

FAQ: Environmentally Sensitive and Hazardous Areas Development Permits

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions about the city's designated Hazardous Conditions and Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Areas. Prior to retaining a consultant to complete an environmental/hazardous areas review, developers and/or land- owners are encouraged to review this document in detail, along with the associated process guide, before submitting your application.

What are Langford's Environmentally Sensitive and Hazardous Development Permit Areas?

The City of Langford has designated four Development Permit Areas aimed at protecting development from hazardous conditions, and three Development Permit Areas aimed at protecting important or sensitive environmental features from the impacts of development.

Development Permits may identify areas of land that contain environmentally sensitive features or be subject to natural hazards, as well as specify that areas of land that must remain free from development and/or be developed only in accordance with conditions contained in the Permit.

The City's four Development Permit areas for the protection of development from hazardous conditions are:

- 200-year Floodplain;
- Steep Slopes;
- Interface Fire Hazard; and
- Areas of Drainage Concern.

The City's three Development Permit areas for environmental protection are:

- Riparian Areas;
- Sensitive Ecosystems (i.e. wetlands, older forest, terrestrial herbaceous, woodland); and
- Areas with Potential Habitat and Biodiversity Values.

To determine if your property is within one of these Development Permit Areas, please review the [Property Information Map](#).

Council has delegated the approval of all Development Permits that conform to the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the applicable development permit area guidelines appended to the Zoning Bylaw to the Director of Planning.

What determines the extent of these Development Permit Areas?

The City of Langford carefully considered a number of factors before setting the boundaries of its Development Permit Areas. The extent of each of these Development Permit Areas may be found in the City's OCP Bylaw No. 1200. Generally, these Development Permit Areas have been determined in the following way:

- **200-Year Floodplain, Steep Slopes, and Areas of Drainage Concern.** Based on data provided in the 1997 Stormwater Management Plan prepared for the City by the firm of Reid Crowther Engineers.
- **Interface Fire Hazard Areas:** Based on cadastral, forest cover and topographic data provided by Provincial Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (formerly Ministry of Forests).
- **Riparian Areas.** Based on Riparian corridors identified by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (formerly Provincial Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks).
- **Sensitive Ecosystems.** Based on the data of the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory prepared by Environment Canada, the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (formerly Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks).

- **Areas with Potential Habitat and Biodiversity Values.** Encompasses all undeveloped parcels of land, within those areas designated as Potential Neighbourhood in the OCP, which are over 2 ha (5 acres) in area as well as areas identified by the Gary Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team.

What do each of these Development Permit Areas mean?

Each Development Permit Area is intended to either protect development from a particular natural hazard, or to protect particular aspects of the natural environment from development.

The Development Permit process gives the City the ability to secure necessary information when considering development applications, and apply conditions requiring areas of land to remain free from development if they may be subject to (for example) wildfires, flooding, mud flows, land slip, rock falls, subsidence, etc, and so that rare, endangered, or sensitive plant and animal communities and ecosystems are protected. As such, a report from a qualified professional, such as a registered professional biologist or professional engineer depending on the applicable DP Area, will be requested as part of the application.

Can I still develop property that is within a Development Permit Area?

Inclusion within a prescribed Development Permit Area does not mean that a property may not be developed; however, the development must occur in accordance with the conditions specified within the Permit. A Development Permit must be issued prior to obtaining a building permit, prior to subdivision approval and prior to any land disturbance (e.g., tree cutting, soil removal, or blasting).

What should I do if I want to develop my property, and my property is in one of these Development Permit areas?

For a description of supporting documentation required for each Development Permit Area, please review the [process guide, application form and fee schedule on our website](#).

Please note a Development Permit does NOT constitute approval of a subdivision or structural building details. A separate application for subdivision approval and/or a building permit may be submitted to the City, after a Development Permit is issued, and must be submitted (if required) before any development occurs on site.

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