Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

Infrastructure Services

No.	Question	Type	Advice
1	How quickly will new applications be added to the system?	General	Applications will be available to view online as soon as they are deemed to be valid. Please note that the web-site is real-time but there could potentially be a delay between a valid application being received and it appearing as valid in the system. However, the system has advanced features that allow you to be automatically emailed of any changes to search results, please see the user guide for full details.
2	How often is the information updated?	General	The information contained within the online system is 'as live' as our back office system, and therefore the information contained within is continuously updated throughout every working day.
3	How quickly will documents be uploaded onto the system?	General	The information contained within the online system is 'as live' as our back office system, documents are being continuously added to the system as documents are processed. Comments on applications received through the online system automatically appear against in the "comments" tab. Letters and other documents sent to the council will take 2-3 working days to appear as these are scanned, assigned to the application and checked for any personal information, which is masked, before being published.
4	How does the council protect my personal information when publishing documents online?	General	All comments and letters received on planning applications are open to public inspection and may be repeated in public documents. They will be published on our online planning register as part of the application file. If the application is referred to a committee for decision they may be published within the committee papers and pages of our website.

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			In following the council's data protection policy the following procedures are followed for publishing documents online. General correspondence (includes letters of representation) – private individuals - We publish the sender's name and address and mask personal signatures, personal email addresses and personal telephone and mobile numbers before documents are published online. Applicants - Applicants' names and addresses are published as these form part of the statutory planning register. We mask personal signatures, personal email addresses and personal telephone numbers before documents are published online. Business letters - We mask signatures only. We publish many documents as part of the planning process, and human error can occur and we may miss something. If you notice something that causes you concern please mailto:planning@aberdeenshire.gov.uk noting the application reference and document details and we will do our best to resolve the matter.
5	I can't find an application when searching by partial reference number.	Searching	You can use a 'wildcard' (either a '*' or '%') within the search to improve your search. But you don't need to add a wildcard at the start or end of your search term as the system assumes this. For example doing a "Simple Search" for "Duff House" will return all applications with both words convectively in the location or description as will "*Duff House*" or "%Duff House%" (no quotes in actual search).
6	I can't find my application using the simple search e.g. I entered 51 Low St.	Searching	The search tool does not understand abbreviations - e.g. St., Rd., Dr., Cl., Ave. – please type in full, e.g., Street and do not include any punctuation (full stops, apostrophes or commas) in the address.
7	I searched for an application	Searching	To ensure you find all applications associated with a property you are interested in, it is

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	that covers more than one site e.g. 21 to 23 High Street.		best to use the "Property Search" or "Map Search" functions.
8	I can't find any applications when searching by date.	Searching	The date search boxes shouldn't be format sensitive. However, by clicking on the calendar icons you can select the date of interest to automatically fill the box for you.
9	I can't find decision details.	Searching	The decision is located under "Details" then "Further Information" tabs. The date of the decision is also located under "Details" then "Important Dates". A copy of the decision notice, setting out conditions of consent or reasons for refusal, is located under the "Documents" tab.
10	I can't find plans/documents.	Searching	These are located under the "Documents" tab.
11	What documents are available to view online?	Documents	Full documentation associated with planning applications for the years 2004 onwards are available to view online.
12	There are no details of file sizes for documents.	Documents	The system is not able to display this information at present. A request has been made to our software provider to include this feature.
13	Why do some documents take a long time to download?	Documents	Download times are subject to the speed of your internet connection, the speed of our website, and the size of the file requested.

There is also a small delay as the online system links to our document management system to pull through the correct document.

We endeavour to keep file sizes down to an acceptable size, the maximum file size permitted by the national e-Planning portal is 5Mb (5120Kb). |
| 14 | What should I do if I get an error message after pressing submit? | Comments/ Technical | It would help us if you noted the error message and the URL address of the page (or took a screenshot) and contacted us via mailto:planning@aberdeenshire.gov.uk so we can investigate.

Occasionally the online system maybe interrupted by other essential work on our website, if this disruption is planned there should be a message on the website to cover |

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			this.
15	Why the boundary of my property not shown incorrectly?	General	The information shown on this site relates to Planning Applications only. It does not reflect land ownership.
16	What is the constraints tab about?	General	The Constraints tab contains know location related constraints that may or may not affect the application, e.g., conservation areas, flooding issues, etc.
17	How do I suggest improvements to the online planning register?	General	The Online Planning Register (Public Access) is software provided by IDOX Group who provides the council's planning database. Feedback on the system can be submitted mailto:planning@aberdeenshire.gov.uk and we will liaise with IDOX over improvements and can log a change request, which IDOX will consider and may include in a future software release.
18	What internet browsers does the online planning register (Public Access) support?	Technical	Public Access 3.1 is supported by (at the time of writing): • Internet Explorer 9, 10 and 11 • Google Chrome • Firefox • Safari
19	Why is my Public Comment not being displayed on the website?	Comments	Some comments are flagged as being "Restricted" and are not presented for public display.
20	What is the difference between "Public" and "Consultee" comments?	Comments	Consultee comments are made by organisations formally consulted by the council. If the screen displays an organisation name such as "Scottish and Southern Energy Ltd", it means that they have been invited to comment. If we receive consultee comments we will make them publicly available either as text underneath the name of the organisation or via the "Documents" tab.
21	Why does the website list an	Comments	This means that the council has invited the organisation to make comment and that no

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	organisations name as a consultee but then say "No consultations have been made on this case"?		comment has been received. All listed organisations have been invited to consult by the council. This wording is confusing and a request for change is being made to the software supplier.
22	I was expecting an automatic email re a Saved Search or Tracked applications but never received it.	Searching	If there are no changes to either your Saved Searches or Tracked applications, no emails will be issued. If you suspect there is a problem with the automatic emails then, please contact us to let us know what the problem is, mailto:planning@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.
23	I got a 'session timed out' message when making a comment and lost all my typing	Comments	To avoid the possibility of losing a long comment, you are advised to type up in a Word Processor or Notepad type application. You can then Save as you go along and copy into the Public Access Website when you are finished.
24	"Tracked Application" clarification of when an email is sent to registered users.	Technical	Please note it is only when the "Status" of the application changes that an email alert is sent to users. In a previous version of the software (2.1) an alert was also sent when documents were added but this is no longer an option.