

Chelford Neighbourhood Plan

CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

May 2018

Index

Introduction.....	page 2
Cheshire East - A Unique Borough.....	page 3
Policy Context.....	page 5
National Landscape Character Area.....	page 8
The Cheshire Landscape Assessment 2008.....	page 9
Landform, geology and soils.....	page 13
Chelford – A sense of Place.....	page 14
Local Character Context.....	page 20
Typical Local Materials.....	page 36
Typical Traditional Detailing.....	page 40
Listed Buildings in Chelford.....	page 42
Green Spaces- areas for recreation.....	page 42
Footpaths and Bridleways.....	page 45
Recommendations.....	page 49

Introduction

This report seeks to set out and summarise the key landscape and design characteristics of Chelford Parish, placing them in a wider context of the local authority area (Cheshire East), to make meaningful recommendations for policy themes that could be pursued in the Chelford Neighbourhood Plan.

Character is the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that make each place different. Landscape character is an important element of this, which makes a place unique and gives a locality its 'sense of place' and is influenced by combinations of visual, natural and historic elements together with settlement patterns and built components. Intangible aspects such as tranquillity and sense of place also have a strong influence upon the way the landscape and place are perceived.

The information in this report draws from several different studies and other reports including the Cheshire East Design Guide and the Cheshire Landscape Assessment 2007. This report seeks to assist in the formulation of policies and guidance to ensure the planning and management of sustainable future landscapes and it has three main purposes:

- To encourage a greater awareness of local landscape character
- To help to recognise contemporary pressures
- To stimulate debate about the future

The report is structured to set out the wider character context within which Chelford is located and further assess the detailed elements which contribute to the sense of place in Chelford itself. The body of the report undertakes this assessment and Appendix 1 sets out the existing planning policy framework in regards landscape and design, relevant to the parish.

Cheshire East - A Unique Borough

This section has been included 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. It sets out in brief, from where that uniqueness has been derived, in terms of historical and physical influences and it 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.

The two key elements from 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. Developers and their design teams are therefore encouraged to draw upon the information distilled from this Character Assessment of Chelford and creatively use it to produce unique, forward looking, grounded developments, which contribute positively to the established settlements and landscape of the Parish.

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. 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.

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. 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.

It is this emotional response which is lacking from many modern developments. 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 each other.

Geographic & Historic Influences

Geography and history have been key in the evolution of the Cheshire East landscape and settlements within it. Sheltered locations, supply of building materials, fire wood, food and fresh plentiful water were the first priorities in establishing places to live. 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.

The Industrial Revolution of the 1760's saw the start of an explosion in population and settlement growth. 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 market.



For example, the Silk Industry in Macclesfield and Congleton grew up around the unique microclimate required in the silk production process, as much as around the power supplied by the local river systems. Whereas, Bollington's focus was cotton. 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, mill buildings, workers' terraces, foremans' homes and mill owners' villas and mansion houses, as well as in the developed infrastructure in terms of canals and

railways. Chelford's development on the other hand was influenced by the development of the railway in the 19th century and the transport link it offered to the industrial townships.

Whilst local histories 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. By distilling out what makes these town and villagescapes special and creatively reinterpreting them, will lead to yet another layer of history and evolution to the settlements into which they are placed.

The “Corner Shoppe” and Post Office – one of the oldest buildings in Chelford.



Policy Context

At a national level, the landscape is recognised to be an important asset, and this is promoted by public bodies such as Natural England and English Heritage as well as being set out in planning policy.

The government signed up to the European Landscape Convention in 2007. This convention defines landscape as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” *(Council of Europe, 2000)*.

The Localism Act 2011 says that local communities can develop Neighbourhood Plans with a view to determining locally based guidance on where development can go and what it should look like. This landscape character assessment will provide part of the evidence base for the Chelford Neighbourhood Plan and will thus be used to inform and contribute to the Plan’s policies

Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in line with both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Cheshire East Local Plan.

The NPPF 2012 states that:

- Decision making should “be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area”
- Decision making should “always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”
- Decision making should “take account of the different roles and character of different areas recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it”
- “Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks”
- Policy and planning decisions should take account of “opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place”.

Chelford is a rural village, where the landscape has been influenced over many hundreds of years by the work of the agricultural community.

The landscape character of Chelford is the result of the interaction of people with both the natural and social landscape over centuries. The settlement pattern has been strongly influenced by the coming of the Manchester to Crewe railway in the 19th century. The siting of the station led to the village focus moving from its original location surrounding the Church to developments north of the railway line.



Chelford from the air showing
the rural settlement pattern

National Landscape Character Area

Chelford lies within the NCA 61 The Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character Area. NCA 61 comprises most of the county of Cheshire, the northern half of Shropshire and a large part of north-west Staffordshire. This is an expanse of flat or gently undulating, lush, pastoral farmland, which is bounded by the Mersey Valley NCA in the north, with its urban and industrial development, and extending to the rural Shropshire Hills NCA in the south. To the west, it is bounded by the hills of the Welsh borders and to the east and south-east by the urban areas within the Potteries and Churnet Valley, Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands, and Cannock Chase and Cank Wood NCAs.

A series of small sandstone ridges cut across the plain and are very prominent features within this open landscape. The Mid-Cheshire Ridge, the Maer and the Hanchurch Hills are the most significant. They are characterised by steep sides and woodland is often ancient semi-natural woodland which is notably absent from the plain, except around Northwich.

The landscape character of the plain owes much to its glacial origins. A thick layer of glacial till covers the lower slopes of the ridge and the surrounding plain and is punctuated by numerous ponds and meres. Subsequent colonisation by vegetation has resulted in the establishment of large areas of bog, known as mosses. Some are associated with the development of schwingmoor which is an advancing, floating raft of bog moss. The meres and mosses of the north-west Midlands form a geographically discrete series of nationally important, lowland open water and peatland sites; the finest examples are of international importance.

Key characteristics of NCA 61 that resonate within the Chelford Parish:

- Extensive, gently undulating plain, dominated by thick glacial till from the late Pleistocene Period, producing productive, clay soils and exemplifying characteristic glacial landforms including eskers, glacial fans, kettle holes, moraines and a landscape of meres and mosses.

- Few woodlands, confined to the areas around Bag Brook and Snape Brook; the Astle Estate; and Mere Court.
- Strong field patterns with generally well-maintained boundaries, predominantly hedgerows, with dense, mature hedgerow trees. Cheshire-style (curved topped) metal railing fences occur locally on the Astle and older established estate lands.
- A mixed farming and arable agricultural landscape.

Ref. Natural England National Character Area Profile 61: Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain 2014

The Cheshire Landscape Assessment 2008

Chelford is located in area LFW1 within the Cheshire Landscape Assessment 2008 [Fig 1]. The area is designated as The Marthall Character Area.

This low undulating (c 40-90m AOD) character area extends from Lower Peover, northwest as far as Alderley Edge. The southern boundary is provided by the valley of the River Dane.

This is a medium scale landscape of mixed arable and pastoral farmland. There are localised areas of more undulating ground, but the land is generally flat. In the north many fields have been enlarged and there is evidence of hedgerow removal with increased reliance upon post and wire fences. This has produced a more open, larger scale landscape with more extensive views, although even here many views are curtailed in the middle distance by solid blocks of woodland. Chelford in the north of the character area is strongly influenced by the proximity of urban Knutsford, Wilmslow and Alderley Edge. Several major highways, including the A50 and A537, traverse the area with the associated intrusion of heavy traffic, but many tranquil rural locations remain in the inter-land between these strategic routes.

The area is drained by several small rivers including Bag Brook and Snape Brook and these are often associated with linear woodlands or lines of mature trees, forming conspicuous features in the landscape.

In the northern part of the character area, the high ground of Alderley Edge with its wooded slopes forms an important visual feature on the horizon. In the south the Jodrell Bank radio telescope provides a local landmark as it is visible over a wide expanse.

Settlement has a medium density comprising clusters of dispersed settlement e.g. the Warford Hall and Blackden Heath areas; linear settlement that has developed along roadways e.g. Stocks Lane, Over Peover; small nucleations at Swan Green and Twemlow Green and larger nucleated villages that have undergone modern expansion such as Chelford and Goostrey. The railway connecting Alderley Edge and Holmes Chapel runs across the area.

There is a substantial concentration of small-medium (up to 8ha) medieval fields with semi-regular pattern in the Lower Peover/Peover Hall area. Much of the remaining area comprises regular small-medium post medieval enclosure with some medieval and large modern fields (over 8ha). Boundaries are a mix of patchy hawthorn hedges with standard trees and fences. Horsiculture also has made an impact on this area e.g. stables and modern fenced horse paddocks. Red brick buildings, some with white wash are typical and there are also several half-timbered, brick nogged cottages.



Issues affecting the Lower Farms and Woods landscape character type

- Increase in demand for equestrian facilities riding schools etc. including enclosed exercise areas and associated large-scale buildings.
- Continued pressure for mineral extraction: current and future operations can present a threat to habitats but also provide opportunities for habitat creation.

- Changes in farming including pressure to diversify and changing patterns of land ownership. The purchase of agricultural holdings by non-farmers is becoming a significant force for change, resulting in conversion of farm houses and farm buildings and changes in farm use.
- Changes in farm crops. Increase in areas under arable or fodder crops and a trend towards silage production. Possible move towards bio-energy crops such as Miscanthus and increasing potato production.
- On-going decline in traditional woodland management practices leading to under management of farm woodlands, coverts and copses leading to general deterioration. Many hedgerow trees over-mature and in decline.
- Reduction, fragmentation and deterioration of habitats: Loss of ponds through drainage and in-fill plus nutrient run-off from surrounding farmland. Decline in species-rich hedgerows at some locations. Intensification of grassland management leading to loss of species-rich acid grassland. Loss of ancient woodland through inappropriate management, grazing, encroachment and erosion through informal recreation.
- Loss of historic field pattern due to decline in hedgerow management, with resulting increase in use of fencing.
- Loss of historic parkland to agriculture and recreational use e.g. golf courses.
- Erosion of built environment character through incremental development: This may lead to loss of historic buildings and vernacular character; the suburbanisation of rural properties and their curtilage; pressure for expansion of existing settlement, ribbon development and in-fill.
- Standardisation of roads: Upgrading of lanes and minor roads leading to increasingly suburban character of the countryside.

Ref. The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment November 2008

These pressures on the landscape are relevant to the Character Assessment of Chelford and in turn the Local Neighbourhood Plan.

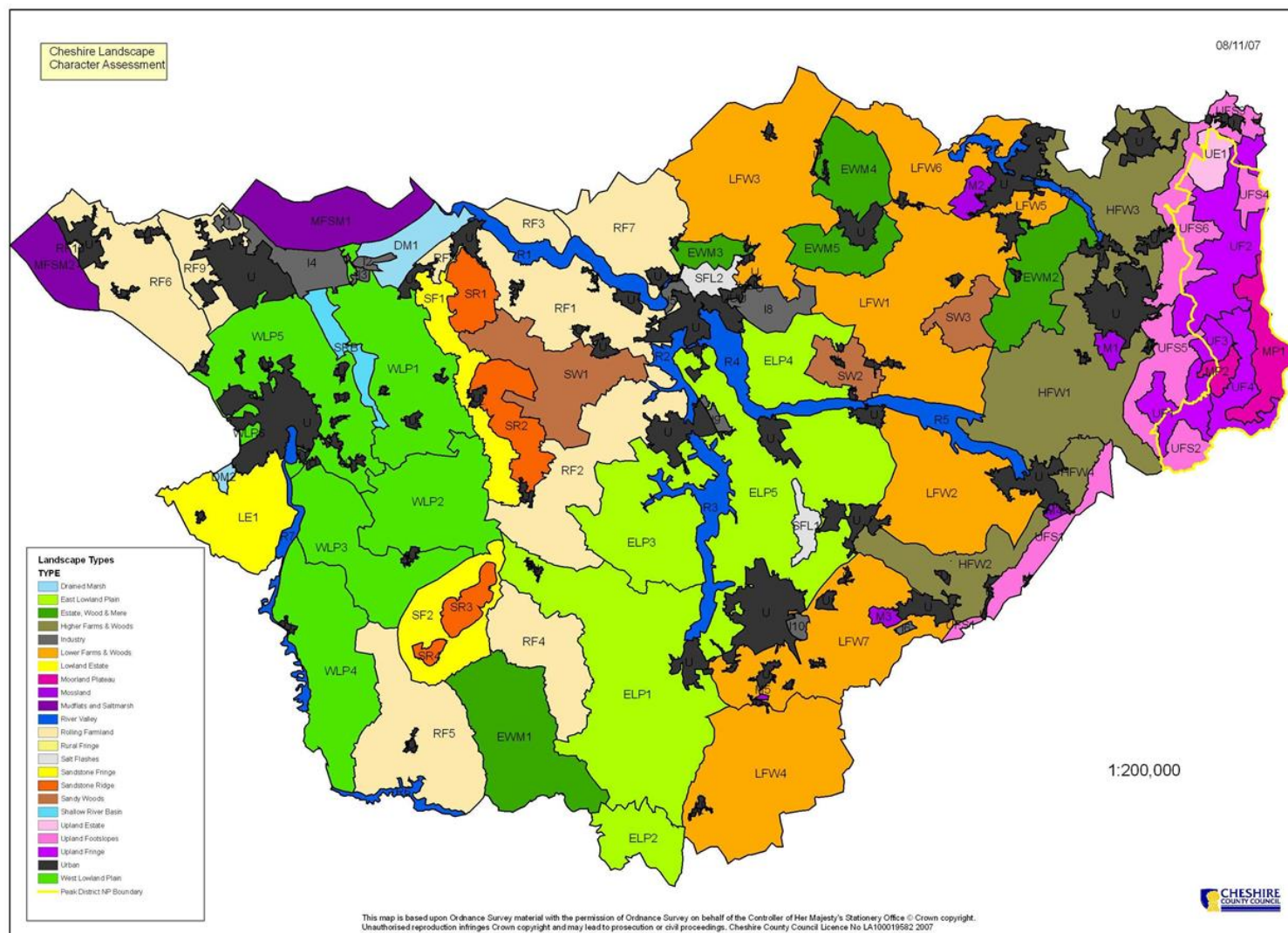


Figure 1 - Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment

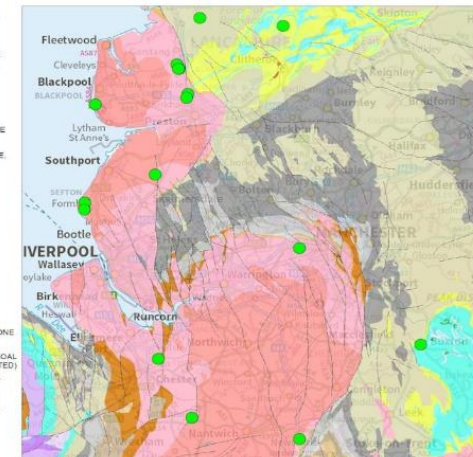
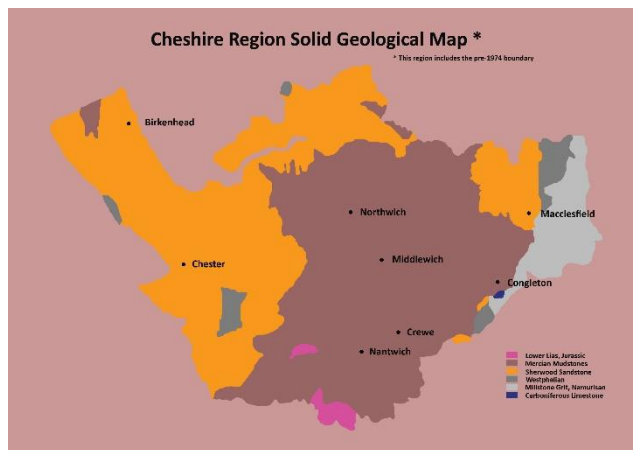
Landform, geology and soils

The solid geology that underlies much of the area comprises red mudstones and sandstones of the Triassic Period. These rocks were deposited under arid, desert conditions circa 248–205 million years ago.

Chelford lies on the surrounding plain of the lower slopes of the sandstone ridges. The area is covered by a thick deposit of glacial till (sands and boulder clays) that was deposited during the last glacial advance about 18,000 years ago and is punctuated by numerous ponds and meres. Glacial deposits also occur widely in the major river valleys. Glacial outwash channels formed the Congleton and Chelford sands, a nationally important reserve of silica sand.

Silica sand is extracted from the nationally important reserves in the areas around Congleton, Chelford and Eaton Hall in Macclesfield. This extraction has led to the large areas of water now forming lakes in the disused sand quarries that are within the Parish boundary.

The water retention and fertility of the clay-based soils support a range of agricultural practices. Once this was predominantly dairy. Today the parish is characterised by mixed agriculture.



Chelford – A sense of Place.

The data used for this section of the report was published in 2013 as part of the Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project. There has been little major housing development within Chelford since its publication. The data therefore is a reliable guide to the social character of the village today.

Social and cultural background.

1175 people living in 550 households were resident in Chelford during the last census. Whereas Cheshire East data is reflective of the England averages, Chelford's population does not reflect these averages. Those under 16 and of working age were less than the England average. Those over 65 and in single pensioner households were much higher than the England average. Single parent families and those born outside the UK were also much lower than the England average.

Many local rural communities highlight that younger groups – particularly families – are moving out. This is often due to lack of affordable housing, or not having suitable employment and training opportunities. These groups are often replaced by more affluent older families, for example moving in from urban areas.

The data for Chelford shows greater inward migration in all age groups except for the 15-24 age group between the 2001 and 2011 census returns. The older age groups have the greater difference in terms of inward migration. This reflects the general view that the area attracts more affluent older families. The net loss within the 15-24 age group, may to some extent, reflect high housing costs, reducing opportunities to remain in the area.

Equity and prosperity.

Nationally, children and older people are more likely to be living in low income households and these groups generally are indicators of vulnerability within an area. Reducing child poverty is therefore a major element of building sustainable communities. In terms of the national Index of Multiple Deprivation, Chelford is in the 20th percentile of the least

deprived areas in England. Few children are in poverty when compared to the England average. Only 5 children between 0-15 are in out of work households.

Health is a fundamental factor in wellbeing and quality of life, having a direct impact on an individual's ability to live a fulfilling and enjoyable life and indirectly impacting on their ability to sustain standards of living through income. Poor health may also have a severe effect on other people, either directly through changing relationships (for example forcing family members into informal unpaid care), or through indirect effects such as change in household income.



Chelford Surgery

The age profile of residents in Chelford reflects the three categories of determining poor health. In Chelford, people with a limiting long term illness, attendance allowance claimants, and disability living allowance claimants, all reflect the England averages. When compared to other prosperity indices, one might conclude that this is unexpected. However, given the above average number of over 65s living in Chelford, some of whom constitute the less well off, it is less surprising. However, in terms of planning requirements, it highlights the need for services and appropriate housing to be available for the population. It further highlights the need for ease of access to the health centre and community venues.

Economy.

Many rural communities have been affected by the recent economic downturns, with unemployment levels rising even in areas that have had few people out of work in the past. Being out of work can have a severe impact on an individual's quality of life, and not just economically. People out of work may also feel excluded from the local community, and the impacts can also affect partners and children, not just the person out of work.

Chelford has a small number of people of working age who are not in regular employment. This may be because nearly 40% of the population above 16+ have a degree compared to 16% with no qualification. Retail, professional and manufacturing are the three largest employment sectors. Nearly 60% of those in employment are in managerial or professional occupations with a further 11% in skilled trades. In addition, there is an increasing number of people who work from home. This employment breakdown suggests the population is more affluent than the surrounding areas within Cheshire East. Alongside the age profile it leads to a duality within the community.



Examples of rural employment in Chelford



Housing and the built environment.

Housing is an important issue in rural communities. Increases in house-prices, which recently have far outstripped average increases in earnings, mean that local people may be priced out of the housing market in the area in which they grew up. For a community to sustain a fair and balanced housing market, it must provide affordable housing accessible to the local community. However, local housing development can also strain local services, as well as affect the character of the area. With the limited supply of homes priced at an affordable level for young families, evidencing the type and availability of housing in Chelford will be essential to community planning.

Currently 64% of the Chelford housing stock consists of detached houses. A further 13% are semi-detached; 14% terraced and 8% flats. This reflects the affluent nature of the area. 80% of the housing stock is owner occupied with 20% either social housing or private rented dwellings.

Less than 22% of the housing stock is in the lowest three Council Tax bands. 26% of housing is in the top three Council Tax bands. There are less than 1% of households without central heating and only 8% considered to be in fuel poverty compared to 11% in England. This again reflects the affluent nature of the village.

Transport and connectivity.



People in rural areas rely more on private transport and, in general, spend more on transport than their urban counterparts (nationally, higher transport expenditure accounts for almost half the higher expenditure by rural households than urban ones). Overall, the residents of rural hamlets and villages travel nearly twice as far by

car each year compared to urban residents.



This is certainly true of residents in Chelford. 10% of households in Chelford have no car compared to nearly 50% who have at least two cars. Travel time information suggests that Chelford is not well connected, when compared to county averages. The loss of local shops places additional pressures on any future development to ensure that adequate car parking and garage spaces are provided in all planning applications.

In Conclusion.

Chelford is an affluent area in terms of incomes and quality of housing stock. There are few services available for the current population. Access to shops and services is mainly by private car. Some young families are leaving the village because of the lack of suitable affordable housing. The age profile is increasing towards the over 65s. As a community the growth of the 44-60 age group poses challenges because these people are often time poor. There is a need to encourage population growth in the mid twenty to forty age range through a supply of homes priced at an affordable level for young families.



Map of Chelford designated area for the Neighbourhood Plan – shaded area
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS

Local Character Context

Chelford is identified as a Local Service Centre in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy. The primary landscape character of Chelford is medium scale landscape of mixed arable and pastoral farmland with a medium density, comprising of clusters of dispersed settlements. There are localised areas of more undulating ground, but the land is generally flat. In the north, many fields have been enlarged and there is evidence of hedgerow removal with increased reliance upon post and wire fences. This has produced a more open, larger scale landscape with more extensive views, although even there, many views are curtailed in the middle distance by solid blocks of woodland.



Based on internally consistent typologies and broad similarities, the character area can loosely be further refined into three sub areas: the roundabout area, the suburban edge and the open countryside.

The primary landscape is predominantly agricultural with green flat terrain with gently rolling fields and largely open. Chelford has some open views across the fields adding to the visual richness of the area, but overall short views are visible from the roadside and from the station. Jodrell Bank can be seen in the distance but there are few landmarks defining the view.

The overall wider area is sparsely occupied by dispersed farmsteads with properties spread across a much larger area. There are footways situated along the main road, but these are narrow in width.



Chelford Character Areas

Yellow Character Area 1

Red Character Area 2



Character Area 1

The roundabout contributes as a focal point and node in the village as many roads connect from this point into other local areas. The roundabout is defined by mature trees and greenery. From the roundabout this Character Area divides into four distinct segments.

- To the north along Alderley Road.
- To the north west along Knutsford Road.
- To the west along Peover Lane.
- To the east and south with some of the oldest properties in the Parish.

To the **north** there is linear development from the Shell garage towards the railway bridge close to the parish boundary. The cottages in this area are predominantly Edwardian characterised by gabled roofs and sash windows. Close to the roundabout are small industrial/commercial premises including motor vehicle repairs; a picture framing business and locksmiths.

Further towards Alderley Edge, the 19th century school house with its black and white design has been converted into offices. At the northern extremity of the area is a terrace of early 20th century cottages and several small commercial units linked to the original farm outbuildings of Roadside Farm. *[see next page]*





To the **north west** along Knutsford Road towards the railway bridge the landscape is characterised by the Village Hall, Scout Hut and recreational areas linked to the identified green space surrounding these two buildings.





Opposite the Village Hall is a small number of Victorian cottages including the older Toll Bar Cottage. These two storey properties are characterised by gabled roof lines, with a black and white mock-tudor finish. The windows are small square paned.

Development is linear as it is restricted by the main road. There are pedestrian footpaths along one side of the road to enable access from both the roundabout and the railway station.

To the **west** of the roundabout the Corner Shoppe and Post Office act as gate keeper to the cricket field and high value properties along Peover Lane.





These higher value properties are characterised by mature trees with some low stone boundary treatments. Soft landscaping and perennial hedges surround the individual properties. Stone and gravel driveways lead to ample car parking space in front and to the side of the houses. Each two-storey property is set back from the tree lined road.

Windows retain the small pane character. A mixture of Cheshire brick and light colour rendering with tiled roofs and wooden doors, define the building structure of this area.



To the **east and south** of the roundabout is the original location of Chelford. Properties in this area are the oldest and follow the two main roads to Macclesfield and Holmes Chapel. The church and its surrounding cottages are a major feature to the south. In a linear development alongside the A537 towards Macclesfield are a several large properties including the Old Vicarage, the Manor House and the three-storey brick-built property Ivy House that was once the original public house.

These properties are individualistic in style offering a mix of boundaries and building materials. Black and white detailing predominate within the dwellings whilst the church is of red brick with small gothic features.



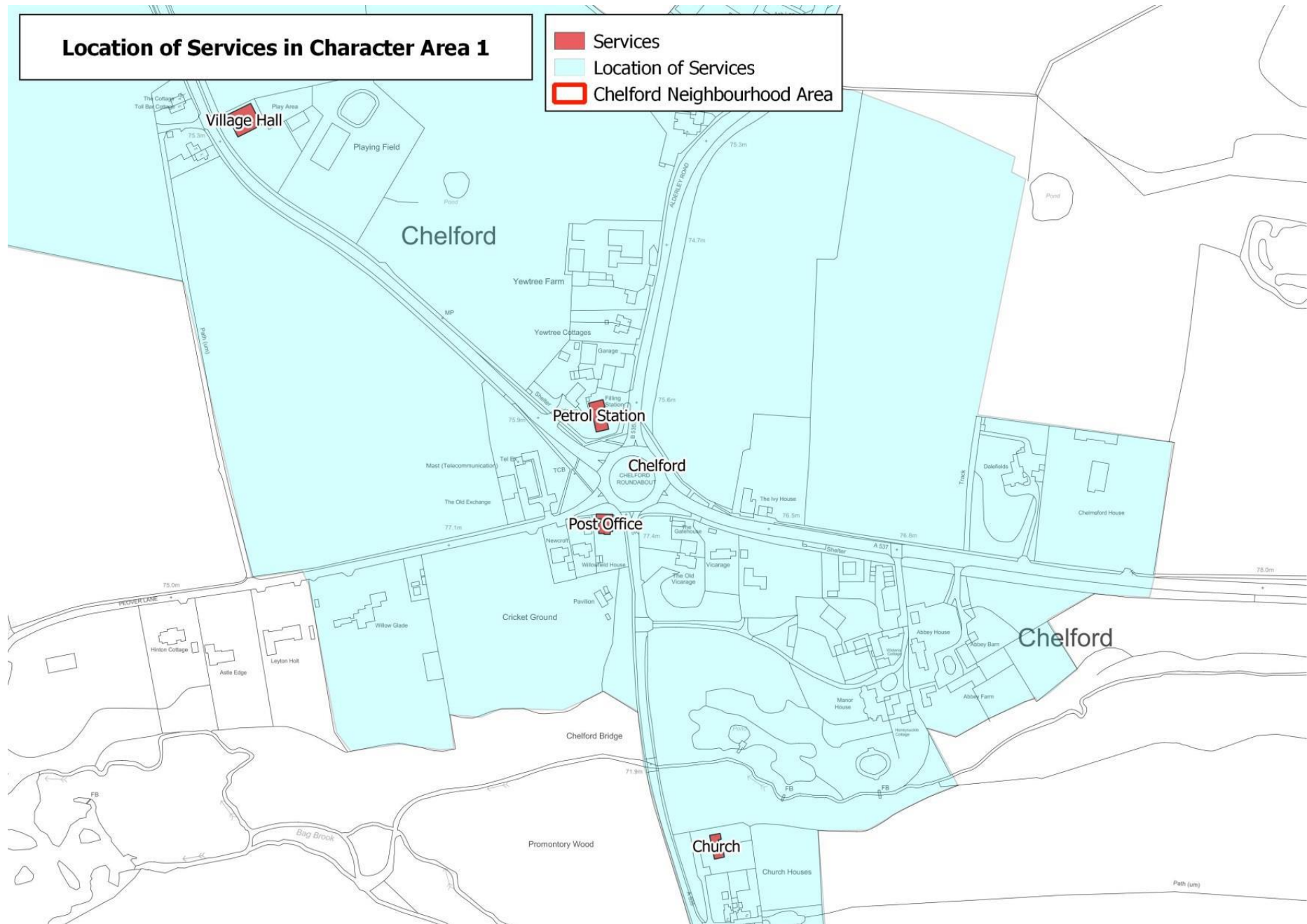
The Old Vicarage and Ivy House – Listed buildings



St John's Church and cottages. Listed buildings

Location of Services in Character Area 1

- Services
- Location of Services
- Chelford Neighbourhood Area



Character Area 2

Since the coming of the railway in the 19th Century, this area of Chelford has developed away from the heartland surrounding the roundabout. The area is characterised by three areas:

- The ribbon development along Knutsford Road from the station westwards.
- The 1950-70 developments in social and private dwellings to the north of the Victorian developments on Knutsford Road.
- The Dixon Drive estate developed in the 1980s.

The **ribbon development** along Knutsford Road is characterised by a range of character styles. Typically, modern single storey and two storey housing has developed towards the Knutsford end of the development. Towards the station end there are Victorian terraced properties alongside larger Victorian dwellings.



safely for local pedestrians.

There is 21st century development of flats fronting the main road. Within this area are shops and commercial properties in the Victorian buildings. The building styles are characterised by Victorian embellishments to the brickwork on some of the properties within the gabled frontages.

Parking for the commercial properties is provided off the main road, although the heavy traffic flow of traffic makes it a difficult road to cross



Victorian and commercial properties along Knutsford Road





The Victorian terraces leading to the station are the only properties within this area that do not have parking access.

To the south side of the road, a new housing development is being established on the site of a former transport depot. These properties are of a higher density than the other modern estate at this end of the village.

The developers have maintained many of the village characteristics with the use of gabled frontages and a mixture of brick and light-coloured rendering. The mock Tudor styling found within the Victorian buildings has also been included in

the design.



Location of Services in Character Area 2

Legend:

- Services (Red)
- Location of Services (Light Blue)
- Chelford Neighbourhood Area (Orange Outline)

Map Labels:

- Pub and Deli
- Egerton Arms (PH)
- The Coach House
- Sunny Bank Farm
- Chelford C of E Primary School
- School
- Doctors
- Astle Court Community Centre
- Greengrocers and Butchers
- Farm Supplies Store
- Chelford Station

Map Features:

- Playing Field
- White House
- Town Bank
- Hart Down
- Highfield
- Bowling Green
- Pavilion
- Cattle Market
- Tanks
- Ponds
- The Woodlands

-
- Location of Services in Character Area 2**
- Legend:
- Services (Red)
 - Location of Services (Light Blue)
 - Chelford Neighbourhood Area (Orange Outline)
- Map Labels:
- Pub and Deli
 - Egerton Arms (PH)
 - The Coach House
 - Sunny Bank Farm
 - Chelford C of E Primary School
 - School
 - Doctors
 - Astle Court Community Centre
 - Greengrocers and Butchers
 - Farm Supplies Store
 - Chelford Station
- Map Features:
- Roads: DIXON DRIVE, BROOMFIELD CLOSE, WOODFIN DRIVE, ELKSTEAD ROAD, ROBIN LANE, STATION ROAD, KNITSFORD ROAD
 - Playing Field
 - White House
 - Town Bank
 - Hart Down
 - Highfield
 - Bowling Green
 - Pavilion
 - Cattle Market
 - Tanks
 - Ponds
 - The Woodlands

The **1950-70** social and private developments are characterised by single and two storey dwellings. These developments follow a linear pattern. The social housing is a mix of 1950s council houses and single storey, single bedroom properties for retirement. Both are brick built with tiled roofs. The buildings in each category are of a similar character and provide a sense of uniformity to the area. The single storey units are linked with shared grass space as well as designated parking.

The private dwellings are of a distinctive style with timber cladding or dark tiles forming part of the elevations. They are a mix of two storey houses and single storey bungalows.



A small number of semi-detached dwellings have a white render with dark tiled roofs. Windows are of a modern style with larger single panes.

The areas of social housing are characterised by well-kept hedges, with several front garden spaces converted into hard standing for vehicles.

Pedestrian footpaths enable access through the areas.

The **Dixon Drive** estate built in the 1980s has a mix of single and two storey detached dwellings. These vary in size from two to five bedrooms. The houses are characterised by a Cheshire brick build with dark tiled roofs. The windows are uniform in mock Georgian style. All properties have either integral garages or garages in a designated block. All house frontages have additional hard standing for at least two vehicles. The areas of hard standing are now a mix of tarmac and block paving. There are a small number of terraced houses within the overall mix.



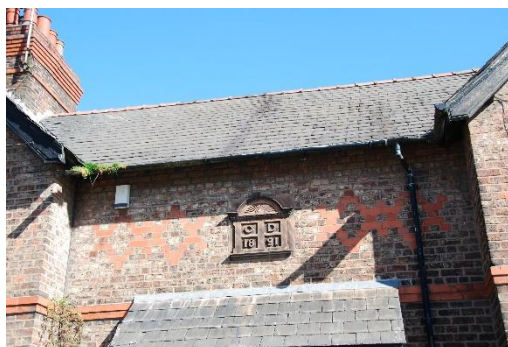
The area is characterised by tree lined avenues and open plan front gardens. Many of these have since been delineated by hedges or shrubbery. The back gardens are either walled or fenced.

The estate is of low density by 21st century standards. Roads throughout are curved enabling green open space to predominate. Within the estate are three areas of green recreational space.

Pedestrian pathways follow the main road layout, though the side roads have no pedestrian footpaths. Pedestrian movement throughout the area is encouraged through a series of cut-throughs enabling easy access. Public footpaths and bridleways link the main areas to the surrounding open countryside.

Typical Local Materials

Brick is the predominant building material throughout both Character Areas. There are subtle variations in colour between the older and the newer properties. The predominant colour is red brick though the older properties are a darker shade. Contrasting engineering brick is used on the older properties to highlight features.



Roofs are a mixture of tiles, slates and stone.





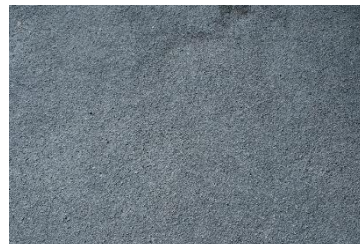
Materials vary between elevations, for instance render or painted brick on main facades and exposed brick on side elevations. Boundary walls in both character areas are mainly red brick. In Character Area 1 stone walls are found. In many areas brick boundary walls are hidden behind beech and conifer hedges. Modern buildings have iron railings.



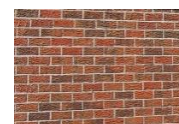
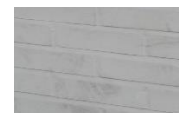
Older dwellings have traditional open wooden fences to mark their boundary. Boundaries in Character Area 2 are more uniform than in the older areas of the village.



Driveways in both character areas are a mixture of paved sets and black tarmac. Where communal garages exist, the driveway is concrete.



Examples of boundaries and driveways in Character Area 2



Colour Palette for housing

White render and painted brickwork.

Off-white/cream render and painted brickwork.

Darker brickwork on older properties.

Red Cheshire brickwork.



Typical Traditional Detailing

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 both main Character Areas.

Distinctive shaped gables are common throughout both Character Areas. Older properties have gabled frontages with mock Tudor infill. The 1980s properties maintained the gabled style though without the mock Tudor influence. The newest properties along the A537 respect the mock Tudor gables.

The 19th century terraced properties have decorative red brick banding creating a pattern below the roof line.





Listed Buildings in Chelford

The national heritage list for England

- Former Tithe Barn at the Manor House, Holmes Chapel Road – Grade II
- Church of St John, Holmes Chapel Road. – Grade II*
- The Manor House, Holmes Chapel Road. – Grade II*
- Church Cottages, 3-5 Holmes Chapel Road. – Grade II
- Chelford Bridge South, Holmes Chapel Road. – Grade II
- The Lodge, Holmes Chapel Road. – Grade II
- Astle Farm East Farmhouse, Astle Lane. – Grade II
- The Old Vicarage, Macclesfield Road. – Grade II
- The Ivy House, Macclesfield Road. – Grade II



The main heritage sites are linked to Character Area 1 and buildings associated with the station built in the mid-19th century.

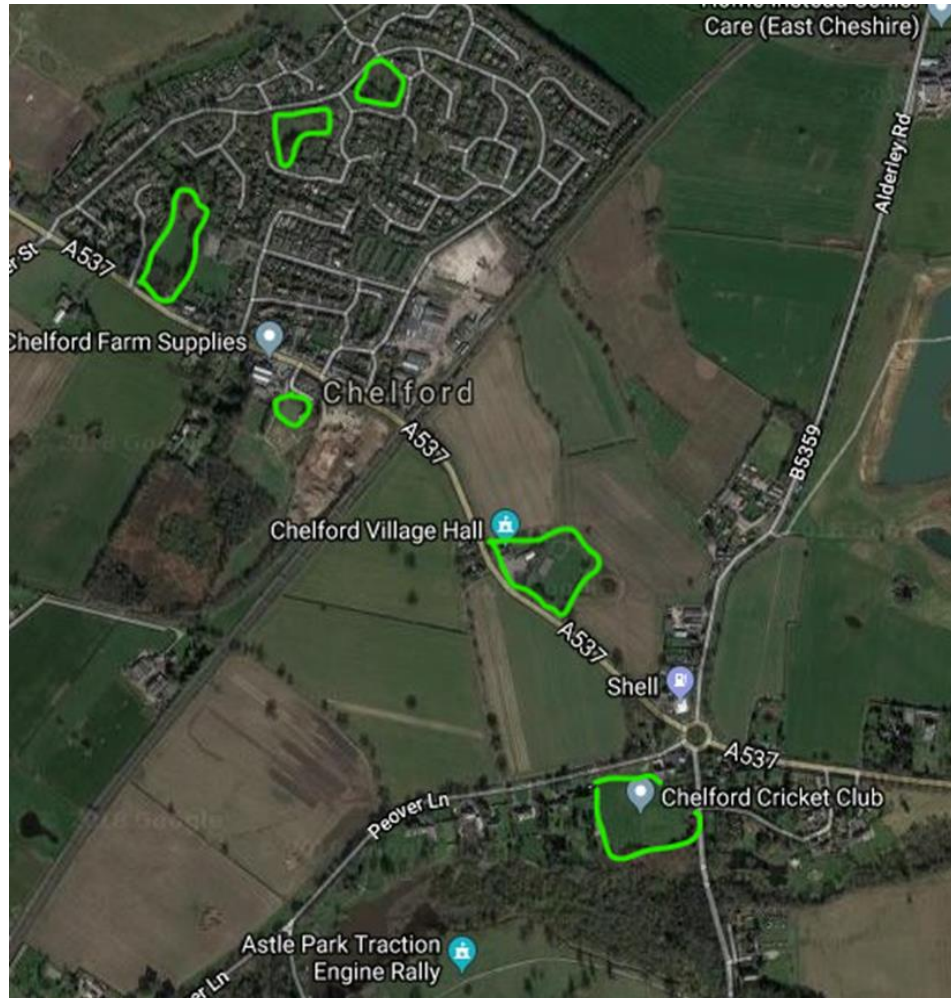
They are a key aspect of Chelford Village and offer historical visual cues to future building styles that might be approved in the future.

For the village to retain its historical links with the past these buildings and the vistas surrounding them need to be retained.



The Old Coal Masters Building and Railway Station – both mentioned as historical assets

Green Spaces- areas for recreation



The map indicates areas of Green Space to be designated for recreational usage.

The area adjacent to the A537 is Mere Court. This contains a football pitch and children's play area.

The two areas to the north are small green play areas surrounded by trees accessed off of Dixon Drive

The Bowling Green is behind Chelford Farm Supplies. It is currently under threat, although it is home to both men's and ladies crown green bowling clubs.

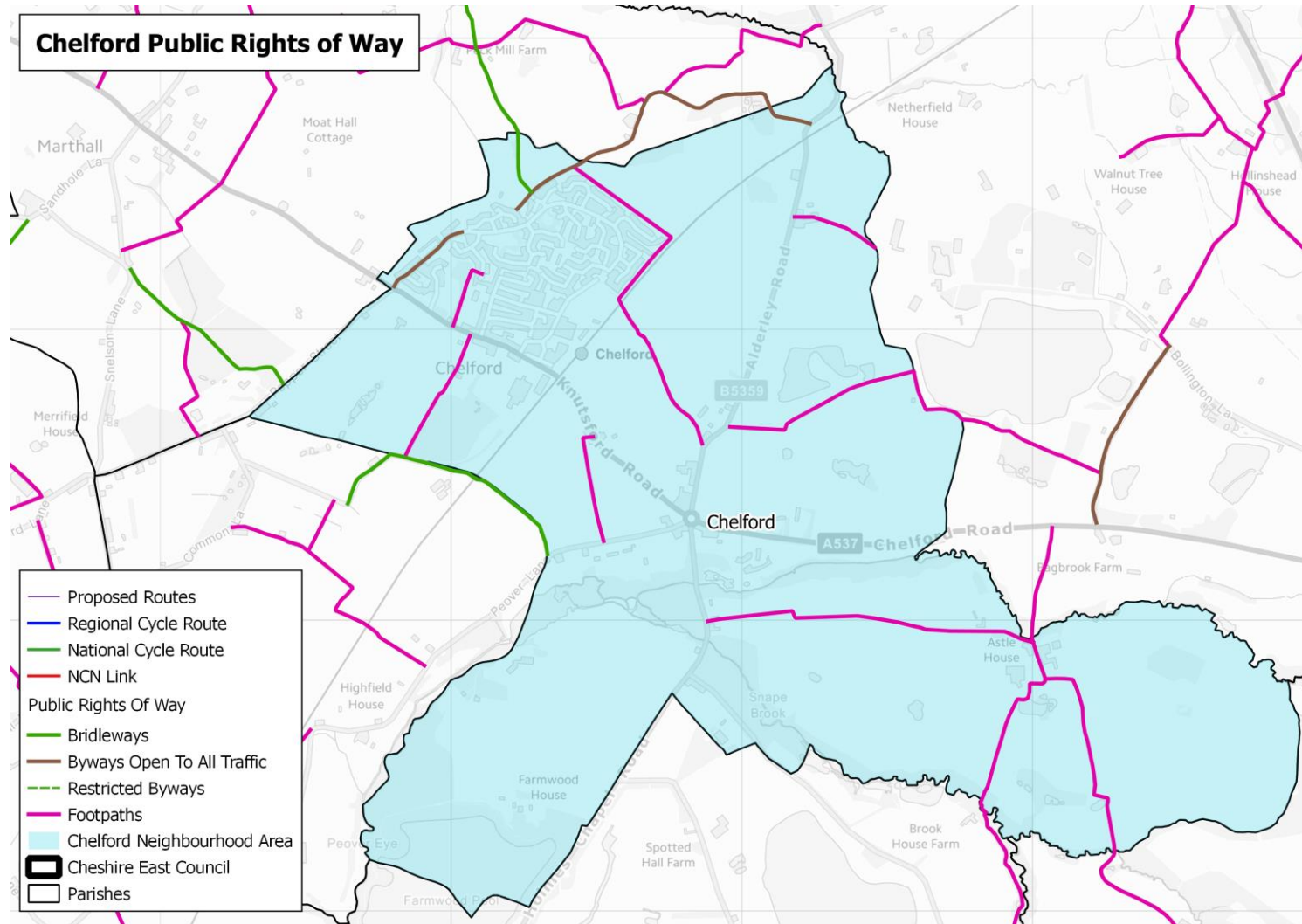
The Village Hall has adjacent green field space, a children's play area, MUGA, and BMX track. These are all free to use.

Chelford Cricket Club is a long-established club, reflecting the history of the village. The original ground was on what is now the site of the new development "Cricketers Green" which will house 90 dwellings.



Recreational areas within Chelford

Footpaths and Bridleways



Footpaths and Bridleways provide ease of access for pedestrians to experience the open countryside and farmlands that make up most of the Chelford landscape. Access to these walkways is from within the built environment as well as alongside farmland. The positive influence this has on health through walking is sometimes hindered by the footpaths becoming overgrown.



Footpaths surrounding the 1980's development



Footpaths leading to open countryside

Key Positive Impacts

Chelford has a range of traditional Victorian rural character cottage houses with distinct features. There are decorative timber features on windows with a set back design.

Windows are in proportion to the rest of the property complemented by a variety of brick shade and pattern adding to character detailing on Victorian properties.

The more modern properties have retained the gabled detailing in the overall design, whether that be above bay windows or within the structural design.

The 1980s built estate in Character Area 2 has wide grass frontages and tree lined avenues. The layout offers a curved road design. The mix of house sizes and design creates an open feel. Car parking has been considered with integral single and double garages built into the design element.



Chelford residents have ease of access to the surrounding countryside and farmland through a mixture of public footpaths and bridleways.

The mix of housing, whilst retaining traditional features, creates a village identity linking the older property with the newer through mock Tudor inserts or gabling in the structural design.

Recreational opportunities are evident in both major Character Areas. These include the Cricket Club, Bowling Green, Multi Use Games Area, children's play areas and designated open spaces. The Village Hall and Scout Hut complement the open areas as does the Community Hub in Character Area 2.

Most dwellings in Chelford have parking space for at least one vehicle. Only those on Station Road leading to the railway station, and the social housing units on Dixon Drive and some of Robin Lane do not.

Negative Impacts

The railway line divides the village into two distinct Character Areas. The Church and area including the Village Hall surrounding the roundabout create a distinct focus for passing motorists. The area to the west of the station offers an alternative centre for the village.



The loss of rural services from the main centre including the bank, paper shop and grocers. The design of new properties with limited green frontage and lack of trees detract from the rural character.

The new development on the site of a former transport depot offers little shared green space and limited car parking.

The planned development on the former market site offers no green spaces.

Overgrown boundary hedges on the 1980s development narrow the pedestrian walkways.

The increasingly busy A537 coupled with the planned two new developments make pedestrian access and increased vehicular access an issue for future planners.

The government's affordability ratio for properties in Chelford suggests that property prices in relation to median incomes are nearly twice as expensive as those in the rest of England.

Recommendations

To protect and enhance the character of the village and to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan incorporates locally specific policies, the following recommendations are to be considered in the policy areas of the plan:

1. New development should avoid introducing suburban forms and depth to the development pattern.
2. Existing covenants should inform the structure of any new developments.
3. New development should not significantly harm features which make an important contribution to the landscape and character of the area (hedgerows and trees)
4. New development should ensure that all dwellings have adequate allocated parking.
5. Conversions and new dwellings should ensure a positive transition between the rural and village landscapes, by ensuring the scale, materials and orientation of buildings are sensitive to the landscape within which the site is located.
6. New buildings should use a limited palette of materials, seeking opportunities to integrate and reproduce existing strong character elements. Newly rendered properties to reflect the design cues of the Character Areas identified and include a mixture of red Cheshire brick and renderings.

7. Details from traditional properties should be reflected in new developments.
8. Improve or maintain the permeability of new residential settings and the legibility of the village, either through the character of the buildings by using a contrast of features, or landscape features such as benches and distinct nodes and edges on new developments.
9. The proportions of new properties should reflect the characteristics of existing properties. Contextual cues to be taken from the existing village layout.
10. Green spaces - within existing areas to be maintained or allocated within new development to ensure a complementary vision to the existing rural environment.
11. Existing Green Spaces for sport and recreation to be protected. These include the Cricket Field, the Bowling Green, Mere Court and the associated children's playground, the field and MUGA linked to the Village Hall, and the green spaces in the Dixon Drive estate.
12. Maintain green spaces and use soft landscaping/hedges around properties. Use appropriate landscaping for local context. Enclosure of plots and formation of boundary edges should be delivered in new development
13. Boundaries: Boundary treatments facing the street should be low rise, consistent with the immediate character of the area and seek to create a sense of enclosure within the street scene. Boundary hedges should normally be retained and incorporated in new development.
14. Pavements and fixed boundary treatments to complement existing features of properties. Use texture and pattern to make permanent boundaries distinct where possible.
15. In infill plots, new development should ensure a consistency of form with immediate neighbours who are in close proximity to one another.

16. Protect PROW and bridleways. Increase cycleways through the village. New developments to ensure connections to existing footpaths and bridleways.
17. Identify any local heritage assets for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.
18. Visual amenity should be protected from significant harm.
19. New buildings should be oriented to ensure roof ridges run parallel to the highway.
20. Installation of gate posts and gates facing the highway should be limited in size and not dominate a residential frontage or street scene
21. Dormers should be proportional to the existing building and be subservient to the roof space.

Other Considerations for the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Consider detailed review of development opportunities within the village.
- Consider establishing a formal settlement boundary.
- Formalisation of existing areas of employment.
- Protection of and increasing opportunities to access the countryside.
- Policies to manage the change of use of agricultural buildings as farms consolidate and close. The multiple farmsteads in the rural area offer an opportunity for rural economic development and where appropriate for new residential development but this should be balanced against suburbanising effects on the rural character of the area both in terms of design and use.
- Policies to encourage and facilitate the diversification of the rural economy, including to support tourism and leisure.

References:

Cheshire East Council - Design Guide

Design Council - Building for Life: The sign of a good place to live

Locality - Good design in Neighbourhood Planning

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - NPPF

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Housing White Paper

Chelford A Cheshire Village – Plant, Roycroft and Slater – October 1999

Chelford Landscape Character Assessment - A report into the local features and special qualities that characterise Chelford Parish. Cheshire East 2018

National Heritage List 2018

Cheshire East Local Historical List 2010