

PLANNING USE CLASSES ORDER

Change of Use:

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. A 'Use Class' is a grouping together of similar land uses. For example, shops are grouped as class A1, restaurants and cafés as A3, hotels as C1 etc.

Planning use classes order:

The following classes of use for England are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and its subsequent amendments.

A1 Shops - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners and funeral directors.

A2 Financial and professional services - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services and betting offices.

A3 Restaurants and cafés - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.

A4 Drinking establishments - Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments (but not a night clubs).

A5 Hot food takeaways - For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

B1 Business - Offices, research and development, light industry appropriate in a residential area.

B2 General industrial

B3-B7 Special Industrial Groups - See 'Use Classes Schedule'.

B8 Storage or distribution - This class includes open air storage.

C1 Hotels - Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided.

C2 Residential institutions - Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres.

C2A Secure Residential Institution - Use for a provision of secure residential accommodation, including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.

C3 Dwelling houses - Family houses, or houses occupied by up to six residents living together as a single household, including a household where care is provided for residents.

D1 Non-residential institutions - Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries, museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres.

D2 Assembly and leisure - Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or sports arenas (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

Sui Generis - Theatres, houses in multiple-paying occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, launderettes, taxi businesses, amusement centres. Casinos.





Is the change permitted?

These changes of use are permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995:

From	To
A2 (professional and financial services) when premises have a display window at ground level	A1 (shop)
A3 (restaurants and cafes)	A1 or A2
A4 (drinking establishments)	A1 or A2 or A3
A5 (hot food takeaways)	A1 or A2 or A3
B1 (business) (permission limited to 235 square metres of floor space in the building)	B8 (storage and distribution)
B2 (general industrial)	B1 (business)
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B8 (storage and distribution) (permission limited to 235 square metres of floor space in the building)	B1 (business)

A planning application is not required for change of use in the following circumstances: from A1 to A1 plus a single flat above; and from A2 to A2 plus a single flat above. These changes are reversible without an application only if the part that is now a flat was, respectively, in either A1 or A2 use immediately before it became a flat.

Changes of use requiring a planning application:

Applications for planning permission are always required for material changes of use involving amusement centres, theatres, scrap yards, petrol filling stations, car showrooms, taxi and car hire businesses and hostels.

Changes of use not requiring planning permission:

In many cases involving similar types of use, a change of use of a building or land does not need planning permission. Planning permission is not needed when both the present and proposed uses fall within the same 'class', or if the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order says that a change of class is permitted to another specified class.

For example, a greengrocer's shop could be changed to a shoe shop without permission as these uses fall within the same 'class', and a restaurant could be changed to a shop or a estate agency as the Use Class Order allows this type of change to occur without requiring planning permission.

However, many changes of use **do** require planning permission. You can use the above table to work out whether a proposed change of use requires permission.

Most external building work associated with a change of use is likely to require planning permission.

NB Before you negotiate a lease or buy a property for your business, your architect can check whether you need to obtain planning permission for your intended use, and, if so, your chances of getting it.

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