


DO I NEED COUNCIL APPROVAL FOR MODULAR ACCOMMODATION?

Do you need council approval for modular accommodation? Learn when it's necessary and how to assess your project for smooth decision-making.

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Do I Need Council Approval for Modular Accommodation? Let's Get It Sorted.

If you're looking to set up modular accommodation on your land, chances are you're wondering whether you need to go through council approval. It's a fair question—and one we get asked a lot.

Here's the thing: you might not need approval. But, you don't want to take a punt on that. What's important is getting it right upfront, knowing when council approval is necessary and when it isn't. Let's walk through it together.

When Is Council Approval Needed?

First up, **modular accommodation** is a great option for a variety of needs—whether it's housing for workers on the farm or a place for family to stay. But, whether or not you need the council's nod depends on a few key factors:

- **Where You're Building (Zoning):** Your local council has rules for different areas, whether you're in a residential zone, rural land, or commercial space. Some places need tighter oversight, others don't. It all comes down to how the land is zoned.
- **The Size of the Building:** Generally speaking, the bigger the unit, the more likely it is that you'll need approval. Smaller setups, especially temporary ones, might be a different story.
- **What You'll Use It For:** Permanent accommodation often comes with more red tape. If you're setting up something long-term, it's worth checking the rules. Temporary housing for seasonal workers? You might just be able to skip the approval process.
- **Environmental Factors:** Got a property that's in a bushfire zone or prone to flooding? That'll probably mean the council has to get involved to make sure everything's safe and sound.

When Don't You Need Council Approval?

The good news? You won't always need to go through the

hassle of **council approval**. There are plenty of cases where you can get things rolling without a lengthy process:

- **Temporary Accommodation:** If you're putting up something that's not a permanent fixture—say, a modular unit for harvest season workers—it might fall under "exempt development." That means you could get away with no approval, as long as it meets a few simple criteria.
- **Small Units:** Some smaller modular units might not trigger the need for council approval. If your setup is compact enough, it could avoid the paperwork altogether.
- **Remote or Rural Areas:** Some councils in the bush are more relaxed when it comes to modular buildings, especially if you're far from residential neighbours. But again, it pays to check with them before making assumptions.



How to Work Out If You Need Approval

So, how do you figure out if you're in the clear or if you need to get council approval? It's pretty straightforward.

Step 1: Talk to Your Local Council

They'll know the rules for your land and can give you a direct answer. Just a quick chat with them could save you a lot of time down the track.

Step 2: Call in the Pros

If things get a bit tricky or you're dealing with bigger projects, it might be worth talking to a town planner or a consultant. They'll help you navigate the process and give you a straight answer on whether or not you need approval. Good modular accommodation suppliers will often have someone on their team or a partner they work with that handles this for you.

Step 3: Know How You're Using the Space

If your modular accommodation is going to be a permanent feature, the chances are higher that you'll need council sign-off. For temporary use, the requirements might be much more relaxed.

What to Expect If You Need Approval

Let's say council approval is necessary. Here's how it usually goes:


- 1. Submitting Your Development Application (DA):** You'll need to provide the council with documents like your site plans and building designs. They'll also want to check environmental factors, especially if you're in a flood or fire-prone area. For more on how this works, check out the [NSW Government's guide to the DA process](#) [here](#).
- 2. The Council's Review:** Once you submit, it's out of your hands for a while. The council will take time to review everything, and they might ask you to tweak a few things here and there. How long this takes can vary, but the earlier you get it in, the better.
- 3. Final Approval and Ready to Build:** Once everything's squared away, the council will give you the go-ahead, and you can get cracking on the build. In some cases, they'll want to inspect things during or after installation to make sure it all lines up with their regulations.

Wrapping It Up

At the end of the day, whether or not you need council approval for modular accommodation comes down to a few key factors. Get the right advice, check in with your local council, and make an informed call based on the situation.

It's not about jumping through hoops—it's about making sure everything's done right. That way, you can have peace of mind knowing your modular accommodation is set up properly, whether it needs approval or not.



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