**NATIVE VEGETATION REMOVAL – PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

A planning permit may be required to remove, destroy or lop [native vegetation](#NativeVegetation)\* (including dead vegetation) on private or public land. Ask a Council planner to confirm if a planning permit is required. The information requirements are also detailed in the [*Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation*](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/91146/Guidelines-for-the-removal%2C-destruction-or-lopping-of-native-vegetation%2C-2017.pdf)(Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017) (Guidelines). These planning permit applications should be accompanied with the following information.

**FORMS, FEES AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS**

* Complete planning permit application form and pay application fee

For the application form and fee schedule please refer to <https://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/Plan-and-Build/Planning-permits/Application-Forms-and-Permit-Information/Your-Planning-Permit#section-5>

* Certificate of Title not more than 60 days old including:
* Plan of Subdivision or Title Plan
* Restrictive Covenants (if any)
* Section 173 Agreements (if any)

To obtain the Certificate of Title please refer to landata.vic.gov.au

**APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

All applications to remove native vegetation must include as appropriate:

* Site Plan including:
* North point
* Boundaries and dimensions of the site
* Existing site conditions, buildings, driveways, fences and vegetation
* All proposed vegetation removal
* Tree protection zones\*

**REPORTS**

* The assessment pathway\*. This includes the location category of the native vegetation to be removed.
* A description of the native vegetation to be removed\* including:
* whether it is a patch or a scattered tree (or both)
* the extent (in hectares)
* the number and circumference (in centimetres measured at 1.3 metres above ground level) of any large trees within a patch
* the number and circumference (in centimetres measured at 1.3 metres above ground level) of any scattered trees, and whether each tree is small or large
* the strategic biodiversity score
* the condition score
* if it includes endangered Ecological Vegetation Classes
* if it includes sensitive wetland or coastal areas.
* The offset requirement\*, in accordance with section 5 of the Guidelines, that will apply if the native vegetation is approved to be removed.

*\*A report can be created using DELWP systems and tools to address the above application requirements. Please visit* <https://nvim.delwp.vic.gov.au> *to access the* [Native vegetation removal tool](https://nvim.delwp.vic.gov.au/Biodiversity).

**ADDITIONAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the above planning permit application requirements, an application in the Detailed Assessment Pathway may be required including:

* A [site assessment](#SiteAssessment) report of the native vegetation to be removed including:
* A [habitat hectare assessment](#HabitatHectareAssessment) of any patches of native vegetation, including the condition, extent (in hectares), Ecological Vegetation Class and bioregional conservation status.
* The location, number, circumference (in centimetres measured at 1.3 metres above ground level) and species of any scattered trees, and whether each tree is small or large.
* Information about impacts on rare or threatened species habitat\* including:
* The relevant section of the Habitat importance map for each rare or threatened species requiring a species offset
* For each rear or threatened species that the native vegetation to be removed is habitat for according to the Habitat importance maps:
* the species’ conservation status
* the proportional impact of the removal of native vegetation on the total habitat for that species
* whether their habitats are highly localised habitats, dispersed habitats, or important areas of habitat within a dispersed species habitat.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

Ask a Council planner if other planning application requirements apply including (but not limited to):

* Feature Survey prepared by a qualified Land Surveyor
* If a sign is proposed, see Signs Checklist
* If subdivision is proposed, see Subdivision Checklist
* Proposed stormwater management system
* Carparking Demand Assessment and/or Traffic Impact Assessment by a qualified Traffic Engineer
* Bushfire Management Plan, see Bushfire Requirements Checklist
* Cultural Heritage Management Plan
* If the lot is over 4000 square metres and native vegetation removal is proposed, see Native Vegetation Removal Checklist

**TERMS EXPLAINED**

**Assessment pathway**

There are three assessment pathways for an application to remove native vegetation: *Basic*, *Intermediate* and *Detailed*. The assessment pathway reflects the potential impact the removal has on biodiversity. These pathways are determined by:

* the amount of native vegetation (in hectares)
* whether any large trees are to be removed, and
* the location of the native vegetation.

Basic Assessment Pathways and Intermediate Assessment Pathways do not require a site assessment by an accredited native vegetation assessor. Further information is available at

[https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0024/90762/Applicants-guide-applications-to-remove,-destroy-or-lop-native-vegetation.pdf](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/90762/Applicants-guide-applications-to-remove%2C-destroy-or-lop-native-vegetation.pdf)

**Habitat hectare assessment**

An assessment of native vegetation to determine its condition, extent (in hectares) and EVC. The assessment must be completed by an accredited native vegetation assessor following methodology described in [Native vegetation: sustaining a living landscape. Vegetation Quality Assessment Manual – Guidelines for applying the habitat hectares scoring method, Version 1.3](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/51809/VQAM-V1_3-Chapters-1-11.pdf)(or its successor) and updated in the [Assessor’s handbook](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0022/91255/Assessors-handbook-Applications-to-remove%2C-lop-or-destroy-native-vegetation-V1.0.pdf). Further information is available at

<https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation/native-vegetation/biodiversity-information-tools>

**Native vegetation**

Native vegetation is defined in Clause 72 of the Victoria Planning Provisions and all local planning schemes as ‘*plants that are indigenous to Victoria, including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses’*. Please refer to [https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0021/91146/Guidelines-for-the-removal,-destruction-or-lopping-of-native-vegetation,-2017.pdf](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/91146/Guidelines-for-the-removal%2C-destruction-or-lopping-of-native-vegetation%2C-2017.pdf)

**Offset**

An offset requirement specified in general habitat units to compensate for the biodiversity loss from native vegetation removal. DELWP systems and tools contains information required to address this application requirement and is available at <https://nvim.delwp.vic.gov.au/> and

<https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation/native-vegetation/biodiversity-information-tools>

**Planning**

Planning covers a broad range of issues, but is essentially about the control of the construction, growth and development of towns, cities and urban areas. Further information is available at

<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/planning-in-victoria/a-guide-to-the-planning-system>

**Planning Permit**

A planning permit is a legal document that allows a certain use and/or development on land. A planning permit is not a building permit. You may need to obtain both a building permit and a planning permit. Further information is available at

<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/planning-permit-applications/do-i-need-a-permit>

Under Victoria's planning system, local councils and the State Government develop planning schemes to control land use and development. They contain planning policies, zones, overlays and other provisions that affect how land can be used and developed. Further information is available via: <http://planning-schemes.delwp.vic.gov.au/about>

**Tree protection zone (TPZ)**

The TPZ is the area required to protect a tree from adverse construction impacts and involves the required distance stemming outwards from a trees crown and roots.

**VicSmart**

VicSmart is a streamlined assessment process for straightforward planning permit applications including:

* prescribed planning permit application fee
* a 10-day planning permit application process
* applications are not advertised and there are no third-party appeal rights
* pre-set information must be submitted with an application
* the Chief Executive Officer or delegate officer (planner) of council is the decision maker

Further information is available at <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/planning-permit-applications/vicsmart>

**LODGEMENT**

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