

Frequently Asked Questions

Significant Tree Register



Questions about the Significant Tree Register

Q. What is the Significant Tree Register?

A significant tree register is a list of trees within the Shire nominated as significant and which warrant further investigation and protection.

Q. How do I nominate a tree for the significant tree register?

A tree or several trees can be nominated for the register by filling out and submitting the *Significant Tree Register Nomination Form* on Council's website at the following link: www.creating.cardinia.vic.gov.au/Significant-trees

Q. What is classified as a significant tree?

A tree can be significant for any of the following reasons:

Horticultural value / rare or localized / outstanding example of species / location / age / outstanding size / curious growth form / aesthetic value / historical value / habitat value / Aboriginal significance / social, cultural or spiritual value.

The *Significant Tree Register Nomination Form* clearly outlines the categories of significance.

Q. What will a significant tree register achieve?

The Significant Tree Register provides an opportunity for the community to draw Council's attention to any tree believed to be significant.

This will ensure Council has a record of those trees and guide an arborist in the location and assessment of these trees during further investigations.

The Significant Tree Register is the beginning of the process of ensuring significant trees are adequately protected through the Cardinia Planning Scheme.

Q. Why is Council implementing a significant tree register?

Council is requesting nominations of significant trees from the community to identify significant trees on private and public property that Council would otherwise not know about. This will ensure that Council has a list of trees of potential significance and can undertake further investigations to determine which trees require protection through the Cardinia Planning Scheme.

Q. How are significant trees protected?

Firstly, trees believed to be of significance are nominated for the significant tree register. These trees will then be professionally assessed and, if declared significant, a planning scheme amendment process will begin. It is proposed that trees declared as significant will be protected via the Cardinia Planning Scheme. It is proposed that an appropriate overlay will apply to any property where the significant tree grows and to any other properties that are within its tree protection zone.

Q. What does it mean if my tree is declared significant?

If your tree is nominated for the significant tree register and is later confirmed by a Council-appointed arborist to be of significance the planning scheme amendment process will begin. It is proposed that an appropriate overlay will apply to any property where the significant tree grows and to any other properties that are within its tree protection zone. This means that any proposed buildings and works within the tree protection zone, or significant pruning, lopping or removal of significant trees, will require a planning permit. This does not mean that absolutely no works are allowed on or near significant trees but that the impact of the proposed development on the health and value of significant trees must be considered in the planning permit application process. Referrals to arborists and/or horticulturalists may be required to assess any proposals that may impact the health or values of significant trees.

Q. Will I be notified if a tree on my property has been nominated for the significant tree register?

Yes. Council will send an acknowledgment of nomination to the property owner and/or residents and the individual who nominated the tree.

OFFICIAL

Q. Can I nominate trees Shire wide for the significant tree register?

Yes. Nominations for trees to be added to the significant tree register are open Shire wide; however, nominations within Cardinia's growth corridor and employment precincts will be added to the significant tree register on a case by case basis. Planning for growth areas and precinct structure plans involve detailed background investigations including vegetation assessments. Trees within growth areas will be carefully considered in relation to relevant background reports, existing controls and legislation as well as compatibility with future plans. If you have nominated a tree within one of these areas that can't be added to the register you will be notified.

Q. Will I be notified if a tree on my property has proceeds to the Planning Scheme Amendment stage?

Yes. If a tree on your property is confirmed to be of significance and requires further protection it will proceed through a Planning Scheme Amendment. During the Planning Scheme Amendment process property owners and surrounding property owners for the area at which the Amendment applies will be informed and have the opportunity to write a submission in relation to the amendment.

Q. Can Council maintain trees confirmed as significant on private land?

No, it is the owner's responsibility to ensure that trees on private land are not safety hazards or cause nuisance - regardless of any planning controls that may apply to the land.

Owners who attempt removal/lopping of a protected tree without a permit may be pursued with enforcement action.

Q. Can I nominate trees on other people's land or on Council land?

Yes, you do not have to be the owner of the property to nominate a tree. If you do know the property owner, we recommend letting them know that you intend to nominate their tree so that they know why you think the tree is exceptional. Council will alert property owners and residents if a tree on their property has been nominated for the register.

Yes, you can nominate trees on council land. Council land is subject to careful regulation, planning, and management in line with council policies, but anyone can nominate a tree on council land for inclusion on the register.

Q. What is the benefit of nominating a significant tree?

The Significant Tree Register provides an opportunity to promote, share and protect trees that are believed to be significant. Owners of properties where significant trees are located play an important role caring for valuable community assets.

Q. What are the next steps?

Throughout nomination period council will be developing a list of significant trees: the Significant Tree Register.

An arborist will then be engaged by council to assess the significance of each tree and produce a significant tree study.

A planning scheme amendment process will then begin in order to adopt the study into the Cardinia Planning Scheme and protect each tree through the appropriate planning tool.

Further information will be provided to those properties involved within the Planning Scheme Amendment.

Q. What is the Cardinia Planning Scheme?

Each local government in Victoria is covered by a planning scheme.

The Cardinia Planning Scheme sets out how land is protected and how it can be used and developed in Cardinia Shire.

Planning schemes require changes from time to time to achieve certain planning outcomes, support new policies, and to ensure that requirements continue to meet the needs of the local community.

Q. How long do I have to nominate trees?

The significant tree register will be open for nominations from 24 March to 28 April.

Q. Where can I find more information?

You will find more information and the online nomination form on Council's website at the following link:

www.creating.cardinia.vic.gov.au/Significant-trees

You can also visit Council offices at 20 Siding Avenue, Officer or contact Council's strategic planning unit who can discuss over the phone or meet with you to answer any questions you may have.