

National Development Assessment Definitions

The Development Assessment Forum (DAF) has prepared a discussion paper on nationally consistent development assessment definitions. The paper is open for public comment until 23 March 2001 and recommends 18 operational development assessment definitions to be used in planning schemes at Local, State and Commonwealth level.

The inconsistency of planning and development assessment definitions between and within states is of concern to industry and others involved in development assessment processes. The DAF considers the adoption of a national set of development assessment definitions a positive step to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of development assessment systems.

During the consultation period, all DAF members have undertaken to consult with their membership and seek their comments on the definitions proposed in the discussion paper. In May, the DAF will receive a final report on the Definitions discussion paper and consider recommending a core set of definitions to be adopted consistently by State and Local Government authorities.

The core set of development assessment definitions recommended for adoption are:

Item	Proposed definition
Allotment/Lot	A parcel of land or space described in a land title.
Building	A fixed structure wholly or partly enclosed by walls and which has a roof.
Building height	The distance from finished ground level to the highest point of the roof or parapet.
Basement	A storey either below ground level or that projects no more than 1.2 metres above finished ground level.
Dwelling	A building or part of a building used as a self contained residence.
Floor area (of a building)	The total floor area of the building measured from the outside of the external walls or the centre of a common wall.
Frontage	A boundary of a lot which abuts a road.
Natural ground level	The natural level of a site.
Finished ground level	The finished level of a site.

Item	Proposed definition
Habitable room	Any room used for normal domestic activities other than a bathroom, toilet, pantry, walk-in wardrobe, corridor, lobby, photographic darkroom, clothes drying room, and other spaces of a specialised nature occupied neither frequently nor for extended periods. <i>(modified BCA)</i>
Mezzanine	An intermediate floor within a storey.
Plot ratio	The total floor area of all buildings on a site divided by the area of the site.
Private open space	An open area of land or building attached to a dwelling intended for the exclusive use of the occupants.
Setback/ Building setback	The minimum distance from any boundary to which a structure may be built. <i>(Macquarie)</i>
Site coverage	The proportion of a site covered by buildings.
Swimming pool	Any structure capable of being filled with water to a depth of more than 300 millimetres and primarily used for swimming, wading or paddling. <i>(BCA, Aust Std)</i>
Storey	Storey means a space within a building which is situated between one floor level and the floor level next above, or if there is no floor above, the ceiling or roof above, but not— (a) a space that contains only— (i) a lift shaft, stairway or meter room; or (ii) a bathroom, shower room, laundry, water closet, or other sanitary compartment; or (iii) accommodation intended for not more than 3 vehicles; or (iv) a combination of the above; or (b) a mezzanine.
Window	Window includes a roof light, glass panel, glass block or brick, glass louvre, glazed sash, glazed door, or other device which transmits natural light directly from outside a building to the room concerned when in the closed position.

Copies of the draft definitions discussion paper are available through:

The DAF Secretariat
 National Office of Local Government
 Department of Transport and Regional Services
 PO Box 594
 CANBERRA ACT 2601
 Email: daf@dotrs.gov.au

The paper is also available on the DAF Website www.daf.gov.au, including an electronic feedback form.

Your comments on the draft paper will be welcomed.

Visit our Website

The DAF website contains copies of all the background reports, links to all State and Territory planning departments, various local government or municipal associations, and to the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services.

The website is at:

www.daf.gov.au

More Information

Contact the DAF Secretariat at the National Office of Local Government by phoning 02 6274 8127 or by e-mailing daf@dotrs.gov.au