

Public Realm

Master Specification

PR-LS-C11 Tree Pruning and Removal

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PR-LS-C11 Tree Pruning and Removal

1 General

- 1.1 This Part specifies the requirements for tree pruning, tree removal and stump removal, including the pruning and removal of vegetation for maintenance purposes.
- 1.2 This Part references the following documents:
 - a) AS 4373 Pruning of amenity trees.
 - b) Native Vegetation Act 1991.
 - c) Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016.
 - d) Controlled Substances Act 1984
 - e) Landscape South Australia Act 2019
 - f) [Native Vegetation Council Guideline: Clearance of Acacia longifolia \(South East NRM Region\)](https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/public/native_veg/nvc-guideline-acacia-longifolia-fact.pdf) (available from: https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/public/native_veg/nvc-guideline-acacia-longifolia-fact.pdf).
 - g) Native Vegetation Council: Guide to the Native Vegetation Regulations 2017.
 - h) Department Vegetation Removal Policy.
 - i) Department Restricted Clearance Envelope Roads List.
 - j) Department Rail and Roadside Significant Sites Environmental Instruction 21.5.
 - k) Department Weeds List.
 - l) Department Phytophthora (Dieback) Control Environmental Instruction 21.3.
- 1.3 Department publications are available from: <https://www.dit.sa.gov.au/standards/environment>.
- 1.4 The definition of “tree” and “pruning” in the Department Vegetation Removal Policy applies to this Part.
- 1.5 Roadside Significant Sites include sites that are of natural and cultural significance. The dataset of Roadside Significant Sites is available from DataSA and mapping tools such as NatureMaps and Location SA.. Works within a Roadside Significant Site must be undertaken in accordance with Department Rail and Roadside Significant Sites Environmental Instruction 21.5.
- 1.6 Where required under the Controlled Substances Act 1984, and the Controlled Substances (Pesticides) Regulations 2017, employees undertaking pest control work shall hold a current Pest Management Technician’s License.
- 1.7 The Contractor shall operate in accordance with Department Phytophthora (Dieback) Control Environmental Instruction 21.3. Prior to commencing works onsite, the Contractor shall undertake a Phytophthora risk assessment to determine the required hygiene procedures and disposal requirements for the Works.
- 1.8 For tree hollow relocation requirements, refer to PR-LS-C12 “Tree Hollow Relocation and Habitat Creation”.

2 Tree Pruning and Removal

- 2.1 All pruning, including an onsite assessment of tree(s) prior to pruning, will be undertaken in accordance with AS 4373.
- 2.2 The Contractor shall not prune or remove any tree other than those specified. The Contractor shall ensure that all approvals required in accordance with the Department Vegetation Removal Policy have been obtained prior to commencing vegetation pruning and removal work. If the Contractor removes or prunes vegetation without the required approvals, the Contractor will be liable to pay the offset amount in accordance with the Native Vegetation Act 1991 for native vegetation, the Planning,

Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 for regulated and significant trees, or the Department Vegetation Removal Policy for amenity vegetation.

- 2.3 If the Contractor recommends removal of a tree specified for pruning because they have assessed that it poses an unacceptable risk to persons or property, or will retain no habitat or amenity value following pruning, the Contractor shall immediately notify the Principal. The Contractor shall seek approval to remove the tree and subsequently remove the tree if approved by the Principal.
- 2.4 All pruning and tree removal, including on-ground support work, must be carried out by personnel who are trained / qualified to the appropriate level for the type of work being performed and have a full appreciation of the principles, techniques, hazards and safety procedures involved.
- 2.5 All equipment used must comply with any applicable standard (including noise and spark arrestor requirements), be properly maintained and in good working order, and be appropriate for the type of works being undertaken.
- 2.6 The Contractor shall carry out the work in a manner which minimises disturbance to the non-target vegetation, soil and watercourses, and does not spread weeds, Phytophthora or other soil borne pathogens.

Tree Pruning / Removal Methods

- 2.7 The Contractor is responsible for determining the most suitable method of tree pruning / removal unless stated otherwise by the Principal.
- 2.8 Equipment that wounds the bark or conductive tissues (e.g. spurs, spikes, hooks) must not be used on sections of the tree to be retained. All cutting tools must be sharp, and branches must be undercut to prevent splitting or tearing of the branch collar or trunk.
- 2.9 Clear felling may only be used for tree removal where there is sufficient area in all directions for the tree to be felled safely, without damage to persons, property or existing vegetation.
- 2.10 If tree climbers or an elevated platform is used, cut material may only be dropped to the ground if the Contractor ensures that there is no risk to any person, property or existing vegetation.

Control of Bees and Wasps

- 2.11 The Contractor is responsible for the control of any bees and wasps to enable the tree work to be undertaken safely.

Coastal Wattle Removal

- 2.12 Coastal Wattle (*Acacia longifolia*) may be pruned up to an additional 2 metres beyond the defined clearance envelope.
- 2.13 Within the South East Natural Resources region, clearance of Coastal Wattle to the property boundary can be undertaken in accordance with [Native Vegetation Council Guideline: Clearance of *Acacia longifolia* \(South East NRM Region\)](#).
- 2.14 Where the removal of Coastal Wattle is required, the Contractor shall cut the vegetation to ground level and treat the stump to prevent regrowth. Provided that it is not within a Roadside Significant Site, cut material may be left where it falls, ensuring that it is not left on the road shoulder or road verge. It is preferable to cut Coastal Wattle prior to setting seed. If the cut Coastal Wattle material contains seed, the cut material shall be removed from the site.

3 Clearance Envelope Pruning and Removal

- 3.1 Clearance envelope pruning and removal is the ongoing trimming of vegetation within an “envelope” of a defined height and width to allow for the safe passage of legal height vehicles.
- 3.2 The Contractor shall remove vegetation within the defined clearance envelope in accordance with the Department Vegetation Removal Policy. A number of different clearance envelope types, including standard and restricted, have been defined in the Department Vegetation Removal Policy, and roads categorised under the restricted type are detailed in the Department Restricted Clearance

- Envelope Roads List. The Contractor shall meet the requirements for each type of clearance envelope and be aware of the roads to which they apply as part of this Contract.
- 3.3 If the Contractor identifies a whole tree requiring removal from the clearance envelope, the Contractor shall immediately notify the Principal. The Contractor shall seek approval to remove the tree, and subsequently remove the tree if directed by the Principal.
 - 3.4 Where trees of high environmental, aesthetic or social significance are identified, exceptions may be applied by the Principal to enable these trees to be retained within a defined clearance envelope.

Chainsaw / Polesaw

- 3.5 Where a chainsaw or polesaw is used, pruning must conform to AS 4373.

Side Trimming

- 3.6 The use of flail mowers is not permitted. The use of other types of side trimming machines is permitted.
- 3.7 Side trimming machines may be used on areas identified as Roadside Significant Sites if side trimming does not have any adverse effect on the vegetation beyond the clearance envelope.
- 3.8 Side trimming machines must not be used within built up residential areas.
- 3.9 The Contractor shall minimise damage to vegetation (including ripping or tearing of limbs) by:
 - a) ensuring blades are sharp;
 - b) driving at a speed that enables branches to be cut cleanly; and
 - c) undertaking follow-up pruning by hand / chainsaw / polesaw (in accordance with AS 4373) on all branches over 50 mm diameter, and any torn or ripped branches within 1 week of side trimming.
- 3.10 If excessive ripping or tearing of limbs occurs, the Contractor shall cease work and modify work practices to ensure that this does not reoccur.

4 Fauna Protection and Habitat

- 4.1 The Contractor shall:
 - a) implement all reasonably practicable measures to minimise disturbance to fauna and to prevent injury to fauna;
 - b) under the supervision of a suitably qualified person, relocate any native fauna to a similar habitat if that fauna's habitat will be destroyed by the Contractor's work;
 - c) contact Fauna Rescue SA, the RSPCA or a veterinarian for advice if any fauna is injured by the Contractor's activities; and
 - d) notify the Principal if the Contractor's activities have injured or killed native fauna on the Site.
- 4.2 Removal or pruning of trees, particularly in rural or remote areas, may result in removal of tree hollows which provide important habitat for native fauna species. The Contractor:
 - a) shall relocate hollows that have been removed from a tree where material of between 400 mm and 1000 mm in length that contains hollows greater than 50 mm in diameter or hollow apertures greater than 40% of the trunk diameter is removed from a tree; and
 - b) shall place these hollows on the ground amongst existing vegetation in a location where they do not smother native vegetation or present a hazard to persons or property.

5 Disposal of Cut Material

Material Containing Weeds

- 5.1 All plant material containing environmental weed species and weeds species declared under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 must be removed from the site and disposed of at a licensed waste depot unless otherwise agreed to by the relevant authority. Environmental weed species are listed in the Department Weeds List.
- 5.2 The Contractor shall obtain all required permits (and comply with all conditions of the permits) for transportation of declared weed species from the relevant authority.
- 5.3 The Contractor shall operate in accordance with required hygiene procedures and disposal requirements for declared and environmental weed species.

Other Material

- 5.4 Unless specified otherwise, this plant material must be chipped and be spread on site. The chippings will:
 - a) not pose an unacceptable risk to public safety or property;
 - b) not be spread on pedestrian / shared use paths, vehicle access tracks, or the road shoulder;
 - c) not be spread on turf areas or lawns;
 - d) be evenly spread at a depth not exceeding 100 mm;
 - e) not obstruct drainage infrastructure such as swales, culverts and open drains;
 - f) not significantly increase the current fuel load;
 - g) avoid native and amenity vegetation, including, but not limited to, indigenous grasses and ground covers; and
 - h) not be spread or disposed of within any Roadside Significant Site.
- 5.5 If there is excess cut material, the Contractor shall remove that excess cut material from the Site.

6 Prevention of Suckering and Regrowth

- 6.1 The Contractor is responsible for determining the most suitable method of preventing suckering and regrowth. The Contractor shall ensure that suckering or regrowth of a removed tree does not occur within 12 months of the completion of the Contract.
- 6.2 The application of any herbicide by the Contractor shall avoid impacting all non-target vegetation and prevent spillage of herbicide on the soil. A red marking dye must be added to the herbicide mix.

7 Stump Removal

- 7.1 Where the stump location will be unpaved or unsealed, the Contractor shall cut the stump to existing ground level, ensuring no trip hazards remain.
- 7.2 Where the stump location will be paved or sealed, the Contractor shall grind the stump to at least 300 mm below the underside of the pavement level and backfill so that the surface does not present a hazard.
- 7.3 The Contractor shall not undertake stump removal of a tree utilising a method that will affect the health or stability of surrounding trees that are to be retained.
- 7.4 The Contractor shall not disturb underground services during tree stump removal.

8 Hold Points

- 8.1 There are no Hold Points referenced in this Part.
