

**Heritage Asset Review Working Group
Review and Update**
Report by Historic Environment Manager

Summary: The Heritage Asset Review Group was set up by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 8 January 2010 in response to the Cultural Heritage review undertaken following the Planning Service being taken in house. The group has met for the last three years reviewing progress on a range of heritage issues including Buildings at Risk, the Mills Strategy and the production of a Local List. Planning Committee's agreement to the formation of the group included a requirement for periodic review of the Group's membership and remit.

Recommendation: That members agree:

- (i) that the Heritage Asset Review Working Group be continues; and
- (ii) that the membership of that group is reviewed and its terms of reference and reporting mechanism are agreed as set out in the report.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 One of the three main purposes of the Broads Authority is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Broads and particular reference is included within Chapter 2 of The Broads Plan. The Broads Authority Strategic Priorities have identified the need to identify buildings for inclusion on a local list and a continued review of Conservation Areas in line with national performance indicators as well as seeking the continuing protection and enhancement of the area's cultural landscape
- 1.2 Following the Authority taking the Planning Service in house, a comprehensive review of Cultural Heritage in the Broads including a survey of all Listed buildings was completed. In January 2010 Members agreed to set up a Member Working Group to provide officers with direction concerning the protection of Heritage Assets in particular the high number of Buildings at Risk identified by the survey. The Heritage Asset Review Group (HARG) had its first meeting on 26 March 2010 and in total has now had 11 meetings.
- 1.3 HARG provides a mechanism by which Officers can provide updates to and seek guidance directly from Members on work in progress relating to all aspects of the Historic Environment in an informal and consensual way.

Reporting back to the Planning Committee provides a formal and appropriate level of scrutiny for the work of the group.

- 1.4 HARG's Membership is made up of 5 Members of the Broads Authority Planning Committee and includes the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee, The Authority's Heritage Champion and two other Members. Current Membership is –

Murray Gray (Chair of Planning Committee) - Chair
Stephen Johnson (Heritage Champion) - Vice Chair
Sholeh Blane
Julie Brociek-Coulton
Colin Gould (Vice Chair of Planning Committee)

- 1.5 HARG meets three times a year every four months following Planning Committee meetings and reports to the next scheduled Planning Committee meeting. The terms of reference of the Group are attached for Member's information.
- 1.6 On setting up the Group, Members of the Planning Committee agreed to review its terms of reference and Membership periodically. The purpose of this report is to give members of the Planning committee the opportunity to review progress made in the last three years, the Group's Terms of reference are appended (Appendix 1)

2 Progress

- 2.1 Over the last three years the Group has been successful in guiding officers and providing a clear direction relating to Listed Buildings at Risk (BAR) and also unauthorised work to Listed Buildings. This has resulted in 25 or approximately 50% of the BARs being removed from the "at risk" register. In addition the group has provided guidance on Conservation Area re-appraisals and helped to prioritise those to be undertaken in association with adjacent local authorities before they are submitted to the Planning Committee. It has also provided advice and guidance in association with English Heritage criteria on the compilation and adoption of a Local List which will be an on-going process. The group advised on the use of a thematic approach to the List which has proved fruitful in providing a stimulus for Parish Councils in their annual nominations of assets for the Local List.
- 2.2 Many of the issues with which the group deal can be of a sensitive nature and require careful discreet handling and detailed discussion which would not always be appropriate for a full Planning Committee that meets in public.
- 2.3 Having set up procedures for dealing with those issues mentioned above, the Group is now tackling the more difficult and long standing Building at Risk cases, many of which relate to the Drainage Mills. These are recognised as being one of the major cultural assets of the Broads landscape. The group has helped to formulate the basis for the Mills Strategy which has resulted in a very successful first stage Workshop with Mill Owners and other stakeholders

in May 2013. In order to progress matters further, further Member input will be required. Continuing Member input will also be required for Buildings at Risk and the Local List both of which are constantly under review and require updating although the procedures put in place mean that this is now a more structured process. Members may recall that there are National Park Performance Indicators that relate to Buildings at Risk.

2.4 The emerging Placemaking Project identified as a Strategic Priority for 2013/14 has also been considered by HARG.

2.5 For these reasons, the group is considered to be exceedingly worthwhile and an appropriate arm of the Planning Committee.

3 Original Objectives (Taken from report to Jan 2010) and Outcomes

3.1 As reported to the December Planning Committee the Heritage Review work has highlighted a number of specific issues in particular:

- ***A much higher percentage of buildings that are “at risk” than previously thought – approaching 20% of the entire Listed Building stock including Buildings At Risk from the effects of climate change.***

Outcome - The number of Buildings at Risk in The Broads has halved in the three years that HARG has been meeting. The figure is currently approximately 10% of the Listed Building stock which is now in line with the average for all National Park Authority's

- ***Listed Buildings that have been subject to unauthorised work.***

Outcome - Close scrutiny has been given to important cases and two cases brought to Committee for consideration of Enforcement Action. Otherwise cases have been dealt with by negotiation on HARG advice. Only one outstanding case requiring resolution currently remains. Listed Building enforcement will be a continuing issue.

- ***The need to establish a criteria based approach to assessing assets not statutorily protected for inclusion on a local list of heritage assets.***

Outcome - The Group has provided guidance on this subject and a workshop was held with parish councils prior to requesting nominations. Nominations received from Parish Councils, individuals and Officer's, nominations have all been considered by HARG and the first Local List was adopted in 2012 – this will be a continuing process and new nominations will be considered by HARG shortly.

- ***Conservation Areas requiring designation, re-appraisal and management proposals.***

Outcome – 6 Conservation Area appraisals have been adopted since 2010 with a further four to be adopted in 2013-14. Out of a total of 23 Conservation Areas 15 now have adopted up to date appraisals with a further four coming forward. This will be a continuing process.

- ***Exploring opportunities for partnership working and external funding opportunities with other organisations regarding the Historic Environment.***

Outcome – This area of work is progressing through the work on the Mills including the compilation of detailed survey sheets and production of individual action plans for the 75 Mill structures both Listed and Non Listed. The Projects Manager post will allow exploration of possible funding bids to support this on-going work.

- ***Provision of published advice regarding heritage assets for owners.***

Outcome – An action as a direct result of the Mills workshop was to approach individual owners and share the Survey and Action Plan information with them in order to explore possible solutions for their assets.

4 Summary

- 4.1 There remains a need to determine what action needs to be taken in specific instances with regard to some Heritage issues - for example what particular action to take regarding a Building At Risk, how to prioritise action and develop a strategy for Buildings at Risk. This is a continuous process and the group has provided guidance on this very successfully.
- 4.2 There remains a need to establish what level of Enforcement action is appropriate in individual instances where unauthorised work has taken place. As under 2.2 above.
- 4.3 There remains a need to monitor the inclusion of buildings on a local list in order that consistency is assured and inclusion justified in case of challenge prior to adoption by Planning Committee – This is a continuing process.
- 4.4 There remains a need to agree up to date appraisals and management plans for existing and new conservation areas – a continuing process. On-going updates and guidance on priorities provided by Group before being taken to Planning Committee.
- 4.5 There remains a need to further explore and advise on what might be appropriate in terms of partnership working and external funding opportunities in order to maximise positive impact on the Historic Environment.

- 4.6 There is a need to establish the best method of publishing advice and Guidance to owners in order to achieve the maximum impact and benefit to the Historic Environment. This is an on-going process and the group has provided guidance on this very successfully.

5 Financial implications

- 5.1 There are potential financial implications from serving urgent works notices, repairs notices and building preservation notices and other mechanisms to secure the repair of historic assets. Similarly there are financial implications to taking enforcement action, preparing of a List of Locally important Heritage Assets and the preparation and publication of guidance for owners.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The HARG group has addressed specific and detailed issues relating to the Historic Environment in the Broads reporting back to Planning Committee as required. In order to continue to address these specific issues, and to further progress, both the input and approval of Members will continue to be required on particular courses of action that may be appropriate in individual circumstances. Given the nature of these issues and the need for member agreement and further given the breadth and length of the average agenda of the Planning Committee it is considered that the working group should continue to deal with specific Cultural Heritage issues as set out in the terms of reference below.
- 6.2 The working group is made up from members of the Planning Committee and has proved a flexible and efficient way of progressing issues. Given the wide remit and average length of business that the monthly Planning Committee has it is considered that a specific group with a clear focus should continue.
- 6.3 It is recommended that the Membership of the Group should continue to be made up from Planning Committee Members as originally agreed although a review of current Membership to allow other Members of the Planning Committee the opportunity to sit on the group is considered appropriate.

Background papers: None

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Date of report: 26 September 2013

Appendices: APPENDIX 1 – Role of the Working Group

Role of the Working Group

The role of the Working Group is to advise officers on these issues which could include Authorisation of the serving of Urgent works and Repairs notices, Building Preservation notices, Enforcement notices. In the case of designation of new Conservation Areas and adoption of re-appraisals and management plans for existing Conservation Areas, these will continue to be reported to the Planning Committee for decision.

These matters are currently delegated to Officers specifically in the case of urgency when they might be exercised after consultation with the Chair or Vice-Chair of Planning Committee. It is not proposed to alter this arrangement.

Working Group Terms of Reference

The group is asked to look at the issue of Cultural Heritage with a view to:

- Protecting heritage assets identified as being “at risk “and prioritising and taking appropriate action to achieve their protection. Developing and adopting a strategy for their long/medium/short term future. This includes heritage assets at risk from Climate Change and developing and approving the publication of advice to owners of heritage assets.
- Developing and adopting criteria for the preparation of a list of locally important heritage assets and developing and adopting a strategy for their long/medium/short term future – identifying where and what changes of use might be appropriate in order to secure the future of the asset.
- Considering where necessary, appropriate enforcement action against unauthorised works to protected structures.
- Considering appropriate methodology for the preservation and enhancement of designated conservation areas in the Broads Authority Executive Area. Considering re-appraisals and boundary changes to existing Conservation Areas and the designation of new Conservation Areas in the Broads Authority executive area, including Landscape character assessment work.
- Exploring opportunities for partnership working with other organisations and agencies (English Heritage other parks etc) involved in the Historic Environment and also opportunities for external funding.

Reporting Mechanism and meeting frequency.

The working group meets quarterly or three times a year? as business requires and reports to the Broads Authority Planning Committee.