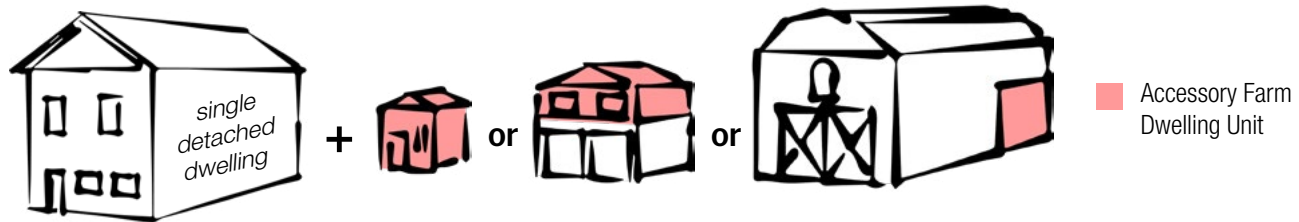


# FAQ

## Frequently Asked Questions Accessory Farm Dwelling Units

### Q: What is an Accessory Farm Dwelling Unit (AFDU)?

A: An AFDU is a small second residence accessory to the single detached dwelling on the lot. An AFDU can be in a standalone building without any other use (e.g. Garden Suite, Manufactured Home), as a Coach House (e.g. above a garage), or within an agricultural building (e.g. farm retail).



**Note:** An agricultural building is any building for, or accessory to, an Agricultural Use, as defined in the [Zoning Bylaw](#).

### Q: Which properties are permitted an Accessory Farm Dwelling Unit?

A: An AFDU is permitted, subject to conditions, on an A Zoned (A1-A6) lot that is 0.4 ha (~1 ac) or larger.

### Q: Does my property have to be a farm?

A: No, an AFDU is permitted on farms and non-farms alike, subject to conditions.

### Q: My property is located in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), do I need approval from the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)?

A: ALC approval is not required if:

- » your lot is 40 ha in size or greater, or less than 40 ha where the single detached dwelling on the lot does not exceed 500 m<sup>2</sup> (see [ALR Use Regulation s. 34.3](#) and [ALC Info Bulletin 05](#) for details); **and**
- » the only other residential use on the lot is a single detached dwelling (can include a secondary suite)

**Important:** While an ALC application is not required if the above conditions are met, an ALC Notice of Intent will likely be required for the placement of fill and/or removal of soil. For more information, see [ALC Information Bulletin 07: Soil or Fill Uses in the ALR](#).

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**Q: How large can an Accessory Farm Dwelling Unit be?**

A: If your property is 40 ha or less, an AFDU is limited to a maximum of 90 m<sup>2</sup> (~968 ft<sup>2</sup>). However, an AFDU can be as large as 186 m<sup>2</sup> (~2,002 ft<sup>2</sup>) on a lot over 40 ha.

**Q: Can an accessory farm dwelling unit have a basement and/or garage?**

A: Yes, however they both count towards the total floor area maximum (90 m<sup>2</sup> / 186 m<sup>2</sup>).

**Q: Can an AFDU be used for farm worker housing?**

A: Yes. For more information see Question #15 of the ALC's [Residential Flexibility in the ALR Frequently Asked Questions](#).

**Q: I have more than one residence on my lot (e.g. main house with farm help housing and/or a mobile home). Can I also have an AFDU?**

A: Any lot with more than one residence (not including a secondary suite) requires an application to the ALC. For more information see Question #7 of the ALC's [Residential Flexibility in the ALR Frequently Asked Questions](#).

**Q: I have an existing principal residence on my lot that is 90 m<sup>2</sup> (~968 ft<sup>2</sup>) or less. Can I build a new house and keep the existing residence?**

A: Yes, if:

- » the lot is at least 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> (~1 ac) in size
- » the floor area of the residence is 90 m<sup>2</sup> (~968 ft<sup>2</sup>) or less, including basement & attached garage
- » no part of the existing residence/building is proposed for any other use (e.g., storage)
- » the new house will not exceed the *ALC Act* principal residence size limit (500 m<sup>2</sup>)
- » the existing residence is the only residence on the lot and does not have a secondary suite
- » the existing residence was built and/or altered with all required authorizations (e.g., Building Permit) for residential use

**Q: I have an existing principal residence on my lot that is larger than 90 m<sup>2</sup> (~968 ft<sup>2</sup>). Can I alter the house to remove floor area, keep the dwelling, and build a new principal residence?**

A: Yes, if the size of the residence, including basement and attached garage, is reduced to a maximum of 90 m<sup>2</sup> (with permits) prior to submitting a building permit application for the new principal residence.

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**Q: I have an existing residence on my lot that is larger than 90 m<sup>2</sup>. Can I use part of it for an AFDU and convert the remainder to a different use?**

A: This requires Council consideration and ALC approval. For more information see Question #8 of the ALC's [Residential Flexibility in the ALR Frequently Asked Questions](#). The City's Zoning Bylaw only permits combined-use AFDU buildings in the form of a Coach House or within an agricultural building.

**Q: I have a non-residential building on my lot (e.g., barn, storage building), can I convert it into an AFDU?**

A: Yes, provided it complies with all Zoning regulations for the use (e.g. size), all parts of the building meet the respective BC Building Code requirements, and the necessary authorizations are obtained (i.e. Building Permit). For more information, contact the [Building Department](#).

**Q: Can I connect my AFDU to other areas in the same building?**

A: No, it must be walled-off from the rest of the building, including separate entrances/exits from those that access other parts of the building.

**Q: Are there any Building Code implications I should keep in mind?**

A: Residential and agricultural buildings have different Building Code requirements (e.g. fire protection). If you plan to combine an AFDU with non-residential uses, you will need to ensure all areas of the building meet the respective Building Code requirements. For more information contact the [Building Department](#).

**Q: Can I get a second City water connection?**

A: An AFDU should tie-in to the same water connection as the single detached dwelling.

**Q: Can my AFDU have its own driveway?**

A: An AFDU will typically share the driveway with the single detached dwelling as development regulations limit the number access points from surrounding roads. Any works within the road right-of-way (e.g. additional access points) require a Highway Excavation Permit.

**Q: Can I stratify and sell the AFDU?**

A: No.

**Q: Are there any additional annual fees to keep in mind?**

A: Similar to secondary/additional suites, AFDUs are subject to an annual infrastructure fee that is coordinated with your property taxes.

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## Helpful Links:

[City of Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw](#)

[ALR Use Regulation](#)

[ALC Information Bulletin 05 - Residences in the ALR](#)

[ALC Information Bulletin 05 - Residences in the ALR - FAQs](#)

[ALC Information Bulletin 07 - Soil or Fill Uses in the ALR](#)

[ALC Policy L-26 Non-Adhering Residential Use Applications](#)

## Notes:

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### Planning Services

604-864-5510  
planning-info@abbotsford.ca

### Building Permits & Licences

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