

# How to have your say at planning meetings

Members of the public have the right to speak at Cherwell District Council planning meetings. This leaflet explains how.

**The Planning Committee considers certain applications for planning permission. Members of the public may request to speak on applications considered at a meeting of the planning committee if they have made written representations on an application.**

This gives you an opportunity to give your views in person to the committee. The committee will continue to take account of letters of support or objection.

The opportunity to speak is available to applicants or their agents, objectors, local residents, town/parish council representatives and any other person with an interest in a certain application, providing they have made written representations on an application. Public speaking only applies to applications which are considered by the committee, not applications that are determined by Planning Officers.

## **When and where does the planning committee meet?**

All committee meetings are held in the Council Chamber at Cherwell District Council Offices, Bodicote House, Bodicote OX15 4AA.

The planning committee meets every 4 weeks at 4pm on a Thursday. A full calendar of meetings can be found on our website: [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk). Meetings are web cast live on the internet and available to view for 6 months after the meeting date.

## **Who can speak?**

Applicants (people applying for planning permission) or their agents, parish/town council representatives and any person or group who has made written representations on the application.

## **Which planning applications can I speak on?**

Any planning application for determination that you have applied for, or made a written representation on, as part of the planning consultation process. You cannot speak on legal or enforcement action when the committee is considering whether to take legal action or monitoring reports

## **When will the application be considered?**

Applications will usually be considered in the order in which they appear on the agenda of the meeting.

The Chairman has the discretion to change the order agenda items are considered in. If your application is a later item on the agenda, please be aware it may be considered earlier.

An application may be deferred until another meeting if further information, negotiations or a site visit is needed. If an application is deferred, public speakers are not required to register again if they have not spoken. However, if public speakers have already addressed the Committee, no further public speaking will be permitted unless there are significant material changes to the application in the meantime. This will be at the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee.

## **What is the procedure for speaking?**

The planning officer will present the application referring to the report in the published agenda. The report will include a planning officer's recommendation as to whether it should be approved or refused.

Following the presentation by the planning officer, the local Ward Member (if not a member of the Committee) will have the opportunity to speak.

The following groups of speakers will be introduced and invited to speak by the Chairman of the meeting:

- Objectors
- Supporters, including the applicant

The planning officer will then clarify any planning points in the speakers' statement, relevant to the planning application. The Committee will debate the application and make a decision on the application. If the committee approve it they may also vote to impose certain conditions on the application.

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

Registered speakers will be grouped into applicant/supporters and objectors. Each group can speak for up to 5 minutes. If more than one person has registered to speak in each group the 5 minutes will be shared. In such circumstances speakers are encouraged to nominate a spokesperson. If no spokesperson is nominated speakers will be heard in the order in which they have registered to speak, on a strictly "first come, first served" basis until the 5 minutes has elapsed. This does not apply to the applicant/supporter group where the applicant or their agent takes precedence in the 5 minute speaking slot.

There will be no extension to the 5 minute speaking period for objectors or applicant/supporters.

There is no time limit for the local Ward Member, although this should be within reason and is at the discretion of the Chairman.

### **How can I best use my time when speaking to the committee?**

This will depend on the planning application but please try to limit your views to relevant planning issues. The committee take these types of issues into account when making their decisions:

- Whether the site is suitable for development
- Design, appearance and layout
- Over-looking and over-dominance
- Highway safety and traffic
- Noise, disturbance and smell
- National and Local planning policy and guidance.

The Committee must ignore non-material considerations when making their decision.

### **Can I bring handouts to distribute to the Committee?**

No. Members of the public, Ward Members and Planning Committee members may not show plans, drawings, photographs, video clips or circulate written material, as this opportunity has already been given as part of the planning consultation process.

### **How do I arrange to speak at a meeting?**

Requests to address the Planning Committee on a particular application will not be accepted until it has been included on a published agenda. Parties who have made written representations on a planning application will be notified of the date it will be considered by Planning Committee.

If you want to speak on an application you will need to contact Democratic and Elections no later than 12 noon on the last working day before the meeting. You can register by telephone, email or letter.

You must provide your name and email address or telephone number, the application you wish to speak about, whether you are an objector or supporter and the capacity in which you will be speaking. You will be asked if you are willing to share your contact details with other speakers so that arrangements can be made to nominate a spokesperson if necessary.

Any requests to speak received after midday on the last working day before the Committee meeting will not be accepted.

## How to contact us

Democratic and Elections  
Cherwell District Council  
Bodicote House  
Bodicote  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire  
OX15 4AA

Tel: 01295 221534

Email: [democracy@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk)

Call 01295 221534

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