

Places background paper - Chester

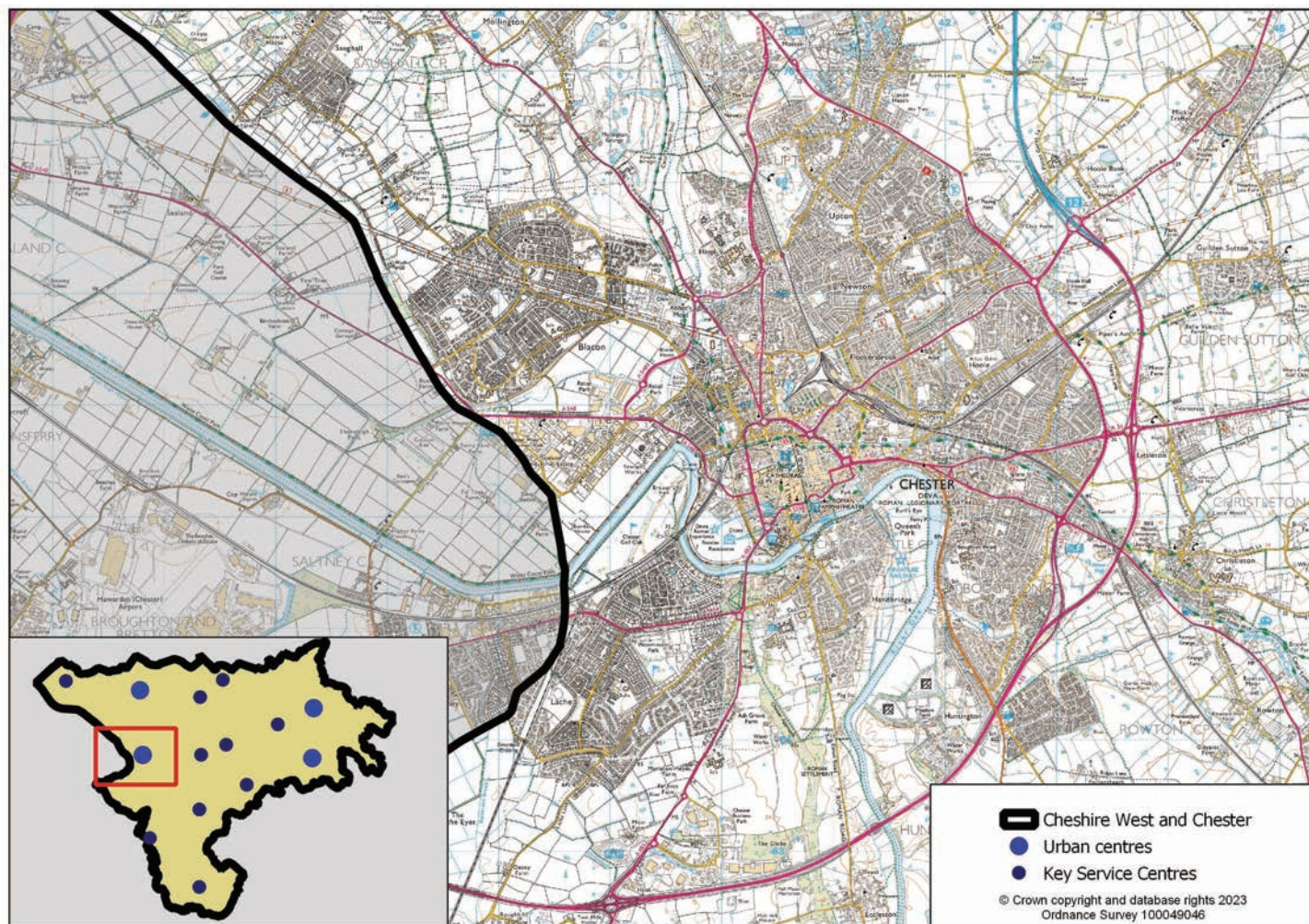
1 Chester	2
2 Socio-economic profile	3
3 Availability of services and facilities	9
Social and community infrastructure	12
Education	12
Health	13
Community, culture and entertainment	14
Green infrastructure, sport and leisure	15
Local retail and services	16
4 Accessibility / access to public transport	17
5 Employment opportunities	20
6 Constraints - natural / built environment	21
7 Chester profile summary	24

1 Chester

1 Chester

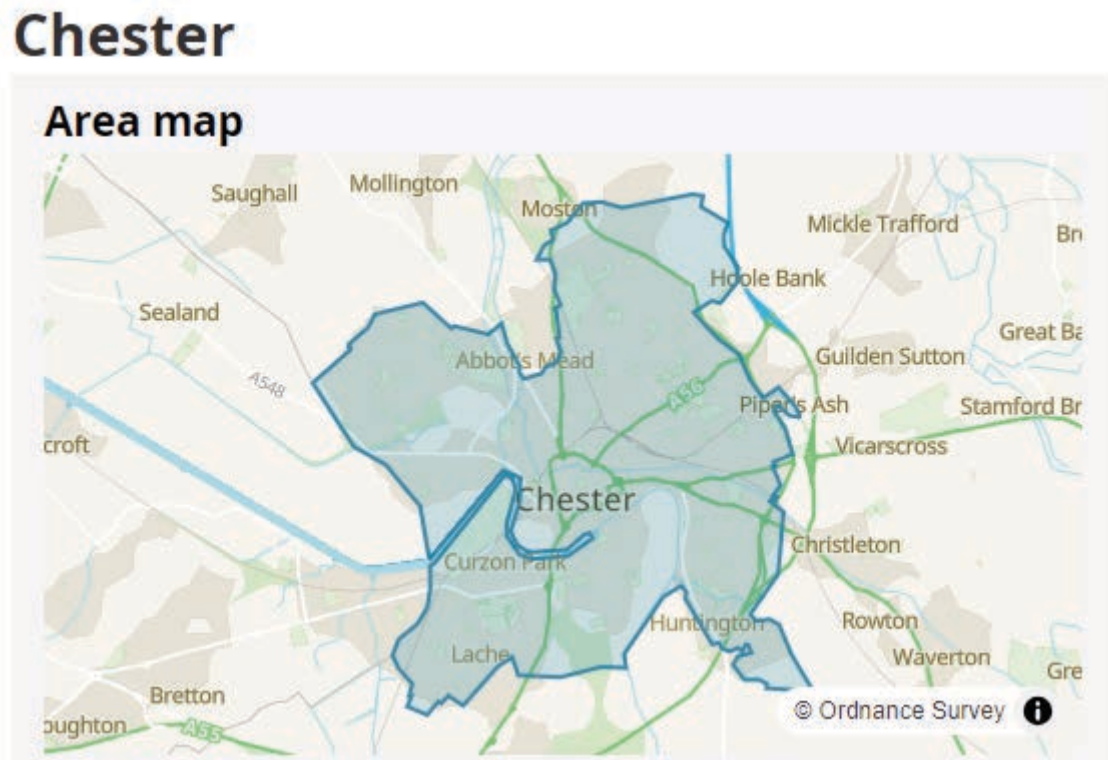
1.1 The city of Chester is the borough's largest settlement and is a key centre for employment, retail, education and tourism as well as being a main transport interchange and gateway, with direct routes to London, Manchester, Merseyside and North Wales. The city is internationally renowned as a historic city with unique heritage assets particularly Roman remains, the City Walls and medieval Rows.

Map 1.1 Chester location



2 Socio-economic profile

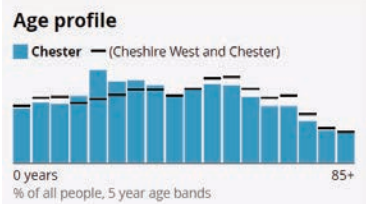
Map 2.1 Chester area map



Chester: ONS – Build a custom area profile used: The data and boundaries displayed in this profile are aggregated from small areas on a best-fit basis, and therefore may differ slightly from other sources: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

2 Socio-economic profile

Table 2.1 Chester socio-economic profile

Topic	Settlement figure		Borough figure		Settlement share of the borough total
Population					
Total existing population (Census 2021, rounded to the nearest 100 people)	85,300		357,200		23.9%
<div>Age profile</div> <div></div> <div>(Census 2021)</div>	Age	%	Age	%	
	0-4:	4.7	0-4:	4.9	
	5-9:	5.2	5-9:	5.6	
	10-14:	5.1	10-14:	5.7	
	15-19:	5.8	15-19:	5.2	
	20-24:	8.0	20-24:	5.5	
	25-29:	7.0	25-29:	5.9	
	30-34:	7.1	30-34:	6.3	
	35-39:	6.7	35-39:	6.3	
	40-44:	5.9	40-44:	5.8	
	45-49:	6.3	45-49:	6.4	
	50-54:	6.8	50-54:	7.3	
	55-59:	6.7	55-59:	7.4	
	60-64:	5.7	60-64:	6.4	
	65-69:	4.9	65-69:	5.6	
	70-74:	4.9	70-74:	5.8	
	75-79:	3.6	75-79:	4.2	
	80-84:	2.8	80-84:	3.0	
	85+:	2.7	85+:	2.7	
	Households				
Number of households	37,900		155,200		24.4%

Socio-economic profile 2

Topic	Settlement figure		Borough figure		Settlement share of the borough total
Population					
(2021 Census, rounded to the nearest 100 households)					
Household size (2021 Census, percentage of all households)	1 person in household	34.9%	1 person in household	30.2%	N/A
	2 people in household	34.2%	2 people in household	36.4%	
	3 people in household	15.1%	3 people in household	16.1%	
	4 or more people in household	15.9%	4 or more people in household	17.2%	
Household composition (2021 Census, percentage of all households)	One person household	34.9%	One person household	30.2%	N/A
	Single family household	59.0%	Single family household	65.3%	
	Other household types	6.1%	Other household types	4.4%	
Accommodation type (2021 Census, percentage of all households)	Whole house or bungalow	77.4%	Whole house or bungalow	87.4%	N/A
	Flat, maisonette or apartment	22.6%	Flat, maisonette or apartment	11.9%	
	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	0.0%	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	0.7%	
Number of bedrooms (2021 Census, percentage of all households)	1 bedroom	10.9%	1 bedroom	7.0%	N/A
	2 bedrooms	28.2%	2 bedrooms	23.1%	
	3 bedrooms	42.1%	3 bedrooms	45.7%	
	4 or more bedrooms	18.8%	4 or more bedrooms	24.3%	
Tenure of household	Owns outright	32.5%	Owns outright	37.1%	N/A

2 Socio-economic profile

Topic	Settlement figure		Borough figure		Settlement share of the borough total
Population					
(2021 Census, percentage of all households)	Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	28.5%	Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	32.4%	
	Social rented	17.2%	Social rented	14.6%	
	Private rented or lives rent free	21.8%	Private rented or lives rent free	15.8%	
Employment					
Economic activity status (2021 Census, % of people aged 16 years and over)	Economically active: In employment	56.5%	Economically active: In employment	57.2%	N/A
	Economically active: Unemployed	3.6%	Economically active: Unemployed	2.8%	
	Economically inactive	39.9%	Economically inactive	40.0%	
Employment history (2021 Census, % of people aged 16 years and over not in employment)	Not in employment: Worked in the last 12 months	15.8%	Not in employment: Worked in the last 12 months	12.3%	
	Not in employment: Not worked in the last 12 months	63.3%	Not in employment: Not worked in the last 12 months	67.3%	
	Not in employment: Never worked	20.9%	Not in employment: Never worked	20.5%	
Occupation (2021 Census, % of people aged 16 years and over in employment)	Managers, directors and senior officials	12.5%	Managers, directors and senior officials	14.0%	
	Professional occupations	24.4%	Professional occupations	20.5%	

Socio-economic profile 2

Topic	Settlement figure		Borough figure		Settlement share of the borough total
Population					
	Associate professional and technical occupations	13.1%	Associate professional and technical occupations	13.2%	
	Administrative and secretarial occupations	8.1%	Administrative and secretarial occupations	8.9%	
	Skilled trades occupations	7.8%	Skilled trades occupations	9.3%	
	Caring, leisure and other service occupations	8.6%	Caring, leisure and other service occupations	8.8%	
	Sales and customer service occupations	8.8%	Sales and customer service occupations	8.2%	
	Process, plant and machine operatives	5.6%	Process, plant and machine operatives	6.9%	
	Elementary occupations	11.0%	Elementary occupations	10.2%	
Travel to work and transport					
Number of cars or vans (2021 Census, % of all households)	No cars or vans in household	24.8%	No cars or vans in household	16.7%	N/A
	1 car or van in household	43.3%	1 car or van in household	40.8%	
	2 cars or vans in household	25.7%	2 cars or vans in household	32.0%	
	3 or more cars or vans in household	6.2%	3 or more cars or vans in household	10.5%	
Distance travelled to work (2021 Census, % of people aged 16 years and over in employment)	Less than 10km	37.9%	Less than 10km	32.7%	N/A
	10km to less than 30km	14.2%	10km to less than 30km	18.6%	
	30km and over	5.0%	30km and over	5.2%	

2 Socio-economic profile

Topic	Settlement figure		Borough figure		Settlement share of the borough total
Population					
	Works mainly from home	32.6%	Works mainly from home	31.5%	
	Other	10.4%	Other	12.1%	
Method of travel to workplace (2021 Census, % of people aged 16 years and over in employment)	Work mainly at or from home	32.6%	Work mainly at or from home	31.5%	N/A
	Underground, metro, light rail, tram	0.1%	Underground, metro, light rail, tram	0.1%	
	Train	1.2%	Train	0.8%	
	Bus, minibus or coach	3.3%	Bus, minibus or coach	1.7%	
	Taxi	1.0%	Taxi	0.6%	
	Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.4%	Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.4%	
	Driving a car or van	41.9%	Driving a car or van	50.8%	
	Passenger in a car or van	3.6%	Passenger in a car or van	3.9%	
	Bicycle	3.1%	Bicycle	2.0%	
	On foot	12.1%	On foot	7.4%	
	Other method of travel to work	0.9%	Other method of travel to work	0.9%	

Availability of services and facilities 3

3 Availability of services and facilities

Chester - Local Retail Centres (May 2023)

3.1 Boughton (District Retail Centre)- this centre is anchored by Waitrose supermarket, set back from one of the main routes into Chester. A footbridge is now open across the Shropshire Union Canal allowing access for residents to the centre and walking access to the train station from Boughton. Moxy hotel has opened in the centre servicing mainly visitors to Chester city centre. Boughton is a district centre and has a number of small retail units that are generally well occupied and have a strong passing trade. There is a diverse range of units from hot food takeaways to kitchen showrooms, meaning the centre is busy most times of the day and evening. There is parking on the road, as well as Waitrose car park. Buses regularly travel through the centre due to the proximity to Chester city centre.

3.2 Saltney (Chester Street) - this centre is near the borough's boundary and the Welsh border. Located on the A5104 it is the main route connecting Chester with Wales. Mainly located on the north side of the street, the centre is diverse and has a low vacancy rate. Some convenience retail does exist, but features food and drink facilities along with specialist retailers. There is a small Asda supermarket outside the centre, although given the narrow pavements and orientation of the unit, it is unlikely people walk between the two. There are other larger supermarkets in easy access of the centre over the border in Wales. There is on street parking as well as a small car park. The road is wide and the centre is easy to walk around. Although the type of uses may limit how many linked trips are made.

3.3 Christleton Road - this centre is along the A5115 in the residential area of Boughton and is located on a main route into Chester city centre. The centre has diversified in recent years, adding a bar and café to existing pubs. A bakery has opened as well as part of Jewsons becoming a Co-Op, which has increased the amount of people coming and going from the centre. There are some hot food takeaways with other uses such as hairdressers, butchers and dog groomers. The centre has a low vacancy rate and therefore the centre has activity most parts of the day and evening. Within the area is a primary school, high school and medical centre with pharmacy adding to the number of people commuting through the centre. There is parking on street and off street in front of the units, with many people popping to Co-Op.

3.4 Garden Lane - this centre is located on Garden Lane within the residential area of the Garden Quarter. Located 1.6km northwest of Chester. The area is close to the University of Chester and does have a number of students that use the centre. As such, the centre is dominated by student let companies and food and drink facilities. There is one convenience store within the centre, with some limited on-street parking on the narrow one way road. The area is mainly terrace housing, with a high number of HMO's. Therefore, has a high density of customers in a smaller area that can access the centre, which is likely to contribute to the low vacancy rate.

3.5 Green Lane - this centre is a purpose built retail centre with community facilities such as a pub. The wider surroundings include a church, library, school and dentist making the centre a focal point for the area. The centre is off the main A51 and A41 roads around Chester, but is on a main residential road. Spar is a key anchor of the centre as well as the hot food takeaway and pub. There is a bus route serving the centre and a dedicated car park with many residents able to walk to the centre for their day to day needs.

3.6 Handbridge - this centre is just over the River Dee from Chester City centre and therefore the main footfall are residents walking into the city centre, but will have some footfall from people visiting the River Dee. There is time limited parking on street and a limited bus service. Handbridge Bridge is traffic

3 Availability of services and facilities

light controlled and cars take it in turn to cross the bridge, therefore traffic can build up along the centre. The centre is small and since designation, the petrol station shop has been extended into a Co-Op (which provides for residents day to day needs) and therefore isn't included within the centre. There are cafes, deli's, convenience goods as well as offices and bar. Given its proximity to the city centre and being one of the few routes into Chester over the river, the centre is generally occupied and has activity within it.

3.7 Kingsway - this centre is located away from the A41, but is on a main road through the residential area of Kingsway. The centre is purpose built around a car park and opposite a park and green space. The pub within the centre has been converted into a Heron Food with a community centre in addition to the Co-Op already there. There is a church, care home and University with community health facilities in the surrounding area. The centre itself has a café and some hot food takeaways. It is a busy centre, but can have some vacancies. There is a frequent bus route past the centre and is in walking distance for many residents.

3.8 Long Lane - this centre is along the A41, close to Chester Zoo and is the connecting route between Chester and Ellesmere Port. The centre has a number of convenience shops along with other uses including a carpet shop and dentist. The centre is busy and is on a bus route. The centre is not big, but is diverse and uses such as a restaurant and hot food takeaway means it is busy most of the day and evening. There is parking in centre as well as a Spar and is in walking distance for some residents.

3.9 Bache - this is a small centre, anchored by Morrisons. Located close to the Countess of Chester hospital, the centre has a hotel, pub and some smaller units. The centre is off a busy route into Chester and is connected to Bache train station which provides regular trains between Chester and Liverpool. The centre is also accessible by regular buses and walkable by residents, commuters and visitors of the hospital. The centre has a hot food takeaway, bakery and off license coupled with a supermarket and pub, which results in the centre being very busy throughout the day and evening.

3.10 The Parade - this centre is located in the centre of Blacon, northwest of Chester, between Saughall Road and Blacon Avenue. The centre is purpose built, with residential above and some regeneration has taken place in the centre. There is a new enterprise centre, along with a purpose built Spar and new residential development. There is an attractive and easy route from the new houses to the Local Retail Centre. There is a good diversity of uses and the centre is well used. Uses such as the pharmacy, bakers and newsagents can support the day to day needs of residents in addition to the convenience store. The other uses support the centre, ensuring that it is busy for longer periods of the day. There is parking in front of the shops and there is a primary school and play area close to the centre. There are other retail units elsewhere in the area, but they don't impact upon each other. There is a bus stop at the centre and the centre has easy access on foot.

3.11 Westminster Park - this centre is located just over 2km south of Chester city centre in a residential area. The centre is opposite a primary school and is accessed off Lache Lane. There are a number of new houses being built at the strategic site, Wrexham Road, which has yet to have its facilities built. There is a diverse mix of uses in the centre, anchored by a Co-Op convenience store with a Post Office. Other uses such as a bakers, butchers, fishmongers and pharmacy all cater for the day to day needs of the community. The deli and hot food takeaway promote linked trips and footfall in the centre for long parts of the day. There is a dedicated car park on Castle Croft Road which is well used. As the centre is on a quiet, flat road in a residential area, the centre is easily accessible on foot.

3.12 Weston Grove - this centre is a good size with a number of uses. There is diversity but does have a number of food units and a few vacancies, therefore the centre can feel a little quiet in the day. The centre is anchored by Tesco Express and this part of the centre is busier. The centre is on a busy

Availability of services and facilities 3

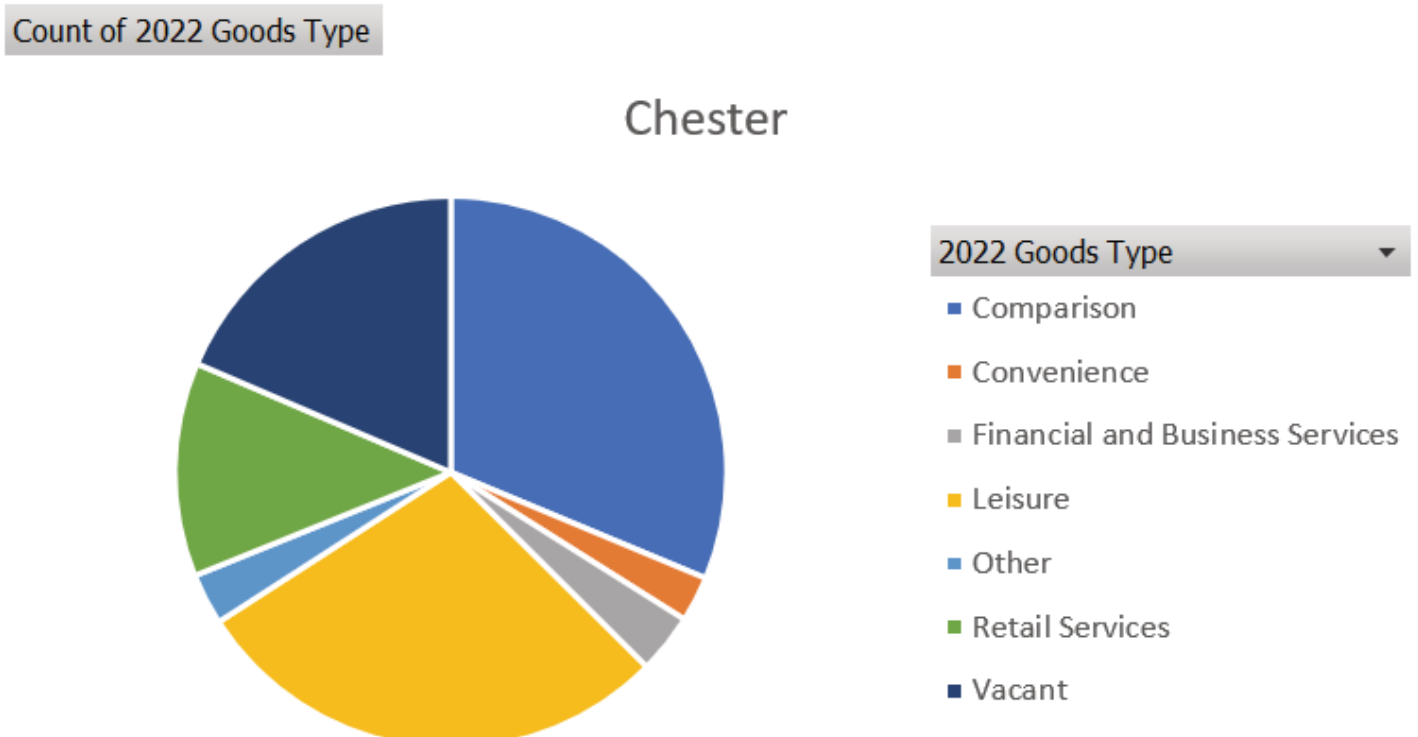
residential street and is accessible for many residents. There is a bus that passes the centre and there is a primary school nearby. South of the centre is a open space with park, community centre and library. These uses will attract people to the area, but is unlikely that there will be liked trips associated with these facilities.

3.13 Brook Street - this is a large centre just outside Chester city centre and is the link between the centre and train station. There is parking on the street, although this now requires payment. The centre is diverse and generally has a low vacancy rate. It is larger than other Local Retail Centres and attracts a wider customer base than just local residents. The street is on a quieter street than runs parallel to the A56, but does have a number of cars driving down it which can cause traffic issues when stopping and parking. The centre is diverse with food and drink, many independent international supermarkets and foods from other cultures attracts many people to the centre. The footfall is high for the centre with commuters visiting the centre and it feels busy both in the day and at night.

3.14 Faulkner Street - this is a busy centre located off the A56 and is just over 1km from Chester City Centre and Chester train station. The area has a number of terrace streets and guest houses providing a density of people in a small area. As the centre is easily accessible from the A56, a main route into Chester from the motorway, it is likely that commuters will stop at the centre. There is a small, pay and display car park at the rear of the shops and there is a one way system around the shops. There is also on street parking with limited time available. There is a good diversity of uses in this popular centre, catering for leisure needs such as food and drink, convenience needs as well as services such as opticians and laundrette. The centre has been expanding in recent years along Charles Street.

3.15 Local Retail Centres in the borough have been surveyed (Spring/Summer 2023) to ascertain the 'health' of the centres in terms of vacancy rates compared to the previous year. The retail offer in each settlement and a breakdown of the commercial goods type (2022) is provided in the graph below (e.g. comparison, convenience, leisure uses).

Figure 3.1 Chester retail - goods by type

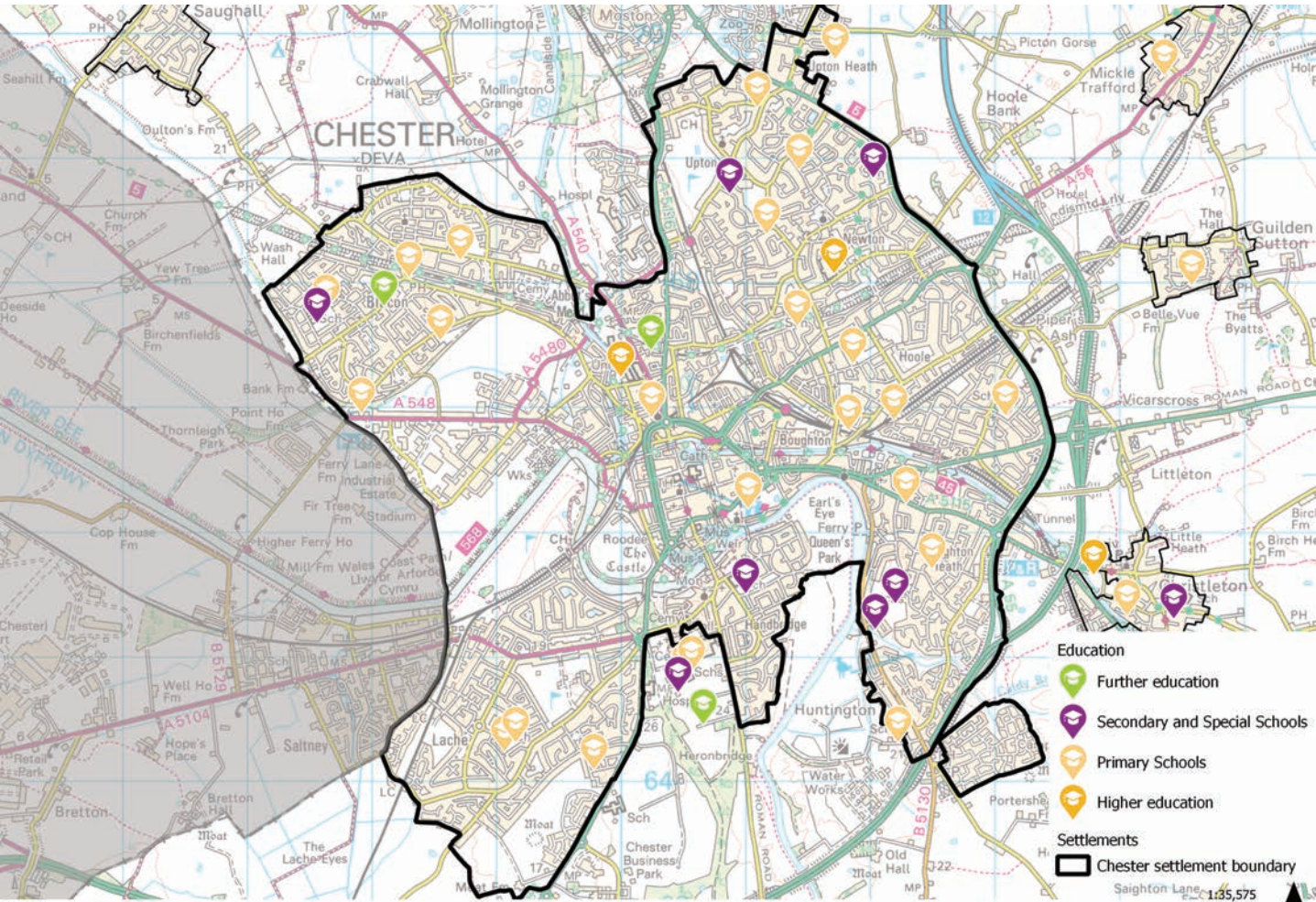


3 Availability of services and facilities

Social and community infrastructure

Education

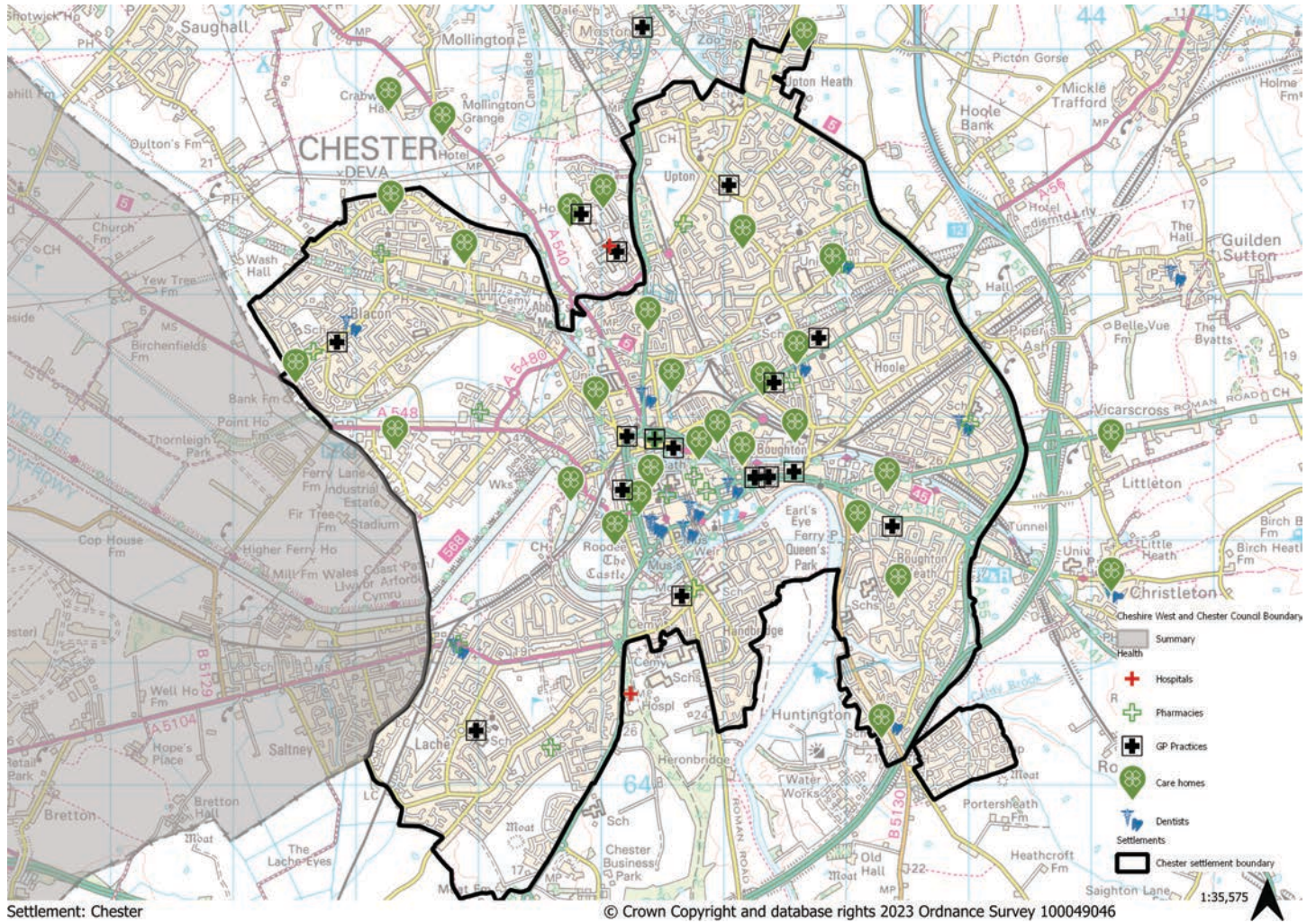
Map 3.1 Chester education facilities



Availability of services and facilities 3

Health

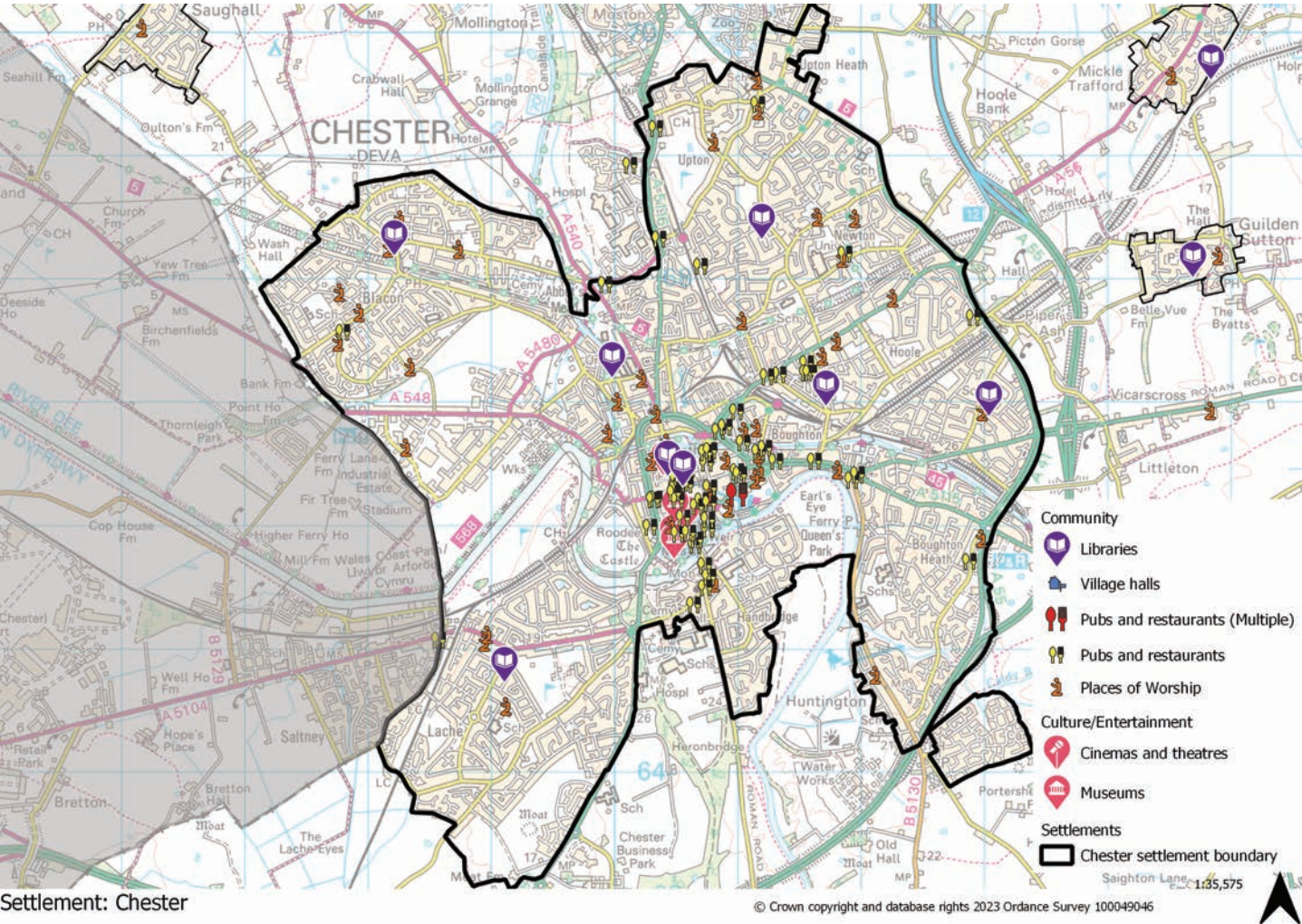
Picture 3.1



3 Availability of services and facilities

Community, culture and entertainment

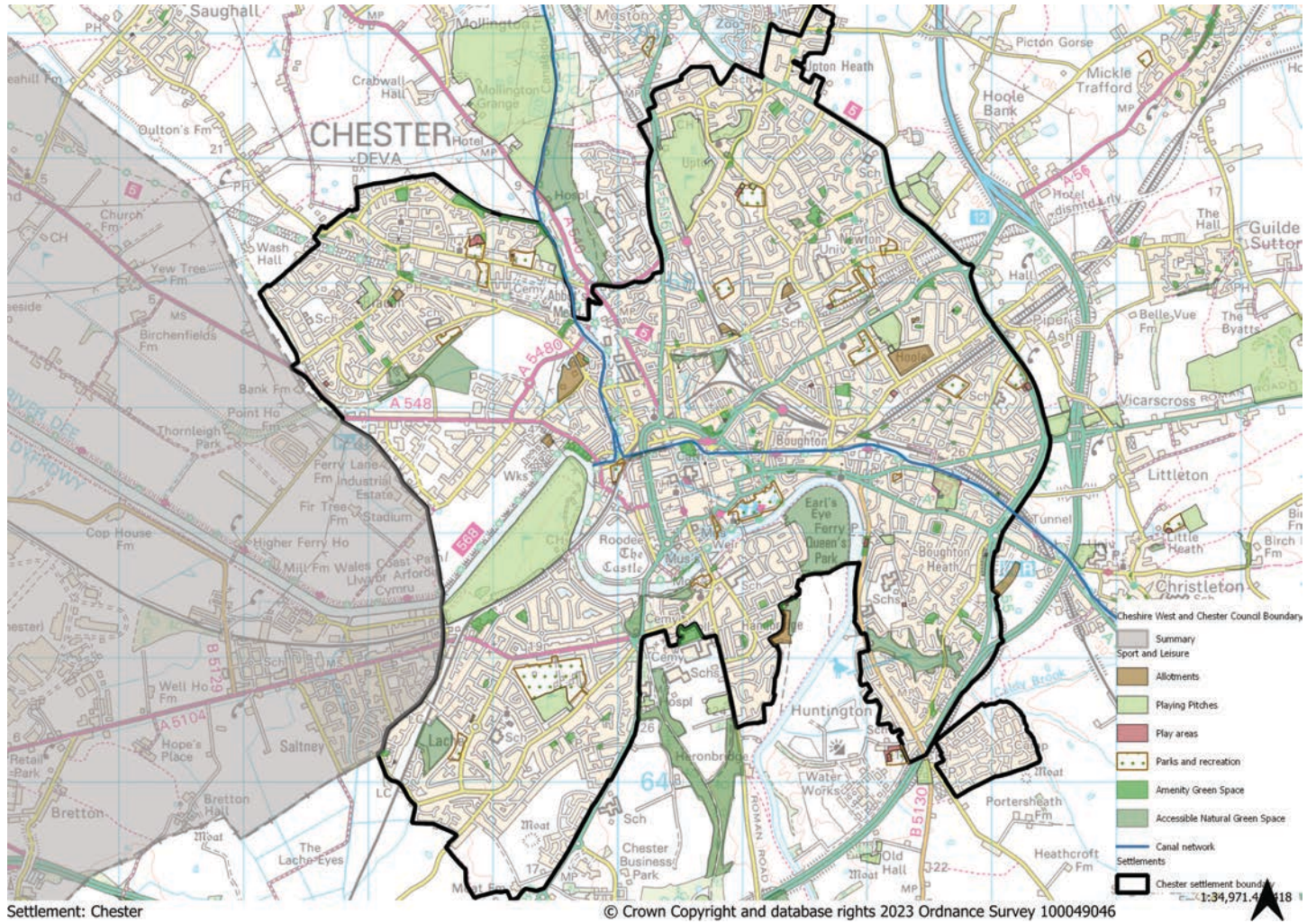
Map 3.2 Chester community facilities



Availability of services and facilities 3

Green infrastructure, sport and leisure

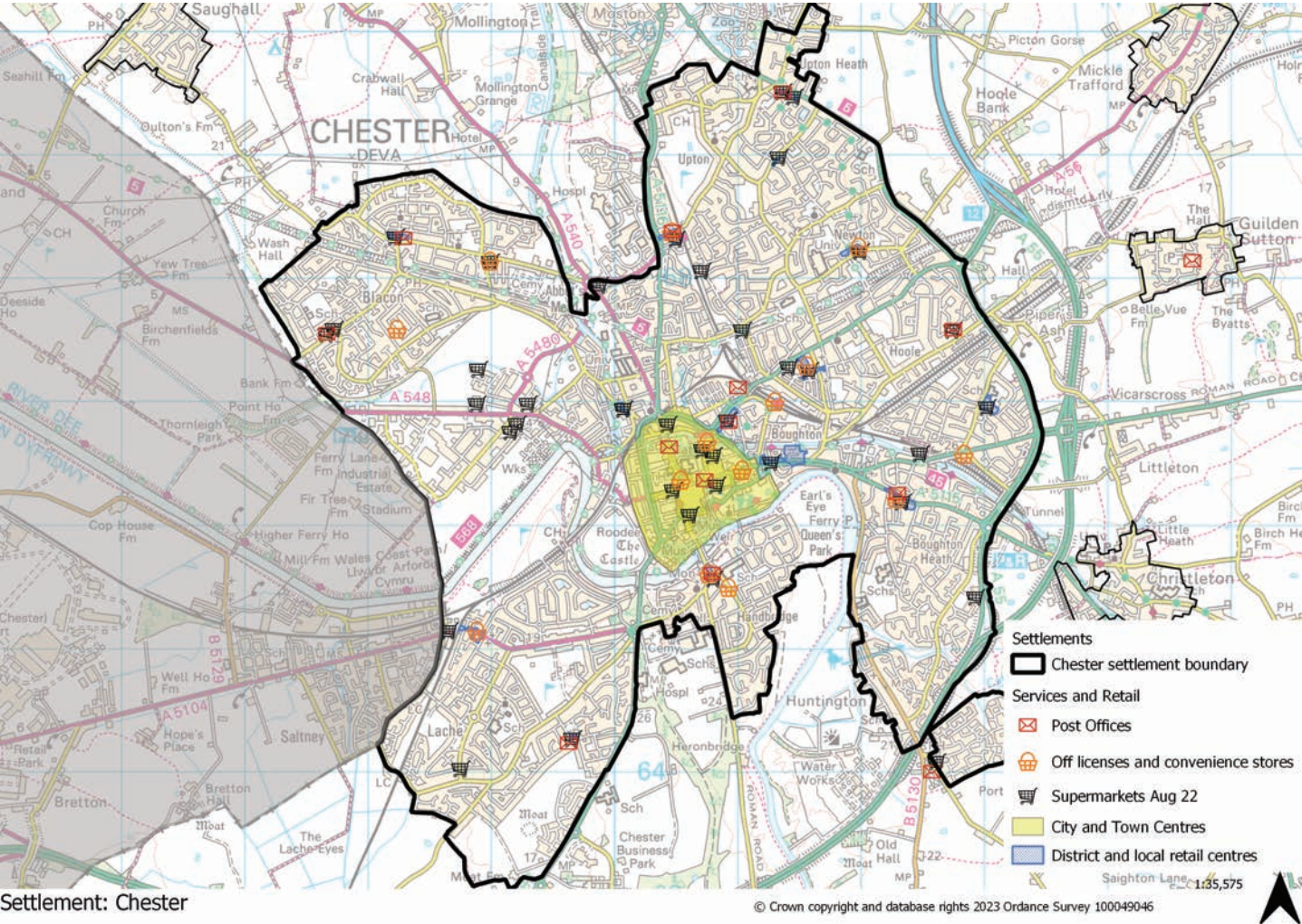
Picture 3.2



3 Availability of services and facilities

Local retail and services

Map 3.3 Chester retail and services



Accessibility / access to public transport 4

4 Accessibility / access to public transport

Map 4.1 Chester accessibility

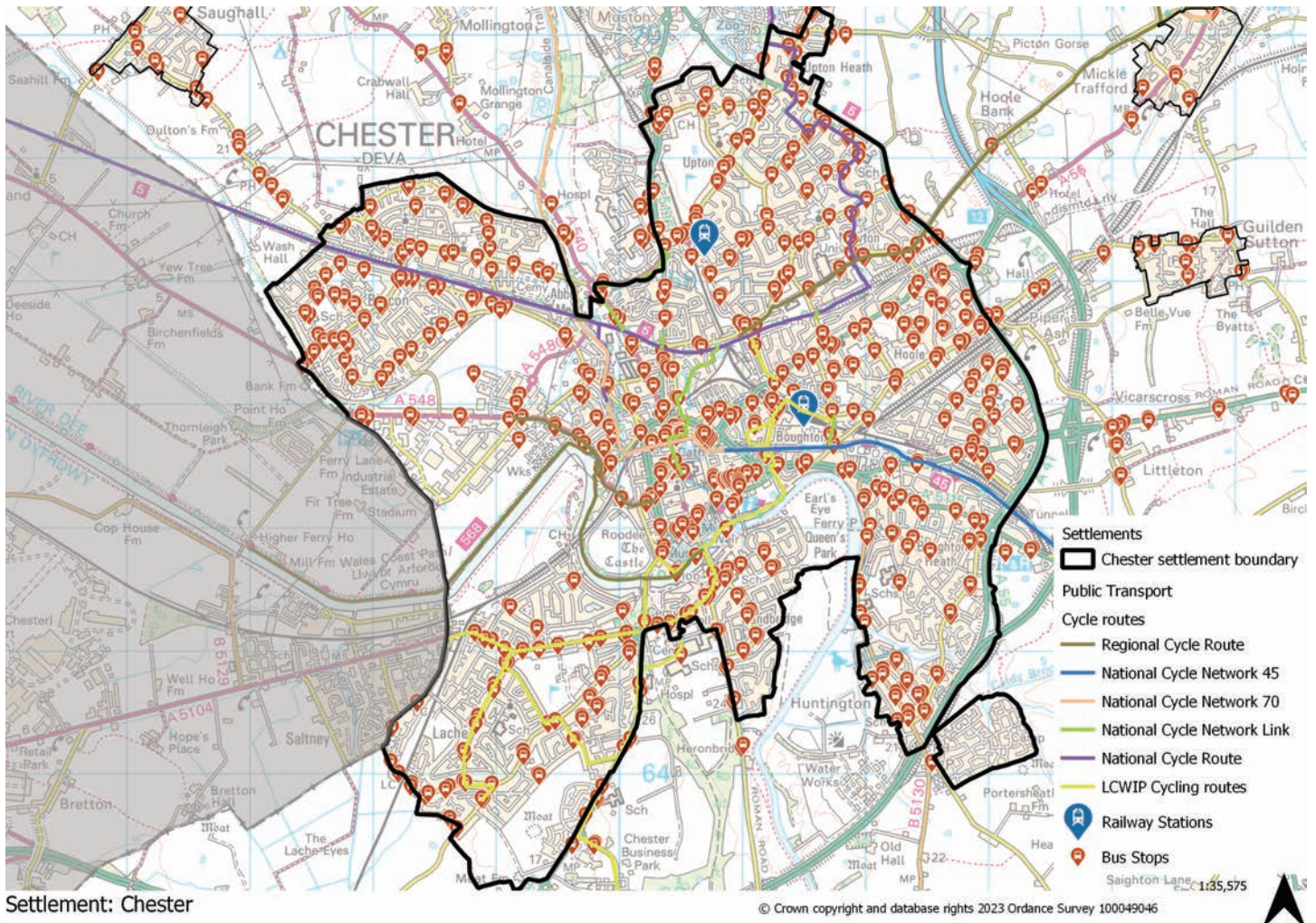


Table 4.1 Distance to other towns/higher order service centres

From Chester to:	Distance (approximate miles)	Approximate travel time by bus	Approximate travel time by train	Approximate travel time by bicycle	Approximate travel time by car
Ellesmere Port	9	38 minutes	24 minutes (no direct train)	48 minutes	17
Northwich	18	1 hour 3 minutes	32 minutes	1 hour 39 minutes	39 minutes
Winsford	18	2 hours 1 minute (no direct service)	1 hour 35 minutes (train and bus)	1 hour 48 minutes	36 minutes
Liverpool	22	1 hour 40 minutes	40 minutes	1 hour 37 minutes	39 minutes

4 Accessibility / access to public transport

From Chester to:	Distance (approximate miles)	Approximate travel time by bus	Approximate travel time by train	Approximate travel time by bicycle	Approximate travel time by car
Wrexham	13	41 minutes	15 minutes	1 hour 8 minutes	24 minutes

Table 4.2 Frequency of train services from Chester

Main train routes from Chester	Days	Frequency
Manchester	Daily	3/1 hour
London	Daily	1/1 hour
Liverpool	Daily	4/1 hour and 1/1 Sunday
Birmingham	Daily	1/2 hour
Holyhead	Daily	1/1 hour
Cardiff	Daily	2/1 hour and 2/day Sunday

Table 4.3

Bus routes from Chester	Days	Frequency
Liverpool	Daily	2/1 hour
Wrexham	Daily	4/1 hour and 2/1 hour Sunday
Runcorn	Mon-Sat	1/1 hour
Broughton (Chester)	Mon-Sat	2/1 hour
Mold	Daily	2/1 hour
Flint/Connah's Quay	Daily	4/1 hour and 2/1 hour Sunday
Rhyl	Daily	2/1 hour and 1/2 Sunday
Saughall	Daily	2/1 hour and hour Sunday
West Kirby	Mon-Sat	1/1 hour
Guilden Sutton	Mon-Fri	1/2 hour
Ellesmere Port	Mon-Fri	1/2 hour
Whitchurch	Mon-Sat	1/2 hour
Dodleston	Mon-Sat	1/1 hour
Northwich	Mon-Sat	1/1 hour
Crewe	Daily	1/1 hour and 1/1.5 hour Sunday
Deeside	Mon-Fri	1/2.5 hour

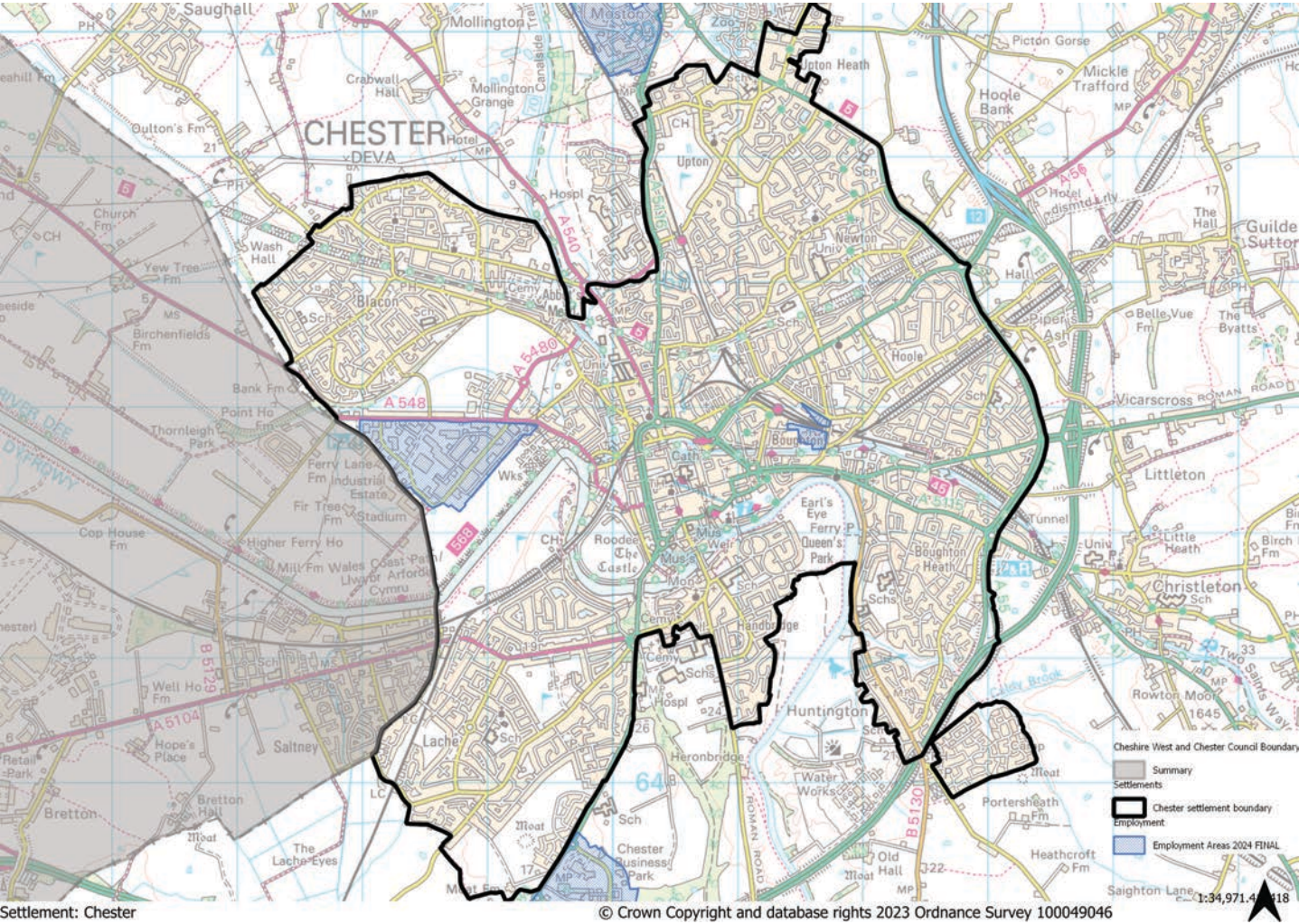
Accessibility / access to public transport 4

Bus routes from Chester	Days	Frequency
Corwen	Mon-Sat	1/1 hour
Warrington	Mon-Sat	1/1 hour
Frodsham	Mon-Sat (evenings) Sun	1/2 hour and 1/1 Sunday

5 Employment opportunities

5 Employment opportunities

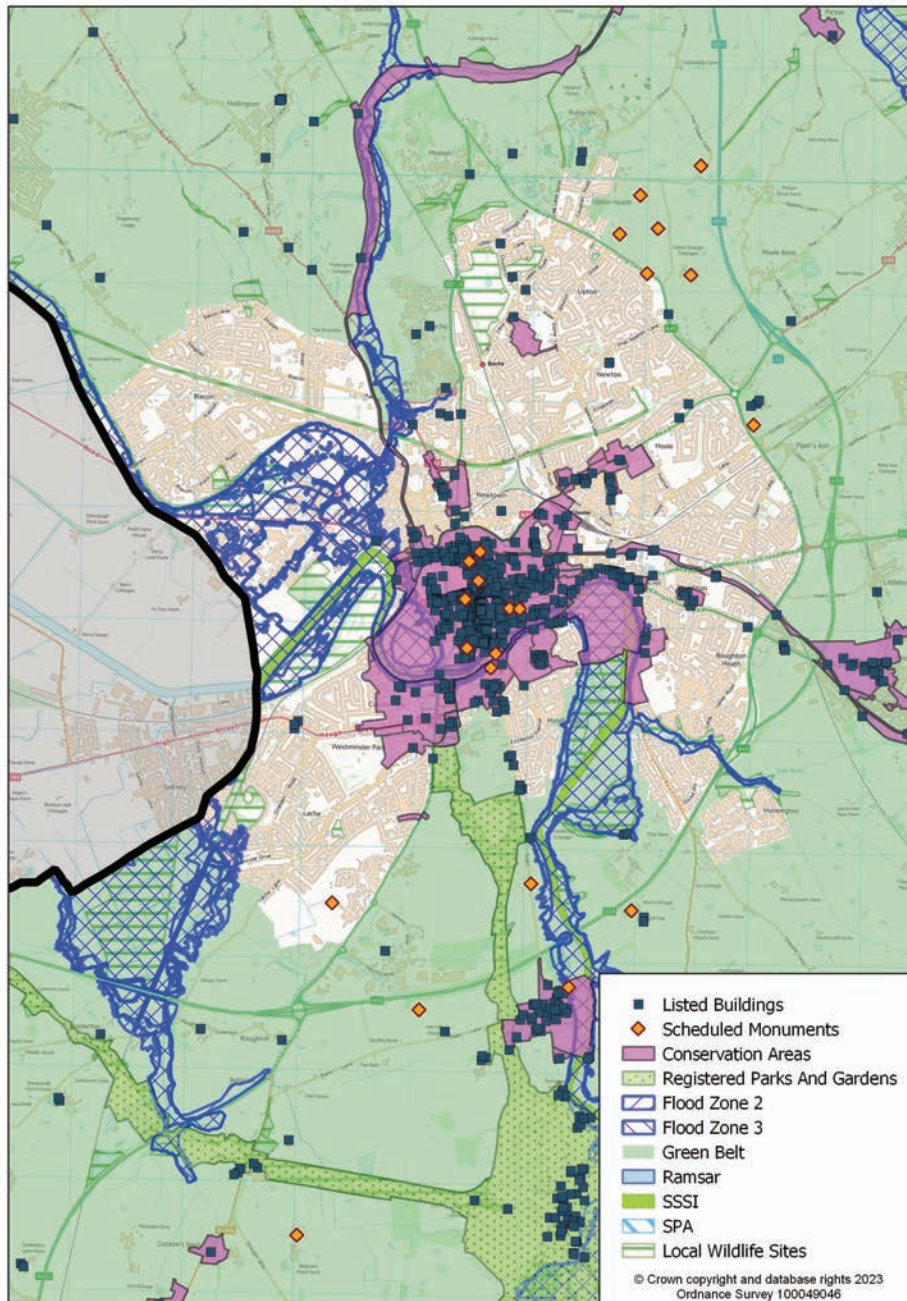
Picture 5.1



Constraints - natural / built environment 6

6 Constraints - natural / built environment

Map 6.1 Chester constraints



6 Constraints - natural / built environment

Landscape Character

Table 6.1 Chester landscape character assessment

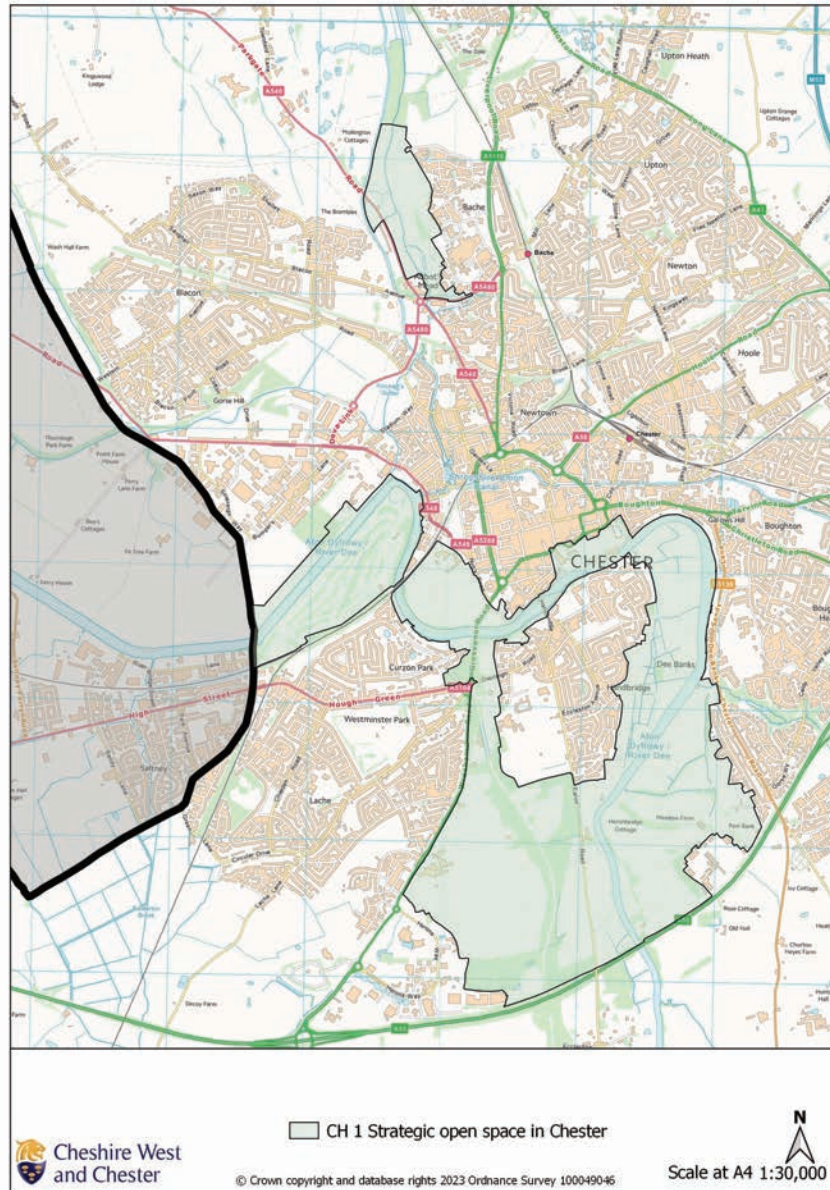
Landscape Character Type	General Description
Cheshire Plain West (Saughall to Waverton Plain) - to the north and east	The Saughall to Waverton Plain character area lies to the immediate east and north of Chester City urban area, in a large arc of well-populated countryside characterised by larger villages and transport infrastructure. This landscape type is defined by its flat or very gentle topography enclosed by hedgerows and standard trees in small-medium enclosures that follow an irregular and semi-regular field pattern. It is differentiated from the Cheshire Plain East by the physical barrier of the Sandstone Ridge.
River Valley (Dee Valley) - to the south	The Dee Valley extends as a narrow and sinuous landscape area reflecting the course of the River Dee and administrative boundaries from Chester through Aldford and Farndon, south as far as the borough boundary north of Worthenbury. It defines a significant length of the western boundary of Cheshire West and Chester borough area.
Estate Farmland (Grosvenor Estate) - to the south	A medium-scale, low-lying and well maintained landscape character area falling in extensive tracts of the Cheshire Plain either side of the Dee Valley LCA south of Chester. It is defined through a consistency in topography, land use, woodland blocks and formal parkland and tree-lined avenues associated with historical estate ownership, with particularly strong and distinguishing settlement and architectural elements.
Drained Marsh (The Lache Eyes) - to the south west	The Lache Eyes is a very small landscape character area immediately to the southwest of Chester. Formerly part of the larger Saltney Marsh in the Dee Estuary, it continues to the north beyond the Cheshire West and Chester borough boundary, west of Saltney. A very flat, low lying landscape of former tidal marsh alongside the Dee Estuary, contrasting with surrounding built development. Regular flooding occurs in the winter.

6.1 Strategic open space - the Local Plan (Part Two) identified a number of strategic open spaces/corridors around Chester aimed (through policy CH1) at protecting the nature, quality and scale of these corridors. Development within or adjacent to areas of strategic open space should be appropriate in scale and type with sensitive boundary treatment so not to harm the nature, quality or scale of these spaces, or impede public enjoyment of them. The special qualities and characteristics of the following strategic open spaces which contribute to the setting and character of Chester, should be protected. The areas of strategic open space are as follows and are shown on the map below:

- The Meadows Corridor to the south of Chester and the River Dee Corridor;
- The Dukes Drive woodland to the south of Chester;
- The Canal Corridor to the north of Chester;
- Dee Flood Plain to the west of Chester

Constraints - natural / built environment 6

Map 6.2 Chester strategic open space



7 Chester profile summary

7 Chester profile summary

Socio-economic profile

- Chester is the largest settlement in the borough with a 23.9% share of the borough's population.
- The age profile shows that the highest percentage of residents are between 20 and 24.
- There are 37,900 households in the settlement, mostly 3 bedroom houses or bungalows, with the majority being 1 person or 2 person households owned outright.
- 56.5% of residents are in employment, which is lower than the borough figure. The primary occupation of working residents is professional.
- 43.3% of the households have 1 car or vans which is higher than the borough average.
- 32.6% of residents work from home which is higher than the borough figure and where they do travel to work the main method is by driving a car or van.

Availability of services and facilities

- As well as the city centre retail offer and service provision, the city has a number of outlying designated Local Retail Centres, namely Boughton, Saltney, Christleton Road, Garden Lane, Green Lane, Handbridge, Kingsway, Long Lane, Bache, The Parade, Westminster Park, Weston Grove, Brook Street and Faulkner Street. These local centres and neighbourhoods provide their communities with a wide variety of services and facilities, including supermarkets, convenience stores, GP surgeries, libraries, community halls and schools.

Social and community infrastructure

- Education – primary schools, high schools and special schools and higher education provision including a university.
- Health – A number of city centre and outlying GP practices and medical centres, pharmacies, dentists, care homes and the Countess of Chester hospital.
- Community, culture and entertainment – Libraries, community halls, Places of Worship (including Chester Cathedral) a wide variety of restaurants and pubs, cinema, theatre and museums.

Accessibility / access to public transport

- Chester is accessible by the road system via the M56 linking it to Manchester to the east, the A483 providing links to Wrexham to the south and the M53 providing links to the Wirral and Liverpool to the north. The A55 also provides road links to north Wales to the west of Chester. Chester railway station provides a 3 hourly service to Manchester, an hourly service to London, a two hourly service to Liverpool and Holyhead and a service to Cardiff once every two hours. Chester bus interchange also provides regular services to Wrexham, Ellesmere Port, the Wirral, Northwich, Warrington and Crewe. Less frequent services are available to Whitchurch, Deeside and Rhyl.

Chester profile summary 7

Employment opportunities

Table 7.1 Chester employment opportunities

Number of jobs (2021)	Economically active (excluding full-time students)	Economically inactive	Jobs less economically active population	Job density
43,305	41,275	29,003	2,030	1.05

Constraints - natural / built environment

- Chester is surrounded by Green Belt. The city centre has a high concentration of built heritage designations including a large number of Conservation Areas covering the city centre and its approaches as well as a high concentration of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments within them. There is a large area at flood risk in the Sealand Basin to the west of the city as well as along the route of the River Dee to the south. Other designations in and around the city include Registered Parks and Gardens and Local Wildlife Sites.
- The waterway heritage contributes to the wealth of heritage value and significance within Chester, which includes the Grade II listed Hoole Lane Lock, Grade II*listed Chester Leadworks and Shot Tower and the Taylor's Boatyard listing comprising amongst others the Former Flat Shed, Narrowboat Shed, Former Steam Saw Mill, Blacksmith's Forge and Dry Dock.