

Living in Sheds and Changing a Shed into a Dwelling

This fact sheet has been designed to provide you with information about living in sheds. People often enquire about living in sheds or another type of temporary home. It is seen as a more cost-effective option or an alternative way to occupy land while planning or building a dwelling. However, it's often not the most cost-effective choice. This factsheet has been designed to answer some of the frequently asked questions we receive about living in sheds and to help residents avoid the trap of a shed or temporary home becoming permanent. This scenario causes further problems down the track.

Am I allowed to live in a shed?

No, it is illegal to live in a shed, garage, or temporary home for residential purposes. Under the building code, residential buildings or a dwelling requires a higher standard of construction than sheds, especially in cyclonic areas.

Residents can apply for a "Temporary Home Permit" for the occupation of a shed or garages for limited periods while a dwelling is being built. It is always subject to conditions (see Temporary Homes Factsheet for more information).

Why live in a shed?

While building a shed may seem like a cheaper option in theory it can often turn out to be more expensive in the long run. The cost of setting up a temporary kitchen, laundry, bathroom, and toilet facilities can be quite significant, and these are all required when setting up temporary accommodation.

Sheds are not the most comfortable living, they can typically be very hot in summer and quite cold in winter, they are also very difficult to seal against insects and vermin. It may be a better option to build a small dwelling rather than a 'liveable' shed as the finished value of a dwelling will far exceed the value of a shed set up for occupation.

How do I build a small house on a limited budget?

Keep the design minimal, prevent from making the floor area too big and only put in the necessities required.

The minimum facilities required are a kitchen sink & food preparation area, laundry tub and space for a washing machine, toilet, shower, and hand basin.

A good thing to remember is that a small dwelling can always be converted into a bedroom, studio or shed by removing the kitchen sink and/or laundry tub. This allows options and possibilities to extend on the dwelling later down the track.

Can I change my shed into a dwelling?

Yes. The Queensland Building Act 1975 and Building Code of Australia stipulate the minimum requirements for the construction of all buildings. However, changing a shed into a dwelling is never a simple process as it involves compliance with mandatory building requirements.

See Building and Plumbing Application Guidelines for more information on lodging an application.

What fees and charges will apply?

To view Council's fees and charges visit www.cassowarycoast.qld.gov/fees-charges.

Further Information

For further information contact Council at 1300 763 903 or email enquiries@cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au.

www.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au