
PLANNING COMMITTEE SITE VISITS PROCEDURES AS AGREED BY THE PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2004

1. Purpose of Site Visits

Visits to sites covered by items being considered by the Planning Committee will be carried out by the Members of the Committee where, in the opinion of the Head of Planning or Chair of the Planning Committee, a site visit is desirable to enable the Members to be better informed of the relevant issues and facts about the application. Visits will normally take place on the day before the meeting of the Planning Committee. All applicants will be advised that such a visit may occur when an application is registered.

2. Attendance at a Site Visit

All members of the Planning Committee may attend the site visit. Many sites can be viewed from public roads or vantage points and it may not be necessary to gain access to private land. If access to private land is necessary, or, if the Head of Planning/Planning Committee considers it is desirable, the applicant/agent will be invited to attend the site visit to observe and to answer any questions of fact but not to make representations. In exceptional circumstances statutory consultees may be invited to be present as observers or to answer questions of fact.

3. Procedure on the Site

For unaccompanied site visits, the Authority Officer will normally explain the proposal and answer any questions from Members. Members may ask Officers to provide further information or undertake further work prior to the consideration of the item at the formal Committee meeting but Members will not be asked to make any recommendation on the application on the site visit day.

For accompanied visits the procedure will be as follows:

- (a) The Chair of the Committee shall preside at the site visit. In the Chair's absence the Vice Chair will preside, or failing that, another Member agreed by the Members present, shall preside. The presiding Member will emphasise that the Members will not be making a decision or recommendation on the application during the site visit. The application will only be determined at a formal meeting of the Committee.
- (b) The Planning Officer will explain the details of the application and the issues involved including any points that have been raised by consultees, supporters or objectors.
- (c) Others invited to attend may not speak about the application except to answer questions from Officers or Members of the Committee pertinent to the site visit.
- (d) Members may ask Officers to provide further information or undertake further work prior to the consideration of the item at the formal Committee meeting.