

Free Range Poultry

Following the EU ban on battery cages in 2012, the demand for Free Range eggs has made a vast influence on egg production in the UK with free range eggs accounting for 43% of 2014 output.

Free range egg production however, presents specific issues when looking at housing in particular.

Two key aspects to any free range proposal is firstly the need for planning permission and secondly, if so can planning permission be secured.

Planning permission may not be required if:-

- a) the housing method is a structure not a building - generally this means mobile, delivered in one piece and not connected to services but beware Local Authorities interpret these differently and there is no black and white answer; or



b) the development is permitted development - this will only be a prospect if the building is below 465m² and more than 400m from nearby protected buildings/dwellings plus meeting other 'rules'. This will mean prior approval may be required rather than planning permission.

In cases where planning permission is required, the issues which will be important include:-

- Landscape
- Highways and Access
- Airborne Pollution (odours, dust & noise)
- Ecology
- Dirty & Clean Water Disposal

It is always worth noting that the grazing of the birds themselves does not require planning permission, only the shed to house them and any new access facilities.

Generally free range buildings obtain planning permission if good sites are chosen. However, because buildings are located on their own away from other buildings, cases can sometimes be controversial.

Acorus have been involved in several successful planning appeals which can provide useful guidance for new cases, such as:

Tyne & Wear

Erection of 12,000 free range bird unit in an Area designated of High Landscape Value (AHLV).

Rutland

Appeal won for a new 16,000 bird unit and extending a 12,000 bird unit to 16,000 unit on another site.

Kent

Success relating to a 10,000 bird unit in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



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