

Encouraging Secondary Dwellings

Housing Strategy Initiatives



What is a secondary dwelling?

A **secondary dwelling**, often called a granny flat or a studio, is a dwelling that is:

- used in conjunction with, but subordinate to, a dwelling house on the same lot; and
- can be attached to or standalone from the dwelling house.

Planning legislation includes it as part of the **dwelling house**, even though it is self-contained and might be physically detached from the main house.

Residents of the secondary dwelling **do not need to be related to the occupants** of the dwelling house; they might be paying tenants.

Secondary dwellings:

- are small, no more than 65m² in gross floor area, exclusive of decks and carparking
- are not intended to be a full size family home.
- will typically have a modest kitchen but might share a laundry with the main house.

No more than one secondary dwelling can be developed as part of a dwelling house on any site, regardless of site area.

How can a Secondary Dwelling be occupied or used?

A secondary dwelling can only be used for **housing permanent residents**, it cannot be let out to short-term guests or offered as BnB accommodation.

The primary dwelling house and the secondary dwelling can be separately rented to permanent tenants, through separate lease agreements.

Can it be separately titled and sold?

No. Unlike a dual occupancy or duplex, a secondary dwelling cannot be subdivided or separately titled and cannot be covered by a Building Unit Plan.

However, a property with a dwelling house and compliant secondary dwelling is only categorised as one dwelling for the purpose of calculating rates.

Do I need Council planning approval?

Not usually. A secondary dwelling is usually assessed by a private building certifier as part of the mandatory building approval process, without requiring referral to Council. However, in some instances, planning approval or referral of a secondary dwelling to Council for assessment is required¹.

What about Modular or Prefabricated Homes?

Small modular or prefabricated homes can be brought onto a site as a secondary dwelling, however, are still required to meet the relevant provisions of Noosa Plan 2020¹, and building and plumbing approvals are required.

Are Infrastructure Charges Payable?

From 1 July 2025 Council is no longer issuing infrastructure charge notices for secondary dwellings, which will result in a significant reduction in establishment costs of the dwelling.

If a charge notice has previously been issued it is payable, and no refunds will be available.

Making it cheaper and easier to construct a secondary dwelling for permanent housing for locals is one initiative of the Noosa Housing Strategy. Other initiatives are outlined in separate information sheets.

Please refer to the Housing Strategy web page for additional information. www.noosa.qld.gov.au/Planning-and-Development/Housing-strategy

For further information on development under Noosa Plan 2020 refer to www.noosa.qld.gov.au/noosa-plan-2020 or contact Council's Development Assessment team on (07) 5329 6500 or email planning@noosa.qld.gov.au.

¹ Refer to Noosa Plan 2020 **Fact Sheet 3: Secondary dwelling** for further information