

Tree Assessment – 140 – 204 Western Avenue Westmeadows.

25 January 2023 | Tree Logic Ref. 011025

Prepared for Tom Foley – MAB Corporation Pty. Ltd., L5, 441 St Kilda Road, Melbourne 3004.

Prepared by David Phillips - Treelogic Pty. Ltd., 4/21 Eugene Terrace, Ringwood VIC 3134.



Dear Tom,

RE: 140 – 204 Western Avenue, Westmeadows.

Treelogic Pty. Ltd. was engaged by Tom Foley of the MAB Corporation Pty. Ltd. to provide comment regarding the removal of Tree 1 located within the proposed development occurring at 140 – 204 Western Avenue in Westmeadows.

Tree 1 is a semi-mature River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), approximately 6 m tall with a crown spread of 8 m in 2020. At the time of the inspection, the tree exhibited below typical or fair-poor health due to the extent of crown dieback following environmental stress and reduced vigour. Despite, the species ability to respond to adverse environmental conditions, a tree experiencing past environmental stress can be more vulnerable into the future, particularly if the duration between adverse events is short. The tree exhibited an asymmetric form in response to the prevailing wind conditions that is often typical of the species growing in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. The lower trunk portion and buttress were not observed due to the presence of the noxious weed African Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*) surrounding the tree. It is unknown if defects are present in these areas.

Overall, the tree was attributed with a Moderate C arboricultural rating due to its age, size, condition and landscape amenity. It was attributed with this rating as it is an unremarkable tree with no special or significant character and was a singular tree feature with a low contribution to the landscape amenity and overall canopy cover.

Assessment details of individual tree is listed in Table 1 below. Descriptors used in the assessment can be seen in Appendix 1. Tree details taken from Arboricultural Assessment Report, prepared by Treelogic, Ref No. 011025, dated 29/10/2020.

Tree Details

Table 1: Tree data	Subject Tree
Botanical name	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>
Common name	River Red Gum
Type	Indigenous
Age	Semi-mature
DBH (cm)	40cm measured at 1.4 m above ground
Height x Width (m)	6 x 8
Health	Fair-poor
Structure	Fair-poor
Arb. Rating	Moderate C
U.L.E (Useful life expectancy)	10 - 20 years



Figure 1 (left): View of Tree 1 from the north-east.



Figure 2 (left): View of Tree 1 from the north-west.

The future use of the site is primarily for industrial purposes with multiple allotments and internal connector roads. Tree 1 is located halfway up the site towards the western boundary (See Figure 3) that corresponds with Site 33 on the Site Plan (See Figure 4).

The Landscape Masterplan (prepared by Tract, Issue 04, dated 08/11/2022) shows that street trees are proposed along each internal road and along both sides of Western Avenue. The street trees are a mix of exotic, Australian and Victorian native species.



Figure 3 (above left): Shows the location of Tree 1 under the current site conditions.

Figure 4 (above right): Shows its corresponding location within the proposed site plan in Site 33.

Within the context of the proposed development, I believe that its location and the lack of surrounding trees make it difficult to minimize impacts, considering bulk earthworks, weed removal and other activities that will occur as part of construction works. On large sites, such as this one, retaining trees in groups or large trees is more effective, as larger preserved areas have more prominence in the eyes of contractors and can afford better protection. Despite, best intentions and recommendations within the planning phase, the preservation of a small, isolated area for a single small tree is harder to control during construction when activity is to occur on all sides. Therefore, all efforts should be directed towards protecting and preserving the mature trees growing along Moonee Ponds Creek as they can be afforded better protection and contribute far greater to landscape amenity and conservation/biodiversity values, than Tree 1.

Presently, Tree 1 contributes a minor amount to the landscape amenity and overall canopy cover. Its removal would not have a detrimental impact upon the landscape character and could be offset by the proposed streetscape plantings. Following the implementation of the Landscape Masterplan there will be significantly more canopy cover over the site into the future than currently exists. The Landscape design is an appropriate response to the overall design and has selected a variety of tree species that generally perform well under differing site conditions.

If a comment is to be made about the tree selection, in my experience, Port Jackson Fig (*Ficus rubiginosa*) has a vigorous and extensive root system that will conflict with surrounding hard surfaces and underground infrastructure. Consideration should be given to substituting it with another species, such as River Red Gum.

In my opinion, the number of street trees that are proposed within the Landscape Masterplan more than adequately offset the removal of Tree 1. Selected species, such as Canary Island Oak (*Quercus canariensis*), Smooth-barked Apple (*Angophora costata*) and Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculata*) are equivalent species in terms of their mature size in the landscape, given appropriate site conditions and soil volumes for growth and development. The proposed species also have a long-life span with the potential to contribute usefully to the landscape for as long as Tree 1. Particularly, as changes to the site conditions brought about by the development have the potential to reduce its useful life expectancy. Under, the proposed site changes and future site use, it is not expected that Tree 1 will have a useful life expectancy that equals the mature Red Gums growing along Moonee Ponds Creek.

Considering location of Tree 1 and the size of its tree protection zone (area of preservation) in relation to the overall size of the development, it will be difficult to control work activities during construction. As such, the tree is at risk of being adversely impacted with a reduced contribution to the landscape character, amenity, and overall canopy cover. Rather than retain a small tree, all efforts should be made to protect and preserve the mature River Red Gums growing along Moonee Ponds Creek as these have far greater landscape and conservation/biodiversity value.

The Landscape Masterplan sufficiently offsets the removal of Tree 1 as it will significantly increase the number of tree plantings across the site and overall canopy cover into the future. In my opinion, consideration should be given to the removal of Tree 1.

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I am available to answer any questions arising from this report.

Signed



David Phillips – Ass Deg. Env Hort

Senior Consulting Arborist

TRAQ Qualified – Expiry 13/11/2024.

0433 813 587 03 9870 7700 david.phillips@treelogic.com.au

References

Australian Standard (4970-2009) Protection of Trees on development sites. Standards Australia, Sydney NSW Australia.

Clark, J.R. & Matheny, N.P (1998), Trees and Development: A technical guide to preservation of trees during land development. ISA, Champaign, Illinois.

Appendix 1: Arboricultural Descriptors (February 2019)

Note that not all the described tree descriptors may be used in a tree assessment and report. The assessment is undertaken with regards to contemporary arboricultural practices and consists of a visual inspection of external and above-ground tree parts.

1. Tree Condition

The assessment of tree condition evaluates factors of health and structure. The descriptors of health and structure attributed to a tree evaluate the individual specimen to what could be considered typical for that species growing in its location under current climatic conditions. For example, some species can display inherently poor branching architecture, such as multiple acute branch attachments with included bark. Whilst these structural defects may technically be considered arboriculturally poor, they are typical for the species and may not constitute an increased risk of failure. These trees may be assigned a structural rating of fair-poor (rather than poor) at the discretion of the assessor.

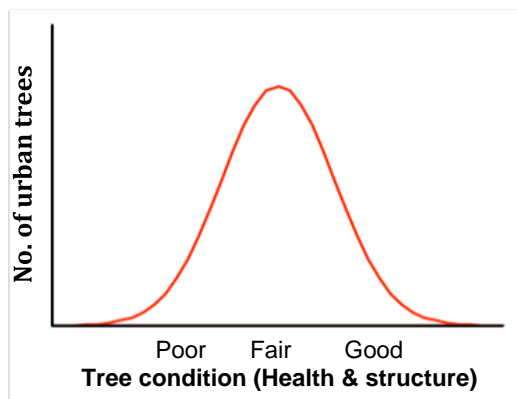


Diagram 1: Indicative normal distribution curve for tree condition

Diagram 1 provides an indicative distribution curve for tree condition to illustrate that within a normal tree population the majority of specimens are centrally located within the condition range (normal distribution curve). Furthermore, that those individual trees with an assessed condition approaching the outer ends of the spectrum occur less often.

2. Tree Name

Provides botanical name, (genus, species, variety and cultivar) according to accepted international code of taxonomic classification, and common name.

3. Tree Type

Describes the general geographic origin of the species and its type e.g. deciduous or evergreen.

Category	Description
Indigenous	Occurs naturally in the area or region of the subject site. Remnant.
Victorian native	Occurs naturally within some part of the State of Victoria (not exclusively) but is not indigenous (component of EVC benchmark). Could be planted indigenous trees.
Australian native	Occurs naturally within Australia but is not a Victorian native or indigenous
Exotic deciduous	Occurs outside of Australia and typically sheds its leaves during winter
Exotic evergreen	Occurs outside of Australia and typically holds its leaves all year round
Exotic conifer	Occurs outside of Australia and is classified as a gymnosperm
Native conifer	Occurs naturally within Australia and is classified as a gymnosperm
Native Palm	Occurs naturally within Australia. Woody monocotyledon
Exotic Palm	Occurs outside of Australia. Woody monocotyledon

4. Height and Width

Indicates height and width of the individual tree; dimensions are expressed in metres. Crown heights are measured with a height meter where possible. Due to the topography of some sites and/or the density of vegetation it may not be possible to do this for every tree. Tree heights may be estimated in line with previous height meter readings in conjunction with assessor's experience. Crown widths are generally paced (estimated) at the widest axis or can be measured on two axes and averaged. In some instances the crown width can be

measured on the four cardinal direction points (North, South, East and West).

Crown height, crown spread are generally recorded to the nearest half metre (crown spread would be rounded up) for dimensions up to 10 m and the nearest whole metre for dimensions over 10 m. Estimated dimensions (e.g. for off-site or otherwise inaccessible trees where accurate data cannot be recovered) shall be clearly identified in the assessment data.

5. Trunk diameters

The position where trunk diameters are captured may vary dependent on the requirements of the specific assessment and an individual trees specific characteristics. DBH is the typical trunk diameter captured as it relates to the allocation of tree protection distances. The basal trunk diameter assists in the allocation of a structural root zone. Some municipalities require trunk diameters be captured at different heights, with 1.0 m above grade being a common requirement. The specific planning schemes will be checked to ascertain requirements.

Stem diameters shall be recorded in centimetres, rounded to the nearest 1 cm (0.01 m).

Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)

Indicates the trunk diameter (expressed in centimetres) of an individual tree measured at 1.4m above the existing ground level or where otherwise indicated, multiple leaders are measured individually. Plants with multiple leader habit may be measured at the base. The range of methods to suit particular trunk shapes, configurations and site conditions can be seen in Appendix A of Australian Standard AS 4970-2009 *Protection of trees on development sites*. Measurements undertaken using foresters tape or builders tape.

Basal trunk diameter

The basal dimension is the trunk diameter measured at the base of the trunk or main stem(s) immediately above the root buttress. Used to ascertain the Structural Root Zone (SRZ) as outlined in AS4970.

6. Health

Assesses various attributes to describe the overall health and vitality of the tree.

Category	Vitality, Extension growth	Decline symptoms, Deadwood, Dieback	Foliage density, colour, size, intactness	Pests and or disease
Good	Above typical. Excellent. Full canopy density	Negligible	Better than typical	Negligible
Fair	Typical vitality. >80% canopy density	Minor or expected. Little or no dead wood	Typical. Minor deficiencies or defects could be present.	Minor, within damage thresholds
Fair to Poor	Below typical - low vitality	More than typical. Small sub-branch dieback	Exhibiting deficiencies. Could be thinning, or smaller	Exceeds damage thresholds
Poor	Minimal - declining	Excessive, large and/or prominent amount & size of dead wood. Significant dieback	Exhibiting severe deficiencies. Thinning foliage, generally smaller or deformed	Extreme and contributing to decline
Dead	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

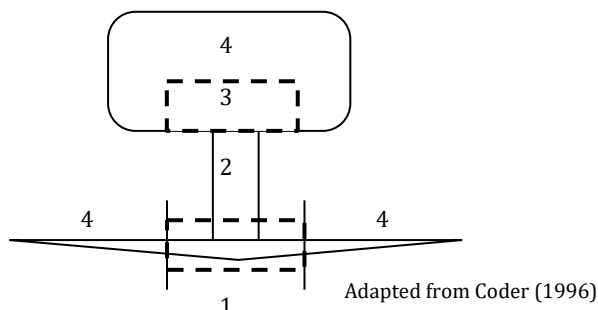
7. Structure

Assesses principal components of tree structure (Diagram 2).

Descriptor	Zone 1 - Root plate & lower stem	Zone 2 - Trunk	Zone 3 - Primary branch support	Zone 4 - Outer crown and roots
Good	No obvious damage, disease or decay; obvious basal flare / stable in ground	No obvious damage, disease or decay; well tapered	Well formed, attached, spaced and tapered. No history of failure.	No obvious damage, disease, decay or structural defect. No history of failure.
Fair	Minor damage or decay. Basal flare present.	Minor damage or decay	Generally, well attached, spaced and tapered branches. Minor structural deficiencies may be present or developing. No history of branch failure.	Minor damage, disease or decay; minor branch end-weight or over-extension. No history of branch failure.
Fair to Poor	Moderate damage or decay; minimal basal flare.	Moderate damage or decay; approaching recognised thresholds	Weak, decayed or with acute branch attachments; previous branch failure evidence.	Moderate damage, disease or decay; moderate branch end-weight or over-extension. Minor branch failure evident.
Poor	Major damage, disease or decay; fungal fruiting bodies present. Excessive lean placing pressure on root plate	Major damage, disease or decay; exceeds recognised thresholds; fungal fruiting bodies present. Acute lean. Stump re-sprout	Decayed, cavities or has acute branch attachments with included bark; excessive compression flaring; failure likely. Evidence of major branch failure.	Major damage, disease or decay; fungal fruiting bodies present; major branch end-weight or over-extension. Branch failure evident.
Very Poor	Excessive damage, disease or decay; unstable / loose in ground; altered exposure; failure probable	Excessive damage, disease or decay; cavities. Excessive lean. Stump re-sprout	Decayed, cavities or branch attachments with active split; failure imminent. History of major branch failure.	Excessive damage, disease or decay; excessive branch end-weight or over-extension. History of branch failure.

Diagram 2: Tree structure zones

1. Root plate & lower stem
2. Trunk
3. Primary branch support
4. Outer crown & roots



Structure ratings will also take into account general branching architecture, stem taper, live crown ratio, crown symmetry (bias or lean) and crown position such as tree being suppressed amongst more dominant trees.

The lowest or worst descriptor assigned to the tree in any column could generally be the overall rating assigned to the tree. The assessment for structure is limited to observations of external and above ground tree parts. It does not include any exploratory assessment of underground or internal tree parts unless this is requested as part of the investigation. Trees are assessed and then given a rating for a point in time. Generally, trees with a poor or very poor structure are beyond the benefit of practical arboricultural treatments.

The management of trees in the urban environment requires appropriate arboricultural input and consideration of risk. Risk potential will consider the combination of likelihood of failure and impact, including the perceived importance of the target(s).

8. Age class

Relates to the physiological stage of the tree's life cycle.

Category	Description
Young	Sapling tree and/or recently planted. Approximately 5 or less years in location.

Semi-mature	Tree increasing in size and yet to achieve expected size in situation. Primary developmental stage.
Early-mature	Tree established, generally growing vigorously. > 50% of attainable age/size.
Mature	Specimen approaching expected size in situation, with reduced incremental growth.
Over-mature	Mature full-size with a retrenching crown. Tree is senescent and in decline. Significant decay generally present.

9. Useful life expectancy

Assessment of useful life expectancy provides an indication of health and tree appropriateness and involves an estimate of how long a tree is likely to remain in the landscape based on species, stage of life (cycle), health, amenity, environmental services contribution, conflicts with adjacent infrastructure and risk to the community. It would enable tree managers to develop long-term plans for the eventual removal and replacement of existing trees in the public realm. It is not a measure of the biological life of the tree within the natural range of the species. It is more a measure of the health status and the trees positive contribution to the urban landscape.

Within an urban landscape context, particularly in relation to street trees, it could be considered a point where the costs to maintain the asset (tree) outweigh the benefits the tree is returning.

The assessment is based on the site conditions not being significantly altered and that any prescribed maintenance works are carried out (site conditions are presumed to remain relatively constant and the tree would be maintained under scheduled maintenance programs).

Useful Life Expectancy	Typical characteristics
<1 year (No remaining ULE)	Tree may be dead or mostly dead. Tree may exhibit major structural faults. Tree may be an imminent failure hazard. Excessive infrastructure damage with high risk potential that cannot be remedied.
1-5 years (Transitory, Brief)	Tree is exhibiting severe chronic decline. Crown is likely to be less than 50% typical density. Crown may be mostly epicormic growth. Dieback of large limbs is common (large deadwood may have been pruned out). Major structural defects that cannot be remedied. Tree may be over-mature and senescing. Infrastructure conflicts with heightened risk potential. Tree has outgrown site constraints.
6-10 years (Short)	Tree is exhibiting chronic decline. Crown density will be less than typical and epicormic growth is likely to present. The crown may still be mostly entire, but some dieback is likely to be evident. Dieback may include large limbs. Structural defects present that influence the tree's risk rating, amenity or vitality. Over-mature and senescing or early decline symptoms in short-lived species. Early infrastructure conflicts with potential to increase regardless of management inputs.
11-20 years (Moderate)	Tree not showing symptoms of chronic decline, but growth characteristics are likely to be reduced (bud development, extension growth etc.). Developing structural defects that reduce viability with limited scope for management. Tree may be over-mature and beginning to senesce. Potential for infrastructure conflicts regardless of management inputs.
21-40 years (Moderately long)	Trees displaying normal growth characteristics, but vitality is likely to be reduced (bud development, extension growth etc.). Structural issues relatively minor and manageable with arboricultural input. Tree may be growing in restricted environment (e.g. streetscapes) or may be in late maturity. Semi-mature and mature trees exhibiting normal growth characteristics. Juvenile trees in streetscapes.
>40 years (Long)	Generally juvenile and semi-mature trees exhibiting normal growth characteristics within adequate spaces to sustain growth, such as in parks or open space. Could also pertain to maturing, long-lived trees. No observable major structural defects. Tree well suited to the site with negligible potential for infrastructure conflicts.

Note that ULE may change for a tree dependent on the prevailing climatic conditions, sudden changes to a tree's growing environment creating an acute stress or impact by pathogens.

The ULE may not be applicable for trees that are manipulated, such as topiary, or grown for specific horticultural purposes, such as fruit trees.

There may be instances where remedial tree maintenance could extend a tree's ULE.

10. Arboricultural Rating

Relates to the combination of assigned tree condition factors, including health and structure (arboricultural merit) and ULE, and conveys an amenity value (An amenity tree can occupy a site that complements its surroundings in a useful manner which culminates in the aid, protection, comfort and emotional response of humans. Adapted from Coder, 2004). Amenity relates to the trees biological, functional and aesthetic characteristics (Hitchmough, 1994) within an urban landscape context. The presence of any serious disease or tree-related hazards that would impact risk potential are considered.

The arboricultural rating can be used by applying only the main category high, moderate, low or very low without using the sub categories. The sub-categories can assist in differentiating a trees value and/or characteristic in more detail within the specific tree assessment context, such as a development site.

Arboricultural rating			
<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>		
High	Exemplary specimen due to multiple factors which could include: good condition and vitality, large size/canopy and prominence in the landscape. Likely to be a very long-term component in the landscape with a long ULE. Other factors that could contribute to a high rating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly good example of the species; rare or uncommon. • Tree has visual importance as a landscape feature; provides substantial contribution to landscape character. • Tree may have significant ecological or conservation value. • *Tree has historical, commemorative or other distinct social/cultural significance. Trees in this category must be considered for retention and/or incorporated within design proposals.		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Sub category</i>	<i>Description</i>
Moderate	Tree of moderate quality, in fair or typical condition. Tree may have a condition, and or structural problem that will respond to arboricultural treatment. These trees have the potential to be moderate- to long-term components of the landscape (moderate to long ULE) if managed appropriately. The sub-categories relate predominately to age, size and amenity. Trees in this category should be considered for retention and/or incorporated within design proposals.	A	Moderate to large, maturing tree. Suited to the site & contributes to the landscape character. Tree may have conservation or other cultural/social value.
		B	Moderate sized, established tree, > 50% of attainable age/size. Suited to the site & contributes to the landscape character (other attributes covered under 'Moderate' description)
		C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young to semi-mature, generally a smaller tree, established, >15 cm DBH, >5 years in the location. Not a dominant canopy. No significant qualities currently but has the potential to become a higher value tree & long-term component of the landscape. Replacement of tree is likely to take up to 6 - 10 years to attain similar attributes. • Semi- to mature tree with accumulating deficiencies and reducing ULE, trending towards Low arboricultural value.
<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>		
Low	Unremarkable tree of low quality or little amenity value. Tree in either poor health and/or with poor structure. Short to transitory useful life expectancy (<10 years). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree is not prominent in the landscape due to its size or age, such as young trees with a stem diameter below 15 cm. Tree < 5 years in location. These trees are easily replaceable or capable of being transplanted. • Tree (species) is functionally inappropriate to the specific location. Is causing excessive damage/nuisance to adjacent infrastructure or would be expected to be problematic if retained (i.e. palm tree under power lines). • Unremarkable tree of no material landscape, conservation or other cultural value. Not visible from surrounding landscapes. • Tree infected with pathogens that could lead to its decline. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree has potential to be an environmental woody weed (may be dependent on location of tree in an urban landscape). • Tree impacting or suppressing trees of better quality. <p>Retention of such trees may be considered if not requiring a disproportionate expenditure of resources for a tree in its condition and location.</p>
<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>
Very low	<p>Trees of low quality with a brief to no remaining ULE (<5 years).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree has either a severe structural defect or health problem or combination that cannot be sustained with practical arboricultural techniques and the loss of the tree or tree part would be expected in the short term. • Tree whose retention would not be viable after the removal of adjacent trees, such as trees that have developed in close spaced groups and would not be expected to adapt to severe and sudden alterations to environmental & site conditions, e.g. removal of adjacent shelter trees. • Small or young tree, <5m in height, <10cm DBH. Easily replaced in short-term or capable of being transplanted. • Acknowledged environmental woody weed species. Tree has a detrimental effect on the environment, for example, the tree has weed potential and is likely to spread into waterways or natural areas if nearby. • Tree infected with pathogens that will lead to decline and has potential to spread to adjacent trees. • Tree is dead (dead tree may offer habitat values) or is showing signs of significant, immediate, and irreversible overall decline. <p>Tree cannot realistically be retained and should be considered for removal.</p>

Other considerations - Even though a tree may be declining or dead, a tree could be retained for other purposes such as habitat or soil stabilisation. These trees would still need to be managed appropriately to reduce risk.

*A tree may have (attract) a high value by the community for historical, commemorative or other distinct social/cultural significance factors, albeit the tree may not be in good condition. In the context of an assessment, for multiple reasons, but more so for development, if it is a noted 'significant' tree it should receive higher consideration during the planning process.

Trees have many values, not all of which are considered when an arboricultural assessment is undertaken. However, individual trees or tree group features may be considered important community resources because of unique or noteworthy characteristics or values other than their age, dimensions, health or structural condition. Recognition of one or more of the following criteria is designed to highlight other considerations that may influence the future management of such trees.

Significance	Description
Horticultural Value/ Rarity	Outstanding horticultural or genetic value; could be an important source of propagating stock, including specimens that are particularly resistant to disease or exposure. Any tree of a species or variety that is rare.
Historic, Aboriginal Cultural or Heritage Value	<p>Tree could have value as a remnant of a particular important historical period or a remnant of a site or activity no longer in action. Tree has a recognised association with historic aboriginal activities, including scar trees.</p> <p>Tree commemorates a particular occasion, including plantings by notable people, or having associations with an important event in local history.</p>
Ecological Value	<p>Tree could have value as habitat for indigenous wildlife, including providing breeding, foraging or roosting habitat, or is a component of a wildlife reserve.</p> <p>Remnant Indigenous vegetation that contribute to biological diversity</p>

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Tree Logic Pty. Ltd.
Unit 4, 21 Eugene Terrace
Ringwood Vic 3134

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