Kelsall & Willington







Updated Neighbourhood Plan
November 2026
REG14 Draft for Consultation





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1 Introduction

This is a final draft of the revised Kelsall and Willington Neighbourhood Plan (KWNP), prepared for the statutory REG 14 Consultation.

It should be read together with the Kelsall and Willington Design Code

Later drafts will be backed up by a comprehensive Justification Statement and also a Modification Statement (outlining changes from the original 2017 Neighbourhood Plan.

Unless otherwise specified, in this document “this Plan” refers to the Kelsall and Willington Neighbourhood Plan and Design Code.

The revised KWNP builds on the original made Neighbourhood Plan, approved in March 2017.

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2 Goals and objectives

2.1 Vision

Kelsall and Willington will continue to be attractive and distinct rural settlements offering a high quality local living environment, with Kelsall functioning as a service centre to the local area.
New housing should serve the needs of all sections of the population, including the elderly, while improving pedestrian and cycle accessibility.
Development will be of a density and design in keeping with the character of the area, incorporate the most sustainable features, improve green spaces, and be sensitive to the distinctive topography of the area.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

Kelsall and Willington NDP provides a local view of how the NPPF and Cheshire West and Chester's Local Plan will be implemented in Kelsall and Willington. The policies in the NP and the Design Code apply to the whole Plan area, with the exception of a few, clearly marked, Design Code provisions.

Together, the documents of the KWNP aim to achieve the following objectives:

A. Sustainable - Encourage balanced and sustainable development

A1. Encourage amenities and retail in Kelsall close to the village centre, and preserve existing ones

A2. Development in Kelsall should be in locations closest to amenities and suitable for its purpose.

A3. Kelsall and Willington should remain separate settlements.

B. Character - Preserve the character and landscape of the Plan area

B1. To protect the views of and from the sandstone ridge.

B2. To ensure that development respects village character and local topography, both in the buildings and green features, and contributes towards local distinctiveness.

B3. To ensure that where development borders countryside, the edge of the built area is designed so as to achieve a soft transition into the open countryside.

B4. To protect the landscape and character of the area from inappropriate development on residential gardens.

B5. To ensure that heritage assets are protected from inappropriate and harmful development, and that distinctive local features are retained.

B6. To maintain and enhance green infrastructure, with features benefitting both people and wildlife.

C. Housing - Ensure that sufficient housing provides all sections of the population with dwellings appropriate for their needs and a good quality of life

C1. Provide the right mix of housing, in terms of size, tenure, design, and affordability to meet the needs of all sections of the population.

C2. Meet the local need for housing for the elderly.

D. Social – Improve quality of life through accessible community facilities and services

D1. Suggested change: Ensure that the recreational and other community facilities in the Plan area are commensurate to its increased population

D2 Support any desired expansion of the primary school, the development of community health facilities to keep pace with further housing expansion.

E. Economic – support retail, business, and employment in the village

E1. To retain existing retail and business premises and support their growth to provide additional employment opportunities -

E2. To encourage new retail premises and small-scale business enterprises.

F. Building Design – Ensure that new development is sustainable and of high quality design

F1. Ensure that density of new housing is consistent with Kelsall village character

F2. Ensure that aspects of development integrate with the village fabric and manage impact on all residents, through layout, boundaries, height and other design aspects

F3. Minimise the impact of development on the environment, including water run-off.

G. Infrastructure –Reduce impact on infrastructure

G1. Encourage reduction of car journeys by locating facilities and amenities centrally

G2. Identify infrastructure priorities for new development, to ensure improvements through S106 agreements /CIL among others.

G3. Ensure that development improves or creates cycle and pedestrian connections

H. Environmental

H1. Minimise the impact of development on the environment, including water run-off.

H2. Ensure that all green infrastructure created in new development benefits all residents

H3. Ensure that green spaces created in new developments improve wildlife habitats within the plan area and through links to the wider environment

H4. Ensure that new development contributes to climate mitigation and reduces impact on climate change

3 Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Kelsall and Willington Neighbourhood Area is shown in Map 1.

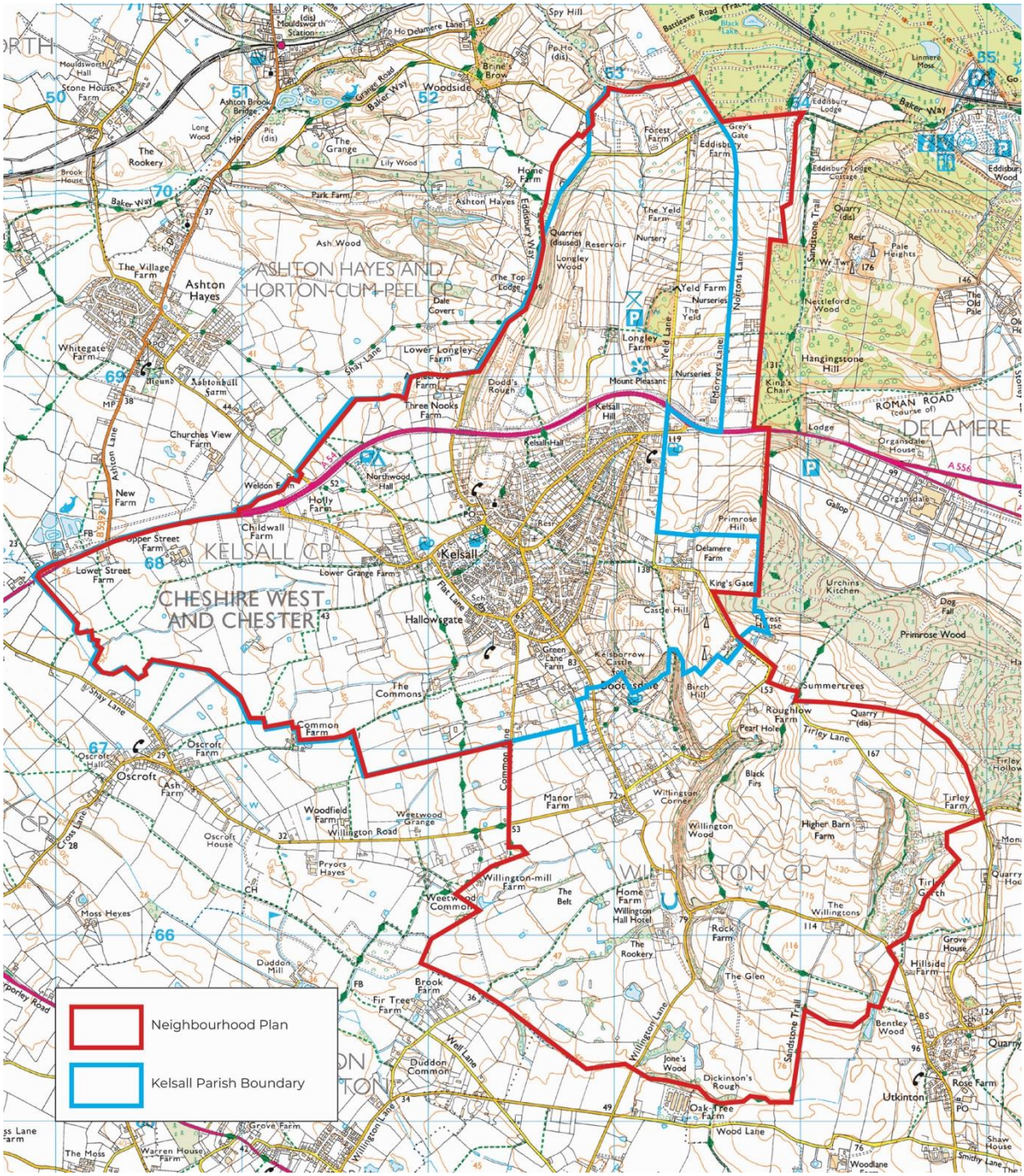
The original NP covered the whole of the Parish of Kelsall, and a large part of Willington Parish. This part was included in order to cover the gap between the two villages, since residents were keen to ensure that this area was not developed. This was necessary to preserve the separate identity of the two villages

Willington Parish Council asked that the whole of Willington parish area be covered by the NP to ensure consistency. In particular, it was considered that policies on landscape impact and the natural environment needed to apply to the whole of Willington. The additional area is largely rural, in planning terms qualified as 'Open Countryside' therefore the extension will not constrain housing development.

The NP area also includes small strips of land that are formally part of Delamere & Oakmere Parish. This is due to an administrative boundary review carried out by CWAC after the original NP Area was drawn. In agreement with Delamere & Oakmere Parish Council it was decided to keep these, as they are accessed through the road network in Kelsall and any development there would primarily affect the latter.

Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan designated Kelsall as one of the Key Service Centres in the Borough's rural area. It has grown markedly during the last Plan period, with at least 250 dwellings built, whereas CWAC had allocated "at least 200" for this settlement.

In contrast Willington is a rural hamlet, linked to Kelsall in many ways, but with no facilities of its own save the Boot Inn.



Map 1 - Kelsall & Willington Neighbourhood Area

4 Housing growth

New housing development is required in Kelsall and its area to fulfil the government policies on housebuilding.

Kelsall is one of the larger settlements in the rural area in Cheshire West and Chester, named a Key Service Centre in the 2015 Local Plan, and as such, required to accept a proportion of housing in the borough.

In June 2026 Cheshire West and Chester issued indicative housing numbers for the Kelsall & Willington Neighbourhood Area, based on their new housing targets for the borough, and using the national housing formula to distribute this amount over 20 years to Key Service Centres (including a 20% additional buffer).

The outcome was a requirement of 421 dwellings for Kelsall.

Neighbourhood Plans cannot result in less development than would have happened without the NP, therefore this figure must be accepted for the NP area.

The KWNP does not recommend any additional housing above the mandatory target, for the following reasons:

Market pressure from developers is evident from the large numbers of Land Availability Assessment sites, and applications for large sites already submitted or approved (totalling 252 as of October 2026), with more in pre-application or survey stages.

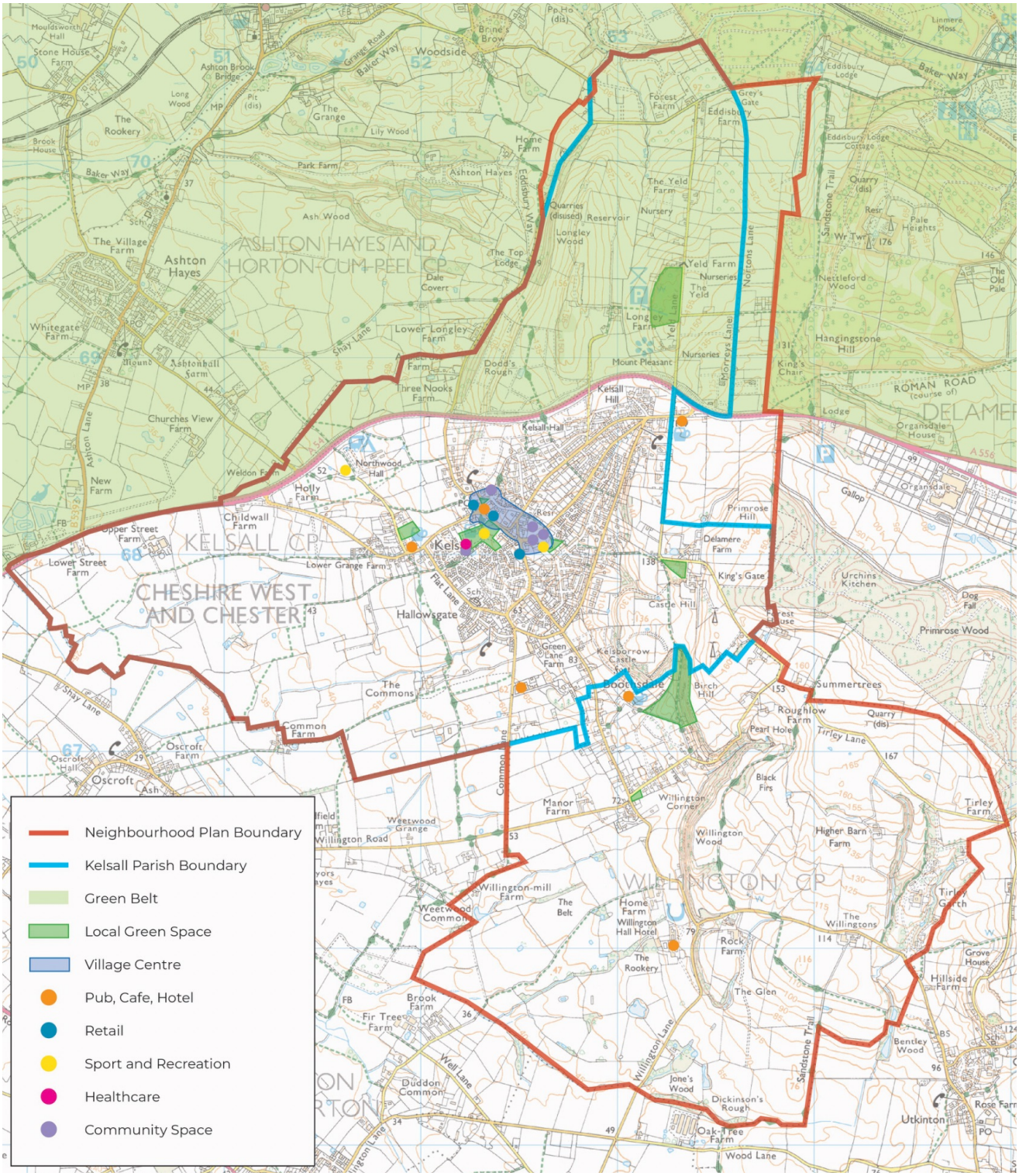
It is clear that the supply of housing in Kelsall is not in question, and locally the tilted balance is very much between robust housing growth and stalled infrastructure supply.

Kelsall Key Service Centre is the worst-served KSC in the local area, with fewer amenities than other Key Service Centres.

251 dwellings have been built for the current Plan period, but there has been no corresponding infrastructure improvement from any sites or from the Local Authority. The only improvement was a new medical centre to house the GP surgery, on a site allocated by the KWNP (2017).

A key objective of the NP is therefore to preserve a balance between housing growth and facilities available, and between development in the NP area and the rest of the borough, not to attract new housing.

Residents' concerns about the infrastructure and facilities are clearly evidenced at every stage of consultation. This is summarised in the Justification Statement.



Map 2 - Features of the Neighbourhood Area

5 Development locations

Policy: Development Locations	
L1	Planning applications within the Kelsall Settlement Boundary, as shown in Map 3, will be supported provided they are consistent with all Policies in this Plan, including the Design Code.
L2	No planning applications will be supported in the gap between Kelsall and Willington shown in Map 4.

5.1 Settlement Boundary; Policy L1

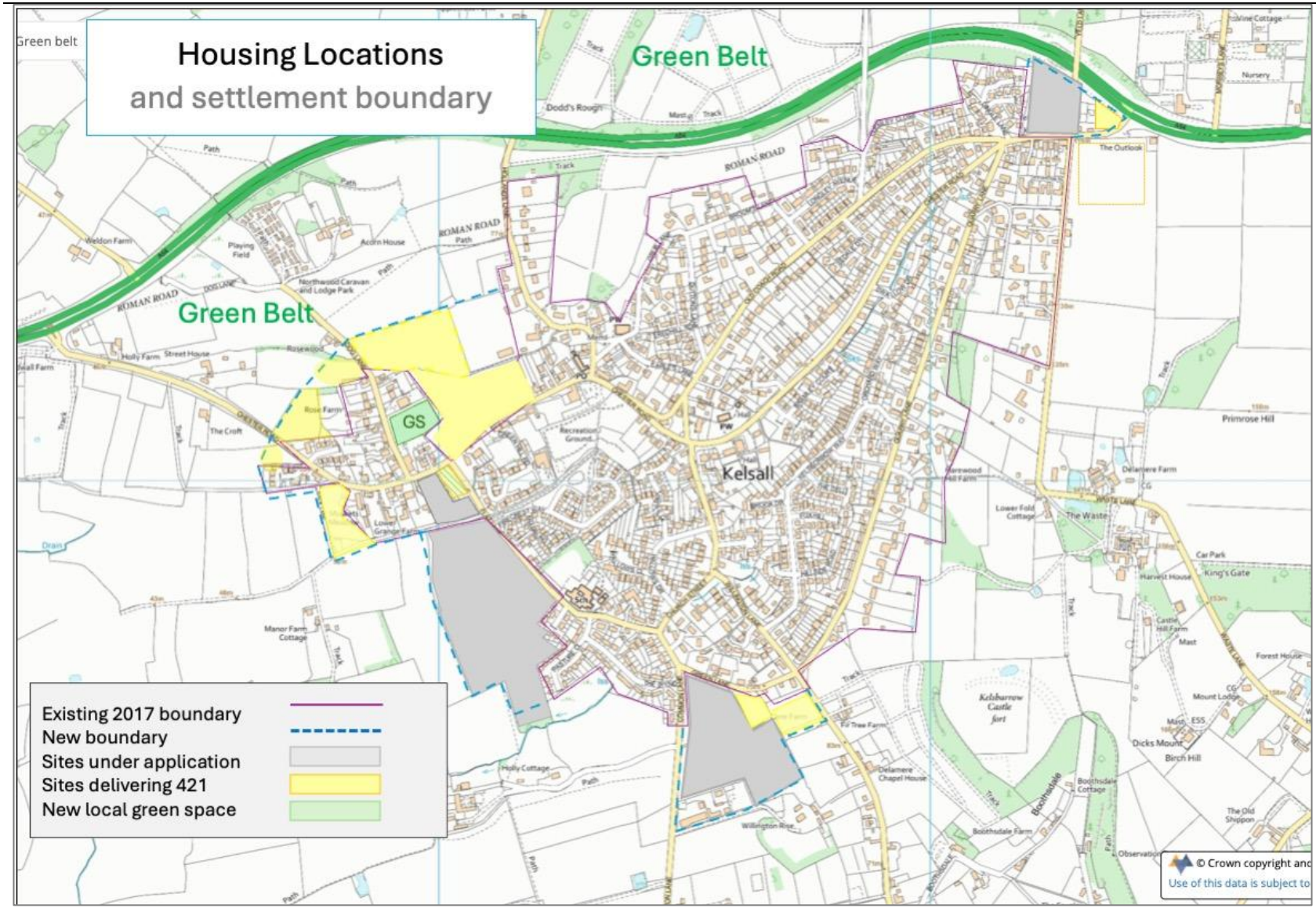
The revised settlement boundary for Kelsall is based on

- The need to accommodate the housing target set by Cheshire West and Chester
- The preferences for development locations expressed by residents during local consultation in Oct / Nov 2025
- Sites identified in the Land Availability Assessment as potentially deliverable
- The Density applying to relevant sites according to the Density Policy G1 below
- Assessment of the possible locations for expansion against physical criteria including proximity to the main village road (Chester Road) and local facilities, landscape impact, natural environment, heritage assets and site accessibility.
- Residents expressed strong preferences for the village to expand in locations north of Chester Road, towards the bypass. It included a majority agreeing that the area of Green Belt between Kelsall and the bypass no longer fulfilled its function, and that the countryside would be better protected in most regards by directing development in this area.
  This was expressed in the consultation for the original NP and confirmed for the review, starting at initial public meeting in Oct 25 (see Justification and Consultation Statements).
- Sites already permitted or under application (likely approval due to lack of 5-year land supply for the Borough) shown in grey on Map 3.

Some sites where stakeholders previously expressed interest in development (eg. by submitting it to the LAA) have been excluded on the basis of excessive harm to the character of the countryside and particularly the special Sandstone Ridge landscape. See Justification Statement for full assessment)

These considerations resulted in the identification of the areas shown in Map 3 as preferable for housing development, and therefore the re-drawing of the Kelsall Settlement Boundary.

The separate hamlet of Willington is located in Open Countryside and is not a Settlement for planning purposes. Development outside the Kelsall Settlement boundary, including Willington, is expected to be mainly extensions, replacement dwellings, the conversion of agricultural buildings, outbuildings and small-scale rural development, such as rural business or farm diversification,

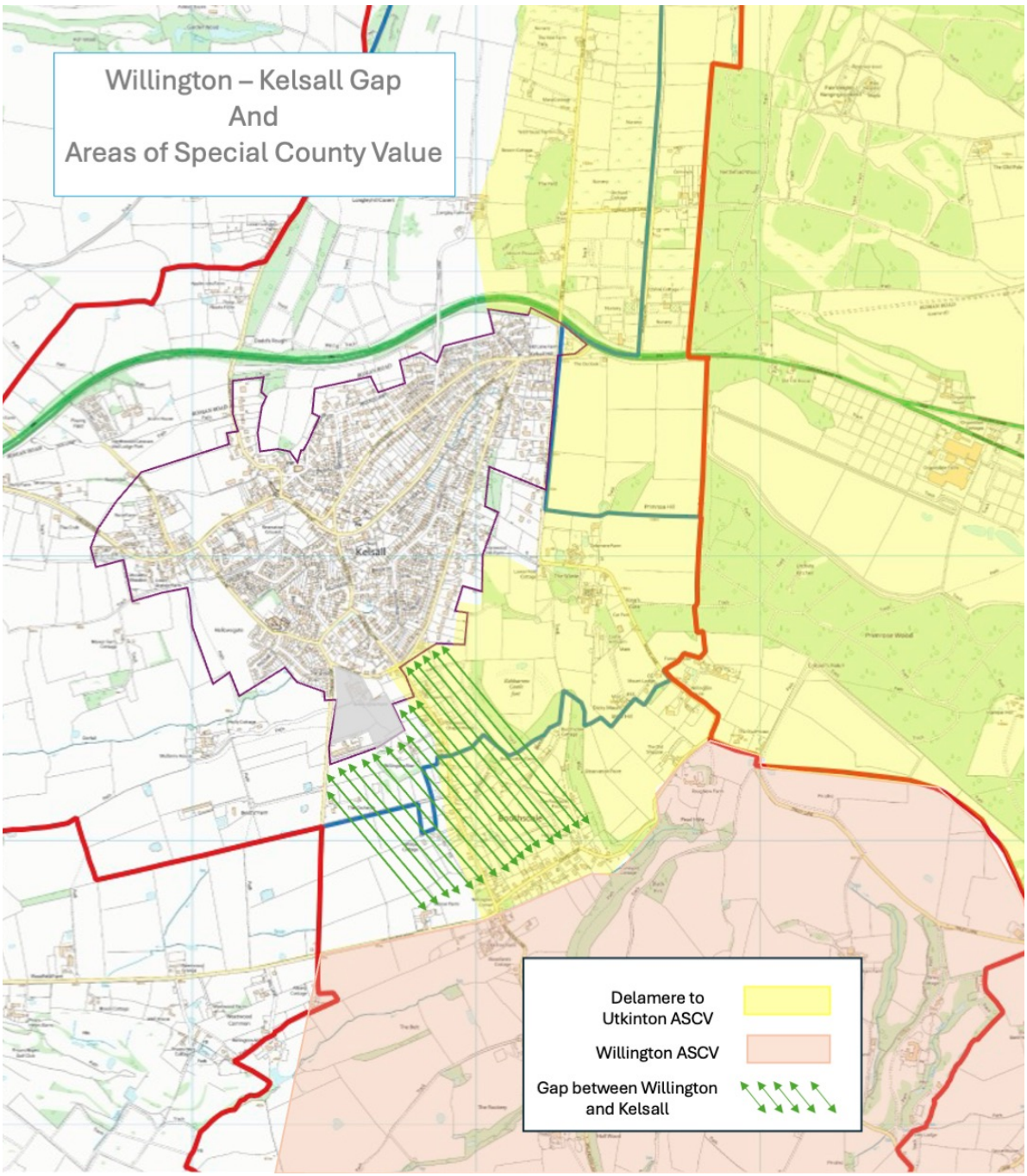


Map 3 - New Kelsall Settlement Boundary

5.2 Gap between Willington and Kelsall; Policy L2

The gap between the settlements must be protected so that the Settlement of Kelsall does not encroach on the Open Countryside towards and around Willington.

This applies to all proposals beyond the settlement boundary along Common Lane and Willington Lane, including brownfield sites. Accordingly, applications for single dwellings along Willington Road between the settlement boundary of Kelsall and Willington will not be regarded as "infill".



Map 4 - Gap between Kelsall and Willington

In addition to the reasoning in section 3.1 above, the following reasons apply:

- Need to keep Willington as a separate settlement. It is a hamlet with no facilities or services and therefore not suitable for larger numbers of housing.
- Higher landscape impact (Area of Special County Value) and proximity of this area to the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge.
- Presence of a Scheduled Monument, Kelsborrow Castle, on the end of the Sandstone Ridge close to Willington Lane

5.3 Development close to village centre; Policy L3

Policy: Location Within Kelsall	
L3	Planning applications for development of sites within easy walking distance of the village centre boundary shown in Map 2 will be supported where they include at least one of the following: - education - recreation and leisure - retail - housing for the elderly - other community facilities and services.

This policy supports the development of community infrastructure and facilities to maintain the balance with increased housing.

- The area defined as village centre is shown on Map 2 in previous section.
- 400m is considered to be an easy walking distance.
- This policy doesn't apply to extensions to existing residential properties.
- The uses above can be supported by the inclusion of housing on the site.

See also design code policy 6.7 on mixed-use buildings, ie design of properties suitable for conversion to retail.

6 Density of development

Policy: Density	
G1	The net housing density of any new housing development should not exceed the figures shown in Table 1, for areas described in Map 5.
G2	Sites within the Sandstone Ridge Character Area are suitable for development limited to the Outlying Density In addition, sites within and adjacent to the Sandstone Ridge Character Area must follow the stricter Landscape policies in the Environment section and Design Code
G3	The density on medium and large sites must be varied through the site, to create different character areas, allow for some openness on the site, and vary affordability.

Character Area Type	Density	Description
Gentle Density	30 Net dwellings per ha	in areas adjacent to Chester Road AND to currently built up areas at the higher recent densities
Village Density	24 Net dwellings per ha	Standard areas, adjacent to traditional village housing and not included in visually sensitive areas
Outlying Density	15 net dwellings per ha	Outlying areas, poorly connected to road network or visually sensitive, including Area of Special County Value

Table 1 - Development densities per area

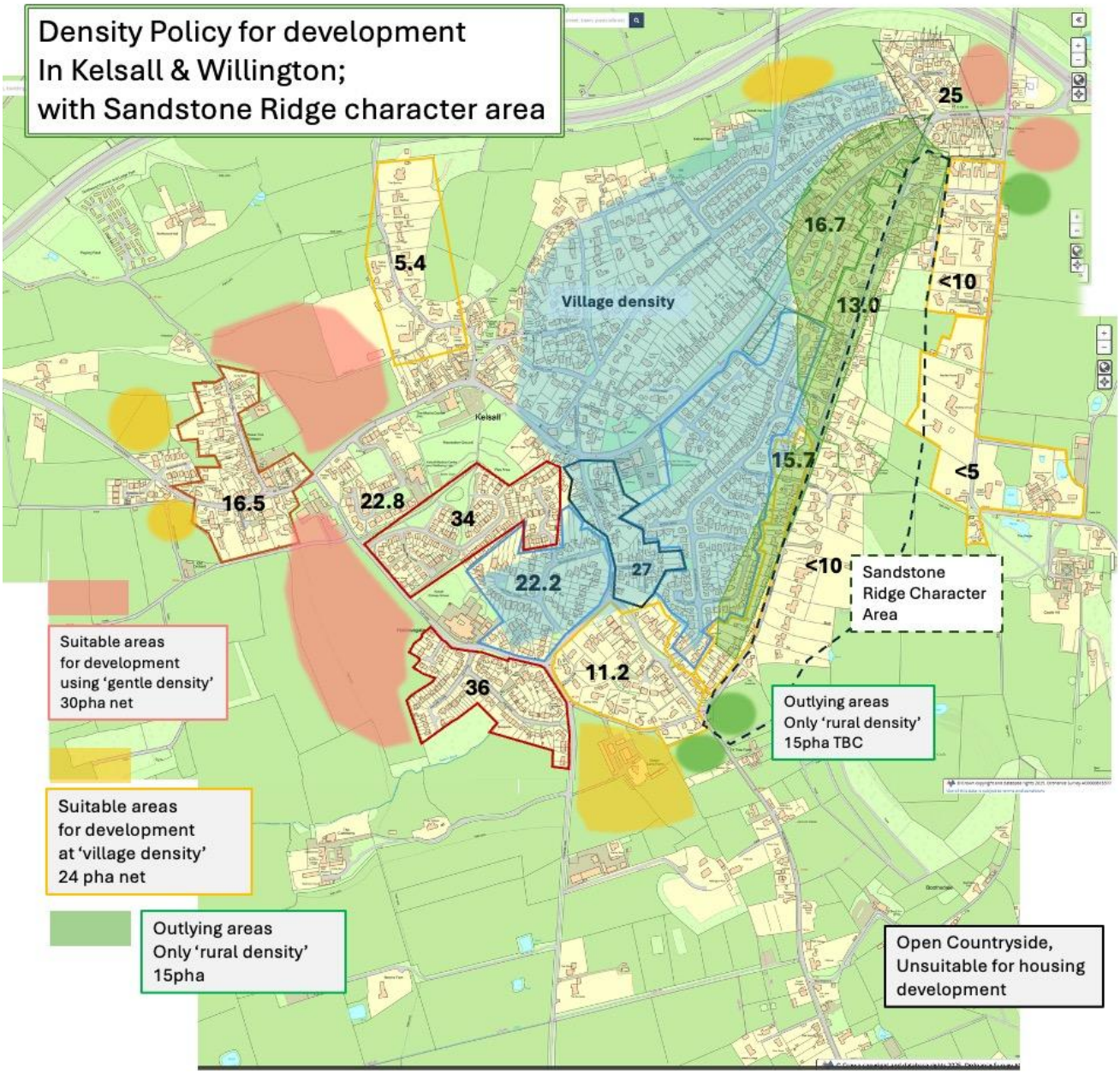
Notes:

- Medium and large sites are as defined in the Design Code 10 to 49 homes, and 50+ homes respectively
- these policies do not make reference to Willington as this countryside location is not expected to receive applications for more than individual buildings, extensions or conversions.

The original NP density of 24 dwellings per ha didn't adequately match the varied character of the village. Neither does it reflect current circumstances surrounding housebuilding.

Throughout the village, as shown on Map 5, net density already varies widely depending on the date of building, location and particular circumstances – from less than 10 in the outlying area of Waste Lane, to 34 on the recent Applewood Green estate (approved before the original NP was made).

The initial consultation in November 2025 shows that residents prefer to vary the density based on sites, based on the character of the surrounding area and impact on landscape, and allowing to concentrate housing in proximity to facilities. See Consultation statement for more information.



Map 5 - Development Density Areas

The right levels are key to achieve the other objectives of the NP policies, i.e. design features delivering quality of life and amenity for residents, and also achieving effective infrastructure including green elements.

Policy G3 on Varying density within a site aims to support higher overall density (within the policy G1) but keeping larger areas of the site more open in aspect. This can be achieved with small blocks, terraces, affordable flats to introduce variety (and improve affordability) and make space in other areas of a development.

7 Viability policy

Policy: Viability of New Developments
G4 Applicants will be expected to justify any features of proposals which don't conform to the policies of this Plan through the submission of a full open book viability appraisal of proposed schemes.

Development Framework policies are known and therefore any development proposal should take them into account when agreeing the price of land for a development site.

This implements NPPF provisions in DM5; development viability

In particular, points

1. Where development proposals accord with relevant up-to-date plan policies and national decision-making policies, they should be assumed to be viable. Relevant policies in this context are those that relate to the contributions expected from development.

And
3. Neither the price paid for land, nor the price intended to be paid through an option agreement, should be a justification for failing to accord with relevant policies in the plan.

Average house prices in our Plan Area are higher than the average in the borough, and most sites available are green field sites presenting no particular challenges and unexpected cost, besides the usual cost of connection to utilities. Together with PM5.3), we therefore do not expect that the policies in this Plan will affect site viability.

8 Housing Policies

8.1 Housing Mix

These policies aim to bring about the building of more small and medium houses, to match the expressed preferences of residents in Kelsall and across the borough, balancing developers' preference for building larger houses.

Policy: Housing Mix	
H1	Planning applications for housing developments of five or more dwellings shall be supported which: **a.** provide a range of property sizes suitable to meet local housing needs, as shown in Table 2; **b.** provide open market houses across the full range of dwelling sizes on developments comprising a mix of open market and affordable housing; **c.** include the proportion of accessible dwellings required by national policy AND **d.** meet the local needs for sheltered, supported and/or extra care housing (including in the affordable housing provided where appropriate).
H2	Planning applications for housing developments for 10 or more dwellings must provide at least two bungalows. For medium and large sites, the number shall increase to three for 20 dwellings and beyond, by one bungalow for each additional 20 dwellings.

Size	Proportion
One or two-bed	25 %
Three bed	35 %
Four bed	25 %
Five bed or more	15 %

Table 2 - Kelsall & Willington Housing Mix

Note:
'Local housing needs' refers to those expressed and evidenced at Borough level.

Policies in this section are intended to encourage building of smaller properties, to increase the stock of more reasonably priced properties, outside Affordable Housing. These are designed to supplement the policies in Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) [(1)]

[1] LP policy SOC1: "in the rural areas sites with a capacity of three or more dwellings or comprise an area of 0.1 hectares or more."

requiring developments to provide 30% Affordable Housing units (including extra-care, supported or sheltered housing)

There is a marked imbalance locally between the size of dwellings and the size of households: 60% of households have TWO or more unoccupied bedrooms – against 35% nationally (at the last Census in 2021).

Statistics also show that the Kelsall area has a larger proportion of older residents: 29% are over 65, against 22% for the borough and 19% nationally.

This supports the need to build dwellings in the proportions outlined in the table above, to cater for smaller households, at either end of the age spectrum. This should include bungalows which are a popular option, to allow older residents to downsize while remaining in the community.

For younger people, not all first time buyers qualify for affordable homes so it is very important that smaller open market houses are available.

Evidence shows that the high property prices are out of sync with incomes: despite relative affluence, property is very unaffordable, due in large part to a skewed housing mix: price to earnings ratio in Kelsall and Willington reaches 10.5, on a par with the London area. This prices many local and average households out of the market. This policy is meant to redress the balance.

8.2 Self-Build provision

Policy: Self-build	
H3	Planning applications for larger housing development sites should provide plots available for people wishing to build their own house.

Larger developments are defined as 50 + dwellings.

The right to build one's own house is supported by national legislation, including LURA, and by the Cheshire West and Chester Housing needs assessment Feb 2026. This specifies that a small proportion of new dwellings should be delivered by self-builders, estimated at 70 per year, however since the register began the maximum ever delivered was 50 per year.

In the local area self-build has only come about from replacement dwellings or garden development. This policy aims to support individual development by encouraging developers to offer a few serviced plots to people on the register in the Borough. If these are not taken up, they would revert to the developer applying for the whole site.

9 Landscape Character Policies

Introduction

Kelsall and Willington occupy a highly distinctive location, spilling down the slopes of the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge from a cleft in the ridge [(2)]. This unique landscape setting creates a strong sense of place, and significant aspects, both as views of the further landscape towards Wales, or of the villages and the ridge themselves from the east.

The recent work of the Sandstone Ridge Trust, leading to the designation of the National Character Area for the ridge, has described in detail this sense of a special setting shared by residents, and provides clear reasons for preserving it.

The character of Willington is even more closely associated with its landscape setting, as it lies wholly inside the Willington Area of Special County Value (ASCV) [3]. Its elevated position, far-reaching views over the Cheshire Plain, the backdrop of ancient woodland along the ridge and steep wooded valleys of Little Switzerland and Rough Low, the orchards of Hillside Farm and its ancient hawthorn hedgerows contribute to a very special rural character.

Our policies in the NP and DC Section 3 – and in particular 3.1, aim to preserve this distinctive landscape character.

In Kelsall, residents are used to thinking of the village as well supplied with trees and rural character, but this was considerably eroded in recent decades. Several large neighbourhoods are spacious but not well planted, and newer estates are suburban and characterless, including their mandatory open spaces.

With renewed development pressures, any existing green spaces and smaller natural features become crucial in order to retain some nature within the built environment. The policies in this section, together with the Design Code ‘Greenery and Nature’ section, aim to preserve and create quality green features to enhance the local environment, and contribute to residents’ quality of life and wellbeing.

These policies are also important for preserving some habitat for wildlife within the village. For this we draw on the comprehensive work of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), This shows that Kelsall is on the edge of several Opportunity Areas and therefore wildlife corridors are needed in the local areas to ensure connectivity of habitats.

[2] The Sandstone Ridge area is distinctive enough to be a National Character Area (no 62), which was considered for a new National Landscape (before funding for the programme was cancelled in 2025)
[3] The ASCVs are identified in Local Plan (Part 2) policy GBC 2.

9.1 Design of new development

Policy: Design of New Development	
D1	Design of all new development must follow the policies of the Kelsall and Willington Design Code. This applies to single dwellings and extensions as well as all multiple sites.

The Justification statement includes evidence supporting Design Code policies where necessary.

9.2 Views of and from the hill

Development along the ridge or scarp must not remove the tree line or alter the skyline.

This is enforced through Design Code policies 3.1.1, 6.1 and 6.2, and the relevant evidence included in the Justification Statement.

In Willington, the more rural nature of the hamlet, and minimal development to be expected, make it possible to preserve more local views as per the Design Code policy 3.1.4.

9.3 Local Green Spaces

Plan Objective

B6. Maintain and enhance green infrastructure.

Policy: Local Green Spaces	
E1	The eight sites shown in Table 3 are designated as Local Green Spaces.

Local Green Spaces			
Ref.	**Site**	**Location**	**Comments**
1	Kelsall Green	Chester Road	Equipped play area, multiple games area, hosts the annual Chester Folk Festival –sport and recreational value.
2	Chapel Green and the War Memorial	Chapel Bank	Home to the Kelsall War Memorial with seating for quiet contemplation – of historical significance.
3	The allotments	Between Chester Road & Kelsborrow Way	Home to 11 plots with 5 people on the waiting list at time of writing - recreational value.

4	Willington Green	Willington Road	Prominent Green Space, and a local landmark with numerous trees and seating. Hosts the annual Village Garden Party and is the site of the village notice board.
5	The Waste	Waste Lane	A beauty spot on a popular walking route. Home to a large pond and mature trees which are rich in wildlife. Seating for quiet contemplation.
6	Boothsdale	The steep sided valley end at Boothsdale	Known locally as “Little Switzerland”. Stunning channelled views towards the Peckforton Hills. Home to a rich variety of wildlife. Currently in the process of being designated as a Local Wildlife Site. Under consideration as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
7	The Yeld	The Yeld near car park	A largely unmanaged area of woodland, including a meadow and small open area. The wilder woodland on the site of an old Common is valuable for wildlife. It includes and connects to several walking paths.
8	Dog Lane Natural space	Dog Lane behind Oak pub	Designated as Publicly Accessible Natural Space

Table 3 - Local Green Spaces

The location of these sites is shown on Map 2. The first 6 areas were designated in the original NP, with overwhelming support from residents. The Yeld woods and Dog Lane Natural space are new.

The Yeld woodland area is accessible to the public, with several walking paths and a natural meadow. It is identified as a Priority Habitat by Cheshire Wildlife Trust. The community has ambitions to link it to other areas of wildlife value, through voluntary action, and supported by the policy on wildlife corridors in section 8.

The Dog Lane site is added by virtue of its designation as “Publicly Accessible Natural Space”, which was not known at the time of the first KWNP. This site has “significant value” because it is the last such open space within the village envelope, and it is protected by its designation from development.

Including it as a Local Green Space will help make it accessible to residents for nature-based, community activities.

However, these two sites are included in the CWAC Open Space Study 2016-2030 (Key Service Centre Supplement: Kelsall). Their inclusion as Local Green Space does not alter the under supply of open & recreation space found by the Study in all typologies.

10 Environment & Biodiversity

Goals & objectives

These policies aim to:

- retain rural character of village
- contribute to health & wellbeing of residents
- improve natural features and connections for the benefit of wildlife,
- provide climate adaptation.

These policies also meet the legal requirement that the NP implements the Cheshire & Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy (C&W LNRS),

The perceived 'rural character' of the settlements in the Plan area is being eroded as they grow, and visible natural features recede. In Kelsall a few areas with mature trees along the main roads, in older neighbourhoods, provide an impression of greenery. However many neighbourhoods are almost devoid of tall trees, even some older ones.

A location in the countryside is not enough to give a village a rural character if the built up area acquires many urban or suburban features, and development sites only include greenery at their edges.

Therefore NP and design code policies aim to ensure that trees are better distributed within the built-up area. This delivers benefits for residents and wildlife.

Kelsall and Willington are at the edge of an area rich in natural sites, identified by CWAC in their Local Nature Recovery Strategy, on and around the Sandstone Ridge. There are a few more in the plain to the west, and there are several protected wildlife sites within the village, as well as existing Local Wildlife Sites around the Area – as shown in maps below. The green infrastructure gains from development should improve connections between all those sites.

Green spaces within new housing schemes can serve several purposes – benefit wildlife, improve drainage, contribute to climate adaptation, provide space for community projects such as orchards or wildflowers.

10.1 Environment & Biodiversity policies

Newer developments feature some open spaces due to existing planning requirements and the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) legislation on habitats. With space at a premium and the reduction of residential garden sizes, it is important that these green features offer genuine value for residents and wildlife.

These policies complement the Design Code.

The Kelsall Design Code contains policies on green infrastructure (section 3.2), planting trees (3.3), green spaces (4.1), and boundaries (DC 7.3) which will also improve wildlife circulation. The policies in this section provide higher level principles to improve the value and connectivity of green spaces, and evidence to support both.

Policy: Wildlife Corridors	
E2	Developments must not adversely affect the wildlife corridors or Local Wildlife Sites identified in the Plan Area. Developments must create edge-to-edge wildlife corridors to enhance movement across the Plan Area, contributing to linking the wildlife sites and nature rich areas in the wider landscape, as shown on Map 6, and include hedgerows.

Policy: Trees and Planting	
E3	The legally mandated Biodiversity Net Gains improvements must be delivered on site.
E4	Planting and green spaces must be spread through larger developments, not confined to the edges of the site.
E5	Planting in the amenity spaces, drainage ponds and Biodiversity Net Gain areas should include semi-natural grasslands, managed as such, and plant species beneficial to locally significant species as per the Cheshire & Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy (e.g. swifts, moths and butterflies).
E6	Tree planting on developments should meet the Cheshire West and Chester goal to achieve 15% tree cover in all council wards, as per the LNRS

Together they deliver the goals of the NP, the opportunities and actions identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) , national and local planning policies and other design guidelines such as the National Design Code and the Building for Healthy Life guidelines.

These collected policies provide connectivity for wildlife through the village and to the wider landscape, including the core and opportunity areas identified in the LNRS.

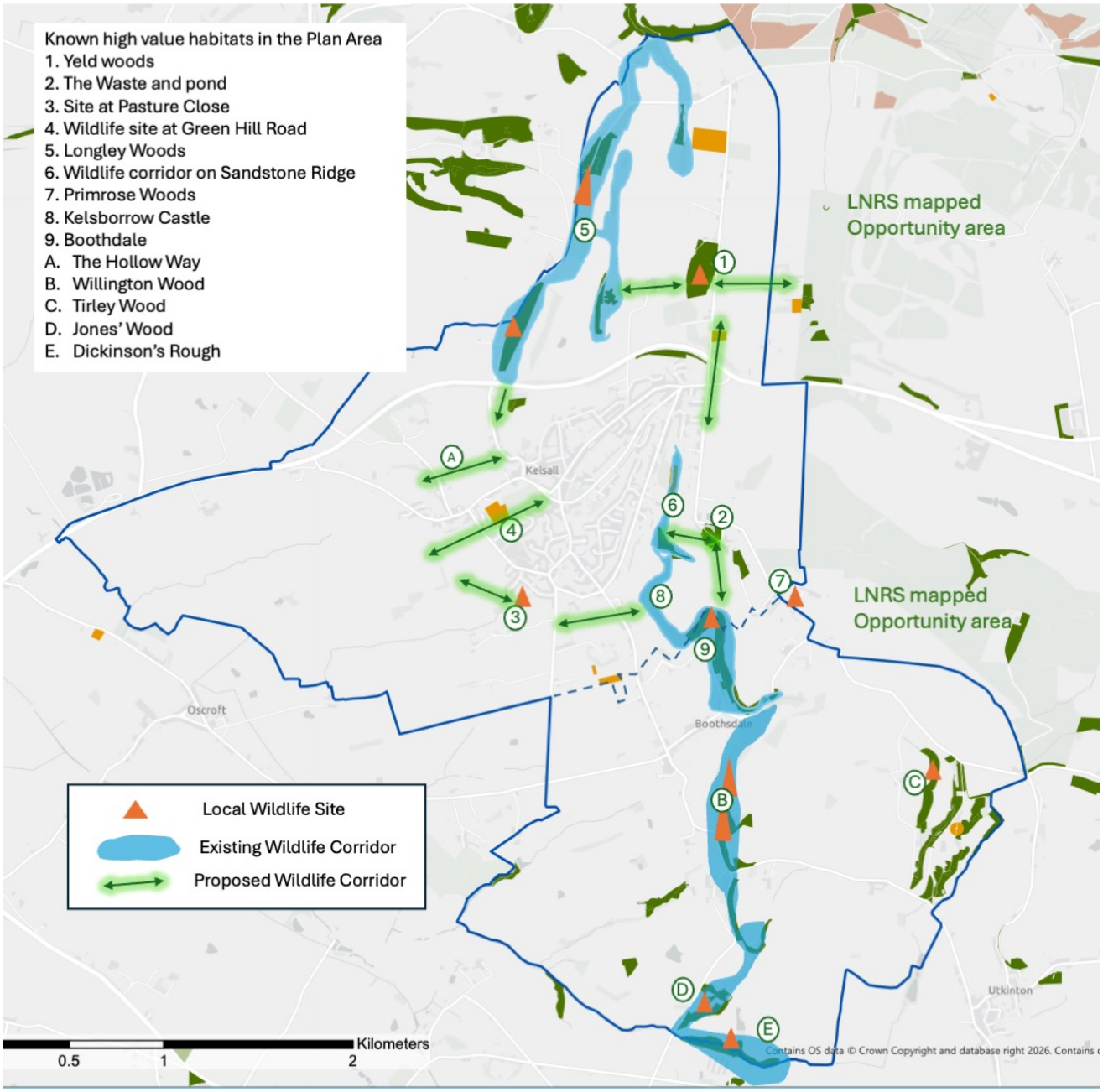
The LNRS mapped actions for woodlands, water management, or urban areas are mapped in 'Opportunity Areas' that only stretch to the edge of our NP Area. Even the Urban Areas' Actions and Nature Based Solutions have not been mapped in detail inside built-up areas, and the policies of this plan aim to provide that detail for any coming development.

The LNRS document makes it abundantly clear that nature recovery takes place within the urban areas as well as in the wider countryside and that delivery involves communities and continuing access to "*Maximise multiple benefits of nature recovery actions, such as carbon storage, health and well-being, flood management* [(4)]" – benefits to people as well as nature.

[4] LNRS Delivery Principles p 24-25

See Evidence document for specific LNRS opportunities and actions delivered through the policies of this Plan and Design Code (mostly section 3 'Greenery and Nature).

Policy E2 above directly implements LNRS Priorities *W1. More, bigger, better and joined up wildlife rich woodland networks across the landscape* and *W4. More, bigger, better and joined up hedgerow networks.*



Map 6 - Wildlife Corridors and sites

The existing wildlife corridors mentioned in policy E2.2 are shown in blue on Map 1 and include the woodland areas in 'Little Switzerland' or Longley woods, and the Hollow Way.

The new corridors created on new developments are designed to link these existing but disconnected areas of wildlife value between themselves and to the wider landscape, including the LNRS identified Opportunity areas to the east of the Plan Area.

The wildlife connectivity corridors need not be segregated from people. The inclusion of pedestrian paths alongside will deliver benefits for residents too. In fact the wildlife corridor through Willington Woods includes a popular walking route through Boothdale, ie “Little Switzerland”.

The hedgerows in wildlife corridors on any development sites should include existing hedgerows where present (and practical) and newly planted hedgerows. All hedges on new development must have adequate space to grow to a size providing suitable cover for wildlife (min 1.5m, as recommended by Hedgelink UK and the Wildlife Trusts).

Many applications for new developments keep green spaces and trees at the edges of the sites. However, to create benefits for residents, these should be distributed through the site. No dwelling should be out of sight of a large tree.

All trees, including those planted in green spaces, must benefit from an adequate improved planting pit with space for roots to develop. Street trees must be planted within green verges to ensure their survival. Recent developments show that many trees shown on the application documents fail to survive due to poor planting, therefore all benefits are lost.



Estate trees planted in 2018 (L), compared to trees planted by Parish Council in 2019 (R)

10.2 Management of green spaces

These must apply to public Open Space (POS), amenity space and tree planting, including any orchards, created on new developments.

Policy: Public Open Space Management and Design	
E7	Applicants must involve the community in the design and management of green spaces created on medium and large sites.
E8	Applicants must offer an option for a portion of the green space to be managed by the Parish Council or volunteer group , under a suitable formal agreement.
E9	To ensure the permanence of green features created (or preserved), the developments should site them in public areas, include management provisions, and if necessary protect them through covenants. Hedge management should aim to maximise its value for wildlife (late cutting in winter and less frequent cutting for example)

New medium and large housing developments are required to create a proportion of green space on their sites. Too often however, these are featureless spaces designed for easiest maintenance, with a few trees and close-cut grass, which deliver few benefits for residents beyond an open aspect, and even fewer for wildlife.

(Note: medium sites are 10 to 49 homes, and large sites between 50 and 250, as defined in the Design Code).

The priorities identified in many new policy documents now suggest that such un-built spaces can play several roles, both for people and for nature:

- By creating better habitats
- By involving the local community in both design and maintenance of the new spaces
- This is on top of utilitarian purposes such as drainage, as SUDS ponds and swales can be designed to include beneficial planting and located where it also provides amenity for residents (see Design Code)

This would allow the community to pursue long-standing aspiration for some social outdoors activities contributing to health, education and social cohesion. These include community gardening, outdoor activities to foster health and belonging (natural health programme involving the local Wellbeing Hub), orchard creation and food production, skills sharing, informal meeting places - among others – while improving habitats on site.

In addition to the Parish Councils, two local groups already carry out similar activities where possible, Kelspaces and Willington CAN (Climate and Nature).

To meet policy E7, the applicant should formally discuss features of the green spaces with representatives of the Parish Councils, and show how their suggestions were accommodated. This should include discussion of a community portion of the green spaces.

To meet policy E8, the parish Councils and / or local groups involved would then have a period of 6 months to confirm whether they are in a position to take over management of a portion of the green spaces, as discussed with the applicant. If so, a formal agreement will then be drawn up at the detailed application stage.

Green Spaces are created under planning conditions, and policy E8 would require a formal agreement to ensure that the local management would fulfil the required conditions. The management would revert to the developers' management company if conditions weren't met.

This arrangement is provided for in the National Design Guide's guidelines, for ex in the Lifespan section, which describes management of spaces and community management systems (point 155 p47) as fostering a sense of ownership.

This accords with the requirements placed by the NPPF on plan-makers, to Create Healthy Communities (HC1) by "*the provision, retention and enhancement of appropriate community facilities and public service infrastructure"*

11 Heritage

Objective. To ensure that heritage assets are protected from inappropriate and harmful development, and that local features are retained.

Policy: Heritage Assets
E10 Designated and non-designated heritage assets enhance local distinctiveness and should be protected in a manner appropriate to their significance. Planning applications that would result in harm to heritage assets and their settings will be considered inappropriate unless this is outweighed by overriding public benefits. In addition to designated heritage assets there are many local non-designated heritage assets that are considered important to the historic environment of the area.

Heritage assets contribute to the character of the Neighbourhood Area and its sense of place.
The importance of the historic environment has been recognised through the designation of the Iron Age fortification of Kelsborrow Castle and a Field System 200m south-east of Longley Cottage as Scheduled Monuments, the Conservation Area designation of lower Kelsall, and the Listing of a number of noted buildings and features. These are listed in Table 9 below.

In addition to these statutorily designated heritage assets, there are a number of non-designated, locally listed, assets. These are also included in the Cheshire Historic Environment Record and were identified by the former Vale Royal Borough Council as part of an extensive survey of local heritage assets.

Any proposal affecting those assets must follow the policies in the NPPF section HE 4 to 10, and the CWAC Local Plan.

Designated Heritage Assets	
Kelsborrow Castle – iron age fortification, scheduled monument	
Field System 200m SE of Longley Cottage, scheduled monument	
Lower Kelsall Conservation Area	
Designated Heritage Assets - Listed Buildings	
Kelsall:	Date Listed
Rookery Farmhouse	1952
Lock up at the end of the Barn at Weldon House	1967
Church of St Phillip	1985
Milepost 110m W of Kelsall Lodge	1986
Hallowsgate Farmhouse	1985
Farm buildings 30m SE of Hallowsgate Farmhouse	1985

Kelsall Hall	1985
Methodist Chapel	1986
Willington:	
Methodist Chapel, Chapel Lane	
Willington Hall, Home Farm and Tirley Garth. Tirley Garth is also a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden	

Table 4 - Designated Heritage Assets

Non-designated Heritage Assets – Locally Listed Buildings	
The following buildings are locally listed in the Cheshire Historic Environment Record. They were previously assessed by Vale Royal Borough Council in the Historic Buildings Survey.	
Kelsall:	
Quarry Lane	Pleasant View, Dogmore Well Cottage
	Harewood Hill
Waste Lane	Barn and Delamere Farmhouse
	Sandstone House
Willington:	
Roughlow	Summer Bank Farm and barn
Chapel Lane	Pear Tree House
Gooseberry Lane	Wood Cottage
	Smithy Cottage
	Ivy Cottage
	Laburnum and Rose Cottages
Willington Corner	Pebble Cottage
Willington Road	The Hob
	1 and 2 Forest Cottages (opposite Boothsdale)
	Delamere Chapel
Boothsdale	The Boot Inn and Cottages

Table 5 - Locally listed buildings

Non-designated Heritage Assets – Buildings of Local Merit	
Kelsall:	
Chapel Bank	Nos. 1, 2, 3
Grub Lane	Hope Cottage
	Stanmore Cottage
	Dewsbury Cottage
	Rose Cottage
Chester Road	Church Villa
Church Street	Nos. 6, 8, 10, 12
Church Street North	No. 2
	Winnett Cottage
	The Old Parsonage
Old Coach Road	Old School
	The Smithy

	The Nook
	The Cottage
Hall Lane	Nos. 4, 6, 8, 10
Dingle Lane	Dingle House
Dingle Crescent	1, 2, 3, 4
Quarry Lane	Durrows
	Barberry Cottage
	Half Acre Barn
	Carters Barn
	Harewood House
	Bryn
	Jasmine Cottage
	Honeysuckle Cottage
	Harewood Farmhouse
	Barn Cottage
	Stone Cottage
	Stone House
	The Cottage
	Sandquay
	Fir Tree Cottage
	Rose Cottage
Orchard Way	Black Hatch
	The Cottage
	Fairhaven Cottage
	Laurel Cottage
Green Lane	Croft Cottage
Willington:	
Chapel Lane	The Tomkinson Memorial Cottages
Willington Corner	Corner Cottage
Willington Lane	1, 2 and 3 School Cottages
	1 and 2 Rose Cottage
the prisoner-of-war wall at Rough Low, the former reading room	

Table 6 - Non-designated Heritage Assets