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SCHEDULE 8 TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as ESO8.

RIVER RED GUMS IN THE BACCHUS MARSH VALLEY

1.0

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Statement of environmental significance

River Red Gums, *Eucalyptus Camaldulensis*, represent the oldest living natural heritage of Bacchus Marsh, and are a striking feature of the Bacchus Marsh Valley. The hollow-bearing nature of the River Red Gum provides ideal fauna habitat and food for many species of native birds, mammals, insects and spiders.

Large hollows do not develop until the trees are well over 100 years old; therefore ongoing protection of all existing River Red Gums (regardless of age) is vital to the biodiversity values of the Bacchus Marsh Valley.

Of the 1411 remaining River Red Gums within the Bacchus Marsh Valley, approximately 150 are aged greater than 300 years and 70% are between 50-150 years old. These younger trees must be protected, as without regeneration the long-term population of the River Red Gums will decline.

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Environmental objective to be achieved

To provide for the long-term preservation and regeneration of the River Red Gum population within the Bacchus Marsh Valley, therefore enhancing biodiversity and landscape quality. Ongoing management practices for River Red Gums should aim to achieve the following:

- Retain all hollow bearing trees.
- Minimisation of disturbance to the Tree Protection Zone for all River Red Gums.
- Support the regeneration of River Red Gums by protecting the growth of young trees.

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Permit requirement

A permit is not required:

- to remove, destroy, lop or prune vegetation that is not native vegetation
- to remove, destroy, lop or prune native vegetation which is not River Red Gum;
- to construct a building or carry out works outside the Tree Protection Zone of any River Red Gum tree. The Tree Protection Zone is defined as being an area with a radius equal to the furthest point of the tree canopy from the centre of the trunk plus 5 metres. The centre of the trunk is to be measured at the point where it meets the natural ground level

An application to remove, destroy, lop or prune any River Red Gum or to construct a building or carry out works within the Tree Protection Zone of any River Red Gum must:

- Be accompanied by a plan that indicates the total extent of native vegetation on the land and the extent of proposed clearing, destruction or lopping.
- Specify the purpose of the proposed clearing.
- Demonstrate that the extent of removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation has been reduced as much as is reasonable and practicable.

Where insufficient justification has been provided for the removal of a River Red Gum the responsible authority may require the applicant to submit a report prepared by a suitably qualified person. The report should describe the impacted River Red Gum/s, including the habitat and food value for both hollow bearing and canopy residing fauna and invertebrate species (e.g. insects and spiders). This report must assess how the proposal impacts on the biodiversity values.

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Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application under this overlay, the responsible authority must consider:

- The impact of any proposal to remove, destroy, lop or pruning of Red River Gum/s on the biodiversity of the Bacchus Marsh Valley.
- The potential for loss of habitat and food source resulting from any proposal to remove, destroy, lop or prune Red River Gum/s.
- The potential for damage to private property or threat to life.
- The immediate and long term impact of any proposal within the Tree Protection Zone on the health, appearance and stability of the River Red Gum/s.
- Whether alternatives, which have a lesser impact on the River Red Gum/s have been considered.
- Where relevant, the need for remedial or restorative works.
- Where buildings and works are proposed in a Tree Protection Zone, the need to prepare a construction and tree management plan to ensure that the all buildings and works are constructed under the supervision of qualified arborist. The plan must include management and protective procedures during construction and should include:
 - Onsite induction program for all contractors/workers.
 - Requirement for and responsibilities of on site arborist during construction
 - Establishment of Tree Protection Zones and protocols for gaining access
 - Notification and remedial protocols for unexpected damage to River Red Gums
 - Any other requirement of the responsible authority.

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References

River Red Gums in the Bacchus Marsh Valley, December 2008