Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves

Design Guidance and Codes

Final Report

Quality information

Revision History

Delivering a better world

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1. Introduction

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves Parish Councils in support of the Joint Neighbourhood Plan. The support is intended to provide design guidance and codes based on the character and local qualities of the Neighbourhood Area to help ensure future development, particularly forthcoming housing, coheres with and enhances the character of the area.

1.1 About this document

The Design Codes are written in order to support the design aims of the Neighbourhood Plan. They support the main document by providing design guidance and codes for development in Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves (known as the NA (standing for Neighbourhood Area) from here onwards for succinctness). The codes are intended as specific design requirements while guidance is suggested recommendation.

The Design Code does this by understanding the existing character of the NA. The Design Code sets out codes and guidance for the whole of the parish.

STEP 01 Initial contact

STEP 02 Site visit and walk around with Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

STEP 03 Preparation of design principles and guidelines

STEP 04 Draft report for review

STEP 05 Final report after review

Figure 01: Steps undertaken to produce this document.

Figure 02: Map showing the Belton Neighbourhood Area and surrounding context.
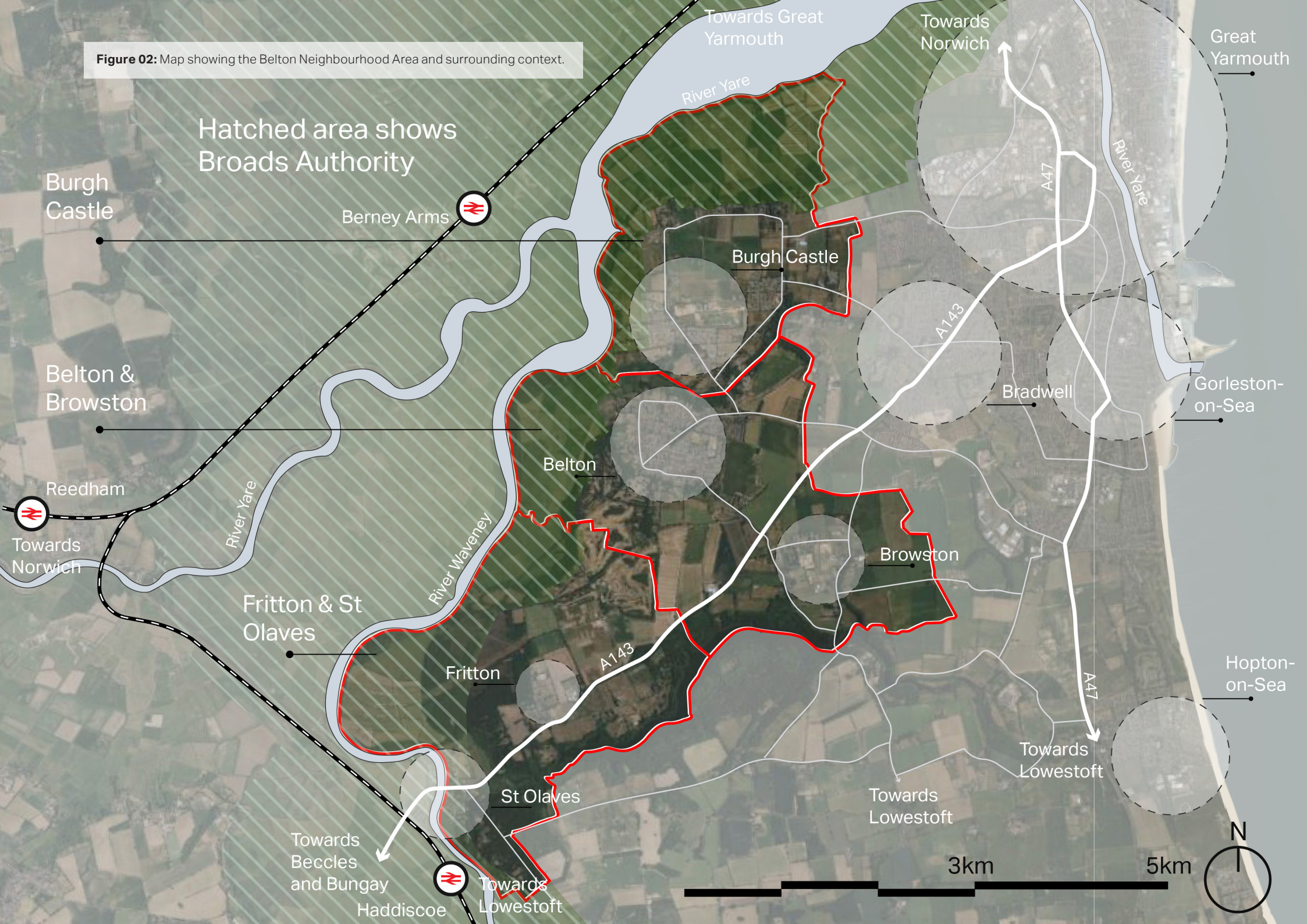
Hatched area shows Broads Authority

Towards Great Yarmouth

Towards Norwich

Great Yarmouth

River Yare

River Yare

Burgh Castle

Berney Arms

Burgh Castle

A47

Belton & Browston

A143

Bradwell

Gorleston-on-Sea

Belton

Reedham

Towards Norwich

River Yare

River Waveney

Fritton & St Olaves

Browston

Fritton

A143

Hopton-on-Sea

St Olaves

A47

Towards Lowestoft

Towards Lowestoft

Towards Beccles and Bungay

Haddiscoe

Towards Lowestoft

N

3km

5km

1.2 Overview of Belton and surrounding settlements

Belton is a village approximately 5 miles southwest of Great Yarmouth in Norfolk. It is partly located in the Norfolk Broads, a protected landscape with equivalent status to a National Park. Under the current adopted Local Plan it is considered a 'primary village' sustaining multiple smaller settlements within its rural periphery. These include Burgh Castle, Browston, Fritton and St Olaves.

Belton offers a range of services and facilities such as a primary school, a convenience store, a pharmacy and two public houses. Tourism is a significant contributer of economic activity in the area with multiple holiday parks and campsites, including the Wild Duck and Kingfisher Park, as well as the St Olaves Marina along the River Waveney.

Historically, the area developed around the horticultural industry, though this industry has since been lost, along with the loss of the Yarmouth-Beccles railway line in 1959. Now, connectivity is heavily reliant on vehicular travel, with each of the villages within the Neighbourhood Plan Area reliant on the A143, a key trunk road passing through East Anglia, for onward connections.

The X11 is a frequent bus service which runs between Belton and Great Yarmouth. Additionally the 580 bus runs between Beccles, Bungay and Great Yarmouth and passes along the A143. There is a rail service from Berney Arms between Great Yarmouth and Norwich, or Haddiscoe for the Norwich to Lowestoft line.

Figure 04: Belton is the primary settlement within the Neighbourhood Plan area with a few small scale services and facilities.

Figure 03: Burgh Castle Village Hall. The Neighbourhood Area consists of five individual settlements within three distinct parishes.

Figure 05: St. Olaves Marina is a key local leisure and tourism destination.

1.3 Signpost to other documents

National and local policy can provide valuable guidance on bringing about good design and its benefits. They can ensure that adequate planning regulations are in place to guarantee development is both fit for purpose and able to build sustainable, thriving communities. Other documents are more technical and offer specific design guidance which can inform design codes and masterplanning activities.

The NA is divided between Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) Local Plan area and The Broads Authority (BA) Local Plan area. GYBC has certain responsibilities for the whole area while The BA is a separate planning authority. As such, any policy and guidance produced by each respective authority must be considered.

Applicants should refer to the following documents when planning future development in the NA. The following documents have informed the design guidance within this report.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life
Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts and promote active travel.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life
Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the crucial role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

2021 - National Planning Policy Framework
DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)

Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places.

2021 - National Design Guide
DLUHC

The National Design Guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

2021 - National Model Design Code Part 1 & 2
DLUHC

The National Model Design Code provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to
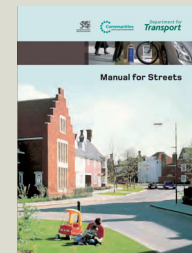
2015 & 2021 - Great Yarmouth Local Plan

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

The Local Plan sets out the level of growth that needs to be planned for in the Borough. It sets out where that growth should be located and how it should be delivered. It also sets out the planning policies which the Council will use in determining planning applications.

The Local Plan for Great Yarmouth is made up of two parts:

- Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1 - 2015)
- Local Plan Part 2 (2021)

Within the Core Strategy element of the Great Yarmouth Local Plan, there is a settlement hierarchy (Policy CS2- Achieving Sustainable Growth) that determines the share of new development allocated to each of the Borough's settlements.

The settlement hierarchy starts with Main Towns, where 35% of new development will take place, then Key Service Centres (a further 30%), Primary Villages (a further 30%), and 5% in Secondary and Tertiary Villages.

Belton is one of six named Primary Villages. Therefore, it will share 5% of the overall new development envisaged in the Local Plan. The total new development envisaged through the Local Plan Part 2 (Policy UCS3: Adjustment to Core Strategy Housing Target) is 7,020 dwellings between 2013 and 2030.

Of these 7,020 dwellings, 1,691 were already completed as of Local Plan Part 2 publication, 2,850 were already committed through planning permissions, and 177 remained to be built in strategic allocations outside Belton. A further 1,636 were allocated in the Local Plan Part 2. Some windfall development is also expected to occur.

2022 - Local Plan for the Broads

Broads Authority

The Local Plan for the Broads does not contain a settlement hierarchy of its own.

This document is the Local Plan for the Broads, prepared by the Broads Authority as the local planning authority for the area. This Local Plan has been consulted on with the public and stakeholders (between 2016 and 2018) and examined by the Planning Inspectorate in 2018. The authority is currently reviewing the Local Plan with an Issues and Options consultation held in autumn 2022.

The Broads Authority has also produced a series of Broads planning guides with guidance on residential moorings, solar panels and sustainability for example. These should be referred to by any proposal within the Broads Authority jurisdiction.

DISTRICT LEVEL
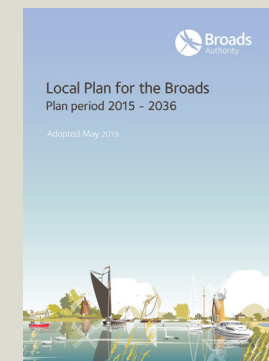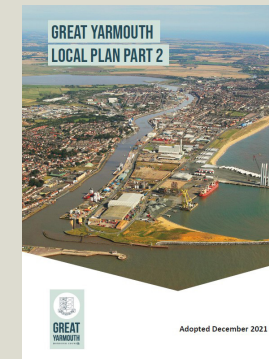
2023 - Open Space Supplementary Planning Document

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

The purpose of this guidance document is to provide further detail to support Policy H4 - Open space provision for new housing development, of the Local Plan Part 2, in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This document therefore sets out how open space requirements will be met in respect of the:

- Open space surpluses and deficits across the Borough
- Thresholds at which open space will
- Apply on or off-site
- Contribution requirements
- Method of collection
- Spending of off-site contributions
- Design/form of open spaces

2023 - Great Yarmouth Design Code

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

The Great Yarmouth Design Code is currently in draft, therefore not yet adopted. However, it has kindly been made available by the Borough Council to AECOM for the purposes of this neighbourhood planning exercise. The Design Code aims to shape placemaking across the Borough, complementing rather than replacing Local Plan policies in this regard. It is structured in four parts, all of which have some relevance for the NA, so will be referred to throughout this report as appropriate.

2023 - The Broads Authority Design Guide

The Broads Authority

The Broads Authority Design Guide is at an early stage, with a part one demonstration consulted on in summer 2022. Part two and detailed guidance contained within is anticipated in autumn 2023.

Open Space Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Adopted February 2023

GREAT YARMOUTH

EMERGING

EMERGING

DISTRICT LEVEL

1.4 How to use this document

The Design Guidelines and Codes will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development within the NA. They will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process.

What follows is a list of actors and how they will use the design guidelines:

Actors	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
The Broads Authority, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Council	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves Parish Councils	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with.
Local organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

1.5 Engagement

In preparation of this Design Code, AECOM engaged with Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, as well as Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

AECOM facilitated a meeting with Great Yarmouth Borough Council officers in March 2023 to discern the objectives, scope, and time-frame for the emerging Great Yarmouth Design Code.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council provided an outline of the emerging structure of the council's design code and shared the following considerations for the Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves Design Code.

AECOM also facilitated a meeting with The Broads Authority in June 2023 to also learn about the emerging Design Guide for The Broads which is at an earlier draft stage and the full draft is anticipated for publication in autumn 2023.

Key points

- The Great Yarmouth Borough Design Guide is planned to go to public consultation in July 2023.

- The Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves Design Code can add further detail by including Area specific guidance.

- The vast majority of new development in the parish area will occur within the Great Yarmouth Borough Area of the parish due to environmental, landscape and flooding constraints within the Broads Authority's jurisdiction.

- New development will predominantly consist of infill within existing settlements.

- Belton has a minimum density of 30dph (dwellings per hectare) with 20dph elsewhere in the Parish.

- The Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves Design Code should seek to protect the rural nature of the Parish.

- The Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves Design Code should include detail on extensions and modifications.

- Local residents want to see a strategic gap retained and protected between Belton and Bradwell to prevent coalescence.

- Placemaking and local distinctiveness is a key concern for the Parish.

- Tourism is a key concern within the Parish and plays an integral role in the local economy.

2. Area analysis

This section provides analysis of the Neighbourhood Area by individual Character Areas. This evidence base forms the basis for the guidance and codes in the following chapter.

2.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the character of each settlement in the Neighbourhood Area. This enables an understanding of how future development should preserve and enhance the existing character of the various settlements. The codes are designed to apply to all of the Neighbourhood Area and contain a degree of flexibility.

1   **Belton**

2   **Browston**

3   **Burgh Castle**

4   **Fritton**

5   **St Olaves**

Figure 07: Map showing the Belton Neighbourhood Area and Character Areas.

River Yare

River Yare

River Yare

River Waveney

3
Burgh Castle

1
Belton

2
Browston

4
Fritton

5
St Olaves

3km

5km

N

2.2 Belton

Introduction

Belton is the largest settlement within the Neighbourhood Area, consisting primarily of post-war residential development. However, Belton does contain clusters of historic buildings and heritage assets which emerged alongside a booming horticultural industry during the latter 19th and early 20th centuries. As this industry has faded, the village's character is defined by its predominantly residential feel and rural surrounds.

Figure 08: Area 1 outline map.

Figure 09: 1970s detached dwellings with on-plot parking.
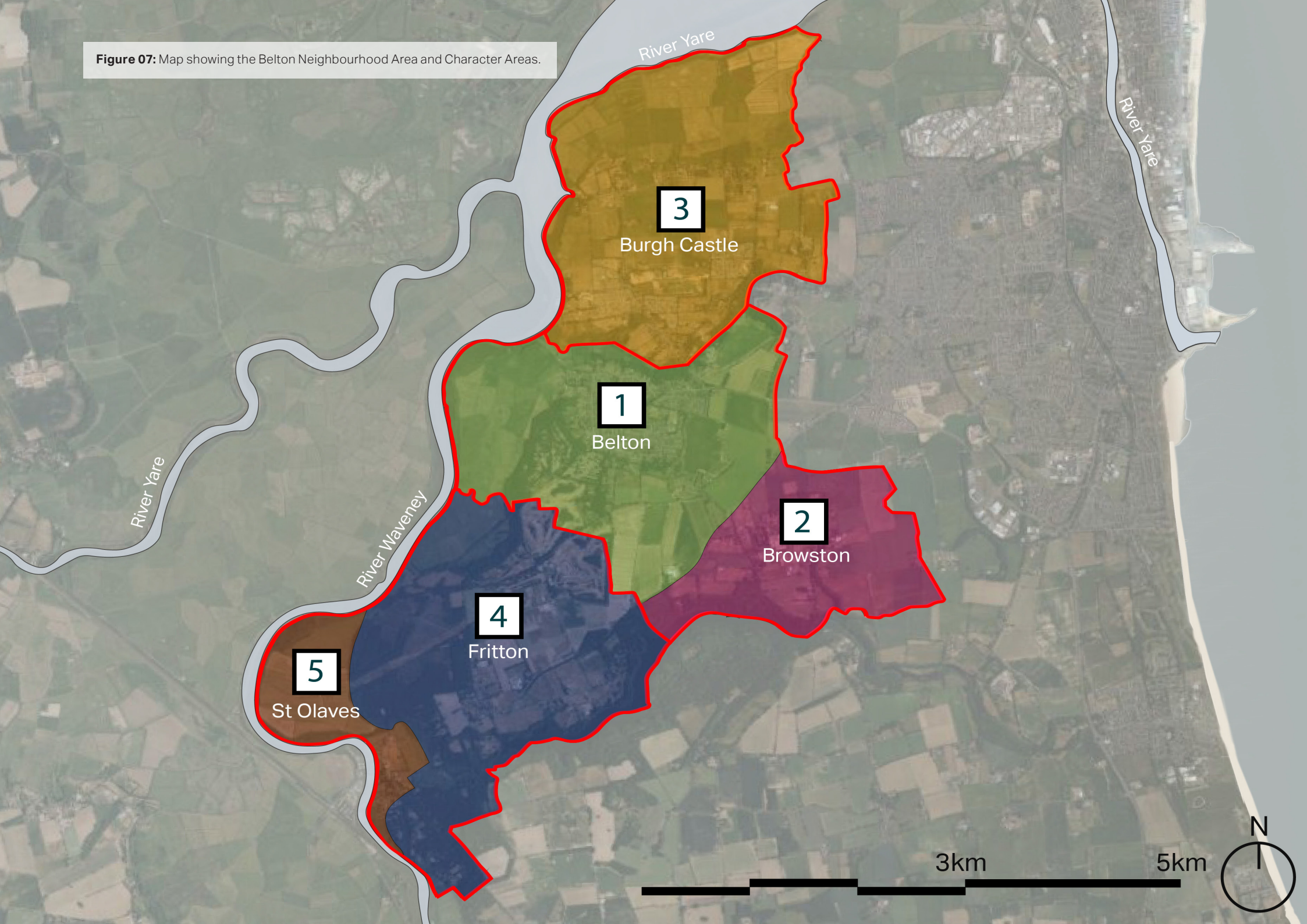
Layout

Belton is characterised by large post-war residential development at a higher density than other settlements within the NA. Much of the envelope is contained along a radial route forming a loose perimeter around the village. From this, cul-de-sacs and other quieter residential streets stem, forming a cluster of development. Additionally, the area has some post-war apartment buildings and maisonettes fronting onto car parking courts and a

few agricultural buildings with courtyards. As with many other settlements within the Neighbourhood Area, Belton features substantial holiday parks, particularly at its south western corner.

Heights

The Neighbourhood Area is low-rise, with few buildings exceeding 1-2 storeys. The most notable exception which stands out from the norm is the All Saint's Church, a landmark building within the parish.

Figure 10: All Saints Church, Church Lane ©Geographer.

Streets

Station Road (North and South) and St John's Road are prominent, historic routes which serve as key thoroughfares through Belton. They are critical for onward access to cul-de-sacs and other routes between settlements within the Neighbourhood Area. These therefore sustain greater flows of vehicular movement. However, they are narrow (approximately 10m) with enhanced enclosure as result of dense vegetation and shallow building set backs.

Cul-de-sacs typically feature lower levels of street activity and movement. However, they are more open with deeper set backs, wider pavements and grass verges buttressing building fronts from the street.

Additionally, Bracon Road and New Road serve as vehicular reliefs through the village, with back gardens and wood fences fronting onto these routes with the latter following the disused railway line. These also feature pedestrian amenity in parts, though lack adequate natural surveillance.

Buildings

Detached and semi detached housing is the prevailing typology within Belton. Additionally, clusters of historic terrace row houses and holiday parks cumulatively give Belton a fine grain. This is occasionally broken by larger plotted buildings such All Saint's Church and Moorlands Academy. However, the local vernacular is characterised by an abundance of post-war housing.

Figure 11: Bungalows on Station Road North © Copyright JThomas.

Figure 12: Example of detached dwellings with front garden provision.

Figure 13: Tesco Express and neighbouring retail use, Bell Lane © Copyright Evelyn Simak.

2.3 Browston

Introduction

Browston is a hamlet on the periphery of the Neighbourhood Area. It features small clusters of linear development and agricultural buildings set along country lanes and among open fields. Browston is a rural area with an abundance of large houses, agricultural small holdings and open fields.

Figure 15: Rural road at Browston Lane © Copyright Geographer.
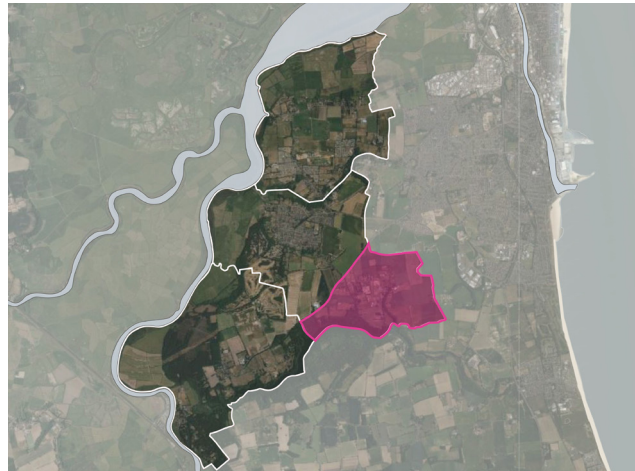
Figure 14: Area 2 outline map.

Layout

Browston consists of a mixed, fragmented grain with development set within loose clusters along two intersecting country lanes. Building lines are often uniform, particularly within instances of infill development, though older buildings with adjoining agricultural buildings feature differing building orientations. Additionally, some buildings are accessed via long private drives set behind main routes within self-contained plots.

Heights

Building heights range from one to three storeys, with an overall low rise. Browston Hall is the tallest building within the area at three storeys. However, screening from tall trees and dense vegetation along main routes blocks views of the overall roofscape. This reinforces the rural feel throughout Browston.

Figure 16: Agricultural building on Browston Lane © Copyright JThomas.

Streets

Browston primarily consists of ad-hoc ribbon development along three intersecting routes. These include Browston Lane, Cherry Lane and Lound Road. These are rural in character with rich hedgerows and dense trees forming a narrow, enclosed route (approximately 5 meters). Subsequently, there is little in the way of pedestrian amenity, though at sections, these routes feature grass verges which make up boundary treatments for adjoining properties.

Access into the settlement from the wider Neighbourhood area is primarily dependent upon the A143, which in turn forms a distinct boundary to the west of the area. Further access from surrounding settlements and hamlets is made possible via a network of other country roads such as Yarmouth Road and Hobland Road. Similarly, these are narrow country lanes and contribute to Browston's overall rural character.

Buildings

Detached country cottages are common throughout Browston. These utilise a mix of architectural styles with older iterations including white render and red brick. Browston Hall is the standout landmark within the area with white render and bay windows. The roofline predominantly uses red clay pantiles and a range of roof typologies. The area also features barns, stables and greenhouses with corrugated steel and timber framing commonly used.

Figure 17: Browston Hall © Copyright Bob Crook.

Figure 18: View of the A143 with electricity pylon crossing perpendicular © Copyright Helen Steed.

Figure 19: Grass verges at the entrance to Browston House at Browston Lane. Enhancing the area's rural and open feel © Copyright Geographer.

2.4 Burgh Castle

Introduction

Burgh Castle is an historic settlement featuring a Roman fort within its boundary, used as a defensive position along the River Yare. The village includes several other historic buildings and is abundant in small, arable farmland and its associated infrastructure. The area has experienced substantial tourism activity which has led to the development of several Holiday Parks along Butt Lane and Mill Road.
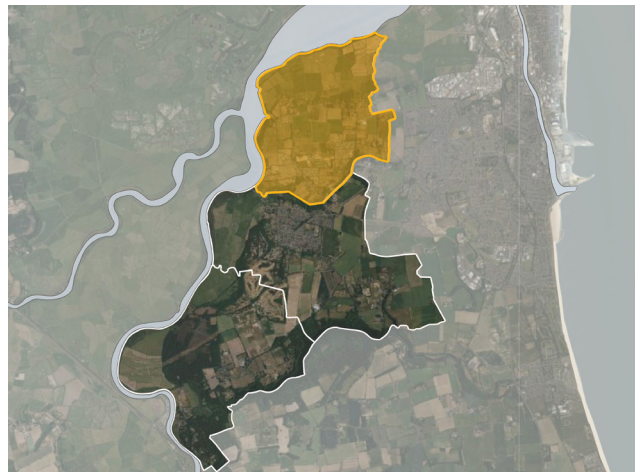
Figure 20: Area 3 outline map.

Figure 21: Burgh Castle Village Hall.

Layout

Burgh Castle is primarily made up of linear development along four routes in a radial form around the village. There is a mix of fine grain residential properties among a scattering of agricultural buildings which feature on larger plots. The building line is relatively inform with detached, semi-detached and terraces set along High Road, Butt Lane, and Mill Road. Additionally there is a high concentration of holiday parks arranged along cul-de-sacs to the south of the area. Much of the land within the area is used as arable farmland bounded by dense wooded areas to the south, and marshland around the River Yare to the west.

Heights

As with much of the Neighbourhood area, Burgh Castle is low rise with an abundance of one and two storey houses. The most notable landmark building is the Church of St Peter and St Paul which is also a prominent landmark within the area.

Figure 22: Little Mary's Cottage, High Road © Copyright Ian S.

Streets

Burgh Castle consists of four key routes which form a radial street pattern around the village. The vast majority of development is set along Butt Lane, Mill Road, Church Road and High Road with houses fronting directly onto these routes. The most prominent of these are Church Road and High Road, which together make up a long stretch of ribbon development, pavements sustaining continuous multi-modal movement. As such, much of the activity within Burgh Castle lies along this route.

There are a few instances of backland development accessed from the main radial route pattern and featuring large country houses or agricultural buildings. Additionally, Back Lane is a narrow, potted route which runs parallel with Church Road and High Road with intersecting narrow passageways forming perimeter housing blocks. Additional housing on the opposing side of Back Lane creates an enclosed route in tandem with its dense tree line.

Buildings

There is a wide mix of typologies within Burgh Castle, ranging from detached, semi-detached and terraced housing, as well as agricultural buildings, the village hall and The Queen's Head pub. Additionally there is a variety of material palettes including red brick, white render, and weatherboarding, as well as mixed roofline with pitched, hipped and gable fronted roofs, as well as skillion and flat roofs used on agricultural buildings such as barns and stables.

Figure 23: Terraced housing on Church Road.

Figure 24: Burgh House assisted living residence, High Road.

Figure 25: Rural road at Back Lane.

2.5 Fritton

Introduction

Fritton is a small settlement within the central portion of the Neighbourhood Area. It is predominately surrounded by dense woodland and flat, arable farmland with the River Waveney and Fritton Lake making up its northern and southern boundaries respectively. The Fritton Lake attracts substantial levels of tourism which has resulted in a concentration of short stay accommodation on the northern shore.

Figure 26: Area 4 outline map.

Layout

The main envelope within the Fritton includes a dense cluster of linear development along New Road. This features a fine grain mix of detached, semi-detached and terrace housing, with large barns to the north. Along this route are small cul-de-sacs such as Forest Mount, and instances of backland development which break up an otherwise consistent building line. Additionally, there are similar settlement patterns along the A143 at the junction with New Road. However, the main differentiation within the settlement pattern is along Church Lane. Here, large houses and agricultural buildings are sparsely dotted along a narrow, private country lane.

Building Heights

Building heights are low rise, around one and two storeys. However, there is no visible roofscape beyond the main cluster along New Road as many properties are screened by dense woodland and hedges.

Figure 27: New build terraces on Church Lane.

Streets

New Road stretches north towards a dense wooded area and the banks of River Waveney. Enclosure is provided by a dense tree line and hedgerows in addition to housing fronts with shallow set backs. Within the built up area, there is passive surveillance, enhancing the quality of pedestrian movement and perceived safety within the small play park along this route. However, there is little by way of pavement provision, though narrow grass verges create lay-by's for pedestrians and occasional parked cars.

The A143 is a busy vehicular route with sections close to residential development. Some properties lie along sections often screened by dense coniferous woodland. The main exception to this is around the Decoy Pub which itself serves as a gateway into the main village area along New Road. Additionally, Church Lane is a very narrow, semi-private country lane leading towards Fritton Lake featuring a small concentration of houses and St. Edmund's Church

Buildings

There is a rich variety of architectural styles, including the Neighbourhood Area's most distinct, historic buildings. These include red brick terrace cottages with sash windows and arched lintels, timber framed and pastel rendered exterior finishes. Additionally there are some instances of mid to late 20th Century housing. The most prominent building is St Edmund's Church, a 12th Century flint walled church with a thatched roof and circular tower.

Figure 28: Detached bungalow, New Road © Copyright Keith Evans.

2.6 St Olaves

Introduction

St Olaves is a small village to the south of the Neighbourhood Area, characterised by its relationship with the River Waveney, its flat arable farmland and extensive views out towards The Broads. The area contains notable landmarks including St Olaves Priory, the Bell Inn and the Marina, each of which serving as key attractions in the area. The area is primarily residential with some commercial and leisure facilities underpinning high levels of activity.

Figure 29: Area 5 outline map.

Figure 30: South River Marine complex.

Layout

St Olaves features a primary cluster of dense, fine grain residential development, with a mix of typologies. There is a small stretch of development along the A143, though much of the housing is set along Priory Road. This is a linear route with instances of backland development and cul-de-sacs. Similarly, Herringfleet Road is another linear route, with housing more sparsely developed and set within larger plots. These clusters are bounded by dense woodland though houses to the east of Priory Drive back onto fields with key views across The Broads. Around the marina is another small cluster as well as small docks and open spaces for public use.

Heights

Buildings are primarily one or two storeys. However, the bridge over the River Waveney is a prominent landmark with large warehouses and a crane the tallest structures within or close to St Olaves

Figure 31: View of the River Waveney at St Olaves © Copyright Ashley Dace.

Streets

The A143 (Beccles Road) through St Olaves is a primary, multi modal route. Along built up sections within the settlement, there is good pedestrian amenity with generous pavements, as well as enclosure and natural surveillance provided by buildings fronting directly onto the road. Crossing the River Waveney along the bridge, the route passes through a key gateway into the Neighbourhood Area when accessed from the south. Subsequently, this is a key activity area with multiple commercial uses and public amenity clustered at this pinch point.

Priory Road and Herringfleet Road are formal residential routes with generous set backs, a defined tree-line, grass verges and pavements. What's more, within the settlement are multiple secluded plots, including St Olaves priory. These are accessed via private country lanes with no through access to other properties or surrounding settlements.

Buildings

St Olaves features a range of building typologies and material palettes. There are key heritage assets such as the Bell Inn, with a mix of flint and red brick with casement windows featuring muntins, as well as a clay pantile roof. There are instances of white render and thatch on some cottages as well. However, there is also an abundance of later 20th Century housing with a range of architectural features.

Figure 32: Terraced cottages on Beccles Road © Copyright Evelyn Simak.

Figure 33: Dwellings on the bank of the Waveney River © Copyright Pierre Terre.

Figure 34: The Priory, Grade II listed asset, Beccles Road.

3. What is good design in Belton with Browston, Burgh Castle and Fritton with St Olaves?

This section outlines the positive physical, historic and contextual characteristics of the Neighbourhood Area.

3.1 Heritage

Much of the parish features numerous examples of heritage assets which significantly contribute to the area's overall character.

Primarily, these include red brick and colour rendered terraces. These often feature pitched and hipped roofs with grey and clay pantiles, gridded sash windows and front doors with transom lights or dormer porches. Each serve as examples of the NA's prosperity as an horticultural hub in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Earlier examples include some older agricultural barns, thatched, rendered cottages and other landmark historic buildings, such as the John Green Institute in Belton, St Peter & St Paul Church in Burgh Castle, Browston Hall and the Bell Inn in St Olaves.

Code

Development should reflect and enhance the heritage value of the area.

i.   Proposals at any scale must be sensitive to the local historic vernacular, using materials and architectural finishes in keeping with surrounding historic buildings.

ii. New development may have the opportunity to enhance the setting of historic assets in instances where these are currently sub-optimal.

Locally distinctive historic buildings should not be overwhelmed by new development.

i.   Proposals should not exceed the scale or massing of adjacent or surrounding landmark historic buildings.

ii. Use of contrasting contemporary materials close to key heritage assets is generally discouraged.

Figure 35: Showcasing materials palette and architectural features of historic terraced housing in Belton.

Figure 36: Thatched cottage with white render an example of a prominent heritage asset with a setting to be preserved and enhanced.

3.2 Landscape

The area is surrounded by multiple landscape typologies, most notably being the Norfolk Broads falling under the Broads Authority. The River Yare flows through the Broads and forms a distinct edge along the neighborhood area boundary to the north and west. This enables expansive views of the Broads' grassy marshland which are particularly prevalent around Burgh Castle and St Olaves.

Additionally much of the area is interspersed with arable farmland with extensive hedgerows, as well as areas of dense woodland around Fritton Lake. This enhances the rural feel of the area, with each parish being distinct in its rural character.

Subsequently, the area's proximity to natural assets underpins tourism in the area, with a number of holiday parks taking advantage of this location. Many of these are set among these natural assets and these should be considered for enhancement by any proposed new development.

Code

Development must reflect the area's rural character and should be avoided close to the boundary with the Broads.

Proposals should not interfere with views across the Broads from within the existing envelope and should seek to improve these where possible.

Where permitted, development must leverage natural landscaping such as level changes, trees, or hedges to screen any urbanisation of views from the Broads into the neighbourhood area.

Holiday parks should take a landscape led design approach, with interventions sensitive to their surrounding natural assets.

Strategic gaps within the surrounding landscape must not be significantly reduced to protect the distinctiveness of each settlement by maintaining intervening open gaps and promoting overall biodiversity.

Figure 37: View of the Broads.

Figure 38: Area of woodland, Fritton.

3.3 Character

Variety and distinctiveness underpins the area's character. It contains a mix of landscapes, building typologies and development patterns. Furthermore, each settlement within the Neighbourhood Area benefits from having its own distinct character.

Protecting the distinctiveness of each settlement will be critical to ensure that the character of the Neighbourhood Area is itself preserved.

Some areas within each settlement will be more accommodating to change. Typically these areas will better suit more contemporary designs. However, others will be more influenced by the local landscape and surrounding heritage assets. To enhance the overall character, proposals must observe the following codes.

Proposals must be contextual and contribute positively to local character by considering scale, massing, boundary treatments, materials, setbacks and roofline.

To preserve open sightlines and passive surveillance along streets, soft boundary treatments of vegetation or stone and brick walls are encouraged. Boundary treatments should be low in height (maximum 1m), particularly front boundaries.

Proposals should avoid large walls and gates screening views of buildings from the street.

Contemporary design may be appropriate in areas abundant with post-war development and few historic buildings. However, infill should still complement the overall street scene.

Residential streets should utilise trees, grass verges and low shrubbery to enhance active movement and enhance the rural feel of the area.

Figure 39: Contextually sensitive contemporary designs.

Figure 40: Soft boundary treatments and low brick walls which preserve transparency of use and passive surveillance.

3.4 Distinctive palette

The Neighbourhood Area offers a unique material palette synonymous with Norfolk's rural character. These typically include white and soft colour renders, timber weatherboarding, flint stonework and red brick.

Often these are found in tandem with one another to add interest and additional detailing, though some uniform examples stand out as high quality precedents which improve the area's overall character. Additionally, grey and terracotta pantiles are commonly found throughout the roofscape, as well as thatch and slate tiles.

While abundant throughout the Neighbourhood Area, these are somewhat diluted by post-war infill and urban extension development, particularly in Belton. Some more generic architectural details and materials result in a more suburban character here. It is important to avoid poor quality extensions and replacements of windows and doors out of keeping with the local vernacular and heritage value of the

Code

New development should utilise and reflect the existing outlined material palette across the Neighbourhood Area.

Proposals should include detailing and features such as timber boarding, as well as a mix of finishes, materials and colour palettes to add interest and enhance the area's overall character.

Where colour is applied to a building facade, a muted tone should be used which refers to the existing colour palette outlined within the guide.

There is a preference for wooden fenestration and utilisation of colours which sit well with the outlined colour palette.

The use of uPVC windows, doors and weatherboarding is discouraged.

Figure 41: Contemporary buildings with a contextually sensitive material palette preserving rural character.

Figure 42: Example of coloured render in keeping with the Neighbourhood Area's prevailing colour palette.

Proposals should reflect the surrounding rooflines and infer from high quality materials within the local context.

The application of thatched roof to an existing building which did not feature thatch as its original roof material should be avoided.

When solar panels are applied to a structure, they should be as unobtrusive as possible.

Services such as gutters, security systems, satellites meter/ utility boxes and gutters should be designed unobtrusively and should not detract from the surrounding character.

Figure 43: Example of contemporary building with positive reflection of local material palette and design cues.

Figure 44: The use of uPVC windows should be avoided, regardless of their design.

Fenestration
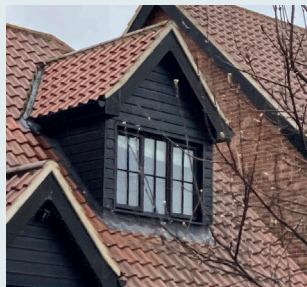

Muntins

Sash window

Dormer porch

Painted wood front
door with transom

Chapel style window

Casement windows

Roof

Black and grey
pantile or slate

Red concrete
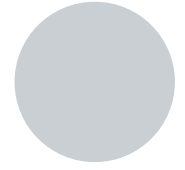pantile

Thatched

Wall

Weatherboard

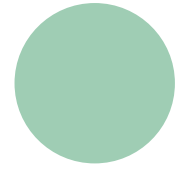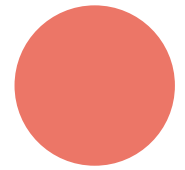Red brick

Colour render

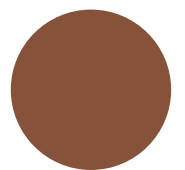**Colour range**

Off white

Blue grey

Sea green

Coral

Ochre

4. Checklist

Because the design guidelines and codes in this chapter cannot cover all design eventualities, this section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which design proposals in the NA should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development.

The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution. As a first step, there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals.

These are listed under 'General design guidelines for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;

- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;

- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;

- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;

- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;

- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;

- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;

- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;

- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;

- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;

- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;

- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;

- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and

- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

3

Building line, access and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?
- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

4

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

5

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?

- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?

- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?

- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

6

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?

- Do the proposed materials harmonise with the local materials?

- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?

- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?

- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

- Are reclaimed or recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?

- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.

- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

7

Buildings layout and grouping:

- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?

- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?

- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?

- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?

- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?

- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?

- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?

- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?

- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?

- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?

- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?

8 (continues)

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?

- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?

- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?

- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?

- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?

- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?

- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?