Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2026

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Present

Tim Jickells – in the Chair, Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Gary Champion, Tom Daly, James Harvey, Martyn Hooton and Matthew Shardlow

In attendance

Natalie Beal – Planning Policy Officer (item 10), Jason Brewster – Governance Officer, Stephen Hayden – the Authority's Arboricultural Consultant (item 9), Steve Kenny – Development Manager, Kate Knights– Heritage and Design Manager (item 9) and Andrea Long – Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects Officer (item 11)

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.

Apologies were received from Tony Grayling and Leslie Mogford.

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 7 August 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

There were no applications for consideration.

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. BA/2026/0001/TPO Woodland To The North Of Long Dyke, Wayford Bridge

The Heritage and Design Manager (HDM) presented the report recommending confirmation of a provisional woodland Tree Preservation Order (TPO) for a mixed deciduous woodland, including oak, ash, willow, alder and birch trees with some areas of wet woodland, located to the north of Long Dyke, Wayford Bridge. A parcel of woodland at the eastern end of the woodland had been sold and the new owner had carried out significant felling and clearing of the understory. It was considered there was a risk of further felling in this area and the potential for further erosion of the woodland should other parcels of it be sold. The Local Planning Authority for the Broads had an obligation to serve TPOs on trees that were considered to be of amenity value and under threat. A Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders (TEMPO) assessment was performed by the Authority's Arboricultural Consultant (AAC) which indicated that the woodland met the criteria for a TPO to be served. A provisional woodland TPO had been served on 11 June 2026 which protected everything that could become a tree including the understory. The HDM indicated that this TPO would need to be confirmed by 11 December 2026.

Two objections had been received, one from the new owner and the other from the previous owner who continued to own the wider woodland.

Both objections had been received within the 28-day consultation period and as per the Authority's Scheme of powers delegated to the Chief Executive and other officers, paragraph 50 (ii), this matter would need to be determined by the Planning Committee. At the Planning Committee meeting on 7 August 2026, Members had considered a site visit to view the woodland to the North of Long Dyke and decided that, in this instance, a visit was not justified.

The HDM presented location maps showing the site in relation to the A1151/A149 between Wayford Bridge and Stalham, in relation to nearby properties including Wayford Bridge Hotel, Wayford Nurseries and the Maltings and in relation to Wayford Marina, the River Ant and Long Dyke. Aerial photographs were presented showing the site in 1946 when it was marshland, a present day image showing the site as woodland and another current image,

from a vantage point above Wayford Bridge looking south along the River Ant, showing the subject woodland to the east bordering Wayford Marina with woodland on the western riverbank. A number of photographs of the woodland were shown taken from various vantage points including from points along the access track off the A149 to Wayford Marina and from within the marina. A site plan was shown depicting the woodland, denoted as W1, with the new owner's triangular plot marked to its eastern end. A couple of photographs were shown of the new owner's site from December 2025 when the Authority first became aware of the felling. Various photographs taken in recent months were shown of the new owner's plot depicting some tree felling, clearing of the understory and the location of an unauthorised container.

The HDM explained that as well as the objections, three statements in support of the TPO had been received during the consultation period. All the representations and the associated responses by the Authority were detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

The HDM, in her assessment of the TPO, explained that the woodland was considered to have moderate amenity value being visible from the river as a wooded backdrop to the marina and through glimpsed views from the bridge, the A149, Nobbs Loke and Long Dyke. The woodland provided wider public benefits in terms of biodiversity, providing a habitat to a number of species and being of ecological value as noted in the letters of support. The woodland also provided an important function in terms of water absorption within a damp area. The woodland's condition was considered to be fair with the majority of the trees likely to have a long lifespan, making them suitable for protection. It was acknowledged that the site was prone to flooding at certain times of the year however the trees had grown within these damp and wet conditions. Wet carr woodland was a habitat common to the Broads which contained trees, such as alder, that were well adapted to these conditions.

As to the expediency of the TPO, it was clear from the substantial tree felling undertaken that there was a threat to the woodland. The woodland TPO protected everything that could become a tree and would protect the understory of the site. The aim of the TPO was to protect the woodland as a whole rather than small areas within it. The recommendation was to confirm the woodland TPO and for the TPO not to be modified.

In response to questions the AAC confirmed there was a good working relationship with the new owner and the TPO was being respected and that replanting would be required to ensure the site recovered. The AAC indicated that the new owner had commissioned a tree management plan which did recommend replanting. The AAC explained that the felling on the site had exposed other trees, making them more vulnerable to wind damage, which would require further trees to be felled to mitigate this risk.

The Chair read a statement from Alice Brown, one of the objectors, who was unable to attend the meeting. Mrs Brown noted that of the many people who experience the woodland, including people owning or living on plots in Long Dyke, those living on Wayford Marine, visitors to the boatyards and local residents, only three statements of support for the TPO had been received. Of these three statements, Mrs Brown believed that two of these statements came from the same person. She believed that the high percentage of dead, dying and

dangerous trees within the site rendered any management of the woodland impossible. Mrs Brown believed that raised ground levels and reduced drainage at Wayford Marine had resulted in greater water ingress into the woodland for longer periods which jeopardised its long term future. She felt that her land was already being used to mitigate the harms created by developments at Wayford Marine. The imposition of this TPO would provide further mitigation for Wayford Marine's destruction of a reed bed in 2023-24 contrary to planning regulations. Mrs Brown felt the Authority's TEMPO report was inaccurate having focused on the new owner's site and failed to address the flood damaged condition of the trees in the wider woodland.

The Development Manager (DM) read a statement from a solicitor operating on behalf of David Rothwell, the other objector, neither of whom were able to attend the meeting. The solicitor stated that Mr Rothwell had not sought to indiscriminately clear the woodland; his concern throughout had been the condition and safety of the trees. Since submitting the objection, Mr Rothwell had obtained an independent arboricultural assessment of the woodland. This report had identified genuine arboricultural and safety concerns and recommended specific management works, continued inspection and replanting. The solicitor noted that the Forestry Commission's inspection had identified that some of the previously felled trees were dead or decayed. Mr Rothwell refuted any allegations that he had undertaken any tree felling since the provisional TPO had been served. Mr Rothwell requested that the TPO was not confirmed. If the TPO was to be confirmed, he requested that the geographic extent of the TPO be revised to encompass the area required to address the identified risk. In either event, Mr Rothwell would work constructively with the Authority and follow professional arboricultural advice to ensure the woodland was safely and responsibly managed and replanted.

The DM read a statement in support of the TPO provided by Mr and Mrs Page, plot owners at Long Dyke, who were unable to attend the meeting. They believed that the new owner intended to extend his mooring into the marshland which would require additional tree felling to manage the right of way associated with the mooring. They believed a failure to confirm the TPO would risk further loss of trees on the site negatively impacting the flood defence, environmental protection and biodiversity provided by the woodland.

A Member asked about the possible planning issues at Wayford Marine raised by Mrs Brown. The DM explained that further investigation would be undertaken to confirm whether a breach of planning had occurred.

The Member asked for clarification regarding Mrs Brown's characterisation of the site largely consisting of waterlogged, dead and dying trees. The AAC explained that dead and dying trees were a normal feature of wet woodland habitats and they were an important part of the site's biodiversity. The presence of dead or dying trees was not necessarily an indication that the wood was in poor condition. If the owner wished to remove dead trees, the Authority could not control these removals but, in keeping with the TPO legislation, would ask for evidence to verify the condition of the trees.

Members asked whether there was any evidence to support Mrs Brown's claim that the site was subject to an increased frequency and duration of flooding. The AAC noted the evidence of flooding within the wood as shown by a line of debris deposited on the understory marking high water (as shown by a photo in the HDM's presentation). The tree species within the site, the majority being alder and oak, could survive this form of flooding and would adapt to any changes to the hydrology. There may be additional dying trees but subsequently more willow and alder would grow.

The AAC responded to Mrs Brown's assertion that the TEMPO assessment had focused only on the new owner's site by confirming that he had assessed the whole woodland when conducting this assessment.

A Member asked whether the claim, by the TPO supporters, that the new owner had other plans for the site was correct. The HDM explained that the Authority had not received any formal proposals regarding this site. If the new owner wished to increase his mooring basin for example, this would require planning permission.

Members noted the objectors' misconceptions that a TPO precluded any necessary tree works and prevented the removal of unsafe trees. Members acknowledged the amenity value of the subject site noting that it included wet woodland, a habitat unique to the Broads. Members recognised the need to protect the whole woodland and not to restrict the TPO to the plot under new ownership. A Member spoke of the indiscriminate felling undertaken and the example this set to any future owners if further plots of the wider woodland were to be sold. Members welcomed the additional protection afforded by the woodland TPO with its promotion of good woodland management from the existing and future owners of the site.

Matthew Shardlow proposed, seconded by Stephen Bolt

It was resolved unanimously to confirm Tree Preservation Order BA/2026/0001/TPO Woodland To The North Of Long Dyke, Wayford Bridge.

10. National Planning Policy Framework - 2026 version

The Planning Policy Officer (PPO) presented the report which provided a summary of the revisions associated with the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published on 17 August 2026.

The assessment undertaken so far had highlighted that the purpose of many existing topic areas remained unchanged. The topics were now referred to as policies and they had been assigned a specific reference number. A number of new areas had been included in the NPPF including Spatial Development Strategies and a list of evidence requirements required to support applications.

This was the third version of the NPPF to be released during the development of the emerging local plan. Under transitional arrangements, the ongoing examination of the emerging local plan would be assessed against the 2024 version of the NPPF. But the 2026 NPPF would need to be considered to ensure the new Local Plan policies were deliverable.

The new NPPF provided support to the emerging local plan in a number of ways:

- It supported water efficiency targets beyond those required by building regulations
- It provided greater emphasis on overheating than the 2024 NPPF
- It included stronger protection for peatlands and pubs than the 2024 NPPF
- It supported policy PUBDM48 on elderly and specialist housing needing to be in development boundaries
- It was generally supportive of the policy on rural exception sites
- It was consistent with a marketing period of 12 months, protecting tranquillity and biodiversity enhancements
- It referenced special qualities in the context of protected landscapes. The PPO added that the emerging local plan would be updated to refer to future iterations of the Broads Plan (where the special qualities were defined).

In other areas, the emerging local plan was not consistent with the new NPPF.

The new NPPF added a clarification to the use of Building Regulations M4(2) standard (accessible and adaptable dwellings) limiting it to major development which was defined as 10 dwellings or more. The emerging local plan referred to this standard in the context of all dwellings which was consistent with an ageing population and supported by census data. The PPO proposed not to update the emerging local plan but this issue might be discussed through the Examination.

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) target of greater than 10% was limited to specific sites in the new NPPF, it was not applicable area-wide as stated in the emerging local plan. As the new NPPF would take precedence, the PPO proposed to update the emerging local plan's BNG policy to be consistent with the new NPPF.

The emerging local plan had a single test for the loss of community services and facilities. The new NPPF included three discrete criteria; it was no longer needed or it would be replaced or alternative provision was available. As the new NPPF would take precedence the Local Plan would need to be updated.

The emerging local plan proposed a hierarchy of uses which needed to be addressed when converting a building. This hierarchy prioritised change of use of buildings and structures to employment, tourism (including holiday accommodation for short stay occupation on a rented basis), recreation and community above residential use. This hierarchy contradicted the new NPPF which allowed residential use where previously it was not permitted. What this meant for the emerging local plan was still being considered.

The emerging local plan required the location of gypsy and traveller sites to be well related to settlements i.e. to consider access to doctors, supermarkets, schools and other services. The new NPPF indicated that a location that is not well related to a settlement may still be appropriate if it addresses an unmet need. The PPO proposed that the emerging local plan

would maintain the existing gypsy and traveller site location criteria but it would be updated to request a justification, consistent with the new NPPF, when a location outside a settlement was proposed.

The Heritage and Design Manager had undertaken a comparison between the new and previous NPPF versions which had highlighted some technical changes regarding the use of historic buildings:

- The emerging local plan stated "Wherever possible, the [historic] building or structure should remain in the use for which it was originally designed". The new NPPF stated historic buildings should "maintain or secure a use consistent with their conservation".
- The emerging local plan proposed a hierarchy of uses when converting historic buildings. The new NPPF listed reuse of a redundant or disused building, including listed buildings, as one of the circumstances under which isolated homes in the countryside could be allowed.
- There was a minor word change required to replace "public benefits" with "benefits".

The emerging local plan would be updated to address these differences with the new NPPF.

The new NPPF provided little detail regarding renewable energy in contrast to the emerging local plan which provided a list of considerations. The new NPPF required sites for various types of renewable energy to be identified which was not the case in the previous NPPF version and consequently the emerging local plan. As these differences did not contradict the new NPPF the proposal was not to update the emerging local plan.

The new NPPF permitted some forms of new employment development and tourism development within rural areas whereas the emerging local plan confined these forms of development within development boundaries. The emerging local plan would be updated to address these differences with the new NPPF.

There was a minor word change for transport network which required "residual impact" to be replaced with "adverse impact" to match the new NPPF. The new NPPF required parking standards to be set within a development plan. The Authority presently defers to the parking standards set by the district or county councils and it was not proposed to change this.

Given that the emerging local plan had been submitted for examination, a Member asked for clarification as to when the changes indicated would be applied. The PPO responded that the Planning Inspectors had submitted 187 questions under the Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) phase of the examination. The Authority had to respond to all these questions and some of these responses would encapsulate the proposed changes to the emerging local plan arising from the Authority's assessment of the new NPPF. These responses would be the subject of the examination hearings planned for February 2027.

Members were disappointed that the new NPPF restricted BNG targets greater than 10% to specific sites given that 10% was a low target and the statutory obligations of the Broads Authority. Members asked whether there was any mechanism to express the Authority's aim

of 20% BNG wherever possible. The PPO would try to keep the 20% but she reminded Members that the new NPPF would take precedence.

A Member questioned whether the change in the wording of protected landscapes was meaningful. The PPO believed the impact could only be measured as applications were received in the coming months.

The Member asked whether the Authority could suggest a list of employment types for consideration within rural areas. The PPO would raise this with the Head of Planning for possible inclusion in MIQs.

A Member asked whether the new NPPF included a duty to cooperate. The PPO explained that this responsibility was now encapsulated by two policies: PM10 Maintaining cooperation between plan-making authorities and PM11 Demonstrating cooperation between plan-making authorities.

A Member asked whether the Authority should identify possible areas for renewable energy sites especially in the context of community energy. The PPO agreed that, as per the new NPPF, the Authority would undertake this investigation at the next revision of the local plan.

Members asked about British Sugar's decommissioning of the Cantley Sugar Factory and its impact on the local plan. The PPO confirmed that it was too early to reach any conclusions as there was a consultation. The PPO had been in touch with the Agent, but nothing had been confirmed. This will be a matter to discuss through the examination.

The report was noted.

11. Suffolk Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage Project update

The Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects Officer (NSIPO) presented the report which provided an update on the Suffolk Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage Project and the Authority's consultation response to the project's Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Submission. The NSIPO's presentation included a map of the pipeline corridors associated with this project and detailed maps focusing on the proposed pipeline near Somerleyton.

The project would provide an advanced water recycling plant near Lowestoft that would be capable of purifying up to 11 million litres per day. Once purified, the recycled water would be released into the River Waveney through an underground pipeline and outfall structure where it will mix with the river's natural flow. The river will transport this water to another proposed Essex & Suffolk Water advanced water recycling plant. There would potentially be two new drinking water storage reservoirs, one in Eye and the other near Saxmundham, to manage seasonal demands and ensure supply during dry periods.

The main focus from the Authority's perspective was the underground pipeline and outfall structure on the River Waveney near Somerleyton.

Given the scale of the work this was considered to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) which would be determined by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on behalf of the Secretary of State.

The Broads Authority would be a consultee in this process. Members of the Authority had previously been engaged in non-statutory consultations in October 2025. Since then, Essex and Suffolk Water and their consultants have undertaken further consultations with statutory consultees, with local authorities and local communities. In July 2026 the project announced their preferred options which was followed by the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping submission to PINS in August 2026. The scoping submission asked for an opinion on what the Environmental Impact Assessment should include. PINS engaged the statutory consultees, including the Broads Authority, to express their opinions before the end of September 2026. The Authority's response to this consultation can be found in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Authority was meeting regularly with Essex and Suffolk Water and separately with other local authorities engaged on this project.

The next milestone would be a public consultation mid 2027 in readiness for the Development Consent Order application to be submitted to PINS early/mid 2028.

In response to questions the NSIPO confirmed that the transporting of water using the river would improve the net river flow, that the water chemistry of the purified water would be assessed to ensure there were no adverse impacts on the river's biodiversity and that the Authority was engaged on assessing possible ecological impacts including possible impacts to peat soils.

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. The Development Manager explained the technical reason for an Enforcement Notice being served at 18 Long Dyke, Wayford Bridge to the incorrect owner. The owner appealed this notice which the Authority subsequently conceded, and the appeal was expected to be allowed by the Planning Inspectorate. This had no impact on the Enforcement Notice which had been appealed by the correct owner.

13. Decisions made by officers under delegated powers

The Committee received a schedule of decisions made by officers under delegated powers from 24 July to 25 September 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

The next meeting of the Planning Committee would be on Friday 6 November 2026 at 10:00am at National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall, 115-123 King Street, Norwich.

The meeting ended at 11:53am.

Signed by

Chair

Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests Planning Committee, 9 October 2026

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest
Tim Jickells on behalf of all members	9	Lobbied: Receipt of email from objector