

Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Examiner's Clarification Note

Qualifying body (Strumpshaw Parish Council) responses in blue, November 2025.

Other small amendments:

- Figure 49 should read: "Left, Buckenham Ancient Woodland Trust noticeboard ..."
- There are 2 paragraphs labelled as 5.32.

This Note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of any doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan provides a clear and concise vision for the neighbourhood area.

The Plan addresses a series of issues relating to the natural and built environment of the neighbourhood area and its landscape setting. The Plan's policies are locally-distinctive. An important element of the Plan is the way in which several of its policies are directly supported by detailed appendices and assessments. It is a good review of a made Plan.

The Plan has been presented in a very effective way. It includes a series of excellent maps. Figure 15 provides a very clear summary of the relationship between its Vision, the objectives, and the resulting policies. This makes the review of the Plan easy to read and to understand.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now able to raise issues for clarification with the Parish Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of the examination report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan:

Policy STR1

I note that paragraph 5.5 sets the scene for the policy. Please can the Parish Council clarify that the Plan proposes to extend the Settlement Boundary from that included in the Greater Norwich Local Plan and that the policies in that Plan would continue to apply in the extended area?

QB response: Yes, the Neighbourhood Plan proposes to extend the Settlement Boundary, and all Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan policies would apply to that area. This was a pragmatic proposal, based on how the built form has changed since the completion of the Mill Meadow development and Strumpshaw Community Hall site on Mill Road.

I also note the commentary in paragraph 5.8 about the proposed strategic gaps. I looked at the gaps carefully during the visit. In doing so, I noticed the clear spatial separation between Strumpshaw and Brundall, and between Strumpshaw and Lingwood. Nevertheless, the

northern and southern boundaries of strategic gaps 2 and 3 do not follow built or natural boundaries.

Three questions arise from this information:

- how would a lack of clarity on the spatial definition of strategic gaps 2 and 3 be addressed in the development management process?

QB: See response to 3rd bullet point question below. The strategic gaps are to ensure coalescence of settlements does not take place. There has been significant development in Brundall, Blofield and Lingwood, neighbouring parishes of Strumpshaw. A strategic gap is of benefit to the parishes of Brundall and Lingwood as well as Strumpshaw.

- could the policy be applied more generally (and as it has been in the made Plan)?

QB response: The amended Neighbourhood Plan looks to be more specific than the made Plan, giving greater clarity to a decision maker on location of the Strategic Gaps.

To frame this part of the policy more positively, we could change policy STR1 from ‘Proposals within the strategic gaps identified in figure 21 that would clearly lead to the erosion of local distinctiveness and the character of Strumpshaw, or to the coalescence of settlements, will not be supported.’ to ‘Proposals within the strategic gaps (identified in figure 21) will only be supported where there is no erosion of local distinctiveness or character of Strumpshaw, or causes the coalescence of settlements.’

- what are the circumstances which have caused the Parish Council to propose the physical definition of strategic gaps?

QB response:

- **Strategic gap 1: follows natural boundaries between development in Strumpshaw, the railway line and the parish boundary with Brundall. Some of the area is at risk of flooding (figure 43).**
- **Strategic gap 2: follows Long Lane between the main settlement of Strumpshaw (northern and southern tips of the western side of the Settlement Boundary) and the hamlet of houses at the western end of the parish. This follows Long Lane, approximately 50-100 metres either side from the roadside verge.**
- **Strategic gap 3: taken from the main settlement of Strumpshaw (northern and southern tips of the eastern side of the Settlement Boundary) to the edge of the Lingwood part of the Strumpshaw parish, up to the railway line and settlement boundary (north end) and the parish boundary (south end). There is no natural boundary for this to follow.**

Strategic gaps have always been an important issue for the community and therefore need to continue to be in the Neighbourhood Plan, with greater definition than in the previously adopted Plan.

In any event, is it appropriate for a neighbourhood plan to define ‘strategic’ gaps?

Yes, to meet the vision ‘By 2045, Strumpshaw parish will continue to be a small,

tranquil and rural village with hamlets’ and ‘Strumpshaw will continue to be distinct from Lingwood, Brundall and Blofield parishes.’. This is in line with community consultation.

Policy STR2

This is an excellent policy which is underpinned by the Design Guidance and Codes (Appendix D). In the round, it is a first-class response to Section 12 of the NPPF.

QB response: No comment.

Policy STR4

This is another excellent and locally-distinctive policy.

QB response: No comment.

Policy STR7

This is another excellent policy underpinned by details in Appendix A.

QB response: No comment.

Policy STR12

This is a good policy which provides a helpful context for development proposals.

QB response: No comment.

Policy STR13

The approach taken in this policy is very effective and has regard to Section 8 of the NPPF.

I note the commentary in the first part of the policy about its overlap with the relevant policies in the two local plans. Nevertheless, both local planning authorities have raised concerns about the way in which the third part of the policy overlaps with the relevant Local Plan policies. Would the third part of the policy be necessary if the first part simply comments that the relevant local plan policies will be applied to the identified community facilities

QB response: As long as the third part of the policy does not conflict with Local Plan policies, it provides clarity and context for the decision maker. Therefore, we would like this to be left in the policy.

Representations

Does the Parish Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan? I would find it helpful if the Parish Council responded to the representations from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

QB response: See attached document.

Both Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority propose a series of revisions to certain policies in the Plan. It would be helpful if the Parish Council commented on the suggested revisions.

QB response: See attached document.

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses to the questions raised by 18 November 2025. Please let me
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know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

If certain responses are available before others, I would be happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled, please could it come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

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Independent Examiner

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21 October 2025