

Dickleburgh and Rushall Neighbourhood Development Plan

Hearing Note

Context

This note clarifies the next stages of the examination process and advises about the issues that will be considered at the hearing. It consolidates the earlier note.

The examination of the submitted Plan is proceeding well. I have visited the neighbourhood area, read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also prepared a clarification note and read the responses to that note.

Hearing

I am satisfied that most of the Plan can be examined by way of written representations. However, in accordance with paragraph 9(3) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, I have concluded that to ensure an adequate examination of the Plan it is necessary to hold a hearing on the contents of two elements of the submitted Plan.

Hearing Details

The hearing details are as follows:

Date: Thursday 16 October 2025

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Dickleburgh Village Centre, Harvey Lane, Dickleburgh IP21 4NL

I would like to meet with the participants in the Village Centre at 10.00 am on the day of the hearing to discuss a series of process matters. This meeting will not discuss the three parts of the hearing identified in this Note.

The participants

Dickleburgh and Rushall Parish Council (as the qualifying body) and South Norfolk Council (as the local planning authority) have a statutory role in each of the three parts of the hearing.

The following other people and organisations are invited to attend the first two parts of the hearing:

- the owner of the housing allocation to the west of Norwich Road (Policy DR20) and/or the owner's agent;
- Mr and Mrs Patching; and
- Rebecca Walkley and Len Wiggins.

Mr and Mrs Patching and Rebecca Walkley/Len Wiggins have decided to prepare a written statement rather than to attend the hearing. The written statement should be sent to South Norfolk Council by 7 October 2025. Thereafter South Norfolk Council will send the statement to the participants who are attending the hearing.

The public and other interested parties are invited to attend the hearing. However, only the organisations and persons listed above will be able to participate on the day.

The issues and the hearing sessions

The hearing will have the following three sessions:

Part 1: The processes used to select the housing allocation to the west of Norwich Road (Policy DR20), and the reasonable alternatives considered.

This session will address the following matters:

- the site selection process for the proposed housing allocation, and the way in which reasonable alternatives were considered;
- the way in which the second Environmental Report (December 2024) was a natural iteration of the first Report (January 2023); and
- the extent to which the second Environmental Report properly underpins the site selection process both generally, and in the context of the contents of Table 3.2.

The participants for this session will be the Parish Council, South Norfolk Council, and the owners of the Norwich Road site and/or the owner's agent. I will also consider the contents of the written statement.

Part 2: The extent to which the proposed development of the housing allocation to the west of Norwich Road can be sensitively accommodated into the format, layout, and highway capacity of the village, and makes an efficient use of land.

This session will address the following matters:

- how the proposed development of the site will relate to the format and layout of Dickleburgh;
- the impact of the development of the proposed site on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- the appropriateness of the density for the proposed housing site, and whether it has regard to Section 11 of the NPPF;
- the proposed access arrangements for the site; and
- how the general requirements for a mix of house types and tenures as identified in the initial part of the policy would be quantified and delivered.

The participants for this session will be the Parish Council, South Norfolk Council, and the owners of the Norwich Road site and/or the owner's agent. I will also consider the contents of the written statement.

Part 3: The extent to which proposed Local Green Space H (The entrance to High Common) meets the criteria for such designation in the NPPF?

This session will address the following matters:

- whether proposed local green space H is demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance; and
- whether proposed local green space H is local in character and not an extensive parcel of land.

The participants for this session will be the Parish Council and South Norfolk Council.

Other Matters

The Arrangements for the Hearing

The hearing will address the matters above in turn. I will ask the various questions and lead any further discussion on the issues. There will be comfort breaks throughout the day.

The details in the Plan and the representations made by the various parties are thorough and comprehensive. As such, additional hearing statements are not required.

The Next Steps

I will finalise my report on the Plan as soon as possible after the hearing. The parts of the report which are unaffected by the hearing will have been completed by the date of the hearing.

The Examiners Report

Whilst the hearing introduces an additional stage into the examination process, it does not affect the way in which the report will be produced and finalised. I will send a fact check report to South Norfolk Council and the Parish Council (as set out in the earlier note on examination arrangements). The main findings of the hearing will be incorporated within that report on a policy-by-policy basis.

The final report will be published once the fact-checking process has concluded.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Dickleburgh and Rushall Neighbourhood Development Plan

7 August 2025