AECOM

Keele
Neighbourhood Plan

FINAL DRAFT REPORT

February 2021

Design Code

Quality information

Document name	Ref	Prepared for	Prepared by	Date	Reviewed by
Keele Neighbourhood Plan Design Code	DR-10915	Keele Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	Lucy Sykes AECOM	25/01/2021	Lee Wood AECOM

Revision history

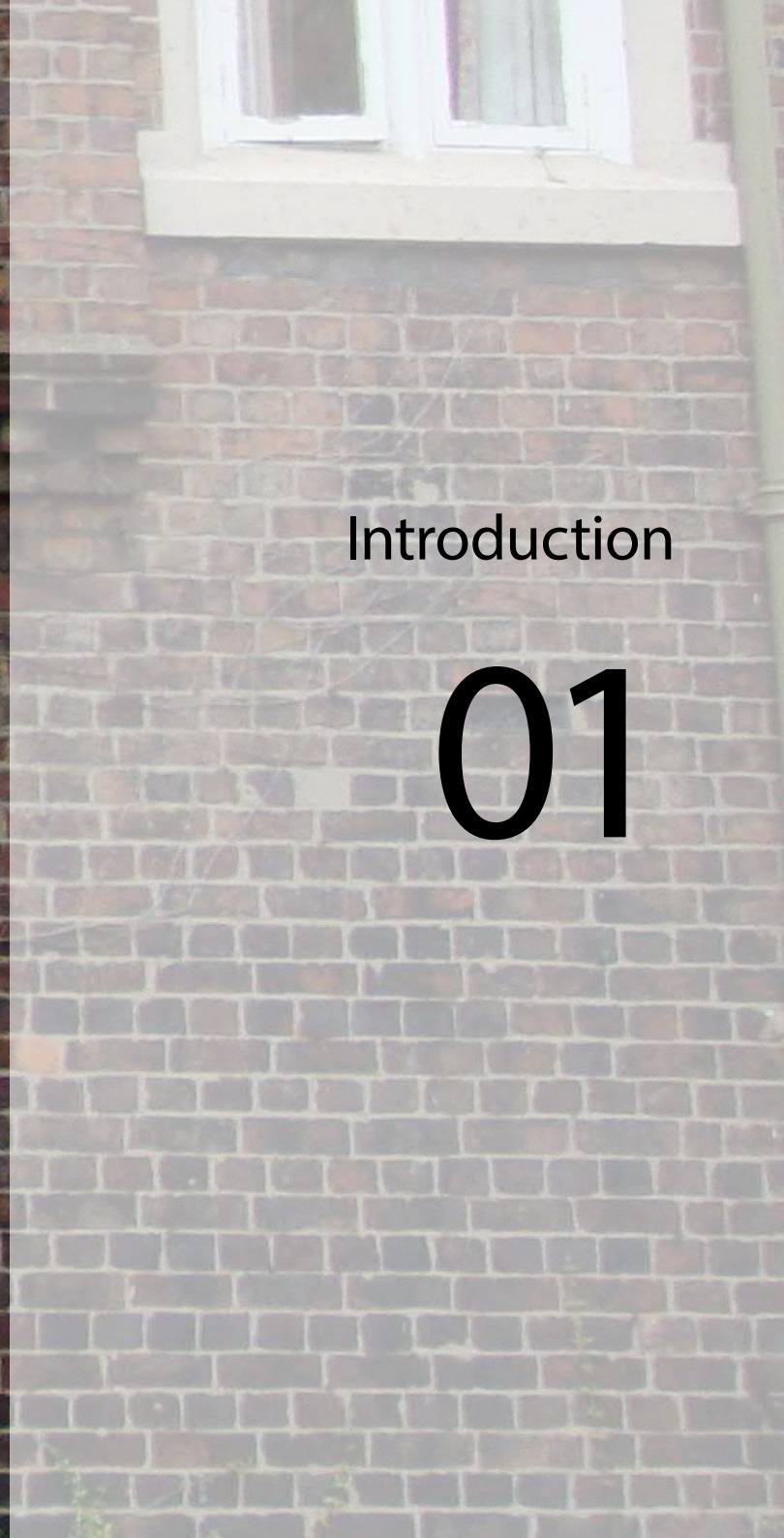| Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
01	29/09/2020	First draft sent to QB for review	LS	
02	13/11/2020	Second draft report page turner with QB	LS	
03	01/12/2020	Second draft sent to QB for review	LS	
04	18/01/2021	Final draft report sent to QB	LS	

Contents

Aerial view of Keele parish

Introduction

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A local building frontage

1. Introduction

This section provides context and general information to introduce the project and its location.

1.1. Background

Keele Parish Council is currently in the process of producing the Keele Neighbourhood Plan, a document which will help to shape and influence development within the Parish. Locality is the national membership network for community organisations that bring local people together to produce neighbourhood plans. Through Locality's support programme, Keele Parish Council have appointed AECOM to deliver a design code document.

1.2. Objective

The intention of this document is to provide guidance and design codes specific to the Neighbourhood Area for new development to adhere to, helping to preserve the characteristics of place which make the parish of Keele unique. This will help to ensure that as new development comes forward it will support and enhance the quality of Keele's existing character. It will identify character areas of the parish and provide guidance which aligns to the local and national policy context, whilst supporting the ambitions of the Neighbourhood Group.

1.3. Study Area

Keele is located within the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme. The parish lies approximately 5km to the west of Newcastle-under-Lyme, which forms part of the Stoke-on-Trent conurbation. The parish of Audley is to the north of Keele, with Silverdale to the north-west, Whitmore to the south, and Madeley to the west. Keele parish is around 775ha in size and has a population of 4,129 within 409 households (2011 Census). The village itself is located in the centre of the parish.

Keele University is located within the parish area, and has a strong impact on the local demographic; over 60% of the population is aged 15-30 years. Excluding the population of Keele University reduces the population to 1,026.

This Design Code report is considered to be applicable across the entirety of the Keele parish Area excluding land associated to Keele University, which is subject to its own masterplanning process, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Keele parish Neighbourhood Plan area

Policy Review

02

The Keele Clockhouse

2. Planning Policy Review

This section provides an overview of the national and local policies relevant to the Keele Neighbourhood Plan area.

2.1. National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2019

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the Government's overarching economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. The policies within this framework apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and act as a framework against which decisions are made on planning applications. The parts of particular relevance to this Design Code report are:

• Part 7 (Ensuring the vitality of town centres)

• Part 12 (Achieving well-designed places)

• Part 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

National Design Guide

The National Design Guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in principle and in practice. It supports the ambitions of the NPPF to utilise the planning and development process in the creation of high quality places. It identifies ten characteristics which underpin good design; Context, Identity, Built Form, Movement, Nature, Public Spaces, Uses, Homes and Buildings, Resources and

Lifespan. This Design Code report will have due regard for each of these characteristics.

2.2. Local Planning Policy

The Development Plan for the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme currently consists of the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006 – 2026 (adopted October 2009) and policies saved from the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011 (adopted October 2003).

Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011 Saved Policies

The following policies, which are saved from the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011, are considered to be most relevant to future development in the area and continue to form part of the Development Plan for Newcastle-under-Lyme.

• Policy S15: The Design of Development

• Policy H2:Replacement of Dwellings in the Open Countryside

• Policy N17: Landscape Character – General Considerations

• Policy N4: Development and Nature Conservation – Use of Local Species

• Policy N12: Development and the Protection of Trees

• Policy B4: Demolition of Listed Buildings

• Policy B6: Extension or alteration of Listed Buildings

• Policy B9: Prevention of Harm to Conservation Areas

• Policy B10: The Requirement to Preserve or Enhance the Character or Appearance of a Conservation Area

• Policy B11: Demolition in Conservation Areas

• Policy E12: The Conversion of Rural Buildings

• Policy C4: Open Space in New Housing Areas

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006 – 2026

The following policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006 – 2026 are relevant to the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

• Policy CSP1 – Design Quality

• Policy CSP2 – Historic Environment

• Policy CSP4 – Natural Assets

• Policy CSP5 - Open Space/Sport/Recreation

• Policy ASP3 – Stoke-on-Trent Outer Urban Area Spatial Policy

• Policy ASP6 – Rural Area Spatial Policy

The Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance SPD

The Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2010) provides urban design guidance for creating better places. The various principles of good design as outlined within the Urban Design Guidance SPD are upheld within this Design Code.

Keele Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, 2017

There are two conservation areas in Keele; Keele and Keele Hall. This report provides detailed understanding of the Keele Conservation Area and its special features of historic and architectural quality.

Keele Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policies

The draft policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have been helpful in establishing the guidance of this design code document.
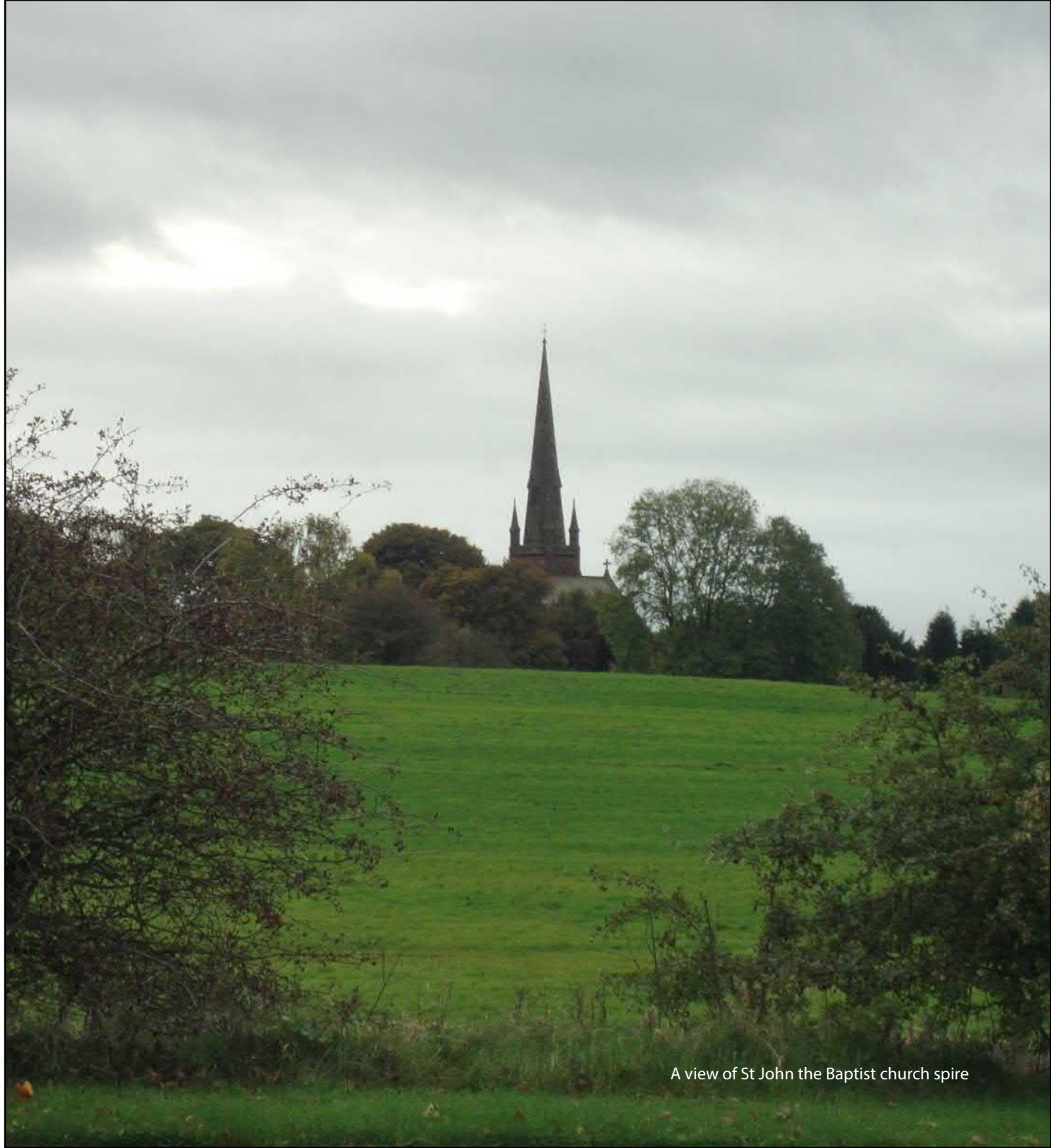
A view of St John the Baptist church spire

Place Assessment

03

View looking eastwards along The Village, outside the Snyed Arms

3.1. Heritage

The Keele Neighbourhood Plan Area contains 28 listed buildings, two conservation areas, (Keele and Keele Hall Conservation Area) and Keele Hall Registered Park and Garden (RPG). Two buildings are considered to be of more than special interest and are designated grade II* listed buildings. These comprise the Parish Church of St John the Baptist to the north-east of the village and Keele Hall, a country house of 16th century origins that is now part of the university.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has also adopted a number of locally listed buildings that, although are not statutorily designated, contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area. These are listed below:

The Villa, The Village, Keele.
Sneyd Arms P.H., The Village, Keele.
The Cottages, 5-9 The Village, Keele.
6-12 The Village, Keele.
The Middle House, 14 The Village, Keele.
Keele Farm House, The Village, Keele.
Station House, 3 Station Drive, Keele.
Stone Walls, Keele Road, Newcastle.
Wrought iron sculptures, A525 Keele.
Two war-time prefabricated units (rear of Westminster Theatre), Keele University.
Station House, Leycett, Keele.
Smithy House, 4 Highway Lane, Keele.
The Old Vicarage, Keele.
4 & 6 Church Bank, Keele.
Old Keele School, Church Bank, Keele.
Hawthorn House, Keele University.
Lodge, Corner of Quarry Bank Road & Pepper Street, Keele.
The Beeches, 52 Station Road, Keele.
Red Heath House, Pepper Street, Keele.
Home Farm, Keele University.

Key:
- ▲ Grade II Listed building
- ▲ Grade II* Listed building
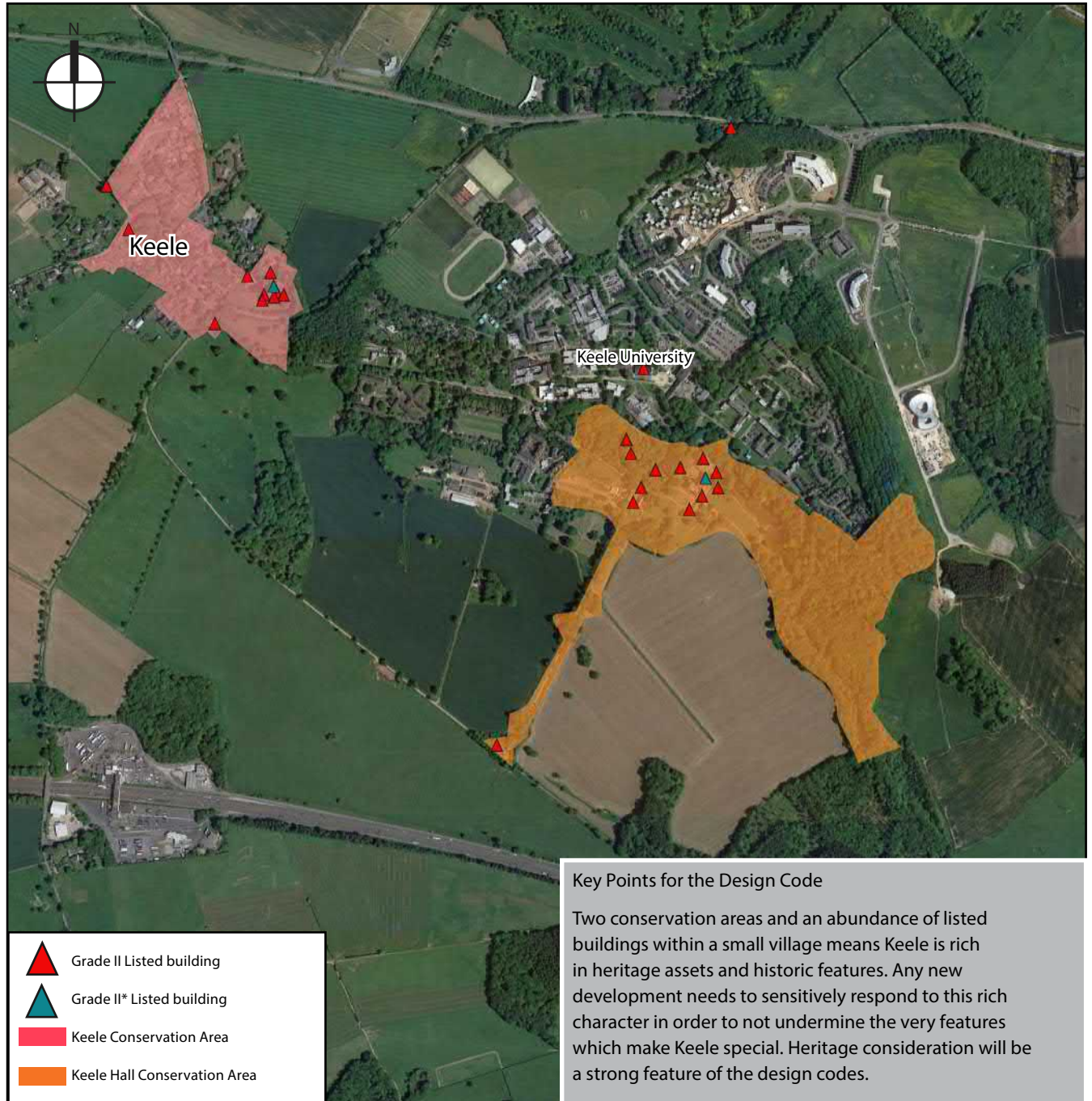- ▮ Keele Conservation Area
- ▮ Keele Hall Conservation Area

Figure 2: Heritage Assets
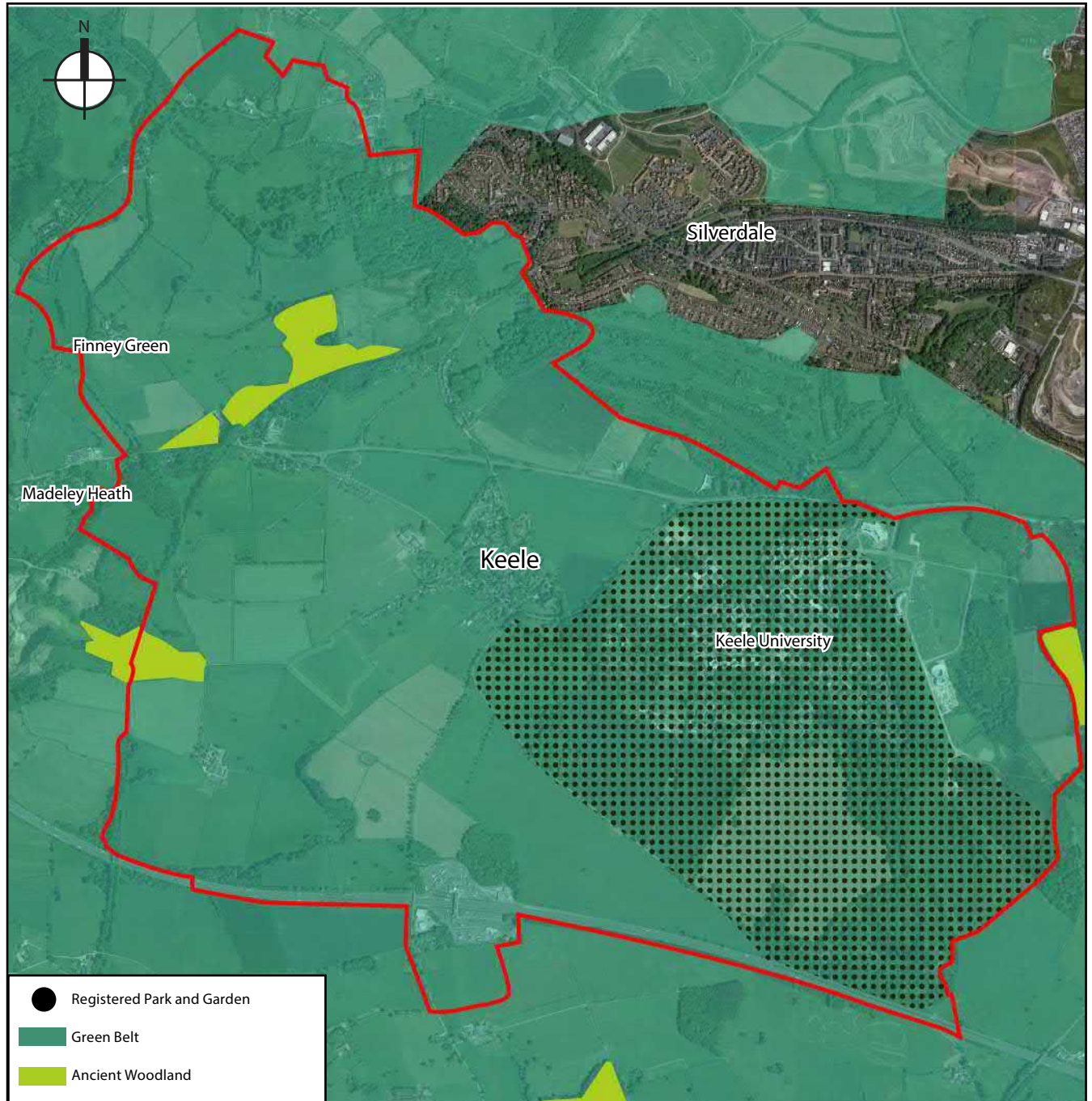
Key Points for the Design Code

Two conservation areas and an abundance of listed buildings within a small village means Keele is rich in heritage assets and historic features. Any new development needs to sensitively respond to this rich character in order to not undermine the very features which make Keele special. Heritage consideration will be a strong feature of the design codes.

Landscape Designations

The parkland surrounding Keele Hall is a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden. It lies within the east of the parish, occupying 218 ha, approximately 25.35% of the parish's total area;

Ancient woodland, a non-statutory designation, occurs in several areas throughout the parish.

The study area lies within land designated as green belt, a non-statutory designation.

Key Points for the Design Code

Green Belt land washes over the parish which restricts the type and amount of development which is considered to be suitable.

Figure 3: Landscape Designations (HCA, AECOM)

Topography and Hydrology

Keele parish straddles a dissected ridge separating the valley occupied by Newcastle-under-Lyme and the eastern edge of the Cheshire Plain. It occupies some of the highest land on the western side of the Stoke-on-Trent conurbation, forming a dominant visual feature over much of the surrounding area.   The village and university campus are situated on a relative high points in the parish.

Whilst views across the parish are open and long, views within the village can be restricted due to the topography, trees and vegetation, and orientation of the built form creating an enclosed feeling and character within the village.

The parish is notably devoid of waterbodies or rivers. The entirety of the parish is located within Flood Zone 1, with a low probability of flooding.

Key Points for the Design Code

Being located on a ridgeline, the parish occupies a prominent position within the landscape, something which needs to be carefully considered when deciding on appropriate built forms and impact of views from across the parish.

Keele has a low likelihood of flooding, and therefore is not required to adopt particularly stringent flood defence mechanisms. However, surface water drainage is still an important feature which should be addressed through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), as is good practice for any new development.
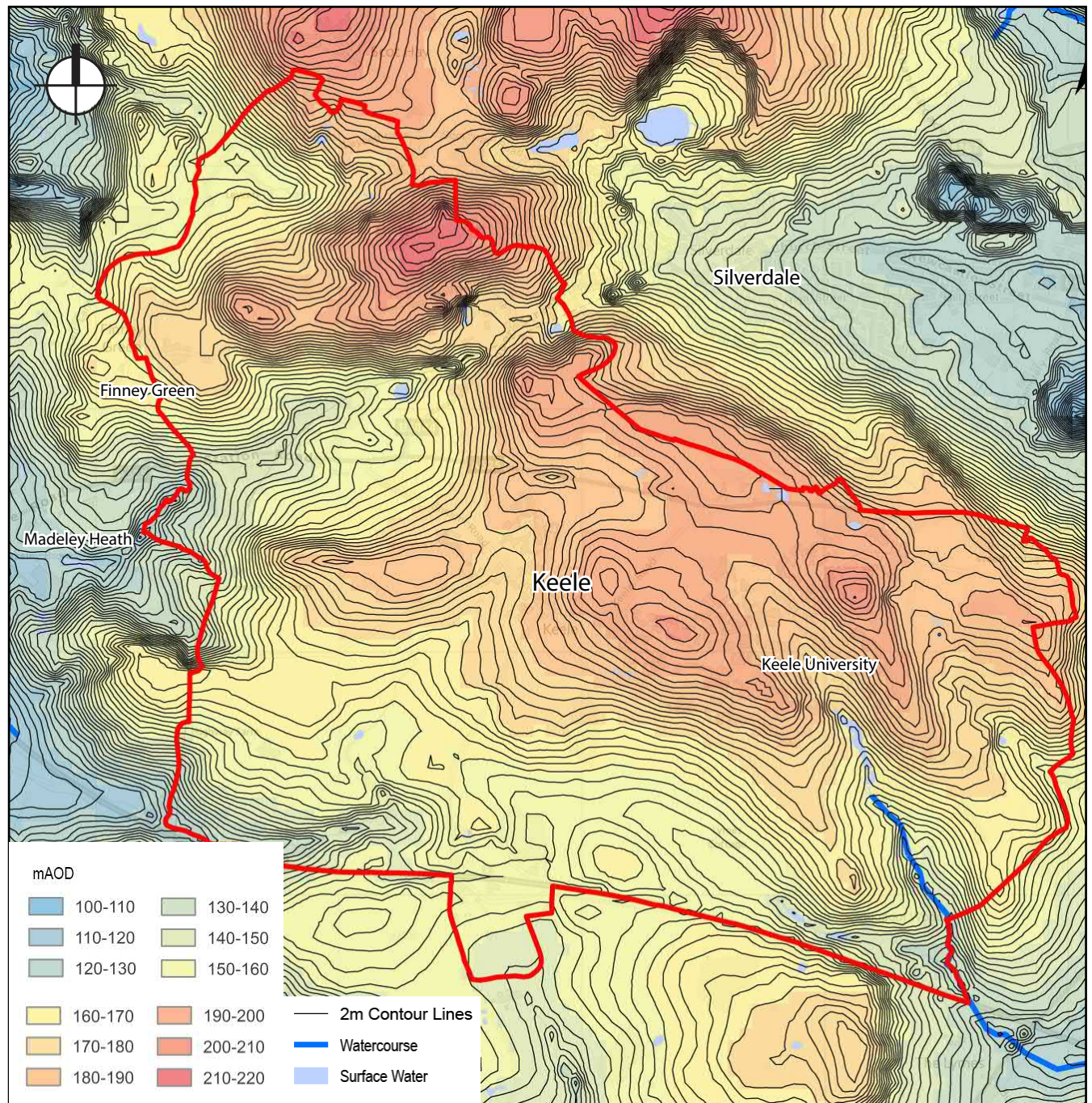

Figure 4: Topography and Hydrology (HCA, AECOM)

Urban Structure and Built Form

Development within the parish is largely contained within small clusters (excluding the university campus):

1. Village core: The village core of Keele exhibits an organic and incremental pattern of growth. Buildings and plot size vary, both tending to be larger towards the edges of the village. Similarly, plot shape tends to be more regular away from the village centre, reflecting the age of development. The range of building form varies with a mixture of detached and semi-detached houses, small cottages, semi-detached cottages and short terraces present.
2. The Hawthornes: The Hawthornes housing development contributes to a more formal arrangement.
3. Finney Green nucleus: Finney Green exists as a cluster of buildings on the parish edge.
4. Highway Lane ribbon extension: Highway Lane extends the village core boundary with low density ribbon development.
5. Station Road nucleus and;
6. Pepper Street/ Quarry Bank nucleus: The Station Road nucleus and the Pepper Street/ Quarry Bank nucleus are examples of ribbon development, with a small cluster around their respective junctions.

The remainder of the parish is largely undeveloped.

Key Points for the Design Code

For a relatively small village area, Keele has a varied projection of built form, layout and style. It contributes to a rich, intriguing experience of space, with lots of nuance and character. Whilst it steers away from predictability, this tapestry of built form contributes significantly to the identity of Keele. It will be important to retain this mosaic character and steer away from a dominance of one development style or structure. The arrangement and balance between the nuclei and ribbon developments should be maintained.
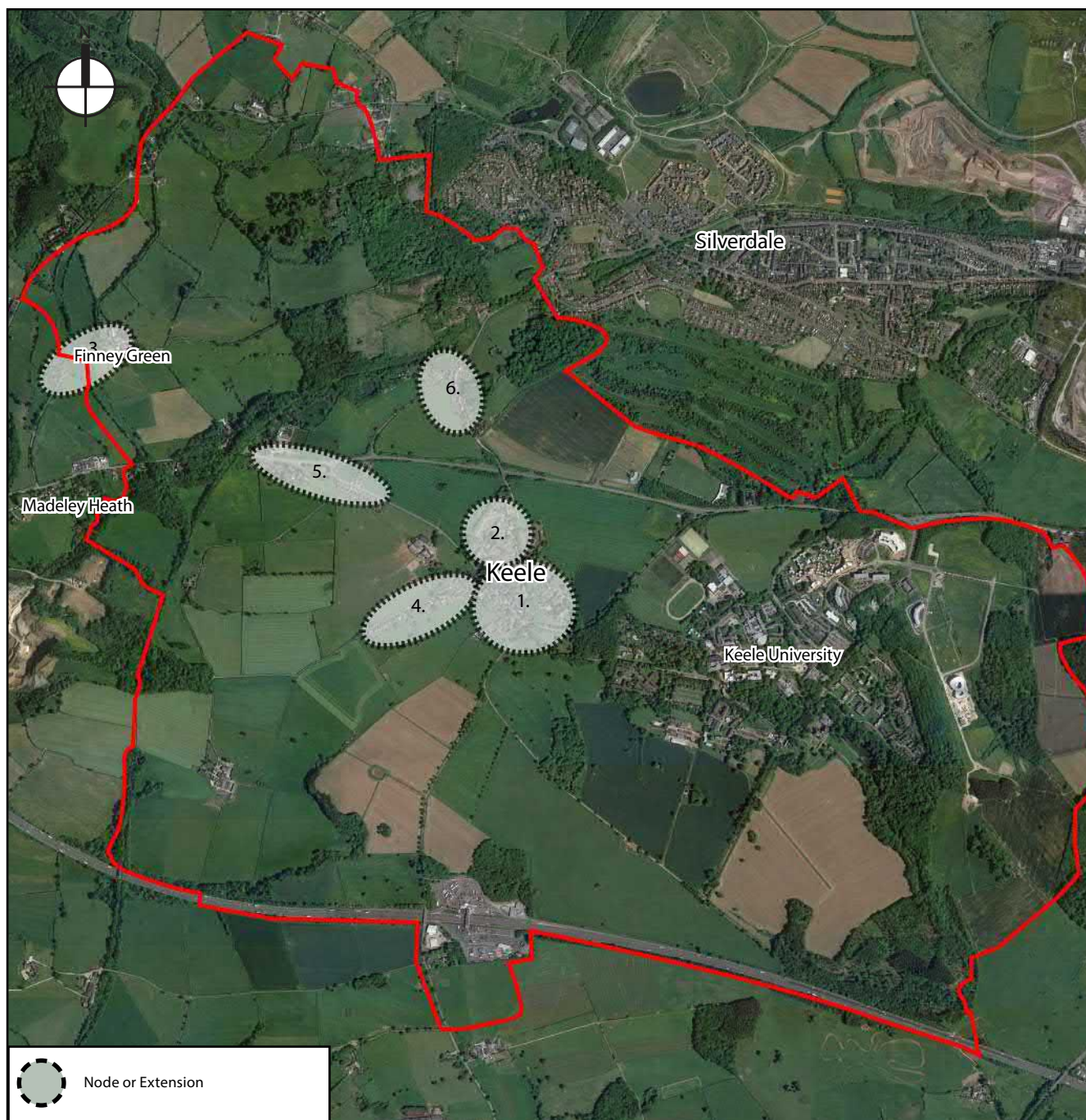

Figure 5: Urban Structure and Built Form (HCA, AECOM)

Route Hierarchy

An overview of the route network across the entirety of the parish area is discussed below:

- Strategic: The M6 motorway forms part of the southern boundary for the parish.

- Primary: The A525 forms the main access route which runs through the parish, extending from Newcastle-under-Lyme in the east to Madeley Heath in the west.

- Secondary: Secondary routes provide key connections between primary routes. The B5044 Pepper Street connects the parish to Silverdale in the north-west and Three Mile lane connects to the M6 in the south. Station Road and Keele Road provide connections to The Village.

- The Village is the name of the main road serving Keele as it passess through the village. This adopts a village-core character.

- Rural Lanes: The Rural Lanes serve the Village Spine and connect the core of the village to onward settlements. Three Mile Lane connects to the south, Station Road to the west and Keele Road to the east.

- Residential Streets: These are access routes which serve residential development. Access is their primary purpose.

Several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT) permeate across the parish. These provide key linkages, and are sometimes more direct than the driving routes (e.g Quarry Bank PRoW). The disused Market Drayton railway line extends from the southern boundary of the parish to the north east.

There is a shortage of parking on the university campus which has resulted in a significant amount of parking in the rest of the parish, especially along The Village where some households have no off-road parking.
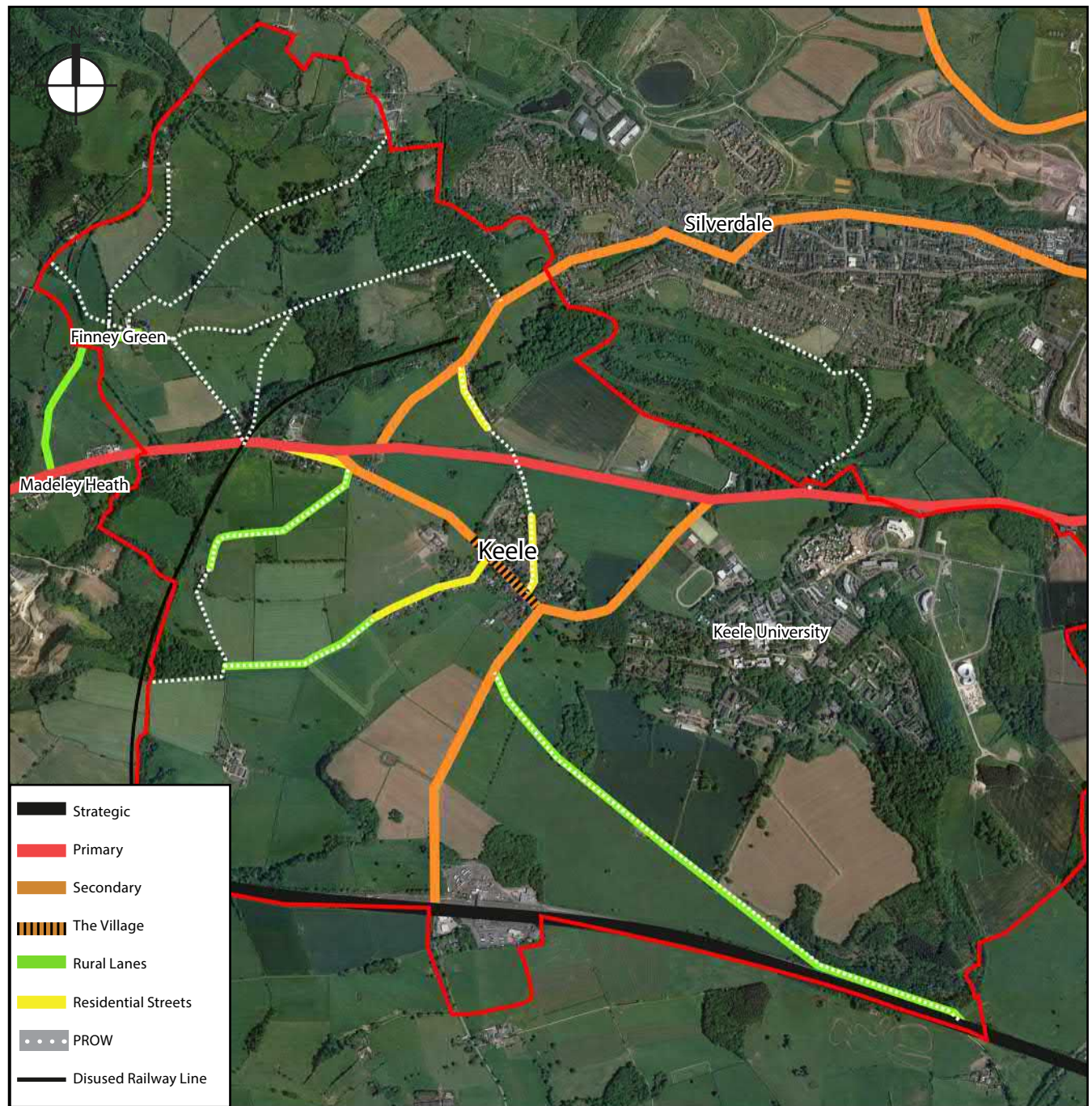
Figure 6: Parish-wide Route Hierarchy

Figure 7: Primary Route- The A525

Figure 8: Secondary Route -Keele Road

Figure 9: The VIllage

Figure 10: Residential Street- Highway Lane (north)

Figure 11: Rural Lane- Hollywood Lane

Figure 12: PRoW - Bridge over A525

Key Points for the Design Code

The streets which make up the road network in Keele have a variety of form and functions. Movement is quite contained within only a few routes, with much of the parish left uninterrupted by the street network. Streets are important in establishing character within the village, and the streetscape should try to retain the rural charm of this village and its close relationship to the landscape.

Buildings set back from the road with densely vegetated boundaries

Local Character

04

Parish Character

Keele is a historic village with a compact core and larger areas of open space around the edges. It remains rural despite the presence of the University campus in the east. There are a large number of trees within and around the edge of the village core which contributes greatly to the rural feel of the area. There are a range of architectural features and styles within Keele, creating a unique village vernacular. The built environment is very much defined by the relationship to the open countryside and rural landscape. Various areas can be identified which share a similar built-character. Within these areas a variety of different vernaculars and building styles remains.

1 Keele Conservation Area: The main nucleus. This comprises of a 19th century estate village with some elements of 20th century development.

2 The Hawthornes: A residential development of 83 contemporary dwellings (under construction at the time of writing) which accounts for a considerable portion of the village's built environment.

3 Station road nucleus: A stretch of ribbon development of 1930s-60s buildings along Station Road, some older properties along Old Chapel Close, and a cluster around the former railway station.

4 Pepper Street/ Quarry Bank nucleus: 1930s-60s ribbon development at the junction. Distinctive, flat roofed pre-war houses are set back within hedged plots, with post-war, red brick houses further along Quarry Bank.

5 Highway Lane Ribbon extension: A series of large scale, low density dwellings which are of a traditional character in the north and become increasingly modern and varied in character to the south-west. Plot size remains substantial.

6 Knights Croft: Low density, one storey buildings located adjacent to the Conservation Area
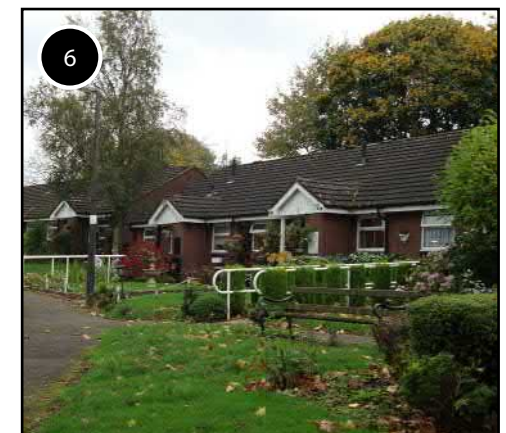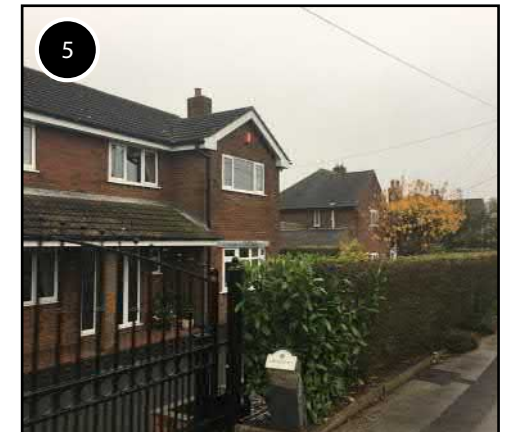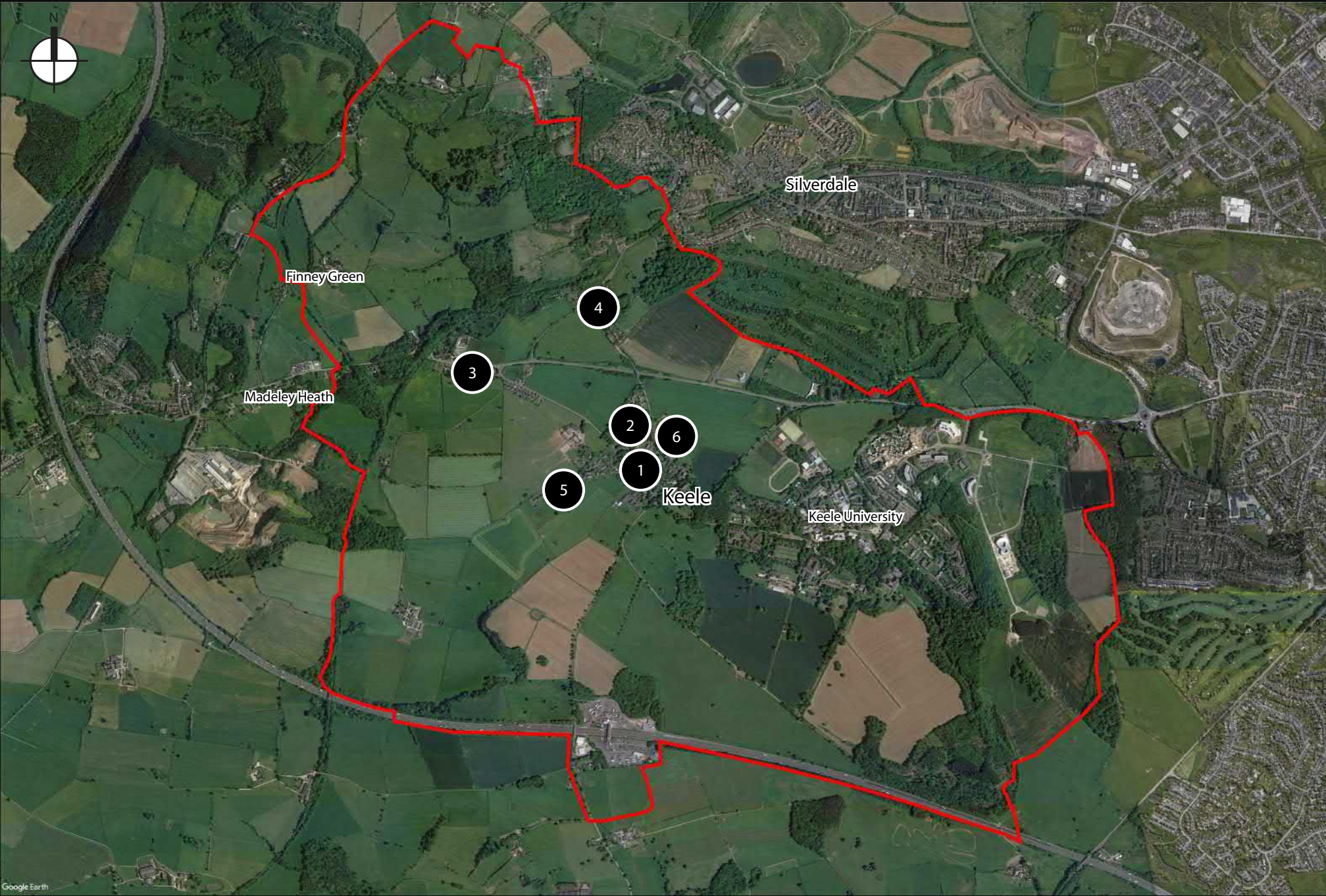
Figure 13: Different housing characters across the parish

Housing Character Examples

Station Road- 1930s-1960s

Pattern and Layout of Buildings	Buildings set back from Station Road in a formal arrangement. The slope of the land creates a sense of scale to the buildings.
Built Form and Roof	Semi-detached, two storey dwellings. Roofs are hipped with front facing gables above the primary upper storey window. Chimneys located at the centre of the roof. Pitched porches are common.
Boundary Treatment	Gardens located to the front and the rear. Hedgerow, low walls and landscaped gardens are common treatments.
Car Parking	Parking is captured on driveways to the front of the dwelling or within garages to the side or rear.
Materiality	Built from red brick. The bay windows and front facing gables are accentuated with white painted facades or hung tiles. Mock Tudor beams exist in part. UPVC windows and doors.

Quarry Bank- Interwar Style

Pattern and Layout of Buildings	Formal arrangement of buildings along Quarry Bank Road set back from the street.
Built Form and Roof	Semi-detached, two storey units with a flat roof, typical of the interwar period. Three chimney stacks serve the two semi-detached dwellings. High solid to void ratio with relatively small window openings. Simple porches above front door are common.
Boundary Treatment	Front and rear gardens. Fencing and hedgerow to the front boundary which screen from domestic gardens and hardstanding.
Car Parking	Parking captured on-plot either on driveways or garages.
Materiality	Roughcast render/ pebble-dashed building façade. Replacement of traditional window and doors with UPVC features.

Knights Croft

Pattern and Layout of Buildings	Informally arranged dwellings positioned around a cul-de-sac street (Knights Croft)
Built Form and Roof	Single storey dwellings which exist in a variety of semi-detached and linked arrangements. Pitched, continuous rooflines with front-facing porch extensions which identify front doors.
Boundary Treatment	Informal landscaping demarcates front gardens with no clear separation between public and private space. Open and spacious character.
Car Parking	A collection of parking bays consolidated in the centre of the cul-de-sac.
Materiality	Red brick buildings, white porch panelling and eaves, UPVC windows.

The Hawthornes

Pattern and Layout of Buildings	Residential estate with primary access onto Station Road/The Village. Public open space and a play area creates areas of openness. The scale and density of the estate is uncommon in the existing parish arrangement.
Built Form and Roof	Informally arranged detached and semi-detached housing of a variety of sizes and scales. Informal building and roof lines. Pitched roof with front facing gables and small dormers in part.
Boundary Treatment	Front gardens with landscaping and early shrub growth. Will become more apparent on completion.
Car Parking	Captured on plot (driveways) or in-curtilage (within garages)
Materiality	Red brick with stone window surrounds and door headers. Certain facades are white painted render. Grey eaves, downpipes and window/door detailing provide consistency.

Keele Conservation Area

Keele Conservation Area was designated based upon the interest derived from its historic character as an ancient village which was substantially remodelled and rebuilt as a 19th century estate village. It embodies a polite style.

Figure 14: Hedge-lined streets create an intimate environment

Streets and Public Realm	The raised landform, short narrow lanes and avenue tree planting creates an intimate feel with restricted views out to the countryside. Small pavements exist on either side of The Village. Small areas of grassed amenity space exist on the Three Mile Lane junction; otherwise there is little publically accessible open space. The hedge and tree lined streets create a rural and private character.
Pattern and Layout of Buildings	Informal organic layout, nucleated around the Three Mile Lane junction. The Old School, church and pub focus around this junction. The conservation area typically incorporates irregular plot sizes with a pattern of organic and incremental growth. A random collection of dwellings exists in the core which are surrounded by lower density buildings. Properties are set at angles to the road behind long gardens, creating an informal and spacious character.
Built Form	A range of building forms, including large detached houses in large plots, small cottages with small gardens, semi-detached houses, semi-detached cottages and short terraces. Varying size, shape and length of plots- these tend to be small and irregular in the centre and larger towards the edges of the village. Most buildings have a small and simple vernacular. The village core has predominantly low buildings which are hidden by surrounding vegetation- a few landmark buildings are more prominent.
Roofs	A consistent feature of the dwellings within the conservation area is their low roofs. Well-proportioned dormer gables and chimneys help define the skyline. Staffordshire small plain clay tiles are commonly used. Most houses have decorative fish-scale roof tile banding. Some roofs have apex dormers, exposed rafters and gable overhangs.

Table 1: Character of the Conservation Area

Figure 15: Landscaping creates a hidden street-scene

Figure 16: Buildings are often set-back from the street

Figure 20: Rendered buildings complement their neighbour

Figure 17: Small pavements and on-street parking along The Village

Car Parking	A lack of off-street parking has led to high levels of on-street parking along The Village.
Boundary Treatments	Hedges are the predominant boundary treatment to the front of properties. These can be up to 2m in height, sometimes adjacent to randomly coursed, rubble sandstone walls. The topography of the village gives the impression that hedgerow dominates the streetscene. Local red and buff rubble sandstone walls do exist, whilst some of the terraces exist without any hard boundary treatments.
Open Space and Landscape	Private and semi-private open spaces are crucial in establishing the conservation area character. Properties are often set back from the street and can be glimpsed through the vegetation creating a close, rural impression. Open fields surrounding the village help to create an agricultural setting. Trees and hedges play an important role in defining boundaries, screening and softening views.
Materiality	Many historic buildings have been rendered, part-rendered or painted so the appearance of the basic building material is stone, brick, polychromatic brick, render and painted brick. There is a rich, textured character to the building style.

Table 2: Character of the Conservation Area (Cont.)

Figure 18: Decorative fish-scale roof tiles

Figure 19: A highly textured and attractive building style.

Photographic Analysis and Observations of Keele Conservation Area

The following section identifies some of the characteristics of Keele Conservation Area.
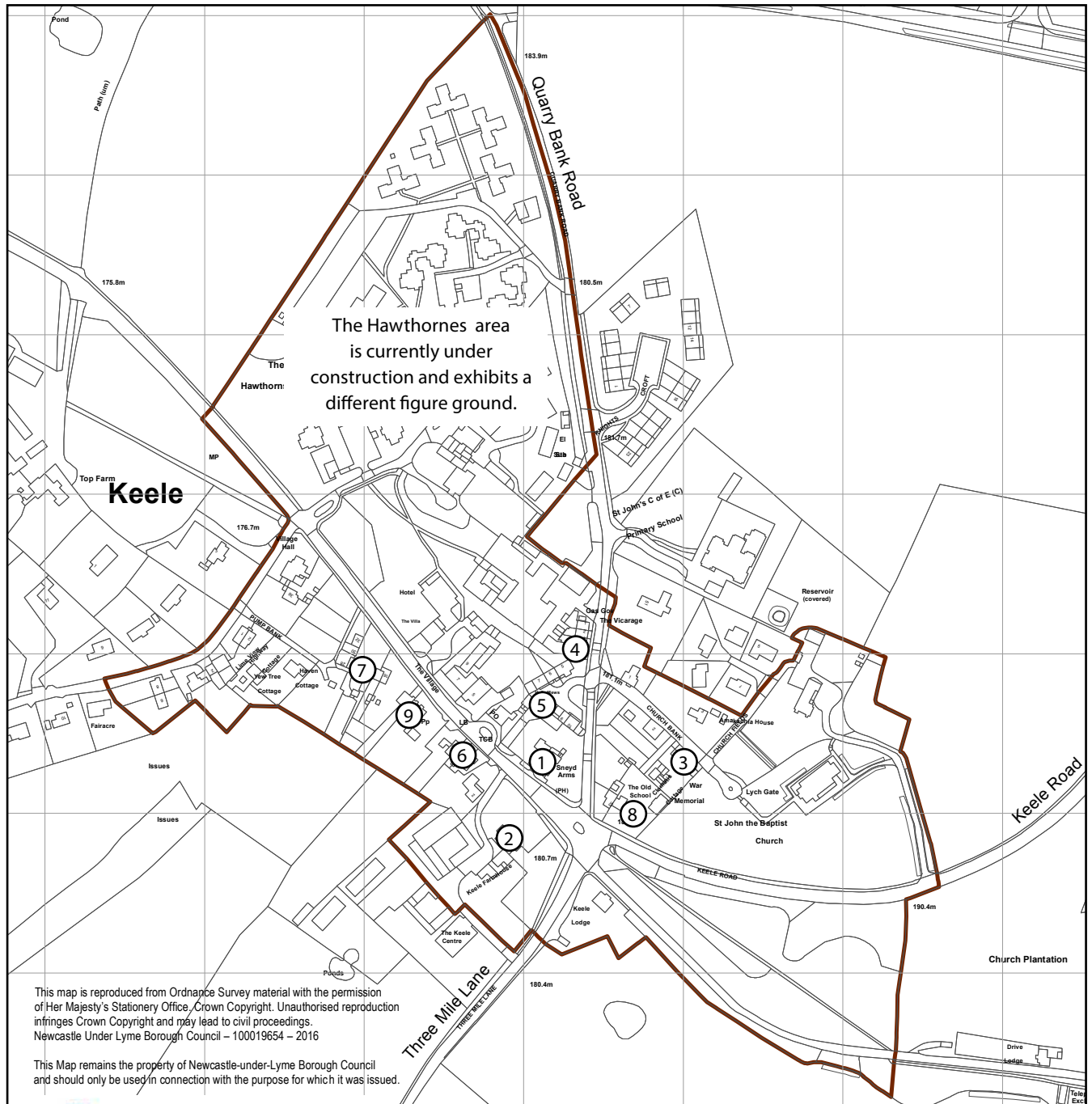
Figure 21: Photographic analysis of the Keele conservation area.

Photograph 1: The Sneyd Arms, The Village

- Stone building materials
- Clay roof tiles
- Multiple gables on front elevation
- Multiple brick chimneys along roof
- Buidling set back behind turfed front lawn with stone retaining wall
- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space
- Wide stone lintels contrasted with a narrower stone sill

Photograph 2: The Village

- Red and Staffordshire Blue brick building materials
- Clay roof tiles in a fish scale pattern
- Multiple gables on front elevation
- Tall brick chimneys
- Building sat back behind garden with hedgerow boundary
- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space
- Parking provided off street on private driveway
- Recessed front door with arched porch

Photograph 3: Church Bank

- Red brick and render building materials
- Clay roof tiles in a fish scale pattern
- Multiple gables on front elevation
- Brick chimneys at either end of building
- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space
- Parking provided off street on private driveway
- Pitched porch to the centre of the building

Photograph 4: Quarry Bank Road

- Red brick and render building materials

- Clay roof tiles

- Front facing gable roof detailing

- No chimneys

- Building set back behind small landscaping area with low brick wall boundary

- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space

- Parking provided on private driveway to the side of dwelling

Photograph 5: Holly Mews

- Red and Staffordshire Blue brick building materials

- Clay roof tiles

- Gable roof form with side facing gable ends

- No chimneys

- Building set back from main carriageway and fronts on to a shared access / parking court

- Parking provided in garages and shared parking court

Photograph 6: The Village

- Painted brick building elevation

- Clay roof tiles in a fish scale pattern

- Multiple gables on front elevation

- Tall brick chimneys

- Building set back behind gardens with hedgerow boundaries

- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space

- Parking provided on-street

Photograph 7: The Village

- Painted brick building elevations
- Clay roof tiles
- Multiple gables on front elevation with wooden architectural detailing
- Tall brick chimneys
- Building sat back behind garden with hedgerow boundary
- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space

Photograph 8: The Old School, Keele Road

- Red and Staffordshire Blue brick and stone building materials
- Clay roof tiles in a fish scale pattern
- Multiple gables on front elevation
- Tall brick chimneys
- Low stone wall topped with a decorative hedgerow boundary
- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space
- Stone quoins to the building corners with decorative stone window surrounds

Photograph 9: The Village

- Painted brick building elevation
- Clay roof tiles in a fish scale pattern
- Multiple gables on front elevation
- Tall brick chimneys
- Building sat back behind garden with hedgerow boundary
- Building is two storeys tall. Second storey makes use of the roof space
- Parking provided on-street
- Decorative brick detailing above windows

Strengths and Weaknesses

Key positive characteristics of Keele include:

- A village with a range of distinctive architectural features creating a unique, textured village vernacular. The styles work complementary alongside each other;

- The Keele Conservation has largely been able to retain its integrity and is relatively intact, with only a few examples of inappropriate development;

- An attractive rural setting; the village sits comfortably within its landscape;

- Hedgerow, trees and shrubs help to blur the transition into the surrounding landscape and contribute to local character and appearance;

- The limited transport infrastructure means traffic is largely confined to the M6 and A525, helping to secure tranquillity and rurality;

- The village has a clear sense of arrival;

- The Church of St John the Baptist is a primary landmark and helps to identify the village within the surrounding landscape;

- There is a generally consistent building height within the village. Those of a greater scale are located within defined areas and are appropriately screened.

Key issues to be addressed within Keele:

- Protecting architectural features on buildings and preventing harmful residential alterations to houses;

- Preventing unsympathetic alterations and extensions to historic buildings such as UPVC windows and doors;

- There is limited public green space within the village which isnt associated to the university;

- Hard boundary treatments do not uphold the character of Keele;

- Retaining the landscape character of the village and high density of mature trees and hedgerows;

- Ensuring development is appropriately sized and scaled so as not to disrupt the balance of styles within the village;

- On-street parking within the Conservation Area detracts from village character.

Design Codes

05

The rhythm of buildings along The Village

5. Design Codes

This section outlines key design elements and principles to consider when assessing a design proposal.

When to use the Codes

The following design codes must be interpreted as a starting point for new development. Exceptions to the code are inevitable but must be robustly justified and in keeping with the spirit of the code.

These codes are not intended to stifle creativity, but instead should be considered as a tool to help achieve an appropriate level of design quality and to capture a sense of place. The aim of this section is to elaborate on a series of design principles and elements which will help new development to maintain the special character of Keele.

List of Design Codes

- Code 1 Community Consultation
- Code 2 Building for a Healthy Life
- Code 3 National Design Guide
- Code 4 Character
- Code 5 Layout
- Code 6 Built Form
- Code 7 Infill Development
- Code 8 Rural Buildings
- Code 9 Type of Homes
- Code 10 Roof
- Code 11 Landscaping
- Code 12 Views
- Code 13 Boundary Treatments
- Code 14 Architectural Detailing
- Code 15 Age-Friendly
- Code 16 Heritage and Character
- Code 17 Conservation Areas
- Code 18 Movement and Parking
- Code 19 Eco-Friendly Design
- Code 20 Water and Drainage
- Code 21 Development on the 'Edges'

Code 1 Community Consultation

Consultation with the community and regular communication and liaison with the community groups must form a key part of the design process from inception to planning submission.

Code 2 Building for a Healthy Life

Major development (or minor developments in the Conservation Areas) must provide a Building for a Healthy Life Assessment which can be updated through all stages of the planning and delivery of the project.

Code 3 National Design Guide

Major development (or minor developments in the Conservation Areas) must provide a statement to show how each of the National Design Guide topics has been taken into account within the design process at each stage.

Code 4 Character

Keele has a rich character, strongly associated with the landscape. The built form is varied with a whole texture of vernaculars which exist in sensitive balance to one another. Small scale parcels of developments have retained a mosaic of building styles which exist complementary alongside each other. Whilst there is a strong building style, there is no strong dominance of building form; it is the mixed appearance of the village which contributes to its charm.

- There needs to be careful consideration to the sensitivity of this village composition. Large scale developments of homogenous style which doesn't reflect the nuance and texture of Keele should be avoided.

- The historical character and appearance of Keele should be maintained, especially within the Keele Conservation Area and along The Village.

- The existing rural and peaceful atmosphere of Keele should be preserved.

- The relationship between the built and natural environment should be upheld with sensitivity. The open countryside, especially to the south, should remain a prevalent feature of the parish.

- Native trees and shrubs should be used to reinforce the rural character of the village.

- Development, when it occurs, should adopt an incremental and small-scale approach, in order to not overwhelm the balance of village character.

The harmony which exists between the built and the rural environment should be retained as an important feature of the parish.

The close proximity of the open countryside is an asset which cannot be overlooked.

Figure 22: Aerial of the Village. The rural, landscaped nature and informal development style should be preserved.

Code 5 Layout

- Development should respond to the existing development pattern of its proximity and adopt complementary block sizes, structures and layouts. Buildings should be arranged in a legible layout which is permeable and which is well embedded into the existing fabric of the parish, whilst retaining the historic street layout.

- The form and structure of the new development should ensure that a sense of place is created which respects its context, setting, local village and landscape character.

- Ribbon development should be limited to appropriate extensions so as not to create continuous links, which would be out of keeping to the village character.

- The village is nucleated and should remain as such; whilst small instances of ribbon development are acceptable in certain contexts any new developments should uphold this nucleated arrangement.

- The careful existing balance between built and natural environment should be recognised within new development so as not to undermine the character of the village.

- Any new development proposed adjacent to the surrounding open landscape should be of a lower density than the main settlement areas to allow it to blend more sensitively with the rural context.

- In order to provide overlooking and natural surveillance buildings should generally position their main façade and entrance facing the street where this is in keeping with local character. In some instances (courtyard arrangements and key gateways) it may be appropriate to orientate the gable end of the building on to the street, however this gable end must include windows facing on to the street.

The A525 is a barrier to northwards expansion of the village core.

Ribbon developments should be limited in length and gaps between settlement areas maintained. These gaps are important in establishing visual proximity to the surrounding countryside.

The relatively compact, nucleated structure of the village core should be retained.
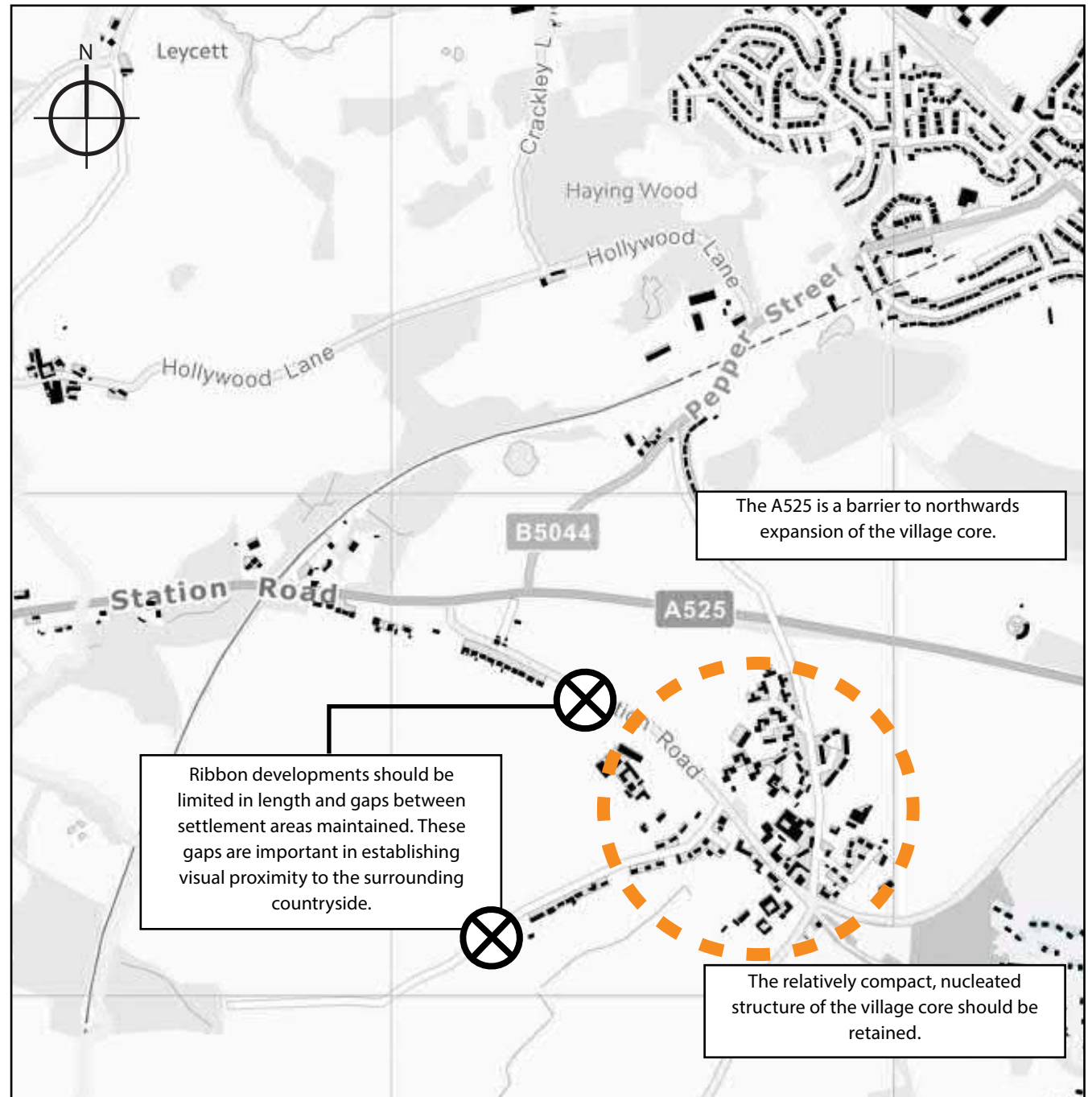
Figure 23: Village layout

Code 6 Built Form

- Dwellings should be well designed and sympathetic to the immediate environment. Scale, location and materiality should not detract from the character of the surrounding rural landscape.

- Buildings are predominantly low within the village and screened by vegetation. This should be sought within new developments.

- Small scale development is preferable to large scale developments. The delivery of small groups of dwellings should reflect the character of Keele.

Code 7 Infill Development

- Infilling of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage of up to 2 dwellings in character and scale with adjoining development will be supported providing it supports continuity of existing frontage buildings and that it is not considered to be unneighbourly or inappropriate.

- Ensure that the height, scale and massing of the proposed infill development is in context with neighbouring buildings.

- Respect the existing building line and frontage type.

- Ensure that the proposed development responds to the architectural rhythmn / character of neighbouring buildings.

Figure 24: Scale and location should not detract from the landscape

Figure 25: The integrity of the landscape is important to maintain

Figure 26: A good example of repurposed units to the rear of a dwelling. Infill development is supported if appropriately designed.

Code 8 Rural Buildings

- The design of buildings within the landscape should conserve and enhance the local countryside character and distinctiveness.

- The historic character of traditional rural buildings should be maintained.

Code 9 Type of Homes

- As per the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, approximately two-thirds of new homes on developments of 9 or more new homes should be terraced or semi-detached, and one –third as detached properties. Strong justification is needed if otherwise.

Code 10 Roof

- Chimneys and dormer gables should sympathetically reflect those which currently exist in scale. They should be appropriately sized to the buildings which they occupy, and have a positive impact on the rhythm of the roofline.

- Original chimney stacks and pots are considered to be important architectural features and should be retained

- Rooflights should be discreet and preferably faced away from the road, especially within the Conservation Area.

Figure 27: Chimney detailing

Figure 29: Appropriately sized dormers at The Hawthornes

Figure 28: Rhythm of front facing gables and character of chimneys

Code 11 Landscaping

- Development should be informed by and sympathetic to landscape character and quality

- High density hedgerow, shrubs and mature trees make a significant contribution to local character and appearance of the village and should be retained, especially along The Village to maintain an intimate streetscene.

- In general, the built form of Keele should be hidden within the landscape through appropriate vegetation screening.

- Imaginative landscape treatment which adds positive distinction to the surroundings are supported.

- Planting should consist of native species, characteristic to the locality.

- The removal of visually significant trees, shrubs or hedges should be avoided, and their placemaking and landscape value recognised.

- The green and blue infrastructure assets of the village should be protected, maintained and enhanced both in quality and quantity. In addition to hedgerow, shrubs and mature trees this also includes ponds, wetlands, allotments, woodland, open spaces, playing fields, parks and any street trees.

- New development should provide avenue street tree planting along streets in accordance with the character of the existing village.

- Ancient woodland and individual ancient/veteran trees within or adjacent to the site are important ecologically and in creating a sense of place. They should be protected from the impact of development.

- Gardens and boundary treatments should be designed to allow the movement of wildlife and provide habitat for local species.

Figure 30: Tree-lined boulevard towards the University

Figure 31: The close relationship between hedgerow and the street

Station Road: The dense hedgerow along Station Road should be retained as a pleasant approach into the village core.

The grassed open space adjacent to the tree-lined access to the University should be protected as a public accessible green space.

Keele Hall Drive: The trees on either side of Keele Hall drive should be protected as a tree-lined boulevard.

Figure 32: Trees and landscaping soften the hard surfaces of the built environment

Code 12 Views

- The Church of St John the Baptist has a 130ft spire and is a key focal point for the village. Buildings and vegetation should seek to frame this view.

- Retain views along the tree-lined boulevard of Keele Hall drive.

- The skyline of the village should be considered in its entirety. Any stark changes or interruptions to this skyline should be avoided.

- Glimpses through front boundary hedgerow to dwellings which are set back from the road are a pleasant feature and should be retained.

- The spacing of new development should reflect the rural character and allow for long distance views of the surrounding countryside.

- Development should not negatively impact on any important views. The topography should be carefully considered when any new buildings are being placed.

Figure 39: Glimpses to attractive views

Figure 42: Gaps between the hedgerow are a common feature

Figure 41: Hedgerow contributes to the streetscape character

Figure 40: All views to the church should be preserved

Code 13 Boundary Treatments

- The historic sandstone walls within the village should be maintained.

- Removal of traditional boundary walls or hedges would have a detrimental effect on the historic character of Keele and should be avoided where possible. New development should seek to provide hedgerows to plot boundaries facing the road. Figure 61 (page 47) outlines some of these elements.

- Avoid concrete posts with panel fencing; the modern materials, colours, hard lines and regularity are a strong contrast to the vegetation of the village. Solid boundary treatments in general should be avoided.

- It will be necessary to provide on-plot waste storage. This will need to be be integrated as part of the overall design of the property and potentially incorporated within the boundary treatment. Landscaping could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers.

Figure 43: Dense hedgerow creates an enchanting street-scene

Figure 44: Traditional timber post fencing can be acceptable

Figure 45: Landscaped boundaries

Figure 46: Hedgerow and brick walls form attractive combination

Figure 47: Panel fencing should be avoided on public roads

Figure 48: Panel fencing is out of scale and unattractive

Figure 49: Traditional stone walls

Code 14 Architectural Detailing

Architectural detailing adds an important texture across the parish; it is noticeable when buildings do not have attention to this detailing. In order to safeguard the integrity of Keele and this attention to detail and texture needs to be appreciated in new developments and retained in traditional units.

Given the variety of styles exhibited across Keele, it would be inappropriate to dictate that only a certain style is permissible. With that in mind, it is better to respond to the general character of the parish. Designers must respond to the local character with one of the following three approaches, considered in the following order:

- Harmonise- clearly responding to existing characteristics

- Complement- delivering something slightly different which adds to the overall character and quality in a way which us fitting and shares some similarities

- Contrast- a high quality design which is different but which adds positively to the built-form and character. Something which will be considered a good precedent for future development.

Traditional architectural features must always be protected on historic buildings in order to prevent incremental, inappropriate residential alterations to houses. Figure 60 (page 46) outlines some of these elements.

Code 15 Age-Friendly

Development should support the needs and lifestyles of an ageing population. Building to Lifetime Home and Bulding for a Healthy Life standards is encouraged.

Figure 50: Patterned fish scale roof riles

Figure 51: Patterned brick combinations

Figure 52: Decorative window headers

Figure 53: Fine red and blue brickwork

Figure 54: Windows maintain the traditional sub-division of panes

Figure 55: Diaper pattern blue-bricks

Code 16 Heritage and Character

- Proposals to alter existing buildings should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the history and design qualities of the building and provide a clear rationale for how this is taken account of in the design of the alterations proposed.

- The total or substantial demolition of listed buildings should be resisted.

- Alterations or additions to a listed building which would adversely affect its character or architectural and historic features is discouraged.

Code 17 Conservation Areas

- Development which would harm the special character of the conservation areas should be avoided.

- Demolition of buildings within the conservation areas is discouraged.

- Any conversion to buildings within the conservation area should seek to enhance the character of that conservation area.

- Development within the conservation areas should avoid pastiche or inappropriate interpretation of historic styles.

- Windows should be repaired rather than replaced where possible. When replaced they should be sympathetic to the original material, sub-division and style.

- UPVC or aluminium replacements for windows and doors are not generally suitable.

Figure 56: Grade II* listed, Keele Hall

Figure 57: Grade II* listed Church of St John the Baptist

Figure 58: Grade II listed, Keele Lodge
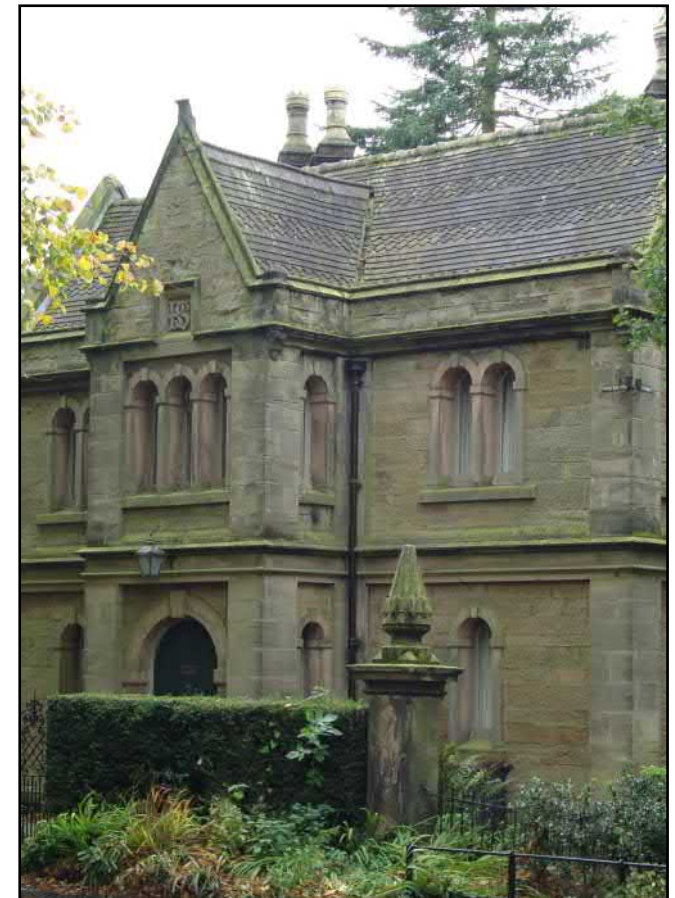

Figure 59: Grade II listed Keele Hall Clock House

Traditional window sub-division should be maintained

Simple coloured down pipes and eaves are recommended.

Slate roofing material

Typical colours and materiality of buildings include:

Red brick

White or muted render

Painted render should reflect the natural colours of surrounding landscape and be used with care.

Decorative window surrounds

Simple window surrounds

Retention of vegetation and screening to the front of the property is supported

Figure 60: Elements of architectural detailing of Traditional buildings

Maintaining enclosure along the street

Glimpsed views through to the dwellings

Boundary treatments conducive to a traditional public realm

Tradtional Stone Walling

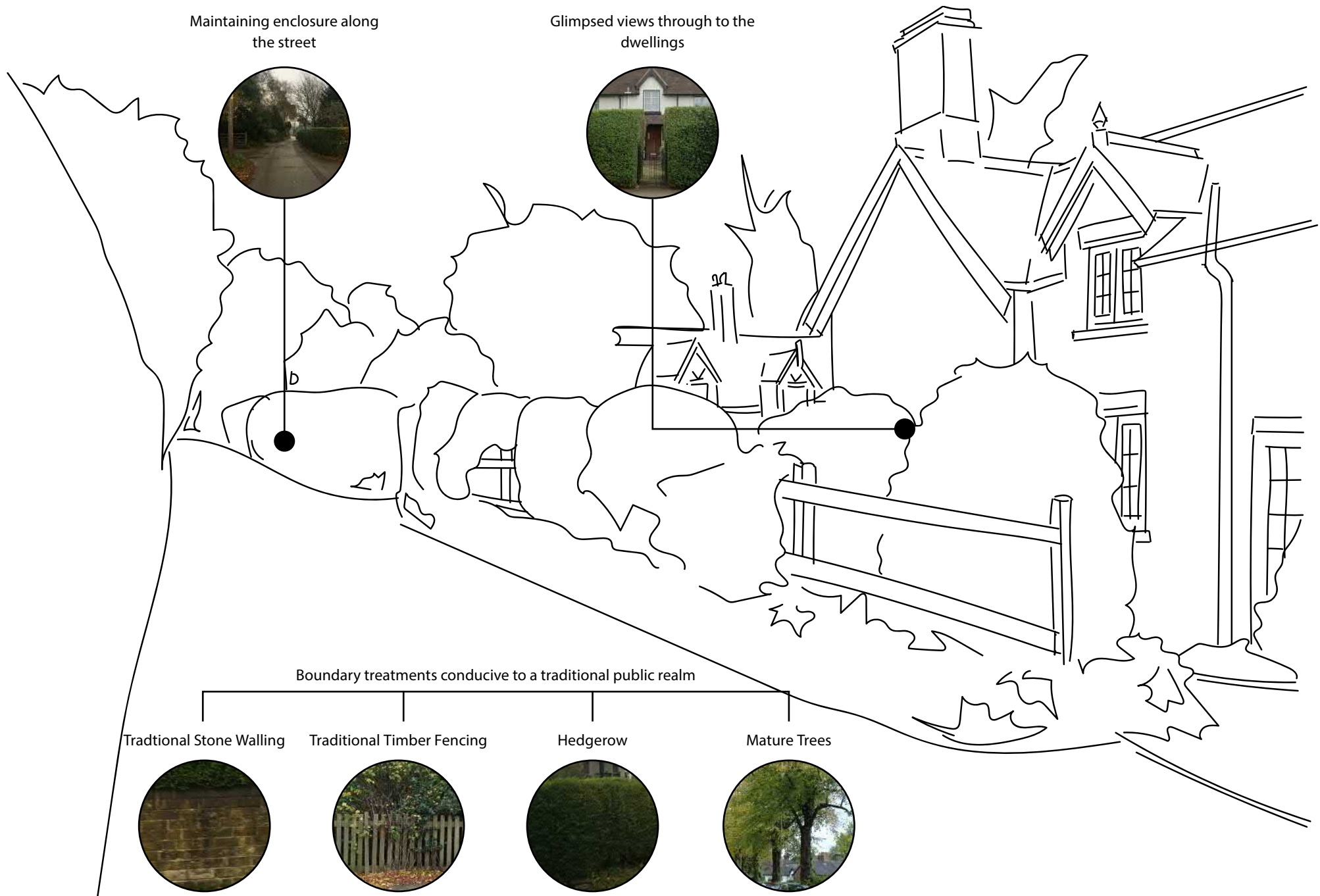Traditional Timber Fencing

Hedgerow

Mature Trees

Figure 61: Characteristics of a traditional residential street

Code 18 Movement and Parking

- Streets must meet technical highways requirements as well as be considered a 'space' to be used by all, not just motor vehicles. It is essential that the design of new development should include streets that incorporate needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

- Streets should follow the gentle curves of the land around Keele.

- The character of the rural lanes should be maintained - the narrow, hedgelined roads through the open countryside help establish a rural character.

- Signage for PRoW is generally lacking (Heritage and Character Assessment, AECOM). New development should seek to contribute to local wayfinding with appropriately designed signage and clear links to PRoW.

- New development should seek to provide off-road parking where possible.

- Links between open spaces and recreational assets are encouraged- these should be supported with attractive routes.

The Village- This is the main route serving Keele village. Movement should allow for safe pedestrian and cyclist flow as well as unhindered vehicle movement. On-street parking should be addressed and limited to that which currently exists.

Rural Lanes: Development should seek to maintain a close relationship to the countryside along these roads which reinforce the rural character of the parish. It is important to adopt hedgerow and soft boundaries along Station Road, Keele Road and Three Mile Lane.

Residential Streets: Residential streets serve a smaller number of units and can a more intimate scale. With limited vehicular use, these streets work well as informal, shared spaces. Shared surface streets are a prime example of prioritising place over movement.

Figure 62: The curvature of the land should be complimented by streets

Figure 63: Signage for PRoW should be improved

Figure 64: On-street parking along The Village should be limited

Code 19 Eco-friendly Design

- Environmentally friendly and low-carbon solutions are encouraged.

- Solar panels are encouraged, but should be placed in discreet locations, especially within the conservation area. Ideally this would be on the rear roof slope of the property and flush with the slope. Retro-fitting renewable technologies to heritage buildings should be done with care.

- New development is encouraged to adopt a 'fabric first' approach to reduce energy demand.

- Good design should provide sufficient refuse and recycling storage.

- Integration of sustainability should be considered at the design stage, with consideration of passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient strategies.

- Designs should encourage local recycling, energy production and energy efficiency.

- Rainwater harvesting helps to capture and store rainwater, and also enables re-use of greywater. Efforts should be made to conceal the units, or install them with attractive materials, cladding and finishing's.

Code 20 Water and Drainage

- It is encouraged that SuDS are to be integrated into developments to help address surface water runoff from the development site. Drainage should be considered early in the development planning and design process, along with other key considerations. Existing flows of surface water across the site, and existing drainage systems, must be taken into consideration and the drainage strategy should mimic natural drainage patterns as closely as possible.

- It is common in Keele for the buildings to be located lower than the road network, creating risk of surface water run-off towards the property. The position of the development in relation to the road network should be considered within the design process. Any surface water drainage should be mitigated in these circumstances.

- Development in elevated positions should have careful consideration of its drainage impacts and the potential impact of surface water run-off.

- Permeable surfaces reduce flood risk by allowing water to filter through. Adoption of permeable paving solutions instead of tarmac would help to enhance the streetscene through attractive materiality.

Figure 66: Solar panels can be adopted to look like original slate roofing

Figure 65: An attractive screen for recycling and refuse facilities

Code 21 Development on the 'Edges'

Landscape edges

- Boundaries should be softened with vegetation to offer a smooth transition into the surrounding landscape. Development edges should be designed to have a minimal impact on the rural character of the countryside.

- Regular breaks in built form to increase visual permeability and opportunities for views. The dwellings to the edge of the village settlement are typically spaced further apart in Keele than the centre of the village. This is good practice.

- New shrub and tree planting can provide screening for privacy. Preference should be given to locally indigenous species and varieties of plants.

- Rear view boundary treatments are important, and should 'fade out' to the landscape. Trees and hedgerows are slow growing in the high peak so their retention is encouraged.

Other edges…

- Development which occurs on the edge of the parish boundary should have due consideration for the vernacular and character of housing which may be adjacent within an adjoining boundary.

- It is important to retain the landscape screening between the village and the university and vice-versa.

- Any development in proximity to the A525 should be sufficiently screened for noise and privacy purposes.

Figure 67: A rural transition between the settlement edge and the surrounding landscape is achieved through fencing and planting

Features to Avoid

UPVC replacements

Traditional features should be retained where possible. UPVC is often a stark contrast to the traditional character of a building.

Window inconsistencies

Where possible, the materiality and arrangement of the window panes should seek to relflect that of neighbourhing properties.

Panel fencing

Panel fencing should be avoided on any public-facing frontages.

Matching brickwork

Differences in colour of brickwork can make extensions or alterations starkly apparent.

Inconsistent facade treatments

Facade treatments should be high quality and show consistency across the building. Painted breezeblocks are uncommon in the parish.

Incongruous boundary treatments

Boundary treatments should seek to maintain the traditional and rural quality of Keele, and have a complementary relationship with adjoining boundaries.

Next Steps

07

The Snyed Arms,

Next Steps

This document has provided an analysis of the built and natural character of Keele parish. It has sought to understand the local identity and the qualities of place which require protecting into the future. The design codes within this document should give certainty to developers as they will be able to design a scheme that is reflective of community aspirations, and also offers guidance to good design and placemaking principles.

Future developers should also make sure that they have observed the guidance in the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's National Design Guide, as well as the many other documents referenced within this report.

Developers should also note that housing developments of any size should strive to achieve carbon neutrality in line with the Government's forthcoming Future Homes Standard. Further standards on residential developments should also be obtained from Building for a Healthy Life, a government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods.

This document forms part of the evidence base for the Keele Neighbourhood Plan, and it is recommended that the codes are embedded within the forthcoming plan as policy.

Appendix

Design Guidelines

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6. Design Guidelines

This section outlines key design elements and principles to consider when assessing a design proposal.

6.1. General questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

Based on established good practice, this section provides a number of questions against which any design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in the proposals. The proposals or design should:

1. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;

2. Reinforce or enhance the established village character of streets, greens, and other spaces;

3. Respect the rural character of views and gaps;

4. Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;

5. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long distance views;

6. Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;

7. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;

8. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;

9. Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;

10. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;

11. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

12. Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;

13. Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours; and

14. Positively integrate energy efficient technologies.

Following these ideas and principles, there are number of questions related to the design guidelines outlined later in the document.

Street Grid and Layout

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?

- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists, and those with disabilities?

- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern? Are these reflected in the proposal?

- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?

- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Local Green Spaces, Views and Character

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?

- Has the proposal been considered in its widest context?

- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?

- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?

- How does the proposal affect trees on or adjacent to the site?

- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?

- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

- Can any new views be created?

- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?

- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

Gateway and Access Features

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between villages?

- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?

- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings Layout and Grouping

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?

- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?

- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?

- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?

- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?

- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

Building Line and Boundary Treatment

- What are the characteristics of the building line?

- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?

- Have the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Fenestration

- Are windows of sufficient size and number to allow abundant natural light inside the building?

- Have long stretches of blank (windowless) walls been minimised?

- Have considerations for natural surveillance and privacy been carefully balanced?

- Have consistent window styles and shapes been used across the elevation to avoid visual clutter?

- In historic areas, does the fenestration demonstrate a careful understanding of locally distinctive features such as scale, rhythm, materials, ornamentations, and articulation?

Building Heights and Roofline

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?

- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing, and scale?

- If a higher than average building is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

Household Extensions

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing, or overshadowing impact?

- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?

- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?

- In case of side extension, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?

- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?

- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?

- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

Building Materials and Surface Treatment

- What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?

- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local material?

- Does the proposal use high quality materials?

- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves, and roof been addressed in the context of the overall design?

- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

Car Parking Solutions

- What parking solutions have been considered?

- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

Architectural Details and Contemporary Design

- If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?

- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?

- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?

- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?