



South Norfolk Council

Newton Flotman Neighbourhood Plan - Decision Statement

1. Summary

Following an independent examination, South Norfolk Council has received the examiner's report relating to the Newton Flotman Neighbourhood Plan. The report makes a number of recommendations for making modifications to policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. South Norfolk Council has made a decision to approve each of the examiner's recommendations and to allow the Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to a referendum within the neighbourhood area.

2. Background

Following the submission of the Newton Flotman Neighbourhood Plan to South Norfolk Council in February 2025, the Neighbourhood Plan was published in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and representations invited. The publication period took place between 10 March and 23 April 2025.

South Norfolk Council, with the approval of Newton Flotman Parish Council, subsequently appointed an independent examiner, Mr Derek Stebbing, to conduct an examination of the submitted Neighbourhood Plan and conclude as to whether it meets the Basic Conditions (as defined by Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and consequently whether the Plan should proceed to referendum.

The examiner's report concludes that, subject to making certain recommended modifications, the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions for neighbourhood planning and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum within the adopted neighbourhood area.

3. Decision

Having considered the recommendations in the examiner's report and the reasons for them, South Norfolk Council has decided to approve each of the examiner's recommended modifications. This is in accordance with section 12 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Council considers this decision will ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions.

The following table sets out the examiner's recommended modifications, the Council's consideration of those recommendations, and the Council's decision in relation to each recommendation.

Subject to the modifications approved by South Norfolk Council, as set out in the table below, the Council is satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum within the neighbourhood area, in accordance with part 12(4) of Schedule 4B of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

| Section | Examiner's recommendation | Council consideration of recommendation | Council decision |
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| PM1 (pages 26-8) | <p><u>Policy NF2 – Housing mix (size, type and tenure)</u></p> <p>Page 26 – delete the full text of the final two bullet points on this page.</p> <p><u>Policy NF2</u></p> <p>Delete the words “<i>(both now and in the future)</i>” in the first paragraph of text.</p> <p>Amend the word “<i>must</i>” in the second paragraph of text to read “should”.</p> <p>Delete the words “<i>should be at a minimum discount of 40 per cent</i>” in the third paragraph of text and replace with “will be at a level of discount to be agreed with South Norfolk Council.”</p> | <p>The Council previously submitted comments expressing concern that Policy NF2 referred to HNA figures which differed from those published in the GNLP HNA and the proposed minimum discount of 40% for affordable home ownership products, as it could jeopardise the delivery of new affordable homes. The Council agrees that this amendment is a satisfactory solution to this issue.</p> | <p>Accept examiner's recommended modifications.</p> |
| PM2 (page 29) | <p><u>Policy NF3 – Location and scale of further housing development</u></p> <p>Amend the words “<i>policy 6</i>” to read “policy NF6” in the first paragraph of text.</p> <p>Delete the word “<i>permitted</i>” and replace with “supported” in the third paragraph of text.</p> | <p>The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF.</p> | <p>Accept examiner's recommended modifications.</p> |

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| PM3 (page 32) | <p><u>Policy NF4 – Land off Alan Avenue (NEW1), local requirements</u></p> <p>Delete the first paragraph of Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p>“This Policy concerns the proposed allocation of land south-west of Alan Avenue for the development of approximately 25 dwellings that is contained in the emerging South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan. This Plan will not be adopted by South Norfolk Council until 2026.</p> <p>The future development of this site will need to take account of the strategic policies contained in the adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan and other relevant Policies in this Plan, including Policies NF1, NF2 and NF9.</p> <p>This Policy sets out a series of local site-specific requirements that will also need to be addressed in the proposed development of the site. These requirements are as follows:”</p> <p>Delete criteria a., e., and i. from the list of requirements set out in the Policy text.</p> <p>Amend criterion b. to read as follows:</p> <p>“b) On-site Affordable Housing provision at a level of least 33% in accordance with the requirements of Policy 5 in the adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan and Policy NF2 in this Plan.”</p> <p>Amend criteria b., c., d., f., g. and h to be criteria a)-f) respectively.</p> <p>Delete sub-heading Housing Mix and amend sub-heading Amenity space and Biodiversity Net Gain to read “Amenity Space.”</p> <p>Amend “Sustainable Urban Drainage System” in criterion h (to be criterion e)) to read “Sustainable Drainage System”.</p> | <p>The Council previously submitted comments expressing concern that Policy NF4 repeated local and national policy criteria. The proposed amendment answers these concerns by removing policy criteria which would duplicate those already existing at a local or national level.</p> | <p>Accept examiner’s recommended modifications.</p> |
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| PM4 (page 34) | <p><u>Policy NF5 – Business development</u></p> <p>Amend the first line of Policy text to read as follows:</p> <p>“Proposals for the development of new business premises or the extension of existing business premises, must be...”</p> <p>Amend the word “pub” in the first line of the second paragraph of Policy text to read “public house”.</p> | <p>The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF.</p> | <p>Accept examiner's recommended modifications.</p> |

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| PM5 (pages 38-9) | <p><u>Policy NF6 – Existing and new community infrastructure</u></p> <p>Delete third paragraph of Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p>“Proposals for the change of use of existing community facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) adequate other facilities exist within a reasonable distance to meet local needs at an accessible location; ii) or where it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of continued viable use through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six months of continuous marketing for the permitted and similar uses, using an appropriate agent; and • confirmation that it has been offered on a range of terms agreed to be reasonable on the advice of an independent qualified assessor; and • regard to future plans for the area including any community-led plans.” <p>Delete fourth paragraph of Policy text in full.</p> <p>Add new paragraph 6.10 to the supporting text on Page 38 to read as follows:</p> <p>“6.10 Section 9 of the Plan also sets out a range of Community Action Projects to improve community infrastructure and which will be investigated.”</p> | <p>The Council submitted comments expressing concern that Policy NF6 could result in a more flexible policy requirement than that set out within the DM DPD. The Examiner's amendments bring the policy in line with the local plan and will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF.</p> | <p>Accept examiner's recommended modifications.</p> |

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| PM6 (pages 41-2) | <u>Policy NF7 – Pedestrian and cycle connectivity</u> Amend the title of the Policy to read " Promoting Active Travel ". | The Council agrees that this modification reflects the national priority to promote active travel. | Accept examiner's recommended modifications. |
| PM7 (page 43) | <u>Policy NF8 – A140 access, traffic calming and community parking</u> Amend the first paragraph of the Policy text to read as follows: "Proposals for new development that will improve safe access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists to and from the A140 road will be supported. All such proposals should be the subject of the necessary consultation with Norfolk County Council as Highways Authority." | The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. | Accept examiner's recommended modifications. |

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| PM8 (pages 46-7) | <p><u>Policy NF9 – Natural assets and biodiversity</u></p> <p>Delete the first paragraph of the Policy text in full, and transfer the text (without amendment) to form an addition to paragraph 8.3 (ahead of Figures 31 and 32).</p> <p>Add new first paragraph of text, to read as follows:</p> <p>“The Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the natural assets in the Plan area that are valued by the Newton Flotman community. These assets are listed at paragraph 8.3 and are shown on Figures 31 and 32.”</p> <p>Delete the second sentence of the second part of the Policy and replace with:</p> <p>“Proposals for new development in the Plan area that are required to secure Biodiversity Net Gain, in line with national policy and the requirements set out in Policy 3 of the adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan, should seek to secure at least a 10% gain in biodiversity compared to the existing situation.”</p> <p>Add new third sentence to the second part of the Policy to read as follows:</p> <p>“Examples of enhancements to the biodiversity of the Plan area can include the following:</p> <p>and then list criteria a.-e. as presently drafted.”</p> | <p>The Council previously submitted comments expressing concern that Policy NF4 repeated national BNG policy criteria. Amendments made by the Examiner remove this duplication and help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF.</p> | <p>Accept examiner's recommended modifications.</p> |

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| PM9 (pages 47-59) | <p><u>Policy NF10 – Local Green Spaces</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full and replace with:</p> <p>“The areas listed below and shown on the map at Figure 33 and on the Inset Maps at Pages 48-57 are designated as Local Green Spaces:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alan Avenue Green Space 2. Alan Avenue Play Area 3. Allotments between Blundeville Manor and Alan Avenue, bordering the southern end of the Playing Fields. 4. Farm Track/Green Lane west of Grove Way 5. Kings Green 6. Playing Field at Newton Flotman Village Centre 7. Pond to the east of Church Farm on Greenways 8. Small Green Space at School Road opposite the Primary School 9. Small Green Space at School Road adjacent to the School Gates 10. Vehicle and Pedestrian access to the Allotments from Exchange Road 11. Verges on Greenways from Newton Greenways towards Church Farm (Roadside Nature Reserve 191) 12. Verges on St. Mary’s Close 13. Churchyard surrounding St. Mary’s Church 14. Verges on Pound Lane (Roadside Nature Reserve 190) <p>Development proposals in the 14 designated Local Green Spaces listed above and defined on the accompanying maps to this Policy will be managed in accordance with national policy for Green Belts.”</p> | <p>The Council agrees that the proposed amendments reflect a consistent approach in assessing Local Green Spaces and bring the clarity required by the NPPF.</p> | <p>Accept examiner’s recommended modifications.</p> |
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| (see above) | <p>Delete Sites Nos.5 and 15 from the text at Pages 50 and 56 respectively, and from Figure 33.</p> <p>Where necessary, re-number all Site Nos. at Pages 48-59, including Figure 33, to conform to the above list (Nos. 1-14).</p> <p>Amend the reference at paragraph 8.8 to Paragraph 102 of the NPPF to read "Paragraph 106".</p> <p>Amend the reference at paragraph 8.9 to Paragraph 103 of the NPPF to read "Paragraph 107".</p> | (see above) | (see above) |
| PM10 (page 62) | <p><u>Policy NF11 – Important local views</u></p> <p>Delete the first sentence of Policy text and replace with:</p> <p>"All proposals for new development in the Plan area should take into account the landscape setting of the development site and any identified important local views within the area of the site, which might be affected by the development."</p> | The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. | Accept examiner's recommended modifications. |
| PM11 (pages 62-3) | <p><u>Policy NF12 – Dark skies</u></p> <p>Delete Figure 36 in its current form, and replace with two new maps of the Parish at a larger scale showing the areas of light pollution and dark skies with much clearer definition.</p> | The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. | Accept examiner's recommended modifications. |

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| PM12 (pages 65-6) | <p><u>Policy NF13 – Localised flooding</u></p> <p>Paragraph 8.23 and 15th line of Policy text – delete the word “urban” from the term “<i>Sustainable urban Drainage Systems</i>”, as Sustainable Drainage Systems are applicable in both urban and rural settings. (Note that the entry on Page 77 is correct).</p> <p>Retain Figure 38 in its current form but add a new map of the entire Plan area at a suitable legible scale (to precede Figure 38 and be numbered accordingly) showing Surface Water Flooding using information from the Environment Agency’s latest datasets and taking account of the LLFA’s comments at paragraphs 3.10 and 3.11 of their representations (Ref. NFNP26).</p> | The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. | Accept examiner’s recommended modifications. |
| PM13 (page 67) | <p><u>Section 9 – Community Action Projects</u></p> <p>Paragraph 9.2 – add additional project, as follows:</p> <p>“17. Recreation/Sports areas e.g. outside gym and tennis court.”</p> <p>Delete the words “<i>Note: there is some overlay with Policy NF6.</i>” at the foot of this paragraph.</p> | The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. | Accept examiner’s recommended modifications. |
| PM14 (page 77) | <p><u>Appendix B</u></p> <p>Amend title to read “Newton Flotman Design Guidance and Codes”.</p> | The Council agrees that these modifications will help to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. | Accept examiner’s recommended modifications. |

4. Next Steps

This Decision Statement and the examiner's report into the Newton Flotman Neighbourhood Plan will be made available at:

- www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plans
- **Newton Flotman Village Hall**, Grove Way, Newton Flotman, NR15 1PT (open daily).
- **Long Stratton Library**, The Street, Long Stratton, NR15 2XJ (Staffed Mon: 10am-7pm; Tue & Thu: 1pm-7pm and Sat: 10am-4pm).
- **South Norfolk Council & South Norfolk Council offices** – The Horizon Centre, Broadland Business Park, Peachman Way, Norwich, NR7 0WF (Please call to make a prior appointment – 01603 431133).

South Norfolk Council is satisfied that with the modifications it has approved, as detailed above, the Newton Flotman Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum within the neighbourhood area, in which the following question will be posed:

‘Do you want South Norfolk Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Newton Flotman to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?’

Further information relating to the referendum will be published by South Norfolk Council in due course.