

Planning and building implications

This fact sheet explains what flood hazard information means, how it is used to keep communities safe by informing planning and building decisions, and how it might influence planning controls.

Planning for increasing flood hazard

Floods can create hazardous conditions, leaving communities vulnerable to flood risk. Land use planning plays a critical role in ensuring future housing growth and development do not put people at risk of flooding.

Climate change will increase flood risk in Melbourne because of increased rainfall intensity and sea level rise. These processes will increase the number of properties at risk and the severity of flooding affecting these properties.

It is critical that land use planning decisions consider these impacts to ensure that future communities are safe and the built environment is resilient to flooding. We have adopted a nominal planning horizon of 2100 for this purpose, which is consistent with the state planning policy for sea level rise.

Understanding flood hazard

National guidance¹ includes a general classification of flood hazard on a floodplain through a combined set of hazard vulnerability curves.

Hazard is defined through six hazard vulnerability classifications, which relate to the vulnerability of the community when interacting with floodwaters: H1 to H6. H1 is associated with shallower flood depths and slower moving flood waters, through to H6 for deeper and faster moving flood waters.

Melbourne Water's new flood models have produced flood hazard maps for a 2100 flood scenario.

2100 flood scenario

The 2100 flood scenario shows flooding predicted in the future, considering climate change factors, for a storm event with a 1 per cent chance of occurrence in any given year.

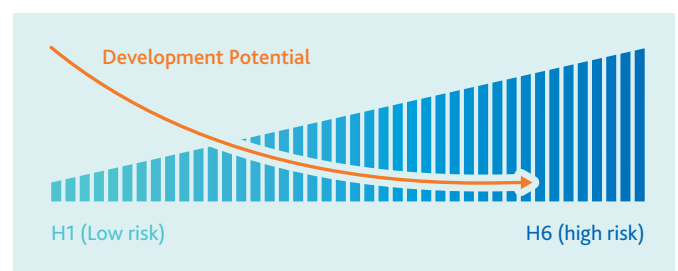
Flood hazard in planning and building decisions

Once finalised and published, after the flood model validation process is complete, the new 2100 flood scenario information will be used to inform planning and building decisions where existing planning and building controls apply.

In these areas, councils refer planning permit applications to Melbourne Water to assess flood risk associated with the proposal and provide advice. Melbourne Water also provides advice to councils on minimum floor levels before a building permit is issued.

The flood hazard across a property and access routes is an important consideration so deep or fast-moving flood waters don't put people in danger when entering or leaving a building or property during a flood.

Flood hazard may vary across a property. This variation is considered in determining planning and building decisions. Before commencing a development, Melbourne Water provides pre-development information and guidance, including advice on how the flood hazard can impact your development potential and how siting and design can reduce flood risk.



1. Including *Australian Rainfall and Runoff: A Guide to Flood Estimation* (2019) and *Guideline 7-3 Flood Hazard*, Supporting document for the implementation of *Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook 7 Managing the Floodplain: A Guide to Best Practice in Flood Risk Management in Australia* (2017)

Planning controls to manage flood risk

Once the flood models are complete, 2100 flood information will also be used to amend relevant planning schemes to include flood planning controls that reflect updated flood maps and risk.

The controls ensure flood risk is considered in planning decisions to avoid intensifying the impact of flooding through inappropriately located uses and development.

There are four types of flood planning controls available to manage flood risk: the Urban Floodway Zone, Floodway Overlay, Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and the Special Building Overlay.

These controls are applied based on the type of flooding and the potential level of risk to life and property, so the level of planning control of land use and development are appropriate to the potential flood risk.

This approach reflects our existing Flood Strategy and Housing Statement Road Map commitments to improve our risk-based approach including the way planning controls are applied to planning schemes; and there is reference to this in Plan for Victoria². Plan for Victoria acknowledges that some locations simply are not suitable for new homes.

This approach means where flood hazard is higher, in areas with deeper and faster moving flood waters, the potential flood risk associated with use and development is high, and more restrictive planning controls are applied. Development in certain areas may be subject to restrictive controls unless drainage infrastructure is upgraded to enable development.

In a similar way, where flood hazard is lower, in areas with shallower and slower moving flood waters, the potential flood risk associated with use and development is low, and less restrictive planning controls are applied. Melbourne Water is investigating ways to speed up the development approvals process in these lower hazard areas.

More information about the risk-based planning controls will be shared with communities in the future, after the flood maps have been finalised and when the Planning Scheme Amendment process commences.

2. Action 19 of the Victorian Government's *Plan for Victoria*



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