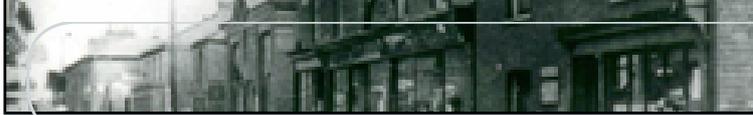




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# PART 1 CHARACTER APPRAISAL





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

# 1 Summary

## 1.1 Key Characteristics

The following are the key characteristics of the Stalham Conservation Area:

- Small, predominantly Victorian town centre with mix of independent shops
- Linear, enclosed, form of the High Street
- Area of late-Georgian buildings around the church at eastern end.
- Informal residential roads off the High Street to south; Market Row and Sutton terrace have long runs of terraced cottages.
- Mature, late Victorian/early twentieth century residential area along Brumstead Road.
- Light industrial activity is interspersed within the town centre

## 1.2 Key Issues

A number of issues have emerged from the character appraisal and are listed below. These form the basis of the management proposals in the second part of the document.

- Scale, form, design and detailing of new development
- Erosion of historic character of older buildings
- Need for review of the Conservation Area boundary
- Poor condition of some buildings, empty shops, signs of vandalism
- Visual impact of present car parking arrangements, road signage and road engineering.
- Incoherent 'public realm' design (including street furniture)
- Poor pedestrian signage and ineffective linkage between High Street and supermarket.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 The Stalham Conservation Area

There are two Conservation Areas in Stalham. One is focused on the historic Staithe area, south of the A149. The second, earlier designation, centred on the High Street, is the subject of this appraisal.

This conservation area was designated by North Norfolk District Council on 17 January 1975. There are only five Listed buildings within the Conservation Area...However, a number of other buildings are of local, historic interest and also make a positive contribution to the area.

### 2.2 The purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal

Conservation Areas are designated under the provision 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'.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and 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 paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

In response to these statutory requirements, this appraisal document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. The appraisal conforms to the English Heritage guidance as set out in Guidance on Conservation Areas (February 2006). Additional government guidance regarding

the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within Planning Policy Guidance note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15).

Government advice on archaeology is set out in Planning Policy Guidance note 16: Archaeology (PPG16).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the conservation area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (Part 1: Character Appraisal)
- Provide guidelines to prevent erosion of character, and achieve enhancement (Part 2: Management proposals).

### 2.3 The planning policy context

This appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Stalham Conservation area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework produced by North Norfolk District Council. That framework is set out in a number of documents:

- North Norfolk Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (adopted 2008)
- North Norfolk Local Development Framework: Site Specific Proposals (timetabled for adoption December 2010)
- North Norfolk Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2008)
- North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2009)
- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

- Heritage White Paper, March 2007. 'Heritage Protection for the 21st Century
- Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment

### 3 Location and Setting



Stalham from the south in 2008 (Photo: Mike Page)

#### 3.1 Location and context



Stalham from the south 2008 (photo, Mike page)

Stalham is a small town and service centre in north-east Norfolk located to either side of the A149. It lies approximately 9 miles south-east of the larger town of North Walsham; 15 miles north-east of Norwich and 16 miles from Great Yarmouth. Its development and role as a service centre and market town was substantially influenced by the proximity of the Broads and access to them.

#### 3.2 General character and plan form

The general character of the conservation area is that of a small Victorian town. The linear high street runs approximately west-north-west to east-south-east. To the south of the High Street, there are a series of informal cottage rows. The High Street

slopes gradually beyond the church to the east where it converges, by means of two mini roundabouts, with the Ingham road from the north and Lower Staithe Road from the south. The line of the High Street then continues eastwards as a mainly residential road towards Stalham Green and Sutton. The Conservation Area ends with the Church Farm complex on the north side of Yarmouth road.

To the south, the Conservation Area continues along the eastern side of Lower Staithe Road. Aside from the 1935 Smallburgh Rural District Council Offices, the buildings here mostly date from the first half of the nineteenth century and display a variety of scales of domestic buildings and outbuildings.

Brumstead Road lies to the north and roughly parallel with the High Street. Various industrial uses (as well as two schools and the church and churchyard extension) at the eastern end give way to large late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential plots towards the west.

#### 3.3 Landscape setting

Stalham lies around four miles from the north-east Norfolk coast. It is situated around a tributary of the River Ant, part of the northern Broads network (this has been central to Stalham's existence over hundreds of years. It also lies within the open and gently undulating north-east Norfolk rich loam district, some of the most fertile and productive farmland land in the county.

See also the North Norfolk District Council Landscape Character Assessment Stalham Area (LP2).



## 4 Historic Development and Archaeology

### 4.1 The origins and historic development of the area

A brief summary of the archaeological sites and finds is included as Appendix 2. Further information is available via the Heritage Explorer website ([www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk)).

Despite the largely Victorian appearance of the town today, the settlement is a long established one. For centuries it formed part of the ancient administrative Hundred of Happing, which occupied the area between the Rivers Ant, Thurne and the coast.

The church survives as a monument from the fourteenth century. It is relatively large, suggesting some former significance. Evidence of the succeeding centuries is scant but includes the fine seventeenth century, Stalham Hall (Grade II\*), built for Robert Puckle of Norwich which survives as Norfolk's finest example of the Artisan Mannerist style.

By the late eighteenth century, water-borne trading was clearly well established. The Stalham Dyke had been cut (or regularised) creating a navigable route between the town and the river Ant. A granary building designed for wherries survives, dated 1808, along with a range of other early nineteenth-century buildings.

Perhaps surprisingly, in the early nineteenth century, Stalham had not yet become the largest or most significant settlement within Happing Hundred. In 1841, the town's population at 679 was lower than three other Happing villages: Hickling, Ludham and East Ruston. Until the mid-nineteenth century, Stalham is typically described as 'a large and commercial village' (Whites Directory, 1836).



Extract from 1810 Stalham Enclosure Map showing the main High Street settlement area ([www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk))

The Enclosure Map of 1810 shows the settlement clustered both around the church in the High Street (then the main Yarmouth to North Walsham road) and, in the Stalham Green area near the Stalham Hall complex to the east. Between the two sites were Church Farm and the huge white Smock Mill which must have dominated the town throughout the nineteenth century.



Extract from 1841 Tithe Map ([www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk))

The Tithe Map of 1841 shows the town to be similar in form to that of 30 years earlier. The town's population had begun to rise slightly at this time. This is reflected in the development of the Baker Street settlement running off the High Street to the south, along with some development on the Upper and Lower Staithe Roads. In this same period, the chancel of the church was rebuilt (1827) and a notably early fire engine house was built in the corner of the churchyard (1833).

From the mid-nineteenth century, the 'commercial village' developed into a busy market town and local centre, serving its agricultural hinterland and a wide range of developments took place. A comprehensive series of church restoration programmes began in 1854. In 1855, the Corn Hall and Police Station were built. From the 1860s, references to the town's market appear regularly. Traders operating in the town in this period included a boatwright, gig-builder, millwright, agricultural implement manufacturer, millers, threshing machine proprietors, seed merchants, harness maker, stone mason, alongside all those trades serving more domestic needs.

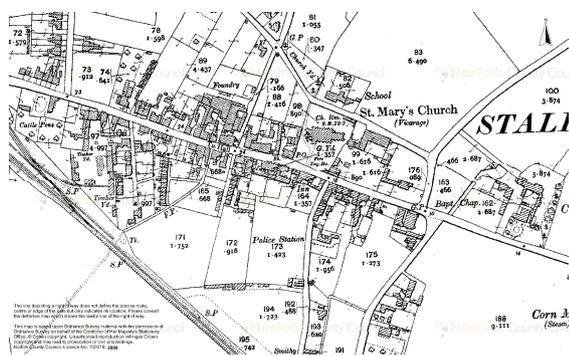
In the 1870s, the board school was built on Brumstead Road. In 1880 the railway line from Great Yarmouth was extended to Stalham and then on to North Walsham the following year. Late in 1885, the construction of a large new Baptist chapel and ancillary buildings, was completed at the eastern end of the High Street.



Extract from 1885 Ordnance Survey map (published in 1891) ([www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk)). The Baptist chapel is yet to appear.

The 1885 Ordnance Survey map, shows that by that date, the High Street had expanded. At the western end, on the north side, today's Break Charity Shop building had been built, along with Stone Villa and neighbouring buildings opposite. The map also shows the beginnings of St John's Road and the first pair of buildings in the terrace where the post office is now located. The area around the Railway Hotel and St Mary's Works foundry had become densely developed. The cottage terraces to the south of the High Street - Market Row and Sutton

Terrace had been built. The residential development of Brumstead Road, had also commenced with the large detached villas, The Cedars and Haughley House.



Extract 1906 Ordnance Survey Map (Norfolk County Council Licence No: 100193)

The 1906 Ordnance Survey map shows further development at the western end of the High Street on the north side, along with St John's Road. To the south of the High Street, the Moore's Yard area had been developed in connection with the railway (two timber yards are marked there, along with cattle pens further west. Development on the north side of Brumstead road had also commenced with the Manse (1895) and Lacewood next door.

In the 1930s, two large public buildings, the High School and Smallburgh Rural District Council Offices, were built in the town. The Second World War saw bomb damage in the vicinity of the Railway Hotel (re-named The Grebe from 1937) and the subsequent clearance of it and various neighbouring buildings. Throughout this period, the town saw modest and steady growth that continued until the 1950s and into the 1960s during which time the town prospered. .

The second half of the twentieth century saw larger scale changes to the town's fortunes. In 1959 the M&GN railway line was closed. This was followed by the construction of the A149 Stalham bypass along the route of the railway.



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Large residential development programmes followed in the 1960s and 1970s, which saw the population of the town more than double within a twenty year period. At the last (2001) census, the population was recorded at just under 3000.

In recent years, the biggest physical change to the town has been the arrival of the Tesco Supermarket, the site of which directly abuts the Conservation Area boundary to the south. This development led to the displacement of the Tuesday market ('Stalham Sale') which today survives as stalls on the District Council pay and display car park at the west end of the High Street. The Tesco development also meant closure to traffic of Lower Staithe road and the creation of a new road 'Old Market Road' which joins the A149 with the B1151 and now forms the priority route into the town.



Stalham town centre from the south in 2008 (photo: Mike Page)

## 5 Spatial Analysis

### 5.1 Character and interrelationship of spaces within the area

The tight linear form of the High Street means there are relatively few public open spaces within the area under consideration. The Grebe PH and Sandwich shop beside it (photos below) are set back from the original building line on the High Street and their front spaces form a natural, if rather undefined, central space.



view to the east shows the continuation of the High Street as the Old Yarmouth Road (below).



Certain groupings of buildings along the High Street have been regularly photographed over the years. The buildings shown below all survive and still form an important part of the Conservation Area today.



### 5.2 Key views and vistas

There are relatively few long views within the Conservation Area. Even the High Street with its apparently linear form, in fact bends gently, obscuring views along its full length. When looking to the east, the Old Surgery, adjacent to the churchyard, terminates views in that direction. From the Old Surgery, the



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



**Archive photographs of The Town Hall and its neighbouring buildings and the eastern end of the High Street (Photos from Stalham Archive [www.remembernorfolk.gov.uk](http://www.remembernorfolk.gov.uk))**

## 6 Character Analysis

### 6.1 Activity, prevailing or former uses within the area

The Conservation Area comprises areas of commercial, light industrial and residential use, often intermixed. There is little activity on this side of the A149 that is directly related to tourism although a number of businesses must benefit from the seasonal influx.



High Street Shops

#### Commercial/Service

The High Street remains the commercial centre of the town, offering a range of shops and services. Shops include newsagents, chemist, grocers, butchers, shoes, antiques. Services include post office, solicitors, opticians, dentist and vets. There has been

a recent trend towards residential infill and the mix of shops has altered in recent years. There are now seven takeaway fast food establishments in close proximity along the High Street (five are within the Conservation Area).

#### Light Industrial

At present, light industrial activity is interspersed with other uses in the town centre.

These areas include Moore's Yard; St Mary's Works (activity there includes printers, tyre and car repairs); at the eastern end of the High Street around the former petrol station, and the old cinema site on Brumstead Road (car sales, sign-writers, windows). The former builders' merchant, adjacent to the churchyard, has recently relocated to the staithe area.





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



**St Mary's Works, a former foundry site and Brumstead Road car tyres and repairs**



**Informal residential areas – Lower Staithe Road and Baker Street**

### *Residential*

Residential areas in the Conservation Area include Brumstead Road, Lower Staithe Road, Church Farm, and the informal roads and terraces off the High Street. There has also been some residential development along the High Street, e.g Dunkerley Court and new developments inserted to the rear of commercial premises.



### 6.2 Character Areas

The Conservation Area has been considered in terms of six sub areas. These are 1. High Street west; 2. High Street east; 3. Brumstead Road, 4. Lower Staithe Road; 5. Off-High Street residential; and 6. Church Farm area.

#### ***The High Street***

The High Street forms the commercial centre of the town and is generally Victorian in character. There are however a number of good quality and varied, mainly late-Georgian, buildings at the eastern end of the High Street.

The later development at the western end of the High Street comprises some potentially good, nineteenth-century buildings, although a number have lost their original features.

The historic character of the town centre has also been weakened by the nature of the infill development from the 1960s onwards. Despite this the buildings along the High Street remain of interest and their architectural value is sometimes underestimated.

#### **Area 1 - High Street – west**

(South side moving west to east)

To create a more coherent Conservation Area, it is proposed to extend the existing boundary as far as the small, tree-lined car park at the western end of the High Street. The High Street is more open at this point with more trees. This extension would bring in the remaining Victorian buildings as well as more public space.

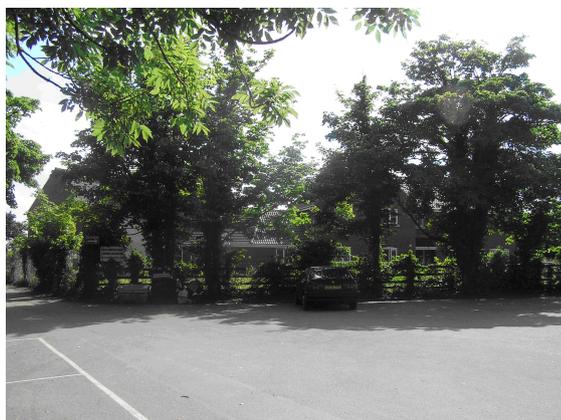
The tree lined boundary to the car park is important in softening and providing some screen to the new development beyond. This extension would also then include the library, flanked by yew trees and its tree-lined garden and the eighteenth-century thatched building next door, currently a solicitors' office, which also has important garden space. The estate agents next door appears to be relatively modern. These are followed by more typically Victorian commercial buildings which first appear on the 1885 OS map. Stone Villa is the former Perfitts stone-masons premises, with stone topped gate pillars marking the entrance to the former yard. The building was a shop window in itself with decorative stone bays, lintels and even a stone doorcase. Many of the headstones in the churchyard are marked with the Perfitt name. A solid bay fronted building is attached. The windows and doors of this and Stone Villa have suffered unsympathetic replacements, as has the undertakers building which follows.



Small car park now home to Tuesday market, the library building and tree-lined garden



18thC house now a solicitors' premises with garden and estate agents next door





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Late Victorian commercial block with bay windows and decorative porches. Right Stone Villa is former premises of Perfitts stonemasons.

Nos 32-42 High Street

The western end of the High Street Conservation Area currently commences with the block of buildings Nos 32-42 comprising an opticians and two fast food establishments. No. 42, the Fortune Chinese, was until recently the town bakery. Although rather obscured by paint, the c.1830s building has a good double fronted decorative cobble façade with brick dressings and quoins and a saw-tooth cornice. It also retains a good doorcase, although the door itself is a poor uPVC replacement. The taller optician's building appears a little later in date. All retain black glazed pantiles.





Entrance to Baker Street and Estate Agents c.1840 with recent single storey units attached

The entrance to the 'informal' Baker Street residential area is followed by a detached double fronted building of c.1830s with more recent single storey units attached. The building has lost many of its features (chimneys, windows) although retains a good doorcase. The next building, the former clock café, is lower and less formal than most of the High Street buildings. It appears to have been four cottages, subsequently converted into two shop units. Both are currently empty with one side undergoing repairs that seem to have ceased. This block is followed by recent infill development. The hipped roofs and form follow the buildings to the east, although these have a pantile roof and despite the key location, the new shop fronts are plain and lacking in any detail.



The old clock café building and new development at nos 60, 60A and 60B

**(north side moving west to east)**

As with the south side, it is proposed to extend the conservation area to include the Victorian buildings on the north side (See Appendix 1). These consist of a late-Victorian terrace with white brick detailing and slate roofs, hipped on the St John's Road corner.





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Late-Victorian terrace with modern shopfronts added



Charity and coffee shop

The Dunkerley Court development follows. This mainly occupies the former site of a garage. The High Street frontage is a mixture of commercial and residential and not of particular merit. It is proposed to delete the part of the development that lies behind the High Street frontage, from the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area currently commences with a charity shop. (A plain detached Victorian building set back from the main building line). This formerly had a large mature garden to the rear, but is now part of the Dunkerley Court development. Most windows have been replaced by uPVC. Its neighbouring buildings have had their facades obscured by heavy, flat roofed shop front extensions.



Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Computer shop, and red brick block of shops.



A long stretch of later development along the High Street

A Victorian red brick block of shops follows then the street space opens out with a long run of modern commercial infill set back from the earlier building line. This is broken by a lone surviving Victorian building with a fine shop front. The historic buildings in this area were a casualty of war-time bomb damage. A flat roofed 1970s shop and The 1950s Grebe Public House ends this part of the Conservation Area.



A lone traditional building among the later re-development. Retains a very good shopfront although the signage added is not sympathetic to it.



A continuation of the stretch of later development



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



The Grebe PH a 1950s replacement for the Railway Hotel and neighbouring buildings. Also rear of The Grebe and its neighbour from Bank Street.

### Area 2 - High Street– east

This includes the strongest, most distinctive part of the conservation area. This is the older end of the High Street and includes the church. The buildings include a mixture of styles and a number of handsome, mid-nineteenth century and polite Georgian examples. Many are red brick with slate roofs. There has generally been a greater retention of historic detail at this end of the High Street. A number of fine outbuildings also survive to the rear.

Less positive is the derelict builders' merchant site beside the church. The building on the High Street frontage, a former post office, once made a very positive

contribution to the area. The recent Rosedale Court development is also rather lacking in detail.

### (South side - moving west to east)



Well photographed group of buildings. All red brick with slate hipped roofs.

The café and chemist shop are both red brick with hipped slate roofs and sash windows and both retain good shop fronts. The Town Hall beyond, formerly a Corn Hall, was built in 1855 in classical style with pediment and tall tri-partite 'sash' effect windows to the street façade. It is a mixture of red brick with white brick pilasters and skewback arches. Next door was until recently, a florist's shop but is currently unoccupied. It has a later extension on the western side to join it to the town hall. There are also some nicely detailed buildings attached to the rear.

The Natwest Bank building which follows is an example of 1920s or 1930s neo-classical 'Bank' architectural design, added to an earlier building.



**The Swan Inn**

The Swan Inn also retains a number of features and there are a good range of outbuildings to the rear of this and the neighbouring building.



The bridal and barber's shop has a good late Georgian façade with many features retained, although the slate roof covering has been replaced. No. 106 High Street is of less formal appearance than its neighbouring buildings. It had an off centre axial chimney stack until recently. The position of the dentil course suggests the thatched roof has been raised.





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Opposite the churchyard, 110 High Street the former Maid's Head Hotel has an eighteenth century façade. The former gardens have been fenced off for development and the remainder concreted.

After the former Maids Head is the top of Upper Staithe Road. The road is narrow at this end and lined on both sides by buildings (left) and flint wall and tall beech trees (right) lining the former gardens of the Maid's Head Hotel (below).



Left. Former police station block

The Conservation Area terminates on Upper Staithe Road with the red brick and slate roofed former Police Station block of 1855, now Wherry Court flats.



112 and 118 High Street

112 High Street occupies the corner of Upper Staithe Road. The building retains some features but has lost its chimney and colourwashing has obscured the tumbled gable and decorative tie-irons. The neighbouring building No 118 is unusually three storeys and retains a good shop front.



No 124 has been altered though its neighbour (left above) has retained a most of its features. No 138 is rendered and end-on to the road. Any original detail has been obscured. This is followed by single storey shops set back from the road. While not a positive element of the Conservation Area, these are relatively unobtrusive. The imposing red and white brick Baptist chapel with its flanking towers marks the end of the High Street.



The Baptist Chapel of 1885

High Street East (north side) - moving west to east



Barclays, corner of Bank Street, and below, the former Hensman shops

Like the Natwest building, Barclays Bank is another example of Neo-Classical 'Bank' architecture attached to an older building.



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

This is followed by an Edwardian, former department store, built following a fire on the site in 1906.

The next site is currently (2009) derelict following the move of the builders' merchant to the staithe. The shop is red brick with black glazed pantiles and as a post office was once well photographed. To the rear, buildings run along the churchyard boundary, now rendered with asbestos roof. Some of these appear to be period buildings underneath the render. The whole is advertised as a residential development site.



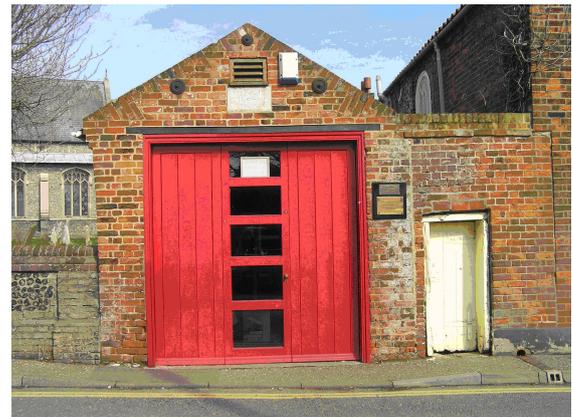
Former builders' merchant site, High Street



Church of St Mary

The Grade II\* listed Church of St Mary the Virgin follows. The nave and aisles date from the fourteenth century, the tower was not finished and is consequently rather wide for its height. The chancel was rebuilt in 1827

and a further series of restorations took place from the mid nineteenth century. The church is notable today for its remarkable font. The Churchyard is not particularly large but provides some valuable 'green' space in the town centre. It also contains a number of ornamental trees around the boundary and lining the paths.



Above, Firehouse and lock-up. Below, The Old Surgery

An Old Firehouse and the town 'lock up' are built into the churchyard on the High Street side and are Grade II listed. The firehouse, of Flemish bond red brick and slate roof, was built in 1833 and is a notably early example. The lock-up attached has the remains of a vaulted roof and door frame reputedly made from the old town stocks.

These are in turn attached to No. 137, the Old Surgery, a handsome late Georgian redbrick house. It has small pane sash windows to the front façade with a

rectangular Victorian bay window added and a classical central doorcase. The hipped roof has been renewed with red pantiles. The property has a large mature garden with a low flint wall and line of pollarded chestnut trees along the High St boundary. The ornate iron gate is by Randells of North Walsham.

The rather austere Rosedale Court development has been built in part of the former garden of the Old Surgery. The impact has been slightly softened by the retention of flint boundary walls and some vegetation.



Rosedale and Stalham Car Sales



1-7 Rosedale Court. Recent garden development. Right – shop units in a converted outbuilding.

The High Street end on the north side with a listed building *Rosedale*; its attached former outbuilding, which has been converted into small shop units; and associated parking and car sales.

The Rosedale building is Grade II listed c.1800, although the visible gable end with its close tumbling suggested this is an early eighteenth century building that has been heightened and refaced. The setting of the building is adversely affected by the surrounding use in a car sales area. The site has been in use as a garage for many years, however the heavy front canopy relates to former petrol pumps and should now be removed. The building appears in need of attention, as does the weatherboarded building attached.

**Area 3 -Brumstead Road - South Side moving westwards**



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

There is currently (2009) a cluster of industry at the eastern end of Brumstead Road. The High Street car sales activity wraps around the corner. To the rear of Rosedale are car repairs, and modern units containing sign makers and pawnbrokers.

The old cinema building formerly known as *The Broadland* until it closed in 1963 has also been in industrial use until recently. The age of the present building is unknown but there has been a building of similar volume on this site since at least the 1810 enclosure map.



1840s cottages



Former National School



The Old Cinema and its informal yard with flint boundary wall separating it from the Rosedale Court development.

The rear of the former builders' merchant's yard follows the north side of the churchyard. A long asbestos roofed and concrete rendered building runs along the western churchyard wall.

A 1960s style concrete boundary wall runs along Brumstead Road. A modern bungalow, *The Drift* has been inserted in here, though is not readily visible here and is accessed from Bank Street.

A pair of 1840s semi-detached cottages follows; their eastern gable end forming part of the churchyard boundary wall. In the north side of the churchyard is the former National School of redbrick with hipped slate roof, now the church rooms.

The Bank Street crossroads follows. A very good flint wall runs down part of Bank Street.



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



**Brumstead Road end of Bank Street with mature vegetation behind.**

Beyond the Bank Street crossroads, Brumstead road becomes a mature residential suburb of late Victorian, Edwardian and later detached villas in large garden plots.

To the south of the road, the garden plots are particularly large.



**Views of the south side of Brumstead Road**

Haughley House, a redbrick and slate roofed double-fronted Victorian villa, is marked on the 1885 Ordnance Survey map. The next two properties, Holly Bank and The Laurels, are relatively modern although within large, mature gardens. Cedar House, a large mid to late Victorian red brick, slate roof dwelling, is sited end-on to the road, as is Barton Cottage, an older cottage, much altered, rendered and extended.





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Above, Cedar House and Below: Barton Cottage



### Brumstead Road north side (proposed addition)

The proposed north side extension to the Conservation Area begins with the 1870s Board School, the first development along the north of the road. This is followed by the late Victorian churchyard extension, complete with commemorative gateposts and iron gates but now bereft of railings along the Brumstead Road boundary.



1870s Board School and late Victorian, churchyard extension

The crossroads with Bank Street and Camping Field Lane follows; then occupying the corner plot is The (Old) Manse, built in 1895 for the town's Baptist minister. Aside from one bungalow (Trees), the remaining properties as far as Seaton House, are Edwardian redbrick villas, along with two delightful little Neo-vernacular Broads-style half-timbered bungalows (The Limes and Roselands) with pyramidal, thatched roofs, built in the late 1910s or early 1920s (they were certainly built by 1922 when they appeared in a local directory).





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



**The Old Manse and Lacewood**



**Straiton and Seaton House**



**The Limes and Roselands with Birches in the background**

### **Area 4 - Lower Staithe Road**

The Enclosure Map shows Lower Staithe Road as undeveloped in 1810. However, by the First Edition One Inch map of the 1830s and the title map of the 1840s, the buildings along the east side had all been constructed with the exception of the later-Victorian 'Staithe Way' and the solid neo-classical Smallburgh Rural District Council building, built in 1935. Despite their similar age, Lower Staithe Road grouping displays a variety of style and scale. By contrast, the western side of the road has been developed with mainly modern chalet development and is not included in the Conservation Area.



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



View along the east side of Staithe Road



The cottage named Gaydon in centre



Former Smallburgh Rural District Council offices



Above, The Cottage and Below, The later Staithe Way



The Coach House and attached Garden Cottage

### Area 5 - Off High Street Residential

To the south of the High Street, there are a series of residential spaces (Baker Street, Sutton Terrace and Market Row) with quite

a rural character. All have a linear form with informal, un-made up road surfaces and cottage style dwellings.

Sutton Terrace is a long run of red brick terraced cottages with black pantiled roofs. A number of the cottages have been rendered and painted cream which has broken up the effect of the long terrace. 'Permitted Development' has also affected character.



Sutton Terrace

The Market Row cottages are a mixture of flint and brick with orange pantiles. They appear to have been 7 small cottages originally but some have been amalgamated.



Market Row

### Area 6 - Church Farm Area

This part of the conservation area beyond the mini-roundabouts is centred around Church Farm. Church Farm House is Listed Grade II. The house has a fine early nineteenth century grey brick façade and black glazed pantiles. The gardens include a number of notable trees and the Yarmouth Road boundary is lined with a series of tall beech trees. The former farm buildings have been converted to residential use and there has been some infill between the farmstead and the High Street since the conservation area was designated.



Main façade of Church Farm House (dated 1808).  
Colourwashed gable visible.





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Rather elaborate new entrance and modern infill on the corner of Yarmouth Road.



### 6.3 Key unlisted buildings

- **The Old Surgery**, High Street

Handsome late Georgian redbrick House, small pane sash windows with rectangular Victorian rectangular bay window added, classical central doorcase. Hipped roof renewed with red pantiles.

- **Baptist Chapel**, High Street

Large chapel which opened in 1884 to seat 450. Imposing symmetrical façade of white brick with red brick dressings with flanking towers topped with slate pyramidal roofs. Main façade has semi-circular headed lights comprising centre light with smaller lights to either side, all with coloured glass margins and rubbed brick voussoirs. Ancillary buildings adjacent.



- **Town Hall** (former Corn Hall)

Classical red and white brick façade of three bays with a central open pediment. Built 1855 paid for by a company of shareholders made up of leading farmers and traders but use as a corn hall ceased shortly after as the farmers and merchants preferred to trade in the Maids Head Inn (Whites 1883). It was then variously used as a library, reading room, lecture and concert hall. Today is the Town Hall and used for a

variety of purposes including the twice monthly Saturday farmers' market; as a cinema and for a variety of meetings and sales.

## 6.4 Local details

### *Ground surface materials*

Aside from the informal unmade surfaces to the south of the High Street Baker Street, Market row, surfaces are generally all tarmac.

### *Ironwork*

There are a number of good examples of Victorian ironwork in the town railings, gates and gate-posts.



**Cast iron Gate posts in High Street and Entrance to Churchyard extension (1897)**



**Railings and Gates at Church Farm and Barber's Shop, High St**





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Churchyard extension gates, the roadside railings are lost. Cottages behind Baptist chapel.



Cobbles used at the rear of street facades

### 6.5 The public realm

#### Construction materials

The majority of the buildings in the Conservation Area are constructed of red brick. Some have white brick dressings and Church Farm has a white brick façade.

Flints and cobbles can also be found, usually as a lower status material, to the rear, or for ancillary buildings or boundary walls. Cobbles have also been used in a decorative way on the main façade of the Old Bakery (although now rather obscured).



Cobbles and waster bricks on ancillary building at former Maid's Head and right a partly cobbled terrace.

Many of the buildings have hipped, slate roofs. The others are covered with a mix of glazed black and unglazed red pantiles. Four buildings within the Conservation Area are thatched. These are two eighteenth

century dwellings (one at either end of the High Street) and the two neo-vernacular bungalows on Brumstead Road.

### 6.6 The contribution made by green spaces, ecology and biodiversity

Overall there is a distinct lack of public green space or street trees within the Conservation Area. The High Street in particular is generally bereft of vegetation. The contribution of those mature gardens around the Conservation Area is therefore particularly valuable. Old photographs demonstrate there was once much more vegetation along the High Street.

### 6.7 Erosion of Character

#### **Buildings**

The relatively few listed buildings means the Conservation Area has been particularly vulnerable to a steady erosion of character through the loss of historic features. These include loss of timber sash windows, chimney stacks and slate roof coverings.



**Buildings which have lost their designed features**

#### **Modern infill**

There are a number of examples of modern infill in the Conservation Area. Unfortunately some of it has done little to conserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

The Dunkerley Court development straddles the present Conservation Area boundary. Rosedale Court has been developed in part of former garden of Old Surgery.





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



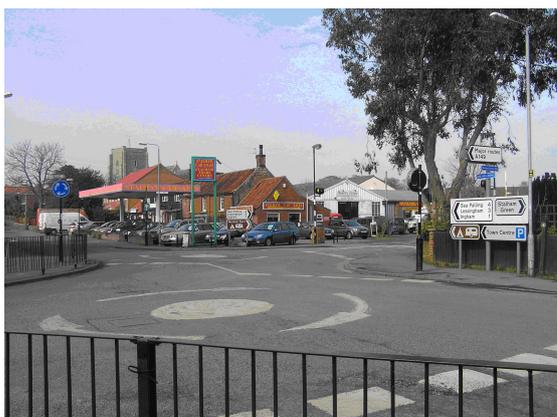
Recent development in a key High Street location 60, 60A, 60B High Street and further development at rear. The form of the buildings echoes those to the east of it but the detailing is very plain.

### **Traffic Management**

There is a considerable volume of on-street parking along the High Street which is convenient and no doubt helpful to trade but the narrowness of the High Street means it has quite a visual impact, as the photos throughout this document show. The heavily 'engineered' traffic calming measures undertaken in the late 1990s, do not complement the character of the town centre.

### **Public Realm**

The mini-roundabouts, attendant lighting and visually excessive signage along with the car sales area create a rather cluttered impression when approaching the town.



### **6.8 General condition**

Overall the condition of the conservation area is very mixed. There are some notably well cared for buildings but also derelict sites, half finished repairs and broken windows.

### **6.9 Problems, pressures and the capacity for change**

#### *New development*

The North Norfolk Local Development Framework sees Stalham performing a stronger role as a local service centre providing jobs, shops, services and community facilities to meet the needs of visitors and residents of the town and the adjacent villages.

Overall the LDF recognises the need to protect the setting of the town and to promote development opportunities that will serve to enhance it.



## 7 Community Involvement

Involving the community is an important part of the appraisal process.

Community Involvement and Public Consultation will be undertaken by:

- Delivering leaflets to all households and businesses
- Making contact with key community groups and providing briefing sessions.
- Holding a public exhibition
- Publishing the draft appraisal on the council's website, accompanied by an electronic comments/feedback form.
- Use of media and press releases
- Evaluation



## 8 Recommendations and Conclusion

### 8.1 Suggested boundary changes

Suggested boundary changes:

- Extend boundary to include remaining Victorian (and earlier) buildings at the western end of the High Street.
- Include short section of north side of Brumstead Road
- Exclude modern Dunkerley Court development behind High Street

### 8.2 Summary of issues - SWOT analysis

The following provides a summary of the (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) identified during the appraisal process.

#### Strengths

- Victorian character
- Some very positive buildings
- Mix of independent shops
- Compact and accessible

#### Weaknesses

- Indifferent (at best) infill development
- Erosion of character of historic buildings through Permitted Development
- Lack of coherence in parts of the Conservation Area
- Signs of vandalism and neglected, empty sites
- Lack of greenery/ public seating space.

#### Opportunities

- Provision for enhancement through sensitive development schemes
- Enhancement of public realm through an area scheme
- Production of information to inform alterations and repairs to historic buildings.
- Incentives for reinstatement of features
- Promotion of the town's many positive aspects

#### Threats

- Economic decline
- Development pressures
- Piecemeal infill development
- Continued erosion of character

Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan  
PART 2 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS





## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

### 1 Introduction

Part 1 of this document, the Character Appraisal, has identified the positive qualities of Stalham Conservation Area, which make the conservation area special and distinctive, and which should be conserved and enhanced.

Part 2 of this document, the Management Proposals, builds upon the negative features which have also been identified, to provide a series of issues and recommendations for improvement and change.

## 2 Issues and Recommendations

### 2.1 Review of Conservation Area boundary

#### Review of Conservation Area boundary

To create a more coherent area and delete some modern development, it is recommended that the following changes are made to the Conservation Area boundary.

- Extend boundary to include remainder of Victorian (and earlier) buildings at the western end of the High Street.
- Include short section of north side of Brumstead Road
- Delete modern Dunkerley Court development behind High Street

### 2.2 Alterations to unlisted buildings and Article 4(2) Directions

The majority of the historic buildings within the Conservation Area are unlisted. A number of these have lost historic features. The cumulative effect of lost features is the weakening of historic character.

Where single family dwellings are concerned, such alterations can usually be carried out without planning permission from the council. Development of this kind is known as 'permitted development' and falls into the various classes which are listed in the Town and Country Planning GPDO 1995.

Powers exist for the Council to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interest of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These are known as article 4 (2) Directions. This may be considered to prevent erosion of the historic character of the area.

- The Council may consider Article 4 (2) Directions to protect buildings that retain original features, from inappropriate alteration.
- The Council will encourage property owners to reverse unsympathetic alterations and to reinstate architectural features, such as windows, doors and boundary walls with modern replacements in the style and materials of the original.

With or without legal protection, production of guidance on conservation and design, specific to Stalham will be explored.

### 2.3 Buildings of Local Interest

Stalham contains a number of buildings which are unlisted, but which make a positive contribution to the character of the area. This is either due to their age, materials, relationship to the surrounding historic buildings, architectural detailing, townscape value, or a combination of these factors. PPG15 (paragraph 6.16) gives provision for local authorities to draw up lists of locally important buildings which make a valuable contribution to the local scene or local history, but which do not merit national listing. These will be given additional consideration in the planning process, but they will not enjoy the full protection of statutory listing.

The following buildings are proposed for entry on the Local List:

- Baptist Chapel, High Street
- Town Hall, High Street
- The Old Surgery, High Street

### 2.4 Development Pressures

The siting of any new development in the Conservation Area should be carefully considered and should take into account the



## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

historic footprint of the town, the scale and form and design and detailing of existing buildings.

New development should include a presumption against the loss of historic buildings within the town to avoid further weakening the historic character.

### 2.5 Buildings at Risk

No buildings are currently (2009) on the Listed Buildings at Risk Register. However the Grade II listed property 'Rosedale' at the east end of the High Street would benefit from some attention.

### 2.6 Tree and green space management

There are relatively few trees within the Conservation Area and opportunities for planting should be considered.

Anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area is required to give six weeks notice to the local planning authority (subject to a range of exemptions including small trees, or dead, dying or dangerous trees.

Tree Preservation Orders should be considered for:

- Church Farm, Yarmouth Road

Further significant townscape trees have been identified:

- Various Ornamental trees lining boundary in the churchyard
- Pollarded Chestnut Trees along boundary of the Old Surgery
- Line of Beech Trees along former Garden boundary of Maids Head/Top of Upper Staithe Road
- Single Oak Tree at Corner Lower Staithe Road near Baptist Church

### 2.7 Public realm

1. The Council will work with other agencies, residents and land owners to ensure that public open spaces are maintained and enhanced.
2. The Council will encourage informed enhancement schemes to improve the public realm and any opportunities to introduce or reintroduce trees and green space will be supported.
3. General principles for the management of the public realm and green spaces in the historic environment can be referred to in the English Heritage guidance *Streets for All*.



### 3 Monitoring and Review

As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the changing national government policy. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the Conservation Area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action.
- An assessment of the recommendations of this document and whether they have been acted upon, and how successful this has been
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and itemising necessary action.



## 4 HELM as resource

Further extensive guidance on the local management of the historic environment can be found on the online resource *Historic Environment Local Management* at [www.helm.org.uk](http://www.helm.org.uk)

# APPENDICES





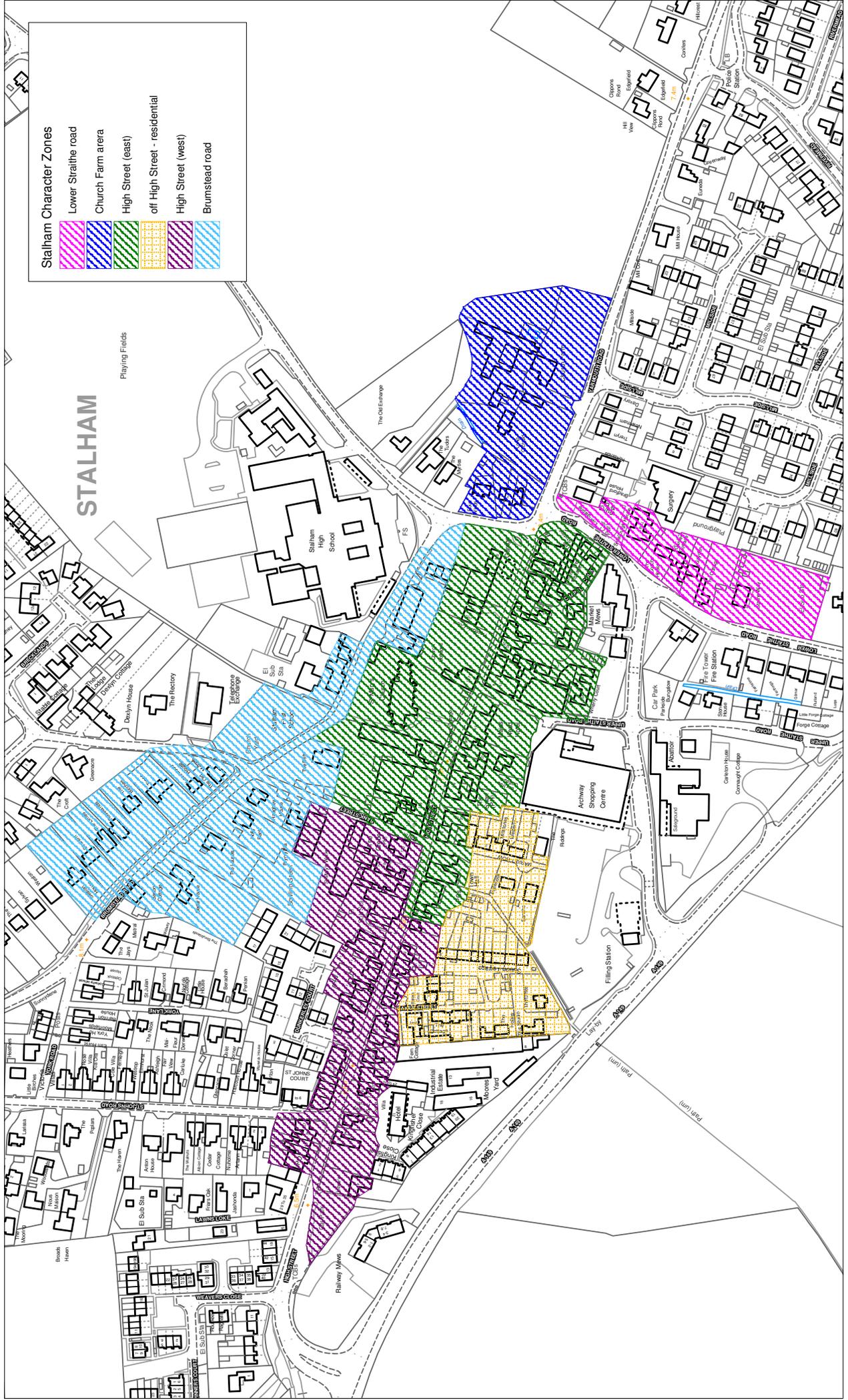
## Appendix 1: Stalham Conservation Area Maps

### Map 1: Character Zones



# Stalham Character Zones

Scale 1:2468  
 Compiled by





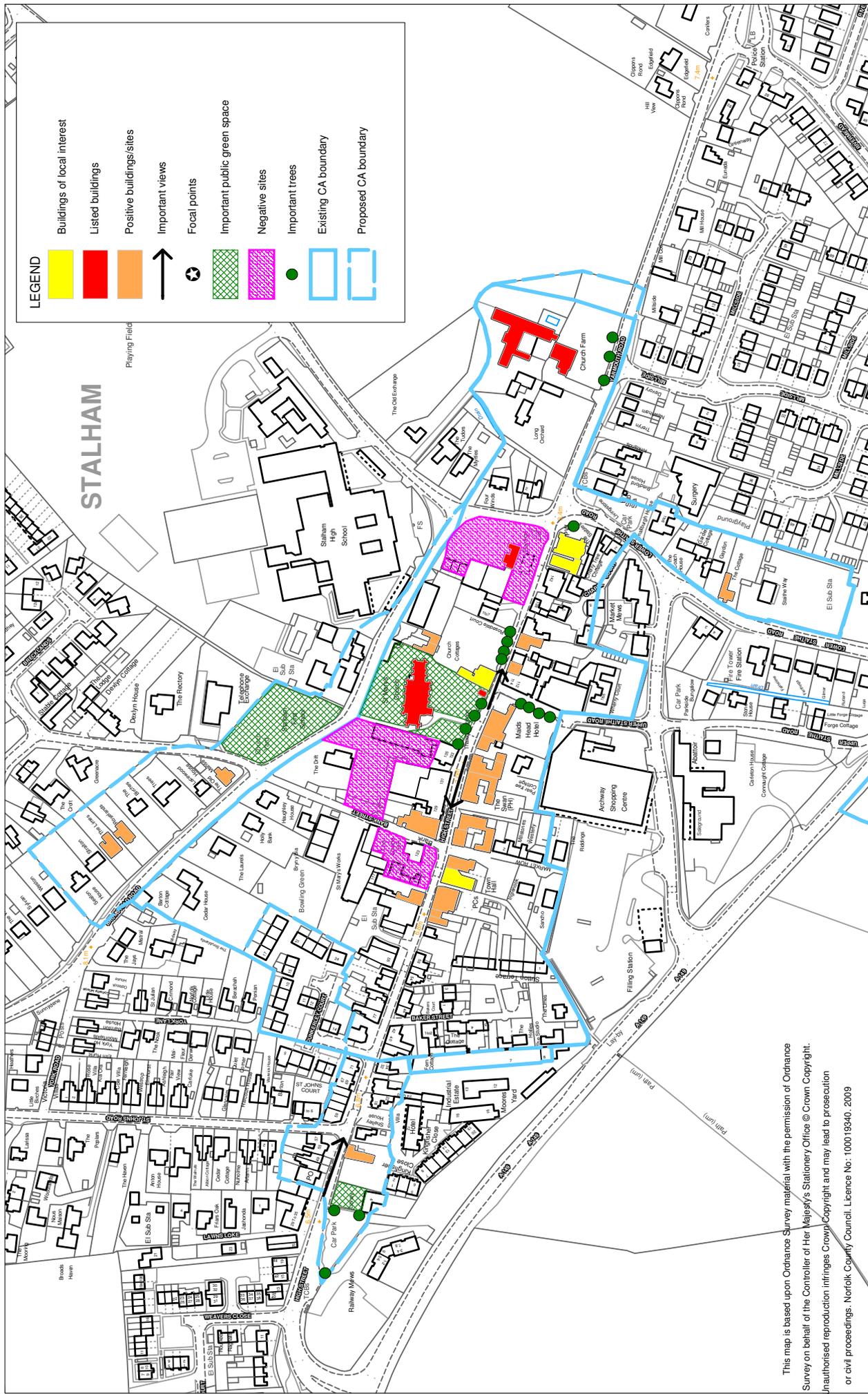
## Stalham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

### Map 2: General Features

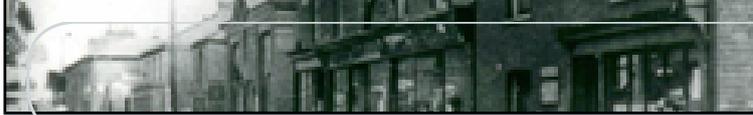


# Stalham Conservation Area

Scale 1:2372  
 Compiled by



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## Appendix 2: References and Sources

W H Cooke, *Stalham Notes* (1909) (Norfolk Studies Library)

Norfolk Parish Studies: Stalham (Stalham Library)

Ashwin, Trevor and Alan Davison, *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2005)

Bloomfield, J, *A History of Stalham Baptist Church* (2004) - available as a PDF via [www.stalhambaptist.org.uk](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk)

Farman, D, *Stalham and District in Times Past* (1982)

Pevsner, Nikolaus and Bill Wilson, *The Buildings of England Norfolk 1: Norwich and the North-East* (Penguin: 1997)

### Websites

Stalham Archive Group [www.remembernorfolk.org.uk](http://www.remembernorfolk.org.uk)

Norfolk Heritage Explorer [www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk)

NOAH [www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.noah.norfolk.gov.uk) Trade directories 1836 to 1929

E-Map Explorer [www.historic-maps.gov.uk](http://www.historic-maps.gov.uk)

Stalham town website – [www.stalhamnorfolk.gov.uk](http://www.stalhamnorfolk.gov.uk) (*appears to have been taken off line*)

[www.stalhambaptist.org.uk](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk)

[www.norfolkpubs.co.uk](http://www.norfolkpubs.co.uk)

## Appendix 3: Contact Details

### North Norfolk District Council

Conservation, Design and Landscape  
Council Offices  
Holt Road  
Cromer  
NR27 9EN

Tel. 01263 516165

Fax. 01263 514802

Email: [conservationanddesign@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:conservationanddesign@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

Web: [www.northernorfolk.org.uk](http://www.northernorfolk.org.uk)

The Conservation and Design webpages offer links to all main heritage and conservation bodies for advice, guidance and information.

### Norfolk County Council

Building Conservation Team  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2SG

Tel: 01603 222705

Fax: 01603 224413

### Norfolk Landscape Archaeology

Union House  
Gressenhall  
Dereham  
Norfolk  
NR20 4DR

Tel: 01362 869280

Fax: 01362 860951

Email: [archaeology+environment@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology+environment@norfolk.gov.uk)



## Appendix 4: Population of Stalham

1831	613
1841	729
1851	698
1861	750
1871	796
1881	852
1891	867
1901	892
1911	958
1921	937
1931	965
1951	1170
1961	1190
1971	1673
1981	2417
1991	2781
2001	2951

## Appendix 5: Archaeological summary of the area

The archaeological record for Stalham is fragmentary and much is reliant on the study of aerial photography and the good practice of metal detectorists in reporting finds. Many of the entries on the Historic Environment Record (HER) concern areas outside the conservation area.

The earliest sign of occupation in what became Stalham consists of pre-historic pot boiler scatters and flint implements. A number of potential Bronze Age landscape features have been identified on aerial photographs along with various artefacts. There have been few definite Iron Age finds other than pottery sherds. The Roman period is much better represented with a large series of potential sites and finds. No Saxon sites have been located although a number of unusual Saxon finds have been made including a canoe dated to AD720, the oldest boat on record in Norfolk, and the blade and hilt of a Late Saxon sword.

The Church in the High Street survives as a monument of the late Medieval period, its size suggests some former importance. The town also once had a Medieval leper chapel. Recent, systematic aerial photography mapping has suggested a possible site of this within the area known as Chapelfield to the south of the A149.

Aerial photography has also revealed many cropmarks of other medieval and post medieval field boundary features as well as evidence of the turf cutting industry. Metal detectorists have also made a number of medieval finds.

For further information, see the Heritage Explorer website:

([www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk))