

Granny flats growing fast

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TEENAGERS refusing to move out of the family home, along with an ageing population, are believed to be behind an increase in the number of granny flats in Sydney.

Investors keen to double the rental return on properties have also been linked to a rise in dual-occupancy approvals last year.

The figures are contained in Planning NSW's latest Local Development Performance Monitoring Report, released last week.

It shows councils determined 1521 development applications for granny flats in 2009-10 and 1365 in 2008-09.

In contrast, 1074 multi-unit development applications were determined last year and 981 the previous year.

Granny-flat developments — or second single occupancies — were among nearly 70,000 developments, worth more than \$15.5 billion, to be approved by councils last year.

With high rents keeping more young people in the



Paul Notaras rents out his granny flat for extra cash

family home, granny flats provide more private living space for them.

But the biggest driver of granny-flat applications is property owners seeking to cash in by building self-contained accommodation on their land or converting garages or other buildings.

With a second baby on the way, Paul Notaras, 37, and his wife, Tamara, decided to rent out a granny flat at their Frenchs Forest home for some extra cash.

The couple bought the property three years ago.

Ms Notaras, a nurse, is

working two days a week so she can care for 20-month-old Nakita and prepare for another arrival in June.

Mr Notaras said: "It will be nice to get some use out of the flat, because it's been sitting there empty, but the main reason is the money."

Planning Minister Tony Kelly said homeowners were benefiting from State Government improvements to the planning system.

Despite a rise in applications, decision times on development proposals had been slashed, Mr Kelly said.

"This report illustrates that reforms implemented by the Government are bringing down decision times, meaning everyone from mums and dads to larger companies are getting a quicker outcome."

Temora Shire Council topped the list for development assessment turn-around times, with staff taking just six days to determine applications.

The five slowest councils were Cooma-Monaro (163 days), Botany Bay (128), Gunnedah (117), Leichhardt (113) and Upper Lachlan (110).