

Broads Local Plan February Bite Size Pieces
Report by Planning Policy Officer

Summary: This report introduces the following topics for the Publication version of the Local Plan: Floating Buildings, Settlement Fringe Topic Paper, Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre.

Recommendation: That Members' views are requested.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report introduces the following topics for the Publication version of the Local Plan:
- Floating Buildings Topic Paper
 - Settlement Fringe Topic Paper
 - Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre.
- 1.2 Members' views are requested to inform the draft policy approach in the Publication version of the Local plan.
- 1.3 It is important to note that this is not necessarily the final text or approach, but is part of the development of the final text. There could be other considerations that come to light between now and the final version being presented to Planning Committee in April 2017.

2 Floating Buildings Topic Paper

- 2.1 This discussed the way forward with floating buildings in this Local Plan and further details are included in Appendix A.

3 Settlement Fringe Topic Paper

- 3.1 This Topic Paper discussed the issue of Settlement Fringe and identifies some areas of particular interest. Further details are included in Appendix B

4 Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre

- 4.1 This policy has been worked up with Waveney District Council as some of the Centre is in Waveney's Local Planning area. Further details are included in Appendix C

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Generally officer time in producing these policies and any associated guidance as well as in using the policies to determining planning applications.

Background papers: None

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Date of report: 16 January 2017

Appendices APPENDIX A – Floating Buildings Topic Paper
APPENDIX B – Settlement Fringe Topic Paper
APPENDIX C – Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre



**Broads Authority
Local Plan
Floating Buildings Topic Paper
January 2017**

1. Introduction

With much of the Broads prone to flood risk, there are limited areas for development of buildings. In other parts of the world and across the country, floating buildings are used to provide development in areas prone to flooding.

The issue was raised at the Issues and Options stage of the Local Plan. See Appendix A for the section of the Issues and Options relating to floating buildings and Appendix B for the comments received as part of that consultation.

This Topic Paper does not provide further research into the topic of Floating Buildings but sets out the proposed approach for the Local Plan currently in preparation as well as setting out future work to look into Floating Buildings in more detail.

2. About Floating Buildings

Internal discussion and initial research has resulted in the identification of five broad typologies of floating buildings or alternative uses of boats:

a) Floating Buildings

Photo 1: A Floating Building in the Netherlands.



- Designed to float the majority of the time.

- Like the photo above(although acknowledged that this gives an f indicative idea of the type of building rather than an acceptable design for the Broads)
- Non-navigable.
- Not self-propelled.
- Piled support.
- Never designed or intended to move on water from where piled to the side.

b) Can-float buildings

Photo 2: Again in the Netherlands: a building that can float if needed.



- Built over land and are designed to float only in the event of a flood
- Rise up and down with flood water.
- Like the photo above(although acknowledged that this gives an indicative idea of the type of building rather than an acceptable design
- Non-navigable.
- Not self-propelled.
- Piled support.
- Never designed or intended to move on water from where piled to the side.

c) Buildings on rafts/pontoons

Photo 3: In Beccles. Photo shows some buildings on rafts/pontoons



- For example like those at Wayford Bridge or Hipperson's Boatyard, Beccles.
- 'Floating sheds'.
- 'Floating caravans'.
- Needs something additional to move it.
- But still a vessel under the Broads Act (although this does not exempt them from needing planning permission if required).
- Some are purpose built and some have adapted structures.

d) Houseboats

- Actual boats that now cannot move under own steam.
- Lived on.
- Needs something additional to the boat to move it.
- Converted internally for residential uses.

e) Live-a-boards/residential moorings

- Actual boats capable of self-propelled navigation
- Can move when they want to.
- Lifestyle of: have a base to moor boat and can go travelling and return to the base.
- Use residential moorings.

3. Policy Approach

The question still remains: can the floating building approach make a proposal that is unacceptable in flood risk terms acceptable? This is likely to need much more detailed work and close liaison with the Environment Agency.

For the Local Plan currently in preparation, it is proposed to mention in the supporting text to the revised flood risk policy (revision of current policy DP29) that floating buildings could be a form of resilience and way of managing any residual risk subject to other design and impact criteria. It will be for the applicant to propose a suitable design that meets all the criteria in the Local Plan as well as address the requirements of the Environment Agency.

Whilst on the face of it, this may not seem as progressive as the stance in the current Local Plan could be, introducing the concept of floating buildings to the Broads is going to be an iterative process (if deemed acceptable in the first place when considering design, safety, character and other impacts) and raising the potential to consider this approach as a form of resilience for already acceptable schemes is the first step.

Additionally, a workshop will be held with the Tolls Team to consider the different typologies discussed previously. Definitions could then be amended within the next version of the Local Plan.

4. Future work and next steps

With regards to floating buildings making a proposal that is unacceptable in flood risk terms acceptable; that is something that needs much more work and could be part of the next Local Plan.

A member of the Planning Team intends to complete a dissertation/research project on this very issue during 2017. So whilst outside the timings to inform this Local Plan, the findings could inform the next version of the Local Plan.

Following internal discussions on the topic, there are some issues further to those raised in Appendix A which further work could look into:

- Accept permanent raising of floor levels which has a permanent impact on the landscape.
- Is it more acceptable to allow buildings to float and rise temporarily? So impact on landscape is limited to times of flood only?
- Could initially allow replacement dwellings to float.
- Design would have to be appropriate to the Broads.
- Sea level rise and climate change could mean that these buildings will permanently be floating.
- But what about the infrastructure, services, utilities and roads that may be designed to provide a service when not flooding? Extra-long cables, flexible pipework, raising roads?

Appendix A: Issues and Options section on Floating Buildings

With much of the Broads prone to flood risk, there are limited areas for development of buildings. Floating buildings are used around the country and world in areas prone to flooding.

To date the Authority's approach has been one of a presumption against such buildings. The Local Plan Issues and Options offers the opportunity to further consider the issue. Below are some issues that need to be considered in relation to floating buildings.

i) Definitions

The adopted Development Management DPD defines **houseboats** as '*a static vessel or purpose-built structure with no form of mechanical propulsion, used or designed for residential purposes*'. These are different to residential moorings. Locally, houseboats are also called 'flat-a-floats'.

Residential moorings are for boats used as someone's sole or primary residence and allow them to stay long term – the boat can be moved so is not static like houseboats are. The boats that use residential moorings can be called 'live-aboards'.

There are two types of **floating buildings**; permanently floating buildings and those that float only when flood waters swell, but sit on the ground during dry conditions.

A house on dry land in Holland, which floats if waters swell.



Again in Holland, this house floats on the water



ii) Broads Housing Need

Whilst the Broads Authority does have a housing need as discussed earlier in this section, the figure of 274 dwellings is to be adjusted for completions and then current allocations and permissions need to be considered. As such, the need for the Broads Authority is not likely to be 274 dwellings but considerably less. This will be discussed further in the Preferred Options of the Local Plan. It could be that the residual need could be met on land or by our constituent district councils rather than on water. The contribution that houseboats and or/floating structures could make to meeting the housing need of the Broads is a matter to be developed through the production of the Local Plan.

iii) Design

There are instances of some house boats in the Broads. Many are quite basic in their appearance. They may add to the local character but equally, would the character of the Broads be affected by more of these types of houseboats or floating houses?

Design is an important aspect of all development in the Broads because of its special qualities. These special qualities are the reasons why people live in, work in and visit the Broads. If houseboats or floating buildings were considered appropriate in principle, the detail of the design will be an important consideration to determine if a scheme was acceptable. There could be potential for well designed, innovative and striking floating buildings in the Broads but design is a very subjective issue.

iv) Location

It is likely that the acceptable location of these floating buildings would be similar to if not the same as that of residential moorings. That is to say that locations where facilities and services often used by the community, such as GPs, shops and schools, are a walking distance from the proposed location. There are some locations in the Broads which have good access to services and facilities.

Another aspect of location is that of potential landscape impact. The sensitivity of the landscape to accommodate buildings of this type would need to be carefully considered. Not forgetting that adverse impact on navigation should be avoided.

v) Function

How electricity, gas and freshwater are provided and foul water and waste disposed of in an appropriate way will be important considerations for any floating building. Furthermore, the user will likely want somewhere to park their car. Access to land will also be a consideration.

vi) Flood Risk

This is a major issue. National Policy seeks to avoid residential development in areas of high flood risk unless there is no other choice (sequential test) and can be made safe (exception test).

That being said, by their very nature such buildings will float. There are two types of floating buildings; permanently floating buildings and those that float only when flood waters swell, but sit on the ground during dry conditions.

Such floating buildings are present elsewhere in the country and indeed the world.

vii) Uncertainty

There will be issues with interpretation of definitions:

- When is a boat a boat?
- When is a floating building a building?
- When is a floating building a boat?

viii) Houseboats - Need

The Housing and Planning Bill includes a requirement for Local Housing Authorities (a function carried out by our districts) *'to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district*

with respect to the provision of (inter alia) places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored'. The Authority will monitor the Bill and work with Local Housing Authorities (our districts) on this issue.

Q: What are your thoughts on floating buildings? Do you have any evidence to address the issues raised?

Appendix B: Comments received relating to Floating Buildings

South Norfolk Council would support the principle of floating buildings. **Broadland District Council:** consider the issue raised about Design could be addressed through 'design codes'. **IWA:** Given the Broads special situation, there may also be opportunities to provide innovative housing such as floating housing as deployed in Holland to contribute. This would also apply to affordable housing, indeed these may be especially suitable if procured as 'factory built'. However such structures must not interfere with the ability of all craft to navigate the adjacent waterways. IWA does not have direct experience of floating buildings. However we are prepared to assist BA in developing thoughts around this subject if this is helpful. **RBOA:** The RBOA support the concept of floating housing (defined differently to residential boats) as a viable way to meet the need to build within flood risk areas and would be interested in discussing this further with the Broads Authority. **River Thurne Tenants Association:** These are traditionally used as holiday accommodation and provided they are sited sympathetically in the Broads landscape they serve a purpose and could be retained. Caravans or something similar NOT designed for the purpose of floating are unpleasant, intrusive and generally not liked by our members. However if something such as the purpose-built floating Dutch and Scandinavian buildings, in areas susceptible to flooding or on lakes can be pleasant, beautiful and quite desirable, even in the Broads landscape. It all depends on the design and location of the 'floating buildings'. **Mr Thomas:** "Floating accommodation" or building on stilts hardly sounds viable. **EA** Where Local Plans contain policies relating to floating structures, they must be informed by the flood risk Sequential Test and Exception Test. The vulnerability classification of floating structures is not formally defined, this is for the LPA to decide based upon national planning policy and guidance, and we can assist in discussions on this. The main channel of rivers is usually considered as Flood Zone 3b, the functional floodplain. Only residential accommodation associated with water-compatible uses (as defined by Table 2), is appropriate in FZ3b.

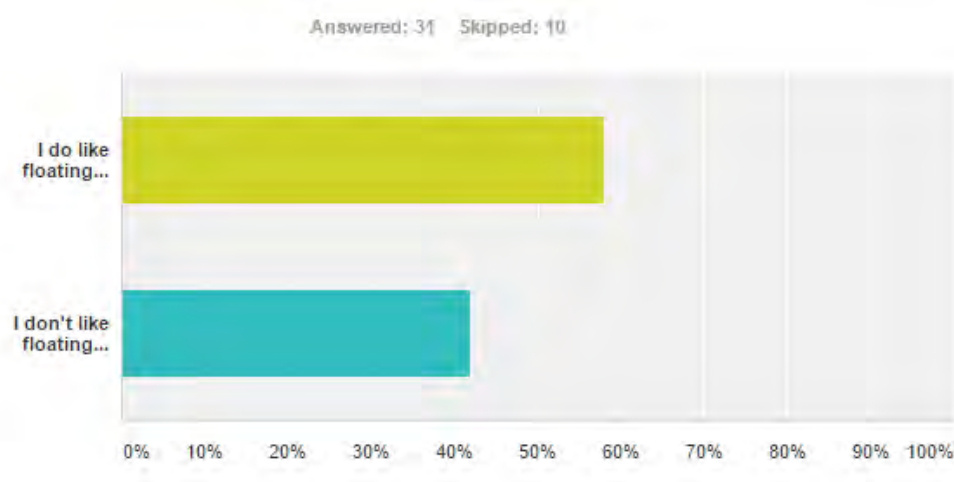
We also offer the following more detailed points that would need to be considered before such floating structures could be permitted:

- ix) Access and Egress - Floating houses would need to offer safe access and egress routes to non-flooded areas should, for example, power or water supplies be lost which make the house no longer safe or habitable.
- x) Floating structures in the channel of a Main River or within byelaw distance will require Flood Defence Consent. There may also be fisheries, navigation, water quality and aquatic biodiversity issues to consider.
- xi) The potential 'downstream' effects on flood risk of floating buildings and residential moorings would also need to be taken into account in an FRA. Compensatory storage may need to be provided to at least equal displacement of the loaded structure. We should also be satisfied that the building or structure does not obstruct flows, and does not present a risk of breaking free and obstructing flow channels.
- xii) During a flood, debris such as large branches or even cars that are carried in the floodwater can hit the structure below or above the waterline. At high velocities that could damage the structure, including the undercroft area or tanks that provide the floatation.
- xiii) After a flood the structure may be designed to settle back down upon its foundations. However if debris has come to rest underneath this will be trapped, potentially meaning the house does not settle evenly. This can cause structural stress and also make it very challenging to remove the debris. This would be a particular risk for buildings using stilts or piling as a mechanism to

retain a structure in place. The design would also need to ensure its anchorage mechanism can withstand the floodwater velocities. It is not within our remit to endorse the mechanics of the structure. The LPA would need to consider this.

- xiv) The responsibility and cost of long term maintenance is likely to rest with the householder, who will need to ensure the building will function properly throughout its design lifetime. There is a risk that routine maintenance is not undertaken or key parts of the structure, e.g. the underneath, cannot be accessed and inspected. A fault or failure in any part of the design which compromises the structure's ability to operate properly may only become apparent during a flood. The LPA should satisfy itself that the structure can be maintained over its lifetime and apply appropriate conditions.
- xv) Such development would also need to consider WFD impacts through an assessment of direct effects on river morphology. Generally the objective should be to soften embankments where possible. If larger scale projects are planned, then it may be sensible to consider mitigation improvements in other areas of the system, i.e. have a habitat improvement plan / bank to offset development.

What do you think about floating buildings in general?



Do you have any comments?

- a) Floating buildings should be fixed via post piles which allow full rise & fall allowing for extreme conditions
- b) Live and let live , if they are not causing a problem they should be allowed to stay
- c) What do you mean by floating buildings. I cannot find a dictionary of such a term. Providing they do not interfere with the navigation for both power and sail it will stand a reasonable chance of being acceptable
- d) Can be an asset - eg. canals
- e) I'm no aware of any floating buildings and have no opinion
- f) I don't know enough to comment
- g) This amounts to urban development
- h) Often unsightly
- i) Can be efficient and look nice if done properly
- j) Boatyards/marinas should be encouraged to provide properly regulated residential mooring
- k) Floating buildings have to be governed by aero/aquodynamic and are generally known as boats

- l) Everybody should have the right to live on the water if they so wish, providing they respect the waterways and abide by the rules
- m) Of course belongings are safe in floods, it's a floating building !!!!!
- n) No objections if buildings are designed to float during a flood situation but please, no more ugly houseboats!
- o) However, I don't like the look of the "floating buildings" at Carrow.



Broads Authority
Local Plan
February 2017
Settlement Fringe Topic Paper

1. Introduction

Settlement fringe is a landscape type represents those areas of land found repeatedly throughout the Broads where settlement and semi natural/natural environment converge. Invariably around any settlement there are pressures for use other than for traditional agricultural. Many of these pressures are a generated as a direct result of increasing time for and range of recreational and leisure activities. Developments are varied and include garden extensions with their associated fencing and features; allotments; poultry keeping, horse keeping, sports pitches, pond construction (fishing and wildfowling) and storage of scrap items etc.

Additionally the proximity of a settlement can influence the presence and extent of strategic infrastructure such at the poles and cables for telecoms and electricity supply.

The land which is subject to these types of development pressure will generally have the basic underlying characteristics of the prevailing landscape type within the locality but invariably if used for such activities can become heavily modified though the annexation; subdivision; change of use; introduction of ancillary buildings and structures which meet the needs of the activity.

The changes effected on the areas of land which are subject to these activities can both individually (depending on their scale and nature) and cumulatively (if it is following a trend in an area) have an effect on the landscape character of an area, through changes to the traditional land use and land cover.

Many activities will require the submission of a planning application and as part of that process, consideration to their likely impacts on the landscape character of an area will be one of the many aspects that the planning authority will need to consider.

However, there are many areas in the Broads where traditional landscape features and elements are being eroded as a result of unauthorised and unsympathetic development.

2. Characteristics of Settlement Fringe

The distinctive landscape characteristics of this landscape type are that:

- the basic underlying landscape characteristics are the same as the prevailing landscape type within the character area i.e. estuarine marshland/ heathland etc;
- the basic landscape characteristics associated with the existing natural/ semi natural environment have been compromised;

- they are always located in close proximity to existing settlement;
- the landscape has been modified in some way to accommodate the intended use;
- features may have been added that look out of character with the semi natural environment of the Broads; and
- the activities have the potential to impact on the soils, vegetation, water quality and tranquillity of an area.

At certain locations within the Broads unauthorised activities have triggered the establishment of an Article 4 direction. This is a special planning regulation adopted by a Planning Authority to cover all or part of their executive area. It operates by removing permitted development rights from whatever is specified in the Article 4 direction. The Broads has a number of these article 4 directions within its boundaries.

3. Impacts on Settlement Fringe Landscape Character

Each of the activity types has the potential to effect landscape in different ways. They may cause direct impacts on both the landscape (soils water, vegetation etc.) and the perceptual qualities of an area including views. They may have the effect of urbanising the semi natural/natural environment. What follows are some examples of landscape issues which may have an adverse impact on the local landscape character.

Excavations for ponds for wildfowling /fishing etc.

- the shape, depth and profile of the excavations can look unnatural;
- pond edges not designed to support marginal plant species;
- material dug out is not disposed of in an appropriate manner;
- peat, which is a valuable landscape resource) is excavated;
- ancillary structures introduced to support the activity look out of character
- inappropriate planting

Garden extensions

- inappropriate ornamental planting introduced into a semi natural/natural environment
- layout, the materials used and manicured appearance can look out of character
- garden buildings, fencing and features can look out of character
- loss of natural/semi natural habitat

Horse keeping

- loss of natural/ semi natural habitat from changing in relation to grazing management and construction of ménages
- introduction of fencing can look out of character
- water quality – storage of bedding materials
- buildings for storage of feedstuffs and equipment
- stabling blocks
- lighting

Forces for change include

- An increase in housing development and therefore recreational / leisure time pressures within areas adjacent to the Broads
- An increase in horse ownership
- Land values which may dictate the economic viability of land use.
- Increasing popularity for coarse fishing

4. Evidence

The Broads Authority's Landscape Consultant undertook an assessment of the existing landscape type GIS data set (unpublished and unchecked) by comparing both map based and aerial imagery (provided by the Broads Authority). The original settlement fringe boundaries identified in the original dataset were either confirmed, amended or deleted and further areas were added. The work is based on map based information and local knowledge and was a desk based exercise.

The settlement fringe areas shown in the published plans at Appendix A were identified as a result of one or a combination of the following

- a landscape assessment process where particular types have development/activities have been noted;
- planning applications; and/or
- anticipated pressures or emerging trends for land change through professional judgement

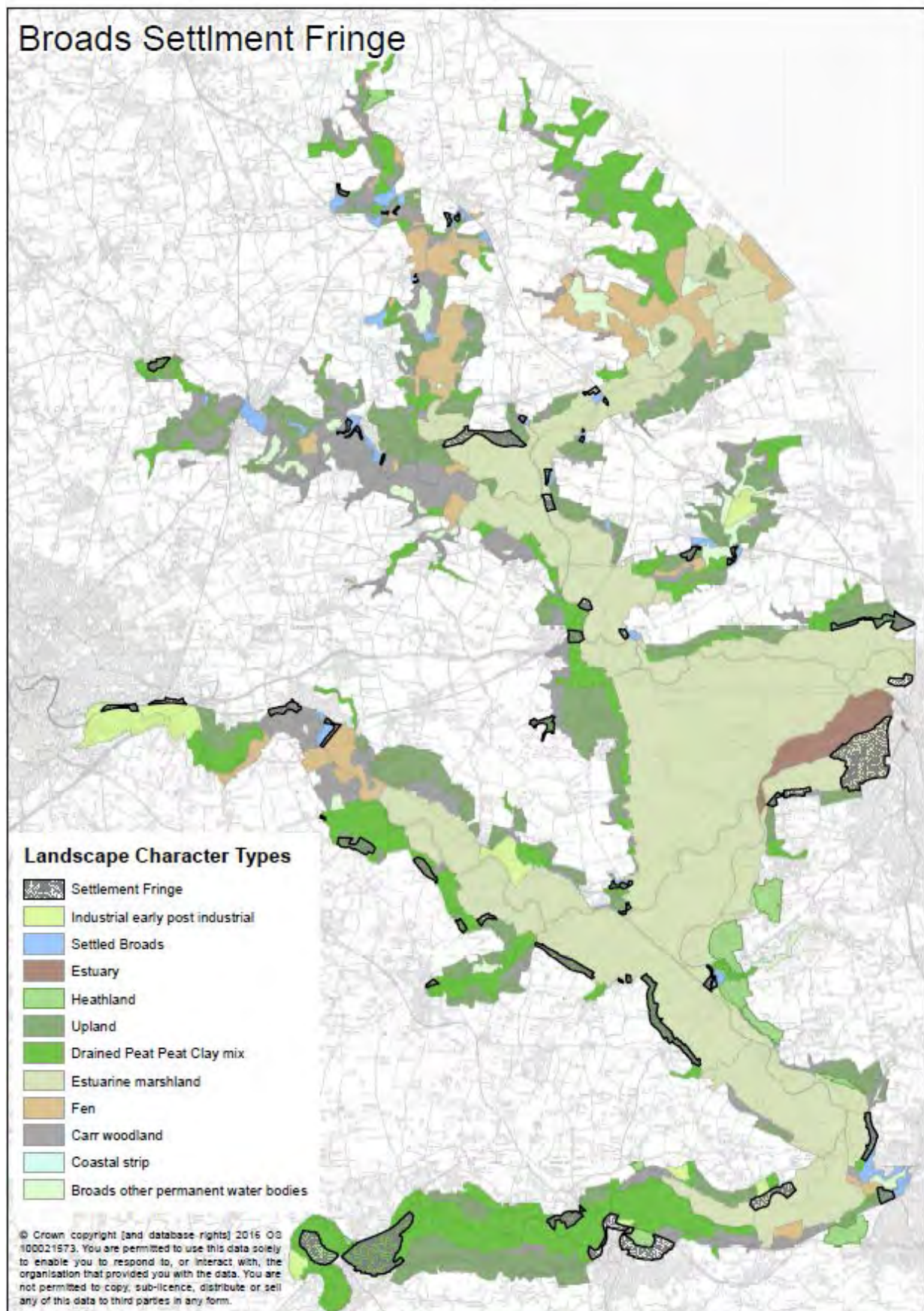
5. Policy Approach

The evidence shows that this is an issue in some particular areas and should be addressed through the Local Plan.

A Development Management style policy has been produced (at Appendix B). Using this policy, applications will be assessed on a case by case basis with reference to the maps but also the Landscape Character Assessment and landscape character more generally.

These areas have been reviewed against other policies in the Local Plan. Whilst some areas identified as Settlement Fringe at risk from development, the thrust of the policies that may cover the same area are generally in conformity with draft Settlement Fringe policy.

Appendix A: Map showing Settlement Fringe areas at particular risk.



Policy PODM20: Protection and enhancement of settlement fringe landscape character

Proposals for development lying within settlement fringe areas shall be informed by and be sensitive to the distinctive characteristics and special qualities of the Broads landscape, and should contribute to the active conservation, enhancement and restoration of these landscapes.

Development shall be permitted where it can demonstrate that its location, scale and design (with particular regard to materials, and colour) will protect, conserve and where possible enhance:

- i) The special qualities, local distinctiveness and the natural beauty of the Broads (including its historical, biodiversity and cultural character).
- ii) The visual and historical relationship between settlements and their landscape settings.
- iii) The pattern of distinctive landscape elements such as dyke networks, woodland, trees (especially hedgerow trees), and field boundaries along with their function as ecological corridors.
- iv) Visually sensitive skylines significant views towards key landscape features such as drainage mills and/or important vistas.

Development shall also demonstrate that it will not as a result of cumulative and/or sequential landscape and visual effects of development detract from the natural beauty of the Broads and the experience of tranquillity.

Reasoned Justification

There are many areas in the Broads where traditional landscape features and elements are being eroded as a result of unauthorised and unsympathetic development.

Settlement fringe is a landscape type that represents those areas of land found repeatedly throughout the Broads, where settlement and semi natural/natural environment converge. Invariably around any settlement there are pressures for use other than for traditional agricultural. Many of these pressures are generated as a direct result of recreational and leisure activities. Developments can be varied and include garden extensions with their associated fencing and features; allotments; poultry keeping, horse keeping, sports pitches, pond construction (fishing and wildfowling) and storage of scrap items etc.

The distinctive landscape characteristics of this landscape type are that:

- a) the basic underlying landscape characteristics are the same as the prevailing landscape type within the character area, i.e. estuarine marshland/ heathland, etc.;
- b) the basic landscape characteristics associated with the existing natural/ semi natural environment have been compromised;
- c) they are always located in close proximity to existing settlement;
- d) the landscape has been modified in some way to accommodate the intended use;
- e) features may have to be added that look out of character with the semi natural environment of the Broads; and
- f) the activities have the potential to impact on the soils, vegetation, water quality and tranquillity of an area.

Additionally the proximity of a settlement can influence the presence and extent of strategic infrastructure, such as the poles and cables for telecoms and electricity supply.

The land that is subject to these types of development pressure will generally have the basic underlying characteristics of the prevailing landscape type within the locality, but invariably if used for such activities can become heavily modified through the annexation, subdivision, change of use, or introduction of ancillary buildings and structures that meet the needs of the activity.

The changes on the areas of land that are subject to these activities can both individually (depending on their scale and nature) and cumulatively (if it is following a trend in an area) have an effect on the landscape character of an area through changes to the traditional land use and land cover. The landscape character of an area is determined by distinct and recognisable patterns of both elements, or by characteristics (both physical, e.g. topography, soils water quality vegetation, etc., and perceptual, e.g. visual, sound, time depth, tranquillity, etc.) that make one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

Many activities will require the submission of a planning application. As part of that process, consideration as to their likely impacts on the landscape character of an area will be one of the many aspects the planning authority will need to consider.

Each of the activities (see below for examples) has the potential to affect landscape in different ways. They may cause direct impacts on both the landscape (soils, water, vegetation, etc.) and the perceptual qualities of an area, including views. They may have the effect of urbanising the semi natural/natural environment. The following are examples of landscape issues that may have an adverse impact on the local landscape character.

Excavations for ponds for wildfowling/fishing, etc.:

- the shape, depth and profile of the excavations can look unnatural;
- pond edges not designed to support marginal plant species;
- material dug out is not disposed of in an appropriate manner;
- peat (which is a valuable landscape resource) is excavated;
- ancillary structures introduced to support the activity look out of character
- inappropriate planting

Garden extensions

- inappropriate ornamental planting introduced into a semi natural/natural environment
- layout, the materials used and manicured appearance can look out of character
- garden buildings, fencing and features can look out of character
- loss of natural/semi natural habitat

Horse keeping

- loss of natural/ semi natural habitat from changing in relation to grazing management and construction of ménages
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- buildings for storage of feedstuffs and equipment
- stabling blocks
- lighting

Forces for change include:

- An increase in housing development and therefore recreational / leisure time pressures within areas adjacent to the Broads
- An increase in horse ownership
- Land values which may dictate the economic viability of land use.

- Increasing popularity for coarse fishing

Comments received as part of the Issues and Options consultation:

General support for addressing this but would be a need to take different types of development into consideration due to the varying degrees potential landscape impact.

Alternative Options and Sustainability Appraisal Summary

- **Preferred Option:** Positive against some environment criteria. A ? against the rural economy as some development on the settlement fringe in the past had an economic element (as well as recreation) such as horsiculture. The policy does not stop change, but sets criteria that proposals should address.
- **No policy:** Not having a policy does not mean that these issues would not be addressed as the Broads is a nationally protected landscape. The policy is drafted to reflect ongoing practice and emerging themes from determining planning applications.

Evidence used to inform this section

- Officer knowledge and experience.

Monitoring Indicators

- Applications permitted contrary to Landscape Architect advice.

Policy PUBOUL4 - Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre

Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre is identified on the Policies Map.

Within the Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre proposals for changes of use of ground floor premises from Use Classes A1 (retail) and A2 (financial and professional services) to other non-retail uses including A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food takeaways) will not be permitted.

The following changes of use will only be permitted where either cumulatively or individually they have no significant adverse impact on the character, retail function, vitality and viability of the centre, residential amenity including noise, fumes, smell and litter, highway safety, parking and community safety:

- a) from Use Classes A1 (retail) and A2 (financial and professional services) to A3 (restaurants and cafes)
- b) other premises in the Oulton Broad District Shopping Centre to Use Class A3 (restaurants and cafés), A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food takeaways)

Constraints and Features

Flood Zone 3 and 2 according to EA mapping.

Centre is in Waveney and Broads Local Planning Authority areas.

Next to protected open space – Nicholas Everett Park.

Spar is the largest retail unit in this centre.

In Oulton Broad Conservation Area.

Reasoned Justification

The NPPF, at paragraph 23, says '*planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period*'.

Recent retail evidence and on-site monitoring continues to identify Oulton Broad as a 'District Centre' where shops and services will be protected and prevented from changing to other uses. Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4) 'Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth' (now deleted), defines District Centres as a 'group of shops, separate from the town centre, usually containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library'. There is currently no definition for District Centres in the NPPG or NPPF.

Oulton Broad District Centre is located around Bridge Road in Oulton Broad. The area is shared between the Broads Authority and Waveney District Council's Local Planning Authority areas. There are around 50 retail units currently in operation (according to 2016 monitoring data).

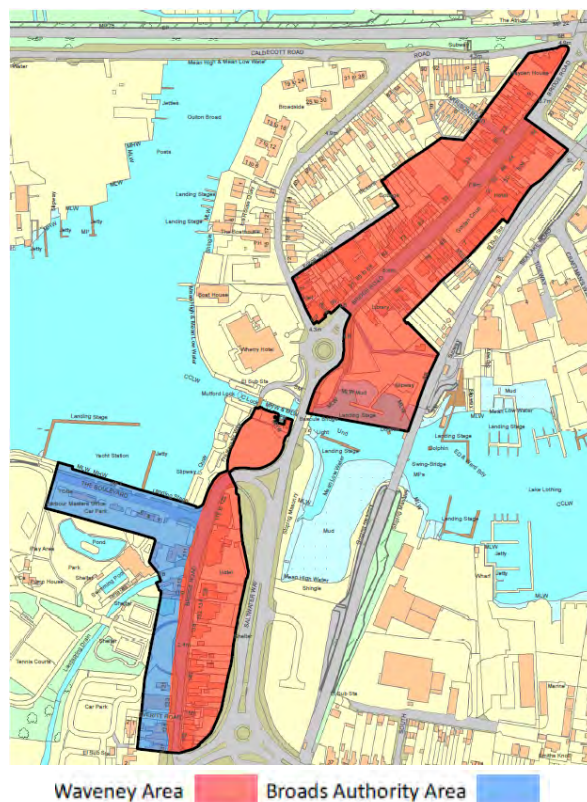
The 2016 Retail and Leisure Study says that the Centre has a relatively good mix of independent stores for its size but an under provision of banks and building societies. The Centre was principally identified as a 'top-up' food shopping destination in the household survey. The assessment suggest

that there is potential to increase the convenience food offer as well as increase the number of cafes and restaurants to cater for the need of the local population and the wider tourist market. The assessment also identifies the potential to increase the linkages between the centre and the Broads.

The increase in the number of takeaways has been a cause for concern in Oulton Broad, with late opening times often being associated with anti-social behaviour that harms the amenity of local residents and the environmental quality of the areas. Concern has been raised that a continuation of this trend could reduce the centre's retail provision making it less attractive for local residents and thereby potentially affecting the viability of the remaining shops.

Policy PUBOUL4 is included within both the Waveney District Council Local Plan and the Broads Local Plan to reflect the centre's location across both planning authorities' area. The policy intends to protect the existing shopping and service offer in the Centre and promote new restaurants and cafes where they would not undermine the viability of the Centre. The policy restricts changes of use to A4 and A5 in order to address amenity concerns discussed previously.

It is acknowledged that some changes of use can take place without planning permission under the Permitted Development Order 2015 which allows some flexibility of uses within the area (dependent on size, final proposed land use and whether the site is located in the Broads or not). This policy will apply to circumstances where planning permission is required.



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Evidence used to inform this policy:

Waveney District Council Retail and Leisure Needs Study (2016)

<http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Waveney-Retail-and-Leisure-Needs-Assessment-2016/01-Waveney-Retail-and-Leisure-Needs-Assessment-2016.pdf>

Waveney District Council Monitoring (various years)

<http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/waveney-local-plan/monitoring-information/annual-monitoring-report-2/>

Alternative options and Sustainability Appraisal

Publication policy:

No policy:

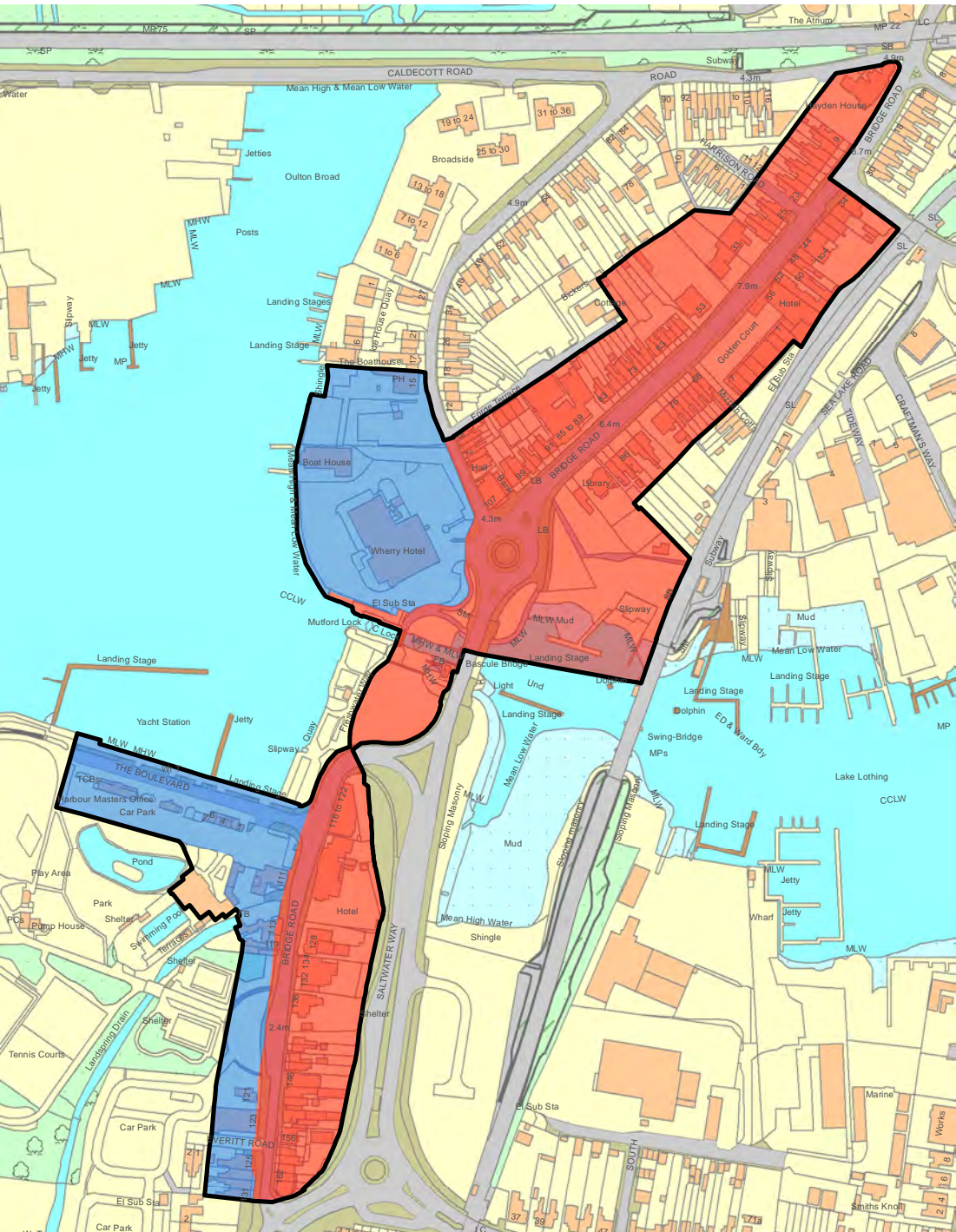
Allow other wider land uses:

Monitoring Indicators

Changes in land use in line or contrary to this policy.

Oulton Broad Shopping Area

Option 1 - Include Wherry and Commodore



Waveney Area ■ Broads Authority Area ■

Option 2 - Exclude Wherry and Commodore

