

Overview

The council is keen to encourage the submission of planning applications online. The online process offers significant benefits, both for the applicant, and the council. However, it also introduces a new range of factors that have to be dealt with in order to permit the council to efficiently process the application. We are increasingly having to handle documents with very large file sizes. These documents cannot be downloaded from our website or be easily attached to emails. This impedes the efficient processing of your application and impacts on the service we can offer, both to you and others with an interest in the planning process.

We have produced these notes to provide some guidance on how you can prepare documentation in such a way as to help us speed up the processing of your application.

Document preparation – Electronic files

When preparing your documents you should reduce the file size of documents to an absolute minimum, preferably no more than 1 to 2 megabytes for each document. This provides for a short download time and also permits easy attachment to emails.

File formats

The following formats can be accepted by the council:

Images/plans: pdf, bmp, gif, jpg/jpeg, plt, png, tif/tiff

Documents: pdf, doc, rtf, txt, xls

Video: avi, mpg/mpeg, wmv (*by arrangement with the case officer*)

Photographs and scanned images

Modern cameras and scanners produce very large native file sizes. Please do not directly import photographs or scanned imagery into your documents from your camera or image management software. All images should be post processed to rescale them to a size appropriate for the document. The resolution of the image should also be scaled back to no more than 300 dpi which is sufficient for screen display and printing.

Black and white drawings

Colour drawings in electronic format are typically four times larger than an equivalent black and white file. Please consider using black and white drawings wherever possible.

Mixing colour and monochrome

Try to avoid including one area of colour on an otherwise monochrome drawing, an example of this is a site location or block plan with a red outline included in an plan/elevation drawing. This requires the whole drawing to be scanned and stored in colour. Supply the site location and block plan as separate A4 extracts.

Drawing size

Consider using A3 sized plans rather than more traditional A2 or A1 sized plans.

Provide a summary sheet (not required for householder applications)

For larger applications include a summary sheet that lists the documents you are providing. This should include the file name and a brief description of the document. This aids us in checking the documents and also provides a crib sheet for indexing the documents into our document management system, ensuring that your documents are correctly described.

Document preparation – Paper files

If you are submitting documents in paper form, please bear in mind that they will have to be scanned. To this end please avoid using bindings that are difficult to remove, such as wire-binding and hot glue bindings.

Your cooperation would be appreciated, and will improve the ease with which we can deal with your application. Thank you.