

HOME BASED BUSINESSES

Townsville City Plan 2014

Occasionally, small-scale businesses are able to operate from residential areas if they meet certain criteria. The *Townsville City Plan* sets this criteria to help balance the needs of home based businesses and their neighbourhoods, and to help protect neighbourhood amenity. This information sheet explains how the *Townsville City Plan* applies to establishing a home based business, and whether you need to lodge a development application.

Tip - Maintaining an open dialogue with your neighbours is vital in operating a successful home based business

WHAT IS A HOME BASED BUSINESS?

Townsville City Plan defines a home based business as a dwelling used for a business activity where this is subordinate (a secondary use) to the residential use. Home based businesses are small-scale activities that operate within the home and do not cause nuisance to the neighbourhood.

Examples of home based businesses:

- » bed and breakfast
- » home office
- » home-based child care.

Examples of businesses which do NOT qualify as home based:

- » mechanical or vehicle servicing
- » boarding house
- » boat repair
- » café
- » industry/manufacturing uses
- » shop.

IS COUNCIL APPROVAL REQUIRED?

Council has identified a number of criteria which, if met, mean you do not need to lodge a development application to Council. This process is referred to as being 'self-assessable'.

Acceptable locations

Home based businesses are only permitted in certain locations. Go to eplanning.townsville.qld.gov.au, and select 'Find a property'. By searching your property address you will be able to determine the zone your property is in.

You can have a home based business in:

- » Residential zones
- » Centre zones
- » Rural zone
- » Emerging community zone.

See *Part 6 Zones* of the *Townsville City Plan* on the eplanning website for the full criteria, which is summarised below.

Assessment criteria

- » The business must be operated by a permanent resident/s of the home.
- » Only one non-resident employee is permitted*.
- » The business must be conducted within an existing building.
- » The business must operate within an area of not more than 60m² of gross floor area**.
- » Operation and delivery times are limited from 8am to 5pm Monday-Friday, and 8am to 2pm Saturday***.
- » No more than one commercial vehicle is parked on the property.
- » No more than one heavy vehicle trip may occur per week (e.g. deliveries).
- » No more than 14 vehicle trips may be generated by the business per day.
- » The impacts of noise, visual amenity, odour and parking must not cause disruption to the neighbourhood.
- » The business must not involve the hiring out of material, goods, appliances or vehicles.
- » If bed and breakfast accommodation, it must not exceed three bedrooms.

* in the rural residential zone and rural zone two non-resident employees are permitted.

** bed and breakfast may use a greater area.

*** bed and breakfast and home based child care activities may operate outside of these hours.

Signage

To be self-assessable, signage must be:

- » either a fence sign or wall sign
- » limited to 1 sign per premises
- » limited to a maximum sign face area of 1m².

If the signage associated with your home based business does not meet the above requirements you will need to lodge a separate development application for operational works.

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Refer to *Part 9 Development codes* in the *Townsville City Plan* for the full criteria for the placing of advertising devices.

Parking

Home based businesses should not generate on-street parking above and beyond the primary residential use. Any business visitor parking should be on-site.

WHEN APPROVAL IS REQUIRED

If your home based business requires you to submit a development application, Council encourages you to have a [pre-lodgement](#) meeting to ensure a streamlined assessment process. A pre-lodgement meeting allows you to meet with a Council officer to discuss your proposal and ask questions before lodging a development application. To book a pre-lodgement meeting please use the online pre-lodgement request form, or phone us.

OTHER PERMITS/LICENCES

Food

Home based businesses involving the preparation or sale of food to the public may require a food licence. Food licensing is managed by Council's Environmental Health and Regulatory Services Team (see the information sheets at Food Safety (Businesses) on Council's website). This is separate to Council's development approval of a home based business.

Building work

A private building certifier must approve any building work, such as structural fit-outs and extensions. This is separate to Council's development approval of a home based business.

Legislative obligations

Whilst your home based business may not need any further Council requirements, there may be other legislative requirements specific to your business activities. As the operator of a home based business, it is your responsibility to ensure all relevant approvals are obtained prior to operating.

WHAT IF THE BUSINESS GROWS?

Many home based businesses reach a point where they can grow and expand. However, this growth has the potential to disrupt the amenity of your neighbourhood. Examples of this include vehicles parked along the street, excess noise levels and multiple deliveries. At this point, Council may become involved to resolve these impacts on behalf of the community, which may ultimately require you to reassess your business activities and/or operation. Should your business activities outgrow the limitations of a home based business, you will need to consider your alternatives, which may include relocation to a more suitable location, i.e. a commercial/industrial premises.

MORE INFORMATION

Website townsville.qld.gov.au

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Email enquiries@townsville.qld.gov.au