

Designations of Local Green Space and Special Policy Areas in the Keele Neighbourhood Plan

Keele Parish lies entirely within the Green belt, Green belts are applied to the fringes of urban areas, in essence, to prevent urban sprawl. They do not preclude all types of development and do not recognise landscape quality or special community value

The Local Green Space designations can be made, within Neighbourhood Plans, to offer extra protection to areas of land close to communities and which are of particular value to them. The areas of land may be of historical significance, beauty, recreational value, tranquillity or may be an important habitat.

Having reviewed the options carefully, Keele Parish Council are proposing to designate two areas of land as Local Green Space and apply the following policies as part of our Neighbourhood Plan:

LGS1: Hawthorns Green, in front of Hawthorns House.

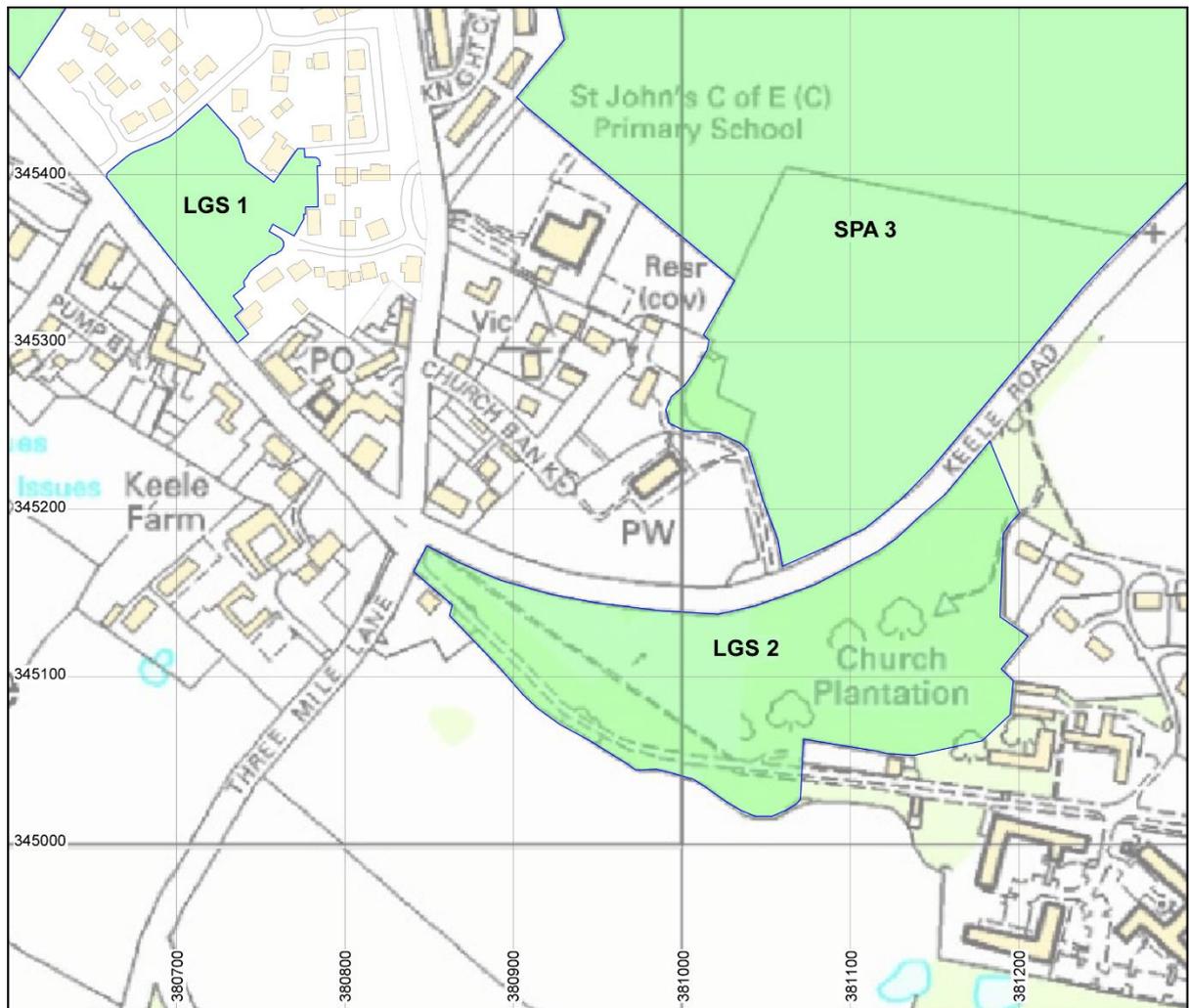
LGS2: University Green, Keele Road.

- 1. Development must not encroach onto Local Green Space. An exception may be made where development meets all of the following:**
 - **It is very small-scale;**
 - **It is directly related to the community use and value of the space;**
 - **It would not compromise the open or green character of the space.**

- 2. Development in close proximity to Local Green Space must have no significant adverse impact on the community value, safety, amenity, or accessibility of the space.**

Interpretation:

The policy does allow limited development to support the community use of the space, for example such as a small store for tools or equipment.



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LGS1: Hawthorns House Green, in front of Hawthorns House, The Village, Keele,

This LGS forms the green gateway to the Hawthorns development and is a key green area in the centre of Keele village. It provides an important setting for the locally listed Hawthorns House and is a key part of the Conservation Area.

It is planted with mature trees and memorial trees and has been used by the community for many years. There have been a number of new trees planted as part of the landscaping scheme for the recent housing development.

It provides pedestrian access from Highway Lane & Station Road through to the local school, linking up with other walking routes in the village.

The mature hedgerow fronting the site to The Village reflects the rural character of the parish. Acting as a defensible boundary and enables it to

be of value to recreation & wildlife, as well as providing a tranquil and peaceful environment in the village.

It is demonstrably special to the community. This was made clear through planning representations on the planning application in which the Local Green Space forms part of the development site. In addition the planning inspectorate also recognised its significance and saw fit to protect it from development.

It has historical significance as it fronts the Sneyd estate's Agent's House and would be where the estate workers gathered to collect their weekly wages.

Suitability for LGS Designation

Special Community Value	The space is of special community value, as described above. The mature hedgerow also provides a wildlife corridor, reflecting the character of the rural parish.
Area of space (Ha)	0.82 Hectares
Planning permissions or site allocations	None.
Other Designations	It lies within the Keele Village Conservation Area and is public open space
Not an extensive tract of land	The area is 0.82 Ha and thus it is not an extensive tract of land
Close to the community it serves	It is within easy walking distance of a large proportion of the village population. This makes it a "natural" village green.

Conclusion

Keele Village lacks a formal village green but this is one of two spaces which have served this function informally over recent decades. This peaceful, leafy space provides the setting for the 18th century Hawthorns House, one of Keele Villages most important buildings. The recent development of housing on the Hawthorns site means that the green is accessible to over 80 new residences as well as the older properties in the

village. It will undoubtedly be a key space for residents to meet, walk, relax and spend time together.

LGS 2: University Green, between Keele Road and University Drive

Special Community Value

This LGS is an important green space in Keele village. It is set with mature and memorial trees and has been used by the community for many years. It is used by both children and adults for recreational activities and is also used extensively for dog walking. A noted feature is its use by the Historia Normannis re-enactment group who can be seen in full 12th century garb during term time. The space is used for informal games of football, cricket, for picnics and for taking the sun with friends.

The main pedestrian access from the village to the University and the historic parks and gardens crosses this site.

The stone wall that provides the site boundary to Keele Road is a key part of the conservation area and acts as a defensible boundary.

The area forms part of the historic park and garden of the Keele estate and is of historical importance

The entire green space occupies an area which was originally the central part of the Preceptory of the Knights Templar at Keele. Nineteenth century maps and plans show structures marked as Hall or Old Hall on the site - i.e., the residential unit of the Templar brothers which parallels very precisely other Templar establishments at Temple Balsall (Warwick) and Garway (Herefordshire). Other Templar (farm) structures lie under the eastern end of this green space and in the adjacent woodland and can be identified as earthworks in the landscape. Field walking this archaeological site has thrown up numerous small finds here and in adjacent fields.

NB. The A525 main road through Keele was created in the 1840s to make an easier cartway through Keele than had originally existed and resulted in the division of the Preceptory site with the Templar's chapel (now the parish church on the northern side of the new road and this green space on its southern flank)

Suitability for LGS Designation



<p>Special Community Value</p>	<p>The University Green sits at the opposite end of the village to Hawthorns green and is its complement, providing more open space than Hawthorns Green and the opportunity for informal sports and recreation. It is of historical importance and provides a critical part of the setting of St John's Church (grade 2*) whose presence dominates the view northward from the green. Southward, the green provides views of rolling countryside and the green provides a critical part of the setting for the estate village of Keele. It is widely used by village and campus residents alike for formal and informal recreation: sports, picnics, dog walking and the re-enacted of medieval warfare!</p>
<p>Area of space (Ha)</p>	<p>3.52</p>
<p>Planning permissions or site allocations</p>	<p>None.</p>

Other Designations	Part of the Keele Village Conservation Area
Not an extensive tract of land	At 3.52 Ha, the green cannot be regarded as an extensive tract of land
Close to the community it serves	It is within 10 mins walking distance of all properties in the village and university campus.

Conclusion

This green space has an open setting and significant areas of unplanted grass which is maintained by the University. Although it remains the property of the University, they are happy for the public to use the space provided they follow the rules clearly posted at the entrance. It is part of the setting of the estate village and its grade 2* listed church and offers attractive views in all directions. It is widely used by village and campus communities for rest and recreation.

Special Policy Areas

SPA3: Field adjacent to Keele Road and A525

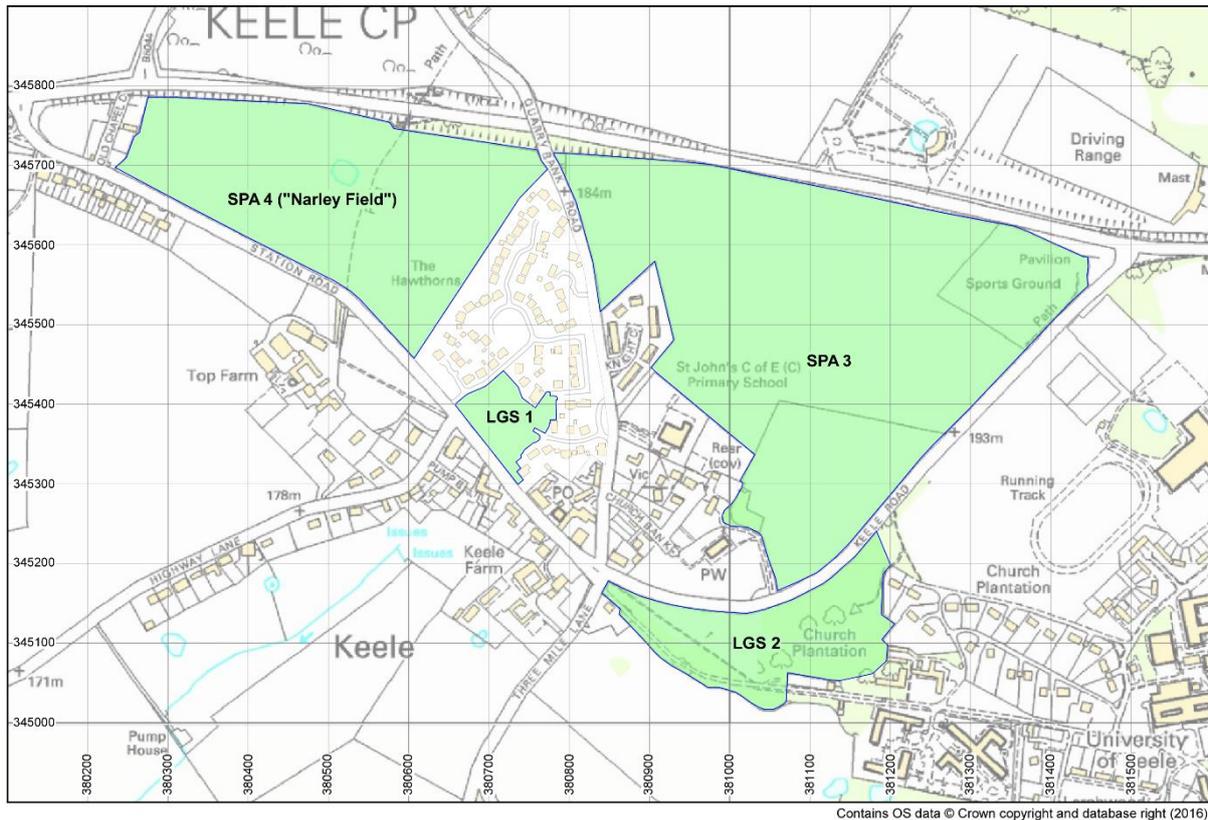
SPA4: Field adjacent to Station Road and A525: the Narley

These proposed areas have been identified as important landscape setting within our community. Whilst these do not meet all the criteria for Local Green Space, they are demonstrably special to the community, reflecting the landscape and historic character of the rural parish as gateway sites to Keele village.

The policy recognises the importance of the landscape setting to the distinctive and historic character of Keele Village. The landscape setting is also relevant in the application of special statutory duties for heritage.

Keele Parish Council recognise that the upcoming Borough Plan options consultation is likely to put forward the building of 1000 or so houses on the Old Golf Course site to the north of Keele Village. Were this development to go ahead it would constitute an urban extension of Newcastle under Lyme which would risk engulfing the estate village of Keele and change its character from rural to suburban. Given the historical and visual importance of the village to both the wider local area and to Keele University, our Neighbourhood Plan will seek to discourage housing development on the fields to the north of the village and to the

south of the A525. This will create a 'green gap' which will help preserve the character of the village.



Special Policy Area 3 - Field between Keele Road and Keele Bypass (behind Knights Croft)

Although there is no public access to the site or permitted recreational value, it is demonstrably special to the community for the vistas it offers and the setting it provides for the Conservation Area.

Keele is an historic Estate Village developed by the Sneyds and is of a rural character. This field forms part of Keele's rural setting, allowing views of St John's Church (grade II* listed) as the village is approached along Keele Road. The field is thus critical to the character of the village and makes a significant contribution to the form and layout of the settlement.

It is not with an extant planning permission and was not allocated for development in the Joint Local Plan options consultation. It lies entirely within the Greenbelt. Its owner did propose to the Borough that it be removed from the Greenbelt and developed for housing as part of the call for sites in the run up to the JLP options consultation. This suggestion was not taken up by the Brough nor was it presented as an option for the JLP.

This LGS is a key green area on the edge of Keele village. It is visible as you enter the village from the Newcastle and characterises the rural

nature of the village and provides the first view of the spire of the Grade II* listed St. John's church as you enter the village.

Special Policy Area 4 - Narley Field between Station Road and Keele Bypass

The 'Narley' is a large field to the north east edge of Keele village. It is visible as you enter the village from the west and characterises the rural nature of the village. It is bounded on one side by Station Road, on the other by the A525 and by the Hawthorns on its third side.

There is public access via a footpath which runs through it from Station Road to the A525 and onwards to Quarry Bank. This was protected when the bypass was constructed to maintain the connection between the 2 parts of the village.

The field also contains a small pool that supports wildlife in the area, there is also some tree coverage that provides habitat for wildlife. The field is clearly delineated and protected by natural hedgerows that also provide habitats for birds and other wildlife.

The field provides the only visual connection between the 2 parts of the village: the estate village and the Quarry Bank/ Pepper Street settlement. The field is open in character and provides spectacular views to the west of the Peckfortons and Welsh mountains beyond and forms part of Keele's rural setting, as the village is approached along Station Road. It is critical to the character of the village and makes a significant contribution to the form and layout of the settlement. This in turn adds to the amenity of the new properties in The Hawthorns with western views across the fields.

The following is from Newcastle Boroughs Local Green Belt Assessment:

"The approach to Keele village ... through open countryside and up a shallow rise with boundaries marked by sandstone walls and hedges. The open fields around the village are crucial to creating the agricultural setting which the village is within, and the views into and out of the village. The open parkland to the east of Keele Hall provides views both into and out of the village and creates the impression of a settlement within an unbuilt environment."

Until recent decades Keele Village housed staff of the Keele Estate and local farms. The farms remain to this day and the surrounding fields are used principally for grazing. That Keele Village remains, in part, a farming community is a central part of its identity and this core purpose gives context and meaning to its built environment and the setting of that environment in the wider landscape. In the case of this field, the footpath

across it provides wide ranging views of the countryside westwards, stretching as far as the Welsh Mountains on a clear day. "

If you would like to comment on the above proposals, please email:

keeleneighbourhood@gmail.com