CHRISTLETON AND LITTLETON PARISH PRIORITY STATEMENT(PPS) v10 FINAL

1 YOUR DETAILS

Main contact name **John Beckitt**

Town or Parish Council **Christleton and Littleton**

Details of public consultation and engagement used in the preparation of the PPS

Village consultation document posted to every household
LINK TO VILLAGE CONSULTATION

Housing needs report posted to every household and presented in a report by Community Action
LINK TO HOUSING NEEDS REPORT

Village open day provided opportunity for residents to make contributions

2 INTRODUCTION AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE

What are the three key changes you would like to see in your Parish over the next 15 years? These changes should relate to the priorities set out below. It will also be helpful to explain when you think these changes should happen over the 15-year period.

Introduction

The traditional villages of Christleton and Littleton are 'washed over by green Belt and surrounded by working farmland. However, over several years an unchecked series of Brownfield and Infill developments have threatened the rural character of the villages by being too high, too large, too densely packed, eliminating open views, invading privacy of adjacent housing, of low quality and unsympathetic to the character and heritage of the villages.

Christleton and Littleton Parish Councils concluded in 2023 that they must influence development through a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) so as to avoid the persistently adverse impact of development on the villages. Cheshire West and Chester requested the Parish Council submit a Parish Priority Statement (PPS), this short form version of the NP, in advance of the NP to assist with preparation of the Local Plan.

Vision

The Parishes of Christleton and Littleton wish to continue to maintain their individual characters as vibrant communities with a strong sense of community. They will continue to be areas with a mix of age groups, where local people can live, work and enjoy a high quality of life. Importantly the unique character of each settlement will be retained and enhanced providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and green open spaces rich in wild life for the benefit of the local communities. The Green Belt and strategic green gaps will be retained to provide an important buffer between the settlements and the City of Chester so as to retain the rural character of the plan area, the rural views, outdoor activities and locations for wildlife to thrive.

The Parishes of Christleton and Littleton are also sustainable villages that offer two churches, a Primary School, a High School, a shop, a dentist, hairdressers, three pubs, two cafés, a play area, a village pond, cricket club, sports centre and swimming pool that cater for the needs of most residents. The special character, heritage assets, wildlife and the surrounding countryside must be protected and enhanced so as to ensure that the area remains an attractive place in which current and future residents live, work and play.

Objectives - the three key changes we would like to see in our Parish over the next 15 years are in bold

- **Maintain and enhance our wildlife corridors, cycling and walking networks and existing green spaces throughout and around the Village**
- **Encourage young local people to remain in the village by providing more affordable, low cost 2/3 bed energy efficient houses that are sympathetic with existing housing and heritage assets**
- **Reduce the A41/51 traffic, queuing on the A41/51 and cut through Christleton traffic at peak school arrival and leaving times**
- Provide secure and sustainable environments for their inhabitants
- Continue to be part of the wider area of Chester but with the distinctive character of the two villages, protected by Green Belt, with local access to open spaces and the surrounding countryside
- Be communities which take pride in their appearance and physical heritage
- Be settlements where people of all ages and incomes can find high quality, well-designed, sustainable housing together with the community services and facilities they need, particularly health and education
- Provide a healthy environment for its communities with access to local and a wider network of open spaces with ample opportunities for cycling, walking, running and riding
- Provide sustainable transport links to both employment and leisure provision on roads, footways and cycleways that are safe for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities
- Preserve locally important views within, into and out of the plan area.
- Be communities that are resilient to the impact of climate change that work towards a 'carbon neutral' sustainable outcome
- Preserve and enhance the wildlife and biodiversity within the plan area by creating and enhancing spaces where nature can thrive.
- Compliance with Local Plan parts 1 and 2 LINK TO PART 1 and LINK TO PART 2

3 DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND

What type and level of development would you like to see in the parish?

As you read this PPS it will become clear that Christleton and Littleton are dominated by the Shropshire Union Canal, the A41, the A51, the traffic that cuts through the village in each direction to and from these two major roads and the traffic, walking and cycling children to and from both schools.

The Highways network surrounding Christleton handles tens of thousands of vehicles every year, is stretched to breaking point with half mile traffic queues, unacceptable accident injury rates, nitrogen dioxide and PM2.5 exposure of residents, visitors, schoolchildren and the elderly at many times the guideline levels. This pollution is equivalent to that of a major UK city and represents a major health risk measured by volunteers and recorded in an Air Quality report for the Christleton and Littleton area LINK TO AIR QUALITY REPORT

It is therefore critically important to prevent any material increase in traffic volume and maintain the separation of Christleton and Littleton from each other and from Great Boughton, Vicars Cross, Rowton and Waverton.

Christleton and Littleton enjoy the distinctive character of housing interspersed with green spaces. The maintenance of these green spaces and the public rights of way are an essential feature of the rural character of both villages.

The highways constraints and air pollution limit housing development in this area which is washed over by green belt.

Policy H1 – Scale of Housing Development

New development will therefore be supported in principle provided that they are small scale, and in character with the settlement phased over the period of the Plan and falling within the following categories:

Brownfield or greenfield Development

A maximum of 6 new houses on any one available and deliverable brownfield or greenfield site immediately adjacent to the village. Such developments should not be co-located with other new housing developments unless there are demonstrable sustainable benefits from doing so

Infill Development

Strictly controlled infill with houses sympathetic in style and size to adjacent housing that do not invade anyone's privacy. Infill is described in planning policy as a small gap for up to 1 or 2 houses and should not be confused with back land infill which generally invades the privacy of existing housing and will be resisted.

Rural Exception Sites

Sites of up to 6 houses to meet local needs and in character with adjoining developments on land immediately adjacent to the village

Housing needs report

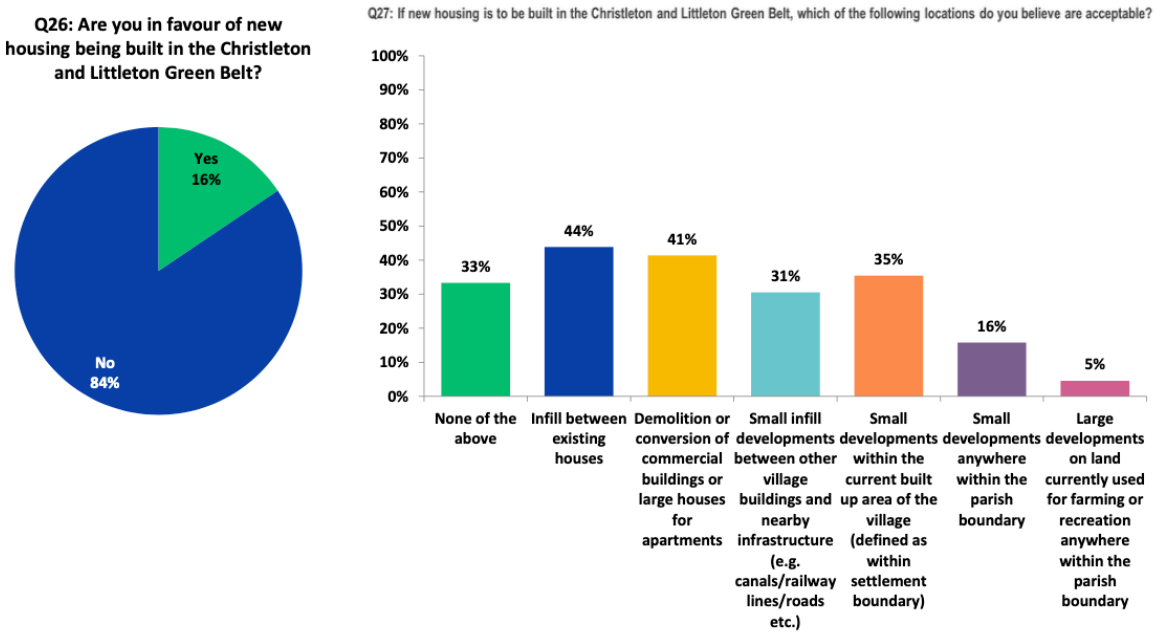
LINK TO HOUSING NEEDS REPORT

The Housing Needs Survey report can be summarised by these charts

The table below shows a summary of the overall results to the survey.

Survey Summary	Total Number	% of Households
Total surveys distributed	1,283	100%
Total surveys returned	310	24%
Total needing homes in Christleton and Littleton Parishes	64	5%
Total demand for affordable housing from the survey	12	1%

Property Type	Affordable housing need		Estimated supply		Shortfall (-) / Surplus (+)
	Housing register need (2023)	Christleton and Littleton Survey – demand for affordable tenures (March 2024)	Pipeline planning permissions – affordable units	Re-lets of existing stock (annual average)	Housing register and survey needs minus estimated supply
1 Bed	36	1	4	1	-32
2 Bed	23	7	4	2	-24
3 Bed	13	2	1	<1	-13
4+ Bed	5	2	1	0	-6
Total	**77**	**12**	**10**	**4**	**-75**



Are there any areas of the Parishes you would like to see developed – NO

It is all washed over by green belt and the limitations of the current highways network and the damaging air quality affects on the health of residents led the Parish Councils to conclude that new housing should be limited to the local needs of residents as there is no anticipated growth in local employment.

Are there any specific areas you want protected for other uses?

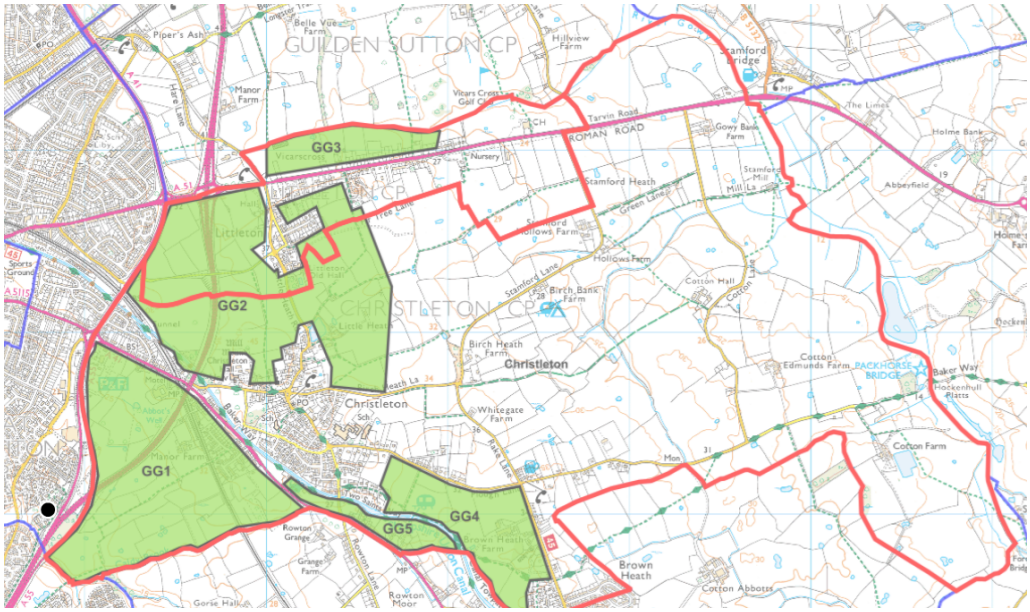
The Parish Priority Statement and the subsequent Neighbourhood Plan designates sites within the plan area as Green Gaps (GG) that separate communities from each other and provide critical corridors for wildlife. They have a specific function, add significantly to the outdoor amenity of the area and are protected from new housing development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated or where development supports the role and function of the Green Gaps.

The Green Gaps that meet the GG criteria are identified in the Policy list below.

Justification
The green gaps reinforce the protection provided by greenbelt, prevent settlements from merging into one another and provide access to open countryside (see plan below)

Failure to maintain these green gaps will

- erode the physical gap required to maintain the integrity of each settlement
- adversely affect the visual character of the landscape
- significantly affect the undeveloped character of the green gaps and lead to coalescence of the settlements
- eliminate the exercise and health benefits of easy access to open countryside
- negatively impact wildlife across the plan area and the future enhancement of nature and biodiversity.



Policy GG1 - Land separating Christleton from Great Boughton and Huntington

- Provides open access to open countryside for all three Parishes
- Public Rights of Way (PROW) access between the Parishes
- Christleton does not need the large number of proposed houses possible on the Manor Farm and Abbotswell sites located within this green gap within green belt

Manor Farm

- the Farmer and a developer have offered a new High school, funded by a large housing development on GG1 and on the existing school site in the middle of the Village
- the road infrastructure does not support a large development with access off the A41
- **only children from Huntington and Rowton children cross the A41 from west to east with the High School and Primary School on the east side of the A41 and in the middle of Christleton Village. If the High School were moved to the west side of the A41 many more children from Christleton, Littleton, Barrow, Waverton and other communities around Chester would have to cross the A41 from east to west with unacceptable accident injury and air quality risks**
- **the peaks flows of pedestrians, cyclists, cars and buses will cause the A41, already queueing from the hamburger to Waverton, to completely gridlock for long periods every morning and evening leaving commuters, HGVs, school staff and pupils unable to get to work or school on time and contributing to the high pollution levels**
- the developer's suggested Hamburger bypass using White Lane and a road past the new housing development is fraught with risks and will not avoid the A41 queueing and gridlock
- access to the site is inadequate – White Lane railway bridge is too narrow and Old Womans lane railway bridge is a wildlife corridor
- the Christleton Parish Council have taken legal advice and the planning inducement of a new school breaches planning law and is not supported by the Parish Council

Abbotswell

- Christleton does not need the large number of houses possible if the Mercure Hotel is demolished and the proposed 200 houses built
- as with the Manor Farm development the A41 is already gridlocked with traffic queues from Waverton to the Hamburger on many occasions during the day but particularly during peak times in the morning and afternoon. Access directly on and off the proposed large housing development will make these traffic queue longer and more frequent
- this is a functioning commercial/employment site which has operated for many years and its designation for that use should be retained

Policy GG2 - Land separating Christleton and Littleton from Vicars Cross

- Provides open access to open countryside for all three Parishes
- Critical piece of green belt that separates Littleton from Christleton
- Very important PROW walking route and distant views of the Village
- Christleton does not need the large number of houses possible on this site
- Long rural view would be irreversibly damaged

Policy GG3 - Land separating Littleton from Guilden Sutton

- provides open access to open countryside and PROW access for both Parishes
- if Guilden Sutton develop a neighbourhood plan they are likely to create an adjoining green gap

Policy GG4 - Land separating Christleton from Waverton

- Provides open access to open countryside for both Parishes
- Critical piece of green belt that separates Waverton from Christleton
- Very important PROW walking route and distant views of the Village
- Christleton does not need the large number of houses possible on this site
- Long rural view would be irreversibly damaged

Policy GG5 - Land separating Christleton from Rowton

- Provides open access to open countryside for both Parishes
- Critical piece of green belt that separates Waverton from Rowton
- Location of uniquely historical civil war Battle of Rowton Moor
- Very important PROW walking route and distant views of the Village
- Christleton does not need the large number of houses possible on this site
- Long rural view would be irreversibly damaged

4 HOMES

What type of homes would you like to see in your local community
What size of home is needed locally?
Any other requirements?

These questions are answered in section 3 above

5 DESIGN

Are there any areas of local character which are particularly important to the local community?
Areas of local character are described in the following two documents
Christleton Heritage Assessment **LINK TO CHRISTLETON HERITAGE ASSESSMENT**
Christleton Coronation Trail **LINK TO CHRISTLETON CORONATION TRAIL**

Both Parishes are washed over by green belt, and single conservation area and a tight settlement boundary to limit any further large development. Small developments are preferable and very limited and tightly controlled infill, so as to retain the green rural character of the settlements, would be acceptable to meet local needs

History of the Villages puts the above question into context

It is certain that buildings existed in what is now Christleton since Roman times, probably because the village is positioned on the route between the salt mining areas surrounding today's Middlewich and the port of Deva (Chester), home of the garrison of the twentieth Legion. Salt was a vital commodity for the Romans and could be shipped elsewhere conveniently from Chester.

The first documented evidence comes from the Domesday Book, when "Cristentone" is part of the Norman Barony of Malpas, and the property of Robert, the Norman earl. The unique name of Christleton is said to mean "The place of the Christians" or "a farmstead with a cross". It is likely that a wooden church stood near the current church site in the late Saxon period, as the village is well established by the Norman period, and one of the larger villages of Cheshire.

The term "the place of the Christians" may have been reinforced by the fact that Chester Cathedral was founded in the 10th century as a Benedictine abbey dedicated to St Werburgh and the areas around Christleton were the market gardens and farmsteads serving the monastery. The Abbot's Well, at the site of today's Mercure hotel on the A41 trunk road, was the source of piped water supply to the abbey from the 13th century.

With the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century, the Ecclesiastical Parish of Christleton was formed with five townships: **Christleton**, **Rowton** (rogh Christleton)**, Littleton** (little Christleton), **Cotton Abbotts** and **Cotton Edmunds** and this remains the same today.

The next century brought the Civil War and the Old Hall in the centre of the village housed the Parliamentary headquarters during both the siege of Chester, which was a Royalist stronghold, and the battle of Rowton Moor, the battlefield being less than a mile from today's village centre. There are no complete buildings predating 1645 left standing as a result of this conflict, though the Old Hall itself dates from 1605 and is a timber framed construction which is now encased in brick.

The 18th century brought the canals to Christleton when the Chester Canal Company was founded to bring goods for export from the industrial Midlands to the port on the River Dee. Running from Nantwich to Chester, the Chester Canal was never a commercial success, largely as a result of the growth of the port of Liverpool, but the canal was to bring real benefits to the village of Christleton later.

Railways came in the 19th century and Christleton has a confluence of road, rail and canal, the latter featuring a diversion, still visible today, to enable the tunnelling of the railway under the canal. A unique surviving feature in the history of canal construction in the North west.

With the arrival of the motor car in the 20th century adding to these existing transport links and its proximity to both Chester and the rapidly growing cities of Liverpool and Manchester, Christleton became an attractive residential area for bankers, lawyers and similar professionals working in the cities and they built themselves the substantial Victorian and Edwardian houses that are a feature of the centre of the village today particularly as they are randomly mixed with smaller cottages of agricultural origin. The most significant influence on the village centre as seen today came once again from 'a place of Christians' in the name of Canon Lionel Garnett, rector from 1868 to 1911, who restored the parish church and Christleton Grange in Village Road as a new rectory. The High School stands in what was the garden of this rectory.

Arguably it is the original Chester Canal, now part of the Shropshire Union, that survives as the most significant heritage asset for both Christleton and the nation. After World War II, owners of canal hire boat companies based in Christleton recognised the leisure potential of the neglected canal network and their lobbying led to the formation of the Inland Waterways Association. From this point, canals nationwide were revitalised and restored to become the attractive waterfront developments and tourist assets of today. In 2018, the whole length of the original Chester Canal between Chester and Nantwich was designated a Conservation Area.

Design Guide summary

The parishes of Christleton and Littleton are characterized by their distinctive architectural heritage, featuring traditional Cheshire vernacular styles including red sandstone buildings, black and white timber-framed cottages, and select Victorian brick dwellings. These settlements maintain a strong rural character with properties thoughtfully positioned to complement the natural landscape rather than dominate it.

The existing housing stock predominantly consists of detached and semi-detached dwellings arranged in organic clusters along historic lanes and around village greens, creating a sense of community while preserving green spaces between developed areas. New developments must respect this established pattern and architectural vocabulary to ensure harmony with the existing built environment.

In addition to DM2(Impact on Residential Amenity from the Local Plan) all new residential developments within Christleton and Littleton parishes shall adhere to Passivhaus standards, incorporating high levels of insulation, airtightness, and efficient mechanical ventilation with heat recovery systems. These energy efficiency requirements will ensure minimal environmental impact while reducing operational costs for residents. To maintain the rural tranquillity that defines these parishes, all external mechanical equipment, including air source heat pumps, must operate at noise levels not exceeding 20 decibels when measured at the nearest neighbouring property boundary and in the bedrooms of adjacent properties when their windows are open. This sound limitation ensures that energy-efficient technologies can be implemented without compromising the peaceful character of these historic settlements. The Sustainable Construction guidance note - updated June 2022 provides additional guidance beyond the requirements set out in this document.

Taking into account DM 3(Design, character and visual amenity of the local plan) all new developments shall strictly adhere to a two-storey height limitation to maintain the established low-profile skyline characteristic of both parishes. Building design must reflect local architectural traditions through appropriate scale, form, and use of materials that complement rather than contrast with the existing built environment. Developments shall be limited to small clusters of no more than 5-8 dwellings, thoughtfully arranged to create intimate community spaces rather than standard suburban layouts. These small groupings must be separated by appropriate green buffers to maintain the distinctive parkland character and prevent coalescence of the historic settlement patterns that define the parishes' unique identities.

Exterior lighting within new developments shall employ sensitive, low-level illumination strategies that protect nocturnal wildlife habitats and preserve dark sky conditions. Lighting fixtures must be positioned below 1.2 meters where possible, directed downward, and utilize warm-spectrum bulbs not exceeding 2700K colour temperature. The parkland character of both parishes shall be reinforced through comprehensive landscaping schemes that incorporate native species, preserve mature trees, establish wildlife corridors, and create informal green spaces that transition naturally to the surrounding countryside. Development proposals must demonstrate how these landscape elements will be integrated from the outset rather than added as an afterthought, ensuring the rural essence of Christleton and Littleton remains intact for future generations.

A detailed housing design guide has been prepared LINK TO HOUSING DESIGN GUIDE

6 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We have commissioned Cheshire Wildlife Trust to provide a comprehensive report on the local wildlife for inclusion the Neighbourhood Plan. We would like to see provision where possible for the following.

Wildlife

- Nest boxes – swifts, house martins, robins, house sparrows (prefer colony housing).
- Bat roosts
- Hedgehog highways, provision of food sources (flourishing insect population), safe water source

Greenscaping and trees

- Native planting for pollinators
- Additional tree planting to incorporate pocket forests and tiny forests - to provide the highest value to wildlife and highest carbon capture for smaller spaces.

- Additional turfing will be swapped for options with higher biodiversity gains, such as clover lawns, wildflower planting, and if turf is necessary then bulb such as snowdrops and bluebells planted in it.
- A green infrastructure plan must be produced for all new development so as to create enhanced green space and nature corridors for people in the context of the surrounding landscape.
- Any felling of trees for development will be avoided except where the trees are dead, dangerous or decayed. They will then be replaced at a two/three to one ratio so as to offset the biodiversity loss.
- Felling of ancient woodland or veteran trees, considered irreplaceable, will not be permitted due to significant biodiversity net loss – it takes decades for trees to establish
- Developers must make provision for nature before planning permission is granted and any approved nature schemes should not be permitted to be downgraded or reduced.
- All developments should offer significant green space enhancements via survey, design, monitoring and management.

Lighting

- Minimal lighting
- Any lighting must be justified, minimise blue or UV spectra, and if deemed necessary fitted with dimmers and time switches timers to minimise impact on wildlife and sensitive ecological receptors
- Position, duration of the light source and blue or UV spectra content will need to be considered for the wildlife in the area.
- As lux level thresholds are not available for individual bat species, light levels must be reduced as far as possible along with the blue content.

Flooding

- Habitat creation wetland
- Wet woodland
- Pond creation
- All using natural processes.

Corridors and buffer zones

- Creation of 'corridors' to different spaces rather than isolated islands.
- Joining up hedgerows with wildflower meadows
- Extending hedgerow planting into woodland (required for species such as Hazel dormice).
- Creation of buffer zones with each planning development.
- Any new development must ensure the space is accessible to wildlife that are freely able to move through the space into adjacent spaces

Management

- An ecologist will be required to work alongside contractors as an ecological clerk overseeing any work carried out under a European protected species Licence.
- Where development proceeds in phases spanning years, further ecological surveys should be performed in corresponding stages to inform the preparation and implementation of measures to protect the ecology at every phase.

Further detail is available in the following WILDLIFE BACKGROUND DOCUMENT.

A professional Wildlife Survey is underway alongside a Village Wildlife Inventory Survey. These surveys will be built into the Neighbourhood Plan

7 JOBS - LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

Information about business you would like to protect and business opportunities that should be provided?

There are a variety of small businesses in Christleton and Littleton which provide local employment and services to the local population and include:

Rock House dental practice
Drakes haircutters
Christleton Sports Centre
Matt Pate wedding photography
Deva bridge club
Urban reactive drainage service
Carrs landscapes
Marketing projects
Barker building and architects
Kieba Homes
AA decorative events
Future online sales
Christleton Orchard range
Abbotts building
The Village Store
Ring of Bells, Plough and Cheshire cat pubs
McCormick architects
Chelma Graphics
The Abbots Well Hotel
Barnhouse Veterinary
Koow Coffee Shop
Prodo Digital
Oaklands Nursing Home
Vicars Cross Golf Club
Northern Healthcare (Beck House Tarvin Road)

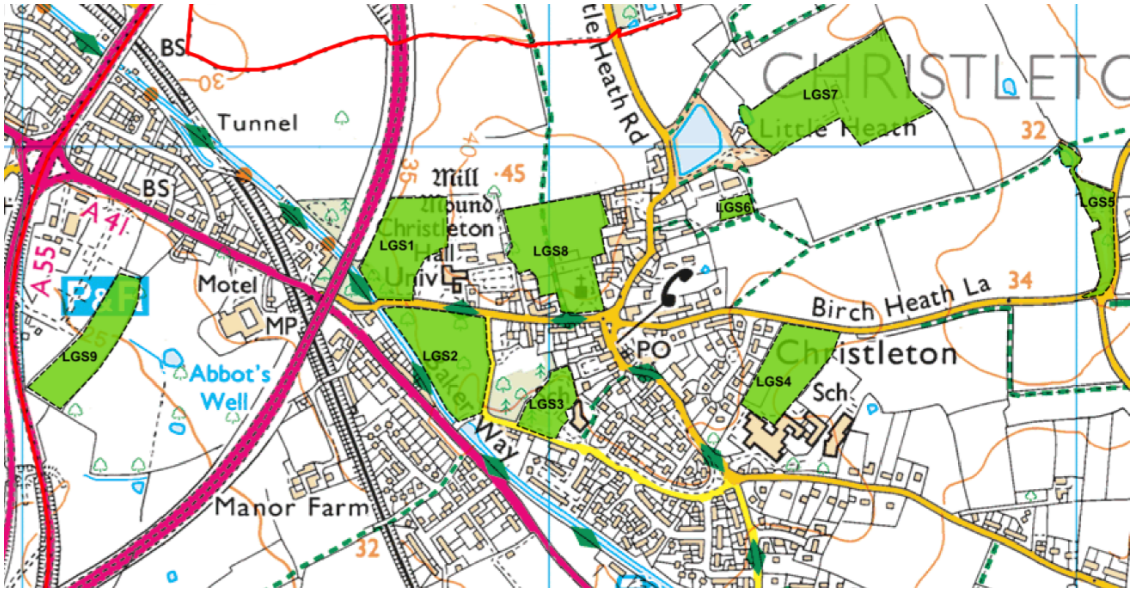
Protection of these businesses is focussed on critical improvements required to the A41 Hamburger junction and the A51 Roundabout to improve their throughput so that there are reduced half mile queues on each road and elimination of high-speed traffic cutting through Littleton and Christleton. This cut through traffic when added to the school arriving and leaving traffic, cycling and walking peaks, causes gridlocks, air pollution and difficult access to all businesses.

There is no anticipated step change in employment which has led the Parish councils to conclude that no significant increase in housing supply is required

8 LOCAL GREEN SPACES(LGS)

Public Open Spaces, Public Realm, Pocket Parks

Many open and green spaces within built environments have special value or purpose for the communities they serve. These include activities and functions which may be regularly held there or regular recreational use.
The following green spaces contribute to quality of place which together with the history, heritage, historical buildings and public realm are enjoyed by local residents and are an integral part of the attraction of the area



Policy LGS1 - Law College playing field
Green field designated a critical playing field and only 100m from the Village Green
Separates the new Law College housing development from the unacceptable noisy A55
Large tree planting around the edges of the field which link to the canal and nature connectivity

Policy LGS2 - Cullimore's field
Triangular piece of less than 100m from The Village Green land bounded by Pepper St, Quarry Lane and the Shopshire Union Canal
Green space that separates Christleton from the A41 and provides a picturesque setting for the canal and the Trooper hump backed bridge
Location for bikers meets, weddings and other village events

Policy LGS3 - Primary school playing field
School playing field bounded by gardens and the primary school
Critical Primary school playing field exactly in the centre of the Village used by the historic village fete
Intimately surrounded by the Village who can hear the delightful cries of schoolchildren during term time

Policy LGS4 - Part of High School playing field
Rectangular piece of land bounded by the park, Birch Heath Lane and the High School which separates the school from the centre of the Village
Critical High school playing field
Very local in character

Policy LGS5 - Birch Heath Common
Small woodland to the East of the Village and 200m from the Village Green surrounded by fields with a small pond in the centre and profusion of wildflowers and several Hazel trees. The area provides nesting sites, water sources and food for birds, insects, and small mammals. It is valued by the village as a good walking and wildlife location and provides interconnectivity for nature
A beautiful rural walk, past a pond which connects footpaths.

A lowland wildflower meadow between the Pit and Little Heath Road, and only 50m from the Village Green, connecting footpaths in the Village centre , supporting a range of wildflower species (such as yellow rattle and purple orchid, insects, bees and butterflies (Emperor dragon flies have been spotted here).

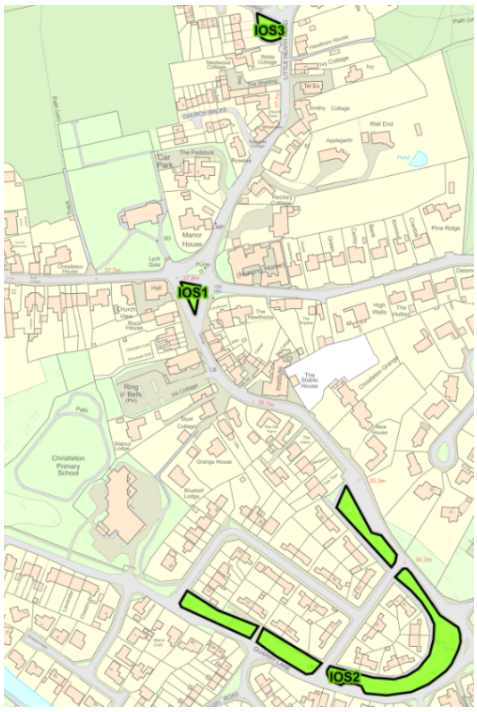
Policy LGS7 - King George V recreation area
Close to the Village centre to make for easy access
Play area, playing field and cricket pitches
Activities for everyone on the edge of the Village that feels like open countryside
Valued open recreational green space with mature tree planting and surrounding fields. An additional 16 native standard trees have just been planted providing habitats, flooding, and pollution control.
Additional biodiversity enhancement is planned to include wildflower meadow planting, native bulb planting, and habitat creation for bats, birds and insects

Policy LGS8 – St James Church Graveyard
Essential secluded end of life provision for our dearly departed
St James Church yard is an area of natural beauty that has been working on re-wilding sections of the churchyard to help offset its carbon footprint and achieve net zero. Butterflies and pollinators have benefited from this.

Policy LGS9 – Boughton Heath allotments
On the edge of the Village and bounded by heavily used main trunk roads
A lesson in independent healthy living

Policy LGS10 – The Pit
The large pond on the edge of the village, only 100m from the Village Green, which is valued as an amenity, heritage, wildlife habitat, and resource for wildlife including fish, aquatic birds, insects and plant species
A crucial amenity for young and old alike

8.2 INCIDENTAL OPEN SPACES(IOS)



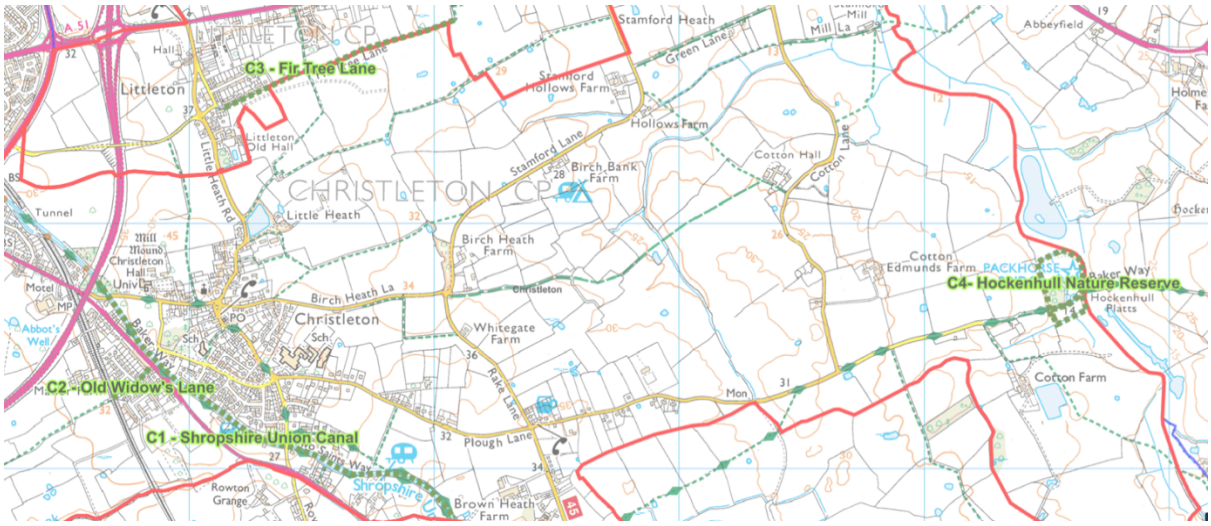
In addition to the above Local Green Spaces (IOS) there are a number of incidental open spaces in the centre of the Village that are open to the entire community and provide a green and open setting to the dense residences and heritage assets in the centre of the Village. They do not fall under the NPPF criteria but add to the open and rural appearance of the Villages.

IOS1 - Village Green
A setting for the Church, Parish Hall and numerous heritage buildings set alongside a Dentist, Care Home, General Store, Pub and Hairdresser

IOS2 - Wide green verges on Village Road and Quarry Lane
These green verges provide a rural setting for a critical road in the Village Centre
Bounded by housing, the High School, the Ring of Bells and the Village Green

IOS3 – The Daffodill field next to the Methodist Hall
This provides a spectacular display of daffodils every year

8.3 CONSERVATION CORRIDOORS AND WILDLIFE RESERVE(C)



C1 – Shropshire Union Canal
The Shropshire Union Canal is a critical conservation corridor which passes through part of the plan area. The Canal River Trust have provided a set of general development, heritage, ecology, water quality, health and wellbeing, green infrastructure and mooring policies to protect the Shropshire Union Canal
LINK TO CANAL POLICIES

C2 - Old Womans Lane
This is a canopy covered walkway and conservation corridor and old carriageway, rich in wildlife, with mature trees on either side of the lane and a walk through to Manor Farm with open views to the mountains of Wales. Barn Owls use this corridor for nesting and hunting.

C3 - Fir Tree Lane
Canopy covered bridle path and PROW rich in wildlife.
Is almost certainly a unique Roman and medieval route between settlements

C4 - Hockenhull Platts Nature Reserve
Hockenhull Platts nature reserve sits by the River Gowy and is a special place to enjoy a short stroll along the Mill Trail and over the quaint Roman bridges that traverse the reserve. The reserve has several habitats, including ponds, reed beds, mature hedgerows, woodland and species rich wet meadows. Many mammals are glimpsed here including caught on camera traps fixes, otters and water vole. The reserve is in bird life with over 70 species recorded including sedge warblers, grasshoppers warblers and reed warblers. Otters have been recorded along the banks of the river. The reserve also has snipe over winter and good numbers of dragonflies and damsel flies in the summer months.

9 INFRASTRUCTURE

In addition to the planning policies set out in this Parish Priority Statement the following air quality, flooding, highways/traffic and cycling initiatives are required to support sustainable development in Christleton and Littleton.

Any lack of adequate highways infrastructure, air quality mitigation, waste water treatment, drinking water, flood mitigation and other critical infrastructure must prevent housing development in Christleton and Littleton.

In theory a Grampian condition can be used to prevent a development from being occupied until the infrastructure is in place. A Grampian condition is a negatively worded planning conditions that prevent the commencement of a development until certain actions, often off-site works, are completed. These actions typically involve land not controlled by the applicant and may require the consent or authorization of another party. In practice a Grampian condition is unacceptable as once the development is built the developer will try to get around the condition

If obvious infrastructure limitations, around Christleton and Littleton, are not resolved to the satisfaction of the Parish Councils then it their intention to enforce appropriate action through legal routes.

AIR QUALITY(AQ)

The levels of pollution identified in the attached Air Quality Working Group (AQWG) report on the A41 and through Christleton Village centre to the A51 is comparable to larger urban locations like Bolton, Bournemouth, Leicester, Edinburgh, Manchester, Newcastle, Liverpool, Bristol to name just a few of over 70 locations throughout the UK
LINK TO AIR QUALITY
The Parish Council are therefore concerned that pollution of the A41/51 and the centre of Christleton will continue for many years

Actions

The actions that must flow from the AQWG report are

AQ1-minimise the number of children and elderly people walking along or crossing the A41/51 by providing non polluted alternative routes where possible
AQ2-Request S106 funding to ensure continuous monitoring and reporting of PM 2.5 and NO2 on the A41/51 and in the centre of Christleton
AQ3-extend the Chester Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) to include the A41/51 as PM2.5 and NO2 levels are higher than 77/91% of measurements inside the existing AQMA
AQ4 – Ensure that all new highway surfaces are sealed surfaces that do not abrade and hold particles on the A41/51, adjacent to housing, and in the centre of the Village.
Failure by the Highway Authority to implement these actions will result in fine particles penetrating deep into the lungs and cardiovascular system of Christleton and Littleton ‘s young children and elderly residents with the long-term consequences of strokes, heart disease, lung cancer, asthma and respiratory infections to name just a few LINK TO HEALTH EFFECTS

9.2 FLOODING(F)

Introduction
Current rainfall levels are three times what they were 30 years ago. As a result, flooding is becoming a regular occurrence during high rainfall. In most circumstances given some time the water drains away, however there are several locations listed below that seriously impact the village. Any new developments

must contribute to resolving these problems as well as ensuring that new developments do not bring new flooding

Actions
F1-Any developments in Christleton and Littleton must, as appropriate to the development, make an S106 contribution to the elimination of the serious flooding adjacent to any development and at the following locations
F2-Eliminate Plough Lane flooding that prevents Waverton schoolchildren from accessing the High School
F3-Eliminate flooding at the Village Road, Plough Lane and Quarry Lane junction, in front of the High School, that is regularly polluted with back flow of waste water and prevents access to the High School
F5-Flooding of the Primary school car park and footpath that prevents all schoolchildren from accessing the Primary School
F6-Flooding of Pepper St outside the entrance of the Law College that prevents Great Boughton schoolchildren from accessing the High School
F7-Porous surfaces must be provided for all developments that naturally drain rainfall away and not on to adjacent properties
Justification
Failure to take action will result in children being unable to access to the Primary and High schools as well as a dislocation of transport in and out of Christleton

9.3 HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC(HT)

Introduction

Christleton and Littleton are bounded to the west and the north by the A 41 and A51. The hamburger junction at the end of the A41 and the traffic lit roundabout at the end of the A51 is overloaded at peak times in the morning and in the evening rush hours. As a result, there are queues which can be anything up to half a mile long. The consequence is that vehicles try to avoid these queues by cutting through Christleton from the A41 to the A51 and the A51 to the A41. This cut through traffic represents half of all the overall traffic going through the centre of Christleton.
In addition, the High School (1400 pupils) and Primary (200 pupils) and all the staff arrive and leave the school over a period of 25 minutes whilst these cars are cutting the through the Village resulting in multiple gridlocks and pavement mountings.

Actions

The Parish Council will work with the Local Highway Authority on the following matters – it is worthwhile commenting that the suggestion that the congestion on the A41 and A51 will be resolved by a modal shift to bus use is nonsense!

A41/51 improvements
HT1-Signage to direct traffic via M56/M6 rather than down the A41 and A51
HT2-Implement throughput improvements to the hamburger junction on the A41 and the traffic lighted roundabout at the end of A51(consider switching lights off all or some of time) so as to reduce congestion and queueing on the A41 and A51 which contributes to high PM2.5, NO2 and injury risks along the A41/51 as well traffic cutting through Christleton at peak times to avoid the queues on the A41 and A51
HT3-Prevent any new accesses and high traffic generative businesses on or off the entire length of the A41/A51 and through the centre of Christleton
A41 improvements
HT4-Increase the width and replace the surface of the canal footpath so as to move as many Huntington and Great Boughton cycling schoolchildren as possible off the polluted and dangerous A41 shared user path and on to the canal footpath
HT5-Widen the shared user path over the railway with an independent truss bridge or as part of a project to replace the railway bridge

A51 improvements

HT6-Reduce speed limit from Littleton to Christleton to 30mph, on the A51 to 20mph and carry out an assessment of the benefits of an average speed camera system on the A51

Centre of Christleton

HT7-Restrict any new vehicular accesses and high traffic generative businesses on or off Little Heath Road, Village Road and Rowton Bridge Road

HT8-Reduce vehicular speeds, congestion and improve active travel provision through incremental implementation of the Cycling and Walking plan for the Village centre designed by a Village Working Group, CWAC Highways and Planit(Design Consultancy)

LINK TO CHRISTLETON PLANIT SCHEME

HT9-incremental implementation of the cycling plan for Christleton and the adjoining Parishes using the proposed prioritisation

LINK TO SE CHESTER CYCLING PLANS

LINK TO PRIORITISATION

HT10- alleviate congestion at school arrival and leaving times by removing pinch points by continuing extension of H bars to provide passing places

HT11-continue to promote 'Park and Stride' locations at Costa Coffee, the Plough Inn, Pearl Lane and the Cheshire Cat for children to be dropped off on the periphery of the Village

HT12-continue a policy of no or minimum road markings to enhance appearance of Village centre

HT13-If and when the current High School buildings are replaced, consider providing a main access point to the rear of the school from Birch Heath Lane or Rake lane so as to eliminate gridlocks and congestion in the Village centre

Parking

HT14-provide additional car parking capacity behind St James's Church and behind the High School as and when the opportunity arises

HT15-provide badge access to these new car parking spaces for members of the bridge club so as to reduce congestion on Village Road at school arrival and leaving times

HT16 -comply with up-to-date parking standards for width of new spaces

LINK TO CWAC CAR PARKING DESIGN

Justification

Continued failure to divert HGV traffic down the M56 and M6, make throughput improvements to the A41/51, divert school traffic to the rear of a new High School and provide additional parking in the centre of Christleton will continue to make a major contribution to the adverse PM 2.5 health implications and accident injury rates on the A41, A51 and in the centre of Christleton

9.4 CYCLING PLANS(CP)

The Parish Council carried out a travel survey of all 1400 children in Christleton High School 47% of the children travel from Boughton, Great Boughton and Saighton

LINK TO HIGH SCHOOL TRAVEL SURVEY

21% of the children travel from Christleton Littleton and Waverton

The remainder travel from all over Chester

The children use the following travel modes

Car	33.5%
Park and Stride	4.9%
Bus	7.1%
Cycle	17.2%
Walk	37.4%

The long-term objective is to reduce car use from 33.5% to 10% as the peak use of cars use to/from the schools cause congestion, gridlocks, pavement mounting and high PM2.5 levels in the centre of Christleton and to and from Littleton and the adjacent villages

The Planit cycling, walking and traffic plan for the centre of Christleton addresses these issues

The High School travel survey was also used to identify key improvements in cycling access to and from Christleton. A team of volunteers representing all the surrounding parishes was assembled and they produced a cycling plan for each parish and for connections between each of the parishes
LINK TO SE CHESTER CYCLING PLANS
This was then professionally prioritised and the results given to CWAC
LINK TO PRIORITISATION

These priorities require funding with help from S106 contributions from all future housing developments
CP1-Painted footpath and coloured tarmac on Rowton Bridge Road – Dutch style pedestrian and cycling priority to discourage car access
CP2-Provide truss bridge to widen SUP across the A41 railway bridge
CP3-Resurface Canal footpath from Rowton Bridge Road to Great Boughton
CP4-Improve safety at the high school entrance by separating vehicles, pedestrians
CP5-Incrementally fund and complete Planit cycling, walking and traffic plan for the centre of Christleton

10 CHRISTLETON AND LITTLETION NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WEBSITE links

VILLAGE CONSULTATION
AIR QUALITY REPORT
LOCAL PLAN parts 1 and 2
HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY
CHRISTLETON HERITAGE ASSESSMENT
CHRISTLETON HERITAGE TRAIL
HOUSING DESIGN GUIDE
SHROPSHIRE UNION CANAL POLICIES
CAR PARKING DESIGN
CHRISTLETON CYCLING WALKING AND TRAFFIC PLAN
HIGH SCHOOL TRAVEL SURVEY
SE CHESTER CYCLING PLANS
SE CHESTER CYCLING PLAN PRIORITIES
CHRISTLETON AND LITTLETON VIEWS
WILDLIFE BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

11 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP*(NPSG)*
John Beckitt
Lauren Buckley
Rob Evans
Andy Foxall
Graham Ranger
Julie Smith
Andy Thompson
Eirlys Smalldon

12 GLOSSARY

Amenity– A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area.

Ancient woodland – An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Archaeological interest – There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of some past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Biodiversity – A measure of the number and range of species and their relevant abundance in a community.

Biodiversity Net Gain - is the name given to a process of biodiversity offsetting whereby any habitat loss caused by a new development is mitigated to ensure an overall increase in biodiversity post-development. As part of initial development plans, developers are increasingly required to demonstrate that biodiversity loss is mitigated. To establish the best way to protect the habitats on-site, a metric is used. To achieve biodiversity net gain, a development must show evidence that a development will increase the biodiversity value of a site by at least 10%. This statistic is presented in the value of a biodiversity net gain metric called 'biodiversity units.

If habitats and ecological value cannot be added to the site itself, then mitigation plans must be put into place to ensure habitats. This can be achieved either by enhancing the on-site biodiversity or creating new habitats elsewhere.

BREEAM - BREEAM sets the standard for best practice in sustainable building design, construction and operation. It is a globally recognised standard and allows the assessment and benchmarking of new and existing property assets across a multitude of building types. A BREEAM assessment uses recognised measures of performance to evaluate a buildings specification, design construction and use across:

- Energy and water use
- Internal environment (health & wellbeing)
- Management processes
- Pollution
- Transport
- Materials
- Waste
- Ecology

Cheshire West and Chester Council– The local authority for the plan area. **Community**– At its largest it means all of the communities in the Plan area.

Community Facilities– Facilities providing for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, leisure and cultural needs of the community.

Community Infrastructure– The basic facilities, services and installations needed for the functioning of a community or society. It includes community buildings and halls, leisure facilities, cultural facilities, education services, healthcare facilities and renewable energy installations.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners and developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Consultation Statement (Statement of Consultation) – A statement accompanying the Neighbourhood Plan. The statement must set out what consultation was undertaken and how this provided the basis of the NP.

Core Strategy – A Development Plan Document prepared by Cheshire West and Chester Council setting out the long-term spatial vision for the wider area and containing both strategic and generic policies which will apply to all development proposals in the local authority area.

Countryside – The area outside the settlement boundaries.

Development – Defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land". Most forms of development require planning permission.

Development Plan – A plan comprising the Development Plan Documents contained within the Local Development Framework. This includes adopted local plans and neighbourhood plans and is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Enabling development - is development that would be unacceptable in planning terms but for the fact that it would bring public benefits sufficient to justify it being carried out, and which could not otherwise be achieved. The key public benefit to significant places is usually the securing of their long-term future.

Evidence Base – A researched, documented, analysed and verified basis for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. It consists of many documents produced over a period of years by the local authority as part of the process of developing its Core Strategy.

Evidence Base Summary – A document produced as part of the process of developing the Neighbourhood Plan. It supports the plan by setting out a summary of the relevant Evidence Base and explaining how decisions were made as to where new development should be located in the NPA.

Examination – An independent review of the NP carried out in public by an Independent Examiner.

Green Corridors – Green spaces that provide avenues for wildlife movement, often along streams, rivers, hedgerows, or other natural features, which connect green spaces together.

Greenfield – Land on which no development has previously taken place.

Heritage asset – A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority. (local listing)

Independent Examiner – Anyone with appropriate qualifications and skills and who meets certain requirements set out in the Localism Act. This could be a planning consultant or other planning professional, an employee of another local authority or a planning inspector.

i. is in keeping with the scale, character and appearance of its surroundings and the local area;
ii. does not give rise to unacceptable impacts; and
iii. does not involve the loss of undeveloped land that makes a positive contribution to the character of the area.

Infrastructure – All the ancillary works and services which are necessary to support human activities, including roads, sewers, schools, hospitals, etc.

Local – Within our neighbourhood plan area.

Local Green Gaps – Areas that support the distinctiveness of settlements and that are identified in neighbourhood plans. LPS policy PG6 'Open Countryside' will apply and development will not be permitted where erosion of the physical gap between settlements is identified, where the visual character of the landscape is adversely affected and/or where development may lead to the coalescence between or within existing settlements.

Local Green Space – areas of local green space within the settlements in the neighbourhood plan area that are valued and used by the local community for a variety of purposes.

Local Housing Needs – Housing that generally meets the needs of existing residents of the NPA or with a local connection or in the case of essential agricultural dwellings, employed or last employed in agriculture. Evidence of need should be based on the latest Parish Housing Needs survey.

Local Wildlife Sites – Sites with 'substantive nature conservation value', they are defined areas identified and selected locally for their nature conservation value based on important, distinctive, and threatened habitats and species with a national, regional and local context.

Mitigation Statement – The best effort to minimise significant harm that it is deemed cannot be wholly or partially avoided.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Published by the Government in July 2018, and subsequently amended a number of times, the latest version published in December2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Nature Improvement Area - Nature Improvement Areas (NIA) were established to create joined up and resilient ecological networks at a landscape scale. They are run by partnerships of local authorities, local communities and landowners, the private sector and conservation organisations with funding provided by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Natural England

Neighbourhood Plan – The full title in the Localism Act is 'Neighbourhood Development Plan'. It is a document for a defined area, subject to examination in public and approval by local referendum. It will be used in the determination of planning applications.

Open Space – All spaces of public value, including public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which may offer opportunities for sport and recreation or act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.

Passive house - Voluntary standard for energy efficiency in a building that reduces the building's carbon footprint. Conforming to these standards results in ultra-low energy buildings that require less energy for space heating or cooling.

Plan Period – The period for which the Neighbourhood Plan will set policy for the NPA. This will be from the adoption of the plan from 2026 until 2030 by agreement between Combined Parishes and Cheshire West and Chester Council

Referendum – A general vote by the electorate on a single policy question that has been referred to them for a direct decision. In the case of the NP, the referendum will decide whether or not to adopt the plan.

Residential Amenity – The quality of the living environment for occupants of a dwelling house including its associated external spaces.

Rural Area - The part of the NPA area outside identified settlements.

Rural Exception Sites - Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

Sensitive Development – Blends with and is complimentary to existing properties in all aspects of footprint, shape and height, incorporating some of the local features with regards to materials, window design, roof pitch etc.

Settlement Boundary - A settlement boundary defines the limits of development and makes clear where development will and will not be allowed, regardless of other constraints. The purpose of settlement boundaries is: -

- To direct future housing, economic and community related development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area to the existing settlement of Weston and to enhance its role as a resilient and sustainable community and to protect the surrounding open spaces and countryside.
- To contain the spread of the settlement, by reinforcing the core area and maintaining an effective and coherent built-up rural edge.
- To ensure that proposals for new housing development outside the settlement boundaries will only be granted in accordance with Policy H1 or in exceptional circumstances, such as any new dwelling required for the essential need of an agricultural worker to live permanently on or near their place of work in the countryside; and
- To preserve the existing and proposed green gaps which provide separation from other adjoining settlements and strategic allocations.

Settlement characteristics – features that define a settlement, including its site, situation, function, and pattern. The site is the actual location, while the situation describes the settlement's location relative to its surroundings. Settlements can have various functions, such as residential, industrial, or commercial. They can also be dispersed, linear, or nucleated in pattern.

Setting of a heritage asset – The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Spatial integrity of settlements refers to the organized human habitation and the spatial patterns of their structures. Settlements can be urban, rural, compact, or dispersed, each with unique characteristics. The spatial arrangement of settlements can be analysed to identify patterns and understand their relationship to infrastructure, economic, or political conditions.

SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest**.**

Sustainability Appraisal – A process of appraising policies for their social, economic and environmental effects, which must be applied to all Development Plan Documents.

Steering Group – A group of local people representing the Parish Council, community groups and businesses that collated and guided the work on the NP.

Strategic Environmental Assessment – Assessments made compulsory by the European Directive (the SEA Directive). To be implemented in planning through Sustainability Appraisals of Development Plan Documents and NPs where required.

Sustainable transport modes – Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) - A drainage system that controls the rate and quantity of run-off of surface water from developments.

Wildlife Corridor – Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations