

Brisbane City Plan 2014 (City Plan) has been developed by Brisbane City Council in consultation with the community to support a simple, clear and streamlined development assessment process. The plan guides how land in Brisbane can be used and developed to support population growth, while protecting our enviable way of life.

City Plan encourages a variety of housing options to meet Brisbane residents' diverse and changing needs.

Under City Plan, a house is defined as a 'dwelling house' and refers to the residential use of premises for one household that contains a single dwelling. A dwelling house includes outbuildings (for example carports or sheds) and works normally associated with a house, such as an extension. It may also include a secondary dwelling such as a granny flat.

This factsheet outlines how the City Plan applies to granny flats in residential zones, how to check if you require planning approval from Council and basic design requirements. A certifier must also approve any work for granny flats before you start construction – this is separate to a planning approval.

Do I need Council approval to build a granny flat?

An extension to an existing dwelling house in a residential zone for a granny flat is referred to in the City Plan as a secondary dwelling. It can be a maximum of 80 square metres in size. If the granny flat is for a member of your household, you do not need to apply for Council approval as long as you meet the criteria in the [Dwelling house code](#) or [Dwelling house \(small lot\) code](#).

Small lots are less than 450 square metres or for a rear lot less than 600 square metres excluding the access way.



You will need to lodge a development application if:

- the granny flat is bigger than 80 square metres in size
- it is more than 20 metres from the main house.

You will need a development application for a different use, a 'dual occupancy', if you are renting it to someone who does not form part of your household.

How is a household defined in Brisbane City Plan 2014?

A 'household' is defined as an individual or a group of two or more related or unrelated people who reside in the dwelling, with the common intention to live together on a long-term basis and who make common provision for food or other essentials for living.

A household can be:

- one person maintaining a household
- two or more people related by blood, marriage or adoption
- up to five children under the age of 18 that are not related and one or two adults who have care of them
- no more than five people that are not related.

How do I find out what zones, overlays and neighbourhood plans affect my property?

Council has made it easy to find all the relevant information for your property when planning to build a granny flat. *The Brisbane City Plan 2014* online [interactive mapping](#) tool allows you to view your property on a map to see the zones, overlays and neighbourhood plans that apply to your site. The maps are colour and number coded to help you clearly identify the relevant zones and precincts within an area.

How do overlays and neighbourhood plans affect my proposed granny flat development?

If overlays or neighbourhood plans apply to your property, you will need to consider these in designing your granny flat. Some overlays such as the [Biodiversity](#) and the [Wetlands overlays](#) may require you to apply for Council approval – all of this information is available through Council's online [interactive mapping tool](#).

What are the setbacks from boundaries for granny flats?

Boundary setbacks for granny flats on standard sized lots* are set by the Queensland Development Code and are not included in the City Plan. Boundary setbacks for granny flats on small lots** are identified in the [Dwelling house \(small lot\) code](#). Boundary setbacks help with protecting privacy, property maintenance and amenity.

* A standard sized lot is one that is greater than 450 square metres, or for a rear lot greater than 600 square metres excluding the access way.

** Small lots are less than 450 square metres or for a rear lot less than 600 square metres excluding the access way.

What is the maximum site cover?

Site cover is the proportion of the site covered by buildings including the main house and the granny flat or any structure attached to the buildings and carports. It does not include structures such as gazebos or shade structures. For small lots, the City Plan requires site cover of all relevant buildings and structures on the site to be a maximum of:

- 50% for lots 400 m² or more
- 60% for lots 300 m² or more and less than 400 m²
- 70% for lots 200 m² or more and less than 300 m²
- 80% for lots less than 200 m².

Site cover restrictions for standard sized lots are set by the Queensland Development Code, which can be found on the Department of Housing and Public Works website at www.hpw.qld.gov.au and can be confirmed by a private building certifier.

What is the maximum height and number of storeys you can build to without Council approval?

9.5 metres and two storeys¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Character residential (CR)• Low density residential (LDR)• Low–medium density residential (LMR1) (two storey mix)• Low-medium density residential (LMR2) (two or three storey mix)• Rural (RU)• Rural residential (RR)• Emerging community (EC)• Environmental management (EM)
11.5 metres and three storeys²	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium density residential zone (MDR)• Low–medium density residential zone (LMR3) (Up to three storeys)

(1) Rear and side wall heights cannot be higher than 7.5 metres and the maximum pitch to the highest part of the roof top cannot exceed 30 degrees on small lots.

(2) Rear and side wall heights cannot be higher than 9.5 metres and the maximum pitch to the highest part of the roof top cannot exceed 30 degrees on small lots.

Building up to the height specified above does not require a development approval from Council if your development complies with all other requirements. However, you will need a building approval from a qualified building certifier and if you are proposing to build higher, you will need to seek Council approval.



Is car parking required for granny flats?

One (1) car parking space is to be provided on the site for a granny flat plus one (1) car parking space for the main dwelling house.

Tips for determining if you need to lodge an application

- If you are checking to see if you need to lodge an application for the construction of your granny flat, we recommend you engage a building certifier or consultant town planner to confirm that you can complete this assessment and do not need to apply to Council. You can also call Council on (07) 3403 8888.
- A certifier must also approve any building work for granny flats before you start construction. This is separate to development approval. A building certifier checks that your proposed building work complies with the *Building Act 1975* and associated standards.
- Visit www.qbcc.qld.gov.au for more information about building approvals and building certifiers.

While Council aims to assist you through the process, you may wish to engage a consultant town planner, building certifier, surveyor or other appropriately qualified professional for help with your granny flat project.

More information

For more information about City Plan and to access the interactive mapping tool, visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au and search for *Brisbane City Plan 2014* or call Council on (07) 3403 8888.

If you would like to be kept up to date with future services and general planning and development in the city, you can register your details by emailing CP2014@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Disclaimer: The content of this information sheet is a summary and has been prepared to assist the reader to understand the City Plan. Please refer to the full City Plan document, entitled *Brisbane City Plan 2014*, on Council's website for further detail.