

Cessnock City Council Building Cost Guide

(Adapted from the Rawlinsons Construction Cost Guide 2010 and the A.I.B.S Building Cost Guide (NSW Chapter))

Estimating Cost of Works and Application Fees

Council calculates application fees for development applications (DA), construction certificates (CC), principal certifying authority (PCA) inspections and complying development certificates (CDC) based on the estimated cost of all building and associated works, the type of application, or the number of proposed lots. There are also other fees applicable due to external referrals, builders' long service leave levy, Councils' archive fee legislation, notification fees, legislation, and other administrative processes. Not all of these apply to every application.

This guide explains how Council determines the 'estimated cost of works' and the application fees payable.

Clause 255 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 identifies how a fee based on 'estimated cost' is determined. The Council will accept the applicants' genuine estimate of the completed cost unless it is significantly understated. If that is the case Council will make a genuine estimate of the completed costs associated with the construction and preparation of the building for its purpose including plant, fixtures and equipment and/or the construction costs of carrying out of a work, cost of BASIX and/or Bushfire prone land compliance and/or the demolition cost of a building or work, as it applies to the application.

If you understate the estimated cost of works and your application fees are underpaid the appropriate shortfalls in fees MUST be paid before the application is determined.

What rate does Council base the estimated cost on?

Council calculates the cost of works on the estimated 'market price' for the completed project. This may not necessarily reflect the actual cost of the development to the applicant, for example, an applicant may source materials free or second hand and use their own labour (owner-builder).

Council uses building cost indicators compiled by Rawlinsons *Construction Cost Guide 2010* and Australian Institute of Building Surveyors' (AIBS) *Guide to Building Costs*. A list of the common development types and rates are included in this guide which may be used to help complete the 'estimated cost of works' question on your application form.

How does Council calculate the cost?

On the application form (for a DA, CC, PCA inspections or CDC), you must:

- State your estimated cost of works; and
- Provide the areas (in m²) for each of the generic parts of the project e.g. the gross floor areas including any outbuildings such as garages; or
- State the number of additional lots, for subdivision applications.

Council will check the appropriate floor area of your proposed development and multiply it by the unit cost for the component (as identified in the list of rates within this guide). This will give an estimated cost for the purpose of setting Council fees. Council will treat development proposals that fall outside the parameters of this guide, on their own merits.

Please note that the base construction cost of a project home is rarely ever the only work involved with the entire development proposal. The cost of decks, garages, driveways, retaining walls and other site costs, for example, must be included as part of the completed cost of your project for a development application.

Further assistance

Council's customer service staff can assist you if you need help completing the 'estimated cost of works' question on your application form. Phone 49934300 or visit in person, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock (9.00 am to 5.00pm).