



FACT SHEET

Conversion of a Shed into a Dwelling

Disclaimer:

This information is provided in good faith as a guide. The relevant legislation and planning documents take precedent over the information in this fact sheet.

Sheds and other outbuildings are classed 10a (non-habitable) buildings under the Building Code of Australia and generally don't meet the minimum construction standards required for a class 1a (habitable dwelling).

Development and Construction approval is required to convert a non-habitable building to a habitable building as this constitutes a "Change of Use" and construction works need to be undertaken to bring the proposed building into compliance with the Building Code of Australia.

This fact sheet provides guidance for anyone considering converting a shed or other outbuilding into a dwelling.

Can I build a shed and convert it to a dwelling later?

If you are considering building a shed with a view to using it as a dwelling at a later stage, it is important to seek professional advice before you build. It is a good idea to build to a higher standard which will allow for an easier conversion to a dwelling in the future.

You may find that building a shed for later conversion is not the best or most cost-effective option. It may be better to build a new dwelling that fully complies with the Building Code of Australia.

See construction standards for converting a shed to a dwelling.

What sanitary facilities can I install in a shed?

The installation of sanitary facilities in a shed requires prior development consent and possibly a local approval, even if the shed has been erected as an exempt structure.

Can I live in a shed temporarily while I build my house?

An owner of a property, for which development approval for a dwelling has been granted, may apply to Council to occupy a shed and/or caravan prior to the building being completed. Approval will only be granted on the following basis:

1. A shower, basin and toilet are installed and connected to either sewerage or an approved on-site sewage management system. Approval may be required to undertake certain works;
2. Town water or an adequate tank water supply is available and must be connected;
3. If located in a bushfire prone area, adequate measures are required to be installed as per NSW Rural Fire Service document titled 'Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019' and Australian Standard (AS) 3959;

4. The period of occupation can be issued for twelve (12) months;
5. If installed temporarily, any kitchen and laundry facilities are to be removed from the shed when the dwelling is completed, and the use of the building reverts to a non-habitable outbuilding. Any bathroom can remain.

What are the construction standards for converting a shed to a dwelling?

The construction standards for a dwelling are contained in the Building Code of Australia (BCA), the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* and Council's Development Control Plan (DCP) and can be summarised as:

- Minimum facilities - a toilet, shower or bath, wash basin, kitchen sink and facilities for the preparation and cooking of food, laundry tub and space for a washing machine.
- Concrete slab - to be constructed to AS2870 for a class 1a dwelling or as per any structural engineer's certificate supplied which states the proposed slab is suitable for use in relation to a dwelling. Evidence of a moisture barrier membrane under the slab. The slab should be at least 100mm above surrounding ground level with adequate surface water drainage but preferably at least 225mm above surrounding ground level.
- Frame, including tie downs and bracing - constructed for a class 1a dwelling standard under AS1684 if timber framed or certified by a structural engineer to be suitable for a dwelling.
- Minimum ceiling height - 2.4 m for habitable rooms and 2.1 m for laundry, bathroom, corridor and toilet as per the BCA.
- Minimum natural light for habitable rooms - glazed area of windows to be 10% of the floor area and ventilation as per the BCA.
- Boundary setbacks - are to comply with the BCA.
- Flood - if the property is flood liable the floor level should be constructed above the 1:100 year flood level. Council has undertaken a flood study for the Glen Innes township, please seek further advice from Council's Infrastructure Department.
- Bushfire - if the property is mapped as bushfire prone the NSW Rural Fire Service document titled 'Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019' and AS3959 apply. A completed Rural Fire Service - Single Dwelling Application Checklist or submit a report from a suitably qualified Bushfire Consultant.
- Basix - a BASIX certificate is to be submitted with any application for conversion of a shed to a dwelling, outlining the energy efficiency measures to be installed. See www.basix.nsw.gov.au.
- Connection to sewer or an approved on-site sewage management system.
- Thermal break - if the building has metal framing and metal wall or roof cladding the BCA requires a thermal break be installed between the cladding and frame.
- Certificates of compliance for electrical, glazing and plumbing and drainage works.
- Termite protection to AS3660.1 where required.
- Complying stairs, landings, balustrades, etc.
- Smoke alarm/s as required by the BCA.

<p>There is already a shed on the property that has been converted to a dwelling but I'm not sure if it is Council approved. What should I do?</p>	<p>You can check the building approvals that have been issued for a property by submitting a Government Information (Public Access) (GIPA) search of Council's records (this form is available on Council's website or at our Town Hall or Church Street Offices).</p> <p>If the property has a dwelling entitlement and this is the only dwelling on the property a Development Application and Building Information Certificate application under the <i>Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979</i> may be required to be submitted.</p> <p>If this is a second dwelling on the property, this matter should be discussed with Council Planning staff.</p>
<p>Can I convert a shed to a dwelling to create a dual occupancy on my property?</p>	<p>In residential zones attached or detached secondary dwellings are permitted with development consent.</p> <p>In rural zones (RU1) attached or detached dual occupancies or secondary dwellings are permitted with development consent. Development standards are set out in the Glen Innes Severn Council Local Environmental Plan 2014 (Glen Innes Severn Council LEP).</p>
<p>What action can be taken if a shed is converted to a dwelling without approval?</p>	<p>Council takes unauthorised development very seriously. When unauthorised development occurs enforcement action will be taken in accordance with Council's Enforcement Policy and can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue of significant infringement notices. These can be issued to the owner of the property and the person who carried out the work. • The issue of a rectification, demolition or cease use order. • The requirement to submit applications and supporting documentation for a suitability assessment. • Court action.
<p>What is dwelling entitlement?</p>	<p>The Glen Innes Severn Council LEP is the main planning document for our Council area. It sets out the land use zones and what development can occur in those zones. Not all rural properties have a dwelling entitlement or meet the minimum lot size, access and other factors as to whether a dwelling could be approved for a property. Properties with a dwelling entitlement means that the property was granted approval prior to the Glen Innes Severn Council LEP being amended in 2014 and are generally less than the minimum lot size for the zone under the current LEP. Further enquiries can be directed to Council Planning staff.</p>