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## PLANNING COMMITTEE: SITE VISIT PROTOCOL

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- 1.0 Site visits by the Planning Committee shall be held only where the benefit is clear and substantial, having regard to: policy and material considerations; where the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans, photographs and information provided; where the comments of the applicant and objectors cannot be expressed adequately in writing; or where the proposal is particularly contentious.
- 2.0 The purpose of the site visit is to observe the site and gain a better understanding. The Committee shall visit the site with Officer assistance. The decision to hold a site visit will be taken by the Chairman of the relevant Planning Committee in consultation with Officers, Planning Committee Members and Ward Councillors and a record of the reason for the visit shall be kept.
- 3.0 Where a site visit is carried out following a request from a Ward Councillor, it may also be appropriate to invite the relevant Member to attend the site visit to hear the same explanation of the proposal/application as the Committee. The site owner, (whether the applicant, objector or third party) will also be present, solely to provide access to the site.
- 4.0 The Local Member, landowner, applicant and objector, if in attendance, may not make any representations to the Committee about the application, but may point out relevant features on the ground.
- 5.0 The Committee should direct all questions to the Officer. Only where the Officer does not have the answer immediately available, may the applicant or objector answer a technical or factual question relevant to the application.
- 6.0 At no point during a site visit should the applicant, objector or Local Member be allowed to make representations to the whole Committee or to individual Committee Members in conversation. All representations should be made at the Planning Committee meeting in accordance with the procedure for public speaking on planning applications.
- 7.0 The needs of all participants will be considered and reasonable measures taken to facilitate access to the site visit. A representative may attend where reasonable adjustments cannot be made.
- 8.0 Individual Committee Members are only entitled to view the site from public vantage points if visiting the site alone, as they have no individual rights to enter private property.

Adopted by Worthing Borough Council - 15 July 2014