

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

<b>TO:</b>	<b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> January 2022</b>		
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS</b>		
<b>SERVICE:</b>	<b>PLANNING</b>	<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>BOROUGH WIDE</b>
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**1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To identify those sites where, due to the sensitive or important nature of the proposals, Councillors are advised that a Site Visit would be appropriate before the matter is presented at Committee and to confirm how the visit will be arranged. A list of potential sites is appended to this report with an officer note added to say if recommended for a site visit or not.

**2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 2.1 That you note this report and confirm if the site or sites indicated on the appended list are to be visited by Councillors.
- 2.2 Confirm if there are any other sites Councillors consider necessary to visit before reaching a decision on an application.
- 2.3 Confirm how the site(s) agreed should be visited will be carried out - accompanied by officers or unaccompanied.

**3. THE PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 Appended to this report is a list of applications received that may be presented to Committee for a decision in due course. Officers will normally indicate if a site would benefit from being visited to inform your decision making or Councillors may request that a site is visited.
- 3.2 A site visit is only likely to be necessary if the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and any supporting material or if there is a good reason why the comments of the applicant and objectors cannot be expressed adequately in writing; or, the proposal is particularly contentious.
- 3.3 It is possible that these difficulties will arise at Committee during consideration of an application, in which case it is appropriate for Councillors to seek a deferral to allow a visit to be carried out to assist in reaching the correct decision.

3.4 Accompanied site visits consist of an arranged inspection by a viewing Committee, with officers in attendance and by arrangement with the applicant or their agent. Applicants and objectors however will have no right to speak but may observe the process and answer questions when asked. The visit is an information gathering opportunity and not a decision making forum.

3.5 Unaccompanied site visits can take place where the site is easily viewable from public areas and allows Councillors to visit the site when convenient to them. In these instances, the case officer will provide a briefing note on the application and the main issues to be considered by Councillors when visiting the site.

3.6 There may also be occasions where officers or Councillors request a post completion site visit in order to review the quality or impact of a particular development.

#### **4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

4.1 The processing of planning applications contributes to creating a sustainable environment with active communities and helping the economy within the Borough as identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan:

1. Healthy Environments
2. Thriving Communities
3. Inclusive Economy

#### **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. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

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

- 8.2 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. As a team we have also reduced the amount of resources (paper and printing) we use to carry out our work.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The cost of site visits is met through the normal planning service budget and Councillor costs.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Reading Borough Council Planning Code of Conduct.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Potential Site Visit List:**

**Ward:** Minster

**Application reference:** 211928

**Application type:** Regulation 3 Planning Approval

**Site address:** Land adjoining, 24 Lesford Road, Reading, RG1 6DX

**Proposal:** Temporary Change Use of private amenity land for the purpose of providing temp parking for a period of 18 months.

**Reason for Committee item:** RBC application

**Ward:** Peppard

**Application reference:** 211843

**Application type:** Outline Planning Approval

**Site address:** Reading Golf Club, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8SQ

**Proposal:** Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (c3 use to include affordable housing) and public open space at the former reading golf club

**Reason for Committee item:** Major application

**Ward:** Whitley

**Application reference:** 211932

**Application type:** Outline Planning Approval

**Site address:** 142 Whitley Wood Lane, Reading, RG2 8PP

**Proposal:** Outline application for the demolition of existing retail units and ancillary buildings and redevelopment to provide ground floor retail uses with ancillary office space, and 12 dwellings (Class C3) on the upper floors (Landscaping reserved for future consideration).

**Reason for Committee item:** Major application

**Ward:** Church

**Application reference:** 211827

**Application type:** Regulation 3 Planning Approval

**Site address:** Shinfield Road Recreation Ground, Linden Road, Reading

**Proposal:** To install a small tarmac ball games court with a combined metal basketball / football goals at each end and perimeter of 1mtre high metal railing fence

**Reason for Committee item:** RBC application