

Plum Island Guidelines

The information contained within this document is for **general guidance purposes only**. If you have questions **specific to your property or situation**, please contact either the Inspectional Services Department at (978) 465-0862.

- For additional and more detailed information, please reference [§97-4D \(Plum Island Overlay District/PIOD\)](#) of the Town of Newbury's Bylaws.

Lot Coverage

From §97-11D, "lot coverage shall be determined by dividing the sum of all structure footprints by the area of the lot on which they are located." The total amount of lot coverage allowed on Plum Island is **20%**. Things that count towards lot coverage are:

- Buildings (home, garage, etc.)
- Sheds
- Decks
- Exterior stairs

Ex: If you have a 10,000 square foot lot, you are only allowed 2000 square feet of lot coverage, or what is existing – whichever is greater.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

From §97-11D, "FAR shall be construed as a mathematical expression determined by dividing total gross floor area of a building by the area of the lot on which it is located."

The total amount of FAR allowed on Plum Island is 25%. Included in the FAR calculation is roofed sections of the home. This can include covered decks.

Ex: If you have a 10,000 square foot lot, the total FAR you are allowed is 2500 square feet.

Stories

Per §97-11D, a story is defined as "(t)hat portion of a building included between the upper surface of a floor and the upper surface of the floor or roof next above, excluding attics that have no habitable area and that are used solely for storage and to house mechanical equipment. Intermediate level(s) such as mezzanines, lofts, and penthouses shall be counted as a story."

The maximum number of stories allowed on Plum Island is 2.

Setbacks

Setbacks on Plum Island are: 10 feet from the side and rear property lines, and 20 feet from the front property line (street).

Plum Island Guidelines

Height

The maximum height allowed is 35 feet (defined in §97-11D) *“The dimension in feet as measured from the mean level of the established grade at the building to the mean height of the highest roof.”*

Bedrooms

A bedroom is defined in 310 CMR 15.00 of the State Environmental Code.

Only one bedroom can be added to a home with 1 or 2 bedrooms existing. If a bedroom has been added since 2004, no further bedrooms can be added. **The maximum number of bedrooms allowed is 3.**

Foundations

All new construction on Plum Island must be on pilings or piers. If work is being done on an existing home with a solid foundation in a flood zone, and the cost of that work is equal to or exceeds 50% of the value of the **structure**, then the whole structure must go up on pilings.

Ex: If the structure -only- is valued at \$100,000, and the cost of the proposed work is \$50,000, then the home must go up on pilings.

Sheds/Garages

Will need to be elevated. Sheds are considered lot coverage, and require process through Zoning and Conservation. Sheds under 200 square feet do not need building permits, but must conform to setbacks required by zoning.

Fences

Need to be 50% open. Individuals interested in installing a fence on Plum Island should contact the Conservation Agent prior to purchasing and installing.

Plum Island Guidelines

Processes

Building Permits: You can apply for Building Permits online by visiting the Town's website (www.townofnewbury.org), and clicking "Online Permitting". Building Permit approval is subject, but not limited, to the following:

- Department sign-offs, including
 - Treasurer/Collector
 - Conservation
 - Historical Commission
 - Fire Department
 - Newburyport Water & Sewer*
- Completeness and accuracy of the application and supporting documents
- Zoning Board of Appeals and/or Conservation Commission Approval

* **Newburyport Water & Sewer will need to sign-off on any permits in which the applicant is proposing adding rooms. The applicant is responsible for obtaining the sign-off.**

Conservation: Certain work on Plum Island will require additional process through the Conservation Commission. Generally, any exterior structural work will require this process, and includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- New Construction
- Additions
- Decks/patios/external stairs
- Solar Panels
- Driveway Resurfacing
- Sheds
- Pools
- Generators
- Propane Tanks
- Treatment of invasive species

As part of an approval, the Conservation Commission may require conditions including, but not limited to, delineating limit of work and vegetation replication.

Please refer to the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10) and the Town of Newbury Wetlands Bylaw (Chapter 95) for further information.

Zoning Board of Appeals:

Any work that will add to the lot coverage, floor area ratio, or height of a structure will require approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals. In order to

Plum Island Guidelines

initiate the application process, applicants must obtain a denial letter from the Building Commissioner by applying for a building permit.

If you have questions relating to specific work you are planning, please contact the appropriate Inspectional Services Department staff member using the directory below.

Name	Title	Phone	Email
Chrissy Beaupre	Inspectional Services Admin Assistant	978-465-0862 Ext 304	is.admin@townofnewbury.org
Peter Binette	Building Commissioner	978-465-0862 Ext 309	buildinspect@townofnewbury.org
Samantha Holt	Conservation Agent	978-465-0862 Ext 310	conscom@townofnewbury.org
Martha Taylor	Planning Director	978-465-0862 Ext 312	planningboard@townofnewbury.org