



A Guide to Having your Say on Planning Applications

INTRODUCTION

Anyone can send in representations on Planning Applications – it doesn't matter whether you have received a letter from us, seen the application advertised by way of a site notice or press notice, or seen the application on our website, or just been told of an application by a neighbour. Your comments have to be made in writing, either by letter or by E-mail, (in the case of the latter your name and contact address must be included) and have to be received before the application is determined, either by officer (delegated powers) or by the Council's Planning Applications Committee. You can find out the last date for receipt of comments and whether an application is likely to go to Committee by contacting the relevant planning officer. The Planning Applications Committee is a public meeting and anyone is entitled to attend.

WHO MAY SPEAK

Those who have commented in writing on an application which is going to be determined by the Planning Applications Committee will receive a letter inviting them to speak at the Committee. As it is not practical to allow all objectors and supporters to speak, the Council allows the following to speak, in the order set out below:

- Parish Council representative
- One supporter (not the applicant or agent)
- Objector
- Objector
- The applicant or his agent.

Each speaker will be allowed three minutes in which to put their case.

If more than one member of the public wishes to speak, either for or against an application, then **speakers will be allocated on a first come first served basis. It is therefore important that if you receive a letter and wish to speak, you must contact the Council as set out in the letter, by 5.00pm on the Wednesday before the meeting. (In order to give equal opportunity, only telephone bookings will be accepted).** If more than one

speaker does come forward, you are strongly advised to contact the other objectors or supporters and agree a spokesperson. A Ward Member is entitled to speak for any length of time at the chairman's discretion and will be allowed to enter into the debate, but not to vote.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is only allowed for planning applications on the agenda. Each speaker is allocated three minutes in which to put their case – public speaking will commence after the officer has introduced the application to Members. The Chairman will firstly introduce the speaker, let the speaker know when the two minute mark has been reached, and after 3 minutes the Chairman will thank the speaker and ask them to return to the public seating. There will be no further opportunity for involvement for speaking or involvement in the debate which follows the public speaking. If you are notified that you are included on the schedule of public speakers, you should arrive 15 minutes before the meeting commences and introduce yourself to the Committee clerk, who will explain the procedures. If you are not present when the Chairman asks you to speak you lose your opportunity to speak. Speaker's comments should be confined to relevant planning issues, such as

- Residential amenity
- Highway safety and traffic
- Noise, disturbance, smell
- Design appearance and layout
- Character of Area
- Historic buildings or conservation area issues
- Trees and Landscape and
- Planning Policy (Local Policy, Structure Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy and Government Guidance).

Please avoid non-planning issues such as

- Private Property rights
- Right to a view
- Effect on property values
- Developer's morals/ motives etc..

Please do not

- Make statements of a personal, racist or slanderous nature which could result in legal action against you
- Be abusive
- Interrupt other speakers, or the committee debate.

If this does occur the Chairman can curtail your right to speak, and in serious instances the Chairman can ask you to leave the room. Your presentation will be verbal only – no other form of presentation will be allowed (including the passing out of photographs, or handouts). Members of the Committee, through the Chairman, may ask questions of clarification from a speaker, but debate at this stage is not allowed. Applications are normally dealt with in the order in which they occur on the agenda, although the Chairman may take them out of order if large numbers of people attend for a particular item. The Chairman also has the discretion to vary procedures as necessary to assist the conduct of the meeting. If the application is **deferred** to a later meeting, those who spoke first time around will have an automatic right to speak again, or may nominate someone else to speak on their behalf, but **must confirm their wish to speak again following receipt of the letter from the Council prior to the relevant meeting.** If no response is received, the invitation will then be extended to others who have made written representations and requested to speak.

HOW THE VOTING SYSTEM WORKS

Following the completion of the public speaking the Chairman will invite Members to debate the application, and where appropriate request clarification from officers. Each committee member has a single vote, with the exception of the Chairman who can vote a second time (a casting vote) if Members are evenly split when they vote.

To find out who your Parish/Town representative or Ward Councillor is please view the following weblinks or contact Monica Henschcliffe on 01283 508608.

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/Services/Pages/ParishCouncils.aspx>

<http://www1.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Members.aspx>

If you would like to confirm accessibility to the meeting room please use the following link:

<http://disabledgo.com/en/org/east-staffordshire>