



## **PUBLIC SPEAKING AT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Northumberland National Park Authority has introduced a public speaking scheme in order to allow interested individuals and organisations to make verbal presentations to the Development Control Committee which determines major planning applications, prior to the Committee making a decision on an individual planning application, in accordance with the scheme set out below.

The public speaking scheme only relates to planning applications where Northumberland National Park Authority is the decision making body and the proposal is being dealt with by the Development Control Committee. It does not apply where the Authority is asked to respond as a consultee to a proposal; where the proposal is dealt with under delegated powers; or to items regarding enforcement matters (because these do not involve any public consultation as such).

Further details of the Authority's Delegation Scheme for Dealing with Planning Applications are available on the website <http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/planning> or on request from the Planning Team.

Any individual or group wishing to address the Development Control Committee must give notice of their wish to speak by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting by contacting the Corporate Administration Team in writing (by letter, fax or e-mail) or by telephone. Contact details are given at the end of this document.

Where notice has been received that an objector (or objectors) wishes to address the Committee, and the applicant has not already made a request to address the Committee, the Authority will contact the applicant (or agent) to inform them that a request has been received from an objector.

### **Who Can Speak?**

The applicant, agent, supporters and objectors have the opportunity to address the Development Control Committee in connection with a planning application being considered at their meeting.

The applicant and/or agent and/or supporters who have formally notified the Authority in advance may speak in favour of the application and objectors who have formally notified the Authority in advance may speak against it. In addition a representative can speak on behalf of the Parish Council, District Council or County Council, representing the wider local community and a National Park Authority Member who has declared a prejudicial interest in the application or who is not on the Development Control Committee can speak, provided they have notified the Committee Administrator in advance in accordance with the above procedure.

A maximum of five minutes is allowed for each category of speaker. Where a number of individuals, or a group, wish to speak they should agree on a spokesperson who can speak on their behalf or make arrangements to split the five minutes. If agreement cannot be reached, the Chairman will have the right to decide who will speak.

### **Supporting an Application**

Applicants are encouraged to work with Planning Officers to ensure sufficient information has been submitted in advance to enable the Development Control Committee to make a fully informed decision.

When addressing the Development Control Committee through Public Speaking applicants or their agents are not permitted to change or amend the detail of the scheme as the application as submitted is a legal document and open to statutory consultation.



### **Making an Objection**

Objectors to applications (individuals, interest groups or organisations) are encouraged to follow the procedure of making written submissions in advance that can be referred to in reports submitted to the Development Control Committee. Planning Officers will ensure that objections received are accurately reported and Members will take any material planning considerations raised fully into consideration when making a decision.

### **Making a Presentation**

It is the responsibility of objectors and the applicant to contact the relevant Planning Officer to follow the progress of the application and arrange to attend the relevant meeting although the Authority will normally have sent out information on the details of the meeting beforehand.

At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm which items will have public speaking. These items will be moved nearer to the start of the agenda to reduce unnecessary waiting and will be dealt with in the order they appear on the agenda. Speakers should arrive at the meeting fifteen minutes before the scheduled start and make themselves known to the Committee Administrator.

Determination of an application will not be postponed because an individual who has indicated a wish to speak is not ready to do so when the application is announced by the Chairman. Any speaker who has not completed their presentation in the time available will be asked to stop.

Representations will be heard in the following order:

- Description of application by Planning Officer
- Applicant / agent / supporter (5 minutes in total)
- Objector(s) (5 minutes in total)
- Parish Council representative (5 minutes in total)
- District Council representative (5 minutes in total)
- County Council representative (5 minutes in total)
- National Park Authority Member (5 minutes in total)
- Summary of assessment and recommendation by Planning Officer

Members of the Committee or Officers will be allowed, through the Chairman, to seek clarification from the applicant, or objector, about the points that have been raised. This additional time should only be used to seek clarification on the point being made, not for the purpose of facilitating speaking. Speakers will not be allowed to question other speakers, Officers or Members. Members declaring a prejudicial interest will be required to leave the meeting room when they have finished speaking.

Members of the Committee will then debate the application in the normal way, with Officer advice, and make a decision. The Committee can decide to approve or refuse the application on the day or defer the decision so that a Site Visit can be arranged or further information be sought.

### **Deferral**

If new evidence is brought to the Committee it may be necessary to defer consideration of the application to a subsequent meeting.



## **General**

All presentations by applicants/agents/objectors/supporters should be confined to matters which are material planning considerations. Comments on non-planning issues will not be taken into account by the Development Control Committee in determining planning applications. Advice on this is available from the Authority or can be found on the web-site at: <http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/planning>

No handouts, photographs or presentation equipment can be used. The use of video or tape recorders or cameras is not permitted in Development Control Committee meetings.

In cases of dispute, the Chairman's ruling is final.

Development Control Committee meetings are open to the public and representatives from the press may be in attendance. Speakers should bear in mind that in making their presentations to Committee they have no protection from the laws governing slander, libel and defamation.

If you require any aids/modifications/reasonable adjustment to assist you in addressing the Development Control Committee please contact the Committee Administrator in advance who will be happy to help make appropriate arrangements.

This scheme may be reviewed and amended by the Authority at any time.

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## **CONTACT DETAILS**

The Committee Administrator  
Northumberland National Park Authority  
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We can provide copies of the information contained in this publication in large print or alternative formats on request. Contact the Committee Administrator for details.



## **What are you allowed to say?**

Speakers may comment on:

- Planning policy
- Case law
- Visual impact
- Effect on listed buildings or Conservation Areas
- Layout and density of buildings
- Traffic generation, parking and highway safety
- Local amenity, noise, privacy
- Flood risk

Speakers may not comment on:

- Matters covered by other legislation
- Restrictive covenants
- Loss of a private view
- Alleged increases/decreases in property values
- Private issues between neighbours, for example boundary disputes
- Trade objections from potential competitors
- An applicant's character, morals, motives or financial circumstances