

Public Involvement in Planning Control

- There is no obligation to speak at a Committee meeting whether you are the applicant, agent, parish or town councillor or have commented on an application. Any comments will be reported to the Committee and you may attend the meeting if you wish. You may decide that if the Case Officer's recommendation is in accord with your wishes, there is no need to amplify your comments; you should note that the Committee may not accept the Case Officer's recommendation. The applicant or their agent may or may not choose to speak at the meeting.
- **Should you wish to speak at the meeting you must contact us by 4:00pm on the working day before the Committee and the list of speakers will be placed in the order in which we have been contacted.**
- The full order of speaking will be –
 - A Planning Officer who will introduce the item (no time limitation)
 - Parish/Town Council representative
 - Objectors
 - Supporters
 - Applicant/Agent
 - Ward Member (if not on the Committee)
 } only if a valid request to speak has been received
- Members of the Committee may question each speaker after they have spoken followed by an opportunity for debate by the Committee where further information may be sought from the Planning Officer. The decision will then be taken unless the Committee decide that it should be deferred to the next meeting for further information, negotiations or a site visit; if this happens the whole process for public speaking will be repeated.
- ***There is a time limit of five minutes for each group of speakers. For example, objectors will normally be called in the order in which they have contacted us to notify their wish to speak, until the five minutes have expired. However, it is acceptable for objectors to appoint a representative to put forward their case jointly or to vary the order of the speakers in the interests of efficiency.***
- The Committee has no powers to require other speakers to answer questions from members of the public. It is recommended that any questions are asked before the meeting and on no account must other speakers or the Committee debate be interrupted.
- The issues which are relevant to the consideration of the proposal will vary depending on the nature of the proposal itself and the site but may include:
 - Local Development Framework
 - Government orders and guidance
 - Case law and previous decisions
 - Highway safety and traffic
 - Noise, disturbance and smells
 - Design, appearance and layout
 - Conservation (buildings, trees, etc)
 - Residential amenities
- The following issues are usually irrelevant in planning terms but will vary from case to case:
 - Matters covered by other laws (eg alcohol licence)
 - Private property rights (eg boundary or access disputes)
 - The developer's morals or motives
 - Possible future development
 - Loss of view over other people's land
 - Effect on value of property

Please note this is an outline of the procedure intended for guidance only. The procedure is governed by the Council's Constitution and in particular Part 7, which may be viewed at the following link:

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38471&p=0>