

Site 106. Scoresby Rd Verge, South of Burwood Hwy

A treed road verge on the eastern side of Scoresby Rd.

Site Significance Level: *Local*

- Locally significant: many trees that facilitate movements of birds and probably flying insects around the local landscape in pursuit of their daily and seasonal needs;
- Locally significant: populations of locally-threatened indigenous tree species.

Aerial photograph and map: See page 675.

Boundaries

The site comprises the six strips along Scoresby Rd that are outlined in black on the aerial photograph on page 675, totalling 0.707 ha. The strips are all tree reserves, separate from the road reservation for Scoresby Rd.

The site has been extended northward by 200 m² compared with the previous (2010) edition. That land was previously part of a Church of Christ property (431 Scoresby Rd) and its trees had planning protection under clause 52.17 of the planning scheme. Subdivision of the property has removed that protection. The trees have grown larger over the past fifteen years and their habitat value has increased.

Land use & tenure: Tree reserve, acting like a vegetated extension of the road reserve.

Site description

This roadside retains a substantial number of mature remnant eucalypts, interspersed with other Australian native trees and trees from other parts of the world. The trees provide rudimentary habitat for native birds, bats, possums and insects. The dominant remnant eucalypt species is Mealy Stringybark (*Eucalyptus cephalocarpa*), followed by Bundy (*Eucalyptus gonioalalyx*), plus small numbers of Narrow-leaved Peppermint (*Eucalyptus radiata*), Messmate Stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) and one Swamp Gum (*Eucalyptus ovata*).

There is hardly any native understorey left within the site. The main exceptions are a Cherry Ballart (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*) near the southern end (at 487 Scoresby Rd) and a line of eight remnant Swamp Paperbarks (*Melaleuca ericifolia*), 7 m tall, adjacent to a bus stop just south of Cambden Park Parade.

All the remnant tree species are threatened with dying out in Knox – some in the Vulnerable category and others, Endangered.

Apart from their biological significance, the trees provide an attractive streetscape and shade for walkers along the footpath.

Relationship to other land

It seems that very few species of indigenous, warm-blooded indigenous fauna other than possums could fulfil all their daily and seasonal habitat needs within any one of the various sites seen on the aerial photograph on page 673. It follows that those species must move regularly between suitable sites. The Scoresby Rd site's parrots and most of its other birds (and probably flying insects) are part of that nomadic fauna.

Consequently, the trees in this site effectively represent an ecological stepping-stone within the local, fragmented matrix of habitat. Habitat in the local area would be more fragmented without them.

Bioregion: Gippsland Plain

Habitat types

Swampy Woodland (EVC 937, **regionally Endangered**), represented only by one *Eucalyptus ovata* and some *Melaleuca ericifolia*.

Valley Heathy Forest (EVC 127, **Endangered**), represented by all the other remnant trees mentioned above.

Significance ratings

The following is an assessment of the site's biological significance against the Department of Energy, Environment & Climate Action's standard criteria (Amos 2004).

Ecological Integrity and Viability

For the reasons discussed above, the trees in the site function as an ecological stepping-stone for nomadic movement of fauna in the local area. Criterion 1.2.6 of Amos (2004) attributes **Local** significance to habitat links that it describes as 'Important at Local Scale - Link between individual remnant habitat blocks or within subcatchment'.

Locally-threatened plant species

Some of the locally threatened eucalypts mentioned above are fairly abundant, thereby meeting criterion 3.1.5 for **Local** significance.

Threats

- Human-induced climate change, which is predicted to cause more severe droughts, heatwaves, floods, fires and storms, as well as substantially lower rainfall (particularly in winter);
- Debilitation and deaths of trees, partly due to the abovementioned droughts and storms;
- Tree removal or severance of tree roots during maintenance of roads or utility services;
- Lack of natural replacement of indigenous species as they die.

Strategic planning

- As a result of the previous (2010) edition of this report, Schedule 4 of the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO4) applies to this site (minus the northernmost 200 m², which has been added in this edition). The stated reasons for applying VPO4 were that:
 - It contains (in the words of the VPP Practice Note on Biodiversity) 'scattered living food trees with an exotic understorey';
 - It is a site of Local biological significance;
 - The six lots involved are each too small to be affected by Clause 52.17 of the Knox Planning Scheme, which might otherwise provide some of the trees with some protection.

These features are equally valid for the current version of the site. There is no need to alter the text of VPO4. Extending VPO4 to the 200 m² added in this edition would be ideal but it is not at all urgent and the effort required might not be justified except under special circumstances.

- The land is zoned Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 4 (NRZ4).

Information sources used in this assessment

- An ecological survey of the site by Rik Brown on 8th May 2002 for the first edition of this report;
- Inspections of the area by Dr Lorimer in April and May 2004 to determine site boundaries for the first edition of this report;
- A basic check for changed conditions in 2008 as Dr Lorimer drove down Scoresby Rd;
- A vegetation survey of the site for this edition during 2024–2025, on foot and by car, including redetermination of the site's boundary;
- A search in vain for records of flora and fauna observations stored in Knox City Council's biodiversity database;
- A solitary record stored in the Atlas of Living Australia – of one or more Sulphur-crested Cockatoos;
- Aerial and satellite imagery from between 1976 and 2025;
- The Victorian Government's 'NatureKit' website;
- Maps of geology, topography and strategic planning information produced by agencies of the Victorian Government.