

# **Accepted development vegetation clearing code**

## **Clearing for infrastructure**

**Effective 22 November 2023**

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*Landholders are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Acts and regulations relevant to their operations, and to seek advice from the relevant agency if required.*

## Glossary

The following table of technical terms and their definitions are essential to understanding this accepted development vegetation clearing code (code). Any terms used in this code not included in the below Glossary table have the meaning provided for in the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#)<sup>1</sup>.

Term	Definition
Acid sulfate soil	Is soil, sediment or other material containing iron sulfides and/or acidity generated by their breakdown.
Airstrip	Is an area of land cleared and prepared for the landing and take-off of aeroplanes and that complies with either of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Australian Government Civil Aviation Safety Authority guidelines (CASA)</li> <li>or</li> <li>• Royal Flying Doctors Service Requirements for Queensland.</li> </ul>
Boundary fence	Is a fence which runs along the property boundary as marked on the Digital Cadastral Database (DCDB) or surveyed property plan.
Coastal lot	Is a lot that falls partly or entirely within any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brigalow Belt subregions 1 (Townsville Plains), 2 (Bogie River Hills) and 14 (Marlborough Plains)</li> <li>• Cape York Peninsula subregion 2 (Starke Coastal Lowlands)</li> <li>• Einasleigh Uplands subregion 3 (Hodgkinson Basin)</li> <li>• Central Queensland Coast bioregion</li> <li>• Southeast Queensland bioregion</li> <li>• Wet Tropics bioregion</li> </ul>
Contour bank	Is an earthen structure constructed across slopes used to intercept runoff before it concentrates and starts to cause erosion, after which it is safely channelled into stable grassed waterways, natural depressions or grassed areas adjacent to a paddock.
Crossing	Is a track, internal fence, boundary fence or other linear infrastructure that crosses a watercourse or drainage feature. <u>Note:</u> A crossing does not run parallel to a watercourse or drainage feature.
Dedicated road	See section 93 of the <a href="#">Land Act 1994</a> .
Defining bank	Is the bank that confines the seasonal flows, but which may be inundated by flooding from time to time, and can be either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the bank or terrace that confines the water before the point of flooding</li> <li>or</li> <li>• where there is no bank, the seasonal high water line that represents the point of flooding.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> A list of terms defined in the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#) is available in the General guide to the vegetation clearing codes: Accepted development vegetation clearing codes. The general guide is available online at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'General guide to the vegetation clearing codes').

Term	Definition
Drainage and erosion control structure	<p>Is an earthen built structure associated with a vehicular track, internal fence, boundary fence, firebreak, fire management line or linear infrastructure for the purpose of reducing erosion or directing run-off and/or capturing sediment. For example, a whoa boy and its associated sediment basin is a drainage and erosion control structure.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> For the purposes of this code, it does not include contour banks.</p>
Ecological processes	<p>Is the range of natural processes which maintain an ecosystem, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hydrological processes</li> <li>• soil development</li> <li>• nutrient cycling</li> <li>• chemical processes including storage of nutrients</li> <li>• decomposition and cycling of organic matter</li> <li>• pollination and seed production</li> <li>• seed dispersal</li> <li>• predator-prey relationships</li> <li>• germination and recruitment of species</li> <li>• the carbon cycle and stability of atmospheric carbon.</li> <li>• habitats for flora and fauna (such as particular regional ecosystems, logs, rocks, debris, leaf litter, nectar, hollow bearing trees, food and shelter).</li> </ul>
Environmental offset	See the <a href="#">Environmental Offsets Act 2014, section 7(2)</a> .
Exempt clearing work	<p>Has the meaning given in Schedule 24 (Dictionary) of the <a href="#">Planning Regulation 2017</a></p> <p><u>Note:</u> A list of exempt clearing work is available at: <a href="http://www.qld.gov.au/search/exempt_clearing_work/">www.qld.gov.au (search 'exempt clearing work')</a>.</p>
Fire management line	Is a pathway, track, or fence line clearing, which can be used to access water for fire-fighting, divide the property into sub-units to allow a fuel reduction burning program to be carried out, and/or divide the property into sub-units to allow for back burning in the event of a wildfire.
Firebreak	Under this code, is a strip of land which has been cleared and is located immediately adjacent to infrastructure, excluding boundary fences, tracks, internal fences, irrigation channels or contour banks.
Habitat tree	<p>Is a living or dead standing native tree that contains either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one or more visible hollows positioned at least two metres above the base of the tree<sup>2</sup></li> <li>or</li> <li>• an active bird's nest or the nest of a raptor or other bird that uses the same nest each year.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Habitat trees are used, or potentially used, by hollow-dwelling fauna.

Term	Definition
Helipad	<p>Is an area of land that is cleared and prepared for the landing and take-off of helicopters and complies with either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Civil Aviation Safety Authority guidelines</li> <li>or</li> <li>• The Royal Flying Doctors Service Requirements for Queensland.</li> </ul>
Impact area	<p>Is the total area to be cleared in a category C area or category R area that requires an exchange area to be legally secured under <a href="#">section 4.5</a> of this code.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> the total area to be cleared includes the area below the limit specified in this code and the area that exceeds the specified limit in this code.</p>
Internal fence	Is a fence other than a boundary fence.
Irrigation channel	Is an excavated channel that transfers water between a source and areas which require irrigation. The channel may be lined with material such as concrete or flexible membrane to prevent seepage and erosion.
Immature koala habitat tree	<p>Means a koala habitat tree that is all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is located in a koala habitat area</li> <li>• is not a mature tree or habitat tree</li> <li>• is two metres or more in height.</li> </ul>
Koala habitat area	See the <a href="#">Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017, section 7B</a> .
Koala habitat tree	See the <a href="#">Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017, schedule 2 (Dictionary)</a> .
Koala offset	Means an environmental offset under the <a href="#">Environmental Offsets Act 2014</a> provided for a matter of State environmental significance mentioned in schedule 2, section 6(3) or 6(4) of the <a href="#">Environmental Offset Regulation 2014</a> that is in relation to a koala habitat area.
Landholder	<p>Is (where relevant):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the registered proprietor of freehold land</li> <li>• a lessee of freehold land, subject to the consent of the freehold owner to make a notification</li> <li>• a lessee of a lease under the <a href="#">Land Act 1994</a> provided the clearing is consistent with the purposes of the lease</li> <li>• a sub-lessee of a lease under the <a href="#">Land Act 1994</a> subject to the consent of the lessee to make a notification and provided the clearing is consistent with the purposes of the lease</li> <li>• a licensee or permittee under the <a href="#">Land Act 1994</a> provided the clearing is consistent with the conditions of the licence or permit</li> <li>• the road authority for a dedicated road</li> <li>• the holder of the title or tenure to the land.</li> </ul>
Land zones	Are categories that describe the major geologies, associated landforms and geomorphic processes in Queensland. The land zone can be identified by the middle number in the three digit regional ecosystem identification code. For example—the regional ecosystem identified by the code 12.3.4 is in land zone 3.

Term	Definition
Linear infrastructure	<p>Means a structure built or used for any purpose that is linear in nature.</p> <p>This includes but is not limited to, a pipeline, telecommunication line, or power line. For the purpose of this code, it does not include tracks, an internal fence line or boundary fence line, irrigation channels, contour banks, fire management lines or firebreaks.</p>
Non-coastal lot	Are all lots other than a coastal lot.
Non-linear infrastructure	<p>Means a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose that is not linear infrastructure.</p> <p>This includes but is not limited to, residential housing and associated structures, commercial and industrial buildings and structures, a stock yard, shed, feed pad, dam, windmill, solar panels, water tank, or telecommunication tower. For the purposes of this code it does not include airstrips or helipads.</p>
Recognised best practice methods	<p>Are any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A method recognised by a State or Federal government agency to prevent increased soil erosion and instability, stabilise soil erosion and instability and prevent increased sediment run-off. This includes a guide such as the <a href="#">Soil Conservation Guidelines for Queensland (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)</a>, a fact sheet or other advice published or provided by a State or Federal government agency.</li> <li>• The <a href="#">Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control Document</a>, IECA, 2008<sup>3</sup>.</li> </ul>
Regional ecosystem structure category	<p>Is a vegetation density category that is allocated to each regional ecosystem. It can be found within the Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM REDD) on <a href="http://www.qld.gov.au">www.qld.gov.au</a> (search 'VM REDD') or in a Vegetation Management Property Report for the lot, which can be requested at: <a href="http://www.qld.gov.au">www.qld.gov.au</a> (search 'property report').</p>
Road authority	<p>Is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a State-controlled road under the <a href="#">Transport Infrastructure Act 1994</a> – the chief executive under the Act</li> <li>or</li> <li>• all dedicated roads other than those declared as a state-controlled road under the <a href="#">Transport Infrastructure Act 1994</a> – the local government.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> The Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control Document, IECA, 2008 available online at: <https://www.austieca.com.au/publications/best-practice-erosion-and-sediment-control-bpesc-document>



Term	Definition
Salinity expression area	Is an area containing <u>more than one</u> of the following salinity indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant species tolerant of saline conditions, shallow water tables or poor drainage (waterlogging)<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Wet areas in lower parts of the landscape or bare soil (soil scalding)</li> <li>• Dieback of larger trees in low, wetter parts of the landscape (outside drought conditions or the effects of fire)</li> <li>• Salt accumulations on the surface (often white and powdery, sometimes crystalline)</li> <li>• Areas of shallow groundwater<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>
Seasonal high water line	Is a zone that represents the usual peak seasonal flow level and can be identified by deposition, debris or characteristic vegetation zonation.
Soil erosion and instability	Is the occurrence of gully erosion greater than 30 centimetres in depth, landslips, a scarp, soil scalding or stream bank slumping.
Stream order	Means a numerical ordering classification of each stream segment according to its position within a catchment <sup>6</sup> . Streams are watercourses and drainage features shown on the vegetation management watercourse and drainage feature map.
Threatening process	Is a process that includes but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fragmentation</li> <li>• climate change</li> <li>• weather events</li> <li>• weed and pest (animal and plant) infestations</li> <li>• fire</li> <li>• disease</li> <li>• land degradation (e.g. erosion, acid sulfate soil or salinity issues)</li> <li>• predation.</li> </ul>
Track	A sealed or unsealed pathway providing permanent or temporary vehicular or pedestrian access.

<sup>4</sup> For example—*Melaleuca* spp. (in particular *Melaleuca bracteata* and *Melaleuca quinquenervia*), *Sporobolus* spp. (in particular saltwater or marine couch), *Salsola australis* (soft roly-poly), *Sclerolaena* spp. (in particular prickly roly-poly), *Cyperus* spp. (sedges), *Juncus* spp. (rushes), *Atriplex* spp. (saltbushes), *Paspalum* spp. (water couch), *Enchylaena tomentosa* (ruby saltbush), *Sesuvium portulacastrum* (purslane), *Tecticornia* species (samphires), *Phragmites* spp.

<sup>5</sup> A water table less than 5 metres from the surface would generally be considered as shallow for this purpose. One mechanism to identify this is from a nearby bore.

<sup>6</sup> Further information on identifying stream orders is available in the General guide to the vegetation clearing codes: Accepted development vegetation clearing codes. The general guide is available online at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'General guide to the vegetation clearing codes').

Term	Definition
Weed <sup>7</sup>	Is any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted or prohibited matter declared under the <a href="#">Biosecurity Act 2014</a></li> <li>• A non-native plant</li> <li>• A “Native and naturalised” plant that is not native to the bioregion.</li> </ul>

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<sup>7</sup> The Census of the Queensland Flora and Fungi, which is updated annually by the Queensland Herbarium, identifies plants considered “Native in Queensland”, or “Native and naturalised” for particular bioregions in Queensland. The Census will include non-native plants as either: “Formerly naturalised”, “Doubtfully naturalised” or “Naturalised in Queensland”. Plants that are “Native and naturalised” for particular bioregions in Queensland, are non-native for the remaining bioregions. Further information can be found on the Queensland Government website at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search for ‘flora and fungi census’).

# 1 Introduction

The [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#) (Vegetation Management Act), in conjunction with the [Planning Act 2016](#) (Planning Act) and subordinate legislation, regulates the clearing of remnant vegetation and regulated regrowth vegetation. This code, which was made by the Minister on 5 September 2023 (effective 22 November 2023) in accordance with section 19O of the Vegetation Management Act and the State Policy for Vegetation Management<sup>8</sup>, is approved as an accepted development vegetation clearing code under section 3 of the [Vegetation Management Regulation 2023](#).

Clearing in accordance with this code is accepted development under schedule 7, part 3, section 12 of the [Planning Regulation 2017](#).

*Note: Other legislation may also affect clearing activities. Before you notify the Department of Resources of your intention to clear vegetation under this code, it is strongly recommended that you contact the relevant agencies listed in [Appendix 1](#) to determine whether your proposed clearing activity is allowable under other local, state and federal laws.*

## 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this code is to regulate the clearing of remnant vegetation (category B areas) and regulated regrowth vegetation (category C areas and category R areas) to establish or expand infrastructure in accordance with requirements designed to meet the objectives outlined in [section 1.3](#). If the clearing does not comply with this code, it is classified as either assessable or prohibited development under the Planning Act and may be subject to the relevant offence provisions.<sup>9</sup>

*Note: All sections of this code are mandatory and to ensure you are compliant with this code, you **must** satisfy the requirements in all sections. If your intended clearing is in a category B area and will not comply with this code, you may be able to apply for a development approval. Contact Department of Resources on 135 VEG (135 834) for further information.*

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<sup>8</sup> The State Policy for Vegetation Management is available at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'state policy for vegetation management')

<sup>9</sup> The Department of Resources uses satellite imagery to monitor compliance with vegetation management legislation.

## 1.2 Scope

This code applies to the clearing of vegetation in a category B area, category C area and category R area that is on any of the following land tenures:

- Freehold land
- Indigenous land
- Leasehold land granted under the [Land Act 1994](#)
- Unallocated state land<sup>10</sup> under the [Land Act 1994](#)
- Trust land (other than indigenous land under the [Land Act 1994](#))
- A non-tidal boundary watercourse under the [Land Act 1994](#)
- Dedicated roads.

This code also applies to clearing of vegetation in a category X area on dedicated roads.

This code authorises clearing for the following types of infrastructure only:

- Boundary fences
- Internal fences
- Tracks
- Contour banks
- Drainage and erosion control structures
- Irrigation channels
- Other linear infrastructure
- Airstrip or helipads
- Telecommunication towers
- Other non-linear infrastructure
- Firebreaks
- Fire management lines

*Note: This code sets clearing area and width limitations for different types of infrastructure, vegetation and tenures. If your intended clearing for a particular infrastructure type exceeds the area or width limitations for the relevant tenure outlined in this code, and is in a category B area, you may be able to apply for a development approval.*

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<sup>10</sup> A tidal boundary watercourse under the [Land Act 1994](#) is dealt with as unallocated State land for the purposes of this code.

This code does not apply to the following activities:

- Clearing inconsistent with a condition of a development approval under the Planning Act that remains enforceable.
- A development approval for a material change of use or reconfiguring a lot is required under the Planning Act, other than a development approval for a material change of use for a telecommunication tower.
- Clearing inconsistent with a condition applied by the Coordinator General for a coordinated project under the [State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971](#).
- Clearing of vegetation that is exempt clearing work under schedule 21 of the [Planning Regulation 2017](#) except where schedule 21 refers to clearing under this code.
- Clearing of vegetation that complies with schedule 7, part 3, section 13 of the [Planning Regulation 2017](#) being operational work for necessary firebreaks or fire management lines.

*Note: Before notifying to clear under this code, you should check whether your intended clearing activity qualifies as exempt clearing work<sup>11</sup>. If your clearing qualifies as exempt clearing work, you can clear without a notification or approval under the vegetation management framework.*

### 1.3 Objective

The objective of this code is that clearing to establish or expand infrastructure achieves the following environmental outcomes:

- Avoids and minimises impacts on remnant vegetation and regulated regrowth vegetation
- Prevents land degradation
- Maintains ecological processes and biodiversity
- Maintains bank stability, water quality and habitat of wetland, watercourse and drainage features
- Maintains regional ecosystems

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<sup>11</sup> A list of exempt clearing work is available at: [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'exempt clearing work').

## 1.4 Commencement date

This code became effective on 22 November 2023, replacing the following superseded code:

- *Clearing for infrastructure* (effective 7 February 2020)

Any current notifications made under the superseded *Clearing for infrastructure* code effective 7 February 2020 continue to be valid and allow you to clear provided you comply with all requirements of this code (effective 22 November 2023).

*Note: If you notified under the superseded Clearing for infrastructure code effective 7 February 2020, you do not need to re-notify under this code unless you want to do additional clearing to that already notified, or the notification has expired. From 22 November 2023, you must however ensure you undertake the clearing in accordance with the requirements of this code.*

## 1.5 Assistance

Queensland Government staff are available to help you understand your obligations, so if—after reading this code—you have questions or want to make sure you are doing the right thing, contact the Department of Resources by calling 135 VEG (135 834) or emailing [vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au](mailto:vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au).

## 2 Notification requirements

Before any clearing is undertaken under this code, the Department of Resources must be notified of your intended clearing activity by either:

1. the landholder <sup>12</sup>  
or
2. a third party.

*Note: If you are a third party making a notification over someone else's land, you need the landholder's consent to enter, access and undertake clearing or other works on their land.*

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<sup>12</sup> This includes a person authorised to notify on the landholder's behalf, such as someone who holds a power of attorney.

## 2.1 Notification process

1. If your intended clearing requires legally securing an exchange area in accordance with [section 4.5](#) of this code, before notifying, first legally secure the exchange area.
2. Complete the online or hard copy notification form, which requires that you provide certain information, including:
  - a. contact details
  - b. the lot on plan on which the activity is proposed
  - c. the tenure of the property (i.e. whether freehold, leasehold, or other)
  - d. information that clearly identifies the location of the intended clearing.
3. Lodge the completed form with the Department of Resources.
4. Receive confirmation of your notification from the Department of Resources before commencing clearing.

*Note: If you are notifying online, you should receive an email within 10 minutes that confirms receipt of your notification.*

## 2.2 Notification limitations

1. Each notification is limited to a single lot. If your property consists of multiple lots, you may lodge a notification for each lot.
2. Each notification is limited to one type<sup>13</sup> of infrastructure. If you wish to clear for multiple types of infrastructure, you may lodge a notification for each type of infrastructure.
3. Only one notification can be lodged per item of infrastructure<sup>14</sup>.
4. A notification remains in effect for two years from the date the Department of Resources issues confirmation of your notification<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> For example if, on the same lot, clearing is required for a track, boundary fence, and two different types of non-linear infrastructure such as a feedlot and a windmill, then four separate notifications must be made.

<sup>14</sup> Clearing limits must be applied considering the entire proposed clearing footprint for the infrastructure item as a whole under one notification.

<sup>15</sup> Notifications do not transfer on title. If you have recently purchased the property and intend to undertake clearing activities in remnant vegetation or regulated regrowth vegetation, you must first notify Department of Resources.

### 3 Compliance requirements

To comply with this code, you must do all of the following:

1. Notify the Department of Resources in accordance with the notification requirements ([section 2](#) of this code).
2. Conduct your clearing activity in accordance with all of the clearing requirements ([section 4](#) of this code).
3. Keep all of the following records and make them available to the Department of Resources on request:
  - a. appropriate records detailing the recognised best practice methods employed in [section 4.4.1](#) of this code
  - b. appropriate records detailing the progress and effectiveness of all exchange area works and management actions, if relevant
  - c. if you have contracted another person to undertake the clearing on your behalf:
    - i. contractor details (name, address, contact details)
    - ii. instructions to contractors including the location, date and time the instructions were given.

### 4 Clearing requirements

Clearing must comply with all the following:

1. Avoid and minimise practice in [section 4.1](#)
2. Clearing requirements in [section 4.2](#), if you are clearing on land other than a dedicated road
3. Clearing requirements in [section 4.3](#), if you are clearing on a dedicated road
4. Soil and water quality protections in [section 4.4](#)
5. Exchange area<sup>16</sup> requirements in [section 4.5](#), if [section 4.2](#) or [section 4.3](#) requires you to legally secure an exchange area.

#### 4.1 Avoid and minimise

Clearing is only permitted under this code if all of the following apply:

1. The infrastructure is necessary.
2. The infrastructure cannot reasonably be located in category X areas or existing cleared areas<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Before undertaking clearing that requires legally securing an exchange area, it is recommended that independent legal and financial advice is obtained regarding the impact of any subsequent certification of a property map of assessable vegetation (PMAV) or declared area (voluntary).

<sup>17</sup> It may not be reasonable to locate the clearing in category X areas or existing cleared areas due to the nature of the infrastructure or the landscape.



Where it is not reasonable to locate the infrastructure entirely in category X areas or existing cleared areas, you must apply the 'avoid and minimise' principles to the location and extent of clearing in the following order:

1. Locate as much of the clearing in category X areas or existing cleared areas as reasonably possible.
2. Locate as much of the remaining clearing in a category C area or category R area where reasonably possible.
3. Where necessary to clear in a category B area, locate the clearing within least concern regional ecosystems where reasonably possible.
4. Take all possible steps to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimise to the greatest extent possible, clearing:
  - a. in riparian protection zones listed in Appendix 2, Table C
  - b. in essential habitat
  - c. in a koala habitat area
  - d. of immature koala habitat trees
  - e. of habitat trees.

*Example: Clearing for an internal fence to enable property management or improve land condition is an example of necessary infrastructure. Clearing for a track when an existing fire management line has already been cleared and provides access, is not necessary infrastructure and would not comply with the code.*

## 4.2 Clearing requirements on land other than a dedicated road

Clearing on land other than a dedicated road must comply with either of the following:

1. Clearing in a category B area must comply with all of the clearing requirements listed in Table 1, relevant to the type of infrastructure listed in column A  
or
2. Clearing in a category C area or category R area must comply with all of the requirements in Table 1 relevant to the type of infrastructure listed in column A, unless:
  - a. an exchange area is legally secured in accordance with [section 4.5](#); or
  - b. the clearing is in a koala habitat area and a koala offset is secured for the extent of the clearing.

**Table 1: Clearing requirements for infrastructure on land other than a dedicated road**

Column A - Type of infrastructure	Column B - Clearing requirements
<b>Boundary fences</b>	1. Clearing <u>must not</u> result in any of the following <sup>18</sup> : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearing that exceeds 10 metres in width on the landholder's side of the property boundary<sup>19</sup>.</li> <li>The widening of an existing cleared area on the landholder's side of the property boundary to more than 10 metres in width.</li> </ol>
<b>Tracks, internal fences, irrigation channels or contour banks</b>	1. Clearing <u>must not</u> result in any of the following <sup>20</sup> : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearing that exceeds 10 metres in width.</li> <li>The widening of an existing cleared area to more than 10 metres in width.</li> </ol> 2. Clearing <u>must not</u> occur within any of the following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 metres of the defining bank of a wetland.</li> <li>10 metres of a defining bank of a watercourse or drainage feature unless the clearing is for a track or internal fence and a crossing is required.</li> </ol>
<b>Drainage and erosion control structures</b>	Clearing <u>must not</u> exceed 900 square metres (e.g. 30 metres x 30 metres) in total per drainage and erosion control structure.
<b>Linear infrastructure other than boundary fences, tracks, internal fences, irrigation channels or drainage and erosion control structures.</b>	1. Clearing <u>must not</u> result in any of the following <sup>21</sup> : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearing that exceeds the width limits in Appendix 2, Table A.</li> <li>The widening of an existing cleared area to more than the width limits in Appendix 2, Table A.</li> </ol> 2. Clearing <u>must not</u> occur within 10 metres of the defining bank of a wetland.           3. Clearing <u>must not</u> occur within 10 metres of a defining bank of a watercourse or drainage feature unless a crossing of the watercourse or drainage feature is required.
<b>Firebreaks</b>	1. Clearing is only permitted if the firebreak is located on a non-coastal lot <sup>22</sup> .           2. Clearing <u>must not</u> result in any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearing that exceeds 30 metres in width.</li> <li>The widening of an existing firebreak to more than 30 metres in width.</li> </ol>

<sup>18</sup> Clearing in a koala habitat area may be regulated under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#) framework. To seek further information contact the Department of Environment and Science (see [Appendix 1](#) for contact details).

<sup>19</sup> A landholder can only clear on the property for which they are responsible.

<sup>20</sup> Clearing in a koala habitat area may be regulated under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#) framework. To seek further information contact the Department of Environment and Science (see [Appendix 1](#) for contact details).

<sup>21</sup> Clearing in a koala habitat area may be regulated under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#) framework. To seek further information contact the Department of Environment and Science (see [Appendix 1](#) for contact details).

<sup>22</sup> On coastal lots and non-coastal lots, clearing for a necessary firebreak to protect infrastructure, other than a fence, road or vehicular track, is exempt clearing work if the maximum width of the firebreak is 1.5 times the height of the tallest vegetation next to the infrastructure, or 20 metres, whichever is wider.

Column A - Type of infrastructure	Column B - Clearing requirements
<b>Fire management lines</b>	Clearing in a category C area or category R area, <u>must not</u> exceed 10 metres in width.
<b>Airstrips and helipads</b>	1. Clearing <u>must not</u> occur within a riparian protection zone specified in Appendix 2 Table C <sup>23</sup> .
<b>Non-linear infrastructure other than airstrips and helipads</b>	<p>1. All of the following apply to clearing in a category B area<sup>24</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Clearing <u>must not</u> exceed 5 hectares in total.</li> <li>b. The total combined area cleared of endangered regional ecosystems and of concern regional ecosystems <u>must not</u> exceed the area limits in Appendix 2, Table B.</li> <li>c. Clearing in essential habitat <u>must not</u> exceed the area limits in Appendix 2, Table B.</li> <li>d. Clearing of a least concern regional ecosystem <u>must not</u> exceed 2 hectares if the regional ecosystem has a sparse, very sparse, dense or mid-dense structure category.</li> <li>e. Clearing of a least concern regional ecosystem <u>must not</u> exceed 5 hectares if the regional ecosystem has a woody grassland structure category.</li> <li>f. Clearing <u>must not</u> occur within a riparian protection zone specified in Appendix 2, Table C.</li> </ul> <p>2. Where applicable, all of the following apply to clearing in a category C area and a category R area<sup>25</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Clearing greater than 2 hectares in a category C area or a category R area <u>must not</u> occur in any of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Essential habitat;</li> <li>ii. Riparian protection zones specified in Appendix 2, Table C;</li> </ul> <p><u>unless:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. an exchange area that complies with <a href="#">section 4.5</a> of this code is legally secured; or</li> <li>2. the clearing is in a koala habitat area and a koala offset is secured for the extent of the clearing.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Total combined clearing in a category C area or a category R area <u>must not</u> exceed 10 hectares, <u>unless:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. an exchange area that complies with <a href="#">section 4.5</a> of this code is legally secured; or</li> <li>ii. the clearing is in a koala habitat area and a koala offset is secured for the extent of the clearing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>23</sup> Clearing in a koala habitat area may be regulated under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#) framework. To seek further information contact the Department of Environment and Science (see [Appendix 1](#) for contact details).

<sup>24</sup> Clearing in a koala habitat area may be regulated under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#) framework. To seek further information contact the Department of Environment and Science (see [Appendix 1](#) for contact details).

<sup>25</sup> Clearing in a koala habitat area may be regulated under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#) framework. To seek further information contact the Department of Environment and Science (see [Appendix 1](#) for contact details).

*Note: If you intend to clear native vegetation in a watercourse, you may need a riverine protection permit. For further information visit [www.business.qld.gov.au](http://www.business.qld.gov.au) or contact your closest Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water office.*

### 4.3 Clearing requirements on a dedicated road

*Note: If you are clearing on a dedicated road, you need consent from the road authority to enter, access and undertake clearing or other works on the dedicated road.*

Clearing for necessary infrastructure on a dedicated road must comply with all of the following:

1. Clearing in a category B area on a dedicated road must comply with all of the clearing requirements listed in Table 2.
2. Clearing in a category C area, category R area or category X area must comply with all of the clearing requirements listed in Table 2, unless an exchange area is legally secured in accordance with [section 4.5](#).

**Table 2: Clearing requirements for infrastructure on a dedicated road**

Infrastructure on a dedicated road	Clearing requirements
All	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clearing <u>must not</u> exceed the width limits in Appendix 2, Table A.</li> <li>2. Clearing <u>must not</u> exceed the area limits in Appendix 2, Table B.</li> <li>3. Clearing <u>must not</u> occur within any of the following areas:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 10 metres of the defining bank of a wetland</li> <li>b. 10 metres of a defining bank of a watercourse or drainage feature <u>unless</u> a crossing of the watercourse or drainage feature is required.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

### 4.4 Soil and water quality protections

When clearing, all of the following apply:

1. Recognised best practice methods must be employed to:
  - a. prevent increased soil erosion and instability resulting from the clearing
  - b. stabilise soil erosion and instability which has resulted from the clearing
  - c. prevent increased sediment run-off entering a wetland, watercourse or drainage feature as a result of the clearing.

2. Clearing is not permitted within 100 metres of a salinity expression area unless the clearing is in a category C area or a category R area and an exchange area that complies with [section 4.5](#) of this code is legally secured.
3. In land zone 1, 2 or 3 where the elevation is less than five metres above sea level, topsoil must not be mechanically disturbed to a depth greater than 30 centimetres, unless acid sulfate soils are managed consistent with both of the following:
  - a. [State Planning Policy](#), Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 2017<sup>26</sup>
  - b. [Soil Management Guidelines in the Queensland Acid Sulfate Soil Technical Manual](#), Department of Science Information Technology Innovation and the Arts 2014<sup>27</sup>.

## 4.5 Exchange areas

An exchange area must be legally secured where clearing does not meet the clearing requirements in [Table 1](#) or [Table 2](#), or where it is required in [section 4.4.2](#), unless a Koala offset is secured for the area.

Exchange areas must comply with all of the following:

1. The exchange area must be located in a category X area, category B area, category C area or category R area.
2. The exchange area must contain a predominant native woody vegetative layer which is at least two metres in height.
3. The exchange area must be consistent with one of the three options listed in Table D (Appendix 3).
4. The exchange area must be legally secured using the relevant mechanism outlined in Table D (Appendix 3), before commencement of clearing the impact area.
5. The exchange area must be located within the same bioregion as the impact area, or where it is not reasonably possible, located in an adjacent bioregion.
6. The exchange area must be located and configured in a way that ensures it remains in the landscape despite threatening processes.
7. The exchange area must be shown as a category A area on the regulated vegetation management map until the area becomes remnant vegetation and is mapped as a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map.
8. The exchange area must be managed in accordance with a management plan.
9. The management plan<sup>28</sup> for the exchange area must include all of the following:
  - a. Property owner's details

<sup>26</sup> Available online at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'State Planning Policy').

<sup>27</sup> Available online at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'Guidance materials for acid sulfate soils').

<sup>28</sup> The level of detail required in a management plan will depend on the nature and scale of the activity being undertaken.

- b. Description of the area/s the subject of the exchange area, including spatial coordinates or shapefile and a map showing the location and extent
- c. The management objective, which must be either of the following:
  - i. If the exchange area is located in a category X area, category C area or category R area—to return the exchange area to remnant vegetation (a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map) as soon as possible and within 20 years or
  - ii. If the exchange area is located in a category B area—to achieve the nominated substantial conservation outcome or address the nominated significant land degradation issue as soon as possible
- d. Description of the works / management actions that will be undertaken to achieve the management objective, including the methods, timing, frequency, intended benefits etc.
- e. The conservation outcomes that will be achieved by the works / management actions
- f. Description of the management actions that will be undertaken to ensure that the effects of the works do not result in land degradation
- g. Details of who is responsible for all works and management actions, and the estimated length of time the area/s will be managed
- h. Monitoring and auditing processes including adaptive management approaches to rectify negative results from the monitoring and auditing processes
- i. Record keeping process for retaining appropriate records for monitoring and auditing processes.

## Appendix 1—Other relevant legislation

Activity	Legislation	Agency	Contact details
Interference with overland flow Earthworks, significant disturbance	<i>Water Act 2000</i>	Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) <a href="http://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au">www.rdmw.qld.gov.au</a>
Earthworks, significant disturbance	<i>Soil Conservation Act 1986</i>	Department of Resources (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) <a href="http://www.resources.qld.gov.au">www.resources.qld.gov.au</a>
Indigenous cultural heritage	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i> <i>Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts (Queensland Government)	Ph. 13 QGOV (13 74 68) <a href="http://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au">www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au</a>
Mining and environmentally relevant activities Infrastructure development (coastal) Heritage issues	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> <i>Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995</i> <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) <a href="http://www.des.qld.gov.au">www.des.qld.gov.au</a>
Protected plants and protected areas <sup>29</sup>	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 1300 130 372 (option 4) <a href="mailto:palm@des.qld.gov.au">palm@des.qld.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.des.qld.gov.au">www.des.qld.gov.au</a>
Koala mapping and regulations	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	Department of Environment and Science (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) <a href="mailto:Koala.assessment@des.qld.gov.au">Koala.assessment@des.qld.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.des.qld.gov.au">www.des.qld.gov.au</a>
Interference with fish passage in a watercourse, mangroves Forest activities <sup>30</sup>	<i>Fisheries Act 1994</i> <i>Forestry Act 1959</i>	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 25 23 <a href="http://www.daf.qld.gov.au">www.daf.qld.gov.au</a>
Matters of National Environmental Significance including listed Threatened Species and Ecological Communities	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Australian Government)	Ph: 1800 803 772 <a href="http://www.dcceew.gov.au">www.dcceew.gov.au</a>

<sup>29</sup> In Queensland, all plants that are native to Australia are protected plants under the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#), which endeavours to ensure that protected plants (whether whole plants or protected plants parts) are not illegally removed from the wild, or illegally traded. Prior to clearing, you should check the flora survey trigger map to determine if the clearing is within a high-risk area by visiting [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'flora survey trigger map'). For further information or assistance on the protected plants flora survey trigger map for your property, please contact the Department of Environment and Science on 13QGOV (13 74 68) or email [palm@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:palm@des.qld.gov.au).

<sup>30</sup> Contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries before clearing:

- any sandalwood on state-owned land (including leasehold land)
- on freehold land in a 'forest consent area'
- more than five hectares on state-owned land (including leasehold land) containing commercial timber species listed in parts 2 or 3 of schedule 1 of the [Vegetation Management Regulation 2023](#) and located within any of the following local government management areas - Banana, Bundaberg Regional, Fraser Coast Regional, Gladstone Regional, Isaac Regional, North Burnett Regional, Somerset Regional, South Burnett Regional, Southern Downs Regional, Tablelands Regional, Toowoomba Regional, Western Downs Regional.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Legislation</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
Development and planning processes	<i>Planning Act 2016</i> <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>	Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) <a href="http://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au">www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au</a>
Road corridor permits	<i>Transport Infrastructure Act 1994</i>	Department of Transport and Main Roads (Queensland Government)	Ph: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) <a href="http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au">www.tmr.qld.gov.au</a>
Wet Tropics World Heritage Area	<i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i>	Wet Tropics Management Authority	Ph: (07) 4241 0500 <a href="http://www.wettropics.gov.au">www.wettropics.gov.au</a>
Local government requirements	<i>Local Government Act 2009</i> <i>Planning Act 2016</i>	Your relevant local government office	



## Appendix 2—Clearing limits and riparian protections

**Table A: Clearing width limits**

For powerlines	
Bare conductor – line voltage	Clearing widths on each side of the centre line
33 kV, 22kV or 11kV	10 metres
19.1kV, 12.7kV or 11kV Single Wire Earth Return Line	7.5 metres
Low Voltage Open Wire Line	5 metres
Aerial bundled cable (ABC) and covered conductor – line voltage	Clearing widths on each side of the centre line
33 kV, 22kV or 11kV	3 metres
Low Voltage ABC Line	1.5 metres, however the clearing width may be extended to 3 metres on one side where vehicular access is required.
For all other linear infrastructure	
Regional ecosystem structure category	Clearing width limits
Dense and mid-dense	10 metres
Sparse and very sparse	20 metres
Woody grassland	25 metres

**Table B: Clearing area limits**

Regional ecosystem structure category	Clearing area limits
Dense and mid-dense	0.5 hectares
Sparse and very sparse	2 hectares
Woody grassland	5 hectares

**Table C: Riparian protection zones\***

Water feature	Riparian protection zone
Wetland	100 metres
Watercourse and drainage feature	
Stream order <sup>†</sup> 1 or 2	10 metres
Stream order 3 or 4	25 metres
Stream order 5 or more	50 metres

**Notes:**

\* The riparian protection zone includes the area between the defining banks of the watercourse, drainage feature or wetland, plus the specified distance measured from the defining bank away from the water body.

<sup>†</sup> Stream order is shown on the vegetation management supporting map.

## Appendix 3—Exchange area requirements

**Table D: Requirements for exchange areas**

Exchange area requirements	Size of exchange area	Required mechanisms to legally secure and manage the area <sup>31</sup>
<p><b>Option 1:</b> The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area, is dominated by native vegetation more than 10 years of age, is a functioning regional ecosystem which occurs in the same bioregion as the impact area, and is at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The same pre-clear regional ecosystem/s as the impact area</li> <li>• A higher pre-clear regional ecosystem status (e.g. endangered or of concern) than the values of the impact area</li> <li>• Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse</li> <li>• Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a wetland</li> <li>• In a location that creates a corridor of at least 100 metres in width between regional ecosystems that are mapped as either a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map, which are each at least 4 hectares in size and 100 metres in width</li> <li>• An area that adjoins either an area mapped as a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map which is at least 4 hectares in size</li> <li>• Another area of environmental significance to flora or fauna under other State or Commonwealth legislation.</li> </ul>	<p>Equal to the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater</p>	<p>Property Map of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV) that shows the area to be used as the exchange area as a category A area and management plan or Declared area (voluntary)<sup>32</sup> and management plan</p>

<sup>31</sup> Note that both— a declaration made under section 19F of the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#) and its associated management plan; and a Property Map of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV) that contains a category A area— transfer on title.

<sup>32</sup> A Guide to voluntary declarations under the [Vegetation Management Act 1999](#) is available at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'voluntary declaration guide').

Exchange area requirements	Size of exchange area	Required mechanisms to legally secure and manage the area <sup>31</sup>
<p><b>Option 2:</b> The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area and is at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The same pre-clear regional ecosystem/s as the impact area or</li> <li>• a higher pre-clear regional ecosystem status (e.g. endangered or of concern) than the values of the impact area</li> <li>• Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse</li> <li>• Within 50 metres of the defining bank of a wetland</li> <li>• In a location that creates a corridor of at least 100 metres in width between regional ecosystems that are mapped as either a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map, which are each at least 4 hectares in size and 100 metres in width</li> <li>• An area that adjoins either an area mapped as a category A area and/or a category B area on the regulated vegetation management map, which is at least 4 hectares in size</li> <li>• Another area of environmental significance to flora or fauna under other State or Commonwealth legislation.</li> </ul>	<p>Double the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater</p>	<p>Declared area (voluntary) and management plan</p>
<p><b>Option 3:</b> The area to be used as the exchange area is a category X area, a category B area, a category C area or a category R area, and with specific management actions will achieve all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a substantial conservation outcome or address a significant land degradation issue</li> <li>• remnant vegetation status.</li> </ul> <p>An example of a 'substantial conservation outcome' includes restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key habitat for an endangered species listed under State or Commonwealth legislation</li> <li>• an area that is severely weed infested and is an endangered regional ecosystem</li> <li>• the ecological integrity of a Ramsar listed wetland<sup>33</sup></li> <li>• a threatened ecological community listed under State or Commonwealth legislation</li> <li>• an area within or adjacent to a World Heritage property or listed on the National Heritage List for natural values.</li> </ul> <p>An example of addressing a significant land degradation issue includes stabilizing and restoring the stream bank of a watercourse that has evidence of mass failure.</p>	<p>Three times the impact area, or 1 hectare, whichever is the greater</p>	<p>Declared area (voluntary) and management plan</p>

<sup>33</sup> A list of Ramsar wetlands is available at [www.dcceew.gov.au/](http://www.dcceew.gov.au/)