

# Having Your Say at Planning Committee

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Most planning and related applications do not go to the Planning Committee for a decision. Instead, they are dealt with by a Senior Council Officer and his team under powers delegated to him by the Planning Committee. This approach is widespread to Councils across the country and, at North East Lincolnshire Council, includes all non controversial applications. In such cases, written comments are positively encouraged and are fully considered before a decision is taken; but there is no opportunity to speak to the Planning Committee.
- 1.2 More information about those applications which do go to Planning Committee can be found in the Council's Constitution (see P98 powers delegated to the Strategic Director – Place or equivalent. The Constitution is found here: <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/decision-making/the-constitution/>.
- 1.3 The planning applications which are to be considered at Planning Committee are published in an agenda. This is available at least 5 full days beforehand and is posted here: <http://www.nelincs.gov.uk/meetings>.
- 1.4 Planning Committee normally meets every four weeks on a Wednesday - at **9.30am in Grimsby Town Hall**.
- 1.5 Public speaking will be permitted each time a planning, or related, application is considered by the Planning Committee. However, in order to do so you must register your intention to speak, more details about which are given below.
- 1.6 It is important that people affected by a development are able to speak at Planning Committee in order to reinforce their written comments. It is equally important that the applicant, or their representative, can speak to the Planning Committee and respond to issues raised. Local parish and ward councillors may also wish, and are entitled, to speak.
- 1.7 This document explains the related procedures, to ensure that the entitlement to speak to the Planning Committee is clear.

## 2 Registering an Intention to Speak --what you must do before Planning Committee

- 2.1 You are only able to speak to the Planning Committee if:
  1. You are the applicant or a person acting on their behalf; or
  2. You, or someone you represent, have previously made written comments on the application to the Council.
- 2.2 Separate rights also exist for Ward and Parish Councillors which are explained below.

- 2.3 You must let us know that you would like to speak by, at the very latest, 5pm on the Monday before the Wednesday meeting. This is so that we can make suitable arrangements for those who wish to speak. This can be done by telephoning (01472) 326285, or by emailing [Planning@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:Planning@nelincs.gov.uk). Alternatively, a form (found here: <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/planning-and-development/planning-committee/>) can be posted or emailed.

### **3 Speaking at Planning Committee**

- 3.1 Public speaking will be permitted each time a planning, or related, application is considered by the Planning Committee.
- 3.2 **Local residents and others**, who have previously written to the Council about an application, may speak to the Planning Committee. Up to 2 supporters may speak for no more than 5 minutes in total and up to 2 objectors may also speak for no more than 5 minutes in total. If more than two people have requested to either support or object to an application, their details, with their permission, will be shared with other objectors / supporters at the time they register to speak. This is in order that they can agree who will speak at Planning Committee and how they will split their time.
- 3.3 In those cases where a petition has been submitted, a spokesperson, on behalf of the petitioners, will continue to need to register a request to speak at Planning Committee. Their entitlement to speak will not extend beyond the 5 minutes as set out above.
- 3.4 At the discretion of the Chair, and in the case of major strategically significant proposals, additional public speakers may be permitted. In such cases there may be a wider range of views and opinions which it would be valuable for Planning Committee to hear, before taking a decision or making a recommendation to national government.
- 3.5 Additional plans, photographs or information which local residents and others wish to present to Planning Committee to supplement their case should be submitted at the earliest possible opportunity and at the latest by the Monday before the Wednesday Committee meeting. This is in order that we can circulate the information to Councillors and to the applicant. The submission of additional plans, photographs or information will not normally be allowed on the day of Planning Committee.
- 3.6 **Ward Councillors** may speak to the Planning Committee, for up to 5 minutes each, about an application in their ward. They may also speak for up to 5 minutes on a planned major development which is not within their ward, if the Chair agrees that it has a wider interest beyond a single ward.
- 3.7 **Parish Councils** may send a representative to speak to the Planning Committee for up to 5 minutes about an application in their parish. They may also speak for up to 5 minutes on a planned major

development which is not within their parish, if the Chair agrees that it has a wider interest beyond a single parish.

3.8 **Applicants and/or their agents** may speak to the Planning Committee for up to a total of 5 minutes and no more. This maximum time may be used by up to two people. Additional plans or material to support an application will not normally be accepted on the day of Planning Committee. Any additional plans received on the day of the Committees may result in an application being taken off the agenda, to be considered at a later date, so as to give proper time for the amended details to be looked at.

3.9 The use of electronic presentation media (such as PowerPoint) is acceptable. However, in order for suitable arrangements to be made for this it should be sent as early as possible, via email, to the Development Management officer dealing with the application or to [Planning@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:Planning@nelincs.gov.uk). The latest that such presentations should be sent is 5pm on the Monday before Planning Committee.

#### **4 Arriving at the Planning Committee Meeting**

4.1 It is helpful, in order to assist the smooth running of the meeting, that on arriving at the committee room in Grimsby Town Hall, people who have registered to speak make themselves known to the Committee Clerk. This then helps the Planning Committee Chair know which applications most people have come to hear. The Committee Chair will, as a result, normally vary the order in which items on the agenda are considered so that those with the most public interest are heard first of all.

4.2 Once a public speaker has spoken to Planning Committee there is no further right to speak at the meeting or add additional comments; this must all be done within the allotted 5 minutes.

#### **5 Planning Committee – Order of Business**

5.1 The discussion of applications is, in each case, in the following order:

1. Chair of Planning Committee announces the application.
2. Strategic Director – Place or equivalent, or his/her representatives, presents the application and outline the main points and recommendation contained within a detailed written report in front of the Committee. This presentation is normally supported by extracts from the plans submitted with the application and photographs of the site and its surroundings being shown to the Planning Committee via a large screen.
3. Objector(s) address Committee.
4. Developer/applicant/agent or supporter(s) address Committee

5. Ward Members (not on Planning Committee) address the Committee
6. Parish Councillors address Committee
7. Strategic Director – Place or equivalent, or his/her representatives, at the invitation of the Chair, respond to any issues raised.
8. Councillors on Planning Committee debate the application and may ask questions of the Council officers present.
9. A Planning Committee councillor proposes what should happen to the application (normally approval with conditions, refusal or deferral for a site visit or further information).
10. In the event that the above proposal is seconded by another Planning Committee member the Committee votes, with the permission of the Committee Chair, on the proposition.

## **6 Getting the Best from Speaking at Planning Committee**

- 6.1 When speaking at Planning Committee it is recommended that you restrict your comments to those matters which the Planning Committee can take into account when it makes a decision. If detailed comments are made about matters which the Committee cannot take into account then Council officers present will advise the Committee Chair that this is so. The matters which the Planning Committee cannot take into account are prescribed nationally and normally include land ownership issues, the perceived impact of a development on land and property values and existing businesses and the loss of a private view. Further advice on this is available here: <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/planning-and-development/planning-applications/commenting-on-a-planning-application/>
- 6.2 Anyone can attend any Planning Committee, whether you are speaking or not. If you think you might want to speak to the Committee in the future, you may find it useful to attend an earlier meeting to see how they work.
- 6.3 We recognise that public speaking can be an intimidating experience for anyone. But please be assured that everyone speaking to the committee is made welcome and will be treated with respect. If you would like further reassurance, please contact the Development Management team on (01472) 326289 – Option 1.

## **7 Councillors**

- 7.1 Councillors at North East Lincolnshire Council must comply with a Code of Conduct (found here: <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/councillor-conduct/>) The rules set out are to ensure that Councillors behave properly and lawfully at all times.