

Why a Hearing?

A Hearing is required in certain cases to allow enhanced scrutiny of planning issues where applications are significant or complex, as well as providing openness and transparency in planning decisions. Hearings are aimed at making the planning system more inclusive, allowing the views of applicants and all those who have made representations to be heard before a planning decision is taken. Each planning authority has discretion over how hearings will operate in its area.

It is at the discretion of the Members when to hold a Hearing rather than determining the application at a Planning and Access Committee Meeting in the normal way. Hearings are normally held where:

- there is significant local concern; or
- complex issues are raised

The decision to hold a Hearing will be made in advance by the Members of the Planning and Access Committee or the full Board. Hearings will normally take place after a site visit (if scheduled) or may take place on a separate day.

Where and when does a Hearing take place?

Hearings can take place at any time or place agreed by the Members in advance. It would be the usual intention to select a venue close to the location of the application being considered.

How do I make a request to speak at the Hearing?

If you have made a written representation, prior to the publication of the agenda, you will be notified in writing that the application is to be considered at a Hearing. A participation form will be enclosed. If you have not made a written representation you are not entitled to request to speak.

Return the completed form (to the address below) to arrive leaving two and a half clear working days before the meeting (for example, if the meeting is on a Monday, requests must be received by 12 noon on the previous Wednesday) to the Board and Committee Manager.

You may also download a copy of the form from our website and e-mail it to committeeclerk@lochlomond-trossachs.org

You may only submit a request if you have already made a written representation.

You are not able to speak on matters relating to enforcement cases.

You must highlight clearly on the form, the topics you wish to cover in your presentation.

The Agenda and the reports

Full details of the venue and agenda are published at least three clear working days before the meeting and are on our website at:

<http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/park-authority/our-board-committees/meetings/>

How many people can speak?

The applicant or their agent will be allowed to speak in support of the application. There is no limit to the number of speakers who may speak in either support or objection to an application. However, where there are a large number of objectors who are raising the same issues, it is at our discretion to ask one objector to speak on behalf of a group rather than allowing all objectors to address the Members individually.

What happens at the Hearing?

- If you have requested to speak you must arrive early at the venue. We recommend ten minutes before the meeting starts.

Make contact on arrival with the Board and Committee Manager, who will ensure that you fully understand the procedures at the meeting.

- One of the Authority's Planning Officers *will* present the planning assessment of the proposal and the recommendation.
- The Chair will invite each speaker to talk for a maximum of five minutes normally, in the following order:
 1. The applicant or their agent
 2. Consultees including SEPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland etc.
 3. The Community Council
 4. Objectors/Supporters to the proposal

(Note: you will be asked to move to the designated area and speak into a microphone)

- You must restrict your comments to planning matters relevant to the proposal and the site.

(Note: guidance is included in the Participation Form)

- You may not use slides or overhead transparencies or distribute hand outs at the meeting.
- At the end of your presentation, the members may ask you questions. However, you will not be able to question other speakers directly or speak again to comment on the contributions of others unless requested to do so by the Chair.

- After the speakers have finished, the Chair may ask a speaker to return if there are any supplementary questions.
- The Chair may direct questions to Planning Officers at any time during the process.
- At the end of the questioning, the Chair will close the Hearing and re-convene the formal meeting.
- Members will debate the proposal and may ask questions of the case officer, the Head of Planning and Rural Development and the Park Authority Internal Advisors (Trees, Landscape, Ecologist, Access).
- The Members will then make the decision, this can be in agreement with the case officer or they can overturn or amend the recommendation. Members will confirm their position by a show of hands.
- The Proper Officer will then confirm the final decision of the Committee.

What if I have special needs?

If you need assistance, please contact the Board and Committee Manager at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting to discuss your requirements.

Further Information

For further information on any aspect of this guidance note please contact:

Douglas Smith

Tel: 01389 727750

Email:

committeeclerk@lochlomond-trossachs.org