

APPENDIX 2

KELSALL ASPIRATIONS FOR CHESTER'S LDF

This Appendix contains a number of aspirations of the local community, which it realises can not be adopted by the Council within a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) under planning regulations, either because they are outside planning control or they relate to the allocation of sites which must be undertaken in the Development Plan Documents and be subject to independent Examination. These will not form part of the adopted SPD. The local community is aware that it will have to pursue these aspirations through the appropriate consultation process as part of the Local Development Framework or a future Kelsall Parish Plan.

The aspirations include:

- the whole of the 'green heart of the village' (the land between the Morris Dancer and the Community School) should remain as open space. The whole area should be protected from building development and not subject to gradual erosion.
- land near to the Community School should be allocated for sports use, to meet the needs of the whole community; and, most importantly, this should include a play area for young children.
- the spectacular views from village roads and footpaths should not be further obscured by building. They should be protected, and more viewpoints developed where possible, for the enjoyment of all residents and for visitors who use this area for recreation.
- the essentially rural nature of the community should be retained.
- land should be allocated to meet special needs in the community - affordable housing, sheltered and special-care housing.
- a network of safe pedestrian and cycling routes within the village is needed.
- the problems of flooding and sewage need to be urgently resolved.

Some of these issues will be addressed within the context of the Parish Plan, but some of them have Village Design implications, and these are addressed in the policy recommendations in the Village Landscape and Design Statement and in the LDF aspirations detailed below. In particular the landscape character of the parish has deserved detailed analysis. The relationship between national, regional, county and district landscape assessments is established in Appendix 3.

The opportunities for the LDF are identified as:

Topography

Residents believe that the topography of Kelsall Parish deserve special attention.

LDF Recommendation A:

That contour lines should be illustrated on Plans and taken into account during the preparation of Chester City Council's Local Development Documents)

Open Space, sport and recreation

There are areas adjacent to the school which are currently designated as open countryside. There is strong community support for the area designated for recreation to be expanded across to the school. This would permit football and cricket pitches to be located in the green heart of the village without detracting from its wildlife value through mature hedgerow and rural fringes.

LDF Recommendation B:

Further recreation space adjacent to the existing school playing fields should be considered (Local Plan ENV65).

Green Belt

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).

LDF Recommendation C:

That sustainable locations are identified for affordable housing AND for sheltered and supported accommodation to meet local need (Local Plan policy ENV67 and HO12).

Greenspace

Greenspace Areas are identified under Local Plan Policy ENV17. The current football field on the west side of Dog Lane and the Scout Hut land on Grub Lane should be included in this designation as land in community use over some 30 years. The designated land on the east side of Dog Lane is in the ownership of BT. Its potential community use needs to be clarified.

The land off Pasture Close is owned by Chester City Council and is presently without any management. This area could be considerably upgraded to provide a Local Nature Reserve for the benefit of the school, local residents and wildlife. Whilst supporting the value of securing adequate Greenspace in any future development (Local Plan policy ENV20), this should be directed to meet an established community priority such as landscaped car parking space, play facility, habitat creation, woodland. Further areas of high maintenance amenity grassland not catering for recreation should be avoided. The Chester City Council land, off Pasture Close, is largely unsuitable for development. The site abuts Salter's Brook and already supports a large badger sett.

LDF Recommendation D:

That the biodiversity value of the Chester City Council owned land (not suitable for development) is maximised through an appropriate strategy and action plan to achieve Local Nature Reserve Status.

LDF Recommendation E:

That designated Greenspace in Kelsall Parish be reviewed in the LDF programme so that community benefit can be secured, biodiversity/landscape value can be enhanced and geodiversity/landform is protected.

Archaeological Sites

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.

LDF Recommendation F:

That the extensive Hollow Way between Street House and Kelsall Hall is acknowledged and protected through an appropriate strategy and action plan.

Landscape

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. In addition to the recommendations within the Parish there is also concern for the impact of development as viewed from the west.

LDF Recommendation G:

That further consideration is given in the LDF to the impact of roofscapes on a hillside settlement, visible from a significant distance such that there is proportionality between the size/design of the building and the potential for effective treescape/landscape enhancement.

Housing

The outstanding character of property, celebrated in Kelsall, lies in the sheer diversity across the main settlement. Older properties are mainly of local brick or sandstone and there is a significant number of dwellings with white rendered facing. Rookery Farm is unique in its half timbered construction. Less sensitive modern development has used non-local paler brick. Overall low angled roofs and the use of brick is predominant.

Earlier thatched properties were destroyed by fire and most of the older settlement is roofed in low angled Welsh slate. The majority of recent development has a subdued roofscape, but intrusive, high, steep gabled properties are a cause for concern.

The perception of residents is that, whilst developers seek to build large executive houses, the local need is for smaller retirement properties, extra care and sheltered accommodation and, outstandingly, properties suitable for first time buyers and young families. The village looks to the Local Development Framework to encourage a balance of property types and ownership to support a sustainable community which remains rural in character.

There are sites within the Parish which could meet this need emphasising the role of Kelsall as a neighbourhood hub.

LDF Recommendation H:

That the balance of housing types and tenure influences the LDF in determining allocations to support the needs of a sustainable community.

Roads, Footways and cycle routes

The road and footway network through the parish falls under the management of Cheshire County Council. Many footways have been/are being upgraded to encourage pedestrians particularly for Safer Routes to School. However some older lanes have narrow or no footways and are not wide enough for two vehicles. The main road through the village has a central section, including the street lighting, which retains its trunk road character and at no point is there any designated cycleway.

Residents would like to see wider footways, particularly in the vicinity of the school and community facilities, even if this requires a reduction in road width. Locating off road car parking to accommodate staff and visitor vehicles at the school is a high priority. Serious consideration should be given to redesigning the wide section of Chester Road when the highway is due for refurbishment. Features, of a rural character, which improve the footway, provide a cycleway and discourage speeding would be particularly welcome. Similarly village street lighting would now be appropriate for Chester Road.

Kelsall is affected by a proposed cycle route (*Local Plan TR5*), as shown in Map 4. Any improvement for access and safety of both local and touring cyclists is welcome. This designation could contribute to Safer Routes to School. The proposed route follows Hollands Lane which is narrow and subject only to the national speed limit and therefore hazardous.

LDF Recommendation I:

That a strategy and action plan is formulated to develop the proposed cycle route to enhance safer routes to school (Local Plan TR5).

LDF Recommendation J:

Improved pedestrian safety is a priority consideration at the Hollands Lane/Chester Road/Morris Dancer junction.

Burials

There is a serious shortage of graveyard space for burials. In addition it is noted that existing burial space on Chester Road is open to public view, whilst the burial ground behind the Chapel is disturbed by being adjacent to a popular youth meeting place. The community needs space for scattering of ashes, woodland burial and other requirements in a discrete location within the parish. Suitable options require further investigation.

LDF Recommendation K:

That the parish is included in the area of search for a woodland burial site and that suitable sites for graveyard extension are supported by the Local Planning Authority.