

Branston and Mere Neighbourhood Plan

Summary of representations submitted by North Kesteven District Council to the independent Examiner following the regulation 16 Draft Plan Consultation, held between 19 April 2021 and 14 June 2021. For actual documents, please refer to the downloads under the link <https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/residents/living-in-your-area/localism-your-community/neighbourhood-plans/branston-and-mere-neighbourhood-plan/regulation-16-consultation/>

Rep No.	Representation	Comments
1	Canwick Parish Council	<p>1. Branston and Canwick parishes share a fairly short common boundary to the East of the newly opened Lincoln Eastern Bypass (LEB). No significant development is presently planned across the boundary but the proposed Lincoln South East Quadrant Sustainable Urban Extension (SEQ SUE) will be developed on Canwick Heath to the West of the LEB throughout the period of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP).</p> <p>2. Canwick PC understands that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan (NP) must conform with strategic policies in the higher level Local Plan (the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, or CLLP) and the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). We note that the large 3 sites identified in the CLLP for development within Branston are already being constructed but we are concerned that the present wording of Policy 1 could preclude all such development downstream, to the potential detriment of adjacent Parishes such as our own. Further, it could also affect the identification of new sites during future evolutions of the CLLP. Accordingly, we believe the policy should be revised to ensure that the NP will remain subservient to the higher level documents.</p> <p>We ask that our comments be taken into account.</p>
2	Forestry Commission	<p>Thank you for inviting the Forestry Commission to respond to the consultation on the Branston and Mere Neighbourhood Plan. Unfortunately we do not have the resources to respond to individual plans but we have some key points to make relevant to all neighbourhood plans.</p> <p><i>Forestry Commission and Neighbourhood Planning</i> <i>Existing trees in your community</i> <i>The Forestry Commission would like to encourage communities to review the trees and woodlands in their neighbourhood and consider whether they are sufficiently diverse in age and species to prove resilient in the face of tree pests and diseases or climate change. For example, if you have a high proportion of Ash, you are likely to see the</i></p>

majority suffering from Ash Dieback. Some communities are proactively planting different species straight away, to mitigate the effect of losing the Ash; you can find out more [here](#). Alternatively, if you have a high proportion of Beech, you may find they suffer particularly from drought or flood stress as the climate becomes more extreme. There are [resources](#) available to help you get ideas for other species you can plant to diversify your tree stock and make it more resilient.

Ancient Woodland

If you have ancient woodland within or adjacent to your boundary it is important that it is considered within your plan. Ancient woodlands are irreplaceable, they have great value because they have a long history of woodland cover, with many features remaining undisturbed. This applies equally to Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). It is Government policy to refuse development that will result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland, unless “there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists” ([National Planning Policy Framework](#) paragraph 175).

The Forestry Commission has prepared joint [standing advice](#) with Natural England on ancient woodland and veteran trees. This advice is a material consideration for planning decisions across England and can also be a useful starting point for policy considerations.

The Standing Advice explains the definition of ancient woodland, its importance, ways to identify it and the policies that relevant to it. It provides advice on how to protect ancient woodland when dealing with planning applications that may affect ancient woodland. It also considers ancient wood-pasture and veteran trees. It will provides links to Natural England’s [Ancient Woodland Inventory](#) and [assessment guides](#) as well as other tools to assist you in assessing potential impacts.

Deforestation

The overarching policy for the sustainable management of forests, woodland and trees in England is a presumption against deforestation.

Woodland Creation

The UK is committed in law to net zero emissions by 2050. Tree planting is recognised as contributing to efforts to tackle the biodiversity and climate emergencies we are currently facing. Neighbourhood plans are a useful mechanism for promoting tree planting close to people so that the cultural and health benefits of trees can be enjoyed alongside their broader environmental benefits. Any planting considered by the plan should require healthy resilient tree stock to minimise the risk of pests and diseases and maximise its climate change resilience, a robust management plan should also be put in place.

3	Historic England	<p>Thank you for consulting Historic England about your Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The area covered by your Neighbourhood Plan includes a number of important designated heritage assets. In line with national planning policy, it will be important that the strategy for this area safeguards those elements which contribute to the significance of these assets so that they can be enjoyed by future generations of the area.</p> <p>If you have not already done so, we would recommend that you speak to the planning and conservation team at your local planning authority together with the staff at the county council archaeological advisory service who look after the Historic Environment Record. They should be able to provide details of the designated heritage assets in the area together with locally-important buildings, archaeological remains and landscapes. Some Historic Environment Records may also be available on-line via the Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk). It may also be useful to involve local voluntary groups such as the local Civic Society or local historic groups in the production of your Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Historic England has produced advice which your community might find helpful in helping to identify what it is about your area which makes it distinctive and how you might go about ensuring that the character of the area is retained. These can be found at:-</p> <p>https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/plan-making/improve-your-neighbourhood/</p> <p>You may also find the advice in <i>“Planning for the Environment at the Neighbourhood Level”</i> useful. This has been produced by Historic England, Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission. As well as giving ideas on how you might improve your local environment, it also contains some useful further sources of information. This can be downloaded from:</p> <p>http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140328084622/http://cdn.environmentagency.gov.uk/LIT_6524_7da381.pdf</p> <p>If you envisage including new housing allocations in your plan, we refer you to our published advice available on our website, <i>“Housing Allocations in Local Plans”</i> as this relates equally to neighbourhood planning. This can be found at https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-localplans/</p>
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		<p>heag074-he-and-site-allocation-local-plans.pdf/</p> <p>If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p>
4	National Grid	<p>National Grid has appointed Avison Young to review and respond to Neighbourhood Plan consultations on its behalf. We are instructed by our client to submit the following representation with regard to the current consultation on the above document.</p> <p>About National Grid</p> <p>National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET) owns and maintains the electricity transmission system in England and Wales. The energy is then distributed to the electricity distribution network operators across England, Wales and Scotland.</p> <p>National Grid Gas plc (NGG) owns and operates the high-pressure gas transmission system across the UK. In the UK, gas leaves the transmission system and enters the UK's four gas distribution networks where pressure is reduced for public use.</p> <p>National Grid Ventures (NGV) is separate from National Grid's core regulated businesses. NGV develop, operate and invest in energy projects, technologies, and partnerships to help accelerate the development of a clean energy future for consumers across the UK, Europe and the United States.</p> <p>Proposed development sites crossed or in close proximity to National Grid assets:</p> <p>An assessment has been carried out with respect to National Grid's electricity and gas transmission assets which include high voltage electricity assets and high-pressure gas pipelines.</p> <p>National Grid has identified that it has no record of such assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>National Grid provides information in relation to its assets at the website below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www2.nationalgrid.com/uk/services/land-and-development/planning-authority/shape-files/ <p>Please also see attached information outlining guidance on development close to National Grid infrastructure.</p>

		<p>Distribution Networks Information regarding the electricity distribution network is available at the website below: www.energynetworks.org.uk</p> <p>Information regarding the gas distribution network is available by contacting: plantprotection@cadentgas.com</p> <p>Further Advice Please remember to consult National Grid on any Neighbourhood Plan Documents or site-specific proposals that could affect our assets. We would be grateful if you could add our details shown below to your consultation database, if not already included:</p> <p>Director nationalgrid.uk@avisonyoung.com Avison Young Central Square South Orchard Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 3AZ</p> <p>Town Planner box.landandacquisitions@nationalgrid.com National Grid National Grid House Warwick Technology Park Gallows Hill Warwick CV34 6DA</p>
5	Natural England	Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

		<p>Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.</p> <p>Natural England does not have any specific comments on the Branston and Mere Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16.</p> <p>However, we refer you to the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>For any further consultations on your plan, please contact: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.</p>								
6	NKDC	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="618 632 790 667">Section</th> <th data-bbox="790 632 1599 667">Commentary</th> <th data-bbox="1599 632 1977 667">Changes recommended</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="618 667 790 1394">Policy 1</td> <td data-bbox="790 667 1599 1394"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy seeks to limit development to proposals of 9 or fewer dwellings except in exceptional circumstances and (presumably) where community support has been achieved. Part 1a) links to part 2 and 3, but part 3 relates to amenity space so this is likely an error. Branston has received a fair amount of development from sites allocated in the local plan and it is these allocations which allow a restrictive policy to be put in place. The inclusion of the exception rules in parts 2 and 4 of the policy differ from the local plan policy LP2 position on Large Villages such as Branston, but this change (given the allocations) is not considered to be in conflict with the local plan. However, there may be occasions where, for example, a brownfield site could be redeveloped for more than 9 dwellings and where forcing a reduction to below the threshold would result in inefficient use of land. As such a minor amendment to part 2 should be made to allow for such occasions on a case by case basis. </td> <td data-bbox="1599 667 1977 1394"> <p>Amend part 2 to “In exceptional circumstances additional growth on non-allocated infill or brownfield sites within the developed footprint, or in appropriate locations (see CLLP) outside of...”</p> <p>Amend the last sentence in part 2 to read “Notwithstanding this, these proposals will also be subject to the criteria (c-e) in part 1 of this policy.”</p> <p>Import definition of exceptional circumstances from the local plan to part 2.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Section	Commentary	Changes recommended	Policy 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy seeks to limit development to proposals of 9 or fewer dwellings except in exceptional circumstances and (presumably) where community support has been achieved. Part 1a) links to part 2 and 3, but part 3 relates to amenity space so this is likely an error. Branston has received a fair amount of development from sites allocated in the local plan and it is these allocations which allow a restrictive policy to be put in place. The inclusion of the exception rules in parts 2 and 4 of the policy differ from the local plan policy LP2 position on Large Villages such as Branston, but this change (given the allocations) is not considered to be in conflict with the local plan. However, there may be occasions where, for example, a brownfield site could be redeveloped for more than 9 dwellings and where forcing a reduction to below the threshold would result in inefficient use of land. As such a minor amendment to part 2 should be made to allow for such occasions on a case by case basis. 	<p>Amend part 2 to “In exceptional circumstances additional growth on non-allocated infill or brownfield sites within the developed footprint, or in appropriate locations (see CLLP) outside of...”</p> <p>Amend the last sentence in part 2 to read “Notwithstanding this, these proposals will also be subject to the criteria (c-e) in part 1 of this policy.”</p> <p>Import definition of exceptional circumstances from the local plan to part 2.</p>		
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furthermore, the reference at the end of part 2 of this policy requires exceptional cases to adhere to parts 1a-e of this policy, but parts 1a and 1b are not relevant. • Part 2 of the policy takes a different approach to the definition of exceptional circumstances than the local plan which specifies that more than just delivery of housing is needed to justify such proposals, with an example of a community facility being given. It might be that this is intentional but in order to ensure consistency with the local plan it is recommended that the definition of exceptional circumstances set out in Policy LP2 is carried across into this policy. • Part 4 would benefit from clarification of the scope and extent of the consultation required. This is based on the experience of using such a policy in the local plan. An additional point 4b) would help to make this more precise. • Part 4e) of the policy could be clarified somewhat with an amendment to the wording to make it more precise. • Once these minor amendments are made, it is considered that this policy will meet the basic conditions. 	<p>Add new 4b) to read “that the scale and reach of community engagement is appropriate taking account of the scale and location of the proposal” and change 4b) to 4c) etc.</p> <p>Amend part 4e) to replace “an explanation” with “a clear demonstration”</p>	
		Policy 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is noted that due to the restrictions of Policy 1, this policy will apply to very few occasions. However, there may be occasions where it will apply when the exceptional circumstances apply. It is considered to be consistent with the local plan and meet the basic conditions. 	n/a	
		Policy 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In part 1c) “unreasonable” should be replaced with “unacceptable” to be more accurate. • In part 1d) “integrity” should be replaced with “setting and significance” to be more aligned to national policy. • Part 2 of the policy introduces the community support element of policy to employment uses. Whilst this is not done in the local plan, it does not conflict with it. The 	<p>In part 1c) replace “unreasonable” with “unacceptable”.</p> <p>In part 1d) replace “integrity” with “setting and Significance”.</p>	

			<p>inclusion of the word “new” in this part of the policy is considered important as it would be unreasonable and counter-productive to apply such a policy to an existing employment use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In part 3 of this policy as worded, it would apply to all uses, including residential, which then doesn’t make sense with the rest of the paragraph. Some minor amendment should be made to clarify the uses intended. • Once these changes have been made it is considered that this policy will meet the basic conditions. 	Amend part 3 of the policy to clarify the uses this would apply to, presumably employment uses.	
		Policy 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some concern that this policy makes no reference to the conservation area and its appraisal. The supporting Branston Village Appraisal also makes very limited reference to the Conservation Area Appraisal. There is no objection to requiring development to be informed by the Branston Village Appraisal that has been produced by the Parish Council, but there should be some reference to the Conservation Area Appraisal too. • Part 1e) of the policy seems to have been cut off. Looking at the regulation 14 draft of the policy there seems to be additional wording that may or may not need to be reintroduced to allow this to make sense. • Once these two amendments are made it is considered that this policy will meet the basic conditions. 	<p>Add new point 2: “2. Within Branston Conservation Area and within its setting, development proposals should be consistent with the requirements of the Branston Conservation Area Appraisal (2018).”</p> <p>Complete the sentence at the end of part 1e) depending on what the Steering Group intended.</p>	
		Policy 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This policy seeks to protect community facilities. It is considered to be consistent with local plan policy LP15 and otherwise meets the basic conditions. 	n/a	
		Policy 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are challenges with this policy with the changes to the use class order in 2020 and subsequent changes to allow changes to residential uses from E Use Classes. However, it is right that the community should seek to protect these 	n/a	

		<p>essential services and facilities and NKDC supports this. This policy accords with the local plan policies and is considered to meet the basic conditions.</p> <p>Policy 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy seeks to protect and enhance green infrastructure in the parish. This is consistent with policies in the local plan and is considered to meet the basic conditions. <p>Policy 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy designates seven areas as Local Green Space. An assessment of the areas in Appendix B suggests that these sites meet the NPPF criteria for Local Green Space designation. As such it is considered that this policy meets the basic conditions. <p>Policy 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy seeks to protect the main leisure facility in the village, providing support for proposals to enhance it. This is supported and is considered to meet the basic conditions. 	n/a	n/a	n/a
7	Nottinghamshire CC	Thank you for consulting Nottinghamshire CC on the above, we have no comments to make.			
8	Resident 1	<p>Page 20 - I was very surprised to see no mention of sustainable properties as per the national objectives. Why can't we specify all new houses must have solar panels, eco boilers etc? Surely this will future proof our new housing and encourage developers to build responsibly.</p> <p>Page 22 - the 2011 survey specified "impact on the environment" are we saying we have done everything possible to future proof our new houses with the looming changes from central government?</p> <p>Page 35 – 11.2 eludes to sustainable design fit for the 21st century I would argue the current plan is not forward leaning or adventurous enough.</p>			
9	Witham First District Internal Drainage Board	<p>The Board supports North Kesteven District Council Planning Policies.</p> <p>Below are general Board comments for Neighbourhood Plans.</p>			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan should support the idea of sustainable drainage and that any proposed development should be in accordance with Local, National and Regional Flood Risk assessments and Management plans. • No new development should be allowed to be built within flood plain. The 'Flood Maps' on the Environment Agency website provides information on areas at risk. Also risk from surface water flooding should also be considered, information can also be found on the Environment Agency website. • Under the terms of the Land Drainage Act. 1991 and the Board's Byelaws, the prior written consent of the Board is required for any proposed works or structures within any watercourse within the District. This is independent of the Planning Process. • Outside the District under the provisions of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, and the Land Drainage Act. 1991, the prior written consent of the Lead Local Flood Authority (Lincolnshire County Council) is required for any proposed works or structures in any watercourse outside those designated main rivers and Internal Drainage Districts. At this location this Board acts as Agents for the Lead Local Flood Authority and as such any works, permanent or temporary, in any ditch, dyke or other such watercourse will require consent from the Board. <p>Through the planning process the Board will continue to comment on the individual planning applications, as and when they are submitted. Many of the proposed areas for development have been subject to multi-agency discussions including this Board with regard to flood risk and surface water discharge.</p>
10	Branston and Mere Traffic Calming Community Group	<p>Relating to Traffic/Congestion as a negative impact is mentioned throughout the Neighbourhood plan:</p> <p>4.9, 4.15 (Table 1 all 4 sectors), 5.13, 5.14, 6 (objectives 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9), 7, 7.6, 7.8, 10 (1e).</p> <p>But I will address the matter by focusing on: 17 Community Projects</p>

In the context of my coordination of the Branston and Mere Traffic Calming Community Group, which at present has over 200 members, we agree with all the projects listed but would like to add to the following sections:

Road Safety Improvements – in the centre of Branston.

We created the BMTCCG in response to the many residents upset and safety fears due the increase in traffic, including HGVs, as well as the increase of speed and lack of courtesy shown by said traffic through the parish. We have been in consultation with the residents of Branston and Mere and there is a great deal of support for comprehensive traffic calming measures throughout the parish – especially considering this plan projects forward to 2037. Including:

- A Community Speed Watch group
- Increasing the 30mph speed limit zone to commence where the present 40mph speed limit commences/ends and extending the 40mph speed limit to where the current 50mph speed limit starts/finishes at the village ‘gates’ on the B1188 section driving between Branston and the new bypass.
- Implement a full-time 20mph zone encompassing the Conservation Area within Branston
- The restriction of 7.5 tonne+ vehicles throughout the village except for access – this is possible now the bypass is open.
- Countdown signage leading up to the 30mph / village gates on Sleaford Road entry into Branston
- Continued enforcement of speed limits - Ideally several well-positioned, permanent speed cameras on each of the 4 main routes through the village – especially the B1188.
- Proven psychological traffic calming throughout village, as discussed in Psychological traffic calming_TRL_2005 and trialled in the village of Latton

Cycle paths and pavements - require improvements, particularly linking to Lincoln.

- There is also a need for a foot/cycle path from the village to Branston Potatoes.

Pedestrian crossing - on Lincoln Road.

- Due to the increased traffic/speeds residents already feel a need for more than one pedestrian crossing to enable safe access to those living in the parish

		<p>to other areas of the Parish; schools, shops, green space, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Two on Lincoln Road (B1188)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Far end of Lincoln Road close to Beech Road▪ Village Hall areao Sleaford Road (B1188) near Moor Laneo Silver Street near to Thackery Laneo Station Road<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Near Primary School▪ Near Academy
11	Marrons Planning for Vistry Group	https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/resources/assets/attachment/full/0/120990.pdf