

Minutes of a meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 7 January 2026 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

J Avery (Chairman)
A C Beal (Vice-Chairman)

B Alcock
P Barnes
H J Bingham

C J T H Brewis
A Casson
S Hutchinson

T Sneath
A R Woolf

In Attendance: Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure, Executive Programme Manager, Senior Planning Lawyer, Development Manager (Interim), Planning Consultant and Democratic Services Officer

32. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

The Senior Planning Lawyer reported that notification had been received of the following substitution for this meeting only:

- Councillor Barnes was replacing Councillor Tennant.

33. **MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2025.

AGREED:

That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

34. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

There were none.

35. **QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION (STANDING ORDERS).**

There were none.

36. **H05-0439-25**

Planning No. and Applicant
H05-0439-25 National Grid
Electricity Distribution

Proposal
Full application for use of site to
construct new primary substation at
Land West of Branches Lane,
Holbeach, Spalding.

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Consideration was given to the report of the Development Manager upon which the above application was to be determined, including their recommendations, copies of which had previously been circulated to all members.

Members debated the matter and fully explored the details of the application in light of prevailing policies and guidance, with the following comments being raised:

- The temporary car park had been shown on the plan but not mentioned on the report. Would this be conditioned to ensure it was restored to agricultural land?
 - Officers responded that if planning consent were granted, temporary access and car parking would generally be covered by permitted development rights so would only require separate consent if it were to become a permanent feature.
- Requested that underground cabling be made a condition to avoid pylons being put in place.
 - Officers confirmed that electrical infrastructure was covered by permitted development rights and pylon construction could not be controlled through planning conditions in this case.
- Disappointed that suggested hedging on the north side was discounted.
- Questioned the need for a substation in Fleet that would service Holbeach and why other sites had not been looked into.
 - Officers confirmed that the applicant had provided a statement that explained the process of choosing the site and how other sites were discounted.
- Queried why the application was referred to Chairman's Panel first rather than automatically being presented to Planning Committee, given SHDC's strong support.
 - Officers responded that SHDC was not the applicant or the landowner and therefore constitutionally, the application was correctly presented to Chairman's Panel first.
 - It was also added that the SHDC had been involved in assessing district-wide energy needs which had shown that current network capacity would be exhausted by 2027 and an upgrade was required in this area, not the choosing of a particular site.
 - The Council's involvement in this application was strategic, based on energy capacity planning rather than operationally choosing a site. Without a new substation the district would not be able to deliver housing and industry at the levels set out in the Local Plan.
- Would the building itself ensure that noise levels from operation were kept to a minimum?
 - Officers responded that there was a condition included for a construction management plan but in terms of the operation of the substation, the Council's Environmental Protection team had not raised any concerns.
- The notion that this building was visually similar to agricultural buildings across the district and therefore didn't need to be screened was incorrect as most agricultural buildings were expected to have some sort of screening.
- Were the conditions relating to any screening and biodiversity actually enforceable?

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- Officers confirmed that they were enforceable, and the screening involved would be a landscaping scheme to soften the visual impact rather than full screening.
- Could the landscaping condition go further to insist that screening was put in place on all sides of the building?
 - Officers responded that there were two separate conditions included for landscaping and boundary treatments. Discussions had been undertaken with the applicant around further planting but this was not possible within the confines of the site.
 - There was a danger that a more stringent condition could lead to the substation not being built.
- Welcomed the update to energy infrastructure in South Holland.
- Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue had objected with regard to fire hydrants, was a condition included to overcome this?
 - Officers confirmed that this would be secured through the building regulations scheme rather than a planning condition.
- The application stated that there were no hazardous materials on site. Was this correct given that the transformers would be filled with mineral oil?
 - Officers confirmed that this part of the application form related to existing site conditions.
- Suggested that the wording on condition four be amended to read 'prior to consent of use' rather than 'occupied'.
 - Officers confirmed that this could be amended if the Committee agreed to this.
- Would access and highways improvements be completed prior to the consent of use or done prior to construction? The condition also stated that the signing off of the completion of works would be done by the local planning authority, should this not be the highways authority?
 - Officers responded that final highways and access improvements would usually be done prior to the consent of use.
 - The applicant would be required to submit an application to the local planning authority to discharge the condition. As part of this process the highways authority would be consulted, and the local planning authority would then discharge the condition.
 - The wording of condition four could be amended to ensure it was clear there was a requirement for the applicant to submit an application to discharge the condition.

The full debate was not repeated here as a livestream of this Planning Committee Meeting could be viewed on South Holland District Council's Facebook page for a limited period of time, in line with the Democratic Services Privacy Notice.

AGREED:

That permission be granted subject to the conditions outlined at section 9.0 of the report, and the following amendments to condition four:

- Word 'occupied' to be replaced with 'prior to consent of use'

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- Addition of wording to make it clear the applicant was required to submit an application to discharge the condition.

(Moved by Councillor Bingham, Seconded by Councillor Beal)

Oral representations were received in respect of the above application in line with the Council's scheme of public speaking at Planning Committee meetings:

Supporter: Paul Greco (NGED) (Applicant)

37. **H16-0854-25**

Planning No. and Applicant

H16-0854-25 South Holland District Council

Proposal

Section 73 modification application for demolition of existing swimming pool building following the construction of a two storey extension including basement area to existing Castle Sports Complex building to provide new and upgrade indoor leisure and health related facilities including two new swimming pools, plant area and changing rooms. Reconfiguration of exiting building to provide new and upgraded sports facilities and physical activity facilities and related supporting services. Provision of a new 3G artificial turf pitch (ATP), an Informal Outdoor Games Area (IOGA), other outdoor play areas, an informal running trail/track, a health and well being garden and an outdoor splash pad relating to the new swimming pool. The provision of supporting infrastructure including additional car parking and landscaped areas – Approved under H16-0462-24. Modification to Condition 2 to allow amendments to previously approved plans & modification to Conditions 3, 7 & 25 to allow amendment to wording at Castle Sports Complex, Albion Street, Spalding.

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Consideration was given to the report of the Development Manager upon which the above application was to be determined, including their recommendations, copies of which had previously been circulated to all members.

Members debated the matter and fully explored the details of the application in light of prevailing policies and guidance, with the following comments being raised:

- Asked for a brief summary of the planning officer's response to the late letter received from the local MP.
 - Officers responded that the vast majority of the points raised within the letter were not material to the application being considered.
 - Officers were happy to pass the comments made onto the team working on the design of the scheme.

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AGREED:

That permission be granted subject to the conditions outlined at section 9.0 of the report.

(Moved by Councillor Bingham, Seconded by Councillor Beal)

38. **H13-0848-25**

Planning No. and Applicant

H13-0848-25 Mr & Mrs Greenaway

Proposal

Full application for conversion of existing steel framed building to self build dwelling at Land off High Road, Moulton, Spalding.

Consideration was given to the report of the Development Manager upon which the above application was to be determined, including their recommendations, copies of which had previously been circulated to all members.

Members debated the matter and fully explored the details of the application in light of prevailing policies and guidance, with the following comments being raised:

- Agreed that the application did not meet policy requirements, but the location was screened so you would not see the property from the road and the design would be in keeping with the holiday lodges that were already on site.
 - Officers responded that the screening in place did not make the application location a sustainable site and by the same rationale houses could then be put in woodlands across the district.
 - The approval of a site for holiday use did not make it suitable for residential use.
- Felt it met the statement in paragraph 7.15 that the development led to an enhancement of its immediate surroundings and the design had been done to a very high standard.

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- This application had different circumstances to other self-build applications in the open countryside.
- The level of design presented would not have been possible with a barn that was of a higher architectural relevance.
- The site had well established boundaries and the proposal would enhance this site further.
- The conversion of existing buildings was important, and the scale had already been established from the existing building so this was unlikely to cause any harm to the surrounding community.
- Supportive of the officer's recommendation as the surrounding holiday lodges were not included in the red line boundary of the application and therefore should not be considered.
- There was a danger that approving this application would open the floodgates to more steel barns being converted in the open countryside.
- The design of the proposal was good, but it was not exceptional and therefore did not outweigh the conflict with the Local Plan policies and any approval would undermine our own development plan.
- Design was subjective and down to personal opinion
 - Officers responded that the threshold for design in the NPPF was that of truly innovative and outstanding and they did not feel that this particular design reached that threshold.
- Would this type of building have been classified as Class Q?
 - Officers confirmed that they would not be Class Q as they would extend the footprint of the building and any building works within that class would need to be minimal.
- The policies allowed for self-build proposals to come forward in sustainable locations. The application's location was not in the middle of the countryside and was only around 200m from the main road so could be seen as a sustainable location.
 - Officers responded that within the local plan, the location of the application was open countryside, and the relevant policies applied. To go against these policies would undermine the local plan.
- Policy 23 set out a number of points that all had to be complied with, and the application only complied with one so this could not be overcome.

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The initial vote to refuse the application was lost. Following further debate and the re-tabling of the vote to refuse the application as no alternative proposal was put forward.

AGREED:

That the application be refused for the reasons detailed at section 9.0 of the report.

(Moved by Councillor Avery, Seconded by Councillor Brewis)

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39. PLANNING APPEALS

Consideration was given to the report of the Development Manager which provided an update on recent appeal decisions.

Members were advised to contact the relevant case officer should there be any queries or points of clarity required on any of the appeal decisions included within the report.

Officers were thanked for their work on the appeal for an application in Sutton Bridge.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

40. REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTED PLANNING DECISIONS TOUR

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure which provided conclusions of the Performance Monitoring Panel and invited the Committee to submit any comments back to the Panel following the review/tour undertaken with members.

Members commented that they were impressed with some developments but unimpressed with others. Electricity boxes continued to be a problem with placement on the front of houses and whole estates in one brick colour were very uninteresting and should be avoided in the future. Furthermore, the parking of cars in front of houses with no front gardens was particularly disliked.

AGREED:

That the Planning Committee considers the conclusions drawn from the Performance Monitoring Panel and notes the report.

41. PLANNING UPDATES.

There were none.

42. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.11 pm)

(End of minutes)