

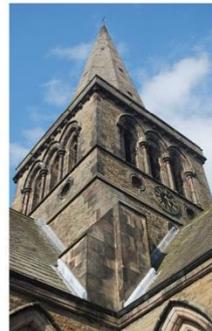
# Sandbach

## Neighbourhood Development Plan

A vision for Sandbach up to 2030



*Our Community | Our Decisions*



# **Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan**

## **Our Community – Our Decisions**

### **A vision for Sandbach up to 2030**

**Final Revision 2.0**

**September 2015**

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#### **Preface**

This Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) has been produced by the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group, comprising members of Sandbach Town Council and the local community.

The area covered by this Plan is identified in section 1.2 and Fig.1.

It is important to note that the Sandbach neighbourhood area covers the civil boundary of Sandbach, incorporating Sandbach town and the village settlements of Sandbach Heath, Elworth, Ettiley Heath and Wheelock. When the Plan makes reference to Sandbach, this is intended to represent all these settlements which make up the area and is used for the sake of brevity only.

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## How this plan is organised

This Plan is divided into four sections:

### **Section 1: Introduction**

This section sets out:

- How the Plan fits into the Planning System
- An overview of the initial stages of public consultation, and how it has influenced the development of the Plan
- About Sandbach - a brief overview of Sandbach, past and present.

### **Section 2: A Vision for Sandbach – Key Issues, Vision and Aims**

This section sets out:

- The overall vision for development in future years
- The key themes which have contributed to the vision.

### **Section 3: The Plan Objectives and Policies**

This section sets out:

The objectives and policies to support the overall vision  
Site specific briefs where relevant.

### **Section 4: Supporting Information and Evidence Base**

This section sets out:

The framework and the justification for the plan, including:

- Glossary of Terms
- Acknowledgements
- Reference Documents
- Appendices.



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  - Appendix 5 POLICY JLE1 - CS24 “Capricorn” site.
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## **SECTION 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Overview**

This document has been prepared by the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group, which has been led by Sandbach Town Council and members of the community.

The Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) is a planning document that sets out the direction of growth in Sandbach until 2030. It is part of the Government's approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the 'Localism Act' that came into force in April 2012.

The Plan provides a vision for the future of the community and sets out clear policies to realise this vision. These policies must accord with higher level planning policy, as required by the Localism Act. The Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the people of Sandbach and others with an interest in the community.

The Plan provides local people with the opportunity to have control over use of land – the local history and character, its landscape, type and tenure of development, where development should go and how it can benefit the community.

The Plan reflects the wishes of the Sandbach community to ensure that appropriate contributions towards facilities and services are provided as part of any additional housing development.

The Plan must be flexible and adaptable in order to provide a structure which meets the needs of a changing population, safeguards our environment and builds our local economy. The Plan must also be sustainable in order to ensure the future wellbeing of our community.

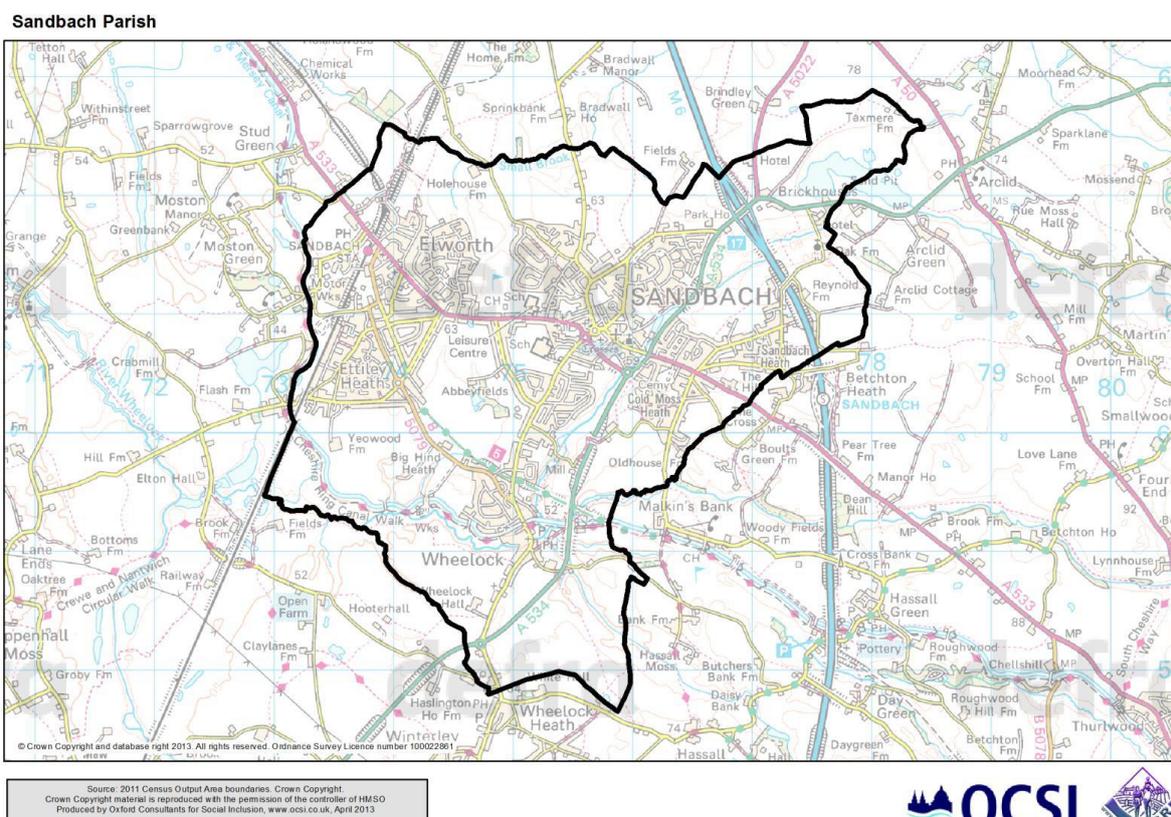
## 1.2 Quick Reference Guide – Index to Policies and Maps

DETAIL	POLICY	ASSOCIATED MAP
<b>Sandbach Civil Parish Boundary</b>		Fig.1
<b>Future Vision of Sandbach Proposals Map</b>		Fig.2
<b>Protecting the Countryside:</b>		
Areas of Separation	PC1	Fig.3
Landscape Character	PC2	Fig.4
Policy Boundary for Sandbach	PC2a	Fig 2
Areas of High Ecological Value and Wildlife Corridors	PC3	Fig.5
Local Green Spaces	PC4	Fig.6
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	PC5	Fig.5
Footpaths	PC6	Fig 7
<b>Preserving Heritage and Character</b>		
Historic and cultural environment	HC1	
Protection and Enhancement of the Principal Shopping Area	HC2	
Shop Fronts and Advertising	HC3	
Markets	HC4	
<b>Managing Housing Supply</b>		
Housing Growth	H1	Fig. 2
Design and Layout	H2	
Housing Mix and Type	H3	
Housing and an Ageing Population	H4	
Preferred Locations	H5	Figs.2 & 8
<b>Promoting Jobs and the Local Economy</b>		
Future Employment and Retail Provision	JLE1	Appendix 5
Tourism and Visitors	JLE2	
The Market Hall	JLE3	
<b>Improving the infrastructure</b>		
Sustainable Transport, Safety and Accessibility	IFT1	Appendix 6
Parking	IFT2	
<b>Community Infrastructure Levy</b>	IFC1	
<b>Community and Well-Being</b>		
Amenity, Play and Recreation	CW1	
Sport and Recreation Facilities	CW2	
Health	CW3	
<b>Adapting to Climate Change</b>		
Adapting to Climate Change	CC1	

### 1.3 Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan Boundary

The Civil Parish of Sandbach (Fig. 1) has been formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area through an application made by Sandbach Town Council (a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) on 10 July 2014 in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (part 2 S6) and approved by Cheshire East Council on 21 October 214.

The Civil Parish of Sandbach includes the settlements of Elworth village, Ettiley Heath, Wheelock village and Sandbach Heath.



**Fig.1 - The Civil Parish of Sandbach**

## 1.4 How the Neighbourhood Development Plan fits into the Planning System

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their towns, the Localism Act which came into force in April 2012 sets out some important laws.

One of these is that all Neighbourhood Development Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy. That is, Neighbourhood Development Plans must be in line with European Union regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations, the National Planning Policy Framework (otherwise known as the NPPF) and local policy, in particular, the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council).

The Plan has been developed with the Basic Conditions firmly in mind, against which all neighbourhood plans are assessed. In terms of the Local Plan, the relevant consideration is general conformity with the strategic policies of the saved policies of the adopted Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review (2005). Cheshire East is preparing a new borough-wide Local Plan. It is still at examination stage so does not yet form part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood Development Plans can come forward before up to date Local Plans are in place and the way in which the Sandbach Plan has been prepared is in line with national planning guidance, covering where this is the case. There has been close working with Cheshire East Council to understand the relationship between the Plan and the adopted and emerging Local Plans, taking into account national planning policy. This collaborative and pragmatic approach has been successful in achieving a Plan that is complimentary to the emerging Local Plan. Once brought into effect, the Plan will become part of the development plan within the designated Neighbourhood Plan area and, with the latest adopted Local Plan, will be the starting point for determining planning applications.

The Localism Act allows the Plan to provide more dwellings than the number specified in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, but it does not allow the Plan to provide for less.

Whilst planning applications are still determined by Cheshire East Council the production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan has given local people the power to decide where new housing, additional leisure, retail and employment provision should go, and how the town should evolve. The Plan provides the policy framework for Cheshire East Council to make these decisions on behalf of the people of Sandbach.

Positioning the Plan in respect of the Cheshire East Council Local Plan Strategy (which was submitted for Examination in 2014) has been difficult as its' approval was delayed by the Inspector's decision that certain elements required revisiting, including the overall housing figures.

The community felt that it was important, however, to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan, and the Plan has, therefore, been produced taking full consideration of the strategic direction and policies in the Cheshire East Local Plan

Strategy Submission Version, and through discussions with Cheshire East Council. has enabled us to amend policies as necessary, draft a Plan we consider to be in general conformity and minimise any potential conflict between policies. General conformity with existing plans and guidance is detailed in the Basic Conditions Statement.

Additionally the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Submission Version does endorse many of the saved policies of Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review (adopted in 2005). Certain policies will be retained and used in the determination of planning applications until superseded by the Site Allocations and Development Policies and Waste Development Plan Documents.

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## 1.5 What is in the Neighbourhood Development Plan?

Although deciding where new housing, additional leisure, retail and employment should go is an important part of the Plan, it is about much more than this. The Plan is a plan for the parish as a whole. It looks at a wide range of issues, including:

- The development of housing (number, location, type, tenure etc.)
- Local employment and opportunities for businesses to set up or to expand their premises.
- Transport and access issues (roads, cycling, walking etc.)
- The provision of leisure facilities, schools, places of worship, health, entertainment and youth facilities.
- The protection, extension and creation of open spaces (nature reserves, allotments, sports areas, play areas, parks and gardens).
- Installation of renewable or alternative energy solutions.
- Protection of important buildings and historic assets.

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## 1.6 Sustainability Appraisal

Neighbourhood Development Plans are not technically subject to sustainability appraisal, provided they are in conformity with the development plan of the local planning authority in terms of the scale and distribution of planned growth.

However, the land use planning process provides an important means by which sustainable development can be achieved. The Plan is in conformity with, and refines, the Cheshire East Council Strategic Policy relating to Sandbach and forms a formal part of the Cheshire East Council Local Plan Strategy.

Sandbach is defined as a Key Service Centre and Policy PG2 of the most up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. states that “*In Key Service Centres, development will be of a scale, location and nature that recognises and reinforces the distinctiveness of each individual town will be supported to maintain their vitality and viability*”.

As such, the Plan will help to achieve sustainable development by ensuring that its development policies and proposals will meet the needs of people who live, work in and visit Sandbach.

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## 1.7 Community Engagement and Consultation

The Plan belongs to the people of Sandbach. It has been developed from the views of local people gathered using a variety of different consultation approaches including: stalls at local events, meetings, presentations interactive workshops, website interactive forums, Facebook pages and Sandbach-wide on-line/paper surveys.

Phase 1 survey was an open questionnaire with five questions:

1. What's good about living here?
2. What's not so good about living here?
3. What do we need?
4. What should we look after?
5. What are the 3 most important issues you would like the Neighbourhood Plan to address?

Over 1,600 completed questionnaires were returned.

A second major survey was distributed to every household and business address throughout Sandbach. This survey was a test of the proposed vision, aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and included a housing need survey questionnaire.

Over 1200 completed surveys and 400 housing needs surveys were returned.

In addition to the residents' consultation, a wide range of stakeholders were invited to participate in events aimed specifically to gather their views, ideas and concerns. Local businesses, developers and land owners were encouraged to participate in the process.

The following are reference documents to the Plan:

- Relationship between The Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan and existing Sandbach Town documents
  - Consultation Statement – Evidential record of community engagement
  - Basic Condition Statement
  - Supporting Evidence Base
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## 1.8 About Sandbach

### **Location:**

Situated in the North West of England and in the heart of the Cheshire Plain, Sandbach is a small rural market town, located close to the M6 motorway Junction 17. The M6 provides an easy connection to the north and south of the country.

Landscape character is typical Cheshire (flat/rolling) farmland and woodland, with traditional style buildings and clear unobstructed views of the Welsh hills to the west and the Pennine Range to the east. There is evidence of historic salt brine pumping, leading to the creation of the “Flashes”. Brine extraction without replacement and the existence of a number of underlying brine runs, means that significant areas of the parish are potentially subject to ongoing ground movements.

Sandbach as a whole consists of distinct settlements or “villages” which have green Areas of Separation that act as buffers between the settlements and allows them to retain their own identities. The town centre is situated in the northern part of Sandbach, Sandbach Heath is to the South East, Wheelock village to the South, Ettiley Heath to the South West, whilst Elworth village is to the West. Each settlement contains at least one church and many public houses. Sandbach, Elworth and Wheelock have their own primary schools.

To the south of Sandbach, the Trent and Mersey canal runs through the village of Wheelock bringing some visitors to the outskirts of town. It also provides a clear boundary to the South of Ettiley Heath and Elworth.

Sandbach train station, located 1 mile from the town centre in Elworth village, provides 2 trains per hour to the heart of Manchester, one of which runs via Manchester International Airport. A 10 minute car or train journey will take travellers to Crewe mainline station for connections to London (1 hour 35 minutes), Edinburgh (3 hours 15 minutes) and the rest of the UK.

Sandbach is surrounded by a number of small parishes, namely: Betchton, Hassall, Haslington, Moston, Bradwall, Brereton and Arclid. Landscape consists primarily of farmland and woodland. Cheshire contains some of the best arable and dairy farmland in the country.

### **History of Sandbach and The Settlement Villages:**

**Sandbach Town** is mentioned twice in the 1086 Domesday Book census.

The towns most famous landmark is the “Sandbach Crosses”. The two massive Saxon stone crosses, elaborately carved with animals and Biblical scenes including the Nativity of Christ and the Crucifixion, dominate the cobbled market square of Sandbach. Probably dating from the 9th century, and originally painted as well as carved, they are among the finest surviving examples of Anglo-Saxon high crosses.



The licence to hold a market every Thursday in the town was first granted by Queen Elizabeth I on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1579.

During the Civil War, a party of nearly 1,000 exhausted Scottish troops rode through Sandbach on horseback as they retreated from the Battle of Worcester. A skirmish occurred as the local people attacked the Scottish troops, reported as “The dispute was hot for two or three hours and there were some townsmen hurt and two or three slain, the Townsmen slew about nine or ten and took 100 prisoners.” The central common in Sandbach has since been known as Scotch Common.

During the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Sandbach was noted for the production of fine worsted yarns and malt liquor, and the revenue from these, together with that from the fairs and market, made the Town “modestly affluent”.

In the 1820's and 30's, Sandbach was an important coaching stop on the roads from London and Birmingham to both Liverpool and Manchester. Later in the 19th Century, the Town produced silk, boots and shoes and enjoyed extensive trade with its corn mills and salt works along the Trent and Mersey Canal.



The 20th Century saw the upsurge of heavy vehicle manufacturing industry within the Town. The Foden Steam Wagon enjoyed huge success and attained a worldwide reputation for economy and reliability. From the early 1930's the industry concentrated on diesel-powered heavy goods vehicles, which were produced in the factories of both E.R.F. and Foden. The lively market town traditions still continue to the present day and the cobbled square, surrounded by black-and-white and thatched buildings along with the adjacent High Street and the nearby "Common" are venues for regular events such as markets, farmers markets, festivals, open-air concerts and fairs.





**Conservation Areas** - The Sandbach Conservation Area consists of one major historical delineation plus later additions (refer to Map Fig.14). The major area takes in Hightown to the bottom of High Street at the Bridge. This area is the Town Centre plus Well Bank to Dingle Lane /Dingle Farm. The first of the additions is the area west of Hawk Street to the rear of the Crown Inn. The second and third additions include Bold Street, Welles Street and Green Street, west of Bradwall Road, to include Wesley Avenue to Chapel Street. The latest addition includes Dingle Farm, with possible future inclusion of associated paddocks and land.

**Wheelock Village** was also recorded in the Domesday Book under its original name of Hoileck/Hoiloch (Old Welsh source meaning “winding river” which runs through it). The name Wheelock was finally settled upon in 1390. In 1801 the population was 189, by 1851 it was 548 and by 1901 it was 685. Wheelock had its own Mayor up until 1849.



An historian in 1850 described Wheelock as “a township and pleasant village in a neighbourhood richly diversified with picturesque beauty, half a mile S.S.W. from Sandbach, intersected by the North Staffordshire Railway (laid in 1840) and the Trent and Mersey Canal (cut in 1775 by the Engineer James Brindley). Here are three salt works, two sawmills, two breweries, a soap factory, and three silk factories, only one, however, of the latter is now occupied”.



Virtually all of these industries have now disappeared and the North Staffordshire railway branch from Kidsgrove to Sandbach (Elworth) ceased passenger service in the 1930's and closed for freight traffic in the 1960's. (This disused track has since become the "Wheelock Rail Trail" and is used extensively by walkers and cyclists.



**Elworth Village** is described as “a village approximately one mile to the west of Sandbach”. It has several pubs and a few shops. There are two churches in Elworth: Mount Pleasant Methodist Church and St Peter's Church of England, (the latter was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott who also designed St. Pancras Railway Station in London, as well as many other buildings in the area). It also has the railway station serving Sandbach, which is located here on the main line between Crewe and Manchester.

In 1840 the Manchester to Crewe railway (also known as the Manchester to Birmingham Line) was constructed, a section of which ran through Elworth. By 1860 there were seven trains a day calling at Elworth Station. A second line was laid at Elworth, forming the Sandbach to Winsford Junction.

The railway encouraged the establishment of the local industrial base and Elworth was the home of Foden the lorry makers until 1980. The Trent and Mersey canal runs to the southwest of the village.

**Ettiley Heath** grew out of the narrowboat trade on the Trent and Mersey Canal (Barges were too big to travel further south than Middlewich on this canal and so narrowboats were used) where they were loaded just beyond Rookery

Bridge. It was home to many of the salt workers from Sifta Salt, which operated where Springvale Industrial Estate is situated today. Beyond Rookery Bridge were situated Glacia Salt and the boneworks both notable features of the landscape. The salt factories grew out of the brine pumping locally which caused much of the area to sink and indeed is the reason why we have the “Flashes”, now a site of special interest for birdwatchers and other species.

**Sandbach Heath** was once a woodland area but now, St John the Evangelist Church, opened in 1861 and standing proud on the top of the heath, can be seen from many miles distance. This extremely attractive Church was also designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott. Today, Sandbach Heath has a strong community “feel” with many regular events organised by and for the local people.

### Population:

In 2010 the population of Sandbach was 17,976 and there were approximately 7,840 dwellings (source 2011 census). During the period 2010 to March 2015, a further 2,754 dwellings (including an element up to 30% low cost/affordable) have been approved, which represents an increase of 35%.

Latest Government figures indicate a net fall from present numbers in the local population by year 2030 (Housing Vision consultative report dated March 2015 – see Appendix 4.3 (Reference Documents) and Appendix 8 (Overview of Housing Vision and report)). However, whilst the overall number will fall, the forecast also predicts that the percentage of older age members of the community will increase.

### Demographics:

#### Age distribution

There were approximately 18,000 people living in Sandbach at the time of the 2011 Census (table KS102EW). The following analysis provides further details:

Category	Sandbach	England average
Number of people living locally	17,976	
Sex	48.8% male and 51.2% female	
Number of households	7,840	
Children under 16	3,070 (17.1%)	18.9%
Working age adults	11,041 (62%)	64.7%
Older people over 65	3,600 (20.0%)	16.3%
Lone parent families with children	430 (19.5%)	24.5%
Single pensioner households	1,110 (14.2%)	12.4%
People from black or minority ethnic groups	640 (3.6%)	20.2%
People born outside the UK	610 (3.4%)	13.8%
Dependency ratio	0.59	0.56

### Population by age

Age	% Population (2010)	% Population (2011)	% Cheshire East	% England
0-15	17.6	17.1	17.8	18.9
Working age	62.7	62.9	63.0	64.7
65+	19.6	20.0	19.3	16.3

Source: Community Profile for Sandbach © ACRE, RCAN, OCSI 2012 and 2013

### Key findings:

- The age structure of the population is similar to that for Cheshire East. Both Sandbach and Cheshire East have lower younger and larger older populations than regionally or nationally

### Dwellings and households

Category	Sandbach (% of all households)	England average
One person per household	15.2	17.9
Married households	39.1	33.2
Cohabiting households	9.5	9.8
Lone parent families	5.5	7.1
Pensioner households	25.1	20.7
Student households	0.0	0.6
Other households	5.6	10.6

Source: Census 2011 (tables KS201EW, KS204EW and KS105EW)

### Key findings

- Compared with the region and nationally, Sandbach and Cheshire East have:
- More older households;
- More couple households with no children;
- More households with dependent children; and
- Less lone parent households

### Weekly household earnings

Category	Sandbach (£)	Cheshire East (£)	England (£)
Total weekly household income estimate	717	702	673
Net weekly household income estimate after housing costs	438	419	423

Source: Income Support/Pension Credit (DWP Aug-12), Economic Deprivation Index 2009, Fuel Poverty (Department for Energy and Climate Change 2009), Housing/Council Tax Benefit (DWP 2005), Households below median income (ONS 2008)

### Inward and outward migration

Migration pattern	Sandbach	% England
Lived at same address 1 year ago	16,440 (91.5%)	87.7
Lived elsewhere 1 year ago; within the	287 (1.6%)	11.0

same area		
Inflow: lived elsewhere 1 year ago outside the area but within the 'associated area'	766 (4.3%)	0.2
Inflow: lived elsewhere 1 year ago outside the 'associated area' but within the UK	406 (2.3%)	n/a
Inflow: lived elsewhere 1 year ago outside the UK	77 (0.4%)	1.1
<b>Inflow: Total</b>	<b>1,249 (6.9%)</b>	
Outflow: moved out of the area but within the 'associated area'	740	
Outflow: moved out of the 'associated area' but within the UK	511	
<b>Outflow: Total</b>	<b>1,251</b>	
Net migration within the UK	-79	
<b>Total residents</b>	<b>17,976 (100%)</b>	

Source: UKMIG001 2011 Census data, ONS website, <http://www.ons.gov.uk> and NOMIS website <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk>

#### Key findings:

- Sandbach's population was more stable in the year prior to the 2011 Census compared with Cheshire East, the region or nationally.
- The net effect of UK migration to and from Sandbach was a loss of 79 people.
- There was less movement within Sandbach and more from the associated area and beyond.
- Most movement into Sandbach was of families with dependent children.
- Most movement out of Sandbach was of one person households aged under 65.
- Those least likely to move home were aged 50+.
- The main age bands who moved into Sandbach were aged 20-34 and 0-4 which indicates families with children.
- The main age band moving out of Sandbach was those aged 16-19 which is likely to be to access further or higher education; employment and/or more affordable housing

#### Employment

The number of people employed is 8,790 (source: Census 2011 tables KS605EW and KS608EW).

<b>Patterns of travel to work</b>	<b>No.</b>
Live and work in Sandbach parish	1,620
Travel out to work from Sandbach parish	5,660
Travel into work to Sandbach parish	3,405
Net travel to work	-2,255

Source: WU01EW 2011 Census data, ONS website, <http://www.ons.gov.uk> and NOMIS website <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk>

Key findings:

- 2,250 more people commuted out of Sandbach than commuted in.

Distance travelled to work for workday population aged 16 to 74	Number 16-74	% of 16-74	Number of commuters	% of commuters
Less than 2 km	1,350	12.2	1,350	27.0
2 km to less than 5 km	551	5.0	551	11.9
5 km to less than 10 km	1,303	11.8	1,303	26.0
10 km to less than 20 km	1,023	9.3	1,023	20.4
20 km to less than 30 km	339	3.1	339	6.8
30 km to less than 40 km	225	2.0	225	4.5
40 km to less than 60 km	138	1.2	138	2.8
60 km and over	76	0.7	76	1.5
Work mainly at or from home	993	9.0		
No fixed place	561	5.1		
Not in employment	4,482	40.6		
All Categories	11,041	100.0	5,005	100.0

Source: WD702EW 2011 Census data, ONS website, <http://www.ons.gov.uk> and NOMIS website <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk>

Key findings:

- Over 5,000 people aged 16-74 commuted out of Sandbach each day of whom:
  - 38% commuted less than 5 km;
  - 26% commuted between 5 and less than 10 km;
  - 20% commuted between 10 and less than 20 km; and
  - 16% commuted 20 km or further.
  - 9% of people worked from home.
- In relation to Travel out to Work from Sandbach, the main destinations are at or in the vicinity of Crewe, Middlewich, Knutsford, Holmes Chapel and Congleton.
- In relation to Travel in to Work in Sandbach, the main locations of origin are at or in the vicinity of Sandbach, Middlewich and Crewe.
- The largest single employer is Cheshire East Council, with Headquarter offices located close to the town centre.
- At present the main employment area in Sandbach is located on the Spring Vale Industrial Estate in Ettiley village. Other small employment areas include the Zan Industrial Park, having access off Crewe Road in Wheelock village, Business units on Hind Heath Road in Elworth and off Abbey Road in Elworth. A further employment area is designated within the Cheshire East Council Local Plan Strategy for Sandbach, for development as a business/employment site on the (CS24) "Capricorn" site, located on the outskirts of the town and close to the M6 Motorway Junction 17.
- The majority of local people work in managerial, professional and associate professional occupations (45.9%). Other occupation segments include; Administration/secretarial (11.%), skilled trades (10.2%) and elementary work (8.9%).

- Unemployment in Sandbach is low at 1.8% of working age people seeking Jobseekers allowance, against a country average of 3.8% (*source: Jobseekers Allowance claimants DWP Feb 2013*), Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefits/Out of Work Benefits DWP Aug 2012, Available jobs (*source: Job Centre Plus Nov 2012*). This low figure is due largely to the fact that a high proportion of the settlement's workforce travel further afield to their places of employment, including Crewe (4 miles), Macclesfield (25 miles), Manchester (30 miles) and Birmingham (50 miles).

### **Public transport services**

The town is currently served by regular bus services, interconnecting with Crewe (20 minutes), Nantwich (30 minutes), Congleton (25 minutes), Macclesfield (60 minutes), Northwich (40 minutes) and Chester (90 minutes)

The Sandbach train station is located in the village of Elworth and 30 minutes' walk from the town centre.

A limited circular route bus services operates around the town, on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays between 09.30 and 15.00hours.

Journey time to the nearest hospital in Crewe is 35 minutes by public transport/walking The County average is 33 minutes (*source DFT 2011*).

### **Car ownership**

As a rural community private car ownership and usage is the predominant method of transport; with approximately 43% of all homes owning at least 2 or more cars.

### **Crime**

Sandbach is considered by the community to be a reasonably safe place to live. The crime rate (per 1,000 population) for Cheshire East (including Sandbach) is 29 against the North West average of 36.9 and country average of 37.6 (*source: Indices of Deprivation 2010, CLG*).

### **Facilities and services**

A comprehensive list of the facilities and services provided in Sandbach by public bodies and private organisations for community use can be found in the supporting Evidence Base.

#### **Leisure and sporting facilities**

##### Public sector owned, managed or funded:

- Sandbach Leisure Centre - Indoor sports hall, squash courts, drama room and swimming pool.(supplied via a Joint User Agreement with the Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College).
- Sandbach School – swimming pool, cricket, rugby, five-a-side astro turf pitches, tennis courts.
- Football pitches and Academy on Hind Heath Road, Ettiley Heath

##### Privately Owned Sports Facilities

- Sandbach Rugby Club, Elworth Cricket Club, Sandbach Cricket Club, Elton Road playing field and Sandbach Golf Club.

- Privately owned Gyms in Elworth, Wheelock and the Sandbach town centre

### **Parks and open spaces, walkways and footpaths**

- Sandbach Park, Elworth Park, Wheelock Playing Fields, several smaller areas of open space containing play equipment, including Newall Avenue, Forge Fields and Mortimer Drive.
- Footpaths/ walkways owned by Cheshire East Council, including - Wheelock Rail Trail and parts of Footpath 56.
- Sandbach Wildlife Corridor
- Several woodland trails linking to a footpaths network.
- Open spaces on housing estates

### **Halls and venues**

Sandbach Town Hall, Literary Institute, Cricket Club, Masonic Hall, Library, local Pubs, Church Halls, School Halls, ATC and other small communal buildings.

### **Allotments**

Presently at a temporary location in Ettiley Heath. There is an ongoing project to find a permanent site.

### **Clubs and societies**

Sandbach has a high level of community involvement supporting a wide variety of activities, from sporting activities to cultural and community based pastimes.

There is also a community Cinema at the Town Hall.

Many of the organising groups present and promote their activities at the “Sandbach Today” event. This is an annual showcase organised by the Sandbach Partnership.

The Sandbach Partnership holds several community forums throughout the year and manages community projects which involve Sandbach Town Council and community organisations.

“Community Pride” – In 2013 and 2014 Sandbach won “Best Kept Town in Cheshire (population 10,000 to 30,000 group)” and in 2014 won the Championship Award across all categories, in addition to several awards for local “Little Gems” and also for Sandbach Park.

## **SECTION 2: The Key Issues, Vision and Aims**

### **2.1 Summary of Key Issues**

The views expressed by local residents from surveys, questionnaires and at the various consultation events particularly reflected the impact of a recent high level of additional housing on local Areas of Separation, the local landscape, green spaces, facilities and services. It is also recognised that some issues were raised that were considered important to members of the community but which are not “land use” matters. Therefore, whilst they cannot be addressed through the Plan, the Plan process seeks to ensure that they are addressed through the appropriate channels. A list of aspirational issues and action plan can be found in the Consultation Statement (Refer to section 4.3 – Reference Documents).

In summary the key issues that the Plan must address are:

#### **Protecting the Countryside**

- There is an overwhelming desire to preserve existing farmland, publicly accessible open spaces and green spaces surrounding the town.
- To maintain and protect the Areas of Separation which separate the distinct village settlements of Sandbach, Elworth, Ettiley Heath, Wheelock and Sandbach Heath.
- To ensure that any new developments maintain public rights of way and also to improve footpath networks to provide access to the surrounding countryside.
- To protect and improve the existing natural wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors.

#### **Preserving Heritage and Character**

- The wish to retain Sandbach as a small historical rural market town with its traditional ambiance and in particular to preserve and protect its historic buildings and retain its important assets such as the high street, green spaces, open spaces, old buildings, wild-life corridors and conservation areas.
- The need to protect the town centre and viability of the shops and services throughout the town, which are one of the town’s strongest assets, whilst preserving and enhancing its appearance and conservation area which is fundamental to the traditional market town ‘feel’.

#### **Managing Housing Supply**

- The need to control the location and rate of housing growth within Sandbach to ensure that the town’s infrastructure such as medical facilities, schools and highways are allowed to catch up with demands.
- Policy PG6 (Spatial Distribution of Development) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy submission version (2014) indicated that Sandbach should provide in the order of 2,200 new dwellings up to 2030. Following the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) review by Cheshire East Council (July 2015), the number was increased by a further 25% to 2,750 dwellings. During the period 2010 to March 2015, 2,754 dwellings have already been approved. Many of these houses are located on green field areas, outside the current

settlement zones and/or located in designated Areas of Separation (see map Fig.2).

- The latest Government figures indicate a downward trend in market priced housing for Sandbach (Housing Vision Report March – 2015) but with an increasing need to provide a wider range of housing types to meet the local needs of Sandbach, particularly starter homes, affordable housing and homes designed for older people (including bungalows). This same conclusion has been reached through a housing needs survey carried out by the Plan Working Group as part of the consultation process

### **Promoting Jobs and the Local Economy**

- The closure of many factories and businesses over time and the proximity of Sandbach to the M6 motorway has caused changes to the way that people travel to work. Over 5,000 residents of working age in Sandbach commute to work outside the area each day.
- The area identified as CS24 in the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council (and known locally as the “Capricorn” site), is located adjacent to the M6 motorway J17 and is currently proposed as a strategic site for mixed use. However, the local community feels that the remaining uncommitted area (May 2015) of this site (situated on the south side of the wildlife corridor), is at risk of change to solely housing if employment take-up is slow. This has been demonstrated recently by a developer who successfully maintained that housing was necessary in order to subsidise development of business premises.
- Jobs which attract tourism and which enhance the vibrancy of the town and town centre need to be encouraged.

### **Improving the Infrastructure**

- Public transport services to the train station and nearby population centres and facilities are uncoordinated. As a result the vast majority of journeys are made by private car.
- There is a lack of car parking facilities in the town centre to serve both the medical centre and shopping areas.
- More speed reduction measures are required throughout the town.
- Sandbach train station facilities are regarded as important because the number of houses already approved indicates an inevitable increase in commuting. The possible re-opening of the rail link to Middlewich where large quantities of employment land are available reinforces the need to improve the station facilities.

### **Community and Well-Being**

- Access to formal and informal leisure facilities within the town could be improved.
- Facilities and opportunities for young people within the town could be improved.
- Concern that the number of primary and secondary school places is insufficient to accommodate demand brought about by the recent rapid increase in the number of houses and the resulting increase in the population in Sandbach.

- The need to support and provide for the increasing number of older people.
- 

## 2.2 The Vision and Aims of the Plan

The vision and aims are based on the key issues raised by local people during the initial stages of the consultation process. They have been summarised and refined by the Plan Working Group to form the basis of Plan.

### **Vision for Sandbach**

The most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council identifies Sandbach as a key service centre which will have growth and development to meet identified local needs, respecting its location in the open (green field) countryside.

The community interaction process has enabled a more particular vision to be articulated for Sandbach (see proposals map Fig.2):

Sandbach is a thriving market town with a treasured historic heart. The Vision for the town is:

**“Over the Plan period, Sandbach will continue to be a distinctive rural parish, whilst evolving and expanding in a way that respects and reflects the views of the community. It will retain its distinctive character of a rural market town formed by villages intersected by open countryside. There will be a wide range of community facilities and businesses that will both expand and prosper within an attractive environment. Current and future generations will enjoy a strong sense of community, a high quality of life, and a flourishing natural environment”.**

### **Aims for Sandbach**

The aims and objectives have been identified through engagement with the community and the delivery of the Plan will have the following at its core:

#### **Protecting the Countryside**

To protect and enhance the open countryside setting of Sandbach including its Areas of Separation, green spaces, canals, amenity land and wildlife areas (see Fig.2).

#### **Preserving Heritage and Character**

To preserve and enhance the heritage and character of the Parish of Sandbach.

#### **Managing Housing Supply**

The Sandbach Plan housing policies are designed to provide a framework which will enable the parish of Sandbach to grow at a sustainable rate which will satisfy the identified future local housing need during the Plan period.

The settlement boundaries will be reviewed and amended to take account of committed development approvals (see Fig.2).

### **Promoting Local Economy and Jobs**

To promote and maintain a thriving local economy to ensure that jobs and enterprise opportunities are available for local people of all ages. There will be a strong customer base for retail and hospitality businesses, enabling the community to maintain a prosperous town centre.

### **Improving the Infrastructure**

1. To develop a safe, efficient and sustainable transport system that contributes to the social, environmental and economic well-being of the residents, businesses and visitors to Sandbach.
2. To provide equal opportunity for everyone to access key services whilst maximising the use of 'green' alternatives to vehicular movements.

### **Community and Well-Being**

To protect and maintain existing community amenities, buildings, facilities and services throughout Sandbach. New services and facilities should be added as appropriate in the future.

### **Adapting to Climate Change**

To encourage sustainable development and moves towards a low-carbon economy, which includes high standards of energy conservation and the use of renewable energy.

To encourage better use of green infrastructure assets such as ponds, swales and wetlands which will not only meet local green space needs but also address existing and/or future surface water/ climate change issues.

The delivery of some of the stated aims arising will be achieved in partnership with public sector, private bodies and stakeholders such as landowners, developers and the community. To this end the Working Group may be widened over time to include representatives of other bodies who will both monitor progress and the delivery of the plan.

The Plan fully accords with the requirements for public consultation as set out in the Localism Act. Details of the consultation have been recorded in a report called the 'Consultation Statement' which is a reference document to the Plan.

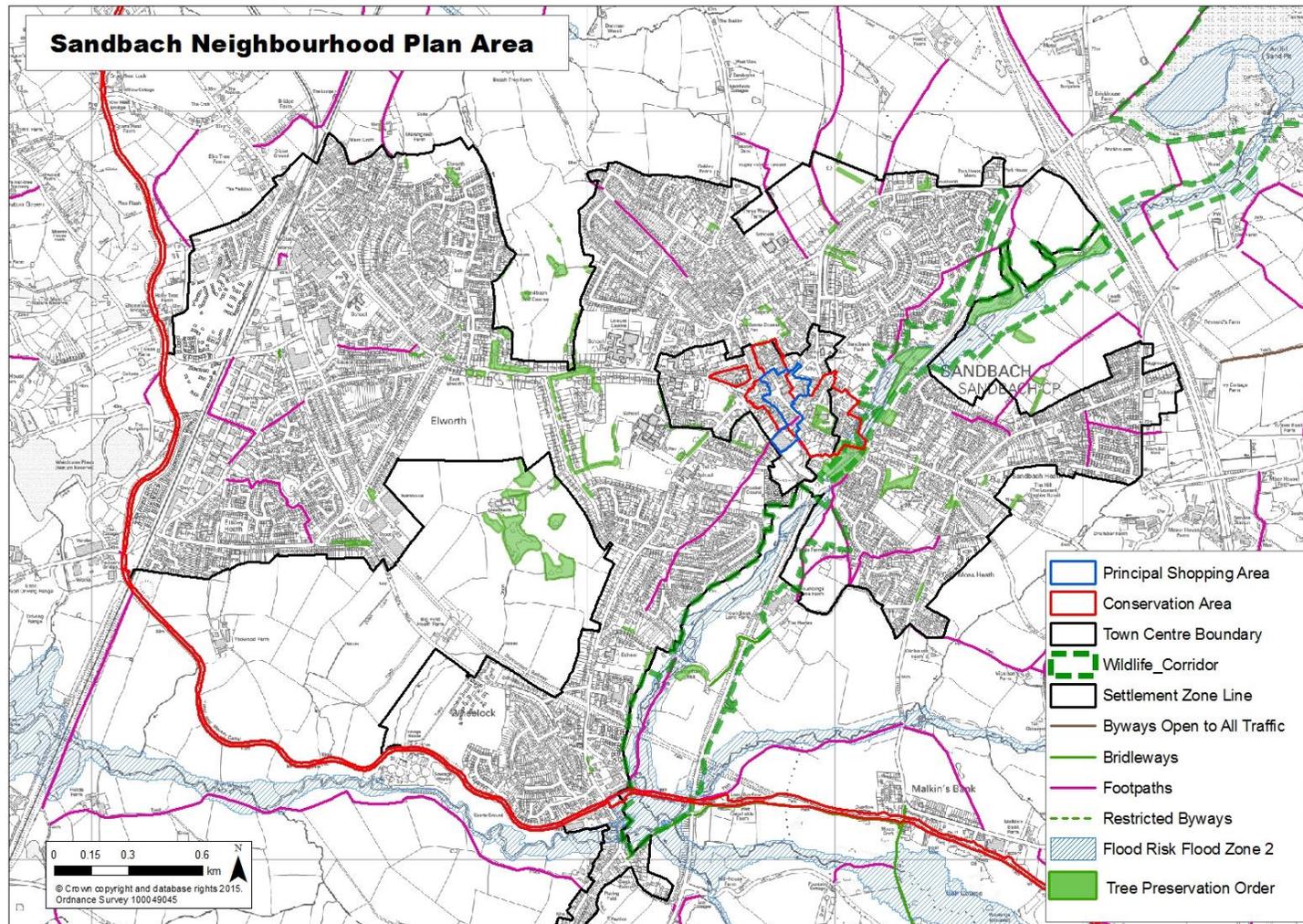


Fig.2 – Vision and Proposals map for Sandbach

## SECTION 3: Objectives and Policies of the Plan

### 3.1 Protecting the Countryside (PC)

**AIM:**

To protect and enhance the open countryside setting of Sandbach including its Areas of Separation, green spaces, canals, amenity land and wildlife areas.

**OBJECTIVE 1: To maintain the green spaces and the Areas of Separation between the distinctive village settlements**

#### **POLICY PC1 – AREAS OF SEPARATION**

The Areas of Separation between the distinct settlements of Sandbach, Elworth, Ettiley Heath, Wheelock and Sandbach Heath, as defined in Fig 3, will be maintained and enhanced to support opportunities for recreation and leisure purposes. Developments which detract from the open character and/or function of these Areas of Separation will not be permitted.

**Justification:**

The maintenance and enhancement of land between individual settlements (Areas of Separation) has been established as a priority for Sandbach. This was made apparent by local residents through the first and second round of consultations, and from evidence received from local organisations such as Cheshire Wildlife Trust, A Rocha and Sandbach Woodlands and Wildlife Group who each exercise an active role in identifying areas of ecological importance.

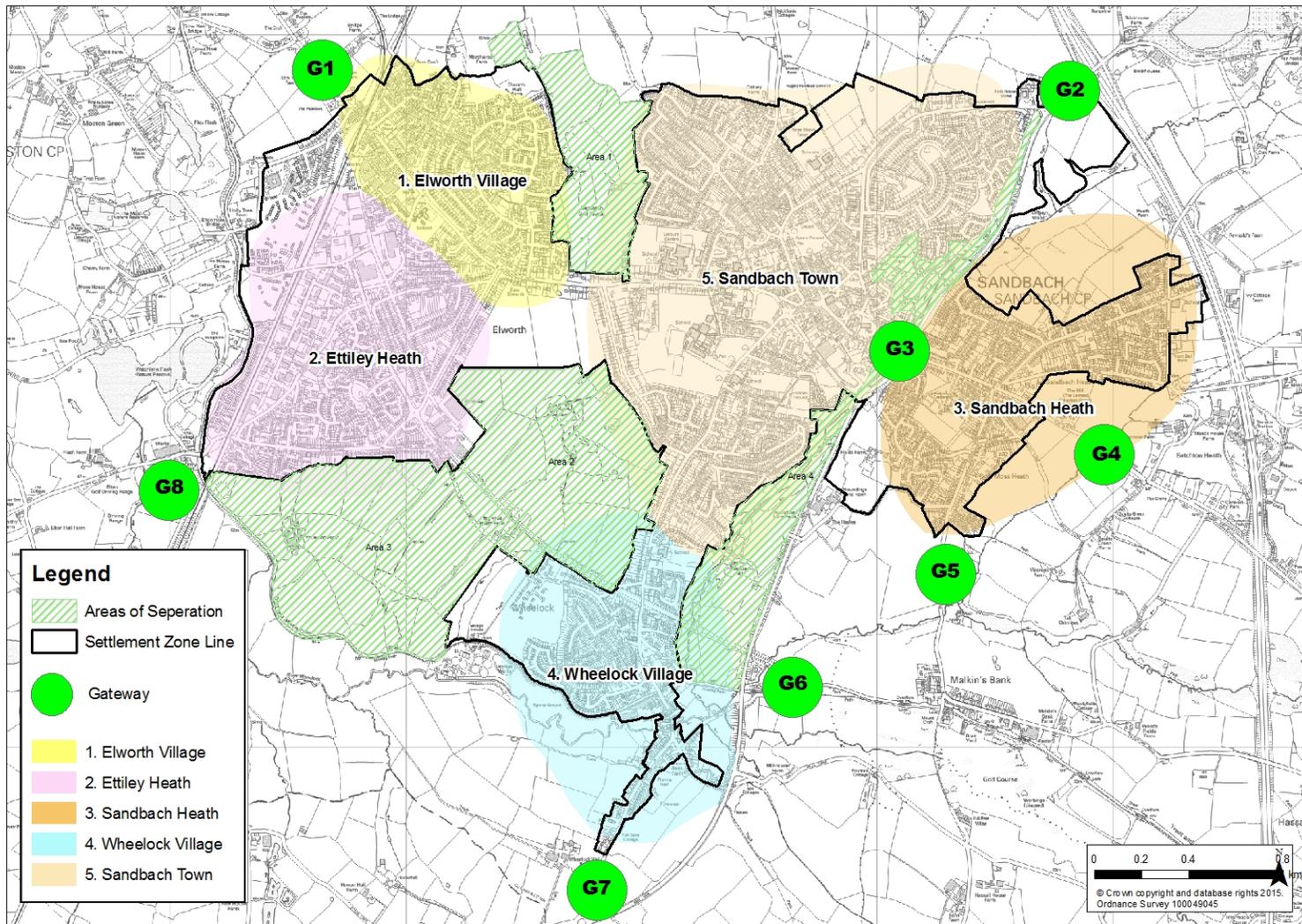
A key objective of the NPPF is to encourage well designed buildings and places that can improve the lives of people and communities (paragraph 8) This is also a key objective for the local community. The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that 96% of the respondents strongly agree or agree that each settlement has a distinct identity and should be given adequate protection from development. Additionally, the land between the settlements, which is largely undeveloped, is also of ecological value and contains amenity space used for recreational purposes.

The evidence to support this strongly held view is demonstrated in the Land Character Areas described in maps Fig.4 and the areas of high ecological value described in maps Fig.5. Specific areas requiring protection include:

- The Abbeyfield ancient woodlands (located to the west of Crewe Road)
- Land between Sandbach and Elworth
- Land between Wheelock and Ettiley Heath
- The corridor of land running along the Arclid Brook Valley West
- The land on both sides of the M6 Motorway, including areas identified as of biological importance and public rights of way within “the Capricorn site CS24” in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Submission Version.
- Land to the north of Elworth, including Sandbach golf course, and continuing between the rear of Congleton Road until it meets the M6 motorway.

- Other land which contains some habitat distinctiveness as shown in Figs. 4 & 5.

This policy also accords with paragraph 109 of the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF), policy PG5 (Open Countryside) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy GR5 (Landscaping) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (January 2005). This policy also supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).



**Fig 3 – Areas of Separation and Gateways**

**OBJECTIVE 2: To protect the identity of Sandbach as an historic market town within its open countryside and farmland setting and ensure that new developments respect the landscape character.**

### **POLICY PC2 – LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

In order to protect the identity of Sandbach as an historic market town within its open countryside and farmland setting, new developments must respect the landscape character of Sandbach. The Landscape character areas are set out in proposals maps (Fig.4). New development proposals must indicate how they have considered the Landscape character areas through design statements, reflecting the scale, massing, features and design of the development in relation to the existing landscape character.

#### **Justification:**

Sandbach is an historic market town, and its setting provides a unique sense of place and special character as highlighted in the Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) whereby 86% of the respondents strongly agree and a further 10% who agree. New developments must not detract from this setting but should instead consider the distinctive landscape and character of this area.

This is another key objective for the community as clearly identified from the consultation survey (2015). 97% of the respondents wish to protect the identity of Sandbach as an historic market town within its open countryside setting. It was also a key theme set out in the Sandbach Town Strategy.

Sandbach is situated within National Character Area 61 Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain, a pastoral area of rolling plains, particularly important for dairy farming.

The area is a major provider of good quality agricultural land. Almost 95% of the total land area of the Cheshire East Borough is agricultural of which 17.8% is Grade 2 and 74.2% is Grade 3. The bulk of the highest quality land lies around Sandbach, Hassall, Somerford and Somerford Booths, and between Congleton and Alsager.

The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment identifies recognisable patterns in the landscape. Different aspects such as geology, landform, soils, vegetation and land use have been used to identify character areas. The assessment is intended to be used as a basis for planning and the creation of future landscape strategies, as well as raising public awareness of landscape character and creating a sense of place.

The Landscape Character Assessment identifies recognisable character areas within the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan area as:

- Type 7. East Lowland Plain
- Type 10. Lower Farms and Woods
- Type 16. Higher Farms and Woods.

- Due consideration must be given to Type 11. Salt Flashes, if a proposed development is less than the permitted distance of this character area
- Due consideration must be given to ancient woodland, if a proposed development is less than the permitted distance of this character area

The maps Fig.4 illustrate the Landscape character areas and setting around Sandbach

### **Sandbach Landscape Character Areas Assessment**

Separate evidence is provided to illustrate the Areas of Separation, key gateways and views of open countryside and green spaces (see Section 9 – Related Documents).

This policy accords with paragraphs 58 and 109 of the NPPF, policies SD2 (Sustainable development Principles), SE1 (Design), SE4 (Landscape) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. and GR5 (landscaping), PS8 (Open Countryside) and H6 (Residential Development in the Open Countryside) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

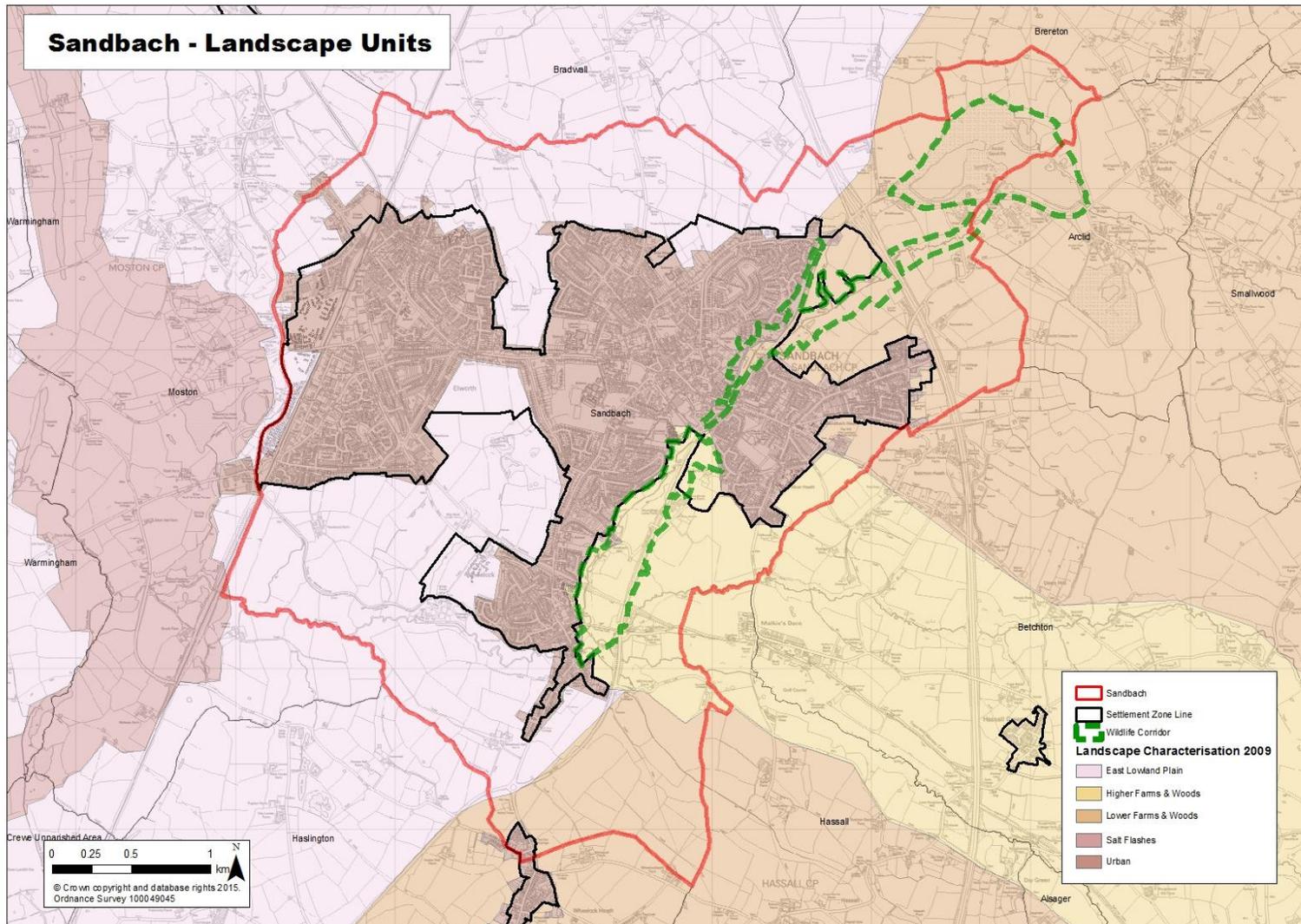


Fig.4 –Landscape Character

## **POLICY PC2a – POLICY BOUNDARY FOR SANDBACH**

New development involving housing, commercial and community development will be supported in principle within the policy boundary defined around Sandbach and shown on the Proposals Map for Sandbach (Fig.2).

The area outside of the boundary is countryside. The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be protected by restricting development to that which requires a countryside location and cannot be accommodated within Sandbach. Within the countryside the following types of development will be permitted;

- a) Development that has an operational need for a countryside location such as for agricultural or forestry operations.
- b) Replacement buildings.
- c) Small scale and low impact rural / farm diversification schemes appropriate to the site, location and its rural setting.
- d) The reuse of existing rural buildings, particularly for economic purposes, where buildings are of permanent construction and can be reused without major reconstruction.
- e) The expansion of existing buildings to facilitate the growth of established businesses proportionate to the nature and scale of the site and its rural setting

### **Justification:**

The policy boundary has been drawn from the Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review (in which it was called a 'settlement zone line') but has been extended to incorporate sites that have been granted planning permission for housing development on the edge of the town. The Plan does not allocate these sites because they are planning commitments and the extension of the policy boundary is a simple and pragmatic reflection of the fact that these sites will come forward for development. These permissions however were granted outside of any plan-led approach and one of the purposes of preparing this Neighbourhood Plan is to introduce a clear planning framework through which there will be greater certainty about future planning decisions. Along with other policies of the Plan which enable further development within the town, these sites will deliver substantial housing growth and will meet and exceed the emerging Local Plan housing requirement for the town.

This policy accords with paragraphs 76 of the NPPF, policies SC6 Rural Exceptions Housing for Local Needs) and PG5 (Open Countryside) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. policy H6 (Residential Development in the Open Countryside and the Green Belt) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

**OBJECTIVE 3: To protect and enhance areas of high ecological value and wildlife corridors.**

## **POLICY PC3 – AREAS OF HIGH ECOLOGICAL VALUE AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS**

Areas of high ecological value and wildlife corridors as indicated on the proposals maps Fig.5 will be protected and enhanced:

- A) The M6 motorway to Wheelock Stream Valley between Sandbach and Sandbach Heath
- B) The River Wheelock Valley
- C) Malkins Bank Brook corridor
- D) Abbeyfields ancient woodlands (located to the west of Crewe Road)
- E) Land adjacent to Taxmere
- F) The Malkins Bank to Middlewich Road canal corridor past Ettiley Heath and Elworth
- G) Taxmere local wildlife site
- H) Arclid Brook Valley west local wildlife site
- I) Arclid Brook Valley east local wildlife site
- J) Wheelock disused railway local wildlife site (also known locally as the Wheelock Rail Trail) and,
- K) Any other areas identified as areas of high ecological value or wildlife corridors in the future

Opportunities to enhance wildlife connectivity between areas of high ecological value will be supported.

Areas H and I are collectively known locally as Sandbach wildlife corridor. (However, other areas may also function as wildlife corridors)

### **Justification:**

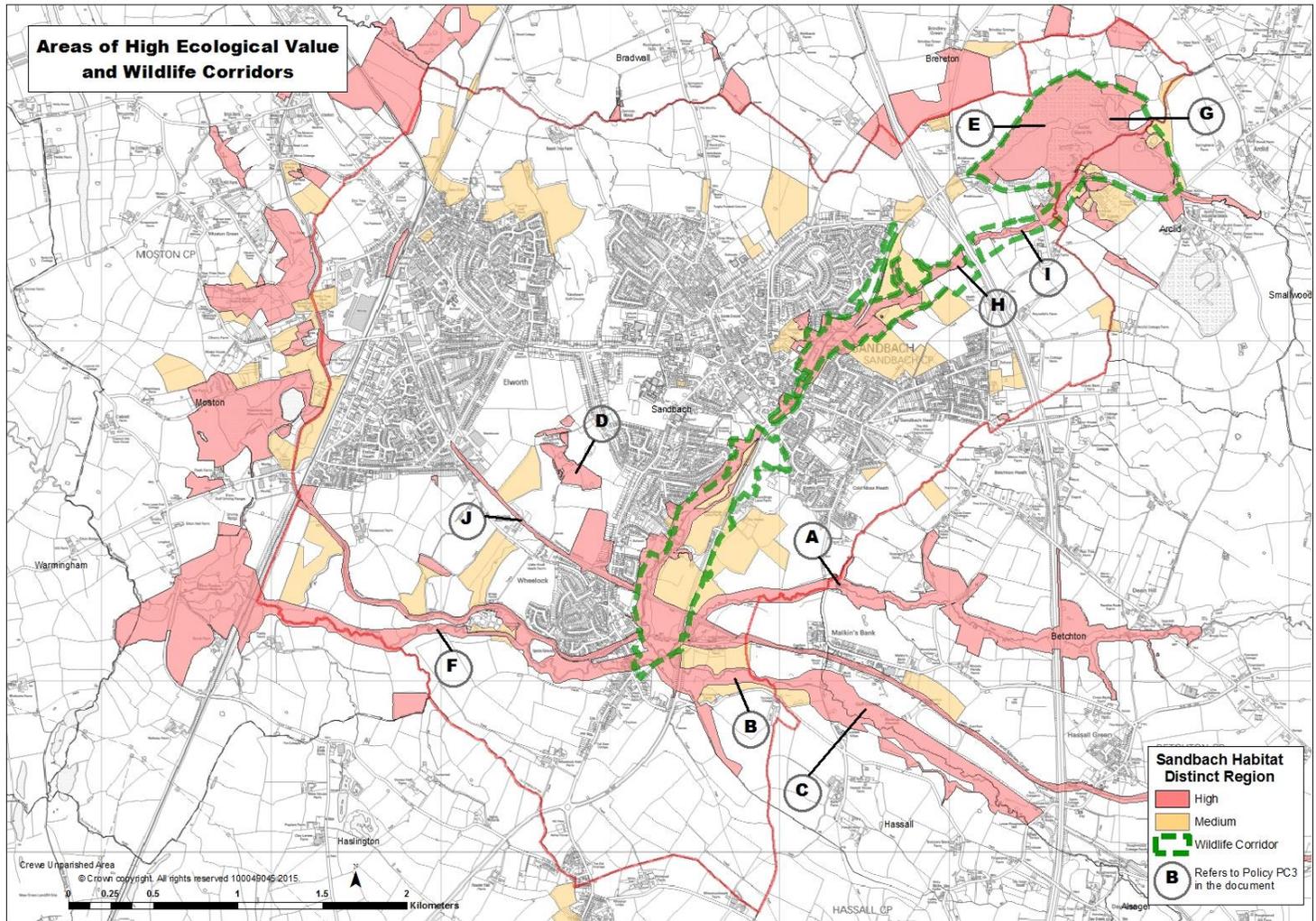
The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that 98% of the respondents wish to protect and enhance the wildlife corridors and areas within and around Sandbach.

Policy PC3 lists the areas in Sandbach that have the greatest ecological value and are therefore the greatest natural assets to the community. Their ecological connectivity provides opportunities for wildlife to move through what would otherwise be a landscape hostile to wildlife.

The “M6 motorway to Wheelock Stream Valley”, between Sandbach and Sandbach Heath, is particularly valued by local residents as it provides accessible opportunities for the enjoyment and appreciation of wildlife throughout the year. Other areas such as the Wheelock disused railway and the canal corridor also provide opportunities for the public to appreciate nature as well as functioning wildlife corridors. More details of the local wildlife sites G, H & I are set out in Appendix 1

This policy seeks to protect and enhance wildlife sites which are important to Sandbach, and promote wildlife connectivity. It accords with the NPPF, which indicates that planning authorities should plan positively for the creation, protection,

enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. It also accords with policy SE3 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy HR4 (Non-Statutory Sites) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).



**Fig.5 - Areas of High Ecological Value and Wildlife Corridors**

## **OBJECTIVE 4: To protect and enhance valued existing open spaces**

### **POLICY PC4 – LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following locations as Local Green Spaces, as shown on the Proposals map Fig.6

L) Brook Wood (S30)

M) St Mary's Wood (S34)

N) Dingle Wood (S23)

P) Park House Meadows (S22)

R) The Green situated at the convergence of Tatton Drive and Gawsworth Drive (S21)

S) Dingle Lake and Dingle Copse (S23)

T) Filter Bed Wood

U) Offley Wood

W) Fishing lakes adjacent to Offley Wood and Filter Bed Wood

X) Woodland along Arclid Brook from Trent and Mersey Canal to Mill Hill Lane (known locally as The Salties Bridge Path, Cinder Path, Zan Wood and Mr Hassall's Wood)

Proposals for any development on the land will not be permitted unless it is for the provision of appropriate recreational uses which improve and enhance the land.

All the above locations, with the exception of (N), form part of the area known as the Sandbach Wildlife Corridor.

#### **Justification:**

The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that 84% of the community strongly agree and a further 13% agree that the areas specified in the policy are local green areas and of continuing importance to the local people. They are all within 2 miles proximity to all members of the Sandbach community.

Brook Wood has recently become more accessible through the restoration of pathways and is enjoyed by residents of all ages. Improvement to the trails through St. Mary's Wood and Dingle Wood is being encouraged in order to extend this further access to woodland areas. Park House Meadow provides a nature trail linking Doddington Drive to Dingle Wood, Sandbach Park and St Mary's Wood.

By seeking to ensure the designation, and protection and enhancement of good quality locally distinct green spaces, which are important to the people of Sandbach this policy proposes the designation of 10 sites as Local Green Spaces, as defined by paragraphs 76 and 77 of the NPPF.

This policy also accords with policy SE6 (Green Infrastructure) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. It also supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

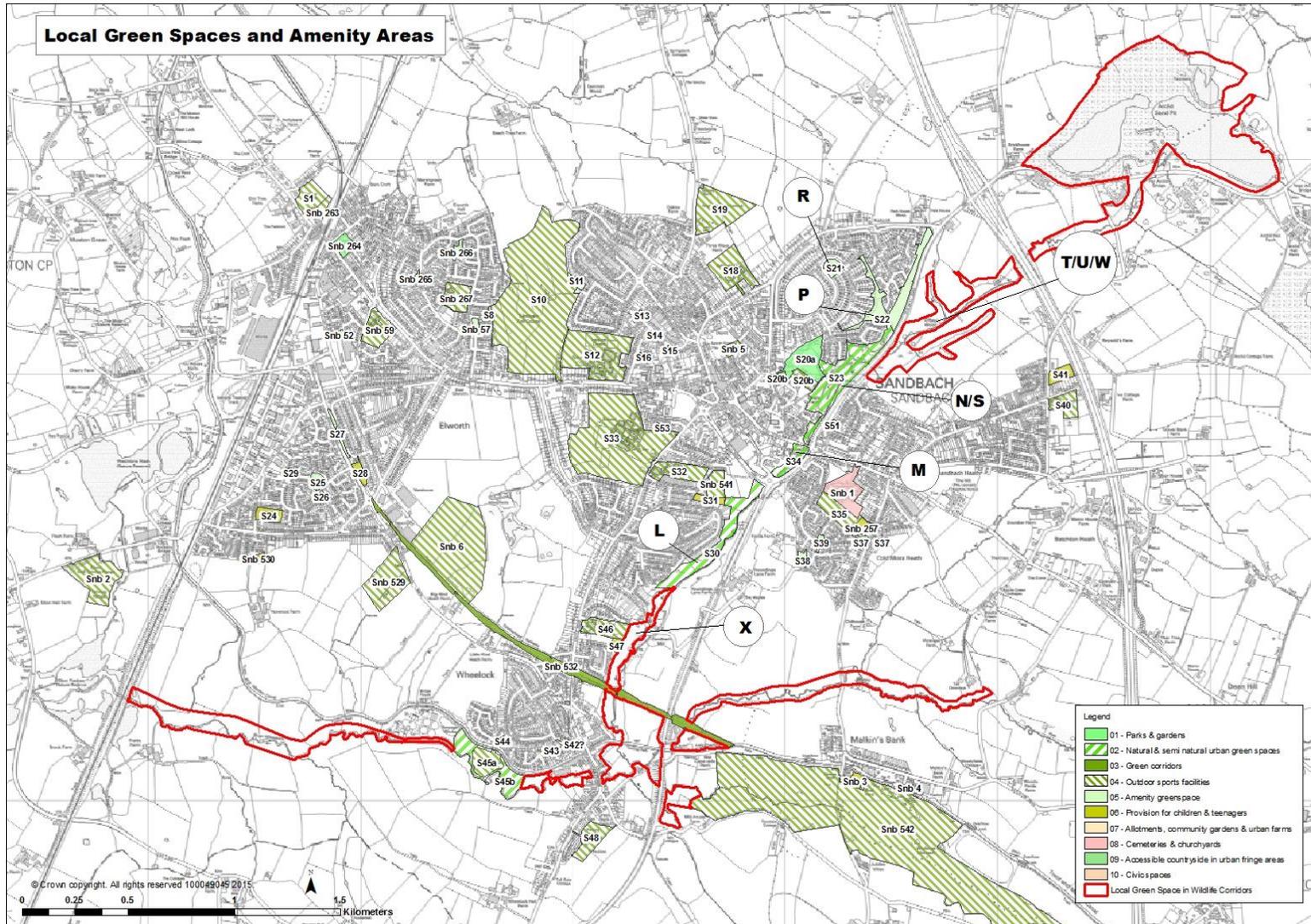


Fig.6 - Local Green Spaces and Amenity Areas

**OBJECTIVE 5: To ensure that development in all areas of Sandbach results in no net loss in biodiversity and geodiversity**

**POLICY PC5 – BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY**

Areas of high biodiversity and geodiversity value will be protected and enhanced. Enhancement measures will include increasing the total area of valuable habitat in the Neighbourhood Area, and linking up existing areas of high value habitat to create 'ecological stepping stone sites', 'wildlife corridors' and 'Nature Improvements Areas'. Ecological networks and connectivity are vitally important in sustaining sites and addressing the impacts of climate change.

Development proposals which are likely to have any significant adverse impact on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) will not be permitted.

Development proposals which are likely to have a significant adverse impact on a site with one or more of the following local or regional designations, habitats or species will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances where the reasons for the proposed development clearly outweigh the value of the ecological feature adversely affected and there are no appropriate alternatives:

- Local Nature Reserves
- Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) or Local Wildlife Sites
- Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGGS)
- Designated Wildlife Corridors
- Habitats and species within the Cheshire Biodiversity Action Plan
- Priority habitats and species within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan
- Habitats and species listed in respect of Section 41 of The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- Legally protected species
- Areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland
- Nature Improvement Areas

All development must aim to positively contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity and should not negatively affect these interests. To ensure that there are no residual adverse impacts resulting from a proposed development, where in exceptional circumstances the reasons for the proposed development clearly outweigh the value of the ecological feature adversely affected and there are no appropriate alternatives, the adverse impacts of the development must be proportionately addressed in accordance with the hierarchy of: mitigation, compensation and finally offsetting.

Development proposals that are likely to have a significant impact on a non-designated asset or a site valued by the local community as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan will only be permitted where suitable mitigation and/or compensation is provided to address the adverse impacts of the proposed development.

## **Justification**

The community in Sandbach is keen to protect wildlife and one of the key ways to achieve this is to ensure that new developments result in a net gain for biodiversity and geodiversity. There are a number of sites in the locality where further improvements to benefit wildlife are required and this will be achieved by working with the Local Authority, local landowners and developers.

A detailed analysis of the Parish, described in map Fig.5 has highlighted a number of areas which are likely to support high and medium value habitats. This plan would expect to see a detailed evaluation of these sites should they be put forward for planning purposes. Where loss of biodiversity is likely, appropriate mitigation or compensation measures must be applied in line with local and national policies.

This policy seeks to ensure that development demonstrates no net losses in biodiversity or geodiversity and, identifying areas important to Sandbach which will require evaluation should development proposals be brought forward. It accords with Neighbourhood plan policy PC5 of the NPPF, which seeks to help deliver one of the key planning aims of conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Para 109 indicates that the planning system should minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible, to help halt the overall decline in biodiversity

This policy also accords with policy SE3 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy NR4 (Non-Statutory Sites) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

**OBJECTIVE 6: To maintain and enhance the existing network of footpaths and public rights of way to provide access to the surrounding countryside.**

### **POLICY PC6 – FOOTPATHS**

Developments will be expected to establish publicly accessible links from development sites to the wider footpath network and green spaces wherever possible. Initiatives for improvement and enhancement to public footpaths will be strongly supported. The existing footpaths network as set out in the Public Rights of Way and Footpath Network map Fig.7 will be enhanced. High quality green links between existing public rights of way and other footpaths will be provided in support of this policy.

Proposals which lead to the loss, diversion or degradation of any public right of way will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances focussing on clear and demonstrable benefits for the wider community.

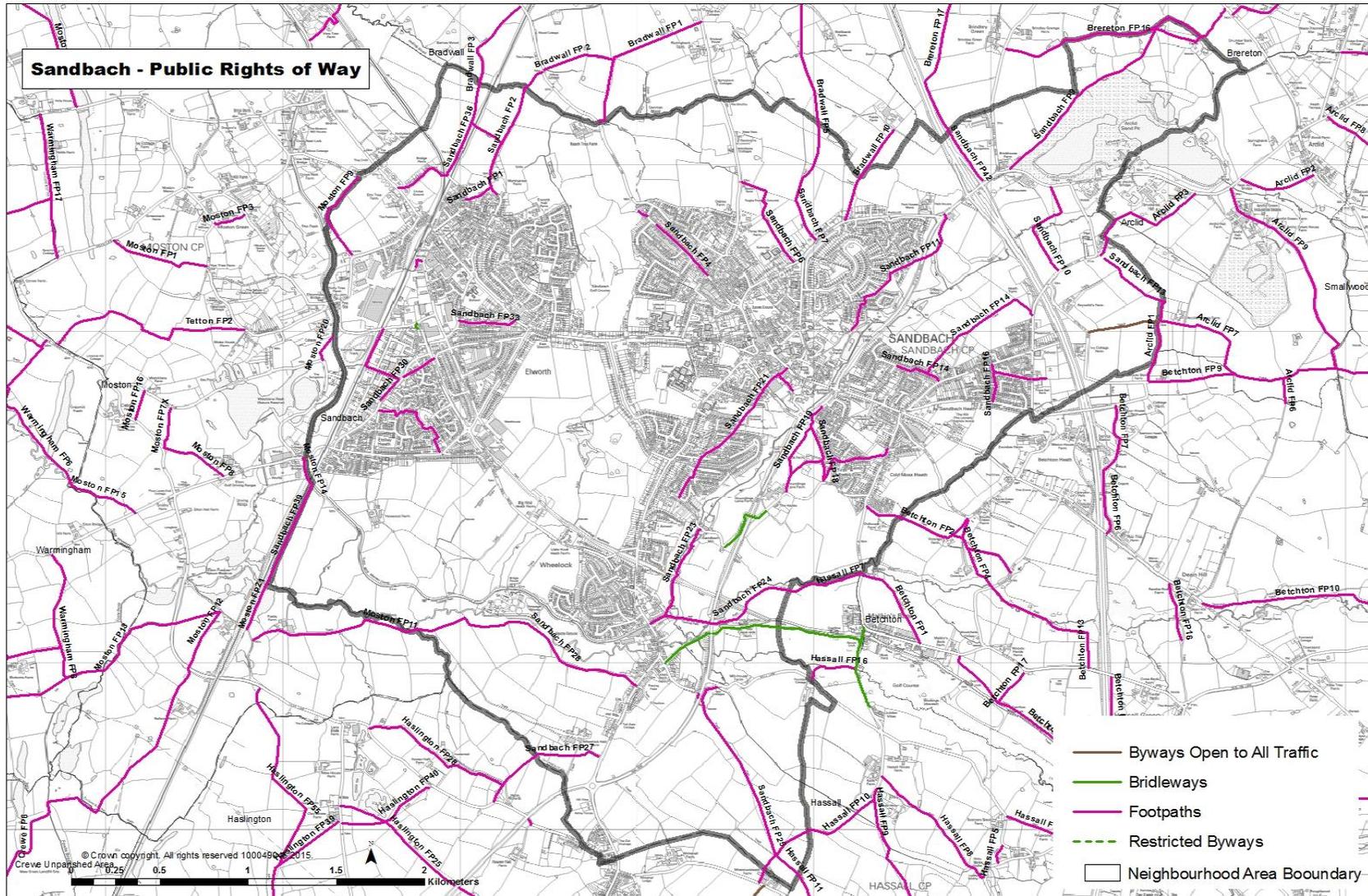
#### **JUSTIFICATION:**

During the Plan consultation process it was clear that an increasing number of people are using trails and rights of way for recreational purposes and 95% of the local community supports enhancement to the footpaths and cycleways network. Wheelock Rail Trail, Sandbach Bridges Trail and the Trent and Mersey Canal towpaths all provide good access for walkers.

Sandbach also has a number of public footpaths that fan out from the town centre, although connections to the adjacent countryside are in need of improvement. The Plan aims to protect the existing network, and take opportunities to integrate new developments with the existing rights of way network and enhance existing provision by creating new links where possible (see Appendix 3 – Sandbach Footpaths Action Plan).

This policy seeks to help deliver one of the NPPF's key planning aims of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and also of promoting health communities. Para 75 indicates that policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and that opportunities should be sought to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing public rights of way networks. It also accords with policy SE6 (Green Infrastructure) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy GR16 (Footpath, Bridleway and Cycleway Networks) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

This policy also supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).



**Fig. 7 Public Rights of Way and Footpath Network**

## 3.2 Preserving Heritage and Character (HC)

### AIM:

To preserve and enhance the heritage and character of the parish of Sandbach.

**OBJECTIVE 1 To preserve and protect the historic environment of Sandbach, including its listed buildings and features, conservation areas, ancient monuments, buildings of specific interest and archaeological sites.**

### **POLICY HC1 – HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT**

The setting and character of the built and historic environment of Sandbach will be conserved and enhanced. Protection will be given to the character and special features of the following (as defined in the most recently adopted Cheshire East Council Sandbach conservation area assessment and National Heritage list for England):

- a) Listed buildings and associated features
- b) Conservation area
- c) Scheduled ancient monuments
- d) Archaeological sites.
- e) Trent & Mersey Canal, as contained within Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan boundary, and associated listed buildings and features including locks, bridges and mileposts (as defined by National Heritage list for England and on Appendix 4).

All developments, projects and activities will be expected to protect and where possible enhance historic assets and their settings, maintain local distinctiveness and the character of identified features.

Development should respect the historic landscape character and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or the creation of appropriate new features.

The adaptive re-use of redundant or functionally obsolete listed buildings or important buildings will be supported where this does not harm their essential character.

### **Justification:**

Section 1 of this Report, in paragraph 1.8, contains a brief history of Sandbach and its settlement villages. The conservation area, referred to in Policy HC2, and listed monuments are illustrated in the Sandbach conservation area are determined by Cheshire East Council. In addition, the Sandbach landscape character assessment areas (see Appendix 7) provide further evidence of a number of specific buildings which form the heritage and character of the town.

The Trent & Mersey Canal has a significant role to play in contributing to the character and heritage of the local area. The canal is designated as a conservation area and contains a number of listed buildings within the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan area including locks, bridges, mileposts and other non-designated assets.

Results from the Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that over 99% of the respondents wish to preserve and protect the historic environment of Sandbach, its listed buildings and features, conservation area, ancient monuments, buildings of specific interest, historic parks and gardens and archaeological sites.

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF, detailed in Para 17, is to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and policy HC1 aims to help conserve and enhance the historic environment.

This policy accords with policy SE7 (The Historic Environment) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies BH3 (Change of Use/Conversion), BH4 (Effect of Proposals) and BH9 (Conservation Areas) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005). This policy also accords with section 7 (Town Centre) of the Sandbach Town Strategy 2012).

This policy supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

**OBJECTIVE 2 To ensure that future developments or change of use enhance the existing character of the town centre.**

### **POLICY HC2 – PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL SHOPPING AREA**

Sandbach Town Centre (as defined in the most relevant, recent and up to date Sandbach conservation area assessment report held by Cheshire East council) will be supported by a presumption in favour of proposals that retain the provision of A1 (shops), A2 (financial and professional services), A3 (restaurants and cafes) and A4 (Drinking Establishments) uses.

The change of use of ground floor level to Class A5 (hot food take-aways) will be strongly resisted where the proportion of units in A5 use exceeds 10% of the total number of units in the primary shopping frontage

Use of upper floors for residential or business use will be permitted where appropriate.

Out of centre retail outlets will only be supported if they do not have an adverse effect on the town and town centre. Applications will only be supported if they:

- Complement and enhance the town and town centre without reducing its commercial viability.
- Are compatible with the size and scale of the existing town centre.
- Do not have an unacceptable impact on the existing road network.

**Justification:**

This policy reinforces the protection provided by Policies HC1 and HC3. It also assists in ensuring that non-Class “A” uses would not dominate or detract from the core objective of providing retail outlets for the shopper.

The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that over 98% of respondents strongly agree or agree that future developments or change of use are sympathetic to the existing character of the town. Also:

- 86% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the variety of retail and business provision within the town should be protected and that changing the use of premises should only be permitted if it can be demonstrated its present use is no longer viable.
- 90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that there should be a suitable balance between independently owned and national chain stores within the town centre such that local private businesses have a significant (majority) presence.
- 88% of respondents strongly agree or agree that additional retail provision should be supported only if it complements the town centre, is compatible with the size and scale of the existing town centre and does not have an unacceptable impact on the existing road network.

The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that over 90% of respondents wish to maintain a suitable balance between independently owned and national chain retail outlets within the town centre, such that local private businesses have a significant presence.

This policy seeks to ensure that the town centre remains vibrant, attractive and successful with uses appropriate to a traditional market town centre in accord with paragraph 23 of the NPPF, together with an allowance for further housing and business use in upper floors.

As a Key Service Centre within the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council, the focus of policy EG5 (Promoting a Town Centre First Approach to Retail and Commerce) is to improve both the convenience and comparison goods offer along with further strengthening and enhancement of the retail offer where suitable. In addition, diversification of the town centre to support other uses such as offices, services, leisure, cultural and residential uses is encouraged within appropriate locations. As such, this policy accords with policy S4 (Principal Shopping Areas), S5 (Other Town Centre Areas) and S6 (Use of Upper Floors Within Town Centres) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

This policy accords with section 7 (Town Centre) of the Sandbach Town Strategy 2012) and supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

**OBJECTIVE 3 - To ensure that shop frontages and directional signs are in keeping with and enhance the character of the town.**

**POLICY HC3 – SHOP FRONTS AND ADVERTISING**

Shop fronts within the town centre (as defined in the most recently adopted Cheshire East Council Sandbach conservation area assessment report) will be expected to preserve a traditional appearance as defined by the most recently adopted Sandbach Town Council street signage design policy.

Within this area, facias and projecting signage are to be kept to a minimum and illumination by means of external spotlights (not internally illuminated facias or strip lights) will be required to be constructed of traditional or appropriate composite materials.

In all cases, advertisements and signage will be expected to be of a high standard of design, located on and relate well to the premises and business they serve and be in character and keeping with the street scene or, where located within the Wider Rural Area, be in character and keeping with the locality and to not adversely impact on the rural landscape.

**Justification:**

The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that 96% of the respondents strongly agree or agree that shop frontages and signs should be in keeping with and enhance the character of the town.

This policy seeks to ensure that developments in the town centre, and indeed further afield, respect the character of the surrounding area in accord with paragraphs 17 and 58 of the NPPF which state that developments should establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. They should respond to local character and history, reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

This policy accords with policies SE1 (Design) and SE7 (The Historic Environment) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies S14 (Advertisements), S15 (Advertisements in Conservation areas) and S11 (Shop Fronts) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

This policy supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

**OBJECTIVE 4 - To preserve, protect and promote the heritage, character and traditions of Sandbach as a small rural market town.**

**OBJECTIVE 5: To support the development and expansion of the outdoor market to ensure its sustainability and commercial viability and to ensure that the market retains its unique place within the community.**

#### **POLICY HC4 – MARKETS**

Development and expansion of viable outdoor and indoor markets throughout the town centre will be supported where sustainable and commercial viability can be demonstrated.

Market hall development must respect the character and heritage of the town and its unique place within the community.

#### **Justification:**

The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that 89% of the respondents support the development and expansion of the outdoor market to ensure its sustainability and viability. Also, 92% of the respondents support the enhancement and improvement of the Market Hall to ensure its viability whilst respecting its character and heritage.

The licence to hold a market every Thursday in the town was first granted by Queen Elizabeth I on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1579. 96% of respondents agree that the heritage and character of Sandbach “as a small rural market town” should be retained and that the market should keep its unique place within the community.

The City Markets (Market Managers and Operators) report for Sandbach (June 2011) states that:

- Long established traditional markets are part of a town’s cultural heritage, and should be cherished.
- The atmosphere of a traditional British market is unique, and has evolved over hundreds of years.

By seeking to develop and expand the retail offer within the town centre, whilst respecting the character of Sandbach, this policy accords with paragraph 23 of the NPPF regarding the retention and enhancement of existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduction or creation of new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive.

This policy accords with policies SE7 (The Historic Environment) and EG5 (Promoting a Town Centre First Approach to Retail and Commerce) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council.

This policy supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

### 3.3 Managing Housing Supply (H)

**AIM:**

The Sandbach NDP housing policies are designed to provide a framework which will enable the parish to grow at a sustainable rate which will satisfy the identified future housing need during the period up to 2030.

**OBJECTIVE 1 - To ensure that all future housing developments provide a mix of homes to meet identified needs.**

**OBJECTIVE 2 – To ensure that small scale sites are developed to meet planned organic growth.**

**POLICY H1– HOUSING GROWTH**

Future housing proposals will be delivered on small scale sites of up to 30 houses within the policy boundary for Sandbach (see Fig.2), defined by policy PC2a. Exceptions to small scale sites of up to 30 houses will only be permitted if the proposal accords with policy H4 (ageing population) or is on a brownfield site within the policy boundary. Proposals shall contain a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures designed to meet identified need.

**Justification:**

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote further housing growth in a more incremental way, following large scale rapid growth, described below in the context of up to date evidence. The development will take place on sites within a new settlement boundary, in order to continue the established pattern of development and characteristic separation between settlements whilst allowing growth. This provides the best opportunity to steer further development towards brownfield sites in the most sustainable locations and support regeneration.

This approach is fully in line with national planning policy which aims to significantly boost the supply of housing. It also seeks to ensure that future decisions about the scale and location of additional housing development is plan-led, another key requirement of national policy.

The Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to meet and exceed the housing requirement for the town which has been identified in up to date evidence, described below.

The Local Plan Strategy being prepared by Cheshire East Council (currently at examination) will set out the housing requirement for Sandbach to 2030. In July 2015 Cheshire East published updated evidence regarding future housing growth in the borough, both in terms of the overall level of housing required and how this should be distributed across the Borough (*Cheshire East Housing Development Study 2015 Report of Findings June 2015 Opinion Research Services and Spatial Distribution Update Report July 2015 AECOM*) This evidence identifies that 2,750 new dwellings should be developed at Sandbach between 2010 and 2030. During the period 2010 to March 2015, 2,754 dwellings have already been built or have planning permission. This means that this requirement can be met and exceeded. It represents a significant over-achievement within the first 5 years of the Local Plan period and

equates to an increase of 35% in the size of Sandbach. This rapid rate of unplanned growth is not considered sustainable and does not meet the needs of the local population. Furthermore, the majority of these houses are located on green field areas, outside the current settlement zones and/or located in designated Areas of Separation (see map Fig.2).

Rapid growth has predominately occurred in 3 to 4 bedroom houses to meet a regional need because Sandbach is not in a Green Belt area, like towns in the north of the borough, and has easy access to the transport system. This “estate type” growth of larger houses is changing the character of Sandbach and is not required. The Housing Vision Survey has indicated that:

“Significant falls are projected in the need and demand for family housing and very significant increases projected in the need and demand for housing suitable for older households”.

The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows 74% of respondents have indicated a desire for housing development to be delivered in small scale developments.

Since 2010, a total of 2,286 houses have been approved on sites having 50 or more dwellings within Sandbach. 390 houses have been approved on sites having 10-49 dwellings and 80 houses have been approved on sites of less than 10 dwellings. This demonstrates that over 15% of approvals have been achieved on smaller scale developments and that, future small scale developments can achieve the majority of the required level of growth for Sandbach.

This policy allows for further housing and there is flexibility to allow larger housing schemes where the proposed development is on a brownfield site or accords with policy H4 (ageing population).

The most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council states there should be 30% low cost/affordable homes on sites over 15 units. The Sandbach Housing needs surveys 2015 (Housing Vision report & Phase 2 Questionnaire) identify a need for affordable housing and housing designed to meet the needs of an ageing population.

This approach reflects national planning policy to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

This policy accords with policies PG6 (Spatial Distribution of Development), SD2 (Sustainable Development) and SE2 (Efficient Use of Land) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies PS3 and PS4 (Settlement Hierarchy and Towns) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

**OBJECTIVE 3 - To ensure that all future housing developments are well designed and that they respect the scale, style and setting of the existing environment.**

## **POLICY H2 – DESIGN & LAYOUT**

All new developments will be expected to meet high standards of design that:

- a) Are in keeping with, the unique character of Sandbach and surrounding countryside
- b) Provide sufficient off street parking in accordance with national & local guidelines

New developments, extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures will be expected to:

- Contribute positively to local distinctiveness, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, density, layout, appearance, materials, and its relationship to adjoining buildings and landscape features.
- Not cause unacceptable visual intrusion, overlooking, shading, noise, air pollution, light pollution or other adverse impact on local character and amenities.
- Make efficient use of land while respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area.
- Retain existing landscape and natural features.
- Ensure that the scale and massing of buildings relate sympathetically to the surrounding area.
- Create safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety.
- Use traditional and vernacular building materials where such treatment is necessary to respect the context of the development concerned.
- Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians.
- Comply with the objectives of the River Basin Management Plan or their supplementary plans (section 17 of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003)

### **Justification:**

Sandbach is an attractive Elizabethan market town with many features that are important to the local community. This is reflected in the Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015), which shows that:

97% of respondents have indicated that the heritage and character of Sandbach as a small market town should be preserved and protected.

99% of respondents believe that the historic environment of Sandbach, for example listed buildings and features, conservation areas, ancient monuments, buildings of specific interest, historic parks and gardens and archaeological sites should also be preserved and protected.

96% of respondents believe that future developments or change of use are sympathetic to the existing character of the town centre.

98% of respondents have indicated that all future housing developments should be well designed and respect the scale, style and setting of the existing environment.

93% of respondents agree that future developments should respect the quality of the local landscape, ensuring that existing views are maintained.

96.5% of respondents agree that all future developments should respect and enhance the existing natural environment, including existing green spaces.

95% of respondents believe that any housing infill development and the conversion of existing buildings to residential use is supported only where they contribute positively to local character and where they help to meet local housing need.

In exercising their functions, all public bodies and statutory undertakers (that is most reporting authorities) have a duty to have regard to the objectives of the River Basin Management Plans or their supplementary plans (section 17 of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003).

This policy accords with paragraph 17 of the NPPF, policies SD1 (Sustainable Development in Cheshire East), SD2 (Sustainable Development Principles), SE1 (Design) and SE2 (Efficient Use of Land) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies GR1 (New Development) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

**OBJECTIVE 4 - To ensure that all housing infill development and the conversion of existing buildings to residential use is supported only where it contributes positively to local character and helps to meet identified housing need.**

**OBJECTIVE 5 - To ensure that all future housing developments provide a mix of homes to meet identified local housing needs including an appropriate element of affordable housing to meet identified needs.**

### **POLICY H3– HOUSING MIX & TYPE**

All housing within Sandbach as allocated by the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council or latest housing requirements as identified by Cheshire East Council should be designed to meet the identified needs of the community in terms of housing type and need. Housing should be designed to provide a mix of houses to meet identified need, e.g. affordable housing, starter homes and provision for housing an ageing population.

**Justification:**

The Sandbach Housing Needs Survey 2015 (Housing Vision report and Phase 2 Questionnaire) identify a need for affordable housing and housing designed to meet the needs of an ageing population.

The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that 84% of respondents want to ensure that new housing meets local needs.

The Plan is in general conformity with local plan policies, recognising that there is a need for a mix of dwellings to ensure a sustainable and mixed community.

This policy accords with paragraph 50 of the NPPF, policy SC4 (Residential Mix) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy GR3 (Design) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

**OBJECTIVE 6 – To ensure that future housing developments provide homes suitable for older people in Sandbach to meet a housing need identified in an independent survey.**

#### **POLICY H4– HOUSING AND AN AGEING POPULATION**

To meet the needs of an ageing population within the town, developments will be supported that provide suitable, accessible houses for older people and preferably on brownfield sites. Housing should be a suitable mix of tenures, including private, housing association, self-build, co-housing, together with an element of affordable housing.

#### **Justification:**

This policy seeks to provide accommodation for local housing needs and the borough's older residents. A housing needs survey by Housing Vision entitled "The Implications of Household Projections for Meeting Housing Need in Sandbach: 2013 to 2030" (see Section 4.3 (Reference Documents) and Appendix 7 (Overview of Housing Vision and report)) has highlighted:

- "ES 1 Sandbach is facing very dramatic changes in its population and household structure which will lead to a very different pattern of need for housing in the period to 2030. Significant falls are projected in the need and demand for family housing and very significant increases projected in the need and demand for housing suitable for older households. Without intervention to provide suitable alternatives for older people, tensions will grow between the housing required and the housing available.
- ES 2 The current age structure is similar to that for Cheshire East, with lower younger and larger older populations than regionally or nationally.
- ES 3 Compared with the region and nationally, Sandbach and Cheshire East have higher proportions of older households; of couple households with no children and of households with dependent children; and lower proportions of lone parent households.

- ES 13 Decline of 5% is projected for the 16-34 age group and of 19% for the 35-54 age group. Growth of 22% is projected for the 55-64 age group and of 40% for the 65+ age group.
- ES 14 The number of (mostly older) one person households is projected to grow by 18% over the period 2013-2030. Such households are likely to require smaller one and two bed accommodation.
- ES 15 The number of (mostly older) two person households with no dependent children is projected to grow by 17% over the period 2013-2030. Such households are likely to require two bed accommodations.
- ES 19 Matching housing required to household projections implies a decline of 11 in the requirement for one bed flats; of 40 for two bed flats and houses; of 301 for three bed and larger houses, and growth of 1,041 in the requirement for housing suitable for older people, including downsizing flats; bungalows and houses and for housing with care and support.
- ES 20 It will be difficult to reconcile the surplus of family housing against the increased requirement for downsizing and more manageable homes for older people.

This policy accords with paragraph 50 of the NPPF and helps deliver a wide and appropriate choice of homes. It also accords with policy SC4 (Residential Mix) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy GR3 (Design) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

**OBJECTIVE 7- To ensure that small scale sites are developed to meet identified housing needs.**

**OBJECTIVE 8 - To ensure vacant, brownfield sites are prioritised for future planned housing or mixed use development.**

**OBJECTIVE 9 - To ensure that all proposed future housing or mixed use developments protect, respect and enhance the existing natural environment, including existing Sandbach Areas of Separation and Open Countryside.**

**OBJECTIVE 10 - To ensure that future housing developments do not diminish the Sandbach Areas of Separation between the settlements of Sandbach Town, Sandbach Heath, Elworth, Ettiley Heath and Wheelock (This reinforces Policies PC1 and PC4).**

**OBJECTIVE 11 – To ensure that future housing developments should identify and protect all underground utility infrastructure assets.**

## **POLICY H5 – PREFERRED LOCATIONS**

- a) Developments will be within the policy boundary around Sandbach, defined by Policy PC2a and will be small scale of up to 30 houses. Exceptions will only be permitted if they accord with Policy H1.
- b) The re-development of brownfield sites will be supported in favour of greenfield locations.
- c) Brownfield sites in or near town centre locations with good ease of access will be supported to provide homes for older people.
- d) Locations must contribute positively to local character and help to meet identified housing needs.
- e) Housing infill development, the conversion of existing buildings to residential use, self-build projects, co-housing and the subdivision or amalgamation of existing residential units with suitable space will be supported within the policy boundary for Sandbach (see Fig.2), but only within the countryside when they conform to countryside developments permitted in Policy PC2a. They must also contribute positively to local character and help to meet identified housing needs.
- f) Residential use of accommodation above retail premises will also be supported (supports Policy HC2).
- g) Developments will be required to have easy access to existing public transport provision and be designed / located so that they would encourage the use of “green” methods of transportation.

### **Justification:**

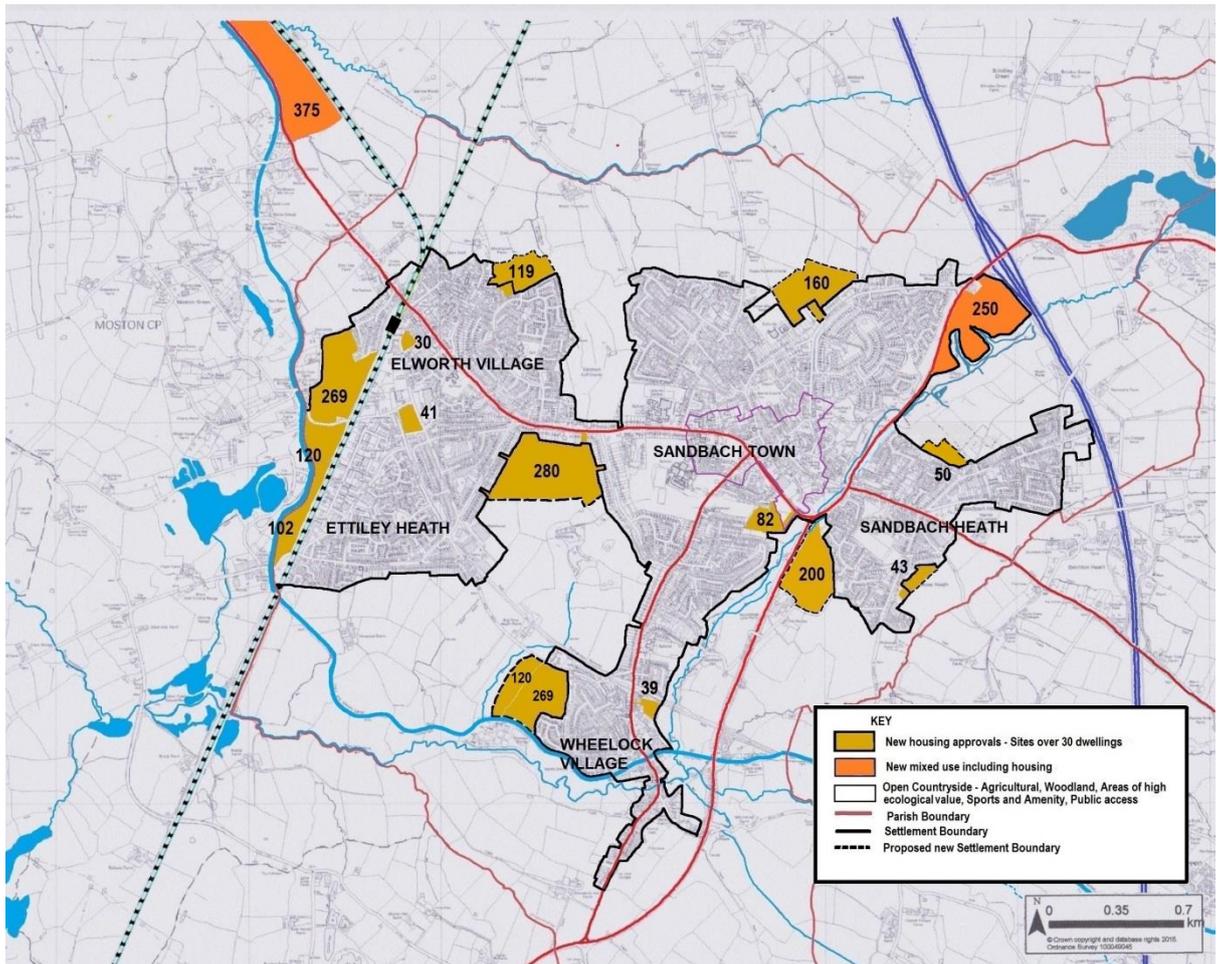
The majority of housing development approvals within Sandbach have been outside recognised settlement zones and on greenfield sites (see map Fig.8).

This policy encourages appropriate development of brownfield land, as do policies SD1 (Sustainable Development in Cheshire East), SD2 (Sustainable Development Principles), SE2 (Efficient Use of Land) and PG5 (Open Countryside) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. It also accords with policy PS3 (Settlement Hierarchy) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

This policy reflects serious concerns from the community that Sandbach, whilst continuing to grow, should do so at a scale and sustainable rate that will not harm the landscape, character and feel of the town and seek to ensure that the town’s individual sense of place and local distinctiveness is retained.

The NPPF Core Planning Principles (paragraph 17) identifies the efficient use of land as one of the core land use planning principles which encourages “the efficient use

of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (Brownfield land), provided it is not of high environmental value”.



**Fig.8 – Housing development approvals (2010 to May 2015)**

### 3.4 Promoting Jobs and the Local Economy (JLE)

**AIM:**

To promote and maintain a thriving local economy to ensure that jobs and enterprise opportunities are available for local people of all ages. There will be a strong customer base for retail and hospitality businesses, enabling the community to maintain a prosperous town and town centre.

**OBJECTIVE 1: To ensure that future land allocations and planning permission for employment purposes are retained solely for the provision of business and long term employment opportunities in Sandbach. Future proposals for employment sites must demonstrate that development does not negatively impact on the existing highways network; local wildlife and natural assets; and Sandbach Town Centre;**

**NB** Objective 1 and policy JLE1 do not seek to allocate any specific employment site. A proposed employment site is identified within the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CS24 and locally known as the “Capricorn” site – see Appendix 5) and, should the allocation be formally adopted, then Objective 1 and policy JLE1 will be triggered to guide the detailed aspects of development proposals there and seek the long term retention of employment at that site.

#### **POLICY JLE1 – FUTURE EMPLOYMENT AND RETAIL PROVISION**

The following principles of development will apply to all future employment proposals for employment and retail within the Sandbach neighbourhood area:

- 1 Where there is a reasonable prospect of a site being used for employment purposes:
  - a) Sites will be retained for employment uses only
  - b) The inclusion of housing or care related uses will not be permitted.
  
- 2 Development proposals must:
  - a) Not adversely impact on locally identified natural environmental assets. Proposals will positively enhance access to green corridors whilst protecting and enhancing sites of biological importance, watercourse and wildlife corridors. Development which harms or does not demonstrate compatibility with the areas of high ecological value and wildlife corridors will not be permitted (refer to policy PC3 and PC4):
  - b) Demonstrate their impact on the highways network and identify measures to ensure that harmful impact is mitigated
  - c) Demonstrate sustainable access to and from the site via:
    - I Provision of sustainable transport infrastructure including public transport; cycle infrastructure; and design which places safe access and movement for pedestrians as a priority within the modal hierarchy; and, where reasonable proximity allows

- ii Enhance public access to Green Corridors (identified in policy PC3 and PC4)
- 3 Retail proposals outside the Town Centre Boundary will be supported where such proposals do not have an adverse effect on Sandbach Town Centre and they demonstrably:
  - a) Complement and enhance the Town Centre without reducing its commercial viability
  - b) Are compatible with the size and scale of the existing Town Centre; and
  - c) Do not have an unacceptable impact on the existing road network.
- 4 Development proposals will be supported in accordance with the above and where they can demonstrate:
  - a) The delivery of long term employment opportunities
  - b) Close proximity to the local or national public transport network
  - c) That no unacceptable levels of vehicular movements through Sandbach Town

**Justification:**

The Plan Phase 1 and Phase 2 consultation processes demonstrate a strong community desire to retain this area solely for the purpose to provide employment opportunities for local people.

The Capricorn site is proposed for mixed use and up to 200 houses in the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. Outline permission has been granted for 250 residential houses (with mixed use) on an area at the northern end of the site and a further 50 granted (with no provision for long term employment) at the southern end of the site. The total of 300 house approvals already exceeds the number originally proposed. Evidence demonstrates that further applications are coming forward for housing only on this site, with no provision for long term employment.

The most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council proposes 20 hectares of employment land in Sandbach, which will help to address the significant level of net out-commuting. *“Current completions and commitments will already see a 35% growth in the number of households in Sandbach over the plan period. To help balance local employment and housing, it is considered that further housing growth above that which is already ‘committed’ would therefore be undesirable in this respect. Further growth would also put pressure on an already constrained strategic and local highways network”.*

This policy accords with policies EG1 (Economic Prosperity) and EG3 (Existing and Allocated Employment Sites) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies EG3 (Employment Development in Towns) and E10 (Re-use or Redevelopment of Existing Employment sites) of the Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review (2005).

Improved opportunities for local employment will help to reduce the need for people to commute to other employment areas and will contribute to a “greener” society.

The site is considered to be well located for employment opportunities that could arise with the Government’s forthcoming HS2 rail link and future “Northern Powerhouse” programmes. It therefore helps deliver one of the NPPF’s aims of building a strong, competitive economy. The policy allows for the long term viability of the “Capricorn” site for employment use and is therefore in compliance with Paragraph 22.

The site is connected to the existing settlement of Sandbach and contained by existing residential development to the west and south. To the east, the site boundary is formed by the M6 motorway. Capricorn lies at the gateway to Sandbach offering an excellent opportunity to capitalise on strong links to the M6 motorway, attract investment and skills to locate in the town. Furthermore, long awaited J17 layout improvements are now completed, making the site more easily accessible, particularly for larger vehicles (this was previously considered a major obstacle to take-up of the site).

**OBJECTIVE 2: - To support the development and enhancement of tourist and visitor amenities, events and accommodation facilities within the town, whilst ensuring appropriate scale and use, in keeping with the heritage and character of the town.**

#### **POLICY JLE2. TOURISM AND VISITORS**

Improvements to services and facilities associated with tourist attractions will be supported.

Development proposals should:

- Comply with policies for the countryside and conservation/heritage.

- Be appropriate in scale, character and location for the development.

- Create no harm to the existing character of the local area.

- Provide for appropriate new tourist attractions well-related to the cultural and historic assets of Sandbach.

- Have no adverse impact on any adjoining residential amenities.

- Have no conflict with matters of highway safety.

#### **Justification:**

Consultation Phase 1 survey showed that the community strongly values tourism as a means to improve the local economy and the Phase 2 survey reaffirmed that view.

This policy therefore reflects the desire to encourage and improve tourism facilities and services, whilst protecting the environment, landscape and townscape setting.

This policy accords with paragraph 28 of the NPPF and helps deliver a prosperous rural economy. It also accords with policy EG4 (Tourism) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies E16 – E18 (Tourism and Visitor Development) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005)

This policy supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

**OBJECTIVE 3: To support the enhancement and improvement of the Market Hall to ensure its source of employment whilst respecting its character and heritage.**

### **POLICY JLE3 – THE MARKET HALL**

Planning applications for alterations and/or other improvements to the Market Hall should take into account the need to sustain and enhance the heritage asset of Sandbach Town Hall. Applications should seek to facilitate desirable new development, ensure the continued viability of the Hall throughout and after any such works and make a positive contribution to its local distinctiveness as part of the town's historic environment.

#### **Justification:**

This policy reinforces policy HC4 (Markets).

The Plan Phase 1 survey showed that the community values the Market Hall and the Phase 2 survey reaffirms that the community (92%) strongly supports or supports the enhancement and improvement of the Market Hall to ensure its commercial viability whilst respecting its character and heritage.

The City Markets (Market Managers and Operators) report for Sandbach (June 2011) states that:

- Markets contribute to the national economy, through customers spending an estimated £1.1- £3 billion a year at stalls run by some 46,000 market traders providing around 96,000 jobs across the UK.
- Thriving markets attract additional footfall into town centres, encouraging shoppers to buy not just at the market, but also at neighbouring shops.
- Markets can be a starting place for new start-ups to reach an audience for their goods and services. Therefore, markets have an important role in offering start-up opportunities for new businesses.
- There are maybe 150 small businesses operating at Sandbach Market. Each business probably employs at least two people. In addition there are a number of ancillary workers, for example suppliers, waste disposal, cleaning staff, security staff etc. Therefore, the market probably provides direct and indirect employment for approximately 350 people.
- Markets boost the local economy by providing employment and trading opportunities for local suppliers and small businesses.

Results of a Door to Door survey (4<sup>th</sup> March 2015) amongst High Street businesses within Sandbach showed 70 % of retailers gained an uplift in trade on the day of the Farmers' Market compared to a regular Saturday. All felt it was a high level of increase. Of those quoting figures, the increase was between 20 and 33% increase in trade. Those businesses that were not affected by the Farmers' Market were all service providers and did not see any adverse effect of the market on their trade (i.e. no reduction in trade).

This policy accords with paragraph 17 of the NPPF in helping to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations and aims to enhancing the local historic environment. This policy also accords with policies SE7 (The Historic Environment), SE1 (Design) and SD2 (Sustainable Development) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East.

This policy supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

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## 3.5 Improving the Infrastructure (IF)

### 3.5.1 Transport Integration and Traffic Management

#### **AIMS:**

1. Work with relevant partner authorities and transport providers to develop a safe, efficient and sustainable transport system that contributes to the social, environmental and economic well-being of the residents, businesses and visitors to Sandbach.
2. Provide equal opportunity for everyone to access key services whilst maximising the use of 'green' alternatives to vehicular movements.

**OBJECTIVE 1: To support the development of an integrated transport system designed to meet the current and future needs of the community and manage levels of congestion whilst supporting planned growth.**

**OBJECTIVE 2: To promote schemes and projects which improve highway safety.**

**OBJECTIVE 3: To promote the use of ecologically sustainable methods of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport, whilst maintaining a safe environment for residents and also meeting the needs of those with disabilities.**

**OBJECTIVE 4: To promote safe and efficient local, regional and national transport links into and out of Sandbach, enabling reliable and efficient journey times.**

**OBJECTIVE 5: To promote improvements to public and private transport services, especially rail and bus, resulting in a better integrated service.**

**OBJECTIVE 6: To address congestion issues created by through traffic at peak times and from increased housing numbers.**

## **POLICY IFT1 – SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT, SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

In order to improve transport and safety, applicants for new development must:

- Demonstrate safe walking and cycling routes in the immediate area of the proposed site, with consideration of access to services and facilities.
- Demonstrate how the proposals link to public transport.
- Demonstrate the impacts of traffic from the proposed development and indicate how any impacts will be mitigated.
- Demonstrate that the most up to date parking standards required by Cheshire East Council will be met.
- Demonstrate that the proposed site is located in an acceptable location in relation to the existing highway network, especially from a safety and aggregate congestion viewpoint.
- Demonstrate that the proposed site is located with good accessibility by a range of sustainable forms of transport, minimising the distance that people need to travel to employment, shops, services and leisure opportunities.
- Demonstrate that the needs of those with disabilities have been positively considered and appropriate facilities within the transport infrastructure have been provided to assist them.
- Developments that impact adversely on existing footpaths (see policy PC6) and cycleways network (see appendix 6) will not be allowed.

Planning applications for developments that will generate significant amounts of movement must be accompanied by a Travel Plan to Sandbach Town Council and Cheshire East Council that sets out how sustainable movement will be encouraged.

Proposals which promote better integration between different modes of transport, including links to the local rail station, and /or improve bus routes, services and passenger facilities around key transport hubs and linkages to the larger service villages and towns will be supported, subject to meeting the criteria of other policies within the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Justification:**

As a rural community private car ownership and usage is the predominant method of transport; with approximately 43% of all homes owning at least 2 or more cars. Whilst cars are essential for many people (particularly in rural areas), the provision of public transport and the encouragement of walking and cycling routes is vital in order to help address the issues of climate change, reduce congestion and provide equality of opportunity.

The Housing Needs Survey (2015) completed by Housing Vision identified Crewe, Middlewich, Knutsford, Holmes Chapel and Congleton as the main travel to work destinations.

The Phase 2 questionnaire question 23 “To promote safe and efficient local, regional and national transport links into and out of Sandbach, enabling reliable and efficient journey times” had a 98.1% positive response (67.3 % strongly agree and 30.8% agree).

The Phase 2 questionnaire question 28 “To positively encourage sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and the use of public transport, helping to initiate and develop an effective network of footpaths and cycle ways linking all areas of the Parish of Sandbach” had a 95.2% positive response (64.5 % strongly agree and 30.7% agree).

The Phase 2 questionnaire question 26 “To promote improvements to public and private transport services, especially rail and bus, resulting in a better integrated service.” had a 95% positive response (63 % strongly agree and 32% agree).

The promotion of sustainable transport is one of the aims of the NPPF (paragraph 35) and this policy seeks to ensure that ‘the transport system is balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel’.

This policy accords with policies CO1 (Sustainable Travel and Transport), CO4 (Travel Plans and Transport Assessments), SD1 (Sustainable Development in Cheshire East), SD2 (Sustainable Development Principles) and SE1 (Design) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies GR9 – GR18 (Accessibility, servicing and Parking Provision, Footpaths etc.) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

This policy accords with section 8 (Infrastructure Priorities) of the Sandbach Town Strategy 2012) and supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

**OBJECTIVE 7: To maintain and enhance the ‘Town Centre’ experience by effective management of the parking supply, ensuring that local businesses and shops are serviced by adequate short stay parking spaces.**

**OBJECTIVE 8: To support the provision of adequate parking facilities that meet the needs of residents, local businesses and visitors, by providing adequate levels of car parking in line with Council’s published car parking standards.**

**OBJECTIVE 9: To ensure that residential areas have adequate parking facilities to avoid or minimise ‘on street’ parking of vehicles.**

#### **POLICY IFT2 – PARKING**

The retention and provision of adequate short stay parking spaces in the town centre will be encouraged to support local businesses. Development which leads to the loss of car parking spaces within the Town Centre will not normally be

permitted. Where development proposals require the loss of any publically available spaces serving the Town Centre, these should be replaced on site or nearby as part of the development scheme, or an agreed alternative transport facility be provided or contributed towards to mitigate the loss and facilitate more sustainable forms of access to the Town Centre.

Existing residential areas and new developments must have adequate parking facilities to avoid or minimise 'on street' parking.

**Justification:**

The NPPF does not include maximum parking standards, which were a feature of previous national guidance. Local Authorities now need to develop their own parking standards and supporting justification, taking into account such factors as: the accessibility of the site; the type and mix of development; local car ownership; and the need to reduce use of high-emission vehicles.

The removal of consistent national parking standards has enabled Cheshire East Council to develop and set its own parking standards for new development. These are set out in Appendix C of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. The accompanying text makes it clear that some variation from these standards may be possible if supported by appropriate supporting evidence.

The Phase 2 questionnaire question 20 "To maintain and enhance the 'Town Centre' experience by effective management of the parking supply, ensuring that local businesses and shops are serviced by adequate short stay parking spaces" had a 94.6% positive response (60.4 % strongly agree and 34.2% agree).

The Phase 2 questionnaire question 21 "To provide free car parking facilities to service the town centre." had a 93.7% positive response (76.8 % strongly agree and 16.9% agree).

The Phase 2 questionnaire question 22 "To ensure that residential areas have adequate parking facilities to avoid or minimise 'on street' parking of vehicles" had a 95.8% positive response (64.1 % strongly agree and 31.7% agree).

This policy underpins the Heritage and Character policy HC1, and seeks to ensure that the town centre remains vibrant, economically successful, and is a pleasant and easy place to visit.

This policy accords with policies CO2 and SD1 (Sustainable Development in Cheshire East) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies GR9 (Accessibility, servicing and Parking Provision) and GR17 (Car Parking) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

### 3.5.2 Community Infrastructure Levy (IFC)

**OBJECTIVE 10: To ensure that appropriate community infrastructure is funded through appropriate charging schedules.**

#### **POLICY IFC1 – COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

Where policies in this plan require contributions to community infrastructure, subject to development scheme viability, they will be made through planning obligations in accordance with the most up to date funding mechanisms in place for developer contributions and infrastructure adopted by Cheshire East Council. Details of priorities for funding within Sandbach should be sought from Sandbach Town Council.

#### **Justification:**

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a national scheme which allows local planning authorities to set local charges for new development to fund the provision of infrastructure. In the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council, the section on infrastructure sets out the Borough Council's intentions to develop a Charging Schedule for CIL following the approval of the Local Plan Strategy. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan has also been prepared to demonstrate what strategic infrastructure is required to support the development proposed in the Local Plan Strategy.

Some mitigation schemes for the impact of the proposed development set out in the CELP have been identified in the Local Infrastructure Delivery Plan and have been developed using traffic modelling. In addition, the incremental nature of these schemes over the next 20 years will bring pressures on all aspects of access and movement within and to the town.

Money raised by CIL from new development within Sandbach can be used to support local infrastructure projects that the local community feels is appropriate. 25 per cent of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from appropriate developments would be made available for local priorities. This policy will set out the priorities for spending CIL within Sandbach town.

Planning agreements under section 106 of the Planning Act are intended to mitigate the impact of development on local communities. For all development schemes with a local impact, Cheshire East Borough Council would normally negotiate with the developer a package of measures to limit the impacts on the local environment and residents.

This policy accords with paragraphs 17 and 175 of the NPPF, policies SD1 (Sustainable Development in Cheshire East), SD2 (Sustainable Development Principles) and IN1 (Infrastructure) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy GR19

(Infrastructure) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005). This policy also accords with section 8 (Infrastructure Priorities) of the Sandbach Town Strategy 2012).

**Supporting Action to be taken:**

The priorities for funding within Sandbach will be prepared and regularly updated by Sandbach Town Council.

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### 3.6 Community and Well-Being (CW)

**AIM:**

To protect and improve existing community amenities, buildings, facilities, activities and services throughout Sandbach. New services and facilities should be added as appropriate in the future.

**OBJECTIVE 1: To ensure amenity, play and recreation areas are appropriately developed for the health and well-being of all.**

**POLICY CW1 – AMENITY, PLAY AND RECREATION**

All areas currently used for amenity, play and recreation as described on the proposals map Fig.6 will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. Development will not be permitted unless: an assessment has been undertaken which shows them to be surplus to requirements; the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative amenity, play or recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

**Justification**

A list of play and recreational facilities is set out in Appendix 2.

Throughout the consultation processes of the Plan, Sandbach Town Plan and Sandbach Town Strategy, it is clear that the significant changes to Sandbach Park, Elworth Park and all play areas have been welcomed by the communities they serve. The Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015) shows that 98% for the respondents strongly agree or agree that new and extensive areas now provide excellent facilities for all ages.

The need for allotments has also been identified during consultations as a further important outdoor recreational activity. Although there is an allotment site in Ettiley Heath, which is well managed and supported, it has no long term security. Following positive local consultation, a new site has been identified and is being actively progressed. Further sites in other areas of the town will be supported in line with the policy.

This policy seeks to help deliver the NPPF aim of promoting healthy communities. Para 73 and 74 state that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

This policy accords with policy SC1 (Leisure and Recreation) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy RC2 (Protected Areas of Open Space) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

This policy accords with section 8 (Infrastructure Priorities) of the Sandbach Town Strategy 2012) and supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

**OBJECTIVE 2: To encourage the provision and improvement of sports, leisure and recreation facilities in Sandbach to meet the needs of all age groups.**

## **POLICY CW2 – SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

- 1) The development of new or improved indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation facilities will be supported
- 2) Developments that enhance existing sports facilities, by way of increasing their utilisation or capacity for improved levels of public access will be strongly supported.
- 3) Any developments for new or enhanced sports and leisure facilities must be inclusive for all, including being suitable for an ageing population, residents with disabilities and comply with the requirements of Sport England.
- 4) New developments must be accompanied by adequate car parking provision, having regard to the likely modes of transport to and from the venue and other parking availability in the vicinity. Sites which are easily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling will be strongly supported.
- 5) The development of a new or improved leisure centre on the existing site at Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College should allow for public access.

### **Justification:**

The need for improvements and provision of sport and recreation facilities for all age groups was clearly identified from questionnaires completed by residents. The first and second stages of consultation for the Plan indicated that there is dissatisfaction with the leisure centre based at the High School, which does not meet modern expectations, particularly access by the public during school hours. The Plan Phase

2 consultation survey (2015) indicates that 56% of respondents support the development of a new leisure centre and 75% support improvements to the existing leisure centre.

Cheshire East Council Indoor Leisure Facilities Development Statement (2013) Section on Sandbach states that there is a case for further investment and the development of extra capacity in the swimming pool.

The consultation survey indicates a desire by some residents for specific facilities for young people within the town. A list of aspirational issues and action plan can be found in the Consultation Statement (Refer to section 4.3 – Reference Documents).

It is considered important that facilities are available for all, regardless of age or ability, in order that the whole population can benefit and to ensure an inclusive, healthy and sustainable community.

One issue arising from consultation was the impact of traffic and parking problems and it is felt important that new or improved facilities do not exacerbate this problem.

This policy accords with paragraph 73 (Promoting Healthy Communities) of the NPPF. It also accords with policy SC1 (Leisure and Recreation) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policies RC1 (Recreation and Community Facilities), RC10 (Outdoor Formal Recreational and Amenity Open Space Facilities) and RC11 (Indoor Formal Recreational and Amenity Open Space Facilities) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

This policy supports the Sandbach Town Plan Action Plan (Final Update 2015).

**OBJECTIVE 3: To provide reasonable access to health services for all residents and to provide the infrastructure such as pedestrian and cycle links between different parts of town that would enable people to undertake physical activity and access the natural environment.**

### **POLICY CW3– HEALTH**

- 1) Residential developments must address the provision of appropriate medical provision as part of the development proposal. Applicants must engage with the relevant health authorities at the earliest possible stage.
- 2) Developer contributions or the provision of new facilities will be expected as set out in the most up to date guidance from Cheshire East Council, so that new residents have access to a GP practice within a reasonable distance subject to agreement with the healthcare provider, and unless the existing services have capacity for new residents.
- 3) Proposals to improve specialist care for the elderly, for people with disabilities, and for mental health services will be supported
- 4) The design of residential developments should incorporate means by which people can walk or cycle within the town

### **Justification:**

This is a key objective clearly identified from the Plan consultation process. Furthermore, with 2,754 new homes being granted permission between 2010-May 2015 within the parish of Sandbach, it is likely that many of the new residents will need to be registered locally. The existing surgery was constructed 11 years ago and was expected to meet some growth in the population but the rapid expansion is perceived by many residents to be putting facilities under increased pressure. It is considered important to ensure that Sandbach remains a sustainable and inclusive community and, new residents have the opportunity to access local services without exacerbating problems for existing residents.

This policy seeks to ensure that developments do not lead to a shortfall of provision in health care for new and existing residents, and that development is sustainable located so as to encourage walking and cycling.

This policy accords with policy SC3 (Health and Well-being) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council and policy GR23 (Provision of Services and Facilities) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

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### 3.7 Adapting to Climate Change (CC)

**AIM:**

To encourage sustainable development and moves towards a low-carbon economy, which includes high standards of energy conservation and the use of renewable energy.

**OBJECTIVE 1: To ensure that new developments, designs and conversions reflect the need to reduce harmful environmental emissions and adapt to climate change.**

**POLICY CC1 – ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

New development proposals must demonstrate how design, construction, landform, layout, flood prevention methods, orientation and operation minimises the use of energy and clean water. Developments which cannot clearly demonstrate these measures in accordance with latest government and planning regulations will not be permitted.

**Justification:**

Sustainable development is at the heart of planning policy, and the protection of the environment is important to the people of Sandbach. Paragraph 17 of the NPPF supports the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, and encourages the use of renewable resources Paragraph 96 highlights that, in determining

planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

This policy is reflected in the Plan Phase 2 consultation survey (2015), which shows that:

- 95% of respondents agree that it is desirable to positively encourage sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and the use of public transport, helping to initiate and develop an effective network of footpaths and cycle ways linking all areas of the Parish of Sandbach.
- 96.5% of respondents agree that all future developments should respect and enhance the existing natural environment, including existing green spaces.

This policy accords with policies SE1 (Design), SE9 (Energy Efficient Development), SD1 (Sustainable Development in Cheshire East) and SD2 (Sustainable Development Principles) of the most relevant, recent and up to date Development Plan Document held by Cheshire East Council. It also accords with policy GR2 (Design) of the Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review (2005).

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## SECTION 4: Supporting Information and Evidence Base

### 4.1 Glossary of Terms

**Affordable Housing**– (as defined in the NPPF-2012):

Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable Rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing.

Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable). Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Affordable housing is not available on the open market. It is available as social rented, affordable rented or as shared ownership housing, and is managed by a Registered Social Landlord, who may be the local authority.

#### **Areas of Separation**

The Sandbach community has expressed a strong wish to retain their own identities and distinctiveness and to protect the green areas which separate the settlements of Sandbach, Sandbach Heath, Wheelock, Ettiley Heath and Elworth. These areas are open countryside and include sports facilities, recreation areas, woodland, areas of high ecological value, wildlife corridors and footpaths. Development which would detract from the open character of these areas or reduce the visual separation of will not be permitted.

#### **Brownfield**

Previously developed land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface.

**Climate Change**

The formal term given to the fluctuation of the world's temperature. These fluctuations can be attributed to natural variability, human activity or a combination of the two. Currently, the world's climate is in a period of warming. Although this Climate Change increase is in part a natural phenomenon, "the consensus of scientists is that evidence is now overwhelming: human activities are causing global climate change at an increased rate to that which would occur naturally" (DECC, 2009).

**Conservation Area**

Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

**Development Plan**

A Development Plan is the legal term used to describe the set of planning policy documents which are used to determine planning applications within a particular area. The Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan will form part of the development for Cheshire East, together with the Core Strategy and saved Local Plan policies.

**Flood Risk Assessment**

An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and flood mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

**Greenfield**

Land (or a defined site) usually farmland, that has not previously been developed.

**Highway Authority**

Highway authorities are responsible for producing the local transport plan and for managing existing or proposed new local roads in the area. In most places, the local highway authority is part of the county council, the metropolitan council or the unitary authority.

**Household**

One person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area.

**Infrastructure**

Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

**Jobs (or employment)**

For the purposes of this Paper and the Local Plan objective assessment of housing need, "jobs" or "employment" means the number of (filled) jobs located in the local area (Cheshire East in this case) which are undertaken by employees or self-employed people, members of HM Forces or Government-supported trainees. This includes jobs undertaken by casual staff, people on fixed term contracts and other non-permanent staff. (This is different from the number of employed people who

work in the local area, because an employed person can have two or more jobs and, conversely, two people can share the same job.)

### **Listed Building**

A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II\* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building and any buildings or permanent structures.

### **Local Authority**

An umbrella term for the administrative body that governs local services such as education, housing and social services.

### **Local Development Scheme**

This sets out the documents that will make up the Local Plan, their subject matter, the area they will cover and the timetable for their preparation and revision. Local planning authorities must prepare and maintain the Local Development Scheme and publish up-to-date information on their progress.

### **Local planning authority**

The local government body responsible for formulating policies, controlling development and deciding on planning applications. This could be a district council, unitary authority, metropolitan council or a National Park Authority.

### **Local Plan Strategy**

This is the name given to the high level strategic planning policy document for Cheshire East Council. Once approved and adopted it will set out a vision, objectives and detailed delivery policies for the District to 2030. The Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in conformity with the adopted Strategy.

If the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan is released before the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy is approved or adopted then the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan will take precedence (subject to the weighting level applied by the external examiner for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)).

### **Localism Act 2011**

A major piece of new legislation which includes wide ranging changes to local government, housing and planning. Included in this new Act is the introduction of Neighbourhood Development Plans.

### **National Planning Policy**

National planning policies that local planning authorities should take into account when drawing up Development Plans and other documents, and making decisions on planning applications. In the past these policies have been included in Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). The Government has introduced the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in April 2012.

### **Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Neighbourhood Development Plans, were introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The term may also be used by some to refer to the Neighbourhood Development Orders,

which were also introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and are a second tool to enable neighbourhood planning. Communities will be able to prepare neighbourhood planning documents, outlining how they would like to see their area developing in the future. Please go to [www.planning.org.uk](http://www.planning.org.uk) for the most up to date information.

### **Open Countryside**

The open countryside is defined as the area outside the settlement boundaries of those towns and villages in the Borough identified as Principal Towns, Key Service Centres, Local Services Centres or Villages. Settlement boundaries are Proposals Map Fig.2.

### **Open Space**

All space of public value, including public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which may offer opportunities for sport and recreation or act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.

### **Parish Council or Town Council**

Parish Councils and Town Councils are the tier of governance closest to the community. Around 30% of England's population is governed by a parish or town council, predominantly in rural areas. Parish or town councils are elected bodies and have powers to raise taxes. Their responsibilities vary, but can include provision of parks and allotments, maintenance of village halls, litter control and maintenance of local landmarks.

### **Planning Permission**

Formal approval which needs to be obtained from a local planning authority to allow a proposed development to proceed. Permission may be applied for in principle through outline planning applications, or in detail through full planning applications.

### **Public Open Space**

Urban space, designated by a council, where public access may or may not be formally established, but which fulfils or can fulfil a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural usages).

### **Section 106 Agreement**

A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

Sustainability Appraisal assesses the economic, environmental and social impacts of a proposed policy or plan, to ensure that it would contribute to achieving sustainable development. Development Plan Documents (DPDs) have to undergo Sustainability Appraisal, but Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) do not.

## 4.2 Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements and thanks are due to the following; who all played a part in delivering this Plan:

- Members of the Sandbach Town Council Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group
  - Officers of Cheshire East Council for the support and advice they gave as the Plan was developed.
  - Officers of the Cheshire Community Action who assisted us with the consultation events and the preparation of the Evidence Base and Consultation Statement.
  - Residents and the whole community of Sandbach who participated so enthusiastically in the consultation process and throughout the creation program for the Plan.
  - Photographers of Sandbach who contributed the images contained within the Plan.
- 

## 4.3 Reference Documents

- [Sandbach Town Strategy](#)
  - [Sandbach Town Plan](#)
  - [Sandbach Town Plan – Action Plan](#)
  - [Sandbach Conservation Area – Character Appraisal and Management Plan \(draft appraisal\)](#)
  - [Localism Act 2011](#) – Department for Communities and Local Government
  - [Town and Country Planning -Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#)
  - [National Planning Policy Framework 2012](#)
  - [Cheshire East Council Local Plan Strategy Submission Version 2012](#)
  - [Congleton Borough Council Local Plan First Review 2005](#)
  - [Town and County Planning Act 1990 \(Section 106 Planning Obligations\)](#)
  - [Community Infrastructure Levy \(CIL\) – Planning Advisory Service](#)
  - [Relationship Between The Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan And Existing Sandbach Town Documents](#)
  - [Housing Vision report – The Implications of Household Projections for Meeting Housing Need in Sandbach: 2013-2030 \(March 2015\)](#)
  - Consultation Statement (Community Engagement And Consultation)
  - Landscape Character Assessment (June 2015)
  - Basic Condition Statement
  - Supporting Evidence Base Register
-

## 4.4 Appendices

### APPENDIX 1.

#### **POLICY PC 3 Areas of High Ecological Value and Wildlife Corridors - Local Wildlife Sites**

- |   |
|---|
| H) Arclid Brook Valley West Local Wildlife Site<br>I) Arclid Brook Valley East Local Wildlife Site<br>J) Wheelock disused railway Local Wildlife Site |
|---|

#### **H) Arclid Brook Valley West LWS is WEST of the M6. It includes:**

- Arclid Brook
- Offley Wood and all associated hedgerows.
- Two fishing pools next to Offley Wood and associated field
- Fields between Offley Wood and A534
- Fields between Offley Wood and M6 (planning approval exists)
- Filter Bed Wood and land to east of A534 to A553 traffic lights
- Waterworks Farm (planning approval exists)
- Dingle Wood, Dingle Lake and Dingle Copse
- St Mary's Wood and Dell
- Brook Wood
- Meadow between Brook Wood and A534 (Wheelock By Pass) on east side of Arclid Brook
- Woodland between Mill Hill Lane and Trent and Mersey Canal in Wheelock. (planning application pending)
- Part of Meadow between Trent and Mersey Canal and River Wheelock

#### **I) Arclid Brook Valley East LWS is EAST of M6. It includes:**

- Arclid Brook through to Taxmere
- Fields below St John's Church (Sandbach Heath) between M6 and Church Lane including strip and copse north of Arclid Brook
- St John's churchyard.
- Chimney House Hotel field and woodland.
- Field to west of Sibelco offices and east of St John's Church.

#### **J) Wheelock disused railway LWS (known locally as Wheelock Rail Trail)**

This trail is a popular 2 km traffic-free route, which runs between Ettiley Heath and Malkins Bank.

## APPENDIX 2.

### POLICY CW1 – Amenity, Play and Recreation

#### Open Spaces Mapping (see map Fig.6)

(Indicating Settlement Areas)

#### Parks and Gardens

Sandbach park (S20a & 20b) Town

Elworth park (Snb 264) Elworth

Saxon Place (S53) Town

#### Outdoor Sports Facilities

Dingle lake, (Fishing) (S23) Town.

Elworth C of E Primary School (Snb 59) Elworth.

Elworth cricket club (S1) & (S263) Ettiley Heath.

Elworth Hall Primary School (Snb 267) Elworth.

Forge Fields playing field (S45a) Wheelock.

Green Street football pitch (Snb 5) Town.

Mortimer Drive/Hassall Rd playing field (S35) Sandbach Heath.

The Limes bowling green (S13) Town.

Offley County Primary Junior & Infant School (S18) Town.

Sandbach cricket club (Snb529) Wheelock

Sandbach golf club (S10) Town.

Sandbach High School (S12) Town.

Sandbach park (S20a & 20b) Town.

Sandbach rugby club (S19) Town.

Sandbach School (S33) Town.

Sandbach United football club (Snb 6) Ettiley Heath.

#### Amenity Greenspace

These are generally small areas of open space shown on the map marked with open space references:

S26, S27, S29, Snb52, Snb265, Snb266, Snb 57, S8, S 11, S14,  
S 15, S 16, S 37, S 38, S 39, S 21

*Additional areas without a number:* Palmer Road Amenity Area.

#### Provision for children and teenagers

Elworth park (Snb 264) Elworth

Ettiley Heath recreation area (S24) Ettiley Heath

Forge Fields playground (S43) Wheelock.

Gibson Crescent playing field (S 28) Elworth

Mortimer Drive/Hassall Road (Snb257) Sandbach Heath

Lightly Close play area (S 47) Wheelock

Newall Avenue playground (S 31) Sandbach Heath

Rookery Close play area (Snb530) Ettiley Heath.

Church Lane playground (S 41) Sandbach Heath.

Sandbach park (S 20a) Town.

Thornbrook Way play area (S25) Wheelock.

Wheelock recreation ground (S48) Wheelock.

**Schools**

Elworth C of E County Primary (Snb 59) Elworth

Elworth Hall Primary (Snb 267) Elworth

Offley County Primary, Junior & Infant School (S18) Town

Sandbach Primary Academy (formally known as Sandbach Community Primary)  
(2569) Town

Sandbach High School (S37) Town

Sandbach School (S33) Town

St. John C of E Primary (S40) Sandbach Heath

Wheelock County Primary (S46) Wheelock

## APPENDIX 3

### POLICY PC6 Footpaths Sandbach Footpaths Action Plan

#### **Purpose:**

This Action Plan has been established to deal with existing and future footpaths both in and near the town.

#### **The Action Plan will:**

- Maintain the existing public footpath network in and around Sandbach.
- Maintain the existing public rights of way
- Ensure that informal, but well established and frequently used footpaths are formally recognised.
- Extend the footpath network in and around Sandbach to provide more continuity of the footpath system and to eliminate, as far as possible, having to resort to road walking between sections of footpath.
- Identify “gaps” between sections of footpaths that require action of some sort to create new sections of footpath to fill these “gaps”.
- Use potential developments to meet these “gaps” by identifying what would be desirable, and requesting Cheshire East Council to make this a priority at the onset of any planning application for development
- Ensure that wherever developments take place, these are supported by the creation of suitable landscaped dedicated footpaths.
- Ensure that wherever developments take place that include lengths of existing paths, these paths are retained as the very minimum policy.
- Ensure that when developments do take place that change the route of existing footpaths, equivalent sections of path are created, suitably landscaped, **as the very minimum policy**. These should be dedicated footpaths, and not just pavements alongside roads. The replacement of dedicated footpaths by pavements would be considered as completely unacceptable by the Sandbach Woodlands and Wildlife Group (SWWG).
- Ensure that all replacement or new footpaths created as a result of developments are **Not:**
  - Public footpaths taken along pavements, or
  - Inadequate alleyways or ginnels squeezed between building developments.
- Ensure that all replacement or new footpaths created as a result of developments **Are:**

- Genuine dedicated footpaths,
- Of an adequate width to act as a green corridor and
- Suitably planted with appropriate species.

### **Recommended Actions**

(This list is not exhaustive and is subject to continual revision).

#### **New footpaths required and recommended**

- Linking Path S/B FP6 (Offley Road to Bradwall Road) through to Cookesmere Lane (Wood Lane) to Path S/B FP2.
- Linking SB FP11 to SB FT8, SB FP7 and SB FP6 north of Congleton Road.
- Providing a high quality (cycle and wheelchair) footpath link to the south of Brook Wood the other side of Arclid Brook from Old Mill Road to Mill Hill Lane. Add additional access from Townfields Meadow.
- Link from Congleton Road to The Wheelock Rail Trail (Abbey Fields)
- Enhancement of existing rough trails through St.Mary's Dell and Dingle Wood

#### **Existing footpaths requiring protection in the light of possible developments (as per policy above)**

- SB FP 18 and SB FP19 (Fields Farm and Houndings Lane Farm)
- SB FP 11 north of Offley Wood (Old Mill Road to Congleton Road)
- SB FP 14 (Hawthorn Drive to Heath Farm)
- SB FP1, SB FP2, SB FP35 and SB FP 36 (Elworth – east and west of rail line)
- SB6, SB FP7, SB FP8 (north of Congleton Road)

## APPENDIX 4

### Trent & Mersey Canal Listed Buildings/ Features

Name and location	Photograph	Date	Notes	Grade
Bridge No. 157  53.13109°N 2.39127°W		Early to mid 19th century	An <a href="#">accommodation bridge</a> over the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a> , it is built in brick with a stone <a href="#">coping</a> . The bridge consists of a single span with a humped back and an elliptical arch, and has wings ending in <a href="#">piers</a> .	II
Lock House  53.12978°N 2.36741°W		Mid 19th century	A cottage for the lock keeper on the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a> adjacent to lock no. 66. It is in brick with a <a href="#">slate</a> roof, it has two storeys and a two- <a href="#">bay</a> front. In the centre is a projecting brick porch with a <a href="#">gabled</a> roof and <a href="#">bargeboards</a> . The windows are <a href="#">casements</a> .	II
Canal milepost  53.12986°N 2.37069°W		1819	A milepost on the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a> . It is in <a href="#">cast iron</a> , has a domed top, and carries a two panels inscribed with the distance in miles to <a href="#">Preston Brook</a> and <a href="#">Shardlow</a> . On the post is another panel with the name of the manufacturer and the date.	II
Canal milepost  53.13091°N 2.39255°W	—	1819	A milepost on the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a> . It is in <a href="#">cast iron</a> , has a domed top, and carries a two panels inscribed with the distance in miles to <a href="#">Preston Brook</a> and <a href="#">Shardlow</a> . On the post is another panel with the name of the manufacturer and the date.	II
Canal house and warehouse  53.12969°N 2.37369°W	—	Late 18th century	The house faces the road, and the warehouse attached to the rear stretches along the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a> at Wheelock Wharf. The house is in painted brick with a <a href="#">slate</a> roof, and is in three storeys and cellars. The warehouse is also in brick and in	II

Name and location	Photograph	Date	Notes	Grade
Canal cottage  53.12975°N 2.37289°W	—	c. 1775	<p>three storeys, but has tiled roofs. It contains openings including loading bays and windows.</p> <p>The cottage at Wheelock Wharf was built for canal workers on the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a>. It is in brick with a tiled roof, is in two storeys, and has a three-<a href="#">bay</a> front. The doorway has a segmental arch, and the windows are <a href="#">casements</a>.</p>	II
Lock No. 65  53.12970°N 2.36602°W		c. 1775	<p>A pair of <a href="#">locks</a> on the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a>. The north lock was added in about 1830. The locks are in brick with stone dressings, and have wooden gates. There are also small <a href="#">cantilever bridges</a>.</p>	II
Lock No. 66  53.12971°N 2.36777°W		c. 1775	<p>A pair of <a href="#">locks</a> on the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a>. The north lock was added in about 1830. The locks are in brick with stone dressings, and have wooden gates.</p>	II
Double bridge, Lock No. 66  53.12973°N 2.36803°W		c. 1775	<p>An <a href="#">accommodation bridge</a> crossing the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a>. Its north arch was added to the bridge in about 1830. The south arch is built in brick and is segmental with blocks of stone acting as rubbing blocks. The north arch is also in brick, and has stone dressings; its arch is almost elliptical. There are curved approach walls ending in <a href="#">piers</a>.</p>	II
Stable and ticket office  53.12973°N 2.37311°W		Late 18th to early 19th century	<p>The former stable and ticket office are at <a href="#">Wheelock Wharf</a> on the <a href="#">Trent and Mersey Canal</a>. The attached buildings are in brick with tiled roofs. The stable is in two storeys with a segmentally arched entrance and a hayloft flanked by</p>	II

Commercial  
Hotel

 53.12921°N —  
2.37406°W

c. 1805

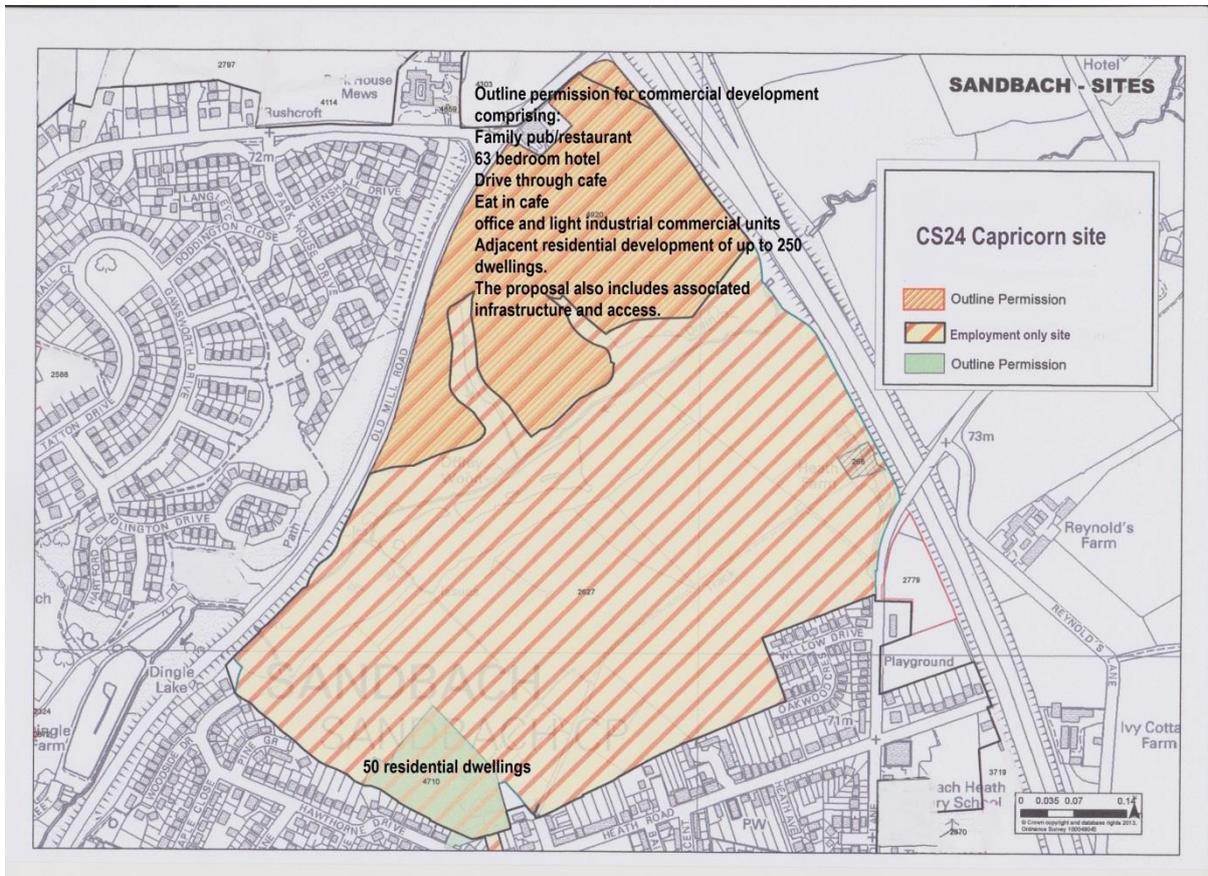
windows. The ticket office on the right is in a single storey and has a semicircular arched entrance with a window to the right.

A public house on Wheelock Wharf, it is in painted brick on a stone [plinth](#), and has a Welsh [slate](#) roof. The building is in two storeys, and has a four-[bay](#) front, the central two bays projecting slightly forward under a [pedimented gable](#). To the right is an additional single-storey gabled wing. The main doorway is flanked by three-quarters [Roman Doric](#) columns. Above the door is a semicircular [fanlight](#) with [Gothic tracery](#) and a pediment. The upper floor windows are [sashes](#).

II

# APPENDIX 5

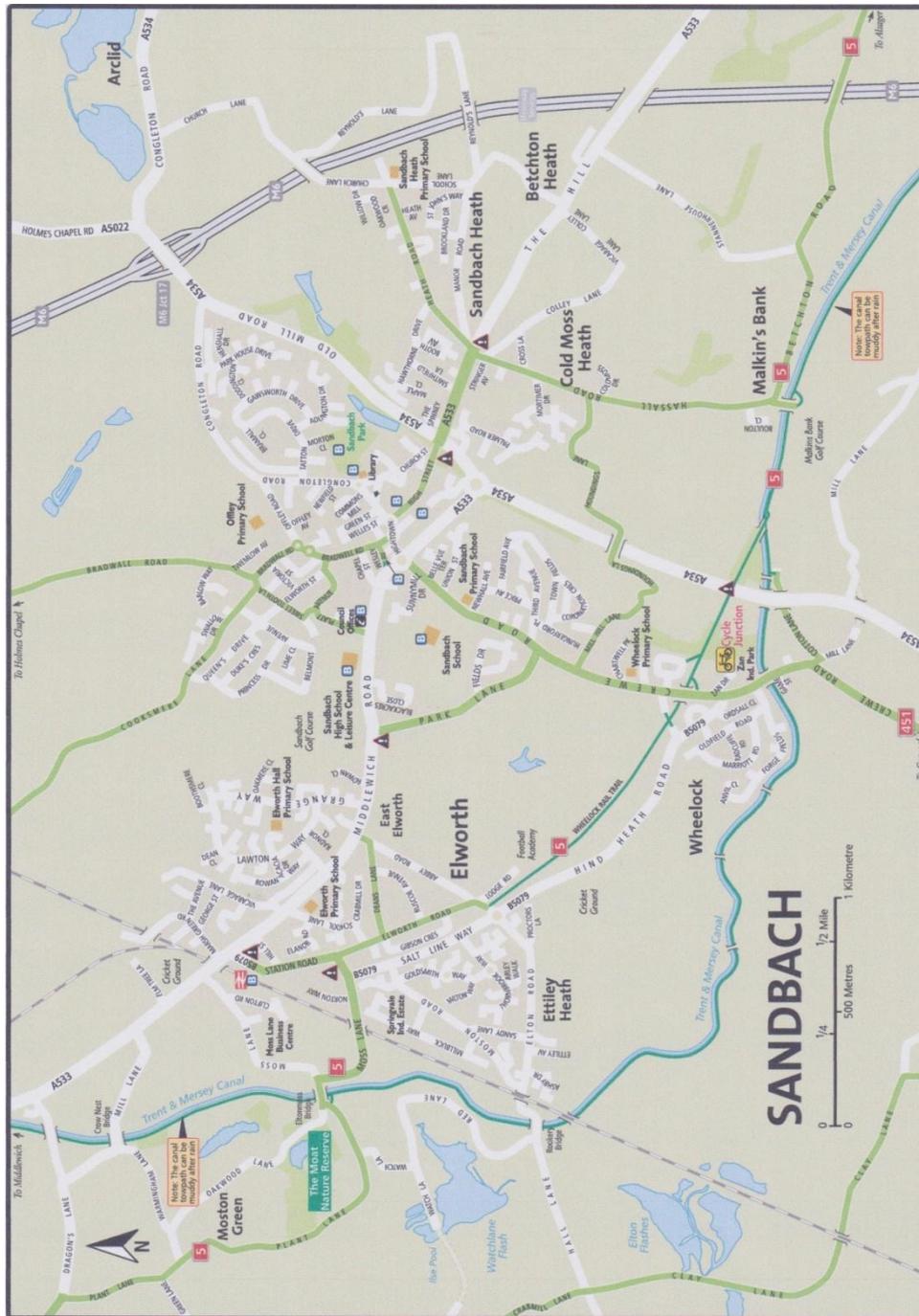
## Capricorn Site



CS24 “Capricorn” site - Sandbach

## APPENDIX 6

### Sandbach Cycleways Network



SECCAG and CycleKnutsford maps produced by Active Maps Ltd. South East Cheshire Cycling Action Group (SECCAG). CycleKnutsford Map © Active Maps Ltd. and CycleKnutsford.

## APPENDIX 7

### Overview of Housing Vision and report “The Implications of Household Projections for Meeting Housing Need in Sandbach: 2013 to 2030”

Housing Vision was commissioned by the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group in the absence of a survey arranged by Cheshire East Council and due largely to the uncertainty of the CEC Local Plan examination status. There has been no intention from the outset to challenge emerging OAN housing figures that CEC would eventually publish through its own commissioned survey. It was commissioned as a “double check” of numbers but always understood that CEC would eventually commission its own survey and the SNDP would comply with that, once available.

The Housing Vision report has been very useful evidence in forming the housing policies for older people. The report identified a shortage of housing for older people despite the huge numbers Sandbach will be taking. So from this perspective report was intended to inform planning policies to ensure the right mix of housing is delivered for the town.

#### **Housing Vision Expertise**

The Housing Vision team combines a wide range of experience and expertise in housing research, policy and practice. They have active links with the Universities of Birmingham and York, with De Montfort University in Leicester and with research institutes across Europe. Team members have worked for the National Housing Federation, the London Housing Unit and for registered providers, housing co-operatives and local authorities as diverse as Midland Heart in the West Midlands and the London Borough of Hackney.

Housing Vision are specialists in housing market, housing need and affordability assessment and have completed over 125 projects throughout the country and for clients across the housing and planning, public and private sectors. They specialise in Assessments at the local level and recent projects include parish housing needs surveys and HNAs for the Thame and East Leake Neighbourhood Plans. Their Assessments meet the requirements of the government’s National Planning Policy Framework and the appropriate National Policy Planning Guidance.

Housing Vision was established by Director Richard Turkington in 2001. He is co-author (with Bob Line and Tim Brown) of the only toolkit, the NHF’s, *Understanding Your Housing Market: a guide to housing market assessment*.

Specialising in housing market assessment at all levels from neighbourhood and site specific to sub-regional and strategic, Housing Vision has developed advanced techniques to model the impact of policy, population and housing change. Their Assessments fully comply with CLG’s *Strategic Housing Market Assessment Guidance* on which they were formally consulted.

The Housing Vision expert team who have contributed to the Sandbach NDP project consisted of:

**Richard Turkington BA (Hons), PGCE, PhD, FRSA, Director**

Richard established the Housing Vision Consultancy in 2001 and has over 25 years experience, delivering cutting edge social and housing research projects. Richard has extensive experience of all forms of housing market, housing needs and affordability assessment and co-ordinated the project.

He is an Honorary Research Fellow in Housing at De Montfort University and has active links with researchers throughout Europe. He is joint co-ordinator of the European Network for Housing Research Working Group on Housing Market Dynamics and was made a Fellow of the RSA in 2010 for his work in comparative housing. He has extensive Board membership experience, from early involvement with Castle Vale Community Housing Association to over 10 years as Chair of Housing Services and Development Committees at Mercian Housing Association, Birmingham.

**Greg Ball, RTPI, Expert Demographer**

Greg is a qualified town planner with a specialism in the analysis of demographic, Census and other sources of statistical data. Greg has 30 years' professional experience in local government, working in metropolitan, urban and rural areas, including in Birmingham where he was the lead officer on demographic intelligence and research providing quantitative evidence for policy making. Greg has contributed to national working groups on methodological developments in demography for the Office for National Statistics and Communities and Local Government and is a Member of the Council of the British Society for Population Studies.

**Rachel Wright BSc (Hons), M.Soc.Sc., Data Analyst**

Rachel lead on data analysis and GIS mapping. She has more than 20 years' experience as a social researcher working in the fields of Housing, Crime, Employment, Health, Social Care and Regeneration. She has five years' experience working as a local authority Research Officer in housing and social services for Dudley MBC and three years in a wider corporate policy role at Blackpool, and eight years of experience of working as a Research Officer at a large Midlands based housing association (Prime Focus). She has considerable experience of working with large-scale quantitative datasets using SPSS and has analysed qualitative data and designed topic guides for focus groups.

Projects of prior to and of direct relevance to the Sandbach NDP include:

Housing Needs and Market Assessments, including Affordability and Viability Assessments, and Associated Policies and Strategies

- Housing Needs Studies and Housing Market Assessments, including at District level, Blaby (2007); North Shropshire (2007); Kettering (2008-10); Bromsgrove (2008), Cannock (2009), Enfield and Ponders End (2012); North Northants. (2012), North Devon and Torridge (2012); West

Somerset (2013), Telford (2014), St Albans (2014/15), Exmoor National Park (2014/15) and North Devon, Torridge and West Somerset (2015).

- Over 50 site-based and place-based housing market, affordable housing and viability assessments including in the context of Neighbourhood Plans for Thame (2011/13) and East Leake (2014).

In 2015 Housing Vision has been re-appointed to the Homes and Communities Agency's Multi-disciplinary Panel as a member of the Tibbalds Campbell Reith Partnership. They have added the expert demographer Greg Ball to their team and have been appointed to a range of projects focusing on rural areas, including for CPRE - the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

Housing Vision Contact Details:

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Tel: 01886 833118; Mobile: 07714 106386



# Sandbach

## Neighbourhood Development Plan

A vision for Sandbach up to 2030



*Our Community* | *Our Decisions*



All enquiries relating to the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan should be submitted to:

**The Town Clerk**  
**Sandbach Town Council**  
**Sandbach Literary Institution**  
**Hightown**  
**Sandbach**  
**Cheshire**  
**CW11 1AE**  
Telephone **01270 600800**  
or email **clerk@sandbach.gov.uk**



Supporting information available at  
[www.sandbachneighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.sandbachneighbourhoodplan.org.uk)