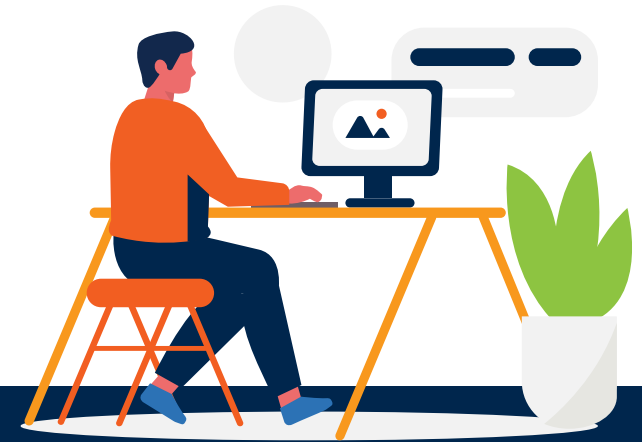


LOGO

# Planning Applications: Getting Started Guide



## **Planning can be a complex space**

Alpine Shire Council's experts in planning and development work to ensure that the built environment of our community maintains the character of Alpine Shire, whilst also aligning with our development guidelines

**This Getting Started Guide** will take you step by step from when you first think about a building project or improvement idea, through to submitting your application.

Council is here to provide advice and guidance so you can refine your plans and have a greater chance of a successful application. A little preparation up front goes a long way to helping us help you.



#### Notes and tips for using this guide.

- Allow plenty of time. Once you submit, the processing time should be short but it depends on us receiving the correct information.
- Some ideas seem simple, but can involve complexities related specifically to your property. This guide will identify key points at which to approach Council's expert planners for advice.
- While it looks like there are many steps involved in an application, some of these take just a few minutes on a computer.

## Steps in this guide



## 1 Find out if I need a planning permit

### Description

This stage guides you to think about your project idea and the outcomes you seek from it, undertake initial research to understand your project options, and collect the information that council needs to be able to advise you of the applicable planning processes.

### 1.1 Decide on my project idea

The steps below will help you to:

- Define the outcomes you want from your project
- Understand the general options available to achieve these outcomes
- Be realistic about what is achievable in your context

- a. If you are new to the process, we highly recommend getting support from a planning professional.
- b. Research: get some background knowledge on similar projects and work that has been done in your area (e.g. Google search, take photos of similar things or save images to Pinterest).
- c. Start taking measurements of your property. Providing manufacturers with the correct dimensions early may help to avoid delays beyond your control.
- d. Review brochures and engage with companies (e.g. solar panel and AC companies) to find out what options are available to you.

**Tip:** Think about how your neighbours will feel. What will they see living next door, e.g. a big blank wall?

**Tip:** have a go at sketching your idea

### 1.2 Identify if I need a permit

The steps below will help you to:

- Know whether or not you need a permit
- Know the next steps you need to take to progress your project

- a. Review Council's general permit information.
- b. If you need a permit or are unsure, call or visit us, or book a check-in meeting (in-person or video call).
- c. If you don't need a planning permit, you can proceed with your project without further involvement by Council. Please note, you may still need a building permit.

Note: if your project changes so that it no longer complies with the list of permit exemptions, you will need to return to complete the planning process.

[CONTACT COUNCIL](#)

For Council to advise whether you to need a permit, you will need to provide:

- Your address
- Photos / research materials of your idea

## 1 Find out if I need a planning permit

### 1.3 Understand my property's context, and enable council to advise me if needed

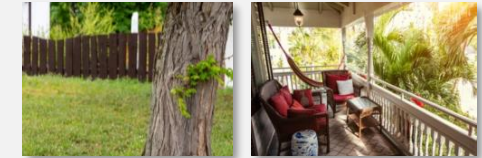
The steps below will help you to:

- Understand how the proposed project will impact your property
  - Understand if the project is likely to impact your neighbours, so that you can inform them of your intentions and reduce the risks of major changes required later
- 
- a. Take photo(s) of the area(s) affected by your idea, including any buildings, fences or trees close by that will be impacted.
  - b. Take photo(s) of the area(s) affected from street level. See example photos.
  - c. Obtain approximate measurements for your idea/project. See example photos.
  - d. For projects that might be visible beyond your property and above the fence height, talk to your neighbours about what you want to do.
  - e. (Optional) Contact Council and ask to talk to the Duty Planner to receive advice on your idea, whether there are any other options available and the application process.

#### CONTACT COUNCIL

**Tip:** Photos need to be current and accurately reflect the part of your property that is being altered.

#### Example photos



**Tip:** The VicPlan tool contains your property's planning information on one page. It is a powerful tool and can take a few minutes to load.

**REMEMBER**, for Council to provide you with informed advice on whether you are likely to get a planning permit for your idea, based on planning policy, they will need information from you. Their advice to you will only be as good as the information you give them.

The address of the property (subject site).

- Photos / research materials of your idea including measurements, materials and colours.
- Photo of the area affected by the proposal including any building, outbuilding, fence or tree which may be affected by the proposal.
- Photo of the subject site and adjoining properties along the street frontage (2 properties either side).



## 1 Find out if I need a planning permit

### 1.4 (Optional) Contact council for confirmation of permit requirements

The steps below will help you to:

- Be confident about whether or not you need a planning permit
- If a planning permit is required, consider what options are available to you (in other words, what works you could do without needing a planning permit)

In a check-in meeting, Council's planning staff will:

- a. Review your site photos and any diagrams you have sketched or downloaded and listen to your ideas.
- b. Confirm planning permit requirements based on the Yarra Planning Scheme and the information that you have provided.

**Tip:** It's useful to check in with Council at the early stages of your project.

**REMEMBER, for Council to advise whether you need a planning permit, you will need to provide them with the following:**

- The address of the property (subject site)
- Photos / research materials to illustrate your idea.- A photo of the area affected by the proposal including any building, outbuilding, fence or tree which may be affected by the proposal.

## 2 Learn how planning restrictions could impact my project

### Description

This stage helps you to understand the context and feasibility of your project for your property. Each property is different, it is important to obtain the right records so you can make adjustments to your project and have the information that council needs to be able to advise you of what you'll need for a successful submission.

### 2.1 Understand the planning process for my project

The steps below will help you to:

- Confirm the scope of your project
- Understand if you are eligible for a VicSmart permit (which involves simpler submission requirements)

- a. Confirm the idea to take forward.
- b. Prepare relevant plans – we recommend getting professional help.

### 2.2 Find out what i can and can't do on my property

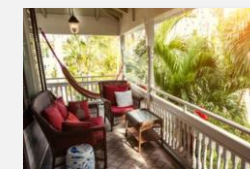
The steps below will help you to:

- Identify and understand any planning restrictions applicable to your property
- Prepare for a check in with Council

- a. Get an aerial photo [download a free Property Report from [VicPlan](#). You can also get an aerial photo of your property from [Google Maps](#) and download your free property report [here](#).
- b. Review your property's zoning and overlays.
- c. Identify colours and materials you might want to use.
- d. Call Council, to book a pre-application meeting (videocall preferred).

**Tip:** The [VicPlan](#) tool contains your property's planning information on one page. It is a powerful tool and can take a few minutes to load.

#### Example photos



**Tip:** for heritage buildings, review photos and colours on the "[What house is that](#)" document.

### CONTACT COUNCIL

For your Council check-in, you will need to provide:

- Your address
- Photos / research materials of your idea
- A photo of the area affected by the proposal including any building, outbuilding, fence or tree which may be affected by the proposal
- A photograph of the subject site and adjoining properties along the street frontage
- Approximate dimensions of what you would like to build/install
- Aerial photo (from Google Maps or VicPlan) that accurately reflects the current state of your property
- Property Report
- A basic drawing or hand sketch of your proposed project



## 2 Learn how planning restrictions could impact my project

### 2.3 Check in with Council before any significant costs have been incurred or detailed drawings made

The steps below will help you to:

- Confirm any restrictions on how you might use your property
  - Confirm any restrictions on how you might develop / extend your property
  - Gain a better understanding of whether you are eligible for a VicSmart application.
  - Gain a better understanding of what is expected of you, and whether you are capable of doing the drawings and collating all of the information, yourself, OR, whether it is better for you to get a professional to prepare your application on your behalf.
- 
- a. Discuss the context, desired outcome of the project, options and further information needed.
  - b. Discuss zoning and overlays.
  - c. Check my if project is eligible to be a VicSmart application.

NOTE: If your property is in a heritage overlay, and has 'heritage restrictions', it is unlikely that your application will qualify as a VicSmart application.

## 3 Prepare a good quality application

### Description

This stage helps you to use the research and planning material you have gathered to prepare the drawings and documents that comply with planning restrictions for your property, and that are to the level of detail required by Council.

### 3.1 Confirm project scope and obtain title information

The steps below will help you to:

- Make a final decision on scope of works proposed
- Obtain your certificate of title and official property site plan

- a. Confirm the scope of your project
- b. [Obtain your property's Certificate of Title](#) from Landata to determine site boundaries prior to drawing anything up in detail

### 3.2 Prepare my plans

The steps below will help you to:

- Prepare plans to the level of detail required by Council
- Understand all of the required information is included in your application.

#### VicSmart eligible applications

If your project is eligible for VicSmart fast-track

- a. Prepare the relevant documents listed in the VicSmart guide.
- b. Proceed to submit your application.

[APPLY FOR A VICSMART PERMIT](#)

#### Non VicSmart eligible applications

- a. Draw up plans/ elevation/ detail drawings using the photos and documents you have gathered.  
If your project is more complex than expected, we strongly recommend that you obtain professional support(e.g a surveyor, architect) to prepare your application.
- b. Select materials and finishes.
- c. Get professional advice from a planner or pre-application advice from one of our planners before lodging your application.

**Tip:** A complete and thorough application is likely to be processed faster with fewer delays

**Tip:** You can usually take measurements yourself for simple, projects e.g. fences

**Tip:** For larger projects (e.g. first story extension) you might need to engage a draftsman or surveyor for measurements.

[CONTACT COUNCIL](#)



## 3 Prepare a good quality application

### 3.2 Prepare my plans (continued)

The steps below will help you to:

- Make a final decision on scope of works proposed.
- Obtain your certificate of title and official property site plan.

If your project is eligible for VicSmart fast-track

- a. Prepare the relevant documents listed in the VicSmart guide. You can see visual examples in the Document Preparation Guide.
- b. Proceed to submit your application.

For any Council check-in or Pre-Application meeting, you will need to provide:

- Certificate of Title
- Written statement of your proposal
- Demolition plan
- Proposed site plan
- Aerial photo marked up with dimensions
- A photograph of the subject site and adjoining properties along the street frontage, with project dimensions
- Elevation plan
- Names and images of proposed materials, colours and finishes

**Tip:** You can annotate photos and create drawings by hand, or using easily available tools like Microsoft Word, Microsoft Paint.

**Tip:** You take the drawings to the planning counter to double check with duty planner if they are on the right track.

### 3.3 For Non-VicSmart applications: (Optional) Check in with Council before submitting your application

The steps below will help you to:

- Confirm all of the required information is included in your application.
- Understand if your proposal is ready for submission, or if revisions are required.

- a. Ensure you have required documents: the Registered Search statement, the Title, Copies of any encumbrances, Relevant plans, and a completed application form.
- b. Contact Council if you have any questions and confirm revisions required before submission.



## Submit my application

### Description

This is the final stage, which guides you to submit your application.

#### 4.1 Review your information

The steps below will help you to:

- Ensure your documents are ready for Council review
- Obtain a final check with Council

- 
- a. Double/triple check before submission
  - b. Call or visit Council, or book a check-in meeting. A planning consultant can help you ensure you are submitting a high quality application.

[CONTACT COUNCIL](#)

#### 4.2 Submit your application

Submit your application via Councils Planning Application Portal <https://alpine.greenlightopm.com/planning>

---