

# case study

**SpectrumITech**

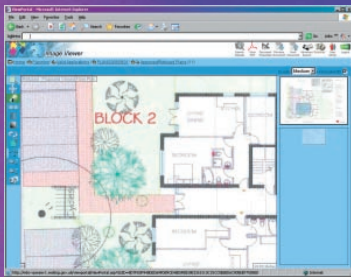
Innovative  
e-planning  
delivery  
solution

## Woking Borough Council



**“SpectrumITech were extremely responsive and flexible in delivering a first class web based system. ViewPortal™ has made a fundamental improvement to information access for the public and transformed the way our Planning Department conducts its business.”**

Sean Rendall – Project Manager WBC



## Background

The majority of Local Government Planning Applications are submitted as paper plans and documents that are subsequently managed and stored as hardcopy items. Viewing by the public of these documents normally entails a personal visit to the Council Offices. Whilst many Councils currently operate some form of centralised land and property management software within their Planning Departments, these systems are not designed to deliver large images such as plans, maps and reports quickly to the public over the internet. Consequently a number of e-Gov incentives have been developed which encourage conformance to what are known as the “21 Pendleton Criteria”. These criteria foster the development of web based public access for the whole planning process; from initial application to the decision notice.

## The Vision

Woking Borough Council fully embraced electronic service delivery in the Planning service. Their vision was driven by:

- The desire to meet central government's target for 100% e-enablement of the local authority services by the end of 2005
- The need to improve service delivery to the citizen and planning related agencies
- The desire to be more customer focused
- The need to improve efficiency and productivity through the automatic transfer of information

## ViewPortal™ key benefits

### For the public

- **Planning services and documents are now available 24 hours a day and accessible by anyone with a PC and an internet connection.**
- **No reliance on PDFs**
- **No client software**
- **Rapid viewing of even large drawings**
- **Easy to use via the browser**
- **Speed of image delivery**
- **Tools to allow online measurement**

### For Woking Borough Council officers

- **Enhancements added with minimum disruption to existing WBC infrastructure.**
- **Automated processes reduce internal workloads and ensure fast turn-around of paper and electronically received (Planning Portal) plans**
- **Conversion to digital images on web server**
- **Rapid integration with in-house systems**

## The Requirements

To meet the vision of electronic service delivery, Woking Borough Council required a cost-effective and rapidly deployable technical solution that also had to:

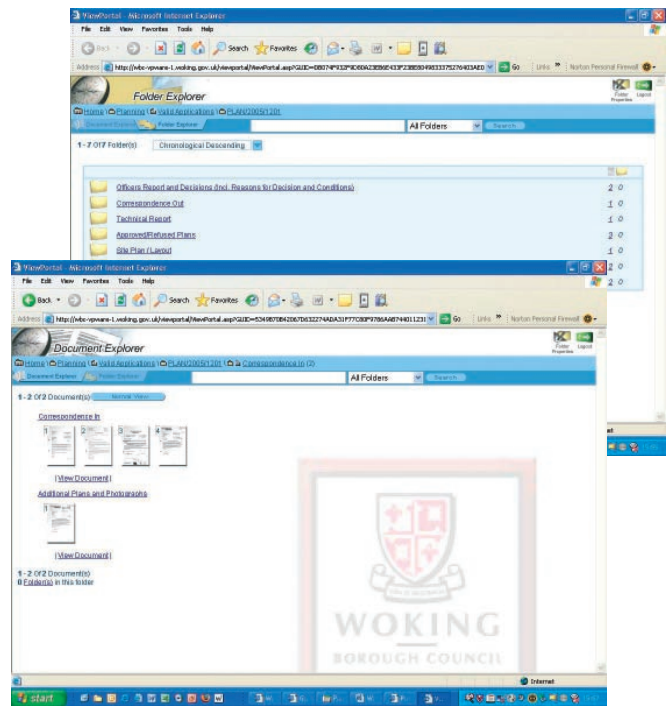
- Readily integrate with existing in-house systems
- Require minimal additional internal resources to maintain.
- Have a user-friendly public interface without the necessity to download special viewing software.
- Allow users to zoom into the image and make linear and area measurements.
- Enable rapid access to view large file images remotely
- Convert over 300 paper applications, including drawings up to A0, per month to create over 8000 web-based digital images in the shortest possible time

## The Solution

On a daily basis SpectrumITech receives one copy of the documents, including all the drawings, relating to planning applications from the Council, and scans and indexes them. These are then uploaded to the SpectrumITech ViewPortal™ Electronic Document Management System located in the Council offices. Workflows integrated with the Council's own Planning software allow these procedures to be fully automated. The Planning software also generates a daily list of documents to be made available to the public. This electronic list is received by ViewPortal™ which then automatically publishes these approved documents to the web for public viewing.

During the course of each Planning Application a number of documents are electronically generated within the Council. These include Decision Notices, Officer's Reports and Correspondence with the various applicants, their agents and perhaps statutory bodies such as the Water Board or Environment Council. These are again automatically captured by ViewPortal™ and where appropriate made available for public viewing.

One of the many unique features of ViewPortal™ is the ability to view very large images even over slow internet



connections. This feature overcomes the common public complaint that images cannot be downloaded because of their size. In addition there are simple to use tools for zoom, and linear and area measurement. All these tools can be applied using a standard internet browser so no software downloads are required.

ViewPortal™ is linked directly to the Council's Planning Application system. Both the public and Council officers can now track and study associated information such as representation letters, correspondence, technical reports and minutes of planning committee meetings with ease and, if necessary, download a personal copy of these documents.

## Summary

In summary SpectrumITech's ViewPortal™ provides an automated solution that readily integrates and enhances the existing facilities available to both Woking Borough Council's Planning Department and the general public.

Go to [http://caps.woking.gov.uk/publicaccess/dc/DcApplication/weeklylist\\_searchform.aspx](http://caps.woking.gov.uk/publicaccess/dc/DcApplication/weeklylist_searchform.aspx) and follow through to "View Associated Documents" to see ViewPortal™

### SpectrumITech

Spectrum House, 56 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6LE, UK  
Tel +44 1483 730201 Fax +44 1483 762620

### SpectrumITech

16225 Park Ten Place, Suite 300, Houston, Texas 77084, USA  
Tel +1 281 647 0602 Fax +1 281 647 0926

email: [sales@SpectrumITech.co.uk](mailto:sales@SpectrumITech.co.uk)  
[www.SpectrumITech.co.uk](http://www.SpectrumITech.co.uk)

