

# ADAPTABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS FOR MULTI UNIT DEVELOPMENTS



Adaptable housing is housing designed to cater for people of all ages and abilities, for example a home that is wheelchair accessible. Adaptable housing provides greater housing choices and means it is easier for people to 'age in place' where they feel comfortable.

The Territory Plan requires some types of development to include adaptable houses. The requirements differ depending on the type of development being proposed and the land use zone that applies. All adaptable housing requirements in the Territory Plan refer to the [Australian Standard \(AS4299\) for Adaptable Housing](#).

This fact sheet sets out the standard required by the planning and land authority (the authority) to meet adaptable housing requirements of the Territory Plan and the Australian Standard, and the documentation needed when submitting a development application.

## WHAT IS AN ADAPTABLE HOUSING UNIT

Australian Standard AS4299 defines an adaptable housing unit as a housing unit designed and constructed to meet the performance requirements of the Standard and to include the essential features listed at Appendix A of the Standard. An adaptable housing unit is designed in such a way that it can be modified easily in the future to become accessible to both occupants and visitors with disabilities or progressive frailties.

The Standard lists the 119 features that could be incorporated in an adaptable unit and indicates whether they are essential, 'first priority' desirable or desirable.

## ADAPTABLE HOUSING CLASSES

The different classes of adaptable housing units are:

- » **Class C:** incorporates all essential features
- » **Class B:** incorporates all essential AND a minimum of 50% of desirable features, including all 'first priority' features
- » **Class A:** incorporates all essential AND desirable features.

Essential features are included at Appendix A of the Standard.

Different codes of the Territory Plan require a different standard of documentation to accompany a development application. For example, some codes require dwellings to comply with the Standard (Class A) while others only require the development to be designed to meet the Standard (Class C).

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE INCLUDED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION?

Where a code requires a development to comply with the Standard (Class A), the development application must include plans and documentation that demonstrate the dwelling will be built to—and comply with—Class C, and have the potential to be easily adapted to be a Class A or Class B Adaptable Unit.

All development applications involving an adaptable housing unit must be accompanied by a completed version of Appendix A (schedule of features for adaptable housing) of the Standard that is certified by an independent, suitably qualified person.

In summary, a development application for adaptable housing must include:

- » a certified version of Appendix A of AS4299 where the certifier initials each column relevant for an essential feature to confirm that item has been incorporated into the building (or will be incorporated where the code requires the development to be designed to the Standard) and
- » drawings and plans demonstrating compliance with Appendix A of AS4299, including drawings showing the housing unit in its pre-adaptation and post-adaptation stages.

## ADAPTABLE HOUSING FOR SECONDARY RESIDENCES (GRANNY FLATS)

A secondary residence is a form of development that allows a second house to be built on blocks over 500m<sup>2</sup>. The house needs to be built to either meet Standard (Class C) or be easily adapted to suit the needs of people with a disability.

The authority considers that in order to be considered “easily adaptable” a secondary residence must contain all essential elements (such as a bedroom, bathroom and living area) on the ground floor.

Please note that for secondary residences, a report completed by an independent suitably qualified person is not required, however you must submit a floor plan that shows the secondary residences as adapted (post-adapted plans) to demonstrate adaptability can be achieved.

## ADAPTABLE HOUSING IN RZ2 – RULE 14

In relation to adaptable housing in the RZ2 zone, the Multi Unit Housing Development Code sets out Rule 14, which allows for greater dwelling density where all dwellings comply with Class C of the Standard. This rule is mandatory.

This rule may allow you to build additional dwellings if you can show that all dwellings on the block comply with (that is, are constructed to meet) the Standard (Class C). This also means that you may need to provide a greater level of detail than normally expected at the development application stage. For example, showing that door handles and hardware will be built to AS 1428.1. The maximum number of dwellings for RZ2 blocks is shown in table A3 of the Multi Unit Housing Development Code.

Allowing an additional dwelling benefits the community because it increases the number of truly adaptable dwellings that anyone with a disability can use, or easily adapt to use.

Under this rule, all essential features must be located on one level.

Split or multi-level adaptable dwellings are not acceptable, apart from exceptional circumstances where this is clearly justified in an application (for example, the block is on a sloped terrain) and where all essential features and a bedroom are located on the ground level and easily accessible.

## ADAPTABLE HOUSING FOR 10 OR MORE DWELLINGS - RULE 54

In relation to adaptable housing in multi-unit developments that have 10 or more dwellings, the Multi Unit Housing Development Code sets out Rule 54, which is mandatory.

This rule requires a certain number of dwellings to be designed to meet the Standard (Class C). However, they do not need to comply with the Standard at the time of approval. That documentation can be provided demonstrating, through post adaptable plans, that the Standard (Class C) can be met.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions about this information sheet or would like more information, please contact the DA Gateway team on 02 6205 2888 or by [submitting an enquiry](#). You can also visit us in person at 16 Challis Street, Dickson from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday.