

Solihull Council is committed to extending public involvement in the planning process. There are already extensive consultation procedures for all planning applications together with site notices and newspaper adverts for larger proposals. Members of the public now have a right to speak at Committee meetings during the consideration of any application for permission under the Town and Country Planning legislation.

The purpose of public speaking is to give members of the public an opportunity to make their views known directly to the Committee. This leaflet tries to answer some of the questions you may have about the procedures and what to expect from the meeting.

### **Does the opportunity to speak change existing procedures for publicity of planning and other similar applications?**

Current arrangements will continue. If you have any comments to make on any application, you should still write to the Head of Planning Services in the usual way and respect set deadlines

### **Does the opportunity to speak change existing procedures for making decisions on planning and other similar applications?**

It is important to recognise that not all planning or similar applications are determined by the Planning Sub-Committee. Some matters are delegated to the Head of Planning Services for decision. The right to speak extends only to those applications

being considered by the Planning Sub-Committee.

### **If I want to speak at a meeting, how do I arrange it?**

The decision to speak on an application is yours. Your written objection will be reported to the Committee in the usual way and will be given consideration.

The Officer's recommendation may be in line with your views and you may feel there is little point in adding to it. However, Officers' recommendations are not always followed by the Committee. About one week before the Committee meeting we will write to everyone who has commented on proposals that are to be considered at that meeting. We will also notify all applicants (and/or their agents) whose proposals are to be considered. The letter will contain time and details of when the meeting will take place. If you want to speak you will need to contact us by either writing in or making a telephone call up until midday of the day before the meeting.

### **Who can speak at the meeting?**

The opportunity to speak is available to all objectors to development proposals which are to be considered by the Planning Sub-Committee. Applicants themselves will be invited to speak in response to members of the public who have indicated an intention to speak.

The opportunity to speak is also available to the applicant for development proposals which are being recommended to the Sub

Committee for refusal of planning permission, or to their supporters, but not to both.

You can speak for yourself or (with their agreement) on behalf of a group of objectors/supporters. Only one objector and one supporter will be allowed to speak on each application. If the other people wish to speak, on the same application, you should try to agree before the meeting who will put your case.

If you cannot, the first person to register an intention to speak will be invited to do so. In the case of any concern or uncertainty, the Chairman of the Committee will adjudicate.

### **What can I speak about?**

Objections may only relate to the effect the development will have on you and should be confined to proper, material planning considerations. These include: Residential amenity, highway safety and traffic, noise, disturbance and smell; design, appearance and layout; the character of the town and country; historic buildings; trees; the adopted planning policies of the Council; the Local Plan; the Structure Plan and Government guidance. Matters that are not relevant to planning decisions include private property rights, the developer's ethics or motives, loss of view over other people's land and effect on property value.

If you feel that the Officers report has factual errors or that the plans are inaccurate, these matters are best resolved prior to the meeting by calling the case officer.



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

To make sure that everybody has the same opportunity it is necessary to limit the time allowed.

Persons objecting to an application must do so within a three-minute period. Supporters and/or the applicant will also be allowed three minutes to speak.

### **What is the order of speaking?**

A Planning Officer will begin with a brief outline of the proposed development and the recommended decision.

A presentation of the proposal may also be made. The objector will then be asked to speak and the applicant or their representative will be invited to respond. Ward Members may then set out their views.

The Planning Sub-Committee will then, sometimes with further advice from Planning Officers, discuss and come to a decision on the application.

These arrangements are necessary to ensure that each application is dealt with properly and fairly.

### **Will I be asked / able to ask questions at the meeting?**

You may not ask questions of Councillors or Officers, nor may you take part in the discussion. The Committee may choose to ask you questions to clarify points made to ensure a full understanding of your concerns has been made.

## **CONTACTS**

Development Control  
Physical and Economic Regeneration  
PO Box 11652  
Solihull  
West Midlands  
B91 3YA

Tel: 0121 704 6871

Fax: 0121 704 6592

E-mail: [developmentcontrol@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:developmentcontrol@solihull.gov.uk)

A LARGE PRINT VERSION OF THIS LEAFLET  
IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.



## **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council**



### **Right to Speak At Planning Sub-Committee**

Any advice contained in this pamphlet is not intended to be an authorised statement of the law, it is intended for guidance only.