

Choosing your block

When choosing your land you'll probably be influenced by your budget, and whether you need to be near work, public transport, schools or other facilities. You will need to seek expert help when addressing some items in the checklist below.

- ✓ Have you established the correct location of your allotment? Your certificate of title shows your allotment entitlement, however you need to define your allotment boundaries on the building site to ensure your building, when constructed, is correctly positioned. This is determined by the position of the survey pegs located on the allotment that indicates your allotment boundaries. A licensed land surveyor can only position these survey pegs (commonly referred to as a re-establishment survey).
- ✓ Have you checked the certificate of title for the restrictions for building envelopes, easements, covenants and rights of access?
- ✓ Are there any special local council planning overlays that apply to the site that may impact on your house design?
- ✓ Are there any zoning or local council planning changes underway?
- ✓ Is the block suitable for the type of home you intend to build?
- ✓ Are services such as gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone connected?
- ✓ Is a legal stormwater discharge point available directly to the allotment?
- ✓ Have you checked with relevant service providers about availability and cost of having services connected?
- ✓ Does the block and your subsequent plan provide for privacy, safe entry and exit, an energy efficient aspect and room for all your needs?
- ✓ Where are the boundaries and do you need fences?
- ✓ Can you get satisfactory building access to the block?
- ✓ Is the block well drained in regard to potential surface or sub-surface run-off?
- ✓ Are there any large trees located where you intend to build, or at a distance from it that is less than 1.5 times the tree's height?
- ✓ Do you have a copy of the plan of subdivision for the block from the local council? If so, does it show any cut and/or filling as extra costs may be incurred for footings?
- ✓ Have you reviewed the natural and finished levels of the block and the crossing and stormwater information?
- ✓ Do any trees, buildings and associated structures such as foundations and septic tanks need to be removed?
- ✓ Have you checked whether the block is prone to termites? Although your council will determine whether your block is located in a designated termite area, termites are not always confined just to these declared areas. Consequently, regardless of the location of your block, you should carefully consider measures to protect your new home against termite infestations.
- ✓ Is the block located in a flood prone, landslip or snowload area?
- ✓ Is your land located in a designated bushfire prone area? If so, you may be required to use special construction techniques when building your home. Design and maintenance measures to prevent destruction by bushfires can be taken. Contact the Country Fire Authority (CFA) for detailed information on (03) 9262 8444 or visit the website at www.cfa.vic.gov.au

Acknowledgement – 'Building and Renovating, A guide for consumers', Consumer Affairs Victoria, Sept. 2007.