



GRANNY FLAT GUIDE 2026

Your complete guide to consent-free granny flats under the new NZ legislation

BUILT THE NZ WAY | PEOPLE-FIRST

Welcome to Freedom Cabins NZ

Hi, we're Drew and Jodie.

Thanks for downloading this guide. We started Freedom Cabins in 2019 because we saw too many Kiwi families forced apart by rest home costs and housing prices.

Since then, we've helped 200+ families across New Zealand create extra living space without consent nightmares, council delays, or surprise costs.

This guide shows you our designs, the process, what's included, and real costs — whether you're buying or renting.

We're here to make it simple, honest, and stress-free.

Let's get you sorted.



**Bay of
Plenty
Times**

Fieldays^{NZ}



**Tiny House
Expo**

At Freedom Cabins, it's not just cabins we build — it's care and trust. We approach with the same attention and pride as if it were our own home. ”

Drew Donovan, Owner



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What's Changed in 2026?

Parliament passed legislation removing building consent requirements for granny flats <70m²

Under the new exemption, you could have a home on site in 6-10 weeks. Councils can't say no on qualifying builds.

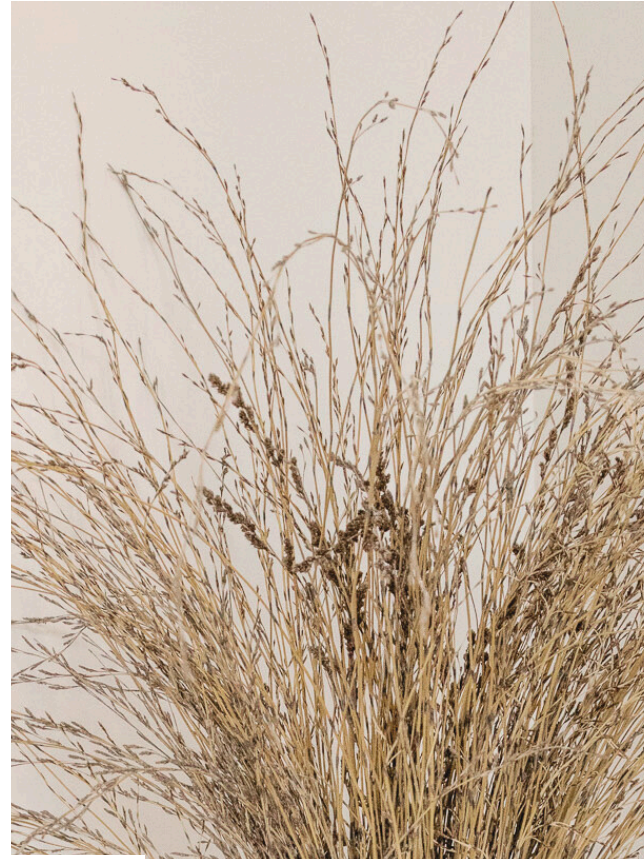


	Before 2026	Now
Consent	Required	Not Required
Council Fees	\$5,000-\$15,00	* \$0-\$500
Wait Time	08-12 weeks	Start immediately
Your Savings	—	\$7,000-\$17,500

What's Included in Every *Freedom Cabin*

Every Freedom Cabin comes with thoughtfully chosen finishes and features built for comfort, durability, and performance — smart design done properly, not as extras.

From energy-efficient systems to tough exterior materials, we focus on the details that make your space feel, function, and last. This guide outlines our core inclusions, with options to adjust finishes to suit your budget or purpose.



- ✓ COMPLETE KITCHEN
- ✓ FULL BATHROOM
- ✓ QUALITY CARPET & VINYL
- ✓ ELECTRICAL CERTIFICATION
- ✓ GAS CERTIFICATION
- ✓ 10-YEAR STRUCTURAL WARRANTY



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This is a game-changer for *Kiwi families*

Add a quality granny flat without building consent — no \$10,000+ fees, no 8-12 week delays, no paperwork nightmare. Keep Mum or Dad close, or earn rental income to offset your mortgage.

The catch? You must meet ALL requirements right below. Miss one, and you're back to the old consent process.



Does Your Property Qualify?

- ✓ **Size under 70m²** — Total floor area including garage needs to be under 70m²
- ✓ **Single-storey** — No two-storey or mezzanines
- ✓ **2m setbacks** — 2m from all boundaries AND 2m from main house

Not sure if your property qualifies?

Book a free consultation and we'll walk you through it.

[Book Free Consultation](#)

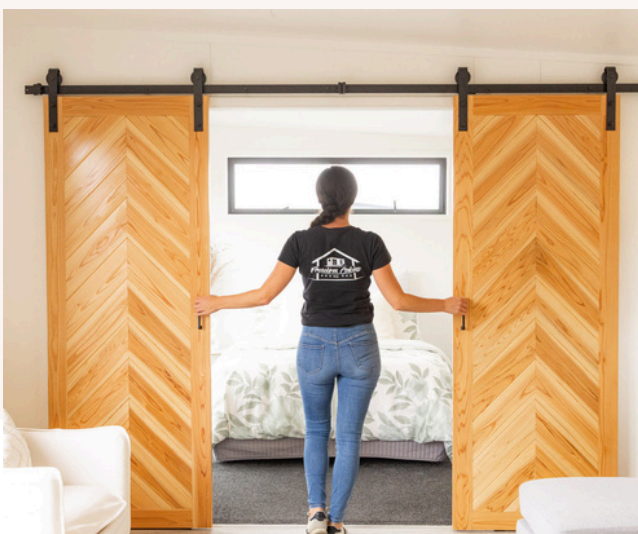


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The **Fine Print**

✓ Construction Specifications

Maximum height	4 metres
Maximum floor height	1m above ground
Construction materials	Timber or light-gauge steel only
Insulation standard	H1 (NZ Building Code)
Wind zones	Built for any NZ wind zone (site-specific)



The **Fine Print**

What You Can (and Can't) Do Under the New Legislation

✓ You CAN Include:

✓ **Garage**

Counts within the 70m² total
— perfect for secure storage

✓ **Carport**

Subject to council approval
during the design phase

✓ **Any standard kitchen & bathroom**

IKEA, Bunnings, Freedom
Kitchens — your choice

✓ **Electric or gas heating**

Heat pumps, panel heaters,
or gas — all compliant

✓ **Connect to existing services**

Water, waste, power — often
connects to main house



✗ You CAN'T Include:

✗ **Tiled showers**

Acrylic shower bases only
(waterproofing compliance)

✗ **Wood burners**

Not permitted under
consent-free rules

✗ **Mezzanines or second storeys**

Single storey only — no exceptions

✗ **Attaching to main house**

Must be separate structure
(2m minimum gap)

✗ **More than one granny flat**

Only ONE per standard
residential site

✗ **Rammed earth or heavy materials**

Lightweight construction only
(timber/steel)



Watch out for *Cowboys*

Never pay more than 10% upfront for plans or engineering

If someone asks for 30%, 50%, or full payment upfront — walk away. Legitimate builders don't need huge deposits for design work.

Always get a proper written contract

Handshake deals and vague quotes lead to disputes. A proper contract protects both you and the builder.

Check their track record

Ask to see completed builds, talk to past clients, and verify they have Licensed Building Practitioners on staff.



How Freedom Cabins *Protects You*

Built the NZ Way. People-First

- **Staged Payments**

Secure your build with \$10,000, with the balance payable prior to delivery.

- **Upfront Pricing**

No hidden costs. Clear, transparent pricing before we begin.

- **Ongoing Support**

We're here after completion to support.

- **10-Year Structural Warranty**

All our cabins come with a 10-year structural warranty as standard

- **Past Client Referrals**

Speak to past customers about their experience with us.

No shortcuts. No surprises. Just quality.

Questions About What You Can Build?

Book a free consultation and we'll walk you through exactly what's possible on your property.

[Book Free Consultation](#)

Complete Cost Breakdown

Here's what a complete granny flat project actually costs — no hidden fees, no surprises.

Item

Cost Range

SITE PREPARATION

Assessment, soil, leveling, foundation, access

\$5,500-\$25,500

THE BUILDING

Basic shell (45-55m²)

\$85,000-\$110,000

Mid-range liveable (55-65m²)

\$110,000-\$150,000

Quality turnkey (60-70m²)

\$130,000-\$170,000

SERVICES

Electrical, water, waste, stormwater

\$3,000-\$9,000

PROFESSIONAL FEES

Council notifications

\$0 - \$150

NO building consent fees (save \$5,000-\$15,000)

TYPICAL TOTAL PROJECT COST

\$135,000-\$180,000



Compare this to:

- \$80-100k/year in rest home costs
- \$500k+ for a traditional build with consent
- Years of waiting and paperwork nightmares

With Freedom Cabins:

transparent pricing, fast turnaround, zero consent fees.

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Income

Rental Income Calculator

Many families offset costs by renting out their granny flat. Here's what you can expect across NZ:



Region	Rent	Annual Income	Annual Yield
Auckland	\$450-\$600	\$23,400-\$31,200	13-17%
Wellington	\$400-\$550	\$20,800-\$28,600	12-16%
Bay of Plenty	\$350-\$500	\$18,200-\$26,000	10-14%
Waikato	\$350-\$480	\$18,200-\$24,960	10-14%
Canterbury	\$380-\$520	\$19,760-\$27,040	11-15%

*Yield based on \$150K total investment

Want to know exactly how much rental income YOUR granny flat could generate?

Book a free consultation and we'll run the numbers with you.

[Book Free Consultation](#)



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Real Investment Example

10.4%

Annual Return

✓ Paid Off in 9.6 Years

INITIAL INVESTMENT

Granny flat (Lifestyle Ready package)	\$149,900
Site prep & services	\$15,000
Total investment	\$164,900

RENTAL INCOME (Bay of Plenty example)

Weekly rent	\$420
Annual income (48 weeks, 4 vacant)	\$20,160
Less: insurance, maintenance, rates	-\$3,000
Net annual return	\$17,160

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Annual yield Payback period	10.4% 9.6 years
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- Bonus: Property value typically increases \$80K-\$150K when you add a compliant granny flat. This capital gain isn't included in the yield calculation above.



Design Guide

Aging Parents

Design Guide: Granny Flats for Aging Parents

When building for aging parents think safety, independence, and dignity:



Feature	Why It Matters	Specification
Doorways	Wheelchair/walker access	850-900mm wide (standard 660mm)
Bathroom	Most falls happen here	Walk-in shower, shower seat, raised toilet
Kitchen	Reach and safety	Lower bench (850mm), pull-out shelves.
Flooring	Slip prevention	Non-slip throughout, no rugs.
Lighting	Vision declines with age	LED, motion sensors, easy reach switches
Handrails	Balance support	Beside toilet, shower, entry steps
Entry	No-step access ideal	Ramp - 1:12 gradient
Windows	Ease of operation	Lever handles, low sills for seated views

Recommended Layout:

- ✓ Open plan living/kitchen
- ✓ Bedroom near bathroom
- ✓ Large bathroom - wheelchair access
- ✓ Emergency call button - beside bed and in bathroom
- ✓ Storage at waist height - avoid bending or reaching
- ✓ Outdoor access - no steps

■ Future-Proofing: Build these features in from day one, saving huge for the future add on's





Council *Questions*

Council Questions Checklist

Before you commit to a granny flat, ask YOUR council these questions — and get answers in writing.

Questions	Why This Matters
What's the notification process and fee?	Simple notification, not approval. \$0-\$300.
What are requirements for water supply and wastewater?	Must connect to mains or have compliant septic.
Do I need resource consent as well?	Some councils require resource consent even with consent-free building.
What are my District Plan setback rules?	Exemption requires 2m from boundaries + main house

*councils can't delay qualifying builds

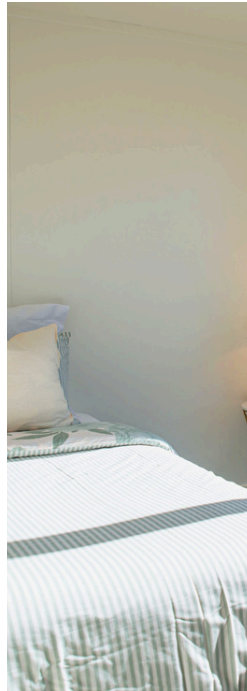


Critical Tip: Get answers in writing via email. A verbal 'yes' isn't enough if there's a problem later. Email creates a paper trail.

Bedrooms Designed for Real Life

Forget poky, dark bedrooms with nowhere to put your stuff. Our bedrooms include:

- Carpet or vinyl (your choice)
- LED downlights
- Painted with Medi-grade antibacterial paint ready to personalise



Whether it's for Mum and Dad, the grandkids visiting, or your home office that doubles as a guest room.

Bathrooms Without Compromise

Our bathroom inclusions are designed to feel calm, practical, and comfortable from day one.

Each space is carefully planned with storage, natural light, and smart layout in mind — so even compact rooms feel well considered and easy to live in.

- Full-size shower (not a camping cubicle)
- Quality vanity with storage
- Proper toilet
- Exhaust fan
- Durable, easy-clean surfaces





10.8m x 3m

- Two Bedroom Cabin

 2  1

 [view cabin](#)

LENGTH 10.8M

WIDTH 3M

FLOOR AREA 32.4M²



Our best seller, the 10.8m x 3.0m cabin features two bedrooms, full bathroom, and open kitchen/living area.

Featuring two bedrooms, a full bathroom, and an integrated kitchen/living area, this well-thought-out design provides versatile accommodation for families.

The second bedroom creates flexible space for children, guests, or a home office, all within a thoughtfully designed package that maximizes comfort and functionality.

Built to code. Priced honestly.



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Buy This From

\$110,900



12m x 4m
- Two Bedroom Cabin



LENGTH 12M

WIDTH 4M

FLOOR AREA 48 M²



Our premium 12m x 4m home offers exceptional living space with a contemporary design.

Featuring two generous bedrooms, a sleek kitchen with a breakfast bar, and a well-appointed bathroom, this spacious model provides comfortable family accommodation.

This quality home combines modern fixtures, full insulation, and durable construction in a smart, efficient package perfect for permanent living.

Built to code. Priced honestly.



freedomcabinsnz.com

Buy This From
\$139,900



15m x 4m

- Two Bedroom Cabin



 [view cabin](#)

LENGTH 15M

WIDTH 4.3M

FLOOR AREA 64M²



Our premium 15m x 4m home showcases exceptional design with so many features crammed into 65m² of smart, efficient space.

Featuring two generous bedrooms with walk-in wardrobe, two complete bathrooms for family convenience, a dedicated office nook, and a large living area - this premium model offers everything modern families need under one roof.

This quality home combines modern fixtures, full insulation, and durable construction in a premium package perfect for permanent living.

Built to code. Priced honestly.



freedomcabinsnz.com

Buy This From

\$199,900



12m x 5.8m

- Two Bedroom Cabin



 [view cabin](#)

LENGTH 12M

WIDTH 5.8M

FLOOR AREA 70 M²



Our premium 12m x 5.8m home offers exceptional living space with a contemporary design.

Featuring two generous bedrooms, a sleek kitchen with a breakfast bar, and a well-appointed bathroom, this spacious model provides comfortable family accommodation.

This quality home combines modern fixtures, full insulation, and durable construction in a smart, efficient package perfect for permanent living.

Built to code. Priced honestly.



freedomcabinsnz.com

Buy This From
\$209,900



12m x 5.8m

- Three Bedroom Cabin



[view cabin](#)

LENGTH 12M

WIDTH 5.8M

FLOOR AREA 70 M²



Our flagship 12m x 5.8m home delivers exceptional family living with a 70m² design that packs a punch - premium features packed into a spacious, thoughtfully planned layout.

Featuring three generous bedrooms and two complete bathrooms, this premium model provides genuine comfort for growing families. The extra width creates room to breathe, with space for everyone to spread out.

This quality home combines modern fixtures, full insulation, and durable timber-framed construction in a smart, efficient package perfect for permanent family living.

Built to code. Priced honestly.



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Buy This From

\$209,900



Ready to
Get
Started.....

Book Your *Free Consultation*

Spots fill fast — let's get your family sorted.



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info@freedomcabinsnz.com



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Book Now


Lets Get Started!


What We Cover in Your Consultation

- ✓ Shape a practical floor plan based on how the space will be used
- ✓ Understand consent requirements and site considerations
- ✓ Get clarity on pricing, timelines, and next steps

If you have any questions at any stage, we're always happy to help — just reach out by phone or email.

Let's Talk About Your *Space*

 027 711 8710

 info@freedomcabinsnz.com

