

# MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 1 October 2014



## NATIVE VEGETATION REMOVAL

Yarriambiack Shire Council successfully prosecuted a Hopetoun man for the removal of native vegetation on his land in the Hopetoun Magistrates Court on Thursday, 25 September 2014. The successful prosecution was the conclusion of a thorough and extensive investigation undertaken by Council Officers and Legal Representatives.

In January 2013 the Hopetoun man illegally removed a total of 74 native trees, some estimated to be more than 300 years old, without obtaining the relevant approvals as required under State Law.

Yarriambiack Shire Council was awarded costs of \$15,000 and the Hopetoun man was also required to donate a further amount of \$5,000 to the local land care group. Additionally, the Hopetoun man is also required to enter into a Section 173 Agreement with Council to undertake an onsite offset plan under the Native Vegetation Framework to Council's satisfaction and approval.

Yarriambiack Shire Council Chief Executive Officer, Ray Campling said he hoped that all residents and visitors are aware of the need to comply with the relevant State and Local Laws, especially in regard to the planning scheme, when it comes to building, developments and the removal of native vegetation.

Mr Campling went on to say Native Vegetation rules are determined by the State Government and administered by Local Government. Mr Campling hoped that the decisive action taken by Council in regard to the recent Hopetoun case would prove to be a deterrent to anyone else contemplating undertaking illegal clearing of native vegetation and that it also sent out a stern message that Council was very serious about this important and significant matter. Mr Campling emphasised that anyone considering removing native vegetation should and must contact Council to determine what permits and approvals are required prior to undertaking any works. Incidents like this recent Hopetoun case should not and will be tolerated! So do the right thing and contact Council prior to undertaking any removal of native vegetation.

**Media contact: Ray Campling, Chief Executive Officer – ph. (03) 5398 0100**