



How do you make sure your plan is Land Registry compliant?

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Whenever we register a transaction at the Land Registry which relates to anything other than the whole of a registered title, the document evidencing the transaction must include a plan which complies with the Land Registry's guidelines. Preparing a compliant plan is not an easy task and is essential that it is done correctly.

When is a Land Registry compliant plan needed?

Some common examples of transactions where a compliant plan is required include:

- The grant of a lease of seven years or more (or a reversionary lease of any length which starts more than three months after the date of grant) of part of a registered title
- The grant of any lease of seven years or more (or a reversionary lease as above) out of an unregistered title
- The sale of land forming part of a registered title
- The sale of any land which has not previously been registered
- The grant of any easement over registered property (unless it relates to the whole of a registered title), whether the easement is in a stand-alone document or forms part of a lease or transfer (including leases of less than seven years)

What are the consequences of not providing a Land Registry compliant plan?

If the plan that is attached to the document is not Land Registry compliant, the Land Registry may raise requisitions or the application may be rejected. The application will need to be resubmitted with a replacement plan – depending on how serious the defects are the plan may need to be re-executed by all parties. This will cause delay and, in a worst-case scenario, may cause problems with getting the transaction registered. It therefore saves time and money if the plan provided at the outset is compliant.

What are the Land Registry's guidelines?

- The plan must be drawn accurately to a stated scale. The preferred scales are:
 - o 1:1250 – 1:500 for urban properties or small rural properties
 - o 1:2500 for larger rural properties (eg fields, agricultural property and large development sites)
- It should be based on a metric scale measurement
- It should include a bar scale
- It should show its orientation (eg a north point)

- It should show sufficient detail to be identified on an Ordnance Survey map
- It should clarify the general location by showing roads (with their names), road junctions and other (labelled) landmarks
- The plan should not be marked as “for identification only” and should not bear a statement of disclaimer used under the Property Misdescriptions Act 1991
- Care needs to be taken with photocopies: each time a plan is copied the accuracy and clarity is lost and distortion creeps in – a plan that already has edgings or colour on it before it is copied suffers the most
- Care also needs to be taken with PDFs: if you are printing a plan from a PDF please ensure that no page scaling is applied

A good test of whether your plan meets the requirements as to detail and general location is to give it to someone else with no additional clues and see if they can find the exact location on Google maps. If they can't then there is a good chance that you've not included enough information.

Defining the property or land which is the subject of the application

- The plan must show the whole of the property – this means that you need to include eg any garages, parking spaces, gardens or bin stores which form a part of the property
- The property must be clearly defined, for example by edging, hatching or colouring, but care must be taken not to obscure any detail in the process
- Where different rights or interests are being granted in respect of different parts of the property (for example a lease of a building and a right of way over an access road) these should be clearly shown in different colours as defined in the deed
- Buildings must appear in their correct current or intended position
- Where access drives or pathways form part of the property boundary these should be shown
- Where boundaries cannot be defined by reference to some other feature these must be plotted accurately – where necessary, measurements should be included (which correspond to scaled measurements)
- Any measurements should be given in metres to two decimal places (ie the nearest centimetre)
- Where there are intricate boundaries such as the internal divisions in a building, these should be shown on a separate plan at a larger scale (ideally 1:200)

Defining property that is not at ground floor level or covers multiple floors

- A plan must be supplied which shows where the property falls in relation to the external footprint of the building and/or surrounding detail on an Ordnance Survey map

- Where the extent is different at different levels, multiple plans should be provided to show this, with the level identified on the plan
- Where the property consists of subsoil or airspace the plan should show the levels between which the property falls, relating it to the ordnance datum (mean sea level) where possible
- Where there are intricate boundaries such as the internal divisions in a building, these should be shown on a separate plan at a larger scale (ideally 1:200)
- The plan must correspond to the verbal description contained in the deed and correctly show all markings referred to in the deed

Is a description alone ever acceptable?

A description of the property may be sufficient in the case of, for example, a single house with a clear postal address and fully defined boundary features which appear on the Ordnance Survey map (eg walls or fences all the way around the property). However, if there is any uncertainty at all about what land is included (eg open plan frontages, open side passages, or separate garages or buildings) a plan must be supplied.

How can I ensure that my plan is Land Registry compliant?

The most commonly acceptable base plan is an Ordnance Survey map or a copy of an approved Estate Layout plan. However, any plan that is drawn accurately to scale and follows the above guidelines is acceptable. You should never use a hand drawn sketch. If you don't have any one who can prepare a compliant plan for you, a web search for "Land Registry Compliant Plans" will come up with plenty of organisations that are able to offer compliant plan services. The cost varies widely depending on the complexity of the plan but is usually anywhere from about £80 upwards.

The Land Registry also offers an informal checking service. If we are acting for you on a transaction and there are any concerns over whether the plan may be accepted, we can send it to our contact for pre-approval. However, the process can take up to three days so it's important that plans are not supplied at the last minute.

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