

Ancillary Dwelling

Granny flat • What you need to know before you build

THE SHORT VERSION

An ancillary dwelling is a self-contained dwelling on the same site as an existing dwelling. You will need a Building Permit before construction starts. Planning Approval may not be required if the proposal meets all applicable planning requirements.

YOUR APPLICATION IN 5 SIMPLE STEPS

1	2	3	4	5
Check planning	Prepare plans	Get reports	Apply	Build
Confirm whether Planning Approval is required.	Show what you want to build and where it will go.	Energy, bushfire, engineering and wastewater where needed.	Lodge a BA1 or BA2 Building Permit application.	Start only after the Building Permit is issued.

What is an ancillary dwelling?

An ancillary dwelling (commonly called a granny flat) is a self-contained secondary dwelling associated with an existing dwelling. It can be attached to the main dwelling or located separately on the same site.

MAXIMUM INTERNAL FLOOR AREA	NUMBER	BUILDING PERMIT
70 m² Generally, under the R-Codes	1 per site For a site with a single house or grouped dwelling	YES Required before construction

Good to know

- You can generally rent an ancillary dwelling to people who are not family members of the occupants of the main dwelling.
- An ancillary dwelling does not create a separate title or automatically allow the property to be subdivided.
- If you want to use the dwelling for short-term accommodation, additional planning and registration requirements may apply.
- Your site may have additional requirements because of bushfire risk, wastewater, slope, existing buildings or other site conditions.

NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

Contact the Shire's Planning Services before finalising your plans if you are unsure whether Planning Approval is required.

Before you apply

Planning, services, builders and costs

1 Planning Approval

MAYBE — NOT ALWAYS

A compliant ancillary dwelling may be exempt from Planning Approval. The proposal must still meet all applicable planning requirements, including the relevant local setback requirements. A Building Permit is still required.

The Shire's Planning Services can confirm whether your proposal is eligible for the planning exemption.

[See the Shire's planning information](#)

2 Power, water and wastewater

SERVICES

- Check power and water capacity before building.
- Separate meters or connections may be possible depending on the site and service provider.
- Contact your electricity/water provider early.

WASTEWATER

- If the property is connected to sewer, confirm the proposed connection.
- If not, contact Environmental Health before planning the dwelling.
- A new or altered on-site wastewater system may require approval.

3 Who can build it?

- If the building work is valued at more than \$20,000, it generally must be carried out by a registered builder or an approved owner-builder.
- For residential building work over \$20,000, Home Indemnity Insurance is generally required when using a registered builder. Ask your builder for the certificate before making payments.
- If you are an owner-builder, separate owner-builder requirements apply.

4 How much will the permit cost?

Building Permit fees and State Government levies apply. The amount is based on the estimated value of the building work and the type of application. Pricing changes from time to time, so check the Shire's website for the current Schedule of Fees and Charges when you apply.

CONSTRUCTION TRAINING FUND (CTF)

For construction work valued at more than \$100,000, a 0.2% CTF levy applies. The levy must be paid before construction starts.

5 Choose your Building Permit pathway

BA1 • CERTIFIED

You engage a registered building surveyor to certify the design and provide a Certificate of Design Compliance (BA3).

BA2 • UNCERTIFIED

The Shire assesses the design as part of the uncertified application process.

Tip: If you already have a designer or building surveyor, ask them which pathway is most suitable for your project.

Your application checklist

Tick these off before you lodge your Building Permit application

Everyone needs these

- ☐ Completed BA1 (Certified) or BA2 (Uncertified) application form, signed as required.
- ☐ Accurate estimated value of the building work, including GST.
- ☐ Planning Approval, or confirmation/evidence that Planning Approval is not required.
- ☐ Site plan, floor plan, elevations and cross-sections.
- ☐ Site classification / geotechnical information, wind classification and structural engineering certification.
- ☐ Construction details and specifications sufficient to assess and construct the building.
- ☐ Builder registration details or owner-builder approval, where applicable.
- ☐ Applicable Building Permit fees and State Government levies.

You may also need these

- ☐ Certificate of Design Compliance (BA3) — for a BA1 Certified application.
- ☐ Home Indemnity Insurance certificate — where required for residential building work.
- ☐ Energy efficiency assessment report and/or NATHERS certificate, using a permitted NCC compliance pathway.
- ☐ Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) assessment and construction information, if applicable.
- ☐ On-site wastewater approval, if the property is not connected to sewer or to an existing system.
- ☐ Other reports or approvals required because of the site or proposed construction.

IMPORTANT

A Building Permit application is not complete simply because the form is complete. The plans and supporting documents must contain enough information to demonstrate compliance with the current NCC and all other applicable requirements.

What your plans should show

SITE PLAN

- Property address, boundaries and dimensions
- Existing buildings and structures
- Proposed ancillary dwelling
- Setbacks to boundaries and other buildings
- North point
- Existing and proposed ground levels
- Finished floor level

BUILDING PLANS

- Room layout and dimensions
- Doors and windows
- Kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities
- Materials and construction
- Roof and floor construction
- Smoke alarm locations
- Stormwater and wastewater arrangements

Plan scales: You must submit professionally drawn, legible plans. As a guide, site plans should generally be at 1:200 and elevations at 1:100 @ A3. Larger scales may be needed where more detail is required.

Key building requirements

The simple version of the things your granny flat needs to get right

Structure & foundations The building must be structurally suitable for the site and proposed construction. Soil/site conditions, footings, slabs, framing and tie-down must be addressed.	Fire safety Smoke alarms and other fire-safety measures must be provided as required by the NCC.
Energy efficiency The dwelling must meet the current NCC energy-efficiency requirements. Provide the required assessment/certificate.	Bushfire If the site is in a bushfire-prone area, additional assessment and construction requirements may apply.
Light & ventilation Habitable rooms need appropriate natural light and ventilation in accordance with the NCC.	Termites Where termite management is required, the system must comply with the applicable NCC and Australian Standards.
Wet areas Bathrooms, laundries and other wet areas must be waterproofed in accordance with the NCC and applicable standards.	Stormwater Roof and surface water must be managed so it does not cause nuisance, erosion or adverse impacts.
Glazing Windows and glass must meet the applicable NCC and Australian Standard requirements, including safety glazing where required.	Wastewater Sewer or on-site wastewater arrangements must be suitable for the additional dwelling and approved where required.

Don't forget the small things

- Room heights must comply with the current NCC.
- Kitchen, bathroom, laundry and sanitary facilities must meet the applicable NCC requirements.
- Electrical, plumbing and gas work must be carried out by appropriately licensed trades.
- Any retaining walls, significant earthworks, decks, verandahs or other structures may have their own approval and design requirements.
- If the ancillary dwelling is close to a boundary or another building, additional fire-separation requirements may apply.

ONE IMPORTANT RULE

Do not start construction until the required approvals are in place and the Building Permit has been issued.

Need more help?

For Building and Planning Approval and/or application questions, please contact the Shire's Development Services Team.

Shire of Denmark • (08) 9848 0300 • info@denmark.wa.gov.au

Useful links

[Shire of Denmark – Planning & Building Information](#)

[WA Building Commission – Building approvals and forms](#)

[Construction Training Fund – CTF levy](#)

GUIDE ONLY This information sheet is intended as a plain-English guide only. Requirements depend on the site, proposed work and current legislation. Additional information may be requested during assessment. The applicant/builder remains responsible for obtaining all required approvals, permits, licenses and certificates.