

Building Information Sheet - Conversion to a Habitable Space

What is a habitable space?

According to the Building Code of Australia (BCA), a habitable room is any space used for typical domestic activities, such as a bedroom, living room, dining room, study, or kitchen. Non-habitable rooms include spaces like bathrooms, laundries, pantries, corridors, and walk-in wardrobes, which are used less frequently and not for extended periods.

Most existing sheds, patios and carports do not achieve many of the requirements of a habitable room. It is common that major modifications are necessary to achieve the requirements of the BCA for a room to be used for habitable purposes.

Do I need a Building Permit?

Yes, a Building Permit is always required for the conversion of a non-habitable space into a habitable space. You must obtain a building permit from the City of Armadale prior to commencing any building work.

Please note the City's Health and/or Planning approval may be required for the conversion into a habitable room before a building permit can be issued. For further information please contact the City on 9394 5000 or via email at info@armadale.wa.gov.au.

For more detailed information on how to apply, please visit <https://my.armadale.wa.gov.au/service/apply-for-building-approval>.

Do I need to be a registered builder?

Yes, if the build cost is \$20,000 or more, a builder's registration or Owner-Builder approval is required for the construction of a conversion.

The nominated registered builder will also be required to obtain a home indemnity insurance (HII) certificate by an approved insurer for conversions over the value of \$20,000. An owner builder is exempt from requiring home indemnity insurance.

For more detailed information on builder's registration or becoming an owner builder, please visit the WA Government website <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/do-i-need-be-registered-builder> and/or <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/service-delivery/owner-builder-approval>.

What is a certified application?

A certified building permit application must be accompanied by a Certificate of Design Compliance BA3 form (CDC) issued by a registered, independent building surveyor. A certified application can be submitted for all residential and commercial structure types.

The City has up to 10 business days to determine a certified application, unless further information is required.

What is an uncertified application?

An uncertified application is submitted to the City for assessment against relevant building standards by one of the City's registered building surveyors. A CDC will be issued by the City. An uncertified application can only be submitted for class 1a and class 10 structures.

The City has up to 25 business days to assess and determine an uncertified application, unless further information is required.

How long is my permit valid for?

A building permit issued by the City of Armadale is valid for two years from the date on which it was granted. If more time is required to complete the building works, you can make an application for an extension of time. To apply for an extension of time, please visit <https://my.armadale.wa.gov.au/service/apply-for-building-approval>.

What happens when I have completed my building works?

The nominated builder on the Building Permit must submit a Notice of Completion BA7 form to the City within seven days of completing the prescribed building works. To submit a Notice of Completion, please visit <https://my.armadale.wa.gov.au/service/apply-for-building-approval>.

Additional notes to consider about room conversions:

There are several significant considerations if you wish to change the use of a non-habitable room to a habitable room including (but not limited to) the following:

- The lot must still comply with Residential Design Codes requirements for parking. A carport/ garage may be converted to a habitable room only if there is sufficient space elsewhere on the lot to provide adequate parking space.
- A compliant termite barrier is to be installed under the concrete floor and around the perimeter.
- Moisture must be prevented from entering the room. This includes rising damp between the ground and the floor slab and the moisture through walls and a roof. Cavity wall construction is generally required and can be double brick, brick veneer, timber or steel stud wall lined externally and internally.
- A compliant ceiling is to be installed under the roof cover with a minimum ceiling height of 2.4 metres above the finished floor level.
- Toilet, laundry and bathroom have windows that open to the outside and/or mechanical ventilation systems (exhaust fans) installed.
- Compliance with the energy efficiency provisions of the BCA will be required. Details demonstrating compliance will be required. It is recommended that you consult with your draftsman or an Energy Assessor regarding this.

The typical documentation to be submitted will have to clearly demonstrate but not limited to the above points. If there are questions raised during the assessment of your application, we will reach out for clarification.

What documents need to be submitted with my building application?

Please see next page **Building Application Checklist - Conversion to a Habitable Space** for the documents required.

Building Application Checklist - Conversion to a Habitable Space

A completed application form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 'BA1 - Application for Building Permit - Certified' or 'BA2 - Application for Building Permit - Uncertified' form. Application form to be completed in full and signed by the nominated builder and applicant Application forms available from the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety's (LGIRS) website https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-local-government-industry-regulation-and-safety 	
BA3 - Certificate of Design Compliance (certified application only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issued by a registered building surveyor/practitioner 	
Home Indemnity Insurance certificate (if applicable)	
Payment of fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the City's 'Building Services Information Sheet - Fees & Charges' on the City's website https://my.armadale.wa.gov.au/service/apply-for-building-approval. 	
Construction Training Fund (CTF) Levy receipt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required for building works with a value greater than \$20,000 If the CTF levy is applicable, please visit https://ctf.wa.gov.au/levy to make payment Please provide a copy of your CTF levy payment receipt with your building application submission 	
Site plan to scale (1:200) showing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of the structure and all other existing structures on the property Measurement from the boundaries to the proposed structure Location of septic tanks and leach drains (if applicable) Show landscaping and all impervious surfaces within the street setback area 	
Contour Survey Plan	
Footing and slab details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterproof barriers 	
Construction details to scale (1:100) showing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed floor plan showing room dimensions, walls, doors, and windows Details of materials and sizing Cross-section details Location of all smoke detectors 	
Structural engineer's certification	
Energy Efficiency Report	
Termite Treatment	
Bushfire Attack Level assessment (if applicable)	
Approval from the City's Health Department (if applicable)	
Approval from the City's Planning Department (if applicable)	

This information sheet is intended as a guide only. The City disclaims any liability for any damages sustained by a person acting on the basis of this information.

For further information contact **Building Services** on **9394 5000**.