# Couple ordered to demolish home built under guise of horse breeding centre in Cambridgeshire



A couple in Cambridgeshire has found themselves at the centre of a controversy after being ordered to demolish a property they covertly constructed, having originally sought permission for a commercial horse breeding facility. Jeremy and Elaine Zielinski were granted planning permission for a two-storey building to serve as a stallion semen collection centre, including a small flat for staff. However, the couple transformed the interior into a three-bedroom home, complete with sophisticated design features and scenic views. The local council discovered their deviation from the planning terms and issued an enforcement notice demanding demolition.

The Zielinskis appealed the council's decision, arguing that the order was excessively harsh and that the site could easily revert to its intended commercial use. Yet, a planning inspector upheld the original ruling, stating that evidence indicated the couple had constructed the residence from the outset, thereby committing a "clear and flagrant breach of planning policy." The inspector's finding noted the residential quality of the property, including a fully equipped kitchen and other domestic features, which were not aligned with the initial commercial project.

Despite the harsh judgement, Mrs Zielinski expressed her ignorance of any wrongdoing, asserting to the media that their home was warm and comfortable. As stated in her interview, “It doesn’t make sense to tear it down. I don’t want to go live in a caravan.” The couple cites financial difficulties exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which they allege compelled them to convert their business structure into a living space.

Their plight has sparked mixed reactions from the local community. While some neighbours have shown support for the council's decision, others have expressed sympathy for the Zielinskis. One neighbour remarked, “People should obey the rules. I don’t have any sympathy because they shouldn’t have changed the use,” while another noted the hardship the couple faces, highlighting the emotional toll of being faced with the loss of their home.

The planning history of the property reveals a complicated trajectory. Originally purchased in 1986 for £100,000, the Zielinskis sold their previous home in 2019, only to relocate into a static home while they pursued plans for their horse breeding operation. However, according to the planning inspector, testimonies revealed little evidence that any commercial activity was truly initiated, raising questions about the legitimacy of the couple's claims regarding their business.

This situation reflects a broader legal and ethical landscape wherein planning laws are strictly enforced to maintain community integrity and environmental standards. Notably, a similar case in Ireland involved the Supreme Court ordering a couple to demolish their house built without proper permissions. The court underscored the importance of compliance with local regulations, regardless of the personal consequences faced by families. Such instances point to a heightened vigilance among authorities regarding construction and zoning laws, particularly in rural settings.

In a response to the enforcement notice, Cllr Dr Tumi Hawkins of South Cambridgeshire District Council remarked on the necessity of adhering to planning regulations, emphasising that such rules exist to protect the countryside and ensure appropriate land use.

While the Zielinskis are now seeking legal counsel to challenge the demolition order, they stand firm in their belief that they were unaware of any planning violations during the construction of their home. Mr Zielinski lamented, “If we have broken the rules, we didn’t know the full ramifications.” As they face the potential loss of their residence, the couple’s story underscores the ongoing tensions between private ambitions and public policy within the realm of property development.

The case stands as a poignant reminder of the delicate balance between individual rights and the rule of law, with the Zielinskis’ situation echoing others who have faced similar consequences for venturing beyond established planning protocols.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1, 3, 6, 8, 9
2. Paragraph 2, 5
3. Paragraph 4
4. Paragraph 7

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14727279/Couple-illegally-built-1million-home-instead-horse-breeding-clinic-ordered-tear-down.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-20450545.html> - In 2017, the Supreme Court of Ireland ordered Michael and Rose Murray to demolish their 588 sq m house in Faughan Hill, Meath County, built without proper planning permission. Despite previous refusals and a High Court order, the Murrays proceeded with construction, leading to the Supreme Court's decision. The court emphasized the importance of adhering to planning laws and the consequences of flagrant breaches, even considering the hardship caused to the family. The Murrays were given a year to comply with the demolition order.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-59956781> - Karl and Victoria Shellard, operating as PosherBulls in Bonvilston, Vale of Glamorgan, were found to have illegally bred and sold at least 67 litters of bulldogs over six years without the necessary license. The couple admitted to failing to meet the dogs' needs and were ordered to pay over £450,000 in fines and costs. The court heard that each puppy could sell for up to £20,000, and the Shellards had been warned in 2018 about the need for a license to continue breeding.
4. <https://www.wbko.com/2023/11/18/58-dogs-rescued-horse-cave-backyard-breeding-operation/> - In November 2023, Animal Rescue Corps, in collaboration with local law enforcement, rescued 58 dogs from a backyard breeding operation in Horse Cave, Kentucky. The dogs were found in neglectful conditions, tied to trees without adequate shelter or food. The owner faced no legal consequences due to Kentucky's lack of bond and forfeiture regulations, allowing them to continue owning animals in the future. The rescued dogs were transported to various rescue organizations for rehabilitation and adoption.
5. <https://www.wbal.com/police-couple-ran-illegal-breeding-operation-out-of-basement-face-more-than-100-animal-cruelty-charges> - In October 2019, a Howard County couple, Candace Berry and Glenn Hopple, were charged with over 100 counts of animal cruelty for allegedly running an illegal breeding operation out of their basement in Woodbine, Maryland. Authorities seized more than 50 dogs, three turtles, and a parrot from the property. The animals were found in unsanitary conditions without sufficient food, shelter, or veterinary care. The couple faced fines and potential jail time if convicted, highlighting the importance of reporting suspected animal cruelty.
6. <https://fox59.com/news/indycrime/animals-seized-from-backyard-breeding-operation-in-morgan-county/> - In January 2022, nearly 100 animals, including over 60 dogs, 17 chickens, 11 ducks, and three cats, were seized from a property in rural Morgan County, Indiana. The Morgan County Humane Society described the operation as a 'backyard breeding operation,' with many animals suffering from medical issues and injuries due to inappropriate housing and untreated conditions. The investigation led to the removal of the animals, emphasizing the need for proper animal care and adherence to regulations.
7. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-824697> - In October 2024, inspectors from Israel's Agriculture Ministry rescued over 30 dogs from an illegal breeding facility in an agricultural area. The dogs were confined in makeshift enclosures and cages, surrounded by weeds and junk, and suffered from neglect, including untreated medical issues and poor living conditions. Criminal proceedings were initiated against the facility's owner, with the ministry condemning such operations and emphasizing a zero-tolerance policy toward the exploitation of animals in harsh conditions.