

Strumpshaw Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan



Adopted version

July 2014

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This document is supported by the following documents:

- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan supporting documents
- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan consultation statement
- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan consultation statement supporting documents
- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement
- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan sustainability appraisal
- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan sustainability appraisal supporting documents part 1
- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan sustainability appraisal supporting documents part 2
- Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan HRA screening report
- Declaration of the result of the poll for the Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan referendum, 22nd May 2014.

This document and the supporting documents are available through the strumpshaw.org website. Printed copies may be inspected via the Parish Clerk.

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Foreword

This document is the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted by the voters of the parish of Strumpshaw at a referendum held on May 22nd 2014. The question asked at the referendum was “Do you want Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Strumpshaw to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?” 284 votes were cast. 188 (66%) of these were in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the area.

The referendum was held after an Independent Examiner reviewed the documents. She submitted a Report on 14th March 2014. The Examiner recommended a number of changes in the Neighbourhood Plan which have been incorporated in this document. She also recommended that the Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum. The Examiner’s report is available through the strumpshaw.org website. A printed copy may be inspected via the Parish Clerk.

As the referendum showed that more than 50% of those voting were in favour of adopting the Neighbourhood Plan, it has been adopted by Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority. It will be a key document within the planning process for the parish of Strumpshaw.

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1. Our Strategy

In 2011 Strumpshaw Parish Council published the Parish Plan for the villages of Strumpshaw, Buckenham and Haddingham. Following this the Parish Council took the opportunity to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, the intention of which is to consider how the main planning themes from the Parish Plan could be delivered.

2. Introduction

This is a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Strumpshaw, which covers the villages of Strumpshaw, Buckenham and Haddingham. It is produced under the Localism Act 2011, and as such it forms part of the Development Plan for the area. Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority as local planning authorities will have regard to it in determining applications for planning permission. The Neighbourhood Plan Area has been determined to be the whole of the parish of Strumpshaw, as shown in map 1 in appendix 1.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by Strumpshaw Parish Council with support from members of the local community, and has been informed through a number of community engagement exercises in the parish. This plan deals with spatial planning matters and complements other documents such as the Strumpshaw Parish Plan 2011. It is intended that this Neighbourhood Plan will provide a planning framework until 2026.

As a document that forms part of the Development Plan, this Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with strategic policies of the two planning authorities (in particular, the Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Joint Core Strategy 2011 and the Broads Authority Core Strategy). The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy was consulted in the development of this Neighbourhood Plan. It also has to comply with national planning policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The main planning themes from the Strumpshaw Parish Plan are:

- maintaining the environment of the villages
- resisting the development of housing outside the present areas of housing within the villages
- encouraging the provision of more affordable housing within the settlement limits
- encouraging the long term generation of green electricity
- improving Strumpshaw Parish Room
- providing additional allotments
- encouraging new business opportunities for local people in the three villages

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An initial broadly framed consultation took place in April 2012, followed by consultations on specific aspects of the developing Plan during the remainder of the year. A questionnaire to all residents was not used as one had been completed by those living in the Parish in 2010 and formed the basis of the drafting of the Parish Plan. 147 people attended the April 2012 initial consultation, 18 attended the specific consultation on allotments and housing held in September 2012 and 50 people attended the specific consultation on a new community room held in November 2012.

A general consultation exhibition was held over the weekend of 5th to 7th July 2013 at the start of a six week consultation period. The exhibition was attended by 112 people. On Friday 5th July, as part of the exhibition, there was a presentation about Policy 4 for a community room, allotments and housing which was attended by 29 people.

There was evidence from the 2012 consultations that there was a small demand for allotments. There was also interest in the provision of some additional housing. It became clear that the objective of improving the Strumpshaw Parish Room was not a realistic option and that a new community room would be required for Strumpshaw. The developing Plan focussed on the means of achieving these goals, whilst retaining the rural nature of the Parish.

Further details about all the consultations are contained in the Consultation Statement produced alongside this Neighbourhood Plan.

In order to help guide the formulation of policies, a Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken. Although not a specific requirement of Neighbourhood Plans, this was used as a means of checking the validity of the policies and proposals. This also complies with the possible requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3. Spatial Portrait

Strumpshaw is a small parish which lies between Lingwood, Brundall and Blofield. Its southern boundary is formed by the River Yare.



The Yare valley and marshes from Strumpshaw Hill

Strumpshaw hill was historically used for gravel extraction, and the resulting quarry became a large landfill site. This has been closed since the mid 1980s and a perimeter path around the closed landfill site has been created. A small part of the site is used as a recycling collection centre. Further to the east along the ridge line is Buckenham Wood, while Strumpshaw Wood lies directly south of the settlement limit. Both of these are classified as Ancient Woodland as well as being designated as County Wildlife Sites, along with Farm Carr, Long Meadow and Buckenham Carr.

Most of the land in the Parish is used for agriculture, with the open farmland being classified as an Area of Landscape Value in the Broadland Local Plan 2006 and as Plateau Farmland in Broadland District Council's Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (2013). Some land to the north of the Parish is designated as Tributary Farmland in this document, while land at the south of the Parish is designated as Marshes Fringe.

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A Broad at Strumpshaw Fen

There are environmentally important marshes and wetlands on the northern edge of the River Yare. The riverside area lies within the Broads Authority Executive Area, and is identified as having National Park equivalent status. It has been designated by Natural England as a Ramsar area and two Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Strumpshaw Fen and Buckenham Marshes are designated as a Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protection Area. A map showing the Broads Authority area is in appendix 1.

Although there is housing close to both the Lingwood and Brundall boundaries, the built up core of Strumpshaw is separate and distinct from its neighbours.

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The southern edge of the built up core of Strumpshaw looking south towards Strumpshaw Hill

This built up core is located on the northern slope of the highest hill east of Norwich.

Strumpshaw is currently served by two public houses, one Church of England church, a sub post office and wine merchants and a garage. There are two RSPB reserves, two livery stables and a steam museum. There are 8 listed buildings in the parish, including the churches at Buckenham, Hassingham and Strumpshaw, Oaklands farmhouse and Strumpshaw Hall.

The smaller neighbouring parishes of Buckenham and Hassingham were attached to Strumpshaw in 1935, creating the civil parish of Strumpshaw. The overall parish area is assessed as 1,170 hectares¹. According to the Office for National Statistics the population of the civil parish was 634 at the time of the census in March 2011, which gives a population density of some 0.5 people per hectare. Both the Parish Plan and the census found that the population tends to be elderly. The 2011 census recorded that 29% of the population was over 60 and 17% was younger than 18. The 2011 census also shows that there were 269 dwellings in the Parish in March 2011, an increase of 17 since the 2001 census.

When consultees were asked about the factors they like about the Parish, typical comments made at the initial consultation meeting in April 2012 were:

¹ Office of National Statistics, Census 2011

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“The peace, minimum traffic, safe roads for children, dog walkers and horse riders, the views across the fields.”

And

“Everything: it’s rural, no light pollution, quiet, the community”.

Comments made at the April consultation about factors that the consultees would like to see improved tended to concentrate on fly tipping, the speed of Broadband and the speed of the traffic on the main Norwich Road. However, one comment was:

“The parish does not have a very significant community feel. There’s the church and the pubs but very little else. Some additional “community building” activities would be welcome.”

Key issues identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report were the need to supply suitable housing for older and younger people, the need to reduce the amount of travelling undertaken to work by residents and the need to preserve and enhance the built and natural environment.

4. Spatial Vision & Objectives

The key vision for the parish of Strumpshaw is that in 2026 the parish will be much as it is currently.

The Parish Council's vision for Strumpshaw in 2026 is:

In 2026 the Parish will remain much as it is currently, with the tranquil and rural nature of the Parish being maintained and protected. Areas of high landscape value, the marshes and nature reserves will continue to be protected. The Parish will continue to have a distinctive difference from Lingwood and Brundall.

The settlement limits in 2026 will be maintained as they are in 2013. The Parish will benefit from good quality improvements in community facilities to assist a thriving community to be maintained. The Plan will encourage the continuation of the Parish as a safe place in which to live.

Employment provision in the Parish will be maintained at much the same level in 2026 as it is currently. Some provision for additional low key and low impact employment opportunities will be included.

Spatial Planning Objectives

A. Environmental

1. Maintain and protect the tranquil and rural nature of the whole of the Parish
2. Keep the built up core of Strumpshaw separate from those parts of Strumpshaw adjacent to Lingwood and Brundall
3. Resist any development which is in parts of the Parish that are outside the settlement limit
4. Maintain and protect areas of high landscape value, including wooded areas in private ownership, reflecting the landscape assessments undertaken by the Broads Authority and Broadland District Council.
5. Maintain and protect the marshes and nature reserves
6. Protect agricultural land use
7. Encourage the provision of green space in the built up core of the Parish

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B. Social

1. Ensure that a community meeting room continues to be provided in the Parish, easily accessible to the majority of residents
2. Ensure that sufficient allotments are provided to meet the needs of the residents of the Parish
3. Encourage the completion of the footpath along Norwich Road, Strumpshaw, between Beech Drive and Goat Lane
4. Encourage any new housing to be of a low density and of a vernacular design
5. Encourage the development of any new housing to include both affordable and lower cost market dwellings, including consideration of housing for elderly people
6. Resist the introduction of street lights
7. Promote a safe highway network, identifying measures to encourage adherence to traffic speed limits, and to reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians

C. Economic

1. Encourage the provision of small scale, low impact and low key employment opportunities

Policies & Proposals

Introduction

The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan are in accordance with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, and are in general accordance with Broadland District Council's Local Plan and the Broads Authority's Local Plan.

These policies are additional to the policies in the above documents, and will be taken into account in the determination of applications for planning permission.

POLICY 1 (POL 1): Any development will need to reflect the existing form and structure of the settlements, respecting the planning policies of the local planning authorities. It will also need to reflect and complement the rural character and history of the area.

The Neighbourhood Plan area is very rural, with scattered buildings in those parts of the parish not included within the settlement limits. Most of the area contains high quality agricultural land, while the area within the Broads Authority is environmentally sensitive and is high value for nature conservation. Further development would generally be inappropriate.

POLICY 2 (POL 2): The attractive countryside in the parish will be protected from intrusive development, with particular consideration given to the more sensitive areas such as those related to the Broads area, and gaps between settlements (i.e. between the built up core of Strumpshaw and those parts of Strumpshaw adjacent to Lingwood and Brundall).

The majority of the Neighbourhood Plan area covers land of a high landscape value, from the hill in the centre of the parish to the marshes that border the river Yare. The countryside includes historic buildings, some of them listed, from as early as the thirteenth century. It also includes two areas of ancient woodland, three county wildlife sites as well as a Ramsar site and two Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Both the Parish Plan 2011 and the consultation in April 2012 showed that residents strongly favour maintaining the separation of the built up core of Strumpshaw from those parts of the parish adjacent to Lingwood and Brundall.

This policy compliments both the Broads Authority and Broadland District Council's Landscape Character Assessments.

POLICY 3 (POL 3): The settlement limits will be maintained as they are in 2013. The exception to this policy is a specific proposal as outlined in Policy 4 below, which can only be achieved on a site outside the development boundary.

The settlement limits for Strumpshaw are currently drawn tightly around the existing housing, as shown on map 2 in appendix 1.

The Strumpshaw Parish Plan 2011 stated that the Parish Council should “resist the development of housing outside the present areas of housing within the villages”. It also included policies to “encourage the provision of more bungalows within the settlement limits” and to “consider the provision of more affordable housing within the settlement limits”.

The conclusions of the Parish Plan were considered again at the April 2012 consultation, which showed a mixed response to the need to expand the settlement limits. A typical comment of those in favour of considering some expansion was:

“Some extra development is required to keep the village viable – but a mix of both starter and more expensive”.

A typical comment of those consultees not in favour of such an expansion was:

“Expanding the limits could mean blurring of boundaries. Prefer to retain existing and resist further housing.”

Opinion on the need for additional housing was split, with about half the consultees wanting the Parish not to have any additional housing, and about half wanting to see a small amount of additional housing allowed.

Consequently it has been decided to retain the settlement limits as they currently exist. The exception to this is a specific proposal which will bring significant benefits for the community and which can only be achieved on a site that falls outside the settlement limits.

POLICY 4 (POL 4): An area of land is identified for a new community room, up to 8 allotments and an enabling residential development of up to 10 dwellings, located to the west of Mill Lane, as shown in map 5 in Appendix 1.



Proposed site viewed from Mill Road

Community room

The Parish Plan showed that 66% of respondents to the questionnaire attended events or activities at Strumpshaw Parish Room. Those who responded to the questionnaire were evenly divided over the issue of repairing or replacing the Parish Room. The Parish Plan included a policy for the Parish Council to encourage the Trustees of the Parish Room to seek external funds to improve the room.

Further work has shown that seeking to improve the Parish Room is unlikely to result in a satisfactory community room. The current Parish Room is becoming structurally unsound, has no provision for people in wheelchairs and has only two parking spaces. In addition, the Trustees have made it clear that neither they nor the Parochial Church Council will be able to finance the current Parish Room in the near future. The Trustees intend to give notice by the end of 2014 that the Parish Room will close.

A specific consultation on the need for a new community room was held on 24th November 2012, which was attended by 50 people. Those attending were

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asked if they thought that the Neighbourhood Plan should include provision for a new community room. 48 people commented, and 42 (87%) said that they thought that a new community room should be included in the Neighbourhood Plan. A large range of potential uses was proposed by consultees. These are significantly greater than the uses of the current inadequate Parish Room. The main uses are identified in appendix 2. Details of the consultation are given in the Consultation Statement.

Allotments

Strumpshaw currently has one allotment, on the corner of Barn Hill and Buckenham Road. The site is not large enough for any further allotments. The Parish Plan included a policy that the Parish Council should consider where additional allotments could be provided. A specific consultation about the need for allotments was held on 29th September 2012. 18 people attended this consultation, most of whom were interested in the provision of additional allotments. Those attending wanted to have a few more allotments provided as a group to enable a community of allotments holders to develop. They also considered that a group of allotments would assist Strumpshaw to continue to remain a village. Details of the consultation are given in the Consultation Statement.

Enabling residential development

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was conscious that the financial cost of providing a new community room and allotments would be significant. They considered that this could be ameliorated through the provision of some additional housing on the same site, but did not want to propose that such housing should be developed unless it enabled a community room and allotments to be provided. The Steering Group considered extending the settlement limit to cover the proposed site for a new community room, allotments and enabling residential development, but decided that this was not justified. They therefore have proposed that the site for the community room, allotments and enabling housing should be an exception to the settlement limits.

The Parish Plan showed that there was some interest in the provision of bungalows and affordable housing in the parish. This was explored further at the consultation in April 2012. Typical comments were:

“More affordable housing is needed to encourage the young to stay and avoid Strumpshaw becoming a retirement village.”

Typical of the comments opposed to additional housing was:

“No new housing – bungalows or otherwise.”

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When those at the April 2012 consultation were asked about the type of housing which could be provided, there was an overall consensus that any new housing should be a mix of housing to enable young people to stay in the village, and for older people to downsize. A typical comment was:

“Mix of housing is required. Don’t develop just affordable housing.”

Details of the consultation are given in the Consultation Statement.

Potential sites

The Parish Council does not have sufficient land or funds to enable it to develop a community room or allotments. Thus it became clear that it would be essential to include an allocation for a small amount of residential development to enable the community room and allotments to be provided. Nine potential sites for a new community room, allotments and enabling residential development have been considered, as have three sites for a standalone community room.

A full report on these options and the criteria used to evaluate them is in the supporting document (Strumpshaw Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan supporting documents). The three most promising sites were also analysed in the Sustainability Appraisal (Strumpshaw Parish Council Sustainability Appraisal pages 7 to 10).

Proposed site

The site which was assessed as having the largest number of positive factors and the fewest unfavourable factors is on land to the west of Mill Road, option F. This site is Agricultural Land Classification Grade 2. Consideration was given to the protection of agricultural land use when potential sites were assessed.

More work is required to specify the size of the community room and parking as well as the site drainage solutions before a planning application can be made. A planning application would need to respond to this Neighbourhood Plan’s policies as well as the National Planning Policy Framework and the development plan adopted by Broadland District Council.

Planning permission will only be given for housing provided that it includes a well designed mix of dwellings, and delivers the community room and allotments. A concept statement is attached as Appendix 2 (Community Room, Allotments and Housing concept statement) which also contains an illustrative diagrammatic concept plan for this proposal.

POLICY 5 (POL 5): New buildings should respect the vernacular design of current buildings in the parish, and should allow adequate space between buildings to retain the character of the parish.

The April 2012 consultation showed that consultees wanted new buildings to be well designed with high levels of energy efficiency.

It is important that new buildings in the Neighbourhood Plan Area respect the vernacular design of existing buildings. Guidance on the nature of the vernacular design of buildings in the parish will be developed outside the Neighbourhood Plan.

POLICY 6 (POL 6): The key green features on the south western corner of Mill Road and Norwich Road, and the north western corner of Hemblington Road and Norwich Road will be protected



Norwich Road looking towards Mill Road



Hemblington Road looking from Norwich Road

There was a strong consensus amongst the consultees at the April 2012 consultation that Strumpshaw should continue to be a tranquil and rural parish. There are two key factors which assist in maintaining this feel to the built up core of Strumpshaw. These are the green area between Brickfields and Mill Road, which breaks up the line of housing running from St. Peters Church to the Post Office, and the wooded area which runs along the north side of Norwich Road from close to the Shoulder of Mutton to Hemblington Road and partway along the west side of Hemblington Road. These areas are shown on Map 5 in appendix 1.

Retaining these areas as key green features is an important aspect of maintaining the rural feel of the parish.

POLICY 7 (POL7): Development will be expected to ensure that there is no detriment to highway safety and, where possible, help to reduce existing risks.

The Parish Plan 2011 showed that traffic speeding through Strumpshaw is of concern to a large number of residents. 88% wanted discussions to take place to encourage drivers to keep to the 30mph limit on Norwich Road Strumpshaw. The Parish Plan also acknowledged the need to develop a footway on Norwich Road from Beech Drive to the Goat Lane track. The remainder of the parish has very rural roads, which are often single track with informal passing places.

The speed of traffic was one of the significant factors that those at the April 2012 consultation felt that they disliked about the current situation in Strumpshaw. A typical comment was:

“(We dislike) speeding through the village. A small minority do not respect that they live in a quiet village.”

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Road safety and highway issues will need to be considered in relation to any future development.

POLICY 8 (POL 8): Small scale employment uses appropriate to a rural area will be encouraged, especially those that contribute to the social fabric of the village, provided they do not impact on the character of the area or the amenity of residents.

The Parish Plan 2011 showed that 71% of respondents were in favour of new business opportunities being encouraged in the parish, and the Plan adopted a policy for the Parish Council to encourage new business opportunities for local people. The April 2012 consultation concluded that opportunities for the development of small businesses should be taken, provided that this did not require heavy lorries, or fumes or noise.

Access to employment is important for the community. However, employment uses should not be planned in places where they will cause a nuisance to neighbouring properties. There could be scope for limited employment development in the parish, for example, related to the conversion of existing buildings for agriculture, tourism, crafts, and home-working. Any such development should be appropriate to a rural area.

POLICY 9 (POL 9): The conversion or re-development of the existing parish room on Barn Hill to appropriate uses will be allowed, subject to meeting the relevant policies of the local planning authority.



The Parish Room on Barn Hill

The existing parish room is located on a very constrained site. Any development will need to be carefully considered in order to deliver an appropriate and acceptable scheme.

POLICY 10 (POL10): A small facility including toilets and kitchen will be sought for St. Peter's church visitors, in a way that will offer least harm to the significance of the existing grade 1 listed church and its setting.



St Peter's church from the South

St. Peter's Church is a Grade 1 listed building. Great care needs to be taken that any new development does not detract from this. Therefore, although there is an identified need for some new facilities, particularly toilets and a small kitchen, such a facility will need to be designed carefully and appropriately to respect the historic church and its setting. A possible location would be on the South side of the church.

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Implementation & Monitoring

The majority of the policies will be implemented through the planning process, by the determination of normal planning applications in relation to this Neighbourhood Plan.

The provision of the community room and allotments described in **POLICY 4** will be managed by Strumpshaw Parish Council, and will respond to the design concept statement in appendix 2. Provided the community room and allotments are developed, planning permission will be given for up to 10 dwellings as described in **POLICY 4**, subject to consideration of the detailed layout and design of this housing. Any Community Infrastructure Levy allocated to the Parish from any development will be used by the Parish Council for infrastructure related to the Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan.

A new facility related to St. Peter's Church as described in **POLICY 10** will be managed by the Parochial Church Council.