

Intensive Livestock - INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Intensive livestock units present specific issues when looking at planning permission.

The most important of these are the implications of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011.

Intensive livestock development falls into one of two separate categories; Schedule 1 and Schedule 2, if your development falls within Schedule 1, an

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required. Schedule 2 involves intensive livestock installations above 500m² and can require an EIA if there are perceived significant environmental effects. This is a judgement the Local Planning Authority (LPA) make although such a judgement can be challenged via your Local Government Office.

It is important to note that intensive livestock is not specifically defined in the EIA Regulations so for example can include a shed to house free range hens or a cattle building used for winter housing.

If there is a doubt as to whether an EIA will be required it is possible to ask the LPA for a screening opinion for which they have three weeks to reply, otherwise you can again go to the Government Office.

The other part of the EIA Regulations is clarifying the content of your Environmental Statement via a Scoping Opinion. Again, this is achieved via a request to the LPA who can consult their consultees. It is always advisable however to take your own view on the issues especially given the costs of specialist studies. The Government Office is the route used if the scoping opinion is not received.





Preparing an Environmental Statement can assist with the design of a scheme. A positive statement can also be of great assistance in obtaining planning permission. Even if an EIA is not required, many of the principles and issues can be applied to a planning report. In other words don't assume that where an EIA is not required the issues will not apply.



What has to be looked at in an EIA will vary from site to site but will generally include the following:-

- Landscape
- Traffic including access arrangements
- Airborne pollution (odours, dust & noise)
- Dirty and clean water disposal (including flood risk)
- Ecology (on and off site)
- Archaeology

You also have to indicate what alternatives have been looked at and deal with the construction phase. A non technical summary also has to be prepared.

The main disadvantages of an EIA are time and cost although they needn't be expensive. It depends entirely on the site and what technical aspects have to be covered and in what detail. Remember though a key aspect of an EIA is that you must deal with all the issues identified.

Given all the above, one of the key aspects is site selection and weighing up the issues at an early stage. The LPA can ask for an EIA after you have submitted a planning application which will cause significant time delays and cost as you are then liable for advertisement of the EIA, which would normally be covered by the LPA.

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