

A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

for
ALREWAS PARISH
2013 - 2029



Prepared by The Neighbourhood
Plan Steering Group on behalf of
Alrewas Parish Council

Made DD MM 2018

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1. Acknowledgements

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would like to thank the following for their input to the Plan and their support of its aspirations:

- Alrewas Parish Council for embarking on the project, its ongoing support and direct involvement in the preparation of the Plan.
- Land owners and developers who engaged with the group, shared their aspirations for their sites and supported the process.
- Residents who took part in the detailed Task Group sessions - over fifty individuals spread over a dozen sessions.
- All those who responded to the parish survey, business survey, canal festival attendees - well over a thousand individuals who have had their say.
- All Saints Primary School pupils and teachers.
- Youth Forum volunteers and group members.
- The consultants, Your Locale, for their professional support and input to the Plan.
- Lichfield District Council Officers for their advice and guidance.
- Photographs courtesy of Harry Arnold MBE, Peter Ralley (Alrewas Archive), John Pegg and Will Chapman. Some photographs may be from unknown sources – no copyright infringement is intended - thanks to all who originated these photographs.

THANK YOU

2. Introduction

The Localism Act (2011) introduced Neighbourhood Planning as a way for communities to actively engage with the process of planning policy making for their local area. In February 2013 Alrewas Parish Council successfully applied to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, with the Plan area designated as the Parish Boundary.

The Plan has been produced by a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group made up of Parish Council members, community volunteers, community group leaders and local built environment professionals. The group has been supported by Lichfield District Council officers and Your Locale.

The Neighbourhood Plan aims to provide a set of statutory planning policies for the development of the Parish over the life of the Plan.

The Plan reflects significant public engagement and seeks to represent their views as fully as possible. The Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Lichfield Local Plan (2015). The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period from 2013 to 2029.

The Plan embraces the National Planning Policy Framework, supporting strategic development in accordance with Local Plan policies and planning positively to support local development, but taking into account local circumstances in shaping and directing development in the Plan area.

Five resident focus groups (or 'Task Groups') were established to review key elements of policy, involving over fifty members of the community including Parish Councillors, local landowners, developers and community representatives. The Task Groups identified key issues for the Parish, and these were instrumental in generating a detailed Parish wide survey of all adult residents and a separate business survey. The Parish survey achieved a very high response rate (38%) providing clear guidance on what residents wanted to see in the Plan and highlighting concerns about the future development of the Parish. This has been a key element of the evidence for the subsequent formulation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies. Alongside the community survey the Neighbourhood Plan has used a range of evidence including the evidence published to support the District Council's Local Plan.



FIVE POLICY ELEMENTS:

- ***Community Facilities***
- ***Traffic and Transport***
- ***Public Realm***
- ***Environment and Conservation***
- ***Housing and Economic Development***

A Neighbourhood Plan is considered to meet the basic conditions if:

- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
- the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
- the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood development plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood development plan.

Previous Local Work

The Alrewas community has a well-established history of local engagement with development planning. Alrewas prepared a Parish Plan as long ago as 2003. In 2008 parishioners worked with Lichfield District Council to prepare a detailed Conservation Management Plan for Alrewas and in 2011 a Lichfield District Rural Planning Project established a number of recommendations relating to future development. Staffordshire County Council also published a Historic Character Assessment report for Alrewas in January 2013. The Lichfield Local Plan was adopted in 2015. All of these policies, reports and plans have been instrumental elements of the evidence base used in the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

This Plan is therefore based on sound District, County and Village level reports, plus further extensive research and is strongly influenced by robust engagement with the local community. Alongside the community survey and engagement, the Plan has taken into account a wide range of evidence, including the evidence base published to support the District Council's Local Plan.

EVIDENCE BASE:

- ***Lichfield District Local Plan***
- ***Parish-wide Survey***
- ***Community Consultation***
- ***Business Survey***
- ***Developer and Landowner Engagement***
- ***Conservation Management Plan 2010***
- ***Rural Masterplan 2011***
- ***Alrewas Historic Character Assessment 2013***

3. Vision and Objectives

Alrewas will continue to be a thriving and vibrant community which protects and enhances its distinctive character, rich heritage and natural assets such as the canal, river and its rural setting and will grow to be an even better place in which to live and to visit.

The aim of the Plan is to provide policies which will encourage development to be incremental, spread around the village and in smaller schemes which differentiate themselves from each other in terms of design whilst providing good quality design sympathetic to the nature of the village, its vernacular style and housing mix.

Services and infrastructure will be developed to meet the requirements of the residents. The built and natural heritage of the Parish will be retained and protected. The most highly valued countryside areas in the Parish will be recognised and conserved. Views and access to the surrounding countryside will be retained.

Key objectives:

- Future housing development should consist of infill and small scale developments so that it is dispersed and has a minimal impact on traffic flows within the village centre.
- New housing development should include a level of properties for first time buyers as well as high quality accommodation suitable for elderly “downsizers” to meet the current and projected demographic needs of the village.
- Designate a new Settlement Boundary to help deliver sustainable development.
- Retain access to the countryside, particularly to the north of the village.
- Protect and foster the natural environment for the benefit of people, flora and wildlife.
- Improve community life with particular reference to elderly and less able residents by strengthening community services.
- Increase the accessibility of facilities within the Parish, particularly through the construction of a footbridge across the A38 to link the Trent & Mersey Canal with the National Memorial Arboretum.
- Conserve and/or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets for this and future generations.



4. Summary

The settlement of Alrewas is identified in the Local Plan as a key rural settlement within Lichfield District. The historic village has a strong identity and is characterised by its compact nature, medieval origins, and its relation to the Trent and Mersey Canal.

In order for the Parish to grow in a way that is optimally sustainable and truly reflects the needs of existing and future residents, it is fundamentally important that a plan, developed by the local community, is in force.

The Alrewas Parish Neighbourhood Plan process began in January 2013 and there has been a high degree of stakeholder consultation. Primary research has been combined with that presented in existing formal and statutory documents to provide a robust evidence base, which has been used to identify five key areas of challenge and opportunity faced by Alrewas in the future – Community Facilities; Traffic and Transport; Public Realm; Environment and Conservation; and Development. Development has been further split into Housing Development and Economic Development. The Plan therefore includes six policy areas.



5. Local Context and History

The Parish of Alrewas is situated in the county of Staffordshire midway between Lichfield to the south and Burton-upon-Trent to the north. It is sited on Rykneld Street, a Roman Road which connects Alrewas with other ancient settlements such as Fradley and Barton-under-Needwood. It is adjacent to the rivers Trent and Swarbourn and has the Trent and Mersey Canal running through its centre.

The landscape of Alrewas is characterised by a flat plain which gave rise to its name. Over 2,000 years ago Alrewas was on the crossing point of two important trade routes, one running north to south called the Salt Route, another running east to west. As the plain was, and still is, liable to annual flooding, traders were often held up in this area and so a settlement sprung up. Its name comes from two words: *Alder*, denoting the trees that dominated this heavily forested area, and the Viking word *Weiss*, meaning area that floods. Thus *Alder-Weiss* eventually became Alrewas.

The area to the north of the village contains a mix of field systems of different dates from later medieval to modern, historically water meadows were important within the area, some of which survive. The Alrewas Historic Character Assessment 2013 also notes the high archaeological potential of both prehistoric and Roman remains as well as later archaeology associated with the settlement

With the development of the settlement came industry to serve the busy trade routes. There has been a mill of some sort in Alrewas for over 800 years, milling everything from cotton to animal feed and providing employment for a great number of inhabitants. The mill closed in the 1990s and the site has since been developed for housing. In 1777 the Trent and Mersey Canal was completed and runs through the centre of the village. It connected the Midlands to the River Mersey and Liverpool, securing a further route for trade across the UK. The canal is as important today as it was then - to the south of the village lies Fradley Junction, one of the most important points on the British Canal network, where the Trent and Mersey and the Coventry Canals meet. The canal provides valuable tourism for the village and adds to the cultural heritage that pervades Alrewas.



Alrewas had a station until 1964 when it closed as part of the Beeching reforms. Before then it had provided a lifeline to the village for passengers and its frequent trains delivered all manner of goods to the village including animal stock for the many farms and smallholdings.



During the first half of the twentieth century, Alrewas grew into a settlement of around 1,500 people. The village was a mix of houses, smallholdings and larger farms which all had their bases within the village itself and villagers were used to the sight of cows being walked through the village or drinking from the canal alongside children playing on Walkfield. There were numerous builders yards, small shops, four pubs and a grand hotel which doubled as the local mortuary.



Rykneld Street became the A38, a major route linking Bodmin in the south to Mansfield in the north, almost 230 miles in length. Today the A38 is a major dual carriageway which runs alongside the eastern edge of the village, connecting local communities with major cities, airports and the M6 Toll Road. In the 1960s and 70s the village underwent major change with the development of several major housing estates which eventually brought the population of Alrewas to around 3,000.



Alrewas is a vibrant village which maintains its traditions eg the Alrewas Show over 132 years, the Womens Institute over 100 years, Open Gardens over 25 years, and continues to establish new ones such as the biannual Alrewas Arts and the Canal & Music festivals.

Alrewas is proud of its heritage and takes care of its historic assets - its Norman Church; a large number of listed buildings; timber framed and thatched cottages and what remains of its rural hinterland. Much of the village is a designated Conservation Area which the community values highly. Alrewasians understand that renewal and development will always be needed, but they care about their village and are passionate that the unique rural nature of Alrewas should be maintained.



In 2001 the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) was established on former gravel quarries in the east of the Parish. Recognised as the UK's national centre for remembrance, the NMA now attracts over 300,000 visitors a year and is a significant international tourist destination.

Alrewas is proud to be a Gateway into the National Forest. The village, and a significant portion of the parish, lie within the National Forest. The recently opened National Forest Way starts at the National Memorial Arboretum and passes through the village and onwards across the parish towards Yoxall.

Pedestrian access between the village and the NMA is hazardous. A pedestrian bridge would make this section of the walk safer and much more pleasant.

Part of the parish also lies in the area covered by the Central Rivers Initiative which has taken on the role of restoring former gravel workings as places for tourism, employment, recreation and wildlife. The vision of the Central Rivers Initiative is to carefully restore these sites to create beautiful places where people can explore and enjoy water, landscape and wildlife, and to form a sustainable network of wildlife habitats, public amenities and agricultural land.

In the west of the Parish lie Orgreave and Overley, both hamlets centred on former large farms or manorial houses, which stretch out along the A513, both within easy walking distance of Alrewas Village itself. Between them is a National Grid major high pressure gas pumping station, and a number of pipelines run across the parish. (Figure 1 page 11).

At 344 hectares, Alrewas is the smallest Parish in Lichfield District by some considerable margin. When the areas taken up by the NMA; land subject to regular flooding; gravel extraction sites and non-developable rural farmland is taken into account, the potential for development sites in the Parish is very limited. This is indicated by Figure 3 on page 12 which sets out land use in the Parish.

Furthermore the development boundary of Alrewas village has remained largely confined by natural and manmade features; major roads to the east and south (A38 and A513), and floodplains of the River Trent and its tributary Pyford Brook to the north and west respectively. These were instrumental in establishing development boundaries in the 1998 Local Plan.

The impact of issues such as flooding on the Rivers Trent and Tame to the north and east, Pyford Brook to the west (see Figure 2 on page 11), traffic speed, noise and pollution from the major roads to the east and south, are concerns for the community and have been considered in the Plan.



These various constraints have led to the last 40 years of development being mostly infill sites. As such the village has relatively little open amenity space within its development boundaries and no village green. The community is therefore unsurprisingly protective of Alrewas' playing fields (known as 'Walkfield') and any open rural land which remains on its outskirts, the most easily accessible of which is to the north.

Future development in the Parish therefore has to find a delicate balance between these constraints and the need for the village itself to continue to remain sustainable, in order to ensure that it meets the needs of local people in the future.

Data from the 2011 Census below shows that Alrewas has a higher percentage of residents over 60 (31.7%) when compared with Lichfield (27.6%) and England (22.3%). These differences are significant and support a policy to ensure an adequate number of suitable homes for elderly people are provided in future development.

Age Range	Alrewas		Lichfield	England
	Population	%	%	%
0 - 9	303	10.6	10.6	11.9
10 - 19	369	12.9	11.6	12.1
20 - 29	169	5.9	10.2	13.7
30 - 39	226	7.9	11.6	13.3
40 - 49	501	17.6	15.4	14.6
50 - 59	379	13.3	13.2	12.1
60 - 69	441	15.5	14.3	10.7
70 - 79	311	10.9	8.6	7.0
80 - 89	140	4.9	3.9	3.8
90 +	13	0.5	0.8	0.8
Total	2852	100	100	100

In preparing this Neighbourhood Plan, a great deal of local knowledge, community comment and consultation has been combined to consider solutions to this fundamental challenge and to put forward detailed proposals for future development.



Figure 1: Alrewas Neighbourhood Area

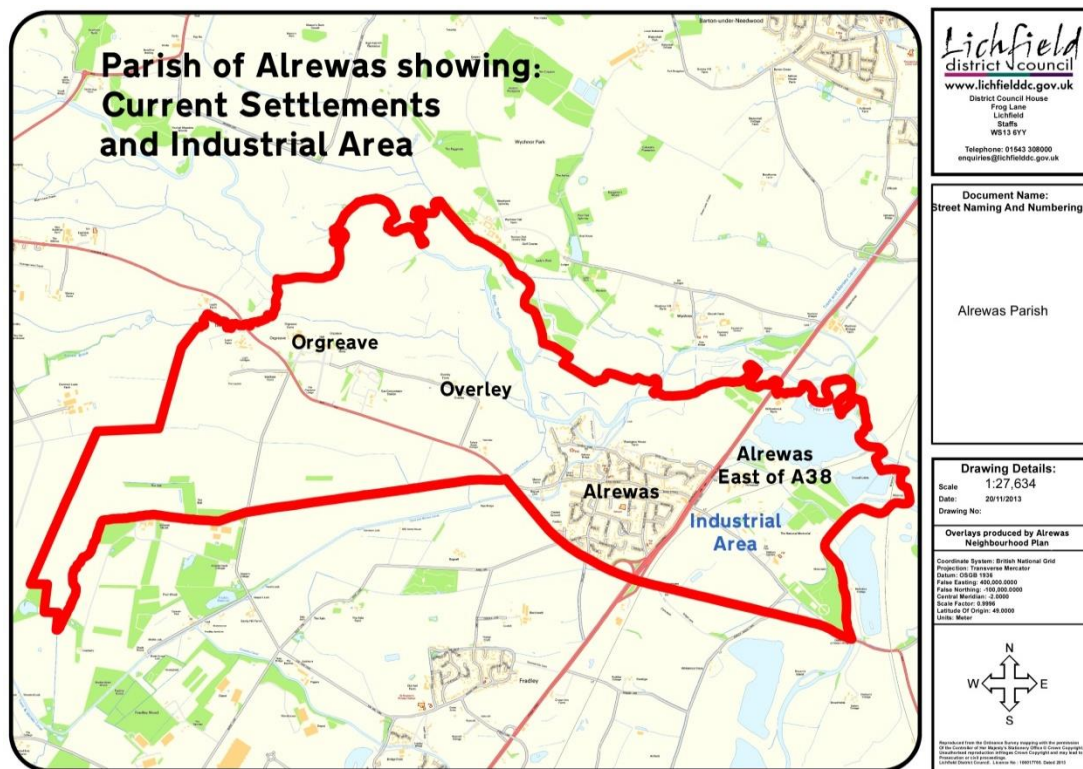


Figure 2: Flood Plain around Alrewas Village

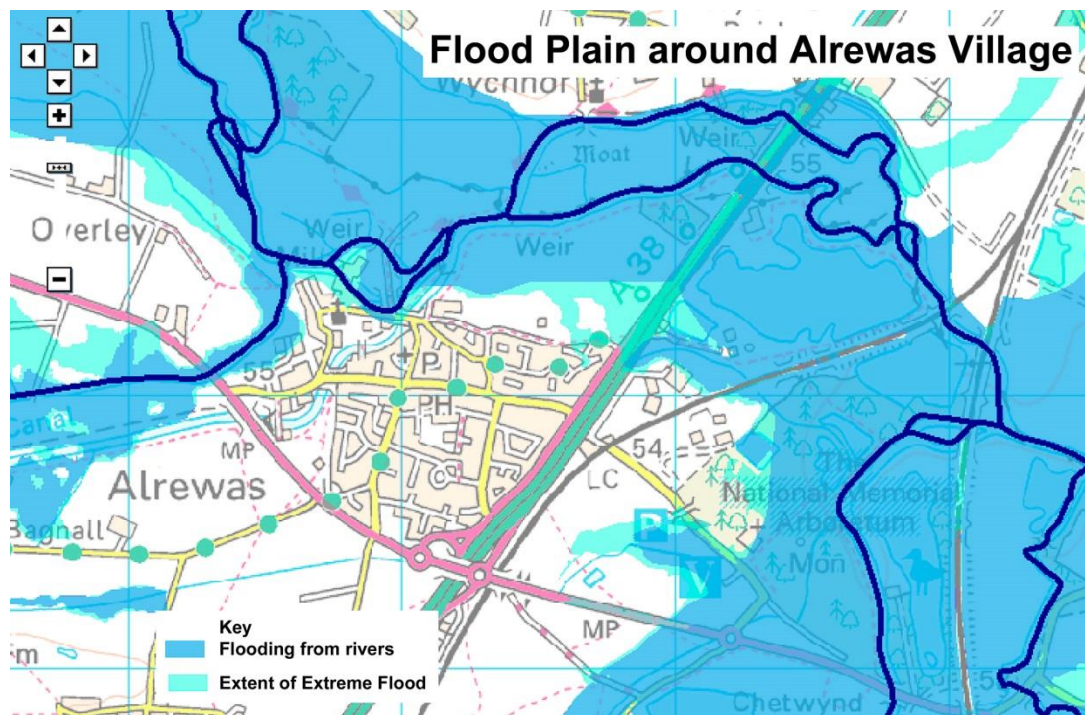
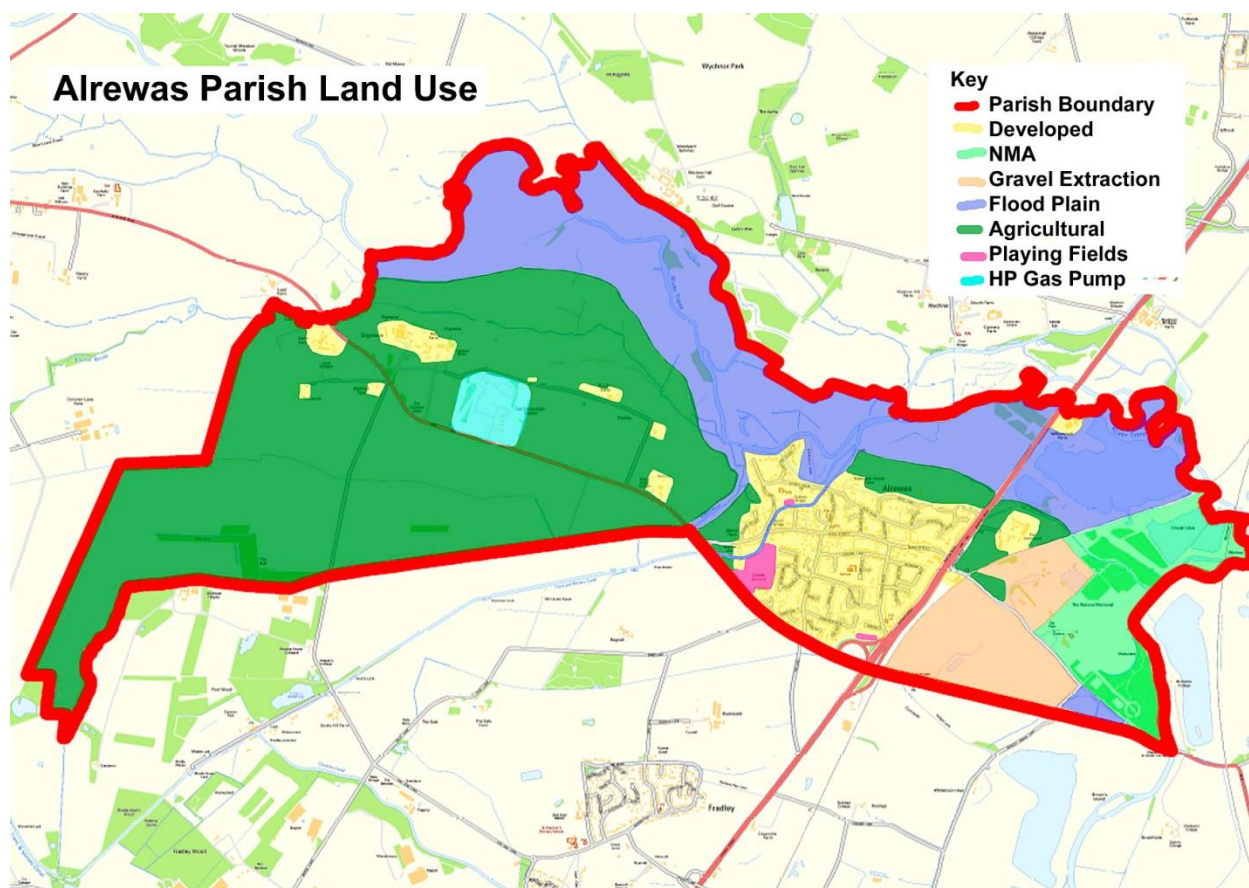


Figure 3: Parish Land Use



Alrewas Parish Land Use	
Land Use	% Usage
Developed	12.6%
NMA	6.9%
Gravel Extraction	6.2%
Flood Plain	24.2%
Agricultural	46.2%
Playing Field	0.8%
HP Gas Pump	1.4%
Other	1.7%
Total	100.0%

6. Planning Framework

General regulations governing Neighbourhood Planning are set out in the Localism Act which came into force in April 2012. This sets out a series of measures to devolve power to a more local level, incorporating local authorities and communities. One of its key components is the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan, a tier in planning policy which enables people to shape the long term development of their own community.

Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by local volunteers working collaboratively with the whole community to produce a land use plan that sets out the overall vision for the area, addressing the challenges and opportunities through objectives and policies, and forming part of the development plan for the area.



7. Consultation

Consultation has been fundamental to the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. A Consultation Statement (Appendix vi) was prepared and submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, in line with legislation. This sets out, in detail, the consultation undertaken.



Designation and Raising Awareness

Alrewas was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in February 2013. The boundary of the Neighbourhood Area coincides with that of Alrewas Parish.

How did we engage with the community?

- ***Parish Council reports***
- ***Task Group meetings***
- ***Five public meetings***
- ***Parish wide survey to every home***
- ***Business survey***
- ***Canal Festival stand***
- ***Youth Forum***
- ***All Saints School pupils ideas***

8. ALREWAS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

Community Facilities

Justification and Evidence

Alrewas is well served in terms of community facilities. It has a small supermarket, three pubs and the Royal British Legion. The GP surgery offers a good range of services and is supported by a pharmacy. Other health-based services include a private dentist and a number of exercise classes at the Village Hall and Methodist Hall. Shops include a popular fish and chip shop, Chinese takeaway, Indian restaurant, butchers, a security shop, four vehicle repair facilities and an interior design shop. The local petrol station also offers a range of food and non-food items in addition to fuel and other vehicular services. In addition to a long established and thriving cricket club, there are football clubs, a tennis club, two bowling clubs, whist and bridge clubs and the Civic Society.

The good range of services available is a significant factor in identifying Alrewas as a 'Key Rural Settlement' in the Lichfield Local Plan, supporting the principle that it is a sustainable community. It is imperative therefore that these existing services, businesses, and facilities are not lost in the future. Recent losses include a specialist grocery store, newsagent, Crackpotz, a Business Travel Agency, and the post office (now incorporated into the pharmacy).

Alrewas Village Hall is owned by the Parish and run by members of the community and representatives of regular user groups. The hall is over 100 years old and in 2014 underwent much needed refurbishment. Extensive consultation regarding the future of the Village Hall carried out in recent years concluded that the community wished to improve the existing hall in its current location. Further community space is available at the Methodist Church Hall, All Saints Church, The Scout Hut and the Cricket Pavillion.

In recent years the Alrewas Archives project has seen the village heritage preserved in the form of a digital archive. The Community Facilities task group identified the provision of a heritage centre as an aspiration for the village.



Preserving, maintaining and enhancing local services and community facilities is a key factor in ensuring Alrewas continues to be a vibrant, sustainable community in the future.

For children there are Rainbows, Brownies and Beavers groups, and for teenagers Scouts and a newly established youth club. Village groups, such as Alrewas Arts Festival and Alrewas Dramatic Society also endeavour to include young people as much as possible.

Dog fouling has long been seen to be an issue in the village. Local groups have made an effort to make the community aware of the issue but with limited success.

The Parish Council hopes to increase co-operation with the National Memorial Arboretum to encourage its visitors to make use of the village facilities. Equally, facilities available at the NMA would be better used by villagers, bus and boat visitors, if pedestrian access to the East of the A38 were to be improved.

The local Primary School is extremely popular and has an excellent reputation but is very near capacity. There is concern amongst residents that the school will be unable to expand to accommodate significant increases in the school age population.

Community Feedback

The Parish Survey identified the following key issues:

- Develop community facilities such as a sports hall, club rooms, gym, art facilities etc. – 68% agreed.
- Dog fouling is a concern – 87% agreed.
- Develop the Primary School in its current location – 53% agreed.



Residents support improvements and enhancements to existing facilities but wish to keep them in their current central locations – i.e. GP surgery, school, village hall, etc.

POLICY SECTION: Community Facilities

POLICY CF1: Protection of Community Facilities

Development that results in the loss of, or has significant adverse effect on, the following village facilities and services will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable or that the facility is to be replaced to no less a standard and convenience: local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. New development should not prevent residents from continuing to have access to existing facilities, including public footpaths, playing fields and public open spaces.

POLICY CF2: New Community Facilities

Improvements to existing community facilities and the provision of new community facilities will be supported subject to such development respecting local character and residential amenity, and being easily accessible by sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling.

The policies above set out to achieve the following:

- Protect and retain existing facilities to preserve the sustainability of the Parish for the future.
- Preserve the vibrancy of the village by preventing further loss of services, including retail units, to residential conversion.
- Ensure that developments give adequate consideration to the capacity of local services, in particular the school.
- Promote walking and cycling.

Traffic and Transport

Justification and Evidence

Alrewas is bounded by a major trunk route - the A38 dual carriageway - to the east with a single access into the village from the south and a single exit on to the northbound carriageway, both via a slip road. The A513, which connects Rugeley in the west to Tamworth in the east, provides two access roads into the village. This network of A roads enables rapid access to major towns and cities in the area and has resulted in the village becoming a commuter settlement with the majority of residents using cars to travel to work outside of the village. This road network also provides residents from surrounding villages easy access to the village to use its facilities.

The roads in the historic centre of the village are winding, narrow and convoluted and were not designed for current traffic levels. Many older properties have no off street parking.

There are two key transport characteristics within the village: Cars entering and leaving the village by the three access roads are perceived to travel in excess of the speed limit and there is a desire for traffic management on these roads. Traffic becomes particularly congested in the centre, where the shops and GP surgery are located, and around All Saints Primary School with motorists parking over pavements and across residents' driveways.

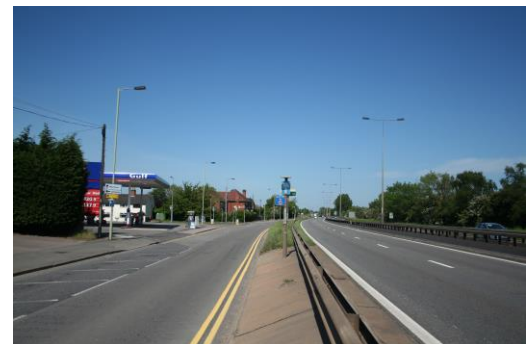
The N54 National Cycle Route passes through the centre of the village. It was recently re-routed through some of the quieter back roads as cycling down Main Street was deemed too hazardous.

There is a community aspiration to provide off-street car parking in the village centre to ease the congestion and to provide a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Public transport provision is perceived to be inadequate with infrequent local bus services. Coaches convey pupils to and from Secondary School in Barton-under-Needwood. Most people in the village use cars as the primary mode of transport.



The A38 – then and now



Speed and congestion in the village centre have been identified as key concerns for residents.

Alrewas Railway Station, located on the opposite side of the A38, was closed in the 1960s. The community would like to see the station re-opened. This is supported by Lichfield Rail Group. This would also provide an important transportation link to the National Memorial Arboretum. The village was bisected when the A38 dual carriageway was developed. Access to a re-opened station and connection to any future development of the area east of the A38 would be achieved by the erection of a footbridge over the A38; this has been identified as a key community aspiration.



Pupils of All Saints Primary School reported that they felt safe in Alrewas and were able to walk around on their own, although they have been advised by the police not to cycle to school as the roads are too busy and congested.

The roads surrounding the village provide vehicle access but conversely act as a barrier to pedestrians accessing the east of the village properties, businesses and the NMA.

The Parish Council will be generally supportive of traffic management proposals to direct traffic away from the historic village centre and include means of reducing congestion will be supported.



Community Feedback

Consultation on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan revealed the following key issues in relation to this topic, which the policies seek to address:

- Provide a footbridge over the A38 – 90% agreed
- Re-open Alrewas Station – 89% agreed
- Improve traffic management and safety within the village – 87% agreed
- Improve bus services – 82% agreed
- Provide car parking in the village centre – 75% agreed

POLICY SECTION: Traffic and Transport

POLICY TT1 Traffic

Development proposals will not be supported if the cumulative traffic generation and parking impact created by the proposal results in a severe impact on parking, congestion, residents access, or road and pedestrian safety, unless that impact can be mitigated via developer contributions.

POLICY TT2 Pedestrian and Cycle Access

The provision of a safe pedestrian and cycle access from the village centre across the A38 to the National Memorial Arboretum, the National Forest and the Central Rivers Initiative Area will be supported.

POLICY TT3 Alrewas Railway Station

The re-opening of Alrewas railway station to passenger services including provision or alteration of station buildings and car parking facilities will be supported.

POLICY TT4 Car Parking

Proposals to improve the quality and extent of public car parking in the village will be supported.

POLICY TT5 Road Safety

Measures to improve pedestrian safety and reduce traffic speed within the village will be supported.

POLICY TT6 Road Noise and Air Pollution

Proposals to reduce noise and air pollution arising from the A38 and A513, and which respect local character, residential amenity and highway safety will be supported.

The above policies set out to achieve the following:

- Ensure development which will have a significant impact on smaller village side roads is avoided
- Prioritise development which is easily accessible to traffic
- Actively reduce traffic impact, congestion and risk of speeding traffic in the village
- Reduce noise impact from traffic on main roads
- Provide public parking in the village centre to support businesses and reduce congestion
- Provide pedestrian access to the east of the A38, National Memorial Arboretum, National Forest and Central Rivers Initiative area.
- Support the reopening of Alrewas Station

Public Realm

Justification and Evidence

Walkfield, on the western edge, is the only public amenity space in the village. It is owned by the Parish Council. It has recently been given 'Queen Elizabeth II Fields in Trust' status. Walkfield includes facilities for outdoor activities including a cricket pitch, senior and junior football pitches, tennis courts, infant and young children's play areas and a multi-use games area. Walkfield is also used for community events such as the Arts Festival's 'Party in the Park' and Bonfire night.

It is recognised, and confirmed by the Rural Masterplan, that there is an under provision of public open space within the Parish. Residents therefore make extensive use of the rural open land north of the village as amenity space for walking, fishing, photography, birdwatching, canoeing etc. The Rural Masterplan also recommended additional play facilities in the northern section of the village.

There are two bowling greens in the village and two fully utilised allotment sites.

The canal is a focal point for the village, and is of economic importance with many boaters bringing tourist income to the village. Views of the floodplains and the River Trent crossing the canal, best viewed from 'Quartermile Bridge' north of the village, are quite unique and attract many tourists to the area (figure 5 page 31). Facilities for overnight mooring are fundamentally important to encouraging visitors to the Parish, supporting local business. The Birmingham Angling Club has fishing rights to the Canal and River within the Parish.

The Alrewas Conservation Area Management Plan 2010 identified the need to ensure that any development of the village was appropriate in terms of its approach to public realm, street furniture etc. and that this was in keeping with the rural nature of the village and the Conservation Area.



There is an under provision of public open space in the Parish and its rural hinterland is extremely highly valued by residents as amenity space.

Community Feedback

The Task Group identified the following issues:

- **Footpath along the Trent** - in accordance with the National Rivers Authority objective to provide walks along Britain's riverbanks.
- **Improved Disabled Access** – a project to improve the surface of Statfold Lane for wheelchair access and the adjoining public footpath that links with the Quartermile Bridge is being pursued. Providing improved access will enhance facilities for the village and attract more visitors to this attractive area.
- **High Speed Broadband** – better broadband connections are needed and this is being pursued with British Telecom.

The Survey carried out in December 2013 identified the following issues as important to residents:

- Retain the size and rural atmosphere of the village - 96% agreed
- Maintain separation from Fradley and Barton-under-Needwood - 96% agreed
- Easy access to the countryside - 93% agreed
- Enhance local shops and businesses - 91% agreed



POLICY SECTION: Public Realm

POLICY PR1 Protection and Enhancement of Public Open Spaces

The protection and enhancement of publicly accessible open space and the canal side environment, and the maintenance or improvement of public rights of way, will be supported.

POLICY PR2 Public Rights of Way

The provision of disabled access to public rights of way will be supported. The provision of integrated cycling and walking infrastructure linking new development to services and facilities is supported.

POLICY PR3 Public Realm Design

Improvements to public realm design including street furniture, material specifications and lighting, appropriate to the historic nature of the village and the Conservation Area or that limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation will be supported. The provision of waste bins and dog waste bins will also be supported.

POLICY PR4 Trees and Hedges

Development proposals that damage or result in the loss of trees and hedges of good arboricultural, ecological and amenity value will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that such loss can be suitably mitigated through re-provision of equal or greater ecological, arboricultural and amenity value elsewhere. Proposals should be designed to retain trees and hedges of arboricultural, ecological and amenity value.

Further tree planting within Alrewas to retain and enhance this aspect of the character of the village and to reflect the village's position as a gateway to The National Forest is supported.

The above policies set out to achieve the following:

- Recognise the importance of open space in and around the village and serve to protect or enhance it in the future.
- Improve access to the countryside by further developing footpaths and tourist information.
- Improve facilities for visitors and canal users
- Provide a consistent approach to public realm design to maintain, enhance and improve the historic village setting and conservation area.
- Improve the provision of waste bins for litter and dog waste.

The 'public realm' is the space between and around our buildings. It must be preserved, and where affected by development must be consistently well designed and made as accessible as possible.

Environment and Conservation

Justification and Evidence

Alrewas is a rural Parish which offers residents a high quality living environment. The Alrewas Conservation Area (figure 4 on page 29) covers half of the current extent of the village and encompasses historic street patterns containing many high quality historic buildings, 53 of which are listed. The outstanding qualities of the Alrewas Conservation Area and the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area must be recognised in all potential development proposals.

The Neighbourhood Plan has established that the community is strongly in favour of protecting the Alrewas Conservation Area in terms of ensuring development is of appropriate design and scale, visual impact is minimal, and that design standards in and around the Conservation Area are of a high standard. These requirements are also clearly set out in the Local Plan policies.

The Staffordshire Historic Environment Character Assessment (2013) identifies some good surviving historic landscape around Alrewas including early field systems to the north of the village and water meadows. Staffordshire's Ecological Study (2009) identifies areas of habitat that support species that are either protected and/or identified in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, in particular fields to the north and west, resulting in a strong recommendation against development in these areas (Rural Masterplan page 8). Lichfield's Greens and Open Spaces Strategy (2008) identifies Alrewas as having a very high priority for additional parkland (page 62).

The Alrewas Conservation Area Management Plan and the Staffordshire Historic Environment Character Assessment take into account the statutory requirement to preserve and protect the Conservation Area and consider the importance of open space. This has been a key consideration in the formulation of these policies.



Protection of Local Green Spaces.

Policy EC4 in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan designates two areas of Local Green Space. These are described below..

A. Statfold Wood

This site is an integral part of Alrewas Conservation Area lying directly North of Church Road, is close to residential areas of housing, the village church, mooring sites along the towpath, and a few minutes walk from the centre of the village. The field is located on the flood plain of the river Trent and floods on average 1-3 times per year to ankle depth. A village group is currently looking at options to purchase the site with a view to converting it to a nature reserve and recreational area. This has the support of the National Forest. *(See Appendix (ii) for details.)*



B. Canal & Riverbank North of Dark Lane

The site comprises an area of open field, adjacent to the Village, to the north of Dark Lane, bounded by the Village Settlement Boundary, the Trent and Mersey Canal, the River Trent and an existing field boundary/ hedgerow. The site is partially situated within the Conservation Area; these fields essentially provide Alrewas with its main line of defence from flooding. They are also designated as being fundamental to the effectiveness of the flood mitigation measures that are an important part of the development of 121 houses on the fields, lying immediately to the south and east, and running north of Dark Lane. *(See Appendix (iii) for details.)*



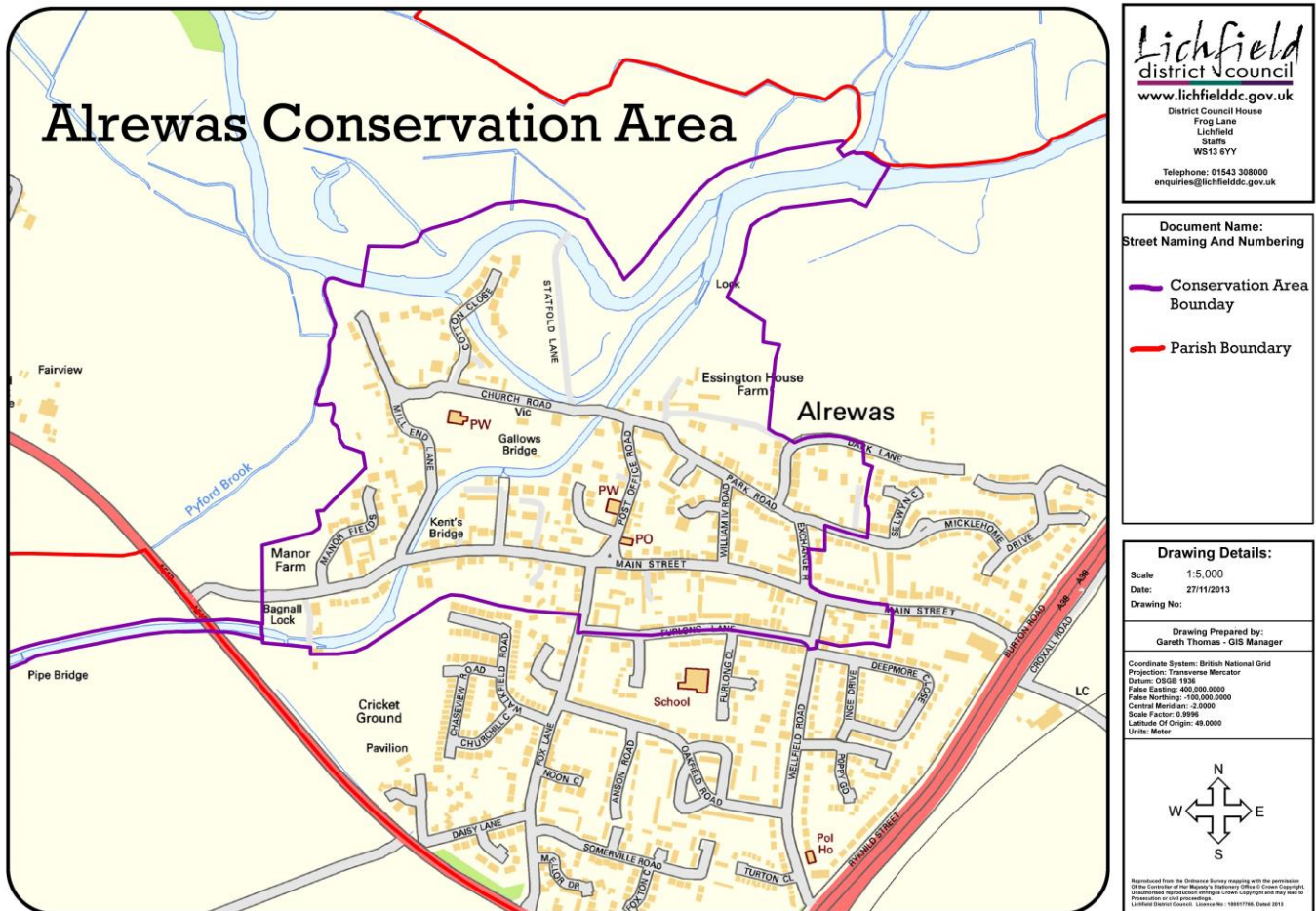
Community Feedback

The Survey carried out in December 2013 identified the following issues as important to residents:

- Develop other sites in preference to development in the Conservation Area - 84% stated as important
- Retain the historic centre of the village - 97% stated as important
- Retain access to open fields - 88% stated as very important
- Preserve access to canal and riverbanks - 82% stated as very important



Figure 4: Alrewas Conservation Area Map



POLICY SECTION: Environment & Conservation

POLICY EC1 Protecting and Enhancing the Built Environment

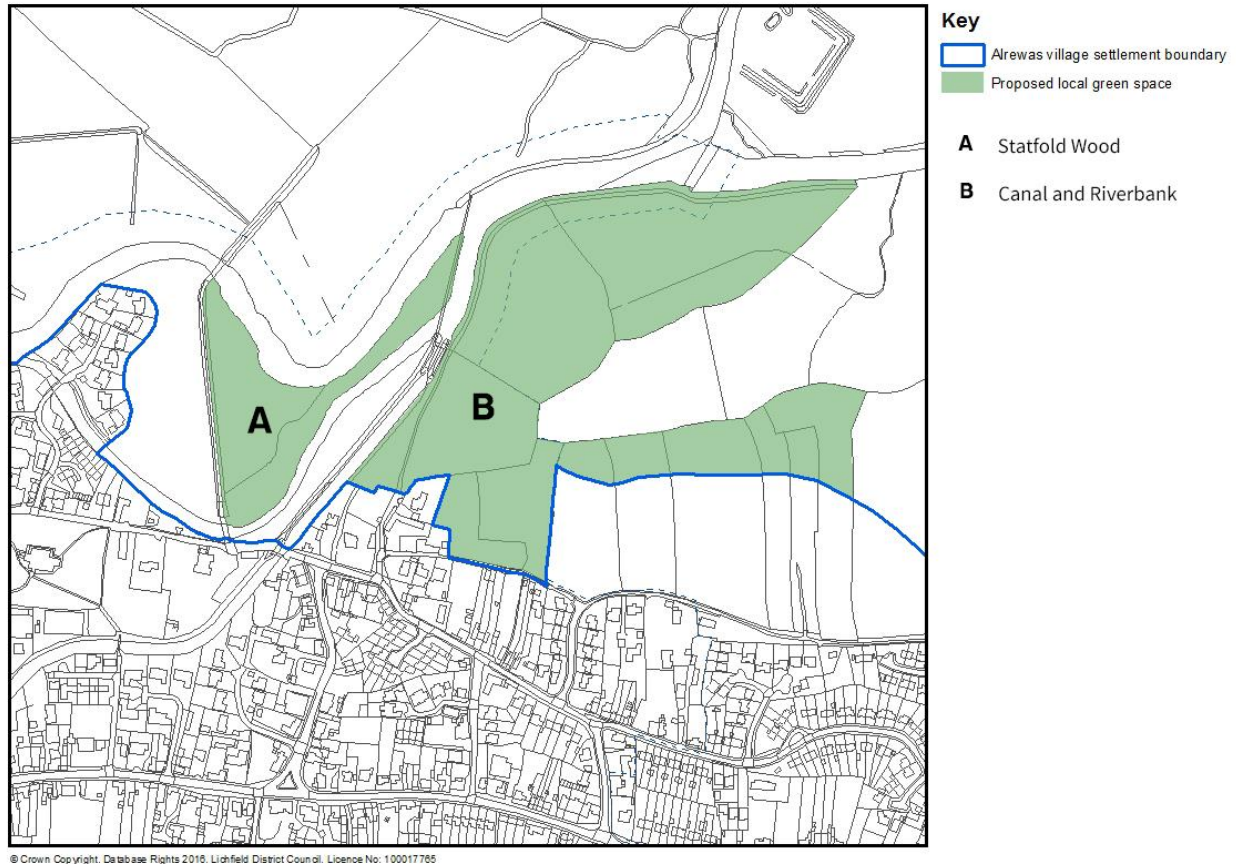
Within the village, development proposals must have regard to local character and demonstrate a high quality of design, form and layout.

POLICY EC2 Protection of Local Green Space

The following sites are designated as Local Green Space, where development is ruled out other than in very special circumstances.

- A. STATFOLD WOOD The area East of Statfold Lane, bounded by the River Trent and the Mill Stream.*
- B. CANAL AND RIVERBANK The area of open field north of Dark Lane bounded by the village settlement boundary, the Trent and Mersey Canal and the River Trent.*

Figure 5: Local Green Spaces



The policies EC1 to EC4 set out to achieve the following:

- Ensure high quality of design in any development which impacts on the Conservation Area or the historic nature of the village.
- Provide a high degree of protection to the Conservation Area itself, in particular its open spaces.
- Provide protection to important rural views, especially those in and out of the Conservation Area as outlined in the Alrewas Conservation Management Plan.
- Maintain the setting of the Conservation Area by ensuring any development is physically separated from adjacent historically important areas.
- Provide enhanced protection for wildlife, ecology, habitats, trees, hedgerows and landscape features.
- Support Cannock Chase EU special area of conservation.

Housing Development

Justification and Evidence

The best villages have developed through incremental growth that harmonises with the existing character of their setting. It is essential that this is the case in Alrewas. The supply of new homes in the village and wider Parish must be realised in accordance with the distinctive features, scale and grain of the local area. Housing sites must be carefully considered and will only be acceptable where they reflect these principles and are consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan taken as a whole.

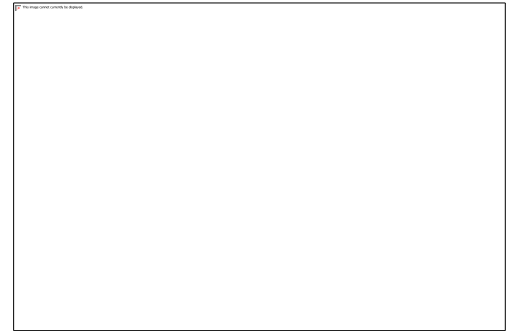
There are currently 1,235 dwellings in the parish of Alrewas. Of these, the vast majority are located in the village whilst the remainder are spread around the Parish including the hamlets of Orgreave and Overley.

The purpose of the Village Settlement Boundary is to ensure that sufficient sites for new homes and economic activity are available in appropriate locations that will avoid impinging into the local countryside.

Settlement Boundaries distinguish between areas where, in planning terms, development is acceptable in principle, such as in the built-up area of the village, and where it would not be acceptable, generally in the least sustainable locations such as in the open countryside. Such growth would risk ribbon development and the merging of hamlets to the detriment of the community and visual amenity of a neighbourhood plan area's surroundings.

The Plan proposes to designate a Settlement Boundary for the village of Alrewas (figure 7 page 39). This will update and supersede the existing Village Settlement Boundary, where an appropriate amount of suitably designed and located development will be acceptable in principle, although some sites within this area are protected from development.

Focusing development within the agreed Village Settlement Boundary will help to support existing services within the village centre and help to protect the countryside and the remainder of the Plan area from inappropriate development.



The community recognises that housing development can bring wider benefits, such as the redevelopment of brownfield sites, securing the on-going use of a building and providing affordable homes.

Alrewas has relatively little public open space within its boundary. Previous consultations (and the Local Plan) have identified the need for additional amenity and open areas especially to the north and east of the village (Open Space Assessment 2016 for the Lichfield Local Plan item 17.22). There is no village green, and only one play area in the village. The open rural fields and canal side footpaths to the north of the village are therefore extremely highly valued by residents and should be protected. Older residents born in the village have attested that the fields and paths which are bordered by the River Trent have always been used as a place of recreation. Records suggest that this was once common land implying that the fields have been used as such since time immemorial.

At 344 hectares, Alrewas is the smallest Parish in Lichfield District. However, the Lichfield Local Plan establishes that there is significant housing need within the District, with a minimum of 10,030 homes needing to be delivered up to 2029. Alrewas Village is described in the Local Plan as a key rural settlement and therefore a suitable rural settlement with a wide range of strategic services and facilities. The Local Plan establishes Alrewas' housing requirement as being 90-180 dwellings up to 2029. As at August 2016, there are 30 completions, 17 committed supply 2016- 2021, 135 Local Plan Allocation sites (including Dark Lane), making a total of 182. The redevelopment of Anson Road (net over 20 dwellings) is not included in this figure.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to accommodate this volume of new housing within the Plan period and has adjusted the Village Settlement Boundary to accommodate the required number.

The Local Plan (Alr 4) states that the eventual allocation would be determined by a Local Plan Allocations process and subject to extensive public consultation. This is currently being undertaken.



*Protecting open space
and ensuring
expansion is modest
and proportionate.*

Community Feedback

The Steering and Development Task Groups highlighted the following issues:

- The requirement to meet the District Council's future allocation of residential units should not be confined to the area within the current village boundary. Following discussions with the District Council, it was agreed that the Village Settlement Boundary would be redrawn to accommodate the housing allocation.
- Future developments should strike a balance between maintaining the integrity of the Conservation Area, green space, and be within the revised Village Settlement Boundary.
- Any new housing development should be generally small scale infill as recommended by the Rural Masterplan and the Local Plan and must respect adjacent properties in terms of design, density, scale, plot size and massing.
- Where possible new housing development should not involve the building of new roads. The existing historic street pattern should be maintained as recommended by the Conservation Area Management Plan.
- New development should be avoided in areas adjacent to the existing flood plain boundary in order to mitigate additional risk of flooding in the village.
- Except where location in the centre of the village is essential for the business, or there is existing suitable premises, any new commercial development should be on the east of the A38.
- The waterways through the Parish – and the immediate hinterland which is accessible to the public – should be protected for leisure and recreational purposes.
- The Local Plan prioritises small scale and infill development (Policy Alr 4). Task Group members employed in the house building industry identified 'Building for Life 12' as the most appropriate current recognised design quality standard in the industry.

The Parish Survey carried out in December 2013 identified the following issues as important to residents:

- Small infill developments are the preferred approach (79% agreed) with a single large development being the least popular approach (11% stated this as their preferred approach).

Where appropriate, new developments must preserve the Conservation Area, avoid the flood plain, provide direct access to traffic from A513 or A38, and preserve the canal environment as far as possible.

- Provision of smaller starter homes, homes for older people, and homes to downsize to should be encouraged (over 70% agreed, with over 90% stating that there were too many larger - 4 bed or more - homes in the village).
- Develop sites other than in the Conservation Area – 76% agreed.
- Retain and enhance open space in and around the village – 95% agreed.
- Developments to have differing building styles – 68% agreed.
- Views in and out of the conservation area to Wychnor in the north are the most important – 74% agreed.
- Maintain easy access to the countryside – 96% agreed.
- Small scale development in Parish hamlets such as Orgreave and Overlay should be allowable - 62% considered these suitable for small scale development (the second most popular development location after brownfield sites).

Provide smaller homes for 'downsizers', the elderly and first time buyers – enabling both the young and the old to stay in their village.

The following responses were provided to support the level of the allocation:

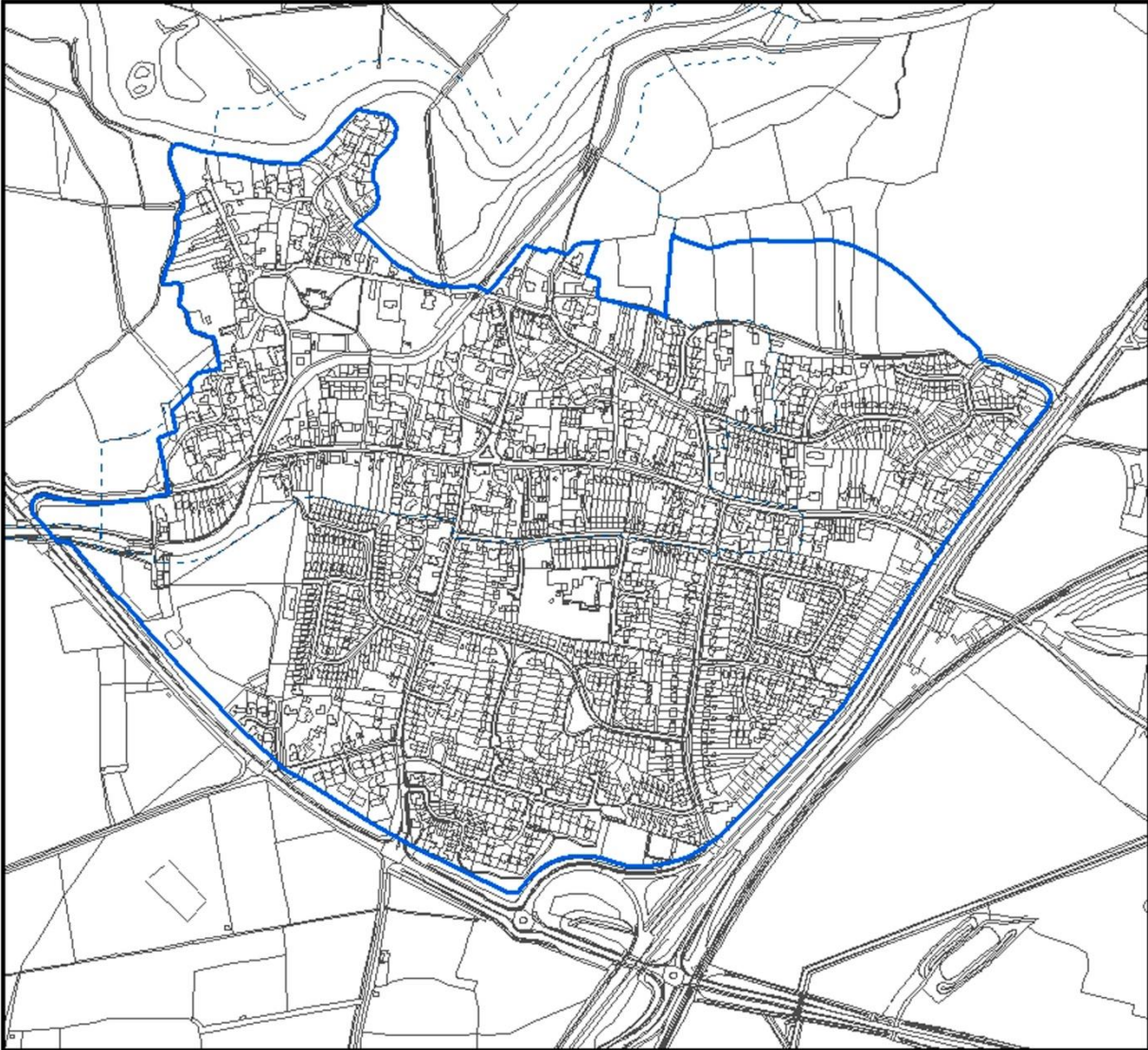
Proposed Housing Numbers	% in agreement
0-25	100 %
26-50	71 %
51-75	44 %
76-100	21 %
101-150	7 %
151-200	2 %

Preferred approach to development was ranked as follows:

- 1st – small infill sites (59% stated as preferred option)
- 2nd – a mix of small and medium sized sites (23% stated as preferred option)
- 3rd – a number of medium scale developments on the outskirts (18% stated as preferred option)
- 4th – single large scale development (8% stated as preferred option)


POLICY SECTION: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Figure 6: Alrewas Village Settlement Boundary



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Key

 Alrewas village settlement boundary

POLICY HP1 – Housing Provision

Development proposals within the Village Settlement Boundary identified on Figure 6 will be supported.

POLICY HP2 – Alrewas Village

In Alrewas village infill development and the development of brownfield sites is supported. Within this context, new developments of smaller properties (e.g. 3 bed or fewer) and those suitable for older people that provide for a recognised need will be supported.

POLICY HP3- Rural exception sites

The provision of affordable housing on rural exception sites will be subject to:

- a) the type and scale of affordable housing is justified by evidence of need from a local housing needs survey; and*
- b) the development consists entirely of affordable housing or is for low cost housing.*

POLICY HP4 - Building for Life

New residential development must respect its surroundings and all residential development in the Neighbourhood Area should be of a high quality. To help achieve this, it is recommended that proposals consider the following:

- a) Connections - Does the scheme integrate into surroundings?*
- b) Facilities & Services - Does the scheme provide (or is it close to) community facilities?*
- c) Public transport - Does the scheme have good accessibility to public transport?*
- d) Meeting local housing need - Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?*
- e) Character - Does the scheme create a place with locally inspired distinctive character?*
- f) Working with the site and its context - Does the scheme take advantage of site characteristics e.g. topography, habitats etc.?*
- g) Creating well defined streets and spaces - Do buildings enclose streets and spaces and turn corners well?*
- h) Easy to find your way around - Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?*
- i) Streets for all - Are streets designed to encourage low vehicle speeds?*
- j) Car Parking - Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated?*
- k) Public and private spaces - Will public and private areas be clearly defined?*
- l) External storage and amenity - Is there adequate external storage for bins, recycling and cycles?*

Economic Development

Justification and Evidence

Alrewas Parish once supported a large number of small businesses, shops, and farms. The Mill was historically a major employer in the village, but is now converted to housing. The rise in car ownership means residents no longer have to rely on local suppliers and this has inevitably led to a decline in village based businesses. Although land around the village is still farmed, the number of farmers and agricultural employees has reduced dramatically, with many farm buildings now converted to other uses.

Alrewas has maintained some 50 businesses within the Parish, including a small scale industrial estate to the east of the A38. A small number of village shops, a pharmacy, butchers and general store, as well as pubs and food outlets still survive, although recent losses include a specialist grocery store, newsagent, Crackpotz, a Business Travel Agency, and the post office (now incorporated into the pharmacy). The village also supports a number of self-employed people who work from home.

The Neighbourhood Plan undertook a survey of all commercial businesses in the Parish and a 36% response rate was achieved.

A wide range of businesses responded, mostly service providers such as hairdressing, bed and breakfast, pottery, retail, and food and drink outlets. Many of these are supported by tourists in the summer. Three were larger businesses reaching a wider customer base i.e. regional, national, or international. The remainder were generally people working from home providing a range of services such as accountancy, therapy, photography, etc. These businesses employed 180 people in total 32 of whom live in the Parish. The businesses did however use local services such as the post office, garage, and food and drink outlets.



There has been a steady decline in the number of businesses offering services to the community within the Parish, and this plan seeks to support those that remain and encourage new ones to develop.

The following were some suggestions put forward by responders, which they felt would help their businesses:

- Faster broadband
- Better parking facilities
- More housing for younger families
- Footbridge over A38
- Banking facilities

As noted above the provision of a footbridge to the east of the A38 has been identified as a key aspiration and this would help support the businesses in that location. There have been examples of deaths and serious injury to residents trying to cross the dual carriageway.

The Federation of Small Businesses annual report 2013 states that small businesses account for 33% of economic turnover, and 47% of private sector employment. The Neighbourhood Plan policies will support the development of appropriate types of businesses and enterprise in the Parish, notably shops, services, leisure and tourism related activities.

The Parish Council would like to see the commercial area to the east of the A38 maintained. The Parish does not have any large scale manufacturing, distribution or industrial developments/buildings and the Parish Council would not be supportive of such development.

The Parish Council wishes to prevent the loss of shops and services in Alrewas. This Plan therefore includes policies designed to support this aspiration, to encourage new similar business to develop in the Parish, and to provide adequate parking and other facilities to support these businesses.

Small businesses offering services to the community of Alrewas must be supported and protected. Encouragement should be given to new ones in order to maintain the sustainability of the settlement, ensuring its long term vitality.

Community Feedback

Business survey responses: a 36% response rate was achieved.

The survey carried out in December 2013 identified the following issues as important to residents:

- Easy access to road networks – 72% considered important
- Services provided by local shops and businesses – 92% considered important
- The businesses considered to be most important in the village were the GP surgery, pharmacy and 'local shops'

Residential development or conversion must not result in a loss of services or community facilities.

POLICY SECTION: Economic Development

POLICY ED1 – Sustainable Business Growth

The sustainable growth and expansion of business and enterprise, through conversion, extension and well-designed new buildings, will be supported, provided that such development:

- a) Respects local character, including the massing and scale of surrounding buildings and protects residential amenity; and*
- b) Maintains or improves highway safety*

POLICY ED2 Commercial Development East of the A38

The provision of a new footbridge connecting Alrewas with commercial development to the east of the A38 will be supported.

POLICY ED3: Support for existing shops and services

Development requiring planning permission that results in the loss of shops, services or public houses as a result of proposals for change of use will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the shop/service is no longer needed, or it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer viable for the existing use or where the proposal is for the relocation of the existing use that will continue to serve the local community.

POLICY ED4 Tourism

Development providing facilities for visitors and tourists will be supported, subject to it being of an appropriate size, scale and to it respecting local character and residential amenity.

The above policies set out to achieve the following:

- Prevent the loss of retail, commercial and community services within the Parish to residential conversion or development unless this is to the betterment of the community in some other way.
- Support local businesses and their aspirations for future development, encouraging local employment.
- Ensure any commercial development is appropriate in location, form, scale and type and has no detrimental impact on the Parish.
- Support improved access to business and facilities east of the A38.
- Encourage new small business into the Parish
- Support tourism and developments improving facilities for visitors.

9. Community Actions

Station

The Parish Council will support a campaign to reopen Alrewas station.

Footbridge

The Parish Council will evaluate proposals which lead to construction of a footbridge over the A38. The Parish Council will work with third parties with the aim of delivering this and will consider using Community Infrastructure Levy receipts to help procure its delivery.

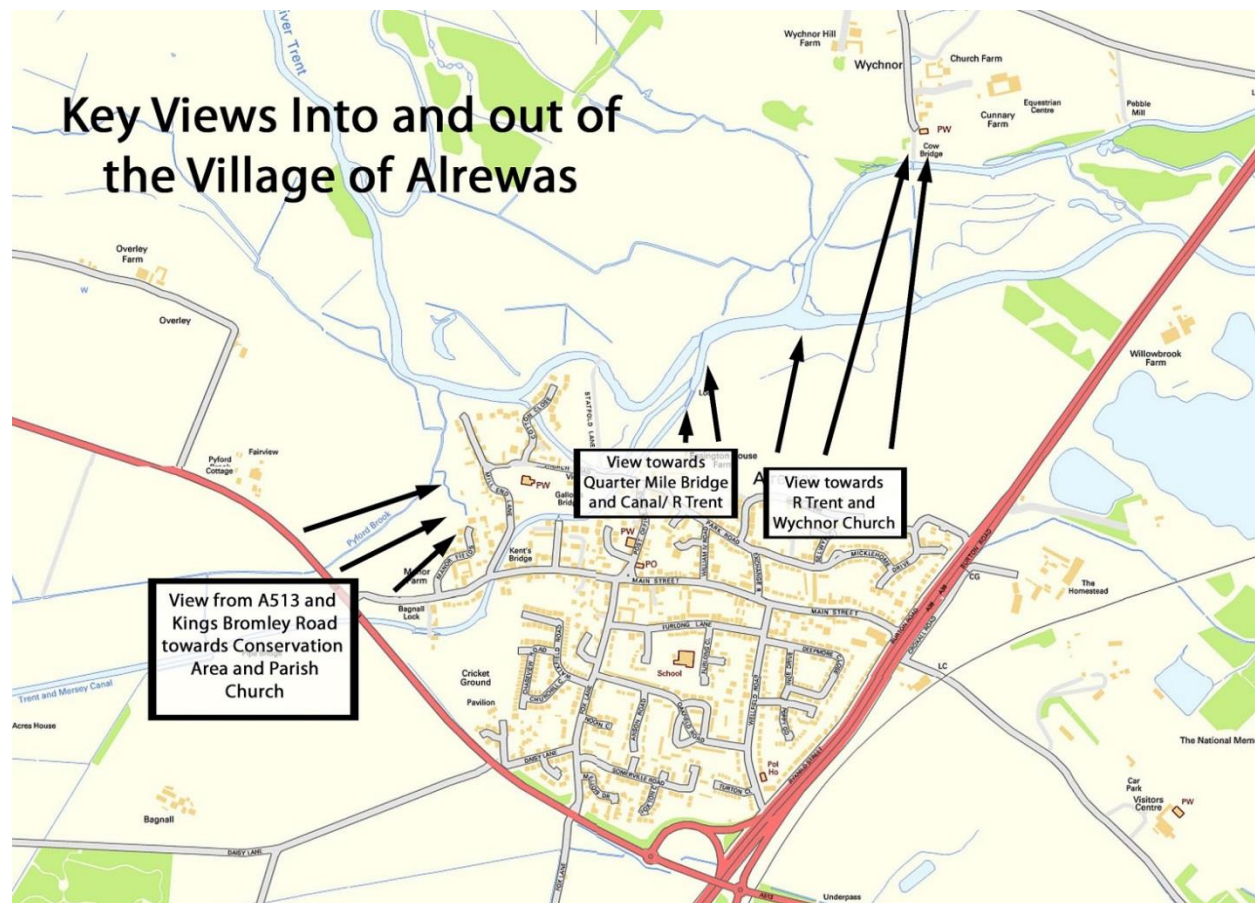
Public Realm Design

The Parish Council and where appropriate the local Conservation Officer, will provide guidance to Staffordshire County Council on what would be acceptable in terms of public realm design, including limiting the impact of light pollution on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

Significant Views

The Parish Council will encourage developers to take into account the general views shown on the diagram below, with the aim of ensuring that development respects important vistas from the village.

Figure 7: Significant Views



10. Appendices List

The appendices listed below comprise reports and information that support the plan making process. The reports and information are available from the Parish Council.

- (i) Project Aspirations
- (ii) Local Green Space – Statfold Wood
- (iii) Local Green Space – Canal and Riverbank North of Dark Lane
- (iv) Index of Evidence Base
- (v) Comments on The Alrewas Conservation Area Management Plan 2010
- (vi) Detailed Consultation Statement
- (vii) Parish Survey and Responses
- (viii) Business Survey and Responses
- (ix) Canal Festival Survey Results
- (x) Primary School Student Survey Results
- (xi) Local Plan Policies Alr1- Alr4, NR7 and BE1
- (xii) Glossary

Useful background information, consultation responses, site information, and the evidence base for the Plan.