

SUMMARY REPORT

Application for Approval to Clear Native Vegetation—Greenhills Road, York

Introduction

The Shire of York has secured funding via the Western Australian State Black Spot Program to improve the safety of road users on Greenhills Road.

Upgrades have been proposed to address a known crash location near the intersection with Railway Parade, where roadside hazards, including two mature trees, contribute to the elevated crash risk.

Between 2018 and 2022, three crashes have occurred along this section (SLK 1.61—3.29), including two requiring hospitalisations. One crash involved a run-off-road incident at the location of the trees proposed for removal.

Background

The proposed works are located on Greenhills Road near Railway Parade in Greenhills, WA (coordinates: -31°55'39", 116°57'13"), within the road reserve (Landgate Property ID: 3463046).

The project involves widening the existing sealed carriageway from as narrow as 4.5 m to 7.2 m, to achieve appropriate horizontal geometry and superelevation, reducing the likelihood of run-off-road crashes. The project scope also includes installation of signage to improve driver awareness and guidance.

Proposed Removal

Two trees are proposed for removal from the road reserve at Greenhills Road. Both are situated within the roadside clear zone and represent a fixed hazard for road users. Although the proposed widening will not extend directly into their footprint, their proximity to the carriageway places them inside the unsealed shoulder and the clear zone required under Austroads safety guidelines.

The trees are:

- Salmon Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus salmonophloia*) – 750 mm DBH, mature, located approximately 1.5 m from the seal edge, adjacent to the unsealed shoulder.
- York Gum (*Eucalyptus loxophleba*) – 350 mm DBH, mature, also located approximately 1.5 m from the seal edge, adjacent to the unsealed shoulder.

The York Gum appears to be in poor condition, exhibiting signs of significant decline (leafless canopy, potentially dead). The Salmon Gum appears to be in good health with an intact canopy. No hollows were observed in either tree, and there were no signs of nesting, loose bark, or other fauna habitat features.

Avoidance

Design considerations have prioritised retention of vegetation where possible.

- At another location along this project, the road alignment was adjusted to avoid the need for tree removal. This approach has allowed a mature tree to be retained within the road reserve.
- For the proposed clearing location, however, the two identified trees fall within the clear zone required under Austroads guidelines. Given their proximity to the carriageway and the safety risks they pose, the trees cannot be retained in the current position.

- Options to reduce the proposed seal width were investigated but determined to be unsafe, as they would not achieve the required lane geometry for the curve and posted speed limit.
- Guardrail installation was also considered but rejected due to geometric constraints and the need to maintain consistent seal width through the curve.

Vegetation Impact Mitigation

To offset the proposed clearing activity, a revegetation area has been identified immediately adjacent to the proposed clearing site, within the same road reserve. This area, under Shire ownership, is characterised as Salmon Gum woodland with intact understory vegetation. It contains a large open area of approximately 320 m that presents an opportunity for vegetation management and infill planting.

The surrounding woodland contains healthy mature Salmon Gums with an intact understory, providing a suitable location for rehabilitation. Open areas within the site will be used for revegetation, while long-term management will focus on weed control and maintenance. The area is consistent with the surrounding landscape and will be enhanced to support local biodiversity values.

Conclusion

The Shire of York is progressing safety improvements along a hazardous section of Greenhills Road as part of the State Black Spot Program.

As part of these works, the removal of two mature trees is required to address a roadside hazard within the clear zone and to support the widening of the sealed carriageway. This treatment will reduce the risk and severity of further run-off-road crashes at the site.

In developing the design, the Shire has:

- Minimised vegetation clearing through targeted alignment decisions.
- Undertaken an assessment of tree condition and potential habitat features.
- Identified a local revegetation site within the road reserve to offset the impact of clearing.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Proposed Clearing Area

Attachment B – Trees for Removal

Attachment C – Revegetation Area

ShireOfYork_GreenhillsRd_ProposedClearingArea.zip (ESRI Shapefile)