

Native Vegetation Marker System (NVMS) information for landholders

It's important for residents to understand what they can and cannot do on a NVMS site, also known as blue marker sites.

The NVMS was established in 2009 through the Local Government Association of SA, and aims to protect sites that provide important habitat to plants and animals which require specialised management.

Roadside verges often contain the last remnants of native vegetation, so the NVMS helps to protect and conserve local biodiversity and improve the health and resilience of our environment.

How to identify a NVMS site

A small blue marker sign with a unique number is used to identify NVMS sites. The sites are listed using the unique number in a register maintained by Adelaide Hills Council.

A green biodiversity conservation sign is also attached under the blue marker to explain why it is being protected and what activities are restricted.

Council has over 450 blue marker sites across the district that help protect approximately 420 kilometres of native vegetation in the road reserves.

Will a NVMS site impact my bushfire risk?

Council staff and contractors regularly monitor and maintain NVMS sites to mitigate the risk of bushfires.

Creating a defensible space around your residence or outbuildings is an effective way to lower your bushfire risk, rather than clearing an adjacent reserve.

More information about managing vegetation and preparing your property to mitigate bushfire risks can be found online at:

ahc.sa.gov.au/bushfires-and-fire-prevention



Fast Facts

- A NVMS site can be recognised by the presence of a blue marker signage
- Many significant native plants are small and inconspicuous, which increases the risk of them being unknowingly damaged or destroyed
- Adelaide Hills Council has over 450 Blue Marker Sites, helping to protect approximately 420 kilometres of native vegetation in the road reserves



What can I do on a NVMS site?

All native vegetation is protected under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 and any alterations to a roadside are governed under the Local Government Act 1999 (Section 221).

Outside of the Native Vegetation Regulations 2017, any clearance of native vegetation requires approval from the Native Vegetation Council. Penalties may apply if the appropriate approval is not obtained.

Can I clear or alter vegetation on my verge?

You need to seek approval from Council before you clear or alter vegetation on a verge. Council may need to seek further approval from the Native Vegetation Council under the Native Vegetation Act 1999.

Council undertakes an annual maintenance programme, prioritising areas most at risk, to support road safety and reduce fire risk. Verges that are not included on Council's annual maintenance program are considered the responsibility of the adjacent landowner.

Any activity on a road verge requires a S221 permit application to ensure the safety of pedestrians and motorists. You can apply for this permit via the Adelaide Hills Council website: ahc.sa.gov.au/authorisation-to-alter-a-public-road

If you wish to plant native vegetation on your verge, rather than introduced species, the S221 application fee will be waived.

Weed management advice

The Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board are responsible for the control of declared weeds on all parts of the roadside in the region. The Landscape Board is also able to recover costs for control from adjoining landholders.

If you have declared weeds on your verge, Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu can provide advice on the management of weeds.

Please contact the Hills & Fleurieu Landscape Board on (08) 8391 7500 or email Hf.LandscapeBoard@sa.gov.au for further advice.

What can I do?

Can I?		What do I do next?
Remove weeds	Yes, with Council approval. Although Council prefers to use pre-approved bushcare contractors or Council Biodiversity staff due to biodiversity value and sensitivity of NVMS sites.	Contact the Council Biodiversity team for more info: AHCbiodiversity@ahc.sa.gov.au
Plant more trees or shrubs	Yes, with Council approval.	Apply for an S221 permit via the Council website: ahc.sa.gov.au/authorisation-to-alter-a-public-road
Remove plants and debris to reduce fire fuel	Only with Council approval and subject to the Native Vegetation Act 1991. *Please note, this is unlikely to be granted due to impacts on habitat values.	Apply for an S221 permit via the Council website: ahc.sa.gov.au/authorisation-to-alter-a-public-road
Collect plant material or seeds	Yes, with an appropriate permit under the SA National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972	Apply for a permit from the Department of Environment and Water and Adelaide Hills Council See: environment.sa.gov.au/licences-and-permits Email Council: AHCbiodiversity@ahc.sa.gov.au
Clear an area for fencing	Yes, with an appropriate permit under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 and in accordance with the Adelaide Hills Council Roadside vegetation Management Plan	See Native Vegetation Council website for more info: environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation Or email Council: AHCbiodiversity@ahc.sa.gov.au
Collect firewood	No. Under Council Bylaw 3	
Dispose of rubbish or green waste	No. Under Council Bylaw 3, supported by the Environmental Protection Authority	Council offers free organic green waste drop off days. See more info at: ahc.sa.gov.au/greenwaste
Drive or ride vehicles	No. Under the Native Vegetation Act 1991 and Council Bylaw 3.	

More information

Contact the Adelaide Hills Council Biodiversity team via:

- ahc.sa.gov.au
- 8408 0400
- AHCbiodiversity@ahc.sa.gov.au





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