



## FAQ

# Litchfield Council – Development and Subdivision Standards

### Why is Council updating the current Planning - Development Guidelines?

The update is essential to ensure that the document:

- Accurately captures Council's current requirements and practices,
- Is presented in a user-friendly format, and
- Addresses all areas of Council responsibility, including existing and new asset classes, such as waste, street lights, and public open space.

Additionally, the updated information will feed into Council's review of the Developer Contribution Plan. Updated Standards are required prior to finalising the associated costs of works nominated in the Developer Contribution Plan.

### What are the main differences in the proposed Standards?

#### Document Title

The previous document title referred to Guidelines. However, the document provides minimum requirements, rather than recommendations, and are therefore more appropriately titled as "Standards".

#### Design and Approval Process

The second chapter of the updated document contains detailed instructions for the developer for each stage of the development process. The intent of this section is to ensure the developer is fully informed and has an easy reference guide for interaction with and expectations from Council throughout the project.

#### Road Widths and Streetscape Design

The updated document contains more detailed information on requirements for overall road, carriageway, verge, and footpath widths for streets with different types of urban development – smaller lot single dwelling and multiple dwelling residential, larger lot single dwelling residential, and commercial/industrial development. Importantly, a focus of the streetscape design is to ensure the preservation of a rural streetscape character even within the areas of more urban development, primarily through requirements for wider landscaped verges and dedicated areas for on-street car parking in areas of more intense residential development.

Rural road carriageway widths for all roads have been coordinated for consistency in the creation of an interconnected local road network, as encouraged by the NT Planning Scheme.

### Wearing Surface

The updated document has upgraded the requirement for cul-de-sacs from spray seal to asphalt to manage Council's long-term maintenance costs due to frequent repairs required to these areas under the current Guidelines.

The driveway crossover requirement has been downgraded to 10mm aggregate, as it has been determined that this standard provides a better surface over time for this crossing.

### Driveway Crossovers and Access for New Lots

The updated document includes clarification of Council's position on shared right-of-way and battleaxe accesses.

The driveway crossover requirement for commercial and industrial sites in rural areas has been amended to a concrete crossover, to protect this area of Council's road reserve from failure due to use by heavy vehicles.

### Drainage

The updated document contains standards for detention basins, where appropriately sited, and contains clarification on requirements for underground stormwater drainage in urban areas.

### Landscaping

The updated document provides requirements for tree planting, irrigation, and weeds and provides revised requirements for extent of grass cover.

### Waste

The updated document provides minimum requirements for waste collection for commercial/industrial properties and for residential properties with four or more units.

### Street Lights and Public Open Space

The updated document details requirements for these two areas of Council new responsibility since the adoption of the previous Guidelines.

### **Why are there new requirements for urban roads and drainage?**

The existing document addresses primarily a rural setting, with limited attention to commercial and industrial development. With the latest NT Planning Commission direction for Litchfield Council, such as encouraged in the Litchfield Subregional Land Use Plan, there is an expectation for an increase in urban types of development within the Rural Activity Centre areas, and we will begin to see the new development of entirely urban suburbs, such as Holtze and eventually Weddell. The current Guidelines do not contain adequate standards to address these urban areas.

### **Why do we need street lighting section in this document?**

Council is now responsible for street lighting within the Municipality. These requirements were formed through evaluation of best practices of Power and Water Corporation City of Darwin, City of Palmerston, and Town of Katherine.

## **Why do we need to introduce public open space in this document?**

In areas of urban development, the NT Planning Scheme requires a minimum of 10% of the total subdivision area to be provided as public open space. These standards will ensure the provision of appropriate public open spaces that provide adequate facilities for the local population.

## **Why have the forms changed? / Where is the Declaration of Works form?**

All forms within the document have been updated to ensure a smooth process for the developer throughout the project.

The updated form introduces *Form A – Developer’s Representative* to ensure consistent information is given to the correct contact throughout the project.

*Form B – Plan/Report Review* contains a handy checklist on the reverse side of the form to ensure the developer has included all necessary information for each type of plan/report submitted to Council.

*Form C – Works Permit – Works Associated with a Development Permit* provides a specific form for works within Council’s road reserve that are associated with a development or subdivision. Other works within Council property will have new forms developed that will sit outside of the Standards. This form includes standard conditions related to the Permit on the reverse side.

*Form D – Inspection Request* provides an updated form with an easy-to-use checklist that allows the developer to specify the hold point required for inspection.

*Form E – Clearance of General Conditions/Release from Defects Liability Period* was developed to reduce identified confusion for developers in knowing how to initiate these stages of the development process.

*Form F - Value of Assets Spreadsheet* replaces the *Declaration of Works* form from the previous Guidelines. The intent of the *Declaration of Works* form was to capture the new assets Council was receiving as part of the subdivision; however, there was inconsistency in how these values were applied across developments, leading to a sense of inequality amongst developments. *Form F - Value of Assets Spreadsheet* takes away the inconsistency by applying the same values across all developments. The developer has only to fill in the amount of the assets created (e.g. total length of road, number of signs) and the spreadsheet will produce a consistent value for each asset across all developments. The values within *Form F - Value of Assets Spreadsheet* are taken from Council’s asset revaluation process (which is updated every three years), in accordance with Australian Accounting Standard AASB116.

*Form G – Outstanding Works Bond Application* provides an updated form for any outstanding works, which is typically limited to a grass bond.