

Heritage Asset Review Group

Notes of the meeting held on 14 June 2024

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Present

Harry Blathwayt – in the Chair, Stephen Bolt, Bill Dickson, Andrée Gee, Tony Grayling, Tim Jickells

In attendance

Jason Brewster – Governance Officer, Kayleigh Judson – Heritage Planning Officer, Kate Knights – Historic Environment Manager, Ruth Sainsbury – Head of Planning and Lorraine Taylor – Governance Officer

1. Notes of HARG meeting held on 08 March 2024

The notes of the meeting held on 08 March 2024 were received. These had been submitted to the Planning Committee on 26 April 2024.

2. Historic Environment Team progress report

The Historic Environment Manager 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 09 March and 14 June 2024.

Conservation areas – update

The Historic Environment Manager confirmed that the initial draft of the Neatishead Conservation Area appraisal was progressing. The draft, when complete, would be reviewed by both Parish Councils and North Norfolk District Council and updated accordingly. The appraisal would then be made available for public consultation in September which would incorporate one drop-in event in the village scheduled for a Saturday morning.

Listed buildings

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) provided an update on the Quinquennial Survey. The HEM indicated that the Historic Environment Team (HET) had secured additional support from a volunteer who, as well as visiting listed buildings, was helping with the post visit administration. Since the last meeting, the Historic Environment Team (HET) had continued to inspect the listed buildings within the Broads Authority area. The HEM had visited Hunsett Mill, Stalham a Grade II listed drainage mill circa 1860 with a four storey brick tower and timber weatherboard cap that was noted for having two external scoop wheels when operational. The structure was found to be in sound condition although, as seen from the photograph, the brickwork needed repair in places and the cap, stock and sails required painting and these points would be raised with the property owners.

While in Stalham the HET visited the Old Granary, Staithe Road a Grade II listed building that straddled a staithe which, in its heyday, had enabled wherries to deliver to and from the building. This building was found to be in sound condition and no further concerns had been raised.

The team had visited the Grade II Catfield Hall dating from the mid-18th century and two associated 18th century barns, both Grade II listed, which were still used for agricultural purposes. The barns had been sympathetically restored and, including the hall, all the buildings appeared to be in good condition.

The Heritage Planning Officer (HPO) provided an update on Ellingham Mill and Mill House, a Grade II former water mill and miller's house dating from the 18th century situated on the River Waveney. The mill, as seen in the photographs, was weatherboarded on rendered brick ground storey with painted brick left end and had an iron frame believed to be circa 1900. The mill had been functional until 1964 when the buildings were divided and sold separately. The buildings were found to be in very good condition. Some minor maintenance issues relating to blocked drainpipes had been noted and the barge board on the left end gable required replacing and the owners would be notified of these items.

The HPO reported on two structures at Geldeston: The Old House a Grade II red brick two storey property dating from the 18th century with a front façade in two sections as demonstrated in the photograph, and the Crinkle-Crankle Wall located immediately to the north-west of The Old House. This Grade II listed structure dated from the late 18th century was constructed in red brick in an irregular serpentine or wavy plan. The house and wall had been well maintained and were found to be in good condition.

Mautby Marsh Windpump, a Grade II mid-19th century three storey brick tower drainage windpump, had been visited. The HPO reported that the boat shaped timber cap and sails, which had been restored in the 1980s, were in poor condition and required some repair and weatherproofing. The HET would liaise with the owner to agree how to improve this building.

While at Runham, the HET visited Runham Swim Windpump, a Grade II listed two storey tarred brick tower drainage pump dating from the mid-19th century. This remote structure, previously restored in 2008, was found to be in good condition although the cap required a clean down and re-painting and the owner, Norfolk County Council, would be notified.

Heritage at Risk

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) provided an update on the Heritage at Risk (HAR) Register, a national list of designated sites assessed as being at risk. This register was updated annually following submissions from local authorities and the HEM provided an update on the six entries on the HAR Register that were located within the Broads Executive Area:

- The Church of St Peter and St Paul, Burgh Castle was a Grade II* listed parish church dating from the 11th century with a 13th century nave, a remodelled chancel circa 15th century and a north aisle added in 1847. Structural work was required to the west tower, the south aisle roof and the chancel gable. Some repair work had been undertaken but further repair work was required.
- Wiseman's Mill, also known as Oby Mill, was a Grade II* listed drainage windpump dating from 1753. A temporary roof covering had recently been installed and the building itself made secure and this would slow, if not halt, the deterioration of the structure.
- Turf Fen Mill a Grade II* three storey brick tower windpump dated 1880 located on the river Ant and noted for its double scoop wheels. This structure was in poor condition and the ground floor regularly flooded. A Listed Building Consent to repair the building had been granted to the Norfolk Windmills Trust who had secured funding from Historic England.
- Boardman's Mill was a wooden 'skeleton' type mill built in 1897 to drain adjacent marshes. This Grade II* listed structure was in a poor state with a noticeable lean and the cap, an element that was not original to the mill, was rotten and would need replacing. The Norfolk Windmills Trust had been granted a Listed Building Consent to repair and re-instate the sails and fantail, remodel the cap to its traditional shape, straighten the lean to the tower and replace the metal stocks with traditional timber equivalents.
- Herringfleet Mill, Somerleyton was a Grade II* listed smock mill, the last of its kind on the Broads, dated from 1820. This octagonal timber-framed and clad mill was no longer watertight and its brick plinth needed repair. The structure was leaning and would require underpinning and the remaining stock and sails are rotten and posed a safety risk due its proximity to a footpath so are being temporarily removed. This structure had been added to the HAR last year and the Authority were liaising with the Somerleyton Estate, the owner of the building, to initiate a new project to restore this mill.

- Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area (CA), that included a landscape shaped by the unique industrial heritage of the Broads, was considered at risk due to the potential encroachment from Great Yarmouth (including development and light pollution), the potential dualling of the A47 road and the degradation of the designated buildings, mostly drainage mills, within the area. The HEM reported a slight improvement for this entry due to the completion of the Water, Mills and Marshes project that had repaired a number of drainage mills within the CA and the completion of the Stracey Arms drainage mill restoration undertaken by the Norfolk Windmills Trust.

The HAR Register had taken on a new significance with the introduction of Defra's new monitoring system for protected landscapes: the Protected Landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework. This Framework introduced a number of new targets associated with managing protected landscapes but of particular importance to the HET was Target 10 which was to "Decrease the number of nationally designated heritage assets at risk in Protected Landscapes".

The HEM noted that this target, given the nature of the six HAR assets listed in the Broads, would be difficult to achieve. Given that two-thirds of these assets were redundant mills that were largely inaccessible any improvement, as demonstrated on the Water, Mills and Marshes project, would take years to achieve not to mention the time required to secure the necessary funding and resources.

Given that all Local Authorities were responsible for submission of entries for the HAR Register there was a risk that submissions would be suppressed to reduce the number of assets at risk within their area.

The target gave the impression that these assets were under the control of the Authority when in reality the maintenance and repair of these assets was the owner's responsibility. The Authority could take enforcement action to rectify the poor state of a building, via a Repairs Notice or an Urgent Works Notice, however the Authority would have to be prepared to foot the bill for the resulting repairs if the owner was unwilling or unable to do so.

The HEM acknowledged that identifying any form of target was difficult to define and required some form of compromise. The HEM noted that this new target would raise the profile of the HAR Register and the associated assets at both national and local levels. This could be beneficial when liaising with owners and when seeking grant funding. The Head of Planning added that this might be helpful in the context of other applications for example in reducing light pollution from developments in Great Yarmouth.

Members agreed that this new target did not appear to be helpful especially in the context of the Halvergate Marshes CA. The associated discussion highlighted that the speed of repair/restoration of HAR assets, if possible, would vary greatly and maybe a further re-classification or segregation of these assets would be desirable over time. The HEM confirmed that, after consultation with other National Park HEMs, future HAR submissions would include a narrative to ensure that the reasons for assets not being removed from the register over time were understood.

Water, Mills and Marshes - update

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) reported that work to complete the Water, Mills and Marshes project had been delayed due to the poor weather in recent months. A number of items were outstanding:

- Mutton's Mill required a final coat of paint to the cap, stock and sails.
- The Millwright had a handful of snagging items to resolve at Mutton's Mill.
- At Strumpshaw Engine House the end of the drainage channel required lime rendering.

Once the weather improved this work would be progressed and was expected to complete October 2024.

Matters for information

Turf Fen Mill (BA/2023/0469/FUL and BA/2023/0470/LBC): An application that has been determined under delegated powers (presented to HARG for information and interest) The Heritage Planning Officer (HPO) presented an approved application, under delegated powers, for the repair and restoration of a Grade II* listed, brick tower, drainage mill (Turf Fen Mill) on the west bank of the River Ant at How Hill. The presentation included a location map, various photographs of Turf Fen Mill and two other mills at How Hill and detailed plans of the replacement sail frames and stocks.

Turf Fen Mill was located within an ecologically sensitive area being a Ramsar site, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protection Area and it was one of three mills at How Hill; the others being Boardman's Mill, mentioned previously within the Heritage at Risk topic, and Clayrack Mill a hollow post drainage mill. The HPO confirmed that once the restoration work on Turf Fen Mill was complete restoration work on the other two mills would follow.

The Norfolk Windmills Trust proposal to repair and restore the mill to winding condition included:

- Replacement sail frames
- Repairs to the brick tower
- Substantial repairs to the cap and fan stage

Funding had been secured for this work which was expected to start shortly.

3. Any other business

Enforcement - update

The Heritage Environment Manager (HEM) provided an update on the unauthorised replacement windows in listed building Holly Lodge, Church Loke, Coltishall. The Planning Committee had granted authority to serve a Listed Building Enforcement Notice requiring the removal and replacement of the windows and the removal of the shutters with a compliance period of 15 years. The HEM confirmed that the owner had now appointed an agent and the

Authority were in discussions with the owner's agent with the intention to resolve this matter without recourse to the serving of an Enforcement Notice

Bill Dickson's final meeting

This was the last HARG meeting before Bill Dickson finished his term of appointment. The Chair thanked Bill for his support at this forum and his dedication was exemplified by his attendance record which surpassed that of the Chair. Bill thanked officers for facilitating these meetings and the recent opportunities to visit areas of interest within the Broads and he urged Members to take advantage of these meetings to further their knowledge of the historic environment of the Broads.

4. Date of next meeting

The next HARG meeting would be held on Friday 06 September 2024.

The meeting ended at 10:46am

As this meeting was hosted at Ludham Village Hall after the meeting Members had the opportunity to visit St Benet's Abbey to view firsthand some of the challenges faced in preserving this scheduled monument.

Signed by

Chair