

Design standards in land division assessment

The State Planning Commission has prepared the draft engineering design standard for land division that aims to streamline assessment processes and enable more homes to be built faster across South Australia’s growth areas. Find out how the design standard and other proposed changes affect the land division assessment process.

Overview of the land division assessment process

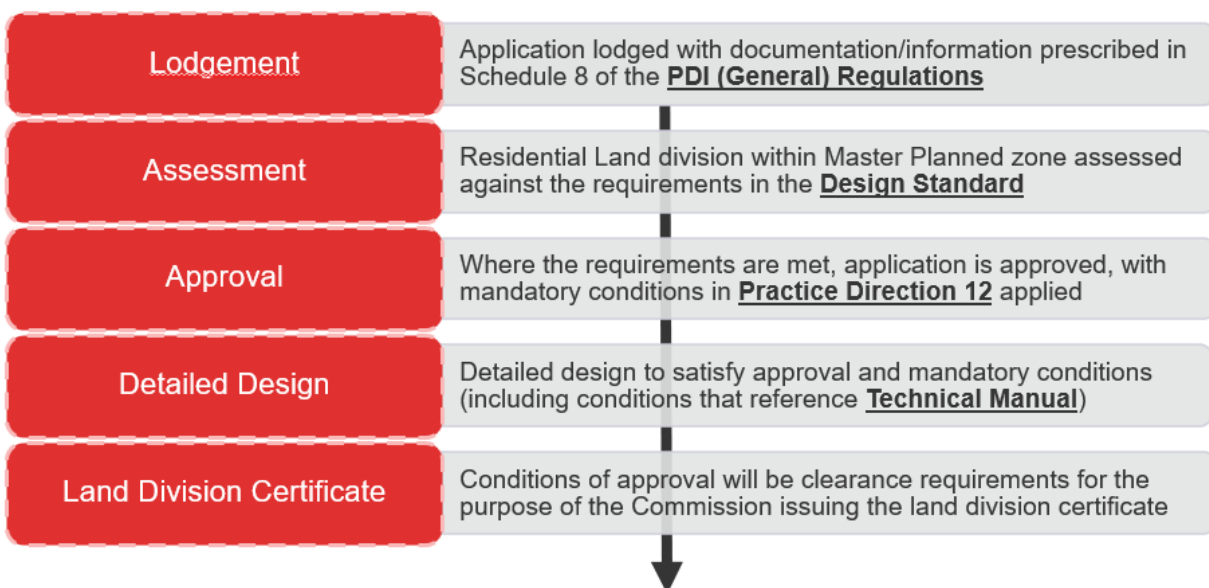
Draft Design Standard 1 – Engineering Requirements for Land Division provides technical guidance and builds on existing planning rules to deliver more transparent and consistent design standards, construction specifications and infrastructure costs for land division.

It specifies requirements for matters assessed during land division consent and applies to land division for large residential developments in Master Planned Zones, including constructing a public road or infrastructure that will become council property.

A draft technical manual has also been prepared to provide detailed best-practice engineering specifications for these types of infrastructure, as well as a suite of draft standard drawings for use in design and construction to significantly reduce assessment timeframes.

Supporting amendments to the planning general regulations and Practice Direction 12 – Conditions are also proposed.

Each of these proposed changes play an important role in streamlining the land division assessment process and providing greater certainty, consistency and efficiency for assessments.



Lodgement

Residential land division applications within a Master Planned Zone that include infrastructure to be vested in a council are assessed against the engineering design standard.

No additional information is required to submit the land division application beyond the mandatory information specified in the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017*. This allows the relevant authority to confirm the assessment pathway, referrals and fees.

Where necessary, the relevant authority may request additional information following verification to be able to appropriately assess the application.

Assessment

As with any land division, applications that are subject to the design standard require both planning consent and land division consent.

Planning Consent

The planning consent process remains unchanged, with the land division assessed against the Planning and Design Code.

This assessment considers whether the land division is well planned, aligns with the vision for the area and can be appropriately serviced.

Considerations include the layout and staging of allotments, movement for people and vehicles, site suitability and whether allotment sizes and dimensions support appropriate future development.

Land division consent

The engineering design standard is applied through the land division consent assessment process.

Under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, an application for land division is assessed against any applicable design standards, the requirements of relevant water industry entities (such as SA Water), the open space contribution scheme and the requirements set out in the regulations relating to constructing roads and drainage.

Where the engineering design standard applies, the design standard requirements replace the corresponding provisions of the regulations and all requirements must be met. Councils will no longer have discretion to dispense with requirements.

The design standard sets out the requirements that must be satisfied as part of the land division consent assessment in relation to:

- road and pavement design
- stormwater design and quality
- earthworks
- service infrastructure
- street landscaping, including trees.

All design requirements within the design standard must be able to be met for the land division consent to be approved.

Approval

If a land division meets the design standard and all other land division consent requirements, the relevant authority will approve the application.

The approval will include conditions, including mandatory conditions related to the design standard.

Proposed amendments to Practice Direction 12 – Conditions list the conditions that must be included in approvals where the land division is assessed against the design standard.

These mandatory conditions are applied to ensure consistent outcomes are achieved at the detailed design stage.

Detailed design

Detailed design of a land division is undertaken after development approval is issued to:

- avoid over-designing infrastructure too early
- reduce the amount of technical information required at application stage
- allow councils and developers to resolve technical matters closer to construction.

Detailed design is when the high-level design accepted at land division consent is turned into fully specified, build-ready plans.

This is the stage where technical details are finalised and checked to make sure infrastructure can actually be constructed and vested to the relevant authority (usually the council or a service provider).

Detailed design typically includes:

- final road geometry, pavement thicknesses and materials
- detailed stormwater pipe sizes, levels and outlet designs
- water sensitive urban design details
- earthworks levels and retaining structures
- service layouts (water, sewer, power, telecoms)
- detailed landscaping and street tree plans
- construction specifications and drawings.

Before any infrastructure can be constructed or works commenced on the site, the detailed design must be submitted to the council and approved.

It must also be consistent with the plans approved as part of the land division consent and meet all mandatory conditions.

Land division certificate

A land division certificate is issued by the State Planning Commission after land division consent has been granted and all required conditions have been satisfied.

The land division certificate confirms that:

- the approved land division has been carried out in accordance with the plans and details
- all relevant conditions of approval have been met.

Under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, the certificate is issued under section 138, and it is required before new certificates of title can be created.

The conditions of approval and the matters set out in the engineering design standard will be clearance requirements for the purpose of the Commission issuing the land division certificate.

Further information

For more information about the draft engineering design standard and supporting draft technical manual, mandatory conditions and regulation amendments:

- read the [Engineering requirements for land division fact sheet](#)
- visit the YourSAy website at: yoursay.sa.gov.au/engineering-design-standard-stage-2
- register to join an online information session on Wednesday, 29 April at: shorturl.at/RHE7P
- contact the team at DHUD.PlusStrategicProjects@sa.gov.au or call 1800 752 664.

Share your feedback

Feedback on the draft engineering design standard, technical manual and standard drawings, mandatory conditions and regulation amendments can be provided by 20 May 2026 by:

- taking our online survey at: yoursay.sa.gov.au/engineering-design-standard-stage-2
- emailing your written submission to: PlanSASubmissions@sa.gov.au
(subject: Submission – Engineering Requirements for Land Division)
- posting your written submission to: Attention: State Planning Commission, GPO Box 1815, Adelaide SA 5001.