

Seeking pre-lodgement advice from SARA

This fact sheet outlines the processes for receiving advice from the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) before lodging a development application.

Benefits of seeking pre-lodgement advice

If your development application under the *Planning Act 2016* needs to be made to SARA as the assessment manager, or referred to SARA as a referral agency, discussing your application prior to lodgement is a great way to identify issues and expedite the assessment of your application (once made).

Pre-lodgement discussions with SARA are intended to:

- identify and resolve issues prior to lodgement
- provide constructive feedback in a timely and flexible manner
- promote the lodgement of 'decision ready' applications
- support efficient assessments post-lodgement.

Types of pre-lodgement advice

The type of pre-lodgement advice will depend on the information you are seeking from SARA:

- **Do you have a quick question?** You can call or email your local **SARA regional office** at any time. To give you the best advice, SARA officers may need to take your details and get back to you if further investigation is required.
- **Do you have a detailed enquiry?** Written advice or a meeting either in person or online may be right for you.

Officers from your local **SARA regional office** can assist you in deciding which kind of advice will best meet your needs. SARA will coordinate technical input from other relevant state agencies to ensure comprehensive advice is provided across all aspects of your development proposal. Combined pre-lodgement meetings with the relevant local government authority can also be facilitated.

How to request pre-lodgement advice

The easiest way to request and receive pre-lodgement advice from SARA is through the **MyDAS2 system** – the online platform for the preparation and assessment of applications under the *Planning Act 2016*.

If you are unable to use MyDAS2, please contact your local **SARA regional office**.

If you choose to submit your request for pre-lodgement advice through MyDAS2, please refer to the checklist (page 2 of this Factsheet) for recommendations on the information to be included. While SARA is happy to provide advice on development proposals at any stage, the more detailed the information you supply, the more detailed SARA's feedback can be.

Timeframes for receiving pre-lodgement advice

Unless a shorter timeframe is requested, SARA aims to action requests for pre-lodgement advice as follows:

- For written advice, advice will be provided within seven business days.
- For pre-lodgement meetings:
 - a meeting time will be agreed within five business days
 - any follow-up advice will be provided within seven business days of the meeting.

SARA can work within your project timeframes to supply pre-lodgement advice; however, please bear in mind that if timeframes shorter than the above are requested, our ability to give detailed advice may be limited.

What to provide when seeking pre-lodgement advice

Including as much detail as possible in your request for pre-lodgement advice will help SARA officers give the most comprehensive feedback and will maximise the value of the pre-lodgement process for your project.

All pre-lodgement advice requests must include the following (MyDAS2 will prompt you):

- your name and contact details
- location of the proposed development site (street address, lot on plan and/or coordinates)
- description of the development proposed
- the matters you are seeking advice about
- your preferred format for advice (e.g. meeting, written advice)
- if a meeting is the preferred format, details of proposed attendees and suggested date/time (if relevant).

We recommend also providing the following information if it can be uploaded into MyDAS2:

- detailed proposal plans, including a site plan and other architectural or engineering drawings
- draft consultant reports or other inputs relating to technical issues
- existing use and history of the development site
- the relevant local government area and planning scheme zone
- previous approvals over the site and/or previous advice from SARA or local government
- any other information you deem relevant.

Please contact your local **SARA regional office** if you are unsure about the materials that should be supplied with a pre-lodgement request.