In light of the further announcement on 16 April regarding ongoing controls in relation to the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic, the Council will be amending how we manage the determination of planning applications in order to be able to support the economy while practicing social distancing and safeguarding measures.

- Applications will be validated and allocated to an officer as usual.
- Officers will only be carrying out site visits where it is essential to be able to assess the proposal and other methods have been explored (i.e. the use of aerial photography, street view, previous records or photographs from the applicant). Officers will only go onto the application site where this has previously been arranged with the applicant and with their consent.
- From 27 April 2020 where there is a statutory requirement to display a site notice this will be undertaken. We will practice social distancing, minimise the number of officers who will undertake this and will use appropriate protective equipment to minimise risk.
- Neighbour notification letters and consultations required for each application will be sent out as usual.

The statutory requirement to post a site notice includes applications that affect the character or appearance of a conservation area or the setting of a listed building; that are a ‘major application’ i.e. 10 or more dwellings or 1000sqm or more for non-residential; where the application is contrary to the Development Plan; that are accompanied by an Environmental Statement; that affect a public right of way; or are submitted by the Council. The Council will also advertise by site notice when the proposal is directly adjacent to land where the landowner’s address is unknown i.e. agricultural land. In order to minimise the number of journeys to erect the required site notices it is likely that there will be a delay in the Council being able to determine the application.

The Council will be seeking in the above scenarios, as is recommended by government and is usual practice, to agree an extension of time with the applicant for a revised date in which to determine the application by. The Case officer for each application will contact applicants individually in this respect and we trust that applicants and agents will work with the Council and be cooperative with this approach.
Town / Parish councils will continue to be consulted and in most instances have the ability to comment on planning applications without the need to convene a meeting. However Town / Parish Councils are advised to contact the case officer should they be unable to comment on an applications in the required 21 day period or do not have appropriate constitutional arrangements in place to do so. We will of course, as always, consider requests for further time for Town / Parish Councils to comment on a case by case basis depending on the particular circumstances of each application.

We are reliant on responses from statutory consultees in most instances in order to determine a planning application. We may experience a delay in responses and again the case officer will keep applicants and agents updated.

In respect of contact with the case officer/the council offices during this period, as you will appreciate the majority of staff are working remotely and email contact in the first instance is suggested and preferred, however we do have phone cover and will do all we can to help you on the first point of contact or ask the case officer to contact you directly.

Whilst we are working hard to maintain our usual efficient service, as we are working in different ways to respond to the restrictions of Coronavirus at this time, you may experience a delay. The Case officer will be in touch with you to discuss implications on individual applications.

The planned Planning Committee/Development Management Committee for April were postponed and in line with Government Advice we have been looking at ways to convene virtual meetings on 6 May 2020 for South Norfolk Council and 20 May 2020 for Broadland District Council and will post a further update during the week commencing 27 April 2020 once the details have been agreed.

Please note that this procedure will be kept under review in light of any further updates and changes from the government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

24/04/20