

PART 4 | SECTION 4 - SPEAKING PROCEDURE RULES (DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE)

1. SECTION 4 – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE SPEAKING SCHEME

1. Introduction

- 1.1. When an application has been identified to be considered at a particular Committee meeting the Development Control Section will inform the Applicant (or their Agent) and any person who has made representations on the application that it is due to be considered by the Committee and to give those persons the opportunity to make verbal representations at the Committee meeting.
- 1.2. This procedure only relates to applications determined by the Borough Council.

2. When are the Committee Meetings?

- 2.1. Development Control Committee meetings are usually held every 4 weeks and normally begin at 7:00 pm in the Council Chamber at the main Council Offices in Station Road, Wigston. It is advisable that speakers at the Committee should arrive a little earlier and inform the Clerk of the Committee that they have arrived.
- 2.2. Committee agendas are published at least 5 working days before the Committee meeting and are available to view at the main Council Offices.
- 2.3. Agenda papers are also available to view on our website www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk on the 'Meeting Dates, Agendas and Minutes' tile under the 'Your Council' icon.

3. How to Register an Interest to Speak

- 3.1. Any person wishing to speak at the Committee should contact the Development Control Section by no later than 4 p.m. on the working day before the Committee meeting. They should indicate whether they wish to speak as the applicant (or Agent) or whether they are in support of, or against the proposal.
- 3.2. Only persons who have made written representations will qualify and be allowed to speak at the Committee meeting.
- 3.3. Speaking opportunities shall be allocated on a first come, first served basis. If a number of people want to speak for or against a proposal the onus is on them to appoint a speaker. However, the Applicant (or Agent) will always be given the opportunity to address the Committee.
- 3.4. If objectors/supporters cannot agree on a spokesperson the objector/supporter who registered first will be the ones permitted to speak. The identified speakers may defer to another at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee.

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- 3.5. A speaker's contact name/number/address may be disclosed to other persons wishing to address the Committee to assist in the appointment of a spokesperson should there be more persons who wish to address the Committee than allowed under the public speaking protocol.

4. How many people can address the Committee?

- 4.1. There will be a maximum of three public speakers (excluding Ward Councillors not on the Committee or Councillors with prejudicial interests) allowed to speak.
- 4.2. These would consist of the Applicant (or Agent), one supporter and one objector.
- 4.3. There will be a time limit of five minutes per person and each speaker may only speak once.

5. Commenting at the Committee Meeting

- 5.1. Comments must be completed in five minutes and be a statement of the speaker's objections or support. It is not an opportunity to ask questions. No letters or additional information can be distributed at the Committee meeting and videos, overheads and electronic presentations are only allowed at the Chair's discretion.
- 5.2. Comments should also be limited to relevant planning considerations. Examples of some relevant planning considerations are as follows (although this list is not exhaustive):
- Layout and density of buildings;
 - Overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy, noise disturbance or other loss of amenities;
 - Appearance and character of the development;
 - Traffic generation, highway safety, parking;
 - Relevant planning policies.
- 5.3. Speakers should avoid references to matters which are not material planning considerations. Examples of matters which are not relevant planning considerations are as follows (although this list is not exhaustive):
- Boundary disputes, covenants or other property rights;
 - Personal remarks (for example the applicant's motives);
 - Reduction in property values;
 - Loss of private view over the land;
 - Matters dealt with under other laws (for example licensing).

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- 5.4. At the Chair's discretion, Members of the Committee may ask a visiting speaker to clarify a point of fact after their statement has been made before the application is debated. However, this is not intended to result in a dialogue between the Committee Members and the speaker.
- 5.5. Any issue deemed to be defamatory, derogatory or to relate to a specific Officer or Member will not be permitted and the speaker will be informed accordingly.
- 5.6. Committee meetings are audio recorded and will be made available as part of the public record.
- 5.7. If the person chosen to speak would like help preparing their case, Planning Aid may be able to assist them. Planning Aid is a charity run by volunteers and not connected with Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. Planning Aid do not provide planning advice via telephone, all requests for advice should be directed to their email advice service, details of which can be found at www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/online-advice-service.

6. What Happens at the Committee Meeting

- 6.1. Generally, the Chair will introduce each item on the agenda and then proceed as follows:-
 - Any Councillors with prejudicial interest in the application to address the Committee (if any);
 - The Applicant/Agent of the application may then address the Committee;
 - Supporters/objectors of the application can address the Committee;
 - A Ward Councillor(s) who is not a Committee Member may then address the Committee (if any);
 - The Planning Officer or Development Control Manager will present the application and include any information detailed on the Agenda Update;
 - Development Control Committee Members debate and determine the application, involving Officers as and when necessary.
- 6.2. If an application is deferred until another meeting for further information or negotiations, before or after public speaking, then the process is repeated. The right to speak does not extend to site visits.