

**MITCHELL SHIRE COUNCIL**

**Council Meeting Attachment**

**ENGINEERING AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**20 FEBRUARY 2017**

**9.3**

**REVIEW OF THE NATIVE VEGETATION  
CLEARING REGULATIONS**

**Attachment No: 1**

**Review of Native Vegetation Clearing  
Regulations Information Sheet Jan. 2016**

# Review of the native vegetation clearing regulations

Information Sheet  
Jan 2016



## The Victorian Government has completed its review of the native vegetation clearing regulations.

The review included extensive consultation with the Victorian community and key stakeholders. The review outcomes will be delivered through:

- a program of ongoing improvements as described in *Review of the native vegetation clearing regulations - outcomes report*
- amendments to the relevant clauses of the *Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP)* and all Victorian planning schemes.

The changes will implement the Victorian Government's election commitment to ensure the native vegetation clearing regulations sensibly protect sensitive vegetation.

### Why is this important?

Victoria's ecosystems provide important habitat for our unique native plants and animals.

A healthy environment is also the foundation of many of the productive activities that underpin our economy.

We need to protect and enhance our natural environment for future generations while ensuring our economy can grow and prosper.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the care and protection of our environment.

This is being achieved by three interconnected initiatives:

- Development of an overarching biodiversity plan – *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2036*
- A review of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, and
- A review of the *Native vegetation clearing regulations* (the review).

### Why are the regulations changing?

The review of the *Native vegetation clearing regulations* explored how the regulations had been functioning since reforms were introduced by the previous Victorian Government in 2013. The changes address issues identified during extensive consultation with the community and stakeholders during 2015 and 2016.

### How will the changes better protect sensitive native vegetation?

Some of the changes to better protect sensitive native vegetation include:

- placing a greater emphasis on avoiding native vegetation removal
- updating maps to consider additional values of native vegetation, such as endangered Ecological Vegetation Classes and large trees
- enabling site assessed information to have a greater role in decision making
- ensuring that offsets must protect large trees when they are permitted to be removed
- enabling increased monitoring and reporting on native vegetation losses and offsets.

A native vegetation advisory group will also be established to provide advice to DELWP to develop and implement a program of ongoing improvements.

[delwp.vic.gov.au](http://delwp.vic.gov.au)



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## Review of the native vegetation clearing regulations

The proposed regulatory system changes are described in detail in the following documents:

- *Review of the native vegetation clearing regulations – summary of amendments to the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP)*. This is the document that describes the changes to the relevant clauses of the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria.
- *Native vegetation clearing – assessment guidelines*. This is the draft of the new document to be incorporated into all planning schemes in Victoria that describes how the regulations will be applied.

These documents are available for comment on the Engage Victoria website:

[www.engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review)

### How do the proposed system changes compare to the current regulations?

A comparison of the detailed regulatory system changes to better protect sensitive vegetation is described in the *Native vegetation clearing regulations – Overview of key system (VPP) changes*, on the Engage Victoria website.

DELWP will deliver additional changes through an ongoing program of actions, and will also establish a stakeholder advisory group.

### How can I have my say on the changes?

We welcome community feedback on the proposed changes, especially from people who may be affected by, or who are responsible for, implementing the proposed system changes.

It is important that we know about any potential implementation issues before the VPP amendments are adopted.

To make a submission on the proposed changes, please visit the government's Engage Victoria website: [www.engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review)

Consultation closes at 5pm on Sunday, 8 March 2017.

### What does this mean for Victoria's biodiversity?

The amended regulations will enable better consideration of important biodiversity elements in decision making. This includes key habitats for dispersed rare or threatened species, large trees, endangered Ecological Vegetation Classes, and sensitive wetlands and coastal areas.

Changes will also result in fairer offset obligations for the removal of scattered trees, by acknowledging the habitat values of large trees and reducing the offset requirements for small trees.

### When will the changes happen?

DELWP will review and consider comments received by the 8 March 2017. Proposed changes will then be finalised and submitted to the Minister for Planning for approval later in 2017.

### Where can I find more information?

Relevant project documents or links are available on the government's Engage Victoria website:

[www.engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review)

Other documents that describe the government's review process, including the response to stakeholder and community feedback include:

- *Review of the native vegetation clearing regulations – outcomes report*
- *Review of the native vegetation clearing regulations – consultation, submissions and response information sheet*.

These documents are available on the DELWP website:

<http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife/biodiversity/native-vegetation-clearing-regulations-review>



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