

Responses to landholders frequently asked questions

State development areas

What is a State development area?

State development areas (SDAs) are clearly defined areas of land in Queensland that have been established by the state government to promote economic development, build wealth and generate jobs.

SDAs typically take the form of one of the following:

- industrial hubs, for large-scale and large footprint industrial development and associated infrastructure
- infrastructure corridors, for the colocation of infrastructure such as rail and pipelines
- major development sites including public works.

How are SDAs established?

SDAs are declared under section 77 of the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act).

A regulation may declare any part of the state an SDA if the Governor in Council is satisfied the public interest or general welfare of persons resident in any part of the state requires it.

What are the benefits of an SDA?

The benefits of SDAs include:

- attractive industrial development opportunities
- proximity to ports, rail and/or major road networks
- greater development certainty for industry

- efficient processing of development applications, including a coordinated referrals process
- more efficient use of land, most notably through the creation of multi-user infrastructure corridors
- best practice land-use planning and management, ensuring land and infrastructure assets in SDAs are, and remain, attractive to existing occupants and potential investors
- process for compulsorily acquiring land in an SDA if necessary, including on behalf of proponents
- concentration of industrial development in selected areas, thereby minimising or avoiding:
 - environmental impacts
 - loss of amenity
 - infrastructure duplications
 - transport conflicts.

What is the role of the Coordinator-General?

The Coordinator-General is responsible for the planning, establishment and ongoing management of SDAs throughout Queensland.

In an SDA, the Coordinator-General:

- controls land use activities
- implements the development scheme
- assesses and decides all development applications related to the use of the land
- has compulsory acquisition powers.

Does declaration of an SDA change the ownership of the land?

No. However, the Coordinator-General may compulsorily acquire land or easements in an SDA for various purposes, including establishment of industry, essential services or infrastructure corridors.

When can my land be acquired?

Land cannot be acquired until a regulation is made declaring an SDA in accordance with the SDPWO Act.

Following declaration, the Coordinator-General can commence an acquisition process if required.

Will my land be acquired?

Although land in an SDA may be resumed, generally not all land in an SDA is acquired.

Following the declaration of an SDA, the Coordinator-General can acquire land with the landowner's agreement (under section 15 of the *Acquisition of Land Act 1967* (ALA)) or without the landowner's agreement.

Land not resumed in an SDA remains the property of the landowner, but use of the land will be subject to the SDAs development scheme, a regulatory document that controls land use, infrastructure planning and development in the area.

If you are concerned about the potential of your property being resumed in the future, you may wish to seek independent advice.

How will I know if my land has been identified for acquisition?

If you are the owner of, or have a legal interest in, land identified for compulsory acquisition, the Coordinator-General will send you a written Notice of intension to resume (NIR). The NIR describes the land required and

will include a map or plan of survey showing the location of the land required.

The NIR signals the start of the acquisition process. At this stage, you are still the owner of the land.

If land is compulsorily acquired, the owner of the land is compensated in accordance with the ALA.

For further details see the factsheet [Compulsory land acquisition: Frequently asked questions](#).

What is a development scheme?

Each SDA is subject to a development scheme, a regulatory document that controls land use, infrastructure planning and development in the area.

Prepared by the Coordinator-General, the development scheme:

- ensures development is well planned, recognising existing industries and avoiding, mitigating or offsetting impacts on the environment, cultural heritage and the community
- provides certainty to developers, local government, state agencies and the wider community about the type and form of development that can occur in the SDA
- sets out the processes and procedures for the assessment of applications that are regulated by the development scheme
- overrides local and state government planning instruments related to the use of the land in the SDA.

When do I need an SDA development approval?

Approval is required from the Coordinator-General for any material change of use, namely:

- the start of a new use of the premises
- the re-establishment on the premises of a use that has been abandoned
- a material change in the intensity or scale of the premises.

This includes:

- building a dwelling house
- buildings for commercial purposes
- intensification of rural uses, e.g. grazing to cropping.

What other development approvals are required?

Development proponents may also lodge other types of development applications or requests in an SDA, namely:

- SDA application for reconfiguring a lot
- SDA application for operational works
- request to change an SDA application
- change application for an SDA approval
- request to state a later currency period
- request to carry out prior affected development
- request for approval of a plan of subdivision.

See the relevant development scheme for the applications regulated in that SDA.

Are development applications referred to other government agencies?

Applications may be referred to relevant state government agencies and local government/s for comment.

Accordingly, a proposed application may be assessed against other state or local statutory instruments (e.g. legislation, state policies and local planning schemes) as part of the referral process.

Are SDA applications subject to public consultation?

Some SDA applications are subject to public consultation, giving the public an opportunity to make a written submission on the application.

The [public consultation policy](#) provides information on matters the Coordinator-General may consider when determining whether public consultation of an SDA application is required.

How long does the development assessment process take?

The timeframes for each stage of the approvals process are detailed in the development scheme for each SDA.

Timeframes will depend on the type of development application, the complexity of the request and whether the request will be publicly notified and/or referred.

It is a priority of the Coordinator-General to streamline approvals and reduce approval timeframes where possible.

How do I submit a development application request?

The departmental website provides links to [online application forms](#) for all types of development applications and requests in SDAs.

Advisory notes are available to assist you with the preparation of the forms.

It is recommended that you contact the Office of the Coordinator-General prior to lodging an application to arrange a pre-lodgement meeting. This provides an opportunity to discuss the proposal, identify any issues that could potentially affect the assessment and ensure applications are properly made when submitted.

Application forms can be submitted via the online form or a printable form may be provided.

Are there fees involved with applications and requests relating to development in an SDA?

Yes. Fees are set by the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2020*.

For further details and the schedule of fees see the [Overview of fees for the Office of the Coordinator-General](#).

Prior to lodging an application or request, a proponent may make a written request to the Coordinator-General to waive all or part of a specified fee. This request must provide sufficient grounds for the waiver.

When do I need to contact my local council?

In an SDA, the relevant local council may still be responsible for assessment of other types of development such as:

- applications involving subdivision (reconfiguring a lot), creating new lots, or a change to a boundary when this is not regulated by the development scheme for that SDA
- plumbing and drainage works such as kitchen and bathroom additions and renovations, installing or replacing hot water heaters, toilets, showers and sinks
- development works for building and/or plumbing such as minor renovations, alterations and additions and before erecting retaining walls, carports and swimming pools
- operational work, such as vegetation clearing on freehold land when this is not regulated by the development scheme for that SDA
- building certification for renovations and new structures such as extensions, pools and sheds.

Are SDAs permanent?

No. When an SDA has achieved its objectives, the Coordinator-General has the option of revoking the declaration of the SDA and repealing its development scheme.

When this occurs, responsibility for planning and development in the revoked SDA is handed back to the relevant local council.

In May 2013 the Coordinator-General revoked the declaration of the Bundamba to Swanbank SDA and repealed its development scheme.

In September 2023 the Coordinator-General revoked the declaration of the Queensland Children's Hospital SDA.

Are all SDAs the same?

No. Each SDA has a different purpose, specific to that area and a different development scheme that takes into account the industries that already exist in the SDA as well as the surrounding land uses.

How many SDAs are there?

Currently there are 12 SDAs throughout Queensland.

- Abbot Point
- Bromelton
- Bundaberg
- Cairns South
- Callide Infrastructure Corridor
- Galilee Basin
- Gladstone
- Mackay
- Stanwell-Gladstone Infrastructure Corridor
- Surat Basin Infrastructure Corridor
- Townsville
- Tropical North

Further information

For further information please contact the Office of the Coordinator-General on 1800 001 048 or via sdainfo@coordinatorgeneral.qld.gov.au.

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