

TREES AND VEGETATION



The Victorian Government is investing \$530 million in the second stage of the Hurstbridge Line duplication that will deliver further improvements, including more train services, less crowding on peak trains and better connections to public transport in Melbourne’s north east.

As part of this project we will duplicate two sections of rail track between Greensborough and Montmorency, and Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen and build new stations at Greensborough and Montmorency.

Tree and vegetation removal are a necessary part of major construction. Reducing our impact on vegetation is a major priority for the project. We work with environmental and sustainability specialists across our projects to manage the impacts on flora and fauna.

Throughout community consultation we’ve heard how important trees and vegetation are to your communities. Re-planting and landscaping of trees, shrubs and grasses around the Greensborough and Montmorency station precincts will take place as part of our major works which will be completed in 2022.

How we remove trees and vegetation

Vegetation along the rail corridor is assessed by independent arborists to determine:



Structural strength, including the size and location of tree roots



Health and life expectancy



How close it is to construction works and services

Why we need to remove trees and vegetation

The Greensborough to Montmorency rail corridor is in a residential, built up area with limited space to undertake major construction activities. The construction of 3 kilometres of track duplication, as well as the new Greensborough and Montmorency stations will have an impact on the surrounding environment. Similarly, the 1.5 kilometres of track duplication between Diamond Creek to Wattle Glen will require tree removal along some sections of the rail line.

These works involve the construction of new rail infrastructure within the existing rail corridor, including new rail tracks, maintenance access to underground services, overhead wiring and signalling equipment, as well as relocation of existing equipment and services. To fit everything in, we will also need to move the existing track and associated services in some areas.

These works and the space required to construct them, will require trees and other vegetation to be removed in some areas. In addition, to allow construction access to the rail corridor, removal and trimming of some trees will be required at some locations.

Minimising tree loss

Reducing tree loss is a major priority for the project. We are constantly reviewing our design and construction methods to reduce the number of trees that need to be removed. These efforts will be ongoing and our workers on the ground will look for practical ways to minimise tree loss.

Wildlife

We work with qualified ecologists and wildlife handlers who inspect trees flagged for removal and make sure all wildlife is safely rehomed. We will also put in nesting boxes to help protect local fauna.

Assessing trees and vegetation

Independent arborists are conducting a comprehensive assessment of trees and vegetation along the Hurstbridge line. This assessment will identify which trees along the corridor will need to be removed to enable construction or which pose a hazard to rail operations.

Understanding root systems and health of trees is also crucial to identifying where tree removal can be avoided.

Planting and landscaping

Once the stations are built and newly duplicated tracks are in place, thousands of trees, shrubs and grasses will be planted in station precincts. We are also exploring opportunities for re-vegetation in and around sections of the rail corridor.

Landscape design and species selection forms an important part of the design process. Community feedback will help us to understand what kind of plantings people want to see as part of this project. This feedback, together with advice from environmental specialists and our team of landscape architects will help inform the final landscape design.

There are safety considerations when it comes to planting trees and vegetation in rail corridors and station precincts. Trees planted too close to a railway line can easily become a hazard or lead to equipment faults and we will work with Metro Trains to develop an appropriate landscape response.

Offsets

Victoria has a state-wide native vegetation program aimed at maintaining overall biodiversity across the state. Native vegetation that is removed for the second stage of the Hurstbridge Line duplication will be offset in accordance with this program. We will also be working closely with the Banyule and Nillumbik Councils on opportunities to enhance or contribute to native vegetation in the local area.

More information about offsets can be found at environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation

What happens with trees that are removed?

We will talk to local community groups regarding proposed vegetation removal and how some of the removed vegetation can be re-used for local initiatives in the area. For example, suitably sized felled trees may be re-used for habitat logs, landscaping elements or nesting boxes for fauna relocation.

Where this is not possible, vegetation is mulched on site, to allow for its easy and safe removal.

We will seek to donate or reuse mulch within our project area wherever possible.

Call us on **1800 105 105** or email contact@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au



CONTACT US

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