

Mabe Parish Council

Planning – Sites Visits Protocol

(Adopted: July 2021)

1. Purpose

The purpose of a site visit is to gain knowledge about the site of a planning application that may be difficult to visualise from the plans and supporting material, and to make a visual assessment of the proposal in the context of its location and its relationship with adjoining development.

When reporting back to the council, reference should be made to relevant local and national planning policy.

2. Informal visits

The majority of visits will be informal and can be undertaken without entering the application site, from a road, pavement or footpath. Cllrs may be approached by the applicant or neighbours, in which case you should explain who you are, that you are carrying out a visit to view the application site, and avoid entering into discussion about the application. Any questions should be only to seek clarification on the application.

3. Formal visits

Formal site visits will be held only on very rare occasions, and with the agreement of the Chairman of the council, or in their absence the Vice-Chairman.

A formal visit is classed as one which requires access to the development site, and so an appointment with the applicant/landowner/agent should be requested.

Councillors should not attend a formal visit alone, they must be accompanied by at least one other councillor.

Councillors must avoid discussion with the applicant/agent on the merits (or otherwise) of the application and restrict any questions to seeking clarification on the application.

Councillors must approach each application with an open mind and with no pre-judgement of the application.

4. Interests

Any councillors with an interest of any description in an application must not attend a site visit for that application.

5. Covid-19

During the pandemic, councillors attending site visits must observe the regulations and guidance current at the time.