

# Renovation Guide



Undertaking works in your strata apartment

2023



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# Renovation Categories

## Renovations in your apartment

In New South Wales, the *Strata Schemes Management Act 2015* provides for 3 categories of renovations.

### → 1. Cosmetic Works

- Installing or replacing hooks, nails or screws for hanging things on walls
- -Installing or replacing handrails
- Painting
- Filling minor holes and cracks in walls
- Laying carpet
- Installing or replacing built in cupboards
- - Installing or replacing blinds or curtains

### → 2. Minor Works

- Renovating a kitchen
- Changing recessed light fittings
- Installing or replacing wood or other hard floors
- Installing or replacing wiring or cabling or power point
- Reconfiguring walls
- Removing carpet or other soft coverings to expose underlying wooden or other hard floors
- Installing a rainwater tank
- Installing a clothesline
- Installing a reverse cycle split system air conditioner
- Installing double or triple glazed windows
- Installing a heat pump
- Installing ceiling insulation.

### → 3. Major Works

- Installing or removing a pergola, sunshade or enclosing a balcony.
- Waterproofing works including bathroom renovations.
- Removing a structural wall.
- Adding a structure to any part of the lot.



# The Owners Corporation & Strata Committee

**The Owners Corporation** ('OC') is the entity that all owners belong to, which is responsible for the administration and management of the common property.

The OC elects, every year, a strata committee. **The Strata Committee** is responsible for making day-to-day decisions on behalf of the owners corporation.

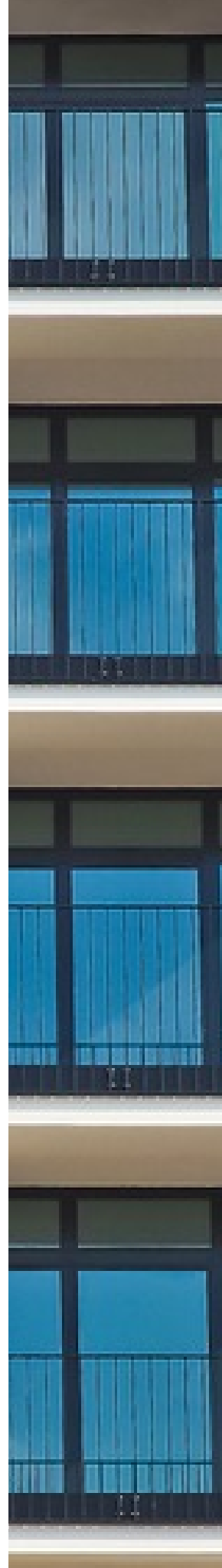
The owners corporation can also appoint people to help them. A strata manager, and often also a building manager.

## What is Common Property and Lot Property

**Lot property** refers to your apartment, and what you exclusively own. The **Common property** is basically the actual fabric of the building, which you co-own as a member of the Owners Corporation. Below is a list to assist you:

<b>Lot Property</b>	<b>Common Property</b>
Internal walls	External walls that form the boundary, including ceiling and roof
Blinds, curtains and fly screens	Windows
Shower screen & internal wall tiles & waterproofing	External wall and floor tiles and waterproofing
Carpet, floating floors and installed tiles	Original tiles and hard flooring
Ovens, dishwashers and other appliances	Common hallways and foyers
Balcony fly screens	Balcony tiles and handrails
Internal plumbing such as taps, shower head and sink 'S-bend'	Sliding balcony doors
Bath	Common pool, gym, meeting room and other facilities
Internal cupboards	Lifts
Toilet system	Letterboxes
	Gutters and downpipes

\*This is not a comprehensive list and is a guide only. You should consult your individual by-laws and ask your strata and/or building manager should you require any further clarification.



# Conditions for all works



The type of work you undertake, and your schemes by-laws will require you to comply with certain conditions before, during and after your renovation. However, the Act does require the following for all works:

1. Any damage caused to the common property by carrying out the works must be repaired.
2. All work must be completed in a competent and proper manner.

## Types of Renovations

# S.109 – Cosmetic Work



Owners do not need to obtain consent or permission to undertake these works, however should still inform the building or strata manager when the works will occur, what works are occurring and provide the insurance and license details of any trades.

Cosmetic work is:

- Installing or replacing hooks, nails or screws for hanging things on walls
- Installing or replacing handrails
- Painting
- Filling minor holes and cracks in walls
- Laying carpet
- Installing or replacing built in cupboards
- Installing or replacing blinds or curtains



# S.110 – Minor Renovations & S.28 of the Regulations



These types of work DO require permission from the owners corporation to proceed. In most cases the owners corporation, through a by-law, will have delegated the ability to approve works to the strata committee. You will be required to submit information about the type of renovation you want to do, who will be doing and details like how rubbish will be managed.

You will likely be requested to complete an application form, and agree to certain conditions as detailed in the by-laws.

It is very important you do not undertake these works without consent. If you do, the owners corporation may apply to have an order made that the works be removed, costing you money, time and no doubt, unnecessary stress.

Minor works are:

- Renovating a kitchen
- Changing recessed light fittings
- Installing or replacing wood or other hard floors
- Installing or replacing wiring or cabling or power points
- Reconfiguring walls
- Removing carpet or other soft coverings to expose underlaying wooden or other hard floors
- Installing a rainwater tank
- Installing a clothesline
- Installing a reverse cycle split system air conditioner
- Installing double or triple glazed windows
- Installing a heat pump
- Installing ceiling insulation.



# S.111 – Work by owners affecting the common property



These works are often referred to as ‘major works’ and require consent through a by-law. This is because the works will directly impact on the common property.

Generally this is work that has the potential to impact others. The strata committee, through the strata manager can provide you with guidance on your application, but ultimately it must go before all owners at a general meeting for approval.

You could choose to carry the costs of calling an Extraordinary General Meeting to consider your application, or wait until the next general meeting, your strata manager can let you know when the next meeting is, and the cost of calling your own meeting.

‘Major’ works can include:

- Anything that impacts the appearance of the external of the building, such as installing an awning or pergola.
- Waterproofing works to any wet area, including bathroom and laundry renovations.
- Removing a structural wall.
- Enclosing a balcony.
- Adding a structure to any part of the lot.



# The Process

You can expect the process of obtaining approval for your minor works to take about two weeks, provided all required information is provided. To hasten your application we would recommend:

- Reading the application carefully and ensuring you provide ALL requested documentation.
- Checking the expiry dates of information such as your trades license and insurance details.
- Include a drawing showing the exact location of where you want to carry out works.
- Provide as much information as you can.
- Collate your application into one PDF document with easily identifiable documents.



# Our 7 step process for working with us

1

Check by-laws to understand requirements. Discuss with your building/strata manager if you need more info.

2

Obtain a renovation application form and collate all documents you require.

3

Send renovation form to strata manager. The strata manager may request more information or work with you to get your application ready for the committee.

4

Strata manager sends application to committee.

5

Committee approve application.

6

You receive approval letter with terms and conditions for undertaking works.

7

Inform building manager & neighbours 1 week prior to commencing.



## What is a By-law?



By laws are binding rules and obligations that all owners, residents and visitors are compelled to follow. By-laws can be made in relation to the management, administration, control, use or enjoyment of lots or common property. By-laws cannot be harsh, oppressive or unconscionable.

Your owners corporation may have, in fact, likely does, a by-law that details the terms and conditions and processes associated with renovations. It will include details such as the standard of work to be complied with, and where and how building waste needs to be disposed of. Make sure you know if your building does have a by-law and what requirements you need to adhere to.

**Some works you do may require that you have your own by-law, which grants you permission to undertake that work. This will be the case if the work impacts on the common property or the appearance of the building. The by-law will transfer responsibility for maintaining that common property to you. A by-law can only be approved at a general meeting of all owners, by way of a special resolution. If you require a by-law you should be prepared to incur some costs related to the drafting and registration of that by-law. A budget of between \$1,000 and \$1,500 would generally be sufficient.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **How long will approval take?**

Minor works application will generally be approved within 2 weeks.

### **When can I commence work?**

You can commence works once you receive written approval and have provided notice to the building manager and your neighbours.

### **Who approves my application?**

For minor works, the strata committee  
For major works, owners at a general meeting.

# Renovation Guide



*Making the connection between strata & home.*

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