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Kelsall & Willington Neighbourhood Plan Initial Consultation

October 17th - 19th 2025
+ survey

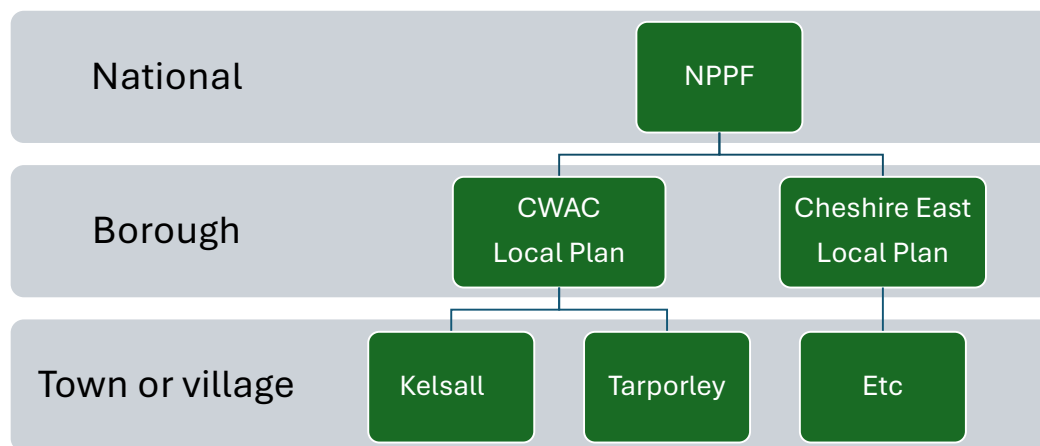
Introduction; what's a Neighbourhood Plan

- Who we are
- Purpose and format of this session
- Survey to follow
- Updating existing Neighbourhood Plan 'made' in 2017
- Applies to whole of Kelsall Parish and part of Willington
- Lower tier of planning policies, below national and borough

Presentation in chunks of 15 mins followed by Q&A,

The survey that will follow is vital feedback for the Plan and other planning concerns in the area. We will need everybody to fill in!

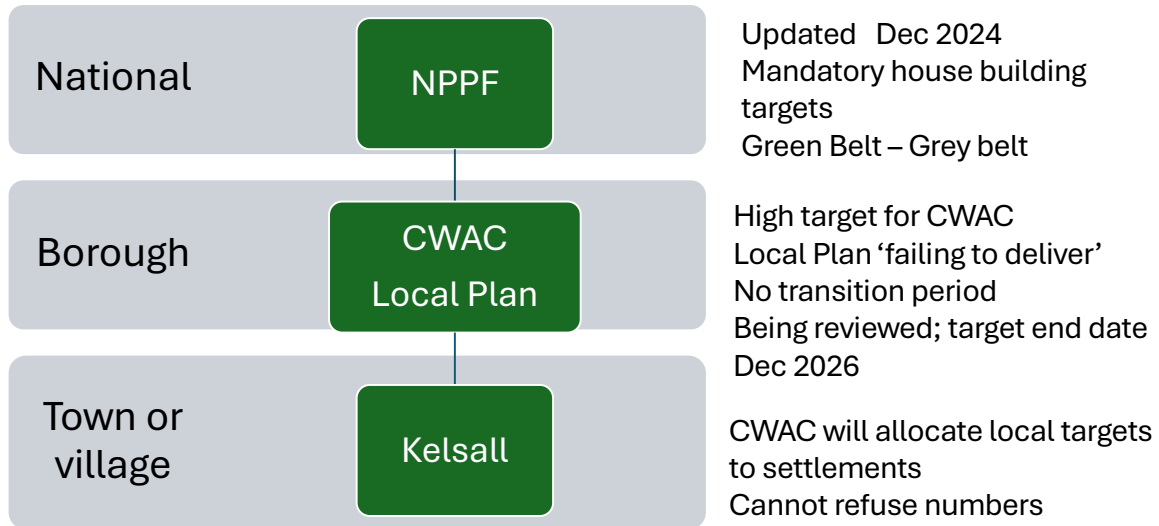
Context and Influences



Neighbourhood Plans must follow key national and borough policies, but can introduce rules on local priorities

- for ex design
- 'allocate' land for specific needs – eg new surgery
- green spaces conditions

Context and Drivers

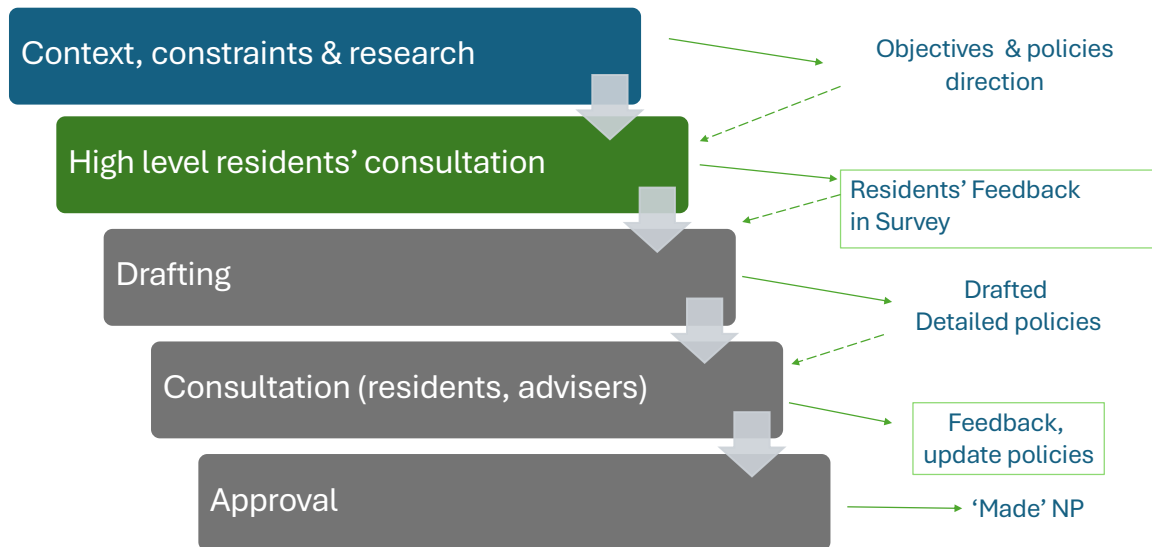


We have already had a session about the Local Plan’s own first consultation, broad options for delivering increases; Parish Council answered their consultation. Cheshire West are looking at possible changes in areas covered by Green Belt to accommodate extra building

At each level, saying NO is not an option, in fact our MP has asked question in parliament about getting NP groups a transition period, but it made no difference

We don’t know what our number will be yet, the Cheshire W Option & Issues consultation mentioned 500 new houses for the Kelsall area.

Updating the K& W NP



This is a review, so we are keeping a lot of the high level objectives and some policies

We are doing this at the same time as the CWaC LP update, but this is not a contradiction. Key policies for both are based on the NPPF, and NP needs to be 'in broad conformity' with Local Plan ; information goes both ways and we have enough to make a start; will revise detail policies if need be, but NP policies are allowed to differ if there is good reason

Do reply to the survey we will send out and follow our progress; check for updates

Must have solid evidence for NP policies, and residents' feedback is part of this!

A challenging period

- High new government target (x 3)
- CWAC pipeline is insufficient, so no transition period for updating Local Plan – or NPs
- Applications are ‘presumed sustainable’ until 80% target reached
Many developers applying as a result!
- Existing detailed policies and other legislation still apply
- New plan policies (inc NP) cannot apply while draft

Explain how normally strict policies are being relaxed, (, eg *OK to build outside settlement boundary* , so many sites on edge of settlements will be considered OK.

This is happening around most villages and towns already, even on Green Belt land, -

Some applications will be approved while the NP is draft, but all evidence can be used to try and shape applications

Opportunities

- Uniquely local focus, evidence of local need
 - eg retirement housing
 - meet needs HERE – eg green spaces
- Developers' contributions
- Resources & timescales



CWAC manage services at borough level – ie green space, school places.

Example of the surgery in first NP – All development is supposed to be 'sustainable', so for ex housing growth must not exceed capacity of facilities. we all were very aware of the limitations of Kelsall's Doctors surgery, oversubscribed etc. So we could provide evidence that to support more housing, the village needed to expand the surgery. Possible because GPs helped with the NHS side of the process, and the NP could allocate the site (otherwise would have had 45 'executive' houses).

Last bullet: CWAC are updating their LP as fast as possible to regain control, so they're not going to spend time looking at issues village by village – and we can probably still work faster than them

We're involved in both these processes and the evidence we gather, and feedback residents give us, will be useful to influence development of the CWAC Local Plan and the planning application submitted to take advantage of the interim period

Building on & improving existing NP

- Work from existing objectives,
- Improve existing policies;
eg Scale of coming development requires better protection of landscape & and local character
 - building on a hill
 - Variety
 - rural character etc.
- Detailed consultation in later stage



Most high level objectives still apply, that development should be sustainable at the very local level, as explained just before

Eg housing mix, landscape protection, provision of amenity, impact on infrastructure etc

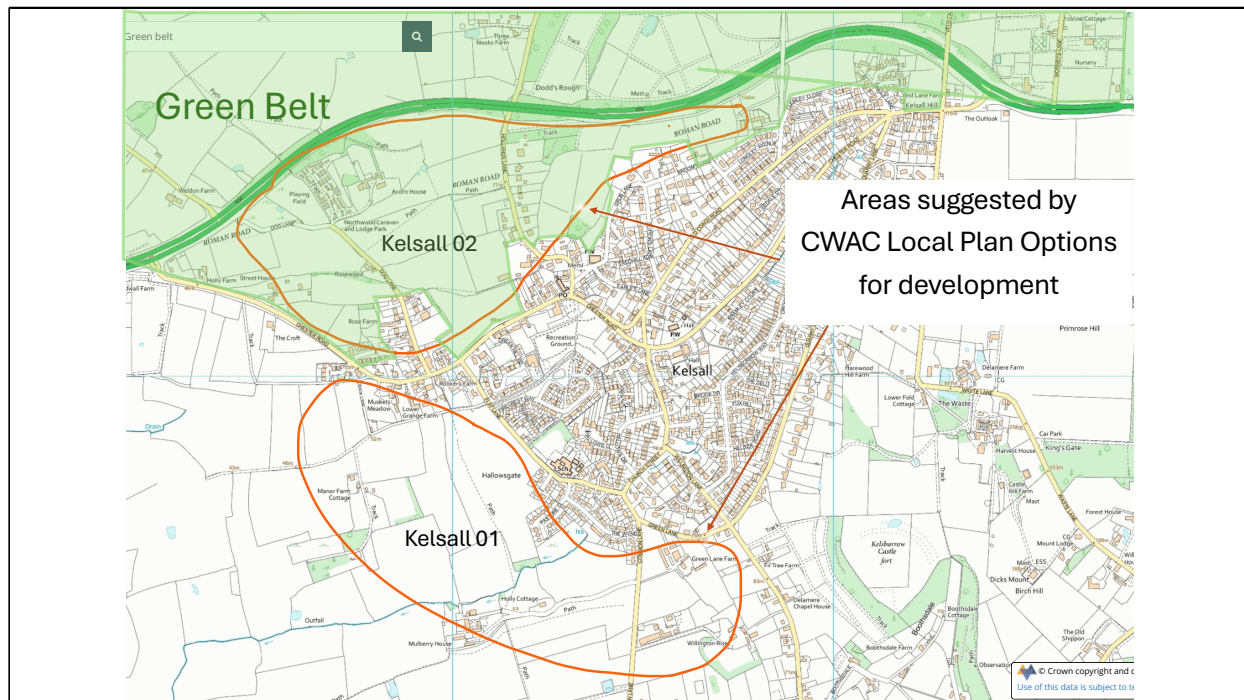
With experience from the 6 years since the plan was made, we can improve some policies and remove some that duplicate CWAC policies or new legislation

Coming expansion will be outside of Kelsall – in the last period, development was mostly on sites within Kelsall (Hallows Close, the Paddocks, Taylor Wimpey's Applewood Green). Now the impact on the countryside will be unavoidable and we should try and reduce the impact

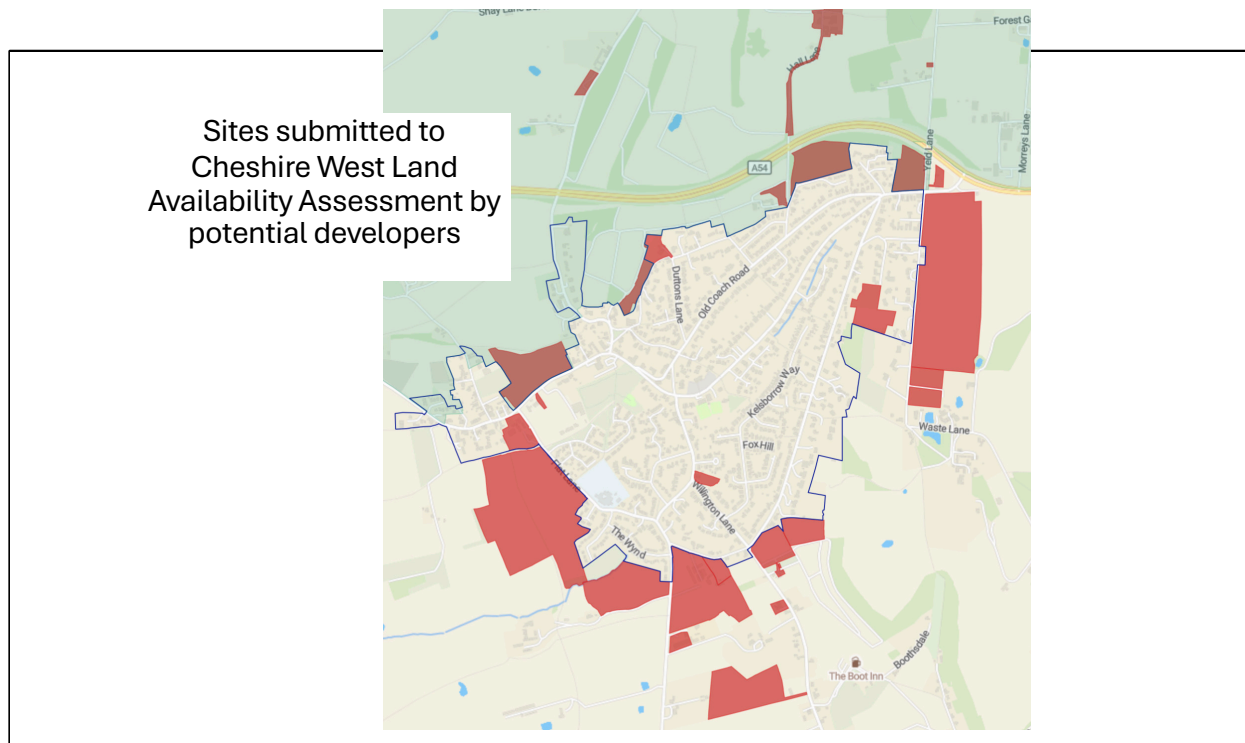
For example limit impact on highly visible hillside and ridge

Rural character difficult to reconcile with modern housing development; Kelsall doesn't have a strong style, its variety is what people seem to value, so we have policies on housing mix and we can strengthen variety through design, and also relating to tree cover and quality of open spaces

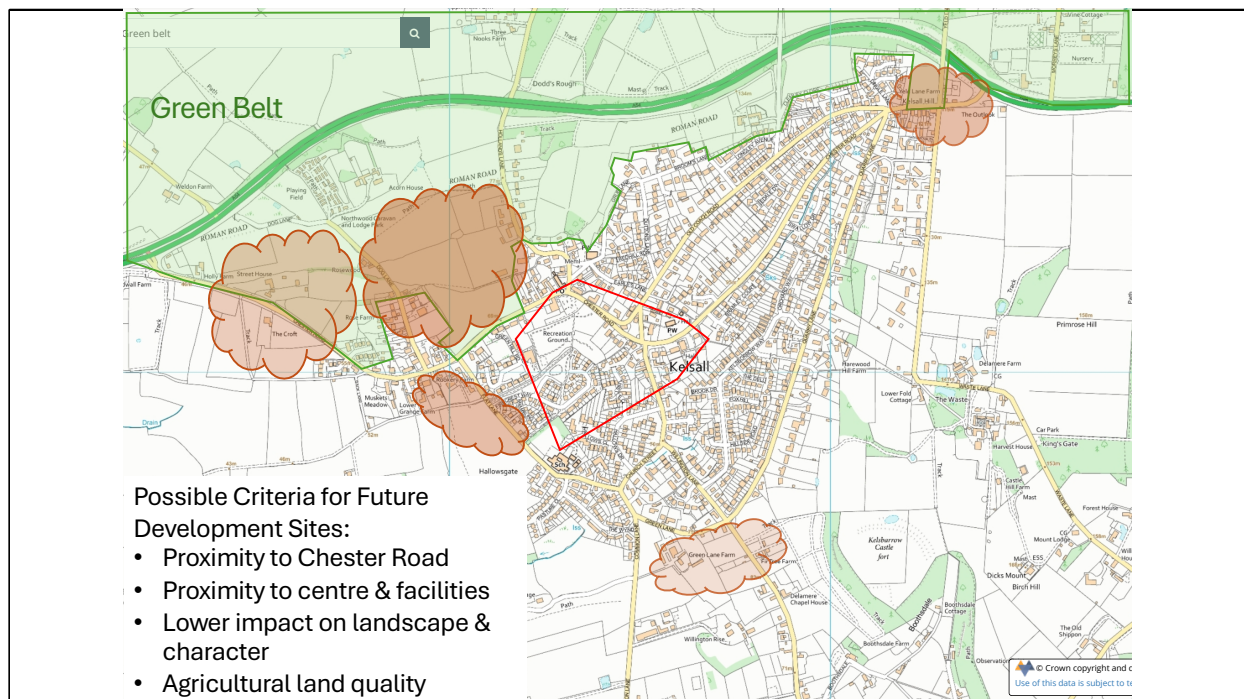
Questions



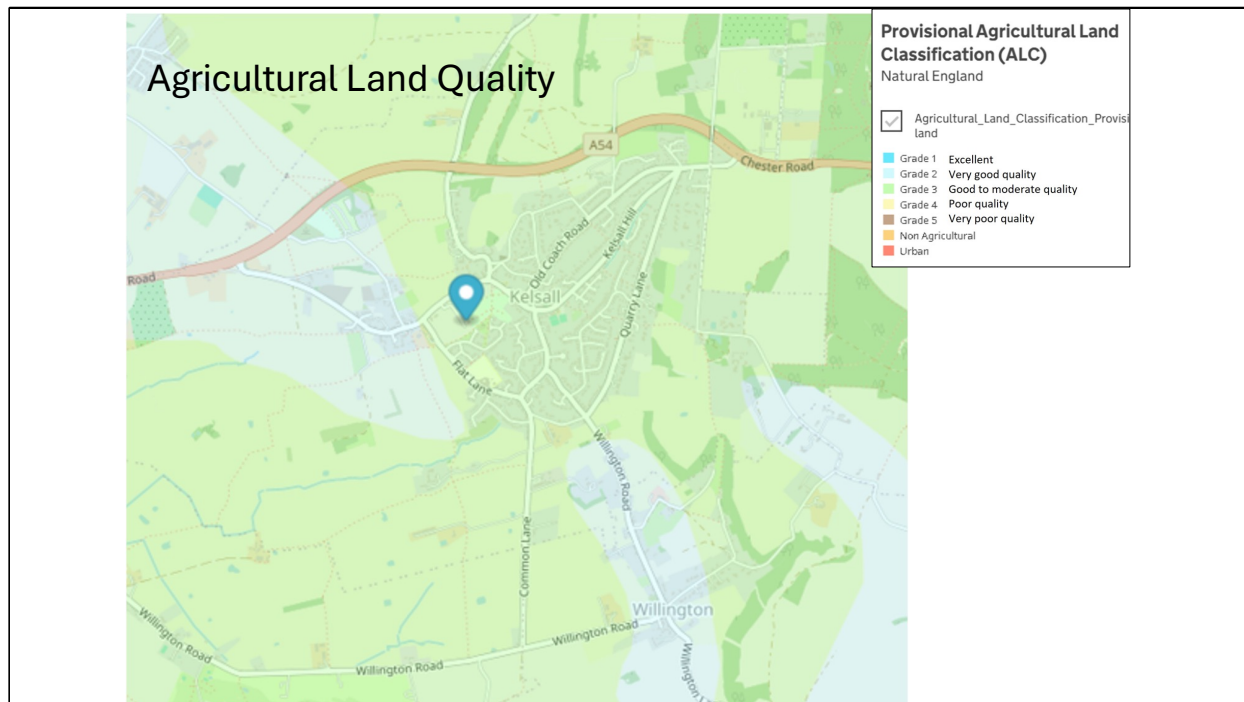
- This part of the presentation focusses on the location and density of any new development in Kelsall. Some development is certain so we really need community input of where it might go and what form it should take.
- Local Plan consultation had 3 options all of which foresaw Kelsall having up to 500 new homes in the next 10-15 years.
- Two of the options assume all the development in Kel01 (West and South) only
- One option suggests development in KEL02 (North) as well
- Both KEL01 and KEL02 are outside the current Settlement Boundary established by the Neighbourhood Plan (March 2017)
- NPPF foresees that some current 'Green Belt' is 'Grey Belt' and can be developed under certain conditions. Much of the current 'Green Belt' between Chester Road and the bypass may well be regarded by CWaC as 'Grey Belt' and they may seek to change the designation of this area in the new Local Plan.
- Note: 'Green fields' are not the same as 'Green Belt'.



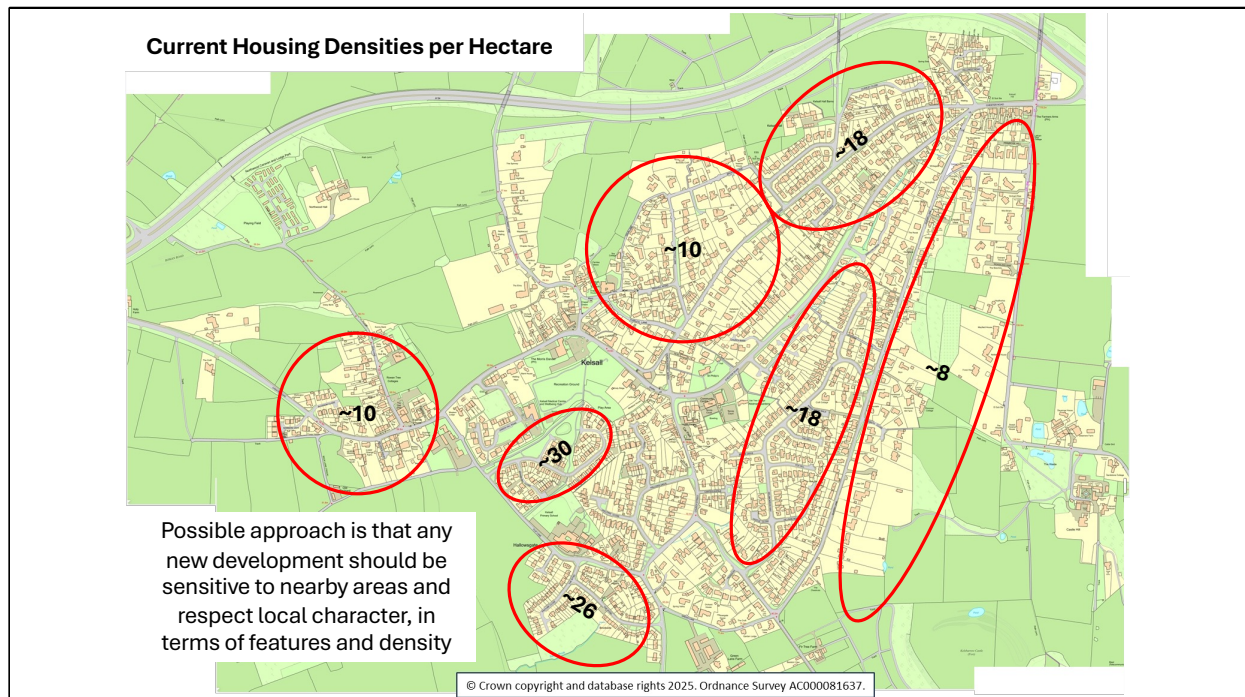
- CWaC has to maintain a list of sites across the Borough where landowners and developers have expressed a future possible interest in development. This is potentially their 'development pipeline'.
- The map shows the sites which CWaC had noted at the point the Local Plan options were published in the summer. Virtually all are outside the Settlement Boundary set in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- This is a living document and does not mean that planning permission will be sought for a site or that an application would be approved.
- However, as the Government have now set CWaC a much higher housing development target it is more likely that planning applications will come forward and CWaC may have to approve them unless they can show that land is available elsewhere.



- So given that some development will have to happen where would we prefer it to be and where would we definitely not want it to be?
- The map shows possible areas, but are there others?
- We will be asking everyone in village through a questionnaire, but in order to get a first idea we have two maps available at the meeting today where you can indicate where you would (maybe reluctantly) want any new development and where you would definitely not want any new development **[How many 'blobs' are we going to give each person who attends?]**
- As a start point for the updated Neighbourhood Plan we have so far considered four criteria to help decide where might be best for the village.
- Go through the 4 criteria.
- Are there other, or alternative, criteria that would be useful?
- We will be using the questionnaire to collect a wider set of responses on both development locations and the possible criteria.



- Natural England have recently published maps showing the quality of Agricultural Land and graded it in terms of its agricultural utility.
- The NPPF says that agricultural land of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3a should only be used for development if no alternative lower quality land is available.
- Some of the land in Kelsall and Willington are Grade 2 (light blue) and everything else is Grade 3. We think much of the Grade 3 land would be Grade 3a, particularly to the south and west of the Kelsall.
- How CWaC will use this the agricultural land quality information to decide on planning applications is an unknown at this point.



- The density of the current dwellings in Kelsall varies significantly depending on location in the village.
- Additionally the village as a whole is quite densely developed with the only significant green space of Kelsall Green,
- Applewood Green (Firecrest Way) has around 30 dwellings per Hectare, which is the typical density used by CWaC for new developments, whereas the density to the east of the village on Quarry Lane and Waste Lane is less than 10 dwellings per Hectare.
- Some drone photos follow that illustrate the densities in some areas of the village.
- The current Neighbourhood Plan stipulates that new developments should have a density of no more than 24 dwellings per Hectare irrespective of where development takes place. Is this the right approach for the new Neighbourhood Plan? We will be seeking views through the questionnaire.
- Higher densities use less land compared with lower densities as illustrated in the final two slides.



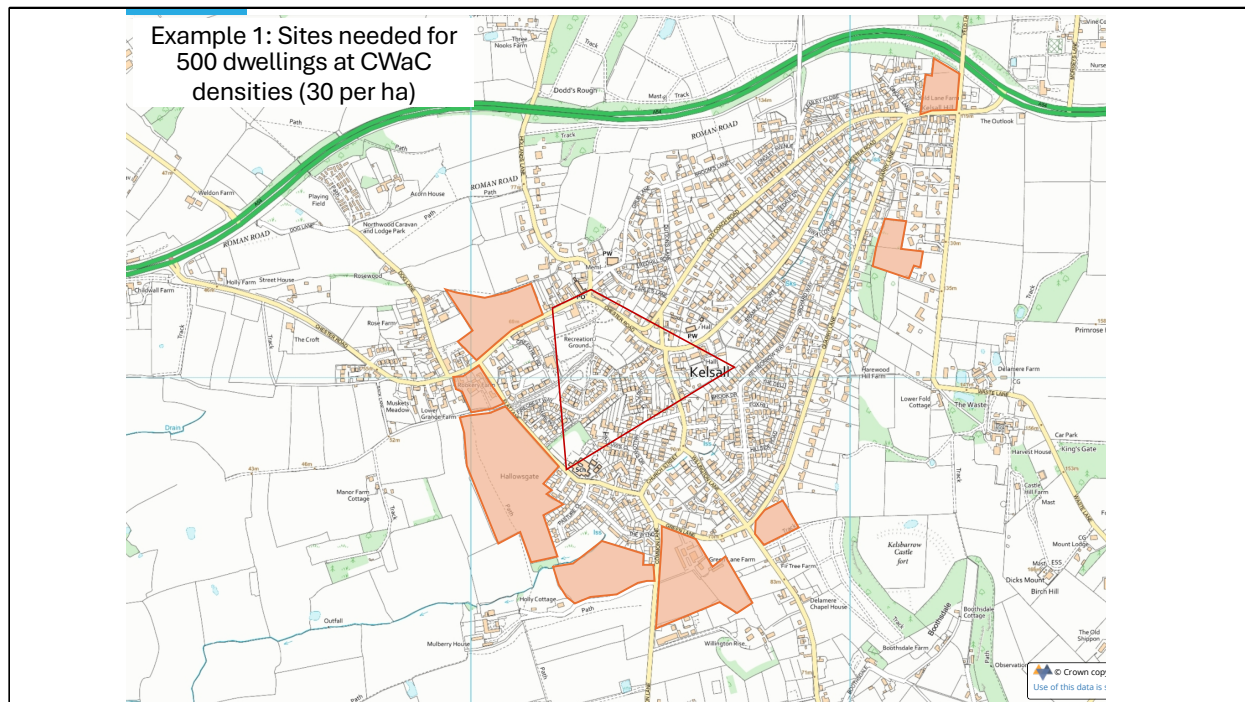
Applewood Green
~30/Ha



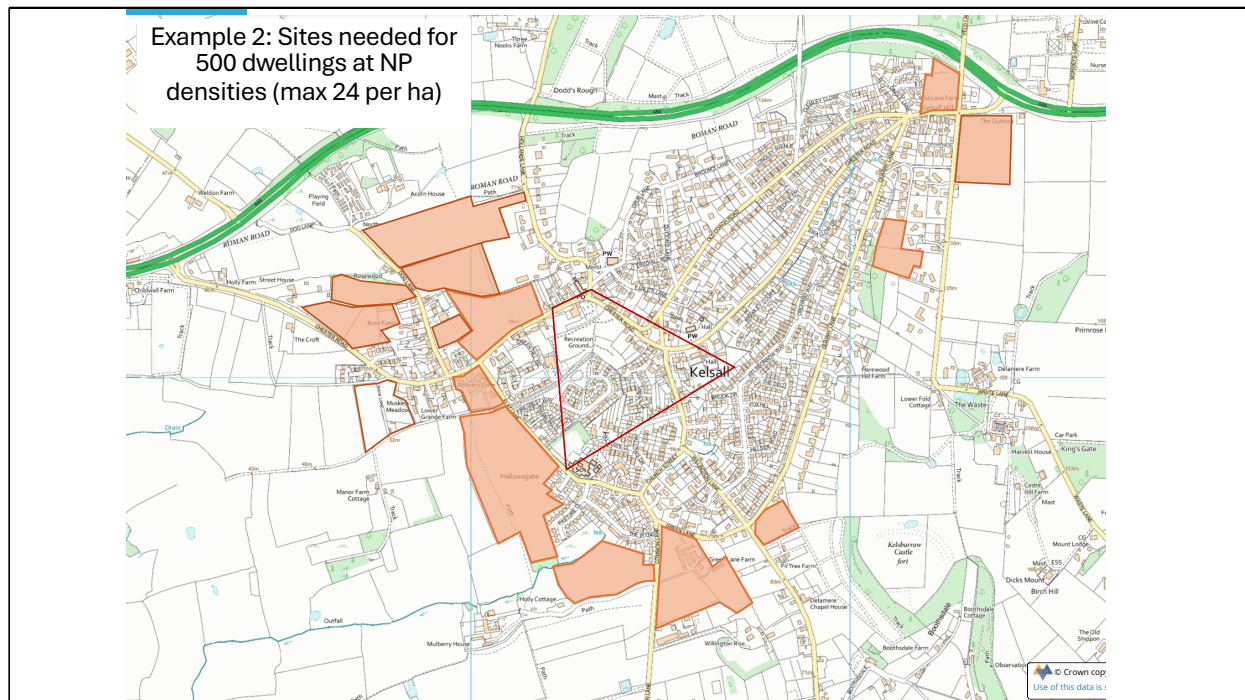


Hallows Way
~19/Ha





- Assumption: 30 dwellings per Hectare – CWaC general density number.
- For this illustration we have used sites that are likely to come forward for development (shown in CWaC's development pipeline assessment) Some already have, some may not happen.
- Higher density means less land is needed for 500 dwellings.



- Assumption: 24 dwellings per Hectare – Neighbourhood Plan density number.
- For this illustration we have used sites that are likely to come forward for development (shown in CWAC's development pipeline assessment)
Some already have, some may not happen.
- Lower density means more land is needed for 500 dwellings.
- What would residents prefer?
- Maybe densities could vary depending on the location in the village?

QUESTIONS

Limitations of Planning Policies

- Applications drive development, and planning policies shape it
- Highways and infrastructure can always be 'fixed';
- Remedies implemented after building
- Cannot force events (eg. shops)
- Impact assessed for individual applications, using narrow technical evidence



Introduce self. Been on KPC for 10+ years. Was part of team, with Claire, who produced our current Neighbourhood Plan - which came into force in 2017.

- You wouldn't need planning policies if no-one built anything! But it's probably not a good idea to let anyone build whatever they want, where they want - so we have Planning Policies.

Planning policy is the method by which the development of land and buildings is planned for, managed and controlled.

Each planning application is assessed individually on it's own merits.

As you all know, planning applications can have a big impact on local communities

Infrastructure

Highways, Utilities, Shops & Businesses, Healthcare, Education, Green spaces.

- Individual developments are not responsible for existing highways etc.
- Normal approach is to mitigate impact during or after development.
- Technical standards already exist
- Design features and specific policies can be used to try to mitigate impacts.

What are the key infrastructure problems in Kelsall?
What else do we need to consider?



In our survey!

Infrastructure, in its broadest sense is all the stuff around us that we need to function as a society. There's "hard" infrastructure - transportation networks, utilities and communications. And "soft" infrastructure - like healthcare, education, "green" infrastructure. I will deal with the last 2 later. So, Highways, Utilities, etc. There are national standards and requirements that we can't over-ride. If we have a new housing estate it has to be fitted in to the existing road network, power and drainage networks. The impact of new development can be mitigated during or after development. e.g. When Taylor Wimpey were building the Applewood Green estate they were required to modify the junction from Flat Lane onto Chester Road, to improve visibility. They also made improvements to the pedestrian crossing on Chester Road from the Pub car park to the shops. Developments may be required to provide drainage attenuation - where they store waste water on site and release it in a controlled manner into the main drainage network. So there is usually a technical "fix" that can be made, and it's unlikely, though not impossible, that planning permission would be refused due to highways issues, or for hard infrastructure reasons.

Shops & Businesses - Kelsall doesn't have a large number of shops in comparison to similar villages (and we recently lost the Post Office) But, we can't force businesses to keep trading or to open new outlets.

Having said all that, we can have policies and design features to help mitigate the impact of new development e.g. appropriate parking, surface water run-off control through permeable surfaces and the like. Policies, like one we already have in the NP, to retain local sandstone walls in order to retain local character.

Opportunity for Open Spaces

- Amenity greenspace e.g. on Applewood Green
- Play space (for children and Youth)
- Allotments
- Parks & recreation e.g. the Green



Kelsall is short of open spaces in all of these categories.

Larger developments should provide various open spaces on site, but can also make financial contributions instead.

If off-site, then where?

If on-site, how is it managed? can we have more control?

In the past, housing development didn't provide the sorts of greenspace that they now have to. You can see that by looking at maps of Kelsall - large areas of housing built in the past with no green spaces within them.

By Green Space/Open Space we mean the above. Amenity Greenspace, like the grassy area on Applewood Green with the pond! trees and shrubs, it is publicly accessible green areas to provide informal recreation, softens urban environments, provides small habitats for wildlife, less formal than a Park.

Despite being in a rural setting, Kelsall doesn't have as much Open Space as it should. CWAC Open Space Study 2016-2030 shows that for all of the categories above Kelsall is undersupplied. If we have 500 new houses then we will have a shortfall of more than 3 hectares of Open Space.

CWAC require developers to provide on-site specific areas (by size) of amenity and play space, and allotments, depending on the size of the development. (e.g. allotments only on 100+ units). If it's not required on-site then off-site contributions (money!) has to be paid to create or support Open space elsewhere.

Point of interest - Kelsall was able to buy the land that is now Kelsall Green using accumulated off-site contributions from developers.

Questions for you to think about - (and will be in the consultation questionnaire)

We have “Kelspaces” volunteer group who planted up the area of verge on the corner of Chester Rd and Church St North. They do other things too - Bulb planting , maintaining the large planters on the way into the village. Would you like to see more of this type of thing? Can you suggest other suitable sites? Should we pool developers contributions in order to try and acquire additional land for play and recreation use? We will have money coming in, but we can't put a second floor on Kelsall Green and it already has a lot of things on it. So, where might that land be?

Amenity Greenspace on-sites is managed by a company appointed by the developer, who arrange grass cutting etc. Should we try to get agreements for the community to take over some of this land for green community projects - wildflowers, community orchards, space for wildlife and nature??

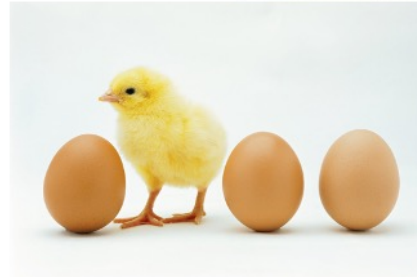
Primary School

Small 1-form entry, 270 pupils max, old buildings

Increase in households:

- c1200 Households at 2021 census
- 500 new houses
=> 125 primary pupils (half a school)

But how to provide places before pupils?
Can we make a site allocation?



Kelsall Primary school is the average size of a primary school in England. DfE data indicates that typical demand generated by new homes is equivalent to one primary school for 1104 new homes.

DfE figures – 100 new homes => 25 primary pupils. SO 500 new houses => 125 primary pupils (half a school) So you can see that there is a potential need for another half a school in Kelsall.

The process for letting schools grow to meet future demand for places is complicated and a bit Chicken and Egg, finance comes when the new pupils join the school, so not available to provide places in advance

However: What about allocating a site for a new, bigger school (like we did in our NP for the Health Centre)?

A site allocation must be “deliverable and feasible” i.e.

Landowner agrees and school is in a position to use the site in the short/medium term.

Process to agree school expansion is very complicated involving school, Local Authority and for Academies, central government;

Benefits of development and Neighbourhood Plan

More “Affordable” housing - 30% on most sites, 45% on Greenbelt sites.

Developers contributions

- General: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - a planning charge on developers, paid to local authorities, to fund local infrastructure projects, such as schools, transport, and flood defenses

With a NP we receive 25% of the CIL to spend on local projects

- Specific Developers’ Off-site financial contributions for play (children & youth) Parks & recreation etc. (S106)

New public green spaces?

Other policies/infrastructure projects?

- Affordable housing:

“Homes provided below market prices for people who cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market”. E.g. Social rent, affordable rent (80%), shared ownership,

Kelsall Average house price over last year was £425750 (Rightmove)

Detached £504000 Semi Det £44600 Terraced. £284000

Rent – average monthly rent £1000+ (I have seen only 1 To let sign in the village))

New Health Centre/Wellbeing Hub/Retirement housing

Specific planning policies for our local area

CIL. Developers contributions (Higher % with NP)

In the past this has paid for the lighting along the path through the Green, Donations towards The Wellbeing Hub, Large planters on Chester Rd, SID

- S106. Developer contributions but comes with Conditions

e.g. Taylor Wimpey paid £78000 to improve Kelsall Green

Bloor Homes (Thistle Close) paid £32000 to provide facilities for children under 12

Castlemead (retirement houses & medical centre) paid £24000 for Parks & Recreation

We have used these sums to provide e.g. the path round the Green, new play equipment, the adult gym equipment.

Questions