



Arboricultural Report

Address: 41/43 Albert Street Creswick, Victoria 3363

**On Behalf of
Hepburn Shire Council**

Date of Report:

17/4/2026

Introduction

Ballarat Treeworks have been commissioned by Hepburn shire council to assess the condition of a single *Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca' (Blue Atlas Cedar) situated at the front of the Creswick Visitor information Centre. This assessment follows significant structural failure during a storm event in February 2026.

The objective of this report is to:

- Evaluate the current physiological and structural condition of the specimen.
- Determine the tree's ongoing retention value in the context of its landscape significance.
- Provide risk mitigation and management recommendations based on the frequency of failure and the high-occupancy nature of the site.

The site is covered by a Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO). The aim of the overlay is to protect vegetation of 'special significance, natural beauty, interest and importance'. As well as 'To protect vegetation that is significant for its contribution to the townscape, heritage or landscape character of an area'. This report seeks to balance the objectives of the VPO with the duty of care regarding public safety and risk management.

Methodology

The tree was assessed visually from the ground. This assessment consisted of a detailed visual inspection of the tree, including a complete walk around the tree, looking at buttress roots, trunk, branches and foliage. Attention was paid to the area of previous failure. A broader observation of the tree was also taken to consider the crown shape, landscape context and surrounding.

A sounding hammer was used to acquire more information about the tree. A sounding hammer is used to listen for tone variation that may indicate hollows or decay.

All measurements are approximates and no aerial inspections have been undertaken.

Site Map



Figure 1: Location of tree highlighted by red circle. Image provided by Nearmap

Observations

Tree 1	
Botanical Name	<i>Cedrus atlantica</i> 'Glauca'
Common Name	Blue Atlas Cedar
Age	Semi Mature
Height	14m
DBH	92cm
Structure	Poor
Health	Fair
Canopy Spread	17m N-S
ULE years	15-20 yrs
Defects	Signs of previous failures, extended limbs in canopy. Signs of possible decay in main union, multiple stems with acute angles of attachment. Ivy growing from main union.



Discussion

Blue Atlas Cedars are an ornamental tree often used in large gardens and landscapes as a feature tree. The Blue Atlas Cedar is located at the front of the Creswick Visitor Information on the north side of the building in an area of lawn. It has a footpath to the south and west of it. This area is often occupied by locals and visitors to the information centre and passing by.

During a weather event in February 2026 the tree lost a significant limb on the north side of the canopy. This is not the first time the tree has lost a limb, there is a wound of the south side of the crown from a previous failure. The recent failure at the union of codominant stems confirms the presence of deeply included bark. This structural defect prevents the development of a branch bark ridge, resulting in a weak connection that is unable to support the weight of the limbs during dynamic wind loading. The presence of adventitious (aerial) roots at the failure site is a possible indicator of decay in the union. These roots typically develop in response to moisture and decomposing wood within a compromised union.

Due to the location of the tree Hepburn Shire Council inspects the tree after each wind event to assess the tree for any structural change or failures. With these wind events becoming more frequent and severe then risk of further failures is increased. At another site in Hepburn Shire there is a discussion taking place around closing a garden area during strong wind events due to limb failures in another Blue Atlas Cedar. This would not be possible at this site due to the location of the tree.

Remedial pruning of the tree to retain it with an acceptable level of risk would need to be severe. Heavily pruning Blue Atlas Cedars comes with a risk of die back due to the lack of latent buds in the crown. Heavily pruning the tree would impact the significance and aesthetics of the tree.

If another failure was to occur of a similar size of the previous ones the distribution of the canopy would become uneven and even with major pruning, then the balance of the tree will be impacted.

Mechanical bracing has been discussed as an option for retention but due to the requirements for installation, the functionality of the bracing would be reduced. When installing bracing pruning is also recommended as previously mentioned, pruning Blue Atlas Cedar comes with a risk of dieback.

Recommendations

Having taken into consideration the tree, location, previous failure and remedial options it is recommended removal of the tree and replanting with a species selected by Hepburn Shire.

Bruce Fowles



Dip. Arb Merrist Wood U.K

Limitation of Liability

This report is intended solely for the client and for the specific purpose outlined in the introduction.

The information and recommendations provided in this arborist report are based on the judgment and observations of the arborist at the time of the site visit.

The arborist's assessment is based on visible conditions observed during the inspection and does not include any hidden or underground conditions that may affect the health, stability, or safety of the trees.

It is up to the client to accept or disregard the recommendations of the assessment or report.

Trees are living organisms that have potential to fail in ways the Arboricultural Industry does not fully understand.

Within trees faults or potential faults are often hidden within trees and below ground. Unless otherwise stated, only a ground inspection has been carried out.

The arborist makes no guarantees regarding the future health, safety, or condition of the trees, as these factors are subject to various environmental conditions and potential changes over time.

Trees can be managed but are still unpredictable. To live or work near a tree always involves a degree of risk.

The only way to eliminate all risk associated with a tree is to remove them.

If this report is to be used in a court of law or a legal situation, we must be advised in writing prior to the written assessment being presented in any form to any other party.

At no time can Ballarat Treeworks be held responsible for the compliance to any relevant council regulation or development condition arising from recommendations contained in this report or for the standard of work completed that other persons undertake.

While Arborists can have specific knowledge of some local laws it is the owners' responsibility to obtain the relevant approvals and information for any tree work. If you require further information or clarification, please contact me.

The recommendations in this report are based on current industry standards, but unforeseen circumstances or changes in conditions may require additional evaluation or mitigation.

By accepting this report, the client acknowledges and agrees to the limitations outlined above.