

Electric Line Clearance Management Plan 2025-2026

Version 10.0

Document version history

Title: Electric Line Clearance Management Plan 2025–2026 V10

Name: Darebin City Council

Authorised by: Michael Tudball, Interim CEO, Darebin City Council

Signature: 

Authorisation date: ## February 2025 Mar 18, 2025

Version	Date	Author	Reason/Description
1.0	May 2018	David Smith, Coordinator Tree Management	Initial Release
2.0	Mar 2019	David Smith, Coordinator Tree Management	Update for 2019
3.0	Mar 2020	David Smith, Coordinator Tree Management	Update for 2020
4.0	November 2020	David Smith, Coordinator Tree Management	Amended following ESV audit of plan
5.0	January 2021	David Smith, Coordinator Tree Management	Amended following ESV review of plan
6.0	February 2021	David Smith, Coordinator Tree Management	Update for 2021
7.0	March 2022	David Smith, Coordinator Tree Management	Update for 2022
8.0	March 2023	David Smith, Principal Tree Management	Update for 2023
9.0	September 2024	David Smith, Principal Tree Management	Update for 2024
10.0	February 2025	David Smith, Principal Tree Management	Update for 2025

Contents

Introduction	5
References	5
Regulation 9.....	5
Subregulation 2.....	5
Subregulation 3.....	7
(a) Name, address and telephone number of the responsible person:	7
(b) Name, position, address and telephone number of the person who was responsible for the preparation of the management plan:.....	7
(c) Name, position, address and telephone number of the persons who are responsible for carrying out the management plan:.....	7
(d) The telephone number of a person who can be contacted in an emergency that requires clearance of a tree from an electric line that the responsible person is required to keep clear of trees:	7
(e) The objectives of the management plan	8
(f) The land to which the management plan applies.....	8
(g) The location of each area that the responsible person knows contains a tree that the responsible person may need to cut or remove to ensure compliance with the Code and that is: 9	9
(h) The management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the Code, which must:.....	10
(i) Management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the code;	10
(j) the procedures to be adopted if it is not practicable to comply with the requirements of AS4373 while cutting a tree in accordance with the Code:	15
(k) a description of each alternative compliance mechanism in respect of which the responsible person has applied, or proposes to apply, for approval under clause 31 of the Code; 15	15
(l) the details of each approval for an alternative compliance mechanism that:	16
(m) A description of the measures that must be used to assess the performance of the responsible person under the management plan.....	16
(n) Details of the audit processes that must be used to determine the responsible person's compliance with the Code	18
(o) The qualifications and experience that the responsible person must require of the persons who are to carry out the inspection, cutting or removal of trees in accordance with the Code:	19
(p) Notification and consultation procedures, including the form of the notice to be given in accordance with Division 3 of Part 2 of the Code	21
(q) Dispute resolution procedures	22
Regulation 9, subregulation 4.....	22
Regulation 10, subregulation 7.....	23
Regulation 11, subregulation 2(a) and 2(b)	23
Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 1	23
Regulation 4 – Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines	23
Regulation 5 – Exception to minimum clearance space for small branches around insulated low voltage electric lines	23

Regulation 6 – Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas.....	23
Regulation 7 – A responsible person who owns or operates a transmission line	23
Regulation 8 – Responsible person may cut or remove hazardous trees	24
Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 2	24
Regulation 10 – Cutting or removal of: native trees; trees listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance; trees of cultural or environmental significance must be minimised	24
Regulation 11 – Cutting or removing habitat for threatened fauna.....	25
Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 4 Regulation 20 – Duty relating to the safety of cutting or removal of trees close to an electric line	25
Appendix 1 Map of Darebin Declared Area	27
Appendix 2 Map of Darebin Planning Overlays	28
Appendix 3 Map of Darebin Pruning Cycle.....	29
Appendix 4 Darebin City Council Distribution Company Areas.....	30
Appendix 5 Clearance audit pro-forma – Quality Audit.....	31
Appendix 6 Annual Line Clearance Streets	33
Appendix 7 ELC Employee Induction Record.....	34

Introduction

Darebin City Council's Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (ELCMP) addresses the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 requirements using the guidance tool provided by Energy Safe Victoria and ensures programs for vegetation management to minimise impact on electrical assets in a low risk bushfire area.

The Plan outlines plans based on sound and knowledgeable vegetation management practice to deliver outcomes that satisfy stakeholders and fulfil principles of environmental management.

References

This Plan should be considered alongside the following key documents for tree management in Darebin City Council:

- Urban Forest Strategy 2013-2028
- Darebin Open Space Strategy 2019
- Darebin City Council Contract Provision of Proactive Tree Management Services CT202358 (The Contract)
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Darebin Electrical Line Clearance Manual
- Darebin Electrical Line Clearance Policy

Regulation 9

The following sections – ‘Subregulation 2’ and ‘Subregulation 3’ – are as per ‘Part 2— Prescribed Code of Practice and related provisions’, Regulation 9 (Preparation of management plan) of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

Subregulation 2

Darebin City Council's Principal - Tree Management is responsible for reviewing, amending and facilitating the authorisation of the plan by the CEO by 31 March each year for the following financial year.

The following action plan commencing the February prior outlines all necessary steps, deadlines and verification that the process is occurring and on track. This action plan is implemented by the Principal - Tree Management and monitored by the Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces.

Annual ELCMP review timetable

Action	Who	Deadline
Notify Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces and General Manager - Infrastructure, Operations & Finance that review/update of plan has commenced.	Principal - Tree Management	1 February
Check for amendments to regulations, currency of relevant standards and review of tree database to include relevant updates.	Principal - Tree Management	1 February
Review and update plan in line with regulations	Principal - Tree Management	28 February
Approve updates to plan and facilitate authorisation by the CEO	Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces, General Manager -Infrastructure, Operations & Finance	31 March
Authorisation of plan	CEO	Prepared 31 March
Place plan on website	Principal - Tree Management	Within two days of approval of plan by the CEO

Any request from Energy Safe Victoria to Darebin City Council to submit the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan is registered in Council's correspondence system and processed as follows:

- CEO, General Manager -Infrastructure, Operations & Finance and Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces are notified by the Records Unit of the request from Energy Safe Victoria
- Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces assigns correspondence to the Principal - Tree Management
- Principal - Tree Management drafts return correspondence to accompany the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan on behalf of the CEO and facilitates approval from the CEO through the Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces and General Manager - Infrastructure, Operations & Finance

The Plan is submitted in the requested format within 14 days of request.

Subregulation 3

(a) Name, address and telephone number of the responsible person:

Name: Michael Tudball
Position: Interim CEO, Darebin City Council
Address: 274 Gower Street, Preston, Victoria 3072 (PO Box 91)
Telephone: (03) 8470 8888

(b) Name, position, address and telephone number of the person who was responsible for the preparation of the management plan:

Name: Rachel Ollivier
Position: General Manager - Infrastructure Operations and Finance
Address: 274 Gower Street, Preston, Victoria 3072 (PO Box 91)
Telephone: (03) 8470 8888

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

Name: Michael Pogemiller
Position: Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces
Address: Operations Centre, Carawa Drive, Reservoir, Vic, 3073
Telephone: (03) 8470 8888

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

Council's Customer Service Hotline (business hours): (03) 8470 8888
Council's After-Hours Duty Officer: (03) 8470 8889

(e) The objectives of the management plan

The objectives of this management plan are to outline how Darebin City Council achieves the requirements of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 within the Darebin City Council Declared Area.

Darebin City Council will fulfil its role as a Responsible Person and comply with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 (Regulations), particularly Schedule 1 Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance (Code) and initiate procedures and practices accordingly, to:

- Compliance with the Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance 2020
- Electrical safety
- Adhere to all WH&S requirements for the community, Council and contractors
- Ensure that appropriately qualified staff are undertaking ELC vegetation clearance works
- Maintain continuity of electrical supply
- Minimise fire starts
- Maintain the health and aesthetic appeal of the City's tree population
- Protect areas of important vegetation
- Maintain vegetation to maximise environmental benefits for native wildlife and the community
- Ensure that affected people are informed of the electric line vegetation clearance works
- Maintain community satisfaction

All objectives are reviewed annually in line with the review and update of the Plan. Refer to sections (i) and (n) for outline of implementation, monitoring and auditing of objectives and key performance indicators, for which the Coordinator Tree Management is responsible.

(f) The land to which the management plan applies

The area for which Darebin City Council is responsible for covers the urban suburbs of Alphington, Bundoora, Fairfield, Kingsbury, Macleod, Northcote, Preston, Reservoir and Thornbury. It is primarily made up of roadside reservations, bushland areas and parks. Reservations are variable in width and proximity to overhead lines, traversed by service wires and to properties. Parks and bushland areas are sometimes traversed by overhead lines, including transmission. These reservations, parks and bushland areas are occupied by a variety of native and introduced species.

Darebin City Council's declared area is in a low bushfire risk area (LBRA). Fire management within the declared area and clearance around electric lines is a shared responsibility between CitiPower, Jemena (Zinfra) and Darebin City Council.

CitiPower and Jemena (Zinfra) are responsible for vegetation clearance and management on private land. See **Appendix 4** for a map of distribution companies asset areas in Darebin.

Darebin City Council is responsible for vegetation clearance and management of roadsides and parks. See **Appendix 1** for a map of Darebin Council Declared Area.

In order to ensure currency of the fire hazard boundaries, Council will consult the relevant Authorities annually, including Fire Services Victoria, before preparing the plan.

(g) The location of each area that the responsible person knows contains a tree that the responsible person may need to cut or remove to ensure compliance with the Code and that is:

i. Native trees

The street trees in the City of Darebin are a diverse mix of natives and exotics which enhance the amenity of the municipality. It is estimated that approximately 15,000 native trees are located in the vicinity of electric lines. These occur within nature strips, road reserves, recreation reserves and other areas of land managed by Council.

A native tree is defined as a tree found or naturally occurring in Australia. This includes trees that are indigenous or naturally occur in the area.

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

Trees located in Springthorpe, Lancaster Gate and Mount Cooper in Bundoora are protected under Council's Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO), however these are predominantly located in a newer estate and have the advantage of underground power in most instances.

The Environmental Significance Overlays mainly contain native vegetation in a riparian environment adjacent to the Merri Creek, the Darebin creek and environs.

The Vegetation Protection Overlays consist of significant native and exotic vegetation within newly established housing estates that were identified for protection.

Heritage Overlays in Darebin do not usually contain protected trees, with the exception of the Cherry Street Avenue of Honour in Macleod and a small number of residential properties.

The map in **Appendix 2** is taken from the Council's GIS. This is in line with Darebin's Environmental Significance Overlays (ESO1 and ESO2), and Vegetation Protection Overlays (VPO2, VPO3, VPO4 and VPO5) available at: <http://planning-schemes.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/darebin>

iii. Trees of cultural or environmental significance

There are no trees on the National Trust register of significant trees that are affected by electrical line clearance requirements.

In addition to the above, all Council staff have access to a GIS data set containing location and relevant details of all Council trees.

This GIS data set has also been made available to Councils ELC Contractor.

(h) The management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the Code, which must:

- Consult the Council's Planning Scheme to determine locations of important vegetation within planning overlays. This can be accessed at: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/schemes-and-amendments/browse-planning-schemes>
- Consult the Heritage Register: <https://heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/heritage-protection/register/>
- Consult the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register: <https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/victorian-aboriginal-heritage-register>
- Consult the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988: <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/flora-and-fauna-guarantee-act-1988/045>
- Consult the Threatened Flora List with a conservation status in Victoria of "vulnerable", "endangered" or "critically endangered": [Victoria's Threatened List and Processes List](#)
- Consult the Threatened Vertebrate Fauna List with a conservation status in Victoria of "vulnerable", "endangered" or "critically endangered": [Victoria's Threatened List and Processes List](#)
- Consult the Threatened Invertebrate Fauna list with a conservation status in Victoria of "vulnerable", "endangered" or "critically endangered": [Victoria's Threatened List and Processes List](#)

Consultation will be completed annually to ensure the accuracy of the City's knowledge of the location of such vegetation.

(i) Management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the code;

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

i. Managing Trees

- Biennial inspection and pruning (where required) of all streets throughout the City of Darebin to ensure compliance with the Code
- Annual pruning of selected streets with high voltage assets (refer **Appendix 6 – Annual Line Clearance Streets**)
- The inspection record is street by street and the adjacent property number is used as an indicator of where pruning is required

- The use of appropriate plant selection for new and replacement planting as per Councils' Urban Forest Strategy
- Work with distribution companies to achieve better outcomes
- Transitioning to underground or aerial bundle cable (ABC) where funding permits
- Council will apply for exceptions where appropriate
- Clearance is calculated using Graphs 1 through 4 and Figures 1 through 7, in Schedule 2 of the current Electrical Safety (ELC) Regulations.
- Allowance for regrowth must also be added to the clearance distance, depending on the frequency of pruning.

ii. **Maintaining the clearance space, required by the Code, between electric lines and trees;**

The majority of the City of Darebin is made up of well-established suburbs with power infrastructure above ground.

Approximately 27,000 trees are located within 3m of electrical assets and are therefore affected by this plan.

As of November 2014, Council has been operating on a two-year electric line clearance cycle (refer **Appendix 3** – Darebin Clearance Cycle), with selected streets pruned on an annual basis (refer **Appendix 6** – Annual Line Clearance Streets).

Council's contractor will ensure that every street tree is inspected prior to commencement of any clearance works. Appropriate clearance pruning is then undertaken to maintain compliance with the code.

Where vegetation displaying unanticipated growth or regrowth is noted to occur outside the inspection program its location will be recorded. This information will be referred to the vegetation management contractor. They will be required to make arrangement to have this vegetation cleared to meet the clearance requirement of the Code at the earliest opportunity. The goal of pruning to ensure that regrowth into the clearance space does not occur within the pruning cycle.

For spans >100m the network owner will be consulted to determine the additional distance for sag and sway. There are no currently known spans greater than 100m.

If Council or their contractors have to clarify works adjacent to rail or tram electrical assets, they can contact the person/people as nominated in response to **Regulation 20** below.

iii. **Tree pruning and managing regrowth**

The works are undertaken by suitable contractors with the required qualifications and training, in accordance with the Contract.

The Contract (CT202358) documents that suitably qualified arborists are required to have as a minimum:

- At least 3 years' relevant experience
- Tree Clearance by Non-Electrical Personnel Certificate
- Advanced Certificate in Arboriculture (Cert 4 or higher) for those cutting significant trees and collecting data/inspecting

Training must be specific to roles undertaken. Further detail about elective units required for various roles is outlined in 9(3) (o).

The above meets the requirements for a suitably qualified arborist as defined in the regulations.

Trees are pruned to the required clearance spaces as outlined in Schedule 1 Part 3 – Minimum clearance spaces of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020, Schedule 2 and consultation with the relevant distribution company for guidance on additional allowance for sag and sway. Allowance for regrowth must also be added to the clearance distance, depending on the frequency of pruning.

Where there are low voltage lines in low bushfire risk areas there is at least 1000mm minimum clearance with additional allowance for sag and sway if the line span is longer than 45m, as per Graph 2, Schedule 2 of the Code and in consultation with distribution companies.

Where there are high voltage lines in low bushfire risk areas there is at least 1500mm minimum clearance with additional allowance for sag and sway if the line span is longer than 45m, as per Graph 3 (less than 66kV) and Graph 4 (66kV), Schedule 2 of the Code and in consultation with distribution companies.

All pruning will take place in accordance with AS4373 (Pruning of amenity trees), and where possible, pruning will be undertaken in a way that minimises damage to understorey vegetation, as specified in clause 5.1.1 'Standard of pruning works' and 9.4 'Guidelines: pruning for electric line clearance' of the Contract.

The contractor undertaking the pruning will determine the required level of pruning on each tree by considering the following factors: tree species and likely growth; pruning cycle; minimum clearance space including sag and sway where required and pruning standards. In time, as data is collected and regrowth rates identified, less pruning may provide appropriate clearance.

Appropriate plant and equipment must be used by all personnel when undertaking pruning or works in proximity to electrical assets. Elevated

Work Platforms must be tested and certified for use in proximity to electrical assets.

iv. Tree removal

Tree removal may be considered if the tree is of immediate risk in terms of the tree or branches falling, or if the growth rate of an individual tree will impact on the clearance space in less than one pruning cycle. Trees may also be removed if the proposed pruning works will cause major disfigurement, instability, decline or death of the tree. Removal will only take place after inspection and recommendation by a qualified arborist.

A long-term strategy encourages appropriate planting under and surrounding electric lines so that the vegetation does not encroach into the clearance space.

Council will regularly review its pruning cycles based on vegetation significance categories and tree data gathered from the inspection, works and audit records.

v. Auditing works

An audit of the works is undertaken by Council Arborists once programmed works are complete to ensure that they comply with AS4373 and the Code. Both quality and safety audits are carried out, with a minimum of 6-8 streets per month audited for quality and at least 1 safety audit per month. The audit inspections are recorded on the quality audit and safety audit forms (see **Appendix 5**), which is filed and available for inspection upon request. It is requested that 48 hours' notice be given for access to these records.

The purpose of the works audit is to record the performance of the contractor in relation to the objectives of the annual electric line clearance program. This includes recording instances where:

- the minimum clearance space plus allowance for sag and sway as well as additional clearance for regrowth has not been achieved
- vegetation clearance works have not been undertaken according to the appropriate standards

Non-conformances recorded during the audit process are referred to the contractor in writing with a timeframe for completion.

Refer to section (n) below for the process to determine cause of and follow up non compliances arising from audit processes. Provision of Proactive Tree Management Services CT202358 Section 12 provides a dispute resolution process.

vi. Maintaining records

Inspections, works and audits are recorded on the relevant audit forms and maintained in Council's document management system. The outcome of the inspection is recorded by reference to the property numbers, works are recorded by date and the audit is recorded with reference to completed work or further work required.

vii. Liaison with the distribution business

Council and the distribution companies (Jemena / Zinfra and Citypower) will meet a minimum of two times per year. Ongoing agenda items include:

- Darebin City Council electric line clearance program for the year, including high voltage and suppression, live line and/or shutdown works
- Distribution companies electric line clearance program for the year
- Performance including any issues, non-conformance, clarifying processes, notification of works to each other
- Performance of contractors
- Provision of updated contact details
- General business

Regular communication regarding these issues outside of the scheduled meeting will be facilitated as required.

A map showing the distribution companies asset areas in Darebin can be seen in **Appendix 4**, taken from Council's GIS records.

(ii) specify the method for determining an additional distance that allows for cable sag and sway for the purposes of determining a minimum clearance space in accordance with Division 1 of Part 3 of the Code

Spans within the Darebin Declared Area where vegetation clearance is required are less than 45 metres. The cutting distance required is determined using graphs 2, 3 and 4 provided in Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

Contractors are responsible for pruning to achieve the clearance space outlined in **9(3)(i)(i)** above. Where the contractor is uncertain about the span distance, they contact Council's Operations Arborist who will consult with the relevant distribution company in determining the span distance and minimum clearance.

Council provides the additional distance information to the contractor who then performs the works. Council records these sag and sway calculations in Council's document management system where they will be maintained for at least five years. Additional clearance for sag and sway is applicable for spans greater than 45m and is calculated using Graphs 2 (Uninsulated Low Voltage), 3 (HV less than 66kV) and 4 (66kV) from Schedule 2 of the Regulation.

The Principal - Tree Management is responsible for implementing the above processes. The Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces is responsible for verifying that processes are implemented. Audits of the works will be to ensure that the required works are occurring as a result of the above process.

- (j) the procedures to be adopted if it is not practicable to comply with the requirements of AS4373 while cutting a tree in accordance with the Code:** Council contractors carry out works in accordance with the Provision of Proactive Tree Management Services CT202358, Specification - section 2 'Services' and 3 'Service Standards'.

The definition of 'reasonably practicable' in reference to AS4373 – Pruning of amenity trees is: 'A suitable qualified arborist's opinion in relation to the pruning of a tree in respect to meeting both the code and the AS4373'. Discussion of this approach is included in the induction process for staff and contractors.

As per the Contract, when pruning works to meet the code will not comply with AS4373 the contractor will contact Council and inform them. An appropriate decision will then be made in conjunction with Council arborists and the Principal – Tree Management

Audits will be completed at the end of the program to ensure compliance to the code and AS4373. Council's arborist's will make the contractor aware of the results of the audit in writing using Forestreet.

If unacceptable works are identified, Council's arborists or Principal - Tree Management will notify and meet with the contractor to discuss ways of resolving the dispute or difference, as per section 12 of the Contract.

The approved contractor will submit the required training and qualification information, as per sub regulation (o), in January prior to the financial year to which the plan applies and the plan will be updated during the review process. This includes verification that the current version of AS4373 is being applied. Monthly meetings between the approved contractor and Council will be noted and filed in Council's records management system.

Appropriate plant and equipment must be used by all personnel when undertaking pruning or works in proximity to electrical assets. Elevated Work Platforms must be tested and certified for use in proximity to electrical assets.

- (k) a description of each alternative compliance mechanism in respect of which the responsible person has applied, or proposes to apply, for approval under clause 31 of the Code;**

Council does not intend to use or apply for any alternative compliance mechanisms. Pruning is the only method used for electric line clearance work

within the declared area. If the need arises to use other methods, Council will determine a suitable alternative compliance mechanism and seek approval from Energy Safe Victoria in accordance with clause 31 of the Code. This will be reviewed annually in line with the review of this Plan.

(l) the details of each approval for an alternative compliance mechanism that:

- **the responsible person holds**

N/A

- **is in effect**

N/A

(m) A description of the measures that must be used to assess the performance of the responsible person under the management plan

Achievement of pruning cycles, vegetation conservation and enhancement shall be measured by the following performance measures, as well as successful completion of actions outlined in section (i) and (n) of this Plan. The Principal - Tree Management is responsible for monitoring the performance measures and successful completion of actions outlined in section (i) and (n), which will then be assessed by the Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces. Council will be considered to be performing if:

- Works are planned utilising annual inspection data, previous years' data on workload (locations, hours) provided by contractors as well as pruning requests and non-conformances from residents and the distribution business. The purpose of planning is to ensure that Council budgets appropriately to undertake works.
- Quality audits are carried out for every tree in all streets, to ensure work carried out is as per agreed standards (with a minimum of 95% compliance to the regulations) and defects are rectified within agreed time frames (time frame included in audit documentation – commonly 14 days unless otherwise agreed).
- Safety audits are carried out (at least one per month) to ensure all safety regulations are being followed, incidents are minimised (less than 5% LTI) and relevant training is up to date.
- Work programs after annual audit are completed by declaration of the fire season. The Contract requires completion of works within the specified timeframe and there are weekly updates between the contractor and Principal -Tree Management. Electric line clearances are in accordance with the regulations
- Requests for clearance/non-compliance from the distribution business are minimised and, by agreement, incorporated into the annual clearance works or if urgent completed within the agreed timeframe. These are recorded and monitored in Council's document management system

- Details of works completed in each electric line clearance area are recorded
- Data collection occurs on all street trees as part of the pruning program using Forestree.
- No deviations have occurred from the cycles outlined in the plan
- No vegetation damage has resulted from inadequate or substandard pruning practices. Random inspections of works will be undertaken to ensure they are adequate and up to standard
- No trees have been removed without expert advice being received. All removals are requested within the Contractor portal and approved by Council officers before work proceeds.
- Preparation of an Electrical Line Clearance Plan prior to 31 March of each year
- Processes are reviewed in line with the review and preparation of the next year's Plan

If inadequate process or performance is observed, the matter is reported and referred to the Principal - Tree Management.

If the matter can be resolved using the standard defect resolution process used for quality audits (See Appendix 5 for pro forma), then this is documented and completed.

If this matter cannot be resolved using the standard defect resolution process, then it will be tabled at the monthly contract meetings for resolution.

If the matter cannot be resolved at the monthly contract meeting, it can be escalated to Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces and the relevant Management staff for the Contractor, with financial oversight or advice from Councils' procurement staff as required.

The process is guided by the Contract (CT202358) with an aim to achieve compliance to the Regulations.

Periodic review of the ELC program occurs in order to assess program effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvement. All processes and each stage of work are recorded and monitored, with improvements to process made as required. These processes include:

- Bi-annual (and selected annual) street assessment and pruning requirements shall be recorded. The assessment shall be dated, outline the extent of works required and identify specific trees which require other further assessment
- Reports may be prepared on streets which require consideration of alternative electricity delivery infrastructure and shall be forwarded to the Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces
- Actions and decisions resulting from further assessment are to be recorded

- Work programs including dates, times and extent of work are to be recorded (as per section 6 Reporting of the Contract)
- Correspondence sent and received from the Energy Safe Victoria shall be placed on file
- Correspondence related to clearance and vegetation management shall be placed on file
- All complaints or requests from distribution businesses, residents, staff, etc are recorded, acted upon and responded to accordingly

The Electrical Line Clearance Management Plan, Codes and regulations are available for inspection upon request at Council Offices, 274 Gower Street Preston, Victoria 3072. It is requested that 48 hours' notice be given to arrange a suitable time for both parties.

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

Council's Natural and Civic Spaces team conducts audits of pruning works each month in which a contract is operational. The audit assesses all pruning works to confirm compliance with Council and Australian Standards and the Electric Line Clearance code of practice.

All team members who conduct audits to have the following qualification:

- The qualification of National Certificate Level IV in Horticulture and Arboriculture, including the "Assess Trees" module, or an equivalent qualification and or relevant industry experience.
- At least 3 years field experience in assessing trees.

The audit results are discussed and analysed at contract meetings and saved in Council's records database, Objective. Contractors are required to address any areas of non-compliance within 15-30 working days or as otherwise agreed.

Audit results are discussed and analysed to identify the root causes of noncompliance and undertake actions as required to prevent reoccurrence. This may include photos of before and after pruning works, site visits to discuss and form collaborative solutions to improve quality of works and compliance to Regulations. Distribution companies may be involved in these discussions to alter site conditions if required or assist with ways to improve process.

All changes to process are documented in the monthly contract meetings and changes made to the ELC plan and other documents as required.

All key stakeholders including Council staff, contractors, distribution companies and ESV are made aware of changes in process as required.

All correspondence is recorded in Council's document management system.

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

The Council requires that all work conducted on trees is conducted by suitably trained workers who have qualifications in arboriculture or suitable experience and/or in the process of obtaining qualifications. Personnel completing vegetation management works are acting as *qualified persons* in accordance with Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019, r616.

All personnel who conduct audits must have the following qualification:

- The qualification of National Certificate Level IV in Horticulture and Arboriculture, including the "Assess Trees" module, or an equivalent qualification and or relevant industry experience.
- At least 3 years field experience in assessing trees.

The Council requires experience, expertise, quality management, OH&S systems and environmental management systems of its contractors and internal staff to ensure they comply with Council's requirements and Industry Standards.

Prior to appointment, the Principal - Tree Management will review the qualifications and experience of all persons who are to carry out cutting or removal of vegetation to clear electric lines. Only after this has been verified will they be authorised to perform these tasks. Details of personnel qualifications and experience will be maintained by Council and reviews annually to ensure their continued suitability to perform these activities.

An induction is carried out for all staff or contractors before work can be carried out on trees in proximity to electrical assets in the City of Darebin. This ensures that all workers are aware of their responsibilities and have the correct training to perform their role, as per the current Electrical Safety Regulations.

The process requires:

- Checking that the required certification and licenses are up to date
- Awareness of Darebin ELC management Plan and requirements to perform their role in the City of Darebin
- Discussion of 'reasonably practicable' in reference to AS4373 – Pruning of amenity trees is: 'A suitable qualified arborist's opinion in relation to the pruning of a tree in respect to meeting both the code and the AS4373'.
- Training matrices are updated to reflect all changes
- Contractors and Council officers sign to complete process

The Employee Induction Record for ELC works within the City of Darebin can be viewed as Appendix 7.

Council will ensure that all staff and contractors performing pruning hazard inspections around electric lines will have:

- The qualification of National Certificate Level IV in Horticulture and Arboriculture, including the "Assess Trees" module, or an equivalent qualification and or relevant industry experience.
- At least 3 years field experience in assessing trees.

Council will ensure that all staff and contractors performing pruning and removal works around electric lines conform to:

- 'Pruning of Amenity Trees' Australian Standards AS4373-2007.
- UET30219 Certificate II in E.S.I. Powerline Vegetation Control
- The "Blue Book"

And that in addition to the above staff will hold the following qualifications:

- National EWP Licence
- Chipper Operations Certificate (*)
- Chainsaw Operations Certificate (*)
- First Aid- Level 1 (*)
- Certificate III in Horticulture (Arboriculture) National Code: RTF30203 or suitable experience and in the process of obtaining qualifications
- Basic Worksite Traffic Management – VIC National Course Code, 21783VIC – Control Traffic with A Stop-Slow Bat, 21784VIC – Implement Traffic Management Plan (*)

Staff and contractors performing chipping and clean-up works require the certifications marked with (*) above.

All persons conducting inspections must have a minimum Certificate IV in Horticulture (Arboriculture) National Code: RTF30203 or at least 3 years suitable experience.

The following elective units are required for the following roles:

EWP Operator and EWP Safety Observer

- UETTDRVC33 - Apply pruning techniques to vegetation control near live electrical apparatus
- UETTDRVC25 – Use elevated platform to cut vegetation above ground level near live electrical apparatus
- TLILIC0005 – Licence to operate a boom-type elevating work platform (EWP licence)

Tree Climber and Climber Safety Observer

- UETTDRVC21 - Use climbing techniques to cut vegetation above ground near live electrical apparatus
- UETTDRVC33 - Apply pruning techniques to vegetation control near live electrical apparatus
- UETTDRVC34 - Undertake release and rescue from a tree near live electrical apparatus
- AHCARB204 - Undertake standard climbing techniques

Evidence that contractor personnel have had the required training must be carried by the staff at all times and must be shown to the Council officer on request, in accordance with the Contract clause 5.3 Electrical line clearance. If

on-site audits identify personnel without the required accreditation or training, Council's arborists or Principal Tree Management will notify the site supervisor to immediately rectify the situation, including removal of the personnel from the site.

Records of training are filed and available for inspection upon request at the Darebin City Council's Preston Municipal Offices, 274 Gower Street, Preston, from 8am to 4.30pm on weekdays (not including public holidays). It is requested that 48 hours' notice be given.

The contractor is responsible for keeping electronic qualification records and making them available to Council on request.

Refresher training must be undertaken with an approved RTO to ensure all competencies are up to date. The following refresher modules must be undertaken for UET30219 Certificate II in E.S.I. Powerline Vegetation Control:

- UETTDRRF10B First Aid in an ESI Environment
- HLTAID001 CPR
- Safe Approach Distances
- UETTDRRF03B EWP Rescue
- UETTDRRF08B EWP Controlled Descent Escape

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

Council's Principal - Tree Management will advise residents of intentions for electric line vegetation clearance works at least 14 days and not more than 60 days prior to work crews commencing works. The Principal - Tree Management and member of the communications team responsible for advertising will ensure up to date information regarding the Electrical Line Clearance Program is posted on the Council website. The information will include a description and/or map of the affected area, description of tree works being undertaken and proposed commencement and completion dates of works.

Depending on the works and likely disruption to residents, at least 14 days and not more than 60 days prior to works commencing, the Principal - Tree Management may advise via direct mail the individual residents who may be affected in the area of any works to a significant tree.

Council's checklist for electric line clearance works will be used to ensure notification is placed on the Council Website.

If clearing is not going to occur in the 14 to 60-day notification window, we will update the information as required on the web.

(q) Dispute resolution procedures

i. Between Council and residents/customers

Any dispute relating to electric line clearance will be dealt with in line with Complaint Handling Policy (Oct 2024), available on Council's website: [Feedback and complaints City of Darebin](#). It is also available for inspection between 8am and 4pm Monday to Friday at the Darebin City Council's Preston Municipal Offices, 274 Gower Street Preston.

In the first instance, disputes will be referred to the Operations Arborist for resolution, with escalation as follows if required:

- Operations Arborist – Euan Rugg 0419 764 416
- Principal Tree Management – (Acting) Jessica Blade 0460 304 013
- Manager - Natural and Civic Spaces – Michael Pogemiller 0409 7690 017
- General Manager Infrastructure Operations and Finance – Rachel Ollivier 0439 251 423
- Interim CEO – Michael Tudball Michael.tudball@darebin.vic.gov.au - 8470 8888

ii. Between Council and the contractor

In the event of any dispute or difference arising between Council and the Contractor, Council's arborists or Principal - Tree Management will notify and meet with the contractor to discuss ways of resolving the dispute or difference, as per Section 12 of the Contract 'Dispute Resolution'. If a resolution cannot be met, it will be escalated within Council and / or referred to mediation.

iii. Between Council and the distribution business

In the event of any dispute or difference arising between Council and distribution companies, Council's arborists or Principal - Tree Management will notify and meet with the relevant representative of the distribution company to discuss ways of resolving the dispute or difference. If a resolution cannot be met, it will be escalated within Council and / or referred to mediation.

Complaints can also be referred to:

- ESV (Contact Dan Tulen on 0499 889 772 or Leesa Anderson on 0408 580 635)
- ESV General number for disputes and complaints 03 9203 9700
- EWOV <https://www.ewov.com.au/complaints/how-to-make-a-complaint>

Regulation 9, subregulation 4

Covered under regulation 9(3)(i)(ii)

Regulation 10, subregulation 7

The current version of the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (the Plan) is available for viewing on Council's website and Customer Service Centre, in accordance with Regulation 10 (Obligations relating to management plan), subregulation 7 of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

The Plan is available on Council's website as per the following link:

[Trees on Council land City of Darebin](#)

This website will be updated to replace the superseded Plan with the current Plan by the Natural and Civic Spaces web author at the request of the Manager, Natural and Civic Spaces within two days of the CEO's authorisation of the Plan.

- a. A copy of Council's "Electric Line Clearance Management Plan" is available at Darebin City Council's Preston Municipal Offices, 274 Gower Street Preston for inspection and comment by the public during normal office hours.

Regulation 11, subregulation 2(a) and 2(b)

There are no exemptions currently in place.

Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 1

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

All trees that are considered exceptions under this regulation are listed within Council's ELC inspection record reference A5801819.

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

All trees that are considered exceptions under this regulation are listed within Council's ELC inspection record reference A5801819.

Regulation 6 – Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas

All trees that are considered exceptions under this regulation are listed within Council's ELC inspection record reference A5801819.

Regulation 7 – A responsible person who owns or operates a transmission line

This does not apply to Council.

Regulation 8 – Responsible person may cut or remove hazardous trees

The hazard tree inspection and pruning/removal process is as follows:

For Darebin Council, a tree or part of a tree is deemed to be hazardous following an assessment by a suitably qualified arborist. The assessment will consider whether the tree has structural defects and/or poor health that may pose a risk of personal injury or property damage that exceeds an acceptable level. In determining the level of risk, the assessment will consider the likelihood of the tree or part of the tree failing within 12 months given normal weather conditions and the likelihood of a target being present in the area of potential impact.

For the purposes of this Plan the target would be an electric line.

If a member of the public, Council staff or distribution business identifies and reports a hazard tree, a qualified arborist will conduct an assessment of the tree. If that assessment confirms the likelihood of contact with an electric line having regard to foreseeable local conditions, the tree may be cut or removed by the responsible person. Council staff will record the report in Council's customer service management system (Pathway), including details such as: location of tree; name and contact details of reporter; why the tree is a hazard, and if it's deemed urgent. All works proposed and carried out are also captured and managed in Forestree.

If Council is not responsible, details of the report are forwarded to the distribution company or other responsible parties as soon as practicable. If it is Council's responsibility, works on a hazard tree will be actioned depending on the urgency or risk priority identified during the assessment.

Wherever appropriate, urgent cutting will not exceed one metre from the minimum clearance space around the electric line.

Records of emergency or urgent works will be kept for five years and include details of where and when the works were undertaken, why the works were required and the last inspection of the section of line where the cutting or removal was required.

Council will keep a record of trees removed under the emergency work provisions to ensure replanting occurs where appropriate.

Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 2

Regulation 10 – Cutting or removal of: native trees; trees listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance; trees of cultural or environmental significance must be minimised

Regulation 11 – Cutting or removing habitat for threatened fauna

The following provides a response to both Regulation 10 and Regulation 11, read in conjunction with section (g) of this plan.

Tree pruning is undertaken to comply with minimum clearance distances. The trees identified in section (g) have been assessed to determine pruning cycles to minimise cutting. These trees are pruned annually to minimise impact. If removal is recommended, a suitably-qualified arborist will inspect, as per section (i)(i) of the Plan, to verify that removal is required.

If the need arises for alternative mechanisms, approval will be sought from Energy Safe Victoria in accordance with clause 31 of the Code.

Contractors may also contact Council if there are any site indicators that a tree may have significance if they haven't already been alerted to it by Council (list in section g above). Before any works are undertaken on old mature indigenous plants, trees are inspected. In the event a significant tree is identified, no pruning shall occur without further consultation with Council.

Trees are identified by a qualified arborist with knowledge of indigenous, native and exotic trees. Council staff also refer to maps detailed in section (g), the relevant planning overlays and GIS to ensure that minimal impact is made in areas of cultural, historical, botanical, and ecological or habitat significance for rare or endangered species.

If a habitat tree is identified within the vicinity of electric lines, it will be managed in line with the Darebin Urban Forest Strategy, which may include engagement of a fauna specialist, conducting pruning activities outside of the breeding season wherever practical or relocating the fauna.

Council will maintain a list of known habitat trees in proximity to electrical assets and will inform the Contractor as soon as possible to ensure the above process is followed. These can also be listed in Forestree.

Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 4 Regulation 20 – Duty relating to the safety of cutting or removal of trees close to an electric line

Where Council has responsibility for cutting and removal of trees close to electric lines then the following process applies:

- During inspection of the zone to be cleared, a list of sites is collated where vegetation removal near electric lines (live line) is required.
- For advice regarding concerns about the safety of cutting or removing a tree near an electric line identified during the inspection, Council's arborist

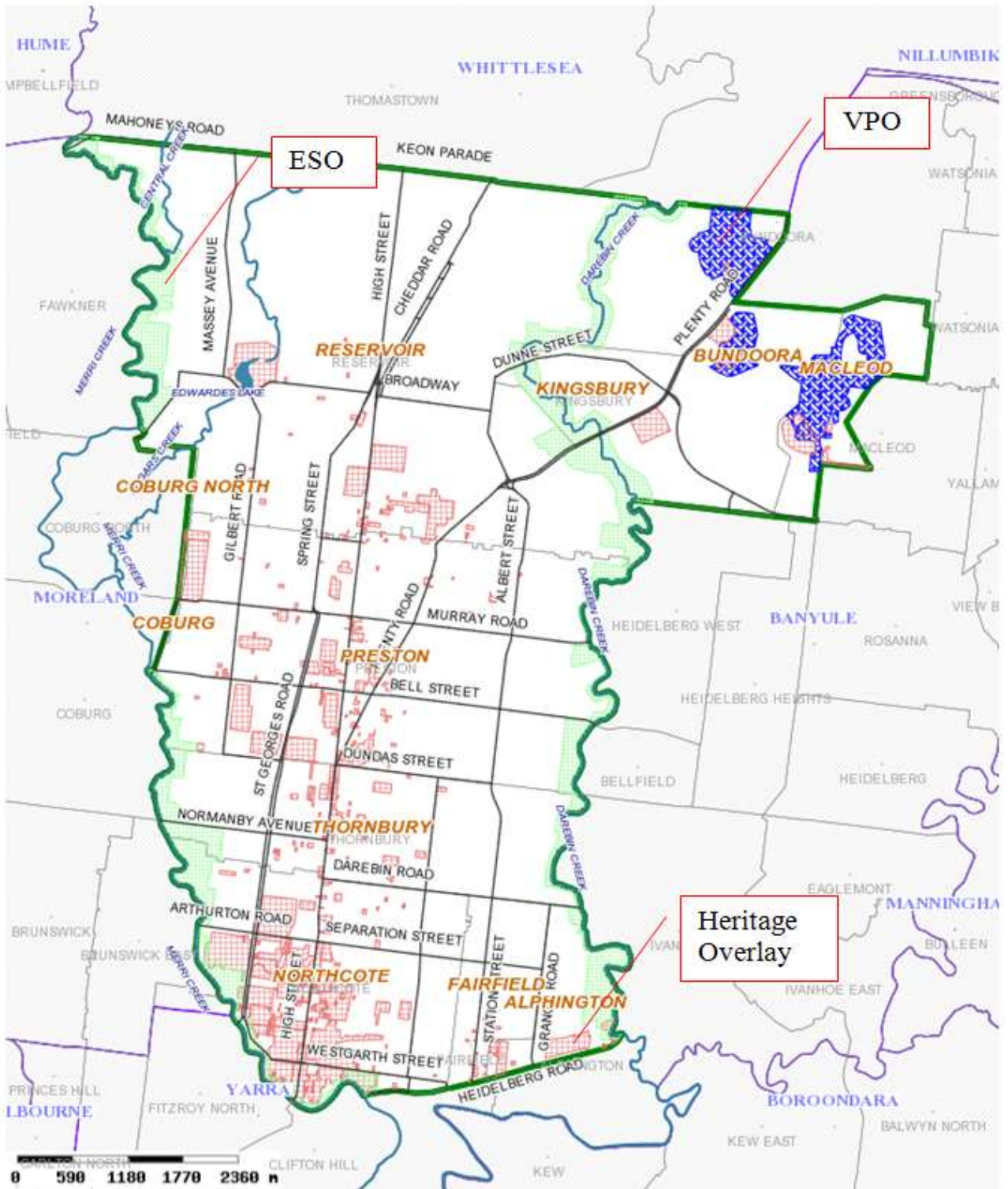
contacts the distribution business contact. The distribution business contacts are:

- William Few, ORP Liaison Officer (Jemena / Zinfra)
Email: William.Few@zinfra.com.au
Phone: (03) 9713 6508
- Jason Craig, Vegetation Stakeholder and Improvement Lead (Powercor)
Email: JCraig@powercor.com.au
Phone: 0402 386 940
- Tobias Meyer, Team Manager Network Facilities (Yarra Trams)
Phone: 0410 473 749
Email: Tobias.Meyer@yarratrams.com.au
- Katrina Lewis, Tree Clearing and Conformance Officer (Metro Trains)
Phone: 0405 506 488
- A contractor with appropriately qualified staff is engaged for assessment, quotes and works which include suppression or shutdown as required.
- The contractor used by Darebin Council for this purpose engaged under Provision of Proactive Tree Management Services CT202358, is Lucas Tree Services. The contact person is Sam Lucas with contact details as follows: 0428 319 454 or sam@lucastreeservices.com.au
- The contractor (Lucas Trees) will liaise with the distribution business (Jemena / Zinfra or Powercor) on Council's behalf for suppression or shutdown.

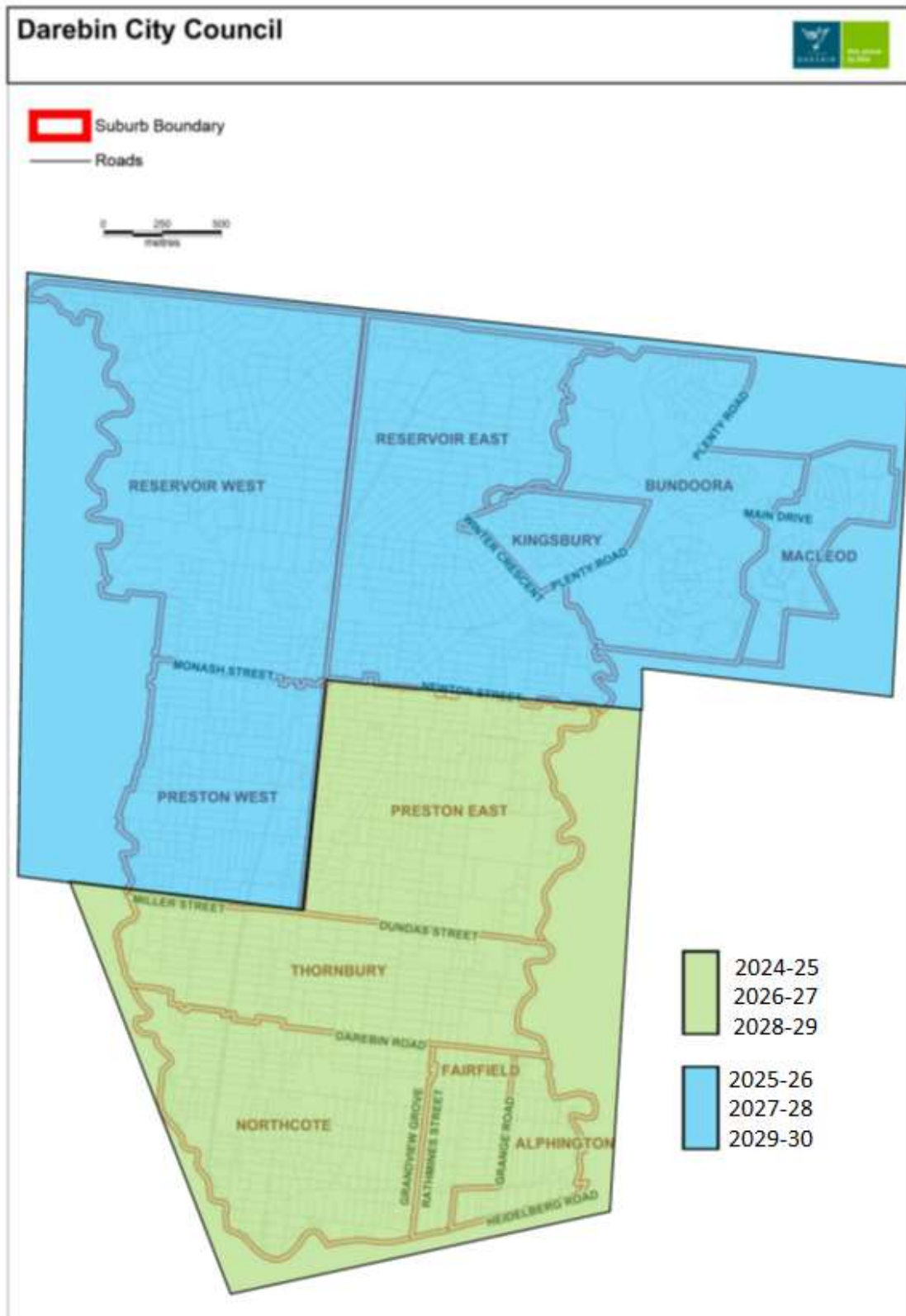
Appendix 1 Map of Darebin Declared Area



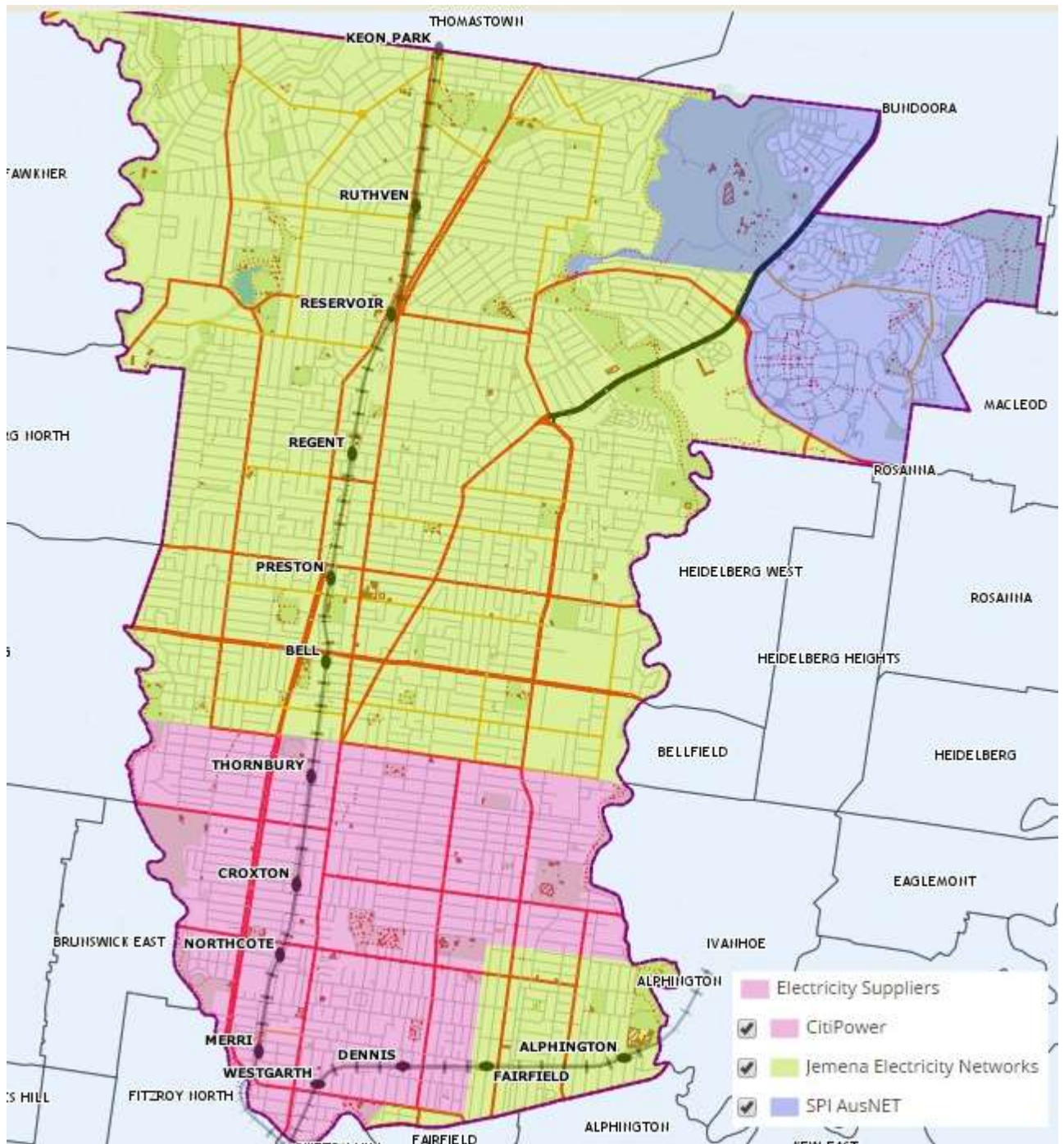
Appendix 2 Map of Darebin Planning Overlays




Appendix 3 Map of Darebin Pruning Cycle



Appendix 4 Darebin City Council Distribution Company Areas




Appendix 5 Clearance audit pro-forma – Quality Audit

ELECTRICAL LINE CLEARANCE - QUALITY AUDIT Version 4.0 Feb 2019		 	
DATE / TIME			
CONTRACTOR			
LOCATION			
LAST PRUNED			
DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES AND WORKS REQUIRED			
ISSUES TO BE RECTIFIED BY (DATE / Person Responsible)		/	
OPPORTUNITY for IMPROVEMENT			
SAFETY AUDIT		COMPLIES	
ISSUES REQUIRING RECTIFICATION			
<i>See safety audit form for further details</i>			
<i>All items to be tabled at the next monthly meeting</i>			
CONTRACTOR REPRESENTATIVE	NAME		
	SIGNED		
COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE	NAME		
	SIGNED		

Safety Audit

Electrical Line Clearance Works Safety Audit

 <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">City of DAREBIN</p>	<p>CONTRACTOR: _____</p> <p>DATE: _____ TIME: _____</p> <p>WEATHER: _____</p> <p>COUNCIL OFFICER: _____</p> <p>CONTRACTOR REP: _____</p> <p>SITE LOCATION: _____</p>
--	--

Number of CONTRACTOR STAFF ON SITE *(tick appropriate box)*

- 0
 1
 2-4
 5-8
 9+


Hazard	Possible Problem	Pass	Fail	N/A
Traffic Hazards	Vehicles working on site safely			
	Safety cones placed around work area			
	Worksafe approved signage in place			
Public Protection	Signage in place to alert pedestrians			
	Footpaths clean and free from debris and slips			
	Noise controls in place			
Manual Handling	Site access controlled			
	Proper manual lifting techniques used			
	Use of mechanical aids where possible			
Personnel	Authorised Operators (as per ELC induction process)			
	Training Log books up to date			
	UET Cert 2 current			
Ergonomic Hazards	Appropriate PPE being worn			
	Spotter in place for work in proximity to wires			
	Proper vehicle controls			
Mobile Plant and Equipment Including EWP	Plant and equipment in good condition			
	Warning lights operational			
	Reversing alarm operational			
Other safety hazards	Tyres satisfactory			
	All logbooks filled in correctly			
	Adequate first aid kit on site			
	Clean and tidy work area			
	Fuel stored appropriately			
	MSDS available and up to date			
	Mobile Phone on site			
	Fire extinguisher charged and available			

• **COMMENTS** *(List areas of concern, action required, contractor instruction)*

Appendix 6 Annual Line Clearance Streets

Annual Electrical Line Clearance only Cycle (as stipulated in Part B, section 11.1)								
Street	Street Section	Associated Block	Scheduled Clearance Year					
			2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Christmas St Northcote	St David Street to Victoria Rd	Northcote	Already Included In Current Block Pruning	✓	Already Included In Current Block Pruning	✓	Already Included In Current Block Pruning	✓
Grange Rd Fairfield	Heidelberg Rd to Darebin Rd	Fairfield		✓		✓		✓
Station St Fairfield	Christmas St to Separation St	Fairfield		✓		✓		✓
Gillies St Fairfield	Heidelberg Rd to Separation St	Fairfield		✓		✓		✓
Rathmines Rd Fairfield	Heidelberg Rd to Railway Place	Fairfield		✓		✓		✓
Cunningham St Fairfield	High St to Ross St	Fairfield		✓		✓		✓
Parklands Av Alphington	Kelvin Rd to Yarana Rd	Alphington		✓		✓		✓
McLachlan St Northcote	Westgarth St to Cunningham St	Northcote		✓		✓		✓
Arthur St Fairfield	Separation St to McGregor St	Fairfield		✓		✓		✓
Fulham Rd Alphington	Heidelberg Rd to Livingstone St	Alphington		✓		✓		✓

Appendix 7 ELC Employee Induction Record

Employee Induction Record for Electrical Line Clearance Works within the City of Darebin Version 1.0 December 2018		 
Contractor to complete this section		
Contractor / DCC Internal		
Employee Name		
Role of employee	Line Clearance / Ground Crew / Chipping	
Cert 2 UET20312 initial date of certification	/ /	
Cert 2 UET20312 Refresher date expiry	/ /	
Relevant up to date licenses sighted for agreed role as above	Y/N	
Employee has been made aware of Darebin ELCMP and requirements to perform the agreed role in DCC	Y/N	
ELC Training matrix has been updated by ELC Contractor and emailed to DCC	Y/N	
Contractor representative (print name)	
Signature	
DCC to complete this section		
Updated ELC Training matrix has been received	Y/N	
Darebin responsible person (print name)	
Signature	
<i>Both Contractor and Darebin representatives are required to sign before employee can perform ELC works within DCC</i>		