

Heritage Asset Review Group

Notes of the meeting held on 17 September 2021

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Present

Harry Blathwayt, Nigel Brennan, Stephen Bolt, Bill Dickson, Andrée Gee, Tim Jickells and Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro

In attendance

Kayleigh Judson – Heritage Planning Officer, Kate Knights – Historic Environment Manager and Sara Utting - Governance Officer

1. Appointment of Chair

Harry Blathwayt was proposed by Tim Jickells and seconded by Bill Dickson.

Harry Blathwayt was appointed Chair.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Tim Jickells was proposed by Harry Blathwayt and seconded by Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro.

Tim Jickells was appointed Vice-Chair.

3. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

4. Notes of HARG meeting held on 25 June 2021

The notes of the meeting held on 25 June 2021 were received. These had been submitted to the Planning Committee on 13 August 2021.

Minute 5 – any other business – St Benets

The Historic Environment Manager advised that she had met with Natalie Butler of the Norfolk Archaeological Trust (NAT) who had confirmed that as the whole site was a Scheduled Monument, Scheduled Monument Consent would need to be granted by Historic England (HE) for any works. NAT was aware of the degradation caused by visitors and had proposed a fence to protect the vulnerable areas but this was not supported by HE which was suggesting that a sign be erected, drawing visitors' attention to the potential impact of their actions. The effectiveness of the sign would then be monitored. In terms of the cattle, the site had been purchased with a sitting tenant who had a right to graze cattle. Finally, in terms of the cross, the lease for that part of the site carried a maintenance responsibility but the cross remained with the Diocese. The HEM concluded that the situation would continue to be monitored, with ongoing dialogue with the NAT.

5. Historic Environment Team progress report

The Historic Environment Management (HEM) and the Heritage Planning Officer (HPO) presented the report providing an update on progress with key items of work by the Historic Environment Team between 25 June and 17 September 2021.

Conservation Area review

The HEM advised that the consultation period for the review of the Belough Conservation Area ended on 10 September 2021. A drop-in event had taken place on 4 September at which there had been 20 attendees at the two hour session, which was a reasonable number given the population figure. Overall, there was general support for the proposals as summarised in the report, with the full responses detailed within appendix 1. Appendix 2 of the report included a list of buildings proposed to be Locally Listed – this removed Sevenstead and nos. 10-12 The Street, following the responses to the consultation. It was anticipated a report would be presented to the October meeting of the Planning Committee recommending the adoption of the Conservation Area Appraisal, together with the Local List and the two Article 4 Directions as discussed at a previous HARG meeting (to remove permitted development rights for solar panels and for the replacement of thatched roof coverings within specified areas). It was noted the Directions had been served but did not come into force until they had been confirmed, following a period of consultation. The HEM advised that the purpose of the Article 4 Direction was not to prevent the installation of solar panels but would provide extra controls to ensure that their positioning, size and specification were as unobtrusive as possible.

Listed buildings

The HEM reported that work had recommenced on the Quinquennial Survey, with the help of a volunteer who had experience in historic buildings. To date, surveys had been carried out on approximately 45 Listed Buildings. Photographs were shown covering the types of buildings surveyed: St John the Baptist Church in Reedham (Grade I); The Limes in Coltishall (Grade II*) which had identified a strip of lead which had come off the flashing and would be brought to the owner's attention and Common Farmhouse on Ruggs Lane in Fleggburgh which was already on the Buildings at Risk Register. Works were being carried out, and very thoroughly, but were taking time as they were being done by the owners themselves. As the building had protective scaffold around it, it was not deteriorating any further.

Work would focus on buildings at risk but often it was difficult to get to all of them, particularly mills, as they were so inaccessible.

Water, Mills and Marshes - update

As Norwich City College had been closed to students during the summer, there was no update to report in terms of heritage skills but it was hoped students would be back on site early October.

In terms of windmills, members were pleased to note that Six Mile House Mill had recently won the Regional Award in the Conservation and Regeneration category and the project had now been entered into the National Awards to be held in London in January.

Works to High's Mill in the Halvergate Marshes were nearly complete. It had been necessary to rebuild the raceway on the right-hand side due to damage to the brickwork caused by a massive Alder root. Repair works had previously been carried out in the 1980's but the Alder had only just been cut back. This had now been removed and the apprentices had done a fantastic job repairing the mill. There was evidence of Death Watch Beetles in the historic timber work within the Cap which would need to be treated, which would make the structure more watertight and thereby reduce the moisture levels. A local forge was making an iron support bracket to support the beam and minimise further deterioration. It was understood that this was one of the oldest timber bits of mill machinery in the Broads.

Work on Muttons Mill was due to be commenced shortly but the cap would be covered during the winter as the mill was in a very exposed location. It would be good to get the new / repaired sails on as the mill was prominent in the surrounding landscape of Halvergate.

Matters for information – Grove House Barn, Irstead

The HPO advised that an application had been approved under delegated powers which essentially sought to bring the historic farmhouse (Grove House) and historic barn back into one curtilage both physically and operationally with a single residential use. She provided a detailed presentation, including photographs of the properties involved.

The property, a Grade II listed thatched barn, concrete yard and modern agricultural building, was immediately adjacent to the grade II listed farmhouse, Grove House. The HPO referred to

a previous meeting when she had reported on the works to the main farmhouse (18 December 2020) such as reinstatement of the historic sweeping drive. Following removal of areas of the lawn to provide the driveway, original hardcore had been discovered as well as drive edgings which had been used together with new hardcore and gravel to complete the drive. In addition, new gateposts had been commissioned which mimicked the originals which had been discovered amongst some shrubbery. Historically, both buildings had been linked but the barn had subsequently become separated physically by both use and ownership.

In terms of the annex conversion, the crinkly tin roof had been replaced with red pantiles and installed new windows and doors (the windows had previously existed). The owners were also installing an impressive herringbone courtyard in between the house to the rear.

Regarding this newly approved application, the owners of Grove House had bought the thatched barn and applied to bring it back into the curtilage of Grove House. The setting of the barn had been compromised by the division of the site with a modern wall which ran in between the two sites, a large concrete courtyard and a massive asbestos barn. The barn itself had been damaged and subjected to inappropriate alterations such as blocking off the main barn doors. Consequently, there was now minimum agricultural storage use which put the barn at a greater risk of decline and its very poor state meant that it would probably have met the criteria for being on the Buildings at Risk Register. This application was therefore very timely. Renovation of the main barn (to the north of the site) to use as a large store and part conversion to ancillary accommodation from the range which ran from the south. This included removal of the modern wall in between the two sites and creation of the kitchen garden. The large modern barn was proposed to be retained for agricultural purposes. The 1970s was the last time both house and barn had been in one ownership and this redevelopment sought to recreate the original farmyard principle, which was helped by the newly proposed garage carport which was simple and traditional in style. Works were still in progress and there was plenty left to do. The HPO concluded that she hoped to update members with some pretty impressive photographs or even a site visit in the future.

In response to a question on whether bat surveys had been carried out on the barn and any mitigation proposed, the HPO advised that there had been significant ecological surveys across the whole site for both the renovation of the main house and conversion of the barn but no presence of bats had been found. However, there was a nesting Barn Owl and mitigation provided for that.

In response to a question on how long it would be before the works were completed, the HPO advised that the works were progressing quite quickly. The owners had actually pre-booked a thatcher for 2022 so hopefully by the end of that year.

A member queried if the aim was for the owners to have a working farm but if not, what was the purpose of barn. The HPO responded that there was still an agricultural unit which was rented out to a farmer, separately to this site. There was actually an application in for replacement of that building. She considered this would offer additional benefits to the setting of the farmhouse and barn. Also, a modern agricultural unit would be more suited to modern agricultural purposes.

6. Any other business

A member referred to the recent decision to extend the membership of this group to all members of the Authority to reflect the importance of the work being carried out and expressed his disappointment at the turn-out for today's meeting. He referred to the grant which had been awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund for the authority to carry out works under the water, mills and marshes projects and without this, many of the Broads' heritage assets might have been lost. There was also the added benefit for younger people to learn new skills etc. Consideration needed to be given as to how better raise the profile of this group and ensure all members were aware of the amount of work being undertaken. Another member echoed these sentiments, commenting that it was hugely important to retain the character of the fabric of buildings within the Broads area. He suggested that a site visit might provide a good opportunity for members to witness projects "hands on" and this could take the form of a whole day looking at significant heritage assets. The Historic Environment Manager responded she would discuss this suggestion with colleagues and also whether it could be a regular event. A member commented that they had written a long report on the work carried out by the Broads Authority on heritage work in recent months which would be presented to their council meeting next week.

7. Date of next meeting

The next HARG meeting would be held on **Friday 17 December 2021**.

The meeting ended at 10:50am

Signed by

Chairman