Sustainable and accessible housing design

What is sustainable design?

Sustainable design includes: energy efficient building design, such as heating and cooling, water conservation, and choice of appliances; and accessibility. Making the right decisions will reduce the cost of maintaining your home and its environmental impact, and enhance your comfort and enjoyment. Your choices may also ultimately improve your home's future resale value. The resources shown below will help you make informed decisions about sustainable design.

Sustainable building and design (including government incentives and rebates)

- Your Home – Australian Government website
- The Department of Housing and Public Works website at: http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/construction/Sustainability/SmartSustainableHomes/Pages/Default.aspx

Energy ratings

- http://www.energyrating.gov.au/

How do I make my home more accessible?

It is generally more cost-effective to incorporate sustainability and accessibility considerations in home design at the point of construction or renovation, than it is to retrofit them.

Some points to consider regarding mobility:

- Do you need to minimise steps?
- Do you need to increase the width of doorways and corridors to allow wheelchair access to bathrooms etc.?
- Do you need to install switches and handrails in appropriate places?

Building accessible places:

https://www.qld.gov.au/disability/business/building

Who is the right builder for my job?

Builders' awareness of and capabilities in sustainable design principles will vary greatly. Ensure you discuss all your design needs with prospective builders before choosing your final contractor.

Before signing the contract, ensure that your preferences and choices regarding sustainability and mobility are accurately incorporated and fully detailed in the contract documents, including the plans and specifications.

Need more information?

Standards Australia (refer to the relevant Australian Standards including AS 3740, ASI428 Ports 1–4, and AS 42991)

- www.standards.org.au
- SAI Global (ph: l300 654 646)

QBCC

- Visit www.qbcc.qld.gov.au
- Call 139 333.