



HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING



Minutes of a Helmdon Parish Council held in the Helmdon Reading Room, Church Street, Helmdon on **Thursday 18th June 2026 at 7:30 pm.**

Present: Cllrs Moody (Chair), Hart, Plunkett, Marchant, Minshall, Sparrow, Shepherd, Fitzroy-Ezzy and the Clerk.

Members of the public: 27 members of the public, Unitary Councillor Eastwood.

577. Apologies for absence - Apologies were received from Cllr Tracey Fitton. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the absence.

578. Declarations of Interest - None.

579. Public participation session -

Councillor Eastwood: Offered support and advice.

Members of the Public: Multiple members of the public spoke to object the application including points regarding failure to conduct an appropriate traffic survey, design of properties also and queries about when objections will be present on WNC planning page. It was explained that there is a backlog on comments being added to the planning page.

580. To consider the following planning application:

580.1. App no. 2026/2019/MAF

Location Land North of Station Road

Proposal Construction of 26 dwellings, a local shop, car parking, a local equipped area for play (LEAP), a public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure works.

Link <https://wnc.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display/2026/2019/MAF>

It was **RESOLVED** to object to the application and submit the following comments:

1. Surface Water Drainage & Topographical Flood Risk

Helmdon Parish Council objects to the proposed development based on unmitigated surface water flood displacement. The Council strongly endorses the formal representation from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) dated 9 June 2026, which states that the applicant's drainage documentation is not satisfactory to demonstrate sustainable water management. This low-lying greenfield site functions as a critical natural water-meadow catchment basin. A development on this natural attenuation zone risks displacing heavy surface run-off directly onto the public highway and adjacent school and houses, representing an unacceptable risk.

2. Unproven Foul Sewage Infrastructure

Helmdon Parish Council objects to the introduction of a substantial residential foul drainage load onto a local network where a sustainable connection point remains entirely unproven, as evidenced by Anglian Water (Page 42 of the

Flood Risk Assessment). Empirical village infrastructure logs spanning 1998–2026 confirm that the wider village network experiences intense hydraulic overload during heavy rainfall. This frequently causes Foul Sewer Manhole 7601 (situated at the critical Station Road/Church Street junction) to surcharge, flooding the public highway with foul sewage. Adding the foul water load of 26 dwellings and a retail shell upstream of an unmapped, unproven infrastructure bottleneck represents an unacceptable threat to properties, public health, and highway safety. Helmdon Parish Council is already concerned about the high incidence of sewage discharge into Helmdon Brook (see <https://www.floodmapper.co.uk/stations/helmdon-terminal-pumping-station-helmdon>)

3. Flawed Traffic Resolutions & Acute School-Gate Safety Hazards

Helmdon Parish Council objects to the proposed development based on flawed Traffic Sampling and impact on road safety (NPPF Paragraph 115). The applicant's Transport Statement relies on a 30-minute snapshot parking beat survey that bypassed the acute 15-minute operational peaks when school traffic restricts the local network. Helmdon Primary School is operating at near-capacity and 80% of the pupil roll must commute from outside the village by car. This generates intense, twice-daily car parking congestion directly opposite the proposed site entrance on a narrow village road. Introducing a major estate junction, tandem parking overspill, and local traffic (including industrial and agricultural vehicles) into this specific hyper-congested area creates an unacceptable risk to highway and child pedestrian safety.

4. General concerns

Inaccuracies and technical errors in the application, poor design standards and the omission of a street scene visualisation.

In the event that the application is approved, Helmdon Parish Council would expect the following planning conditions:

1. Prevention of Future Phase Encroachment (S106 Land Gift)

To prevent future incremental layout creep, a binding Section 106 agreement must mandate that the remaining 50% of the greenfield parcel comprising the northern open space, and ecological zones, be legally transferred into the unencumbered freehold ownership of Helmdon Parish Council in perpetuity. This transfer must be accompanied by a developer-funded capital maintenance endowment to ensure zero cost burden falls on the local precept.

2. Construction Management Plan

Prior to the commencement of any site clearance or development, a comprehensive Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. To protect the adjacent primary school and pre-school interfaces from critical traffic and environmental hazards, the CEMP must strictly enforce: i) A absolute ban on all construction deliveries, heavy plant movements, and contractor arrivals during school peak traffic operational windows (08:00–09:15 and 14:45–15:45); ii) Strict working hour limits and zero operation on weekends or Bank Holidays; iii) An absolute ban on the on-site burning of trees, vegetation, or site clearance waste to protect local air quality.

3. Commercial Asset Protection (The "Anti-Abandonment" Clause)

To ensure the proposed retail unit is not used as a speculative tool to secure planning consent only to be abandoned or instantly converted into residential units, a condition must dictate that the retail structure be built out to a full commercial shell fit-for-occupation prior to the completion or occupation of the 10th residential dwelling with the unit retained strictly for commercial use for a period specified by the Local Planning Authority.

4. Local Connection Affordable Housing

All affordable housing and down-sizing units delivered on-site must feature a legally binding condition ensuring that initial allocation, and all subsequent re-lets or sales, prioritise individuals with a verified residential, employment, or direct familial connection to Helmdon for a minimum period of 12 weeks before cascading let or sale opportunities to the wider district.

5. Binding Biodiversity Net Gain & Topsoil Protections

A detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) must be secured. The LEMP must include a strict restrictive covenant prohibiting commercial topsoil stripping.

6. Locally Equipped Area for Play

Helmdon Parish Council would expect to be consulted and be given the opportunity for a wider community consultation to design the LEAP.

Cllr Moody was nominated to speak at the WNC Planning Committee meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that **Cllr Moody will register intention to speak at the WNC Planning Committee meeting and attend once the meeting has been arranged.**

The council considered whether further publicity of the opportunity for members of the public to submit comments to WNC was warranted. It was **RESOLVED: To publicise the council's response via Facebook and the website and to encourage residents to submit their own comments directly noting the comments-due date of 2 July 2026.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council will **contact Northants ACRE and CRPE for consultee comments.** Emergency services have already been consulted.

The chair proposed a vote of thanks to the clerk for her competent and professional service so soon after her start with the council. The chair led a round of applause for the clerk.

Meeting closed @ 20:57pm

Signed



Date

23/9/26