

Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) Handout

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SDA Assessment – Trigger Criteria

Knox City Council requires that a Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) Report must be submitted with any Planning Permit Application for Developments, including Alterations and Additions, consisting of:

- 2-9 Additional Dwellings (i.e. Townhouses and Apartments); or
- A Mixed Use (i.e. Apartments + Retail or Office) or Accommodation other than Dwellings (i.e. Motel/Hotel) Building with a Gross Floor Area between 500m² and 1,000m²; or
- Alterations and Additions of more than 500m² additional Gross Floor Area (excluding outbuildings) to Accommodation and/or Mixed Use Buildings with a Residential Component; or
- A Non-Residential (i.e. Office, Retail or Warehouse) Building and/or Alteration and Addition with a Gross Floor Area between 500m² and 2,000m².

Note

Council strongly encourages the submission of an SDA Report for all other developments that **fall below** the above criteria (i.e. a single (1) dwelling development or dual occupancy subdivision).

Council requires a **Sustainability Management Plan (SMP) Report** for developments that **exceed** the above criteria (i.e. Non-Residential development with GFA >2,000 m²).

Why Submit a Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) Report?

A Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) Report outlines a development's sustainability performance reflected by the relevant Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) principles incorporated within the development.

Knox City Council requires that the sustainability performance of a development is measured as a part of the planning permit application process. The purpose of requesting planning permit applicants to measure the sustainability performance of their development is to:

- Ensure new buildings meet appropriate environmental performance standards;
- Provide a clear outline of the environmental objectives and standards required by Council;
- Present a consistent and equitable approach towards assessing planning applications on their environmental impact;
- Offer flexibility on how developments meet such standards with an easy-to-use assessment tool; and
- Promote awareness and knowledge of the benefits of incorporating sustainability within developments from the planning stage and as a part of the integrated development process.

To facilitate this process, Knox City Council has endorsed the use of the ESD assessment tool the **Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS)** (the Tool). The computer-based tool is a simple way to determine if a proposed development measures up to standards of environmental and sustainability performance. The Tool provides assistance to improve the applicant's design and reduce its environmental impact, thereby supporting Council's objectives. The Tool can be accessed via: <http://www.bess.net.au/>.

All planning permit applicants must use the **BESS Assessment Tool** for residential buildings and/or non-residential buildings or an equivalent rating tool system (i.e. the Green Building Council of Australia's (GBCA's) Green Star Rating Tool), if applicable.

A development must achieve the minimum expectations for sustainable design performance as measured by the BESS Assessment Tool. This includes achieving a **Minimum Overall Score of 50%**. **Additionally, a minimum 50% score must be achieved for each of the categories 'Energy', 'Water' and 'Indoor Environment Quality (IEQ)' and a 100% score for the category 'Stormwater'; supported by ancillary assessment tools, as deemed necessary.**

The **BESS Assessment Report**, generated by the Tool, **must be submitted with the applicant's SDA Report as part of the ancillary documentation** required to support a planning permit application.

Please note that the **BESS Assessment Tool has replaced** the former *Sustainable Development Scorecard (SDS)* and *Sustainable Tools for Environmental Performance Strategy (STEPS)* assessment tools as a method to assess developments.

BESS Assessment Tool Background

The BESS Assessment Tool is a free, online, sustainability assessment tool that is built to support the Sustainable Design Assessment in the Planning Process (SDAPP) framework.

The Tool is supported by several Councils a part of the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) which Knox City Council is a member. CASBE is an association within the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) consisting of Victorian councils committed to the creation of a sustainable built environment within and beyond their municipalities.

In accordance with SDAPP, the Tool aims to address the 10 key sustainability building categories within a proposed development including Energy and Water Efficiency, Indoor Environment and Stormwater Quality, Waste, Construction and Building Management, Transportation and Urban Ecology.

Requirements when Submitting an SDA Report

Upon review of the **SDA Assessment – Trigger Criteria** specified to determine whether an SDA Report is required to accompany a planning permit application, all applications to Knox City Council must contain the following documentation:

Primary Documentation:

- A Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) Report including a written Sustainability Statement/Summary which summarises the relevant sustainability measures and ESD features included in the development (please see Council templates for guidance regarding SDA Reports for Residential and Non Residential developments);

Ancillary Documentation:

- A copy of the Report generated from the BESS Assessment Tool or equivalent;
- A copy of the Report generated from either the InSite Water, STORM or MUSIC Assessment Tools pertaining to Water Efficiency and Stormwater (required to complete the BESS Assessment Tool process);
- A copy of the Preliminary Energy Performance Assessments relevant to the type of development (i.e. NatHERS certificates, FirstRate5, JV3 or BCA Section J Energy Efficiency Assessments); and
- Any sustainability measures and ESD features marked on relevant plans (e.g. vegetation, permeable surfaces, water tanks, WSUD features such as raingardens, clothes lines, individual/smart utility metres, drainage, eaves and shade structures).

This checklist aims to ensure that all documents are submitted to Council to initiate the assessment of an SDA Report application.

Please note that the quality and content of the information submitted to the Planning Office will not be assessed until it is reviewed by the Responsible Authority.

Contact

For further queries regarding an SDA Report, the BESS Assessment Tool and relevant documentation, please contact City Development, Planning Services on 9298 8125.