

THE DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Planning Act 2016

STAGES OF ASSESSMENT

The *Planning Act 2016* outlines the step-by-step process for lodging, assessing and deciding development applications. Council officers follow this system when assessing an application. There are five main stages of assessment:

- » Application Stage
- » Information and Referral Stage
- » Notification Stage
- » Decision Stage
- » Compliance Stage.

Note—not all stages, or all parts of a stage, apply to all applications.

Council offers a pre-lodgement service that allows applicants to seek advice from planning officers prior to lodging the application. Please contact Planning Section for further information on the pre-lodgement process.

Application Stage

Applications are lodged either electronically via the Townsville Online Lodgement System, by email, post, or in person at Council's Customer Service Counter. Fees and charges are raised and paid at this time.

The application will initially be assessed to ensure it is “properly made” in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016*. If the application is not properly made, the applicant will receive an action notice identifying items to be addressed. If the application is properly made, the application stage will end and the next stage will commence. A confirmation notice may be sent at this stage.

Referral Stage

If any relevant referral agencies are identified on the confirmation notice, the applicant must send a copy of the application to each identified agency.

Information Request Stage

The assessing officer will commence the assessment of the application. This is when further information may be requested if there is insufficient information to allow a decision to be made.

Public Notification Stage

This stage is only for applicable impact assessable applications. Public notification is satisfied by placing an advertisement in the Townsville Bulletin, erecting a public notice sign on all street frontages of the development site,

and sending a letter to all adjoining neighbours advising of the details of the proposed development.

The applicant must notify council when public notification has commenced, and confirm that public notification has been completed in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016* once the public notification period has ended.

Decision Stage

When all information and responses have been received from referral agencies and the applicant, the decision stage commences.

The assessing officer refers to the relevant legislation, the planning scheme codes and policies, Australian Standards and the State Planning Policy, as required, to assess all aspects of the application.

The assessing officer will prepare a report, detailing the proposal and making a recommendation to approve, approve with conditions or refuse the application.

The application may then be decided under delegated authority based on the assessing officer's recommendation. Depending on the type of application, it may be required to be decided by Full Council and the recommendation presented to the Planning and Development Committee.

A decision notice is posted to the applicant when a decision has been made. This decision notice will also detail the conditions that the approval is contingent on (see Standard Conditions below).

STANDARD CONDITIONS

Development approvals are usually contingent on conditions. Council has developed Standard Conditions, which represent the most commonly used conditions. These are published on Council's website.

The conditions attached to a development approval must be:

- » relevant to, but not an unreasonable imposition on the development or use of premises as a consequence of the development; or
- » be reasonably required in relation to the development or use of premises as a consequence of the development.

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Conditions may be imposed that:

- » place a limit on how long a lawful use may continue or works may remain in place; or
- » state that a development may not start until other development permits, for the development on the same premises, have been given or other development on the same premises, including development not covered by the development application, has been substantially started or completed; or
- » require compliance with an infrastructure agreement relating to the land; or
- » require a document or work to be subject to further approvals; or
- » require development, or an aspect of development, to be completed within a particular time and require the payment of security.

LODGING APPLICATIONS

Development applications can be lodged in the following ways.

Online: Townsville Online Lodgement System, (TOLS), via Council's website

Email: developmentassessment@townsville.qld.gov.au

Visit: Council's Customer Service Counter, 103 Walker Street

Post: PO Box 1268, Townsville, QLD, 4810