

The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide

A Supplementary Planning Document

Adopted

2nd May 2017

Volume 1: Setting the Scene of Cheshire East



Quality Checked*		e*SCAPE u r b a n i s t s	
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Foreword



Cllr Ainsley Arnold, Housing & Planning
Portfolio Holder

Residents of Cheshire East are fortunate to live in a fantastic location, where picturesque market towns nestle within unspoilt countryside. It is a very special and unique place that we have a duty and privilege to protect and we must do so both for our current and future residents.

Its character and attractiveness underpins the quality of life that we as Cheshire East residents enjoy, that visitors choose to come and visit and that businesses choose to locate to, to invest in order to create jobs and wealth. However, we are also victims of our own success as these special ingredients form a honey pot that attracts new inward investment which, in turn, contributes toward increasing pressure for significant change in the future.

Whilst development and progress are all part of our changing world, we need to ensure that today's unprecedented pace and extent of change is not at the expense of the quality of life for our communities or the intrinsic attractiveness of the area's environment, both for the sake of current and future generations.

All too often, development in the recent past has detracted from rather than added to the character of Cheshire East. If this process continues, the essence of what Cheshire East is, and what we have come to take for granted, will be harmed forever. We need to ensure therefore that new development is positively designed to reflect the character of the Borough. New developments need to harmonise rather than jar with the settlements from which they evolve. Furthermore, they need to be well designed to suit current and future needs and to provide liveable homes and neighbourhoods and high quality work places.

This Design Guide, as part of a toolkit of measures, will ensure that developers have the opportunity to understand the character of Cheshire East and what they need to do to fully appreciate that and therefore design appropriately for the part of the Borough in which the site is located. It also sets out the principles and requirements that underpin well designed places.

The Council welcomes new development that is located appropriately and which responds positively to and reinforces the existing character of a place. But, it will also oppose development that is not good enough and which fails to take the opportunities to reinforce that sense of place or improve the way it functions. We therefore challenge developers to ensure they deliver new development that will be considered good enough to approve.



Sean Hannaby, Director of Planning &
Sustainable Development

Introduction

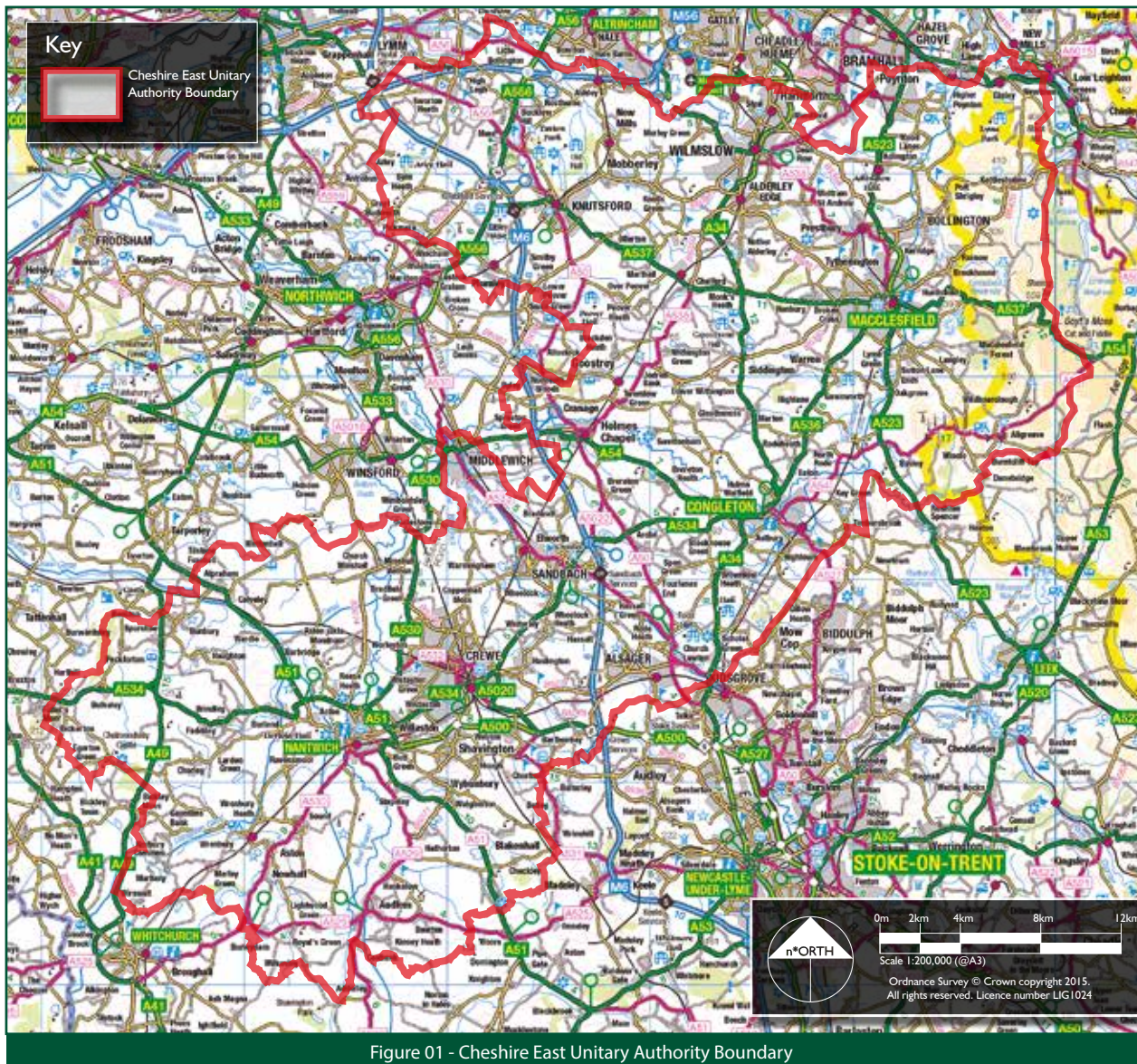


Figure 01 - Cheshire East Unitary Authority Boundary

- 01 Since the Second World War, this country has seen extensive urban development and renewal. Further development is required however, to meet the needs of a growing population. Whilst there are exceptions, a great deal of this past development lacks local identity or any 'Sense of Place'.
- 02 We have created places that have watered down the character and variety within our town and villagescapes, undermining the remarkable qualities of our area by creating places with little or no regard for local context and that look like anywhere else in the country rather than being specific to here.
- 03 Further still, these places also do not function well for people, creating neighbourhoods which are banal, inhuman in character and scale, poorly connected and also dominated by traffic and parking. We can and must do better to prevent the continued decline of Cheshire East's specific local identity.
- 04 'Sense of Place' is an emotional response to the form, layout, materials, spaces and landscape of a settlement. Post war development, in the main, forgot the need to provide that emotional dimension. It must therefore be made clear that post war developments on the fringes of settlements are not appropriate justification for building more of that same 'anywhere vernacular'.
- 05 There is also established evidence that achieving good quality design is not only beneficial for developers as a business model but also provides significant benefits for the occupants and communities within which developments takes place. It is in everyone's interests therefore that any development that occurs is of high quality.

- 06 The purpose therefore of this residential design guidance is to provide developers, their agents and design teams with a framework of advice to aid them in developing designs which will:
- Be responsive to the context and environments into which they are set;
 - Follow a logical design approach, underpinned by Building for Life 12 (BfL12), which in turn is illustrated and justified in the application through the Design and Access Statement and/or Design Codes if so required;
 - Provide information and guidance on the requirements of design related to highways, environment and drainage consultees to ensure their concerns and issues do not get repeated project by project;
 - Sets out minimum standards for design which the authority will expect to see delivered on development projects in the district;
 - Provide developers with a clear steer on what Cheshire East expects of them in terms of design related information submitted as part of a planning application;
 - Provide reassurance to existing communities that development within their settlements and neighbourhoods will be delivered to a high standard, and;
 - Ensure the delivery of quality developments in Cheshire East which reflects the prestigious and much sought after location within the wider North West of England.

07 Sustainable Development is at the heart of Cheshire East's Design Policies and the authority's overarching corporate philosophy. There are three strands to sustainable development in Cheshire East:

Social

- Better Quality of Life for the people of Cheshire East
- Identity – Maintaining our sense of self
- Improved well-being and greater resilience

Economic

- Prosperous local economy and improved prospects and opportunities
- Capitalising on Cheshire East's strategic location and opportunity
- Adding Value – new development adding to the success of the area

Environment

- Conserving our rich and varied historic and natural environment for the future
- Managing finite resources and being able to respond to our changing climate
- Local Distinctiveness – ensuring new development respects and reinforces the 'Place DNA' of Cheshire East

“We cannot afford to accept poorly designed housing that does not contribute to the area in a positive way, now and in the future.”

Cllr Ainsley Arnold, Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder

The Cheshire East Design Tool Kit

08 In order to elevate the quality of design in the Borough, Cheshire East Council will be developing and employing a number of design tools which will be underpinned by design policies in the Local Plan set out later in this guide for reference. The tools will aim to not only improve design quality as described above, but also enable communities and elected members to better participate and articulate design concerns through the planning process, provide a mechanism to recognise, support and celebrate good design in the planning process and resist design that is poorly considered and not of the quality expected in the Borough.

09 The tool kit will consist of the following elements:

- Local Design Review Panel
- Proactive Use of Building for Life 12
- Design Codes
- The Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Local Design Review

10 A local design review panel of design and development experts from the North West with local connections and knowledge will be established. It will also be observed by local councillors. Projects can be put forward by developers or recommended for review by the Local Planning Authority and the panel's recommendations and conclusions will be used as a material consideration in determination of applications. Not all projects will be able to go to the panel and those that do will be chosen based on their size, sensitivity or potential impact on the landscape, heritage or natural assets or existing adjoining settlements and communities.

Building for Life 12

- 11 BfL12 is the industry standard, endorsed by Government, for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods that local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use to assist in creating good places to live which are contextually responsive and sustainably located.
- 12 BfL12 was redesigned in 2012 to reflect the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the government's commitment to build more and better homes. BfL12 is a tool which can be used by developers and local authorities to assess the design quality of proposals that are evolving or have been proposed.
- 13 BfL12 is in essence a best practice design process approach rather than an overly subjective design scoring tool and is intended to be a collaborative and pragmatic negotiation tool between developers, their designers and the local authority. The opportunity to continue a design dialogue through pre-application design stages as well as post submission is key to an iterative and flexible design process and Cheshire East Council has committed to ensuring that BfL12 (or its future successor should it be superseded or updated) is proactively used during discussions with developers. Indeed, in time, a formal BfL12 assessment prepared by or on behalf of the case officer will be included within the officer's committee report.
- 14 The BfL12 approach and process will be applied to all residential schemes above 10 units, but the authority would welcome its application by developers on all schemes to demonstrate a best practice design approach.

Design Codes

The majority of schemes coming forward in the borough would be supported by a Design and Access Statement (D&As) which will need to incorporate site specific elements of design guidance and/or parameters depending on the nature of the application (outline/reserved/detailed). The elements to which a developer would be expected to commit to delivering should ideally be agreed prior to application submission as part of the pre-application process or as part of the post submission negotiations prior to determination.

However some schemes, based on their size, sensitivity or potential impact on the landscape or existing adjoining settlements and communities (similar to the criteria applied to the use of the Design Review Panel - see page 7) would require the production of a supporting Design Code.

The content of such a Code would be dependent on the nature of the application i.e. A spatial design code may be developed to support an outline application with the scope to develop a detailed design code prior to submission of a reserved matters application. That way the spatial elements of proposals (green & blue infrastructure, character areas, landscape strategy, public art, movement hierarchies, play and recreational provision, mix of uses etc.) can be committed to at an early stage, whereas detailed design elements (house types, materials, Parking, soft landscape, hard landscape, renewables, mix and location of affordable units etc.) can be brought forward at the detailed or reserved matters application stage. Thus those elements remain relevant to the approved application as it is implemented. Indeed, where there are a number

of phases of development over a 5 to 20 year delivery programme a detailed design code would be developed for each phase reflecting changing needs, current best practice, evolving policy and new energy technologies etc., but would build upon the spatial design code.

Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

18 This document, and the associated "Residential Design Guide", provides the starting point for refreshing the suite of design guidance supporting the Local Plan. Consequently further guidance on other design topics may follow. It covers residential development, as this topic is the most pressing in the Borough and whilst homes are much needed in Cheshire East the main focus will now be on securing well-designed homes set into contextually and environmentally responsive townscapes, villagescapes and landscapes.

19 The guide is split into two volumes:

- 1: Setting the Scene of Cheshire East
- 2: Residential Design - Creating Quality

The following paragraphs describe in brief the structure and content of the Design Guide.

Volume 1: Setting the Scene

20 This provides an overview on the policy context at both a national and local level, referencing the Planning Policy Framework, the current saved policies of the three local plans from the previous Borough Councils and the relevant emerging policies from the new Local Plan.

21 The settlement character areas within Cheshire East are then described and illustrated, providing

	developers and their design teams with an overview of the District's local vernacular and how it varies in terms of historic evolution, geographic location, settlement form, layout, archetypes, materials and detailing etc. i.e. what makes different areas distinct.	27	It also provides the detailed criteria to determine which developments should go before the Local Design Review Panel and which will require the support of a Design Code and the nature and content of the Code required etc.	33	In other words, the world beyond the red line.
22	As stated later in the document the local vernacular should not be slavishly followed on new developments to create 'chocolate box' pastiche developments, indeed this will be resisted, but for design teams to creatively reinterpret and use this for inspiration and to knit development into the place.	28	BfL12 is also covered here, with the 12 questions set-out, the assessment system described and the collaborative working relationship between the developer and Cheshire East clearly defined to ensure an iterative design process is undertaken from initial contact, through pre-application discussions, stakeholder responses, application submission, pre-determination correspondence to final determination and agreement of conditions.	34	The guidance also defines overarching principles of Urban Design and working with the grain of the existing settlement and site features to create a layout, building forms, massing, materials, fenestration, streetscapes and landscape that are responsive to the setting and context.
23	Development should not be justified by the fact that the scheme sits against post war neighbourhoods with little local design integrity. The key is to celebrate inspirational design and the process undertaken to create places with kerb appeal.	29	This best practice approach will not only be reflected in the designs themselves, but also the design process and evolution needs to be illustrated and narrated in the D&As to support the design itself.	35	The guidance considers additional layers of detail, specifically around streets, movement, public realm, public art, landscape strategies, green and blue infrastructure networks, passive and active sustainable design and the power of design to improve the quality of life (including health and wellbeing) of communities and individuals.
24	The design teams should describe/justify in the Design and Access Statement (D&As) how the vernacular has been used or if an alternative contemporary/arts based design approach has been adopted.	30	Such an approach aids the Local Planning Authority (LPA), the councillors and others in appreciating how the design has evolved and how it has been influenced by the environment in which it will be located and thus assist them in the determination of the application.	36	It is intended that the guidance when followed will resolve conflicts and issues between urban design, highways, open space and drainage providing a consistent voice on these issues.
25	It should be stressed that this information is merely the starting point of a detailed assessment of the place where development is proposed.	31	In essence Volume 1 sets out the design process expected to be undertaken in order to ensure that the design quality described in Volume 2 is delivered.		The authors of this guidance have worked with colleagues and stakeholders to develop an understanding of their needs and requirements to ensure that development schemes coming through the planning system not only deliver quality design on paper but also can be translated into high quality schemes on the ground with the roads, drainage and landscapes in a fit state either to be adopted or with appropriate alternative management in place.
26	The final chapter of Part 1 sets out the importance of good urban design, its role in 'Place Making' and the need to follow good design practices. In developing proposals for a site the designers will need to genuinely respond to the context into which they are designing and positively contribute to;	32	<i>Volume 2: Creating Quality</i>	37	In summary this guide provides the process and structure for each and every residential development coming forward in Cheshire East. If this guidance is followed and developers engage pro-actively with the Local Planning Authority then a collaborative design process will ensure the Borough delivers its aspiration for high quality, well designed residential development.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the settlement of which the development is part; the landscape into which it is placed, and; the ecology of the site and its surroundings. 		Volume 2 is the meat of the Design Guide and will provide guidance on holistic issues relating to the wider context in which the site sits and how the site should be assessed to ensure that it takes full advantage of its connections, views, topography, site features, habitats and surrounding land uses etc.		

i. Policy Backdrop

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) on Design Quality

- i|01 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes clear the importance that the Government attaches to the design of the built Environment, recognising that it is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- i|02 Policies and decisions should be underpinned by the following key principles:
- i|03 Context - policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics (Para 58). Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development;
 - establish a strong sense of place;
 - create places that are attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
 - optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development;
 - create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses including incorporation of green and other public space and support local facilities and transport networks;
 - respond to local character and history;
 - create safe and accessible environments; and
 - are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

i|04 **Urban Design Codes** - Local planning authorities should consider using design codes, but avoid over-prescription, concentrating instead on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally (Para 59).

i|05 **Style** - avoiding the imposition of particular architectural styles or particular tastes or the stifling of innovation and creativity. The importance of promoting or reinforcing local distinctiveness (Para 60).

i|06 **Connections** - addressing the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment (Para 61).

i|07 **Design Review** – LPAs should refer major projects, where appropriate, for national design review. Early engagement produces the greatest benefits. In assessing applications LPAs should have regard to the recommendations from the design review panel (Para 62).

i|08 **Innovation** - great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area (Para 63).

i|09 **Refusals** - Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions (Para 64).

i|10 **Consultation** - Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account

of the views of the community. The use of public artists to lead and contribute to the community consultation process is to be encouraged. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably (Para 66).

i|11 The importance of good design is recognised within the 12 core principles that the Government states should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The 12 principles include the need to:

- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas...
- support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);
- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution...
- promote mixed-use developments...
- actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of land;
- public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable

National Planning Practice Guidance

Design

“Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations. Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place. It puts land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use – over the long as well as the short term”

What does good design achieve? (Paragraph 2)

- i|12 Good design should:
- ensure that development can deliver a wide range of planning objectives
 - enhance the quality buildings and spaces, by considering amongst other things form and function; efficiency and effectiveness and their impact on well being
 - address the need for different uses sympathetically.

National Guidance/Best Practice

Building for Life 12

- i|13 Building for Life 12 is a government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use it to guide discussions about creating good places to live. BfL12 is also designed to help local planning

authorities assess the quality of proposed and completed developments; it can be used for site-specific briefs and can also help to structure design codes and local design policies. It is intended to be used as a design tool throughout the planning process.

- i|14 BfL12 comprises of 12 easy to understand questions that are designed to be used as a way of structuring discussions about a proposed development. There are four questions in each of the three chapters: Integrating into the Neighbourhood; Creating a Place, and Street & Home, embracing topics such as connections, access to public transport, working with context, character, landscaping, legibility, car parking, public/private space and amenity/storage space.



Cheshire East's Response to the Design Challenge

- i|15 The current statutory development plan for Cheshire East consists of saved policies from the Congleton Borough Local Plan, Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan, Macclesfield Local Plan, Cheshire Minerals Local Plan and Cheshire Waste Local Plan. The Council are currently preparing the new Cheshire East Local Plan which once adopted will replace the existing local plans of the former Councils. This guide for the time being will relate to these 'saved' policies.

Cheshire East Local Plan

- i|16 Work on the new Local Plan began in 2010. The Local Plan Strategy will be the centrepiece of the new Cheshire East Local Plan. It sets out the overall vision and planning strategy for development in the Borough and contains planning policies to ensure that new development addresses the economic, environmental and social needs of the area. It also identifies strategic sites and strategic locations that will accommodate most of the new development needed. The Local Plan Strategy is currently undergoing an independent examination to determine whether it is sound and legally compliant.

- i|17 The importance of good design is outlined in a number of the Draft Plan's Strategic Priorities:

- i|18 **Strategic Priority 2** focusses on the need to create sustainable communities and outlines mechanisms for how this will be delivered. It prioritises locating new housing in sustainable locations and ensuring that there is an appropriate mix of house types, sizes and tenures including affordable housing. It also seeks to ensure that new development promotes healthier lifestyles (e.g. through provision of high

quality green infrastructure), makes appropriate connections with existing neighbourhoods, promotes walking, cycling and public transport and is well designed, sustainable and energy efficient.

i|19 Strategic Priority 3 concerns protecting and enhancing environmental quality. It focusses particularly on the need to reduce the Borough's impact on climate change, for example by promoting renewable energy, encouraging water efficiency, providing new and maintaining high quality green infrastructure and the sustainable management of waste. It also stresses the importance of respecting the character and distinctiveness of places, buildings and landscapes through the careful design and siting of development.

i|20 Strategic Priority 4 relates to reducing the need to travel, managing car use and promoting more sustainable modes of transport. The implication for the design of new residential areas is the need to: build homes that are close, or easily accessible, to where people work, shop, access services and enjoy recreational activities; ensuring development gives priority to walking, cycling and public transport; and supporting safe and secure access for mobility and visually impaired people.

i|21 Policy SD1 sets out a number of key design principles to be used at a local level in order to achieve sustainable development including:

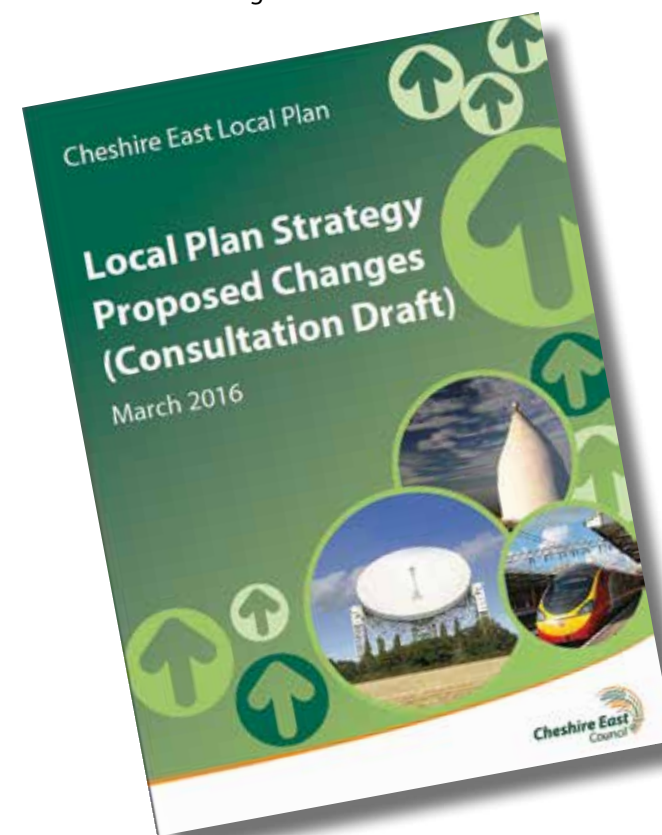
- ensuring that development is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling;
- Providing appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs of the local community, including landscaping and open space;
- Providing safe access and sufficient car parking;

- Supporting the health, safety, social and cultural well-being of the residents;
- Providing a locally distinct, high quality, sustainable, well designed and durable environment;
- Using appropriate technologies to reduce carbon emissions and create a low carbon economy;
- Incorporating sustainable design and construction methods;
- Contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built, historic and cultural environment;
- Making efficient use of land.

i|22 Policy SD 2 expands on these key principles of sustainable development, applying them to new development proposals. It places particular emphasis on the need for all development to contribute positively to an area's character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness through appropriate choices around height, massing, materials, external design features, relationship to neighbouring properties and response to landscape character. The design, construction, insulation, layout and orientation of developments is encouraged to promote the efficient use of natural resources. In terms of residential development in particular, Policy SD2 emphasises the expectation for quality open space, accessibility by public transport, and measures to encourage travel by sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

i|23 Policy SE1 emphasises the need for design quality and requires that development proposals make a positive contribution to their surroundings.

Delivering a sense of place, respecting local distinctiveness and heritage assets, designing for pedestrian priority and quality public realm are all key. Developments should have regard to sustainable design principles including passive environmental design, adaptability and future-proofing, water conservation, renewable energy/ low carbon technologies and green infrastructure. Policy SE1 also stresses the importance of liveability: issues of internal/external space, privacy, storage, waste management and access for all. Much of



	which is also dealt with in BfL12, and, as the policy states there is a need to evidence good design in applications which can thus be addressed through the use of the BfL12 assessments.				
i 24	Finally, developers are encouraged to consider measures for designing in safety, including high levels of passive surveillance and lighting of streets, spaces and parking, incorporating Secured by Design principles and ensuring that site layout and design minimises the opportunity for crime.				
i 25	SE9 Energy Efficient Development states that the Council will look favourably upon development that follows the principles of the energy hierarchy and which seeks to exceed high standards, especially where these exceed the statutory minima required by the Building Regulations. Where development is over 10 dwellings, it will be expected to secure at least 10 percent of its predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that this is not feasible or viable. Within areas identified as District Heat Network Priority Areas, or within other large-scale development, new development should contribute toward the development of a strategic district heating network by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale and mixed use developments of over 100 dwellings should install a site wide district heating network • Smaller developments of 10 dwellings or more should connect to a district heating network 	i 27	Policy SE8 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy also refers, with references to the importance of combined heat and power and district heating and other forms of renewable and low carbon energy production.		
			Cheshire East Renewable Energy		
			Supplementary Planning Documents		
		i 28	A summary of relevant adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) of the former Councils is provided below and are material considerations in the determination of planning decisions. Those SPD's adopted by one of the former Councils are relevant only to the area previously covered by the Council that adopted them.		
		i 29	Cheshire East Supplementary Planning Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Design Statements - various adopted across the borough. • Alsager Town Centre Strategy (adopted October 2010) • Local List of Historic Buildings (adopted October 2010) 	i 32	Supplementary Planning Documents adopted by the former Borough of Crewe & Nantwich Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Development (adopted April 2005) • Development on Backland and Gardens (adopted July 2008) • Extensions and Householder Development (adopted July 2008)
		i 30	A link to CEC's SPD's is included below:		
			CEC's Supplementary Planning Documents		
		i 31	Supplementary Planning Documents adopted by the former Congleton Borough Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Development (adopted July 2008) • Trees and Development (adopted October 2006) 	i 33	Supplementary Planning Documents adopted by the former Macclesfield Borough Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prestbury Village Design Statement (adopted May 2007) • Supplementary Planning Document for Poynton (adopted May 2007) • Nature Conservation Strategy (adopted October 2006) • Designing Out Crime (adopted January 2006) • Supplementary Planning Document for Bollington (adopted January 2006)
					Neighbourhood Plans
				i 34	A number of communities have already, or are preparing Neighbourhood Plans. Some have already or intend to include specific design guidance for their village or town.
				i 35	Those design supplements should be read in conjunction with the Guidance presented here in the Cheshire East Design Guide to inform and shape new development proposals that respond positively and add to those places.
					Neighbourhood Planning
i 26	Where a heat network does not yet exist, developers should demonstrate that the development is capable of connection to a network at a later date and it should be designed to maximise the ability to accommodate a future district heating				

Other Guidance Notes

- i|36 Supplementary Planning Guidance notes adopted by the former Congleton Borough Council:
- Public Open Space (PDF, 83KB) (adopted October 2003) and Interim Policy Note: Public Open Space Provision for New Developments (PDF, 189KB) which was adopted in September 2008 and updates the 2003 Supplementary Planning Guidance.
 - Provision of Private Open Space (PDF, 230KB) (adopted November 1993)
- i|37 Supplementary Planning Guidance notes adopted by the former Macclesfield Borough Council:
- Housing Character Areas (PDF, 873KB) (adopted July 2004)
 - Trees & Development Guidelines (PDF, 3.2MB) (adopted February 2004)

Other Relevant Guidance & Resources

- By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System: towards better practice (2000) Cabe/DETR
- Urban Design Compendium 1 & 2 (2007), English Partnerships Better Places to Live by Design: A Companion Guide to PPG3 (2001), Cabe/DETR
- Building for Life 12: The sign of a good place to live (2012), Cabe at the Design Council, Home Builders Federation, Design for Homes
- Manual for Streets (2007), DoT
- Manual for Streets 2 (2010), Institute of Civil Engineers
- Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention (2004), ODPM/Home Office
- Code for Sustainable Homes Technical Guide, November, 2010, CLG
- Car Parking: What Works Where (2006), English Partnerships
- Secured by Design, New Homes, 2014.
- www.lifetimehomes.org.uk
- Urban Design Lessons: Housing Layout and Neighbourhood Quality (2014), Homes and Communities Agency

Cabe Publications:

- Green Space Strategies: A Good Practice Guide (2006)
- Sight Line: Designing better streets for people with low vision (2010)
- This Way to Better Residential Streets (2009)

- Design & Access Statements: How to Read, Write and Use Them (2006)
- Better Neighbourhoods: Making Higher Densities Work (2005)
- Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas (2002)
- Building for Life Newsletter 6: Accommodating the Car (2006)

ii. Cheshire East - A Unique Borough

ii|01 The county of Cheshire is well known for its rolling pastoral landscapes, plains and historic market towns. No landscape in Cheshire is truly natural, all have been influenced by humans over millennia.

ii|02 In Cheshire East these influences can be seen from the Upland Peak District fringe in the east to the plains, rolling landscapes and sandstone escarpments in the west.

ii|03 Farming, geography, natural resources, geology, and the industrial revolution have all impacted upon the landscape, location, growth of and form of the settlements within it.

ii|04 The way settlements have evolved, responding to their location, to growth and changing human needs over centuries have made each of them unique today. The layers of history are physically displayed in the buildings, streets and spaces, all of which add depth to their sense of place and providing us with an emotional response to inanimate bricks and mortar.

ii|05 One of the characteristics that modern development often lacks is the capacity to invoke a positive emotional response. Whilst the evolutionary depth of a place takes many years and cannot be recreated, many modern developments have lost any intimate human sense of scale and are more governed by rigorously applied standards, amplified by industry standardisation which, in turn creates bland anywhere places and spaces which bear no relationship to their wider context or immediate surroundings.

ii|06 This chapter 'Cheshire East - A Unique Borough' looks to identify what is unique about Cheshire East, how the character varies and to identify

'Settlement Character Areas', distilling out what makes each unique and special, sets out in brief where that uniqueness has been derived from in terms of historical and physical influences and provides a series of 'design cues' to aid designers in reinterpreting these features in a modern context and fit for purpose in the 21st century.

ii|07 The two key phrases out of the previous paragraph are '**reinterpretation**' and '**fit for purpose**'. Cheshire East does not want to create pastiche 'chocolate box' developments. Such an approach will water down and weaken the historic town and villagescapes within the district.

ii|08 Developers and their design teams are encouraged however to draw upon the information distilled from Cheshire East's character, as set-out below, and creatively use it to produce unique, forward looking, grounded developments which positively contribute to the established settlements and landscape into which they are placed.

Geographic & Historic Influences

ii|09 As touched on above, geography and history have been key in the evolution of the landscape and settlements within it.

ii|10 Sheltered locations, supplies of building materials fire wood, food and fresh, plentiful water were the first priorities in establishing places to live.

ii|11 As human endeavour evolved, settlements grew, based on communication routes (paths, navigable rivers, fords and valleys), farming, trade, defensible locations, raw materials (coal, stone, peat etc.) and the most reproductive land.

ii|12 The Industrial Revolution of the 1760's saw the

start of an explosion in population and settlement growth.

ii|13 Settlements grew and new ones sprung up when they were well located to exploit the needs of the new industries in terms of power (water in the first instance), raw materials and the transport systems to move those raw materials and then the finished products to their markets.

ii|14 For example the Silk Industry in Macclesfield and Congleton grew up around the unique micro-climate required in the silk production process, as much as around the power supplied by the local river systems. Whereas, Bollington's main focus was cotton.

ii|15 The influences on the form and layout of those settlements of the silk industry can be seen today in the classic three storey weavers cottages (pictured below), mill buildings, workers terraces, foreman's



Figure ii:01 - Silk Weavers Cottages, Paradise Street, Macclesfield

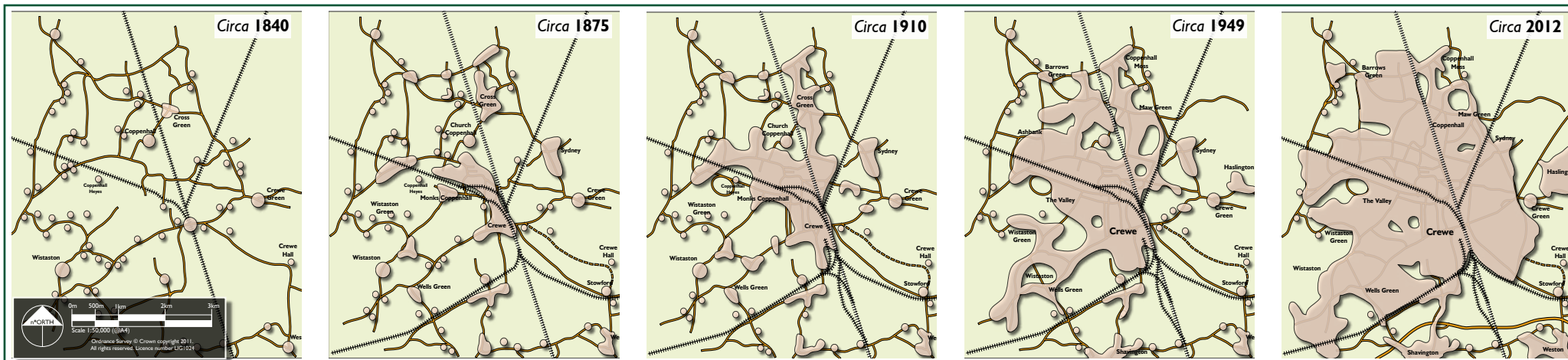


Figure ii:02 - The Growth of Crewe

homes and mill owners villas and mansion houses, as well as in the developed infrastructure in terms of canals and railways.

ii|16 Whilst these create interesting and much loved townscapes, replicating these forms and layouts in the 21st Century with the impact of motor vehicles and modern standards is not practical or desirable. But, as stated previously, distilling out what makes these town and villagescapes special and creatively reinterpreting it would lead to adding yet another layer of history and evolution to the settlements into which they are placed.

ii|17 Some settlements didn't exist until well into the industrial revolution. For example Crewe didn't take on a recognisable settlement form until the 1840's.

ii|18 It was only when the railways arrived in Crewe that the town as we know it today began to grow as illustrated in The Growth of Crewe (Figure ii:02 above).

ii|19 Similar historical and geographical influences have affected all the settlements in Cheshire East in one form or another.

ii|20 Another geographical based aspect of character is

derived from the underlying geology in the form of the local building materials.

ii|21 The architectural form of buildings has been heavily influenced by the local materials quarried in the area. Gritstones are the obvious example in the east of the District from Disley in the north east down to Bollington, Sutton, Langley and Wincle in the south east where solid no-nonsense built forms dominate.

ii|22 Due to the availability of clay, the use of brick dominates as the main building material from Poynton across the Cheshire Plain to Crewe and Nantwich and beyond with their extensive use in settlements and farmsteads in between. Probably the Georgian period is the best represented illustration of the use of locally produced brick, with tall light and well proportioned double fronted high status town houses and farm houses which can be seen across the market towns and farmsteads of most of lowland Cheshire East.

ii|23 The local material palette specific to each settlement character area is explored in more detail under Settlement Character Areas and the sample settlements drawn from those areas which follow.

How Landscape Informs Settlement Structure

ii|24 It is not only the location of settlements which is informed by geographic features but also settlement form and layout can be influenced by the landscape features in and around them.

ii|25 Cheshire East contains a variety of settlement forms which we have termed as:

- Dispersed Linear
- Compact Linear
- Dispersed Radial
- Compact Radial

ii|26 Dispersed settlement forms are normally found in rural locations such as Bosley (Dispersed Linear) or Wincle (Dispersed Radial).

ii|27 Settlements along river valleys, hill tops or ridge lines are usually found to be linear in form following the course of the river or particular contours. Settlements within the Cheshire Plain can also be linear influenced by a main road, watercourse or railway (existing or former).

ii|28 Radial settlements are usually found on the plains or within gently rolling landscapes, most examples are

market towns or villages which sit on a crossroads of two or more main roads with the Market Square or a Coaching Inn lying at the heart of the settlement.

Some Basic Principles...

- ii|29 Development proposed within or on the edge of settlements should be informed by an understanding of its current form, street pattern and density.
- ii|30 Development in linear settlements should be accessed from the primary road and/or work with the contours, river or communications routes to which the existing settlement has responded. Development in such locations should respect any maximum or minimum contour lines; above or below which issues of visibility (built form breaking above the ridge line if this precedent is not already set) or potential flooding (adjacent to a watercourse in a valley bottom location) are likely to preclude development.
- ii|31 Radial settlements are probably easier locations in which to develop proposals as, by their very nature, they are less constrained by the surrounding topography, watercourses or communication routes. However if a radial settlement is tucked under a hill or set into a rolling landscape then existing vistas and panoramas of that settlement from the surrounding countryside or special views out from the settlement should be respected and maintained. The green spaces penetrating into these settlements may also be particularly important.
- ii|32 Development on the edge of such settlements should look to infill parcels of land to reinforce the radial nature of those settlements, buildings should nestle into the landscape and exploit any changes in topography or existing landscape features



Figure ii:03 - A settlement nestled into the landscape, Bollington

(woodlands, hedgerows or individual trees) on the site to soften and integrate the development into the landscape, townscape or villagescape in which it is part.

- ii|33 In dispersed settlements the layout and location of development should respond to the settlement form (linear or radial) and not be seen to change the nature of the settlement from 'dispersed' to 'compact'. Therefore lower density development (individual properties or short runs of townhouse rows), set into a strong landscape framework responding to existing field/lane/woodland patterns would be necessary to successfully integrate them.

Settlement Character Areas

- ii|34 As set-out generally above, Cheshire East is unique due to its diversity of settlements and landscapes which have been influenced by geography, farming, industry and movement.
- ii|35 This uniqueness of landscape and settlement characters should be used to inform future developments within the Borough to ensure Cheshire East retains an individual identity and does not give the impression of a series of bland 'anywhere' settlements.

- ii|36 Settlement Character Areas have been defined as illustrated in Figure ii:04 over page.

- ii|37 These settlement character areas have been informed in part by a desktop assessment of the Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment, the Cheshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Study and a comprehensive field survey of settlements and the rural hinterland which has refined and defined the final character areas and their boundaries as illustrated opposite.

- ii|38 Five Settlement Character Areas have been created as illustrated and include from north to south:

- North Cheshire Fringe
- Gritstone Edge
- Silk, Cotton & Market Towns
- Salt & Engineering Towns
- Market Towns & Estate Villages

- ii|39 The following pages describe each Settlement Character Area, the general Landscape Character traits which make up these areas, the typical design cues, materials and detailing which can be found within each area. In addition Sample Settlement Worksheets from each Character Area have been included to illustrate in summary the typical range of settlement types, layouts, evolution, form, archetypes, materials and detailing which will help inform the design process for any developments proposed within these Settlement Character Areas.

- ii|40 It is not practical to do this for every settlement in Cheshire East. This document should therefore be read in conjunction with any relevant existing **conservation area character appraisals**, neighbourhood plans or village design statements.

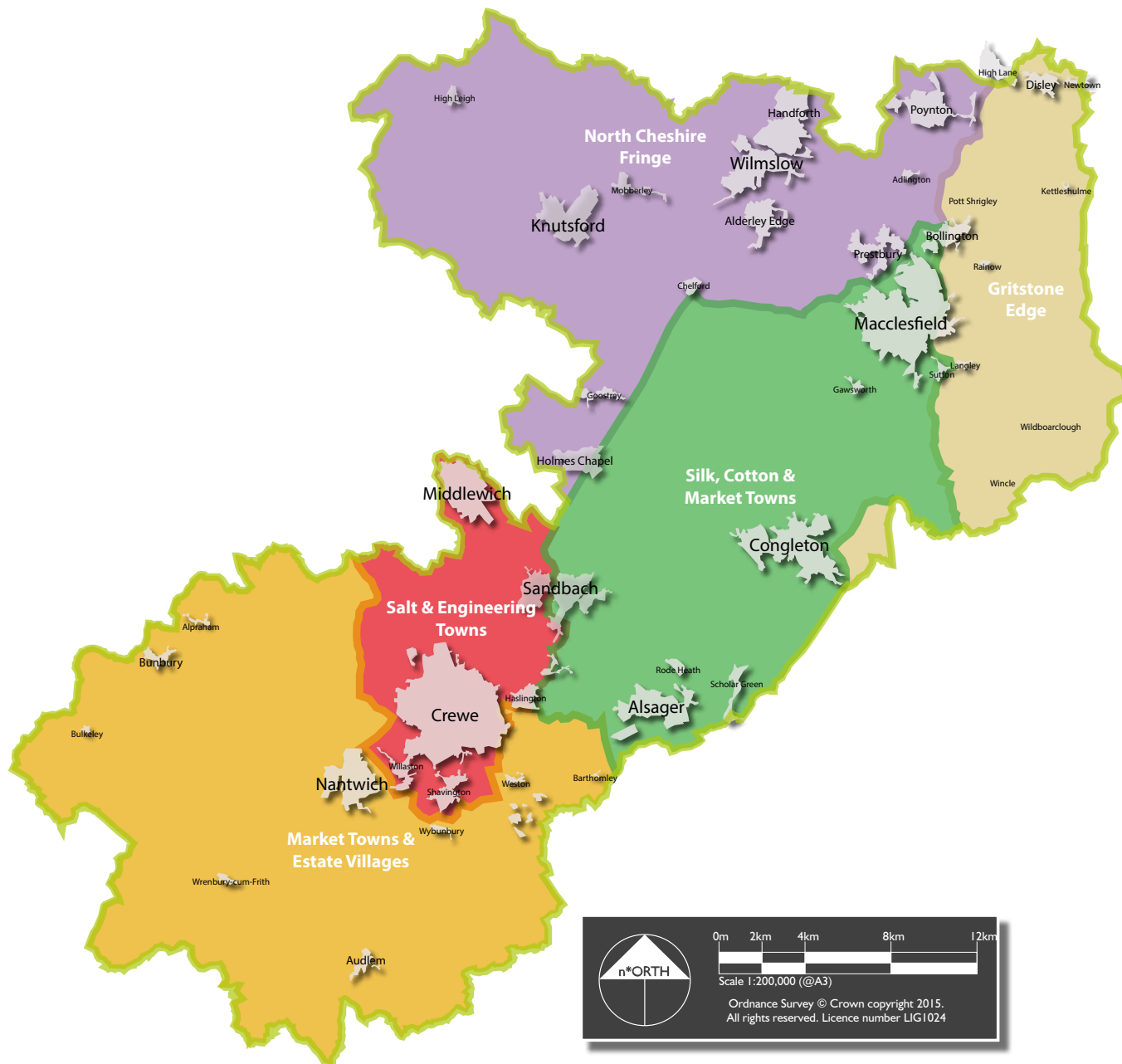


Figure ii:04 - Cheshire East Settlement Character Areas

- ii|41 Specific design cues have been identified for each settlement and are included on the sample settlement worksheets. Generic settlement character area cues have emerged, as highlighted in the green boxes in the character area descriptions. These design cues should be used to aid the designers in the development of their proposals.
- ii|42 Designers and developers are asked to take cognisance of the pages that follow and use the information creatively to inform their proposals. This process and the design approach chosen should be set-out and incorporated in the supporting Design & Access Statement. This document is the starting point. It should be overlaid by further site/area specific assessment by the design team.
- ii|43 Cheshire East expect Design and Access Statements to be comprehensive in illustrating and explaining the design process adopted in developing the proposals and Volume 1, Chapter iii sets-out what is expected in terms of contents and approach.
- ii|44 Some settlements fall within two character areas, drawing influence in character from both. This needs to be reflected and responded to in the character studies within Design and Access Statements and in developing masterplans and design codes.

Gritstone Edge

ii|45 The Gritstone Edge forms the eastern flank of the borough and its landscape character and the form, layout and materials found within the settlements are informed by the rolling foothills of the Pennines and the geology beneath them. Part of the area forms the north western edge of the Peak District National Park.

ii|46 The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment contains four Landscape Types within the Gritstone Edge boundary, as defined in Figure ii:05 including:

- Moorland Plateau
- Upland Estate
- Upland Foothills
- Upland Fringe

Generally the landscape character within the Gritstone Edge can be described as a large scale enclosed landscape consisting of reverting and improved moor and also unenclosed upland moor. Dry stone walls are prominent aligning with and crossing the contours of the steep slopes of valleys that rise between 280m AOD to 560m AOD. Notably woodland is virtually absent in much of the eastern character area of the Gritstone Edge and there is a presence of limited dispersed stone built farms and barns.

ii|47 Other characteristics of the landscape include upland streams, open, unrestricted views of the surrounding area and the presence of disused quarries. Further west the character area becomes a medium-large scale landscape, with low stone walls providing the dominant elements of enclosure. Clough Woodlands are obvious along water courses. Elsewhere blocks of enclosed woodland or regular shaped plantations appear locally dominant within the pattern of stone walls, emphasising the general



Figure ii:05 - Settlement Character Area: Gritstone Edge

scarcity of trees, hedges or woodland cover and the open nature of the landscape. Similarly the occasional stone barn or prominent farmstead can present a local landmark within the open slopes.

ii|48 A strong skyline or ridge is generally dominant within this type, often provided by the higher ground of the surrounding landform. The high vantage points and generally open aspect ensure long distance panoramic views in all directions. These extend westward over the Cheshire Plain, to the east into the heart of the Peak District and to the Manchester conurbation in the north.

ii|49 The settlements within the Gritstone Edge are widely dispersed within the landscape with some villages being little more than dispersed linear hamlets scattered along a river valley (Wildboarclough) or dispersed radial hamlets set within a bowl (Wincle). Whilst the smaller villages and farmsteads are found within the wider landscape and served by local lanes, the larger villages (Kettleshulme, Rainow & Langley) are located along more major roads, are generally linear in form and historically would have been used as stop-overs on coaching routes across the Pennines.

ii|50 The Gritstone Edge contains two larger settlements, Disley (north) and Bollington (west). Both have distinct characters; Disley, radial in form and a market town character with fingers of development extending out along surrounding roads. Bollington, on the other hand evolved around a number of villages set within the steep sided Dean Valley which were then complimented by various settlements growing up around the Mills along the River Dean and Macclesfield Canal. There are five distinct neighbourhoods which make up Bollington and this is reflected in their location, layout and architecture.

Positive Rural Transitions ✓



Approach into Bollington bordered by traditional dry stone walls with a stone terrace announcing arrival at the settlement edge.



Cottages front road with small front gardens bounded by drystone walls. Native hedgerow fronts fields on opposite side of road.



Terrace fronts street with small gardens enclosed by a mix of hedges, walls and railings. Small pine plantation opposite softens settlement edge and offers wind break from wider open countryside beyond.



Large detached and semi detached properties at Langley offer incremental approach to village prior to reaching more densely developed terraces at centre of settlement.

Settlement Fringes - The Rural Transition

ii|51 The interaction of the settlement edge with the wider open countryside is key to providing not only strong and defensible settlement boundaries, but also well defined, outward looking and finished settlement edges.

ii|52 As illustrated here there are a number of positive and negative solutions in the Gritstone Edge. As stated previously, this Settlement Character Area has a diverse variety of landscapes and settlements within it and so the edges are defined by a variety of boundary treatments, movement solutions and built form to edge interactions.

ii|53 The boundaries range from dry stone/coursed stone walling, native hedgerows with hedgerow trees, parkland style railings, concrete post/panel fences to close boarded timber fences.

ii|54 Positive solutions look to arrange built form fronting onto a lane or other form of movement corridor, bordered by boundary treatments which are in keeping with their location. Solutions should not look to screen development from the countryside, but to soften and ground development in its setting, in keeping with the local character.

ii|55 The key is to ensure that the boundary solution draws on best practice in terms of creating the desired finished edge, which is well surveilled, with good quality hard and soft detailing to the boundary solutions, movement corridors and elevations of the built form.

ii|56 The photographs illustrated here show existing positive and negative solutions within the Gritstone Edge Settlement Character Area.

Negative Rural Transitions ✗



Rear elevation of property in stone is very positive however this is lost when the existing hedgerow is removed and replaced with a concrete post and timber panel boundary fence.



A picturesque view of the valley at the top of Bollington. Could have been improved by the townhouses in the centre of the photo being turned to front the countryside without the conservatory and high fence spoiling the panorama.



The properties located on this ridge face outwards and don't break the skyline which is positive, however the extensive use of brick in this gritstone location and the lack of response to the surrounding vernacular is incongruous with the wider settlement.



The same properties illustrated opposite in Langley have no detailing to rear elevations and the boundaries between the gardens and rural landscape are a mix of low fences and hedgerows with rear garden clutter very visible from surrounding viewpoints.



Figure ii:06 - Stepped Townhouse Row, Kerridge

Typical Traditional Materials

- ii|57 Due to the underlying geology the architecture of the area uses the buff and pink gritstones which are still quarried locally around Kerridge. The stone was primarily used in a split faced finish, but higher status houses, public buildings and commercial premises have historically used sawn faced stone in their façades. Simpler cottages used a combination of coursed split faced stone as the main walling materials with sawn reveals, heads and sills to door and window openings etc. Stone flag is also widely seen on roofs, giving the architecture a solid and heavy feel.
- ii|58 Parts of Disley, Bollington and Langley also have extensively used brick in Flemish and English bonds from the early Victorian period onwards, along with welsh blue slate on the roofs replacing the earlier stone flags. This transition can most clearly be seen in Bollington where Higher Bollington is primarily stone with Lowerhouse and Bollington Cross containing more brick.
- ii|59 The traditional streetscape materials palette includes stone sets, flags and kerbs.

Typical Traditional Detailing

- ii|60 Much of the built form of the character area is simple, solid and practical and therefore detailing is minimal on most of the traditional cottages and farmsteads in the area. On such properties where a coursed or random split faced stone has been used the detailing is focussed around the fenestration. Sawn stone heads, sills and jambs contrasting with the rougher textures of the stonework. Older properties still have the original stone mullioned windows.



Figure ii:07 - Architectural Materials Palette



Figure ii:08 - Streetscape Materials Palette



ii|61 Higher status buildings; Inns, shops, halls and civic buildings for example contain additional detailing including the use of quoins, arched window openings and ornate portico around main entrances.

ii|62 Where brick properties are found they reflect similar detailing principles to stone properties, with workers terraced properties having minimal but subtle detailing (a stepped banded brick course at the eaves as illustrated in Figure ii:09 for example). Higher status properties have detailing such as stone string courses, stone plinth, quoins, stone heads, sills and jambs or a dripstone detail at the eaves.



Figure ii:09 - Traditional Detailing

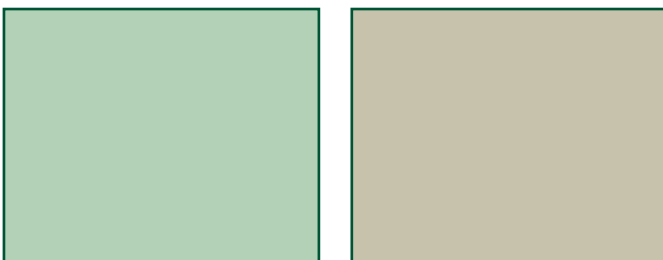
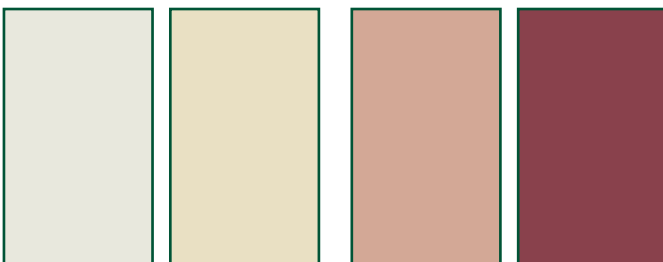


Figure ii:10- Character Area Colour Palette

Settlement Character Area Design Cues

ii|63 Out of our assessment of the Gritstone Edge we have distilled out the typical design cues of the area, as highlighted in the panel to the right.

Sample Settlements

ii|64 A range of settlements have been chosen as 'sample settlements' within the Gritstone Edge which either best illustrate the typical settlement character of the area or have variations from that character which add to their uniqueness and sense of place. The settlements selected are:

- Bollington & Kerridge
- Disley
- Rainow
- Langley
- Pott Shrigley

ii|65 The Sample Settlements have been set-out on the following pages in the form of worksheets, each containing a general description of the settlement, it's evolution, design cues and sample imagery.

Gritstone Edge Design Cues:

- All eras of architecture are found within the settlement character area.
- Side lanes, alleys and ginnels branch off from the main routes through the settlements.
- Streets and lanes are well enclosed and overlooked by the surrounding houses.
- Streets and Lanes flow with the topography.
- Few key areas of public realm but where they do existing they act as counterpoints to the denser surrounding townscape.
- Built form flows with the topography and with varied storey heights creates a dynamic roofscape and skyline.
- Stone is the dominant building material however there is a greater mix of brick buildings along the western fringes of the character area.
- Landmarks within the townscape are created by Churches, Mills, Public Houses and other buildings associated with historic uses (banks and shops etc.).
- Built form exploits topography - buildings set into valley sides change in storey heights.
- Settlement is tucked into the landscape.
- Some settlements contain short runs of three storey weavers cottages.
- Many settlements have recent developments situated on the approaches to or on infill sites within them.
- Buildings step forward into street creating pinch points and traffic calming townscape.

Sample Settlement:

Bollington & Kerridge

- ii|66 Bollington sits in the River Dean valley and has grown up from a series of villages and hamlets during the industrial revolution as a cotton producing town.
- ii|67 The natural topography of the valley has shaped and influenced the physical form of the town. The river and water engineering related to the mills has created a complex and intricate network of watercourses and mill ponds through the town.
- ii|68 Bollington as a whole could be described as a compact radial settlement, however it is made up of 5 linear neighbourhoods; Higher Bollington, West Bollington, Lowerhouse, Bollington Cross and Upper Bollington/Kerridge.

ii|69 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Georgian through to 21st Century archetypes are found within the town.*
- *A network of lanes branch off from the main street.*
- *Streets and lanes are well enclosed and overlooked by the surrounding houses.*
- *Routes undulate with the topography and curve up the valley and out to the countryside.*
- *Little public realm or open space, but where it is it offers relief to the enclosing townscape.*
- *The canal, former railway and river create linear green fingers through the town.*
- *Built form flows with the topography.*

- ii|70 Bollington has a lot in common with the mill towns of East Lancashire and is unique to the Borough. The influences of the mills, the viaduct and aqueduct provides a strong sense of history within the built townscape.



Figure ii:11 - Figure Ground & Grain

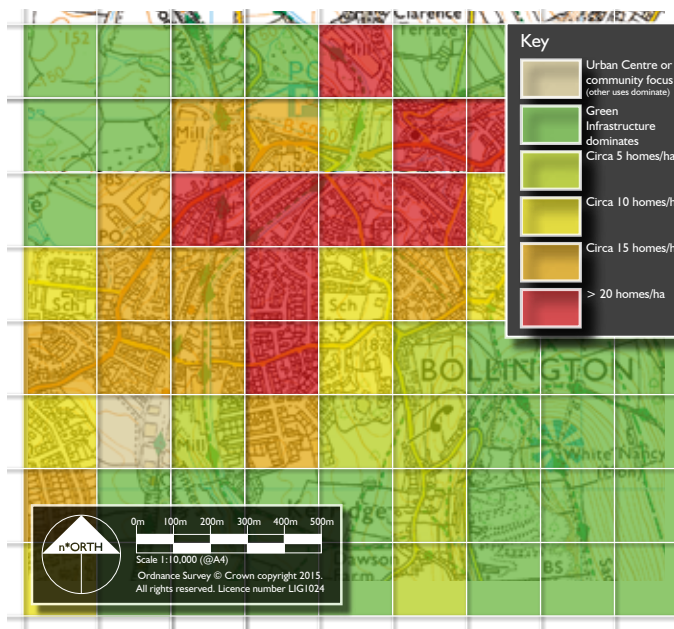


Figure ii:12 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:13 - Imagery

Disley

ii|71 Disley has a strong relationship to the surrounding settlements along the Goyt Valley. The village focuses on Fountain Square around which are arranged a variety of buildings including an Inn, Public House, Shops, Bank and Railway Station. The A6 runs through the square which also contains a Stone Water Fountain and the War Memorial.

ii|72 Disley is a compact radial settlement and has a market town feel in the centre, whilst the industrial uses are set down below the village on the banks of the Peak Forest Canal and River Goyt. Terraced properties relating to the factories are arranged beyond the historic core radiating out along the main roads (the Crescent) and side roads above the mills in which the residents formerly worked.

ii|73 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Medieval to late 20th Century archetypes can be found in and around the village.*
- *Lanes and alleyways lead off from the centre.*
- *Stone and brick buildings of varying storey heights jostle for position along streets and lanes.*
- *Inns and public houses create a number of landmarks within the streetscape.*
- *Square well enclosed by surrounding buildings.*
- *Built form exploits topography - buildings set into valley sides changing from two storey to three storey.*

ii|74 This historic heart of the settlement is located along the A6 corridor with more modern developments located higher on the valley slopes to the north west and south east of the centre.



Figure ii:14 - Figure Ground & Grain

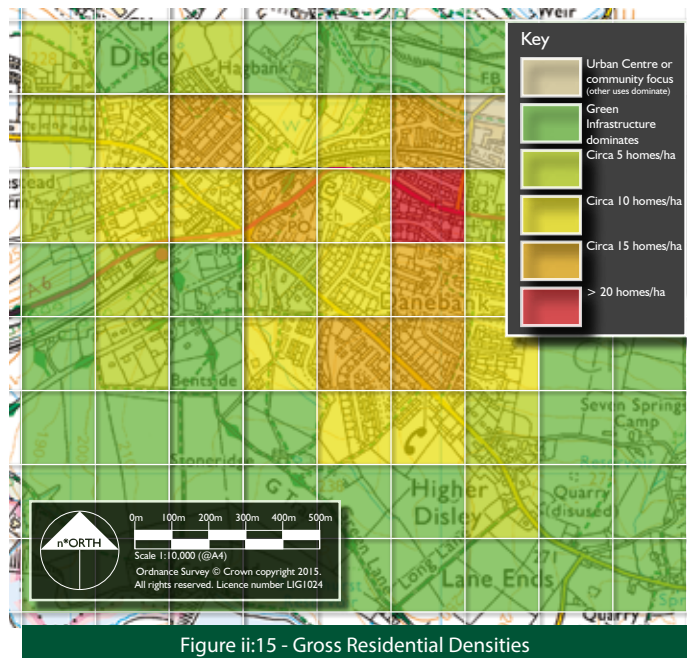


Figure ii:15 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:16 - Imagery

Rainow

ii|75 Rainow's historic form could be described as a dispersed linear settlement, straddling the B5470 to Whaley Bridge and hugging the contour lines of the western slopes of Years Low. However, with the development around Miller's Meadow in the 1970's and 80's the current form appears to be more radial.

ii|76 Rainow originally grew up around a corn mill and subsequently coal was mined from a series of drift mines on the eastern slopes of Kerridge Hill. Water powered cotton and silk mills followed, which were abandoned when mills were no longer reliant on water power.

ii|77 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Georgian to modern archetypes are represented.*
- *Lanes branch off from the main road and are fronted by a mix of stone cottages and more modern stone and render properties.*
- *Buildings and lanes flow with the topography.*
- *The settlement is tucked into the landscape and the settlement itself is heavily tree'd.*
- *The church tower forms the main landmark within the village.*
- *The Tower Hill folly acts as an announcement of arrival into the heart of the village.*
- *Irregular shaped properties add interest where lanes branch off from main road.*

ii|78 Rainow as seen from the main road takes the form of a series of hamlets scattered along a series of ridge lines and valley slopes. This form makes the journey interesting with various 'events' taking place along the route (i.e. views to the folly and church tower).



Figure ii:17 - Figure Ground & Grain

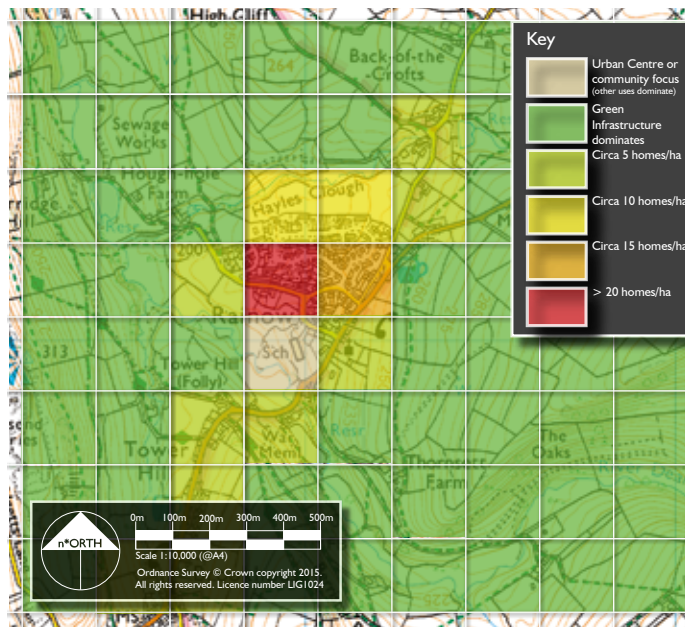


Figure ii:18 - Gross Residential Densities

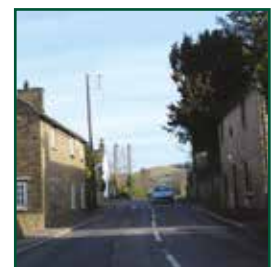
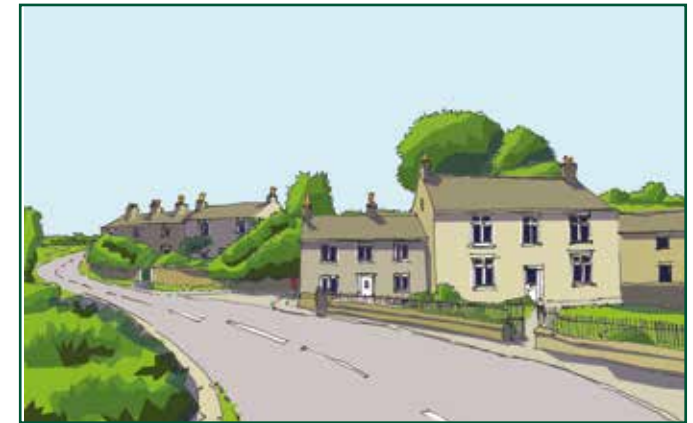


Figure ii:19 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Langley

- ii|79 Langley is a small compact linear village sitting at the foot of Tegg's Nose and acts as the gateway to Macclesfield Forest.
- ii|80 Langley originally contained Silk printing, dying and finishing mills as well as being the home until quite recently of Reiter-Scragg, manufacturers of textile machinery. The former works still stand and is the subject of ongoing proposals for housing development on the site.
- ii|81 Religious, community and high status buildings are constructed of the local gritstone whereas the majority of houses in the village use Cheshire brick as illustrated in the photographs.
- ii|82 Key Settlement Design Cues:
- *Palladian and Georgian to early 21st Century archetypes are represented.*
 - *The village contains a well preserved row of three storey weavers cottages typically found in Macclesfield.*
 - *The village centre along Main Road contains long rows of two storey terraced housing.*
 - *Langley Hall sits to the west in its own grounds and acts as a counterpoint to the village.*
 - *The Methodist chapel occupies a key location on a road junction in the heart of the village.*
 - *A mix of 1950's, 70's and 2000's housing developments have been built on the approaches to or on infill sites within the village.*
- ii|83 Langley is a pleasant small settlement, with a variety of architectural styles laid out along its main road and some of the surrounding lanes. The materials palette is not typical of the Gritstone Edge.

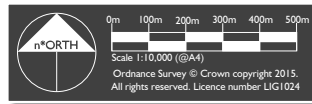


Figure ii:20 - Figure Ground & Grain

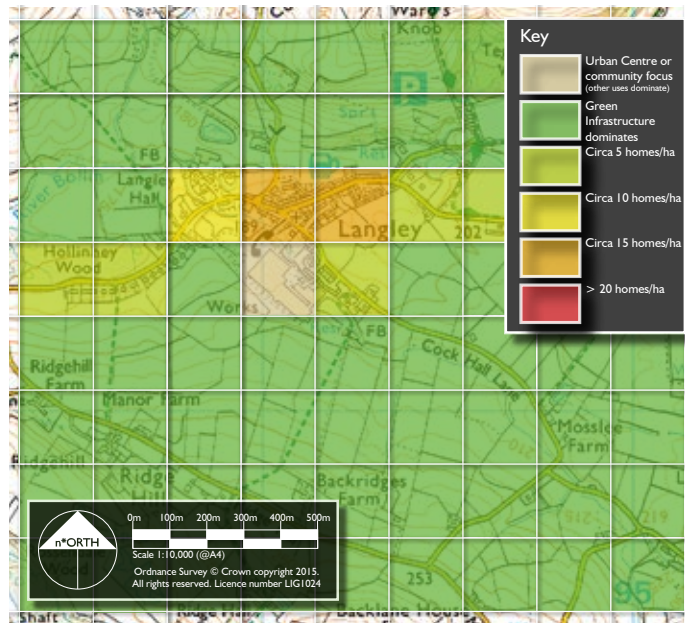


Figure ii:21 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:22 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Pott Shrigley

- ii|84 Pott Shrigley is a small dispersed radial hamlet which sits at the foot of Helme Wood tucked below the ridge line.
- ii|85 The settlement has a long history with its school dating back some 500 years. The current core of the village is arranged around the church and school on the junction of three roads.
- ii|86 Each building in the village is unique with Pott Hall and Pott Hall Farm creating strong frontages onto the streetscape.
- ii|87 The range of cottages along Shrigley Road vary in location with some set back behind front gardens and others immediately hard up against the back of the footpath.

ii|88 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Medieval, Georgian and Victorian architecture are all represented in this small village.*
- *Pott Hall illustrates eras of architectural styles in its elevations.*
- *The varied layout of the houses in the village creates interest and variety in the villagescape.*
- *The simplicity of the stone cottages contrasts with the detailing and fenestration on Pott Hall Farm and Pott Hall.*
- *The school building pushes forward onto Spuley Lane creating a pinch point and traffic calming element in the streetscape.*

- ii|89 Though small, Pott Shrigley has a strong village charm. Enclosure of the streetscape is not only created by the houses but also by the surrounding woodlands and high ridges providing an intimate feel to the village.

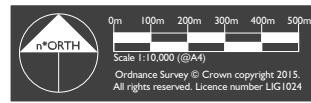


Figure ii:23 - Figure Ground & Grain

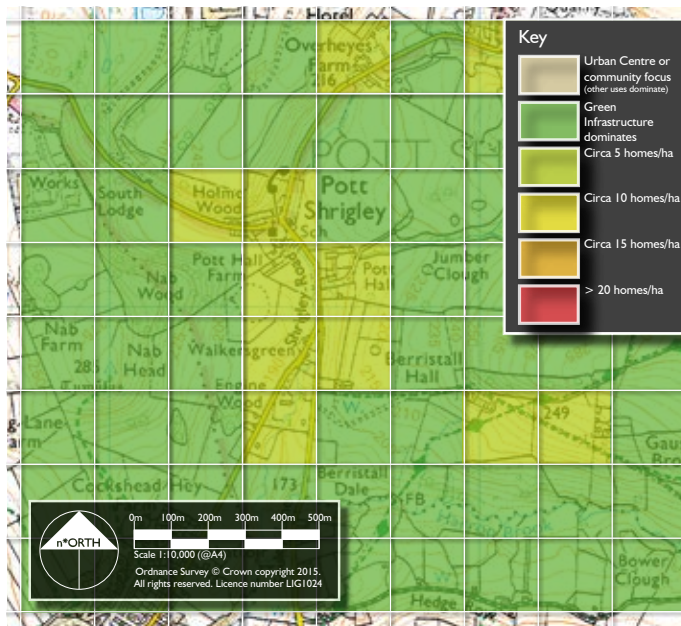


Figure ii:24 - Gross Residential Densities

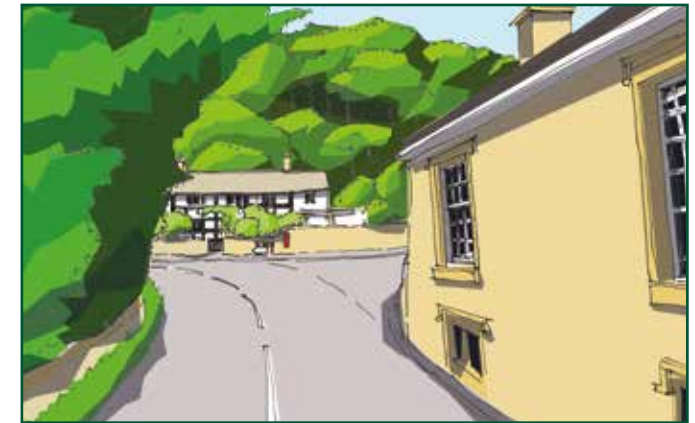


Figure ii:25 - Imagery

North Cheshire Fringe

ii|90 The North Cheshire Fringe Settlement Character Area forms the north western area of the district. The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment contains five Landscape Types within the North Cheshire Fringe boundary:

- Estate Wood and Mere
- River Valley
- Higher Farms and Woods
- Lower Farms and Woods
- Mosslands

ii|91 The Lower Farms and Woods makes up the majority of this Settlement Character Area and is described as low undulating medium scale landscape of mixed arable and pastoral farmland. A large portion of this area is influenced by the towns of Knutsford, Wilmslow, Poynton, Prestbury and Alderley Edge.

ii|92 To the south of the North Cheshire Fringe there are localised areas of undulating topography with concentrated areas of woodland although the landscape is generally flat. The field pattern remains intact but in northern areas hedgerows are increasingly being replaced by post and wire fences creating a larger scale open landscape that allows extensive views to the surrounding countryside.

ii|93 The western part of the North Cheshire Fringe consists of low rolling landform with a medium to large scale, semi regular landscape pattern that creates rural character. Boundaries consist of gappy hawthorn hedges, single trees and fences. Solid woodland blocks interrupt the otherwise open landscape. A number of major roads and transport networks cross through the area and influence the surrounding landscape although many areas remain rural between these routes.

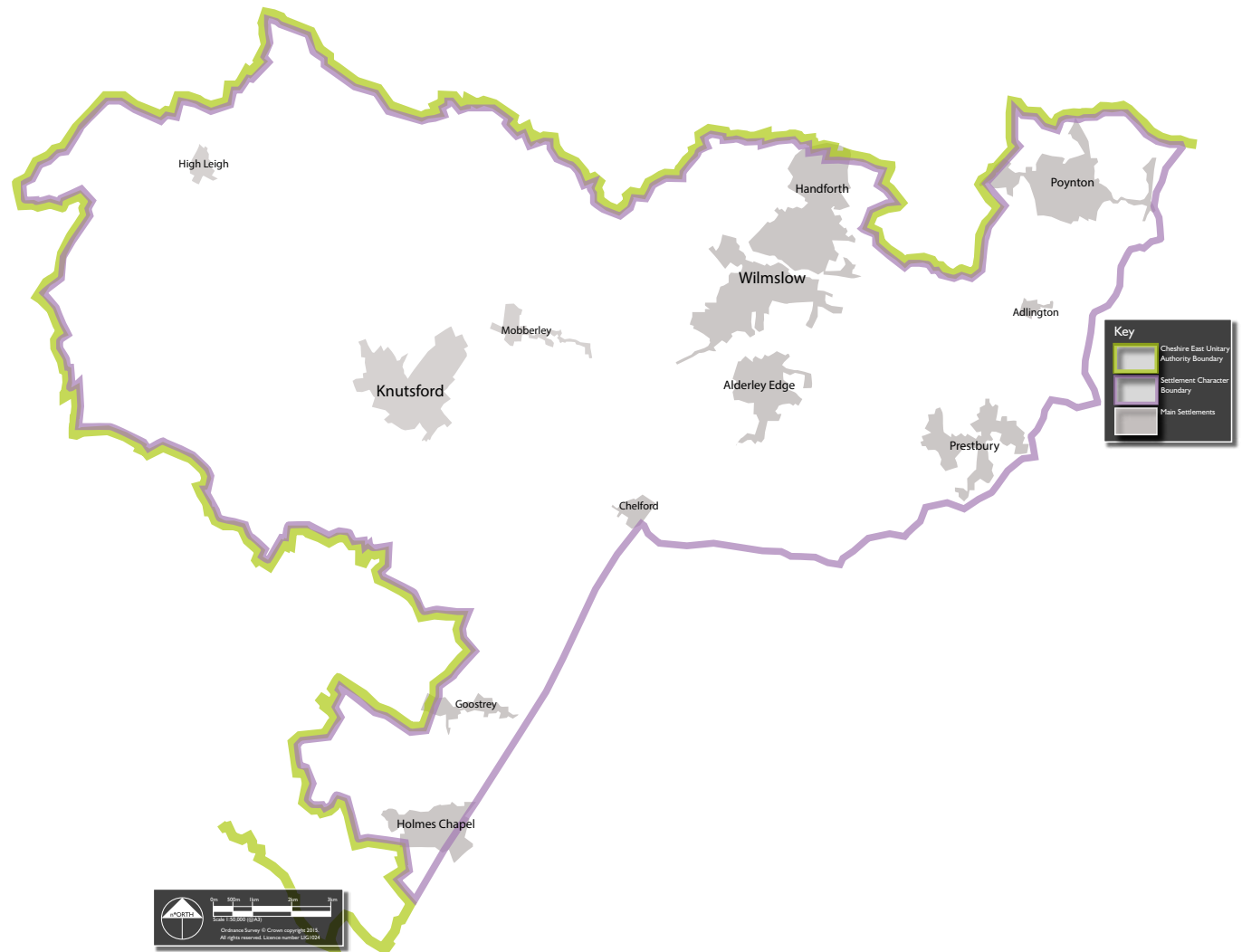


Figure ii:26 - Settlement Character Area: North Cheshire Fringe

- ii|94 To the west of Wilmslow the topography becomes flat with varying scales of landscape. There are many blocks of woodland where the urban edge of Wilmslow is completely hidden from view by dense vegetation.
- ii|95 In the east the topography is undulating, broad and open, becoming steeper further north, particularly around Alderley Edge. This area of the North Cheshire Fringe contains a number of historic estates and houses with associated gardens and parkland, some consisting of large areas of woodland that help to convey a well wooded landscape. Water bodies are a common feature in this small to medium scale landscape.
- ii|96 In the central parts of this character area around Knutsford the landscape is slightly undulating and of medium scale. The parkland within the historic estates has a strong influence on the landscape. Settlement comprises a low density scatter of dispersed farmsteads. Fields in this area are predominantly small to medium in size and regular in shape.
- ii|97 Overall this Settlement Character Area is affected by a number of incongruous elements within the landscape such as the M6 motorway, located to the west of Knutsford and Holmes Chapel, that crosses the landscape on a north to south axis. Particularly within the flat and more open landscape this becomes a visually intrusive element.
- ii|98 The North Cheshire Fringe contains five major settlements: Knutsford, Wilmslow, Poynton, Prestbury and Alderley Edge. Away from the main towns settlement mainly consists of dispersed farmsteads and dwellings with a number of nucleated villages and small hamlets. Several of



Positive Rural Transitions



Built form fronts narrow private access way. Formal picket fence forms garden boundary with cleft oak post and rail fence fronting fields.



Terrace set back behind front gardens and bordered by hedgerow fronting countryside. Parking and servicing to rear.



Properties front informal lane with a mixture of privet hedges and railings. Native hedgerow and trees forms boundary between fields and lane.



Long terrace set behind long front gardens with strong landscaping softening built form when viewed from surrounding area.

the dispersed settlements are linear in form having developed along roadways and larger nucleated villages that have undergone modern expansion, such as Chelford and Goostrey.

Settlement Fringes - The Rural Transition

ii|99 As stated previously in the Gritstone Edge Settlement Character Area the interaction of the settlement edge with the wider open countryside is key to providing both strong and defensible settlement boundaries, and also well defined, outward looking and finished settlement edges.

ii|100 The boundaries in the North Cheshire Fringe range from coursed stone/brick walling, native and ornamental hedgerows, parkland style railings, timber/concrete post/panel fences to close boarded timber fences.

ii|101 Positive solutions look to arrange built form fronting onto a street or other form of movement corridor, bordered by boundary treatments which are in keeping with their location and of a suitable height to ensure properties address their frontage. Solutions in all settlement character areas should not look to screen development from the countryside, but to soften and ground development in its setting, in keeping with the local character.

ii|102 The key is to ensure that the boundary solution draws on best practice in terms of creating the desired finished edge, which is well surveilled, with good quality detailing to the boundaries, movement corridors and elevations of the built form.

ii|103 The photographs illustrated here show existing positive and negative solutions within the North Cheshire Fringe Settlement Character Area.

Negative Rural Transitions



Rear gardens back onto paddock with varied boundary treatments, sheds, greenhouses and conservatories visible from wider countryside.



Blank elevation doesn't make most of elevated views or offer surveillance to public footpath. High timber fence and conservatory incongruous with rural interface.



Blank gable and high walls offer little surveillance of adjoining green space, although the strong landscaping softens the built form.



Cottage row has strong interface with countryside, however much of front gardens lost to parking. Whilst off road parking required, treatment of frontage could have been more sympathetic.



Typical Traditional Materials

- ii|104 Brick is the predominant building material throughout the character area but subtle variations in colour exist between settlements. Lighter brown brick is more common in smaller settlements in contrast to larger towns where a brighter red brick is often found. Contrasting brick is used for decorative effect on many buildings. Materials often vary between elevations, for instance render or painted brick on main façades and exposed brick on side elevations. Stone is most commonly found on boundary walls rather than building exteriors where it is used for trim detail or quoins.
- ii|105 Boundary treatments are a broad mix of brick and stone walls, hedges, railings and timber fencing. Some variation exists with a predominance of low stone walls and hedging in Alderley Edge for example. Paved setts can be found on some streets in Alderley Edge.

Typical Traditional Detailing

- ii|106 Buildings in the Tudor revival style are found throughout the character area. Common details typical of this period include first floor oriel windows, steep pitched roofs, mullioned windows, tall narrow windows and mock timber framing to gables. Turrets, towers and full height bays are a distinctive feature of late Victorian houses. This is very evident in parts of Alderley Edge and Wilmslow. Several properties in Alderley Edge have distinctive shaped gables. Decorative brick banding is common on terraced properties and takes various forms including: three bands of red engineering brick; alternating stretchers of red and blue brick in two bands; and multiple bands of red stretchers (e.g. River Street in



Figure ii:27 - Architectural Materials Palette



Figure ii:28 - Streetscape Materials Palette



Figure ii:29 - Traditional Detailing

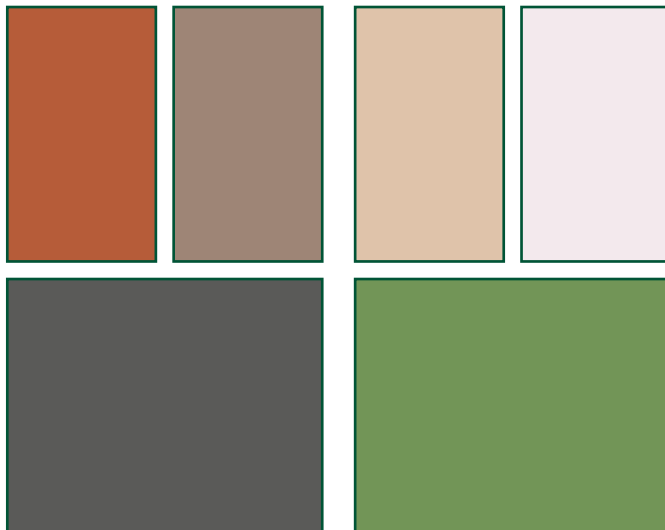


Figure ii:30 - Character Area Colour Palette

Wilmslow). Occasionally a stone band is used below first floor windows with dentilled brickwork below. A few examples of Neo-Georgian architecture can be found in Wilmslow, identifiable by the characteristic of hipped roofs with dormer windows and a white cornice under the eaves.

Settlement Character Area Design Cues

ii|107 Out of our assessment of the North Cheshire Fringe we have distilled out the typical design cues of the area. These have been highlighted in the panel to the right.

Sample Settlements

ii|108 A range of settlements have been chosen as 'sample settlements' within the North Cheshire Fringe character area which either best illustrate the typical settlement character of the area or have variations from that character which add to their uniqueness and sense of place. The settlements selected are:

- Knutsford
- Wilmslow
- Alderley Edge
- Prestbury
- Poynton
- Holmes Chapel
- Styal

ii|109 The Sample Settlements have been set-out on the following pages in the form of worksheets, each containing a general description of the settlement, it's evolution, design cues and sample imagery.

North Cheshire Fringe Design Cues:

- Settlements have well defined street hierarchies providing variety and legibility.
- 19th to 20th century archetypes dominate but examples remain of early domestic architecture.
- Varied materials, although brick is predominant. Cheshire brick often used alongside standard red engineering brick for trim detailing and coursing.
- Most housing is between two or three storeys high giving an intimate domestic scale and feel to settlements.
- Strong well enclosed street pattern.
- Many settlements have recent developments situated on the approaches to or on infill sites within them.
- Full range of boundary treatments in evidence although low sandstone walls with hedging are a strong streetscape element in some settlements.
- Mock Tudor elements seen in buildings of various styles and ages, predominately in the form of black and white timber detailing to gables.
- Original features and detailing include sash windows, decorative barge boards, gabled dormer windows, decorative timber detailing and prominent chimney stacks.
- Views of surrounding countryside adds to rural character and feel of settlements.
- The conversion of former farm buildings to residential use adds character and acts as a reminder of early settlement origins in many cases.
- Suburbs/estates of larger, grande bespoke villas in Wilmslow, Knutsford and Alderley Edge.

Sample Settlement:
Knutsford

- ii|110 Knutsford is one of the larger market towns in Cheshire comprising three medieval settlements Nether Knutsford, Over Knutsford and Cross Town.
- ii|111 The presence of Tatton Park halted expansion to the north with growth to the west, south and east, by the 1870s the three settlements merged. Villa style suburban developments to the south on Legh Road, were developed in the late 19th/early 20th century.
- ii|112 Knutsford has several Conservation Areas: Key features include Georgian and Victorian buildings which line the two principal streets, King Street and Princess Street, two large open spaces and prestigious, primarily detached villas, dating between 1870 and 1914.

ii|113 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Narrow and winding streets in centre.*
- *Buildings lie at the back of the pavements, in terrace form in the centre of the town.*
- *17th to the 20th century archetypes .*
- *Varied materials with some timber framed buildings, but brick is predominant .*
- *Most buildings are domestic in character, two or three storeys high.*
- *Wooded gateways and tree lined streets are key features of approaches into Knutsford.*
- *Village Green & Mere a focal point on edge of town centre.*
- *Victorian and Edwardian Villas.*

- ii|114 Knutsford has become a popular cafe/restaurant and shopping centre and much sought after residential area with strong physical links into Tatton Park which the community utilises.



Figure ii:31 - Figure Ground & Grain

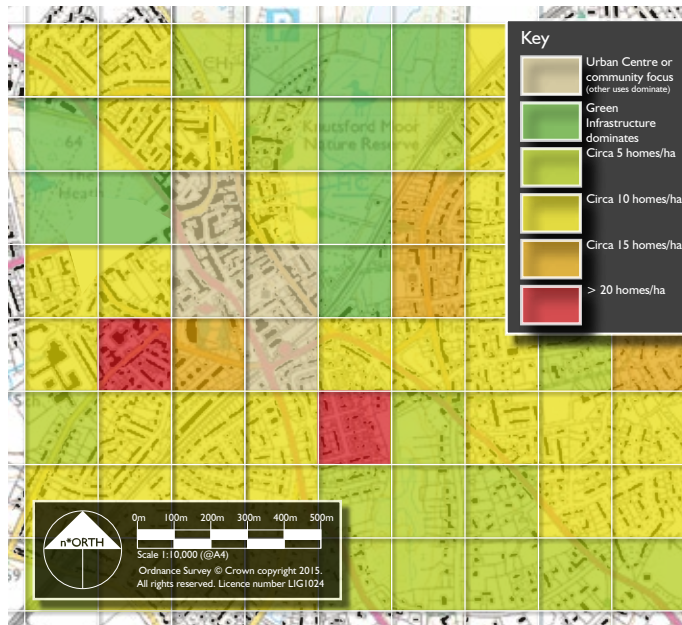


Figure ii:32 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:33 - Imagery

Sample Settlement: Wilmslow

ii|115 Wilmslow is dispersed and linear in form, extending along the B5086 between Alderley Edge and Handforth. Wilmslow was originally an Anglo Saxon settlement and may originally have been called “Le Bolyn” because of its location near to the River Bollin.

ii|116 Wilmslow remained a rural backwater comprising only a few farms and a church. The arrival of the railway in 1842 saw the rapid expansion of the village as it became a popular respite for wealthy Mancunians escaping the city. In 1894 the ancient parishes of Styal, Stanilands, Morley, Fulshaw, Chorley, Hough and Dean Row were officially agglomerated into “Greater Wilmslow”. Since then it has grown to coalesce with Alderley Edge.

ii|117 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Scale generally two storey with Tudor, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian architecture all found through the town.*
- *Strong well enclosed street pattern.*
- *Brick and render are the main external finishes.*
- *Strong suburban form with tree lined avenues and a predominance of detached and semi-detached properties.*
- *Full range of boundary treatments including hedges, railings and walls.*
- *Cheshire brick often used alongside standard red engineering brick for trim detailing and coursing.*
- *Mock tudor elements seen in buildings of various styles and ages.*

ii|118 Wilmslow is known as part of the ‘Golden Triangle’ of north east Cheshire – the other two points being Alderley Edge and Prestbury.



Figure ii:34 - Figure Ground & Grain

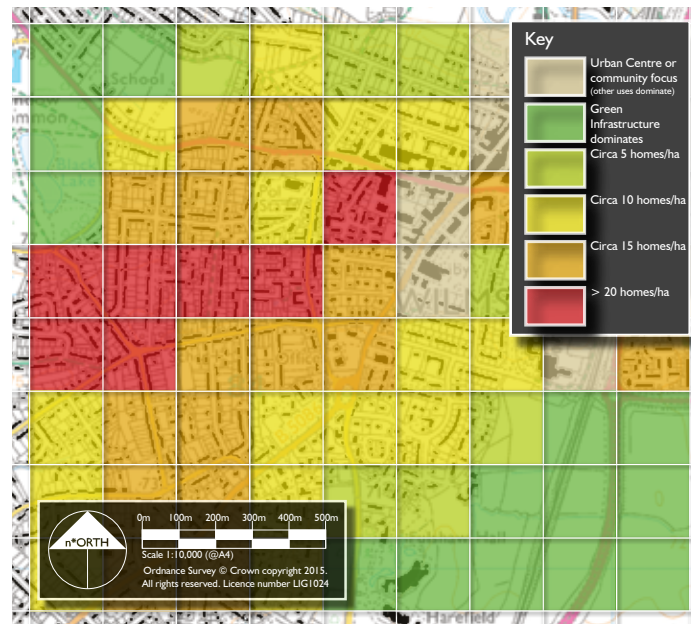


Figure ii:35 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:36 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Alderley Edge

ii|119 Alderley Edge has a dispersed radial form. Historically housing was located to the east of the railway line. Like Wilmslow, the village grew after arrival of the railway. By 1845, a planned suburb was established on The Edge, a sandstone ridge to the east of the village, with distinctive houses in large, well landscape gardens, accessed by cobbled lanes.

ii|120 In the late 19th century and early in 20th century, more modest higher density suburbs for lower income commuters were laid out around the station comprising brick built villas and semi's. Following the Second World War, The Edge came under pressure for infill housing and the expansive gardens of the original houses were subdivided.

ii|121 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Mock Tudor dominates, other archetypes include Victorian, Edwardian, neo-Georgian, Arts and Crafts and examples of modern and post modern.*
- *Typical materials include stone, brick and render.*
- *Older properties roofed in Welsh slate although small clay plain tiles and Kerridge stone slate are also found on 'Arts and Crafts' houses.*
- *Low sandstone walls with hedging common.*
- *Cobbled sett paving along some streets/lanes.*
- *Predominance of sash windows amongst Victorian/Edwardian houses.*
- *Several churches and substantial school buildings provide local landmarks.*

ii|122 Alderley Edge has a strongly defined village centre, focussed around the tree-lined high street, around which are a series of heavily wooded streets located primarily within the Villas Conservation Area.

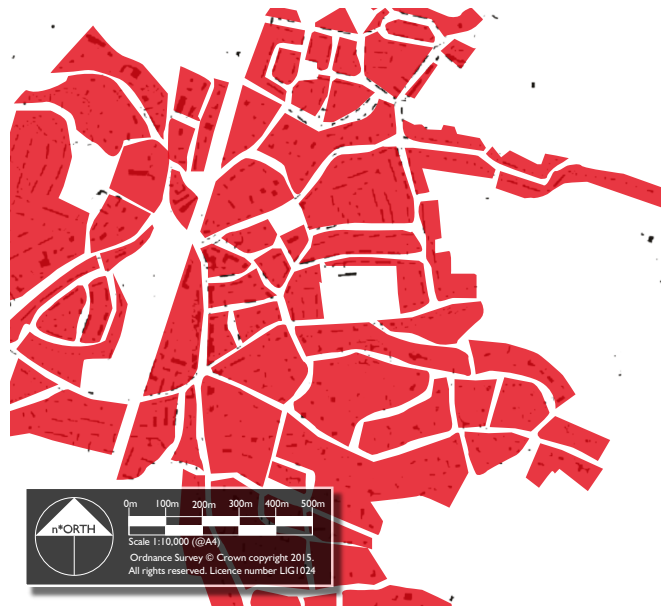


Figure ii:37 - Figure Ground & Grain

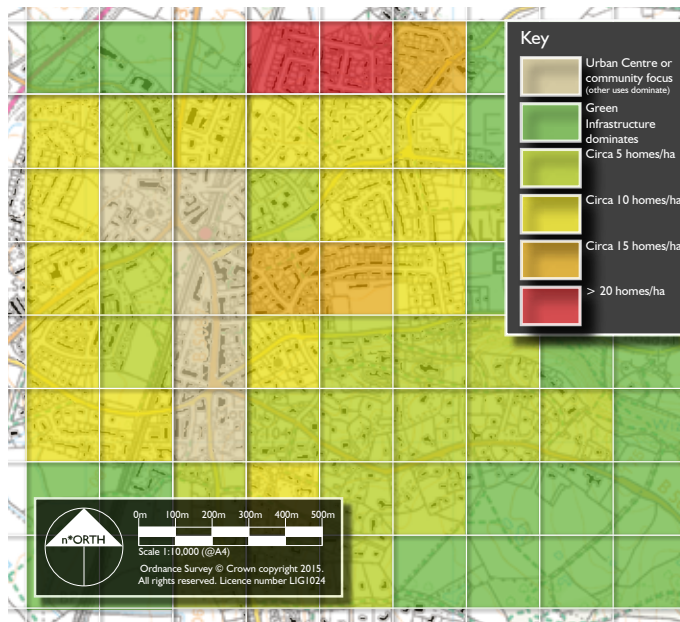


Figure ii:38 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:39 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Prestbury

- ii|123 The original settlement of Prestbury developed along the main route through the village with the 12th Century Church marking the historic centre.
- ii|124 The River Bollin provides a natural boundary to development from the east, this changed when a bridge was built over the Bollin enabling a new road and further development to take place.
- ii|125 During the 20th century Prestbury increasingly became a commuter village and a tourist attraction. The historic core has remained, with development taking the form of ribbon development along main roads or substantial houses set into own grounds.
- ii|126 The settlement pattern bears a slight resemblance to the 'Legs of Man' with one leg stretching west, one north west and the third southwards. In-between, green wedges comprise fields, the river valley and two golf courses. The main settlement is surrounded by Green Belt.
- ii|127 There are a number of listed buildings within the village centre, many constructed in hand-made brick, three story and include weavers' garrets and include a few original farm buildings.
- ii|128 Key Settlement Design Cues:
 - *Linear form to the dense core of the village.*
 - *Dispersed, lower density dwellings surrounding the village – key characteristic.*
 - *Cheshire brick, timber frame, white render, sandstone and millstone grit all in evidence.*
 - *Winding roads dominated by trees.*
 - *Post war housing off Castle Hill and Macclesfield Road is higher density than pre-war properties, recent housing developments are higher still.*



Figure ii:40 - Figure Ground & Grain

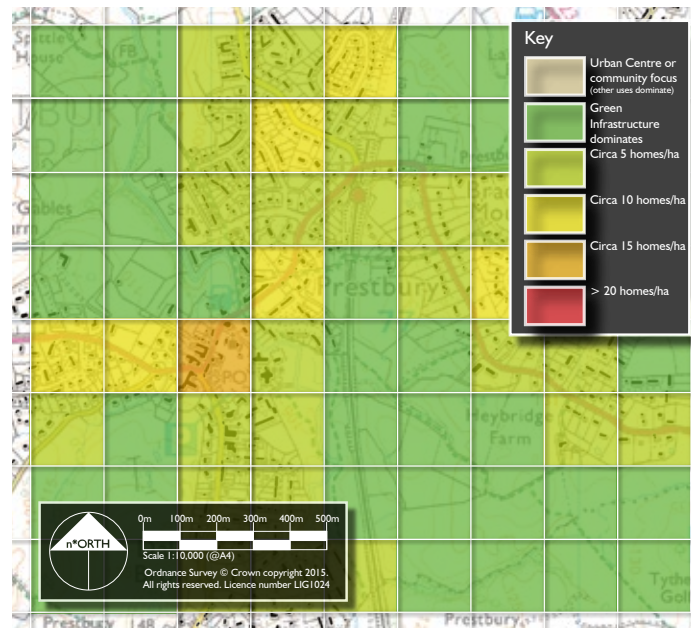


Figure ii:41 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:42 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Poynton

ii|129 Poynton was first settled by the Anglo Saxons and has grown from an area along London Road, Park Lane and Chester Road into a small town comprising around 6000 dwellings. Poynton lies at the eastern edge of the Cheshire Plain. It is a relatively compact settlement with boundaries that are tightly defined by the surrounding Green Belt. Despite its size, it retains a pleasant village feel and character, benefiting from a shared surface public realm enhancement scheme in the town centre.

ii|130 From the Late Middle Ages, coal was mined and the collieries, under the ownership of the Lords Vernon from 1832 until their closure in 1935. At its peak, there were over 60 mine shafts dotted around Poynton. In the late 20th century, Poynton became a commuter town for Manchester and Stockport.

ii|131 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Radial settlement focussed around the cross roads of the A523 (London Road) and A5149 (Chester Road)*
- *Surrounded by substantial housing estates dating from mid to late 20th Century*
- *Diverse character with broad range of housing typologies and ages*
- *Older housing stock comprises predominantly of two storey miner's cottages and terraces.*
- *Red and brown brick are the traditional building materials*
- *Simple architectural detailing to older properties including stone lintels and cills*
- *Larger detached and semi-detached houses on main approach roads with finer detailing.*



Figure ii:43 - Figure Ground & Grain

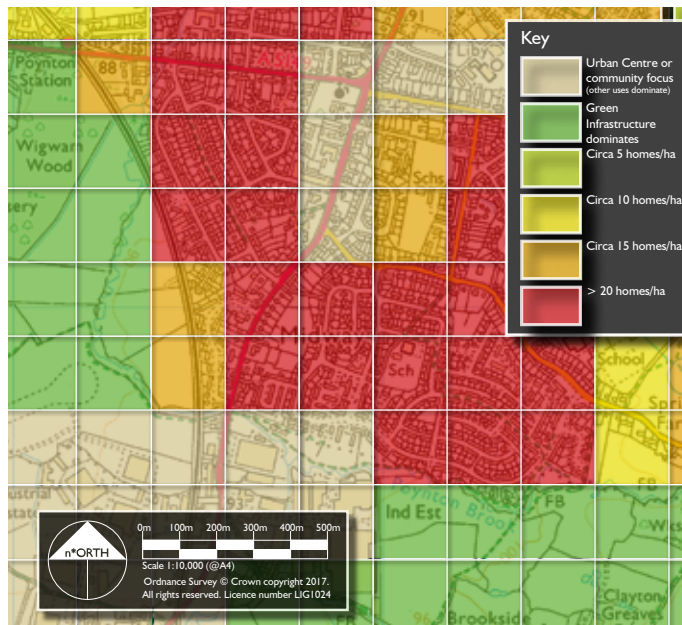


Figure ii:44 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:45 - Imagery

Holmes Chapel

ii|132 Holmes Chapel is a compact settlement surrounded by farm land. It is located approximately one mile from Junction 18 of the M6. The River Dane forms the northern boundary of the village which grew up around the cross roads formed by drover's and coaching routes. Historically, the village catered for both travellers and the local farming population. There is also evidence of early iron manufacturing.

ii|133 At the heart of the village is The Square, where the 15th Century Church stands. The Church forms part of the central Conservation Area, extending from the mini roundabouts on the north side of the village to approximately the fire station and old wine bar. In 1753, the village consisted of 19 buildings, 15 of which were destroyed by fire in June of that year. The Church, Red Lion and two cottages were the only surviving buildings.

ii|134 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Significant mid to late 20th century expansion has resulted in a wide mix of housing types and styles.*
- *Most of the older buildings are located along the main radial routes into the village and around The Square.*
- *Buildings are mainly brick or rendered with a few isolated half-timbered houses such as Cotton Hall.*
- *Many brick houses have stone detailing to the windows. Bricks are generally mixed shades of red, typical of 'Cheshire Bricks'.*
- *Most housing is between one and two storeys in height.*
- *The railway is an important factor in the development of the village with a number of finely detailed railway cottages around the station.*

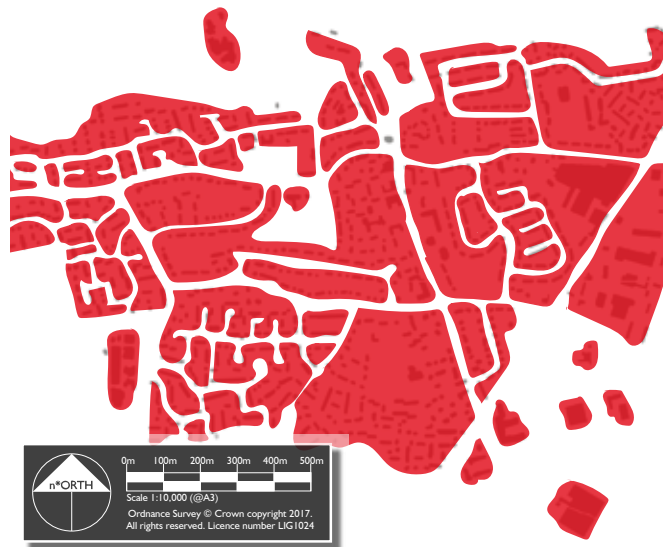


Figure ii:46 - Figure Ground & Grain

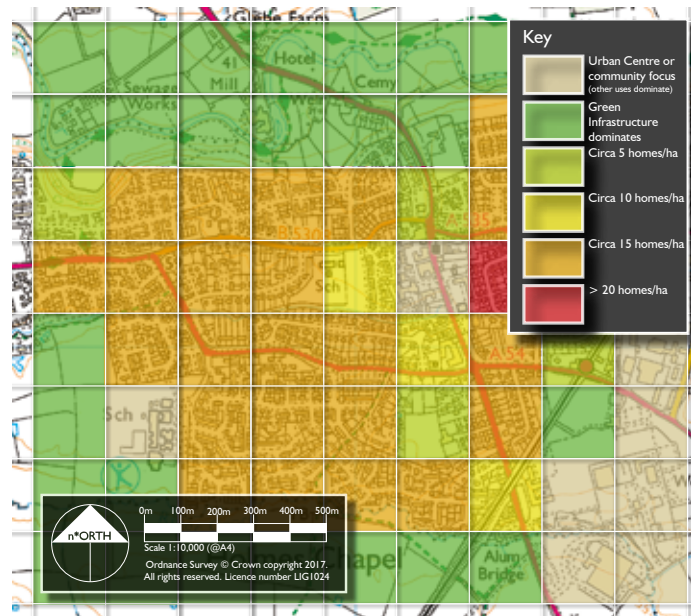


Figure ii:47 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:48 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Styal

- ii|135 Styal is a dispersed linear village. Housing is concentrated along the main streets of Hollin Lane, Altrincham Road and Holly Lane.
- ii|136 Hollin Lane has a distinct character with housing on one side overlooking open fields with semi-detached and detached properties circa late 19th/early 20th Century with later infill. In contrast, Altrincham Road has a rural character, with cottages and converted farm buildings in small clusters, set back from the main road down cobbled lanes.
- ii|137 Styal is a commuter village but has its origins in the Cotton industry. Located on the River Bollin is Quarry Bank Mill, built in 1784 and now a museum. Mill workers cottages can be found in the village.

Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Strong rural character with cottages and converted farm buildings.*
- *Slate is the predominant roofing material, a number of properties have thatched roofs.*
- *Mock Tudor timber buildings add variety.*
- *Detailing includes decorative barge boards, gabled dormer windows, decorative timber detailing and prominent chimney stacks.*
- *Typical boundary treatments include hedges, timber fencing or open frontages.*
- *Cottages retain original sash windows.*
- *Long views across surrounding Cheshire Plains.*

- ii|139 Despite its proximity to Manchester Airport, the village retains a strong rural setting with views across open farmland and good access to the River Bollin and surrounding Country Park.



Figure ii:49 - Figure Ground & Grain

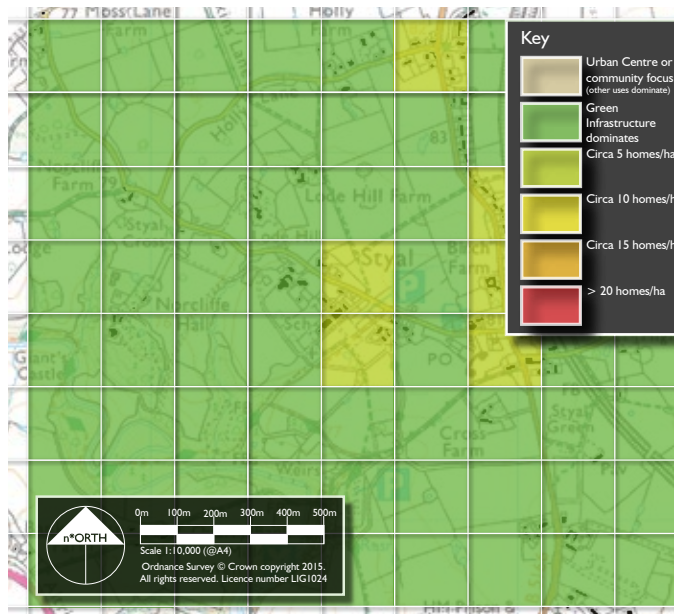


Figure ii:50 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:51 - Imagery

Silk, Cotton & Market Towns

- ii|140 The Silk Cotton and Market Towns covers the central area of the Cheshire East District. Rural in character and defined by a higher than average density of woodland compared with much of Cheshire. It acts as a transitional zone between the flatter expanses in the south of the area and the higher ground to the north towards the Pennine Fringe.
- ii|141 The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment contains seven Landscape Types within the Silk Cotton and Market Towns boundary:
- High Farms and Woods
 - Mossland
 - Lower Farms and Woods
 - Upland Footslopes
 - River Valley
 - Sandy Woods
 - Estate Woods and Mere
- ii|142 Generally the landscape character within the Silk Cotton and Market Towns can be described as a medium scale landscape with generally limited views due to woodland and hedgerows.
- ii|143 In the west of the Silk Cotton and Market Towns hawthorn hedgerows and hedgerow trees predominantly demarcate field boundaries. Further east towards the Peak District Uplands there is a gradual increase in the appearance of dry stone walls and stone buildings. Overall the field pattern is a mix of regular, irregular and semi-regular form. The loss of hedgerow boundaries replaced by fencing is increasingly common. The land is predominantly used for arable and pastoral farming.
- ii|144 The level of woodland is higher in this area than most of the county, occurring in block plantations

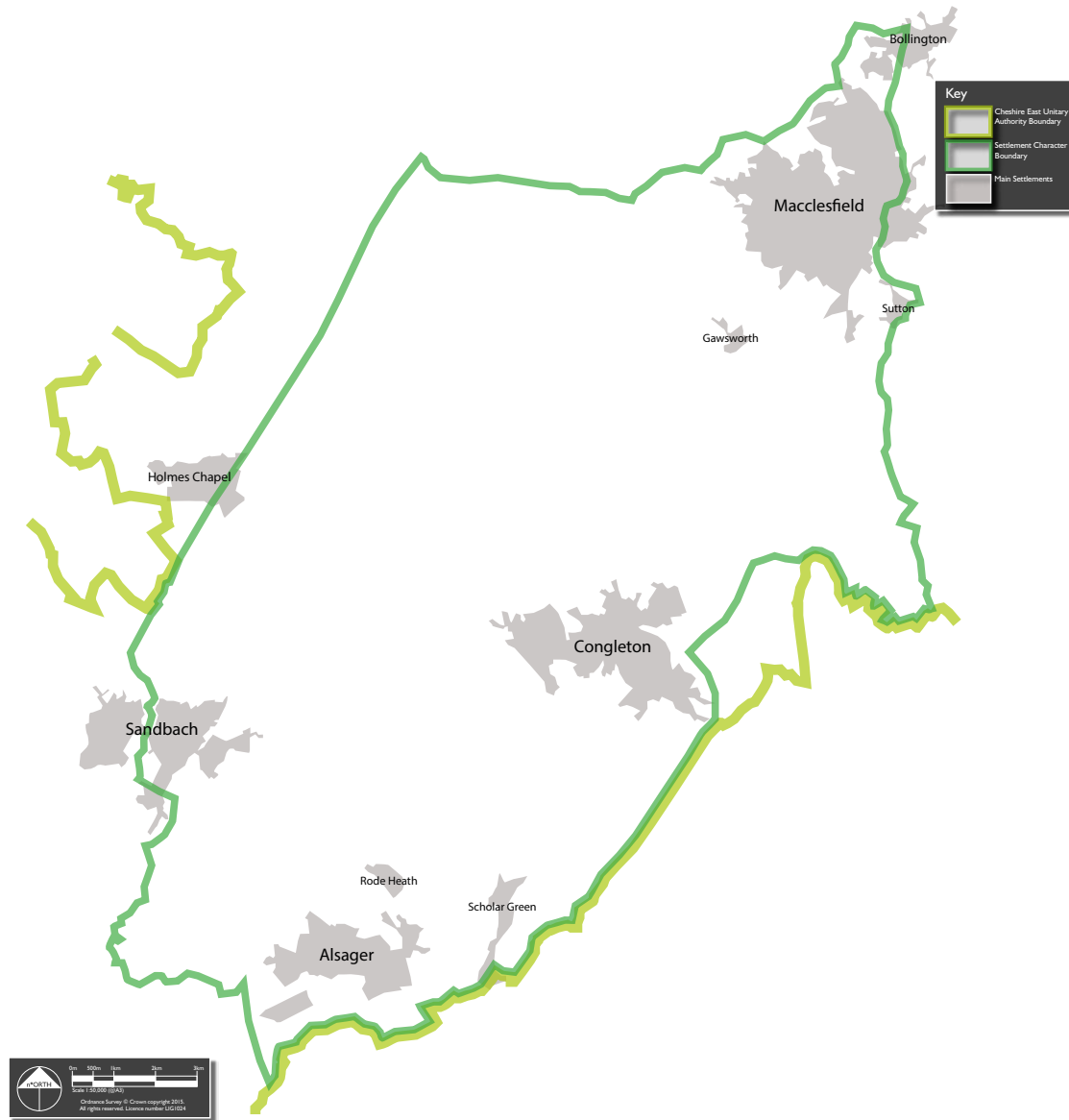


Figure ii:52 - Settlement Character Area: Silk, Cotton & Market Towns

on estates and along watercourses, other vegetation is often associated with stream corridors, field drains and ponds. Towards the south, many areas appear well wooded, with intact hedgerows and large woodland blocks. In the north, where there is less vegetation on areas of higher ground extensive views can be gained, although, in the south views are often limited due to the lack of elevated vantage points, and intervening landscape.

- ii|145 In the north of the Silk Cotton and Market towns the topography varies from 80 – 180 A.O.D. and is gently to moderately undulating with steeper slopes around streams and rivers and approaching the Pennine Fringe to the north east. Whereas in the south, the landform is relatively flat.
- ii|146 The River Dane flows through the middle of this area where much of the steeper ground is wooded and the valley floor consists of pasture land. Field boundaries around the river are generally marked by post and wire fences creating wide expanses of grassland interrupted by the line of vegetation adjacent to the river.
- ii|147 Towards the north of the area, settlement largely retains a dispersed low density pattern, rural in nature despite the presence of larger towns. Further south it remains dispersed, although it increases to a medium density. Small winding lanes cross through the area over the undulating landform.
- ii|148 The Silk Cotton and Market towns contains four large settlements: Macclesfield, a large compact radial settlement, Alsager a small dispersed radial town which has expanded around the junction of the B5077 Crewe Road/Lawton Road and the B5078 Sandbach Road, Congleton on the banks of the River Dane and Sandbach a compact radial market town.



Positive Rural Transitions



Properties front road with strong field boundaries and intermittent tree planting softening built form, but not hiding it.



New development at Sandbach looking out on all sides across landscaped transition zones towards native boundary hedge.



Traditional barn (now converted to residential uses) fronting out onto lane with verges and hedgerows opposite forming boundary with adjoining fields.



Large detached properties (lost in mature gardens) with individual accesses onto lane. The native hedgerows and mature trees create a very soft and established landscape setting for this location.

Settlement Fringes - The Rural Transition

- ii|149 The interaction of the settlement edge with the wider open countryside within the Silk, Cotton and Market Towns Settlement Character Area is a mix of the North Cheshire Fringe and Gritstone Edge approaches due to this settlement character area being sandwiched between the two.
- ii|150 The boundaries range from coursed stone/brick walling, native and ornamental hedgerows, Cheshire/parkland style railings, concrete post/panel fences to close boarded timber fences.
- ii|151 As previously, positive solutions look to arrange built form fronting onto a street or other forms of movement corridor, bordered by boundary treatments which are in keeping with their location. Solutions in all settlement character areas should not look to screen development from the countryside, but to soften and ground development in its setting, in keeping with the local character.
- ii|152 The key is to ensure that the boundary solution draws on best practice in terms of creating the desired finished edge, which is well surveilled, with good quality hard and soft detailing to the boundary solutions, movement corridors and elevations of the built form.
- ii|153 The photographs illustrated here show existing positive and negative solutions within the Silk, Cotton and Market Towns Settlement Character Area.

Negative Rural Transitions



The native hedgerow has been removed and replaced with a variety of post and panel fences. Views into the gardens can be had of sheds, greenhouses and conservatories, impacting on the setting of the adjoining countryside.



A new development in Bosley which turns its back on the main road and surrounding countryside giving it an inward looking and unwelcoming feel.



Views onto the backs of housing. Hedgerow replaced with low fences to maximise views across fields. The variety of boundary treatments and garden storage solutions create a negative view when looking towards the settlement.



Typical Traditional Materials

ii|154 Brick and render are the traditional choice for external walls with localised areas of stone closer to the Gritstone Edge character area. Timber is used selectively for decoration for example in the form of bargeboards and gable decoration. Stone often appears on higher status buildings for bays, window detailing or horizontal courses. However, that said, there are a number of surviving mediaeval timber framed buildings in Sandbach, Congleton and surrounding villages. Workers cottages and terraces are generally treated more simply. Slate is the predominant material for roofing.

ii|155 Typical boundary treatments include brick wall, railings and hedging. Examples of rubble stone walling can also be seen particularly in Macclesfield and Congleton and surrounding villages.

Typical Traditional Detailing

ii|156 Traditional detailing varies depending on the housing typology. Terraced housing is simply detailed with common features including wedge lintels, tall vertical windows, chimneys and arched or rectangular fanlights. Typical embellishments on this standard design palette include string courses in brick or stone, dentilled brickwork to corbals, eaves brackets and bay windows.

ii|157 Larger detached and semi-detached properties are typically characterised by more ornate detailing including moulded stonework, decorative brickwork, porches and mock Tudor effect to gables.



Figure ii:53 - Architectural Materials Palette



Figure ii:54 - Streetscape Materials Palette



Figure ii:55 - Traditional Detailing

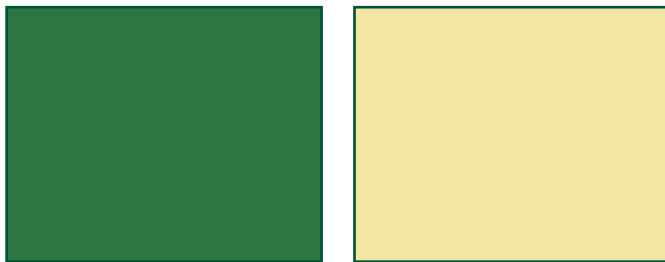
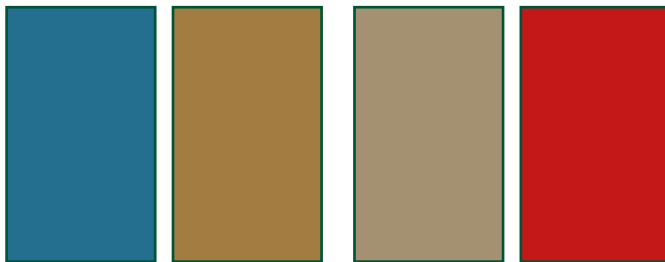


Figure ii:56 - Character Area Colour Palette

Settlement Character Area Design Cues

- ii|158 Out of our assessment of the Silk, Cotton and Market towns character area we have distilled out the typical design cues of the area. These have been highlighted in the panel to the right.

Sample Settlements

- ii|159 A range of settlements have been chosen as 'sample settlements' within the Silk, Cotton & Market towns character area which either best illustrate the typical settlement character of the area or have variations from that character which add to their uniqueness and sense of place. The settlements selected are:

- Alsagar
- Sandbach
- Macclesfield
- Congleton
- Scholar Green
- Sutton

- ii|160 The Sample Settlements have been set-out on the following pages in the form of worksheets, each containing a general description of the settlement, it's evolution, design cues and sample imagery.

Silk, Cotton & Market Town Design Cues:

- All archetypes are represented within the character area.
- Georgian town houses sit on outer fringes of settlement centres.
- Residential properties step and flow with the gently rolling topography.
- Town centres are surrounded by a fine grain of lanes with residential properties immediately adjacent to or located upon the main streets.
- Streets and lanes are well overlooked and enclosed.
- Garden Suburb style housing areas have matured into pleasant neighbourhoods.
- Less terraced housing found in smaller settlements.
- Storey heights vary from one to three storeys typically and the massing varies greatly depending on historical period, status of building and topography.
- Features include single and full height bay windows, ridge detailing and prominent chimney stacks. Higher status properties set back behind small front gardens.
- Brick and whitewashed brick dominates, with localised areas of stone closer to the Gritstone Edge character area.
- Landmark and header buildings found within and around the settlements.
- Landscape setting, views and footpaths out to countryside important in all settlements.

Sample Settlement:

Macclesfield

ii|161 Macclesfield is a large compact radial settlement, astride the valley slopes of the River Bollin. It is a medieval market town, once surrounded by town walls, ramparts and a fortified manor. The fortifications were destroyed in the civil war by the parliamentarians after they displaced the Royalists.

ii|162 During the 19th Century Macclesfield was the biggest producer of finished silk in the country and a number of mills still stand today, many converted to offices and apartments. This mill town heritage can be seen in the typical mill workers terraced housing, as well in the vernacular three storey weavers cottages which jostle amongst the more generic two storey terraces.

ii|163 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Tudor, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian architecture are all found through the town.*
- *Mill workers terraces dominate the town centre fringes.*
- *Georgian town houses overlook Park Lane.*
- *The terraces and weavers cottage step up along the streets which flow with the rolling topography.*
- *Strong well enclosed street pattern.*
- *Town centre is surrounded by rows of terraces, beyond which is a mix of 20th Century housing suburbs and estates.*
- *Victorian, Edwardian and 20th Century suburbs enclose much of the towns outer fringes.*

ii|164 Macclesfield has an active industrial base, attracting a diverse population which is reflected in the form and density of housing which, in turn, is influenced by the topography on which the town has grown.



Figure ii:57 - Figure Ground & Grain

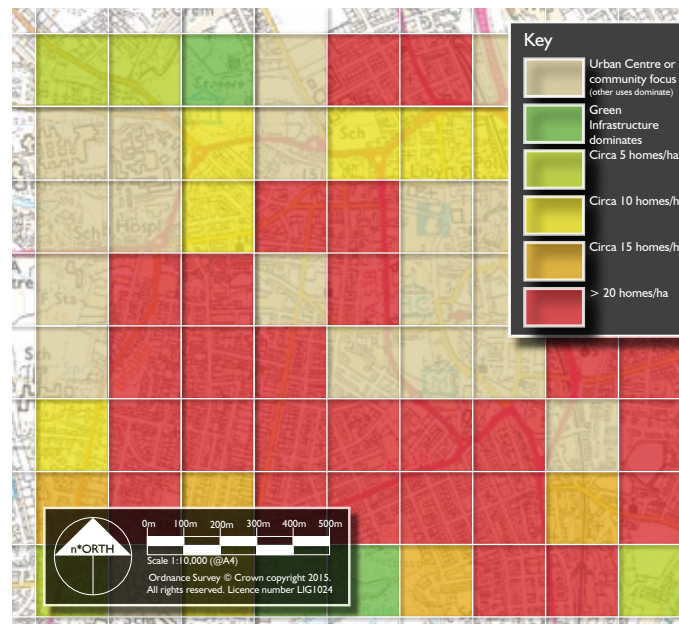


Figure ii:58 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:59 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Congleton

ii|165 Congleton takes a linear form along the southern slopes of the River Dane just above the flood plain. The Dane and Priestly Fields form green corridors into the heart of the town.

ii|166 The first settlements in the area were Neolithic. Congleton became a market town after Vikings destroyed nearby Davenport. In 1451 the River Dane flooded and destroyed the wooden bridge, the town mill and many timber framed buildings. The town centre then grew up on higher ground, where the present day High Street is. Much of Congleton's early prosperity was derived from leather working and lace making, the first silk spinning mill opening in 1755.

ii|167 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Predominance of terraced archetypes in centre.*
- *Well defined streets within the town centre with buildings to back of pavement.*
- *Row of late Georgian and Regency properties along Moody Street create strong townscape.*
- *Mixture of seventeenth to twentieth century buildings set within medieval burghage plots.*
- *Topography adds to townscape quality.*
- *Use of a limited palette of natural building materials of timber, brick, local stone and slate roofs.*
- *Unfolding views along Lawton Street/High Street with a continuous building line provide strong enclosure to street.*

ii|168 Some timber-framed medieval buildings remain but many were swept away in the seventeenth century, built form now dominated by brick.



Figure ii:60 - Figure Ground & Grain



Figure ii:61 - Gross Residential Densities

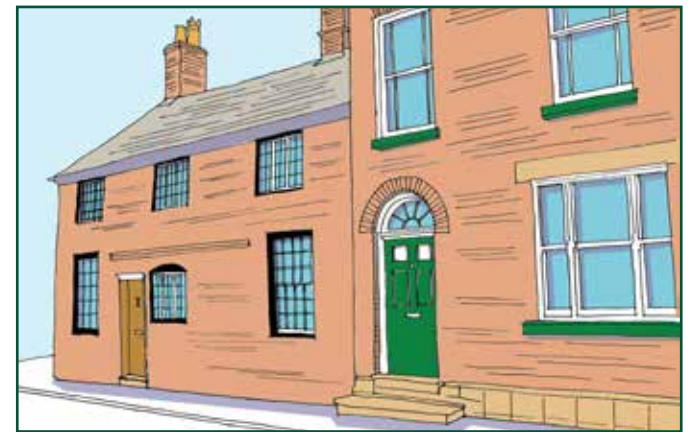


Figure ii:62 - Imagery

Sample Settlement: Sandbach

- ii|169 Sandbach is an historic Market Town which pre-dates the Domesday book. This history can be seen in the architecture and layout of the southern part of the town. Sandbach had a strong silk industry in the 19th Century, of which two mills survive today, creating landmarks within the skyline, along with the church tower, market and town halls.
- ii|170 More recently ERF and Foden were key manufacturers producing traction engines and then trucks. Little evidence is left of this industry today except for a terrace of workers cottages, Fodens Terrace.
- ii|171 Historic back lanes emanating from the main streets and market squares still survive today and create an interesting and intricate series of residential lanes within the southern edge of the town centre.
- ii|172 Key Settlement Design Cues:
- *Tudor, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian architecture are all found within the town.*
 - *A fine grain of residential lanes/secondary streets lie immediately adjacent to the main streets.*
 - *Streets are well overlooked.*
 - *Streets and lanes curve up the hills into the town centre creating unfolding views.*
 - *Strong well enclosed urban spaces.*
 - *Town centre is surrounded by rows of terraces, beyond which is a mix of 20th Century housing suburbs and estates.*
 - *Mature 'Garden Suburb' style housing (i.e. Park Lane).*
- ii|173 Architectural variety and a highly permeable and legible town centre give Sandbach an historic and interesting Sense of Place.



Figure ii:63 - Figure Ground & Grain

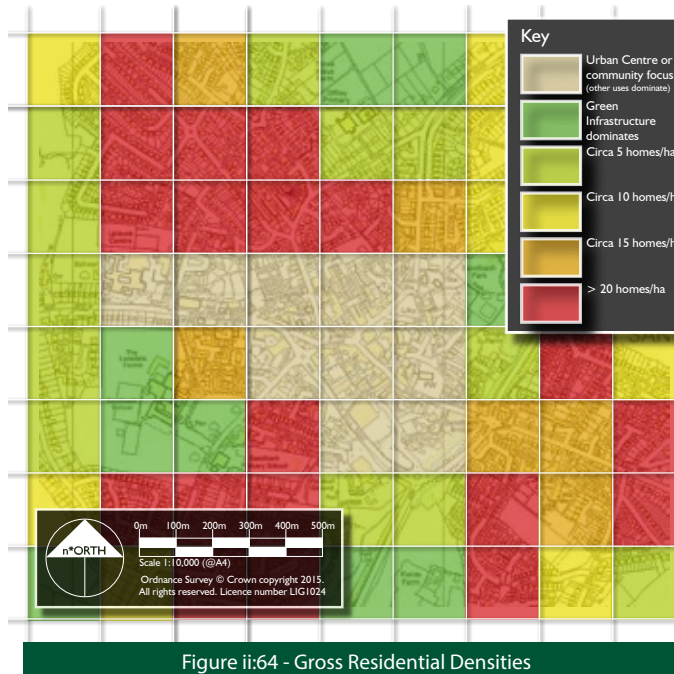


Figure ii:64 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:65 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Alsager

- ii|174 Alsager is a small dispersed radial town which has expanded around the junction of the B5077 Crewe Road/Lawton Road and the B5078 Sandbach Road.
- ii|175 Historically, Alsager was a small farming village until the 19th century when, due to its rail connections and rural character, it became a popular place to live for managers from the nearby Potteries. During the Second World War, a large armaments factory was built outside the town at Radway Green, and the town grew to house the influx of munition workers.

ii|176 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *A broad mix of building styles and ages with detached/semi-detached Victorian villas interspersed with short rows of terraces and modern infill developments of flats and houses.*
- *Few terraced houses, mainly within the Radway Estate and in town centre.*
- *Buildings mainly two storey with a number of bungalows in residential areas.*
- *Victorian Villas dating back from the 1850's front onto Fields Road and are designated as a Conservation Area.*
- *Later 19th Century development of fine semi-detached and detached homes extend along Station Road. Features include single and full height bay windows, ridge detailing and prominent chimney stacks. Properties set back behind low brick walls.*

- ii|177 In the centre of the town is Alsager Mere. Once the focal point of the town, the isolated pool is now only accessible by two fenced public viewing areas and by local residents who have gardens backing onto the waters.



Figure ii:66 - Figure Ground & Grain

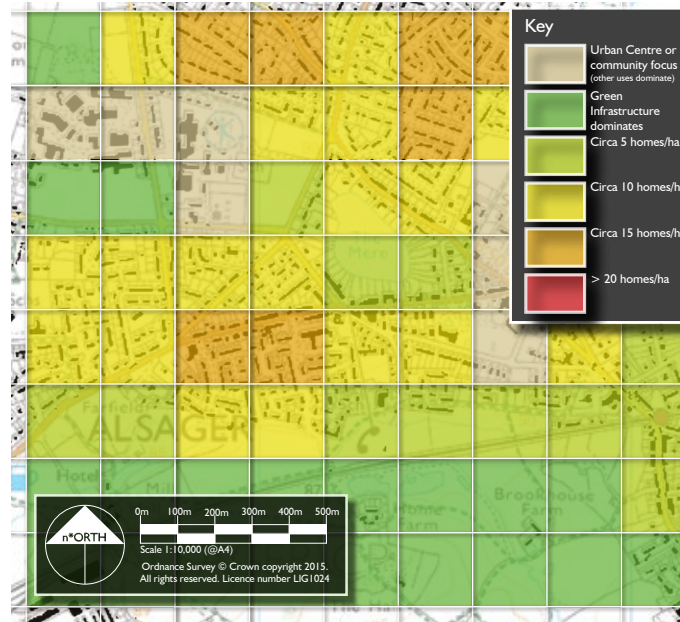


Figure ii:67 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:68 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Scholar Green

ii|178 Scholar Green is a linear compact settlement encompassing the original hamlets of Hall Green, Little Moss and Kent Green.

ii|179 Historically, the economy focused on agriculture and there is surviving evidence of 16th and 17th Century farmhouses, many modified and serving as farmhouses to current farms.

ii|180 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *The thatched roofed Bleeding Wolf Public House (built in 1936) is a key landmark along the A34.*
- *No coherent building style or strong vernacular.*
- *Scale of architecture is mostly domestic, including a number of single storey houses.*
- *Mostly detached and semi-detached properties.*
- *Rural setting with views west across the Plain and thus good access to countryside via footpaths.*
- *Landmark buildings, (some Grade II*), including Little Moreton Hall, Rode Hall and Ramsdell Hall.*
- *Predominance of brick and white render.*
- *Boundaries of low brick walls with hedging.*
- *Victorian archetypes dominate. Substantial estate of post war housing to north.*

ii|181 The surrounding flat topography created an easy route for the cutting of the Macclesfield Canal which runs along the eastern edge of the village. As a result of its evolution it lacks a heart, normally associated with a traditional village, however it includes a good array of amenities including three pubs, primary school, post office, shops and churches. Therefore there is an opportunity to unify the settlement and create a sense of place within new development.

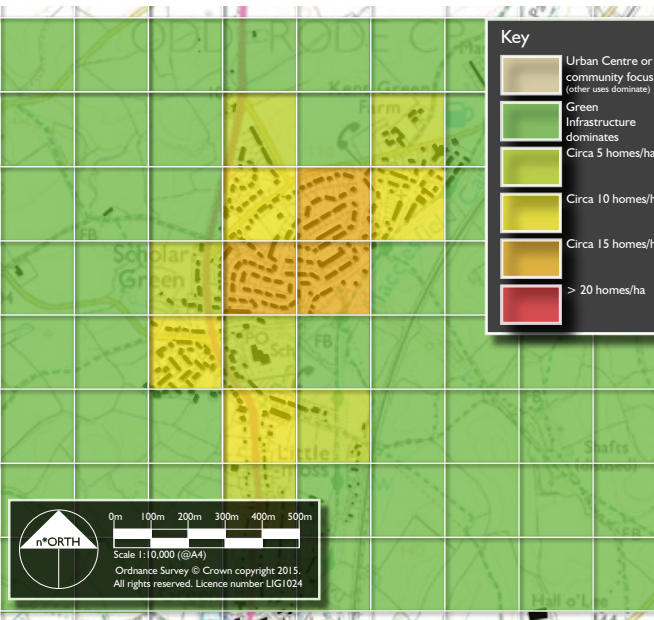
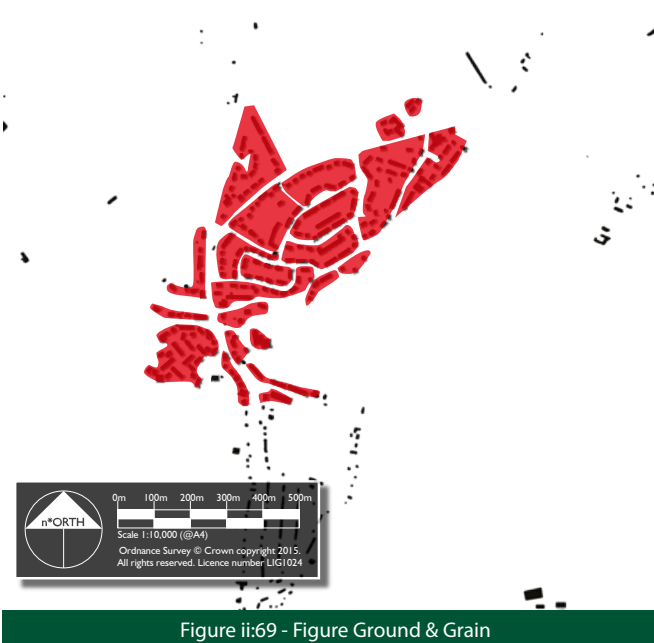


Figure ii:70 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:71 - Imagery

Sutton

- ii|182 Sutton is a compact radial village with a semi-rural character located to the south east of Macclesfield.
- ii|183 The area was associated with silk printing and fabric 'finishing'. The availability of water for power, bleaching and dyeing led to the building of several mills between 1800 and 1875 including the Sutton Lane Ends Mill on Church Lane.
- ii|184 A Village green and war memorial at junction of Hall Lane and Walker Lane sit at the heart of the village.
- ii|185 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Georgian and Victorian architecture are well represented in the village.*
- *Low stone wall boundaries are a unifying feature within the village core.*
- *Streets and lanes are well enclosed and overlooked by the surrounding houses.*
- *Small rows of cottages contribute to character.*
- *Wide grass verge and mature trees along Walker Lane are a key landscape feature.*
- *Strong landscape setting with many mature trees providing a green backdrop to houses.*
- *Topography plays a key role, revealing long views towards surrounding countryside.*
- *Stone and Cheshire/red brick are the predominant materials.*
- *Detached dwellings and community buildings set at different angles and distances from the street creating garden forecourts.*

- ii|186 Most post-war housing development has taken place to the north of the village centre between Church Lane and Hall Lane.

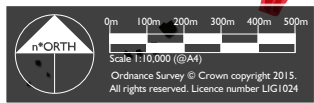


Figure ii:72 - Figure Ground & Grain

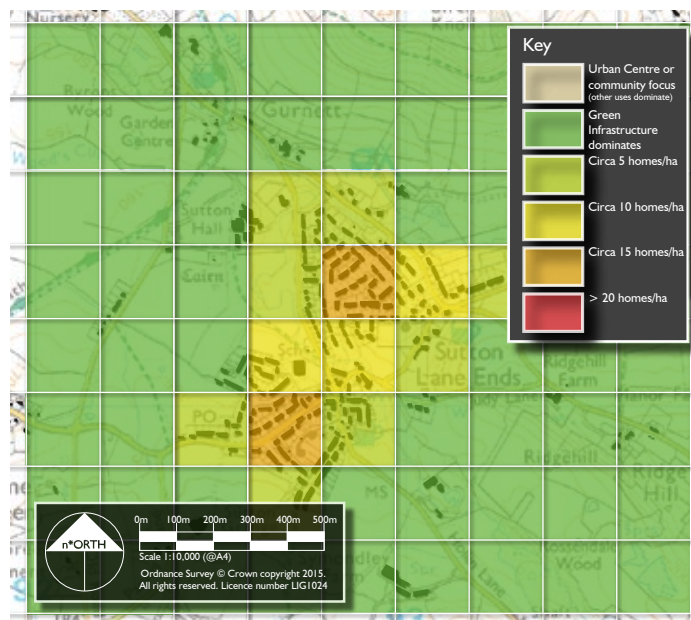


Figure ii:73 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:74 - Imagery

Salt & Engineering Towns

ii|187 The Salt & Engineering Towns Settlement Character Area forms the central area of the district. The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment contains four Landscape Types within the Salt and Engineering Towns boundary:

- East Lowland Plain
- Salt Flashes
- River Valley
- Lower farms and Woods

ii|188 Generally the landscape character within the Salt & Engineering Towns can be described as predominantly flat and highly influenced by the large urban centres of Crewe, Middlewich and Sandbach. The landscape pattern consists of a variety of small to medium, irregular and regular fields.

ii|189 The low woodland cover and lack of hedgerow trees creates an open landscape with expansive views. Long views to the Pennine Hills in the east and Sandstone Ridge to the west can be gained.

ii|190 The Salt & Engineering Towns consists of both the more rural areas where dispersed farmsteads and hamlets are linked by a network of winding lanes and, contrastingly, areas dominated by the large scale urban centres and industrial sites. These are prominent features within the landscape due to the lack of vegetation.

ii|191 Several transport links cross through this landscape character area, particularly the railway that is described in the Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment as being visually intrusive in such a generally flat landscape.

ii|192 The Trent and Mersey Canal follows the south western edge of Sandbach and the River Wheelock

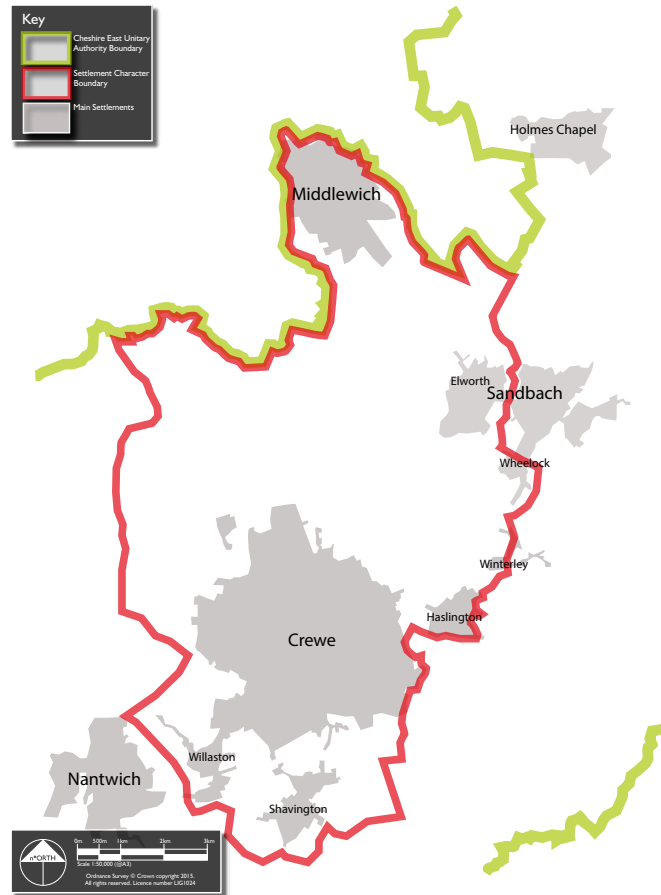


Figure ii:75 - Settlement Character Area: Salt & Engineering Towns

is located to the south, here drainage is poor and has resulted in a number of small scale water bodies with peripheral reed beds that introduce an alternative character to this agricultural landscape. These water bodies make up the Sandbach Flashes designated as SSSIs due to their habitat and wildlife value. Field patterns in this area are small and irregular contrasting with the majority of the Salt & Engineering Towns.

ii|193 The western edge of the Salt & Engineering Towns contains the Upper Weaver Character Area consisting of the River Weaver and the Shropshire Union Canal along with a number of water bodies that are said to have been created by the subsidence that occurred following the extensive brine pumping in the 19th century.

ii|194 The landscape character along the western edge differs from the majority of the area being very rural with a lack of large settlements and only small dispersed hamlets and farmsteads. The topography changes from complex and relatively steep upstream, to much flatter and more uniform further downstream. Blocks of bankside trees and a pattern of medium sized regular fields enclosed by hedgerows are features of this part of the Settlement Character Area.

ii|195 Crewe is the largest of the urban centres and is dominated by transport infrastructure. The town's most significant period of growth centred upon the construction of the railway station and works.

ii|196 Middlewich is the second largest of the towns in the area, located at the confluence of the rivers Dane, Croco and Wheelock. Three canals pass through the town as well as three major roads. Water is a major influence generally across this character area.

Positive Rural Transitions ✓



Terraces and cottages front country lane with varied front garden depths adding variety to streetscene. Walls and hedgerows form garden boundaries with shared surface informal lane accessing properties. Native hedgerow forms boundary to countryside.



Open plan gardens of large detached properties create a more open feel in the streetscene. A landscape buffer forms the interface with the countryside and offers filtered views between the trunks of trees and from the settlement.



Access road forms strong edge to settlement with houses located hard up to back of footpath or behind large front gardens offering variety along the frontage. Hedgerow and copse forms interface to wider rural landscape.



Detached properties set back in well-planted front gardens, bordered by a mix of hedged and stone-walled front gardens. The wall here is well-constructed, but could do with being 1.2m in height as opposed to circa 1.5m to preserve surveillance of the street.

Settlement Fringes - The Rural Transition

ii|197 The interaction of the settlement edge with the wider open countryside within the Salt and Industrial Heartlands Settlement Character Area are based around a lane or shared drive fronted by properties with views out to the surrounding areas.

ii|198 The boundaries on the front gardens are varied with formal and informal hedgerows, brick, stone and in some locations are open plan, although the latter is difficult to defend in terms of public/private interfaces. Many of the boundaries to the opposite side of these lanes are formed with hawthorn and/or holly hedgerows inter-planted with native trees of backed by small copses and woodlands.

ii|199 Transition areas are also in evidence, especially in neighbourhoods where the garden are more open plan. In these locations a wider landscape buffer has been developed which is planted with native woodland in more of a 'New Town' style.

ii|200 Many of the negative examples found in this character area have in part developed out of necessity, where large distributor roads border the neighbourhoods and the boundary treatments used are robust and offer some screening and noise mitigation from the road.

ii|201 The photographs illustrated here show existing positive and negative solutions within the Salt and Industrial Heartlands Settlement Character Area.

Negative Rural Transitions ✗



Properties back onto the rural interface, in part due to the size of the adjoining distributor road. High fences and rear garden clutter create a negative interaction between buildings, road and countryside.



Soft landscaping somewhat lacking on this boundary. Built form hard up to the post and panel fence create a harsh interface with the adjoining countryside with no opportunity to plant trees or hedges to soften the transition.



Building of larger massing used to create a bookend to the development, however with no positive interaction at ground level with the adjoining street, the development, road and countryside read as separate and distinct elements.



The blank gable end and high concretion post and timber panel fence offer no interaction with street or offer surveillance. Again, the development, road and countryside are not integrated or read together.



Typical Traditional Materials

- ii|202 Traditional materials include a mix of brick, stone, slate and clay roof tile. Examples of timber-framed buildings can also be found across the character area.
- ii|203 Render or pebbledash over a brick plinth or lower half is common amongst late Victorian and Edwardian properties, as well as post-war housing. Fully rendered buildings are uncommon but are strong features in the townscape where they do occur, especially when in small groups. Terracotta detailing in the form of plaques, datestones and moulded parts are a popular accessory on many Victorian properties.
- ii|204 A wide variety of boundary treatments can be seen across the character area. Many properties have open frontages to the street or are located at the back of pavement. A low brick wall with stone coping (often painted) is commonly found in association with Victorian terraces.

Typical Traditional Detailing

- ii|205 Features typical of early and mid-Victorian properties within the character area include paired front doors to terraced properties, rounded or angled bay windows, semi-circular fanlights with shaped stone or arched brick lintels and steeply pitched roofs. A few examples of former railway workers cottages remain and are an important element of the local vernacular. Typical features include a stone plinth, slate roofs, two-bay fronts, stone lintels, tudor arched porches with casement windows and sliding sashes on main facades.
- ii|206 Another important element of the local vernacular

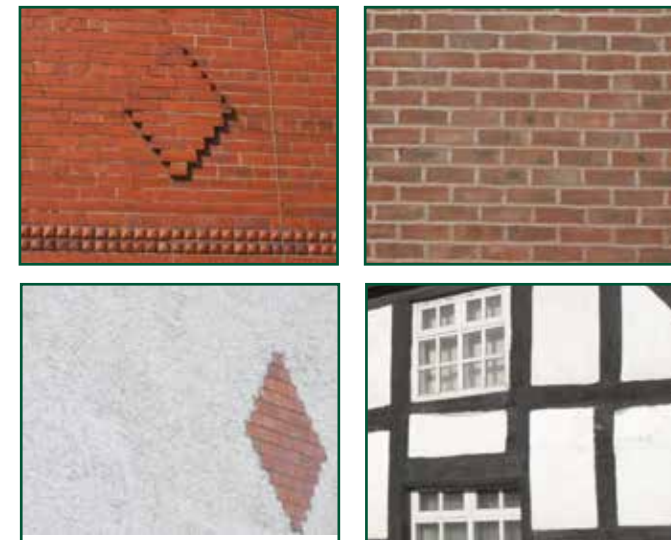


Figure ii:76 - Architectural Materials Palette



Figure ii:77 - Streetscape Materials Palette



Figure ii:78 - Traditional Detailing

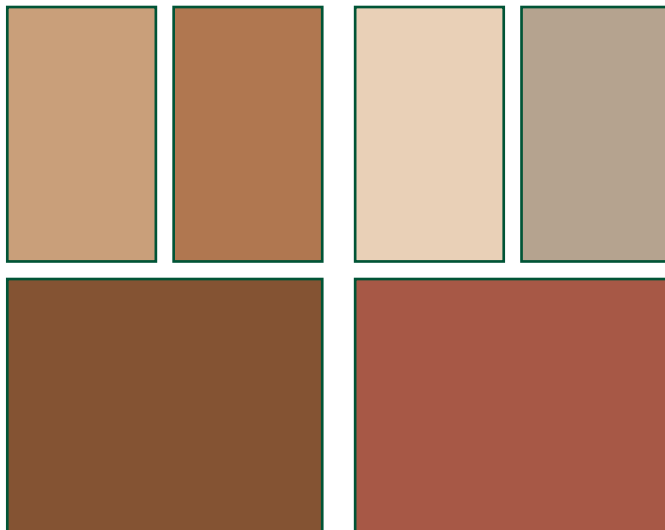


Figure ii:79 - Character Area Colour Palette

in settlements such as Crewe are the large semi-detached and detached late Victorian and Edwardian properties on the edges of the town and along its key approaches. Typical details of properties from this period include gables with mock timber framing or hanging tiles, fine cut brick lintels, prominent chimneys sometimes sited down the slope of the roof, ornate porches and stained glass windows.

Settlement Character Area Design Cues

ii|207 Out of our assessment of the Salt and Engineering towns character area we have distilled the typical design cues of the area. These are highlighted in the panel to the right.

Sample Settlements

ii|208 A range of settlements have been chosen as 'sample settlements' within the Salt & Engineering towns character area which either best illustrate the typical settlement character of the area or have variations from that character which add to their uniqueness and sense of place. The settlements selected are:

- Crewe
- Middlewich
- Haslington
- Willaston

ii|209 The Sample Settlements have been set-out on the following pages in the form of worksheets, each containing a general description of the settlement, it's evolution, design cues and sample imagery.

Salt & Engineering Towns Design Cues:

- The physical environment is heavily influenced by transport infrastructure in some larger settlements and the countryside through which they pass.
- A wide variety of building styles reflecting different periods in the growth of the towns.
- A predominance of red brick terraces and villas.
- Two-storey properties with steep roofed gables onto the street.
- Boundary walls often constructed from same material as main property.
- Subtle variation in detailing or colour palette creates variation between properties within long terraces.
- Properties often set to back of pavement providing strong enclosure to street.
- Brick of various shades and textures is the main building material.
- All eras of architecture are found within the settlement character area
- Long views to the Pennines (north east) and Sandstone Ridge (south west) are a key feature of many settlements.
- Flashes, rivers, canals and field ponds dominate and influence the countryside and settlements of this character area.
- Existing landscape features should be retained on site to preserve the landscape character.

Sample Settlement:

Crewe

ii|210 Crewe is the largest town in East Cheshire. The town owes its origins to the growth in railways during the 19th Century. Prior to the opening of the railway in 1837, Crewe was a tiny village consisting of a few small farms. A 'Railway Colony' quickly grew around the station and in 1843 the modern township of Crewe was formally planned out by Joseph Locke.

ii|211 By 1875 the settlement had grown around the developing railway infrastructure and Crewe's world famous railway engineering works, both instrumental in this massive growth over 35 years.

ii|212 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Large areas of post-war suburban housing to the north and east.*
- *The physical environment is heavily influenced by the five railway lines interchanging at the station to the south of the Town Centre.*
- *A wide variety of building styles reflect different periods in the growth of the town.*
- *A predominance of red brick terraces and villas set into a grid iron layout in many central areas.*
- *Railway workers cottages on Betley Street, Dorfold Street and Tolitt Street (1848), include brick on stone plinth facade, slate roofs, two-bay fronts, arched porches with sash windows.*
- *The Nantwich Road approach is flanked by 2.5 storey Victorian terraces which include double height bay windows and recessed arched tiled porches. Some have timber detailing to gables.*

ii|213 The southern edge of the town has grown little in the past 100 years with the Crewe to Shrewsbury Railway line forming a natural barrier to development.



Figure ii:80 - Figure Ground & Grain

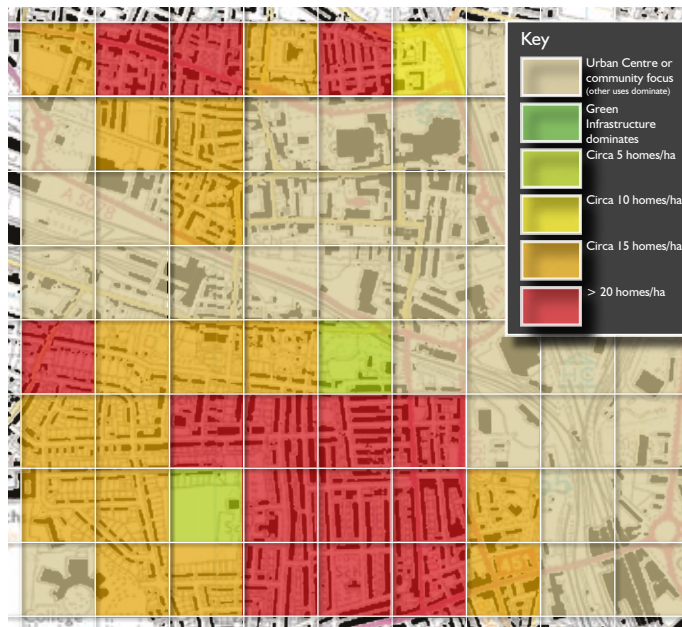


Figure ii:81 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:82 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Middlewich

ii|214 Middlewich, a market town located at the confluence of the rivers Dane, Croco and Wheelock was founded by the Romans as Salinae (the salt workings) and was one of their major sites of salt production. A Roman road, King Street runs between Middlewich and Northwich. This is where the town centre was originally laid out.

ii|215 In the post medieval period, Middlewich expanded west of the River Croco with St Michael's Church as the focal point. Streets around the church; High Town, Leadsmyth Street, Wheelock Street, Lewin Street and Wyche-House Lane became the heart. A rail link opened in 1867, with the building of the Sandbach to Northwich Branch of the London and North Western Railway, but it did not influence the settlement pattern, no station exits today.

ii|216 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Canals heavily influenced town character, waterside developments should reflect this.*
- *Archetypes range from Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian through to 20th and 21st centuries.*
- *Building set to back of pavement on the high street (Wheelock Street).*
- *Terraces dominate the town centre with semi-detached and detached properties on fringes.*
- *Late 17th century properties feature camber-arched doorways and windows.*
- *Large bay windows and timber frame detailing.*

ii|217 Modern Middlewich has undergone significant expansion, with industrial development to the east and a general expansion of housing to the north, west and south, much of which lacks local identity.



Figure ii:83 - Figure Ground & Grain

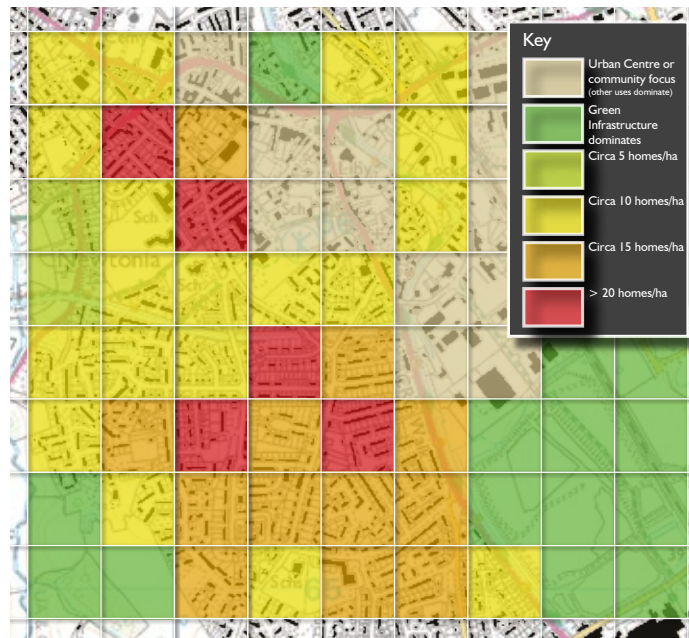


Figure ii:84 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:85 - Imagery

Haslington

ii|218 Haslington has a number of historic buildings along the main street which was the main thoroughfare between Sandbach and Crewe. These include a few half timbered properties, although they also appear to have been extensively remodelled/extended over time.

ii|219 The built form sweeps with the road, buildings being hard up to the footpath or set behind front gardens. Thus the route creates an unfolding narrative of the villagescape as one travels along.

ii|220 Varied archetypes include Tudor, Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and more modern interventions provide variety to elevations, massing and roofline.

ii|221 Behind this enclosing frontage lie a series of 20th Century housing estates typical of the 70's and 80's. Hidden within the estates appear to be a series of lanes, retained as public rights of way.

ii|222 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *A linear main street enclosed by buildings.*
- *Varied architectural styles and detailing.*
- *Varied massing and storey heights adds to roofscape and skyline of the village.*
- *Village Green visible and part of the main street.*
- *Main street curves back and forth along route.*
- *Built form pinches in on the road slowing traffic.*
- *Brick and slate dominate with some half timbered properties adding to the palette.*

ii|223 Domestic scale architecture dominates the village, its massing and variety define and add character to its heart. The estates are typical of many settlements with little reference to materials, detailing or layout.



Figure ii:86 - Figure Ground & Grain

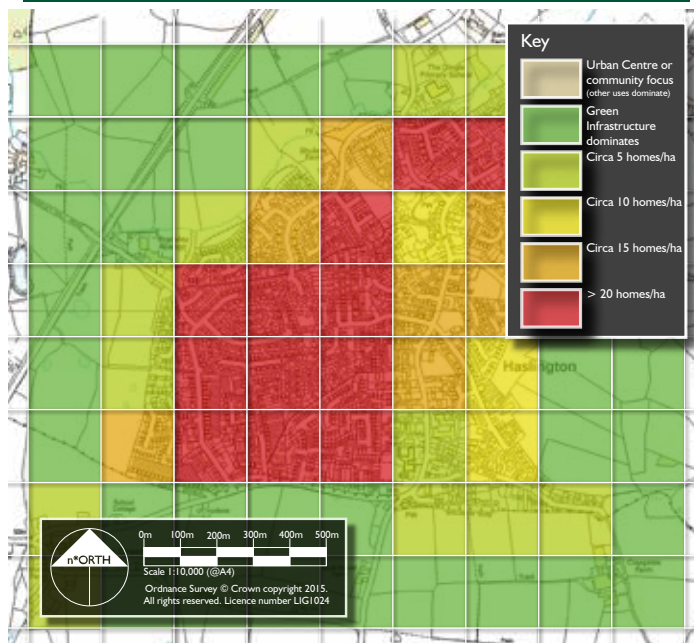


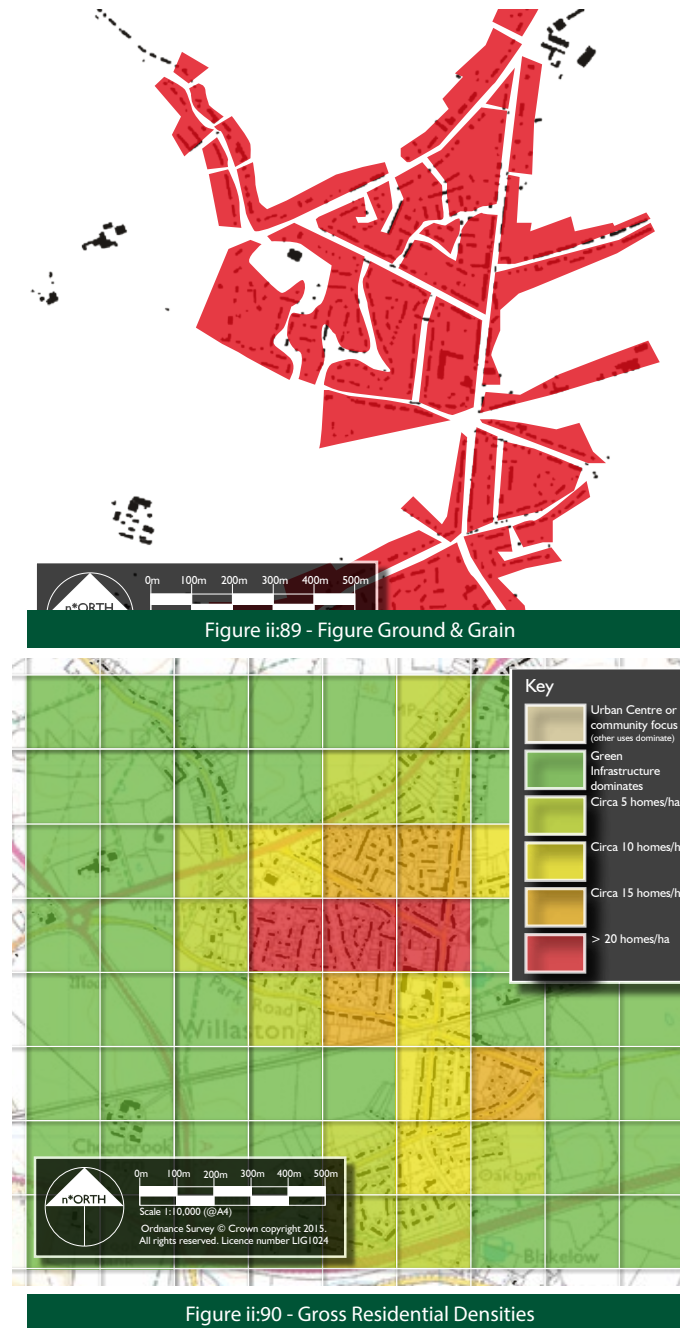
Figure ii:87 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:88 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:
Willaston

- ii|224 Willaston is a semi-rural village with a population of around 3,000 people. It is located between Crewe and Nantwich and now forms part of the expanded area of Crewe.
- ii|225 The settlement originated in a linear form along Wistaston Road predominately where it meets Coppice Road and around Willaston Train Station.
- ii|226 The settlement has since expanded with infill development between Wistaston Road and Crewe Road (A534). There are several small shops and services located on Wistaston Road.
- ii|227 Key Settlement Design Cues:
- *Some Medieval but predominantly Victorian and Edwardian architecture found on the primary roads.*
 - *Late Victorian/Edwardian terraced housing is a key feature.*
 - *Several Edwardian villas and semi-detached properties on Wistaston and Coppice Road.*
 - *Boundary Treatments – brick wall, hedge, low wall and hedge.*
 - *Black and white timber framed dwelling on Coppice road.*
 - *Cheshire brick on some of the terraced housing.*
 - *Arched detailing over doorways.*
 - *Bungalows located on the settlement fringes.*
- ii|228 Historically a linear settlement its form has changed over time into a radial settlement growing out to the north west from its original nucleus.



Market Towns & Estate Villages

- ii|229 The Market Towns and Estate Villages settlement character area is located in the south of Cheshire East. This landscape character area rises from the relatively flat landscape in the north to the elevated undulating landscape in the south.
- ii|230 The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment contains six landscape types within the Market Towns and Estate Villages boundary:
- Lower Farms and Woods
 - Estate Lowland Plain
 - Rolling Farmland
 - Estate Wood and Mere
 - Sandstone Fringe
 - Sandstone Ridge
- ii|231 Generally the landscape character within the Market Towns and Estate Villages is a broadly undulating with a small to large, regular to irregular pattern. The topography rises gently from the relatively flat land in the north towards the county boundary in the south where the landform is more undulating and of a smaller, enclosed scale. The intermittent watercourses are wooded with steeper slopes.
- ii|232 In the north of the area fields are small to large, regular, semi-regular and irregular fields boundaries are demarcated with hedgerows and singular trees. The combination of the flat topography, low hedgerows and post and wire fences creates a large scale landscape with extensive views across the Cheshire Plain. Small copses and coverts are scattered across the area with a low proportion of ancient woodland.
- ii|233 To the west there are patches of grid like field pattern with hedges and trees being typical boundary

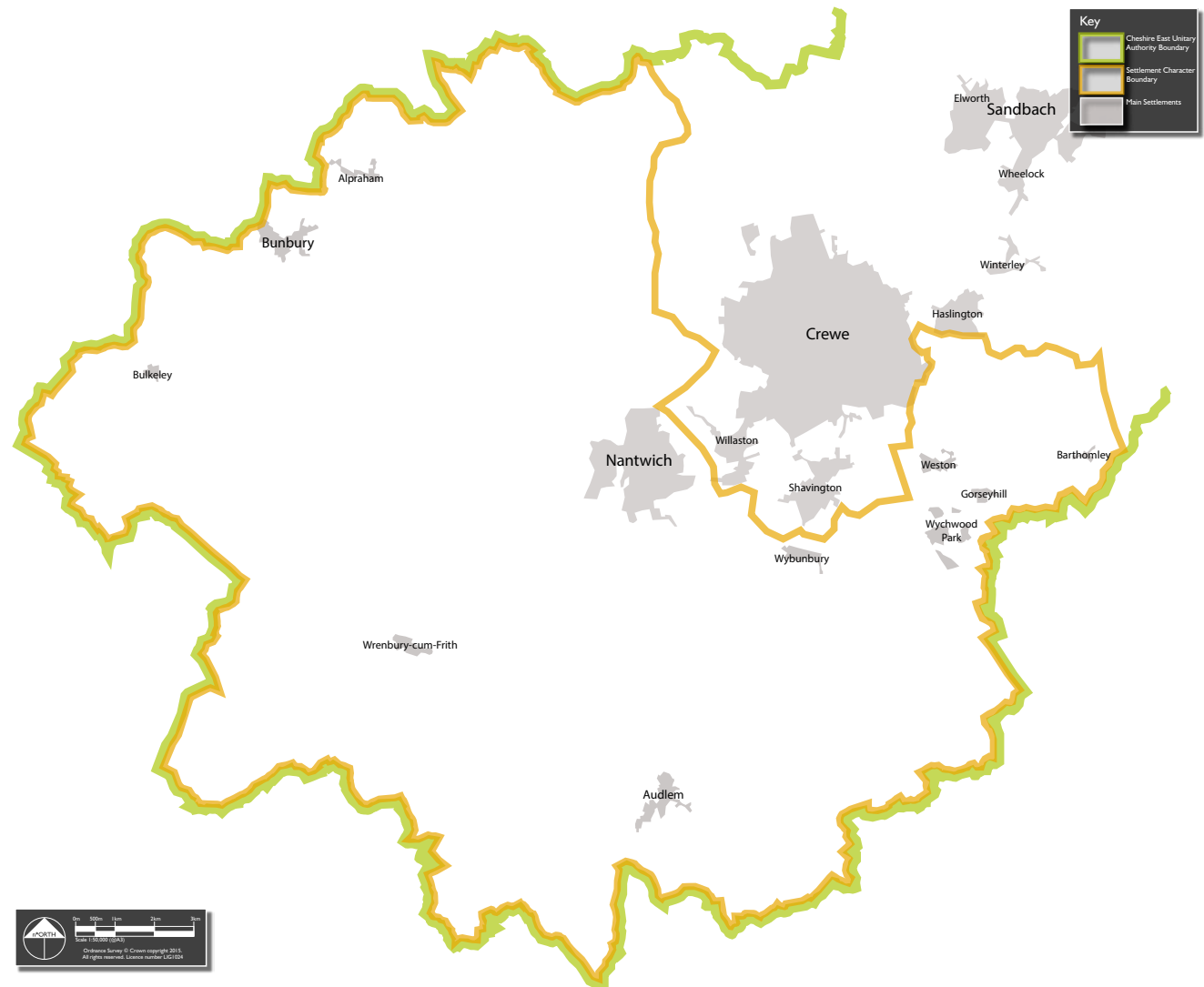


Figure ii:92 - Settlement Character Area: Market Towns & Estate Villages

treatments. The landform is predominantly flat, open and expansive with larger fields bounded by thin or low hedges with few trees that allow extensive views across the plain.

- ii|234 Towards the county boundary in the south the topography becomes more undulating with tree-lined streams and field drains, small woodlands and copses. This area appears more enclosed and of a smaller scale. Very narrow sunken lanes with high hedges, winding through a gently undulating landscape, contribute to the perception of a remote, small scale landscape.
- ii|235 In the east the settlement pattern is generally low in density and consists of dispersed hamlets, farms and small settlements these are linked by a network of narrow country roads. Further west the settlement pattern becomes relatively dense in places with a number of nucleated villages such as Bunbury and Wrenbury along with dispersed farmsteads.
- ii|236 Roads and rail network has had a great impact on this landscape, particularly close to Crewe.
- ii|237 A number of the settlements on the outskirts of Crewe have increased in size in recent years with extensive residential developments causing an impact on the landscape.
- ii|238 The Market Towns and Estate Villages predominantly comprises of dispersed, nucleated villages and hamlets and one larger settlement of Nantwich, to the southwest of Crewe. Nantwich has a dispersed but contained form and dates back to the Roman Period. Medieval architecture can be found in the historic core. The settlement is bounded to the west by the Shropshire Union Canal and located on the London to Chester road.



Positive Rural Transitions



Traditional country lane interaction between farm workers cottage, fronting lane and strong native hedgerow opposite providing boundary with fields beyond.



Typical village scene with incremental massing from settlement fringes to village centre, in this case around church. Properties front out onto lanes and streets and surrounding fields and gables are activated by windows overlooking the countryside.



A simple interface offering strong views out to countryside from settlement edge. Trees soften interface without obscuring development from rural hinterland.



Cottage hard-up to lane creates strong interface with road and aids traffic calming on entering village.

Settlement Fringes - The Rural Transition

- ii|239 The interaction of the settlement edge with the wider open countryside within the Market Towns and Estates Villages Settlement Character Area are very different to those in the north of the borough due to the nature of the wider rolling landscape in which the settlements sit.
- ii|240 The boundaries range from native hedgerows, post and wire stock fences to timber and concrete post and panel fences.
- ii|241 Positive solutions look to arrange built form fronting onto a street or lane, bordered by boundary treatments which are in keeping with their location. Solutions in all settlement character areas should not look to screen development from the countryside, but to soften and ground development in its setting, in keeping with the local character.
- ii|242 The key is to ensure that the boundary solution draws on best practice in terms of creating the desired finished edge, which is well surveilled, with good quality hard and soft detailing to the boundary solutions, movement corridors and elevations of the built form.
- ii|243 The photographs illustrated here show existing positive and negative solutions within the Market Towns and Estate Villages Settlement Character Area.

Negative Rural Transitions



Properties backing onto lane and countryside offering no activity or interaction thus creating dead-space.



Blank gable and long blank fence offers no surveillance onto adjoining footpath or open space.



Architecture and landscape are strong features in this image, but massing feels incongruous with the settlement edge location.



Access road bordered by rear gardens with no surveillance from adjoining properties creates a negative and underused access way.



Typical Traditional Materials

- ii|244 In the settlements surveyed, brick was the predominant building material for external walls, with both Flemish and English Garden Wall bonds being common. Red or dark red-brown is the most common colour. Often there is variation in colour within and between bricks producing a textured and patterned effect.
- ii|245 A number of the larger terraces and villas in Nantwich use Accrington brick, a hard red engineering brick, which contrasts with the softer tones used elsewhere. Stone is used sparingly for window and door surrounds, cills, lintels and boundary walls. The use of render is often limited to individual freestanding buildings and cottages, creating focal points within the streetscape.
- ii|246 Roofing material is predominantly slate or clay tile although a few buildings in Bunbury have thatched roofs.
- ii|247 Timber is often used for decorative detailing to gables, porches and for finials and is usually painted black and white in Mock Tudor style. Boundary treatments are a broad mix of brick and stone wall, hedges, railings and low timber picket fencing.

Typical Traditional Detailing

- ii|248 Tall and prominent chimney stacks are a common feature. A few buildings in Bunbury and Nantwich have distinctive tudor style chimneys. Decorative timber bargeboards feature on many Victorian properties.
- ii|249 Gables are often decorated with black and white timber detailing. Window design varies widely throughout the character area and with the age of



Figure ii:93 - Architectural Materials Palette



Figure ii:94 - Streetscape Materials Palette



Figure ii:95 - Traditional Detailing

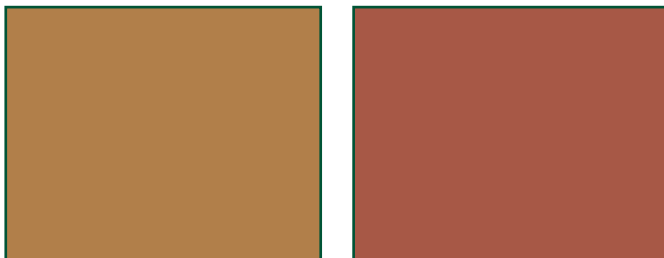
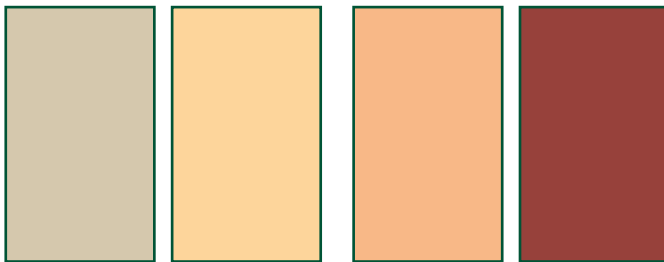


Figure ii:96 - Character Area Colour Palette

property. Georgian vertical sash-windows (8 over 8) can be found on a number of properties in central Audlem and elsewhere.

- ii|250 Victorian properties tend to have simple segmental brick arches or stone wedge lintels, often with keystones. Brick used not only as a main building material for walls but also for adornment in the form of corbals (dentils and dogtooth), banding, window surrounds and lintels.

Settlement Character Area Design Cues

- ii|251 Out of our assessment of the Market Towns and Estates Villages we have distilled out the typical design cues of the area. These have been highlighted in the panel to the right.

Sample Settlements

- ii|252 A range of settlements have been chosen as 'sample settlements within the Market Towns and Estate Villages character area which either best illustrate the typical settlement character of the area or have variations from that character which add to their uniqueness and sense of place. The settlements selected are:

- Nantwich
- Audlem
- Bunbury
- Wynbury
- Weston

- ii|253 The Sample Settlements have been set-out on the following pages in the form of worksheets, each containing a general description of the settlement, it's evolution, design cues and sample imagery.

Market Towns & Estate Villages Design Cues:

- Predominant materials are brick, slate and stone.
- A number of black and white and half-timbered buildings, some with jettied storeys create strong elements within the townscape.
- Tall chimney stacks are a prominent feature of many buildings.
- Boundary treatments include brick/stone walls and commonly metal railings with hedgerows.
- Juxtaposition of townhouses providing strong enclosure to the street alongside detached properties with large gardens.
- Village focal points in the form of schools, village greens and churches
- Variety provided by mix and juxtaposition of housing typologies including terraces, semi-detached and detached properties, often along the same street.
- Real variety in architectural styles and detailing
- Importance of landscape features such as waterways, trees, public open spaces etc in providing a setting for buildings
- Housing orientation is varied with some properties fronting the roads and others side-on.
- The relationship of buildings to streets creates pinch points at certain locations.

Sample Settlement: Nantwich

- ii|254 Nantwich has a dispersed form but is contained to the west by the Shropshire Union Canal. The origins of Nantwich date back to the Roman period. By the medieval period, the town is believed to have been the most important salt-producing centre in the County, benefiting from its strategic location on the London to Chester road. Medieval components are still visible in the town in the form of burgage plots, especially in the commercial core.
- ii|255 In the 14th century, the town held a weekly cattle market at the end of what is today known as Beam Street. Nantwich was also important for its tanning industry. Fire in December 1583 destroyed most of the town, but it was rapidly rebuilt to the original plan of narrow streets and lanes.
- ii|256 Key Settlement Design Cues:
- *Townhouses and semi-detached villas dominate Welsh Row, side lanes change to detached villas.*
 - *Consistent building lines, but variety within the archetypes through, detailing, storey heights, materials/colour and massing.*
 - *Brick, render and whitewash all found.*
 - *Old town retains a strong identity with buildings of different styles/ages, but similar urban scale.*
 - *Predominance of black and white and half-timbered buildings in the centre, some with jettied storeys.*
 - *Strong use of natural materials for roofs and walls.*
 - *Tall chimney stacks are a prominent feature of many buildings.*
 - *Waterside developments along the Weaver should exploit the riverside character.*

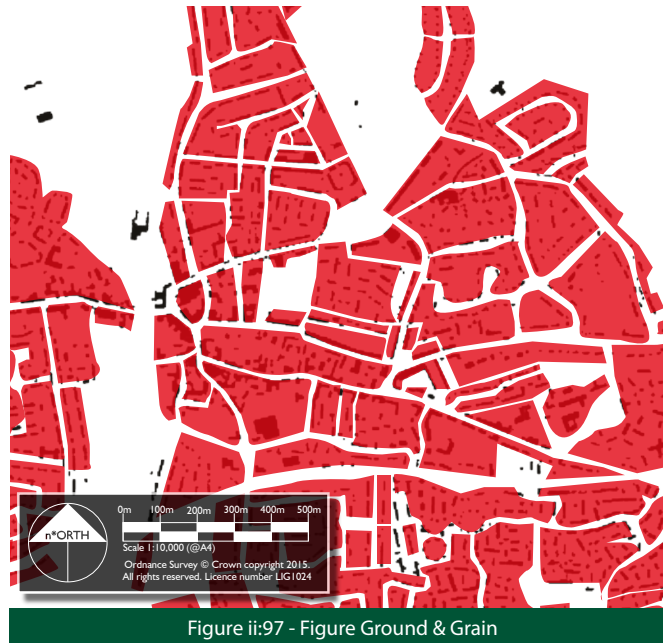


Figure ii:97 - Figure Ground & Grain

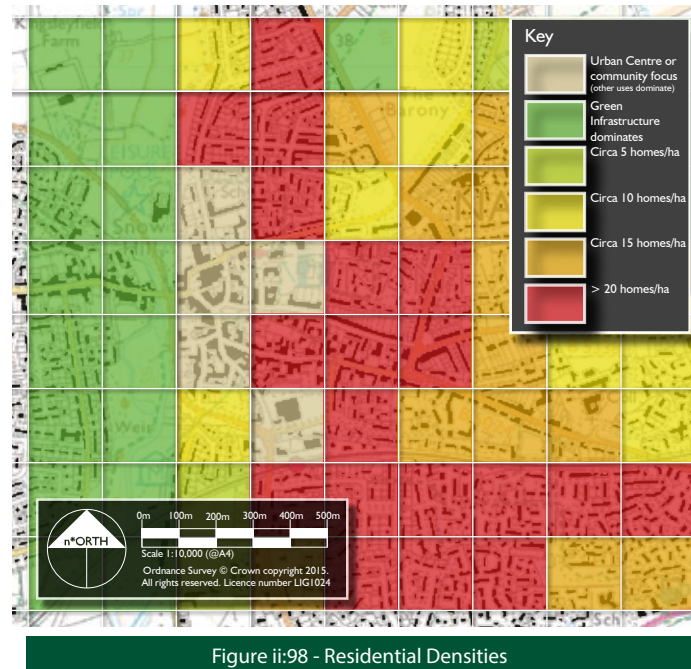


Figure ii:98 - Residential Densities



Figure ii:99 - Imagery

Audlem

ii|257 Audlem is a large village, it has a relatively compact linear form, built around the crossing of two roads. The settlement existed in Celtic or possibly Roman times. By 1278 the village had a church and in 1296 it was granted a Market Charter. There has been a school in the village since the sixteenth century.

ii|258 Historically Audlem was a small, self-reliant agricultural market town. The arrival of the canal (1835) and railway (1863) saw the settlement grow.

ii|259 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *St James church occupies an elevated position overlooking Market Square, the village's focus.*
- *Curving form of the principal roads meet at Market Square providing unfolding views/vistas.*
- *Centre has a an intimate feel, with domestic scale buildings, enclosed streets and narrow lanes.*
- *Plot form and shape varies from regular medieval long thin plots to larger, irregular shaped ones.*
- *Contrast between terraces, open spaces, detached properties and non-residential buildings*
- *Typical architectural detailing includes simple symmetry, Georgian sash windows and doors.*
- *Main archetypes from early nineteenth century.*
- *Materials include red/brown brick, dark blue tiles/ Welsh slate and sandstone. Some properties are painted render.*
- *Boundary treatments include brick/stone walls. Metal railings with hedgerows are common also.*

ii|260 The canal is an important feature, forming a distinct character of locks, mile-posts, canalside cottages and public houses at the centre of the village.

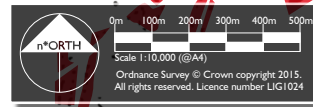


Figure ii:100 - Figure Ground & Grain

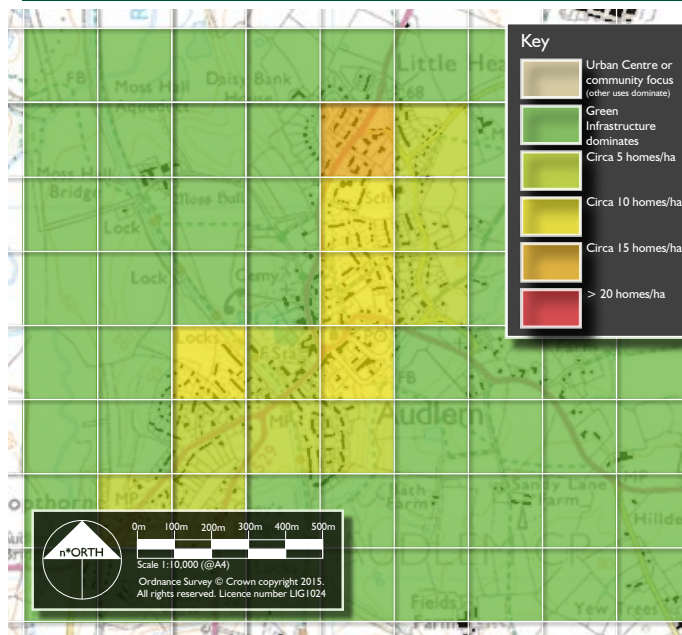


Figure ii:101 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:102 - Imagery

Bunbury

ii|261 Bunbury, a dispersed rural settlement evolved from four hamlets. The medieval village focused on the church, St Boniface, (Higher Bunbury). It developed a secondary settlement at Lower Bunbury. The early 19th Century saw the heath divided into plots creating Bunbury Heath. Bunbury Commons developed between Higher Bunbury and the Canal.

ii|262 The village has continued to grow, with the paddocks around the village being in-filled. Most development took place during the 19th and 20th Centuries, the last forty years seeing most expansion.

ii|263 Since the last war the rate of development has accelerated and the settlement pattern in Lower Bunbury has changed. Higher Bunbury has remained relatively unchanged in recent times.

ii|264 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Materials include Cheshire brick or timber frame with slate or tiled roofs with feature chimneys.*
- *Flemish and English bonded brickwork and banded courses evident with arched brickwork heads or feature stone heads and cills.*
- *Feature finials to roof ridges, to Victorian archetypes with feature chimneys and pots.*
- *Projecting purlins to gable ends and projecting rafters to eaves.*
- *Mature trees to front gardens.*
- *Boundary treatments are predominantly hedges, low brick or sandstone walls.*
- *Village Green (Higher Bunbury).*

ii|265 Bunbury is a characterful village with many periods well presented in the archetypes.



Figure ii:103 - Figure Ground & Grain

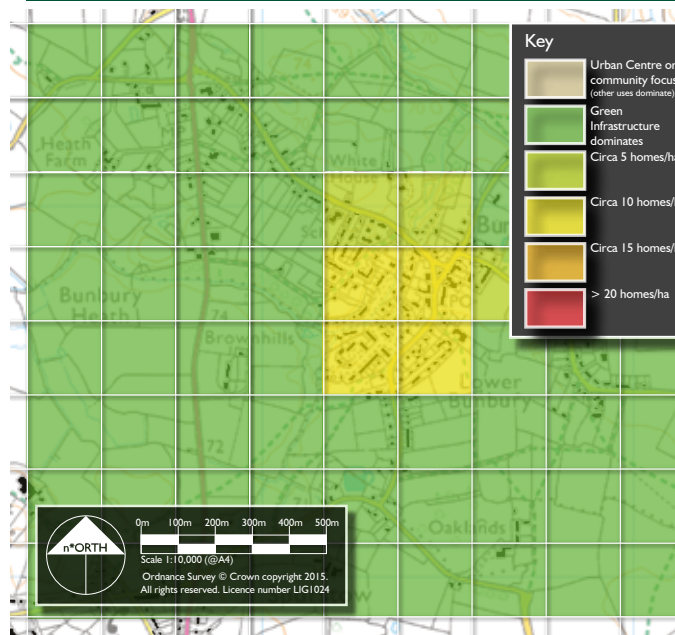


Figure ii:104 - Gross Residential Densities



Figure ii:105 - Imagery

Sample Settlement:

Wybunbury

ii|266 Wybunbury sits on a ridge line running east west. The church was built in the 15th Century, on the eastern bluff of the ridge overlooking the south eastern peripheries of the Cheshire Plain. Main Road/Bridge Street runs along the ridge.

ii|267 The historic core is on Main Road around the original church (only the tower remains). Two moated sites sit below the church and appear to protect the south eastern approach. A third set of earthworks are located to the north east. The village appears to have had strategic importance in the past.

ii|268 Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *The main routes into the village focus on the church tower, this acts as a landmark.*
- *Settlement is compact & linear, hugging the ridge line, recent housing follows this pattern.*
- *The original school is some way from the centre.*
- *A series of eras overlay one another, (Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian) now dominating the villagescape.*
- *Real variety in the styles, detailing and materials.*
- *The relationship of buildings to streets creates pinch points at certain locations.*
- *Streets sweep and curve with the ridge.*
- *Townhouses enclose the streets and then detached properties with large gardens create spaces and softer counterpoints.*

ii|269 Wybunbury has a varied and interesting villagescape which has evolved out of its long history even though the village is now dominated by post medieval architecture.

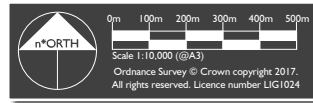


Figure ii:106 - Figure Ground & Grain

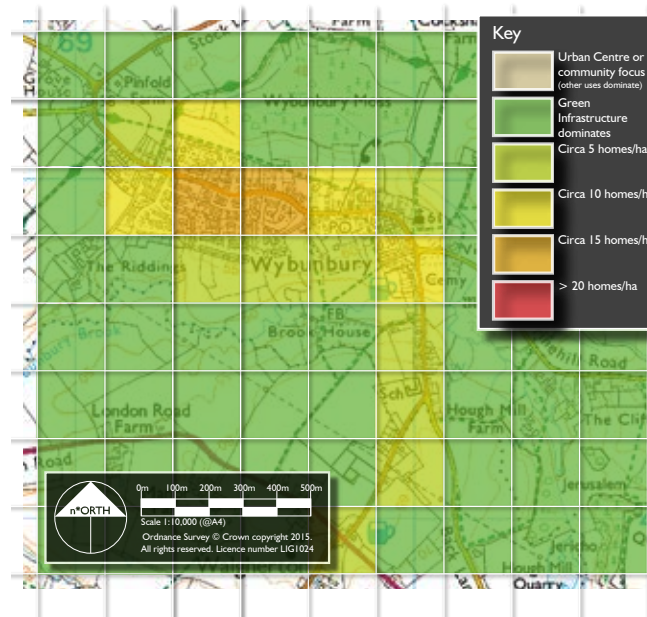


Figure ii:107 - Gross Residential Densities

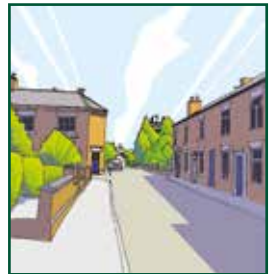


Figure ii:108 - Imagery

Weston

- ii|270 The historic core of Weston is linear and flanks Main Road which was the principle highway through the area prior to the construction of the A500.
- ii|271 The village appears to have developed around the junction of Main and Cemetery Road and is focused around the White Lion and All Saints Church. The church being located in the middle of the junction. 20th Century social and estate style housing has grown up along Cemetery Road.

Key Settlement Design Cues:

- *Detached and semi-detached properties line Main Road.*
- *There are few townhouses in the village.*
- *Housing orientation is varied with some properties fronting the roads and others side-on.*
- *Large garden plots surround many of the houses.*
- *Half timbered buildings from various eras create strong elements within the villagescape.*
- *Hedges are the primary boundary treatment with some timber picket fences.*
- *One and half and two storey cottages provide variety within the villagescape.*
- *Gables are active with many windows from habitable rooms overlooking the streets.*
- *Dormers, chimneys and a varied materials palette create interesting detailing.*
- *The public realm is very simple with mature trees creating the main statements.*

- ii|273 Whilst Weston is a reasonably mature village it is understated and has the feel of an estate village.

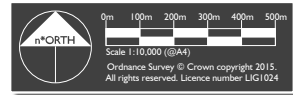


Figure ii:109 - Figure Ground & Grain

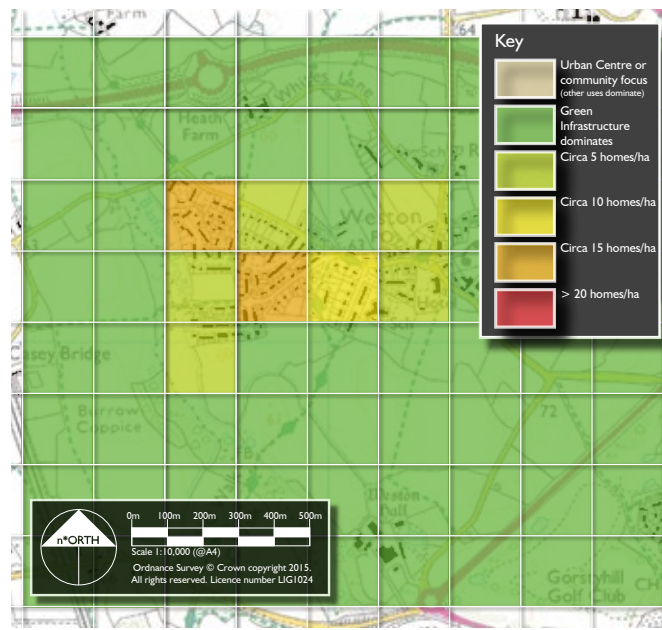


Figure ii:110 - Gross Residential Densities

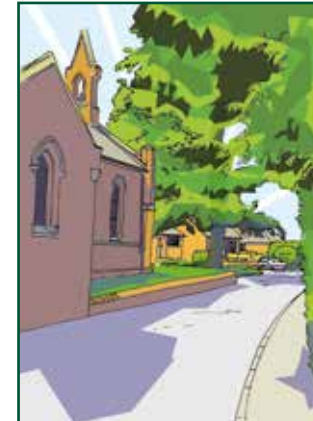


Figure ii:111 - Imagery

iii. A Best Practice Design Approach

- iii|01 As stated in the introduction Cheshire East Council expects to see high quality residential developments coming forward in the Borough.
- iii|02 In order to ensure this happens and to aid developers in the process, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has prepared this design guidance. The guidance is part of a tool kit used by the LPA to ensure design is properly considered in the planning process.
- iii|03 This chapter provides the criteria and processes the LPA expects developers to follow in terms of developing their proposals and defines which projects will need to go to Local Design Review or be supported by a Design Code and what level of coding is required.
- iii|04 By using this design guidance and following a best practice approach developers can expect their planning applications to be dealt with expediently on matters relating to design.

Urban Design & Masterplanning

- iii|05 All residential development proposals should be developed with inputs from an Urban Designer or from another experienced design discipline (architect/landscape architect etc.) with a good working knowledge of urban design and place making.
- iii|06 Urban design is key to good masterplanning and a full appreciation of the context (regional/local and site context) should be fully explored from inception to inform the design process. BfL12 provides a strong design methodology and must be used proactively by the design team at all stages of the design process. BfL12 and its use is described in more detail later in this chapter.

- iii|07 Cheshire East have committed to delivering high quality, well designed residential developments and design will be a key criteria in determining each planning application.
- iii|08 All development proposals, whether for new greenfield, brownfield or small infill sites need to demonstrate that they will deliver quality places and contribute to the wider settlements to which they are associated.

“Urban Design draws together many strands of place-making - environmental responsibility, social equity and economic viability, for example - into the creation of places of beauty and distinct identity. Urban design is derived from, but transcends related matters such as planning and transportation policy, architectural design, development economics, landscape and engineering. It draws these and other strands together. In summary, urban design is about creating a vision for an area and then deploying the skills and resources to realise that vision.”

The Importance of Urban Design, Urban Design Compendium, September 2007

- iii|09 There is a basic chronology used in urban design and masterplanning which is key to delivering the quality places Cheshire East requires of its housing developments. It is illustrated here in Figure iii:01 and in essence is followed in the structure and questions set-out in BfL12. We make no apologies for repeating the process twice in this section as it fundamentally underpins this guidance and should be used and expressed in all new developments in the Borough.



Figure iii:01 - The Urban Design Process

Comprehensive Masterplanning - Multiple Ownerships & Interests

- iii|10 Larger sites can have multiple ownerships, pulled together by a single strategic developer or house builder, other sites can be more complex with multiple developer interests on neighbouring land parcels.
- iii|11 In either situation a comprehensive masterplan is **strongly encouraged** to ensure strategic issues (i.e. road infrastructure, green infrastructure and drainage etc.) are dealt with so that piecemeal development does not occur. Pursuing a comprehensive approach could help reduce delay arising from discordant individual proposals and reduce the risk of an individual application being refused because it does not comply with paragraph 64 of the NPPF (i.e. that it is of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions).
- iii|12 Where multiple developers have interests in adjoining land then they are **strongly encouraged** to appoint a masterplanner jointly to prepare an overarching strategic masterplan and spatial design code (see below for more information). This will ensure that their individual proposals sit within a framework which creates cohesive proposals, delivering the shared infrastructure and neighbourhoods which work in terms of facilities (community, education, public art and retail etc.) and location of open spaces, play areas and general connectivity.

Use of Building for Life 12 & the Design Process

- iii|13 Building for Life 12 (BfL12) is a government endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use it to guide discussions about creating good places to live, which are contextually responsive and sustainably located.
- iii|14 BfL12 was redesigned in 2012 to reflect the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the government's commitment to build more and better homes. In particular it promotes the participation of local communities in the place-making process and helps to identify how development can be shaped to accommodate both new and existing communities.
- iii|15 The questions are therefore designed to help structure discussions between local communities, LPA's, developers and other stakeholders.
- iii|16 BfL12 will be used by Cheshire East as part of its design tool kit in collaboration with the developer's design team to assess the design quality of proposals that are evolving through the pre-application and post submission processes.
- iii|17 Cheshire East will therefore expect developers to achieve as many greens as possible as a material consideration in determining the planning application. If 9 greens or more are achieved, this would mean that they would also be eligible for 'Built for Life™' accreditation. 'Built for Life™' is a quality mark available immediately after planning approval and offers developers the opportunity to promote the quality of their sites. Cheshire East aspires to have the quality mark on all residential developments in the Borough in the future.

BfL12 Assessment Methodology

- iii|18 BfL12 is primarily a best practice design approach and in essence follows the stages of good Urban Design as illustrated in Figure iii:01 opposite.

“Urban Design is about the spaces between and around new homes that can sometimes be overlooked by focusing on the building and its interior, but which are vital to the quality of a place, its attractiveness, functionality and feelings of safety.”

Building for Life 12, Nottingham Trent University 2015

- iii|19 The criteria have been developed as a Q&A checklist for the quality of placemaking and provides a clear indicator of a development's potential to grow into a popular place to live.

How to Use BfL12

- iii|20 BfL12 comprises of 12 questions, with four questions in each chapter and have been structured in such a way as to aid discussions about any proposed development. The chapter headings are:
- Integrating into the neighbourhood
 - Creating a place
 - Street and home
- iii|21 Based on a simple 'traffic light' system (red, amber and green) the proposals should aim to:
- Secure as many 'greens' as possible,
 - Minimise the number of 'ambers' and;
 - Avoid 'reds'.
- iii|22 The more 'greens' the better a development will be. A red light gives warning that an aspect of a development needs to be reconsidered.

iii|23 Cheshire East shall require that the collaborative discussions between the developer and themselves are set-out in the Design and Access Statement (D&As) under a 'Design Evolution' chapter and a final BfL12 assessment with supporting justifications is prepared and incorporated into the D&As prior to submission of the application (see guidance paragraphs later in this Chapter on the preparation of D&As).

iii|24 For more information on the detailed methodology and questions click the link below:

[Building for Life 12 Web-Site](#)

When is BfL12 Relevant?

iii|25 Whilst the intention of BfL12 is primarily targeted at detailed and reserved matters applications, its application is just as relevant to outline applications.

iii|26 Indeed the LPA has had a number of instances where the design process has not been thoroughly explored at the outline stage and has caused difficulties in terms of deliverability and viability when it has come to follow-on reserved matters applications. This in turn has led to commitments entered into at the outline stage becoming undeliverable and thus has had a direct knock-on effect to the anticipated design quality of the end product.

iii|27 Whilst some of the later more specific questions under Street & Home cannot be fully answered at the outline stage, the underpinning principles adopted through the design process can be explored and the intended approach described to set the foundations for the subsequent reserved matters application.

iii|28 Therefore Cheshire East will use the BfL12 structure to enter into design related discussions with

developers on all residential applications over 10 units, no matter what the type of application is.

Developments requiring Design Codes

iii|29 As stated in the introduction, the majority of schemes coming forward in the district would be supported by a Design and Access Statement which will need to incorporate site specific elements of design guidance and/or parameters, depending on the nature of the application (outline/reserved/detailed). The elements to which a developer would be expected to commit to providing should ideally be agreed prior to application submission or as part of the post submission negotiations prior to determination.

iii|30 However, design codes will be required for all strategically important and larger scale developments, based on their size, sensitivity or potential impact on heritage assets, the landscape or existing adjoining settlements.

iii|31 The definition of what is a larger scale or strategically important development in terms of the need for a Design Code and the nature of the sensitivity and potential impacts will mean that the final decision on whether coding is required would be made on a case by case basis.

iii|32 As a rule of thumb however Cheshire East would require outline schemes of more than 150 dwellings to automatically require a supporting Design Code and also where a site forms part of a larger strategic allocation of more than 150 units. One of the practical benefits of Design Coding, if undertaken appropriately, is that it can speed up the design and development process with consequent benefits for the delivery of new development

iii|33 The content of Design Codes would be dependent on the nature of the application. Therefore **Outline Applications** would be supported by a **Spatial Design Code**, a **Reserved Matters Application** would be supported by a **Detailed or Character Area Design Code**, which would carry on from where the Spatial Code finished and a **Detailed Planning Application** would require a **Comprehensive Design Code** covering spatial and detailed coding.

iii|34 Figure iii:02 sets out, at a glance, the requirements for the production of Design and Access Statements and the need for/type of Design Code required to support each type of planning application.

A Spatial Design Code

iii|35 A Spatial Design Code creates the spatial framework and over arching principles at the outline stage. The production of a code does not negate the need to produce a comprehensive D&As. The D&As should be read alongside the spatial code for a full appreciation of the design process and evolution of the proposals. The spatial code will also provide a proposed structure and guiding principles for the detailed or character area codes to be prepared in due course, and illustrative information which may be used to assist in the preparation of the Character Area Codes.

iii|36 The spatial code provides guidance to potential developers who would be taking sites forward to reserved matters applications, based on the outline planning submission and its subsequent approval.

iii|37 A spatial design code sets the framework for contextually responsive development, defining the location, amount, use mix, quality of the green and blue infrastructure network, the character areas,

Documents to be submitted with the application:	Nature of Application:					
	Outline:		Reserved Matters:		Full:	
	less than 150 homes	150 homes & more	less than 150 homes	150 homes & more	less than 150 homes	150 homes & more
Design & Access Statement	✓	✓	✗ ^{*1}	✗ ^{*1}	✓	✓
Spatial Design Code	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Detailed/Character Area Code	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Comprehensive Design Code	✗	✗	✗	✓ ^{*2}	✗	✓

Note:

- ✗¹ Whilst a Design & Access Statement is not required, a supporting design statement is recommended, explaining how the reserved matters application accords with the D&As submitted at the outline stage.
- ✗² A comprehensive design code or elements of a comprehensive design code may be required to accompany a reserved matters application, if a spatial code was not prepared at the outline application stage.
- The final decision on the need for a Design Code shall be determined by the planning case officer.
- It is recommended that the content and form of all design documents be agreed with CEC prior to submission.
- All documentation will need to be validated by CEC, on formal submission of the application.

Figure iii:02 - Planning Application Requirements for Supporting Design Documents

passive layout considerations and the development parcels.

iii|38 Spatial codes should also set the 'guiding principles' which provide overarching detail which will need to be consistent across the Detailed or Character Area Codes, such as defining the hierarchy, form and layout of the movement and public realm network, the location and structure of development parcels, the general density, massing and layout of the built form and setting out the principles of Sustainability.

iii|39 A Spatial Design Code sets the layout, form and structure of the site and provides the framework upon which the design of individual development areas can be based through the development of Detailed or Character Area Design Codes.

Detailed or Character Area Codes

iii|40 Detailed or Character Area Codes add the detailed information below the spatial code, specifically for Reserved Matters Applications where there is no statutory requirement to produce a D&As.

iii|41 If a spatial design code has not been required or produced at the outline stage then aspects of a spatial code will need to be included at reserved matters (see Figure iii:02).

iii|42 If the site is to be delivered in multiple phases or by multiple developers then a Character Area Code will be required for each phase. Ideally as suggested by the name each phase or parcel should have a separate and unique character which should have been identified in the Spatial Design Code. Therefore, for example, as development occurs at different rates over a 5 to 20 year delivery programme each phase reflects changing needs, current best practice,

- evolving policy and new energy technologies etc.
- iii|43 A Character Area Design Code should drill down to set-out the principles of the Street, Movement and Public Realm Hierarchies, Hard and Soft Landscape Palettes and the location, species lists and use of ornamental and/or native species, the requirements for play areas and the equipment proposed, the architectural language covering materials, elevations, fenestration and also deal with matters of detail relating to Sustainability and end delivery.

Comprehensive Design Coding

- iii|44 If a developer decides to go straight to a Detailed Application for a major development then the coding requirement would be for a combined spatial and detailed code with the scope and content agreed and prepared prior to submission of the application.

Cheshire East Design Review Panel

- iii|45 A local design review panel will be formed which will be scrutinised by councillors and contain design and development experts drawn from the North West with local connections and knowledge.
- iii|46 Projects can be put forward by developers or recommended for review by the Local Planning Authority and the panel's recommendations and conclusions will be a material consideration in determination of applications.
- iii|47 Not all projects will be able to go to the panel and those that do will be chosen based on their size, sensitivity or potential impact on the landscape or existing adjoining settlements and communities.
- iii|48 It is recommend that schemes go to design review early in the process when the design is at an early

stage. Therefore the panel can contribute positively and constructively to the process and enable the designers to spend the time considering the panels recommendations and implementing any changes necessary to enable the scheme to move forward.

- iii|49 The BfL12 questions shall be used as the framework for the design review process to ensure the review feedback is consistent, objective and constructive.

- iii|50 The Design Review process should be seen as a positive method of developing large scale or sensitive proposals and that all parties involved will see benefits in its use and communities see the development of unique and sensitive design solutions being implemented within their neighbourhoods.

Preparation of the Design & Access Statement

- iii|51 A Design and Access Statement (D&As) must accompany planning applications for both outline and full schemes. The elements to be described in the D&As will be the same regardless of whether the application is for outline or full planning permission, but their scope will differ. Developers are reminded that the level of detail provided in the D&As should be proportionate to the complexity of the proposed development and the sensitivity of its setting.

- iii|52 Government guidance on the production of a D&As suggests that they should be succinct and proportionate to the complexity of the application.

- iii|53 Cheshire East expects any D&As to be comprehensive in its narrative and highly graphic in its content. The D&As should cover all aspects of the design process and describe and illustrate the design evolution undertaken in arriving at the final submitted proposals.

- iii|54 As a minimum any submitted D&As should include the following information:

- Executive Summary/Introduction
- Physical Context & Local Character
- Constraints & Opportunities
- Design Parameters
- Design Evolution
- Illustrative Masterplan/Site Layout
- Public Art Plans & Strategies
- Sustainability Summary
- Building for Life 12 Final Assessment
- Conclusions

The following paragraphs describe the content of each chapter.

Executive Summary/Introduction

- iii|55 Provide a short and concise summary of the purpose and content of the application, a site description, mix, quantum of development and the design process and ethos followed in developing the proposals. The above should be supported by a site location plan with the site clearly defined in its context.

Physical Context & Local Character

- iii|56 Depending on the strategic nature of the site, the contextual appreciation should drill down from a review of the site in a regional context to the sub-region, local and site context in order to appreciate the site in its geographic location, access to services, schools and public transport, relationship to other settlements and the settlement of which it is part.

- iii|57 The local context should examine the nature of the existing settlement, its history and evolution, the

- relationship to rivers, woodlands, topography, green infrastructure networks, local facilities, location of bus stops, walking distances, local landmarks and communication routes.
- iii|58 In addition the local vernacular of the area should be studied as part of the wider contextual appreciation of the site in order to understand how local settlements have evolved with the natural grain of the landscape and been influenced by natural and man made features.
- iii|59 An appreciation of the layout, form, streets, spaces landscape (including tissue studies of grain, density and enclosure ratios), as well as the architectural detailing and materials palettes which have traditionally been used can be reinterpreted and applied creatively to ensure sympathetic and high quality developments are achieved.
- Constraints & Opportunities**
- iii|60 The site should be comprehensibly appreciated and understood by the design team. Information and guidance should be in-putted from the wider consultant team which could include town planners, ecologists, transport planners, archaeologists, aboriculturalists, geologists, drainage engineers, landscape architects, noise, vibration and ground contamination engineers.
- iii|61 It is the design teams responsibility to collate information provided from the above consultants, input their own expertise and map the information to provide a comprehensive set of site constraints and opportunities. This mapping should be illustrated in the D&As and supported by site photography.
- iii|62 The form and layout of developments should be informed by the mapping of constraints, many of

which will, in essence, become the opportunities as the structure and layout is developed around them and they become part of the proposals.

Design Parameters

- iii|63 The design parameters provides spatial relationships between the amount of developable land, use mix, open space/green infrastructure, the retention of site features, gateways/access points, surrounding connections and retained key views etc.
- iii|64 In addition and depending on the nature of the application, parameters can be set relating to internal movement and public realm hierarchies, landscape strategy, SUDs Management Trains, overall scale, location of focal/header buildings, landmarks etc.
- iii|65 In an outline application certain key parameters will be required to be carried forward into reserved matters applications by condition. These parameters should be identified and agreed with the LPA ideally prior to submission. However the following parameters should be fixed as a minimum and set into a parameters masterplan:
- Land use
 - Transport/Movement
 - Green/Blue Infrastructure

Design Evolution

- iii|66 This is a key chapter in the D&As but is not always included. It should chart the iterative design process undergone in developing the proposals and how they have evolved and been influenced by site features, the community, councillors, officers of the council, additional studies and any emerging policies (national and local) that have materialised during the process.
- iii|67 A concise narrative should be developed drawing on the Statement of Community Involvement, the BfL12 design process and the minutes of meetings etc. and be accompanied by a montage of images illustrating the evolving nature of the design and various stages in the process.

Illustrative Masterplan/Site Layout

- iii|68 A testing/indicative layout or illustrative masterplan will be required to be submitted with any outline application. The masterplan will need to be in enough detail to prove that the quantum's of development can be delivered on the site at an appropriate density for the setting, site, and the settlement in which it is located.
- iii|69 The illustrative layout should be supported by artists impressions, 3D massing models, streetscenes and cross sections, as appropriate, to clearly communicate the proposals.
- iii|70 For detailed applications a site or planning layout will need to be developed, along with supporting streetscenes, cross sections, 3d visualisations, house types, boundary treatments, landscape proposals and materials palettes as required to fully articulate the proposals.

- iii|71 In either case the material will need to be supported by a comprehensive narrative covering:
- Land Use & Quantum's of Development
 - Scale & Massing
 - Movement & Public Realm Hierarchies
 - Landscape
 - Appearance
 - Access
 - Secured by Design
 - Sustainable Drainage

Sustainability Summary

- iii|72 Whilst all major applications should be supported by a comprehensive Sustainability Strategy a summary statement on sustainable design should be included in the D&As for all applications.
- iii|73 Such a statement should cover issues around passive solar gain, site orientation, accessibility, alternative modes of transport, adaptation and flexibility of the layout and buildings to accommodate climate change and new technologies.
- iii|74 More technical issues will also need to be considered around sustainable building techniques and building regulations including issues around energy efficiency, carbon emissions, water consumption, use and resourcing of materials, waste management and recycling, minimising pollution, health and well-being, site management and ecological protection.

Building for Life 12 - Final Assessment

- iii|75 As reiterated throughout this document BfL12 should be a continual thread through the design process and will be used by Cheshire East to structure pre-application and post-application discussions around design.
- iii|76 The process and the design's evolution should be set out in the D&As as described previously.
- iii|77 However a final formal BfL12 assessment should be included at the end of the D&As as a quick reference to the content of the document and the wider application which will thus aid the LPA in their decision making process.
- iii|78 The assessment should not just be a scoring matrix, but should include answers to the 12 questions with summary justifications/qualifications. To assist in this process a checklist is included at the end of each chapter of Volume 2 and contains relevant BfL12 prompts and questions.

Conclusions

- iii|79 The conclusion to the document should summarise the proposals, the BfL12 process, type of application and, with an outline application, set-out which matters of detail are to be considered and which are reserved for later determination.
- iii|80 Matters around economic and community benefits leading from the construction of a quality development can also be summarised here to add weight to the application.

Build Quality

- iii|81 Whilst this guidance is focused on the quality of design expected in Cheshire East, there is no point

creating interesting places, if once they are built, they don't stand the test of time.

- iii|82 Cheshire East therefore expects the quality of workmanship to be equal to the quality of design. Materials should be used that are fit for purpose and experienced local trades people should be employed with the necessary skill sets to deliver homes which will look as good in 50 to 100 years time.

Viability Assessment

- iii|83 There may be occasions where the objectives set out in this guide impact significantly upon the viability and deliverability of a development, for example where there are unforeseen or significant **extraordinary** infrastructure costs. In such circumstances, in accordance with Para 173 of the NPPF, when planning applications are being determined there may be the opportunity (as with planning obligations) for an applicant to argue a case on the individual viability of a scheme, but only where the applicant adopts an open book approach to the viability appraisal. Importantly, each case will be assessed on its own merits
- iii|84 This does not exempt the land owner/developer, however, from utilising the appropriate professional inputs or adopting the systematic approach to design set out in this guide, to achieve the high quality design also required by the NPPF and the Local Plan Strategy.
- iii|85 The systematic approach set out in the design guide may also assist in securing a more robust and viable development proposal through a better approach to urban design. The issue of viability should be brought to the LPAs attention at the earliest opportunity, ideally at the pre-application stage.

In Conclusion to Volume 1

- iii|86 It should be made clear that good design practice is not a box ticking exercise and that this process should be integral to the design ethos of developers and their design teams. The information contained in Volume 1 of this guidance provides the foundations for the design process, Volume 2 provides the structure.







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