

# Info Sheet

## Native Vegetation Clearing



This fact sheet explains how native vegetation removal is regulated in the planning scheme.

Vegetation removal associated with dam construction, agriculture and forestry is typically regulated outside the land use planning system through State Government agencies.

Planning scheme regulations includes exemptions, zone requirements and the Natural Assets Code.

### WHY RETAIN NATIVE VEGETATION

Regardless of whether you need a permit or not to clear native vegetation, we encourage all property owners to retain existing native trees, shrubs and grasses.

Retaining native vegetation provides a number of benefits, including:

- maintaining soil stability and helps prevent erosion
- reducing exposure to wind and adverse weather,
- maintaining key habitat, and
- providing aesthetic values.

Importantly, replacement plantings can be very slow growing on poor quality soil.

### EXEMPTIONS

Table 4.4 of the planning scheme details when vegetation removal is exempt from planning approval. The exemptions are quite detailed and generally relate to maintenance around existing infrastructure, such as fencing, or to

implement a bushfire hazard management plan.

### ZONES

The Landscape Conservation Zone and Environmental Management Zone include standards relating to the retention of native vegetation. Please refer to these zones for their specific requirements.

### NATURAL ASSETS CODE & PLANNING SCHEME OVERLAYS

The scheme has two overlays that relate to native vegetation; the Priority Vegetation Area overlay and the Waterway and Coastal Protection Area overlay. Both overlays are part of the Natural Assets Code.

The Priority Vegetation Area (PVA) for Sorell has been prepared in the same way as it is for all other Tasmanian Councils. The PVA is based on a Regional Ecosystem Model that incorporates a range of data on threatened species, vegetation communities and key habitat values.

The Waterway and Coastal Protection Area (WCPA) applies to all waterways, wetlands and coastlines and consists of a buffer distance around these features. The principal role of the WCPA is to manage riparian vegetation and potential impacts to water quality or habitat from works in or adjacent to waterbodies.

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### Priority Vegetation Area (PVA)

Clearing in the PVA overlay will require a discretionary planning application and natural values report. The planning scheme seeks to minimise vegetation removal and ensure any removal has minimal impact through consideration of:

- the purpose of the clearing;
- the scale of the clearing
- whether buildings or works could be located elsewhere, to avoid clearing
- fire-resistance building design;
- ongoing management or protection of other areas of vegetation.

### Waterway and Coastal Protection Area

Most works within the WCPA will be discretionary and the performance criteria seeks to minimise impact to native vegetation, avoid or manage erosion and maintain waterways.

### PVA PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

**P1.1:** Clearance of native vegetation within a priority vegetation area must be for:

- (a) an existing use on the site, provided any clearance is contained within the minimum area necessary to be cleared to provide adequate bushfire protection, as recommended by the Tasmania Fire Service or an accredited person;
- (b) buildings and works associated with the construction of a single dwelling or an associated outbuilding;

- (c) subdivision in the General Residential Zone or Low Density Residential Zone;
- (d) use or development that will result in significant long term social and economic benefits and there is no feasible alternative location or design;
- (e) clearance of native vegetation where it is demonstrated that on-going pre-existing management cannot ensure the survival of the priority vegetation and there is little potential for long-term persistence; or
- (f) the clearance of native vegetation that is of limited scale relative to the extent of priority vegetation on the site.

**P1.2:** Clearance of native vegetation within a priority vegetation area must minimise adverse impacts on priority vegetation, having regard to:

- (a) the design and location of buildings and works and any constraints such as topography or land hazards;
- (b) any particular requirements for the buildings and works;
- (c) minimising impacts resulting from bushfire hazard management measures through siting and fire-resistant design of habitable buildings;
- (d) any mitigation measures implemented to minimise the residual impacts on priority vegetation;
- (e) any on-site biodiversity offsets; and
- (f) any existing cleared areas on the site.