

# Heritage Asset Review Group

## Notes of the meeting held on 17 June 2022

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### Present

Chair – Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Bill Dickson, Andrée Gee and Tim Jickells.

### In attendance

Jason Brewster – Governance Officer, Kayleigh Judson – Heritage Planning Officer, Kate Knights – Historic Environment Manager and Marie-Pierre Tighe – Director of Strategic Services.

## 1. Notes of HARG meeting held on 25 March 2022

The notes of the meeting held on 25 March 2022 were received. These had been submitted to the Planning Committee on 29 April 2022.

## 2. Historic Environment Team progress report

The Historic Environment Management and the Heritage Planning Officer presented the report providing an update on progress with key items of work by the Historic Environment Team between the end of 26 March and 17 June 2022.

## Conservation Area review

The Historic Environment Management (HEM) reported that work had continued on the Halvergate and Tunstall Conservation Area re-appraisal. This update to the Conservation Area would aim to accurately reflect the physical alterations that have occurred since 2007, would take into account the setting of this Conservation Area within the wider landscape and would incorporate the latest Historic England guidance.

Members asked for clarification regarding planning permission in context of solar panels being installed on a property. The HEM confirmed that solar panels are incorporated within the permitted development rights as defined by the Government. This enabled households to add solar panels to a property within guidelines without the need to seek prior planning permission. The HEM added that a listed building would need to apply for a Listed Building Consent in this context and in this scenario alternative solutions would be sought such as ground mounting of the solar panels. The HEM reminded Members of the Article 4 Direction that was served within the Belaugh Conservation Area which included further regulation relating to solar panels.

## Listed buildings

The HEM explained that the Quinquennial Survey resulted in approximately 60 listed buildings being surveyed with the help of volunteer Simon Woodward. Database records were being updated to reflect this new information and owners contacted informing of them any issues and prompting them to resolve them. The Buildings at Risk Register would also be amended to reflect this updated information. A couple of more serious cases will require the HET to liaise with the owners to get them repaired.

Three buildings have been removed from the Buildings at Risk Register in the last year; High's Mill, Six Mile House Mill and the Stracey Arms Mill. All three benefitted from National Lottery Heritage Fund funding and highlighted the importance of these big grants in securing the future of these buildings, funding that would have been difficult to achieve independently.

The majority of buildings at risk were drainage mills and photos of Brograve Mill and Stones Mill were shown which highlighted their neglected state. The HEM also referred to Six Mile House (also known as Burnt House) Mill at Chedgrave. Their remote locations and difficulty accessing these sites were key factors in their current state of disrepair. In fact the work at Stones Mill had to be scaled back due to the inability to access the site caused by flooding and the fact that the structural state of the building is beyond a light touch repair. Focus here will now be on improving the biodiversity in and around the site.

A Member remarked on the romantic charm of Brograve Mill in its current state indicating that it would be a pity to lose that through restoration. The HEM confirmed that given its reduced state and the subsidence that it was experiencing the most practical outcome would be to slow its decline rather than restore it.

Another Member was puzzled by this response, questioning whether this contradicted the purpose of registering the building. The HEM agreed that ordinarily the addition of a building to the register would be a prompt to take action. The HEM explained that proposing remedial

work for a building at risk was not uncommon and was usually the only pragmatic option available. The HEM added that inclusion of a building on the Statutory List would serve to protect the building in the context of planning applications in and around the site.

An addition to the Buildings at Risk Register was a WW1 Pillbox at St Olaves which also included the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century timber framed office mounted on its roof. The ornamental hoods over the door and windows of the pillbox are a unique feature. The timber structure, windows, cladding and stairs were all in need of repair. A member, prompted by a photo of the pillbox, asked whether the pillbox was sinking into the beach or whether the shingle was swamping it. The HEM confirmed that further investigation was required to confirm the ground conditions.

Following on from an earlier point, a Member asked what was to stop the owner of the pillbox challenging the need to restore this structure rather than maintain its current state. The HEM agreed that receipt of the initial notification that a building they owned had been added to the Building at Risk Register could be daunting for the owner. At this stage the HEM would ordinarily only have a postal address from the Land Registry so could not adopt a more personal form of introduction. Once the owner had responded the HEM would seek to meet with them to discuss the matter in person. In the case of the pillbox the HEM believed the repairs to be easier and more realistic especially in the context of the mills previously discussed.

### **Water Mills and Marshes - update**

Staff absences had resulted in the postponement of work at Mutton's Mill and the planned end date had moved from end of September until spring when ground conditions would once again be suitable for a crane to operate.

This delay has had a knock-on effect to planned work at Herringfleet Mill, Somerleyton and the scope of work has had to be reduced. Focus would be on repairing sails that had been removed and repairing the engine shed in preparation for the interpretation installation. The Local Planning Authority for the Broads would submit planning permission and listed building consent applications for the planned works with the expectation that the Herringfleet Trust would take responsibility for the outstanding work.

Staff absences had also reduced involvement with students. A couple of students had shown a keen interest in the Water Mills and Marshes restoration work and were developing their heritage skills accordingly. If they continued with their training these skills would be of great benefit within the area and another positive outcome for the project.

The trainee joiner was still recovering from injury but had recently returned to work and had been completing snagging work at North Mill, Stone's Mill and High's Mill.

Members congratulated the Water Mills and Marshes team on their hard work.

In response to a Member question the HEM confirmed that trail walks associated with various Mills had been detailed and could be found at [Trails Archive - Water Mills and Marshes](#) and [Halvergate Mills Trail - Water Mills and Marshes](#).

## Enforcement - update

The Heritage Planning Officer (HPO) provided an update on Oby Manor Farm that had a Listed Building Consent (LBC) to replace UPVC windows and doors with timber equivalents. This property had recently been sold and the new owners had agreed to complete the remaining work associated with the LBC to the existing 2024 deadline. The HPO would report on progress at future meetings.

## Design Guide

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) provided an introduction to the Broads Authority's Design Guide. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated last year and a new requirement was for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to prepare design guides consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code (both of which were also published in 2021).

The Government advises the development of design guides and codes via some form of public consultation, and the LPA for the Broads surveyed residents, visitors and users of the Broads and received approximately 150 replies. A key message from these responses was that people valued the traditional buildings and their setting within the Broads landscape. The LPA for the Broads along with consultants used the survey results to create an initial draft of the Design Guide.

Part 1 of the Guide covered 6 main Building Types representing those buildings most commonly presented in development management terms within the Broads. These main building types may be subdivided and the HEM used the example of chalets and in particular two of a possible four subdivisions, cottage and shed categories, to illustrate what is covered by this part of the guide. The first part of the guide details the characteristics of each building type and in the context of chalets these characteristics included Roof, Form & Heights, Elevations & Detailing and Access & Water.

Part 2 of the Guide is the design code which sets out requirements or guidelines that should be adhered to. This included elements of architectural detailing such as types of windows and roof materials as well as urban design guidelines such as heights & storeys, roof form, width & base and location with respect to road and river. Each section contained general guidance and, where necessary, specific guidance per building type. The HEM used the first page of the Built Form, Scale & Massing section of the design code to illustrate this content.

The draft Design Guide was available online and would be presented at the next Planning Committee on 24 June 2022.

The second stage of consultation would be run concurrently with the Local Plan consultation scheduled for the end of July and early August 2022. The guide would then be reworked and might go through a further round of consultation before it was ready for adoption early 2023.

A Member asked how the Design Guide balanced the need for sustainability with maintaining heritage buildings. The HEM explained that the Design Guide did cover sustainability by, for example, encouraging upgrades to existing buildings rather than replacing them. As

heritage/listed buildings are covered by separate legislation they are not explicitly referenced within the Design Guide.

Members welcomed the guidance provided with respect to chalets which were an important part of the Broads landscape. The HEM believed the Design Guide was an improvement on previous guidance in this regard and would strengthen the need for planning consideration on developments relating to this type of building.

### Collaboration

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) had attended meetings with the Suffolk Conservation Officers, Norfolk Conservation Officers and National Parks Historic Environment Officers. At the Suffolk Conservation Officers meeting they presented a study on historic farmsteads performed by Suffolk County Council. This pilot project for Historic England had compared farmsteads marked on first edition Ordnance Survey maps (c.1886) with contemporary aerial photographs and categorised them. The HEM showed the results of this analysis for Yew Tree Farm, Low Farm and Bullocks Ley. This information would be added to Suffolk County Council's Historic Environment Record and would be a valuable reference for planning officers.

### 3. Any other business

None.

### 4. Date of next meeting

The next HARG meeting would be held on **Friday 9 September 2022**. It is planned to hold this meeting at the Museum of the Broads, Stalham on the assumption that enough Members would attend. The Chair urged Members in attendance to promote the next meeting to their colleagues.

The meeting ended at 10.56am

Signed by

Chair