



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP INC.

Protecting the distinctive features of Blackburn since 1987

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Planning Application Process.

1. Developer Applicant prepares Planning Application. A Permit is required when the application seeks to go beyond what is allowed in the Planning Scheme e.g. Removal of significant trees, reduced setback, exceeding permitted height, etc.
2. Letters are sent to adjoining neighbours and an advertising sign is erected at the front of the site, objectors have 14 days to object. In reality the time to object is up to when the application is considered by the planning officer. Currently there is a backlog so it could be weeks or months after the closing date. Technically if Council doesn't make a decision within 60 days the applicant can go directly to VCAT for a decision.
3. Residents can object on the [Council form](#) or by letter. Objections should be based on the planning scheme and clearly detail your specific concerns, how the proposal may adversely affect you, and any improvements or changes you may want to suggest. A resident must be an objector to Council for resident's to make a later submission to VCAT.
4. Plans and information about the application can be viewed at Council Planning Department or [on line](#) - Plans, Arborist reports, landscape plans and a report that demonstrates how the application responds to the relevant provisions of the Whitehorse Planning Scheme. Other important information – [Planning Scheme](#), [Planning Scheme Maps](#), [Aerial photos and Council Maps](#), [Zone Character Statement](#), [Tree removal documents](#).
5. If there are less than 11 objectors, Council officers will decide on the application. Where 11 or more objections are received, Council will arrange a Forum where residents can raise their concerns with the developer and hopefully have them addressed.
6. After the forum Council planning staff prepare a report and recommendations and the decision is then made at a Council meeting. This aspect allows Councillors some say in the process. Residents can also register to speak at a [Council meeting](#).
7. Councillors may reject the application leaving the applicant the choice of moderating the plans or to take the matter to VCAT. If Council support the application residents can take the matter to VCAT. Applications must be lodged within 21 days of the notice of decision.
8. VCAT fees apply in both cases. For an objector to make a presentation at a VCAT hearing that has been called by the developer the fee is \$19.50. If a resident takes a case to VCAT that Council have approved the fee starts at \$819.70 for a single dwelling up to \$1902.80 for projects in excess of \$50 million. Fees are detailed on the VCAT site <https://www.vcat.vic.gov.au/resources/vcat-fee-tables-effective-1-july-2016>