



# DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES DESIGN BRIEF

## Apartments





## Document Control

Revision Date	Comments	Author
18.10.2019	Whole brief revision	Urban Design



## Preface

This Design Brief for Apartments has been developed by the Department of Communities, Housing (DoC,H) for use on all housing projects delivered by the Department of the appropriate Building Code of Australia (BCA) building class.

This Functional Design Brief is to be read in conjunction with the State Planning Policy 7.3 – Apartments (SPP 7.3) and any relevant Local Government policies.

This Design Brief contains additional requirements and guidance to SPP 7.3 to assist proponents in the design of Multiple Dwellings on behalf of the Department of Communities.

All images in this document are illustrative purposes only and are not to scale.





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# PART A

## External Design



Landscaping Strategy | Fencing



## A1 | Landscaping Strategy

**A1.1 Well-designed landscapes are integral to providing high amenity-built environments. A comprehensive landscaping strategy that clearly outlines the objectives of each landscaped area in the development and its verges is to be provided. Some example objectives are:**

- A1.1.1 Productive fruit, vegetable or herb gardens for common use and socialising opportunities. The proponent is to provide plants to these areas – empty planters are not to be left for future tenants to populate.
- A1.1.2 Hedges or screening plants to provide privacy or a buffer to communal walkways.
- A1.1.3 Vertical green or planting on structure for visual interest, as a buffer between different areas of the development, and/or to add to the amenity of the streetscape.
- A1.1.4 Formal gardens or feature landscapes such as rockeries, wetland ponds, xeriscapes, or flowering gardens.
- A1.1.5 Grassed area for socialising or kids play.
- A1.1.6 Low level ground cover to reduce hardscapes.

**A1.2 Landscaping must be used as part of the design strategy of the development to complement the built form and improve the appearance from the street, communal open spaces, pedestrian access and entries, and areas of fencing. The following are some suggested ways to achieve this:**

- A1.2.1 Use trees and shrubs of different heights to break the roofline or 'break up' the bulk or scale of a development, softening its appearance to the street.
- A1.2.2 Climbing plants or other forms of vertical greening should be used to improve the appearance of all blank walls within a development visible from the common areas of the development and public domain.
- A1.2.3 Use climbing plants to create green canopies/arbours over walkways or entry points to a site.
- A1.2.4 Locate trees, shrubs, or climbing plants where they can shade strategic walls or openings of the development to reduce solar heat gains to the dwelling and public domain. Consider using deciduous plants to provide winter solar gain and summer shading.
- A1.2.5 Landscaping adjacent to openable windows can assist to cool air entering the dwelling.
- A1.2.6 Verge landscaping should complement the landscaping strategy of the development while complying with local Council requirements.





**A1.3 Landscape design must ensure that plants are in locations suitable for and have the soil conditioning, drainage improvements and reticulation necessary to achieve the intended target height, width, and canopy at maturity, as well as maintain overall health:**

A1.3.1 Planting must include robust and long-living, water-wise species.

A1.3.2 All private balconies and courtyards are to have an external hose cock to allow private landscaping to be maintained.

**A1.4 Developments are to provide high-quality landscaping that contributes to the amenity of the public realm:**

A1.4.1 All developments must locate a portion of the Deep Soil Area required by SPP 7.3 within the street setback(s) that do the following to improve the appearance of the streetscape:

- Include a minimum of 1 x 90L tree for each ground floor dwelling.
- Include mature landscaping that provides an attractive combination of groundcovers, mid-height shrubs, and/or grass.



## A2 | Fencing

*Fencing has an important role in the presentation of the development and in defining the public and private realms. It should be designed to complement the development by using the same materials and colours while balancing the privacy needs of residents with ensuring passive surveillance of the street.*

### **A2.1 Fencing should be attractive and contextually appropriate by providing the following:**

- A2.1.1 Be attractively designed by incorporating features such as piers, permeable infill screens, raised planters, adjacent landscaping, and areas of articulation.
- A2.1.2 Provide legibility and activation to each street-facing ground floor dwelling by incorporating dwelling address signage, individual letterboxes and pedestrian gates directly accessible from the public footpath.

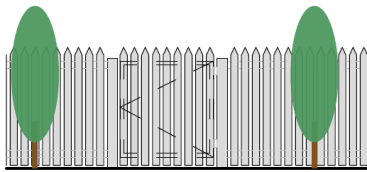
### **A2.2 Fencing permeability should be appropriate to the privacy requirements of residents, passive surveillance requirements of the public domain and clearly define public and private realms by incorporating:**

- A2.2.1 Highly permeable fencing (see Figures 1 - 3) to areas across site that do not require privacy, to facilitate passive surveillance, outlook and social interaction.
  - Highly permeable fencing is not suited for use around the primary outdoor living areas.
  - Where permeable fencing is used, a 500mm landscaping strip should be provided along the fence (on either or alternating sides) to contribute to higher amenity to the residents and the public realm.
- A2.2.2 Semi-permeable fencing (see Figures 4 - 6) to areas across site where physical separation is required to delineate between public and private realms, whilst maintaining low-medium passive surveillance and outlook.
  - Where this type of fencing is used along primary streets frontages, incorporate interesting elements such as raised planters and varied setbacks to add visual interest and articulation.
- A2.2.3 Non-permeable fencing (see Figures 7 - 9) to meet maximum visual privacy requirements where passive surveillance, outlook and social interaction is not required.
  - This type of fencing creates a strong delineation between public and private realms and can be visually appealing by incorporating planters



or sections of varied materials that complement the greater development.

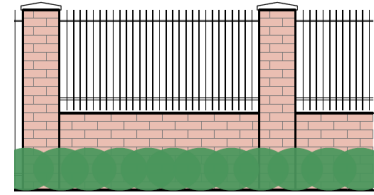
- Metal sheet fencing is not accepted for fencing located along public realm interfaces, such as next to public walkways or public open spaces.



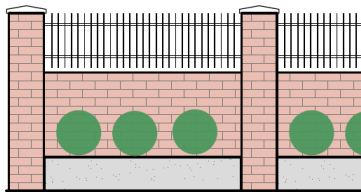
**Figure 1:** Permeable fencing – low picket fence



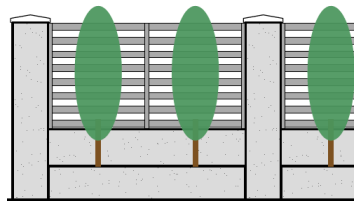
**Figure 2:** Permeable fencing – brick pier and full-height permeable infill panel



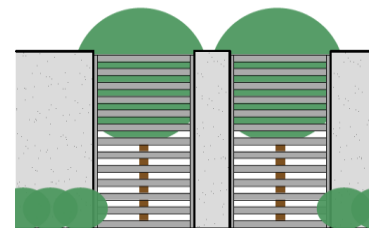
**Figure 3:** Permeable fencing – brick pier and low wall with permeable infill panel



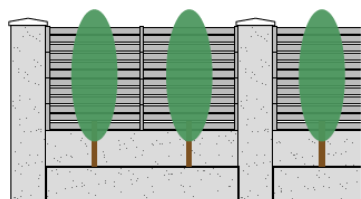
**Figure 4:** Semi-permeable fencing – brick pier and wall to 1200mm with integrated planter. Permeable infill panel above 1200mm



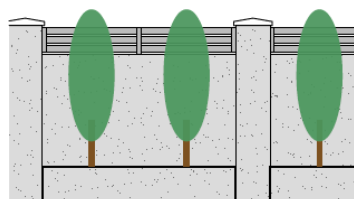
**Figure 5:** Semi-permeable fencing – rendered masonry pier with low wall, integrated planter and permeable infill panels above



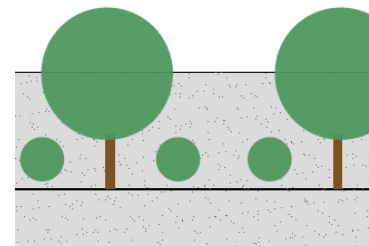
**Figure 6:** Semi-permeable fencing – 1800mm high brick wall with 1800mm high permeable infill panels



**Figure 7:** Non-permeable fencing – rendered masonry pier and low wall with integrated planter. Solid infill panel above



**Figure 8:** Non-permeable fencing – rendered masonry wall to 1600mm with permeable infill panel above



**Figure 9:** Non-permeable fencing – brick wall to 1800mm with integrated planter



**A2.3 Corner lot fencing should:**

A2.2.1 Incorporate additional design features responding to the immediate context, such as including provisions for signage, lighting and integrated raised planters.

**A2.5 Laneway fencing should:**

A2.5.1 Provide privacy to outdoor living areas while allowing for passive surveillance to the public realm.

A2.5.2 Minimise areas of concealment.

A2.5.3 Maximise the integration of large trees along the fence line.



## **PART B**

### **Internal Design**



**Dwelling Entry & Circulation Spaces | Bedrooms | Living & Dining Areas | Kitchens | Laundries & Internal Storage | Utilities | Natural Ventilation & Daylight | Additional Department of Communities' Guidance**



## B1 | Dwelling Entry & Circulation Spaces

**B1.1** Front doors or primary points of entry into dwelling should include adequate space for entry furniture such as a hallstand, coat or shoe rack and or umbrella stand and have a minimum internal dimension of 1200mm x 1200mm.

**B1.2** Dwellings should be designed with efficient circulation spaces:

B1.2.1 Total circulation area through the dwelling does not equal more than 10% of the Fully Enclosed Covered Area (FECA) of the dwelling.



## B2 | Bedrooms

### **B2.1 Bedrooms are functional, easily furnishable, and have good access to natural daylight and ventilation:**

B2.1.1 Bedrooms can accommodate the following furnishings:

- A queen size bed or two single beds;
- Two bedside tables;
- Chest of drawers; and
- A built-in-wardrobe or walk-in-wardrobe with a minimum of 1800mm of hanging space must be provided.

B2.1.2 Bedrooms are designed to allow for logical furniture placements which will not obstruct windows, doors, or necessary circulation clearances within a room. DGPOs must be placed in locations that support flexible furnishing arrangements.



## B3 | Living & Dining Areas

### **B3.1 The size and area of open plan living/dining spaces should be relative to the number of potential occupants in a dwelling, as follows:**

- B2.1.1 1 bedroom dwellings should have a minimum area of 20m<sup>2</sup> and minimum dimensions of 3.6m x 5.6m.
- B2.1.2 2 bedroom dwellings should have a minimum area of 24m<sup>2</sup> and a minimum dimension of 4.0m x 6.0m.
- B2.1.3 3+ bedroom dwellings should have a minimum area of 28m<sup>2</sup> and minimum dimensions of 4.4m x 6.4m.

These areas are not to include any of the area required for full use of the kitchen, such as necessary circulation space in front of kitchen benchtops (see Figure 10).

### **B3.2 Living/dining areas are to maximise the extent of glazing for increased northern solar access and to provide outlook from the room:**

- B3.2.1 Sliding glass door selection provides appropriate outlook and daylight to the dwelling.
  - For single aspect living/dining rooms, a full-height glazing suite with 3000mm wide sliding glass doors should be provided.
  - For dual aspect living/dining rooms, a sliding glass door of minimum 2400mm high and 2700mm wide should be provided.

### **B3.3 Living and dining room should be functional, furnishable, and have circulation space that gives regard to:**

- B3.3.1 Relationships of furniture.
- B3.3.2 Points of access to passages, bedrooms and balconies.
- B3.3.3 Separation from kitchen cooking area to allow for safe food preparation.
- B3.3.4 Avoiding square and irregular open plan living areas (such as those shown in Figures 11 – 13) to ensure optimal furnishing can be achieved in the most efficient area possible.





**Figure 10:** Optimum living space proportions showing furniture layouts and circulation route. The dimensions can be scaled up relative to number of dwelling bedrooms.

**Key**



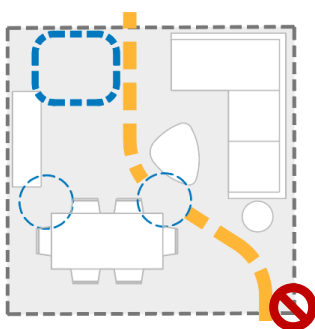
Unusable space within room that could be allocated elsewhere to improve furnishability of room.



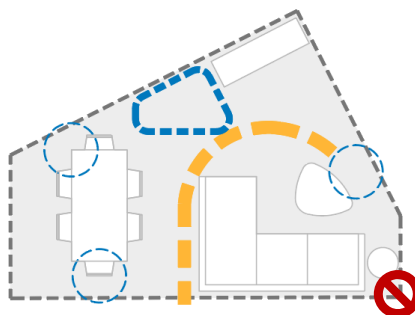
Pinch points between furniture.



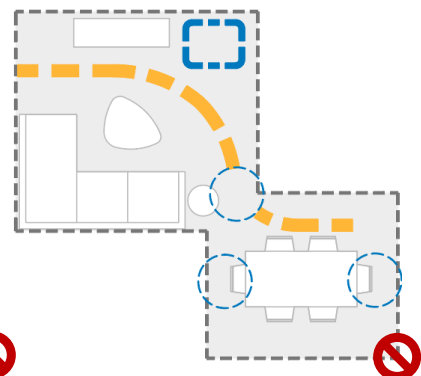
Circulation path through room.



**Figure 11:** Square living spaces have poor acoustics, flow and definition of dining from living areas.



**Figure 12:** Unconventional living areas result in 'pinch points', poor furniture relationships and unusable spaces when furnished.



**Figure 13:** Cellular living areas require more space around furniture to assist in access as well as providing a sense of space.



## B4 | Kitchens

### **B4.1 Kitchen size is appropriate for the dwelling typology and meets the following requirements:**

B4.1.1 1-2 bedroom dwellings kitchens should be provided with:

- 1 ½ bowl and drainer sink;
- 600mm contiguous bench space;
- 1500mm total bench space (excluding corners, stovetop and sink);
- 900mm (w) x 1800mm (h) fridge recess dimensions.

B4.1.2 3 bedroom dwelling kitchens should be provided with:

- 2 bowl and drainer sink;
- 800mm contiguous bench space;
- 1800mm total usable bench space (excluding corners, stove and sink)
- 900mm (w) x 1800mm (h) fridge recess dimensions.

### **B4.2 Kitchen provides the following storage requirements as a minimum:**

- Overhead cupboards above benchtops without negatively impacting on natural light and ventilation entering the space;
- Dedicated recesses with appropriately located DGPOs for a microwave, dishwasher and refrigerator;
- Refrigerator recess must have overhead cabinetry storage;
- Storage space for bulky kitchen items such as appliances and pots;
- Bank of drawers for cutlery; and
- Two minimum 15-litre inbuilt bins located within cabinetry near the kitchen sink.

### **B4.3 Kitchens must incorporate a pantry that is appropriately sized for the dwelling typology. Pantry width may be reduced with the provision of slide-out drawers as follows:**

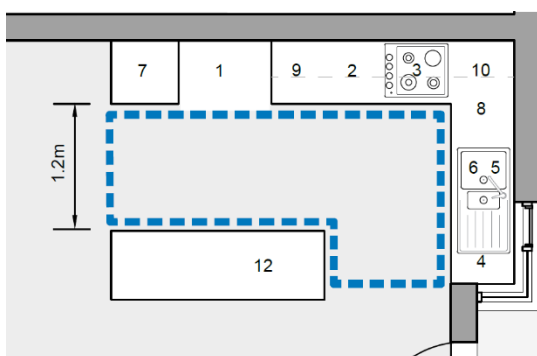
- 600mm wide or more - no drawers required.
- 450 - 600mm wide – 50% of pantry comes with drawers.
- 350 - 450mm wide – 100% drawers or a pull-out pantry system to allow easy access to the back of the storage space.



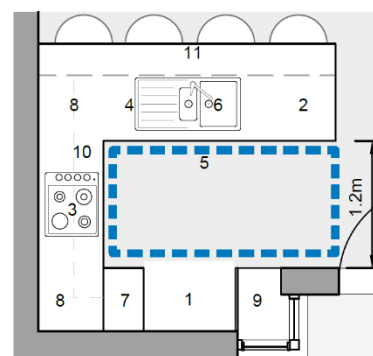
**B4.4** Where a corner cupboard is a blind corner (door only opening on one edge), it must be fitted with hardware such as fold out kidney shelving or a turn-style shelf to ensure the space is useable and convenient for storage.

**B4.5** The design of kitchens should be highly practical, functional and utilise the space efficiently while also being attractive, safe and easy to use (see Figures 14 – 17 for examples).

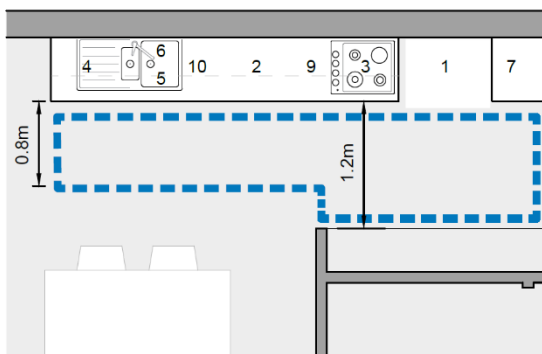
Typical kitchen layouts:



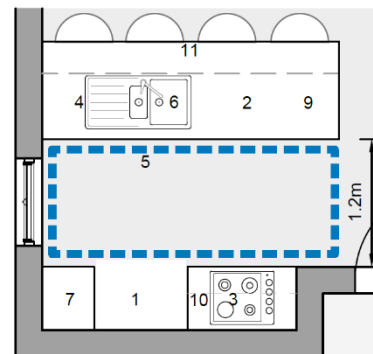
**Figure 14:** L-Kitchen



**Figure 15:** U-kitchen



**Figure 16:** One-wall kitchen



**Figure 17:** Galley kitchen

**Key**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Fridge recess with storage over        | 7. Pantry or pull-out pantry                   |
| 2. Microwave recess with pot drawer under | 8. Below bench corner cabinet                  |
| 3. Cook top and oven                      | 9. Bank of drawers                             |
| 4. Dishwashing machine recess             | 10. Overhead storage and range hood            |
| 5. Bins and cleaning storage              | 11. Breakfast bar (300mm overhang)             |
| 6. Stainless steel sink and drainer       | 12. Island bench (where adequate space exists) |



## B5 | Laundries & Internal Storage

### B5.1 Laundry typology and location is practical and does not impede on the functionality of other spaces in the dwelling.

B5.1.1 Laundry housed in screened recess in bathroom (See Figure 18):

- Washing machine recess, and laundry trough, broom cupboard in minimum 700mm deep recess;
- Enclosed with suitable doors.

B5.1.2 European laundry (See Figure 19):

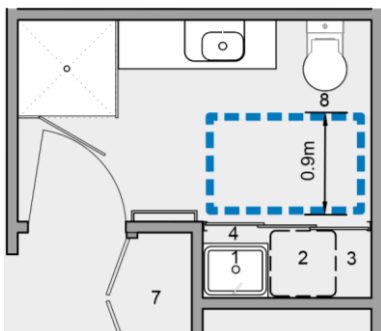
- Only located in passageways, not habitable rooms;
- Location minimises acoustic and visual impact on living room, dining room and bedrooms;
- Enclosed with suitable doors.

B5.1.3 Open joinery laundry integrated within bathroom (See Figure 20):

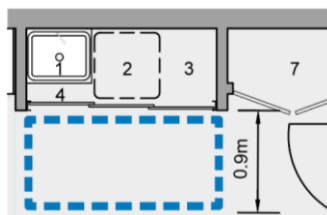
- Washing machine located under benchtop with integrated laundry trough;
- Benchtop depth should cover washing machine below;
- Benchtops to complement tiling and other features of bathroom.

B5.1.4 Dedicated laundry room:

- Enclosed room with laundry facilities separate to other functions of the dwelling.



**Figure 18:** Laundry integrated within bathroom – Screened recess



**Figure 19:** European Laundry in passageway



**Figure 20:** Laundry integrated within bathroom – Open joinery

#### Key

- |                    |  |  |
|--------------------|--|--|
| 1. Laundry trough  | 4. Stacking tri-sliders or hinged pocket doors | 6. Joinery with cupboards and inset trough |
| 2. Washing machine | 5. 300mm high tiled splashback                 | 7. Linen cupboard                          |
| 3. Broom storage   |  |  |



## **B5.2 Laundries of all types are equipped with the following:**

- Integrated 42 litre stainless steel laundry trough with dedicated enclosed storage for cleaning agents;
- Washing machine provisions including a GPO, adequately sized recess and taps;
- Dryer provisions including a GPO, dedicated space, and structural provisions where dryer is intended to be wall-mounted;
- Dedicated floor waste;
- 250mm exhaust fan; and
- Electrical requirements such as adequate light servicing laundry trough and additional DGPO to facilitate ironing, etc.

## **B5.3 Laundries are sized relevant to dwelling size:**

B5.3.1 Studio, 1 bedroom, and 2 bedroom dwellings require:

- A minimum recess of 1400mm (w) x 700mm (d) that can accommodate a washing machine, 42 litre stainless steel trough, and taps.

B5.3.2 3+ bedroom dwellings require:

- A minimum recess of 1800 (w) x 700 (d) mm that can accommodate laundry machine, 42 litre stainless steel trough, and taps.

## **B5.4 Household storage requirements are accommodated by different types of internal storage options:**

B5.4.1 A dedicated storage area for brooms, vacuum and ironing board with minimum dimensions of 300mm (w) x 450mm (d) x 1800mm (h) must be provided:

- Integrated into laundry cabinetry; or
- Hallway cupboard; or
- Integrated into kitchen cabinetry; or
- Other areas where cabinetry will not reduce amenity of room.

B5.4.2 A dedicated linen cupboard with minimum dimensions of 1000mm (w) x 450mm (d) x 2100mm (h), exclusive of area used by integrated utilities (such as NBN boxes) must be provided that is:

- Located within laundries, except where laundries are integrated within bathrooms to prevent damp build up; or
- A non-habitable room other than a bathroom.



## B6 | Utilities

**B6.1 Utilities/services such as hot water units and air conditioner outdoor unit are to be safely installed where their visual impact is minimised to the public realm, communal areas within the development, and private outdoor living areas.**

The installation of any utilities/services should be in accordance with the instruction of relevant manufacturers, engineers, or other persons and Australian Standards to ensure safe and functional use. The following options for the location of utilities/services should be considered:

**B6.1.1** On roof.

- Condensers located on roof
- Not visible from public realm

**B6.1.2** A/C deck.

- Enclosed location for AC units for multiple apartments

**B6.1.3** Within dedicated screened recess (see Figure 21).

- On balcony or ground floor where store is located adjacent or within outdoor living area
- AC units should expel warm air away from habitable outdoor areas

**B6.1.4** Within store (see Figure 22).

- Within co-located store or stores directly accessible from dwelling
- Utilities are safely accommodated and concealed
- Ensure installation of AC unit and ventilation of store is to relevant engineer and manufacturer's requirements
- Services located on floor or wall-mounted 1500mm AFL
- Required store area provided in addition to space required for services

**B6.1.5** Within dedicated recess (see Figure 23).

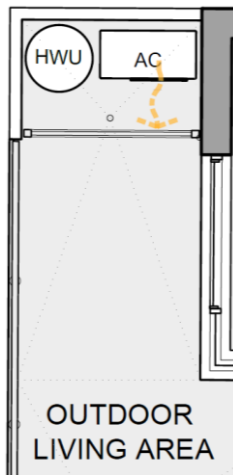
- Away from outdoor living area
- Running noise does not impact enjoyment of outside space
- Not visible from the public realm
- AC units should expel warm air away from habitable outdoor areas
- Provides space required for maintaining unit

**B6.1.6** Within entry courtyards.

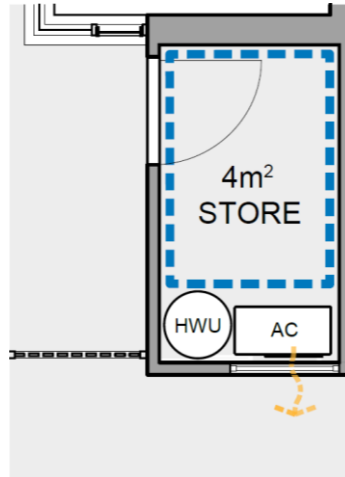
- Within private courtyards screened from public and communal areas



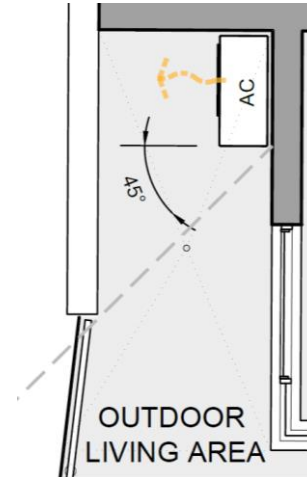
- Does not impact enjoyment of courtyard



**Figure 21:** Services located in dedicated recess on balcony



**Figure 22:** Services located within store



**Figure 23:** Services located within screened recess

- B6.2** Where AC units are located on balconies and unscreened, extra balcony area must be provided so the AC unit and its exhaust air are a suitable distance away from the habitable area of the balcony as required by SPP 7.3.
- B6.3** NBN units must be screened from view within the home by being located within a dedicated communications and data cabinet, co-located within storage areas such as linen, broom closets, built-in-wardrobes, or in garage. Location should consider NBN provider requirements.



## B7 | Natural Ventilation & Daylight

### **B7.1 Window selection, placement and design must maximise the cross-ventilation capacity of the dwelling:**

- B7.1.1 Where windows with restricted openings are installed, openings must extend to a minimum of 110mm beyond building envelope.
- B7.1.2 Windows in a room are to have a combined openable area that exceed 5% clear of the room's floor area.
- B7.1.3 When only highlight windows can be provided to a bedroom, highlight windows must have a height of 8c or greater and have at least two openable portions on a single wall.
- B7.1.4 Windows should be provided to 2 different walls within a room wherever possible to maximise cross ventilation within a room.
- B7.1.5 Windows in bedrooms should not be relied upon to cross-ventilate public living areas of the home.
- B7.1.6 Windows are located clear of obstructions that reduce the extent of opening, e.g. taps or other services installed on the outside of the building.





## Appendix | Compliance Self-assessment

The proponent certifies that all objectives and clauses of this brief have been complied with except the following:

Proponent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Proponent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### The design meets all but the following clauses of this design brief:

Clause no.	Justification