

Heritage Asset Review Group

Notes of the meeting held on 08 September 2023

Contents

1.	Appointment of Chair	1
2.	Appointment of Vice-Chair	1
3.	Notes of HARG meeting held on 16 June 2023	2
4.	Historic Environment Team progress report	2
	Conservation areas – update	2
	Listed buildings	4
	Water, Mills and Marshes - update	5
	Risk to character of the Broads through the loss of thatched roofs	6
5.	Any other business	8
6.	Date of next meeting	8

Present

Harry Blathwayt – in the Chair (from item 2), Mark Collins, Peter Dixon, Tony Grayling, Tim Jickells, Kevin Maguire & Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro

In attendance

Jason Brewster – Governance Officer, Kayleigh Judson – Heritage Planning Officer, Kate Knights – Historic Environment Manager and Cally Smith – Head of Planning – in the Chair (until item 2)

1. Appointment of Chair

Harry Blathwayt was proposed by Tim Jickells and seconded by Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro.

Harry Blathwayt was appointed Chair.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Tim Jickells was proposed by Harry Blathwayt and seconded by Tony Grayling.

Tim Jickells was appointed Vice-Chair

3. Notes of HARG meeting held on 16 June 2023

The notes of the meeting held on 16 June 2023 were received. These had been submitted to the Planning Committee on 21 July 2023.

4. 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 17 June and 08 September 2023.

Conservation areas – update

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) provided an update on the Halvergate and Tunstall Conservation Area (CA) appraisal following the public consultation conducted earlier in 2023.

This appraisal was part of a wider ongoing review of CAs, as recommended by government guidance, and factored in changes within the area itself and the latest Historic England (HE) guidance since this CA was adopted in 2007. The Halvergate and Tunstall CA lay within Broadland District Council's and the Broads Authority's Executive areas. It had been agreed that the Broads Authority should lead on this re-appraisal, with input from colleagues at Broadland District Council (BDC). As part of the re-appraisal process the existing conservation area boundary had been reviewed and, after consideration, no change to the boundary had been proposed.

The initial CA appraisal had been taken to public consultation between 14 April and 9 June 2023 and included a well-attended drop-in event at the village hall and resulted in plenty of positive and constructive feedback.

The CA appraisal was intended to describe the general character of an area and provide an assessment of its historic interest. The CA appraisal provided a summary of the architectural interest and built form and included a spatial analysis looking at the spaces between the building, landscape features (such as trees) and important views. Once the appraisal was approved it would act as a reference document to influence and guide new development to ensure it related well to the established context of the settlement.

The HEM explained that the appraisal guidance had changed regarding the historic interest of an area and, rather than provide a potted history, indicated that the appraisal should focus on setting out what makes the area special and the impact of its history on its current character and appearance. The appraisal also noted the contribution made by local materials to the character of the area with flint being predominant along with red brick, thatch and red clay pantiles.

The HEM explained that an important element of the appraisal, which was mandated by the governing legislation, was the inclusion of proposals for the management and enhancement of the area. This section generated a number of comments during the consultation some of which stemmed from a misunderstanding of the purpose of this content. People had perceived these improvement proposals as being assigned to property owners thus burdening

them with extra responsibilities and potential costs. The Historic Environment Team (HET) had spoken to people during the public consultation to allay their concerns and explain that this section was intended to help identify/target future funding/project opportunities that could deliver the proposed improvements. This section also highlighted conflicting opinions about what areas should and should not be improved, with given areas for improvement receiving comments both for and against the proposed improvement.

The HEM provided details of the some of the proposed areas for improvement:

- Stone Cottage, a grade II listed building which had suffered fire damage including the loss of its thatched roof a couple of years ago. The owner was working with BDC to repair and restore this structure.
- Red Lion pub, a grade II listed building, required a replacement thatched roof and improvements to the surfacing of the car park. The proposals for improving the car park had received mixed feedback responses, however it was deemed an appropriate area for enhancement.
- The railings to the paddock were in parts in poor condition and in need of repair. The inclusion of this area demonstrated the importance of public consultation as people had interpreted the proposal for repair as the wholesale replacement of sections of railing and consequently had voiced their disapproval in the feedback. As a consequence of this feedback this entry had been updated to reflect the need for sensitive repair to this structure.
- The area around the coronation bench needed to be maintained and enhanced. As with the railings this area proved to have sentimental value to a number of respondents. This came to light when it was originally proposed to remove a protective galvanised steel bar located in front of the bench and the feedback indicated that people valued this structure and wanted it to remain, and the entry was amended accordingly.

The HEM indicated that, unlike BDC, the Authority maintained a Local List of buildings that were considered to positively contribute to the character of the Authority's Executive Area but may not qualify for national listing. During the appraisal, several buildings in Tunstall had been identified that were deemed to meet the criteria for Local Listing including a group of outbuildings associated with the Manor House, a K6 telephone kiosk, a barn adjacent to Tunstall Hall that bore a date stamp and plaque relating this barn to the Hall and a couple of World War II structures. These buildings had previously been flagged as important to the CA and as such were included in appendix 2 of the previous appraisal document which listed all buildings considered to positively contribute to the character of the CA. Their inclusion in the Local List was a means in which to formalise their importance to the CA.

The appraisal had been updated to reflect the feedback received where appropriate and had been reviewed by colleagues at Broadland District Council (BDC). The appraisal and Local Listing would be presented to the Planning Committee on 15 September for approval and BDC would formally adopt the appraisal for their part of the CA.

The Head of Planning explained that this appraisal was part of a wider ongoing review of all the CAs associated with the Broads Executive Area. The intention was to review all 24 CAs within a 5 year rolling programme although this timeframe might prove ambitious especially given the impact of the lockdowns associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. The CA appraisals had been prioritised based on their size and the time elapsed since their last appraisal and had been shared between the various local authorities. The next CA to be appraised by the Broads Authority would be Neatishead.

Members praised the HET for their work on this appraisal and its highlighting of the importance of the CAs in protecting the heritage of the Broads.

The HEM indicated that this public consultation had highlighted some areas for improvement in the Local Listing process:

- The establishment of criteria and a scoring system for assessing buildings for possible inclusion in the Local List.
- The definition of a process for responding to formal objections to new entries on the Local List.

A Member asked about revisiting the locally listed waterside buildings as he believed the risk to these buildings had increased given the increased value of riverside plots; he referred to a disused chalet situated on a waterside plot at Horning that was for sale. The Member added that the waterside plots at Potter Heigham were leasehold and therefore were not at risk in the same way. The Heritage Planning Officer (HPO) indicated that the Authority had proposed 16 waterside buildings for National Listing and that 14 of these would be assessed by Historic England in autumn 2023 with the final decision to be taken by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The HEM added that Local Plan policies existed for some waterside areas that stipulated the size of a chalet relative to the plot size. The HoP referenced the ongoing review of Local Plan policies and in particular the policies associated with riverside sites at Potter Heigham. These policies promoted sensitive extensions to existing buildings and no more than 70% of the plot frontage to be taken up by building. This review provided an opportunity to compare recent photographs of these sites with photographs taken previously as a means of identifying any new developments and assessing the effectiveness of the associated Local Plan policies.

Listed buildings

The Historic Planning Officer (HPO) provided an update on the ongoing quinquennial survey of listed buildings. Since the last meeting, the Historic Environment Team (HET) had visited buildings on Haddiscoe Island bounded by Breydon Water to the north, River Waveney to the east, the New Cut to the south and the River Yare to the west (photographs of the following buildings were included in the presentation).

Langley detached windpump, a Grade II listed building used for dwelling accommodation was visited and found to be in a similar acceptable condition to that of the last inspection.

The Grade II listed Toft Monks (detached) windpump was visited and found to be in acceptable condition. The HPO explained that an application had been received to fully restore this property including the sails and a separate residential unit.

Raven Hall, a Grade II listed building located just off the river Yare to the north of Haddiscoe island was visited and found to be in a much better condition since the last inspection. The Hall had been re-thatched and a new breathable lime render applied. The HPO explained that the owners had applied to remove an existing internal spiral staircase to improve access to the first floor. On investigation the HET determined that this spiral staircase pre-dated the surrounding structure and was a surviving element from a much older building and as such was not suitable for removal. The existing staircase limited access to the first floor and there was no means of installing a new staircase without disrupting the planform of the existing building. The HET worked with the owners to agree an extension to the property that was in keeping with the existing building and, along with a new bathroom and entrance hall, would accommodate a new staircase between the ground and first floors.

Pettingell's Mill (Seven Mile House), a Grade II listed disused drainage pump located on the west bank of the river Waveney was visited. The HPO indicated that this site was of interest as it provided a historical record of the evolution of drainage technology on the Broads; the mill reflecting the use of wind then steam to power the drainage pump. The adjacent small red brick engine shed housed the replacement, now disused, diesel pump which had in turn been superseded by the current electric pumping station. The mill was suffering from quite a lot of erosion given its exposed location and the tower was leaning. It was noted that some vegetation had been removed from the mill since the previous survey when the whole structure was covered. The doors to the tower and the adjacent engine shed were open leaving both structures vulnerable to vandalism. The HET would contact the owners to discuss how best to secure these buildings, monitor the lean on the tower and identify further works to preserve the mill.

Water, Mills and Marshes - update

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) provided an update on the Water, Mills and Marshes (WMM) project. The HEM indicated that Members who attended the Authority's annual site visit on 6 July 2023 had been able to view the millwright at work on the first of the two stocks to be installed at Mutton's Mill. The millwright had not been able to spend the expected time on site due to other work commitments and his work at Mutton's Mill had not advanced as anticipated. The HEM showed recent images of the mill with both stocks and one sail having been installed. She expected the millwright to have installed the remaining sails, the tail pole and lightning conductors by the end of September. A Member was keen to celebrate the completion of this work and wondered whether Members could be given advanced notice of the completion date. The HEM indicated that the millwright's busy schedule meant it was difficult to finalise a completion date however she would endeavour to provide prior notice of completion if possible.

The HEM confirmed that the Authority's Heritage Carpenter had completed the snag list tasks at Mutton's Mill and would be completing similar snagging tasks at Six Mile House and the

Strumpshaw Engine House before returning to Mutton's Mill to complete the final site clearance.

The HEM provided an update on the repair to the existing drainage channel associated with the Strumpshaw Engine House. The HEM explained that the initial stages of this work had proved challenging due to the regular influx of water into the channel from the tidal river Yare. Working conditions had much improved since the headwall had been installed and the HEM showed an image of a dry and cleared drainage channel and showing the start of work on the new brick courses along the existing drainage walls. The existing drainage walls were not square and the HEM explained that this had required skilful bricklaying to create a level brick course in order to ensure the restored drainage walls were vertical/perpendicular.

Risk to character of the Broads through the loss of thatched roofs

The Historic Environment Manager (HEM) presented details of recent changes to roof materials on a number of properties within the Broads that had resulted in thatch being replaced. The HEM detailed a number of options available to the Authority to protect historic thatched roofs and welcomed Members' feedback.

The HEM presented photographs of Heronby a large, detached house located at Wroxham showing the original thatched roof and a current view showing red pantiles instead of thatch. The next property shown was The Thatched House at Thurne that consisted of a cottage with a dormer roof joined to a larger building perpendicular to the cottage, both structures having originally been thatched. The current views of the property showed the larger building had a new slate roof and work was underway to replace the thatch on the cottage with the same material.

The next photographs related to Shoal's Cottage, Irstead where planning permission had been granted, under delegated powers, for a substantial, almost two-storey, extension to be erected on the southern elevation of the existing thatched property (BA/2022/0030/HOUSEH). The use of thatch on the extension was considered essential and a planning condition was imposed to ensure this. The owners failed to secure a thatcher and subsequently submitted a planning application (BA/2022/0309/COND) to change the proposed thatched roof covering the new extension from thatch to tile. As reported at the Heritage Asset Review Group meeting 16 December 2022, this application was refused under delegated powers and the owners had subsequently appealed this decision. As demonstrated in the photographs, the owners had now undertaken to change the existing roof from thatch to tile under permitted development. The HEM indicated that this action would undermine the case for the extension to be thatched.

The examples shown highlighted the impact of replacing thatch with alternative roofing materials on the character of the Broads. Members were in agreement and believed that the changes at Shoal's Cottage had a greater impact given its prominence on the river.

The HEM presented photographs of existing thatched properties that were not currently listed or within a Conservation Area and therefore vulnerable to change via permitted development; A boatshed at South Walsham, a property at Thurne and Leisure Hour, a chalet at Hoveton.

The HEM indicated that Leisure Hour was one the waterside properties being considered for National Listing.

The HEM explained that for future applications relating to extensions to existing thatched buildings the Authority would remove permitted development rights relating to the existing roof to prevent them from being exploited in the same manner as demonstrated at Shoal's Cottage.

The HEM indicated that Article 4 directions could be used as a means of restricting permitted development rights in the context of particular sites and/or areas; in this case removing the permitted development right to replace thatch with another material. Members were supportive of the use of the Article 4 directions and questioned the need to focus on particular sites and/or areas given the relatively small size of the Broads Executive area and its unique landscape character. The Head of Planning (HoP) responded that widening the area covered by an Article 4 direction would reduce its chance of success resulting in delay which could provoke owners to pre-emptively remove their thatched roofs.

The HEM explained that there was scope to cluster a number of thatched properties within proximity of each other and for this cluster to be covered by a single Article 4 direction. This approach would reduce the work required to create the Article 4 directions without undermining its chance of approval.

The HEM indicated that the key issues with a thatched roof, from an owner's perspective, were the fire risk, the cost and the lack of thatchers and these could be mitigated as follows:

- The fire risk could be mitigated by the adoption of a series of building control requirements known as the Dorset Model. Amongst other things this involved the introduction of a fire-proof barrier between the thatch and the rafters.
- The high upfront cost of a thatched roof was mitigated by its increased lifespan compared with other materials and its improved thermal efficiency.
- The lack of thatchers could be mitigated by a wider awareness of the lead time to secure this resource, helping owners to plan work to maintain a thatched roof.

A Member believed that people living in an area with thatched properties would be supportive of steps to maintain the existing thatched roofs. The HEM confirmed that a public consultation must be performed in order for an Article 4 direction to be considered for approval.

Members wondered whether the Local Plan could be amended to promote thatched roofs as they utilised a local, sustainable material, supported local industry and were part of the local heritage. The HoP indicated that the Authority needed to be mindful that the Local Plan was not overly prescriptive, and while it was acceptable to promote the use of local materials in general, it would be deemed too restrictive to indicate the use of local reed. The HEM confirmed that Listing Building Consents were similarly restricted and could not prescribe the use of local reed. The HoP acknowledged that the Local Plan could be updated to strengthen

the need to retain existing materials, such as thatch, and reminded Members that the Local Plan would only address those developments that required planning permission.

A Member wondered whether there were any similar problems facing other Local Planning Authorities and referred to Collyweston stone slate used in central England as a possible example. The HEM confirmed that other National Parks and organisations such as the National Society of Master Thatchers would be consulted as part of the Authority's research on this matter.

A Member asked whether there was any merit to removing permitted development rights relating to roofs from all the Conservation Areas (CAs) within the Broads Executive Area. Other Members cautioned against this action as it would prove very unpopular with residents in the impacted areas and would be damaging to the reputation of the Authority. The HEM added that the CAs only accounted for a proportion of the existing thatched properties.

The HEM believed that the work to identify how best to protect thatched buildings in the Broads would take a while to conclude and confirmed that any resulting changes in planning policy and/or Article 4 directions would be decided by the Planning Committee. In the meantime, the HEM welcomed any further suggestions from Members.

5. Any other business

A Member asked what actions the Authority could undertake to improve navigation through the Potter Heigham bridge to secure improvements in tourism and associated commercial benefits. The Chair responded that matters of navigation were not a matter for the Heritage Asset Review Group. There was a general discussion regarding the importance of this bridge as a Scheduled Monument, proposals to close the bridge to vehicular traffic and the impact larger boats accessing the upper Thurne might have on the environment and other people's enjoyment of this area.

6. Date of next meeting

The next HARG meeting would be held on Friday 15 December 2023.

The meeting ended at 11:47am.

As this meeting was hosted at Ranworth Village Hall after the meeting members had the opportunity to partake in a tour of St Helen's Church conducted by Mr Cook, Secretary to Ranworth with Panxworth PCC.

Signed by

Chair