



NEW BUILDS . NEW STYLES . NEW TRENDS

# HOME

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# SAFE HAVEN

GRANNY FLATS ARE GAINING  
POPULARITY AS A WAY OF  
ADDING FLEXIBLE LIVING SPACE  
AND VALUE TO A PROPERTY



# Return of the granny flat

**RESHNI RATNAM**

Lifestyle and demographic changes are leading to a rise in the number of granny flats popping up in Brisbane backyards.

Lachlan Walker, the director of Place Projects, said their renewed popularity was down to a shift in the way families live, with children staying at home longer and people wanting to make caring for older family members a priority.

"Granny flats provide a level of independence and freedom that works for everyone," Mr Walker said. "These mini homes are showing strong appeal from Brisbane's inner city to the outer fringes."

Grace Song, the director of Arkospace Architects, said that granny flats helped families to embrace flexible living arrangements to best meet their needs.

"While they are intended for the social and sustainable benefits of keeping families together, in these uncertain times granny flats can also create safe spaces for physical distancing and self isolation for vulnerable family members," she said. "In this way families can support each other and stay together, yet be apart."

They can also add value to your overall home, Ms Song said. For example, a 42sq m granny flat she designed for a property in Chelmer, inner Brisbane, delivered an almost

25 per cent increase in the property's overall value, from \$640,000 to in excess of \$800,000. Arkospace granny flats start from \$150,000.

Ms Song said she was able to increase the value of the property by almost a quarter in just eight weeks, more than covering the cost of the build.

Far from the afterthought lean-to of times gone by, today's granny flats are compact, sustainable and self-contained.

The designs are an urban interpretation of a modern apartment, with the same elegant architecture, clever storage solutions and level of high-end finishes.

Ms Song said the mini-home in Chelmer packed plenty of design detail, from the bold

contrast of charcoal cladding and crisp white French doors of the formal entry, to the frameless double-hung windows and architecturally designed aluminium hoods.

"We're able to design and deliver a turn-key granny flat that is small in stature yet punches well above its weight in architectural detail and finishes," she said.

Ms Song said thoughtful architecture ensured the dwelling complemented Brisbane's varying lot sizes.

"The granny flat was constructed on a 607sq m lot adjacent to the main residence,"

she said. "It has a main bedroom with built-in wardrobes, a study nook, bathroom, dining area and separate lounge area, which can be converted into a second bedroom. A custom-designed, combined kitchen and laundry provides generous storage."

Mr Walker said not only did architectural designs add value to a property but it made better use of a site's footprint.

Another plus is that many granny flats are designed to be mobile, so you can always take it, and your granny, with you if you move.

## NEED TO KNOW...

- In Brisbane a granny flat does not require council approval if it is a maximum of 80sq m, is for a member of your household, and meets development requirements according to the Building Act 1975.
- You may require approval if you live in a character area or there are hazard constraints.
- A certifier must approve any building work before you start construction.

Source: Brisbane City







COVER STORY

Mark Herrington with his partner Grace Song, mother-in-law Joosook Lee, and children Elias 10, Sebastian 8, Luis, 5, outside their granny flat in Chelmer  
Photo: Jamie Hanson