

The cover image features a scenic landscape with a large rock formation on the left, a field of yellow flowers in the middle ground, and a body of water with a bird in flight in the foreground. The title 'Coorong District Council Information Guide 16' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Coorong District Council Information Guide 16

Planning & Development

Shipping Containers - Do They Require Development Approval?

Introduction

The placement of shipping containers on properties has become more prevalent; not only within the Coorong District Council, but in other regional areas throughout the state. They are being used on land in a manner that is unsightly and that is detracting significantly from the amenity of the locality in which the land is situated and is becoming a matter of concern throughout the Council.

Whilst historically the most common use was as a temporary storage option, especially in association with providing secure storage for materials being used in the construction of houses etc., these containers are now more frequently being used for permanent storage/use in place of actual constructed sheds.

A shipping container is considered to be a **building** as defined in the Development Act 1993 as it is:

“a building or structure, or a portion of a building or structure, whether temporary or permanent, moveable or immovable”

As such, they may be required to gain Development Approval to remain on the property.

As with any building requiring Development Approval, the placement of shipping containers on a property may create issues including:

- is it an appropriate use in the zone?
- effects on the amenity of the locality.

In addition, the fixing of the container to the ground is important (in light of extreme weather events which can occur).

Whether the placement of the shipping container can gain Development Approval will be determined by aspects including the proposed use; zoning of the property; size, colour and condition of the container and siting on the property. Council envisages improving the appearance of the land and to minimise and regulate the use of shipping containers within the Council area.

Do all containers need Development Approval?

If on an allotment where there is an existing, approved dwelling, there may be instances (depending on the planning zone) where the size and location of the container may be such that Development Approval is not required.

Can I still use a container to store material if constructing an approved building?

Yes. A container can be used as a temporary store (but not for the purposes of overnight accommodation) directly in association with the performance of approved building work on the site. The container must be removed from the property at the completion of the relevant building work (unless you have gained Development Approval for it to remain).

I have shipping container/s on my property that do not have Development Approval – what am I required to do?

In the first instance contact Council's Development and Environmental Services Team to determine whether your container/s will be required to receive Development Approval. If so, then a Development Application is required to be lodged with Council for assessment and, if determined to be a suitable form of development, gain Development Approval.

Please note that there will be some instances where it may not be appropriate to have a container on the property (e.g. if the proposed use is unsuitable for the zone; affect on the amenity of the locality etc). If an application is refused, then you will be required to remove the container from the property.

In the absence of contact with the Council and, if a container is determined to require Development Approval to remain on the property, the container will be deemed to be illegal development which can result in proceedings being taken against the land owner. Your cooperation in liaising with Council regarding containers on land will be appreciated to ensure that the storage requirements of land owners can be met whilst also meeting the legislative requirements which address potential effects on neighbours and ensuring the amenity of the townships and rural areas is maintained or enhanced.

Further Information

For any queries regarding shipping containers please contact Council's Development and Environmental Services Team on 1300 785 277.

Development Information Guides are intended to help applicants to submit applications which are complete, well prepared, and can be processed efficiently. The information provided is intended as a general guide only and applicants are encouraged to refer to Coorong District Council's Development Plan and to seek advice from our staff if necessary.