

Speaking to the Planning Applications Committee

Members of the public can speak to KCC's Planning Applications Committee as part of the process for determining a planning application. This leaflet explains this process.



Who can speak to the Committee?

If you wish to speak to the Committee you must already have sent in a written comment about the application.

If that condition has been met, then residents, parish and town councils, residents' associations, local businesses and other people who live in the county can ask Democratic Services for the opportunity to speak to the Committee. Contact them as soon as possible to let them know that you may wish to speak. You will not normally be allowed to be represented by solicitors or other professional agents.

How will I know when the committee is meeting?

The Committee meets once a month, usually on a Wednesday at 10am.

If you have told Democratic Services that you may wish to speak, then they will write to you or contact you by e-mail when they publish the report on the planning application you are interested in. This normally happens six working days before the committee meets to determine it. A copy of the report will be on the website and will also be sent to you by Democratic Services.

Please read the report carefully before deciding whether or not you want to speak. The Committee Members will have read the report. What you can add is information that may be missing from the report or a particular emphasis you feel is not being made.

If after reading the report, you decide you do want to speak to the meeting, then contact Democratic Services by noon on the Monday before the meeting.

How many people can speak?

Normally up to four people can speak on each application.

They are:

- two individuals or group representatives
- a representative from the Parish or Town Council and
- the applicant, who has the right of reply to any points made

Where there are speakers both for and against the development, priority will be given to ensure both viewpoints are represented.

If more than two individuals or representatives wish to raise similar points, the Democratic Services will ask them to agree amongst themselves who should speak for them. If necessary, the Chairman of the Committee will decide which members of the public may speak.

What happens on the day?

If you are invited to speak to the Committee then you should aim to arrive at County Hall, Maidstone, at least a quarter of an hour before the meeting begins (i.e. normally by 9.45am). A member of staff will meet you and explain the procedures and answer any questions.



What will happen in the meeting?

The chairman will ask the planning officer to introduce the report and explain the reason for the recommendations.

Each speaker will be allowed up to five minutes to address the Committee about the application. It is, of course, up to you what you decide to say, but it might be useful to bear in mind the following:

- The committee will listen to what you say but will not debate the merit of your opinions with you
- The chairman will let you know when you have half a minute left to speak and will also tell you when your time is over
- Concentrate on explaining the points that you have already made in writing. You should not attempt to surprise the Committee by raising issues you have not raised before.
- The Committee must consider the application on planning grounds. You should not discuss the applicant's past behaviour nor speculate about what you think their possible future intentions may be. The Committee can only consider the application before them.

What happens after I have spoken?

After the speeches by the public and the applicant, the Committee will consider the application. Although this will be done in public, there will be no further opportunities for the public to speak.

Useful telephone numbers and addresses

Individual planning officers will normally ask you to write to them personally.

The address for general enquiries is:
Head of the Planning Applications Group
Kent County Council, First Floor
Invicta House, County Hall
Maidstone, ME14 1XX
Tel: 03000 411200
Email: planning.applications@kent.gov.uk

To get in touch with the Democratic Services Unit you should write to:
Democratic Services
Kent County Council
Room 1.99, Sessions House
County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ
Tel: 03000 416749
Email: andrew.tait@kent.gov.uk
www.kent.gov.uk

Directions to County Hall HQ

By bus and coach:

- The line 150 and line 7 buses from Walderslade, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, and the 101 bus from the Medway Towns stop at County Hall HQ.

By rail:

- To Maidstone East from London Victoria or Ashford, Canterbury West and the Kent Coast
- To Maidstone Barracks station on the Strood to Tonbridge line (for services from Chatham, Gravesend, Dartford, London Bridge and Charing Cross, change at Strood)
- To Maidstone West Station from Gatwick, Redhill and Tonbridge

By car:

County Hall HQ is located on the A229 Maidstone to Chatham Road opposite Maidstone East Railway Station. (Sat Nav code is ME14 1XQ) Follow signs to the town centre and County Hall. There is no visitor parking at County Hall. Pay and Display car parks are sign-posted from major roads. The closest Pay and Display Car Park is the Maidstone East Station Car Park.



This leaflet is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Please call 03000 414141.

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