Long Bennington Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015-2025

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Executive Summary

The right for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans was established through the Localism Act (2011) and the rules governing their preparation were published in 2012. This has given us, the communities, the right to shape how future development in our area is managed and delivered.

In November 2012, Long Bennington Parish Council was successful with its application to become a Neighbourhood Plan Area. This Neighbourhood Plan (the 'Plan') reflects community-wide comments, observations and concerns about its future, bringing them together with census information, strategic and statistical evidence to produce policies that reflect the need to make Long Bennington a better place to live, work and visit, now and for future generations.

Long Bennington is a large village and, as a designated Local Service Centre has a range of challenging issues—amongst the key ones of these, that have changed rapidly even over the preparation of this plan appear to be:

- Traffic—volume, speed and type, with associated parking and road safety problems
- Development—a substantial amount of current and proposed development of residential, commercial and retail premises
- Local Infrastructure—connected with development is an inevitable increased usage of drains, highways, medical and school facilities

The Plan has been produced by a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group including Parish Council members, informed by extensive community feedback from residents and organisations. Once the Plan has been made, following a favourable local referendum, the Long Bennington Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan of South Kesteven and will be used to determine planning applications for new developments in the local area.
1 Why we need a Neighbourhood Plan

1.1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for Long Bennington to create a local blueprint for delivering a sustainable future for the benefit of all who live, work or visit our area.

The Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that a Neighbourhood Plan gives the community “direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need” (NPPF para. 183). It enables us to ensure we get the right types of development in the right locations, and set neighbourhood policies that will go towards the decision making process when determining planning applications.

A Neighbourhood Plan, once voted on and ‘made’, becomes part of the statutory Development Plan for the local area and this statutory status means the Neighbourhood Plan is more powerful than other local documents, such as Parish Plans or Village Design Statements. The Plan must comply with European and national legislation and be in conformity with existing strategic planning policy while not repeating what is already stated in South Kesteven’s Local Plan.

Robust evidence is the foundation on which every local planning policy document has to be based, including this Neighbourhood Plan. This includes community engagement through consultations and surveys, to establish our community’s views, aspirations and needs of our local area. South Kesteven’s existing evidence base has been used to inform the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan.

1.2 Why we need a Neighbourhood Plan for Long Bennington

The village of Long Bennington has distinctive and diverse characteristics, highly valued by our residents. As the village evolves, the process of change needs to be positively managed so that the unique qualities that contribute to the village’s individual identity can be protected and enhanced, whilst managing future growth and new development.

There is recognition that sustainable development\(^1\) is not only necessary but desirable, as without it our villages will stagnate or grow in an unsustainable way negatively affecting our economy, society and environment. According to the 2011 Census data, population change in Long Bennington has been 8.67% over a 10 year period, compared to the national figure of 7.9% and the District figure of 6.72%. This shows that our area has been growing at a greater rate compared to the wider surrounding area, and therefore there is more of a need for sustainable, community led policies to help direct and manage new growth within our local area.

However, this growth has not been all positive, as feedback from the local community shows. The Long Bennington Parish and population are concerned about inappropriate and over-intensive development, green spaces being lost (including one where attempts are being made to protect it as a Village Green), expansion of the existing built boundaries of the village traditional cottages being demolished and the character of historic buildings being affected by changes affecting their setting and therefore, not keeping with the characteristics of the area.

Greater traffic, caused in particular by Commercial Developments in and around the village is creating pressure on the roads, together with excessive speeding (see summary of traffic survey annexed).

There are concerns about the lack of safety with HGV vehicles using the village roads. This is creating social concerns, along with environmental worries. A Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to stop this kind of change, but it gives us the opportunity to identify the best ways to manage change, identify appropriate highway and safety improvements, directing development

\(^{1}\) “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (http://www.worldbank.org/depweb/english/sd.html).
towards what the local community wants, while protecting the natural environment and cultural assets and ensuring a more sustainable future for us and future generations.

This Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared by members of the Parish with the NPPF’s core principles in mind, namely “a presumption in favour of sustainable development”, so the Plan can assist in the development of Long Bennington to ensure a healthy society, thriving economy and protected environment.
2 How the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by a group of members from Long Bennington Parish Council, informed by local community members and the District/County Councillor that make up the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Its mandate is to drive the process, consult with the local community and deliver the Plan. The Neighbourhood Area was designated by South Kesteven on 6th November 2012, and SKDC have provided valuable background data such as demographic information used in the preparation of this document We have been advised in the latter stages of our programme by URS/AECOM a nationally respected planning and environment consultancy. Planning Aid England have provided invaluable support and assistance, and we have benefited from a generous grant from DCLG which has assisted us in the preparation of our village questionnaire and other documents.

A Parish Plan for Long Bennington was produced in 2005. The Parish Plan was in many ways an exemplary piece of work but unfortunately had no formal status. The Long Bennington Neighbourhood Plan has been introduced following an extensive consultation exercise with local residents, community organisations and businesses and comes at a time when there are a number of challenges. These include the status of the village as a Local Service Centre in South Kesteven and the granting of a number of planning permissions for a number of residential and commercial developments, some of which have been objected to by the Parish Council.

The consultation process, which lasted a year, involved working with the local community through the creation and circulation of:

- Village Questionnaire; (which had over 370 responses, constituting an unusually high response rate of c 40% of eligible households)
- Business and Community Group Survey;
- School Survey ; and
- An “Open Q&A” session was held as part of the Annual Parish Meeting in Spring 2014.

A draft Neighbourhood Plan was developed from these consultations and from research and evidence collected. Throughout the Plan’s development we also liaised very closely with South Kesteven District Council to ensure not only that our policies are in general conformity with the existing Local Plan Development Plans, but also, that they are not in conflict with the policies of the emerging Local Plan.

The next step of the process is to put this draft Neighbourhood Plan forward to local residents, businesses and statutory bodies for a six-week consultation period. Based on the feedback from this consultation, amendments will be made resulting in a Final Neighbourhood Plan which will be formally submitted to South Kesteven District Council, who will publicise it for six weeks and then forward it with accompanying documents and all representations made during the publicity period to an Independent Examiner. The Examiner will examine the Plan to make sure it meets the ‘basic conditions’ including all requirements under EU and National legislation, who will then submit a report to the District Council confirming whether the Plan is approved or rejected. The Plan will then be put forward for a public referendum.

Assuming it is approved for recommendation, the referendum question will be a straight “yes” or “no” on the Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. If 50% or more of those voting vote “yes” for the Plan, it will be adopted and become part of the planning policy for the local area. If fewer than 50% vote “yes” for the Plan, then it fails and there will be no adopted Neighbourhood Plan in the area.

The Plan period will run for 10 years from the time it is passed at referendum. We recognise that the Plan will be delivered and implemented by differed stakeholders and partners and that it is not a rigid blueprint, but instead provides a framework for change through its vision, strategy and policies.
3 Background to the Neighbourhood Plan

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Neighbourhood Plans must be line with policy established in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the South Kesteven District Council Local Plan. The NPPF emphasises the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” through three critical roles; (1) an economic role by contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy; (2) a social role through supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and (3) an environmental role by contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

The NPPF sets out to achieve sustainable development in 13 core planning principles. In short they are: (1) building a strong, competitive economy; (2) ensuring the vitality of town centres; (3) supporting a prosperous rural economy; (4) promoting sustainable transport; (5) supporting high quality communications infrastructure; (6) delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; (7) requiring good design; (8) promoting healthy communities; (9) protecting Green Belt land; (10) meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; (11) conserving and enhancing the natural environment; (12) conserving and enhancing the historic environment; and (13) facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.

The Long Bennington Neighbourhood Development Plan is designed to embrace these principles and roles of sustainable development, to ensure development in the parish grows in a sustainable way.

3.2 Basic Conditions

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) (2014) identifies a set of ‘basic conditions' that a draft Neighbourhood Plan must meet to proceed to referendum. These are:

a. Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
b. The making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
c. The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of authority (or any part of that area);
d. The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
e. Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan.
3.3 South Kesteven District Council Local Plan

The Plan is written in conjunction with, and in conformity with the South Kesteven Local Plan. The Local Plan contains a number of adopted and emerging plans. The adopted plans include the Core Strategy (2010) and the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2014). The Core Strategy contains a range of policies relevant to the Plan, including: Policy H1 – Residential Development; Policy H3 – Affordable Housing; Policy E1 – Employment Development; Policy SP3 – Sustainable Integrated Transport; Policy EN1 – Protection and Enhancement of the Character of the District; and Policy EN4 – Sustainable Construction and Design. As it can be seen from figure 3-1, there are no relevant policy designations from South Kesteven's Local Plan, affecting Long Bennington.

The Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document show an existing employment site (ExE LSC3) which has now been developed out and a new housing allocation (LSC1e) (for which planning permission for 37 properties has been granted) within the parish of Long Bennington, as seen in Figure 3-2. The Locally Important Existing Employment Site, as Policy SAP5 in the Site Allocations Plan, restricts proposals for development, reuses and/or redevelopment of land or premises within the area for employment-generating uses. The housing allocation, as Policy LSC1 in the Site Allocations Plan, allocates around 35 houses with 12 of these defined as affordable and being built between 2011 and 2016. Affordable housing, open space and play facilities will be required as part of each development (in accordance with Policies H3 of the Core Strategy and SAP10 of the Site Allocations Plan).
3.4 Long Bennington Parish Plan 2005

In 2005 a Parish Plan group operating under the auspices of the Parish Council produced a Parish Plan for Long Bennington, which included a Village Design Statement. The Parish spent their first year asking residents what they like and enjoy about the village, what they would like to change, what they would like to keep and how they would like to see the village develop. Two major surveys were distributed, workshops and debates hosted as part of three working groups at an Open Day in July 2004, a traffic survey was conducted in November 2004 and as well as close consultation with local authorities, local businesses, landowners and service providers. We produced a draft Parish Plan in February 2005 for discussion with South Kesteven District Council and our own Parish Council, and the resulting revised draft was then presented to a second Parish Open Day in the Village Hall in February 2005. We again had over 100 participants who enjoyed some lively discussion and expressed strong support for the structure, strategies and initiatives in the draft Parish Plan. From this, village development needs were identified as follows:

- Affordable housing;
- The need for a nursing home;
- Sheltered accommodation;
- Residential homes suitable for retirement;
- Larger Doctor’s Surgery;
- Development for employment; and
- Amenity development for leisure.

Unfortunately the Parish Plan had no formal status. However, some of the issues mentioned in the Parish Plan are still relevant today whilst others have been addressed (for example a larger GP surgery, which has been designed to have the
capacity to be extended, has been built). Whilst a retirement or nursing home facility would have been welcome there is acceptance that this would be dictated by a suitable site being available and market conditions. The Neighbourhood Plan includes planning policy to guide and steer development in relation to these issues.

### 3.5 Long Bennington Boundary

This Plan relates to the Parish of Long Bennington and the Qualifying Body empowered to create the Plan is Long Bennington Parish Council. The Plan Area was formally designated by South Kesteven District Council on 6th November 2012, as seen in Figure 3-3. The majority of the evidence and policies in the Plan concern the village of Long Bennington, but there is a significant area of agricultural land uses and dispersed individual dwellings outside the village.

### 3.6 Long Bennington Parish Profile

#### 3.6.1 Population

The population of Long Bennington has risen substantially during the last fifty years. The expansion has come once again from the Great North Road which, following the major road improvements of the sixties and the general increase in car ownership and usage, has brought Long Bennington within easy commuting distance of Lincoln, Nottingham, Newark and Grantham, the latter two having good rail links to London and the North. The effect of high house prices in London and the southeast, the choice of good schools in the area, a rural environment, and the growing trend for home working have also contributed to the growing population. According to Census data, between 1971 and 2001, the population of the Parish grew from 947 to 1,843 persons; an increase of almost 95%. Between 2001 and 2011 the population grew to 2,081, an increase of 8.67%. This shows a constant growing population in Long Bennington which should carry into the future and create a greater elderly population.

#### 3.6.2 Housing

National and regional policy now places greater emphasis on development being sustainable. The South Kesteven District Council surveyed all villages in the district to identify those villages which are considered to be sustainable. The assessment for sustainable development requires villages to satisfy at least 8 out of 9 essential criteria of having a: primary school, food...
shop, village hall, bus service (hourly), church, post office, public house and Doctor's Surgery. Long Bennington meets 8 of these 9 criteria and is therefore classified as a sustainable village; it fails the bus service criteria since the service is less frequent than hourly and services finish too early in the day to make commuting by bus a practical proposition for most workers. For example the last regular service bus back from Newark, the nearest large town is at 15.27, and the last service back from Grantham is at 17.20. There are no Sunday services whatsoever.

The Lincolnshire Structure Plan (consultation document published in February 2012) Policy H1 sets the requirement for residential housing within the South Kesteven District area as 9,200 for the 20 year period from 2001 to 2021. Of this total 1,900 are allocated to rural villages. Figures supplied by the District Council in August 2012 state that the Structure Plan rural figures would already be exceeded if permissions granted and those awaiting Section 106 agreements are added together. The situation in Long Bennington is that 75 properties were built between April 2001 and March 2012. There are 51 with planning permissions granted, of which 10 have started, as of March 2012. In particular, with regard to the Housing Site LSC 1 indicated above, planning permission for some 35 properties (including 12 affordable units) was granted during the preparation of this plan.

3.6.3 Economy

The Parish possesses several long established industrial and commercial undertakings. These include Long Bennington Mill (now relocated to the west of the A1), a financial call centre, vehicle hire firm offices, optical factory and accountancy practice, and an engineering company manufacturing horse drawn carriages and metal furniture (now also relocated to the west of the village with its original site being used for a housing development). Traditional but declining employment is provided by the farm units in the Parish. A number of residents work from home partially or wholly.

The development of Roseland Business Park on Normanton Airfield has provided a concentration of industrial premises in the southwest corner of the parish. Some 700 people are employed here. Activities on this site are diverse and include companies manufacturing animal feed, cement products, kapok products, a large vehicle body repair facility and specialist sports cars as well as companies providing vehicle storage and educational art supplies. On the northern extremity of Long Bennington village, the land north of the playing fields between the old Great North Road and the A1, is Long Bennington business park. This has grown substantially over the last few years and now provides employment for some 800 people, leading to localised traffic, parking and congestion issues.

Long Bennington is home to many commuters, travelling as far as Nottingham, Peterborough, Lincoln, Leicester and London. Economic changes in the UK are rapidly changing working patterns and practices, and we now also see a growing number of people working from home or from small offices and workshops classified as micro businesses with less than ten people.

3.6.4 Transport

Since the opening of the A1 by-pass in the late 1960s, Long Bennington has been spared the traffic problems resulting from its locations on one of the nation’s most important highways. Due to this, the village possesses a degree of accessibility unrivalled by most other rural settlements. Village residents have been concerned over a number of years, over the volume of heavy goods traffic generated by industrial development at Roseland Business Park on the nearby Normanton Airfield. The absence of slip roads onto the northbound A1 from either the southbound end of Main Road or from Normanton Lane requires northbound traffic to pass directly through Long Bennington, either using Main Road or the shorter but narrower Costa Row. Similarly southbound traffic from the A1 also has to leave the A1 at the north of the village and pass directly through the centre of the village along Main Road.

Residents have also become concerned about high traffic speeds on the village entrances at both ends of Main Road and at the southern entry into Costa Row. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee requested that the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership conduct a traffic monitoring exercise on Main Road in late 2014. This survey indicated that traffic entering Long Bennington from the A1 enters the village at high speed of an average of 36.7mph. As there was some doubt over the validity of this data, the Parish Council commissioned its own independent traffic survey which revealed both increasing volume of traffic and that the 85th percentile of traffic was at c 44mph.

The village is served by two bus services that travel to both Grantham and Newark. An additional service to Bottesford/Bingham has been cancelled due to support being removed by Lincolnshire County Council. These services are
adequate for shopping and school runs but there is limited access for commuters working in Grantham or Newark, non-drivers and young people who would like to travel in the evenings.

3.6.5 Environment

Long Bennington is situated in countryside that is ideal for arable crops and is therefore intensively farmed, although there are some grazing meadows adjacent to the River Witham with cattle. There is no access land (as defined in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) within the Parish. Access to the countryside is therefore limited to the many footpaths, bridleways and green lanes that have a historic public right way and are an integral part of the landscape. There are a number of paths adjacent to and accessing the riverside, but many of these are not public rights of way. An amenity area, which has been used for a range of community events in the past behind the “Royal Oak” pub has been closed off by the site owners and has been the subject of a recent village green application which has been submitted to Lincolnshire County Council.

Witham Road (Old Playing Field) Nature Reserve Project was set up as a millennium year project to turn the old village playing field into a nature reserve. It is located adjacent to the River Witham, as seen in Figure 3.4. The land is held in trust “for the enjoyment of the public”. The two-acre field is best described as “an old fashioned meadow grassland area with evidence of ridge and furrow”. The plan is for the development of the field as a traditional hay/cut meadow, with additional wild flower and native shrub plantings and with winding paths. Wild flower seeding has taken place and the Parish Council pay for periodic grass cutting to stimulate growth and allow access.

Wide roadside verges, particularly along the course of the old Great North Road are an important aspect of the landscape and streetscape in Long Bennington. The maintenance of these verges help ensure the safety of road users by providing good visibility at bends and adequate drainage. The maintenance should also ensure that farmland is protected from over-invasion by weeds and that access is available to hedges and ditches. At present, low priority is given to the road verges as important wildlife/natural habitat venues and the ‘amenity’ consideration of giving the road a pleasant appearance. There is also concern that inappropriate parking has damaged a number of verges, particularly around the centre of the village. Although Highway verges are formally the responsibility of Lincolnshire County Council as Highway Authority, the Parish Council has sought to improve the condition of some verges by works and a programme of bulb planting, particularly entering the village from the South.

3.6.6 Community Leisure and Wellbeing

Long Bennington has significant amenities in the provision of a Doctor’s Surgery, Village Hall, sports field (with floodlit Multi-use Games Area and new Football pitches supported with a grant from Sport England), pavilion and open spaces (as seen in Figure 3.5). A desire for a Cricket Pitch has been identified, There is little accommodation for visitors and tourists in Long Bennington other than a small number of “Bed and Breakfast” rooms at Priory House, Church Street and development of such accommodation would benefit the economy and community leisure. This is supported in the Local Plan Policy E1 Employment Development, where local
service centres are encouraged to develop opportunities to boost their local economy.

A mobile library calls twice a month, stopping at four locations in the village. At present this service seems adequate and meets the needs of the village.

The street lighting in Long Bennington varies depending on the location. In the newer developments the lighting is good and there are no known problems. In older parts of the village and particularly in Main Road and the narrow lanes leading off Main Road, the street lightning is inadequate, with issues associated with older lamp posts without the benefit of newer lower glare lights with cowling to prevent light spill.

Figure 3-5: Open space in Long Bennington
4 Vision and Objectives

4.1 The Vision Statement

The vision for Long Bennington is:

‘A Parish where the quality of life and sustainability is steadily improved over the timeframe of the Plan, so Long Bennington becomes a strong and thriving community where our history and heritage are sustained, and where our rural setting and character are preserved and enhanced for both residents and visitors.’

4.2 Objectives

The five objectives below outline what will need to be achieved in order to deliver the vision for Long Bennington. These give direction to the spatial framework outlined in Chapter 5 of this Plan.

![Figure 4-1: Neighbourhood Plan Objectives](image)

To make Long Bennington a better place to live, work and visit.

To support the provision and use of a range of local amenities and infrastructure.

To enhance public spaces in the village for future generations.

To seek to ensure new development is sympathetic to the historic heart of the village, appropriate and in accord with available infrastructure.

To reflect and act upon key areas of concern, such as road safety, public transport, civic amenity and unsympathetic development.
5 The Plan – Overview

5.1 Sustainable Development and our Neighbourhood Plan

The policies of the Long Bennington Neighbourhood Plan are set within the context of the NPPF and South Kesteven’s Local Plan. The scope and content of the Plan has been developed in line with the Parish Council’s aspirations and objectives to make Long Bennington a better place to live, work and visit.

5.2 Planning Context

The procedure for the making of a Neighbourhood Plan is prescribed within the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Regulations have informed the preparation of the Long Bennington Neighbourhood Plan, in particular:

- Ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- Ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan is in conformity with the policies and proposals of the South Kesteven Local Plan.

5.3 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

This section of the Neighbourhood Plan includes a set of planning policies that will be applied to all new development within Long Bennington. The community aspirations or intentions of the Parish are also included. The policies are to be read in conjunction with South Kesteven’s Local Plan.

5.3.1 Managing Development

The South Kesteven Site Allocation and Policies DPD (2014) makes provision for at least 5,940 new homes across the District (excluding Grantham) up to 2026, of which 761 are to be provided outside the key urban centres, chiefly in Local Service Centres such as Long Bennington. One of the plan’s overarching objectives is to identify suitable and deliverable sites for affordable housing schemes to meet local needs within rural villages, and ensure the provision of an appropriate amount of affordable housing on qualifying development sites.

The Plan also promotes sustainable patterns of development through the identification of appropriate housing allocations including rural affordable housing sites, promoting sustainable rural employment opportunities, improving access and public transport and by seeking to retain and improve existing facilities. Policy LSC1 Housing Allocations in the Local Service Centres allocates land at Main Road, Long Bennington for new housing development during the plan period 2011-2016. Allocation of this site provides the opportunity to deliver benefits to the local community, with a requirement to provide up to 35% affordable housing. Planning Permission has already been granted for this development with 37 houses. There are a number of current or pending applications including:

Development of 8 properties behind Royal Oak Pub (which would have the effect of removing one of the remaining open spaces in the village centre area)

Development of 4 properties behind Current Properties on Church Street [ref 14/2677 ]

Developments of 2 and 4 houses in land off Vicarage Lane
This policy is in line with Long Bennington’s overarching objective to provide affordable housing within the Parish. There is the need to avoid the consolidation or extension of isolated, sporadic or linear development within Long Bennington. The Plan’s aspiration is therefore to restrict further linear development by excluding new development on land outside the present village envelope.

5.3.2 Delivering New Housing to meet the needs of the Community

Taking into account the views of the Parish, the following development criteria, are proposed which SKDC should deploy in considering planning applications:

- Affordable housing is important to our future to enable younger people and low income families to stay in Long Bennington. There is little low cost housing available in the village and preference will therefore be given to low cost starter homes for local residents. The Parish will liaise with the Council’s Housing Department on the most appropriate way of achieving this; and

- The provision of retirement homes and sheltered accommodation is important for the ageing population in the village. Priority will be given (if a suitable site can be identified) to the development of a nursing home and the provision of retirement homes and sheltered accommodation for local residents, possibly in the form of an integrated retirement community.

- Concerns expressed by Anglian Water as to the suitability of drainage systems to take effluent from existing developments and overall capacity issues must be carefully considered

- For a number of reasons, Long Bennington has been subject to a disproportionate number of planning permissions for residential development in comparison with other LSCs and has a high number of extant permissions

- Buildings of merit and character should not be subject to their settings being adversely affected by development

- Developments should be required, by such things as established building lines and use of appropriate materials be required to blend in with and be sympathetic to surrounding properties

- Over intensive development in land previously used as back gardens should be discouraged

### LB1: New Housing Development

All new development in Long Bennington (including both committed and “windfall” sites should take into consideration the following:

i. The impact of the development on the form, character and setting of the settlement and on the community and its local environment;

ii. The availability of suitable drainage/ utility services;

iii. Appropriate access to and from the development; and

iv. The existing pattern of development and the need to restrict further linear development.

v. The unsuitability of current “combined” drainage systems currently prevalent in the village

Extensions and alterations to existing properties designed in accordance with the Design Principles set out in Policy LB2 will be supported.

**Conformity with NPPF:** Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (paragraph 50, 55). Section 7 – Requiring good design (paragraphs 58, 60).

**Conformity with SKDC Planning Policy:** EN1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Character of the District. SP2 - Sustainable Communities.

**Justification:** Strong evidence from Parish Consultations: Questionnaire 2013, question 38 on limiting development that expands the village boundaries and question 40 on the negative effects that arise from new housing.
5.3.3 Urban Design Principles

The Site Allocations and Policies DPD document states that where a Village Design Statement or Parish Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council and adopted by the District Council, development should be in accordance with the design principles established. There is not currently an adopted Village Design Statement for Long Bennington, so the intention of this policy is to implement some of key design principles so new development in Long Bennington will be subject to these specific requirements. This reflects concerns over a number of recent applications incorporating:

- demolition of current historic buildings
- over-intensive developments
- flooding caused by inappropriate or poorly executed drainage solutions
- “Garden Grabbing”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LB2: Design Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New development in Long Bennington should take account of relationships between buildings, landscape and open spaces which are characteristic of the immediate area and surrounding buildings. The following requirements should be considered:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. The visual impact of the building should respect the local vernacular, blend into the existing streetscape and not have a detrimental effect on the form, character and setting of the immediate area and its local environment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. The bulking, building lines and massing should be in keeping with the adjoining buildings;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Will not have a detrimental impact upon the quality of life of adjacent residents and properties;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Materials and boundary treatments should be sympathetic to the character and landscape of the surrounding area; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Infill and backland development should be in line with policy SAP H1 of the Site Allocation and Development Policies and the Backland Development SPG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi. In appropriate locations where adjacent properties would not be unduly affected, individual applications for buildings of high aesthetic and sustainability merit will be considered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conformity with NPPF: Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (paragraph 50, 55). Section 7 – Requiring good design (paragraph 50, 60).

Conformity with SKDC Planning Policy: EN1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Character of the District. SP2 – Sustainable Communities.

Justification: Parish Evidence Consultations: Questionnaire 2013, question 38 on limiting development that expands the village boundaries and question 40 on the negative effects that arise from new housing.

5.3.4 Employment and Office Development

Long Bennington is home to many commuters, travelling as far as Nottingham, Lincoln, Leicester and London. Economic circumstances in the UK are rapidly changing working patterns and practices, and we are now also seeing a growing number of people working from home or from small offices and more flexible workspaces.

The worldwide shift to service-based knowledge working has emphasised this trend, which has then been accelerated by technology in the form of personal computer use and now the availability of broadband in Long Bennington. It is reasonable to assume that this global pattern will continue to affect the distribution of commuters and home-based office and workshop workers in the village.

In line with the adopted South Kesteven Core Strategy (2010), proposals for the expansion of existing businesses and proposals for new employment-generating uses within or on the edge of Local Service Centres will generally be supported,
provided that the scale of the proposal is appropriate to its location, and that it will not have a negative impact on the village and neighbouring land uses. For example, the importance of co-locations, clusters and back room services such as printing and PA support will also be encouraged reflecting the changing nature of work habits and the increase in more home and flexible working.

The development of Roseland Business Park on Normanton Airfield has provided a concentration of industrial premises in the southwest corner of the parish. Activities on this site are diverse and include companies manufacturing animal feed, cement products, kapok products, and specialist sports cars as well as companies providing vehicle storage and educational art supplies. Recent permissions have been granted for a large vehicle repair facility and accommodation for a business unit of a large international construction company and there is the potential for a new waste/recycling facility to be constructed on the site as a result of a potential allocation decision of LCC. All of these developments are accompanied by substantial HGV movements with accompanying noise, vibration and road safety issues due to the access from this site from the North being directly along Long Bennington main Road. The long term objective of the Parish Council is, with the involvement of LCC and the Highways agency to improve access to this area from the Southbound A1.

On the northern extremity of Long Bennington village the land north of the playing fields between the old Great North Road and the A1 amounting to 1.75 hectares was designated in the draft South Kesteven Local Plan for 2001 as suitable for new employment development to promote diversification of the rural economy. This has since grown substantially to encompass a range of office-based uses.

Long Bennington Business Park, Main Road, Long Bennington is important because there are several commercial, multi-use and industrial units providing a range of local employment including a substantial call centre. This is very important for maintaining employment numbers in the village and beyond, although concerns have been expressed over traffic and on-road parking resulting from recent expansion of use of units on the Business Park.

Whilst “green energy” initiatives are generally to be supported, Wind Turbines within sight of the village are regarded with concern, not only due to visual intrusion but the environmental effects of heavy construction traffic.

**LB3: Protecting Employment Uses**

Proposals for business development that encourage employment opportunities in the village and larger parish will be supported, providing they do not negatively impact on neighbours, in terms of noise, traffic, light and pollution impacts. Such uses will include, in addition to those sites identified within the South Kesteven Site Allocations, the following:

- Office development for knowledge workers;
- Flexible workspaces and studio development for light commercial and craft-based businesses;
- Live/work units; and
- Backroom facilities such as printing, secretarial, teleconference and meeting space.

Further development at the Roseland and Long Bennington Business Park sites will be supported subject to appropriate attention being given to:

- Infrastructure and Road Safety Improvements
- Minimisation of Landscape Impact by appropriate mitigation measures
- Measures to attenuate noise pollution effects of development

**Conformity with NPPF:** Section 1 – Building a strong, competitive economy (paragraph 21). Section 3 – Supporting a prosperous rural economy (paragraph 28).

**Conformity with SKDC Planning Policy:** EN2 – Employment and Development.

**Justification:** Parish Evidence Consultations: Questionnaire 2013, question 5 on where the local residents have to travel to for employment.

**Industrial/ Energy Developments**
There have been recent concerns over;

Permissions for major developments at Roseland-for example a development of modular units for a national firm of Builders. Whilst the setting for this is appropriate, it is considered that;

-Further applications for development at Roseland should take into account the effect on traffic and the need for long-term improvements to the Access to the Roseland Business Park from the A1

Recently Applications have been submitted for at least three applications for major Wind Farms, at Temple Hill, Marston and Thackstons Well, just within the Parish. These applications are typically controversial both for and against. Accordingly;

-Major applications for Wind Turbines/ Solar Farms should be subject to consideration of LCC policies and avoiding proximity to residential areas where amenity of properties might be affected

5.3.5  Green Spaces

The Long Bennington Neighbourhood Plan supports developments which accord with the South Kesteven Core Strategy, in particular the following elements of EN1 which seeks to protect the natural environment and permits new development where it is appropriate to the character and significant natural, historic and cultural attributes and features of the landscape within which it is situated, and contributes to its conservation, enhancement or restoration.

5.3.6  Witham Meadows

Part of the grassland on the west bank of the river Witham between Winters Lane and the Meadows development, historically designated as 'E6' and later as 'EN2', has been designated as a Nature Reserve, and work has been done such as clearing of spoil, planting of wild flower seeds and installation of bird nesting boxes. Because much of the area is under-used, consideration is being given to a part of the area being utilised as allotments.

5.3.7  Improved Access to Footpaths

To improve access for people with mobility problems, all stiles on selected footpaths should be replaced with self-closing and self-latching gates and the footpaths paved to provide access and a firm surface for all, including users of wheelchairs, push-chairs and prams. The selected footpaths are the path from Lilley Street across the Water Meadows to Winters Lane, the path from Sparrow Lane to the Water Meadows footpath and the proposed east bank footpath. Please see Table 6.1 for a list of related projects that the Parish will actively promote and encourage.

5.3.8  Allotments

Allotments provide valuable cultivation space for residents who have no access to a private back garden, or to residents who require space additional to their back garden space in which to cultivate fruit, vegetables or flowers. They provide a valuable open space experience for local residents acting as a “lung” in a similar way to parkland. Both cultivated and untended plots contribute to maintaining biodiversity. They also provide an opportunity for exercise in the form of cultivating, and they play a

LB4: Protection of Green Spaces

New development should, wherever possible:

- Maintain existing hedgerows, meadows, grassland, trees and woodland and encourage the planting of new trees and hedgerows;
- Where new trees are proposed, these should, wherever possible, be appropriate disease resistant native species; and
- Should not negatively impact on existing neighbouring uses through noise, traffic, light and pollution impacts.
- Amenity areas and accesses to riverside routes should be supported and developments not impede their usage by local residents
- Local Green Spaces should be designated by relevant Local Authorities to protect their long-term availability

5.3.8  Allotments

Allotments provide valuable cultivation space for residents who have no access to a private back garden, or to residents who require space additional to their back garden space in which to cultivate fruit, vegetables or flowers. They provide a valuable open space experience for local residents acting as a “lung” in a similar way to parkland. Both cultivated and untended plots contribute to maintaining biodiversity. They also provide an opportunity for exercise in the form of cultivating, and they play a
very important role in sustainability terms by allowing residents to grow their own produce. The Parish Council have been actively seeking a suitable site, but the need for a suitable water supply has made this more difficult than initially anticipated.

**Conformity with NPPF:** Section 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paragraph 109, 118).

**Conformity with SKDC Planning Policy:** EN1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Character of the District.

**5.3.9 Community Infrastructure**

The NPPF provides a clear framework for the promotion, retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. South Kesteven's Core Strategy also includes policies to protect and enhance existing facilities and resist any inappropriate loss.

Core Strategy Policy SP2 identifies the 16 settlements which have been identified as Local Service Centres (LSCs). Long Bennington is one of these LSCs (although, as indicated above it fails to meet all relevant criteria). These are villages which offer a range of local services and facilities which are able to meet the day-to-day needs of the local population. These settlements also act as focal points for the rural community and surrounding area.

An increase in community facilities can contribute towards the continuing viability and sustainability of villages. It is important, therefore, that proposals which would result in either an increase in, or improvements to, community assets and facilities are supported, and developers should be encouraged to provide or contribute towards community assets, such as green spaces and pedestrian routes as part of their developments. Such development would be supported by Policies SP1 and SP2 of the adopted Core Strategy.

The Village Hall in Long Bennington provides an invaluable community facility to the Parish and is used for a toddler group, dance sessions, public meetings, WI, flower and produce shows and other community uses. In addition to the main hall, which benefits from a stage and PA system, there is a smaller hall, bar and the Parish Clerks office. Additional capacity in the halls that could accommodate further uses will be strongly encouraged albeit that the current site is already well developed.

The Playing Field area has a popular pavilion, a Multi-Use Games area, two tennis courts (which can also be used for 5 a side football), a well-supported bowling green (which hosts county matches) and new football pitches supported with a grant from Sport England. The field supports a junior football club with over 200 members. Unfortunately the demise of car boot sales on the site has meant that the PC has had to meet an increasing burden of support to the facility. Much of the original development of the facilities on the Playing field was supported by a highly successful programme of car boot sales but the improved nature of the new pitches mean that this is no longer feasible. Construction of a new (co-operative) convenience store is under way in the village.

The Village has 3 popular wine bar/public houses.
**5.3.10 Transport and Traffic (including A1 Traffic Access)**

Village residents have become concerned over the amount of heavy goods traffic generated by industrial development at Roseland Business Park on the nearby Normanton Airfield. Roseland have completed the privately funded road, Roseland Way, from the airfield to join the southern end of Main Road allowing northbound traffic from the A1 to gain access to the airfield and for southbound traffic from the site to gain access to the A1 without passing through Long Bennington. A number of planning permissions have been issued for new/enlarged developments on the Roseland Site, permitting expansions over the last few months 15,740 square feet of industrial/warehousing space. Concerns about increasing heavy goods traffic are now centred on the traffic generated by Roseland Business Park requiring access to and from the north. The absence of slip roads onto the northbound A1 from either the southern end of Main Road or from Normanton Lane requires northbound traffic to pass directly through Long Bennington, either using Main Road or the shorter but narrower Costa Row. Similarly southbound traffic from the A1 also has to pass directly through the centre of the village using Main Road. The initiatives are:

- Construct a new slip road from Roseland Way on the northbound carriageway of the A1; and
- Construct a new slip road from the southbound carriageway of the A1 to intersect Main Road opposite the junction from Foston.

**Whilst the community is generally supportive of controlled development at Roseland, further large-scale development would be opposed unless it was accompanied by a clear commitment to fund the construction of a new A1 slip road or other significant highway improvements**

The majority of residents in Long Bennington who are in employment, work further than 10 miles from the village (45%). The majority of locals are concerned about the speed in the village (155), size of vehicles (164), volume of traffic (109) and parking on the main road (83). The majority of residents would also like the see further traffic calming measures and a pedestrian crossing in the village. Many people rate the frequency of bus services very poor. For example, the last regular service from Newark to the village is at 15.27 in the afternoon

A Road Safety Group has been set up in the village which has identified certain key requirements:

- the need for more active Speed Cameras to supplement the current flashing devices at the Southern and Northern entrances to the village. These will be installed at up to 10 sites across the village on a periodic basis

- the need for pedestrian refuges and safe crossing places at key locations such as Main Road and Valley Lane
LB7: Access and New Development

New development for ‘appropriate uses’ will be permitted where it seeks to maintain or improve access to the countryside, and where it is in accordance with the other policies of the plan. In particular, the following improvements will be sought through the use of planning condition, s.106 agreement where appropriate and feasible, or through the neighbourhood element of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) if/when this is adopted by South Kesteven District Council:

i. Improvements to footpaths, cycle paths and signage to ensure they are easily identified and accessible all year round;
ii. Traffic calming measures such as interactive speed cameras, pedestrian refuges and improved highway marking
iii. Wherever possible, new development should ensure that access to existing permissive rights of way is maintained; and
iv. Wherever viable, provide linkages to existing footpaths and rights of way or create new routes.
v. In order to protect road safety and amenity of residents, potential development alongside or associated with the A1 should be carefully controlled to deal with potential problems of landscape impact, noise, traffic and access and light pollution

Where possible and viable, new development on the edge of the village will be required to provide new permissive paths that link to existing walking routes.

Conformity with NPPF: Section 4 – Promoting sustainable transport (paragraph 35). Section 8 – Promoting healthy communities (paragraph 75).(135,479),(926,633)


Justification: Parish Evidence Consultations: Questionnaire 2013, question 23 on the local residents concern over various traffic issues, questions 24 and 25 on the need for further traffic calming and questions 26 and 27 on the need for a pedestrian crossing).
6 Delivery and Implementation

6.1 Development Management

Development Management is the principal tool through which South Kesteven will implement the Long Bennington Neighbourhood Plan, enabling it to reshape the area according to the plan’s policies and principles.

Alongside this document, development management decisions will be made in line with South Kesteven’s Core Strategy, Site Allocation and Development Policies and the emerging Local Plan.

SKDC, LCC and the Parish Council should work together by encouraging maximum practicable pre-application discussions and consultation rather than limiting itself to the bare “statutory minimum”. This will help to ensure that community concerns are addressed and benefits for the community maximised.

6.2 Monitoring and Review

South Kesteven has a statutory requirement to prepare a Monitoring Report on the progress of local planning policy documents, the extent to which policies within these documents are being implemented and their effectiveness. Monitoring is needed to establish what is happening now and what may happen in the future. By monitoring and studying trends it is possible to identify key challenges and opportunities for the future and enable policy to be adjusted or revised where necessary. Monitoring is also important to ensure that the aim of sustainable development is being achieved.

The Parish Council will undertake a review of the Neighbourhood Plan every 3 years to ensure it remains compliant with both national and local planning policy, and that it is up-to-date and relevant to changing circumstances. This review will involve monitoring unimplemented planning permissions relevant to the plan area as well as monitoring the progress of relevant community infrastructure projects. This review will feed into South Kesteven’s Councils own monitoring reports.

6.3 Projects and Prioritisation

The Plan sets out a number of projects and initiatives that the Parish have identified as being a priority for them to ensure delivery and implementation of the Plan. It is important to note that these are not ‘land-use’ planning issues, rather they are the community’s aspiration to deliver these and are considered as being very important to the Parish. These concerns lie outside the remit of ‘town planning’ and therefore, require other actions to take them forward. The table below sets out suggestions for taking forward these wider issues.

Table 6-1: Community Aspirations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Aspiration</th>
<th>Action</th>
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| **A1 Junction**       | The initiatives are:  
|                       | • Construct a new slip road from Roseland Way on the northbound carriageway of the A1;  
|                       | • Construct a new slip road from the southbound carriageway of the A1 to the intersect Main Road opposite the junction from Foston.  
|                       | • The Parish will seek the advice of LCCs transport planner. It may well be the case that the Neighbourhood Plan safeguards land where the junction will go to incentivise the Highways Agency. |
| Traffic Refuges / Speed Reduction Cameras | LBPC is considering the installation (using funding from LCC/s106 contributions when available) of central refuges to be built on Main Road at two locations:
- Near the Post Office (Main Road North); and
- Adjacent to the Primary School (Marin Road South).
  - Movable Speed reduction cameras at up to 10 locations around the village
  - Obstacles to reduce overnight HGV parking by Playing fields/Pavilion
The Parish Council will continue to work with Lincolnshire County Council Highways Department to improve the safety and condition of the roads within the parish. |
| New Walks | The initiatives are:
- New footpath from the Viking Way Bridge off Church Street on the east bank of the River Witham to join Westborough Lane, constructing a new bridge over the old mill spillway.
- New footpath from the end of Winters Lane to the river.
- New footpath to link the extended footpaths from Winters Lane and Lilley Street.
- Extension of the Sparrow Lane footpath down to the west bank of the river.
- Complete the roadside footpath from Costa Row to Vicarage Lane
- Enhancing riverside paths where appropriate |
| Improved Access to Footpaths | The initiatives are:
- On selected routes paved footpaths. |
| Maintenance of Rights of Way | The Parish Council will seek to protect and improve rights of way, supporting appropriate applications to formalise informal paths where appropriate |
| Construction Management/Code of Practice | Where developments do occur there have been problems with what might be called "inconsiderate contractors"-mud on roads, working late and at weekends, leaving pavements in a dangerous state etc. LBPC to work with the District and/or County Council on ensuring an up-to-date Code of Conduct for construction is in place for all contractors to adhere to. |
Appendices – to follow

To include: List of Evidence Base, Consultation Survey Results, List of relevant South Kesteven Local Plan Policy

Any other relevant docs that the PC would like to include?
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