



Council
Arboriculture
Victoria

Reporting Guidelines

Arboricultural Impact Assessments



Version 3.0 | February 2020



Arboricultural Impact Assessments

Section 1

Arboricultural Reporting

Arboricultural reports are to be written in a professional and impartial manner by a project arborist suitably experienced and competent in arboriculture, having acquired through training, qualification and/or equivalent experience the knowledge and skills to perform the tasks required by Australian Standard AS 4970-2009 *Protection of trees on development sites* (i.e. minimum AQF Level 5, Diploma of Horticulture (Arboriculture) and/or equivalent experience).

Section 2

Arboricultural Impact Assessments

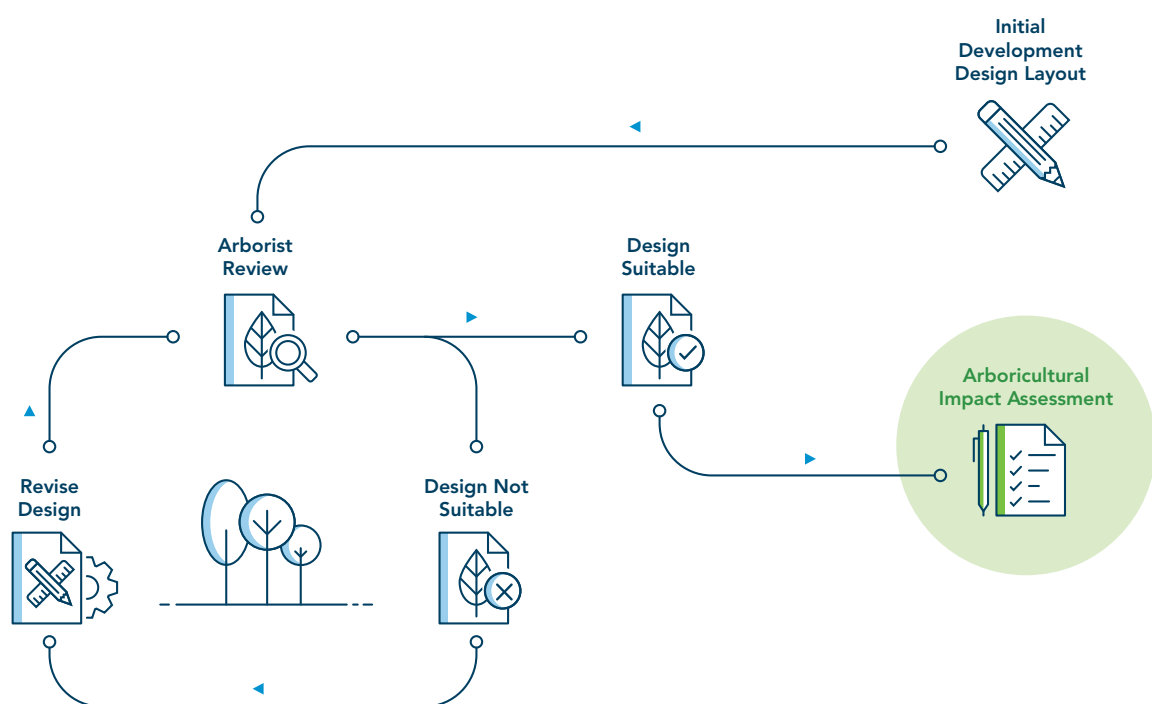
Successful long-term retention of trees in the vicinity of construction work requires arboricultural input at each stage of a development project.

Section 2 continued:

Arboricultural impact assessments are a procedure for determining the viability of retained trees at the **design and review stage** of a project, as defined at Clause 2.3.4 of Australian Standard AS 4970-2009 *Protection of trees on development sites*.

An arborist working with the project team resolves design outcomes to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts to retained trees. Tree-sensitive design outcomes are finalized before formally submitting a proposal to a determining authority, seeking permission to proceed.

Where an arboricultural impact assessment is found to include significantly inaccurate data, or does not satisfactorily address protection zone encroachments, or does not otherwise meet the guidelines of AS 4970-2009, the determining authority may return the report to the applicant, with comments, and require an updated or new arboricultural impact assessment.





The following report structure is intended to guide the preparation of arboricultural impact assessments and is not a template. The scale and complexity of a project influences report content and format.

2.1 Title Page

To include:

- Title of report;
- Site address;
- Date of report;
- Company name, author, qualifications and contact details;
- Client's name;
- Relevant identification/reference/version number(s).

2.2 Executive Summary

To include:

- Summarise key points, generally not exceeding 150 words.

Note: Useful for large reports.

2.3 Introduction

To include:

- Purpose of report;
 - Description of the proposal;
 - Details of applicable tree regulations;
- Note:** e.g. planning scheme, local laws, other legislation and/or regulation.

2.4 Methodology

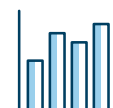
To include:

- Date(s) of the inspection;
Note: Report to be prepared within 6 months of site inspection(s);
- Description of the assessment method used;
Note: Several commonly used assessment methods are contained in documents listed at Appendix E of AS 4970-2009.
- Description of the method used to determine any protection zone encroachments;
Note: e.g. CAD, GIS, encroachment spreadsheet etc.
- Assessment tools used;
- Documentation reviewed;
- Limitations of the assessment, if any.
Note: e.g. site access, weather conditions, available documentation etc.

2.5 Observations

To include:

- Relevant site information;
Note: e.g. soil characteristics, topography, drainage, obstacles for root growth etc.
- Relevant tree data to be presented concisely with the assistance of tables, graphs, maps, photos etc. Complete records of tree data to be included in the report appendices.





2.5 Observations continued:

Note: Relevant tree data supports assessments made in the discussion section of the report (e.g. protection zone encroachment calculations, tree retention value/significance, notable tree defects, proposed tree retention/removal etc.).

Note: Protection zone and protection zone encroachments to be determined with reference to Clause 3 of AS 4970-2009. Protection zone encroachments to account for any proposed building and/or works.

Note: Where applicable present tree data in the observations section sorted by tree ownership e.g. site trees, neighbouring trees, public trees etc.

2.6

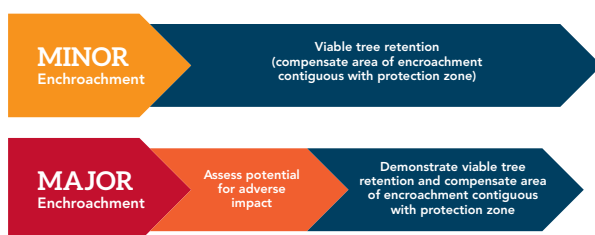


Discussion

To include:

- An impact assessment for retained trees and how adverse impact is avoided and/or minimized with consideration to Clause 3 of AS 4970-2009;
- Note:** Clause 3.3 of AS 4970-2009 outlines impact assessment pathways for minor and major levels of protection zone encroachment. The level of encroachment defines the extent of assessment required to demonstrate whether tree retention is viable relative to proposed building and/or works.

Note: Consider requirements for pruning/crown protection.



- Reasons for any tree removal and associated considerations;
- Note:** State if tree removal is proposed in response to tree condition, and/or construction impact, and/or any other reason. List or table the significance of trees proposed for removal and any applicable tree regulations requiring permission to proceed.
- Supporting research and/or literature to be appropriately referenced.

2.7



Conclusion & Recommendation(s)

To include:

- Summarise the discussion points;
- Recommend if tree protection will be required for the construction stage of the development project by way of a future Tree Protection Management Plan.

Note: Design adjustments that avoid/minimize adverse tree impact cannot be recommended to a determining authority. Resolve design adjustments with the project team before submitting a development proposal for approval.

Note: A Tree Protection Management Plan specifies tree protection actions for the demolition and construction stage of a project and is prepared once a determining authority has approved development design plans.

2.8



References, Appendices & Glossary

Where necessary include:

- References used in the report;
- Complete records of tree data and supporting information including maps and photos to be tabled in the appendices of the report;

Note: Tree data to be recorded with consideration to Clause 2.3.2 of AS 4970-2009.

Note: Tree mapping to include accurately surveyed trunk and canopy, tree ID/numbering, protection zones, proposed building and/or works and any protection zone encroachments.

- Glossary of arboricultural terms and ratings.

