# Gawler Rail Electrification Project

## Vegetation management

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is the Gawler Rail Electrification Project?**
A: The $615 million project is jointly funded by the State and Australian Governments and is being delivered by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT).

The electrification of the Gawler Rail Line forms part of the State Government's ongoing investment in upgrading our public transport to deliver cleaner, safer, more reliable and more comfortable rail services. The electrified Gawler rail line will be a modern, environmentally friendly and efficient train service.

**Q: What does electrification of the rail line involve?**
A: The electrification works for the Gawler rail line between Adelaide and Gawler will occur largely within the existing rail corridor, however there may be some works that will require access to adjacent land to allow for construction and local traffic management.

The scope of the works include:

- installation of the 25kV overhead wiring system including masts and gantries;
- construction of a combined services trench for the installation of new fibre optic communications cabling;
- installation of a new signalling system;
- services relocations; and
- fencing of the rail corridor for improved safety.

**Q: Will vegetation management be required for the project?**
A: Yes, vegetation management, including trimming and removal, is required as part of the project. Failure to effectively manage vegetation along the corridor presents a serious safety risk to the community, surrounding residents, train drivers and operators. Reasons vegetation management may be required in your area include:

- **Safety around electrical infrastructure** – vegetation must have a minimum of 3m clearance from the electrical Overhead Wiring System (OHW) to meet electrical safety requirements, reduce the likelihood of tree limbs interfering with wiring, falling on the track or onto the overhead wires.
- **Safety fencing** – new fencing is required to protect the newly electrified rail corridor. This is for the safety of the community and train operators. Vegetation along the existing fence may be impacted by either the removal of the old fence or construction of the new one.
- **Installation of the Common Services Route (CSR)** – the CSR is a buried signalling and rail services network that runs within the rail corridor to facilitate the new signalling system. In areas where the rail corridor is narrow, this trench may impact on root systems of existing trees to the extent they cannot survive.

**Q: What is the department`s policy on vegetation management?**
A: DIT has developed a policy that is consistent with electrified rail systems in other states, as well as power line infrastructure. DIT's Vegetation Removal Policy sets out the parameters for managing vegetation along the electrified rail corridor and seeks to minimise trimming or removal of vegetation as much as possible, without compromising the safe operation of the rail network and electrical clearance requirements. To see a copy of the policy visit: https://www.dit.sa.gov.au/ and search "vegetation removal policy".

The policy states that a vegetation Exclusion Zone of three meters is necessary between vegetation and the live electrical infrastructure, and a further two meter envelope required to ensure the Exclusion Zone is not breached and can be maintained. For more information visit http://www.dit.sa.gov.au/grep and go to Frequently Asked Questions.

**Q: How has the Project Team worked to minimise vegetation management?**
A: Steps to minimise the extent of vegetation management required for the project are taken at all stages of the project planning and delivery. Only once this process is complete will vegetation be removed or pruned. Local Councils have been, and will continue, participating in this process and provide feedback to ensure vegetation of high value to the community is retained wherever possible. The stages of review include:

- **Design –** as the detailed design for the rail infrastructure is developed, the team identify opportunities to move infrastructure to reduce the impact on trees and vegetation. This includes the location of the CST and shifting electrical infrastructure further inside the corridor to limit the impact of the required clearance zone.
- **Survey –** prior to any removal or trimming, the required clearance and trimming area for the CST, fencing locations, construction accesses and required OHW clearances will be surveyed and pegged to identify which vegetation may be required for removal or trimming.
- **Construction –** the surveyed clearance and trimming area is reviewed with the Construction Team to determine if alternative construction methodologies can be used to reduce the impact. Councils are invited to also participate in this process.

**Q: How will vegetation be pruned to ensure tree health?**
A: All vegetation will be pruned in accordance with Australian Standard (AS) 4373 Pruning of Amenity Trees in order to maximise the long-term health of the tree. A qualified arborist is involved in managing the pruning process to further support the health of the tree and ensure regrowth is carefully managed.

**Q: Will the trees removed as part of the project be replaced?**
A**:** All vegetation removals will be offset following an agreement reached between the department and each Council. A Vegetation Planting Guideline has been developed to assist in managing vegetation replanting along the electrified line, and can be accessed at http://www.dit.sa.gov.au/grep.

**Q: When can I expect vegetation management to occur in my area?**
A: Vegetation management will occur progressively along the rail corridor as required by the construction works program. Residents in the vicinity of planned works will be contacted by the Project Team to notify them in advance.

**Q: Who can I talk to for more information about vegetation management?**
A: For more information about vegetation management or the project more generally, please contact the Project Team as below:

**Phone:** 1300 080 834
**Email:** DIT.gawlerelectrification@sa.gov.au | **Web:** http://www.dit.sa.gov.au/grep