

Kinver

Conservation Area Management Plan



South Staffordshire Council

Adopted 11 November 2010

Preface

South Staffordshire is a special place. Located cheek-by-jowl with the urban areas of the West Midlands conurbation and subject to constant pressure for development it still retains a strong rural character. Landscapes within the District change from one part to another, reflecting differences in the underlying geology and the location of villages within the landscape change too.

Our villages are a source of local pride and many are designated as conservation areas. Within these areas there are noticeable differences in many buildings in terms of their materials, designs and details. These variations, known as local distinctiveness, give individual character to different parts of the District.

Our first conservation areas were designated 40 years ago. The District was amongst the first in the country to do this and now has 19 conservation areas covering 16 of its villages and the entire lengths of the three canals which traverse it.

Designating a conservation area is not an end in itself. Local authorities need to develop policies which identify clearly what features of the area should be preserved or enhanced and set out how this can be done. Character Appraisals provide a clear assessment and definition of an area's interest and Management Plans set out the action needed to protect it. Within this the most important policy is a presumption against the loss of elements which have been identified in the character appraisal as making a positive contribution to the special interest for which the area was designated.

We make this presumption here in South Staffordshire and, together with our District-wide Village Design Guide, this Management Plan and Character Appraisal will provide all those involved in the development process with a clear statement of what we regard as special in our conservation areas and how we intend to preserve and enhance this.

Publication of this Management Plan and Character Appraisal of the Kinver Conservation Area represents another important step forward for the Council in its commitment to the corporate aim: *'To be a Council which protects and enhances South Staffordshire's distinctive environment'*.

"I commend it to you wholeheartedly".

Councillor David Billson – Deputy Leader, Strategic Services



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Kinver Conservation Area Management Plan

Preface	ii
CONTENTS	1
1 Introduction	2
1.1 Format & derivation	2
1.2 Purpose & legislative context	2
1.3 Local Plan & emerging Local Development Framework	2
1.4 Sustainability	2
1.5 Consultation	3
1.6 Monitoring	3
2 Kinver Conservation Area – Generic actions	4
2.1 Policy	4
2.2 Other guidance	4
2.3 Development Control process	4
2.4 Enforcement strategy	5
2.5 Street management	5
2.6 Promotion & awareness	6
2.7 Historic Environment Champions/Parish Councils	6
2.8 Education/community involvement	6
2.9 Production of further guidance/leaflets	6
3 Kinver Conservation Area – Specific actions	7
3.1 Conservation area boundary review	7
3.1.2 Boundary changes	7
3.1.12 Buffer zones	7
3.1.14 Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area	8
3.2 The protection of the landscape setting and views	8
3.3 The protection and enhancement of the existing trees and landscape	8
3.4 New development in the conservation area	9
3.4.4 Siting	9
3.4.7 Design	9
3.4.12 Materials	10
3.5 Maintaining the special character of the conservation area	10
3.6 Tourism	10
3.7 Positive buildings and demolition in the conservation area	10
3.8 Neutral and negative buildings in their present form	11
3.9 Streetscape improvements	11
3.9.1 Public realm	11
3.9.3 Highways, street signage & lighting	12
3.10 Shops & advertisements	12
3.10.1 Shop fronts	12
3.10.7 Advertisements	12
3.11 Amenity space	13
3.12 Buildings at Risk/Urgent Works Notices	13
3.13 Grants - assessment of existing & potential for new schemes	13
3.14 Statutory & local lists	13
3.15 Article 4 Directions	14
3.16 Site specific enhancement opportunities	14
4 Monitoring	15
Appendix 1 Conservation Area appraisal	16
Appendix 2 Retained Local Plan policies	50
Appendix 3 Bibliography	52
Appendix 4 Contacts	52

1. Introduction

1.1 Format & derivation

1.1.1 This management plan document sets out a mid- to long-term strategy in the form of a series of recommendations and guidelines for the Kinver Conservation Area. It has been informed by an accompanying character appraisal document for the conservation area, which identified its special character and concluded by outlining some of the issues that it faces (see Appendix 1).

1.1.2 The plan is split into generic and specific actions. The generic ones are tied in with general management principles, which are to be applied across all of South Staffordshire's 19 Conservation Areas. A new character appraisal document is being prepared for each of these conservation areas in order to inform these guidelines. The specific actions section is also informed by the findings of the character appraisal, but these are tailored to the specific nature of each individual conservation area.

1.2 Purpose & legislative context

1.2.1 This management plan sets out guidelines by which the special character of Kinver Conservation Area can be preserved and enhanced. They will provide a basis for preparing new policies to achieve this.

1.2.2 The preparation of management plans for its conservation areas is one of the Council's statutory obligations under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.2 of the character appraisal (see Appendix 1).

1.2.3 In addition to the statutory requirement to produce these plans, the Audit Commission also monitors the management of historic assets by local authorities as part of the overarching Best Value scheme. Best Value performance indicator BVPI 219c was a measure of how many up-to-date (less than five years old) management proposals local authorities had for their conservation areas. This indicator is a driver for best practice in conservation area management and states: '*Public support for*

conservation areas as places that give identity to people and places is well-established. This indicator will monitor how local authorities are managing their development.' Although this indicator has now been deleted, the Council considers that up-to-date management plans are an important planning tool and remains committed to their production.

1.3 Local Plan & emerging LDF

1.3.1 Current planning policies for South Staffordshire, including those governing development and management of change in conservation areas, are laid out in the *South Staffordshire Local Plan*, adopted in December 1996. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.3 of the character appraisal (see Appendix 1).

1.3.2 However, a new Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the Local Plan eventually. This is part of the new planning system introduced by the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

1.3.3 This management plan and character appraisal document (see Appendix 1) will sit as a Planning Document alongside the conservation policies contained within the new LDF and will be complementary to its aims of preserving and enhancing the South Staffordshire's Conservation Areas.

1.4 Sustainability

1.4.1 The Council will adopt the above Management Plan and Character Appraisal as a Supplementary Planning Document. Their preparation adheres to the principles of sustainability as it underpins the new planning system. The thorough survey of the conservation area, the subsequent identification and in-depth analysis of special character and the partnership with the local community in the preparation of the documents all contribute to reaching the targets set for sustainability.

1.5 Consultation

1.5.1 In line with the increased emphasis on community engagement in the LDF, as well as the existing policies of South Staffordshire Council, the plans contained in this document have undergone full public and stakeholder consultation before being adopted. Stakeholders have been consulted to inform the content of the documents and to contribute to the formation of the principles contained within them.

1.5.2 The findings of the Character Appraisal and proposals contained within the Management Plan were exhibited at the Kinver Parish Council Offices on the afternoon of Monday 3rd March 2008, at which 53 people attended. An open public meeting where the proposals contained within the Management Plan were described and discussed followed this.

1.5.3 A record was made of all pertinent comments and, wherever possible, these were accommodated within the final drafts of the Management Plan and Character Appraisal. Revised versions of both documents were made publicly available as downloadable pdfs on the Council's website and the final proposals featured as part of a day long exhibition held at the Council's offices on 7th October 2010.

1.5.4 South Staffordshire Council subscribes to the view expressed in the English Heritage document *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (August 2005) regarding management plans that: 'involving the local community in their development is essential if the proposals are to succeed.'

1.6 Monitoring

1.6.1 South Staffordshire Council will seek to review these documents every five years; taking into account Government policy and English Heritage guidance. The contents of this review are outlined in Section 4 of this document. The principles of monitoring are based around creating a 'virtuous circle' of monitoring, review and action.

2. Kinver Conservation Area - Generic actions

2.1 Policy

2.1.1 It is the Council's duty to preserve and enhance its conservation areas and policies are included in the Local Plan (adopted December 1996) in order to fulfil this duty. Relevant policies for conservation areas are covered in Policies BE7, 9, 12 and 14-19. Other policies, including Green Belt and others are detailed in Section 2.3 of the character appraisal (see Appendix 1).

2.1.2 The fundamental principles of good management of conservation areas are to be found in these policies, which will be carried forward to the emerging LDF. They can be related to the following set of generic management plans for all of South Staffordshire's Conservation Areas, which have been informed by the appraisal documents (see 8.1 Issues):

2.1.3 Overarching aim: to maintain the urban character of village centres and the rural character of conservation areas' periphery:

- Through the development control process (Policies BE7 & BE9);
- Controlling new shop fronts and signage (Policies BE14 to BE19);
- Addressing traffic issues (in co-operation with Staffordshire County Council);
- Control of boundaries (gates, fencing, walls) and building details through consideration of designating Article 4(2) Directions to control minor works;
- Improving the quality of the public realm through new schemes and funding;
- Encouraging owners of historic buildings to carry out required repair or improvement through education or possible grant schemes;
- Creating a full Local List of important historic buildings;
- Regularly (every five years) carrying out a new appraisal of each conservation area, if necessary, and updating management plans: monitoring change (see Section 4);
- Regularly (every five years) assessing the need for boundary changes and new designations of conservation areas, and carrying out the changes should they be required.

- Regularly (every five years) carry out a survey to assess the condition of listed buildings.

2.2 Other guidance

2.2.1 South Staffordshire Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on 'The Design of Shop fronts and signs in Conservation Areas'. This advises shop owners and guides planning decisions regarding changes to shop fronts.

2.2.2 These principles have been included within the District-wide Village Design Guide, which was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 15 September 2009 and sits within the emerging LDF.

2.2.3 English Heritage and other organisations can provide other guidance, such as specialist information regarding listed buildings, traditional construction methods and materials.

2.3 Development Control process

2.3.1 The system of considering planning applications for their suitability and conformity with national and local policies is long established and is based on more stringent criteria in conservation areas.

2.3.2 While there are additional policies concerning conservation areas and other parts of the historic environment, it is essential that these policies be applied consistently in the development control process.

2.3.3 Applications concerning land or properties within or close to a conservation area are referred to the Conservation Department of South Staffordshire Council. Within the usual period of time for consideration of an application, a conservation specialist will advise the planning officer assigned to the application whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. The specialist will, therefore, advise on whether the application should be supported or refused on conservation grounds.

2.3.4 As an important figure in this process, the conservation specialist will be trained in the field of historic building conservation and/or planning, either through formal qualifications, long-term experience in the field, or both. The Skills Base Best Value Performance Indicator BVPI205 measures the suitability of persons for this and other specialist roles and South Staffordshire Council is committed to meeting these criteria for such specialist roles.

2.3.5 Consistency of approach to determining planning applications is at the centre of a fair system of controlling change, especially in conservation areas. Consistent decisions also lead to an improved public perception that the system is fair and, in turn, there is a greater public engagement with the process.

2.3.6 Design and development briefs should be promoted and encouraged as a matter of course on any substantial application in the conservation areas. Due to the significant lack of spare land available for development purposes, any new development is likely to have an impact on the appearance and character of the conservation area. Therefore, there is a clear case for a coherent written argument in favour of the benefits of the proposal at the time of application. This could take the form of a letter, but ideally would be a more thorough development brief and include mock-up photographs that give an impression of how the proposal would look.

2.3.7 **ACTION:** *The Council will consult a conservation specialist on all proposals affecting the character of conservation areas.*

2.4 Enforcement strategy

2.4.1 In some cases the development control process is not fully adhered to and planning permission is not always sought or implemented correctly. In these cases it is important that enforcement action is swift and effective. This will reinforce the message that the development control process is fair and that it must be followed in all cases. Usually, enforcement action does not result in legal action, but is resolved through effective communication between the Council representatives and the relevant party.

2.5 Street management

2.5.1 The recent appraisal programme has noted that there is a certain amount of room for improvement in the public realm in most of the conservation areas in South Staffordshire. While responsibility for the highways and for *some* associated street furniture lies with the County Council, the maintenance of most of the public realm is the responsibility of South Staffordshire Council. (For a detailed analysis of the public realm in the Kinver Conservation Area see Section 5.4 in Appendix 1).

2.5.2 One of the common themes throughout the conservation areas is a lack of continuity in the design and fabric of the public realm. While there is a presumption in favour of traditional materials in conservation areas, it is recognised that it is not always practical or financially viable to use traditional materials in large-scale projects.

2.5.3 However, it should always be required that consideration is given to the effect that any new introductions to the public realm will have on the character of a conservation area and reasonable efforts be made to preserve that character with minor modifications to design. For example, traditional colours such as letterbox red should be preferred to more modern shades. Also, consideration should be given to the scale of new features, particularly streetlights, and 'conservation' alternatives should be requested and considered when embarking on any large scale scheme of public realm replacement.

2.5.4 It is important that the conservation section is consulted early on regarding any proposals to affect material changes to conservation areas. It is often the case that they can bring previous experience to the process, as well as a through understanding of the needs of an area.

2.5.5 **ACTION:** *The Council will consult a conservation specialist on all street management schemes affecting the character of conservation areas.*

2.6 Promotion & awareness

2.6.1 While it is often the conservation section that advises on planning applications and other schemes in conservation areas, almost every department in the Council will deal with matters affecting them in some way. It is the responsibility of every employee to give regard to the special character of conservation areas and promote awareness of them to residents. An active Historic Environment Champion (see below) can be an effective way of encouraging understanding across Council departments.

2.7 Historic Environment Champions/Parish Councils

2.7.1 The Historic Environment Champion is a senior member of the Council, usually an elected member, who is nominated to promote historic environment issues at the highest level of the organisation. The Champion can, therefore, play an important role in raising the profile of conservation in general and ensuring that key strategic decisions are taken with a full consideration of their potential effect on the historic environment. This role will be optimised if the champion has a through knowledge of the state of South Staffordshire's historic environment and regular liaison with the conservation section.

2.7.2 Parish Councils and other local bodies are also useful contributors to the process and are consulted for their opinion of planning applications in their localities. The wealth of knowledge contained within Parish Councils is a valuable resource when identifying local character and strong ties with the conservation section are encouraged.

2.8 Education/community involvement

2.8.1 An active engagement with the local community should be sustained after the consultation over the appraisal and management proposal documents. The documents should be promoted in the community as useful aides in identifying and retaining what is important

in their area. This, in turn, should promote a sense of ownership that will foster an improved level of understanding of the importance of preserving and enhancing special character.

2.8.2 **ACTION:** *The Council will seek stronger ties with local bodies and interest groups and promote the continued involvement of the local community in managing and enhancing the character of its conservation areas.*

2.9 Production of further guidance/leaflets

2.9.1 A new shop front design and signage guide would help to improve the main shopping area's appearance and enshrine guidance within the emerging LDF. The principles included in the existing guide have been carried forward into the new District-wide Village Design Guide SPD, adopted on 15 September 2009 and sitting within the LDF.

2.9.2 **ACTION:** *The Council will consider preparing and issuing additional design guidance and leaflets as and when appropriate. This may be in response to the continued review of conservation areas in South Staffordshire or other indicators.*

3. Kinver Conservation Area - Specific actions

In addition to the general proposals, which are to preserve and enhance the conservation areas and to maintain a good knowledge base of them through monitoring and appraisal (as outlined in Section 2), the following actions relate specifically to Kinver Conservation Area.

3.1 Conservation area boundary review

3.1.1 After the completion of a thorough survey of the Kinver Conservation Area, a Character Appraisal was written (see Appendix 1). This concluded that a number of boundary revisions would improve the extent to which the designation accurately reflects the special character of Kinver.

Boundary changes

3.1.2 The area to the west of the present conservation area, beyond Comber Road and its adjoining woodland, comprises a number of late 18th/19th century cottages, set in a winding country lane (Astles Rock Walk) which once led to the nearby stone quarry. Edge View Nursing Home, built in the early 20th century as a temperance hotel for tourists, is the only large building, and sits in a spacious garden which forms an attractive setting for the neo-Tudor building when viewed from Comber Road. Two modern properties sit down into the valley and have little visual impact. All of the remaining buildings are judged to be 'positive' in terms of their contribution to the area's special character.

3.1.3 **ACTION:** *The following addition is proposed to the existing Kinver Conservation Area boundary:*

- Edge View Home and Astles Rock Walk

3.1.4 The south side of Foster Street is shown as complete on the 1901 map, and the site survey confirms that this side of the road retains a number of well detailed, red brick two storey family houses with sash windows and slate roofs, the most original examples of which are Nos. 1-13 (consecutive) which are proposed for inclusion in the conservation area. Stylistically the details suggest a date of construction of around 1860, and all of them are judged to be 'positive' in terms of their contribution to the special character of the area.

3.1.5 **ACTION:** *The following addition is proposed to the existing Kinver Conservation Area boundary:*

- Foster Street (south-east side only)

3.1.6 Dunsley House in Gibraltar is a 'positive' house shown on the 1917 map, and sits prominently on the hillside overlooking the canal. It is considered that it forms a group with other buildings of a similar age in Gibraltar, which are already in the conservation area.

3.1.7 **ACTION:** *The following addition is proposed to the existing Kinver Conservation Area boundary:*

- Dunsley House, Gibraltar.

3.1.8 No.1 Stone Lane is a 'positive' house and a fine piece of late 19th century architecture. The double fronted red brick detached house features a decorative eaves cornice and canted bays and a decorative stone door head.

3.1.9 **ACTION:** *The following addition is proposed to the existing Kinver Conservation Area boundary:*

- No. 1 Stone Lane

3.1.10 As well as adding the above to the Conservation Area boundary, the survey also recommended three deletions.

3.1.11 **ACTION:** *The following deletions are proposed from the existing Kinver Conservation Area boundary:*

- Farmyard to Hill Farm - These are modern farm buildings of no special interest.
- Delete buildings on north side of The Compa - These are all post-war houses and bungalows of no special interest.
- Delete bungalows in Comber Grove - These are 1960s/1970s bungalows, again of no special interest.

Buffer zones

3.1.12 As part of the character appraisal process, English Heritage recommends the identification of 'Buffer Zones' around and on the edges of existing conservation areas, where development could potentially have an adverse effect on the special character of the conservation area. For Kinver, only one such

zone has been identified, to the north of the existing football pitch. It is a landscape area in the river flood plain, notable for its wide, open green spaces, trees, and sports and play facilities. The former British Legion club, a modern building of no merit, awaits redevelopment.

3.1.13 ACTION: *Add the open space to north of Kinver football pitch, with its play area and bowling green, as a 'Buffer Zone' to the Townscape Appraisal Map (see pp. 26-27) and note this designation in any future planning applications relating to this part of Kinver.*

Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area

3.1.14 In due course, when the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area is reappraised, it might be considered appropriate to remove the canal area from the Kinver Conservation Area. This is because the canal area as a whole has a unique character, completely different to that of the more urban centre of Kinver village and logically the stretch of land along the canal should all form part of the same designated conservation area.

3.1.15 ACTION: *Consider removing the land along the canal into the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area once a Character Appraisal has been completed of that part of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area that runs through South Staffordshire.*

3.2 The protection of the landscape setting & views

3.2.1 The landscape setting of the Kinver Conservation Area is very important. It has been established that new development on the edges of the conservation area affects views into and out of the conservation area, and can adversely affect the area's special architectural or historic interest. The plan therefore includes the identification of one area of land, as detailed in 3.1.2, as a 'Buffer Zone'. Other parts of the landscape around the Kinver Conservation Area were considered at the time of the survey work for the Character Appraisal (see Appendix 1), but

because of changes in the topography, and the sense of enclosure provided by existing trees, there were no other areas that it was considered made the same potential contribution.

3.2.2 ACTION: *The Council will seek to ensure that development within the Buffer Zone preserves or enhances the special interest of the conservation area and causes no harm to that special interest.*

3.2.3 Views across the Kinver Conservation Area are very important given the dramatic topography and river- and canal-side location. The unique qualities of the conservation area rely on the continued protection of these views, the most important of which are recorded on the Townscape Appraisal Map (see pp. 26-27).

3.2.4 Less obvious, but equally important, are the shorter views along the principal streets, particularly the High Street, with its gentle bends punctuated by its many historic buildings. In these areas, it is crucial that the spaces between the buildings (the 'public realm') are protected from unsympathetic development, including street improvements.

3.2.5 ACTION: *The Council will also seek to ensure that these views remain protected from inappropriate forms of development and that due regard is paid to them in the formulation of public realm works or enhancement schemes.*

3.3 The protection & enhancement of the existing trees & landscape

3.3.1 Kinver benefits from several large areas of woodland and more open landscape within and on the edges of the Conservation Area, although not all of them have unlimited public access. Within the Conservation Area these are:

- The woodland between Comber Road and Church Hill (site of the Scout Camp), and the adjoining field;
- The fields below the church;
- More formal public amenity spaces along the High Street;
- The football field and the adjoining open space to the east of the High Street;
- The landscaped area along the canal.

(These are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map - see pp. 26-27).

3.3.2 Large areas of woodland and more open landscape outside the Conservation Area are:

- The National Trust land to the west of Comber Road;
- The former quarry to the west of Astles Rock Walk;
- The playing field and bowling green to the north of the football field.

3.3.3 These areas need to be protected from inappropriate development, which might adversely affect their rural qualities. This means that a variety of changes, including car parking provision, must all be carefully designed and the countryside location taken into account. Views across and into these spaces must also be protected.

3.3.4 Additionally, the trees and other vegetation must be properly looked after and, where necessary, and in consultation with the Council's Tree Officer, private owners encouraged to carry out appropriate tree management such as lopping, felling and new planting. All trees within the conservation area are already automatically protected by the requirement for landowners to notify the Council of their intention to lop or trim them. Tree Preservation Orders provide an additional protection for significant trees and groups of trees, where any proposed action requires consent from the local planning authority.

3.3.5 **ACTION:** *The Council will seek to prepare a Tree Management Programme, identifying all mature trees within the conservation area (privately as well as publicly owned) and ensuring that priorities are agreed and funding set aside for the costs involved in remedial works or replacement.*

3.4 New development in the conservation area

3.4.1 The new housing on the east side of Mill Lane has already had a detrimental effect on the special character of the Kinver Conservation Area due to its density, prominence and impact on the open green space around the canal. The loss of

the former mill, and its replacement with Mill House, a late 20th century building of no special merit, is also regrettable. These developments have taken place despite national and local plan policies which seek 'to preserve or enhance' the special character of the conservation area.

3.4.2 If the special interest of the conservation area is to be protected in the future, development should only be allowed where it will fit in with the existing historic form of development; where it does not impinge on the setting of historic buildings; and where it does not result in the loss of important green open space.

3.4.3 **ACTION:** *The Council will continue to monitor all planning applications very carefully and ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact on the existing buildings or landscape features of the conservation area.*

Siting

3.4.4 Historically, buildings in Kinver have been built towards the front of the plots on through routes. This gives a network of streets with a distinct building line set back slightly behind small front gardens. The houses were widely spaced allowing generous views of trees and farmland.

3.4.5 These simple rules have been observed less in the 20th century, when houses have generally been built in the centre of their plots and on culs-de-sac. This has undermined the established character and lead to buildings intruding on significant views within the village and from outside the conservation area.

3.4.6 **ACTION:** *New housing will be sited to conform to traditional building lines and street patterns.*

Design

3.4.7 The principal aim of new development should be to assimilate into its surroundings rather than making a complete contrast. This is because the attractiveness of the village relies on the visual cohesiveness of the streetscape. It does not mean that new buildings have to be replicas of old ones, but rather that their forms should be determined by traditional building depths, spans and roof pitches. In this way,

continuity can be maintained as history evolves.

3.4.8 A major problem with modern build, particularly bungalows and more recent very large houses, is the considerable depth of the built form. Whilst the use of details borrowed from the established estate cottage style on recent two storey dwellings is welcomed, the large roof-spans of these properties tend to produce uncharacteristic proportions of expansive roofs on relatively small buildings.

3.4.9 Further details of fenestration, eaves, verges or chimneystacks can also be borrowed from local examples to good advantage, for instance eaves detailing with exposed rafter feet rather than modern fascias and soffits.

3.4.10 Uncharacteristic detailing should be resisted, but the addition of chimneystacks in some locations may be required, to ensure compatibility with adjoining properties.

3.4.11 **ACTION:** *The form of all new development should reflect the dimensions and rhythms of neighbouring property that is characteristic of the conservation area as identified in this document and the conservation area appraisal document (see Appendix 1).*

Materials

3.4.12 Kinver's traditional character relies strongly on a restricted palette of materials, which is detailed in the South Staffordshire Village Design Guide.

3.4.13 Window and door joinery is timber, sometimes with iron casements. Departure from this norm, particularly the use of harsh bricks, renders and imitation materials, is a primary cause of discordance in the conservation area.

3.4.14 Modern, machine-made flat clay tiles will rarely be acceptable; neither will concrete tiles, artificial slate or plastic doors and windows. Windows should be traditionally detailed with vertically or horizontally sliding sashes, or casements fitted flush with their frames. Top-hung false 'sashes' are not suitable. Front doors should be made from timber, planked or with recessed moulded panels. All timber should be painted not stained.

3.4.15 **ACTION:** *A limited range of traditional materials and details should be specified for new development in Kinver in accordance with the South Staffordshire Village Design Guide.*

3.5 Maintaining the special character of the conservation area

3.5.1 It has already been noted that the Kinver Conservation Area can be divided into four Character Areas, as defined by the topography, buildings, uses, and landscape. These are:

- Comber Copse and St Peter's Church;
- Church Hill and Dark Lane;
- The High Street;
- River Stour and the canal.

3.5.2 Each of these areas has unique qualities which gives a special 'Local Distinctiveness' to the different parts of the conservation area. These are described and recorded on the Townscape Appraisal Map in the Character Appraisal (see pp. 26-27). The Council is required by law to insist that all new development achieves the protection and enhancement of these features and the production of a detailed Character Appraisal helps Council officers and also the relevant councillors to make informed decisions about the suitability of development proposals as they are submitted for approval.

3.5.3 **ACTION:** *The Council will use the Character Appraisal to guide development proposals in the Kinver Conservation Area and will resist applications that threaten the special character of the conservation area (see Appendix 1).*

3.6 Tourism

3.6.1 Kinver High Street is an important local shopping centre and retains a good variety of shops and other commercial premises such a bank, estate agents, cafes, public houses and restaurants. Whilst the town is not such a popular tourist destination as it was 100 years ago, there are still many visitors who come all year round to enjoy the scenery and peaceful canal side walks. At the moment, there are few specific facilities for them and a number

of actions could be taken to encourage more visitors including the provision of public toilets along the canal and perhaps a Kinver Town Trail. Improvements to the public realm, as discussed below, would also be welcome.

3.6.2 **ACTION:** *the Council could consider a Tourism Strategy for Kinver to improve facilities for visitors.*

3.7 Positive buildings & demolition in conservation areas

3.7.1 Conservation Area Consent is required for the full or substantial demolition of buildings within the conservation area. In accordance with Government guidance in PPS5 there will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

3.7.2 As part of this study, buildings that make such a contribution but have not been included in the national statutory list of building of architectural or historic interest have been identified and are shown on the map as Positive Buildings (see Section 6.4 in Appendix 1)

3.7.3 These buildings are considered to be of local importance and contribute positively to the character of the conservation area. The demolition of such buildings will erode and dilute the existing character of the conservation area and adversely affect its appearance. Additionally, because these buildings are an important part of the character of the conservation area, special attention needs to be paid to applications to alter and extend these properties.

3.7.4 **ACTION:** *The Council will resist applications to demolish all or a substantial part of any building identified as a 'Positive Building'. Additionally, alterations and extensions to these buildings will have to be particularly sensitively designed and take into account their historic and architectural interest.*

3.7.5 **ACTION:** *Every effort will be made to retain all existing traditional architectural features of these buildings. The removal or loss of these will need to be fully justified within the context*

of the impact that this loss will have on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Alterations will need to incorporate matching designs and materials appropriate to the age and character of the building.

3.8 Neutral & negative buildings in their present form

3.8.1 Neutral buildings are older buildings that have been altered, or modern buildings the design of which is considered to be reasonably in keeping with the surrounding area (see Section 6.6 in Appendix 1).

3.8.2 Negative buildings are buildings, which, in their present form, conflict with the traditional character of the conservation area as identified in the character appraisal document for it. Whilst these buildings do not contribute as much to the area character as positive buildings they can be renovated sympathetically incorporating traditional designs and materials appropriate to the conservation area (see Section 6.5 in Appendix 1).

3.8.3 **ACTION:** *Alterations to neutral buildings and negative buildings shall incorporate traditional materials and designs that are associated with the key buildings in the conservation area (listed buildings and positive buildings). Demolition of these buildings would only be considered if replaced with a quality building that has been specifically designed to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area.*

3.9 Streetscape improvements

Public realm

3.9.1 Parts of Kinver High Street has been subject to an environmental improvement scheme, possibly in the 1980s, using concrete paviors, concrete slabs, and some traffic calming measures, such as raised speed tables. These finishes are now in need of replacement and upgrading. Elsewhere in the conservation area, paving and surface materials are generally modern, uncoordinated and of poor quality. In almost all cases they fail to enhance or reinforce the historic identity of the conservation area.

3.9.2 ACTION: *The council will seek to review design and materials of paving/streetscape throughout the area, particularly in Kinver High Street, with a view to the publication of a Streetscape Manual setting out principles for public space design. In particular, existing areas of historic external paving shall be retained where possible and proposed new areas of paving shall be appropriate to the historic environment in which they are set. Where possible, overhead cabling should also be removed.*

Highways, street signage and lighting

3.9.3 The overall control of the highways and streetscape in Kinver is the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council (See Section 2: Generic Actions), although South Staffordshire Council is involved in improvement schemes. The County Council and South Staffordshire Council can only achieve the enhancement of the Kinver Conservation Area by working together in partnership.

3.9.4 ACTION: *The Council will work in partnership with the County Council over new schemes, which will improve the control of traffic flow and pedestrian access in the Kinver Conservation Area.*

3.9.5 Signs and notices can spoil the visual attractiveness of the Kinver Conservation Area. While traffic signs are obviously necessary, they can be poorly sited and there may be an over provision. In the High Street, street lighting is generally provided by lights fixed directly onto the buildings, which add to the attractiveness of the area.

3.9.6 ACTION: *The Council will seek to compile an audit of all road signage and street furniture in the conservation area with a view to bringing about a simplified and better-coordinated approach in line with the principles set out in English Heritage's latest 'Streets For All' publication.*

3.10 Shop fronts & advertisements

3.10.1 The Kinver Conservation Area contains a number of shops, many with historic shop fronts (see Section 6.8 in Appendix 1). In some cases, poorly designed shop fronts with little regard for

the host building and the street scene spoil the historic character and appearance of a building or street. The better quality shopping parades in High Street should serve as exemplars.

3.10.2 With regard to a proposal for 'living over the shop', where a shared access exists, its removal will be resisted. If required, a new or additional access will be sought by negotiation.

3.10.3 Occasionally, a simple modern shop front may be more appropriate than a reproduction 19th century design. However, these should still follow the basic principles governing the historic relationship between the fascia, glazing, pilasters and stall riser, as well as the use of colour, materials, and signage.

3.10.4 ACTION: *When considering the replacement of a shop front, owners should follow the advice contained in the District Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance entitled 'The Design of Shop fronts and signs in Conservation Areas.'*

3.10.5 ACTION: *The principles included in the Council's adopted SPG entitled 'The Design of Shop fronts and signs in Conservation Areas' has been carried forward into the new District-wide Village Design Guide (adopted 15 September 2009), which sits as an SPD within the new LDF.*

3.10.6 ACTION: *When considering planning applications for new shop fronts, the Council will be mindful of Policy BE15 in the Local Plan (and any subsequent relevant policy in the emerging LDF).*

3.10.7 All outdoor advertisements affect the appearance of the building or neighbourhood where they are displayed. The visual appearance of the Kinver Conservation Area suffers from some garish advertisements including banners and A-boards, which may not be authorized.

3.10.8 ACTION: *The Council will ensure that all proposed advertisements accord with policies BE14 to 19 of the Local Plan and the subsequent relevant policies that will be adopted in the forthcoming LDF.*

3.11 Amenity space

3.11.1 Kinver does not benefit from any large areas of public open space within the conservation area, although the canal towpath does provide good public walking space. Amenity space is limited to small corner sites or recessed areas with bench seats. These spaces are often at key sites that have a great impact on the appearance of the area and should be well maintained and kept free of graffiti as much as possible.

3.11.2 **ACTION:** *The Council will continue to work with other agencies such as Kinver Parish Council and Staffordshire County Council to ensure that the small open spaces that are available are well maintained and enhanced, as appropriate.*

3.12 Buildings at Risk/ Urgent Works Notices

3.12.1 There are a number of buildings, mainly in the High Street, where some repairs are needed, but the survey work for this document did not uncover any seriously 'At Risk' historic buildings, and it seems unlikely that there would be any need for Urgent Works Notices to be served in the short or medium term.

3.21.2 The Council has recently completed a Buildings-at-Risk survey of listed buildings in the whole district and will shortly publish a report on their condition. None of them are in the Kinver Conservation Area.

3.12.3 None of the Grade I or II* Buildings-at-Risk on the English Heritage Register in South Staffordshire are within the Kinver Conservation Area.

3.12.4 **ACTION:** *The Council will publish a Buildings-at-Risk Register for all listed buildings in the district and will develop policies to address the issues identified in the English Heritage Register.*

3.13 Grants – assessment of existing and potential for new schemes

3.13.1 There are currently no local or national grants available to promote new schemes in Kinver.

3.13.2 **ACTION:** *The Council will consider starting new schemes and working with other local and national bodies to create new schemes that could preserve or enhance the character of Kinver Conservation Area.*

3.14 Statutory & local lists

3.14.1 No buildings in Kinver are proposed for addition to the statutory list, which appears to be up to date. However, the community has identified other historic buildings, which do not fit the strict criteria for listing but are important in the local area, which are detailed below:

- The pumping station, Mill Lane;
- Nos. 120-121 High Street;
- The Constitutional Club, High Street;
- The public library in Vicarage Drive;
- Selected properties between Nos. 2a and 47 High Street;
- The Vine Inn.

Not in the Kinver Conservation Area:

- Selected houses in Foster Street, especially No. 24;
- Selected houses in James Street, especially Nos. 4 and 7.

3.14.2 Some of these have been identified as 'positive' buildings (see below) as part of the character appraisal (see Appendix 1). It might well be that the Council adds further buildings to the Local List, in addition to those already suggested, once the Management Plans have been formally adopted.

3.14.3 **ACTION:** *The Council will compile a list of buildings and structures of Special Local Interest (the 'Local List') and develop policies promoting their retention and improvement.*

3.15 Article 4 Directions

3.15.1 The Council is able, through the imposition of an Article 4 Direction, to make restrictions on the permitted development rights of owners of unlisted single-family dwelling houses in the conservation area. Article 4 Directions are generally designated in order to protect particular building details such as windows, doors and chimneystacks in the interests of preserving the special character of a conservation area. Additionally, front boundary walls and the creation of vehicular hard standings can also be brought under planning control.

3.15.2 An Article 4 Direction is therefore useful in strengthening controls over the unsympathetic alteration of unlisted buildings and their gardens, which would cumulatively have an adverse affect on the character of the conservation area. It is worth noting that strict controls already exist over listed buildings and unlisted buildings in a variety of other uses (such as flats or shops) where Listed Building Consent or Planning Permission is already required for a variety of minor alterations.

3.15.3 An Article 4 Direction could be considered for those groups of 'positive' unlisted terraced family houses such as those in High Street and Foster Street, where they retain their original architectural details and the Council would wish to preserve them as such. Controls over front boundaries are not so relevant as most of these properties abut the backside of the pavement, without any front garden space.

3.15.4 **ACTION:** *The Council could consider making an Article 4 Direction on unlisted 'positive' family dwelling houses in the conservation area.*

3.16 Site specific enhancement opportunities

3.14.1 Three areas of publicly owned land were identified as having the potential for improvement. These are:

- Clock Tower;
- Daneford Gardens;
- Jubilee Gardens.

3.14.2 All of these lie towards the northern end of the High Street and would benefit from new paving, planting, lighting, seating and litterbins. The provision of tourist-related information boards would also be welcomed.

3.14.3 **ACTION:** *the Council will, subject to funding, prepare enhancement schemes for the above site, and will put these forward to full public consultation.*

4. Monitoring

4.1 As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging LDF and government policy generally. A review should include the following: -

- A survey of the conservation area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publication of an updated edition of the management plan.

4.2 On an annual basis the Council will monitor the status of its conservation area management plans with regard to their need to be reviewed.

4.3 It is possible that the local community, under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the Council, could carry out this review. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

4.4 This will monitor the changes that have occurred through the continuous processes of development and through individual changes of use. The purpose is to re-evaluate the special character of a conservation area to reach decisions about whether it still warrants designation, and to check that the boundaries are sufficiently clear in demarcating changes in character.

4.5 It is intended that a photographic record be made of each area at the time of the publication of the Appraisal or the time of its reissue following a review, so that changes are monitored.

Appendix 1: Kinver Conservation Area appraisal

C O N T E N T S	16
1 Summary	17
1.1 Key characteristics	17
2 Introduction	18
2.1 The Kinver Conservation Area	18
2.2 The purpose of a conservation area character appraisal	18
2.3 The planning policy context	18
3 Location & landscape setting	20
3.1 Location & activities	20
3.2 Topography & geology	21
3.3 Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings	22
4 Historic development and archaeology	23
4.1 Historic development	23
Townscape Appraisal Map	26-27
4.2 Archaeology	31
5 Spatial analysis	32
5.1 Plan form & layout	32
5.2 Landmarks, focal points & views	33
5.3 Open spaces, trees and landscape	34
5.4 Public realm	34
6 The buildings of the conservation area	36
6.1 Building types	36
6.2 Listed buildings	37
6.3 Locally listed buildings	38
6.4 Positive buildings	39
6.5 Negative buildings	40
6.6 Neutral buildings	40
6.7 Building materials & local details	41
6.8 Historic shop fronts	43
7 Character Areas	44
7.1 Area 1: Comber Copse and St Peter's Church.	44
7.2 Area 2: Church Hill and Dark Lane	44
7.3 Area 3: The High Street	45
7.4 Area 4: River Stour and the canal.	46
8 Issues	48
8.1 Key issues	48
8.2 Conservation Area boundary review	49

1. Summary

1.1 This Character Appraisal of the Kinver Conservation Area concludes that its key characteristics are:

- Attractive mix of rural and urban character;
- Hilly topography with St Peter's Church on a high sandstone ridge overlooking the village centre;
- Woodland and fields to the west around Kinver Edge, owned by the National Trust;
- St Peter's Church and its churchyard with fields and a former farm;
- Church Hill with its high quality listed buildings;
- The historic High Street, with its many listed and 'positive' buildings;
- The survival of the medieval burgage plots;
- Notable examples of 16th and 17th century timber-framed houses;
- Well detailed 18th and 19th century buildings;
- The river Stour and its water meadows;
- The canal, its towpath and narrow boats.



2. Introduction

2.1 The Kinver Conservation Area

2.1.1 Staffordshire County Council designated the Kinver Conservation Area in February 1970. The conservation area covers the historic High Street, with its shops, banks and other commercial premises; the green fields and woods which lie up steeply rising hills to the south-west, forming Kinver Edge; Church Hill and the historic St Peter's Church, visible on the crown of the hill from many vantage points in the conservation area; and lastly, the sinuous curves of the River Stour and the adjoining Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, between which lie open fields and areas of woodland. Of particular note, although not readily appreciated from the High Street because of the almost continuous rows of properties which front the main street, are the long, thin burgage plots which stretch down to the river on the north side, and towards the bottom of Church Hill on the south side.

2.1.2 The Kinver Conservation Area abuts the Canal Conservation Area, which follows the line of the canal into and out of Kinver, the section of canal closest to the village being included in the Kinver Conservation Area.

2.2 The purpose of a conservation area character appraisal

2.2.1 Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as '*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.*'

2.2.2 Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

2.2.3 Planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment are set out in Planning Policy Statement No.5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5). In addition, guidance to help practitioners implement this policy is provided in the accompanying Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide.

2.2.4 In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Kinver Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with English Heritage guidance as set out in Guidance on conservation area appraisals and Guidance on the management of conservation areas (both August 2005). This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Kinver Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of the 'Character Appraisal').

2.2.5 The Conservation Studio carried out survey work for this document in October 2006, when a full photographic record was also taken of the area and its buildings. Unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution, trees, watercourses, historic shop fronts, views and areas and buildings for enhancement were noted and recorded on a Townscape Appraisal Map. Additionally the existing conservation area boundary was carefully surveyed and proposals drawn up for a number of changes. The omission of any particular feature does not imply that it is of no significance.

2.3 The planning policy context

2.3.1 This document therefore provides a firm basis on which applications for future development within the Kinver Conservation Area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (revised January 2008); Staffordshire County Council's Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 and the South Staffordshire Local Plan, which was adopted in December 1996.

2.3.2 In the Local Plan, Inset Plan 51 confirms that the following policies apply to the Kinver Conservation Area or to the land that surrounds it:

- Canal Conservation Area BE7, BE9, BE12 & BE14
- Conservation Area Policies BE7, BE9, BE12, BE14 – BE20
- Green Belt GB1, C1 – C4, C8 & C13
- Policies H12, BE26 & BE28

These policies are detailed in Appendix 2.

2.3.3 A Local Development Framework (LDF) is being prepared to help to shape a sustainable future for South Staffordshire. It will replace the existing Local Plan (adopted 1996) and set out the District's spatial planning strategy to 2026. The LDF will combine a number of statutory and non-statutory documents to set out planning policies and proposals to guide the District's development. The statutory ones are known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and, together with the West Midlands' Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), will form part of the Development Plan for South Staffordshire. For further information on the LDF please contact: The Development Plans Team on 01902 696317; email: developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk.



3. Location & landscape setting

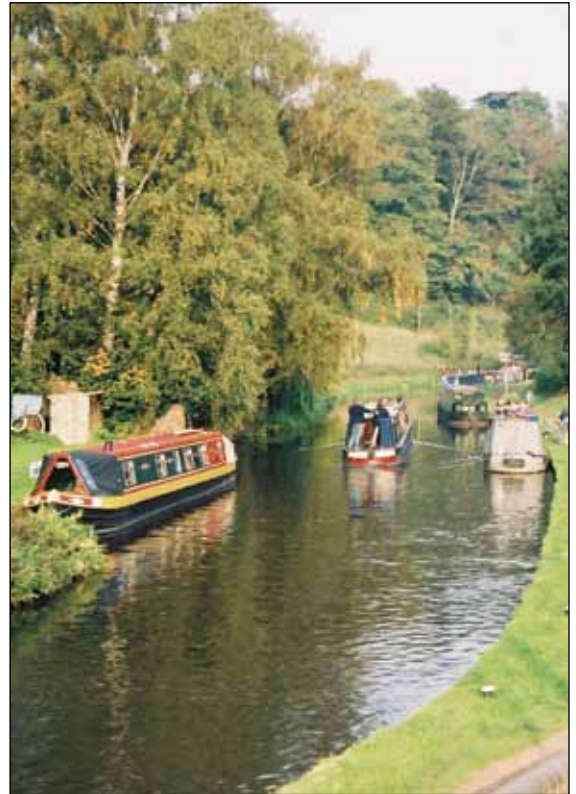
3.1 Location & activities

3.1.1 Kinver is located about 22 kilometres to the west of Birmingham, 15 kilometres south of Wolverhampton, and eight kilometres north of Kidderminster. The village lies on the River Stour that rises in the Clent Hills to the east of Kinver and enters the River Severn at Stourport. The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal also passes through Kinver, at times almost touching the river. The nearest main road is the A449 between Wolverhampton and Kidderminster, which lies one kilometre to the east of the village. Kinver's population was 6,805 in the 2001 Census.

3.1.2 Despite mainly late 20th century housing, which lies in closely defined areas to the west, north and east of the conservation area, Kinver retains a village quality, which is reinforced by the rural setting and waterside location. There is no railway, although trams ran from 1901 to 1930, bringing in visitors who wanted to visit the picturesque sandstone ridge known as Kinver Edge, which forms the southern and western boundary to the settlement. This sandstone ridge is notable for the unique rock houses, which are now administered by the National Trust, who own much of Kinver Edge. This beautiful piece of countryside amounts to some 300 acres, and has been a main centre of tourism since the 19th century when visitors from the industrial towns nearby came to enjoy the dramatic scenery and fresh, clean air. A well-used Scout Camp, consisting of 23 acres of woodland with glades and open areas forming individual camping sites, is located in the conservation area in Comber Copse between the village and Kinver Edge.

3.1.3 Perhaps because of the regular influx of visitors, the village is well served by catering establishments with nine public houses either in or around the village, five restaurants or takeaways, several cafes, and of course, The Olde White Harte Inn, a large, Grade II listed building in the High Street. Otherwise, the High Street provides a range of local shops, two supermarkets, and the usual choice of a national bank, buildings societies, estate agents, and professional offices.

3.1.4 St Peter's Church is the primary religious building, located outside the built-up area on a spur of the ridge, overlooking the village. The former



Images from Top to Bottom

- View of canal from bridge in Mill Lane
- The Olde White Harte Inn, High Street
- High Street shops

Victorian school in Vicarage Road has now been converted into the local library, and there are now three schools in Kinver, all outside the conservation area: Foley Infants School, Brindley Heath Junior School, and Edgecliffe High School. A group of farm buildings in Church Hill has been converted into housing, and an Old People's Home built on the site of the former village mill off Mill Lane. Further along Mill Lane, a substantial amount of new housing has been built recently at Mill Fields and Kenrose Mill.

3.1.5 Along the canal, moorings for canalboats and the use of the former towpath as a very popular canal-side walk provide activity and interest, especially at weekends when families use the area for walking and cycling. The Vine Inn with its large garden is another popular amenity, where visitors can sit and watch canal activities including the boats going into and out of the lock at Kinver Bridge.

3.2 Topography & geology

3.2.1 Kinver is notable for the high sandstone ridge which forms the southern and western part of the conservation area, and which lies about 50 metres above the High Street. This forms a backdrop in views from the High Street and beyond, punctuated by the outline of St Peter's Church on the skyline. The steep slope down from the church is mainly wooded but is cut through by Church Hill in two places, exposing the underlying sandstone. This is a very soft stone, which is easily carved and shaped, allowing in the past the creation of cave houses, called 'rock houses', which were occupied until the 1950s. Bunter Pebble Beds form the upper edge of the actual escarpment. The soil is mainly light sand with some sandy loam, and, closer to Compton to the northwest of Kinver, clay. Sand pits have been worked in the area since the 17th century or earlier, and the burial ground in Church Road marks the site of a former gravel pit.

3.2.2 Down the hill, there are alluvial deposits associated with the River Stour, which meanders across a flat valley bottom now used as a grazing or as playing fields. Beyond the canal, the land rises slightly towards the northeast, with a wooded hillside being a primary feature of the views from the more eastern section of the canal.



Images from Top to Bottom

- View from churchyard over Kinver
- View northwards from Church Road
- Sandstone outcrops near Mill Lane
- Blocks of sandstone near Comber Road

3.3 Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings

3.3.1 The Kinver Conservation Area is closely constrained by three areas of modern housing, which create definite barriers, but otherwise is surrounded by woods or fields, which allow limited views out and enhance the rural qualities of the village. The land beyond this housing, to the west and north of Kinver, is designated as a Special Landscape Area in the Local Plan.

3.3.2 To the southwest, most of Kinver Edge is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and is notable for its trees, ancient woodland and heath. To the south of Church Road and Church Hill are open fields, which are mainly used as pasture. To the north, the green swath of land, which follows the line of the river and canal, cuts through the built-up areas providing a 'green lung' which is fortunately easily appreciated because of the canal towpaths. Because the canal follows the contour, it can be seen that to the east of Church Hill and Dark Lane the land rises and then falls, creating a long gentle loop in the canal. Despite the easy public access to the canal, it is surprising that there is a general lack of access to the river where it runs behind the High Street, although some views are possible from the playing fields which are only accessible at certain times of the day.



Images from Top Right to Bottom Left

- Fields off Comber Lane
- Woodland lies close to Kinver
- Canalside housing on loop of the canal
- View over playing fields
- The canal lies at the foot of the escarpment

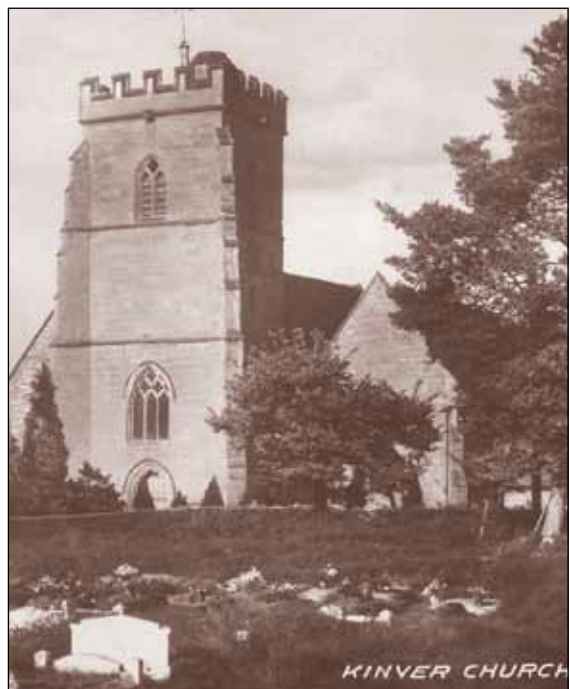
4. Historic development & archaeology

4.1 Historic development

4.1.1 The existence of a settlement at Kinver is first recorded in 736 AD as Cynibre, meaning 'great hill.' From the 8th century Kinver fell under the ownership of the Earl of Mercia, but after the Norman Conquest the area was designated as the King's hunting ground, and was used as such by King John, who used nearby Stourton Castle as his hunting lodge. In 964 AD there is a reference to Cynefares Stane, another early form of Kinver.

4.1.2 A Celtic church may well have been located beneath St Peter's Church although the current church dates from the 12th century. A church certainly existed by 1086, when the Domesday Survey also recorded that there were 28 inhabitants. Philip de Rous is recorded as rector in 1189 and Gilbert de Lascy in 1226. The Norman church appears to have been what is now the nave, and the late-12th century great buttress ends of the north and south walls can still be seen at the west, close to the tower, which was built in 1380. The nave roof is a 14th century double collar braced rafter roof, a good example of its type. In the 15th century, John Hampton was Lord of the Manor and lived at Stourton Castle. He was a great courtier and a squire to Henry VI, and he built a new chapel onto the northeast corner of the church, now called the Foley Chapel. He died in 1472 and his tomb once stood in the middle of the chapel, although all that remains now is the trunk of a man in armour resting on a stone plinth. After his death, Edward IV granted his lands to his brother Clarence.

4.1.3 A market charter is recorded in 1221, but wherever this earlier settlement was located, it was overtaken at about this time when the then Lord of the Manor laid out a new village along the High Street, with the characteristic long thin plots (or burgages) stretching out on either side. In 1227-8 Richard Beneit 'de novo burgo' appeared among a group of local men, confirming the establishment of the new settlement, which was administered by a borough court, separate from the manorial court which covered the rest of Kinver and Stourton (known then as Kinfare Royal). A licence to hold a fair at Kinver is recorded in 1257. In about 1270 the Lord of Kinver issued a charter of liberties to his burgesses, of whom there were 22 in 1293,



Images from Top to Bottom

- Speed's map of Kinver, 1611
- The Tramway Station, terminus of the Kinver Light Railway, in Mill Lane
- St Peter's Church, tower and nave

giving them a number of economic privileges. Between the late 11th and early 13th century kings visited Kinver on several occasions, probably when hunting in the forest, and it is recorded that Edward I stayed at Stourton in 1277.

4.1.4 In the late medieval period Kinver was known for making sturdy cloth, using the flow of the Stour for fulling mills and dyeing. A corn mill on the north side of Mill Lane is recorded in 1439, and a bridge over the river in 1461. Later the river was used to power finery forges and slitting mills, including Hyde Mill, located about 1.5 kilometres north of Kinver village. This was established in about 1625 and may have been one of the earliest mills of its type in England. There were five slitting mills in the parish by the late 18th century, more than any other parish in the country. These slit bars of iron into rods to be made into nails and chain in the nearby Black Country. Iron making therefore became an important local industry from the early 17th century onwards.

4.1.5 A grammar school was first established at the junction of Church Lane and Dark Lane in the 16th century (the building still exists) and another house, known as the Stone House, was built nearby in 1624 (rebuilt in c1840 and now called Rockmount). The timber-frame cottages to the south of the church (Church Cottages) were there as early as 1635. In the 17th century, the village also profited from being a stop on the great 'Irish Road' from Bristol to Chester (until the 1800s the port of embarkation for Ireland), The Olde White Harte being the oldest (1605 at least) and largest inn. The Compton census of 1676 recorded that the population of the parish had risen to 957 people. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the Kinver, Compton and Dunsley manors were all in the same ownership, first by the Whorwood family and then by the Foleys. These estates had broken up and dispersed by the early 20th century.

4.1.6 In the late 1750s Richard Wilkes, the Staffordshire antiquary, stated that 'the town... consists of chiefly one long spacious street well paved with pebbles, and the houses are many of them handsome and well built.' Up to the 17th century, these had been constructed from timber, but from the 18th century onwards brick became the more fashionable material, although many



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Old Grammar School
- The Olde White Harte in the 1900s
- Kinver High Street in the 1910s

older buildings were simply refronted. The best example in Kinver is Church Hill House in Church Hill, dated 1710 on the front elevation.

4.1.7 Under an Act of 1766 James Brindley built the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal. The Kinver stretch was opened in 1770 and the whole canal in 1772. The canal connects the River Severn at Stourport to Wolverhampton, where, later, the Shropshire Union Canal branched off, and then on to Tixall Wide, where it joins the Trent & Mersey Canal. The canal is some 60 kilometres long, with 45 locks. Between Kinver and Kidderminster the canal passes through the Cookley Tunnel, a dramatic piece of canal engineering.

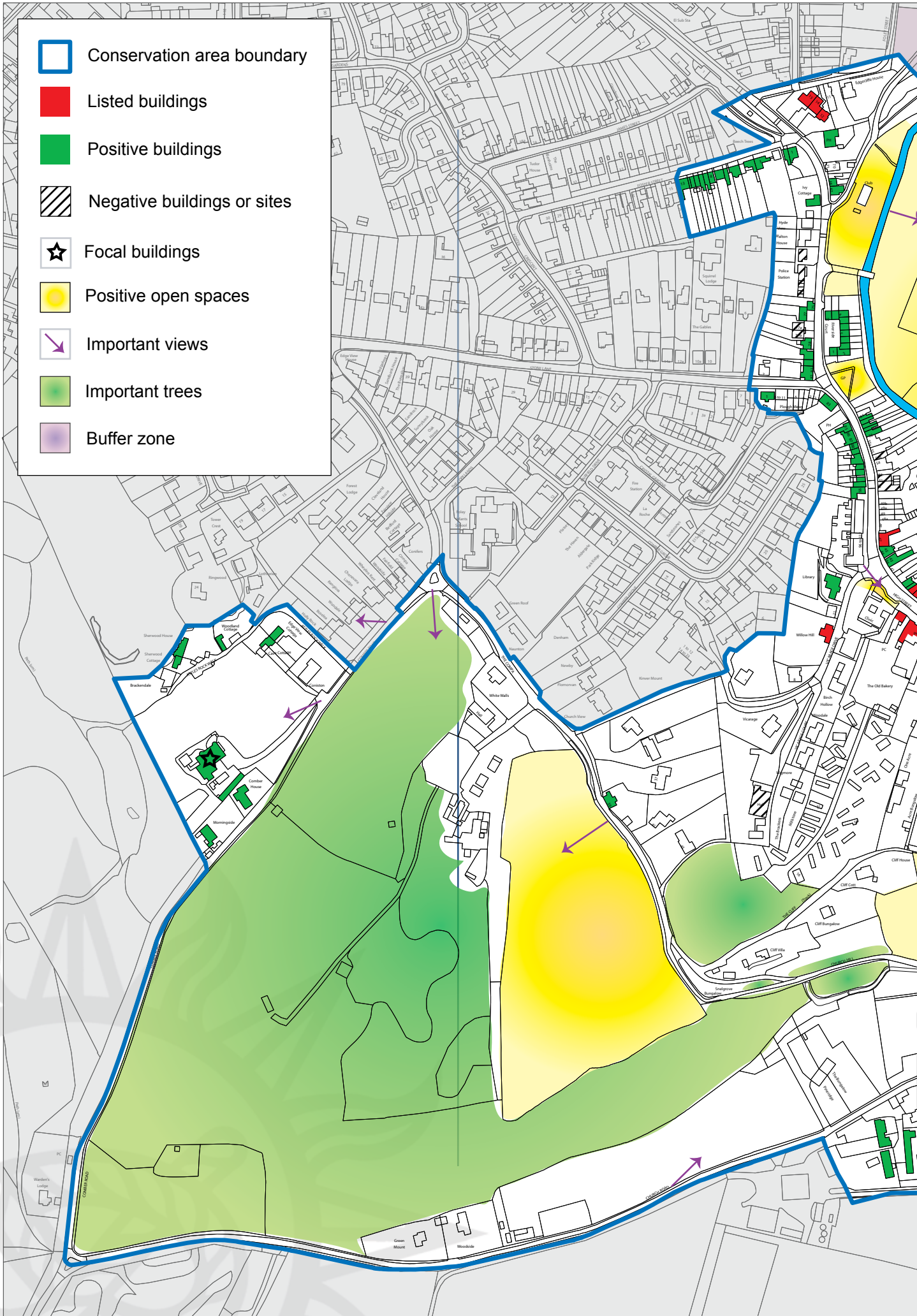
4.1.8 Kinver Mill is noted in 1783 but by this time part of the old corn mill had been converted into a rolling and slitting mill. In 1837 there were complaints about the noise from the newly installed hammer at Kinver Mill and fears about the effect of the vibration on the grammar school building. It later made screws, then spades and shovels, then other agricultural implements, and finally a waterworks was opened on part of the site in 1908. The rest of the mill was converted into a sawmill; electric power was substituted for water in 1929. The waterworks supplied mains water to the village, which had previously relied upon wells that had become very polluted. The mill was closed in 1978 and eventually demolished in 1980 to make way for an Old people's Home.

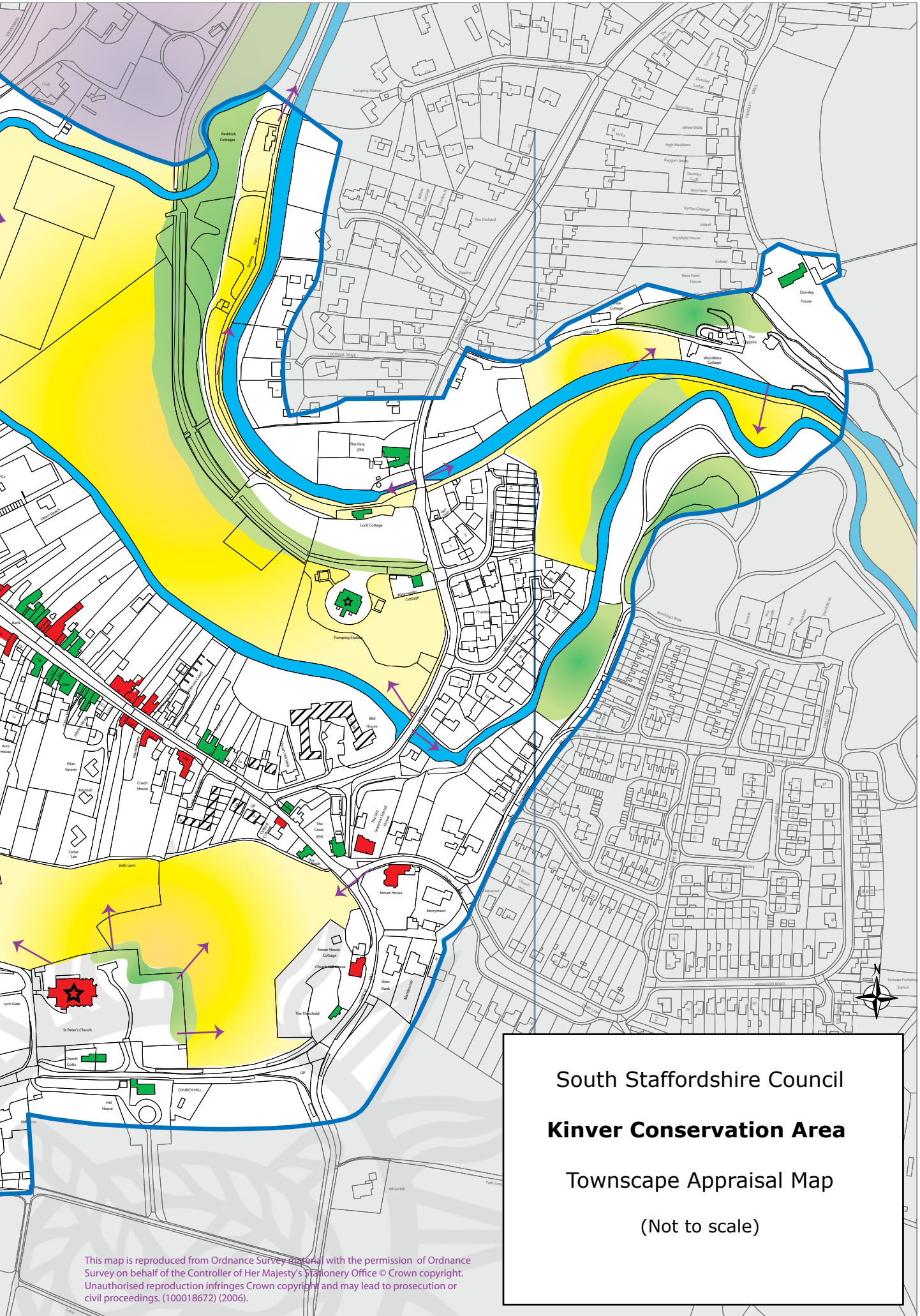
4.1.9 By 1802 the population of Kinver had risen to 1,165. In 1821 The Old Grammar School (which by this time was too small) became the master's house and a new school provided on land immediately to the northeast. By 1830 there were cottages around the junction of High Street, Mill Lane and Church Hill and also along the south side of Mill Lane where they included a rock house. In 1834 Kinver was described as '*A large and pleasant village, consisting of one long street, with many good houses, on the declivity of an eminence called Kinfare edge.*' By 1850 a new school with an attached schoolmaster's house was built in Enville Road to the designs of Thomas Smith of Stourbridge, and in 1873 another new school, for girls only, was provided on the corner of High Street and Vicarage Drive (now the library). By 1857 the growing population (3,551 by 1861) meant that



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Vine Inn, Mill Lane, from Kinver Lock
- The Old Pumping Station, Mill Lane
- Kinver Waterworks in a disused state





South Staffordshire Council
Kinver Conservation Area
 Townscape Appraisal Map
 (Not to scale)

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a new chapel had to be added onto St Peter's Church in the form of a north aisle. The church was thoroughly restored by J O Scott in 1884-5 to the designs of his father, Sir George Gilbert Scott.

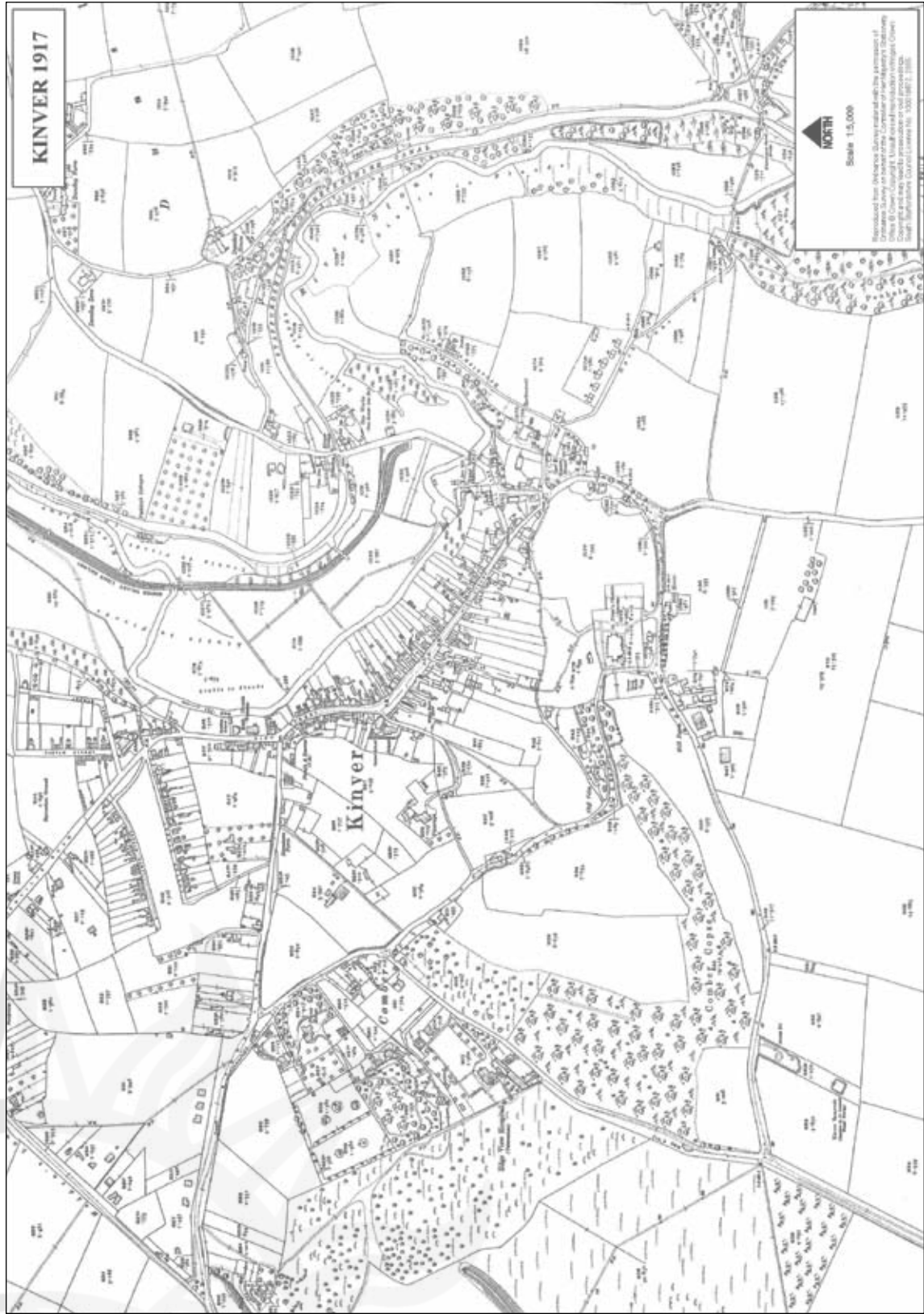
4.1.10 Some expansion of the village took place during the mid-19th century, and it is recorded that in 1851 there were 10 households living in the rock caves at Holy Austin Rock. Foster Street existed by 1851 and the parallel James Street by 1856, but by the 1870s the village suffered a decline as the screw works at Kinver Mill was closed and the iron industry generally struggled. By 1891 the population had fallen to 2,160 and many of the local inhabitants fell into dire poverty. However, towards the end of the 19th century, as the rest of the Black Country became increasingly industrialised, Kinver developed as a visitor centre, with workers seeking clean air and countryside walks. They also came to inspect the ancient rock houses, some of which are located on Kinver Edge (mainly around Holy Austin Rock) and were occupied until the 1950s. To provide accommodation for the many visitors, a temperance hotel (Edge View Hotel off Comber Road) was opened by 1900, but was closed within five years. This is now an Old Peoples' Home. In 1907 the National Trust was given a large tract of land on Kinver Edge, increased substantially by purchases of further adjoining land in 1964 and 1980. In 1916 The Old Grammar School finally closed and the 1832 building was eventually demolished in c1965.

4.1.11 An innovative electric light railway opened in 1901 and helped to further this local tourism industry, sometimes bringing on a Bank Holiday as many as 10,000 visitors a day into Kinver. The Kinver Light Railway (KLR) connected Kinver to Amblecote via Wollaston, a distance of about six kilometres, and from 1902 the Dudley, Stourbridge & District Electric Traction Company administered the line. To encourage visitors, the company branded Kinver as the 'Switzerland of the Midlands.' The track and rolling stock deteriorated badly after the Great War, and in the 1920s competition from the bus and motorcar made the line unviable – it finally closed in 1930. A curved section of raised track can still be discerned between the river and the canal, ending just to the west of Kinver Bridge on the site of the Pumping Station, which was built on the site of the tramway station in 1938.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Kinver High Street in the 1940s
- Edge View Hotel in the 1930s
- Kinver Tramway Station, Whit Bank Holiday 1925
- Inside the Tramway Station, c.1903



Image

- Kinver - Ordnance Survey Map 1917

4.1.12 In 1975 the north aisle in St Peter's Church was rebuilt in a modernist style, in keeping with the historic building, to designs by local architect, the late John Greaves Smith. He is remembered by a floor plaque immediately front and left of a beautiful glass screen – dedicated to the memory of Wilf Barlow – which he also designed. This is located in the arch between the chancel and the north chapel. In 1967 the former girls' National School in Vicarage Drive was converted into a branch of the county library. At about the same time, the Kinver Community Association opened a hall, the Edward Marsh Centre, close to Mill House on the east of the High Street.

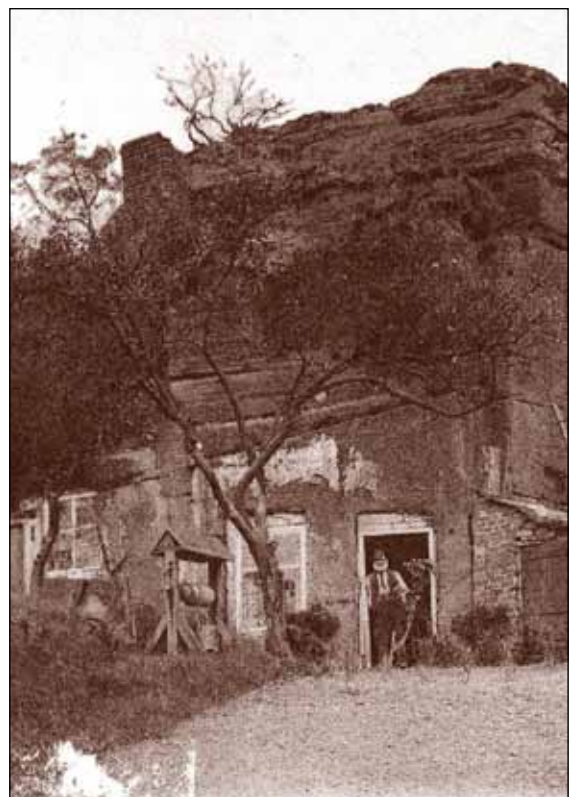
4.1.13 Both before and after World War II new Council housing was built in Kinver, such as the area to the south of White Hill. However the main expansion has occurred since the 1960s, when substantial amounts of new housing were added around the edges of the conservation area, although further development is now prevented by the designation of the surrounding area as Green Belt. Perhaps the greatest loss is the former waterworks and saw mills in Mill Lane, demolished in 1980 and replaced with an Old Peoples' Home.

4.2 Archaeology

4.2.1 Early inhabitants took advantage of the hilly topography that provided the opportunity of easier defence, so it not perhaps surprising that Mesolithic and Neolithic flints have been found in various parts of the parish. An Iron Age promontory fort (a Scheduled Monument) one of seven remaining such structures in Staffordshire and covering some eight acres, lies on Kinver Edge.

4.2.2 There is evidence of Romano-British settlement in the parish, and County Lane, which forms part of the eastern boundary of the parish, follows a line of a Roman road from Ashwood, in Kingswinford, to Droitwich. The Romans built a fort at nearby Greensforge, measuring 180 by 150 metres.

4.2.3 The HER (Historic Environment Record) for Kinver runs to 56 pages and records note that there are six dwellings cut out of stone at Holy Austin Rock, on Kinver Edge, which were inhabited until the mid-20th century.



Images from Top to Bottom

- The former Girls' National School in Vicarage Drive before conversion into the library
- Rock houses on Holy Austin Rock

5. Spatial analysis

5.1 Plan form & layout

5.1.1 The most significant feature of the layout of the Kinver Conservation Area is the long, thin High Street with the medieval burgage plots behind the buildings which line the street. However, because these buildings are almost continuous, there is little appreciation from the public domain of these late 13th century property boundaries, which remain remarkably intact. The plots end in the north on the bank of the River Stour, a convenient and typical arrangement which allowed for the use of the river as a drain, and to the south, at the base of the hill which leads up to the church. The relationship of river to High Street to hill is therefore not accidental. The slight widening of the High Street at its junction with Vicarage Drive may represent the location of a medieval market place.

5.1.2 It appears that there may have been a Celtic church on the site of St Peter's Church, in which case it would probably have had a circular enclosure around it, but the current boundary is likely to be a 19th century remodelling with a new stone wall to enclose the churchyard which was probably too small anyway for the expanding population. It is possible that there were further buildings around the early church where its naturally defensible position made it a safer location for dwellings, but there are no obvious remains and after the 13th century the main development of the village was further down the hill in the flat-bottomed valley. Development until the mid-18th century was almost totally confined to the High Street apart from the church and The Old Grammar School, a timber-framed house of the 17th century located just off Church Hill. This winds down the hill from the church in two directions, both lanes being narrow and incised into the hillside with exposed sandstone in places and overhanging trees creating a tunnel effect.

5.1.3 The coming of the canal in 1772 must have brought increased prosperity to the area, perhaps resulting in the construction of Church Hill House, and later Kinver House, on the outskirts of the village in a more rural location. It is notable that there are no truly grand houses in the village, as the occupants of Stourton Castle held the Manor. The canal follows the contour and therefore snakes around the valley of the River Stour, bending gently



Images from Top to Bottom

- The medieval burgage plots are accessed from the High Street
- Church Hill
- Lock Cottage

and providing attractive views in either direction. To the south of the canal, the raised bank of the former electric tramway is a slight feature, now somewhat overgrown with shrubs. This leads to the grounds of the water pumping station, which is next to an open field beside Lock Cottage, the former once being the site of the tramway station.

5.2 Landmarks, focal points & views

5.2.1 St Peter's Church is by far the most important landmark, sitting on a high hill above Kinver, with a distinctive square tower. Other than this, the remaining buildings in the conservation area are of a similar domestic scale apart from the former agricultural buildings at Hill Farm, in Church Road, and the Edge View Nursing Home, currently outside the conservation area. This is a substantial Gothic building dating to c.1900 and built as a hotel when the KLR opened to Kinver.

5.2.2 Surprisingly, Kinver has no 'village green' or other central place to act as a focal point within the built-up area. There are two public open spaces, Daneford Gardens and Jubilee Gardens, but they are both on the northern edge of the conservation area and rather out of the village centre. To celebrate the Millennium a new shelter with a clock tower was built on the junction of High Street and Vicarage Court, in front of the modern doctor's surgery. This functions to a degree as a focal point, but it sits rather unhappily on the site and does not relate to the other buildings or spaces in the proximity.

5.2.3 Kinver is notable however for the many fine views which can be found throughout the conservation area. The most impressive are from the churchyard over Kinver to the river and canal beyond, and indeed, good views can be found looking back toward the church, Kinver Edge and the thick cover of trees, which conceal the roads and buildings from below. There are very pleasant views along the canal in many locations, particularly from Kinver Bridge, but the River Stour is surprisingly hidden, the curves in the river and the thick tree cover concealing the river when viewed from Mill Lane Bridge.

5.2.4 The most significant views are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map (see pp. 26-27).



Images from Top to Bottom

- Daneford Gardens
- View along the canal
- Trees next to the pumping station

5.3 Open spaces, trees & landscape

5.3.1 The conservation area is notable for the tightness of the built form along the High Street, with just two public open spaces, Daneford Gardens and Jubilee Gardens, at its northern end. Both are in need of improvement. The High Street contrasts with the many areas of open space, which surround it on both sides.

5.3.2 To the north, the open spaces are provided by the fields between the river and the canal (though only visible from the houses and gardens which lie on the northern side of the High Street) and by the canal with its attractive sylvan setting. The pumping station sits on an open site allowing views from Mill Lane along the former tramway.

5.3.3 To the south, there are open fields (again in private ownership) between the rear boundaries of the High Street properties, viewed most attractively from the churchyard. Another field to the west of Church Hill as it drops down towards The Compa is used for sheep grazing. Horses can be seen in the fields alongside Church Road.

5.3.4 Trees make a major contribution to the character of the conservation area. The most impressive are in Comber Copse and in the National Trust-owned land in Kinver Edge, where native species – horse chestnuts, beeches and sycamore predominate. The second group of trees are located around the canal, particularly on the eastern side of the conservation area. The most significant trees are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map.

5.4 Public realm

5.4.1 The public realm – the pavements, footpaths, street surfaces, street lighting and signage – is generally very disappointing, although in places some good quality details do remain. Outside the shelter and clock tower in the centre of the village is an untidy mix of concrete 'tub' planters, a black plastic litterbin, a paladin bin, and busy street signage, all of it uncoordinated. These concrete planters continue along the High Street towards the Post Office and beyond. There is throughout the conservation area the usual plethora of untidy telegraph poles and overhead wires. In Daneford Gardens a black CCTV camera is very obtrusive.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Millennium shelter and clock tower
- View along High Street
- Daneford Gardens with prominent CCTV camera

5.4.2 **Paving:**

There are a few examples of the use of local paving materials, such as the stone setts in parts of the pavement between the clinic and Kinver Post Office in the High Street, but most of the village centre has been repaved using black tarmacadam or concrete slabs with thin (150mm) sandstone kerbing and parallel corresponding row of Staffordshire Blue paviers. Crossovers are marked by concrete paviers or Tegula blockwork. Some of the outlying lanes, such as Comber Road and Church Hill have no pavements at all, which actually suits the rural character of these streets. Some traffic calming has been achieved in the High Street by raised tables in the same location, and by speed humps further west along Enville Road.

5.4.3 **Street lighting:**

In the main part of the High Street, street lighting is provided by wall-hung modern fittings, which provide a wash of light after dark. Otherwise white steel modern fitments provide lighting. There are some Victorian style cast iron street lamps in St Peter's Churchyard, which may be original.



Images from Top Right to Bottom Left

- Historic paving on south side of High Street
- Historic light in St Peter's Churchyard
- Church Hill

6. The buildings of the Conservation Area

6.1 Building types

6.1.1 The highest concentration of historic buildings in the Kinver Conservation Area is in the eastern and central sections of the High Street. All of these were built as residences, at the front of a medieval burgage plot, and face directly onto the street without any front gardens. They appear to date to the 15th century or later, are mainly two or three storeys high, and are built from timber framing, stone or brick. Many have later shop fronts, with some well-detailed late 19th or early 20th examples (see 6.8 Historic Shop fronts). The only properties of any size are The Olde White Harte Inn and Cliff Side, No.125 High Street. However, both of these retain a domestic scale and were clearly originally built as houses. Many of these properties have carriage ways marked by double timber boarded gates, although occasionally the openings are left unblocked, providing glimpses of the long, thin burgage plots beyond. This is mainly on the north (River Stour) side of the High Street.

6.1.2 Further west along the High Street, there are some good examples of mid to late-19th century cottages and modest houses, again facing the street and tight up to the back of the pavement. Towards the edge of the conservation area, No.77 is unlisted but has 17th century features and sits back from the street with a small front garden. However, this part of the High Street apparently lies beyond the extent of the medieval burgage plots so probably represents later expansion of the settlement. Finally, at the end of the designated area is a very large Victorian Gothic building, which sits up on the bank overlooking the street. This is the largest building in the conservation area apart from St Peter's Church and has now been converted to residential use.

6.1.3 Outside the more urban core of the village, the historic buildings are mainly detached cottages or houses, the more prestigious of which lie in the Church Hill/Dark Lane area and are listed. Close to the canal, the pumping station of 1938 is a large red brick and stone building with Art Deco details. Lock Cottage, on the towpath, is the only building with obvious links to the canal although the windows facing the canal are now blocked up and the impression is that it is now a private house.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Timber framed houses on north side of High Street
- Former Old Foley School
- Lock Cottage from towpath
- Trinity Court

6.1.4 St Peter's Church can be found to the south and up the steep hill towards Kinver Edge. This is the largest and most important building in the conservation area, with the former Hill Farm barns beyond along Church Road. These four buildings have all been converted into houses.

6.1.5 Although modern, Trinity Court - an almshouse-style development in the High Street - is worthy of special mention because it has been so well designed with Gothic-style windows and gables, and because of their pretty front gardens.

6.2 Listed buildings

6.2.1 A listed building is one that is included on the government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Law protects these buildings and consent is required from South Staffordshire Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. Further information can be found in South Staffordshire Council's Local Plan, adopted in December 1996

6.2.2 There are 27 listed buildings or structures in the conservation area. They are all listed Grade II apart from St Peter's Church, which is Grade I. Most were built as houses, some of which have now been converted into shops with storage or residential accommodation above. Other types of listed buildings include a former school now converted into houses (Nos. 12, 13 and 14 Enville Road) of 1851; and a K6 telephone kiosk in the High Street outside the Post Office.

6.2.3 St Peter's Church is the only listed building, which is entirely built from stone. Otherwise the listed buildings are timber framed (c.15th to 17th century) or brick, stucco or painted render (18th and 19th centuries).

6.2.4 The earliest identifiable secular buildings are No. 112 High Street (next to The Olde White Harte Inn), which dates to the 15th or possibly the 16th century and retains some very early timber framing, and Nos. 18-20 High Street that are known from dendrochronology to date to 1564. There are other examples of early timber-framed buildings of the 16th and 17th century, where the framing was infilled with wattle and daub, brick infill panels or has been rendered over (e.g. The Olde White Harte Inn, High



Images from Top to Bottom

- Listed K6 telephone kiosk outside the Post Office
- No. 112 High Street
- No. 17 High Street
- Clifford Cottage, Church Hill

Street; No. 17 High Street; No. 112 High Street; The Old Grammar School, Dark Lane; and Clifford Cottage, Church Hill). After about 1700 brick, stucco and render, lined out to replicate stone, became fashionable (Church Hill House, Kinver House, Rockmount, No. 21 High Street; Nos. 123, 124 and 125 High Street, Nos. 38 and 39 High Street; Nos. 28 and 29 High Street; and Willow Hill in Vicarage Drive). More decorative is the mid-19th century Old Foley School, now Nos. 13, 14 and 15 Enville Road, built from red brick with stone dressings in the Gothic style.

6.2.5 Most of these buildings were listed in 1953 or at the listing resurvey in 1985. A number have been 'spot listed' since. However it is noticeable that there appear to be many further buildings in the conservation area that might merit listing and one of the recommendations in the Management Plan is that the Council instigate action on this issue.

6.3 Locally listed buildings

6.3.1 The Council is compiling a Local List for South Staffordshire and is encouraging nominations from the public. The following have already been suggested for Kinver:

In the Kinver Conservation Area:

- The pumping station, Mill Lane;
- Nos. 120-121 High Street;
- The Constitutional Club, High Street;
- The Public Library in Vicarage Drive;
- Selected properties between Nos. 2a and 47 High Street;
- The Vine Inn.

Not in the Kinver Conservation Area:

- Selected houses in Foster Street, especially No. 24;
- Selected houses in James Street, especially Nos. 4 and 7.

6.3.2 Some of these have been identified as 'positive' buildings (see below) as part of this appraisal. It might well be that the Council adds further buildings to the Local List, in addition to those already suggested, once this appraisal has been formally adopted. This issue is considered in the Management Plan.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Nos. 120 - 123 High Street
- The Constitutional Club, High Street
- No. 4 Foster Street
- The Royal Exchange

6.4 Positive buildings

6.4.1 In addition to listed buildings, the Conservation Area contains a large number of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to its character and have townscape merit. These are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map as 'positive buildings' and in many cases they are also proposed for inclusion on the Local List. This follows advice provided in English Heritage guidance on conservation area character appraisals, and in paragraph HE10.1 of PPS5, both of which stress the importance of identifying and protecting such buildings.

6.4.2 The criteria used for selection of positive buildings are those set out in Appendix 1 of English Heritage's Guidance on conservation area appraisals (2006). Where a building has been adversely affected by modern changes and restoration is either impractical or indeed, not possible, they are excluded.

6.4.3 Of special note are:

Public houses:

- Royal Exchange Public House, High Street;
- Plough and Harrow Public House, High Street;
- The Cross Public House, Church Hill.

Good quality mid-19th c terraced houses:

- Nos. 56-60 High Street;
- Nos. 85-95 High Street;
- Nos. 117/118 (Post Office) High Street;
- Nos. 120-123 High Street.

Early houses or cottages:

- Greystead, No. 3 High Street c.1850;
- No. 26 High Street (?17th century);
- Church Cottages, Church Hill (NB exposed timber frame at back- 17th c);
- No. 39 The Compa c.1800.

Individual buildings:

- Pumping Station, Mill Lane;
- Waterworks Cottage, Mill Lane;
- Lock Cottage, Kinver Lock;
- Kinver Library.



Images from Top to Bottom

- No. 56 - 60 High Street
- Greystead, No. 3 High Street
- No. 39 The Compa
- Pumping Station, Mill Lane

6.5 Negative buildings

6.5.1 The Conservation Area also contains a number of unlisted buildings that make no positive contribution to its character. Some of these are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map as 'negative buildings or sites'. This is in accordance with guidance within PPS5, which stresses the importance of dealing with such buildings through the planning process. Paragraph HE9.5 in the latter notes that:

Not all elements of a ... Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance.... Where an element does not positively contribute to its significance, local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of enhancing or better revealing the significance of the ... Conservation Area

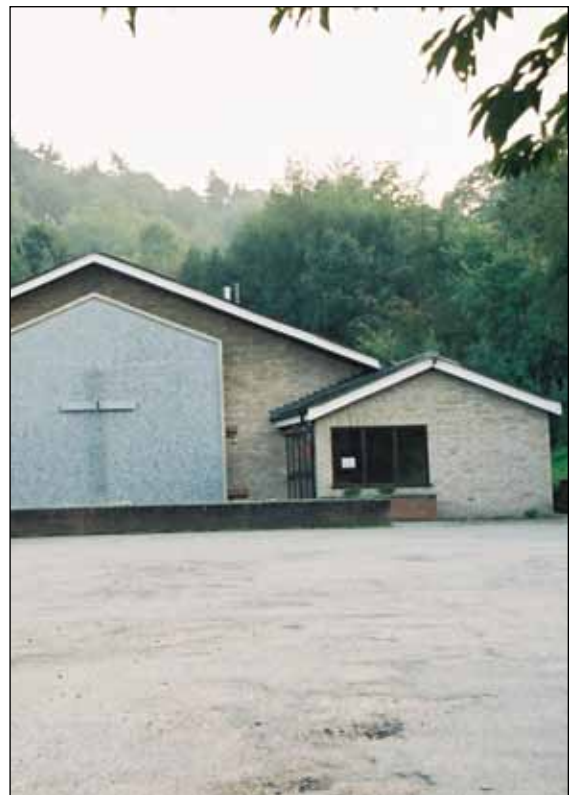
6.5.2 The criteria used for the selection of negative buildings or sites are derived from those set out in Appendix 1 of English Heritage's *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (August 2006). This sets out 10 questions regarding the characteristics of unlisted buildings in a conservation area. Whereas a positive answer to any question can provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, by deduction, a building or site which fails to score any positive answers to the same questions can be regarded as detracting from the overall character and integrity of a conservation area and to be having a negative impact upon it.

6.5.3 The negative buildings and sites identified in Kinver are:

- High Street: Police Station, Nos. 1, 2a, 50, 51a, 54a, 77a and 77b, 129, 130, 131, The Burgesses;
- Mill Lane: Mill House, Kenrose Mill, Mill Fields;
- Vicarage Court: Church Hall.

6.6 Neutral buildings

6.6.1 In addition to listed, positive and negative buildings, the conservation area contains a large number of *unlisted* buildings that make neither a positive nor a negative contribution to its character – their effect is regarded as neutral. These are not identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map in any special way.



Images from Top to Bottom

- No. 50 High Street
- Church Hall: Vicarage Drive

6.7 Building materials & local details

6.7.1 The earlier buildings, dating from the 17th century, are timber-framed with either wattle and daub or lime plaster infill panels. Notable examples include Nos. 17 and 19 High Street, which have a projecting two-storey front porch. The Olde White Harte Inn is also possibly 17th century, with some internal timbering of this period, but subsequent alterations have provided a more 19th century appearance on the five gables that face the street. The Old Grammar School in Dark Lane is the finest example of its type in the conservation area, with oriel windows and close studding of the 16th century. Nos. 123-124 High Street are a unique example of a late 17th or early 18th century brick building, facing the street, but with Dutch gables to either end gable. Throughout this period handmade clay roof tiles appear to have the universal roofing material, and indeed they continued to be until the mid-19th century when slate began to be brought in from Wales. There are no completely stone buildings apart from the church, as clearly the local sandstone was far too soft for building purposes apart from poorer quality buildings such as barns and storehouses. The Nook in Church Hill is partly built from sandstone but has been overbuilt in brick, probably in the 19th century. However, some grey limestone is used for walling in Comber Road, which presumably was brought in from further afield. Brick making in the area appears to commence with the establishment of a brick kiln at Checkhill, near Kinver, in 1671, and in 1674 the lessee received payment for 13,000 new bricks.

6.7.2 After the 18th century brown brick was more common, with little decoration apart from a dentil eaves cornice, steeply pitched roofs and axial end chimneystacks. Windows were casement or sashes. There are several examples in the conservation area, such as No. 39 Church Hill, which are not listed, possibly because of modern alterations. Church Hill House is by contrast the most prestigious Georgian building in the conservation area with fine sash windows, moulded red brick, a well-detailed doorcase and steeply pitched tiled roof. Also listed, but faced in painted brickwork, Cliff Side, No. 125 High Street, has a variety of sash windows, stone lintels with key stones, a small eaves pediment marking the central bay which steps



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Old Grammar School
- Nos. 123 - 124 High Street
- The Nook, Church Hill

forward very slightly, and a deeply moulded eaves cornice. Regrettably, the door case has been altered but the six-panelled painted timber door is probably original.

6.7.3 During the early 19th century, slightly better quality details became common, with sash windows, curved or flat stone or brick window heads, and panelled doors. Examples include Nos. 56-60 High Street, Nos. 85-95 High Street, and Nos. 117/118 (Post Office) High Street. Riverside, No. 21 High Street is c.1820 with a fine red brick façade in the classical Georgian tradition, with multi-paned sash windows and a steeply pitched tiled roof.

6.7.4 As previously mentioned, there are many early 19th century houses in the conservation area with a dentil eaves cornice, and this does appear to be a local detail. An example is Nos. 56-60 High Street, which also has multi-paned sash windows (although none appear to be original), brown-red brick, and slated roofs (probably originally tiled) above. This terrace also has a eaves cornice picked out in brick dentils, as does Mill House, an unlisted house next to Jubilee Gardens, with the same brown-red brick, sash windows (replacements) and a very similar dentil eaves cornice.

6.7.5 There are several buildings in the conservation area, which appear to relate to the period before the Great War when visitors flocked to Kinver Edge on the KLR, these include the Kinver Constitutional Club of c.1905, with its Tudorbethan details; and the Edge View Home, currently outside the conservation area.

6.7.6 The dominant red brick and white-painted render or stucco provides colour in the built-up areas. Roofs are usually mid- to dark brown flat clay tile, or grey Welsh slate. Windows, doors and shop fronts are painted a variety of colours, usually not particularly obtrusive.

6.7.7 Boundaries are very mixed with few historic boundaries visible in the High Street because the buildings lie next to the pavement. Beyond the High Street, there are a variety of traditional brick walls with railings (Church Hill House), although simple walls with brick coping predominate. A good example is outside Nos. 12-14 Enville Road, the former school, which retains a very fine brick wall



Images from Top to Bottom

- Cliffside, High Street
- No. 85 - 95 High Street
- Mill House, 67 High Street

with a blue clay coping. A stonewall outside The Old Grammar School has been heavily restored but also retains a well-detailed stone coping. There is also a variety of modern timber fencing, not all of it appropriate in a rural location. A simple painted timber palisade fence outside The Threshold in Church Hill is in keeping, but other examples of more 'fussy' detailing, such as the curved top to the boarded timber fence to one side of White Walls in The Compa, are not. Otherwise hedging, shrubbery and trees create boundaries on the outskirts of the village.

6.8 Historic shop fronts

6.8.1 Kinver is notable for its surviving historic shop fronts, of which the following are the most complete or the most interesting:

- No. 26 High Street (no name);
- No. 37 (The Butchery – modest size);
- Nos. 28 and 29 (Midcalf Nicholls and Adam Myers);
- No. 33 (Just Petals);
- No. 39 now a house (small shop front now living room);
- No. 40 small shop front now living room;
- Nos. 45 and 46 (Omnipresent);
- No. 47 (Old House Tea Rooms and Upton Estates)
- The Post Office, No.118 High Street.

6.8.2 Historic shop fronts are notable for the survival of original details, such as moulded fascias, pilasters, stall risers, glazing bards and original entrances. Policies to protect them are already included in the Local Plan 1996 Policy BE14: Retention of shop fronts.

6.8.3 There are four 'Character Areas' in the Kinver Conservation Area, based on topography, buildings, uses and landscape. These are:

- Comber Copse and St Peter's Church;
- Church Hill and Dark Lane;
- The High Street;
- River Stour and the canal.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Railings outside Church Hill House
- The Threshold, Church Hill
- No. 33 High Street
- No. 45 & 46 High Street

7. Character areas

7.1 Area 1: Comber Copse and St Peter's Church

Key positives:

- Hilltop location with views over Kinver;
- Rural qualities with former farm buildings, winding narrow lanes and few buildings;
- Thick woodland and open fields used for grazing sheep and horses;
- St Peter's Church sits on top of the hill;
- Pretty graveyard with attractive lychgate, cast iron lights, and monuments;
- A few historic buildings, most notably Church Cottages.

Key negatives:

- Railings removed from churchyard wall;
- Conversion of former barns at Hill Farm has resulted in a loss of rural character, with new boundaries and parking areas;
- Use of Leylandii trees as tree screening;
- Blue litter bins in Comber Road;
- Dispersed 1960s development along The Cliff;
- Use of modern materials and details on some of the positive buildings e.g. Cliff Villa, The Cliff;
- 1960s and later houses along The Compa, including a number of bungalows;
- Non traditional boundaries e.g. Wavy-topped wooden fencing to White Walls, The Compa; metal gates and railings to Amber, The Compa.

7.2 Area 2: Church Hill and Dark Lane

Key positives:

- Winding, hilly lanes with rural qualities;
- Mainly detached historic buildings set in spacious gardens;
- The Old Grammar School is the most significant historic building, with its exposed timber framing (16th century);
- High quality 18th and 19th century listed buildings – Church Hill House, Kinver House, and Rockmount;
- Traditional cast iron railing and gates to Church Hill House;
- Clifford Cottage with exposed timber-framing;
- The Cross Public House is a popular local facility;
- Former rock houses in The Holloway, where the lane cuts through the underlying sandstone;
- Significant trees enclose Church Hill and constrain views.



Images from Top to Bottom

- View over Kinver
- Monument in St Peter's Churchyard
- Converted farm buildings off Church Hill
- Metal gates and railings to Amber, The Compa

Key negatives:

- Use of Tegula concrete blocks to form driveway to Kinver House Cottage;
- Modern double garage to side of Church Hill House.

7.3 Area 3: The High Street

Key positives:

- Curving main street lined with a variety of mainly historic buildings;
- Varied roof lines and eaves heights provides visual interest in views along the street;
- Survival of medieval burgage plots (though largely hidden from view);
- Former carriage entrances suggest existence of back yards;
- Some historic buildings with exposed timber-framing add to the interest of the buildings;
- The Olde White Harte Inn is a focal building;
- Views up to St Peter's Church and, in places, towards the River Stour and the surrounding water meadows;
- Trinity Court is a good example of modern development;
- Trees and public gardens;
- A SPAR and Co-op Supermarket provide a useful local facility;
- Survival of a number of well detailed historic shop fronts;
- Wide selection of local shops with popular on-street parking.

Key negatives - Spaces:

- Poor quality paving;
- Steel street lights in places;
- Telegraph poles and overhead wires in places;
- Shelter and clock tower is surrounded by poor quality features: CCTV pole, concrete planters, plastic litter bins, steel streetlight, and a multitude of signs attached to the streetlight;
- Daneford Gardens and Jubilee Gardens both require enhancement;
- No central green or communal area apart from the shelter and clock tower;
- Loss of sense of enclosure with modern buildings set back from historic building line, often with parking bays;
- The Burgesses is a 1960s development of bungalows, which does not relate to the historic form of development along the High Street.



Images from Top to Bottom

- View from Dark Lane
- Former rock house in The Holloway
- High Street looking east
- View to St Peter's Church

Key negatives - Buildings:

- Use of modern materials and details on many of the unlisted positive buildings;
- Poor quality buildings and shopfronts especially between No. 48 and 55 High Street;
- A number of buildings are empty with 'To Let' signs and there are signs that some of the businesses are struggling;
- Some buildings require repair;
- Satellite dishes on front elevations e.g. No. 81 High Street;
- No. 58 High Street has been extended at the back, resulting in the ridge being built over;
- 1960s doctors' surgery behind the Clock Tower is a single storey building which does not relate to the historic High Street in any way;
- Nos. 123/124 high Street (listed Grade II) both have modern windows;
- No. 125 (Cliffside) is a Grade II listed building which requires repairs;
- Need for an assessment of all of the historic buildings for local and statutory listing.

Key negatives - Comber Grove:

- The 1960s bungalows that face the road are of no special interest.

Key negatives - Vicarage Court:

- Poor quality 1960s village hall, with large car park.

7.4 Area 4: River Stour and the canal**Key positives:**

- Attractive green spaces with trees, river and canal;
- Colourful narrow boats and tow path;

Trees & fields:

- Remains of former tramway embankment;
- Pumping Station of 1938, with its adjoining house;
- A variety of views along the canal, all of interest;
- Views past the pumping station to the meadows beyond;
- The Vine is a popular public house with a large garden overlooking the towpath and canal.

**Images from Top to Bottom**

- Poor quality paving in High Street
- Jubilee Gardens requires improvements
- Over dominant signage in the High Street
- Doctor's surgery in the High Street

Key negatives:

- Dangerous traffic around Kinver Bridge;
- Modern housing development in Mill Fields and Kenrose Mill;
- Mill House has replaced the former mill (demolished in 1980).



Images Clockwise from Top to Bottom

- Canal and pumping station
- The Vine Inn
- Horses grazing alongside The Vine Inn
- View from Church Road over woodland

8. Issues

8.1 Key issues

8.1.1 From the identification of 'Key Negatives' in the preceding chapter, the following are considered to be the principal issues in the Kinver Conservation Area:

Landscape & setting:

- The protection of the conservation area's setting and views;
- The protection of amenity space within and on the edges of the conservation area;
- The protection and enhancement of the existing trees and landscape.

Pressure for new development:

- Erosion of the existing rural qualities of the conservation area.

Maintenance & improvement of the urban village centre:

- Better tourism facilities are needed;
- Poor quality public realm;
- The need for improvements to street signs and street lighting;
- The quality of the pavements;
- The need for other highway improvements including signage.

Shops & commercial premises:

- The protection of historic shop fronts and the control of new shop fronts;
- The need for improved advertisement control.

Enhancement opportunities:

- Clock Tower;
- Daneford Gardens;
- Jubilee Gardens.

Building specific:

- Additions to the statutory and local lists;
- Buildings in need of repair and the potential for grant aid;
- The control of unlisted buildings.



Images from Top to Bottom

- New development in Kinver has started to erode its rural qualities
- Improvements needed to the village centre
- Protect historic shopfronts like these (No. 30 High Street)

8.2 Conservation Area boundary review:

8.2.1 A number of boundary revisions would improve the extent to which the designation accurately reflects the special character of Kinver. These are described in greater detail in the Management Proposals, but are summarised below:

Additions:

- Edge View Nursing Home and Astles Rock Walk;
- Foster Street (one side only);
- Add Dunsley House, Gibraltar.

Deletions:

- Farmyard to Hill Farm;
- Delete buildings on north side of The Compa;
- Delete bungalows in Comber Grove.

8.2.2 Also, the identification of a 'Buffer Zone' which recognises the impact that development in these areas could have on the neighbouring designated conservation area:

Buffer zone:

- Open space to north of Kinver football pitch, with its play area and bowling green.

8.2.3 A further proposed change is suggested, so that the area along the canalside is made into one continuous canal conservation area:

- Consider transferring the canalside area to the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Cottages in Astles Rock Walk
- No. 1 Stone Lane
- Buffer zone: Play area and bowling green
- Canalside area – recommended for transfer to the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal CA

Appendix 2: Retained Local Plan policies

- BE7** Conservation Areas – Planning Applications
- BE9** Conservation Areas – Demolition Prior to Redevelopment
- BE12** Conservation Areas – Removal of Intrusive Features
- BE14** Retention of Shop Fronts
- BE15** Replacement of Shop Fronts
- BE16** Security Screens
- BE17** Internally Illuminated Signs
- BE18** New Advertisements
- BE19** Existing Signs
- BE20** Reuse and Adaptation of Rural Buildings
- BE26** New Development – Design Criteria
- BE28** Protection of Ground Water Resources
- C1** Reuse of Rural Buildings
- C2** Use of Agricultural Land
- C3** Development on Agricultural Land
- C4** Dwellings in the Countryside
- C8** Extensions
- C13** Expansion of Businesses
- GB1** Green Belt (General)
- H12** Local Needs Assessment Criteria
- OC1** Open Countryside – Genera



Appendix 3: Bibliography

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Notes





**Kinver Conservation Area Management Plan
Adopted 11 November 2010**



South Staffordshire Council