

## **6. A Quality Environment**

- 6.1 Existing planning policies are essential in guiding future development in the Parish. In particular the community believes that the topography of the settlement deserves special attention in order that these policies are upheld.

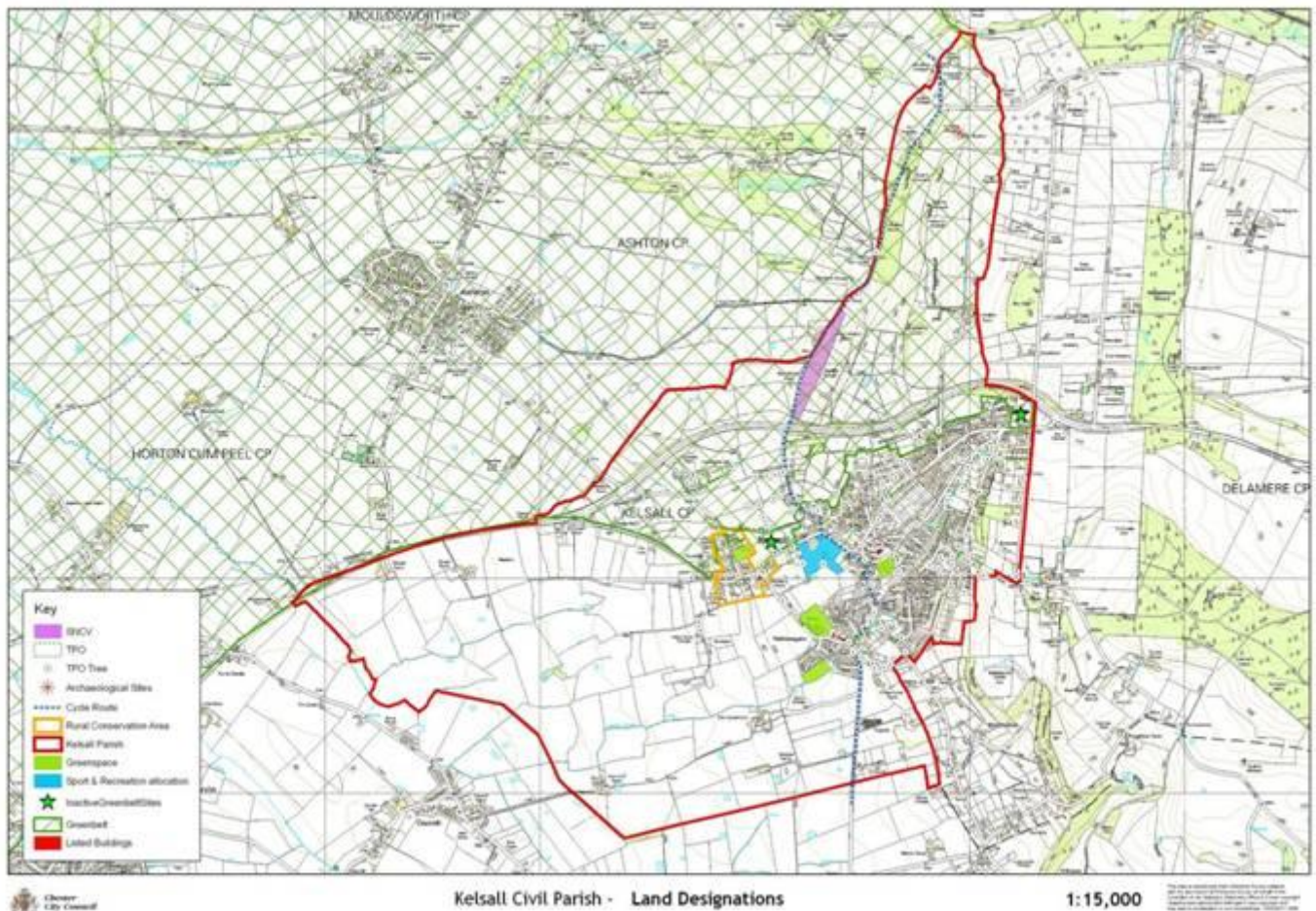
### **SPD Recommendation 2**

Proposals for new development in Kelsall Parish should pay special attention to the local topography. There should be a complementary relationship between the height of new buildings and the immediate topography to prevent any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and on visual amenity.

*(Structure Plan Policy GEN3 and Local Plan Policy GE3)*

- 6.2 Most importantly the Chester City Local Plan has established designated Sport and Recreation Space, Greenspaces, a Rural Conservation Area, a Site of Nature Conservation Value, Green Belt, Open Countryside, Listed Buildings, Trees Preservation Orders and a projected cycle route as shown in Map 4.

## Map 4: Showing sites under existing planning policies/designations



6.3 This section reviews the effectiveness of the Local Plan from the perspective of the Kelsall community and provides SPD policy recommendations to supplement existing Local Plan policies:

### a) Sport and Recreation

6.4 There is a recognised under provision of land for recreation and sport for a community the size of present day Kelsall. *Policy SR3* secures the green heart of the village. Long term tenure/ownership of this area is a top priority. The Kelsall community looks to Chester City Council to secure this area in perpetuity. Further the land between this allocation and the school should be protected for recreational/habitat/community needs to secure the long term green heart of the village.

### SPD Recommendation 3:

The land adjacent to the Morris Dancer is designated for recreational use in the Local Plan. Development proposals on this land should deliver sport and recreation for the community, including a children's play area, whilst retaining space to accommodate festivals and events (*Local Plan policy SR2*). A Strategy and Action Plan to deliver these is required.

### b) Green Belt

6.5 In Kelsall Green Belt is only on the NW fringe of the existing settlement and is fragmented by the construction of the by pass. Whilst most of the Green Belt remains in economic land use, there are two locations which are now isolated and not in active use. One site is close to central village facilities. The second is on the eastern fringe. Both sites are starred on

Map 4. These sites deserve detailed consideration as potential contributions to meeting the needs of the whole community (a sustainable settlement).

#### **SPD Recommendation 4:**

Exception sites in Kelsall Parish should be in sustainable locations and provide accommodation to meet local need in line with the City Councils SPD: Affordable Housing and Government guidance. Proposals for affordable, sheltered and supported accommodation will be encouraged to support family stability in the community. More information is provided in the City Council's Housing Needs Survey. (*Local Plan Policy ENV67 and HO12*).

#### **c) Open Countryside**

- 6.6 Open countryside includes all the white area on map 4. This area enjoys similar protection from development as the Green Belt. However there are additional Local Plan policies which aim to support the rural economy and provide for recreational activity.

#### **e) Rural Conservation Area & Locally Important Properties.**

- 6.8 The designated Rural Conservation Area in lower Kelsall is protected from demolition/significant change (*Local Plan policies ENV37-38, ENV47*). In addition there are numerous sandstone buildings in the village, built around at the time of the Kelsall enclosure and through the active period of sandstone quarrying, which deserve protection from demolition and major change. The additional buildings in Kelsall, notably in Grub Lane and in Quarry Lane, which may warrant further designation have been identified on the Local List in Appendix 5. We recognise that; *“Traditional buildings are among the most ubiquitous of historic building types in the countryside. They are not only fundamental to its sense of place and local distinctiveness, but represent a major economic asset in terms of their capacity to accommodate new uses. The re-structuring of farming and other economic and demographic changes in the countryside provide both threats and opportunities in terms of retaining the historic interest of this build stock and its contribution to the wider landscape”*.<sup>2</sup>

#### **SPD Recommendation 5:**

Locally distinctive important buildings in Kelsall Parish as identified in the Local List in Appendix 5 (that are not statutorily designated and fall outside the Conservation Area) are preserved and / or enhanced. (*Local Plan ENV2, ENV37 & GE7*)

#### **f) Listed Buildings**

- 6.9 Kelsall has a small number of listed buildings (4) detailed in Appendix 6. (*Local Plan policies ENV 45, ENV 46, ENV47*). Rookery Farm has a key position in the history and future of the village within the Conservation Area. Both Hallowsgate and Kelsall Hall have been overtaken by effective barn conversions for domestic properties. St Philips Church is also listed but not the Methodist Chapel. It is regrettable that the non-listed Upper Longley Farm has been allowed to become derelict. The potential of this site and its relationship with land ownership on Longley Ridge deserves further consideration. The historic quarries, wells, pumps and extensive sandstone boundaries also warrant protection.



#### **SPD Recommendation 6**

<sup>2</sup> Further information can be obtained from CoAg and English Heritage publications: “Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Good Practice Guide” and “Living Buildings in a living landscape: finding a future for traditional farm buildings”.

Sandstone features, which are locally distinctive to Kelsall Parish, including quarries, wells, walls and banks should be protected and / or enhanced.

*(Local Plan policy GE7 & PPS9)*

#### **g) Archaeological Sites**

- 6.10 In Kelsall parish there is a significant ancient field system 200m south east of Longley Cottage, on Longley Ridge which is designated of national importance. The Roman Road through the Kelsall gap between Chester and Manchester is partially defined and is a major feature across the parish. It is recognised that Roman farms and villas are likely to have functioned in this area but at Domesday only 9 residents are recorded. *(Local Plan ENV 31)*. The relationship between the Longley field system, Kelsborrow, Eddisbury and ancient routes has yet to be understood. However the extent of the Hollow Way between Street House and Kelsall Hall is a substantial feature which has been largely neglected. It is believed to be one of the most extensive remaining early routes in Cheshire. Only a small section remains a public right of way.

#### **SPD Recommendation 7**

The extensive Hollow Way between Street House and Kelsall Hall should be protected and / or enhanced. The development of an appropriate Strategy and Action Plan is encouraged. *(Local Plan policy ENV37)*

#### **h) Landscape**

- 6.11 Chester City Council undertook a Landscape Assessment of the District in consultation with the Countryside Commission and the County Council to identify areas with individual character concerning rural landscape *(Local Plan ENV24)*. The Parish Landscape Character Assessment considers the detail of five distinctive landscape areas: Ridge, Scarp, Valley, Scarp Foot and Plain. **The policy recommendations for the SPD are covered in recommendation 1.**

#### **i) Tree Preservation Orders**

- 6.12 It is imperative that important landscape trees in an area of potential development benefit from a Tree Preservation Order *(Local Plan ENV21)*. The list of TPO's for Kelsall is currently being reviewed. The existing TPOs in upper Kelsall have served to protect the upper valley from further intensive development. There is concern that modern housing density leaves too little space for significant trees to mature and contribute to the landscape. Older trees in the hedgerows of the fruit fields are subject to overcrowding from the more vigorous Cupressus hedging. In response to climate change, deciduous trees planted on the south side of development provide welcome shade in the summer whilst allowing the lower winter sun to contribute solar gain.

#### **SPD Recommendation 8:**

The well wooded character of Kelsall Parish should be sustained, protected and / or enhanced with native species for hedgerows and street trees. *(Local Plan Policy ENV21)*

#### **SPD Recommendation 9:**

New development and the location of deciduous tree planting should maximise on the benefits of solar gain as part of Kelsall Parish's approach to carbon management. *(PPS1)*