

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Thursday, 20 August 2026 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 9.30 am

Committee Members Present:	Cllr P Heinrich (Chairman)	Cllr R Macdonald	(Vice-Chairman)
	Cllr M Batey	Cllr M Hankins	
	Cllr P Neatherway	Cllr K Toye	
	Cllr L Vickers		
Substitute Members:	Cllr J Toye		
Officers in Attendance:	Development Manager		
	Solicitor		
	Democratic Services and Governance Officer		
	Senior Planning Officer (SPO-AW)		
	Senior Planning Officer (SPO-RA)		

23 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A Brown, Cllr P Fisher, Cllr A Fitch-Tillett, Cllr V Holliday, and Cllr L Paterson.

24 SUBSTITUTES

Cllr J Toye was present as a substitute for Cllr A Brown.

25 MINUTES

The minutes of the Development Committee meeting held Thursday 16 July were approved as a correct record subject to two amendments relating to the Local Members comments for application PF/26/0688 (Fakenham) made by Cllr L Vickers.

1. To amend the wording in the first sentence to reflect that her fellow Ward Member, Cllr J Punchard was also supportive of the application.
2. Include additional wording in the 4th Paragraph to read ‘ Cllr L Vickers reflected that in recent years Fakenham *was undergoing a renaissance*, and had welcomed many independent, enterprising businesses’

26 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Development Manager informed the Committee that subsequent to agenda publication the government had published a revised NPPF. This had come as a surprise to many Local Planning Authorities who had anticipated a new NPPF in September following the summer recess. The Development Manager advised that the NPPF was a material consideration for decision making, and that the 2026 revisions had affected delegated decisions and was a relevant material consideration to applications coming to Development Committee.

The Development Manager assured Members that two of the three applications before Committee today were not impacted. The Scottow application was impacted to some degree by the new NPPF, and the Case Officer would offer advice on the implications when the item was presented to Committee.

Alongside publication of the new NPPF, the government had also published the 2026 Housing Delivery Test, which reflected historic house building over the three-year period and compared it against target levels. In North Norfolk 54% of homes had been delivered, falling short of national targets. As the result fell below the 75% threshold, there was a requirement to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development as detailed in the new NPPF.

Training was in the process of being arranged for Members regarding the NPPF and other changes to planning.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

28 POPPYLAND - PF/25/0902 - INSTALLATION OF SECTIONS OF NEW FOOTPATH, ALONG WITH UPGRADE OF SURFACING OF EXISTING AREAS USED AS PERMISSIVE FOOTPATHS TO CREATE A SINGLE NEW CONNECTED WALKWAY WITH REST STOP AREAS AND INTERPRETATION BOARDS (PART RETROSPECTIVE), FOREST PARK, NORTHREPPS ROAD, NORTHREPPS, NORFOLK

Officer's Report

The Case Officer reintroduced the application previously considered, and deferred, by Development Committee on 18 June 2026, and confirmed that the revised NPPF did not materially change the Officer recommendation.

The proposal had been amended following deferral to address concerns relating to privacy and overlooking by residents along the 400m section of footpath adjacent to the properties of Bracken Avenue. The application now proposed planting of a native species of thorn hedge along this section, which would mitigate the impact of the footpath. Officers accepted that, in the short term till the hedge was established, there would remain a level of overlooking and loss of privacy to nearby residential properties which would negatively impact residential amenity. However, Officers concluded that the longevity and extent of the impact would be limited by the proposed boundary treatments, distances to dwellings, frequency of use and the transient nature of the pedestrian activity.

Discussions had taken place to explore the possibility of moving the path; however, this was considered to be economically unviable given the footpath was now in situ.

The SPO-AW took the Committee through the Officer's report and presentation, affirmed the sites' location, provided details of the footpath and rest stop construction, and offered images in and around the site.

Officers concluded that, on balance, the amended proposals would positively mitigate the limited and short-term amenity harm. The scheme would provide an enhanced piece of green infrastructure for the area, providing a new pedestrian link and encouraging outdoor recreation. Further, development would deliver wider

strategic benefits associated with long term resilience of the costal path network, where coastal erosion represents an ongoing challenge to sections of the existing route. Officers therefore recommended approval of the application subject to conditions.

Public Speakers

Sarah Petch – Objecting
Will Woodrow – Supporting

Committee Debate

- a. Cllr J Toye recognised residents concerns, however affirmed that ‘right to a view’ was not a planning consideration. Cllr K Toye reflected that many people lived in properties where one of their windows immediately looked onto a street and could in turn be looked into.
- b. The Development Manager advised that the question of land use should be what the impact of the change was. Officers recognised that the footpath would be a new introduction which would impact residential amenity and cause some degree of harm. Officers concluded, however, that the benefits arising from the scheme outweighed the identified harm.
- c. Cllr K Toye asked whether any anti-social behaviour had been observed on the path. The Case Officer advised there was none so far as she was aware.
- d. The Committee welcomed health and wellbeing benefits the footpath would bring, with Cllr J Toye keen to promote active travel and alternative methods of transport which would diminish the reliance on cars. Cllr R Macdonald and Cllr L Vickers sought assurances that the footpath would be used by pedestrians and would not be used by dirtbikes.
- e. The Applicant was invited to address the Committee. The Applicant confirmed the intention of the footpath was to be for pedestrians and not for motorbikes, the scheme was designed as such with gate restrictions, though these were designed in such a way as to remain wheelchair accessible.
- f. Cllr Vickers expressed sympathy for residents along Bracken Avenue, and asked if there had been a pre-existing footpath, or unofficial trail previously in situ. The Case Officer advised she was not aware of what the prior arrangements may have been.
- g. Cllr M Hankins sought assurances over fire risks, given the recent heat waves and changes to the UK Climate, the SPO-AW detailed the layout of the scheme, and confirmed that the section of footpath being discussed was adjacent to a woodland.
- h. Cllr J Toye proposed acceptance of the Officers recommendation, seconded by Cllr K Toye.

RESOLVED

That Planning Application PF/25/0902 be APPROVED in accordance with the

Officers recommendation.

29 SCOTTOW - PF/25/2438: CONSTRUCTION OF TWO-STOREY DWELLING (RETROSPECTIVE) AT SCOTTOW BARN, NORTH WALSHAM ROAD, SCOTTOW, NORWICH, NORFOLK

Officers Report

SPO-RA introduced the Officers report and recommendation for refusal. The application had previously been before Development Committee on 30 April 2026 and was deferred to enable a review of Enforcement Team action and involvement in the site, as well as outstanding Nutrient Neutrality issues. The Enforcement Case report was detailed on pages 32 and 33 of the agenda pack. The Case Officer confirmed that on the 10 August, the applicant had made an enquiry and received a quote from Norfolk Environmental Credits (NEC) in relation to mitigating the effects of the development on the River Bure SAC.

The Case Officer advised that the 2026 revised NPPF was a material consideration, and noted correspondence received from the agent, circulated to the Committee on 18 August. The agent highlighted policy considerations relating to sections S3 and S5 of the NPPF.

By virtue of the new Housing Delivery Test, it was accepted 54% of the Local Planning Authorities requirement was delivered over the rolling three-year assessment period. Officers did not consider the application could be assessed against policy S51J, as Scottow was not considered a settlement in policy terms, by virtue of Scottow not having a settlement boundary per the settlement hierarchy, nor was it considered a predominantly built-up area, and so did not comply with the criteria for S51J.

However, SPO-RA acknowledged NPPF section S51D could be engaged, and that the land could be considered previously developed or brownfield by virtue of the previous building. The revised NPPF stated that *'Only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements, as set out in the following list. These should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework' 'The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential);'*

The 2026 NPPF removed wording of 'less than substantial harm'. The Conservation Officer opinion was that, on balance, a replacement dwelling would be marginally preferable to the loss of a building without a replacement. A replacement building would reinstate a connection of support back to the primacy Grade II listed building, albeit starting again rather than the result of conservation.

Public Speakers

Stephen Fuller – Scottow Parish Council
Jason Parker – Supporting

Committee Debate

- a. Cllr L Vickers thanked the Case Officer for his report. She supported the

views expressed by the Parish Council that the barn had fallen down and should be replaced. She agreed the proposal was preferable to the alternative.

- b. Cllr J Toye and Cllr P Neatherway were minded to go against the Officer recommendation for refusal, though stressed the importance that the Council should not, in granting permission, look to encourage the dismantling and demolition of heritage buildings. They did not wish for this application to set a precedent. Cllr J Toye sought clarification of the designation of the site in the settlement hierarchy and reflected that in order to meet the housing targets, house building in the designated countryside was to be expected.
- c. The Development Manager advised the site lay within the designated countryside per the Local Plan. The Local Plan sought to deliver growth in sustainable locations in accordance with the Spatial Strategy. The Development Manager reflected that this was a very finely balanced application. The Conservation and Design Officer agreed that a replacement building would be preferable to the alternative, but it was noted that a modern replacement would not replicate what was lost, as modern buildings must comply with modern regulations, therefore a like for like replacement could not be achieved. The Development Manager clarified that, in policy terms, the proposal was considered a new build in the countryside as the former building had fallen down. There was no insinuation that the collapse of the building was deliberate.
- d. The SPO-RA advised the plans submitted were identical to those submitted and obtained permission in 2024. He noted that matters relating to Nutrient Neutrality was not wholly resolved but had progressed from when the Committee last heard the application. If the Committee were minded to approve the application, the historic conditions could be applied.
- e. The Development Manager advised conditions relating to the use of materials could be applied, i.e. use of existing bricks; approximately 8000 original bricks had been saved and cleaned with the Applicant indicating that they intended to reuse these in external facing falls, or preservation of any other historic material.
- f. Cllr M Hankins considered the Housing Delivery Test results tipped the balance in favour of the development.
- g. The Chairman proposed and seconded approval of the Officers recommendation in order to compel a vote.

THE VOTE FELL

- h. The Development Manager advised, if the Committee were minded to approve the application, this would be subject to matters of Nutrient Neutrality being resolved.
- i. Cllr C Rouse proposed acceptance of the application, seconded by Cllr M Hankins. Wording of final conditions to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning.

RESOLVED

That Planning Application PF/25/2438 be APPROVED subject to conditions. Final Wording to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.55am and resumed at 11.09am.

- 30 FULMODESTON - RV/25/2839 - VARIATION OF CONDITION 8 (WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN) OF PLANNING PERMISSION PF/21/3458 (ERECTION OF TWO ONE-BED TREE HOUSES WITH EXTERNAL WORKS AND SERVICING (TO INCLUDE BIOROCK DRAINAGE SYSTEM AND SOLAR PANELS) - REVISIONS TO THE WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN AT BROWNS COVERT, HINDOLVESTON ROAD, FULMODESTON.**

Cllr C Rouse and The Solicitor to the Council left the meeting following the adjournment.

Officer Report

The Development Manager introduced the Officer report and recommendation for approval. He outlined the sites' location and planning history.

As detailed in the Officer Report, application PF/21/3458 was considered by Development Committee in January 2023. That application was considered before Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) was a requirement, and proposed the delivery of 6000% BNG, which was secured by condition. The Applicant sought to vary the condition to reduce the BNG requirement to the minimum 10% which would enable them to apply for grant funding.

Having spoken with the Applicant, the Development Manager clarified that the Applicant did not wish to renege on their BNG commitment, but they simply wished not to be formally tied to the commitment in order to achieve grant funding. The intention was for the wider benefits to be achieved on the site, and the grant funding would better enable these to be delivered.

Public Speakers

Delaval Astley – Supporting

Local Member

Cllr M Hankins expressed his support for the application and affirmed that he had received no objections to the scheme from his parish councils.

Committee Debate

- a. Cllr J Toye agreed with the proposal and commented that more would likely be achieved as a result of grant funding. Cllr L Vickers agreed with was an excellent proposal.
- b. Cllr R Macdonald proposed, seconded by Cllr J Toye, acceptance of the Officers recommendation for approval.

RESOLVED

That Planning Application RV/25/2839 be APPROVED in accordance with the Officers recommendation.

31 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Development Manager introduced the Officer's report and spoke positively of the councils timely decision making, and appeal record.

32 APPEALS SECTION

The Development Manager outlined the Officer's report and noted 3 appeals decisions had been received, all of which were dismissed. The enforcement appeal at Cromer was also dismissed.

33 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

The meeting ended at 11.25 am.

Chairman