

DATE PALMS FACTSHEET



The Victorian Government is removing 20 dangerous level crossings and building 13 new stations as part of a \$4 billion upgrade on the Frankston line that will improve safety, reduce congestion and allow more trains to run more often.

We're removing the Neerim Road and Glen Huntly Road level crossings by lowering the rail line into a trench, and building a new Glenhuntly Station.

The new station – with its lowered platforms – will provide locals with increased safety and accessibility as well as improve connections between public transport, shops and community areas.

Vegetation removal is a critical step in the preparation for major construction.

Careful planning has been undertaken by qualified arborists, sustainability and environmental specialists to help minimise the impacts to local flora and fauna.

Royal Avenue in Glen Huntly is renowned for its iconic Canary Island date palms. There are about 200 mature date palms between Glen Huntly and McKinnon that have been in place for 80 to 100 years. They are a treasure that the project team will take very good care of.

As the palms are too close the rail line, up to 23 of them must be temporarily relocated. We'll store them in a safe location during construction and then bring them back to be replanted.

For all the other trees that we do remove, we will plant two new trees as part of landscaping at the end of the project.

The palms will be transported by a specialist team and carefully monitored while in transit and at their temporary location.



Construction workers position a returned date palm in Cheltenham

Canary Island date palms

The Canary Island date palm is native to the Canary Islands. They are characterised by their date fruit, diamond-patterned trunk and broad spiky fronds.

They often provide homes for possums and birds like rainbow lorikeets. We will carefully remove and rehome and wildlife that we find prior to transplanting Glen Huntly's palms. On their return, lorikeets have been known to settle back in before the palms are off the crane.

How we'll do it:

- Palms are prepared by trimming most fronds that make up the canopy, leaving only about the top third. These are then tied up into a bunch to allow for easier transportation.
- The area around each palm is prepared by either trenching or non-destructive digging, to create a 2m by 2m square around the base of the palm.
- Airbags are inserted into the trench on one side of the palm and inflated to lift the palm and structural root system out of the ground.
- A crane lifts and places the palm down horizontally onto a cradle on a specially equipped truck. The rootball of the palm is bagged to keep it condensed and for protection during storage.
- Palms are temporarily replanted offsite and treated regularly with water and fertiliser, with soil testing undertaken for analysis of soil health. If being stored for longer than 3–6 months, the tied palms fronds are released.
- The palms are returned to site near the end of works in reverse order to the above. We'll continue to monitor the health of the palms for the next four years.

One of the date palms leaving Cheltenham

We've done this before:

We have successfully managed the temporary removal of palm trees on other projects along the Frankston line.

Carrum

Our first palm was transplanted at Carrum in 2020. It was removed using the airbag method and is now thriving in its original location.

Cheltenham and Mentone

Across Cheltenham and Mentone during their level crossing removal projects, we salvaged and transplanted 17 mature trees, including five Canary Island date palms.

One of Cheltenham's returned palms



CONTACT US

contact@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au
1800 105 105
Level Crossing Removal Project
GPO Box 2392, Melbourne VIC 3001

Follow us on social media
@levelcrossings



Translation service – For languages other than English, please call 9209 0147.

Please contact us if you would like this information in an accessible format.

If you need assistance because of a hearing or speech impairment, please visit relayservice.gov.au