

**Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan: Designation of Neighbourhood Area**  
Report by Planning Policy Officer

**Summary:** This report advises the Committee about Strumpshaw Parish Council's proposed neighbourhood plan area and the Broads Authority's considerations in designating such an area.

**Recommendation:** That the Committee:

- (i) notes the proposed area for the Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan and the responses to consultation on this; and
- (ii) supports the officer's recommendation to the Authority of designation of the proposed area as a neighbourhood area.

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The 2011 Localism Act provided for the creation of an additional, neighbourhood layer of development plans. In parished areas, only the parish council can prepare such a plan. Before a neighbourhood plan is prepared the area covered must be approved by the local planning authority. In legal terms, the local planning authority designates the area as a 'neighbourhood area'. The grounds for not approving the area proposed (effectively requiring amendment of the neighbourhood plan's boundaries) are relatively limited.
- 1.2 Strumpshaw Parish Council wishes to prepare a neighbourhood plan for its whole parish. With the support of Broadland District Council the Parish Council received 'front runner' status, providing both it and the District Council with additional resources from Government to help prepare the plan. Because, like all Broads parishes, part of Strumpshaw Parish lies within the designated Broads area, and part lies within the District Council's planning area. It needs the approval of both local planning authorities. The District Council is expected to make its decision regarding the area outside the Broads on 4 December. This report focuses on the Broads part of the Parish.

## **2 Proposed Area for Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan**

- 2.1 Strumpshaw Parish Council has said it wishes to include the whole of its Parish in the neighbourhood plan it intends to prepare. The Parish Council has explained that:

*“Buckenham and Hassingham [both partly within the designated Broads area] for the most part are covered by SSSI and RAMSAR, which means that land use is unlikely to change greatly. It was thought it would be divisive to leave these two villages out of the Neighbourhood Plan. If the Neighbourhood Plan omitted these two villages, the parishioners in them would not be eligible to vote in the referendum. These people use the facilities in Strumpshaw, the pubs, the garage, the church etc and therefore have an interest in what goes into the Neighbourhood Plan.*

*Strumpshaw Parish Council voted unanimously for the area of the Neighbourhood Plan to be bounded by the parish boundary....”*

2.2 The proposal to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the whole of Strumpshaw Parish has been advertised for the required statutory period of six weeks (from 8 September to 22 October 2012) to allow comments on the proposal. This was undertaken jointly by Broadland District Council (leading) and the Broads Authority, and published on both authorities' websites. Only two representations were received from Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Constabulary, both stating they had no objections to the proposal.

2.3 In deciding whether to designate the area proposed by the Parish Council, the Authority must have regard to:

- the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area; and
- the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.

There are, however, no existing neighbourhood areas in the vicinity. The whole of Strumpshaw Parish does indeed seem to provide an appropriate and desirable area for a neighbourhood plan, providing administrative convenience and linking well to a local sense of identity as highlighted by the Parish Council. Given this and the lack of any objections or alternative proposals arising from consultation, the Authority is recommended to designate the whole Parish as a neighbourhood area insofar as it lies within the designated Broads area as proposed by the Parish Council. The Committee is invited to support this recommendation to the Authority.

2.4 In the event of the Authority designating an area this will be communicated to Strumpshaw Parish Council and Broadland District Council, and the Authority must publish a map showing this area and any other subsequently designated neighbourhood areas.

### **3 Conclusions**

3.1 Strumpshaw Parish Council has proposed that its neighbourhood plan should include the whole of the Parish. In the light of the statutory and other considerations discussed, the Parish Council's proposal seems eminently

sensible. The Authority will therefore be recommended to designate the whole of Strumpshaw Parish insofar as it lies within the Broads as a 'neighbourhood area' to facilitate the Parish Council's ambitions. The Planning Committee is invited to support this recommendation to the full Authority.

#### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 While the Authority is obliged to provide support and assistance in the preparation of neighbourhood plans, the designation of the whole of the Parish, as opposed to some other area, is not considered to have any financial implications in itself.

Background papers:	Strumpshaw Parish Council. Designating a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Area: Application to Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority, August 2012 Representations from Norfolk County Council 11/9/12, and Norfolk Constabulary 20/9/12.
Broads Plan Objectives:	None
Author:	John Clements, Planning Policy Officer
Date of report:	30 October 2012
Appendices:	APPENDIX 1: Map showing extent of Strumpshaw Parish (proposed neighbourhood area) and the boundary of the designated Broads area.

