

Planning Committee

08 November 2024

Agenda item number 12

Broads Authority Design Guide and Code

Report by Historic Environment Manager

Summary

Work on the Broads Authority Design Guide and Code has been ongoing since 2022 and we now seek approval for the document to go out to consultation with the Broads Local Plan, as an appendix to the Local Plan.

Recommendation

To endorse the Broads Authority Design Guide and Code for consultation concurrently with the Local Plan.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) (NPPF) includes a requirement for all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide (2021) and National Model Design Code (2021). The Government's commitment to the production of design codes by LPAs has been strengthened in the recent Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023), which requires all LPAs to have a design code in place covering their entire areas.
- 1.2. The purpose of a Design Code is to provide clarity of design expectations at an early stage in the development process and to ensure that good design is considered at all spatial scales, down to development sites and individual plots. The Design Code should reflect local character and the NPPF specifically states that codes should be grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Codes should reflect local design preferences and should involve effective community engagement, taking into account national design guidance. The level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place.
- 1.3. It is intended that the document should be used by anybody proposing new development, to give them an understanding of the key characteristics of built form in the area and guidance on what form new development should take and what is likely to be acceptable. The focus is on both urban design principles, as well as more detailed design (e.g. the elevational treatment of buildings).

2. Progress to date

- 2.1. Work commenced on the document in 2022 when we worked with consultants, Turley, on the first draft of the document. There have been two previous rounds of consultation: the first at the beginning of 2022 prior to work commencing, and the second on the first draft of the document over winter 2022-2023.
- 2.2. Subsequently the document has developed and changes have been made to it. This is in response to consultation feedback and changing national and local planning policy.
- 2.3. The document is arranged in two parts. The first part of the document is the Design Guide, which sets out the characteristics of the main building types and forms of development that we deal with in the Broads (for example, waterside chalets and farm buildings). This is to ensure people understand the context in which they are proposing to develop and to encourage them to consider their surroundings when developing proposals. The second part of the document is the Design Code. This sets out parameters and requirements that must be met when applying for planning permission, with a checklist that should be submitted with planning applications.

3. Next steps

- 3.1. In order to ensure the Design Guide and Code carries sufficient weight in planning decisions, it is proposed that it should be an appendix to the new Local Plan. As such, it will be necessary to carry out consultation concurrently with the Broads Local Plan. For timings, please see the scenarios and recommendations set out in the Local Plan report for this committee.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. It is recommended that the Planning Committee endorse the Design Guide and Code for public consultation.

Author: Kate Knights

Date of report: 23 October 2024

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: F4

The following appendix is available to view on [Planning Committee - 08 November 2024 \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix 1 – Draft Design Guide and Code for the Broads (October 2024)