

## Operational Works vegetation damage

### What is vegetation damage?

The CairnsPlan 2016 Planning Scheme defines vegetation damage (clearing) as follows:

*Remove, cut down, ring bark, push over, poison or destroy in any way including by burning, flooding, or draining.*

### What is Operational Works?

Operational work under the *Planning Act 2016* is development that is regulated through the CairnsPlan 2016 Planning Scheme. Operational work means work, other than building work or plumbing or drainage work, in, on, over or under premises that materially affects premises or the use of premises. Assessable vegetation clearing is operational work.

Refer to [Operational Works | Cairns Regional Council](#) for more information.

### Pruning

Pruning work is not considered vegetation damage if it is done in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Standard Pruning of Amenity Trees AS4374, by a certified Arborist and does not result in the removal of more than 15%, by volume, in any 12-month period.

### What to include in a Development Application?

Generally, for works involving assessable vegetation clearing, a properly made application, must include:

- 1) A cover letter.
- 2) Payment of relevant application fees. Please refer to [Council's Development Assessment fees & charges](#) for operational work vegetation clearing,

specifically in relation to the number of proposed trees to be assessed for vegetation damage.

- 3) DA Form 1, obtained from [Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning \(DSDMIP\)](#).
- 4) Plans (to scale) in support of the application.
- 5) An assessment against the CairnsPlan 2016 Planning Scheme with responses to the non-compliant planning scheme codes, detailing what you are proposing to do, and which acceptable outcome has been satisfied.
- 6) All supporting information required to assist with the assessment of the development application, such as: engineers' reports; arborist reports; visual impact assessments; environmental management plans; landscaping plans.

Your operational works application should include all relevant plans and information, to allow the assessment of the application. It should not have to rely on other applications already submitted or reports yet to be obtained from other sources. Any related engineering drawings and specifications submitted for approval must be checked, approved, and signed by a registered professional engineer.

### How to apply for a Development Permit?

If a permit is required, you can apply via:

- **Online:** [Development Applications Online Portal](#)
- **In person:** Over the counter at Council's main Customer Service Centre  
119-145 Spence Street  
CAIRNS QLD 4870



- **Mail:** Cairns Regional Council  
Attention: Executive Manager, Development & Planning  
PO Box 359  
CAIRNS QLD 4870
- **Email:** Please contact Council's Development & Planning team: [planningadmin@cairns.qld.gov.au](mailto:planningadmin@cairns.qld.gov.au).

Refer to [Making & lodging a Development Application | Cairns Regional Council](#) for more information.

## Vegetation Assessment and Audit Plan

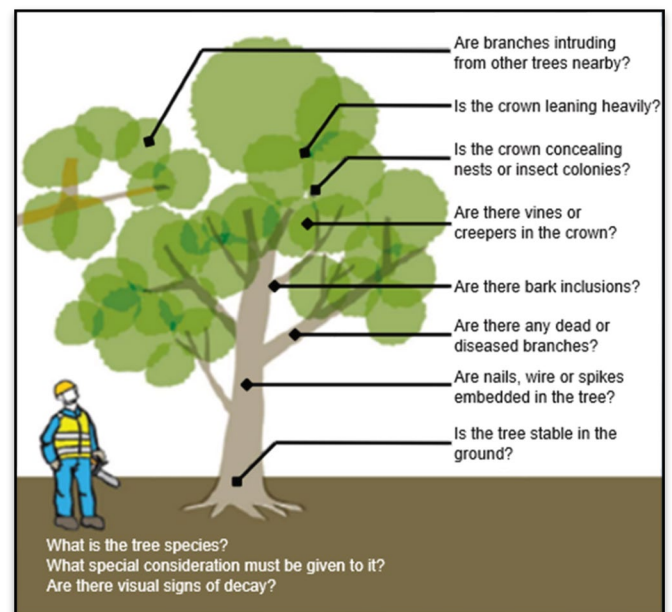
Council recommends that a Vegetation Assessment and Audit Plan is compiled by a qualified consultant with a minimum AQF Level 5 Diploma in Horticulture, Arboriculture (Arb), and vegetation works should be undertaken by a consultant with a minimum level 3 Horticulture (Arb).

Arboriculture reporting should include:

- Vegetation Assessment including species, estimated height and spread, age, health, form, structure, tree root zones, and a discussion of the opportunities, constraints and suitability of proposed vegetation clearing, retention and replacement planting.
- Audit Plan detailing the extent of vegetation clearing and vegetation to be retained, botanical and common names, tree identification number, proposed or existing development and landscaping, tree roots zones where applicable to demonstrate compliance with the Australian Standard Protection of trees on development sites AS4970-2009.

- Audit Plan detailing the location of vegetation clearing, retention, botanical and common name, tree identification number, existing and or proposed development and landscaping including tree root zones.
- Images demonstrating trees proposed for retention or removal.
- Any other additional information to assist with the assessment of the application such as Sonic Tomography Resistograph Testing, Geotechnical recommendations and certification, ecological assessment, waterway audit.

Written approvals from referral agencies and other stakeholders are required prior to lodgment.



**Figure 1: Tree Hazards.**

Sourced from <https://qaa.net.au/>

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