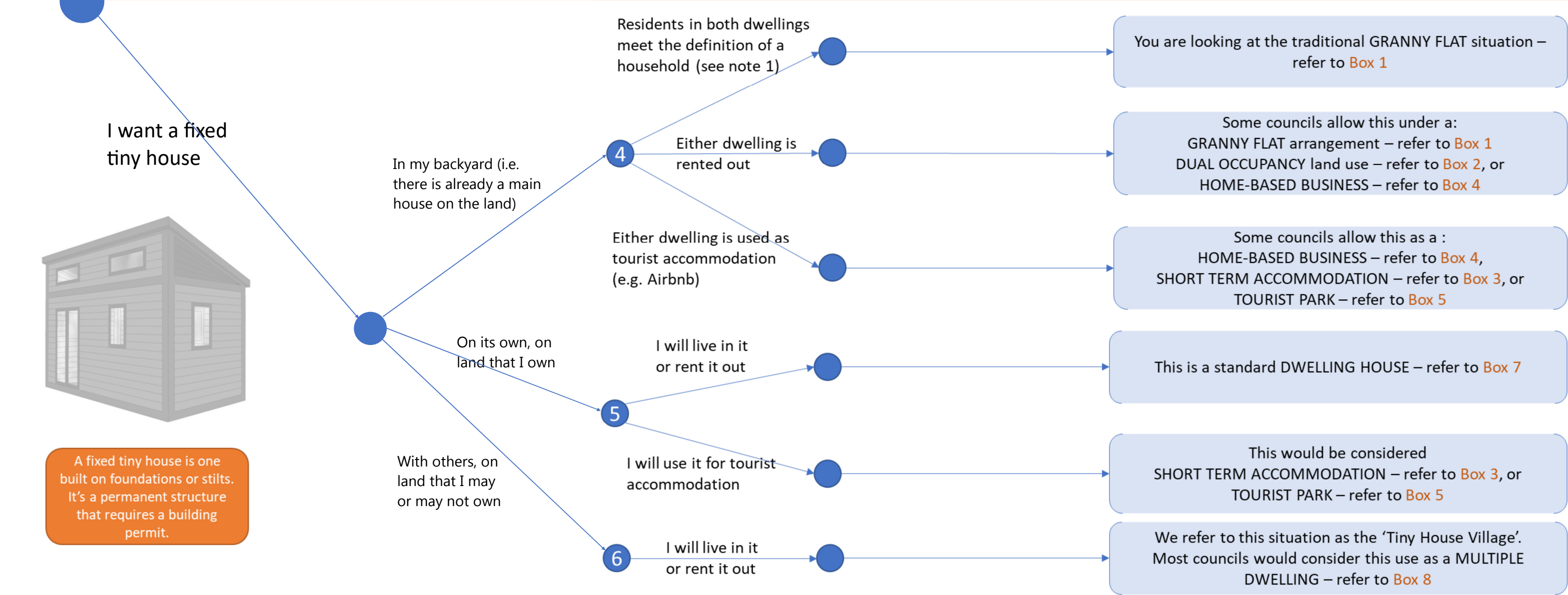
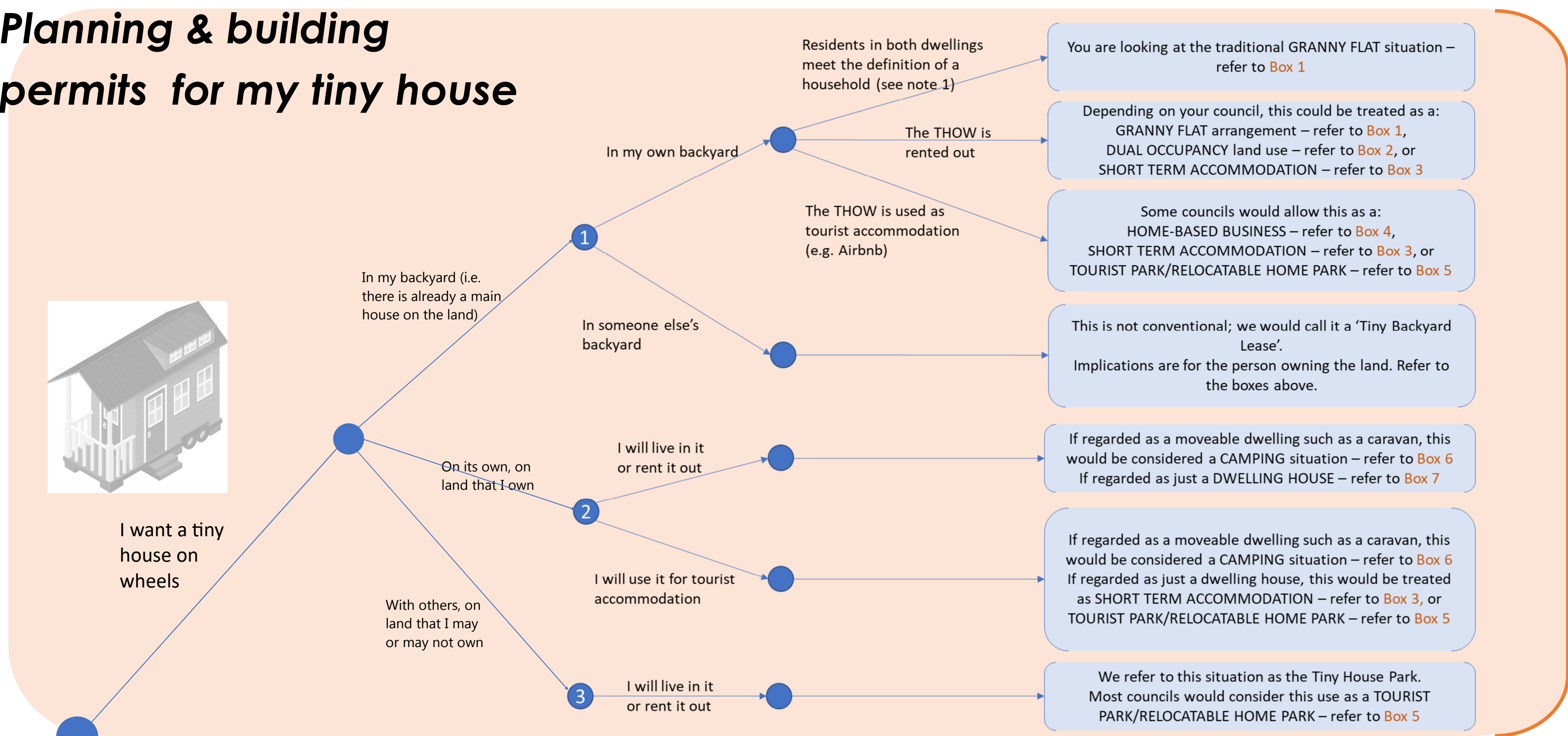


Planning & building permits for my tiny house



Note 1: a 'household' is defined by the state planning legislation as "1 or more individuals who (a) live in a dwelling with the intent of living together on a long term basis; and (b) make common provisions for food and other essentials for living." Local councils can however add qualifying terms when defining the acceptable outcomes for the uses.

A **PLANNING PERMIT** (or **DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**) is issued when your development application has been approved. You need to lodge a development application if what you are proposing to build that does not meet the code (the code spells out what you are allowed to build in your zone). If you are not sure whether you need to lodge a development application, you should contact your local council or a private planning professional.

BOX 1 GRANNY FLAT

Most councils allow granny flats (called secondary or auxiliary dwellings). There are usually constraints (codes) around maximum floor area, distance from main house, etc. If these constraints can be met, a development application is not required. Some councils only allow family members to live in the granny flat. This is slowly changing.

BOX 2 DUAL OCCUPANCY

Two separate dwellings under one roof for separate households. The dwellings can be on one lot, or each dwelling unit can be on its own lot subject to a Community Title Scheme. This type of arrangement is restricted to certain zones such as medium density or infill areas.

BOX 3 SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

This land use is usually assessable development depending on the zone of the land and is highly regulated. Most councils require a development application to be lodged and have restrictions on how long people can stay (e.g. maximum of 3 months).

BOX 4 HOME-BASED BUSINESS

Home-based businesses are catered for in many planning schemes and often do not require a planning permit if complying with basic criteria, one of which limits the occupancy to "short-term" (i.e. a maximum duration of three months).

BOX 5 TOURIST PARK / RELOCATABLE HOME PARK

Land zoned to allow this type of use is often located outside of town centres or the outskirts of suburbia. Caravan parks are regulated by council local laws. Relocatable home parks operate under their own legislation.

BOX 6 CAMPING

Camping is regulated by local laws, not planning schemes. These vary widely between councils. Some councils prohibit camping on private property, others are more lenient (e.g. permissible, but time restricted and location specific).

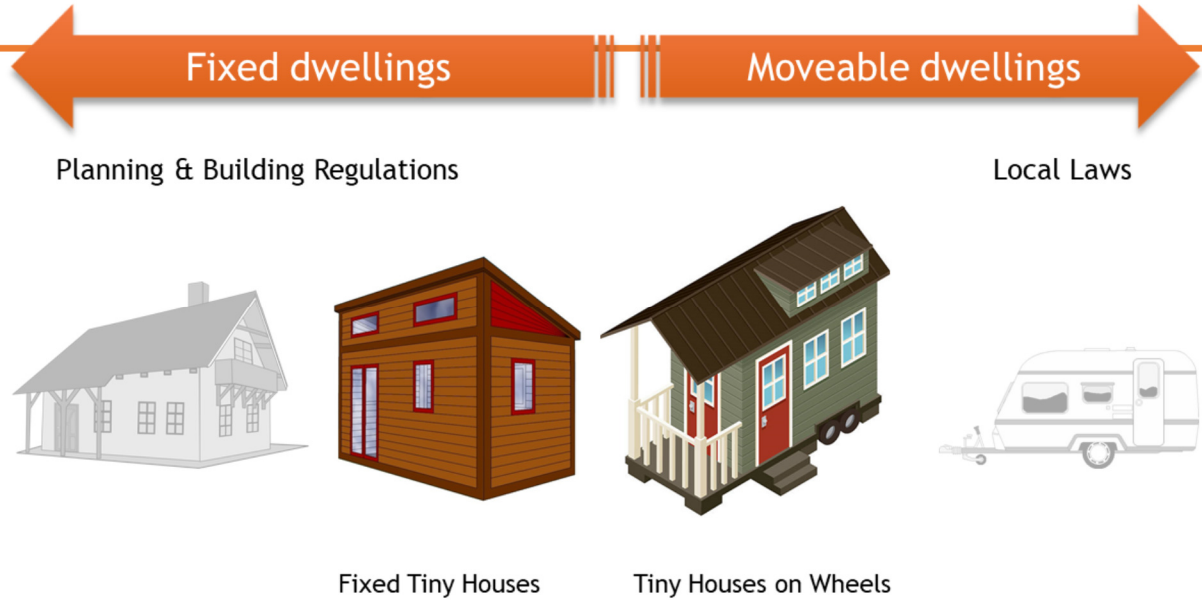
BOX 7 DWELLING HOUSE

For the zone that your land is in, you will not need a planning permit as long as you meet the code for a dwelling house.

BOX 8 MULTIPLE DWELLING

The Multiple Dwelling use is intended for blocks of units or otherwise multiple storey buildings. However it is limited by zoning which favours areas close to large transport nodes. Council would not consider a tiny village the 'best use' of that land. The cost of buying land within these zones is likely to be too expensive.

In the spectrum of regulations for our homes, tiny houses sit in the uncomfortable grey zone. Fixed tiny houses are easier to handle because they are closer to our standard houses. But planning schemes severely limit the ability to put them where we would like (e.g. minimum lot sizes of 300 m² which make a block of land unaffordable for a tiny house). Tiny houses on wheels are even more of a conundrum. Because a tiny house on wheels is regarded as a moveable dwelling (similar to a caravan), some councils will treat it as such. Caravans are not regulated under the planning system and do not require a building permit. Every local council has their own by-laws on how they regulate moveable dwellings. On the Gold Coast you're simply not allowed to live in a caravan in your backyard; in Brisbane it's permissible as long as you aren't causing a public nuisance and have appropriate access to waste disposal and toilet amenities. In other councils there are time limits (from a couple of weeks to a few months) or you can live in one temporarily while completing a house build. Other councils will treat moveable dwellings as just another type of dwelling and will therefore try to apply its planning scheme rules. This is what the diagram on the left is trying to show. As you will see, rules will change depending on whether the tiny house is co-located with a normal house or is sited on its own.



A **BUILDING PERMIT** is issued when your building application has been approved. In Queensland, building permits are issued by private building certifiers (registered to act on behalf of the Government).

TINY HOUSE ON WHEELS

For a tiny house on wheels, you do not need to get a building permit/certificate as it is considered a moveable dwelling and is therefore not subject to the *Building Act 1975*.

NOTE: to remain a moveable dwelling, the tiny house on wheels cannot be tied down to the ground, or be resting on piers dug into the ground, or show any signs of permanent attachment to the ground (drainage pipes for grey water systems may be ok). The trailer also needs to remain registered.

For your safety and those of others, it is advised that you get as much information from your builder as to the construction standards that have been met.

FIXED TINY HOUSE

For a fixed tiny house, you will need to get a building permit/certificate. The tiny house will need to comply with the standard building code as per a normal house. This may prove difficult for certain aspects such as stairs or ceiling heights if you have a loft.