# Priority Development Assessment Process

The City of Whittlesea has a Priority Development Assessment process for projects that deliver community benefit and local jobs in line with the Council Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

The focus of the streamlined process is on applications within one of five key criteria derived from the priority areas of the Council Plan including:

• Employment Generation

• Community Wellbeing

• Environmental Sustainability

• Council Infrastructure and

• Geographic location.

## The process will deliver:

• Better case management

• Clear advice upfront

• A coordinated approach

• Consistent communication throughout the process and

• Timely decisions within 6 weeks.

The following highlights key actions and responsibilities of each party under the Priority Development Assessment process.

## Priority Development Process

• Contact Council’s Development Assessment Department to determine if your project falls into an applicable category, meets the relevant criteria and can be considered under this process

• Arrange a pre-application consultation meeting with relevant Council staff

• Engage relevant experts and prepare concept plans and supporting documentation to bring along to the meeting

• Hold a pre-application workshop with relevant parties to discuss the proposal and work through any issues. A checklist of information requirements will be confirmed at this meeting and a written response will be provided following the meeting within 10 business days.

• Finalise application on the basis of pre-application advice and checklist completed and lodged with Council.

• Weekly progress updates and decision within six weeks

## What applications can be considered?

### Employment Generation

* Change of use creating 20 jobs for 12 months post construction
* Change of use (such as office) that provides local business incubation
* Change of use that supports workforce training and skill development such as specific education facilities.

### Community Wellbeing

* Change of use to educational facilities by Not-for-Profit organisations such as classrooms for University of the third age (U3A)
* New schools or specialist education centres
* Genuine social housing
* Goes above and beyond in contributing to equity such as employment for those with special needs
* Permanent accessible community meeting spaces (which may form part of a mixed use development)

### Environmental Sustainability

* Renewable energy infrastructure project such as a power station, solar/wind farm, stormwater/grey-black water harvesting or similar
* Project that protects and manages significant native vegetation and/or includes significant native revegetation.

### Council Infrastructure

* Community Activity Centres (CAC) buildings
* Recreation facilities
* Transport and drainage infrastructure
* Emergency Service Facilities (Police, Ambulance, CFA etc)
* Hospitals

### Geographic Location

Located within Epping Metropolitan Activity Centre or the South Morang, Mernda or Wollert Major Activity Centres or other major employment hubs and must achieve the objectives of the strategic plan and creates more than 5000m2 of additional commercial/retail floor area (speculative projects for buildings, factories, offices etc without an end tenant in mind).

## Car parking

Must meet the standard car parking rate or seek to waive/reduce the parking rate by no more than five car spaces.

## Referrals

No statutory referrals are required or if a statutory referral is required, a copy of the referral response must be provided at the time of lodgement with the application based on the most recent plans. Any application that requires referring again cannot be considered as part of this process.

## Public notice

The application must be exempt from public notice.

### Cultural heritage

The application does not require a Cultural Heritage Management Plan to be prepared (and approved) for the site unless it has already been prepared and approved and does not affect the proposal.

### Restrictions

There are no covenants or restrictions on title that would prevent Council from issuing a permit.

### Information and Delegation

The application must contain all the information required to enable a complete assessment and the proposal must be a type that can have a decision made under delegation.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and other projects may be suitable for the Priority Development Assessment Process