



**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](mailto:planning@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk).

<b>Planning Reference</b>	LA01/2016/1328/F	
<b>Name</b>	MAURICE BRADLEY	
<b>Contact Details</b>	Tel: [REDACTED]	
22 NEW ROW COLERAINÉ	Email:	
<b>Support or Objection – please tick relevant box</b>	Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Objection	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>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).</b>		

**Maurice Bradley MLA**

**Support for the proposed Merrow Hotel & Spa (planning reference: LA01/2016/1328/F)**

Good morning Chair and Members,

Thank you for your time this morning. I am pleased to be speaking in support of the application for the Merrow Hotel & Spa development which, if approved, will bring a range of benefits that align with aims and objectives of this council and indeed the wider area.

If approved the project will provide much-needed high-quality accommodation in the Portstewart and North Coast area, which is currently significantly under-serviced. It is clear to absolutely everyone who lives or spends time in the area that hotel accommodation like this is badly needed. Not just when it comes to the hosting of international events but all year round.

In doing so, the new hotel and spa will support the growth of the tourist sector and broader economy locally, not only through the initial private investment of over £20 million, but also by keeping more visitors in the area for longer.

Having state-of-the-art conferencing facilities will enhance this, by attracting and hosting events both for visitors and locals. There are currently very few venues in the borough that can facilitate large scale conferences and events, and too often we see local businesses and organisations travelling elsewhere for these facilities. Keeping these events in the area will have a positive impact for other businesses and suppliers who will be required to provide services, products, bed nights, transport and travel and other support.

I also welcome the applicant's commitment to creating long-term local employment opportunities, and the 100 jobs that will be created when the facility opens will be very important to the local area. Too often jobs in the tourism and hospitality sectors here are seen as seasonal but I believe the applicants commitment to creating exciting career opportunities at the Merrow Hotel & Spa will help to address that perception and attract talent to the sector.

I think it is notable how the applicant has worked closely with the North West 200 to ensure the development will be taken forward without having an adverse impact on the races, which bring so much to the North Coast. This is reflected in the North West 200's strong support for the project, which will remain fully operational throughout race week with no impact on the events. Not only that, but it is particularly good news that the Coleraine District and Motorcycle Club will have a permanent home in the hotel – this will enable the team to take the North West 200 to even greater levels.

For the reasons I have discussed today, and in my previous submissions on this application, I believe the proposed Merrow Hotel & Spa development will bring many benefits to Portstewart and the surrounding area, and if I can I would encourage the Committee to make a positive decision on the planning application today in line with the case officer's recommendation to approve the proposal.

Thank you for your time.