

Solar Panels, Satellite Dishes, Aerials & Rainwater Tanks

Information Sheet 06

Do I need approval to install solar panels, a satellite dish, an aerial or a rainwater tank?

There are a number of different structures that homeowners commonly use to enhance the use of their property. Whether or not a development approval is required will depend on the particulars of the proposal, as there are a number of exemptions that may apply.

Development Approval comprises both Development Plan Consent and Building Rules Consent. An application may be made for both consents together or separately.

This information sheet provides some guidance on when approval would (or would not) be required. It is recommended that you provide the details of the proposed structure to Council prior to commencing work to determine if development approval would be required.

What is Council doing to support the adoption of renewable energy sources?

Council is a strong supporter of alternative energy sources to assist in reducing the carbon footprint of the City. Council has resolved that people who submit development applications for the installation of solar panels will not be required to pay any application fees.

As such, on those occasions where approval for solar panel systems is required, no fees will be payable for lodgement, planning assessment or building rules assessment.

When is approval required for solar panels?

For systems ≤ 100kg

The installation, alteration, repair or maintenance of a photovoltaic system on the roof of a building (other than State heritage places) does not require development approval if it has a total weight that is no greater than 100kg.

For systems > 100kg

For photovoltaic systems that are heavier than 100kg (total), the installation, alteration, repair or maintenance of it on the roof of a building (other than State heritage places) does not require development approval if it satisfies the following criteria:

- the weight load is distributed so that it does not exceed 100kg at any single point of attachment to the roof; and
- the panels (and any associated components) do not overhang any part of the roof; and
- the panels are fitted parallel to the roof, with the underside surface of the panels being not more than 100mm above the surface of the roof; and
- the panels are installed by an accredited installer.

If the system is to be erected on a tilt frame, or exceeds any of the above criteria, then development approval would be required.

For systems on frames at ground level

Within a zone designated for residential development, an open-lattice frame or pole mounted with solar panels does not require development approval (other than State heritage places) up to a height of 4.5m and a panel area of 20m².

For systems on local heritage places

Development approval for a photovoltaic system on a local heritage place is not required if the system, when installed, could not be seen by a person at ground level standing in a public street. In addition, the system must also satisfy the criteria listed above according to its total weight.



When is approval required for an aerial or antenna?

An aerial attached to a building

Other than in respect of a State or local heritage place, development approval would be required for the construction, alteration or extension of an aerial or antenna greater than 2m in height that is attached to a building in a zone designated for residential development.

In other zones, a height of 4m is permissible without development approval. The height of the aerial or antenna is to be taken from the topmost point of attachment to the building, disregarding any attachment by guy wires.

A free-standing aerial

Development approval would be required for the construction, alteration or extension of a free-standing aerial or antenna that exceeds 7.5m in height.

This height limit increases to 10m if the aerial is to be used solely by a person who holds an amateur licence under the Commonwealth *Radiocommunications Act 1992*.

For State or local heritage places

Development approval would be required for any aerial or antenna located on the site of (or that would be attached to) a State or local heritage place.

When is approval required for a satellite dish?

A satellite dish attached to a building

If the satellite dish would be located in a zone designated for residential development, development approval would be required for a dish with a diameter greater than 1.2m, or if the total height of the additional structure (including the dish) is greater than 2m.

In other zones, a diameter of 2.6m and height of 4m is permissible without development approval. The height of the structure includes the satellite dish and is to be taken from the topmost point of attachment to the building, disregarding any attachment by guy wires.

A free-standing satellite dish

If the satellite dish would be located in a zone designated for residential development, development approval would be required for a dish with a diameter greater than 1.2m or attached to a structure where their combined height exceeds 7.5m.

In other zones, a diameter of 2.6m and height of 10m is permissible without development approval. The height of the structure includes the satellite dish and is to be taken from natural ground level.

For further information:

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When is approval required for a rainwater tank?

A water tank (and any supporting structure) does not require development approval if it would:

- be part of a roof drainage system; and
- be located wholly above ground; and
- have a total floor area not more than 10m²; and
- have no part higher than 4m above natural ground level.

If any of these criteria are not satisfied, then development approval would be required.

If approval is required, can my application be fast-tracked?

There is a fast-tracked assessment stream that could apply to the planning assessment of a rainwater tank, whether the tank is proposed above or below ground. A different assessment fee will apply for fast-tracked applications. Fast-tracked assessment does not apply to State or Local Heritage Places, or within Historic (Conservation) Zones.

Above-ground tanks

To be eligible for fast-tracked assessment, an above-ground water tank (and any supporting structure) must:

- be part of a roof drainage system; and
- have a total floor area not exceeding 15 square metres; and
- be located wholly above ground; and
- have no part of the tank higher than 4m above natural ground level; and
- have no part of the tank in front of any part of the building line of the main building line; and
- in the case of a tank made of metal, be pre-colour treated or painted in a non-reflective colour.

Underground tanks

To be eligible for fast-tracked assessment, an underground water tank must be ancillary to a dwelling erected on the site and the tank (and any associated pump) must be located wholly below ground level.

