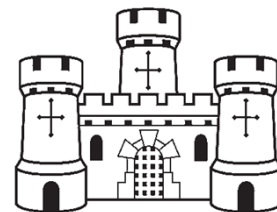


Public Document Pack

Date of meeting Tuesday, 10th September, 2019
Time 7.00 pm
Venue Lancaster Buildings, - Ironmarket, Newcastle, Staffs
Contact Geoff Durham



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Castle House
Barracks Road
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 1BL

Planning Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 4a APPLICATION FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT – SEABRIDGE COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRE, ROE LANE. STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL. 19/00515/OUT (Pages 3 - 4)
- 5a APPLICATION FOR MINOR DEVELOPMENT - THE BARN, BARTHOMLEY ROAD, AUDLEY. MR & MRS McCREADY. 19/00448/FUL & 19/00646/DOB (Pages 5 - 6)
- 7a QUARTERLY REPORT ON PROGRESS ON ENFORCEMENT CASES WHERE ENFORCEMENT ACTION HAS BEEN AUTHORISED (Pages 7 - 8)
- 9a LIST OF LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATIONS (Pages 9 - 14)
- 15 **URGENT BUSINESS** (Pages 15 - 22)
PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEE

The item is considered urgent as the report needs to be considered at Full Council on 18 September.

Members: Councillors S. Burgess, Mrs J Cooper, A. Fear (Chair), D. Jones, H. Maxfield, S. Moffat, P. Northcott, B. Proctor, M. Reddish (Vice-Chair), S Tagg, G Williams and J Williams

Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training/development requirements from any of the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.

Meeting Quorums :- 16+= 5 Members; 10-15=4 Members; 5-9=3 Members; 5 or less = 2 Members.
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Officers will be in attendance prior to the meeting for informal discussions on agenda items.

NOTE: THERE ARE NO FIRE DRILLS PLANNED FOR THIS EVENING SO IF THE FIRE ALARM DOES SOUND, PLEASE LEAVE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY THROUGH THE FIRE EXIT DOORS.

ON EXITING THE BUILDING, PLEASE ASSEMBLE AT THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING BY THE STATUE OF QUEEN VICTORIA. DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL ADVISED TO DO SO.

FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
10th September 2019

Agenda Item 4

Application Ref. 19/00515/OUT

Seabridge Community Education Centre, Roe Lane

Since the publication of the main agenda report the comments of Staffordshire County Council as **Lead Local Flood Authority** (LLFA) have been received. They raise no objections subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission and approval of a detailed surface water drainage design.

The RECOMMENDATION remains as set out in the main agenda report

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FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
10th September 2019

Agenda Item 5

Application Ref. 19/00448/FUL & 19/00646/DOB

The Barn, Barthomley Road, Audley

Due to the requirement to undertake publicity on the application to discharge the S106 planning obligation a decision cannot be made until 28th September, therefore after the meeting. It is, however, considered that it would be appropriate to give delegated authority to the Head of Planning to make that decision having taken into consideration any representations received.

In addition there is an error in recommendation A, as the wrong application reference has been quoted.

The **RECOMMENDATION** is therefore amended as follows:

- A. PERMIT 19/00448/FUL - no conditions**
- B. That the Head of Planning be given the delegated authority to discharge the S106 agreement, 19/00646/DOB, following the publicity period having taken into consideration any representations received provided such representations do not raise issues that are material to the determination of the application and have not been addressed within the main agenda report. Should representations be received that raise issues that have not been addressed within the main agenda report and are material to the determination of the application the application shall be reported back to Committee.**

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FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
10th September 2019

Agenda Item 7

Quarterly report on progress of enforcement cases where enforcement action has been authorised

A planning application has been received for the retention of Barn 2, Moss House, Eardleyend Road, Audley for Class B8 (storage and distribution) use. The eight week target date for that application is 17th October 2019 and the earliest date that the application can be determined is 28th September 2019.

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FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
10th September 2019

Agenda Item 9

List of Local Validation Requirements for Planning and Listed Building Consent Applications

The consultation response received from the Environmental Health Division are summarised in the Table attached to the Addendum to Appendix 1 attached, which also contains your Officer's suggested response.

The revised **RECOMMENDATION** is as follows

That Committee approves the revisions to the list arising from the consultation proves as set out in Appendix 1 of the main agenda report and within the Addendum to the Appendix attached to this report, so that the revisions can be made, the revised list published on the website and thereafter used in the validation process.

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ADDENDUM TO APPENDIX 1 OF AGENDA ITEM 9

Comments received from Environmental Health Division	Proposed response/ action
Information item 3 'Air Quality Assessment' should be revised to reflect best practice and guidance	<p>35. Agreed that the suggested amended text/links under the headings 'Types of applications and geographic location(s) that require this information' and 'Where to look for assistance' should be amended as requested.</p> <p>Agreed that the suggested text under the heading 'What information is required' replaces the existing text although it is noted that no such guidance will then be provided.</p>
Introduction of a new information item 'Aviation and Telecommunications Statement' for wind turbines >11m tall or a rotor diameter >2m	36. Not agreed – it is not considered that the NPPF provides a clear policy driver that justifies the inclusion of this information item. Such information can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.
Information item 11 'Land Contamination Assessment' relocation of <i>"To discuss this in further detail contact the Environmental Protection Team"</i> From under heading 'Types of applications and geographic location(s) that require this information' to 'Where to look for assistance' + inclusion of link to a webpage under development 'Environmental Health – Planning Advice and Requirements'	37. Agreed – information item should be amended as requested.
Introduction of a new information item 'Construction Management Plan' for all developments greater than 5 dwellings	<p>38. Not agreed for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the NPPF does not provide a policy driver for such an information item; • impacts arising during construction work are not material to the determination of a planning application and as such the provision of a Construction Management Plan cannot be said to be relevant, necessary and material as which the NPPF indicates is necessary for inclusion as a local validation requirement; and • the requirements would not be reasonable having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and as such would be contrary to the Development Management Procedure Order 2015
Introduction of a new information item 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)/ Environmental Statement (ES)	39. Not agreed – The requirement to undertake Environmental Impact Assessments is governed by specific legislation and is already a requirement in respect of certain applications. This is not a 'local' requirement, therefore.
Amendment to information item 16 'Noise and Vibration Assessment' to include reference to sound insulation details/ventilation	40. Agreed that the 'What information is required' and 'where to look for assistance' sections should be amended as requested.
Amendment to the 'Types of applications and geographic location(s) that require	41. Not agreed - it would not be reasonable to require such information for all

<p>this information' for information item 16 to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, B2, B8, C1, C2, C2A, C3, C4, D1, D2 and sui Generis. • change of use to A3, A4, A5 • conversion of buildings to residential use • new residential development nearby to licensed premises • any application for an entertainment and licensed premise • Other developments (including day nurseries, sports facilities, smoking areas, places of worship) can generate noise and may warrant a noise impact assessment / noise mitigation scheme, this will be determined on a site to site basis. • Wind Turbines • Solar Farms • Diesel generating farms • Mineral operations and mineral extraction 	<p>of the listed developments as there is no regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development or whether they are close to noise sensitive/noise generating uses or activities and as such it would be contrary to the Development Management Procedure Order 2015.</p> <p>Such information can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.</p>
<p>Replacement of 'What information is required' and 'Where to look for further guidance' for information item 16 with new text/guidance</p>	<p>42. Agreed – new text/guidance should be included in revised list</p>
<p>Introduction of a new information item 'Servicing' for all Hot Food Takeaways , Retail uses, Industrial Uses, Warehousing, Hospitals, Care Facilities , Apartment blocks</p>	<p>43. Not agreed – it would not be reasonable to require such information for all of the listed developments as there is no regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development or whether they are close to noise sensitive/noise generating uses or activities and as such it would be contrary to the Development Management Procedure Order 2015</p>
<p>Introduction of a new information item 'Commercial developments that will cause odorous emissions'</p>	<p>44. Not agreed - it is not considered that the NPPF provides a clear policy driver that justifies the inclusion of this information item. Such information can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.</p>
<p>Introduction of a new information item 'Applications involving external seating areas, play areas, MUGAs and requirement to provide a list of additional information which includes, for example, requirement to provide details of tables, chairs and other ancillary equipment; whether they would be stored within the unit, confirmation of whether or not proposed external seating area would be table service; confirmation that no amplified sound or an music would be played in the external area.</p>	<p>45. Not agreed – the NPPF does not provide a clear policy driver that justifies the provision of this information for the types of development identified as a validation requirement. Such information can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.</p>
<p>Introduction of a new information requiring an Operating Schedule and dispersal procedure from premises in Class A3/A4/A5 uses, to prevent crime and disorder</p>	<p>46. Not agreed – the NPPF does not provide a clear policy driver that justifies the provision of this information for the types of development identified as a</p>

and public nuisance, and confirmation that the proposals have been discussed with the Licensing Section of Staffordshire Police;	validation requirement. Such information can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.
Introduction relating to applications involving taxi bases	47. Not agreed – the NPPF does not provide a clear policy driver that justifies the provision of such an information item. The information referred to can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.
Amendments to information item 5 'Coal Mining Risk Assessment' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the heading 'Types of applications and geographic location(s) that require this information' specifying that the information item relates to full applications (excluding change of use), outline applications and applications for the winning or working of minerals will require a Coal Mining Risk Assessment if they fall within a Coal Mining Referral Area rather than by referring the reader to the Coal Authority's exemption list. Amending the text under 'What information is required.' 	48. Not agreed given that the Coal Authority have not raised any objections and it is considered that there is no justification to make the suggested amendments therefore
Introduction of a new information item requiring an Energy Statement for all planning applications for major development.	49. Not agreed – in the absence of any Development Plan policies which specify that such information must be provided the NPPF does not provide a clear policy driver that justifies the provision of such an information item. The information referred to can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.
Introduction of a new information item requiring a Health Impact Assessment for all planning applications for requiring an EIA.	50. Not agreed – The requirement to undertake Environmental Impact Assessments and what such Assessments should cover is governed by specific legislation and is already a requirement in respect of certain applications. This is not a 'local' requirement, therefore. In addition in the absence of any Development Plan policies which specify that such information must be provided the NPPF does not provide a clear policy driver that justifies the provision of such an information item.
Amendments to information item 14 'Lighting Assessment' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the heading 'Types of applications and geographic location(s) that require this information' specifying that the information item Proposals for external lighting including floodlighting and lighting in connection with a publicly accessible development or proposal in the vicinity of a residential property, listed building, conservation area, a site of nature conservation 	51. Agreed – new text/guidance should be included in revised list

- value (SSSI, LNR, SINC, SLINC, PSI) or area which is currently unlit and contributes to the wider network of dark corridors for wildlife.
- Amending the text under 'What information is required' and 'Where to look for further guidance'

Introduction of a new information item requiring a Shadow Flicker Assessment for all wind turbine applications with the nearest sensitive receptor within 10 rotor diameter distance of the proposed wind turbine(s)	52. Not agreed – the NPPF does not provide a clear policy driver that justifies the provision of such an information item. The information referred to can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.
Introduction of a new information item relating to an Odour Impact Assessment.	53. Not agreed – the NPPF does not provide a clear policy driver that justifies the provision of such an information item. The information referred to can still be required to support an application if justified or secured through a condition of planning permission, but this should not form part of the validation requirements.
Introduction of a new information item relating to Electric Vehicle Charging and Low/Zero Emissions Fuelling and Provision for Commercial Vehicles for all development where parking provision is provided and Warehousing/Distribution Centres/Garage Forecourts/Lorry Parks.	54. Not agreed – the suggested item seeks to specify the level of provision of electric vehicle parking points and thereby attempts to set policy. The list of local validation requirements cannot set policy and it would not be appropriate to attempt to do so in respect of this matter.

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

10 th September 2019

REVISED SCHEME FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Purpose of the Note

To enable Members to review the existing scheme for Public Speaking at Planning Committee and to discuss the proposed amendments to update the scheme. In particular the note suggests that in future speakers (including ward members) should be able to request that material on the Planning Portal, and therefore already in the public domain, should be on display as they address the Committee.

Recommendation

That the existing scheme be amended to reflect the proposed changes in the document at Appendix A to the report.

Reasons

To ensure that the Planning Committee's procedures remain fit for purpose.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Planning Committee has a long established scheme for Public Speaking at Planning Committees which sets out the process to be adopted. This was substantially reviewed at the meeting of the Committee on 31 March 2015 following recommendations from the Planning Peer Review Team.
- 1.2 At the meeting of the Committee on the 6 November 2018, and at the request of the Chair, members considered a further report which looked specifically at the policy of the Committee not to allow any facilities for the projection of any material by speakers. Members did not want to make any extensive changes to the scheme at that stage but did agree to amend the existing scheme to allow the site layout plan to be displayed during public speaking with immediate effect. However, it should be noted that the existing scheme, as set out in the Council's Constitution, has not been updated to reflect this decision.
- 1.3 This Report brings members an updated version of the Scheme for Public Speaking at Planning Committees (with track changes for ease of reference) and seeks Members views. Any amendments to the Scheme will require the approval of the Planning Committee itself and full Council on the 18 September 2019.
- 1.4 Members should note that there has not been the opportunity to take a report formally to a meeting of the Constitution Working Group prior to the meeting but members of the Group have had the opportunity to comment electronically on the contents of the report and any comments will be reported to the meeting.

2. Current procedure

- 2.1 As members will be aware the current procedure is that ward councillors, a supporter and an objector may make an oral representation to the Committee. Their oral representation is the sum of the representation permitted. No facilities for the projection

of any material are made available and no material may be circulated or distributed to members of the Committee by the ward members, the supporter, or the objector. However, a copy of the site layout plan may be displayed.

3. Proposed Changes

3.1 The existing Public Speaking Scheme has been reviewed and is appended with track changes at Appendix A. Apart from some minor changes to simplify or clarify the wording in the document the main changes relate to sections 3 – 4 as follows:

- **Section 3 – Attendance-** updated to change the reference to the Civic Centre & the former process whereby speakers were invited into the chamber & could retire to the public gallery. Clarifies speakers will be invited to come forward to speak and may return to the public seating area. Now states, where a speaker wishes to make representations items will be moved to the start of the agenda with the agreement of the chair and following a request to do so.
- **Section 4 – Nature of Representations –** Amended to permit speakers (including ward members) to request 48 hours in advance that material contained on the Planning Portal such as photographs, maps or plans which are all already in the public domain are displayed during their 5 minute representation for ease of reference by them. Requires the speaker to remain seated at the microphone during the 5 minutes they are allowed to speak. Stresses no new information may be introduced and no additional time will be allowed if reference is made to any material displayed on the planning portal. As before the scheme provides for no new material to be circulated or distributed at the meeting and officers and committee members may not question the speaker.

3.2 The major change to the scheme is the suggestion that speakers may now request in advance that material already on the Planning Portal may be displayed during their representation in addition to the site layout plans which are already available. Officers do not see any particular difficulty in accommodating this change provided all speakers do notify officers in advance and that officers continue to operate the display equipment. As speakers are required to remain seated it is recommended they are provided with a “pointer.

3.4 The report which went to Planning Committee on 8 November is attached at Appendix B for ease of reference.

APPENDIX A

Public Speaking at Planning Committee

Public representations are allowed at the Development Control meetings of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Planning Committee subject to the following regulations. In cases where a planning application is brought to Full Council, the same rules concerning the **supporter** and the **objector** shall apply as would for a meeting of the Planning Committee.

1. Those allowed to speak

Apart from members of the Planning Committee, the following are allowed to make a representation at the relevant Planning Committee meeting:

- a) Councillors of the ward where an application has been made.
- b) One **supporter** of, and one **objector** to, any given application, except those matters listed as excluded in paragraph 9 below.
 - (i) A **supporter** of an application is defined as a person who has made a submission in writing concerning an application, prior to notifying the Council of a wish to make an oral representation on that application to the Committee. The applicant, regardless of whether or not they have used an agent to submit an application, will be taken to have made such a submission. A person or agent speaking on behalf of such a person is also capable of being considered to be a **supporter**
 - (ii) An **objector** to an application is defined as a person who has made a submission in writing about an application, prior to notifying the Council of a wish to make an oral representation about that application to the Committee. A person or agent speaking on behalf of such a person is also capable of being considered to be an **objector**.

If more than one request to make a representation in favour or against an application is made, it is requested that potential supporters/objectors determine amongst themselves who is to speak. If agreement cannot be reached, the individual who made the earliest written representation to the Council shall be given the right to speak. In the case of **supporters**, if the applicant or his agent indicates a wish to speak, the right to speak shall be given to that person.

2. Requests to speak

Requests to speak must be made no later than the end of business three working days before the advertised Planning Committee/Full Council meeting whose published agenda contains the application concerned.

This request must be made in writing or sent via email to the Senior Planning Officer of the Council.

The request must list the specific agenda item on which the representation is to be made and indicate whether the speaker wishes to be the **supporter** or the **objector**.

Attention is drawn to sections 1. b) (i) & (ii) above.

On receipt of an application, the Council shall inform the applicant whether his application has been successful. If prior applications have been made, a contact address/telephone number of such applicants will be made available in order that those applying may come to an agreement about who shall speak.

3. **Attendance**

The **supporter** and **objector** must arrive at the meeting venue 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the relevant Planning Committee/Full Council meeting and make themselves known to the Planning Committee Clerk or the senior officer present at the meeting. Failure to do so will forfeit the right to make a representation.

Speakers will be invited to come forward to speak when the application with which they are concerned is about to be considered by the Committee/Council. After their respective representations they may leave the meeting or may return to the public seating area

Upon agreement from the Chair, following a request to do so, the Planning Committee may move items where either/or a **supporter** and **objector** wish to make representations to the start of the agenda.

4. **Nature of representations**

Ward Members, the **supporter**, and the **objector** may make an oral representation to the committee. This oral representation is the only representation permitted.

Relevant site layout plans will be displayed.

No facilities for the projection of any material will be made available, however any speaker (including ward members) may request to display material contained on the Planning Portal such as photographs, maps or plans that are already in the public domain for reference by them.

Any such items must be identified to the Planning Department at least 48 hours before the meeting

The Speaker must remain seated at the microphone throughout the five minutes they are allowed to speak. No new information may be introduced and no additional time will be allowed if reference is made to material displayed on the Planning Portal.

No material may be circulated or distributed to members of the Committee by Ward Members, the **supporter**, or the **objector at the meeting**.

Officers and Committee members may not question any speaker making representations.

5. Length of representations

Ward Members, the **supporter**, and the **objector** will be given 5 minutes to make their representations.

They will be advised by the Clerk of the meeting when 4 minutes have elapsed.

6. Content of representations

All representations must be made in a seemly manner and any speaker who fails to conduct themselves appropriately will **immediately** forfeit the right to speak.

Under no circumstances must personal, malicious or frivolous remarks, insults, or libellous comments be made. These will **immediately** forfeit the right to speak

Speeches should address material planning concerns. Anyone who is unsure of these is strongly advised to seek advice in advance of speaking.

Speeches should address issues directly concerned with the specific application under consideration.

Speaking from notes is permitted. However in no circumstances will more than five minutes for a representation be granted.

Ward Members, the **supporter**, and the **objector** may not ask direct questions of the Committee or Council officers, though they may suggest questions that members of the Committee may feel ought to be put to officers.

7. Procedure

Each item on any given Planning Committee agenda shall be dealt with in the following sequence:

- i. The officer's report on the item
- ii. Ward members' representations (if any)
- iii. The **objector's** representation (if any)
- iv. The **supporter's** representation (if any)
- v. Comments by officers on the **objector's/supporter's** representations
- vi. Debate of the item by the Committee and its determination.

8. Deferrals

If an item is deferred, the **supporter** and the **objector who made representations during** the initial debate shall have the right to make representations at the meeting when the deferred item is debated once more.

9. Exclusions

No public representations shall be permitted on items dealing with the following:

Any item included in the closed section of any agenda: namely items subject to the paragraphs 1, 2 and 6 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, or successor legislation.

Planning Enforcement matters

Proposed litigation

Financial interests or other Member interests.

Matters delegated to officers of the Council

September 2018

**REPORT TO THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

APPENDIX B

6th November 2018

**SCHEME FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEE
REVIEW OF POLICY REGARDING DISPLAY OF MATERIAL**

Purpose of the Report

To enable Members to determine whether or not they wish to revise existing policy concerning the display of material during public speaking, or direct representation, to the Planning Committee

Recommendation

That the existing scheme be amended to allow public speakers, including ward councillors, to refer to material, excluding “presentations”, that has been submitted as part of, or in relation to, the application that is being considered by the Committee; and that this amendment be brought into immediate effect

Reasons

To ensure that the Planning Committee’s procedures remain fit for purpose

1. Background

- 1.1 In July 2008 the Planning Committee agreed to a package of measures entitled “Reforms to Planning Procedures” of which arrangements for public speaking at the Committee, and withdrawal from the Planning Committee of “called-in” application were part of. At the same time the Committee agreed to a guillotine on late representations and the submission of amended plans, and a policy voting on planning applications where a site visit had been held.
- 1.2 The Committee at the same time agreed that the changes should be reviewed by the Planning Committee within a 6 month period.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 30th September 2008 the Committee considered and agreed a requested amendment to the Committee’s protocol on public speaking.
- 1.4 At its meeting on the 21st April 2009 the Committee agreed, having considered a detailed report, that the current procedures for the operation of the Planning Committee be continued.
- 1.5 At its meeting on the 31st March 2015 the Committee undertook a further review of its procedures. With respect to Public Speaking, or direct representation, to the Planning Committee certain amendments to the procedures were made
- 1.6 Comments have been received about the policy of the Committee that no facilities for the projection of any material will be made available, and the Chair has asked that this item be brought to the Committee.

2. Current procedure

- 2.1 As members will be aware the current procedure is that ward councillors, a supporter and an objector may make an oral representation to the Committee. Their oral representation is the sum of the representation permitted. No facilities for the projection of any material are made available and no material may be circulated or distributed to members of the Committee by the ward members, the supporter, or the objector.

3. Discussion

- 3.1 The argument has been made that, as the Council does have the means by which material can be displayed on screen at the Committee, that it would be advantageous to the Committee's understanding of the representation for speakers to be able to refer to material that is displayed concurrently at the Committee.
- 3.2 The counter argument is that by limiting the representation to a purely oral one this creates a "level playingfield" for applicant's agents and other interested parties. There is also a secondary concern that speakers, knowing that they could ask for material to be displayed, might use material that had not been previously submitted and had been available for public comment and inspection. Concerns have been voiced about the display of photographs because of the potential for the manipulation of images.
- 3.3 This issue needs to be considered in context – all application material and representations, which not uncommonly includes photographs – is available to view on the Council's website, members of the Planning Committee are provided with a link to the Council's website and are assumed to have viewed the documentation associated with the application prior to coming to the Committee. They are therefore assumed to be already taking that material into account in coming to their decision
- 3.4 Your Officer considers that upon occasion it might have been helpful to the Committee, particularly when reference is being made to the relationship between properties and design, if the speaker had been able to refer to layout and elevational details in particular, and to "point to" features. It is an aspect of the planning system that agents employ professional agents to make their case and this "advantage" is built into the system, but members of the public are often very capable of making their points persuasively as well. Provided officers continue to be given an opportunity to comment upon anything said, and material displayed, by the speakers, the Committee should be able to be appropriately advised - to avoid taking into account in their determination any "immaterial" considerations.
- 3.5 Provided the material being displayed has been submitted in advance (and for the avoidance of doubt that means in advance of the Committee's guillotine), is not in the format of a "presentation", and has been subject to public inspection (including by applicants in the case of material submitted by third parties) there should, in your Officer's view, be no particular problem with introducing such a change in procedure.. It is recommended, for practical and resource reasons, that officers would continue to operate the display equipment, although the speakers would be provided with a "pointer". Speakers would need to notify officers in advance what material, if any, they wished to have available for display.