

Navigation Committee

22 January 2026

Agenda item number 9

Castle Marsh 24-hour mooring

Report by Head of Operations and Waterways Projects Officer

Purpose

Consultation with the Navigation Committee on a planning application which will be submitted by the Broads Authority for new moorings on the River Waveney.

Broads Plan context

E1 - Improve the integrated network of access routes and points (with easier access for people with mobility and sensory needs), linked to visitor facilities

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The provision of a new 24-hour mooring on the River Waveney has been prioritised to meet the following [Integrated Access Strategy](#) (IAS) objectives:

M3 Identify locations for new short-stay moorings in gaps identified by gap analysis, and,

M8 Feasibility study of different mooring design options and consult

A location on the south bank of the Waveney near North Cove has been identified. The landowner, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, is fully supportive of a 24-hour mooring at this location. The mooring would be installed and maintained by the Authority and the suggested mooring name is Castle Marsh 24-hour Mooring.

This report is to fulfil the requirement to consult the Navigation Committee:

*“(iv) before determining any application for planning permission which may significantly affect the use or enjoyment of the whole or any part of the navigation area and which materially conflicts with any policy, plan, strategy or procedure of the Authority;”
(Section 9 (6) (iv) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988)*

- 1.2. The Committee is asked for feedback and comments on this proposed application and its potential impacts on the public navigation.

2. Rationale for a public 24-hour mooring at Castle Marsh, River Waveney

- 2.1. A new mooring in this location (See Appendix 1) will provide a safe mooring between Authority managed sites at North Cove 24-hour mooring on the Waveney, and the Dutch Tea Gardens 24-hour mooring on Oulton Dyke. This is currently one of the largest gaps in free, 24-hour mooring provision in the whole of the Broads navigation.
- 2.2. Location of a mooring here adds to the network of safe and available moorings and contributes significantly to IAS aim 7.8 - *The Broads Authority will work to ensure wherever possible that the distribution of short stay moorings is a maximum of 30-minute cruising time apart (equal to 2 miles distance at 4mph)*. In addition to filling a gap in provision, the location also provides visitors with land access to the new Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) Castle Marshes Nature Reserve. The mooring location also provides access to the public right of way “Barnby footpath 008”, part of the Angles Way long distance path, which follows the southern bank of the Waveney between Beccles and Oulton Broad.
- 2.3. Within the desired section of the Waveney for this mooring, the specific location identified has the shortest distance between the floodbank (solid ground for anchoring the ramp) and the open water. The shorter distance means a shorter ramp and less disturbance to existing vegetation (see Appendix 2).
- 2.4. The intended design is for a floating, 20-metre-long pontoon, connected to the land via a pedestrian ramp. The pontoon will be secured by up to four round piles driven into the riverbed. The ramp will pivot at the landward end to a solid fixing into the floodbank (see Appendix 3). This design will allow the pontoon to rise and fall with the

tide, enable safe pedestrian access to land, and ensure a constant freeboard for moored vessels. The pontoon positioned just off and parallel to, the riverbank means the need for hard engineering and loss of river-edge habitat are avoided. The overall design is very similar to that already installed at Peto's 24-hour mooring, on Oulton Dyke.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1. The capital cost for purchase, installation and on-going maintenance costs of a floating pontoon mooring is less than vertical steel piling designs. The pontoon design also minimises the flood risk, design complexity, ground investigation, and biodiversity net gain requirements, which all add costs at the project planning stage. The capital purchase of the materials will be funded from the National Park Capital Programme. Installation by in-house teams if available from April 2026 at the earliest, subject to planning consent.

4. Risk implications

- 4.1. Installation of a fixed structure in the public navigation reduces river width, with benefit of providing mooring and land access for boat users. The intended location with a pontoon installed and the riverside trees on the opposite bank would leave a river width of approximately 28 m (see Appendix 4).
- 4.2. A mitigation measure to maximise river width would be for the tree growth on the opposite bank to be managed in line with the Riverside Tree Management process, see [Riverside Tree Management process](#). Given the consenting and work programming required to carry out this work, the earliest this mitigation could be completed in September 2026.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The officer view is that this proposal offers cost benefits in meeting multiple mooring, public enjoyment and access objectives with the Broads Plan and relevant sub-strategies. The impact on navigable water space is not considered detrimental to vessels along this stretch of river, which has good visibility and adequate width for vessels passing in opposite directions.

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Date of report: 08 January 2026

Background papers: Riverside Tree Management process, see [Riverside Tree Management process](#)

Appendix 1 – Site location map

Appendix 2 – Plan of proposed pontoon

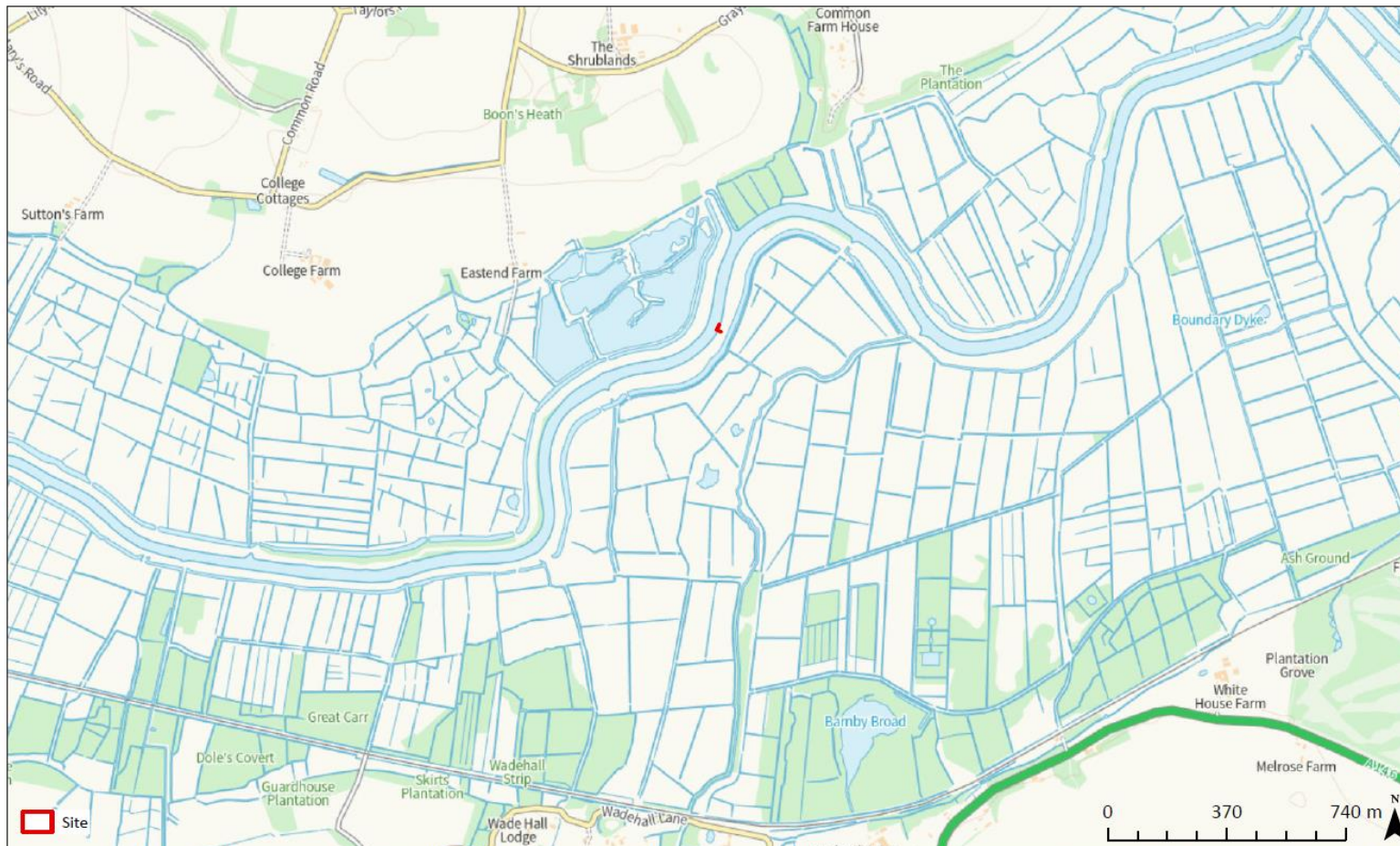
Appendix 3 – Cross section of proposed pontoon

Appendix 4 - Castle Marsh 24-hour mooring location (with river widths)

Appendix 1- Site location map

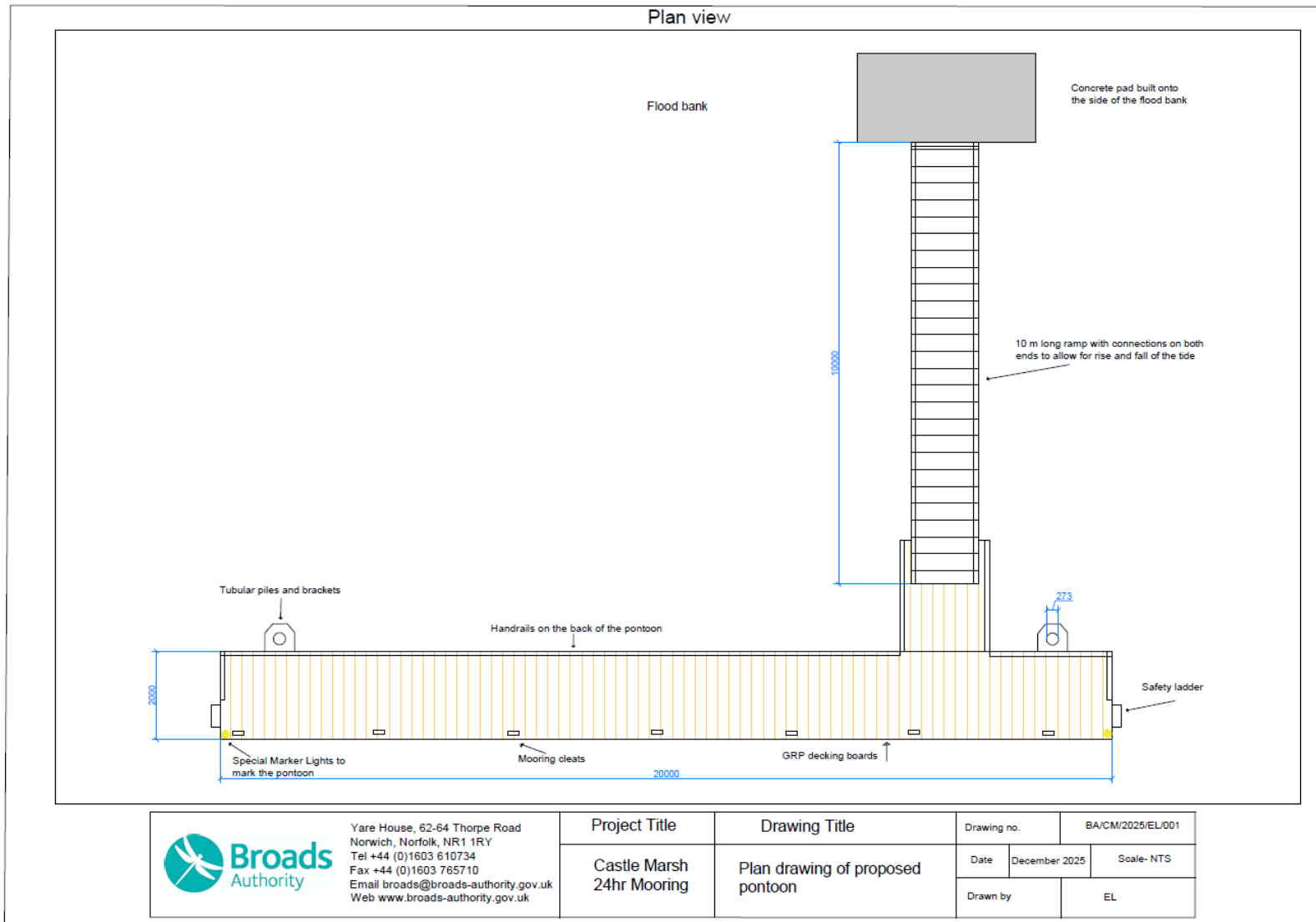
Site location plan: Castle Marsh - 24hr mooring

Scale: 1:15,000



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Appendix 2 - Plan of proposed pontoon



Appendix 4 - Castle Marsh 24-hour mooring location (with river widths)

Aerial image 2024: Castle Marsh - 24hr mooring

Scale: 1:300



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