

## 2.56 DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING ACCOMMODATION FOR HORSES (ENV. 29)

2.56.1 The Council recognises that the local horse riding activities contribute to a diversified rural economy and that equestrian activities are seen as part of the rural character of the area. However given the growing pressure for field shelters and small scale stabling provision within the rural parts of West Berkshire it is considered appropriate to have a Local Plan policy dealing specifically with such development. Race horse training establishments remain to be dealt with under policies ECON.8 and ECON.9.

2.56.2 Annex F of PPG 7 is aimed at ensuring that equestrian activities do not have an adverse effect on the countryside and that horses are well housed and cared for. The Council has prepared and issued supplementary planning guidance on the keeping of horses for leisure purposes and the erection of 'field shelters and stables'.

**POLICY ENV.29** The Council will permit the erection of stabling and field shelters for horses, including the use of associated land for horse grazing, where:

- (a) the proposed buildings have been designed to blend in with the rural surroundings; and
- (b) the scale and location of such buildings and their use would not cause a material loss of amenity for the occupants of adjoining properties or other users of the countryside; and
- (c) there is sufficient space provided for the ancillary storage of food stuffs, bedding, tack and related equipment on a scale appropriate to the number of horses being accommodated; and
- (d) there is sufficient land being provided with the field shelter and / or stable to accommodate the number of horses; and
- (e) the access to and from the public highway is in a location and form which would prevent any hazard to riders and other users of the highway.

Notwithstanding the above factors such buildings will be unacceptable if they appear to urbanise an attractive rural area or spoil a key view or vista.

2.56.3 In the context of criterion (a) of policy ENV.29 it is suggested that stabling and field shelters should be arranged in a compact plan form. A loose straggle of buildings poorly sited and visually intrusive is not acceptable. Brightly coloured materials or materials out of place in a rural environment will not be permitted. Furthermore regarding criterion (d) the British Horse Society suggest a minimum of 0.6 hectares (1.5 acres) of pasture per horse is required. If such buildings are no longer required for the accommodation of horses then it is expected that they will be removed so as to avoid unnecessary clutter in the countryside.