

Broadland & South Norfolk Design Code FAQs (Updated Spring 2025)

What is a Design Code?

A Design Code establishes clear design requirements for the physical development of a site or area. It provides straightforward guidance to ensure high quality and appropriate development. Design Codes may cover themes such as the height of buildings, their design and materials, landscaping, the design of bin stores, and the design of parking spaces.

How will the Broadland & South Norfolk Design Code be used?

The Design Code will be used to help in the planning applications process to ensure that new development is of appropriate quality, responds to the local context, and provides great places for people to live. It will apply to residential schemes between 1-500 homes in size. As part of this code, South Norfolk and Broadland District Council have requested for particular emphasis to be put on: quality of landscaping; the character of areas and local buildings; and the use of distinctive materials.

Whilst the main Design Code will be similar across both districts, we want to make sure that the local differences, character and identities between the two districts are identified. These distinctions are illustrated in the accompanying Character Assessments for Broadland and South Norfolk which support the coding requirements in the Design Code.

How have the design issues included in the Design Code been identified?

Over the last nine months, Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design has worked with the Councils to produce a Design Code that is reflective of the key design issues across the two districts. These design challenges have been identified through two previous rounds of engagement with stakeholders and members of the public. Alongside the local priorities identified through engagement, the code also explains how protecting the environment and climate resilience are fundamental considerations to be considered at every stage of the design process.

More information about the earlier rounds of engagement is set out below.

What 'weight' does the Design Code have in planning terms?

It is intended the new Code will eventually be adopted by each Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) independently. SPDs are used to provide further guidance on existing planning policies.

There will be a six-week period of formal consultation on the proposed Design Code for each local authority area before the SPDs are adopted. It is expected that this will take place later this year.

What is the current stage of consultation?

We are now seeking views on a draft Design Code, as well as a draft Broadland Character Assessment and an Assessment Framework that have been prepared to support the code.

How do I take part in the consultation?

The team has re-launched the dedicated engagement website at <https://southnorfolkandbroadland.placechangers.co.uk/page>.

This summarises the process so far and outlines the core content of the design code and other documents. There are a series of questions and opportunities to leave feedback, which will inform the final amendment to the documents before they go to statutory consultation.

Any feedback as part of this consultation needs to have been submitted by **5.00pm on 23 June 2025**.

Summary of Stage 2 Engagement (Autumn 2024)

The second stage of public and stakeholder engagement in relation to the emerging Design Code took place between September and November 2024. The consultation sought views on the proposed vision for the Design Code, as well as the different issues and opportunities for each of the coding area types. As part of this process we:

- Held three online workshops with Council officers, Council members, Parish and Town Councils, and local developers, agents and architects, with approximately 40 attendees in total;
- Hosted a six week consultation via the Placechangers consultation platform with 209 responses being submitted by 85 participants.
- Received written feedback from a range of statutory consultees and stakeholders.

Summary of Stage 1 Engagement (Summer 2024)

As part of our first round of engagement on the Design Code, we undertook a series of engagement exercises during summer 2024 to understand how people feel about what makes the areas distinctive, and what they would like a Design Code to prioritise across the two authorities. As part of this process, we:

- Held six online workshops with Council officers, Council members, Parish and Town Councils, and local developers, agents and architects, with approximately 75 attendees in total;
- Hosted a six-week online engagement period on the Placechangers website. We had a significant level of response to the website, and 147 individual respondents left 155 responses. There were a range of comments, ranging from the

importance of character in the rural context, to the use of appropriate local materials, to the need for new development that is sustainable and resilient to climate change;

- Received written feedback from a range of statutory consultees and stakeholders.