



Scottish Government to raise Planning Application Fees from 1st June 2017

As part of the ongoing review of the Scottish Planning System, the Scottish Government have recently consulted on the **raising of planning fees** in Scotland.

The aim of the increase is to ensure a full cost recovery of applications. The Planning Team at GCR have reviewed the consultation paper and provided their thoughts to the Scottish Government.

It was announced by the Scottish Government on April 26 that, following consideration of the consultation responses, the **fee maxima** would be increased to **£125,000** from the June 1, 2017 for renewable energy applications determined by the Local Planning Authority. There is no current change to the fees associated with Section 36 applications to the Scottish Government.

The new pricing structure is outlined in the table below:

Category of Development	Type of Development	Old Fee	New Fee
The erection or alteration or replacement of plant or machinery	Application for Planning Permission	£401 per 0.1Ha, subject to a maximum £20,050 (5Ha)	Sites up to 5Ha, £401 per 0.1Ha Sites exceeding 5Ha, £20,050 plus £200 per 0.1Ha in excess of 5Ha, to a maximum of £125,000 (57.5Ha)

While smaller developments will be able to operate within the current pricing structure, larger developments, such as solar, hydro, and onshore wind farms, will be subject to significant cost increases. These would not be proportionate to the potential revenue available outwith the subsidy environment.

It is disappointing that the renewables sector has not been given more detailed consideration at this time, with suggestions received as part of the consultation calling for a separate category to be created for renewable energy development, moving it out of the plant and machinery area. This would have

allowed a separate pricing structure to be agreed and could have provided some relief in these uncertain times of subsidy cuts and rates rises.

As the Scottish Government are acutely aware, the renewables industry is seeking ways to reduce costs and streamline processes to ensure value for money, and secure a route to market for development. Increasing the front end, at risk costs, creates further uncertainty within the sector, at a time when it needs strong leadership and support from the government.

Operating outside the subsidy market, it is hard to see how the proposed planning fee increase will aid the support of the next generation of subsidy free renewable developments, which is the ultimate goal of both the renewables industry and the Scottish Government.

To find out how this may affect your project, or to discuss the proposal in more detail, please contact the GCR Planning Team.

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