum clearance space around the first or last sixth of the span.

If it has, the tree will be noted as requiring pruning during the next cycle of the annual clearance program. If it has not, Council requires all vegetation that does not qualify for an exception to be pruned to maintain clearance spaces for a period of one year. Any breaches of this clearance are responded to reactively and are entered into Council's record management systems and actioned within 28 business days of receiving notification of the breach.

(7) EXCEPTION TO MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACE FOR STRUCTURAL BRANCHES AROUND UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS

As part of Council's annual pruning program, Council's Contractor has been requested to identify all trees within the declared areas that meet the requirements for exception as outlined in Section 7 of Schedule 1 of the Code. Which is;

- (iv) An uninsulated cable; and
- (v) A low voltage electric line and
- (vi) Located in a low bushfire risk area

And in the case the branch comes in the minimum clearance space around the middle two thirds of the span, the span is fitted with;

- (i) One conductor spreader if the length of the span does not exceed 45 meters or;
- (ii) Two conductor spreaders if the length of the span exceeds 45 meters and

Note: a spreader is not required to be fitted to the span if the branch comes within the minimum clearance space around the first or last sixth of the span.

Where it is identified that a structural branch >130mm diameter is less than 500mm within the Clearance Space and removal of the branch will significantly alter the shape of the tree or compromise its structure, A Council suitably qualified Arborist will undertake an individual risk assessment of the tree to determine whether an Exception to the normal clearance requirements is appropriate under the Code, and ensure the span has spreaders as required under the Code, or that spreaders are installed within 6 months of the risk assessment.

All assessments for trees to which this exception may be or is applied will be undertaken by an arborist with a minimum of AQF Level 5 in Arboriculture, or equivalent, and with all relevant training as detailed in Part 1 9(4)p of this Plan.

Where the assessment determines that the limb is a low risk of impacting on the powerlines, the tree will be added to a register of trees to which this exception is being applied. The register will be held in Council's Asset Management System. All trees on the register will be re-assessed annually.

All assessment records will be held as per Council's data retention policies, but for a period of no less than 5 years.

(8) NOT APPLICABLE – TRANSMISSION ONLY

(9) RESPONSIBLE PERSON MAY CUT OR REMOVE HAZARD TREE

Council is responsible for pruning or removing urgent trees under powerlines. After undertaking the work, Council will be required to notify;

- i. All affected persons and
- ii. The occupier of the land on which the tree was cut or removed and
- iii. If a tree was removed – the owner of the land on which the tree was removed

The form of notice is provided in Appendix 2.

Records of all urgent works and completion of the notification requirement will be recorded in the Asset Management System;

- i. Where and when the cutting or removal was undertaken
- ii. Why the cutting or removal was required
- iii. The last inspection of the section of the electric line where the cutting or removal was required

The Contractor engaged for urgent cutting or removal as a result of unanticipated regrowth, will notify (using form in Appendix 2), the affected person/s after the works have been carried out and in line with their training and induction will not remove or cut the trees further than 1 metre from the minimum clearance space around the electric line given the urgent cutting or removal is required;

- i. As a result of the encroachment or growth of trees that was not anticipated in the management plan or,
- ii. During the fire danger period declared under the Country Fire Authority Act 1958.

PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

DIVISION 2 – MANNER OF CUTTING AND REMOVING TREES

(9) RESPONSIBLE PERSON MAY CUT OR REMOVE HAZARD TREES

Please see Part 1 9(4)(j)

(10) CUTTING OF TREE TO COMPLY WITH STANDARD

Please see Part 1 9(4)(k)

(11) CUTTING OR REMOVAL OF INDIGENOUS OR SIGNIFICANT TREES MUST BE MINIMISED

Please see 9(4)h and 9(4)i.

(12) CUTTING OR REMOVING HABITAT FOR THREATENED FAUNA

Please see 9(4)i.

PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

DIVISION 3 – NOTIFICATION, CONSULTATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

(17) RESPONSIBLE PERSON MUST PUBLISH NOTICE BEFORE CUTTING OR REMOVING CERTAIN TREES

Please see 9(4)q.

PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

DIVISION 4 – ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

(20) DUTY RELATING TO THE SAFETY OF CUTTING OR REMOVAL OF TREES CLOSE TO AN ELECTRIC LINE

Where Council and its Contractor are unsure of the safety of pruning or removing a tree, they will consult with the relevant Distribution Business, or if the tree affects a railway supply line, the relevant Railway Operator, to develop an appropriate action plan to mitigate the hazard or bring the tree into compliance with the Code.

The contact details of the relevant organisations are provided at the beginning of this Plan.

(21) DUTY RELATING TO ASSISTING TO DETERMINE THE ALLOWANCE FOR CONDUCTOR SAG AND SWAY

Notwithstanding other requirements of this clause, Council notes that an owner, operator or distribution company that is consulted by a Council under subclause 21(1) must assist the Council by determining the additional distance.

PART 3 – MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES

DIVISION 2 - ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE MECHANISMS

(31) APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE MECHANISM

Council is not and does not currently intend to use any alternative compliance mechanisms.

If Council should apply to Energy Safe Victoria for approval to use an alternative compliance mechanism in respect of a span of an electric line or a class of spans, the application will include details of:

- (i) the alternative compliance mechanism; and
- (ii) a written confirmation from the Distribution Business or alternative qualified provider that includes
 - a) the procedures to be adopted for commissioning, installing, operating, maintaining and decommissioning the alternative compliance mechanism; and
 - b) the published technical standards that will be complied with when commissioning, installing, operating, maintaining and decommissioning the alternative compliance mechanism; and
- (iii) the location of the span; or describe the class; and
- (iv) the minimum clearance space that the applicant proposes is to be applied in relation to the span, or class of spans, in respect of which the application is made; and

(v) a copy of the formal safety assessment prepared by the Distribution Business or an alternative qualified provider under clause 32.

(vi) a copy of the written agreement of the owner or the operator of the span; or the owner or the operator of each span that belongs to that class.

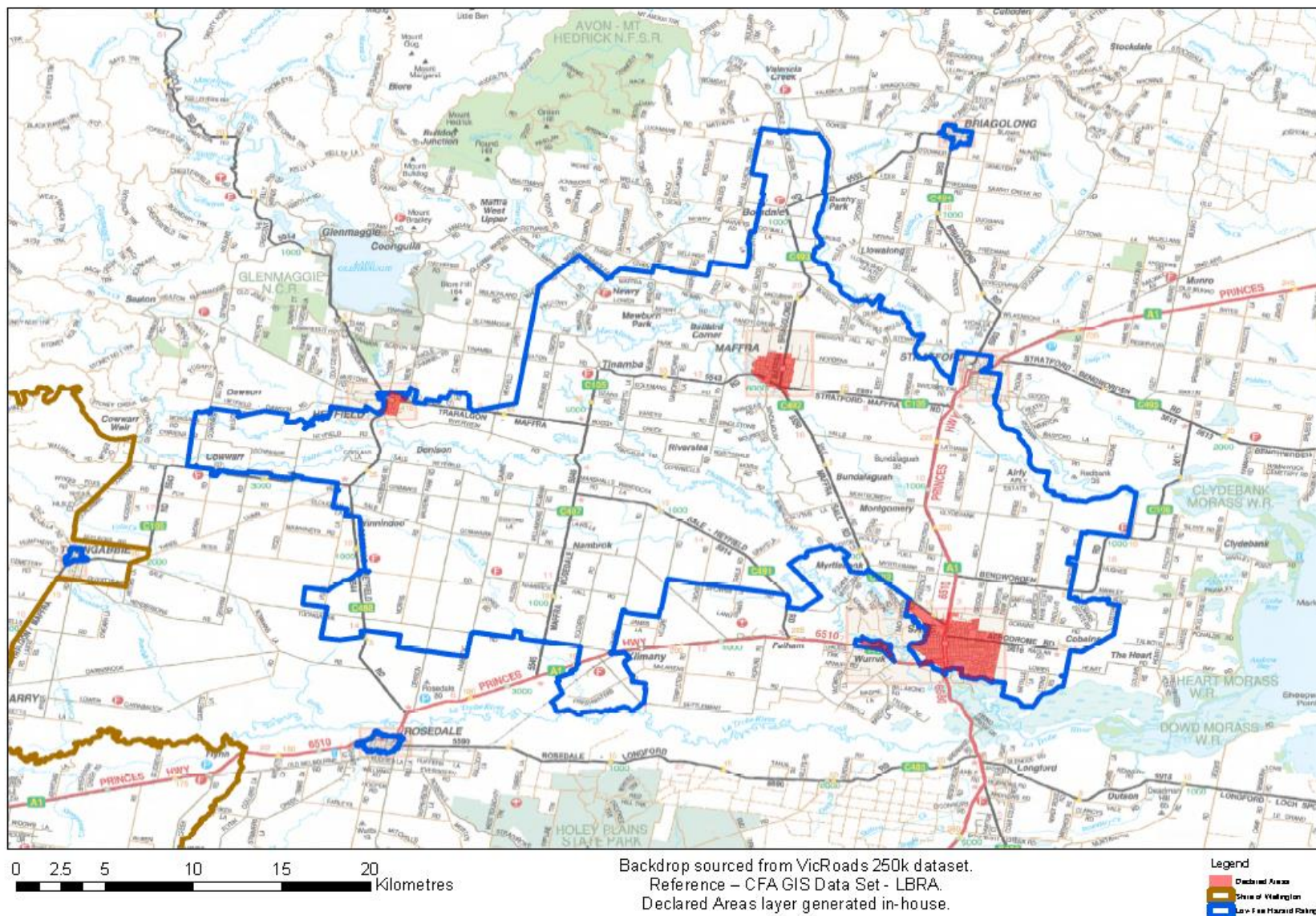
(32) FORMAL SAFETY ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE MECHANISM

Council is not and does not currently intend to use any alternative compliance mechanisms.

As Council Officers are not qualified to provide a formal safety assessment, any such assessment will be prepared by the Distribution Business or an alternative qualified provider and will comply with the requirements as defined in Schedule 1, part 3, Division 2, and Clause 1 of the Code.

APPENDIX 1 – DECLARED AREA MAPS

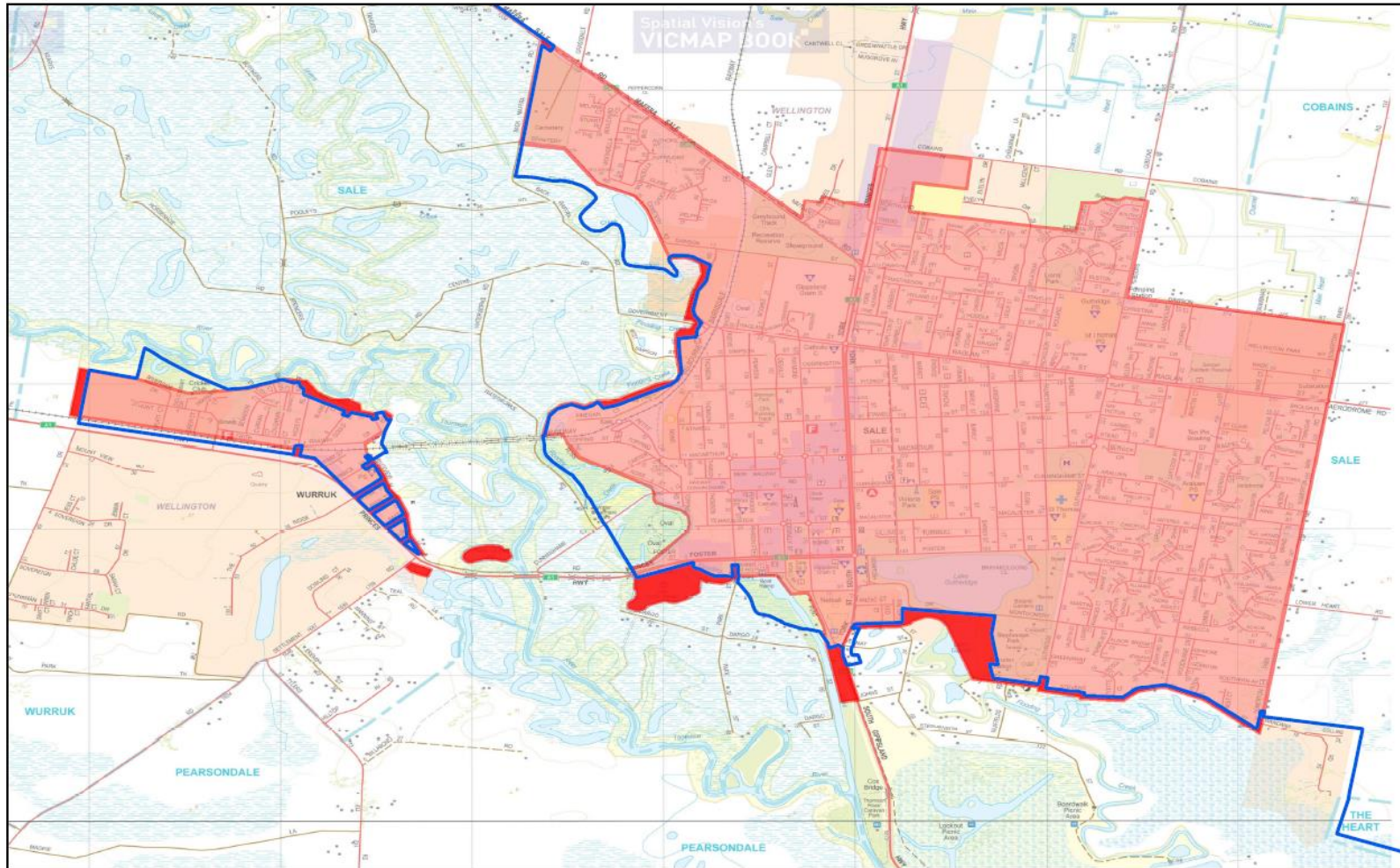
1.1 OVERVIEW



1.2 SALE AND WURRUK



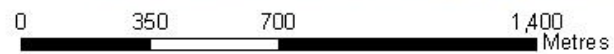
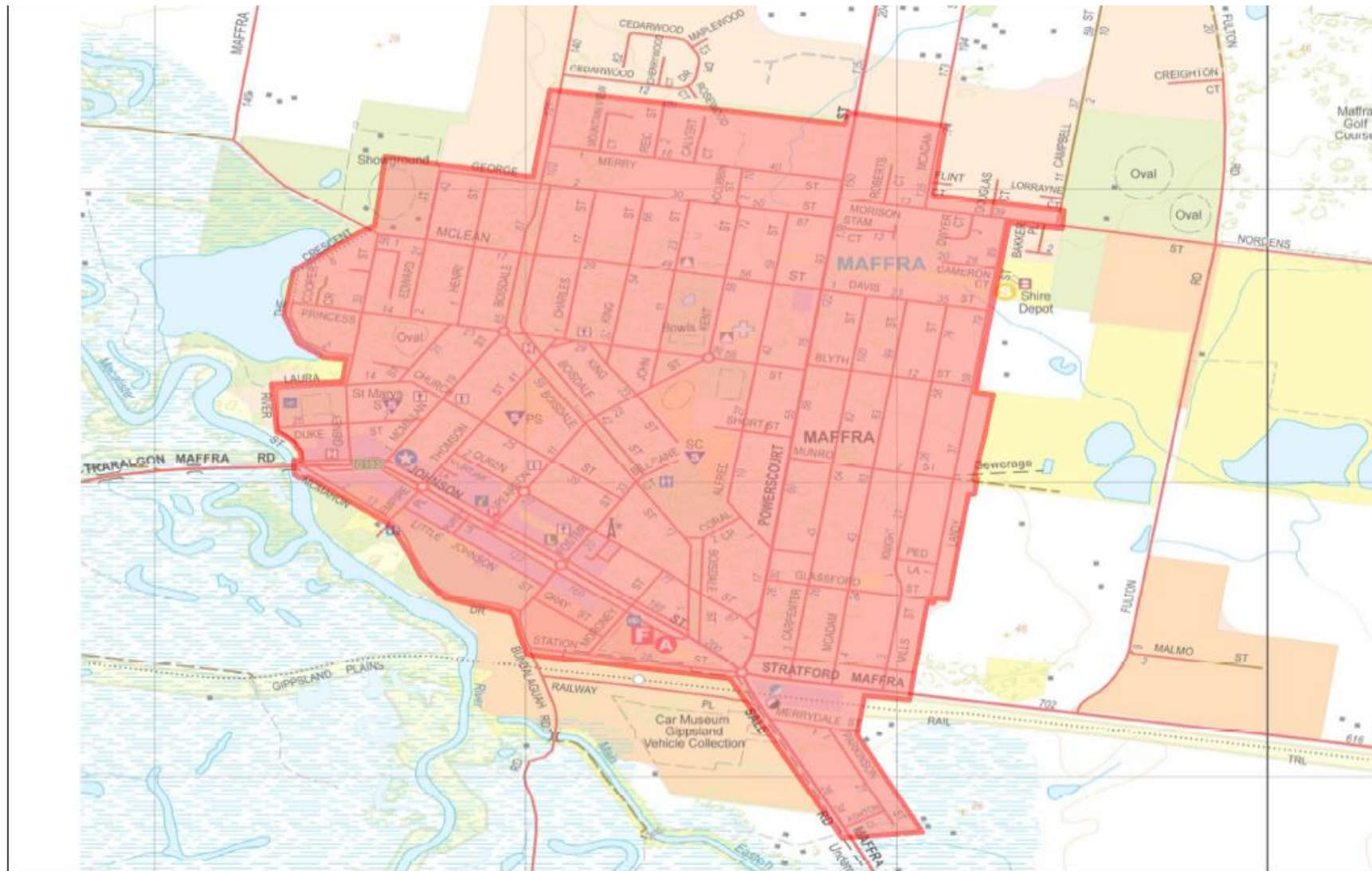
LOW FIRE HAZARD RATING - SHIRE OF WELLINGTON - SALE AND WURRUK



Backdrop sourced from Spatial Vision 20k raster dataset (Edition 3).
Reference – CFA GIS Data Set - LBRA.
Declared Areas layer generated in-house.

- Legend**
- Low Fire Hazard Rating
 - HBRA Within Declared Areas
 - Declared Areas

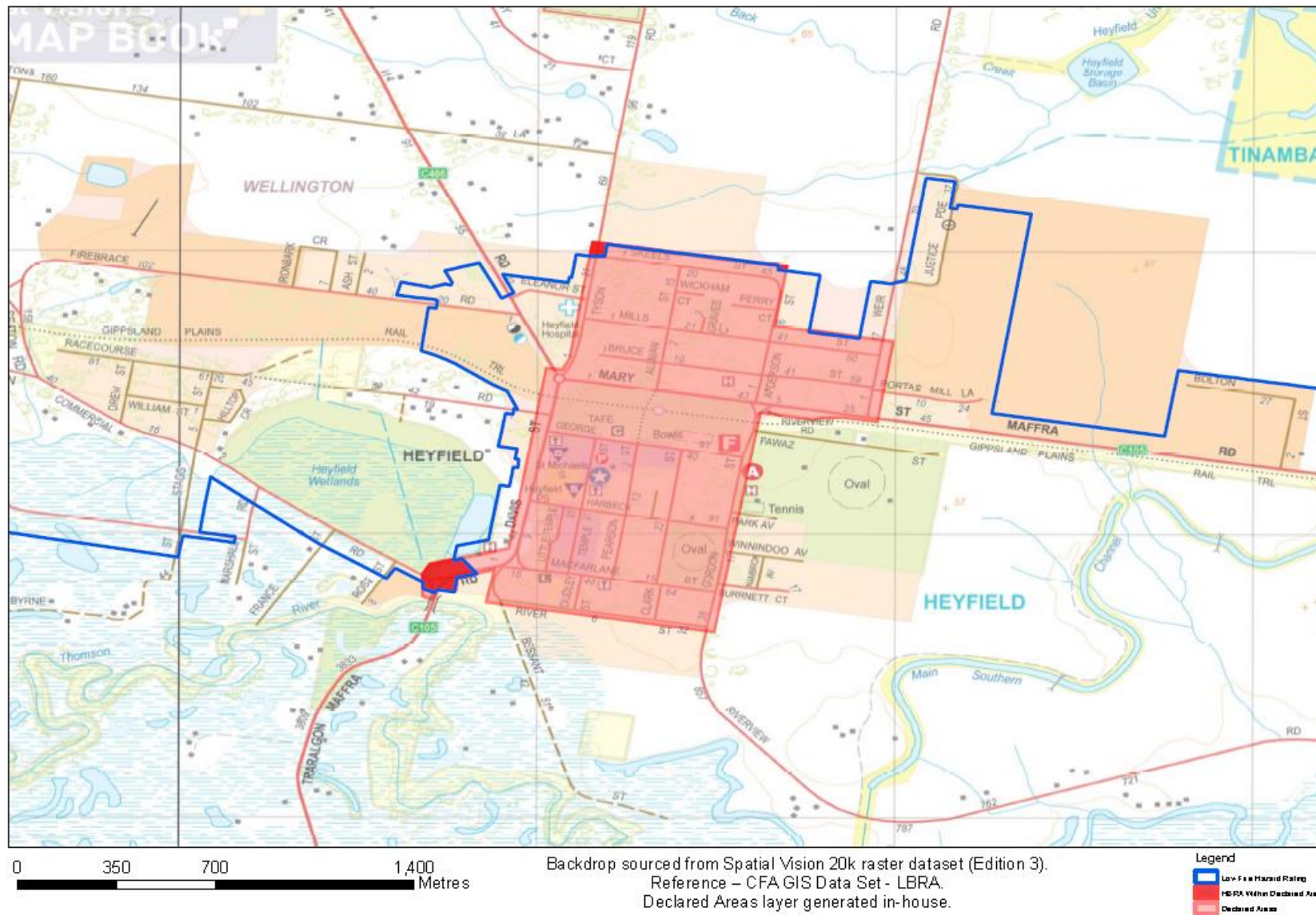
1.3 MAFFRA



Backdrop sourced from Spatial Vision 20k raster dataset (Edition 3).
Reference – CFA GIS Data Set - LBRA.
Declared Areas layer generated in-house.



1.4 HEYFIELD



APPENDIX 2 - Notice of Urgent Cutting or Removal of Tree from unexpected regrowth or other reasons as per Clause 17 (2) (a), (b) and Clause 3 (a), (b), (c) of Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020



Notification of Works

Date of Works:

Date of Last Inspection:

Address of Works:

Reference ID:

Name of company undertaking works:

Dear Resident,

The tree outside your property has been pruned or removed to meet the requirements of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) current regulations. We are required by the regulations to inform you of this work. The works were undertaken for one of the following reasons (I checked box).

- As a result of encroachment or growth of trees that was not anticipated in the management plan; or
- As a result of a tree falling or becoming damaged so that it is required to be cut or removed to maintain the required clearance space; or
- If the arborist's assessment under clause 3 of the Act confirms the imminent likelihood of contact with an electric line having regard to foreseeable local conditions; or
- Works required during the fire danger period declared under the Country Fire Authority Act 1950.

Should you have any concerns please contact Wellington Shire Council 1300 366 244



APPENDIX 3 – List of Significant Trees on Public Land

- King George Avenue Sale
- Port Albert Heritage Precinct*
- Sale Town Centre Precinct**
- Sale Victoria Park Precinct**
- Sale St Mary's Precinct**
- Sale Lake Guthridge Landscape Precinct**
- Sale Stawell & Market Streets Precinct**
- Sale Cunninghame St– *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* located outside Sale Primary School
- Sale Desailly Street, Peppercorn trees
- Sale Corner of Desailly & McMillan Streets, Elm Trees
- Sale - 128-30 Foster Street, Borough of Sale Municipal Offices (former) Fig tree
- Sale Maffra – Sale Road Pine Tree
- Sale St Columba's church complex & Login Reserve 131-71 Raymond Street, Sale
- Sale Robinson Park Trees CA 18C, 23F, & 23G, South Gippsland Highway, Sale*
- Stratford Wesleyan Methodist Church (former) 14 Hobson Street, Stratford*

* **not within Declared Area (managed by AusNet)**

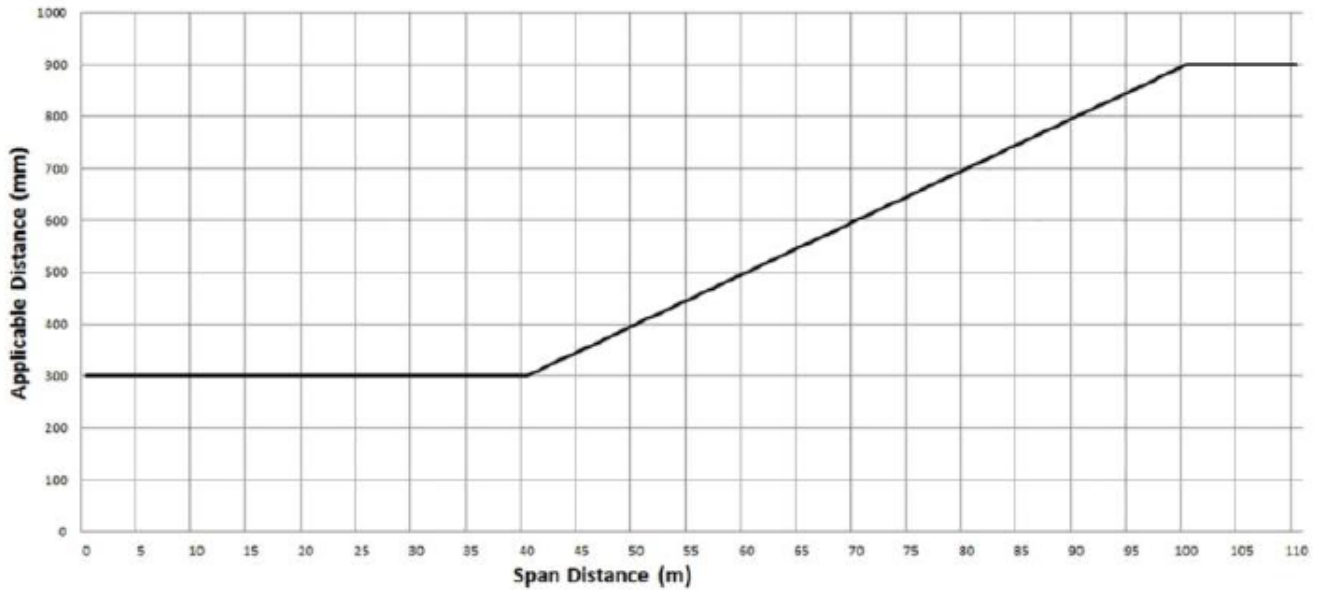
****includes street trees**

https://planning-schemes.api.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/wellington/ordinance/43_01

APPENDIX 4 - Applicable distance for middle 2 thirds of electric line span

GRAPH 1—INSULATED ELECTRIC LINES IN ALL AREAS

(Extracts from Electrical Safety (Line Clearance) Regulations 2020)

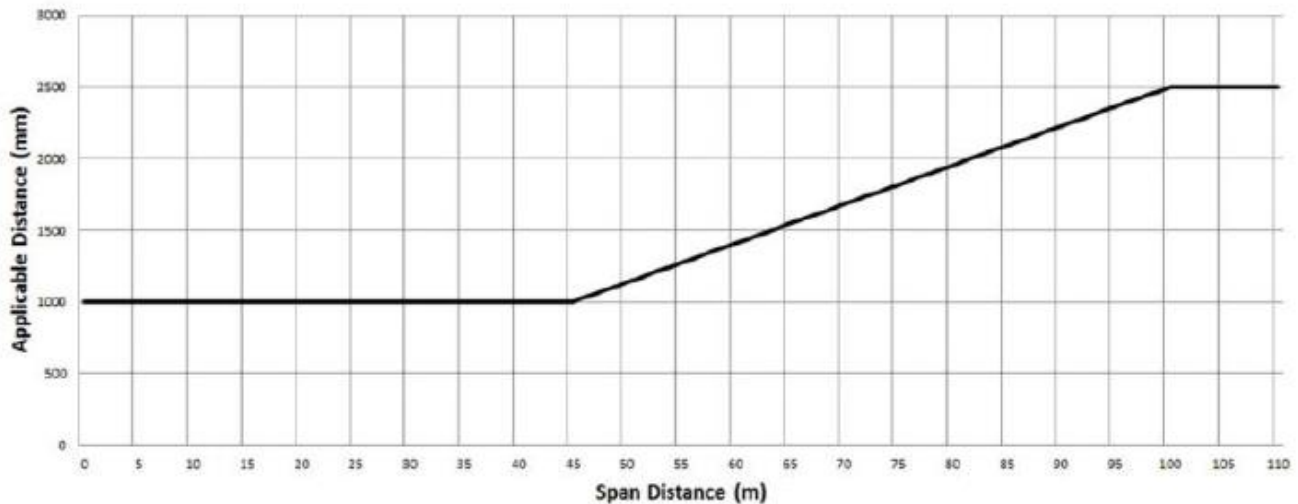


The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of an insulated electric line in all areas is calculated is as follows:

The applicable distance for the middle two thirds of the span is:

- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 40 m the applicable distance equals 300 mm
- B. if the span distance is greater than 40 m and less than or equal to 100 m — the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression — $300 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 40) \times 10]$;
- C. if the span distance is greater than 100 metres the applicable distance equals 900 mm.

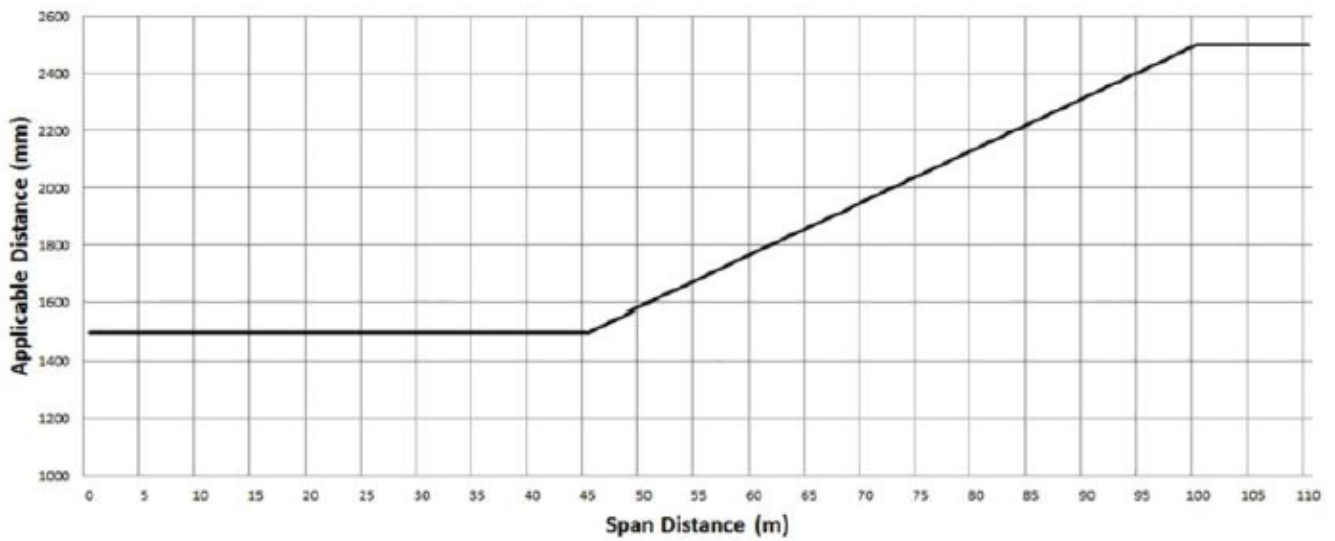
GRAPH 2: UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA



The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of uninsulated low voltage electric line in a low bushfire risk area is calculated is as follows

- A if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 1000 mm
- B. If the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 100 m the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression: $1000 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times (1500 \div 55)]$;
- C. if the span distance is greater than 100 m the applicable distance equals 2500 mm.

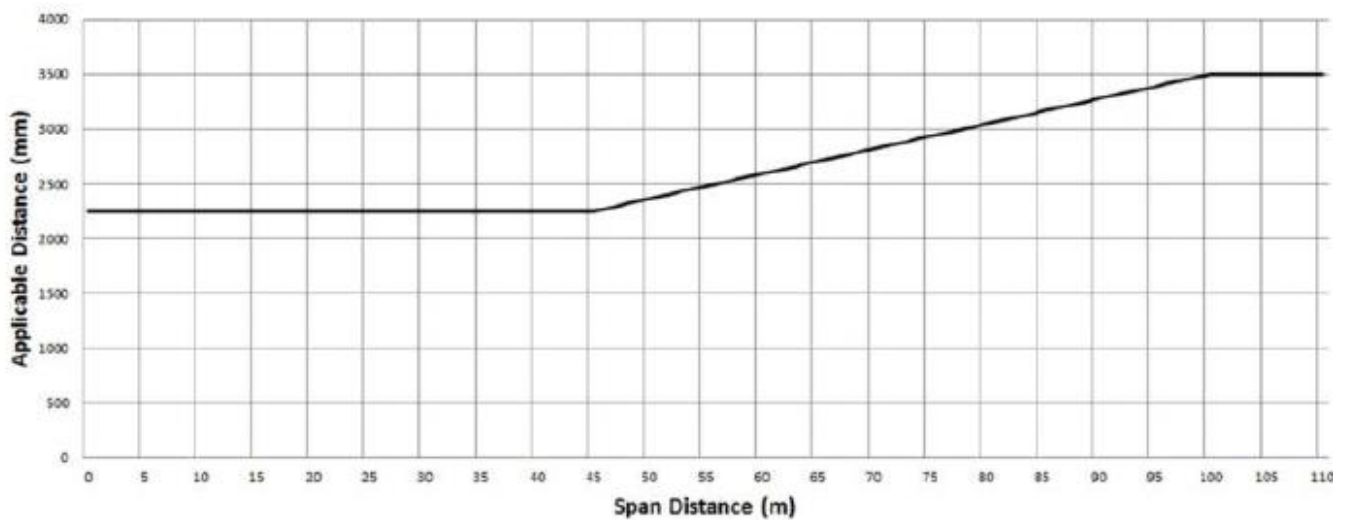
GRAPH 3: UNINSULATED HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE (OTHER THAN A 66,000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE) IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA



The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of uninsulated high voltage electric line (other than a 66,000-volt electric line) in a low bushfire risk area is calculated is as follows:

- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 1500 mm
- B. if the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 100 m, the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression $1500 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times (1000\ divided\ by\ 55)]$
- C. if the span distance is greater than 100 m the applicable distance equals 2500 mm.

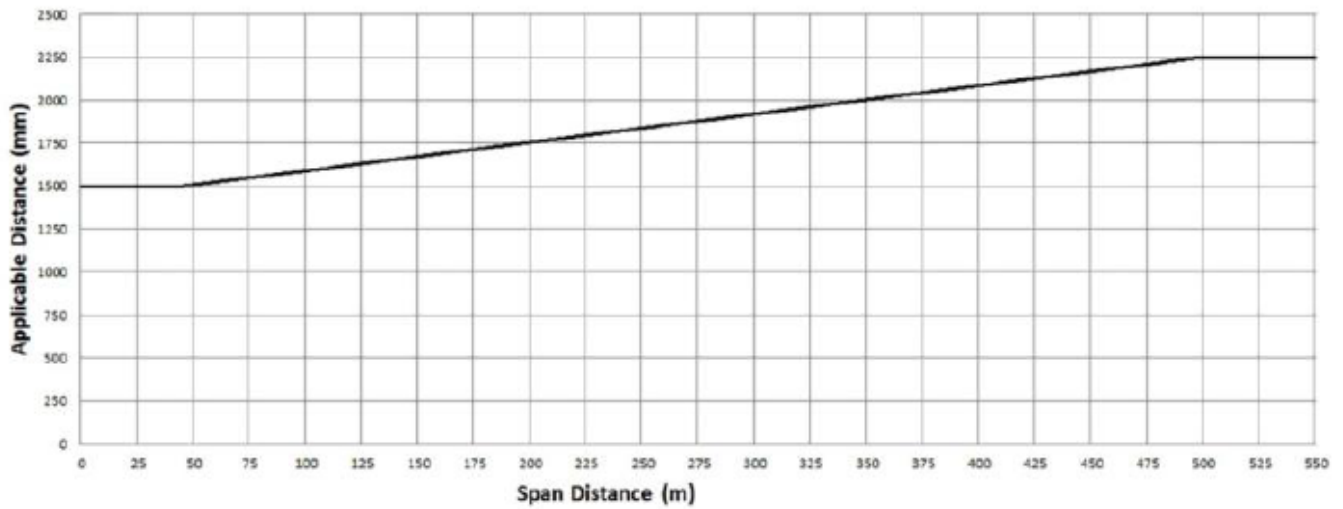
GRAPH 4: UNINSULATED 66,000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA



The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of uninsulated 66,000 volt electric line in a low bushfire risk area is calculated is as follows:

- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 2250 mm
- B. if the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 100 m the distance calculated in accordance with the following expression $2250 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times (1250 \div 55)]$; or
- C. if the span distance is greater than 100 m the applicable distance equals 3500 mm.

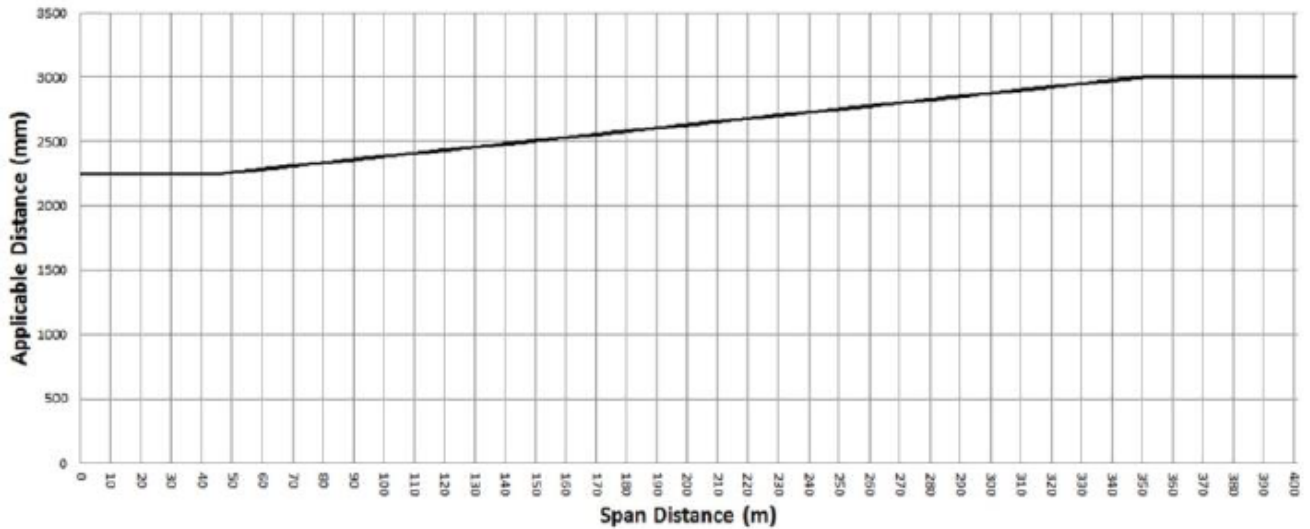
GRAPH 5: UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE AND HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE (OTHER THAN A 66,000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE) IN HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREA



The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of an electric line is calculated is as follows:

- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 1500 mm
- B. if the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 500 m, the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression $1500 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times (500\ divided\ by\ 303)]$; or
- C. if the span distance is greater than 500 m the applicable distance equals 2250mm

GRAPH 5: UNINSULATED 66,000V ELECTRIC LINE IN HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREA



The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of an electric line is calculated is as follows:

- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 2250 mm
- B. if the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 350m, the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression $2250 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times (750\ divided\ by\ 305)]$; or
- C. if the span distance is greater than 350 m the applicable distance equals 3000mm

FIGURE 1 – PLAN VIEW OF ELECTRICAL LINES IN ALL AREAS

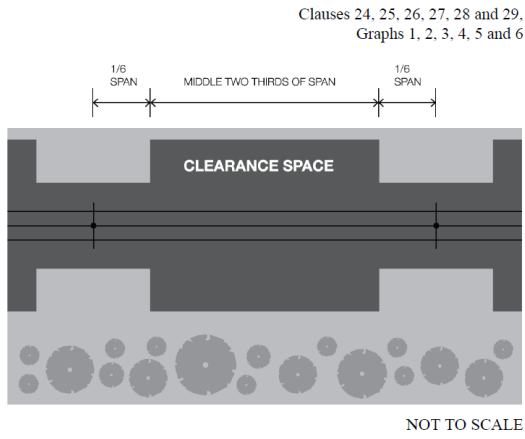


FIGURE 2 – INSULATED ELECTRICAL LINES IN ALL AREAS

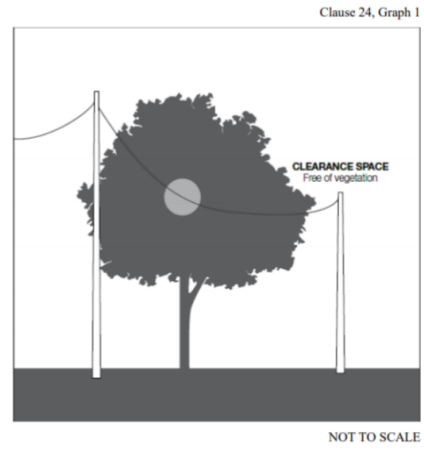


FIGURE 3 – INSULATED ELECTRICAL LINES IN ALL AREAS AND UNINSULATED HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL LINES (OTHER THAN 66 000 VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES) IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS

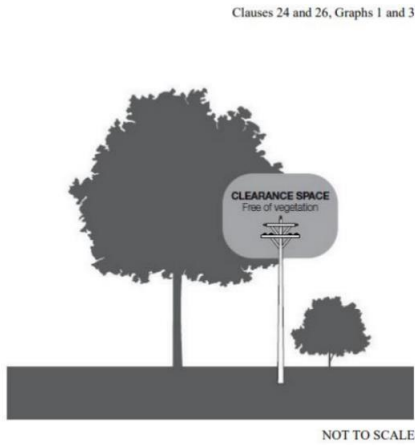


FIGURE 4 – UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL LINES IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS

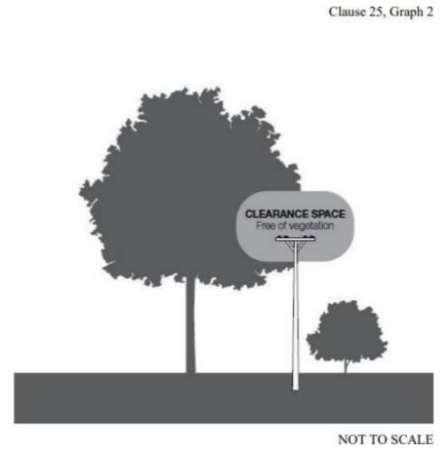
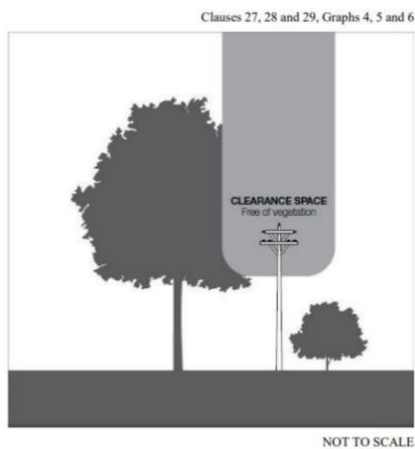


FIGURE 5 – UNINSULATED 66 000 VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL LINE IN LBRA and UNINSULATED IN HBRA



APPENDIX 5 - NEP ELC ONSITE SAFETY AUDIT INSPECTION FORM



**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & PARKS
ELC SAFETY AUDIT**

Date/...../.....

Roadside Safety Audit

Location.....

Electrical Line Clearance (ELC) Safety Audit

	REQUIREMENTS	YES/NO NA	COMMENTS
JSA / SWP'S	<i>JSA Complete, SWP's on site & current</i>		
TRAFFIC SIGNS	<i>Placed appropriately as required.</i>		
PPE	<i>Appropriate, suitable for conditions, good quality</i>		
1 ST AID KIT	<i>On site, well stocked, up to date</i>		
PLANT BEING USED	<i>Operators trained, competent & licenced</i>		
PLANT LOG BOOK	<i>On site & completed</i>		
CHEMICALS	<i>Labelled & stored correctly. SDS on site.</i>		
THIS SECTION ONLY APPLICABLE FOR ELECTRICAL LINE CLEARANCE (ELC) SAFETY AUDIT			
PPE	<i><u>Mandatory:</u> Aust. Standard Helmut, harness attached to lanyard (strapped in), long sleeves (when pruning)</i>		
SAFETY SPOTTER	<i><u>Mandatory</u> when working within 6.4m of lines.</i>		
EWP	<i><u>Mandatory:</u> 6 Monthly Electrical Test current. <u>Must</u> be earthed.</i>		
RAPID	<i>ELC Program Induction Complete, Cert II ESI Powerline Vegetation Control Qualification, Licences current.</i>		
PHOTOS	<i>EWP compliance plates, outriggers, earth chain, JSA/SWMS, Lanyard/harness, 6 month electrical test, signage/cones, Safety Spotter, Pre-start check book.</i>		

Discussion Questions

Q. When was your last near miss / incident?

Q. Can you identify the voltage of the powerline you are working on, and what is the clearance required?

Q. Do you have any safety concerns when completing works?

Q. Do you require anything in order to do your job safer?

Q. Do you understand when a JSA is required?

Q. Do you have any safety concerns about the public (aggressive people)?

Q. Anything else you'd like to discuss?

Staff/Contractor Name (print).....

Signature

Auditor Name (print).....

Signature

Coordinator Name (print).....

Signature

APPENDIX 6 – PUBLIC NOTICE WSC UPCOMING ELECTRIC LINE CLEARANCE WORKS



PUBLIC NOTICE

Upcoming Electric Line Clearance Works

The Wellington Shire Council in accordance with its Electrical Line Clearance Management Plan and its obligations under the Electric Line Clearance Regulations 2020, will be pruning street trees in {insert area} between {insert date}.

The works are expected to commence {insert date} and continue for 8 weeks.

The works are required to maintain a safe clearance from electrical lines.

Council apologises for any inconvenience caused while these necessary works are completed.

For information please contact council on 1300 366 244 or email enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au