

**Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan Review (the Plan)**  
**INSPECTORS' VIRTUAL HEARING ETIQUETTE GUIDANCE**

**Inspectors: Karen L Baker DipTP MA DipMP MRTPI &  
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**Programme Officer: Annette Feeney**

**Introduction**

1. This note summarises the key points set out in our Guidance Note [J6] in relation to the way that we expect participants to take part and conduct themselves in the virtual Hearing sessions.

**Participating in Virtual Hearing Sessions**

2. The aim is to make the virtual Hearing sessions as similar as possible to physical Hearing sessions in the way they run and the way you participate.
3. At the start of each Hearing session we will take appearances in the usual way. We will lead the Hearing, introduce each topic and ask specific questions about the topic. If you wish to respond to a question, please use the 'raise hand' facility in Zoom to indicate your desire to speak.
4. We will give each person who has raised their hand an opportunity to have their say. Although all participants may be able to see each other, only one participant may speak at a time. We ask that all participants have their video turned on, but that they remain on mute until invited to speak. When you are invited to speak unmute your microphone, and state your name and, if any, your organisation if it is your first time speaking during the session. If the attendance of more than one participant per Representor has been agreed by us in advance of the Hearing session, only the main speaker should have their video switched on, the other participant should remain on mute, with their camera off, until they change places with the main speaker.
5. Please make your response brief and focused and adhere to the agenda. You will not need to repeat your full case, or give any formal presentation, as we will have read all your representations. We may ask questions about aspects of your verbal or written submissions. The format will be a structured discussion, which we will lead. There will not be any formal cross examination and responses should always be directed to us. We will invite participants to speak in turn and there will be a lot to cover, so please be patient.
6. If you have already spoken on a particular topic but believe that you can help further on the subject, raise your hand using the facility in Zoom. Please ensure that anything you say here is new, important and relevant. Simply repeating what you or others have already said, or to register that you do not agree with another participant, is not necessary.

7. We will ask the Council for their comments on the main points raised and we will terminate the discussion on any topic when we have enough information. At the end of each Hearing session, we will end the session and ask all participants to log out of Zoom.
8. If you experience electronic interference during a session, try moving your mobile phone away from your computer. If you experience other connectivity issues, try switching off some other devices which share your Wi-Fi, or move closer to the router.
9. If you are unable to join, or lose connection during a Hearing, try again to join using the link provided in your invitation. The Hearing may continue in your absence. As a backup you can re-join by telephone, using the number in the invitation. If you do use the dial-in facility, you should dial 1471 before dialling the main number so that your personal number cannot be viewed in Zoom. Transferring from Wi-Fi to mobile data or making a Wi-Fi hotspot using a mobile phone are other contingencies that you may wish to use. If none of these resolves the issue, please contact the Programme Officer for assistance on **07775 771026**.

### **Conduct, Documents, Evidence and Presentation**

10. Local Plan Examinations are a formal event, with appropriate conduct. All participants, their views and evidence are treated with fairness and consideration, and participants do not interrupt each other.
11. To make the best use of the Hearing time and to avoid disruption, the virtual Hearing sessions will start strictly at the time indicated on the agenda. You will receive an invitation from the PO to the relevant session or sessions along with a Privacy Policy. You must join the Hearing on Zoom at least 20 minutes before the time indicated on the agenda. The PO is responsible for admitting participants into the Hearing session, you must wait to be admitted. You will be held in a waiting lobby until you are admitted into the Hearing by the PO. Attempting to join the Hearing after the time indicated on the agenda will cause disruption and you may not be admitted.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. You must make sure that you attend the Hearing session you are invited to from start to finish. Leaving midway through a session or coming and going are not respectful, and you may miss the opportunity to speak, hear other people's contributions and listen to Inspector announcements.

15. When adjournments are announced, please make a careful note of the resumption time and be back at your screen before that time. If you need to leave early for any reason, please inform the PO.
16. The chat facility in Zoom must **not** be used under any circumstances. It does not form part of the formal Hearing procedure and any posts will not be viewed by us. You should consider whether you are likely to need to confer with another person (Agent, Legal Representative, Colleague etc) during the event. If so, agree how you intend to do this e.g. SMS, Email, WhatsApp etc before the event. Participants should also **not** use the 'reactions', 'yes', 'no', 'go slower', 'go faster' functions.
17. 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 Zoom. Nor should you hold any document in front of your camera.
18. New documents should only be submitted during the Hearing sessions at our invitation. If we request a new document from any party, for example a statement of common ground, it should be emailed straight to the PO so that she can pass it to us and put it in on the Examination website.

## **Privacy**

19. The Hearings will be conducted in line with the Council's data protection policies and processes as set out here:  
[https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/www.ipswich.gov.uk/files/privacy\\_notice\\_-\\_local\\_plan\\_examination.pdf](https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/www.ipswich.gov.uk/files/privacy_notice_-_local_plan_examination.pdf)
20. Please have regard to the attached privacy notice.
21. Please do not make your own recording of the Hearing. Each session will be live streamed, as well as being recorded and published on YouTube within 24 hours for anyone to view and will be available until our Report has been submitted to the Council. A link to the live streaming and recording will be provided on the Examination website  
<https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/content/latest-news>. If you do not wish your image to be viewed, please turn your camera off before entering the Hearing session. 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, Zoom allows you to blur your background, but please do not use any of the other backgrounds that are available on Zoom. You must also not share any personal information during the Hearing, either yours, or anyone else's.

## **The Hearing Sessions**

22. The Hearing sessions will begin at **0930hrs** on **Tuesday 24 November 2020** and will normally run between 0930hrs and 1100hrs, 1130hrs and 1300hrs and 1400hrs and 1530hrs each day to allow for appropriate screen breaks. Details of the sitting days are included in the accompanying draft Programme and are summarised as follows:

***Tuesday 24 to Thursday 26 November 2020***  
***Tuesday 8 to Thursday 10 December 2020***  
***Tuesday 15 to Thursday 17 December 2020***

Friday 11 December and Friday 18 December 2020 are reserved as possible sitting days if required.

23. ***Only one participant is allowed per Representor. However, in view of their particular position in covering the whole Plan, two or sometimes more Council representatives may take part in a Hearing, depending on the subject under discussion.***
24. We recognise that the Hearing sessions cover a range of topics, requiring different technical knowledge. However, other than the Council, we would normally only permit one person to represent and participate on behalf of each Representor at any one session. If you consider that you need more than one witness at any one session, please supply the reasons why this is necessary and we will consider it.
25. In those cases where there is more than one participant per Representor, we expect only one participant to keep their camera on, but with their microphone muted, unless they are invited to speak. All other participants should join with their cameras and microphones off. For those areas of the discussion where a different participant needs to speak, they must 'virtually' change places with the current participant by switching their camera on and the current participant switching off theirs, to ensure that only one participant from each Representor is sitting around the 'virtual' table at any one time.
26. ***Representors are requested to keep in touch with the PO or the Council Examination webpage regarding the programme, which may be subject to change.***

*Karen L Baker and Mike Hayden*

INSPECTORS

16 November 2020 (updated 20 November 2020)