

PART 3: LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Planning Submissions

Introduction

The Council recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI), including generative AI, may be used to support the preparation of planning applications. AI can be used positively where it is applied responsibly, transparently and accurately, and where a competent professional fully stands behind the submitted evidence.

AI includes technologies capable of generating or altering content such as text, images, video, audio or data, typically by drawing on large datasets or internet-based sources. While the method of production is not itself material to decision-making, excessive or verbose AI-generated content may hinder public engagement and timely decision-making.

When a Declaration Is Required

Applicants or agents **must complete an AI declaration at the point of submission** to confirm whether generative AI **has or has not** been used to create or materially alter any part of a planning submission.

Where generative AI **has been used**, the declaration must clearly identify the affected documents and provide the information required by the validation guidance.

This requirement applies to all application types where documents, reports, images or other supporting material form part of the submission.

Applicant Responsibilities

Applicants or their agents must:

- **Clearly identify where generative AI has been used** within the submitted documents.
- **State whether AI has been used to create or alter images or video**, including:
 - Whether content has been changed, enhanced, added or removed.
 - Which specific elements have been altered (for example buildings, infrastructure or landscape features).
- **Confirm responsibility for the factual accuracy** of all submitted information.
- **Confirm that the use of AI has been responsible and lawful.**
- **Confirm that any professional evidence submitted can be fully supported and defended by the relevant competent professional.**

The use of AI does not remove or reduce professional accountability for submitted evidence.

Exclusions

Applicants are **not required** to declare the use of traditional or embedded AI tools, such as:

- Grammar or spell-check functions.
- Common software features where AI is integrated as standard and not user-directed.

This requirement applies specifically to **generative AI**, not routine or background AI functions embedded in everyday software.

Purpose

This declaration ensures transparency and helps the Local Planning Authority, consultees and the public to:

- Understand the origin, purpose and reliability of submitted information.
- Properly interpret evidence during application consideration and any subsequent appeal.

Applicants remain responsible for all submitted evidence regardless of whether AI has been used.