



Yarra Ranges Council

Seasonal Worker Accommodation 2023

Fact Sheet

If your property or business has seasonal worker accommodation there are certain permits and registrations, you will require.

Council is committed to supporting our agricultural businesses to attract the staff they need. One of the ways to do this, is by developing a reputation as a great place to work. Providing safe, quality accommodation for seasonal workers, which meets industry standards, is an important step towards that.

The safety and well-being of employees is paramount. Strict codes of practice apply to all accommodation providers to ensure the health and safety of guests, and all legitimate providers must adhere to health and safety, hygiene, building, and planning regulations under Victorian and local laws.

This fact sheet covers the basic requirements for seasonal worker accommodation. Whether that accommodation is on-site or at another location, these permits and registrations are applicable. Every property will have its own specific requirements. Council is here to help you navigate through this process.

There are three separate permissions that you must obtain :

A Planning Permit refers to the use of the land or the development of a piece of land for a particular purpose. Planning Schemes contain both policies and planning controls. Council is mandated by law to adhere to the Planning Scheme framework.

A Building Permit relates to an actual construction of a building or development. Building permits can be issued by Council or by an independent Building Surveyor to ensure buildings are constructed to comply with the Building Code of Australia.

Health Registration: You will need to register any accommodation you provide to workers with Council's Public and Environmental Health Department.

You must also meet Essential Safety Measures. You can download this list www.vba.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103935/Essential-Safety-Measures_rebuild.pdf

Yarra Ranges Council can help you navigate the permits your business will need. Get in contact with the Economic Development Team on 1300 368 333 or via business@yarraranges.vic.gov.au



Planning

Most of Yarra Ranges' agricultural land is preserved as Green Wedge Zone (GWZ). However, your property may be located in a different zone. It is advised that you contact Council to confirm this.

The Green Wedge Zone is designed to protect, conserve, and provide land use for agriculture, horticulture, recreational uses, parks and peri-regional communities, on the rim of the urban areas of Melbourne.

This is achieved by following the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme outlined by the State Government.

Other overlays that may affect your site could include Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO), Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO), Land Subject Inundation Overlay (LISO) , Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) and Erosion Management Overlay (EMO).

These types of permit applications can be complex, it can be a good idea to engage an external Planning Consultant to help you with your submission.

To apply for planning permits for seasonal worker accommodation you will need to provide:

- Relevant information pertaining to the zone and any overlays affecting the site.
- Details of the number and duration of workers proposed to be housed.
- Copy of the Certificate of Title including any covenants.

Plans:

- Overall Site Plan.
- Site Layout.
- Accommodation Floor Plans and Elevations. Plans are required to include dimensions.
- Kitchen Floor Plans and Elevations.
- Common Room Floor Plan and Elevations.
- Laundry Plans.
- Details of any car parking.
- Land Capability Assessment (if applicable).
- Environmental Protection Authority Works Approval (if applicable).
- Country Fire Authority approval (if applicable).
- Emergency Management Plan.

Seasonal Worker Accommodation must meet specified conditions in Green Wedge Zone:

- Must be used in conjunction with Agriculture, Natural systems, Outdoor recreation facility, Rural industry, or Winery.
- Must be used to provide accommodation for persons away from their normal place of residence.
- The lot on which the use is conducted must be at least the minimum subdivision area specified in a schedule to this zone. If no area is specified, the lot must be at least 40 hectares. It is advised that you contact Council to confirm this.

You can contact the planning department for further information including:

- To determine whether or not a planning application is required for your proposal
- Table of the Green Wedge Zone Schedule:
- For a summary of the planning controls that may apply to your property and development:
- Once you've determined that a planning permit application is required, book a pre-application meeting:

Contact the planning department on 1300 368 333 and get put through to the Planning Help Desk.

- The planning scheme is subject to change and the information is only valid at the time of enquiry. We recommend you get advice from a professional planning consultant when planning your development. Please check the property title for further restrictions and/or covenants that may restrict or prohibit your proposal'



Rural Worker Accommodation must meet intent and decision guidelines:

- The worker accommodation supports site-specific agricultural activities
- The land is clearly capable of accommodating worker accommodation due to its size and the extent of agriculture occurring.
- No landscape values are impacted due to the low-scale nature of the buildings and their location on site.
- There are no detrimental biodiversity impacts
- There are no land use conflicts present nor will any be created as a result of the proposed works given the siting.

Prior to lodging your planning permit application, a pre-application meeting with a Yarra Ranges Council Planner can be requested.

Public and Environmental Health

If you provide any type of accommodation for your workers, including accommodation provided onsite at the farm or accommodation provided at another location, you must:

- Be registered with Council's Public and Environmental Health Department.
- Provide a clean-living environment, including;
 - adequate ventilation
 - continuous and adequate hot and cold-water supply
 - clean drinking water
 - Vermin-proof bins and regular rubbish collections
 - adequate sewerage and water discharge with adequate wastewater management including sewerage connection or septic system, and
- Provide at least one toilet, one bath/shower, and one wash basin for every 10 people
- Comply with regulated room sizes, based on the number of occupants and length of stay
- Comply with Local Laws around the use of caravans (if applicable)

Off-site accommodation such as rooming or boarding houses, also need a Health Registration and possibly other permits.



Building

Applying for a building permit

If your development involves construction, demolition, alteration, or extension of a building, you will probably need a building permit.

The building permit is issued by a private registered building surveyor. The building surveyor carries out all relevant mandatory inspections as required by the building surveyor.

The building permit gives the surveyor's permission for building work to go ahead and ensures that building regulations are followed.

If you are unsure if you need a building permit, contact either your council building department or the private registered building surveyor of your choice.

When considering constructing, alter or extend a building, you will be required to consider the structure, fire resistance, access and egress, services and equipment, health and amenity and energy efficiency which are all considered in the Building Code of Australia. You should liaise with your design consultant to discuss the Building Code of Australia requirements prior to applying for your building permit.

Working towards safe and healthy accommodation options for Seasonal Workers in Yarra Ranges

Council is committed to working with existing owners and proprietors that may not meet regulations or are not operating in accordance with legislation and local laws to achieve compliance.

There is an understanding that issues of non-compliance may not be intentional in many cases, and Council can support by providing the resources and advice to assist in running a safe and healthy business environment for workers and staff. However, in some instances, it may be necessary to take enforcement measures to ensure compliance with important safety measures and requirements.

Measures can include issuing of orders/notices to upgrade safety measures of the building, prohibit occupation and remedy any breaches of standards under the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations, the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme, and the Building Act 1993.

Yarra Ranges Council can help you navigate the permits your business will need. Get in contact with the Economic Development Team at 9294 6185 or via business@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Other resources

PALM Scheme www.palmscheme.gov.au/

WorkSafe www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/

Agriculture Vic www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/

Wine Yarra Valley www.wineyarravalley.com.au/

Agribusiness Yarra Valley www.agribusiness-yarravalley.com/

Labour Hire Authority www.labourhireauthority.vic.gov.au/

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