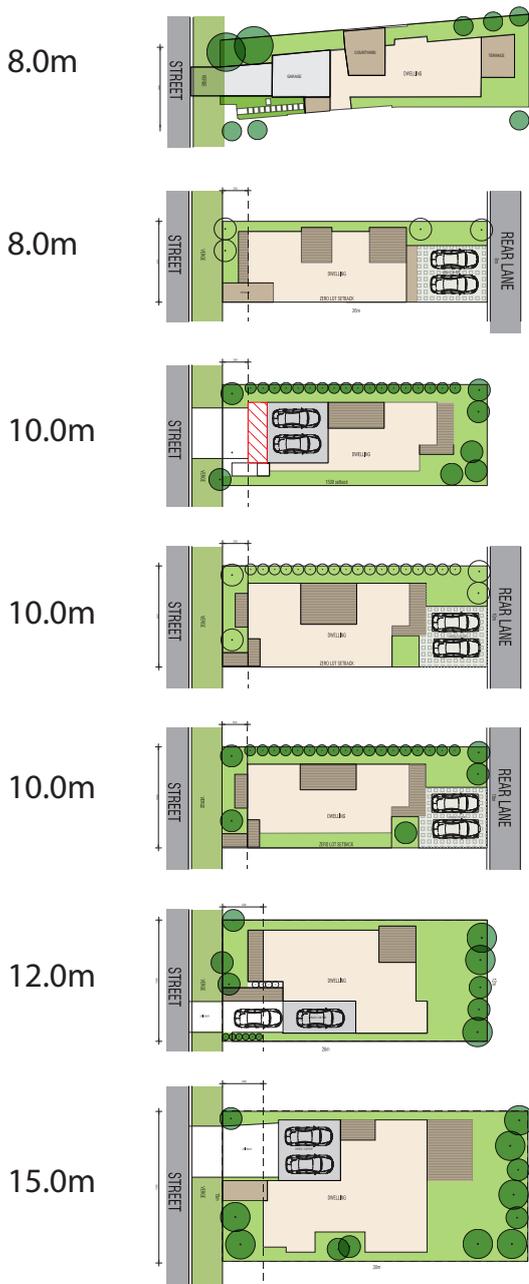


Small lot housing

Your guide to building a house



Image: ArcoEco



Small lot housing provides a genuine form of diversity in housing choice. Also known as garden homes, courtyard homes, zero lot homes and narrow lot homes, small lot housing typically refers to single dwelling houses, specifically designed to be accommodated on smaller lots, ranging between 200-450 m².

Small lot housing is not new to the Tweed with some of the existing older housing types, particularly the smaller workers cottages around Murwillumbah and older holiday cottages along the Tweed coast being on lots less than 450m².

The challenge with new small lot housing types is to deliver an acceptable standard of contemporary living in terms of providing light and shade, privacy, outdoor space, quality streetscapes, sufficient living space and car accommodation in a more compact and attractive building form.

Well designed, low rise small lot housing is generally:

- less expensive to build and can deliver a greater mix of affordable housing;
- suits a wide range of demographic groups who are looking for a lower maintenance lifestyle;
- has better environmental performance and uses a lower environmental footprint; and
- integrates well with existing streets and neighbourhoods.

Given small lot housing is more constrained by space surrounding the dwelling, the orientation of lots and dwellings becomes a key consideration in the design process.

Other key design considerations include:

- courtyards and light wells should be used where ever possible;
- use of highlight windows which allow light and ventilation to penetrate the dwelling without creating any privacy or overlooking impacts;
- design quality outdoor living, appropriately located for solar access, breezes and light and providing connectivity between the outdoors and the indoors; and
- design should incorporate multi-use or function spaces. For example a hard stand parking space/carport area is easily paved and treated to also be used as an attractive outdoor courtyard.

Small lot housing, which comes in many shapes and forms, provides housing for all life cycle stages including families, singles, childless couples, students, single parents, empty nesters who all have different housing needs and income levels.

Small lot house design

NORTH

Consider greater front setback to maximise northern sun to yard space.

Front of building faces north to the street.

Lounge room and key living spaces orientated towards north with a small deck accessed directly off this space.

Series of smaller side courtyards provides for additional sunlight access across the floor plate.

Kitchen located to the east to get the morning sun.

Second family space and deck to get out of the sun during summer months.

Side elevation of allotment faces north, smaller side courtyards provides for north sunlight access across the floor plate and provides for internal landscaped areas.

Lounge room and key living spaces orientated towards north with deck outdoor living accessed directly off this space.

Cars and service areas (toilets, stairs) located to the south.

WEST

Side elevation of allotment faces north, smaller side courtyards provides for north sunlight access across the floor plate and provides for internal landscaped areas.

Lounge room and key living spaces orientated towards north with deck outdoor living accessed directly off this space.

Cars and service areas (toilets, stairs) located to the south.

Include a deeper backyard to take advantage of the northern aspect.

Lounge room and key living spaces orientated towards north with deck outdoor living accessed directly off this space.

Kitchen located to the east to get the morning sun.

Smaller side courtyards provides for additional sunlight access across the floor plate.

Inclusion of a home office fronts the street.

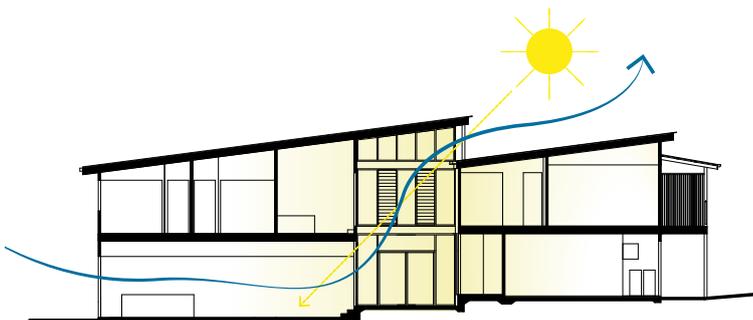
Consider less front setback to southern boundary.

EAST

SOUTH



Designing for optimum solar orientation doesn't always have to include the ideal north facing block. Effective site planning locates internal spaces to take best advantage of sunlight access, cooling breezes, landscaped outlooks whilst achieving an attractive street presence for all orientations.



Within small lot housing, the use of internal voids and double volumes not only provides a better sense of space but substantially assists with natural ventilation and natural light access. Image: Arco Eco Architects.

Small Lot House Tips

Well designed smaller housing requires creative consideration of:

- Quality and efficient design** for multi use/purpose rather than quantity design for segregated use/purpose, ie minimising specialised rooms, such as media, home theatre, rumpus, and study and co-locating family uses in multipurpose rooms.
- Liveable design** where the housing is oriented to maximise sunlight and breezes, provides sufficient quality private open spaces and outdoor living areas as well as space for services such as garbage storage, clothes drying, storage and the like.
- Appropriate design** where the housing type and size that is suited to the occupants needs, including: a range of 1-4 bedrooms, appropriate to the number of occupants; single level housing for elderly or infirm.
- Adaptable and universal design** where housing is flexible and easily modified as occupants housing needs change and they age; housing with attached granny flats that may be used for visiting/extended family or providing affordable rental housing.
- Accessible design** which ensures housing is well located with access to employment, education and services.
- Sustainable design** which embraces water and energy saving measures; embraces the principles of touching the earth lightly; provides space for self sufficiency such as vegie gardens; and considers the 'whole of life cycle' costs of housing, embodied energy costs, reducing resource use and global footprints.