

Change of Classification – Class10A to Class 1A (Habitable Sheds)

1. Sheds, and the like, are approved and defined under the Building Code of Australia 1996 as 'non-habitable' or Class 10 buildings. As such, the standards required for these structures are significantly less than those for habitable buildings (Class 1 structures). By living in a shed or the like, owners place at risk the health & safety of themselves and all those they let occupy these structures.
2. For this reason, a Class 10 building cannot be lawfully occupied as a habitable building. For occupation to occur, it must be upgraded to meet the Class 1 building requirements for a dwelling. Whilst Council does not encourage this practice, it is prepared to permit such a conversion where it can be demonstrated that the building in question can be improved and meet the necessary requirements. Building Code of Australia (Volume 2) 1996 requirements for Class 1A structures are:
 - Structure (Part 2.1);
 - Damp and Weatherproofing (Part 2.2);
 - Fire Safety (Part 2.3);
 - Health and Amenity (Part 2.4); and
 - Safe Movement and Access (Part 2.5).
3. These sections cover the requirements of the Building Code of Australia Volume 2 with regard to a change of classification.
4. **Obtaining Approval from Council.** For the City to assess your application, it is a requirement that you engage the services of a Practising Structural Engineer, to determine if the structure fully meets the following requirements:
 - a. Is a waterproof membrane in place, to prevent the transfer of moisture from the ground through the slab?
 - b. Suitability of any steel reinforcement, if in place, and the slab thickness.
 - c. Are the structural components of the shed able to withstand the loads imposed by internal linings on both the walls and ceiling?
5. **Requirements That Will Need To Be Considered:**
 - a. Is there an adequate approved effluent disposal system in place? (Refer to [the City's Environmental Health Officers](#) for further information)
 - b. Are hardwired smoke alarms installed to relevant Australian Standards?
 - c. All glazing must be installed to standard, particularly where human impact is possible and safety glass is required (shower screens, windows over baths, low level windows and glazed door panels).
 - d. Is the building insulated? For example: If it is a flat roof structure, condensation and dampness could be of real concern to health and also structure.
 - e. Has electrical wiring been installed to the wiring codes for residential buildings?
 - f. Ceiling heights to be a minimum of 2.4 metre high for all habitable rooms.

- g. Natural light and ventilation minimum standards required are:
 - (i) Natural lighting must be provided by windows that have an aggregate light transmitting area measured exclusive of framing members, glazing bars or other obstructions of not less than 10% of the floor area of the room; and
 - (ii) Ventilation must be provided to a habitable room, sanitary compartment, bathroom, shower room, laundry and any other room occupied by a person for any purpose by permanent openings, windows, doors or other devices which can be opened with an aggregate opening or open able size not less than 5% of the floor area of the room required to be ventilated.
- h. Is there a plastic waterproof membrane (0.2mm minimum thickness) placed under and around the concrete slab and edge to stop dampness rising through the floor slab?
- i. Termite inspection certificate required for any structural timber components to confirm that the inspection has been carried out by registered Pest Control Company.
- j. Are the ventilation requirements for wet areas met – refer to attached Environmental Health information sheet?
- k. Slow combustion heaters must be installed to the relevant Australian Standard to avoid the risk of fire.
- l. Compliance with Energy Efficiency Measures. (see information sheet & check list).

6. The Following Minimum Facilities Are Required For Every Dwelling:

- a. Bath or shower;
- b. Kitchen sink & facilities for food preparation & cooking;
- c. Clothes washing facilities, one washtub & space in the same room for a washing machine;
- d. Closet pan & washbasin.

Note: Such facilities can be detached from the main building but must be for the exclusive use of occupants of the building.

7. Application Requirements. Once the favourable structural certification has been performed and you have addressed the other issues mentioned previously, the following documentation is required to be submitted to Council in the form of a building licence application:

- a. A letter/certificate from a practising structural engineer, addressed to the City's Development Services Team, establishing the suitability of the above items are acceptable. A list of structural engineers is also attached for your information.
- b. A floor plan identifying what currently exists.
- c. Full working drawings of all new / additional construction works to be done.
- d. A costing of the work to bring the building up to compliance (not including the existing structure).
- e. Completed building licence application form.
- f. Completed checklist of energy efficient measures.

Note: A final inspection is required prior to the house being occupied once the work is completed.

8. **Information for Owner/Builders.** If you are an Owner/Builder and you plan to sell the property with a shed classified as a residence, there may be certain requirements and restrictions.
9. Firstly you may be required to obtain housing indemnity insurance for the shed/residence to provide protection to the incoming owner on your work. Please refer to the Councils advice notes with regard to both Home Indemnity Insurance and Owner/Builders.
10. Also, the new owner may not be able to build a more substantial home upon the lot without first converting the shed back to a Class 10 building or demolishing the structure.
11. **Planning Issues: [Contact Development Services Team](#)** In the event that an existing house is already located on your property you would need to apply for a Planning Scheme Consent for a grouped dwelling.
12. It is advised that a grouped dwelling can only be considered on “Rural” zoned land where the lot is greater than 20 hectares or where the land is zoned “Residential” and is in accordance with the density coding for that land.
13. It is also advised that should the land be zoned “Residential”, and another dwelling already exists on the land the provision of driveways, parking areas, storage areas and landscaping may be required in accordance with the Residential Design Codes.
14. **More Information.** Should you have any questions or require any further information, please contact a member of the Building Team by either phoning on 9841 9382, by email: building@albany.wa.gov.au or in person at the City Offices.