

Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 10th August 2026 at 7.30pm to 10.00pm at Blofield Courthouse

PRESENT

Sarah Dhesi (Vice-chair), Stuart Smith, Will Crane, Paul Culley-Barber, Yvonne Burton, and Eleanor Bannister (Clerk).

County Cllr. Jan Davis attended for items 1 to 6. Two representatives from REAL Consulting attended to provide information on item 18, the community hub tenders. One parishioner attended.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE MEETING BY THE VIC-CHAIR

The Vice-chair, Sarah Dhesi, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Paul Newstead and Joseph Scholes, and Clerk Sarah Osbaldeston, and were duly accepted by the Council.

3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr. Will Crane declared an interest in item 7 (application 2026/2052) and in any element related to Blofield Preschool.

4. OPEN FORUM - FOR PARISHIONERS TO RAISE QUESTIONS ON AND/OR MAKE STATEMENTS ABOUT MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AND TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS.

County Cllr. Jan Davis provided an update. In future, these updates will be added to the Parish Council's website as an Appendix to the Minutes. His update included the recruitment process for the Chief Executive of Norfolk County Council, and that British Sugar would be closing its Cantley factory by the end of February 2027.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20TH JULY 2026

The Minutes of the meeting were unanimously approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Vice-chair.

6. TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA: FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The Council noted that the Pergola at Wyngates which was no longer safe, had kindly been removed by Brundall Men's Shed. The Council also noted its thanks to Brundall Men's Shed. Next steps for the area where the pergola was will be discussed at the Council meeting on 14th September 2026.

It was reported that a fire had been started under the bridge along FP12 (between Blofield Church and Braydeston Church). The Police were informed and NCC Highways were reviewing the damage.

7. TO RESOLVE TO PASS A FORMAL RESOLUTION (UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES AND ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS ACT 1960) TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC FROM AGENDA ITEM 18.

At 8.00pm the Council unanimously resolved to formally pass the resolution to exclude the press and the public for minute item 18 (commercially sensitive matters), as this enabled REAL Consulting to advise the Council on item 18, plus items 10 and 11, then leave the Council meeting following discussion on these items. Items 10, 11 and 18 were then discussed at this point in the meeting.

PLANNING

8. To consider comments on planning applications

Application: 2026/2115

Proposal: Car port to front driveway

Location: Chez Moi, 14 Mill Road, Blofield, NR13 4QJ

The Council unanimously resolved to submit the following comments:

Given the sizeable extension, the Parish Council is concerned over the potential loss of light for the neighbouring property (No. 12). Could BDC Planning confirm that the neighbours will not lose any amenity value as a result of this proposal? There is also concern relating to the potential over-development of the site, as there do not appear to be any other structures close to the hedge line in front of neighbouring properties; could BDC Planning also check this?

Application: 2026/0622

Proposal: Approval of reserved matters for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (plot 3 – self-build) following outline approval 2024/2451

Location: Land West of Woodbastwick Road, Blofield, Norfolk

The Council resolved to re-submit the previous comments sent to Planning on 22nd April 2026, as many appear to still be valid. These include:

- *Parking: As this is a 5-bed dwelling, is there sufficient capacity to provide car parking spaces for 4 cars where they can exit onto the highway in a forward gear? (Blofield NP HOU 5)*
- *There appears to be no reference to the existing Trod which fronts the current land.*
- *The Parish Council would welcome revisions to include native hedging at the front to offset the loss of the mature and species-rich hedging that has been removed.*
- *Outline planning references various points including: drainage, trod, 30mph speed limit, water consumption of 105 litres per person per day, offsite highways works and constructor's carpark; where can the detail be checked?*
- *The Parish Council understands that NCC Highways had concerns related to three drives crossing the culvert that runs under the trod; can this please be considered and addressed as necessary. The Parish Council further understands that the layout of the self-build has changed substantially; have any photographs been submitted, and would these demonstrate that NCC Highways condition SHC 21 has been met?*

Application: 2026/2052

Proposal: Erection of 3 self-build dwellings with associated garages and gardens (Outline)

Location: Land West of Woodbastwick Road, Blofield, Norfolk

The Council resolved to resubmit previous concerns related to application 2024/2451 as they remain pertinent to 2026/2052. Application 2024/2451 was originally for 5 self-build houses, which the Parish Council objected to on 17/09/2024. The application was subsequently reduced to 3 self-builds and the Parish Council raised concerns on 16/01/2025. The application was then approved with conditions. (Original emails are attached as an appendix.)

Application 2026/2052 would increase the number of self-builds from the originally approved 3 to 6, extending all the way to the corner of Hall Road. This would result in six driveways crossing the trod in an area of flooding. The Parish Council therefore reiterates the following concerns:

- *A key consideration is that the GNLP states that “due to the high levels of existing commitment in Blofield Parish, approximately 12–20 new homes are considered appropriate for the Blofield Heath cluster (Blofield Heath and Hemblington)”.*
- *GNLP Policy B.BH.1 has earmarked up to 20 dwellings on land off Woodbastwick Road (on the RenEnergy side of the road, infilling between the white houses and RenEnergy).*
- *There is an existing commitment of 36 dwellings under GNLP Policy B.BH.2 (Bennetts).*
- *The footpath from Hall Road to connect to Blofield Heath is effectively a trod and narrows outside the existing housing. If Planning is minded to approve, the footpath would need to be conditioned accordingly.*
- *The application is outside the settlement boundary for Blofield Heath.*
- *It is contrary to Blofield Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENV6 – Distinct Villages, as the proposal would further eradicate green space between the two villages (Blofield and Blofield Heath).*
- *There is no detail about what type of housing would be provided under the self-build proposal, raising the question of whether this genuinely meets local housing need (HOU1).*
- *The proposal is in an area identified as suffering severely from surface water flooding. How would this proposal ensure that flooding is not made worse? This has been identified in the Blofield Parish Neighbourhood Plan under ENV3 Drainage. (Identified localised flooding areas include but are not limited to the junction of Woodbastwick Road and Hall Road.)*
- *There is an issue of loss of mature hedging, though it was noted this would be offset with a planting scheme.*
- *Impact on speeding: Speeds recorded on the SAM2 unit indicate that driver behaviour has not changed since six new dwellings were developed on Woodbastwick Road. This raises*

real doubt as to whether new dwellings would change driver mindset. The Parish Council believes there needs to be some form of physical restriction to reduce speeding. This

proposal would add a further 3 entrances to Woodbastwick Road (bringing the total to 6 new entrances) in an area that already suffers from speeding vehicles.

However, if planning officers were minded to approve the development:

- The Parish Council requests that more is done to improve highway safety than moving the 30MPH speed limit. It requests that physical changes to the road to limit speeding are conditioned. Options could include, but are not limited to, amending the speed limit to 20MPH along the length of Woodbastwick Road in Blofield Heath, and the installation of speed bumps and speed cameras.*
- Additionally, the existing trod footpath should be upgraded to a properly smooth-surfaced path to ensure wheelchair and buggy users can traverse safely, conditioned accordingly to connect with the existing footpaths on Hall Road and the 1.8m footpath on Woodbastwick Road.*
- Further, the Parish Council would seek reassurance that the very real issue of surface water flooding is addressed as identified in ENV3 policy of the Neighbourhood Plan.*
- The Parish Council requests that conditions are added to reflect HOU4 (Rural Image, Heights and Massing – respecting the height and massing of surrounding properties) and HOU5 (Parking).*
- The Parish Council requests that the developer provide assistance with the provision of land or a footpath linking Blofield Heath to Blofield, where many services including the doctors' surgery and the library are based. (This is referred to in the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2022 – 'Unscheduled Infrastructure Projects – S10 Green Infrastructure; Feasibility into creation of link between Blofield and Blofield Heath' – but has not yet been progressed.)*

Application: 2025/3580

Proposal: Retrospective alteration of gable roof by raising ridge and eaves to allow for rooms in the roof, erection of single storey front, side and rear extensions, changes to boundary treatment, erection of outbuilding and new garage

Location: Blafelda, 24 Yarmouth Road, Blofield, NR13 4JS

The Council resolved to reiterate its earlier comments submitted on 16th June 2026, as there appear to be minimal changes since the Parish Council's previous comments, which remain unaddressed. The Parish Council would also like to highlight a concern in relation to the latest Garage Plan; these plans have changed and the garage is now set 30cm further back. Can it be confirmed that this is not encroaching on the neighbour's property line or land? Additionally, the Parish Council noted that NCC Highways have listed several conditions which do not appear to have been addressed, including widening the entrance prior to occupation and checking the highway boundary as the applicant's responsibility. The Parish Council requests that all of its comments – and those of NCC Highways – please be addressed.

Application: 2026/2110

Proposal: Details of conditions – Condition 3 (Materials) and Condition 4 (External Lighting) of original planning application 2024/2039

Location: Brian Bromley Carpets, Laburnum Drive, Blofield, NR13 4RF

The Council resolved to request that it is conditioned to ensure that flood lighting is not a nuisance to neighbouring properties, as requested by NCC Highways on 30th July 2026.

9. TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATION RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA

No further planning applications required Council feedback.

COMMUNITY HUB PROJECT

10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DISCHARGE OF CONDITION 12 FROM THE FIRST HUB PLANNING APPLICATION, AND OTHER CONDITIONS RELATED TO THE SECOND/FULL APPLICATION 2026/0809

The Clerk (EB) provided an update, confirming she was continuing to follow up on the discharge of Condition 12 related to 2023/3727, and would be working with the Gary Waterton on the conditions related to the full planning application (2026/0809). The Council noted the update.

11. TO REVIEW COMMUNIUTY HUB PROJECT UPDATES REPORT AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS

The Clerk provided an update on the removal of tree stumps and trimming of the boundary hedge of Blofield Park. A contractor has been appointed to carry out the necessary works.

Cllr. Sarah Dhesi provided an update on the opening of Blofield Park playground. The playground had been very well received by the community, and had attracted significant public interest, with social media coverage describing it as one of the best free parks in Norfolk. The Council noted that the opening had generated significant congestion and there were issues related to visitors parking on the pavement; signs encouraging responsible parking had been installed over the weekend and the Police agreed to patrol more frequently. Further signage reiterating 'no dogs' were also put up.

12. TO CONSIDER OFFER OF VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S WIX WEBSITE (INCLUDING ADDITION OF SECTION ON 'BLOFIELD PARK' WITH UPDATES), DRAFT NDA AND AGREE NEXT STEPS

The Council approved all aspects of the proposal for volunteer assistance with the WIX website. Clerk (EB) to confirm to the volunteer and issue the NDA, and to arrange a meeting with the volunteer, Cllr. Paul Culley-Barber and the Clerk to progress the website work.

PARISH MATTERS

13. TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

The draft Artificial Intelligence Policy was unanimously approved by the Council, subject to a minor amendment. Clerk (EB) to amend accordingly and post on the website.

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

14. TO APPROVE ANY DELEGATED DECISIONS AND PAYMENTS

The Vice-chair, Sarah Dhesi, reported that a number of payments had been made as necessary under delegated powers. These were noted by the Council.

OTHER

15. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

The Council received the Clerk's report and noted the correspondence.

16. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

The Clerk confirmed that a list of items had been prepared for the September agenda. Cllr. Culley-Barber recommended that the Council adopt the MoSCoW project management approach to prioritising agenda items if there were a significant number of items.

17. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

This was confirmed as Monday 14th September 2026 at 7.30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

18. TO DISCUSS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE MATTERS RELATING TO THE COMMUNITY HUB TENDERS AND APPOINTMENT OF A CONTRACTOR

The Council discussed commercially sensitive matters relating to the community hub tenders and the appointment of the build contractor and agreed on the preferred contractor. The Council agreed to arrange a meeting with the preferred contractor prior to appointment, to clarify final points.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Signed..... Dated.....