

Foston's Neighbourhood Development Plan



2016 - 2026

Design Guidance

March 2016

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Introduction

Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives

The Vision for Foston's Neighbourhood Plan was derived directly from the views of the villagers gathered throughout the consultation process and can be summarised in the following simple statement:

The Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure that Foston remains a successful and vibrant rural village that values its past but looks to the future.

All feedback has clearly indicated that any planning should ensure Foston's past is respected and the historic fabric of the village preserved in its setting. This means that any development does not overshadow or compromise the historic and natural environment which is so much a part of Foston.

The natural environment and the local countryside was recognised by residents as special for quality of life and recreational purposes, including open views and green spaces. Key then to the Plan is to protect rights of way and the rural landscape from inappropriately sited and uncontrolled development. However it is recognised that some development will be required over time and the Plan should allow some sensitively sited development, including residential, agricultural and industrial development as well as renewable energy projects that are appropriate in scale and design to the topography of the Parish and the historic fabric of the village.

The community spirit within Foston is highly valued, and feedback has shown that Foston should remain a caring and safe community in which all residents are proud to live and work. Foston should continue to be supported by sustainable infrastructure suitable for a rural community, including recreational amenities. The vision includes the retention of the playing fields and improved sports facilities, as well as re-connection with residents on both sides of the A1 via a footbridge.

Our Neighbourhood Plan embraces the concept of local distinctiveness that contributes to a sense of well-being for the present community and future generations. It aims to progress the spirit of Localism through influencing planning matters in conjunction with South Kesteven District Council's Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The above is distilled into the following Plan Objectives which have guided the development of the Plan and its Policies:

- To recognise the distinctive quality of the landscape of the Parish of Foston, and seek to protect and enhance the local landscape character, its biodiversity, footpaths and bridleways.
- To promote the safeguarding and enhancement of locally important buildings and features that contribute to the character of the Parish.
- To allow for a limited amount of new development to meet local needs, having regard to national and local planning policies for development in the countryside.
- To encourage measures to improve highway safety for all road users.

The period of the Plan runs from 2016 to 2026, and the community will continue to be engaged with its evolution during that time.

Foston Neighbourhood Plan Building Design Guidance

Residential Planning Guidance

- a) The design of replacement and new dwellings should be sympathetic and in keeping with the general character of the village, which is predominantly red brick and pan-tiled. Sympathetic consideration should be taken regarding the size, situation and scope of the original and surrounding properties.

Red brick is considered the most appropriate building material for the village. Also, the type, colour and finish of components should be in keeping with the local vernacular. Elements such as windows and doors are particularly important as these can help emphasise the local distinctiveness. A consistent choice of materials should be adopted.

- b) The design of extensions should be sympathetic, set back and subordinate in size to the original building and in keeping with the general character of the village. Similarly roof pitches, windows and colour schemes should be in harmony with the original palette.

Garages and extensions should have pitched roofs in accordance with the existing building and/or style of the neighbourhood.

Exemptions may be given for innovative contemporary creative solutions that **successfully integrate** modern architectural design into the local vernacular.

- c) Dormers should be small and unobtrusive, appropriate in scale and number to the main roof of the building. The size of these windows needs to be in proportion with the existing fenestrations and in accordance with the rhythm of the building. Lead cheeks are considered appropriate with pitched, catslide or flat roofs to be determined by the locality.
- d) Particular attention needs to be given to boundary treatments and landscaping. The preservation of existing trees, hedgerows and stone/brick walls should be encouraged. Where removal of hedgerows is unavoidable, new planting should incorporate native species rather than exotic conifers. Timber close boarded fence should not be erected where visible from the road. There will be a presumption against street-facing gates above 1m in height.
- e) Opportunities to incorporate features into new build or retro-fitted buildings which are beneficial to wildlife are encouraged, e.g. the incorporation of roosting opportunities for bats or the installation of bird nest boxes. Similarly, the incorporation of features which contribute to the efficient use of water (e.g. water butts) is encouraged.

- f) New development plans should demonstrate how surface water is to be managed and where it is to be discharged. Measures for on-site attenuation and infiltration should be incorporated wherever practical and possible to do so. Approaches / technologies to capture rainfall before it reaches the surface is desirable (eg rainwater harvesting systems, attar butts, etc).
- g) Vehicular access arrangement must not be detrimental to the character of the village streets. Access to houses may include a variety of surface finishes for example, block pavements, gravel, tarmac or concrete with traditional brick edging detail.
- h) Key views into and from villages will need to be respected, particularly principal vistas to heritage assets and villages on the escarpment.
- i) Solar panels to roofs can dominate a setting. Their installation is encouraged in appropriate locations that are not prominent.
- j) The large proportion of the village is located on higher ground and surrounded by low-lying countryside. This means that new structures outside the main village envelope are likely to have a substantial impact across a broad extent of the landscape. The breadth of the landscape and the modest scale of the village therefore require new development to be grounded within the broadly horizontal topography. This will mean that the form of new development needs to adopt a horizontal emphasis, with larger structures/buildings (including agricultural storage units) carefully sited with sensitive consideration of their roof-scape, colours and textures and with extensive use of new planting to visually break up the mass.
- k) The wide verges along country lanes will need to be maintained where possible to preserve nature and for conservation purposes. The existing bio-diversity, habitats, ecology and wildlife of the area should be protected. All existing public footpaths and byways need to be fully protected.

Commercial Development Guidance

Small-scale commercial development will be supported where the following can be demonstrated:

- a) The development is within or adjacent to existing commercial developments within the Parish.
- b) The development is in keeping with the scale of the village and other businesses elsewhere within the Parish.
- c) The proposed use will not give rise to detrimental impact on local residential amenities as a result of either intended or unintended consequences.
- d) New development plans should demonstrate how surface water is to be managed and where it is to be discharged. Measures for on-site attenuation and infiltration should be incorporated wherever practical and possible to do so. Approaches / technologies to capture rainfall before it reaches the surface is desirable (eg rainwater harvesting systems, attar butts, etc).
- e) The proposal will not generate a significant increase in traffic and a need for parking that cannot be adequately catered for, either by the existing infrastructure locally or through mitigation by the development itself. Any new development should include a specific traffic impact plan at the submission stage (covering construction traffic and traffic thereafter).
- f) The proposal will not have a harmful visual impact on either the core of the village or the adjacent open countryside as a result of inappropriate design or signage.

Renewable Energy Guidance

There have been a number of applications for industrial scale, renewable energy projects in a number of locations adjacent to the village. A study carried out by East Midlands Councils identified possible opportunities for low carbon renewable energy as an evidence base for the development of policies by local authorities. This organisation provides strategic advice on a range of services to county and district councils in the East Midlands. The task of identifying actual sites is left to the energy companies and they are also required to consult with the local community through the initial development stages.

The level of contact with the local community is generally low and these projects generally reach a very advanced stage before there is any meaningful engagement with the actual planning process and appropriate public consultation. To be successful, any renewable energy application must comply with the Foston Neighbourhood Plan Policies for the protection and enhancement of the character of the village. They must also comply with SKDC core strategy policy.

Foston Parish Council supports energy conservation and any reasonable measures designed to help reduce our carbon footprint. The village encourages the production of renewable energy and a small number of properties have been fitted with solar panels.

The acceptance of any proposed new development will depend upon the proposed installation being appropriate in scale to the local setting and not having an adverse impact on the character of the natural environment.

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