

# ELECTRIC LINE CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

2026-2027

<b>File name &amp; Objective reference</b>	<b>Document date</b>	<b>Comments/amendments</b>	<b>Distributed</b>
Electric Line Clearance Management Plan 2026 -2027 (Version 5)	31.03.2026	Plan Reviewed	Rescinded
Electric Line Clearance Management Plan 2026 -2027 (Version 5)	27.04.2026	Plan Approved	Approved

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**Disclaimer:**

***Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations***

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

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

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

## STRUCTURE OF PLAN

The Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (Plan) has been structured to align with the relevant clauses of the *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025* (Vic).

The corresponding section of the Plan is numbered identically to the section of the Regulations to allow for cross referencing.

## DISTRIBUTION BUSINESSES

The names and contact details for the Distribution Businesses that operate within the Latrobe City Council are:

### **Organisation Name: Ausnet Services**

Contact name:	Spencer Few
Position:	Vegetation Management Lead
Address:	Level 31, 2 Southbank Boulevard Southbank, Vic 3006
Contact Number:	0439563262

## CONTRACT

Compliance works are currently undertaken by Contractors (the Contractor) under the following Latrobe City Council Contract (LCC - 760): Urban Block Pruning Contract.

## **PART 2 SECTION 9 PREPARATION OF A MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **9(2) Preparation of a Management Plan by March 31<sup>st</sup>**

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

The document has been prepared consistent with Latrobe City Council's *Council Plan* and *Latrobe 2026: The Community Vision for Latrobe Valley*, which articulate Council's commitment to:

- Enhance the quality and sustainability of streetscapes and parks across the municipality;
- Manage and protect the environment to ensure a lasting legacy for future generations; and,
- Ensure public infrastructure is maintained in accordance with community aspirations.

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

- Council will conduct an annual review by 31 March to address any changes in personnel, policy or programs;
- When the new annual Plan is uploaded, Council will remove the superseded plan at the same time, no later than 1 July each year;
- A complete review of the Plan will also be implemented should there be a change of Contractor or Contract methodology. This review could occur at any time;
- The amended Plan and the requirement to comply with the Plan will be brought to the attention of Council's Contractors at the scheduled monthly Contract meeting following the review;
- The amended Plan and the requirement to comply with the Plan will be brought to the attention of relevant Council personnel following each annual review; and,
- When Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) requests a copy of Council's Plan, it will be submitted within 14 days from the date of request.

Council reviews its Plan annually and prepares a new or amended plan as required by 31 March of each year. The Plan is stored in Council's document management system and will be available on Council's website [www.latrobe.vic.gov.au](http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au) from that date each year.

As part of the annual review, key staff members from Council's Regional City Planning and Assets Department will ensure that all specific policies, relevant documents, personnel documentation, training, programs, and resourcing requirements are reviewed and updated as required to ensure compliance with the Regulations.

No exemptions are in operation and therefore none are required to be displayed.

Council reviews the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan prior to the 31 March deadline each year to confirm compliance requirements and the status of the Plan's implementation. The review is an official component of Council's Risk Management Operational Policy – Version 2.0, which involves identification of operational risks and periodic review and reporting. Such reviews will be recorded and reported to Council's Authorising Officer.

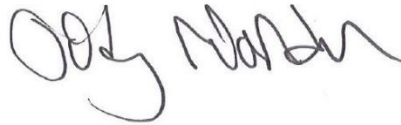


**9(4) Management Plan requirements**

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

Name: Jody Riordan, General Manager Infrastructure and Sustainability

Electronic Signature:



Address: 141 Commercial Road, Morwell, PO Box 264, 3840

Telephone Number: 1300 367 700

The General Manager Regional City Planning and Assets is Council's principal representative in its role as a Responsible Person under the *Electricity Safety Act 1998*.

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

Name: Will Cheatley

Position: Manager City Presentation

Address: 2-4 Driffield Road, Morwell, PO Box 264, 3840

Telephone Number: 1300 367 700

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

Name: Chris Dash

Position: Coordinator Open Space Maintenance

Address: 2-4 Driffield Road, Morwell, PO Box 264, 3840

Telephone Number: 1300 367 700

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

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE No: 1300 367 700 (24 hours, 7 days a week)

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

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

- To ensure public safety at all times in relation to fire risk, human injury and continuity of supply resulting from the contact between power lines and vegetation.
- Where reasonably practicable and within their level of competence, Council employees and Contractors will aim to ensure Electricity Safety.
- To achieve compliance with the *Electricity Safety Act 1998* and the *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025 (Vic)* and the incorporated Code of Practice (Code).
- To maintain the health and amenity of the Latrobe City community's trees by applying appropriate standards and practices. Where practicable within the limitations imposed by the Regulations our tree management will be best industry practice.
- In the unlikely event that compliance cannot be readily achieved by pruning, Council will implement a documented process of 6-monthly inspections on these trees while developing an alternative engineering solution in conjunction with the Distribution Business.
- To ensure protection of areas of important local and significant vegetation throughout the Council's Declared Area. This protection includes, but is not limited to, sites containing botanically, historically or culturally important vegetation, or vegetation of outstanding aesthetic or ecological significance, and/or the habitat of rare or endangered species.
- Establishing an open dialogue with relevant distribution company(s) vegetation management group to ensure both parties have a clear understanding of each other's priorities. This will be achieved through an annual meeting with relevant distribution company(s) managers and Latrobe City Council's responsible employee(s).
- To ensure effective management of vegetation to maximise the amenity value of Latrobe City's trees and ensure shading of pathways is continually increased to encourage physical activity in the community.
- To ensure provision of a safe working place for employees and Contractors undertaking vegetation clearance pruning and any employee or Contractors who conduct other maintenance vegetation works within the vicinity of powerlines.
- To ensure community satisfaction with the manner in which the necessary works are carried out.

Compliance with these objectives is measured by an ongoing process of auditing and Contract performance monitoring, as detailed in the relevant section 9(4)(n) of this Plan.

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

Latrobe City Council's Plan only covers trees on land that is managed by Latrobe City Council within the Declared Area. The trees are located in road reserve, parklands and other land/property managed by Latrobe City Council within the towns of Traralgon, Morwell, Moe/Newborough and Churchill.

The majority of the Declared Area managed by Council is rated Low Bushfire Risk (LBRA) based on the Country Fire Authority (CFA) Fire Hazard Ratings. Town maps highlighting Bushfire Risk Overlays are attached in [Appendix 1](#).

Latrobe City Council manages approximately 100,000 urban street and park land trees. Approximately 15,000 street trees are estimated to be impacted by electric lines inside the Declared Area.

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

The majority of the Declared Area managed by Council is rated Low Bushfire Risk (LBRA) based on the CFA Fire Hazard Ratings. Town maps highlighting the small areas of Hazardous Bushfire Risk Area (HBRA) are attached in [Appendix 1](#).

Council's Emergency Management Risk and Performance personnel meet annually with the local CFA to review Municipal Emergency Management processes and discuss the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). Any amendments to the overlay, or the boundaries of the Hazardous Bushfire Risk Areas (HBRA) are also discussed at these meetings.

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan is available on the Latrobe City Council website [www.latrobe.vic.gov.au](http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au).

**9(4)(h) EACH AREA THAT THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON KNOWS CONTAINS A TREE THAT THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON MAY NEED TO CUT OR REMOVE TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE AND THAT IS –**

**(i) Indigenous to Victoria**

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

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

There are no known trees of habitat significance for rare or endangered species listed in Council's Declared Area within the vicinity of powerlines that require pruning or clearing to ensure compliance with the Code.

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

Additional resources available to identify significant and Indigenous trees are -

- a. Reference to the Heritage Register as per the meaning of the *Heritage Act 1995* <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/>
- b. Reference to the National Trust Register and regular communication with the Local History Officer <http://trusttrees.org.au/>
- c. Reference to the Threatened Species Advisory Lists as published by the relevant State department <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/conserving-threatened-species/threatened-list>

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

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

No Environmental Significance Overlays apply to Indigenous or Significant trees within the Declared Area.

By their nature, these types of vegetation do not change quickly in normal circumstances. No trees of significance have been identified within the Declared Area during the historical auditing of the Declared Area conducted as part of Council's annual line clearance Block Pruning Program that will be affected by electric line clearance.

Council will review the Planning Scheme and consult with Council's Planning Department to identify any changes in State controls when this Plan is revised as described in 9(2).

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

(iii) Trees of cultural or environmental significance

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

Latrobe City Council has compiled a Significant Tree Register containing a list of trees Council considers significant within the municipality. The Significant Tree Register is a collection of trees that protects Council's natural and cultural tree heritage, and aids in future planning and decision-making by protecting significant trees. The list includes individual trees and groups of trees. This register was endorsed on 8 February 2021 and is available on Council's website [www.latrobe.vic.gov.au](http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au).

Trees identified within Latrobe City Council Significant Tree Register that require pruning to achieve compliance are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Significant Trees Requiring Pruning to Achieve Compliance

Tree Species	Location	Voltage	LIS# - Pole 1	LIS# - Pole 2
<i>Pinus brutia</i> (Lone Pine)	Princess Drv - Morwell	22kV	2618418	2618419

<i>Ulmus procera</i> (English Elm)	Princess Drv - Morwell	22kV	2618417	2618416
<i>Ulmus procera</i> (English Elm)	Princess Drv - Morwell	22kV	2618417	2620276

By their nature, these types of vegetation do not change quickly in normal circumstances. Council will review the Planning Scheme and consult with Council's Planning Department to identify any changes in State controls when this Plan is revised as described in 9(2).

**9(4)(i) DETAILS OF METHODS THAT WILL BE USED TO AVOID AND MINIMISE THE IMPACT ON VEGETATION REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH 9(4)(h)**

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

The presence of any previously unidentified tree of significance will be reviewed as part of the annual review of this Plan using the processes and resources outlined in 9(4)(h).

If a specimen of high value, or a tree with or likely to contain habitat hollows, is identified by Council as being non-compliant, the tree will be individually assessed to ensure that pruning is minimised, and the environmental value of the tree is preserved as far as practicable. This may include managing the tree consistent with Clauses 4, 5 or 6 of the Code, or on an increased inspection or pruning cycle. They will also be plotted on Council's mapping system and monitored to ensure that minimal impact is made in the event of works being required. If Council intends to cut or, on the advice of its Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist, remove a tree that has been identified in 9(4)(h) as known habitats for fauna listed as:

- a) *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998* Threatened List  
<https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/conserving-threatened-species/threatened-list>
- b) Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/victorian-aboriginal-heritage-register>
- c) Threatened Invertebrate Fauna List  
<https://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicthreatenedlist.pl>
- d) Threatened Vertebrate Fauna List  
[https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/50450/Advisory-List-of-Threatened-Vertebrate-Fauna\\_FINAL-2013.pdf](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/50450/Advisory-List-of-Threatened-Vertebrate-Fauna_FINAL-2013.pdf)
- e) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* List of Threatened Flora  
<http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicthreatenedlist.pl?wanted=flora>

Prior to commencing works, Council will make available to the Contractor any relevant Significant Tree documentation including Council's Significant Tree Register.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**1) Identification of Work Required**

Latrobe City Council has identified areas near townships where powerline clearance works are required within the Declared Area. Each area is a defined geographic region and referred to as a 'Block'. These Blocks are included as polygons in Councils Geographic Information System (GIS). Maps indicating the geographic area covered by each Block, LBRA and HBRA inside the Declared Area are reflected in the associated Town Maps included in Appendix 1.

Each Block containing trees that require clearance from electrical infrastructure has been incorporated into a 'Block Pruning Program' that was developed using historical data. Trees within each Block are pruned as part of a two-year cycle. Information linking each tree inside the Declared Area with the Block Pruning Program is included in the Latrobe City Council Tree Database. The following schedule applies to the Block Pruning Program cycle:

- Year 1 - Blocks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5; and,
- Year 2 - Blocks 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Latrobe City Council engages suitably qualified Contractors to undertake electric line clearance tree pruning inside the Declared Area within each Block. The management timeframes associated with engagement of suitably qualified Contractors, timing of work and auditing is included in Table 2. It is expected that the Contractor(s) will complete five Blocks and the HBRA each year. These deadlines are specified in the Block Pruning Program Contract.

Table 2: Block Pruning Program Management timelines

Tree Management Schedule of Works	Month
Notifications publicly announced (14 days prior to works commencing)	July

Works Initiated - 5 Block Biennial Cycle	1 August to 31 January
Works Audited (per Section <b>9(4)(o)</b> )	1 August to 31 January
HBRA Zones within LCC Boundaries Audited	August to November
HBRA Zones within LCC audit rectification works undertaken by in-house LCC crew and/or Contractor.	30 November

To ensure that tree amenity is considered, the Contract requires the Contractor to refer any tree that cannot be pruned to comply with the standards in this Plan to the Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist for follow up inspection and action. Another requirement within the Contract Specification is that only adequate equipment is used to undertake the requested tree maintenance. These requirements are also reiterated during pre-commencement meetings with each Contractor prior to beginning work.

On time delivery of the Block Pruning Program ensures trees are pruned regularly, and clearance spaces are maintained. Trees pruned as part of the Block Pruning Program are audited per Section **9(4)(o)** herein.

Consultation is undertaken as required with the distribution business representative shown on [page 5](#) to maintain open communication, discuss clearance issues and/or:

- To request assistance for suppressions and shutdowns;
- To clarify Declared Area responsibilities;
- Changes to regulations;
- Urgent or non-compliant works; and,
- Other issues as they arise.

## 2) Hazard Trees

The *Electricity Safety Act 1998* (Victoria) Section 86B provides that a municipal Council must specify, within its Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP):

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

Latrobe City Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) refers to this Electric Line Clearance Management Plan in relation to hazard trees.

During the inspection of the Declared Area, Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist, will also inspect areas adjacent to the clearance space or regrowth space for trees that could become a hazard to the lines.

Note: For the purpose of this Plan, a hazard tree is a tree that possesses readily observed hazardous faults which, if not actioned, will negatively impact distribution assets. These trees may possess characteristics such as:

- Large cavities, severe decay, major cracks or hanging branches; and/or
- Regrowth into the clearance space before next scheduled visit; and/or,
- Vegetation in HBRA found in clearance space after declaration.

In a situation where a tree is identified that is likely to fall onto or otherwise come into contact with an electric line, Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will assess the hazardous tree and program the required minimum pruning to make the site safe. Before returning to re-assess the site Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will conduct any required notifications before rectification follow up tree works, as per the description in section [9\(4\)\(p\)](#) herein.

In situations where Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist assessment confirms the likelihood of contact with the electric line having regard to foreseeable local conditions including weather and ground instability, Council will remove or cut the hazard tree as per the Code. In the event of a hazard tree being identified as a culturally significant, environmentally significant or habitat tree, Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist where possible, will minimise the impact on the tree or fauna as previously outlined, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Code, the Schedule to the Code or to make an unsafe situation safe.

Records of all urgent works and completion of the notification requirements will be recorded and logged electronically under Councils 'Pathways' Works Request System. Information included within this documentation includes the date of entry, location, and completed works date.

### **3) Assessment of Regrowth Space**

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

The responsible person assessing the vegetation will be Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist, as per the description in section [9\(4\)\(p\)](#) herein.

Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will observe the amount of regrowth for each species pruned and use this information when defining pruning frequencies required to achieve compliance with the Code. Consideration will also be given to the voltage, span length, relevant pruning cycle, and the significance of each tree proposed to be pruned.

Subject to the significance of the tree, tree pruning frequencies may be adjusted to accommodate observed growth rates and achieve compliance with the Code.

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

$$\text{Clearance (m)} = \text{regrowth (m/year)} \times \text{cycle (2 years)}$$

Examples of this formula:

*Melaleuca linariifolia*

- *regrowth 30cm per annum X 2 years = 60cm clear of the Clearance Space*

*Fraxinus sp.*

- *regrowth 120cm per annum X 2 years = 240cm clear of the Clearance Space*

Latrobe City Council have identified that the predominant tree species that may require pruning for electric line clearance inside the Declared Area (Table 3).

Table 3: Predominant tree species found within the Declared Area.

<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	<i>Grevillea robusta</i>
<i>Corymbia ficifolia</i>	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxydon</i>	<i>Platanus sp.</i>
<i>Eucalyptus nicholii</i>	<i>Robinia sp.</i>
<i>Fraxinus sp.</i>	<i>Quercus palustris</i>

Latrobe City Council has a long-term strategy to reduce the likelihood of vegetation encroaching into the clearance space of electric lines. All tree planting programs undertaken by Latrobe City Council will recognise the inherent problems with the planting of vegetation in the vicinity of power lines. Where overhead services are present, tree selection will generally be made from the Latrobe City Council Tree List using tree species that are less likely to encroach on powerlines at maturity. The Latrobe City Council Street Tree List is reviewed annually and is available on Council's website [https://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Street\\_Tree\\_List](https://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Street_Tree_List)

From 2005-2019, Council implemented an Inappropriate Street Tree Removal Replacement Program. As part of this ongoing program, Council removed and replaced more than 6,500 inappropriate street trees and the majority of tree species listed in Table 3 (above) located under powerlines.

#### **4) Pruning to maintain the Clearance Space**

Proactive clearance pruning is undertaken to maintain the Clearance Space around electric lines. The pruning is undertaken by Council's Contractor as part of its Block Pruning Program outlined in Section **9(4)(j)(i)(1)**. Council's internal Tree Maintenance Team may also cut trees identified as being in, or likely to grow into, the Clearance Space in the case of urgent or reactive works.

Hazardous trees identified during these routine inspections are classified as Emergency Work and programmed for pruning or removal as required. Work is scheduled according to the hazard potential presented by the tree or part deemed hazardous.

All pruning works will be undertaken in accordance with industry Best Practice methods. Detailed assessment of the specific pruning requirements of each tree will be assessed and recorded by the Contractor. Council's Contractor will then prune each tree in accordance with the work instructions issued by Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist in accordance with Council's Block

Pruning Contract. The regrowth space required beyond the minimum recommended clearance space detailed within the Code will be forecast in accordance with species type, local conditions and pruning frequency.

Contractors and personnel working on behalf of Council and shall at all times comply with the training and safety requirements detailed in [9\(4\)\(p\)](#).

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

As part of its normal Contract reporting, Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will ensure that the Contractor has appropriately trained and inducted its employees to these requirements.

Trees that cannot be successfully pruned in accordance with the Code will be brought to the attention of the Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist. They will inspect the tree and if they believe the tree cannot be pruned to comply with the Code, Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will investigate and implement an alternative method to ensure safety and continuity of supply.

Following completion of pruning works, a Council Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will undertake visual inspections of the entire LBRA within the Declared Area. The inspections identify any trees which are in breach of or may encroach the clearance spaces specified in the Regulations in the following six months. As part of the inspection a determination is also made in regard to the requirement for interim pruning as per the sequence listed in Table 2. This inspection also includes the identification of any hazards outside the clearance and regrowth spaces that may require assessment or correction. Non-compliant trees shall be recorded.

Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist also undertakes an annual visual inspection of the entire HBRA from August to November situated within the Declared Area, prior to the declaration of the fire season by the CFA.

If non-compliance is identified, Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will liaise with internal staff or the Contractor to determine the cause of the Non-compliance. Where the Non-compliance is caused by unanticipated regrowth, the species and growing conditions will be identified to determine if this is likely to occur again, or with other trees in the vicinity of powerlines. Appropriate inspection regimes will be implemented to address any identified issues.

Performance management measures will be initiated if the Block pruning work was undertaken by Council's Tree Maintenance Team and the Non-compliance is a failure to follow the requirements specified in [9\(4\)\(i\)](#). Where the Block pruning work was undertaken by a Contractor, and the Non-compliance is deemed a failure to meet the Contract specification, this will be documented as a Contract non-conformance.

Any non-conformances identified during these inspections that require follow up tree maintenance work are incorporated in reactive tree maintenance programs and classified as “Critical” or “Non-compliance”. Critical signifies any tree that is growing through or touching high voltage lines. Non-compliance indicates trees that are within clearance space of low voltage lines, whether touching or not.

Remedial pruning works are carried out within the following time frames:

- Critical works will be reported to Ausnet Services Vegetation Management Lead within five working days for Ausnet service to follow up and action; and,
- Non-compliance works will be carried out within four weeks.

In the event that the Latrobe City Council’s Tree Maintenance Teams are not able to complete these reactive works within the specified time frame, Council’s Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist will, subject to available resources and competing priorities, arrange for an approved Contractor to carry out the works within the time frames.

Reports of Non-compliance from relevant distribution company(s), residents or other sources will be investigated by Council’s Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist. Once the investigation has been completed either Latrobe City Council’s Tree Maintenance Teams or a Contractor will carry out any pruning action to rectify a confirmed Non-compliance.

Records of all urgent or reactive works and completion of the notification requirements will be recorded electronically under Councils ‘Pathways’ Works Request System. Information included within this documentation the date of entry, location, and completed works date.

## **5) Alternative methods that may be adopted to maintain the clearance space**

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

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

Council’s Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist may undertake a cost benefit analysis on a case-by-case basis where vegetation significance or public need dictates an alternative course should be pursued.

The following alternative methods may also be adopted for maintaining clearance if a person objects to the methods proposed by Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist:

- Reduced pruning cycle;
- Removal/Replacement with suitable species;
- Use of Aerial Bundled Cable or covered conductors;
- Powerlines to be re-routed;
- Undergrounding of powerlines; and,
- Other engineering solutions.

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

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

In the Declared Area, long spans will require additional allowance for sag and sway. The number of spans affected is likely to be minimal. Latrobe City Council will request the location of, and minimum clearances required (including the additional allowance for sag and sway), for any spans greater than 100m in length within LBRA, and greater than 45m in length in HBRA from the Distribution Business. A list of these spans and allowances, once obtained, will be recorded in this Plan and made available to all relevant personnel and Contractors.

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

Any information Latrobe City Council obtains from the distribution company referencing long spans/sag and sway will be kept in Council's document management system for a minimum of 5 years.

**9(4)(k) THE PROCEDURES TO BE ADOPTED IF IT IS NOT PRACTICABLE TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF AS 4373 WHILE CUTTING A TREE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE.**

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

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

- Safe approach distances are maintained;
- A safe work environment when working at heights;
- Minimum clearance is achieved; and,

- An affordable level of productivity.

In order to achieve pruning of acceptable quality, all pruning personnel, either Latrobe City Council employees or Contractors, must have the following as a minimum:

- Formal training as outlined in [9\(4\)\(p\)](#) that incorporates modern tree pruning practices including awareness of AS4373 and natural target pruning principles; and,
- Project induction including awareness training in the Code and this Plan.

As part of Latrobe City Council's normal Contract management processes, pruning quality will be assessed by Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist and poor performance will be identified based on the standards in [9\(4\)\(o\)](#). Normal Contract management processes will be used to address poor performance, including Contract meetings, increased compliance audits, remedial training and, where necessary, application of Contract non-conformance penalties.

Should Non-compliance with AS4373 be identified on multiple occasions without reasonable justification, staff and Contractors will be requested to provide evidence of refresher training and/or alternatively demonstrate an understanding by all staff of AS4373. Further Non-compliance could potentially result in performance management measures being implemented or the loss of the Contract.

If compliance of AS4373 is unable to be achieved the following solutions will be investigated:

**Short-term:**

- Increased inspection and pruning cycles, or
- Tree removal and replacement with a more suitable alternative.

**Long-term:**

- Investigation into conversion of open wire to insulated or covered conductors, or
- Request to DB for alternative cross-arm configurations, or
- Request to DB for underground cabling, or
- Request to DB for another innovative, appropriate, alternative technical solution.

**9(4)(l) 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.**

Latrobe City Council does not hold approval, nor intend to apply for any alternative compliance mechanisms at the time of preparation of this Plan.

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

*(i) that the Responsible Person holds -*

Latrobe City Council does not hold approval or intend to apply for any alternative compliance mechanisms at the time of preparation of this Plan.

*(ii) that is in effect*

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

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

Performance measures will be monitored via Latrobe City Council's monthly performance management reporting system (Sytle).

The following Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) detailed in Table 4 (below) will be used to assess the performance of the Latrobe City Council under this Plan:

Table 4: Key Performance Indicators

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Measurement method</b>	<b>KPI</b>
Completion of the inspection/pruning programs according to schedule outlined in <u>9(4)(i)</u> of the Electric Line Clearance Management (ELCMP).	Audit inspections and works ensuring timelines are met	100% completion prior to 31 January each year.
A reduction in the Code Clearance breaches identified through the inspection program	Audit external breaches from the Distribution Business (DB) and Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) breaches.	Maintain compliance of the Code Clearances.
Compliance to the current Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (ELCMP).	ELCMP uploaded to Council website and submitted to ESV upon request	ELCMP is completed prior to 31 March each year.
Providing a safe working place for employees, Contractors and residents. Ensuring safety to the public and property.	Monitor reports of incidents	A reduction in incidents against previous years data.
Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025	Monitor results from audit breaches and the DB audit breaches.	99% Compliance with zero major breaches.

Protect areas of important vegetation such as botanically, historically or culturally important or significant vegetation.	Monitor reports of any affected issues in relation to important vegetation	A reduction in relevant issues against previous years data.
Manage vegetation to maximise the amenity value of Latrobe City Council's trees.	Monitor public complaints regarding tree aesthetics. Monitor Pathways Works Request Systems with line clearance related customer requests	No year-on-year increase in complaints received
Minimise the danger of electrocution and electric lines causing fires.	Monitor reports of Line Clearance related incidents, including Worksafe cautions and weekly publicised incidents.	Zero electrocutions and/or fires started from Latrobe City Council (LCC) managed vegetation.
Maintain continuity of the power supply.	Adhering to LCC inspection pruning programs. 100% completion of targets outlined in <u>9(4)(i)</u> of ELCMP.	Zero power outages caused by LCC managed vegetation.
Provide the community with adequate notification of vegetation works required throughout the municipality	Monitor public complaints regarding tree notification issues.	Pro-active works: Advertise Council Block Pruning Program on Council webpage  Re-active works: letter drop / notification of Line Clearance works to residential property located directly in front of tree requiring works.

Internal crews and the Contractor supervisory personnel responsible for implementing the relevant sections of the Plan are advised of the performance standards under the Plan at toolbox or Contract meetings.

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

The audit processes undertaken by Latrobe City Council staff, and Contractor staff, working on Latrobe City Council's Block Pruning Program are outlined below.

Audits are undertaken by Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist with the relevant electrical line industry experience and qualifications to ensure powerline pruning works are compliant with the Code during tree maintenance operations.

Fortnightly Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Mobile Work Site Audits (MWSA) are scheduled to be conducted during the term of the Contract which runs between August and January of each year. OHS Audit reminders are programmed within Council's OHS management system (MYOSH)

Contractors are also required to self-audit their powerline pruning standards to ensure they are compliant with the Code. These audits must be submitted weekly to Council. The audit criteria includes:

- Time, date and location;
- Checks to ensure pruning is compliant with this Plan;
- Checks to ensure personnel are adequately qualified and competent;
- Recording any instances of unacceptable pruning practices;
- Recording any remedial action to be taken; and,
- Checks to ensure Traffic Management processes are adequate.

The audit maps and number of trees that have and/or will be in breach of the regulation will be recorded. The audit results are reported in a Monthly Findings Report to the Contractor.

An example of the audit documentation can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

Any rectification work identified as part of an audit is referred to the Contractor with payment of completion of works withheld until all works are completed.

Any remedial action not carried out to the satisfaction of Council will be reported back to the Contractor for further remedial action at the Contractor's expense. Failure to carry out such remedial works will result in the invoice for those works not being approved for payment. The Contractor will only be paid for works that are completed to the satisfaction of Council.

In cases where the Contractor is in dispute with Council about the required remedial work, Council's internal Tree Maintenance Team will complete Non-compliance remedial works to ensure the clearance space is maintained.

All follow up works will be completed and recorded within the Contractually required timeframes or as soon as practical.

Weekly toolbox meetings are held with Latrobe City Council's internal Tree Maintenance Team staff. Any issues raised about the inspection cycles and audit process are documented and investigated.

If any works are identified during the audit, letters to the affected resident/residents will be issued advising of tree pruning works required. This will include time frames and the contact details for Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist. A copy of the notification template can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

Latrobe City Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist also records notes, where required, in their work diary while carrying out inspections. This will note the day, time and reason for remedial action.

Latrobe City Council retains records for seven years. These records will show tree and powerline inspections, worksite audits, and include any work undertaken as a result of requests/complaints from residents, or AusNet Services.

Where assistance is required by others such as the distribution company, then a consultation process shall be used to assist in attending to the Non-compliance as soon as possible.

Following investigation of a Non-compliance and the establishment of the cause, the importance of compliance with this Plan and the Code will be drawn to the attention of the persons concerned. If an occasion occurs the notification shall be in writing, and the incident recorded on file.

The Contractor and personnel undertaking line clearance pruning will be audited on the following criteria -

**Statutory Clearance of Vegetation - 100 % compliance**

All trees pruned must comply with the clearance requirements as stipulated in the Contract Tender Document's Specifications and to the current Code unless a specific management option has been approved for that tree, such as applying Clause 5 or 6 of the Code.

Latrobe City Council's objective is to achieve a biennial cycle. If this clearance results in the aesthetics of the tree being dramatically altered, or the tree permanently damaged, the Contractor must notify Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist. Latrobe City Council will then conduct a site inspection and make the final decision as to the correct clearance for the tree, or if removal is the only option.

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

**Contract Requirements - 95 % compliance**

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

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

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

**Pruning Techniques - 85% compliance**

For each tree pruned, a minimum of 95% of final pruning cuts must be compliant with AS4373 *Pruning of amenity trees* and best management practices.

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

**Site Condition - 95 % compliance**

All sites must be left tidy with no debris visible.

### **Record keeping**

All records will be stored in Latrobe City Council's document management system CI Anywhere, Pathways or Councils Tree Management software program (Forestreet). The Contractor will forward all relevant records to Latrobe City Council in accordance with the terms and conditions clearly set out in the Contractual agreement.

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

Latrobe City Council shall ensure that all trees are pruned according to industry Best Practice as a minimum standard. They shall further ensure that all Contractors and employees are appropriately qualified and trained, with appropriate certificates approved by Energy Safe Victoria. This includes current annual refresher training relevant to their works roles for both themselves and their equipment that legally entitles them to undertake the work. A record of the sighting of these documents shall be kept by the Latrobe City Council and shall be updated annually.

A skills matrix for personnel working on Latrobe City Council's line clearance program is provided in Table 5 (below).

Table 5: Skills Matrix for Personnel Working on Latrobe City Council’s Line Clearance Program

Role	Qualification(s)	Other Licences / Training that may apply
Tree Worker - ground crew	Certificate II Arboriculture or equivalent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Approach Distances – Vegetation Work</li> <li>• Safe Approach Distances to SWER</li> <li>• Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (HLTAID009)</li> <li>• Provide First Aid in an ESI environment (UETTDRRF10)</li> <li>• Licence to operate a boom-type elevating work platform (boom length 11 metres or more) (TLILIC0005)</li> <li>• Use elevated platform to cut vegetation above ground level near live electrical apparatus (UETTDRCV25) or</li> <li>• Control vegetation in the vicinity of electrical apparatus from an elevated work platform (UETTDRCV004)</li> <li>• Apply pruning techniques to vegetation control near live electrical apparatus (UETTDRCV33) or</li> <li>• Control vegetation using pruning techniques (UETDRCV007)</li> <li>• Perform EWP rescue (UETTDRRF03) or equivalent</li> <li>• Perform EWP controlled descent escape (UETTDRRF08)</li> <li>• Elevated Work Platforms High Risk Work Licence</li> <li>• UETTDRCV21 – Use climbing techniques to cut vegetation above ground near live electrical apparatus or</li> </ul>
EWP Operator/EWP Safety Observer	UET20312 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control	
Tree Climbing	or	
Tree Climbing/ Climbing Safety Observer	UET20321 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UETDRVC006 Control Vegetation in the Vicinity of live electrical apparatus from within a tree</li> <li>• UETDRVC101 – Perform rescue from within a tree in the vicinity of live electrical apparatus</li> <li>• Operate A Mobile Chipper FWPHAR2206 or</li> <li>• Operate a mobile chipper/mulcher (FWPHAR2208)</li> <li>• Chainsaw accreditation equivalent to AHCMOM213</li> <li>• Manual Handling Training (TLID1001)</li> <li>• Noise Conservation</li> <li>• Sun Smart training</li> <li>• Appropriate driving licence</li> <li>• Appropriate, Accredited Traffic management training.</li> </ul>
<p>Crew Leader</p> <p>EWP Operator/EWP Safety Observer</p>	<p>UET20312 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control</p> <p>or</p> <p>UET20321 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control</p> <p>Certificate III Arboriculture</p> <p>Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment (UETDRVC24)</p> <p>or</p> <p>Assess vegetation in an electricity supply industry environment (UETDRVC002)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EWP operator/EWP safety observers training, plus the following</li> <li>• Experienced and competent in the supervision of a large group of employees.</li> </ul>
<p>Arborist</p> <p>Line clearance assessment</p>	<p>Certificate III Arboriculture</p> <p>Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment (UETDRVC24)</p> <p>or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid Level 2 certificate</li> <li>• Sun Smart training</li> <li>• Driver’s licence</li> </ul>

	Assess vegetation in an electricity supply industry environment (UETDRVC002)	
Supervisor Arborist or Suitably Qualified Arborist  Defect assessment	<p>Certificate III Arboriculture</p> <p>Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment (UETDRVC24)</p> <p>or</p> <p>Assess vegetation in an electricity supply industry environment (UETDRVC002)</p> <p>Perform a ground-based tree defect evaluation module (AHCARB408) or equivalent + at least 3 years of field experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid Level 2 certificate</li> <li>• Sun Smart training</li> <li>• Driver's licence</li> <li>• 5 years industry experience</li> </ul>
Supervisor Arborist  Hazard Tree and Risk Assessment	<p>Diploma in Arboriculture + 5 years' experience</p> <p>Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment (UETDRVC24)</p> <p>or</p> <p>Assess vegetation in an electricity supply industry environment (UETDRVC002)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid Level 2 certificate</li> <li>• Sun Smart training</li> <li>• Driver's licence</li> <li>• 5 years industry experience</li> </ul>

Latrobe City Council employees or Contractors must also follow the minimum distances specified in the *Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019* (specifically outlined in regulation 616) when undertaking tree clearing works, and comply with the limits of approach as outlined in:

- The Blue Book; and,
- *ESV Electrical Safety Rules for Vegetation Management Work Near Overhead Powerlines by Non-Electrical Workers*.

Notification of affected parties will also be undertaken per the requirements of the Code with further detail provided in section 9(4)(q) below.

Latrobe City Council does not require persons undertaking tree cutting works to have a minimum level of experience in order to undertake the work. As long as individuals have the required training and operate to the training and safety standards outlined in the Regulations, a minimum level of experience is not required. All personnel undertaking pruning will be made aware of the pruning quality requirements detailed in [9\(4\)\(k\)](#) during worksite induction and be suitably qualified defined in section [9\(4\)\(p\)](#).

Where a tree that is likely to fall onto or otherwise come into contact with an electric line the tree will be risk assessed by a Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist. If Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist is not practically available, an assessment will be undertaken by a Suitably Qualified Arborist. The assessment will take into account foreseeable local conditions and consider the classification of the tree. Based on the Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist's assessment and recommendations, the hazard tree will be actioned in compliance with the Code.

Latrobe City Council shall inspect the work carried out by staff and Contractors throughout the period that active pruning is taking place. A record of these inspections shall be kept, citing any evidence of sub-standard pruning practice and filed at the Council's Office as per the Code.

Latrobe City Council OHS personnel conduct annual desk top audits of their Contractors. During these audits training certificates and qualifications will be evaluated to ensure only competent and experienced Contractor employees are utilised by Latrobe City Council as specified in the Contract.

The required training and skills matrix for Contractor personnel against their designated work roles is included by the Contractor in their monthly report and review at the monthly Contract meeting. Personnel found not to be appropriately trained for the designated task must be removed from line clearance work tasks as specified in the Contract.

#### **9(4)(q) NOTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION PROCEDURES**

Latrobe City Council understands the importance of providing notification of programmed tree pruning works to affected persons. All tree works carried out in Latrobe City Council must follow Latrobe City Councils "Tree Maintenance Notification Policy, May 2023" which is available for viewing at [www.latrobe.vic.gov.au](http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au).

Please note Council's Tree Maintenance Notification Policy is currently under review and may include outdated references to previous legislative documents. These will be updated during internal Policy renewal processes.

Notifications will be advertised on Latrobe City Council website no less than 14 and no more than 60 days prior to the commencement of works.

If this timeline cannot be achieved, updates will be posted on Latrobe City Council web page and social media platform, detailing the new timeline.

#### **9(4)(r) DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES.**

The Citizen's Complaints Resolution Policy and associated procedure (13 PRO-3) are used to resolve internal and external disputes that may arise during the period of this plan. The policy is available on the Latrobe City Council website [www.latrobe.vic.gov.au](http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au).

##### a. Internal Dispute Resolution

The person who is responsible for resolving disputes between the responsible person, members of the public, or between Latrobe City Council and the Distribution Businesses is:

Name: Chris Dash

Position: Coordinator Open Space Maintenance

Address: PO Box 264, Morwell 3840

Telephone Number: 1300 367 700

Throughout the process, Latrobe City Council may contact complainants to discuss their concerns or to ask for more information.

In the event of any dispute or difference arising between the responsible authority (Latrobe City Council) and members of the public (either during the period of this plan or after its completion), concerning any matter connected with this plan, **where the dispute is not resolved to the satisfaction of either party**, an external dispute resolution procedure will be followed.

##### b. External Dispute Resolution

- 1) The concerned parties may appoint representatives to resolve (or assist with resolving) the dispute on their behalf, provided that reasonable notice in writing is given.
- 2) Depending on the nature of the issue, the parties will mutually agree to engage an external facilitator/representative from one of the following bodies:
  - i. Victorian Chapter of the Institute of Arbitrators;
  - ii. Consumer Affairs Victoria;
  - iii. Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria; and/or,
  - iv. Victorian Tree Industry Organisation.

- 3)** Each party will pay their own costs associated with external dispute resolution, and equally share the cost associated with engaging any external facilitator.

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

## **PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **DIVISION 1 – ROLE OF RESPONSIBLE PERSONS**

#### **(4) Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines**

Where a tree is identified with a structural branch within the Clearance Space >130mm in diameter and removal of the branch will significantly alter the shape of the tree or compromise its structure, Latrobe City Council may undertake an individual risk assessment of the tree to determine whether this exception to the normal clearance requirements is appropriate.

The Exception relates to a structural branch with a part that is >130mm diameter within the Clearance Space for spans that are:

- (i) Less than or equal to 40m in length and the branch is >150mm from the line, or
- (ii) Greater than 40m in length and the branch is >300mm from the line.

If Latrobe City Council chooses to apply this Exception, an individual risk assessment of the tree will be undertaken every 14 months to determine that the branch does not have a defect or otherwise pose an unreasonable risk. All assessments for trees to which this exception may be or is applied will be undertaken by Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist with all relevant training as detailed in Part 1 [9\(4\)\(p\)](#) of this Plan.

All assessment records will be held as per Latrobe City Council data retention policies, and for a period of no less than 5 years.

#### **(5) Exception to minimum clearance space for small branches around insulated low voltage electric lines**

Where it is identified that foliage and branches less than 10mm in diameter have grown within the Clearance Space of a low voltage insulated cable, the pruning records for the tree will be reviewed to ensure the tree has been pruned to comply with the minimum Clearance Space in the previous 12 months. If it has, the tree will be noted as requiring pruning during the next cycle of the annual clearance program. If it has not, the Contractor will be required to prune the tree within 7 days of receiving the non-conformance. This will not be treated as a Contractual non-conformance or breach of Contract.

#### **(6) Exception to minimum clearance space for SMALL branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas**

If Latrobe City Council identifies any tree(s) to which it intends to apply this exception, it will be inspected every 14 months by Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist, with any identified works undertaken to mitigate risks prior to being included and listed on the tree exemption register.

For these tree(s) it will not be required to ensure that a particular branch of a tree for which it has clearance responsibilities is clear of the minimum clearance space for a span of an electric line if:

- The electric line is:
  - An uninsulated cable; and
  - A low voltage electric line; and
- The branch is less than 10 mm at the point at which it enters the minimum clearance space; and
- The branch is no more than 500mm inside the minimum clearance space; and
- The point at which the branch originates is below the height of the electric line; and
- In the case of a branch that comes within the minimum clearance space around the middle 2 thirds of the span, the span is fitted with:
  - one conductor spreader if the length of the span does not exceed 45 metres; or
  - 2 conductor spreaders if the length of the span exceeds 45 metres; and
- the responsible person has completed an assessment of the risks posed by the branch; and
- the responsible person has implemented measures to effectively mitigate the identified risks.

All assessment records will be held as per Latrobe City Council data retention policies, and for a period of no less than 5 years.

#### **(7) Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas**

Where a tree is identified with a structural branch within the Clearance Space >130mm in diameter and removal of the branch will significantly alter the shape of the tree or compromise its structure, Latrobe City Council may undertake an individual risk assessment of the tree to determine whether this Exception to the normal clearance requirements is appropriate.

This Exception relates to a structural branch with a part that is >130mm diameter within the Clearance Space for spans that are:

- (i) Less than 45m in length, contain one conductor spreader and the branch is >500mm from the line, or
- (ii) Greater than 45m in length, contains two conductor spreaders and the branch is >500mm from the line.

If Latrobe City Council chooses to apply this Exception, an individual risk assessment of the tree will be undertaken every 14 months to determine that the branch does not have a defect or otherwise pose an unreasonable risk. All assessments for trees to which this exception may be or is applied will be undertaken by Council's Supervisor Arborist/Suitably Qualified Arborist with all relevant training as detailed in Part 1 9(4)(p) of this Plan.

All assessment records will be held as per Latrobe City Council data retention policies, and for a period of no less than 5 years.

#### **(8) Owner or operator of transmission line must manage trees around minimum clearance space**

The Latrobe City Council is not an owner or operator of transmission lines and is therefore not responsible for electrical clearance of vegetation around transmission lines.

**(9) Responsible person may cut or remove hazard tree**

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

- 1) All affected persons;
- 2) The occupier of the land on which the tree was cut or removed; and,
- 3) If a tree was removed; the owner of the land on which the tree was removed.

Latrobe City Council Tree Maintenance Team and Contractors provide letters to the property letterbox at the time of pruning or removal. An example of the notice is included in [Appendix 2](#).

The staff utilised for urgent pruning or removal will record all urgent works and completion of the notification requirement including;

- a) Where and when the cutting or removal was undertaken;
- b) Why the cutting or removal was required; and,
- c) The last inspection of the section of the electric line where the cutting or removal was required.

Where the urgent cutting or removal is required:

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

The staff utilised for urgent cutting or removal as a result of unanticipated regrowth, will not remove or cut the trees further than 1 metre from the minimum clearance space around the electric line and will notify the affected person(s) after the works have been carried out using the form in [Appendix 2](#).

Records of all urgent works and completion of the notification requirement will be provided to Latrobe City Council as part of the Contractor monthly report.

**PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**DIVISION 2 – MANNER OF CUTTING AND REMOVING TREES**

**(9) Responsible Person may cut or remove hazard trees**

Please see Part 1 [9\(4\)\(j\)](#)

**(10) Cutting of tree to comply with Standard**

Please see Part 1 [9\(4\)\(k\)](#)

**(11) Cutting or removal of indigenous or significant trees must be minimised**

Please see [9\(4\)\(h\)](#) and [9\(4\)\(i\)](#).

**(12) Cutting or removing habitat for threatened fauna**

Please see [9\(4\)\(i\)](#).

**PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**DIVISION 3 – NOTIFICATION, CONSULTATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

**(17) Responsible person must publish notice before cutting or removing certain trees**

Please see [9\(4\)\(g\)](#).

**PART 2 – CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**DIVISION 4 – ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF RESPONSIBLE PERSONS**

**(20) Duty relating to the safety of cutting or removal of trees close to an electric line**

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

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

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

Notwithstanding other requirements of this clause, Latrobe City Council notes that an owner, operator or distribution company that is consulted by a Council under subclause 21(1) of the Regulations must assist the Council by determining the additional distance. Latrobe City Latrobe City Council will keep a record of the information provided, including the additional sag and sway distances for at least 5 years.

**PART 3 – MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES**

**DIVISION 2 - ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE MECHANISMS**

**(31) Application for approval of alternative compliance mechanism**

Latrobe City Council does not hold approval for, nor intend to use any alternative compliance mechanisms.

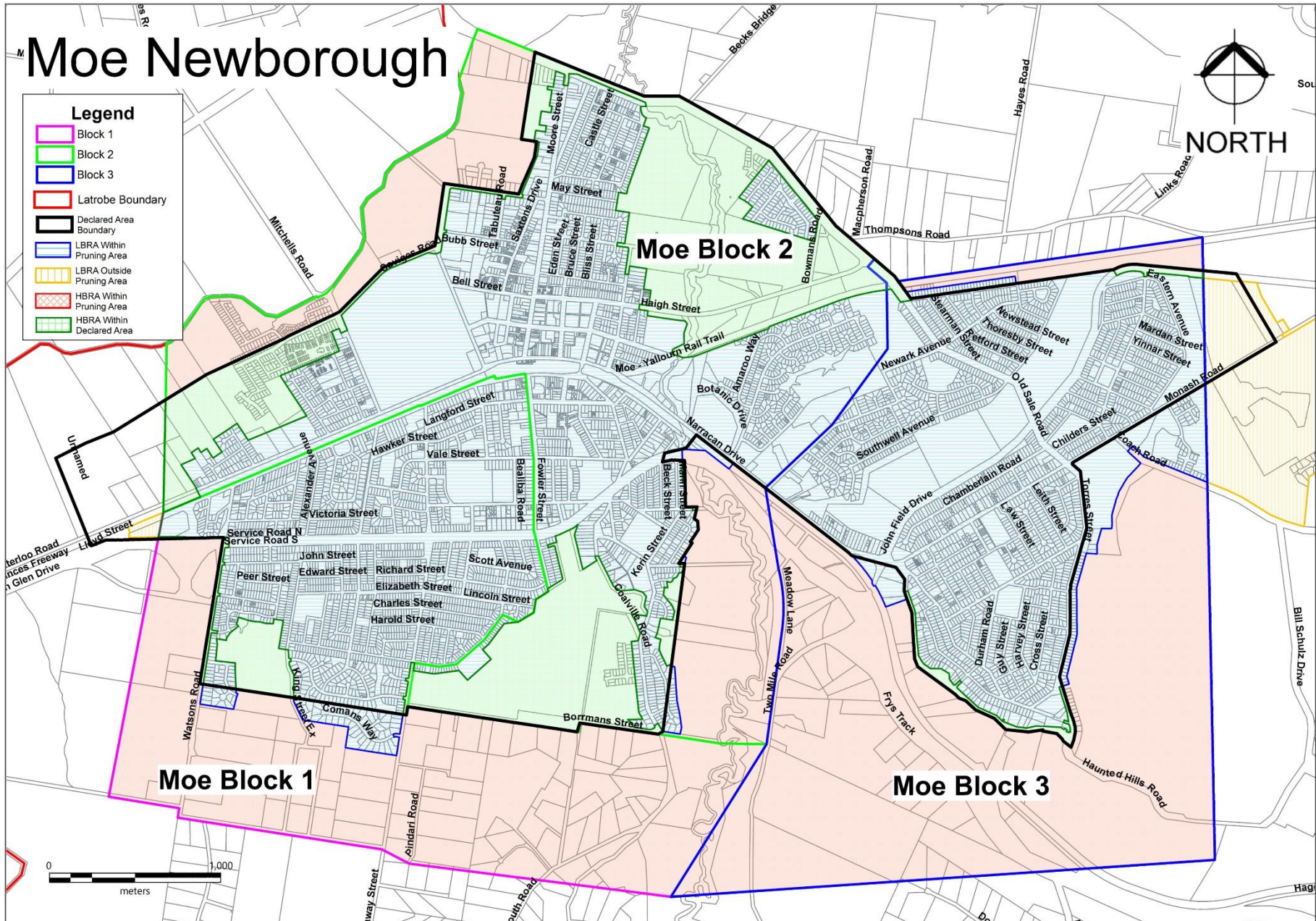
If Latrobe City Council should apply to Energy Safe Victoria for approval to use an alternative compliance mechanism in respect of a span of an electric line or a class of spans, the application will contain details including:

- (i) the alternative compliance mechanism; and
- (ii) a written confirmation from the Distribution Business or alternative qualified provider that includes;
  - a) the procedures to be adopted for commissioning, installing, operating, maintaining and decommissioning the alternative compliance mechanism; and
  - b) the published technical standards that will be complied with when commissioning, installing, operating, maintaining and decommissioning the alternative compliance mechanism; and
  - c) specify the location of the span of electric line; or describe the class; and
  - d) the minimum clearance space proposed is to be applied in relation to the span, or class of spans, in respect of which the application is made; and
  - e) a copy of the formal safety assessment prepared by the Distribution Business or an alternative qualified provider under clause 32.
- (iii) a copy of the written agreement of the owner or the operator of the span; or the owner or the operator of each span that belongs to that class.

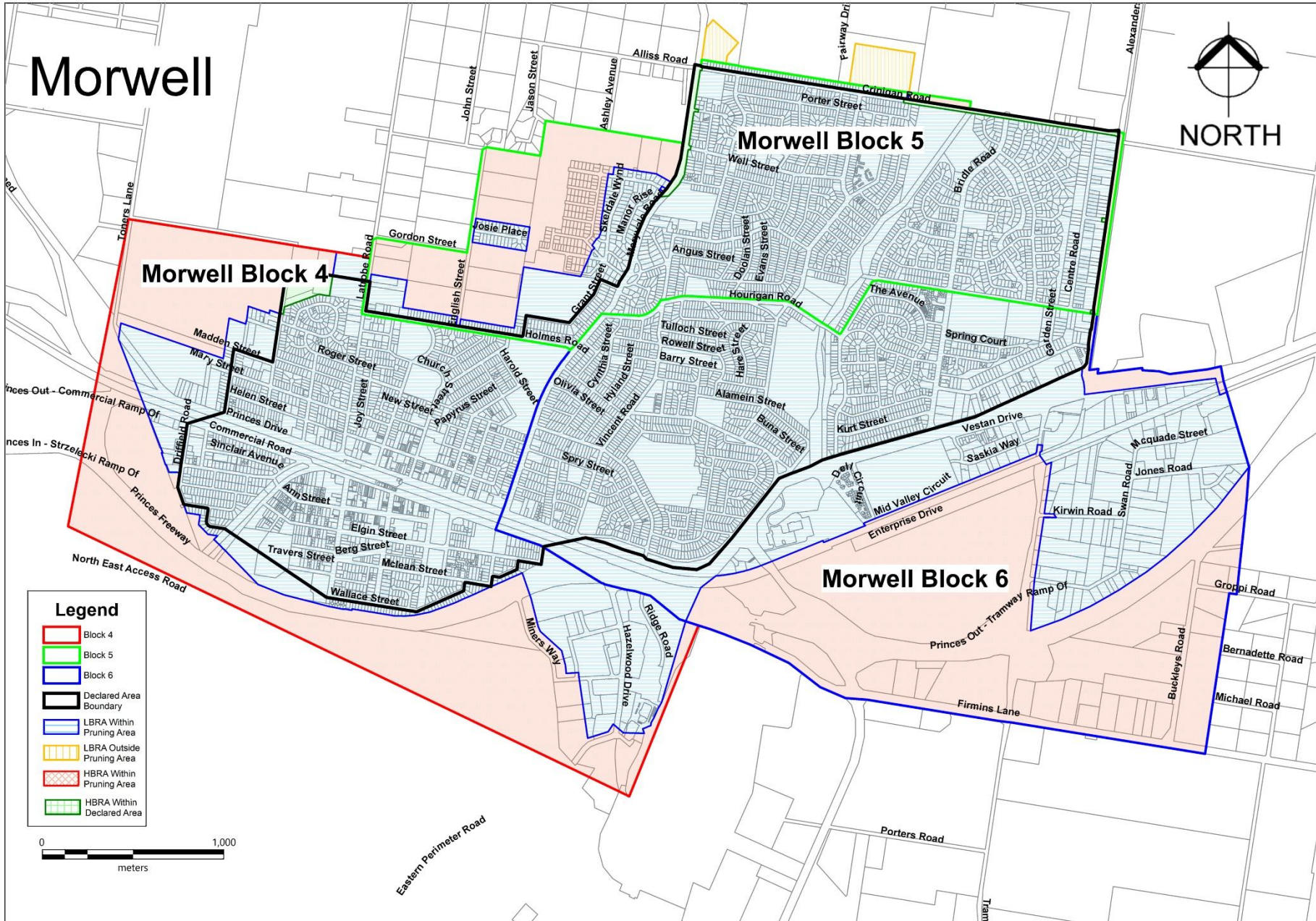
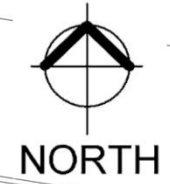
**(32) Formal safety assessment of alternative compliance mechanism**

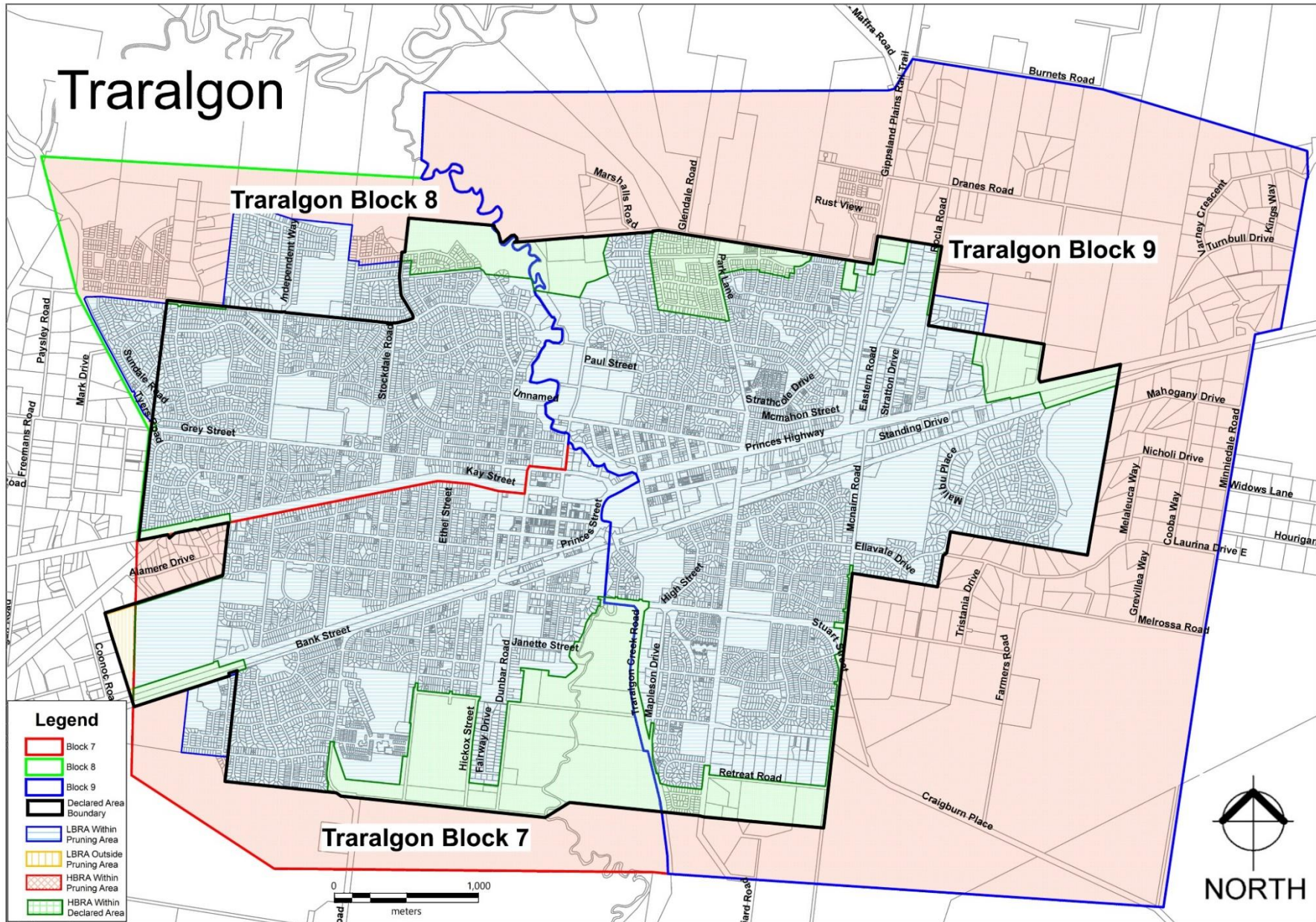
As Latrobe City Council Officers are not qualified to provide a formal safety assessment, any assessment will be prepared by the Distribution Business or an alternative qualified provider and will comply with the requirements as defined in Schedule 1, part 3, Division 2, and Clause 1 of the Code.

APPENDIX 1 – Town Maps



# Morwell

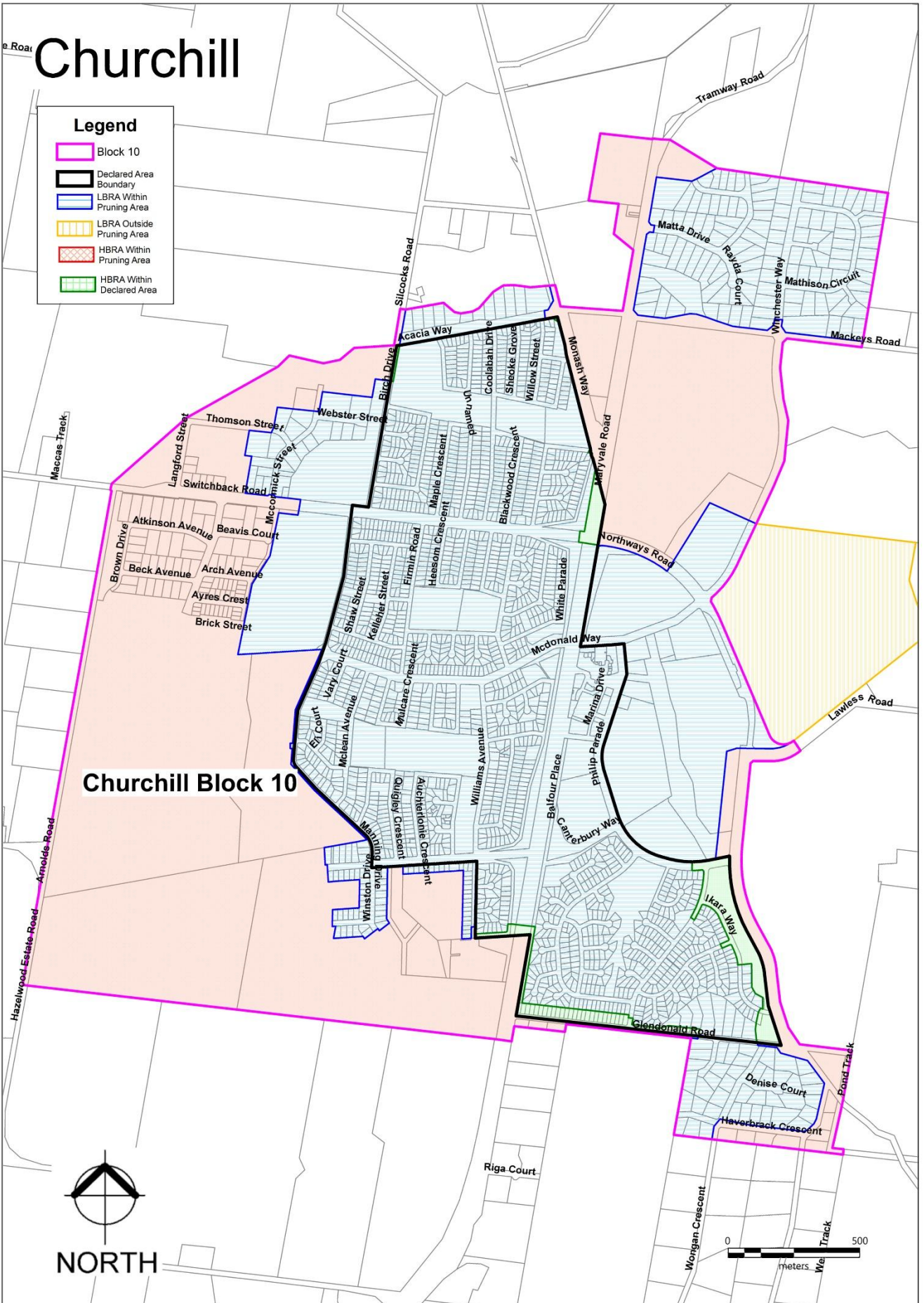




# Churchill

**Legend**

- Block 10
- Declared Area Boundary
- LBRA Within Pruning Area
- LBRA Outside Pruning Area
- HBRA Within Pruning Area
- HBRA Within Declared Area



Property Notice of Cutting or Removal of Tree/s to affected persons per Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025.

**EXAMPLE OF NOTIFICATION:**

**Address:** .....

The tree/vegetation at the above location has been identified as encroaching electrical assets (Powerlines) under the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025.

Works are required to comply with the regulations consist of:

- Pruning of the offending tree.
- Removal of the offending tree.

**COMMENT:**

.....  
.....

Tree works are considered as:

- Hazardous Tree – To be carried out within 2 Working day
- Non-compliance Works – To be carried out within 20 Working days

In the case of tree removal, stumps will be removed within: .....

**COMMENT:**

.....  
.....

Please contact Cameron Johnson, Supervisor Arborist on 0428555087 to answer any queries you may have regarding this matter.

**SIGNED:** ..... **DATE:** .....

**APPENDIX 3 – Example of Inspection Audit Form**

LATROBE CITY COUNCIL  
ELECTRICAL LINE CLEARANCE - SAFETY AUDIT



Urban Block Pruning                      LCC -

Contractor \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Location \_\_\_\_\_  
Crew Leader \_\_\_\_\_  
Crew members \_\_\_\_\_  
Latrobe City Council Representative \_\_\_\_\_

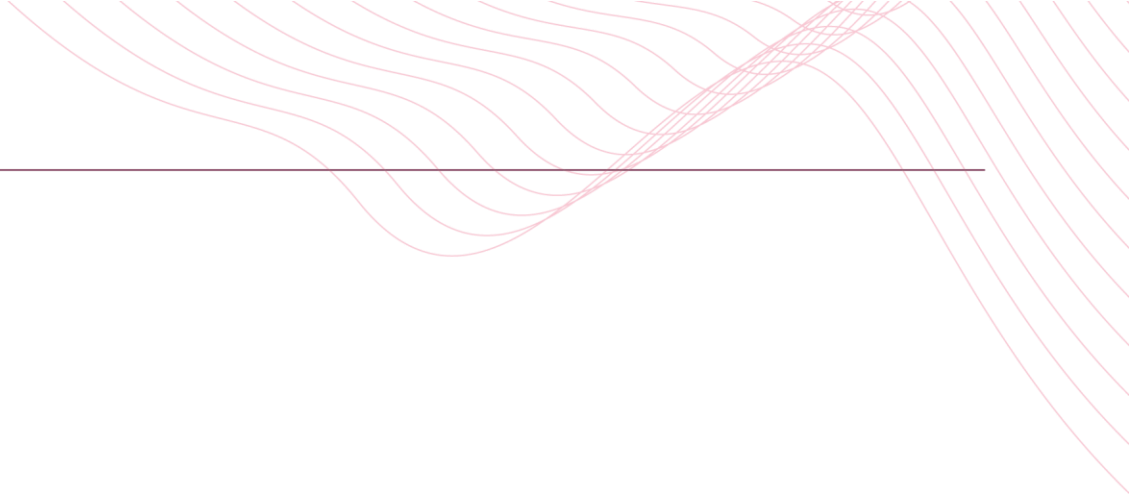
	PASS	FAIL	N/A	COMMENT
<b>Staff Training</b>				
ESI Cert II (current)				
Chainsaw				
First Aid level 1				
Correct PPE				
Manual handling				
Traffic Managemnet				
Signage visbile				
Traffic (TMP ONSITE)				
Stop/Go (if needed)				
Pedestrian access				
<b>Documentation</b>				
SWMS / JSA				
Pre Start checks completed				
<b>Vehicles</b>				
Log books - Detail entered correctly				
Fire extingusier (in-date)				
First Aid Kit Onsite				
EWP electrical test (in-date)				
Chipper operations (emergency stop working)				
Spill Kit in vehicle				
<b>Pruning</b>				
Compliance with AS-4373				
Vegetation Clearances conform to Electrical Safety Regulations 2020				
Remedial works required				
<b>Other</b>				
Electrical line workers wearing long sleeved cotton shirts				

Details of Identified Issues:

Must the Contractor Stop Works Until Issue is Resolved? YES / NO / (If Yes)  
The Identified Issue Must be Resolved: Immediately / Within                      Days

Follow up Actions Required YES / NO / NA  
Provide details of Follow up Actions: (if required)

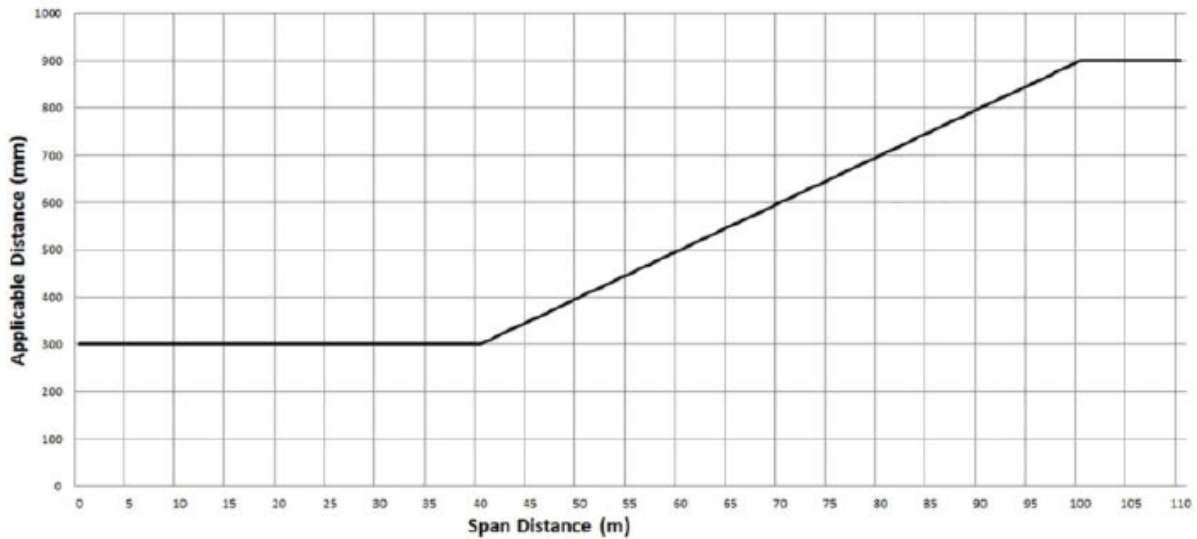
*Any staff members found not having the above training will cease operational duties immediately.*



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

**GRAPH 1—INSULATED ELECTRIC LINES IN ALL AREAS**

*(Extracts from Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025)*

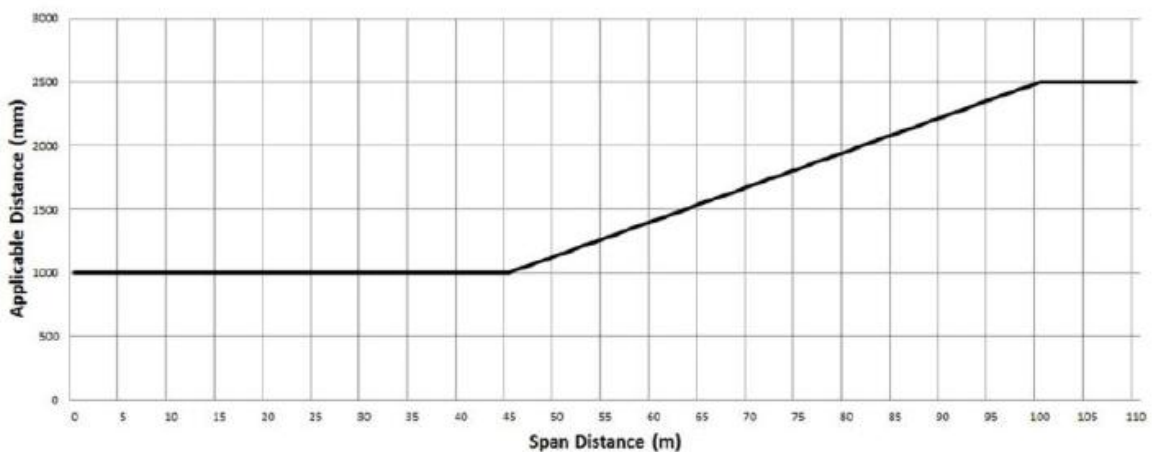


The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of an insulated electric line in all areas is calculated is as follows:

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

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

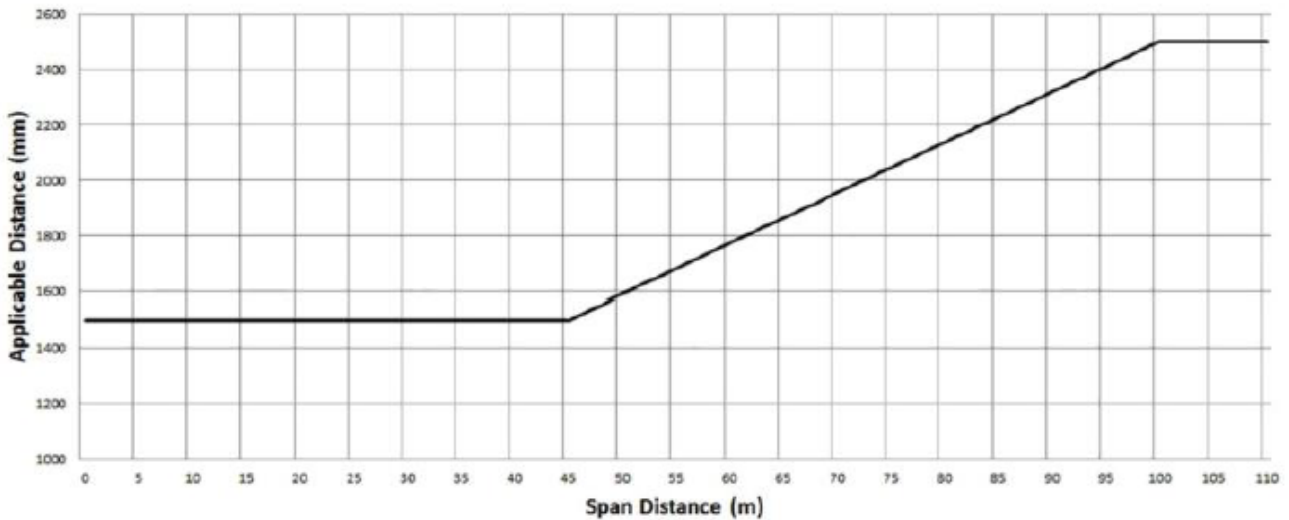
**GRAPH 2: UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA**



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

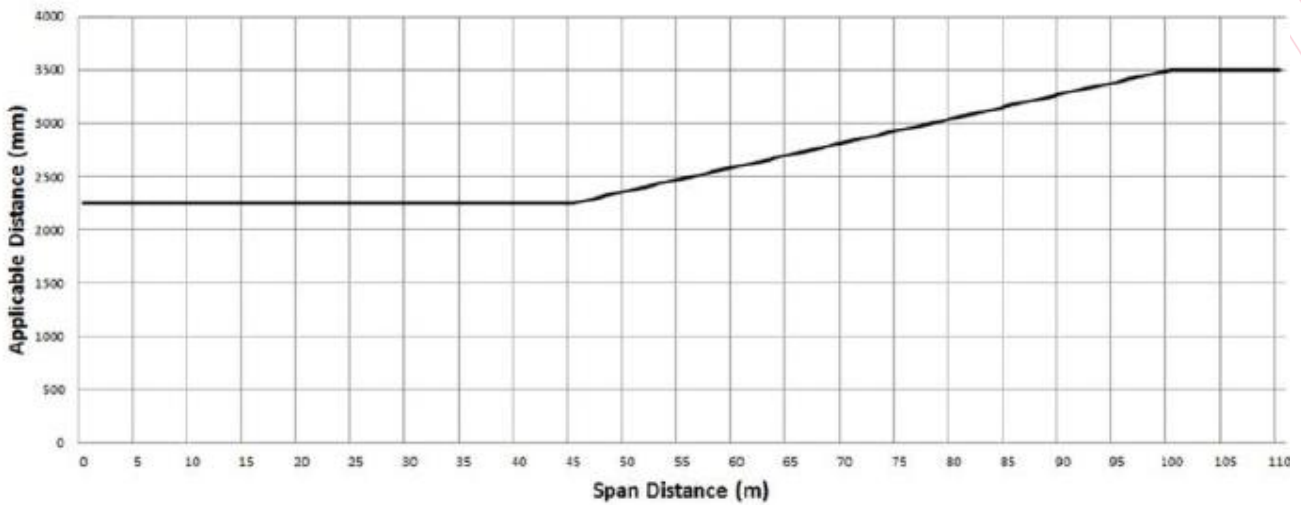
- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 1000 mm
- B. If the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 100 m the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression:  $1000 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times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

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



- The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of uninsulated high voltage electric line (other than a 66,000-volt electric line) in a low bushfire risk area is calculated is as follows:
- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 1500 mm
  - B. if the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 100 m, the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression  $1500 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times (1000\ divided\ by\ 55)]$
  - C. if the span distance is greater than 100 m the applicable distance equals 2500 mm.

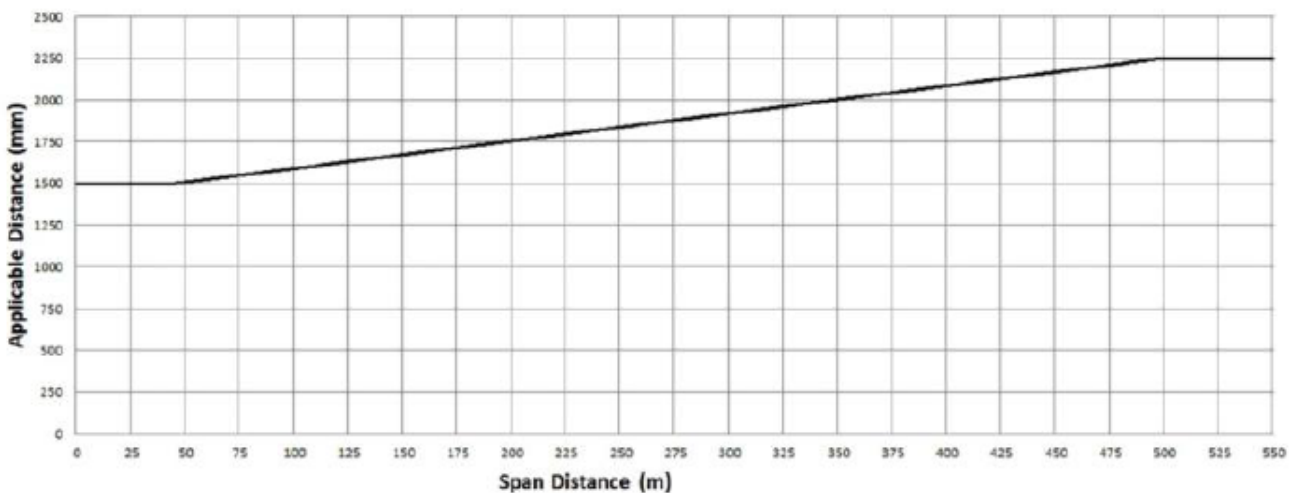
**GRAPH 4: UNINSULATED 66,000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA**



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

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

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

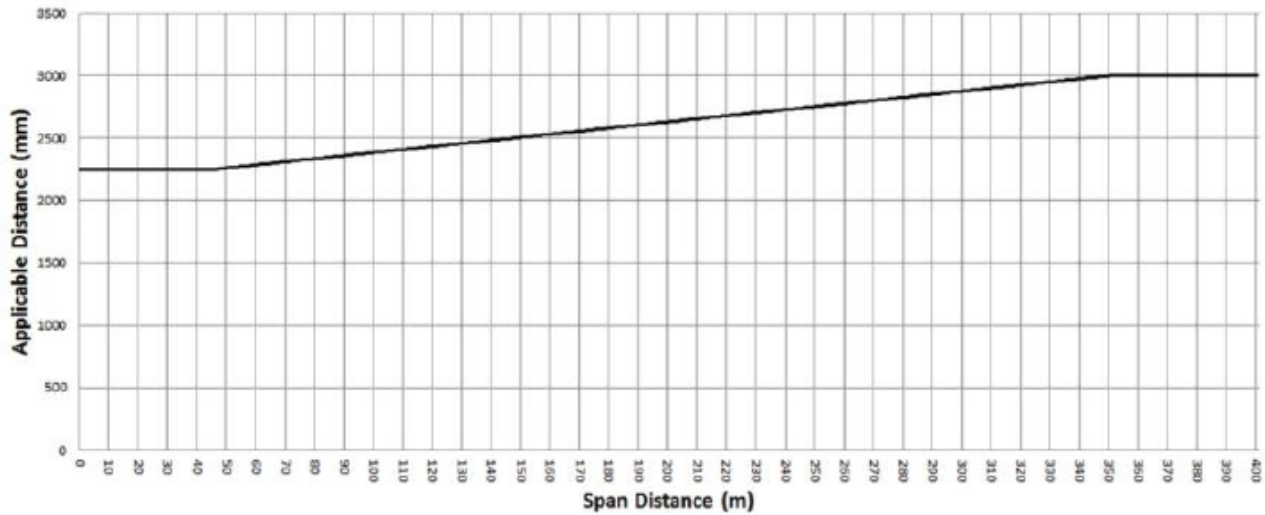


The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of an electric line is calculated is as follows:

- A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 1500 mm
- B. if the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 500 m, the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression  $1500 +$

[(span distance minus 45) multiplied by (500 divided by 303)]; or C. if the span distance is greater than 500 m the applicable distance equals 2250mm

**GRAPH 6: UNINSULATED 66,000V ELECTRIC LINE IN HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREA**



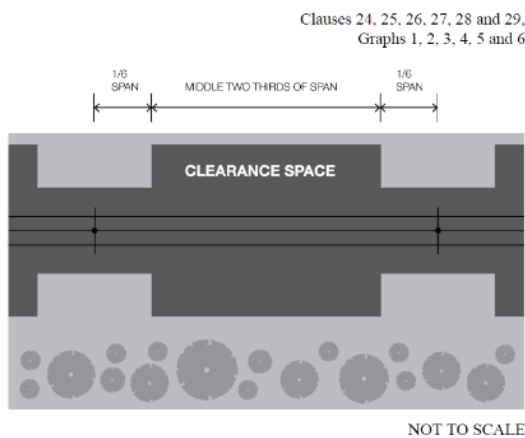
The formula by which the applicable distance for the middle two thirds of a span of an electric line is calculated is as follows:

A. if the span distance is less than or equal to 45 m the applicable distance equals 2250 mm

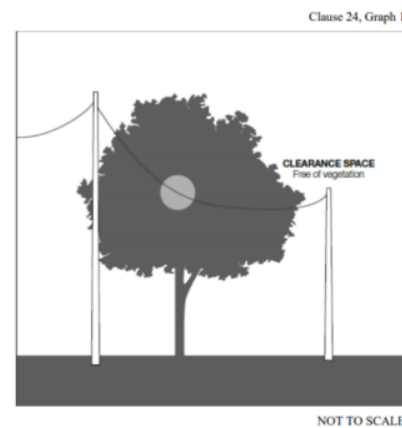
B. if the span distance is greater than 45 m and less than or equal to 350m, the applicable distance is calculated in accordance with the following expression  $2250 + [(span\ distance\ minus\ 45) \times (750\ divided\ by\ 305)]$ ; or C. if the span distance is greater than 350 m the applicable distance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

**Plan and section view figures Clearance spaces for all areas per Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Interim Regulations 2025.**

**FIGURE 1 – PLAN VIEW OF ELECTRICAL LINES IN ALL AREAS**

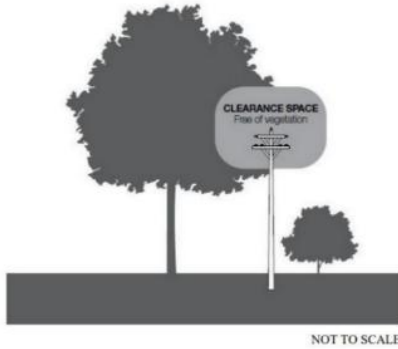


**FIGURE 2 – INSULATED ELECTRICAL LINES IN ALL AREAS**



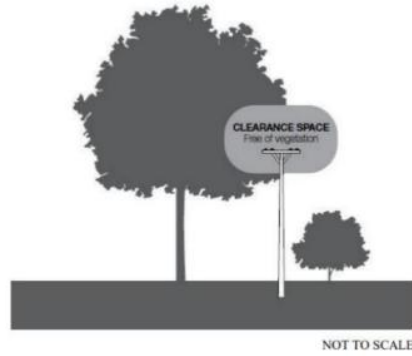
**FIGURE 3 – INSULATED ELECTRICAL LINES IN ALL AREAS AND UNINSULATED HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL LINES (OTHER THAN 66 000 VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES) IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS**

Clauses 24 and 26, Graphs 1 and 3



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

Clause 25, Graph 2



**FIGURE 5 – UNINSULATED 66 000 VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL LINE IN A LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA AND UNINSULATED ELECTRIC LINE IN A HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREA**

Clauses 27, 28 and 29, Graphs 4, 5 and 6

