

Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) – Non-designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs)

1. Background & Context

- The SNP Steering Group is currently working through the development of an updated SNP
- An initial public consultation heard from 98 individuals (c15% of the population, of which 70 were in person on Saturday 23rd March 2024 and 28 online from mid-March to 5th April 2024), in which a specific question was asked regarding NDHAs:- “Should we have Non-designated Heritage Assets in the Neighbourhood Plan?” 80% of respondents answered ‘Yes’ and 20% answered ‘No’. A follow-on question was asked:- “If you are interested in your property being considered as a Non-designated Heritage Asset please let us know”, to which there were no responses.
- During the SNP development process, the approach to policy creation in relation to NDHAs has been subject to debate, initially centring around 2 options. However, a consensus had not been reached by the SNP Steering Group prior to the May 2024 SPC meeting and it was agreed that the options be presented to the SPC for consideration on 7th May 2024.
- The 2 options were presented to the Strumpshaw Parish Council on 7th May 2024 and it was agreed that both the Parish Council and the SNP Steering Group would take further time to consider the options and next steps.
- The SNP Steering Group subsequently undertook to review the feedback received and develop an alternative additional option, which is outlined in this paper.

What is a Non-designated Heritage Asset (NDHA)?

A Non-designated Heritage Asset is a building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having historical or cultural significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which is not formally designated or protected by law as a heritage or conservation site. These assets are usually recognised by local authorities based on their architectural, historic, or archaeological interest, but do not meet the criteria for national listing.

Non-designated Heritage Assets are important because they contribute to the local character and sense of place. They are often included in local lists made by local planning authorities, which use these lists to provide some level of protection in planning processes. The recognition and protection of such assets can vary widely based on local policies and community values.

2. Purpose of paper

- Obtain a decision or recommendation from the Strumpshaw Parish Council on how best to proceed with the treatment of NDHAs within the updated SNP.

3. Options for the treatment of NDHAs within the SNP

OPTION 1: Publish a full and exhaustive list of NDHA's in the Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan

How this would work:

- All NDHAs, as per the definition provided in section 1 (both residential and non-residential), will be identified for potential inclusion and publication in the SNP.
- The creation of the list would be subject to further public consultation.

- A published NDHAs list will only be valid if it is complete; making exceptions for owners who object to their property being included will make the list inequitable and untenable
- Ultimate approval of whether an asset is given NHDA status lies with Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority, as part of the approval of the overall Neighbourhood Plan.

Pros:

- **Protection of Local Heritage:** Including these assets can help protect and preserve buildings, landscapes, and other elements that contribute to the community's character and history, even if they are not legally protected as designated heritage assets.
- **Community Identity and Pride:** Recognising and valuing local heritage can enhance community identity and pride, fostering a greater connection to the neighbourhood and its history.
- **Guidance for Development:** A clear list of important local heritage assets provides developers and planners with guidance, helping ensure that new developments respect the existing character of the area.

Cons:

- **Restrictions on Property Owners:** Concern has been expressed that owners of properties listed as Non-designated Heritage Assets might face restrictions that could complicate renovations, property improvements, or development opportunities. It should be noted that if a building is considered to qualify as a Non-designated Heritage Asset this will be a material consideration in the planning process. Planning officers already take this into account when assessing proposals. Concern has also been expressed about whether property value could be affected, however this has not been validated through expert professional opinion.
- **Uncertainty and Legal Challenges:** The status and management of Non-designated Heritage Assets can lead to legal challenges or disputes, especially if the significance of the asset is contested.
- **Safety & Privacy:** It has been brought to the attention of the Steering Group that some parishioners have expressed concerns about the publication of residential NDHAs in the public domain, to the extent that it might compromise asset owners' safety and privacy.

Note: In practice, of the 30+ Neighbourhood Plans facilitated by our Consultant, all but one PC has developed a list of NDHAs for inclusion on their Neighbourhood Plan. The one exception developed a list of NDHAs, then withdrew it from their NP, because it was proving divisive and splitting their community down the middle. Apparently, they subsequently regretted having withdrawn their List.

OPTION 2: Do not include a list of NDHAs within the SNP, instead review the impact of development proposals on potential NDHAs on a case-by-case basis.

How this would work:

- NDHAs (both residential and non-residential) will be identified on a case-by-case basis, at the point when a development proposal is submitted to and reviewed by the Strumpshaw Parish Council. For the avoidance of doubt, the review of Non-designated Heritage Assets under these circumstances would be obligatory and limited to those relevant to a specific development proposal.
- As part of the development of the SNP, guidelines will be provided to enable the Parish Council to review the potential impact of development proposals on Non-designated Heritage Assets and provide feedback accordingly.

Pros

- **Complaints & Objections:** This approach reduces the likelihood that complaints or objections will be made by parishioners in relation to their properties being included in a published list of NDHAs
- **Safety & Privacy:** The approach of not publishing a list of NDHAs in the public domain is likely to reduce or remove concerns regarding owners' safety and privacy.

Cons

- **Parish Council Resources:** Reviewing the impact of development proposals on NDHAs in a case-by-case manner will be more resource and time-intensive for all concerned (PC, developers, members of the public) than it otherwise would be under Option 1 (i.e. establishing a list that is published and available to development planners upfront via the Neighbourhood Plan).
- **Risk to NDHAs:** If a list of NDHAs is not published, it will therefore not be available to development planners and approvers, which increases the risk of undesirable direct or indirect impact on NDHAs resulting from development. However, this risk could be mitigated by including more detailed information in the SNP on how to apply the national criteria to the built environment in Strumpshaw.

Option 2 draft policy:

Strumpshaw has a number of historic buildings that are important in terms of their heritage. These include Listed Buildings recorded in the National Heritage List and buildings of potential local interest which are described as Non-designated Heritage Assets. In the event of a development proposal, all non-listed historic buildings directly affected or adjacent to the development proposal should be assessed on a case-by-case basis for being a Non-designated Heritage Asset using the criteria set in Historic England's advice note 7 (age, rarity, architectural and artistic interest, group value, archaeological interest, historic interest and/or landmark status).

Development proposals should avoid harm to all heritage assets (Listed and Non-designated Heritage Assets) having regard to their character, important features, setting and relationship with surrounding buildings or uses. Proposals should demonstrate that consideration has been given to retaining:

- a. The important asset or historic feature itself.*
- b. Its most distinctive and important features.*
- c. The positive elements of its setting and its relationship to its immediate surroundings.*
- d. The contribution that the building or historic feature and its setting makes to the character of the local area.*

OPTION 3: Write to owners of potential NDHAs and ask if they wish for their property to be listed in the Neighbourhood Plan

How this would work:

- The Parish Council will write to the owners of identified potential NDHAs, asking if they wish to have their property listed in the Neighbourhood Plan.

- NDHAs will be listed in the Neighbourhood Plan if the owner provides their consent, but will not be listed if they do not.
- This approach seeks to address individual concerns while reflecting the majority support for listing NDHAs indicated in the public consultation.

Pros:

- **Respecting Individual Preferences:** This approach respects property owners' preferences, allowing them to opt-in for listing rather than being mandated.
- **Majority Support:** It addresses the public consultation's outcome, balancing majority support with individual concerns.

Cons:

- **Incomplete List:** This approach may result in an incomplete list of NDHAs, potentially undermining the comprehensiveness of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Administrative Effort:** Identifying the potential NDHAs, writing to the owners and managing the responses will require additional administrative resources. Note that options are currently being explored with regards to accessing additional funding and resources to undertake the review of potential NDHAs.

4. Decision

A decision or recommendation is sought from the Strumpshaw Parish Council regarding which of these 3 options to adopt.