Housing Delivery Authority SSD criteria

About the HDA SSD process

The NSW Government has established the Housing Delivery Authority (HDA) to boost housing supply and improve housing affordability across the State.

An expression of interest (EOI) process has been established for the HDA to recommend certain major housing proposals be declared as State significant development (SSD).

The Minister will consider the advice of the HDA in determining whether the recommended proposals should be declared SSD under the HDA Pathway.

The HDA is not responsible for determining any future State Significant Development Applications resulting from an EOI.

Aim and objectives for the HDA SSD pathway process

The aim of this process is to encourage and identify major housing proposals and ensure a strong pipeline of dwellings, by assessing and determining high-yield housing projects through the SSD pathway which can be delivered within the five year horizon.

Before a project submitted by way of EOI is recommended by the HDA to be declared SSD, EOIs will be assessed against criteria that accord with the objectives of this process.

Objectives

1. **Identify high-yield housing proposals** by focusing on known high-yield types of residential accommodation.
2. **Identify housing projects that can be assessed and constructed quickly** by focusing on more compliant, major housing proposals that can commence construction quickly.
3. **Drive quality and affordable housing** by focusing on housing development proposals that are well-located, have enabling infrastructure and contribute to affordable housing supply.
4. **Complement the State Significant Rezoning Policy** by providing a potential pathway for major housing proposals that are seeking concurrent rezoning.

The HDA applies flexibility in their evaluation of proposals against the criteria.

HDA SSD criteria

The HDA is responsible for assessing EOIs against the following criteria to determine whether residential development should be recommended to become SSD.

The criteria are designed to:

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- maximise the opportunities for well-located housing that can be quickly assessed and delivered.
- support the objectives of the EOI process.
- be clear, objective and consistently applied.

The Department will review all EOIs to ensure applications have adequately addressed the criteria below.

It is ultimately a matter for the HDA to be satisfied whether an EOI under consideration adequately addresses the criteria below, including an evaluation of the criteria against each other determined by the HDA. The HDA may decide to recommend to the Minister that a particular proposal become SSD, if the HDA is satisfied that a particular development adequately addresses the following criteria.

Updated criteria: published 12 May 2026

Criteria	Element
Objective 1: Deliver more homes within a five year horizon	
1.1 Development is a type to deliver high yield housing	The residential component of the development is a type of 'residential accommodation' including the following types of high-yield housing: • multi dwelling housing • residential flat buildings • seniors housing • shop top housing • co-living housing (student housing) that involves renewal of existing student housing or on a university campus Land subdivision is not a housing type, subdivision will only be considered where high yield housing is also included. An EOI for a concept plan needs to be accompanied by a detailed application for housing so that the proposal delivers housing within the five year period.
1.2 Development is State significant	Estimated development cost (EDC) of the residential component of development is: • more than (approximately) $60m (and approximately 100 or more homes) in the Greater Sydney Region, or Newcastle and Wollongong Local Government Areas • more than (approximately) $30m (and approximately 40 or more homes) elsewhere. If there is an existing SSD pathway available for the development under the Planning System SEPP or Housing SEPP, then that pathway should be utilised.

Criteria	Element
Objective 2: Identify projects that can be assessed quickly	
2.1 Largely consistent with development standards	Does not exceed applicable development standards by more than 20%.
2.2 Positive commitment to commence	Demonstrated capability to lodge application quickly - within 9 months of SEARs being issued.
	Demonstrated capability to commence development quickly - within 12 months of approval.
2.3 Land tenure is secure	Demonstrated ownership or option to purchase for all land to which the proposal applies.
2.4 Utilises existing contribution schemes	Applicant demonstrates proposal will pay contributions as per councils' existing contributions plans (or equivalent).
2.5 Has addressed any previously refused proposal	Applicant positively addresses any reasons for refusal if development is based on a previously refused or stalled application/planning proposal/land and environment court appeal. EOIs previously considered by the HDA and not supported will not be accepted for subsequent consideration unless positively and materially addressing the reason for decision. Note: any proposal that is already being considered under another pathway will not be declared as State significant until the applicant withdraws from that pathway.
Objective 3: Drive quality and affordable housing	
3.1 Well-located	Proposal site has good access to transport and services as it is: • for development on land in Greater Sydney[1], Central Coast, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle, Kiama, Shellharbour and Wollongong local government areas — in an accessible area[2], or • for development on other land — within 800m walking distance of land in a relevant zone[3].

[1] Greater Sydney

[2] As defined in Schedule 10 of the Housing SEPP.

[3] E1 Local Centre, E2 Commercial Centre and MU1 Mixed use.

Criteria	Element
	Proposal site is free of specific environmental hazards and constraints, by not being located: • in an environmentally sensitive area of State significance as defined in the EP&A Regulation . • on bush fire prone land[4]. • on land in a flood planning area[5]. • on land affected by hazards (including land slip, mine subsidence, contamination and underground high-risk infrastructure).
3.2 Well serviced	Applicant demonstrates that there is adequate capacity in enabling infrastructure such as water, sewer, access
3.3 Positive commitment to affordable housing	Proposal will contribute a measurable quantity of affordable housing (as defined in s1.4(1) of the *EP&A Act*) Affordable housing offering demonstrates a commitment to: • align to the NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines[6] • align to existing State or council policy Where a concurrent rezoning is sought, the affordable housing offering from the proponent should exceed the requirements already in place in a council or State policy, so that the affordable housing rate is proportional to the level of uplift sought. Where the uplift sought through a concurrent rezoning is significant, the affordable housing offering should be provided in perpetuity, recognising the substantial benefit in uplift to the proponent. Applicant is to specify the proposed nature of any offering including percentage rate, form, ownership and tenure.

[4] As designated by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service under section 10.3 of the EP&A Act

[5] As defined in the NSW Government's Flood risk management manual.

[6] NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines

Criteria	Element
Objective 4: Optional Concurrent Spot Rezonings	
4.1 Significant changes to development standards or prohibited development will require a suitable concurrent rezoning proposal	• For a proposal that exceeds applicable development standards (such as height of building or FSR) by more than 20%, requires amendment of a local provision or is prohibited by an EPI, will need to be lodged in conjunction with a rezoning proposal • For a proposal that seeks uplift via a concurrent rezoning, demonstrate why the infill affordable housing bonus provisions and associated SSD pathway are not to be utilised.

Criteria	Element

4.2 Proposal has strategic merit	• Land is not zoned:
	  ○ C2 Environmental Conservation
	  ○ C3 Environmental Management
	  ○ RE2 Private Recreation
	  ○ RU1 Primary Production
	  ○ RU2 Rural Landscapes
	  ○ RU3 Forestry
	  ○ RU4 Primary Production Small Lot[7].
	• Land is not:
	  ○ categorised as 'regionally significant industrial land' under the framework identified in the draft Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands and applied through a draft or adopted strategic plan.
	  ○ within commercial core of the Parramatta (land identified as "Area B" on the Special Provisions Area Map under Parramatta LEP 2023), North Sydney and Sydney CBDs (land zoned E2 Commercial Centre or SP5 Metropolitan Centre under the respective Local Environmental Plans[8])
	  ○ subject to a dwelling cap under an environmental planning instrument[9]
	  ○ subject to an active State-led rezoning which is yet to be exhibited.
	• Applicant demonstrates that the proposal has strategic merit
	  ○ aligns with a relevant strategic plan or responds to a change in circumstances that has not been recognised by the existing planning framework
	  ○ there is no other available state assessed pathway
	  ○ aligns with development standards/zoning set for the site through a State-led rezoning completed since the beginning of the National Housing Accord period, or local masterplan which replaces the TOD planning controls in State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 (the Housing SEPP)
	  ○ is consistent with an exhibited state-led rezoning which is yet to be finalised.

[7] Land use zones are described in the Standard Instrument LEP https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/epi-2006-155a#pt

[8] Parramatta LEP 2023, North Sydney LEP 2013, Sydney LEP 2012

[9] In force environment planning instrument can be viewed on the NSW Legislation website

Changes to July 2025 criteria:

Criteria	Change
Objective 1 and Criteria: Development is a type to deliver high yield housing	• Maintain an ongoing commitment to timeliness to support a continuous housing pipeline.
Criteria: Development is State significant	• Update the estimated development cost for Newcastle and Wollongong Local Government Areas.
Criteria: Has addressed any previously refused proposal	• Clarify that the HDA will not reconsider a previously unsupported EOI unless a new EOI positively addresses the reason for this decision.
Criteria: Positive commitment to affordable housing	• Provide further guidance on the detail and form of affordable housing contributions, including that existing policy is met and the concurrent rezonings provide a contribution proportionate to the uplift.
Criteria: Proposal has strategic merit	• Outline land that is ineligible for the pathway • Clarify that applicants demonstrate their proposals align with local masterplans which provide an alternative response to the Transport Oriented Development as finalised.