



Public speaking procedure at meetings of the Planning Applications Committee

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Mansfield
District Council

Introduction

Public speaking at planning committee enables people to make their views directly on development proposals other than just by letter. This leaflet has been prepared by the council to provide advice on how the meetings work. All matters of procedure during the meeting will be at the discretion of the Chairman of the Planning Applications Committee.

Who can speak?

You can speak if you are:

- An applicant
- An individual (or representative of a company) who has commented on an application
- An agent acting for an applicant (but only where the applicant does not wish to speak).

What do I have to do if I want to speak?

Anyone wishing to speak should contact a Democratic Services Officer at the council by 5pm, at least two working days before the meeting to register the request. The request must be in writing, facsimile or e-mail (details on back page). Requests which are late will not be granted and telephone requests cannot be accepted. The use of visual aids is not permitted and copies of comments, written information or photographs cannot be circulated at the meeting.

How many speakers are allowed?

The applicant/agent, supporters and objectors will be sent a written invitation to register their request to speak. Although you may request to speak at committee, a maximum of two speakers in support and two speakers against will be able to present their view. The invitation will contain a list of all other supporters or objectors (as appropriate) and advises that those wishing to speak should liaise with each other to agree appropriate speakers. If more than two people request to speak, speakers will be selected in order of receipt. Those unsuccessful will be contacted by telephone.

Please note, in relation to the submission of organised objections, such as by means of a petition, one spokesperson should speak for all, subject to there being a maximum of two speakers as described above.

How much time will I have?

Each speaker will have four minutes. You will be timed by a Democratic Services Officer who will give you a reminder 30 seconds before the end of the four minutes.

Will I be asked questions?

Committee members may ask questions to clarify points you have made. Your comments should be made as statements. Neither councillors nor officers will discuss the issues with you.

What am I allowed to say?

The council must decide applications according to the relevant planning policies and other material considerations. Examples which can be taken into account include:

- Noise and disturbance
- Highway safety and traffic issues
- A building which is of poor design
- Loss of light caused by new building.

Considerations which cannot affect the way an application is decided include:

- A loss of view
- A reduction in the value of a property
- Business competition
- Inconvenience during construction work
- Private property rights (e.g. boundary disputes).

The above lists are not exhaustive.

Who sits on the committee and who attends the meeting?

The Planning Applications Committee includes 11 elected councillors representing different parts of the district. A Chairman is in charge of the meeting. The Democratic Services Officer will take minutes and manage the time allowed for speaking. A Legal Officer and normally two Planning Officers will also attend. Meetings are open to the press and public so anyone can attend.

What is the order of the business at the meeting?

Although the agenda is published prior to the meeting, applications with speakers may be taken first.

What is the order of speaking on each application?

- The chairman will announce each application in turn
- A planning officer will make appropriate introductory comments
- The order of speakers will be objectors, supporters, and applicant/agent.

What happens if a decision is deferred?

Applications will not be deferred because of the absence of any person who has expressed a wish to speak. They may be deferred if there is need for further details or a site visit. If an application is deferred for a site visit you will not be able to speak on site other than to point out things that they wish members to see or to answer any queries members may have. However, you will be able to speak when the application is brought back to committee for consideration.

Conduct

Speakers will be expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner and concern themselves only with planning issues.

Further Information

To register your wish to speak please either confirm by letter, return the slip attached to my letter to you or notify a Democratic Services Officer at the district council by

Fax: 01623 463900

E-mail: democraticservices@mansfield.gov.uk

Please note: A ward councillor who is not a member of the Planning Applications Committee can speak at the meeting but is limited to six minutes, and other councillors can speak with the chairman's permission but will be limited to four minutes. They will be timed by the Democratic Services Officer who will give them a reminder 30 seconds before the end of the time period.