



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Ministry of Home Affairs
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 Home Affairs formulates the GDO. It lists five different classes of development that are deemed to have planning permission. These are:

- I Development within the curtilage of a residential building
- II Development within the curtilage of a building other than a residential building
- III Repairs, maintenance, temporary, sundry or minor works
- IV Development by statutory undertakers
- V Solar energy collection systems (1,000 square feet or less in area)

The following information provides the guidelines regarding small additions to residential buildings (Class I) and minor building works such as walls (Class III) 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 apply to all residential development and allow 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	500sq.feet	150sq.feet
Maximum additional gross floor area	1,000sq.feet	250sq.feet

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.

Erection of Gates, Fences and Walls

The GDO grants planning permission to gates, walls and fences provided they do not exceed 4 feet 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 III		
	Gates, Fences & Walls	Excavation
Maximum height/depth	4 feet	4 feet
Setback from lot line	N/A	4 feet



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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 feet. With this excavation you can go no closer than 4 feet to your lot line.

What are some of the general restrictions?

The GDO does not grant planning permission to additions to listed (historic) buildings. However, the GDO does allow you to carry out specific repair and replacement works on listed (historic) buildings. 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.