



Exeter City Council

Your chance to speak at the Planning Committee

The Planning Committee considers significant or major planning applications which relate to the City. The majority of planning applications are determined by the Council's planning officers under delegated powers.

The City Council wants to make sure the decision making process is an open one and allows people who have an interest in an application to express their view on significant or major applications. This opportunity is aimed primarily at individuals who have a direct interest in the application. Consequently, professional representation is strongly discouraged.

As part of the usual planning application process, all applications are publicised and people already have the right to send in written comments about an application.

These comments are summarised and reported to the Committee. The right to speak at the meeting is designed to complement the existing process, not replace it.

Who can speak at Committee?

The opportunity to speak at Committee is available to anyone, but limited to one speaker for and one against the application. Where there is more than one objector or more than one supporter for an application, requests to speak will be dealt with on a first come first served basis.

To make sure that the Committee remains effective in cases where there are many people supporting or objecting to an application, the Council will encourage interested people to co-ordinate a response and nominate a spokesperson. The nominated spokesperson will be asked to provide contact telephone numbers and email addresses to aid contact with other interested groups.

In cases where the agreement between interested groups cannot be reached regarding the nomination of a spokesperson, priority will be given to the first person to contact the Council or at the discretion of the Chair.

How can I register to speak?

Planning Committee is usually held on a Monday at 5.30pm at the Civic Centre. Anyone wishing to speak for or against an application must contact the Democratic Services (Committees) office by 10:00am on the Thursday before the meeting.

If the meeting is one not being held on a Monday, then the office must be contacted by 5pm two working days before the committee.

Democratic Services (Committees) can be contacted on 01392 265107 or email committee.services@exeter.gov.uk.

When can I speak?

At the meeting, the Chair of the Committee will announce the application and the planning officer will give a brief outline of the proposal and relevant matters for consideration.

Members of the Council not on the Planning Committee who ask to speak in respect of any planning application will then speak. The objector's spokesperson will then be invited to speak, followed by any spokesperson in support of the applicants/agents. Members of the Committee may ask questions of the speakers purely for clarification.

The Chair will then normally ask the planning officers to comment on what they have heard. Members of the Committee will then debate the proposal and make their decision. Speakers can make no further comment during the course of the Committee debate.

How long can I speak?

The maximum time each speaker will be allowed is three minutes. All speakers will be timed and must finish after three minutes.

The speaker will be requested by the Chair to immediately end their remarks if they exceed this time limit.

Where there are two applications for the same proposal, such as a planning application and a listed building consent, the two rights to speak can be separate or combined for one five minute opportunity.

What can I speak about?

All speakers' comments will be taken into consideration. However, weight can only be given to relevant planning issues, which will vary with the nature of the proposals and site.

Relevant issues normally include:

- Local plan policies
- Highway safety and traffic issues
- Noise/disturbance/smells
- Design and appearance
- Layout
- Conservation matters
- Wildlife and trees
- Residential amenity such as loss of privacy and overlooking

Other issues, which are not relevant to planning considerations, include:

- Private property disputes
- Loss of view
- Loss of value to property

If a speaker is unsure as to whether an issue is a relevant planning consideration, it is advisable to check with the planning officer dealing with the application before the meeting. Speakers are also advised not to make slanderous statements about individuals or companies, to avoid the possibility of legal action by them.

Need more information?

If you have any questions about speaking at a Planning Committee, or you wish to know the dates, times and venue of meetings, please contact Democratic Services (Committees) on 01392 265107 or see [Planning Committee](#) on our website.

If you have any questions about any particular item on the Committee report, you need to speak to the Planning Officer who is dealing with it. Their name, telephone number and email address are available on the neighbour notification letter.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's)

The right to speak at Planning Committee also exists in relation to reports recommending the confirmation of Tree Preservation Orders. Further information is available from Democratic Services (Committees) on 01392 265107.