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LEARN MORE ABOUT BUILDING A GRANNY FLAT IN NELSON

This guide covers:

- Planning & Council Regulations
- Design & Size Options
- Construction Process
- Cost Guide
- Materials & Features
- Benefits & Uses



CONTACT US:

 027 285 2187

 orcadevelopments.co.nz

 orcadv@xtra.co.nz



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Planning & Council Regulations

The Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council have specific zoning and consent requirements, including:

Building Consent: Required for all buildings over 30m² or any building with toilet/bathroom or kitchen.

Resource Consent: May be needed depending on your property's zoning and size.

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Planning & Council Regulations

Setback Rules

- Setback distances depend on the zone you're building in—residential, rural, and commercial zones all have different rules.
- In most residential areas, buildings must be at least 1.5m from side or rear boundaries (more if over 12m long) and 4.5m from the front boundary (road).

Building Coverage Limits

- Lower Density Areas: Up to 30% of the land can be covered by buildings.
- Standard Residential Zone: Up to 40% building coverage.
- South St Heritage Precinct: Up to 60% building coverage.

Height & Daylight Rules

- Buildings can be a maximum of 7.5m high.
- Buildings must comply with daylight rules to avoid overshadowing neighbors.

Upcoming Regulation Changes

The New Zealand government is proposing new rules to simplify granny flat construction. Changes include:

- Exempting units up to 70m² from needing building consent.
- Standardizing resource consent rules.

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Design & Size Options

Granny flats come in various sizes and layouts. Common options include:

- **20–30m² Studio:** Ideal for office space or guest accommodation.
- **40–50m² One-Bedroom:** A compact self-contained unit.
- **60–70m² Two-Bedroom:** Suitable for extended family or couple.

We build custom projects tailored to your unique needs and property constraints.

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Construction Process

Consultation & Site Assessment – An initial discussion with a builder to assess your site, determine feasibility, and outline your needs.

Design & Council Approvals – Developing detailed plans and obtaining the necessary building and resource consents.

Construction & Inspections – The actual build phase, including site preparation, foundation work, framing, roofing, and final fit-out, all while ensuring compliance with inspections.

Final Completion & Handover – A thorough quality check, council sign-off, and handing over the completed granny flat, ready for use.

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Cost Guide

The cost of building a granny flat varies depending on size, materials, design, building site and location. For **self contained options**, here is a cost guide.

- **Basic (20 – 30m²):** \$80,000 – \$120,000
- **Mid-size (50m²):** \$120,000 – \$180,000
- **Large (60–70m²):** \$180,000 – \$250,000+

Additional costs may include:

- Design & plans
- Council fees & permits
- Site preparation & power, drainage
- Landscaping & driveways

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Types of Granny Flats



Self-contained Granny Flat

Price Guide: \$80,000-\$225,000+

Requires Consent: Yes

- Normally built up to 60-70m², meeting full building code requirements.
- Fully self-contained, including kitchen and bathroom.



Cabin/Sleepout/Office

Price guide: \$45,000-\$65,000+

Requires Consent: No, if under 30m² and does not include a bathroom or kitchen.

- Power and stormwater connections can impact the overall cost.
- Built to full building code standards, ensuring durability and compliance—these are not sheds.



Garage Conversion

Price guide: \$80,000-\$125,000+

Requires consent: Yes

- The cost of a garage conversion depends heavily on the existing structure.
- Can be built to be fully self contained or just an extra bedroom.

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Cladding Options



Timber Weatherboards

Cost: Mid-range
Maintenance: High
Insulation & Comfort: Good insulation, retains warmth in winter, breathable



Metal Cladding

Cost: Mid-range to high
Maintenance: Low
Insulation & Comfort: Low insulation



Brick

Cost: High
Maintenance: Low
Insulation & Comfort: Excellent thermal mass, keeps heat out in summer and retains warmth in winter



Plywood Cladding

Cost: Low to mid-range
Maintenance: High
Insulation & Comfort: Low insulation.



Plaster

Cost: Mid-range to high
Maintenance: High
Insulation & Comfort: Low insulation, prone to cracking.



Combination

Cost: Varies
Maintenance: Varies
Insulation & Comfort: Can enhance aesthetics while using high-performing materials strategically

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Interior Options



Basic

- Walls & Ceiling: Plywood finish, can be left natural or painted.
- Flooring: Plywood, with the option to add carpet or other coverings.
- Overall: A simple, functional interior with minimal finishing.



Mid-range

- Walls & Ceiling: Painted plywood for a clean, finished look.
- Flooring: Hardwood floors in main areas, carpet in bedrooms.
- Overall: A step up in quality with more custom finishes.



Luxury

- Walls & Ceiling: Gib-stopped walls, timber feature ceilings, and accent walls.
- Flooring: High-quality hardwood floors, tiles, carpet etc
- Overall: A premium high end finish, range of different options to choose from.

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Floor Plans

Some example floor layouts—each of our projects is custom-built to suit your needs.



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Why Build a Granny Flat?

A granny flat offers a range of practical benefits:

- **Extra Rental Income** – Can be rented out to long-term tenants or used for Airbnb.
- **Family Accommodation** – Ideal for elderly parents, grown children, or extended family needing an independent but close living space.
- **Home Office or Studio** – A dedicated workspace separate from the main house, perfect for remote work, creative studios, or consulting rooms.
- **Guest or Teenager Retreat** – Provides extra space for visiting guests or teenagers seeking more privacy while staying at home.
- **Future Flexibility** – Can adapt over time, serving as a rental, family space, or downsized living option in later years.

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FAQ

How long does it take to build a granny flat?

Most projects take 3-6 months from design approval to completion.

Do I need council approval?

Yes, most granny flats require building consent, and resource consent may be needed depending on zoning rules.

Can I build a granny flat on a small section?

Yes, but site coverage and setback regulations will apply.

What are the best materials for a durable granny flat?

Weatherboards, metal roofing, and high-quality insulation ensure long-term durability & efficiency.

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Why Build With Us?

- 150+ Projects Completed
- 23 Years in business
- 100+ Satisfied Homeowners
- Custom Designs Tailored to You
- Seamless, Hassle-Free Process
- Premium Craftsmanship & Attention to Detail

We specialize in custom builds, working with you from the design and consent process all the way to the final handover. Whether you need a home built onsite or prefer a transportable home, we are able to help you with both. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your project ideas, feel free to give us a call.



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Greg Law
DIRECTOR

027 285 2187
orcadv@xtra.co.nz
orcadevelopments.co.nz

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