Checklist 3 – Native Vegetation

Overview

This guideline is designed to assist you in providing the required information with your planning permit application for the lopping, removal, or destruction of native vegetation protected by Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation.

This provision applies to all land greater than 4,000 square metres. Before applying, you are encouraged to determine that the vegetation is indigenous to the area and is not exempt based on the table of exemptions.

Guidelines

The Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation 2017 (the Guidelines) outline how native vegetation removal is assessed and offset. The Guidelines are an incorporated document in all Victorian planning schemes.

The *Applicant's guide* is a comprehensive guideline to assist you in navigating this provision, which covers off on whether you need a permit and what you need to do to prepare the application.

Preparing an application to remove native vegetation

The application requirements for an application to remove native vegetation depend on the application's assessment pathway. There are three assessment pathways, Basic, Intermediate and Detailed.

The assessment pathway is determined by the amount of native vegetation to be removed (in hectares), whether any large trees are to be removed, and the location of the native vegetation in the landscape.

The Native Vegetation Information Management (NVIM) tool assists in preparing an application to remove native vegetation.

Exemptions

For vegetation management for bushfire protection in bushfire prone areas or land included in a Bushfire Management Overlay, visit the Department of Land, Water, Environment and Planning's website for more information.

For other exemptions, see Exemptions from requiring a planning permit to remove native vegetation.

Assessment

In assessing your application, Council will use the *Assessor's handbook - Applications to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation*. It is essential that you have read the guidelines above to ensure that your application provides all of the required information.

What information should I submit?

Mandatory	
☐	**Application form** - A completed planning permit application form The application forms are available on our website here
☐	**Copy of title** - A current and full copy of title (including title plan) and details of any Restrictive Covenants/Section 173 Agreements or other restrictions on the title. This title must have been searched within the last three months. A title can be obtained from www.landata.vic.gov.au by following this guide.
☐	**Fee** - full payment of appropriate application fee, an invoice will be sent after lodgement. If the removal or lopping of vegetation is included with the permit application for the development of a single dwelling **Class 2 -16** applies, see the list of Statutory Planning Permit Application Fees. If the permit application is only for the removal or lopping is proposed, a **Class 22** fee applies, see the list of Statutory Planning Permit Application Fees.
☐	**Native Vegetation Removal Report** A completed report using the Native Vegetation Information Management (NVIM) is required to be submitted with the application. The *Applicant's guide* has comprehensive information on what is required with your application depend on the assessment pathway. For more information, see the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation 2017* (the Guidelines).
☐	A statement how the removal was aimed to be avoided or minimised, which is included in the above report. A diagram has been attached to this guideline to illustrate this concept.

Arborist report	
An arborist report, or arboricultural report, is a written assessment by an arborist, which assesses the species, health, structure, landscape value, useful life expectancy of the tree(s) and recommendations proposed for removal. This is recommended to be provided if the application proposes to remove significant vegetation, which may either mean a significant degree of vegetation or a singular tree of considerable size.	
Information to include:	
☐	Identification of the tree species
☐	Tree size – including height, breadth, DBH (diameter at breast height)
☐	Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) and Structural Root Zone (SRZ)
☐	Assessment of the health, structure, age, retention value, and useful life expectancy
☐	Risk assessment using relevant risk matrix, if the reason for removal is concern over safety

☐	A plan showing the tree locations clearly marked, and Tree Protection Zones if relevant to the application
☐	Photographs or other evidence relied on in the report
☐	Recommendations

Site Plan

If the removal is considered appropriate and a permit is granted, a site plan will need to be endorsed to accompany the permit showing the location of the tree. Depending on the complexity of the application, this may need to be prepared by a professional. For simpler applications, this may be prepared by you using satellite imagery and photographs provided the vegetation is able to be identified.

The Native Vegetation Removal report or Arborist Report may have a plan that is appropriate for endorsement. If this is the case an additional site plan does not need to be provided.

Information to include:

☐	The address of the property
☐	The layout and boundaries of the property
☐	The location of the vegetation
☐	Clear identification of vegetation for removal and retention

What if I don't provide enough information?

As the complexity and context of each proposal is different, the above outlined information are suggestions on what should be submitted with your application to enable Planning Officer's to undertake an assessment, but is not necessarily exhaustive.

Once your application has been assigned to a Planning Officer, if they find that additional information is required to proceed with an assessment of your application, a request for further information will issued, generally within 28 days of lodgement of the application.

Notice of the application may be required pursuant to Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. Notice is required for a 14 day period, including a notice sign(s) on site and/or letters to the adjoining properties. A visual diagram of the planning process can be downloaded here.

How do I lodge my application?

Lodge the completed application, including all forms and documents by e-mailing planningapplications@basscoast.vic.gov.au. Alternatively, the application can be lodged in person at the Customer Service Centre (76 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi) or sent via post to Statutory Planning PO Box 118 Wonthaggi VIC 3995.

What if I have questions?

If you need more information about planning in Bass Coast you can review the information available on our website, or contact the Statutory Planning Department on 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or visit the Council Offices at 76 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi.