



# Gold Coast City Plan

## Determining the height and number of storeys of development proposals

This practice note has been developed to assist in the determination of height, which is used to establish the correct level of assessment and compliance with acceptable outcomes.

### Building height

The City Plan regulates building height in, either:

- (a) metres; or
- (b) as number of storeys.

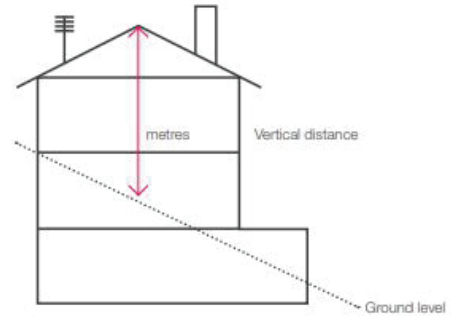
In determining the height of a proposal, there are a number of definitions that need to be considered:

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Building height | <p>If specified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) in metres, the vertical distance between the ground level and the highest point of the building roof (apex) or parapet at any point, but not including load-bearing antenna, aerial, chimney, flagpole or the like; or</li> <li>(b) in storeys, the number of storeys above ground level; or</li> <li>(c) in both metres and storeys, both (a) and (b) apply</li> </ul>   |
| Storey          | <p>A space that is situated between one floor level and the floor level next above, or if there is no floor above, the ceiling or roof above, but not a space that contains only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a lift shaft, stairway or meter room;</li> <li>(b) a bathroom, shower room laundry, water closet, or other sanitary compartment;</li> <li>(c) a combination of the above.</li> </ul> <p>A mezzanine is a storey.</p> <p>A roofed structure on or part of a rooftop that does not solely accommodate building plant and equipment is a storey.</p> <p>A basement is not a storey.</p> |
| Basement        | <p>A space that is situated between one floor level and the floor level next below where no part of the space projects more than one metre above ground level.</p>  |

It is important to note that where a building height is specified in both storeys and metres, both height designations apply (i.e. both need to be met.)

### Height specified in metres

Where the City Plan provides a building height designation in metres, the height of a proposed building is determined as the 'vertical distance between the ground level and the highest point of the building roof... or parapet at any point, but not including load-bearing antenna, aerial, chimney, flagpole or the like'.



Example 1

- Measured in metres - some elements not included.

### Heights specified in storeys

Where the City Plan provides a building height designation in storeys, the height of a proposed building is determined as the 'number of storeys above ground level'.

### Determining the number of storeys

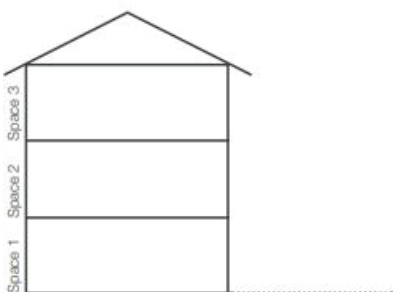
The 'storey' definition provides that each space between one floor level and the floor level next above, ceiling or roof above counts as a storey (see example 2), but with the following exceptions:

- (a) a space that contains only a lift shaft, stairway or meter room, bathroom, shower room laundry, water closet, or other sanitary compartment (or combination of these) is not a storey. If there are other elements (e.g. a garage), that space is a storey (see examples 3, 4 and 5).
- (b) a roofed structure on the rooftop that solely accommodates building plant and equipment is not a storey. Again, if there are other elements (e.g. a bedroom), that space is a storey.
- (c) a basement is not a storey (refer below for additional discussion).

The current definition of storey under the City Plan results in anomalies depending on different circumstances pertaining to particular site context and the type of development proposed. In order to provide an approach that results in sensible development outcomes, involves construing the definition broadly and practically, rather than pedantically, or narrowly, that best fits the purpose and objectives of the City Plan.

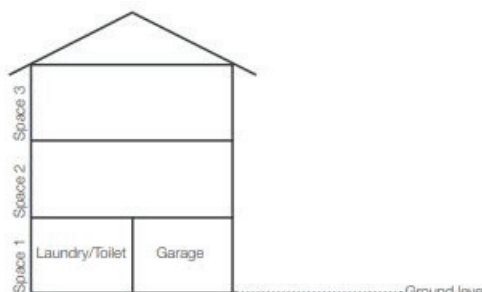
It is acknowledged that the reference to measuring in a vertical plane was removed from the City Plan definition. Although this particular provision is not present within the current definition, there is absolutely no utility in measuring storeys in a horizontal plane context. The real impacts of the height of a building will always be in relation to the actual height of the building. Assessing a building in any other way will only lead to unnecessary and often artificial outcomes.

Council has two methods used to measure the height of buildings, one being actual height and the other being measuring in storeys. The measuring of height is based on a vertical plane method and therefore it is fitting that the same methodology be used for measuring storeys as well; being that storeys are measured also in a vertical plane.



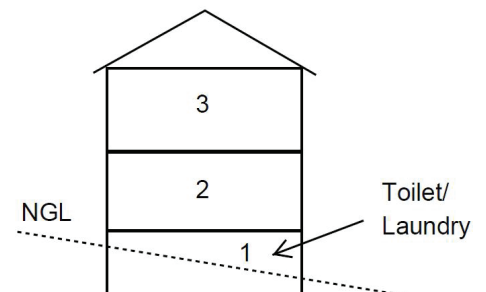
Example 2

- Three spaces, no exceptions apply
- Three storeys



Example 3

- Space 1 contains a garage, so does not meet exceptions in definition
- Three storeys

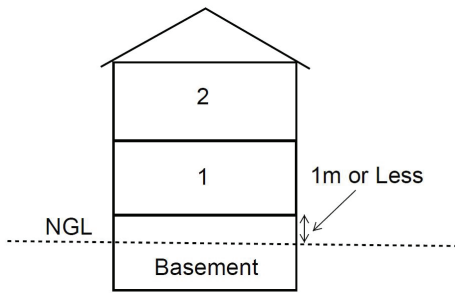


Example 4

- Space 1 contains only a laundry and toilet, so is not counted as a storey
- Two storeys

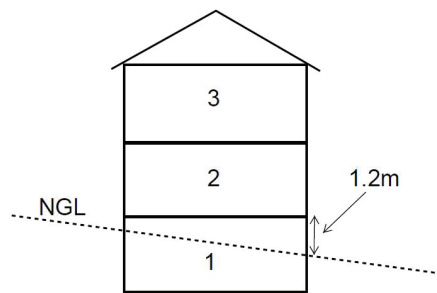
## Basements

If a part only of the basement projects more than a metre above ground level, this will not have the effect of precluding the balance of the space that is less than one metre above ground level from being construed as a basement. The part below the one metre threshold remains as a basement as defined under the City Plan.



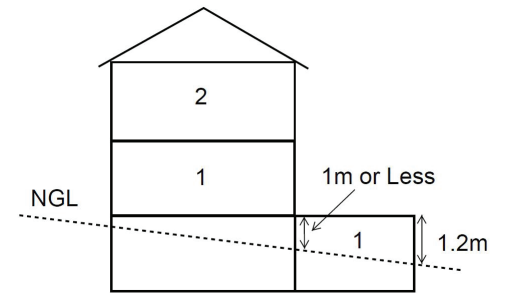
### Example 5

- Space 1 is a basement, so does not constitute a storey
- Two storeys



### Example 6

- Part of Space 1 exceeds 1 metre above ground level
- Space 1 is not a basement and will be a 'storey'
- Three storeys



### Example 7

- Part of Space 1 exceeds 1 metre above ground level but is limited to a small portion only
- At the point on a vertical plane, when measured from the exterior wall of the dwelling, the basement is less than one metre above ground, therefore constitutes a two storey development.