

SOUTHERN
MIDLANDS
COUNCIL



GUIDE TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FOOD BUSINESS



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WHAT IS THIS INFORMATION PACKAGE?

This information package has been compiled to assist existing owners/proprietors, new owners/proprietors, architects and builders comply with relevant structural, fixture and fit-out requirements in food businesses and to explain the approval process(es) required.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The following legislation/standards may be relevant to the establishment or fit-out of a food business:

- *Food Act 2003*
- Food Safety Standards (Food Standards Australia New Zealand)
- Relevant parts of the National Construction Code (NCC) including Tas Part 14 Food Premises
- *Building Act 2000* and associated Regulations
- Southern Midlands Planning Scheme
- Australian Standard (Food Premises) – AS 4674:2004 – Design, construction and fit-out of food premises.
- Australian Standard (Lighting) – AS/NZS 1680.1:2006 – Interior and workplace lighting – General principles and recommendations.
- Australian Standard (Ventilation) – AS/NZS 1668.1:1998 – The use of air-conditioning and ventilation in buildings – Fire and smoke control in multi-compartment buildings.

Copies of legislation can be obtained from:

- Print Applied Technology, 123 Collins St, Hobart (☎6233 3289)
- Tasmania's Consolidated Legislation Online (www.thelaw.tas.gov.au)
- Standards Australia (www.standards.com.au)
- The Food Standards Code (www.foodstandards.gov.au)
- Planning Scheme (<http://www.ccc.tas.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=1074>)

COUNCIL CONTACTS

COUNCIL DEPARTMENT	TELEPHONE CONTACT
Planning	(03) 6254 5000
Building	(03) 6254 5000
Plumbing	(03) 6254 5000
Environmental Health	(03) 6254 5000



COUNCIL APPROVAL PROCESS - NEW BUSINESSES

The establishment of a new food business may be subject to Council approval from various Departments including Planning, Building, Plumbing and/or Environmental Health.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The Planning Department will ascertain the suitability of your proposed business in your chosen location e.g. - consideration to zoning, parking availability and other related planning matters.

Planning approval is the first step in the construction of a new food business. You should consult with one of Council's Development Appraisal Officers to determine whether a Development Application is required for your proposal. This may be necessary if you are, for example, constructing a new premise or occupying existing premises but changing the use (e.g. – changing an office into a food business). Planning approval may also be required for the erection of signage.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

The Building Department processes applications and issues Building Permits in accordance with the *Building Act 2000*.

All permits require the services of an accredited Building Surveyor to issue a Certificate of Likely Compliance. Council no longer offers Building Surveying services therefore you will need to engage your own Building Surveyor. As part of the certification process, you may be required to engage other accredited building practitioners such as a building designer/architect or mechanical ventilation/lighting and/or electrical engineer.

Please note:

1. A Building Permit cannot be issued unless the Builder contracted to undertake the work is accredited at the appropriate level.
2. You cannot be an 'Owner Builder' if you are the lessee of the premises.

PLUMBING DEPARTMENT

The Plumbing Department is interested in all plumbing and drainage aspects of your proposal or fit-out. This particularly relates to such issues as grease-traps for businesses. In most cases, you will be required to lodge a separate plumbing application. Depending on the volume and composition of wastewater likely to be generated, a Trade Waste Permit may be required; in areas connected to the reticulated sewerage system, this now comes under the jurisdiction of TasWater (contact 13 69 92).

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Environmental Health Services are required to assess and approve all plans for new food premises and alterations or extensions of existing food premises. **It is important to talk with a Council Environmental Health Officer in the initial stages of any proposal so they can discuss requirements of the relevant legislation with you. This can save time and money at a later stage when the plans are submitted to Council.**

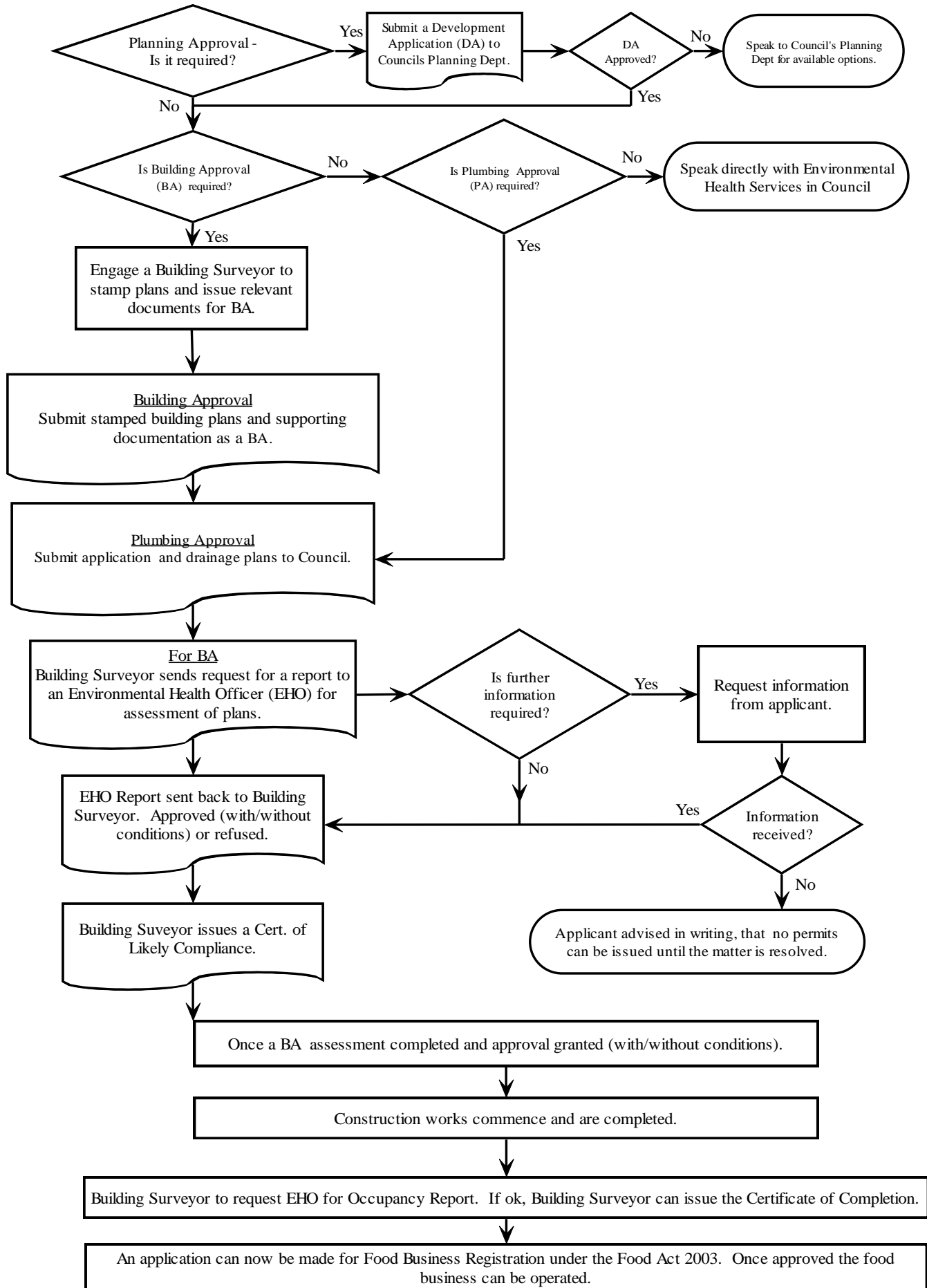
This Department is concerned with suitability of the premise for food handling and the minimisation of opportunities for food contamination. Food premises, fixtures, equipment and transport vehicles should be designed and constructed to facilitate easy and effective cleaning and where necessary, sanitising. The premise needs to be of an adequate size for its purpose and provided with necessary services of water, waste disposal, light, ventilation, cleaning, staff facilities, storage space and toilet access.

You should advise Environmental Health Services of any changes to your food business and if necessary they will be assessed, even if Planning or Building approval is not required.

FEES

For current Building, Planning and Plumbing Application fees, please refer to Council's Fee Schedule, available at or contact Council's Environmental Health Services on 62545 000 for the current charges.

Diagrammatic Process for Council Approval



WHAT AM I REQUIRED TO SHOW ON MY PLANS?

To obtain approval from Council's Building and Environmental Health Departments, plans and specifications must be submitted detailing proposed fixtures, fittings, finishes and equipment within the premises. **Talk to Council's Environmental Health Officer in the early stages of the proposal so they can discuss the layout and construction requirements with you.**

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, energy outputs, locations;
- Locations and elevation drawing (cross-section details) of all fixtures and fittings including constructions 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;
- Storage of dry goods, chemicals and cleaning equipment, packaging material and staff clothing/personal belongings;
- 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 disabled facilities where required);
- Show there is adequate space for the activities that will be conducted on the premises i.e. ingress and egress of wait staff, receipt of deliveries, food preparation and service, separation and preparation of raw food and ready to eat foods, washing and sanitising of equipment etc.



Please also include a comprehensive list of all manufacturing processes to be undertaken and foods to be prepared. For restaurants a proposed menu should be included.

Submission of the above details will minimise unnecessary delays in the approval process for the applicant.

WHEN CAN I START CONSTRUCTION WORK?

Construction work can only commence after the following:

- Planning approval has been granted (if applicable)
- Building and Plumbing Permits (incorporating environmental health) have been issued.

Please refer to the diagrammatic process for assessment (page 5)



FOR NEW PREMISES.....

WHEN CAN I START OPERATING AS A FOOD BUSINESS?

Under the *Food Act 2003* all businesses must be registered with the Council of the municipal area in which the food business is located, before food business operations commence.

A food business is any business, enterprise or activity that involves the handling of food intended for sale; or the sale of food. This is regardless of whether the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only.

Prior to operating as a food business, you must have:

- 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 premise and signed off on the construction;
- A Certificate of Completion issued by Council's Building Department or Private Building Surveyor.

You then need to apply to Council's Environmental Health Department for registration as a food business in accordance with the *Food Act 2003*. This form can be posted to you upon request or can be collected from Council.

The fee applicable to your application is determined depending the risk classification. A risk-based system is used to classify food businesses into priority ratings based on the risk they present to the public.

This application will be examined and if all the relevant approvals have been gained and subject to an inspection by an EHO a Certificate of Registration issued to the business. A Certificate of Registration requires renewal annually (on the 30th June each year). A fee set by Council is also applicable.

Please note that if you have not constructed your kitchen in accordance with the approved plans or have not complied with the conditions of occupancy, Council may withhold issuing your Certificate of Registration or may issue this with conditions that must be complied with, in set time frames.

After this has been issued, you may commence operation as a food business.

Please refer to the diagrammatic process for assessment (page 5)



GUIDANCE ON STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD BUSINESSES

Floor

The floor shall be a smooth, durable non-slip surface that is impervious and free from cracks and other defects. Recommended materials include:

- Epoxy poly urethane resin
- Polyvinyl sheeting with welded seams

Other approved impervious materials may be used.

You may wish to consult Table 3.1 '*Suitability of Floor Finishes for Food Premises Areas*' of AS 4674:2004 – 'Design, construction and fit-out of food premises'.

Please note that floor grading for a floor waste is 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 wash-down areas. The NCC should be consulted in this instance.

Walls

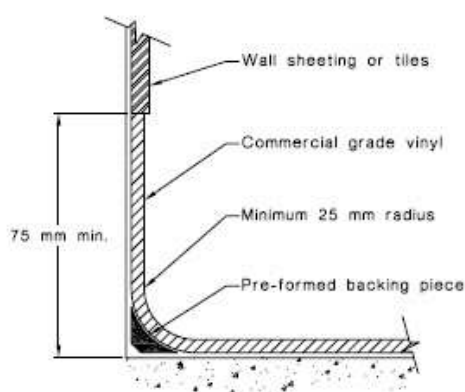
The walls shall have a surface that is smooth, rigid and durable, impervious and free from cracks and other defects. Walls shall be finished in a light colour, and if the surface does not consist of a glazed material it shall be painted with washable full gloss paint (to facilitate cleaning).

You may wish to consult Table 3.2 '*Suitability of Wall Finishes for Food Premises Areas*' of AS 4674:2004 – Design, construction and fit-out of food premises.

N.B – Polyvinyl sheeting is not considered suitable in areas of kitchens which are exposed to excessive heat or high impact areas.

Coving – Floor/Walls

The angles of all walls and floors of the preparation area shall be coved and sealed. This is to be done in such a manner as to prevent moisture through the joints, facilitate cleaning and ensure that accumulations of dirt, grease etc does not occur.



From Australian Standard 4674:2004

You may wish to consult Section 3.1.5 '*Coving*' of AS 4674:2004 – 'Design, construction and fit-out of food premises'.

Ceilings

Ceilings shall consist of a smooth, rigid surface that is free from cracks and other defects.

Ceilings shall be constructed in such a manner that offers the least possible opportunity for the lodgement of dust and shall be finished with light coloured, washable full gloss paint (to facilitate cleaning).

Drop-in panel ceilings or 'false ceilings' are not suitable for use in food preparation areas or over areas where open food is displayed or served.

You may wish to consult Table 3.3 '*Suitability of Ceiling Finishes for Food Premises Areas*' of AS 4674:2004 – Design, construction and fit-out of food premises.

Window sills

Window sills should be at least 300mm above benches, sinks and appliances. Sills must allow adequate cleaning and prevent the accumulation of dust and other particles. Preferably they should be splayed down at an angle (e.g. - 45°) and not to be able to be used as a shelf.

Animals and Pests

Pests must be prevented from entering the premises by providing inhibiting mechanisms to all openings, doorways and windows which may be opened e.g. – screens, self-closing doors, 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.



Lighting

The preparation and storage areas shall be provided with natural or artificial lighting (or both). A minimum light intensity of 240 lux is recommended. Artificial lighting must comply with AS/NZS 1680. 1:2000.

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

Adequate natural or mechanical ventilation shall be provided to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapour from the premises. It is recommended that you check the energy output of certain appliances before considering ventilation options.

In accordance with AS 1668.2-2002 standard 5.3.1 a local exhaust system shall be provided over all cooking equipment for commercial or institutional purposes, which have a total maximum input exceeding 8kW or any deep fryer appliance.

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

Where a ventilation system is required, plans/diagrams must be submitted with the application to check for design compliance with the Australian Standard. Council will condition an application that certification must be provided that the ventilation is in accordance with the relevant Standard(s). To obtain certification, you may need to engage an electrical or mechanical ventilation engineer.

Plinths

All appliances and fixtures that are *not* capable of being easily moved should be installed so that the area underneath the article can be easily cleaned. A minimum clearance of 250mm from the floor to the bottom of the appliance or bench is acceptable. If this is not possible, they are to be placed on a solid base constructed of impervious material (plinth).

It is recommended that plinths be constructed at a minimum of 75mm in height.

Steel legs and frames used for supporting appliances and fixtures must have the ends of tubular steel sealed to prevent vermin and insect access.

Shelving

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

Shelves must be 25mm clear of walls or sealed to the wall. See figure 4.3 of AS 4674:2004 – Design, construction and fit-out of food premises. If the underside of the shelving is absorbent that surface is to be sealed so that it meets these requirements.

Supports and Brackets

Supports and brackets must be smooth, impervious, and allow effective cleaning. 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.

Handwash Basins

A separate handwash basin is to be provided with a permanent supply of warm running water through a single outlet. A flickmixer or similar system (e.g. – sensor operated) is recommended.

The position of handwash basins will be determined by operations in each area. Handwash basins are to be located and installed so that they are:

- Unobstructed;
- At bench height either permanently fixed to the wall, to a supporting frame or set in a bench top;
- Easily accessible and no further than 5m from any place where food handlers are handling open food.
- Provided with hot and cold water, through a common outlet.



The handwash basin is to be of a size that allows for the effective washing of hands and arms. A minimum recommended size is 11 litres capacity with dimensions of 400mm x 500mm off the wall.

Liquid soap and single-use paper towels (hot air hand dryers are not approved) shall be provided in wall-mounted dispensers. A receptacle for used paper towels is to be provided. This is to be of a size that fully contains the amount of waste generated.

Where extensive food preparation occurs, or there is high potential for contamination of hands, handwash basins may need to be non-hand operated (eg. foot, knee, wrist or sensor operated).

Food Preparation Sinks

A suitably sized food preparation sink is required for washing and sanitising fruit and vegetables. This must be separate from the equipment washing sinks, handwash basins and cleaners sink. It must be stainless steel supplied with hot and cold water and have an integral drainer on at least one side or a third bowl. (TAS Part 14 of the NCC Food Premises).

Services Pipes and Conduits

All service pipes are to be concealed in floors, plinths, walls or ceilings. Where this is not possible, such pipes are to be fixed on brackets so as to provide at least 25mm clearance between the pipe and adjacent vertical surface.

Where pipes enter into the wall cavity, gaps must be sealed to prevent harbourage of vermin and to allow effective cleaning.

Dishwashing Facilities

As a minimum, a stainless steel double-bowled sink with drainer and 150mm integral splashback shall be provided with an adequate supply of hot and cold water. Hot water temperature shall be not less than 75°C for a sink where sanitising will take place. Please note, this temperature differs from hand wash basins which can not be set higher than 40°C under plumbing laws.

Approved dishwashing and glass washing machines may also be provided.

For further information, consult AS 4674:2004 – ‘Design, construction and fit-out of food premises’.

Food Storage

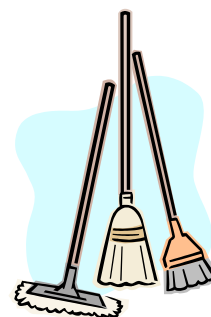
Adequate space must be provided for storage of dry goods and food packaging. The amount of space required will depend on the activities that will take place on the premises. This area must ensure food/packaging is stored under environmental conditions that will not adversely affect its safety and suitability and protect it from the likelihood of contamination i.e. there must be enough shelf space to store all products off the floor.

Refrigeration

Sufficient refrigeration shall be required for the storage of all potentially hazardous food products. Where an approved coolroom is installed the shelving must comply with the Minister’s Standards for Shelving in Refrigerated Coolrooms. Coolrooms require coving at all floor/wall junctions. Racks, shelves and other surfaces shall be smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleanable and non-corrosive.

Storage of Cleaning Materials and Equipment

A separate room or enclosure shall be provided for the storage of cleaning materials and equipment. This equipment is to be stored separately to any food.



Storage of Garbage

Refuse receptacles used in the food preparation areas should be located in a suitable position where cross-contamination cannot occur. Bins should be provided with a plastic liners maintained in a clean condition. They must also be of a size that will fully contain the amount of waste generated and keep pests out.

Where outdoor storage enclosures are used they shall be constructed of solid impervious material. The floor shall be paved, graded and drained through a silt trap, to the sewer and the area shall be provided with a hose tap connected to the water supply.

Fats and oils should be collected and stored in drums. Do not wash them down the floor wastes or stormwater drains. There are various companies that collect and remove these wastes.

Staff Personal Effects or Lockers

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

Grease Traps

Grease traps are generally required in most food premises. This is for the adequate disposal of fats and oils. Grease traps need to be regularly maintained. The size of the grease trap may vary depending on your business. It is recommended that you contact TasWater on ☎ 136 992 or enquiries@taswater.com.au for advice on your individual requirements.

Cleaner's Sinks

Access to a cleaner's sink, for the emptying of cleaning water, is required. This sink must be separate from the food storage and handling areas.

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, preferably in an area where cleaning materials and equipment is stored.

Floor Waste Gully

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

Outdoor/Indoor Dining Areas

The provision of outdoor and indoor dining areas is covered by the National Construction Code (NCC). You will need to contact your Building Surveyor for further information.



Sanitary Conveniences

The provision of sanitary facilities required for staff and patrons is determined by the National Construction Code (NCC).

Food businesses must ensure that all staff and food handlers are provided with adequate toilet facilities.

There is to be no direct access between the toilets and any part of the food premises. Toilet facilities are to be separated from areas where food is handled, displayed or stored.

An air lock (intervening ventilated space) is to be provided with a self-closing device fitted to each door.

All Handwashing facilities adjacent to toilet facilities must be provided with a constant supply of hot and cold water through a common outlet, liquid soap and single-use paper towels (hot air hand towels are not approved) for hand washing.

Mechanical ventilation may be required, depending on the location of the sanitary compartment.

Your Building Surveyor will advise you how many toilets, urinals and hand basins you require for your business, using the NCC. Disabled facilities may also be required.

MOBILE FOOD BUSINESSES

What is a mobile food business?

A mobile food business is not a temporary premises. The term means a permanent food premises that can be moved to new locations and might return to a base overnight i.e. – food van. The design, construction and fit-out can be restricted by space, weight and the need to be self sufficient in water supplies and waste disposal.

Do I need Planning Approval?

You will need to confirm whether you require Planning Approval by consulting one of Council's Planning Officers.



Do I need Building Approval?

Building Approval is not required if the vehicle is going to be a registered vehicle.

In any other case, you should confirm with Council's Building Department if approval is required.

Do I need Environmental Health Approval?

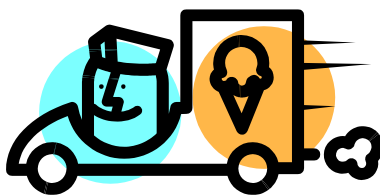
It is strongly recommended that you contact a Council Environmental Health Officer (EHO) very early in the planning of your mobile food business to discuss your proposal and advise of the extent of food handling you intend to undertake.

Whilst full building plans may not need to be submitted, Council's EHO will still ultimately need to approve the mobile food business for registration as a food business under the *Food Act 2003*.

When designing and fitting out a mobile food vehicle, you must ensure it can meet the required outcomes of the *Food Safety Standards*.

Please refer to pages 8-12 for guidance on structural requirements.

If my mobile food business is approved and registered, can I operate anywhere?



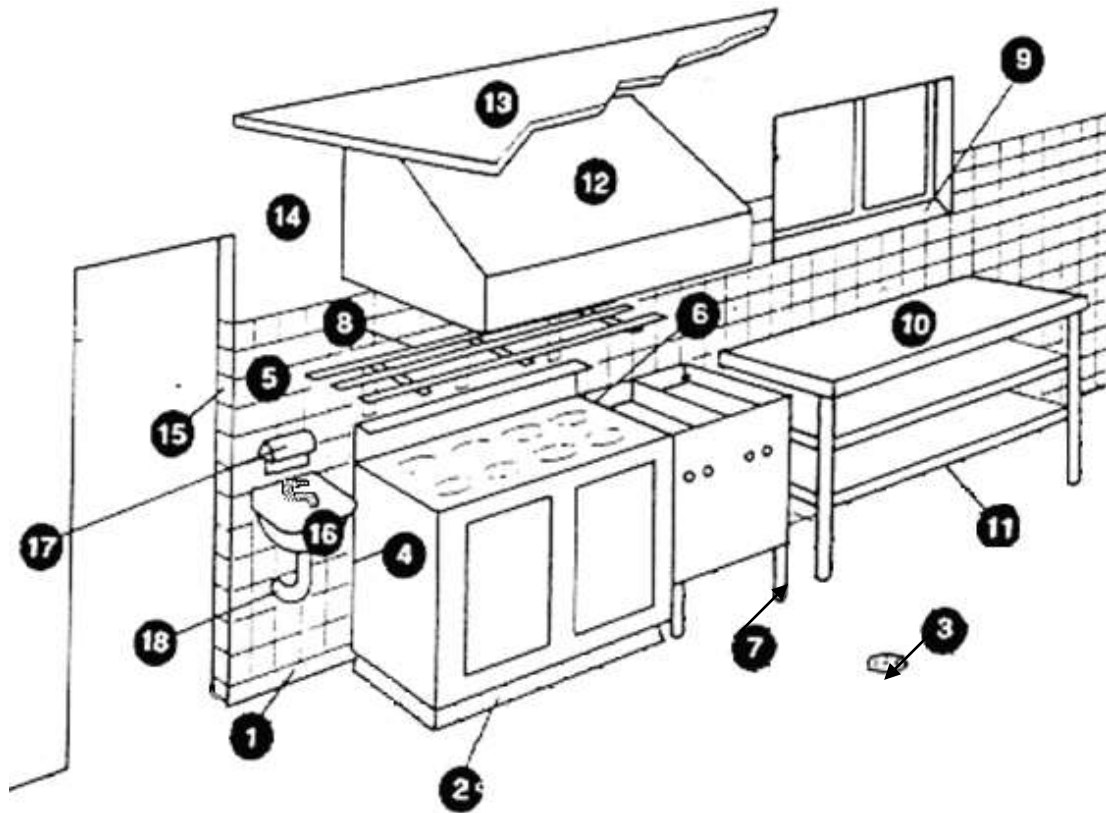
If you are a registered food business, your Certificate of Registration may entitle you to operate at other events either within Southern Midlands or in other Municipalities. However, you should always call the relevant Council to confirm if this is adequate or if there are other requirements for the particular event.

If you wish to sell products on Council land, please contact Council's Planning Department.

How do I dispose of waste and wastewater?

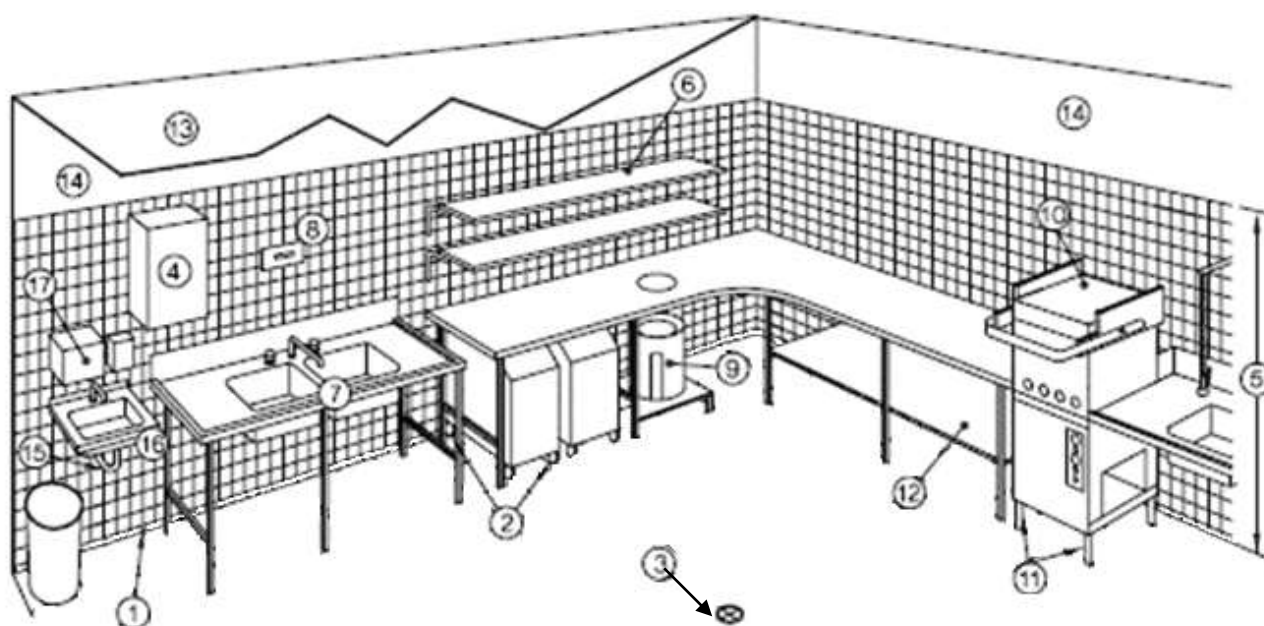
Depending upon the volume generated, disposal of waste/wastewater needs to be organised through a private waste contractor. Numbers can be obtained from the phone book. Environmental Health Services will require you to obtain a contract from an approved waste contractor.

EXAMPLE: FOOD PREPARATION AREA



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Floor / Wall Coving | 10. Preparation Bench – Steel Framed |
| 2. Plinth | 11. Bottom Shelf 250mm above Floor |
| 3. Impervious Floor Graded and Drained | 12. Mechanical Exhaust Ventilation Canopy |
| 4. Fittings Sealed to Wall or 150mm Clear | 13. Rigid Smooth Faced Ceiling |
| 5. Walls Tiled to 1800mm | 14. Smooth Cement Rendering |
| 6. Sealing between Fittings | 15. No Timber Door Frames |
| 7. Legs 250mm min. | 16. Hand Basin, Hot and Cold Water Mixing Set |
| 8. Open Design Racks | 17. Soap and Towel Dispenser |
| 9. Splayed Windowsill 300mm above Prep bench | 18. Water and Drainage Pipes concealed in Wall |

EXAMPLE: WASH-UP AREA



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Floor / Wall Coving | 10. Dishwasher with Temperature Indicating Device |
| 2. Castors to Under bench Storage | 11. Legs 150mm min. |
| 3. Impervious Floor Graded and Drained | 12. Bottom Shelf 250mm above Floor |
| 4. Hot Water Heater Sealed to Wall | 13. Rigid Smooth Faced Ceiling |
| 5. Walls Tiled to 1800mm | 14. Smooth Cement Rendering |
| 6. Shelving 25mm Clear of Wall | 15. Water and Drainage Pipes Concealed into Walls |
| 7. Sink Unit on Metal Frame | 16. Hand Basin, Hot and Cold Water Mixing Set |
| 8. Thermometer | 17. Soap and Towel Dispenser |
| 9. Garbage Receptacle | |

Source: Australian Standard (Food Premises) – AS 4674:2004 – Design, construction and fit-out of food premises (Figure 4.2)

NOTES

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 or extension of existing food businesses.

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

For further information, please contact Council via the details on page 3 or at mail@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au