

Thinking of Building a Patio or Pergola? (Information Sheet)

If you are proposing to build a new patio or pergola or to replace an existing patio or pergola, you need to obtain the necessary approval from the City. Even if you are altering an existing patio or pergola you may still need approval, and therefore it is necessary to make enquiries before you commence work, to confirm what kind of approvals are needed and what the City requires.

What is a Pergola?

A pergola is defined as "An open-framed structure covered in a water permeable material or unroofed, which may or may not be attached to a dwelling." (R-Codes)

Approval required to be obtained from the City for a Pergola prior to construction commencing:

Building Permit.

Development approval is not required for a Pergola.

What is a Patio?

A patio is defined as "an unenclosed structure covered in a water impermeable material which may or may not be attached to a dwelling." (R-Codes)

Having regard to the respective definitions of 'pergola' and 'patio' set about above, within the District of the City South Perth, a 'patio' is an open-sided structure which is roofed with 'Colourbond' metal, tiles or another opaque and water impermeable material.

Approvals required to be obtained from the City for a Patio prior to construction commencing:

Development Approval

Building Permit.

Applying for Development Approval and Building Permit

Please refer to the City's information sheet series on applying for Development Approval and a Building Permit, available on the City's website. Also available on the City's website are the necessary application forms, Development Approval application checklist and fee schedule.

Before submitting your application(s), please examine these documents as they provide information regarding the details on drawings and other documents which need to be submitted with your applications. Failure to supply sufficient or accurate information will result in unnecessary delays.

Preparing the site plan

All applications for approval of patios and pergolas need to include a site plan in addition to floor plans and elevation drawings of the proposed structure.

Should you require your building plans to assist with drawing up your site plan for submission, please refer to the City's information sheet "How to Obtain a Copy of Plans – Information Sheet".

Standard Specifications

If you are purchasing your patio or pergola from a company, they may have a set of standard specifications which can be submitted to the City with your application. Generally these standard specifications will be sufficient; however some larger proposals may require a structural engineer's signature. If a structural engineer's signature is required for the building permit application, the signature needs to be in ink of a colour other than black and on each page of both copies.

Town Planning Requirements for a Patio

The City will assess your application for Development Approval for a patio against the requirements of the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015, City's Town Planning Scheme and Policies, and the R-Codes.

Patios in front of the dwelling

The presentation of the dwelling as part of the streetscape is an important consideration. Patios located in front of a dwelling rarely comply with the City's policy requirements relating to streetscape. If you are proposing a patio in front of the dwelling, consult the City's Planning Policy No. P302 "General Design Guidelines for Residential Development". When lodging your application you need to include a covering letter explaining how your application meets the provisions and objectives of this policy.

Building Requirements for a Patio or Pergola

The City will assess your Building Permit application for a patio or pergola against the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and the City's Policies. The major requirements are set out below:

Setbacks

In the first instance, in the case of a proposed patio, it is necessary to maintain the setback upon which Development Approval was issued.

The following required setbacks are for the purpose of 'fire separation' under the BCA.

The roof covering of the patio or pergola must be set back a minimum of 500mm from the lot boundary or from another building (Figure 3.7.1.6 of the BCA) The guttering must be set back a minimum of 450mm.

Subject to compliance with the 'fire separation' requirements of the BCA (Figure 3.7.1.7), support columns may abut the lot boundary. Your architect, draftsman or builder will be able to advise you further in this respect.

If you wish to have the roof less than 500mm from the lot boundary, a parapet wall may be necessary to meet the 'fire separation' requirements and particular attention needs to be given to the guttering design. Your architect, draftsman or builder will be able to advise you further in this respect.

Other requirements

Other requirements relating to matters such as drainage, structural adequacy and flashing and guttering details are considered in the assessment of a Building Permit application. Your architect, draftsman or builder will be able to advise you further in this respect.

Relevant Publications

All the of the City's forms and fee schedules can be obtained from the City's offices at the Civic Centre or can be viewed and downloaded from the City's website @ www.southperth.wa.gov.au.

Publications from other agencies are available directly for the respective agencies website.

Should you have any further questions regarding this or any other matter, you are welcome to contact one of the City's officers by telephone or via email enquiries.

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