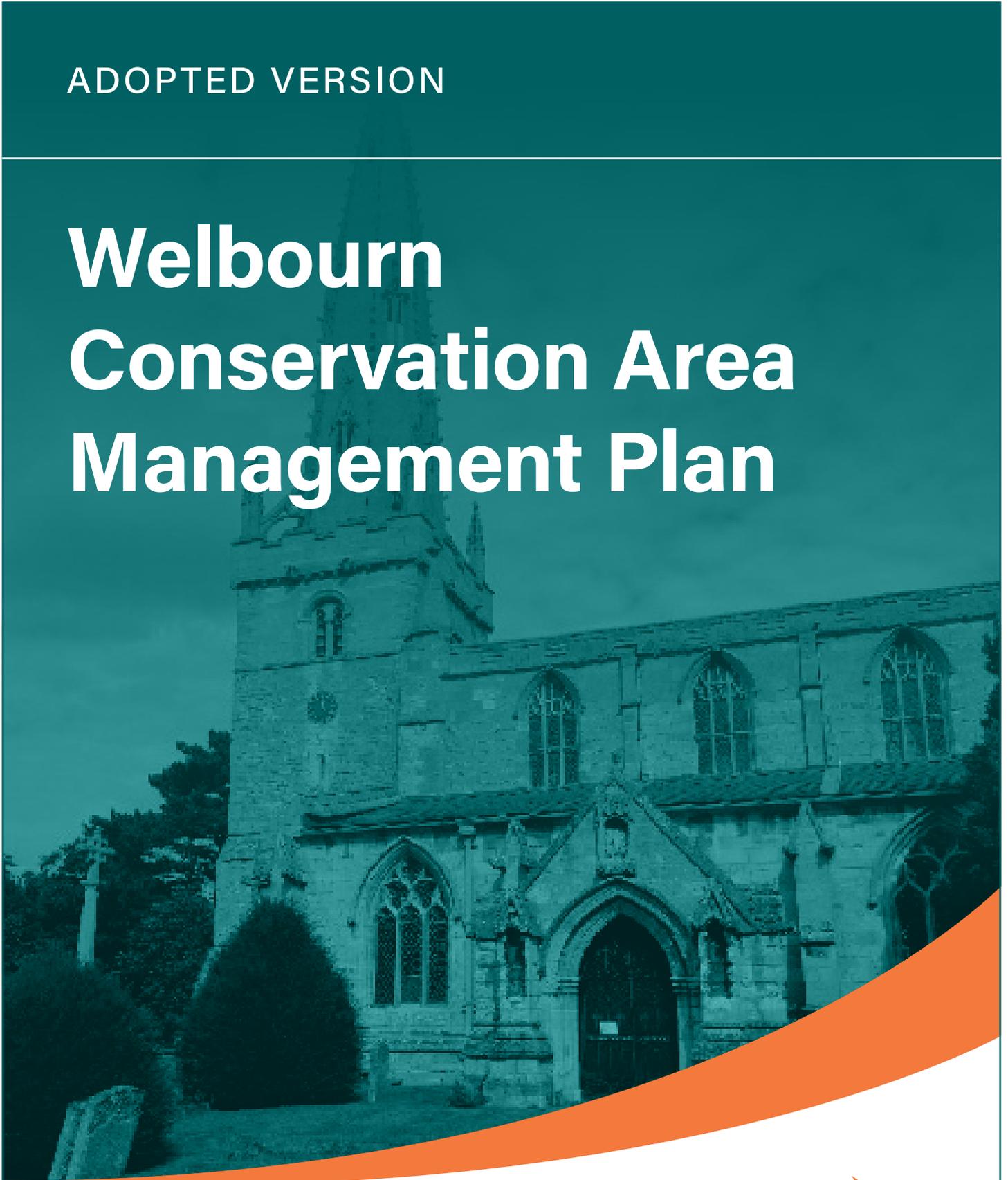


ADOPTED VERSION

Welbourn Conservation Area Management Plan



OCTOBER 2021



North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Scope and Purpose

The main objectives of the Welbourn Conservation Area Management Plan are to ensure the protection of what makes the conservation area special and to guide future development in a way that preserves and enhances the characteristics which make them worthy of protection. It will set out the tools available through Development Management and Planning Enforcement procedures in addition to policies designed to proactively manage change within the conservation area.

Management Policies

Article 4 Directions

Article 4 Directions are used to bring under planning control a range of works authorised by the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). They remove all, or in most cases selective, normal permitted development rights of householders to make changes to specific items considered to be contributing to the erosion of the character of many conservation areas.

Small scale, incremental changes such as the loss of traditional timber windows and doors and roof coverings such as slate and clay pantiles have been identified within the conservation area appraisal as having a harmful impact on the conservation area. In addition further changes such as the installation of roof-mounted solar panels also have the potential to harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. In order to address these issues it is proposed that a separate report will be produced and a public consultation exercise carried out to determine whether the introduction of a selective Article 4 Direction would be an appropriate course of action.

The purpose of the Article 4 Direction would be to prevent further harm to the conservation area and potentially provide a means to reverse the harm which has already occurred.

Green space, landscaping and public art

Green space and landscaping plays a vital role in forming the character and appearance of Welbourn Conservation Area. Green verges, mature trees and private gardens all contribute to this and it is therefore important that these spaces are preserved and enhanced. Paragraph 2.39 of the Welbourn Neighbourhood Plan sets out a wider environmental objective to 'protect, enhance and reinforce Welbourn's built features and countryside environment'.

The loss of green space and mature trees as a result of development will be resisted and the Council will seek to ensure their enhancement through the planning process wherever possible. There are a number of public art installations throughout the conservation area which help to enhance its local distinctiveness and interpret the history of the village. The Council will seek to support the retention and enhancement of these elements of the conservation area.

Design

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Welbourn Parish Character Profile (forming part of the Neighbourhood Plan) identifies and defines the special characteristics of the conservation area including the general form, detailing, important views and open spaces. These elements should be retained, reinforced and enhanced where appropriate when development proposals are being formulated.

Any new development will be required to preserve and enhance the conservation area. This will be achieved by ensuring the scale, massing and architectural details and pattern of development respects and reflects that of the existing built environment.

Appropriate external materials and finishes will be expected on all new development. Traditional materials typical of the conservation area will normally be expected and boundary treatments should follow the form of those existing in the area.

Development Management

There are no sites allocated for residential or commercial development in Welbourn, either through the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) (which runs to 2036) or the Welbourn Neighbourhood Plan (2015).

The CLLP is currently under review and contains draft Policy S56 'The Historic Environment', which sets out similar provisions to policy LP25 of the adopted CLLP. The draft policy notes that 'significant weight' will be given to the protection and enhancement of Conservation Areas, and that 'development within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a Conservation Area should conserve, or where appropriate enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's special character, appearance and setting, including as identified in any adopted Conservation Area appraisal'.

Draft policy S52 'Design and Amenity' confirms that 'all development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, must achieve high quality sustainable design that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape, and supports diversity, equality and access for all'. It states that development proposals will be assessed against, and will be expected to meet a number of design and amenity criteria, including that it is based on 'a sound understanding of the context, integrating into the surroundings and responding to local history, culture and heritage' and must 'relate well to the site, its local and wider context and existing characteristics including the retention of existing natural and historic features wherever possible'.

Draft policy S80 'Housing Sites in Medium Villages' proposes to allocate the site at Borfa-Wen Farm, Hall Orchard Lane, Welbourn however this site is not within the conservation area (existing or proposed boundary).

The draft Plan will be subject to examination by the Planning Inspectorate in due course whereupon these policies (subject to any subsequent amendments) when read alongside the Welbourn Neighbourhood Plan will then form the basis of decision making for developments affecting Welbourn's historic environment.

Policy H1 'Managing Housing Growth' of the Welbourn Neighbourhood Plan supports the principle of new residential development subject, amongst other things, to a requirement that it positively contributes to the local character, scale mix of housing and appearance of Welbourn and ensures, through good design and materials, that the local distinctiveness and sense of place of the village are retained.

Whilst the NP does not formally allocate any commercial or residential development sites, Figure 5 of the NP identifies six possible development sites that were offered up by their owners, or have potential, for residential development which collectively have an indicative capacity of 17 dwellings. 3 of these sites are within the revised Conservation Area boundary. Such piecemeal windfall development still has the potential to significantly affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The Council will seek to support development which preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with local and national policy and guidance as outlined in the conservation area appraisal. This includes responding to the wider Tourism and Heritage objectives identified in the Welbourn Neighbourhood Plan which collectively aim to 'preserve and protect Welbourn's heritage'.

Planning Enforcement

Unauthorised works and breaches of planning control can cause significant harm to the quality of both the built environment and surrounding spaces within a Conservation Area. Examples include unauthorised alterations to a building or the use of non-approved materials, or development that materially differs from what has been approved all of which can individually or cumulatively erode the special character of a conservation area.

Where expedient, enforcement action is pursued by the District Planning Authority and is undertaken by the Compliance and Enforcement Team. The Council's Conservation function works with the Compliance and Enforcement Team to tackle any breaches of planning control and will use the appraisal and this management plan as a means of justification for the expediency of any action taken.

Opportunities for Enhancement

The Council seeks to preserve and enhance the special interest of its heritage assets, including Conservation Areas. This includes the preservation, restoration or enhancement of historic buildings, the enhancement of the public realm and the sympathetic redevelopment of sites that currently detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

With regard to future areas for enhancement in Welbourn Conservation Area, the council supports the re-use, restoration or enhancement of historic buildings and sites within and around the Conservation Area.

The incremental loss of historic architectural fabric has been harmful to the special interest of the Conservation Area. The most obvious detrimental changes have been the replacement of traditional timber-framed windows with modern upvc, the loss of timber doors and the replacement of non-interlocking clay pantiles with concrete pantiles. The reinstatement of features such as these would be greatly beneficial to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

As part of its management strategy the Council will support:

- The use of bespoke public realm materials where appropriate, particularly hard surfacing
- The preservation and/or enhancement of the Conservation Area's significant buildings, sites and green spaces, including grass verges and boundary walls.
- The preservation and/or enhancement of historic architectural features, including traditional timber-framed windows, timber panel/plank doors, non-interlocking clay pantiles, brick or stone chimney stacks, traditional shop fronts and signage (consistent with the Council's Shopfront Design Guide);
- The reintroduction of appropriate historic/traditional architectural features in the Conservation Area's buildings and public realm, such as timber joinery, natural clay pantiles (or natural slates where appropriate), cast iron street lamps, traditional walls, etc;
- The reduction or removal of overhead lines;
- The retention of significant trees and where necessary (due to damage or loss) their replacement with appropriate species.

North Kesteven Heritage Grant Scheme

In order to help secure the preservation, enhancement and special interest of its heritage assets, including Conservation Areas, grant assistance of between £1,000 and £2,500 is available for works to historic buildings in North Kesteven. Funding is available to both residential and commercial buildings, and the aim of the scheme is to preserve and enhance the District's built heritage by encouraging the sympathetic repair of historic buildings. Works eligible for grant assistance include the repair, restoration or reinstatement of original windows and doors, brickwork and stonework repairs and repointing, repairs to chimneys and the repair or reinstatement of traditional boundary walls, railings and steps.

Further information, including the grant scheme terms and conditions, eligibility and the application form is available at <https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building/planning/conservation-and-heritage/north-kesteven-heritage-grant-scheme/>. All grants are offered subject to availability.