

# Old Somerby Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2036

As made by South Kesteven District Council on the 29<sup>th</sup>  
June 2021



Old Somerby Parish Council

Referendum Held 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## Foreword

Old Somerby Neighbourhood Development Plan is an important planning document which will shape the future of our community over the next decade and beyond. It is relevant to all parishioners who value our long history, our heritage and our sense of community.

The Localism Act, 2011 provided parish councils with the ability to have a vital say in shaping the future of their communities by means of a neighbourhood development plan. To take advantage of this opportunity our Parish Council set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which comprised volunteers from the local community.

The Steering Group carried out extensive research and consultations with those who live, work or have a business interest in the area. In addition statutory bodies have also been consulted.

Feedback has enabled the Steering Group to confirm our vision for the parish as set out below:

*In 2036 Old Somerby will be a distinct, sustainable and vibrant rural village surrounded by attractive open countryside. It will contain a community that values and looks after its historic buildings and the natural environment. Whilst physically separate from Grantham there will be good links to the employment opportunities, services and facilities that the town offers.*

Furthermore by preparing the neighbourhood plan the Parish Council has taken the opportunity to prepare planning policies that will influence the type, scale and design of any development which can take place within our parish.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the preparation of this plan. In particular I am extremely grateful to the Steering Group for all their hard work, and the officers at South Kesteven District Council who supported us throughout the process.

Vicky Lowndes  
Chair of the Parish Council

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## 1. Introduction

### What is a neighbourhood development plan?

- 1.1 Communities have powers to shape development through neighbourhood planning, which is a right introduced through the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.2 A neighbourhood development plan can set out a vision for an area and establish planning policies for the use and development of land. It will form part of the statutory planning framework for the area, and the policies and proposals contained within the neighbourhood development plan will be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.3 A neighbourhood development plan (hereafter referred to as the ‘neighbourhood plan’) will therefore form part of the statutory development plan for the area and will be used by the local planning authority and other stakeholders in decision making.

### Old Somerby Parish

- 1.4 The parish is located about 3 miles to the south east of Grantham. The main road running through the parish is the B1176, which has a junction with the nearby A52/B6403 approximately 1 mile to the west.
- 1.5 The parish is predominantly rural comprising open farmland. Almost all of the built development is located within the village of Old Somerby, which is located in the centre of the parish. There is also a small hamlet known as Cold Harbour situated about a mile to the north west of the village. According to the Census 2011 the parish has a population of 224.

### Governance

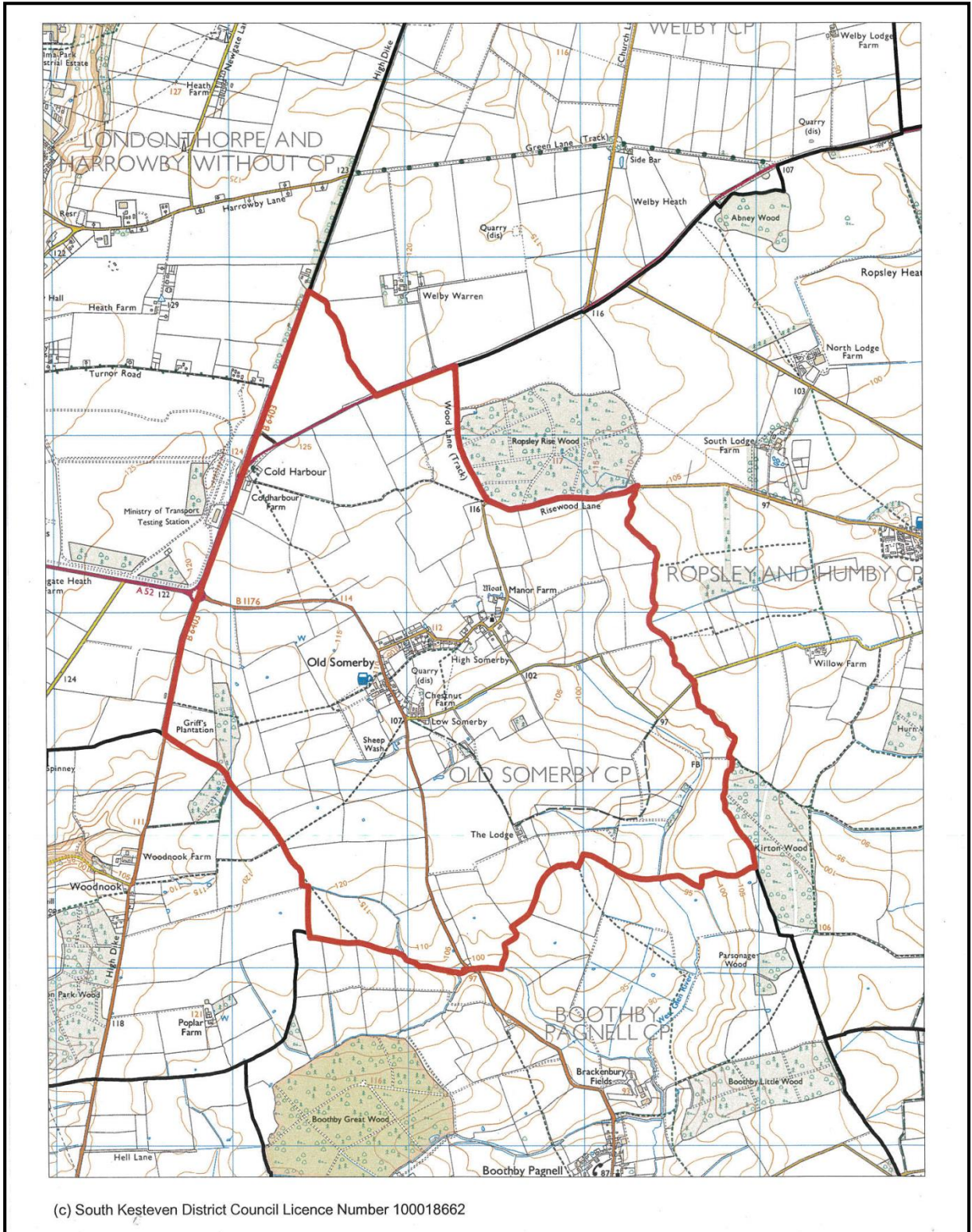
- 1.6 The parish is within the administrative area of South Kesteven District Council, which serves as the local planning authority. Services such as education and transport are provided by Lincolnshire County Council, which also deals with minerals and waste planning matters.

### Background to the neighbourhood plan

- 1.7 The Parish Council considered putting together a neighbourhood plan so that local people would have more influence on any development coming forward in the area. A parish meeting was held on 25 May 2016 and those present voted in favour of the Parish Council



### Map 1 – Boundary of the Old Somerby Neighbourhood Area



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commencing the formal process. At the meeting a steering group was formed to prepare the neighbourhood plan on behalf of the Parish Council.

- 1.8 The first stage in the statutory process is for the boundary of the neighbourhood plan, known as the neighbourhood area, to be formally designated by the local planning authority. As the appropriate 'Qualifying Body' Old Somerby Parish Council applied to South Kesteven District Council to designate the neighbourhood area on 16 June 2016. The proposed boundary of the neighbourhood area followed the parish boundary. The boundary is indicated in Map 1.
- 1.9 The application was advertised in accordance with the statutory requirements and representations were invited on the proposed boundary. No responses were subsequently received by the District Council.
- 1.10 The District Council formally approved the boundary of the Old Somerby Neighbourhood Area on 15 August 2016.

### **The Plan Period**

- 1.11 The neighbourhood plan will cover the period from 2018 to 2036.
  - 1.12 The plan period is identical to that for the recently-adopted South Kesteven Local Plan'
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## 2. National and Local Planning Context

### The Basic Conditions

- 2.1 There is a statutory requirement that a neighbourhood development plan must meet certain basic conditions. These are:
- it has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
  - it is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
  - it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations; and
  - the prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with. For example the ‘making’ of the Neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012.

### National Policy

- 2.2 The Old Somerby Neighbourhood Plan has therefore been developed with appropriate regard to national policy, most notably the National Planning Policy Framework (known simply as the Framework). The Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England. It first came into effect in March 2012. However in July 2018 and February 2019 the Government published a revised Framework which replaced the earlier version.
- 2.3 The revised Framework must be taken into account when preparing local and neighbourhood plans. It states that neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans, and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. It adds that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than that set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.

For further information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- 2.4 The Old Somerby Neighbourhood Plan has also been mindful of the Planning Practice Guidance, which was published online by the Government in 2014. The Guidance explains how national policy should be applied.

The Guidance can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

## The Development Plan

- 2.5 The Development Plan is the name for the collection of adopted local development documents or planning policy documents that shape development and manage land use in a particular area. It contains the policies and proposals against which planning applications are determined.
- 2.6 In accordance with the basic conditions, a neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic planning policies for the area as set out in the Development Plan.
- 2.7 The Development Plan prepared by the District Council for South Kesteven comprises:
- The recently adopted Local Plan to 2036.
- See more at: <http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=14904>
- 2.8 The Development Plan also includes adopted minerals and waste plans prepared by Lincolnshire County Council.

## Sustainable development

- 2.9 The Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It says that sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 2.10 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching aims relating to economic, social and environmental objectives. These should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans.
- 2.11 At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development providing it does not conflict with the policies in an up to date local or neighbourhood plan.

## EU Obligations

- 2.12 A number of EU obligations may be relevant to the neighbourhood plan. In particular the District Council will check whether the policies and proposals give rise to significant environmental effects that trigger the need to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The District Council will also assess whether a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required.

## Basic Conditions Statement

- 2.13 Details about how the draft neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions are set out in a separate document. The basic conditions statement can be viewed here:



<http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/OldSomerby>

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### 3. Historical Development and Character

- 3.1 The village of Old Somerby is located in the centre of the parish. It nestles in a slight hollow in the landscape and is surrounded by extensive areas of open countryside.
- 3.2 It is a linear village that primarily comprises ribbon development along the B1176 and School Lane, and partially along Church Lane. The only exception to this type of development is a cul-de-sac off School Lane.
- 3.3 These roads provide three sides of a square, with the relatively underdeveloped The Pastures adding the fourth side. In the middle is an expansive open area of agricultural land that is crossed by two public footpaths that link different parts of the village together.
- 3.4 The nature and density of residential development that is spread along these roads perhaps gives the impression of a village that it is bigger than it is, partly the result of stretches of undeveloped road frontages and areas of open space within the built form of the settlement.

#### Origins of the settlement

- 3.5 The settlement of Somerby is first recorded in 878 when it was referred to as Summerledebi. This is a Danish word which means 'Home of the Summer Sailor', and probably refers to a Viking invader.
- 3.6 The village initially evolved as two separate settlements, namely High Somerby and Low Somerby.

#### High Somerby

- 3.7 High Somerby evolved around the church. The Domesday Book notes that that in 1086 there was a church in the settlement. This is the oldest building in the village and is dedicated to St Mary Magdalene. The oldest surviving part is the Norman arch which dates to 1140. The South Aisle was added in 1250 and the font dates from around the same time. The Church is a Listed Building (Grade II\*).
- 3.8 Old Somerby Manor House and the adjoining barn originate from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and are both Grade II Listed Buildings.
- 3.9 Near to the church and Somerby Manor House there is the Old Rectory, which is a Queen Anne building believed to date from 1702. The Old Rectory is a Grade II Listed Building. Opposite the Old Rectory is Church Cottage, which dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. This building, like many of the original buildings within the village, is stone built and was originally thatched. Apart from the Old Farmhouse on Grantham Road, this cottage is probably the oldest surviving house in the village. Glebe Farm is at the northern end of

the village. The original thatched farmhouse was destroyed by fire, being rebuilt in the 1830's.



Old Rectory, School Lane

- 3.10 The remainder of the buildings in this part of the village comprise post 1950's housing development.

### Low Somerby

- 3.11 Low Somerby grew alongside what is now the Grantham Road (B1176). Within this area there is an old pit and quarry, the stone from which was used for local building and road repair. Next to the old quarry was a small Methodist Chapel that was built in about 1899. This building was built using corrugated iron, and was in use as a chapel for just 25 years before being sold as a house. It's somewhat crude construction served well until it was replaced with the present, slightly enlarged brick dwelling in 1965.
- 3.12 The Old Farmhouse situated next to the public house in Grantham Road dates from 1644 and is a Grade II Listed Building. Reputedly this attractive old building has the longest internal unsupported beam in Lincolnshire. Also situated in Grantham Road is the Old Forge (now Post Office Cottage) and the Old Post Office, which served the village for over 50 years since the 1920s. Both the Post Office and the Forge were owned and lived in by the Ayers family since at least 1841 until their closure in 1979.
- 3.13 The Fox and Hounds Public House was previously a farm. The original public house was situated in one of the stone cottages at 3 Grantham Road. It was known as The Plough when it served its last pint and closed its doors. The license was transferred to the new building around the beginning of the 20th Century. The current pub has been extensively altered and extended in recent years.

- 3.14 The village well was sunk behind the buildings on Grantham Road around 1811. The spot is still easily found as it is marked by a rather grand stone well head. The well was funded by the Reverend John Myers and given to the residents of the parish. An inscription to this effect can still be found on it.



Grantham Road (the B1176)

- 3.15 Finally in Low Somerby the imposing White House Farmhouse sits at the point where The Pastures meets Grantham Road. It was built in 1876 by the owner Christopher Turnor and farmed by Mr Sneath, a tenant farmer. In 1916 the land was taken over by the Jenkinson family.

### Merging of the two settlements

- 3.16 In 1845 the village school was constructed between the two settlements. It was built using public money on land owned by the church. In 1866 the school records show that 42 pupils were in attendance. Some redevelopment of the building took place in 1962 including the provision of indoor toilets. It remained in use as a school until finally closing due to lack of pupil numbers on 16 July 1971. It is now a private house.
- 3.17 From the 1950's onwards High and Low Somerby gradually merged together. Opposite the Old School the first few local authority council houses were built, quickly followed by more along the southern side of School Lane and in the late 1960s a row of private houses to the north of School Lane. Whilst the two parts of the village have become more united the open feel of the settlement is maintained as a result of the undeveloped areas and frontages within the built form together with a number of views over paddocks and farmland.





Cul-de-sac off School Lane



Housing development along School Lane

## The present village

- 3.18 Today there is a mixture of architectural styles within the village. It still retains its character and identity separated from the nearby town of Grantham by productive and extensive farmland.

## Character assessment

- 3.19 As part of the preparation of the neighbourhood plan the Steering Group undertook a character assessment of the village. This concluded that the historical development of the settlement has resulted in three distinct character areas. The characteristics of each of these areas is summarised below.

**Table 1 - Village Character Assessment**

Feature	High Somerby	Between settlements	Low Somerby
Topography	Relatively flat though the church is set on slightly higher ground.	The land gently rises along School Lane towards the church.	A slight incline from The Pastures along the Grantham Road (B1176) towards School Lane. Views across surrounding farmland to the west indicate how the village is set within in a slight hollow with the surrounding countryside beyond gently rising. This creates a sense of enclosure.
Land uses	Once the historic core of the village with the church and other prominent buildings. However now primarily residential. Further ad-hoc ribbon development added along Church Lane.	Dominated by more recent housing development along School Lane. It largely comprises former council housing constructed in the 1950s in a cul-de-sac. This was followed by market housing ribbon development built in the 1980s.	A mixture of past uses including old quarry, Methodist Chapel and agricultural buildings. Now primarily residential though the public house is a prominent building and key landmark.
Layout	The area is centred around the church and other historic buildings at the junction of School Lane and Church Lane. The area has an irregular and varied arrangement. Buildings are set back from the road, which widens and curves through the area. This provides a good setting, especially for the church. Buildings stand at irregular angles. amongst small but mature front gardens.	School Lane is straight in places and buildings and their associated gardens have a regular and more formal arrangement. Some front gardens front directly onto the road. Some properties have quite long back gardens.	Buildings are of a mixture of ages and styles, and set in an irregular layout. Some buildings front directly or have gable ends hard against the road creating a feeling of narrowness and enclosure.

Feature	High Somerby	Between settlements	Low Somerby
Spaces	A sense of openness from the graveyard and front and back gardens that vary in size, dimensions and proportions.	Only the front gardens provide open space. A small public open space to the rear of properties on the southern side of School Lane. There is an unattractive area of garages to the southern rear of properties.	Minimal open space aside from smallish front gardens. However once beyond the public house there are views across the surrounding farmland.
Roads, streets and routes	The roads twist and turn, and has a more relaxed and informal layout.	The road has a slightly suburban rather than rural feel. Buildings set back from the road do give a feeling of openness though pavement only available on one side which changes.	Traffic feels slightly intimidating with buildings fronting directly onto the street or properties having smallish front gardens.
Green and natural features	The area has a feeling of greenery from the small pockets of open green space, the churchyard, wide road verges and mature trees and hedges.	Some mature hedges and trees.	Little greenery as you travel along the road. Some front gardens have been paved over to create off road parking spaces.
Landmarks and Listed Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church of St Mary Magdalene</li> <li>• Old Somerby Manor House</li> <li>• The Barn at Old Somerby Manor</li> <li>• The Old Rectory</li> <li>• Church Cottage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old pit and quarry (though naturally regenerated and now largely hidden from view)</li> <li>• Methodist Chapel</li> <li>• The Old Farmhouse</li> <li>• The Fox and Hounds Public House</li> <li>• Old Forge (now Post Office Cottage) and the Old Post Office</li> <li>• Village well (Well Head)</li> </ul>
Streetscape features	Features are indiscrete and include a post box set in a wall, old road signage and a church notice board. There are also attractive stone walls in the area.	A notice board and bench are located on a small area of open space at a bend on School Lane. This provides a small space for social interaction. Telephone wires prominent along the street.	Some advertisements in and around the public house as well as prominent telephone wires crossing road.
Views	There are attractive views within the area of the historic properties and mature trees and hedges. There are also some glimpses of the surrounding countryside.	Whilst most properties front onto School Lane, they often enjoy wide views of the surrounding countryside from the rear of their properties.	The core of the village is quite enclosed, but there are extensive views of the surrounding farmland to the west once you pass the public house.

## Important open land

- 3.20 Whilst not regarded as within any one of the above character areas, the agricultural land to the east of the properties on the Grantham Road and to the south of buildings on School Lane and Church Lane provides an important open space in the layout and setting of the village. In many ways it is integral to the character and rural feel of the village. There are a number of glimpses of this area as you walk around the village, and gaps in the buildings that allow access.
- 3.21 This agricultural field is further enhanced as a valued asset by enabling a pedestrian thoroughfare along the two public footpaths, which links different parts of the village and provides a quieter alternative to using the busy main roads. It also allows substantive views from within the village across the adjoining open countryside.

## Map 2 – Location of village surrounded by open countryside



## Cold Harbour

- 3.22 Situated about a mile north west of the village there is a small hamlet known as Cold Harbour. The name means a ‘generally inhospitable place’ and was often given to small clusters of buildings found alongside ancient tracks. This small collection of houses is situated on what was the Roman Road known as High Dyke. Originally there was a farm at the location and this lovely building still survives. The stable block at Cold Harbour



Farm is a Grade II Listed Building. Also at the spot is a large house called Blue Harbour, which was originally a public house.

## Surrounding landscape character

- 3.23 A Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken by South Kesteven District Council in 2007. This indicates that the parish predominantly falls within the Kesteven Uplands landscape character area, which is described as extending from Grantham in the north, covering a large part of the District to the south. The northern boundary of the parish along the A52 comes just within the Southern Lincolnshire Edge landscape character area.
- 3.24 The Kesteven Uplands character area is described as:
- a relatively unified, simple, medium-scale agricultural landscape, with a high proportion of historic woodland
  - undulating landform based around the valleys of the Rivers Witham and East and West Glen and the Welland to the south
  - picturesque villages built of local limestone, with Collyweston slate roofs to the south, and pantiles to the north
  - high concentration of houses and parks, with areas of farmland under estate management
  - a dispersed, nucleated settlement pattern, mostly following the river valleys
  - enclosed mostly by hedgerows, with hedgerow trees
  - modern human influences include airfields and the A1, Great North Road
- 3.25 Aside from part of Griff's Plantation there is no woodland within the parish. However Ropsley Rise Wood and Kirton Wood abut the parish to the north and east respectively.
- 3.26 In terms of its sensitivity, the landscape of the Kesteven Uplands is described in the Landscape Character Assessment as medium in scale with a strong landscape pattern of woodland and hedgerows. It contains areas of sensitive landscape including the historic parks and areas around the edge of the often picturesque villages. Away from the main transport corridors it is a relatively tranquil landscape. Landscape sensitivity to new employment or residential proposals is described as being medium to high because of the high proportion of valuable landscape elements and relatively undisturbed character.
- 3.27 The landscape management objectives for the Kesteven Uplands are to:
- protect and improve field boundary condition
  - protect existing hedgerow trees
  - plant new hedgerow trees
  - maintain important grassland areas
  - protect important and distinctive woodland cover
  - protect historic parkland
  - protect field trees, particularly in parkland and in large arable fields
  - maintain traditional village forms

- use of limestone for new construction in the villages and countryside
- use of new planting to minimise the visual impact of major roads and industrial buildings
- pay special attention to sensitive spaces around the edge of historic towns such as Stamford and the villages
- maintain open areas that extend into the towns and villages

The District Council's Landscape Character Assessment can be found here:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2417&p=0>

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## 4. Profile of the Area

4.1 In October 2013 a profile for Old Somerby Parish was prepared by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) in conjunction with Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and Community Lincolnshire.

4.2 To create this profile OCSI primarily used data from the Office for National Statistics and Census 2011 as well as other information sources. The findings of the report are briefly summarised in this section.

A copy of the full report can be found here:

<http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/OldSomerby>

4.3 This report built upon the national review carried out by John Egan and was framed around a set of characteristics that a community should have in order to create thriving, vibrant and sustainable community to improve the quality of life for its residents. These characteristics were broken down into a set of themes around which the profile was structured. These themes provide the headings below.

### Social and cultural aspects

4.4 The report states the parish has a population of 225 people living in 95 households.

4.5 Of this total 135 (61%) are working age adults. There are 55 (24%) over 65, which is higher than the national average of 16%.

4.6 The percentage increases in total population between 2001 and 2011 mirrors the average for Lincolnshire as a whole. However the inward and outward migration indicates that there were more aged 15-24 and aged 65+ moving out, whilst there were more aged 25-44 moving into the parish.

### Equity and prosperity

4.7 The parish is not regarded as a deprived area though there were 12 people of working age who were benefit claimants.

### Economy

4.8 There are 120 economically active residents. This represents 68% of those aged 16-74, which mirrors the national average. There were 56 economically inactive (31%).

4.9 Of those people in employment:

- 54 were full time employees;
- 33 were part-time employees; and

- 23 were self employed.

4.10 There were 5 people working from home.

4.11 Only 5% of working age adults were receiving ‘out of work’ benefits, which is half the national average.

4.12 The largest employment sector is retail (17% of people in employment), followed by construction (15%) and manufacturing (13%).

4.13 In terms of the occupations of those in employment:

- 11% are managerial, which is the same as the national average;
- 23% are professional, which compares to 30% nationally;
- 10% are administrative or secretarial, which compares to 12% nationally ;
- 19% are skilled trades which compares to 11% nationally; and
- 14% elementary, which compares to 11% nationally.

## Housing and the built environment

4.14 Housing in the parish contains the following type of properties:

- 56 detached houses;
- 37 semi-detached houses;
- 5 terraced houses; and
- 1 flat.

4.15 The proportion of detached houses in the parish is double the national average and the proportion of terraced houses is half the national average.

4.16 In terms of whether people in Old Somerby rent or own their homes:

- 72 houses are owner occupied;
- 8 houses are socially rented;
- 11 houses pay private rent; and
- 5 houses comprise other rented accommodation.

4.17 An analysis of council tax bands reveals that the parish has:

- 22% in Band A compared to Lincolnshire average of 39%;
- 11% in Band B compared to Lincolnshire average of 21%;
- 15% in Band C compared to Lincolnshire average of 20%;
- 16% in Band D compared to Lincolnshire average of 11%;
- 14% in Band E which is the same as the Lincolnshire average;
- 14% in Band F compared to Lincolnshire average of 2%; and
- 8% in Band G compared to Lincolnshire average of 1%.

4.18 It was estimated that 15 households were in ‘fuel poverty’.



## Transport and connectivity

- 4.19 In terms of car ownership:
- 10 households had no access to a car;
  - 35 households had 1 car;
  - 40 households had 2 cars;
  - 10 households had 3 cars; and
  - 5 households had 4 cars or more.
- 4.20 Generally car ownership is higher than the Lincolnshire and national average.
- 4.21 As regards commuting 10 people travel less than 2km to work. Conversely 15 travel more than 40km. Only 3 people travel to work by public transport.
- 4.22 The average travel times by public transport or walking from Old Somerby to the nearest service or facility was estimated as follows:
- employment centre – 16 minutes;
  - further education facility – 37 minutes;
  - GP – 15 minutes;
  - hospital – 89 minutes;
  - primary school – 9 minutes;
  - secondary school – 28 minutes;
  - supermarket – 15 minutes; and
  - town centre – 24 minutes.

## Services

- 4.23 The road distance from certain key services is as follows:
- job centre – 5.7km;
  - secondary school – 6.1km;
  - GP – 5km;
  - public house – 0km; and
  - post office – 4.2km.
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## 5. Community Consultation

### Initial non-statutory consultation

- 5.1 To support the initial preparation of the neighbourhood plan the Parish Council decided to consult the local community to establish what people believe is important about living in Old Somerby. In addition the Parish Council was keen to understand what the local community felt was good about the area, what needed to be protected, and what needed to be improved.
- 5.2 This consultation was organised and undertaken by Community Lincs on behalf of the Parish Council. In August 2016 they distributed two hard copies of a questionnaire to every household in the parish.
- 5.3 Of the 190 questionnaires distributed around the parish, there were 76 returned. This represents a return of 40%.
- 5.4 Community Lincs published an analysis of the responses to the questionnaire in October 2016. A copy of their full report can be found here: <http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/OldSomerby>
- 5.5 The main findings are that when asked about why they enjoy living in Old Somerby, the following received most support:
- local church/public house;
  - clean and tidy;
  - safe and quiet environment;
  - rural atmosphere;
  - open views;
  - access to the natural environment; and
  - local wildlife and habitats.
- 5.6 When considering any development proposals the following features of the natural environment were regarded as very important considerations:
- peace and quiet;
  - green spaces;
  - landscape and views;
  - nature conservation; and
  - biodiversity.
- 5.7 When considering development proposals in the parish, the questionnaire asked what aspects of the built environment were important to protect. The considerations regarded as most important included the size of the village, historical aspects and the distinctive building style.

- 5.8 There was strong support for the introduction of traffic management measures, most notably the reduction of speed levels through the village. In terms of service improvements, respondents most wanted to see better internet/broadband provision.

### Consultation on the Pre-submission Draft Plan

- 5.9 The statutory pre-submission consultation period took place between 22 November 2018 and 31 January 2019. The Draft Plan was widely publicised to all those who lived, worked or had a business interest in the area, including landowners. They were all given an opportunity to comment.
- 5.10 A copy of the document was also distributed by email to over 30 consultation bodies specified in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The list of contacts was kindly provided by South Kesteven District Council.
- 5.11 The group received 36 responses. These comprised:
- 28 responses from local residents;
  - 6 responses from Government agencies and the voluntary sector; and
  - 2 responses from landowners.
- 5.12 Of the 28 responses from residents, 24 said they were broadly happy with the overall content of the neighbourhood plan. Of the remainder, three had no fundamental criticisms or areas of concern but provided several detailed comments which were assessed and, where appropriate, the draft plan was amended accordingly. There were a number of positive comments about the need to protect views. One resident expressed concerns about the overall process.
- 5.13 Similarly the 6 organisations raised no objections. Some offered a number of general comments on preparing a neighbourhood plan or additions to the evidence base. South Kesteven District Council offered a number of constructive and detailed comments to improve the policy wording or the accompanying maps. The two landowners expressed some concerns about policies in the plan.

### Consultation Statement

- 5.14 Further details about the community engagement undertaken is provided in the consultation statement, which is a separate document that accompanies this plan.
- 5.15 As required by the Regulations the consultation statement specifies:
- details of who was consulted on the proposed neighbourhood plan;
  - an explanation of how they were consulted; and
  - a summary of the main issues and concerns raised throughout the consultation.
- 5.16 The consultation statement can be viewed here:  
<http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/OldSomerby>

## 6. Key issues

6.1 The key issues to emerge from the evidence gathering and community engagement are summarised below in terms of their impact on achieving a sustainable community.

**Table 2 - Assessment of Key Issues**

	Positive impacts	Negative impacts
Environmental Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The village is very attractive with a rural and open character</li> <li>• There are a number of historic Listed Buildings, mainly located around the church</li> <li>• The village is surrounded by open countryside</li> <li>• It is located in a bowl surrounded by the Kesteven Uplands landscape character area</li> <li>• It is physically separated from the nearby town of Grantham, which is not visible because of the topography</li> <li>• There are extensive open views across surrounding farmland available from public places within the village</li> <li>• There is pedestrian access available within the village and to adjoining countryside via the public rights of way</li> <li>• Local people value the tranquillity and rural nature of the village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is concern amongst the local community that any inappropriate development would result in the loss of environmental features</li> <li>• A need has been identified for the introduction of traffic management measures, most notably the reduction of speed levels through the village</li> </ul>

	Positive impacts	Negative impacts
<b>Social Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a church and public house in the village</li> <li>• There are extensive services and facilities available nearby in Grantham</li> <li>• There are a mixture of house types in the village, of varying size and tenure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quarter of residents are over 65</li> <li>• The village has limited services and facilities with no local shop, primary school or health facilities</li> <li>• There is high car ownership in the village (presumably because of the above)</li> <li>• There is no meaningful public open space available in the parish, such as a children's' play area or playing fields</li> <li>• There is no community building to facilitate social interaction, such as a village hall</li> <li>• Respondents to the questionnaire wanted to see better broadband provision</li> <li>• There was also requests for improved public transport and surface water drainage</li> <li>• There were also additional comments supporting the provision of a village shop</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not a deprived area</li> <li>• There are low unemployment levels</li> <li>• There are employment opportunities available in nearby Grantham and further afield (e.g. commuting to London on the East Coast Mainline)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is very few employment opportunities available within the parish</li> <li>• People are very dependent on the motor car for accessing work, with very few using local public transport</li> <li>• There is concern about poor road maintenance</li> </ul>

6.2 These key issues thereby provide the context for the formulation of the vision and objectives in the following section, and the subsequent policies and proposals.

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## 7. Vision and Objectives

### National context

- 7.1 The Framework states that neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area.

### Local context

- 7.2 The recently adopted South Kesteven Local Plan includes a vision that states what the District will become by 2036:

*In 2036 South Kesteven will continue to be a vibrant part of Lincolnshire. It will have strong links to the growing economies of Peterborough, Cambridge and London, in particular. The distinctive local character, unique local heritage and environmental and cultural assets will be a source of enjoyment of all and will be enhanced where possible.*

*The District will have a successful, diverse economy providing employment opportunities for the local workforce, equipped with a wide range of skills to meet employer needs. It will be an area of sustainable, high quality growth and a popular place to work, live, visit and invest in.*

*South Kesteven will provide a high quality of life, consisting of sustainable urban and rural communities where people want to live and work and are able to do so in quality and enhanced environments. The District will be a safe place to live with strong communities.*

*The network of town and village centres will grow and develop appropriately, according to their size, and will provide a range of accessible services in a good environment. This will be achieved by:*

- *Creating the right balance of jobs, housing, services and infrastructure;*
- *Ensuring that development is sustainable in terms of location, use and form;*
- *Balancing the development needs of the District with the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment;*
- *Addressing and mitigating any negative effects of development on the built and natural environment;*
- *Working with partners and residents to develop a place that is welcoming to all*

- 7.3 The vision for South Kesteven's recently adopted Local Plan looks to maximise the potential of the District, through supporting the delivery of jobs, growing the economy, enhancing the role of the town centres, and enabling villages and smaller settlements to deliver appropriate forms of sustainable growth.
- 7.4 The vision for South Kesteven in the recently adopted Local Plan also includes the following extract for rural areas:

*Outside the four main towns, new development will be focused primarily on those villages where there are good levels of services and facilities, having regard to the environmental and infrastructure capacity of those villages and the desire to safeguard existing services and employment.*

*All villages will retain their diversity and vitality, with thriving communities, well planned and carefully managed development. Villages will have sufficient jobs and homes for local people. Larger villages will continue to provide the necessary day-to-day services to ensure rural communities have choice in terms of homes, work and recreation.*

*The specialised needs of rural communities will be met through appropriate development that meets defined local needs. The diversification of the rural economy will be encouraged while recognising the importance of supporting the important agricultural economy as well as protecting and enhancing where possible important environmental assets.*

## Vision for Old Somerby

- 7.5 It is against this wider national and local context, and the views expressed by the local community, that the following vision for Old Somerby has been formulated.

The vision is:

In 2036 Old Somerby will be a distinct, sustainable and vibrant rural village surrounded by attractive open countryside. It will contain a community that values and looks after its historic buildings and the natural environment. Whilst physically separate from Grantham there will be good links to the employment opportunities, services and facilities that the town offers.

## Objectives

- 7.6 To deliver this vision the plan has the following objectives:

1. To support appropriate small scale residential development in the village, to include affordable homes for parishioners and their families.
2. To protect the separate identity and setting of the village by preventing coalescence with Grantham
3. To protect and enhance the character of the village and the surrounding rural landscape
4. To maintain and develop the local services and facilities to ensure a sustainable and viable community

## Planning policies

- 7.7 The vision and objectives will be achieved by the planning policies set out in Section 8. The following table indicates which policies will deliver each of the objectives.

**Table 3 – Relationship between Objectives and Policies**

Objective	Policies
Objective 1 - To support appropriate small-scale residential development in the village, to include affordable homes for parishioners and their families	Policy 1 – Residential Development within Old Somerby
	Policy 2 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites
Objective 2 - To protect the separate identity and setting of the village by preventing coalescence with Grantham	Policy 3 – Preventing Coalescence
Objective 3 – To protect and enhance the character of the village and the surrounding rural landscape	Policy 4 – Heritage Assets
	Policy 5 – Local Green Space
	Policy 6 – Important Views
	Policy 7 – Open Countryside
	Policy 8 – Trees and Hedgerows
	Policy 9 – Environmental Quality
Objective 4 - To maintain and develop local services and facilities to ensure a sustainable and viable community	Policy 10 - Community Services and Facilities
	Policy 11 – Footpaths
	Policy 12 – Telecommunications Infrastructure

- 7.8 In addition a number of other issues emerged which are not appropriate in a neighbourhood plan. This is because they are not land use planning policies and cannot therefore be included under the statutory requirements. However these issues can be listed and addressed in a separate document or as an appendix to the neighbourhood plan. Section 9 is therefore entitled ‘community aspirations’. Technically this does not form part of the statutory neighbourhood plan. Nevertheless this is where the Parish Council will address these wider issues raised during the public consultation and other evidence gathering.

## 8. Planning Policies

- 8.1 The following policies are designed to deliver the vision and objectives outlined in the previous section. Once the neighbourhood plan has been ‘made’ (i.e. adopted) by South Kesteven District Council these policies will form part of the Development Plan for the area. They will then be used by the District Council to determine planning applications in the parish.
- 8.2 Each policy contains supporting justification to substantiate the stance being adopted. In accordance with the statutory requirements, each policy must meet certain basic conditions. Where appropriate, the accompanying justification to each policy will therefore refer to:
- relevant sections in national planning policy, most notably the National Planning Policy Framework (hereafter referred to as the Framework) and Planning Practice Guidance (hereafter referred to as Guidance);
  - The strategic policies in the current Development Plan for the area are defined within the South Kesteven Local Plan to 2036
  - the findings from research and the evidence base; and
  - the views expressed by the local community during the various consultation initiatives.

**Objective 1 - To support appropriate small scale residential development in the village, to include affordable homes for parishioners and their families**

### Residential development in Old Somerby

- 8.3 When assessing future housing provision in Old Somerby regard needs to be paid to the wider strategic context, especially how the village relates to other settlements in the immediate area.
- 8.4 The recently adopted South Kesteven Local Plan to 2036 has defined a settlement hierarchy. With Objective 5 seeking to facilitate and sustain a network of sustainable communities which offer a sense of place, that are safe, inclusive and can respond to the needs of local people, establishing an appropriate spatial strategy that will guide the scale, location and form of new development across South Kesteven, providing the long term basis for the planning of the District by:
- directing the majority of all new development to the market towns;
  - allowing Larger Villages to not only support their own communities but also fulfil the role of being a service centre to the smaller settlements and rural areas
  - defining a list of Smaller Villages, where there will be limited capacity to accommodate new development,
  - restricting development elsewhere in the Open Countryside

8.5 Within the recently adopted Local Plan Old Somerby is regarded as a smaller village. The South Kesteven Local Plan states that in the small villages, there is limited capacity to accommodate new development, and whilst previously planning policies strictly limited development in these locations, it is the intention of the Local Plan to allow small, sensitive infill developments (generally expected to be no more than 3 dwellings) so that these smaller communities can positively respond to the housing needs of their people and fulfil their role as sustainable communities.

8.6 In terms of infill development the recently adopted Local Plan states:

SP3: Infill Development

*In all settlements defined in Policy SP2, infill development, which is in accordance with all other relevant Local Plan policies, will be supported provided that:*

- a) it is within a substantially built up frontage or re-development opportunity (previously development land);*
- b) it is within the main built up part of the settlement;*
- c) it does not cause harm or unacceptable impact upon the occupiers amenity of adjacent properties;*
- d) it does not extend the pattern of development beyond the existing built form; and it is in keeping with the character of the area and is sensitive to the setting of adjacent properties*

*The Council is preparing a Design SPD to assist with the submission of applications against the above criteria. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Design SPD, and any development proposals will be expected to have regard to the Design SPD.*

8.7 As regards development on the edge of settlements, the recently adopted Local Plan states, in part, that:

SP4: Development on the Edge of Settlements

*Proposals for development on the edge of a settlement, as defined in Policy SP2, which are in accordance all other relevant Local Plan policies, will be supported provided that the essential criteria a – f below are met. The proposal must:*

- a. demonstrate; clear evidence of substantial support from the local community\* through an appropriate, thorough and proportionate pre-application community consultation exercise. Where this cannot be determined, support (or otherwise) should be sought from the Town or Parish Council or Neighbourhood Plan Group or Forum, based upon material planning considerations;*
- b. be well designed and appropriate in size / scale, layout and character to the setting and area;*
- c. be adjacent to the existing pattern of development for the area, or adjacent to developed site allocations as identified in the development plan;*



- d. *not extend obtrusively into the open countryside and be appropriate to the landscape, environmental and heritage characteristics of the area;*
- e. *in the case of housing development, meet a proven local need for housing and seeks to address a specific targeted need for local market housing; and*
- f. *enable the delivery of essential infrastructure to support growth proposals*

## Housing land availability

- 8.8 As of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, South Kesteven has an identifiable housing land supply of 4878 homes expected to come forwards over the next five years, which equates to 5.95 years supply.

## Views of the local community

- 8.9 When considering any development proposals the community consultation as part of the preparation of the neighbourhood plan indicated that certain features of the natural environment were very important and warranted protection. This included green spaces, landscape and views, nature conservation and biodiversity. Respondents were also keen to see both access to the countryside and footpaths protected when considering any development proposals.
- 8.10 As regards the built environment, the community consultation revealed that the size of the village, its historical aspects and the distinctive building style were all regarded as most important when assessing proposals for development.
- 8.11 Furthermore community engagement throughout the preparation of the neighbourhood plan indicated a strong desire by the local community to maintain the distinctiveness and rural feel of village, and to preserve the easily accessible, open rolling landscape of the parish. Similarly there was clear agreement that any new housing should complement the form and characteristic buildings of the village and protect the valued open land and countryside views.

## The approach adopted

- 8.12 The neighbourhood plan has not included a numerical housing requirement for the village over the plan period nor made a specific allocation of land for residential development for the following reasons:
- it is a small village with very limited services and facilities;
  - the District Council has identified a 5.95-year supply of housing land so the policies in the Development Plan are regarded as up to date; and
  - any housing development on the periphery of the village would involve incursions into the surrounding open countryside and would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the settlement, and the landscape quality of the surrounding Kesteven Uplands.

- 8.13 However the recently adopted Local Plan to 2036 adopts a less restrictive approach to smaller settlements though no quota is suggested for specific settlements. In the settlement hierarchy the recently adopted Local Plan regards Old Somerby as a smaller village where small, sensitive infill developments (generally expected to be no more than 3 dwellings) may be allowed.
- 8.14 The neighbourhood plan therefore recognises that very limited small-scale housing can occur subject to certain criteria being met. In accordance with the recently adopted Local Plan any development is restricted to infill and no development will be permitted outside the existing main built up part of the village. The aim is to avoid incursions into the surrounding open countryside and to protect the setting of the settlement.
- 8.15 In addition Planning Practice Guidance states that proposals for development should consider scale. This relates both to the overall size and mass of individual buildings and spaces in relation to their surroundings, and to the scale of their parts. It adds that decisions on building size and mass, and the scale of open spaces around and between them, will influence the character, functioning and efficiency of an area. Guidance states that too much building mass compared with open space may feel overly cramped and oppressive, with access and amenity spaces being asked to do more than they feasibly can. Also that the size of individual buildings and their elements should be carefully considered as their design will affect the: overshadowing and overlooking of others; local character; skylines; and vistas and views. It adds that the scale of building elements should be both attractive and functional when viewed and used from neighbouring streets, gardens and parks.

#### Policy 1 – Residential Development within Old Somerby

Proposals for infill residential development within the main built up part of the village will be supported where they meet the following criteria

- a) They are on a small scale, generally expected to be no more than 3 dwellings in an otherwise built-up frontage;
- b) it is appropriate to its surroundings and does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of adjoining properties;
- c) They are designed with regards to scale, layout and materials to retain local distinctiveness and create a sense of place
- d) there is suitable access and adequate off-road parking provision; and
- e) they take account of the designation of the Well Head local green space (Policy 5) and the identified important views (Policy 6)

- 8.16 The following will be classified as within the main built up part of the village:
- a) buildings and well-defined curtilages which are contained and visually separate from the open countryside that are clearly part of a network of buildings that form the settlement.
  - b) areas of land with planning permission for built development.

- 8.17 In the context of this definition gardens of dwellings where the curtilages are not well-defined, and which are visually open and relate to the open countryside will not be considered to be within the main built up part of the village

### Affordable housing

- 8.18 The Framework states that in rural areas local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs.
- 8.19 The Framework defines rural exception sites as: small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. The Framework adds that small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority’s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
- 8.20 The Framework also defines an entry-level exception site as a site that provides entry-level homes suitable for first time buyers (or equivalent, for those looking to rent). Paragraph 71 adds that local planning authorities should support the development of entry-level exception sites, suitable for first time buyers (or those looking to rent their first home), unless the need for such homes is already being met within the authority’s area. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:
- a) comprise of entry-level homes that offer one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of the Framework; and
  - b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in the Framework, and comply with any local design policies and standards.

The footnote adds that entry-level exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement.

- 8.21 Policy H2 of the recently adopted Local Plan includes reference to affordable housing.

*All developments comprising 11 or more dwellings (or greater than 1000m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace) should make provision for 30% of the scheme’s total capacity as affordable housing, except within the urban area of Grantham as defined on the Policies Map where the affordable housing requirement on such developments will be 20%.*

*This should normally be provided within the development site. Where it is demonstrated that a development proposal cannot accommodate the affordable housing requirement on site the Council may accept provision off site; or as a commuted sum in lieu. In such cases the applicant will be expected to demonstrate why this exemption should be made based on the viability and specifics of an individual site.*

*Proposals which seek to under-develop or split sites in a way that seeks to reduce the Affordable Housing contribution and/or promote off-site provision will not be acceptable.*

*All affordable housing will be expected to:*

- a. include a mix of socially rented/affordable rent/intermediate rent and intermediate market housing appropriate to the current evidence of local need and local incomes as advised by the Council;*
- b. be well integrated with the open market housing through layout, siting, design and style;*
- c. be of an appropriate size and/or property type to meet the need identified by the current evidence of local housing need for affordability the area; and*

*The Council will expect this requirement to be met in all cases.*

*Policy continues within the recently Adopted Local Plan ...*

8.22 Additionally, in the recently adopted Local Plan, policy SP4 states that development proposals on the edge of a settlement will only be supported in the following specific circumstances:

- where they are supported by clear evidence of substantial support from the local community; or
- where they form a Rural Exceptions scheme which meets a proven local need for affordable homes.

In all cases the site must be well located to the existing built form, substantially enclosed and where the sites edge is clearly defined by a physical feature that also acts as a barrier to further growth (such as a road). The proposal should not visually extend building into the open countryside.

8.23 A rural exception site may therefore be appropriate in Old Somerby if a need is identified at some point in the future.

8.24 In conjunction with the District Council, the Parish Council will monitor and review the need for affordable homes and/or starter homes within the village over the plan period. Should a need emerge in the future the following policy will apply.

#### Policy 2 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

A proposal for affordable housing outside the existing confines of a built-up area will be supported if it is:

- a) for a small number of properties;
- b) located immediately adjacent to the edge of the built-up area of the village;
- c) justified by evidence of need through a local housing needs survey of the Parish;
- d) prioritised for those with a local connection as prescribed in the allocations policies of social housing providers such as South Kesteven District Council and housing associations; and.

- e) any associated market housing is demonstrated to be the minimum required to deliver a viable affordable housing development and also meets locally identified housing needs.

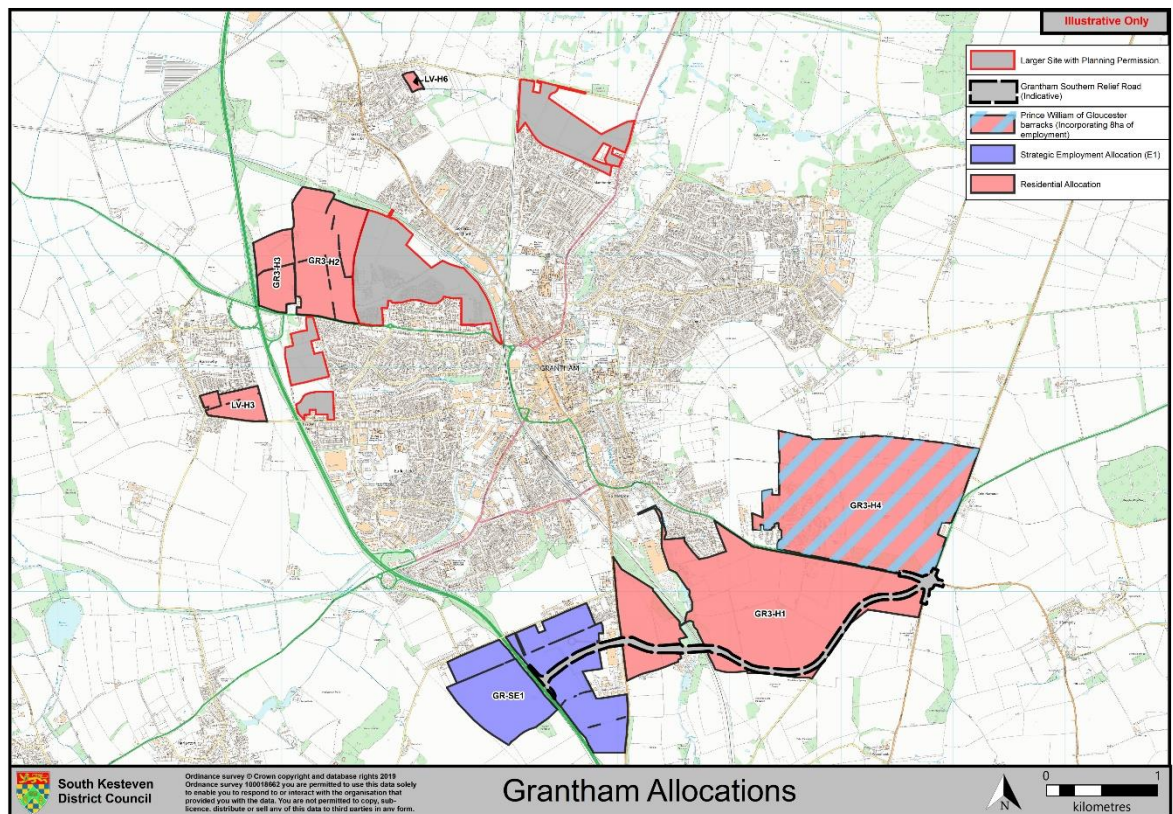
## Objective 2 - To protect the separate identity and setting of the village by preventing coalescence with Grantham

### Preventing coalescence with Grantham

- 8.25 The village of Old Somerby lies broadly in the centre of the parish, surrounded by open countryside. There is currently a gap of about 2 miles between the village and the edge of Grantham. Despite their proximity they each have a different built form, scale and character, and separated by extensive open countryside. Furthermore the town is not visible from the village owing to the topography.
- 8.26 However the recently adopted Local Plan has identified sites for future development. Policy GR3-H1 allocates land for housing to the south of Grantham on a site known as Spitalgate Heath Garden Village, which has an indicative target of 3700 new dwellings (1,650 anticipated to be constructed by 2036). The boundary of the proposed site partially abuts the parish boundary to the west. In addition Policy GR3-H4 allocates land for housing on a site known as Prince William of Gloucester Barracks. This is for 1775 dwellings, which will be delivered by 2036. This also abuts the parish boundary to the west. These would be a garden village or satellite settlement rather than an extension to the town. The location of these proposed developments is indicated in Map 3.



### Map 3 – Grantham allocations in the Local Plan to 2036



- 8.27 To the immediate west of the proposed Spitalgate Heath Garden Village the recently adopted Local Plan allocates a site of some 96 hectares for employment purposes to support the growth of Grantham. This proposed site is known as the Grantham Southern Gateway and will take advantage of direct access to the A1 and proposed Southern Relief Road. This new road will link up to the current roundabout at the junction of the A52/B6403/B1176 on the edge of the parish.
- 8.28 Whilst not happening within the parish boundary, these proposed developments in the recently adopted Local Plan will occur between Grantham and the village. As a consequence the gap between the village and town will be eroded. The gap between the settlements would then be less than a mile. A neighbourhood plan can only comment about development proposals within its designated neighbourhood area. As such whilst this policy addresses the gap between settlements across administrative boundaries it only has effect within the designated Old Somerby neighbourhood area”
- 8.29 During the initial consultation members of the local community expressed the view that they enjoyed living in a distinct rural settlement with attractive views across the surrounding open countryside. Despite the proximity to Grantham, the identity of Old Somerby is defined by being both physically and visually separate from the neighbouring town. Any future expansion of Grantham beyond that proposed in the recently adopted Local Plan could further erode the gap between the village and the town. The valued green buffer of open countryside between the village and the town must therefore be

protected from further development. In addition the A52/B6403 that follows the parish boundary provides a logical hard boundary to the future expansion of Grantham.

- 8.30 Coalescence between settlements is a recognised planning issue in order to reinforce local distinctiveness and the separate identities of settlements. The following policy seeks to ensure that any development does not narrow the gap between the village and the town and detract from the separate identities of these two settlements or have a harmful impact on their respective landscape setting. This matter is clearly of importance to the local community who value the rural and distinctive character of the village. Proposals for development will not therefore be permitted if they do not preserve the separate identity and integrity of the settlements.

#### Policy 3 – Preventing Coalescence

Development Proposals should respect the individual and distinct identities of Old Somerby village, Cold Harbour and the urban extensions of Grantham as allocated In the South Kesteven Local Plan to the west and the open gaps between them.

Proposals for the re-use of rural buildings, agricultural and forestry-related development, playing fields, other open land uses and minor extensions to existing dwellings in the gaps between the settlements and or the allocated sites will be supported where they would preserve the separation between the settlements concerned and retain their individual character and appearance. Proposals which would result in the unacceptable reduction in the visual and physical separation of the settlements or which would result in their coalescence will not be supported

### objective 3 - To protect and enhance the character of the village and the surrounding rural landscape

#### Historic environment

- 8.31 Old Somerby has a rich and diverse history that contributes to its distinct identity. Although there is not a Conservation Area the parish contains many listed buildings and features, especially in the vicinity of the church. Additionally, much is known about the history and former use of several other buildings in the village, some of which have had their use changed while others have been replaced by more recent buildings. The historic environment is something that the local community value very highly.
- 8.32 The Framework states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

The Framework adds that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It points out that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Any harm should also be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. A balanced judgement is therefore required having regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the heritage asset.

8.33 The recently adopted Local Plan states that South Kesteven has a rich heritage of buildings, archaeological remains and countryside. It boasts an attractive and varied landscape. The historic fabric of the towns, villages and individual buildings, archaeological features, historic parks and gardens, as well as their settings and the wider landscape all need to be recognised, understood and conserved. This high quality natural and built environment could suffer if the needs of development are met without taking steps to safeguard these finite resources.

8.34 In relation to heritage conservation, Policy EN6 of the recently adopted Local Plan States:

EN6: The Historic Environment

*The Council will seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings in keeping with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.*

*Development that is likely to cause harm to the significance of a heritage asset or its setting will only be granted permission where the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the potential harm. Proposals which would conserve or enhance the significance of the asset shall be considered favourably. Substantial harm or total loss will be resisted.*

*Proposals will be expected to take Conservation Area Appraisals into account, where these have been adopted by the Council.*

*Where development affecting archaeological sites is acceptable in principle, the Council will seek to ensure mitigation of impact through preservation of the remains in situ as a preferred solution. When in situ preservation is not practical, the developer will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording before or during development.*

8.35 The historic environment is one of the parish's most valued assets. The buildings and structures, and archaeological remains in the parish should be protected from insensitive development. Policy 4 provides a context within which decisions can be made on planning applications which impact on heritage assets in the neighbourhood area.

### Policy 4 – Heritage Assets

A proposal for development will be supported providing that:

- a) it preserves or enhances heritage assets and their setting including listed buildings; or
- b) the public benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the scale of the harm or loss of the heritage asset.

Proposals that sensitively promote and interpret heritage assets will be supported.

### Local Green Space

- 8.36 The Framework introduced the concept of Local Green Space. Through neighbourhood plans local communities are invited to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. The designation of land as Local Green Space in a neighbourhood plan allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
  - b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
  - c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 8.37 Guidance states that different types of designations are intended to achieve different purposes. If land is already protected by designation then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as a Local Green Space. Guidance also says that land could be considered for designation even if there is no public access (e.g. green areas which are valued because of their wildlife, historic significance and/or beauty). Designation does not in itself confer any rights of public access over what exists at present.
- 8.38 Although there are no significant areas of public open space within the parish, the Well Head is a well established landmark with historical links to the village. Although it is a building rather than an open area, Guidance states that Local Green Space designation can include land where structures are located or spaces that provide a tranquil oasis.
- 8.39 The Well Head is a structure that meets this criterion and is a key landmark in the village. The well was sunk behind the buildings on Grantham Road around 1811. The spot is still easily found as it is marked by a rather large stone well head. It was funded by the Reverend John Myers and given to the residents of the parish. An inscription to this effect can still be found on it.
- 8.40 In terms of how it meets the criteria in the Framework:



- a) the structure is centrally located in the village and is therefore in close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) it is demonstrably special to the local community because of its historical significance and is a Registered Asset ; and
- c) it is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.



*The Well Head*

8.41 The Well Head is therefore designated as a Local Green Space and will be protected accordingly. The Well Head is a rather unique local green space. It is a physical structure on a very restricted footprint. In this context the type of development which may be supported in very special circumstances will be very limited'

Policy 5 – Local Green Space

The Well Head is designated as a Local Green Space.

Proposals for development within designated Well Head Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances.



The location and boundary of this Local Green Space is shown on Inset A of the Policy Map

## Important views

- 8.42 The framework states that the planning policies should ensure that the developments: add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good layout and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environments and landscape setting, and maintain a strong sense of place.
- 8.43 A strong message to emerge from the local community engagement was the need to retain the rural feel of the village. When asked about why they enjoy living in Old Somerby factors such as the rural atmosphere, open views and access to the natural environment received most support. Similarly when asked about what matters to consider when considering any development proposals, the local community felt that the protection of views was a very important consideration.
- 8.44 This is facilitated by the various agricultural buildings located within the village and the proximity of the surrounding farmland. In addition the nature of the surrounding topography and the position of the settlement in a bowl allow locally valued views over the adjoining rural landscape. It is the nature and qualities of these views across open countryside that reinforces the rural feel of the village and adds to its charm and character.
- 8.45 All proposals should be in line with the key principles set out in the Framework, which states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. In their advice Natural England state that neighbourhood plans present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes. They suggest that such plans may want to consider identifying distinctive local landscape features or characteristics and think about how any new development proposals can respect and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness.
- 8.46 The following views are all from public vantage points and are regarded as important and warrant protection:

**Table 4 – Important Views**

Description of view	Reason for importance
B - View from the seat on School Lane adjacent to the village notice board looking north-west.	This view is over a field of permanent pasture containing ancient ridge and furrow and bounded by historic hedges and established trees. Cattle frequently graze this field which contains a pond that provides a valuable habitat for birds, mammals and reptiles. The bench, which has been located in this position for many years, provides a vantage point to appreciate this view

	<p>which has been enjoyed for generations by parishioners. It is an important green area and view which helps to characterise the unusual spatial arrangement of the settlement which is a product of there being two original parts of the village. The field contributes to the unique character of the village and in particular the distinctive spatial quality of Old Somerby that was recognised back in 1995 in the SKDC local plan by Policy EN6. This field is one of three spaces that were protected by this policy and the view continues to make its own valuable contribution to the character of the village as a whole.</p>
<p>C - View from the timber field gate on School Lane looking south over the paddock between The Orchards and Church Cottage.</p>	<p>An undeveloped frontage and open space providing a much valued vista with Glebe Farmhouse as a backstop over a paddock in the foreground and southerly views towards the distant horizon taking in field boundaries in the middle distance of stone walls, hedges and fences . The paddock is frequently grazed by sheep and horses and has been used for a number of village events over the years therefore embodying much of what it means to live in a rural setting. In the centre of the view in the foreground is a fine specimen tree that is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. A tree such as this is an important feature of the area for local people as recognised by the Woodland Trust for providing healthy living and recreation. The contribution that this view makes to the village was also recognised as far back as 1995 in policy EN6 of the SKDC local plan and nothing has changed to reduce the importance of this open space and vista.</p>
<p>D - View from the junction of School Lane and Church Lane looking north towards the church and surrounding environs.</p>	<p>This is the historic core of the settlement containing the majority of Old Somerby's listed buildings, The Manor House, Manor Barn, The Old Rectory, and the parish church of St Magdalen (Grade11*) which dates from the Norman period. The area has a special and much valued quality due to the combination of a number of factors including the setting of the Church, the materials and scale of neighbouring buildings and their relationship with one another. There are mature trees and stone boundary walls and within the church yard beneath a yew tree seating all of which combine to produce an area and view that provides the principal historic identity and heart of the village.</p>
<p>E - View from adjacent to the footpath sign looking southwards towards The Pastures</p>	<p>This vista from the much used pedestrian route (footpath no 1) providing local connectivity between High and Low Somerby, encompasses commanding southerly views over a rolling landscape through changing seasons and field patterns. A number of small spinneys (Coronation Wood and Potts Gorse) are visible as well as White House Farm and buildings and the track (footpath no 7) leading to The Lodge. A footpath (Right of Way No 3) diagonally crosses the arable field in the foreground leading to The Pastures and to further public rights of way beyond. This field is known to have been the location of an ancient settlement which contributes to a sense of continuity and place.</p>
<p>F – View looking south and west from a position on Footpath No 1 adjacent to the electric substation.</p>	<p>In the foreground the view is over a grass paddock which in previous years had been used as the village cricket field as well as a venue for other community events such as fetes and fairs. Located within the village this open space and view contributes to the appearance and amenity of the settlement. Beyond the paddock in the foreground views include a traditional stone farmhouse, cottages and farm buildings as well as the Well Head. The vista is over an area of open land within the centre of the village that forms an important part of the history of the settlement.</p>
<p>G - View from footpath no 9 at grid ref</p>	<p>The vista from this elevated position looking north-east is one of the most panoramic within the parish comprising uninterrupted views over Old</p>

<p>95633288 looking north east.</p>	<p>Somerby and beyond. From this position it can be seen that the village nestles in a hollow with the two original parts of the settlement clearly discernible including the parish church together with more recent development. The hamlet of Cold Harbour can be seen in the distance as can Ropsley Rise Wood on the horizon. This expansive view incorporates rolling arable land, ancient ridge and furrow grassland, established hedgerows and woodland. In the foreground there is the old sheep wash and to the north Burgh Banks, the remains of an Iron Age hill fort where crop marks and slight earthworks remain - Grid ref 95573303.</p>
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8.47 A photograph of each view is shown on the following pages:



B - View from the seat on School Lane adjacent to the village notice board looking north-west



C - View from the timber field gate on School Lane looking south over the paddock between The Orchards and Church Cottage





D - View from the junction of School Lane and Church Lane looking north towards the church and surrounding environs.



E - View from adjacent to the footpath sign looking southwards towards The Pastures



F - View looking south and west from a position on Footpath No 1 adjacent to the electric substation.



G - View from footpath no 9 at grid ref 95633288 looking north east.

*(Professional photos supplied by Lisa Louise Keen Photography)*

- 8.48 The following policy therefore aims to protect important views into, out of, and within the village. This policy demonstrates how neighbourhood plans can encapsulate the aspirations of a local community in a way that is difficult in a Local Plan covering a wider area. The views and vistas are important to the unique character of the village and its rural feel, and it is appropriate for the neighbourhood plan to seek to protect them in order to maintain character and local distinctiveness. Policy 6 has been designed to ensure that new development proposals should take account of the identified important views and are designed to respect their significance in the wider neighbourhood area. Where appropriate any development proposals which would have an impact on the integrity of an identified important view should be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal to identify the scale and nature of that impact and any potential mitigation measures

#### Policy 6 – Important Views

Development proposals should demonstrate how they would be integrated into their immediate setting and conserve, and where practicable enhance, its character and appearance.

The neighbourhood plan identifies the following important views:

**View B)** - from the seat on School Lane adjacent to the village notice board looking north-west;

**View C)** - from the timber field gate on School Lane looking south over the paddock between The Orchards and Church Cottage;

**View D)** - from the junction of School Lane and Church Lane looking north towards the church and surrounding environs;

**View E)** - from adjacent to the footpath sign looking southwards towards The Pastures;

**View F)** - looking south and west from a position on Footpath No 1 adjacent to the electric substation; and

**View G)** - from footpath no 9 at grid ref 95633288 looking north east.

New development proposals should take account of the identified important views (as shown on the polices map) and be designed to respect their significance in the wider neighbourhood area.

Proposed developments that would have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of its immediate setting and/or on the integrity of an identified important view will not be supported.



## Surrounding countryside

- 8.49 The parish is a predominantly rural area with the centrally located village surrounded by open countryside.
- 8.50 The Framework states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils; and
  - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
- 8.51 The recently adopted Local Plan states that development proposals in the open countryside which do not meet the criteria set out in Policy SP4 will be restricted, unless exceptional circumstances apply as outlined in Policy SP5. This will ensure that development is located in the most sustainable and suitable locations, but also enables those essential needs of rural communities and the rural economy to be accommodated. The policy states:

SP5: Development in the Open Countryside

*Development in the open countryside will be limited to that which has an essential need to be located outside of the existing built form of a settlement. In such instances, the following types of development will be supported:*

- a) *agriculture, forestry or equine development;*
- b) *rural diversification projects;*
- c) *replacement dwellings (on a one for one basis) or*
- d) *conversion of buildings provided that the existing building(s) contributes to the character or appearance of the local area by virtue of their historic, traditional or vernacular form; and*
- e) *are in sound structural condition*
- f) *are suitable for conversion without substantial alteration, extension or rebuilding, and that the works to be undertaken do not detract from the character of the building(s) or their setting*

- 8.52 In terms of landscape character the policy in the recently adopted Local Plan adds:

EN1: Landscape Character

*South Kesteven's Landscape Character Areas are identified on the map above (Figure 6). Development must be appropriate to the character and significant natural, historic and cultural attributes and features of the landscape within which it is situated, and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration.*

*In assessing the impact of proposed development on the Landscape, relevant Landscape Character Appraisals should be considered, including those produced to inform the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration should also be given to the Capacity and Limits to Growth Studies produced for Grantham and Stamford and the Points of the Compass Assessments prepared for the Larger Villages.*

- 8.53 The Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken by South Kesteven District Council in 2007. This indicates that the parish predominantly falls within the Kesteven Uplands landscape character area, which is described as extending from Grantham in the north, covering a large part of the District to the south. The northern boundary of the parish along the A52 comes just within the Southern Lincolnshire Edge landscape character area.
- 8.54 The community consultation undertaken in Old Somerby revealed how rural attributes such as peace and quiet, the quality of the surrounding landscape and biodiversity protected from insensitive and inappropriate development. The following policy therefore builds on the wider planning context provided by the recently adopted Local Plan, and applies it at the neighbourhood plan. However any proposal for development is expected to safeguard the landscape character, protect areas of wildlife interest, and the historic environment of the surrounding open countryside.

#### Policy 7 – Open Countryside

Outside the main built up part of Old Somerby village development will be limited to that which has an essential need to be in the open countryside in accordance with Policy SP5 of the South Kesteven Local Plan. Any such development proposals should demonstrate how they would preserve and, where practicable, enhance the landscape character and quality of the Kesteven Uplands and the intrinsic character, beauty and tranquillity of that part of the countryside in which it is located.

### **Trees and Hedgerows**

- 8.55 Trees and hedgerows are an integral part of the natural environment. They provide visual amenity, create habitats for wildlife, and improve air quality.
- 8.56 The Framework states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.
- 8.57 Policy DE1 in the recently adopted Local Plan seeks to promote good quality design. Part d. states that development proposals should seek to retain and incorporate important on site features, such as trees and hedgerows.
- 8.58 Although Ropsley Rise Wood and Kirton Wood abut the boundary to the north and east respectively, there is no woodland within the parish aside from part of Griff's Plantation.

Similarly many of the hedgerows in the parish have been removed in the past to enlarge field sizes and create more extensive agricultural land. The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 now protects most countryside hedgerows from being removed (including being uprooted or otherwise destroyed). If anyone wants to remove a hedgerow (or part of a hedgerow) they must apply in writing in advance to the District Council. The District Council can issue a hedgerow retention notice if the hedgerow is considered 'important' and therefore must be kept, or it can give permission to remove the hedgerow. An important hedgerow must be at least 30 years old and meet certain criteria e.g. it marks a pre-1850 parish boundary, incorporates a Scheduled Monument or an archaeological feature, is an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Enclosure Acts, or contains protected species listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

- 8.59 However within the village itself there are a number of mature trees, especially in the vicinity of the church and in some private gardens. The protection of these trees is vital to the appearance of the village. A number of these have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in force. Whilst the purpose of the TPO is to safeguard the trees, their retention also protects the village character.
- 8.60 The following policy therefore aims to prevent where possible development that would result in loss of or damage to significant trees or hedgerows. Such features are a vital element in the character of the village and its surrounding countryside. However unless trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders their removal and pruning is not subject to planning control. Even where trees are subject to planning control it is unusual for policies to preclude their removal and it is more normal to require the provision of replacement trees.

#### Policy 8 – Trees and Hedgerows

Proposals should take account of important habitats and incorporate them sensitively into new developments'

A proposal for development should protect mature trees and important hedgerows wherever practicable. Development that would result in the loss or damage to protected trees and hedgerows will not be supported unless a satisfactory scheme for the replacement of lost trees or mitigation of damage to the landscape is included as part of the application details.

### Environmental quality

- 8.61 The Framework states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water and noise pollution or land instability.

- 8.62 The Framework adds that local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.
- 8.63 Policy EN4 in the recently adopted Local Plan deals with pollution control. It states:

EN4: Pollution Control

Development should seek to minimise pollution and where possible contribute to the protection and improvement of the quality of air, land and water. In achieving this:

Development should be designed from the outset to improve air, land and water quality and promote environmental benefits

Development that, on its own or cumulatively, would result in significant air, light, noise, land, water or other environmental pollution or harm to amenity, health well-being or safety will not be permitted. New development proposals should not have an adverse impact on existing operations

Development will only be permitted if the potential adverse effects can be mitigated to an acceptable level by other environmental controls, or by measures included in the proposals

Development that would lead to deterioration or may compromise the ability of a water body or underlying groundwater to meet good status standards in the Anglian River Basin Management Plan (required by the Water Framework Directive) will not be permitted.

Where development is situated on a site with known or high likelihood of contamination, remediation strategies to manage this contamination will be required.

Subject to the Policies in this Plan, planning permission will be granted for development on land affected by contamination where it can be established by the proposed developer that the site can be safely and viably developed with no significant impact on either future users or on ground and surface waters.

- 8.64 As indicated in the local community consultation, the combination of dark skies and rural tranquillity is appreciated by residents. Despite the proximity to Grantham and the major road network the area retains its rural idyll.
- 8.65 The local community also expressed concern about flooding. The Framework states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

- 8.66 Policy EN5 in the recently adopted Local Plan states that development should be located in the lowest areas of flood risk, in accordance with the South Kesteven Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. All development must avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- 8.67 The following policy therefore encourages optimal minimisation of air, noise and light pollution and seeks to minimise flood risk and the degradation of wildlife habitats.

#### Policy 9 – Environmental Quality

As appropriate to its scale nature and location a proposal for development will be supported where it incorporates design features that minimise:

- a) the emission of air pollutants;
- b) noise to protect the tranquillity of the area;
- c) light pollution to retain the dark skies;
- d) the generation of waste and maximises opportunities for reuse and recycling;
- e) flood risk and encourages efficient water and waste management systems, including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS); and
- f) the fragmentation of habitats and creates green infrastructure networks that improve biodiversity.

### Objective 4 - To maintain and develop the local services and facilities to ensure a sustainable and viable community

#### Existing services and facilities

- 8.68 To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs the Framework states that planning policies and decisions should:
- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
  - b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
  - c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
  - d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
  - e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
- 8.69 However there are very few services and facilities available within the village. In effect there is only St Mary Magdalene Church and The Fox and Hounds Public House. There are

no retail, educational or medical facilities available within the settlement. The nearest are located in nearby Grantham, which has limited access for those dependent on public transport.

- 8.70 Respondents to the consultation questionnaire felt that the limited range of community buildings and facilities and the school catchment area were matters that didn't contribute to their enjoyment of living in the village:
- 8.71 The recently adopted Local Plan states that the on-going provision of local services and facilities is of critical importance to the sustainability of the District's towns and villages. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing community facilities will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer viable, there are alternative facilities to meet the local need at an equally accessible location, or an alternative local service/facility is proposed. Whilst not acting as service centres, it adds that the small villages and rural areas also have services and facilities that also need to be protected therefore Policy facilities will also apply in these locations.

### New community facilities

- 8.72 Whilst there is a strong sense of community within Old Somerby, there is no village hall in the settlement. However some respondents to the community consultation were keen to the provision of the provision of a community building as somewhere to meet or hold activities. Similarly there is no village green or suitable public open space that provides a natural centre that could be used for community activities such as a village fete.
- 8.73 In addition there were suggestions during the community consultation supporting the provision of a new village shop.
- 8.74 Some respondents to the community consultation were also keen to see the provision of a playing field or play area for children. Despite being surrounded by extensive farmland, there is very little public open space available within the parish. There is a very small area of public open space available.
- 8.75 As part of the preparation of the recently adopted Local Plan the District Council prepared the South Kesteven Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Report (2017). This study calculated up-to-date quantitative data of existing open space provision for each of the parish and town council areas in South Kesteven. These were calculated to show the current quantity of open space provision (hectares) per 1,000 people for various types of open space. This provides updated, location specific data for the current provision of open space that can be assessed against the locally set standards for South Kesteven.
- 8.76 Table 1 in the report indicates the following provision (hectares per 1,000 people based on a parish population of 224) in Old Somerby:
- 7.78 hectares of parks, gardens or recreation ground;
  - 0 hectares of informal and accessible natural open space;



- 0 hectares of children's and young person's space;
- 0 hectares of outdoor sports space;
- 0 hectares of allotments;
- 1.32 hectares of churchyard or cemetery; and
- 0 hectares of education space.

- 8.77 This lack of open space restricts opportunities for sport and recreation, as well as for general relaxation and exercise. Similarly there is no allotment provision. There is a small area of public open space but no formal play area meaning that younger children are largely restricted in their outdoor play activities to private gardens. There are also limited opportunities for social interaction. The general lack of open space provision could be detrimental to the physical and mental health and well-being of the local community.
- 8.78 The following policy seeks to protect existing community facilities, whilst supporting the provision of new facilities – most notably a children's play area, shop or village hall. Policy 10 does not address any proposals which may arise for development on open spaces or recreational facilities. Any such proposals will be determined by reference to national policy (paragraph 97 of the NPPF 2019) and to other development plan policies'

#### Policy 10 - Community Facilities

The provision of new community facilities or the expansion of existing community facilities, will be supported providing that it does not have unacceptable harmful impacts on the amenities of residents or on other neighbouring uses.

Proposals which would result in the loss of an existing community facility will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown it to be surplus to requirements or no longer viable; or
- b) the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the need; or
- c) the development will bring about a community benefit, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

## Footpaths

- 8.79 The Framework states that opportunities to promote walking should be identified and pursued. It adds that planning policies should provide for high quality networks.
- 8.80 The public footpaths in and around the village (especially across the open and extensive farmland to the rear of the B1176, School Lane, Church Lane and The Pasture) provide a quieter and more pleasant means of walking around the village than using the busy main roads. The public rights of way network immediately around the village allows access to the surrounding open countryside for walking and exercising dogs. In view of the limited public open space within the village, these footpaths provide invaluable access for

recreation and health purposes. Opportunities should therefore be sought to provide better facilities for users by, for example, adding links to the existing rights of way network.

#### Policy 11 – Footpaths

A proposal for development will be supported if it improves or extends the existing network of public footpaths in and around the village, especially where it allows greater access to services and facilities or the surrounding open countryside. Proposals which would result in the loss of an existing footpath will not be supported.

### **Communications infrastructure**

- 8.81 The Government recognises that reliable broadband internet access is essential for homes throughout the country if they are to benefit from online services.
- 8.82 The Framework states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.
- 8.83 Superfast broadband access enables people to work from home and thus reduces the need to travel. Some businesses are run from people’s homes and it is an essential requirement for education purposes. Superfast broadband also enables people in the village, especially the disabled, to access services and facilities that would not otherwise be available.
- 8.84 However the community consultation revealed that current provision is inadequate in the parish. In terms of service improvements, respondents most wanted to see better internet/broadband provision.

#### Policy 12 – Communications Infrastructure

Proposals for development that improve electronic communications such as superfast broadband and the mobile phone network will be supported providing any adverse impact on the environment can be adequately mitigated.

## 9. Community Aspirations

- 9.1 Throughout the period of preparation of the Old Somerby Neighbourhood Plan some issues have been raised by members of the community that do not specifically relate to land use or development matters. To meet the statutory requirement such issues cannot be considered within a neighbourhood plan. Similarly some other issues require further technical assessment in terms of their suitability and economic viability.
- 9.2 The Parish Council therefore wishes to further consider and research these aspirational projects. They include:
- a) the introduction of traffic management measures in the village to, amongst other things, reduce speed levels;
  - b) the provision of a village or community shop;
  - c) the provision of additional public open space, such as a children's play area or village green;
  - d) the provision of a community building such as a village hall; and
  - e) lack of sufficiently fast broadband.
- 9.3 It should be noted that the above matters do not form part of the statutory Old Somerby Neighbourhood Development Plan.
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## 10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 The Parish Council will monitor and, if appropriate, undertake a review of the Old Somerby Neighbourhood Plan.
- 10.2 An annual monitoring report will be prepared and considered by the Parish Council. The report will cover:
- a) the effectiveness of the policies in the neighbourhood plan when assessing and determining planning applications;
  - b) any changes in national planning policy that could supersede the policies in the neighbourhood plan;
  - c) the latest statistical information such as meeting the rural housing requirement across South Kesteven District in ‘smaller villages’ or the need for additional affordable homes within the village;
  - d) any changing circumstances within the village.
- 10.3 The views of the District Council, as the local planning authority, will be sought on these matters.
- 10.4 The annual monitoring report might conclude that a partial or comprehensive review of the neighbourhood plan is necessary and accordingly trigger that process. In any event, the Parish Council will need to return to the plan and its replacement as it approaches the end of the plan period.





### Inset A – The Wellhead LGS



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