

Implementation Date: 01 September 2023

Template for Requesting Speaking Rights at the Planning Committee

The Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee provides for interested person(s) to register to speak on a planning application that is scheduled to be determined at the next meeting of the Planning Committee. This request must be received by the Planning Department no later than 10am on the Monday before the Planning Committee meeting via email account planning@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk.

Planning Reference	LA01/
Name	Eamonn Loughrey
Contact Details	Tel: Email:
Support or Objection – please tick relevant box	Support YES
Written representation summarising key points to be addressed and supplementary information in support of your case (minimum font size 10 and maximum length two sides of A4 page). On behalf of the applicant company and the prospective tenant, The Food Warehouse, we welcome the recommendation to approve this application. We request the Committee endorse and accept this recommendation. The Food Warehouse is a new brand of food offering in Northern Ireland. It is operated by Iceland. Iceland are rolling out this new format of stores on a national basis to sit alongside their existing network of High Street Iceland stores. This offer complements the traditional High Street retail offer providing a wider range of goods and catering for the bulky buyer. There are over 800 Iceland stores and 200 Food Warehouse stores. The Iceland store at Railway Road is a very popular and successful trading store for the company. There is no intention to close or alter the trading of that store. It is meeting a different customer profile, the core base of Iceland customers and Iceland will continue to meet the demands of those customers in the town centre.	

Because of the 'two store' strategy and the success of the Railway Road store, Iceland have confirmed that the town centre store will remain open for at least another 5 years. The Planning Department have sought to formalise this commitment through a legal agreement, which Iceland have agreed to.

Consequently, this application delivers two benefits to Coleraine, first it secures the long term provision of a town centre Iceland store for another 5 years at least, and second it introduces the Food Warehouse brand to the town.

In terms of policy, there is a qualitative need for a new retail offering in Coleraine, and the proposal will create 40-50 new jobs in Coleraine and obviously provides security for the staff of the existing Iceland store. It also creates 20-30 construction jobs and represents an investment of £1.5million in Coleraine.

There is a quantitative need for the proposal. The Council's own Capacity Assessment identifies a requirement for additional convenience floorspace, and this proposal can help to meet that need.

We have carried out a retail impact assessment and demonstrated that there will be no harm to the town centre. Indeed, given the commitment of Iceland to retain the Railway Road store, this proposal can be considered to provide a benefit of certainty for the town centre.

Finally, as confirmed by the Case Officer, there are no suitable sequentially preferable sites for this proposal in either Coleraine, or Portrush or Portstewart.

The proposal therefore complies with the policies of the Northern Area Plan and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement.

Given the foregoing, I respectfully request that the application be approved.