

## **HAVE YOUR SAY ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The District Council is committed to extending Public Involvement in the Planning Process. The Council currently consults local residents and commercial enterprises on planning applications by individual consultation letter, the placing of a notice on site and by advertising the application in the press.

Any comments received are then taken into account in dealing with planning applications. This means that the Council decides many of the less contentious planning applications by a scheme of delegation. The Service Director or designated officers determine the vast majority of applications. The more complex proposals and applications that cannot be considered under the scheme of delegation are referred to the Planning Committee which meets approximately every 4 weeks.

The Council provides an opportunity for residents to speak on those applications determined by the Planning Committee. This leaflet explains the issues and procedures which you need to be aware of if you wish to speak to the Planning Committee.

### **Can I Speak to the Committee?**

If you have written to the Council either supporting or opposing a planning application which is to be considered by the Planning Committee, and your comments have been received prior to the Agenda being published, then you will be invited by letter to speak.

Only one speaker in support, a resident or the applicant/agent, and one resident opposing the proposal will be able to speak. Where there is more than one person opposing or supporting the proposal it will be necessary for each group to appoint a single spokesperson. If the application has been dealt with by way of delegation then the opportunity does not arise.

### **What Can I Speak About?**

The Council can only consider “material considerations” when deciding planning applications. Examples of these are planning policies in the Ashfield Local Plan Review (2002), government advice and policy, the impact on your residential amenity, highway safety and traffic, noise and disturbance, smell, design and external appearance, the impact on Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and trees etc.

You should not make reference to non-planning issues such as private property rights, covenants, competition, moral issues, loss of view and property value, as these cannot be taken account of. If you feel you need advice on what issues are relevant in deciding planning applications then please contact one of the Planning Officers in the Council's Development & Building Control Section.

### **How Do I Arrange to Speak?**

As an applicant or a resident who has written to the Council about an application you will be informed, in writing, if a particular application is to be considered at a Planning Committee. You will normally have about a week's notice of the Committee meeting. You will then need to register your wish to speak with one of our Democratic Services Officers by telephoning 01623 457317 by 4pm two working days before the Committee. Alternatively, you can Email your request to [speakplanning@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:speakplanning@ashfield.gov.uk).

However, you must leave both a telephone number and your postal address. If the "slot" has already been allocated then you will be referred to the allocated speaker to enable you to make a satisfactory arrangement.

Late requests to speak will not be considered. The Planning Committee meetings are usually held in the Council Chamber, Kirkby in Ashfield and will start at 10:00am. You should arrive by 9:45am and confirm your intention to speak to the Democratic Service Officer who will be present.

### **How long will I be able to speak for?**

Each registered speaker will be allowed a maximum of 5 minutes and this will be carefully controlled by an Officer of the Council. If you take longer than 5 minutes then you will be asked to draw your comments to an end.

### **When Can I Speak?**

Planning Applications are considered just after the meeting commences. Normally the Chairman will introduce each planning application and an officer will outline the proposal and advise the Committee of any late information. You will then be invited to address the Committee from the front of the Chamber.

In cases where both an objector and the applicant wish to speak the Committee will listen to the speaker objecting to the proposal first followed by the applicant or agent. Facilities are available for you to electronically display any supporting evidence if you so wish; but any other form of illustrative material is discouraged. You will not be able to hand out documents, illustrations etc at the meeting.

Once representations have been made there will be no further opportunity to speak. You will not be able to ask Councillors any questions or join in the debate after your presentation but Committee Members will be offered the opportunity to clarify any matters raised by yourself If required. An objector however, cannot ask questions of the applicant and vice versa. If you require any information on speaking to the

Planning Committee then do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team on 01623 457317.

**Please bear in mind if you refer to non-planning matters the Chairman may ask you to stop. Furthermore it is always wise to choose your words carefully, and to avoid any reference to other people which could be defamatory.**

**Ashfield District Council,  
Urban Road,  
Kirkby in Ashfield,  
Nottinghamshire.  
NG17 8DA.**