

Short-term Accommodation Guide

Noosa Plan 2020 – As amended 26 September 2025

This Short-term Accommodation Guide provides guidance on the requirements for short-term accommodation under **Noosa Plan 2020 as amended on 26 September 2025**. The provisions of Amendment No. 2 to Noosa Plan 2020 are not retrospective and lawful approvals for *short-term accommodation* prior to this amendment continue.

Additional requirements for operating short-stay letting are regulated under Council's Short Stay Letting and Home Hosted Accommodation Local Law. Refer to Part 7 for further information.

This Fact Sheet is intended to assist with interpreting Noosa Plan 2020 and **should not be solely relied on to inform decisions**.

Prior to making decisions or undertaking any development, it is strongly recommended that applicants:

- Review all the requirements of Noosa Plan 2020, and/or
- Seek advice from a qualified planning professional.

Noosa Plan 2020 is available online at: <https://noosaplan.noosa.qld.gov.au/eplan>

For further information or assistance, contact Council's Development Assessment team:

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1. What is short-term accommodation?

Under Noosa Plan 2020, *short-term accommodation* means:

- (a) *the use of premises for:*
- (i) *providing accommodation of less than three consecutive months to tourists or travellers; or*
 - (ii) *a manager's residence, office or recreation facilities for the exclusive use of guests, if the use is ancillary to the use in (i); but*
- (b) *does not include a hotel, nature-based tourism, resort complex or tourist park.*

Short-term accommodation examples:

- Renting out a house, duplex, unit, or apartment.
- Motels, hostels, or backpacker accommodation.
- Farm stays, cabins, or permanent tents.

Short-term accommodation exclusions:

- Renting a property to the same person(s) for more than three consecutive months.
- Home hosted accommodation (where the host lives on-site and rents part of their home) – this is considered a *home-based business*¹.
- Accommodation uses defined separately in the planning scheme (e.g. *hotels, resorts, tourist parks, nature-based tourism*).
- House swapping your principal place of residence (non-commercial), which can be carried out without requiring a planning approval.

1.1 Can I short-term let my secondary dwelling or granny flat?



No, secondary dwellings (e.g. granny flats) cannot be short-term let.

*Secondary dwellings*² or granny flats are for permanent occupation by residents and cannot be used for *short-term accommodation* or as a *home-based business* (home hosted accommodation).

1.2 Can my dwelling be used by guests for organised parties and events?



No, Party Houses are prohibited.

A **party house** means premises containing a dwelling that is used to provide, for a fee, accommodation or facilities for guests if—

- (a) *guests regularly use all or part of the premises for parties (bucks parties, hens parties, raves, or wedding receptions, for example); and*
- (b) *the accommodation or facilities are provided for a period of less than 10 days; and*
- (c) *the owner of the premises does not occupy the premises during that period.*

Under the *Planning Act 2016*, the entire Noosa Shire is designated as a *party house* restriction area. This means that any dwelling used for **short-term accommodation** is strictly prohibited from being used for parties, weddings, bucks nights, or other gatherings.

Noosa has long enforced restrictions on party houses. As such, no property in the Shire holds existing use rights that would permit hosting events or parties in residential dwellings, regardless of past usage.

¹ Refer to **Factsheet 4: Home Hosted Visitor Accommodation** for further information.

² See **Fact Sheet 3: Secondary Dwellings** and **Fact Sheet 4: Home Hosted Visitor Accommodation** for more information.

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2. Does short-term accommodation need planning approval?

Under Noosa Plan 2020, the need for planning approval for *short-term accommodation* depends on the zone in which the property is located and how the use is classified.



Short-term accommodation identified as “**consistent**” is considered an **appropriate use** in the zone.



Short-term accommodation identified as “**inconsistent**” is an **inappropriate use** in the zone.

2.1 Approval requirements

Table 1 identifies the level of assessment for different types of STA within each zone. Level of assessment are as follows:

Accepted development

No planning approval required.

Accepted development subject to requirements

No planning approval is required; however the use must comply with specific acceptable outcomes in the relevant Noosa Plan 2020 Codes.

Code assessment

Planning approval is required. The application is assessed against the relevant Codes in Noosa Plan 2020.

Impact assessment

Planning approval is required. The application is assessed against the entire Noosa Plan 2020, and public notification is required, allowing the community to make submissions on the proposal.

Table 1 Summary of levels of assessment for short-term accommodation

Zone	STA of principal place of residence max 60 days / 4 times per year	STA of a dwelling on an ongoing or frequent basis	Other Short-term accommodation (e.g. cabins)
Low, Medium or High Density Residential	Consistent Accepted development subject to requirements	Inconsistent Impact assessment	Inconsistent ³ Impact assessment
Rural Residential	Consistent Accepted development subject to requirements	Inconsistent Impact assessment	Consistent ⁴ Impact assessment
Rural	Consistent Accepted development subject to requirements	Inconsistent Impact assessment	Consistent ⁴ Code or impact assessment
Tourist Accommodation	Consistent Accepted development	Consistent ⁴ Code assessment	Consistent ⁴ Code or impact assessment
Centre zones	Consistent, code assessment - District Centre - 16 Mary Street, Noosaville only		
	Consistent, impact assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Major Centre - Noosa Business Centre - Village Mixed Use Precinct⁴ only ▪ District Centre - in the Cooroy Local Plan Area only ▪ Local Centre - in Pomona, Cooran, Kin Kin and Boreen Point and in conjunction with non-residential uses 		
	Otherwise, inconsistent and subject to impact assessment		

³ Excluding 48 Noosa Drive, Noosa Heads, which is consistent, impact assessment.

⁴ Subject to meeting specific requirements

3. Short-term accommodation in the Low, Medium or High Density Residential zones

The Low, Medium, and High Density Residential zones are primarily intended for permanent residential living. Regular or frequent use of dwellings for *short-term accommodation* is not considered appropriate in these zones, with the preferred form of development being *dwelling houses*, *dual occupancies* and *multiple dwellings* occupied by long-term residents. These permanent residential uses are separately defined and distinct from short-term accommodation under Noosa Plan 2020.

The use of a dwelling for *short-term accommodation* is only considered **consistent** in these zones when it meets the accepted development requirements.

3.1 Short-term letting of an entire dwelling on an ongoing basis

Using an entire dwelling (e.g. house, unit, apartment) for *short-term accommodation* on an ongoing basis – being more than 60 nights and more than four separate bookings per calendar year - is considered an **inconsistent** use in Residential zones under Noosa Plan 2020.

3.2 Other forms of short-term accommodation

Other forms of *short-term accommodation*, such as motels, backpackers and hostel accommodation, are also classified as **inconsistent** in all Residential zones⁵.

3.3 Short-term accommodation in a principal place of residence

Occasional *short-term accommodation* use of an entire dwelling - where the permanent resident temporarily vacates their home (e.g. for holidays or work travel) - may be considered **accepted development (subject to requirements)** in a Residential zone where the following conditions are met:

- The dwelling is the applicant's principal place of residence
- The property is let to short-term guests on no more than four occasions per calendar year
- The total number of nights let does not exceed 60 nights per calendar year
- Only one self-contained dwelling is let at any one time (i.e. *secondary dwellings* cannot be short-term let).
- The accommodation is limited to a maximum of five guest bedrooms.

To qualify as **accepted development**, the proposal must also comply with all applicable provisions of the relevant Zone Code and Use Code – refer to Table 2 for details. If any of these requirements are not met, a development application must be submitted to Council for assessment and approval.

3.4 Other forms of visitor accommodation

Home-hosted accommodation (a form of *home-based business*, which is separately defined to *short-term accommodation*) is also considered a **consistent** use in Residential zones⁶.

⁵ excluding 48 Noosa Dr, Noosa Heads, where STA is consistent (subject to impact assessment) where providing low-cost accommodation

⁶ Refer to Fact Sheet 4 – Home Hosted Visitor Accommodation

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Table 2 – Additional requirements for short-term accommodation in Residential zones

Low Density Residential Zone

Low Density Residential Zone Code Acceptable Outcomes

- **AO2.1** – The use does not regularly result in more than 10 unrelated persons being present on site
- **AO2.2** – The use does not adversely affect the amenity of the residential neighbourhood by the emission of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, vapour, steam, soot, ash, dust, grit, oil, waste water, waste products, or radio or electrical interference.
- **AO2.3** – The use is subordinate to the use of the premises as a permanent residence.
- **AO3.2** – Short-term accommodation:
 - (a) Does not operate in a secondary dwelling;
 - (b) Does not constitute a party house;
 - (c) Makes available no more than one self contained dwelling at any one time;
 - (d) Does not unreasonably impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by the adjoining or surrounding properties (for example through noise, light spill, vehicles parking and movements or waste disposal); and
 - (e) Makes available no more than five bedrooms
- **AO3.4** – Waste storage areas are screened and located to the rear or side of a building and are not located along any frontage to a public street or space.

Low Density Housing Code Acceptable Outcome

- **AO7** – two car parking spaces are provided on site.

Medium Density Residential Zone

Medium Density Residential Zone Code Acceptable Outcome

- **AO8** - Short-term accommodation:
 - (a) Does not operate in a secondary dwelling;
 - (b) Does not constitute a party house;
 - (c) Does not unreasonably impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by the adjoining or surrounding properties (for example through noise, light spill, vehicles parking and movements or waste disposal).

High Density Residential Zone

High Density Residential Zone Code Acceptable Outcome

- **AO3** - Short-term accommodation:
 - (a) Does not operate in a secondary dwelling;
 - (b) Does not constitute a party house;
 - (c) Does not unreasonably impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by the adjoining or surrounding properties (for example through noise, light spill, vehicles parking and movements or waste disposal).

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4. Short-term accommodation in the Rural Residential zone

The Rural Residential zone is intended primarily for permanent residential living. The dominant form of development in this zone is *dwelling houses* occupied by long-term residents generally located on large, un-serviced lots.

4.1 Short-term letting of an entire dwelling house on an ongoing basis

Using an entire dwelling for *short-term accommodation* that does not meet the accepted development requirements is considered **inconsistent** with the Rural Residential zone under Noosa Plan 2020.

4.2 Short-term accommodation in a principal place of residence

Occasional *short-term accommodation* use of an entire dwelling house - where the permanent resident temporarily vacates their home (e.g. for holidays or work travel) - may be considered **accepted development (subject to requirements)** where the following conditions are met:

- The dwelling is the applicant's principal place of residence
- The property is let to short-term guests on no more than four occasions per calendar year
- The total number of nights let does not exceed 60 nights per calendar year
- Only one self-contained dwelling is let at any one time (i.e. *secondary dwellings* cannot be short-term let).

To qualify as **accepted development**, the proposal must also comply with the following applicable provision of the Rural Residential Zone Code:

- **Acceptable Outcome AO1.1 of the Rural Residential Zone Code** - Development is inconspicuous and presents as a dwelling house.

If you do not meet AO1.1, a **code assessable** application is required, where the non-compliance will be assessed against the relevant performance outcome of the Code.

4.3 Short-term accommodation (eg cabins and glamping)

Other forms of *short-term accommodation* - such as cabins and glamping - may be considered on Rural Residential lots, subject to Council approval, if all of the following conditions are met:

- The accommodation is provided in addition to the applicant's principal place of residence on the site⁷;
- The property has a minimum lot size of 4 hectares;
- The combined total gross floor area of all short-term accommodation buildings does not exceed 250m²;
- A maximum of 12 guests are accommodated at any one time; and
- The use does not include a conference or function facility.

If these requirements are satisfied, an **impact assessable** development application can be submitted to Council seeking a Development Permit for a Material Change of Use – Short-term Accommodation. This application will be assessed against the entire Noosa Plan 2020 and will require public notification, allowing community submissions.

As the Rural Residential zone is intended for permanent living, all *short-term accommodation* must be managed by a full-time resident living on-site to minimise impacts on neighbours⁸.

4.4 Other forms of visitor accommodation

Other low-impact visitor accommodation types - such as *nature-based tourism* and home-hosted accommodation (a form of *home-based business*) - are considered **consistent** uses in the Rural Residential zone, provided they are operated in addition to a permanent residence (i.e. the applicant's principal place of residence) on the property.

⁷ It is expected the resident is operating & managing the accommodation and has not vacated the property.

⁸ Short-term accommodation without a permanent on-site resident is considered an **inconsistent use** in the Rural Residential zone.

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5. Short-term accommodation in the Rural zone

The Rural zone is primarily intended for agricultural and rural activities, typically in conjunction with permanent residential living on very large, unserviced lots.

5.1 Short-term letting of an entire dwelling house on an ongoing basis

Using an entire dwelling for *short-term accommodation* which does not meet the accepted development requirements is considered an **inconsistent** use in the Rural zone under Noosa Plan 2020.

5.2 Short-term accommodation in a principal place of residence

Occasional *short-term accommodation* use of an entire dwelling house - where the permanent resident temporarily vacates their home (e.g. for holidays or work travel) - may be considered **accepted development** where the following conditions are met:

- The dwelling is the applicant's principal place of residence;
- The property is let to short-term guests on no more than four occasions per calendar year;
- The total number of nights let does not exceed 60 nights per calendar year; and
- Only one self-contained dwelling is let at any one time (i.e. *secondary dwellings* cannot be short-term let).

If the use complies with the above requirements, a Development Permit (i.e. Council planning approval) is not required.

5.3 Short-term accommodation (eg glamping, cabins)

Other forms of *short-term accommodation* may be provided on a Rural lot, subject to approval – refer to Table 3 – **Assessment triggers for short-term accommodation in the Rural zone**

for further details.

As the Rural zone is primarily intended for permanent living, all *short-term accommodation* must be managed by a full-time resident living on-site to minimise impacts on neighbours⁹.

Table 3 – Assessment triggers for short-term accommodation in the Rural zone

Code Assessable	Impact Assessable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ on the same site as the applicant's principal place of residence; and ▪ located on a site with an area of at least 4 hectares; and ▪ not incorporating conference or function facilities; and ▪ with no more than four guestrooms, cabins or permanent tents; and ▪ not exceeding 200m² total gross floor area; and ▪ accommodating no more than 8 guests. <p>Where the proposal meets the above requirements, a code assessable application is required, to be assessed against the relevant Codes under Noosa Plan 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ on the same site as the applicant's principal place of residence; and ▪ located on a site with an area of at least 4 hectares; and ▪ not incorporating conference or function facilities; and ▪ having a total gross floor area not exceeding 1,000m²; and ▪ accommodating no more than 24 guests. <p>Where the proposal meets the above requirements, an impact assessable application is required, to be assessed against the whole of Noosa Plan 2020.</p>

⁹ Short-term accommodation without a permanent on-site resident is considered an **inconsistent use** in the Rural Residential zone.

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6. Short-term accommodation in the Tourist Accommodation zone

The Tourist Accommodation zone is the primary zone for a range of visitor accommodation types.

Short-term accommodation is **consistent** in the zone in addition to *hotels, nature-based tourism, resort complexes* and *tourist parks*.

The Tourist Accommodation zone allows for a broader range of *short-term accommodation* types such as:

- short-term letting of an entire dwelling on a frequent or ongoing basis;
- serviced apartments, motel or backpacker accommodation.

6.1 Short-term letting of an entire dwelling on an ongoing basis

Using an entire dwelling (e.g. house, unit, apartment) for *short-term accommodation* on an ongoing basis – being more than the accepted development limit of 60 nights and more than four separate bookings per calendar year - is considered a **consistent** use in Tourist Accommodation zone, subject to code assessment (unless the use is located on a site listed below, where **impact assessment** is required).

6.2 Other forms of short-term accommodation

Other forms of *short-term accommodation*, such as motels, backpackers and hostel accommodation, are also **consistent** uses in the Tourist Accommodation zone.

A **code assessment** application is required for these forms of *short-term accommodation*, unless the use is located on a site listed below, where **impact assessment** is required:

- within the Hastings Street Mixed Use Precinct;
- Essence - 215 David Low Way, Peregrine Beach;
- Viridian Noosa Resort - 3-5 Morwong Drive, Noosa Heads;
- Settlers Cove Resort - 3-7 Serenity Close, Noosa Heads;
- RACV Resort - 94 & 142 Noosa Drive, Noosa Heads;
- Ivory Palms Resort - 73 Hilton Terrace, Noosaville;
- Noosa Lakes Resort - 3 Hilton Terrace, Tewantin;
- Big4 Noosa North Shore - 1 Beach Road, Noosa North Shore;
- 30 Beach Rd, Noosa North Shore;
- Beach Road Holiday Homes - 90 Beach Road, Noosa North Shore;

- Halse Lodge - 2 Halse Lane, Noosa Heads; or
- Lot 4 SP178340, 61 Noosa Springs Drive, Noosa Heads.

6.3 Short-term accommodation in a principal place of residence

Occasional *short-term accommodation* use of an entire dwelling house - where the permanent resident temporarily vacates their home (e.g. for holidays or work travel) – is **accepted development** where the following conditions are met:

- The dwelling is the applicant's principal place of residence
- The property is let to short-term guests on no more than four occasions per calendar year
- The total number of nights let does not exceed 60 nights per calendar year
- Only one self-contained dwelling is let at any one time (i.e. *secondary dwellings* cannot be short-term let).

If the use complies with the above requirements, a Development Permit (i.e. Council planning approval) is not required.

7. Short Stay Letting and Home Hosted Accommodation Local Law

The Short Stay Letting and Home Hosted Accommodation Local Law came into effect on 1 February 2022. The Local Law governs the operation of short stay and home hosted accommodation in Noosa Shire, aiming to reduce the impacts on permanent residents and residential amenity through a local management framework and code of conduct for guest behaviour.

7.1 Local Law Approval Requirements

All operators of short stay letting or home hosted accommodation - unless specifically exempt under **Schedule 21A(2)** of the local law - must obtain approval from Council, in addition to any required planning approvals.

To operate legally¹⁰:

- A local law application must be submitted for each property.
- Annual renewal of the approval is required for as long as the activity continues.
- Conditions may include appointing a local contact person, adhering to a guest code of conduct, and displaying the approval number on the property.

¹⁰ Refer to Council's website for further information on the requirements under the local law, including requirements for

lodgement of an application. refer to www.noosa.qld.gov.au/short-stay-letting-home-hosted-accommodation-local-law