

Hacheston Parish Council

Minutes of a Planning Meeting of Hacheston Parish Council meeting held at Hacheston Village Hall on Wednesday 18th February 2026 at 7pm

1. Apologies for absence & declarations of interest

Present

Cllr. James Hardy (Chair), Cllr. Terry Mee, Cllr. Chris Hurlock, Cllr. Linda Montgomery, Cllr. Alan Perry, Cllr Leslie Judd

District Councillor Sally Noble

Two consultants from CalComms Ltd, representing the developer re item 2, Balance Power.

PUBLIC FORUM

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded residents of the consultation deadline, emphasising the importance of submitting comments directly to East Suffolk Council so that they can be taken into account during the planning process.

The consultant representing Balance Power gave a short overview of the planning proposals. Residents were then invited to ask questions and share their views with the Parish Council.

A range of concerns were raised, including flooding, the visual impact of the proposals, lack of detail within the application, lack of community benefit to the village, potential noise (particularly during quiet evenings when windows may be open), fire risk and public safety, the adequacy of landscaping measures and the cumulative impact of local energy projects both approved and pending.

Concerns were also raised regarding discrepancies between the stated grid connection dates for the scheme. Antony confirmed he would seek clarification on this point and also provide information on the number of approved sites Balance Power has constructed to date.

The District Councillor agreed to confirm whether the consultation period has been extended beyond 19th February. If so, the clerk will publicise the revised deadline on the village website. The clerk will also publish Balance Power's drainage report on the website for residents to view.

The public forum concluded at 8.40pm, followed by a short break during which members of the public left the meeting

2. The following planning application was considered:

DC/25/4923/FUL Construction of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), with associated infrastructure, access and landscaping

Land Directly South of Substation The Street Hacheston IP13 0DZ

Councillors considered the concerns raised by residents at the meeting, together with written representations submitted to East Suffolk Council.

It was agreed by majority to object to the application on the following grounds:

- Cumulative impact with other nearby energy infrastructure
- Visual impact on the rural landscape

- Noise concerns
- Fire risk and public safety concerns
- Impact on the setting of a heritage asset, with the nearest property being Grade II listed

Councillors also agreed that, should the application be approved, East Suffolk Council be requested to consider the following conditions:

Highways and access

That the site entrance and visibility splay be widened to improve the turning arc and enable articulated lorries to enter safely without needing to move onto the wrong side of the road or encroach into Garnetts Gardens car park.

Site height and layout

That the applicant considers reducing the overall height of the site so that the containers are no higher than the existing BESS containers on the adjacent site, in order to help reduce visual and noise impacts.

Community benefit and flooding

It was noted that no form of community benefit had been suggested prior to this meeting. Councillors agreed that the most beneficial contribution for the community would be measures to help alleviate flooding within the village. Members would like to ask that the developer enters into an agreement with Suffolk County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority, to contribute financially towards maintenance and improvements of the drainage system along The Street. The Section 19 Flood Investigation Report recommended improvements to this drainage network, which have not yet been implemented. Councillors reiterated that flooding of nearby properties during Storm Babet was caused by surface water runoff from surrounding fields and inadequate drainage capacity, rather than river flooding. Residents would welcome reassurance that drainage from the development site would not exacerbate existing problems and that wider drainage improvements could help reduce risk and show good community engagement by the developer.

Maintenance responsibilities

That the developer commits to the ongoing maintenance of ditches, hedges and landscaping on the site for the lifetime of the development.

Landscaping and biodiversity

Councillors welcomed the projected biodiversity net gain figures, which were stated to be significantly higher than the current baseline. However, they would like to see additional environmental screening around all sides of the site to help further reduce visual impact.

Noise limits

That conditions require background noise levels at the nearest residential properties not to exceed current baseline levels, with automatic shutdown procedures in place if limits are exceeded.

3. Date of next meeting

This was confirmed as Wednesday 18th March at 7pm.
There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Signed: **Date:**.....