
State Significant Development and State Significant Infrastructure Guideline Updates – March 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

Why have the guidelines been updated?

The guidelines have been updated to reflect changes introduced by the *Planning System Reforms Act 2025* to make the planning system faster, fairer and more outcomes focused. The updates also reflect other recent changes to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and associated planning instruments.

Which guidelines have been updated?

All of the State Significant Development (SSD) and State Significant Infrastructure Guidelines, except Appendix A to the SSD and SSI Guidelines - Preparing a scoping report, have been updated. The Undertaking Engagement Guideline, Cumulative Impact Assessment Guideline, and Social Impact Assessment Guideline have also been updated

Work is underway to review scoping processes and ensure assessment requirements are targeted to key environmental risks to support proportionate, risk-based assessments.

What has been updated in the guidelines?

The key changes are outlined below:

- **New Objects of the Act** – Embed proportionate and risk-based approach to planning and assessment through messaging in the guides.
- **Matters for consideration** – Reflect new requirements for the consent authority to consider the significant likely impacts, rather than minor or negligible ones, when assessing an SSD.
- **Establishment of DCA** – Summarise the initial roles and responsibilities of the Development Coordination Authority (DCA). More detail will be provided after 1 July once DCA is fully operational.
- **Modifications under s4.55 of the Act** – Outline guidance for the changes that move modifications with no environmental impacts from section 4.55(1A) to section 4.55(1), with a new 14-day determination period for 4.55(1) modifications, after which they cannot be refused. To support this, the SSD guidelines - preparing a modification report introduce a streamlined application process for 4.55(1) modifications.
- **Reviews and appeals** - Set new rules for eligibility and timeframes.

- **EIS requirements** - Reflect changes to the EP&A Regulation. For SSD and SSI, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS):
 - no longer needs to provide an analysis of feasible alternatives to the development or infrastructure
 - only requires an analysis of the significant likely impacts on the environment of the development or infrastructure
 - must continue to outline measures to mitigate adverse effects on the environment and address Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).
- **Length and structure of reports** – Revise guidance text to emphasise that report length should be proportionate to the significance of impacts, with page limits removed.

You can learn more about the commencement of the reforms [here](#).

Are there any further changes planned for the guidelines?

More updates will be made in the coming months to clarify scoping expectations.

The guidelines will continue to be updated as new provisions begin, and additional policy changes are made to support the reforms.