

Crawley Borough Local Plan Examination

Virtual Hearings

Part 2 Hearings, Week 2

Inspectors' note for Participants

Introduction

This note is to be read in conjunction with the Inspectors' Guidance Notes ([ID-002](#)) which set out the general parameters for the examination. This note provides specific advice on participating at the virtual hearings.

The final week of the Part 2 hearings for the Crawley Borough Local Plan Examination will proceed 'virtually', by means of Microsoft Teams Live Events. Please read this note carefully as it sets out the procedures and rules for how the virtual hearings will be conducted.

Joining the hearing as a participant

Participants should join their session by using the electronic link in their invitation sent in an email by Sophie Gilbert, Crawley Borough Council. This will be via the email address you have already provided to the examination. If for technical reasons you are unable to join via the link provided please contact the programme officer, Charlotte Glancy.

Please join approximately 15 minutes before the event is due to open (i.e. 09.45 for a 10.00 start) to allow time to register your details. You will be held in a virtual 'lobby' until you are admitted into the hearing.

Watching the hearing

The sessions will be live-streamed but they will also be recorded for non-participants and the public to watch on the internet. A link to view the sessions will be available on the Council's Local Plan [examination web page](#).

The recording of the proceedings will be published as soon as possible after the hearing.

How the hearing will work for invited participants

Microsoft Teams Controls

The principal controls you will need to use are:

- camera on/off – to indicate you wish to speak turn your camera on
- microphone on/off (to mute or unmute yourself); and
- the red telephone to disconnect at the end of the hearing session or at the point you wish to leave the discussion.

The procedure for virtual hearings

The aim is to make the virtual hearings as similar as possible to physical hearings in the way they run and the way you participate. Please bear in mind that the purpose of the hearings is for the Inspectors to gain the information they need to examine the plan's soundness.

At the start of the hearing session we will remind participants that the event is being recorded and that this is not discretionary. If you do not wish to be recorded your option will be to leave the event.

If you wish to respond to a question, please turn your camera on to indicate your desire to speak. Although all participants will be able to see and hear each other only one participant may speak at a time. When you are invited to speak please unmute your microphone.

As with physical hearings, please make your contributions brief and focused and relevant to the point on the agenda. You will not need to repeat your full case, or give any formal presentation, as we will have read all your representations.

At a mid-session break, we will remind participants not to log out but ensure they turn their cameras and microphones off. At the end of the hearing session we will ask all participants to log out.

Documents, evidence and presentation

The examination website contains all the relevant examination documents. These are available to all participants, stakeholders and the public.

The hearing will not use the document sharing facility available on Teams.

Nor should you hold any document in front of your camera.

Conduct

All participants, their views and evidence shall be treated with fairness and consideration. Participants must not interrupt each other, and contributions should be made respectfully.

To make the best use of the hearing time and to avoid disruption, the virtual hearings will start strictly at the time indicated on the agenda.

You will receive an invitation from the Crawley Borough Council to the relevant session or sessions. You must join the hearing on Teams approximately 15 minutes before the time indicated on the agenda and you will be held in a waiting lobby until you are admitted into the hearing by the Programme Officer.

You should have made appropriate arrangements to ensure that your working environment is quiet, and that the hearing (and your ability to concentrate on it) is not disrupted by external noise and unnecessary distractions. Please ensure that your camera is positioned to provide a clear, front-on view of your face and avoid sitting where you are silhouetted in front of a window or light.

Those who use Teams and Zoom may have grown used to the idea that people can come and go during virtual meetings. However, that does not apply to

examination hearings. You must make sure as far as possible that you attend the hearing you are invited to from start to finish. Leaving midway may mean you miss the opportunity to speak, hear other people's contributions, and listen to the Inspector's announcements. If you need to leave early for any reason, please inform the Programme Officer as soon as possible.

When adjournments are announced, please make a careful note of the resumption time and be back at your screen before that time.

You should consider whether you are likely to need to confer with another person (Agent, Legal Representative etc) during the event. If so, agree how you intend to achieve this e.g. SMS, Email, WhatsApp etc before the event.

Privacy

Please have regard to the privacy notice. You can turn your camera off if you don't want your image to be viewed.

As set out above the hearings will be recorded for reference. Please do not make your own recording of the hearing. You must ensure that no-one else appears on your camera unless it has been otherwise agreed, and you should clear your background of personal information. If you prefer, Microsoft Teams allows you to blur your background, but please do not use any of the other backgrounds that are available on Teams.

You must not share any personal information during the hearing, either yours, or anyone else's.

Use of Microsoft Teams

To join the live video conference via Teams, you will need to click on the link provided in the invitation. If you are intending to join using a PC, Apple Mac, iPhone or Android, you should download and install the Microsoft Teams application. If you are using Microsoft Teams, please ensure that you are using the old version of teams, as Live Events is not compatible with the new version of teams. If this is not possible, you can join using a Chrome browser on your desk top computer (not on your mobile phone).

Some people with older devices or who use corporate devices which prevent downloads being installed could experience problems. In this case, either use an alternative or contact your corporate systems administrator.

You will be responsible for making sure your kit is functional and that you have everything in place and working to enable you to join the hearing via Teams.

If you are unable to join, or lose connection during the hearing, try again to join using the link provided in your calendar invitation. The hearing may continue in your absence. As a backup you can re-join by telephone, using the number in the invitation.

Glen Rollings *David Spencer*

Inspectors.

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