

# Making Planning Application Representation and Consideration of Planning Applications at Planning Committee Meetings

This guidance has been prepared to help members of the public understand the way the Planning Committee meetings operate and how they can take part in the proceedings

## Making planning applications representation following receipt of a notification letter

### Should I object?

You may have received a letter (or viewed a site/press notice) notifying you of a development proposal. If you have any concerns then any objection must be rational, impersonal and relate to any planning issues raised by the proposal.

### What should I do next?

Establish the facts, because all too often objections are submitted which are based on an incorrect understanding of the application. You can view/inspect the application at council's website <http://www.warrington.gov.uk/planningsearch>

You may wish to simply discuss the application with the applicant which could resolve any of your concerns.

### Making your objection

If after considering the application and reviewing the options you still wish to make representations then the next step is to send your comments in writing to development control - [devcontrol@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:devcontrol@warrington.gov.uk)

or in writing to

Development Control  
Warrington Borough Council  
Environment and Regeneration Directorate  
Environment & Public Protection Services  
New Town House  
Buttermarket Street  
Warrington  
WA1 2NH

Quoting the relevant planning application number.

Your objections will need to be made within the 21 day consultation period.

**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council 



## What happens next?

The development control case officer will consider your comments along with council and national policies and guidelines.

Most planning applications are determined under delegated powers by the planning officers but if the application needs to be considered by the planning committee we will not copy all the letters received but your comments will be summarised in a report. Copies of your letter/representations will be placed on the council's website as a public record. Any signatures will be removed for data protection reasons.

The council does not acknowledge receipt of letters but they can be viewed on the council's website at [http://www.warrington.gov.uk/planning\\_search](http://www.warrington.gov.uk/planning_search)

They are normally placed on the website within three working days of receipt.

## Petitions

A petition and/or a bundle of standard letters will be regarded as one objection when referred to in the officer's report and for the purposes of referral of applications to a planning committee. When a petition is received only the individual's name and address on the covering letter or first name and address on the petition (if there is no covering letter) will be entered into the council's planning application database system. A copy of the petition will be placed on the council's website ([www.warrington.gov.uk/planningsearch](http://www.warrington.gov.uk/planningsearch)).

Should the planning application be refused and an appeal lodged then only the individual who sent in the petition or the first person appearing on the petition will be notified of the appeal. Planning application reports will refer to the number of signatures appearing on a petition and/or number of standard letters received.

## The committee

The planning committee is made up of locally elected councillors. It usually meets at the Town Hall, Warrington at 6.30pm (on a Wednesday or Thursday).

Most major planning applications are considered by the development management committee (DMC). Other planning applications are determined by the planning applications sub committee (PASC) depending on a number of factors.

For more information relating to which applications are determined by a planning committee and which are determined at officer level please consult the council's constitution on the council's website - [www.warrington.gov.uk](http://www.warrington.gov.uk).

A list of DMC and PASC dates is available on the council's website at [www.warrington.gov.uk](http://www.warrington.gov.uk).

## The agenda

The committee has an agenda which includes reports on individual planning applications. These reports have been prepared by the council's officers who make recommendations to the committee. The committee then makes the final decision on applications.

A selection of written representations made either in support or against a planning application will be summarised or addressed in the committee report. This will either be on the main agenda or officers will provide a verbal update at the committee meeting.

For those wishing to send in representations the deadline is 12 noon on the preceding two days before the relevant planning committee meeting. It may not be possible to consider and summarise any further comments received after this time.

Officers from development control attend the meeting to help and advise the committee. Other specialist officers may attend from time to time to deal with specific applications.

## Public speaking arrangements

Planning committee meetings can be long but public speaking is allowed. Three people for and three people against are allowed to speak. This includes local and parish councillors and residents/amenity groups.

The chair of planning committee can decide to increase the number of people that can speak in favour and/or against particularly when there has been a significant amount of public interest relating to an application.

Those wishing to speak at a planning committee meeting must arrange this with development control by no later than 12 noon on the day. **Call development control support on 01925 442819.** The chairman has the discretion to accept or decline public speaking requests from those individuals that have not already registered to speak but decide that they wish to do so on the night.

The chairman of PASC or DMC will be handed a list of public speakers on the day. The chairman will then decide the order in which to take agenda items. Large numbers of objectors and supporters are encouraged to nominate a spokesman.

If members of the public arrive at a committee meeting and request to speak the chair will decide whether to allow any more speakers. Members of the public and local/parish councillors will each have up to three minutes to address the planning committee members.

## Procedure

The running order for each application will be as follows:

1. The chairman will read out the application number, location and proposed development.
2. Before each agenda item the chairman will ask officers if there is any additional information or matters of clarification to report to members.

## Time limit

3. Three people for and three people against are allowed to speak for up to three minutes. This includes local/parish councillors and local groups.
4. The chairman will ask a representative of any objectors to present a statement explaining why they think the application should be refused.
5. The chairman will ask the applicant or their representative/supporters to present a statement explaining why they think the application should be approved.
6. The chairman, where relevant, will ask the appropriate officer(s) to comment on any factual points raised by the objectors or applicants, which are considered to be incorrect or need further explanation. If necessary the officers and or chairman may seek clarification from the agent/applicant.
7. The chairman will give members of the committee an opportunity to ask the officer(s) questions. The chairman will also give members of the committee the opportunity to ask any objector or supporter a question (eg point of clarification).
8. The chairman will announce the opening of the debate on the application.
9. After the debate, the chairman will take the vote on the application. If an application is deferred for a site visit this will normally be carried out immediately before the next meeting of the committee. Site visits are not public meetings.

## Preparing for public speaking

10. How should you prepare your statement?

Tell us why you think this planning application should be approved or refused.

Before arriving at the committee meeting you should prepare a clear, concise statement explaining why you think the planning application you are interested in should be approved or refused. When preparing your statement, you should try to explain:

- how the proposals comply or conflict with planning policies in the development plan and relevant planning guidance issued by the council
- whether the proposals will have any affect on neighbouring property and if so what that will be
- what the main advantages or disadvantages will be for you and the wider community
- what evidence you have for your statements.

## What matters will the committee take into account?

The planning committee considers all applications on planning grounds only. The council's development plan is an important consideration. Listed below are examples of issues that the committee can and cannot consider. It is best to look at these lists before you speak. If you raise other issues then the committee will not be able to take them into account.

Issues the committee can normally consider:

- overshadowing
- adequate parking and servicing
- loss of trees
- design and appearance
- effect on listed building(s) and conservation areas
- traffic issues
- smells
- flood risk
- overlooking and loss of privacy
- overbearing nature of proposal
- loss of ecological habitats
- layout and density of buildings
- access and highways safety
- noise disturbance from the scheme
- visual amenity

## Issues the committee cannot normally consider:

- loss of value to individual property
- loss of view
- boundary disputes including encroachment of foundations or gutters
- private covenants or agreements
- the applicant's personal conduct or history
- the applicant's motives
- potential profit for the applicant or from the application
- private rights to light
- private rights to way
- damage to property
- disruption during any construction phase
- loss of trade and competitors
- age, health, status, background and work patterns of the objector
- time taken to do the work
- capacity of private drains
- building and structural techniques
- alcohol or gaming licences

This list does not include everything, it is meant as a guide to help you when preparing your statement.

## Conduct

From time to time debates on planning applications will be lively as they raise issues that members will feel very strongly about. It is the role of the chairman to maintain order and discipline. Members of the public can watch proceedings but cannot address the meeting unless agreed by the chairman, and at other times should keep as quiet as possible. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings or is disruptive then he or she can be asked by the chairman to leave the room.

## Decisions

You will not be notified of the decision, but once it has been made you will be able to view and download the decision from the council website <http://www.warrington.gov.uk/planningsearch>. They are normally placed on the website within one to two working days of decisions being made.

If you do not have access to our website you can use the PCs in the reception area of the Council's Contact Centre, 26-30 Horsemarket Street, Warrington, WA1 1XL

## Appeals

The committee's decision can be challenged by the applicants on appeal to the office of communities and local government if their application is refused, or if conditions are imposed which they do not agree with. When this happens, anyone who has written about the original application or who has spoken about the application at the committee will be informed. Third parties, for example objectors, cannot appeal to the secretary of state against a decision to grant permission.

