



Dfi & NI Councils' Planning Privacy Notice

The Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) and 10 of the 11 Northern Ireland Councils, excluding Mid Ulster (Mid Ulster have their own privacy notice [click here](#)) are joint Data Controllers under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the Data Protection Act 2018, for the personal data gathered to enable the processing of; applications for any permission, consent, approval or determination; enforcement cases; or Tree Preservation Order requests. You are providing your personal data to us and our lawful basis for processing is exercise of a task carried out in the exercise of official authority under the Planning Act (NI) 2011 and related subordinate legislation.

Dfi and the Councils are committed to protecting your privacy when you use our services. The purpose of this privacy notice is to explain why and how we collect and use your personal information, your rights regarding this information and how we comply with data protection law.

Why are you processing my personal information?

- To enable us to process; applications for any permission, consent, approval or determination;
- To investigate enforcement complaints;
- To consider and process Tree Preservation Orders;
- To consider public representations on Planning Applications;
- To ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- To notify you about changes to our services;
- To answer any of your questions;
- To notify you of the outcome of decisions;
- To allow Audit reviews or investigations to be carried out;
- Dfi and Councils may also process the information for research purposes carried out in the public interest. For example to improve services and carry out statistical analysis.

Please note that when you submit a planning application the information, including plans, maps and drawings, along with other associated documentation (with the exception of personal telephone numbers, signatures, email addresses or sensitive personal data), will also be published on the Planning Portal through the Planning Register (<https://planningregister.planningsystemni.gov.uk>).



What categories of personal data are you processing?

- Personal Information: Name, address, phone number, email address and signatures. In some cases we will hold financial information such as Bank statements, invoices, utility bills in support of an application, as well as Legal and Commercial information if appropriate.
- Special Category – Sensitive information including Health data / Medical details where it relates specifically either to a Planning Application or in objection to a Planning Application.

Please note Special Category data will NOT be published on the internet.

Where do you get my personal data from?

We get personal data from you when you apply for a planning application or Tree Preservation order, when you make an objection or declare support for a planning application, or when you make a planning complaint. We also collect your data:

- When you use the website and our services (such as your name, address and contact details);
- as part of our online registration process (such as your email address); and
- Details of transactions you carry out through our website and in the processing of an application;
- Personal information about you may be received as part of the investigation of an enforcement complaint from sources other than the data subject, such as from a complainant, or obtained as part of the investigation. Only information required for the purposes of investigating the complaint will be processed, and such information will in accordance with the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and/or the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Do you share my personal data with anyone else?

Your information will be held by DfI and the Councils. Your personal data will not be shared or disclosed to any other organisation without your consent unless the law permits or places an obligation on us to do so. No personal information you give us will be used for commercial purposes.

- Information may be shared internally among officers and other agencies/government bodies who are involved in processing planning applications and where necessary between internal council or central departments with the purpose of supporting an effective delivery of service.
- We may share your personal data with other Government bodies and enforcement agencies for the prevention, investigation or detection of crime.
- All authorities have a contracts with a third party service provider who support the day-to-day operation of our Planning Portal and we share access with them.
- We may disclose or share information we have collected and processed with a third party if we are under a duty to do so or in order to comply with any legal obligation, or in order to enforce or apply our terms of use and other agreements; or to protect the rights, property, or safety of the Planning Portal, our customers, or others. This includes exchanging information with other companies and organisations for the purposes of fraud protection. If we transfer



- ownership or management of the website to a third party we may also transfer your data to them, provided they comply with UK GDPR requirements.

Please note that your telephone number, email address and signature will not appear on the internet.

The Planning Register

The Councils are legally obliged¹ to make applications for any permission, consent, approval or determination publically available for inspection by means of a Planning Register that is currently available to view at the relevant Council office. This will contain the Applicant's and or Agent's personal details, including their name, address, and signature, and may contain email address and telephone number.

Planning enforcement information is not routinely made publically available. Only cases which have resulted in the issue of a formal Enforcement Notice will be made available on an Enforcement Register that is currently available to view at the relevant Council office. Any requests seeking information with regard to enforcement investigations or to view enforcement files will be treated under the relevant governing legislation i.e. Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act 2000, and Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Do you transfer my personal data to other countries?

Your information will not normally be transferred to other countries, however we may, as a matter of practice, have to share data with Planning Authorities in the Republic of Ireland in cases where a Planning application significantly impacts on a particular County in the Republic. Any data sharing will be in full compliance with all aspects of the DPA legislation and UK GDPR. Any information published on the internet will be available worldwide.

How long do you keep my personal data?

Personal Data is held and stored in line with our Records Retention and Disposal Schedule. Individual authorities may return sensitive data and or documents to the applicant/agent in advance of timescales outlined in the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.

What rights do I have?

- You have the right to obtain confirmation that your data is being processed, and access to your personal data
- You have the right to have personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- You have the right to have personal data erased and to prevent processing, in specific circumstances
- You have the right to block or suppress processing of personal data in specific circumstances
- You have the right to object to the processing of your personal information.

¹ Section 242 (1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the 2011 Act)

How do I complain if I am not happy?

If you are unhappy with any aspect of this privacy notice, how your personal information is being processed, or what personal information we hold please contact the Data Protection Officer for the relevant organisation listed below.

If you are still not happy, you have the right to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

- **ICO website:** www.ico.org.uk
- **ICO self-service portal:** <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>
- **Helpline:** 0303 123 1114

Information / Computer Security

Use of cookies on Planning Portal NI

When we provide services, we want to make them easy, useful and reliable. Where services are delivered on the internet, this sometimes involves placing small amounts of information on your computer, mobile phone or tablet. These are known as cookies. They cannot be used to identify you personally.

The Planning Portal website (<https://www.planningsystemni.co.uk/>) uses cookies which are small electronic files of letters and numbers that are transferred to your computer's hard drive through your web browser. This allows us to recognise your browser and help us to track visitors to our site; enabling us to understand better the products and services that will be most suitable to you.

We use the following types of cookies:

Strictly necessary cookies: These are cookies that are required for the operation of our website. They include, for example, cookies that enable you to log into secure areas of our website. These are placed automatically when you first arrive at the site and as you navigate around it, including when you sign into our platform.

Analytical or performance cookies: These allow us to recognise and count the number of visitors and to see how visitors move around our website when they are using it. This helps us to improve the way our website works, for example, by ensuring that users are finding what they are looking for easily.

Functionality cookies: These are used to recognise you when you return to our website and our platform. This enables us to personalise our content for you and remember your preferences (for example, your choice of language or region).

A cookie can contain your log in details and information to allow us to identify your computer when you travel around our site. This is used for the purpose of helping you access the necessary information to support your application and to improve your user experience.



How we use cookies

We use cookies for a variety of reasons detailed below. Unfortunately, in most cases there are no industry standard options for disabling cookies without completely disabling the functionality and features they add to this site. It is recommended that you leave on all cookies if you are not sure whether you need them or not, in case they are used to provide a service that you use.

We do not automatically log or collect data apart from the information you specifically provide to us. For more information on our partner's privacy and cookie policies, please visit their individual websites.

Third party cookies

Please note that third parties may also use cookies (which are likely to be analytical, performance or targeting cookies) over which we have no control. Some Planning Portal web pages may also contain content from other sites, which may set their own cookies, for example from media and advertising partners that are used to deliver advertising messages that are more relevant to you. Also, if you share a link to a Planning Portal page, the service you share it on may set a cookie on your browser. We have no control over third party cookies - you can turn them off, but not through our website.

On some of our web services we use tracking software, including Google Analytics, to collect and monitor visitor traffic and site usage for the sole purpose of helping us develop and improve the design and layout of the websites. This Information includes:

- number of visitors to the site
- search terms used to find the site
- where visitors to the site have come from
- the pages visited on the website and how long is spent on each web page
- how many times an advert has been displayed and clicked on

These cookies collect information in an anonymous form. Google undertakes that it will not link your IP address with any other data held by Google.

To provide website visitors with the ability to prevent their data from being used by Google Analytics you can download and install the Google Analytics opt-out add-on for your web browser.

The cookies we set

If you create an account with us, then we will use cookies for the managing the sign-up process and general administration. These cookies will usually be deleted when you log out however in some cases, they may remain afterwards to remember your site preferences when you have logged out.

We use cookies when you are logged in so that we can remember you. This prevents you from having to log in every single time you visit a new page. These cookies are typically removed or cleared when you log out to ensure that you can only access restricted features and areas when you are logged in to your account.

In order to provide you with a great experience using the Planning Portal we provide the functionality to set your preferences for how this site runs when you use it. In order to remember your preferences, we need to set cookies so that this information can be called whenever you interact with a page is affected by your preferences.

The table below details all the cookies that the Planning Portal NI uses:

Cookie name	Description
ai_session	Various cookies used by Microsoft's Application
ai_user	Insight activity tracker to record anonymous user activity.
cookie_preferences	Our own cookie, used to track the user's cookie preferences.
_ga _gid _gac_gb	Various tracking cookies for Google Analytics, used to distinguish users or persist session states. If you have linked your Google Analytics and Google Ads accounts, Google Ads website conversion tags will read this cookie unless you opt-out. Learn more.
__gads _gat_UI NID CONSENT	Various Google Ads cookies used to deliver advertising.
x-ms-cipm-* [various]	Various Microsoft cookies used to support the secure log-in process, including user authentication.

Analytics

Hotjar: We use Hotjar in order to better understand our users' needs and to optimize this service and experience. Hotjar is a technology service that helps us better understand our users' experience (e.g. how much time they spend on which pages, which links they choose to click, what users do and do not like, etc.) and this enables us to build and maintain our service with user feedback.

Hotjar uses cookies and other technologies to collect data on our users' behaviour and their devices. This includes a device's IP address (processed during your session and stored in a de-identified form), device screen size, device type (unique device identifiers), browser information, geographic location (country only), and the preferred language used to display our website. Hotjar stores this information on our behalf in a pseudonymized user profile. Hotjar is contractually forbidden to sell any of the data collected on our behalf.

Disabling cookies

Most Web browsers automatically accept cookies, but, if you wish, you can set your browser to prevent it from accepting cookies.

The 'Help' option in the menu on most browsers will tell you how to prevent your browser from accepting new cookies, how to have the browser notify you when you receive a new cookie, or how to disable cookies altogether. You can prevent the setting of cookies by adjusting the settings on your browser (see your browser 'Help' for how to do this).

Be aware that disabling cookies can affect the functionality of this and many other websites that you visit. Disabling cookies totally will usually result in also disabling certain functionality and features of the Planning Portal. Therefore, it is recommended that you do not disable cookies unless you have a good understanding of the difference between first and third-party cookies.

For further information about cookies and how to disable them please go to the Information Commissioner's webpage: <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/online/cookies/>. This document describes what information the cookies that we use gather, how we use that information and why we sometimes need to store it. You can prevent cookies from being stored however this may downgrade or 'break' certain elements of the site's functionality and may adversely impact your ability to use our services.

For more information about cookies, visit: www.allaboutcookies.org or www.aboutcookies.org By using our websites and agreeing to our Privacy Notice, you expressly consent to the use of cookies as described in this document.

Information and security

Your attention is drawn to the fact that any information carried over the Internet is not secure; information can be intercepted, lost, redirected, changed and read by other people. Any transmission is at your own risk. Once we have received your information, we will use strict procedures and security features to mitigate unauthorised access and protect your personal data against unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction and damage.

We have implemented security policies, controls and technical measures to protect the personal data that we have under our control from:

- unauthorised access;
- improper use or disclosure;
- unauthorised modification; and
- unlawful destruction or accidental loss.

All our employees and processors who have access to and are associated with the processing of personal data, are obliged to ensure compliance with DPA and respect the sensitivities surrounding our customers' personal data.

We use leading technologies and encryption software to safeguard your data, and set strict security standards to prevent any unauthorised access to it.

Your rights and responsibilities

Please ensure that the information you submit is accurate and correct. Do not include personal information about third parties (including family members) unless you have told the individual concerned and they agree to it being supplied.

Tell us as soon as possible if any of the personal information you have provided should change.

Where we have given you (or where you have chosen) a password which enables you to access certain parts of our website, you are responsible for keeping this password secure. You should not share this password with anyone.

Plans, drawings and material submitted to the council as part of a planning application may be protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (section 47) even if they have been available on the internet. You should only use planning application material which is downloaded and/or printed for consultation purposes, to compare current applications with previous schemes or to check whether developments have been completed in accordance with approved plans. Further copies must not be made without the prior permission of the copyright owner. The Department and Councils in making the documents available in line with a statutory requirement does not constitute permission for you to breach any copyrights that may exist on them.

You can find out more about DfI at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/> or <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/planning>. If you have any questions, or want more details about how DfI uses your personal information, please use our secure online contact form or you can call us on 02890 540540 (+44 2890 540540 from outside the UK).



• **Department for Infrastructure**

Data Protection Officer
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB

Telephone: 02890 540075

Email: DFIGDPR@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

If you have any queries about how local councils process your personal data please contact your local Council using the information below.

• **Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council**

Data Protection Officer
Antrim Civic Centre
50 Stiles Way
Antrim
BT41 2UB

Telephone: 028 9446 3113

Email: DPO@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

• **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Data Protection Officer Name: Jonathan Young

Ards and North Down Borough Council,
Town Hall,
The Castle,
Bangor,
BT20 4BT

Telephone: 0330 013 3333

Email: dataprotection@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk



- **Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council**

Data Protection Officer Name: Joan Farley

Old Armagh City Hospital
39 Abbey Street
Armagh
Co. Armagh
BT61 7DY

Telephone: 02837 529600

Email: Joan.Farley@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

- **Belfast City Council**

Data Protection
Officer Belfast City
Council Legal & Civic
Services City Hall
Belfast BT1 5GS
Telephone 02890 320202

Email dataprotection@belfastcity.gov.uk

Email: records.managment@belfastcity.gov.uk

- **Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council**

Data Protection Officer Name: Elizabeth Beattie

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
Coleraine
BT52 1YA

Telephone: 028 70347034

Email: elizabeth.beattie@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk



- **Derry City and Strabane District Council**

Data Protection Officer Name: Damian McCay

Derry City and Strabane District Council
Information & Customer Services Officer
98 Strand Road
Derry
BT48 7NN

Telephone: (028) 71253 253 Ext 4310

Email: damianmccay@derrystrabane.com

- **Fermanagh and Omagh District Council - Enniskillen Office**

Data Protection Officer: Louise Horner

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
Townhall,
2 Townhall Street,
Enniskillen,
Co Fermanagh,
BT74 7BA

Telephone: 0300 303 1777 extension 21189

Email: dpo@fermanaghomagh.com

- **Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council**

Data Protection Officer Name: Michael Finney

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council,
Civic HQ,
Lagan Valley Island,
Lisburn,
BT27 4RL.

Telephone: 02894447493

Email: data.protection@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk



Department for

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- **Mid and East Antrim Borough Council**

Data Protection Officer Name: Victoria Taylor

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
The Braid,
1-29 Bridge Street,
Ballymena
BT43 5EJ

Telephone: 0300 1245 000

Email: Victoria.taylor@midandeantrim.gov.uk

- **Newry, Mourne and Down District Council**

Data Protection Officer Name: Edel Cosgrove

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road
Downpatrick,
BT30 6GQ

Telephone: 0330 137 4461

Email: Edel.Cosgrove@nmandd.org