

# Sheds as a dwelling



## Living in a shed

People often enquire about living permanently in sheds as a cost effective option or living in a shed temporarily while building another dwelling.

If a property owner is wishing to use a shed for residential purposes and incorporate habitable rooms in the building, e.g. kitchen, bathroom, living room, dining room, within the shed you must not do so without first obtaining all relevant approvals to permit this use.

## Am I allowed to live in a shed?

No, it is actually illegal to live in a shed, garage or temporary home for residential purposes as they are defined as non-habitable. Under the building code, residential buildings or a dwelling

requires a higher standard of construction than sheds, especially in cyclonic areas.

Class 10a buildings (such as a private garage, carport, shed, or the like) are defined as non-habitable buildings in the National Construction Code (NCC) and are not permitted to be used for residential purposes without effective approvals. In addition, the Class 10a building must be upgraded to the minimum standard of a Class 1a dwelling, as required by the NCC, prior to the building being occupied for residential purposes.

## Solution: Temporary home permit

Council may approve a “temporary home permit” for sheds, garages and caravans for limited periods while a dwelling is being built, subject to conditions.

Further information can be obtained via council's website at [www.mackay.qld.gov.au/temporaryhomes](http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/temporaryhomes).

## Changing a shed into a dwelling

The Queensland Building Act 1975 and the National Construction Code stipulate the minimum requirements for the construction of all buildings. Changing a shed into a Class 1a dwelling involves compliance with mandatory building requirements and is assessed through a building application process and is submitted to a private building certifier.

Note: Sheds are often not constructed with the same residential standards as houses. Further examination may demonstrate that it is not practical or economical to convert

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a shed into a dwelling. Council recommends consulting with a builder or building designer.

## Step 1

Contact council's planning advice team by lodging an online planning advice enquiry at [mackay.qld.gov.au/onlineservices](http://mackay.qld.gov.au/onlineservices). Select "lodge a customer request" and choose "planning advice enquiry".

The planning advice team are available to ensure that no restrictions apply to the siting and construction of a dwelling on your property and answer general questions about development proposals including:

- Is a development application required?
- What information is required as part of a development application?
- What are the possible development application fees?
- How will the development assessment process work?
- What provisions apply to the dwelling houses and residential storage sheds?

## Step 2

Contact a builder or building designer to arrange an on-site assessment of your property.

## Step 3

Engage a Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) licenced private building



certifier to issue an appropriate building development approval permit. They can also assist with advice on the required documentation and plumbing and drainage requirements.

Yellow Pages and internet searches will provide a list of building certifiers in the Mackay region. Alternatively, a list of licensed certifiers can be obtained through the QBCC website at [www.qbcc.qld.gov.au](http://www.qbcc.qld.gov.au).

## What approvals would I need?

**Building** - Building development approval permit from a private building certifier to change the classification of the building from a Class 10a building (such as a private garage, carport, shed, or the like) to a Class 1a dwelling; and

## Plumbing and drainage -

Plumbing compliance permit from council, to be obtained prior to any plumbing work being carried out. Any plumbing or drainage and sewage disposal work carried out without approval will need to be inspected and upgraded, if necessary, to comply with the Plumbing Code of Australia.

NOTE: A QBCC licenced building certifier will confirm if any additional approvals are required.

For more information phone council on **1300 MACKAY (1300 622 529)** or visit the website [mackay.qld.gov.au](http://mackay.qld.gov.au).