

Design Standard 1 – Engineering Requirements for Land Division

The State Planning Commission has prepared draft engineering requirements for land division that aim to streamline assessment processes and enable more homes to be built faster across South Australia's growth areas. Find out more about these proposed changes.

A new engineering design standard

Design standards are a new planning instrument that supports 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.

For council, they provide a transparent and efficient decision-making framework that supports consistency and streamlines assessment. For industry, they offer certainty and clarity upfront, helping to reduce delays, redesign costs and inconsistency during the approvals process.

Set to be South Australia's first design standard, draft Design Standard 1 – Engineering Requirements for Land Division is a statutory planning instrument prepared by the State Planning Commission that supports the Planning and Design Code by setting consistent infrastructure requirements for land division in South Australia's greenfield and growth areas.

It aims to improve certainty, consistency and efficiency in the design, assessment and delivery of civil infrastructure associated with large residential land divisions, and ensure infrastructure is safe and functional.

The design standard is intended to:

- streamline land division assessment processes
- enable faster delivery of housing in growth areas
- reduce infrastructure costs through consistent standards
- provide greater clarity for developers, councils and the community
- support durable and maintainable public infrastructure.

It builds on existing planning rules rather than replacing them, providing technical guidance that supports transparent and consistent decision-making.

The draft engineering 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.

The standard specifies infrastructure requirements across key infrastructure areas, including road and pavement design, stormwater design and quality, earthworks, service infrastructure and street landscaping, including trees.

Mandatory conditions in Practice Direction 12

Proposed changes to Practice Direction 12 – Conditions establish mandatory engineering-related conditions that must be applied to land division consents where the engineering design standard applies, making the state’s technical design requirements legally enforceable.

The draft practice direction requires land divisions to be designed, constructed and handed over in accordance with the technical manual or council requirements and relevant Australian Standards, covering civil works, earthworks, stormwater management, roads and pavements, service infrastructure, landscaping and street trees, and asset handover.

The conditions ensure stormwater is appropriately managed, roads and services are designed for long-term capacity and durability, infrastructure is delivered underground to service-provider standards, and councils receive compliant “as-constructed” documentation before assets are handed over.

In practice, the engineering design standard sets the technical benchmarks, while practice direction 12 makes compliance with those benchmarks mandatory through conditions of consent.

Technical manual for growth area infrastructure

The draft Technical Manual – Infrastructure for Growth Areas and Greenfield Developments explains what is expected when planning, designing and delivering infrastructure for new land divisions in greenfield and growth areas within South Australia.

Its purpose is to provide clear guidance on the level of information, design quality and baseline standards needed for infrastructure such as roads, stormwater, earthworks, services and public spaces, so developments are safe, functional and fit for long-term use.

The draft technical manual supports the engineering design standard by helping applicants, designers and authorities understand what good practice looks like and what should be considered early in the design process.

It promotes consistent, well-designed outcomes, while recognising that site conditions, council requirements and service provider standards may require different solutions in some cases.

The technical manual is referenced in some of the proposed mandatory conditions in practice direction 12 and provides guidance to best practice land division design and construction as well as suitable ways to meet the mandatory conditions.

Overall, the draft technical manual is intended to improve the quality and consistency of infrastructure delivered in growth areas, while allowing flexibility where justified and agreed through the development assessment process.

Amendment to the general regulations

The proposed amendment regulations update the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017* to clarify how design standards apply to land division and introduce new requirements for open space and street lighting.

The draft amendment regulations:

- clearly establish design standards as the primary technical requirements for land division where they apply
- reduce duplication and uncertainty between regulations and design standards
- ensure councils have clear approval roles for open space, street lighting and street planting in new subdivisions.

Work is also underway to prepare additional regulations regarding mandatory information requirements for the design standard. These will be consulted on as part of a broader package of proposed planning regulation changes relating to mandatory information requirements mid-year.

Have your say

Share your feedback on the draft engineering requirements for land division, including the draft engineering design standard, technical manual, standard drawings, regulations and practice direction, by Thursday, 21 May 2026.

Have your say 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.

Further information

Find out more about draft engineering requirements for land division and how to share your feedback by:

- registering to join an online information session on Wednesday, 29 April at: shorturl.at/RHE7P
- visiting the YourSAy website at: yoursay.sa.gov.au/engineering-design-standard-stage-2
- contacting the team at DHUD.PlusStrategicProjects@sa.gov.au or call 1800 752 664.

Hard copies of the draft engineering design standard, technical manual, standard drawings, regulations and practice direction are available for viewing during standard business hours at level 9, 83 Pirie Street, Adelaide.