



Introduction to Planning Number 1

Keeping the Broads special

What makes the Broads special for you?
Is it desirable waterside locations?
River views? An out-door life-style?
Wildlife on your doorstep?

The Broads is an ever-changing landscape. If you are planning any changes the Broads Authority has published a set of leaflets to help you make them in a way that is sympathetic to this nationally protected area.

Why is the Broads special?

The Broads is a very special place since nowhere in Britain will you find such a landscape of water, people and wildlife. The protection of the Broads as a national park is recognition of its unique qualities. It tells us how important it is to look after the area for the future.

The villages and buildings within the landscape are crucial to the distinctiveness of the Broads. The Broads has always been popular and has experienced steady development over many years. The indications are the Broads will continue to be an attractive place to live, work or visit and therefore development pressure is likely to continue in years to come.

The Broads Authority is the local planning authority for the area. The policies of the Broads Local Plan 1997 aim to control and guide new development in order to protect and enhance the environment. However, responsibility for the Broads must go a lot wider if this unique place is going to remain special. Everyone living, working and visiting the Broads can influence how the Broads looks and feels. The distinctiveness of the Broads and its value for wildlife depends on us all.

What's special about Broads buildings?

Buildings in the Broads reflect the activities of people living and working here. The importance of the waterways, with their associated trades and activities dominates. Many villages are centred around their staithe (mooring place), with the church nearby, built from stone carried by water. The designs of buildings reflect their special functions whether connected with riverside trade or management of the land. Boat sheds, drainage mills, riverside chalets and cottages are all typical of the Broads. Their simple construction, often out of lightweight materials, is suitable for the marshy ground conditions. The result is the scale and type of building which blends with the natural surroundings in a way that some new developments do not.

Design is crucial in a protected landscape like the Broads. Development needs to take account of the characteristics of the site as well as what is distinctive in the wider Broads setting. Good design is all the harder to define in the Broads because of the varied nature of the local architecture. Unlike, for example, the Yorkshire Dales, with its distinctive local stone, buildings in the Broads vary throughout the area. Here we find small, neat, weather-boarded waterside chalets, grand riverside homes with sweeping gardens and villages of brick and thatch. What is right for one area may not necessarily be right in another.

Attention to detail is important. Detailing of roofs, walls, windows and doors can make the difference between a building that is in harmony or is discordant with its surroundings. The unfussy use of materials is the key to good detailing. Buildings will keep their good looks if they use materials which age and weather at the same rate. The use of Norfolk reed supports local industry as well as wildlife in the marshes. A study of local buildings will usually help you to choose what will look best.

As the local planning authority, the Broads Authority can influence design to help a building be absorbed

more easily into the landscape. But it's not just about looking back, we want to look forward as well. Balance is the key, as with all aspects of the Broads Authority's work. The past gives us the context, but we welcome innovative design as well as more traditional styles. Scale, form and the materials used are particularly important.

We hope that this series of advice leaflets will help generate development proposals to keep the Broads special.

The advice leaflets

This series of leaflets is designed to help you by providing

- Information about the planning system,
- Guidance on what needs planning permission within the Broads,
- Advice on how to submit an application, and
- What makes an application successful.

By obtaining these leaflets at an early stage you will save time and unnecessary expense.

You will find rules about new development within the Broads differ from those in the surrounding districts. This means more things need planning permission here than in other parts of the country.

When you think that your proposals are appropriate, you will need to ensure that the details of your scheme are also appropriate.

The other leaflets give detailed advice on what forms and styles of new building and engineering work are likely to receive planning permission in the Broads. The aim is to ensure that changes made in the open countryside, or to villages and waterside areas, are in keeping with the special character of the Broads. Then everyone can continue to enjoy the area in the future.

The design advice should be read alongside the Local Development Framework including the 'saved' policies of the Broads Local Plan and the Norfolk and Suffolk Structure Plans. These documents set out the general policies for deciding what type of

development is right for the Broads. They can be viewed at the Broads Authority's Norwich office, district council planning offices and on the Broads Authority's website.

Planning on the web

The government has funded a state of the art planning website so that you have easy access to information at all hours. Information on planning applications, the planning process, guidance and advice, planning policies, conservation, tree preservation and planning enforcement is all available by using the Broads Authority's website www.broads-authority.gov.uk and clicking the planning link.

If you are looking for a particular application, have the reference number ready to enter.

PublicAccess is an on-line service that allows you to view details of planning applications being considered by the Broads Authority. Over time, planning history will build up and be available going back to 1989 when the Authority became a planning authority.

You can monitor the progress of an application, submit comments about an application and search an updated list of planning applications received.

Contact us

- Please contact us through the Authority's "Contact Us" section on the website and type "Planning" in the title.
- If you prefer, phone on 01603 610734.
- Planning applications can also be viewed at the Broads Authority's head office at 18 Colegate, Norwich, NR3 1BQ between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

There will not always be a planning officer on the premises, so please phone for an appointment if you require further help. If you are making a special journey, or have any special access needs, please phone the reception so that we can help you.

Other useful leaflets All leaflets in the *Introduction to Planning series*. • Subject specific leaflets published from time to time. You are welcome to photocopy individual information sheets in this series.

Also available in large print. Please telephone 01603 610734