



# Livable Housing Design Guidelines





## About Livable Housing Australia

Livable Housing Australia (LHA) is a partnership between community and consumer groups, government and industry.

LHA champions the mainstream adoption of livable housing design principles in all new homes built in Australia.

LHA arose from the Kirribilli Dialogue on Universal Housing Design, which established nationally agreed guidelines on designing and building livable homes.

LHA is responsible for the ongoing development, dissemination and revision of Australia's Livable Housing Design Guidelines.



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# Foreword

The design of the Australian family home is set for a makeover.

Our homes have transformed significantly over the years. Today's houses are greener, more efficient and safer.

The next step is to design them to be more versatile, to better meet the changing needs of occupants over their lifetimes.

Livable Housing Australia, which represents a unique partnership between community, business groups and government, is helping make homes easier to access, navigate and live in, as well more cost-effective to adapt when life's circumstances change.

LHA has produced practical, common sense guidelines to livability. The design features embraced by the guidelines are inexpensive to incorporate into home design, and will deliver huge dividends to future generations of Australians.

Our Silver, Gold and Platinum ratings represent a trusted quality mark – a seal of approval that attests to enhanced livability.

LHA's goal is simple: we champion the adoption by 2020 of a Silver rating for all new homes.

It's makes smart sense to commit to livability features when a home is first designed and built rather than wait for an unplanned need to arise. In fact, international research shows that it's 22 times more efficient to design for adaptability up front.

Livability works for pregnant mums, young families with kids and people with sporting or traumatic injuries, as well as seniors, Australians with disability and their families.

Livability is an investment that makes both economic and social sense. It also offers peace of mind.

On behalf of Livable Housing Australia, I encourage you to help transform the Australian dream home by adopting and implementing these Livable Housing Design Guidelines.



Sophie Pickett-Heaps  
Chair  
Livable Housing Australia



## Livable Housing Australia:



**Championing safer, more comfortable and easier to access homes for everybody, everyday, at all stages of life.**

# Introduction

## What is Livable Housing Design?

A livable home is designed and built to meet the changing needs of occupants across their lifetime.

Livable homes include key easy living features that make them easier and safer to use for all occupants including: people with disability, ageing Australians, people with temporary injuries, and families with young children.

A livable home is designed to:

- be easy to enter
- be easy to navigate in and around
- be capable of easy and cost-effective adaptation, and
- be responsive to the changing needs of home occupants.

## Livable homes enhance the quality of life of all occupants at all stages of their life.

### What are the benefits of a livable designed home?

All Australians benefit from homes designed with comfort, safety and ease of access as core design features. These features make the home easier for parents to manoeuvre prams, easier to carry the shopping into the house, easier for people with disability or temporary injury to get around and easier to move furniture.

These same features enable key living spaces to be more easily and cost effectively adapted to meet the changing needs and abilities of home occupants such as ageing baby boomers and people who have or acquire disability.

## A livable designed home benefits:

**Families with young children** by making it easier to manoeuvre prams and strollers and removing trip hazards for toddlers.

**People who sustain a temporary injury** that limits their mobility (for example as a result of sporting or work-related injury or motor vehicle accident).

**Ageing baby boomers** who are looking to move or renovate their existing homes to better accommodate future needs.

**People with disability and their families** enabling them better choice of housing and the opportunity to visit the homes of friends and relatives.



## Is there a market?

Mainstream adoption of key livability features into new housing makes sense for several reasons:

### Baby Boomers

- The significant ageing baby boomer demographic represents a growing market for age-friendly, livable designed housing.



- The number of Australians with disability will inevitably rise as the population grows and ages.

1 in 5

- One in five (close to 4 million) Australians currently have a disability of some type - about 320,000 are children.

60%

- Research indicates a 60 percent chance that a house will be occupied by a person with a disability at some point over its life<sup>1</sup>. This person is likely to be someone you know – a parent, child, sibling or friend.

62%

- The family home accounts for 62 percent of all falls and slip-based injuries and costs the Australian population \$1.8 billion in public health costs<sup>2</sup>.

22 x

- The cost to the homeowner of including key livable housing design features (in this case the silver level) is 22 times more efficient than retrofitting when an unplanned need arises<sup>3</sup>.

A national survey has shown that the majority of recent home buyers, builders and renovators, and people aged 60 plus believe that livable housing design features make a home safer and more functional for all<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Smith, S., Rayer, S., & Smith, E. (2008) Ageing & disability: Implications for the housing industry and housing policy in the United States. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 74:3, 289 – 306.

<sup>2</sup> Monash University Accident Research Centre. (2008) The relationship between slips, trips and falls and the design and construction of buildings. (Funded by the Australian Building Codes Board).

<sup>3</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Social Development. (2009) Economic effects of utilising Lifemark at a National level.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. (2010) *Dwelling, Land and Neighbourhood Use by Older Home Owners*, p.282.

# Intended audience for the Livable Housing Design Guidelines

The Livable Housing Design (LHD) Guidelines assist the residential building, property industry and governments better understand how to incorporate easy living features into new housing design and construction.



## How to read this document

The LHD Guidelines provide useful information for consumers seeking to introduce livable design features into a new home and could be readily applied within an existing home during renovation or refurbishment.

The Guidelines describe 15 livable design elements. Each element provides guidance on what performance is expected to achieve either silver, gold or platinum level accreditation. Elements 1–7 cover the core elements of the basic silver level accreditation.

### Structure of the LHD Guidelines

Three levels of performance are detailed in the LHD Guidelines. These voluntary performance levels can be applied to all new dwellings.

It is noted that common areas for Class 1b, 2, and 3 buildings are covered by the Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010 and the National Construction Code (NCC), Building Code of Australia (BCA) Volumes 1 and 2 which take precedence over the LHD Guidelines.

Note: LHA Design Guidelines apply to at least one toilet, bathroom. Where there is more than one bathroom or toilet in a dwelling, the LHA Guidelines should apply to the ground floor (entry) facilities. In the case LHA gold or platinum requirements for kitchens, laundry and bedroom then the design guidelines apply to at least one of these areas of a dwelling.

*These guidelines have been developed as a set of voluntary inclusions that can be incorporated into a new or existing home or apartment. On this basis, the Guidelines use the term "should" rather than "shall" to acknowledge that none of the requirements are mandatory, unless the Guidelines are referenced by a state, territory or local government authority or regulation in which case the relevant requirements specified by an Authority shall then be mandatory. If the Guidelines are being relied upon for a regulatory purpose, for example a development application, then advice should be sought from the relevant regulatory authority as to which of the requirements are mandatory. If the Guidelines are to be used as a benchmark for Silver, Gold or Platinum level Certification, then all of the requirements detailed in the Guidelines must be met."*

## Performance levels

The levels of performance range from basic requirements through to best practice in livable home design. The levels are as follows:



### Silver Level

#### Seven core livable housing design elements

Focuses on the key structural and spatial elements that are critical to ensure future flexibility and adaptability of the home. Incorporating these features will avoid more costly home modification if required at a later date.



### Gold Level

#### Enhanced requirements for most of the core livable housing design elements plus additional elements.

The gold level provides for more generous dimensions for most of the core livable housing design elements and introduces additional elements in areas such as the kitchen and bedroom.



### Platinum Level

#### Some further enhanced requirements for the core livable housing design elements plus all remaining elements.

All 15 elements are featured in the platinum level. This level describes design elements that would better accommodate ageing in place and people with higher mobility needs. This level requires more generous dimensions for most of the core livable design elements and introduces additional elements for features such as the living room and flooring.

## Introducing the seven core design elements:

LHA is committed to championing the adoption of the silver level design elements into all new dwellings.

LHA acknowledges that the core design elements do not necessarily accommodate the needs and abilities of all home occupants. However, they are considered to be of most widespread benefit and use in the majority of circumstances.

Importantly, by including the core livable housing design elements, home occupants are provided with the opportunity to reduce or avoid costs associated with retrofitting a home to improve access in future, should it be required.

The seven core design features elements in the silver level they are:

- 1 A safe continuous and step free path of travel from the street entrance and / or parking area to a dwelling entrance that is level.
- 2 At least one, level (step-free) entrance into the dwelling.
- 3 Internal doors and corridors that facilitate comfortable and unimpeded movement between spaces.
- 4 A toilet on the ground (or entry) level that provides easy access.
- 5 A bathroom that contains a hobless shower recess.
- 6 Reinforced walls around the toilet, shower and bath to support the safe installation of grabrails at a later date.
- 7 Stairways are designed to reduce the likelihood of injury and also enable future adaptation.

## The relationship between the Livable Housing Design Guidelines and the National Construction Code (NCC), Building Code of Australia (BCA) Volume 1 and 2

The National Construction Code (NCC) sets out the legal construction requirements for all new building work in Australia. It includes performance requirements that must be achieved for each aspect of building construction.

In designing a home that incorporates the design elements of the LHD Guidelines it is important to ensure that all building work also complies with the relevant NCC, inclusive of BCA Volume 1 and 2, requirements where they apply, particularly for:

- fire safety
- water proofing of wet areas (internal)
- weather proofing (external)
- termite protection
- window location and size
- floor surfaces in wet areas and on stairs.
- stairways



# Application

The elements described in the LHD Guidelines are applicable to the following classes of buildings as specified in the NCC.

**Class 1** – one or more buildings, which in association constitute:

**Class 1a** – a single dwelling being:

- i. a detached house; or
- ii. one of a group of two or more attached dwellings, each being a building, separated by a fire-resisting wall, including a row house, terrace house, town house or villa unit; or

**Class 1b:**

- i. a boarding house, guest house, hostel or the like; with a total area of all floors not exceeding 300 m<sup>2</sup> measured over the enclosing walls of the Class 1b building; and in which not more than 12 persons would ordinarily be resident, which is not located above or below another dwelling or another Class of building other than a private garage;
- ii. 4 or more single dwellings located on one allotment and used for short-term holiday accommodation.

**Class 2** – a building containing 2 or more sole-occupancy units, each being a separate dwelling.

**Class 3** - a residential building, other than a building of Class 1 or 2, which is a common place of long term or transient living for a number of unrelated persons, including -

- a. a boarding house, guest house, hostel, lodging house or backpackers accommodation; or
- b. a residential part of a hotel or motel; or
- c. a residential part of a school; or
- d. accommodation for the aged, children or people with disabilities; or
- e. a residential part of a health-care building which accommodates members of staff; or
- f. a residential part of a detention centre.

**Class 4** – a dwelling in a building that is a Class 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 if it is the only dwelling in the building.

**Note:** The design elements described in these Guidelines should only be applied to the parts of the building classes not covered by the Disability Standards and NCC (BCA Vol 1 and 2).





The background features a dark brown field with several overlapping geometric shapes in a gold color. A large, irregular gold shape is positioned in the upper left, extending towards the center. Below it, a large, curved gold shape is visible on the left side. The text is centered within the dark brown area on the right side.

**The 15 Livable  
Housing Design  
Elements**

# 1 Dwelling access

## Performance Statement

There is a safe, continuous, step-free pathway from the street entrance and/or parking area to a dwelling entrance that is level.



## Silver Level

- a. Provide a safe, continuous step-free pathway from the front boundary of the property to an entry door to the dwelling. This provision does not apply where the average slope of the ground where the path would feature is steeper than 1:14.
- b. The path of travel referred to in (a) should have a minimum clear width of 1000mm and have:
  - i. no steps;
  - ii. an even, firm, slip resistant surface;
  - iii. a crossfall of not more than 1:40;
  - iv. a maximum pathway slope of 1:14

Where ramps are required they should have landings provided at no greater than 9m for a 1:14 ramp and no greater than 15m for ramps steeper than 1:20. Landings should be no less than 1200mm in length.
- c. The path of travel referred to in (a) may be provided via an associated car parking space for the dwelling. Where a car parking space is relied upon as the safe and continuous pathway to the dwelling entrance, the space should incorporate:
  - i. minimum dimensions of at least 3200mm (width) x 5400mm (length);
  - ii. an even, firm and slip resistant surface; and
  - iii. a level surface (1:40 maximum gradient, 1:33 maximum gradient for bitumen).

- d. A step ramp may be incorporated at an entrance doorway where there is a change in height of 190mm or less. The step ramp should provide:
  - i. a maximum gradient of 1:10
  - ii. a minimum clear width of 1000mm (please note: width should reflect the pathway width)
  - iii. a maximum length of 1900mm
- e. Where a ramp is part of the pathway, level landings no less than 1200mm in length, exclusive of the swing of the door or gate than opens onto them, must be provided at the head and foot of the ramp.

**Note:** The width of the landing will be determined by the adjoining pathway. If the landing directly adjoins the doorway please refer to Element 2 for dimensional requirements.

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## Gold Level

As for silver level except:

- i. replace in (b) the minimum clear pathway width of 1000mm with 1100mm, and
- ii. insert in (c) the following additional features:
  - a. a vertical clearance over the parking space of at least 2500mm; and
  - b. a covered parking space to ensure protection from the weather.

---

## Platinum Level

As for gold level except.

- i. replace in (b) the minimum clear pathway width of 1100mm with 1200mm, and
- ii. replace in (c) the minimum dimensions of at least 3800mm (width) x 6000mm (length)

# 1 Dwelling access

## Performance Statement

There is a safe, continuous, step-free pathway from the street entrance and/or parking area to a dwelling entrance that is level.



Photo courtesy of Landcom



Photo courtesy of Lendlease



Photo courtesy of Landcom

1. Continuous step-free path of travel to a side entrance
2. Easy access from the front pathway and driveway
3. Continuous step-free pathway with varied surface finishes
4. Achieving access on a sloping block

**Direct entry from a parking space to a level entry (not necessarily the front entrance) is essential. A level path from the street further improves access.**



Photo courtesy of Landcom

4

**Performance Statement**

There is a safe, continuous, step-free pathway from the street entrance and/or parking area to a dwelling entrance that is level.

**A generous car space makes it easier to move around a vehicle when the doors are fully open.**

Photo courtesy of Lendlease



**Performance Statement**  
Where the parking space is part of the dwelling access it should allow a person to open their car doors fully and easily move around the vehicle.

## 2 Dwelling entrance

### Performance Statement

There is at least one level (step-free) entrance into the dwelling to enable home occupants to easily enter and exit the dwelling.



### Silver Level

- a. The dwelling should provide an entrance door with -
  - i. a minimum clear opening width of 820mm (see Figure 2(a));
  - ii. a level (step-free) transition and threshold (maximum vertical tolerance of 5mm between abutting surfaces is allowable provided the lip is rounded or beveled); and
  - iii. reasonable shelter from the weather.
- b. A level landing area of at least 1200mm x 1200mm should be provided at the level (step free) entrance door. A level landing area at the entrance door should be provided on the arrival side of the door (i.e. the external side of the door) to allow a person to safely stand and then open the door.
- c. Where the threshold at the entrance exceeds 5mm and is less than 56mm, a ramped threshold may be provided (see Figure 1(b)).
- d. The level (step-free) entrance should be connected to the safe and continuous pathway as specified in Element 1.

**Note The entrance must incorporate waterproofing and termite management requirements as specified in the NCC.**

---

### Gold Level

As for silver level except replace:

- (b) with a level landing area of at least 1350mm x 1350mm, and
- (a) (i) with minimum clear door opening width of 850mm (see Figure 2(b)).

---

### Platinum Level

As for silver level except replace:

- (b) with a level landing area of at least 1500mm x 1500mm, and
- (a) (i) with a minimum clear door opening width of 900mm (see Figure 2(c)).

**A level entrance makes entering and exiting the home safer and easier.**



Photo courtesy of Len dlease



**Performance Statement**

There is at least one level (step-free) entrance into the dwelling to enable home occupants to easily enter and exit the dwelling.

# 2 Dwelling entrance

## Performance Statement

There is at least one level (step-free) entrance into the dwelling to enable home occupants to easily enter and exit the dwelling.

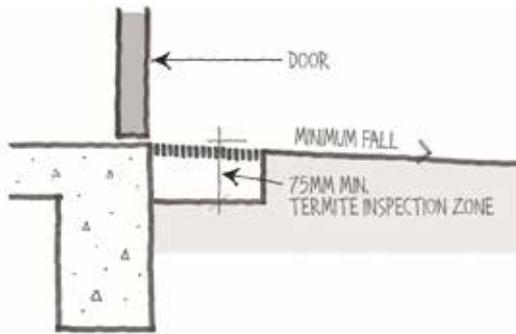


Figure 1(a) Threshold treatment: incorporates grated drain along threshold to achieve minimum termite inspection zone and weather protection.

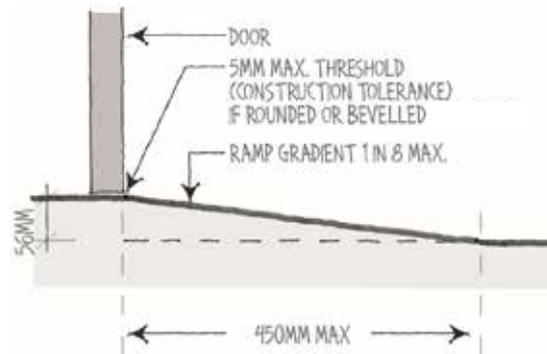


Figure 1(b) Weather protection: 1 in 8 max. ramp at threshold

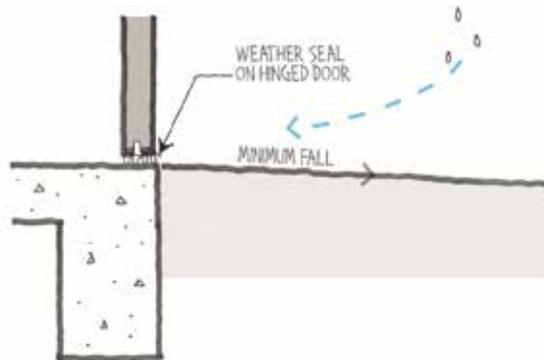


Figure 1(c) Weather protection: weather seal on hinged door.

### Design considerations at level entries

#### 1. Termite prevention:

The limiting of thresholds at doorways (to say 50mm) prevents achieving adequate inspection zones (min 75mm) and termite barriers across these thresholds. This commonly demands that porch slabs be integrated with the general floor slab of the house so that termite barriers and inspection zones can be continued around the perimeter of the porch.

This inspection zone might be achieved by other methods such as within the depth of a grated drain along the threshold.

#### 2. Weather protection and thresholds:

Weather protection is traditionally aided by stepped thresholds. Level access requires consideration of alternative solutions to maintain adequate protection from the wet weather. Standard threshold ramps, as detailed in 1(b) above, allow weatherproofing thresholds of up to approx. 50mm. This can be combined with gently sloping porches to limit the possibility of water entering the dwelling.

Appropriately sized grated drains and generous cover at entries should also be provided to limit the quantity of water in the area adjoining the door.

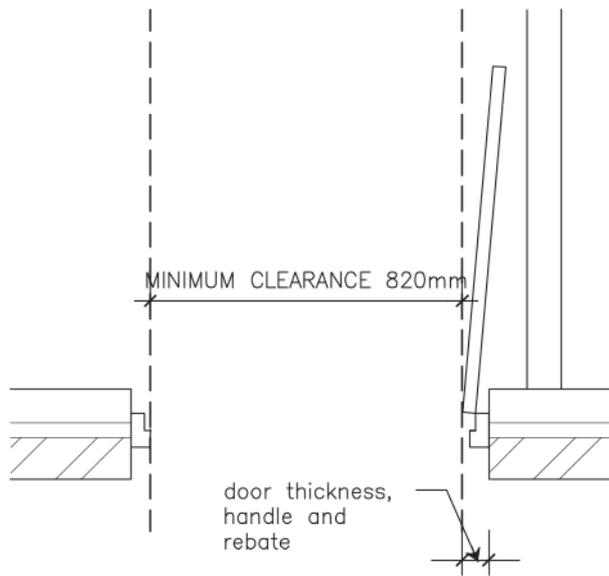


Figure 2(a) Silver level clear door opening

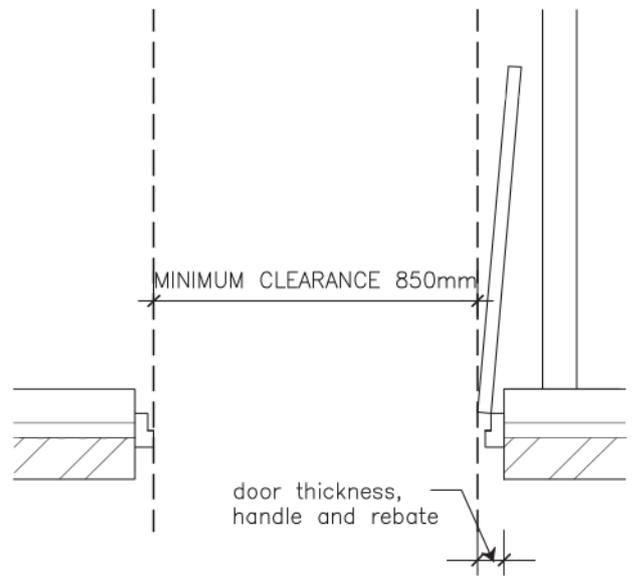


Figure 2(b) Gold level clear door opening

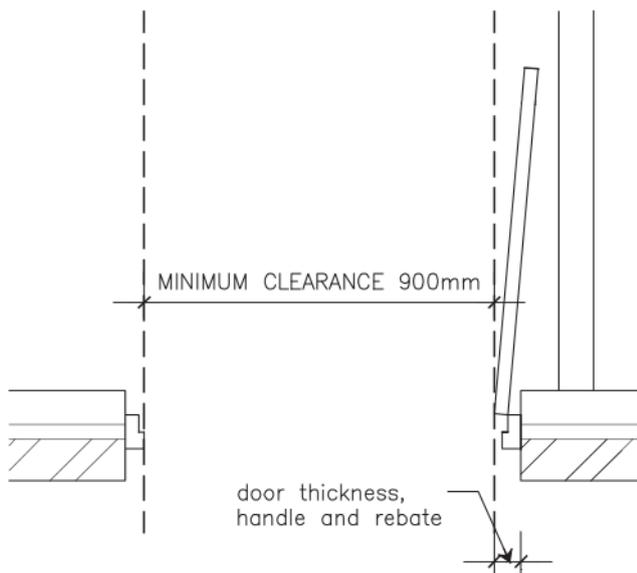


Figure 2(c) Platinum level clear door opening

# 3 Internal doors & corridors

## Performance Statement

Internal doors and corridors facilitate comfortable and unimpeded movement between spaces.



### Silver Level

- a. Doorways to rooms on the entry level used for living, dining, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, laundry and sanitary compartment purposes should provide:
  - i. a minimum clear opening width of 820mm (see Figure 2(a)); and
  - ii. a level transition and threshold (maximum vertical tolerance of 5mm between abutting surfaces is allowable provided the lip is rounded or beveled).
- b. Internal corridors/passageways to the doorways referred to in (a) should provide a minimum clear width of 1000mm.

\* Corridor widths should be measured as described in Clause 6.3 of AS 1428.1 – 2009

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### Gold Level

As for the silver level except replace:

- (a)/(i) with a minimum clear opening width of 850mm (see Figure 2(b)), and
- (b) with a minimum corridor/passageway width of 1200mm.

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### Platinum Level

As for the silver level except replace:

- (a)/(i) with a minimum clear opening width of 900mm (see Figure 2(c)), and
- (b) with a minimum corridor/passageway width of 1200mm.

**Slightly wider doors and corridors make it easier to manoeuvre strollers and prams, move furniture and carry in groceries. It's also easier for people with mobility issues.**



**Performance Statement**  
Internal doors and corridors facilitate comfortable and unimpeded movement between spaces.

# 4

# Toilet

## Performance Statement

The ground (or entry) level has a toilet to support easy access for home occupants and visitors.



### Silver Level

- a. Dwellings should have a toilet on the ground (or entry) level that provides:
  - i. a minimum clear width of 900mm between the walls of the bathroom if located in a separate room; and
  - ii. a minimum 1200mm clear circulation space forward of the toilet pan exclusive of the swing of the door in accordance with Figure 3(a).
  - iii. The toilet pan should be located in the corner of the room (if the toilet is located in a combined toilet / bathroom) to enable installation of grabrails at a future date. Reinforcement guidelines for walls in bathrooms and toilets are found in element 6.

---

### Gold Level

As for silver level except replace (a)/(i) with a minimum clear width of 1200mm between the walls of the bathroom if located in a separate room, or between amenities if located in a combined bathroom.

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### Platinum Level

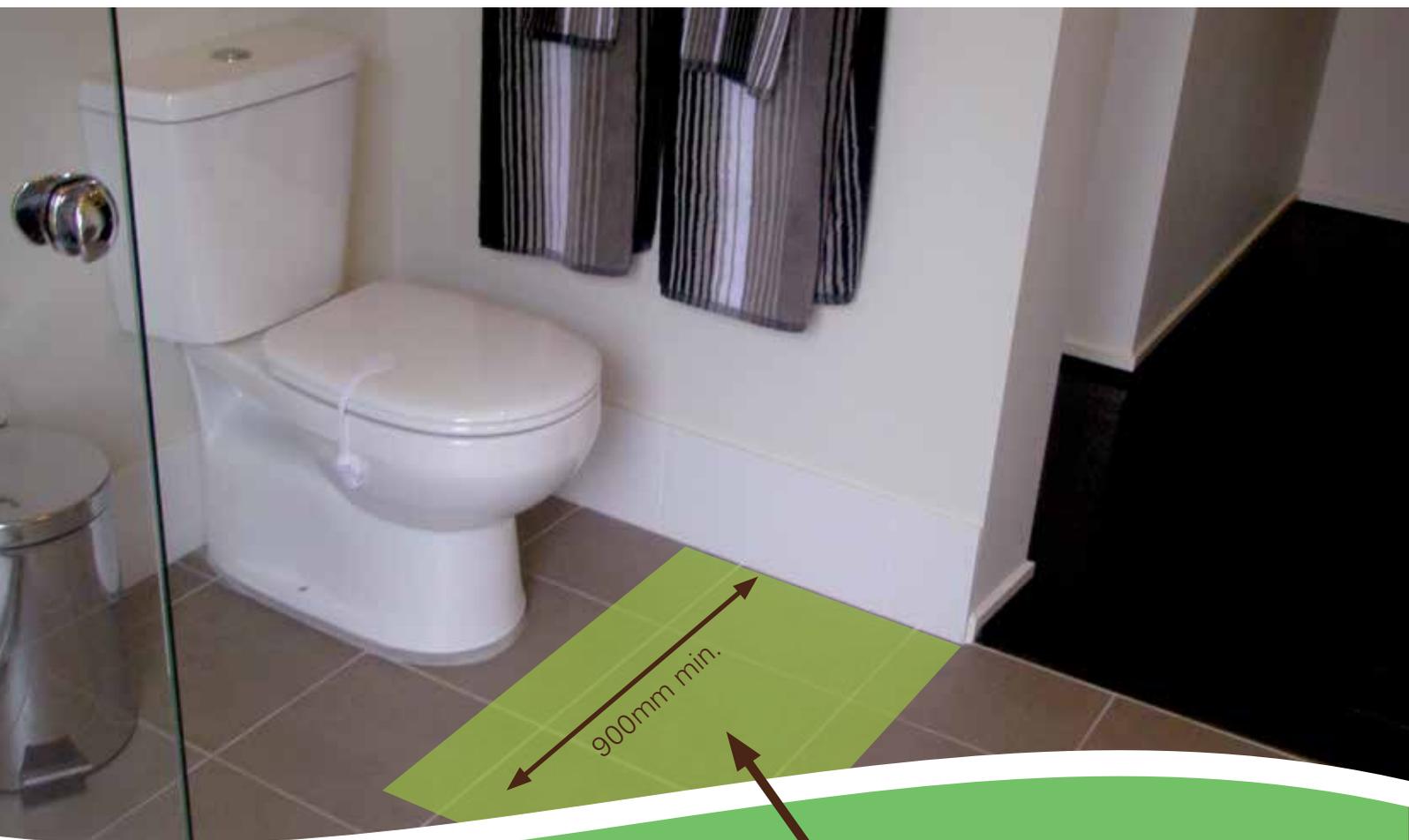
As for the gold level with the following features added to (a) as detailed in Figure 4:

- iv. a toilet seat positioned between 450mm – 460mm from the nearest wall as measured from the centre line of the toilet;
- v. 600mm minimum clearance forward of the cistern measured from the front of the cistern to the front of the toilet seat. 800mm (+/-10mm) clearance is required if the cistern is recessed; and
- vi. a height for the seat of between 460mm-480mm above the finished floor level.

**Note:** Compliance with the platinum level does not equate to compliance with AS 1428.1 2009 for accessible sanitary facilities.

**Clear space in front of the toilet is key as it ensures easier access for children, older people and people with mobility difficulties.**

The IFO6861 toilet suite by Enware with the cistern design that forms an integrated backrest meets the intent of the Platinum Level requirements for toilets outlined in the Livable Housing Design Guidelines despite the clearance from the front of the pan to the front of the cistern being less than 600mm as long as the front of the pan is set out to be at least 800mm from the back wall."



**Performance Statement**  
The ground (or entry) level has a toilet to support easy access for home occupants and visitors.

# 4 Toilet

## Performance Statement

The ground (or entry) level has a toilet to support easy access for home occupants and visitors.

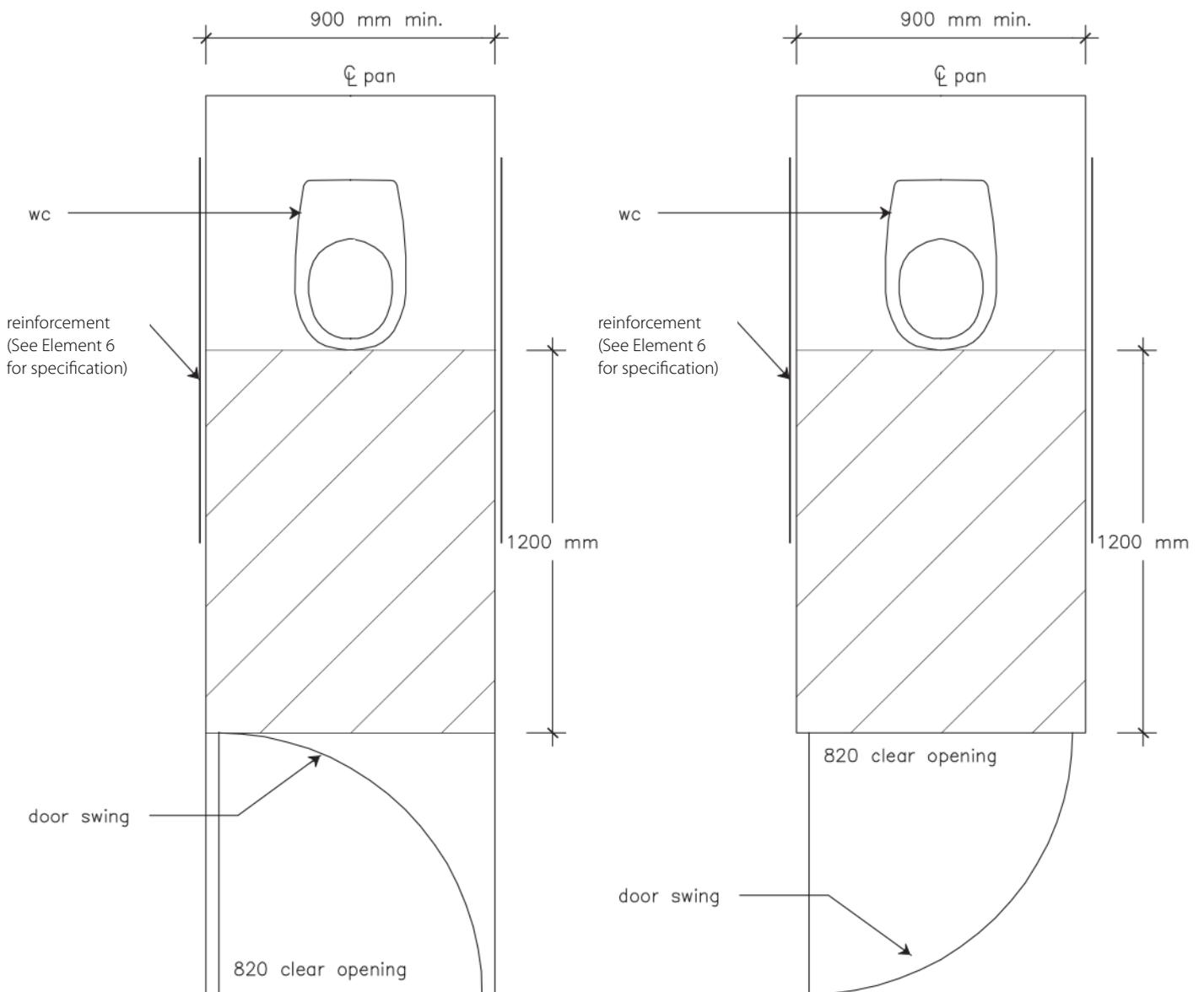


Figure 3(a) Silver level ground (or entry) level toilet layout and space requirements in a separate room.



# 5 Shower

## Performance Statement

The bathroom and shower is designed for easy and independent access for all home occupants.



### Silver Level

- a. One bathroom should feature a slip resistant, hobless shower recess. Shower screens are permitted provided they can be easily removed at a later date.
- b. The shower recess should be located in the corner of the room to enable the installation of grabrails at a future date.

For hobless specification please see Australian Standard AS3740-3.6. Reinforcement guidelines for walls in bathrooms and toilets are found in element 6.

---

### Gold Level

As for silver level except:

- c. The hobless shower recess described in (a) should:
  - i. be located in a bathroom on the ground (or entry) level;
  - ii. provide minimum dimensions of 900mm (width) x 900mm (length); and
  - iii. provide a clear space of at least 1200mm (width) x 1200mm (length) forward of the shower recess entry as detailed in Figure 5(a).

---

### Platinum Level

As for gold level except:

- i. replace (c)/(ii) with dimensions of at least 1160mm (width) x 1100mm (length). A level transition and threshold (maximum vertical tolerance of 5mm between abutting surfaces is allowable provided the lip is rounded or bevelled); and
- ii. replace (c)/(iii) with dimensions of at least 1600mm (width) x 1400mm (length) forward of the shower recess as detailed in Figure 5(b).

**Hobless, shower recesses reduce the risk of slips and falls and make access easier and safer for home occupants.**



Photo courtesy of Supplier

**Performance Statement**  
The bathroom and shower is designed for easy and independent access for all home occupants.

Floors in shower recesses need to be graded properly so that screens can be removed if required and water will still drain effectively.

# 5 Shower

## Performance Statement

The bathroom and shower is designed for easy and independent access for all home occupants.

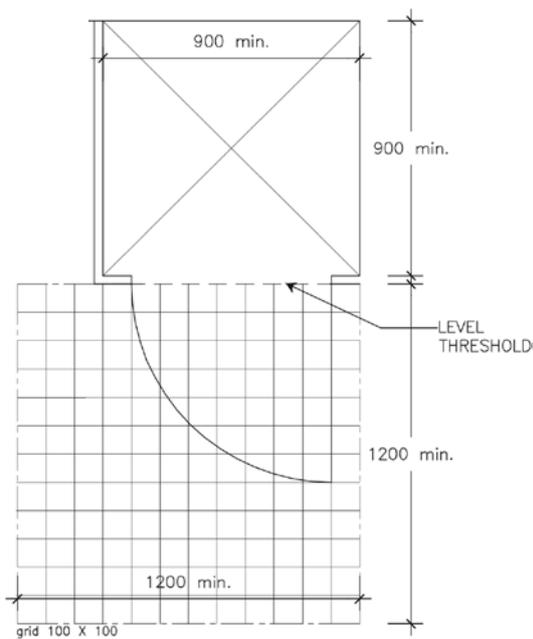


Figure 5(a) Gold level circulation space requirements for shower recess

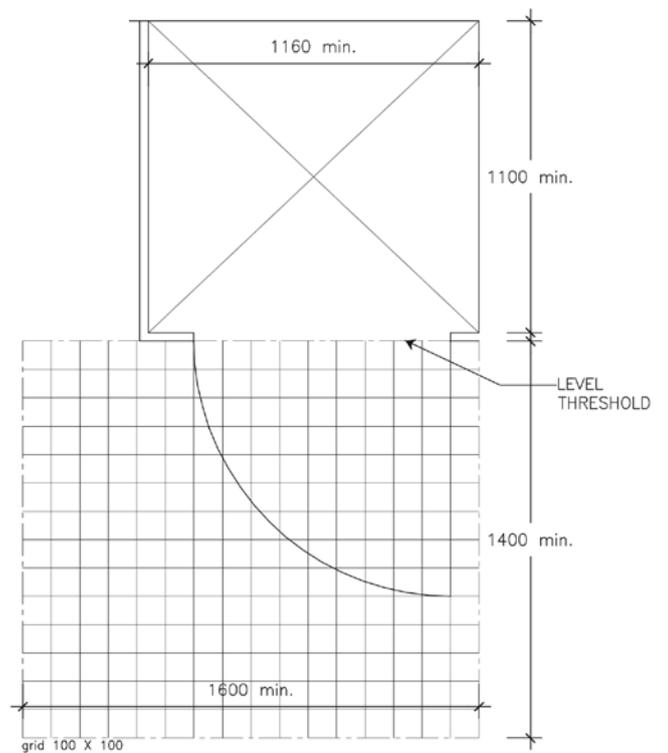


Figure 5(b) Platinum level circulation space requirements for shower recess

# 6 Reinforcement of bathroom & toilet walls

## Performance Statement

The bathroom and toilet walls are built to enable grabrails to be safely and economically installed.



## Silver Level

- a. Except for walls constructed of solid masonry or concrete, the walls around the shower, bath (if provided) and toilet should be reinforced to provide a fixing surface for the safe installation of grabrails.
- b. The walls around the toilet are to be reinforced by installing:
  - i. noggings with a thickness of at least 25mm in accordance with Figure 6(a); or
  - ii. sheeting with a thickness of at least 12mm in accordance with Figure 6(b).
- c. The walls around the bath are to be reinforced by installing:
  - i. noggings with a thickness of at least 25mm in accordance with Figure 7(a); or
  - ii. sheeting with a thickness of at least 12mm in accordance with Figure 7(b).
- d. The walls around the hobless shower recess are to be reinforced by installing:
  - i. noggings with a thickness of at least 25mm in accordance with Figure 8(a); or
  - ii. sheeting with a thickness of at least 12mm in accordance with Figure 8(b).

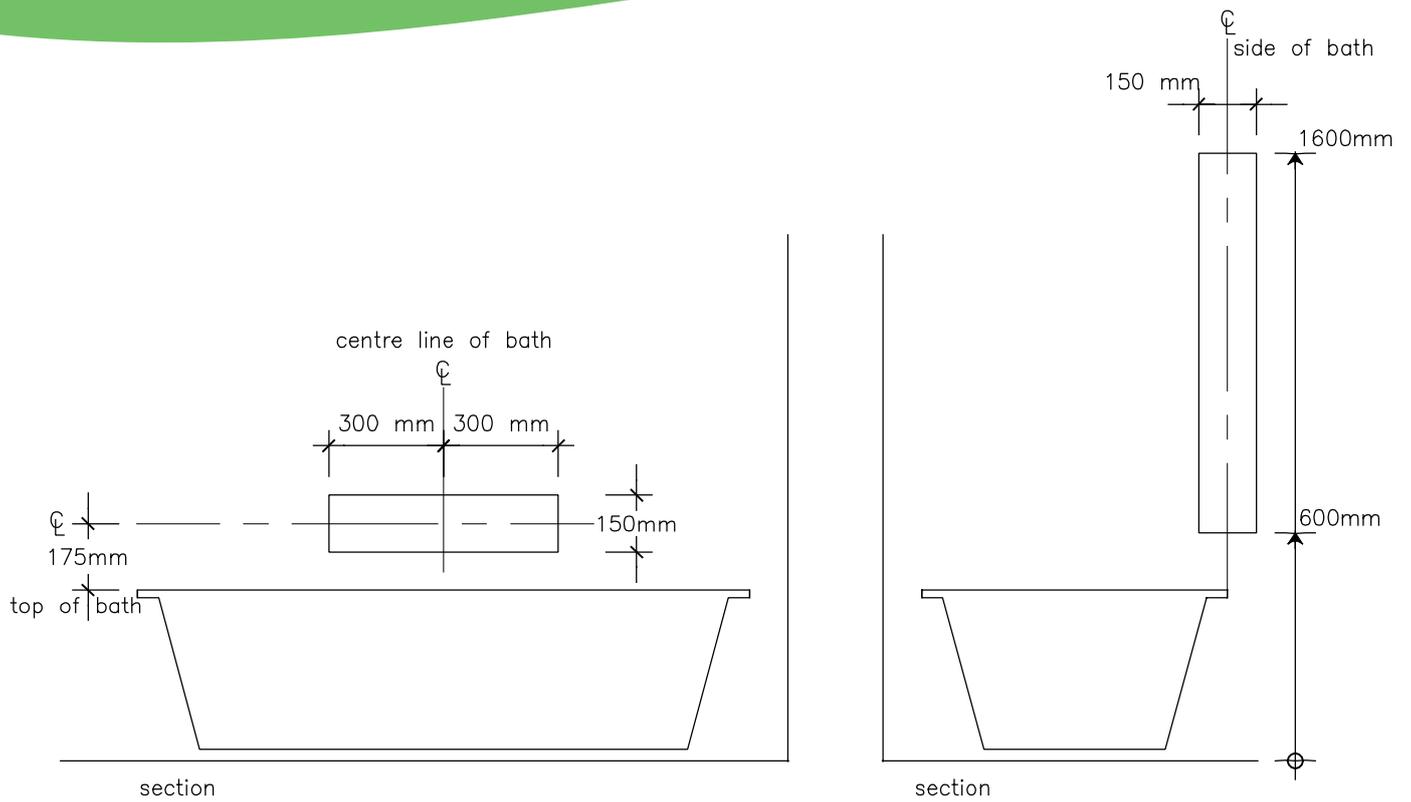


Figure 7(a) Bath – Location of reinforcement

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### Gold Level

Silver level requirements apply.



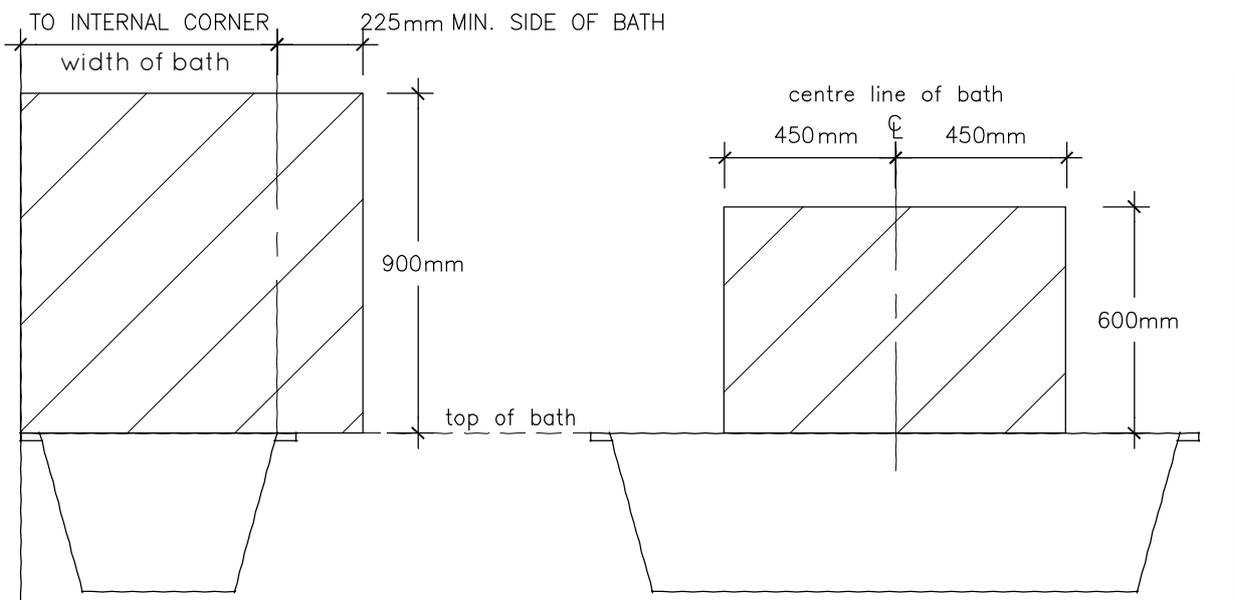
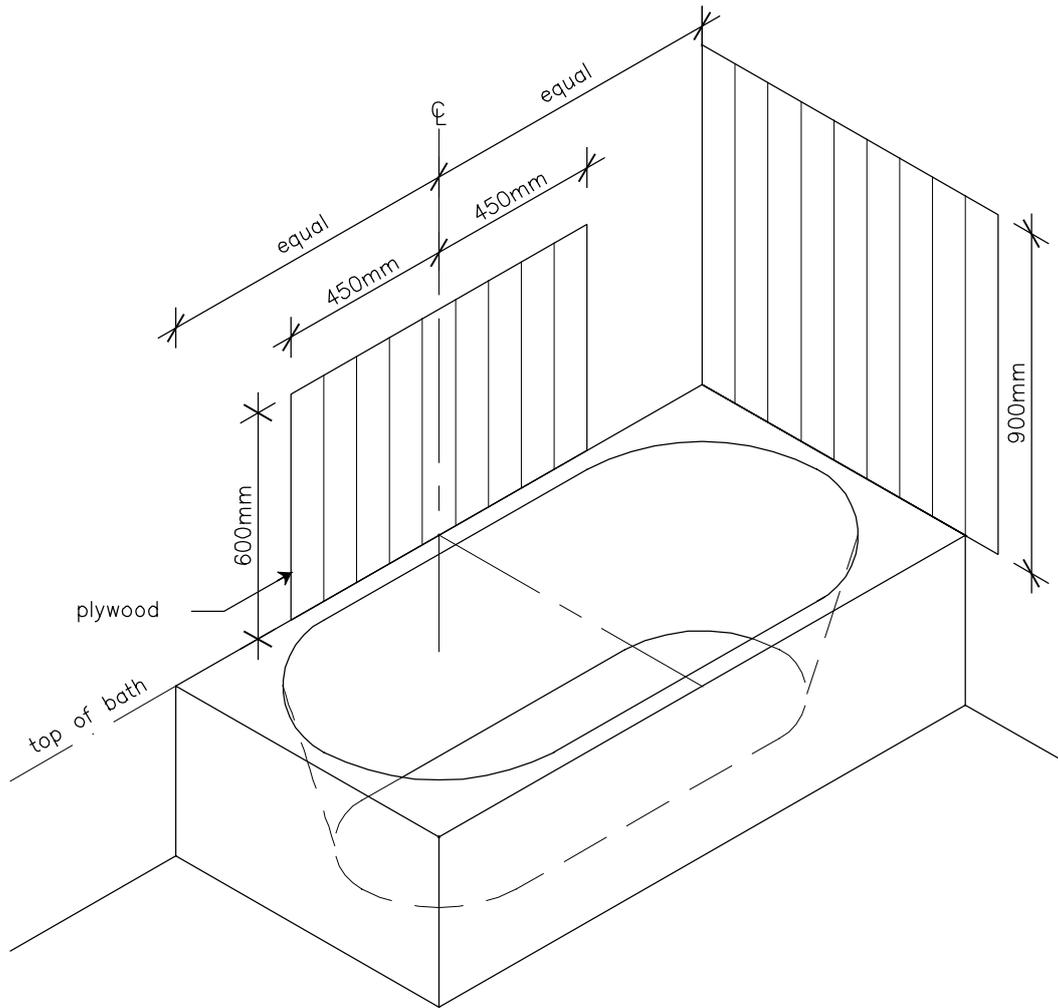


Figure 7(b) Bath – Location of sheeting

# 6 Reinforcement of bathroom & toilet walls

## Performance Statement

The bathroom and toilet walls are built to enable grabrails to be safely and economically installed.

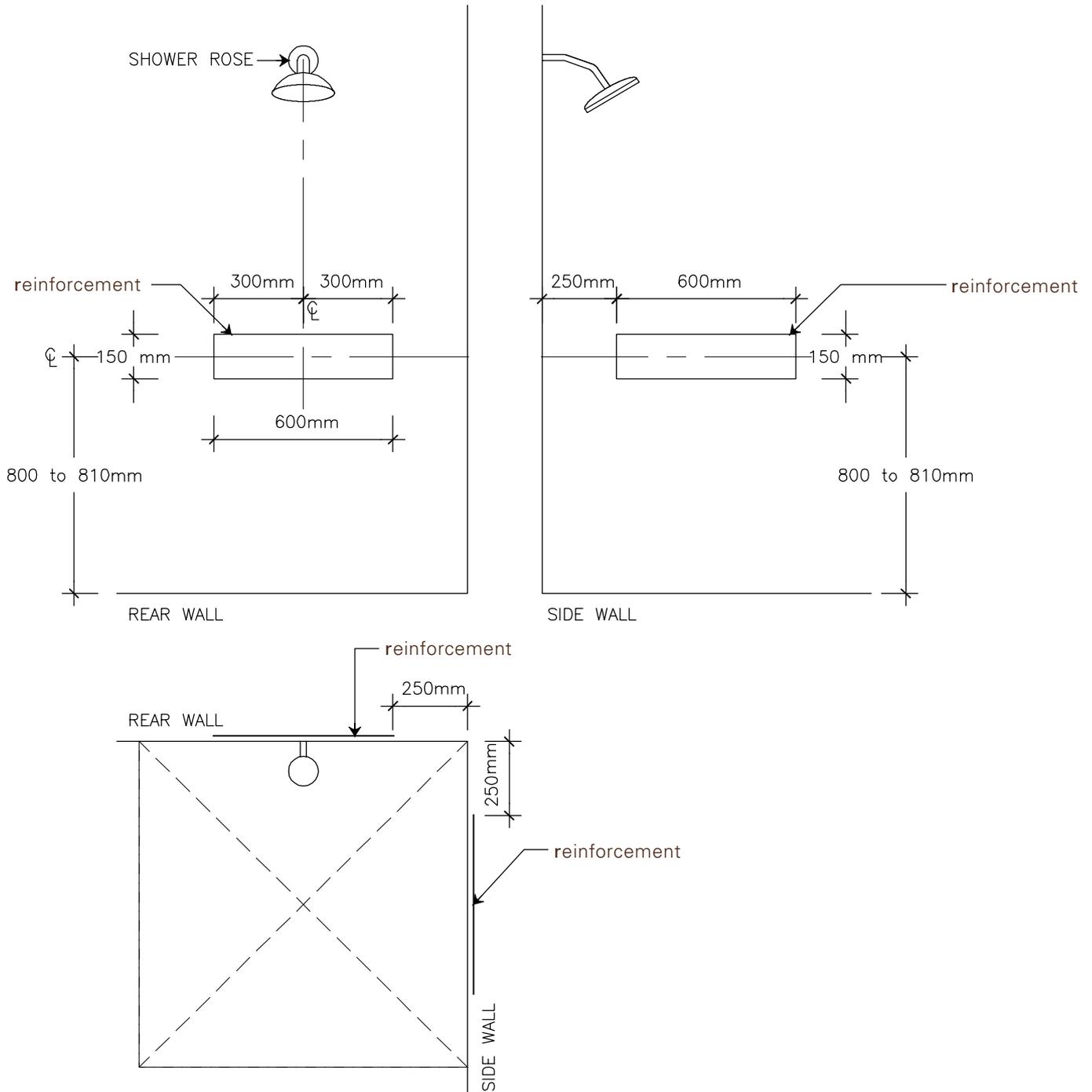


Figure 8(a) Shower recess – Location of reinforcement

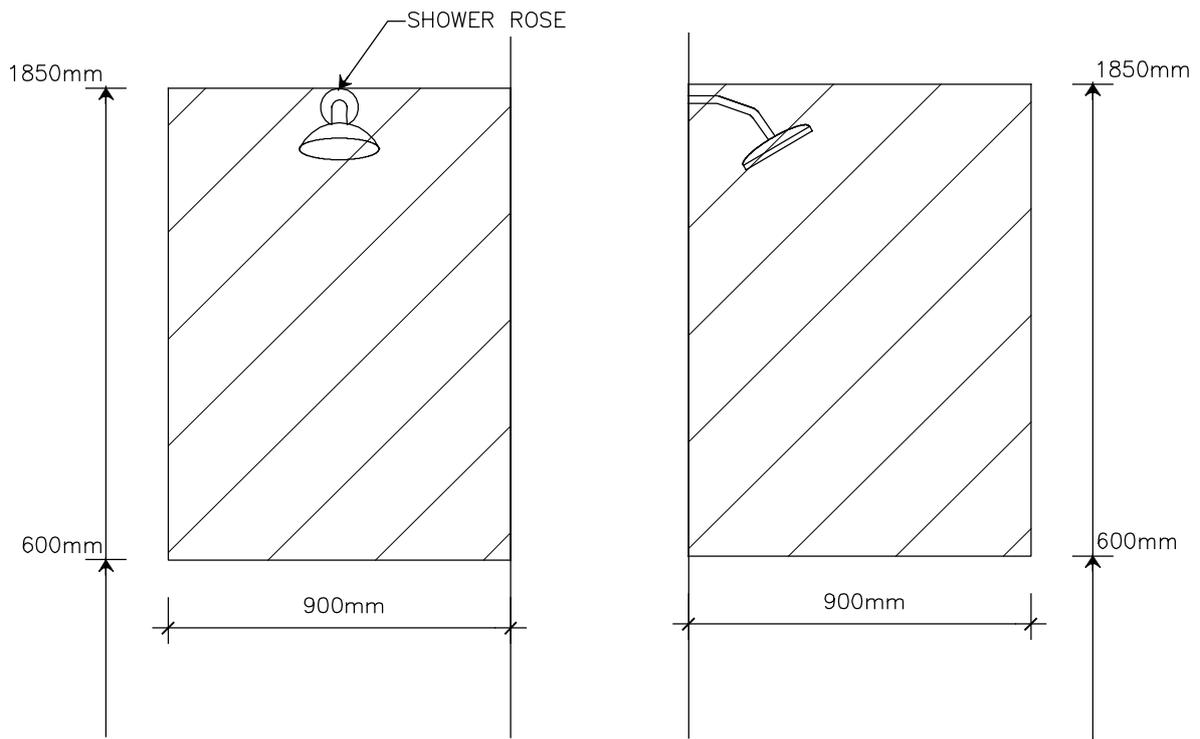


Figure 8(b) Shower recess – Location of sheeting



Photo courtesy of Landcom

Construction image illustrating reinforcement of walls using sheeting

# 7 Internal stairways

## Performance Statement

Where installed, stairways are designed to reduce the likelihood of injury and also enable safety pathway.



### Silver Level

- a. Stairways in dwellings must feature:
  - i. a continuous handrail on one side of the stairway where there is a rise of more than 1m.

**Note** This is a requirement for all new homes under the NCC. Homes built prior to 2014 may benefit from this element.

---

### Gold Level

As for the silver level with the following additional features:

- ii. a minimum clear width of 1000mm;
- iii. be straight in design; and
- iv. be positioned adjoining a load bearing wall.

**Note** The steps must provide a slip resistant finish and suitable non-slip tread as specified in the NCC. Handrails on both sides of the stairway are preferred.

---

### Platinum Level

As for the gold level with the following additional features:

- v. closed risers;
- vi. continuous handrails on both sides of the stairway; and
- vii. minimum landing areas of 1200mm x 1200mm at the top and base of the stairway.

**Note** The steps must provide a slip resistant finish and suitable non-slip tread as specified in the NCC.

---

**Straight stairs against a load bearing wall are safer to use and easier to modify if needs change.**



**Performance Statement**  
Where installed, stairways are designed to reduce the likelihood of injury and also enable future adaptation

# 8 Kitchen space

## Performance Statement

The kitchen space is designed to support ease of movement between fixed benches and to support easy adaptation.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

- a. The kitchen space should be designed to support ease of movement and adaptation with:
  - i. at least 1200mm clearance in front of fixed benches and appliances (excluding handles); and
  - ii. slip resistant flooring.<sup>6</sup>
- b. *Floor finishes should extend under kitchen cabinetry to enable cupboards to be removed without affecting the flooring. Where fixtures cannot be easily removed (eg. ovens which are built in) the floor finishes should not be continued.* If relying on advice from a third party, Assessors are advised to provide a note in the notes column of the Assessment.

---

### Platinum Level

As for the gold level except that the kitchen space described in (a) should be designed to support ease of movement and adaptation with:

- i. at least 1550mm clearance in front of fixed benches and appliances (excluding handles);
- ii. slip resistant flooring<sup>6</sup>; and
- iii. task lighting installed above workspaces.

---

<sup>6</sup> Slip Resistance is referenced in the National Construction Code and ultimately, Livable Housing Australia would like to defer to the NCC and the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) for rulings related to slip resistance. Standards Australia publish a number of standards as well as a handbook that address slip resistance of surfaces.

**Clear space between benches makes it easier and safer to use the kitchen space and appliances.**



Photo courtesy of Landcom



**Performance Statement**  
The kitchen space is designed to support ease of movement between fixed benches and to support easy adaptation.

# 9 Laundry space

## Performance Statement

The laundry space is designed to support ease of movement between fixed benches and to support easy adaptation.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

- a. The laundry space should be designed to support ease of movement and adaptation with:
  - i. At least 1200mm clear width provided in front of fixed benches and appliances (excluding handles). Where the appliances are not installed then the recessed area provision for an appliance shall be a minimum of 600mm in depth; and
  - ii. Slip resistant flooring.<sup>6</sup>
- b. Floor finishes should extend under Laundry cabinetry to enable cupboards to be removed without affecting the flooring. Where fixtures cannot be easily removed the floor finishes should not be continued. If relying on advice from a third party, Assessors are advised to provide a note in the notes column of the Assessment

---

### Platinum Level

The laundry space should be designed to support ease of movement and adaptation with:

- i. At least 1550mm clear width provided in front of fixed benches and appliances (excluding handles). Where the appliances are not installed then the recessed area provision for an appliance shall be a minimum of 600mm in depth.
- ii. Slip resistant flooring<sup>6</sup>; and

**Free space in front of the laundry bench makes it easier to unload laundry appliances.**



**Performance Statement**

The laundry space is designed to support ease of movement between fixed benches and to support easy adaptation.

# 10 Ground (or entry level) bedroom space

## Performance Statement

There is a space on the ground (or entry) level that can be used as a bedroom.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

- a. The dwelling should feature a space (or room) on the ground (or entry) level that:
  - i. is of at least 10m<sup>2</sup> clearance exclusive of wardrobes; skirtings and wall lining;
  - ii. provides for a minimum path of travel of at least 1000mm on at least one side of the bed.

---

### Platinum Level

As for the gold level, but it also:

- i. provides a space of at least 1540mm (width) x 2070mm (in the direction of travel) on the side on the bed that is closest to the door approach; and
  - ii. provides for a minimum path of travel of 1000mm on the remaining side of the bed.
  - iii. Where no bed the design should assume a queen size.
-

**Bedroom space should encourage ease of movement and be free of obstructions.**

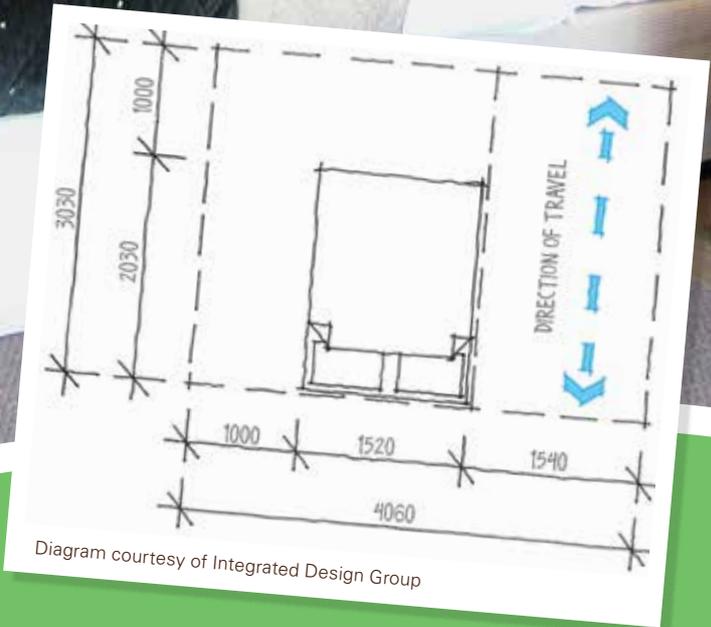


Diagram courtesy of Integrated Design Group

**Performance Statement**  
There is a space on the ground (or entry) level that can be used as a bedroom.

**Platinum Level bedroom circulation space requirements.**

# 11 Switches and powerpoints

## Performance Statement

Light switches and powerpoints are located at heights that are easy to reach for all home occupants.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

- a. Light switches should be positioned in a consistent location:
  - i. between 900mm – 1100mm above the finished floor level; and
  - ii. horizontally aligned with the door handle at the entrance to a room.
- b. Powerpoints should be installed not lower than 300mm above the finished floor level.

---

### Platinum Level

As for gold level with the following feature:

- c. Light and powerpoint switches should be rocker action, toggle or push pad in design with a recommended width of 35mm.
-

**Light switches should be positioned in a consistent configuration.**



Photos courtesy of Landcom

**Performance Statement**  
Light switches and powerpoints are located at heights that are easy to reach for all home occupants.

# 12 Door and tap hardware

## Performance Statement

Home occupants are able to easily and independently open and close doors and safely use tap hardware.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

- a. Doorways should feature door hardware installed at between 900mm – 1100mm above the finished floor.

---

### Platinum Level

As for gold level with the following features:

- b. Doorways should feature lever or D-pull style door hardware; and
- c. Basins, sinks and tubs should feature lever or capstan style tap hardware with a central spout.

For Gold and Platinum level, the handle clearances for D-pull style door hardware should be the same as AS1428.1 2009. AS 1428.1 2009 is the most relevant set of specifications aimed at providing the greatest access to the greatest number of people and as such is an appropriate standard to reference for this Element.

**Level and D-Pull handle door hardware and taps are easier to independently operate for all home occupants especially children.**



**Performance Statement**  
Home occupants are able to easily and independently open and close doors and safely use tap hardware.

# 13 Family/living room space

## Performance Statement

The family/living room features clear space to enable the home occupant to move in and around the room with ease.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

No requirements.

---

### Platinum Level

- a. The family/living room should accommodate a free space, minimum 2250mm in diameter, to enable ease of movement clear of furniture.
-

Ensuring there is free space in a living room area encourages ease of access within the home.



Photo courtesy of Landcom

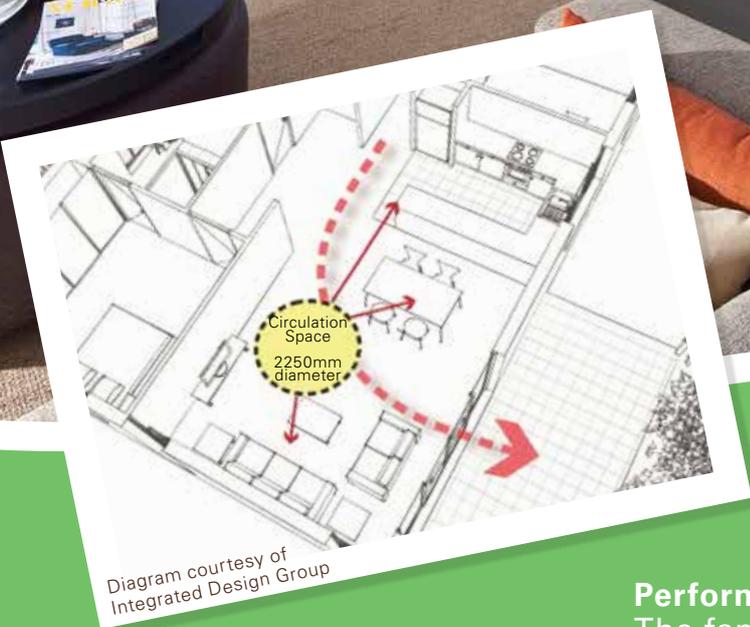


Diagram courtesy of Integrated Design Group

**Performance Statement**  
The family/living room features clear space to enable the home occupant to move in and around the room with ease.

# 14 Window sills

## Performance Statement

Windows sills are installed at a height that enables home occupants to view the outdoor space from either a seated or standing position.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

No requirements.

---

### Platinum Level

- a. Window sills on the ground (or entry) level in living areas and bedroom spaces should be positioned no higher than 1000mm above the finished floor level to enable enjoyment of the outlook.
- b. Window controls should be able to be easy to operate with one hand and located within easy reach from either a seated or standing position.

**Note** A concession from (a) is reasonable in kitchen, bathroom and utility spaces.

---

**Lower level windows encourage good sight lines to the outdoor space making it easier to monitor children and inviting better interaction with neighbours.**



**Performance Statement**  
Windows sills are installed at a height that enables home occupants to view the outdoor space from either a seated or standing position.

# 15 Flooring

## Performance Statement

Floor coverings are slip resistant to reduce the likelihood of slips, trips and falls in the home.



### Silver Level

No requirements.

---

### Gold Level

No requirements.

---

### Platinum Level

- a. All floor coverings should:
  - i. be firm, even and slip resistant; and
  - ii. feature a level transition between abutting surfaces (a maximum vertical tolerance of 5mm between abutting surfaces is allowable provided the lip is rounded or beveled).

**Note:** Slip Resistance is referenced in the National Construction Code and ultimately, Livable Housing Australia would like to defer to the NCC and the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) for rulings related to slip resistance. Standards Australia publish a number of standards as well as a handbook that address slip resistance of surfaces.

---

**Slip resistant floor surfaces significantly reduce the risk of slip, trips and falls in the home.**



Photos courtesy of Landcom



**Performance Statement**  
Floor coverings are slip resistant to reduce the likelihood of slips, trips and falls in the home.





# CREATING A HOME IS ONE OF THE LARGEST EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS YOU CAN MAKE

## **THINK SMART – FIND AN ARCHITECT**

Working with an architect gives you a personal, professionally guided experience that gives you the best chance of achieving your vision.

Architects have the qualifications, training, vision and experience to manage the entire design and construction process with you. In addition, architects explore new boundaries when it comes to living, investigate new technologies and materials, and can ensure that what is built is environmentally sustainable, livable and accessible.

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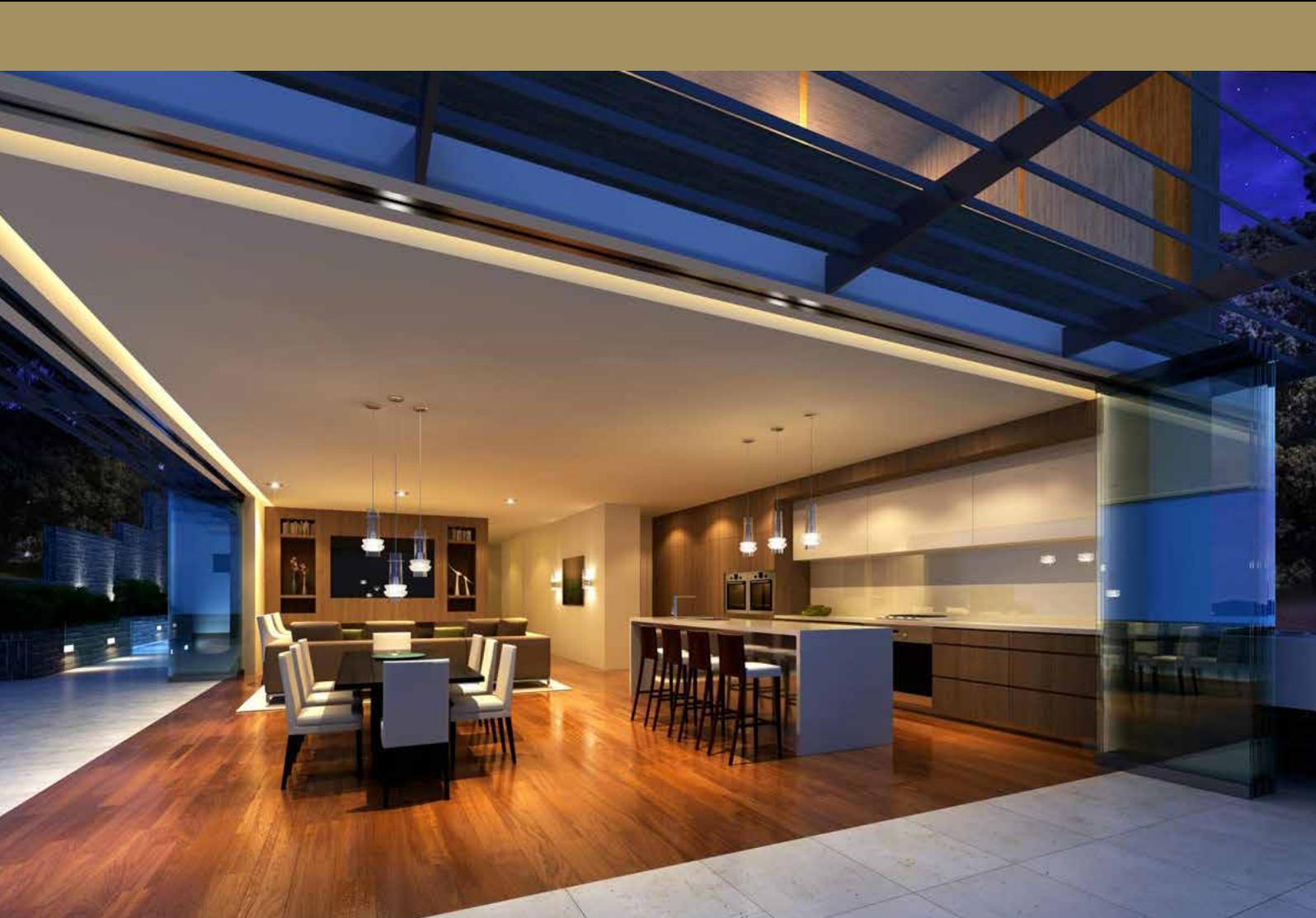
**Our goal is for all new homes in Australia to achieve the LHD Silver livability rating.**



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**Livable**  
Housing Australia



Master Builders and its members have for a long time demonstrated a commitment to delivering diverse housing for individuals and households.

Our members are at the forefront in developing housing that meets the current and future requirements of its households.

A house will have many occupants with a variety of needs over its lifetime. Intelligent design and innovative construction can deliver housing that is adaptable. It provides an accessible and safe home environment for young families, the elderly and people with disability.

As an industry leader, Master Builders is pleased to work with Livable Housing Australia in developing the Livable Housing Design (LHD) Guidelines. The LHD Guidelines will be a valuable resource for households, the building industry and the broader community to better understand the benefits and the design options available to make our homes more accessible and safe for everyone.

**Master Builders Australia**

Email: [enquiries@masterbuilders.com.au](mailto:enquiries@masterbuilders.com.au)

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