

Introduction

The Marion Council Assessment Panel (CAP) is an independent planning 'Relevant Authority' established by the *Planning, Development & Infrastructure Act 2016*, with members appointed by Council to make decisions on development applications presented by Council planning staff.

What should you expect

Council understands that speaking in front of a Panel can be intimidating. While CAP meetings have some formal processes, Committee members are informal in their questions and discussions.

Meetings have two parts:

1. **Hearing:** Representors can speak for 5 minutes, followed by the applicant's 5-minute response. Panel Members may ask questions after each presentation to clarify points. Note that the applicant, or their representative will also have 5 minutes to respond to all those who made verbal presentations.
2. **Discussion and Decision:** The Panel discusses the application openly, but the gallery cannot ask questions or engage during this part. You can however hear the decision arrived at.

The Presiding Member will call your name when it is your time to speak and you can come forward and sit at the table.

You can find information about the application and the planner's report and recommendation in the Agenda documents.

[View the Agenda here](#)

[View the CAP Operating Procedures here](#)

Tips for speakers

- **Don't read your written submission:** The Panel has a copy and has already reviewed it. Focus on key points instead.
- **Read the planning officer's report:** Understand what's being presented. Check if it accurately represents your concerns, if there are any factual errors, or if you disagree with any points or recommended conditions? Use these insights to shape your presentation.
- **Be aware of any changes made:** If there have been changes to the application after the consultation period, know what they are and how they affect your position. Explain to the Panel if these changes alter your stance or not.
- **Consider alternative solutions:** If you're open to alternative solutions to address your concerns, mention them. The Panel may consider these in their assessment or ask the applicant about them.

Remember, you only have 5 minutes, so make the most of it to get your key points across.

Council and Panel members will conduct themselves with respect and empathy, and they expect the same from you. Rude or threatening behaviour is not tolerated and won't help your cause.

After the hearing, the Panel will discuss the application in front of the gallery. You are welcome to stay and listen to the discussion and the final decision, but you cannot engage with members or staff in any way during this part.