

Adelaide Hills Council Roadside Vegetation Management Plan 2015-2020



Steven Brooks

Natural Resources Officer - Engineering Department

PO Box 44, Woodside, SA 5244

8408 0547

mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

www.ahc.sa.gov.au

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FORWARD

Adelaide Hills Council (the Council) has a responsibility to prepare and implement strategies for sustainable management for land under its care and control, in partnership with the community.

The maintenance and provision of a safe network of road reserves is one aspect of Council's land management that is influenced by a broad range of stakeholders.

The Council has created and implemented the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (the Plan), to reflect the wide range of community values and uses for the network of road reserves in the Adelaide Hills.

Since its initial development in 2000, the Plan has provided guidance in managing our roadside vegetation. The review of this document in 2013 ensures that it reflects new knowledge and remains relevant to our changing environment.

The Plan is designed to help to provide clear guidance to staff and others who work on road reserves so that sound environmental practice is used; and most importantly that a consistent regional approach to road reserve management is adopted.

I commend the efforts of staff, Councillors and committees who have guided the development and implementation of this comprehensive document.

I am confident that the Plan's clear policy, directions and operational guidelines provides Council and the Community with a solid foundation for practical and sustainable management of its road reserves for future generations.



Cr Bill Spragg

Mayor

ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL

July 2014

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1. INTRODUCTION

Local government has a responsibility for roads throughout South Australia and an influential decision making role in consultation with stakeholders and authorities on road management. The linear aspect of road reserves combined with the conflicting values over roadside interests has ongoing implications for natural resource management.

Road reserves generally support vegetation notable for flora and fauna conservation. In many situations these reserves are the only and last remaining areas of the remnant native vegetation, in that the original ecosystem is threatened by fragmentation and subsequent isolation. The effects of large-scale rural land clearing for agriculture, land division and urban settlement reduces native habitat. In consequence this land and the vegetation it supports has become an important environmental asset. Protecting, enhancing and maintaining the primary functions of road reserves are forever challenging. The vegetation remnants are highly valued for biological diversity serving as important wildlife corridors, a seed source for revegetation and areas for species refuge.

The Adelaide Hills Council has a network 1,453 kms of made roads comprising 251 kms of sealed state roads - (Department of Planning Transport and Infrastructure - DPTI) 587 kms of sealed council roads and 459 kms of unsealed roads. Approximately 150 kms of road reserve remain undeveloped. The majority of road reserves are 20 metres wide (one chain). This narrow width often has significant implications for biodiversity management.

The plan addresses a broad range of road reserve management issues and sets up procedures for improved management and resolution. The document is formatted based on **NVC guidelines - roadside vegetation template** and provides contemporary information and advice. Integrated management plans include the Adelaide Hills Council - Biodiversity Strategy, Strategic Management Plan and State of the District Report which provide greater detail toward the environment of the Mount Lofty Ranges and the role of the Council.

The Adelaide Hills Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of natural assets. This Roadside Vegetation Management Plan has been developed to guide the organisation in the best practice management of roadsides with focus on sustainable stewardship. This document was reviewed by Adelaide Hills Council in July 2014 and is endorsed by the Native Vegetation Council. This Plan is valid for a period of 5 years from the date of sanction.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 What is Roadside Vegetation?

Local councils in South Australia are responsible, under the *Local Government Act 1991*, for approximately 75,000 kilometres of roads. While the Commissioner of Highways controls and maintains the trafficable section of major arterial roads under the *Highways Act 1926*, local councils are responsible for the remainder of the road reserve, including the roadside vegetation, as well as all other roads within their district.

The definition of a **Road** (from Roads (Opening and Closing) Act 1991) is -

- a) a public road within the meaning of Section 4 of the *Local Government Act 1999*; or
- b) an alley, laneway, walkway or other similar thoroughfare vested in a council; or
- c) in relation to a part of the State not within a council area -
 - (i) a road or street delineated and shown on a public map or plan of the State as laid out for public purposes by the Crown; or

- (ii) a road or street opened under this Act or any other Act relating to the opening of new roads and streets; or
- (iii) a road or street transferred or surrendered to the Minister of Local Government or the Crown by the owner or lessee for use as a public road or street; or
- (iv) a road or street declared or dedicated under any other Act to be a public road or street,
- d) and includes part of a road.

For the purposes of this plan:

- **Roadside** - Is defined as the strip of land between the road formation and the boundary of the road reserve (where the road formation is the surface of the finished earthworks, excluding cut or fill batters)
- **Roadside vegetation** - Is any vegetation growing on a road reserve, and includes vegetation on a roadside (the area adjacent to a formed road), and vegetation growing on an unmade or undeveloped road reserve; this ranges from native vegetation of conservation value to vegetation dominated by introduced species.



Example of a road reserve showing road formation and roadside

The Adelaide Hills Council has a network 1,453 kms of made roads comprising;

- 251 kms of sealed state roads - Department of Planning Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI),
- 587 kms of sealed council roads,
- 459 kms of unsealed roads.
- Approximately 150 kms of undeveloped road reserve

The majority of these road reserves are 20 metres wide.

2.2 Why is Roadside Vegetation Important?

Native roadside vegetation is important for a variety of reasons. From a conservation perspective it often has significant value, as much of the native vegetation within the State has been removed or highly disturbed. In some areas roadsides support virtually the only remaining example of the original vegetation. Roadside vegetation also provides functional and social benefits.

Survey work in 1978 revealed, *“South Australia’s native roadside vegetation has been severely depleted through clearance and through several forms of ongoing disturbance. Despite this, many important areas remain, some of which are in very good condition and need to be kept free of disturbance as much as possible, while others require active management to ensure that their features are not gradually degraded”*¹.

The benefits of preserving native vegetation on roadsides can be summarised as follows (Breckwoldt and others (1990)², and Saunders and Hobbs (1991)³, provide further background information):

1. Functional benefits

- Native vegetation on roadsides helps to lower local water tables that may affect the road formation and pavement.
- Intact native vegetation also acts as an effective, low cost form of weed control by preventing the establishment of weeds in the roadside. Roadsides heavily infested with weeds can be a threat to adjacent properties and may increase wildfire risk.
- Native vegetation on roadsides can provide valuable shelter for livestock and crops in adjacent land.
- Native vegetation can also help to define curves, creating a safer driving environment.
- Retention of native vegetation reduces the velocity of water runoff, thus reducing scour and erosion of batters and embankments.
- Shade from native vegetation keeps the road cool for road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists, and provides shade at rest stops for travelers.
- Predatory insects (‘farmers helpers’) are commonly found on native vegetation.



2. Conservation benefits

- Substantial areas of native vegetation can still be found along roadsides even in highly modified areas of the state. In some areas native vegetation in road reserves is virtually the only remnant of the original vegetation.
- For the most part, roadsides are areas that have never been grazed or cultivated, and therefore may contain plant species - often threatened - that aren’t found in the surrounding scrub areas.

¹Palmer, D., and Lewis, S. (1987). *Mapping of Roadside Vegetation in South Australia*. Department of Environment and Planning, South Australia.

²Breckwoldt, R. and others (1990). *Living Corridors – Conservation and Management of Roadside Vegetation*. Greening Australia, Canberra, Australia.

³Saunders, D.A., and Hobbs, R.J. (1991). *Nature Conservation 2: The Role of Corridors*. Surrey Beatty & Sons, Chipping Norton, NSW, Australia.

- Along with other remnant vegetation and scattered paddock trees, roadside vegetation can facilitate movements of wildlife, particularly birds, through the landscape and in turn assist in pollination of plants that may otherwise become isolated.
- Roadside trees can be very old and contain resources (e.g. hollows) less common in younger surrounding vegetation⁴.
- Roadside vegetation can also provide an important seed source for revegetation projects.

3. Social benefits

- In areas that have been extensively cleared remnant vegetation on roadsides provides important aesthetic visual interest to the general landscape - once referred to as the “Front Garden of the Nation” by Edna Walling in 1952⁵.
- Scenic quality is important to motorists: roadside vegetation can contribute to driver alertness by offering relief from boredom.
- Remnant vegetation in road reserves often contains attractive wildflower species contributing to the natural character and tourist appeal of a district.
- In cleared areas road reserves often represent an historical reminder of the variety of vegetation types that occurred across the landscape prior to settlement.
- Roadside vegetation can be used as an educational tool to highlight to the general public the varieties of habitats that used to belong in the area.
- It could also be said that *“we, the community, have a duty to exercise foresight in our treatment of the environment which we will hand on to our successors”*⁶.



A roadside - arid South Australia

⁴Clarke et al (2010). *Aging mallee eucalypt vegetation after fire: insights for successional trajectories in semi-arid mallee ecosystems*. Australian Journal of Botany 58: 363 – 372.

⁵Walling, E. (1952). *Country Roads – The Australian Roadside*. Reprinted in 1985, by Pioneer Design Studio, 31 North Road, Lilydale, Victoria, Australia.

⁶Roadside Vegetation Committee (1978). *The role and objectives of the Roadside Vegetation Committee*. Unpublished Document. Adelaide.



Moores Road - Norton Summit has flora and fauna that is significant, covered under state and federal legislation and notably valued by the community, environmental authorities and amongst scientific circles
(Refer to section 9 - Appendix)

2.3 How is Roadside Vegetation Protected?

Native roadside vegetation in South Australia is protected or regulated under State and Commonwealth legislation.

2.3.1 Native Vegetation Act 1991 and Native Vegetation Regulations 2003

In South Australia, the clearance of native vegetation, including that along roadsides, is controlled under the ***Native Vegetation Act, 1991*** and the ***Native Vegetation Regulations 2003***. This means that any clearance of native vegetation on roadsides requires the permission of the Native Vegetation Council (NVC) unless a specific Regulation applies.

Regulation 5(1)(y) - Roadside Vegetation, allows for clearance by a local council, or someone acting on behalf of the local council, if the vegetation is growing on a road reserve in the area of the council and the person undertaking the clearance complies with either:

- a management plan prepared by the local council and approved by the Native Vegetation Council; or
- with Native Vegetation Council guidelines for the Management of Roadside Vegetation.

Some roadside activities such as clearance for new road works, fire prevention, public safety and service provision are dealt with under other Regulations (Figure 3). Some require the clearance to be compensated for through either on-ground native vegetation restoration or revegetation works, or payment into a fund that supports those works elsewhere in the region.

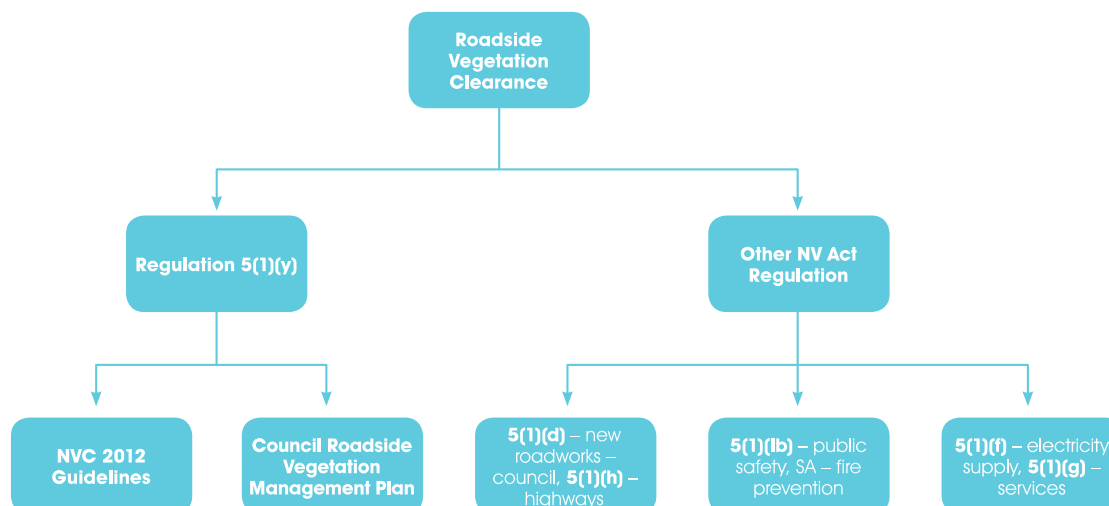


Figure 3 Roadside Vegetation Clearance mechanisms under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*

See “A Guide to the Regulations under the Native Vegetation Act 1991” for further information - http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Conservation/Native_Vegetation/Managing_native_vegetation

2.3.2 Other statutes relevant to the protection and management of native fauna and flora on roadsides

- The ***Local Government Act 1999*** (Section 221) where any works on road reserves require permission of the local council.
- The ***National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972***, which prohibits the removal of native vegetation without a permit from reserves, wilderness protection zones, Crown land, public land or forest reserves in South Australia.
- The ***Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999***, which promotes the conservation of biodiversity by providing strong protection for nationally listed species of threatened indigenous plants and animals and important habitats. Any action that will have a significant effect on these species or habitats requires assessment and Commonwealth approval.
- The ***Natural Resources Management Act 2004*** which promotes sustainable and integrated management of the State's natural resources and makes provision for the protection of the State's natural resources.
- Numerous other Acts of parliament include, but are not limited to the *Fences Act 1975*, *Electricity Corporations Act 1994*, *Development Act 1993*, *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*, *Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986* and *Road Traffic Act 1961*.

2.4 Threats to Roadside Native Vegetation

Purely because of its linear nature roadside vegetation is susceptible to gradual degradation through a range of activities. This degradation can be compounded if soils are disturbed or compacted by machinery or if low native shrubs or native grasses are unintentionally driven over or cleared. Not only can native plants be unnecessarily destroyed, but conditions can also be made unsuitable for natural regeneration and management problems can also be created for adjoining landholders.

Examples of the types of threats to native vegetation on roadsides include:

- inappropriate fire prevention methods (e.g. boom spraying, ploughing)
- pesticide drift from neighbouring property
- clearing for fence replacement (excessive or inappropriate method)
- clearing for new driveways (excessive or poorly located)
- weed invasion from neighbouring property
- excessive seed harvesting
- firewood collecting
- disposal of rubbish and waste materials
- inappropriate or insensitive weed control methods
- inappropriate or insensitive vermin control methods
- poorly designed new road construction (realignments, widening)
- poorly managed roadwork activity (e.g. stockpiles, turning areas)
- incremental clearance along road edge when grading unsealed roads.
- inappropriate vegetation control methods for sight distance
- poor management of grading spoil (placement in roadside or table drain)
- excessive drain clearing or inappropriate disposal of drain spoil
- installation of services where cleared land exists elsewhere
- insensitive methods used to maintain services
- planting within intact native vegetation (e.g. trees in native grassland, or sedgeland)
- grazing by stock or rabbits
- off-road vehicles
- plant disease (e.g. Phytophthora, Mundulla Yellows)
- inappropriate fire regimes
- changes to hydrology
- dryland salinity
- lack of active management
- senescence (old age)

These activities can occur for a number of reasons, but can be grouped into four categories, each which may require a different approach to minimise or eliminate the risk. Threats to roadside native vegetation can occur due to:

- ignorance of the law - e.g. clearance for fencelines by adjacent landholders, or seed collection;
- accidental clearance - e.g. vehicles parking on roadside, grading a little wider each time, or inappropriate weed control methods;

- illegal use - e.g. domestic waste and weed dumping, or sheep and cattle grazing; and
- inaction – e.g. weeds and pests spread over time if not actively controlled.

2.5 How can Roadside Vegetation be Managed?

Native bushland is an efficient, self-sustaining system and, after any ground disturbance, it may take a number of years to return to a stable state. Major disturbance can unbalance the system (e.g. through serious weed infestation) and cause long-term and sometimes irreversible damage. In many instances inappropriate management activities can set up the next round of maintenance problems.

Native vegetation along roadsides needs careful management if it is to be conserved for future generations. Good roadside management practices can also generate potential savings in local council road maintenance budgets.

Low-impact management of roadside vegetation is an integral part of efficient and effective maintenance of roads.

The most important step to manage roadside native vegetation is to identify where and what it is, through roadside vegetation surveys or opportunistic observations.

Preventative measures (such as the Roadside (Blue) Marker System (RMS), protocols for road workers, and information to landowners) should then be implemented to prevent direct clearance and physical damage to identified vegetation.

Ideally, management measures should also extend to improving the quality and quantity of the vegetation on roadsides, through weed and pest control works, rehabilitation and revegetation.



Native plants, garden escapees and roadside weeds.



Roadside Markers (Blue) denote the RMS (Roadside Marking Signs) and highlights the importance of native vegetation (significant flora). This signage informs contractors and Council staff of the care required when operating on this land.

2.6 What is a Roadside Vegetation Management Plan?

A roadside vegetation management plan (RVMP) is a reference document encompassing a range of actions that occur on roadsides, which is prepared and owned by a local council for the purpose of promoting good management of roadside vegetation.

Implementation of the plans objectives and guidelines, combined with local council commitment and support, can result in good management outcomes for roadside vegetation, and usually with little impact on council and other users' activities on roadsides.

RVMPs need to be endorsed by the Native Vegetation Council under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* in order to fulfil a legal requirement under *Regulation 5(1)(y)*. This Regulation allows for clearance of native vegetation by a local council, or someone acting on behalf of the local council, where the clearance complies with a roadside management plan that has been approved by the Native Vegetation Council.

3. CONTEXT OF ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

3.1 Area covered by Plan

The Adelaide Hills Council covers an area of 795km² and supports a population of 40,000 people. The AHC region features several main townships- Crafers to Bridgewater (including Stirling and Aldgate), Lobethal, Woodside, Birdwood, Gumeracha, Uraidla, Oakbank, Summertown, Inglewood, Houghton, Mount Torrens, Balhannah, Kersbrook, Woodforde, Teringie, Rostrevor, Greenhill and Norton Summit.

Agriculture (including horticulture and viticulture) and forestry provide the main employment, followed by tourism and associated activities. The dominant business in the area is primary industry but there is also a higher than average proportion of business involvement within the construction, recreation and tourism industry.

Under the Local Government Act 1999, the Adelaide Hills Council has a responsibility to ensure that roads not only provide for the safe movement of traffic, but also is required to facilitate sustainable development and the protection of the environment and to ensure a proper balance within its community between economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations.

Within the Adelaide Hills Council local area roads are classified as follows, Sealed - Arterial, Distributor, Collector and Local with unsealed rated as High, Medium and Low use - See page 20 for more details on functional road classifications.

The remnant native vegetation cover of the Adelaide Hills Council District is diverse. The most widespread intact native plant communities are open forests and woodland. The least conserved indigenous plant communities are wetlands and grassy woodlands. Typical associations include dry sclerophyll woodland and open forest, characterised by an over-storey of one or more Eucalyptus species with typically dense under-storeys comprising sclerophyllous shrubs. The total native vegetation cover within the council District is displayed within the map below.

The threatened plant community of Mountain Gum (*Eucalyptus dalrympleana* ssp. *dalrympleana*) Open Forest occurs in the wetter, colder valleys on fertile soils between Mylor and Gumeracha. Due to the scarcity of preferred climate in the Mt Lofty Ranges, this association was never widespread. As this association occurs on highly productive soils, it has been preferentially cleared. These Open Forests can be found in discreet pockets throughout the central section of the District around Norton Summit and Bridgewater with stands as far east as Mount Torrens.

Approximately 87% of the native terrestrial vegetation of the Mount Lofty Ranges has been cleared. Within the Southern Mount Lofty Ranges, the Adelaide Hills Council District contains a significant proportion (~ 30 %) of the remaining native vegetation cover, including private land. In 2000, approximately 27% of Council managed lands had native vegetation of reasonable to good condition and 57% of lands in a degraded state. Some 16% of Adelaide Hills Council lands were not recorded as they comprised built infrastructure (AHC Open Space Strategy, 2000). Since this period considerable effort has been undertaken by Council staff and volunteers to conserve and enhance native vegetation.

Adelaide Hills Council Area



3.2 Council Roadside Vegetation Commitment Statement

The Adelaide Hills Council commitment for roadside vegetation is -

Maintaining road traffic safety within legislative parameters while retaining remnant roadside vegetation of high biodiversity value.

3.3 Key Objectives for Roadside Vegetation

The Adelaide Hills Council key objectives for roadside vegetation are to:

- meet legal requirements for both the provision and maintenance of a safe road network and the protection of roadside vegetation.
- maintain and enhance the species diversity, genetic diversity, vegetation associations and habitat types currently occurring within existing roadside vegetation.
- maintain and enhance the habitat and corridor value for indigenous flora and fauna.
- minimise the adverse impacts of activities occurring within the roadside vegetation corridor.
- clearly identify unauthorised activity in road reserves.
- improve the awareness of roadside vegetation management issues for local council staff and contractors, the community and other authorities.
- to achieve appropriate pest plant and vermin control.

3.4 What this Roadside Vegetation Management Plan Does

This Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (RVMP) has been developed to provide the Adelaide Hills Council with a consistent, integrated approach to managing roadside vegetation along all municipal controlled roads. Roadside Vegetation Management Plans can:

- outline what can be legally cleared on road reserves without Native Vegetation Council approval;
- outline the ecological value of roadside native vegetation in the region - e.g. what plant associations are present, their conservation significance and quality; the location of any threatened species, and the distribution of weed species of significance;
- identify the threats to roadside native vegetation in the region;
- promote protection of roadside native vegetation from direct damage (e.g. roadworks), by either
- processes and procedures (codes of practice, guidelines, fact sheets) and/or
- plant identification by vegetation survey, mapping, database, Geographic Information System(GIS) and roadside markers for the entire region, OR, on a case-by-case basis by council staff, local experts, or Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources staff;

- promote the protection of roadside native vegetation from indirect damage (e.g. weeds, pests, old age/senescence) and present opportunities for environmental enhancement of the road network such as guidelines and programs for weed control; weed hygiene procedures; bushcare work and principles and other restoration works;
- set clear policies and guidelines for activities affecting roadsides - this applies not only to road works but also to other uses of roadsides such as service provision, pest animal and plant control, property access and bushfire prevention;
- undertake forward planning of renewal and maintenance works to minimize potential damage to roadside vegetation (combined with vegetation surveys, planning of roadworks programs well in advance can avoid areas of conservation significance and allow options that have the least impact on roadside vegetation).
- enable local councils to coordinate annual work programs affecting roadside vegetation and avoid ad-hoc decisions that may be detrimental to roadside vegetation;
- enable greater efficiencies through planning - from road network planning, management of maintenance contracts and construction project planning, to development of environmental programs and strategies;
- enhance local council and community awareness of issues affecting roadside vegetation;
- provide a means for local councils to demonstrate due diligence in our responsibility to protect and maintain native vegetation on roadsides; and
- if sufficient detail is included, the RVMP can remove the need for case-by-case consultation associated with some activities (e.g. by setting out how a particular pest will be tackled in a way which minimises the impact on native vegetation, and showing how any damage will be offset through replanting or natural regeneration at the completion of the work. This may allow councils to avoid the requirement to obtain individual clearance approval for each case of that pest).

However this Roadside Vegetation Management Plan is not:

- a means of avoiding liability if native vegetation clearance offences do occur;
- an appropriate mechanism to obtain environmental approval for large road construction works;
- an approval for all roadside vegetation clearing; or
- a stand-alone document in isolation to other management structures and controls over activities that occur in road reserves for which the Adelaide Hills Council has jurisdiction.

3.5 How this Roadside Vegetation Management Plan was Prepared

This Plan was developed by the Adelaide Hills Council Natural Resource Officer in consultation with the Manager Engineering and Assets and ensures compliance with the Native Vegetation Act 1991. Relevant legislative reference is detailed within the Adelaide Hills Council Strategic Management Plan and Biodiversity Strategy.

As part of the consultative process, issues and activities affecting roadside vegetation within the district have been identified and management actions established to ensure compatibility with council policies and objectives.

This includes development of standard operating procedures for managing roadside activities where those activities are likely to affect roadside native vegetation.

This RVMP is formally approved by the Native Vegetation Council.

3.6 What this Roadside Vegetation Management Plan Contains

This Roadside Vegetation Management Plan contains:

- details of the *Council's* roadside vegetation survey data and roadside marker scheme records.
- a discussion of management issues (activities) that may affect roadside vegetation, including procedures for approval prior to implementation of activities, and Guidelines for undertaking these activities (Section 3);
- a section on Management Actions outlining a series of actions with a program for implementation that will promote forward planning and improved co-operation and

3.7 How to Use This Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

This RVMP will be used as a working reference document within the Adelaide Hills Council. The implementation of the RVMP is linked to the Adelaide Hills Council Strategic Development Plan and Biodiversity Strategy.

The strategic plan linkages relate to:

Goal 2	Sustainable Natural and Built Environments
Key Issue 2.1	Natural Systems
Key Action 2.1.2	Implement the Biodiversity Strategy
Key Action 2.1.4	Manage, protect and restore native vegetation on Council land

The Adelaide Hills Council Natural Resources Officer will be responsible for administering the Plan's implementation.

It will be kept on the Council's website at the following address - www.ahc.sa.gov.au

Council staff and contractors will be trained to ensure they can interpret the Plan and implement the roadwork practices required to minimise damaging impacts on roadside vegetation and improve the protection of remnant vegetation.

3.8 Distribution of this Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

The Road Reserve Management Plan will be distributed to -

- management staff - key persons to include;
 - the Works Manager,
 - Manager Engineering and Assets,
 - Supervisor Civil Work and the Supervisor Parks.

The document is to be circulated amongst operational staff.

On request:

- Elected members
- Committees or local community groups that may have a stakeholder interest in roadsides
- the Native Vegetation Biodiversity Management Unit
- Department for Environment Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR)
- the Adelaide Hills *Council* website www.ahc.sa.gov.au

It is the responsibility of the Natural Resources Officer to ensure the plan is kept current and to promote the contents to Council staff and the community.

3.9 Plan Review

To ensure compliance and that the objectives of this RVMP are met, the document will be reviewed by the Council every five year period to maintain accurate and current best practice information.

Standard procedure involves contact with The Native Vegetation Biodiversity Management Unit (NVBMU) prior to internal review to ensure amendment relating to departmental name change or revised policy is incorporated.

Following internal review, the RVMP will be forwarded to the NVBMU who will then prepare a minute for the Native Vegetation Assessment Panel. The Panel will then consider any significant changes and re-endorse the plan for another time period (generally 5 years).

This is to ensure that the RVMP is current with new information, legislation and terminology.

4. ROADSIDE VEGETATION SURVEY

4.1 Why the Roadside Vegetation has been Surveyed

The Adelaide Hills Council has surveyed its roadsides to provide important information about the location, composition and conservation value of native plant communities and species along roadsides, and the extent of weed invasion and other disturbances.

Previously the RMS reserve survey was conducted using the standard drive-by roadside methodology, “Roadside Vegetation Survey Methodology in South Australia”. This method enables the rapid, systematic collection of data describing the ecological value and conservation significance of vegetation in road reserves, and provides information necessary for making appropriate roadside management decisions (Stokes *et al*, 2006).

Data collected in the field was entered into and maintained in the Roadside Vegetation Database (RVD) which is a database linked to the Geographical Information System (GIS) within the State Environment Department. The standard methodology allows the data collected to be incorporated into a state-wide layer of roadside vegetation mapping.

The RVD is part of the Environmental Database of South Australia (EDBSA) and is therefore linked to the bulk of the biological survey data in South Australia.

The recognised advantages of using this survey methodology are many, including:

- contractors undertaking different regional surveys need not spend time developing their own methodology;
- local councils that instigate a roadside survey do not have to develop their own database or mapping system;
- plant names are automatically updated if the taxonomy of a species is changed in the future; and
- data can be efficiently accessed to search for and spatially display segments of roadside that match certain characteristics (such as threatened species records, pre-European mapping, etc).

A revised road reserve survey is currently in progress at Adelaide Hills Council, using the DEWNR - Native Vegetation Council’s BushRAT methodology which surveys/reviews the road reserve at a landscape scale. The respective RMS site is scored using a condition rating for vegetation (weeds noted), conservation and overall landscape scale.

4.2 What Were The End Products of the Roadside Vegetation Survey?

The Roadside Vegetation survey has provided Council with an inventory of the condition and quality of roadside vegetation, and has been used to assist Council in the development of strategies for the protection and management of roadside vegetation.

The outputs of the Adelaide Hills Council vegetation survey were:

- Maps displaying the information collected during the “drive-by” assessment - in particular, data collected from the roadside vegetation survey have been analysed and mapped according to the five vegetation categories described in Table 1.
- Copies of all the data and analysis of results have been extracted and loaded onto Adelaide Hills Council GIS system enabling Council to customise its own outputs, while still obtaining updates of data from DEWNR where necessary.

- Computer generated reports that summarise the data collected such as vegetation association statistics (distance, condition), lists of species recorded on the survey, and roadside marker report required to determine locations for placing roadside markers under the Roadside Marker Scheme.

Outcomes stemming from the survey results **include** -

- on-ground identification - roadside marker signs;
- informing Council's planning programs for road construction and road maintenance activities of the location of high value vegetation so that alternative routes can be considered at the planning stage;
- educational and promotional material (signage and/or council website or pamphlets) about conserving important areas;
- identifying potential Significant Environmental Benefit (SEB) areas should any proposed clearance of native vegetation for road work activities be required; and
- identifying suitable sites for intensive management to protect and enhance biodiversity values (eg Trees for Life "Bushcare" sites).

Such measures to minimise the impact of activities on roadside vegetation are likely to contribute to lower, long-term roadside and road verge maintenance costs.

4.3 Roadside Reserve Classification

Roadside vegetation survey data has been used to conduct an assessment of the relative ecological value of the vegetation in each road segment surveyed.

The **overall significance** rating provides a simple one to five summary of the relative ecological value of the vegetation in each segment. The score is based on the roadside vegetation scoring system.

There are five categories of roadside vegetation based on its *overall significance* (Table 1). These range from Category 1 with high priority vegetation association in excellent or good condition to Category 5 with little or no native vegetation present.

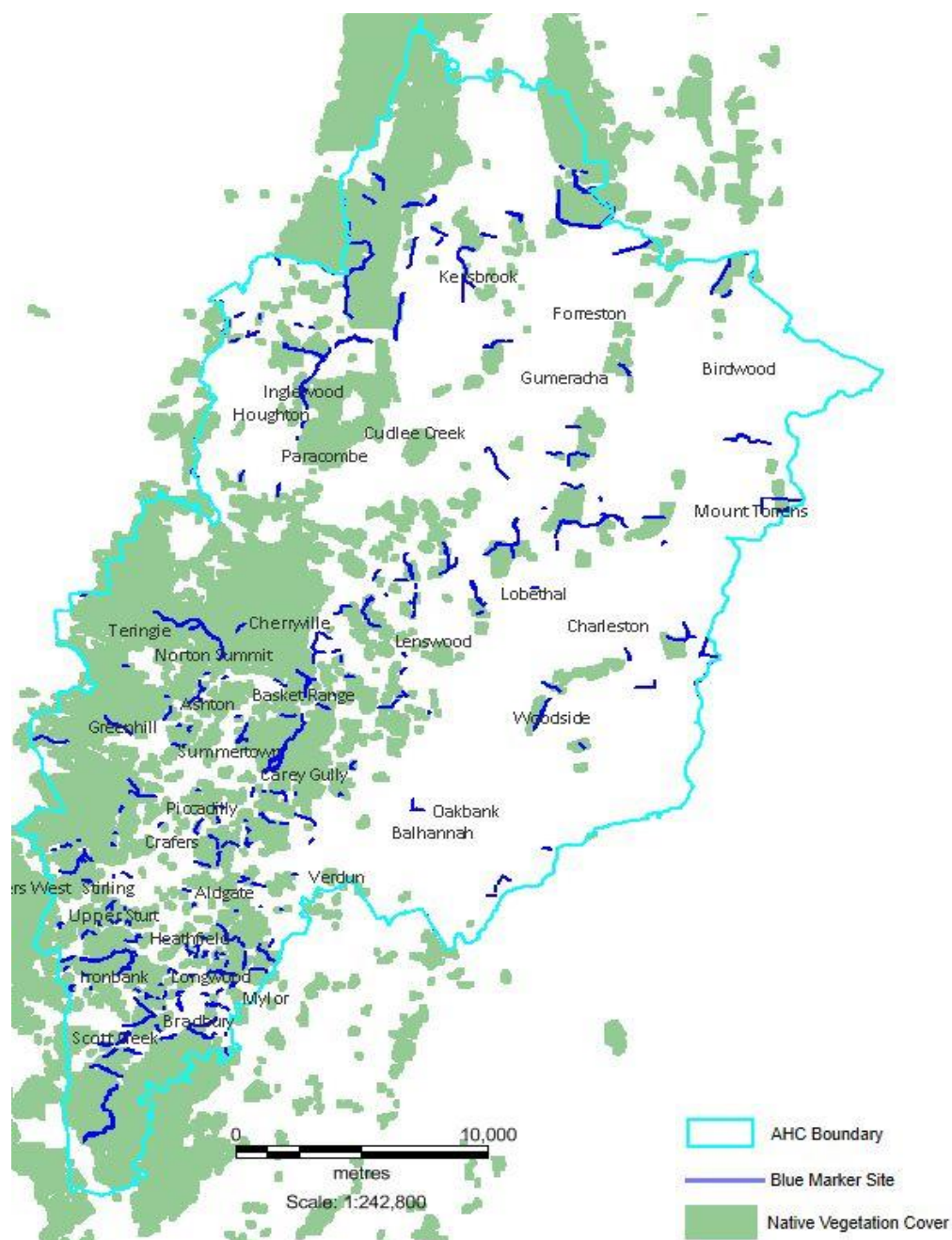
A map of the vegetation categories for the road network within the Adelaide Hills Council can be found **below**.

Table 1 Description of the categories of overall vegetation significance

Category	Description
1	Should not be disturbed; contains a high priority vegetation association in excellent or good condition
2	Should not be disturbed; contains a high priority vegetation association in moderate condition or a lower priority association in excellent condition
3	Disturbance should be avoided wherever possible; contains a high priority vegetation association in poor condition or a lower priority association in moderate condition
4	May be disturbed, subject to further assessment and planning; contains limited native vegetation in poor condition
5	May be disturbed; very little or no native vegetation present.
0	Roadside vegetation has not yet been surveyed or assessed for this site – contact Natural Resource officer is unsure or native vegetation is present

Note: Even though some categories "may be disturbed", this only means that disturbance of areas *without* native vegetation can occur, e.g. soil disturbance, and compaction by machinery or other means. Native vegetation in ALL categories (even D and E) must not be cleared, unless specifically outlined in this plan.

4.4 Map of Roadside Marker Scheme (Sites)



4.5 Hierarchical Road Classification System

The hierarchical road classification system (combined with the one to five roadside reserve classifications in 4.3) is a useful tool to identify and recognise roads within the network containing high quality roadside vegetation that needs to be balanced against the loss of vegetation that may occur to achieve the clearance envelope standard. The width of roadsides supporting good quality native vegetation should be maintained by recognising the roads where this occurs. A system of road classification based on functional use, including the roadside environment, allows for a consistent treatment of all roads in a network (Table 2).

An important factor to consider for route location, and therefore road classification, is the quality of roadside vegetation. This may require the examination of several alternative routes and a detailed evaluation based on environmental and social, as well as traffic considerations. A road classification system based on routes designated for specific traffic needs and providing for protection of roadside vegetation will ensure that ad hoc management decisions at the expense of roadside vegetation can be avoided. For example, isolated requests to clear roadside vegetation for movement of over-dimension farm machinery can be dealt with strategically and more efficiently.

The roadside environment should therefore be recognised as an important functional element of roads and road reserves. The vegetation, for example, cannot be considered independently of the soil and water that support it, and these in turn cannot be considered in isolation of the pavement.

The **four** hierarchical road classification categories within the Adelaide Hills Council are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Hierarchical road classification categories for Sealed Roads:

Category	Description
1	Distributor - These roads are main roads that link major centres and/or collect a large catchment volume of traffic from residential or commercial sites feeding into the arterial network
2	Major Collector - These are sealed roads used by residents to connect into distributors and arterial roads
3	Minor Collector – Low to moderate use roads that collect local traffic to feed into the network
4	Local - These are predominantly minor roads used by adjoining property owners.

Table 3 Hierarchical road classification categories for Unsealed Roads:

Category	Description
1	High Use - High frequency of traffic due to numerous allotments or linkage between activity centres
2	Medium Use – Moderate use, but primarily largely residential traffic
3	Low Use - Minor access roads serving a small amount of properties only

5. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The following sections outline the management issues relevant to the Adelaide Hills Council that may impact on native vegetation on roadsides and provides guidelines to reduce likely impacts, as well as any consultation or assessment procedures that are required. The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify the key threats to roadside vegetation and their likelihood of occurring in order to develop appropriate control measures to minimise or eliminate the risk.

The guidelines that follow include a standard section entitled ***Consultation and Approval Procedures***. Within this section there is reference to the need for ***clearance approval***. This should be interpreted as follows:

- **native vegetation clearance approval is needed under the *Native Vegetation Act*,**
- **the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit should be the first point of contact regarding such clearance, as the Unit may be able to approve clearance of a small amount of vegetation known to be common to an area and that would not impact on the biodiversity of the area,**
- **the Unit will determine whether the proposed clearance requires formal clearance approval from the Native Vegetation Council in the form of a Clearance or Regulation Application,**
- **The Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board (AMLNRMB) and the South Australian Murray-Darling basin Natural Resource Management Board SAMDBRNRB can be contacted for advice regarding native vegetation on roadsides.**

Both the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit and the Native Vegetation Council can be contacted at:

GPO Box 1047 ADELAIDE 5001

Telephone (08) 8303 9777

Facsimile (08) 8303 9780

Email nvc@sa.gov.au

Web www.environment.sa.gov.au/nativevegetation

Quick reference guide to the legal requirements under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*

The table below is a quick reference guide to the legal requirements of clearing native roadside vegetation, as detailed more fully in the “*Guidelines for the Management of Roadside Vegetation*” (NVC, 2012).

ACTIVITY	CLEARANCE APPROVAL	
	NOT REQUIRED (Does not require approval under the <i>Native Vegetation Act 1991</i>)	REQUIRED (Under Native Vegetation Regulation or clearance application to the NVC)
Maintenance	Maintenance of existing clearance with low impact methods	Increased clearance or high impact methods to be used
New Roadworks	Very minor clearance e.g. pruning of branches or removal of one or two saplings or shrubs known to be common in the area	All but very minor clearance
Pest Plant and Animal Control	Very. minor clearance e.g. pruning for access	All but very minor clearance
Bushfire Prevention	Maintenance of legally established existing breaks.	Any other clearance for fire prevention Unless in accordance with a District Bushfire Management Plan under the <i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005</i> , or through an application to the CFS Regional Prevention Officer
Fencelines	Trees on boundary; branches over/through fence; bushes within 1m if they are growing through fence	Any clearance exceeding standards
Access to Adjoining Land	Maximum 5m wide – normal access. Maximum 10m wide – machinery. (Careful site selection to minimise clearance)	Any clearance exceeding standards
Grazing (Leased Roads)	Long-standing grazing practices.	Any direct clearance or increased pressure on native vegetation through changed grazing
Grazing (general)	No native vegetation or only trees & exotic grasses present	Where understorey or regenerating vegetation present
Removal of Plant Material	Dead vegetation other than that defined in the Native Vegetation Regulations	Live timber, flowers or other vegetation removed e.g. brush-cutting Clearance of dead plants of a class declared by Regulation to be included in the definition of native vegetation.
Maintaining Diversity		Any measures involving burning, lopping or other disturbance of native vegetation. Any measures involving burning, lopping or other disturbance of native vegetation.

5.1 New Roadworks (Reconstruction/Resealing/Construction)

Objectives

1. To ensure road construction activities meet road safety standards whilst ensuring minimum disturbance to roadside native vegetation.
2. Where significant vegetation is present the Adelaide Hills Council will consider modifying the road construction to reduce or avoid critical impact.

Information

The Adelaide Hills Council sometimes needs to undertake new roadworks that involve clearance of mature or relatively undisturbed native vegetation. Such new roadworks can include:

- construction of new roads along previously undeveloped road reserves,
- widening or realignment of existing roads,
- construction of new drains, borrow-pits, and stockpile sites, and
- any other new works incidental to road construction or roadworks within the road reserve as defined in Section 221 of the Local Government Act.



These activities could have significant environmental impact and it is important that the vegetation be assessed prior to the works. If significant vegetation is present it may be possible to modify the roadworks to reduce or avoid critical impact.

Action

Council staff will use the roadside reserve classification score (from section 4.3) prior to works commencing to identify the need to undertake further investigation if required. This allows forward planning at annual budget time to identify what roadworks will be occurring on roads with significant native vegetation.

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES FOR NEW ROADWORKS

Clearance approval under Regulation 5(1)(d)[#] is required for new roadworks (such as construction, widening, realignment, new drains, borrow pits or stockpile sites) that involve clearance of native vegetation. Where clearance is required for public safety, Regulation 5(1)(lb) may apply.

NOTE: (1) This requirement does not apply to very minor and localised clearance, such as pruning of branches or removal of one or two tree saplings or shrubs that are known to be common in the area. If in doubt as to what constitutes minor clearance, consultation with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit is recommended.

(2) Prior to any work being undertaken, it is recommended that the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit or a suitably qualified person with good plant identification skills be consulted. It is possible that the site may contain small, visually insignificant plant species, such as orchids or native grasses that are of particular conservation significance.

Local councils are asked to contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit early in the planning and design stages of new roadworks in order to obtain information about potential native vegetation issues and any associated clearance approval requirements under the Native Vegetation Act 1991, therefore minimising delays.

[#] Under the Native Vegetation Regulations 2003, Regulation 5(1)(d) permits clearance of native vegetation for new road works provided that it is located such that it avoids or minimises the impact on significant areas of native vegetation. In particular, new road works or widening activities should seek to avoid areas containing an intact stratum of native vegetation. These types of activities require specific NVC approval and require an SEB to offset the clearance.

Guidelines

5.1.1 Road Design where native vegetation occurs with a roadside vegetation score of 1 to 4

The Adelaide Hills Council will consider the following design principles when planning new road works (prior to obtaining NVC approval):

- Avoid vegetation communities of high conservation significance.
- One wide roadside is preferable to two narrow roadsides.
- If widening is necessary where native vegetation is present on both sides, widening on the narrow roadside is preferred.
- The value of roadside vegetation is greater where there is native vegetation adjacent (outside the road reserve).
- Drainage systems and batters will be designed to minimise sedimentation of water courses, minimise discharge into disease-susceptible plant communities, and control erosion.
- To minimise potential environment impacts of new road works, SEB requirements and the necessary clearance approvals, the Adelaide Hills will consult with DENR during the planning phase. If significant vegetation is present council will investigate possible options to modify the road works to reduce or avoid critical impacts.

5.1.2 Road Construction where native vegetation occurs with a roadside vegetation score of 1 to 4

Once approval has been obtained from the NVC, the Adelaide Hills Council will minimise the impact of construction on vegetation by abiding by the following guidelines:

- Clearly identify and mark with stakes or tape any significant or protected vegetation, habitat areas and sensitive areas prior to the commencement of works.
- Always stay within the construction zone.
- Keep machinery and stockpiles on previously cleared land.
- Limit soil disturbances on roadside.
- Only remove vegetation approved by the NVC.
- Identify the exact location of proposed stockpiles, plant compounds, access roads and turning areas to avoid any incidental vegetation damage.
- Borrow pits must be located where native vegetation will not be disturbed.
- Materials for construction works to be taken from disease and weed free sites.
- Equipment should be cleared on site before moving on to other sites: this particularly applies where machinery is operating in weed-infested areas.

- Only use the appropriate type and minimum size of machinery for the job.
- Chip light material from tree removal and use as mulch to spread local seed; dispose of other waste materials at an appropriate site or leave as habitat for wildlife (hollow logs, and other woody material may be left on site if they are spread widely and not left in a pile).
- If there is no alternative to burning of prunings, do not burn close to native vegetation.
- Strip and stock-pile topsoil from areas of good vegetation, and re-use as soon as possible.
- Avoid “cleaning-up” vegetation after construction: retain stumps, and dead wood.
- If unsure about any environmental controls, contact the site supervisor or Council Environment Officer.

Sealed Road Reconstruction Standards

- Road Carriageway Widths - (sealed) roads are to have a sealed road width of **6.2 m**, with a shoulder width of up to 1.5m width on either side of the edge of the sealed carriageway
- Target to be compliant with Austroads 2010 for road geometry.
- Vertical Height Clearance - The vertical height clearance envelope of new sealed roads is to be up to a maximum of 5m from the edge of the sealed carriageway.
- Sight Distance – clearance to meet the sight distances in accordance with standards

Unsealed Road Reconstruction Standards

- Target to re-sheet unsealed road to no greater than existing width.
- Typically an un-sealed road would have a 5.5m wide wearing surface, with 0.5m -1.0m shoulders.
- Vertical Height Clearance - The vertical height clearance envelope of all new unsealed roads is to be up to a maximum of 5m from the edge of the grader line. Best practice operating procedure in relation to Phytophthora is to be implemented.

New Sealed Road



New Unsealed Road



5.2 Roadside Maintenance

Objectives

1. To ensure a safe and efficient road system whilst ensuring minimum disturbance to roadside native vegetation.
2. To ensure best management practices for vegetation maintenance works on roadsides are understood and adhered to.

Information

Roadside Maintenance refers to the clearance of regrowth vegetation (native and introduced) in order to maintain a road corridor or other established cleared or disturbed areas on road reserves.

Adequate vertical and lateral clearance of roadside vegetation is needed for the safe movement of legal height vehicles across the full width of the traffic lanes and additional clearance is usually needed at intersections, crests, the inside of curves and around roadside furniture such as signs and delineation devices. The degree of clearance needed will vary according to the standard of the road, the type and amount of traffic and the characteristics of the vegetation.

Along most rural roads, clearance to the necessary safety standard has already taken place, but regrowth may be encroaching back into the clearance space, often referred to as the clearance envelope (across the full width of the carriageway) or secondary clearance envelope (adjacent to the carriageway). Regrowth may also be occurring on cleared or disturbed sites such as borrow-pit sites and designated spoil heap sites.

This regrowth may be removed without clearance approval, provided that low-impact methods are used (e.g. slashing, rolling, chainsaws) and the regrowth vegetation is less than 5 years old.



'Living verge' maintained along edge of unsealed road

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES FOR ROADSIDE MAINTENANCE

- a) Clearance approval is not generally needed for maintenance of existing roadside vegetation clearances by low-impact methods if the vegetation is less than 5 years old.
- b) Clearance approval is needed where:
 - clearance *exceeding previously established* safety standards is proposed, such as construction of new open drains; new stockpiles or work areas outside approved clearance envelope; or other maintenance requiring increased clearance, in which case:
 - regrowth vegetation between 5 and 10 years old requires consultation with, and approval from, the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit - In situations where a longer clearance cycle can be justified it is likely to be approved and noted on file; and
 - regrowth vegetation older than 10 years usually requires assessment and Native Vegetation Council approval either under Regulation 5(1)(b)(for safe sight distance) or 5(1)(d) (for reasons other than safe sight distance);
 - regrowth has reached the stage where high-impact methods (e.g. bulldozing) are proposed; OR
 - new works are proposed (see Section 4.1).

If in doubt, check with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for advice.

Guidelines

Code of Practice

The following code of practice will be implemented by the Adelaide Hills Council with the delegated responsible officer being the Natural Resource Officer. If unsure about any environmental controls, contact the site supervisor.

1. Minimise Weed and Disease Spread

- Clean down machinery in appropriate areas before entering and leaving work site. (Refer to Best Practice Operating Procedure Guidelines).
- Program works to begin with clean machinery in high conservation areas and work toward degraded sites.
- Only use soil or fill from a weed or disease free site.

2. Turn-around Points

- On narrow roads of high or medium conservation value, identify machinery turn-around points where native vegetation will not be damaged.
- Locate stockpiles, turn-out or lay-down areas on existing cleared land.

3. Grading and Drain Cleaning Operations

- Avoid damage to roots, bark and limbs.
- Avoid working inside the drip line of trees, and where root damage and soil compaction may occur.
- Remove drain spoil and dispose of appropriately.
- The grader must not intrude beyond the existing carriageway width (grading a little further each time can have significant impact over a number of years).

4. Herbicides

- Only use herbicides where vegetation control by mechanical methods is inappropriate.
- Avoid over-spray by not spraying in windy conditions.

5. Vegetation Removal

- Avoid “cleaning up” vegetation and retain stumps, and dead wood where possible.
- Carefully prune trees using low impact methods in accordance with recognised arboriculture standards.
- Avoid damaging undergrowth when removing trees.
- Dispose of waste materials at an appropriate site or leave as habitat for wildlife (hollow logs, and other woody material may be left on site if they are spread widely and not left in a pile).
- Low shrubs, native grasses and groundcovers generally do not affect road safety and, where possible, will be retained to help prevent weed invasion and erosion.
- Particular care to be taken at sites with Significant Roadside Marker signs.

6. Machinery Use

- Only use the appropriate type and minimum size of machinery for the job.

7. Erosion Control

- Remove as little vegetation as possible and encourage the growth of native vegetation on batters, maintain drainage systems, and minimise soil disturbance.

5.3 Clearance Envelopes

A clearance envelope is an area where vegetation clearance is required to allow for the passage of legal height (4.6 m) vehicles across the full width of the carriageway.

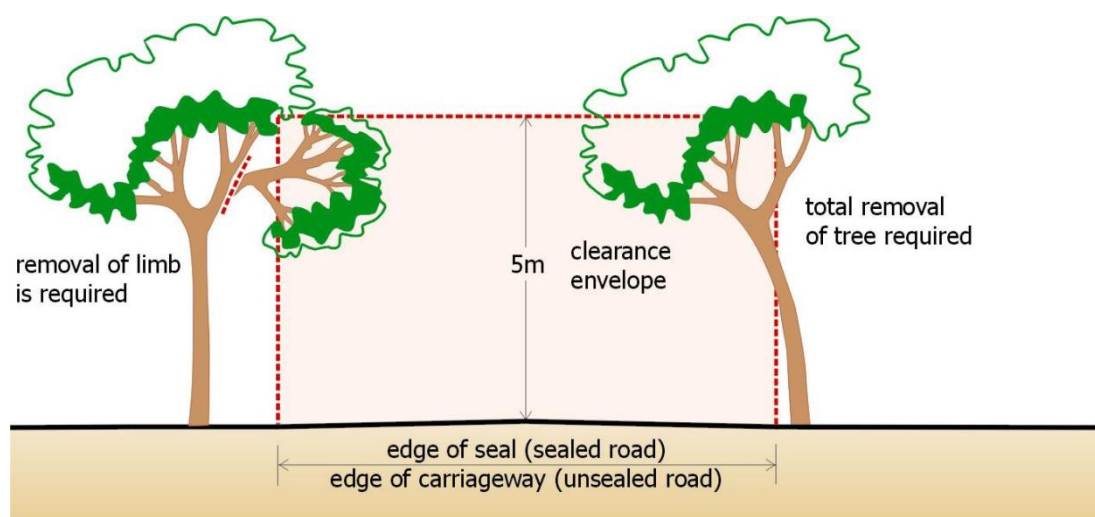
To allow for regrowth between pruning and sagging of branches caused by wet or windy conditions, a minimum⁷ clearance height of 5.0 m will be maintained.

Sealed Roads:

A clearance envelope is to be maintained up to a vertical height of 5m from the edge of the sealed carriageway (diagram below). Clearance beyond this height will require NVC approval.

Unsealed Roads:

A clearance envelope is to be maintained to a vertical height up to 5m from the edge of the grader line (diagram below). Clearance beyond this height will require NVC approval. Every effort must be made to limit grading to the pre-existing width, and where possible this width should be documented for future maintenance works.



Maintenance of clearance envelope

Carriageway - That portion of a road or bridge devoted particularly to the use of vehicles, inclusive of the shoulders and auxiliary lanes (Austroads 2010).

⁷Reference to maintaining a minimum, does not suggest that an increased level of clearance can automatically occur. In some cases roads may have historically been maintained with a higher vertical clearance, and can continue to do.

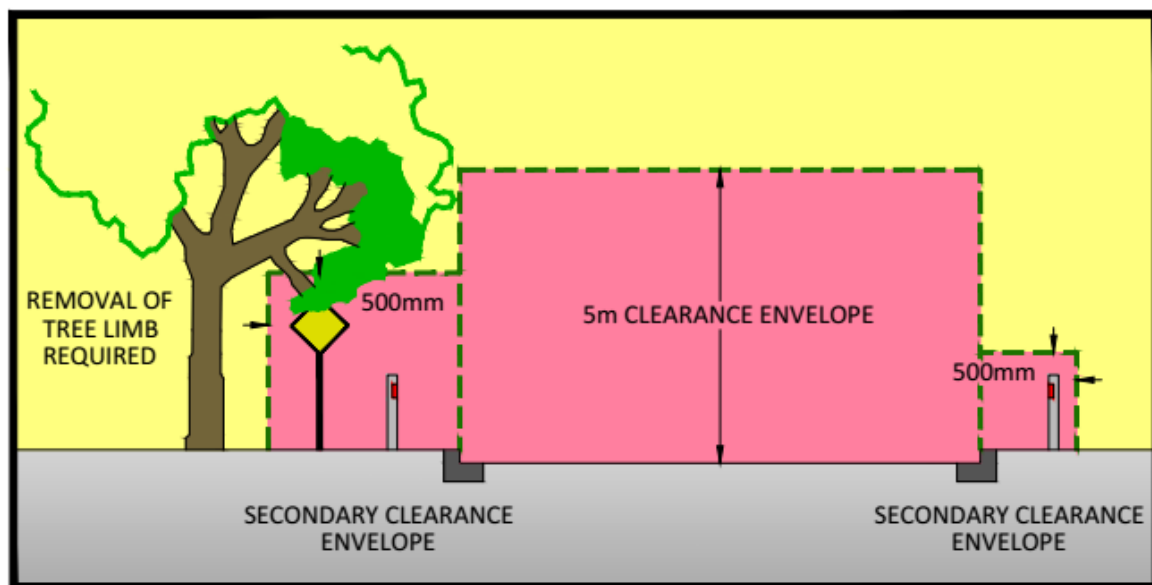
5.4 Secondary Clearance Envelopes

Secondary clearance envelopes are further areas to be kept clear of *regrowth* vegetation adjacent to the carriageway for adequate visibility of other traffic, signs and other roadside furniture.

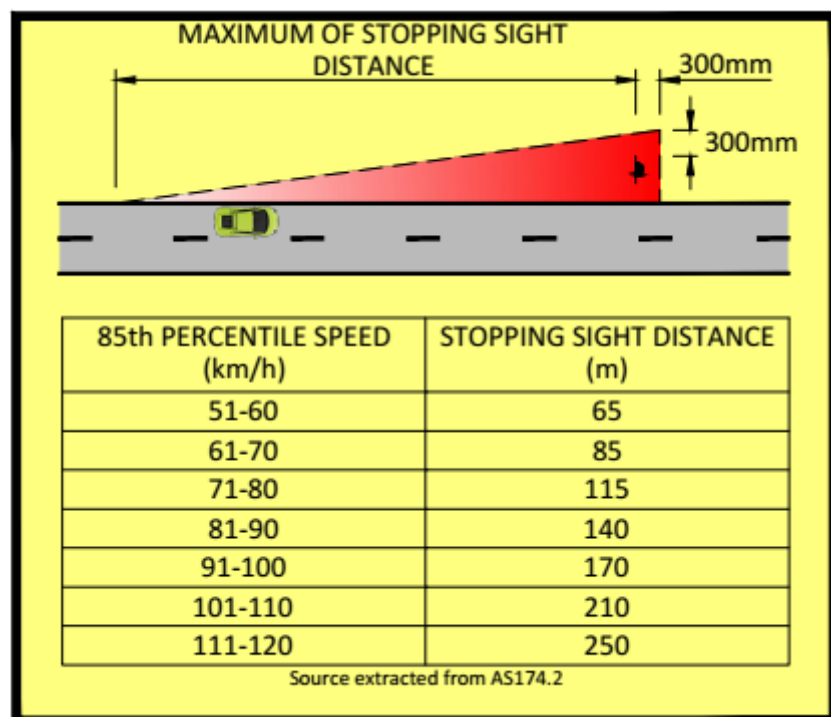
- Secondary clearance envelopes extending up to 500 mm around roadside furniture can be maintained
(Diagram below).
- Additional clearance envelopes may be maintained on the approach side of signs and delineation devices to ensure they are clearly visible from a distance equivalent to the stopping sight distance for the speed environment of the road (**Figure**).
- At road intersections where corners are created, *existing* verge clearance can be maintained for safe sight distance according to Austroad standards.

Any new clearance for safe sight distance (i.e. clearance exceeding previously established safety standards) requires written approval under Regulation 5(1)(b)(see Section 4.3).

Low growing native plant species within the road verge that will not impair sight distance or pose a significant risk to vehicle safety are to be retained and promoted. The presence of these species can help prevent weed invasion and soil erosion, maintain a level of biodiversity in the area and can reduce roadside management costs.



Secondary Clearance Envelope maintained around existing roadside furniture



Secondary clearance envelope around a sign.



Secondary clearance envelope along a road.

The clearance envelope also extends to a 300 mm visibility clearance around road signs and guideposts. Any opportunity to relocate signs (subject to Australian Standards), rather than undertake vegetation clearance should be considered.



Road requiring a clearance envelope



5.5 Public Safety

Objectives

To balance roadside protection of native vegetation and public safety.

To address any issues of public safety over and above those currently addressed (see Roadside Maintenance section) in accordance with the NVC 'Managing Native Vegetation - A Framework for the Application of Regulation 5(1)(b), for Clearance Along Roads, Intersections and at Rail Crossings for Public Safety Purposes'.

Information

Maintenance of existing clearances for road safety can occur under Regulation 5 (1)(y) (see section on Road maintenance), but any clearance greater than this needs approval either under 5(1)(b) where clearance is necessary to protect public safety, or under 5(1)(d) for infrastructure clearance (new road construction, widening or re-alignment).

Once any additional areas are authorised under Regulation 5(1)(b), then these will be incorporated into the Maintenance section of this RVMP (either as an erratum, or added when the plan is next due for review).

This section of the RVMP summarises the requirements for Council when considering new clearance for the purpose of increasing levels of road safety under Regulation 5(1)(b) in accordance with the NVC 'Managing Native Vegetation - A Framework for the Application of Regulation 5(1)(b), for Clearance Along Roads, Intersections and at Rail Crossings for Public Safety Purposes'.

However, contact should be made with the NVBM Unit for advice.

Guidelines - Public Safety Clearance

If clearance greater than that considered exempt in Section 3.2 - Roadside Maintenance, is proposed -

- Firstly contact the NVBMU.
- Acting on their advice, provide the necessary data for the NVBMU to make an assessment of whether 5(1)(b) is applicable or whether clearance falls under Regulation 5(1)(d).

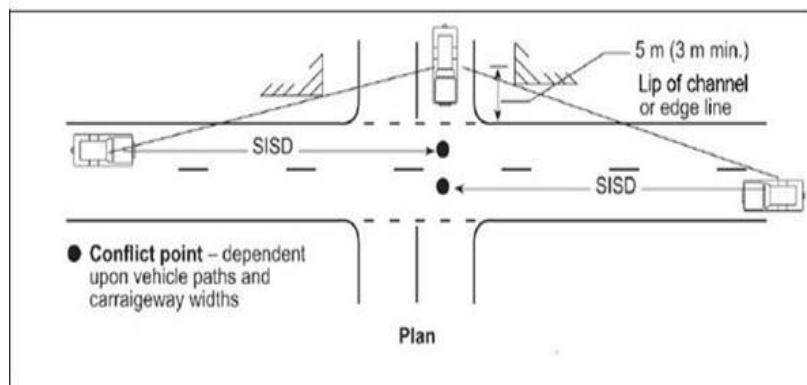


Figure 22: Safe Intersection Site Distance (SISD).
(Australian Road Research Board).

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES FOR CLEARANCE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

Maintenance of existing roadside vegetation clearances (clearance envelopes) by low impact methods can generally proceed without clearance approval.

New vegetation clearance for sight distance at intersections, or any other clearance for public safety, needs to occur according to Austroad Standards and requires written approval under Regulation 5(1)(lb).

See 'Managing Native Vegetation - A Framework for the Application of Regulation 5(1)(lb), for Clearance Along Roads, Intersections and at Rail Crossings for Public Safety Purposes'.

5.6 Installation and Maintenance of Services

Objectives

1. To minimise the impact of installation and maintenance of services to native vegetation within road reserves.
2. To maintain a safe operating environment for services.

Information

Traditionally, services such as powerlines, water supplies, gas and telecommunications have often been established along road reserves. Construction of these services can involve clearance of native vegetation as can ongoing maintenance of those services.

Some service providers have their own external codes of practice for installation and maintenance of their service, for example the “Telecommunications Code of Practice 1997”.

The Adelaide Hills Council has adopted some general procedures to further protect native vegetation within road reserves.

This section describes how the use of road reserves for installation and maintenance of power, water, telecommunications and gas services is controlled.



Tree pruning may be required to maintain powerlines along roadsides

Guidelines – Installation and Maintenance of Services

New Services

Any new services require a submission to the Native Vegetation Council under Native Vegetation Regulation 5(1)(d) – Building or provision of infrastructure. This regulation permits clearance of native vegetation for the construction or expansion of a building or infrastructure that the Minister for Environment and Conservation considers to be in the public interest, provided that it is located such that it avoids or minimises the impact on significant areas of native vegetation.

Note: For telecommunications, a carrier authorised by the Australian Communications Authority under the Telecommunications Act 1997 to install a low impact facility (e.g. underground cable) is immune from some State and Territory laws and environmental laws, including the Native Vegetation Act 1991. However, the carrier must comply with the requirements of the Telecommunications Act and the Telecommunications Code of Practice 1997.

Maintenance of services

Maintenance works associated with electricity supply and other infrastructure, such as water and gas, are permitted under Native Vegetation Regulations 5(1)(f) - Maintenance works associated with electricity supply and 5(1)(g) – Repair or Maintenance of Infrastructure. See A Guide to the Regulations under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 for more information, http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Conservation/Native_vegetation/Managing_native_vegetation.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Clearance Associated with installation and Maintenance of Services.

Clearance approval is required for clearance associated with any new services or maintenance clearance in excess of existing standards (excluding carriers authorised under the Telecommunications Act 1997 to install a low impact facility); Refer to Regulation 5(1)(d).

Approval is not required for maintenance of existing clearances – refer to Regulations 5(1)(f) and 5(1)(g).

5.7 Pest Plant and Animal Control

Objectives

1. Reduce the establishment of new pest plants and animals in road reserves.
2. Reduce the spread of existing pest plants and animals and their range and numbers.
3. Reduce the impacts of pest plants and animals on roadside native vegetation.
4. Minimise disturbance and damage to native vegetation.

Information

Pest plants and pest animals are also commonly known as ‘weeds’ and ‘feral animals’. They can invade rural land or natural habitats and because of their characteristics and/or location, they can cause economic, ecological, physical or aesthetic problems, often with significant potential impacts on local and regional biodiversity.

The linear and semi-disturbed nature of many roadsides means that they are susceptible to invasion by plant and animal pests. Without appropriate control and preventative measures in place, weeds in particular can invade and degrade native vegetation areas both on and adjacent to the roadside, as well as more distant areas via the road network.

Pest plants and animals can be categorised as those that require control under legislation (“declared” species) and those that, whilst still damaging, are not considered significant enough to warrant legislative control at this stage.

The control of declared species on roadsides falls under the jurisdiction of the local Natural Resources Management (NRM) Boards under the guidance of the Natural Resource Management Council.

Under the Natural Resources Management Act 2004 (the NRM Act) landholders are responsible for the control of pest species on their land and NRM Boards have the responsibility to control declared pest plants or pest animals on road reserves.

Within some local council areas, landholders may be required to contribute to the control of pests on adjacent roadsides. Where landholders opt to control the pests on adjacent roadsides they must seek approval of the NRM Board and the local council. Local councils can only give consent if they are acting in accord with the Native Vegetation Act 1991 and have the relevant approvals or exemptions regarding clearance.

There is a legal requirement under the NRM Act (Chapter 8 – Control of plants and animals, Section 192- Protection of certain vegetation and habitats) that a person must, in taking measures for the control of animals or plants, take all reasonable steps to ensure:

- a. that native vegetation is not cleared except in accordance with guidelines prepared by the Native Vegetation Council under section 25 of the Native Vegetation Act 1991; and
- b. that damage to or destruction of other vegetation is kept to a minimum (unless the vegetation is subject to destruction or control under this Chapter).

A wide range of low-impact methods has been developed. For example, for rabbit control, using a combination of poisoning, ripping accessible warrens and fumigation of inaccessible warrens makes it possible to control rabbits economically and provide adjacent crop protection without causing undue damage to roadside vegetation.⁸

It is also important to note that plants other than declared pest plants can create management problems on roadsides. These include pasture grasses and non-local Australian natives. While there is no requirement that these plants be controlled, it is important that they be controlled to reduce competition with the local native plants.

Advice on pest control methods is freely available from the local NRM Boards.

In the Adelaide Hills Council, the most common pest plant and animal species are Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus*, Cape Broom *Genista monspessulana* and English Broom *Cytisus scoparius* and *Erica luscitana*. Of particular concern is the invasion of *Watsonia meriana* and the Broom species into Category 1-2 RMS sites. Due to the scale of this problem and Council's limited resources, the Adelaide Hills Council will investigate partnering with the regional boards, AMLRNRMB and the SAMDBNRMB with a focus target on pest control programs within specified Category 1-2 RMS sites.

The Adelaide Hills Council recognises its responsibility to help prevent the further spread of pest plant and animal species and will assist landholders through a partnership approach to prevent the spread into private landholdings and roadsides through abatement programs and through the provision of information on control methods.

In the Adelaide Hills Council, common pest plant and animal species are listed on the AMLRNRMB website - <http://www.amlrnm.sa.gov.au>

Council currently engages in a partnered weed management program with the AMLRNRMB to address spread. The Adelaide Hills Council continues to investigate service delivery improvements through operational maintenance review and increased RMS site survey investment.

⁸Cooke, B.D. (1981). Rabbit control and the conservation of native mallee vegetation on roadsides in South Australia. Aust. Wildl. Res., 8, 627-36.

Guidelines - Pest Plant and Animal Control

Some important basic principles are:

- small infestations of weeds may be best dealt with using minimum disturbance techniques such as hand-pulling (while still minimising soil disturbance) and 'cut-and-swab' with herbicide;
- it is usually best to work from the best areas of bush or areas of low weed infestation towards denser infestations;
- spot-spray and selective herbicides should be used carefully to avoid off-target damage of native plants;
- where natural regeneration of native species is not occurring, revegetation with local native species can be an effective long-term means of weed control.
- pest-control methods usually require an integrated approach using several methods to both control the pests, and minimise impacts on native vegetation.

General Guidelines

- Under Section 221 of the *Local Government Act, 1999*, it is illegal for landholders to undertake pest plant and animal control work on the road reserve adjoining their property without authority from the Adelaide Hills Council.
- Where adjoining landholders are planning roadside pest control that could affect native vegetation, the respective Natural Resources Management Board should be the first point of contact. The need for consultation with the Native Vegetation Conservation Section can then be determined.
- The Adelaide Hills Council in collaboration with landholders controls pest plants other than declared species.
- In districts where there are serious problems with roadside pest control, local NRM Boards are encouraged to develop overall management strategies in consultation with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit. This can avoid the need for consultation with the Unit on a case-by-case basis.

- Suitably qualified contractors or council staff trained in the identification of native vegetation and weeds will be used to implement control procedures that minimise disturbance and damage to native vegetation.
- Impacts to native vegetation during control works must be minimised in accordance with the requirements of the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*, and also comply with NVC guidelines '*Clearance of Native Vegetation associated with the Control of Plant and Animal Pests*' (excerpt below) - see the Native Vegetation Council (NVC) website for full details:
- The clearance of native vegetation during programs for control of declared animals and plants must be kept to the minimum needed for effective pest control (in accordance with advice from the local NRM / State Authorised Officer or NRM Board) and must be in accordance with these guidelines.

1 Pruning of Native Vegetation

The pruning of native vegetation, if essential to provide access for pest animal and plant control, is acceptable provided that it is kept to a minimum and does not affect the overall viability of the plant(s) involved.

2 Spraying of Herbicides in Native Vegetation

Spraying of declared plants in native vegetation is acceptable provided that a careful and selective approach is used (e.g. spot-spraying) and damage to nearby native vegetation is avoided or minimised. The use of herbicides must be in strict accordance with NRM advice and with instructions for use provided by the manufacturer.

Any broader spraying program in native vegetation (e.g. boom-spraying) requires the endorsement of the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit (NVBMU), DEWNR, and may require the consent of the Native Vegetation Council through a clearance application.

3 Removal of Entire Native Plants

The removal of entire native plants (if considered essential to facilitate animal and plant control) must be discussed with and endorsed by the NVBMU.

This consultation can take one of two main forms:

a) Case-by-case consultation

Minor clearance of native species known to be common in a district may be resolved through verbal or electronic communication without the need for site assessment by NVBMU staff. For larger scale clearance, or for cases where the identity of the native plants is unclear, a site inspection will usually be undertaken.

NOTES:

- i. In this situation, either the landholder undertaking the work or the State authorised officer (the authorised officer) should initiate the consultation by contacting the NVBMU.
- ii. Whether a proposed clearance is “minor” (and therefore not warranting a site inspection) will be determined through discussion between the NVBMU and the landholder / authorised officer. As a guide, the clearance of up to 10 Kangaroo Thorn (*Acacia paradoxa*) for rabbit control in the South East, or up to 10 Nitre Bush (*Nitraria billardierei*) for rabbit or boxthorn control in northern areas could be regarded as “minor”.
- iii. Where minor clearance is agreed without a NVBMU inspection, it will be recorded by notation on the appropriate file. By notifying the NVBMU, any reports of illegal clearance can be managed or dispelled rapidly. Where a NVBMU inspection is undertaken, any endorsement is to be advised in writing.
- iv. If, as a result of the above consultation, the NVBMU determines that a clearance proposal is of particular environmental significance or sensitivity, the proposal is to be referred as a clearance application to the NVC.

This may occur, for example, where a substantial area of native vegetation is involved, or where the clearance involves plant species of particular conservation significance.

b) Consultation based upon a broader planning approach

- Broader planning arrangements may be developed between NRM Boards and the NVC.
- For example, it may be agreed that certain methods will be applied within a Board district for control of pests often associated with particular native species - such as boxthorn or rabbits associated with Nitre Bush, or rabbits associated with Banksia-heath vegetation. This would be in the form of a management plan initiated by the local board and prepared in consultation with the NVBMU. Once endorsed by the NVC, the plan could be put into effect and the need for consultation with the NVBMU about each program would be avoided.

- It is envisaged that plans of this type would normally be prepared on a Board basis. However, there may be issues and management approaches of State-wide relevance, in which a State-wide management plan could be prepared, presumably at the initiation of the NRM Board.

4. The control of declared animals and plants in native vegetation should also take the following factors into account:

- the removal of tree saplings or more mature trees is not normally necessary for pest control;
- very localised pest control issues might be manageable with hand-held equipment rather than heavier machinery which could have greater environmental impact;
- there is an increasing range of pest control equipment available, some of which has less environmental impact than the equipment used more traditionally;
- any control method involving soil disturbance has the potential to promote further establishment of declared plants or other introduced plants which may disrupt the ecology of the native vegetation: Soil disturbance should be minimised and control works should be followed with site monitoring and selective eradication of any introduced plants which re-establish; and
- fire has some potential for inclusion in pest control programs in native vegetation to improve access, reduce the bulk of declared plants, and possibly to promote the regeneration of native species: however, the issues associated with fire can be complex and any such burning in native vegetation should be discussed with the NVBMU to avoid the possibility of a breach of the Act.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Pest Plant and Animal Control

- (a) Clearance approval is required where a proposed animal or plant control program is likely to cause significant damage to native roadside vegetation.

"Significant" in this context includes:

- ripping of warrens where native vegetation will be affected;
- non-selective spraying in mixed weeds/native vegetation; and
- burning of native vegetation to assist pest control.

It does *not* include minor damage, such as removal of branches to gain access to pests.

The NVMB Unit is able to determine whether the proposed clearance is of a sufficiently significant nature to warrant referral on to the NVC for decision.

- (b) In districts where there are serious problems with roadside pest control, local Boards are encouraged to develop overall management strategies in consultation with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit. This can avoid the need for consultation with the Unit on a case-by-case basis. This approach has been adopted in several local council areas.

- (c) Where pest control works are planned that could affect roadside native vegetation, the local authorised Natural Resources Management Officer should be the first point of contact. The need for consultation with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit can then be determined.

5.8 Plant Diseases

Objectives

1. To minimise the spread of *Phytophthora* and other soil-borne diseases in the local council area.
2. To manage infected areas in such a way as to minimise the effect on the environment and on recreational activities.
3. To protect uninfected areas and minimise the risk of them becoming infected.
4. To promote a “whole of Community” approach to the management of *Phytophthora* (and /or other diseases) in the local council area.

Information

Diseases of native plants such as *Phytophthora* and Mundulla Yellows (MY) can occur along road reserves.

Phytophthora

'Dieback caused by the root-rot fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*' is listed as a 'key threatening process' noted within the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Phytophthora is a microscopic, soil and water borne organism that attacks the roots and basal stem tissue of some native and introduced plants. It is often referred to as a “fungus”. *Phytophthora* infects the roots and basal stem tissue preventing the uptake of water and nutrients by the plant, causing dieback and death. Any movement of soil, water and/or plant material has the potential to spread *Phytophthora* to new areas. Once an area is infested with *Phytophthora* it is always infested. There are many species, but the most widespread and destructive to native vegetation in South Australia is *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (*P.cinnamomi*).

Vulnerable areas are those sites where susceptible vegetation is present and where environmental conditions are such that there is the potential for *P.cinnamomi* to become established. Such conditions include average annual rainfall of 400mm or more and neutral to acid soils, and soil with poor drainage and temperature of at least 15 degrees Celsius.

In South Australia *P.cinnamomi* has been identified at locations throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges, Fleurieu Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, and possibly in the lower Eyre Peninsula. In 2011 it was identified near Broken Hill in sandy soil over clay following a higher than average annual rainfall.



The best way to control *Phytophthora* is to prevent the transfer of infested soil or plant material. Councils in vulnerable areas should follow ***Phytophthora Management Guidelines***⁹, which provides a framework for the management of *Phytophthora* by all Government and non-government organisations, landholders, community groups and individuals.

Mundulla Yellows

Mundulla Yellows is a relatively recent plant die-back syndrome known to predominantly affect eucalypt species and other native plant species. Mundulla Yellows was first discovered in the southeast of South Australia in the 1970's, and has since been recorded in other parts of the state and interstate. Eucalypts with *Mundulla Yellows* are identifiable initially by the presence of small clusters of bright yellow leaves (actually yellowing between the veins of the leaves) within the tree canopy, followed by a progression of yellowing towards the trunk and a progressive dying back of the tree (or shrub), and a slow deterioration in health, before death. The symptoms exhibited by plants affected by *Mundulla Yellows* are similar to symptoms presented due to other environmental factors, hence diagnosis can be difficult.



In South Australia, Mundulla Yellows are generally found on alkaline soils. It is caused by a complex interaction of soil properties (i.e. increased alkalinity and salinity, reduced water availability, increased compaction and a few others) resulting in a deficiency of available iron, manganese and other micronutrients to the plant. Hygiene guidelines for Mundulla Yellows are no longer considered necessary; however, amenity trees (or trees deemed to be of significant value to warrant treatment) within the local council can be treated with iron chelates or implants to reverse the symptoms.

For further information on Phytophthora and Mundulla Yellows contact the DEWNR's Biosecurity Ecologist, Nature Conservation Unit on 8552 0306 or contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for advice.

Guidelines – Plant Diseases

Permission

- Any activity occurring within a road reserve infested with a soil-borne plant disease such as *Phytophthora* requires consent of the Adelaide Hills Council.
- Consent will only be granted if work is conducted according to appropriate guidelines of best practice.

⁹Phytophthora Technical Group, *Phytophthora Management Guidelines* (2006, 2nd edition)

Management Guidelines

Phytophthora

- The Adelaide Hills Council has been identified in a vulnerable area for Phytophthora, and will follow 'Phytophthora Management Guidelines' by the Phytophthora Technical Group (2006, 2nd edition).
- This provides a framework for the management of Phytophthora by all Government and non-government organisations, landholders, community groups and individuals.

Some general principles include:

- avoid driving, riding or walking in areas when soils are wet and sticky;
- stay on designated roads and track because vehicles, bikes and people moving off roads into infested areas may pick up infested soil and transfer it to un-infested areas;
- brush soil off vehicles, bikes, boots and camping gear before entering an un-infested area and after leaving an infested area - do not take them home to clean;
- obey road signs because roads and tracks may be closed, sometimes permanently, to help stop the spread of Phytophthora;
- use wash down or hygiene stations when provided;
- protect your bush and your garden by ensuring that purchased plants are free of Phytophthora; and
- report any unusual plant death.

Please report the death of groups of susceptible native plants to your local Department for Environment Water and Natural Resources office.

Mundulla Yellows

- The Adelaide Hills Council has not yet identified Mundulla Yellows within the Council area, and will discuss the matter with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit if and when appropriate.

For further information on Phytophthora and Mundulla Yellows contact the DEWNR's Biosecurity Ecologist, Nature Conservation Unit on 8552 0306 or contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for advice.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Plant Diseases

There are no legal requirements under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* in relation to diseases of plants along road reserves.

5.9 Clearance for Fencelines

Objectives

1. To enable landholders to gain appropriate access to fencelines for maintenance and construction purposes.
2. To minimise the impact and disturbance of native vegetation by clearance for fenceline construction and maintenance.
3. To encourage alternative approaches for erecting fences that minimises clearance of roadside native vegetation.



Information

A landholder who wishes to clear native vegetation on a road reserve, to enable construction or maintenance of a boundary fence, requires consent of the Adelaide Hills Council under the *Local Government Act 1999* (Section 221), and may, depending on the amount of vegetation involved, also require formal Native Vegetation Council approval.

In granting any consent, the Adelaide Hills Council must comply with the standards outlined below.

Consultation and Approval Procedures

Clearance approval from the NVC is required for any vegetation clearance along fencelines that exceeds the following standards:

- **Where the roadside vegetation consists largely of trees, only branches protruding through or overhanging the fence, or trees growing on the actual fence alignment can be removed.**
- **Where shrubs or bushes are growing through the fenceline, those plants growing within one metre of the fence alignment can be removed.**

Consultation with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit should occur through the local council.

If rare or threatened plant species¹⁰ are present, reasonable care should be taken to protect them. If necessary, contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for advice.

¹⁰Threatened species are those plant and animal species considered to be at risk of extinction in the wild.

Note: These standards take into account that the adjoining landholder can usually clear up to five metres width on the private land abutting the road, thus allowing for vehicular access to the fence (see Regulation 5(1)(s) - NOTE that it does not provide an automatic right to clear a five-metre strip along a fence. If vegetation on an adjacent property is located within five metres but does not impede reasonable access to the fence, the regulation cannot be used to clear that vegetation).

Guidelines - Fenceline Clearance

Permission

- Removal of native vegetation on a road reserve for the purpose of construction or maintenance of a boundary fence requires consent of the Adelaide Hills Council.
- In granting any consent, Council will comply with the following standards:
 - Where the roadside vegetation consists mainly of trees, only branches protruding through or overhanging the fence, or trees growing on the actual fence alignment, should be removed.
 - Where shrubs or bushes are growing through the fence line, those plants growing within one (1) metre of the fence alignment can be removed.
- Clearance approval from the NVC is required for any native vegetation clearance along fencelines which exceeds the above standards.
- If rare or threatened plant species are present, reasonable care should be taken to protect them. If necessary, contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for advice.
- Any unauthorised clearance will be referred by Adelaide Hills Council staff to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Clearance methods

- Low impact methods of clearance (e.g. minimal ground disturbance, cutting cleanly rather than breaking branches, slashing, trimming, mowing, or rolling) should only be used when clearing vegetation according to these standards, to reduce potential weed invasion and erosion problems.

- Cleared vegetation should not be deposited on or amongst other native vegetation but should be disposed of in a manner that does not affect native vegetation, unless it is useful as habitat for wildlife, or is scattered sparsely amongst the remaining vegetation.

Re-locating Fences

- Landholders wanting to replace boundary fences may consider re-locating the new fencing a few metres into their properties to minimise potential impacts on roadside vegetation. This can also potentially reduce construction and maintenance costs. The narrow strip between the old and the new fence can be maintained clear of any regrowth to minimise impacts on the new fence, and also act as a firebreak between the roadside and the property.
- An alternative to the removal of trees in line with the property boundary may include constructing a simple strut arrangement that allows a fence to deviate a short distance around a tree. Wires are not attached directly to the tree, thus minimising potential damage to the tree (Figure 12).

Note: the above approach may not be appropriate for smaller trees, and an effort should be made to avoid structural roots when placing the post hole for the strut next to the tree.



Fenceline strut arrangement -

Left and middle: A simple strut arrangement that allows a fence to deviate a short distance around a tree. Wires are not attached directly to the tree, thus minimising potential damage to the tree.

Right: The same strut arrangement seen from the side. The strut holding the wires away from the tree is directly behind the trunk.



Poor relocation of a fenceline

Soil disturbance increases the presence of weed infestation and dumping vegetation onto road reserve smothers understory plants. This is illegal works.



Unclean cutting causes infection and disease

5.10 Clearance for Access to Adjoining Land Objectives

1. To minimise the loss of native vegetation through the construction of property access points.
2. To provide safe and appropriate access to properties adjacent to road reserves.

Information

From time to time a new access point will be needed from the road to adjoining land. For rural areas a primary producer may need new access to a paddock, possibly to cater for wide farm machinery. In other situations (e.g. semi-urban) it may be normal vehicular access to a residential allotment.

In these situations, the safety of the access-user needs to be the primary consideration, but the conservation of native vegetation is also a high consideration. If there is more than one option which will provide safe access, the option which involves least disturbance of native vegetation or vegetation of lower conservation significance should be selected. In addition to obligations under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*, clearance for this purpose requires written permission from the Adelaide Hills Council.



Poor driveway sight clearance



Good driveway sight

Guidelines - Clearance for access to adjoining land

Permission

- Removal of native vegetation on a road reserve to provide access to adjoining land requires consent of the Adelaide Hills Council.
- Clearance approval from the NVC is required for any native vegetation clearance along fencelines that exceeds the above standards.
- Any unauthorised clearance will be referred by the Adelaide Hills Council to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Clearance methods

- Low impact methods of clearance (e.g. minimal ground disturbance, cutting cleanly rather than breaking branches, slashing, trimming, mowing, or rolling) should only be used when clearing vegetation according to these standards, to reduce potential weed invasion and erosion problems.
- Cleared vegetation should not be deposited on or amongst other native vegetation but should be disposed of in a manner that does not affect native vegetation, unless it is useful as habitat for wildlife, or is scattered sparsely amongst the remaining vegetation.

Avoiding unnecessary clearance

- Care must be taken to avoid plant communities of conservation significance and naturally open areas such as native grassland, sedgeland and wetland.
- Where possible, access points will not be permitted on Category “1” (i.e. best quality) road reserves.
- A suitably qualified person will conduct an inspection to assess options for access points and negotiate an access point that is safe and minimises disturbance to native vegetation.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Access to Adjoining Land

Clearance of roadside vegetation to provide access to adjoining land requires the consent of the Adelaide Hills Council as part of an application for an alteration to road reserve.

If there is more than one option which will provide safe access, the option which involves least disturbance of native vegetation or vegetation of lower conservation significance, should be selected.

Where some clearance of native vegetation is unavoidable, this should not exceed the following standards:

For normal vehicle access: five metres wide plus minimum clearance along the road reserve needed to provide adequate sight distance;

For wider farm vehicles: ten metres wide plus minimum clearance along the road reserve needed to provide adequate sight distance.

If rare or threatened plant species are present, reasonable care should be taken to protect them. If necessary, contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for advice.

Approval is needed through the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for any proposed clearance of native vegetation for access that exceeds the above standards.

5.11 Bushfire Protection

Objectives

1. *To take reasonable steps to inhibit the outbreak of fire on roadsides and the spread of fire through roadsides.*
2. *To minimise the adverse effects of fire management on roadside native vegetation.*
3. *To outline the process for undertaking bushfire protection works within roadside vegetation to protect life and assets.*

Information

The Adelaide Hills Council is required to adhere to the Fire and Emergency Service Act 2005. This Act places the responsibility on Adelaide Hills Council to take reasonable steps to prevent or inhibit the outbreak and spread of fire on council owned land, including roadsides, i.e. Part 4A of the Fire and Emergency Service Act 2005, Division 3105G, states:

- 1) *A council that has the care, control or management of land-*
 - a) *in the country; or*
 - b) *in a designated urban bushfire risk area,*
must take reasonable steps-
 - c) *to prevent or inhibit the outbreak of fire on the land; and*
 - d) *to prevent or inhibit the spread of fire through the land; and*
 - e) *to protect property on the land from fire; and*
 - f) *to minimise the threat to human life from a fire on the land.*



Grassy weeds in particular, can create a fire hazard on roadsides

In accordance with the *Native Vegetation Regulations 2003*, there are provisions to enable clearance and management of native vegetation for Bushfire Protection works. This applies to road reserves.

A Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) or a Bushfire Management Area Plan (BMAP) (or equivalent) under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005* that has been endorsed by the Regional Bushfire Management Committee is the best mechanism for strategic planning of bushfire protection works across the district and landscape.

If any proposed bushfire prevention works are not included under such a plan, advice and written approval from the SA CFS Regional Prevention Officer is required.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Bushfire Protection

Native Vegetation Regulations 2003 provide provisions to enable clearance and management of native vegetation for Bushfire Protection works, i.e. under -

Regulation 5A Part 1 (b)—Fire Prevention and Control, native vegetation can be cleared if—

- (i) the purpose of the clearance is to reduce combustible material on land; and
- (ii) the clearance:
 - (A) is required or authorised by, and undertaken in accordance with, a bushfire prevention plan (equivalent to a Bushfire Management Plan under the *Fire and Emergency Service Act 2005*); or
 - (B) is undertaken in accordance with the written approval of the Chief Officer of SACFS;

NOTE:

- (1) Reference to a Bushfire Prevention Plan is deemed to be that referred to under the *Fire and Emergency Service Act 2005*, as a Bushfire Management Plan.
- (2) For the purpose of part B above, approval is from the Chief Officer of SACFS or authorised delegate – i.e. the CFS Regional Prevention Officer.
- (3) There may be constraints under other legislation that need to be complied with, such as the *Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Guidelines - Bushfire Hazard Reduction

Bushfire protection works on roadsides should reference the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Area Management Area Plan as endorsed by the Regional Bushfire Management Committee.

Bushfire Management planning is focused on the risk assessment of life, property and environmental values as threatened by bushfire, followed by planning and implementation of strategies to mitigate those risks.

Planning includes: the strategic placement of fuel breaks and fire access tracks in accordance with GAFLC Guidelines¹¹; adoption of Zoning Principles in response to risk assessment; and consultation with the SA CFS to plan and evaluate fire prevention works that provide the best practice for the conservation and fire prevention on roadsides.

¹¹ GAFLC (2008). *South Australian Firebreaks, Fire Access Tracks and Sign Standards Guidelines*. Government Agencies Fire Liaison Committee, Government of South Australia, Adelaide.

Permission

- Removal of native vegetation (fuel) on a Council managed road reserve to reduce bushfire hazard requires consent from the Adelaide Hills Council.
- In granting any consent, Council will comply with Regulation 5A part (b)(ii) where the clearance -
 - A) is required or authorised by, and undertaken in accordance with, a bushfire prevention plan (or equivalent); or
 - B) is undertaken in accordance with the written approval of the Chief Officer of SA CFS.
- Clearance approval from the NVC is required for any native vegetation clearance which exceeds that allowable under Regulation 5A of the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.
- Any unauthorised clearance will be referred by Council staff to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Clearance methods

- Low impact methods of clearance (e.g. minimal ground disturbance, cutting cleanly rather than breaking branches, slashing, trimming, mowing, or rolling) should be used wherever possible when clearing vegetation to reduce potential weed invasion and erosion problems.
- Grazing and herbicide use should only be contemplated where no or minimal impact upon native vegetation is likely (such as where there are mature trees over exotic grasses (i.e. no native understorey and no evidence of natural regeneration of the tree species)).
- Limit the use of herbicides to spraying:
 - around furniture
 - for selective control of particular weeds where it is the most appropriate means of control
 - to control growth of potentially serious weeds on firebreaks (subject to the approval of the SA CFS Regional Prevention Officer), or
 - when weather conditions will minimise the likelihood of spray drift affecting non-target plants.
- Only remove vegetation that is referred to in the approved Bushfire Management Plan (e.g. strategic clearance, removal of fine fuel), and retain all other vegetation including dead timber.

- Such work should preferably be combined with a native vegetation re-establishment program.
- In the vast majority of cases adequate fuel reduction on roadsides can be achieved by selective planning focusing on the removal of exotic vegetation. Particular care should be taken to avoid areas of native grasses which can be difficult to distinguish from exotic grasses.

Prescribed Burning for Fuel Reduction

- Prescribed burning of native vegetation if followed up with weed control methods such as selective spraying or hand weeding, can be a useful management tool for lowering fuel levels thereby minimising threat of a bushfire burning vast areas across the landscape.
- Careful planning and management is required before implementing a prescribed burn including preparation of a prescribed burn plan that is approved by the SA CFS Regional Prevention Officer.
[Fire can also encourage weed invasion, thus increasing fire hazard within a short time, and if used too frequently or at the wrong time or intensity, can lead to loss of biodiversity over time].
- Advice can be sought from the CFS Regional Prevention Officer.

Other considerations

- Where a well-vegetated road reserve adjoins cleared farmland, any required fuelbreak should be established on the cleared land rather than through clearance of roadside vegetation.
- Any applications to revegetate roadsides must be assessed and approved by the Council Fire Prevention Officer to ensure bushfire risk is not increased for areas that are designated as strategic fuel reduced zones.
- Design weed slashing programs to begin with clean machinery in areas of good vegetation condition and work towards the more degraded sites. This will assist in the prevention of further spread of weeds.

5.12 Grazing

Objectives

To minimise any impact of grazing by stock on roadside reserves where native vegetation is present.

Information

Grazing of stock in areas of native vegetation can have severe impact: damaging plants, assisting weed invasion, preventing natural regeneration and compacting and polluting the soil. The *Native Vegetation Act 1991* controls the grazing of native vegetation. Roadside grazing can also be controlled by Council using by-laws under the *Local Government Act 1999*.

Grazing of roadsides is not permitted by the Adelaide Hills Council. Grazing of areas comprising native species (including native grasslands) requires clearance approval under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. Native grasslands in particular may be difficult to distinguish from introduced grasses, and care must also be taken to avoid small or visually insignificant species such as annuals, orchids and other small native ground cover species.

Many undeveloped road reserves are leased to adjoining landholders for grazing or cropping. Where grazing has historically occurred, then this may continue at the same frequency and duration without NVC approval, however, any change of stock or increase in frequency or duration of grazing, or grazing of areas without any previous history of grazing, requires NVC approval.

Guidelines - Grazing

Council does not allow stock to graze on roadsides reserves.

- On undeveloped road reserves that are leased to adjoining landholders for grazing where grazing has historically occurred, then this may continue at the same frequency and duration without NVC approval, however, any change of stock, or increase in frequency or duration of grazing, or grazing of areas without any previous history of grazing, requires NVC approval.
- Any unauthorised clearance caused by grazing will be referred by Council staff to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.



Consultation and Approval Procedures for Grazing

Clearance approval is required for any grazing (other than associated with droving - see next section) likely to cause damage to native roadside vegetation. This includes roadsides where:

- native shrub and understorey species are present; or
- there is evidence of recent or periodic regeneration of native plant species.

Modification of native vegetation on leased roads, by changed grazing practice that increases the pressure on native vegetation, also needs clearance approval from the NVC.

Where important native vegetation is identified on leased roads, it will be protected through a management agreement or through removal of the area from the lease. Consultation with, and confirmation from, the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit is recommended.

5.13 Droving stock

Objectives

1. To manage potential damage to roadside native vegetation from the droving of stock.
2. To protect roadside native vegetation of high conservation significance from the impacts of droving stock.

Information

The droving or movement of stock on roadsides requires written permission from the Adelaide Hills Council under the *Local Government Act 1999* (Section 221). It is recognised as a necessary practice within some areas of the region as part of normal farm management.

The droving or movement of stock does not require approval under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. However, routes that contain important stands of native vegetation should be avoided as much as possible so as to minimise damage to native roadside vegetation.

If there is no practical alternative, and stock are to travel through native vegetation, then stock must be kept moving at all times to minimise incidental grazing and subsequent damage to native vegetation (otherwise may constitute breach of *Native Vegetation 1991 Act* - see grazing section).



Droving stock on the road

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Droving Stock

No NVC approval is required if stock are to be kept moving at all times, and areas of native vegetation of particular conservation significance are avoided as much as possible.

Movement of stock on roadsides does not require the consent of the Adelaide Hills Council, however the following guidelines apply.

Guidelines - Droving stock

Permission

The movement of livestock that is part of normal farm management, from one property to another is permitted if there are no practical alternatives to avoiding the road reserve.

Where the movement of livestock is over a long distance, consultation shall be held with the local Natural Resource Management Authorised Officer, and the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Any unauthorised clearance caused by stock droving will be referred by the Adelaide Hills Council to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Clearance methods

Stock must be kept moving at all times.

Stock must be free of pest plants and disease.

Avoiding unnecessary clearance

Movement of stock along Category 1 and 2 roadsides, or roadsides containing known populations of threatened species, plant communities of conservation significance or naturally open areas such as native grassland and sedgeland, should instead be diverted where possible along roadsides containing vegetation of lesser value, i.e. Category 3, 4, and as last preference 5.

If the roadside vegetation has not yet been surveyed, a suitably qualified person(s) will conduct an inspection to identify vegetation along the proposed route.

Signage

Appropriate signage must be placed an adequate distance from stock moving along roads warning vehicles of the potential hazard.

5.14 Recreational Trails on Road Reserves

1. To minimise the impacts of recreational activities on native roadside vegetation.

Information

Road reserves (both developed and undeveloped) are subject to a range of recreational pressures. For example, there is an expanding network of walking trails on roadsides in many areas of the State. Horse and bike trails are being established on some roadsides.

All of these activities have the potential to significantly disturb native vegetation. Recreational vehicle activities on roadsides are not permitted, but walking trails may be acceptable provided that certain principles and practices are adhered to (see guidelines below), and NVC approval is sought.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Recreational Trails on Road Reserves

The development of any recreational trails along road reserves must include consultation with Council and with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit where the trail would pass through or immediately alongside native vegetation.

Under the Native Vegetation Act 1991, clearance approval is required for any trail development involving clearance of native vegetation. The Adelaide Hills Council does not permit recreational vehicle activities on roadsides containing native vegetation, but will allow lawfully established walking trails provided that certain principles and practices contained in this RVMP are adhered to.

Guidelines - Recreational use Permission

- Any planned recreational event within a road reserve requires written permission from the Adelaide Hills Council.
- Any unlawful off-road activities within road reserve areas will be reported to the Adelaide Hills Council, Police, and if damage to native vegetation occurs, the NVC.

Proposals for recreational trails may be acceptable if the following principles are adhered to:

- Any trails need to be part of an overall district or regional trails plan developed with the local council.

- Trails should not be established where clearance of native vegetation would result. Only if the trail is a vital part of a network and if there is no reasonable alternative should any clearance of native vegetation be contemplated. Should any proposed trail pass through or immediately adjacent to native vegetation, consultation with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit must occur, and clearance approval is required for any clearance of native vegetation.
- Trails must not be established where the soil type and/or slope could result in erosion, unless specific measures to prevent erosion are implemented.
- Trails must not be established where their use is likely to introduce weeds or assist the spread of weeds on the road reserve unless there is a clear commitment to a weed control program.
- Effective monitoring programs must be incorporated into any trail development.
- Existing or planned recreational trails along Category 1 and 2 roadsides, or roadsides containing known populations of threatened species, plant communities of conservation significance or naturally open areas such as native grassland and sedgeland, should instead be diverted where possible along roadsides containing vegetation of lesser value, i.e. Category 3, 4, and as last preference 5.
- If the roadside vegetation has not yet been surveyed, a suitably qualified person(s) will conduct an inspection to identify vegetation along the proposed trail route.

Recreational Trail



Existing Trails

- Maintenance of existing trails only requires the consent of the Adelaide Hills Council.
- The location of existing trails should be reviewed in light of the guidelines above, to ensure that where possible, important areas of native vegetation are protected and/ or enhanced.

5.15 Cultivation and Cropping

Objectives

To manage potential damage to roadside native vegetation from cultivation and growing of agricultural crops.

Information

Cultivation of roadsides (for fire prevention, weed control, or cropping) can have devastating impacts on any remaining remnant native vegetation through the physical removal of plant species, run-off from fertilisers and pesticides altering the nutrient status of the soil and exposing fallowed soil to weed invasion and erosion potential. Cultivation and growing crops on roadsides is only a technique for consideration on roadsides without, or adjacent to areas without, remnant vegetation.



Illegal cultivation of a roadside

Within the Adelaide Hills Council there are many surveyed road reserves which have never been developed as roads. Many of these undeveloped road reserves could be leased to adjoining landholders for cropping purposes. Some are totally cleared and pass unmarked through farm paddocks. These areas may be suitable for cropping or for revegetation projects. Undeveloped road reserves have relatively undisturbed native vegetation and are of high conservation value. In these areas cropping practices will not be permitted.

Cropping on roadsides or on undeveloped roads needs clearance approval from the Native Vegetation Council if native vegetation is present.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Cultivation and Cropping

Under the Native Vegetation Act 1991, approval is required for cultivation or cropping on roadsides where native understorey or regenerating native vegetation is present.

Guidelines - Cultivation and cropping

Permission

- Cultivation or cropping within a road reserve requires written permission from the Adelaide Hills Council.
- Any unauthorised clearance of road reserve native vegetation caused by cultivation or cropping will be referred by the Adelaide Hills Council to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

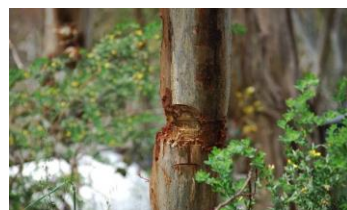
Existing cultivation and cropping

- Landholders currently cropping in road reserve areas require ongoing permission from the Adelaide Hills Council.

5.14 Removal of Plant Material

Objectives

- To promote the statutory requirements for retaining roadside native vegetation.
- To limit the extent of damage caused by removal of roadside native vegetation.
- To ensure that only a sustainable amount of native vegetation is removed from roadsides.



Information

The removal of plant material from roadsides includes:

- collection of dead timber for firewood
- cutting of live vegetation
- brush-cutting
- seed collection
- flower and leaf harvesting

All such activities require written permission from the Adelaide Hills Council and other constraints may also apply - as set out below.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Cultivation and Cropping

Consultation and approval Procedures for Removal of Plant Material

Removal of plant material from road reserves requires consent from the Adelaide Hills Council and in the following instances, also requires clearance consent under the Native Vegetation Act 1991:

- removal of 'dead plants' as defined under the Native Vegetation Regulations 2003;
- cutting of live timber (outside the scope of the guidelines in this RVMP);
- the cutting of brush (*Melaleuca uncinata*) unless it is undertaken in accordance with other guidelines in this RVMP; and
- the harvesting of flowers.

In the case of seed collection, a permit is also needed from the Department for Water Environment and Natural Resources, Permit Unit, who can also provide guidance as to how collect seed.

The Adelaide Hills Council will ensure that removal of plant material from roadsides is undertaken in accordance with the guidelines in this plan and that appropriate permits have been issued.

Guidelines - Removal of plant material

Permission

- Removal of plant material within a road reserve as set out below requires written permission from the Adelaide Hills Council.
- Any unauthorised clearance of road reserve native vegetation caused by activities will be referred by the Adelaide Hills Council to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Collection of dead timber

- Dead timber should not be "tidied up" on roadsides, and is not permitted unless outlined as necessary for fuel reduction in the approved the Region 3 Bushfire Plan - see Bushfire Hazard Reduction section of this Plan), to assist rabbit control, or to remove timber which is hazardous to traffic or fencing.

- Dead timber on roadsides is not controlled under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*, except in the case of dead plants in some parts of the state that provide habitat for nationally threatened species, which are defined as native vegetation under Section 3(1) of the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*¹². Contact the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit for further details, including a fact sheet “Dead trees as native vegetation”.

Despite this, the Adelaide Hills Council controls this activity under the *Local Government Act 1999*, as dead timber, both standing and fallen, provides cover and foraging places for native fauna, shelters young seedlings and small plants adapted to and protected by the sheltered conditions provided by fallen timber, i.e. protects from severe sunshine and drying winds, may protect small plants physically from grazing by rabbits, kangaroos etc, and also provide optimal conditions for survival - darker and moister micro-habitats, and is also important in the recycling of nutrients. The development of hollow timber takes many years and is a limited resource for wildlife, and therefore should not be collected for firewood. Retention of dead timber (and fallen leaves, bark and twigs) is also encouraged so that soil disturbance and the creation of open areas suitable for weed invasion is minimised.

- The removal of dead timber from all roadsides is prohibited.

Cutting of live timber

- Any cutting of live timber outside of the scope of guidelines in this plan requires the consent of the Adelaide Hills Council and also clearance consent under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.

¹² <http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/home.jsp>

¹² Dead plants (under the definition of native vegetation in section 3(1) of the Act)

, means the class of plants, or parts of plants, comprising trees of a species indigenous to South Australia

(a) that have a trunk circumference (measured at a point 300 millimetres above the base of the tree) of –

- (i) in the case of a tree located on Kangaroo Island – 1 metre or more; or
- (ii) in any other case – 2 metres or more; and

(b) that provide or have the potential to provide, or are a [part of a group of trees or other plants

(whether alive or dead) that provide, or have the potential to provide, a habitat for animals of a listed threatened species under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* of the Commonwealth, is declared to be included in that definition.

Brush-cutting

- The cutting of brush on roadsides requires clearance approval unless it is undertaken in accordance with other guidelines in this plan.

Seed collection (cuttings and specimens)

- Revegetation programs using local species are strongly supported and roadsides are often ideal sites for seed collection. However, care is needed to minimise damage to the parent plant and to avoid depleting the seed supply to such an extent that natural regeneration of plants on the roadside is affected.
- The collection of seeds, cuttings and specimens from native vegetation from roadsides, requires the consent of the local council. A permit is also needed under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* and can be requested from the Permit Unit, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, at http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Do_It_Online/Plant_permits.
The Unit can also provide guidance on seed collection methods.
- The collection of seeds, cuttings or other specimens from native plants does not require consent from the NVC provided that damage to the plant is not substantial. As a guide, cutting a substantial branch off a tree or bush to collect seed would not be regarded as exempt; nor would the removal of virtually all harvestable seed from a single plant.
- Nevertheless, the Adelaide Hills Council will give preference to seed collecting permits associated with local revegetation projects, and tree trimming programs (for verge maintenance) will be undertaken in consultation with local revegetation groups to facilitate the collection of seed from trimmed vegetation.

Flower harvesting

- The harvesting of flowers from roadsides requires the consent of the local council and clearance consent from the Native Vegetation Council. The local council should be the first point of contact.
- In general, harvesting of roadside flowers, particularly for commercial purposes, is not favoured because of its impact on the vegetation and on the landscape or amenity of the area.

5.16 Maintenance of Biodiversity

Objectives

To promote community interest and involvement in maintaining and where possible, enhancing, roadside biodiversity (plants and animals).



Spider Orchid - *Caladenia tentaculata*

Information

Along some roadsides there is evidence of a steady decline of native vegetation not associated with direct clearance. Several factors may be contributing to this, many of which are exacerbated by the long narrow shape of roadside vegetation. These include, but are not limited to:

- senescence (old age) and lack of natural regeneration;
- herbicides or other chemicals used on adjoining farmland, or used for weed control on roadsides;
- animal pests and methods used to control them;
- mistletoe infestation;
- lerp infestation;
- competition from exotic species (garden escapees, illegal dumping of garden waste, invasion from adjacent land;)
- inappropriate fire regimes

In some cases a form of disturbance (such as burning or pollarding (pruning)) may be proposed as a means of enhancing vegetation health or diversity in the longer term. Such activities actually constitute clearance in terms of the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* and therefore require clearance approval under the Act or the Native Vegetation Regulations 2003. For example burning an area may be required to promote natural regeneration in an area where species are declining. Or, removal of mistletoe or lopping of limbs may be proposed as a short-term means of protecting unhealthy host trees heavily infested with mistletoe.

Such activities must be carefully planned and the results must be monitored.

There are Regulations that allow for the clearance of native vegetation to address some of these problems. Refer to 'A Guide to the Regulations under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*' for more information,

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Conservation/Native_vegetation/Managing_native_vegetation.

Ecological Prescribed Burning

Prescribed burning for ecological purposes requires careful planning and management. Proposed works are to be carried out under a management plan that has been approved by the NVC. The following is a list of information that should be included in the plan:

- a clear demonstrated focus on biodiversity outcomes, such as a tool for managing threatened species, enhancing ecological communities, managing pest species, maintaining a diversity of vegetation age classes or preventing large areas of habitat burning across the landscape in a single fire event;
- site survey information identifying flora and fauna species present;
- detailed aerial map(s) identifying vegetation communities, topography and areas identified for burning an environmental risk assessment table identifying impacts and mitigating actions;
- any EPBC Act matters also need to be addressed;
- a logistic prescribed burn plan to be approved by SA Country Fire Service; and
- a monitoring program that will assist in the evaluation of the effects of fire on vegetation communities and for planning future adaptive management strategies.



Thelymitra nuda

Advice can be sought from the Native Vegetation & Biodiversity Management Unit.

Mistletoe Infestation

Mistletoes are flowering plants that use other plants to obtain water and mineral nutrients; but provide their own photosynthetic products.

The species of mistletoe along rural roadsides are native to South Australia and are protected under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. They provide important habitats for many fauna species such as birds, butterflies, possums, ants and other insects. In particular, mistletoes are a summer food source for nectar feeding animals such as honeyeaters, and a food source for native butterflies like the rare Genoveva Azure whose larvae eat the leaves and flowers of the Box Mistletoe (*Amyema miquelii*) on Eucalyptus species, and Drooping Mistletoe (*Amyema pendula ssp. pendula*) on Stringybark Eucalypts and Blackwood.

In some areas of the State mistletoe infestations appear to be contributing significantly to tree decline. The factors involved in these infestations are not well understood but appear to be linked with the extent of general vegetation clearance and the accompanying loss of wildlife habitat. An imbalance has somehow been created. Often trees are in poor health due to degradation of surrounding vegetation, and are perhaps more susceptible to the impacts of mistletoe. Higher germination and establishment rates of mistletoe on trees with less canopy, and greater dispersal of seed by the Mistletoe bird in open woodlands, have also been suggested as possible explanations of the association of high levels of mistletoe on trees that are in poor health (Ward and Paton, 2004)¹³.

In severe cases, the removal of mistletoe or lopping of affected limbs may be acceptable as a short-term means of protecting the host tree. These actions constitute clearance, and require clearance approval under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* or the *Native Vegetation Regulations 2003* (photos may be emailed to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit who can then issue advice or grant clearance approval). Protection and/or enhancement of the health of affected trees, by fencing-off from livestock grazing and restoring the affected area through natural regeneration or revegetation with a range of indigenous plants, is seen to be the best overall approach.

¹³ Ward, M. and Paton, D. (2004). Box Mistletoe (*Amyema miquelii*) occurrence and host condition in Eucalypts woodlands of the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia. Report for the Native vegetation Council, South Australia. School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Adelaide.



Close-up of mistletoe



Amyema miquelii in a pink gum, Mt Lofty Ranges

Lerp Infestations

Lerp insects are native leaf-sucking insects which frequently attack red gums (e.g. in the Mt Lofty Ranges) and pink gums (e.g. in the South East). The visual impact can be severe with entire trees being defoliated. In some cases, trees already stressed by other factors may die, but usually they will recover.

In a natural bushland setting, lerps are generally kept in check by native birds such as pardalotes, which feed on the waxy scale like covering (the “lerp”), beneath which the immature stage of the insect, shelters and feeds. In disturbed environments such as roadsides and particularly where understorey plants have been reduced; bird populations are depleted and problems such as lerp infestations are more likely to occur. Restoration of roadside vegetation communities is therefore the recommended management approach.

Community Groups

Within the Adelaide Hills Council there are number of locations where roadside vegetation is being actively managed by volunteer groups using minimal disturbance techniques to maintain biological diversity, or to promote regeneration of native species. This involves minimal disturbance regeneration, weed control, revegetation, fencing and rubbish removal.

Garden Escapees

Intentional dumping of garden waste on roadsides can create new weed infestations.

Garden plants can also escape into bushland and onto roadsides adjacent to properties. Residents adjacent to good roadside vegetation should select garden plants with a low potential to spread, or consider using local native species instead.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Maintaining Biodiversity on Roadsides

Maintaining roadside biodiversity (plants and associated fauna) can be a complex issue and close consultation with the Native Vegetation Biodiversity Management Unit is recommended.

Where modification of roadside vegetation using measures such as lopping, burning or other disturbance of native vegetation is proposed as a tool in maintaining diversity, clearance approval is required from the Native Vegetation Council.

Guidelines - Maintenance of Vegetation Diversity

Permission

- Modification of roadside vegetation within a road reserve for the maintenance of vegetation and biodiversity improvement requires written permission from the Adelaide Hills Council.
- Any unauthorised clearance of road reserve native vegetation caused by activities will be referred by the Adelaide Hills Council to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Proposals

- Any proposals involving disturbance of native vegetation to maintain vegetation diversity will be developed in close consultation with the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.
- Revegetation of the affected area with a range of indigenous plant species should be considered in combination with or instead of disturbance, for example, in the case of mistletoe and lerp attack.

Clearance Methods

- These activities will be carefully planned and the results must be monitored.
- Trimming or pruning of vegetation using appropriate, low impact cutting tools is required - consult with the NVBM Unit for advice for all proposals to help determine best practice.

Prevention

- Opportunities to promote interest in roadside vegetation biodiversity will be developed where possible, e.g. providing information to rate-payers - discouraging illegal dumping and explaining the consequences of weed spread, clear guidelines for activities such as weed control and firewood collection, and promote the importance of roadside vegetation in partnership with other organisations.



5.17 Protection of Native Vegetation of High Conservation Significance

Objectives

- To identify, record and protect roadside native vegetation of high conservation significance.
- To reverse the deterioration of roadside native vegetation by improving management practices.

Information

Roadsides may contain plants or vegetation types of high conservation significance (i.e. threatened at a national, state, or local level, and / or vegetation classed as Category 1 and 2. It is important that these locations are identified, recorded and protected.

While all native vegetation on roadsides is protected and must not be cleared unless clearance is considered exempt as defined in this plan, vegetation of high conservation significance requires:

- extra precautions (such as signage) to prevent accidental damage; and
- active management (such as Bushcare work) to prevent decline in quality (also see next section - Restoration).

Vegetation of high conservation significance is important to the region as it can:

provide habitat for native animals and plants, including endangered species; assist the movement of native animals to move from one habitat area to another; and provide unique genetic reference areas for sourcing seed for revegetation projects.

The Adelaide Hills Council has assessed its roadside vegetation through a roadside vegetation survey and has identified the conservation significance for roads throughout its region. The Adelaide Hills Council has 502 RMS (Roadside Marking Sign) records which contribute to a total length of 3,067 kms - category 1 and 2 sites. The average length is 380 m. It is these roadways that are considered to support the native plants, habitats and/or vegetation associations of high conservation significance.

The Adelaide Hills Council district is located within the Mount Lofty Ranges, a noted Commonwealth area of high environmental significance (Biodiversity Hotspot). Only 13% of the original native vegetation of the Ranges remains which is fragmented with only 22% formally managed for conservation purposes. The key representative vegetation community within the Council district is the *Eucalyptus obliqua* and *Eucalyptus baxteri* 'Stringybark' Open Forest.

Endangered vegetation communities within the Adelaide Hills Council district include; The Silver Banksia Grassy Low Woodland *Banksia marginata*, Candlebark Open Forest *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* ssp *Dalrympleana*, Grey Box Grassy Woodland *Eucalyptus macrocarpa*, Freshwater Wetlands i.e. *Triglochin procerum*, Silky Tea- tree Closed Shrubland *Leptospermum lanigerum*, Kangaroo Grass +/- Wallaby Grass Tussock Grassland *Themeda triandra* +/- *Danthonia* spp. Vulnerable communities include Cypress Pine +/- Blue Gum Grassy Woodland *Callitris preissii* +/- *E. leucoxylon*, Pink Gum +/-

Blue Gum Heathy Woodland *Eucalyptus fasciculosa* +/- *E. leucoxylon*, Manna Gum Woodland *Eucalyptus viminalis* ssp. *Cygnensis* and/or *E.viminalis* ssp. *Viminalis*.

Areas of high conservation significance continue to be identified through survey and scientific assessment. Adelaide Hills Council is in review of listed RMS sites and is evaluating and recording the environmental value of high quality roadside vegetation through the BushRAT (Rapid Assessment Technique) methodology, DEWNR supported.

Consultation and Approval Procedures for activities in areas of Vegetation of High Conservation Significance

Any activity in areas of high conservation significance requires consent from the Adelaide Hills Council.



Roadside Marker (RMS) denoting significant vegetation

Guidelines - Protection of Vegetation of High Conservation Significance

Permission

- Any activity occurring in areas of high conservation significance requires consent from the Adelaide Hills Council, and if native vegetation clearance is proposed, then consent is also required from the Native Vegetation Council.
- Any activity impacting on vegetation of National Significance needs to be referred to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).
- Any unauthorised clearance of road reserve native vegetation caused by activities will be referred by the Adelaide Hills Council to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.

Roadside surveys

- Roadside vegetation surveys have been undertaken using the standard DEWNR roadside vegetation survey methodology to determine where significant vegetation occurs.
- The overall ecological significance of sections of roadside vegetation has been determined.

Database

- A site register or database for significant roadside flora has been developed, and will be used by the Adelaide Hills Council relating to all roadwork activities. The “Roadside Marker System (RMS)” has prioritised significant locations.

Roadside Markers and Bushcare work

- A site marking system to identify significant sites “Roadside Marker System (RMS)”, particularly for Council staff or contractors, have been implemented to ensure protection of significant sites.
- In consultation with Trees for Life, the NRMB and/or Regional Ecologists, (Restoration 5.17) will also be encouraged wherever possible to help actively manage these important areas of native vegetation.

Roadside Activities

- Training programs for Council staff and others (e.g. contractors), and development of work procedures to ensure protection of significant sites, have been implemented by the Adelaide Hills Council.
- A map of the vegetation categories for the road network within the Adelaide Hills Council will be used to minimise or avoid any loss or disturbance of native vegetation of conservation significance by locating proposed development or roadside works away from these areas.
- If it is not possible to avoid loss of native vegetation when planning roadworks, the Adelaide Hills Council will use the data collected and associated maps to identify areas of roadside vegetation that can be managed better as a way of providing an SEB offset which would be a requirement for clearance of vegetation associated with any new works under Native Vegetation Regulation 5 (1)(d) of the Native Vegetation Act 1991.

5.18 Restoration of roadside vegetation

Objectives

- To encourage the re-establishment of native vegetation along roadsides in parts of the Local Council area where native vegetation has been identified as cleared or degraded.
- To prevent further degradation within road reserves giving high priority to rehabilitation works along roadsides containing native vegetation of high construction significance.

Information

Roadside vegetation within the Adelaide Hills Council varies from Category 1 vegetation with very high conservation value (pristine remnant vegetation) to Category 5 vegetation with low conservation value.

The Adelaide Hills Council is committed to roadside restoration. Council recognises the ecological and aesthetic importance of restoring, maintaining and enhancing roadside native vegetation as areas of habitat for wildlife, to increase the biological diversity and seed stock of the area, and to create linkages for wildlife movement. Other benefits include improving the amenity of an area, reducing the risk of soil erosion and soil salinity and possibly reducing the risk of fire through appropriate fire management practices.

The Adelaide Hills Council is located primarily within the Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Region and the South Australian Murray Darling Basin (SA MDB) and acknowledges the respective AMLR (Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges) and SA MDB Regional NRM Plans. The Council will also consider priorities and management actions as outlined in the Adelaide Hills Council Biodiversity Strategy and Strategic Plan.

Council will consider allowing areas of degraded vegetation to rehabilitate through natural regeneration and carefully controlled management practices. Council will consider in previously cleared or degraded roadsides using local native species to establish linkages with remnant bushland areas in the district. If further information on revegetation strategies in the region becomes available (such as revegetation plans), this RVMP will incorporate the recommendations wherever possible.

Within the Adelaide Hills Council there are a number of locations where roadside vegetation is being actively managed by community groups using minimal disturbance techniques to maintain biological diversity, or to promote regeneration of native species.

General advice regarding restoration can be obtained from local NRM Boards and organisations such as Trees For Life (Bush Care Sites), and advice about local native species can be obtained from the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit. Further information can also be found in

'Habitat Restoration Planning Guide for Natural Resource Managers'¹⁴ on the State government website:

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Knowledge_Bank/Science_research/Seascapes_landscapes_and_communities/Landscape_restoration/Publications

Consultation and Approval Procedures for Restoration of Roadside Vegetation

It is essential (and a legal requirement) that the permission of the --- **Council** be obtained for roadside revegetation programs. Planned revegetation programs will be conducted under Council's authorisation and will incorporate other Council maintenance policies aimed at minimising soil disturbance and associated weed establishment, control introduced plants and animals, and restrict grazing or development along roadside areas in the district.

Proposals must also take into account the existing native vegetation present, and consultation with the Native Vegetation Council is required where revegetation is to occur within areas of existing vegetation, particularly open areas (i.e. areas possessing few if any trees or shrubs) as some areas of the State naturally had areas of open grassland, sedgeland and wetland.

¹⁴ Clarke, I., Stokes, Z. and Wallace, R., (2010). *Habitat Restoration Planning Guide for Natural Resource Managers*. Government of South Australia, through Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Adelaide.



Guidelines - Restoration of Roadside Vegetation

Permission

- Any activity occurring in rehabilitated and revegetated areas requires consent from the Adelaide Hills Council, and if native vegetation clearance is proposed, then consent is also required from the NVC.
- Any unauthorised clearance of road reserve native vegetation caused by activities will be referred by the Adelaide Hills Council to the Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit.
-

Roadside rehabilitation and restoration

- Rehabilitation of existing roadside vegetation is usually seen as the priority for restoration work, however, reconstruction of habitat will be dependent on desired goals.
- The Adelaide Hills Council will undertake the rehabilitation and revegetation of suitable, degraded areas of road reserve through natural regeneration of native plant species and through utilising local native species.
- Restoration and rehabilitation programs will only be undertaken after the overall ecological significance of sections of roadside vegetation has been determined in vegetation survey.
- Natural regeneration should be encouraged in High and Medium Conservation Value roadsides.
- Take care when planning planting of trees or shrubs in areas dominated by native grassland species. The area may be naturally occurring grassland and therefore disturbance may constitute clearance under the Native Vegetation Act. Consult with Council's Environment Officer.

- Restoration and rehabilitation programs will be referenced from vegetation survey data and information.
- Revegetation programs on roadsides should use locally collected seed. Within the township locality, a broader range of plants may be utilized; care should be taken to avoid invasive species.
- Near electrical power lines planting must comply with the legislation of the utility authority (SA Power Networks) and planting guidelines.
- On roadsides containing remnant indigenous vegetation it is encouraged that **natural regeneration** is supported and exotic weeds and grasses are controlled.
- **Direct seeding** of native species, using local provenance seed collected should be considered.
- An appreciation and understanding of a modified site should be considered the original ecosystem during a revegetation project.
- Revegetation and/or rehabilitation programs should have a clear intended outcome with appropriate monitoring.

Database

- Rehabilitated sites will be recorded on an applicable site register or database.
- Sites will be monitored with photo-point record.

Roadside markers and bushcare

- Roadside Revegetation Sites will be added to the "Roadside Marker System (RMS)" to ensure protection of significant sites.
- In consultation with Bush for Life, the respective NRM Board, Bushcare sites will also be supported through a service agreement and actively managed through this arrangement.
- The Adelaide Hills Council will continue to encourage and promote the maintenance and improvement of roadside vegetation diversity through the support of existing groups, and where appropriate the establishment of more local community groups to undertake restoration activities.
- Currently the Adelaide Hills Council is actively engaged on the review of all RMS locations across the hills district

6. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

This section outlines actions with a program for implementation that will further enhance management of roadside vegetation in the Adelaide Hills Council area.

The Action Plan for the Adelaide Hills Council is presented below, with actions listed in the order that the Management Issues are addressed in Section 5.

The action plans and guidelines from this document will become a standard reference within Council. The Roadside Vegetation Management Plan should be read in conjunction with Councils Development Plans and Strategic Plan. Each action has been prioritised using the following timeframes:

- **High** Priority will be completed within 2 years.
- **Medium** Priority will be completed within 5 years.
- **Low** Priority will be completed within 10 years or re-assessed within this timeframe.
- **Ongoing** actions which will become effective immediately.

Management Actions

Activity	Action Statement	Timeline
1. Construction Works		
Vegetation Survey	Refer to vegetation category mapping or, where vegetation has not been surveyed, conduct a vegetation survey, along proposed new road works to determine if works are likely to have significant impact on native vegetation. Consult with the NVBMU.	Ongoing
Stakeholder Consultation	Consult with relevant stakeholders prior to planning development and road infrastructure, to ensure that (in particular) damaging activities along Category 1 and 2 roadside vegetation can be avoided, and routes can be selected along areas without roadside vegetation.	As required
Construction Works	Engineer design to minimise vegetation impacts.	As required
Capacity Building	Train workers and contractors in erosion control, vegetation removal and vegetation protection measures prior to commencement of works.	Ongoing
2. Roadside Maintenance		
Road Classification	Maintenance of clearance envelopes to provide adequate sight distance will be based on previous clearance envelopes. However, upper limit should be bound by the nominal width of the road in accordance with the function or hierarchy of the road.	Approx. every 5 years
Site Inspections	Conduct site inspections prior to commencement of maintenance activities to reduce potential impacts of maintenance works on native vegetation.	Ongoing
3. Public Safety		
Safety Audit	Conduct a road safety audit to identify roads with a high risk to public safety.	Ongoing
Category 1-2 Site Assessments	Site assessments on roads with Category 1-2 vegetation will be conducted to ensure appropriate low impact clearance methods are used to minimise damage to vegetation of high conservation significance.	Ongoing

4. Installation and Service Maintenance		
Permit requirements	Council to provide service authorities with the appropriate information regarding permit requirements before any proposed new works on roadsides commence.	Ongoing
Training	Ensure that contractors and staff from service authorities involved in the installation or maintenance of services (particularly on high conservation value roadsides) have the appropriate skills.	5 yearly or new contractor
Mapping	Map potential routes for new or replacement services to identify cleared land or low conservation value roadside vegetation.	As required
5. Pest Plant and Animal Control		
Develop Management Plan	DEWNR have a pest plant and animal management action plan.	Ongoing
Mapping	Map infestations of priority pest plant species.	As required
Priorities	Prioritise pest plant and animal species for eradication or containment.	Ongoing
Standard Operating Procedures	Develop and implement a Standard Operating Procedure for pest plant and animal control activities using standard minimal disturbance techniques (e.g. work from best to worst areas).	Ongoing
Raising Community Awareness	Develop community awareness programs to ensure landholders understand their responsibilities regarding pest plants and animal control activities on roadsides.	Ongoing
Monitoring	Monitor outbreaks of declared weeds.	As required
Eradication	Produce a strategy to eradicate such outbreaks.	Ongoing
6. Plant Diseases		
Contain and minimise the spread of plant diseases	Map and monitor locations of pest plant (eg. Phytophthora) in the Adelaide Hills Council.	Ongoing
Minimise effect on the environment and on recreational activities	Use appropriate hygiene procedures when undertaking roadworks to prevent spread from infected areas, erect signage on site to identify pest plant (i.e. Phytophthora) locations. Promote information on locations and methods to be used (web site/Council office/papers).	Ongoing

Uninfected areas protected from infection	Hygiene procedures and stations to be advertised / provided as per Guidelines (wash down stations at entrances to reserves).	As required
Uninfected areas protected from infection	Hygiene procedures and stations to be advertised / provided as per Guidelines (wash down stations at entrances to reserves).	As required
Raising community Awareness	Dissemination of information relating to pest plant (i.e. Phytophthora) in affected areas.	As required
7. Fenceline Clearance		
Raising community Awareness	Ensure landholders understand the requirements for clearing on roadsides. Encourage landholders to ensure that all waste is removed from the roadside at completion of works and is properly disposed.	Ongoing
Approval Process	Provide information to landholders notifying any removal of roadside vegetation for maintenance/ construction of fence lines requires Council approval.	Ongoing
8. Clearance for access to adjoining land		
Minimal Impacts to Vegetation	Provide property access to landholders through Council control road reserves that have minimal impact on native vegetation. Where possible locate access through less dense / poor native vegetation.	Ongoing
Sight Triangles	Ensure safe sight distance triangles for the clearance of native vegetation meet the required standards.	Ongoing

9. Bushfire Protection		
Bushfire Management Strategy	In conjunction with the Council Fire Prevention Officer implement an approved BMS and implement plans accordingly.	Revised Annually
Reduce High Fuel Loads	Liaise with CFS, Council Fire Prevention Officer and landholders adjoining Council roadside reserves to develop and implement strategies to reduce areas of high fuel loads that have been identified within a BMP i.e. (Asset Protection or Bushfire Buffer Zones).	Revised Annually
Protect Category 1-2 Vegetation Sites	In the BMP ensure Category 1-2 vegetation sites are identified and techniques are appropriate to protect these areas.	Revised Annually
Map Strategic Fire Breaks	Record as part of the Council BMP, the conservation categories of roadsides designated as strategic fire breaks in conjunction with DEWNR.	Revised Annually
Prioritise Strategic Fuel Breaks	Develop a priority list of Strategic fuel breaks and roadways for broad scale fire prevention purposes. Develop an annual maintenance program to establish standards for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the identified roads; dates to be achieved; 	Revised Annually
Conduct Ecological Burns	Application under Regulation 5(1)(z) and will require a Management Plan endorsed by the NVC.	Revised Annually

10. Grazing		
Grazing Licences	The issuing of grazing licenses will only be granted roadsides where there are no native shrub or understorey species present, and where there is no evidence of recent or periodic regeneration of native plant species.	Ongoing
Undeveloped Road Reserves	Grazing of native vegetation in undeveloped road reserves requires clearance approval from the NVC if there is any change in grazing practice which increases the pressure on native vegetation. Important native vegetation to be protected through a management agreement, or through removal of the area from the lease.	Ongoing
11. Droving Stock		
Raising Community Awareness	Promote landholders understanding about the value of roadside vegetation and of the potential impact stock droving has on roadside vegetation.	Ongoing
Monitoring Impacts	Monitor impacts of stock droving on roadside native vegetation.	Ongoing
Category 1 and 2 Vegetation	Discourage the droving of stock along Category 1 - 2 vegetation except where no suitable alternative route is found.	Ongoing
12. Recreational Use of Road Reserves & Unformed Public Roads)		
Raising Community Awareness	Promote communities understanding of the value of roadside vegetation and of the potential impact recreational use of road reserves has on roadside vegetation. Discourage the recreational use of road reserves in Category 1 - 2 vegetation	Ongoing
Monitoring Impacts	Monitor impacts of recreational use of road reserves on roadside native vegetation.	Ongoing
Promotion	Promote the environmental and tourist benefits of lawfully established and recognised public recreational tracks.	Ongoing
Cultivation and Cropping		
Permit Requirements	Cropping works on roadsides is not permitted within the Adelaide Hills Council.	N/A
Community Awareness	Advise landholders and ensure that cropping works on roadsides is not permitted within the Adelaide Hills Council.	N/A

Removal of Plant Material		
Permits	Permits for seed collection on roadsides will be given preference for local revegetation projects. DEWNR and Council permission is required for seed collection.	Ongoing
Tree Trimming	Tree trimming programs (for verge maintenance) will be undertaken in consultation with local revegetation groups to facilitate the collection of seed from trimmed vegetation.	Ongoing
Community Awareness	Distribute information to landholders on the guidelines for removal of plant material on road reserves.	Ongoing
Maintenance of Biodiversity		
Community Awareness	Promote community interest and involvement in roadside vegetation management.	Ongoing
Community Involvement	Involve local people and appropriate tertiary, government or other institutions in roadside disturbance / vegetation maintenance projects.	Ongoing
Expertise	Provide the local community with direct access to local expertise.	Ongoing
Monitoring	Monitor the effectiveness of roadside management techniques and ascertain any changes in condition.	Ongoing
Priority Setting	Identify high and medium conservation value roadsides to aid in maintenance of vegetation diversity.	Ongoing
Protection of Native Vegetation of High Conservation Significance		
Roadside Vegetation Surveys	Conduct roadside vegetation surveys to determine where significant species or vegetation occurs.	Ongoing
Roadside Marker System	Establish and manage a Roadside Marker System to identify significant sites (vegetation of high ecological value), particularly for Council staff or contractors.	Ongoing
Site Register	Develop a comprehensive Register of sites showing all threatened or significant vegetation and fauna areas, linked to standard Council database.	Ongoing
Training	Conduct training programs Council staff and others (e.g. contractors) Ensure all contractors and service providers are aware of the roadside quality and sites	Ongoing

	of significance before any works commence.	
Work Procedures	Conduct training programs Council staff and others (e.g. contractors) Ensure all contractors and service providers are aware of the roadside quality and sites of significance before any works commence.	Ongoing
Monitoring	Monitor signed sites and review management (if necessary) in consultation with NRMB, NVC, the local community, field expert or the site nominator.	Ongoing
Bush Care	In consultation with Trees For Life, Bush Care sites will be encouraged wherever possible to help actively manage important areas of native vegetation.	Ongoing
Restoration of Roadside Vegetation		Ongoing
Priority Areas	Priority will be given to roadsides of high conservation significance, linking with the AMLRNRMB and SAMDBNRMB on regional priorities for revegetation and possible funding.	Ongoing
Seed Collection	Collection of local native seed for annual revegetation programs.	Ongoing
Pest Control	Conduct pre/post pest plant and animal control works to encourage regeneration and rehabilitation of roadside vegetation.	Ongoing
Community Group Participation	Involve Landcare and Community groups in programs for the planting of indigenous vegetation on roadside corridors.	Ongoing
Raising Community Awareness	Provide information such as indigenous species lists and potential growers to the community to encourage authorised planting of local indigenous species on roadsides.	Ongoing

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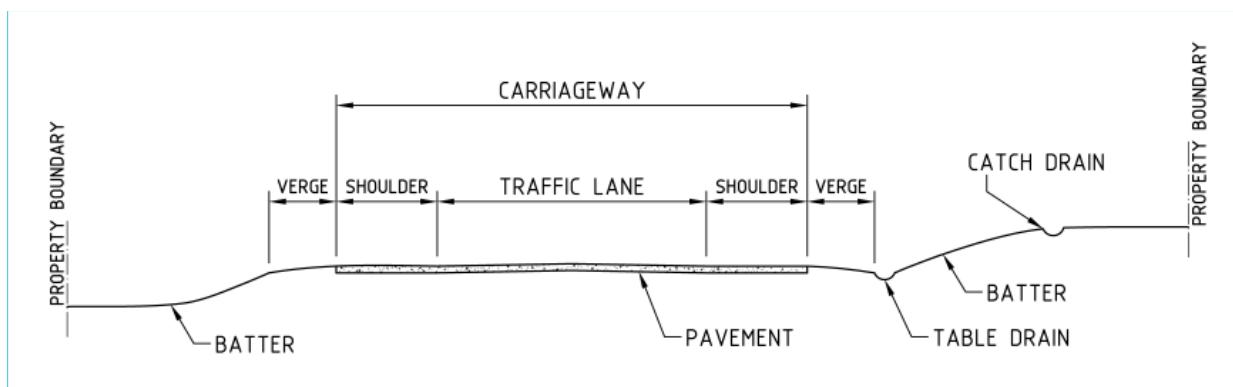
8. ABBREVIATIONS & DEFINITIONS

Abbreviations

DEWNR	Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources
LGA	Local Government Association
NRM	Natural Resources Management
NVBMU	Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Unit
NVC	Native Vegetation Council as established by the <i>Native Vegetation Act, 1991</i> .
RVMP	Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

Definitions

Some of the terms commonly used in relation to roadside vegetation management in South Australia are listed below and, in the case of road construction, illustrated in the following diagram [except where specifically referenced, these terms are defined for the purpose of these guidelines]:



A typical Cross-section of a rural road

Biological diversity or biodiversity– means the variety of life forms represented by plants, animals and other organisms and micro-organisms, the genes that they contain, and the ecosystems and ecosystem processes of which they form a part (*Native Vegetation Act 1991*).

Carriageway – That portion of a road or bridge devoted particularly to the use of vehicles, inclusive of the shoulders and auxiliary lanes (Austroads, 2010).

Catch drain– a surface channel constructed along the high side of a road or embankment, outside the batter to intercept surface water (Austroads, 2010).

Clearance (from the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*) means –

- the killing or destruction of native vegetation;
- the removal of native vegetation;
- the severing of branches, limbs, stems or trunks of native vegetation;
- the burning of native vegetation;

e) any other substantial damage to native vegetation,

and includes the draining or flooding of land, or any other act or activity, that causes the killing or destruction of native vegetation, the severing of branches, limbs, stems or trunks of native vegetation or any other substantial damage to native vegetation.

Clearance envelope– the area where vegetation clearance is required to allow for the passage of legal height vehicles across the full width of the carriageway.

[**Secondary** clearance envelopes are further areas required to be kept clear of vegetation adjacent to the carriageway for adequate visibility of other traffic, signs and other roadside furniture.]

Dead plants (under the definition of native vegetation in Section 3(1) of the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*), means the class of plants, or parts of plants, comprising trees of a species indigenous to South Australia –

- a) that have a trunk circumference (measured at a point 300 millimetres above the base of the tree) of –
 - i) in the case of a tree located on Kangaroo Island – 1 metre or more; or
 - ii) in any other case – 2 metres or more; and
- b) that provide or have the potential to provide, or are a [part of a group of trees or other plants (whether alive or dead) that provide, or have the potential to provide, a habitat for animals of a listed threatened species under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* of the Commonwealth, is declared to be included in that definition.

Dead timber (firewood) – in this plan generally refers to woody debris from standing or fallen dead trees or branches. It does not usually encompass fine fuels – which generally refer to grass, leaves, bark and twigs less than 6mm in diameter (SA CFS web-site).

Droving or Movement of Stock– Moving stock, usually cattle or sheep, from one place to another by driving them slowly on foot along roadways or stock routes.

Formation– The surface of the finished earthworks, excluding cut or fill batters (Austroads, 2010).

Grazing of Stock – Using a particular area for grazing rather than for movement of livestock.

Indigenous (or Native) Vegetation – Local (naturally established) native vegetation species of the type occurring prior to European settlement in this district.

Local council – *in these guidelines has the same meaning as* “council” under the *Local Government Act 1999*; i.e. a council constituted under that Act; the principal role being “...to provide for the government and management of its area at the local level and, in particular—

- a) to act as a representative, informed and responsible decision-maker in the interests of its community; and
- b) to provide and co-ordinate various public services and facilities and to develop its community and resources in a socially just and ecologically sustainable manner; and
- c) to encourage and develop initiatives within its community for improving the quality of life of the community; and
- d) to represent the interests of its community to the wider community; and
- e) to exercise, perform and discharge the powers, functions and duties of local government under this and other Acts in relation to the area for which it is constituted”.

Native Vegetation— under Section 3(1) of the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*, "native vegetation means a plant or plants of a species indigenous to South Australia including a plant or plants growing in or under waters of the sea but does not include—

- a) a plant or part of a plant that is dead unless the plant, or part of the plant, is of a class declared by regulation to be included in this definition; or
- b) a plant intentionally sown or planted by a person unless the person was acting—
 - i) in compliance with a condition imposed by the Council under this Act or by the Native Vegetation Authority under the repealed Act, or with the order of a court under this Act or the repealed Act; or
 - ii) in pursuance of a proposal approved by the Council under Part 4 Division 2; or
 - iii) in compliance with a condition imposed by a Minister, statutory authority or prescribed person or body under—
 - A) the *River Murray Act 2003*; or
 - B) the *Water Resources Act 1997*; or
 - C) any other Act prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph;"

Natural Regeneration – New growth of indigenous native plants from seed or sucker growth.

Pavement – That portion of a road designed for the support of, and to form the running surface for, vehicular traffic (Austroads, 2010).

Public road(from Section 4 of the *Local Government Act 1999*), is —

- a) any road or land that was, immediately before the commencement of this Act, a public street or road under the repealed Act; or
- b) any road—
 - i) that is vested in a council under this or another Act; or
 - ii) that is placed under a council's care, control and management as a public road after the commencement of this Act, but not including an alley, laneway, walkway or other similar thoroughfare vested in a council; or
- c) any road or land owned by a council, or transferred or surrendered to a council, and which, subject to this Act, is declared by the council to be a public road; or
- d) any land shown as a street or road on a plan of division deposited in the Lands Titles Registration Office or the General Registry Office and which is declared by the council to be a public road; or
- e) any land transferred or surrendered to the Crown for use as a public road that was, immediately before the transfer, held by a person in fee simple or under a lease granted by the Crown,

(and includes any such road that is within the boundaries of a public square);

Property Line – The boundary between a road reserve and the adjacent land (Austroads, 2010).

Remnant Vegetation – Surviving indigenous vegetation.

Road (from *Roads (Opening and Closing) Act 1991*) is —

- a) a public road within the meaning of Section 4 of the *Local Government Act 1999*; or

- b) an alley, laneway, walkway or other similar thoroughfare vested in a council; or
- c) in relation to a part of the State not within a council area—
 - i) a road or street delineated and shown on a public map or plan of the State as laid out for public purposes by the Crown; or
 - ii) a road or street opened under this Act or any other Act relating to the opening of new roads and streets; or
 - iii) a road or street transferred or surrendered to the Minister of Local Government or the Crown by the owner or lessee for use as a public road or street; or
 - iv) a road or street declared or dedicated under any other Act to be a public road or street,

and includes part of a road.

Roadside – Is defined as the strip of land between the road formation and the boundary of the road reserve.

Roadwork (from the *Local Government Act 1999*) means—

- a) the construction of a road; or
- b) the maintenance or repair of a road; or
- c) the alteration of a road; or
- d) the construction of drains and other structures for the drainage of water from a road; or
- e) the installation of fences, railings, barriers or gates; or
- f) the installation of traffic control devices, traffic islands or parking bays; or
- g) the improvement of a road including (for example)—
 - i) landscaping and beautification; or
 - ii) installation of road lighting; or
- h) the installation of amenities or equipment on or adjacent to a road for the use, enjoyment or protection of the public; or
- i) the installation of signs on or adjacent to a road for the use or benefit of the public;

Road furniture – A general term covering all signs, streetlights and protective devices for the control, guidance and safety of traffic, and the convenience of road users.

Road reserve— Refers to land set aside for a road, whether constructed or not, and extends from property boundary on one side to property boundary on the other side.

Roadside vegetation— Is any vegetation growing on a road reserve, and includes vegetation on a roadside (the area adjacent to a formed road), and vegetation growing on an unmade or undeveloped road reserve; this includes native vegetation of conservation value and vegetation dominated by introduced species.

Secondary clearance envelopes— are areas required to be kept clear of vegetation adjacent to the carriageway for adequate visibility of other traffic, signs and other roadside furniture.

Shoulder – The portion of formed carriageway that is adjacent to the traffic lane and flush with the surface of the pavement (Austroads, 2010).

Sight Triangle The area of land between two intersecting roadways over which vehicles on both roadways are visible to each driver (Austroads, 2010).

Significant Environmental Benefit – The *Native Vegetation Act 1991* includes provisions requiring the clearance of native vegetation to be offset by an environmental gain, referred to by the legislation as a 'Significant Environmental Benefit' (SEB).

- The rationale for an SEB offset recognises that clearance of native vegetation will result in the loss (even temporary) of habitat, biodiversity and/or other environmental values, in a landscape that has already been significantly modified by human settlement.
- The SEB provides a mechanism to minimise that loss by managing, restoring or re-establishing areas of native vegetation that result in a better outcome for the environment.

Table drain – The side drain of a road adjacent to the shoulder, having its invert lower than the pavement base and being part of the formation (Austroads, 2010).

Threatened Species – Threatened species are those plant and animal species considered to be at risk of extinction in the wild.

Travelled way – That portion of a carriageway ordinarily assigned to moving traffic, and exclusive of shoulders and parking lanes (Austroads, 2010).

Traffic Lane – A portion of the carriageway allocated for the use of a single line of vehicles. (Austroads 2010)

Unmade road– Means a road that is not sealed with bitumen (or other surfacing material) for use by motor vehicles. (*Roads (opening and closing) Regulations 2006*).

Undeveloped road – A surveyed road reserve which has never been developed as a road. Some are totally cleared and pass unmarked through farm paddocks, and others retain native vegetation.

Verge – That portion of the formation not covered by the carriageway or footpath (Austroads, 2010).

9. APPENDIX

**Operational Appendices - Moores Road and Colonial Drive - Vegetation Management Plan
(attached)**