

FINDING DIRT CHEAP LAND ASSESSMENT



Find the right piece of land at the right price for your project!





SMART LAND BUYING ON A BUDGET: FINDING AFFORDABLE, BUILDABLE PROPERTY

Use this packet as your guide to finding affordable land that won't drain your budget with hidden costs.

Before purchasing, walk the property, research local zoning laws, and assess key factors like water access, road conditions, and soil quality. Understanding these elements will help you avoid expensive surprises and ensure your land is actually buildable. If utilities aren't available, consider the costs of going off-grid. Look into any legal restrictions, easements, or permits required in the area. Lastly, think long-term—environmental risks and energy efficiency can impact your costs over time.

With careful evaluation, you can secure dirt-cheap land that truly works for your budget and vision!



This land assessment was prepared by Dr. Rachel Goldlust of Natural Buildings Australia and is a great companion to her class "Finding Dirt Cheap Land".



I. Land Suitability for Building:

Before purchasing land, it's important to evaluate whether it's truly buildable—what seems like a great deal upfront could come with expensive challenges. Review these considerations to ensure your land supports a stable, efficient, and affordable build.

Topography: Is the land flat or sloped? What kind of foundation work will it require?

Water Access: Does the land have access to water (well, stream, public water systems)? Understand water rights in the area.

Soil Quality and Drainage: Will you need to deal with swampy or rocky soil? Can you build a foundation, or will it require extra work?

Road Access: Does the property have legal and practical access? Are roads passable year-round?

Utilities: Availability of electricity, sewage systems, and cell service. Will you need to go off-grid?

II. Legal & Zoning Considerations:

Zoning regulations: Is it zoned for residential or agricultural/industrial?

Building permits: What permits are required in the area, and how easy is it to get them?

Easements: Are there any shared access rights with other properties? Are they documented?



Understanding the legal and zoning restrictions of a property can save you from major setbacks down the road. Make sure the land is legally buildable and that permits, zoning, and easements align with your plans before committing to a purchase.



III. Land Agreements

If you're leasing or co-owning land, having clear agreements in place is essential to avoid disputes and secure your rights. A well-documented agreement will prevent surprise fees, eviction risks, or restrictions that could derail your budget-friendly build.



- If you choose to lease or rent land, make sure you know the local laws and have a clear, written legal agreement with the landowner that ensures your right to live on the land.
- Make clear agreements regarding the use of the land with your land partners.

IV. Environmental Considerations

Ignoring environmental factors can lead to costly setbacks and long-term expenses. Researching land use plans and climate risks upfront helps you avoid unexpected hazards, expensive mitigation efforts, and potential loss of investment.



Plans for the area: clear-cut, mining rights, or a non-organic farm?

Climate change: are there any potential disasters: earthquakes, bushfires, floods, inundation?



Photo: Earthship Eco Homes

THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to explore this guide on finding affordable, buildable land for your natural or alternative home. We hope it has provided valuable insights to help you make informed, budget-conscious decisions.

If you have any questions or want to see more content like this, feel free to reach out at info@webuildoutsidethebox.com.

Happy land hunting, and best of luck on your building journey!



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