



Assessment Pathways

What are ‘assessment pathways’?

Assessment pathways describe the steps in assessment and approval of proposals for buildings or structures, alterations or demolitions or change in land use or division of land.

What are the main differences in the new planning assessment system?

The new planning system has been designed to ensure that simple applications with minimal issues are processed quickly, reducing red tape in the assessment process. This will be achieved through key changes like:

- creating an ‘ePlanning’ platform so that all applications are lodged, assessed and determined from one central portal (there will no longer be a need to lodge hard copy plans at the local council)
- allowing ‘accredited professionals’ to assess certain types of planning applications
- reducing the amount of applications that need to be referred to external agencies
- creating an automatic ‘deemed consent’ if the planning authority exceeds the maximum timeframe for a decision
- creating an ‘outline consent’ process to provide upfront certainty for certain proposal concepts
- sign on the land for public notification.

Will it be easier to get approval for my development application?

Simple, expected forms of development, such as new houses and domestic structures, will follow a quick approval process, lodged through a central portal, to your council or choice of accredited professional. Simple applications that meet the planning rules will not be subject to public notification and will be guaranteed planning consent.

If, however, a development doesn’t fit within the planning rules, the assessment process will be more thorough to ensure that impact and design are given proper consideration, and neighbours are given a chance to have their say.

Will I still lodge my application with my local council?

No, applications will be lodged online on the SA Planning Portal. This means that you can lodge an application at home or from anywhere in the world – you no longer need to go to the local council to lodge applications in person, or in hard copy.

Some applications will still be assessed by the council officers or an assessment panel, but they will receive the application electronically via the planning portal.

Where required, councils or community centres may choose to provide assistance to applicants in lodging their application in person - by scanning plans and lodging on the portal.

What types of applications can be submitted to a private ‘accredited professional’?

The role of accredited professionals will be enhanced in the planning system via the new accreditation scheme. Exactly what types of applications accredited professionals will be responsible for will be determined from feedback to the technical discussion paper [Assessment Pathways: How will they work?](#)

Will I be notified about my neighbour’s development application?

Affected persons will be notified of impact assessed development. Neighbours may also be notified of certain types of performance assessed development where identified in the [Planning and Design Code](#).

Development that meets all the planning rules is unlikely to be notified as it will be a ‘deemed-to-satisfy’ form of development. This means that people who design their development to comply with the policies will not be held up with unnecessary consultation.

How will I be notified of development that affects me?

If an application is to be publicly notified, the following methods of notification will be undertaken:

- Owners or occupiers of land located no more than 60 metres from a development site will be notified by mail; and a notice will be placed on the development site.
- There is no longer a requirement for development applications to be advertised in the local newspaper.
- A sign on the land will provide more direct notification to people who regularly see the development site.

Will neighbours be able to appeal planning decisions?

Third party appeal rights will still apply to all restricted development because such development is beyond that anticipated by the planning rules. If, however, a development is expected and reasonable within its zone (and therefore is in the ‘code assessed’ category), there will not be a formal avenue for neighbours to appeal the planning decision. This means that development that is envisaged in a zone cannot be held up by third party appeals.

What happens if the planning authority takes a long time to make a decision?

If a planning authority does not make a decision on an application within the set timeframe, the applicant can apply for a ‘deemed consent’. This means that, on the day the applicant notifies the authority that they have exceeded the timeframe and wish to apply for a ‘deemed consent’, the authority will be taken to have granted the planning consent.

If the relevant authority believes that deemed consent should not have been granted, they may choose to issue a new consent with conditions, or apply to the Environment, Resources and Development Court for an order quashing the consent.