

Planning Committee

11 November 2022

Agenda item number 7.1

BA 2022 0312 ADV- 3 signs at Hickling Broad

Report by Planning Assistant

Proposal

Installation of information billboards at three sites around Hickling Broad

Applicant

Broads Authority

Recommendation

Approve subject to conditions

Reason for referral to committee

The Broads Authority is the applicant

Application target date

17.11.2022

Contents

1.	Description of site and proposals	2
2.	Site history	2
3.	Consultations received	2
4.	Representations	3
5.	Policies	3
6.	Assessment	3
7.	Conclusion	4
8.	Recommendation	5
9.	Reason for recommendation.....	5
	Appendix 1 – Location map	6

1. Description of site and proposals

- 1.1. Hickling Broad is located in the northern part of the Broads, 20 miles north east of Norwich and is important in terms of landscape, nature conservation and recreation interest. Hickling Broad itself falls within the very large Upper Thurne, Broads and Marshes SSSI, which encompasses an extensive area of some 1159 ha. Hickling Broad also forms part of the Broads Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Broadland Special Protection Area (SPA), which are European sites. It is also listed as The Broadland Ramsar site.
- 1.2. This application is proposing the installation of three signs at three different locations around Hickling Broad. The signs will be 750mm by 400mm with a height of 1.3m and be constructed of HPL (High Pressure Laminate) boards with steel fixings and oak posts. The purpose of the signs is to provide information and education to the public with regards to the restoration works that the Broads Authority are doing to maintain Hickling Broad. One of the signs is proposed along a footpath that is maintained by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, another is at Catfield Staithe, where it overlooks the moorings, and the third location is the beach which is located at the water's edge next to Hickling Windsurfing Club.

2. Site history

- 2.1. BA/2014/0411/FUL - Install erosion protection along 3 bayed areas at NE end of Hickling Broad.

BA/2018/0173/FUL - Hickling Broad enhancement work to reconstruct the reedbed footprint to that of circa 1946. To be achieved through the installation of geotextile tubes that are filled with dredged sediment, pinned in place by wooden poles and covered with polyfelt curtain, additional sediment and planted, and then once established, the void created to be filled with further dredged sediment to re-create an area of reedbed.

BA/2018/0393/APPCON - Details of: Condition 3: water monitoring plan of permission A/2018/0173/FUL.

BA/2021/0258/NONMAT - Change to timings of proposed works, non-material amendment to permission BA/2018/0173/FUL

3. Consultations received

BA Landscape

- 3.1. The proposed information boards are of relatively small size and are unlikely to have any significant landscape or visual effects. They would have a worthwhile function given the information to be conveyed. From the photo provided, the polycarbonate material together with the hard edges may have a slightly unsympathetic appearance. If feasible, I suggest that a timber frame surround could soften this. The mounting of each board is

rather unclear. It would be helpful if further details could be provided. Fixing to existing structures or new timber posts would be preferable. No objection.

BA Heritage Planning Officer

- 3.2. Thank you for consulting me on the above planning application. Given the benefits of providing interpretation to locals and visitors regarding an important restoration project I can advise I have no objection to the erection of the signs at the locations proposed which are of a small scale and simple in form. Just for clarity, where the signs are not being installed onto an existing structure (such as a fence) the applicant will need to provide a simple drawing which shows what the signs will be erected onto and the material of the proposed frame/stand and how it will be fixed to the ground, (I assume a timber post for example)? I would also recommend the imposition of a condition which secures the removal of the signs and associated structures and making good of the land when they are no longer required to help protect the landscape.

4. Representations

- 4.1. Broads Society – Supports the application

5. Policies

- 5.1. The adopted development plan policies for the area are set out in the [Local Plan for the Broads](#) (adopted 2019).
- 5.2. The following policies were used in the determination of the application:
- DM11 – Heritage Assets
 - DM16 – Development and Landscape
 - DM43 – Design
 - DM49 – Advertisements and signs

6. Assessment

- 6.1. The proposal is for the erection of three information signs to inform the public of works that the Broads Authority has been carrying out. The signs will be located at three different sites around Hickling Broad. The main issues in the determination of this application are the principle of development, appearance of the proposed signs and the impact on the landscape.
- 6.2. The three proposed signs are to provide the public with information in terms of a restoration project. These are non-illuminated signs located at well-established sites, sited off the public highway, and which relate directly to the Broad sited immediately behind the sign locations. The principle of development is therefore considered acceptable.

- 6.3. Considering the issue of design, it is important to note that advertisements and signs should be sensitively designed and located, having regard to the general characteristics of the locality. The signs proposed are small, simple and use sustainable materials. There will be no illumination and the signs will not be large or out of place. The proposal is acceptable in terms of Policy DM49 of the Local Plan for the Broads.
- 6.4. In assessing the design of the proposed development, Policy DM43 states that all development will be expected to be of a high design quality and should integrate effectively with its surroundings, reinforce local distinctiveness and landscape character and preserve or enhance cultural heritage. The proposed signs are made from HPL (High Pressure Laminate) eco board and will be 10mm thick with rounded corners. This is a sustainable material and will be durable to the elements as well as being long lasting. The sign will use a stainless-steel bracket to the underside to attach it to the sanded oak post which will be set into the ground with concrete. The boards themselves measure 750mm by 400mm and will be approx. 1.3m in height. The signs are simple in form and small scale and will not detract from the special qualities of the particular areas. The proposal is in accordance with the requires of Policy DM43 of the Local Plan for the Broads.
- 6.5. With regards to the landscape impact, the three chosen sites are key vantage points of Hickling Broad and areas which members of the public pass frequently. One of the sites is located within the Norfolk Wildlife Trust managed area and is located at the far east side of the Broad. There are other signs in this particular area, one of which is a Broads Authority sign relating to a different on-going project and another sign installed by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust informing the public of particular species in the area. Both of these signs are similar in size, although attached to the fence rather than a standalone post. The other two sites are moorings which are frequently used and the signs are positioned in places where they will be seen, but not obtrusive. The Landscape Officer was consulted and confirmed that there was no objection and that they will have a worthwhile function. It is considered acceptable in terms of Policy DM16 of the Local Plan for the Broads.
- 6.6. Hickling Broad is the largest broad and is important in terms of landscape and nature conservation. The proposed signs will maintain the high standard of materials expected and it is considered that the impact on the surrounding area will be minimal. The proposed signs will not have a negative impact on the area, therefore is in accordance with the requirements of Policy DM11 of the Local Plan for the Broads.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The application is for the erection of three signs located at three different sites around Hickling Broad. These sites are the National Wildlife Trust footpath, the beach located next to Hickling Wind Surfing Club and Catfield Staithe moorings. The signs are simple in form and are considered acceptable in terms of Policy DM11, DM16, DM43, DM49 of the Local Plan for the Broads.

8. Recommendation

8.1. Approve subject to conditions:

1. Three-year timescale for commencement
2. In accordance with the approved plans and material details
3. The signs must be removed after they have served the intended purpose to protect the landscape and make good of the land.

9. Reason for recommendation

- 9.1. The proposed signs at Hickling Broad are in accordance with the NPPF guidance and Policy DM11, DM16, DM43, DM49 of the Local Plan for the Broads and is considered acceptable.

Author: Callum Sculfor

Date of report: 24 October 2022

Appendix 1 – Location map

Appendix 1 – Location map

BA/2022/0312/ADV - Hickling Broad, Staithe Road, Hickling



© Crown copyright and database rights 2020 Ordnance Survey 100021573. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.