Making an application online via the Planning Portal

The Planning Portal allows registered users to create and submit applications online.

Online submission of applications helps to facilitate a quicker and more responsive planning application service.

You can register with the Planning Portal by clicking on the 'Register' link in the top left of any page on the site. When doing so you agree to our terms and conditions of use.

The service is provided so that, in most cases, all parts of an application can be completed and submitted electronically, including payment; which can be made by various methods.

Your rights and responsibilities

Please ensure that the information you submit is accurate and correct. Do not include personal information about third parties (including family members or sensitive information about an individual) unless you have told the individual concerned and they consent to it being supplied.

Online application best practice

- **Clear your browser cache** before logging into the Planning Portal – this will ensure that the system loads the information into your application correctly and does not display any outdated information. Learn how to clear your browser cache.

- **Start a new session** by going to https://www.planningportal.co.uk/ and logging in using the link in the top left corner of the page before starting an application or going to your application list.

- **Name your application using the site address** – this allows you to easily identify it later and helps the local planning authority (LPA) identify your application when they receive it.

- **Complete the forms in sentence case** – normal upper and lower case writing with a capital letter at the start of each sentence - to aid the LPA in processing it.

- **Archive your application** once the LPA has received it. You can tell when the application has been received by the LPA as its status will change to 'Transferred'.

Electronic Communications

We encourage users to always include their email address on the application form so that LPAs can communicate electronically throughout the process.

Please note: Where an application is made online, the applicant shall be taken to have agreed:

a) for the LPA to use such communications for the purposes of the application;

b) that the applicant's address for those purposes is the address provided with the application; and

c) that this agreement shall remain until the applicant gives the LPA written notice to stop using electronic communications.

Creating a new application

You can start a new application by clicking on the 'Start an application' link which is first in the 'Applications' list at the bottom of every page on the site.

Every application requires three basic details:

1. **Name** - A name for your application, we suggest using the site address.

2. **Location** - The location of your development - this determines the Local Planning Authority (LPA) that you will submit the application to.

   Please note: The system will only identify a single LPA. If your site is within more than one LPA's boundary, then please contact us when you have submitted.

3. **Type** - The type of application you require (you may wish to contact your LPA to discuss this or view details of the types of application we offer).

   Please note: there are some types of application that are not currently available through our online system. View a list of these and download PDF forms.

Once you have confirmed these basic details, your newly created application will be saved ready for you to start completing it. It will also be stored under the 'Draft' tab in your 'My Application' list should you wish to return to work on it later.

The 'My Application' list can be accessed via the 'View your planning applications' link under 'Planning' in the links at the bottom of every page on the site.

Your online application

When you have created a new application or when you access an existing one from the 'My Applications' list, you will be taken to the '**Overview**' tab for that application. This screen lets you view and manage your application details.

This screen displays the name of the application, its Planning Portal (PP) reference number, the type of consent being applied for, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) responsible for determining your application, and the status and date you first created the application.

Online application process

Using the tabs to the right of '**Overview'** you can complete the following tasks:

1. **Forms** - Complete the application form (also lists all sections of the form)

2. **Supporting Documents** - Attach supporting documentation

3. **Fees** - Calculate fees for the application

4. **Check, Pay and Submit** –
    - Confirm that the application is complete and ready to submit
    - Sign off and submit the application
    - Pay the application fee and service charge
    - Once payment is received and has cleared, the application and application fee will be submitted to the relevant LPA.

These stages are detailed below.

1. Forms - Complete the application form

Your form is made up of a series of questions that must all be answered to allow the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to determine your application.

We recommend that you answer the questions in order as the system will automatically bypass any questions that are not required, i.e. where your answers to previous questions mean subsequent questions are no longer relevant.

Most questions in the form have help text to assist you in completing them. You can view the help text by clicking on the 'Help' button at the top right-hand corner of the question.

After you have entered details on a question, click the 'next' button. This will save the details entered so far and take you to the next question.

You should also always click 'next' before clicking on another tab or leaving the application as this will ensure the details you entered will be saved for when you return to the form later.

After you have filled in the form, all questions should show as 'Complete'. If any show as 'Incomplete' you will need to return to that question again by clicking its link and make sure all sections of the question have been answered.

If you think that the question being asked is not relevant to your application then you should enter '*not applicable*' within the relevant section. However, we would advise you to contact your LPA to ensure they do not need this question answered to validate your application.

You should also contact your LPA if you have any planning queries about your application. You can find their contact details using our 'Local Authority search' function.

With the exception of the applicant(s) contact details (telephone numbers and email addresses), all the information you provide on the application form and in any supporting documents may be published on the LPA website. We recommend removing these details, including signatures, from supporting documents before uploading files.

2. Supporting Documents - Attach supporting documentation

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

Mandatory documents

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) will not be able to process your application unless **all** the mandatory supporting documentation has been provided.

Please note: Unless **at least one** attachment (or alternative submission method) is supplied for **each mandatory item** in the Supporting Documents section, the system will not allow you to submit your application.

There are two levels of mandatory documents, national and local:

• **National -** The application service will tell you what mandatory documentation you need to provide in support of your application.

• **Local -** The LPA will have produced a list (usually available from a link in the right-hand side panel on the supporting documents screen called "Planning Application Requirements") which details any specific documentation that is required to accompany the application in addition to the national requirements.

For further details of the mandatory documents, including design and access statements, please refer to the Planning Practice Guidance section on validation requirements.

Optional documents

You can also attach any other relevant documentation which you think will help the LPA decide on the application.

Please note: You should not attempt to submit additional applications by supplying completed PDF application forms as supporting documents to another application.

Every application needs to be submitted separately, regardless of submission method.

Supporting document limitations

File types - Supported file types are:

- Adobe PDF - .pdf
- Images - .bmp, .gif, .jpg / .jpeg, .png, .tif
- CAD (HPGL) - .plt
- Microsoft Office - .doc / .docx, .xls / .xlsx
- Text - .rtf, .txt
- Video – .avi, .mov, .mp4 .mpg / .mpeg, .wmv
- GML - .gml

If you wish to submit supporting documentation by any other method, we recommend that you use the file types listed above wherever possible. If you wish to use any other file type, you should check with your Local Planning Authority (LPA) before submission as they may not be able to accept them.

File size - You will not be able to upload files larger than 10MB. If your document exceeds this limit please refer to our guidance on reducing file sizes

File name - Supported characters within a file name are:

- The letters A to Z (upper and lower case),
- The numbers 0 to 9
- The characters:
    - " " (space)
    - "-" (dash)
    - "_" (underscore)
    - "(" (open bracket)
    - ")" (close bracket)
    - "." (full stop) – Note that full stops should only be used to separate the file name and type (for example: Siteplan.pdf NOT Site.plan.pdf)

Permitted examples:

- Siteplan.pdf
- Elevations existing Drwg 1345-2.tif
- first-floor-plan_proposed_drwg 1346-1.plt
- SECTIONS AA BB (DRWG 234_1 REV 2).PDF
- Timber-frame-detail_entrance-hall (179098_2) (Heritage statement).doc

If the LPA cannot download or view an attached file you may be asked to provide it again in a file type they can use or supply a hard copy of the information.

Attaching plans and drawings

Although not a legislative requirement, it is recommended that all drawings include a scale bar, key dimensions, the direction of North, original paper size and scale (e.g. 1:200 at A3) clearly marked on them.

While not compulsory, submitting plans and drawings on A3 will help the LPA process your application more efficiently. For example, consider placing fewer elevations on smaller page sizes, even if this means submitting more documents. We would also recommend only using colour where necessary as this can greatly increase file sizes.

Supporting documents best practice

Follow best practice to help the LPA process your application more efficiently:

- Portable Document Format (PDF) is a trusted and reliable open file format used to convert virtually any document into an easily readable, industry standard format. Converting, or scanning original drawing files into PDF format reduces the original file size, while preserving the information.

- Please ensure that the files are orientated correctly. The file should be saved with the orientation it should be viewed in, landscape or portrait.

- Where possible, use an A3 size for your plans and elevations (rather than reducing the original document down to A3), this saves time and costs for the LPA if printed copies are required for consultation.

- Make sure you always clearly state the original sheet size and drawing scale, include a scale bar and key dimensions which will enable your drawing to be scaled accurately on-screen at any size.

- We recommend that documents are submitted at their original sizes. This ensures that the LPA can take accurate measurements from them. If this is not possible, clearly state the original size, scale and reduced size (e.g. Scale 1:500 at A2 original size, reduced to A3). Also ensure that annotations and other text are legible at the reduced size. If the reduced size does not meet the LPA's needs, they may ask you to provide the original version.

- When using compressed file formats (e.g. jpg, pdf, avi, wmv) you should ensure that the document is of high enough quality and resolution, otherwise you may be asked to resubmit it.

- Do not use 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.

Please Note: The LPA cannot register an application until all supporting documentation has been received. Therefore, we recommend submitting everything online wherever possible, rather than sending some information by post, to avoid any delays in the registration of your application.

With the exception of the applicant(s) contact details (telephone numbers and email addresses), all the information you provide on the application form and in any supporting documents may be published on the LPA website. We recommend removing these details, including signatures, from supporting documents before uploading files.

3. Fees - Calculate fees for the application

Different applications types have different fees, which are set by the UK government. The fee calculator allows you to determine if fee is due and what the fee will be.

All applications made online that attract a fee will have a service charge applied. The service charge is £23.33 +VAT

Please note that while every effort has been taken to ensure that the application fee is calculated correctly, the determination of whether the fee is correct is solely the responsibility of the relevant Local Planning Authority (LPA). Once you have submitted and paid for the application, the fee will be checked by the LPA when they validate the application and they will confirm whether the fee is correct.

Should the fee be incorrect, please contact our service desk for assistance.

Exemptions, reductions and applications relating to more than one LPA

Once a fee has been calculated, you can select any relevant reductions or exemptions and identify if the application is within the boundaries of more than one LPA.

If you are claiming an exemption in payment (e.g. if the proposed works provide 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), some LPAs may require a statement attached to your application giving the appropriate details (you will need to contact the LPA before submission to confirm this).

If the application site is within the boundaries of more than one LPA, then the fee will be increased to 150% of the original calculated value. This is correct for most applications of this type, but as above, the fee will be checked by the LPA when they validate the application and they will confirm whether the fee is correct.

4. Check, Pay and Submit – Complete the online application

Check

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

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

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 parts have been completed you can pay for and submit the application. To do this you will need to click the 'Proceed to Pay & Submit' button at the bottom right of the 'Check' screen.

Pay and Submit

Once you have completed the declaration and payment section, clicking on the 'Pay and Submit' button will initiate the payment process. Once payment is confirmed, the application will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), allowing them to download and validate it.

If your application does not attract a fee, then you can simply complete the declaration and 'Submit' the application directly to the LPA.

Please note: The system will only submit an application to a single LPA. If your site is within more than one LPA's boundary, then please contact us when you have submitted.

Payment options

The payment options displayed will depend on the total amount due for your application. If the total amount is under £1,000 all payment options will be available.

If the amount is over £1,000 you will be able to pay by bank transfer or cheque.

In either case, you can pay the application yourself or someone else (such as a client) can pay on your behalf.
Please note: The application will not be submitted to the LPA until the correct fee and service charge have been paid and all funds cleared. Therefore, we recommend online or

telephone payments rather than cheques to avoid any delays in the submission of your application.

You can pay for the application yourself by the following methods:

- **Pay online using a credit or debit card** - There is a transaction limit of £1,000 for debit and credit card payments. If the total amount exceeds this limit you will need to choose a different payment method. The application will be submitted to the local authority instantly after payment is confirmed.

- **Pay by phone using a credit or debit card** - There is a transaction limit of £1,000 for debit and credit card payments. If the total amount exceeds this limit you will need to choose a different payment method. The application will be submitted to the local authority instantly after payment is confirmed.

- **Bank transfer (online banking)** - You can pay by bank transfer using BACS, CHAPS or Faster Payments. The application will be submitted to the local authority one working day after payment is received with a valid reference. Faster Payments and CHAPS will usually get to us the same day.

- **Cheque** - Paying by cheque will increase the time it takes for your application to be submitted to the local authority. It may take up to 10 working days after the cheque is received with a valid reference for your application to be submitted.

  Cheques are to be made payable the 'Planning Portal' and the postal address and instructions for sending will be shown on the payment screen after selecting the option to pay by cheque.

  When completing cheques, please ensure you clearly write the application reference number **at the top right side on the back of the cheque**.

  Post the cheque as soon as possible. This will help minimise any delays in the submission of your application.

Alternatively, you can nominate another person to pay for the application.

Follow the instructions on the payment screens to initiate a payment nomination. The application will be submitted to the local authority after payment is confirmed.

Incomplete payments

If you cancel the payment process, then your application will not be submitted.

You can check your application's status in the 'Overview' screen or in the 'My Applications' list. Submitted applications will have the status of 'Submitted' or 'Transferred'.

If the application is still shown as 'Draft' then it has not been submitted to the LPA and you should complete the payment process or contact our support desk.

Please note: The application will not be submitted to the LPA for them to download and validate until payment has been received and all funds have cleared.

Amendments

Once it is submitted to the LPA 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 should select 'amend' from the 'Actions' column in your application list, or from within the 'Application details' box of the 'Overview' tab.

View further information on amending an application.

Where the fees remain the same as the initial submission and no additional fee needs to be taken, the application can be submitted on the Planning Portal and submitted to the Local Planning Authority straight away.

If the amended application incurs an additional fee due to the changes made, there will be a further service charge for submitting through the Planning Portal. This additional service charge will only apply to application fees over a certain threshold.

Please note that making an amendment to a previously submitted application will incur an additional service charge of £23.33 +VAT should the additional fee be over the service charge threshold.

Please note that once you have amended an application, you will need to validate (check) the forms, submit the application again and make any payment before the amendment can be submitted to the LPA.

To assist the LPA with your amended application, we recommend that you attach an additional document detailing the amendments you have made.

What happens next?

Once the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has received your application successfully you will receive a confirmation email from the Planning Portal. This email will include a unique reference number which should be quoted in all correspondence with the LPA. Your reference number is also available from the 'Application Overview' page.

Please note: The email from the Planning Portal does not constitute the formal acceptance of your electronic submission by your Local Planning Authority.

Once the LPA has received your application, supporting documents and payment, it will register and validate it within its normal workflow processes and timescales. If the LPA 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

Specific questions, online payment and after submission

If you have a specific question regarding your application (for example a query over the fees, requirements for supporting documents or answers to specific questions) you should contact the relevant Local Planning Authority (LPA).

The Planning Portal is unable to answer such questions as they fall under the jurisdiction of the LPA.

If you have any queries regarding the payment of an application, please contact our support team.

For refunds you will need to contact your local planning authority who will, if a refund is required, begin the process and request this with us.

Once the application has been submitted to the LPA, they will be able to assist with any queries.

Help with the online application system and technical support

The Planning Portal provides several options for help with the application system:

- **Help -** If you are having difficulties with the application system then our help page can provide you with links to useful information and/or contact details for our support desk, based on your specific issue:

  Launch Planning Portal help

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) -** Answers to our most common queries about the online application system and many other areas of the Planning Portal:

  View the Planning Portal's FAQs