



Stables and Manèges

These guidelines are intended for people who want to build stables and/or a manège near their dwelling because of their private equestrian leisure interest and require planning permission from the Council. The advice and design principles in this Guidance Note seek to ensure that this type of equestrian development is sympathetic to the nature of the existing dwelling in terms of its siting and appearance and has due regard of the potential impact of equestrian uses on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers. The advice and design principles also seek to avoid harming the character of the surrounding area and, in particular, rural landscapes of acknowledged special value.

The scope of this guidance relates to non-commercial recreational equestrian development. This includes horses and ponies in private ownership, where they are generally kept in a field on their own, rather than in a larger complex. Larger scale commercial livery or other business uses involving horses, although subject to broadly similar planning principles, fall outside the terms of this guidance and are dealt with by existing development plan policies and Government advice.

In instances where planning permission from the Council is not actually required, which will normally be infrequent, it is hoped that the guidelines will highlight sound principles that can be incorporated into the design of stables and manèges.

1. Do I need to make a planning application?

1.1 The erection of stables, associated tack-room and feed-store buildings and the installation of manèges on agricultural land will require planning permission from the Council for the change of use of the land and the new building work involved. **1.2** Stables located within the residential curtilage of a dwelling that are erected for horses kept as ‘pet animals’ may, in certain instances, benefit from “permitted development” rights under town and country planning legislation and may therefore not require planning permission from the Council. **1.3** You are advised, in all cases, to obtain written advice from the Council’s Strategic Planning Unit at the earliest opportunity to find out whether you need to make a planning application (and any related applications). On-line advice is also available via the planning home page on the Council’s web-site (www.ashford.gov.uk) and also via the Government’s “Planning Portal” (www.planningportal.gov.uk). Both sites offer comprehensive guidance on how the planning system works.

1.4 Finally, it is also important to remember that you may need separate approval for new horse related outbuildings under the Building Regulations. You are welcome to discuss your scheme with the Council's Building Control Surveyors (Tel: 01233 – 330282) or take alternative professional advice.

2. Which factors will the Council take into account?

2.1 The design advice and guidance in this document will be a material consideration when the Council decides your application.

2.2 The planning policy background is set out in government guidance (existing Planning Policy Guidance Notes and their proposed replacements known as Planning Policy Statements) and also the Development Plan/Local Development Framework. Adopted planning policies in such documents will play a key role in helping determine your application.

2.3 You may therefore also wish to read this Guidance Note in conjunction with the Ashford Borough Council Local Plan 2000, which contains general environmental, design and other policies aimed to improve design quality and at the same time protect and enhance the Borough's urban and rural environments. The Kent County Council Structure Plan 1996 and the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (Deposit Draft) 2003 should also be referred to for advice on development and design.

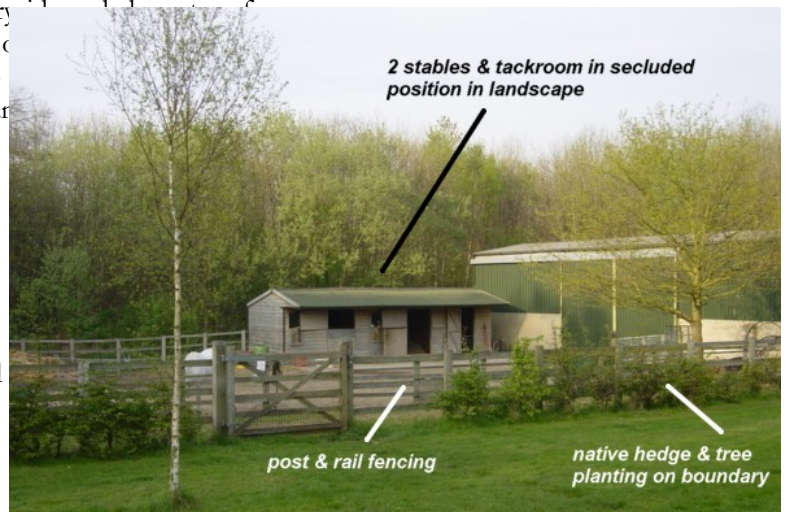
2.4 All of the documents identified above can be viewed at the Council's offices. The Local Plan can be viewed on the Council's web-site (www.ashford.gov.uk).

3 The scale and siting of stables

3.1 The siting scale and design of proposals must not have an adverse effect on the quality of the landscape and in particular must not have a detrimental visual impact on the setting of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Special Landscape Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The number of stables should be proportional to the accommodation of reasonable equestrian leisure needs of householders balanced against the need to protect the countryside and the character of the landscape. Typically this might mean three or four stalls, a tack room and a feed store. New small hay barns to accommodate up to 100 bales also require planning permission from the Council.

3.2 Stables, tack-rooms and feed-stores should all be situated in one block or a tight grouping of buildings rather than in a dispersed form over surrounding fields and paddocks. This will help reduce the impact of development in the landscape. Development must also be designed in sympathy with the character of the immediate surroundings. Developments should ideally be

located close to the owner's dwelling to help minimise the visual impact of buildings in the landscape and provide a sensible



level of security and readily available care for horses.

3.3 The re-use of existing buildings for stabling is possible in circumstances where the size and existing built character of buildings lend themselves to

conversion. Courtyard layouts and layouts with a strong relationship to manèges (if either existing or proposed) will be important in order to limit the impact on the landscape. In some very open and exposed areas, the visual impact of stables may be too great to be acceptable.

3.4 Any proposals must not cause a nuisance to adjoining or neighbouring occupiers through matters such as smell and noise. The proposed arrangements for disposal of faeces and soiled bedding from horses should be clearly stated in any application. The burning of soiled bedding is unlikely to be viewed favourably.

4. The appearance and landscaping of stables

4.1 Where development is in an area with existing buildings, the new buildings should blend in with those already existing. Any locally occurring or reclaimed materials should be used in order to enhance local distinctiveness. The appearance and design of any new development should be in keeping with its use, and pay close attention to its surroundings, particularly if the setting of buildings of architectural or historic interest could be affected. In the case of the latter, it might be necessary to construct buildings with traditional pitched roofs capable of taking either slates or plain clay tiles. **4.2** Developments with mono-pitch roofs or shallow sloping roofs will typically be clad in green/grey mineral felt or corrugated sheeting e.g. Onduline. Colours for this type of roof should be muted and, wherever possible, in a matt finish to limit the degree of “reflection” in the landscape. Elevations should be clad in traditional stained feather-edged weatherboarding rather than timber or plastic shiplap.

4.3 Driveways and hardstandings, if required, must be designed with consideration to the surrounding landscape and must not be intrusive. The use of gravel, rolled gravel or products such as grasscrete will tend to assist minimise visual impact. If a new vehicular access to the site from the public highway is required then this must ensure that proper highway safety considerations will be able to be met. **4.4** Further landscape planting may be needed to reduce the visual impact of the development and, if required, should preferably be of native species. Species that might be harmful to horses such as *leylandii*, yew and laurel should be avoided.

5. Manèges

5.1 Artificially surfaced riding areas, known as manèges (orig. French: “*riding school*”) are becoming increasingly common. They can appear alien and intrusive in the natural landscape and care with siting and design must be applied so that they do not cause a harmful impact on the character of the landscape or on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

5.2 Manèges are normally 40 metres by 20 metres and their siting should be as inconspicuous as possible, particularly if larger competition sizes are required. Their siting should be as near to stables, tack-room and feed-stores as possible to limit the unnecessary dispersal of development in the rural landscape.

However, care will be required where there is another dwelling close by to ensure that the equestrian activity does not result in noise and disturbance.

5.3 The siting of a manège close to corners of paddocks and boundaries is preferable so to take advantage of the screening afforded by existing hedgerows and trees.

5.4 Surfaces should be designed to blend into the landscape as far as possible. The use of bark or re-cycled rubber chippings is likely to have reduced visual impact compared with sand and may be preferable in more exposed locations and sensitive areas such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Fencing should be of post and rail design between 1-2 metres in height.



5.5 Landscape planting may be needed to reduce the visual impact of manèges and, if required, should preferably be of native species. Species that might be harmful to horses such as leylandii, yew and laurel should be avoided. Within a relatively short time period a combination tree and hedgerow planting scheme (e.g. alders and hawthorn) can flourish, helping to integrate a manège visually with its surroundings.



6. Lighting

6.1 External lighting, in particular high level flood columns, can be a prominent and incongruous feature in the countryside especially when in use. It can also result in "light pollution" which spoils other people's appreciation of the sky, may cause nuisance to neighbouring properties and will cause disturbance to wildlife. External lighting (apart from inconspicuous safety and security lighting) will therefore normally be unacceptable, especially in sensitive areas such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Special Landscape Area.

7. Policy Index

Kent Structure Plan 1996 – Rural Settlement Policies
RS1, and RS5, Environment Policies ENV3, ENV4 and ENV15

Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000 – Policy HG9
(Extensions in the countryside), HG10 (Residential annexes), GP10
(Tenterden's special character), RE1 (B1 uses within residential
curtilage), EN2 (Enjoyment of homes), EN21 (Listed buildings),
EN26 & EN27 (AONBs & SLAs), EN15, EN16, EN17, EN18
(Conservation areas), DP1 (Design quality) & DP2 (Standard
environmental requirements)

Kent & Medway Structure Plan (Deposit Draft) 2003 – SS7
(Development in the countryside), E1 (Protecting Kent's countryside),
E3 & E4 (Protecting special landscape areas and areas of outstanding
natural beauty), QL1 (Quality of development and design), QL9
(Protecting buildings of architectural or historic importance)

Further Information

If you require further information or informal advice about proposals to build stables, tack-rooms, feed-stores, hay barns and manèges (or submitting a planning application for the same), please make written contact with:

Planning and Development

Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Tannery Lane
Ashford
Kent TN23 1PL

Telephone 01233-330264

Direct Fax: 01233-330682

www.ashford.gov.uk