

# Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Blofield Parish Council Planning Meeting held online via Zoom on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 at 7.30pm – 8.15pm.

## PRESENT

Sarah Dhesi, Stella Shackle, Stuart Smith, Joseph Scholes, Pat Wilson, Mary Moxon, Paul Culley-Barber, Yvonne Burton and Melanie Eversfield (clerk).

1. Welcome and Introduction to the meeting by the Chair, Stuart Smith
2. **TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
Apologies were received and accepted from Rob Christie.
3. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**  
Paul Culley-Barber declared an interest in agenda item 6.2.
4. **OPEN FORUM - FOR PARISHIONERS TO RAISE QUESTIONS ON AND/OR MAKE STATEMENTS ABOUT MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**  
There were three parishioners present. Two of the parishioners spoke about planning application 20210340 and had submitted comments to the Parish Council prior to the meeting.
5. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**  
The Parish Council unanimously approved the minutes of the Planning Parish Council Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 and these were duly signed by the Chairman.
6. **TO CONSIDER COUNCIL FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL SUBJECT TO PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA**
  - 6.1. Application: 20210340  
Construction of single storey annex and detached cart shed  
Location: Copperbeech, Lingwood Road, Blofield, NR13 4LL  
*Blofield Parish Council has now had an opportunity to consider the above planning application and the proposals contained therein. The Parish Council would like to make the following comments:*
    - *There is a question if NP HOU5 comes into play – there ought to be a minimum of 2 parking spaces for a 1-bedroom dwelling, presumably the plot can easily accommodate it. There is no explanation of the access or parking.*
    - *There is a question if NP HOU4 comes into play – the single storey annex is fractionally taller than the existing garden store to which it attaches. It seems that this will be a detached annex with no explanation of why it is needed.*
    - *The cart shed appears to be built in agricultural land which goes against NP ENV4.*
    - *There is question over NP ENV8 – Important views. Approaching Blofield from the east on Lingwood Road – this is the exact location in Blofield Neighbourhood's plan that we wish to protect.*
    - *Apart from the CIL exemption of having to keep it for three years, and Highway's comment of the site not to be split, what is to stop it being sold as a separate residence? As there is a 5-year land supply, do we need another property?*
    - *The next-door neighbour's house is a listed property and therefore NP HOU3 comes into play.*
    - *In the application form it states that it will connect to a main sewer, but it also states that it is unknown if they are proposing to connect to an existing system. It all seems a bit vague.*
  - 6.2. Application: 20210306  
Single storey rear and side extension. Side roof change. Conversion of garage. Front porch.  
Location: 49 Mill Road, Blofield Heath, NR13 4QS

*Blofield Parish Council has now had an opportunity to consider the above planning application and would like to make no comment to the proposals contained therein. However, if plans change or new information comes to light it would appreciate the opportunity to consider this further.*

**7. TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE AGENDA**

7.1. There were none.

**8. TO RECEIVE INFORMATION AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS RELATING TO PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ISSUES AND A PLANNING UPDATE**

8.1. It was noted that planning permission for Walnut Tree Farm, 78 Blofield Corner Road, Blofield has been granted.

8.2. It was also noted that complaints had been received in relation to the motor cross track in Shack Lane. This will be deferred to Broadland District Council Planning Enforcement.

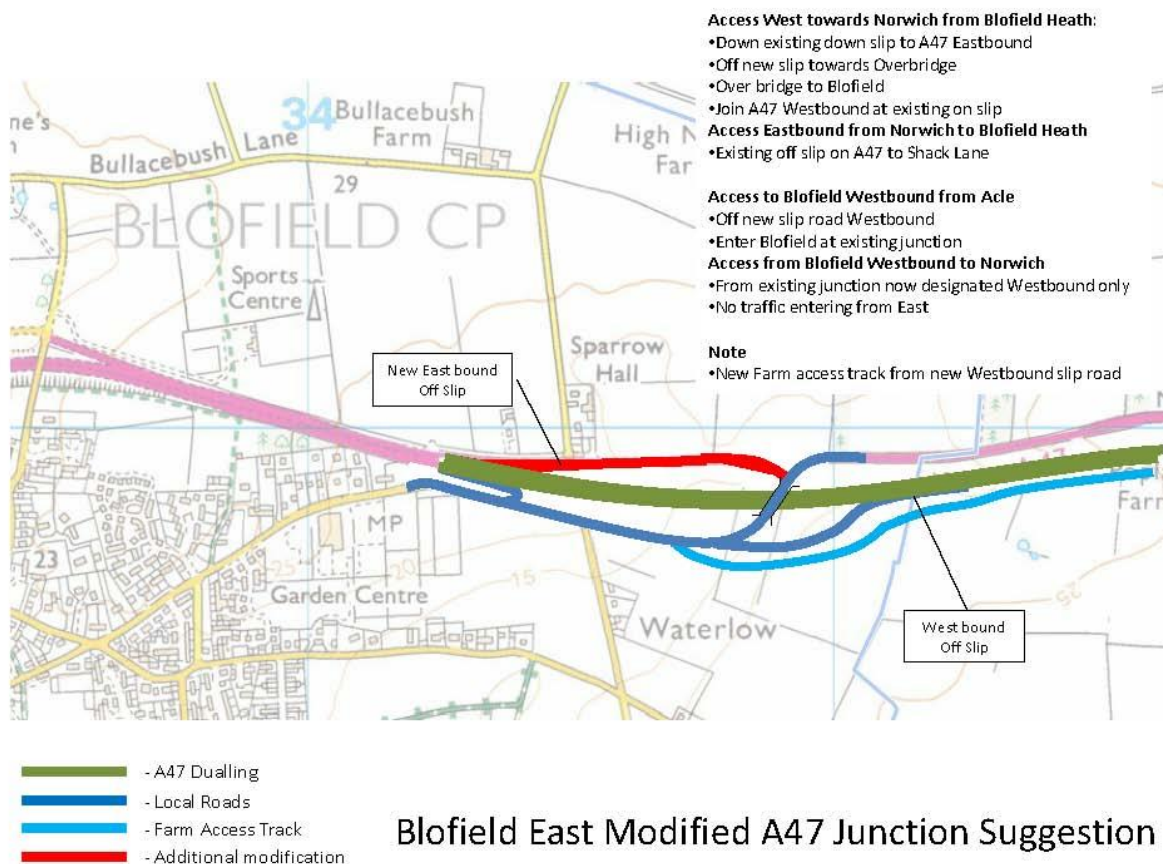
**9. TO CONSIDER RESPONSE TO HIGHWAYS ENGLAND A47 BLOFIELD TO NORTH BURLINGHAM CONSULTATION**

9.1. Mary Moxon and Paul Culley-Barber had sent a draft response to councillors prior to the meeting. The following was agreed as the Council's official response: -

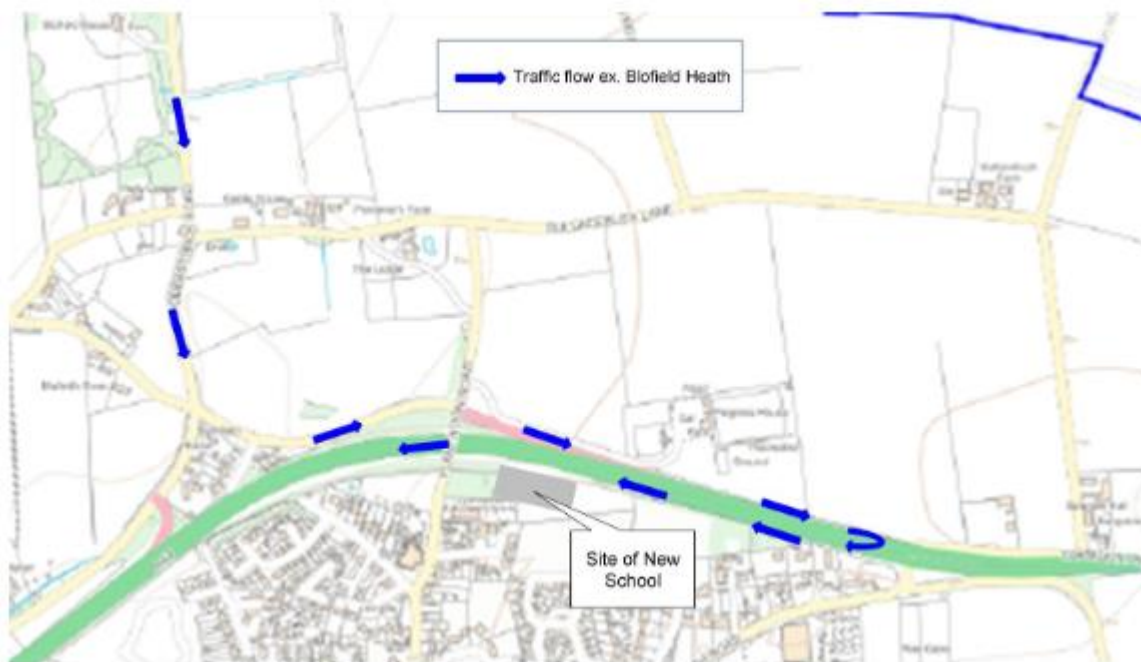
**Comments on Highways England A47 Blofield to North Burlingham DCO**

**2.3 Works Plans**

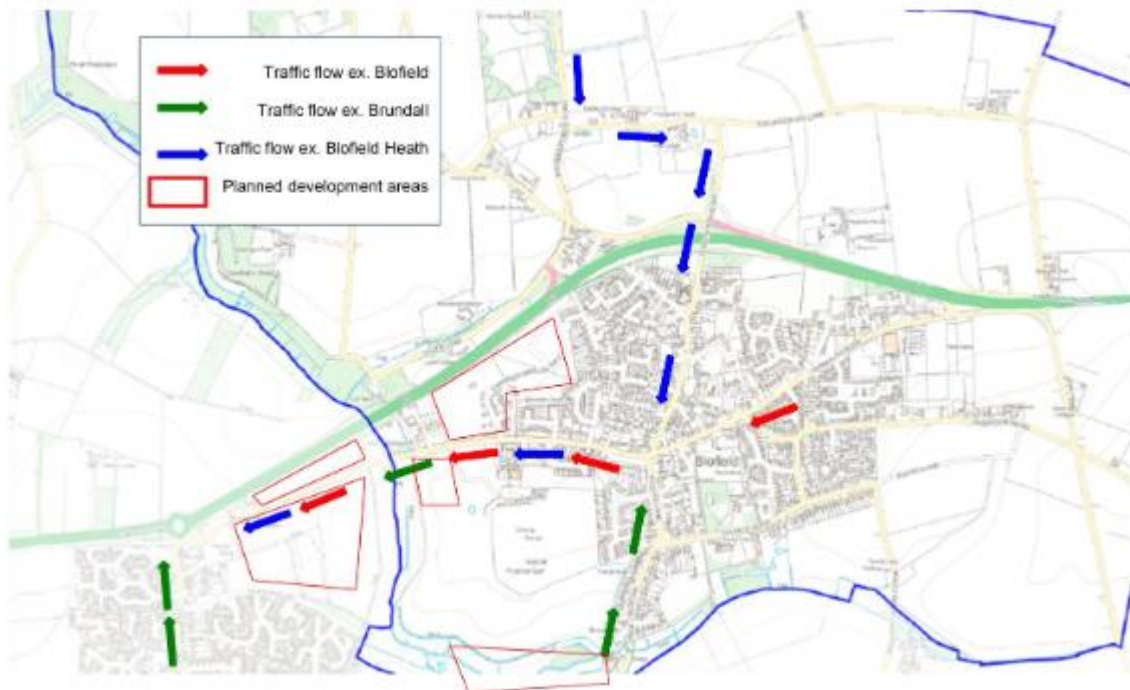
Blofield Parish Council is disappointed that the suggested alternative junction layout has been completely disregarded by Highways England.



This was proposed to Highways England due to the following concerns which have been ignored. Traffic flow from Blofield Heath suggests that a high number of parishioners are exiting Blofield Heath, travelling south towards Blofield, using the slip road to join the A47 East towards Acle and then using the gap in the central reservation to execute a U turn to then travel towards Norwich on the westbound A47, as indicated below.



As the proposal for the A47 junction will close off the gap in the central reservation, it is our view that traffic will be forced to enter Blofield and encounter the already congested road network in the vicinity of the current school site, doctors surgery and proposed new school site for onward travel to the A47 Cucumber Lane roundabout for onward travel to Norwich. Proposed development in the parish and beyond our boundary will further compound the traffic flow issues being encountered at the A47 Cucumber Lane roundabout.



Traffic routes shown on the indication above demonstrate that flows from Brundall, Blofield and Blofield Heath concentrate at the A47 Cucumber Lane roundabout which is already causing congestion before the additional development proposals for housing have been built out. Both Highways England and Norfolk County Council refuse to perceive this as a problem either now or in the future and have resisted taking a proactive approach to the problem by planning, instead positioning themselves on a wait and see basis. Local knowledge already sees this as a problem waiting to happen, but no authority will take responsibility for resolving this in advance.

It is with this knowledge why we proposed an alternative layout to the junction that could be achieved with minor alterations to the plans which, in our view, would alleviate the traffic flow issues demonstrated above.

#### **2.4 Rights of Way and Access Plans**

It would appear that FP4 is going to be diverted through the back of what would be the new school site. Currently FP4 borders the top of the bank running adjacent to the A47 and through the small section of woodland before turning to the south to join up with Yarmouth Road adjacent to Turret House.

The Council would urge that you consult with NCC Childrens Services and NPS who are evolving plans for the new school site to ascertain if a redirected footpath is relevant.

It would appear that only a cycle track is being provided over the new overbridge whereas the Council understood that this was going to be a footpath as well to facilitate safer pedestrian access to Blofield from the residents on the northern side of the A47 (and on which a housing proposal was passed for a sub division on the premise there would be footpath connectivity – which doesn't appear to be the case)

Will the proposed soakaways be sufficient to protect the properties at Waterlow from surface water flooding?

#### **2.6 General Arrangement Plans**

The proposed 20 lighting columns would be in contradiction of the Blofield Neighbourhood Plan Environment 5 Policy regarding Dark Skies. If the proposed junction was amended as per our suggestion at the beginning of this document, then the junction lighting would not be in contradiction to our local plan policy.

#### **2.7 Drainage and Surface Water Plans**

The allotment car park seems to be vastly reduced compared to what is currently serving the allotment gardens. Will this new reduced size be sufficient to cater for peak growing season capacity? Will there be sufficient space to facilitate access to the two haulage ways on the main allotment plots?

Will the proposed concrete dished channel be sufficient to cope with surface water run off to prevent the allotment car park from being flooded (as is the current issue) and water creating channels down the half plot side of the allotment gardens.

#### **2.9 Hedgerow Plans**

The Council is disappointed that there appears to be limited new hedging being planted to offset the hedging being removed.

#### **2.11 Traffic Regulation Plans**

Could the proposed 30MPH limit be extended to cover the entrance to the allotment gardens carpark thus enabling safer access to the allotments, considering a footway is going to be provided to encourage walking to the allotments it would be beneficial to have the opportunity for speeding cars to be reduced.

Considering the A47 will now be national speed limit, is the slip road off the Westbound side to enter Blofield sufficient to slow drivers down from the 70MPH limit into a tight turn off for either Waterlow or Yarmouth Road restricted at 30MPH? The Council can foresee accidents occurring and would really encourage Highways England to reconsider the junction plans as mentioned at the start of this document.

#### **6.1 Chapter 3- Assessment of Alternatives**

Junction option B detailed in 3.1.12 is pretty close to what the Parish Council wanted to see. Discounted purely on costs and what a computer has predicted as traffic flow, without seeking any local knowledge or insights. Again very disappointing to see this desirable option discounted or even a willingness to work with the Parish Council to see what is best for the local community.

#### **6.1 Chapter 7 – Landscape and Visual Effects**

7.9.2 mentions providing an appropriate Blofield gateway semi ornamental landscape treatment at the junction of the A47 with the Yarmouth Road. The parish council would like to be consulted over this gateway.

7.9.2 also mentions retaining or replacing and reinforcing existing vegetation where this contributes to the distinctive qualities of the landscape, including a notable line of poplar trees on the north-eastern edge of Blofield. Presumably this excludes the line of Poplar trees on the allotment site as they will be destroyed for the realignment of Waterlow, but we would appreciate clarity over the tree treatments for works alongside the A47 and what is proposed to provide security for the allotments as the current line of poplar trees prevents open access to the allotment site.

However section 7.10.4 seems to contradict the above, stating :- The Proposed Scheme would result in the loss of a line of mature shelterbelt trees on the southern edge of Waterlow, adjacent to the allotments on the north eastern edge of Blofield. A line of mature trees along the northern edge of the A47 to the west of the Yarmouth Road junction at Blofield would also be removed by construction.

### **6.2 Appendix 7.7 Arboricultural Impact Assessment.**

This document seems to show that the line of trees adjacent to Plantation Park will be removed along with all the trees adjacent to the allotment site and those adjacent to the A47. This is a devastating loss of mature trees with seemingly limited plans to replace said mature trees.

### **6.8 MasterPlan**

The Council welcomes the addition of what seems to be proper footpaths connecting the allotment site to Norwich Camping and also the footpath to the north of Waterlow, the new bridge and to join up with the "old" A47 path. It is a shame that this seems to contradict the maps detailed in 2.4 and so the Council would appreciate confirmation that these footpaths will be delivered. It also notes a lack of crossing points which would be welcomed to facilitate slower traffic entering Blofield or some other form of physical speed restraint.

Replacement trees along the A47 by Plantation Park and the Allotment site are also welcomed but these ought to be of mature status to offer the same level of shielding the to be removed trees currently provide.

Signed.....

Dated.....