

Town Planning Report

Partial Demolition and additions to a Heritage Dwelling

487 Albert Street, Brunswick
West

Advertised Document
Advertised Report - 41 Pages
Application No: MPS/2025/221
Date: 5/06/2025

Please note: This written statement is produced by the permit applicant and may not represent Council's position about whether the Standard is met. Council will complete its own assessment before a decision is made

ratio:

Project
Partial Demolition and additions to a
Heritage Dwelling

Prepared for
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Our reference
22304P

Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land we work, live and travel on, and appreciate the rich cultures of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their enduring connection to country.

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Application Summary

Site	
Address of the land	487 Albert Street, Brunswick West
Title Details	Lots 1 and 2, Title Plan 430636Q, Vol:02213, Folio: 545
Site Area	653 square meters
Are there any covenants?	Yes. However, the proposal will not result in a breach of the covenant as the covenant restricts manufacturing of bricks, tiles, pipes and pottery on the subject site.
Are there any easements?	Site benefits from a right of carriage over the rear laneway.
Are there any Section 173 Agreements?	No
Controls	
Zone	Neighborhood Residential Zone, Schedule 1 (NRZ1)
Overlays	Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Schedule 1 (DCPO1) Heritage Overlay (HO56)
Particular Provisions	N/A
Current relevant Planning Scheme Amendments	None
Bushfire prone area	No
Cultural Heritage sensitivity	No
Registered Aboriginal Party	Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
Flood prone area	No
Permit Triggers	
Planning Scheme Clause No	
Description of Permission Sought	
Demolish or remove a building.	
Construct a building or construct or carry out works.	
Construct a fence visible from the street.	

1. Introduction

1.1. Instructions

Ratio Consultants has been engaged the permit applicant to prepare and submit a planning application for partial demolition, alterations and additions to an existing dwelling that is affected by the Heritage Overlay. The proposal includes a small second dwelling, which is exempt from requiring a permit.

1.2. Investigations

In the course of preparing this report, we have carried out relevant planning investigations, including a site visit conducted on the 4 February 2025, a review of the Merri-Bek Planning Scheme and relevant heritage citations.

This town planning report includes an assessment of the development against the relevant planning controls and policies set out in the Merri-Bek Planning Scheme.

Notably, the proposal is not subject to an assessment against Clause 54 of the planning scheme as the lot is over 300 square metres in size. As such considerations relating to amenity impacts are not relevant to this application.

1.3. Summary

In summary, it is our submission that the proposal should be supported as:

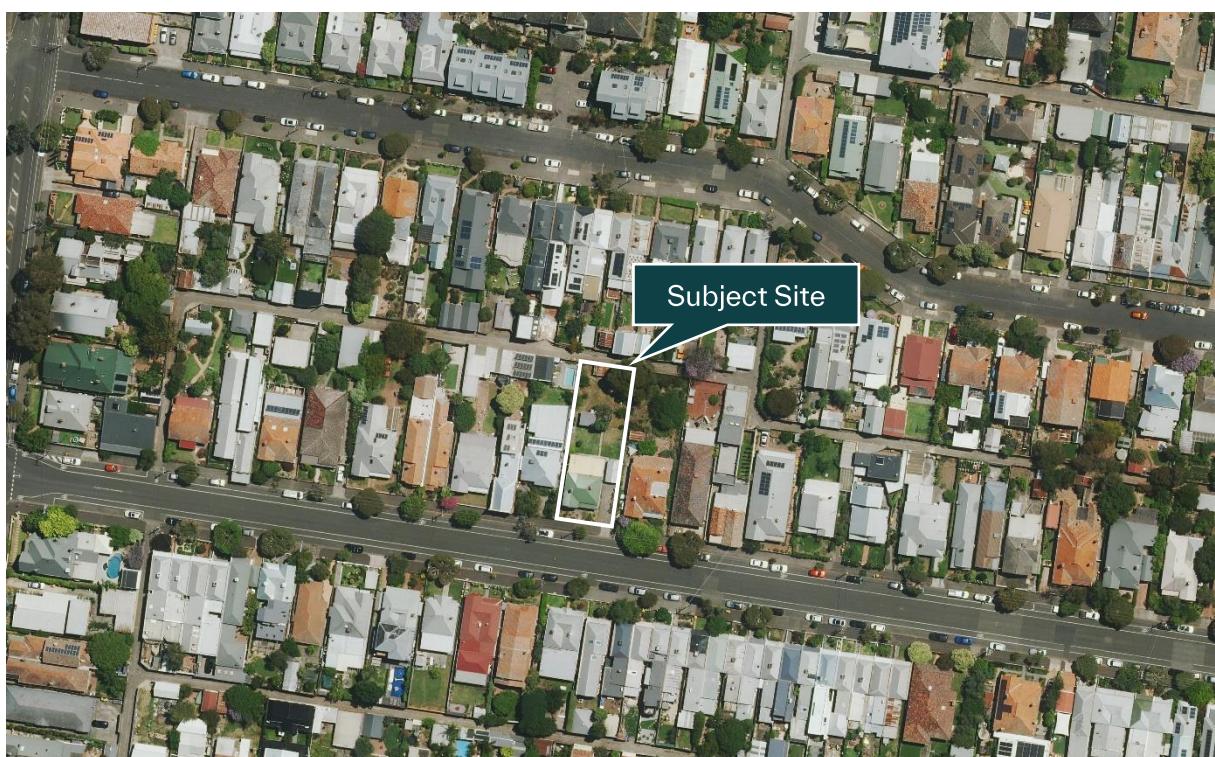
- The proposal seeks to retain the contributory portions of the existing dwelling while modernising and improving the existing dwelling on site. The proposed changes will make a positive contribution to the existing area and improve the quality of the local housing stock.
- The buildings and works respond favourably to the decision guidelines within the Heritage Overlay at Clause 43.01-8 as they respect and respond to the existing heritage fabric and the streetscape.
- The proposal is consistent with the strategies within **Clause 02.03-4** and **Clause 15.03-1L** as it respects the existing and significant elements of the existing dwelling on site, whilst maintaining and preserving the legibility of streetscape and the heritage area.

2. Site and Context

2.1. Site

The subject site is 487 Albert Street, Brunswick West. The site is formally known as Lot 1 and Lot 2 on Title Plan 430636Q.

Figure 1 – Aerial of the subject site and surrounds



Specifically, we note:

- The site rectangular in shape with an area of 653.79 sqm.
- The site's primary frontage is to Albert Street (south). The width of the street frontage is 15.07 metres and is typical of the varied frontage widths on the street, which generally includes lots with 5-15 metre frontages to Albert Street.
- The site is orientated north-south and has a maximum depth of 43.37 metres.
- The site comprises an existing single-storey Victorian era weatherboard dwelling. There are two outbuildings (sheds) located on the site; one located east of the existing dwelling and one abutting the rear boundary.
- The existing dwelling is setback approximately 3.6 metres from the street.

- The existing front fence is a non-original brick fence, including gates to an existing crossover located to the east of the site's frontage.
- Vehicle access is provided via a single crossover located on the eastern side of the site frontage. This extends to a driveway running along the eastern boundary to the shed adjacent to the dwelling.
- There is scattered vegetation at the rear of the subject site within the existing grassed garden; however, nothing of significance. Additionally, there is a large canopy tree located at the north-western corner of the neighbouring site, which overhangs the rear of the subject site
- The subject site's topography is generally flat.

Figure 2 – Frontage of the subject site, pictured from Albert Street



2.2. Surrounds

The properties surrounding context can be described as follows:

North

The subject site is abutted to the north by an unnamed laneway approximately 3.4 metres wide, accessed via Albert Street.

Further north the land continues to be zoned as Neighbourhood Residential and is affected by the Heritage Overlay, with the properties directly opposite the laneway, at 35, 37 and 39 Hunter Street comprising single dwellings with more recent alterations and additions.

East

Immediately abutting the subject site to the east is No. 485 Albert Street, which is occupied by a single storey brick dwelling. The dwelling is setback approximately 3.6 metres from the street, with a frontage of 15.09 metres. No. 485 Albert Street is also located within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1 and is affected by the Heritage Overlay (HO56).

Approximately 320 metres further east is land within the Mixed-Use Zone utilised for a large apartment complex, surrounded by the Public Park and Recreation Zone.

Figure 3 – Subject site's eastern abuttal at 485 Albert Street



South

The subject site is abutted to the south by Albert Street which features an approximate 19 metre road reserve, pedestrian paths, street trees, bike lanes and on-street parallel parking along both sides of the street.

West

Abutting the subject site to the west is No. 489 Albert Street, comprising a single storey weather board dwelling. This property includes a new addition to the rear with a pool and outbuilding to the rear as well as vegetation.

Figure 4 - Subject site's western abuttal at 489 Albert Street



3. Proposal

This planning permit application is for alterations and additions to the existing dwelling at the site. The proposal is described in more detail below.

Figure 5 – 3D Image – Street Frontage



Demolition

To facilitate the proposed works, the following demolition is proposed:

- Demolition of the rear non-original portions of the dwelling;
- Removal of windows to the west and east façade of the front portion of the dwelling;
- Demolition of both metal sheds and the pergola in the rear yard.
- Demolition of the existing non-original brick front fence

The proposed additions to the property include:

Existing Dwelling

- Internal reconfigurations (no permit required) to create two bathrooms and two bedrooms within the existing dwelling.
- Addition of three (3) skylights to the northern side of the existing roof, proposed to provide daylight to the entry hallway, ensuite and bathroom.
- Addition of a 1.2 metre painted timber picket front fence.

Rear Additions

- The rear extension will include an open plan living/kitchen area. It will also accommodate a walk-in pantry and two additional bedrooms.
- Addition of a garage / storage area, to be accessed from the existing driveway, the garage will include a 9.5-metre-long wall on the eastern boundary.
- The eastern wall of the rear extension will have a minimum setback of 3.48 metres to the eastern boundary.
- The western wall of the extension, associated with the living area and new bedrooms, will have a minimum setback of 1.32 metres from the western side boundary, consistent with the existing setback.
- The maximum height of the proposed addition will be 5.8 metres, with the highest point associated with an angled ceiling / roof detail over the living area. The predominant height of the building will be lower, at 4 metres high.
- Addition of an outdoor dining area accessed via the living / dining area and pool in the northwestern portion of the site, will ancillary pool equipment storage and paved area.
- Gate at the northwestern corner of the site to provide direct access to the rear laneway.
- Addition of solar panels to the angled roof detail over the living area.

The above works will result in the creation of a 4-bedroom dwelling, with an open plan living space and overall improved internal amenity. Post development, the site will:

- Have a permeable area of 57% (371 sqm)
- Have a site coverage of 51% (334 sqm)
- Provide a garden area of 43% (281 sqm)

Small Second Dwelling (exempt)

The proposed rear extension includes the addition of a ‘small second dwelling’ at the rear of the subject site, the details of the small second dwelling include:

- A total area of 42.65 sqm, comprising a single storey with a maximum height of 5 metres to the pitch of the angled roof.
- The small second dwelling will comprise a kitchenette, living space and bathroom.
- The small second dwelling will be accessible from the main dwelling via the proposed outdoor dining space. The permissions required for the small second dwelling are discussed in Section 4 of this report.

4. Planning Policy

The site is affected by the controls within the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

4.1. Zone

The subject site is located within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1 (NRZ1).

Figure 6 – Zoning Map



Source: VicPlan

The purpose of the zone includes:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To recognise areas of predominantly single and double storey residential development.
- To manage and ensure that development respects the identified neighbourhood character, heritage, environmental or landscape characteristics.
- To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.

The subject site is greater than 300 sqm, therefore no planning permit is required pursuant to the zone.

Pursuant to **Clause 73.03**, the proposed small second dwelling does not require a permit under the Neighbourhood Residential Zone because:

- The building has a gross floor area less than 60 sqm, specifically the area of the outbuilding is 42.65 sqm.

- The building is on the same lot as an existing dwelling.
- The building is proposed to be used as a self-contained residence and includes:
 - A kitchen sink;
 - Food preparation facilities;
 - A bath or shower; and
 - A toilet and wash basin.

Accordingly, no planning permit is required under the zone to construct a small second dwelling on a lot greater than 300 sqm.

4.2. Overlays

The site is affected by the Heritage Overlay (HO56) and the Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Schedule 1 (DCPO1).

Heritage Overlay

Specifically, the subject site is within Heritage Precinct 56 (HO56) which applies to the Daly Street Precinct, West Brunswick.

The subject site is identified as contributory to the heritage precinct, in accordance with the Statement of Significance.

Figure 7 – Heritage Overlay Map



The purpose of the HO includes:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.*
- *To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.*
- *To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.*

- To conserve specified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.

We note that, Precinct 56 is subject to solar energy system controls.

Pursuant to **Clause 43.01-1**, a planning permit is required by the overlay to:

- Construct a building or construct and carry out works.
- Demolish or remove a building.
- Carry out buildings and works, including a solar energy system attached to a building that primarily services the land on which it is situated if the system is visible from a street, where solar energy system controls apply.
- Construction of a fence visible from the street.

Pursuant to **Clause 43.01-3**, a planning permit is required to construct a ‘small second dwelling’ that exceeds a height of 5 metres. Noting the maximum height of the small second dwelling is 5 metres, and the materials employed will be in muted tones, a planning permit is not required to construct or carry out works associated with the small second dwelling.

Development Contributions Plan Overlay

As the proposed development is isolated to buildings and works to an existing dwelling the DCPO1 is not relevant to this application.

4.3. Planning Policy Framework

Relevant policies within the PPF include:

Clause 15.01-1S/L – Urban Design

Clause 15.0-5S – Neighbourhood Character

Clause 15.03-1S – Heritage Conservation

Clause 15.03-1L – Heritage in Merri-bek

Clause 16.01-1L – Homes in Merri-bek

4.4. Municipal Planning Strategy

Relevant policies within the MPS include:

Clause 02.01 – Context

Clause 02.02 – Vision

Clause 02.03-4 – Built environment and Heritage

Clause 02.03-5 – Housing

Clause 02.04 – Housing Framework Plan

Clause 02.03-4 – Built Environment and Heritage

Given the nature of this proposal, the key local policy is at Clause 02.03-5 (Built environment and heritage). General Strategies include:

- *Encouraging development that is designed to respond to and contribute to its context and any relevant heritage significance.*
- *Encouraging development that is designed to integrate with landscape design to improve aesthetic quality and amenity for occupants and the public domain.*
- *Improving the quality of design of housing development.*
- *Protecting Merri-bek's valued heritage places from demolition and unsympathetic development or subdivision.*
- *Encouraging the design of signage that is sensitive to the style, scale and character of host buildings, nearby buildings, and streetscapes.*

4.5. General and Particular Provisions

Clause 65 – Decision Guidelines

'Decision Guidelines' states that, before deciding on an application, considerations should be given to series of matters including the purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision, the orderly planning of the area and the effect on the amenity of the area.

5. Planning Assessment

This application relates to demolition and buildings and works associated with an existing heritage dwelling. The existing dwelling is an Edwardian era style dwelling that has experienced previous alterations relating to the rear of the dwelling.

This proposal provides for alterations and additions that will improve the internal amenity to meet the needs of the residents, whilst removing non original additions.

Further, the small second dwelling / studio space (not triggered under the zone) provides for additional accommodation on the site, without having any adverse impact on the heritage characteristics of the site or surrounds.

The key consideration in the determination of this application is whether the proposal is consistent with the strategies within the local heritage policy and whether the built form is appropriate given the sites heritage context.

5.1. Is the proposal consistent with Clause 02.03-4?

The key policy within the MPS is **Clause 02.03-4 ('Built environment and heritage')**, which provides key strategies for development within heritage precincts. We note that the proposed development is consistent with the objectives and responds to key strategies as:

- The proposal respects the existing and significant elements of the dwelling on site, maintaining and preserving the legibility of streetscape and the heritage area. Restoration of heritage fabric on the site will continue to enhance the predominantly Edwardian and Interwar era houses reflective of the Daly Street Precinct.
- The proposal supports development that will enhance the existing dwelling for its residents. Specifically, by adding to the traditional fabric to ensure its significance within the precinct.
- While no permit is required, we note that the small second dwelling seeks to modernise the subject site and make it fit for a modern family. Importantly, the small second dwelling will not have any impacts on the heritage context of the site itself or the surrounding precinct, as it only proposes a single storey and will not be visible from the public domain.

5.2. Is the built form appropriate in its heritage context?

In assessing the built form outcomes of the proposal, we have considered relevant strategies at **Clause 15.03-1L** (Heritage in Merri-bek), the decision guidelines within the Heritage Overlay and policy documents including *Alterations and Additions to Houses in Heritage Areas in Merri-bek*.

Clause 15.03-1L identifies the following demolition and development strategies relevant to the proposal:

- Encourage retention of contributory or significant heritage fabric required to maintain the original streetscape appearance.
- Support partial demolition of a heritage place, if the extent of demolition will not result in facadism.
- Encourage new buildings and alterations and additions that respect the existing scale, massing, form and siting of contributory or significant elements and do not dominate the heritage place or precinct.
- Ensure that new buildings, alterations and additions do not obscure important view lines to contributory or significant heritage buildings or their features.
- Encourage new buildings to be set back the same distance (or an average) from the front boundary as existing adjacent or nearby contributory or significant buildings.
- Encourage new buildings to adopt a facade height that is consistent with adjoining or nearby contributory or significant buildings.
- Encourage new buildings to adopt side setbacks that reflect the side setbacks of adjoining or nearby contributory or significant buildings, where these setbacks are an important feature of the heritage place.
- Design alterations and additions (including upper storey additions) to contributory or significant heritage places to adopt the following:
 - Additions to contributory heritage places should be visually recessive, including from the opposite side of any street (not a laneway) or public park abutting the property, and not dominate the heritage place.
 - Additions to individually significant places should, as far as possible, be concealed by existing heritage fabric when viewed from the front and visually recessive when viewed from any other adjoining street (not a laneway).
 - Existing facades, rooflines, chimneys or other elements that form part of the contributory or significant fabric of the heritage place should be preserved and not altered (such as new windows or door openings).

In response to **Clause 15.03-1L** and the other applicable policies and reference documents, we make the following comments:

- The proposal retains significant fabric that contributes to the heritage character of the area and will maintain the original streetscape appearance. Importantly, the proposal seeks to retain the principal form of the dwelling, including the roof with the contemporary addition largely sited to the rear of the building.
- The proposal seeks to remove small parts of the existing roof to facilitate the addition of three skylights. The skylights will be located centrally on the rear of the original roof and are included within the design to enhance internal amenity within the bathrooms and entryway. The size and location of the skylights are considered to be appropriate, given they are on the rear portion of the existing roof and will not be visible from the street.
- The proposed demolition is limited to a later addition to the dwelling and will not result in facadism. The majority of the original dwelling is to be retained, this includes the first four rooms (to be reconfigured).

- The proposed location of the works is respectful to the existing property and maintains the legibility of the site. Specifically, the majority of the additions are confined to the rear of the site and seek to retain existing fabric. Importantly, the proposed rear addition is of a single-storey scale, therefore ensuring view lines to nearby heritage buildings aren't obscured and visibility to the rear additions is limited from the street.
- Given the front portion of the original dwelling is to be retained, the front setback and façade height will remain unchanged and continue to reflect the existing pattern of the streetscape.
- The rear addition largely maintains the existing side setbacks. Specifically, the western side setback will remain consistent with the original fabric (1.26 metres). The eastern setback of the rear extension is generous at 3.46 metres.
- The new garage, which replaces an existing outbuilding, will present a 9.5-metre-long wall on boundary with an average height of 3.2 metres.
- The proposed garage is setback 7.14 metres from the street and 2.99 metres behind the main front wall of the dwelling, ensuring it will present as a recessive addition to the main dwelling. The simple contemporary style of the garage ensures that it will be distinguishable from the original fabric and does not seek to mock the heritage detailing. When viewed in the context of the heritage façade, it will not present as visually dominant or reduce the significance of the dwelling or streetscape.
- The proposed form of the rear addition is contemporary and does not seek to replicate the existing dwelling. The rear addition's roof form proposes a sawtooth design, which creates a separation of the two roof forms, providing a junction between old and new, defining the existing heritage building.
- The appearance of the rear extension is cohesive with the existing dwelling through the use of complementary materials and colours. The proposal seeks to employ a combination of cladding, weatherboard, painted brick and traditional brick. Sheet cladding will be applied vertically to the side elevations, to contrast with the horizontal timber weatherboard dwelling. The use of painted brick and weatherboard in natural white tones will pick up on the existing materiality of the original weatherboard frontage.
- The development will maintain the existing subdivision pattern, noting the dwelling will continue to be orientated to Albert Street.
- Development at the rear of dwellings is common in this area with a number of different examples throughout the street. As such the overall development footprint is consistent with the local character.
- The proposed development seeks to address and respond to the rear laneway in a similar manner to other properties in the area. The proposed built form and small second dwelling to the rear of the site is consistent with the development pattern in the street and along the rear of Hunter Street properties to the north.
- The proposed rear extension will include the addition of solar panels. Solar panels are commonplace for properties along Albert Street and the proposed solar panels will not have an impact on the streetscape, with panels located 22.14 metres from the street and obscured by their siting and orientation. Therefore, the proposed solar panels are

considered respectful of the heritage fabric of the street whilst achieving positive environmentally sustainable outcomes.

- Noting the existing front fence is not original, the proposal seeks to provide 1.2-metre-high timber picket fencing that is complementary to the stylistic Edwardian and interwar period of the precinct and will ensure view of the dwelling will continue to be possible.

Is the Small Second Dwelling Appropriate?

The proposed ‘small second dwelling’ does not require a permit given its height is 5 metres. Regardless of permit requirements, we note:

- As outlined earlier in this report, built form in the rear portion of sites is commonplace along the laneway. Given the small second dwelling is located to the rear of the existing heritage building and is set back considerably from the street it will not have any impact on the contributory heritage nature of the subject site.
- The material and roof form proposed for the small second dwelling will continue to compliment the original materiality of the dwelling, noting it will comprise an angled roof and painted brick in natural white tones. This component of the proposal will make a positive contribution to the overall site and the local area.

Summary

With regard to the Heritage Overlay and relevant policy, we note that that built form outcomes encouraged are consistent with those within Clause 15.03-1L and decision guidelines of the Heritage Overlay. As such we consider the proposed demolition, alterations, and additions the existing dwelling responds favourably to the decision guidelines within the relevant policies of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

6. Conclusion

This application seeks a planning permit for partial demolition, alterations and additions to a dwelling in a Heritage Overlay.

The design of the proposed development is respectful of the existing dwelling on site and the Edwardian character of the heritage area. The works have been designed so that the new additions complement the existing fabric of the building, while providing for a contemporary, flexible family home with a high level of amenity.

The additions are low in scale, clearly legible when read adjacent to the existing building and will not detract from the contribution this dwelling makes to the streetscape.

For all the reasons contained in this report, it is considered that the proposed buildings and works are a positive outcome from the site, and that this application should be supported by Council.

Appendix A – Photographic Assessment

Figure 8 – Existing crossover and driveway within eastern portion of the frontage



Figure 9 – Backyard pictured from rear of the dwelling



Figure 10 – Existing rear of dwelling pictured from the sites eastern boundary



Figure 11 – Existing shed at the rear of the site



Figure 12 – Rear of the existing dwelling, pictured from the rear of the subject site





Assessment of Trees at 487 Albert Street
Brunswick West

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

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21 March 2025

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1. Introduction

A rear extension is proposed for the property at 487 Albert Street, Brunswick West. Additionally, a studio is planned for the rear garden, with a pathway running alongside it to provide access to the laneway at the back of the property.

C&R Ryder Consulting has been engaged by Ratio to assess trees that may be impacted by the development. This assessment includes an evaluation of tree health and condition, as well as an arboricultural impact statement. This report will provide:

- the findings of the assessment
- the impact of the proposed works to the trees
- any protection measures for trees to ensure their longevity.

2. Tree Assessment Method

Phil Baker and Cameron Ryder inspected the trees at the property on Thursday, 6 March 2025. The following data were collected for the trees:

- Unique ID
- Image of tree
- Botanic and common name
- Tree dimensions (Height x Width)
- Diameter at breast height (DBH)
- Diameter at base (DAB)
- Health
- Structure
- Useful life expectancy (ULE)
- Tree significance
- Comments

Trees have been aligned to match the supplied feature survey. Tree protection detail has been prepared and mapped in accordance with AS4970-2009 *Protection of Trees on Development Sites*.

The trees were visually assessed from ground level, heights and widths were estimated and trunks measured with a diameter tape. No invasive tests were conducted or samples taken and any assessments of decay are qualitative only. Trunk diameters for trees on adjacent property were estimated. Large shrubs and other vegetation were not individually assessed.

For all tree assessment descriptors, see Appendix 1.

3. Site Map

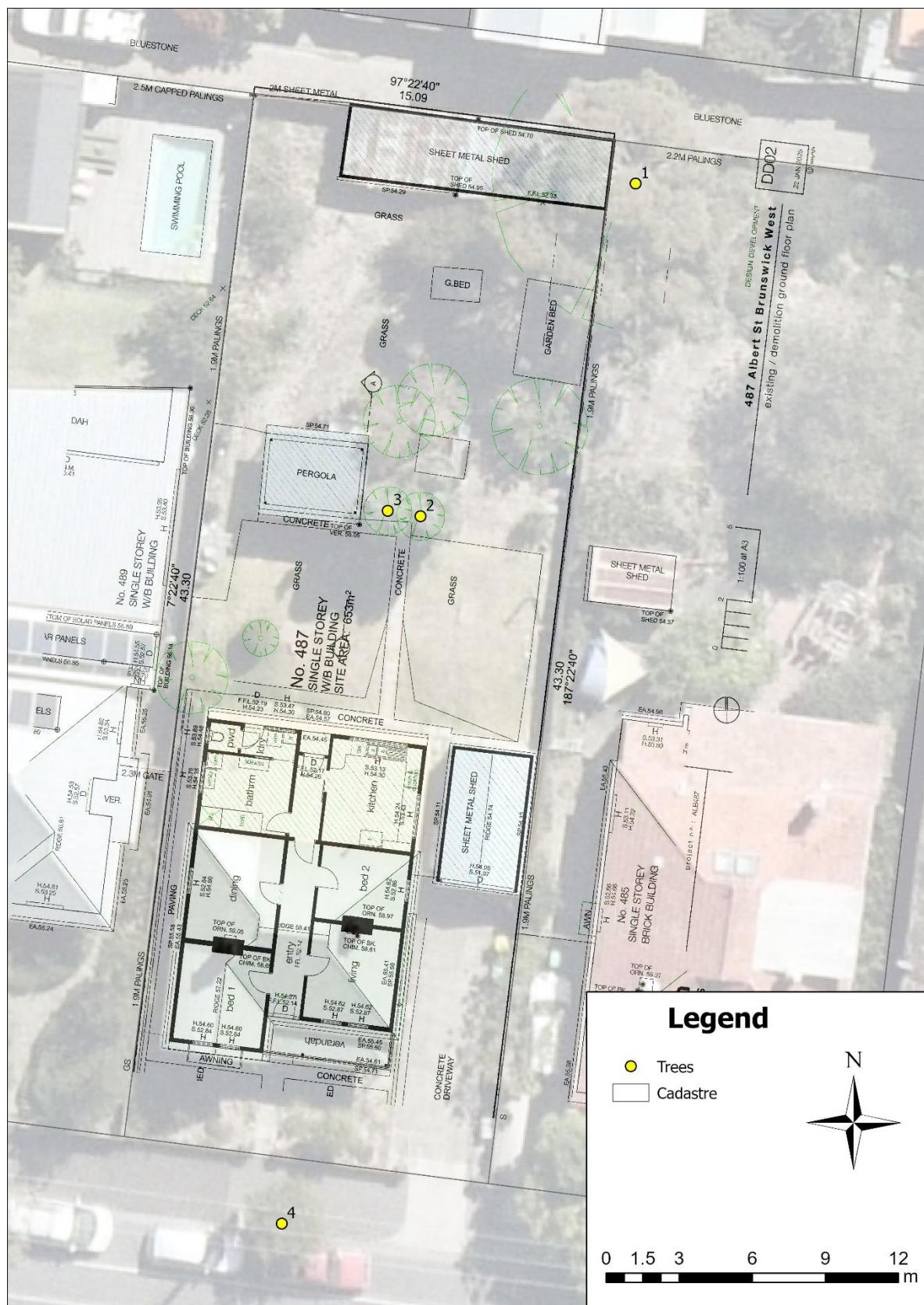


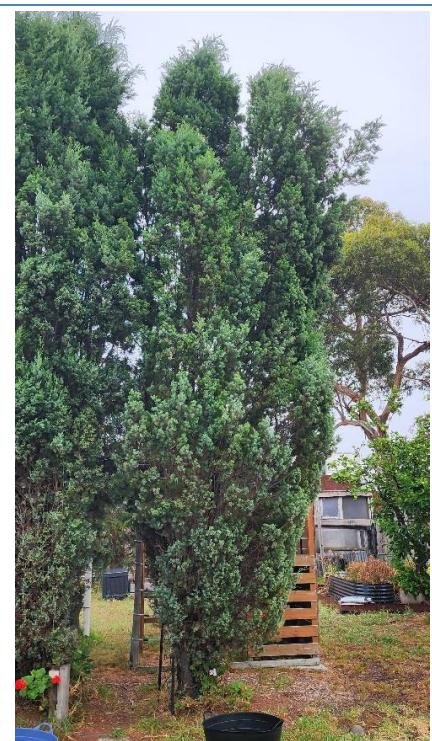
Figure 1: Map of assessed trees (Nearmap image date March 2025).

4. Tree Details

Tree Number	1
Botanic Name	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i>
Common Name	Yellow Gum
Tree dimensions	8m x 9m
DBH dia. @ base	41cm 47cm
Health	Good
Structure	Fair
ULE	10-20 years
Significance	Moderately Significant
Retention Value	Third party owned
TPZr SRZr	4.9m 2.4m
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree was located within the neighbouring property. It overhangs the property by ~5m. Several overhanging branches ~150mmØ had been pruned.



Tree Number	2
Botanic Name	<i>Callitris glaucophylla</i>
Common Name	White Cypress Pine
Tree dimensions	6m x 2m
DBH dia. @ base	25cm 25cm
Health	Fair
Structure	Fair
ULE	10-20 years
Significance	Low
Retention Value	Low
TPZr SRZr	3m 1.8m
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree located in the centre of the garden. Multi stemmed trunk.



Tree Number	3
Botanic Name	<i>Callitris glauophylla</i>
Common Name	White Cypress Pine
Tree dimensions	6m x 2m
DBH dia. @ base	29cm 29cm
Health	Fair
Structure	Fair
ULE	10-20 years
Significance	Low
Retention Value	Low
TPZr SRZr	3.5m 2m
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree located in the centre of the garden. Multi stemmed trunk. Overhangs adjacent shelter.



Tree Number	4
Botanic Name	<i>Callistemon 'Kings Park Special'</i>
Common Name	Kings Park Bottlebrush
Tree dimensions	4m x 2m
DBH dia. @ base	14cm 24cm
Health	Good
Structure	Fair
ULE	10-20 years
Significance	Moderately Significant
Retention Value	Third party owned
TPZr SRZr	2m 1.8m
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree located on the council verge is owned by Merri-bek City Council.



5. Discussion

5.1 The Site

The site at 487 Albert Street is located within Merri-bek City Council. It is a residential property comprising a dwelling, garage, front and rear garden, and a shed situated at the rear. (Figure 2). A sheltered deck area is centrally located in the rear garden (Figure 3). The garden contains a mix of small native and exotic trees and shrubs, which are outside the proposed design, or do not meet the size thresholds defined for protection under AS4970-2009 *Protection of Trees on Development Sites* or relevant Merri-bek City Council tree protection guidelines.



Figure 2: Front of the property.



Figure 3: Rear garden.

5.2 Overlays and Planning Controls

The property is located within Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ1). Heritage Overlay (HO56) applies to the site; however, tree controls do not apply. There are no other overlays that control the removal, destruction or lopping of vegetation.

5.3 Previous TPZ Encroachment

A shed with a brick floor exists within the TPZ of Tree 1 and has likely been there for longer than the tree has been alive (Figure 4). Tree roots may be present beneath the floor; however, unfavourable conditions are likely to have limited their presence. The existence or depth of a concrete slab beneath the bricks is unknown.

The laneway to the north, beyond the rear property boundary is also within the SRZ. It is likely that the laneway is substantially older than the tree.

Both features are likely to have meant that the majority of the tree's roots are within the neighbour's property at number 485.



Figure 4: Existing shed floor.

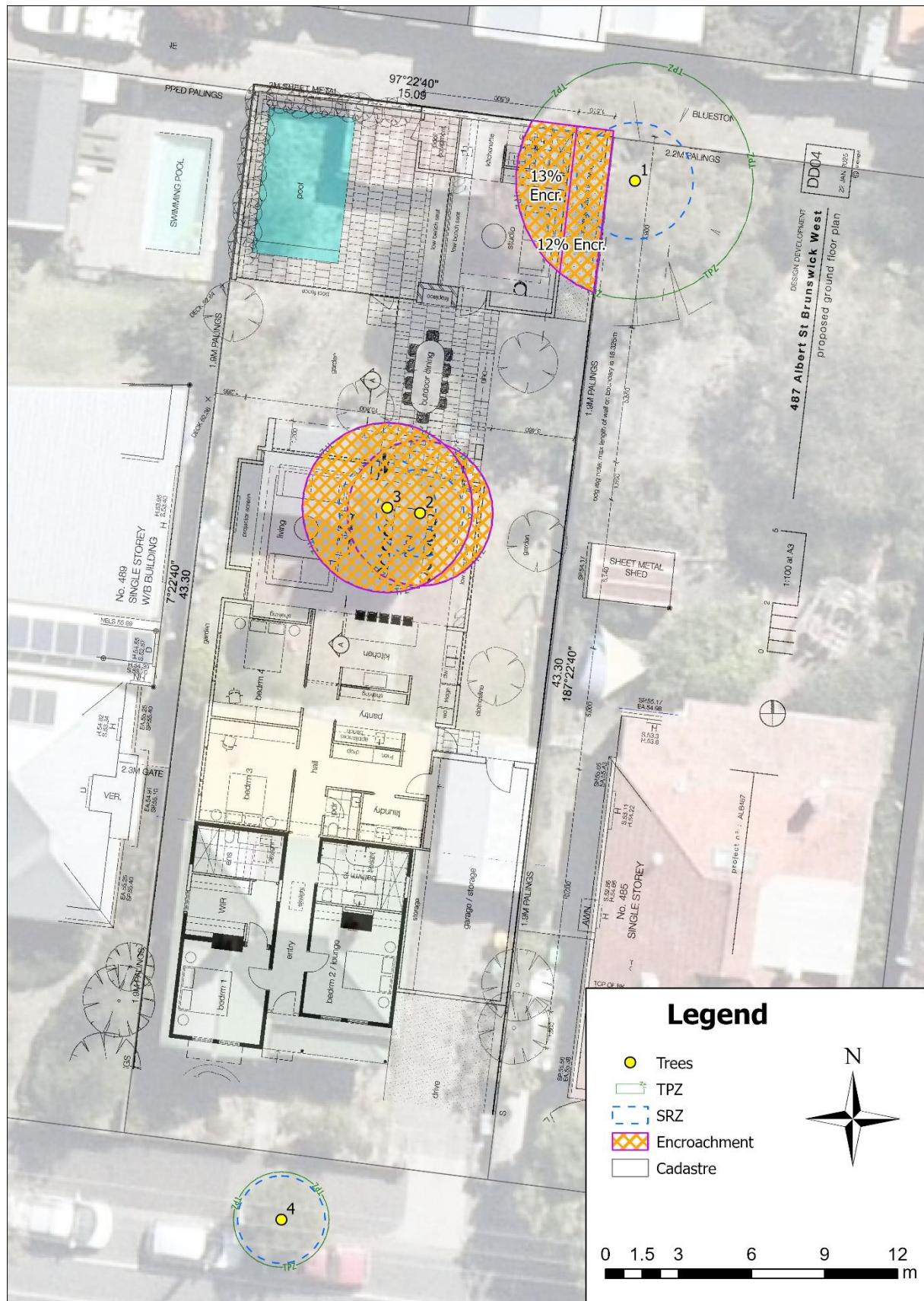
5.4 Design Proposal

Feature surveys and architectural drawings have been provided by the client, the proposal will comprise the following elements:

- An extension to the rear of the dwelling.
- A studio adjacent to the rear boundary.
- A pathway on the east side of the studio which gives access to the laneway.

See section 5.5 TPZ & Proposed Map. Any trees to be retained throughout the build will require protection during construction. The easiest way of achieving this is with the installation of Tree Protection Zones (Appendix 2).

5.5 TPZ & Proposed Map



5.6 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

The impact of the proposal on the trees' TPZs and SRZs have been assessed (Table 1). Trees with an assessment of 100% encroachment include those where the trunk is located within the development. Trees not encroached are not shown.

The percentage encroachments were calculated, and the levels of impact were determined in accordance with AS 4970-2009, *Protection of Trees on Development Sites* as follows:

- **Major** - Encroachment >10% and/or SRZ intrusion
- **Minor** - Encroachment <10% and no SRZ intrusion

Table 1: Construction Impact

ID	Retention	TPZr (m)	SRZr (m)	Encroachment %	SRZ Intrusion	Encroachment level	Outcome/ Comments
1	Third Party	4.9	2.4	25	Yes	Major	Tree can be retained
2	Low	3.0	1.8	100	Yes	Major	Trees will require removal
3	Low	3.5	2	100	Yes	Major	

Trees 2 & 3 are low retention value, centrally located and cannot be retained within the design. Tree 4 is the street tree and will not be impacted.

5.6.1 Tree 1

The TPZ of Tree 1 will be encroached by 25% from the proposal (see section 5.5 TPZ & Proposed Map). This comprises:

- 12% encroachment from the proposed path within the SRZ
- 13% encroachment from the proposed studio without SRZ intrusion.

Approximately half of the area encroached by the proposal is currently encroached by the existing shed with a brick floor. In order to mitigate impacts, the following is proposed:

1. Ensure that the access path remains permeable and at grade. A maximum of 50mm excavation could be required to achieve levels and remove the organic layer.
2. This will improve conditions as currently ~40% of the path is covered by an impermeable shed and brick floor.
3. Demolition of the existing shed must be supervised by a project arborist as part of a Tree Management Plan.
4. Excavation for studio footings must be supervised by a project arborist as part of a Tree Management Plan with any uncovered roots pruned in accordance with AS4373-2007 *Pruning Amenity Trees*.

Implementing these measures will ensure that the works can be completed, and the tree remain viable.

5.7 Management Recommendations

The canopy of Tree 1 overhangs the site and some pruning is recommended. The low, small and a large branch that overhang the property should be pruned to provide clearance to the proposed studio (Figure 5).

All pruning should be completed by qualified arborists (minimum Certificate III Arboriculture) in accordance with AS4373-2007 *Pruning of Amenity Trees*.



Figure 5: Tree 1 recommended pruning.

5.8 Tree Management Plan

Following completion of a design and approval of trees to be retained and removed, a Tree Management Plan (TMP) is to be developed. It is to contain:

- The engagement of a project arborist with a minimum qualification of Diploma in Arboriculture (AQF level 5 or equivalent)
- Detail regarding how the trees will be retained:
 - During demolition
 - Prior to and during construction
 - Post construction
- A tree protection plan to scale that is to show:
 - all tree protection zones and structural root zones,

- all tree protection fenced off areas and areas where ground protection systems will be used.
- The type of footings within the tree protection zone
- All services to be located within the tree protection zone and a notation to state that all services will either be located outside of the tree protection zone or bored under the tree protection zone.
- A notation to refer to the tree management plan for specific detail on what actions are required within the tree protection zone.
- Location of tree protection measures and ground protection
- Certification, milestones, inspection times and hold points.

The TPMP is to be developed in accordance with AS4970-2009 *Protection of Trees on Development Sites*.

6. Conclusion

C&R Ryder Consulting was engaged to assess the trees at 487 Albert Street, Brunswick West and provide an arboricultural impact assessment. The works being considered include construction of an extension to the rear of the dwelling, a studio at the rear of the garden, and a pathway on the east side of the studio.

4 trees were assessed. Trees 1 & 4 had good health and fair structure, Trees 2 & 3 had fair health and fair structure. All 4 trees had a ULE of 10-20 years.

The works being considered will have the following impacts to the trees:

1. Tree 1 has a 25% encroachment comprising 13% from the proposed studio and 12% encroachment from the proposed path. The tree can be retained due to the following:
 - a. Ensure that the access path remains permeable and at grade. A maximum of 50mm excavation could be required to achieve levels and remove the organic layer.
 - b. Demolition of the existing shed must be supervised by a project arborist as part of a Tree Management Plan.
 - c. Excavation for studio footings must be supervised by a project arborist as part of a Tree Management Plan with any uncovered roots pruned in accordance with AS4373-2007 Pruning Amenity Trees.
2. Trees 2 & 3 have 100% encroachment and cannot be retained under the proposed design.
3. Tree 4 is not encroached by the design.

Implementation of a Tree management Plan for Trees 1 & 4 is recommended.

7. References

AS 4373, 2007, *Australian Standard, Pruning of Amenity Trees*, 2nd Edition Standards Australia.

AS 4970, 2009, *Australian Standard, Protection of Trees on Development Sites*, Standards Australia.

Coder, K. D., 1995, 'Tree quality BMPs for developing wooded areas and protecting residual trees', in *Trees and Building Sites, Proceedings of an International Workshop on Trees and Buildings*, Edited by G. W. Watson and D. Neely, International Society of Arboriculture, Champaign, Illinois.

Appendix 1. Tree Assessment Descriptors

1.1 Image of tree

Digital image captured on the day of assessments.

1.2 Botanic Name/Common Name

The tree identified to genus and species level as well as the generally accepted common name for the tree.

1.3 Tree Dimensions

The height and width of the tree as estimated by the arborist in whole metres.

1.4 Diameter at Breast Height

The trunk diameter of the tree measured with a diameter tape at 1.4m above ground level.

1.5 Diameter at Base

The trunk diameter of the tree measured with a diameter tape above the root flare.

1.6 Health

Very Good	The tree is demonstrating exceptional growth for the species, has a full, dense canopy and there is no sign of any pest or disease.
Good	The tree is demonstrating good growth for the species with respect to its location and broader context. The canopy is full and complete and there are no signs of pest or disease.
Fair	The tree may have shown a reduction in optimal growth and/or there may be some twiggy deadwood within the canopy. There may be the presence of some pests or diseases that are not causing a significant decline in the tree
Poor	The tree is in decline with little growth. There may be sections of the canopy missing and pests or diseases may be prevalent
Very Poor	The tree is in significant decline, with large sections of the canopy dead. This tree is very unlikely to recover.
Dead	The tree is dead

1.7 Structure

Good	The tree's structure is typical of the species with no significant hazards such as included bark, trunk decay, splits or tears. In general, there will be a single trunk with scaffold and/or subordinate branches that display good attachments
Fair	There may be minor defects in the canopy, but the overall tree is still relatively free of significant issues. The tree may need minor pruning to fix minor defects. The canopy will be mostly symmetrical and typical of the species.
Poor	The tree will have 1 or more significant defect that may be able to be remedied with pruning. This tree is likely to have an atypical canopy and may contain defects such as included bark or codominant stems.
Very Poor	The tree has substantial defects associated with its primary trunk and scaffold structure that cannot be remedied with pruning or other measures. It is likely that this tree will require removal in the short term.
Hazardous	The tree has major defects and is likely to fail. It should be removed as soon as possible.

1.8 Useful Life Expectancy

20+	The tree is a healthy specimen in good condition. It is expected to provide a contribution to the landscape for at least another 20 years with an appropriate level of management.
10-20 years	The tree is a reasonably healthy specimen in good or fair condition. It is expected to provide a contribution to the landscape for 10-20 years with an appropriate level of management.
5-10 years	The tree is in fair condition or a short-lived species. It is likely to provide contribution to the landscape for 5-10 years with an appropriate level of management at which point removal may need to be considered.
1-5 years	The tree is a poor specimen in decline and is likely to require removal within 1-5 years.
0 years	The tree is either dead or has substantial defects requiring its removal in the short term.

1.9 Tree Significance

Highly Significant	The tree is a large, mature example of the species, generally in fair to good condition. It may be a remnant specimen or have substantial habitat value. The tree may have specific landscape context or be very prominent in the broader environment. This tree may be suitable for inclusion on a significant tree register at local or state government level. Significant efforts should be made to retain this tree.
Significant	The tree is a mature example of the species in good condition and/or have particular prominence in the landscape. There may be evidence of the tree being used as a habitat tree by local fauna and/or it may be a remnant specimen. It has a long ULE and should be considered for retention. The loss of the tree may have a significant impact on the surrounding landscape.
Moderately Significant	The tree is a semi mature to mature example of the species in good condition, may be well sited in the landscape and/or may have habitat value. The removal of this tree would be noticed in the landscape.
Low	The tree is generally a smaller specimen or may be in decline. It is not located in a prominent position and its removal would have little impact on the broader landscape.
None	The tree is considered insignificant, and its loss would go unnoticed.

1.10 Tree Retention

Very High	The tree is an outstanding example of the species, and it should be retained at all costs.
High	The tree is a mature specimen in fair to good condition with a ULE of at least 10 years, is suitable to the site and should be retained in a new development.
Moderate	The tree is a semi-mature or mature specimen, in fair to good condition that is suitable for retention; however, is located such that its loss would not have a significant impact on the landscape.
Low	The tree is likely to be juvenile or in decline and could be retained; however, design changes are not considered worthwhile to retain a tree in this category.
None	The tree should be removed irrespective of a design as it is in severe decline, hazardous or dead.
Third Party Tree	This tree is located off the subject property and is owned by a third party. The assessment of health and structure is considered irrelevant as the tree must be retained.

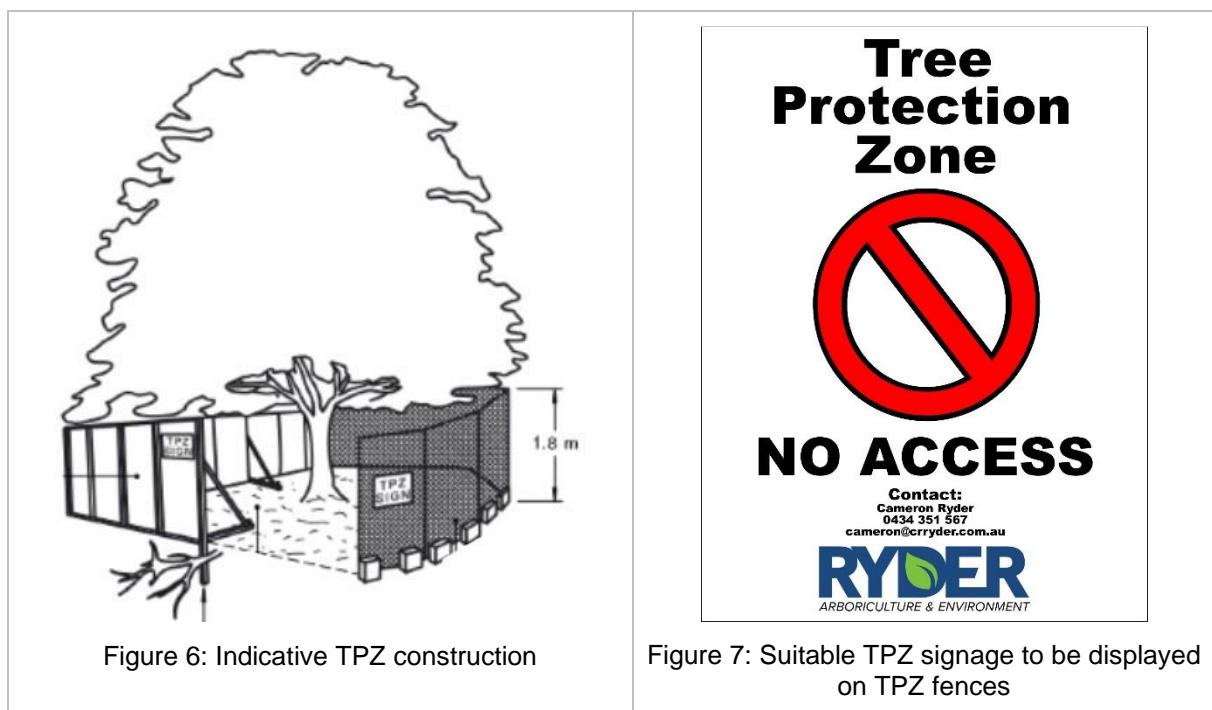
Appendix 2. Tree Protection

2.1 Tree Protection Zones

It is important when considering development or construction that assets to be retained are properly protected. In this case the trees are the assets and require protection if they are to be retained in the landscape long-term. Damage to the trees can come in 1 of 2 ways. The first is immediate damage directly to the tree in the form of root severance, breaking of branches and wounding of the trunk. The second is more insidious and can take some time to manifest. This is a more indirect form of damage and usually relates to modification of soil structure or grade, drainage patterns or hydrology (Coder 1995).

Trees can be easily protected from development by the installation of Tree Protection Zones (TPZ). TPZs have been calculated according to AS4970-2009 *Protection of Trees on Development Sites* for all trees to be retained. This calculates the TPZ radius by multiplying the trunk DBH by 12 to a maximum of 15m radius. These figures have been supplied in section 4 Tree Details.

A tree protection fence should be designed to be robust and withstand easy movement or ingress. Chain mesh fencing, temporary fencing panels or solid hoarding are all good examples (Figure 6).



The following should be prohibited within a TPZ (adapted from AS 4970-2009):

- built structures or hard landscape features (i.e. paving, retaining walls)
- materials storage (i.e. equipment, fuel, building waste or rubble)
- soil disturbance (i.e. stripping or grade changes)
- excavation works including soil cultivation (specifically surface-dug trenches for underground utilities)
- placement of fill
- lighting of fires
- preparation of chemicals, including preparation of cement products

- pedestrian or vehicular access (i.e. pathways).

Include the following procedures in setting up and maintaining any TPZ (adapted from AS 4970-2009):

- erect warning signs at regular intervals along the entire length of any protective TPZ fencing (Figure 7)
- construct TPZ fencing to prevent pedestrian access into the protected area.
- mulch the TPZ area to a depth of 100mm with woodchips (if available, use woodchips generated from onsite tree clearing).
- irrigate TPZs periodically, as determined by the consulting arborist.

2.2 Structural Root Zones (SRZs)

The structural root zone is a formula to define the theoretical volume of soil and tree roots required to keep a tree stable in the ground. It is in no way related to tree health and significant excavation at or near the SRZ for many trees will cause severe decline and/or death.

Excavation within SRZs can lead to whole tree failure often with devastating results. SRZs have been calculated in accordance with AS 4970-2009 *Protection of Trees on Development Sites* using the equation:

$$R_{srz} = (D \times 50)^{0.42} \times 0.64$$

Where D=trunk diameter at base in metres.

These figures have been supplied in section 4 Tree Details.

2.3 Encroachment

Encroachment of less than 10% of the TPZ and outside the SRZ is deemed to be minor encroachment according to AS 4970-2009. See Figure 8. Variations must be made by the project arborist considering other relevant factors including tree health, vigour, stability, species sensitivity and soil characteristics.

Encroachment of more than 10% of the TPZ or into the SRZ is major encroachment. The project arborist must demonstrate that the tree(s) would remain viable. This may require root investigation by non-destructive methods and consideration of relevant factors tree health, vigour, stability, species sensitivity and soil characteristics.

In any case, the lost TPZ should be compensated and be contiguous with the existing TPZ.

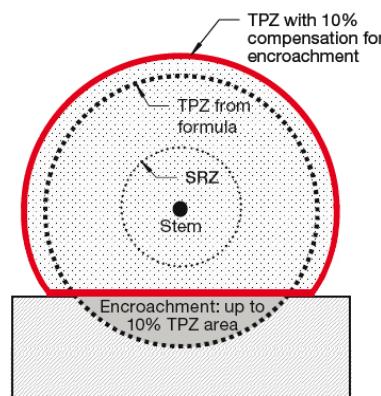


Figure 8: Example of TPZ encroachment and compensatory offset (image from AS 4970-2009)