

Planning committee site visits

Guidance notes for Members

August 2021

Site visits are a fact gathering exercise for members of planning committees only, enabling councillors to see for themselves the impacts of development and appreciate any issues involved.

- Site visits will take place on an ad hoc basis where there will be a clear benefit to the committee viewing the site; sites to be visited to be determined by the chairman, with the advice of the Lead Planning Officer.
- Committee Services will email details of the site visit arrangements to Members.
- Planning Committee site visits will take place collectively. It was agreed that the approach to sites visits for Buckinghamshire Council area planning and strategic sites committees be organised group site visits by minibus/ coach/ own travel; sites to be visited to be determined by the chairman, with the advice of the Lead Planning Officer.
- Buses will be arranged for members to join the visit. Buses will depart from the local office or other convenient pick up point(s). Members can, if they prefer, choose not to be on the bus but to travel to sites using their own transport if they wish. However, you **must** meet the rest of the committee on site at the specified time. To support officers organising the visit please let your committee clerk know how you plan on travelling to site.
- Members must not engage with residents /agents /applicants /objectors on site.
- Site visits will usually take place the day before the relevant planning committee meeting.
- Officers will specify if personal protective equipment (PPE) is to be provided for the site visit.
- Local Members will be not be invited to planning site visits as they will have the opportunity to put their views at Planning Committee and to counter any suggestion that members of the committee may have been influenced by their presence at the site visit.