

## **Having Your Say at a Virtual Planning Committee**

From April 2020 until further notice, meetings of the Planning Committee will be held virtually via online video conferencing. Members of the public remain encouraged to take part in Committee meetings and will be able to have their say on planning applications by submitting statements - the process will be slightly different as it will not be possible to speak directly to the Committee.

### **Who can have their say at a Planning Committee?**

- Those who have submitted a planning application – the applicant or their agent.
- Those who represent a civic or local representative group (such as a residents' or tenants' association) that has made written comments to the Planning department on a planning application.
- Members of the public (such as a neighbour) who have made written comments to the Planning department, either for or against a planning application.

If you have made written comments, the Planning department will write to inform you of the date of the Committee at which the application will be considered. For information about the agenda please contact Democratic Services on 01293 438000.

### **How should I prepare a statement for a virtual Planning Committee?**

Under the new system for virtual Planning Committees, you can have your say by submitting a statement to Democratic Services as long as you meet the criteria outlined above. This statement should read as if you were making a speech to the Committee. The statement should take no longer than **three minutes** to read aloud; roughly one and a half sides of A4. A statement may also include one and a half sides of photographs related to the application or the site in question. This process replaces the previous process of addressing the Committee in person.

### **What information should be included in my statement?**

To make the greatest impact with your statement, you should:

- Be brief and to the point.
- Limit your views to the planning application under consideration.
- Confine yourself to relevant planning considerations – these will vary depending on the nature of the site and the proposed development.

### **What are some examples of relevant planning considerations?**

- Local Plan policies
- National Planning Policy Framework and other Government guidance
- Planning law and previous decisions
- The density of development proposed for a site
- Highway safety and traffic issues
- Noise and disturbance
- Residential amenity
- Design, character, appearance, visual impact, layout

- Impact on trees or the character of an area, including listed buildings and conservation areas
- Flooding and drainage

### **What are some examples of non-relevant issues?**

- Matters covered by other legislation
- Private Property Rights, e.g. boundary or access disputes, restrictive covenants on the land or rights of way
- The morals or motives of the developer
- Suspected future development
- Loss of views over other people's land
- Effect on the value of property
- Infringement on rights of light
- Personal matters

Further information can be found at [www.crawley.gov.uk/plancomment](http://www.crawley.gov.uk/plancomment). It should be noted that statements should not make any derogatory or defamatory remarks about a person. Any such comments may leave you open to legal action.

### **What is the process for submitting my statement to the Planning Committee?**

If your statement meets all of the above criteria, please email it (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) to [democratic.services@crawley.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@crawley.gov.uk) **no later than 12 noon two days before the meeting**. For example, if a meeting were to take place on a Monday, the statement would need to be sent by noon on the Saturday prior. Please include your **name, address, contact number, the application your statement relates to, and whether you are supporting or objecting to the application**. Your statement will be read out at the Planning Committee meeting at which the application is being considered – any exceeding 3 minutes will be discontinued.

There will be a limit to the number of statements that can be made per application. Local groups and objectors may want to select a joint representative to avoid duplication and ensure all relevant points are made. Statements will be read out at the Committee in the following order and limited (**on a first come, first served basis**) as follows:

1. Civic/local representative groups or objectors (**maximum of 3 statements**)
2. Applicant, agent or supporters, including relevant Cabinet member/s (**maximum of 3 statements**)
3. Borough Ward Councillors
4. Any other elected individual

### **Can I attend the meeting virtually?**

All virtual meetings of the Committee will be streamed live via the Internet. A public link to the meeting will be available on the Committee page of the Council's website ([www.crawley.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.crawley.gov.uk/democracy)) 24 hours before the meeting is due to begin. The meeting agenda will be published on the Council's website under normal procedure.