Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Application Guidelines

Below is a 10 point checklist of guidelines drafted to ensure that planning applications submitted to the Central Bedfordshire Council can be published onto the Council's website quickly. Any omission or deviation from these guidelines may result in delays to the publication of the planning application material onto the Council's website.

#	**Item**	**Check**
1	All planning material is clearly named, with names that are specific to the planning application.	☐
2	All submitted documents are clearly viewable on a 17" screen at a resolution that is not greater than 1024 X 768	☐
3	Planning application documents are submitted electronically in Portable Document Format – (PDF) format	☐
4	No single PDF file is to exceed 5 MB. Where this limit is exceeded, the files are split into multiple files accordingly.	☐
5	If submitted by e-mail, the total size of all documents relating to a single planning application should not exceed 25MB. Failing that, submission should be via CD – ROM or DVD.	☐
6	Document structures such as titles, chapters, headings, are used to improve accessibility of the electronic documents.	☐
7	Images within PDF documents are accompanied by written descriptions, to assist those who may be using screen readers.	☐
8	Scanned documents have Optical Character Recognition – OCR , applied to them, to produce searchable text content	☐
9	All electronic documents have navigational and organization aids, such as a table of contents and bookmarks	☐
10	All electronic documents that have security applied (i.e. passwords) to prevent copying or editing, will need to be accompanied by an alternative electronic version adhering to all the above, so that it can be published directly onto the Council's website.	☐

Clarification on these guidelines can be obtained from Roy Romans, Team Leader – Minerals & Waste.

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Purpose:

These guidelines relate to planning applications submitted to the Council. Adherence to these guidelines will help the Council to quickly publish applications on its website and also help to ensure that planning application content continues to be accessible.

The guidelines for planning applications are as follows:

1. All planning material should be clearly named, with names that are specific to the planning application. A description of Plan 1, plan 2, plan 3, etc would not be acceptable.

2. All submitted documents will need to be clearly viewable on a 17" screen at a resolution that is not greater than 1024 X 768

3. All planning application documents should be submitted electronically in Portable Document Format – (PDF). Documents not submitted in PDF format will require conversion, which may delay their publication on the Website.

   The PDF size should be kept at a minimum, without adversely affecting quality. To this end, it would be preferable if the text within PDFs was created from the original electronic documents rather than from scanned documents.

4. No single PDF file is to exceed 5 MB. Where this limit is exceeded, the file should be split into multiple files that comply with this guideline, or compressed so that it does not exceed this limit.

5. If submitted electronically by e-mail the total size of all documents relating to a single planning application should not exceed 25MB.

   Where this limit is exceeded, the application should be submitted via CD-Rom or DVD. As per any files sent electronically, the files on the CD-Rom or DVD should comply to the guidelines highlighted in this document.

6. To improve accessibility, document should include titles, chapters, headings, as they make it easier for technologies such as screen readers, to understand the logical reading order of the content without any ambiguity.

7. Efforts should be made to include written descriptions of images in documents. For example, the Tags palette in Adobe Acrobat can be used to add a description of an image (Alternate Text). When a screen reader encounters that image in the document, it will read the alternate text description so the user can understand what the image is about.

Further information on how to create accessible PDF files can be found at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/access_book3.html

8. Scanned documents should have Optical Character Recognition – OCR , applied to them, to produce searchable textual content which can be interpreted by technologies such as screen readers.

9. All PDF documents should include navigational and organization aids, such as a table of contents, bookmarks and useful headings. This should provide an easy way for users to move through the document so that they don't have to read the entire document page by page in order to find what they are looking for.

10. All electronic documents that have security applied (i.e. passwords) to prevent copying or editing, will need to be accompanied by an alternative electronic version adhering to all the above, so that it can be published directly onto the Countcil's website.

    Furthermore if the alternative itself has security applied, then content access will need to be enabled for the visually impaired / accessibility. Further information on facilitating this can be found at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/access_book_appendixa.html