C O N F I D E N T I A L

Planning Alert Service

Oxford Software Solutions Ltd.

Revision 2.0

Contents

1. Overview

This document describes the internet interface to access the Planning Alert service.

The purpose of this service is to help determine whether a specified location is close to any new or recent planning applications.

2. Technical Details

Each request to the service must carry with it either a point location or a polygon defining the area of interest.

The service response is currently in XML. Other format options may be added in the future.

Co-ordinate System

The x-y co-ordinates must refer to the British National Grid (defined by the Ordnance Survey), and should be supplied as the full figure “Eastings” and “Northings”.

Example: Trafalgar Square:

Eastings (x) = 530000
Northings (y) = 180500

Transfer Protocol

Requests are made using the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1) as defined by the Internet Engineering Taskforce (IETF).

The document defining this protocol may be found at either of the following:

http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2616.txt
http://www.w3.org/Protocols/rfc2616

Either http or https, and both “GET” or “POST” methods can be used for making requests.

Parameters

A standard http GET method requires the construction of a URL defined as:

URL = "http:" "//" host [":" port] [abs_path ["?" query]]

The components of this URL are detailed below.

Host

Two alternative IPv4 addresses are used for fail-over and redundancy in order to increase system reliability. These should be found using dynamic DNS look-ups from the following domains:

mapping1.net (Primary)
mapping2.net (Secondary)

Although RFC 2616 recommends avoiding the use of IP addresses, the IP addresses may be used directly in the event of DNS failure.

Either of these domains may be used, although the first is considered to be the primary address. If reliability is an important aspect of a system that uses this service, that system should be designed to automatically switch between these if a timely response is not received from any one domain. Typical time-

out periods are usually in the range of 30 to 90 seconds. Time-out periods less than this are not recommended.

Port

The default Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) Ports 80 and 443 are used for HTTP and HTTPS respectively. In many cases the port number may be omitted.

Abs_path

This should be the string "**.pla**" (excluding quotation delimiters).

Query

The query should be constructed as a string such as:

Point search:

"userID=<userID>&passKey=<passkey>&version=2&x=<x>&y=<y>"

Polygon search:

"userID=<userID>&passKey=<passkey>&version=2&
polygon=<x_1>,<y_1>,…<x_n>,<y_n>"

(excluding quotation delimiters)

The next table summarises the available fields.

Field Name	Type	Example
userID	String, mandatory.	
passKey	String, mandatory.	
version	String. Must be 2, mandatory.	2
x	Floating point, use when specifying a point.	384309.6
y	Floating point, use when specifying a point.	301874.2
polygon	Floating point, use when specifying a region. Maximum 1000 points.	See Test Example 3
bufferSize	Floating point. Distance in metres. Optional. Default is 500m, maximum 1000m.	250
SessionID	String, optional.	testsession
*Format**	*Char string, optional.*	*JSON*
*Callback**	*Char string, optional.*	*myCallbackFunction*

* Not currently implemented.

The userID and passKey should be used as supplied. Other parameters are as follows.

There are two formats for the query depending upon whether a point search or a polygon search is being requested.

1. For point searches the query string should be constructed as:

"userID=<userID>&passKey=<passkey>&version=2&x=<Eastings>&y=<Northings>"

(excluding quotation delimiters)

2. For area searches, the region of interest is defined by supplying the co-ordinates of the vertices of the polygon. The co-ordinates are 2-dimensional Cartesian x,y pairs. The parameters for a polygon of n vertices are passed as follows:-

polygon=x_1,y_1,x_2,y_2,x_3,y_3,…x_n,y_n

The polygon is always considered to be a closed loop, where the n^{th} point is assumed to link back to the 1^{st} point. A triangle will therefore be specified with 3 points.

For a polygon search the query string should be constructed as:

"userID=<userID>&passKey=<passkey>&version=2&polygon=<x_1>,<y_1>,…<x_n>,<y_n>"

(excluding quotation delimiters)

SessionID

If required, this is an optional parameter that can be added to each call to aid session tracking.

For example, &sessionID=testSession123

For full details of this see the document entitled "Session ID Registration Service".

Responses

The default format for responses is XML.

There are five categories checked and the response includes a text description of each category. Each is returned with either a "Yes" (indicating one or more applications found for that category), or "No".

Any response that is not in the expected format is indicative of an error, e.g. incorrect user identification or an exception such as system failure, e.g. server over-load (see examples section later).

Notes

In order to increase security, the use of source-IP address restrictions can be made where required.

3. Test Examples

The following strings are complete examples that should return the responses indicated.

Example 1: Failed authentication

Request:

https://mapping1.net/.pla?userID=imposter&passKey=wrong&x=237000&y=083000&version=2

Response:

Failure to authenticate

(Note that there will be no response if IP restrictions are used and not met.)

Example 2: Point search.

Request:

https://mapping1.net/.pla?userID=<userID>&passKey=<passKey>&version=2&x=487000&y=210000

Response:

```
<?xml version="1.0"?>
<planningData>
	<Item value="0">
		<description>Home improver</description>
		<result>Yes</result>
	</Item>
	<Item value="1">
		<description>Small residential</description>
		<result>Yes</result>
	</Item>
	<Item value="2">
		<description>Medium residential</description>
		<result>No</result>
	</Item>
	<Item value="3">
		<description>Large residential</description>
		<result>No</result>
	</Item>
	<Item value="4">
		<description>Mixed and commercial</description>
		<result>Yes</result>
	</Item>
</planningData>
```

Example 3: Polygon region search.

Request:
http://mapping1.net/.pla?userID=<userID>&passKey=<passKey>&version=2&polygon=236000,82000,237010,83000,237000,83010

Note that the responses obtained may vary over time due to planning applications being submitted or expiring.

4. Revision History

Date	Revision	Author	Notes
11 November 2016	1.0 Draft A.	PJH	For review.
29 January 2025	2.0	PJH	Reduction from 7 to 5 categories, with associated changes.