# Local Government Online Planning Portal

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Getting started

### 1. When do I need planning permission?

Generally, you need planning permission for any development of land or property unless the development is specifically exempted. Development includes carrying out works (building, demolition, alteration) on, in, over or under land or buildings and making material (i.e., significant) changes to the use of land or buildings. Failure to obtain planning permission where it is required can result in penalties (e.g., significant fines and/or even imprisonment). Your local planning authority will be able to advise you about this.

### 2. Why should I use the Local Government Online Planning portal?

As a user:

- You can register your own account
- You can view the status of your application quickly and easily
- You can view submitted documents and submit additional documentation if necessary
- You can view previously submitted applications on your dashboard
- It's paperless and environmentally friendly
- You'll have 24/7 access to your account

### 3. How do I get started?

If you want to view an application, you can use the search tool on the planning enquiry system.

If you want to submit a planning application, you must first register an account. After you've registered your email and clicked the agree to terms box, you can start creating new planning applications.

If you wish all agents in your practice to have access to view all applications for your practice – use an email address that you *all* have access to – such as info@agency.ie

### Differences between online and paper forms

### 4. What is the difference between the online form and the paper application?

The notable differences are:

- The layout of the online form is different, but the Local Government Online Planning portal includes the same questions as the paper form.

- In the documentation section, you now have to upload a single copy of each required document rather than six copies of each to complete an application.

- Documents must be uploaded as PDF and labelled from a pre-determined list of documents. Individual documents must be a maximum of 20MB

- All subsequent correspondence from the planning authority will be sent by email.

## 5. Can I still apply using paper forms?

Yes, if you prefer to submit your planning application in paper form, please contact the appropriate Local Authority.

## 6. Can I edit an existing application?

Yes, you can edit any application while it's in draft status. However, once you've submitted the application and paid the application fee, you will no longer be able to make any changes.

## 7. What changes to the layout have been made on the Local Government Online Planning application?

The Online Planning form contains the same questions as the statutory paper form. These questions are laid out over five separate tabs on the webpage that must be completed before you can submit your planning application.

This includes:

- Place

- Proposal

- People

- Supporting Documents

- Payment

## 8. Is the timeline any different for files submitted on the Local Government Online Planning portal and paper files?

No, the timelines for both files submitted on the Local Government Online portal and paper files are the same. Generally, a planning authority will deal with a valid planning application within 12 weeks, beginning from the date the application is made, to the date the final grant of planning permission is issued.

### Password and contact information

## 9. I forgot my password, how do I reset my password?

You can request a new password on the Local Government Online Planning portal by selecting the option to reset your password and by entering the email address for your account. A link will be sent to the email address.

If you are having any issues resetting your password, please submit a ticket for additional support.

## 10. How do I update my contact information?

You can update your contact information (First Name, Surname, Contact Phone Number, and Address) on the Local Government Online Planning portal by clicking on the Details tab. You will not be able to change the email address.

If you are having any issues updating your contact information, please submit a ticket for additional support.

O Connell Street, or OConnell Street are fine but NOT O'Connell Street Because the Payment Address entry fields will not allow apostrophes.
Each of these address lines cannot be more than 50 characters long – again, this causes issues with your payments, so please do not squeeze the full address onto one line.

## 11. How do I register as an Agent?

When you create your account, you will have an option to set your account as an agent.

If you would like to change your account to an Agent account, go to the Details tab under My Planning and tick/untick the box.

## 12. What fields are required in the Place tab?

This field in the Online Planning form is the same as the statutory paper form. If any of the required fields are left blank, you will receive an error message when you try to submit and you will be unable to make a payment for your application.

The Eastings and Northings and the OSI Map Ref are usually written on the map you receive from the OSI.

## 13. What fields are required in the Proposal tab?

This section of the Online Planning form is the same as the statutory paper form. If any of the required fields are left blank, you will receive an error message when you try to submit and you will be unable to make a payment for your application.

Question 16 - If you have answered No to a Part V Application Type – type n/a in the description.

## 14. What fields are required in the People tab?

This field in the Online Planning form is the same as the statutory paper form. If any of the required fields are left blank, you will receive an error message when you try to submit and you will be unable to make a payment for your application.

**Documents**

## 15. What documents are required in the Supporting Documents tab?

All Online Planning applications must be accompanied by the following documentation:

- A copy of the newspaper notice for your application

- A copy of the site notice

- The site location map

- The site or layout plan

- Plans and other particulars required to describe the works to which the development relates (including detailed drawings of floor plans, elevations and sections- except in the case of outline permission

Other documents may be required in a particular circumstance, for example an Agent applying on behalf of an applicant would be required to upload a letter of consent.

These required documents are the same as the documents required for a paper application. All applications "e or paper" must comply with the articles 16 to 23 of the planning and development regulations to be valid.

Please note: Each local authority has its own development plan, which sets out local development policies and objectives for its own area. The authority may therefore need supplementary information (i.e., other than that required on the statutory application form) in order to determine whether an application conforms with the development plan and may request this on a supplementary application form.

## 16.Is there a size limit for documents?

Individual documents must no larger than 20MB for uploading.

Larger documents can be split into chapters or sections as required to allow them to meet the 20mb criterion.

## 17. How do I upload a document?

You can upload a document by first selecting Document-type from the dropdown menu and then select the document you would like to upload.

As you upload documents, for each document you will select a document-type e.g., Newspaper Notice. Each document-type has either (Public) or (Confidential/Internal) alongside it. It is very important to pick the right category as Documents categorised with a public type will be published online for the public to view whereas those categorised with a Confidential/Internal type can only be viewed by Council staff.

Please ensure you submit **all** pages attached in one file under the same document type (heading) to avoid any pages relating to a document heading being missed when going through the various stages of deciding upon an application.

If you do need to upload several documents that are of the same type, please enter more information about the documents in the Description field to help differentiate them.

It is also vital that the information on the pdf is no longer editable therefore print to pdf rather than save to secure your work especially when using editable/annotated pdfs etc. You can print to pdf by clicking on Print when the document is open and selecting 'Print to PDF' as the Printer.

Please note you can upload a maximum of five documents at a time. After you select all the documents you would like to upload, click on the upload button.

Do not reupload the documents which were uploaded with any previous invalid applications – if they have been date watermarked.

See questions 19 and 20 for more information.

Instructions on uploading Supporting Documentation can also be found here.

Please see the user guide for more specific information on Document Types

## 18. Can I delete a document after uploading it?

Yes, if your application is still in draft status, simply go into the documents tab, click on the document you would like to delete, click on upload, and save the draft.

## 19. What documents will be published and available to be viewed online?

When uploading documents, all documents listed under document-type with the word Public next to it will be published online. The documents will have a date stamp watermark applied to it automatically upon submittal.

For example:

- Newspaper Notice (public) will be published

- Site Location Map (public) will be published

- For Further Information documents, for each document you must also select a document-type which will be either "FI Received Doc" or "FI Received Doc Private". It is very important to pick the right document-type because documents categorised as "FI Received Doc" will be published online whereas those categorised as "FI Received Doc Private" can only be viewed by Council staff.

The information requested and supplied is compiled by the planning authority for the purposes of fulfilling the statutory obligation to maintain a publicly available register of planning applications.

As a holder of this information, it is important that you should be aware of your obligations as a data controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2018.

Facial Images of natural people are not to be used with any reports or drawings submitted as part of a planning application. If facial images have been generated using artificial intelligence a disclaimer should state- "Disclaimer – Facial images have been generated by means of Artificial Intelligence"

## 20.    What documents will not be published?

When uploading documents, all documents listed under type with the word Confidential/Internal next to it will not be published online.

For example:

- Driving Licences and Birth Certificates (both Confidential/Internal) will not be published.

- In addition, any documents uploaded at the Further Information stage (if applicable) with the document-type "FI Received Doc Private" will not published online.

## 21. For the Newspaper Notice, what newspapers are approved?

A list of approved newspapers, for the purpose of giving notice of intention to make a planning application, is available from the planning authority to which the application will be submitted. This list is available under the Proposal tab.

Newspaper Notices must include the publication title and date. Newspaper Notices can often be downloaded from the online version of the newspaper in question. Optionally, a screenshot of the Newspaper Notice saved to PDF can be submitted once it's legible. The best practice is to outline the specific advertisement in red.

## 22. How do I know what supplementary documentation may be required?

Each planning authority has its own development plan, which sets out local policies and objectives for its own area. The authority may therefore need supplementary information (i.e., other than that required on this online application) to determine whether it conforms with the development plan and may request this on a part B application form.

The supplementary information Part B if applicable for the associated local authority is available through the supporting documents tab of the application. A direct link is provided to you on the application. Instructions for uploading supporting documentation can also be found in the supporting documents tab.

## 23. If I do not provide supplementary documentation, will my application be invalidated?

Failure to supply the supplementary information will not invalidate your planning application but may delay the decision-making process or lead to a refusal of permission. Applicants should contact the relevant local authority to determine what local policies and objectives apply to the development proposed and whether additional information is required.

## 24. Can I withdraw my application?

To withdraw your application, contact your planning authority to withdraw your application.

**Payments**

## 25. What fields are required in the payments tab?

You have the option of paying by credit card/debit card or by contacting your Planning Authority for their BIC and IBAN so you can do an electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your own bank account direct to their bank account. The best practice would be to use Debit/Credit card payments as payments can be refunded directly onto the Card if the application is deemed Invalid.

If paying by card, enter the fee amount, and basis of fee calculation. You will be redirected to the LA payment website where you will enter your card details. You will receive a receipt by email after a successful payment.

If paying by EFT, you must enter the EFT reference number supplied by the bank or the Planning Application Reference Number from this Portal, the fee amount, and basis for fee calculation. Please note: to pay using EFT you will need to contact you planning authority to get bank account details to enable the electronic transfer to happen.

It should be noted that you should only use one EFT transaction per Planning Application. Please be advised that EFT payments are only recommended where a single planning application is €5,000 or more.

In the instance that the application is exempt from planning fees, you will need to provide additional documentation.

## 26. How much is the application fee?

All planning applications must be accompanied by the appropriate fee.

Planning regulations set out the fees that you must pay with your planning application. The fee amount is based on the type of planning and the scale of the proposed development. The scale of fees is available on Local Authority's webpage.

**Submission issues**

## 27. I tried to submit my application and a red banner with the error message 'required fields are missing' appeared. How do I submit my application?

Before proceeding to payment and submission, you must complete your application. A red banner will appear at the top of your application listing any required field(s) that are missing and/or any required document(s) that need to be uploaded. Simply update your application by filling in any missing fields and/or uploading any missing documents.

Note: Using Safari browser can cause issues, switching to another browser may resolve it.

## 28. I'm having issues with processing my payment; how can I request assistance?

Try filling in the details a second time to confirm you have entered all your payment details correctly. The second line of your address must be less than 80 characters. If you still have issues, fill out a support request for help. You will receive an email confirmation of the service request. someone will get back to you to assist.

## 29. I am an agent applying for Planning Permission. Does the address on the Credit Card being used for payment have to match the address of my business?

No, this is not a requirement, but you will need to have an IRISH Eircode, the Local Authority Eircode could be used.

### Submitted applications

## 30. Can I amend my application after it's been submitted?

No, after you have submitted your application, you will not be able to edit your application. You can only view your application after submission.

## 31. I've submitted my application, what happens next?

You will receive an email confirming that your application was received, and the Planning Authority will now consider if the application complies with the planning regulations.

## 32. How long will it take to process planning permission?

Generally, a planning authority will deal with a valid planning application within 12 weeks, beginning from the date the application is made, to the date the final grant of planning permission is issued.

However, the period can vary, particularly if the planning authority seeks further information from the applicant (it should do this within the first eight weeks). The planning authority then had four weeks from the day it receives the reply to the further information request to make a decision on the application. The following table illustrates the timescale involved in most cases.

| Timescale | Action |
|---|---|
| **Start** | Notice published in newspaper and site notice erected. |
| **Not more than two weeks from the public notices** | The planning application must be lodged with the planning authority within two weeks of publication of the newspaper notice and the erection of the notice on site. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Within five weeks of submitting a valid application** | Upon receiving the planning application, the planning authority will acknowledge receipt and check that it is valid. If an application does not contain the required fee, public notices, forms and particulars the planning application will be invalid and returned to the applicant. Members of the public have five weeks from the date of the making of a valid application to make a submission. The planning authority cannot make a decision in respect of the application before the five weeks expires. |
| **Between five weeks and up to eight weeks of the date of a valid application** | The planning authority issues notice of its decision on the application. Alternatively, where the planning authority requires certain information to enable it to make a decision it may request it. Where further information is sought, this stops the clock from the date of the request. The applicant then has six months to respond. If no response is lodged within six months, the application is declared to be withdrawn. |
| **Four weeks after issues of notification of a decision** | When the planning authority issues a notification of decision, a four week period follows, during which the application or a third party can appeal the decision to An Bord Pleanála. If no appeal is lodged within the four week period, the planning authority issues a grant of permission, or outline permission, except where they have already indicated a decision to refuse. |

## 33. How can I find more information about planning?

For more information about planning, please visit:
- Planning (www.gov.ie)
- The Office of the Planning Regulator (opr.ie)
- An Bord Pleanála
- Irish Statute and Law Reform (lawreform.ie)
- Irish Statute Book

## 34. Can I search for a planning application?

You can search for planning applications online using the find a planning application search tool on the Local Government Online Planning portal.

## 35. I'm having difficulties and need assistance completing my application.

Carefully read the instructions on your screen and try to navigate through the issue. If you are still unable to resolve your issue, take note of the error message (if applicable). Then fill out a support request for assistance. You will receive an email confirmation of the service request.

## 36. Are there any restrictions on the type of PDF that can be uploaded?

Interactive Forms or Annotated PDFs must <u>not</u> be uploaded. Planning applications may be invalidated if such documents are uploaded.  If you are working with an Interactive Forms or Annotated PDFs, you can print the file to PDF format by clicking Print icon and selecting Microsoft Print to PDF as the printer. This will allow you to create a version of the document which is not interactive and will be suitable for upload to the back-office system.

## 37. What should I do if my Planning Application is comprised of a mixture of Application Types e.g. Permission & Retention?

The Portal will only allow you to select one of four Planning Application Types: Outline Permission, Permission, Retention and Permission consequent.  Applying for any other type via this portal will be invalid. If your application is a mixed type, you should select the one that best describes the largest part of your application.  Please include detail of both types in your 'Description of Proposed Development' on the Proposal Tab of the Online Application Form.  The Portal currently allows up to 2500 characters, if you require more space, please upload a more detailed Proposal Description Document and categorise it as 'Other Assessments'.   You need to refer to that document in the 2500 character space.  This restriction is *currently* in place to fit the Planning Systems in the Planning Authorities around the country.

## 38. What should I do if my Planning Application spans more than one Planning Authority?

You will need to submit a separate Planning Application to each Planning Authority.

## 39. Is there an Applicant Consent to Agent form online to be filled in and uploaded?

The applicant needs to give written consent to the agent to complete the online application on their behalf and this 'Applicant Consent to Agent' document needs to be uploaded with the planning application.
There is currently no prescribed template for the 'Applicant Consent to Agent' letter, however it needs to include the following:- Applicant Name; Development Title; the text 'I hereby authorise [insert name of agent] to submit a planning application on my behalf to [insert name of Local Authority] and that all communications will issue to [insert name of agent]'. Both applicant and agent need to sign and date the letter.

## 40. Is the Site Assessment Report a new report?

The Site Assessment Report (also known as a Site Characterisation Report) is a form from the Environmental Protection Agency which is needed for new Wastewater Treatment and Septic tanks.
If you select an answer other than 'Public Sewer' for the Wastewater or On-site Treatment questions on the Place tab, this form becomes mandatory as part of your Planning Application. The form can be downloaded from here.
Please note that before uploading this form to the portal, you must select Print – then select Print to PDF as the Printer to save the form as a non-editable pdf file and secure your work.

## 41. Where do I upload a Section 97 form to on the Portal?

Once you answer "Yes" to the question "Is the application an application for permission for development to which Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 applies?" on the proposal tab, Part V Compliance Documents become mandatory in the Supporting Documents tab, one of the documents being the "Part V Exemption Application Form" .

## 42. Should the site notice be printed and signed and then I upload the scanned in version?

A signed site notice is required so printing and signing the site notice would be ideal.

Please note if the Site Notice document is an editable or annotated pdf file you must print this document as a pdf rather than saving to secure any changes made to original. To do this, select Print – then select Print to PDF as the Printer to save the form as a non-editable pdf file.
It should also be noted that a blank Site Notice template document is available from [here](#).

## 43a. What should I do in the event that there are two applicants applying for permission?

When you have two different named Applicants for a Planning Application, you can put in the full name of the first applicant in the Applicant Forename field and then & full second name applicant in the Applicant Surname field, both located in the People tab of the application.

For example: Ann Barry & Ian Dempsey
Applicant Forename Field: Ann Barry
Applicant Surname Field: & Ian Dempsey

If it was Ann & Ian Dempsey
Applicant Forename Field: Ann & Ian
Applicant Surname Field: Dempsey

## 43b. What should I do in the event that the applicant is a company?

When the applicant is a company, (e.g. Example Products Ltd.), you would fill out the People tab of the application as follows:

Applicant Forename:        Example
Applicant Surname:         Products Ltd.
Company Name:              Example Products Ltd.

Filling out the People tab in this way will also ensure that the Company name shows up on all correspondence which will be issued from the Planning Authority and also on the Part A Application Form.

## 44. What should I write under Development Description?

This should match what you have in your Newspaper Notice/Site Notice (e.g. to construct a domestic dwelling, domestic garage, treatment plan percolation area and all associated works. Gross floor space of proposed works: House: x sqm & Garage: x sqm).
There is no requirement to have "Permission to construct a ….." or "Retention to ….." at the start as you have already selected your type of Permission on the first part of the application process. The Applicant Name and Development Address are also not required under Development Description as they are already detailed in other sections of the form.
An example of a suitable Development Description would be as follows: "as constructed front porch and the extension to the rear including all associated site development works."

## 45. What are some of the more common reasons for Invalidation of Planning Application?

- NIS: If there is an NIS included in the application then you must state it in newspaper advertisement and on the site notice.

- Site Notice: The type of permission must be outlined on the Site Notice. The Agents postal address and signature must also be visible. A number of applications have also been invalidated due to information on the site notice being incorrect. Several have also been invalidated due to not having a reference to retention.
- Description: Several applications have been invalidated due to the Site Notice and Newspaper Notice not describing attached garage to dwelling house.
- Site Location Map: The Site Location Map must show Red Line Boundary marker.
- Site Layout: An Application will be Invalidate if the Site Layout is not to Scale or if no north point indicator is present.
- Plans/Drawings/Elevations: No FFL on Site plan, Floor Plans, Sections or Elevations. No floor plans provided. Not all elevation drawings provided. Location of site notice not shown on any drawings. No Plans, sections or elevations attached.
- Reference line boundaries do not match between layout and location map.
- No Map Sheet Number.
- Newspaper Advert: Submitted newspaper does not display the publication date or title of the paper.

## 46. What is the correct procedure for uploading EIAR documentation?

If an applicant answered yes to the following question on the Proposal tab of your Planning Application:

"Does the proposed development require the preparation on an Environmental Impact Assessment Report?"

It will then become mandatory to upload the following 2 document types with their Application:
• EIAR
• Confirmation of EIAR from Department

An applicant wishing to submit EIAR documentation with their Planning Application will first need to contact the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage at the following email address EIAPortal@housing.gov.ie along with the Site Layout and Site Notice to obtain their Confirmation of EIAR.

Once the applicant receives confirmation back from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, they can proceed to upload their EIAR and also their Confirmation of EIAR to the Planning Portal.

Please be advised that an application accompanied by an EIAR will have additional public notice requirements for both the notice in the approved paper and the site notice.

Please also note that restrictions on retention and outline applications mean these permission types cannot be accompanied by an EIAR.

As with all documents uploaded to the Portal, the maximum size for each document is 20MB, this may require you to compress photos, graphics etc or to split certain documents into volumes. You may upload five documents at a time.

## 47. I have not been receiving the expected email notifications from the system. What should I do?

If you are not receiving email notifications from the system, the first thing to do is to contact the LGMA to ensure that the right email address is on the system. If the email has been confirmed as being correct, the next step is to contact your email administrator and make sure that emails from onlineplanning@lgma.ie and noreplyplanning@localgov.ie are not being blocked.

## 48. What should I do if there is metadata on the PDF document that I wish to upload?

The best practice would be to remove metadata from PDF documents that you are going to upload in case there is Personal Identifiable Information on it. You can do so as follows:

a.  Run Adobe Acrobat as an Administrator. ...
b.  When the program loads, go to "File" and select "Properties."
c.  A window will appear. ...
d.  This will display the PDF's metadata. ...
e.  Choose to remove it, and then click "OK."

## 49. Do I still need to submit a Part A Application form with a signature with my online application?

No, the system automatically generates a Part A Application form when you submit your application online. Also, there is no need for a physical signature on the generated Part A Application form. When an application is made in electronic form with the consent of the Planning Authority under article 22(3) of the Principal Regulations, valid login credentials will replace the need for a signature and satisfy the declaration.

## 50. How can I manage a request for Further Information or Additional Information?

You will receive a request from your Planning Authority requesting further information. You will see the status of your application has changed in your Portal to 'Further Information'

| Project name | Local Authority | Reference number | Type | Applicant name | Date | Status | Actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UAT Test Application _Every_Field_Completed_2 | Wicklow County Council | 120000002240 | Permission | Jenny Finnegan | 20th February 2024 | Further Information | View, Respond, Clone |

You can upload response documents by clicking on respond, then Details.

Dashboard > Dashboard

# Dashboard

***** This is the UAT system *****

1. Application Details    2. Further Information

| Further information request name | Description | Further Information request type | Status | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2460020 - Further Information No. 273195 | 2460020 - Further Information No. 273195 | Request | Requested | Details |

First you must choose the document type you will upload – is it a private document or public type

Further Information response. To upload a document choose "Save as a Draft".

**Document type**

Please Select

Please Select
F.I. Received Doc.
**F.I. Received Doc. Private**

Please Select

**Pick a file**

Choose file   No file chosen

Then choose your file category – sub document type and finally pick a file from your computer.  Do this with each document you wish to upload.  Save as draft often.

**Document type**

F.I. Received Doc.

**Sub Document type**

Other Assessments (Public)

**Pick a file**

Choose file   TestAPublicDocumentUpload.pdf

Choose "Save as draft" to upload each document - only choose Submit Further Information Response when ALL your documents are uploaded and listed below.

> Choose "Save as draft" to upload each document - only choose Submit Further Information Response when ALL your documents are uploaded and listed below.

Finally, save as draft.

Choose "Save as draft" to upload each document - only choos
below.

| **File Name** | **Document Type** | **Date E** |
|---|---|---|

To show all documents related to the application please sele

⊕ Save as draft     Return to Previous Screen

When each document has been uploaded.  You can then choose to submit your response to your Planning Authority.

| **File Name** | **Document Type** | **Date Entered** | **Description** | **Visibility** | **Download** | **Delete** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| sfi_newspaper_notice.pdf | F.I. Received Doc. | 04/03/2024 | Significant FI News Paper Notice | Published online | Download | ☐ |

To show all documents related to the application please select "application details" above.

⊕ Save as draft     Submit Further Information Response     Return to Previous Screen

## 51. How can I respond to a Publication Request for Significant Further Information.

You will receive a request from your Planning Authority requesting further information.  You will see the status of your application has changed in your Portal to 'Publication Required'

| iPlan 5 UAT Cavan Test 5 | Cavan County Council | 120000002213 | Permission | ▬▬▬ | 01st February 2024 | Publication Required | View, Respond, Clone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

You will only be able to upload the two documents – Site Notice and Newspaper Notice



## 52. How can I request Additional Time to Respond to my Further Information Request?

If you wish to apply for an extra 3 months to respond to the request for Further Information, then – before the FI 6 months is up - please upload a letter requesting that Additional Time as your Response.  This must be a .pdf type document.

The Planning Authority will consider that request, and if approved, a new Further Information Request letter will issue from your Planning Authority, and it will have the additional 3 months to respond.