

6.0 Summary

- 6.0.1 The Parish of Kimbolton is a diverse and, in the main, a deeply tranquil rural area which retains much of its traditional historic character.
- 6.0.2 The landscape is in two distinct parts – the central and eastern part of the Parish is made up of gently rolling elevated countryside which rises steeply out of the Herefordshire lowlands and provides a number of spectacular far-reaching views to the north and north-west.
- 6.0.3 Within this area, the dense network of fields are enclosed by well established hedgerows, which together with areas of ancient woodland and native broadleaf woodland, give an extensive tree cover. There are significant concentrations of traditional orchards which are important habitats for a number of species including beetles and bats.
- 6.0.4 The western parts of the Parish are low-lying and contain important transport routes linking north Herefordshire with Shropshire. Here, the impact of modern farming practices and development pressures is more obvious, reflected in the open and ‘damaged’ character of the landscape, and the presence of large commercial buildings.
- 6.0.5 The area as a whole has a low density of development with Kimbolton village the most significant settlement and two small hamlets of Hamnish and the Hundred. Outside these settlements there are scattered groups of houses and historic farmsteads. The majority of buildings are of traditional sandstone rubble construction of a domestic scale.
- 6.0.6 Kimbolton village is an attractive and distinctive settlement, having a medieval core reflected in significant groupings of historic buildings, historic field patterns and archaeological remains. The village is surrounded by rising land and the setting is very sensitive to new development.

7.0 Recommendations

7.0.1 The Neighbourhood Plan should seek to maximise the following opportunities to maintain the distinctive character of the Parish, and thus:

- Support proposals which protect and enhance the traditional rural landscape of the Parish while recognising the varied and distinctive character of specific sub-areas. Particular priority should be given to protecting the setting, tranquillity and dark skies of the area as a whole, and maximising opportunities for landscape restoration and enhancement along the A49 corridor and land to its west.
- This to be achieved in the context of the need to support a working landscape that provide essential food, homes and recreational opportunities.
- Encourage the management and enhancement of the landscape by supporting proposals which maintain or restore hedgerow boundaries particularly where they reinforce historic field patterns.
- Support the expansion, restoration and creation of traditional orchards and ancient and broadleaf woodland, so that extensive connected wildlife habitats are created in accordance with the landscape character.
- Building on the findings of this Study and assisting implementation of the recommendations, consider the preparation of a Parish Biodiversity Action Plan to identify key species, habitats, ecosystems and guide future management.
- Conserve and enhance our understanding of key historic features, including Bache Camp, the Roman Road, Leominster Canal and the medieval settlement of Kimbolton.
- Conserve and manage the rich architectural legacy and distinct pattern of historic dispersed settlement which extends from scattered settlements, the two small hamlets, farmsteads, traditional reddish-brown sandstone buildings to occasional and distinctive timber-framed buildings. This Report should form the starting point for the identification of heritage assets for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan and potential inclusion in a 'Local List'.
- To protect and enhance the distinctive character and setting of the village of Kimbolton and supporting appropriate new development which meets the housing, employment, commercial, recreational and day-to-day service needs of the community.
- The Neighbourhood Plan should contain policies which require planning applications and other development proposals and projects to consider how they contribute to the above issues, including consideration of the findings of this Study.