



Information sheet

Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014

Secondary Dwellings

This information sheet has been prepared to provide summary advice on Secondary Dwellings. Please refer to the *Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014* for further details.

What is a Secondary Dwelling?

Under the *Planning Regulation 2017*, a 'Dwelling House' is defined as a residential use of premises involving:

- (a) 1 dwelling and any domestic outbuildings¹ associated with the dwelling; or
- (b) 2 dwellings, 1 of which is a **secondary dwelling**, and any domestic outbuildings associated with either dwelling.

A 'Secondary Dwelling' is defined as a dwelling on a lot that is **used in conjunction with, but subordinate to**, another dwelling on the lot, whether or not the dwelling is:

- (a) attached to the other dwelling; or
- (b) occupied by individuals who are related to, or associated with, the household of the other dwelling.

Note – Amendments were made on 26 September 2022 to the *Planning Regulation 2017* to remove controls in the planning framework around how members of a household live together.

This means that some existing lawful secondary dwellings, and all new secondary dwellings, may now be privately rented to anyone for long-term residential use, regardless of whether they are related to the occupants of the primary dwelling.

Before you rent an existing secondary dwelling, you will need to check with Council if additional approvals are required and whether the secondary dwelling complies with any other legislative or local government requirements (including, fire safety and sound transmission requirements). For information about any additional requirements, advice should be sought from a private building certifier.

For further guidance to determine if a Secondary Dwelling can be **used in conjunction with or subordinate to**, a dwelling house please refer to **Table 1: Secondary Dwelling Checklist** overleaf.

If the dwelling is not used in conjunction with, and subordinate to, a dwelling house on the same lot, then the use would most likely be defined as a 'Dual Occupancy'.

A 'Dual Occupancy' is defined as a residential use of premises involving:

- (a) 2 dwellings (whether attached or detached) on a single lot or 2 dwellings (whether attached or detached) on separate lots that share a common property; and
- (b) any domestic outbuilding associated with the dwellings.

It does not include a residential use of premises that involves a secondary dwelling.

What approvals are required for a Secondary Dwelling?

Planning Approval

Where located in an appropriate zone (e.g. the Low density residential zone, Rural residential zone or Rural zone), a planning approval is generally not required for a Secondary Dwelling provided that the requirements in the Planning Scheme's Dwelling House Code are complied with at all times – refer to the next section of this information sheet for an overview of these requirements.

If a Secondary Dwelling cannot comply with one or more of the requirements in the Dwelling House Code, a planning approval from Council will be required.

If the Secondary Dwelling is proposed on land subject to certain mapped Planning Scheme overlays (e.g. biodiversity, bushfire, cultural heritage or flooding), this will trigger additional requirements or require a planning approval.

Planning Scheme zoning and overlay information for your property can be viewed in '[MyMaps](#)' – an interactive mapping tool on Council's website.

Building and Plumbing Approvals

In addition to complying with relevant planning requirements, building approval is required for all Secondary Dwellings. In the Sunshine Coast region, building approvals are issued by private building certifiers.

¹Domestic outbuilding means a non-habitable class 10a building that is –

- (a) a shed, garage or carport; and
- (b) ancillary to a residential use carried out on the premises where the building is.

A permit for plumbing or drainage work will also be required for a Secondary Dwelling. Plumbing approvals are issued by Council.

What are the main planning requirements for a Secondary Dwelling?

A Secondary Dwelling may be constructed under a Dwelling House, attached to a Dwelling House or be freestanding.

The Planning Scheme's Dwelling House Code includes requirements to ensure that a Secondary Dwelling is used in conjunction with, and subordinate to, a Dwelling House and that neighbourhood character and amenity is protected.

To meet the requirements of the Planning Scheme, a Secondary Dwelling will need to:

- **Be located and designed to have a nexus or functional connection with the primary dwelling.**

Where the Secondary Dwelling is freestanding, it is located within 20 metres of the primary dwelling (measured from the outermost projection of each dwelling).

- **Be used to share common services and vehicle access arrangements.**

This can be achieved by the Dwelling House and Secondary Dwelling sharing a single (common):

- water connection and meter;
- waste water connection/system;
- street number and letterbox; and
- vehicle access driveway and access point.

- **Be small in size, such that the Secondary Dwelling is ancillary to the primary dwelling.**

Specifically, the Secondary Dwelling has a maximum gross floor area of 60m² (or 90m² in the Rural Zone or Rural Residential Zone or 45m² in the Moffat Beach/Shelly Beach/Dicky Beach area as discussed below).

- **If located in the Moffat Beach/Shelly Beach/Dicky Beach area, be designed to be small and low impact.**

In this particular area, the Secondary Dwelling has a maximum gross floor area of 45m² and does not exceed 4 metres in height.

- **Have sufficient parking.**

One additional on-site car parking space is provided for the Secondary Dwelling.

- **Be located on a traditional lot.**

Where located in an urban zone, the Secondary Dwelling is located on a regular shaped lot with an area of at least 600m².

Note – The Planning Scheme contains several other requirements, which a Secondary Dwelling may also need to comply with including, but not limited to, property setbacks, siting, building height, services and utilities, access and parking, filling and excavation, building design and overlay constraints. Please contact Council for further clarification.

Note – In certain locations, residential estates may be subject to master planning approvals that vary the effect of the Planning Scheme or a Plan of Development. You should check with Council or your consultant/certifier whether such approvals apply to your property and whether this changes the requirements for Secondary Dwellings.



Secondary Dwelling

Need further information?

For further information about the requirements for Secondary Dwellings, the *Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014* is available on Council's [Council's website](#). Alternatively, you may contact Council directly with your enquiry.

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Disclaimer

The contents of this information sheet deals with technical matters in a summary way only and has been prepared to assist the community to understand the Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014. Please refer to the Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014 for further detail.

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Table 1: Secondary Dwelling Checklist

<p>Is the Secondary Dwelling used in conjunction with, and subordinate to, a Dwelling House on the same lot?</p> <p>In answering this question, consider whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There is a clear nexus or functional connection between the two dwellings.</i> • <i>There is a clear relationship and joint residential endeavour between the two dwellings.</i> • <i>The dwellings share common services and vehicle access arrangements (e.g. utility connections and metering, single letterbox and street number, vehicle access driveway and common waste collection bins).</i> • <i>The Secondary Dwelling is small in size and clearly ancillary to the primary dwelling (e.g. does not exceed the floor area limits in the Dwelling House Code and is not of a scale or intensity which constitutes a material change of use for a Dual Occupancy).</i> 	
<p>Yes</p> <p>↓</p> <p>The dwelling is a Secondary Dwelling</p>	<p>No</p> <p>↓</p> <p>The dwelling is not a Secondary Dwelling under the <i>Planning Regulation 2017</i> definition, and the use is most likely a Dual Occupancy. Please contact Council for further information.</p>
<p>Is the Secondary Dwelling to be used for long-term residential use? i.e. more than 3 consecutive months.</p>	
<p>Yes</p> <p>↓</p> <p>The dwelling is a Secondary Dwelling</p>	<p>No</p> <p>↓</p> <p>The dwelling is not a Secondary Dwelling under the <i>Planning Regulation 2017</i> definition, and the use is most likely Short-term accommodation (i.e. for visitors or travellers). Please contact Council for further information.</p>