



Planning Committee North

Members are invited to a **Meeting of the Planning Committee North** to be held in the Conference Room, Riverside, Lowestoft on **Tuesday, 20 January 2026 at 2.00pm**

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Members:

Councillor Sarah Plummer (Chair), Councillor Toby Hammond (Vice-Chair), Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Paul Ashton, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Graham Parker, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Geoff Wakeling.

An Agenda is set out below.

Part One – Open to the Public

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| 1 | Apologies for Absence and Substitutions | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest
Members and Officers are invited to make any declarations of interests, and the nature of that interest, that they may have in relation to items on the Agenda and are also reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the Meeting if it becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is considered. | |
| 3 | Declarations of Lobbying and Responses to Lobbying
To receive any Declarations of Lobbying in respect of any item on the agenda and also declarations of any response to that lobbying. | |
| 4 | Minutes - November 2025
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2025. | 1 - 52 |
| 5 | Minutes - December 2025
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2025. | 53 - 82 |

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7	DC/25/3322/FUL - Land to the rear of Larks Rising, Easton Lane IP18 6SS and The Warren, Easton Lane, Easton Bavents, Reydon IP18 6SU ES/2670 Report of the Head of Planning and Building Control	100 - 119
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Part Two – Exempt/Confidential	Pages
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There are no Exempt or Confidential items for this Agenda.

Close



Chris Bally, Chief Executive

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Interested parties permitted to speak on an application are a representative of Town / Parish Council or Parish Meeting, the applicant or representative, an objector, and the relevant ward Members. Interested parties will be given a maximum of three minutes to speak and the intention is that only one person would speak from each of the above parties.

If you are registered to speak, can we please ask that you arrive at the meeting **prior to its start time (as detailed on the agenda)** and make yourself known to the Committee Clerk, as the agenda may be re-ordered by the Chairman to bring forward items with public speaking and the item you have registered to speak on could be heard by the Committee earlier than planned.

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Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Planning Committee North** held in the Conference Room,
Riverside, on **Tuesday, 11 November 2025 at 1:00 PM**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Paul Ashton, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Toby Hammond, Councillor Graham Parker, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Sarah Plummer, Councillor Geoff Wakeling

Other Members present:

Councillor Mark Packard

Officers present: Jamie Behling (Senior Planner - Development Management), Chris Bing (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Joe Blackmore (Planning Manager (Development Management)), Katy Cassidy (Democratic Services Officer), Lorraine Fitch (Democratic Services Manager), Matt Gee (Senior Planner), Jo Hooley (Legal and Licensing Services Manager), Steve Milligan (Principal Planner (Development Management), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Lucille Reed (Assistant Enforcement Officer), Isabel Rolfe (Political Group Support Officer (GLI)), Alli Stone (Democratic Services Officer), Ben Woolnough (Head of Planning and Building Control)

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

At the start of the meeting the Chair read out the following announcement:

The Council recently undertook an independent review of the Planning Committee through the planning advisory service. Overall, this was positive and it included some recommendations to improve how committees functioned. One of these was to enable East Suffolk Council solicitor presence at meetings to support the process. The recommendations will be taken forward over the coming months by a task and finish group. As a trial of that we have the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Legal Services Manager in attendance to assist and observe how this may be implemented going forward.

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ashdown declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6; he would be speaking as a Ward Councillor and would recuse himself from that item.

Councillor Ashton referred to agenda items 9 to 14 and declared that he was a resident of Yoxford, but not residing in a location that meant he was consulted on any of those applications.

Councillor Beavan declared that he was Ward Member for Southwold, relating to agenda items 7 and 8.

3 Declarations of Lobbying and Responses to Lobbying

Councillor Plummer declared that she had been lobbied on agenda items 9 to 14 from three different residents. She had acknowledged the emails but not responded. It was confirmed that the rest of the Committee had received the same lobbying emails and had not responded.

Councillor Ashton declared that he was invited to attend Yoxford Parish Council meeting on 3 November 2025. He didn't take part in the meeting; he was asked a question about the planning process by the Chair which he was unable to answer. Whilst people there were raising views about the applications, these were not directed at him, therefore he did not treat this as lobbying.

Councillor Ashton had been lobbied by Councillor Ewart, who had written to him and the Leader of the Council raising concerns about agenda items 9 to 14. She invited them both to join a meeting with the Case Officer and the Planning Manager. He took part in the meeting and observed that Councillor Ewart's points were about both the process of determining applications and about the applications themselves. Throughout the meeting he observed, trying not to take part in discussions regarding matters of the planning applications, but he did engage in terms of some of the process matters. He declared that Councillor Ewart's lobbying had had no undue influence on his issues and he was at the meeting with an open mind about all the applications.

4 Minutes

On the proposition of Councillor Plummer seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 East Suffolk Enforcement Action - Case Update

The Committee received report **ES/2570** of the Head of Planning and Building Control which provided a summary of the status of all outstanding enforcement cases for East Suffolk Council where enforcement action had been sanctioned under delegated confirmed powers up until 27 October 2025. The Assistant Enforcement Planner advised that there was one update to the report that was received relating to item B2, Part Land East of Mariawood. The appeal had very recently been determined and there would be a further update at the next Planning Committee. The Chair invited questions from the Committee.

Councillor Ashton asked to receive an update offline from that appeal to take to the next meeting of the Henstead with Hulver Street Parish Council meeting.

The Chair thanked the enforcement team. On the proposition of Councillor Plummer, seconded by Councillor Pitchers it was

RESOLVED

That the outstanding enforcement matters up to 27th October 2025 be noted.

6 DC/25/3049/FUL - Land Adjoining 20 Manor Park Road, Corton

Councillor Ashdown, who was speaking as Ward Councillor, moved to the Public Gallery for this agenda item.

The Committee received report **ES/2577** which related to application **DC/25/3049/FUL**. This application sought planning permission for the erection of a self-build two storey chalet style dwelling and all associated works. The application was before Planning Committee North, having triggered the Member Call-In process.

A presentation was given to the Committee by the Senior Planner, who was the case officer for the application. The application site was just on the edge of the settlement of Corton. The application site had previously gained consent under the current Local Plan. There was not any significant changes in terms of the material planning considerations, but that application had lapsed.

An aerial photograph was shared showing the site's proximity at the end of Manor Park Road and on the end of the settlement boundary. It was considered to be sustainable location. The Senior Planner noted the material considerations relating to the previous consent for a dwelling on the site as well as the current tilted balance approach of paragraph 11 in terms of providing sustainable development (albeit minor with just one single dwelling). Photographs of the site were shared to give context, showing the access point and how it fitted within the road. The block plan, and proposed design were shared, which in officer's opinion was compatible with the character of the street scene. Floor plans were shown, which officer's considered gave a good level of resident' amenity and an extensive back garden. The material planning considerations and key issues were summarised as:

- Principle
- Design
- Highways and Access
- Landscaping and Trees
- Drainage
- Ecology
- Flood Risk

Drainage was one of the main issues raised by the Parish Council and residents. It was understood from concerns raised there was a damaged sewage pipe within the road. Officers had requested Anglian Water's comment on that. They provided no real comment other than it was a maintenance issue. There wasn't a material reason to

refuse this planning application, Anglian Water had raised a slight technical objection on capacity constraints within the Corton area but set out that an acceptable condition would be that the applicant worked with Anglian Water to find a suitable approach.

It was recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report.

There were no questions from the Committee Members. The Chair invited the first of the public speakers, Corton Parish Council, to speak.

The Parish Council Representative told the Committee that the objections were due to the concerns with the drainage system in Manor Park Road. Somewhere in the system the soil pipe and surface pipe had been connected causing foul to go in the surface and vice versa. This was affecting surrounding properties where flooding occurred to the rim of the toilets after heavy rainfall. He told the Committee that serious rainfall would cause the houses to flood. There had been drainage issues for many years, with both Anglian Water and Suffolk Highways refusing to acknowledge, he wished that someone would fix it. He added that having a new property built before issues were solved would make matters worse, with more surface water coming off hard surfaces into the main drainage, which currently was land where the rainwater soaked away. The Parish Council Representative said this would increase the chances of raw sewage entering adjacent properties via a toilet pan. He concluded that once the drainage system was properly repaired then there wouldn't be a problem, and they wouldn't be objecting. Anglian Water needed to solve the issue and then they would be happy to have a new neighbouring property.

The Chair invited questions to the Parish Council Representative.

Councillor Hammond thanked the Parish Council Representative; he was interested to hear about the inappropriate plumbing in Manor Park Road and agreed that rainwater going into sewers was a common issue and could be serious. He agreed that more hard surfaces would make things worse, and noted that a lot could be done with every individual property, making sure that there were soakaways etc, rather than downpipes etc plumbed straight in. He asked if any efforts had already been made to reduce the volume of rainfall going into the surface.

The Parish Council Representative replied that there had been regular visits from Anglian Water, who had used cameras and equipment to explore what the issue was. Part of the drainage had collapsed, and they had not been able to use the camera to find out where that went to. He said, they didn't fix it; they just left it at that. He added even if they had soakaways, the water must go somewhere, it could go under the bungalows' foundations and cause damp issues.

Councillor Hammond asked if any individual household measures had been applied to slow down the flow, eg water butts. The Parish Council Representative said they had experienced issues with a neighbour's water butt, it was never emptied and overflowed. He said they have to be drained regularly, and the water would just go back into the drainage system again.

Councillor Beavan noted that one of the planning conditions was that there should be an agreed drainage plan with Anglian Water. He asked the applicant if he would be happy to have a say in the outcome of that plan, and he confirmed that he would.

Councillor Ashton asked if it was possible that this application having a condition dependent on an Anglian Water drainage plan could force a resolution for everybody. The Parish Council Representative hoped it would and reinforced that they would love to have the applicant as a neighbour.

The Planning Manager said this would be picked up within the Officer Clarification after public speaking.

There were no further questions for the Parish Council Representative.

The Chair invited the Applicant's Agent to speak. He told the Committee that he welcomed the content of the report and the recommendation. The application was for a self-build for the applicant and his family. It would be a chalet style 3 bedroom dwelling, in an infill plot within the cul-de-sac. There were already similar dwellings. This would have a spacious garden; it was in a sustainable location and was therefore acceptable in principle. Planning Permission was previously approved in 2019, albeit now expired. The design and layout, following officer discussions, was now of a slightly smaller scale, designed to not cause loss of neighbour privacy, the overall height was just over 6 m high. There had been no objections by highways. Waste bin storage was provided. There was a generous garden with additional trees and shrubs, providing biodiversity contribution. The Applicant's Agent noted that foul drainage issues had been raised and that was part of the reason the application was before Committee. The applicant had agreed to a condition requiring a foul drainage scheme to be approved by Anglian Water prior to the commencement of any development. He told the Committee that it should be noted that Anglian Water did have a duty to ensure that the mains drainage could serve existing and proposed properties. He added regarding surface water drainage, there would be soakaways employed for the site, it would not go into surface water drains and mains sewer. He concluded that the Committee would be aware of the need to maintain a 5 year housing supply for the Local Plan area, and developments like this one cumulatively contributed to the housing supply. The application was compliant with local and national plan policies and he requested that the Committee supported and approved the application.

The Chair invited questions to the Applicant's Agent.

Councillor Beavan noted the issues with Anglian Water and asked whether the applicant would help the community by giving the Parish Council a veto on the drainage plan. The Applicant's Agent responded that it was necessary to find a solution for the site itself. He would have concerns giving them a veto, as Anglian Water were the experts. He was happy for them to be consulted as part of the condition and was keen to seek a system that worked for the site and the rest of the road.

There were no further questions for the Applicant's Agent.

The Chair invited the Councillor Ashdown, Ward Member, to speak.

Councillor Ashdown said he had been Ward Councillor for Corton since 2019 and in that time Mr S, the resident of the adjoining property, had been before the Parish Council several times complaining of the sewage coming back through his toilets and flooding his garden. He was not the only resident in Manor Park Gardens who had suffered the same issues. Mr S, had met with Anglian Water on site for investigations, where it had been noted that there was a fault, a blockage, but they were unable to say where it was. Councillor Ashdown said they were now seeing changes in the climate, there was more rainfall which was much heavier and faster, causing flooding. He said adding another property would create more surface water irrespective of how the drainage was set up. Corton was not against the application, he was not against it either, however he could not accept that people within the ward had to suffer the risk of sewage flooding when it could be avoided. He said Anglian Water had not cooperated satisfactorily and a condition was required that Anglian Water rectified the situation, for the residents of Manor Park Road. It was necessary to ensure that not only this dwelling, but the rest got the treatment that they deserved.

The Chair invited questions to Councillor Ashdown.

Councillor Ashton noted they were talking about a condition for a drainage plan being agreed on this property, he suggested it felt unfair and possibly unlawful to place it on this property when it applied to the rest of the street. Councillor Ashdown responded that it would benefit the rest of the street as they would have to investigate and do the necessary repairs. They needed to take every opportunity to ensure that the work was carried out, he didn't have an issue with the new dwelling but didn't want them to suffer the same drainage issues.

There were no further questions for Councillor Ashdown. The Chair invited Officer clarification.

The Planning Manager noted that the key issue for the community was drainage. As an Officer group, they had sympathy for that. He had recently attended a meeting with the local MP in Kessingland where similar issues had been discussed. There was a lot of attention to the role of Anglian Water and the work that they are doing and need to do. He noted the influence from Members that may need to occur outside of the planning process to rectify those issues.

Councillor Ashton alluded to the lawfulness of a planning condition that deals with the wider area and the Planning Manager said that he was correct to be concerned. There were six tests that needed to be met for a planning condition. They had to be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise, and then reasonable in all other aspects. The Planning Manager said it would not be reasonable to apply a condition to fix the wider area problem to this one single dwelling. It would be ensured that this property if it was consented and built would not make the situation any worse. But it couldn't be promised that the work in discharging that condition would solve or identify further problems in the wider area that could then be fixed. It may tease out some issues and it might put some pressure on to some extent in terms of concluding that condition. Ultimately, as the agent had set out, the approach from the applicant might be an onsite solution which would be acceptable from a planning perspective. The Planning Manager

concluded he was very sympathetic to all the raised concerns here, they were aware and were working on it, but the application was limited to the condition in report.

The Chair invited any final questions to the Officers.

Councillor Beavan heard that some planning could be refused due to lack of supply of fresh water. He asked if the lack of ability to get rid of foul water should be treated the same. In terms of the drainage plan he accepted that they didn't want laypeople looking at it and giving an opinion, but asked could an independent expert look at it to make sure it wasn't exacerbating the situation for the neighbours? The Planning Manager replied that he didn't think so as it was infrastructure owned by Anglian Water as the statutory provider, and it wasn't clear if it would be possible for an independent consultant to carry out the suggested review. The Planning Manager suggested that the findings were shared with the Parish Council for local knowledge and feedback. Ultimately Anglian Water had the statutory obligation. The Officer's view was that there wasn't grounds to refuse and with real care and attention provided to condition it could be approved.

Councillor Beavan asked whether as part of the drainage condition, the applicant could be required to commission an independent review? The Planning Manager replied that it didn't seem proportionate as an absolute requirement of the condition. He added, if Members were minded to support, that could be encouraged and there could be an informative on the planning permission to engage with Anglian Water and secure their approval. It couldn't be embedded as it didn't meet the six tests outlined earlier.

Councillor Gee noted the report stated that the drains and sewers were in a terrible state. She asked who was responsible for the maintenance of drains and sewers, was it Anglian Water or a private individual. If it was Anglian Water, surely they should be held accountable. The Planning Manager confirmed that it was all Anglian Water infrastructure and their responsibility to maintain it. They were working with Anglian Water in all sorts of ways but they had housing targets to meet as well, so it needed to be proportionate. This was a one dwelling proposal and it was not the job of this applicant or developer to solve the situation, it was just about making it no worse. Councillor Gee replied, without the new dwelling residents were suffering an intolerable situation with possible overflowing, she asked if pressure could be put on Anglian Water to uphold their statutory duties.

The Head of Planning and Building Control drew the Committee's attention to the fact that this was highlighting an issue that was being faced across the whole region with Anglian Water and nationally with other water companies. He had identified the interventions of Anglian Water in the corporate risk register, and this would be discussed in December's meeting of Overview and Scrutiny. The problem was arising in other applications too, both within network issues and also water treatment centres. Developers have the right to connect, and they pay the water company to create that connection. Water companies were receiving that revenue and should be investing in the network and identifying improvements and implementing them. He noted that as a Council, they should be placing pressure, but they have to maintain a planning process to develop the homes that are needed.

Councillor Hammond had every sympathy with the neighbours having experienced similar issues himself. He said if he was the applicant, he would be proposing an off-grid sustainable solution and the planning condition alluded to that. He noted that the applicant did not want to make it worse for the neighbours and the neighbours would welcome them. He asked whether the applicant should make a commitment to an off-grid foul water and drainage system that wouldn't connect to sewage, or was the condition being left open which would cause the neighbour's concern. The Planning Manager confirmed that the condition should require the details of a strategic foul water strategy with either option available as part of an Anglian Water post-development enquiry.

Councillor Ashton felt that both options had to be kept open to enable the best outcome. He could see from the applicant's perspective, off-grid might be more suitable, but it was in everyone's interest that both options were available.

The Planning Manager assured Members that given the issues that had been raised at the Committee, whatever solution was presented through the planning condition, there would be close attention from Officers who would engage with Anglian Water. He agreed with Councillor Ashton that one option could not be ruled out, but the applicant had to supply the correct detail, supported by independent information if necessary.

Councillor Pitchers asked if they could go back to the applicant, but that was not possible as not procedurally correct.

Councillor Gee referred to the report where Anglian Water stated that they were not happy to have a connection, she felt they were passing the buck. The Chair said they talked about an engagement, so solutions can be considered.

In order to move things forward, the Planning Manager said these were only summary conditions, and if members were minded to approve they could grant authority to approve the application subject to the final wording of the foul water drainage condition being agreed with the Chair and Vice Chair. This would enable Members to in principle agree the approach and have sight of the final wording to proceed with the decision.

The Chair agreed that was a sensible suggestion and proposed accepting the recommendation that the exact wording of the condition comes through the Chair and Vice-Chair to agree.

Councillor Beavan said if that meant they could get independent advice on whether it would work for the neighbours or not then he would support, but without that, he would not approve.

The Planning Manager said it was not appropriate to seek that level of independent input, with the wording of the condition. He assured members it would be thorough; they would expect to see a detailed submission from the applicant. If there was any doubt in Anglian Water's response, then he was confident that the Case Officer would continue to work with them through the discharge process.

Councillor Ashton was not convinced that the issue lied with independent assessment, he said the issue was Anglian Water stepping up and meeting their obligations. They were obliged to enable a connection. He felt an MP meeting regarding Anglian Water should be encouraged with the residents of Corton.

It was proposed that the recommendation be amended as follows:

That Members grant authority to approve the application subject to the final wording of the drainage condition to be agreed in writing with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning Committee North.

This revised recommendation was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Hammond and

RESOLVED

That subject to the receipt of the updated Tree Protection Plan, final wording of the drainage plan and confirmation of the ecological mitigation measures, and to the conditions set out below, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

Conditions:

1. Standard 3 Year condition
2. Approved Plans
3. Material Details
4. Contamination 1 - Site Investigation
5. Contamination 2 - Remediation Strategy
6. Contamination 3 - Implementation of Remediation
7. Contamination 4 - Validation Report
8. Contamination 5 - Unexpected Contamination
9. Ecology - Mitigation
10. Ecology - lighting design strategy for biodiversity
11. Ecology - Bird Nesting Method
12. Ecology - CEMP
13. Highways - Access Construction
14. Highways - Parking
15. Highways - Cycle and EV Details
16. Tree Protection
17. Custom/Self Build Requirement
18. Construction Management Plan
19. Surface Water Implementation
20. Strategic foul water strategy

7 DC/25/0179/FUL - 17 Market Place, Southwold

The Committee received report **ES/2578** of the Head of Planning and Building Control which related to planning application **DC/25/0179/FUL**. The application sought

planning permission to convert and extend part of a Grade II* listed building into a new small dwelling. The application was referred to the Planning Committee by the referral panel. A presentation was given to the Committee for this agenda item and agenda item 8 (DC/25/0567/LBC) for the associated Listed Building Consent by the Senior Planner, who was the case officer for the application.

A site location plan and aerial photograph was shared with the Committee to show the property in context with the High Street. The planning history was outlined to the Committee, highlighting the residential and commercial aspects of the building. The proposed block plan for the new residential dwelling was shared along with the existing and proposed floor plans. The existing and proposed elevation were shared. The building was proposed as a contemporary addition to the grade II* listed building with metal seam wall cladding, in contrast to the existing elevations. A 3d image was also provided to give more detail of the proposal. Various photographs of the site were shared showing the site in context. The Senior Planner noted that Mews Cottage was used as a holiday let rather than permanent accommodation, lessening the impact of the new extension. The main material planning considerations were summarised as:

- Design – impact to street scene, conservation area and listed buildings. Comments received from Historic England were not overly supportive, citing inappropriate materials used for the location. However, the Council’s in-house heritage officers considered it be acceptable, adding an interesting quality to the area.
- Residential amenity of neighbours - Impact on residential amenity to neighbours – it was deemed to be acceptable, it was far enough away from neighbours, with good enough distances between windows in an area where you would expect dense development
- Loss of parking – not given to any particular unit, currently parking was used for commercial, not a particularly useful space, therefore deemed acceptable due to its sustainable location in town centre

The Senior Planner referred to the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan and shared the details for the Committee on the design policy compliance with the national design guide. They concluded there was some openness to providing something new considering it was modest and didn’t harm the wider street scene or conservation area itself.

It was recommended that the application – DC/25/0179/FUL be approved subject to RAM’s contribution and compliance with the conditions set out in the report.

The Chair invited questions to the Senior Planner.

Councillor Beavan understood that they didn’t want faux traditional in an area but felt that the design seemed to harm the street scene and asked for justification for the design.

The Senior Planner confirmed to Councillor Beavan that the new building would be subject to the residential clause in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Senior Planner noted that they had received comments on the design from both Historic England and the East Suffolk Council Design and Heritage team. He had

reviewed these comments, seeking reasoning for support. He shared the comments from the Principal Design and Heritage Officer, noting the subjective nature of design and that people would form their own opinions. Councillor Beavan said he would come to his own conclusion.

The Chair invited the first of the public speakers from Southwold Town Council to speak.

The Southwold Town Councillor said it was great to see 17 Market Place being refurbished, it was a lovely building for the High Street. He agreed with Councillor Beavan that the design was subjective. He read out of Historic England's report that it was a lumpen building being put over another building. It reminded him of a box container that you would receive in Felixstowe docks. The Town Council didn't believe the design met the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan. He said it was unfortunate that it would be holiday lets, and the argument about effect on more permanent residents was important. The road was a narrow lane, which was difficult to access and the parking issues which came with lettings was a current problem. The plan was to remove a garage, creating more parking issues. He believed it would affect the amenity of those in Mews cottage and take existing light away from several other neighbouring properties. It was within a Conservation area, with lots of Listed Buildings in that street. He felt it was a step too far, and against the principles of Southwold Neighbourhood Plan; they had taken a lot of time and effort to preserve the Conservation area that they lived in.

The Chair sought clarity on the residential status of the property, as both holiday lets and permanent residence had been cited. The Case Officer confirmed that the new property would have the condition that it had to be occupied by permanent residents.

The Southwold Town Councillor was pleased to hear that as the rest of building did not have that condition applied.

Councillor Beavan commented if it was a permanent residence then permanent parking would arrive. The Southwold Town Councillor said there was no parking and it was removing a garage. It was in a very busy street in the centre of town, a difficult congested area where there was a health and safety issue as people walk into town and are faced with cars parked on the High Street and lots of traffic.

There were no further questions for the Southwold Town Councillor, the Chair invited the applicant's agent to speak.

The applicant's agent told the Committee that the Planning and Listed Building Consent applications were for the conversion and extension of part of the former bank building in the centre of Southwold. There had been a succession of approvals, with lots of work done by the applicant, all to a high standard. This was the last application. The heritage and parking factors were well balanced by Officers. There was extensive planning history; a succession of smaller works culminating in a very good site. This was the final application to secure the building and its future. He appreciated the Town Council comments, their opinions were not shared with professional consultees, therefore it was for the Committee to balance. He clarified that the site was not inside any defined employment area and did not require marketing or any other striking of

the balance. The consideration was if it was of good design. He said the difference between the old and new was clear, it illuminated the old heritage quality and was complimentary to the historic fabric of the building. This was where the line of the Design and Heritage Officer had been drawn and this was balanced by the officers. He said the Committee should take comfort that the scheme was well conditioned. It was a primary residence all bound by time limit approved plans and the necessary mitigation for RAMS contributions. This followed on from other previously approved applications, and he encouraged the Committee to support it.

There were no questions for the Applicant's agent.

There was no further Officer clarification or final questions from the Committee Members. The Chair asked the Committee to debate the application.

Councillor Pitchers realised that design was subjective; he noted that Southwold Town Council referred to it as a shipping container, he said it looked like a Nissen hut. He added it was rare that he disliked an application on the grounds of design. He could see no problems with parking or replacing or altering the building, but he felt the design was dreadful and spoilt the area, he would take a lot of convincing to change his mind.

Councillor Beavan agreed with Councillor Pitchers, he said it was harmful to the street scene.

Councillor Ashdown concurred, he was not averse to modern design in the appropriate place, but he did not think this was the appropriate place, he would prefer to see something more suitable as a roof line

Councillor Gee fully supported what had been said, she likened it to lego bricks, and said it was unattractive design. She agreed with Historic England that it was unsuitable. She felt it could have been designed in the style that Mews cottage was, in keeping with the courtyard appearance, but this was something totally different and she was totally against it.

Councillor Ashton was not particularly for or against the design. He added a note of caution that they had an officer recommendation that was different, backed by a heritage assessment. He thought ahead to an appeal and what the planning inspector might say, he may vote to support it.

The Chair added that they also had the Historic England report which was giving an adverse opinion and that was where the judgement was between those two views.

Councillor Ashton said he was minded abstaining but would make a decision.

The Chair said her personal view was with Historic England.

Councillor Ashdown said he often disagreed with what Historic England said, but in this case, he was happy to agree with them.

Councillor Hammond agreed with what has been said and thought the design could have been different. He pointed the Committee to Historic England comments, encouraging the applicant to reconsider a more sympathetic design. He said if they came back with something more in keeping that would be favourably met by him.

Councillor Wakeling said he loved the juxtaposition between modern and old, which can showcase the old by having modern design, but he felt the roofline was dire, he would welcome a modern design if it was more sympathetic.

Councillor Pitchers recommended that the application was refused on the grounds of the NPPF (section 8).

The Planning Manager reminded the Committee that they needed a Planning Policy reason for Refusal, and the Chair reminded the Committee that they had Policy documents to hand.

The Planning Manager told the Committee that in moving to refuse the application, all applications had to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicated otherwise. In this case the Development Plan was the Neighbourhood Plan and Waveney Local Plan. He suggested they referred first to the Neighbourhood Plan (SWD 6), and then the Waveney Local Plan (paras 8.29, 8.37, 8.39). He added the NPPF was also important in respect of designated heritage assets and harm to those. He would expect to see Members referring to those policies, identifying where the proposal contradicted them and in doing so identifying a level of harm arising to designated heritage assets. The Head of Planning and Building Control emphasised the importance of paying attention to section 7 of the committee report.

Councillor Beavan sought clarification on some of the policy references and the Chair asked for the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan to be displayed on the screens. Councillor Beavan asked if there were policies about street scene or harm to the street scene.

The Planning Manager advised the process for the Committee Members to work through, taking the design first and how that conflicted with the Neighbourhood Plan policy, how that interacted with heritage assets, listed building and the conservation area.

The Chair led the Committee through the policies that were most relevant to their decision. The Planning Manager reminded the Committee to look at the impact on the heritage asset as well as design. The Head of Planning and Building Control added they could also refer to the sections of the Committee report regarding Historic England.

Councillor Pitchers also considered that paragraph 212 and 213 of the NPPF applied to their decision.

The Planning Manager advised Members how to quantify heritage harm. Substantial harm was very rare, this application was looking at the less than substantial harm category, and whether that was that outweighed by public benefit – this would be what members needed cover in a refusal reason.

The Chair referred to the Head of Planning and Building Control's comments and directed members to the Historic England advice in the report. "Little justification for this design approach as a conventional way of extending the building." Councillor Beavan noted that Historic England did say there would be significant harm to the conservation area in the report.

Councillor Wakeling added that Policy WLP 8.37 said proposals for development should seek to conserve or enhance the heritage assets and their settings. For him, it didn't enhance it at all, it was detracting from it because it was not sympathetic design, as your eye goes straight to that, rather than the rest of the street scene.

The Planning Manager summarised the Members discussion to date, the refusal reason being that design was judged to be out of keeping with the street scene, the materials proposed were unacceptable and poorly related to the context. They wouldn't be sympathetic to the context and would cause harm to designated heritage asset (conservation area and setting of the listed building). It is contrary to WLP 8.37, 8.29 neighbourhood plan SWD6 and that the Harm arising as historic England identified, was on the less than substantial scale and not outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

The Planning Manager confirmed that they were only referring to the FUL application at this point, and when referencing the harm to the significance of the listed building, it was in respect of its setting.

The Chair checked that the Committee was happy with the Planning Manager's summary.

Councillor Gee referenced the Historic England comments in the report, and it was agreed that this was covered.

On the proposition of Councillor Beavan, seconded by Councillor Ashdown it was

RESOLVED

that the application be **REFUSED** for the following reasons.

- Design out of keeping with street scene contrary to SWD6 and WLP8.29
- Materials are unacceptable and poorly related to the context
- WLP8.37 not sympathetic and harms the conservation area and setting of LBS
- Harm arising contrary to NPPF paragraph 213 & 215 and not outweighed by the public benefits.

8 DC/25/0567/LBC - 17 Market Place, Southwold

The Committee received report **ES/2579** of the Head of Planning and Building Control which related to planning application **DC/25/0567/LBC**. The application sought listed building consent for the conversion and extension of part of a Grade II* listed building into a new small dwelling. The application was referred to the Planning Committee by the referral panel. A presentation was given to the Committee by the Senior Planner, who was the case officer for the application.

The Senior Planner informed the Committee that this application related to the works to the building itself, listed building consent application did not take into consideration things like neighbour amenity or parking.

A series of slides were shared with the Committee showing the history of the site, the block plans, existing and proposed block and floor plans, the existing and proposed elevation and a 3d image of the proposed site. Photographs of the rear of the site showed where the work was proposed. The Senior Planner told the Committee that as it was adjoined to the Listed Building, it was therefore listed in itself and required the listed building consent.

The material planning considerations were summarised as:

- Design – impact to street scene, conservation area and listed buildings.
- Residential amenity of neighbours.
- Loss of parking.

It was recommended that the application was approved subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The Chair asked for clarity on which parts of the application needed to be looked at when considering listed building consent. The Planning Manager confirmed that a listed building consent only dealt with physical works or alterations. He drew the committee's attention to the final paragraph from Historic England in the report. The key focus was the significance of the building as a designated heritage asset and whether the scheme fitted with it.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee.

Councillor Gee asked as the previous application had been refused, was it not superfluous to discuss the listed building consent as there wasn't a project to apply it to. The Planning Manager said it was an application that had been submitted, it had different considerations and different conditions, there could be a situation where you could grant listed building consent when the wider scheme was not acceptable. His advice to members would be there would be a risk in granted listed building consent, when planning consent has failed, but they should listen to public speakers, debate and clarification.

The Chair invited the representative from the Southwold Town Council to speak, they were not available online, so the Chair moved to the Applicant's Agent to speak.

The Applicant's Agent told the Committee it was difficult to follow up, following the refusal of the full application. He asked that this application was considered today, the applicants had worked tirelessly with the Heritage Officers to get to a point where there was an agreement between officers and the applicant, leading to the design that was put forward. He recognised there was disagreement and professionally respected that. It was a committee overturn, and he thought there should be the opportunity for the applicant to consider the next steps whether that was resubmission or appeal. He asked that a procedurally sound decision was made.

There were no questions for the Applicant's Agent.

Councillor Beavan was still unclear on what the effect would be on voting for or against this item. The Planning Manager said that the two applications could not be split. It was likely that the Committee would reach the same conclusion for Listed Building Consent. There would be a slight difference in how policy was referenced and framed in respect of a refusal reason. Speaking fairly, he said it would be a risk for the Council to refuse planning permission and grant Listed Building Consent when the Committee had identified works were unacceptable. He was happy to assist the Committee with direction to the relevant policy considerations. He added as this was just LBC, the Committee might want to refer to historic England recommendation in consultation response to assist with recommendation.

The Chair referenced the historic England representation for the Committee.

The Planning Manager asked the Committee, via the Chair, to reflect back on paragraph 215, noting it would be consistent with the planning application where members identified that harm arising wasn't outweighed by public benefits.

The Planning Manager also advised Members that they may wish to reference Section 66.1 of the Planning, Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act (the Act) – as a decision taking committee, they had the statutory duty to preserve the significance of listed buildings and their special interest.

Councillor Beavan agreed with the Planning Manager.

The Chair confirmed that the Committee should do what Historic England were saying and asked for clarity of what was required.

The Planning Manager, summarised what Members had been saying and reflected on Historic England's comments and suggested that the reason for refusal would be that the scheme was judged to be contrary to NPPF paragraphs 212, 213, 215 with no public benefits outweighing the harm arising and it would fail to preserve the significance of the listed building, contrary to section 66 of the Act.

The Planning Manager asked if the Members had been looking at local plans, neighbourhood plans and whether they had other considerations to include.

Councillor Pitchers asked if Section 72 .1 of The Act needed to be referenced. The Planning Manager confirmed it did not.

On the proposal of Councillor Beavan, seconded by Councillor Wakeling it was

RESOLVED

That the Listed Building Consent application be **REFUSED** For the following reasons:

As a result of the design approach there would be harm to the significance of the listed building, contrary to the NPPF, paragraphs 212, 213, and 215 and section 66 of the Planning, Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990.

9 DC/24/2468/FUL - Hotel - Cockfield Hall, Station Road, Yoxford, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3ET

The Planning Manager told the Committee that there had been several late representations received, and many members of the Committee had received direct requests to defer the applications that were before the Committee. He confirmed that those letters were taken very seriously, and he understood that relatively late in the process there had been an influx of comments and interest from local residents. He explained that the Case Officer would set out the context of the consultation process that had been undertaken to date as part of their presentation, some of which was carried out by the applicant team prior to submission and also during the application process. The application had been in the system for a long time with the statutory determination dates dating back to 2024. The Planning Manager confirmed that he understood the scale of the application and that there had been lots of documentation to review; the officer position was that there had been ample opportunity to carry out that review during the process and the publication of that committee report was the conclusion rather than another opportunity to engage with written representations. He noted the benefit of the public meeting being held to consider the applications where there was the opportunity for public speaking and representation that was important to the process. He notified the Committee that presentation materials from both the community and the applicant were received after the cut off deadline as outlined in the public speaking procedures and therefore it was not possible for it to be presented at the meeting.

The Planning Manager handed over to the Senior Planner who was the Case Officer for the applications.

The Committee received report **ES/2571** of the Head of Planning and Building Control which related to planning application **DC/24/2468/FUL**. The application sought planning permission for the conversion of Cockfield Hall to a hotel (C1 use), to include partial rebuild of existing buildings alongside the sensitive extension of the Main Hall, and removal of ancillary structures in the immediate setting. This also included full details of car parking required to support the hotel use. The application was referred to the Planning Committee following the call in process as the application was deemed to be of significant public interest.

The Senior Planner outlined the order and grouping of the presentations that would be shared with the Committee for the Cockfield Hall applications. The presentations were to be grouped as follows:

- Items 9 and 10 – DC/24/2468/FUL and DC/24/2469/LBC would be presented together.
- Items 11 and 12 – DC/23/4864/OUT and DC/23/4866/FUL would be presented together.
- Items 13 and 14 – DC/23/4867/FUL and DC/24/1567/LBC would be presented together.

The Senior Planner told the Committee that all 6 applications formed part of a larger master plan approach for Cockfield Hall Estate, which comprised a heritage and landscape scheme including a variety of accommodation types. The centrepiece was the conversion of the Grade 1 listed Cockfield Hall. There was also the construction of woodland and lakeside lodges and farmsteads with the associated lakes. The overarching aim was to provide significant landscape and ecological benefits. All 6 applications were called to Committee from the former Vice Chair of Planning Committee North at the time due to the public interest in the applications.

The Statement of community involvement (SCI) was shared with the Committee which highlighted the extent and timings of the community involvement carried out. The Senior Planner noted that whilst it was not compulsory to carry out that level of involvement, it was encouraged by the NPPF. This highlighted that a thorough consultation had taken place prior to submitting the application with the community, the statutory consultees and East Suffolk Council.

The Senior Planner said that some of the objections related to EIA development and whether the application fell within EIA regulations. The planning statement highlighted that in 2023 a screening opinion was sought by East Suffolk Council. This was responded to confirming that this wasn't EIA development, details of which can be seen online, available since 2023.

The timeline of applications was shared with the Committee, highlighting the consultation period. The main reason for the delays was to allow time for the Cockfield Hall application to be ready for submission, to enable them to all be determined together. The timeframes shown for each of the applications highlighted the opportunities for comment that were available prior to the applications being determined.

The Senior Planner noted the suggestion that insufficient independent assessment reports had been carried out; he confirmed that all statutory consultees had been consulted and had commented on the applications. These consultees included the Environment Agency, Historic England, Suffolk County Council, Lead Local Flood Authority and Highways Authority. In addition, the highly experienced East Suffolk Council Specialist Services team had commented on the proposals.

A series of slides were shared showing the extent of the consultation carried out in accordance with their community involvement for each of the applications. This showed the Committee where they were sent to and the areas where objections were received from.

The Senior Planner explained the site location plan and layout plans for agenda items 9 and 10 to the committee, highlighting the listed buildings in the courtyard which could be a future application for tourism accommodation and the area for the car park which would be encompassed within the application. Both areas were situated within the conservation area and the registered listed parkland.

The location plan for the second pair of applications, agenda items 11 and 12 was shown to the Committee, highlighting the outline application and north lake. This also

included the change to the access drive and the provision of the cycle and walking path to join onto the A12.

The location plan for the final pair of applications, agenda items 13 and 14 for the West Lakes and associated Listed Building Consent was shared with the Committee.

A slide showing an aerial view of the Masterplan was shared with the Committee. The Senior Planner highlighted that this showed the full Masterplan submitted with the application and also included some applications outside of the proposal, such as the Griffin Public House (already determined) and the nursery site which would be a future planning application. Within some of the plans there were some aspects of the Masterplan which are subject to future applications.

The Senior Planner continued with the presentation, focusing on agenda items 9 and 10, the hotel and listed building consent for conversion of Cockfield Hall to c1 hotel use.

The site location plan was shared showing the location of the listed buildings. An aerial view of the estate and Cockfield Hall was shown, along with a map showing the extent of the Yoxford conservation area and its relevance to the application. The listed parkland boundary was pointed out and its similarity to the conservation area.

The plan for Cockfield Hall itself was shown, the main part being the reconstruction of the southwest wing, a single storey block providing a service building and garden room extension. There would be some development to come forward in the future such as the development of the walled garden and a proposed spa facility in the woodland area.

The Committee was shown a photo of the east side of Cockfield Hall along with the 1950's Curtis Green extension to the southwest elevation, following bomb damage, and a photo circa 1900 of how the building stood prior to that.

As was apparent at the site visit, the Principal Design and Heritage Officer had commented significantly on the application. In addition, Historic England had been significantly involved in the application and pre-application stages. The proposed extension was not seeking to replicate but provide traditional interpretation of exceptional quality. There was also a conservation strategy which outlined the finer details of the restoration of the building.

The existing and proposed northwest elevations were shared, covering the service block element, the colonnade and the garden room extension. Historic England had only made one slight design change which was to change a door to a window on this elevation. This demonstrated the high level of pre-application engagement which had taken place.

Various photographs of the site visit were shared.

Various elevations of the application were shown including:

- The Service Courtyard

- Proposed northeast elevations.
- Proposed basement, ground floor plan and roof plan.
- Proposed first floor 2nd floor and attic.

The view through the gatehouse towards the great hall, which would be the principal entrance to the hotel, was shown, along with the proposed reception plans, as explained by the Principal Design and Heritage Officer at the Site Visit.

The Senior Planner said that one of the main concerns from objections received was relating to noise, particularly from events. He noted that generally hotels did have ancillary events such as weddings and there had been a noise impact assessment carried out.

A slide giving a summary of the noise impact assessment and the nearest noise sensor receptors was shared with the Committee. The Senior Planner confirmed that Environmental Protection Officers had assessed this and were satisfied with the assessment. He noted that there had been discussion regarding marquees and noise, but this did not form part of this application.

The car park layout plan was shared with the Committee, noting the concern from the Parish council and Historic England due to the scale of the car park which was for 195 spaces. The slide identified that this was for staff, overflow and wider master plan parking. Both Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council Landscaping Teams were satisfied that it had been well designed and sat comfortably within the parkland. As the parking was away from the Grade 1 listed building, Historic England were satisfied that there would be no adverse impacts on the heritage asset.

The material planning considerations and key issues were summarised as:

- Principle of development
- Heritage impact and optimal viable use
- Design
- Landscape Impact/Impact on trees
- Neighbour Amenity
- Ecology
- Transport
- Drainage

It was recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the report, and for the completion of a Section 106 agreement for RAMS payment and to secure the permissive path.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his presentation and invited questions from the Committee.

Councillor Beavan asked what noise neighbours would expect to hear at 11pm at night. This was deferred to the applicant's acoustic engineer to respond.

Councillor Hammond asked the Senior Planner to bring up the slide showing the Curtis Green extension. He understood that the officers had steered applicants to not create

a facsimile of what was there before. He asked the Officer to elaborate on the idea of the different phases and the ongoing evolution of the building. The Senior Planner responded that there had been discussions with Historic England and the Principal Design and Heritage Officer; they were understanding and supportive of modern contemporary design but felt it would be difficult to successfully complete due to the nature of the building. He said that the proposed design was a good balance, it looked different, but you could also appreciate the existing building and how the extension tied in with it. He noted that the architect was at the Committee and able to give further detail.

The Head of Planning and Building Control gave another example, referring to brickwork and whether historic bricks should be replicated. He said this was the wrong approach, what should happen is the right type of brick should be used but in a modern form so people can differentiate between components. This would be done sensitively.

Councillor Ashton asked if there had been discussions with the applicants regarding the noise management plan and specific details. The Senior Planner confirmed that there hadn't been yet, this would come later as part of the design consideration.

The Chair invited the first of the public speakers, the objector to speak.

At this point Councillor Ewart raised her hand from the public gallery. The Chair advised that there was to be no interruption from the Public Gallery. Councillor Ewart continued to say that she was unclear on the procedure. The Chair clarified that they were currently hearing public speaking relating to Agenda item 9. She clarified the order that the public speaking would take.

The Objector told the Committee that he was speaking on behalf of residents affected by the scheme in Yoxford. He said the proposals were large scale and ambitious, not fully formed and not yet compliant with the policies of the local plan or NPPF guidelines, especially relating to heritage, as Cockfield Hall was a vitally important Grade 1 heritage asset. He said that Yoxford Parish Council had withdrawn their support for scheme and were united in their view that the application should be denied or deferred today for further information, explanation and compliance to be presented to the planners. He said for this application to stand policy scrutiny, an established need for the development as it stood must be fully proven. It was not for the village to show that the need wasn't established, it was for the applicant to prove that it was. He said this could not be the case as the applicant already owned 2 similar establishments, close by, both of which were currently advertising availability through reseller sites. He said it wasn't good enough that planners relied on an unofficial balance of scales that this requirement could be ignored in favour of an interpretation that benefited the redevelopment of Cockfield Hall. He said that the Parish Council would explain how this application misclassified Cockfield Hall entirely, and the Committee would hear more on that from the District Councillor. He referred to an appeal case in Shropshire, where the inspector dismissed the appeal for 10 shepherd's huts for wedding accommodation due to harming the significance and setting of Grade 2 listed Delby Hall. He said with this in mind the Committee should be minded to dismiss the application outright, or as an alternative they should as a minimum defer it.

There were no questions for the objector. The Chair invited the Parish Council representative to speak.

The Parish Council Representative said she was a recently retired professor of hotel and resort management. She asked that the application was deferred as the proposed use did not fall within a C1 hotel classification as stated and the material impacts for the actual use had not been properly assessed. The applicant had described the proposal as a C1 hotel use, but the evidence clearly showed this was not a public hotel, it was intended to be used as a private event and wedding venue accessible only to guests for exclusive use. There would be no public accommodation, no day to day bookings of individual rooms and no walk in trade. This means that it did not meet the definition of a hotel under C1 which required availability to the general public for overnight stays. What was being proposed in planning terms was a material change of use from a residential property to an events and function venue more accurately sui generis or mixed use commercial. She said that distinction was critical because the impacts of an events venue including large gatherings, a capacity of 400 guests, over 30 events a year and amplified music, late night activity, marquees lighting, catering operations and frequent vehicle movements were far more intensive than those of a genuine hotel. The associated noise and light pollution particularly from evening functions would affect the tranquillity and nearby residents. Heritage England were not satisfied with the car park size and continually asked for justification. By classifying this as a hotel the applicant avoided stricter scrutiny that a change to a full events or mixed use venue would attract. This was not a minor technicality it goes to the heart of whether the proposal had been lawfully and fairly presented to the council and the public. She urged the committee to defer the application until a proper assessment was made under the correct use class.

The Chair invited questions to the Parish Council Representative.

Councillor Hammond asked the representative to expand on her view that it was not a hotel, he asked where that assumption was from. She replied that they got that assumption from the number of events talked about, the number of guests, the size of the property and other properties where you could only hire the whole house. There was no evidence it would be available to book per night like a hotel should be. All the evidence pointed to it being an events and wedding venue. She said they didn't find out about guest capacity or number of events until they looked at the noise assessment report, it was not available elsewhere. She had concerns for the residents about noise, there could be music until 11 or 12 at night. There was nothing to show it was for transient guests, which is what a hotel should be. In the noise assessment report, it said that the venue would be reserved for those event guests. These would be very large events, lasting for 3 or 5 days either a wedding or corporate event. She said she had put all that together and concluded it was not a public hotel, she felt the only way they could turn up and ask for a room for the night was if the person hiring the whole hotel allowed you to take a room.

The Chair invited the applicant to make their representation.

The applicant told the Committee that Cockfield Hall was the centrepiece of a proposed masterplan. He outlined the consultation that had taken place with statutory and community consultees. He said that the statement of community involvement set

out the significant level of consultation that occurred ahead of the planning submission in July 2024, this was with both community and statutory consultees. This included formal public consultations at Yoxford village hall in September 2022 and June 2023 across 5 days and attracting 414 members of the community. He said 71 comments were received at or after the event, which were included in their statement of community involvement, these comments were all responded to where details were left.

The proposals had been in place for over 2 years, during that time changes were driven through design development with East Suffolk officers and Historic England, they had received limited feedback on the proposals for new hotel. This was reflected in the ESC consultation responses; there were no representations made between July 24 and November 24. He said the late representation in objection from Yoxford Parish Council the previous week, was a change from the unanimous support in September 2024. In that time there had been further submissions in respect of minor elevation changes, further rationale on car parking strategy, drainage modelling, and further modelling on the entrance road. The applicant said they were unclear why the change of representation response had been made.

He said that Cockfield Hall was Grade 1 listed and warranted the highest level of protection. Their proposals had received no statutory objections. Cockfield Hall was in need of significant investment; it was purchased in 2014 and was on the market for a considerable time. It was no longer viable as a dwelling house due to the extent of required refurbishment; a hotel was the most viable use to restore and retain it. It was proposed to have a 16 bed hotel with a public restaurant. The layout had been carefully considered to function separately or together. It could be hired as a function space if so requested. This had been designed so that it could be achieved without impacting the day to day running of the hotel. The impacts had been tested as a precautionary measure, considered by statutory consultees, who had no objections.

The Chair invited questions to the applicant.

In response to Councillor Ashdown, the applicant confirmed that the restaurant would be open to the public. He said this was a slight change in the typical Wilderness Reserve model. They had considered what they had in their portfolio, and it was intended to operate as a hotel with a restaurant.

Councillor Beavan asked if the hotel would be public as well, the applicant confirmed it would be open for room bookings.

Councillor Ashton couldn't see any data about frequency/size of events etc and asked if the applicant could share that with the Committee. The applicant said their acoustic consultant was available to answer any noise questions. He told Councillor Ashton that the way they had approached the application was to undertake a noise impact assessment recognising the type of use they were looking at. Its planned use was as a hotel and a public restaurant; therefore, potential functions were likely. As such they had modelled any noise assessment on that to make sure the village would be protected from noise dispersion. It was modelled on a worst case scenario (using potential thresholds) of maximum of 30 events with maximum of 400 capacity, this was an absolute upper limit. The assessment also assumed worse case conditions such as a

downwind taking noise into the village. It assessed everything to make sure it was robust and met all of the policy requirements.

Councillor Ashton raised the following concerns:

Section 2.1.2 talked about people noise and residents in the vicinity would already experience noise from people in the area. He said in Yoxford the area most at risk for noise would be the east side of the high street, north of Mulberry Park. Those properties didn't experience noise from people currently.

He noted the location of the receptor point on the footpath from the side of Horners to a view of Cockfield Hall– that location would be picking up noise from the road, which wouldn't be the case from those properties described. The choice of the receptor location didn't make sense, he said it would make more sense to have the noise receptor nearer to the properties.

The assessment assumed behaviour of guests, describing 5 people talking loudly with raised voices at any one time. That felt implausible to Councillor Ashton with an event of 400 people.

The applicant asked his acoustic consultant to respond. He responded as follows:

People noise – they had looked at predictions of a hypothetical worse case and taken the sound to all different receptor points and compared to other noise in the area whether there would be people there or not. The Committee could see from the report the numbers were all negative and below target levels set. The conclusion was that there was no scenario where they would expect there to be significant or even low impact from people noise.

NP2 – footpath position – He confirmed that was relatively close to the road, and the noise levels showed that, it represented that area of houses, there were 4 positions in all. In between car movements etc, there were gaps in between, the background levels related to what the position was for most of the time. It assumed the worst case situation.

Guests – They had to make some assumptions around the number of people shouting and accepting that not everybody was, they created a realistic profile based on ISO standards and assumption. They could say what if 400 people shouted all the time, which could happen. The noise management plan would be in place, which would be poor management to allow to happen, they were trying to be as realistic as possible.

Responding to an earlier question from Councillor Beavan about noise level at 11pm at night, the acoustic consultant described the noise levels at the 4 points. He said they were all low background noises, and what was important was that the level from music at those positions was 20 or less. There would be many times when it would be completely inaudible and sometimes it may be heard, depending on the conditions.

Councillor Beavan asked what that would sound like. The consultant replied that the further away it was, the sound drops away, the lowest frequency travels the furthest. The bass is created on the dance floor meaning it would fall off more rapidly. The

building assisted with this, assuming not all windows and doors were open. It was found that they wouldn't be able to hear the bass at those times in and in those locations.

The consultant confirmed that the management solutions had worked in the past. They had to apply best practice, a robust assessment had been completed, leading to 4 recommended conditions; one being the noise management plan.

The Chair referred to use of a marquee, asking if music in a marquee could be controlled too? The acoustic consultant replied they would have a similar system and apply different ways of controlling the noise transfer. The best would be at source, with an acoustic lining. They ultimately had the control of volume, and this would be covered by the noise management plan.

The applicant confirmed there was no marquee proposed within the red line of the application. It was assessed precautionarily for people noise. Currently they were not proposing marquees.

Councillor Pitchers asked where the function spaces mentioned were located. The applicant replied they were internal within several different areas within the buildings. The function areas would be in a separate area to the day to day areas used by hotel guests, and that had been tested for noise.

Councillor Ashdown asked if the car park would be in operation at the same time as the hotel was finished and open. Secondly, he noted the access on to the A12 was not particularly good and asked if it would be improved. The applicant confirmed the car park would be constructed to tie in with the opening and there were proposals to widen the access point on to the A12. They were discussing with Suffolk Highways. The applicant confirmed the car park would be suitably surfaced.

Councillor Ashton asked about the car park and its spare capacity. He asked if they had considered it being extended for future applications, as a more phased approach could be more acceptable. The applicant replied that they had tried to break it down into elements, an amount for staff, an amount for restaurant/hotel guests, space for check in points, a degree of flexibility for events. They preferred a considered approach rather than leaving it ad hoc. They took this approach to make it a more considerate design.

Councillor Ashton described the route he had taken and asked if there would be a more suitable walking route between the hotel and village for guests and visitors to make use of. The applicant said they did have another bridge which was not publicly accessible but could be. It was certainly something that could be provided. This was a sizeable project that would take some years to develop, so these items could continue to be looked at. From their perspective they wanted to encourage the success of the restaurant and bring in the community.

The Chair invited Councillor Ewart to speak.

Councillor Ewart, District Councillor for Yoxford and Kelsale, told the sub-committee that Cockfield hall had stood empty for many years and they welcomed its restoration.

She said its renaissance could be wonderful, but unlike other halls, this community did not know their neighbour. She asked what was truly planned – was it turning Cockfield hall into a themed resort operating weekend after weekend with lights and music? This could be catastrophic and must be tempered. No one disputed the quality of restoration of the Wilderness Reserve and what they delivered but they had planning rules to respect. Residents spoke with lived experience, and it was up to councillors to steer this towards a workable solution. The Parish Council Representative had raised that clarification was required for the C1 application as this was not a C1 hotel. She could not find anywhere the notion of a restaurant and questioned whether that had been invented that afternoon. She noted Councillor's questions about the reception, and said that the reception would be closed, which was not a good welcome. She said that noise was a great issue, the acoustic report said no amplified music from marquees, the condition 38 was vague and retrospective, only reacting after a disturbance. She said resident disturbance at midnight was hard to enforce the next day. She concurred with Councillor Ashton as the terrace faced the village, so you could have 400 people on the terrace which needed to be thought about. She referred to the size of the car park – and said that 278 spaces for a 16 bedroom hotel was not needed. She said that an events venue was likely to be on the cards, everything pointed to a party village which would impact Yoxford. She said that the Committee had been told in detailed planning policy and by a professor of tourism what was what. She said this was important for the validity of any decision made. If Yoxford were to accept the application, then it must be best managed and a less harmful vision be delivered, not simply what was convenient for the applicant. With proper reworking and ongoing dialogue, it could be achieved; that required transparency and no surprises. As users of the A12 the Committee would be aware that Yoxford already faced the NSIPS roadworks and infrastructure pressure, yet the village was so often not heard. She asked that as District Councillors they changed that notion. The Parish Councillor stepped in with expertise and clarity/understanding of hospitality to ensure the outcome worked for everyone. She asked that the correct classification was applied and enforceable conditions. She asked the Committee to defer the application.

The Chair invited Officer Clarification.

The Planning Manager clarified that procedurally they had all 6 applications being considered and would have public speaking on all of them.

The Planning Manager noted the points raised about the classification of the proposed development – it was referenced as C1 hotel class use. He told the Committee that the Planning Use classes order brought into effect in 1987 defined Class C1 as a hotel and hostel, it had quite a broad description which covers all classes and could have ancillary events and functions. There was not a requirement in the planning use class order for a hotel to have a mandatory requirement of openness to the public to turn up and book a room or that it is open to individual guests, it was down to how the business operated. He clarified that how the Wilderness had operated their other properties was not relevant to the proposal that they were considering today. He said C1 use was the correct classification.

Following Councillor Ewarts' comment that there was no mention of the restaurant, the Senior Planner said the restaurant was referred to several times throughout the planning statement and the location of the restaurant was highlighted on the site visit.

The Chair invited final questions from the Committee.

Councillor Beavan sought clarity on whether they could enforce a change of use. He gave an example where if the worst case scenario happened and there was 30 events a year with 400 people, could it be deemed outside of their class and enforcement occur? The Head of Planning and Building Control said that the number of events held did not establish the use class and dictate a change of use. He said that the Committee did have the noise assessment which established the maximum number of attendees and maximum number of events, and they could propose conditions that sought to limit the number of events to conform with that. The proposed conditions were there to allow some control. He concluded that the application had to be looked at as a C1 hotel use with the range of events that could take place within a typical hotel.

Councillor Hammond asked if what was proposed was exclusively a private hire venue would that be C1 class or something else? The Planning Manager said that the principal function had to be that rooms were available for hotel purposes, with it being marketed for that general offer. Councillor Hammond asked if the rooms were never actually marketed, would that be in breach of their use class. The Planning Manager replied there were lots of different types of hotels, if later it was deemed to be a single giant holiday let, then there would be a position of saying it was a change of use. Ultimately, they had in front of them a proposal that was proposing a hotel. They would investigate any form of breach at all if that occurred.

Councillor Ashton said he didn't completely accept the noise assessment answers, he accepted the general principle that the hotel could be managed to not have noise impact, but all the noise impact assessment was saying was it was possible, but the noise impact management plan would demonstrate how it was achieved and was crucial.

He said it was a desirable application, and without investment it would deteriorate. He noted the applicant's reputation for thorough and sympathetic restoration. He was not confident for the residents of Yoxford about approving an application without assurance that the noise impacts were definitely mitigated. Councillor Ashton would like to see more detail about the noise management plan; he was happy to propose that the application be deferred for more detail to be added to the noise management plan.

Councillor Ashton added that the walking/cycling route between the village and the hotel should be a condition of this application. Although it hadn't been mentioned he said it was the intention that the guests of the hotel and wider estate would use the Griffin. There would be reason for residents and guests to move in both directions, therefore the application shouldn't be approved without that walking/cycling route.

Councillor Ashdown thanked the Senior Planner for the excellent site visit. He said it was a good visit, where they were able to see everything they wanted to. He said they had seen a building that needed to be back into utilisation and a hotel would be the best option. He saw the potential for growth, and investment, noting the need for tourism in the district, which would bring in income and employment. He said it would be a benefit and was looking to support the application.

Councillor Beavan, having researched, said that 19-26 decibels was a whisper, he said if the noise could be kept down to those levels it was acceptable and he was minded to approve.

Councillor Hammond said that the noise impact was well thought through and would be properly managed and attenuated. They had to take the applicant's word that the management plans would be in place. He agreed that a hotel was the best outcome for the building to ensure it got the restoration it needed. He felt that the residents had been spooked by some of the worst case noise modelling that had been described as well as other elements such as the size of the car park, and this had led to them distrusting the idea of a hotel. It was a very high quality proposal, and officers had provided good reassurance and explanations regarding the use class. He was minded to support, whilst it did have impacts, had positive benefits for employment, income, tourism and restoration of the building.

Councillor Pitchers said he wasn't sure which way to vote. He noted there wasn't a really good restaurant locally and the opening of one would sway him. The Committee had challenged the developer, who had confirmed it would be open to the public as a hotel and restaurant. Councillor Pitchers said this had to be accepted at face value, and if it turned out later it was being used differently, then action would be taken.

Councillor Ashton added that he didn't disagree that ultimately, they should be trying to approve the application; however, he had concern that the noise impacts were not determined by the noise impact assessment but by the successful impact of the management plan. He said that they owed it to the people of Yoxford for the applicant to work with officers to demonstrate that, so it wasn't a condition that was dealt with afterwards without any say. He reiterated his proposal for deferral to give time for the condition to be worked through and asked if there was support for that.

Councillor Gee concurred with Councillor Ashton. She was torn; it was an exciting project which would bring a magnificent building back to life. However, she was anxious about the noise, noting the previous history where there had been problems with the noise. She wanted to be sure that the correct mitigation, control and monitoring would be in place, she noted that the testing had been carried out with the applicant's consultant and not an independent consultant.

Councillor Wakeling said he was minded to agree with the deferral, particularly considering the need for a footpath to access the restaurant.

The Planning Manager said he understood the noise concerns. The noise impact assessments had been carried out by competent qualified professionals based on best practice. He accepted that the noise impact could be mitigated subject to an appropriately detailed noise management plan and that was the standard way of working, with the conditions flowing from the report. He noted there were multiple conditions and it would not be feasible or practical for members to see that level of detail on every condition. The Committee had a proposal to consider, and the reassurance was that they had a detailed noise impact assessment, and the management plan would follow. He said that deferral might not bring the sense of reassurance that the Committee was hoping for as it was not possible for members to

know how every single condition was being complied with. He confirmed this was just planning advice and he was not trying to sway any decisions; they were currently 4 hours into the meeting with 6 applications to be considered and should move toward a decision.

Councillor Beavan said he couldn't see how deferring the application would make the noise management plan, the impact of it would only be seen when it was in operation. Regarding the footpath he said it was in the interests of the applicant to do this as they would not want guests to turn up via a muddy footpath and trail it through the hotel.

The Planning Manager sought clarification on what the deferral was seeking. Councillor Ashton said it was for the noise management plan and reconsideration of the walking route to site.

Councillor Hammond didn't feel deferral would achieve what was required, he said the conditions would deal with the points of concern and it was in everyone's interest to establish the route.

On the proposition of Councillor Ashton, seconded by Councillor Gee it was

PROPOSED

That the application be **DEFERRED** to consider the noise management plan and the footpath. 3 members were for this proposal and 5 against, therefore the motion for deferral failed.

The Committee returned to the proposal as per the officer's recommendation in the report.

On the proposal of Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Hammond it was

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement and subject to the conditions listed below:

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents:

Noise Impact Assessment by Sustainable Acoustics Report No. 22-0128-1 R01.3 (dated 04 July 2024) - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102 001 Rev C - Location Plan - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102.002/0 - Proposed Block Plan - Received 08 July 2024

Drawing No. CO.102/041/0 - Typical Details - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/040/0 - Proposed lift details - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/030/0 - Reception Elevation - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/025/0 - Proposed Southwest and Southeast Elevations - Received 08 July

2024.
 Drawing No. CO.102/021/0 - Proposed Roof Plan - Received 08 July 2024.
 Drawing No. CO.102/024/A - Proposed Northwest and Courtyard Elevations - Received 06 November 2024.
 Drawing No. CO.102/022/A - Proposed Northeast Elevations 1 of 2 - Received 06 November 2024.
 Drawing No. CO.102/023/A - Proposed Northeast Elevations 2 of 2 - Received 06 November 2024.
 Drawing No. CO.102/020/A - Proposed Floor Plans - Received 06 November 2024.
 Drawing No CO.102/009/0 - Existing Floor Plans Showing Building Morphology & Extent of Demolition - Received 08 July 2024
 Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment Preliminary Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan
 In Accordance with BS 5837:2012 by Haydens Arboricultural Consultants (Proj. No. 10613 - dated 19 July 2024) - Received 02 September 2024
 Cockfield Hall, Yoxford - Conservation Strategy & Outline Specification Issue 02 - August 2024 (Zoe kelding/ Jessica Ryder on Behalf of Purcell) - Received 02 September 2024.
 Sustainability Statement for Cockfield Hall Conversion by Wilderness Reserve - Received 02 September 2024

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

10 DC/24/2469/LBC - Hotel - Cockfield Hall, Station Road, Yoxford, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3ET

The Committee received report **ES/2572** of the Head of Planning and Building Control which related to planning application **DC/24/2469/LBC**. The application sought listed building consent for the conversion of Cockfield Hall to a hotel (C1 use), to include partial rebuild of existing buildings alongside the sensitive extension of the Main Hall, and removal of ancillary structures in the immediate setting. The application was before the Committee having been called in by the previous Vice Chair of Planning Committee North due to application having significant public interest.

The presentation for this item was received alongside agenda item 9.

It was recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the officer's report.

The Chair invited the first of the speakers from Yoxford Parish Council to speak.

The Parish Council Representative told the Committee they were concerned about the Listed Building Consent, Cockfield Hall was a beautiful and important heritage asset, a grade 1 listed building in the top 2.5% of buildings. They were worried about the intensification of use; the footprint was to be doubled with the extensions and there were likely to be further associated listed buildings that would come into the whole hotel and portfolio. They worried about how this would pose real risks to the fabric and setting of the listed building and its relationship with the surrounding village. She said it was important in listed building consent to include social sustainability, it was not just about economic activity, but also about how it supported and integrated with the village. As the Heritage Officer commented Yoxford and the Hall were one and they hoped that would continue in terms of any consent. The Hall had an important history, villagers used it for football matches, WI meetings, garden parties, there was lots of historical evidence of that, she hoped that continued and that it was a public open hotel.

The Parish Council Representative said there were concerns with the heritage impact analysis that it had not looked at increased intensity of use and all of the activity, structures and people that go with that. They wanted to stress that they hoped social sustainability would remain given it should be a publicly open space as a hotel. In the spirit of protection of listed building consent, they hoped these things would be looked at. She referred to an appeal case against Aldbury hall, where the appeal was not upheld, this was all about protecting the listed building against the harm of the use.

There were no questions for the Parish Council Representative. The Chair invited the applicant to speak.

The applicant wanted to highlight the level of detail that had gone into the application to demonstrate their understanding of the significance of Cockfield Hall, an appreciation of its history, and how they were looking to give it a positive and viable future. He told the Committee that discussions commenced with East Suffolk Council and Historic England in June 2022 where following initial research and design, they appointed heritage consultants to undertake a Heritage impact assessment. This included looking closely at the history of the hall, how it had evolved over the centuries, as well as an assessment of the significance of the building and its fabric room by room. It then assessed the impact of the proposed works on each area. Late they commissioned Purcell to produce a conservation statement. They assessed how Cockfield Hall could be adapted to allow its change of use as a hotel. As the design evolved, key factors considered were requirements for a commercial kitchen, where to site the flu and duct work, the lift, a fire strategy and associated works, reception area, staff welfare and many more. The majority of the more significant new interventions had been carefully sited within the new building element, avoiding any impact on the building's historical elements. These designs and reports had been commended by East Suffolk and Historic England, commenting specifically that the work had brought together in one place for the first time a complete historic assessment of the important Grade 1 listed building. He told the Committee that he also had the architect with him if there were any specific questions.

Councillor Hammond said he would like to hear from the architect around earlier points that were raised, but before that he asked the applicant to comment on the concern around over intensity of use of the historic fabric of the building, which appeared to be a key parish council worry. The applicant replied that the main function was a hotel, with guest bedrooms and services relating to those occupants. He hoped for a thriving public restaurant used daily. Therefore, intensification would be day to day thriving hotel, which was what historic England considered within their assessment. He didn't think that would damage the historic fabric of the building. The conservation statement set out ways to restore and maintain it. They had a good track record of preserving refurbishing listed buildings across the district.

The architect added that it had been an iterative process between Historic England and East Suffolk Council, with the involvement of the Design and Heritage Officer. He outlined the design process that had occurred and the reason behind those design decisions, considering the history of the buildings and how they have tried to pick up the threads of the building history within the design.

The Chair invited Councillor Ewart, Ward Councillor, to speak.

Councillor Ewart said that the Law required that local planning authorities must have special regard for the desirability of preserving a listed building in its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest. She said that Cockfield Hall and its grounds were rich with such features. From previous schemes they knew that Wilderness would deliver a robust preservation programme. However, the buildings themselves and their size and layout was only part of the story as what was actually before them was the first step of establishing a major commercial venue that would service 400 people at an event in the village of Yoxford. She said the reports were nuanced to deliver an extremely intensive commercial use of an ancient highly sensitive heritage asset, one of the most significant in the UK. The 16 bedrooms were the starting point, and the wider proposal was vastly different and would cause irreversible harm. She asked that the Committee considered the enormity going forwards. She had spent considerable time speaking to Historic England, she was concerned that the Design and Heritage Officer hadn't visited since 2023, but following conversations with the Planning Manager she was assured that he was on the case and he had given them an amazing tour at the site visit. She said it was important that it was managed, if it because too big it would lose its grace and integrity.

There were no questions for Councillor Ewart and no points of officer clarification.

The Chair asked the Committee to debate the application.

On the proposition of Councillor Pitchers, seconded by Councillor Hammond it was

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions below.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 18 of the Act (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents:

Drawing No. CO.102 001 Rev C - Location Plan - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102.002/0 - Proposed Block Plan - Received 08 July 2024

Drawing No. CO.102/041/0 - Typical Details - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/040/0 - Proposed lift details - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/030/0 - Reception Elevation - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/025/0 - Proposed Southwest and Southeast Elevations - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/021/0 - Proposed Roof Plan - Received 08 July 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/024/A - Proposed Northwest and Courtyard Elevations - Received 06 November 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/022/A - Proposed Northeast Elevations 1 of 2 - Received 06 November 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/023/A - Proposed Northeast Elevations 2 of 2 - Received 06 November 2024.

Drawing No. CO.102/020/A - Proposed Floor Plans - Received 06 November 2024.

Drawing No CO.102/009/0 - Existing Floor Plans Showing Building Morphology & Extent of Demolition - Received 08 July 2024

Cockfield Hall, Yoxford - Conservation Strategy & Outline Specification Issue 02 - August 2024 (Zoe Skelding/ Jessica Ryder on Behalf of Purcell) - Received 02 September 2024.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. Prior to the commencement of the use the Heritage Impact Assessment shall be submitted to the Suffolk County Council Historic Environment Record (HER), confirmation of which shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that an appropriate record is made of any fabric of architectural/historic/archaeological significance of the building.

4. Details in respect of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council as Local Planning Authority in consultation with English Heritage before the work is begun. The work shall be carried out in accordance with such approved details:

- a) Specification for replacement roof tiles
- b) Schedule of windows proposed for glazing replacement and detail of the replacement glazing and affixing
- c) Full plan of proposed positions of wood fibre board insulation to internal walls and detail and specification of board, fixing and finish
- d) Details arising from fire strategy to compartment walls, exposed timbers, escape/emergency lighting, means of warning
- e) Full specification of all external materials in new work
- f) Representative joinery details - new windows and new external and internal doors, service courtyard gates, pass gates, service doors - to show materials, finish ironmongery, glazing, opening operation and glazing bar profiles
- g) Brick details - all new decorative work to include arches, cills, jambs, pinnacles, colonettes, quoins, cornices, piers, buttresses, pilasters, finials and stepped gables
- h) Detail of new Tudor-style stack to north-west elevation
- i) Heights/levels of all new work to eaves and ridges
- j) New open (service/escape) staircase to show appearance and materials

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building.

11 DC/23/4864/OUT - Lodges - Cockfield Hall, Station Road, Yoxford, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3ET

The Chair led a discussion regarding the order of the agenda items. It was clarified by the Head of Planning and Building Control that the applications were still being heard as per the published agenda order, however the Senior Planner would be delivering a presentation which covered both agenda items 11 and 14.

The Committee received report **ES/2573** of the Head of Planning and Building Control which related to planning application **DC/23/4864/OUT**. The application was for outline planning permission for tourism development at Cockfield Hall Estate. The application, which included detailed proposals for the matter of access, (with all other matters to be reserved for future determination), was for the erection of up to 37 cottages/farmsteads (comprising up to 200 beds).

The application was before the Committee having been subject to the call in process due to the application having significant public interest.

A presentation was given to the Committee on agenda items 11 and 14 by the Senior Planner. The reason for grouping these two agenda items for the presentation was due to the location of the lake that some of the lodges would be situated around.

It was explained that the outline application of the lodges met Policy SCLP 6.5, the permanent tourist buildings were considered acceptable as the development formed part of a comprehensive masterplan which supported wider landscape and ecological gain.

The masterplan slide was shared and the Senior Planner pointed out the lodge locations and the site of the northern lake.

The current land uses at the Cockfield Hall Estate were explained; primarily arable farmland and as part of the restoration, restoring the landscape setting, reinstating native species of planting, restoring park and farmland to manage as mixed farming enterprise with cattle grazing.

The site location plan showed the proposed areas for the lodges, noting this was an indicative plan with access being the only matter looked at. The extensive planting areas were shown, graded as current, established and future.

The site location plan for northern lake was shown, highlighting where soil from the lake would be spread over existing land.

The design access statement contained various parameter plans. The detail of these plans were worked through for the Committee. The Senior Planner highlighted it was a low density scheme, with low development per hectare (0.2/hectare), comparing with larger tourism accommodation like Center Parcs and High Lodge it was low density. Given the sensitive location, the low level of density was encouraged.

The Edge of Woodland Lodge plans were explained to the Committee, the Senior Planner noted these were part of the reserved matters, but it was important to show them to the Committee to highlight future intentions.

The application was supported by a landscape visual impact assessment that looked at various viewpoints. These viewpoints were shared with the Committee.

The Location of the proposed lodges (Woodland Lodge, Eye Catcher, and Lake Lodges) were shared with the Committee and the typical layout details. They would be within the woodland itself, and in the report there were some concerns with the general layout, where it was expected they would be a more closely knit group of buildings in the farmstead. It was noted they were indicative plans at this stage.

Slides showing the LVIA were shared, highlighting limited long range views, which would diminish as the planting became more established.

The proposed lake design was shown, on higher ground than the other lake proposal and partly built by overland flows and topped up by a borehole if insufficient to fill lake. Proposed lake sections were shown, noting it was quite shallow, 2 to 3 metres in depth. The Senior Planner noted that the Environment Agency weren't statutory consultees on this application, however they had commented on West Lakes and were aware of the link between the 2 lakes. Although they didn't comment specifically on this application, they based comments on western lake application.

Access – there was a transport statement provided with the application. Cumulative impact of transport considered within the environmental impact screening opening, which SCC were involved with. Additional plans shown to Committee to show the 120m required visibility splay. Distances were considered suitable.

The Senior Planner noted there had been comments that the Highways drawings didn't include the junction improvements to the roundabout. A slide was shared, and these were pointed out on the drawings.

There were also offsite highway improvement works proposed as part of the application and these were explained to the Committee with the Senior Planner highlighting that these would improve the facilities within the vicinity for the local community.

The material planning considerations and key issues were summarised as:

- Principle of development
- Demonstration of need
- Neighbour amenity
- Landscape impact/impact on trees
- Heritage impact
- Design
- Ecology
- Flood risk
- Access

It was recommended to the Committee that the application DC/23/4864/OUT be approved subject to the conditions listed in the report.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee.

Councillor Ashton asked what conditions were in the report, which placed a dependency on progressing Cockfield Hall as a prerequisite to the lodges. The Senior Planner confirmed that condition 4 covered the reserved matters phasing detail and when Cockfield Hall was being delivered. It was confirmed that it was not possible to build out lodges without Cockfield hall.

Councillor Ashton referred to pavement improvements and visibility splays and asked if they were consistent with the 110 homes applications with respect to the improvements of the pavement between there and Yoxford as both applications were required to make improvements. The Senior Planner confirmed that was correct they were consistent. The residential scheme had more offsite highway improvements planned than this application. Councillor Ashton noted the comment from the Senior Planner regarding the pavement being poorly maintained and said it was appallingly maintained.

The Chair invited the objector to speak.

As a Councillor and member of the administration she regretted that she hadn't brought her concerns to the attention of the officers until this point. The Head of Planning and Officers have always been extremely responsive and helpful to her enquiries, but due to so much activity on her own ward, she had not been able to give it proper attention until now. As a resident, the development impacted her personally, she was speaking on behalf of herself and other residents. She lived in Yoxford, and questioned the need for this outline tourism development, part of a wider business masterplan agreed between the applicant and the previous political administration, and the benefits it would bring to the community or the wider economic and tourism objectives of their district. The principle of development of 37 lodges comprising up to 200 beds was not made when considering the wider tourism objectives of the council. At full occupancy this would yield well over half of the existing village population before the hotel was even considered. There were inevitable impacts with the development, but she didn't feel they were balanced by any wider community or tourism benefit. There would be increased traffic, noise impacts, light impacts and increased pressure on sewage and water supply. She said it was just about mitigatable for this project but where would that leave them for future essential housing developments. There was no provision in the development or the associated grade 1 hotel and parkland for young families or children in the area and there would be a large increase in visitor activity, more than the village was accustomed to without any mitigating local spend of significance. Again, this was without taking into consideration the impact of the hotel. The potential for events comprising both hotel and lodges would put a strain on village. She acknowledged there may be some jobs but minimal spend in the village. The whole design was to encourage people to stay on site and spend, with all leisure activities provided onsite. If guests didn't feel like restaurants there were private chefs. It was built as a nature themed retreat but on the Wilderness website there was no mention of Dunwich Heath or Minsmere. She didn't think it matched the spirit of the local plan policy 6.4 on tourism development outside the AONB, which states development should be of a scale that reflects the surrounding area, and tourism should be supported in less popular areas to increase the spend and there was no spend happening there.

There were no questions from the Committee.

The Chair invited the Parish Council representative to speak.

She was speaking on behalf of the residents who had concerns about the proposed resort development. The proposal doubled the applicant's current offer, representing a major escalation of use in a sensitive, historical and ecological landscape. Under policy SCLP 6.2, new tourist accommodation in the countryside must be small scale, sustainable, and complimentary to the local environment with broad appeal, she believed this proposal did not meet that test. There were 37 lodges, some of them very large in scale with supporting infrastructure, which amounted to a commercial resort complex, not a low impact tourism use. It offered minimal public access, limited community benefit and failed to demonstrate how it contributed to a balanced and sustainable visitor economy. The parkland forms part of the wider setting of Cockfield Hall and includes ancient trees, old hedgerows and valuable wildlife habitats. This development would cause loss of tranquillity, biodiversity and rural character. The ecological impact did not seem to address the environmental impacts of the final functioning resort. Heritage harms outweigh business investment/need. Referring to Policy 6.5 of the local plan, new tourist accommodation states the road network must be able to accommodate the volume of traffic generated by the new accommodation without having a significant adverse impact on free flow of traffic and highway safety. She referred to the site visit where members would have seen the difficulty turning right, and now there would be 2-300 cars trying to move in and out. Traffic implications were a serious concern and they did not seem to align with Suffolk local transport plan 2025/2040. She wished to see them addressed before a full application came forward.

There were no questions from the Committee, the Chair invited the applicant to speak.

The applicant told the Committee that the report assesses the proposal against a number of local/national policies, a key one being policy 6.5 of the local plan which considered when new tourism accommodation was acceptable. He said they met each of the requirements. Policy 6.5 confirms that permanent building could be delivered where they form part of masterplan which supports wider landscape and ecological gain. The landscape masterplan included 50,000 new trees, in addition to 30,000 already planted. whilst not subject to BNG, this achieved a 30% uplift against the metric, which was significantly higher than current BNG requirements. The masterplan would deliver significant new jobs, over 200 across a range of roles. There were already 150 people employed by the Wilderness and apprentices were trained throughout the business. They intended to develop this further and had discussions with education providers for pathways into employment. Significant investment would be created into the wider area through the construction and operation phases from local trades people to local suppliers including the knock on effect to other tourism locally. This had been fully assessed as part of the economic impact assessment. There was direct benefit for users of the public right of way footpaths 10 and 13 where they would be offering a new permissive path to connect the A12 directly to the train station. Works were proposed to widen the footpath to the station, secured by a Section 106 agreement. Looking at the whole masterplan allowed them to look at how other elements would be addressed, such as a new staff village at the former Darsham Nursery site and provision of a publicly accessible spa. Neither of these were at a detailed design stage but they were committed to them through the masterplan proposals, this followed

community engagement who expressed interest in public access to the spa. He addressed the comments likening the scale of the proposal to Center Parcs and referred to a density comparison table which assessed Center Parcs and Highlodge. Center Parcs in beds per acre was 10 times denser, Elveden was 400 acres, just 35 acres larger than Cockfield Hall Estate and it had 2324 bedrooms. Highlodge was more than 15 times denser with 491 beds across just 60 acres.

Councillor Ashton asked the applicant how much interaction guests of their other lodges had with nearby villages and wider tourism activity in the district. The applicant replied that the website didn't show everything that they promoted to guests when they came to stay, they provide literature to guests and encourage them to explore the area. They were proud of where they were based in East Suffolk and did their best to push the tourism agenda within the district.

Councillor Beavan having viewed the scale asked if they were going to overwhelm the village, it was a small business with a lot of beds. The applicant replied that they were very different to other tourist destinations and that was important to them. The average distance between the lodges was 125m and the landscape and nature setting was focused to support that. They encouraged privacy and it was important to be as concealed as they could be. There were character areas, e.g. lake and woodland areas and for each of the applications they had left an area where they would be planting semi-mature trees. They had achieved this successfully elsewhere.

Councillor Ashton noted that some of their guests were well known, they were on holiday and would not want to be seen. He asked was that something that was considered. The applicant replied it was more of a consideration for the guests; they were used to it. They provided the facilities for people to have that type of retreat and encourage them to explore the area.

Councillor Pitchers referenced Center Parcs and asked was there anywhere on site they could shop to cook food. The applicant replied it varied in the different sites; this was their most sustainable location with access from the A12. They provide welcome packs, guests might have supermarkets deliver or they can be cooked for or use alternative dining establishments, some theirs and some outside of the Wilderness. This leads on to business with taxi companies who might transport them. He said that this was a different type of masterplan to Chapel Barn or Sibton, this would be developed over a number of years, if successful. They were committed to community dialogue with residents and local businesses. They would continue to encourage drop in sessions and wanted to remain part of the community.

The Chair invited Councillor Ewart, Ward Councillor to make her representation.

Referring to tourism and the development of the estate and holiday lodges, Councillor Ewart said that the Committee must remember that Cockfield hall was an important heritage site that needed to be managed carefully. Everyone welcomed the restoration but what was being proposed was more than that. It was a major new commercial development, and it needed to be judged carefully.

She referred to the masterplan, saying there was a second masterplan announced, she didn't know they had that, a bit like the restaurant. This was for outline permission for

37 farmsteads and 200 beds, but it was being presented in the masterplan. The masterplan was not adopted; therefore, it did not have to be accepted. It was just a framework for planning and regardless of the size, she said the case for development must be thought through far more sympathetically. They were leaning on tourism development to justify development at this scale in this grade 2 parkland, and this needed considering, particularly as she had Yoxford residents not able to get planning permission for a back bedroom. Turning to access and traffic she referred to the difficult junction. She compared the drawings for the proposal to the nearby housing estate drawings, saying they were elementary and added by the officer. She asked why the County Council hadn't given it more consideration, she felt they gave a weak response and she had followed that up with them. Regarding infrastructure she said there was no confirmed water supply, there is a partial sewage plan, but no evidence that local systems could cope with wastewater. She wrote to the statutory water company, Essex and Suffolk Water, herself. There was nothing in the pack or on public access. She had received a firm statement on what they require from the Wilderness, which should be done automatically as water capacity and water waste management were serious issues in their region. Regarding landscape, she said saplings would take 20 years to mature, and residents needed protecting now. She believed that the village would absorb the impact and not receive the facilities and benefits that were discussed. She asked the Committee to think about the resident's health and wellbeing as they made their decision. She appreciated it was outline plans, but the tarmac had to stop, they were a green administration. She concluded it could and will be a success story, but it must be lawful, well planned and a good neighbour in order to achieve the triumph.

There were no question, the Chair asked for any final points of officer clarification.

Councillor Ashton asked for clarification regarding lodges being on the Parkland. The Senior Planner confirmed that one of the lodges was on the listed parkland, zone 14, it would be just into the listed parkland area.

The Senior Planner referred to the comment regarding wastewater; Anglian water and environmental agency were consulted on the applications, and they were interested in if there were private sewage treatment plants which there were. They required justification as to why they couldn't all have connection from the sewage network, and this was provided from the applicant. The Senior Planner said they already knew that there was capacity in water recycling centres from the information they had from Anglian Water, they were consulted and did not object.

Regarding Essex and Suffolk Water, the Senior Planner noted that Councillor Ewart had contacted them and received a response, they had also responded a second time to remove conditions. They were more interested that the applicant was able to get a connection to the network and clarified in their two responses that they did not have any issues with this proposal.

The Committee debated the application.

Councillor Ashdown noted the detailed discussions and questions and the reservations regarding the lodges. He commented on the Heveningham Estate lodges that were there exclusively for families and groups. Regarding the outline application and

concerns regarding access, he said Highways did not have an issue with the access and therefore they did not either. It was an outline application, and he hadn't seen anything as to why they shouldn't support it.

Councillor Beavan agreed that there was no planning reason why it should not be approved.

Councillor Ashton said he had heard and read through the concerns, he had approached it with was there a reason to refuse and there wasn't one in planning terms. He recognised the concerns, but there were not valid reasons. The reserve matters would require more detail.

The Head of Planning and Building Control said that there was no default position that reserved matters would come back to the Committee, however there may be cases where he, as Head of Planning, deemed it appropriate to. The routes that the application could return to Committee were outlined.

On the proposition of Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Plummer, it was

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement and subject to the conditions listed below:

Conditions:

1. a) Application for approval of any reserved matters must be made within seven years of the date of this outline permission and then
- b) The development hereby permitted must be begun within either three years from the date of this outline permission or within two years from the final approval of the reserved matters, whichever is the later date.

Reason: To comply with section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Details relating to the scale, layout, appearance and landscaping of the site, (the "reserved matters"), shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before any development is commenced.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 92 of the 1990 Act.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents:

Drawing No. CO.100/010 Rev E - Proposed Site Plan - Received 30 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.100.020 REV A - Proposed Road Layout Overview - Received 30 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.100.021 REV A - Proposed Road Layout Inset 1 - Received 30 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.100.022 REV A - Proposed Road Layout Inset 2 - Received 30 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.100.050 REV C - Proposed Cycleway - Received 30 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.102.002 REV A - Proposed Block Plan, Hall Plan & Parking Plan - Received 06 November 2024

Drawing No. KMC22031 / 001.1 REV C- Visibility at existing Access (A12) - Received 06 November 2024

Drawing No. KMC22031 / 001.2- Forward Visibility at existing Access (A12) - Received 06 November 2024

Drawing No. KMC22031 / 012 REV C - Proposed footway/cycleway along A12 - Received 06 November 2024

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

4. Concurrent with the first Reserved Matters Application a phasing plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority highlighting a broad timetable for the delivery of approved development within the Masterplan Area.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved phasing plan.

Reason: In order to ensure that important elements of the Masterplan are delivered at an appropriate time in the development process.

5. Future Reserved Matters applications shall be substantially in accordance with the Parameter Plans submitted with the application shown on: Drawing Nos. CO.100.101 REV E - Parcels Parameter and CO.100.102 REV D - Zone Density Parameter Plan.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate scale of development in the interest of the amenity of the area.

6. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced a Construction Management Plan shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Construction of the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plan.

The Construction Management Plan shall include the following matters where relevant to the proposed development:

- a) parking and turning for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
- b) loading and unloading of plant and materials
- c) piling techniques (if applicable)
- d) storage of plant and materials
- e) provision and use of wheel washing facilities
- f) programme of site and all associated works such as utilities including details of traffic management necessary to undertake these works
- g) site working and delivery times
- h) a communications plan to inform local residents of the program of works
- i) provision of boundary hoarding and lighting

- j) details of proposed means of dust suppression
- k) details of measures to prevent mud from vehicles leaving the site during construction
- l) haul routes for construction traffic on the highway network and
- m) monitoring and review mechanisms.
- n) Details of deliveries times to the site during construction phase.
- o) Layout of facilities above to be included on a plan.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety to avoid the hazard caused by mud on the highway and to ensure minimal adverse impact on the public highway during the construction phase. This is a pre-commencement condition because an approved Construction Management Plan must be in place at the outset of the development.

7. Details in respect of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council as Local Planning Authority before the work is begun. The work shall be carried out in accordance with such approved details:

- Details and samples of the surface treatment of the access drive and all internal roads.
- Details of road widths.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special historic interest of the building and character of the landscape.

8. Where highlighted as being deemed necessary within the Stage1/Tier1 - Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report, prior to the commencement of development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance or removal of underground tanks and relic structures) approved by this planning permission, an intrusive investigation(s), shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including:

- o the locations and nature of sampling points (including logs with descriptions of the materials encountered) and justification for the sampling strategy;
- o explanation and justification for the analytical strategy;
- o a revised conceptual site model; and
- o a revised assessment of the risks posed from contamination at the site to relevant receptors, including: human health, ground waters, surface waters, ecological systems and property (both existing and proposed).

All site investigations must be undertaken by a competent person (see National Planning Policy Framework) and conform to current guidance and best practice, including BS8485:2015+A1:2019, BS10175:2011+A2:2017 and Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM).

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

9. No development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance or removal of underground tanks and relic structures) approved by this planning consent, shall take place until a detailed Remediation Strategy (RS) has been submitted to, reviewed by and confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as likely to address the risks identified by the submitted assessments. The RS must include, but is not limited to:

- o details of all works to be undertaken including proposed methodologies, drawings and plans, materials, specifications and site management procedures;
- o an explanation, including justification, for the selection of the proposed remediation methodology(ies);
- o proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria; and
- o proposals for validating the remediation and, where appropriate, for future maintenance and monitoring.

The RS must be prepared by a competent person (see National Planning Policy Framework) and conform to current guidance and best practice, including BS8485:2015+A1:2019 and Land Contamination Risk Management.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

10. Prior to any occupation or use of the approved development, the Remediation Strategy agreed under Condition 9 must be completed in its entirety. The LPA must be given two weeks written notification prior to the commencement of the remedial works.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors. The Environmental Protection Team may want to observe works for example the effective installation of ground gas measures and geotextile membranes.

11. A validation report must be submitted to, reviewed by and confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as likely to have addressed the risks identified prior to any occupation or use of the approved development. The validation report must include, but is not limited to:

- o results of sampling and monitoring carried out to demonstrate that the site remediation criteria have been met;
- o evidence that the RS agreed under Condition 10 has been carried out competently, effectively and in its entirety; and
- o evidence that remediation has been effective and that, as a minimum, the site will not qualify as contaminated land as defined by Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The validation report must be prepared by a competent person (see National Planning Policy Framework) and conform to current guidance and best practice, including BS8485:2015+A1:2019, CIRIA C735 and Land Contamination Risk Management. Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

12. In the event that contamination which has not already been identified to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is found or suspected on the site it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Unless agreed in writing by the LPA no further development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance, removal of underground tanks and relic structures) shall take place until this condition has been complied with in its entirety.

An investigation and risk assessment must be completed in accordance with a scheme which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons (see National Planning Policy Framework) and conform with prevailing guidance (including BS8485:2015+A1:2019, BS 10175:2011+A2:2017 and Land Contamination Risk Management) and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the review and confirmation in writing by the Local Planning Authority that likely risks have been identified and will be investigated accordingly.

Where remediation is necessary a detailed Remediation Strategy (RS) must be prepared and is subject to the review and confirmation in writing by the Local Planning Authority as likely to address the risks identified. The RS must include detailed methodologies for all works to be undertaken, site management procedures, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria. The RS must be carried out in its entirety, and the Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification prior to the commencement of the remedial works.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

13. No development shall be occupied/come into use until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Approved Outline Written Scheme of Investigation and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.

Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with

Policy SCLP11.7 of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

14. Concurrent with the first reserved matters application(s) a surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority (LPA). The scheme shall be in accordance with the approved Level 1 Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy Report E23/076/DS Rev. 2 (14-12- 2023) and include:

- a. Dimensioned plans and drawings of the surface water drainage scheme;
- b. Further infiltration testing on the site in accordance with BRE 365 and the use of infiltration as the means of drainage if the infiltration rates and groundwater levels show it to be possible;
- c. If the use of infiltration is not possible then modelling shall be submitted to demonstrate that the surface water runoff will be restricted to Q_{bar} or 2l/s/ha for all events up to the critical 1 in 100 year rainfall events including climate change as specified in the FRA;
- d. Modelling of the surface water drainage scheme to show that the attenuation/infiltration features will contain the 1 in 100 year rainfall event including climate change;
- e. Modelling of the surface water conveyance network in the 1 in 30 year rainfall event to show no above ground flooding, and modelling of the volumes of any above ground flooding from the pipe network in a 1 in 100 year rainfall event including climate change, along with topographic plans showing where the water will flow and be stored to ensure no flooding of buildings or offsite flows;
- f. Topographical plans depicting all exceedance flow paths and demonstration that the flows would not flood buildings or flow offsite, and if they are to be directed to the surface water drainage system then the potential additional rates and volumes of surface water must be included within the modelling of the surface water system;
- g. Details of the maintenance and management of the surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- h. Details of a Construction Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP) detailing how surface water and storm water will be managed on the site during construction (including demolition and site clearance operations) is submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The CSWMP shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan for the duration of construction.

The approved CSWMP and shall include: Method statements, scaled and dimensioned plans and drawings detailing surface water management proposals to include:-

- i. Temporary drainage systems
- ii. Measures for managing pollution / water quality and protecting controlled waters and watercourses
- iii. Measures for managing any on or offsite flood risk associated with construction

The scheme shall be fully implemented as approved.

Reasons: To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage and disposal of surface water from the site for the lifetime of the development. To ensure the development does not cause increased flood risk, or pollution of watercourses or

groundwater. To ensure clear arrangements are in place for ongoing operation and maintenance of the disposal of surface water drainage.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/guidance-on-development-and-floodrisk/construction-surface-water-management-plan/>

15. Within 28 days of practical completion of the last dwelling or unit, a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) verification report shall be submitted to the LPA, detailing that the SuDS have been inspected, have been built and function in accordance with the approved designs and drawings. The report shall include details of all SuDS components and piped networks have been submitted, in an approved form, to and approved in writing by the LPA for inclusion on the Lead Local Flood Authority's Flood Risk Asset Register.

Reason: To ensure that the surface water drainage system has been built in accordance with the approved drawings and is fit to be put into operation and to ensure that the Sustainable Drainage System has been implemented as permitted and that all flood risk assets and their owners are recorded onto the LLFA's statutory flood risk asset register as required under s21 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in order to enable the proper management of flood risk within the county of Suffolk

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-asset-register>

16. The units shall be occupied for tourism accommodation purposes only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole, or main place of residence. The duration of occupancy by any one person, or persons, of the units shall not exceed 56 days in total in any one calendar year. The owners/operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers of the premises, and of their main home addresses, and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is occupied as tourist accommodation, having regard to the tourism objectives of the Local Plan and the fact that the site is outside any area where planning permission would normally be forthcoming for permanent residential development.

17. Concurrent with each Reserved Matters Application, a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) for the development included in that application shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.

g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.

h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

No development covered under the Reserved Matters Application shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until the CEMP has been approved. The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected as part of the development.

18. Development must be undertaken in accordance with the ecological avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures identified within the Ecological Impact Assessment (CSA Environmental, 2023), Ecological Impact Assessment Appendices (CSA Environmental, 2023), Ecology Cover Letter (CSA Environmental, 2023) as submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected and enhanced as part of the development.

19. Concurrent with each Reserved Matters Application, a "lighting design strategy for biodiversity" for development, buildings, and features or areas to be lit by development in that application shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for biodiversity likely to be impacted by lighting and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and

b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that impacts on ecological receptors from external lighting are prevented.

20. No part of the development which may kill, injure or disturb great crested newts or damage or destroy a great crested newt breeding site or resting place, shall in any circumstances commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with either:

a) a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) authorising the specified development to go ahead or demonstration that the appropriate Natural England Class Licence is in place to allow works to commence; or

b) a statement in writing from the relevant licensing body, or a suitably qualified and licenced ecologist, to the effect that it is not considered that the specified development will require a licence.

Reason: To ensure that the legislation relating to great crested newt has been adequately addressed as part of the implementation of the development

21. Before the access is first used visibility splays shall be provided as shown on Drawing No. KMC22031 / 001.1 Rev C with an X dimension of 2.4 metres and a Y dimension of 120 metres [tangential to the nearside edge of the carriageway] and thereafter retained in the specified form. Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 2 Class A of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no obstruction to visibility shall be erected, constructed, planted or permitted to grow over 0.6 metres high within the areas of the visibility splays.

Reason: To ensure drivers of vehicles entering the highway have sufficient visibility to manoeuvre safely including giving way to approaching users of the highway without them having to take avoiding action and to ensure drivers of vehicles on the public highway have sufficient warning of a vehicle emerging in order to take avoiding action, if necessary.

22. Prior to the development hereby permitted being first occupied, the existing access onto the highway shall be properly surfaced with a bound material for a minimum distance of 10 metres measured from the nearside edge of the metalled carriageway, in accordance with details that shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and to avoid unacceptable safety risks arising from materials deposited on the highway from the development.

23. Gates to the access shall be set back a minimum distance of 10 metres from the public highway and shall not open towards the highway.

Reason: To avoid unacceptable safety risks and traffic delay arising from vehicles obstructing the public highway while the obstruction is removed or replaced by enabling vehicles to clear the highway while this is done.

24. The use shall not commence until the area(s) within the site shown on drawing no. CO.102 002 Rev A for the purposes of loading, unloading, manoeuvring and parking of vehicles including cycle storage and EV charging infrastructure has / have been provided and thereafter the area(s) shall be retained, maintained and used for no other purposes.

Reason: To ensure that sufficient areas for vehicles to be parked are provided in

accordance with Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2023) where on-street parking and or loading, unloading and manoeuvring would be detrimental to the safe use of the highway.

Note: It is noted from the Car Parking Strategy that the layout including the overflow will accommodate the wider master plan area also accommodating the seasonal peaks and special occasion parking as needed.

25. Before the development is occupied details of the areas to be provided for the storage and presentation for collection/emptying of refuse and recycling bins shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for no other purpose (or) the approved bin storage and presentation/collection area shall be provided for each dwelling prior to its first occupation and shall be retained thereafter for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that space is provided for refuse and recycling bins to be stored and presented for emptying and left by operatives after emptying clear of the highway and access to avoid causing obstruction and dangers for the public using the highway.

26. Before the development is commenced details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing the means to prevent the discharge of surface water from the development onto the highway including any system to dispose of the water. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the access is first used and shall be retained thereafter in its approved form.

Reason: To prevent hazards caused by flowing water or ice on the highway. *This needs to be a pre-commencement condition to avoid expensive remedial action which adversely impacts on the viability of the development if, given the limitations on areas available, a suitable scheme cannot be retrospectively designed and built.

27. No part of the development shall be occupied until details of the proposed off-site highway improvements indicatively shown on Drawing No. KMC22031 / 012 Rev C have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be laid out and constructed in its entirety prior to first occupation.

Reason: To ensure that the necessary highway improvements are designed and constructed to an appropriate specification and made available for use at an appropriate time in the interests of highway safety and sustainable travel. This is a pre-commencement condition because the required details relate to off site works that need to be agreed before the development can be said to be acceptable in terms of highway capacity/safety.

28. Prior to the commencement of the off-site highway works specified in condition 27 an Arboricultural Method Statement shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The AMS shall address potential impacts on retained vegetation and how these impacts can be mitigated through special engineering

measures. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Required to avoid any irreversible damage to retained trees pursuant to section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality, in accordance with Local Plan Policy SCLP10.4.

29. Prior to first occupation of the new development the local bus stops at Oakwood Park and The Shelter on the A1120 at Yoxford shall be improved to provide DDA kerbs on both sides of the road details of which previously shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To promote and facilitate access to sustainable transport modes and to provide safe and suitable access for all users in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023) Para. 114 and Para. 116.

30. Prior to first use, a workplace Travel Plan should be submitted for approval in accordance with the Suffolk County Council Workplace Travel Plan Guidance by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority. Thereafter, it shall be implemented in full prior to the development being first brought into use and reviewed and revised on an annual basis from the date of occupation. An annual Travel Plan Monitoring, to be undertaken in accordance with the approved Travel Plan, must also be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval until further notice. The development shall not become operational until the Interim Workplace Travel Plan has been agreed. This Travel Plan must contain the following:

- o Baseline travel data based upon the information provided in the Transport Assessment, with suitable measures, objectives and identified targets to reduce the vehicular trips made by employees and visitors/customers across the whole development, with suitable remedial measures identified to be implemented if these objectives and targets are not met.
- o Appointment of a suitably qualified Workplace Travel Plan Coordinator and Travel Plan Steering group (for multiple occupancy) to implement the Travel Plan in full and clearly identify their contact details in the Travel Plan and Sustainable Travel Pack.
- o A baseline travel survey to monitor the vehicular trip generated by the employees and visitors/customer after 3 months of occupation/operation of the units using traffic counters and questionnaires in order to generate a Full Travel Plan based on the SCC Travel Plan guidance. The Full Travel Plan no later than six months after occupation of this development.
- o A further commitment to monitor the Travel Plan annually on each anniversary of the approval of the Full Travel Plan for a minimum of five years after the baseline survey, or one year after occupation of the final unit (whichever is later) using the same methodology as the baseline monitoring and providing the results to SCC in October each year.
- o In the event of targets not being achieved a revised Travel Plan should be submitted to and approved in writing by SCC.
- o A suitable marketing strategy to ensure that all site users are engaged in the Travel Plan process.
- o A Travel Plan budget breakdown that covers the full implementation of the Travel Plan.

o A copy of the Sustainable travel pack that includes a multi-modal voucher to incentivise staff to use sustainable travel in the local area.

The site shall not be operated/ occupied until the Interim Travel Plan has been agreed. The approved Travel Plan measures shall be implemented in accordance with a timetable that shall be included in the Travel Plan and shall thereafter be adhered to in accordance with the approved Travel Plan.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and relevant Local Planning Authority Policies.

31. Not less than 3 months prior to the occupation, a completed Sustainable Travel Pack shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and shall include up-to-date walking, cycling and bus maps, relevant bus and rail timetable information, car sharing information, and sustainable transport and employee discounts. Prior to the start of the new role or during the hiring process, each employee shall be provided with a Sustainable Travel Pack that contains sustainable transport information and measures. The Sustainable Travel Pack shall be maintained and operated thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, and relevant LPA policy

Note 1: The Travel Plan and Employee Sustainable Travel Pack should be produced in accordance with Suffolk County Council's Travel Plan Guidance (www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/travel-plans/information-for-developers)

32. Concurrent with each Reserved Matters Application, a Construction Environmental Management plan (CEMP: Trees) for the development included in that application shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Trees) shall include the following:

- a) Protective fencing details,
- b) Details of ground protection measures,
- c) Details of no dig surfacing
- d) Details of access routes
- e) Facilitation pruning specification
- f) Project phasing
- g) Extensive auditable monitoring schedule.

No development covered under the Reserved Matters Applications shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until the CEMP has been approved. The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that retained trees are not significantly affected by the described development and can continue to contribute to the local landscape amenity and its wildlife value.

33. The development, hereby approved, shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations with the submitted and approved Sustainability Statement by JSH (Dated April 2024 Issue 02 Ref: 596500-JSH-XX-ZZ-RP-ME-2001).

Reason: To ensure a sustainable standard of design in the interest of addressing climate change to secure sustainable development in accordance with Policies SCLP9.1 and SCLP9.2 of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020).

34. Concurrent with each Reserved Matters Application, details for the disposal of foul drainage, based on the indicative foul drainage proposals shown within the letter from JP Chick & Partners Ltd, dated 05 April 2024 (Ref: IE23/076/EA PTP resp1), shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure satisfactory foul drainage from the development.

12 DC/23/4867/FUL - West Lakes - Cockfield Hall Estate, Station Road, Yoxford, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3ET

Due to the length of the meeting and to enable a thorough debate, this agenda item was deferred to a future meeting of Planning Committee North.

13 DC/24/1567/LBC - Walled Garden - Cockfield Hall, Station Road, Yoxford, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3ET

Due to the length of the meeting and to enable a thorough debate, this agenda item was deferred to a future meeting of Planning Committee North.

14 DC/23/4866/FUL - North Lake - Cockfield Hall Estate, Station Road, Yoxford, Suffolk IP17 3ET

Due to the length of the meeting and to enable a thorough debate, this agenda item was deferred to a future meeting of Planning Committee North.

The meeting concluded at 6.30pm.

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Chair

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Planning Committee North** held in the Conference Room,
Riverside, on **Tuesday, 09 December 2025 at 2:00 PM**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Paul Ashton, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Toby Hammond, Councillor Graham Parker, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Sarah Plummer, Councillor Geoff Wakeling

Other Members present:

Councillor Julia Ewart

Officers present: Jamie Behling (Senior Planner - Development Management), Joe Blackmore (Planning Manager (Development Management)), Katy Cassidy (Democratic Services Officer), Mia Glass (Enforcement Planner), Steve Milligan (Principal Planner (Development Management)), Nicholas Newton (Principal Landscape and Arboricultural Officer), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Robert Scrimgeour (Principal Design and Heritage Officer), Ben Woolnough (Head of Planning and Building Control)

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

3 Declarations of Lobbying and Responses to Lobbying

Councillor Beavan declared that he had been approached by several people regarding agenda item 8 but had replied that he could not discuss it as he was a member of the Planning Committee.

Councillor Ashton declared that he had spoken to the Yoxford Parish Councillor, Councillor Walford, at an event but they had only had general planning conversations, no lobbying had taken place.

4 **East Suffolk Enforcement Action - Case Update**

The Committee received report ES/2619 of the Head of Planning and Building Control which provided a summary of the status of all outstanding enforcement cases for East Suffolk Council where enforcement action had been sanctioned under delegated confirmed powers up until 24 November 2025. The Enforcement Planner advised that there were no updates to the report and the Chair invited questions from the Committee.

Councillor Ashdown asked for an update on item A7, which should have been within compliance. The Enforcement Planner replied that they were currently seeking confirmation as to whether the notice had been complied with or if further action was required. On the proposition of Councillor Plummer, seconded by Councillor Pitchers it was

RESOLVED

That the outstanding enforcement matters up to 24th November 2025 be noted.

5 **DC/23/4867/FUL - West Lakes - Cockfield Hall Estate, Station Road, Yoxford, Saxmundham, IP17 3ET**

The Chair outlined the process for the next 3 agenda items; due to the close linkages of the Wilderness applications the Case Officer would give one presentation that covered all 3 applications with questioning, debate, public speaking and voting following separately for each individual application.

The Committee received report **ES/2620** which related to planning application **DC/23/4867/FUL**. The application sought planning permission for the creation of two water bodies as part of a larger landscape masterplan, to hold water within the landscape including the creation of reed bed and wetland habitat. The lakes would provide recreational use and mooring points, associated with the wider tourism development. A new pedestrian bridge would retain the existing public right of way. The application was triggered for Committee via the Call-In process.

The Senior Planner gave a presentation starting with an explanation of each of the applications and the location plan for each.

The Masterplan slide was shared with the Committee and for clarification, following the previous committee, the Senior Planner noted that it was good practice for these types of large-scale development sites to be brought forward in different phases. He added the masterplan was not an adopted document, but it gave an indication of the future development proposals that could be coming forward. This masterplan had been submitted in support of the Wilderness applications, some of which were determined at the previous committee and the Griffin public house which was approved several months ago. It also included the future developments that would be brought forward. The purpose was to demonstrate how it all fitted together whilst providing significant landscape enhancement, ecological and heritage benefits.

The Senior Planner turned to flood risk. It was noted that one of the main resident concerns was flood risk. The site was situated in flood zone 3. Flood zone 3b was functional flood plain, and one small part of the lake was outside of that area. Hydraulic modelling carried out supported a level 3 Flood Risk Assessment, assessed by Environment Agency and the lead local flood authority. The Section 19 report had also been raised, and the Senior Planner advised the Committee that the LLFA representative was available to answer questions as necessary. The Section 19 report highlighted that the main cause of flooding in Storm Babet was the runoff from fields to the west of the site overwhelming the drainage infrastructure due to poor maintenance. The recommendations from the report was the provision of natural flood management projects such as this one, which slowed the flow and attenuated water and for the improved maintenance of gullies, ditches and water courses.

Referring to the update sheet, the Senior Planner noted there was a clarification note from the applicant and a rebuttal from the flood consultant working for the applicant. This was in response to a document that they received entitled Yoxford Impact Assessment by Mr Mayhew, who was due to speak later. Officers were of the view that the application had been thoroughly scrutinised and considered by the Environment Agency and the LLFA.

The next slides took the Committee through the design of the lake. The lake design overview was shared, highlighting the areas where the excavated materials would be deposited. Another concern of neighbours was the recreational activities that may be taking place on the lake, with suggestions that powerboating, jet skiing would be a disturbance to neighbours. The Senior Planner advised there was a condition to require agreement to activities that would be allowed on the lake; officers considered it more likely that sedate activities like those that they had seen on other lakes within the Wilderness Reserve would be more likely to take place.

Slide showing inset 1 was shared, this was the northwestern end of the lake, the narrowest part of lake, viewpoints showed where it would be visible to the public from footpath 7 and 7A within the LVIA.

Slide showing inset 2 was shared – more dramatic views would be available from users of footpath 8, there was a bridge proposed to cross the lake. This was considered to significantly enhance the experience of the users of the public footpaths. Photos shown from LVIA of the 4 oak trees, the point that members viewed at the site visit when looking at the water table level and trees to be retained.

Slide showing the bridge was shared, the bridge was 68 metres across the lake. The cross section showed the water level opposed to the existing ground level, along with the flood storage capacity. There had been some comments about safety of users of the public footpath once there was a lake and bridge crossing it. The Senior Planner said it was not uncommon to have public footpaths near water. This had been fully assessed by SCC public rights of way and met the current safety standards and legislation.

Slide showing inset 3 was shared – this showed access to Hills Farm and Keepers Cottage, also known as Hex Cottage (points that Committee viewed on site visit). It was noted that the character of landscape would change significantly in that location

and it was considered to be a significant enhancement. Channels on the west side of the lake running down towards Cockfield Hall were shown.

Slide showing inset 5 was shared – this was Cockfield Hall itself; the extent of the grade 2 listed parkland was pointed out. The Senior Planner pointed out the Yoxford Conservation Area boundary. The Committee were shown the part of the lake that fell within that green area, this part of the proposal had the potential to affect designated heritage assets of the listed parkland, the conservation area and the grade 1 listed Cockfield hall. The Committee were shown the section of the grade 2 listed wall that was to be removed.

The next slide showed some of the landscaping of the site and the location of some removal of trees. Any tree loss was significantly outweighed by planting across the estate and within this application.

A slide showing the existing walled garden was shown with the site visit location pointed out. The 3m height of walled garden pointed out and where it dropped to 2.1m and the part that was proposed to be removed. An image of the walled garden was shared. The Heritage impact assessment statements were shared with the committee.

A slide showing the plan form of the wall was shared with the Committee from outside and within the walled garden.

The Senior Planner noted that both Historic England and the Garden Trust had been consulted as statutory consultees. Whilst acknowledging some harm through the loss of part of the grade 2 listed wall, it was considered to be less than substantial harm which was outweighed by the heritage benefits of the setting of the hall and conservation area and listed parkland.

The Senior Planner noted that the Garden Trust stated they were fully supportive of comments by the Council's Principal Design and Heritage Officer and were in support of the proposals generally. Within paragraph 7.13 of the report for this listed building consent application there was a weighing up of the benefits against harm.

The next slide showed the proposed north lake; the block plan was shared showing the design and shape of lake. The area where the soil was to be deposited was pointed out along with the oak tree to be retained on the island. The Committee was told that the lake was to have a dual purpose for irrigation and recreation activities. It was in a much less sensitive location, but the officers still felt it was necessary to control the types of recreational activities that took place and had made that a suggested condition. Diagrams were shared from the flood risk assessment showing the existing overland flow routes. The Senior Planner told the Committee that the flood risk assessment suggested that the natural flow route (1) would fill the lake and if it didn't completely fill the lake, it would be topped up by bore hole, outflows from the lake would follow existing flood paths, mimicking natural flow in a controlled way.

The proposed lake sections were shown, it was 2.5 m in depth. The lake would have minimal visibility in the surrounding area. The lodges that proposed to surround the lake had been subject to a previous application; this lake would only be visible from the people staying in the lodges themselves.

The material planning considerations and key issues were summarised as:

- Principle of development
- Flood risk
- Heritage impact
- Design
- Landscape Impact/Impact on trees
- Neighbour amenity
- Transport

Application DC/23/4867/FUL was recommended for approval, subject to the conditions in the officer report.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee on the officer presentation and then any third party representations.

Councillor Ashton referred to the area where the bridge would be and noted it was often quite boggy in the winter, and very infrequently it could flood. He asked if there was any risk of the lake increasing the boggy nature of the area, making it difficult to access the bridge. This question was directed to the applicant's flood consultant to answer.

Councillor Gee asked if Suffolk County Council Rights of Way still objected. The Senior Planner confirmed that the initial consultation had a holding objection, however the most recent response from them was that they had no objection.

There were no more questions, the Chair invited the first of the public speakers, the objector to speak.

The Objector introduced himself and explained that he had a technical expert on hand to answer any specific questions that were raised. He had a series of photographs that he shared to support his public speaking. He told the Committee that the proposal was to replace a very large natural flood plain with lakes which sounded odd. He showed the Committee a photo of how the flood plain had been altered in past years to create a bank and warned it would greatly affect flooding in Yoxford. Various photographs were shown showing the impact of the change. He said that when the River Yox hit the top, the whole field used to soak, and displayed photographs showing what happened now that the flood plain was altered. He said that the lakes were like bowls of water and the flood plain was like a sponge of soil, with extra water, it would soak up and go over the top, he said if the flood plain was removed, it would flood down the river and through the village. This had already happened in Storm Babet, the flooding system all connected, and flooding would occur far away on the A12 if the flood plain didn't operate correctly. He said this scheme would make the flood potential worse, not better or neutral. He had read the reports, yet they struggled to refute this fact. He showed slides of Storm Babet and said this was why he was at the Committee, he like many other residents feared the lakes as they would cause floods to properties and gardens. He said the flood plain was relevant for the whole of Yoxford and replacing the natural sponge and fields which overflowed to take the water of hundreds of years old with two lakes was asking for trouble. He appealed to the councillors to not let the

estate mark its own homework. They had their own experts in and everyone else in the village was suspicious of this thinking as there would be a big flood risk, he said they needed to get independent experts.

The Chair invited questions to the objector.

Councillor Ashton asked to revisit the last slide. For clarity he confirmed with the objector that this was a photo of The Lane in Yoxford with River Yox in the distance. He confirmed that earlier it was stated that the primary cause of flooding in Yoxford as a result of Storm Babet was poorly maintained drainage to the west of the site. He said this photograph was to the west of the site and he wanted to make sure that the objector was not suggested that the flooding in the photograph was caused by the River Yox. He said that was a separate issue.

The objector said he used a generic slide of Yoxford being flooded. He explained that what he was demonstrating was the way the flood plain worked, and how they should work to protect Yoxford. He said in Storm Babet there had already been alterations to the flood plain. He stated whatever the report said, it had been altered. Inevitably the flooding in Yoxford would be made worse. This showed that the flood plain was critical and the plans to replace it with 2 lakes were risky.

Councillor Ashton probed further asking if the objector believe the flood was linked to Storm Babet. The Objector challenged that, saying if the flood plains were removed or attenuated it would be worse. He noted that Storm Babet was a special event.

Councillor Beavan asked how creating a lake attenuated the flood plain. The Objector replied that the field acted like a sponge, as water comes in, they fill up and flood over at the top. Now with a lake, the area was already permanently full of water, this meant they had lost the soil taking up the sponge effect and lost the ability for the water to go over the top.

Councillor Ashton asked if the lake had been built and over time the water had silted up to the point it had soil again; would the lake have greater or less capacity to store water at that point. He argued that it made no sense to claim that with soil in the space there was greater capacity to sponge water up. The objector disagreed and used a metaphor of a sponge to demonstrate how it would work.

Councillor Hammond said the sponge metaphor was powerful, but he wasn't sure that was how they worked. He asked was it not the case that the pores in the soil in the event of a flood were full – the water table is very high and gets to the point where the water table is at that level, regardless of whether there is water or soil there, it then overtops and spills onto the flood plain, taking the pressure off as the water spreads across the valley. His understanding of the proposal was that the spreading out function was not being taken away, and the flood plain was not being eliminated as suggested. He noted that the consultant's report suggested that there would be more capacity than there was currently to absorb water, therefore the flood risk was reduced not harmed.

The objector's flood expert, Mr Mayhew responded by saying when you look at catchment it can do well but adding buildings and hardcore causes significantly more

runoff. He argued it was all very well having a catchment but if you build around it were would the runoff go to. It would mean catching in one area, but due to hardcore and building run off would be increased. He referenced some studies that had looked at this across the world.

Councillor Ashton asked if the question could be answered – if soil was excavated from the flood plain, how can it hold less water than it does with the soil there? He said the assertion was by creating lakes it increased the risk of flooding as the capacity to store water is reduced. He didn't think this was possible as removal of the soil would allow more space for water. The flood expert replied that it would depend on the type of soil and what it could or could not do, it wasn't something that could be answered without further investigation.

The Objector said this reiterated the main point that they were asking, which was for the council to have their own independent assessment.

The Planning Manager told the Committee that Matt Hullis from the LLFA was available online and would respond as part of officer clarification in line with the committee process.

Councillor Gee said that the report paragraph 4.3 flood risk referred to the lake already produced near Yoxman, and it had reduced some of the flood plain there. She said she could vouch for that having noticed the large area of water on the left of the A12 in recent years. She asked how residents were affected. The Objector replied that a lot of people living close to that area were vociferous about far worse flooding into their gardens since those changes. He said lots of people were not willing to write or come forward to meetings as they had links with the estate, but they were very unhappy with lake for the reasons Councillor Gee stated.

Councillor Pitchers asked how long the lake had been there, it was confirmed that it was put in in 2021.

There were no further questions for Mr Wescott or Mr Mayhew.

The Chair invited the next public speaker from Yoxford Parish Council to speak.

The Parish Councillor told the Committee he would be talking about the lakes in general. He introduced himself to the Committee and said he was involved in water activities for many years and was aware of the dangers involved. He said in planning, the key question was what the need was. He said there was no need for lakes, it was purely vanity, which threatened and endangered over 100 houses in the village. Government UK official advice to landowners who wished to build lakes was that they do not build for flood water retention, for water sports, in historic designed landscape/parks or in areas with biodiversity features. He noted the 2025 flooding bill was more rigorous than that of 2020 when the lakes were passed. He said it was accepted that the landscape would be altered, and the new build flags a higher risk. He noted the lakes were forever and delicate permeable vegetation was being destroyed as the soil hardens it becomes impervious. This was the size of 25000 cubic metres, equating to 40 Olympic pools or 10 football pitches. He said it was interesting at the site visit that the area was not marked and the earth removal was made to sound

minimal. There have already been cottage and road development permitted which would create a huge run off area that didn't currently exist. A full lake is a hazard and the only tests that have been carried out have been done by the estate. In the summer there would be more run off and more silt. He said Blenheim palace lake just cost £10 million to have the silt removed, this was what they would be getting at Yoxford. He said the lakes were forever and these builds would become the Parish council lakes. They wished the estate well but asked would it still be there in 200 years, if there was regular flooding and it is regular, who would insure the houses, they would be vacated houses, stripped out emotionally and spiritually.

There were no questions for Councillor Walford. The Chair invited the applicant to speak.

The applicant said this proposal was a landscape feature which was integral to the overall landscape vision by landscape architect Kim Wilkey. It enhances the setting of Cockfield Hall, the outbuildings and parkland. It was supported by Historic England and officers. The design responded to the hydrology and natural topography of the valley bottom. It would be a natural lake, which would sit at the level of the existing water table, and no imported water would be required to fill it. It is not a flood amelioration project, although it did provide natural flood management by attenuating surface water to help minimise the peak storm discharge into the river Yox and it would improve the water quality in doing so. He told the committee it had a free board water storage area, with 60 million litres of additional water storage. During a significant storm, it would not be dissimilar to existing conditions, where the land acts as a water meadow. However, the time it takes to reach the top of the freeboard was crucial as that would provide a lag to help the initial surge of water from upstream pass. Proposals were tested robustly through detailed flood modelling demonstrating flood management benefits and crucially that the development would not increase flood elsewhere. These technical assessments were considered by Environment Agency and LLFA with no reason for objection with consideration to the NPPF and the PPG on flood risk and coastal change. Recently Suffolk County Council published section 19 report on the impacts of Storm Babet. Whilst the key areas affecting the flooding were south of the A120 and not north, principal reasons were runoff from arable fields, blocked drains and undersized culverts. The LLFA is clear that as part of their medium term actions they want to slow flow by attenuating water, referencing natural flood mitigation measures such as storage ponds, wetland areas and this proposal did just that. The design would create a surface area of 17 acres for lake with a further 4 acres for wetland. In addition to the flood management the lakes would provide an important habitat for nature and would provide amenity, visual amenity for guests, and the future footbridge.

The Chair invited questions to the applicant.

Councillor Beavan asked if they had looked at other places where lakes were created and whether it had caused flooding. The applicant replied that where they have created lakes, Heveningham, Huntingfield, Sibton there were no issues. Storm Babet was a seismic event. He added the modelling was commissioned but not undertaken by them and robustly done by consultants as with any other applicant. Their previous work has not led to the catastrophic impacts that have been suggested.

Councillor Hammond asked what the planned maintenance was and whether maintenance or lack of it influenced flood risk. The applicant replied if nothing at all was done then it would return to its current situation. He added that the way the whole site was presented, meant all lakes worked cumulatively and were assessed cumulatively as part of the drainage strategy. There are inlets and roadside swales provided which are opportunities for further infiltration into soil. The estate maintenance team would regularly maintain the lakes, carrying out debris removal, reed cutting, as required. They have effective maintenance of network of ditches feeding into the lakes. They don't have a prescribed maintenance strategy, but it is within the wider drainage strategy.

Councillor Pitchers asked if they could confirm that the surface of the lakes would be where the natural water table was now. The applicant confirmed that was correct. The worst case scenario would be that it acts like it does currently and day to day it provides additional freeboard capacity to manage flows. It mimics the River Yox, providing a crucial lag.

The applicant returned to Councillor Ashton's earlier point around the boggy area where the bridge was proposed. He confirmed that the lake's water was below ground level so it shouldn't impact on the ground conditions at that point.

The applicant responded to issues raised during public speaking. He said that one of the speakers referenced installing the bank and altering what was there currently. He confirmed they were not aware of that happening.

The flood image picked up on was Little Street, he said he had been there and spoken to residents.

The applicant said it wasn't clear whether the consultant had reviewed the catchment and drainage modelling but that would be helpful.

Referencing the last speaker, the applicant confirmed that they had assessed the scale of earth removal and this was shown in the application drawings.

Councillor Ashton said there was concern that they might intentionally/ unintentionally extract water from the River Yox to keep the water level of the lake. The applicant replied they would not, they were simply digging a hole. It would overflow back into the River Yox and not the other way.

Councillor Ashton asked the applicant if they would be concerned if there was a condition that said no motorised boats except for safety vehicles. The applicant replied that could be a constraint, looking at current lake activities, popular activities were paddle boarding, wild swimming. The lakes would be set up some time before they welcomed the first guests, and they didn't want to set up something that may preclude the next popular activity. He added they did use motorised crafts for maintenance and rangers support the lake activity in support vessels. They wouldn't want to say no and then be picked up on that later. The Wilderness thrives on peace and quiet and the opportunity to be in nature.

Councillor Ashton said the Committee would want to ensure that there wasn't any

significant noise that might be a disturbance. They would want officers to make a condition.

Councillor Beavan suggested the use of electric boats; they would be quieter and be more palatable. The condition seemed appropriate to him as noise would affect both guest and neighbour amenity.

The Chair invited Councillor Ewart, Ward Councillor, to speak.

Councillor Ewart said the application was elementary, and to risk or not risk was how to look at the outcome. She said the NPPF was clear, In flood zone 3 where credible risks to safety or flood vulnerability exist, the presumption was against development. When professional opinion is divided, the advice is to take the precautionary route, this was not the safer alternative, and the notion of the development being made in this location should be brought to a close. This proposal was not gentle landscaping, it was a major engineered intervention in the centre of Yoxford, involving excavating into the flood plain, covering 30 acres, 4 metres deep, generating almost half a million cubic metres of soil. It would require HGVs to move them. It would require 360 million litres of water. The applicant says no tankers would be used, so she asked where the source was. Essex and Suffolk Water had not been contacted. She said the application did not meet the NPPFs water stress requirements. The depth was an issue, usually lakes were 1-1.5 metres deep, these lakes would be 3 metres plus. She said that power boats were being considered, with a 68 metre footbridge and 2 metres wide, the deep water would give no refuge. She said that planning required safe access in flood conditions, not just in good weather. She felt that the slippage risk when walking around the lake could cause a fatality. Re flooding, the existing dynamic reed beds were currently holding back water and slowing it. This was evidenced in storm Babet when the river Yox overtopped the edge and water flooded homes on A12 and A1120. She asked who would be responsible for the outcomes as Environment Agency would not manage the lakes in a flood. The SCC statements relied on models that Babet had already exceeded. Referring to the 3 sequential NPPF tests, the development was in a flood risk, there was alternative land available the lakes did increase the risk if elsewhere. Therefore all 3 tests were not met for the application. She said in summary the presumption where risk exists is against permission, and climate change would heighten the risk. The lakes were optional and recreational and did not impact the greater scheme of a Grade 1 listed hall such as Cockfield Hall. These posed a new and unnecessary flood risk to the residents of Yoxford and to major A roads, she concluded by urging the Committee to refuse planning permission.

The Chair invited questions.

Councillor Hammond asked for more information of her understanding of water requirements for the lake. Councillor Ewart said Essex and Suffolk was not consulted and the implication being filling lakes would be a drain on our scarce resources. Councillor Hammond said winter storage reservoirs were being built everywhere by farmers in order to use excessive winter water in summer, these lakes would be naturally filled by winter rainwater. Outside of any concerns around drought conditions, he asked did she know something they didn't?

Councillor Ewart replied would they not expect to see that in the report? She was

informed recently that the water was taken from the local supply to get the lake underway. She understood about water capture, but it was not possible to capture the volume they talked about there. With humidity water lifts and goes up and has to reproduce. To get to 3 deep metres is a significant amount in our areas. Sizewell were also requiring water, that was a considerable amount of water that they would have to find from their community.

Councillor Hammond said that was a red herring, he grew up in an area where there were lots of gravel pits and when they finished pumping out, the pits filled up to the dynamic water table of that time of year. He said that was what happened and anything else wasn't feasible. Councillor Ewart found it concerning that he would ask that question, she said the information wasn't there and she was endeavouring to establish for the community where the water was coming from. The Chair said she thought that information was in the report. Councillor Ewart replied it discussed a bore hole for the North Lake but gave no indication of the source. She wanted to establish where it was coming from as it was good practice. The Chair asked for that to be clarified later by Officer clarification. Councillor Ewart did not think it was a red herring.

There were no further questions for the Ward Councillor. The Chair invited Officer clarification.

The Head of Planning and Building Control referenced the comments requesting an independent review or the applicant marking their own homework. He said that the planning process depends upon a collation of professional opinions, independent, unbiased responses from consultees. This application had received professional input from the Environmental Agency and the Lead Local Flood Agency, an organisation set up in past decade to make sure that the responsibilities around flood risk are addressed. This has included the Storm Babet, section 19 investigation. The Head of Planning and Building Control said the Planning Committee should have confidence in that approach and not require extra independent advice on top of that already sought within the report.

The Planning Manager said that any developer who worked in the district on a planning scheme would note the rigorous scrutiny from the LLFA on applications. There had been objection in February 2024 from the Environment Agency which had led to more information being submitted from the applicant and then again reviewed by the Environment Agency until the objection was finally removed in August 2024.

The same had occurred with the LLFA where there was a holding flood objection which was not removed until the appropriate information had been received. He concurred with the comments of the Head of Planning and Building Control and stated there had been independent review, public consultation, with qualified experts picking up on detail. This was demonstrated in the extent of responses received.

He advised the committee that the applicant team had provided a rebuttal regarding the report from Mr Mayhew, this was on public access.

Regarding the planning condition suggested by Councillor Ashton, the Planning Manager advised that the condition would be for motor craft for safety purposes and

maintenance purposes only – they would want to flesh it out and get it right as it was an important issue for community.

The Planning Manager directed the Committee to the paragraphs within the report which referred to the sequential and exception testing. He confirmed that the application passed the sequential test and exception testing was not required.

He referred back to the report, and following the input received from public speakers concern regarding flooding and others regarding how the lakes would be filled, he directed Members to paragraph 3.2 of the report where the source and design of the lakes was covered. He invited Matt Hullis, of Suffolk County Council, Lead LLFA to add any clarification.

Matt Hullis introduced himself and said he was part of the team that analysed the application, his team included flood risk engineers and investigators. He clarified that the surface and ground water flood risk was a key issue for developers and that is why they sought independent professional advice. Their concern was to make sure that any decisions did not increase flood risk for homes and infrastructure, they look impartially at proposals and any associated information to analyse and take a decision on whether the flood risk is increasing. He confirmed that this was done with this application, looking at surface water and ground water. They did the same for fluvial flood risk from the River Yox. He confirmed that both SCC and the Environment Agency were united in their views that the proposal did not increase flood risk to the locality or anyone else downstream. He completely understood the concern, and referring to the analogy of a bowl of water, he said this wasn't designed as a flood attenuation basin, but it would provide some attenuation. The flood risk would reduce. This was covered in the JP Chick report, page 17. Following the flood investigation report, post Babet, it was confirmed that the source came from the west of village, saturated ground, and the water could not penetrate. The vast majority came from flow paths, west to east across the Yox, this was gathered from information from local residents, and this had the most impact. There was some impact by the overflow of the Yox natural flood plain.

The Chair invited any final questions. Councillor Beavan asked Mr Hullis if he was confident that the proposal did not increase flood risk, and he replied that he was.

The Chair asked how much difference the maintenance made to how problematic the flood risk would become. Mr Hullis replied that every landowner had the maintenance responsibility to stop blockages and keeping them clear.

In terms of lakes effectively its vegetation and silting up which would be the natural cause of not undertaking any maintenance, worst case scenario, lakes became completely silted up, original ground level would reconstitute itself over decades. And you have what you have now.

Mr Hullis referred to the sponge effect, if soil was removed and open space created more water can be stored.

It was confirmed that the construction of a lake was compatible with the NPPF, this was confirmed in paragraph 7.4 of the report.

The Chair invited the Committee to debate the application.

Councillor Ashdown thanked the Officer for their presentation and everyone's input. He said there had been lots of questions and answers, this was a major project which would affect people in different ways. He thought it enhanced what the Wilderness were aiming to do and suggested it should be approved.

Councillor Pitchers referenced the NPPF (paragraph 171) and said he was happy to second Councillor Ashdown.

Councillor Beavan returned to the condition of the lake use and suggested he would prefer noiseless craft with electric motors.

Councillor Ashton said the condition should not include use of craft powered by internal combustion engines, with the exception of safety, maintenance and support for disabled guests. The Planning Manager agreed this would be a reasonable condition.

On the proposition of Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Pitchers, it was

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions listed below.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents:

Drawing No. CO.108/001 Rev C - Location Plan - Received 19 December 2023

Drawing No. CO.108.002 Rev E - Proposed Lake Design Overview - Received 14 June 2024

Drawing No. CO.108.003 - Proposed Lake Design Inset 1 - Received 19 December 2023

Drawing No. CO.108.004 Rev C - Proposed Lake Design Inset 2 - Received 14 June 2024

Drawing No. CO.108.005 Rev A - Proposed Lake Design Inset 3 - Received 26 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.108.006 Rev A - Proposed Lake Design Inset 4 - Received 26 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.108.007 Rev B - Proposed Lake Design Inset 5 - Received 26 April 2024

Drawing No. CO.108/008 - Proposed Lake Sections - Received 19 December 2023

Drawing No. CO.113/001 - West Lake Public Bridge - Proposed Plans, elevation and typical section - Received 19 December 2023

Hydraulic Modelling Report Dated June 2024 by Waterco Rev 3 Ref: 15194-HMR-03.docx - Received 14 June 2024

Level 3 Flood Risk Assessment Report by JP Chick & Partners Ltd Report: IE22/014 FRA

Dated 14 June 2024 Rev. 02 - Received 14 June 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 017 - Proposed Section A-A - Received 26 April 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 016 - Proposed Brick Pier Details Walled Garden - Received 26 April 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 015 - Proposed South-East Elevations Walled Garden - Received 26 April 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 014 - Proposed North-West Elevations Walled Garden - Received 26 April 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 013 Rev A - Proposed Site Plan Walled Garden - Received 26 April 2024.

Arboricultural impact Assessment by Nicholsons Ref: 5981 Version 1 Dated December 2023

Draft Tree Protection Plan V2 - Inset 6 of the Arboricultural impact Assessment by Nicholsons.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced a Construction Management Plan shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Construction of the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plan.

The Construction Management Plan shall include the following matters:

- a) parking and turning for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
- b) loading and unloading of plant and materials
- c) piling techniques (if applicable)
- d) storage of plant and materials
- e) provision and use of wheel washing facilities
- f) programme of site and all associated works such as utilities including details of traffic management necessary to undertake these works
- g) site working and delivery times
- h) a communications plan to inform local residents of the program of works
- i) provision of boundary hoarding and lighting
- j) details of proposed means of dust suppression
- k) details of measures to prevent mud from vehicles leaving the site during construction
- l) haul routes for construction traffic on the highway network and
- m) monitoring and review mechanisms.
- n) Details of deliveries times to the site during construction phase.
- o) Layout of facilities above to be included on a plan.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety to avoid the hazard caused by mud on the highway and to ensure minimal adverse impact on the public highway during the construction phase. This is a pre-commencement condition because an approved Construction Management Plan must be in place at the outset of the development.

4. In the event that contamination which has not already been identified to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is found or suspected on the site it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Unless agreed in writing by the

LPA no further development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance, removal of underground tanks and relic structures) shall take place until this condition has been complied with in its entirety.

An investigation and risk assessment must be completed in accordance with a scheme which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons (see National Planning Policy Framework) and conform with prevailing guidance (including BS8485:2015+A1:2019, BS 10175:2011+A2:2017 and Land Contamination Risk Management) and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the review and confirmation in writing by the Local Planning Authority that likely risks have been identified and will be investigated accordingly.

Where remediation is necessary a detailed Remediation Strategy (RS) must be prepared and is subject to the review and confirmation in writing by the Local Planning Authority as likely to address the risks identified. The RS must include detailed methodologies for all works to be undertaken, site management procedures, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria. The RS must be carried out in its entirety, and the Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification prior to the commencement of the remedial works.

Following completion of the remediation strategy a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation must be submitted to, reviewed by and confirmed in writing by the LPA as likely to have addressed the risks identified.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

5. No development shall take place within the area indicated [the whole site] until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning

Authority.

Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Policy SCLP11.7 of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Prior to first use the site investigation and post investigation assessment shall be completed, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Condition 5 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.

Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Policy SCLP11.7 of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. Development must be undertaken in accordance with the ecological avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures identified within the Ecological Impact Assessment (CSA Environmental, 2023) and Ecological Impact Assessment Appendices (CSA Environmental, 2023) as submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected and enhanced as part of the development.

8. No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction

period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected as part of the development.

9. No part of the development which may kill, injure or disturb great crested newt or damage or destroy a great crested newt breeding site or resting place, shall in any circumstances commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with either:

a) a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) authorising the specified development to go ahead or demonstration that the appropriate Natural England Class Licence is in place to allow works to commence; or

b) a statement in writing from the relevant licensing body, or a suitably qualified and licenced ecologist, to the effect that it is not considered that the specified development will require a licence.

Reason: To ensure that the legislation relating to great crested newt has been adequately addressed as part of the implementation of the development.

10. Prior to first use details and the location of other associated infrastructure such as life belts and mooring points shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the amenity of the area.

11. Before the development within 30m of the existing Public Right of Way is commenced details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and SCC Green Access, showing the proposed bridge provision (Yoxford footpath 8) and detailed design specification. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is completed.

Reason: To promote and facilitate green access modes and to provide safe and suitable access for all users in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024) Para. 115 and 117 and SCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) - Suffolk Green Access Strategy 2020. <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/imported/suffolk-green-access-strategy-2020-2030.pdf>

12. All hedges or trees within the site, unless indicated as being removed within the Arboricultural impact Assessment by Nicholsons Ref: 5981 Version 1 Dated December 2023, shall be retained for at least five years following practical completion of the approved development, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority; and these hedges/trees shall be protected by the erection of secure fencing as shown within the Draft Tree Protection Plan V2 - Inset plans 1 - 6 of the Arboricultural impact Assessment by Nicholsons.

Within the aforementioned five-year period any trees, parts of hedges or hedgerows removed without the Local Planning Authority's consent or which die or become, in the Authority's opinion, seriously damaged or otherwise defective shall be replaced and/or shall receive remedial action as required by the Authority. Such works shall be implemented by not later than the end of the following planting season, with plants of such size and species and in such number and positions as may be agreed with the Authority. The hedge(s) shall be reinforced with further planting where necessary to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing hedges and trees.

13. Prior to first use of the lake details of the recreational activities proposed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lake shall thereafter be used in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the residential amenity of nearby residents.

6 DC/24/1567/LBC - Walled Garden, Cockfield Hall, Station Road, Yoxford, Saxmundham, IP17 3ET

The Committee received report **ES/2621** which related to planning application **DC/24/1567/LBC**. The application sought Listed Building Consent for alterations to and deconstruction of a section of the upper walled garden at Cockfield Hall as part of a wider Heritage led masterplan. The application was triggered for Committee via the Call-In process.

The Senior Planner recapped the elements of the previous presentation that related to the Walled Garden.

It was recommended that the application be approved in line with the conditions in the Officer's report.

There were no questions for the officer on the application or third party representations.

The Chair invited the first public speaker from Yoxford Parish Council to speak.

Councillor Roper said initially the Parish Council did not have an issue with this, but they now had new members who did have more of a problem with it. They were objecting to the harm being caused to the upper part of the wall. The approval of the two lakes did not justify dismantling a nationally recognised heritage asset. They were unsure of what length of the wall would come down and felt it was vague which seemed unacceptable for a heritage asset. The walled garden is grade 2 listed, it is in grade 2 parkland and in a conservation area. She said that the NPPF section 199 states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. Harm would be done by dismantling the wall. There was no public benefit, only commercial benefit, with the erosion of more heritage assets being incremental. There was likely to be further planning permission for changes to heritage assets. The damage to the structure, landscape and setting conflicted with NPPF 1.99 and Local Plan 11.5. They wished to protect heritage assets and asked what harm would be done to the existing

wall.

There were no questions for Councillor Roper. The Chair invited the applicant to speak. He told the committee that the intention was to deliver a viable future use for the estate, contribute to tourism in East Suffolk and create jobs and investment in the local area. A coherent, well designed master plan was essential. They have outlined how they have achieved this alongside the many benefits it has on the surrounding wildlife habitat, flood management etc. The walled garden was listed after the masterplan proposals were submitted, although it was treated as curtilage listed in the initial application. Whilst unfortunate, they considered the partial deconstruction of the later era of the wall against the wider public and heritage benefit and benefits of the lakes. This included restoration of the other areas of the wall and enhanced setting of the listed buildings, sustaining their viable long term use. They had carried out detailed surveys of the wall. They proposed to plant trees along the alignment of the deconstructed wall to allow its alignment to be marked for future generations. The application had been considered by officers and statutory consultees with no objections.

There were no questions for the applicant, the Chair invited the Ward Councillor to speak.

Councillor Ewart said the application was striking due to unusual clarity. She noted that every professional voice accepted there would be harm to the newly listed wall, yet despite that there is a willingness to remove it. Historic England was unequivocal. They state that taking down part of the walled garden would result in harm to the listed structure and to the registered landscape. The Council's own heritage officer echoes this, saying it was regrettable, noting the loss of the historic fabric making it harder to appreciate and understand the setting of Cockfield Hall. The applicant's own heritage assessment conceded a medium adverse impact. The timing suggests that Historic England acted deliberately and promptly to secure the status of key heritage assets at Cockfield Hall on the estate during a period of active change. Councillor Ewart said that the Councillors now found themselves weighing up the protection against a non-statutory, non-adoptive master plan, an internal vision, which remained flexible, conceptual and without formal planning status, which raised a broader question about fairness and consistency. If the demolition of nationally listed fabric can be justified here, what precedent does that set. She noted that the Suffolk Preservation Society had not make any submissions about Cockfield Hall on their grade 1 or 2 listing. The society stated that it reviewed applications on a weekly basis where Suffolk Heritage may be at risk. She concluded that the committee was being asked to support the removal of part of a listed structure for the promise of wider benefits later. The test was where harm could be avoided and where alternatives exist, the justification must be clear and convincing and in this case it was not.

There were no questions for Councillor Ewart, the Chair invited the Officer clarification.

The Planning Manager confirmed that Suffolk Preservation Society were not a statutory consultee and not obliged to respond.

He said it was correct that the officers acknowledge the partial demolition was

regrettable, in NPPF terms that should be avoided where there was no or insufficient justification. The report sets out from paragraphs 7.9 to 7.13 the direct and associated heritage benefits, and these have been considered as part of the planning balance to offset against the heritage harms.

The Principal Design and Heritage Officer noted changes in structure at Suffolk Preservation Society and that they didn't appear to comment on applications currently. He pointed out paragraph 215 which set out the harm and public benefits balance. Benefits include heritage benefits such as repair, strengthening of the rest of wall, the implementation of masterplan. He noted the applications were linked, if the lakes were approved, part of the design was the removal of the walled garden, therefore it had to be removed if looking at it in the round.

Councillor Ashdown said they had heard all they needed to, they had visited the site and seen the wall, they appreciated the harm, however they were gaining the rills which were important for habitats. He was happy to support the application.

Councillor Hammond said it would be a shame to lose the wall; however, it would be inconsistent to refuse having just granted permission for the lakes. It was the later part of wall, and the bricks would be reused. On balance he felt they should agree to deconstruct the wall and was happy to second Councillor Ashdown's proposal.

Councillor Gee said it could be setting a precedent and listed building status should be sacrosanct. She felt they should not be destroying something so intrinsic to Yoxford when it would only benefit people coming to be entertained. They should not be approving demolishing the structure.

On the proposition of Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Hammond it was

RESOLVED

That the application be APPROVED subject to conditions.

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 18 of the Act (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents:

Drawing No. CO.108/001 Rev C - Location Plan - Received 19 December 2023

Drawing No. CO.108 017 - Proposed Section A-A - Received 26 April 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 016 - Proposed Brick Pier Details Walled Garden - Received 26 April 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 015 Rev A - Proposed South-East Elevations Walled Garden - Received 27 August 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 014 Rev A - Proposed North-West Elevations Walled Garden -

Received 27 August 2024.

Drawing No. CO.108 013 Rev A - Proposed Site Plan Walled Garden - Received 26 April 2024.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

7 DC/23/4866/FUL - North Lake, Cockfield Hall Estate, Station Road, Yoxford, IP17 3ET

The Committee received report **ES/2622** which related to planning application **DC/23/4866/FUL**. The application sought full planning permission for the creation of a water body to be used for irrigation of new forestry plantations, habitat creation, sustainable drainage and recreational use as part of the wider tourism development. The works formed part of a comprehensive masterplan for the estate.

The Senior Planner recapped the elements of the previous presentation that related to the North Lake.

It was recommended that the application be approved in line with the conditions in the Officer's report.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee.

Councillor Beavan asked about whether the bore hole would be subject to an extraction licence as he had concerned about its usage in the summer when the water tables were low. This was directed to the applicant to answer.

The Chair invited the objector to speak. They had been called away for work and were no longer available.

The Chair invited the Parish Council representative to speak.

He told the Committee that the estate was proud of their management of lakes at Heveningham and Sibton, but Sibton had flooded spectacularly in recent years. They were both a mile from local residents but at Yoxford there was sometimes only 50 metres from residents. The lakes were forever and will need to be managed in years to come. The newest lake was not shown on the site visit, this was because it had reed infestation and was dug out with diggers. Lake management was important, what needs was there to gift them to Yoxford for years to come.

The depth of lake worried him, people die within seconds, it was 3 metres deep where boats, canoes are and should be 1m or under depth like Thorpeness.

The new lake would be dug out by digger, killing wildlife and contrary to biodiversity.

He took the senior nature warden from Orfordness to compare. Orfordness was half closed to visitors during breeding season, but this was not the case on the estate. Uncontrolled public and dogs in the breeding season did not encourage wildlife, nor would the lakes with sports activities and the only birds that would visit were ducks and wood pigeons. Rare birds would be left to fend for themselves amongst dogs and

people. How would events be quietened in the open. Lakes were built for fun not for meditation, he said a 9pm curfew would be difficult to enforce in the party season.

There were no questions for the Parish Council, the Chair invited the applicant to speak.

Mr Bostock said the north lake was a landscape feature of the masterplan. Forming a key character area alongside woodland planting and arable reversion to pasture. All part of a catchment sensitive landscape management approach employed across the wider estate which had been developed with Natural England's support. The design considered the local topography, and it sat within clay land where the existing clay lining would help with the storage of water. It acted as part of sustainable drainage strategy taking surface water runoff from the roofs and roadways within the northern element of the masterplan. Any overspill would be contained as part of the wider drainage strategies within the proposed swales where water not absorbed back into the soil would be deposited into the bottom lakes before eventually finding its way into the rivers. This process also benefited by removing silts and impurities from the surface water entering the river. The lake would provide irrigation for new plantation as well as new habitat and visual amenity. Any use by guests would be consistent with how other lakes were used across the estate. The lead local flood agency has no objections.

Councillor Hammond had viewed the site on Google earth and asked what the oblong scraping marks were. The applicant confirmed that archaeology trenching and nothing was found.

Councillor Beavan asked if they had an abstraction licence for bore holes. The applicant replied that the majority of the boreholes were unlicensed, the limit was 20 cubic metres a day, they were looking to use borehole from Mill Farm, the centre of Masterplan. Councillor Beavan asked about activity in the summer, the applicant wasn't sure on the detail, they related to the farming use of the estate.

Councillor Ewart read out a statement from Adrian Mayhew. He sent apologies for having to leave the Committee and said that the Committee were duly appointed guardians and protectors having voted on the first section. He asked the Committee to establish a management plan with regards to the flooding and lakes and be aware that drowning statistics show open water swimming and SUPs as the UK's biggest risk; so, think of the safety.

The Chair invited Councillor Ewart, Ward Councillor, to speak.

Councillor Ewart had some questions to raise as she felt the Committee report lacked some information. She referred to the volume of soil and clay to be extracted and where that would go. Did the borehole impact other farms or not and what measures were in place for public safety, given the depth of the water.

The Planning Manager was not clear what the report omissions were referred to as a comprehensive report was given to Members; there was nothing to add.

The Chair invited any members of the Committee to ask final questions.

Councillor Pitchers asked if the lake was graduated or a straight drop. It was confirmed it was graduated.

The Chair added that there would need to be sufficient safety information and this would be considered in the balance.

Councillor Gee asked about a scenario where guests may be intoxicated and had an accident. It was confirmed this would be part of the management plan rather than a planning consideration.

Councillor Pitchers proposed that the recommendation was accepted and Councillor Ashdown seconded.

Councillor Gee referred to 83 fine mature trees being cut, several grade 1. She noted the applicant will plant more trees, but it would take decades to get to the height of some of the trees proposed to be felled, would like to see trees retained, not saplings. The Senior Planner confirmed that the tree felling was part of the previous application.

On the proposal of Councillor Pitchers, seconded by Councillor Ashdown it was

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** Subject to conditions listed below.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents:

Drawing No. CO.114/001/D - Site Plan - Received 19 December 2023

Drawing No. CO.114/003/0 - Proposed Lake Sections - Received 19 December 2023

Drawing No. CO.114/002/B - Proposed Lake Design - Received 19 December 2023

Arboricultural impact Assessment by Nicholsons (Ref: 5981 Version 2, Dated November 2023)

Flood Risk letter - North Lake by JPC Environmental Services Ref: IE23/076/NL-r2 (Dated 12 November 2023)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. Development must be undertaken in accordance with the ecological avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures identified within the Ecological Impact Assessment (CSA Environmental, 2023) and Ecological Impact Assessment Appendices (CSA Environmental, 2023) as submitted with the planning application and

agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected and enhanced as part of the development

4. No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that ecological receptors are adequately protected as part of the development.

5. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced a Construction Management Plan shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Construction of the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plan.

The Construction Management Plan shall include the following matters:

- a) parking and turning for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
- b) loading and unloading of plant and materials
- c) piling techniques (if applicable)
- d) storage of plant and materials
- e) provision and use of wheel washing facilities
- f) programme of site and all associated works such as utilities including details of traffic management necessary to undertake these works
- g) site working and delivery times
- h) a communications plan to inform local residents of the program of works
- i) provision of boundary hoarding and lighting
- j) details of proposed means of dust suppression
- k) details of measures to prevent mud from vehicles leaving the site during construction

- l) haul routes for construction traffic on the highway network and
- m) monitoring and review mechanisms.
- n) Details of deliveries times to the site during construction phase.
- o) Layout of facilities above to be included on a plan.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety to avoid the hazard caused by mud on the highway and to ensure minimal adverse impact on the public highway during the construction phase. This is a pre-commencement condition because an approved Construction Management Plan must be in place at the outset of the development.

6. No development shall take place within the area indicated [the whole site] until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Policy SCLP11.7 of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. Prior to first use the site investigation and post investigation assessment shall be completed, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Condition 6 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.

Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Policy SCLP11.7 of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. Prior to first recreational use of the lake details of the recreational activities proposed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lake shall thereafter be used in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of the residential amenity of nearby residents.

8 DC/25/1867/FUL - Woodleys, The Common, Southwold, IP18 6HR

The Committee received report **ES/2623** which related to planning application **DC/25/1867/FUL**. The application sought full planning permission for the demolition of an existing chalet bungalow and construction of a 1.5 storey replacement dwelling and associated garage, swimming pool and external works. The application was referred to Committee following comments received from the Town Council and Ward Member.

The Senior Planner presented the application to the Committee.

The site location plan and aerial photograph showed the site in context, alongside the surrounding properties and the location of the common and playing fields.

The existing and proposed block plans were shared, along with existing and proposed floor plans, and front and rear elevations.

The materials proposed were hung tile at the upper floor and grey brick to the bottom. The new front elevation was explained with the height being not a lot taller than what was currently there. 3D rendering were shown, giving the Committee a view of what it would look like from the Common, with and without the vegetation that currently exists on the site. Similarly 3D renderings showed how the building would look on site and its relationship with neighbouring properties.

Various photos in and around the site were shown including from the common and the proposed access. There were no objections from highways or PROW. The commons trust did have concern as to the construction traffic, however the Senior Planner noted this was a civil matter between them and the applicant and not a material planning consideration. If permission was granted it would be required to be resolved outside of the planning process.

The material planning considerations and key issues were summarised as:

- Design – impact to conservation area
- Residential amenity impacts
- Access

It was recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions in the officer's report.

There were no questions from the Committee for the Senior Planner.

The Chair invited the first public speaker to make their representation.

The objector told the Committee that she was making a representation in two capacities, one as a member of Southwold commons trust and also as a local resident. In neither of those capacities did she have knowledge or expertise of planning law, so it may not be direct planning matters that she raised. She perceived possible and likely adverse effect on people and local environment from the development. She said the Commons trust were not consulted in a formal way. All of the objections raised by others would have been supported had it been consulted. There were serious environment concerns, quality of heritage space, health and safety and planning over development. There was little evidence that public amenity interest relating to the area was considered seriously. The paddock was an attractive peaceful area, public walk and sit and picnic and play freely. All of these uses would be affected by necessary heavy traffic proposed with the development. There would be impact on public access as a resident. She was not impressed with the architectural features. She had concerns for all of the local residents. It was an unmade track to their homes, garages and gardens and it was already a safety concern for daily comings and goings, it would be unsafe if constantly used for construction traffic, no consideration, anyone stepping outside of garden would be met with vehicles. She urged the committee to have a site visit to see what was involved and to consider concerns before a decision is made on the proposal.

The Chair invited Councillor Flunder from Southwold Town Council to speak.

Councillor Flunder shared some slides to give his presentation context. The track behind the property was shown, which at this time of year was in a dreadful condition and reinforced the issue regarding traffic management. He shared photographs which gave an impression of the property, it's tranquil nature and the public footpath location. He said the Commons Trust owned all the land and was important and part of the way that Southwold managed the commons and the environment and general landscape.

In Southwold Town Council's view the application was against the Neighbourhood Plan, Policy SWD6 showed overdevelopment in this area, replacing a modest 1.5 storey with a 2 storey of brutal industrial design. They questioned that Historic England were in agreement. He read that on page 83 historic England gave concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds, and issues and safeguards needed to be addressed in order to meet requirements of NPPF. He disagreed with the planner and felt it resulted in adverse impact on the common and on the area that they were talking about. He asked that the application was refused and a site visit proposed.

The Chair invited questions to Councillor Flunder.

Councillor Ashton said that Historic England provided an update on 13 October to say they no longer had objections. This was acknowledged by Councillor Flunder.

The Chair clarified that the Historic England comments were within the reports.

The Agent acting on behalf of the applicant made his representation. He clarified that the allegations that due to the number of bedrooms and swimming pool the property was to be a party house were not true, this was a forever home for a family and their 3 children.

Regarding the Commons Trust, he said a meeting was organised between Plaice Design and the Southwold Town Council in May prior to the application being submitted. During that meeting it was considered that by engaging with the Town Council they were also engaging with the Commons Trust.

Re Southwold Neighbourhood Plan, the proposal had been developed with a full appreciation of the criteria set out in the national design guide along with the seaside suburban conservation area appraisals, which ensured the replacement dwelling was contextual and site specific.

Southwold Town Council raised concerns that SWD 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan was not being complied with, the agent reassured members this was not the case and careful consideration had been given. They had fully engaged with ESC since October 2024, and designs continued to be revised, e.g. introduction of dormers to proactively respond to the comments received. The Design and Heritage Officer supported the application, and Historic England removed their objection following changes. This was a good example where opportunities to maximise design quality had been considered. They had considered neighbours with massing. The seaside area had considerable variety, no proposed vernacular. This was deemed to be bespoke, site specific, locally distinctive, replacing a neutral contribution, if approved a family home would be able to be built that contributed to the variety of architectural styles.

Councillor Hammond asked for clear vernacular to be elaborated on. The agent said the words were from the conservation character area appraisals. In response to whether it was in keeping, the agent said he did, the design focused on its charm being a variety of styles, grey brickwork, tiles.

Councillor Beavan said he wasn't an architect, but didn't they think it looked different? The agent asked if different was a bad thing, noting when Woodleys was first built and the neighbouring paddock, they must have represented change from what was there. Every town changes and it was not to be scared of.

Regarding the construction concerns, he said all residents of Strickland Place used the track to get to their homes. The agent confirmed there would be a construction management plan, to preserve track, and return it to its original state at the end as well as maintaining it throughout the use.

The Chair invited Officer clarification.

It was confirmed that the Commons Trust were not a required consultee otherwise they would have been invited to respond.

There was a point made around there being no justification provided for a basement; this was not necessary it would be considered as part of the overall layout of the dwelling.

The Chair referred to a point made about subsidence in the basement. The Senior Planner advised that applicants could build basements under permitted development if

they wished to. It was more of building control issue, in this case it was not an area known for flooding, a low risk proposal, not something to necessarily take into account.

Councillor Beavan said this was difficult, he thought it was an ugly building, but it was difficult to find a reasonable excuse to reject it. Looking at design and acceptability in a conservation area, this was subjective, and it was difficult to object on the basis of design. He felt they should be sympathetic to local opinion. The Paddock was a very special place. He would abstain.

The Chair noted that the initial application was for a building noticeably taller than what was there, and it was now much more acceptable.

Councillor Beavan said he didn't want people to think that they could submit something bad and improve it and it would be approved.

Councillor Ashdown was sceptical after the report and concerned it seemed significantly larger than existing property. However, he agreed with the officer, that it wasn't significantly different in height. There was significant vegetation and as time went on it would mature and be less obstructive, he was minded going along with approval.

Councillor Ashton said following the initial application and consultee comments, these were taken on board, he asked had it gone far enough. There were experts who were independent of both the applicants and objectors, he could see no reason why he as a councillor should not just take that advice, he shared concerns but was happy to propose it was accepted. Councillor Pitchers seconded the proposal, it was not to his taste, it had been reduced and he could not see grounds to object it.

Councillor Wakeling liked it. He appreciated the roofline coming down and supported the application saying it bedded in nicely.

Councillor Gee did not find the design attractive.

Councillor Hammond agreed with Councillor Gee. He added it was a shame that there was the need to tear down rather than extend; it was a shame that national policy and VAT incentives were against reusing and adapting. He would be voting against. Councillor Beavan said he would be voting against.

On the proposal of Councillor Ashton, seconded by Councillor Pitchers, it was

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to conditions.

Conditions:

1. 3 Year time limit

2. Compliance with plans
3. Parking and Manoeuvring
4. Demolition/Construction Management Plan
5. Compliance with Preliminary Ecological Assessment
6. External Lighting Strategy
7. Method statement for nesting birds, reptiles, amphibians, and hedgehog
8. Further Details
9. Water efficiency
10. Obscured windows
11. A noise assessment

The meeting concluded at 5.30pm.

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Chair



Planning Committee North

Title of Report:

East Suffolk Enforcement Action – Case Update

Meeting Date

20 January 2026

Report Author and Tel No

Mia Glass
01502 523081

Is the report Open or Exempt?

Open

REPORT

The attached is a summary of the status of all outstanding enforcement cases for East Suffolk Council where enforcement action has either been sanctioned under delegated powers or through the Committee up until 18th December 2025. At present there are 21 such cases.

Information on all cases has been updated at the time of preparing the report such that the last row in the table for each item shows the position at that time. Officers will provide a further verbal update should the situation have changed for any of the cases.

Members will note that where Enforcement action has been authorised the Councils Solicitor shall be instructed accordingly, but the speed of delivery of response may be affected by factors which are outside of the control of the Enforcement Service.

The cases are organised into categories based upon current status:

A. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, and the compliance period is still ongoing. *8 current cases*

B. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served and is now the subject of an appeal. *6 current cases*

- C. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, upheld on appeal, and is now within a compliance period. *4 current case*
- D. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, upheld on appeal/no appeal submitted and is currently the subject of court action. *0 current cases*
- E. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, upheld on appeal/no appeal submitted and now in the period for compliance following court action. *1 current case*
- F. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, upheld on appeal, and the period for compliance following court action has now expired, so further legal proceedings are being considered and/or are underway. *1 current cases*
- G. Cases on which a formal enforcement action has been placed on hold or where it is not currently expedient to pursue. *1 current case*

RECOMMENDATION

That the outstanding enforcement matters up to 18th December 2025 be noted.

A. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, and the compliance period is still ongoing.

A.1

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/2018/0476/USE
Location / Address	Part Os 1028 Highgate Lane Dallinghoo
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	15.11.2018
Nature of Breach: Siting of a converted vehicle for residential use	
Summary timeline of actions on case 11/09/2023 - Enforcement Notice served. Comes into effect on the 11/10/2023 19/03/2024 - Extension of time given until May, due to ground conditions. 15/05/2024 - Extension of time given until 27/06/2025 due to receipt of confidential information 23/06/2025 - Further extension granted until 19 th June 2027 due to confidential information	
Current Status/Position In compliance period.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	19.06.2027

A.2

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/22/0038/DEV
Location / Address	The Queen The Street Brandeston
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	11.02.2022
Nature of Breach: Change of use for the property from public house with ancillary accommodation to an independent residential dwelling.	
Summary timeline of actions on case 11/04/2024 -Enforcement notice served. Comes into effect on the 11/05/2024 17/06/2025 -Site visit conducted and investigations ongoing.	
Current Status/Position Investigation ongoing.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	11.05.2025

A.3

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/22/0066/DEV
Location / Address	Hornbill Business Park, Hornbill Way, Ellough
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	11.03.2022
Nature of Breach: Erection of new business units	
Summary timeline of actions on case 31/10/2024 -Enforcement Notice served, comes into effect 30/11/2024, with 9-month compliance period. 26/06/2025 - Planning application submitted for development DC/25/2597/FUL. 15/07/2025 - 6-month extension given, to allow for the planning application to be decided. 15/12/2025 - further extension of time agreed due to Planning Application awaiting determination.	
Current Status/Position Within compliance period.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	18.03.2026

A.4

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/24/0047/DEV
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Location / Address	Potton Hall Blythburgh Road Westleton
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	09.02.2024
Nature of Breach: Breach of Condition 8 of C/06/0819– hardstanding laid	
Summary timeline of actions on case 18/02/2025 – Breach of Condition Notice served. Comes into effect on the 18/02/2025. 4 month compliance period. 19/03/2025 - Application submitted including the hardstanding- DC/25/1209/FUL. 27/08/2025 - Planning application approved for part of the hard standing. 6 months given for unauthorised section to be removed.	
Current Status/Position In compliance period.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	27.02.2026

A.5

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/22/0154/DEV
Location / Address	175 London Road North, Lowestoft
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	20.05.2022
Nature of Breach: Unauthorised changes to shop front	
Summary timeline of actions on case 11/06/2025 – Enforcement notice served. Comes into effect on 11/07/2025. 6-month compliance period.	
Current Status/Position In compliance period.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	11.01.2026

A.6

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/23/0406/DEV
Location / Address	148 Blackheath Road, Lowestoft
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	17.11.2023
Nature of Breach: Unauthorised partially built extension	
Summary timeline of actions on case	

11/06/2025 – Enforcement notice served. Comes into effect on 11/07/2025. 4-month compliance period.	
16/12/2025 - Notice has been complied with, case closed.	
<u>Current Status/Position</u> Case closed	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	11.11.2025

A.7

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/22/0329/DEV
Location / Address	Farm View 4 Millville, Mill Lane, Campsea Ashe
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	24.08.2022
<u>Nature of Breach:</u> Erection of a storage building	
<u>Summary timeline of actions on case</u> 19/08/2025 – Enforcement notice served. Comes into effect on 18/09/2025. 4 month compliance period.	
<u>Current Status/Position</u> In compliance period.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	18.01.2026

A.8

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/21/0527/LISTL
Location / Address	Crown Hotel High Street Lowestoft
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	18.12.2025
<u>Nature of Breach:</u> unauthorised works to LB	
<u>Summary timeline of actions on case</u> 18/12/2025 – Enforcement notice served. Comes into effect on 23/01/2026. 1 year compliance period.	
<u>Current Status/Position</u> In compliance period.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	23/01/2027

B. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served and is now the subject of an appeal

B.1

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/21/0201/DEV
Location / Address	39 Foxglove End, Leiston
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	26.04.2021
Nature of Breach: Artificial hedge, support structure and fencing which is over 2m in height	
Summary timeline of actions on case 28/11/2022 – Enforcement Notice served. Comes into effect on the 06/01/2023. 2 months for compliance 09/01/2023 - Pre-start letter from Planning Inspectorate 09/01/2024 - Start letter received from Planning Inspectorate, statements required by 20 th February 2024.	
Current Status/Position Awaiting Planning Inspectorate Decision.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	Dependent upon date and outcome of Appeal Decision

B.2

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/23/0234/DEV
Location / Address	Animal Welfare Centre, 333 High Street, Walton
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	26.07.2023
Nature of Breach: Change of use of animal clinic and boarding facilities to use for storage of furniture, building materials and other associated items with a property development business.	
Summary timeline of actions on case 02/05/2024 -Enforcement notice served. Comes into effect on the 01/06/2024 03/06/2024 -Appeal Submitted, awaiting start date. 19/09/2024 -Appeal start letter received. Statement due by 28 th October 2024	
Current Status/Position Awaiting Planning Inspectorate Decision.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	Dependent upon date and outcome of Appeal Decision

B.3

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/24/0103/DEV
Location / Address	37 Foxglove End, Leiston
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	28.03.2024
Nature of Breach: Erection of artificial hedge and supporting structure	
Summary timeline of actions on case 13/08/2024 -Enforcement Notice served, comes into effect 12/09/2024, with 2 month compliance period. 13/09/2024 - Appeal submitted, awaiting start letter.	
Current Status/Position Awaiting Planning Inspectorate Decision.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	Dependent upon date and outcome of Appeal Decision

B.4

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/23/0336/DEV
Location / Address	Land at The Green, Saxtead, Woodbridge
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	29.09.2023
Nature of Breach: Laying of a hardstanding and associated groundworks	
Summary timeline of actions on case 17/10/2024 -Enforcement Notice served, comes into effect 16/11/2024, with 4-month compliance period. 29/11/2024 - Appeal submitted, awaiting start letter. 11/02/2025 - Start letter received, statements due by 20 th March 2025.	
Current Status/Position Awaiting Planning Inspectorate Decision.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	Dependent upon date and outcome of Appeal Decision

B.5

Location / Address	Land Adjacent Toad Cottage 146 Kirton Road Trimley St Martin
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	11.11.2022

Nature of Breach: Unauthorised storage	
Summary timeline of actions on case 18/02/2025 - Enforcement Notice served. Comes into effect on the 20/03/2025. 3 month compliance period. 18/03/2025 - Appeal submitted, awaiting start letter. 15/04/2025 - Appeal start letter received. Statements due by 26 th May 2025.	
Current Status/Position Awaiting Planning Inspectorate Decision.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	Dependent upon date and outcome of Appeal Decision

B.6

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/24/0292/USE
Location / Address	The Old Golf Shop, Newbourne Road, Waldringfield
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	13.09.2024
Nature of Breach: Unauthorised residential use of golf shop.	
Summary timeline of actions on case 29/04/2025 – Enforcement notice served. Comes into effect on the 29/05/2025. 12 month compliance period. 16/06/2025 - Appeal start letter received, statements due 28 th July.	
Current Status/Position Awaiting Planning Inspectorate Appeal Decision	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	Dependent upon date and outcome of Appeal Decision

C. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, notice upheld on appeal, and is now within a compliance period.

C.1

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/23/0163/DEV
Location / Address	12 Holland Road, Felixstowe
North or South Area	South
Date of Report of Breach	26.05.2023
Nature of Breach: Erection of a ground floor extension and air conditioning unit.	
Summary timeline of actions on case 26/03/2024 - Enforcement Notice served. Comes into effect on the 25/04/2024 29/04/2024 – Appeal submitted. Statement due by 20 th June 12/06/2025 - Appeal dismissed. 21/10/2025 - Extension of time agreed due to extenuating circumstance.	
Current Status/Position In compliance period following appeal.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	23.02.2026

C.2

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/21/0121/USE
Location / Address	The Pastures, The Street, North Cove
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	17.03.2021
Nature of Breach: Material change of use of Land to a storage use, including the stationing of static and touring caravans for residential use and the storage of vehicles, lorry backs, and other items.	
Summary timeline of actions on case 03/11/2022 – Enforcement Notice served. Comes into effect on the 05/12/2022. 4 months for compliance 14/11/2022 - Pre-start letter from Planning Inspectorate 14/12/2022 - Appeal started. Written Representations Process, statement due by 6 th February 2023. PINS Reference APP/X3540/C/22/3312353 13/06/2025 - Appeal visit date set for 18 th August 2025. 26/08/2025 - Appeal dismissed. 6 months for compliance.	
Current Status/Position In Compliance period	

Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	26.02.2026
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C.3

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/22/0158/DEV
Location / Address	11 Wharton Street, Bungay
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	20.05.2022
Nature of Breach: Without Listed Building Consent the unauthorised installation of an exterior glazed door located in front of the front door.	
Summary timeline of actions on case 28/11/2022 – Listed Building Enforcement Notice served. Comes into effect on the 06/01/2023 . 3 months for compliance 09/01/2023 – Pre-start letter from Planning Inspectorate 31/01/2023 –Start letter received from Planning Inspectorate, statements required by 14 th March 2023. 17/09/2025 - Appeal dismissed. 3 months for compliance.	
Current Status/Position In compliance period	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	17.12.2025

C.4

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/20/0131/LISTL
Location / Address	6 Upper Olland Street, Bungay
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	15.04.2020
Nature of Breach: Unauthorised works to a Listed Building (Installation of roller shutter and advertisements)	
Summary timeline of actions on case 17/03/2022 - Listed Building Enforcement Notice served and takes effect on 18/04/2022. 3 months for compliance. 19/04/2022 - Appeal start date. Written Representations Procedure PINS Reference APP/X3540/F/22/3297116 07/06/2022 – Statement submitted 28/06/2022 – final comments due. 03/10/2025 - Appeal dismissed, compliance required by 2 nd January 2026. 15/12/2025 - Extension of time granted to allow work to be completed.	
Current Status/Position In compliance period.	

Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	15 th February 2026
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D. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, upheld on appeal/no appeal submitted and is currently the subject of court action.

E. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, upheld on appeal/no appeal submitted and now in the period for compliance following court action

E.1

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/21/0051/USE
Location / Address	Land West Of Guildhall Lane, Wrentham
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	10.02.2021
Nature of Breach: Change of use and unauthorised operational development (mixed use including storage of materials, vehicles and caravans and residential use /erection of structures and laying of hardstanding)	
Summary timeline of actions on case 10/03/2022 - Enforcement Notices served and takes effect on 11/04/2022. 4 months for compliance. 25/08/2022 - Site visit to check for compliance with Notices. File has been passed to the Legal Dept for further action. 19/12/2022 – Court date set following non compliance at Ipswich magistrates for 30 th January 2023. 30/01/2023 - Court over listed and therefore case relisted for 27 th March 2023 27/03/2023 - Defendant did not attend, warrant issued, awaiting decision from court. 31/07/2023 - Defendant attended court, plead guilty to all charges and was fined £5134.78 in total. 23/07/2024 - Site visit undertaken, court papers updated and passed to legal. 24/07/2025 - High Court for injunction proceedings. Court requires further information to be submitted. 10/10/2025 - Injunction granted. Cease residential use and removal of caravans and mobiles homes required by 10 th April 2026 and other requirements of the notice by 10 th June 2026.	
Current Status/Position In injunction compliance period.	
Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	10/04/2026 & 10/06/2026

F. Cases on which a formal enforcement notice has been served, upheld on appeal, and the period for compliance following court action has now expired, so further legal proceedings are being considered and/or are underway.

F.1

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	EN08/0264 & ENF/2013/0191
Location / Address	Pine Lodge Caravan Park, Hazels Lane, Hinton
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	20.10.2008
Nature of Breach: Erection of a building and new vehicular access; Change of use of the land to a touring caravan site (Exemption Certificate revoked) and use of land for the site of a mobile home for gypsy/traveller use. Various unauthorised utility buildings for use on caravan site.	
<p>15/10/2010 – Enforcement Notice served 08/02/2010 - Appeal received 10/11/2010 - Appeal dismissed 25/06/2013 - Three Planning applications received 06/11/2013 – The three applications refused at Planning Committee. 13/12/2013 - Appeal Lodged 21/03/2014 – Enforcement Notices served and became effective on 24/04/2014 04/07/2014 - Appeal Start date - Appeal to be dealt with by Hearing 31/01/2015 – New planning appeal received for refusal of Application DC/13/3708 03/02/2015 – Appeal Decision – Two notices quashed for the avoidance of doubt, two notices upheld. Compliance time on notice relating to mobile home has been extended from 12 months to 18 months. 10/11/2015 – Informal hearing held 01/03/2016 – Planning Appeal dismissed 04/08/2016 – Site re-visited three of four Notices have not been complied with. 21/04/2017 - Trial date. Two charges relating to the mobile home, steps and hardstanding, the owner pleaded guilty to these to charges and was fined £1000 for failing to comply with the Enforcement Notice plus £600 in costs. The Council has requested that the mobile home along with steps, hardstanding and access be removed by 16/06/2017. 19/06/2017 – Site re-visited, no compliance with the Enforcement Notice. 14/11/2017 – Full Injunction granted for the removal of the mobile home and steps. 21/11/2017 – Mobile home and steps removed from site. Review site regarding day block and access after decision notice released for enforcement notice served in connection with unauthorised occupancy /use of barn. 27/06/2018 – Compliance visit conducted to check on whether the 2010. 06/07/2018 – Legal advice sought. 10/09/2018 – Site revisited to check for compliance with Notices. 11/09/2018 – Case referred back to Legal Department for further action to be considered.</p>	

<p>11/10/2018 – Court hearing at the High Court in relation to the steps remain on the 2014 Enforcement Notice/ Injunction granted. Two months for compliance (11/12/2018).</p> <p>01/11/2018 – Court Hearing at the High Court in relation to the 2010 Enforcement Notice. Injunctive remedy sought. Verbal update to be given. Injunction granted. Three months given for compliance with Enforcement Notices served in 2010.</p> <p>13/12/2018 – Site visit undertaken in regards to Injunction served for 2014 Notice. No compliance. Passed back to Legal for further action.</p> <p>04/02/2019 – Site visit undertaken to check on compliance with Injunction served on 01/11/2018</p> <p>26/02/2019 – case passed to Legal for further action to be considered. Update to be given at Planning Committee</p> <p>27/03/2019 - High Court hearing, the case was adjourned until the 03/04/2019</p> <p>03/04/2019 - Officers attended the High Court, a warrant was issued due to non-attendance and failure to provide medical evidence explaining the non-attendance as was required in the Order of 27/03/2019.</p> <p>11/04/2019 – Officers returned to the High Court, the case was adjourned until 7 May 2019.</p> <p>07/05/2019 – Officers returned to the High Court. A three month suspended sentence for 12 months was given and the owner was required to comply with the Notices by 03/09/2019.</p> <p>05/09/2019 – Site visit undertaken; file passed to Legal Department for further action. Court date arranged for 28/11/2019.</p> <p>28/11/2019 - Officers returned to the High Court. A new three month suspended sentence for 12 months was given and the owner was required to comply in full with the Injunctions and the Order of the Judge by 31/01/2020</p>	
<p><u>Current Status/Position</u> Site visited. Case currently with the Council’s Legal Team for assessment. Charging orders have been placed on the land to recover costs.</p>	
<p>Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)</p>	<p>Dependent upon potential Legal Process</p>

G. Cases on which a formal enforcement action has been placed on hold or where it is not currently expedient to pursue

G.1

LPA Enforcement Case Reference	ENF/2015/0279/DEV
Location / Address	Land at Dam Lane Kessingland
North or South Area	North
Date of Report of Breach	22/09/2015
<p><u>Nature of Breach:</u> Erection of outbuildings and wooden jetties, fencing and gates over 1 metre adjacent to highway and engineering operations amounting to the formation of a lake and soil bunds.</p>	
<p><u>Summary timeline of actions on case</u> 22/09/2015 - Initial complaint logged by parish. 08/12/2016 - Case was reopened following further information 01/03/2017 - Retrospective app received. Following delays in information requested, on 20/06/2018, Cate Buck, Senior Planning and Enforcement Officer, took over the case, she communicated and met with the owner on several occasions. 05/09/2018 - Notice served by recorded delivery. 18/06/2019 - Appeal started. PINS Reference APP/T3535/C/18/3211982 24/07/2019 – Appeal Statement Submitted 05/02/2020 - Appeal dismissed. Compliance with both Notices by 05/08/2020 03/03/2021 - Court hearing in relation to structures and fencing/gates Case adjourned until 05/07/2021 for trial. Further visit due after 30/04/21 to check for compliance with steps relating to lake removal. 30/04/2021 - Further legal advice being sought in relation to the buildings and fencing. Extension of time given until 30/04/21 for removal of the lake and reverting the land back to agricultural use due to Licence being required for removal of protected species. 04/05/2021 - Further visit conducted to check for compliance on Notice relating to the lake. No compliance. Case being reviewed. 05/07/2021 – Court hearing, owner was found guilty of two charges and had already pleaded guilty to one offence. Fined £550 and £700 costs 12/07/2021 – Letter sent to owner giving until the 10th August 2021 for the structures to be removed 13/08/2021 - Site visited and all structures had removed from the site, but lake remains</p>	
<p><u>Current Status/Position</u> On Hold. Ongoing consideration is taking place in respect of the compliance with the enforcement notice for removal of the lake. This is due to the possible presence of protected species and formation of protected habitat. Consideration is also required in respect of the hydrological implications of removal of the lake. At present, with the removal of structures and no harmful use taking place, the lake removal is not an immediately urgent action.</p>	

Date by which Compliance expected (or prosecution date)	31/12/2025
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Committee Report

Planning Committee (North) – 20 January 2026

Application no. DC/25/3322/FUL

Location

Land To The Rear Of Larks Rising
Easton Lane IP18 6SS And
The Warren, Easton Lane
Easton Bavents
Reydon
IP18 6SU

Application type Full Application

Applicant Easton Bavents Ltd

Parish Reydon

Proposal 4 Residential Properties to be built to replace 3 cottages already lost to erosion and 1 house due to be lost in the next 20 years.

Case Officer Joe Blackmore – Planning Manager
Joe.Blackmore@eastssuffolk.gov.uk

1. Summary

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for four (4no.) dwellings, proposed as replacement dwellings in regard to existing (1no.: The Warren) and previously demolished (3no.: The Cottages) dwellings on the applicant’s wider landholding.
- 1.2 The application follows a dismissed appeal (see appendix A for a copy of the decision) and this amended scheme fully addresses the Inspector’s reasons they dismissed the appeal. The application can therefore be supported and is recommended for approval.
- 1.3 Due to the objections from the Parish Council and Ward Member, the committee call-in notification was sent, but no member of the Planning Committee (North) requested the

application be referred to Committee in response to that notification email. The application was then referred to Committee by the Referral Panel.

2. Site Description

2.1 The proposed development site is located to the north-east of Reydon, outside of the settlement boundary, and within open countryside. It is wholly within the Suffolk and Essex Coasts and Heaths National Landscape, which is valued for its scenic qualities and tranquillity. The closest properties are located approx. 140m south and approx. 90m southeast from the site. The main site is predominantly agricultural land detached from and to the north of an existing group of development; access to the public highway is via Easton Lane and then a proposed private drive across land in third-party ownership (the applicant has correctly served notice on the landowner).

3. Proposal and Planning History

3.1 Three cottages at Easton Bavents have already been demolished due to the threat of erosion and this proposal seeks to replace those three dwellings on land within the applicant's holding. A further dwelling is proposed to replace The Warren, which is in-situ and used for holiday accommodation purposes as a C3 dwellinghouse. This brings the total development proposal to 4no. dwellings to replace dwellings previously lost and/or due to be lost to erosion.

3.2 This application is almost identical to a previous submission ref. DC/23/4736/FUL. That application was refused by the LPA for reasons (summarised) below:

1. The Warren is not located within the Coastal Change Management Area. Insufficient evidence to justify the pre-emptive replacement of this dwelling that is located outside of the CCMA and therefore likely to remain in-situ well beyond a period of 20 years, and potentially to the end of the shoreline management 100-year date of 2105.
2. The three dwellings proposed to replace the cottages are significantly larger. The proposed dwellings are tall, detached buildings with integral garages; outdoor raised decks/terraces; substantial garden areas; and, overall, a form of development far greater in scale than that which they would replace.
3. Whilst the architecture is interesting, the scale and form of this proposed development will cause harm to the National Landscape. The group of dwellings randomly located out on a limb in open countryside will be prominent in the landscape and attempts to screen the development / mitigate its impact will be unsuccessful, and in their own way will harm the landscape. For all of the reasons set out, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the National Landscape (AONB).

3.3 This decision was subject of appeal where the Inspector dismissed the appeal but, in principle, did not agree with the Council's finding of harms/policy conflict.

3.4 The only issue the Inspector identified (and the reason the appeal failed) is because The Warren was not included within the red line area of the site location plan. This was a technical failure in the submission on the applicant's part, that they have rectified in this re-submission. In all other respects the application is identical to the previous submission but

has been updated in regard to the suite of submission documents to reflect the extended site area and supporting information on coastal erosion projections.

4. Third Party Representations

- 4.1 One letter of support that identifies the significant erosion impacts; the threat to The Warren from erosion; and comments that the proposals are supported by policy in the Local Plan and supplementary planning documents.
- 4.2 Four letters of objection that raise the following key concerns (inter alia):
- Loss of agricultural land and biodiversity
 - No significant differences between this scheme and previous application
 - Harm to national landscape
 - Alternative options are available on plots at Copperwheat Avenue development
 - Poultry sheds site could be re-developed instead

5. Consultee Responses

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Reydon Parish Council	N/A	4 November 2025
<p>The Reydon Parish Council Planning Committee remains fundamentally opposed to planning application DC/25/3322/FUL. Despite rectifying the technicality that led to the dismissal of the previous Appeal (AP/24/0071) concerning application DC/23/4736/FUL, the current proposal remains contrary to the Development Plan as a whole.</p> <p>1. Fundamental unsuitability and unacceptable harm to the National Landscape The core objection is, and remains, the unsuitable location of the proposal in the open countryside within the National Landscape (formerly AONB). This was the fundamental and overriding reason for the previous Appeal’s dismissal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict with the previous Appeal decision: The new application fails to overcome the primary, substantive reason for the dismissal of the previous Appeal: the unacceptable harm to the National Landscape. The Planning Inspector specifically concluded that the proposal would ‘result in harm to the character and appearance of the area and fail to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape’ (Appeal decision 31). This was deemed a ‘strong reason for refusing the development’ given the site’s location within an ‘asset of particular importance’ (both quotes in Appeal decision 32). • Adverse effects outweigh benefits: The Inspector further concluded that the adverse effects of the proposal ‘would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole’ (Appeal decision 33). • Amendment insufficient: The applicant’s administrative correction – rectifying the technicality concerning the inclusion of The Warren within the red-line boundary – does not mitigate the fundamental environmental harm identified by the Inspector. Similarly, any conditions regarding the demolition of The Warren would not address the underlying issue of unsuitability and harm to the National Landscape. • Impact and scale of development: The National Landscape Team also objects, confirming that the 		

site's suitability remains a major concern. They state the development would 'blur the boundary' between the Reydon settlement edge and the open countryside. Furthermore, the four proposed dwellings are 'considerably larger in scale and bulk' (Appeal decision 22) than those they are intended to replace, meaning they are not like-for-like replacements.

2. Direct conflict with the Reydon Neighbourhood Plan (RNP)

The proposal directly conflicts with the RNP's core objectives and policies for landscape protection.

- RNP purpose: The RNP was developed to allow the community to influence 'the way the countryside around the village is protected' (RNP 1.1). It confirms that the National Landscape is given 'additional protection against development' (AONB in RNP Glossary).
- RNP Policy RNP 5: This policy is fundamental to protecting the countryside and its qualities, including productive agricultural land. It explicitly mandates that 'Development outside the settlement boundary should protect and where possible enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'. The Planning Inspector's prior finding of demonstrable harm to the National Landscape confirms that this proposal is in direct contravention of this essential policy.
- RNP Policy RNP 8: The proposed development's reliance on private motor vehicle travel – deemed unavoidable by the SCC Local Highway Authority due to the site's 'unsustainable location' – could create additional pressure on local roads, in particular Lowestoft Road. This directly violates RNP Policy RNP 8, which states: 'New developments should demonstrate the way in which they can safely be accommodated within the capacity of the local highways network. . . Developments that would cause an unacceptable impact on the capacity or safety of the local highway network will not be supported.'

3. Viable alternatives should be explored

The stated need to replace houses lost to coastal erosion is weakened by the existence of several viable alternative sites which should be fully explored.

- Copperwheat Avenue: Plots are already reserved specifically for replacing dwellings at risk from coastal erosion at Easton Bavents, though the applicants are not willing to consider this as a possible solution.
- Redundant poultry sheds (brownfield site): A better option is a brownfield area within the farm at Easton Bavents, currently occupied by little-used poultry sheds.

Redeveloping these sheds would be a significant aesthetic enhancement to the site, and this location has been the preferred site for ESC planners.

4. Loss of productive agricultural land

The proposed development would result in the irreversible loss of productive agricultural land outside the settlement boundary. RNP Policy RNP 5 is particularly relevant to this loss. As the site constitutes productive agricultural land outside the defined settlement boundary, it is an integral part of the countryside that this policy seeks to protect and which the Inspector found would be harmed. The loss of this land to permanent residential development is therefore contrary to the overall aims of the Development Plan to conserve the National Landscape.

Conditions if permission is granted

In the event that permission is granted, the RPC Planning Committee insists that the following issues be secured by condition as part of a measured response:

- Principal Residence requirement: New open market housing must include a restriction to ensure its occupancy as the Principal Residence of the occupiers, in line with RNP Policy RNP 4. This is to

prevent overdevelopment by second homes, which price local people out of the housing market.

- Prevent net gain: To prevent a net gain of one dwelling, The Warren must be fully demolished before any construction work begins on the four replacement properties.
- Design and scale requirement: A condition must be secured requiring the four replacement properties to be redesigned to be more 'like for like' replacements, addressing the Inspector's finding that the current proposal is for dwellings that are 'considerably larger in scale and bulk' than those they are intended to replace.
- Ecology and biodiversity: The ESC Ecology Team requires multiple stringent conditions.

A precautionary working method statement and an ecological enhancement strategy are needed prior to the start of development. Additionally, a 'lighting design strategy for biodiversity' must be submitted and approved prior to commencement, including a sensitive external lighting scheme to protect commuting bats. Furthermore, since it was noted in the Appeal decision (para 28) that the Inspector would have required further representations on the impact on European-designated habitat sites (SPA/SAC) had it been allowed, this also needs to be done.

- Highways: Conditions must ensure the provision of vehicular visibility splays at the access point for appropriate highway safety. It should also be noted that RNP Policy RNP 8 requires that 'Where necessary, new developments should incorporate more than one point of access', a requirement that must be fully addressed.
- Archaeology: Because the site lies in an area of archaeological potential, the SCC Archaeological Service recommends a planning condition that 'No development shall take place within the application area until a scheme of Archaeological Evaluation of the site has been submitted and approved'. A scheme for preservation in-situ/mitigation must also be secured.
- Fire safety: Conditions must be secured for the provision and installation of fire hydrants and a minimum hard-standing capacity of 15/26 tonnes for fire appliances.
- Contamination: A condition must be secured for unexpected contamination to be immediately reported, investigated, and risk-assessed if found during construction.

Summary

The merits of the proposal do not outweigh the fundamental reasons for objection. The core issue is the unacceptable harm to the National Landscape, which was the Inspector's overriding reason for dismissal. This proposal remains in clear conflict with the Development Plan as a whole, including the Reydon Neighbourhood Plan. We respectfully and strongly urge that application DC/25/3322/FUL be rejected

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Ward Councillor	N/A	10 September 2025

This seems similar to a previous application that was refused. My opinion has not changed. The applicants can have the option of plots on the Copperwheat Avenue development in Reydon to compensate for the loss of houses to coastal erosion. Further if they have to build on the farm, they should use the redundant turkey sheds not a greenfield site. We have permitted them quite a lot of holiday accommodation already to replace loss of income from the farmland, although it is the tenant who is actually suffering the loss.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Reydon Parish Council	9 September 2025	28 September 2025

Summary

The proposed development is in the wrong location, threatens the local farming economy, and harms the National Landscape and local ecology. While we acknowledge positive elements like the carbon-friendly and demountable construction methods, the barn-like form of the dwellings, and the landscaping scheme, these merits do not outweigh the fundamental reasons for objection. We urge the application's rejection.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Environmental Protection	9 September 2025	22 September 2025
Summary of comments: No objections. Advice to case officer provided.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Highways Department	9 September 2025	30 September 2025
Summary of comments: No objections, but request for further details of visibility splays. *Officer note: the access from Easton Lane onto the public highway is existing and well-established, with this proposal replacing existing dwellings. Therefore, it was not reasonable or necessary to secure this information.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Ecology	9 September 2025	22 September 2025
Summary of comments: <i>In conclusion, to ensure that the works do not impact commuting bats, a sensitive lighting scheme will be required for the works, and any external lighting fitted to the buildings. Furthermore, due to the confirmed presence of nesting birds using the site, it is recommended that any vegetation clearance is carried out outside of nesting bird season. If this is not possible, then a qualified ecologist should perform a nesting bird check immediately prior to the commencement of works. To ensure that the works do not impact potentially present hedgehogs, brown hare, and reptiles, a precautionary working method statement should be put in place prior to the commencement of works. Finally, to enhance the site for wildlife, an ecological enhancement strategy is required.</i>		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk Coasts And Heaths Project	9 September 2025	1 October 2025
Summary of comments: <i>In summary the National Landscape team does not consider that the selected site is an appropriate location for the proposed replacement dwelling development. We do not consider that sufficient mitigations have been embedded into the design of the scheme to manage light spill and we do not</i>		

consider that all of the species being proposed in the landscaping plan are appropriate and typical of the AONB around Easton Bavents. For these reasons it is considered that the scheme as proposed, will erode tranquillity levels and negatively impact the landscape quality and natural heritage interest of the site and as such will fail to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC County Archaeological Unit	9 September 2025	18 September 2025

Summary of comments:
There are no grounds to consider refusal of permission in order to achieve preservation in situ of any important heritage assets. However, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 218), any permission granted should be the subject of a planning condition to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset before it is damaged or destroyed.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Natural England	9 September 2025	22 September 2025

No comments to make on the application.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Services - Property And Facilities	9 September 2025	26 September 2025

The plans for this property have been reviewed. For waste collection, the vehicles currently collect from Easton Lane. The new properties are more than 30m from Easton Lane thus the vehicles would need access to the properties via the extended farm road. The road surface is required to be an adoptable standard to allow 32T trucks or the other option is to indemnify the council and its contractors from any damage caused by driving a collection vehicle from accessing the properties.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Fire And Rescue Service	9 September 2025	12 September 2025

Summary of comments:
 Condition required to secure details and implementation of fire hydrants within the development area.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Essex And Suffolk Water PLC	9 September 2025	10 September 2025

Summary of comments:
 No objections raised.

6. Site notices

Site Notice Type	Date Posted	Expiry date	Reason
General Site Notice	2 October 2025	23 October 2025	General Site Notice

7. Planning Policy

- WLP1.1 - Scale and Location of Growth (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP1.2 - Settlement Boundaries (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019) WLP7.1 - Rural Settlement Hierarchy and Housing Growth (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.7 - Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.9 - Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.21 - Sustainable Transport (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019) WLP8.24 - Flood Risk (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.25 - Coastal Change Management Area (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.26 - Relocation and Replacement of Development Affected by Coastal Erosion (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.28 - Sustainable Construction (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.29 - Design (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.34 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.35 - Landscape Character (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019) WLP8.40 - Archaeology (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- RNP: Reydon Neighbourhood Plan ('Made' May 2021)
- East Suffolk Council Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document (2023)

8. Planning Considerations

Policy and Legislative Context

- 8.1 All planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the Development Plan comprises the East Suffolk (Waveney) Local Plan 2019 [“The Local Plan”] and the Reydon Neighbourhood Plan [“RNP”], and the key relevant policies are listed earlier in the planning policy section of this report. The East Suffolk Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning

Document 2023 (“The SPD”) is also a material consideration and should be read in conjunction with the key Development Plan policies. The NPPF is a further material consideration.

- 8.2 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended section 85 of the CRow Act, to create a new duty on relevant authorities to ‘seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area’ when discharging their functions in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs, now known as National Landscapes). The new duty replaces the previous requirement for relevant authorities to ‘have regard’ to the purpose of AONBs and is intended as a more proactive and strengthened requirement. The duty is a statutory one and applies to all relevant authorities when discharging any function that affects an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; officers have this duty in mind in determining the application.
- 8.3 Officers have given full weight to the Neighbourhood Plan in determining this application; however, key relevant policies are primarily contained with the Local Plan in this particular case

Principle of Development and Adaptation to Coastal Erosion

- 8.4 The site is located within designated countryside and in usual circumstances there would be no prospect of the principle of development being supported. That is because the proposals would not meet the rural infill or exceptional affordable housing policies, nor any other general housing in the countryside policies derived from the Local Plan spatial strategy. However, the site context is not a typical countryside location. The applicant’s wider landholding partly falls within the Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA).
- 8.5 Policy WLP8.25 relates the CCMA and sets out that:

“The Coastal Change Management Area is identified on the Policies Map. Reputable and scientifically robust evidence that emerges over the lifetime of this Plan which effects the delineation of the Coastal Change Management Area should be considered when applying this policy.

Proposals for new, permanent residential development including conversion of existing buildings will not be permitted in the Coastal Change Management Area. In parts of the Coastal Change Management Area expected to be at risk from change within a 20 year time horizon, only temporary development directly related to the coast, such as beach huts, cafés, car parks and sites used for touring caravan and camping will be permitted.

In parts of the Coastal Change Management Area expected to be at risk from change beyond a 20 year time horizon, other commercial and community uses will be permitted providing they require a coastal location and provide economic and social benefits to the local community.

Essential infrastructure, including transport infrastructure, utility infrastructure and wind turbines will only be permitted in the Coastal Change Management Area where no other sites outside of the Area are feasible and there is a management plan in place to manage the impact of coastal change including their future removal and replacement.

All planning applications for development within the Coastal Change Management Area and 30 metres inland should be accompanied by a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment which demonstrates that the development will not result in an increased risk to life or property.

Planning permission for all development within the Coastal Change Management Area will be time-limited according to the risk identified in the Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment.

Proposals for new or replacement coastal defence schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the works are consistent with the management approach for the frontage presented in the relevant Shoreline Management Plan and there will be no material adverse impact on the environment."

- 8.6 Further to the CCMA policy, WLP8.26 sets out (in regard to the relocation/replacement of residential dwellings) that:

"Proposals for the relocation and replacement of dwellings affected by coastal erosion will be permitted in the Countryside where:

- The development replaces a permanent building which is within the Coastal Change Management Area as identified on the Policies Map and is forecasted to be affected by erosion within 20 years of the date of the proposal;*
- The relocated dwelling should be in a location which exhibits a similar or improved level of sustainability with respect to access to services and facilities as the original dwelling;*
- The relocated dwelling is outside of the Coastal Change Management Area as identified on the Policies Map; and*
- The existing site is either cleared and made safe or put to a temporary use beneficial to the local community."*

- 8.7 A fundamental criterion within WLP8.26 is that *"The development replaces a permanent building which is within the Coastal Change Management Area as identified on the Policies Map and is forecasted to be affected by erosion within 20 years of the date of the proposal"*.

- 8.8 Updated coastal erosion projections for Easton Bavents were published in January 2025 by the Environment Agency (EA) as part of their Shoreline Management Plan (SMP). These projections identify that 'The Warren' – albeit outside the CCMA – is highly likely to require demolition within 20 years as required by WLP8.26.

- 8.9 The three cottages have already been lost to erosion and, therefore, the principle of replacement is clearly established and supported by the Local Plan.

- 8.10 In the appeal decision, the Inspector reached the following conclusions on the principle of development:

"11. The development plan is clear that CCMA's are based on the area's likely to be impacted by coastal change within the next 100 years (using a 2005 baseline) as identified in the Shoreline Management Plans. When factoring in the new baseline and its predictions within 30 years, I find that The Warren should enjoy the same status as if it were within the CCMA."

“13. The speed of coastal erosion is not an exact science. Nevertheless, based on the evidence provided, I accept that it is highly likely that The Warren would be affected by coastal erosion within the 20-year timeframe set by Policy WLP8.26. I note one of the overall objectives in the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (SPD), which supports the development plan policies, seeks (at paragraph 5.7) the timely relocation and rollback of dwellings well before erosion becomes an imminent threat, which this scheme seeks to do. Furthermore, the overriding purpose of Policy WLP8.26 is to strictly control new development and provide for the appropriate relocation of existing development within those areas already evidenced to be especially vulnerable to coastal erosion, which I find to be the case here.”

- 8.11 Accordingly, based on updated coastal erosion projections and the conclusions of the Planning Inspectorate, officers accept that the principle of four dwellings is sound and compliant with the Local Plan.

Design and Landscape Impact

- 8.12 Out of context, the proposed dwellings are interesting contemporary buildings of architectural merit. However, the site context (and responsiveness of the proposals to that context) is critical to the decision on this application. The three dwellings proposed to replace the cottages are significantly larger. The proposed dwellings are tall, detached buildings with integral garages; outdoor raised decks/terraces; substantial garden areas; and, overall, a form of development far greater in scale than that which they would replace.
- 8.13 The previous application was refused, partly on the basis that the dwellings would be too large and bulky – and far in excess of the relatively modest cottages to be replaced (albeit with The Warren itself being a large, detached dwelling).
- 8.14 However, in the appeal decision, the Inspector concluded as follows:

“The four proposed dwellings are considerably larger in scale and bulk than those they are to replace. However, there is nothing within Policy WLP8.26 that limits the size of the replacement dwellings, a matter that the SPD acknowledges. Indeed, the SPD advocates that the size of any relocated dwelling can include a consideration of permitted development rights and should be considered alongside other landscape and design policies, in order to minimise the risk of unnecessarily larger homes impacting the undeveloped area, which is the approach that I have taken.

Whilst the four new dwellings are substantial in size, they are not excessively bulky. Moreover, the proposed layout would appear as a modern interpretation of a farmstead, which I find to be appropriate for its site context and would provide for an interesting contemporary design.”

- 8.15 Policy WLP8.35 (Landscape Character) of the East Suffolk (Waveney) Local Plan sets out that proposals for development should be informed by, and be sympathetic to, the distinctive character areas, strategic objectives and considerations identified in the Waveney District Landscape Character Assessment (2008), the Settlement Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study (2016), the Broads Landscape Character Assessment (2016), the Broads Landscape Sensitivity Study for Renewables and Infrastructure (2012) and the most current Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan. Development

proposals will be expected to demonstrate their location, scale, form, design and materials will protect and where possible enhance. Section 85 of the CRoW Act places a duty on relevant authorities to 'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area' when discharging their functions in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as National Landscapes).

- 8.16 In the previous application, informed by comments from the Senior Landscape Officer, the LPA considered there would be unacceptable harm arising – in landscape terms – as a consequence of this development proposal. However, the applicant provided an updated landscaping strategy in the appeal process which the Inspector considered, reaching the following conclusions:

"The farmstead would be set further north than the adjacent farm and extend development further into the open countryside away from the existing cluster of built form, which counts against the scheme.

However, the revised landscape plan indicates a robust and meaningful strategy to provide woodland blocks of large deciduous trees to screen the development, which I find would, over time, largely be in character with the surrounding landscape. Their placement would allow for retained and important glimpses of the landscape when viewed across the site towards farmland at the south-east, such that it would assist in preserving the landscape character. It is noteworthy that the location of the proposed dwellings closely follows the pre-application advice given by the Council.

I am mindful that any site to accommodate replacement dwellings would, by necessity, be located within the National Landscape and that Policy WLP8.26 is supportive of replacement dwellings in principle. In this case there would be an encroachment of development away from built form, albeit landscaping mitigations proposed would help to offer visual relief to the effects of this over time to such a degree that this would largely preserve the landscape character."

- 8.17 The only issue for the Inspector in this regard was that The Warren was outside of the application site and therefore it was not possible to secure its timely demolition – with the concern, therefore, that the four dwellings could be built *in addition* to The Warren. As this matter has been addressed within the submission, officers therefore reluctantly accept that it would be fruitless to maintain a refusal position on landscape impact when this failed at appeal stage.
- 8.18 Likewise, the Inspector did not agree with the findings of harm in design terms and accepted the scale of development as acceptable. Again, officers consider that with this recent appeal conclusion, it would not be sound to maintain a refusal position on design grounds.
- 8.19 Accordingly, officers conclude that the scheme is – giving substantial weight to the recent appeal decision – acceptable in design and landscape terms and arguably in compliance with the relevant Local Plan policies cited. Even if one were to still conclude some harm and policy conflict in that regard, the benefit of replacing homes lost and at threat of erosion is a material consideration of significant weight in the planning balance.

Other Matters

- 8.20 No objections are raised by the Ecology Team and the information provided is acceptable, subject to standard ecological conditions and the mandatory BNG condition.
- 8.21 The scheme utilises an existing vehicular access (Easton Lane) and, as replacement dwellings, this is acceptable in highways safety terms.
- 8.22 The dwellings are well spaced out and separated from neighbouring property and as such no material impact on amenity/living conditions.
- 8.23 The dwellings are located in a low-risk flood zone and will be safe for future occupiers without causing any increased flood risk elsewhere.

Conditions

- 8.24 It is necessary to condition the demolition of The Warren in a timely manner to ensure that it has been fully removed prior to any occupation of its replacement dwelling. This will also require the appropriate ecological surveys of The Warren and a demolition method statement prior to such work taking place.
- 8.25 A principal residence restriction (as normally required by the Reydon Neighbourhood Plan) would not be appropriate or reasonable in this case. That is because the dwellings to be replaced were unrestricted, and this scheme should be treated as replacement homes, not entirely new dwellings.
- 8.26 It is necessary to remove permitted development rights in respect of dwelling extensions and works within the curtilage. This is due to the highly sensitive landscape context.
- 8.27 Further conditions are summarised at the end of this report, but the list is not exhaustive and will be updated in full via the Committee Update Sheet.

9. Conclusion and Recommendation

- 9.1 This application is an unusual situation with several key considerations and competing issues requiring a careful planning balance. The recent appeal decision and Inspector conclusions are particularly weighty and influential here and must be borne in mind when considering this revised application. This application has addressed the key issue regarding The Warren and planning conditions can make the scheme acceptable. Whilst officers maintain that there would be a degree of landscape harm, and conflict with design policy, on balance it is judged that there are material considerations that lead to a positive recommendation. The replacement of homes lost to, and at threat of, erosion is a significant benefit of the scheme and should weigh heavily in favour of the proposal. Accordingly, planning permission should be granted.
- 9.2 Approve.

10. Conditions (summarised):

- 1. Standard 3-year time limit

2. Plans compliance / development to be in accordance with approved details
3. Demolition of The Warren to take place prior to first construction works on its replacement dwelling
4. Demolition method statement of The Warren to be approved
5. Details of fire hydrants and implementation prior to first occupation
6. Standard archaeological conditions re. investigation and post-excavation reporting
7. Biodiversity net gain condition
8. Ecology – compliance with preliminary ecological appraisal
9. Ecology - lighting design strategy for biodiversity
10. Ecology – ecological enhancement strategy
11. Ecology – survey of The Warren prior to its demolition
12. Standard condition requiring action should unexpected contamination be encountered
13. Waste storage and presentation areas
14. Cycle storage
15. Parking/turning areas to be delivered pre-occupation
16. Landscaping implementation and ongoing maintenance
17. All external facing material details to be approved
18. Removal of PD rights for extensions and development within the curtilage of the dwellinghouses

11. Background information

See application reference DC/25/3322/FUL on [Public Access](#)



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2025

by **C Walker BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/W/24/3356679

Larks Rising, Easton Lane, Reydon, Suffolk IP18 6SS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Anne Jones on behalf of Easton Bavents Ltd against the decision of East Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/23/4736/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as 4 residential properties to be built to replace 3 cottages already lost to erosion and 1 house due to be lost in next 20 years.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In the interests of conciseness, I have amended the appellants description of development in the banner heading above, omitting elements that do not relate to the operative part.
3. Accompanying this appeal is an Addendum to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) dated November 2024 and a revised landscaping plan. The Addendum provides an updated LVIA based on the amended plans upon which the Council made their decision and is supplementary only. The landscaping plan is ordinarily a matter that could be dealt with through the imposition of conditions.
4. Also submitted with the appeal is a Planning Statement and Business Case by Cheffins dated January 2023 (the Cheffins report). This did not accompany the planning application, but was submitted alongside an earlier pre-application enquiry and extracts were referred to in the Design and Access Statement, so it should not come as a surprise to the Council.
5. These plans and documents have not been subject to formal public consultation but the Council have had an opportunity to formally consider and comment on them as part of the appeal. Given this, accepting them at this stage would not be unfair or deprive those who should have been consulted the opportunity of such consultation. Therefore, having regard to the principles of Holborn¹, acceptance of them would not be procedurally unfair and as a result I have taken them into account in determining this appeal.
6. Evidence on updated coastal erosion projections for Easton Bavents published in January 2025 by the Environment Agency (EA) as part of their Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) has also been submitted. Given its publication date, I am

¹ Holborn Studios Ltd v The Council of the London Borough of Hackney [2017] EWHC 2823 (Admin)

satisfied that this evidence could not reasonably have been provided earlier, is material to the decision and should be considered. The Council has provided comment on this following an agreed extension of time. I am satisfied that there would be no procedural unfairness in accepting this and so I do.

Main Issues

7. The main issues are:

- whether the appeal scheme constitutes the appropriate replacement and relocation of dwellings affected by coastal erosion in the countryside; and
- the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including whether the proposal conserves and enhances the landscape and scenic beauty of the Suffolk and Essex Coasts and Heaths National Landscape.

Reasons

Whether appropriate replacement

8. A Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA) is identified on the Policies Map and defined by Policy WLP8.25 of the Waveney Local Plan (2019) (LP). Policy WLP8.26 of the LP relates to the relocation and replacement of dwellings affected by coastal erosion. It states that proposals will be permitted in the countryside subject to 4 criteria. These are that (1) development replaces a permanent building which is within the identified CCMA and is forecasted to be affected by erosion within 20 years of the date of the proposal; (2) the relocated dwelling should be in a location which exhibits a similar or improved level of sustainability with respect to access to services and facilities as the original dwelling; (3) the relocated dwelling is outside of the identified CCMA; and (4) the existing site is either cleared and made safe or put to a temporary use beneficial to the local community.
9. The dispute between the parties relates to the first criterion and only in relation to the proposed replacement of The Warren, a permanent dwelling and the only one of the four that still stands. It is located outside of the appeal site and is also outside of the defined CCMA as defined by the Policies Map.
10. However, latest evidence published by EA points to coastal erosion far exceeding previous predictions. The 2025 coastal erosion risk projections show that by 2055, The Warren would be lost to the sea in all 3 modelled scenarios. This represents the most up to date information on coastal erosion risk, which produced on behalf of a government agency is reputable and scientifically robust evidence. As such I afford it significant weight, noting that Policy WLP8.25 acknowledges this should be the case in applying the policy.
11. The development plan is clear that CCMA's are based on the area's likely to be impacted by coastal change within the next 100 years (using a 2005 baseline) as identified in the Shoreline Management Plans. When factoring in the new baseline and its predictions within 30 years, I find that The Warren should enjoy the same status as if it were within the CCMA.
12. Evidence presented within the Cheffins report suggests that The Warren would need to be demolished by 2040 based on erosion rates and allowing for a mandatory 10m buffer from the cliff edge, plus time to allow relevant permissions

- to be granted. However, it is not clear how the erosion rates have been derived in the scenario where the coast benefits from defences. As such I can only attribute it modest weight.
13. The speed of coastal erosion is not an exact science. Nevertheless, based on the evidence provided, I accept that it is highly likely that The Warren would be affected by coastal erosion within the 20-year timeframe set by Policy WLP8.26. I note one of the overall objectives in the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (SPD), which supports the development plan policies, seeks (at paragraph 5.7) the timely relocation and rollback of dwellings well before erosion becomes an imminent threat, which this scheme seeks to do. Furthermore, the overriding purpose of Policy WLP8.26 is to strictly control new development and provide for the appropriate relocation of existing development within those areas already evidenced to be especially vulnerable to coastal erosion, which I find to be the case here.
 14. However, explicit in Policy WLP8.26 is that it is permissive of 'replacement' dwellings only. The Warren lies outside of the appeal site boundary, is not within land edged in blue nor indeed shown on any of the formal plans provided. This lack of precision would make a Grampian condition to require its demolition problematic, as I would be unable to tie such a condition to a plan. Additionally, the appellants suggested draft condition essentially sets out that no development could commence on any of the four dwellings until The Warren is demolished, which I have concerns would be disproportionate and unreasonable. This is made more complex as the appeal involves four dwellings, and it is not clear which dwelling replaces which, making drafting a suitably sophisticated condition difficult.
 15. For similar reasons, a spilt decision would also be inappropriate. Having carefully considered this matter, I am not satisfied that a Grampian condition would meet the Framework tests. No legal mechanism, such as a s.106 agreement, is before me. Consequently, there would be no means of controlling that it would be demolished at an appropriate point in time, thus ensuring it is a true replacement.
 16. My attention is drawn to the Pathfinder project which indicates dwellings at risk of coastal erosion could be replaced and the original building retained for alternative, non-permanent residential uses, whilst still safe to do so, a matter reflected in criterion 4 of policy WLP8.26 of the LP. The appellant suggests that such conditions are commonly applied to holiday lets and other temporary forms of residential accommodation and goes on to provide suggested wording. However placing a condition, that is not pre-commencement on a property falling outside of the appeal site would be unreasonable, imprecise and unenforceable.
 17. The effect of this would be that the appellant could achieve a net gain of one dwelling for what could still be a considerable period. This would undermine the policy intent. Consequently, I find that scheme conflicts with the fourth criterion of Policy WLP8.26. As I cannot be certain it would represent a replacement dwelling, it would also be contrary to policies WLP1.2, WLP7.1 and WLP8.7 of the LP, which amongst other things, set out a strategy for growth in rural settlements, including limiting development in the countryside to certain exceptions which this scheme would not meet.

Character and appearance, including National Landscape

18. The appeal site comprises flat agricultural land in the countryside, to the north of Easton Lane close to the hamlet of Easton Bevants and north of the defined settlement boundary of Reydon. Easton Farm with its linear, former poultry buildings, lies adjacent to the appeal site and there are two dwellings to its south, fronting the lane which together form a cluster of development in the rural landscape.
19. The site is located within the North Suffolk Sandlings landscape character area identified in the Waveney Landscape Character Assessment. This area forms a low lying coastal backdrop of remnant acid heathland and wooded farmland defined by the extent of sand and gravel drift deposits. Land use in the area is predominantly agricultural with a mix of farming. Fields tend to be medium to large scale, typically defined by hedgerows which I was able to observe on site. There are areas of open landscape where views are more expansive, with mature trees lining prominent skyline features.
20. The site is also located within the Suffolk and Essex Coasts and Heaths National Landscape designation. The statutory purpose of National Landscapes is conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty. Section 245 (Protected landscapes) of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 amends the duty on relevant authorities in respect of their functions, which affect National Landscapes. Relevant authorities must seek to further the statutory purposes of Protected Landscapes, which includes National Landscapes.
21. Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. In this case, the National Landscape covers a large area. Its status is derived partly from its underlying geology and associated natural habitats, shaped by the effects of the sea and the interaction with people and the landscape, and is valued for its scenic qualities and tranquillity.
22. Evidence shows that the cottages at 1-3 East End Cottage that have already been lost to the sea were a modest terrace of 3 dwellings. The Warren sits apart from the appeal site, in a more exposed location and comprises a two storey, four bedroom dwelling. The four proposed dwellings are considerably larger in scale and bulk than those they are to replace. However, there is nothing within Policy WLP8.26 that limits the size of the replacement dwellings, a matter that the SPD acknowledges. Indeed, the SPD advocates that the size of any relocated dwelling can include a consideration of permitted development rights and should be considered alongside other landscape and design policies, in order to minimise the risk of unnecessarily larger homes impacting the undeveloped area, which is the approach that I have taken.
23. Whilst the four new dwellings are substantial in size, they are not excessively bulky. Moreover, the proposed layout would appear as a modern interpretation of a farmstead, which I find to be appropriate for its site context and would provide for an interesting contemporary design. The farmstead would be set further north than the adjacent farm and extend development further into the open countryside away from the existing cluster of built form, which counts against the scheme.
24. However, the revised landscape plan indicates a robust and meaningful strategy to provide woodland blocks of large deciduous trees to screen the development,

which I find would, over time, largely be in character with the surrounding landscape. Their placement would allow for retained and important glimpses of the landscape when viewed across the site towards farmland at the south-east, such that it would assist in preserving the landscape character. It is noteworthy that the location of the proposed dwellings closely follows the pre-application advice given by the Council.

25. I am mindful that any site to accommodate replacement dwellings would, by necessity, be located within the National Landscape and that Policy WLP8.26 is supportive of replacement dwellings in principle. In this case there would be an encroachment of development away from built form, albeit landscaping mitigations proposed would help to offer visual relief to the effects of this over time to such a degree that this would largely preserve the landscape character.
26. However, without the ability to remove The Warren, the appeal scheme cannot secure the removal of a building that currently interrupts the visual connection between the land and coast and would not enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape. Consequently, it does not counterbalance the adverse landscape effects of the replacements, which would in the short-to-medium term be visible in the landscape owing to the size, their positioning away from the adjacent farm buildings and the lack of established screening.
27. As such, it conflicts with paragraph 185(a) of the Framework as it would, when considered in the round, compromise the character of the coast and its National Landscape designation. Therefore, I find that the development in combination with the uncontrolled retention of The Warren to amount to considerable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and fails to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape which conflicts with Policy WLP8.35 of the LP. Amongst other things, this expects development to demonstrate protection and enhancement with the special qualities and local distinctiveness of the area and the natural beauty of the former Suffolk Coast Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, now the National Landscape.

Other Matters

28. The Council's officer report refers to the appeal site being located within 360m south of Benacre to Easton Bavents Special Protection Area (SPA) and approximately 680m of Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons Special Area of Conservation (SAC), both of which are European designated habitat sites. Limited evidence has been provided to show the effect of the development on these habitat designations. Given my other concerns with the scheme and that this matter is not in dispute, I do not consider this further. Had I been minded to allow the appeal, further representations would have been required on this matter.
29. I have had regard to comments from interested parties, particularly in relation to ecology and wildlife, other sites offered to the appellant other planning permission granted to the appellant, highway safety and the effect on C.C Boggis Ltd. However, I have limited evidence with regard to ecology and wildlife and highway safety and note the comments from the appellant with regard to other sites and permissions and the effect on Easton Farm. As such, I do not have sufficient evidence to find harm in these regards. It is also noteworthy that the Council came to similar conclusions in relation to these matters.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

30. The proposal would result in the provision of additional sustainable and energy efficient dwellings that could be built out quickly and provide associated economic benefits from construction and future spend by occupiers. These benefits weigh in favour of the proposal, but I give them moderate weight due to the scale of development.
31. In contrast however, the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area and fail to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape. The relevant policies in these regards are consistent with the Framework that seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment. Therefore, the proposed development is contrary to the development plan as a whole.
32. During the appeal, the Council have confirmed that it cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and I have no reason to disagree. I have found above that the proposal would cause harm to the National Landscape. This is contrary to the provisions of Chapter 15 of the Framework that protects such assets. Given footnote 7 to Paragraph 11(d)(i) of the Framework, and the harm I have identified to an asset of particular importance, this provides a strong reason for refusing the development and there is no need for me to carry out the assessment in Paragraph 11(d) (ii) of the Framework.
33. Nevertheless, I have had regard to the benefits to the supply of housing and to the economic benefits identified above. However, these benefits are limited by the scale of the proposal and the adverse effects that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
34. Overall, for the reasons given above, the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no other considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Walker

INSPECTOR



Committee Report

Planning Committee North - 20 January 2026

Application no. DC/25/3663/RG3

Location

33-41 Puddingmoor
Beccles
Suffolk
NR34 9PJ

Statutory determination date 1 January 2026

Application type Deemed Council Development

Applicant East Suffolk Council

Parish Beccles

Proposal Replacing existing UPVC windows with new UPVC windows to all elevations matching in style as existing.

Case Officer Katherine Rawlins
01502 523018
Katherine.Rawlins@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Determination route This application is before Planning Committee for determination because East Suffolk Council is the owner and/or applicant.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Permission is sought for the installation of replacement windows to the front and rear elevations at no's 33-41 Puddingmoor, Beccles, in which there is an Article 4 Direction in force in the Beccles Conservation Area.
- 1.2 This application is before the Planning Committee (North) as the building and land is within the ownership of East Suffolk Council.
- 1.3 No third-party representations have been received, and the Town Council raises no objection.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 No's 33-41 Puddingmoor is a group of 5 modestly proportioned modern bungalows located within the Beccles Conservation Area on the far western edge of the settlement boundary under the ownership of East Suffolk District Council.
- 2.2 Puddingmoor is located within Character Area 3 of the Beccles Conservation Area Management Plan and is identified as forming part of the original medieval character of Beccles, with the land to west and north located entirely within the jurisdiction of the Broads Authority.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 Permission is sought for the installation of replacement windows to the front and rear elevations at no's 33-41 Puddingmoor, Beccles, in which there is an Article 4 Direction in force in the Beccles Conservation Area.
- 3.2 As such, planning permission is required for the installation of replacement windows in this instance, as the group of bungalows fronts a 'relevant location' (highway, waterway or open space) in which permitted development rights for the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse are removed under Class A of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order.

4. Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 None

5. Consultee Responses

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Beccles Town Council	13 November 2025	2 December 2025
Summary of comments: No objection		

6. Third Party Representations

6.1 None

7. Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Publication	Published date	Expiry date	Reason
Beccles and Bungay Journal	14 November 2025	5 December 2025	Conservation Area
Lowestoft Journal	14 November 2025	5 December 2025	Conservation Area

Site notices

Site Notice Type	Date Posted	Expiry date	Reason
General Site Notice	19 November 2025	10 December 2025	Conservation Area

8. Planning policy

- WLP1.2 - Settlement Boundaries (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.29 - Design (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- National Planning Policy Framework 2024
- BECC5: Heritage (Beccles Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' September 2021)
- BECC9: General Design Policies (Beccles Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' September 2021)
- Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (East Suffolk Council, Adopted June 2021)

9. Planning Considerations

Principle

- 9.1 Under Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 planning applications must accord with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan includes the Adopted Waveney Local Plan (2019) and the Beccles Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 (Made September 2021).
- 9.2 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Beccles as shown in the policies map of the Adopted Waveney Local Plan (2019). Subject to compliance with other policies of the Development Plan, the principle of development is acceptable.

Design and Impact on Heritage Assets

- 9.3 In accordance with policy WLP8.39 of the Adopted Waveney Local Plan (2019) and the Council's statutory requirements under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Planning Authorities must pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 9.4 Policy WLP8.39 adds that proposals for replacement doors, windows and porches in conservation areas where Article 4 Directions are in place, must be of a suitable design and constructed in appropriate materials. Applications will be assessed with reference to the prominence of the location, the historic and architectural value of the building and the historic and architectural value of the feature to be replaced.
- 9.5 Policy WLP8.29 of the Adopted Waveney Local Plan is a more general design policy that requires development to respond to local context and form of surrounding buildings in relation to overall scale, layout, the site coverage and height and massing of existing buildings; to account for the relationship between buildings and the wider street scene; and to protect the amenity of the wider environment and neighbouring uses.
- 9.6 Paragraph 208 of the NPPF (2024) requires that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 9.7 The Heritage Statement notes that Puddingmoor is not a major through route from the Bungay Road to the west, but it has two-way traffic and provides access to the Beccles Lido, a public car park, various boatyards and small businesses including the Waveney Hotel beside the river at the northern eastern end of Puddingmoor. It is a lane of medieval origin leading to the historic centre of Beccles with its church and marketplace. The lane was of particular importance leading to the quays when the River Waveney was navigable before the turn of the 20th century after which the herring industry declined. The surrounding area has a semi-rural character with land directly opposite to the north and west, located within the River Waveney River Valley - Waveney Meadow - and the Broads Authority Executive Area.
- 9.8 This group of modern bungalows is not identified as having any architectural or historic importance in the Beccles Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan and is set back from the street frontage along Puddingmoor behind a brick boundary wall. No's 33-41 Puddingmoor is not a historic building therefore, as it comprises a group of 5 modern bungalows located on the southwestern side of Puddingmoor on the edge of the Town Centre. The bungalows were built in the late 1960s/early 1970s and are constructed from brick and render with timber clad gables and a shallow pitched roofline of concrete pantiles. Access to the rear is via an upward sloping concrete path at the southwestern end next to the 20th century extension to the serpentine retaining wall of the front garden.
- 9.9 The Heritage Statement submitted in support of this application identifies that the brick serpentine boundary wall, which forms the front boundary to the application site, is of some architectural and historic significance, as it marks the former northwestern boundary of the Grade II listed St Mary's House in Ballygate, situated 40 metres to the southeast on elevated

ground. The site of Nos. 33-41 Puddingmoor is of historic significance therefore, as it forms part of the grounds of the medieval St Mary's Chapel and 13th Century Leper Hospital where the early 19th century Fauconberge Grammar School (St Mary's House) now stands.

- 9.10 The Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document is a material consideration.
- 9.11 Paragraphs 10.25-10.27 states that the installation of replacement windows in original, old and rare historic buildings will not normally be acceptable, because these features contribute to the character of historic buildings, where there is a presumption in favour of retaining and repairing original and historic windows – joinery and glazing. Where windows have however been replaced (i.e. modern post war replacement) the principle of doing so is acceptable, subject to the replacements being of an improved design quality that enhances the historic building.
- 9.12 The Heritage Statement refers to the existing windows to the front and rear elevations, as needing replacement with windows of better thermal performance and insulation. The existing windows to be replaced are modern uPVC double glazed, side hung casements, with top vents in white frames, which would have replaced the original timber frame windows. No objection is raised to their replacement with windows of an appropriate design. The replacement windows are of a similar style and design, with white double glazed uPVC side hung casements incorporating trickle vents to allow for improved ventilation, in white frames of the same size and dimensions as the existing windows.
- 9.13 The rear elevation of no's 33-41 Puddingmoor is not visible from the streetscene along Puddingmoor and the front elevation is partially screened in views by the brick serpentine wall that is slightly elevated above street level. There are no strategic viewpoints in this part of the Conservation Area that would be impacted by this proposal. The replacement windows, being of similar size, dimensions and design as the existing white uPVC casements, would therefore have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the Beccles Conservation Area and would preserve its historic character and appearance, in accordance with policies WLP8.29, WLP8.39 of the Adopted Waveney Local Plan (2019), policies BECC5 and BECC9 of the Beccles Neighbourhood Plan (2021) the Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (2021) and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Amenity

- 9.14 Policy WLP8.29 requires development to protect the amenity of the wider environment and neighbouring uses. This application, for replacement windows to the front and rear elevations of no's 33-41 Puddingmoor, would have no adverse impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties at no's 43 or 29 Puddingmoor, located either side of the application site to the southwest and northeast, from overlooking or loss of privacy.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 In summary, the installation of replacement non-original uPVC double glazed windows with windows of similar size, dimensions and design as the existing white uPVC casements, would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the Beccles Conservation Area and would preserve its historic character and appearance, in accordance with policies WLP8.29, WLP8.39 of the Adopted Waveney Local Plan (2019), policies BECC5 and BECC9 of

the Beccles Neighbourhood Plan (2021) the Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (2021) and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

11. Recommendation

- 11.1 It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to planning conditions listed below.

12. Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with drawing no. Site Location Plan, Casement Style Windows (Asset Fineline), Photos to show Existing Windows received 24 September 2025, and the Design and Access Statement / Heritage Impact Statement received 6 November 2025, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

Background information

See application reference DC/25/3663/RG3 on [Public Access](#)

Committee Report

Planning committee - 20 January 2026

Application no. DC/25/3775/LBC

Location

5 St Marys Flats
Ballygate
Beccles
Suffolk
NR34 9NF

Statutory determination date 26 December 2025

Agreed extension date 28 January 2026

Application type Listed Building Consent

Applicant East Suffolk Council

Parish Beccles

Proposal Listed Building Consent - A mechanically operated extractor fan through removal of one of the sliding sash window panes in the bathroom.

Case Officer Daniel Bailes
01502 523022
daniel.bailes@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Determination route This application is before Planning Committee for determination because East Suffolk Council is the owner and/or applicant.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Listed building consent is sought for the addition of an extractor fan through the removal of a glass pane on one of the sliding sash windows at St Mary's Flats, Beccles. The proposal is considered to preserve the significance of the listed building in accordance with local and national policy, therefore the application is recommended for approval.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 St Mary's Flats is a two-and-a half storey building which is located within the settlement boundary of Beccles and the Beccles Conservation Area. The building was listed Grade II in September 1971, and the list description describes this as an early 19th century Suffolk yellow brick two storey house with a wood modillion cornice and slate roof.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks listed building consent for a mechanically operated extractor fan through removal of one of the sliding sash window panes in the bathroom.

4. Consultees

Third Party Representations

- 4.1 There have been no third-party representations received.

Consultees Responses

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Beccles Town Council	5 November 2025	2 December 2025
Summary of comments: No Objection.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Design And Heritage	5 November 2025	13 November 2025
Summary of comments: The proposal would have a minor negative impact on the listed building. However, there are benefits to the proposal which are considered to justify the very low level of less than substantial harm.		

5. Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Publication	Published date	Expiry date	Reason
Beccles and Bungay Journal	14 November 2025	5 December 2025	Conservation Area Listed Building
Lowestoft Journal	14 November 2025	5 December 2025	Conservation Area Listed Building

6. Site Notices

General Site Notice	Reason for site notice: Conservation Area, Listed Building Date posted: 19 November 2025 Expiry date: 10 December 2025
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7. Planning Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework 2024
- WLP8.29 - Design (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.37 - Historic Environment (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)
- BECC5: Heritage (Beccles Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' September 2021)
- BECC9: General Design Principles (Beccles Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' September 2021)

8. Planning Considerations

8.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Heritage Impact

- 8.2 The front elevation of St Mary's Flats still retains the historic sash windows and has not been detrimentally altered through its change of use into flats. This proposal seeks to insert a mechanically operated extractor fan through the removal of one of the glass panes on the sliding sash window which serves the bathroom at flat 5.
- 8.3 East Suffolk Council's Design and Heritage Team have been consulted on this application to help assess the impact of the proposal upon the Grade II listed building. They have advised in their comments that it is important to improve the living conditions of the flat by ensuring the flat has adequate ventilation and preventing damp and mould issues to help preserve the building in the long term.
- 8.4 The physical impact of fitting a fan has been minimised, as only one glass pane would need to be removed, and other options of providing ventilation would either interfere with the flat

above or cause the loss of brickwork. Notwithstanding this, the fan would appear intrusive on this elevation. However, on balance, the minor visual impact has justification and ESC Design and Heritage have no objections to this proposal.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

9.2 The proposal is deemed to cause a very low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of St Marys Flats. However, this harm is considered to be outweighed by the benefits of providing adequate ventilation in the bathroom, which will help to prevent damp issues and improve quality of living.

10. Recommendation

10.1 It is recommended that listed building consent is granted subject to conditions.

11. Conditions:

1. LBC Time Limit
2. Approved Plans

Background Information

See application reference DC/25/3775/LBC on [Public Access](#)



Committee Report

Planning committee - 20 January 2026

Application no. DC/25/4557/FUL

Location

70 - 72 High Street
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR32 1XN

Statutory determination date 20 January 2026

Application type Full Application

Applicant Mr Ian Peters

Parish Lowestoft

Proposal Replace shopfronts at 70-71 High Street with traditional timber designs.
Repairs to 72 High Street shopfront

Case Officer Hannah Lence
hannah.lence@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Determination route This application is before Planning Committee for determination because East Suffolk Council is the owner and/or applicant.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This application seeks permission for the replacement of modern shopfronts at Nos. 70-71 High Street with traditionally detailed timber designs and repairs to the existing Edwardian shopfront at No. 72 High Street. The site lies within the North Lowestoft Conservation Area and comprises Positive Unlisted Buildings that contribute to the historic character of the High Street. The proposals aim to reinstate traditional detailing and improve the architectural quality of the shopfronts, consistent with heritage-led regeneration objectives. The proposals will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the North Lowestoft Conservation Area and the significance of Positive Unlisted Buildings and is deemed compliant with all relevant local and national planning policies. As such it is recommended that planning permission is granted.
- 1.2. The application is presented to Planning Committee because the agent is a member of staff at East Suffolk Council and the project is funded through the East Suffolk Partnership Scheme in a Conservation Area (PSiCA) programme.

2. Site Description

- 2.1. The site comprises three ground-floor commercial units within two mid-to-late 19th-century buildings on the east side of High Street, within the North Lowestoft Conservation Area. Nos. 70-71 were designed in 1877 by George Glover and exhibit Italianate detailing, including rusticated stone quoins and cast iron balconies at upper levels. No. 72 retains an Edwardian shopfront with curved glazing and decorative pilasters. Both properties are identified as Positive Unlisted Buildings in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and contribute to the historic streetscape.

3. Proposal

- 3.1. The works at Nos. 70-71 High Street involve the removal of modern shopfronts and signage and the installation of new timber shopfronts incorporating pilasters, mouldings, sills, and appropriately designed doors. A proportionate timber fascia will be introduced to reveal the decorative grille above the glazing, and the existing stallriser will be retained and redecorated. At No. 72 High Street, the proposals are restorative in nature, involving repairs and redecoration to the existing Edwardian shopfront, including the fascia, pilasters, stallriser, and glazing. Minor repairs to rusticated quoins at No. 70 are also included. The use of the premises as retail units with residential above remains unchanged.

4. Consultations

Third Party Representations

- 4.1. No-third party letters of representation have been received at the time of writing.

Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
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Lowestoft Town Council	10 December 2025	No response
Summary of comments: <i>No comments received at time of writing</i>		

5. Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Publication	Published date	Expiry date	Reason
Beccles and Bungay Journal	19 December 2025	14 January 2026	Conservation Area
Lowestoft Journal	19 December 2025	14 January 2026	Conservation Area

6. Site notices

Site Notice Type	Date Posted	Expiry date	Reason
General Site Notice	10 December 2025	5 January 2026	Conservation Area

7. Planning policy

7.1. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this decision has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan, and all other material planning considerations identified in the 'officer assessment' section of the report. The relevant policies from each plan are listed below:

7.2. East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan Policies (Adopted March 2019)

- WLP8.29 - Design
- WLP8.37 - Historic Environment
- WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas

7.3. Supplementary Planning Documents

- Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (East Suffolk Council, Adopted June 2021)
- North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (East Suffolk Council, Adopted July 2020)

7.4. Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan (Made November 2025)

- LOW9 Design and Character
- LOW13 North Lowestoft Conservation Area
- LOW15 Local Heritage

7.5. National Planning Policy Framework 2024

8. Planning Considerations

- 8.1. The North Lowestoft Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the High Street as retaining a notable collection of late 19th and early 20th-century shopfronts. Nos. 70-72 High Street are Positive Unlisted Buildings that contribute to this character, but the existing modern shopfronts at Nos. 70-71 are incongruous and detract from the architectural significance of the buildings and the wider conservation area. In contrast, No. 72 retains an Edwardian shopfront with curved glazing and decorative pilasters, although its condition has deteriorated.
- 8.2. The proposed works seek to address these issues by reinstating traditional timber shopfronts at Nos. 70-71, informed by historic research and original designs, and by repairing and redecorating the Edwardian shopfront at No. 72. These changes will restore architectural integrity and enhance the character of the High Street. The design approach aligns with the principles set out in the East Suffolk Historic Environment SPD (2021), which emphasises sensitive repair and the use of traditional materials, and with the Shopfront Design Guide, which advocates proportionate fascias, timber construction, and historically appropriate detailing.
- 8.3. In policy terms, the proposals comply with Policy WLP8.29 of the Waveney Local Plan, which requires high-quality design that respects local character and distinctiveness. By reinstating traditional detailing and improving the visual quality of the shopfronts, the scheme meets this requirement. Policy WLP8.39 seeks to preserve or enhance heritage assets, including conservation areas and Positive Unlisted Buildings. The removal of detracting modern elements and the reinstatement of traditional features clearly achieve this aim. The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan also supports heritage-led regeneration and shopfront enhancement, particularly within the High Street, which is a focus of the High Street Heritage Action Zone and the current Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCA). The application directly contributes to these objectives.
- 8.4. National policy in the NPPF requires great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets (paragraphs 199-202). The proposals will enhance the significance of the buildings and the conservation area and deliver public benefits through heritage-led regeneration, improved townscape quality, and support for local economic activity. No harm to heritage significance has been identified, and the scheme therefore accords with the NPPF's approach to heritage conservation.
- 8.5. Informal discussions were held with the Council's Senior Design and Heritage Officer, who expressed support for the proposals, noting their compliance with best practice guidance and positive impact on the conservation area. Overall, the works represent a high-quality, heritage-sensitive intervention that will remove detracting elements and reinstate traditional detailing, delivering clear public benefits and meeting the planning balance required by national and local policy.
- 8.6. The scheme is exempt from BNG requirements as the works are deemed de-minimis, and there are considered to be no amenity impacts arising from the development.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. The application accords with the Waveney Local Plan, Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan, East Suffolk Historic Environment SPD, Shopfront Design Guide, and the NPPF. The proposals

will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the North Lowestoft Conservation Area and the significance of Positive Unlisted Buildings.

10. Recommendation

- 10.1. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the full outcome of the consultation period being presented to committee.

11. Conditions:

1. 3 Year Time Limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials as detailed on approved drawings

12. Background information

- 12.1. See application reference DC/25/4557/FUL on [Public Access](#)



Committee Report

Planning committee - 20 January 2026

Application no. DC/25/4438/FUL

Location

99-99A High Street
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR32 1XW

Statutory determination date 27 January 2026

Application type Deemed Council Development

Applicant Paul Newson

Parish Lowestoft

Proposal Replacement of first and second floor aluminium windows on principal elevation with timber sashes, alterations to shopfronts

Case Officer Hannah Lence
hannah.lence@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Determination route This application is before Planning Committee for determination because East Suffolk Council is the owner and/or applicant.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This application seeks permission for the replacement of modern aluminium windows at first and second floor level with traditional timber sash windows and alterations to the shopfronts at ground floor level. The site lies within the North Lowestoft Conservation Area and comprises a Positive Unlisted Building that contributes to the historic character of the High Street. The proposals aim to reinstate traditional detailing and improve the architectural quality of the principal elevation, consistent with heritage-led regeneration objectives. The proposals will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the North Lowestoft Conservation Area and the significance of Positive Unlisted Buildings and is deemed compliant with all relevant local and national planning policies. As such it is recommended that planning permission is granted.
- 1.2. The application is presented to Planning Committee because the agent is a member of staff at East Suffolk Council and the project is funded through the East Suffolk Partnership Scheme in a Conservation Area (PSiCA) programme.

2. Site Description

- 2.1. The site comprises a three-storey mid-19th-century building located on the east side of High Street, within the North Lowestoft Conservation Area. The property dates from around 1866 and was designed by William Oldham Chambers for A. Adams, a grocer and provision merchant. It is constructed of gault brick and features elaborate architectural detailing, including arched first-floor windows, panelled pilasters, and a Guilloche frieze below the second-floor windows. The building is identified as a Positive Unlisted Building in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and contributes to the historic streetscape.

3. Proposal

- 3.1. The works include the removal of existing aluminium windows at first and second floor level and their replacement with painted hardwood single-glazed sash windows. At ground floor level, the shopfronts will be altered to improve their appearance, including the removal of modern signage and doors, installation of timber pilasters, new mouldings and sills, and more appropriately designed doors. A proportionate timber fascia will be introduced, and the existing stallriser will be retained and redecorated. The use of the premises as retail units with residential above remains unchanged.

4. Consultations

Third Party Representations

- 4.1. No-third party letters of representation have been received at the time of writing.

Consultee Responses

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Lowestoft Town Council	5 December 2025	No response
Summary of comments:		

No comments received at time of writing.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Ecology	5 December 2025	17 December 2025
Summary of comments: No objections.		

5. Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Publication	Published date	Expiry date	Reason
Beccles and Bungay Journal	12 December 2025	7 January 2026	Conservation Area
Lowestoft Journal	12 December 2025	7 January 2026	Conservation Area

6. Site notices

Site Notice Type	Date Posted	Expiry date	Reason
General Site Notice	10 December 2025	5 January 2026	Conservation Area

7. Planning policy

7.1. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this decision has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan, and all other material planning considerations identified in the 'officer assessment' section of the report. The relevant policies from each plan are listed below:

7.2. East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan Policies (Adopted March 2019)

- WLP8.29 - Design
- WLP8.37 - Historic Environment
- WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas

7.3. Supplementary Planning Documents

- Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (East Suffolk Council, Adopted June 2021)
- North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (East Suffolk Council, Adopted July 2020)

7.4. Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan (Made November 2025)

- LOW9 Design and Character
- LOW13 North Lowestoft Conservation Area
- LOW15 Local Heritage

7.5. National Planning Policy Framework 2024

8. Planning Considerations

- 8.1. The North Lowestoft Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the High Street as retaining a notable collection of late 19th and early 20th-century shopfronts and upper-floor detailing. No. 99 High Street is a Positive Unlisted Building that contributes to this character, but its architectural integrity has been compromised by modern aluminium windows and unsympathetic shopfront alterations. These elements detract from the building's significance and the wider conservation area.
- 8.2. The proposed works seek to address these issues by reinstating traditional timber sash windows at first and second floor level and improving the shopfronts through the introduction of historically appropriate detailing. These changes will restore architectural integrity and enhance the character of the High Street. The design approach aligns with the principles set out in the East Suffolk Historic Environment SPD (2021), which emphasises sensitive repair and the use of traditional materials, and with the Shopfront Design Guide, which advocates proportionate fascias, timber construction, and historically appropriate detailing.
- 8.3. In policy terms, the proposals comply with Policy WLP8.29 of the Waveney Local Plan, which requires high-quality design that respects local character and distinctiveness. By reinstating traditional detailing and improving the visual quality of the principal elevation, the scheme meets this requirement. Policy WLP8.39 seeks to preserve or enhance heritage assets, including conservation areas and Positive Unlisted Buildings. The removal of detracting modern elements and the reinstatement of traditional features clearly achieve this aim. The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan also supports heritage-led regeneration and shopfront enhancement, particularly within the High Street, which is a focus of the High Street Heritage Action Zone and the current PSiCA scheme. The application directly contributes to these objectives.
- 8.4. National policy in the NPPF requires great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets (paragraphs 199-202). The proposals will enhance the significance of the building and the conservation area and deliver public benefits through heritage-led regeneration, improved townscape quality, and support for local economic activity. No harm to heritage significance has been identified, and the scheme therefore accords with the NPPF's approach to heritage conservation.
- 8.5. Informal discussions were held with the Council's Senior Design and Heritage Officer, who expressed support for the proposals, noting their compliance with best practice guidance and positive impact on the conservation area. Overall, the works represent a high-quality, heritage-sensitive intervention that will remove detracting elements and reinstate traditional detailing, delivering clear public benefits and meeting the planning balance required by national and local policy

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. The application accords with the Waveney Local Plan, Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan, East Suffolk Historic Environment SPD, Shopfront Design Guide, and the NPPF. The proposals will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the North Lowestoft

Conservation Area and the significance of a Positive Unlisted Building. Approval is recommended, subject to conditions securing detailed design, materials, and finishes.

10. Recommendation

10.1. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the full outcome of the consultation period being presented to committee.

11. Conditions:

1. 3 Year Time Limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials as detailed on approved drawings

12. Background information

12.1. See application reference DC/25/4438/RG3 on [Public Access](#)