Smarter Planning toolkit for planning professionals

Smarter Planning promotes a more efficient means of submitting planning applications. It helps local authorities to validate and process applications easily, allowing for smoother onward consultation and simple publication on LPA websites.

Criteria checklist

- Each user should have a separate Portal account.

- Agent Administration functionality set up across organisation.

- Planning Portal service used to submit 100% of supported application types online.

- LPA local requirements checked before submission.

- All attachments submitted electronically with application.

- All plans/drawings in same document are same scale.

- All plans/drawings include at least one dimension, paper size and show North.

- Attachments limited to maximum paper size of A3. Original paper size visible on all files.

- Follow recognised naming conventions for local-level requirements.

- Online payment used, wherever possible.

- Online submission discussed at all pre-app meetings with LPAs for all major applications.

Explanatory Notes

Accounts

Each user has a separate Portal account. We recommend that Agent Administration functionality is set up across the organisation, where applicable, as this will facilitate overall application management.

Applications

Users should submit all applications online, where possible. Some application types, such as Minerals and Non Material Amendments, are not yet available for electronic submission through the Planning Portal.

We recommend that all users are aware of the Portal's comprehensive 'hints and tips' advice.

Attachments – best practice

LPA local requirements: local requirements should be checked on the LPA's website before submission as this will aid efficient validation of the application.

Plans and drawings:

- All plans/drawings should be submitted electronically, including scanning paper copies if necessary. Suppliers/customers should be encouraged to supply electronic files to you prior to submission, preferably as PDFs.

- If plans/drawings are combined in the same document they should all be to the same scale.

- All plans/drawings should include at least one key dimension, the paper size and indicate North.

Paper size: Attachments should be limited to a maximum paper size of A3, where possible. Original paper size should be visible on all files.

File size: All attachments should be submitted with the application. Large documents of over 5MB with images should be compressed as standard to limit file sizes to 5MB. Documents that cannot be compressed to within 5MB should be subdivided into two or more documents of less than 5MB.

Recognised naming conventions

Wherever applicable, please use one of the pre-defined document names for local-level requirements rather than using the user-defined attachment option.

Payment of fees

Online payment is preferred and should be used wherever possible. Increasingly, LPAs are supporting other forms of payment such as by telephone or via the council website – letting agents direct clients to these channels for direct payment.

Pre-application meetings for major applications

Online submission should be discussed at all pre-app meetings with LPAs for all major applications