

Western Australia Abattoir Regulatory Approval Guidelines

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 5

Purpose

These guidelines have been created by the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority (WAMIA) to increase awareness and improve transparency of the regulatory approval framework and processes for the construction and operation of abattoirs in Western Australia (WA).

Context

WAMIA, under the *Western Australian Meat Industry Authority Act 1976*, has a statutory obligation to approve the construction and operation of abattoirs in WA. It is also a function of WAMIA to keep under review the operation of abattoirs and processing facilities in the State and to encourage and promote improved efficiency throughout the meat industry.

For an overview of all WAMIA functions see [WAMIA website – What is WAMIA?](#)

Scope

These guidelines provide a summary of key regulatory approvals required prior to constructing and operating an abattoir that will slaughter and process meat for sale for human consumption.

They focus on legislated requirements and regulations administered and enforced by the following government agencies:

- Local Government
- Department of Health (Environmental Health Directorate)
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
- Western Australian Meat Industry Authority

These guidelines do not cover specific or additional regulatory approval requirements for abattoirs seeking export accreditation as these are administered by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries under the *Export Control Act 2020* and Export Control Rules.

Also out of scope are on-going compliance requirements as these vary between abattoirs based on the specific set of conditions and restrictions applied to them by various regulatory agencies.

Further Info

For further guidance on navigating abattoir regulatory approvals and referrals to the responsible authorities contact the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority on (08) 9571 0013 or wamia@wamia.wa.gov.au.

1. Key regulators and legislation they administer

1.1 Local Government (LG's)

LG's have statutory roles and responsibilities or delegated authority related to planning, development and building approvals, public and environmental health approvals and compliance and are often the lead enforcement agency even though they may not be the principal agency responsible for administering the legislation.

For example, legislation administered and enforced by LG's relevant to approvals for constructing or operating an abattoir is as follows:

- **Development Approvals** - [Planning and Development Act 2005](#), [Planning and Development \(Local Planning Schemes\) Regulations 2015](#), [Public Health Act 2016](#) and the [Local Government Act 1995](#) which enables LG's to make Local Laws including regulations, about matters relating to public health.
- **Building and Occupancy Permits** - [Building Act 2011](#) and [Building Regulations 2012](#).
- **Food Business Registration** and appointment of **Authorised Officers for Meat Inspection** under the [Food Act 2008](#) and [Food Regulations 2009](#)

1.2 Department of Health (DOH) - Environmental Health Directorate

[Public Health Act 2016](#)

An Act to protect, promote and improve the health and wellbeing of the public of Western Australia and to reduce the incidence of preventable illness, and for related purposes.

Note: Until full implementation of the [Public Health Act 2016](#) is complete, check the [DOH website - Public Health Act](#) for the latest updates on its progress and operation of specific provisions.

[Food Act 2008](#)

An Act to (a) ensure food for sale is both safe and suitable for human consumption; (b) to prevent misleading conduct in connection with the sale of food; (c) to provide for the application in this State of the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#).

Subsidiary Legislation:

- [Food Regulations 2009](#) – Includes certain Adopted Australian Standards currently as follows:
 - a) *the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (AS 4696:2023);*
 - b) *the Australian Standard for Hygienic Production of Rabbit Meat for Human Consumption (AS 4466);*
 - c) *the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production of Ratite (Emu/Ostrich) Meat for Human Consumption (AS 5010);*
 - d) *the Australian Standard for Hygienic Production of Crocodile Meat for Human Consumption (AS 4467);*
 - e) *the Australian Standard for Hygienic Production of Wild Game Meat for Human Consumption (AS 4464);*
 - f) *the Australian Standard for Construction of Premises and Hygienic Production of Poultry Meat for Human Consumption (AS 4465);*
 - g) *the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production of Natural Casings for Human Consumption (AS 5011);*
 - h) *the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Rendering of Animal Products (AS 5008).*

The primary objective of the Food Standards Code and Australian Standards listed above is to ensure compliance with food safety requirements. They specify outcomes required for the receipt and slaughter of animals, dressing of carcasses, processing, packaging, handling and storage of meat as well as construction and layout of premises and equipment and transportation of meat and meat products.

DOH is the controlling authority that verifies compliance with these Australian Standards and can provide guidance to LG enforcement agencies and also to industry.

Copies of these standards are available to purchase and download online via the [Standards Australia Store](#) or can be viewed for free at Department of Health, 189 Royal Street, East Perth.

1.3 Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER)

Part V of the [Environmental Protection Act 1986](#)

An Act to provide for an Environmental Protection Authority, for the prevention, control and abatement of pollution and environmental harm, for the conservation, preservation, protection, enhancement and management of the environment and for matters incidental to or connected with the foregoing.

Subsidiary Legislation includes but is not limited to:

- [Environmental Protection Regulations 1987](#)
- [Environmental Protection \(Abattoirs\) Regulations 2001](#)
- [Environmental Protection \(Controlled Waste\) Regulations 2004](#) (includes Abattoir effluent)
- [Environmental Protection \(Noise\) Regulations 1997](#)
- [Environmental Protection \(Clearing of Native Vegetation\) Regulations 2004](#)

[Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914](#)

An Act relating to rights in water resources, to make provision for the regulation, management, use and protection of water resources, and for related purpose.

[Contaminated Sites Act 2003](#)

An Act providing for the identification, recording, management and remediation of contaminated sites, to consequentially amend certain other Acts and for related purposes.

DWER also has an advisory role to LG and State Government planning agencies on land use planning processes and decision making.

Note: DWER is currently undertaking and considering a range of regulatory reforms. See [Environmental Regulation Reform - Department of Water and Environmental Regulation - Citizen Space](#) and [Water Environmental Regulation public consultation | Western Australian Government](#)

1.4 Western Australian Meat Industry Authority (WAMIA)

[Western Australian Meat Industry Authority Act 1976](#)

An Act to establish the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority, to provide for a system of approval of abattoirs and to regulate the branding of animal carcasses in respect of carcase definition.

Subsidiary Legislation:

- [Western Australian Meat Industry Authority Regulations 1985](#)

2. Abattoir Approvals to Construct or Make Structural Additions / Alterations

Summary List



2.1 Development Approval from Local Government



2.2 Works Approval from Department of Water and Environmental Regulation



2.3 Approval to Construct from Western Australian Meat Industry Authority



2.4 Building Permit and Occupancy Permit from Local Government

Other approvals that may be required:

Native Vegetation Clearing Permit from Department of Water Environmental Regulation – see [Native Vegetation Clearing Permits](#)

2.1 Development Approval from Local Government

Planning

Overview

- LG's have local planning schemes typically based on the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* which include a range of model definitions for land uses. They also have local planning policies which set clear expectations for areas and development classes, provide direction to applicants on how LGA's are likely to exercise discretion, and outline acceptable development standards. Development Approvals consider these schemes and policies. Some types of development may also need to be approved by the WA Planning Commission, for example in planning control areas or improvement scheme areas.

Resource Links

- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) - [Local Planning Strategies, Schemes and Structure Plans](#) (as listed by Local Government)

Health

Overview

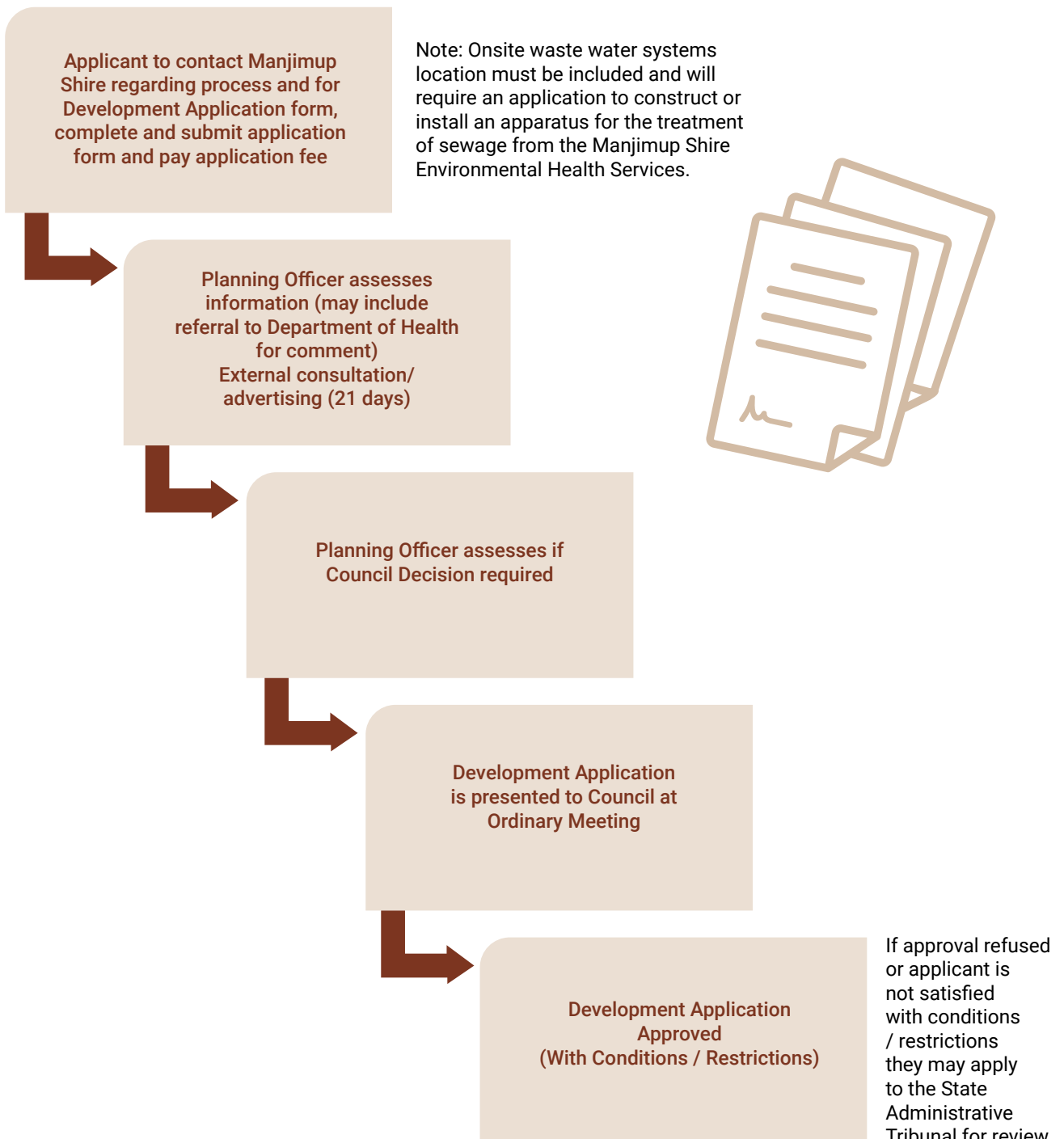
- As the enforcement agencies of the *Public Health Act 2016*, LG's through the Development Approval process need to consider potential impact on surrounding land uses, people or properties caused by nuisance and/or public or private health risks associated with the creation of noise, odour, dust, other emissions, rubbish, pests, or a range of pollutants.
- A key element of the *Public Health Act 2016* is the general public health duty which requires that "a person must take all reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or minimise any harm to public health that might foreseeably result from anything done or omitted to be done by the person". DOH has developed guidelines to clarify the application of this duty and provide industry specific information on what might constitute 'reasonable and practical steps' to prevent harm to public health, including for abattoirs in the [Guidelines for Offensive Trades](#).
- LG's are also the enforcement agencies for the *Food Act 2008* and adopted Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code and *Food Regulations 2009* and adopted Australian Standards, LG Development Approval needs to consider how abattoir construction, alterations and equipment design will comply with these.

Resource Links

- Food Standards Australia New Zealand - [Standards 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#)
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - [Construction and Equipment Guidelines for Export Meat Establishments](#) (archived in 2023 but still made available as it may provide useful guidance for the construction of export meat facilities)

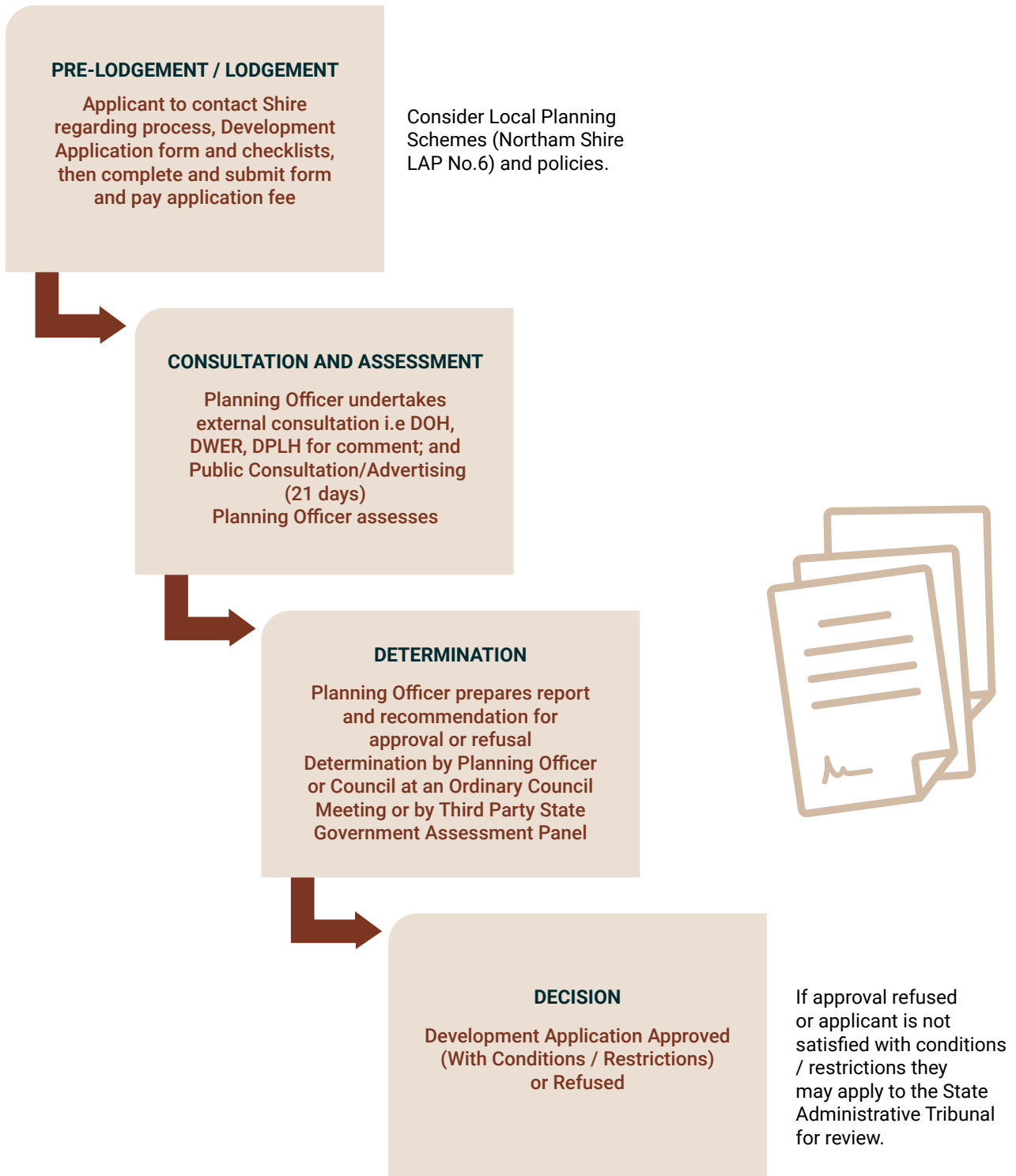
Approval Process Flow Chart

EXAMPLE ONE - Shire of Manjimup as at February 2025



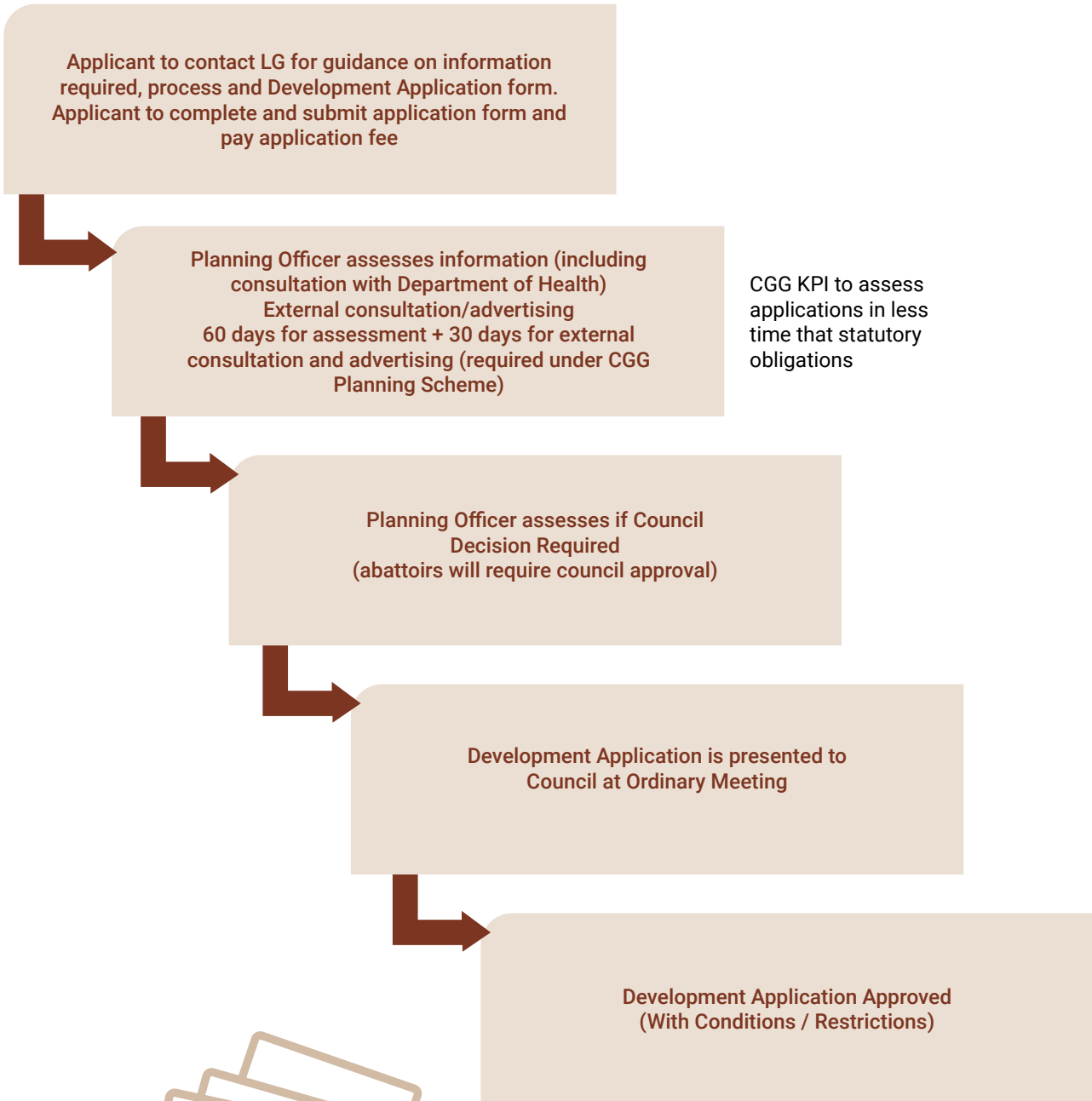
Approval Process Flow Chart

EXAMPLE TWO - Shire of Northam as at February 2025



Approval Process Flow Chart

EXAMPLE THREE – City of Greater Geraldton (CGG) as at February 2025



CGG KPI to assess applications in less time that statutory obligations



If approval refused or applicant is not satisfied with conditions / restrictions they may apply to the State Administrative Tribunal for review.

2.2 Works Approval from Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Overview

- DWER administers works approvals of prescribed premises under Part V Division 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.
- In general, an occupier must have a works approval before constructing / building a prescribed premises and prior to certain alterations to an existing licenced premises. A works approval will apply to the construction phase of the abattoir. A licence applies to the ongoing operation phase of the abattoir.
- A premises becomes prescribed under the *Environmental Protection Regulations 1987* Schedule 1 (Parts 1 and 2) where the activities on the premises meet the definition provided, and the threshold of production or design capacity for an activity on that premises is met or exceeded. This includes abattoirs as per Schedule 1, Part 1 as follows:
 - **Category No. 15; Abattoir: premises on which animals are slaughtered; production or design capacity of 1,000 tonnes or more per year.**
- Abattoirs with a production or design capacity between 100 and 1,000 tonnes per year are not prescribed premises under Category No. 15: Abattoir, however they must comply with the *Environmental Protection (Abattoirs) Regulations 2001*.
- A works approval will contain conditions which aim to prevent, control, abate or mitigate pollution or environmental harm from the abattoir.



Consider future requirements, for example, if you wanted to increase abattoir production capacity and how this might impact on abattoir design, layout and equipment, waste management systems and environment and water licensing.

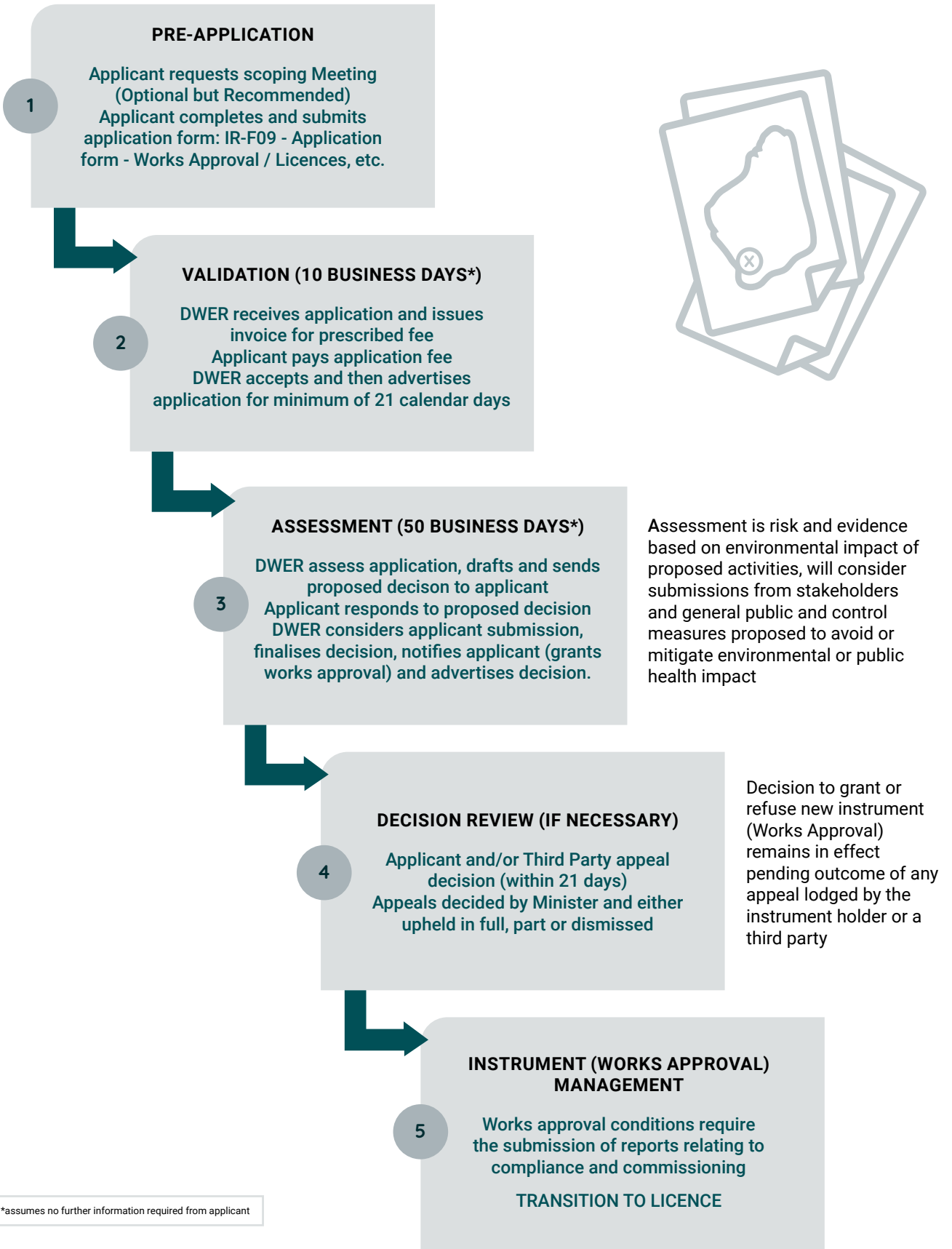
Resource Links (published by DWER)

- DWER - [Guideline: Industry regulation guide to licensing](#)
- DWER - [Regulatory documents – policies, guidelines and procedures for DWER Industry Regulation](#)
- DWER - [Stages of assessment for works approvals and licences – policies, guidelines, factsheets and other resources set out chronologically in the stages of an application process](#)
- DWER - [Procedure: Prescribed premises works approvals and licences – overview of the process DWER undertakes to assess applications for works approvals and licences](#)
- DWER - [Application Forms – includes the Application form: Works approval, licence, registration, amendment or renewal](#)
- For further queries related to abattoir licences contact DWER via Email: info@dwer.wa.gov.au or Phone: (08) 6364 7000

Approval Process Flow Chart

Note: The Flow Chart is a representation based on published DWER guidance as at February 2025, in particular [Procedure: Prescribed premises works approvals and licences](#) which has process maps in Figures 1 to 5 and information on timeframes in section 5.10 and Figure 7.

Occupiers are recommended to further review published DWER guidance including [Guideline: Industry Regulation Guide to Licensing](#).



2.3 Approval to Construct from Western Australian Meat Industry Authority

Not applicable for structural alterations / additions

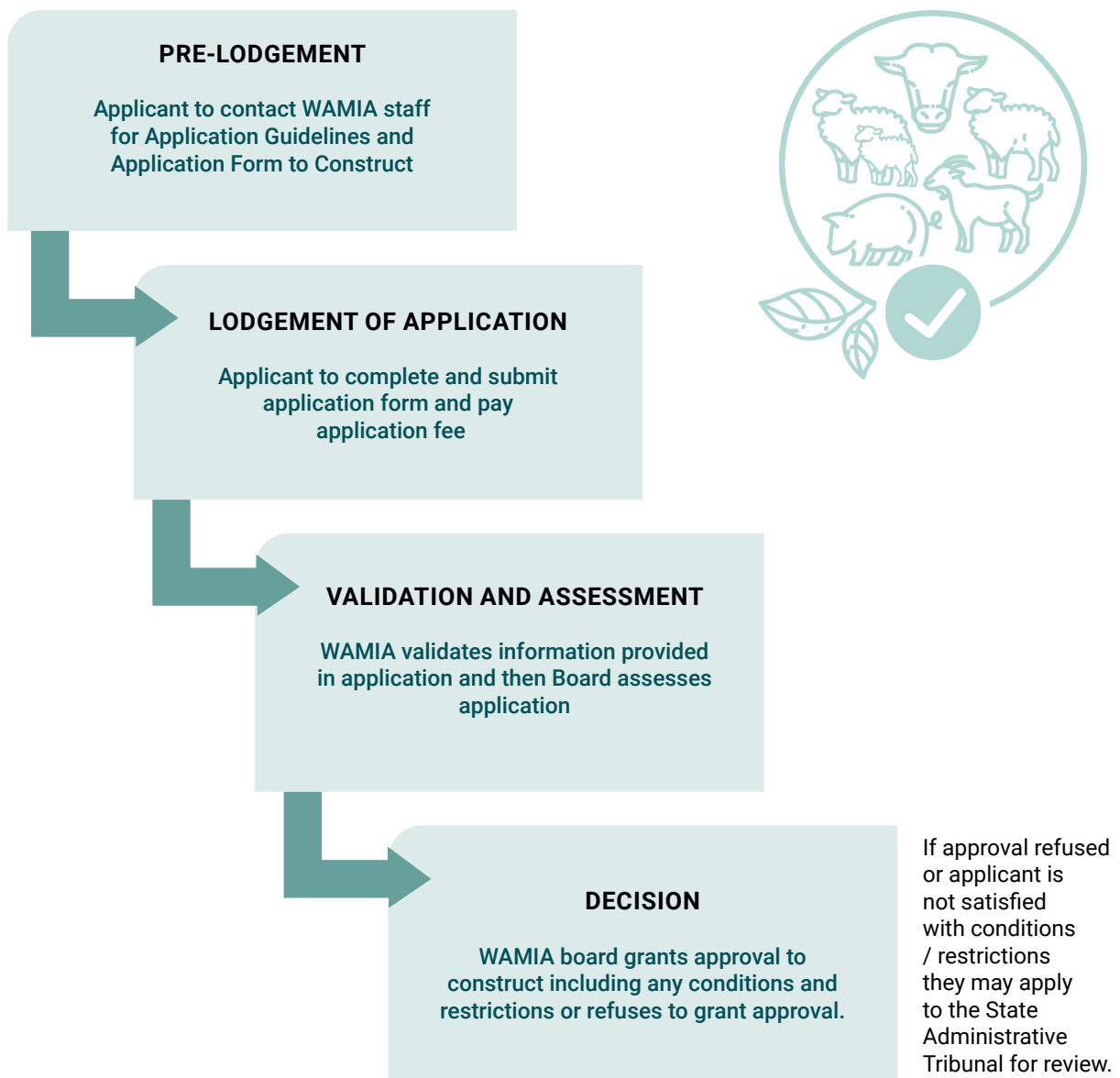
Overview

- Under the *Western Australian Meat Industry Authority Act 1976* owners / operators of abattoirs need to apply to WAMIA for approval to construct.
- If under the Act, the animal species to be processed at the abattoir is not a prescribed or declared species e.g. poultry then this approval is not required.

Resource Links

- WAMIA - [WAMIA Abattoir Approvals](#)

Approval Process Flow Chart



2.4 Building Permit and Occupancy Permit from Local Government Authority

Overview

- Building legislation is governed by *the Building Act 2011* and the Building Regulations 2012. These define what building work is and stipulate when a building permit is required and the process for obtaining a building permit. A building permit must be obtained prior to any construction, alterations or additions to any building including abattoirs.
- The minimum standards required for all construction in WA are set out in the [National Construction Codes \(NCC\)](#). All building permit applications must demonstrate compliance with the NCC. Under the NCC abattoirs are a Class 8 Building and a Certified Application is required. A Certificate of Design Compliance (CDC) from a registered Building Surveyor must also be obtained. Additionally, any building permit application for work valued over \$20,000 requires a registered builder or an owner builder registration.
- Following construction of a building including an abattoir, an Occupancy Permit must be obtained and a Certificate of Construction Compliance (CCC) from a registered Building Surveyor is required.

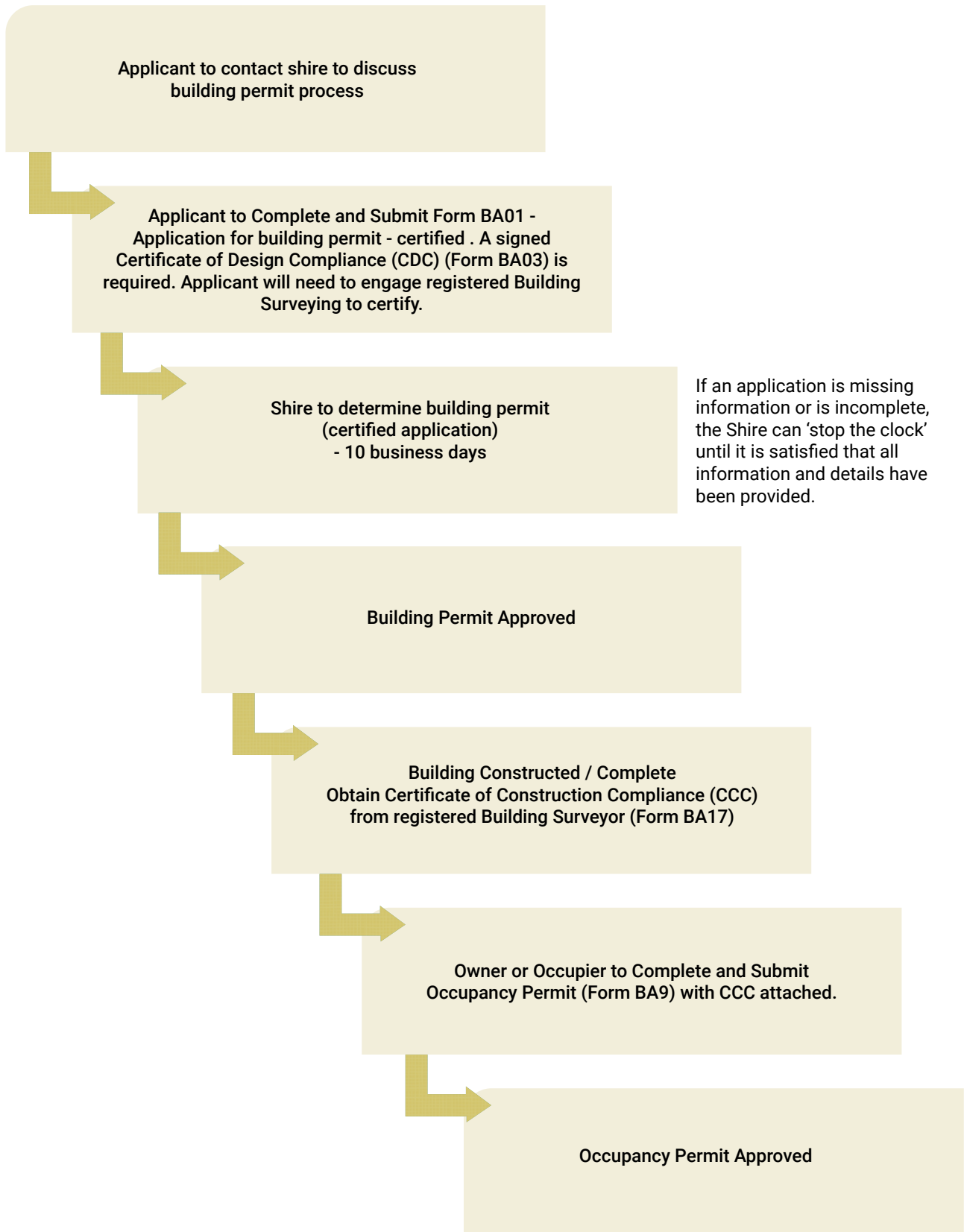


Continue to engage with a registered Building Surveyor throughout build process as their certification services are required at multiple points in the process.



Approval Process Flow Chart

Note: Process may vary across LG's



3. Abattoir Approvals to Operate

Summary List



3.1 Certificate of Registration as Food Business from Local Government



3.2 Licence from Department of Water and Environmental Regulation



3.3 Approval to Operate from Western Australian Meat Industry Authority

Other approvals that may be required:

Water licence and / or permit from Department of Water and Environmental Regulation – [see *Water Licensing*](#)

Certificate of Registration and Property Identification Code from Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – [see *DPIRD Livestock ownership, management and identification in WA*](#)



The 'change of ownership' of a business or 'change of use' of a premise may trigger the requirement for new approvals and require you to re-apply for licences to operate. Don't assume that because the previous owners or lessors of the premise had approval for an activity that these approvals can be transferred to your business. Contact the relevant regulator to discuss your specific circumstance.

3.1 Certificate of Registration as Food Business from Local Government

Overview

- LG's are the "Enforcement Agency" responsible for ensuring compliance with the *Food Act 2008* and *Food Regulations 2009*.
- Under the *Food Act 2008* food businesses including abattoirs / boning rooms need to register with their LG before commencing operation.
- The registration form will require inclusion of a food safety plan demonstrating compliance with the *Food Regulations 2009* and adopted Australian Standards applicable to abattoirs / meat processing facilities i.e. *AS4969:2023 Hygienic production and transportation of meat and meat products for human consumption*.



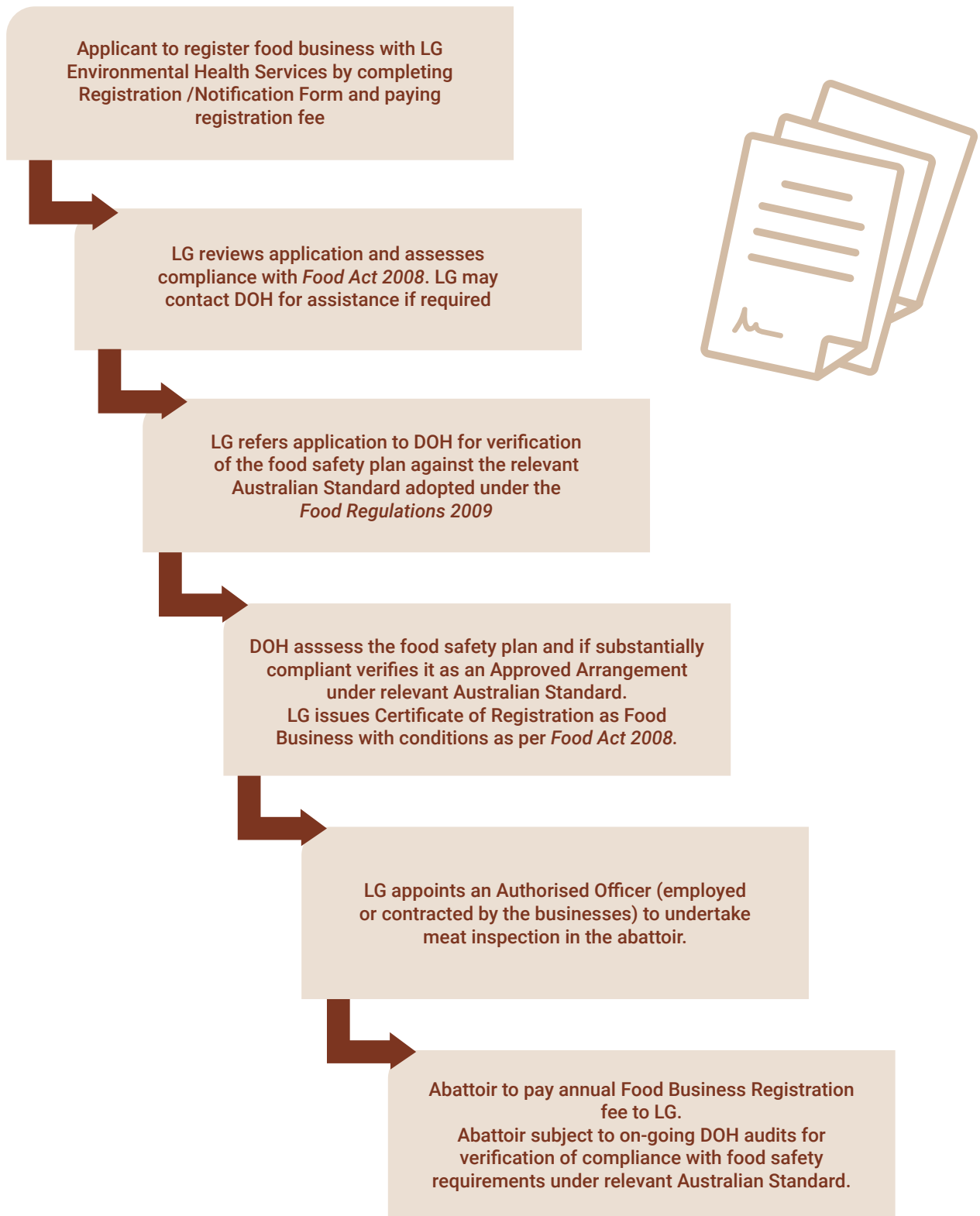
Businesses may like to consider engaging a food safety consultant to assist with development of their food safety plan.

- As part of the registration process, LG's refer to DOH as the "Controlling Authority" to verify the food safety plan complies with requirements under the Australian Standards. This is known as an "Approved Arrangement" and should be in place for LG's to register an abattoir as a food business and .
- After registration and before abattoir operations commence, LG's appoint an Authorised Officer as a meat inspector (typically employed or contracted by the abattoir) to undertake inspection before and after slaughter of each animal. DOH determines the qualifications and competencies required.

Resource Links

- DOH - [Registration of a food business](#)
- DOH - [Starting a food manufacturing business](#)
- DOH - [Guidelines on appointment of Authorised Officers as Meat Inspectors](#)
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand - [Standard 4.2.3 Primary Production and Processing Standard for Meat and Meat Products](#)

Approval Process Flow Chart



3.2 Licence from Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Overview

- DWER administers licences of prescribed premises under Part V Division 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.
- In general, an occupier must have a licence for the on-going operations of prescribed premises.
- A premises becomes prescribed under the *Environmental Protection Regulations 1987* Schedule 1 (Parts 1 and 2) where the activities on the premises meet the definition provided, and the threshold of production or design capacity for an activity on that premises is met or exceeded. This includes abattoirs as per Schedule 1, Part 1 as follows:
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- Abattoirs with a production or design capacity between 100 and 1,000 tonnes per year are not prescribed premises under Category No. 15: Abattoir, however they must comply with the *Environmental Protection (Abattoirs) Regulations 2001*.
- A licence will contain conditions that aim to prevent, control, abate or mitigate pollution or environmental harm resulting from the operation of prescribed premise.



Consider future requirements, for example, if you wanted to increase production whether you would become a prescribed premises and need to apply for a licence from DWER and what operational changes or investment would be required e.g for solid and liquid waste management systems.

Resource Links (published by DWER)

- DWER - [Guideline: Industry regulation guide to licensing](#)
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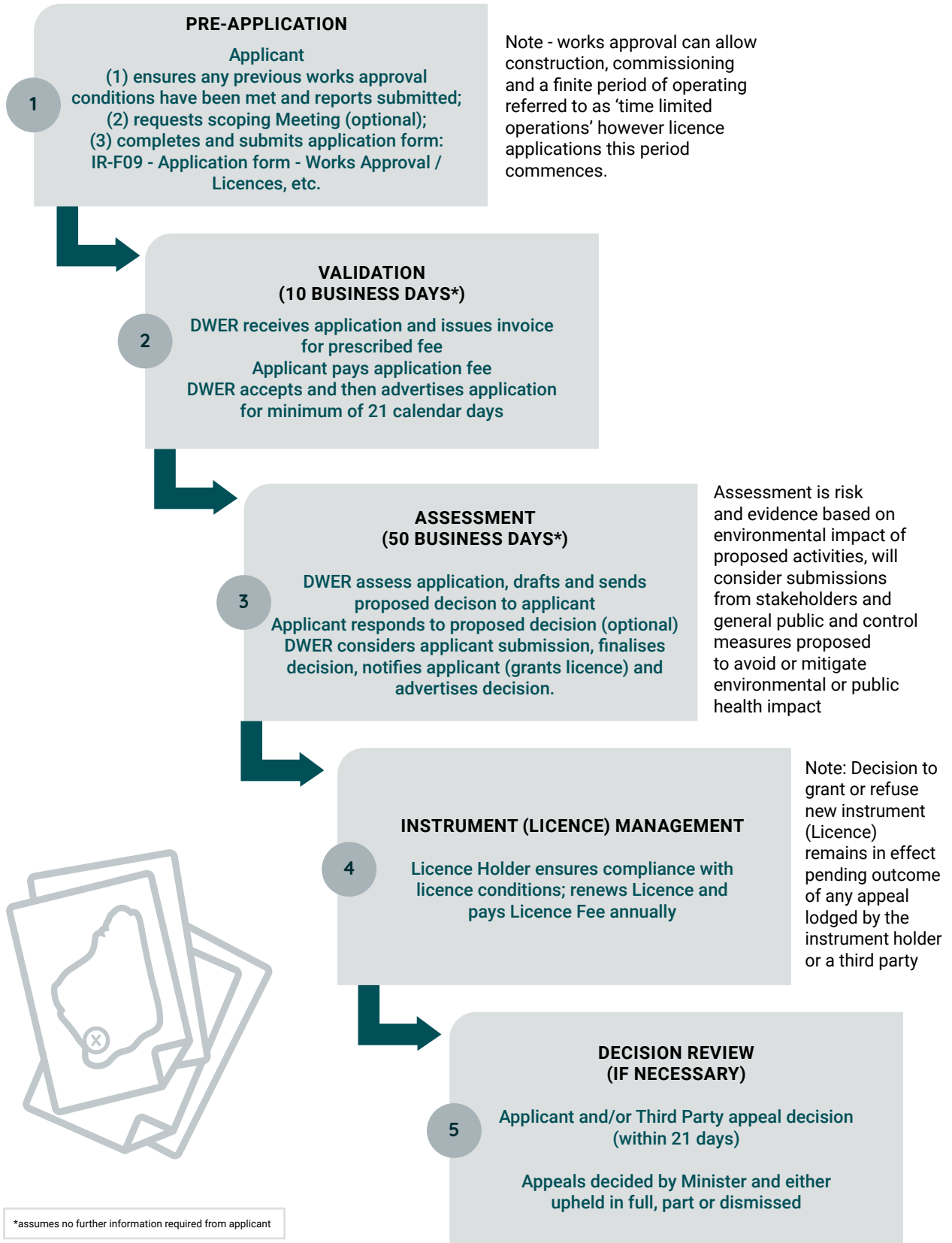


The DPIRD Agribusiness Development team also provides assistance navigating regulatory processes as well as technical advice and has published fact sheets to support proponents and industry with meeting environmental and other regulatory requirements. For further information contact agribusiness@dpiird.wa.gov.au

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3.3 Approval to Operate from Western Australian Meat Industry Authority

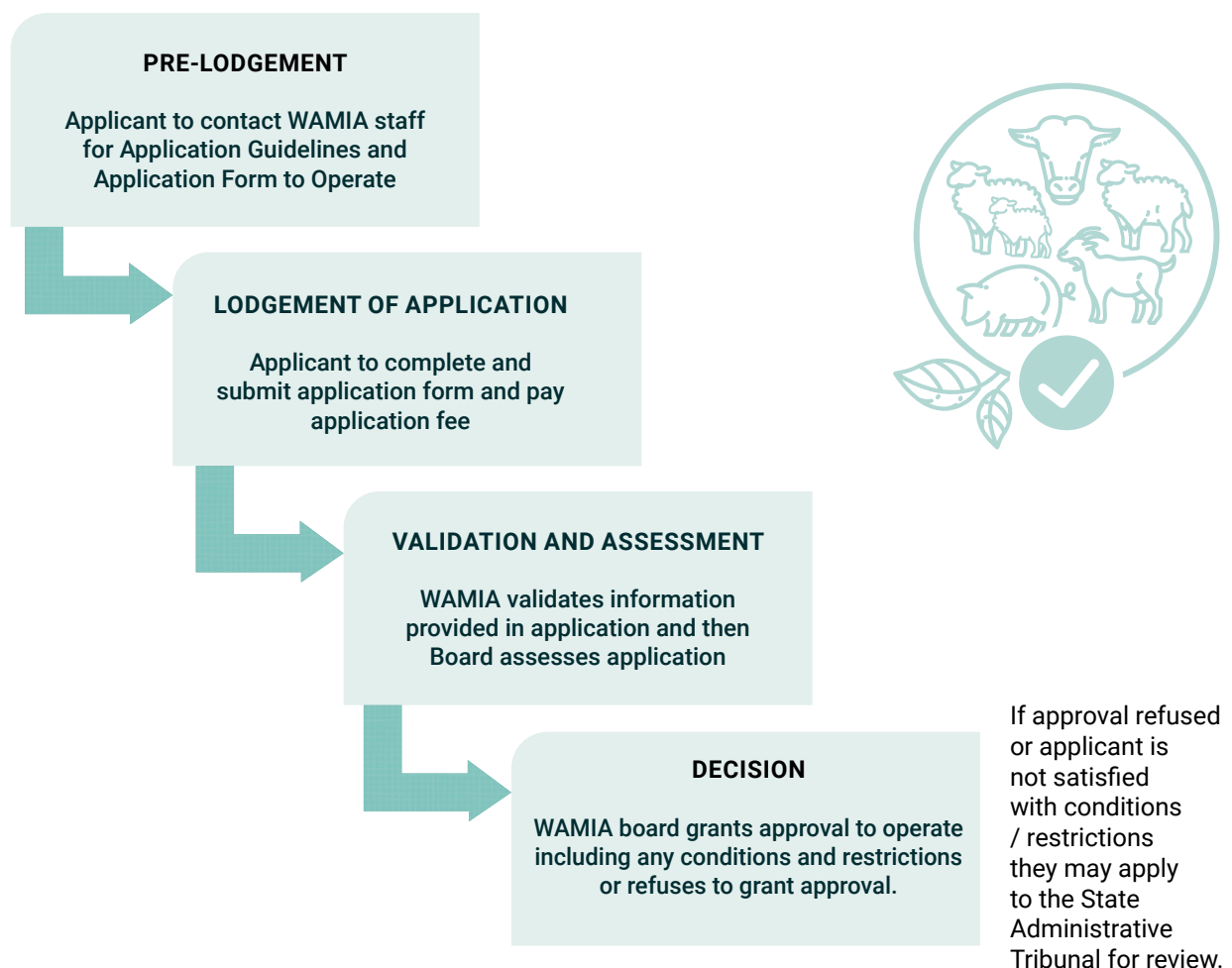
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Resource Links

- WAMIA - [WAMIA Abattoir Approvals](#)

Approval Process Flow Chart



Limitations Information in this document may not include every approval that is required or every variation in an approval process as they can differ based on individual circumstances. Furthermore, whilst the information is considered accurate at date of publication, changes by regulatory authorities after the time of publication may impact upon the accuracy. Therefore, proponents should not rely solely on the information in these guidelines and are encouraged to contact key regulators directly prior to preparing or submitting any applications to them for approval.

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