

East Suffolk Council (ESC) planning application by Belway Homes

Ref: DC/25/3412/FUL

Date: 28th October 2026

Briefing document compiled by: Vince Langdon-Morris – District Councillor - Framlingham

Please see my synopsis below. All bullet points are prefixed in **bold**, relating to the planning topic. I hope this simplifies and assist you to navigate and understand planning complexity. If links are 'glitchy', there are two options to access the information:

- Go to [East Suffolk Council Planning Portal](#). Click [Public Access](#) then copy/paste this reference DC/25/3412/FUL. It will take you to the application and documents.
- See names of documents and dates below and find them in the ESC portal application.
- **Application:** This application is for 128 homes, located on a greenfield site **not** allocated in the current [Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan](#) (2016-2031, March 2017). The proposed applicants site lies within 'Fram27' (p70) which is allocated for **employment/commercial**, not housing development.
- **Application:** The applicant will have had [pre-application meetings](#) with ESC planning (usually held behind closed doors), giving the applicant 'confidence' to proceed with the planning submission.
- **Application:** See in ESC planning portal, documents, **Statement of Community Involvement Appendix J**, date 29 August 2025. Open document, go to p27, see graphs and questions, response stating, **NO**. See, **Neighbour Notification List**, [Info Sheet, date 8th October 2025](#). Question for applicant? Were all residents contacted on 8th October 2025 as this document states?
- **Application:** [Dual Application Strategy](#). Be aware of this strategy used by developers / applicants.
- **Social Housing:** An alternative, substantial 180 plus+ affordable/social housing development is also being proposed for Framlingham (this would include commercial developments/employment). There is an urgent need for more social housing in Framlingham, especially types that allow 'down-sizing' for people if they so choose, from the many 5,4,3,2 bedroomed houses currently in twin or single occupancy. This would be a better alternative, freeing up significant **existing** housing for families.
- **Relevant media articles:** see media coverage referring to the applicant.
[BBC 28th August 2024 'Hellway' - the new-build estate with no end of snags.](#)
[North Wales Live, Developers agree to pay £150,000 after River Alyn tributary polluted.](#)
- **Flooding:** The proposed site lies directly above the epicentre of Storm Babet, just over 2 yrs ago, 20th October 2023. The Town Council and [Framlingham Flood Resilience Working Group](#) have done significant work (see link, scroll down for reports). These efforts are ongoing to try and make the town more future proof / resilient!
- **Climate Change and Town Infrastructure:** During Storm Babet the field ditch, running from east to west **straight downhill** (?) through Castle Keep Housing Estate, *see Neighbourhood Plan, p70*, discharging into Fairfield Road. The deluge from this ditch nearly overcame the electric substation and further swelled the enormous Ore River flows, nearly submerging the houses and businesses lying below. The Sustainable Underlying Drainage Systems (SuDs) at Castle Keep, designed to protect against this happening, did nothing to mitigate this flooding.
The fence along Fairfield Road footpath (*recently repaired by Suffolk County Council after 3yrs, FOI request shows temporary lights cost taxpayers £51,000*). Each time the Ore River floods along the Fens, the underpinning riverbank along Fairfield Road is being gradually eroded. If this continues and affects the road, it could significantly impact access to the houses above (and very costly to repair).
- **Insurance: Commercial:** Businesses along Woodbridge Road are now unable to access insurance. Many flood affected **residents** in Framlingham are unable to access insurance. [The emerging risk that's 'breaking' the insurance industry and could make 3 million homes 'worthless' | The Independent](#)

Synopsis of Central Government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

It is important to have a basic understanding of the 'NPPF' and government's target to deliver 1.5 million homes by the next parliament. The NPPF states that **the plan-led approach must remain the cornerstone of the planning system and Local Plans must be about how, not whether, to meet housing need.**

A revised NPPF was published 12th December 2024. The changes made to housing need figures will have significant implications for East Suffolk. There has been a significant **uplift** in the annual **new** housing need figures in the [Suffolk Coastal Local Plan](#), from the current **905** dwellings to **1,644** dwellings per year (across East Suffolk, including Framlingham).

The NPPF has a clause called the '**tilted balance**', under which **greater weight needs to be given to the supply of housing in decision taking** also known as '**presumption in favour of sustainable development**'.

This housing uplift has directly affected the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, pushing the **statutory 5 yr** 'housing land supply' position downward (now **3½** years due to the 1644 housing uplift). **This means that applications for housing on unplanned sites by developers may be more feasible in the near future.**

ESC planning states that this will not mean '**anything goes**' in terms of housing development. Recognising that housing development within allocated sites should still accord with allocation policies. [that] This is not an excuse to cram more homes into existing allocations. Even where unplanned sites come forward, considerable attention will be applied to site suitability and Local Plan design and environmental policies will apply and afford full weight.

ESC will expect pre-application engagement (with developers) and promote the ESC [Developers Charter](#).

Affordable housing: The revised NPPF places further emphasis on the delivery of social rented accommodation, as part of the mix of affordable tenures.

House Design: The word 'beautiful' has been largely, but not wholly, removed in relation to design. Substantial references to 'beauty/beautiful' were added to the NPPF in 2023. The word 'beauty' created a lot of debate and was not defined. With these deletions it is [our] view that the importance of good design has not been diluted, and in other locations, like the 'tilted balance' it has been emphasised (**my view, house design is drawn up entirely on computers, and it shows**).

Climate change, flooding and coastal change: The [Sequential Test](#) requirement for flood risk has been confirmed as not required, where the part of the site at risk of flooding is not for any built development, access routes or vulnerable elements.

For Neighbourhood Plans that have not been submitted to East Suffolk Council by 12 March 2025 the policies in the new NPPF will apply. We [ESC] will continue to work with Neighbourhood Plan groups to support them in preparing their plans and will advise on the new NPPF.

I hope that this short, simplified narrative, assists you to have a better idea of current planning policy / law, and the legal mechanisms / routes that developers use to make planning applications.