

# Belchford and Fulletby Neighbourhood Development Plan

## Response to Initial Comments of the Independent Examiner – John Slater

**11 September 2024**

### The Plan Area

10. There are two civil parishes, namely Belchford and Fulletby, administered by one twin Parish Council. Seven councillors represent Belchford and three Fulletby. Because the two villages are separated by less than 3 miles residents can represent either village as councillors.

### Belchford & Fulletby Design Code

11. The Design Code document was prepared for the Parish Council by AECOM. Following review it was finalised in August 2022. Whilst it is not part of the neighbourhood plan it is drawn upon as a resource. The Design Code document was made available to all interested parties on the Parish Councils dedicated NDP website [Belchford & Fulletby NDP - belchfordandfulletbyplan.org](http://belchfordandfulletbyplan.org) and at public meetings held on 26 March 2022, and subsequently on 16 March and 18 May 2023. We accept your suggestion that the Design Code should be an appendix to our neighbourhood plan.
12. The Design Code is a 19mB document so probably too large to email. It can be downloaded however from the Parish Councils dedicated NDP website [Final Documents - belchfordandfulletbyplan.org](http://belchfordandfulletbyplan.org)

### Neighbourhood Plan Policies

#### General Comments

13. The Parish Council chose to use the term Strategic Policy to align its neighbourhood plan with the terminology used in the East Lindsey Local Plan – Core Strategy adopted in 2018. We accept that this was wrong and will change the headings of individual policies to Policy BF1 etc.
14. The Parish Council accepts the advice given and will highlight each of the plan policies using a coloured box.

#### Policy BF1: Protected Historic Features

17. The intention of this policy is to protect the remaining buildings of historic and architectural importance in the villages that are not already protected by English Heritage. There are many such buildings which have yet to be formally adopted on the ELDC list of locally protected buildings which is still to be published. Historically, in the absence of protection, we have lost many such buildings and do not wish to lose any more. The Regulation 14 draft of our neighbourhood plan included an explicit list of our cherished buildings which the District Council asked us to replace with a reference to the Local List in order that buildings could easily be added or removed in the future. We can provide you with the full list of buildings and architectural assets that we wish to protect. To be clear these have been subject to full consultation by all interested parties.

### **Policy BF2: Protected Views**

18. We intend to protect the views into the villages which we name in Policy BF2 from viewpoints where there is public access, in other words to mirror them. Such viewpoints are located at vantage points entirely within the plan area, *i.e.* in the parishes of Belchford and Fulletby, for example from the Viking Way. We hope to retain the essentially rural character of the villages and ensure that views of architecturally and historically important buildings are not compromised by future development.

### **Policy BF3: Protected Local Green Spaces**

19. The Parish Council accepts the advice given and has modified Figure 18 accordingly. We attach inset detailed maps which will be added to Figure 18.
20. It is the Parish Councils intention to protect the verge that the stone cairn is sited upon. This is a mistake in the documentation that will be corrected.
21. The LGS criteria set out in paragraph 106 of the NPPF states that protected open spaces must be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves, demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, and local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. All our protected local green spaces meet these criteria:
  - Belchford and Fulletby Village Green forms the centre of the larger of the historic Belchford figure of eight road loops. It is well used a community recreational hub.
  - Historically the smaller figure of eight loop behind the Blue Bell Inn was part of its freehold and was a grass field used regularly by the public for village events and also camping.
  - The Fulletby Glebe Field is a village-owned community asset of Fulletby.
  - The grass triangles are a distinctive feature of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and are particularly well represented in Belchford and Fulletby.
  - The stone cairn and associated verge in Belchford are a focal point in Belchford and have special significance because a time capsule is buried beneath the cairn.
22. With the exception of the land behind the Blue Bell Inn all landowners affected by Policy BF3 are resident in the villages and hence have been made aware of the intention to protect these green spaces as part of the consultation process. The owner of the land behind the Blue Bell Inn is fully aware of the views of the Parish Council and of the community in general which are in essence that the land should be preserved as an open green space. A number of planning applications submitted by the land owner within the last 20 years have all been rejected by ELDC and by subsequently the Planning Inspectorate, principally because development would lead to the loss of valued open space.

### **Policy BF4: Settlement Density**

24. The Parish Council is happy to specify that Policy BF4 applies only to development within the developed footprint of the villages.

### **Policy BF5: Development Design**

25. This policy applies to new properties. The Parish Council accepts that this should be made clear in the first sentence of the Policy BF5.
26. The Parish Council agrees that the phrase “not excessively tall” is subjective and should be replaced with your recommendation that “new building should reflect the scale of development within the locality”.

**Policy BF6: Housing Types**

27. You are correct. It is the Parish Councils intention to support smaller housing units which are intrinsically cheaper. It is not the Parish Councils responsibility to define what is affordable and what is not. Historically small 2 bedroom cottages in the villages have been demolished and replaced with 4/5 bedroom executive style houses.

**Policy BF7: Sustainable Design**

28. The Parish Council agree with you that the wording of Policy BF7 should be changed from encourage to require in conformity with the written ministerial statement of December 2023.

**Policy BF8: Commercial Development**

29. See answer to question 10.

30. A microbusiness is defined by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and by Companies House as having 0 to 9 employees. The Parish Council is informed that planning applications must include a detailed schedule of full time employees to be based at the premises because, if this proves too great for the locality, then the application can be refused.

**Policy BF9: Dark Skies**

31. This policy references the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note 01/21 – The Reduction of Obtrusive Light. We attach a copy of this document.