

LUDHAM AND STALHAM STAITHE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS 2020

Summary: This report seeks approval for the Ludham and Stalham Staithe Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans in line with national policy and best practice.

Recommendations: That the appraisals as set out within the body of this report be considered and taken forward for adoption by Cabinet.

Cabinet Members(s)	Wards(s) Affected
All Members	All Wards
Contact Officer(s) telephone number and emails: Kate Knights (Historic Environment Manager The Broads Authority), 07818 053806; kate.knights@broads-authority.gov.uk Chris Young, 01263 516138, Chris.Young@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Introduction

1.1 As well as its picturesque coastline, rural landscape and big skies, the District is known for its rich historic environment. The District's heritage is an intrinsic part of its character and stands as testament to how the area has been shaped and evolved over time. This heritage manifests itself in many different forms and this is reflected in the quantity and variety of designations found across North Norfolk including:

- 82 conservation areas (4 of which are shared with the Broads Authority)
- Over 2,200 listed buildings
- 34 Parks and Gardens, 18 of which are Registered
- 86 Scheduled Monuments
- Over 250 Local Listings

1.2 Part of the District is also within the Broads, and this area is managed by the Broads Authority which is a Special Statutory Authority. Its statutory purposes are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Broads;
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads by the public; and
- To protect the interests of navigation.

1.3 These duties are similar to those of Britain's National Park Authorities with the addition of the duty concerning navigation and confer the same level of protection from inappropriate development as the National Parks.

1.4 The Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the land within its Executive area. It is responsible for the designation of Conservation Areas in the Broads area, however all of the parishes in the Broads are split and fall partly within their area and partly within the constituent District so it is important to take a

combined view of the shared heritage. There are 18 parishes split between the Broads and North Norfolk and four Conservation Areas.

- 1.5 As part of North Norfolk District Council's ongoing management of their 82 Conservation Areas, it was agreed that the Broads Authority should lead on the production of the Conservation Area Appraisals in the conservation areas that are shared between the two authorities, with input from NNDC. This is normal practice where the majority of the area falls within the Broads Authority Executive area. The first two conservation area appraisals to be worked on have been:

- Stalham Staithe (designated 1991)
- Ludham (designated 1974)

Neither appraisal has been reviewed since designation and neither has ever benefitted from an appraisal.

Both areas were in need of robust definition and understanding to ensure that the Conservation Area status remains meaningful and justified in line with current guidance and legislation. It was considered that the additional information and guidance provided by an adopted appraisal would help to inform and assist future decision making.

- 1.6 The Conservation Area Appraisals at Stalham Staithe and Ludham have now been approved and adopted by the Broads Authority.

2. Statutory Background

- 2.1 Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A Conservation Area is defined as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
- 2.2 Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 2.3 The appraisal documents now being considered conform to current Historic England guidance (Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management 2016). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (2012 and subsequently updated). NNDC's adopted Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Broads Authority's Local Plan provide the local planning policy context.

3. What is a Conservation Area?

- 3.1. To assist in the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and their settings, all Local Planning Authorities are required to review their Conservation Areas from 'time to time'. The preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Proposals is a key element in this process. They play a key-role in

NNDC's efforts to safeguard the environment, which is one of the stated priorities in its Corporate Plan: 2015-2019.

3.2 A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has two key objectives:

- 1: Firstly it defines the special characteristics or historic interest of the Conservation Area and identifies the issues that threaten these special qualities.
- 2: Secondly, it offers guidelines to prevent erosion of character and achieve enhancement.

3.3 In practice the benefits of reviewing a conservation often extend much further:

- 1: A fully adopted Appraisal and set of Management proposals provide additional support and guidance for decision-making through the Development Management process, since they become, on adoption, a material consideration for the Local Planning Authority when dealing with applications for development.
- 2: Having an up-to-date conservation area boundary which reacts to and reflects the position on the ground is easier to defend and becomes a more meaningful and justified designation.
- 3: Experience has shown that the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans can offer a real and practical opportunity for local communities to engage in the future management of their local environment and as such the process contributes positively to community empowerment.

4. Assessment and Methodology

- 4.1 Officers at the Broads Authority have produced the Conservation Area Appraisals. Research has been carried out, along with site assessment, survey analysis and collation of key sources. This has been carried out in liaison with officers from NNDC.
- 4.2 The documents set out the planning policy context, special interest including location and setting; historic development and archaeology; layout and plan form; architectural and townscape qualities; character analysis including the qualities of buildings and the contribution of green spaces and suggested boundary changes. They also provide an overview of areas that could be enhanced and proposals for these enhancements.

It should be noted that no character appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

5. Consultation and Formal Adoption

Stalham Staithe

- 5.1 Residents of Stalham Staithe and other interested parties were consulted on the Stalham Staithe Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan between February and April 2016. Residents in the conservation area were sent a letter and

leaflet with the draft document being available to view online. There was also a public event held at Stalham Town Hall on the 5th March 2016 and a meeting held on the 14th June 2016 with representatives from NNDC, the BA, Stalham Town Council and the County Council. Representations were taken into consideration and the final document was adopted by the Broads Authority in March 2017. Please find the results of the consultation attached as **Appendix 1**.

- 5.2 No extensions were made to the boundary as designated in 1991. In order to ensure that the whole of the conservation area is adopted by the appropriate authority, it is recommended that the Stalham Staithe Conservation Area Appraisal be brought forward for adoption by NNDC so that the small area within the North Norfolk District Council area benefits from the same level of protection as the rest of the conservation area.

Ludham

- 5.3 Residents of Ludham and other interested parties were consulted on the Ludham Conservation area and Management Plan between the 12th March and 15th May 2020. Residents were sent a letter and leaflet, with the draft document available to view online, and the original intention had been to hold a public event in the village. Unfortunately this was cancelled due to the government guidance relating to the Coronavirus pandemic. However, signs were displayed in the village and adverts placed twice in the village newsletter explaining that officers were available to discuss the proposals by telephone, email or post. Representations were taken into consideration. Please find the results of the consultation attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 5.4 Changes are proposed to the boundary, with the changes in the NNDC area being:
- Extension along School Road and Catfield Road to include the 19th century school, school grounds and the former District Nurses' House, which are important to the social development and history of the village.
 - Exclude Latchmoor Park, which is a mid-late 20th century housing development of insufficient historic interest for the conservation area.
 - Extension at the southern end of Horsefen Road to include Woodlands Cottage, to the east of the road.
 - Exclude the fields to the south and north of Lover's Lane and south of Norwich Road, as this farmland is not of particular historic interest and current guidance states that farmland should generally be excluded from conservation areas.
- 5.5 The Ludham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was presented to the Broads Authority's Heritage Asset Review Group (HARG) in June 2020 who were supportive of it and it was adopted by the Broads Authority's Planning Committee in August 2020. In order to ensure that the whole of the conservation area is properly adopted and to avoid confusion for residents' as to their planning status, it is recommended that the Ludham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be recommended for adoption at NNDC's Cabinet. As the conservation area boundary will have changed, legislation then requires that the designated area is advertised in the Local Press and London Gazette and it is proposed that this will be carried out jointly by NNDC and the BA.

6. Budgetary Implications

- 6.1 There is a cost associated with the statutory advertisement and it is proposed that this be shared between the District Council and the Broads Authority.

Recommendations

- 1. That the appraisals as set out within the body of this report be considered.**
- 2. That the appraisals as set out within this report should be taken to Cabinet with a recommendation for approval.**

Appendix 1: Results of Stalham Staithe Conservation Area Appraisal consultation

Appendix 2: Results of Ludham Conservation Area Appraisal consultation