

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Aspen Planning Limited

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Aspen Planning Limited recognises that artificial intelligence (AI), including generative AI tools, can provide useful support in research, administration, drafting, analysis and other aspects of our work.
- 1.2 We will use AI responsibly and proportionately to improve the efficiency and quality of our services, while ensuring that professional judgement, confidentiality, data protection and the quality of our advice are maintained.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all directors, employees, contractors and consultants working on behalf of Aspen Planning Limited.
- 2.2 It covers the use of AI tools for business purposes.

3. Appropriate use of AI

- 3.1 AI may be used to assist with appropriate tasks including:
 - researching and analysing publicly available information;
 - summarising documents and information;
 - checking spelling, grammar and presentation;
 - assisting with administrative and organisational tasks;
 - other uses considered appropriate by Aspen Planning Limited.
- 3.2 The use of AI will be proportionate to the task and appropriate to the sensitivity of the information involved.
- 3.3 AI will not be treated as an authoritative source in its own right.

4. Confidentiality and client information

- 4.1 Protecting client confidentiality is a fundamental responsibility of Aspen Planning Limited. Confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information must not be entered into an AI system unless Aspen Planning Limited has established that the particular system provides appropriate privacy, security and contractual protections and that its use is appropriate for the information concerned.
- 4.2 Where AI is used for a task involving client information, information will be anonymised or minimised wherever reasonably practicable.

5. Accuracy and professional responsibility

- 5.1 AI-generated information can be inaccurate, incomplete, out of date or misleading. AI tools may also generate apparently credible information or references that do not exist. Accordingly, any AI-generated material that may influence professional advice will be reviewed and verified before reliance is placed upon it.
- 5.2 Particular care will be taken when using AI in relation to:
- planning legislation, regulations, guidance and policy;
 - planning applications and planning decisions;
 - development plan documents; and
 - factual information relating to a site or development proposal.
- 5.3 AI-generated references, quotations, policy wording and factual claims will be checked against the original or an authoritative source where they are material to the work.
- 5.4 Responsibility for advice issued by Aspen Planning Limited remains with the relevant professional and is not transferred to the AI system or its provider.

6. Human oversight

- 6.1 Substantive work produced or assisted by AI will be reviewed by an appropriately qualified member of Aspen Planning Limited before it is provided to a client or third party.
- 6.2 Where AI is used to assist with research, the underlying source material will be identified and checked where it is material to the advice being provided.
- 6.3 AI must not independently:
- provide professional planning advice;

- determine planning strategy;
- make decisions on behalf of Aspen Planning Limited;
- communicate professional advice to a client; or
- issue documents on behalf of Aspen Planning Limited without appropriate human review.

6.4 The final professional judgement will always rest with Aspen Planning Limited.

7. Copyright and intellectual property

7.1 Users must take reasonable steps to ensure that AI-generated material does not infringe third-party intellectual property rights.

8. Transparency

8.1 Aspen Planning Limited will seek to be transparent and proportionate in its use of AI.

8.2 Routine use of AI as a drafting, administrative or research aid will not necessarily require specific disclosure to a client. Where the use of AI is material to the delivery of a service, or where a client specifically requests information about its use, Aspen Planning Limited will provide appropriate information.

9. Data protection and risk

9.1 The principles of data minimisation, purpose limitation, confidentiality and security will be applied when using AI.

10. Review of this policy

10.1 AI technology, professional practice and the regulatory environment are developing rapidly. This policy will therefore be reviewed and updated as necessary.