

## Guidance Notes: Making a Planning Application Online

The Planning Portal's service lets you make and submit an application for planning consent online.

The service has been implemented so that, in most cases, all parts of the application for consent can be completed and submitted electronically, including payment.

At any stage during the completion of your application you can check what you have or have not completed from the My Applications screen (on the left hand menu).

### Application overview

This screen lets you manage your active application from initial creation through to submission. From here you can access the application to complete the following tasks:

- Complete the application forms
- Attach supporting documentation
- Calculate fees for the application
- Pay for the application
- Check the application is complete
- Submit the application to the local planning authority

This screen will also tell you the name of the application, its reference number, the type of planning consent being applied for, the local planning authority responsible for determining your application, as well as the status and date of the application.

You can also make an amendment to a submitted application by selecting 'amend' within the application details box. However, once you have amended your application you will need to validate and submit the application again for this to be sent to the Local Planning Authority.

Details of the individual steps you will need to complete before your application can be submitted to the local authority are as follows:

#### **Step 1. Complete the forms**

Your form is made up of a series of questions that need to be answered to allow the local planning authority to determine your application. It is recommended that you answer each question in order as the system will automatically remove (grey out) subsequent questions that are no longer required, i.e. where answers to previous questions mean subsequent questions are no longer relevant.

After you have entered details on a page, selecting 'next' will load the next page and save the details entered so far should you wish to end the session and return to the application at a later date.

After you have filled in the forms, all forms sections should show as 'Complete'. If any sections are showing as 'Incomplete' you will need to load that page again, by clicking on the link on the screen, and make sure all questions have been answered.

If you deem that the question being asked is not relevant to your application then you may need to enter 'not applicable' within the relevant section. However, we would advise you to contact your local authority planning department to make sure that they do not need this question answered to validate your application type.

You will also need to contact your local authority if you have any planning queries relevant to the application. You can find your LPA and their contact details on the right hand side of the 'fees' page within your application, alternatively you can use the following Planning Portal link:

[www.planningportal.gov.uk/localauthoritysearch](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/localauthoritysearch)

Note: Each question in the form has help text to assist you to complete it. You can access the help text for each question by clicking on the 'question mark' icon at the top right-hand corner of the form page.

## **Step 2. Attach supporting documentation**

Most applications require more information than can be provided by the application form alone.

The service will tell you what mandatory documentation you need to provide in support of your application and what optional documentation the authority may also require.

The local planning authority will not be able to process your application unless the mandatory supporting documentation has been provided. You can also attach optional supporting documentation, which you think will help the local authority determine the application.

Currently you can only add one document per attachment type in the mandatory section. If you have more than one attachment for a mandatory section e.g 'Site and Other Plans' you will need to upload these documents by selecting 'add document' under the optional documentation section.

For further details of the mandatory documents please refer to the CLG guidance note '[The Validation of Planning Applications: Guidance for local planning authorities](#)'.

When uploading supporting documents for electronic submission individual files should not exceed 5MB in size. There is currently no limit on the overall size of all attachments however we do recommend that you do not exceed 25MB as some LPAs may have restrictions on their own sites.

For consistency it is recommended that you use the following file types, for supporting documents, wherever possible.

- Images/plans: jpg, tif, gif, bmp, png, plt
- Documents: doc, pdf, txt, rtf, xls
- Video: mpg, avi, wmv

If you wish to use any other file types you should check with your LPA before submission as this may cause problems in receipt.

Ultimately, if the LPA cannot view an attached file then you may be asked to provide it in a file type they can use or supply a hard copy of the information.

You should not upload exe, zip or other archive formats as these are commonly identified by security software as high risk and may not be transferred to the LPA correctly.

### **Attaching plans and drawings**

All plans and drawings to be submitted are required to have dimensions or a scale clearly marked upon them.

Marking size and dimensions on plans and drawings will help the local planning authority process your application more efficiently.

### **Step 3: Calculate fees for the application**

The fee calculator has been provided so that, by selecting the relevant tick boxes, you can work out what fee is required for your application.

Please note that while every effort has been taken to ensure that the fee has been calculated correctly, the determination of whether the fee is correct is solely the responsibility of the relevant local planning authority. Once you have submitted an application, the fee will be checked by the local planning authority and they will confirm whether the fee is correct.

If you are claiming an exemption in payment, (e.g. if the proposed works are in connection with the provision of disability access to a building), or if you are claiming a reduction in payment, (e.g. if it is a development by a parish council), then some local authorities may require a statement attached to your application giving the appropriate details (you will need to contact your LPA before submission to confirm this).

#### **Step 4. Paying for the application**

Once you have calculated the correct fee you can pay for your application in up to three ways dependent upon which service the LPA supports.

Most local authorities will accept the following three payment options:

1. Secure online payment by credit or debit card
2. Pay by cheque: the system will tell you where to post the cheque when you select this option
3. Pay by phone: the system will provide the correct telephone number when you select this option.

#### **Step 5: Check application**

You will not be able to submit the application until you have completed the 'Check Application' stage.

Once you have completed the forms, added supporting documentation, calculated the fees and chosen the payment method, the system will check the entire application to make sure all the mandatory information and stages have been completed.

If you have not completed any part of the application, these will be identified by the system, i.e. 'incomplete' will appear next to the section or area that contains missing or incorrect information. To correct this area simply click on the link and the system will take you to the area of the form requiring completion.

Once all stages of the application have been completed you can submit the application to the local planning authority.

#### **Step 6: Submit the application**

Submitting the application will send the application form and supporting information to the local planning authority.

You can view and access your submitted application at any time from the My Applications screen. However, once it is submitted to the local authority you will not be able to make any changes to that application without making an amendment.

To make an amendment to a submitted application you will need to select 'amend' within the application details box of the 'overview' tab. Once you have amended your application the system will note this as the next version number for that application and will send this version to the LPA once you have re-checked and submitted the application as detailed above.

### **What happens next?**

Once the local planning authority has received your application successfully you will receive a confirmation email from the Planning Portal. The confirmation email will include a unique reference number which should be quoted in all correspondence with the local planning authority.

Your reference number is also available from the Application Overview page. Please note that the email from the Planning Portal does not constitute the formal acceptance of your electronic submission by your local planning authority.

Once the local planning authority has received your application it will validate it within its normal workflow processes and timescales. If the local authority needs more information or has any queries it will contact you directly.

For further information on the progress of your online application please contact your local authority quoting your reference number.

### **Getting Help**

If you are having difficulty completing the application service please contact the Planning Portal Support Team on [support@planningportal.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:support@planningportal.gsi.gov.uk) or (0117) 372 8200.

Once the application has been submitted the local authority will be able to assist with any queries.