

Module 3 – Planning Use Class Cheat Sheet

In the UK, property planning use classes categorize different types of land and building uses. These classes are defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order. These classes provide a framework for local authorities in the UK to manage planning permissions and development control. They help determine what a particular property may be used for and what changes in use might require planning permission.

Here are the top 10 most common property planning use classes along with a brief description of each:

Class A1 (Shops): This includes retail shops, post offices, travel and ticket agencies, hairdressing, funeral directors, and dry cleaners. It covers premises for the retail sale of goods other than hot food.

Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services): Used for financial services such as banks and building societies, professional services (other than health or medical), and including estate and employment agencies.

Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafes): For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises – restaurants, snack bars, and cafes.

Class B1 (Business): Covers offices (other than those that fall within A2), research and development of products and processes, and light industry appropriate in a residential area.

Class B2 (General Industrial): General industrial use for industrial processes other than those falling within Class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment, or landfill).

Class B8 (Storage or Distribution): This includes warehouses, distribution centers, and repositories.

Class C1 (Hotels): Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided (excluding hostels).

Class C2 (Residential Institutions): Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges, and training centers.

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Class C3 (Dwelling Houses): This class is for dwelling houses. It's divided into three sub-classes:

C3(a): reflects the use by a single person or a family (house or flat).

C3(b): up to six people living together as a single household and receiving care.

C3(c): allows for groups of people (up to six) living together as a single household.

Class C4 (Houses in multiple occupation): Small shared houses occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals, as their only or main residence, who share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom.

Class D1 (Non-residential Institutions): This class includes a variety of uses such as medical or health services, crèches, day nurseries, day centers, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), non-residential education and training centers, museums, libraries, public halls, religious institutions, and law courts. It generally covers uses which do not fall within any other use class and are of a non-residential nature.

Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure): This class encompasses a wide range of leisure and social uses. This includes cinemas, concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not nightclubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums, and other areas for indoor and outdoor sports or recreations (excluding motor sports, or where firearms are used).

Class E (Commercial, Business and Service): Introduced in September 2020, Class E is a broad category that encompasses a wide range of commercial, business, and service uses. It includes retail, financial services, restaurants and cafes, offices, research and development, light industry, gyms, health centers, nurseries, and day centers. This class was created to provide greater flexibility in the planning process by allowing buildings to be used for a wider range of purposes without the need for planning permission for changing use within the class.