



FOOD BUSINESS CONSTRUCTION GUIDE

For new food premises or alterations to existing food premises, Council requires compliance with the Australia New Zealand Food Safety Standards 3.2.3 Food Premises & Equipment.

Standard 3.2.3 outlines mandatory requirements for food premises with regard to, fixtures, fittings, equipment & food transport vehicles. These Food Safety Standards apply to all food businesses in Australia and in Tasmania and are incorporated in the *Food Act 2003*. A food premises is not permitted to operate or be registered until Standard 3.2.3 is complied with. This includes all fixtures, fittings, equipment and associated transport vehicles constructed in compliance with the Standard.

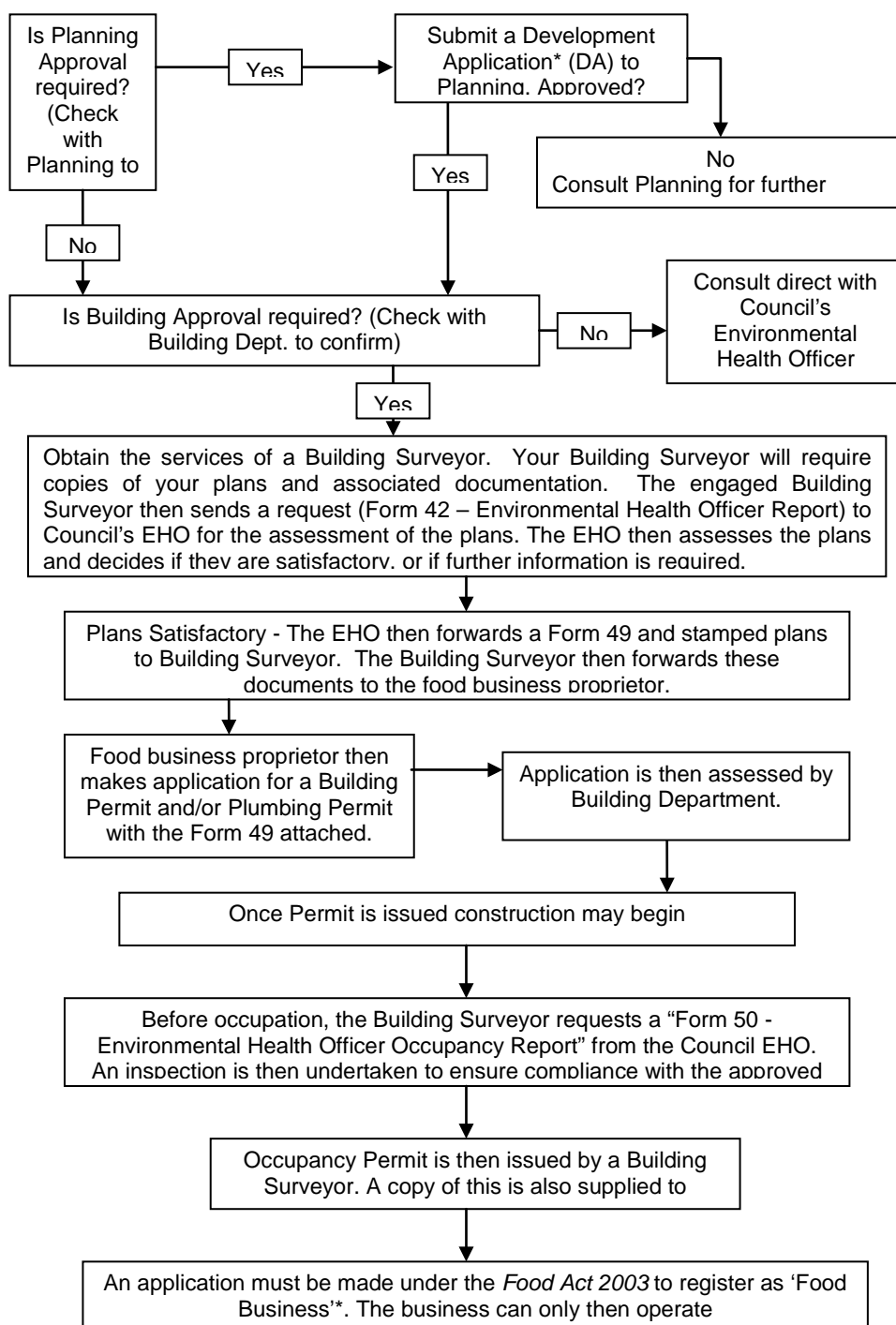
During an approval process for food premises, food business operators are required to submit plans and specifications relating to proposed fixtures, fittings, finishes and equipment within the premises.

The plans are to be drawn to scale by an accredited building designer or architect and are to include specific details of:

- Finishes of floors, walls, ceilings, benches, shelves and other surfaces;
- Lighting and electrical installations – types, locations;
- Locations and elevation drawings (cross-section details) of all fixtures and fittings including construction materials (elevations are to determine heights and widths of equipment);
- Plumbing design and location (including all sinks/services, floor wastes/bucket traps/cleaner's sink, grease traps and sanitary conveniences);
- Refrigeration details such as freezers, chillers, coolrooms, display fridges;

- Position of all exhaust facilities with details and specifications of hood fabrication and performance;
- Details of refuse facilities (rubbish bins, bin storage area);
- Toilets and change rooms (including facilities for persons with a disability where required);

Please also outline all manufacturing processes to be undertaken and foods to be prepared in the business. A menu will need to be provided to Council stating all types of food that are proposed as well as how they are processed.



*Please consult Council for applicable fees and charges

Guidance on Structural Requirements for a Food Business

Flooring:

Flooring in the areas used for food handling, cleaning sanitising & personal hygiene of a food business need to be able to be cleaned effectively, impervious to grease and food particles, not allowing ponding of water and not provide harbourage for pests.

This includes but is not limited to epoxy jointed ceramic and quarry tiles, heat welded vinyl sheeting and epoxy resin for food preparation areas and general use. Refer to Table 3.1 in AS 4674 - 2004 for suitability of flooring finishes for food premises areas.

Floors are to be evenly graded (at least 1:100) to ensure suitable fall. Depending on the use of the premises there may be other gradients that are applicable e.g. - for wet-down areas whereby the BCA should be consulted in this instance.

Walls & Ceilings:

Walls and ceilings in kitchen areas must be sealed and smooth to prevent dirt, dust and pests getting into the food premises and must be impervious to grease, food particles and water. Walls and ceilings must also be easy to clean, and be of a solid construction to prevent harbourage of vermin in any voids & cavities.

It should be noted that polyvinyl sheeting is not considered suitable in areas exposed to excessive heat or high impact areas.

Further information on walls and ceilings in food premises is available from AS 4674:2004 – Design, construction and fit-out of food premises, Table 3.2 ‘Suitability of Wall Finishes for Food Premises Areas’ and Table 3.3 ‘Suitability of Ceiling Finishes for Food Premises Areas’ respectively.

Coving:

Coving is required on all angles where flooring intersects with walls in food preparation areas. Coving is to be installed and sealed to prevent moisture through joints; facilitate cleaning by ensuring accumulations of materials do not occur.

Further information can be found in AS 4674:2004 – ‘Design, construction and fit-out of food premises’ Section 3.1.5.

Service pipes conduits, electrical wiring:

Service pipes, conduits, and electrical wiring are to be concealed in floors, walls, plinths & ceilings, penetration & openings are to be sealed. Where this is not possible, pipes are to be fixed on brackets so as to provide at least 25mm clearance between the pipe and adjacent vertical surface; 100mm between the pipe and adjacent horizontal surfaces.

Animals and Pests:

Pests must be prevented from entering the premises by providing mesh screens, self-closing doors and other inhibiting mechanisms at all openings, doorways and windows. Inhibiting mechanisms can include air-curtains, fly-strips or fly-zappers.

There should not be void areas above cupboards, coolrooms etc and all plinths should be of solid construction.

Pests can be eradicated by contracting a qualified pest control company to treat the premises on a regular basis and by providing baits and traps around the premises (including external areas to the building).

It is important to note that precautionary measures must be taken to ensure that pests will not be a problem in a food business.

Window Sills:

Where windows are present in a food business, the windows sills are to be at a 45° angle towards the floor. This prevents an accumulation of dust and also provides for easier cleaning. Window sills should be at least 300mm above benches, sinks and appliances.

Lighting:

A food business needs to be provided with either natural or artificial lighting. If artificial lighting is used it must comply with AS/NZS 1680.1:2006 and AS/NZS1680.2.4:1997.

All lights should be fitted with light diffusers/covers or shatterproof tubes to facilitate cleaning and to prevent contamination of food and the premises should breakage occur.

Ventilation:

Natural or mechanical ventilation is to be provided in accordance with the Building Code of Australia. Extraction ventilation systems are to be provided to remove cooked fumes, odours, heat & steam in accordance with AS 1668.1 & 1668.2. This is required when cooking equipment exceeds 8kW for electrical appliances or 29 MJ/h for a gas appliance.

An extraction system shall also be provided where there is any dishwasher and other washing/sanitising equipment that vents steam into an area to the extent that there is, or is likely to be, condensation collecting on walls and ceilings.

Council will require certification that the ventilation is in accordance with the relevant Standard(s).

Cleaning/Sanitising of Equipment:

A food business as a minimum must have a double-bowl sink, and 150mm integral splashback for cleaning food contact equipment. The sink must be large enough to ensure the largest piece of equipment can be washed adequately. Separate sinks should be used for food washing operations and equipment washing.

If a dishwasher is used to wash and sanitise equipment, a single bowl sink will suffice. Please note however, dishwashers used for sanitising are to operate on the sanitising cycle at the manufacturers recommended temperature and time.

For cleaning in sinks the temperature of the water will need to be at least 45°C. For sanitising in the sinks the temperature of the water needs to be at least 80°C or alternatively chemical sanitisers may be used.

Hand Washing Facilities:

A separate hand wash basin must be available and easily accessible for food handlers. This must have a permanent supply of warm running water through a common outlet. This should be operated by a flick mixer or similar system. For businesses which undertake extensive food preparation, or there is high potential for contamination of hands, hand wash basins may need to be of hands free operation i.e. foot, knee, arm or sensor operated.

The basin should be at least 11 litres in capacity with the minimum dimensions of 500mm by 400mm off the wall. Accompanying the basin should be a wall mounted dispenser supply of liquid soap and

single use paper towel. A waste receptacle will also need to be provided for the disposal of the paper towel.

The hand wash basin must not be obstructed and be easily accessible at all times. It should be no further than 5m from any place where food handling is occurring, open food areas & utensils & equipment washing areas & also immediately adjacent to toilets.

Cleaner's Sink:

Access to a cleaner's sink is required. This will provide for the disposal of mop water and similar liquid waste. This is to be located in a separate area(s) from where open food is handled. This sink is to be connected to sewer.

Floor Waste Gully:

A floor waste gully may be required depending on the nature of the business.

Shelving:

The surface of all shelving shall be smooth, impervious, non-absorbent, free from cracks and defects, and capable of being cleaned easily. Shelving for food storage should not be at a level lower than 250mm above the floor.

If the underside of the shelving is absorbent, it is recommended that the surface be sealed so that it meets these requirements.

Supports and Brackets:

Sinks, tubs, draining boards, hand wash basins, heaters, urns, benches, shelving and similar fittings shall be supported on approved frames. If hollow pipe is used the ends must be sealed. Timber framing is not permitted.

You may wish to consult Table 4.5 'Supports for Equipment' of AS 4674:2004 – Design, construction and fit-out of food premises.

Refrigerated counter, cupboards, cabinets and bars:

Construction material & specific requirements for fixtures, fittings & equipment are shown in AS4674-2004 table 4.3 & 4.4. They shall be designed & constructed of metal, plastic or sealed timber sheeting or other impervious material to ensure ease of cleaning.

Equipment:

All equipment shall be either moveable for cleaning or built into walls & completely vermin proofed or butted against walls & sealed or installed with clearances as outlined in AS4674-2004.

Equipment shall be supported on wheels or castors, 150mm legs, plinths or solid metal or capped tubular steel brackets or framework.

Toilets:

Toilets for both staff & customers must be provided in accordance with the Building Code of Australia (BCA). Toilets are to be separated from food areas by intervening ventilated space (e.g. airlock) fitted with self closing doors. Customer/ public toilets are not to be accessed through areas where open food is handled.

Staff Belongings or Lockers:

Staff room, lockers or separate facilities shall be provided for storage of street clothing and personal effects of employees.

Storage of Garbage:

Storage areas for refuse must be able to be cleaned and pest proofed. External ground storage areas are to be paved, graded, designed to fall to a floor waste drain. A hose tap is to be installed to facilitate cleaning.

Garbage room floors are to be impervious, coved graded & drained. Walls are to be smooth impervious surfaces. Ventilation, pest proofing & a hose tap to be provided.

Garbage and recyclable material is to be contained by the food premises. This means that the waste should be kept in bins, hoppers, wire cages or other containers that are appropriate for the types of waste. The containers must be large enough or in sufficient numbers to contain all waste produced by the business while awaiting the next waste removal from the premises.

Prior to opening:

Before opening your food business, you must ensure you have complied with the following checklist:

- ☑ Planning approval (if applicable);
- ☑ Building and plumbing approval (incorporating environmental health);
- ☑ An Occupancy Report issued by an EHO to the Building Surveyor. Occupancy will not be issued until the EHO has inspected the premises and signed off on the construction;
- ☑ An Occupancy Permit issued by Building Surveyor and copy forwarded to Council's Permit Authority.

Once you have obtained the above approvals/permits etc you will need to inform Council that you wish to begin operating. This is achieved by completing a '*Notification of Food Business Form*' and submitting it to Council's Environmental Health Section.

Once this has been completed, Council's Environmental Health Section will identify the risk category which will be used to determine how often the premises will be inspected.

It should be noted that this document is intended only as a guide to assist in the establishment of a new food business or the alteration/extension of existing food businesses.

Council's Environmental Health Department should be contacted for more specific details. You should liaise closely with the Environmental Health Officer through planning, construction and beyond as this will prove beneficial, and possibly cost saving.

For further information, please contact us.