

FAQ FOR ROADSIDE VEGETATION MARKERS

WHAT IS THE ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (RVMP)?

The Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (RVMP) is a document detailing general guidelines for the management of vegetation within roadside verges in rural and peri-urban areas of the Penrith Local Government Area (LGA).

Proposed roadside activities occurring along these roadsides have been examined individually to ensure that each roadside will achieve best management practice. This may entail detailed assessments for each roadside to protect existing vegetation and to ensure appropriate regeneration actions.

The purpose of the RVMP is to promote good management of roadside vegetation in accordance with the vision of protecting threatened biodiversity including species and vegetation communities. The RVMP defines the strategic framework and management principles which will guide Council's actions within road reserves to promote good management of roadside vegetation for the Penrith LGA, whilst ensuring that road safety is maintained.

WHAT IS ROADSIDE VEGETATION?

Roadside vegetation refers to vegetation situated with the road reserve. The road reserve is the public land situated between the private property boundary and the road seal.

Roadside vegetation is a prominent part of the landscape and provide public amenity and aesthetic value. Well-structured native vegetation with trees and shrubs provides shelter from road noise, dust and prevailing winds and shade for residents and others using the roadside environment.

Roadside reserves contain valuable environmental assets that provide habitat for native flora and fauna and amenity to local communities. As a result, the need to manage roadside reserves for environmental objectives and recognise the ecological value of these areas across the LGA rather than exclusively for their utility as transport corridors has emerged.

WHAT IS A "THREATENED SPECIES"?

"Threatened" means that the species is under threat to such an extent that it is vulnerable to extinction in the near future. Legislation is in place to protect threatened species. If the risk is high, the species are listed in legislation and conservation actions are developed for their protection.

A species may be listed under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 as:

- vulnerable
- endangered
- critically endangered, or
- presumed extinct.

WHAT IS A "THREATENED VEGETATION COMMUNITY"?

A vegetation community can be at risk of extinction. This can occur because of a significant reduction in its distribution across regions or a decline in ecological function. Approximately 90% of the vegetation remaining in Penrith is considered to be threatened under state or federal legislation. Many of these vegetation communities are considered to provide vital habitat for threatened and vulnerable fauna species.

WHAT IS HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE (HCV)?

HCV vegetation is a patch of bushland/ vegetation that has been graded against a government endorsed matrix to determine its inherent conservation value. Contributing factors that determine conservation value can include biological, ecological, social or cultural values. This can also include endemic species, threatened species, sacred sites and natural features of a habitat. The more degraded the area is, the lower it will score on a conservation value matrix.

WHO OWNS THE ROAD VERGE/ NATURE STRIP?

Council owns the road verge/ nature strip out the front of private property between the property boundary and the roadway.

WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT TO MAINTAIN THE ROAD VERGE/ NATURE STRIP?

Generally, residents and property owners are encouraged to regularly maintain nature strips to keep them neat and tidy. However, if you have been informed or a purple roadside marker has been placed out the front of your property, residents must cease maintaining their road verge to ensure compliance and protection of threatened vegetation. This includes activities such as mowing, hand weeding, and pesticide application.

For more information go to penrith.city/roadsidevegetation



WHAT DOES THE ROADSIDE MARKER LOOK LIKE?

Exactly the same dimensions as a white guidepost used for roadway delineation.

CAN RESIDENTS REMOVE/ MOVE A ROADSIDE MARKER?

Please do not remove or relocate roadside markers. If you have safety concerns with the location of roadside markers, please contact Council on 4732 7777 and an inspection will be scheduled by trained personnel.

CAN RESIDENTS MAINTAIN/MOW IN BETWEEN THE ROADSIDE MARKERS?

Please be advised that appropriately trained Council staff are rostered to mow grass in designated areas alongside roadside reserves. Unauthorised mowing can damage protected vegetation and result in the loss of threatened species populations and stifle their ability to grow.

Roadside verges that contain HCV have been identified and mapped by State Government as having high biodiversity value and are protected from impacts to native vegetation.

If residents are continuing to mow vegetation, which includes vegetation within Biodiversity Value Mapped areas, penalties under the State Government Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 may also apply. In addition, any persons breaching sign posted prohibited activities may receive penalties under the Local Government Act 1993.

BUSHFIRE RISK

Council recognises that managing native vegetation responsibilities and risks associated with bushfire is extremely important.

The Rural Fires Act 1997 is taken into consideration when considering the management of native vegetation. Where Council receives advice from the Rural Fire Services that any area poses a bushfire risk, this will be considered as part of the long-term management of the vegetation.

It should be noted that the presence of the purple marker doesn't mean that the vegetation will be left to grow uncontrolled. The marker means that the management of these areas require different control measures and operational requirements than other areas.

Should you believe that the vegetation on the road reserve poses a bushfire risk, we recommend that you contact your local Rural Fire brigade to have them undertake an assessment.

PROPERTY VALUE

Council is required to comply with the legislative requirements relating to biodiversity, including vegetation in the road reserve.

Penrith Council's management strategies are consistent with what other councils across NSW are implementing and is in line with LGNSW recommendations. Council is not aware of any evidence within Penrith or other council areas that managing native vegetation on roadside reserves has a negative impact on property values.

Should you believe that the vegetation on the road reserve has a negative impact on your property value, we recommend that you write to Council providing proof of your property being devalued so this can be considered by the appropriate department at Council.

WHAT SHOULD RESIDENTS DO IF THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSITIONING OF THE MARKERS AND MAINTENANCE TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN BETWEEN MARKERS?

Contact Council on 4732 7777 and request to speak to the Bushland Management Coordinator. A site inspection may be conducted with the resident to discuss further. Council can implement maintenance schedules in the HCV areas if deemed there is a significant safety concern or risk to the community. This work will be undertaken by environmental professionals.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ON THREATENED VEGETATION AND THREATENED SPECIES?

Please visit penrith.city/roadsidevegetation

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