



ACT
Government

Standard and Non-Standard Blocks

Advisory Note 12

Territory Planning Authority
July 2026

Introduction to Advisory Notes

Advisory notes provide guidance on how particular processes in the ACT planning system will typically occur, how elements of the system work and how considerations will typically be made. These will typically be technical in nature and may cover anything from steps in an assessment and decision-making process to interpreting elements of the statutory planning documents.

Advisory notes in combination with process maps, guides and factsheets, seek to support all stakeholders to better understand and interact with the planning system.

Advisory notes are for the use of all stakeholders, including the development industry when preparing a development proposal or progressing a proposal through the assessment and approvals process, or the general community when commenting on applications and interacting with the planning system.

Advisory notes are prepared by the Territory Planning Authority to cover elements of the *Planning Act 2023* only. These are not intended to cover other processes, such as Building Approvals under the *Building Act 2004*.

Advisory notes may be updated or added to from time to time.

Version history

Version number	Approved by	Date
1.0	Executive Group Manager, Statutory Planning Division, EPSDD	29/11/2023
2.0	Executive Group Manager, Statutory Planning Division, EPSDD	24/04/2024
3.0	A/g Senior Director, DA Services and Support, Statutory Planning Division, EPSDD	17/05/2024
4.0	Executive Group Manager, Statutory Planning Division, CED	06/07/2026

Advisory Note 12: Standard and Non-Standard Blocks

This advisory note provides guidance on how to work out if your block is a standard or non-standard block. This plays an important role when responding to planning requirements in the Territory Plan regarding subdivision under the *Unit Titles Act 2001*, and for basement carparking, in Residential RZ1 and RZ2 zones.

Standard block and non-standard block

In the ACT planning system, the Subdivision Policy permits dual occupancy housing on a standard block (subject to prescribed size limitations) in a Residential RZ1 zone to be subdivided under the *Unit Titles Act 2001*. Multi-unit housing on a non-standard block in a Residential RZ1 zone may also be subdivided under the *Unit Titles Act 2001*. The Residential Zones Specifications also refer to standard blocks for basement carparking in Residential RZ1 and RZ2 zones.

It is important to carefully note what your original residential Crown lease permits and the original use of your land, to determine if your block is a standard or a non-standard block (see below). This has a bearing on your ability to subdivide a multi-unit housing development in a RZ1 zone under the *Unit Titles Act 2001*.

What is a standard block and non-standard block?

The Territory Plan defines **standard block** to mean a block with one of the following characteristics:

- a) originally leased or used for the purpose of one or two dwellings except where the original lease explicitly permits two dwellings
- b) created by a consolidation of blocks, at least one of which is covered by a)

A **non-standard block** is not a standard block (for example, where the original lease explicitly permits two dwellings, or where originally leased or used for the purpose of three or more dwellings).

What is a dwelling?

The Territory Plan defines **dwelling** to have the same meaning as in the *Planning Regulation 2023*.

Note: Dwelling is a type of single dwelling housing but may also be a type of multi-unit housing.

Section 6 Planning (General) Regulation 2023 defines dwelling to mean:

Dwelling— (a) means a class 1 building, or a self-contained part of a class 2 building, that— (i) includes the following that are accessible from within the building, or the self-contained part of the building: (A) at least 1 but not more than 2 kitchens; (B) at least 1 bath or shower; (C) at least 1 toilet pan; and (ii) does not have access from another building that is either a class 1 building or the self-contained part of a class 2 building; and (b) includes any ancillary parts of the building and any class 10a buildings associated with the building. In this section: kitchen does not include outdoor cooking facilities or a barbeque in an enclosed garden room.

What is originally leased for the purpose of one dwelling or not explicitly permit two dwellings?

A residential Crown lease may limit the property to a single dwelling, permit two or more dwellings, or may permit residential purposes without specifying the maximum number of dwellings.

Example 1 - Residential Crown lease purpose clause for a single dwelling:

2(c) To use the land for residential purposes only;

2(d) That the building erected on the land shall be used only as a single unit private dwelling housing and any outbuildings erected on the land shall not be used as a habitation;

Unless the lease says otherwise, a Crown lease purpose clause in this form is limited to a single dwelling. This is a **standard block**.

Example 2 - Residential Crown lease purpose clause without limitation:

2(c) To use the land for residential purposes only;

A Crown lease purpose clause in this form, without a qualifying clause, means the maximum number of dwellings is not limited by the Crown lease. If the land was originally used for the purpose of one or two dwellings this is also a **standard block**.

What lease purpose clause applies to a non-standard block?

Example 3 - Residential Crown lease purpose clause for two dwellings:

2(c) To use the land for residential purposes only;

2(d) That the building erected on the land shall be used only as:

(i) a single unit private dwelling;

(ii) where permitted by the Territory Plan a second single unit private dwelling;

PROVIDED THAT any outbuildings erected on the land shall not be used as a habitation;

Unless the lease says otherwise, a Crown lease purpose clause in this form is limited to a maximum of two dwellings. This is a **non-standard block**.

Example 4 - Residential Crown lease purpose clause without limitation:

2(c) To use the land for residential purposes only;

If a lease clause does not limit the maximum number of dwellings, and the land was originally used for the purpose of three or more dwellings, it is a **non-standard block**.

Also, a Crown lease clause that permits multi-unit housing for three or more dwellings and the land was originally used for the purpose of three or more dwellings, is a **non-standard block**.

Summary table – standard block and non-standard block.

The following summary table provides general guidance on whether a block is considered a standard or non-standard block according to the wording in the original lease:

Wording of original Crown lease along the lines of:	Standard or non-standard block
Single dwelling only	Standard block
Single dwelling + second/additional dwelling	Non-standard block
Single dwelling + second/additional dwelling if permitted by the Territory Plan	Non-standard block
Two dwellings only	Non-standard block
Multi-unit housing	Non-standard block
Residential purposes*	Standard block

*In this example, although the lease allows ‘residential purposes’ (therefore a dual occupancy would be permitted), the Crown lease does not explicitly permit two dwellings.

Note: The reference to “+ second/additional dwelling” does not include a “secondary residence”.

Got questions?

If you have any queries, please contact the DA Leasing Team at:

Email: ACTPLADALEasing@act.gov.au

Phone: 02 6207 5403

The DA Gateway team are also available on the following:

Email: planningenquiries@act.gov.au

Online: <https://services.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/forms/land-planning-and-building-enquiry>

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