



2015 - 2030



WELBOURN PARISH CHARACTER PROFILE

July 2015

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Foreword

This document was produced by the Welbourn Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group as an integral part of the production of the Welbourn Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015 - 2030.

The Welbourn NDP will be used by NKDC to help determine planning applications which are submitted within the Parish area and will inform the Parish Council in considering any proposals for development within the Parish. This Parish Character Profile supports the NDP and in particular the design and character policies in it and it is intended that this document is read and used alongside the NDP to help ensure that proposals for development will complement and reinforce the distinct and special character and identity of Welbourn.

From time to time the Parish Council will review this document to ensure that it is kept up to date.

W N D P Steering Group July 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

The village of Welbourn is a small rural parish in central Lincolnshire with roots reaching back to the pre Norman period. It lies within a geographical area distinguished by the city of Lincoln and service towns of Grantham, Sleaford and Newark. In his book entitled "Lincolnshire and the Fens" (1952) Professor Maurice Barley had this to say about Welbourn and other villages in the region:

"Better still are the villages from Leadenham towards Lincoln, which cling to the top of the limestone scarp, each with its own steep land down to the fertile Low Fields, Navenby is a large one-street village, but Leadenham itself, Welbourn and Wellingore have quiet winding lanes, lined with stone cottages with pantile roofs, or occasionally a brick cottage making a brilliant but harmonious contrast."

As the author implies, Welbourn is a village settlement with a truly distinct and recognisable rural character. This study documents the most important characteristics that contribute to the village's unique and distinctive character, sense of place and identity.

2. LANDSCAPE SETTING

The large and elongated parish of Welbourn cuts directly across the distinctive geographic and geological divisions of western Lincolnshire. Consequently the Parish contains a variety of differing landscape features within a relatively small area. Broadly from east to west there are three striking natural divisions. (See Figure 1 - Photo taken on the public footpath of the disused Lincoln to Grantham via Honington railway line. Figure 2 - Welbourn Parish Landscape Setting and Figure 3 - Photo taken from the Lincoln Cliff).

- 1. The Heath A gently sloping limestone plateau 100m 70m O.D. with shallow dry valleys. There are expansive views to the east far beyond the parish boundary which follows the greenway of the Roman Ermine Street. The Parliament Enclosure Act of 1781 laid out a uniform pattern of large regular arable fields with low hawthorn hedgerows and the occasional hedgerow tree, a landscape which has changed very little in the intervening 200 years. A small area on the northern boundary contains features associated with the WWII airfield, RAF Wellingore. Today the area is highly regarded as prime cereal growing land. The eastern boundary is marked by Pottergate Road which follows the line of the Jurassic Prehistoric way.
- 2. The Cliff A steeply sloping and west facing escarpment (75m 30m OD) part of the prominent Lincoln Edge. The ridge is capped by lower Lincolnshire limestone with underlying clay beds. An area of mixed land use with small and often irregular shaped fields surrounded by well grown hawthorn hedges including many hedgerow trees particularly ash. This area supports most of the parish woodland usually located around spring heads or associated with former limestone quarry sites. The crest line provides panoramic views westward across the Witham and Trent Valleys. Because of its notable landscape features the Cliff was designated as an area of special landscape character/value within the current NKDC Local Plan, 2006. This designation also includes the open countryside surrounding the village of Welbourn at the foot of the escarpment.

3. Lowfields A flat rather featureless clay plain with heavy clay soils which slopes gently west to the parish boundary which follows the course of the River Brant. A purely agricultural landscape dating from the early 17th century much changed by the extensive removal of hedgerows in the late 20th century to create much enlarged arable fields growing heavy crops of cereals, oil seed rape, sugar beet and potatoes. Recent tree planting has partially mitigated the loss of earlier landscape features and the creation of large irrigation reservoirs are a welcome addition in terms of the diversity of wildlife. The prominent and now tree clad embankment of the disused Lincoln to Honington Junction railway line which skirts the western edge of the village, now forms a fine linear wildlife habitat which can also be enjoyed by local walkers using one of our recently designated Stepping Out field paths.



Figure: 1 - Photo looking north on the public footpath along the disused Lincoln to Grantham via Honington railway line embankment. On the left hand side of the footpath are the Welbourn Lowfields and on the right hand side is Welbourn village and the Lincoln Cliff on the horizon.







Figure: 3 - Photo taken from the Lincoln Cliff looking westward to Welbourn village and the Witham and Trent Valleys

3. OVERARCHING CHARACTER OF WELBOURN

The village occupies a near level site with the impressive backcloth of the Cliff immediately to the east, while the considerable embankment of the disused railway provides a sharp visual boundary to the west. The simple rectilinear village street pattern of two long parallel roads with short connecting lanes is elaborated in both the north and south by a straggle of buildings. The rectangular street pattern, also evident in neighbouring cliff villages, is important to Welbourn's distinct character.

Welbourn's buildings are informally aligned along narrow curving lanes, flanked by hedges and stone walls and complemented by a variety of mature trees. The bulbous spire of St Chad's church is an important landmark. Within the village core earlier buildings cluster tightly but informally along the gently curving road frontages or around small greens to form an interesting enclosed streetscape, as for example in the Little Lane area and the Green. In contrast the extremities of the village, the Nookin and Dycote Lane, with their variety of buildings surrounded by hedges and mature screening trees, form particularly attractive approaches.

Trees, both within the village and along the cliff, add greatly to the attractiveness of Welbourn. A considerable proportion of the houses are built in traditional local materials; coursed rubble limestone and clay pantiles give a surviving sense of unity and character. These qualities led the District Council to designate a Conservation Area in Welbourn in December 1977 (see Figure 7).

4. WELBOURN CONSERVATION AREA

Welbourn Conservation Area covers an area of 26.2 hectares, and takes in the majority of the village. The Conservation Area includes some 19 listed buildings (see Figure: 8 below) together with many other sensitive buildings of historic and/or architectural merit often grouped around small greens as well as village lanes. The different parts of the Conservation Area have varying characters (see the following 'Character Areas within Welbourn' section for more details) but, for the most part, buildings are 1 or 2 storey in height (although 3 storey buildings occur in parts) and are constructed in stone or orange/red brick. Highway boundaries are defined by stone or orange/red brick walls or by hedges, and the Conservation Area contains many important groups of trees. Gabled roofs (typically pitched at or above 45 degrees) with plain verges are the norm, and clay pantiles are the predominant roofing material, although slates and red pantiles occur in some parts of the Conservation Area. Ridge lines are either parallel to, or at 90 degrees to the highway, with chimney stacks usually at ridge level. Modestly-sized dormer windows are common, with monopitched sloping roofs, and the vertical members of window frames are typically closer than horizontal members. Figures 4, 5 and 6 below illustrate some of the key characteristics which the buildings in Welbourn have traditionally exhibited, and which have helped to shape the distinct character of the village.

All new development should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, will not be accepted.

Since 1978 and the publication of the Welbourn Village Appraisal 2005, there has been a considerable amount of housing development including Hall Orchard Lane and Dycote Lane plus infill areas which include Crosby Lane, Poplar Court and Old Mulberry Court.





Wisteria Cottage, High Street



Figure: 5 - Welland House Beck Street



Figure: 6 - Garth Holme Farm High Street



Figure: 7 - Welbourn Conservation Area – (Area shaded green)



Figure: 8 - Welbourn Listed Buildings and Castle Hill – Other than Church of St. Chad, which is Grade 1, all other buildings are Grade 2. Castle Hill is a Scheduled Ancient Monument

5. CHARACTER AREAS OF WELBOURN VILLAGE

Though benefitting from a strong overarching character, there are still subtle differences in character to be found across the village. This section captures these differences by dividing the village into a number of distinct 'character areas', and provides details on the characteristics and features which are common to these particular areas of Welbourn.

Figure 9 below shows the location and extent of each of the Character Areas, which are then discussed in the following pages.



Figure: 9 Map showing the location and extent of each of the Character Areas



The Nookin and North End

Here there is an attractive varied and informal grouping of domestic buildings, many of historical and architectural significance, all dominated by the fine medieval church of St. Chad (Grade 1 listed) mainly $12^{th} - 15^{th}$ century. The built environment is much enhanced by many mature trees and includes small green areas. Mellow limestone walls and natural clay pantiles dominate the built environment but later brick and slate in polite architectural styles are fine compliments to the vernacular. Consequently this is a particularly sensitive location of high quality buildings and appreciable visual value.

Key buildings here include North End House, early 17th century in The Nookin long associated with Quaker families as a meeting place, North End Farmhouse (Grade 2 listed) and outbuildings 18th century – by the church and Jasmine Cottage and Holly Cottage, 17th century. The former Rectory or Old Place (1868) in stone and slate is an impressive Victorian replacement for a Tudor dwelling. The stone covered beehive well in The Nookin is of particular historic interest as a possible surviving Anglo-Norman feature specific to this part of Lincolnshire.



Church of St Chad



The Nookin



North End



North End



The Nookin looking north towards Wellingore from the public footpath

High Street North

Once the commercial and social focus within the village including the school, shops, public house, Methodist Chapel and tradesmen's premises. Most buildings are built in the traditional materials of stone and pantile set within an enclosed villagescape, linked by stone boundary walls. The former Wesleyan Chapel of 1837 is typically built in red brick as is the former White Horse public house of the mid 19th century.

Leading off the High Street into Hall Orchard Lane there are three pairs of semi-detached cottages in dark red brick and slate circa 1935, examples of early Local Authority rural social housing. The former White Horse pub once provided accommodation for drovers and shepherds bringing their flocks to use the local sheep wash. The village school formerly a Victorian building, has had many distinguished former pupils including Field Marshal Sir William Robertson. Dolby Cottages, 18th century, together with two 17th century cottages to the rear represent the local vernacular, while Virginia House a former weavers' and bakers' premises is so named due to its 18th century connections with the American colonies through the Welby family.



High Street



High Street



High Street



High Street



High Street - Welbourn C of E Primary School



Hall Orchard Lane



Hall Orchard Lane

Beck Street North and Castle Hill

Here a scattering of 19th and 20th century dwellings in red brick and orange pantiles follow the east facing side of the street. On the western flank of the Castle Hill site there is a small area of modern infill development, one and two story in brick and plain tiles. The 17th century Wheelwright's Cottage (Grade 2 listed) and the current Rectory House of 1910 Edwardian style complete the built environment. Both the former Castle and the Rectory grounds are well endowed with mature trees.

This part of the village has several distinctive open spaces and related features including the surviving earthworks and moat of Welbourn Castle Hill (Scheduled Ancient Monument open to the public), which date from the late 11th century. The Beck, a spring fed village pond forms a fine setting for the modern village hall while the Bell Tree Green is the likely site of Welbourn's medieval weekly market and annual Fair to celebrate St. Chad. Nearby the village allotments occupy ground once listed as a former Roman encampment, but also likely to have been part of the former Castle grounds, hence the name Hall Orchard Lane.



Moat Lane and Beck Street



Welbourn Village Hall, pond and Lincoln Cliff on the horizon



Village Hall Car Park, Sports Field and Lincoln Cliff on the horizon



Beck Street at the Little Lane – Cow Lane junction

Beck Street South

The more varied pattern of frontage development continues into the southern part of Beck Street but once more stone and pantile cottages are the key element of the street scene, while the rear of the walled grounds of Welbourn Manor are a further positive feature of this part of Beck Street as are the mature trees flanking this property.

The small group of buildings formed by Welland House, a Victorian villa circa 1860 of brick and slate together with Welland Cottage (Grade 2 listed) 18th century and Stonelea early 19th century, both in stone and pantile, reflect the more traditional elements of the village built environment. Elsewhere the street scene is completed by more modern infill in brick and plain tile.



Beck Street looking south



Beck Street



Beck Street Looking towards The Green



Beck Street



Beck Street

High Street South

Here the villagescape follows much the same pattern and form as its northern counterpart with a considerable diversity of styles and age of buildings with good examples of construction in both rubble and ashlar limestone with traditional clay pantiles. There is also some more recent infill in brick and plain tile including single storey dwellings grouped around the perimeter of the former orchard of Welbourn Manor together with more Local Authority family housing in red brick fronting the street. The Joiners Arms (circa 1860) in brick provides a much valued community focus, while to the rear Gartholm Farm buildings are an important agricultural asset.

Gartholm Farm (Grade 2 listed) with garrets and some casement windows in ashlar stone and pantile is an especially fine late 17th century farmhouse while nearby Greengates and Welbourn House (Grade 2 listed) triple pile and with outbuildings also of the mid 18th century, provides another excellent example of Quaker enterprise within Welbourn. The former blacksmith's forge and farrier's workshop (Grade 2 listed) of 1864 (still in use) is a reminder of both our agricultural heritage and the commitment to rural improvements in Victorian England by the Marquis of Ripon, the then owner of the Welbourn estate. Another interesting example of Victorian/Edwardian social engineering can be seen in the semi-detached cottages numbers 5 and 7 and 17 and 19 built by the Lincoln Co-operative Society in the early 20th century to house local ironstone miners.



High Street from the Crosby Lane and The Green junction



High Street looking south



Manor Close



Old Lincoln Co-operative Society building



The former Blacksmith's Forge and Farrier's Workshop

The Green and Welbourn Manor

Here the fine commemorative chestnut tree planted to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of 1897 is a striking feature on our most prominent village green which is surrounded by a rich variety of early 17th to 19th century cottages and farmhouses in both the vernacular and polite styles of architecture. Stone and pantile dominate here complimented by other later properties in red brick and grey slate while the extensive grounds of Welbourn Manor provide an attractive backcloth of mature trees.

In all there are eight listed buildings in this location, most prominent is Welbourn Manor (Grade 2* listed) with 14th and 15th century features. The Old House (Grade 2 listed) mid 18th century and Hunt House also (Grade 2 listed), 1807 are good examples of polite architecture in the Georgian style while Greystone Cottage (Grade 2 listed) early 17th century and Burtts' Cottages (Grade 2 listed) are good examples of the vernacular style in stone and pantile. Of special historical significance the so-called Co-operative cottages (Grade 2 listed) late 18th century includes the former post office and tailor's shop, the birthplace of Field Marshal Sir William Robertson. Nearby the former Co-operative Stores building of 1883 in brick and slate is also of historic considerable community value as the first rural Co-operative venture in Lincolnshire and possibly within the United Kingdom. To the rear is a surviving early 19th century former farmhouse in brick and slate with some stone walling.



The Telephone Kiosk



The Old House





Myrtle Cottage and Co-Operative Cottages



Mobile Library visiting The Green


Welbourn Manor



Stables to Welbourn Manor

Lower Green and Welbourn Hall

This location has a more mixed built environment in terms of building styles, materials and lay-out which complements the northernmost area of Welbourn as having a more dispersed and diverse pattern from the central parts of the village. The most prominent building is Welbourn Hall, a large late Victorian mansion in Gothic Revival style built in dressed limestone and slate, which replaced an Elizabethan Manor House in the 1870's and is now set within extensive tree lined grounds. The neighbouring four semi-detached cottages all in a Victorian estate style, in stone and pantile bordering these grounds were thought to have been constructed from the building stone of the original Elizabethan House. Apart from some modern infill, much of the remaining buildings are small stone cottages built in the vernacular style. An unusual urban style intrusion is represented by the small terrace in brick and slate built by the Great Northern Railway in 1867 to house local employees.

Long Cottage (Grade 2 listed) and Sapperton Cottage both 18th century, provide further examples of small traditional dwellings, the former homes of husbandmen/small farmers and their families, i.e. one storey in height with dormers to utilise the roof space. While Field House (17th century) in rubble limestone and pantile, together with dormers and garrets, probably represents a yeoman farmer's dwelling. Immediately to the south of this area is the grassed site of the former medieval hamlet of Sapperton thought to have been deserted by the late 16th century. The sunken ways and raised house platforms together with a 13th century mill mound are evocative reminders of the ancient roots of our village.



Long Cottage The Green



The Green



The Green and Hall Lane junction



The Green

Dycote Lane

The extension of The Green leads into Dycote Lane which once provided access to the western open fields of Welbourn in medieval times. Both frontages have now been developed for housing in the second half of the 20th century. Local Authority family housing to the south in semi-detached or terrace form, while private development mainly semi-detached, fronts the northern side. Here red or variegated brick with either concrete or plain red tiles are the principle building materials. Laid out in rectangular plots this is a more ordered and regular housing layout compared with the informality and historical range within the rest of Welbourn. This area is viewed by many villagers as a positive development providing an opportunity for the younger members of local families to continue to live in our village.



Dycote Lane



Dycote Lane



Dycote Lane



Looking south from rear of Dycote Lane



Looking towards the Lincoln Cliff from the rear of Dycote Lane



Looking from the north of Dycote Lane towards the Lincoln Cliff – Disused Railway embankment on the left

6. A SELECTION OF CHARACTERISTIC VIEWING POINTS/VISTAS

Below is a map showing sixteen viewing points/vistas locations all around the village. This is followed by a description and photographs of the area.



Map showing location of viewing points/vistas

A view dominated by the historic North End House (17th century) long associated with Welbourn's Quaker families and also within the immediate setting, the ancient Nookin covered well. Beyond this northern built edge of the village there are extensive views of the open countryside including part of the parish Lowfields and to the east the steep slope of the Lincoln Cliff Edge (*northern perspective*).



Location 1 - East the steep slope of the Lincoln Cliff Edge from the area of The Nookin

A particularly attractive village location centred around a small green. The view is dominated by the medieval parish church of St. Chad, together with the neighbouring stone walls and mature trees which fringe the churchyard. The nearby stone walled grounds and fringing trees of North End House and The Old Place, together with Jasmine Cottage and Holly Cottage, further enhance this very distinctive rural setting. (*Northern perspective*).



Location 2 North End

Here the village is viewed from alongside the busy A607 looking across two small grass paddocks enclosed by stone walls towards the northern section of the village which appears to be largely set within a green oasis of tall hedgerows and mature trees with mere glimpses of the settlement. (Westward perspective).



Location 3 looking west from the A607

This viewpoint set within Castle Hill field is largely dominated by the thousand year old earthworks and moats, the remains of the Anglo-Norman Welbourn Castle. Today this is a much valued public open space owned by the village community. In the more distant perspective beyond the tree-lined perimeter of the site lies the distinctive crocketed spire of St. Chad's Church. (*Northern perspective*).



Location 4 – Castle Hill

The Beck (the village pond) and its very attractive surroundings create a distinctive natural landscape feature within the built environment of the village. Together with nearby Castle Hill and the Bell Tree Green, the Beck provides a valuable wildlife habitat at the heart of the village. The newly refurbished village hall, alongside the facilities of the village playing field, is key features in our community life. In springtime the rooks nesting in the tall trees surrounding the former Edwardian rectory house noisily remind our inhabitants of their rural roots. (*North eastern perspective*).



Location 5 - Village Hall and pond

A fine overview of the northern section of the village as seen from the high embankment of the former Lincoln to Honington Jct. railway line. Once again the distinctive spire of St. Chad's Church draws the eye, while the 20th century housing developments on Hall Orchard Lane are apparently successfully absorbed into the overall built environment of the village with a mixture of brick and stone clad buildings with red pantile roofs. Beyond this development the neighbouring field is thought to contain the remains of an early Roman encampment now usually occupied by gently grazing cattle. A view that may be further enhanced by the sound of village children playing at our Primary School. *(North eastern perspective).*



Location 6 – View of Hall Orchard Lane taken from the Public Footpath on the disused railway line embankment

An enclosed streetscape following the alignment of Little Lane, here cottages and houses in the traditional rubble limestone with red clay pantile roofs represent a variety of historic periods and architectural styles. In the background Welbourn House, 18th century in a classical Georgian style forms a central focus. *(Western perspective).*



Location 7 - Cow Lane looking towards the Beck Street and Little Lane junction

A high quality street scene, part of the High Street which includes several listed and historic buildings notably Wisteria Cottage (formally Greengates Cottage), Greengates, Welbourn House and Virginia Cottage all in stone and pantiles and surrounded by limestone boundary walls. Of particular note in the street scene in this location is the fine mature copper beech tree in the grounds of Greengates. (*Northern perspective*).



Location 8 – View of the High Street looking north

Much of the western fringe of the village can be viewed from this section following the top of the former railway embankment using the well established public field path. The irregular settlement pattern, together with the predominant stone walls and red clay pantiled roofs of most of the village houses appears to blend harmoniously into the wide vista of open countryside. Once more the view is enhanced by the prominent backcloth of the steep scarp slope of the Lincoln Cliff Edge which in this location is also well wooded. These landscape qualities are officially recognised by the designation within the North Kesteven District Council Local Plan as being an area of special landscape character, a designation which also extends to the whole of the village of Welbourn and its immediate surroundings. (*Eastern Perspective*).



Location 9 – Looking western fringe of the village from the former railway embankment



Location 9 - Looking to the western fringe of the village from the former railway embankment

The Green is the key focal point within the village and suitably signified by the presence of a fine specimen of a horse chestnut tree planted to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. The northern perspective leading into Beck Street includes a number of distinctive dwellings, in particular The Old House, 18th century Georgian in stone and pantile, while on the northern boundary the tree lined grounds of Welbourn Manor (part 16th century) are a notable feature. (*Northern perspective*).



Location 10 - The Horse Chestnut tree planted to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria

The area surrounding The Green is rich in both vernacular cottage buildings and more polite architectural styles including Hunt House. Of special note on the south side is the birth place of Field Marshal Sir William Robertson, a member of the British War Cabinet during World War I, suitably framed by the majestic chestnut tree. *(Southern perspective).*



Location 11 - Birth place of Field Marshal Sir William Robertson

A peripheral viewpoint overlooking the eastern perimeter of the village as seen from the Miller's Way public field path which is set among the surviving ridge and furrow undulations of the former Open East Field. Yet again the spire of St. Chad's Church is prominent in the background although much of the village is sheltered by the mature hedgerows and well established trees which largely disguise the presence of the main settlement when viewed from the A607. (*North-western perspective*).



Location 12 – Looking towards the village from the A607

A eastward view of Welbourn following the alignment of Dycote Lane as viewed from the bridge which carried the former railway line. Here the late 20th century modern development in brick and pantile successfully blends into the historic core of the village where Dycote Lane meets The Green.

The location on the parapet of the old railway bridge also provides an extensive and uninterrupted view westward across the open countryside of the parish Lowfields, now intensively farmed but accessible to the public by a network of field paths/stepping out walks. (*Western perspective*).



Location 13 - Dycote Lane



Location 13 - Looking from the railway embankment to the Lowfields

From this same position looking northward along The Green, the view is dominated by a row of four pairs of semi-detached cottages in 19th century estate style built originally to provide dwellings for the domestic servants and employees of the neighbouring Welbourn Hall, a classic Victorian mansion, now a care home which replaced the original Tudor manor house owned by the Welby family for several centuries. (*Northern perspective*).



Location 14 – Showing three of the four pairs of semi-detached 19th century cottages

An attractive peripheral view of the southern flank of Welbourn as viewed from the field path which borders the field containing the prominent earthworks which is all that has survived from the late 16th century following the enclosure of the medieval village of Sapperton. This site is now completely deserted but is acknowledged to have significant historical and heritage value. (*Northern perspective*).



Location 15 - Looking across the prominent extensive earthworks of the deserted village of Sapperton

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The photo on the front cover is of a mural painted on the wall in the main hall of the Village Hall painted by students of Sir William Robertson Academy.

WNP Steering Group

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