

**A PLANNING GUIDE TO  
FARM DIVERSIFICATION  
IN NORTH YORKSHIRE**



NOVEMBER 2000

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## FOREWORD

The diversification of farm businesses is not a new idea. For many years farmers and landowners have been adapting buildings and land for alternative uses in ways which can boost farm incomes by adding value to farming products or by accepting enterprises which can thrive in a farm setting.

Recent years have seen a greater need for the promotion of diversification as a way of supporting farm businesses and contributing to the wider rural economy. Such activity must of course be properly regulated but the County, District and National Park Authorities in North Yorkshire are determined to do all they can to steer the planning system into a more enabling role by supplementing national documents with practical local guidance.

This Guide is based on advice given by specialist consultants and is intended to be of use to any farmers and landowners in North Yorkshire seeking to diversify economic activity on their farms. It is not about selling land for development. As well as giving overall advice about how to get the best out of the planning system and pitfalls to avoid, it can be used as a reference book on how the planning system deals with different types of possible diversification enterprises.

We commend the Guide to the farming community in the County.

 Tim Cole	Executive Member North Yorkshire County Council	 Campbell Dawson	Chairman Planning Committee Richmondshire District Council
 Marcia Turner	Chairman Planning Committee Craven District Council	 Allin Jenkins	Chairman Planning & Development Services Committee Ryedale District Council
 Geoff Ellis	Chairman Planning Committee Hambleton District Council	 Jack Crawford	Chairman Planning Committee Selby District Council
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## PREFACE

This Guide provides information and advice to assist farmers and landowners to deal with the planning system when seeking to add income by diversifying economic activity on their farms.

It has been produced by a partnership of the County and District Councils, the National Park Authorities, the Country Landowners Association and the National Farmers Union.

Diversification is regarded as on-farm development which supplements ongoing agricultural activity either by adding value to existing operations or introducing new income streams which remain under the same management control as the main farm enterprise. The advice in the Guide assumes that a basic continuing connection is maintained between any new economic activity and the basic farm business.

The Guide is not concerned with off-farm diversification of the wider rural economy or with development demands which arise when farmers dispose of land or buildings. Nor does it deal with other requirements such as building regulations which may need to be considered separately from planning matters.

Farmers will find that the planning authorities will try to consider favourably those projects which are able to demonstrate close links with ongoing farm activity and consequential benefits to the local economy or environment. Not all proposals will be appropriate in all circumstances but no activity is ruled out in principle. Farm diversification is subject to a framework of regulation common to all development which tries to balance private interests with the interests of the wider community and environment. Planning factors should be considered at the outset and built into a business plan. They should not be regarded as a separate hurdle to be negotiated at a late stage of the process.

The Guide is based on a report by Reading Agricultural Consultants, the full text of which is available at your local planning office. A separate easy language booklet summarising the planning system and how to get the best out of it is also available free of charge on request from the partner authorities/organisations.

The partner authorities/organisations are grateful for financial assistance from Yorkshire Forward towards production of this publication.

Further information can be obtained from Chris Dickinson at North Yorkshire County Council - Tel : 01609 780780 Ext 2353



Yorkshire & Humber Regional Development Agency

## SECTION 1

# THE PLANNING SYSTEM



- The basic feature of the planning system is the statutory requirement that society, primarily through elected local government representatives, controls the use and development of land. In National Parks a proportion of the membership is appointed from outside local government. Government policies provide detailed guidance. Some agricultural development lies outside planning control.
- The system is based on the preparation of Structure/Local Plans and the handling of planning applications.
- The framework for handling planning applications consists of the County Council, District Councils and National Park Authorities interpreting national law and policy, regional planning guidance and the Structure/Local Plans while making provision for public consultation. A balance needs to be struck on a case by case basis when making decisions. Rarely are two cases the same.
- Most individuals come into contact with the planning system through the handling of planning applications. To get the best out of this involvement it is necessary to have a general understanding of the system as a whole.
- Ultimate responsibility for the planning system lies with the Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions. Day to day operation is in the hands of the County and District Councils and National Park Authorities.
- The principal planning measure is the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended through subsequent legislation. Statutory Instruments, in the form of orders and regulations develop the detail. The Secretary of State oversees the activities of the local and national park authorities in the day to day administration of the planning system and can intervene to direct a particular interpretation of planning law or a particular emphasis of land use policy.
- Regional Strategy is emerging with greater weight but land use policy finds local expression mainly in development plans (Structure Plans and Local Plans). These plans, which local planning authorities are required to prepare for their areas, set out the policies for the control of development and identify parts of these areas which will be subject to particular development or conservation requirements.
- The whole purpose of creating this framework of legislation, policy and plans is to control the use and development of land in the public interest. The main feature of the development control process is the mechanism through which those who wish to undertake development need to obtain the prior consent of the local planning authority by means of making a planning application. The legislation requires that planning authorities should decide upon an application in accordance with the provisions of development plans, unless there are material considerations to the contrary.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Section 54A

"Where, in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise"



For the majority of those embarking on a farm diversification project, the main planning issues relate to:

- i. establishing the extent to which the project falls within the control requirements of the planning system, particularly whether planning permission is required;
- ii. assessing the compatibility of the project with Structure and Local Plan policies; and
- iii. satisfying any requirements the planning system might need to impose on the project by condition or achieve by legal agreement.

- Day to day development control is therefore mainly "plan-led". Essentially, there is a presumption in favour of proposals which accord with the policies and proposals in the development plan. Planning authorities are encouraged to keep plans up to date. However, where it can be argued that the development plan is out of date or out of step with prevailing circumstances, any more recent policy guidance from the Secretary of State would be given particular weight.

- Development control is concerned with most uses of land and buildings on farms and needs to assess:-
  - i. the implications of "permitted development" ie uses of land and buildings which have been granted a degree of freedom from the full requirements of the planning process;
  - ii. developments requiring planning permissions; and
  - iii. enforcement action in cases where developments have been undertaken without planning permission or implemented without complying with the requirements of the planning conditions.
- Sometimes the position can become complicated and would benefit from the use of professional advice.

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## SECTION 2

# FARM DIVERSIFICATION THE MAIN PLANNING ISSUES



## The Issues

Nine key issues are particularly relevant to farm diversification projects.

1. The relationship of a proposal to the on-going farm business.
2. The different policy contexts for farm diversification projects.
3. Re-use of existing buildings v new build.
4. Scale, intensity of use and potential for expansion.
5. Traffic generation and highway issues.
6. Landscape issues.
7. Neighbour amenity and pollution issues.
8. Foul water and waste disposal.
9. Signs and adverts.

- In dealing with these, farmers and landowners need to be aware of other regulatory systems concerning buildings, waste and water. While outside the planning system, compliance with other relevant regulations is often crucial to the implementation of a project.

### 1. The relationship of a proposal to the on-going farm business

- A common reason for difficulties between farmers and planning authorities is a different perception of what constitutes farm diversification. Farmers frequently perceive any activity or development which puts money into a family or farm

account as constituting diversification and assume that they will receive automatic policy support. While such enterprise might appear to fit the policy in terms of injecting income, it will not necessarily meet the underlying objective of sustaining existing farming businesses in a way which enables them to continue to deliver wider environmental and social benefits. It is for this reason that the Guide stresses a continuing connection between any new economic activity and an ongoing basic farm or estate management business.

- Projects which can demonstrate the connection between on-going farming activity and any consequential benefits to the local economy or environment are most likely to be considered favourably. One way in which this can be done is to support a planning application for a farm diversification proposal with a farm plan which shows these relationships and benefits. Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 (PPG7) indicates that such plans are useful and "Planning for Rural Diversification - A Good Practice Guide" (HMSO 1995) also promotes such an approach.



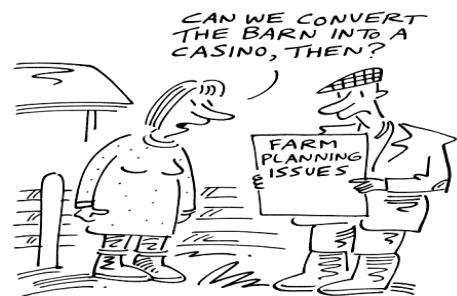
- A farm plan is a useful means of supporting a planning application and providing necessary information to the planning authority. It is also relevant beyond the planning system to the development of a well-founded project which can be integrated successfully into the farm business regime. The structure of a farm plan might include:
  - basic farm profile;** area, type, history, current operations, soil type, existing buildings, wildlife;
  - details of activities;** cropping, livestock, ancillary business, woodland, employees;
  - need for diversification;** problem, history, future options;
  - proposal;** change of use of buildings or land, new buildings, parking, employment, future vehicle movements, intentions for future expansion.
  - implications of the proposal;** for the environment, for the rural economy, for the agricultural use of the land, economic implications.

## 2. The different policy contexts for farm diversification projects

- Just as there can be misunderstanding between farmers and planners as to the meaning of farm diversification, another source of difficulty is

misunderstandings about the environmental opportunities and constraints facing individual farmers. Irrespective of differences in the resources and market opportunities available to them, farmers are not all on the same playing field in planning terms. The countryside is covered by a range of protective designations, such as National Parks which lead to different opportunities and constraints.

- Society expects the planning system to balance the relative importance of particular environmental, natural resource, economic, amenity and cultural interests. Protection of certain environmental features places constraints on development opportunities. There is a requirement for development control to have regard to the social and economic well-being of local communities, but this has to be consistent with environmental objectives.



- Countryside designations do not place a blanket embargo on enterprise and economic development but they do require entrepreneurs to be realistic in terms of the types of activity and development which are acceptable. Farm diversification opportunities have, therefore, to be judged in the context of the planning circumstances applying to the farm's location.

### 3. Re-use of existing buildings v new build

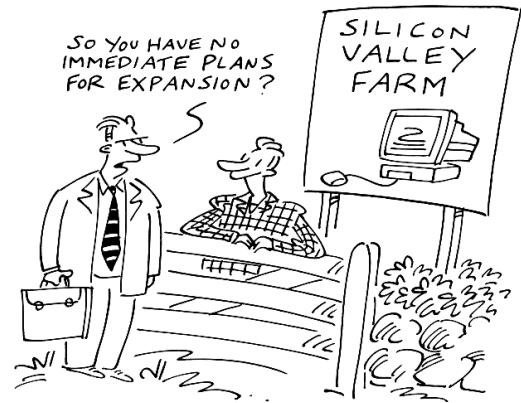
- The changing nature of agriculture has left many traditional buildings redundant or less suitable for modern methods. The re-use and adaptation of these buildings is recognised as having an important role in meeting the needs of rural areas for commercial and industrial premises. This role is recognised in PPG7 and reflected in most of the local plans in North Yorkshire. Most plans express a general preference for re-use of existing buildings over new build, but much depends on their location.
- The Government's position (PPG7) is that the conversion of rural buildings for business use should not be prevented provided that:
  - i. they are of permanent and substantial construction;
  - ii. conversion does not lead to dispersal of activity on such a scale as to prejudice the vitality of local settlements;
  - iii. their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings.
  - iv. reasonable planning conditions can overcome legitimate planning objections which would otherwise outweigh the advantages of re-use;
  - v. they are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction.

- Planning restrictions are more stringent where "Listed" buildings are concerned. Because of their historic or architectural interest such buildings cannot be altered or extended without the special consent of the planning authority. Since the objective of the listing process is to safeguard the character and historical /architectural merits of the building, it may be difficult to accommodate modern space requirements or features such as doors and windows. Several of the North Yorkshire planning authorities have issued specific supplementary guidance on this issue.
- Whether or not a building is "Listed", conversion to a modern use will require compliance with building regulations. There may be some flexibility to relax certain standards but in general it is important to recognise that there will be a cost to meet these requirements. Generally speaking, it is easier to retain the character of a building by accommodating employment rather than residential uses within it.



#### 4. Scale, intensity of use and potential for expansion

- A source of significant concern to planning authorities and local residents in relation to any rural diversification project is the potential for small-scale, acceptable developments to grow into significant businesses generating additional requirements and longer term adverse effects in the wider environment. It is possible for a development which at the outset was entirely appropriate and acceptable in the countryside to progress by the cumulation of small changes to something which would not have been acceptable if it had been proposed at the outset.
- Particular issues relating to expansion and intensity of use which can give rise to planning concerns are:-
  - i. ad hoc alterations to the external appearance of buildings;
  - ii. outside and unsightly storage of equipment, packaging and materials;
  - iii. traffic generation and parking;
  - iv. noise and other pollution related to increased levels of activity;
  - v. a proliferation of signs and advertisements.



- In the light of the above concerns, the planning authorities in North Yorkshire have variously framed their farm diversification policies with a view to preventing or minimising the potential for expansion-related problems. These range from a development criterion limiting farm diversification to proposals which "are small in scale and unlikely to expand significantly over the longer term" to criteria seeking to ensure that permitted proposals are "supplementary to" and not "dominant over" on-going agricultural activity. You should check the position in your local area.

#### 5. Traffic generation and highway issues

- Traffic generation is frequently seen as the most important potential adverse effect of a diversification proposal. Its scale and intensity is the root of development control policies in most development plans.
- This concern can relate to individual diversification proposals and to the cumulative impact of a number of

developments in close proximity. Clearly, in these circumstances, someone's development has to be the one which takes conditions beyond the acceptable, even though it may be identical to another development recently granted planning permission.



- In formulating a diversification proposal, it is, therefore, important to assess the traffic and highway implications and to plan accordingly. Planning authorities can control some aspects of these matters through the imposition of conditions on planning permissions (eg the means and details of access onto the public highway, the number and location of parking spaces, the hours of deliveries, etc). It cannot, however, directly control off-site traffic flows, although financial contributions can be negotiated for developers to fund physical works to the highway (eg sight line and junction improvements). If the traffic implications have been under-estimated then there are likely to be subsequent difficulties relating to matters such as parking on the public highway and damage to highway verges.

- Because of the inability to control off-site traffic flows you may find, for certain types of project, that, whatever your view, the planning authority feels obliged to assume that provision should be made for deliveries by the largest size vehicles.

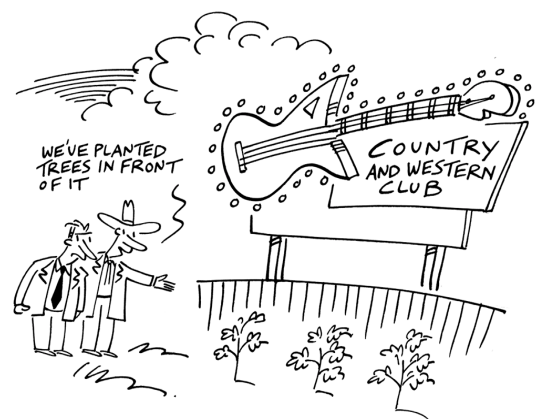
## 6. Landscape issues

- A large proportion of North Yorkshire consists of nationally or regionally important landscapes, mostly recognised by statutory designations. The implications of new development and changes of use in such areas is an important planning consideration. Government policy indicates both that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake and that the priority for rural economic diversification should complement this through the quality of design and the appropriate scale and location of developments.

Landscape issues relate to:-

- i. the effect of a development on the general visual amenity;
- ii. the effect of a development on specific interests; for example, the setting of a feature of historic or cultural significance, or trees of recognised importance; and
- iii. the scope for mitigation and creative planting and management.

- The effects of built development on the landscape derive predominantly from siting and design. It is for this reason that much agricultural development permitted by the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) has to be notified in advance to planning authorities to provide an opportunity for influencing these aspects. The combination of siting, design and colour can be a particularly significant influence on the degree of visual intrusion.
- Developments should be assimilated into the landscape. New buildings should normally form part of a group rather than stand in isolation and should avoid skyline positions, if possible. They should use existing landscape features and topography to blend into the landscape. A well-sited development may benefit from additional screen planting. The visual impact of a poorly situated structure cannot easily be reduced. The design and colour of new development should reflect the tradition of those in the locality. Compatibility rather than camouflage is the objective. The use of particularly reflective materials should generally be avoided. The use of traditional building styles and materials are likely to be especially important in the context of National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the setting of a Listed building, Conservation Area or similar feature.
- If your proposal affects trees and you are uncertain as to their status, you should enquire of the planning authority and be prepared to adjust your proposal accordingly. Trees in particular make a valuable contribution to the landscape either singly or in groups. The planning legislation makes provision for their protection through the mechanism of Tree Preservation Orders. Once a tree is subject to an Order it cannot be felled, uprooted, topped, lopped or damaged without the consent of the local planning authority. If a protected tree is removed either in contravention of the Order or with consent where it is dead or dangerous, the landowner is under a duty to replace it as soon as reasonably possible. Failure to comply with this requirement, or contravention of the Order generally, is an offence.
- It is not the role of the planning process to be prescriptive in terms of design issues but it is appropriate for general guidance and best practice to be promoted through the development plan.



There will be circumstances where it is necessary for the planning authority to secure a high quality of design and to ensure that a development makes a positive contribution to its site and surroundings. This is normally done by attaching conditions to planning permissions requiring separate approval by the planning authority of materials and landscaping. Building work is often complete before any landscaping scheme is implemented but this need not be so. Landscaping is too often a requirement which is forgotten or poorly effected and maintained. Since the requirement for the condition will have stemmed from the visual impact of the completed development, failure to comply may lead to enforcement proceedings.



#### 7. Neighbour amenity and pollution issues

- Changes of use or scale in association with farm diversification proposals can give rise to neighbour concerns about dust, noise, odour, lighting, pests, pollution and hours of work. For this reason, the formulation of any diversification project should be discussed with neighbours and their concerns taken into account. Some aspects of these issues can be controlled through the imposition of planning conditions, but noisy developments generally cannot be rendered noiseless.

- The potential for neighbour and pollution problems is a material consideration in any planning decision. It could be wrongly assumed therefore that, once the planning authority has balanced these interests with the merits of the development and granted planning permission, the development, if undertaken as expected, has a degree of immunity from nuisance actions. However the Courts have held that this is not necessarily the case.

#### 8. Foul water and waste disposal

- The protection of water resources is an important policy objective and most development plans include a policy indicating a general presumption against developments which would prejudice the quality of surface or ground water. This is an especially sensitive issue in rural areas where many properties are not connected to mains sewerage systems.

- New guidance on this subject has been issued by DETR which has indicated that it wishes to encourage the adoption of effective policies, practices and procedures to ensure that past problems associated with non-mains sewerage are not perpetuated in future developments producing domestic sewage. The Environment Agency, when consulted by planning authorities, will therefore be expected to pursue a tougher line than in the past.

assessment where a septic tank is proposed.



- Although primarily aimed at domestic development the guidance covers several other types of development which generate waste water. The approach adopted by the guidance is that non-mains disposal methods should only be used when it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible, on cost and practical grounds, to discharge into a public sewer or to a package sewage treatment plant. This is likely to be the case in many farm-based developments. Where a non-mains disposal method, particularly one involving a septic tank, is proposed, the developer is now required to submit a full drainage assessment with a planning application to demonstrate to the planning authority that there is no risk to the environment, amenity or public health. Several North Yorkshire authorities have decided, with the support of the Environment Agency, not to register planning applications submitted without a drainage

- In view of this requirement, farmers considering projects which would give rise to a need for waste water disposal should consult the planning authority and/or Environment Agency at an early stage. Guidance will be available on the existence of any likely problems and the sources of information on which make a drainage assessment.

**9. Signs and adverts**

- For many farms diversification projects that involve attracting customers or visitors to a particular location, farmers need to erect signs to advertise the presence of their enterprise and to direct people along the highway towards it. This can be a source of difficulty. The local authority is concerned with matters of amenity and public safety. Given sufficient attention to the scale, nature and siting of a sign or advert, most difficulties can usually be overcome.

- Planning authorities have special powers to control signs and advertisements. The question of highway safety is particularly important in relation to advance signs and directional signs. It is illegal to display any advertisement on highway land without the prior consent of the highway authority. Signs on private land need specific planning approval.
- Miscellaneous small notices and signs displayed on premises or buildings as a means of identification, direction or warning, or for the purposes of advertising the existence of a trade or business at the premises and not exceeding 0.3 square metres in size do not need consent.



- Most advertisements, including signs fixed to trailers and other vehicles left in the same position on a permanent basis, require the express consent of the planning authority. If consent is refused, there is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State. If a particular area is regarded as sensitive on amenity grounds the local authority can designate it an "area of special

control". Within such areas, there is a general presumption against any advertisements. This procedure is currently under review.

- DETR produces a free leaflet "Outdoor Advertisements and Signs - A Guide for Advertisers" which is available from your local planning authority.

### Building Regulations are separate from Planning Control

- In addition to controlling development through the planning system, there is a parallel regulatory process to ensure that minimum standards of design and building work are met for the construction of domestic, commercial and industrial buildings. This control relates primarily to the health and safety of people in and around buildings and to matters such as energy and water conservation, disabled access and structural soundness.
- You should not assume that any development permitted under the planning system will automatically meet the requirements of building regulations. A separate application is required. Internal works which do not normally need planning permission will need approval under the building regulations.
- The consent of the local authority is required for works identified in the Regulations. You should obtain professional advice from an architect, structural engineer or building surveyor.
- An explanatory booklet is produced by DETR on Building Regulations and is freely available from your local authority.

### Dwellings

- Farm diversification is not a justification for securing an additional agricultural dwelling. It is a long-standing national

policy that sporadic residential development in the countryside should be avoided. All the North Yorkshire planning authorities follow this approach.

- The only exception relates to circumstances in which it is essential to the proper functioning of an agricultural enterprise for a worker to be readily available on-site at most times, and a house in the nearest village is either unavailable or inappropriate. PPG7 (Annex I) sets out clear and nationally applicable functional and financial tests by which applications for agricultural dwellings should be determined, with an expectation that approval will be the exception rather than the rule.
- The policy guidance makes clear that dwellings on farms should **NOT** be permitted:-
  - i. where the application reflects the personal preferences and circumstances of the individuals concerned;
  - ii. where the justification relates to a non-agricultural activity, even if closely related to farming; for example, food processing;
  - iii. where the agricultural justification is undermined by the absence of any evidence of economic viability in the enterprise;
  - iv. where the need is for a retirement home for a farmer.

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SECTION 3

FARM DIVERSIFICATION

SPECIFIC PROJECTS



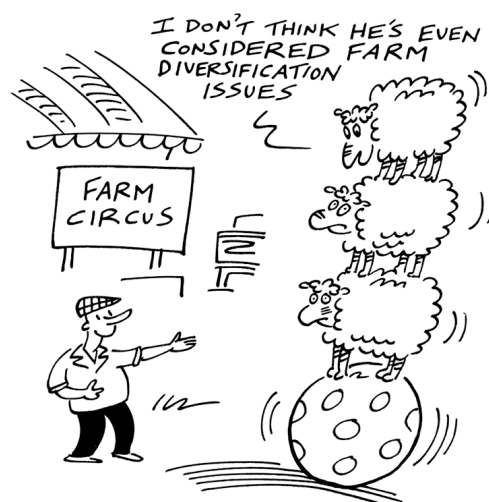
The North Yorkshire authorities wish to support the farming community as far as possible in using the resources and available market opportunities across a wide range of potential farm-based enterprises. There are many factors to be borne in mind and not all farm diversification proposals can be permitted. It is often possible to overcome initial difficulties by negotiation so as to secure a planning permission.

Since specific support for farm diversification within the changing nature of rural planning policy was first introduced in the early 1980s, a considerable number of projects have been successfully established on farms. The variety of types and sizes of projects reflect the diversity of individual skills and aspirations in farming families, the wide variety of resources of land and buildings and location of farms in relation to particular markets and non-farming attractions. The permutations are endless and each development will, in some respect, be unique.

It is not possible for this guide to deal in detail with every possible type of opportunity. However the following pages try to identify the main planning issues relevant to the principal types of farm diversification activity. The advice given provides a sound basis on which to develop a proposal, consult with the local planning authority or to seek professional advice prior to submitting a planning application.

The range of listed projects is drawn from a checklist of typical opportunities produced by MAFF and are arranged in alphabetical order. A number of types of diversification project are examined from a planning perspective.

The guide does not deal with the steps necessary to formulate and assess a business opportunity or suggest that any particular project is commercially sound or acceptable in every situation. Where it exists, reference is made to sources of suitable documentary advice and to relevant sources of professional advice and assistance.



## RETAIL

Craft Centres :	Rural crafts Skill or hobby outlets
Direct Sales :	To trade Sales round Mail order
Farm Shops :	Own produce Local produce Franchise
Food processing :	Smoked meats Home cooking Butchery Ice cream Yoghurt
Pick your own :	Soft fruit Top fruit Vegetables

## SERVICES

Agricultural :	Contract Supply of requisites Repairs Labour
Industrial Workspace :	Office Craft Light Industry
Non-Agricultural :	Local authorities Urban/rural dwellers Local businesses

**Note** : The following pages set out in alphabetical order, planning advice on many of the types of project identified in this table.

## SPORT AND RECREATION

Equestrian :	Livery Riding Stables Pony trekking
Indoor :	Bowls Fitness Centre
Informal :	Picnic site Farm trail
Outdoor :	Golf Sports pitches
Water-based :	Fishing Sailing

## TOURISM

Accommodation :	Bed and breakfast Self-catering Caravan/camping
Leisure Centres :	Farm interpretation Exotic/rare breeds Heritage centre

## LAND-BASED

Animal fibres :	Goat fibre Wool processing
Industrial Crops :	Biomass Bio-diesel
Organic :	Meat Crop Vegetable
Woodland :	Coppice Adventure sports Timber products

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## **AGRICULTURAL SERVICES**

(eg Contracting, Machinery Repairs)

### **Key Resources :**

Existing or new buildings for workspace and to store machinery.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### 1. Policy

Planning permission will be required if the business is a material change from agricultural use.

There are no hard-and-fast rules as to the point at which this change of use is reached. Where, for example, a farmer undertakes field operations for other farmers in the area using his own equipment and storing that equipment in buildings on his farm, that use will be ancillary to agriculture and permission will not be required. If, however, the same farmer sells all his land but keeps his buildings to house the same farm equipment which he now only employs on other farmers' land, there will have been a material change of use of the buildings to an agricultural contractor's yard, which will require planning permission. Obviously with this and other examples there will be a considerable grey area between the extremes. If in doubt, consult with the local planning authority.

#### 2. Technical

Where permission is required, the visual impact of any new buildings and external storage or display areas will be an important consideration.

The impact on the amenities of neighbouring uses will also be important, particularly if the new activity involves increases in noise or traffic levels over existing activities. The local planning authority may seek to attach conditions that reduce such impacts

by restricting the hours of operation or the scale of activity.

There must be adequate access to/egress from the site. The activity should not generate an amount or type of traffic that cannot be accommodated within the capacity of the local road network.

### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Not having sufficient buildings to carry out the activity and store/maintain machines, leading to a proliferation of machines and equipment stored outside.

Inadequate access and parking arrangements in terms of design and capacity so that highway safety is not compromised.



### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

#### 1. Documentary

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

#### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

National Association of Agricultural Contractors, 1st Floor, 8 High Street, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5PL

Tel : 01621 841675

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## BED AND BREAKFAST



### Key Resources :

Spare rooms in an existing dwelling, preferably provided with en-suite bath/shower, although the level of facilities provided may depend on the market that is being targeted. There should be a well-maintained tarmac access road to the house and an adequate nearby area of hardstanding for car parking.

The location of the dwelling will be important to the success of the venture and may determine in large part the market/clientele that is likely to prove most successful. For example, proprietors close to major settlements or employment areas may prefer to target business customers. Others in more remote and attractive countryside might target those seeking to stay "off the beaten track".

Membership of the English Tourism Council's quality assurance accommodation scheme can achieve ratings and listings in web-sites and accommodation guides.

### Planning Issues :

#### 1. Policy

Planning permission will be required if the essential residential nature of the building is altered so that there is a material change of use of the building. Planning permission will generally not be required if the bed and breakfast use is subordinate to the main residential use of the building.

#### 2. Technical

If permission is required, the main concerns of the local planning authority are likely to be to conserve the essential residential character of the unit and area by, for example, control over signs and advertisements. The provision of sufficient car parking may also be important.

### Pitfalls to be Avoided :

Local planning authorities will be concerned that a bed and breakfast business does not expand to the point where the residential nature and character of the area is changed and, if planning permission is required, they may seek to impose conditions limiting the scope for expansion by, for example, limiting the number of bedrooms available for guests.

### Sources of Project Development Advice :

#### 1. Documentary

English Tourism Council (ETC) : The Pink Booklet (legislation affecting tourism accommodation businesses)

ETC : How to Obtain Planning Approval

ETC : Business Information Leaflets (First Steps in Tourism, We're Just Off the Motorway, Signs for Tourist Businesses, Welcoming Disabled Travellers)

ETC : Regional Tourist Facts : Yorkshire

English Tourist Board : Starting a Bed and Breakfast Business

MAFF : Success with Farm-Based Tourist Accommodation : A Guide to Meeting Customer Requirements

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

#### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

English Tourism Council, Thames Tower, Black's Road, Hammersmith, London, W6 9EL  
Tel : 020 8846 9000

Web-site : [www.englishtourism.org.uk](http://www.englishtourism.org.uk)

Yorkshire Tourist Board, 312 Tadcaster Road, York, YO24 1GS. Tel : 01904 707961  
Web-site : [www.ytb.org.uk](http://www.ytb.org.uk)

Farm Holiday Bureau, National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LZ.

Tel : 024 7669 6969 [BACK TO CONTENTS](#)

## CAMPING BARNs AND BUNKHOUSES



### Key Resources :

These should be based in isolated rural buildings. They are likely to have higher occupancy rates if located on or near good walks, especially long distance, regional or national routes or near other attractions such as climbs or nature conservation sites.

Such accommodation is usually very basic. There is no need to provide buildings with vehicular access or servicing beyond basic lighting and cooking facilities.

### Planning Issues

#### 1. Policy

Facilities will mainly be of use within the National Parks and other scenic areas where proposals for the conversion of existing isolated rural buildings to bunkhouses and camping barns for the use of walkers, cyclists and horseriders will generally be permitted.

The building should be large enough to accommodate the use without significant external alterations or rebuilding.

#### 2. Technical

There should generally be no requirements to provide or improve vehicular access to the barn and no requirement for overground utility services.

The building must be capable of conversion without causing adverse visual impacts on its character or setting, or adverse impacts on wildlife habitats.

### Pitfalls to be Avoided :

Avoid upgrading facilities/services to the point where such barns become more

attractive to (particularly) car-borne visitors. Permission is unlikely to be granted for such higher grade accommodation in isolated locations in the National Parks.

### Sources of Project Development Advice :

#### 1. Documentary

English Tourism Council (ETC) : The Pink Booklet (legislation affecting tourism accommodation businesses)

ETC : How to Obtain Planning Approval

ETC : Business Information Leaflets (First Steps in Tourism, We're Just Off the Motorway, Signs for Tourist Businesses, Welcoming Disabled Travellers)

ETC : English Walking Holidays : Tool Kit

ETC : Regional Tourist Facts : Yorkshire

MAFF : Success with Farm-Based Tourist Accommodation : A Guide to Meeting Customer Requirements

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

#### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

Camping and Caravanning Club, Greenfields House, Westwood Way, Coventry, CV4 8JH  
Tel : 024 7669 4995

Web-site : [www.campingcaravanningclub.co.uk](http://www.campingcaravanningclub.co.uk)

Outdoor Industries Association, Morrill House, 58 Station Approach, South Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 6SA.

Tel : 020 8842 1111

English Tourism Council, Thames Tower, Black's Road, Hammersmith, London, W6 9EL.

Tel : 020 8846 9000

Web-site : [www.englishtourism.org.uk](http://www.englishtourism.org.uk)

Yorkshire Tourist Board, 312 Tadcaster Road, York, YO24 1GS

Tel : 01904 707961

Web-site : [www.ytb.org.uk](http://www.ytb.org.uk) [BACK TO CONTENTS](#)

## **EQUESTRIAN DEVELOPMENTS**

(eg Livery Stables, Equestrian Centres, Pony Trekking)

### **Key Resources :**

Such enterprises will generally need a range of existing buildings that are suitable for conversion to stables or space for new purpose-built stables. There must be adequate land available for grazing, turning out and exercise, as appropriate. Many enterprises will depend on a good local bridleway network or other local riding opportunities.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### 1. Policy

Although planning permission is generally not required for the use of land for grazing horses because this is within the definition of agriculture in the 1990 Act, planning permission will be required in most cases for commercial and recreational equestrian developments for the change of use of land from agriculture and the change of use (or new development) of buildings. The planning status of equestrian activity is summarised in Annex F to PPG7. The guidance emphasises that the Government wishes to see a positive approach towards planning applications for horse-based developments which respect the rural environment.

Planning policies in North Yorkshire are generally supportive of new equestrian developments. Proposals in designated areas (such as National Parks and AONBs) are likely to be the subject of particularly rigorous assessment by the planning authority.

Normally, policies encourage the re-use of existing buildings, particularly so in the National Parks where proposals should not give rise to a demand for significant new

buildings or new residential accommodation. Any ancillary development (new buildings, manèges etc) should be well related to existing development to minimise its prominence in the landscape.

#### 2. Technical

The effects on residential and neighbour amenity will be important considerations, particularly in terms of potential traffic, visual, noise, light and odour nuisance. Applications should include proposals to minimise such impacts. The local planning authority may impose conditions to control these matters.

The proposal should not generate a type or amount of traffic that could not safely be accommodated on local roads. The access to/egress from the site and parking should be adequate, particularly for vehicles and horse boxes on the site. Proposals should minimise the need for horse riding on or across roads in such a way to compromise road safety and the free flow of traffic.

Any new buildings and other development should generally be grouped with existing buildings so as to minimise their visual impact and will be expected to be designed to high standards. The visual impact and hours of use of any manèges that are floodlit will need to be considered.

The potential noise effects on neighbouring uses associated with the use of outdoor arenas or public address systems should be considered. There must be adequate foul water drainage and adequate proposals for the storage and disposal of manure.

#### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Ensure that the activity is not likely to generate types and levels of traffic that cannot be accommodated on local roads, particularly bearing in mind possible future expansion of the business. The local planning authority may seek to control the

scale of the operation by the use of conditions, such as limiting the number of loose boxes or horses at the stables, the type of activity undertaken or hours of operation.

Avoid potential conflicts with other countryside users, especially by avoiding the heavy use of bridleways.

If the proposals are likely to require residential accommodation in order to supervise them, locate new stable blocks close to an existing residence within your control which can provide the necessary level of supervision, rather than assume that permission will be granted for a new dwelling adjacent to the buildings.

Riding establishments are subject to supplementary controls – a license under The Riding Establishments Act 1964 and 1970 and, where remote or moorland riding is involved, an Adventure Activity Centre Licence under the Activity Centre (Young Persons Safety) Act 1995.

#### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

##### **1. Documentary**

A full range of publications dealing with all aspects of establishing and running equestrian businesses is available from the British Horse Society bookshop - Website : [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk)

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification :  
A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

##### **2. Professional and Advisory Contacts**

Association of British Riding Schools,  
Queen's Chambers, 38/40 Queen Street  
Penzance, Cornwall, TR18 4BH  
Tel : 01736 369440  
Web-site : [www.abrs.org](http://www.abrs.org)

British Horse Society  
Stoneleigh Deer Park  
Kenilworth  
Warwickshire CV8 2XZ  
Tel : 08710 202244  
Web-site : [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk)



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## FARM SHOPS

### **Key Resources :**

Existing or new buildings for the shop premises/stores. Electricity, water supplies and drainage. Toilet facilities for staff and the public.

The site needs to be well related to the road network or close to a sizeable settlement. It should be well signposted. There should be a good access road to the shop and enough land available for a car park.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### 1. Policy

Planning permission is not required if the shop sells the farmer's own produce from the farm (unless that produce has been substantially altered or adapted for sale), and if the amount of imported goods for sale is insignificant (de minimis principle). Otherwise, planning permission is required. It will be a significant advantage, therefore, if the shop supports or is based on an enterprise that produces goods that can be sold to the public in their raw or near raw condition (eg fruit and vegetables).

Local planning authorities are concerned that new farm shops should not jeopardise existing village shops and, where granting planning permission, will normally seek to control the scale of the operation and the scope for expansion by way of conditions attached to the permission, typically limiting the range of goods sold.

Considerable preference is given by the local planning authorities to accommodating farm shops in existing buildings rather than in new buildings. In the Green Belts, no new buildings for farm shops will normally be permitted. It is often a good idea to get the authority's written opinion, to avoid disputes later.

#### 2. Technical

The proposal should not have a detrimental impact on road safety and the free flow of traffic on the nearby highway network.

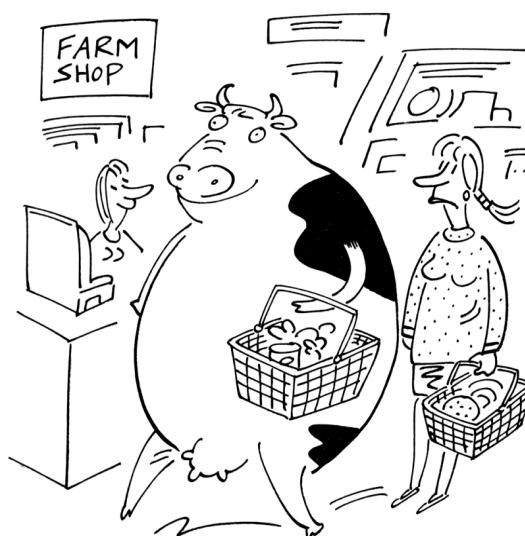
There must be adequate access to/egress from the site and adequate car parking arrangements.

The visual impact of new buildings and/or the conversion of existing buildings will be important considerations. Local planning authorities will normally expect any new buildings to be grouped with existing buildings and will expect a high standard of design for both new buildings and conversions.

The visual impact of signs and advertisements will be an important planning consideration and will help in creating an appropriate image.

#### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Do not sell a significant proportion of produce from another farm holding (even if that other holding is in the same ownership) or any other source without first having obtained planning permission for a farm shop.



Ensure that there are sufficient buildings available for all the shop's needs (particularly for the storage of goods and packaging, etc) so that it is not necessary to store items outside.

Avoid the proliferation of advertisements and advance directional signs and multiple signs at the entrance.

Ensure that your access and parking arrangements are adequate in terms of design and capacity so that highway safety is not compromised.

#### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

##### 1. Documentary

MAFF : Success with Farm Shops :  
A Guide to Farm Retailing

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification :  
A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified  
Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

##### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

Farm Retail Association  
The Greenhouse  
PO Box 575  
Southampton  
SO15 7ZB  
Tel : 023 8036 2150

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## **FORMAL OUTDOOR**

### **SPORTS**

(eg Golf/Sports pitches)

#### **Key Sources :**

These sports are dependent on land rather than buildings. Each will have its own physical requirements in terms of the type of terrain and the area of land required. Usually ancillary buildings will be required for facilities such as clubhouses and changing room.

Generally, to be viable, these activities need to be within a reasonable drive of substantial centres of population, have good access from the major road network, and be located some distance from existing similar facilities.

#### **Planning Issues :**

##### 1. Policy

Planning permission is required in all cases for the change of use of land from agriculture to a recreational use.

Preference is normally given to sites near settlements rather than in the open countryside, as these are likely to be more accessible to the public and may have less harmful effects on the landscape. Preference is also normally given to sites that are accessible to the public by foot, cycle or public transport.

In the National Parks, there is a presumption against the provision of recreational facilities that are not based on the existing characteristics or features of the area or that conflict with priority conservation objectives. Generally, new formal sports provision aimed primarily at attracting visitors from outside the area will not be permitted in the National Parks.

Similarly, proposals in designated areas (Green Belts, AONBs, Park and Gardens of Historic or Landscape Interest, SSSIs, etc) will generally be permitted only where they are compatible with the objectives behind these designations. Proposals in or on sites of nature conservation, archaeological and historic importance, or resulting in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (MAFF definition), are unlikely to be permitted.

Where ancillary buildings are required, preference is normally given to the re-use of existing buildings and to small rather than large-scale new buildings where existing buildings are not available. Buildings should be shown to be essential to the functioning of the proposal and be of a high standard of design.

Golf course proposals have had a history of proposals for associated development seeking to help finance the project - typically hotel, conference or housing developments - but policies in North Yorkshire now require applicants to show that the proposal will be viable in its own right and that such enabling development will not be required.

##### 2. Technical

The potential visual impact of the proposal and the potential effects on the character and appearance of the landscape will be primary considerations, particularly in the cases of golf courses and driving ranges. Important landscape features (eg walls, hedgerows, woods and wetlands) should be retained and managed and landscaping should reflect the area's existing character in form and choice of species. Further, any floodlighting for sports pitches and driving ranges should not be obtrusive after dark and detrimental to the area's rural character.

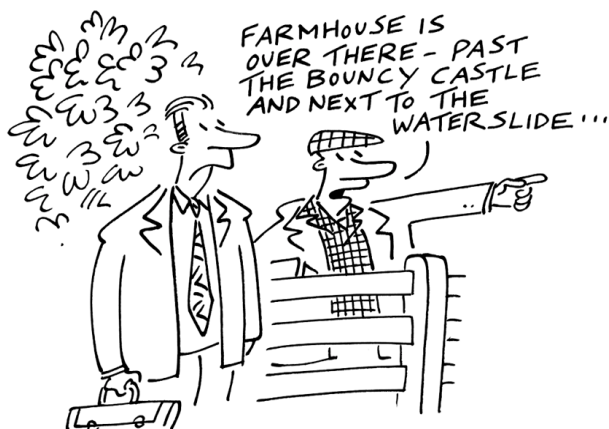
Proposals should indicate a course layout (showing buildings, accesses, parking areas), landscaping scheme (existing and proposed features and species), earthworks plan (existing and proposed topography), drainage and irrigation plan, wildlife plan (existing and proposed habitats) and, in the case of driving ranges and some sports pitches, a lighting scheme (number and intensity of floodlights),

The volume of traffic generated by the proposal should be within the capacity of the road network, and the proposal should not require any changes to the local road network that would affect the character of the area. Access to/egress from the site should be adequate and there should be adequate parking provision for vehicles.

The amenity of residents and other users of the countryside (particularly those using the public rights of way network) should not be unacceptably affected.

#### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Give particular attention to major impacts such as traffic or lighting. Local planning authorities may seek to control operations by the use of conditions attached to a planning permission restricting the hours of operation and the scale and nature of activities. They may also impose conditions restricting the future expansion of the proposal.



#### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

##### 1. Documentary

MAFF : Success with Sporting Enterprises on Farms : A Guide to Farmers and Landowners

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

##### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

English Sports Council  
16 Upper Woburn Place  
London WC1H 0QP  
Tel : 020 7273 1500

Web-site : [www.english.sports.gov.uk](http://www.english.sports.gov.uk)

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## **INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL USES**

### **Key Resources :**

Existing farm buildings, either traditional or modern and in a generally sound condition.

Existing access and services to the building(s) and an adequate hardstanding area for vehicle parking.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### **1. Policy**

Planning permission will be required in all cases.

Normally planning authorities try to steer most new industrial and commercial development towards specific employment areas. However, to encourage farm and rural diversification, the conversion of existing farm and rural buildings to employment uses will generally be acceptable, subject to a number of provisos.

Both traditional and modern buildings may be converted to employment use, although local planning authorities would not normally wish to extend the life of modern buildings erected under agricultural permitted development rights and which have a significant visual impact. In such cases, proposals should seek to improve the external appearance of buildings by, for example, reductions in scale, changes in colour and materials and additional landscaping.

In the National Parks, preference is given to the conversion of buildings that are within existing groups of buildings because the conversion of isolated buildings is more difficult to achieve without causing an adverse impact on the countryside.

There is no need to demonstrate that the existing agricultural or rural building is redundant for its original use. However, in cases where a new farm building has been constructed with the benefit of permitted development rights but has not been used for its stated purpose, applications for a change of use are unlikely to be successful and enforcement action may be taken.

If the conversion proposal is likely to lead to a need for a replacement farm building or there is concern about the impact of the new farm building or buildings on the landscape, local planning authorities may attach a condition to the permission removing permitted development rights for new farm buildings on the holding.

#### **2. Technical**

Generally, the building(s) should be structurally sound and capable of conversion without major rebuilding. Any conversions will be expected to be carried out to a high standard of design and, if the building is Listed, Listed Building consent will also be required for its conversion.

The building(s) should also be sufficiently large to accommodate the proposed use(s) without requiring major extensions.

There should not be an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. Aim to minimise the visual impact of the building, outside storage and vehicle parking.

The development should not generate a type or amount of traffic that could not be accommodated on local rural roads. The access to/egress from the site should be adequate, and there should be adequate vehicle parking and turning areas on site.

The potential effects on residential and neighbour amenity could be an important factor. Proposals should not generate additional dust, noise, light, air or water pollution. In cases where such impacts are likely the proposals should include effective mitigating measures, including control of hours of operation. The local planning authority is likely to impose conditions on a planning permission to control and minimise such impacts or, where these would not be effective, refuse permission.



There may be impacts on nature conservation from converting traditional buildings which have become roosting and nesting sites for bats and barn owls. Proposals to mitigate such impacts will be required.

#### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Make sure the buildings are large enough and that there is enough space to accommodate all the needs of the activity. Avoid a significant amount of outside storage (particularly bearing in mind the possible future expansion of the activity). Where some outside storage is ancillary to the main use, the local planning authority may require additional proposals for screening and landscaping to minimise the visual impact.

In cases where the local planning authority is concerned about the potential scale and expansion of the enterprise, it may impose conditions on a planning permission which restrict the future level of activity.

Make sure that the buildings are structurally sound and can be converted to the appropriate use.

#### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

##### 1. Documentary

Countryside Agency : Design of Rural Workplace Buildings

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

##### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

The Countryside Agency, 2nd Floor  
Victoria Wharf  
4 The Embankment, Sovereign Street,  
Leeds LS1 4BA  
Tel : 01242 521381

Small Business Service, Yorkshire Forward –  
Yorkshire and Humber Regional  
Development Agency, Victoria House,  
2 Victoria Place  
Leeds LS11 5AE  
Tel : 0113 3949687

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## LAND BASED ENTERPRISES

### Key Resources :

Examples include novel crops and livestock, turf production, biomass (usually willow coppice) for energy and woodland establishment.

Each proposal will have its own specific requirements for land and buildings.

### Planning Issues :

#### 1. Policy

The use of land for novel or alternative crops or livestock will generally not require planning permission. Buildings can benefit from permitted development rights under Part 6 (Agricultural Buildings and Operations) and Part 7 (Forestry Buildings and Operations) of the GPDO, but you should be aware of the definitions in the "small print". Buildings for livestock within 400m of the nearest point of "protected" (generally inhabited) buildings or their curtilage will require planning permission.

#### 2. Technical

Where permission is required for new buildings, these should be sited within or adjacent to an existing group of buildings. Consideration should also be given to the design and materials of the building, and to the potential to reduce visual impact by screening and landscaping.

### Pitfalls to be Avoided :

It is important to be aware of the provisions under which agricultural buildings can benefit from permitted development rights and of the system of submitting plans for prior approval of details (siting, design and external appearance).

Some exotic livestock are subject to separate regulations under the Dangerous Wild Animals legislation and require licences from the local authority.



### Sources of Project Development Advice :

#### 1. Documentary

Forestry Commission, 1998 : Introducing Farm Woodlands : An Essential Guide (jointly produced by MAFF and the Forestry Authority).

#### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

Association of Professional Foresters, 7-9 West Street, Belford, Northumberland, NE70 7QA  
Tel : 01892 890276

British Christmas Tree Growers Association, 18 Cluny Place, Edinburgh, EH10 4RL  
Tel : 0131 4470499

Forestry Authority, England National Office, Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge, CB1 2DU  
Tel : 01223 314546

Timber Growers Association, 5 Dublin Street Lane South, Edinburgh, EH1 3PX  
Tel : 0131 538 7111

Various societies for exotic livestock (ostriches, llamas, alpacas, wild boar, etc).

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## **PERMANENT HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION**

### **Key Resources :**

Traditional and rural building(s) in a structurally sound condition and/or an existing residential property suitable for conversion. These must be provided with electricity, water supplies and drainage. Access should be adequate, and there should be sufficient car parking.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### 1. Policy

Planning permission is not required if an existing residential unit is let for self-catering holiday purposes. However, planning permission is required for the conversion of existing buildings or for new buildings.

Normally, permission will not be granted for new buildings for holiday accommodation outside existing settlements.

For conversions, generally (but particularly in the National Parks) the building should be worthy of retention for its visual, architectural or historic value.

#### 2. Technical

The building should be structurally sound and capable of conversion without major rebuilding. Any alterations to the building should be sympathetic to its design, character and materials. If the building is "Listed", a separate consent will also be required for physical works.

The building should be sufficiently large without requiring major extensions or alterations. Permitted development rights for subsequent alterations will normally be withdrawn.

The provision of services should not be visually unacceptable or intrusive.

Access to/egress from the site should be adequate and there should be adequate off-road vehicle parking provided.

Some traditional buildings may be roosting and nesting sites for bats and barn owls. Proposals to mitigate any impacts on these species will be required.

### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Minimise the impact of the holiday accommodation by restricting its area and making it as unobtrusive as possible. If possible, design the layout so that it is capable of being screened and provide additional landscaping, if appropriate.

Ensure that any storage or garaging needs can be met within buildings.



### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

#### 1. Documentary

English Tourism Council (ETC) : The Pink Booklet (legislation affecting tourism accommodation businesses)

## Documentary (continued)

ETC : How to Obtain Planning Approval

ETC : Business Information Leaflets (First Steps in Tourism, We're Just Off the Motorway, Signs for Tourist Businesses, Welcoming Disabled Travellers)

ETC : Regional Tourist Facts : Yorkshire  
English Tourist Board : Starting a Self-Catering Business

MAFF : Success with Farm-Based Tourist Accommodation : A Guide to Meeting Customer Requirements

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

## 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

English Tourism Council, Thames Tower,  
Black's Road, Hammersmith  
London W6 9EL  
Tel : 020 8846 9000  
Web-site : [www.englishtourism.org.uk](http://www.englishtourism.org.uk)

Yorkshire Tourist Board  
312 Tadcaster Road  
York YO24 1GS  
Tel : 01904 707961  
Web-site : [www.ytb.org.uk](http://www.ytb.org.uk)

Farm Holiday Bureau  
National Agricultural Centre  
Stoneleigh Park  
Warwickshire CV8 2LZ  
Tel : 024 7669 6969

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## **PICK YOUR OWN**

### **Key Resources :**

The site's location is an important factor in success. It should be close to a sizeable settlement or on a well-used road. The site should be well signposted and there should be good access to a clearly designated car parking area.

The site itself should be relatively compact, with clear internal directional signs to the different crops. A programme of picking times for different crops (as leaflets or signs) is helpful to customers. The land itself should be of a suitable quality for the proposed crops. A building will usually be required for weighing, takings and the storage of punnets, signs, etc.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### 1. Policy

The use of the land itself for a pick your own unit falls within agriculture and will not normally require planning permission. However, permission will be required for any new associated buildings, new or amended accesses and signposting.

#### 2. Technical

The main technical concerns arising from a pick your own unit are likely to be related to highway matters, especially to ensure that the type and design of the access, and the volume of traffic generated, will not compromise safety on the adjacent highway.

The visual impact of signs and new buildings will be important considerations.

### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Avoid the proliferation of advertisements, advance directional signs and signs at the entrance.

Ensure that your access and parking arrangements are adequate in terms of design and capacity so that highway safety and customer convenience are not compromised.



### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

#### 1. Documentary

MAFF : Success with Farm Shops : A Guide to Farm Retailing

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

#### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

Farm Retail Association  
The Greenhouse  
PO Box 575  
Southampton SO15 7ZB  
Tel : 023 8036 2150

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## **POTENTIAL DISTURBANCE SPORTS**

(eg Clay Pigeon Shooting, Motorbike Scrambling, 4-Wheel Drive Meetings, Powered Water Sports and War/Adventure Games)

### **Key Resources :**

Each sport will have its own physical requirements. Adventure or war games require a significant area of woodland or cover. Motor sports often require undulating terrain. Powered water sports can be sited in flooded former mineral workings.

Most activities will require ancillary buildings for facilities, hospitality and storage.

Proximity to the catchment area is important. Good access from the major road network and adequate car parking is required.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### **1. Policy**

Many of these activities can benefit from permitted development rights for the temporary use of land for any purpose and for moveable structures associated with that permitted use. The General Permitted Development Order 1995 restricts these uses to a total of 28 days in any calendar year (to cover all uses), of which no more than 14 days in total may be for motor car and motorcycle racing.

If the use is within a building or the curtilage of a building, then planning permission will be required. If the use is in an SSSI, any motor sports, clay pigeon shooting and war games require planning permission. Any permanent buildings, structures, new accesses and car parks will need planning permission.

In cases where planning permission is required (for more than the temporary periods granted by permitted development rights or for permanent structures in association with temporary uses), the National Park Authorities have indicated that there will be a presumption against disturbance sports. They are likely to conflict with priority conservation objectives of National Parks, are not dependent on the Parks' special qualities, will not further the quiet enjoyment of the Parks and are likely to damage or disturb the Parks' special qualities.

Similarly, proposals in other designated areas will generally not be permitted where they are incompatible with the objectives behind these designations. Proposals in or on sites of nature conservation, archaeological and historic importance are unlikely to be permitted.

Preference is given to the re-use of existing buildings for ancillary activities and, in turn, to small rather than large-scale new buildings where these are required.

#### **2. Technical**

Clearly, there is a high potential for nuisance from these uses, affecting the character of the area, neighbouring land uses and residents in terms of hours of operation, noise, visual intrusion, traffic, dust, fumes and smell. Proposals should identify the type and level of potential nuisance and provide mitigation to reduce impacts to acceptable levels (eg noise could be reduced by physical measures or changes to the operation or location of the activities).

The volume of traffic generated should be within the capacity of the road network. The access to/egress from the site should be adequate and there should be adequate parking provision for vehicles.

The visual impact of the activity will be important, and applications should consider the potential for screening and additional landscaping, if appropriate.

#### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

If noise levels (or other potential nuisance) cannot be reduced to acceptable levels, the local planning authority may seek to control operations by the use of conditions attached to a planning permission restricting, for example, the hours of operation and the scale and nature of activities.

The local planning authority may also be concerned about the potential expansion of the enterprise and the associated traffic, noise and visual effects. It may seek to impose conditions restricting the future scale of activity.



#### **Sources of Project Development Advice :**

##### **1. Documentary**

MAFF : Success with Sporting Enterprises on Farms : A Guide to Farmers and Landowners

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

##### **2. Professional and Advisory Contacts**

Clay Pigeon Shooting Association  
Earlstrees Court  
Earlstees Road  
Corby  
Northamptonshire NN17 4AX  
Tel : 01536 443566  
Web-site : [www.cpsa.co.uk](http://www.cpsa.co.uk)

English Sports Council  
16 Upper Woburn Place  
London WC1H 0QP  
Tel : 020 7273 1500  
Web-site : [www.english.sports.gov.uk](http://www.english.sports.gov.uk)

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## **PROCESSING FARM**

### **PRODUCE**

#### **Key Issues :**

Existing or new buildings for the processing activities and the storage of materials, packaging and produce. Electricity, water supplies and drainage. Where staff are employed, facilities will need to be provided for them.

Adequate access road and turning area for large vehicles. Hardstanding car parking area for staff.

Where the processed food is sold on the premises, the planning authority will normally wish to control the scale of the operations, perhaps limiting the range of goods sold, so as to try and protect village shops.

#### **Planning Issues :**

##### **1. Policy**

Planning permission is not required if the processing activity is ancillary to agriculture or insignificant (the de minimis principle). If in doubt you should check with your local planning authority.

However, planning permission will be required if a "material change of use" occurs. Generally, this would happen if the produce for sale has entailed manufacturing or processing. For example, fruit and vegetables can be sold in their raw state but if they are sold cooked, processed, frozen, sliced or diced, planning permission will be required. The sale of butchered meat and meat products, processed milk and milk products will generally require planning permission.

Preference is given by the local planning authorities to the (re)-use of existing buildings but new buildings may be acceptable if they are within or adjacent to an existing group of buildings and if the activity proposed cannot be accommodated in suitably converted or adapted buildings.

##### **2. Technical**

The activity should not generate an undue amount or type of traffic that could affect road safety or the free flow of traffic on the local road network. This is particularly the case where an activity would increase the number of heavy goods vehicles visiting the premises.

There must be adequate access to/egress from the site, adequate car parking arrangements for staff and turning areas for heavy goods vehicles.

The effects of the activity on residential and neighbour amenity will be important. Proposals should not generate additional noise, light, air or water pollution. Hours of work may be an important consideration near residential areas. If adverse impacts are felt to be likely the local planning authority may refuse permission or attach conditions on, for example, the hours of working or maximum noise levels. The visual impact of new buildings, or conversions of, or extensions to, existing buildings will be an important consideration.

#### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Clarify whether planning permission is required in your particular case, as usually this will depend on the nature and scale of the individual processing activity. If it is established that permission is not required, because the activity is either de minimis or is ancillary to agriculture, clarify if possible the point at which permission may become necessary through growth of the activity.

Ensure that there are adequate and sufficient buildings for all the requirements of the enterprise.

Avoid the proliferation of advertisements, advance directional signs and multiple signs at the entrance.

Ensure that access and parking and turning arrangements are adequate in terms of design and capacity so that highway safety is not compromised.



## Sources of Project Development Advice :

### 1. Documentary

MAFF : Success with a Small Food Business : A Guide to Starting, Developing and Expanding Your Business

MAFF : Food Safety Act 1990 and you : Guides for the Food Industry, for Caterers and their Employees, and for Farmers and Growers

MAFF : Food Safety Act Codes of Practice : various

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

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# **RECREATIONAL TOURING CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITES**

## **Key Resources :**

A location in an area with local opportunities for countryside recreation or other attractions. Good and well signposted access from the highway network.

Well-screened site capable of further screening or landscaping.

Services, fire safety provisions and sanitary facilities will need to be provided in all cases to a level appropriate to the scale of the enterprise.

## **Planning Issues :**

### 1. Policy

#### General

Caravan sites are controlled by separate planning legislation and standards legislation in the form of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. A caravan site therefore requires both planning permission and a site licence before it can operate.

This framework of control covers:-

- Touring caravan sites, where the use is often restricted to the Spring-Autumn period;
- Static caravan sites which are permanent, but where the period of occupation may also be restricted;
- Static caravan sites for permanent residential use.

A caravan site is defined as any land in which a caravan is stationed for human habitation, together with land used in association. This framework of control does not cover caravan storage, which needs to be the subject of separate planning permission.

A site licence has to be applied for separately and can only be acquired following the granting of planning permission, normally within two months. While planning permission attaches to the land, the site licence is held by the occupier of the land and is non-transferable without the prior consent of the local authority in its role as licensing authority.

The local authority can attach conditions to a site licence controlling the type and number of caravans; their size, condition and positioning on a site; the provision of landscaping measures and the provision of adequate fire safety and sanitary facilities (Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 – Model Standards).

There are some circumstances in which a site licence is not required (see Schedule 1 of the 1960 Act). The majority of these are also granted permitted development rights in the GPDO 1995 (Schedule 2 Part 5) :

- Use for stationing a single touring caravan for no more than two consecutive nights and for no more than 28 days in a year;
- Use for stationing up to three caravans on a holding of at least five acres for no more than 28 days in a year;

- Use as a caravan site of land occupied by an exempted organisation (eg the Caravan Club) or use for not more than five caravans at a time of a site certified by an exempted organisation, or use as a caravan site for not more than five nights for a meeting organised by an exempted organisation;
- Seasonal stationing of caravans for accommodation for agricultural or forestry workers;
- Use as a caravan site for travelling showmen whilst travelling (but not as winter quarters).

Planning permission will be required in all cases for ancillary permanent buildings.

### North Yorkshire

Whilst most authorities permit the provision of camping and touring caravan sites, subject to proposals meeting specified criteria, most will only permit proposals in sensitive/designated areas (Green Belts, SSSIs, AONBs, Special Landscape Areas, Parks or Gardens of Historic or Landscape Interest, etc) in exceptional circumstances. Where acceptable, proposals are likely to be small scale, and require higher standards of design, layout and landscaping.

In most cases, preference will be given to small sites over large sites.

Further, proposals for new camping or caravan sites will generally not be permitted in the National Parks (although small tent sites/backpackers' campsites of no more than 10 tents may be permitted).

Small scale certificated caravan sites in the National Parks will be supported provided they are not prominent, are well screened, and do not require access improvements, new permanent buildings or other significant site works.

## 2. Technical

Proposals should not harm the amenities of local residents through visual impact, traffic congestion or safety, noise, etc.

The Environment Agency is expressing increasing concern about the risk attached to the stationing of caravans in areas liable to flood. Planning permission in such areas will be increasingly difficult to obtain.

The site should generally be well screened by landform and existing landscaping. Additional landscaping will also normally be required.

There should be good access to the road network, and the level of traffic generated should be able to be accommodated safely on the local highway network.

Impacts on sites of nature conservation, archaeological or historic importance should be avoided.

### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

The local planning authorities will be concerned to ensure that the site is not at risk from flooding and does not expand to a scale whereby significant visual, traffic or amenity problems are caused and may therefore wish to impose conditions on a planning permission limiting the future scale of the enterprise.



## Sources of Project Development Advice :

### 1. Documentary

English Tourism Council (ETC) :

The Pink Booklet (legislation affecting tourism accommodation businesses)

ETC : How to Obtain Planning Permission

ETC : Market Prospects for Caravan Park Holidays

ETC : Business Information Leaflets (First Steps in Tourism, We're Just Off the Motorway, Signs for Tourist Businesses, Welcoming Disabled Travellers)

ETC : Regional Tourist Facts : Yorkshire  
English Tourist Board : Developing a touring caravan or camping site

MAFF : Success with Farm-Based Tourist Accommodation : A Guide to Meeting Customer Requirements

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification : A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

Camping and Caravanning Club

Greenfields House

Westwood Way

Coventry CV4 8JH

Tel : 024 7669 4995

Website:[www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk](http://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk)

Outdoor Industries Association

Morritt House

58 Station Approach

South Ruislip

Middlesex HA4 6SA

Tel : 020 8842 1111

Caravan Club

East Grinstead House

East Grinstead

West Sussex

RH19 1UA

Tel : 01342 326944

English Tourism Council

Thames Tower

Black's Road

Hammersmith

London W6 9EL

Tel : 020 8846 9000

Web-site : [www.englishtourism.org.uk](http://www.englishtourism.org.uk)

Yorkshire Tourist Board

312 Tadcaster Road

York

YO24 1GS

Tel : 01904 707961

Web-site : [www.ytb.org.uk](http://www.ytb.org.uk)

Farm Holiday Bureau

Notional Agricultural Centre

Stoneleigh Park

Warwickshire

CV8 2LZ

Tel : 024 7660 6969

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## WATER-BASED RECREATION

(eg Fishing and Boating)

### **Key Resources :**

Each activity will have its own requirements in terms of the area of water required. The location of the site in relation to the target market will be important. Activities such as power boating and water-skiing should preferably be located close to significant areas of population. Fishing lakes can be more remote.

For most activities, good access from the highway and a sufficient area for car parking will be important. Some activities will require huts or other buildings.

### **Planning Issues :**

#### 1. Policy

Informal recreational uses of rivers and lakes, such as angling, motor cruising, canoeing and sailing do not involve development and do not require planning permission. However, permission is required for the creation of a fishing or other recreational lake, for the change of use of existing buildings, for any new buildings associated with these uses and for other ancillary development (new accesses and car parking).

Fish farming for food can benefit from permitted development rights under Part 6 of the GPDO, subject to various limitations. Local planning authorities aim to direct more intensive water-based recreational activities - such as marinas and facilities for power boating, water-skiing, jet-skiing, or mooring facilities for motor cruising (toilets, shops, fuelling services, etc) - to particular areas of concentration, often based on existing centres of activity, rather than encourage the spread of such facilities.

#### 2. Technical

Development should not generate levels of traffic that cannot safely be accommodated on local roads. Access to/egress from the site should be adequate and there should be adequate off-road parking provision.

The amenity of residents and other users of the countryside (particularly those using the public rights of way network) should not be unacceptably affected.

The proposal should not affect sites of nature conservation, archaeological or historic interest.

### **Pitfalls to be Avoided :**

Do not assume that on-farm winter water storage reservoirs, constructed for agricultural purposes can always be used for water sports without the need for planning permission.



## Sources of Project Development Advice :

### 1. Documentary

MAFF : Success with Sporting Enterprises  
on Farms : A Guide to Farmers and  
Landowners

MAFF : Success with Farm Diversification :  
A Step by Step Guide

MAFF : Success with Marketing Diversified  
Enterprises : Concepts and Applications

### 2. Professional and Advisory Contacts

Association of Stillwater Game Fishery  
Managers  
Batham Lake Trout Fishery  
Batham Abbey  
Lamberhurst  
Kent  
TN3 3BG  
Tel : 01892 890276

English Sports Council  
16 Upper Woburn Place  
London  
WC1H 0QP  
Tel: 0207273 1500  
Web-site : [www.english.sports.gov.uk](http://www.english.sports.gov.uk)

National Federation of Anglers  
Halliday House  
Egginton Junction  
Derbyshire  
DE65 6GU  
Tel : 01283 734735

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## WORKING FROM HOME/RENTING OFFICE SPACE

### Key Resources :

Capacity within existing residential premises.

### Planning Issues :

#### 1. Policy

Planning permission will be required if there is a material change from pure residential use. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis and is a question of scale. For example, the use of a room in the dwelling for the householder's business purposes with minimal impact from the business activity (in terms of parking, visitors, storage, noise, etc) is unlikely to require planning permission whereas the dedicated provision of office space for a business which employs other people, receives visitors and requires parking space or storage will require permission. Where permission is required, local planning authorities will normally stipulate that the office/business use remains ancillary to the residential use.

#### 2. Technical

The level of traffic generated by the activity will be an important consideration.

Activities that generate significant traffic from employees and the movement of goods may not be permitted.

### Pitfalls to be Avoided :

Local planning authorities will be concerned that businesses do not expand to the point whereby the residential nature and character of the area is changed - particularly for businesses that employ staff, require storage space, and generate traffic from staff and from importing and

distributing goods. They may therefore seek to condition any planning permission to restrict such expansion by, for example, limiting the approval solely to the person who occupies the dwelling and undertakes the activity.

Businesses that expand significantly would normally be expected to relocate to a building with existing business or employment uses.



### Sources of Project Development Advice :

#### 1. Professional and Advisory Contacts

The Countryside Agency  
2nd Floor  
Victoria Wharf  
4 The Embankment  
Sovereign Street  
Leeds LS1 4BA  
Tel : 01242 521381

Small Business Service  
Yorkshire Forward  
Yorkshire and Humber Regional  
Development Agency  
Victoria House  
2 Victoria Place  
Leeds LS11 5AE  
Tel : 0113 3949687

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