

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING ARRANGEMENTS AT MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- 1.1 If an application is to be decided by Planning Committee, members of the public who are affected by that planning application along with local ward members who are not members of the Committee and county council division members are allowed to speak at the Committee as set out in paragraph 1.3 below.

### **Do I have to speak at planning committee to put my view across?**

- 1.2 Not normally. If you have written expressing a view, whether in support of or objection to an application, then this will be recognised in the Committee papers on the day. The points made in your correspondence will be summarised and fully taken into account in the Officer's report to Committee. Any late representations will also be made available to the Committee members **prior** to the meeting. In the interests of data protection correspondence may be redacted on the planning application file.

### **Who is allowed to speak?**

- 1.3 The following parties, in the order in which they appear below, are allowed to speak at Planning Committee
- A representative of the Parish Council in whose area the application site is located to express the views of the Parish Council;
  - An objector;
  - A supporter;
  - The applicant or professional agent / representative;
  - County Council Division Member(s) who is (are) not a member of the Committee on matters pertaining solely to County Council issues such as highways / education
  - Local Ward Member(s) who is (are) not a member of the Committee
- 1.4 You should not expect to speak unless you have registered your interest in writing with Committee Services following the publication of the Committee's agenda. This can be done by way of email addressed to:  
[committees@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:committees@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk)

If you do not have access to email, you may register by calling the Lead Officer for Planning on 01473 296376.

- 1.5 You must register your interest to speak no later than **two clear working days before the Committee meeting**. You must state which planning application you wish to speak about (application number and address) and provide your name, address and contact number and indicate the capacity in which you wish to speak. By registering your interest you agree to the personal data you provide being used by the Council to facilitate the public speaking arrangements.
- 1.6 All public speakers will be allocated a maximum of **3 minutes** in which to speak, save that Local Ward Member(s) who is (are) not a member of the Committee are allocated a maximum of **5 minutes**. Speeches are timed and the Chair will indicate when your time is up.
- 1.7 For persons other than ward / division members, only one person in each capacity is allowed to speak about each application. Where the Council is notified that more than one person wishes to speak in each category a list will be drawn up to indicate the order in which persons registered their interest. Committee Services will contact the registered parties and indicate where in the list each person is and will share information about other registered speakers. Where more than one person is registered to speak in a particular category it would be helpful for speakers to agree a spokesperson amongst themselves to present all of the relevant views. Where this is not possible then the time will be divided equally amongst all speakers in a particular category. In such circumstances speakers will be expected to co-operate with each other and avoid duplication in their presentations.
- 1.8 The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to allow representatives from more than one Parish Council to speak if they consider it would help clarify the application for Committee members and there would be a clear planning impact upon more than one Parish even though it is beyond the application site. Such arrangements only extend to Parish Councils whose area is immediately adjacent to the area in which the site is located.
- 1.9 The Chair of the meeting also has the discretion to enable more than one person to speak in other capacities if they consider that it would help to clarify the relevant planning issues pertaining to an application and will not lead to a duplication of presentations.
- 1.10 The Chair's decision on the exercise of their discretion is final and may not be questioned in any meeting.

#### **How are applications considered at Planning Committee?**

- 1.11 Applications are listed on the agenda for each meeting. It is usual that the order in which items are heard will be re-arranged by the Chair on the day of the meeting to suit public interest in the applications being heard but taking account of Members commitments.

- 1.12 The planning case officer will make a presentation of the key points of an application making reference to appropriate plans, photographs and other information. Photographs will usually have been taken by the officer and it is understood that there can be differing views about what is needed to reasonably inform Members when they decide the application. Officers may be asked questions to clarify relevant information.
- 1.13 At the end of the officer presentation, the public speaking will take place. After members of the public have been heard, the Members who make up the Committee will debate the application and may request further information or advice from the Planning Officer, before coming to a decision.

**I will be speaking at Planning Committee, what should I remember and expect?**

- 1.14 If you are speaking at Planning Committee, then:
- Remember to arrive in Council Chamber in good time for the meeting and make yourself known to Officers.
  - Remember that you will not be able to speak if you are not present at the start of the meeting or at the expected start time (where a different time is noted on the agenda) or if you have not pre-registered your interest in speaking.
  - Remember that applications may be heard in a different order to that listed in the agenda depending on public interest in the items and Member commitments
  - Remember that consideration of the application will not be deferred if you do not attend.
  - Be ready to answer questions from Councillors on the Committee about what you have said.
  - Remember that you do not have the right to respond further during the debate, or challenge another speaker following your contribution.
  - Act in a way which is orderly and maintains the polite conduct of the meeting.
  - Remember to respect other speakers' right to express their views without interruption.
  - Be ready to co-operate with other people wishing to speak in the same capacity as you and bear in mind the need for balance in time allowed.
  - Remember to keep your presentation to no more than 3 minutes and that the Chair will ask you to draw to a close if you are at risk of speaking beyond your public speaking time.
  - Remember not say anything defamatory, insulting or make personal comments about other people or parties involved in the application.
  - Remember that you are not allowed to circulate your own photographs, drawings, letters, leaflets or other written material to Members at the meeting.
  - Remember not to speak about planning matters which are not on the agenda. The Committee will not normally be able to take these into account and it may waste your public speaking time

## What can I speak about?

1.15 You can speak on any application reported to Committee (e.g. applications for planning permission, listed building consent, advertisement consent) provided that what you say is relevant to the application.

- Remember to speak about relevant material planning considerations such as:-
  - Previous decisions of the Council on the same site or similar;
  - Design, appearance, layout;
  - Effects on amenity, loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy, noise or smell nuisance;
  - Impact on trees;
  - Listed buildings and heritage matters;
  - Highway safety or parking;
  - Planning policy;
  - Case law
- Remember that certain things are not material planning considerations and cannot be taken into account such as:-
  - Effect on property values;
  - Loss of view;
  - Covenants or other private property rights;
  - Motivation behind an application;
  - Matters covered by other legislation