MEMBER BRIEFING PROTOCOL
MAJOR/SIGNIFICANT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

ISSUE	RESOLUTION
Pre-Application Meetings	Under the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) it is considered good practice for Planning Authorities to engage early with developers where possible to facilitate acceptable developments. Officers undertake this good practice on a significant number of development proposals. However, Wealden also undertakes an extended pre-application approach by setting up protocol meetings between local members/parish reps/officers and the developer for some major/controversial schemes. Officers also encourage developers/agents to approach parish/town councils plus other stakeholders ahead of submitting a planning application to seek their views and comments.
Site visits prior to major application briefings	A site visit with a following briefing may be arranged particularly for significant controversial or complex major planning applications such as allocated housing sites this will be by agreement with the relevant chairman. Agent and a Parish Council representative will be formally invited to attend the site visit together with any other authorities (i.e. highways, conservation officer, where significant issues arise) as determined by the Chairman/Officers. N.B. Agents are only invited to provide access to the site and for H&S. The site visit and briefing times will be clearly stated on the invitation and the timings adhered to as much as possible. In light of the briefing session following the site visit, it is preferable that Members do not ask too many questions during the site visit. Any questions asked at the site visit will have the answers repeated at the briefing meeting to ensure all members have the same information.

ISSUE	RESOLUTION
Information needed for Members before the site visit/ briefing	Site plan to be included in the invitation memo to Members, even if no official site visit has been arranged. Precise location of meeting point to be clearly marked on the site plan if visit has been arranged. Invitation memo to Members should define if the site is within a strategic growth area or an allocated site within the Local Plan and if the principle of development exists. This should also be more clearly stated in the report.
Reference to briefings at the - Committee	Chairmen of the Development Control Committees shall state at the outset of consideration of a report that a site visit/briefing has taken place. The Briefing can also be referred to in the report. Wealden's web site should also state that pre meeting site visits and briefings take place but that members of the public will not be able to join the site visit/make representations at the site visit.
Presentation of information at committee	The PowerPoint presentation shown to Members at the briefing will be shown during consideration of the item at the Sub-Committee meeting,
Public speakers for majors applications (a) how long should they be allowed to speak and (b) how many speakers	Three people for and against can speak for three minutes in relation to major planning applications. The public are to be made aware by way of the web site, of the ruling on public speaking, and that supporting material i.e. photographs, drawings and plans are not allowed to be shown to the Sub-Committee if presented to Officers after 10am the day before the Sub-Committee. The Council will not be in a position to circulate statements or plans provided by the public direct to Councillors.
New questions raised during the Sub-Committee that were not raised during the briefing	Questions to Officers can be raised at any time during the briefing and the Sub-Committee. The update circulated to the Sub-Committee Members will include answers from questions asked at the briefing.