



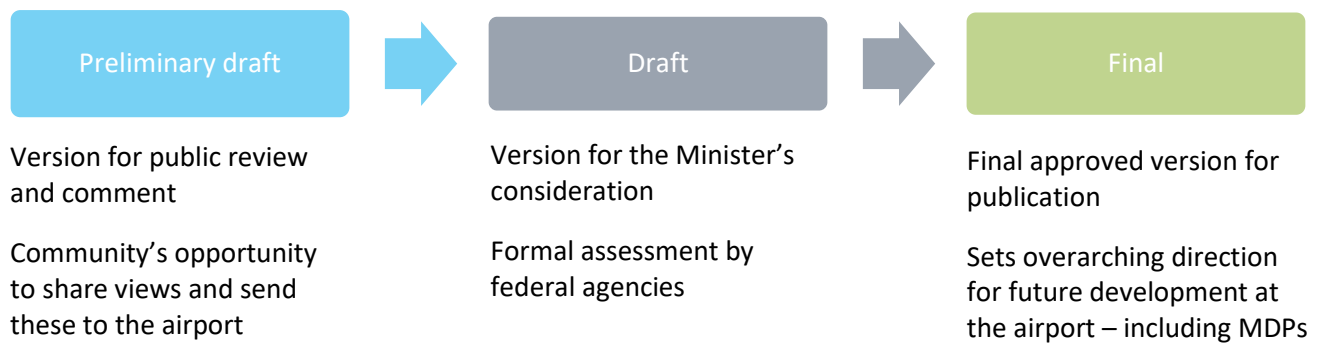
Approval processes for Master Plans and Major Development Plans under the Airports Act 1996

Summary for the Brisbane Airport Community Airspace Advisory Board (AAB)

November 2024

- The *Airports Act 1996* (the Airports Act) sets out approval processes for Master Plans, and Major Development Plans (MDPs), which governs land use and planning on federally leased airports.
- The Minister with responsibility for the Airports Act (currently the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government), must make a decision to approve, or refuse to approve, each draft Master Plan, or draft MDP, before they come into force.
- The purposes of a Master Plan is to:
 - establish the strategic direction for efficient and economic development of the airport;
 - provide for the development of additional uses of the airport site;
 - indicate to the public the intended uses of the airport site;
 - reduce potential conflicts between uses of the airport site, and ensure that uses are compatible with areas surrounding the airport;
 - ensure that all operations at the airport are undertaken in accordance with relevant environmental legislation and standards;
 - establish a framework for assessing compliance at the airport with relevant environmental legislation and standards; and
 - promote the continual improvement of environmental management at the airport.
- An MDP is intended to establish the details of a major airport development (which is defined in section 89 of the Airports Act, and includes construction of a new runway), and to ensure that the major airport development is consistent with the airport lease and final Master Plan for the airport.
- Approval processes for Master Plans and MDPs under the Airports Act are similar. Each Master Plan and MDP is considered through a three-stage process, summarised below.

Master Plan – approval process



Preliminary draft (including public consultation)

- An airport-lessee company is required to publicly exhibit a preliminary draft Master Plan for 60 business days, and invite members of the public to provide written comments about the preliminary draft during this period, prior to submitting a draft Master Plan to the Minister.
- An airport-lessee company is required to provide the Minister with copies of the comments it receives from members of the public and other stakeholders on the preliminary draft version of the Master Plan. The airport-lessee company is also required to demonstrate due regard for those comments in preparing the draft Master Plan that is submitted to the Minister.

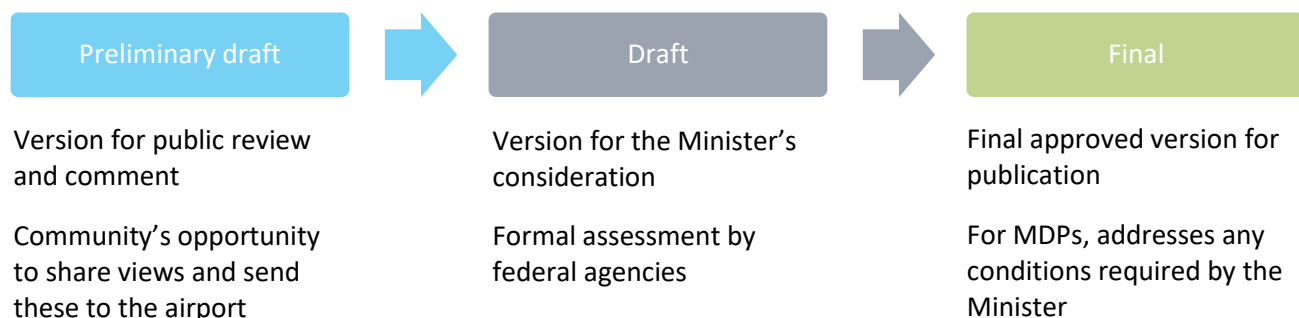
Draft

- The Airports Act requires a draft Master Plan to be submitted to the Minister prior to the expiry of the final Master Plan in force. For Brisbane Airport, this is no later than five years after the final Master Plan came into force, or a longer period specified by the Minister.
- Once a draft Master Plan is submitted, the Minister must either approve or refuse to approve the plan.
- The Minister has 50 business days (or up to 60 business days if a written notice is provided to the airport-lessee company), after a draft Master Plan is submitted to make their decision.
- If the Minister does not make a decision by the end of this period, the Minister is taken to have approved the draft Master Plan.
- If the Minister believes they do not have enough material to make a proper decision to approve or refuse to approve a draft Master Plan, the Minister may request the airport-lessee company provide specified material relevant to making the decision.
 - A request of this nature stops the Minister's 50 business day assessment period until all requested material is received from the airport-lessee company.
 - The clock resumes after this information has been received.

Final

- Should the Minister approve a draft Master Plan, the airport-lessee company must publish the final Master Plan within 50 business days after approval.
 - The final Master Plan sets the direction for all future development on the airport site. In particular, MDPs must be consistent with a final Master Plan for an airport.

Major Development Plan – approval process



Preliminary draft (including public consultation)

- An airport-lessee company is required to publicly exhibit a preliminary draft MDP for 60 business days, and invite members of the public to provide written comments about the preliminary draft during this period, prior to submitting a draft MDP to the Minister.
 - The Minister may approve a shorter consultation period for MDPs (of not less than 15 business days).
- An airport-lessee company is required to provide the Minister with copies of the comments it receives from members of the public and other stakeholders on the preliminary draft version of an MDP. The airport-lessee company is also required to demonstrate due regard for those comments in preparing the draft MDP that is submitted to the Minister.

Draft

- Once a draft MDP is submitted, the Minister must either approve or refuse to approve the plan.
 - The Minister must not approve the plan unless it is consistent with the final Master Plan.
 - The Minister may also choose to approve subject to one or more conditions.
- The Minister has 50 business days (or up to 60 business days if a written notice is provided to the airport-lessee company), after a draft MDP is submitted to make their decision.
- If the Minister does not make a decision by the end of this period, the Minister is taken to have approved the draft MDP.
 - If a referral to the Minister for Environment is required under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), the 50 business day assessment period does not commence until advice from the Minister for Environment's advice has been received.
- If the Minister believes they do not have enough material to make a proper decision to approve or refuse to approve a draft MDP, the Minister may request the airport-lessee company provide specified material relevant to making the decision.
 - A request of this nature stops the Minister's 50 business day assessment period until all requested material is received from the airport-lessee company.
 - The clock resumes after this information has been received.

Final

- Should the Minister approve a draft MDP, the airport-lessee company must publish the final MDP within 50 business days after approval. Major airport developments must be carried out in accordance with an approved MDP (which may, or may not be, subject to conditions).

Information requirements for Master Plans and MDPs

- The content requirements of a draft Master Plan are set out under section 71 of the Airports Act, and the content requirements for a draft MDP are set out under section 91 of the Airports Act.
- Matters relating to noise that must be included in a Master Plan include:
 - an Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) for the areas surrounding the airport;
 - flight paths at the airport; and
 - the airport-lessee company's plans, developed following consultations with the airlines that use the airport and local government bodies in the vicinity of the airport, for managing aircraft noise intrusion in areas forecast to be subject to exposure above significant ANEF levels.
- Matters relating to noise that must be included in an MDP include:
 - if the development could affect noise exposure levels at the airport—the effect that the development would be likely to have on those levels;
 - if the development could affect flight paths at the airport—the effect that the development would be likely to have on those flight paths; and
 - the airport-lessee company's plans, developed following consultations with the airlines that use the airport, and local government bodies in the vicinity of the airport, for managing aircraft noise intrusion in areas forecast to be subject to exposure above the significant ANEF levels.
- The Airports Act also specifies matters the Minister must have regard to in deciding whether to approve or refuse to approve a draft Master Plan (section 81) or MDP (section 94). Amongst other things, this includes the consultations undertaken in preparing the plan, and the outcome of these consultations.