

Press release: Housing Minister announces homes boost for rural families

Rural communities will be given more options to convert agricultural buildings into family homes to better meet local housing needs through planning rule changes, announced Housing Minister Dominic Raab.

Changes to permitted development rights will mean up to 5 new homes can be created from existing agricultural buildings on a farm rather than the maximum of 3 currently permitted.

Currently several hundred new homes each year are created through conversions of agricultural buildings, and these changes are expected to boost these numbers further.

The changes will help communities make the best use of existing buildings to help meet local housing needs more efficiently, while at the same time ensuring they remain in keeping with the character of the area and safeguard people's privacy.

Government is also giving applicants an extra year to convert further storage and distribution buildings into new homes that will help relieve local housing pressures.

Housing Minister Dominic Raab said:

We need to be more creative if we are to meet the housing needs of rural communities.

That's why I'm changing planning rules so rural communities have more flexibility on how best to use existing buildings to deliver more much needed homes for families.

This is part of our comprehensive reform programme to build the homes Britain needs.

The new measures will also help farmers adopt the latest innovations in modern farming practices by increasing the size limit of new agricultural buildings on larger farms from 465 square metres to 1,000 square metres.

Permitted development rights are a national grant of planning permission which allow certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application.

The rights are subject to conditions and limitations to control impact and to protect local amenity.

The amended development right for the change of use of agricultural buildings to provide up to 5 new homes will allow for:

- up to 3 larger homes within a maximum of 465 square metres or
- up to 5 smaller homes each no larger than 100 square metres or
- a mix of both, within a total of no more than 5 homes, of which no more than 3 may be larger homes

To further support housing delivery, applicants will have a further year in which to benefit from the temporary permitted development right for the change of use of buildings used for storage and distribution to residential use. The right will be extended by a year until 10 June 2019.

The regulations to come into force on 6 April support the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's focus on making the most effective use of land or buildings in the [draft revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework](#), announced earlier this week.