

Application for Determination

Parish	Coltishall Parish Council Belaugh Parish Council Wroxham Parish Council Horstead Parish Council	
Reference	BA/2014/0394/FUL	Target date 3 February 2015
Location	Anchor Street, Coltishall Top Road, Belaugh Skinners Lane, Wroxham	
Proposal	Erosion Protection Works on the Upper River Bure	
Applicant	Broads Authority	
Recommendation	Approve subject to Conditions	
Reason for referral to Committee	Broads Authority Development and Representations Received	

1 Description of Site and Proposals

- 1.1 This proposal is centred on three sites located in the upper stretches of the River Bure.
- 1.2 The first site is located at the southern end of Anchor Street in Coltishall. It includes a length of approximately 170m of the river bank fronting an area of water meadow, currently used for grazing. This length of the riverbank has been eroded as a result of river action and movement of cattle in and out of the river. A public footpath runs north-south along the eastern edge of this meadow. To the north of the site are a number of residential properties fronting Anchor Street. This site is situated within the Coltishall Conservation Area and part of the site is within Horstead Parish.
- 1.3 The second site is situated on the stretch of the River Bure that runs adjacent to the southern end of Top Road in Belaugh. This approximately 205m long stretch of riverbank has been eroded over the years by river action. The site bounds a grazing field which rises up steeply from the river to Top Road. This site is situated within the Belaugh Conservation Area.
- 1.4 The final site covers a length of approximately 80m of the riverbank located at the southern end of Skinners Lane in Wroxham. This area is slightly different to the other two areas in that it comprises a very gently sloping beach area,

which forms a shallow bay extending into the paddock currently used for grazing horses. The paddock rises up gently to meet Skinners Lane. This site is situated in the Wroxham Conservation Area.

- 1.5 All three sites are situated within Flood Risk Zone 2 of the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Maps.
- 1.6 The upper stretches of the River Bure have accumulated significant amounts of sediment, particularly on the inner bends of the river, which can restrict navigation. The outer bends of the river, in contrast, are subject to erosion. This scheme seeks to remove 3,000m³ of sediment from shallow areas of the river and use this sediment in the three sites identified above to provide bank erosion protection. The dredging would be carried out by boat and the material moved by boat to the three locations. Wooden posts would be driven into the river bed every half a metre along the length of the original line of the riverbank and Nicospan geotextile would be slotted over these posts through built in pockets. The dredged material would be placed behind the new structure and planted up with local provenance species. These have been amended to include Branched bur reed, Lesser pond sedge and Yellow Flag Iris. These plants would be planted into coir mesh which would be rolled out on top of the dredged sediment. Plastic mesh 'goose guard' would be erected around the filled and planted areas as a temporary measure to allow the plants to become established without being grazed by geese. The Anchor Street and Top Road sites are both adjacent to fields which are grazed by cattle, so the landward side of the works would be fenced or cattle excluded from the fields on a temporary basis to prevent trampling and grazing on the sediment and new plants. Once the planting had become established the fencing and goose guard would be removed and the cattle would be allowed to graze the fields.
- 1.7 Two 'No Mooring' signs would be erected at each site, which would be removed once the vegetation had become established, which is expected to be two years after the work is carried out.
- 1.8 The work is programmed to take place in early 2015, before the bird breeding season.

2 Site History

- 2.1 None

3 Consultation

- 3.1 Environment Agency – The Water Framework Directive Compliance Assessment provided is satisfactory as are the proposed mitigation measures and the applicant is aware of the times that the proposed works can be undertaken. We are therefore in a position to remove our objection.

- 3.2 Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association – Provided that appropriate conditions are imposed as to signage and buoyage while the work is being undertaken, the NSBA has no objection to the application.
- 3.3 Coltishall Parish Council – The Parish Council wishes to object to this application in its present form. We have no concerns about the dredging and bank works, however we would ask you to reconsider the choice of the vegetation. The present choice could grow up to six feet tall and would obscure the view from the river, enjoyed by the many holiday makers and locals. From the footpath any wildlife would be totally obscured from view by walkers who at present enjoy the view of the river and the many species of wildlife that the river brings. Therefore if an alternative planting of vegetation, with a height of no more than 1 metre tall can be sourced, then we would have no objections.
- 3.4 Belaugh Parish Council – We consider the application should be approved. We appreciate that the geotextile material used to retain the bank has to be substantial and sufficiently strong enough to support the amount of backfill proposed, but we are slightly disappointed about its colour. Maybe a more sympathetic colour, i.e. brown would have been less unsightly.

As you are aware, the Bure is relatively non-tidal in Belaugh and we would not agree with your statement that for much of the time the Nicospan would be under water. However we do not live in a perfect world and if this is the best material available then it will have to suffice.

- 3.5 Wroxham Parish Council – The Parish Council have no comments to make on this application.
- 3.6 Broads Society – No objections to the application but would like the following comments considered:
1. We suggest that the Authority reconsider the use of some of the more aggressive reeds to address public concerns regarding the height of the planting.
 2. We suggest priority is given to dredging the sailing reaches at Coltishall.
 3. We assume that the drinking point on the meadow at Coltishall will encompass the small drainage ditch which drains rainwater from the sloping land into the river.
 4. In connection with the goose-guard we would prefer to see the words 'will be removed' instead of 'can be removed'.
 5. We think that no more than 2 No Mooring signs will be needed on the 2 longer lengths.
 6. We have no additional comments on the schemes for Belaugh and Skinners Lane, Wroxham.

4 Representations

- 4.1 Nine representations to this application have been received, with all but one of them concerned with the works proposed for the Coltishall site. One representation has been received on the proposed works at Belaugh. The representations received are a combination of outright objections to the scheme and an acceptance that the work is required but an objection to the way in which the work was originally proposed to be carried out.
- 4.2 The overriding objection to the Coltishall stretch of works is that the choice of plants to be used, as specified in the original submission, is not appropriate for this location. There is a Public Footpath that runs from north to south along the eastern boundary of the water meadow in which it is proposed to carry out these works and objectors are concerned that the plants would grow too high and obscure the views of the river from the footpath and of the meadow from the river. This would have a detrimental effect on the overall amenity and enjoyment of this area. Concern has also been raised at the effect the works and planting would have on the character of the Coltishall Conservation Area. The point has been made that the undulating character of the shoreline in this water meadow is the result of natural erosion processes over time and that the line of the erosion works, as originally proposed, would create a canal like bank alignment, which is out of character with this area. Concern has also been raised about the effect the works would have on flooding in the area, as the water meadow forms a functional part of the floodplain in this area. There is concern that the proposed works and planting would prevent water from the river overflowing onto the meadow, which would exacerbate flooding in Anchor Street. The other question that has been raised is whether the proposed works would have a positive or detrimental effect on the ecology in the area.
- 4.3 The representation received concerning the Belaugh stretch of the works is also concerned about the height of the planting originally proposed and wants assurance that it would be kept as low as possible to ensure that the view of the river is not diminished from the meadow and the grounds of the property along Top Road.

5 Policies

- 5.1 The following Policies have been assessed for consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and have been found to be consistent and can therefore be afforded full weight in the consideration and determination of this application. [NPPF](#)

Core Strategy

[Core Strategy Adopted September 2007 pdf](#)

CS1 – Landscape Protection and Enhancement

CS2 – Historic and Cultural Environment

CS3 – Navigation

CS4 – Creation of New Resources
CS5 – Historic and Cultural Environments
CS15 – Water Space Management

Development Management Policies DPD
[DEVELOPMENTPLANDOCUMENT](#)

DP1 – Natural Environment
DP2 – Landscape and Trees
DP3 – Water Quality and Resources
DP29 – Development on Sites with a High Probability of Flooding

- 5.2 The following Policies have been assessed for consistency with the NPPF and have found to lack full consistency with the NPPF and therefore those aspects of the NPPF may need to be given some weight in the consideration and determination of this application.

Core Strategy
CS7 Environmental Protection
CS20 Flood Risk

Development Management Policies DPD
DP5 Historic Environment
DP13 Bank Protection

6 Assessment

- 6.1 In terms of the assessment of this proposal the main issues that need to be taken into consideration are: the principle of the development; landscape; Conservation Areas; ecology; navigation and flooding.
- 6.2 The buildup of sediment in the River Bure can, and will have, a detrimental effect on navigation in this area of the Broads system unless it is dredged. Strategic Objective NA1 of the Broads Plan seeks to deliver a strategic catchment approach to sediment management to achieve a balance of inputs with outputs, securing defined waterways specifications for the navigation area. Strategic Objective NA1.5 seeks to minimise impacts of bank erosion and provide advice and guidance to landowners on erosion protection design and best practice.
- 6.3 The method of erosion protection proposed by this scheme has previously been trialled by the Broads Authority on the River Ant and recently been consented at Hill Common on Hickling Broad. It is more robust than using faggots, but not so heavily engineered as piling.
- 6.4 Managing bank erosion is a key element of the Broads Sediment Management Strategy. This scheme proposes to re-use 3,000m³ of the dredged sediment from the river in a more creative way to provide bank erosion protection. Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy states that adequate

water depths will be maintained for safe navigation, and the disposal of dredged and cut material will be carried out in ways that mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts on the environment. Beneficial use of dredgings will be encouraged. This proposal is considered to be in full accordance with this Policy.

- 6.5 Policy DP13 of the Development Management Policies DPD states that development proposals that include bank protection will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal has been designed to take account of: the need for the protection; the nature of the watercourse; the scale of the tidal range; safe navigation; the character of the location; the effect on European and priority biodiversity habitats and species; and the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. It is considered that the proposed method of erosion protection meets the tests set out in this Policy as it is needed, it has been designed to recreate the character of this area and it would improve the safety of navigation in this area of the river system. A comprehensive Water Framework Directive Compliance Assessment has been submitted in support of this planning application, which the Environment Agency has confirmed is satisfactory. The proposal is therefore also considered to be in accordance with Policies CS7 of the Core Strategy and DP3 of the Development Management Policies DPD, which require proposals to demonstrate that they are in accordance with the Water Framework Directive where relevant.
- 6.6 It is therefore concluded that the principle of this development is acceptable and in accordance with the wider Broads Authority's objective and the relevant Development Plan Policies.
- 6.7 Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy and Policy DP2 of the Development Management Policies DPD both require any development proposals to ensure that the distinctive landscape character of the Broads is protected and enhanced. A number of objections to the scheme, particularly at the Coltishall site, have cited the negative effect the scheme would have on the landscape. The fact that views of the river from the public footpath and views of the water meadow from the river would be obscured by the planting was a particular concern. Also the original scheme submitted for the Coltishall site would have seen the natural indented and varied riverbank replaced by a straight, canal like bank edge. In response to these objections the scheme has been amended to replace the planting species with Branched bur reed, Lesser pond sedge and Yellow Flag Iris, which are typical broadland river margin species and are not anticipated to grow above 1m above water height in these locations. Also the line of the new riverbank on the Coltishall stretch of the river has been redesigned to create a more sinuous river edge. The drinking point for cattle has also been widened to allow a view directly through to the river.
- 6.8 The works to be carried out at the Skinners Lane stretch of the river would be slightly different in character to the other two sites, as this area is currently a shallow bay. The works here would result in sediment being deposited over a shallower but wider profile, to maintain a certain amount

of the shelving edge which is characteristic of the area, whilst also delivering a defined river bank. No objections were received relating to this site.

- 6.9 Installation will be such that the top of the Nicospan would be level with Mean Water Level and once the planting becomes established it would not be visible. Also it is proposed to remove the gooseguard fencing and the cattle proof fencing after two years when the planting has become established. It is therefore considered that these features would not result in a significant change to the landscape.
- 6.10 It is therefore concluded that, with the amendments that have been made to the scheme as a result of the consultation process, the scheme would not have a detrimental effect on the landscape and is therefore in accordance with Policies CS1 of the Core Strategy and DP2 of the Development Management Policies DPD.
- 6.11 All three sites are situated within Conservation Areas and it is therefore necessary to assess the schemes against any effect that they may have on the setting and character of these Conservation Areas. There were initial concerns about the scheme, particularly in Coltishall, as it was considered that the works would result in an over engineered appearance for the riverbank and that they would alter the character of the Conservation Area by virtue of blocking or screening the visual and physical access to the river enjoyed by the public. A number of the objections received also cited this as a reason for objecting to the planning application. However following the amendments to the scheme, which include varying the plant species, creating a more sinuous line for the riverbank on the Coltishall site and ensuring that the Nicospan on all sites is attached so that it does not extend above the Mean Water Level, it is considered that the scheme would not have a detrimental effect on the setting or character of any of the Conservation Areas. It is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies CS5 of the Core Strategy and DP5 of the Development Management Policies DPD and Part 12 of the NPPF.
- 6.12 Policies CS2 of the Core Strategy and DP1 of the Development Management Policies DPD require all schemes to protect the biodiversity value of sites and maximise opportunities for the restoration and enhancement of the biodiversity value of sites where possible. The application states that the erosion protection scheme would benefit biodiversity by providing new riparian vegetation where currently the bank has eroded away the majority of the typical riparian vegetation. Any trees or shrubs present on the sites would be worked around. At the Skinners Lane site the deposition of the sediment would result in the eradication of an undesirable plant species and its replacement with more appropriate plant species. No protected species would be affected by the works. The work would be completed before the bird breeding season. A water vole survey would be carried out before the works commence, although the sites look unlikely to be suitable for watervole habitation. The Environment Agency was concerned about the possible harmful effects on fish

spawning in the areas of the River Bure where the work is to be undertaken. However, following the submission of the Water Framework Directive Assessment and an assurance that the work would be carried out before the water temperature reached 8 degrees, the Environment Agency is satisfied that there would be no harmful effect on the spawning fish as a result of this development. These matters can be covered by Planning Conditions. On the basis of this information it is considered that the scheme is in accordance with the relevant Development Plan Policies.

- 6.13 The dredging works on the River Bure are required to ensure that the navigation channel is kept open. The river bed directly in front of the areas identified for erosion protection have become shallow through slumping of material from the bank, so creating a new river bank would define the navigation channel clearly, reducing the likelihood of vessels grounding. The gooseguard fencing would be mounted on longer wooden posts, of which one every 10m would be painted yellow to increase visibility to prevent vessels bumping against the new riverbank. Two 'No Mooring' signs would be mounted at each location, which would be removed once the vegetation becomes established. It is considered that this proposal would improve the navigation of the River Bure and would not have a detrimental effect on navigation safety. It is therefore in full accordance with Policies CS3 and CS15 of the Core Strategy.
- 6.14 All three sites are situated within Flood Zone 2 of the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Zones. A number of the representations received cite concern at the effect the proposed works would have on flood risk in the area, particularly in the Anchor Street area of Coltishall as the water meadow currently floods. However the deposition of sediment within the floodplain would cause an increase in flood height across this area of only 0.596mm. The Environment Agency has confirmed that it has no objection to the scheme and the scheme is therefore considered to be fully in accordance with Policies CS 20 of the Core Strategy and DP 29 of the Development Management Policies DPD and the NPPF.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed development is considered to be a necessary part of the ongoing management and maintenance of the River Bure. It is in accordance with the wider objectives of the Broads Authority as set out in the Broads Plan and also in accordance with the Sediment Management Strategy. It is concluded that there will be no adverse effect on ecology, landscape quality, the character of the Conservation Areas, navigation or flood risk and that the proposal is therefore in full accordance with the relevant Development Plan Policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8 Recommendation

8.1 It is recommended that this application be granted consent subject to the following conditions:

- (i) Standard time limit.
- (ii) In accordance with the approved plans.
- (iii) Timing of works to protect breeding/nesting birds with flexibility if the site is checked.
- (iv) Timing of dredging to ensure work carried out before the water temperature reaches 8 degrees to avoid possible damage to spawning fish.
- (v) Protected Species Survey for water voles to be carried out at each site prior to work commencing.
- (vi) Monitoring and maintenance of planting and structures for a specified period and replacement of any failed plants or damaged structures.
- (vii) Removal of protective fencing and 'No Mooring' signage once the planting has become established

Background papers: Application File BA/2014/0394/FUL

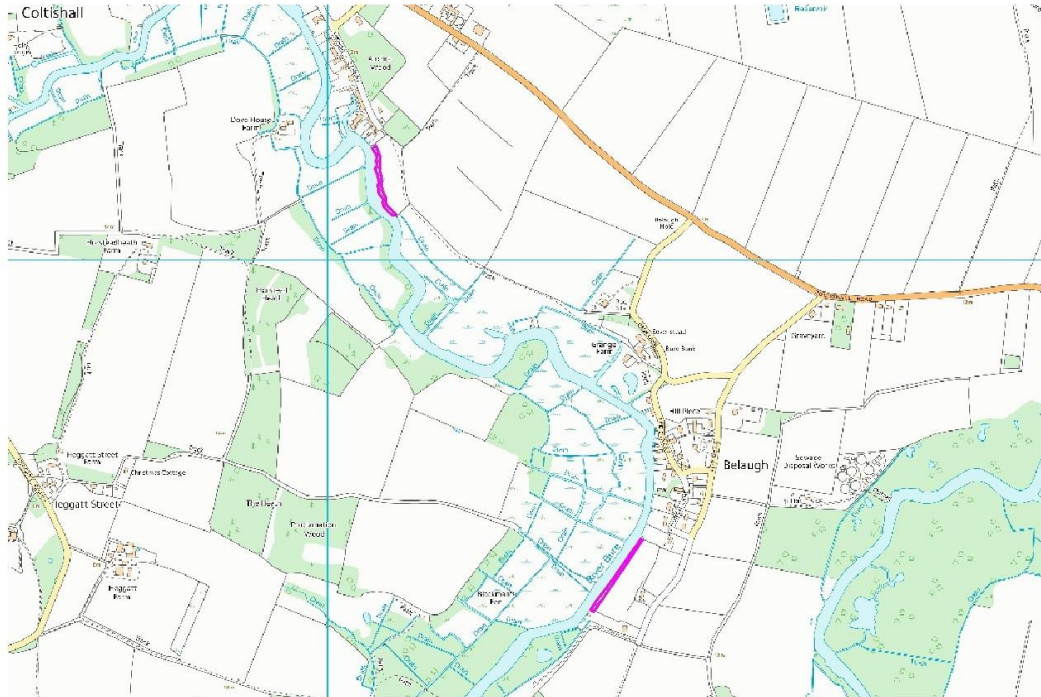
Author: Alison Macnab
Date of Report: 19 February 2015

Appendices: APPENDIX 1 – Location Plan

APPENDIX 1

BA/2014/0394/FUL

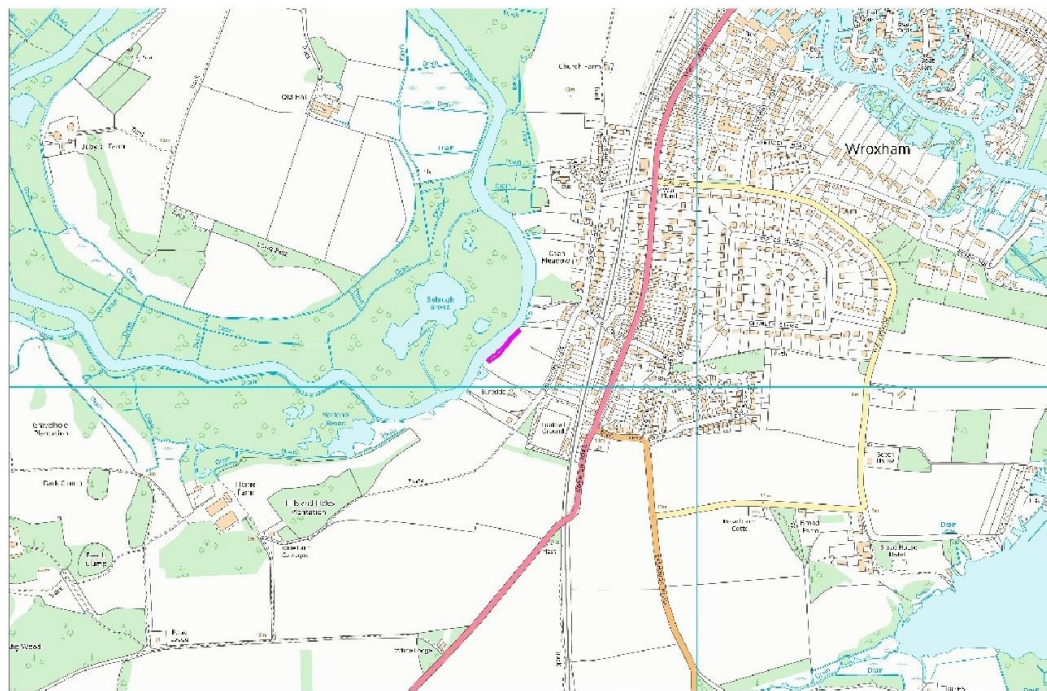
Anchor Street, Coltishall - Top Road, Belaugh
Erosion Protection Works on the Upper River Bure



© Crown copyright and database rights 2015. Ordnance Survey 100021573. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

BA/2014/0394/FUL

Skinner's Lane, Wroxham
Erosion Protection Works on the Upper River Bure



© Crown copyright and database rights 2015. Ordnance Survey 100021573. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.