

Charnwood Borough Council

A Planning Guide to Horses and Stables

This guidance is intended to clarify the legal position and provide initial advice for anyone intending to use land or buildings for a horse related use.

BACKGROUND



Development involving horses (also referred to as “Horsiculture”) is increasingly popular in the countryside. A growing number of farmers are seeking to diversify their activities and commercial equestrian uses such as a livery or riding schools are common options. Alternatively they decide to sell or let farm buildings/land to others to establish a separate business. These uses require planning permission and together with manèges, events, external lighting and high levels of traffic

generation can have a greater and more intensive impact on the surrounding area than “hobby horsiculture”.

With the decline in agricultural jobs an increasing number of small parcels of land are being sold off and purchased by people hoping to keep their horses on these plots. They may be unaware that this use is likely to require planning permission. Stables and shelters can be harmful to the appearance of the landscape and jumps, horse boxes and other equipment can be unsightly.



PLANNING PERMISSION

The list below is not exhaustive but includes common developments which normally require planning permission:

1. To use land and/or buildings for keeping horses for recreational use.
2. To use land and/or buildings for keeping horses for commercial purposes.
3. To erect buildings to shelter horses or their provisions.
4. To erect a building(s) in which to exercise horses.
5. To set out a manège (exercise area) or to create other hard surfaces for a similar purpose.
6. To put up lights to illuminate a manège or other area.
7. To station a caravan in a field for use in connection with “horsiculture”.
8. Laying out or surfacing a vehicular access, hardstanding or other surface treatment in connection with the keeping of horses.

Note:

1. If the main purpose of the land is for the genuine grazing of horses (i.e. they are being fed off the land rather than by imported food and the land is not being used as a recreational/exercise area) then planning permission may not be needed as this could be considered to be an agricultural use. However, buildings and other structures will still need permission.
2. Putting up a stable within the curtilage* of a house may in some circumstances not require planning permission provided the horses are kept as pets in association with that house and
3. depending on the size, height and position of the stable in relation to the position of the house/road (including a footpath) and the size of the curtilage. Please complete [Self Assessment Form B](#) to determine whether your proposal is “permitted development”. The [Planning Portal](#) has information on erecting outbuildings within a domestic curtilage.
4. Mobile field shelters may not need planning permission, depending on size, construction, physical attachment to the ground and its intended degree of permanence.



In all cases contact us in writing with full details of your proposal before proceeding

* Curtilage usually means the enclosed area immediately around the house and does not include for instance adjoining fields or paddocks and may not extend to all land in the ownership of the house.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Where planning permission is required, in considering planning applications, we will have regard to [Chapter 6: Rural Land and Economy of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan](#) (adopted 12th January 2004) and in particular to Policy CT/13 on page 116 together with paragraph 32 of [Planning Policy Statement 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#).

STABLES (including tack room, haystore etc.)

These will normally only be permitted where they are :-

1. No larger than 3.6m x 3.6m x 3.4m high measured externally unless a larger size is substantiated.
2. Sited within or immediately adjoining an existing farm building complex or failing that a hedgerow or other landscape feature which affords substantial screening; and
3. Provided with a safe highway access.
and
4. Designed and constructed in good quality appropriate materials and designed clearly for their intended purpose. Wooden structures are favoured in isolated locations and permanent construction such as bricks/block walls and tile roofs would normally only be considered appropriate where required to preserve or enhance a Conservation Area or if it is sited within a group of existing traditional buildings.



COMMERCIAL EQUESTRIAN USES

The development of commercial uses in rural areas such as riding schools and arenas, stud farms, racing or livery stables will be carefully controlled. Proposals for such uses will be rigorously examined to assess their impact, individually and cumulatively, on the purposes and visual amenity of the countryside, and on the local highway network. It is always an advantage for such schemes to use existing buildings and put them to a new use rather than building new structures in the countryside. If residential accommodation is required then it should be sited next to existing residential accommodation. Smallscale (up to 10 horses) horse enterprises are considered to be a useful form of farm diversification when utilising existing farm buildings.



In considering planning applications the Local Planning Authority will carry out consultations with other professional and outside agencies such as, the Leicestershire County Council [Highway Authority](#), the [Environment Agency](#) (with regard to pollution of a nearby watercourse/water supply source or to ensure adequate drainage) and our [Environmental Health Section](#) (with regard to nuisance from smell/flies etc.).

You should also contact our [Building Control Department](#) to check if Building Regulations consent is required.

For details on submitting a planning application we have prepared a guide to information required when [“Submitting a Horse Related Planning Application”](#).

The fees are:

- £335 for a change of use of land or buildings from agricultural to “horsicultural”.
- The erection of buildings is calculated on the gross floorspace measured externally “including canopy” on land with an existing “horsicultural” use.
- £170 for up to 40 sq metres.
 - £335 for between 40 and 75 sq metres.
 - Where the floorspace is more than 75 sq metres but does not exceed 3750 sq metres the fee is £335 for each 75 sq metres.
 - The construction of a manège is £170.00 for each 0.1 hectare of the site area.
- Where a change of use together with other work is required the highest fee is payable. For further information refer to our [website](#).



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