

**NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
SITE VISIT PROTOCOL**

At its meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008 the Council adopted the following protocol:-

- 1. Site visits are to be undertaken only where there is a clear and substantial benefit to the determination of the application. The member moving the visit should indicate this clearly at Committee or in writing when moving the vote for a visit. These reasons will be recorded in the minutes**
- 2. Information will be provided to members on safety issues. Only those members who are properly equipped with the necessary protective clothing should attend site visits. Third parties should only be allowed on to a site if the applicant/owner agrees to it and the Chair is generally satisfied about the safety risks they may be under. Where a landowner is unwilling to permit third parties to enter his land, members should enter either in the absence or any party other than their officer, or at least unaccompanied by the applicant, so as to avoid allegations about private lobbying or conversations**
- 3. Members should not enter on the site until there is a quorum of at least 4.**
- 4. Members should leave the site together.**
- 5. Officers will give a brief factual presentation explaining the application, site details and other relevant information. Officers should focus upon an explanation of the proposals by reference to any submitted drawings, and the highlighting to members of key features of the site/building/adjoining land and the pointing out and accompanying of members to relevant viewpoints and members should confine themselves to strictly factual questions, having regard to the fact that it is a site visit rather than a site meeting and they should accept the rulings of the Chair on such matters.**
- 6. No submissions by persons other than members of the Committee and the officer will be permitted at the site visit.**
- 7. Officers will briefly record the relevant issues arising at the site visit that are not otherwise included in the committee report and these will be reported at the relevant meeting.**
- 8. There should be no discussion of the merits or otherwise of the case. The proper place for discussion is at Committee to allow all members to participate in informed discussion.**