

Frequently Asked Questions



Design Standard 1 – Engineering Requirements for Land Division

Q – What are design standards?

A – Design standards are a new planning instrument that support the Planning and Design Code by promoting good design in our streets, parks and other public places, help manage the interface between public and private realms and set out clear, consistent requirements for infrastructure as part of new developments.

Under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, design standards may be supported by advisory manuals or guidelines.

Q – What are the benefits of the draft engineering design standard and why is it being implemented?

A – In 2024, the South Australian Government released the Housing Roadmap to address land supply, construction and housing affordability challenges across the state.

Standardised infrastructure requirements, particularly in greenfield areas, can reduce land division assessment timeframes by providing consistent requirements for design and construction.

Introducing consistent infrastructure standards also aims to reduce costs for new residential developments.

The draft engineering design standard applies during land division consent, and is used to assess whether infrastructure such as roads, stormwater, footpaths and street landscaping meets the required standards.

Q – Will the draft engineering design standard need to be used to assess all land division applications?

A – No. The draft engineering design standard only applies to land divisions that:

- are primarily for residential purposes

- involve building public roads or infrastructure that will become council assets
- are located in one of the following zones in the Planning and Design Code:
 - Master Planned Neighbourhood Zone
 - Master Planned Renewal Zone
 - Master Planned Township Zone.

If the land division does not meet all the criteria listed above, councils will assess the design against their own infrastructure requirements, as well as any prescribed requirements outlined in the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017*.

Q – Is land division consent only be assessed against the draft engineering design standard?

A – No, there are other matters that must be considered. Section 102 (1)(c) of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* states that a development is only an approved development if the assessor of the land division is satisfied that the development is in accordance with:

- requirements set out in the Planning and Design Code
- requirements set out in a design standard
- water industry requirements under the *Water Industry Act 2012* relating to the provision of water supply and sewerage services are satisfied
- where land is to be vested in a council or other authority, the council or authority consents to the vesting*
- requirements set out in the general regulations made for the purposes of this provision are satisfied*.

**Note: the Department for Housing and Urban Development is also consulting on draft changes to the Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017 regarding these requirements.*

Q – If a land division is designed to comply with the draft engineering design standard, can the council refuse vesting of the infrastructure and infrastructure reserves?

A – Proposed changes to the general regulations are intended to provide greater certainty for developers, councils and the community about when public land must be vested in a council.

The draft engineering design standard, technical manual and standard drawings have been developed by engineers using industry best practice to ensure consistent outcomes across South Australia.

Councils that have Master Planned Zones, or adopt them in the future, will be required to apply the draft engineering design standard when assessing land divisions. Councils are encouraged to review the proposed changes and provide feedback during the consultation period.

The proposed regulation amendments would require councils to accept the vesting of land where it meets the requirements of the draft engineering design standard.

Q – Will all the design requirements of the draft engineering design standard need to be met?

A – Yes. The assessor for the land division consent must assess the design requirements, where relevant, and determine if the design standard has been met.

If it is determined that a design requirement has not been met and cannot be met through a condition of approval, the land division consent should not be granted.

Q – If the draft engineering design standard has not been met, can the land division be assessed against the local council’s engineering requirements/the requirements set out in the general regulations?

A – No. Where the engineering design standard applies, the land division consent must be assessed against the design requirements in the design standard.

The draft engineering design standard applies to land division for large residential developments in Master Planned Zones, including constructing a public road or infrastructure that will become council property.

Full details of where it applies are outlined in section 6 of the draft engineering design standard.

Q – Why is the State Planning Commission consulting on the draft engineering design standard and technical manual a second time?

The initial draft engineering design standard and supporting technical manual and standard drawings were released for [consultation](#) from 20 May to 15 July 2025.

In response to the [feedback received](#), a comprehensive review of the draft engineering design standard was undertaken and significant changes have been made.

Because significant changes have been made, and due to the importance of ensuring the engineering design standard effectively supports timely and efficient land division assessment and housing delivery, the State Planning Commission is seeking further feedback on the updated documents.

Q – What are the key updates to the draft design standard and technical manual following the initial consultation?

Key updates to the draft design standard following the first stage of consultation include:

- providing clearer definitions and using consistent terminology
- aligning better with the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017* (and its proposed amendments)
- improved document structure
- clarifying that the design standard is intended to be used during land division assessment, and matters relevant to detailed design and construction will be managed through the standard mandatory conditions.

Key technical amendments to the draft design standard and technical manual relate to:

- stormwater management and water sensitive urban design, and the need for robust and context-sensitive designs
- road design, hierarchy and safety standards, including road design life
- guiding principles for active transport and the design of infrastructure and land divisions to respond to climate change are captured in the technical manual, which can be readily updated to reflect best practice and emerging trends
- street trees, green infrastructure and biodiversity, including local native plant species should be favoured, protection of native vegetation and alignment of canopy cover targets with other state strategies.
- terminology and concepts to ensure language and guidance are tailored to South Australia.

Q – Where can I find out more information and provide feedback on the draft engineering design standard?

A – Feedback on the draft engineering design standard is invited from 9 April to 21 May 2026.

For more information about the draft engineering design standard, technical manual and standard drawings, mandatory conditions, regulation amendments and how to provide feedback:

- visit the PlanSA website: plan.sa.gov.au/have_your_say/consultations
- visit the YourSAy website: yoursay.sa.gov.au/engineering-design-standard-stage-2
- register to join an online information session on Wednesday, 29 April at: shorturl.at/RHE7P
- email: DHUD.PlusStrategicProjects@sa.gov.au
- phone the PlanSA Service Desk: 1800 752 664.