

**Church Minshull
Neighbourhood
Plan:
Local Character
Assessment**

October 2018

A report outlining spatial character, landscape issues and policy opportunities for the Church Minshull Neighbourhood Plan

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The survey work, photographs and meetings associated with this work took place across July and August of 2017.
- 1.2 Church Minshull Parish Council are preparing a neighbourhood plan and have an opportunity to establish a local policy framework to determine planning applications.
- 1.1 Church Minshull is a rural parish located approximately 5 miles (8.0 km) North West of Crewe. To the east of the village sits the River Weaver.
- 1.2 The vision for Church Minshull neighbourhood plan is:
 - 1.3 **'CHURCH MINSHULL VISION'**
 - 1.4 The Vision is supported by a series of objectives, those relevant to landscape and character are:
 - 1.5 To inform the development of specific policies that will support sustainable development and the delivery of the Plans vision and Objectives. This report assesses the spatial character of the village, including local design vernacular, elements of the landscape and significant local features



2. History and Evolution

2.1 The name of the village is recorded in the [Domesday Book](#) as *Maneshale*.^[6] According to records from November 1824, numerous trades and crafts were carried out in the village: blacksmith, wheelwright, joiners, cordwainer, gamekeeper, bricklayer, weaver, tailor, carrier, victualler, laundry woman and many domestic servants. There was also a shopkeeper, butcher, two school mistresses and a school master, farmers and farm workers, paupers and spinsters.^{[1][2]}

2.2 The current village church, [St Bartholomew's Church](#) was built on the site of an earlier place of worship between 1702 and 1704.^[7] A village school was built in the churchyard in 1785. In 1858 a new school was constructed on part of the Church Minshull Estate, which had been in the Brooke family for several generations. The school closed after 124 years on the 22 July 1982 and the pupils transferred to Worleston School.^{[1][2]}

2.3 The Village Hall was built in 1963 and modernised in 2003. Home Farm Park was started in about 1958. The site was sold several times and greatly extended over the years to its present size of 65 plots. The shop, post office and petrol station closed in the 1990s and were sold off separately. In 1989, Village Farm was sold to a developer and the old buildings and farm house were converted to eight houses and twelve new houses built on the site; these were finally occupied in 1999. This was the first major housing project in the village.



3. Policy Context: National Policy

3.1 The core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework address the role of design and the relevance of character and landscape in the planning process. The Core Principles state that planning should:

3.1.1 *'always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings'*

3.1.2 *'take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it'*

3.2 These principles are further detailed through a number of policies. Section 7 of the NPPF sets out at length what good design means and how it should be addressed in the planning system. Paragraph 58 sets out that:

Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create 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 as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *are visually attractive and appropriate as a result of good architecture*

3.3 Whilst planning policies should not seek to impose specific styles or features, local distinctiveness is to be recognised (paragraph 60) and consideration should be given to outstanding or innovative design (paragraph 63). The NPPF also sets out that planning policies and decisions should *'identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason'* (para.121)

3.4 NPPF also sets out a series of policies related to the countryside and landscape. Planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (para.17) and local and neighbourhood plans should support sustainable rural enterprise which respects the character of the countryside (para.28).

3.5 The NPPF also sets out a series of policies specifically relating to landscape and environment:

Paragraph 109: *The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;'*

Paragraph 113: *Local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. Distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate with their status and gives appropriate weight to their importance and the contribution that they make to wider ecological networks.*

Paragraph 117: *To minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should:
plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries;*

Paragraph 125: *By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.*

3.6 The NPPF sets a framework within which there are opportunities for local and neighbourhood plans to plan positively for design, environment and landscape. This report makes recommendations on how the Church Minshull Neighbourhood Plan may successfully form a policy response to such issues.

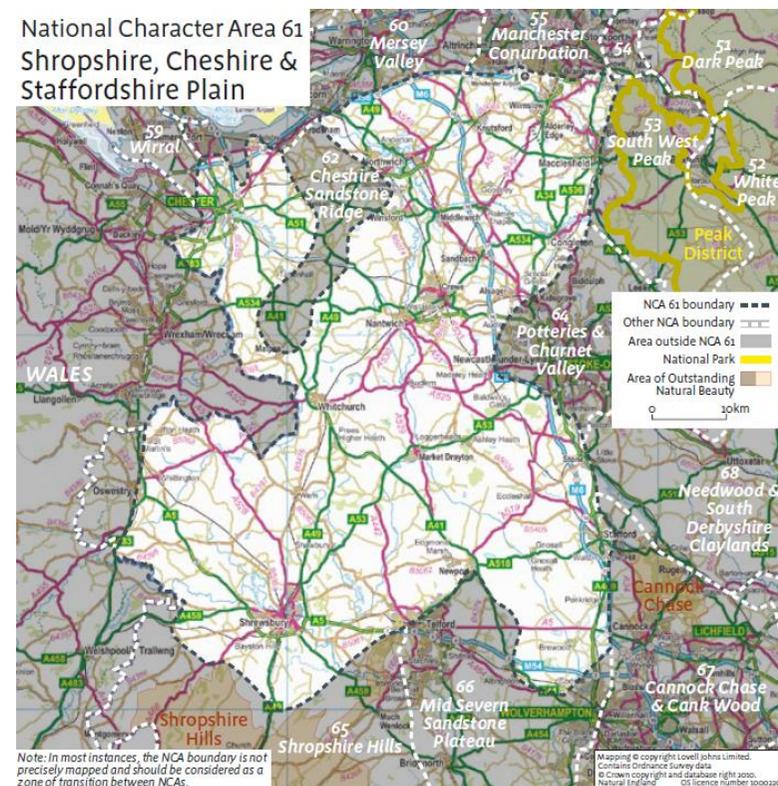
4. National Landscape Context

4.1 The Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character Area (NCA) 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.

4.2 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.

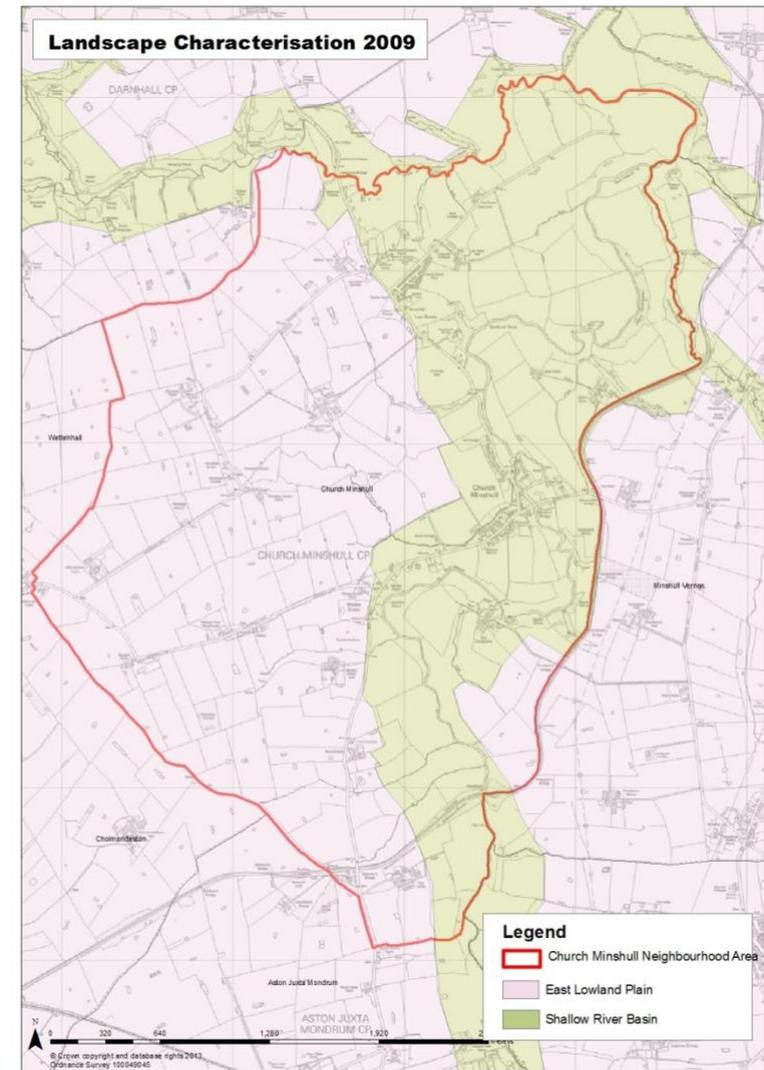
4.3 Key characteristics of NCA 61 (Shropshire, Cheshire-Staffordshire plain):

- Extensive, gently undulating plain
- Prominent, discontinuous sandstone ridges
- Few woodlands but locally extensive tracts of coniferous woodlands and locally distinct orchards scattered throughout
- Strong field patterns with generally well maintained boundaries
- Dominance of dairy farming
- Diversity of wetland habitats, internationally important wetlands, meres and mosses
- Extensive peat floodplains supporting regionally important breeding waders
- Multiple rivers and field ponds
- Archaeological evidence of iron-age hill forts, ridge and furrow and moated houses on the plain
- Regularly spaced large farmsteads, dispersed hamlets, market towns and larger settlements
- Estate parklands and gardens
- Nationally important reserves of silica sand and salt
- Canals, national cycling routes, 500km + of public rights of way and 6 national nature reserves



5 Local Landscape Context

- 5.1 The Cheshire Landscape Character assessment, published by the former Cheshire County Council in 2008, provides a classification of the Cheshire Landscape with the aim of improving awareness of local landscape character.
- 5.2 The assessment identifies 20 Landscape Character Types which share a common identity based on natural and cultural characteristics and further refines the landscape into geographically specific and unique Landscape Character Areas.
- 5.3 Church Minshull Parish straddles two landscape character areas, east lowland plain and shallow river valley. The valley of the River Weaver creates a clear contrast within the landscape between the somewhat elevated plain and the river valley itself.
- 5.4 The built form of the village of Church Minshull creates its own urbanised landscape, albeit of low density rural character. When considering this more localised perspective it is more appropriate to consider landscape at a lesser scale focusing on medium and micro landscapes such as open spaces, the public realm and relationships to the immediate countryside at the edge of the village.
- 5.5 Broadly, in terms of function, the parish can be subdivided into a core residential area and a rural, agricultural hinterland with important functional areas including a marina, farmsteads and a residential caravan park.

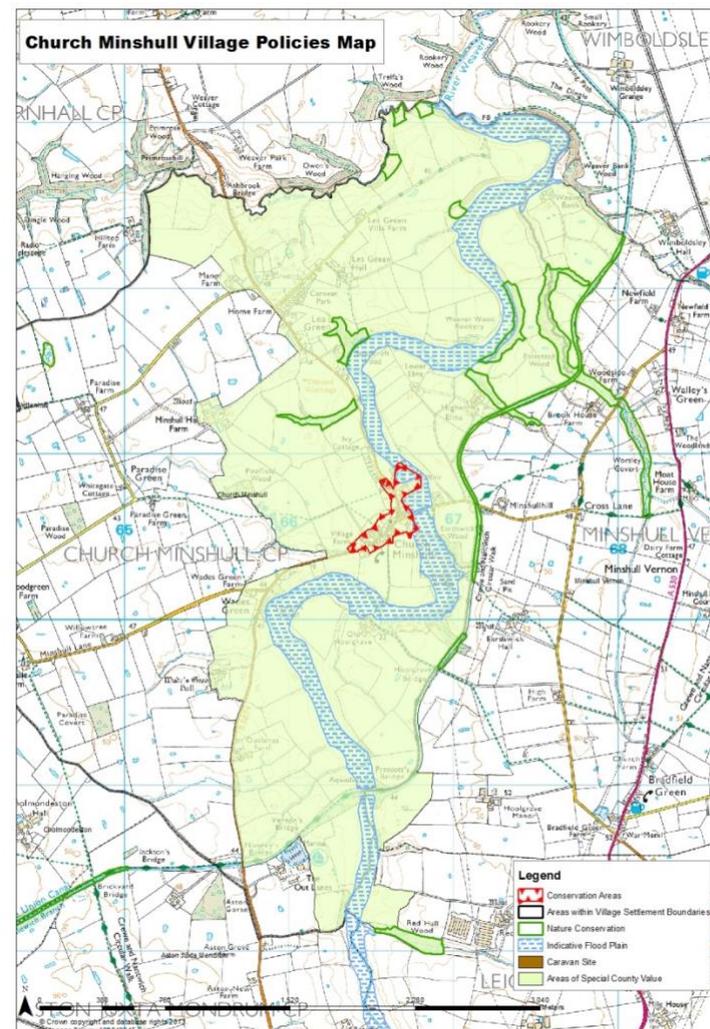


6 Policy Context: Local Landscape Policy

6.1 Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan contains no specific, overarching policy in regard the treatment of Landscape however does include defined Areas of Special County Value and also references the landscape as an important factor for consideration in a number of policies:

- BE.2 Design Standards: sets a criteria based approach to new development
- NE. 3 Areas of Special County Value: limits development to that which is essential and does not have an adverse impact on the designated landscape.
- NE.13 Rural Diversification seeks to ensure that new development does not detract from the visual character of the landscape and recognises wider environmental concerns of acknowledged importance
- NE.14 Seeks to ensure that agricultural buildings requiring planning permissions are satisfactorily sited as to minimise impact on the landscape, is sympathetic in terms of design and materials and appropriately landscaped
- NE.15 addresses the re-use and adaptation of agricultural buildings and seeks to ensure that structures associated with it or with the definition of the curtilage should not harm the visual amenity of the countryside.
- NE.18 addresses telecommunications development and seeks to ensure that visual amenity is preserved and landscape and features of the landscape are not adversely affected by development

6.2 The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy sets out strategic policies which will form the local basis of future detailed policies in the borough. Policy SE4 sets out the approach that Cheshire East Council will take in regard to landscape issues which is to ensure that 'all development should conserve the landscape character and quality and should, where possible, enhance and effectively manage the historic, natural and man-made landscape features that contribute to local distinctiveness of both rural and urban landscapes. The policy is set out in full at Appendix A and carries forward the 'Areas of Special County Value' as 'Local Landscape Designations'.



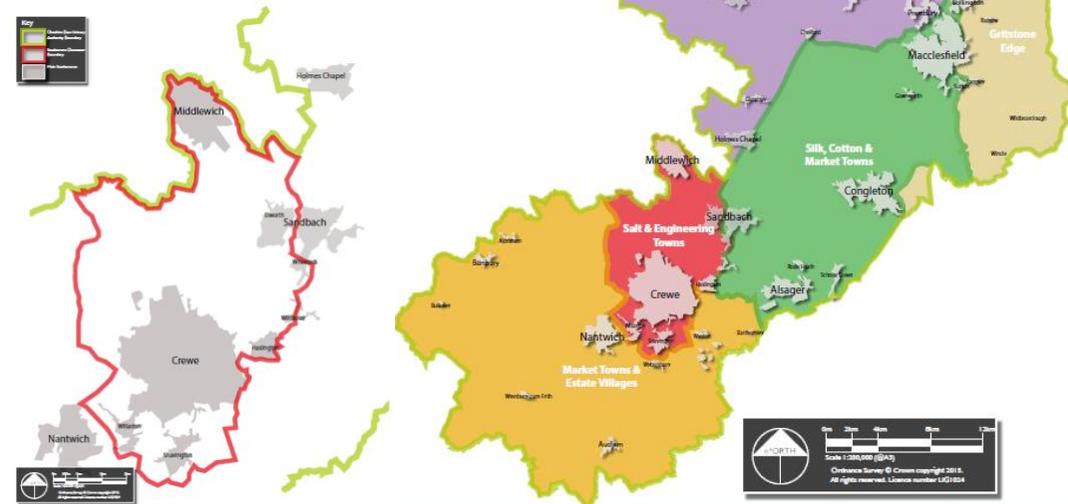
7 Cheshire East Design Guide

7.1 The Cheshire East Design Guide was adopted in March 2017 as a Supplementary Planning Document and sets out the Council's approach to good design.

7.2 Church Minshull is located within the area characterised as Salt and Engineering Towns. Generally the landscape character here can be described as mostly flat and influenced by the large urban centres of Crewe, Sandbach and Middlewich. The rural parts of this landscape feature winding country lanes, small hamlets and farmsteads and the landscape is often intersected, and sometimes defined by, major transport routes. In Church Minshull this is especially true of the Shropshire Union Canal which forms a distinct feature of the landscape.

7.3 The landscape character along the western edge of the area including where Church Minshull is located, 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 and are typical features of Church Minshull parish.

7.4 The following section undertakes an assessment of the parish, its spatial character, features of the landscape and the existing design principles employed locally



8 Spirit of Place Statement:

- 8.1 Church Minshull Parish is a classic Cheshire diverse settlement, containing some valued architectural building both at its core and in the wider area. Several are listed buildings.
- 8.2 Within the parish as a whole there are more modern buildings and many barn conversions, all of which retain the feel of a well-balanced village with both an historic and a more modern feel, which the community value.
- 8.3 Outside the core of the village the housing density is very low, a feature also valued by the community.
- 8.4 Within the wider area, there are many views and vistas, loved and cherished by residents and visitors. The many paths and quiet roads provide walking and cycling access to these views and vistas.
- 8.5 Tourism is encouraged and accommodation via the several B&B facilities and the Badger Inn are welcomed. Use of the Shropshire Canal is much encouraged through the Aqueduct Marina.
- 8.6 Major accesses to the village are provided by the B5074 (coming from the north known as Over Road and from the south as Nantwich Road) whilst Cross Lane provides access from the east. A major concern however is that these roads provide a “rat run” for heavy goods vehicles, and other vehicles travelling between Nantwich, Winsford and Crewe. However, the close proximity of Crewe Railway Station and of Nantwich town, with its market and shops as well as its historical tradition are highly valued.
- 8.7 At the heart of the village, are the Badger Inn and the Village Hall, providing a focal point for the community. The Village Hall supports many thriving activities, all very important to the village.
- 8.8 The River Weaver and the Shropshire Union Canal add further visual character to the parish.

9 Overview of the Parish

- 9.1 The landscape of the parish is primarily undulating plain, containing large field systems with boundaries marked by hedgerows and trees.
- 9.2 The valley of the River Weaver creates an important landscape in itself with wooded banks and often steep topography at the river side.
- 9.3 The southern areas of the parish are more elevated and offer long range views across the wider landscape.
- 9.4 Woodland is limited in the parish. However individual trees feature regularly across the landscape and there are limited and localised tracts of deciduous trees. Within the village the mature trees and hedges are a notable feature in the residential landscaping.

- 9.5 The main village is located in the central part of the parish with limited, low density, linear residential development along some of the lanes. Individual large farmsteads are prominent features of the landscape surrounding the village and in the wider parish.
- 9.6 The area is predominantly agricultural in its land use, with the amount of land given over to residential development and other uses being very limited.
- 9.7 The parish can be considered as one distinct area with sub areas: a core village with a pub and church, a park homes site set within the countryside beyond the northern edge of the village and Aqueduct Marina with caravan park and employment uses.
- 9.8 The rural hinterland of Church Minshull comprises large areas of agricultural, dispersed farmsteads and limited individual residences.

10 Character Areas

- 10.1 The entire Parish straddles two landscape character areas which provide the context within which smaller, more locally distinct landscapes sit. When considering the localised setting of Church Minshull it is appropriate to consider landscape at a lesser scale focusing on medium and micro landscapes such as open spaces, the public realm and relationships to the immediate countryside at the edge of the village and other built development.
- 10.2 The surrounding countryside is typified by its undulating nature and also by substantial native tree cover set in large copses and these features are particularly noticeable from the public footpaths that girdle the village. The approach to the edge of Church Minshull from the north, in particular, gives the sense of descent into a settled area with higher land across the river to the east and up to the newer housing to the west.
- 10.3 Broadly, in terms of function, the parish can be subdivided into two categories – open countryside and agricultural use, and developed areas accommodating a variety of uses from the core residential area of the village to smaller groups of residential buildings, farmsteads and other development (marina, various employment/industrial uses).
- 10.4 The developed parts of the parish are limited and the more extensive rural hinterland incorporates a variety of landscape features including woodlands, farmsteads, hillocks and river valleys each offering their own unique and localised landscape conditions. The multiple and varied size farmsteads are the main form of built development in the rural hinterland acting as focal points within the landscape.

10.5 The carriageways in the outlying areas of the parish are typically rural, defined by hedgerow field boundaries, narrow lanes and isolated farm buildings, often in traditional Cheshire brick. More modern agriculture structures, of steel frame and metal sheeting, are evident including large barns for livestock and machinery.

10.6 The core village consists mostly of ribbon development along Over Road and Cross Lane, with small blocks of residential development extending beyond these highways.



11.0 Summary of character areas

11.1 Excluding the rural hinterland, Church Minshull has four distinct elements of developed land:

- Core Village
- Lea Green
- Marina Aqueduct
- Farmsteads

11.2 Core Village

11.3 The core village is made up of several small residential clusters focused around the highway network and set within the river valley of the Weaver. The topography and vegetation of this landscape frame the village at the eastern edge (particularly the entrance over the bridge on Cross Lane). Outside the core, the village gives way to open countryside and rolling farmland. The dominance of St Bartholomew's Church and the Badger Inn in the centre of the settlement brings a focus to the village and creates a sense of a small but clear centre. The timber framed black and white Tudor and 'Mock Tudor' 20th Century reproduction homes are notable with 15th and 16th century characteristics. These dominate the village near the roundabout clustering around Over Road and Cross Lane. The development pattern is tightly contained to mainly single plot depth along the curvature of the highway which forms a strong visual and legible corridor through the settlement. This gives the village core a backward 'L' shape which is part of the settlement's character and is replicated by the form and layout of buildings that adjoin the highway.

11.4 Home Farm Park - Lea Green Lane

11.5 Beyond the north of the village approaching the Cheshire East border, the main developed area of land is a self-contained park homes site, largely screened from the wider landscape. The landscape here is east lowland plain although, in contrast the river valley, is somewhat elevated. The plots include gardens and generous plot spaces and are used as permanent residential dwellings.

11.6 Marina

- 11.7** The Aqueduct Marina with caravan park is located south east of the village at the centre of the circular canal route of the Four Counties Ring. The canal itself is a unique feature within the landscape and the distance of this development from nearby settlements and its elevation in the topography allow visual connections to be made across the wider landscape and over the open countryside and a sense of quiet, rural tranquillity.
- 11.8** The canal and waterfront are clearly an important and key feature in this location. The buildings and industry associated with the canal are a mixture of sheds and warehouses with large amounts of hardstanding and smaller scale buildings associated with the leisure and recreation (café and outbuildings).
- 11.9** The marina does act as a focal point within the parish, both for leisure and employment activities.

11.10 Farmsteads

11.11 The farmsteads within Church Minshull, although dispersed across the parish at some distance from one another, form a distinct feature within the landscape and although may not be considered a 'character area' do have consistent characteristics which are worthy of mention as a sub category with the character areas identified here. Farmsteads are normally large developed sites with a variety of agricultural buildings, smaller outbuildings, yards and often a residential dwelling on site associated with the operation of the farm. Agricultural buildings range from timber and corrugated steel sheeting to old Cheshire brick, are often of substantial size and are prominent within the immediate landscape they're set within.



12. Layout and structure of the Village

12.1 The village has a historic core which creates a centre within which the church and pub are located and from which ribbon style residential development extends and branches out along the highway network. The quality of the village surroundings enhances the village itself and although interruptions in the development pattern are limited, where they do exist they bring an important linkage to the surrounding countryside within which the village is comfortably nestled. Views to the village are enhanced by rear garden and tree lined buffers between the built form and the adjoining field system. The space between Eel Brook, which runs west to north east to the rear of properties north of Cross Lane, is notable in creating this transitional space.

12.2 There are three key entry points to Church Minshull at Over Road to the north, the B5074 to the south and Cross Lane to the east. Entering the village from the east, the bridge on Cross Lane provides a clear gateway, yet a sense of arrival is not immediately achieved here until one reaches the small roundabout around which the highways intersect. It's at this point that the transition between open countryside and the settlement becomes clear.

12.3 Village Centre

12.4 Approaching from the roundabout, the Church of St Bartholomew's dominates the view and can be seen from varying points, creating a physical and visual anchor in the street scene. The church site is also a vantage point from which varying internal views of the village can be noted. On entry to the village two white washed, timber framed buildings provide the first indications of the dominating ornamental style of the historic centre of the village. A more mixed character of property styles is noticeable towards the centre of the village. A small number of historically important buildings are prominent in the village centre and establishing the traditional character and feel of the village, especially in the conservation area.

12.5 The central area of the village includes a number of feature buildings which are designated heritage assets. Although the centre of the village is designated as a conservation area, together these buildings create a historic core. Large trees at the boundary of the conservation area bring a sense of greenery and nature on the edge of the carriageway and help to set the developed area of the village in its wider landscape context. However from within the village the high vegetation at the edge of the carriageway often blocks views into the landscape beyond, there are gaps and glimpses into fields beyond the village however the dominant characteristic is a sense of enclosure.

- 12.6 The Grade II* Listed St Bartholomew's Church, and its grounds, are the key feature building in the village creating an immediate sense of tradition and history upon arrival. As the largest building in the village it naturally dominates the built environment with the neo-classical tower visible from vantage points around the village and beyond.
- 12.7 Adjacent to this, the Badger Inn pub provides an important local amenity. The building itself is of traditional style and recent refurbishments have incorporated traditional materials and features. There is a substantial car park adjacent to the pub, and behind this is disused land which leads onto a public footpath
- 12.8 Opposite the Badger Inn, Church Farm, a Grade II listed dwelling, projects a steep forward facing pitched porch which leans into the footpath. This distinctive property is a landmark feature within the conservation area.
- 12.9 Within the conservation area, an eclectic style of housing infuses the neighbourhood, with more modern brick built properties, mostly of two stories, interspersed alongside those with more traditional features including exposed timber frames.
- 12.10 The population of the village is small and its amenities are limited. Overall pavements are narrow with only room for single person walking space, and near the roundabout the road has a broad wide curve creating a notable 'blind spot'. The roundabout is a busy junction as it is used as a main thoroughfare to Winsford, Crewe and Nantwich. From a pedestrian perspective there is a point crossing from Cross Lane to Over Road where visibility is limited as cars approach the junction quickly. Generally street lighting is limited and is not noticeable in the street scene
- 12.11 Moving beyond the centre toward the west, mainly linear residential development dominates the street scene. Homes feature small cross windows reflecting a traditional Tudor style, this can also be seen in the modern barn conversions at Village Farm, and the houses (although modern), still have this style of window and reference to the Tudor style features. In some houses in the centre of the village the style changes to a modern double glazed style
- 12.12 The definition of space between private and public highway is achieved by planting, landscaping and a mixture of low rise hard boundary treatments.
- 12.13 Gardens include a variety of boundary treatments; some mature high hedges adding to a sense of seclusion, privacy and enclosure. A mixture of hard (walled) and soft (hedge) boundary treatments and soft boundary treatments of hedges throughout the village - some of these adding character as well as privacy and indicating private ownership. The roofs are mostly slate and steep in design with multiple chimneys adding to the traditional character.

12.14 The converted dairy farm off-set behind the main road has been renovated and converted into quaint red brick terrace houses with low boundary treatments and soft landscaping. Small planters and bushes add definition between public and residential space and contribute to an attractive public realm. These have been replicated with red brick new builds also featuring black and white Tudor style decorative details to compliment the existing neighbourhood characteristics. The small squared window features, further point to the traditional characteristics of the village. The organisation and positioning of the houses in relation to the village responds positively to the neighbourhood context.

12.15 Towards the south, the properties are generally two storey post-war semi and detached houses which mark the edge of the village and the transition to the countryside. Through these properties Eachus Lane leads to Old Hoolgrave Farm, a distinctive farmstead in the open countryside; however views into the wider landscape here are severely limited by tall hedgerows lining this track (which is a public right of way). Field gates provide intervals in this enclosure through which the open countryside can be viewed. There are few urbanising features in this landscape and limited noise creating a sense of rural tranquillity.

12.16 Further south is the Grade 2* Wades Green Hall which has its origins in the 14th Century, together with a farmhouse and associated buildings.

12.17 **Northern edge**

12.18 Properties close to the junction at Over Road are mixed, traditional homes, generally of two stories with cottage garden frontages. Further along Over Road, towards the north of the village, there is separation between the main settlement and a small group of outlier houses at Weaver View, which include terrace and semi-detached properties and an old schoolhouse of some architectural interest. The post war former council stock properties with large garden frontages, creates a sense of openness in the urban form which contrasts with the prior sense of enclosure. These properties are elevated and set back from the highway in large plots with front and rear gardens. The set-back gardens help create a sense of openness and allows glimpses of views into the wider countryside creating stronger relationship with the wider landscape.

12.19 To the east of Over Road lies the River Weaver; however the topography of the river valley and it's well wooded bank are such that the river itself is not visible from the highway.

12.20 Continuing along Over Road opens up medium views across the northern edge of the village. Many of the historic lanes and routes through the village also have open views and/or glimpse views fields to the wider countryside. This relationship with the countryside adds to the village's rural identity and character.

12.21 The undulating topography points to a slight incline with the village centre at the lower end of the terrain with the height towards the park homes area. A public right of way connects Over Road with the rear of the Badger Inn across an agricultural field. Access is not well signed and the footpath itself was inaccessible during the visit (due to full planting of crops across it).

Lea Green



Village Centre



Marina



Natural Environment





13. Positive features/special qualities:

- Attractive Tudor and sympathetic Mock Tudor reproduction and characteristics
- Prominent views of St Bartholomew's Church give a distinctive focal point in the village
- Sympathetic redevelopment of the dairy farm conversion
- Gaps in the built development provide access and views to the countryside
- Consistency of style in boundary treatments, roofscape and roof ridges
- Green wedges create sense of place and connection to landscape
- Front gardens provide a wide range of planting and landscaping contributing to the biodiversity and soft palette of materials associated with a rural setting
- Prominent natural environment with mature trees and hedges
- Separated park home site on Lea Green which provides a different type of housing
- Marina offers leisure activities, wildlife habitat and distinctiveness of character for Church Minshull
- 'buffer' areas between rear of residential properties and countryside

14. Negative/detracting features:

- Some more modern developments do not integrate successfully with the best aspects of the local character
- Some footpaths are overgrown and inaccessible to pedestrians
- Height of vegetation limits visual connection to the wider countryside and the setting of the conservation area/its buildings in some locations
- Dispersed areas of development means physical connection between functional parts of the parish is severed
- There are no everyday amenities in the core village eg. shops apart from the pub and community centre
- Lack of pedestrian safety and footpath access, particularly at the roundabout where fast traffic approaches the junction
- Some indication of urbanising influences such as pylons in the surrounding countryside
- Ever increasing problems with traffic, both in terms of volume and size of vehicles

15. Vernacular detailing:

- 15.1 Historic characterful buildings dominate the vernacular with timber frame black and white buildings lending much to the local character.
- 15.2 Brick and stone buildings are also common and interspersed through the village. Most residences are of single and two storey height, and proportionate to their plots incorporating front and rear gardens.
- 15.3 Multiple approaches to boundary treatments are evident however the limited range of materials overall brings a strong sense of character to the village. Low rise brick walls, hedge rows, timber fencing and Cheshire railings are all evident.
- 15.4 Roofs are mostly tiled in welsh slate with other examples of plain clay tiles. Roof ridges tend to run parallel to the main highway.
- 15.5 Formal open space within the village is limited but individual trees add character and act as markers. There are two green wedges in the development pattern that, although private spaces, significantly contribute to the sense of place. The garden at Village Farm, to the west of the village, and the open land east of Church Farm play an important role in the setting of the village and connecting it to the wider landscape. The contribution this land makes to creating a connection between the village and the landscape is important however the boundary of Church Farm facing the village is currently planted with tall vegetation and therefore the connection is currently lost.

15.6 Architectural Detailing



16



Appendix A: Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Policy SE4:

The Landscape

1. The high quality of the built and natural environment is recognised as a significant characteristic of the Borough. All development should conserve the landscape character and quality and should where possible, enhance and effectively manage the historic, natural and man-made landscape features that contribute to local distinctiveness of both rural and urban landscapes.
2. Development will be expected to:
 - i. Incorporate appropriate landscaping which reflects the character of the area through appropriate design and management;
 - ii. Where appropriate, provide suitable and appropriate mitigation for the restoration of damaged landscape areas;
 - iii. Preserve and promote local distinctiveness and diversity;
 - iv. Avoid the loss of habitats of significant landscape importance;
 - v. Protect and / or conserve the historical and ecological qualities of an area;
3. In Local Landscape Designation Areas, Cheshire East will seek to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape and to protect it from development which is likely to have an adverse effect on its character and appearance and setting. Where development is considered to be acceptable in principle; measures will be sought to integrate it into the landscape character of the area by:
 - i. Protecting, restoring and enhancing the character and appearance of the local area through suitable planting, landscape and / or woodland;
 - ii. Making suitable provision for better public access to, and enjoyment of, the Local Landscape Designation Areas;
4. Where development may affect a local or national⁷⁰ designation a full understanding of the context, characteristics and significance should be provided and informed by the Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment, Historic Landscape Assessment and the Local Landscape Designation Study. In Local Landscape Designation Areas, Cheshire East will seek to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape and to protect it from development which is likely to have an adverse effect on its character and appearance.