



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Ministry of the Environment, Planning and Infrastructure Strategy

Department of Planning

Guide to the General Development Order

What is the General Development Order?

If you want to carry out work that falls within the definition of development in the Development and Planning Act 1974; then you need planning permission. Some forms of development are deemed to have planning permission. Development that has automatic planning permission is set out in the General Development Order (GDO). The Minister of the Environment and Sports formulates the GDO. It lists seven different classes of development that are deemed to have planning permission. These are:

- I Development within the curtilage of a residential building
- II Sundry minor operations
- III Enlargement of buildings other than residential buildings
- IV Damaged buildings, works and plant
- V Temporary buildings and uses
- VI Satellite receiving dishes (under 4' in diameter)
- VII Solar energy collection systems (under 80 ft² in area)

The following information provides the guidelines regarding small additions to residential buildings (Class I) and minor building works such as walls (Class II) only. The GDO imposes some important restrictions on these building projects with which you should become familiar. It is essential to read the GDO to find out the full details of what is and is not permissible. The restrictions in the GDO may mean that your project does not have planning permission.

Residential Buildings

Class I applies to all residential development and allows you to add small extensions or additions onto existing buildings. Also, ancillary structures such as garages that are not joined to your house are permitted by the GDO. Whether separate

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or joined, all new development that comes under this class is restricted as shown in the table below.

CLASS I		
	Detached Houses	Other residential buildings
Maximum additional site coverage	250 ft ²	150 ft ²
Maximum additional gross floor area	400 ft ²	250 ft ²

In addition to those restrictions, there are a number of standard conditions that apply to these minor works. For example you cannot exceed the maximum site coverage for your area as set out in the Bermuda Plan 2008 (35% in Residential 1 areas and 20% in Residential 2 areas). Nor can your building infringe on any setback to a lot line, public road or estate road. Again, you must read the GDO as these are only two examples of the standard conditions.

Sundry minor operations

The GDO grants planning permission to gates, walls and fences provided they do not exceed 4 ft in height. There are restrictions that apply. For example, if you want to erect a wall with pillars at the entrance to your property, those structures cannot block your vision as you exit, in a car, onto a public or estate road. To avoid blocking sightlines, you must keep entrance walls and pillars under 3 ft 6 inches in height.

CLASS II		
	Walls, fences	Excavation
Maximum height/depth	4 ft	4 ft
Setback from lot line	N/A	4 ft

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The GDO also grants planning permission for a limited amount of excavation. The maximum depth that you can excavate without getting planning permission from the Development Applications Board is 4 ft. With this excavation you can go no closer than 4 ft to your lot line.

What are some of the general restrictions?

The GDO does not grant planning permission to additions to listed (historic) buildings. Nor does it allow you to carry out work in an historic area (for example, the historic protection area of St. George's). Also, you cannot use it to build on land protected by a Section 34 Agreement or on environmentally sensitive land such as a woodland reserve. You cannot re-develop a ruinous structure under the GDO.

What next?

If your project does have planning permission under the GDO then only a building permit application is required to complete the project. Permitted Development Permit applications can be submitted every Tuesday for projects permitted under the GDO. For more complex projects not permitted under the GDO a regular building permit is required. The Department of Planning will review Permitted Development Permit applications to ensure conformity to the provisions of the GDO and therefore to ensure the project is deemed to have planning permission. Applications that are not in compliance will be returned and full planning and building permit applications will be required.

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