

# Branston and Mere Neighbourhood Plan



**BRANSTON  
& MERE**  
Parish Council  
**2020 - 2037**



## **1 The Neighbourhood Plan**

This Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by Branston & Mere Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of the community. The Neighbourhood Plan will guide future land use planning in the settlement between 2020 and 2037.

From previous public consultation events held in 2016 and 2017, the community have suggested that they wanted Branston & Mere to develop sensitively and sustainably with the necessary infrastructure keeping pace with the growth over the next 17 years.

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan was subjected to regulation 14 consultation that commenced on the 2nd December 2019 and finished on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The comments received during the consultation period have influenced this Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has now been submitted to North Kesteven District Council where it will be subjected to further six weeks consultation and then independently examined. If successful, the community will vote in a public referendum (yet to be organised) on whether you would like North Kesteven District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan when determining future planning applications within Branston & Mere.

## 2 Foreword

*The Localism Act 2011 granted powers to Parish Council's to prepare land use planning documents and the Act provides an opportunity for local communities to have direct input into the development of their local area by preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.*

*The Neighbourhood Plan for Branston & Mere has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprising of Parish Councillors and members of the local community. However, the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies is very much community led and includes proposals which have been put forward as a result of the extensive community consultation process, that has taken place during the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.*

*Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is primarily a planning document, the Steering Committee has taken the opportunity to incorporate a vision, based on the responses to community consultation, for how Branston and its surrounds develop over the next 20 years as a sustainable and viable community, providing a pleasant and attractive place in which to live and work.*

*It has taken years of hard work and determination to bring the Neighbourhood Plan into existence and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for volunteering their time to work on our Neighbourhood Plan.*

*Peter Lundgren*

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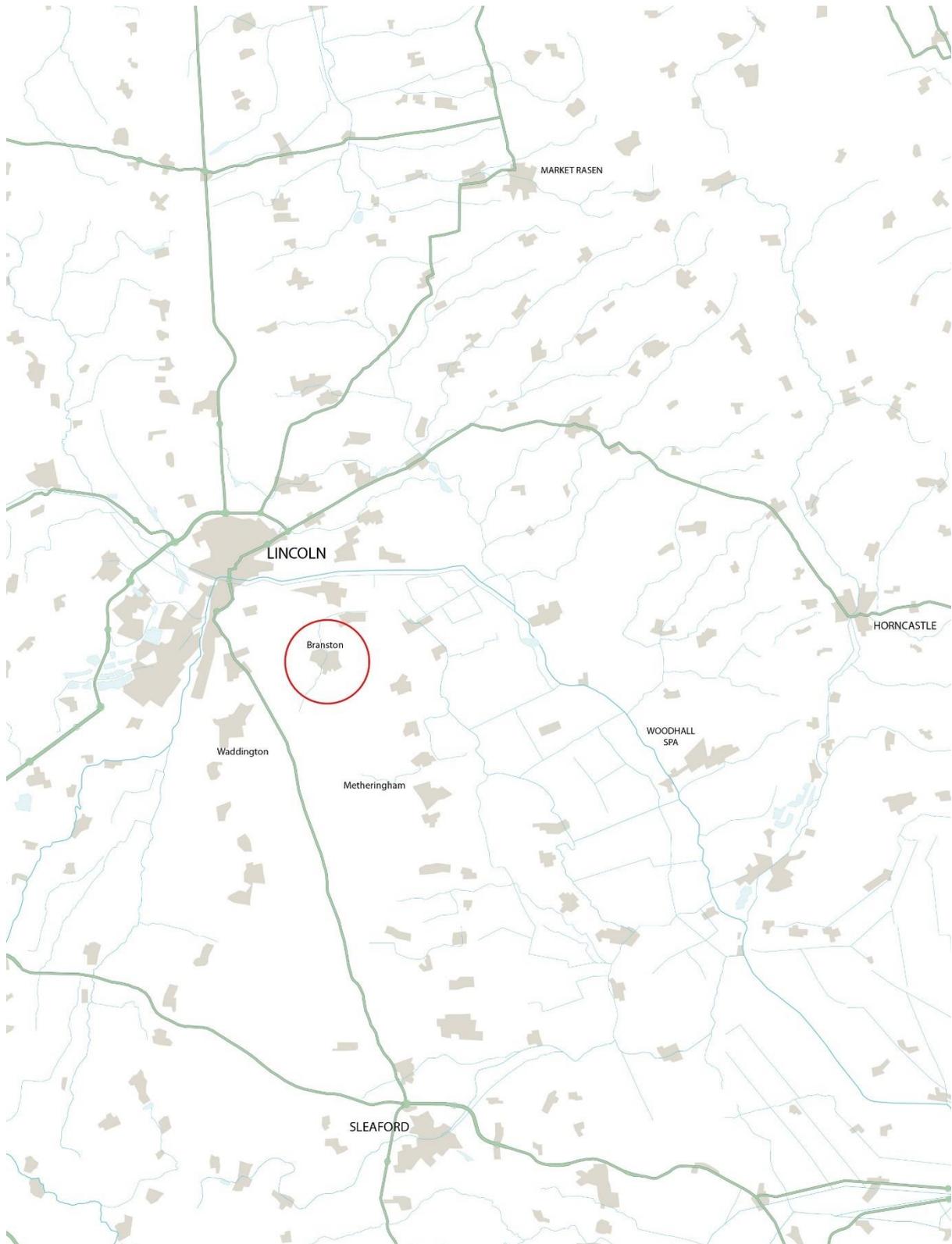
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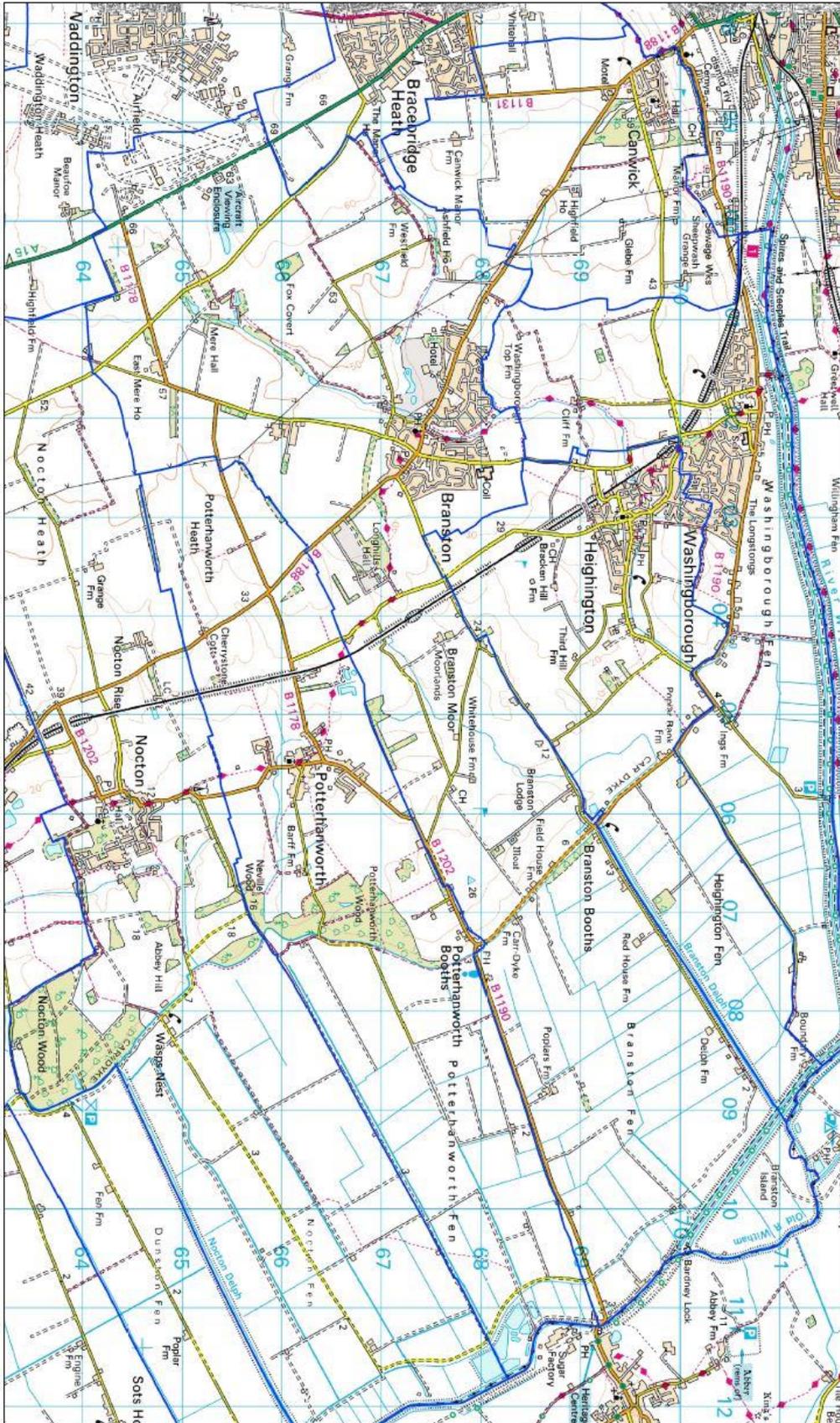
## 4 Introduction

- 4.1 Neighbourhood Planning is a Government initiative introduced by the Localism Act (2011) and recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework (2018). The aim of the legislation aims to empower local communities to use the planning system to promote appropriate and sustainable development in their area. Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) must conform to the Local Planning Authority's Development Plan. In the case of Branston & Mere, this is the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2012 – 2036, adopted on the 24 April 2017.
- 4.2 The Neighbourhood Plan process enables communities to inform future planning applications, better shape their environment and determine where development could take place. It can help to influence the type and quality of that development and ensure that the changes bring local benefit.
- 4.3 Whilst the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to allow local people to have a greater say in the development of their areas, each Neighbourhood Plan must be in line with, and not contradict, National and local level planning policy. Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that Neighbourhood Plans, must:
- Have appropriate regard to national policies and advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
  - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local plan for the area; and;
  - Be compatible with EU obligations, including human rights requirements.
- 4.4 Once 'Made' by North Kesteven District Council, the Branston & Mere Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the District Council's statutory Development Plan and will be used in the determination of planning applications within the Parish.
- 4.5 This Plan has been prepared by Branston & Mere Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Parish Council. It covers the Branston & Mere Parish area and sets out planning policies from the period 2020 -2037.
- 4.6 The Parish area, shown in Map 1 below, was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area and Branston & Mere Parish Council are the qualifying body to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for this area. The area was designated by North Kesteven District Council on the 7 April 2015.

**Map 1: Branston & Mere's location**



**Map 2: Branston Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation**



North Kesteven  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Scale 1:18000

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### **Why are we doing a Neighbourhood Plan?**

- 4.7 In 2011, the Parish Council agreed a Parish Plan and this aimed to ensure that Branston and Mere became a vibrant and sustainable community by protecting what is important to residents and making improvements to the village for the future. This document looked at many issues including business/ employment, community development, environment, housing, services and facilities and identified several issues and potential solutions for the future. Many of these issues were 'planning' based and it was deemed appropriate that the next step should be to explore these issues through a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.8 Planning decisions that are made based on a detailed and an accurate understanding of an area result in good planning decisions. The Policies in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan are made at a District level and provide an overarching framework for the whole of Central Lincolnshire area.
- 4.9 This Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by residents who have lived within the area for many years and this local knowledge forms the basis for the proposals within this plan. The policies focus on;
- providing houses to meet the needs of local people;
  - helping local businesses to grow;
  - supporting, enhancing and protecting the community infrastructure;
  - protecting and enhancing the green infrastructure and landscape across the Plan area;
  - Preserving our historic environment; and
  - Creating a sustainable future for Branston.
- 4.10 The Neighbourhood Plan sets these local policies within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with its emphasis on a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 4.11 The Branston & Mere Parish Council encourages and welcomes early dialogue with landowners and developers looking to build within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 4.12 North Kesteven District Council has an adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) this is a charge that is placed on developments being built to help fund the delivery of infrastructure. By producing a Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council can produce a higher proportion of CIL to be retained for local or neighbourhood projects. In turn, CIL monies can also act as leverage on a range of other public funds and programmes enabling

the Parish Council to bid for other monies which can provide a platform for community investment.

- 4.13 Schemes for community benefit identified in this Neighbourhood Plan may include the provision of a Youth Centre and an improved Pavilion on the existing sports ground. A list of community projects has been included within the Neighbourhood Plan in Section 18.

### **How will it be delivered?**

- 4.14 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Parish Council have worked collaboratively with North Kesteven District Council to identify the key issues facing the Parish and its surroundings. This Plan proposes policies that will ensure any development will not adversely affect the character of Branston & Mere. Until the Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Central Lincolnshire Local plan planning policy (after the local referendum) this Neighbourhood Plan will be used as a basis for comments on applications by the Parish Council.

## SWOT analysis of the Neighbourhood Plan

4.15 The strength, weakness, opportunities and threats for the community and the proposed Neighbourhood Plan area, are set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: SWOT Analysis of the Neighbourhood Plan Area**

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A rural location with good access to the countryside</li> <li>• Good standard of schools</li> <li>• A good range of local Shops</li> <li>• The landscape is attractive</li> <li>• The provision of a Hotel</li> <li>• Local Employment opportunities</li> <li>• A comprehensive historic environment and other historic assets</li> <li>• Good range of Green Spaces</li> <li>• Proximity to Lincoln to access key services and employment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weakness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased car parking on streets</li> <li>• Increasing congestion through the village</li> <li>• Lack of public transport options to Lincoln</li> <li>• A lack of a younger people remaining in the community</li> <li>• Lack of Youth facilities for all ages</li> <li>• Capacity issues in local health centres</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the range and quality of public open spaces</li> <li>• New and existing Public Rights of way need to be redeveloped</li> <li>• Development of tourism facilities to support the economy</li> <li>• Improvement of youth facilities</li> <li>• Potential for further employment and job creation through economic diversification</li> <li>• Potential for home working in new developments</li> <li>• Improvements to recreational facilities/infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in traffic from new development</li> <li>• The size of the village sprawling into the countryside</li> <li>• Encroachment of the built area of Lincoln creeping towards Branston</li> <li>• Some locations in the village have reduced access to broadband capacity</li> <li>• Loss of identity due to new developments and their lack of local distinctiveness</li> <li>• Impact on Conservation Area from increased development</li> <li>• Poor design of new buildings</li> <li>• Lack of suitable infrastructure to accommodate increasing demand.</li> </ul>

## 5 Background

### History of the Parish

- 5.1 Branston Conservation Area was designated in July 1979. It covers an area of around 47 hectares and encompasses the historic core of the village and the grounds of Branston Hall. Modern development has expanded the village to the north, east and west but the southern boundary has remained largely unaltered since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Buildings are primarily residential although there are some commercial properties in the centre of the village.
- 5.2 Branston is located approximately 3 miles south east of Lincoln. It is the centre of an ancient parish, with evidence of settlement traced back to Roman times. At the time of the Domesday Book it is recorded as Branztun(e), possessing a considerable community of 73 households, a church, priest, 4 mills, 3 fisheries and an estimated 1,200 acres under the plough. Branston's All Saints' Church reflects this history in retaining Saxon and Saxon-Norman architecture. Although added to and renovated in the medieval and Victorian periods.
- 5.3 It was not however until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century that Branston's population significantly grew, from 445 in 1801 to 1,216 in 1901, attributed in part to the ploughing up of considerable land following the enclosure in 1765. Much of the development of Branston was dependent on the influence and patronage of leading village families in establishing schools, houses and community venues. Most notably, the Leslie Melville family built the present Branston Hall in 1886 having 38 bedrooms and its surrounding park land and lake, which included the former Old Branston Hall that burnt down during the Goose Dinner in 1903.
- 5.4 Houses built in the village by Leslie Melvilles and other notable families, such as the Abel Smiths at Longhills also brought about the impetus of the village to adapt to new technology. The impressive water wheel and pumping apparatus installed by Branston's Beck, in a now appropriately named Waterwheel Lane, was the solution of the Leslie Melvilles and Abel Smiths to ensure that they had adequate supply of water. Having set up a Gasworks in Rectory Lane to supply lighting to the Hall, this also allowed a more powerful gas-powered pump to be connected to the water wheel. Houses built in the village by Leslie Melville's and other notable families also brought about the impetus of the village to adapt to new technology. The impressive water wheel and pumping apparatus installed by Branston Beck, in a now appropriately named Waterwheel Lane, was the solution of a number of local landowners headed by Alexander Samuel Leslie Melville, to ensure that they had adequate supply of water. Having set up a

Gasworks in Rectory Lane to supply lighting to the Hall, Church and Chapel, this also allowed a more powerful gas-powered pump to be connected to the waterwheel. Poorer residents still had to rely on village wells and the village pump installed on Lincoln Road by public subscription in 1891 with the consequences of ill health and disease from insanitary water. It was not until 1933 that water mains were laid and water fountains installed that can still be seen in the centre of the village.

- 5.5 The agricultural nature of Branston's community continued to be reflected in the occupations and the development of the village, with for example, the establishment of a forge in Church Close by the Melvilles. Indeed, Lincoln Road had its own nucleus of Blacksmiths, Saddlers, harness makers and wheelwrights, such as Chaloner's evocative Collar and Harness Maker's Shop to service the community.
- 5.6 The use of Sheepwash from 1866 and 1948 by the village beck at the centre of the village, epitomised the village's role in the farming calendar, highlighted by a community archaeological dig of the Sheepwash in 2006. Sleaford Road, the High Street and Lincoln Road continued to be the centre of new businesses, such as the Wagon and Horses Public House, Mr Applewhite's tailors shop and Edwin Lintin's butchers, as arterial roads through the village. Such trades meant that in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Branston was a largely self-sufficient community, with carriers, such as the well-known Mary Spalding using her donkeys to pull the cart in order to transport goods from Lincoln that Branston could not supply.
- 5.7 The Church and notable Branston families continued to influence village life in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century with 6 members of the Curtois family who had a remarkable connection with Branston church. For 211 years a Curtois was rector here; there were six of them between 1680 to 1891, beginning with John in 1680. John's grandson, Peregrine Harrison Curtois, built the rectory in 1765, a dignified Georgian residence by the church and known today as "Hainton House". The Curtois family also gave land for the new Branston National School established in 1873 to be built on the High Street, which remained the main school until the opening of the primary school on Station Road in 1970. Henry Grimes, part of Branston farming family, also donated land for what was the Wesleyan, then Methodist Chapel in the namely Chapel Lane. Having similar full congregations to the Church and a vibrant Sunday school that enjoyed summer outings to Skegness.
- 5.8 The Chapel's sale and conversion to a residential property represents changing patterns in the functions of village life, but the character of the building remains. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Branston had a stone and limestone

quarry by the 'Wong' off Silver Street, which had the advantage of being used in the village buildings and by talented stonemasons, causing Pevsner, a famous art and architecture historian, to refer to four stone cottages in Silver Street as being in a "Lovelee" style, named after local stonemason, Thomas Lovelee.

- 5.9 In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Branston's population grew rapidly from approximately 2,000 inhabitants in 1951 to over 3,000 in 1981 and now has a population of over 4,000 with continuing expansion and building beyond the original centre of the village. The footprint of the past nevertheless still influences the present in Branston's formation and continuing development.

### **Branston and Mere Today<sup>1</sup>**

- 5.10 Branston and Mere contains the small village of Branston Booths located to the east of the main village of Branston.

### **Population**

- 5.11 The population of Branston & Mere Parish, according to the 2011 census, was 4,095. The demographics show that the Parish has an ageing population with the largest age range in the parish being that of age 30 – 64 with 59% of the residents being in this age range and 26% of the population being over the age of 65 which is higher than the national average of 16.3%. The population is expected to increase with the projected level of new housing growth in the Parish.

### **Dwellings**

- 5.12 The total number of dwellings in the Parish according to the 2011 census is 1,825 dwellings. The number of dwellings in the Parish has increased by 13% since the 2001 census. The data shows that more than half of properties in the Parish are detached (1,190) and flats/apartments and terraced properties provide the smallest amount of provision. Most of the houses in the parish are privately owned with very few properties being socially rented or privately rented.

### **Car ownership**

- 5.13 The information in the table below (taken from the census 2011) shows that Branston & Mere has a high percentage of car ownership with 92.4% of households owning at least one car which is significantly higher than the East Midlands and the whole of England. This reflects the rural nature of

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<sup>1</sup> All statistics within this section are taken from the 2011 Census.

the settlement and the need to have access to a car to travel and the lack of sustainable transport options available.

**Table 2: Car Ownership in Branston & Mere Parish**

	<b>Branston &amp; Mere %</b>	<b>East Midlands %</b>	<b>England %</b>
<b>No Cars or Vans in Households</b>	15.1	22.1	25.8
<b>1 Car or Van in Household</b>	34.9	42.5	42.2
<b>2 Cars or Vans in Household</b>	35	27.4	24.7
<b>3 Cars or Vans in Household</b>	10.4	6.0	5.5
<b>4 or More Cars or Vans in Household</b>	4.6	2.0	1.8

### House Prices

- 5.14 The need for affordable housing is a critical issue in rural areas, with house-prices increasingly beyond the reach of many groups wanting to stay in, or move to, the local area. Whilst residents recognise the need for additional housing, development needs to be balanced with the impact on the character of the local area, as well as pressure on local services and infrastructure.

### Public Transport

- 5.15 Many rural communities highlight a lack of good public transport as a real barrier in accessing public services such as post-16 education, health, sport and leisure services, employment, financial services and training.

### Consultation

- 5.16 The development of the Neighbourhood Plan involved a very lengthy and highly inclusive consultation process. The issues that the community expressed concerns over at consultation events, and through the community consultation and community questionnaire have formed the vision and objectives for the plan area. From the Vision and Objectives, the necessary policies have been developed to achieve these. The key events are summarised in the following section.



*Public consultation event*

**Table 3: Consultation Activities**

Consultation Activity	Date	Purpose	Outcome
<b>Activity 1: Parish Council public meeting</b>	14/02/2015 and 14/07/2015	To discuss this potential of undertaking a NP	To discuss the potential of undertaking a NP with the Parish Council and members of the public. Around 35 people attended.
<b>Activity 2: Questionnaire</b>	February 2017	To give residents the opportunity to fill in the questionnaire and make their feelings known.	This information helped to form the Vision, objectives and policies in the plan.  557(13.6 %) residents responded to the questionnaire
<b>Activity 3: Secondary School Consultation</b>	28/02/2017	To ensure the Secondary school children have been involved in the NP process.	All 23 sixth form students who live in Branston took part in the session at Branston Community Academy.
<b>Activity 4: Primary School Consultation</b>	26 April 2017	To ensure the primary school children and secondary school children have been involved in the NP process.	18 Children from Branston Church of England School aged 6-7 took part in the consultation event.
<b>Activity 5: Village Fete</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2017	To discuss the key themes of the plan. Vision and Objectives.	To determine initial issues in the settlement and support for the plan. Over 1,000 people attended
<b>Activity 6: Business survey</b>	July 2017	To find out what the business community think about their future in the Parish	This enabled the Parish Council to understand the needs of the business community.  16 questionnaires were returned out of 57 that was sent out to the local business.
<b>Activity 7: Annual Parish Meeting 2018</b>	April 2018	To display the draft Neighbourhood Plan.	This enabled local residents to view the draft content of the plan before its formal Regulation 14 consultation. Over 60 people attended the meeting.
<b>Activity 8: Draft Plan Consultation events</b>	Over Winter 2019/2020	To consult on the draft Neighbourhood Plan	This gave the public an opportunity to see the draft plan and evidence base.

## 6 Community Vision

- 6.1 The Community Vision was prepared following consultation with local people during 2015, 2016 and 2017. The Community Vision focuses on how local people would like the area to be in 2037. It is a shared vision created using the views and concerns of residents, businesses and stakeholders.

### Community Vision

*'In 2037, the Parish of Branston and Mere will be a vibrant, attractive, prosperous and sustainable neighbourhood that retains its own identity. There will be a variety of housing types, employment, service and facilities provided to its residents.*

*All new development will be of the highest quality and design to ensure the village's character is enhanced and retained – especially within and surrounding the historic core of Branston.*

*Accessibility to the open countryside, public spaces and the wider green infrastructure network should be retained and enhanced. Views towards locally important features that include Branston Hall and Lincoln Cathedral will be preserved.*

*Local infrastructure will be improved to enable a more sustainable community for existing and future residents''.*

- 6.2 The following objectives have been developed from the Parish Plan in 2011 and community consultation through this Neighbourhood Plan. The objectives cover a range of economic, social and environmental issues that together will ensure that the village can grow sustainably in the future.

### Community Objectives

1. To ensure all new development is appropriate, proportionate and enhances the existing attractive quality of the surrounding countryside and historic environment.
2. To ensure the three allocated housing sites in Branston, which have been identified within the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, are delivered to the highest standards and reflects the local housing needs (i.e. Starter homes and sheltered accommodation for the older). No further large-scale development is anticipated in Branston and only limited growth is supported in the hamlet of Branston Booths as defined in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan unless it is supported by the community.
3. New development within the area should be contextually responsive and encourage a strong sustainable community. High quality design which responds to its landscape setting and topography is paramount in ensuring new dwellings contribute to the character and identity of the parish.
4. To ensure Branston and Mere retains and enhances access to the open countryside through the improvement of the identified green infrastructure network and designated Local Green Spaces around the Branston village and Branston Booths.
5. To ensure the identified views and vistas towards Branston Hall and Lincoln Cathedral, the Church and Fenlands are protected and, where possible, enhanced.
6. To attract and retain new services and retail units into the area to ensure increased accessibility for parish residents and a reduced reliance on unsustainable modes of transport over the plan period.
7. New, small-scale employment development should encourage economic activity to meet local needs. Meanwhile, reducing the need to travel by encouraging people to live and work through the development of well-designed mixed-use schemes which promote small-scale employment.
8. To preserve existing community amenities whilst supporting the creation of new accessible amenities such as the extension to the sports pavilion, a new youth centre, village hall, play areas and the improvement of existing public spaces. This will help to strengthen and support community cohesion.
9. The protection and enhancement of the existing identified Neighbourhood Centres is encouraged to improve the viability and vitality of the settlement.

## 7 Housing Land Allocations and Development Principles

### Justification

- 7.1 Policy LP2 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) identifies Branston as a 'large village' that is sustainable to take future development due to its size, population and the level of existing services and facilities. The CLLP identifies 3 large housing sites within Branston that, collectively, accommodate around 362 new homes over the Plan period as shown in table 4 and on Map 3. All have now either received full planning permission or are under construction.

**Table 4: Proposed Development sites as set out in the CLLP**

Site Reference	Location	Site Area (Ha)	Number of dwellings
CL417	Land off Moor Lane	2.65	73 homes (Under Construction)
CL418	Land at Silver Street	10.93	198 homes (Under Construction)
CL4666	Land to the West of Station Road	4.56	109 homes (full planning permission)

- 7.2 In addition, the CLLP identifies Branston Booths as a 'small village' and therefore only supports limited development due to its smaller size, population, limited services and facilities. As of January 2018, Branston Booths is projected to get 7 new dwellings over the plan period, as identified in the most recent housing monitoring report proposed by North Kesteven District Council:

<https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/residents/living-in-your-area/localism/neighbourhood-plans/branston-and-mere-neighbourhood-plan/>

- 7.3 Initial Consultation on the development of this Neighbourhood Plan was undertaken in 2015, 2016 and 2017 by the Branston Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Feedback was unequivocal; that some development is required to meet the local housing needs within the community. In addition, small scale commercial development is also required to bolster the local economy.

- 7.4 Over the Plan period, the Neighbourhood Plan is required to allocate land for housing and employment growth. With the new planned development in the area, policies must be in place to help make Branston more resilient. Some policies in this Neighbourhood Plan are proactive to anticipate this change, whilst other policies in this Plan provide greater clarity on what parts of the Plan area require protection.
- 7.5 The Neighbourhood Plan will take a positive approach to development where it brings forward a balance of housing and employment to ensure the village remains an attractive and vibrant place to live and work. When commenting on development proposals the Parish Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development and will work proactively with applicants to find joint solutions. This approach will mean that proposals can be supported where they secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions for the whole parish.
- 7.6 This Neighbourhood Plan supports the allocated sites that have been identified within the CLLP. However, it is important that these new developments are appropriate and deliver homes that benefit the wider community and make the Parish a more sustainable and attractive place to live. In addition, it is also important that new services, facilities and infrastructure is delivered alongside the new housing developments to reduce any concerns about the adverse impact on existing infrastructure raised by the community.

### **Public Consultation**

- 7.7 In 2011, Branston & Mere Parish Council undertook a Parish Plan. The Parish Plan, among other things, looked at issues with housing types, location and affordability. The consultation feedback identified that there were too few starter homes for younger families and suitable accommodation for older residents. More recently, through consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, similar issues were raised through a village survey and consultation events. Additionally, residents are concerned that new housing will have an impact on existing services and facilities such as capacity within the local schools and doctor's surgery and an impact on the existing road and transport networks.
- 7.8 More specifically, issues raised include:
- An increased level of affordable homes to attract younger families and enable people to buy their first home;

- Provide suitable accommodation for the needs of the older population. This does include bungalows and sheltered housing;
- Impact on road capacity – traffic towards Lincoln and the cross roads on Silver Street will increase and lead to further pollution;
- Capacity of the local schools and the doctors;
- Impact on the environment and local wildlife;
- No more development on greenfield land;
- The need for more shops to cater for a larger population;
- Provide adequate off-street parking and suitable sized garages to reduce parking issues on local streets;
- Impact on local character and important views;
- The need for more public open spaces and youth/ sport facilities;  
and
- Existing bus services (day and evening) will need improving in the evening to reduce the use of the car – especially those connections to Lincoln.

## 8 Additional Residential Development Branston and Mere

### Windfall Development

- 8.1 In addition to the identified housing allocations in this Neighbourhood Plan, as identified on Map 3, residents were asked about further residential development opportunities in Branston village and Branston Booths. Although the majority displayed little support for any further development, some residents supported additional growth on smaller sites within the village of Branston only. The Neighbourhood Plan also must respect the existing policies for small scale growth opportunities within the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.
- 8.2 If there were to be additional development, residents preferred the development of existing previously developed land rather than greenfield or edge of village developments as has been the case previously. This supports the CLLP Policy LP4 about directing the location of growth through a sequential test<sup>2</sup>.
- 8.3 CLLP Policy LP2 also states that:

In the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Policy LP2: The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy states that for Large Villages, such as Branston:

*"To maintain and enhance their role as large villages which provide housing, employment, retail, and key services and facilities for the local area, the following settlements will be a focus for accommodating an appropriate level of growth. Most of this growth will be via sites allocated in this plan, or appropriate infill, intensification or renewal within the existing developed footprint. In exceptional circumstances\*\*\*\*, additional growth on non-allocated sites in appropriate locations\*\* outside of, but immediately adjacent to, the developed footprint\*\*\* of these large villages might be considered favourably, though these are unlikely to be of a scale over 25 dwellings / 1 ha per site (whichever is the smaller)".*

- 8.4 When assessing for potential sites within the existing developed footprint of Branston, as defined in the CLLP, it proved difficult to find any sites that could accommodate more than around 9 or 10 properties. The majority of

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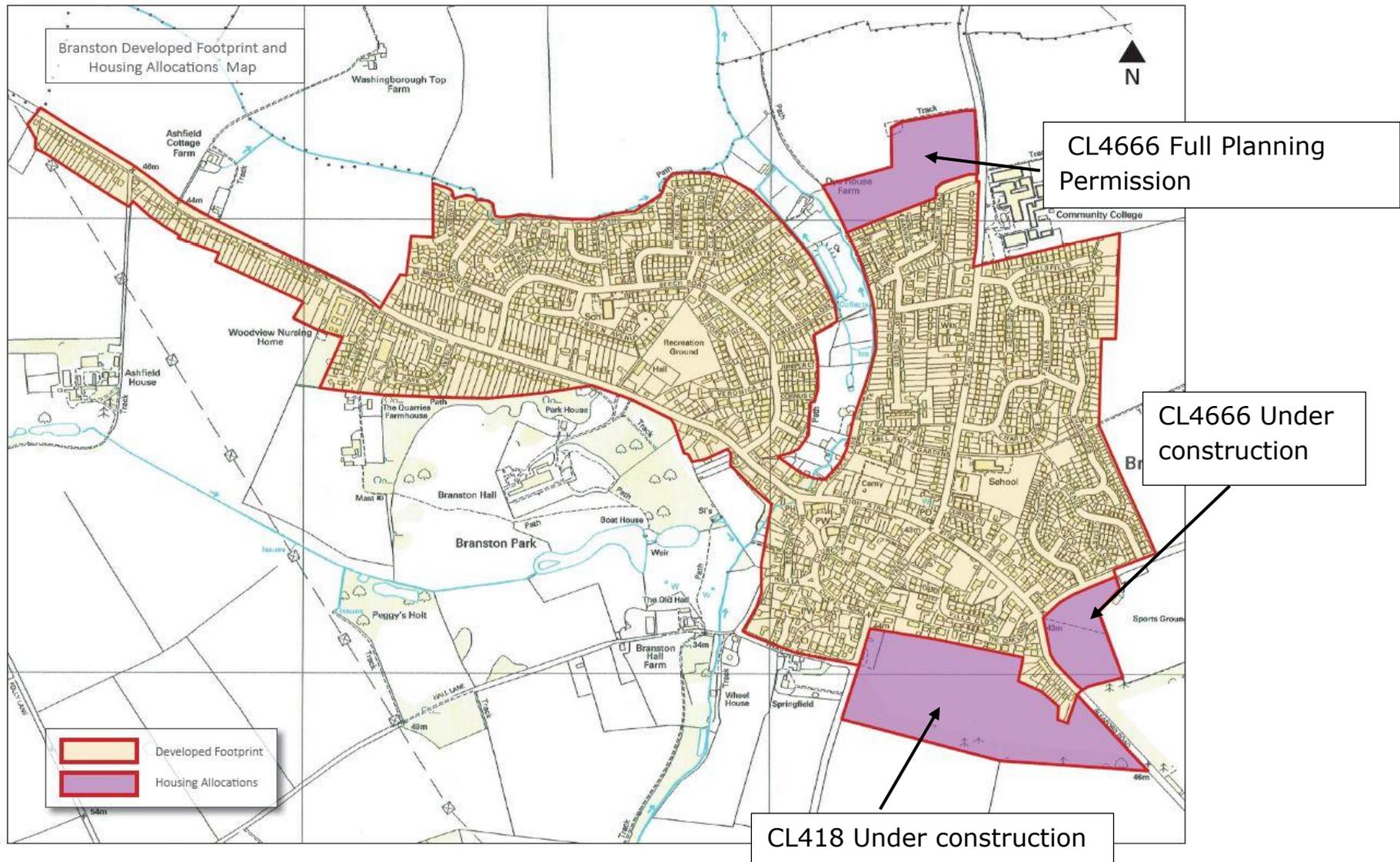
<sup>2</sup> The Sequential Test prioritises sites:

- a) Brownfield land or infill sites, in appropriate locations, within the developed footprint of the settlement;
- b) Brownfield sites at the edge of a settlement, in appropriate locations;
- c) Greenfield sites at the edge of a settlement, in appropriate locations.

potential sites could only include a smaller number of properties. Therefore, Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan considers appropriate infill, intensification or renewal of sites to be of up to and including 4 dwellings per site in Branston Booths and no more than 9 dwellings in Branston where they comply with the relevant criteria in part 1 of Policy 1 and the design aspirations as identified in the Branston Character Appraisal.

- 8.5 Where development proposals are proposed for locations outside of the existing developed footprint, applicants will be expected to demonstrate clear evidence of local community support for the scheme, with such support generated through a thorough, but proportionate, pre-application community consultation exercise as described in part 3 of Policy 1.

**Map 3: Housing Allocations and the existing developed footprint (Branston village)**



**Policy 1: Additional Residential Development in Branston and Mere**

1. Proposals for residential development, including the conversion of existing buildings, will only be supported if the development proposal:

- a) is proposing no more than 9 dwellings (unless otherwise demonstrated in part 2 and part 3 of this policy) per site in Branston or no more than 4 dwellings per site in Branston Booths;
- b) will be situated within the existing developed footprint of Branston or Branston Booths (for Branston, this is illustrated on Map 3) unless otherwise justified through part 2 of this policy;
- c) provides adequate off-street parking provision in relation to the number of bedrooms proposed, per dwelling, as part of the proposal;
- d) does not create significant or exacerbate existing environmental or highway safety problems; and
- e) does not cause any unacceptable negative impact to the private amenity of any nearby residential properties.

***Exceptional Circumstances***

2. In exceptional circumstances, additional growth on non-allocated sites in appropriate locations (see CLLP) outside of, but immediately adjacent to, the developed footprint of Branston might be considered favourably, though these are unlikely to be of a scale over 25 dwellings / 1 ha per site (whichever is the smaller) where the proposal has gained the support of the community\*\*  
Notwithstanding this, these proposals will also be subject to the criteria (a-e) in part 1 of this policy.

***Private Amenity Space***

3. Where appropriate, new dwellings should provide private garden amenity space to meet household recreation needs. The space provided should be in scale with the dwelling concerned, reflect the character of the surrounding area and be appropriate in relation to the local topography and to secure privacy between adjacent dwellings.

**\*\*Criteria for Demonstrating Community Support**

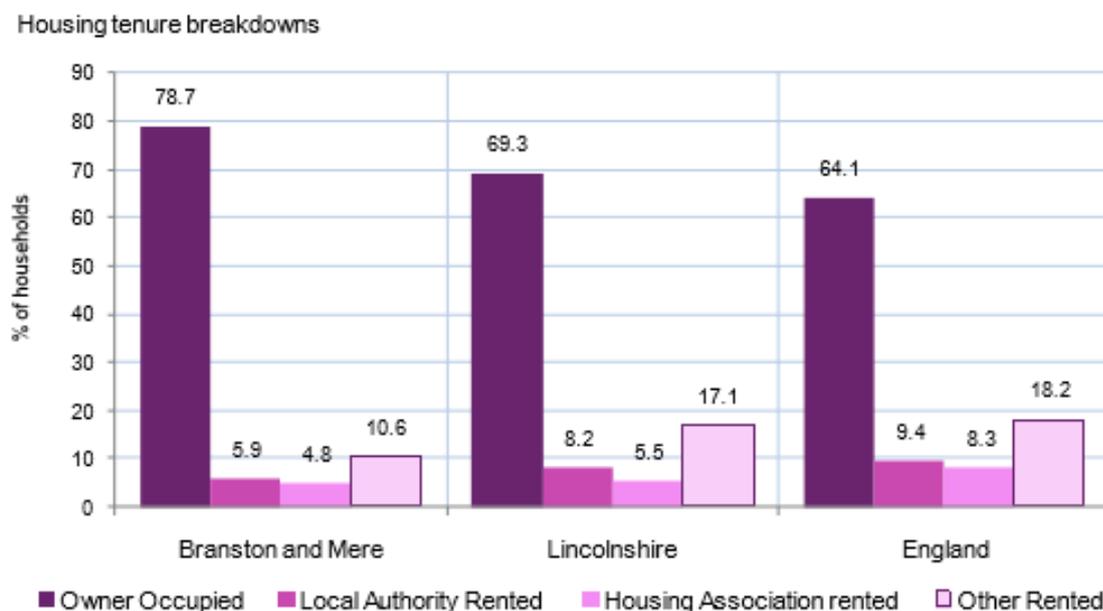
4. *Proposals for residential development on non-allocated sites outside of the developed footprint of Branston and Branston Booths must be accompanied by a consultation statement to demonstrate:
  - a) *a written record of all comments expressed by local people within the neighbourhood area;*
  - b) *an account of the means used to involve and engage with local people during the consultation period by using a range of ways in which input and comments could be provided. For example, a variety of publicity and the opportunity to provide web-based comments as well as attending public events and meetings;*
  - c) *an explanation of how the proposal has addressed any relevant planning issues or concerns raised by local people or the Parish Council through the consultation period;*
  - d) *a description of how the proposal will benefit the local community; and*
  - e) *an explanation that the feedback from the community has been positive overall towards the proposal.**
  
5. *The applicant should ensure a consultation statement accompanies their planning application as supporting documentation to the proposal, that is proportionate to the scale of the development. This will enable Branston and Mere Parish Council and North Kesteven District Council to take it into consideration as a demonstration of community support for the proposal when they come to comment and determine the application respectively.*
  
6. *Schemes that do not comply with part 4 of this policy, to the satisfaction of both Branston and Mere Parish Council and North Kesteven District Council, will not be supported.*

## 9 Providing an Appropriate Housing Type and Mix

### Justification

- 9.1 Branston has a good mix of housing types, including detached, semi-detached, terraces and bungalows. However, with a growing and ageing population, there is a need, and will be a further need over the plan period, to both increase the housing stock and types of houses to accommodate a changing population.
- 9.2 Housing is an important issue in rural communities. Increases in house prices have far outstripped average earnings meaning that local people may be priced out of the housing market in the area. For a community to sustain a fair and balanced housing market, it must provide affordable housing accessible to the local community. However, local housing development can also strain local services, as well as affect the character of the area (although a larger population may be able to sustain more shops, businesses and local amenities).

**Table 6: Housing tenure breakdown<sup>3</sup>**



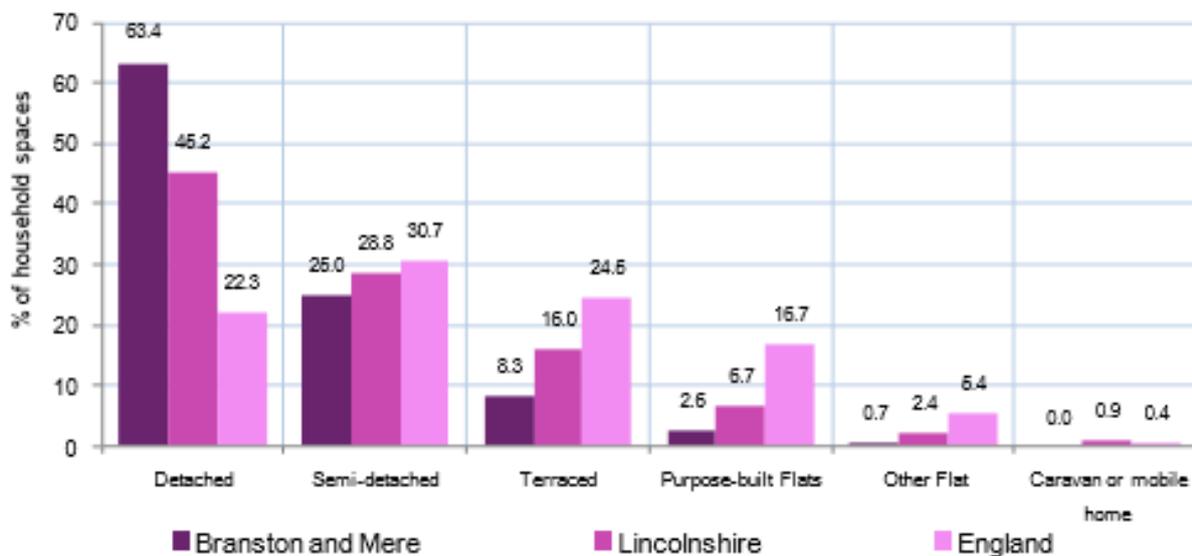
- 9.3 The mixture of owner-occupied, social rented and private rented accommodation in the area is an important component in the sustainability of the local community. With high house-prices, it may be difficult for less affluent people (for example younger people or families who have grown

<sup>3</sup> Source Office of National Statistics 2011

up in the area) to stay in, or move to, areas which have low levels of social or private rented housing.

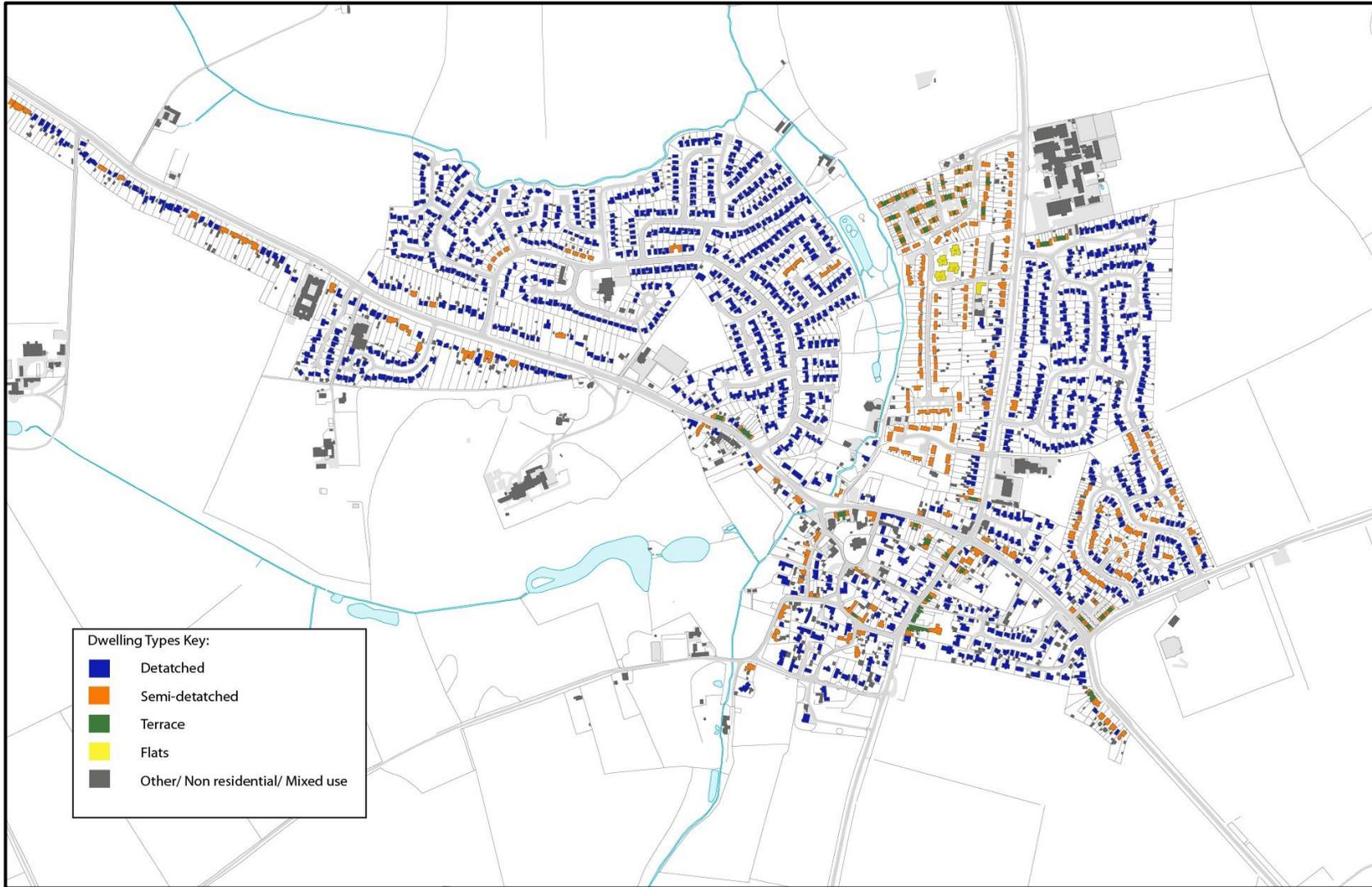
**Table 7: Dwelling type breakdown<sup>4</sup>**

Dwelling type breakdowns



<sup>4</sup> Source Office of National Statistics

**Map 4: Dwelling types in Branston village**



## Public Consultation

- 9.4 The public consultation demonstrated that there is support for certain types of homes within Branston. Most respondents to the village survey stated that they believe Branston should see more bungalows, starter homes, affordable homes and retirement accommodation. There was very little support for flats, 3-storey homes or large executive homes. Smaller homes were favoured with specifically 2-3 bedrooms being the most desired.

### **Policy 2: Housing Type and Mix**

1. Development proposals should deliver a mix of housing sizes, including smaller homes of 3 or fewer bedrooms. Proposals for 10 or more dwellings which do not include the provision of homes of 3 or fewer bedrooms should demonstrate why smaller dwellings would not be suitable for the site and how the proposal is contributing to a diverse mix of housing types and tenures to help meet local needs, this should include:
  - a) the number of units and the percentage split of the proposed dwelling types and sizes;
  - b) how the proposal caters for the needs of first-time buyers, young families and accommodation for older people;
  - c) the proposed level of affordable housing to be provided and the proposed type(s) of affordable housing will help to meet the needs of people in the Parish.
2. Where affordable housing is to be provided on site, it must be fully integrated with the market housing and the affordable housing should be aesthetically indistinguishable from market housing.

## 10 Enabling Employment Opportunities

### Justification

- 10.1 A key part of the approach for this Plan is to secure the long-term sustainability, viability and vitality of Branston and the wider parish.
- 10.2 Although there are employment opportunities and a low unemployment rate within the area, it has been highlighted, through local statistics, that the parish is affected by a low wage economy and this is continuing to cause issues with affordability of housing, issues with people leaving the area to find higher paid employment and a lack of new businesses coming to the area.
- 10.3 This section of the Plan sets out to provide a positive context within which businesses can establish and grow within the parish.
- 10.4 In addition, it is also recognised that to support the local economy, there must be investment in training and improving the local skill base. It is important that new developments for employment encourages the diversification of the local skill base and, where possible, seek to improve this through training programs and working with the local education authority and nearby education establishments.
- 10.5 Branston is in a favourable position to take advantage of the growth and regeneration of Lincoln which is less than 3 miles away.
- 10.6 The development of Lincoln has seen growth in the local employment sector and investment into local industry. The University of Lincoln and the nearby redevelopment of the Riseholme agricultural college supports the local economy and encouraging younger people to stay and work in the area.
- 10.7 Branston has two distinct types of employment. These are a) larger employers like Branston Potatoes and other more agricultural industries which concentrate on food production, packaging and distribution and b) smaller ancillary businesses like services and facilities, small businesses and rural enterprises. These types of businesses are evident within the two Neighbourhood Centres and other areas within the village.
- 10.8 The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Policy *LP5: Delivering Prosperity and jobs* seeks to promote these employment types and opportunities to increase and diversify the local economy.
- 10.9 These businesses provide both employment opportunities and a wider community and social function. This section within the Neighbourhood Plan includes a positive policy approach to support the development of new

businesses in the Plan area. In accordance with the approach set out in the NPPF, support will be given to the following enterprises and projects:

- business proposals that support the sustainability of the Plan area and involve the sensitive conversion of existing buildings and the development of well-designed new buildings such as local services and facilities; and
- proposals that promote the development and diversification of agriculture and other land based rural businesses.

**10.10** The business community recognises the importance of high-speed Broadband access within the Plan area. It will assist existing local businesses to prosper. It will also provide further opportunities for the growing number of people working from home.

**10.11** The business community also recognises the importance of smaller businesses in sustaining the vitality and viability of the community during the working day and in reducing the levels of commuting to the nearby towns and cities such as Sleaford and Lincoln.

### **Public Consultation**

**10.12** From the response to the community questionnaire, the consultation event held on the 22 July 2017 and the business survey undertaken, it showed that most residents were in favour of further small-scale employment opportunities being created in the parish such as craft and artisan spaces.

**10.13** There was broad support for increasing the level of local employment opportunities through increased office space, additional retail facilities and cottage type industries – which can include a greater level of home working. There was also support for further agriculturally based employment on local farms, but little support for large scale warehousing, storage and distribution developments.

**Policy 3: Enabling Employment Opportunities**

1. Proposals for all new employment development, including the development of temporary holiday accommodation, tourist attractions, static caravans, manufacturing, food production, storage and distribution and business related to farm diversification or rural enterprise, will only be supported subject to the following criteria:
  - a) the development is an appropriate use and scale to its setting;
  - b) the proposal makes a positive contribution to the street scene and its wider landscape setting;
  - c) the operation of the proposal does not cause an unreasonable impact from noise, smell, vibrations, glare, dust and operating hours on the amenity of nearby residential properties;
  - d) the proposal respects the integrity of any historic buildings; and
  - e) the proposals will not create any unacceptable amenity, environmental or traffic issues in the immediate locality of the site concerned.
  
2. Proposals for major new employment development where the floorspace is 1,000 square metres or more, or where it is on a site of 1 hectare or more\* will be required demonstrate clear evidence of local community support in accordance with the criteria identified in part 3 of Policy 1.
  
3. Proposals for the conversion of existing rural buildings for other uses, including residential use, will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the use of the building concerned for employment or community uses is neither viable nor practicable. In these circumstances, applicants should provide information to demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell or to lease the site for employment or community purposes at a realistic market price. The marketing period should be at least for a period of 12 months'

*\*As defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order as amended.*

## 11 Development and Design Principles

### Justification

- 11.1 To design successful places, all new development should meet the aspiration for quality and sustainability in their design and layout. In short, good design is inseparable from good planning and place making.
- 11.2 High quality sustainable design is design that is of a notable standard, which, by its nature, will sustain over the longer term, is adaptable, and it is fit for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- 11.3 A fundamental part of achieving high quality sustainable design, and ultimately high-quality sustainable places, is the need to develop a thorough understanding of the local character and the qualities that contribute to local distinctiveness.
- 11.4 All new development must make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the environment within which it is located, having regard to its local context, and should not impact negatively upon the amenity of the local community.
- 11.5 It is important to consider development proposals on their merits and on a case-by-case basis according to what they are proposing. The purpose of this policy is to establish what aspects or features of local character are considered important and contribute towards the local distinctiveness of either the vicinity of a proposed development site, or in the context of the wider neighbourhood area.
- 11.6 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group commissioned an appraisal of the village – ‘Branston Village Appraisal’ to assess the characteristics of the both Branston and Branston Booths. This appraisal has divided the villages up into different character areas and assessed their built environment, the street scape, historic value, views and green spaces. The evidence within this appraisal will help protect areas and features of importance and help support the development of Policy 5. The character appraisal is available to view on the Parish Council website.

### Local characteristics

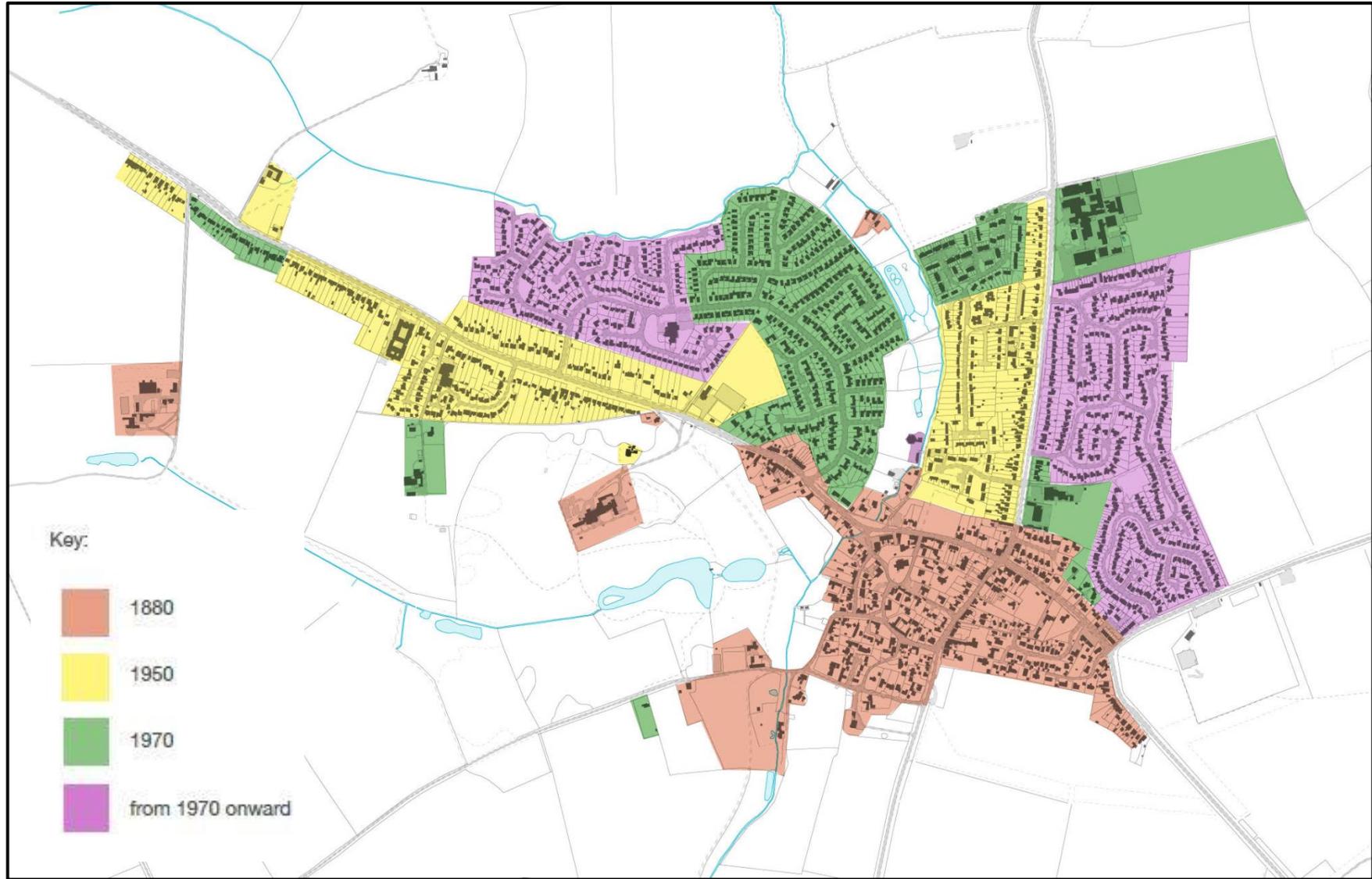
- 11.7 The built-up area of Branston extends along the Lincoln Road heading west towards Canwick and Lincoln, along Station Road heading north, and to the back of the High Street around the centre of the village. Beech Road loops north from Lincoln Road, extending the settlement to the north with a series of short culs-de-sac extending out in a fan-like pattern.

- 11.8 The western boundary is extended linear development shallow to Lincoln Road, with no backland development. The eastern boundary is made up of a series of culs-de-sac off Fairleas and Shardloes which link Moor Lane and Station Road. A distinctive feature of Branston which impacts the extent of the built-up area of the village is the space running north-south that contains two streams. This causes a distinctive 'gap' in the settlement, separating development around Beech Road and the houses to the west of Station Road. Historic Branston sits to the south of the High Street, and Branston Hall and associated grounds forms the rest of the southern boundary.
- 11.9 Historic Branston is a predominately nucleated settlement and its shape has a strong relationship with the underlying topography and hydrology of the area. Silver Street runs with the local ridgeline that extends to the south, and Thackers Lane cuts perpendicular to the ridge, extending to the west. Streets in the area follow this pattern, being either aligned with the topography roughly north-south or cutting across it east-west.
- 11.10 The form is compact, with a series of interconnecting lanes. Whilst the historic settlement pattern is essentially compact, with development clustered around the key junctions, newer development is strung out along in a linear fashion along Lincoln Road, Station Road, and Sleaford Road.

### **Evolution of the village**

- 11.11 When tracking the evolution of Branston over time, a pattern starts to emerge; very little change has occurred within the historic confines of the original village.
- 11.12 The historic core remains essentially unchanged densified, but most of the housing stock has been added through expanding the village along the main routes and through backland development.
- 11.13 The core of the village remains nucleated, with a strong relationship between the development pattern the original streets. Linear development along Lincoln Road brings with it a shift from a nucleated to linear, ribbon-like settlement, reinforced by how shallow much of the village is to the main streets; that is, you are usually very close to a main through route, not buried deep within a local street system.
- 11.14 This is not the case for development added in from about 1970 onwards, which shifts to using a 'nested hierarchy' of streets, with loop roads feeding a system of culs-de-sac. This pattern typifies development from this era but does not reflect the historic pattern of the historic village.

**Map 5: Evolution of Branston Villa**



### Character Areas

- 11.15** To understand and explain the townscape character of Branston, an analysis of each of the main eras of growth has been undertaken through the Branston Village Appraisal. Within these, 9 study areas have been identified.
- 11.16** Where possible, these have been drawn to include whole streets or spaces and their edges. Inevitably, there is some overlap between the character of one area and another, and although every effort has been made to define areas in a way that establishes difference, designers and developers should look to the complete analysis rather than focusing on just one street or space when considering how to bring forward new design.
- 11.17** It should be noted that inevitably there will be a degree of redevelopment within each of the defined areas, meaning that each of them contains buildings that are not from the era that defines the overall area.

**Map 6: Character Areas in Branston village**



### **Important Views**

- 11.18** A key characteristic of Branston are the views onto the open countryside available from around the village. The relatively flat landscape allows for far-reaching panoramas which are as much a part of experiencing Branston as the streets, buildings and space. Managing these views is therefore a key design consideration, and care should be taken to ensure that, where possible, new development does not truncate long views out onto the countryside.
- 11.19** Table 5 and Map 7 show the important views that were identified through the public consultation and the Branston Village Appraisal.

**Table 5: Important local views**



Left: The view from Cooper Close, looking north west towards Lincoln. Note the prominence of the Cathedral on the otherwise unbroken skyline.



Left: Looking from the south towards Branston Hall, with the mature grounds setting off the Grade II listed building.



Left: The Paddock on Thackers Lane, with excellent views out towards the south and west.



Left: Looking south from Thackers Lane, with views across the rural farmland.



Left: Heading into the village along Mere Road, with views over towards Thackers Lane.



Right: Looking west from Lincoln Road as you head toward Lincoln, with only fragmented farmsteads breaking up the view.

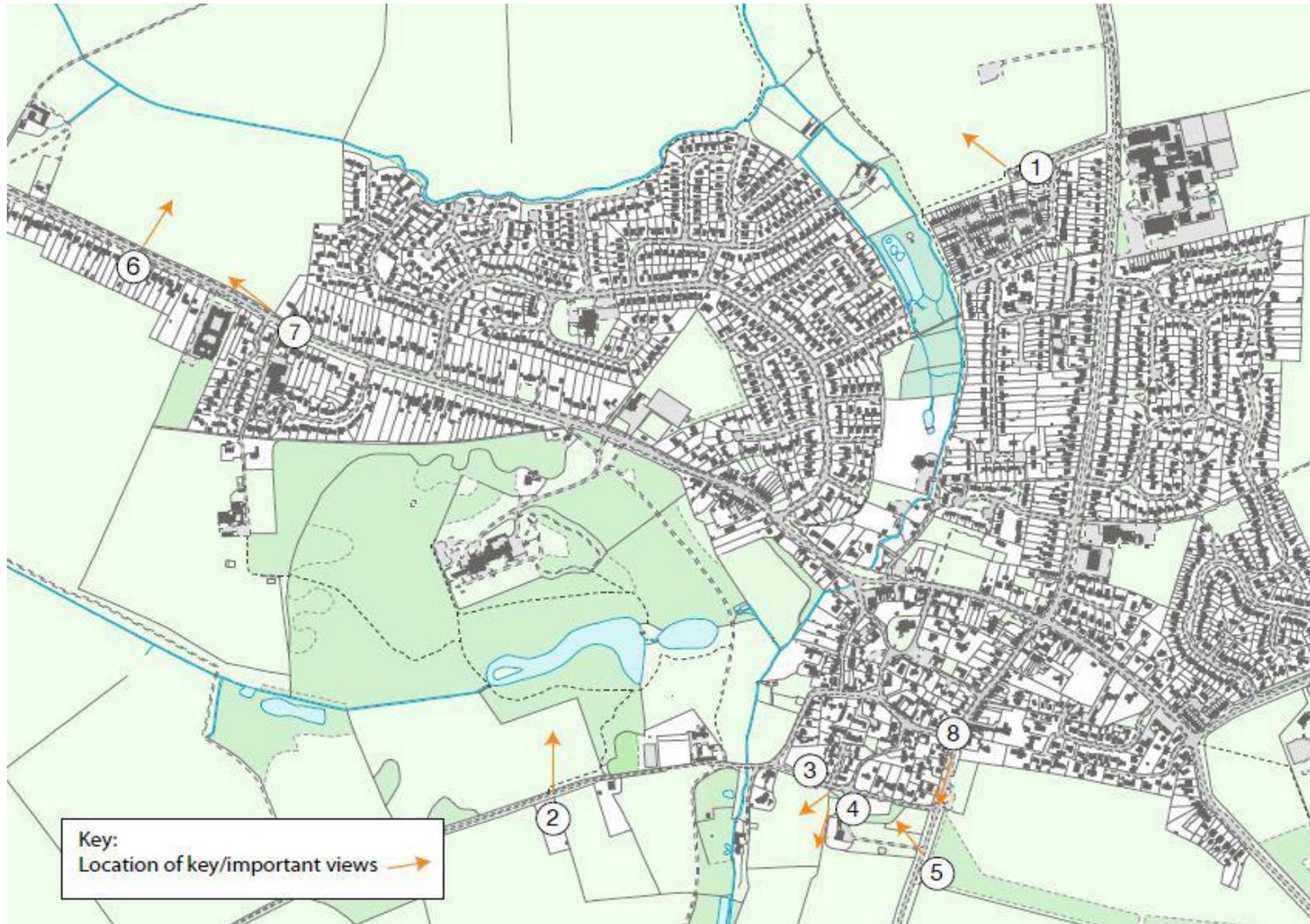


Left: Looking along the Lincoln Road as you head toward Lincoln, with an excellent view of the cathedral across the fields.



Left: The corner of Thackers Lane and Mere Road, looking out towards the countryside.

**Map 7: Important Views in Branston village**



### **Consultation**

11.20 In July 2017, residents were asked if there were any important local views within the Parish and if so why and where were they located. The views shown on proposal Map 7 are the views the community regarded as the most important views. These views, and relevant justification are presented within the Branston Village Appraisal.

**Policy 4: Development and Design Principles**

1. Development proposals should be accompanied by evidence which demonstrates how the attributes of the relevant character area(s), set out in the Branston Village Appraisal, have been incorporated or considered in the design process, including the following design principles:
  - a) the development should complement the existing street scene and be suitably integrated with neighbouring properties in terms of its scale, height, density, massing, separation, layout, materials and access;
  - b) the development should seek to retain any existing mature hedging and established trees. Any existing mature trees or hedging that are unavoidably removed, shall be replaced elsewhere on the site with suitable native species;
  - c) the development will safeguard any "important" views, as identified on Map 7;
  - d) development affecting the transitional edges between the existing built up settlement of Branston Village and the open countryside should be softened by native landscaping or the inclusion of public open space to complement the character of the adjacent or surrounding countryside; and
  - e) development proposals should include an adequate level of off-street parking to serve residents and visitors. Where on-street parking can be shown to be the most appropriate design solution for a scheme.

## 12 Neighbourhood Centres and Other Community Facilities

### Justification

- 12.1 The community believe it is vital to protect and enhance the existing retail services and facilities within the village. These services and facilities provide valuable amenities for residents within Branston & Mere and the other surrounding villages.
- 12.2 Retail provision is an important asset to the village and it is important that the existing retail provision is protected and enhanced to support a growing and sustainable community. Branston is classified as 'Large village' by the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan under *Policy LP 2: Delivering Growth in Villages* and this means that the village provides an important range of facilities used by residents and the surrounding communities.
- 12.3 *Policy LP15: Community Facilities* contained within the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan supports the protection and enhancement of community facilities within the Parish. This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to identify the main concentration of amenities the Neighbourhood Centres.
- 12.4 Policy 5 provides an approach to safeguard such facilities unless specific exceptions can be met. One relates to the commercial viability of the key local amenities. This may be particularly relevant for those amenities which are inherently commercial in their nature. In these circumstances the premises concerned should be marketed at a realistic price for at least six months to assess the opportunities for other community facilities to occupy any space currently occupied by local amenities.
- 12.5 Within the Neighbourhood Centres, Policy 6 will support development proposals where the schemes are shown to make a positive contribution to the retail experience including how the development supports other policies within this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 12.6 **Neighbourhood Centre 1<sup>5</sup>** as shown on Map 9, as identified as the area off Beech Road.

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<sup>5</sup> Please note the survey of these facilities were undertaken in early 2020.



12.7 **Neighbourhood Centre 2<sup>6</sup>** as shown on Map 9, as identified, off Station Road.



### Community Consultation

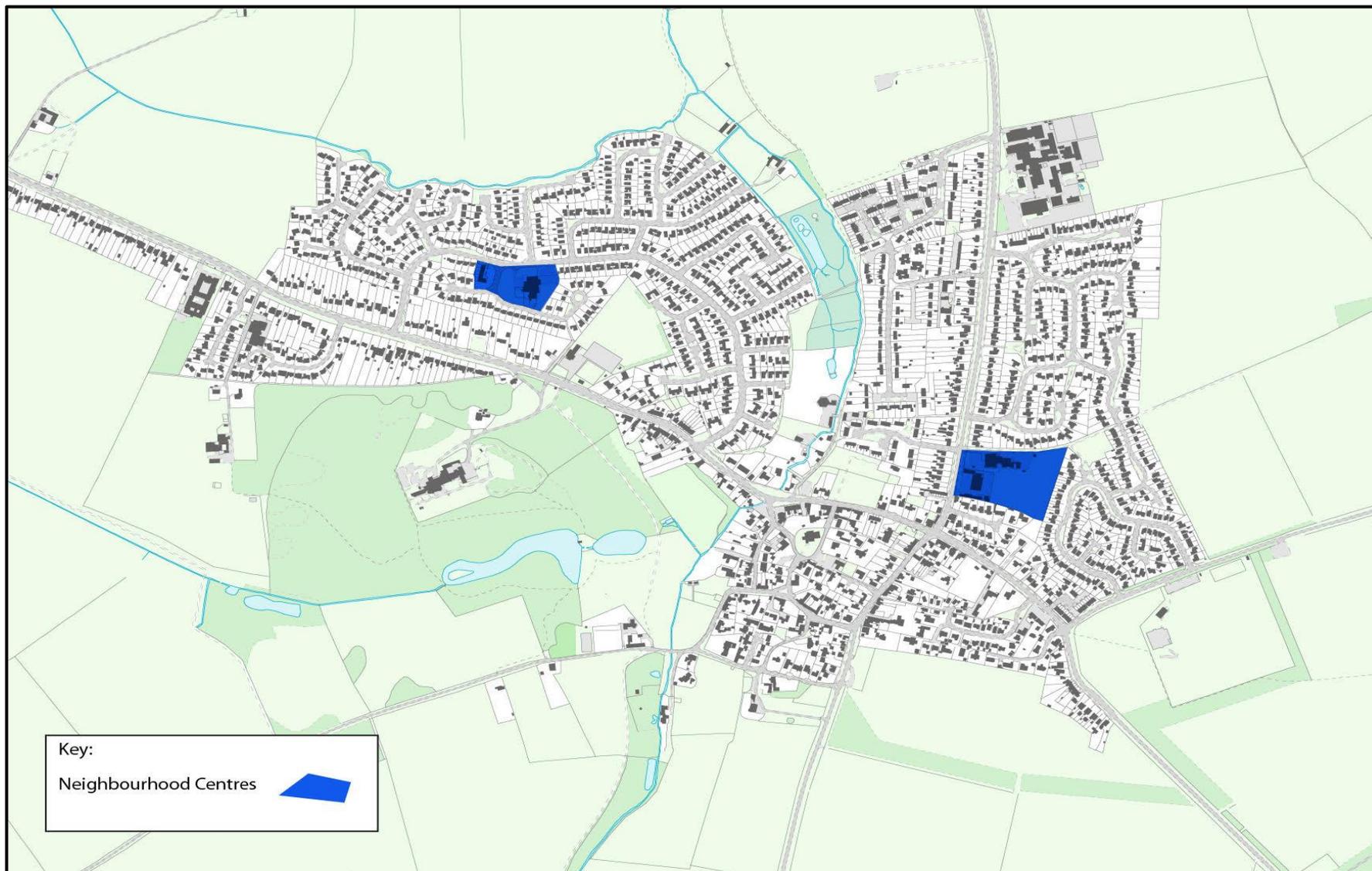
12.8 Throughout the public consultation residents expressed how useful the services and facilities are in the village and how they should be retained. The community expressed the desire for additional community facilities and services such as:

- Small retail units for independent shops are to be encouraged:
- Bakers;
- Butchers;
- small market area;
- Café/bistro;
- Dentist;
- Extension or relocation of the Doctors Surgery; and
- Restaurants.

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<sup>6</sup> Please note the survey of these facilities were undertaken in 2020.

**Map 9: Neighbourhood Centres**



**Policy 5: All Other Village Amenities (Outside of the Neighbourhood Centres)**

1. The village amenities are as follows:
  - All Saints Community Church;
  - All Saints Church Hall;
  - Branston Community Academy;
  - Branston and Mere Village Hall;
  - Branston Booths Village Hall; and
  - Waggon and Horses Public House.
  
2. Development proposals that will result in the loss of a village amenity will not be supported, unless:
  - a) alternative provision of an equivalent or a better-quality amenity, will be provided somewhere else within the Parish; or
  - b) It can be demonstrated through robust evidence, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that there is no longer a need for the facility or that it is not economically viable.\*\*; or
  - c) there is little evidence of local use of that amenity.
  
3. Proposals for new amenities, including health and education, in Branston will be supported provided they comply with other relevant policies in this Plan.

*\*\*Applicants will be expected to demonstrate, to the District Council's satisfaction, that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell and let the site or premises for its existing use(s) or another community use at a realistic price for, at least, a 6-month period.*

**Policy 6: Neighbourhood Centres**

1. Proposals involving the change of use, at ground floor level, to non-retail uses, within the Neighbourhood Centres, as identified on Map 9, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, that there is no longer a need for the facility or the premises are unsuitable or not economically viable\*\* for the continued provision of a retail facility.
2. Development for the provision, alteration or replacement of shop fronts and signs in the Neighbourhood Centres will be supported provided the design, colour, materials and details of the alterations to and replacements of shop fronts and signage sustain or enhance the character of the building and surrounding shop frontages and are in-keeping with the relevant character area.
3. Proposals that seek to improve the public realm of the Neighbourhood Centres will be supported where the materials contribute towards the improvement of the character and the amenity value of the area.

*\*\*Applicants will be expected to demonstrate, to the Council's satisfaction, that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell and let the site or premises for its existing use(s) or another community use at a realistic price for, at least, a 6-month period.*

## **13 Green Infrastructure**

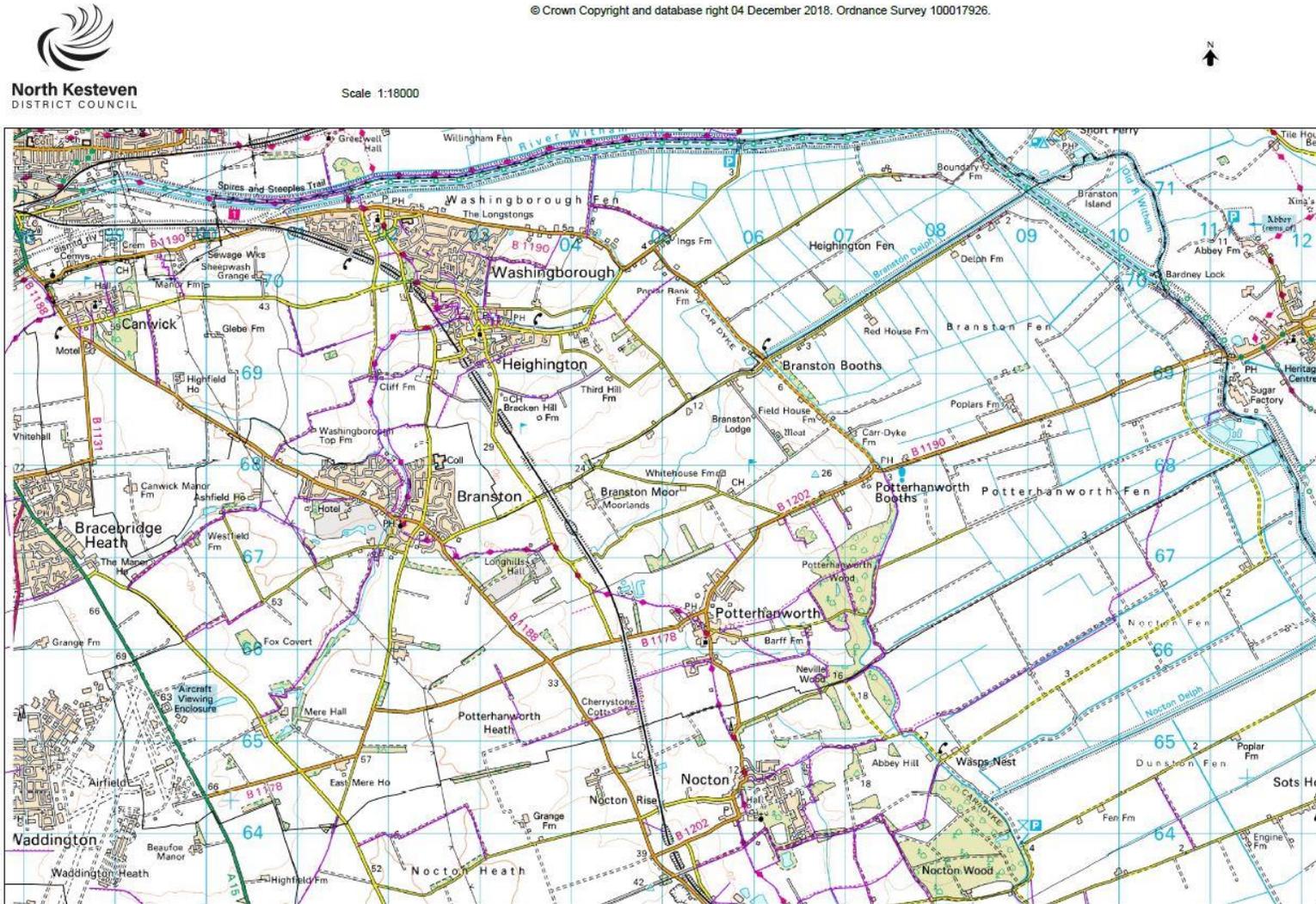
### **Justification**

- 13.1** Green Infrastructure is a term used to describe all the different elements that form the network of natural and semi-natural open spaces within and around the settlement and open countryside. Green and blue Infrastructure covers a variety of types of spaces including woodland, parks and gardens, green lanes, public rights of way (as shown on Map 10), church yards, sports facilities and water courses. Consultation feedback identified that local people do value the green infrastructure network in the area and would like to take the opportunity to improve and extend the existing parks, open spaces and green corridors wherever possible.
- 13.2** The Neighbourhood Plan has mapped out all the green infrastructure within and surrounding the village of Branston this is shown on Map 11.
- 13.3** New development should seek to connect to the existing footpath network where possible and should contribute to improving the system throughout the village. Upgrades should be made to key routes where feasible over the plan period.

### **Green Open Spaces**

- 13.4** Key to Branston's character is the abundance of green spaces in and around the village. Many of these spaces are verges and private gardens that are visible from the public highway. Others are dedicated village greens, parks and river valleys. Protecting and enhancing these green spaces is of paramount importance, and care should be taken to ensure they are well maintained and easy to access.

Map 10: Public Rights of Way



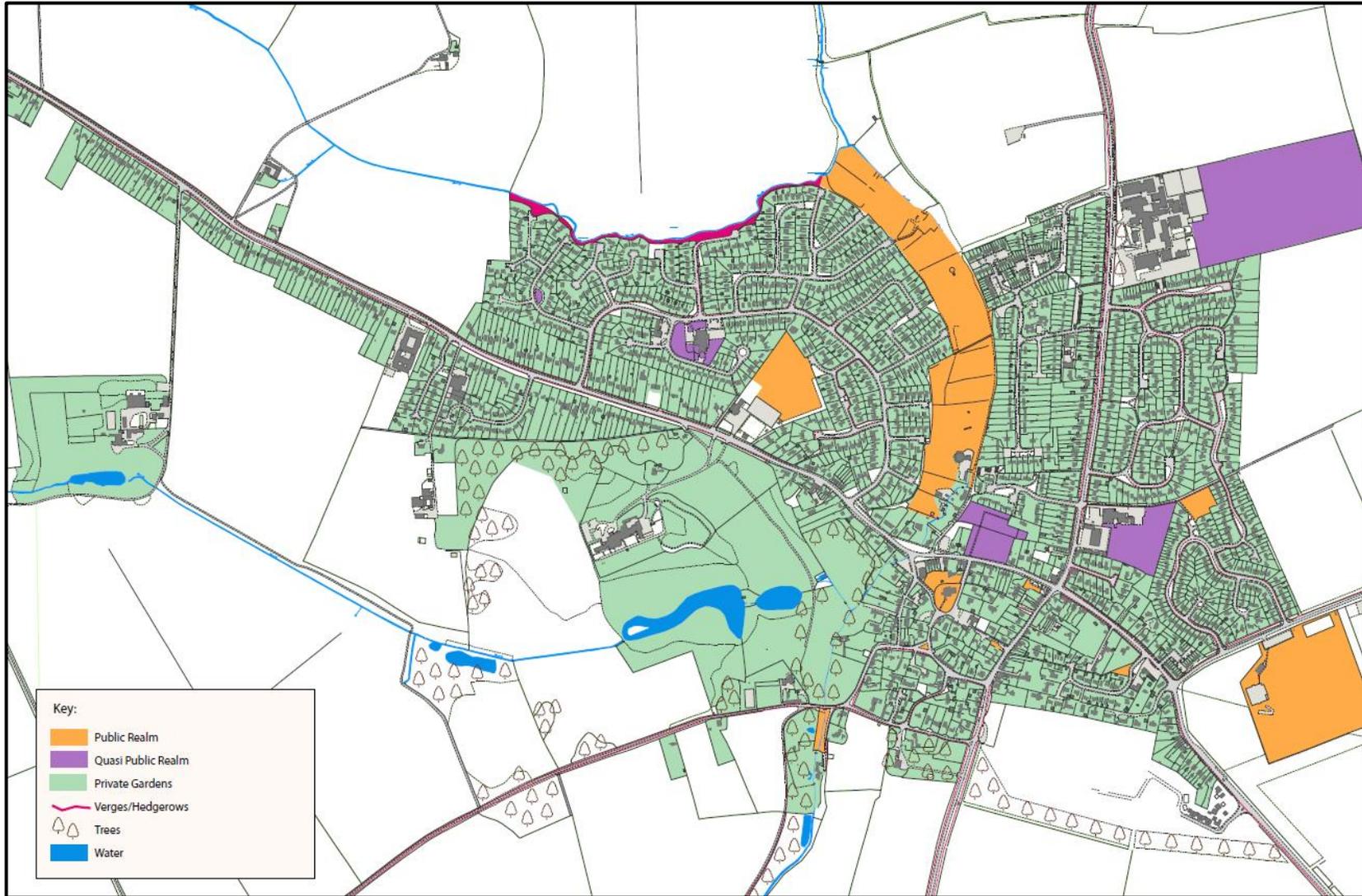
## Consultation

- 13.5 Many people talked about unofficial community spaces. The open space around the village: Jungle, wooded walk, Thackers Lane, Hall Lane and field walks were used consciously, and people felt that much was added to the community in terms of contact with others of all generations, whether people were in official walking groups or simply using the space for themselves.



*Public Art and footpath in Branston*

**Map 11: Green Infrastructure in Branston Village**



**Policy 7: Green Infrastructure**

1. All new proposals should seek to preserve, and where possible, enhance the existing local green infrastructure network, as identified on Maps 10 and 11. Where opportunities exist, proposals should seek to restore underused, or poorly maintained, networks, whilst retaining their amenity value and exploring opportunities to create new connections.
2. Where proposals seek to improve the condition, connection, public realm, lighting and safety of existing footpaths, these will be strongly supported where they provide better accessibility and connections to other parts of the village.
3. Where new public connections are proposed, these should be easily accessible, well-lit and safe for all users, including those with disabilities.



*Branston Churchyard*

## 14 Designated Green Spaces

### Justification

- 14.1 The NPPF indicates that local communities can, through local and neighbourhood plans, identify for special protection green areas of special importance. By designating land as Local Green Space, local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should, therefore, be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.
- 14.2 The NPPF sets out the criteria for sites to be designated as Local Green Space. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
- *in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
  - *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*
  - *local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*
- 14.3 The following sites have been put forward by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Parish Council and the community and all the sites are in the Parish.
- LGS1: Land surrounding the village hall on Lincoln Road;
  - LGS2: Pavilion and recreation ground, Moor Lane;
  - LGS3: The Jungle, lies between Brooklands estate and Station Road;
  - LGS4: Park at Fairleas behind Station Road;
  - LGS5: The Cemetery, High Street;
  - LGS6: Area of land at Waterwheel Lane/ Hall Lane; and
  - LGS7: Branston Booths Play Area.
- 14.4 The proposed designated green spaces are shown on Map 12 and 13 and the supporting evidence is in Appendix B.
- 14.5 The designation of these areas as Local Green Spaces in planning terms would provide an element of surety about their protection over the Plan

period and would also focus local energies on securing grants to undertake environmental improvements in line with the community's support going forward. Given the concern about proposed development elsewhere within the Plan area this policy safeguards locally highly valued assets and ensures that local people will see an improvement in these cherished open spaces over time as funding becomes available.

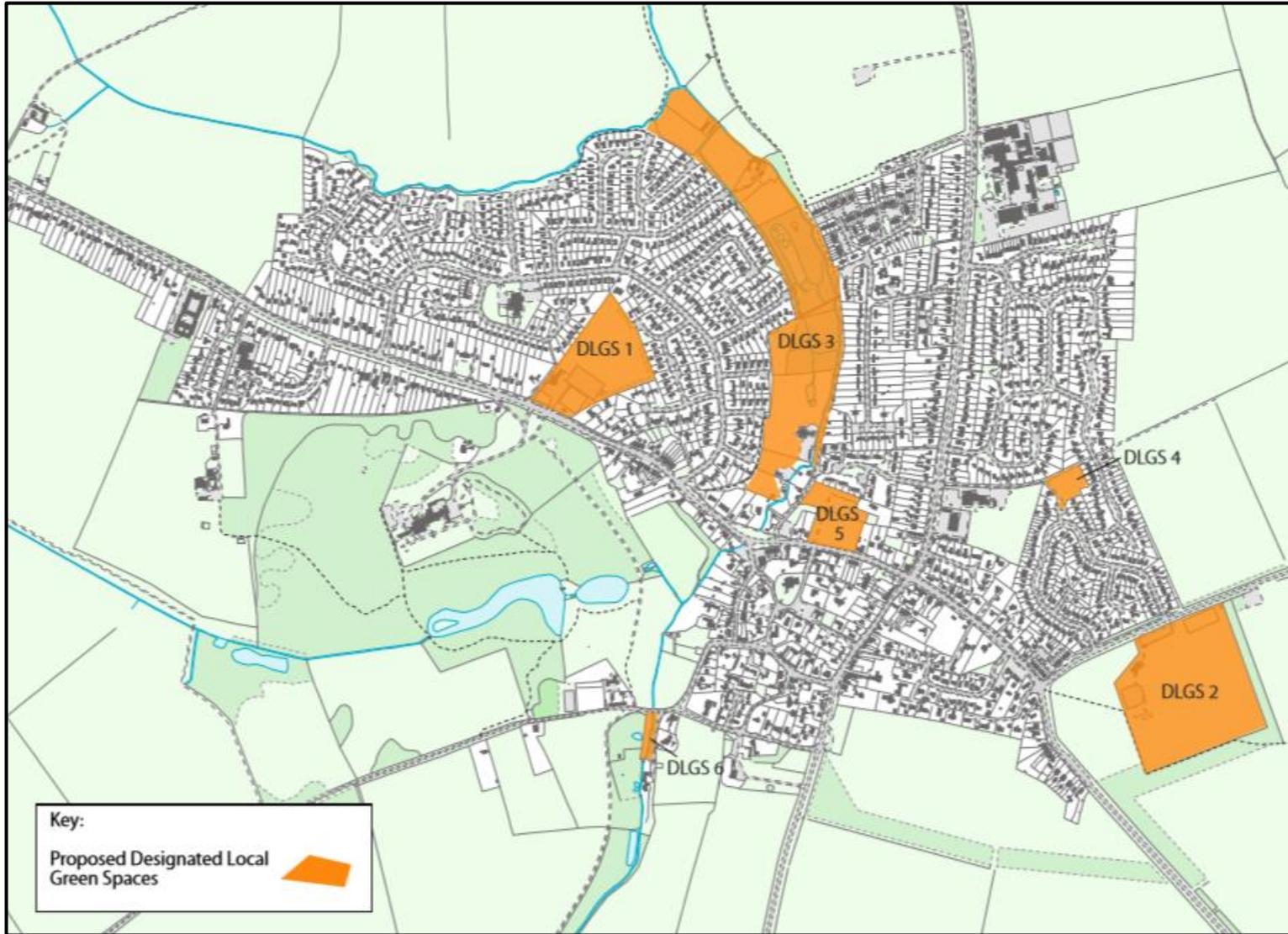
### Consultation

- 14.6 During the consultation process the designated local green spaces have been supported by the local community and the evidence for designating the local green spaces (as shown in Appendix B) was gathered through consultation with the local community.

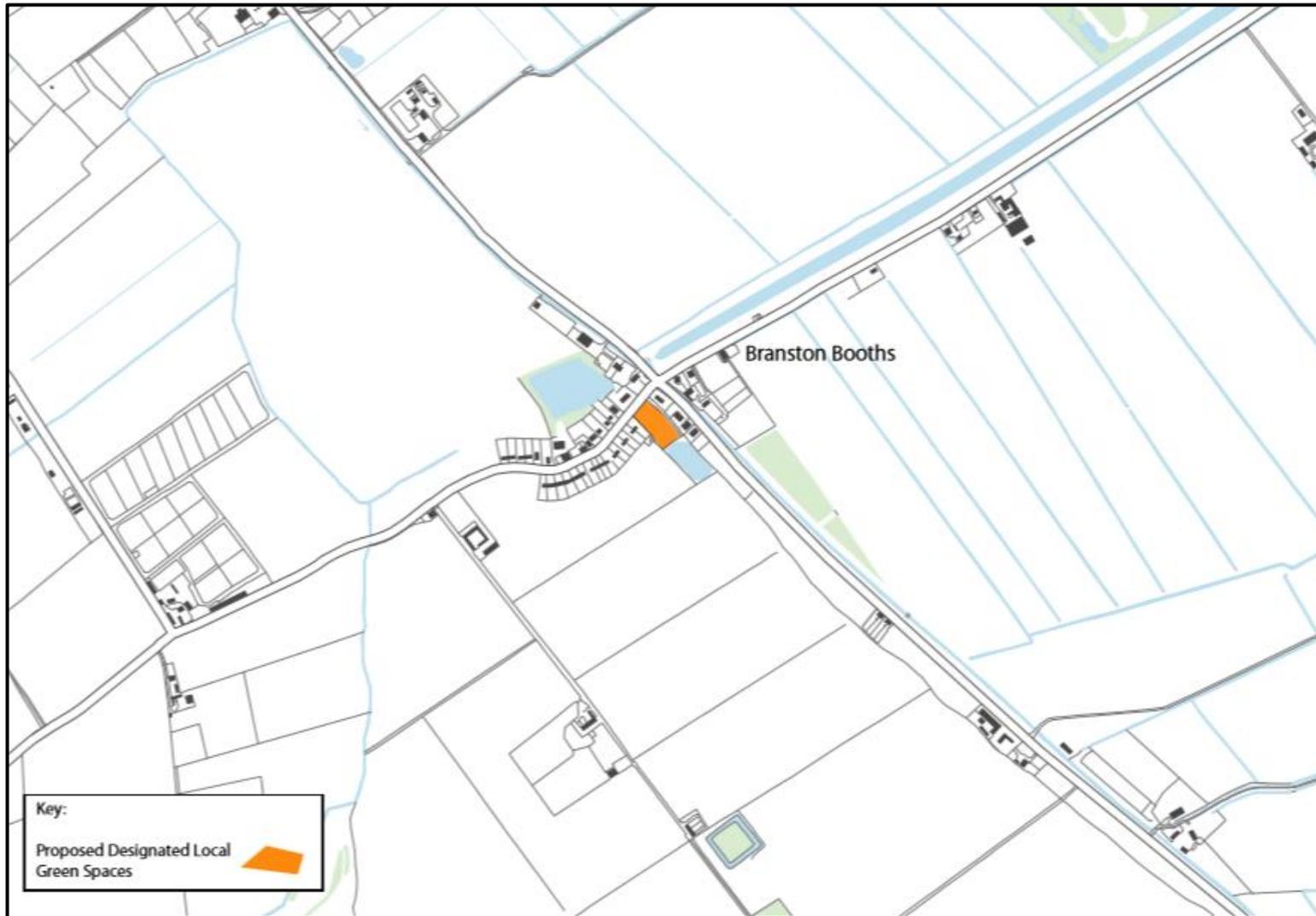


*Moor Lane The pavilion, BMX/ skateboard park, multi-use games area, football fields on Moor Lane.*

**Map 12: Designated Local Green Spaces**



**Map 13: Designated Local Green Space in Branston Booths**



**Policy 8: Local Green Spaces**

1. The sites, as shown on Maps 12 and 13, are designated as Local Green Spaces:
  - a) LGS1: Land surrounding the village hall on Lincoln Road;
  - b) LGS2: Pavilion and recreation ground, Moor Lane;
  - c) LGS3: The Jungle, lies between Brooklands estate and Station Road;
  - d) LGS4: Pocket Park at Fairleas behind Station Road;
  - e) LGS5: The Cemetery, High Street;
  - f) LGS6: Area of land at Waterwheel Lane/ Hall Lane; and
  - g) LGS7: Branston Booths Play Area.
  
2. Development on these sites will not be supported other than in very special circumstances.

## **15 Development of the Sports Pavilion and Youth Centre**

### **Justification**

- 15.1 Branston possesses two main recreation ground areas where residents can enjoy open spaces and take their children to use play equipment.
- 15.2 The two locations are situated on the main Lincoln Road in the centre of the village and on Moor Lane, towards the south side of the village.
- 15.3 The recreation ground located on Moor Lane is the main recreational area and it consists of an open space containing 4 football pitches, skate park, outdoor gymnasium equipment and a multi-use games facility. The site also contains a pavilion which contains changing and shower facilities, a meeting room, kitchen area and toilets. This pavilion has serviced the needs of users for over 20 years but is not now considered fit for purpose.
- 15.4 This is due to the fact it only contains two changing rooms (one for a home team and one for an away team) which due to the significant increase in the usage of the facility is not sufficient. We have children's teams, adult teams and ladies' teams all using the facility and when used together this proves problematical in who can use the changing rooms. It is clearly not suitable for children and adults to share.
- 15.5 It was agreed that following consultation with the users of the facility that we should consider improving the facility by constructing a new pavilion. We have received many messages of support from residents and users alike, supporting the project.
- 15.6 The pavilion should contain sufficient changing facilities for the existing users, improved meeting facilities for current and new users and also consideration for sufficient office space to allow the premise to be used as business type hub, to encourage the growth of small businesses within the village.
- 15.7 We are currently in the position of liaising with a consultant to establish funding opportunities and the protocols involved prior to making any formal bid for funds.

### **Public Consultation**

- 15.8 Through the public consultation events residents suggested that the redevelopment of the existing pavilion, is an opportunity to rebuild not simply another building, but to rethink and research the potential of providing a multipurpose community facility for all weathers linking inside

and out activities and creating a hub for a variety of sporting and community events.

**Policy 9: Redevelopment of the Sports Pavilion**

1. Development proposals at Moor Lane Sports field for the redevelopment or enhancement of the existing sports Pavilion building will be supported only where the proposal relates to the continued use of the facility being used for its intended sports, leisure and community purpose. Proposals that also deliver a wider community benefit will be welcomed.

## **16 Monitoring**

- 16.1 The policies in this Plan will be implemented by North Kesteven District Council as part of their development management process. Where applicable the Parish Council will also be actively involved. Whilst North Kesteven District Council will be responsible for development management, the Parish Council will use the Neighbourhood Plan to frame its representations on submitted planning applications.
- 16.2 In line with the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed within 5 years following the making of the Neighbourhood Plan by North Kesteven District Council.
- 16.3 The impact of the Neighbourhood Plan policies on influencing the shape and direction of development across the Plan area will be monitored by the Parish Council. If it is apparent that any policy in this Plan has unintended consequences or is ineffective it will be reviewed.
- 16.4 Any amendments to the Plan will only be "made" following consultation with North Kesteven District Council, local residents and other statutory stakeholders as required by legislation.

## 17 Community Projects

17.1 The Parish Council will work with the relevant agencies to try to deliver the list of projects outlined below.

**Branston Booths** - needs improved links with services in Branston.

**Bus service** – to provide a service beyond 7pm.

**Car parking** – additional space required at Moor Lane Recreation Ground.

**Road Safety Improvements** – in the centre of Branston.

**Community Allotments/ garden** – the creation of new allotments and garden space in the village.

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

**Energy** - Income or power from renewables to support public buildings.

**Employment** - Support the development of light Industrial units to create local employment opportunities.

**Library** - financial support to maintain the service.

**Parish Office** - To provide a central Parish Office for the Parish Council and area for the public to visit.

**Pavilion** – new or extended facility at Moor Lane Recreation Ground.

**Pedestrian crossing** - on Lincoln Road.

**Skate Park** – Moor Lane Recreation Ground.

**Village Hall** – Extend to provide a second room suitable for small groups.

**Youth Centre** – to provide a dedicated venue to maintain the service.

**Wildlife improvements** - enhancements to the Beck.

## **18 Appendix A: Branston & Mere Village Appraisal**

Please see Branston & Mere Parish Council Website for the document.

## 19 Appendix B: Branston & Mere’s Designated Local Green Spaces

Name/ Location	Description	Local Value	Landscape	Historical	Recreational	Wildlife	Picture
LGS1	Land surrounding the village hall on Lincoln Road  Size Area: 2.2ha	This space is regularly used by local children and families in the area.	This area provides a green space in the landscape that contributes towards the wider green infrastructure in Branston	N/A	This space provides a usable and accessible space for children and provides several pieces of play equipment, seating and amenity space for informal play.	N/A	
LGS2	Pavilion and recreation ground, Moor Lane  Size area: 5.0ha	This is a large area of green spaces that provides an amenity and environmental benefit to local people and wildlife.	This area provides a green space in the landscape that contributes towards the wider green infrastructure in Branston	N/A	This area has always been a green and accessible spaces for both people and wildlife and should be retained to preserve it as a local asset.	This space provides areas of trees and hedgerows around the space that accommodates local wildlife and supports the local bird population.	

Name/ Location	Description	Local Value	Landscape	Historical	Recreational	Wildlife	Picture
LGS3	<p>The Jungle, lies between Brooklands estate and Station Road</p> <p>Size area: 7.0ha</p>	<p>This is a large area of green spaces that provides an amenity and environmental benefit to local people and wildlife.</p> <p>The area has an environmental and social function.</p>	<p>This is a large area of land that acts as a "green corridor" through the centre of the village and supports the extensive green infrastructure network</p>	<p>This area has always been a green and accessible spaces for both people and wildlife and should be retained to preserve it as a local asset.</p>	<p>The area provides a network of public footpaths throughout the spaces that provides walks for local people</p>	<p>The area has areas of grassland, woodland and water courses that host a variety of wildlife</p>	
LGS4	<p>Pocket Park at Fairleas behind Station Road</p> <p>Size Area: 0.23ha</p>	<p>This is a large area of green spaces that provides an amenity and environmental benefit to local people and wildlife.</p>	<p>This spaces forms part of the wider green infrastructure of Branston</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>The area provides public footpaths throughout the space that provides walks for local people to other parts of the housing estate</p>	<p>N/A</p>	

Name/ Location	Description	Local Value	Landscape	Historical	Recreational	Wildlife	Picture
LGS5	<p>The Cemetery, High Street</p> <p>Size area: 0.90ha</p>	<p>This is a large area of green spaces that provides an amenity and environmental benefit to local people and wildlife.</p>	<p>This spaces forms part of the wider green infrastructure of Branston</p>	<p>This space provides a heritage asset close to the historic part of the village and has close connections to the church.</p>	<p>Tranquil space for relaxing and reflection.</p>	<p>Includes green areas and trees to encourage local wildlife.</p>	
LGS6	<p>Area of land at Waterwheel Lane/ Hall Lane</p> <p>Size area: 0.2ha</p>	<p>An area of public amenity space that has a signage board and a bench for people to enjoy the spaces and nearby views of the beck and countryside</p>	<p>This spaces forms part of the wider green infrastructure of Branston and acts as a "green transition" between the built-up part of the village and the nearby open countryside.</p>		<p>Informal amenity green space that is regularly used by people walking in this part of the village.</p>	<p>Preserves this part of the Beck and species in the local area.</p>	

Name/ Location	Description	Local Value	Landscape	Historical	Recreational	Wildlife	Picture
LGS7	<p>Branston Booths Play Area</p> <p>Size area: 0.3ha</p>	<p>This space is regularly used by local children and families in the area.</p>	<p>This area provides a green space in the landscape that contributes towards the wider green infrastructure in Branston</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>This space provides a usable and accessible space for children and provides several pieces of play equipment, seating and amenity space for informal play.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	