

POSITION DESCRIPTION

TITLE:	Vegetation Management Officer
CLASSIFICATION:	Band 6
STATUS:	Full Time
BUSINESS UNIT:	Development and Compliance Services
DATE:	January 2018

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Our vision is that the Cardinia Shire will be developed in a planned manner to enable future generations to enjoy and experience the diverse and distinctive characteristics of our Shire

To undertake this vision successfully we are developing a skilled and professional workforce that embraces our corporate values and demonstrates key leadership capabilities. The Values help guide us to continue to be a customer-focused organisation that strives to achieve excellence in everything that we do. The Leadership Capability Framework describes what we do as leaders and the Values form the basis of how we behave in the workplace and conduct the business of planning. Our corporate values are:

Teamwork:	We work collaboratively to achieve shared goals
Respect:	We value diversity and appreciate others
Accountability:	We are responsible for our actions and behaviours
Communication:	We communicate openly and share knowledge with others
Customer focus:	We consider the needs of others and make a difference for our community

Council plays an important role in contributing to life in your community by providing many of the services and facilities that residents of all ages access every day. Council provides traditional local government services like local roads, waste management, and planning, building and animal control. But beyond this we provide much more. We work with residents from new born babies, to young people, families and our senior citizens.

Cardinia Shire Council values Gender Equality and does not condone any behaviour outlined in our Workplace Behaviors policy. This includes, and is not limited to, discrimination, bullying, family violence, victimisation and breaches of our other workplace policy.

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

Reports to:	Coordinator Compliance Services
Supervises/Direct Reports:	Nil
Internal Liaisons:	Compliance Services staff, Manager - Operations, Open Space Coordinator, Environment staff and other staff of Cardinia Shire Council.
External Liaisons:	State Government Departments and Authorities (eg. Dept of Justice, DSE, VICROADS, MAV, LGPRO, Fire Brigade, EPA, Victoria Police, local

POSITION OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that the use and development of land in the Shire complies with relevant planning legislation and planning approvals.
- Provide enforcement services with respect of planning enforcement matters, pertaining to vegetation and land management.

- Take a pro-active view to enforcing legislation addressing public safety issues.
- Prepare briefs of evidence and provide expert evidence for prosecution in open Court and VCAT
- Provide professional advice on vegetation and land management matters to internal and external clients; undertake investigations in vegetation issues and prepare associated reports and correspondence.
- Undertake regular inspections of landscapes within the Shire to ensure compliance with relevant planning controls and defined maintenance standards.
- Ascertain risk factors and provide advice to internal and external clients on the retention or removal of trees in the municipality, which pose unacceptable risk.
- Prepare guidelines for the protection of vegetation and advocacy for biodiversity conservation in order to raise community understanding.
- Effectively handle complex customer interaction via field operations, front counter and telephone enquiries.
- Deal sensitively with information provided and adhere to Privacy principles.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

- Investigate alleged breaches of the planning controls with respect to vegetation, including non-compliance with Town Planning permits and assessment of illegal vegetation removal, impacts to native fauna habitat or waterways and associated rehabilitation plans.
- Engage external environmental consultants where required.
- Proactive enforcement of tree protection fencing and native vegetation offset plans required as part of planning permit conditions.
- Undertaking pro-active patrols of the municipality.
- Collect and present evidence in infringement and prosecution proceedings at the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and Magistrate Court hearings.
- Responding within agreed timeframes and standards to resident complaints.
- Provide expert advice to Council staff and members of the public regarding Vegetation
- Liaise with owners/occupiers, Council officers and Government authorities to effectively resolve any complaint of breach of the planning controls.
- Seek Planning Enforcement Order applications and issue Infringement Notices when other action fails to resolve issues.
- Monitor use and development within the Shire to ensure compliance with planning controls.
- Prepare Council reports on certain issues on a required basis.
- Develop pamphlet and other material aimed at better educating the community in relation to Compliance matters pertaining to Vegetation.
- Other duties relating to the position as directed by the Manager – Development and Compliance Services and/or Compliance Services Coordinator.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE COMPLIANCE

- Adhere to and promote to HR, IT, OH&S/Risk Management policies, procedures and practices.
- Demonstrate understanding and accountability for record keeping policy including the accuracy and capture of data, the sensitivities involved and the release and destruction of documents.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY

- Ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Planning & Environment Act, Cardinia Planning Scheme, permit conditions and relevant Local Laws relating to Vegetation Management.
- Demonstrate personal and professional integrity at all times consistent with the Cardinia Shire Council values.
- Take personal responsibility for the Vegetation Compliance function in meeting role, team and organisational objectives.
- Effect of decisions and actions taken may be significant but are generally subject to review by the Compliance Services Coordinator and/or Manager – Development and Compliance Services.
- Acting as an “Authorised Officer” in relation to planning matters and other legislation.
- Issue infringements with a high degree of accuracy and in keeping with relevant legislation.
- Represent the organisation with regards to Open Court, VCAT and authorised officer meetings.
- Provide input to the business unit on the establishment and maintenance of quality systems and procedures.

JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING

- Make decisions on all routine matters that are the responsibility of the position.
- Some degree of the work may involve research, identification and application of optional courses of action in consultation with the Compliance Services Coordinator.
- Exercise appropriate discretion in making decisions on legislative matters (subject to instrument of authority).
- Resolve disputes in accordance with the relevant legislation and Council policy. Anything of a political or sensitive nature should be discussed in conjunction with the Manager Development and Compliance Services and/or Compliance Services Coordinator.
- Guidance and advice usually available within timeframe to make a choice.

SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Demonstrated knowledge of vegetation management.
- Indigenous plant identification skills, including both overstorey trees and understorey shrubs, herbs, grasses, wildflowers.
- Land management skills including knowledge of development of rehabilitation plans and how to implement the Bushfire Management Overlay in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Knowledge of the native vegetation removal permit process and the associated planning permit requirements such as native vegetation offset plans.

- General landscape design and assessment principles.
- Knowledge and understanding of Australian Standards, Protection of Trees on Development Sites AS 4970-2009 and Pruning of Amenity Trees AS 4373-2007 to enforce tree protection zones.
- Knowledge of relevant legislation (i.e.: Local laws, The Cardinia Planning Scheme, Planning and Environment Act, Environmental Protection Act, Privacy Act, Local Government Act, Summary Offences Act, etc.).
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills including the ability to gain cooperation and understanding from members of the public and other employees and write high quality reports and correspondence.
- Thorough understanding of procedures, processes and guidelines along with the organisational context of the position.
- Appreciation of the goals of the Development and Compliance Services and Operations Business Units and the objectives of the Council.
- An understanding of the Statutory Planning process.
- An understanding of court procedures and processes.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Strong written, listening and verbal communication skills e.g.: including preparing correspondence and reports.
- Demonstrated ability to gain co-operation and commitment from both internal and external stakeholder to achieve agreed results and outcomes.
- Skills in providing timely and objective advice to client groups.
- Ability to maintain high levels of confidentiality.
- Proven ability to work effectively in teams to deliver positive organisational outcomes along with a committed to the principles of continuous improvement.
- Excellent customer service and public relations skills including the ability to present in public forums.
- Strong customer service and conflict resolution skills.
- Ability to adapt to change.

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Proven time management skills including, set priorities and planning and organising one's own work to achieve specific and set objectives in the most efficient way possible within the resources available and within a set timetable.
- Ability to operate in an environment with demanding workloads and time constraints.
- Ability to work independently yet be an effective member of a multidisciplinary team.
- Work cooperatively with the Manager Development and Compliance Services, Coordinator Compliance Services and Coordinator Open Space to ensure all set tasks are completed to the level required.
- Ability to work in a calm and efficient manner in an emergency situation.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- A tertiary qualification(s) in Applied Science, Environmental Science or other relevant discipline with a focus on natural resource management.
- Current Victorian driver's licence.
- Experience at in a related field or role in a Local Government setting (desirable).
- Experience in the enforcement field in a regulatory environment (desirable).

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Demonstrated working knowledge of native vegetation in the Statutory Planning process and associated legislation, policies, and planning scheme (i.e.: Planning Environment Act, VCAT, Local Government Act etc.) and ability to interpret and enforce above legislation and other local laws.
- Well-developed indigenous plant identification skills and knowledge of native fauna and their required habitat.
- Knowledge of land management practices including development of rehabilitation plans. Highly developed customer service and conflict resolution skills.
- Experience conducting prosecutions at VCAT and the Magistrates Court.
- Ability to role model desired behaviours of Cardinia and actively influence where required.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Terms and conditions of employment are in accordance with the Cardinia Shire Council Enterprise Agreement 2017 and Cardinia's policies and procedures.

Tenure This is a full time ongoing position.

Police Record check Appointments are subject to a satisfactory National Police Record Check.