

## Can a live/work restriction be removed?

*We've come across several barns with planning permission for a residential conversion but with a 'live/work' restriction. Can this be removed and, if not, will this affect resale value?*

Barn conversion policies differ between local planning authorities. However, it is a common feature that barns should be developed as live/work units. As barns are often located in remote rural locations, the aim of the policies is to ensure that car travel is minimised by providing accommodation and a working environment within one property.

Following the granting of permission for a live/work unit, the attached planning conditions and, in many cases, a legal agreement will be used to enforce that the building is used for both purposes. Failure to do so would be in breach of the approval and would render the occupier liable for enforcement action. However, in most cases, planning enforcement teams do not have the resources to actively monitor all such permissions and, therefore, they may only react to cases where they have been tipped off by other departments such as Council Tax or Building Control, or by the public.

The mechanisms available to you to remove the live/work designation relate to either the submission of a revised planning application for the conversion, minus the live/work element, or the submission of an application to remove or amend the conditions and/or the legal agreement. The prospect of success depends on the local planning policies and the merits of the revised proposals.

Properties that have live/work restrictions apportioned to them would command a lower value than if it were a full residential unit. Furthermore, such a property would only appeal to the self-employed or the owners of small businesses and so on, and therefore obtaining a sale would be more difficult given the reduced size of the sale market.