

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Friday, 27 June 2025 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 9.30 am

**Committee
Members Present:**

Cllr P Heinrich (Chairman)

Cllr A Brown

Cllr P Fisher

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett

Cllr M Hankins

Cllr V Holliday

Cllr P Neatherway

Cllr K Toye

Cllr A Varley

Cllr L Paterson

**Officers in
Attendance:**

Assistant Director for Planning (ADP)

Development Manager (DM)

Senior Planning Officer(s) (SPO)

Planning Officer (PO)

Trainee Planning Officer (TPO)

Democratic Services Manager (DSM)

Democratic Services Officer (DSO)

1 CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how he would manage the proceedings.

2 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Batey, Cllr MacDonald, Cllr J Toye and Cllr Vickers.

3 SUBSTITUTES

Substitutes for the meeting were Cllr Adams (for Cllr Batey), Cllr Bayes (for Cllr Vickers) and Cllr Ringer (for Cllr J Toye)

4 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29th May 2025 were approved as a correct record.

5 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Ringer declared that in relation to item 9 he was predetermined and would therefore not take part in the debate and would abstain from the vote.

Cllr Adams declared that he would abstain from the vote in relation to both Comer matters (items 8 and 11)

8 CROMER - PF/24/2341 - ERECTION OF 5 COMMERCIAL UNITS FOR USES WITHIN USE CLASSES E(C)(I) - FINANCIAL SERVICES, E(G)(I) - OFFICES, E(D) - INDOOR SPORT, RECREATION OR FITNESS, B8 - STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION AT HOME FARM ENTERPRISE ZONE, HALL ROAD, CROMER, NORFOLK

SPO-RS presented the report and took the Committee through additional information that had been received from the applicant since the Committee last considered the matter, some of which had been received since the publication of the agenda. The SPO identified the changes that had been made to the application and the informal views that had been received from consultees including Highways (relating to proposed access changes), Landscape Officer (relating to the new planting scheme) and the Tree Officer. The updated recommendations were explained to the Committee- the recommendation was for refusal.

Public Speakers

Colin Robb- Cromer Town Council

Local Members

Cllr Boyle spoke in support of the application, noting the existence of commercial units at the premises, the shortage of available units in Cromer and the that potential tenants were already existing local businesses using local roads. Cllr Boyle stated she believed that the use was compliant with policies EC3 and EC5 and was pleased to note the improved access proposed. She noted that that area was well concealed and that the change would not be detrimental when compared to its current use.

Cllr Adams spoke in support of the application, noting the shortage of local premises and the fact that the existing site had not seen any issues with its use. He also referred to the changes to the application and that highways were now content with the access. He referred the Committee to the change to the speed limit in the area. He believed all outstanding matters could be dealt with by conditions and the benefits far outweighed the policy considerations.

Member debate

- a. Cllr Brown, Cllr Holliday, Cllr Toye, Cllr Fisher and Cllr Bayes expressed a need for further information including details of the economic benefits and the impact on businesses in the town through the sequential test. Cllr Brown proposed that the matter be deferred with the applicant being given 28 days to provide further information.
- b. Cllr Paterson and Cllr Hankins expressed the view that the Committee had sufficient information to make a decision.
- c. The ADP and the DM gave advice to the Committee, the ADP agreeing with the suggestion for a time limit for the applicant if the Committee was minded to defer and the DM suggesting to the Committee that to ensure a sound decision they needed to satisfy themselves that they had information on both sides of any matter to which they were giving weight.

Cllr Brown proposed and Cllr Holliday seconded that the application be deferred, with the applicant given 28 days to submit any further information, with the application being considered by the Committee at its August meeting.

IT **WAS RESOLVED** by 9 votes in favour, 2 votes against and 2 abstentions that

The application be deferred, with the applicant given 28 days to submit any further information, with the application being considered by the Committee at its August meeting.

9 LOWER BODHAM - PF/24/2705 - DEMOLITION OF WORKSHOP BUILDING AND ERECTION OF BUILDING FOR USE AS A LIVE/WORK UNIT, RECLADDING OF RETAINED STORAGE BUILDING, DEMOLITION OF OTHER STORAGE BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF CART SHED AT OLD SCARFE BROTHERS WORKSHOP, CHURCH ROAD, LOWER BODHAM, HOLT, NR25 6PS

The SPO-JS took the Committee through the presentation, the Committee was provided with information including the site location and plan, elevations and photographs of the site. The main issues for consideration, being the principle of development and the design, appearance and effect on character, were brought to the Committee's attention. The recommendation was for refusal.

Public Speakers

JP Ringer- Bodham Parish Council
Alice Kemp (Applicant)

Local Member

Cllr Ringer spoke in support of the application, believing that the application complied with the aims of the NPPF and seeks to re-use existing brownfield land, supports a rural business in the countryside and proposes an off grid sustainable development. He noted the existing condition of the site and suggested that the development would improve the site and whilst noting the large size of the proposed building believed the building would sit low in the landscape. He concluded he was of the view that the application was well designed and that the balance was in favour of approval.

Members debate

- a. Members debated the 2 main issues. Members including Cllr Fitch-Tillett, Cllr Holliday and Cllr Brown expressed concern over the size and mass of the building, with Cllr Adams, Cllr Varley and Cllr Bayes expressing general support, citing reasons including the re-use of a brownfield site and the applications sustainability credentials.
- b. Cllr Paterson suggested that the matter be deferred to allow the applicant to provide information as to how the building would sit in the landscape and consideration of reducing the height of the ridgeline.
- c. The ADP summarised to the Committee the views that he had heard them express, namely that the Committee appeared more comfortable with the principle of development but had some concerns over the scale and mass of the

building. The ADP outlined a number of options available to the Committee, including refusal, approval, deferral or a site visit, suggesting that if the Committee was minded to defer, he understood that this would be to allow the applicant to provide information on the impact of the development on the landscape (landscape impact assessment) and consideration of the height and scale of the ridgeline in particular. The Chairman confirmed this to be his understanding of the debate.

- d. Cllr Adams asked for clarification as to what was hoping to be gained by any deferral. The DM expressed his understanding that it would be to obtain information that would allow the Committee to make a decision on what amounted to an appropriate scale of building on the site.

Cllr Paterson proposed and Cllr Fitch-Tillett seconded that the application be deferred to allow the applicant to provide a landscape impact assessment and for consideration to be given to the height and scale of the ridgeline. A deadline to be provided to the applicant to allow this matter to be reconsidered at the August meeting.

IT WAS RESOLVED by 8 votes in favour, 4 against with 1 abstention that

The application be deferred to allow the applicant to provide a landscape impact assessment and for consideration to be given to the height and scale of the ridgeline. A deadline to be provided to the applicant to allow this matter to be reconsidered at the August meeting

The meeting adjourned at 10.55 and recommenced at 11.10 am

10 FAKENHAM - PF/24/2184 - ERECTION OF TWO BUILDINGS FOR USE AS A RESTAURANT AND FARM SHOP, AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING A SEPARATE WC AND BAR, TWO POLYTUNNELS, CAR-PARKING, PATHS AND ACCESS AT SALMONDS LANE, THORPLAND, FAKENHAM, NORFOLK, NR21 0HB

PO-IM presented the report and brought the viability report circulated after the agenda was published to the attention of the Committee. The Committee was provided with information including the site location and plan, proposals, elevations and site access. Further information was provided about the main issues being the principle of development and location, sustainability and impact on the highways network. The recommendation was for refusal.

Public Speakers

Angela Glynn-Mayor of Fakenham
Jack Spencer Ashworth (Applicant)

Local Member

Cllr Cushing spoke in support of the application. He gave the Committee a history of the business, starting as a “pop-up” and that he wanted to see North Norfolk flourish and this business would provide additional employment opportunities and important farm diversification. In terms of policies, he believed that the application did or could comply with SS1 and SS2. He noted the huge support for the application in the town of Fakenham from residents, through to local Councillors. He noted the recent approval of fast food outlets in the town and urged the Committee to make a

decision based on the greater good and approve the application.

Member Debate

- a. The Chairman, together with Cllr Paterson, Cllr Adams, Cllr Bayes, Cllr Hankins, Cllr Toye, Cllr Varley and Cllr Brown spoke against the recommendation, noting benefits of the development including important farm diversification, support from the local community, the need for rural business in rural areas, a pleasing design and the importance of the business for the farm sustainability.
- b. Cllr Ringer noted the issues and concern with the access for pedestrians and cyclists but did not believe that should prevent approval of the application.
- c. The DM noted the comments from the Committee and suggested that if they were minded to approve they may wish to consider whether they wished to ensure that the site didn't later develop into something they would not wish to see and how generally they may wish to control the development whilst benefitting the local economy.
- d. The ADP advised it would be possible to impose relevant conditions and create a link between the ownership of the farm and the development by way of a legal agreement, this would reflect the benefits that the Committee had raised in the debate and to which they were giving weight.

Cllr Fisher proposed and the Chair seconded the recommendation for **Refusal** of the application.

IT **WAS RESOLVED** by 1 vote in favour and 12 votes against

That the recommendation for refusal be rejected.

- e. Cllr Paterson suggested that the application be approved, noting the economic benefits of the scheme and following a request from the DM for clarification, confirmed that that it was noted that the development is outside policy but that the benefits outweigh that conflict.
- f. The ADP confirmed that his understanding was that the recommendation was that he be given authority to approve the application, subject to agreement of appropriate conditions and if necessary, a S.106 agreement, such conditions to include an ongoing link between the ownership of the farm and the business on the development site.

Cllr Paterson proposed, and Cllr Adams seconded that the ADP be given authority to approve the application, subject to agreement of appropriate conditions and if necessary, a S.106 agreement, such conditions to include an ongoing link between the ownership of the farm and the business on the development site

IT **WAS RESOLVED** by 12 votes in favour and 1 abstention

That the ADP be given authority to approve the application, subject to agreement of appropriate conditions and if necessary, a S.106 agreement, such conditions to include an ongoing link between the ownership of the farm and the business on the development site

The ADP left the meeting at 11.55

11 CROMER - PF/25/0724 - INSTALLATION OF 10 SHEDS (1.58M X 1.58M) ON TEMPORARY GARDEN PLOTS, ALLOTMENTS AT, CEMETERY, HOLT ROAD, CROMER

TPO-NW presented the report including providing the Committee with site location plan, photographs and details of the main issues. The recommendation was for approval.

Cllr Fitch-Tillett proposed and Cllr Brown seconded the recommendation that the application be approved subject to conditions detailed in the report and that the final wording of conditions and any other considered necessary be delegated to the ADP.

IT WAS RESOLVED by 12 votes in favour with 1 abstention

That the application be approved subject to conditions detailed in the report and that the final wording of conditions and any other considered necessary be delegated to the ADP

The ADP returned to the meeting at 12.05.

12 MHCLG CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The ADP provided the Committee details on the proposed response to the Government Consultation paper regarding the national scheme of delegation. He identified to the Committee that under the proposals there would be 2 types of planning applications, Tier A applications which would have to be dealt with by Officers and Tier B applications which would be dealt with by Officers unless the APD and the Chair agreed to send it to Committee. He noted that all applications heard today by the Committee would be considered Tier A.

Cllr Adams and Cllr Brown, noted the proposals with concern and following a question from Cllr Fitch-Tillett the ADP confirmed the government timescale for introducing this new scheme of delegation was this year.

13 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The DM presented the report to the Committee noting a slight dip in performance relating to non-major applications which was partly a result of the issues previously surrounding nutrient neutrality and associated delays.

14 APPEALS SECTION

The DM presented the report to the Committee and noted the delays with the Planning Inspectorate were particularly acute relating to enforcement decisions.

The meeting ended at 12.35 pm.

Chairman