

# **GUIDE TO USING THE EXTRACTIVE CODE**

Accepted Development Vegetation Clearing Code  
Clearing for an Extractive Industry

Effective 25 November 2025

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## About this guide

This guide has been developed to help landholders operate under the *Accepted Development Vegetation Clearing Code: Clearing for an extractive industry* (Extractive code). It refers to the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* and the *Planning Act 2016*, which jointly regulate the clearing of native vegetation in Queensland.

The guide is not intended to be exhaustive. It only deals with operating under the Extractive code. It provides supplementary information, and is designed to be read in conjunction with the Extractive code, and with the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes* (which provides information about the notification process, landholder obligations, and technical information that applies to all codes).

Landholders are also encouraged to familiarise themselves with the local, state and federal Acts and Regulations that apply to their operations.

## Common abbreviations used in this document

- Code = accepted development vegetation clearing code
- Extractive code = Accepted Development Vegetation Clearing Code: Clearing for an extractive industry
- The department/NRMMRRD = Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development
- RE = regional ecosystem
- VM REDD = Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database

All terms in this guide have the meaning provided in the Extractive code or the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*.

## Further information

For more information:

- call 135 VEG (135 834)
- email [vegetation@nrmmrrd.qld.gov.au](mailto:vegetation@nrmmrrd.qld.gov.au)
- search 'Vegetation Management' on [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au).

## Links to other documents

[Accepted development vegetation clearing codes](#)

[General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes](#)

[Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database \(VM REDD\)](#)

# Clearing for an extractive industry

The current Extractive code came into effect on 22 November 2023. This replaces the Extractive code dated 7 February 2020. If you intend to clear for an extractive industry using the Extractive code, you must notify before clearing and meet the requirements of the code.

## Scope

The Extractive code applies to any of the following:

- Freehold land
- Indigenous land
- Leasehold land granted under the *Land Act 1994* (Land Act) for agricultural and grazing purposes
- Land subject of an occupation licence under the Land Act, where the extraction of quarry material is by the licence holder for management purposes of the land
- Dedicated roads, where the extraction of quarry material is carried out by or on behalf of a local government

The Extractive code authorises clearing in category B areas, category C areas or category R areas for the following purposes:

- Establishing, expanding or maintaining a pit or quarry
- Establishing or maintaining a necessary track to provide access to undertake activities permitted by this code

Example: to create a track to establish a pit where there are no existing access tracks available to the proposed development area.

The Extractive code **does not** apply to clearing:

- in a category B area to allow for dredging material from the bed of any waters
- for the extraction of quarry material on State land where it is not subject to a lease under the Land Act
- that is inconsistent with a condition of a development approval that remains enforceable
- in category B areas for which an approval is otherwise required under the *Planning Act 2016* for a pit or quarry (e.g. a material change of use approval)
- for a quarry, where a sales permit is required to extract quarry material under the Forestry Act.

Note: If you are wishing to extract quarry material on State land, you should consult with your local Department of Primary Industries office.

## Exemptions

In some cases clearing for an extractive industry qualifies as exempt clearing work where you can clear without a notification or approval under the vegetation management framework. For example, clearing in a category C area or category R area in a key resources area is exempt clearing work. Find out more about exempt clearing work at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search for 'exempt clearing work').

**TIP** A key resource area is an identified location that contains extractive resources of state or regional significance as shown on the [State Planning Policy Interactive Mapping System](#). Before notifying and clearing under the Extractive code, check

*whether your clearing qualifies as exempt clearing works under the Planning Regulation 2017.*

**TIP**

*Clearing which is exempt under vegetation management laws may still require approval under other local, State or Commonwealth government laws or local government planning schemes. You are encouraged to check with agencies listed in Appendix 1 of the Extractive code.*

## Development approvals

If you wish to undertake clearing beyond the scope and practices of the Extractive code for an extractive industry, you may be able to apply for a development approval for clearing native vegetation under the *Planning Act 2016*. Find out more about development approvals at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search for 'development approvals').

## Notification requirements

If your intended clearing activity applies to the Extractive code, you must notify the department of your intention to clear under the Extractive code.

The maximum clearing limit for category B areas is 5 hectares per lot. Once this limit is reached you will not be able to make any further notifications for clearing of category B areas for the lot under this code. If you have previously notified for the maximum 5 hectare limit in category B but did not clear the full 5 hectares before the notification expired you can renotify for the remaining area not cleared by submitting a hard copy notification form to the department.

**TIP**

*Not all clearing activities can be notified online. You will need to submit a hard-copy notification if you are clearing on a dedicated road under the code. Hard-copy notification forms are available online at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search for 'clearing codes') or from any local NRMRRD office.*

## What is an extractive industry?

An extractive industry is defined in the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* as:

- dredging material from the bed of any waters
- extracting, from a pit or quarry, rock, sand, clay, gravel, loam or other material
- screening, washing, grinding, milling, sizing or separating material extracted from a pit or quarry
- carrying out work that is the natural and ordinary consequence of dredging, extracting and processing quarry materials, for example, providing access to the quarry.

The Extractive code authorises the clearing of regulated vegetation for the purpose of establishing, expanding or maintaining a pit or quarry, and associated access.

A pit is for the excavation of sand, gravel, clay or loam, including areas where material is extracted, stored, processed, treated and transported, and a cleared set back from the working face of extraction.

A quarry is the extraction of hard rock or other materials by blasting, including the areas where material is extracted, stored, processed, treated and transported, and a cleared set back from the working face of extraction.

Quarry materials include guano, stone, gravel, sand, rock, clay, earth and soil.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quarry material does not include minerals within the meaning of the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*; or topsoil, if quarry material is reserved in a deed or grant; or topsoil on a freeholding lease.

The Extractive code also authorises clearing of vegetation (in category C, category R and category X areas) to allow for the dredging of material from the bed of any waters. Dredging generally refers to the mechanical removal of material from the bed of any waterway. Dredging activities include sand or gravel extraction for construction purposes.

## Avoid and minimise

Riverine protection permit: If you intend to clear native vegetation in a watercourse, you may need a riverine protection permit. Further information is available at [www.business.qld.gov.au](http://www.business.qld.gov.au) or contact the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers.

Clearing of regulated vegetation under the Extractive code is limited in extent and can only be undertaken if the extractive industry cannot reasonably be located in category X areas or existing cleared areas. Clearing must also avoid, and if avoidance is not possible, minimise to the greatest extent possible, clearing of essential habitat, koala habitat areas, immature koala habitat trees, habitat trees and riparian protection zones.

For example, clearing should only be located in a category B area where there is no alternative site for an extractive industry. The clearing should be minimised to the extent that it is practicable for efficient and safe operation of the site.

See the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes* for more information on avoid and minimise requirements.

## Clearing for an extractive industry

Before commencing any clearing to establish, expand or maintain an extractive industry you must obtain all other required permits, approvals or authorisations from other agencies.

**TIP** *You'll need to keep records of any other required permits, approvals or authorisations granted by the department or other agencies for the pit or quarry or dredging activities.*

## Stabilisation

Any pit, quarry or area subject to dredging must be stabilised to prevent increased erosion or sedimentation beyond the pit, quarry or dredged area. See the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes* for more information on methods to prevent soil erosion and instability.

 *A useful state government publication is the **Soil conservation guidelines for Queensland** (3rd edition)—download the guide at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) (search 'soil conservation guidelines for Queensland').*

## Clearing in a category B area

Clearing in a category B area, to establish, expand or maintain an extractive industry on each lot or on a dedicated road (excludes clearing to establish or maintain tracks) must comply with all of the requirements below.

- No clearing of 'endangered' regional ecosystems and 'of concern' regional ecosystems
- No clearing of essential habitat
- No clearing in a koala habitat area (SEQ Regional Plan area only)
- No clearing that exceeds five hectares

- No clearing for the purpose of dredging material from a watercourse, drainage feature or wetland
- Total combined clearing of category B areas, category C areas and category R areas must not exceed 10 hectares
- Clearing must not occur within a riparian protection zone (see Table 3 below)

Clearing in a category B area to establish or maintain a track that provides necessary access to undertake an extractive industry must not:

- exceed 10 metres in width
- increase the width of an existing cleared area to more than 10 metres
- occur within 10 metres of the defining bank of a wetland
- occur within 10 metres of the defining bank of a watercourse or drainage feature, unless a crossing of the watercourse or drainage feature is required.

## Clearing in a category C area, category R area or category X area

Clearing in a category C, category R or category X area must comply with all of the clearing requirements in Table 1 of the Extractive code.

Clearing in a category C, category R or category X area under the Extractive code must not exceed the clearing requirements in Table 1 of the Extractive code unless:

- an exchange area is legally secured prior to clearing; or
- if the clearing is in a koala habitat area (SEQ Regional plan area only) and a koala offset is required as a condition of a development approval a koala offset is secured for the extent of the clearing.

Clearing in a category C or category R area that is a koala habitat area may be regulated by the koala protection framework. If your proposed clearing is for an extractive industry<sup>2</sup> in a category C area and the cleared area is more than 500m<sup>2</sup>, it is recommended that you seek further information from the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation on whether your proposed clearing is regulated by the koala protection framework and what further actions to take.

**TIP** For more information on Koala habitat protections see the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes*

**TIP** For more information on the regulatory framework for koala conservation contact the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation

**E:** [SEQKoalaStrategy@detsi.qld.gov.au](mailto:SEQKoalaStrategy@detsi.qld.gov.au)

**P:** 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

## Watercourse mapping

Watercourse and drainage feature mapping outside of South East Queensland is at a 1:100,000 scale (with stream orders), whilst SEQ watercourse and drainage feature mapping is at a finer 1:25,000 scale (without stream orders) for all codes other than extractive industry. Stream ordered vegetation management watercourse and drainage feature mapping at a 1:100,000 scale is available for the purpose of the extractive industry code in SEQ.

 The extractive industry SEQ watercourse dataset is available on the [QSpatial website](#) (search "extractive vegetation management") and on the DA mapping system.

<sup>2</sup> other than clearing for the construction or maintenance a fence, road, track, irrigation channel, contour bank or other linear infrastructure other than a powerline or drainage and erosion control structure, if the cleared area is more than 5m wide. See the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes* for more information.

 For further information on wetlands, watercourses and drainage features, see Part 3 of the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes*.

## Essential habitat

Essential habitat is the habitat of native wildlife prescribed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* as critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable or near-threatened (protected wildlife). See *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes* for more information on how to identify essential habitat. The Extractive code does not permit clearing in areas mapped as essential habitat, unless it is a category C area and an exchange area is legally secured prior to clearing.

## Koala habitat areas

Koala Habitat Areas (KHAs) are areas in SEQ that contain koala habitat which is essential for the conservation of a viable koala population in the wild, and are prescribed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. See *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes* for more information on how to identify koala habitat areas. The Extractive code does not permit clearing in category B areas mapped as a koala habitat area.

## Soil and water quality protections

Soil and water quality protections apply to all clearing under the Extractive code.

Where clearing in a category C area or a category R area will occur within 100 metres of a salinity expression area, an exchange area must be legally secured prior to clearing.

Please see the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes* for further information on protections for soil and water quality.

## Exchange area requirements

Where clearing in a category C area or a category R area under the Extractive code will not meet the clearing requirements outlined in the section above, an exchange area must be legally secured prior to notifying to clear under the Extractive code.

Exchange areas are a mechanism similar to environmental offsets. The intent of exchange areas are to return/achieve a permanent environmental outcome to compensate the impact of the clearing. This involves the exchange area being legally secured and managed under a plan to ensure the exchange area delivers an equivalent conservation or biodiversity benefit.

For information about how to legally secure an exchange area refer to the *General guide to accepted development vegetation clearing codes*.

Exchange area requirement recommendation: 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).

## Exchange areas and koala habitat areas (SEQ only)

If you intend to conduct clearing in a koala habitat area you may require a development approval for interfering with koala habitat. That development approval may require an environmental offset as a condition of approval (a koala offset). You do not need to provide an exchange area for your proposed clearing where it is required under the Extractive code if a koala offset has already been provided for clearing that same area.

For more information on the Koala regulations, contact the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation on the details below.

 *Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation – Koala protection*

**E:** [SEQKoalaStrategy@detsi.qld.gov.au](mailto:SEQKoalaStrategy@detsi.qld.gov.au)

**W:** [environment.qld.gov.au](http://environment.qld.gov.au)

**P:** 13 QGOV (13 74 68)