

Planning points for Horse owners and Landowners with Equine uses

It is a common misconception that equine uses of land and buildings come under the heading of 'agriculture' and therefore do not require planning permission.

Most equine uses of land and buildings are not considered to be agriculture and therefore do require permission for change of use from agriculture. Each individual case depends on its own facts.

If I am using a field to graze horses, do I need planning permission?

Grazing horses pure and simple on agricultural land may not require permission but only if the purpose of the grazing is for feeding and not for exercise or recreation. For instance, if additional feed is regularly given to horses grazing in a field, the use will not be treated as 'grazing' and therefore if the use of the field was formerly agriculture, permission for change of use will be required.

If I want to put up a shelter in a field for my horse to use do I need planning permission?

Putting up new buildings such as stables or field shelters will normally require planning permission, although mobile field shelters do not require permission.

Do I need planning permission if I want to use redundant farm buildings as livery stables?

The change of use of redundant farm buildings to an equine use will usually require permission.

If I apply for permission will I succeed?

Most rural local authorities encourage equine businesses and other equine uses as alternatives for redundant farm buildings and agricultural land, provided they are sensitively designed and located without ruining the landscape. Some authorities however, are more amenable than others over equine in the countryside and local professional advice will always be advisable before applying.

What if I want to keep my horse in the grounds of my house?

Residential land (i.e. land forming part of the curtilage of a dwelling) can usually be used for keeping horses if the garden/grounds are 0.5 hectare or more and the horse is used exclusively for recreational purposes by the occupants of the dwelling.

Will I be able to get planning permission to build a house next to my livery stables?

Occasionally, permission to build a new dwelling next to an equine business establishment can be obtained, but the requirements are strict. Expert advice will be essential for such an application to succeed.

Similarly, if there is a dwelling with an agricultural 'tie', located next to former farm buildings which are being used as a riding or livery stable, or for racehorse training, you may be able to apply for the agricultural tie to be lifted, subject to conditions, with the benefit of expert advice.

The above information is not intended to be a complete or definitive statement of the current law. For further information, please contact **Nicola Newton** at nsn@awdry.co.uk or on **01380 732930**.