

Significant Tree Register - FAQs

1. Can I nominate a tree on somebody else's property?

Yes. You do not have to be the owner of the property to nominate a tree. If you do know the property owner, we recommend letting them know that you intend to nominate their tree so that they know why you think the tree is exceptional. Indigo Shire Council will alert property owners and residents if a tree on their property has been nominated for the register.

2. Can I nominate a tree if I don't live in Indigo Shire?

Yes. Nominations are open to everybody, as the Shire's trees are experienced by anyone who visits the region.

3. What land is included?

Any tree growing on privately owned or managed land that is under the control of the *Indigo Planning Scheme* may be considered for the register. Trees in government-owned parks and reserves, in public gardens, and some schools, and church land may not be eligible unless they self-nominate.

4. Can I nominate trees on Council land?

Yes. Trees on Indigo Shire land are subject to careful regulation, planning, and management in-line with council policies, but anyone can nominate a tree for inclusion on the Significant Tree Register.

5. What types of trees will be considered?

Council recognises the benefits of a diverse vegetation and therefore the Significant Tree Register is open to any tree species, except for those listed as weeds of national significance, or present on the Victorian noxious weeds list.

6. Is it just for trees?

While this Register is limited to trees, Indigo Shire is also exploring further protection for heritage landscapes and gardens.

7. Can I make an appeal if my tree has not been

determined as significant?

The nominator and owner will be alerted as to the reason a tree has not been accepted into the Register. Appeals may be made in the form of an additional nomination with supplementary support material for the tree's inclusion in the register. This supporting material should address the reasons given for the panel not accepting the tree(s).

8. How are significant trees protected?

Significant trees are proposed to be protected via the *Indigo Planning Scheme*. It is proposed that an appropriate overlay will apply to any property where the significant tree grows and to any other properties that are within its tree protection zone. This means that any proposed buildings and works within the tree protection zone, or significant pruning, lopping or removal of exceptional trees will require a planning permit. This does not mean that absolutely no works are allowed on or near significant trees but rather that the impact that the proposed development will have on the health and values of significant trees, must be considered in the planning permit application process. Referrals to arborists and/or horticulturalists may be required to assess any proposals that may impact on the health or values of exceptional trees.

9. How long does it take for a nominated tree to go through the listing process?

The assessment process and procedure will take some time since each nomination will be considered by the expert panel. In the long-term, Council will seek amendments to the *Indigo Planning Scheme*. These must follow a multi-staged legislative process, including a statutory public exhibition phase, and usually take at least a year to be processed. Planning scheme amendments (for both interim and permanent planning controls) are authorised and approved by the Minister for Planning. Planning scheme amendments associated with future versions and updates of the Register will occur approximately every four years or more regularly if there are a large number of additions to the Register.

10. What are the benefits to owners?

The Register provides an opportunity to promote, share and protect trees that are believed to be significant. Owners of properties where significant trees are located play an important role caring for a valuable community asset. To assist in the management and recognition of your significant tree, Council may assist by offering arboricultural advice, plaques and photography. Additionally, if owners are interested, there may be chances to get involved through open days and feature articles.

11. Who is eligible for arboriculture advice?

Reports generated in the assessment phase are made available in this document. Additional information may be provided upon request. Subsequent arboricultural advice may be provided to owners and will be discussed on a tree-by-tree basis.

12. What should be done if the tree seems sick or damaged in some way?

Please contact Council for advice.

13. Will there be any amendments to the Register once it has been created?

Indigo Shire's vegetation is a dynamic system with natural cycles of tree growth, maturation and death, and it recognizes the need for the Register to reflect this. Nominations will continue to be accepted and processed. Additionally, removal of trees from the Register may occur if required following arboricultural assessment and consideration.

14. How are trees removed from the Register?

If a tree is damaged or reaches a state of severe decline it may be considered for removal from the register. The process involves an application for removal from the register, a consultant arborist assessment, expert panel review and council review.