

Bin storage guidance for householders

May 2025

Background

As residents begin to receive ‘wheelie bins’ across the district for the first time, consideration is likely to be given as to where to store them. This note is intended to help guide residents in this regard, particularly in providing information to help inform whether they may require planning permission. The Council has a separate note on the requirements for bin storage when **new** homes are being planned for (*insert link*).

Bins left out in the street, or otherwise poorly located, can have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Step 1 – Where should domestic wheelie bins be stored

Regardless of whether a bin store is provided or not, the storage of domestic bins should only be on land under the control of residents (e.g. residential garden) and not in publicly owned spaces or the public highway (including pavements), unless specifically agreed to in writing by the relevant authority.

Step 2 – Consider whether you want/need a bin store

The Council does not require existing residents to have a formal bin store. Wheelie bins are designed and manufactured to be able to left outdoors in all conditions.

Step 3 – Are bin stores ‘development’ in formal planning terms?

There are a number of types of dedicated bin stores, many of which don’t require planning permission as they do not meet the legal definition of ‘development’¹. In considering whether a bin store is development, there are three well established tests that **all** have to be met before something could be considered as “a building”. These tests are:

- Size;
- Degree of permanence; and
- Means of fixing / attachment.

Whilst every site is different and needs to be considered on its own merits, the following general advice is offered for the benefits of residents.

¹ Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines “development” as:
“the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land”.

The **size** of a typical bin store is slightly larger than the bins that they store. As such given the relative size of this store compared to the dwelling it serves it would be a rare occasion that the size of the bin store would likely be disproportionate to the building that it serves and this test wouldn't be met.

A bin store is likely to be on a site for an extended period so as to avoid bin blight as described above. It may, therefore be concluded, that a store does have a **degree of permanence**.

If a bin store is simply placed on the ground and there are no foundations or works to attach the store to the ground, it would not meet the tests of **attachment**.

However if the bin store is 'development' – by virtue of being a building operation – then consideration needs to be given as to whether it could be Permitted Development.

Step 4 – Do I require planning permission?

Even if a bin store is considered to be 'development', the planning system makes various provisions ²to provide 'permitted development rights' for residents to carry out 'development' without requiring specific planning permission (through a planning application) from the local planning authority.

NB: Permitted development rights only applies to houses and not flats, maisonettes, or any other type of building.

Further details of what permitted development rights may exist in relation to bin stores is set out in Appendix One.

If in doubt please check with the local planning authority.

² The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) sets out the various provisions for permitted development.

Appendix One – Permitted Development rights

The following outlines the potential permitted development rights available in relation to bin stores for different types of residential houses:

Detached, semi-detached, end of terrace properties and those with access to a rear garden:

For the existing residents in the District with access to a rear garden an outbuilding/ bin store, if located in the rear garden, would likely fall to be assessed under the criteria of Class E in the Permitted Development Order.

- *Bin stores and other outbuildings must not exceed 50% of the area of the land around your house.*
- *Structures classed as outbuildings should be single storey. If they have a roof, the maximum height should be 4 metres or 3-metres for any other structure. However, if the outbuilding is within 2 metres of the property boundary, it should not exceed 2.5 metres in height.*

Mid terrace properties or have no rear garden access:

There are parts of the District where dwellings are mid terrace properties or have no rear garden access. In such circumstances it may be necessary to store bins out the front of properties rather than have to, inconveniently, wheel bins through the house to the front on collection day.

If a bin store is operational development and is to be forward of the “principal elevation” of a dwelling, then this would not be PD and would require an application for planning permission from the local planning authority.

If residents are considering a bin store forward of their property, they are encouraged to look at products that would not be considered as “development”.

Dwellings in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape:

If your property is in the National Landscape the outbuilding in the rear garden should be more than 20 metres from any wall. It also must not exceed 10 square metres. Any structure that fails to meet these conditions would not fall under permitted development.

Listed buildings & Conservation Areas:

Outbuildings are not considered permitted development if your property is a listed building.

In the case of any land within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse which is within a Conservation Area, development is not PD if any part of the building or container would

Appendix One – Permitted Development rights

be situated on land between a wall forming a side elevation of the dwellinghouse and the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.