

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES**

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
Date:	29 APRIL 2020		
TITLE:	POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
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1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 Normally this report would accompany a list of sites where, due to the sensitive or important nature of the proposals, Councillors are advised that a Site Visit might be appropriate before the meeting of the next Committee (or at a future date) and to confirm how the visit will be arranged.
- 1.2 However, with the current measures to enforce social distancing it would not be acceptable for officers to recommend that Councillors make any site visits for the time being.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you agree that no site visits shall take place until the current social distancing measures are lifted.

3. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 3.1 The purpose of the planning service is to support the delivery of economic and sustainable growth while providing appropriate regulation to secure an attractive and safe town. We do this by maintaining planning performance and developing policy and systems to secure sustainable development. This contributes to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2018-21:
 - Securing the economic success of Reading;
 - Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs;
 - Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe;
 - Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

- 4.2 The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. We encourage car sharing and the use of alternative transport modes to and from site visits.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 5.1 Statutory neighbour consultation takes place on planning applications.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Officers when assessing an application and when making a recommendation to the Committee, will have regard to its duties Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None arising from this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The cost of site visits is met through the normal planning service budget.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reading Borough Council Planning Code of Conduct.

Local Safety Practice 2013 Planning Applications Committee site visits.