

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2026

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Present

Tim Jickells – in the Chair, Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Andrée Gee, Tony Grayling, James Harvey, Martyn Hooton, Leslie Mogford, Gurpreet Padda, James Reeder, Matthew Shardlow, Vic Thomson and Fran Whymark

In attendance

Natalie Beal – Planning Policy Officer (items 9-10), Jason Brewster – Governance Officer, Nigel Catherall – Planning Officer (item 7.3), Jane Fox – Planning Officer (item 7.1), Steve Kenny – Development Manager, Callum Sculfor – Assistant Planning Officer (item 7.2), Ruth Sainsbury – Head of Planning and Lorraine Taylor – Head of Governance

Members of the public in attendance who spoke

No members of the public in attendance.

1. Apologies and welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

No apologies were received.

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Chair explained that the meeting was being audio-recorded. All recordings remained the copyright of the Broads Authority and anyone wishing to receive a copy of the recording should contact the Governance Team. The minutes remained the record of the meeting. He added that the law permitted any person to film, record, photograph or use social media to report on the proceedings of public meetings of the Authority. This did not extend to live verbal commentary. The Chair needed to be informed if anyone intended to photograph, record or film so that any person under the age of 18 or members of the public not wishing to be filmed or photographed could be accommodated.

2. Declarations of interest and introductions

Members provided their declarations of interest as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes and in addition to those already registered.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters of urgent business

There were no items of urgent business

5. Chair's announcements and introduction to public speaking

No members of the public had registered to speak.

6. Requests to defer applications and/or vary agenda order

No requests to defer or vary the order of the agenda had been received.

7. Applications for planning permission

The Committee considered the following applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (also having regard to Human Rights), and reached the decisions set out below. Acting under its delegated powers, the Committee authorised the immediate implementation of the decisions.

The following minutes relate to additional matters of information or detailed matters of policy not already covered in the officer's report, which were given additional attention.

(1) BA/2025/0287/FUL How Hill Nature Reserve, How Hill, Ludham

Replacement of wooden boardwalk and bridge with recycled plastic

Applicant: Broads Authority

The Planning Officer (PO) provided a detailed presentation of the application that proposed the replacement of a wooden boardwalk and bridge; the boardwalk would be replaced with a recycled plastic material, and the bridge would be replaced like for like using timber and metal. The site was located within a National Nature Reserve which sits within the wider Ant Broads and Marshes (a Site of Special Scientific Interest which forms part of the Broads Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Broadland Special Protection Area (SPA) and Broadland Ramsar). The PO indicated that this application was before the committee as the applicant was the Broads Authority.

The presentation included location maps, an aerial photograph of the site, a site plan, various photographs of the existing boardwalk and bridge and images of an existing boardwalk constructed using recycled plastic material.

In assessing the application, the PO addressed the key issues of the principle of development; the impact on the landscape and Biodiversity Net Gain.

In response to questions the PO confirmed that there was no lighting associated with this development and that the development would be completed before the site re-opened for visitors in April 2026.

A Member noted that, given the site was located within a SAC, a SPA and Ramsar, the Authority was deemed the competent authority in relation to the Habitats Regulations. The Member asked, given the change in materials, the disturbance caused by this work and possible pollution resulting from the work, whether the Authority was certain that this development would cause no harm to the protected sites. The Head of Planning (HoP) confirmed that following a thorough review by the Authority's Ecologists this development would not harm the site and was deemed consistent with the Habitats Regulations.

Members were concerned about the risk of microplastics polluting the site given the choice of material. A Member, who had experience in the production of recycled plastic, believed that

the chosen material was sourced from recycled drinking bottles which were made of a very stable form of plastic and that this material would not require timber preservation treatments that could leach into the environment. The HoP suggested including a condition to ensure that the recycled plastic was cut and drilled offsite which Members supported.

A Member asked whether the Local Plan could be enhanced to simplify the use of recycled plastic materials where appropriate. The HoP confirmed that the emerging Local Plan provided greater flexibility regarding appropriate materials via a criteria based assessment which would enable new/different materials to be considered on a case by case basis.

Members welcomed the greater durability of the proposed boardwalk material and its improved practicality given its non-slip surface.

Leslie Mogford proposed, Harry Blathwayt seconded

It was resolved unanimously to approve the application subject to the following conditions:

- **Time limit**
- **In accordance with the submitted documents and plans.**
- **Constructed in accordance with the agreed material schedule or requirement to submit details of material if they differ due to supply issues.**
- **Processing of the recycled plastic to be performed offsite prior to installation.**

(2) BA/2025/0370/FUL Approach To Carpark Off Fen Lane, Beccles

Installation of three cycle charging boxes

Applicant: Beccles Town Council

The Assistant Planning Officer (APO) provided a detailed presentation of the application that proposed the installation of three electric bike charging pods at The Quay car park, in Beccles, east of the River Waveney. The three pods would be installed as a single unit with a solar panel forming the roof of each pod and required no ancillary connections.

The presentation included location maps, an aerial photograph showing the site relative to the car park and nearby residential properties, and photographs viewed from the car park's access road looking north depicting the site and south depicting the access road intersection with Fen Lane, a diagram depicting the elevation plans of a pod and a site plan which included an illustration of the three charging pods configured as a single unit.

In assessing the application, the APO addressed the key issues of the principle of development; the design and impact on heritage assets and landscape; neighbour amenity; sustainable tourism and recreation and renewable energy.

A Member was concerned about the fire risk associated with batteries used for electric bikes and the potential damage to the local environment resulting from a battery fire. The APO confirmed that the material used in the fabrication of the charging pods was chosen for its ability to withstand an electric battery fire.

Members supported the improvement to sustainable travel associated with this development.

James Harvey proposed, Stephen Bolt seconded

It was resolved unanimously to approve the application subject to the following conditions:

- **Three Year timeframe for commencement**
- **In accordance with the approved plans and material details.**

(3) BA/2026/0004/COND Broad View, Fleet Lane, South Walsham

Amendment to dormer windows and extension to decking area, variation of condition 2 of permission BA/2025/0120/FUL

Applicant: Mr Alan Goodchild

The Planning Officer (PO) provided a detailed presentation of the proposal, which was to amend the dormer windows and extend the decking area as a variation to condition 2 of permission BA/2025/0120/FUL. The proposed changes to the dormer windows were required to ensure the plans conformed with Building Regulations. The proposal was to lower the dormer windows so that they become a continuation of the dwellinghouse flank walls and were cut into the roof eaves. There was no change to the overall design and size of the dormers. The proposed change to the decking area would extend the terraced area replacing the steps for 3.82m from the northern edge and extending the western edge of this new decked area 75cm beyond the approved scheme.

The presentation included a location map, a site map, an aerial photograph with the site marked, photographs of the site as viewed from various vantage points on South Walsham Broad, a diagram of the south elevation as per the approved scheme, a diagram of the south elevation as per the proposed amended scheme, a diagram of the west elevation as per the approved scheme, a diagram of the west elevation as per the proposed amended scheme, a diagram of the north elevation as per the approved scheme, a diagram of the north elevation as per the proposed amended scheme, a diagram of the site viewed from the Broad as per the approved scheme and a diagram of the site viewed from the Broad as per the proposed amended scheme.

The PO indicated that this application was before the committee as the applicant was a Member of the Broads Authority and confirmed that no further consultation responses had been received since the report was written. The PO corrected a reference to a variation in condition 4 of the previous permission on page 1 of the report; the original change to conditions submitted included a change in materials (condition 4) which following negotiation, the applicant had subsequently removed.

In assessing the application, the PO addressed the key issues of the principle of development; the design, impact on the landscape and amenity on neighbouring properties.

In response to a question the PO confirmed that the list of recommendations stated in section 8 of the report were consistent with those previously stated for BA/2025/0120/FUL.

Matthew Shardlow proposed, Martyn Hooton seconded

It was resolved unanimously to approve subject to conditions:

- **Time limit**
- **In accordance with plans and documents**
- **In accordance with Pollution Prevention Plan**
- **In accordance with materials**
- **Details of large scale details of joinery**
- **Water consumption rate of no more than 110 litres/person/day**
- **PROW to remain open and accessible**
- **Sign up to Flood Warnings**
- **Void beneath dwelling to remain unobstructed**
- **No external lighting without prior written permission**
- **Provision of bat boxes**
- **Provision of bird cup or box**
- **Pontoon to be used for dingy and canoes and not for large, beamed vessels**
- **Removal of Permitted Development rights (Part 1 all relevant).**

8. Enforcement update

Members received an update report from the Development Manager on enforcement matters previously referred to the Committee. No further updates were provided at the meeting.

9. Local Plan for the Broads - Submission

The Planning Policy Officer (PPO) presented the report which detailed a new water usage topic paper, responses to the second consultation of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan, an assessment of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan against the emerging National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and a housing need topic paper. These documents were proposed to form part of the submission of the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate which was also detailed in the report. The PPO proposed to discuss each section of the report in turn and welcomed members' feedback.

90 litres per head per day water usage topic

In response to objections received during the first consultation of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan, the PPO had drafted a topic paper proposing a revised water usage threshold of 90 litres per head per day (Appendix 1 of the report). The objecting parties, Anglian Water Services, Essex & Suffolk Water and the Environment Agency, had been consulted on this matter and the topic paper responded to these organisations' assertions that the existing Local Plan's 110 litres per head per day threshold was too profligate and should be restricted further. The topic paper provided justifications and evidence for the proposed 90 litres per

head per day threshold and, following a review by the Authority's viability consultants, the proposal was considered feasible. Whether this new water usage target would be included in the final adopted Local Plan for the Broads would be a matter for the Planning Inspector to determine during the Local Plan examination.

A Member welcomed the improved water usage threshold given the changing climate although he noted that the water companies' lack of investment in infrastructure had not improved matters.

A Member asked how this new threshold would be monitored. The Head of Planning (HoP) explained that this new threshold would be regulated for new developments and through Building Regulations.

Responses to the second consultation of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan

The PPO indicated there had been further comments received during the second consultation of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan (Appendix 2 of the report). Some referred to previous comments submitted during the first consultation which have been logged, many comments were supportive and a few proposed changes, nothing major, to consider.

The PPO would collate both sets of consultation comments and responses, annotating each comment to identify during which consultation they were received. This combined set of consultation responses would be included in the submission documents.

Members had no further amendments to make to the proposed consultation responses.

A Member asked for clarification regarding the detailed submission submitted on behalf of the Trustees of the Somerleyton Estate. The PPO explained that this related to an ongoing planning application for residential moorings submitted by the estate. In light of this representation the Authority had updated the residential moorings policy to propose the inclusion of a condition regarding main or sole residency and had proposed a slight amendment to the definition of a residential mooring. These changes, although prompted by the representation received on the behalf of the Trustees of the Somerleyton Estate, had not addressed their comments. This matter would be determined by the Planning Inspector during the Local Plan examination.

Assessment of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan against the emerging National Planning Policy Framework

In response to the proposed transitional arrangements for the emerging NPPF being consulted on presently, as per item 10 of the agenda, the PPO had reviewed the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan to assess the scale of changes required to conform with the emerging NPPF. The resulting colour coded assessment was detailed in appendix 3 of the report. The key impact, shown by red shading, related to the Authority's aspiration for a 20% Biodiversity Net Gain threshold. There was still scope for the transitional arrangements to be revised, especially given the negative feedback these proposals had provoked, which could mitigate this impact. There was also a risk that further revisions to the transitional arrangements could exacerbate the impacts. This assessment would be included in the submission documents.

Members welcomed this assessment and its attempt to futureproof the Local Plan.

Housing need topic paper

A Housing need topic paper, appendix 4 of the report, had been created to summarise the status of the various housing needs within the Broads and referencing the various items of supporting material. This topic paper would be included in the submission documents.

Submission of the Local Plan for the Broads

Assuming the Planning Committee were willing to endorse the above documents and endorse the submission of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan then, as per the delegation agreed at the Broads Authority meeting on 28 November 2025, the Local Plan would be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 16 February 2026.

Leslie Mogford proposed, Matthew Shardlow seconded

It was resolved unanimously to endorse the 90 litres per head per day water usage topic paper, the responses to the second consultation of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan, the assessment of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan against the emerging National Planning Policy Framework, the housing need topic paper and the submission of the Local Plan for the Broads.

10. National Planning Policy Framework consultation and changes to Biodiversity Net Gain

The Planning Policy Officer (PPO) introduced the report, which summarised proposed changes to both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and documented the response to the NPPF consultation.

The PPO indicated that a new version of the NPPF was issued for consultation in December 2025 and many of the changes were influenced by the Government's manifesto promise to build 1.5 million new homes in England by 2029. The PPO noted some improvements to the NPPF's structure and layout and there were two areas of particular interest to the Broads; the stance of the NPPF regarding the excavation of peat as a byproduct of development had been strengthened; the revised NPPF provided greater leeway for Local Plans to adopt more stringent water efficiency targets in areas of serious water stress. There were some changes where there was some uncertainty as to their implications, for example the National Development Management Policies, previously proposed as statutory items by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, were now considered to be non-statutory. The proposed consultation responses were extensive and the PPO chose to highlight a few key areas of feedback:

- The emerging NPPF proposed the introduction of Spatial Development Strategies (SDS); the proposed response highlighted that the supporting SDS guidance failed to mention protected landscapes, provided no guidance when protected landscapes crossed Local Planning Authority administrative area boundaries and made no mention to climate change and any related adaptations and mitigations.

- The revised structure had made understanding the implications of failing to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply more convoluted; the implications were previously described in one section, the revised version required cross-referencing multiple sections.
- Some of the National Development Management (NDM) Policies were not complete in comparison to the Authority's Local Plan equivalents: For example, the wind turbine section omitted references to the Ministry of Defence and radar and the residential extensions section indicated a couple of issues whereas the Local Plan equivalent included eight.
- It was unclear whether Local Plan Policies could elaborate on NDM Policies which had implications for the Local Plan future-proofing assessment in appendix 3 of agenda item 9.
- The revised NPPF introduced new terminology, such as "well related", "large scale", "small scale", without the associated definitions in, and cross-referencing to, a glossary.
- The transitional arrangements as described cast doubt on the veracity of any Local Plan Policies being examined against a different version of the NPPF as these policies would have "limited weight".

The Head of Planning (HoP) added that the proposed changes, that had seen the NPPF gain an additional 30 pages, were significant and the Authority was one of many Local Planning Authorities across England responding to this consultation. It remained to be seen whether the NPPF would be further revised to accommodate the feedback generated by this consultation.

The PPO explained that the emerging NPPF proposed a change to BNG by restricting BNG targets above the 10% minimum to specific sites. Coupled with the exemption to BNG for developments up to 0.2 hectares previously implemented via regulation changes, these variations significantly changed the scope of BNG within the Broads. The Government was promising to introduce measures to simplify the delivery of BNG offsite and to consult on targeted exemptions for brownfield residential development.

In response to questions the HoP indicated that it was unclear when the emerging NPPF would be finalised and that anyone, including public and private organisations, could respond to this consultation.

Members welcomed the comprehensive response to this consultation. A couple of Members asked for the response relating to BNG to be further strengthened by referencing the statutory obligations of a National Park Authority and the Authority's supporting material justifying a BNG target above 10%. A Member wanted to encourage the NPPF to adopt a more flexible approach to BNG that might be more accommodating to the Authority's BNG proposal and suggested, for example, that the response propose a BNG target for protected landscapes

of 20%. The PPO agreed to strengthen the BNG response, with approval for these and any subsequent changes to be delegated to the HoP.

A Member suggested adding a summary paragraph as a heading to the consultation response that captured the Authority's top four or five key issues. The Member noted the policy regarding 5G and gigabit broadband infrastructure and asked whether the associated response could highlight the Government taking responsibility for this infrastructure in the absence of any environmental impact assessment.

In response to a question the PPO confirmed that the Authority, in conjunction with the other English national parks, was also contributing to a consultation response to be issued by National Parks England.

Stephen Bolt proposed, seconded by Matthew Shardlow

It was resolved unanimously to endorse, subject to the agreed changes, the proposed response to the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. Circular 28/83 Publication by Local Authorities of information about the handling of planning applications – Q4 (1 October to 31 December) 2025

The Development Manager (DM) introduced the report, which provided the development management statistics for the quarter ending 31 December 2025. The DM highlighted that all minor and other applications had been determined within statutory timescales or within an agreed extension of time as shown in table 2 (of the report) and exceeded the national performance indicators as shown in table 3 (of the report).

The report was noted.

12. Appeals to the Secretary of State

The Committee received a schedule of appeals to the Secretary of State since the last meeting. In response to a question the Development Manager confirmed that the Authority had submitted the relevant appeal paperwork relating to the application at Pleasure Boat Inn, Staithe Road, Hickling. Given that recent site visits conducted by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) had been unaccompanied, the DM believed the Authority would not have any further involvement in this matter until PINS issued their appeal decision.

13. Decisions made by officers under delegated powers

The Committee received a schedule of decisions made by officers under delegated powers from 5 January to 30 January 2026 and any Tree Preservation Orders confirmed within this period.

14. Other items of business

There were no other items of business.

15. Date of next meeting

Since the meeting, it had been agreed to cancel the meeting scheduled for 13 March 2026. The next meeting of the Planning Committee would be on Friday 10 April 2026 at 10:00am at The King's Centre, 63-75 King Street, Norwich.

The meeting ended at 11:30am.

Signed by

Chair

Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests Planning Committee, 13 February 2026

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest
Tim Jickells on behalf of all Members	7.1	Applicant is the Broads Authority
Fran Whymark	7.3	Norfolk County Councillor - other registerable interest