

Optional requirement M4(2): Category 2 – Accessible and adaptable dwellings

This section of the approved document deals with the following optional requirement from Part M of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010.

Requirement	
<i>Optional requirement</i>	<i>Limits on application</i>
Part M access to and use of buildings Category 2 – accessible and adaptable dwellings M4(2) optional requirement (1) Reasonable provision must be made for people to— (a) gain access to; and (b) use, the dwelling and its facilities. (2) The provision made must be sufficient to— (a) meet the needs of occupants with differing needs, including some older or disabled people; and (b) to allow adaptation of the dwelling to meet the changing needs of occupants over time.	Optional requirement M4(2)— (a) may apply only in relation to a dwelling that is erected; (b) will apply in substitution for requirement M4(1); (c) does not apply where optional requirement M4(3) applies; (d) does not apply to any part of a building that is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in the building to be inspected, repaired or maintained.

Performance

In the Secretary of State's view, optional requirement M4(2) will be met where a new dwelling makes reasonable provision for most people to access the dwelling and incorporates features that make it potentially suitable for a wide range of occupants, including older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users. Reasonable provision is made if the dwelling complies with all of the following.

- a. Within the curtilage of the dwelling, or of the building containing the dwelling, it is possible to approach and gain step-free access to the dwelling and to any associated parking space and communal facilities intended for the occupants to use.
- b. There is step-free access to the WC and other accommodation within the entrance storey, and to any associated private outdoor space directly connected to the entrance storey.
- c. A wide range of people, including older and disabled people and some wheelchair users, are able to use the accommodation and its sanitary facilities.
- d. Features are provided to enable common adaptations to be carried out in future to increase the accessibility and functionality of the dwelling.
- e. Wall-mounted switches, socket outlets and other controls are reasonably accessible to people who have reduced reach.

Section 2: Category 2 – Accessible and adaptable dwellings

Section 2A: Approach to the dwelling

Application

- 2.1 The provisions of Section 2A apply only where a planning condition requires compliance with optional requirement M4(2) for accessible and adaptable dwellings (see paragraphs 0.3 to 0.6).
- 2.2 The provisions of Section 2A apply to external and internal areas and elements that form part of the **approach route** to the individual **dwelling** and fall within the plot (or curtilage) of the **dwelling** or the building containing the **dwelling**.
- 2.3 The provisions also apply to the **approach route** between the **dwelling** and the point, or points, at which an occupant or visitor, including a disabled person, would expect to get in and out of a car. This **point, or points, of access** may be within or outside the plot of the **dwelling** or the building containing the **dwelling** (typically a block of **flats**). These provisions do not apply beyond the curtilage of the development.
- 2.4 Reasonable provision should be made to ensure that the **approach route** to any **communal** facilities that serve the **dwelling** meets these provisions. **Communal** facilities include storage areas, such as those used for depositing refuse and recycling, but not plant rooms or other service areas unless occupants need regular access, for example for meter reading.
- 2.5 For a house (or other **dwelling** that sits within its own plot) the **approach route** will often only involve a driveway, or a gate and a path, but for a **dwelling** within a larger building (typically a block of **flats**) the **approach route** will usually involve one, or more, **communal** gates, paths, entrances, doors, lobbies, corridors and access decks, as well as **communal** lifts and stairs.

Approach routes

General

- 2.6 The **approach route** should be safe and convenient, adopt the shallowest gradient that can reasonably be achieved and be **step-free**, irrespective of the storey on which the **dwelling** is located.
- 2.7 Where it is not reasonable to achieve a **step-free approach route** to the **principal private entrance**, a **step-free approach route** should be provided to a suitable alternative **private entrance** instead. The provisions for **approach routes** (other than those relating specifically to **step-free** access) should still apply to both the route to the **principal private entrance** and the route to the alternative **private entrance**.
- 2.8 Where a **communal ramped approach route** is provided and has an overall rise of 300mm or more, an additional stepped route meeting the requirements of paragraph 2.11 should also be provided.

2.9 An approach route for a Category 2 dwelling should comply with all of the following.

- The approach route is level, gently sloping or, where necessary, ramped.
- Private parts of the approach route have a minimum clear width of 900mm or 750mm where there are localised obstructions.
- Communal parts of the approach route (except communal stairs) have a minimum clear width of 1200mm or 1050mm where there are localised obstructions.
- Any localised obstruction does not occur opposite or close to a doorway, or at a change of direction, and is no longer than 2m in length.
- All external parts of the approach route have a suitable ground surface.
- Every gate (or gateway) along the approach route has both:
 - a minimum clear opening width of 850mm
 - a 300mm nib to the leading edge of the gate.

External and internal ramps forming part of an approach route

2.10 To enable people to use a ramp safely, the ramp should comply with all of the following.

- The gradient is between 1:20 and 1:12.
- The length of each flight at a given gradient meets the provisions of Diagram 2.1.
- Flights within a private approach route have a minimum clear width of 900mm.
- Flights within a communal approach route have a minimum clear width of 1200mm.

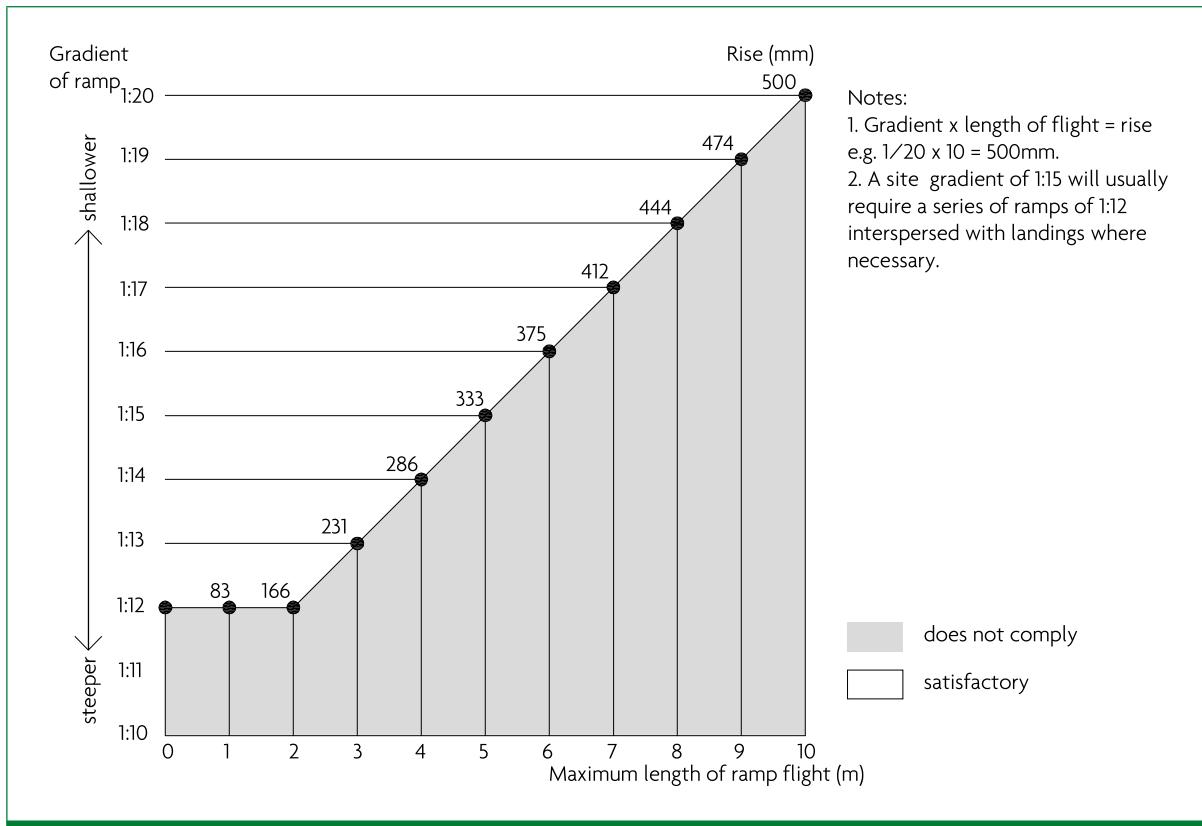


Diagram 2.1 Maximum length of ramp at a given gradient

- e. Every flight has a top and bottom landing.
- f. An intermediate landing is provided between individual flights and at any change of direction.
- g. Every landing is a minimum 1200mm long, clear of any door (or gate) swing.

External steps forming part of an additional route

2.11 To enable a wide range of people to use steps safely, a stepped approach should comply with all of the following.

- a. Steps are uniform with a rise of between 150mm and 170mm and a going of between 280mm and 425mm (for tapered steps measured at a point 270mm from the 'inside' (narrow end) of the step).
- b. Steps have **suitable tread nosings**.
- c. No individual flight has a rise between landings of more than 1800mm.
- d. Every flight has a minimum **clear width** of 900mm.
- e. Top and bottom and, where necessary, intermediate landings are provided and every landing has a minimum length of 900mm.
- f. Every flight with three or more risers has a suitable grippable handrail to one side, (or to both sides where the flight is wider than 1000mm). This grippable handrail is 850-1000mm above the pitch line of the flight and extends a minimum of 300mm beyond the top and bottom nosings.

Car parking and drop-off

Parking space

2.12 Where a parking space is provided for the **dwelling**, it should comply with all of the following.

- a. Where the parking is within the **private curtilage** of the **dwelling** (but not within a carport or garage) at least one space is a **standard parking bay** that can be widened to 3.3m.
- b. Where **communal** parking is provided to blocks of **flats**, at least one **standard parking bay** is provided close to the **communal** entrance of each core of the block (or to the lift core where the parking bay is internal). The parking bay should have a minimum **clear access zone** of 900mm to one side and a dropped kerb in accordance with paragraph 2.13d.
- c. Access between the parking bay and the **principal private entrance** or, where necessary, the alternative **private** entrance to the **dwelling** is step free.
- d. The parking space is **level** or, where unavoidable, **gently sloping**.
- e. The gradient is as shallow as the site permits.
- f. The parking space has a **suitable ground surface**.

Drop-off point

2.13 Where a drop-off point is provided for the **dwelling**, it should comply with all of the following.

- a. It is located close to the **principal communal entrance** of the building containing the **dwelling**.
- b. It is **level** or, where unavoidable, **gently sloping**.
- c. It has a **suitable ground surface**.

d. Where a dropped kerb is provided, it is a minimum of 1000mm wide, reasonably flush with the adjoining ground and has a maximum gradient of 1:12.

Communal entrances

Principal communal entrance

2.14 The **principal communal entrance** should comply with all of the following.

- There is a **level** landing a minimum of 1500mm wide and 1500mm long directly outside the entrance and clear of the swing of any door.
- The landing is covered to a minimum width of 1200mm and depth of 900mm.
- Lighting is provided which uses fully diffused luminaires activated automatically by a dusk to dawn timer or by detecting motion.
- The entrance door (or gate) has a minimum **clear opening width** of 850mm, when measured in accordance with Diagram 2.2.
- Where there are double doors (or gates), the main (or leading) leaf provides the required minimum **clear opening width**.
- A minimum 300mm nib is provided to the **leading edge** of the door (or gate) and the extra width created by this nib is maintained for a minimum distance of 1200mm beyond it.
- The reveal on the leading side of the door (usually the inside) has a maximum depth of 200mm.
- The threshold is an **accessible threshold**.
- Where there is a lobby or porch, the doors are a minimum of 1500mm apart and there is a minimum of 1500mm between door swings.
- The ground surface (or entrance flooring) does not impede wheelchair movement.
- Door entry controls, where provided, are mounted 900-1000mm above finished ground level, and at least 300mm away from any projecting corner.

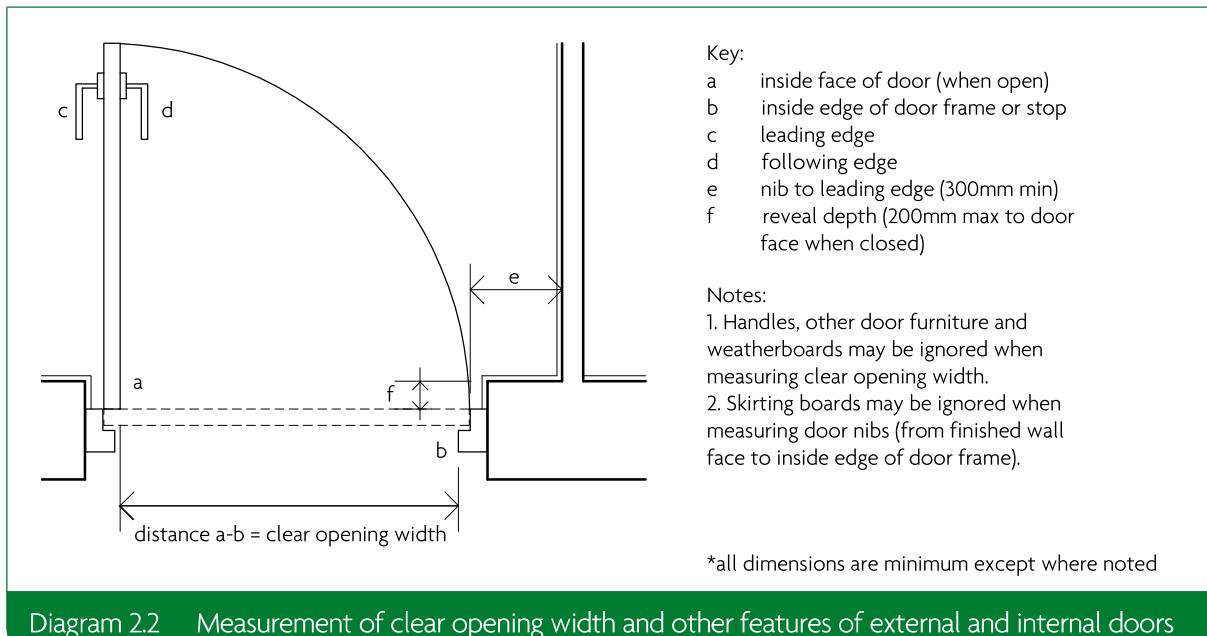


Diagram 2.2 Measurement of clear opening width and other features of external and internal doors

Other communal doors

2.15 Every communal door, or gate, along the approach route should comply with provisions d. to k. of paragraph 2.14.

Communal lifts and stairs

Communal lifts

2.16 A wide range of people, including accompanied wheelchair users, should be able to access and use the lift. Every passenger lift that gives access to the dwelling should comply with all of the following.

- a. There is a clear landing, a minimum of 1500mm long and 1500mm wide, directly in front of the lift door at every floor level.
- b. The lift is equivalent to or meets the requirements of **BS EN 81-70:2003** for a type 2 lift.
- c. The car is a minimum of 1100mm wide and 1400mm deep inside.
- d. Doors have a minimum clear opening width of 800mm.
- e. Landing and car controls are 900-1200mm above the car floor and a minimum of 400mm (measured horizontally) from the inside of the front wall.
- f. The lift has an initial dwell time of five seconds before its doors begin to close after they are fully open.

Communal stairs

2.17 The principal communal stair that gives access to the dwelling should meet the requirements of Part K for a general access stair.

Section 2B: Private entrances and spaces within the dwelling

Application

2.18 The provisions of Section 2B apply only where a planning condition requires compliance with optional requirement M4(2) for accessible and adaptable dwellings (see paragraphs 0.3 to 0.6).

2.19 The provisions of Section 2B apply to private entrances, other external doors and key elements within the dwelling.

Private entrances

Principal private entrance and alternative entrance

2.20 The principal private entrance, or the alternative private entrance where step-free access cannot be achieved to the principal private entrance, should comply with all of the following.

- There is a level external landing with a minimum width and depth of 1200mm.
- The landing is covered for a minimum width of 900mm and a minimum depth of 600mm.
- Lighting is provided which uses fully diffused luminaires activated automatically by a dusk to dawn timer or by detecting motion.
- The door has a minimum clear opening width of 850mm when measured in accordance with Diagram 2.2.
- Where there are double doors, the main (or leading) leaf provides the required minimum clear opening width.
- A minimum 300mm nib is provided to the leading edge of the door and the extra width created by this nib is maintained for a minimum distance of 1200mm beyond it.
- The depth of the reveal on the leading side of the door (usually the inside) is a maximum of 200mm
- The threshold is an accessible threshold.
- Where there is a lobby or porch, the doors are a minimum of 1500mm apart and there is at least 1500mm between door swings.

Other external doors

2.21 All other external doors – including doors to and from a private garden, balcony, terrace, garage, carport, conservatory or storage area that is integral with, or connected to, the dwelling – should comply with provisions d. to i. of paragraph 2.20.

Circulation areas and internal doorways

Door and hall widths

2.22 To facilitate movement into, and between, rooms throughout the dwelling, doors and corridors should comply with all of the following (see Diagram 2.3).

- The minimum clear width of every hall or landing is 900mm.
- Any localised obstruction, such as a radiator, does not occur opposite or close to a doorway or at a change of direction and is no longer than 2m in length; and the corridor is not reduced below a minimum 750mm width at any point.
- Every door has a minimum clear opening width as set out in Table 2.1.
- A minimum 300mm nib is provided to the leading edge of every door within the entrance storey.

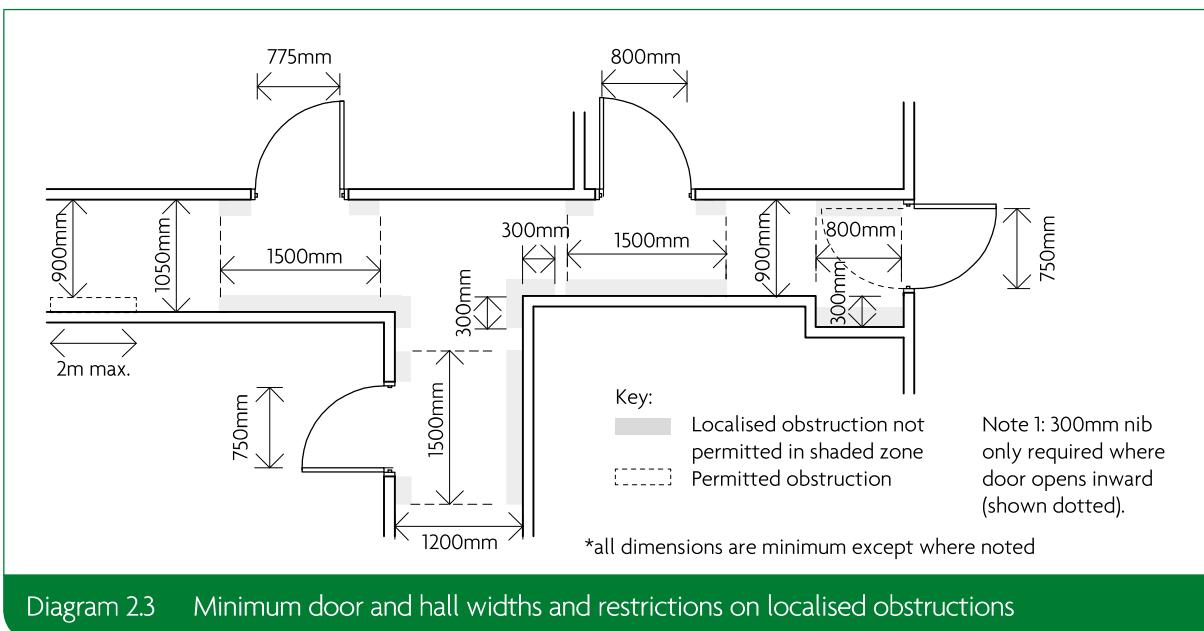


Diagram 2.3 Minimum door and hall widths and restrictions on localised obstructions

Table 2.1 Minimum widths of corridors and passageways for a range of doorway widths

Doorway clear opening width (mm)	Corridor clear passageway width
750 or wider	900 (when approached head on)
750	1200 (when approach is not head-on)
775	1050 (when approach is not head-on)
800	900 (when approach is not head-on)

NOTE 1: The provisions of paragraph 2.22 do not apply to:

- cupboards unless large enough to be entered, or
- en-suite bathrooms or showers that are additional to the provisions of paragraphs 2.26 to 2.29.

NOTE 2: Double doors effectively provide nibs where each leaf is at least 300mm wide.

NOTE 3: A standard 826mm door leaf up to 44mm thick will be deemed to satisfy a requirement for a **clear opening width** of 775mm.

Private stairs and changes of level within the dwelling

2.23 To allow people to move between storeys, and to allow a stair-lift to be fitted to the stairs from the **entrance storey** to the storey above (or the storey below where this contains the bathroom required by the provisions of paragraph 2.29), stairs should comply with all of the following.

- a. Access to all rooms and facilities within the **entrance storey** is **step-free**.
- b. Level changes within every other storey are avoided where possible.
- c. The stair from the **entrance storey** to the storey above (or below) has a minimum **clear width** of 850mm when measured 450mm above the **pitch line** of the treads (ignoring any newel post).
- d. All stairs meet the provisions of Part K for **private stairs**.

Habitable rooms

Living, kitchen and eating areas

2.24 To provide usable living spaces and easy, **step-free** access between a living area, a WC and the **principal private entrance**, key accommodation should comply with all of the following.

- a. Within the **entrance storey** there is a living area (which may be a living room, dining room or a combined kitchen and dining room).
- b. A minimum 1200mm clear space is provided in front of and between all kitchen units and appliances.
- c. Glazing to the principal window of the principal living area starts a maximum of 850mm above floor level or at the minimum height necessary to comply with the requirements of Part K for guarding to windows.

Bedrooms

2.25 To enable a wide range of people to access and use them, bedrooms should comply with all of the following.

- a. Every bedroom can provide a **clear access route** a minimum 750mm wide from the doorway to the window.
- b. At least one double bedroom (the principal bedroom) can provide a **clear access zone** a minimum 750mm wide to both sides and the foot of the bed.
- c. Every other double bedroom can provide a **clear access zone** a minimum 750mm wide to one side and the foot of the bed.
- d. All single and twin bedrooms can provide a **clear access zone** a minimum 750mm wide to one side of each bed.
- e. It can be demonstrated (for example by providing dimensioned bedroom layouts, similar to the example in Diagram 2.4) that the provisions above can be achieved.

NOTE: For the purpose of demonstrating compliance with these provisions, beds should be of the size set out in the furniture schedule in Appendix D.

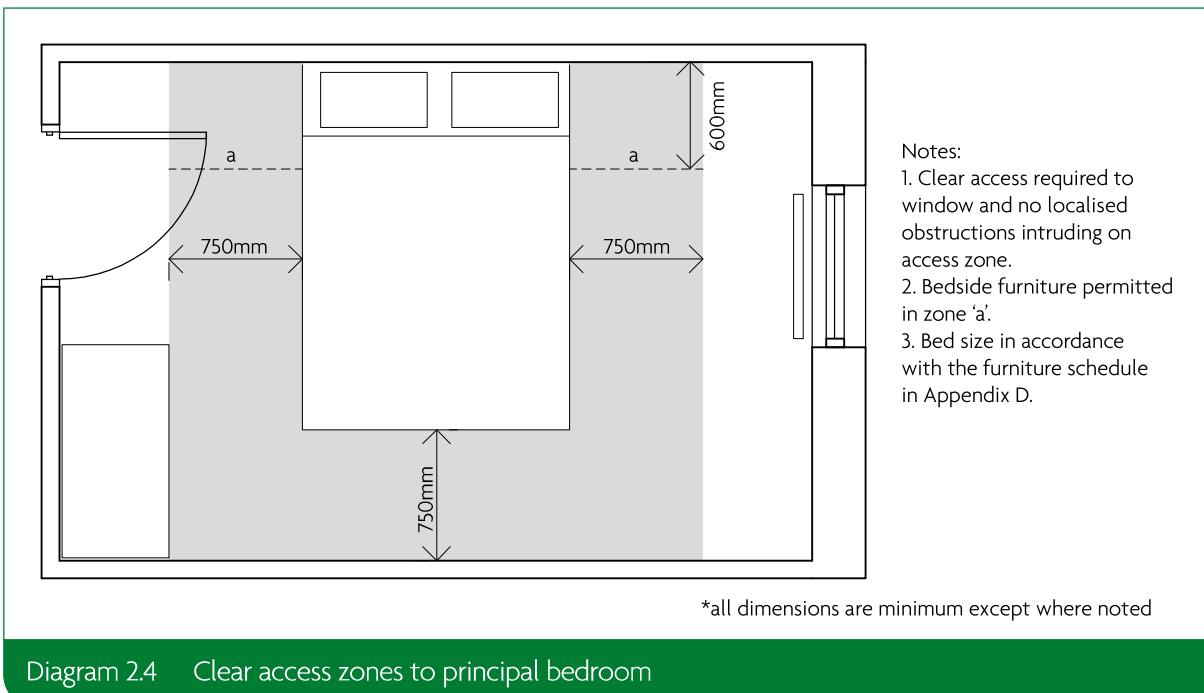


Diagram 2.4 Clear access zones to principal bedroom

Sanitary facilities

General provisions

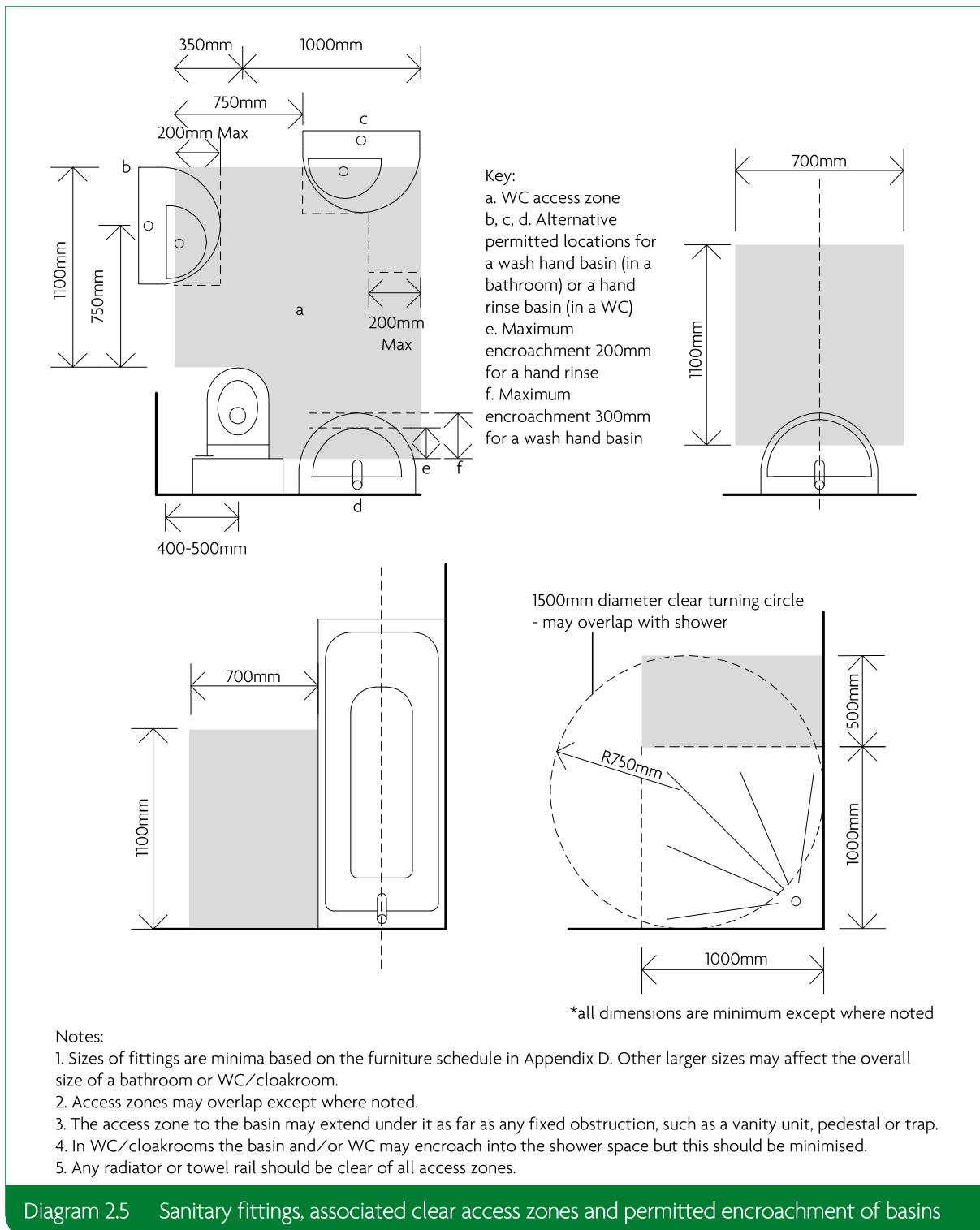
2.26 All walls, ducts and boxings to the WC/cloakroom, bathroom and shower room should be strong enough to support grab rails, seats and other adaptations that could impose a load of up to $1.5\text{kN}/\text{m}^2$. Additional sanitary facilities beyond those required to comply with this guidance need not have strengthened walls.

NOTE: The loading for strengthened walls is considered suitable for many types of adaptations but additional localised strengthening may be required if adaptations are fitted that impose high point loads.

WC facilities on the entrance storey

2.27 To provide **step-free** access to a WC that is suitable and convenient for some wheelchair users and, where reasonable, to make provision for showering, dwellings should comply with all of the following.

- Every **dwelling** has a room within the **entrance storey** that provides a WC and basin (which may be within a WC/cloakroom or a bathroom).
- In a two or three storey **dwelling** with one or two bedrooms, the WC (together with its associated **clear access zone**) meets the provisions of Diagram 1.3 and the basin does not impede access to the WC.
- In a two or three storey **dwelling** with three or more bedrooms, the room with the WC and basin also provides an **installed level access shower** or a **potential level access shower**, and the shower, WC and basin (together with their associated **clear access zones**) meet the provisions of Diagram 2.5. Examples of compliant WC layouts are shown in Diagram 2.6.
- The door opens outwards.



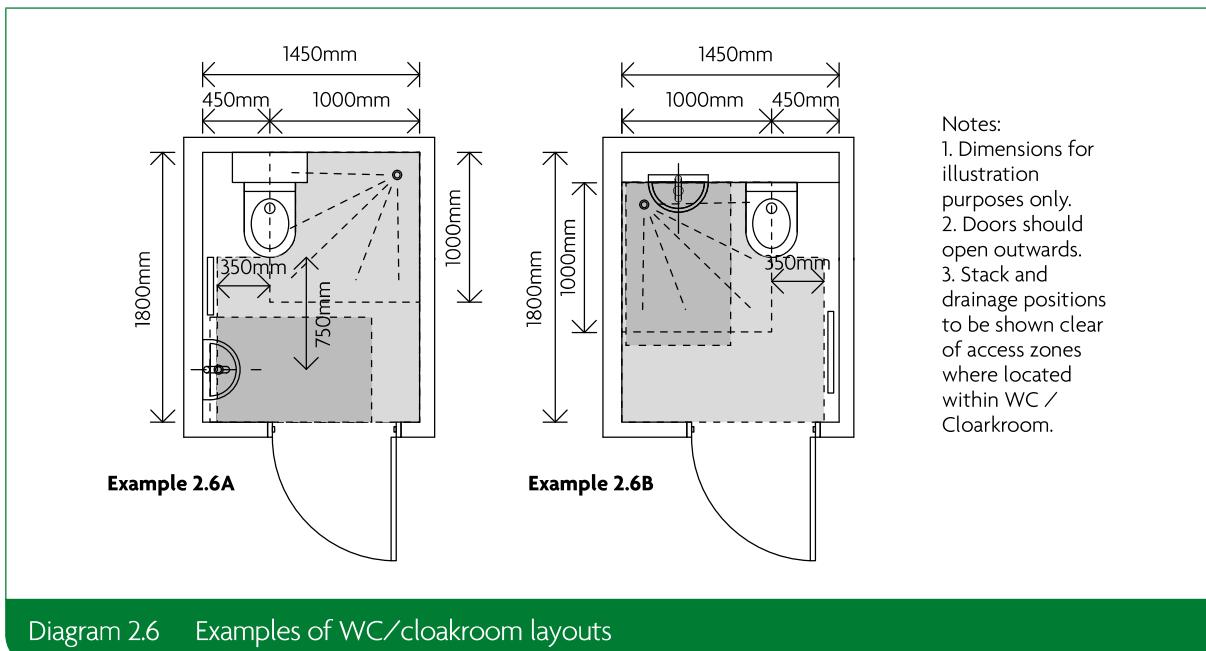


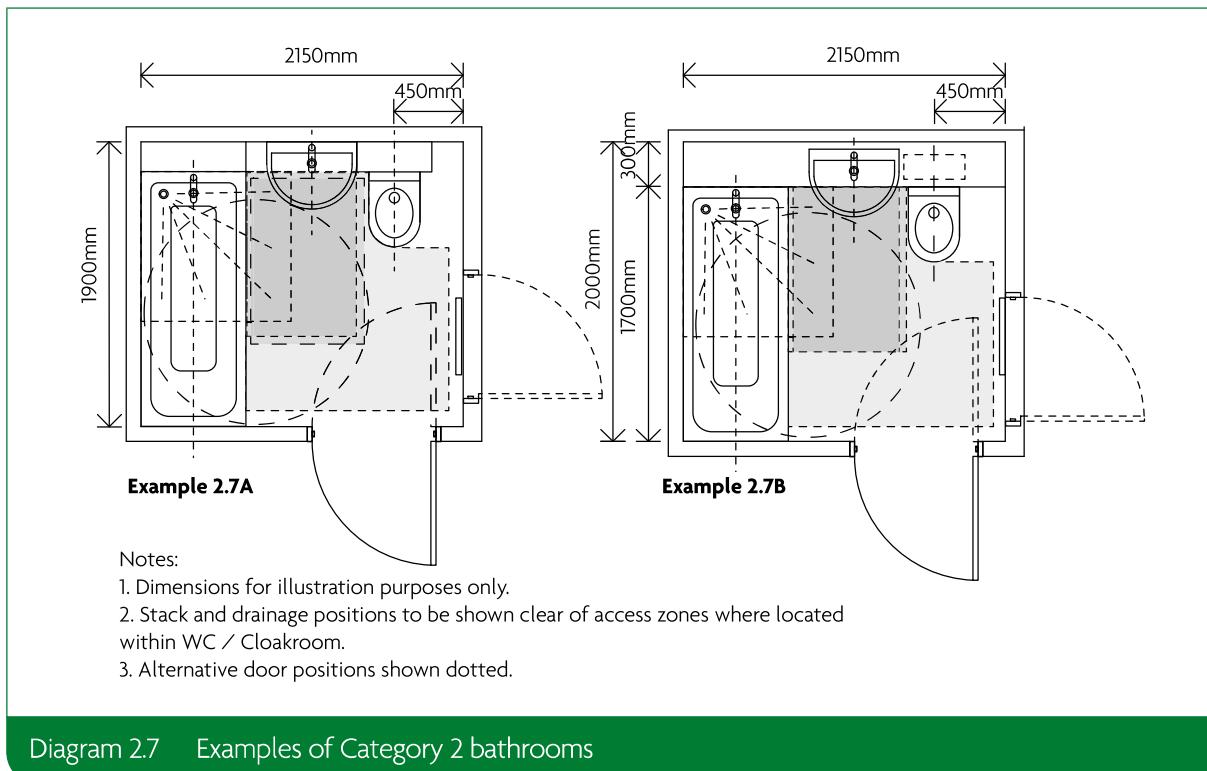
Diagram 2.6 Examples of WC/cloakroom layouts

2.28 Where the **dwelling** provides both an accessible bathroom with a WC and a WC/cloakroom within the same storey, the WC/cloakroom may comply with the provisions of Diagram 1.3.

Bathrooms

2.29 To provide convenient access to a suitable bathroom, the **dwelling** should comply with all of the following.

- Every **dwelling** has a bathroom that contains a WC, a basin and a bath, that is located on the same floor as the double bedroom, described as the principal bedroom in paragraph 2.25b.
- The WC, basin and bath (together with their associated **clear access zones**) meet the provisions of Diagram 2.5. Examples of bathroom layouts are shown in Diagram 2.7.
- Provision for a potential level access shower is made within the bathroom if not provided elsewhere within the dwelling.



Services and controls

2.30 To assist people who have reduced reach, services and controls should comply with all of the following.

- Consumer units are mounted so that the switches are between 1350mm and 1450mm above floor level.
- Switches, sockets, stopcocks and controls have their centre line between 450mm and 1200mm above floor level and a minimum of 300mm (measured horizontally) from an inside corner.
- The handle to at least one window in the principal living area is located between 450mm and 1200mm above floor level, unless the window is fitted with a remote opening device that is within this height range.
- Handles to all other windows are located between 450mm and 1400mm above floor level, unless fitted with a remote opening device that is within this height range.
- Either:
 - boiler timer controls and thermostats are mounted between 900mm and 1200mm above finished floor level on the boiler, or
 - separate controllers (wired or wireless) are mounted elsewhere in an accessible location within the same height range.

NOTE: Controls that are part of a radiator or cooker hood are exempt from these provisions.