

Building Information Note

Converting a Patio into a Habitable Room

What do I need to know and do to convert my existing patio or fly screen enclosure into a habitable room such as a family room, games room, sun room or bedroom?

The primary requirement for a habitable room is to ensure moisture does not enter into the structure through the floor the roof and the walls. The National Construction Code - Building Code of Australia (NCC – BCA) specifies the manner by which this can be achieved and will normally necessitate modifications and additional works to be carried out to the existing patio or enclosure

Most existing patios and non-habitable enclosures do not achieve many of the requirements. It is usual that major modifications are necessary to achieve the requirements of the NCC - BCA for a room to be used for habitable purposes

Use the following information as a checklist to assess how your existing patio or fly screen enclosure compares to the minimum requirements of the NCC – BCA for common methods of building habitable rooms

What is required?

- 1 The level of the new floor may be required to match the level of the existing floor of the dwelling.
- 2 The floor is to be steel reinforced concrete 100mm thick with thickening at the edges of the slab or have a separate concrete strip footing.
- 3 A waterproof membrane on compacted clean sand fill is to be placed under the floor slab.
- 4 A complying termite barrier is to be installed under the concrete floor and around the perimeter.
- 5 Wall construction can be double brick, brick veneer, and timber or steel stud wall lined externally and internally.
- 6 A complying ceiling is to be installed under the roof cover with a minimum 2400mm finished floor to ceiling height to be achieved.
- 7 Plumbing waste pipes and storm water down pipes are to be redirected outside the new room.
- 8 Toilet, laundry and bathroom windows are to be sealed and a mechanical ventilation systems (exhaust fan) installed.

9 Smoke alarms may need to be installed.

10 Insulation may be required to both the roof and wall spaces.

The proposal will also be assessed against the provisions of the Residential Design Codes.

A Building Permit is required prior to the commencement of any construction work for the conversion of an existing patio or patio enclosure into a habitable room.

A Building Permit application is to be completed and is available from the Council office or from Councils Web Site www.kwinana.wa.gov.au

Your submission for a Building Permit must include:

- A completed Building Permit application form.
- **A site plan to scale (1:200) showing:**
 - Location of house and other structures on the block
 - Location of new structure
 - Measurements from the boundaries
 - Location of septic tanks and leach drains (if applicable)
 - Contours split levels and datum points
 - Location of retaining walls
 - Location of any easements
 - Stormwater Management
- **A set of construction details to scale (1:100) showing:**
 - Detailed floor plan and elevations
 - Cross section details
 - Specifications
 - Structural Engineers certification (may be required).
 - Termite treatment

If you are an owner builder, and the value of the works (materials and labour) is \$20,000 or greater then you will **ALSO** need to apply to the Building Commission of Western Australia for an Owner/ Builders License.