

# Viewing & Commenting on Planning Applications

# Public Access A User Guide for Members of the Public

If you require further assistance, please contact us;

Emma Stirland
Planning Admin Team Leader
Braintree District Council
emma.stirland@braintree.gov.uk
01376 551414 x2505

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# Introduction

Public Access is a system which allows members of the public to view details about Planning Applications as well as submitting comments.

This document describes how to use the site.

# Searching

The following pages will help guide you through how to carry out searches for planning applications. There are a variety of search methods to allow you to find the information you are looking for.

- Simple search quickly for planning applications and appeals according to some entered text
- Advanced search according to a wide combination of relevant factors
- Weekly/monthly list search for applications where an application is validated or decided within a particular time period
- **Property** search for a particular property to which applications may apply
- Map search using an interactive map tool.

**Please Note**: The online search facility will only allow searches back to approximately 1990. Applications prior to this date will need to be requested from the Planning Department, for which there may be a charge for officer time. Email <a href="mailto:planning@braintree.gov.uk">planning@braintree.gov.uk</a> for more information.

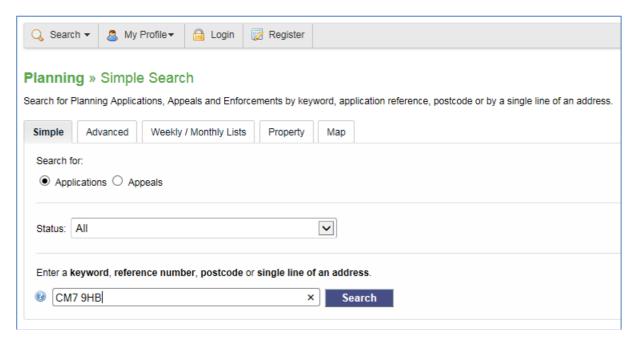
You can also save searches to either re-run when you wish or be notified by email if and when the application is updated or a new application is received.

Information on this can also be found on the following pages.

# **Simple Search**

A simple search allows you to search quickly for a planning application or appeal by entering some text that will help identify it.

1. From the **Search** drop down list then select **Simple Search**.

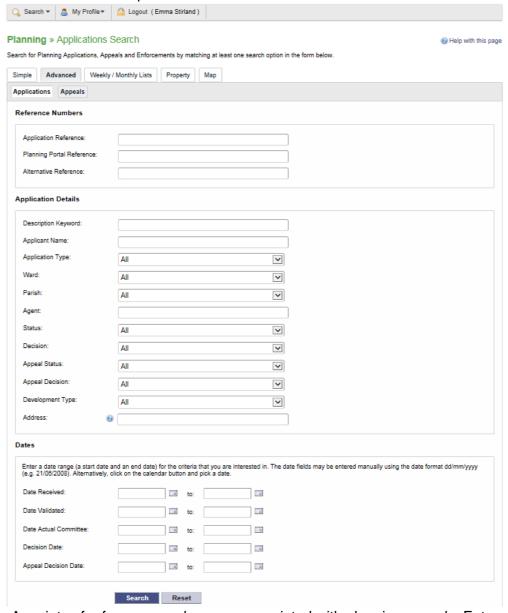


- 2. Click to select the type of record that you want to locate.
- 3. Choose the appropriate option from the **Status** drop down list.
- 4. Enter some text in the **Search** box that will correspond to one of:
  - reference number (for example, "16/01234/FUL")
  - post code (for example, "CM7 9HB")
  - part of an address (for example, "Causeway House", "Bocking End").
- 5. Click on the **Search** button to display the results of your search (see "<u>Viewing Your Search Results</u>").
- 6. If you wish to make a comment on the planning application, see "Making a Comment".

#### **Advanced Search**

An advanced search allows you to build a complex combination of specific criteria on which to search for information.

1. From the Search drop down list select **Advanced Search**.



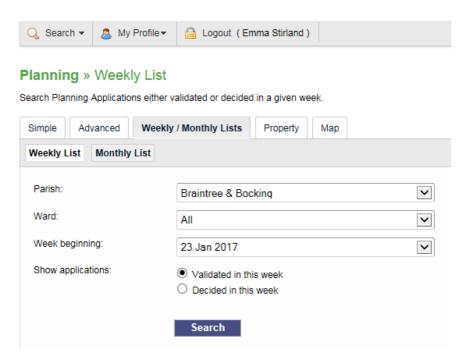
- A variety of reference numbers are associated with planning records. Enter one or more to help identify a specific record.
- Click to select the type of record that you want to locate (either from Application Type or Development Type)
- The details you can fill in depend on the record type selected. Enter the details you want to search on.
- Every planning case has a number of important dates associated with it (for example, the date the application was validated or the date that a court decision was issued). Use the date pickers to define an appropriate period to search within for any dates of interest.

- 2. Click on the **Search** button to display the results of your search (see "<u>Viewing Your Search Results</u>").
- 3. If you wish to make a comment on the planning application, see "<u>Making a Comment</u>".

# **Weekly/Monthly Lists Search**

The weekly or monthly lists feature allows you to search for applications according to the week or month in which they were validated or decided, as published in the local authority's lists.

- 1. From the Search drop down list select **Weekly/Monthly Lists**.
- 2. Click on **Weekly List** or **Monthly List** to select which list you want to search.



- 3. You can narrow your search to a particular area by selecting from the **Parish** or **Ward** drop down lists.
- 4. Specify the Week or Month by selecting from the drop down list.
- 5. Under **Show applications**, select which records to display.
- 6. Click on the **Search** button to display the results of your search (see "<u>Viewing Your Search Results</u>").
- 7. If you wish to make a comment on the planning application, see "Making a Comment".

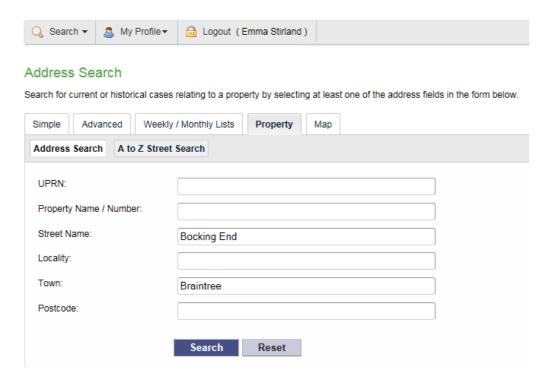
# **Property Search**

The property search feature allows you to search for a specific property in the gazetteer. There are two property search options:

- Address search for applications at a specified address
- A to Z Street search for applications on a specified street chosen from an alphabetical list.

#### **Address Search**

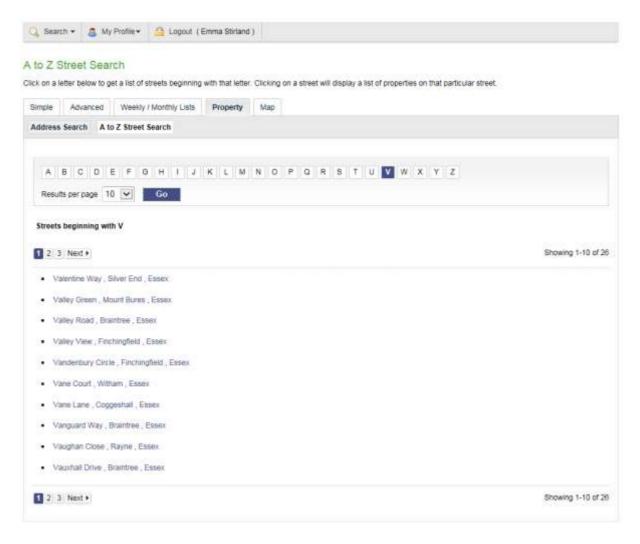
1. From the **Search** drop down list select **Property Search**.



- 2. To search for a specific property by its address, select the **Address Search** tab.
- Enter as many details as you know in the appropriate fields, then press the Search button to display the results of your search (see "Viewing Your Search Results").
- 4. If you need to clear the fields and start again, press the **Reset** button.
- 5. Click on the **Search** button to display the results of your search (see "<u>Viewing Your Search Results</u>").
- 6. If you wish to make a comment on the planning application, see "Making a Comment".

#### A to Z Street Search

- 1. From the **Search** drop down list select **Property Search**.
- 2. To search for a street alphabetically, select **A to Z Street Search**.
- 3. Click on the initial letter of the street you are interested in to display all the streets that begin with that letter.



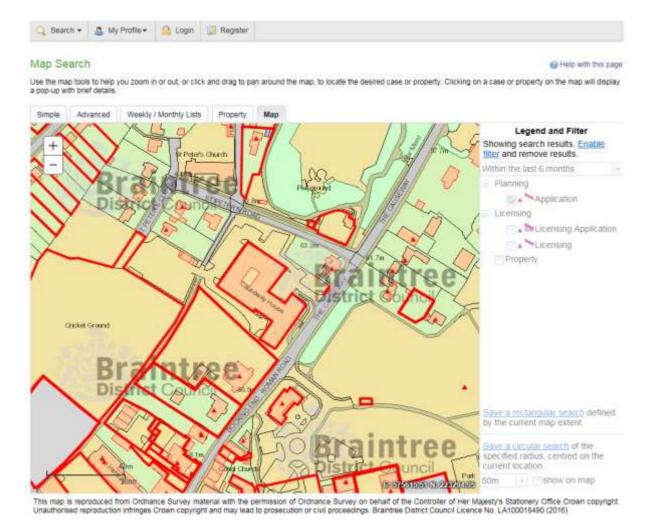
- 4. Select a street from the list to display the addresses on that street, then choose an address to discover whether any planning records exist for that address.
- 5. To go back and chose a different street, click on the **Refine Search** button.

## **Map Search**

The **Map Search** allows you to identify properties that are the subjects of planning applications using an interactive map. The map allows you to zoom in and examine each property to locate the records of interest to you. You can filter the display by adding or removing record types and by changing the time period.

Alternatively, if you are interested in applications relevant to a specific geographical area, such as close to your home, you can search for records limited either to the currently displayed map extent or to a specified radius from the map's centre. These searches can be saved to your **Saved Searches** (see "<u>Viewing Your Saved Searches</u>").

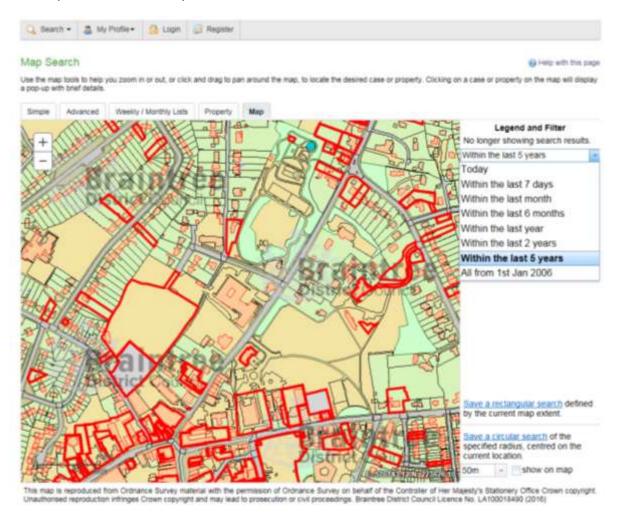
From the Search menu, choose the select Map Search.
 Please Note: The initial view shows applications submitted within the last six months.



- 2. To zoom in on a specific location, click on a point on the map and click on the + button. To zoom out, click on the button.

  Alternatively you can zoom in and out by scrolling the mouse wheel.
- 3. To pan the image around, click on the map and, keeping the mouse button depressed, drag in the direction you want to pan.

4. To refine the display, click on **Enable Filter**. This will allow you to change the time period from the drop down list.



Most records can be displayed in two ways:

- Records from 2006 to current day will be displayed as a red polygon
- Records from approximately 1990 to 2005 will be displayed as a red triangle

**Please Note:** The online search facility will only allow searches back to approximately 1990. Applications prior to this date will need to be requested from the Planning Department, for which there may be a charge for officer time. Email <a href="mailto:planning@braintree.gov.uk">planning@braintree.gov.uk</a> for more information.

5. Once you have identified a record of interest, click on the triangle point or polygon to display a summary of the information about the record.



If there is more than one record associated with the property, you can click on the **navigation arrows** to page through the record summaries.

To view the full record details click on the **Application Details** link at the bottom of the window.

# **Saving Map Searches**

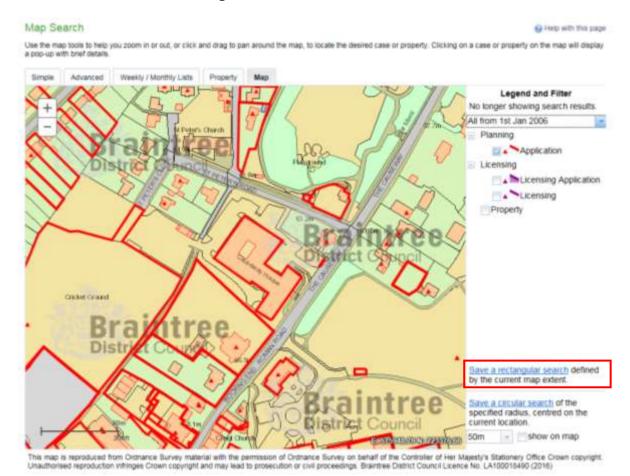
You can add a map search to your Saved Searches list in one of two formats:

- Rectangular Search saves all of the records of the selected record type that apply to the area currently shown on the map
- **Circular Search** saves all of the records of the selected record type that apply to the area within a specified radius of the map centre.

# Rectangular search

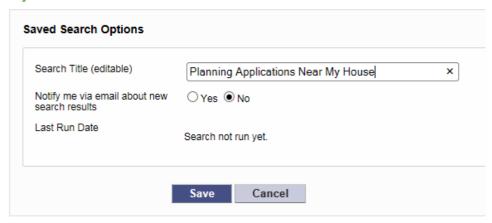
The **rectangular search** allows you to display occurrences of a record type over the geographical area currently displayed on the map. By re-running the search, you can monitor new occurrences. For example, if you have zoomed the map to display your town centre and filtered the legend to display planning applications in the last month you can save an extents search that allows you to monitor new applications arising in the town centre on a monthly basis.

- 1. Zoom and pan the map to display the geographical area of interest.
- 2. Select the required time period.
- 3. Click on Save a rectangular search.



4. On the **Saved Search Options** page you may change the default search title if you wish.

#### My Profile » Save Search

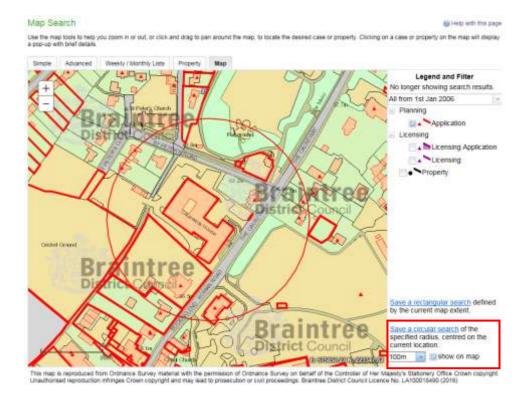


- 5. If you want to be notified by email of any new records matching your search criteria, select **Yes**. These notifications are displayed in your Notified Applications tab (see "Viewing Your Notified applications").
- 6. Click **Save** to save the search to your list of **Saved Searches** (see "<u>Viewing Your Saved searches</u>").

#### Circular Search

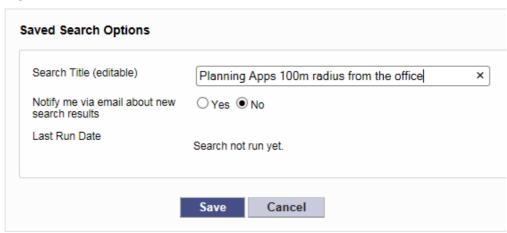
The **circular map search** allows you to display occurrences of a record type over the geographical area currently displayed within a specified proximity of the centre of the map. By re-running the search, you can monitor new occurrences. For example, if you have zoomed the map to display your home and filtered the legend to display planning applications submitted in the last year you can save a proximity search that allows you to monitor new planning applications arising within a specified distance of your home on a yearly basis.

- 1. Zoom and pan the map, placing the geographical point of interest at the centre.
- 2. Select the required time period.
- 3. Select the distance for which to search for records.
- 4. Check the **Show on map box** to display the proximity as a circle around the centre. You can pan the map to make adjustments if required.
- 5. Click on Save a circular search.



6. On the **Saved Search Options** page you may change the default search title if you wish.

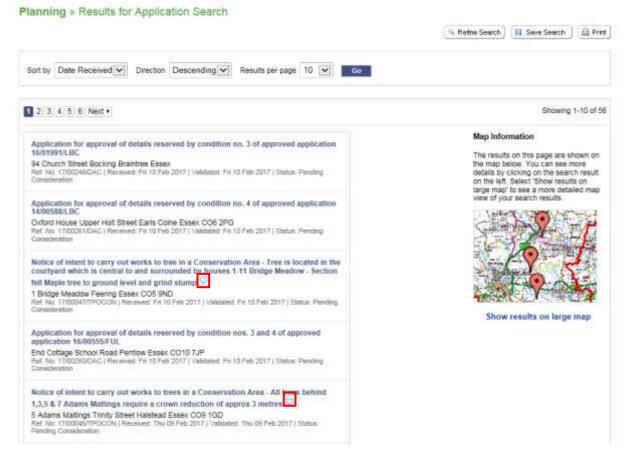
### My Profile » Save Search



- 7. If you want to be notified by email of any new records matching your search criteria, select **Yes**. These notifications are displayed in your **Notified Applications** tab (see "Viewing Your Notified applications").
- 8. Click **Save** to save the search to your list of **Saved Searches** (see "<u>Viewing Your Saved searches</u>").

# Viewing your Search Results

Once you have run a search, a list of records matching the search criteria is displayed.



**Please Note:** A speech bubble icon attached to a record indicates that comments may be made about that record at this time

- 1. You can manipulate how the search results are displayed to help you find applications of particular interest:
  - Sort By re-order the results according to a selected criterion
  - Direction choose whether the results are displayed in ascending or descending order
  - Results per page choose how many results should be displayed on the page at once. When you have made your display selections, click on the Go button.
- The number of results displayed (out of the total number of results) is shown. If
  there are more results than fit on to one page you can navigate between the results
  pages either by clicking on **Next** to view the next page or **Previous** to view the
  previous one, or by clicking directly on the **page number**.
- A map of the relevant area is displayed. Click on Show results on Large map to see the locations of the search results in greater detail (see "Map Search").
- If there are too many results, or if the results do not contain the applications you are looking for, you can go back and amend your search criteria. Press the **Refine** Search button.

- 5. To display the current page of search results in a printable format, click on the **Print** button. Click on **Print** again in the new window to send the page to your local printer. Press **Close** when you are finished with this window.
- 6. To view an individual record in detail, click on its title (application description).

# Saving a Search

You may find that you use a particular search regularly. For example, carrying out a simple search based on your post code or an advanced search showing all applications within your parish boundary. As a registered user you can save these searches to be run again from your **Saved Searches** page (see "<u>Viewing Your Saved searches</u>"). Additionally, when new records corresponding to a saved search arrive, news of these will automatically appear on your **Notified Applications** page (see "<u>Viewing Your Notified applications</u>").

- 1. To save a search, click on the **Save Search** button.
- 2. Change the default search title if you wish.
- 3. If you want to be notified by email of any new records matching your search criteria, select **Yes**.
- 4. Click on **Save** to save the search.

# **Tracking Applications**

Any application can be tracked so that you can keep up to date with its progress without having to search for it again. These cases are listed in your **Tracked Applications** page (see "<u>Viewing Your Tracked Applications</u>").

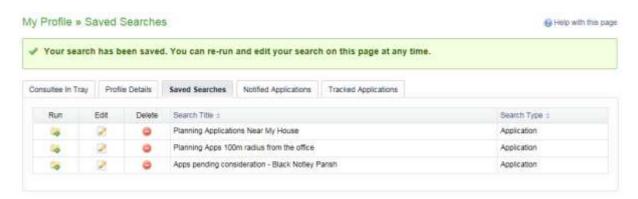
- 1. If you want to add a case to your **Tracked Applications** page click on the **Track** button.
- 2. To find this case again, select **Tracked Applications** under **My Profile**.
- 3. To stop tracking an application, return to the application details and click the **Stop Tracking** button at the top of the page. Alternatively click the **Stop Tracking button** next to the application in the **Tracked Applications** page.

# **Viewing Saved Searches**

Searches that will be performed frequently can be saved so that they may be repeated easily as often as you like (see "Searching").

Any changes to the status of applications previously found by your search criteria or any new applications which match the criteria of a saved search will trigger a notification. **Notifications** are listed in the **Notified Applications** page.

1. To view your saved searches, select **Saved Searches** from the My Profile drop down list.

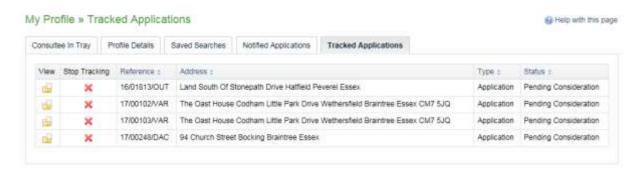


- 2. You can sort the list by clicking on the appropriate column headings:
  - Search Title sort the list alphabetically by search title
  - **Search Type** sort the list alphabetically by search type.
- 3. To perform a saved search now, click on the **Run** button for that search. **Please Note:** Circular map searches cannot be run from the **Saved Searches** page.
- 4. To modify the search criteria, click on the **Edit** button for that search. This returns you to the appropriate search form and allows you to change the details of the search.
- 5. To remove a search from the list, click on the **Delete** button for that search.

# **Viewing Tracked applications**

After locating an application of interest by searching, you can choose to keep a watch on what happens to it by tracking it. Applications are displayed on the **Tracked Applications** page. When applications that you are tracking are modified a notification will appear on the Notified Applications page and you will be sent a notification email.

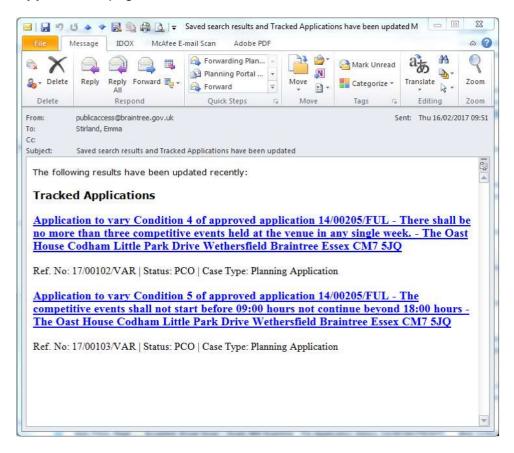
1. To view these applications, select **Tracked Applications** from the My Profile drop down list.



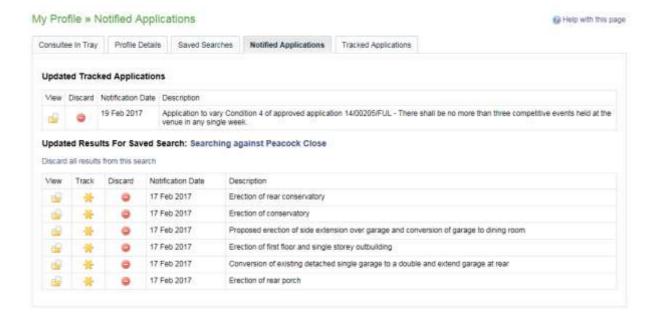
- 2. You can sort the list by clicking on the appropriate column headings:
  - Reference sort the list alphanumerically by reference
  - Address sort the list alphanumerically by the address that is the subject of the application
  - Type sort the list alphabetically by the application type
  - Status sort the list alphabetically by the status of the application.
- 3. To view a tracked application, click on the **View** button for that application.
- 4. To remove an application from the tracked applications list, click on the **Stop Tracking** button for that application.

# **Viewing Notified applications**

When applications that are the subject of a saved search or those in your **Tracked Applications** list are modified, a list of those applications will appear in the **Notified Applications** page. You will also be sent a notification email.



 To view your notifications, select **Notified Applications** from the **My Profile** drop down list.

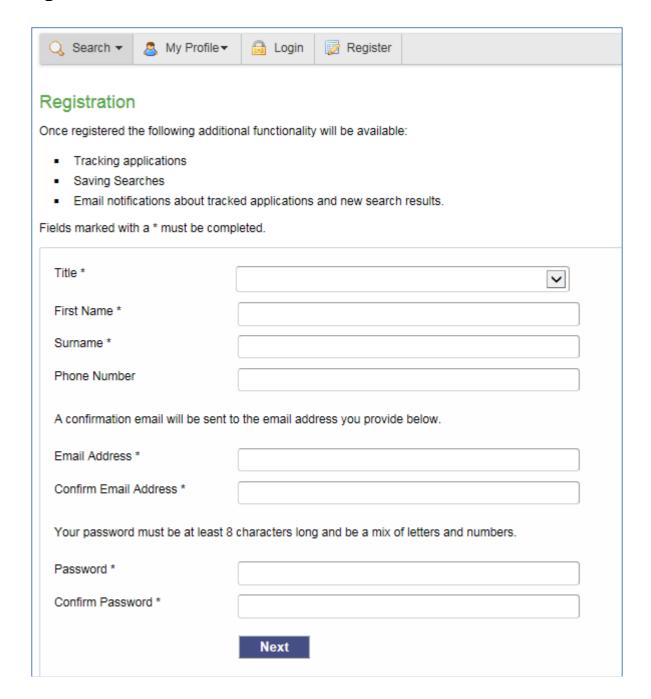


- 2. The tracked applications that have been modified are listed at the top of the screen. These are followed by the modified applications that are subject to your saved searches.
- 3. To view an application, click on the **View** button for that application.
- 4. To remove an application from the notifications list, click on the **Discard** button for that application. To delete all of the notified results for a particular search, click on **Discard All Results From This Search**.
- 5. Additionally, you can select saved search applications from the notifications list and track these. Click on the **Track** icon for the applications of interest. These will now be added to your **Tracked Applications** page.

# **Making a Comment**

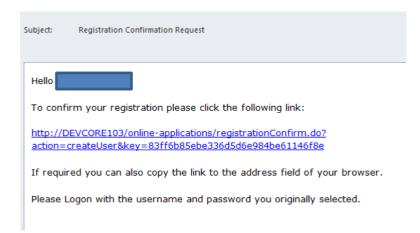
Anyone can use the Public Access site but to take advantage of the advanced profile features and submit comments, you must first register a user account. To register go to <a href="https://www.braintree.gov.uk/pa">www.braintree.gov.uk/pa</a> and click on the "Register here" link.

# Registration



Please Note: Passwords must be eight characters or longer, must contain a mixture of letters and numbers and must not contain spaces.

An email will be sent to the address you entered. This provides final confirmation that you want to create a Public Access account. When the email arrives, click on the **link** to be returned to the Public Access site.



#### Login

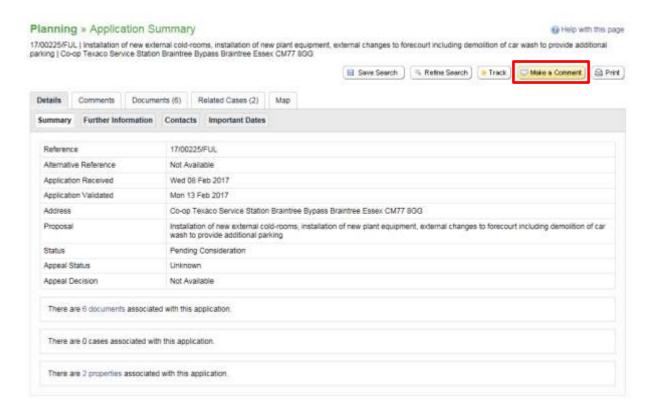
Enter your email address and password and click Login

#### Forgotten password

- If you forget your password, click on the Forgotten password? link
- Enter your email address and then enter a new password twice. Click the **Change Password** button.
- A confirmation email will be sent to your email address. When it arrives, click on the confirmation link. You will now be able to log in with your new password.

#### Make a Comment

1. Once you have found the application for which you wish to comment on, click on the **Make a Comment** button.



- 2. Your personal details will already be completed. (If they are incorrect, you can click to "update my personal details" to make changes.)
- 3. From the **Commentor Type** drop-down, select from a number of options.
- 4. Select your **Stance** (Object, Support, Neutral).
- 5. Use the **Your Comment** to type your comments.

#### Please Note:

You will not be able to upload additional information or photographs.
 This will need to be sent in the post or dropped in at our reception instead.

- Please also be aware that the website might time you out after an hour so bear this in mind if your comments are lengthy.
- If your comments do exceed 2000 characters, you will see a warning suggesting that the comments have been truncated. This is not the case and your comments will be published in full.
- 6. Tick the box **Send me an email confirming my comments** to receive a receipt and copy of your comments.
- 7. When happy to submit, click the **Submit** button.

