

Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two)

Local Landscape Designation Review

Advisory Position Paper

January 2016



Part 1: Moving towards a Rationalised Local Landscape Designations Policy Hierarchy in Cheshire West and Chester

Contents

Section	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Summary of Existing Local Landscape Designation Policy Context Across CWaC.	5
3. Analysis of Policy Coherence for Local Landscape Designations Across CWaC.	13

Appendices

Appendix 1	Local <i>Landscape</i> Related Policy Hierarchy at April 2015	23
Appendix 2	Selective Environmental Policy Framework	29
Appendix 3	Why is a review of local landscape designations in CWAC needed?	39

Cover Photograph: Towards Helsby from Frodsham Memorial © PES Ltd

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This *Advisory Position Paper* is the **first** element of a **two-part** policy review paper in relation to Local Landscape Designations and related settlement identity policy for consideration in the preparation of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two). **This paper** suggests a rationalisation of local landscape designation policy within the Local Plan following the creation of the Borough and its three separate legacy planning policy documents that remained in place thereafter. The accompanying **Part 2** paper '*Identification of Key Settlement Gaps Outside the Green Belt in Cheshire West and Chester*' addresses the related but specific matter of Key Settlement Gaps policy, as proposed within the Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies. **This paper has been prepared in parallel with a comprehensive Landscape Strategy and Landscape Character Assessment review for CWaC.**
- 1.2 At the time of the study, spatial policy for Local Landscape Designations (LLD) within the *Development Plan* for Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) requires a revised and coordinated borough-wide approach.
- 1.3 LLDs are established across the plan area under the policy mechanisms for *Areas of Special County Value* (ASCV) at the former county scale, and *Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value* (ASLEV) within the former borough of Vale Royal. These operate alongside other spatially delineated policy, such as for the Green Belt and designated nature conservation sites, and topic-specific policy such as for biodiversity, the historic environment and development in the open countryside.
- 1.4 Current landscape designation policy stems from saved development plan policies for the former local authorities of Ellesmere Port & Neston (2002), Chester District (2006) and Vale Royal (2006). The first area-wide strategic plan for CWaC - the Local Plan (Part One) (2015) now also sets strategic policy for landscape alongside a legacy framework of three separate sets of saved development plan policies, (themselves stemming from former Structure Plan policy). In combination these factors present a policy framework for local landscape designations that at the *strategic* level is relatively straight-forward (i.e. the Local Plan (Part One)) but relies at the detailed level on saved former Local Plan and LDF policy. Consequently the decision-making framework for considering development proposals potentially affecting the finest landscapes across the plan area relies upon evidence that has been developed for different local authority boundaries. As such, there is a lack of cohesion and consistency between existing landscape policies and Landscape Character Assessments across CWaC as a whole.
- 1.5 A key function of this study is to examine how the various elements of this saved policy framework for LLDs can be (as appropriate) carried forward, refined or abandoned within the context of the Local Plan (Part Two), whilst meeting the intent and scope of Local Plan (Part One).

1.6 This study proposes for consideration a spatial planning policy framework for local landscape designations within the current Local Plan (Part Two Allocations and Development Policies) process. In doing so the proposed framework would seek to:

- Present consistency and clarity in policy across the local landscape designations;
- Present specific separate policy for distinct and different policy objectives, such as for local landscape designations and policies for the protection of settlement identity and character.
- Be consistent with an emerging Landscape Strategy for enhancing, protecting or restoring landscape character across the borough.

1.7 The evidence set out within this report proposes the following approach to Local Landscape Designation within the Local Plan (Part Two).

A Proposed Policy Framework for Local Landscape Designations Across CWaC.

On the basis of the evidence set out within this paper, the following actions and structure for landscape policy are recommended for inclusion within the emerging CWaC Local Plan (Part Two):

- i) **Retain Areas of Special County Value Designations** (ASCV) (re-titled as/if appropriate)
 - Maintain the broad extent of designation subject to minor refinement as appropriate;
 - Take into account of cross-boundary LLD extent and purpose;
 - Prepare single criteria-based policy and supporting text for the consideration of development proposals within the designation which focuses on inherent and identified (LCA) landscape value, having full regard to the function and broad range of natural assets and human influence on that landscape (as per Appendix 3);
 - Link policy and supporting text to the emerging Landscape Strategy.
- ii) **Abandon all Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value (ASLEV) designations**
- iii) **Outside the Green Belt identify a network of 'Key Settlement Gaps'**
 - Areas which can be demonstrated to be important open spaces which help define settlement identity, local distinctiveness and resist coalescence;
 - Prepare single criteria-based policy and supporting text;
 - New designation may include areas (expanded or reduced) formerly identified as Vale Royal ASLEVs outside the Green Belt.

2. Summary of Existing Local Landscape Designation Policy Context Across CWaC.

- 2.1 The policy framework for landscape considerations in the planning process is set out at the national level and at the plan area level at both strategic and local grain of detail. The broad CWaC area landscape policy framework is set out **Appendix 1**.

National Policy

- 2.2 National Policy for landscape and other environmental considerations in the planning process is set out the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) (NPPF). 12 Core Planning Principles (paragraph 17) include taking account of the different roles and character of areas; recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; conservation and enhancement of the natural environment; and that allocations of land should prefer land of lesser environmental value.
- 2.3 Paragraph 109 notes that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing ‘*valued landscapes*’. ‘Valued landscapes’ are not defined in NPPF nor explicitly limited to nationally designated landscapes.
- 2.4 Paragraph 113 of NPPF states that 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. Paragraph 114 requires LPAs to maintain the character of the undeveloped coast, protecting and enhancing its distinctive landscapes.
- 2.5 In this context it can be seen that national policy takes a neutral or non-committal view in relation to purely landscape focused local designations whilst recognising the potential value of all landscapes. Reference at paragraph 109 to ‘valued’ landscapes does suggest however that spatially specific policy applicable to such areas would fall within the scope of national policy.

Adopted Strategic Policy for Landscape in Cheshire West and Chester

- 2.6 With the adoption in January 2015 of CWaC’s first development plan document, the Local Plan (Part One) *Strategic Policies*, an up-to-date ‘coarse grain’ landscape policy (ENV 2) is in place for the plan area, consistent with NPPF. This policy exists alongside earlier Landscape Character Assessments (Chester District (1998) Cheshire County (2008) and Vale Royal Borough (2007))¹ covering (at different grains of detail) the whole plan area, so as to provide a degree of

¹ No Landscape Character Assessment has been prepared at the borough level for Ellesmere Port and Neston.

interpretation and evidence of what such character and distinctiveness is for any particular locality.

- 2.7 The Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies recognises the importance of the landscape and countryside of Cheshire. This is shown in Strategic Objective 10 which aims to protect the general extent and character of the countryside and North Cheshire Green Belt. This is built upon through policy STRAT 2 that seeks to promote growth whilst protecting the high quality environment of the borough, and policy STRAT9 that specifically relates to countryside. Policy STRAT9 recognises that all countryside has an inherent value through the characteristic of being countryside rather than through being a 'valued' landscape such as through a Local Landscape Designation. To protect the countryside from unnecessary loss, and thereby harm, the policy restricts development in the rural area outside of identified settlements to that which requires a rural location.
- 2.8 STRAT9 does acknowledge that where there is a need to accommodate development, such as new residential development, it may be necessary to identify areas of countryside to do so. This will be considered through Part Two of the Local Plan. As part of the process of considering where the most suitable sites for accommodating development on the edge of a settlement are, the Local Plan (Part Two) will need to take account of landscape sensitively, and, specifically in relation to this study's focus, local landscape designations and Key Settlement Gaps.
- 2.9 The Local Plan (Part One) does not identify any specificity for defined areas within the wider plan area apart from setting the context for Local Plan (Part Two) policy to:
- Identify 'Key Gaps' between settlements *outside* the Green Belt that serve to protect and maintain their character; and
 - Protect the borough's estuaries and undeveloped coast.

Saved Detailed Policy for Landscape Across CWaC

- 2.10 With the creation of the Cheshire West and Chester Council and its consequent Local Plan (Part One) adoption, a hierarchy of spatially specific landscape *related* policy (amongst others) has been formally saved pending the development and adoption of the Local Plan (Part Two). On examination this can be seen to constitute an individually distinct legacy of local landscape designations from the former boroughs and district, yet constitutes part of the current Development Plan² and a potential starting point for emerging Local Plan (Part Two) landscape policy. It is therefore appropriate to examine how the various elements of this saved policy framework for LLDs should (as appropriate) be carried forward,

² *Vis-à-vis* Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

refined or abandoned within the context of the Local Plan (Part Two), whilst meeting the intent and scope of Local Plan (Part One).

- 2.11 Saved Policy for local landscape designations across CWaC focuses on the identification of specific tracts of landscape (and their wider environmental and heritage characteristics) of either county or local importance (Vale Royal only). **Figure 1** sets out the spatial distribution and coverage of local landscape designations across CWaC.

Areas of Special County Value (ASCV)

- 2.12 A network of LLD's, considered to be of particular value at the county scale, has been established across Cheshire through various iterations of the Cheshire Structure Plans since 1977. These policies identified Areas of Special County Value (ASCV) in each of CWaC's three predecessor district authorities. These were transposed and adapted into policy within each of the boroughs' and district's local plans and in the main have been 'saved' and remain part of the development plan.
- 2.13 **Table 1** demonstrates that saved policy from the three CWaC predecessor authorities for ASCV vary appreciably in their local interpretation of the Structure Plan context³ at the time of drafting. (**Appendix 1** offers a finer grain analysis of new and saved landscape policy). However, the revised **Landscape Character Assessment** and **Landscape Strategy** for CWaC's (prepared in parallel to this paper), suggests that the general extent of the landscapes of the ASCVs still present additional character and scenic value across those areas, sufficient to merit identification within a local landscape designation approach, although a full review of those designations has not been undertaken within the CWaC-wide LCA review.
- 2.14 Structure Plan policy wording for ASCV is now of limited relevance although sets valuable insight to the background of the current designation (**Appendix 2**).

³ Cheshire 2011, Cheshire Structure Plan, adopted 1999, Cheshire County Council.

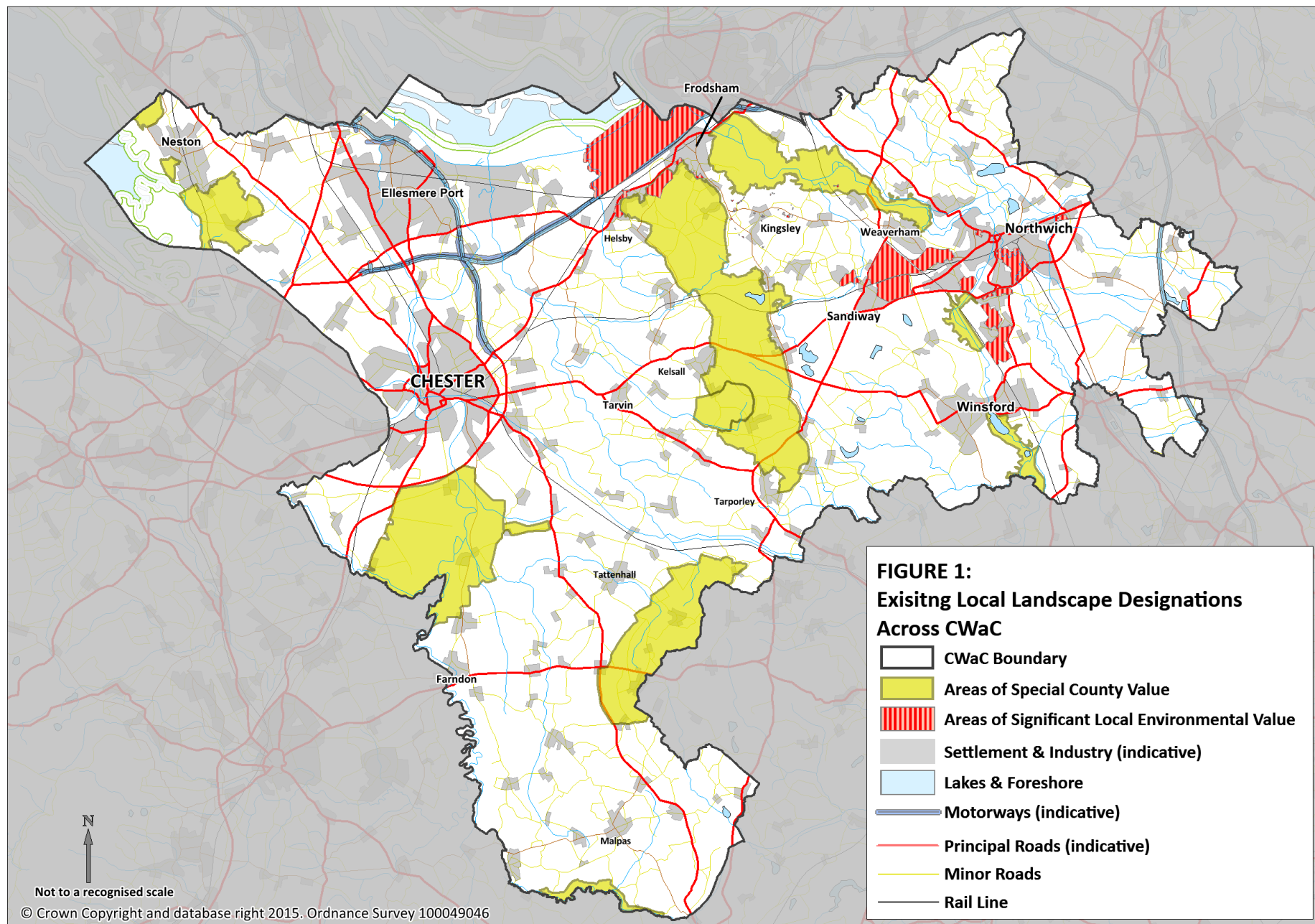


Table 1: Areas of Special County Value (ASCV) Saved Policy across CWaC.

Plan Area	ASCV Policy	Comment/Comparison
Vale Royal Borough	<p>NE11</p> <p>‘The Areas of Special County Value identified because of their high landscape quality are defined on the proposals maps and are described as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weaver Valley • Helsby and Frodsham Hills • Delamere/Utkinton <p>In designated Areas of Special County Value, because of their landscape quality, their archaeological, historic or nature conservation importance, development which preserves or enhances the character or features for which the ASCV has been designated will be allowed.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area identified because of landscape character/value, but... • Can relate to Landscape or other environmental/heritage valued characteristics. • Effectively a multi-component environmental protection policy. • Vale Royal Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document 5 (September 2007) was envisaged and intended to replace ASCV policy (in the context of PPS7).
Chester City	<p>ENV25</p> <p>‘The following areas are designated as Areas of Special County Value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eaton Estate/Dee Valley • Beeston/Peckforton/Bolesworth • Wych Brook Valley • Willington <p>Development which would be likely to damage, directly or indirectly, or contribute to the erosion of features for which an ASCV has been designated, will be refused.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-specific about which environmental elements policy relates to. • Supporting text to policy notes designations made <i>because of the combined significance of historic, landscape, archaeological and nature conservation value present</i> • Effectively a multi-component environmental protection policy. • Supporting text recognises the potential for the use of Article 4 Directions to control some Permitted Development Rights in ASCV.
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough	<p>ENV6</p> <p>‘The Dee Coastal area is defined as an Area of Special County Value for Landscape (ASCV) and is identified on the Proposal Map. Within this area:-</p> <p>i) Development which would adversely affect the special landscape character will not be allowed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifically cites Landscape as reason for designation. • Prescriptive in application of policy to landscape components. • No direct reference to nature conservation or heritage features.

	<p>ii) Small-scale development required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities and small scale outdoor sport and recreational development will be permitted, provided it is in accordance with Green Belt policies and it is sensitively related to the distinctive character of the landscape. Large-scale development will not be permitted.</p> <p>iii) The conservation and maintenance of features important to the landscape of the ASCV such as trees, hedges, copses, woodlands, ponds and traditional sandstone walls will be encouraged.'</p> <p>Where development is permitted it will be required to have a high standard of design, siting and landscaping reflecting the traditional character of buildings in the area and the landscape, using materials sympathetic to the local area. The conservation and enhancement of the landscape will be an important matter in the consideration of planning proposals.</p>	
--	---	--

Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value (ASLEV)

- 2.15 In addition to ASCV policy, within the former Borough of Vale Royal a second layer of LLD is established within the Local Plan as 'Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value' (ASLEV). This designation seeks to provide protection from harm to areas valued for their environmental qualities at the *borough level* (as opposed to county level for ASCV). **Table 2** sets out the policy and pertinent elements of supporting text (a finer grain analysis of LLDs is set out at Appendix 1). With minor exception at land separating Frodsham and Helsby these do not overlap ASCVs.

Table 2: Saved Vale Royal Policy NE12 - Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value

Plan Area	ASLEV Policy	Supporting Text
Vale Royal	<p>NE12</p> <p>Areas of Significant Local Environment Value, as defined on the proposals map are areas having a special value to the borough because of the contribution they make to the character of the district and the towns and villages within it.</p> <p>Within these areas development will only be permitted where there is no unacceptable harm to the value of the area.</p>	<p>Supporting text notes that protecting locally valued areas is important in protecting the 'attractiveness' of the borough.</p> <p>Supporting text sets out 4 functions of ASLEV designation:</p> <p>i) The Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes: Designated to protect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open space between areas of heavy industry ○ Setting of Frodsham and Helsby Hills ○ Important landscape component in themselves and ○ International nature conservation importance. ○ In addition, area important in relation to maintenance and dredging deposits for Manchester Ship Canal <p>ii) Open Land Between Villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 13 Specific areas listed and mapped ○ Significant variation in extent/scale ○ Supporting text states: '<i>Important to keep the gaps between the villages in order to maintain the identity and integrity of the villages, and because these are attractive areas of countryside in their own right. Such areas are also important elements in the formation of the character of an area by giving relief to developed areas acting as environmental buffers, forming or allowing an important view'.</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Defined by specific features, such as roads, railways and development. ○ Noted as important for urban fringe ecology and wildlife corridors. ○ Supporting text effectively expands on functions to include recreation value, views, 'environmental buffer' and inherent landscape value. <p>Which 'functions' each 'Gap' ASLEV perform are briefly set out.</p> <p>iii) Sensitive Areas within Villages/Towns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Within Frodsham and Helsby only ○ Supporting text states it is necessary to present additional layer to 'current planning policy' of protection to protect special townscape and setting of settlements, tree cover and low density housing. <p>iv) The historic orchards in the parishes of Acton Bridge and Kingsley</p> <p>Protect declining traditional land use and related character, habitats and ecology of specific locations.</p>
--	--	--

2.16 Vale Royal SPG5 Part 2 (2007) sought to provide a landscape character-based expression (substitution) of ASLEV policy to reflect diminished support for local landscape designations in the revised PPS7. It set out a character appraisal review of each ASLEV presenting reasons for designation, landscape character, site-specific features and their significance. The SPG stated that its content was prepared to *replace* ASLEV policy set out within the LDF (2006), but no evidence of this being undertaken or the mechanisms it would employ to do so are evident. As such NE12 was never replaced, and ASLEV remain part of the exiting development plan.

2.17 In considering the general principle for ASLEV, SPD5 suggests that Open Countryside policy *alone* was not considered adequate to protect the integrity of some of the designated ASLEVs, and it was thought that the character of some areas lying within the Green Belt could be adversely affected by certain types of development, such as that necessary for agriculture or minerals operations.

3. Analysis of Policy Coherence for Local Landscape Designations Across CWaC

Policy for ASCV

- 3.1 Examination of the ASCV policy framework suggests that saved policy application is partly dependent upon identification of the *specific features* of value for which the area has been designated (*see detailed analysis of special characteristics –*). However, explicit identification of these is inconsistently set out within the plans or supporting text. Where there is uncertainty as to the scope of the characteristics that justified designation, policy application is therefore open to some considerable flexibility but with this brings vulnerability to challenge. In response to this, a component part of this study has been to derive from field survey and desk study a more explicit, structured and systematic record of the special landscape qualities and values of each ASCV (and ASLEV – see below). The Position Paper ‘*Why is a review of local landscape designations in CWaC needed?*’ is set out at **Appendix 3**.
- 3.2 For ASCV policy within the former Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough area, valued character relates to partly-defined ‘lowland landscape character’. However, *supporting text* to the policy states the ASCV is defined so as to include the open countryside overlooking the Dee Estuary, noting this part of the Wirral coast is important in landscape terms for the views it affords out over the Dee Estuary and North Wales, and also for the views of the Wirral from across the Estuary. It notes the importance that development does not reduce or detract from the views out across the Dee Estuary. Supporting text also states the ASCV includes areas around Burton which represent traditional rural Wirral landscape in terms of woodland, the pattern of fields and features such as sandstone walls. As such, the policy affords the most clarity of intent of the saved plans’ LLD policies.
- 3.3 Policies for the former Vale Royal and Chester plan areas are evidently less specific either in relation to whether the policies are primarily landscape designations, or what the specific valued features or character of those areas are. Both policies allow for development proposals to be considered in relation to their potential effects on nature conservation and/or heritage assets within the ASCV, with or without landscape impacts.

Policy for ASLEV (Vale Royal only)

- 3.4 The Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value identified across the former Borough of Vale Royal constitute a diverse and multi-functional *local* environmental designation. Sites are identified on the proposals map and application is area-specific. Furthermore, each ASLEV is supported by a brief outline of the special character and/or function that site presents. In examining the scope and variety embedded within the policy and its supporting text it is

evident that the policy cannot be considered as a LLD specifically, although landscape considerations are a core element therein.

Functionality and Validity of Existing LLDs

- 3.5 The new Local Plan (Part One) **does not explicitly support nor reject the continued reliance upon LLD** for the protection of the plan area's finest landscapes, or repeat that special attention to landscape conservation and enhancement should be afforded to the ASCV as set out historically within Structure Plans. **LLDs are not necessarily an inevitable element of landscape policy within Part 2 of the Local Plan.** However, sufficient flexibility remains available to the council in relation to the specific policy mechanisms used within the Local Plan (Part Two) to further its strategic objectives for landscape (*'protect and wherever possible, enhance landscape character and distinctiveness'*), which could if expedient, include LLD(s) (or, for example, other designations such as Local Green Space), based upon historic designations (examined above) or otherwise. The robustness of such policy and its ability to survive the rigours of Examination will be dependent in part upon there being adequate evidence presented to justify and support a locally specific landscape policy layer.
- 3.6 In relation to all the former borough and district plans, but particularly for Vale Royal Borough and Chester District saved policy, it is necessary to examine whether these afford a policy component that is not adequately addressed by other topic-specific, non-spatially constrained policy mechanisms.
- 3.7 This study is not charged with defining an overall policy suite and scope for the natural and historic environment within the emerging Local Plan (Part Two). However, for this study to make reasoned recommendations for specific local landscape policy or hierarchy it must be assumed that the **general detail and scope contained within the existing saved policy frameworks will be essentially retained** (although refined, updated and expanded as appropriate) and that a reduction in overall policy scope will not materialise. In this context it is possible and appropriate to examine whether or how the retention of the saved LLDs in their existing form would add value to the development plan's effectiveness as a whole in light of development priorities and pressures over the plan period.
- 3.8 Summaries of pertinent environmental policy covering over the issues identified within the saved policy framework for LLDs are set out at **Appendix 2**. This demonstrates without significant exception, that widely scoped and effective policy frameworks remain in place for the appropriate consideration of the wider environment and its valued characteristics and features, including:
- Development in the Green Belt;
 - Development in the Countryside;
 - Nature conservation and particular habitats;

- Conservation of the historic environment (built and archaeological);
 - River valleys, canal corridors and riparian environments;
 - Trees and woodland;
 - Coastal and estuarine zones; and
 - Landscape more generally.
- 3.9 It can be seen of the three saved ASCV policies that only Ellesmere Port and Neston's ENV6 is primarily a landscape designation, set in place for specific reasons of coastal landscape conservation and retention of local distinctiveness. The policy can be seen to remain robust, with clear purpose and spatial specificity. It reflects the intent of the original policy R2 set out in the (now replaced), Cheshire Structure Plan Alteration (2006) more faithfully than policies in the other areas.
- 3.10 Saved ASCV policy for Chester and for Vale Royal both set out to provide specific protection to a range of natural and historic environmental features (and combinations thereof). Examination of their evolution suggests that the spatial identification of these areas was primarily landscape *value* based, but policy has evolved such that it may apply to the protection of heritage and nature conservation features also, whether in combination with landscape considerations or not.
- 3.11 In this context the policies for the two former plan areas clearly present significant overlap with other saved policies, effectively presenting a duplication of protection for environmentally valued assets and character (as detailed at **Appendix 3**). This is a situation that it should not be necessary or desirable to repeat within the Local Plan (Part Two). Application of development plan policy within development management decision-making should always be as a raft of pertinent policies across the development plan, such that complex policies are not necessary to be formulated specifically to address any feasible combination of factors in a single policy. For ASCV, there would appear to be no policy element beyond its valued landscape functions, which could not be adequately covered by the proper and robust application of other topic specific current or reasonably likely future development plan policy.
- 3.12 As a primarily landscape focused designation ASCV can be seen to remain a valid policy mechanism to further Local Plan (Part One) strategy for landscape, acknowledging that their valued landscape character is important at a plan-area scale, and in part this value is a product of topographical, habitat and heritage elements.
- 3.13 Such overlap is reflected to a greater degree within saved policy for Vale Royal, and further expanded through the locally derived ASLEV policy and associated designations. Within ASLEVs, matters of traditional land use, the character of

some urban spaces, tree cover, settlement separation and identity and even functional requirements of the ship canal are included as explicit justification of designation. Whilst all of these issues may remain valid planning considerations, where special character is identified, other more appropriate planning policy specific to each issue could be applied to those sites or areas (see paragraph 3.19 and Table 3). To fit with the policy direction within the Local Plan (Part One), this policy would benefit from greater focus.

- 3.14 A significant element of ASLEV policy relates to maintaining open space between neighbouring settlements and urban areas. Green Belt falls across the northern extent of the former Vale Royal and this would be expected to afford almost exactly the function that ASLEVs theoretically provide in regard to resisting urban coalescence and preserving settlement identity. For development considered not inappropriate in the Green Belt (NPPF 89 and 90), design and other environmental policies should serve to afford appropriate control and mitigation mechanisms.
- 3.15 Further, it is unclear how the identification of ASLEVs within the Green Belt for which urban separation is the main justification has been carried out. For example physical separation between Wincham and Higher Wincham is demonstrably less than or equivalent to other areas identified as ASLEV, but appears to secure settlement separation by Green Belt application only.
- 3.16 Evidently, not all ASLEVs that specifically relate to settlement separation fall within the Green Belt and a greater legitimacy to their *purpose* may be found there. However, within its current structure and scope the ASLEV framework is considered to be unwieldy and increasingly ineffective in the face of high development pressure. Other, more focused policy options are considered to be feasible which specifically relate to the need to maintain settlement identity and distinctiveness and protect these from encroachment and coalescence in areas not designated as Green Belt. This study supports the Local Plan (Part One) proposed preparation of a specific local designation (Key Settlement Gaps) which would be focused on safeguarding areas from development which are critical in maintaining the identity, separation and local distinctiveness of settlements outside the Green Belt (Part 2 of this Advisory Paper addresses the issues of Key Settlement Gaps in detail). These spaces may in part be initially based upon the separation components of ASLEVs in the former Vale Royal. However, as there are questions about the necessity of all designations across the single plan area, the re-examination and roll-out of the concept across CWaC as a whole is appropriate.

Providing Added Value

- 3.17 It is appropriate to consider whether and how ASCV and particularly ASLEV may nevertheless present any *added value* to the wider landscape / environmental

policy framework likely to be refined and rolled out in the Local Plan (Part Two). Do these policies provide a value through spatial delineation, consequent profile or 'status' or through the ability to consider multiple environmental issues within a single policy?

- 3.18 In respect to ASCV, this study concludes that the former county-wide designation can remain appropriate and legitimate at the local CWaC level in furthering policy ENV2 of the Local Plan (Part One) as the areas are demonstrably special in character and particularly sensitive to intrusive or poorly mitigated development (Appendix 3). The designation is long-standing, having been retained through several Structure Plan reviews. The policy may also be important in relation to the promotion of sustainable rural enterprise, particularly within the leisure and tourism markets.
- 3.19 For ASLEV policy, its inherent dilution of application across a broad range of issues regarding environmental sensitivity and value (the great majority of which could be adequately and more directly addressed through an updated environmental and heritage policies suite) suggest that it is not fit-for-purpose as a stand-alone policy. **Table 3** illustrates the extent main areas of policy overlap of NE12 and where other plan-wide or overlapping spatially defined policy would could/should be relied upon. It also suggests alternative approaches to where the removal of ASLEV from the Local Plan (Part Two) may leave reduced policy coverage for very limited range of issues. This is not to suggest that the scope of matters considered by the saved ASLEV policy is not valid in other planning respects. They remain to be so. However, through the dilution of focus, and an unclear wider approach to spatial designation and application, it is difficult to see added value being gained through retention of the approach, and its challenging roll-out to the wider plan area, within Part Two of the Local Plan.
- 3.20 As a consequence of the removal of ASLEVs from the policy framework for CWaC, this study recognises that some limited matters covered by the saved policy may fall outside current and/or likely Part Two detailed policy for the natural and historic environment. In such cases, the Council would be able to devise new, more focused policy for those particular elements than offered by ASLEV, or through revising and adapting other policy to embrace remnant ASLEV issues. The development of the Local Plan (Part Two) policy framework affords significant opportunity to do so.
- 3.21 Further to the identified shortcomings in the extent and scope of NE12 of the saved Vale Royal Local Development Framework, it follows that retention of this (or a closely related) local area environmental designation would require 'rolling out' across the CWaC plan area as a whole.

Table 3: Overview of NE12 (ASLEV) policy objectives and parallel environmental policy

Scope of Policy NE12 : ASLEVs <i>'Areas of Significant Local Environment Value, as defined on the proposals map are areas having a special value to the borough because of the contribution they make to the character of the district and the towns and villages within it:-</i>	Covered by alternative or saved policy coverage?	Opportunity / need for new or alternative policy coverage?
Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Landscape distinctiveness, contrast and prominence; ○ Landscape vulnerability to visual intrusion and character change; ○ Frodsham and Helsby landscape setting; ○ Distinctive area of open space between industrial areas ○ Nature Conservation importance; ○ Manchester Ship Canal maintenance. 	CWaC Local Plan (Part One) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRAT9 • ENV2 (supported by LCA and emerging Landscape Strategy) • ENV4 Saved Vale Royal Local Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS5 • NE1 • NE2 • NE7 • NE18 	Maintenance of Manchester Ship Canal not covered specifically by policy framework. Consider, if necessary, new safeguarding policy which restricts any development which would compromise functionality of the marshes in this respect.

Scope of Policy NE12 : ASLEVs <i>'Areas of Significant Local Environment Value, as defined on the proposals map are areas having a special value to the borough because of the contribution they make to the character of the district and the towns and villages within it:-</i>	Covered by alternative or saved policy coverage?	Opportunity / need for new or alternative policy coverage?
<p>Open Land between Villages 'green gaps':</p> <p>13 areas of separation identified for specific individual reasons encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain identity and integrity of villages ○ Avoidance of coalescence; ○ Important areas of landscape in their own right; ○ Contribute to character through giving relief to urban areas as environmental buffers; ○ Allowing for important views. ○ Act as wildlife havens and corridors; ○ Open space and recreation functions. 	<p>CWaC Local Plan (Part One)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRAT9 • ENV2 (supported by LCA and emerging Landscape Strategy) • ENV4 • ENV6 <p>Saved Vale Royal Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BE1 • NE1 • NE7 	<p>The Local Plan (Part One) has committed the preparation of policy framework for the identification of Settlement Gaps in Part Two of the plan.</p>

Scope of Policy NE12 : ASLEVs <i>'Areas of Significant Local Environment Value, as defined on the proposals map are areas having a special value to the borough because of the contribution they make to the character of the district and the towns and villages within it:-</i>	Covered by alternative or saved policy coverage?	Opportunity / need for new or alternative policy coverage?
<p>Sensitive Areas within Villages/Towns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Within Frodsham and Helsby only ○ Sensitive areas defined because they contribute significantly to the setting and character of the historic villages with distinctive landscape settings. ○ Vulnerable to insensitive development ○ Additional policy layer stated to be necessary; ○ Specific characteristics to be protected cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Treescapes and wooded areas, including where extensive TPOs in place; ○ Roadside hedges; ○ Low density residential development with large gardens; and ○ Setting of Listed Building. 	<p>CWaC Local Plan (Part One)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENV2 • ENV5 • ENV6 <p>Saved Vale Royal Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BE1 • BE22 • NE7 • NE9 	<p>A framework of new strategic and saved policies exists which should/could afford the same scope of coverage as presented by NE12.</p> <p>Should local characteristics justify, robust application of saved policies (as revised) need not be supplemented and potentially complicated by NE12.</p> <p>Should specific reference to these specific areas remain justified, explanatory text to the Local Plan (Part Two) policies could be introduced to pertinent policy without the need for a LLD type approach.</p> <p>Where this approach is not considered robust, Local Green Space designation could be considered.</p>

Scope of Policy NE12 : ASLEVs <i>'Areas of Significant Local Environment Value, as defined on the proposals map are areas having a special value to the borough because of the contribution they make to the character of the district and the towns and villages within it:-</i>	Covered by alternative or saved policy coverage?	Opportunity / need for new or alternative policy coverage?
Historic Orchards: The number and variety of orchards within the Parishes of Acton Bridge and Kingsley make a significant contribution to the character of the settlements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Historic loss of orchards affects character change and loss of cultural heritage (crafts). ○ Inherent wildlife value 	CWaC Local Plan (Part One) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENV2 • ENV4 • ENV5 • ENV6 Saved Vale Royal Local Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE1 • NE7 • NE9 	Should local characteristics justify, robust application of saved policies (as revised) need not be supplemented and potentially complicated by NE12. Should specific reference to these defined areas remain justified, explanatory text to the Local Plan (Part Two) policies could be introduced to pertinent policy without the need for a LLD type approach.

Page left blank

Appendix 1

Local *Landscape* Related Policy Hierarchy at April 2015

Current local landscape policy is set out in four current or saved Local Plan documents:

Cheshire West and Chester

Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) – Strategic Policies (Adopted January 2015).

Policy	Policy Wording	Comment
ENV2 Landscape	<p>'The Local Plan will protect and, wherever possible, enhance landscape character and local distinctiveness. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identification of key gaps in the Local Plan (Part Two - Land Allocations and Detailed Policies Plan) between settlements outside the Green Belt that serve to protect and maintain their character Supporting the designation of Local Green Space Protecting the character of the borough's estuaries and undeveloped coast. <p>Development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take full account of the characteristics of the development site, its relationship with its surroundings and where appropriate views into, over and out of the site. Recognise, retain and incorporate features of landscape quality into the design.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic level landscape policy for whole plan area. Sets context for new Key Settlement Gap designation. Supporting text states: <i>the quality of local distinctiveness in the borough is an essential landscape asset. In order to protect local distinctiveness the Council will identify key gaps between settlements outside the Green Belt which will maintain and preserve their individual character.</i> These are not dependent upon existing designations. Supporting text recognises specific need for enhancement of borough's coastline. The plan does not explicitly support or set a context for LLD.

Former Vale Royal Borough

Saved Vale Royal Local Plan (First Review Alteration) (adopted 2006).

Policies saved following adoption of Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies 2015.

Policy	Policy Wording (our emphasis)	Comment
NE7. Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Features	‘Proposals for development should recognise features of landscape quality such as walls, trees, hedgerows, streams, and ponds on, or in the immediate vicinity of, the site on which it is to take place. Wherever possible these features should be retained and incorporated into the layout or if they are to be unavoidably lost or damaged, they should be replaced elsewhere on site or off site provided the habitat can be successfully recreated. In the design and arrangement of buildings, structures, landscaping and other works, all proposals should maintain or improve the quality and variety of the landscape in which the development occurs.’	
NE11. Areas of Special County Value (ASCV)	<p>‘The Areas of Special County Value identified because of their high landscape quality are defined on the proposals maps and are described as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weaver Valley • Helsby and Frodsham Hills • Delamere/Utkinton <p>In designated Areas of Special County Value, because of their landscape quality, their archaeological, historic or nature conservation importance, development which preserves or enhances the character or features for which the ASCV has been designated will be allowed.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy stems from principle re-established in Cheshire Structure Plan Alteration (adopted 2011), and LP defined boundaries. • Development having a more than local impact within an Area of Special County Value may be required to be accompanied by ES. • Pre-date NPPF. Supporting text notes LCA SPD will be prepared and retention of ASCV decided thereafter in light of SPD to meet PPS7 requirements (as was).

<p>NE12. Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value (ASLEV)</p>	<p>‘Areas of Significant Local Environment Value, as defined on the proposals map are areas having a special value to the borough because of the contribution they make to the character of the district and the towns and villages within it.</p> <p>Within these areas development will only be permitted where there is no unacceptable harm to the value of the area.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised for local value in addition to ASCV. • Recognised as important in maintaining the attractiveness of the former borough. • Pre-date NPPF. Supporting text notes LCA SPD will be prepared and retention of ASCV decided thereafter in light of SPD to meet PPS7 requirements (as was). • Lists areas and reasons for designation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes ○ Open Land between Villages ○ Historic Orchards • Allows expansion of network in plan modifications.
<p>NE13. River Corridors</p>	<p>‘In the Weaver Valley <i>as defined</i> by the Area of Special County Value for Landscape as shown on the proposals maps, developments which will harm the nature conservation, archaeological, recreation or landscape value of the valley will not be allowed.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy appears to repeat function of ASCV for the Weaver Valley. • Effectively a Borough-wide interpretation of Cheshire Structure Plan (2005) • Restricted to ASCV spatial extent. • Notes multiple functionality of the river valley: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Landscape, recreation and nature conservation; ○ Important open space between Northwich and Winsford;
<p>NE14. Dane Valley</p>	<p>‘In the Dane Valley as defined on the proposals maps developments which will harm the conservation, geomorphological, recreation, or landscape value of the valley will not be allowed.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This policy applies to the area of the Dane Valley that is contained within the boundaries of the River Dane Floodplain. • Extends beyond ASLEV

<p>NE18. Mersey Estuary Zone</p>	<p>‘Within the Mersey Estuary Zone, as shown on the proposals map, development will only be allowed: (i) provided it does not adversely affect the open landscape, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities of the area; or (ii) where there is a specific need for the development to be located in this area, that cannot be accommodated in developed areas of the coast or inland, where that need outweighs any harm that would be caused to the open landscape, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities.’</p>	<p>Further sub-tier landscape policy with specific spatial designation. Seeks to support integrated coastal management and planning</p>
---	---	---

Former Chester City

Saved Chester District Local Plan (adopted 2006).

Policies saved following adoption of Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies 2015.

Policy	Policy Wording	Comment
ENV 25: Areas of Special County Value	<p>'The following areas are designated as Areas of Special County Value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eaton Estate/Dee Valley • Beeston/Peckforton/Bolesworth • Wych Brook Valley • Willington <p>Development which would be likely to damage, directly or indirectly, or contribute to the erosion of features for which an ASCV has been designated, will be refused.'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stems from Structure Plan Alteration 2011 ASCV policy. • Based upon <i>the combined</i> significance of features of historic, landscape, archaeological and nature conservation value present in such areas.

Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough

Saved Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Local Plan (Adopted January 2002).

Policy	Policy Wording	Comment
ENV6: Area of Special County Value for Landscape (ASCV)	<p>'The Dee Coastal area is defined as an Area of Special County Value for Landscape (ASCV) and is identified on the Proposal Map. Within this area:-</p> <p>i) Development which would adversely affect the special landscape character will not be allowed.</p> <p>ii) Small-scale development required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities and small scale outdoor sport and recreational development will be permitted, provided it is in accordance with Green Belt policies and it is sensitively related to the distinctive character of the landscape. Large-scale development will not be permitted.</p> <p>iii) The conservation and maintenance of features important to the landscape of the ASCV such as trees, hedges, copses, woodlands, ponds and traditional sandstone walls will be encouraged.'</p> <p>Where development is permitted it will be required to have a high standard of design, siting and landscaping reflecting the traditional character of buildings in the area and the landscape, using materials sympathetic to the local area. The conservation and enhancement of the landscape will be an important matter in the consideration of planning proposals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Interpretation of Structure Plan Alteration 2011 ASCV policy. • Considers the 3 discrete parcels of designation as a single area for policy purposes. • Includes specific landscape criteria relating to adverse effects on special character. • Resists large scale development. • Supports positive management of the landscape. • Area also Green Belt. • Supporting text states: The overriding aim of this policy is to preserve the existing landscape quality of the ASCV by protecting it from inappropriate development. • The ASCV is defined to include the open countryside overlooking the Dee Estuary. This part of the Wirral coast is important in landscape terms for the views it affords out over the Dee Estuary and North Wales, and also for the views of the Wirral from across the Estuary. It is vital that development does not reduce or detract from the views out across the Dee Estuary. • The ASCV includes areas around Burton which represent <i>traditional rural Wirral landscape</i> in terms of woodland, the pattern of fields and features such as sandstone walls. • Neston/Parkgate Coast is the only coastal ASCV in Cheshire • Dee Coast ASCV was first defined in detail in the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan which was adopted in 1993

Appendix 2

Selective Environmental Policy Framework

Vale Royal Local Plan (2006) selective Environmental Policy Framework

Topic	Scope
Nature Conservation	
NE1 Protection of the Nature Conservation Resource	Plan wide considerations for protection of biodiversity/geomorphological assets
NE2 Designated Sites of International and National Nature Conservation Importance	International and National site protection
NE3 Designated Sites of Local and Regional Nature Conservation and Geological Importance	Local sites protection, such as LWS, LNRs
NE4 Threatened and Priority Habitats	Protection of locally significant features and habitats
NE5 Endangered Species	Protection of listed species
NE6 Wildlife Corridors and Green Wedges	Protection of 'habitat' functionality on defined (proposals map) corridors. Also relates to <i>landscape</i> value.
Landscape	
NE7 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Features	Proposals for development should recognise features of landscape quality such as walls, trees, hedgerows, streams, and ponds on, or in the immediate vicinity of, the site on which it is to take place. Wherever possible these features should be retained and incorporated into the layout or if they are to be unavoidably lost or damaged, they should be replaced elsewhere on site or off site provided the habitat can be successfully recreated. In the design and arrangement of buildings, structures, landscaping and other works, all proposals should maintain or improve the quality and variety of the landscape in which the development occurs.
NE8 Provision and Enhancement of Landscape in New Development	Site/development landscaping policy. Includes reference to achieving balance character of the area. References biodiversity opportunities
NE9 Trees and woodland	General protection across plan area

NE11 Areas of Special County Value (ASCV) (See Appendix 1)	Local Landscape and other general environmental / heritage designation over specific named tracts. <i>'landscape quality, their archaeological, historic or nature conservation importance'</i>
NE12 Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value (ASLEV)	Local designation – explicitly 'below' ASCV. Protected because of the 'special value' they have on borough because of the contribution they make to character of the district and towns and villages within it. Defined and mapped. Multiple (and disparate) functions:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes • Open land between settlements • Sensitive areas within settlements (<i>note: do <u>not</u> match CA boundaries, some overlap, mostly outwith</i>). • Historic Orchards
NE13 River Corridors	In the Weaver Valley as defined by the Area of Special County Value for Landscape as shown on the Proposals Maps, developments which will harm the nature conservation, archaeological, recreation or landscape value of the valley will not be allowed.
NE14 Dane Valley	In the Dane Valley as defined on the Proposals Maps developments which will harm the conservation, geomorphological, recreation, or landscape value of the valley will not be allowed.
NE19 Mersey Estuary Zone	Within the Mersey Estuary Zone, as shown on the Proposals Map (NOTE: exact same coverage ASLEV) , development will only be allowed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided it does not adversely affect the open landscape, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities of the area; or • where there is a specific need for the development to be located in this area, that cannot be accommodated in developed areas of the coast or inland, where that need outweighs any harm that would be caused to the open landscape, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities.
Flood Risk	

NE 15 Protection of the floodplain	Areas of risk defined on proposals map. Sequential tests applied, management proposals without environmental harm, and demonstration of no alternative sites at lower risk.
Built and Historic Environment	
BE1 Safeguarding and Improving the Quality of the Environment	Expansive design policy addressing all development proposals, plan area-wide. Including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it should take full account of the characteristics of the development site, its relationship with its surroundings, and where appropriate views into, over and out of the site. This should be achieved through its siting, scales, layout, density, design and landscape treatment; it should be compatible with the local character, and encourage local distinctiveness through use of building materials, architectural detailing, floorscape and boundary treatment (reference should be made to any relevant village design statement); it should retain important trees, hedgerows and other valuable landscape features and take opportunities to enhance the wildlife potential of the site, wherever practicable;
BE10 Historic Environment – Conservation Areas	Development must preserve or enhance character or appearance of the CA
BE11 Development outside the Conservation Area	Proposals in proximity to CA but might affect views in or out will only be allowed provided they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
BE13 Ancient Monuments/Archaeological Sites	Proposals which would adversely affect scheduled ancient monuments and other nationally important archaeological sites and monuments or their settings will not be allowed.
BE14 Other Sites of Archaeological Importance	Proposals which could affect local ancient monuments and sites of archaeological importance, including sites and areas of archaeological potential and those identified in the Cheshire Historic Towns Survey, will not be allowed unless it can be demonstrated, as part of the submitted planning application, that the particular site or monument will be satisfactorily preserved either in situ or where it is not feasible, by record.

BE15 Historic Parks and Gardens	<p>Proposals which may affect historic parks and gardens and their settings, identified on the proposals maps, or any that may subsequently be added to the national register – Consideration given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need to preserve the character and appearance of such historic parks and gardens; • the need to prevent sub-division of historic parks and gardens; and • the need to conserve features of architectural, archaeological and historic interest; • the need to record such features.
------------------------------------	--

Chester District Local Plan (2006) selective Environmental Policy Framework

Policy	Scope
Nature Conservation	
ENV26	<p>A Green Network is identified on the Proposals Maps. Only those development proposals which would not harm its strategic and local function will be permitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Network identified as a resource of inter-linked open spaces, corridors, landscape features and areas of nature conservation value. • Safeguarded against disintegration or erosion through inappropriate forms of development.
ENV27	<p>Development likely to adversely affect, directly or indirectly, features of identified nature conservation value will be permitted only where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is adequate mitigation to conserve the features of value; • there is adequate compensation, management and enhancement of the nature conservation resource.
ENV 28	Protection of European and UK designated nature conservation sites

ENV 29	Development in sites or areas of local nature conservation value will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that features of nature conservation value or the public's enjoyment of them will not be adversely affected, directly or indirectly, or where compensatory features of equal value are provided.
ENV 30	Strategic wildlife corridors are indicated on the Proposals Maps. Development likely to adversely affect, directly or indirectly, the contiguity or integrity of these corridors will be refused unless suitable mitigation can be provided.
Landscape	
ENV15	Strategic open space is identified on the Proposals Map. Development which would adversely affect the character, quality or scale of these spaces will be refused. Focused on setting of Chester
ENV 17	Important areas of greenspace are identified on the Proposals Maps (Localised within and on edge of settlements, small parcels generally) . Development within these areas will not be permitted unless: - the development of the particular greenspace is required to meet the essential recreational or community needs of local people; - the development is for a small-scale structure and the recreation, landscape, wildlife and/or cultural value of the space will not be significantly adversely affected; and in addition: - appropriate alternative provision of greenspace of equivalent community benefit is made in the immediate local area; or - the development will facilitate an enhancement of the recreation facilities, landscape, wildlife and/or cultural value of the remainder of the space or an appropriate existing greenspace in the immediate local area.
ENV21	Tree protection general.

ENV22	High quality hard and soft landscaping in development.
ENV24	<p>ASCV. The following areas are designated as Areas of Special County Value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eaton Estate/Dee Valley • Beeston/Peckforton/Bolesworth • Wych Brook Valley • Willington <p>Development which would be likely to damage, directly or indirectly, or contribute to the erosion of features for which an ASCV has been designated, will be refused.</p> <p>See table 1.</p> <p>Supporting text does not highlight each ASCV special character/features.</p>
Built and Historic Environment	Extensive policy framework-selection relevant to study
ENV31	Development proposals which would adversely affect the site or setting of an existing or proposed Scheduled Ancient Monument or other nationally important sites and monuments will be refused.
ENV32	Where development proposals affect sites of known or potential archaeological interest , the City Council will require an archaeological assessment/evaluation to be submitted as part of the planning application. Planning permission will not be granted without the adequate assessment of the nature, extent and significance of the remains and the degree to which the proposed development is likely to affect them.
ENV33	Development proposals affecting the site or setting of a site of regional or county importance will only be permitted if the integrity of the archaeological remains has been secured.
ENV34	Development proposals affecting the site or setting of a site of District or local importance will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the particular site or monument can be preserved in situ or, where this is not feasible, by record.
ENV35, ENV36, ENV37, ENV38	Conservation Areas – Preserve and enhance through development or demolition. Includes important views into or out of CAs.

ENV 8	<p>New development in Chester city which would obscure important views or lessen the visual impact of historic buildings, landmarks or landscape features through excessive height, mass or bulk or through the development of key open spaces which provide views through, frame views or provide a setting for them will be refused.</p> <p>Buildings and outward and inward views listed.</p>
-------	---

Ellesmere Port and Neston Local Plan (2002) selective Environmental Policy Framework

Policy	Scope
Nature Conservation	
ENV1	International sites policy
ENV2	National Sites policy
ENV3	Regional and district sites protection
ENV4	Local Sites
ENV 5 Ecological Interest	Development proposals which are likely to have a direct or an indirect effect on a site of nature conservation interest or a protected species will be required to include details of the ecological interest on the site and as appropriate put forward measures for the safeguarding of that interest and where necessary measures of mitigation and compensation.
Landscape	

<p>ENV9 Landscape and Habitat Features</p>	<p>Development proposals which involve the felling of trees or woodlands, the removal of hedges or sandstone walls, the loss of ponds or wetlands, or the culverting of watercourses, which make a significant contribution to the rural or urban environment will not be allowed unless it can be shown that the proposal can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the removal of landscape/habitat features; • Provide adequate compensation measures for the loss of landscape/habitat features. <p>New development should, where appropriate, enhance significant landscape and habitat features on the site. Where necessary this may include a requirement to provide a “buffer zone” of a scale and nature appropriate to the interest of the feature to be protected.</p>
<p>ENV12 Coastal Zones</p>	<p>Development within the Dee and Mersey Coastal Zones will only be permitted where the need for development to be sited within a Coastal Zone outweighs the possible adverse effect on the open and built landscape, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities and general environmental quality of the Coastal Zone.</p> <p>Part of the Dee and Mersey Coastal Zones lie within the Green Belt. Part of the Dee Coastal Zone is also within the Area of Special County Value for Landscape. In these areas, development will only be allowed where it accords with the relevant ASCV and Green Belt Policies.</p>
<p>ENV7 Agricultural Buildings and Structures</p>	<p>Where planning permission for agricultural buildings and structures is required, it will only be granted subject to meeting all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant is able to demonstrate that it is reasonably necessary for the agricultural operation of the unit, • That the visual impact on the landscape is minimised through the appropriate use of materials and colour, appropriate siting and a suitable landscaping scheme.
<p>Built and Historic Environment</p>	

Gen 1 General Development Criteria	<p>The following general criteria will apply to all development proposals:-</p> <p>Development should be appropriate to the characteristics of the site and its surroundings in terms of its layout, density, scale, design and materials and with suitable landscaping. It should not be detrimental to, and wherever possible it should enhance, the amenity of the surrounding area.</p>
GB2 Green Belt	Reflects national policy.
ENV13 Conservation Areas	<p>Preserve and enhance...</p> <p>Within or affecting the setting of...</p> <p>Reflects legislative protection and duty.</p>
ENV14 Parkgate Conservation Area	<p>Within the Parkgate Conservation Area, development proposals will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character of the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, development proposals should reflect the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the streetscape of The Parade and adjoining roads; • Upgrade buildings in a poor state of repair; • Improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists; • Reduce the detrimental impact of vehicular traffic and car parking.
ENV16 Non Listed Buildings and Structures of Architectural and Historic Interest	<p>Some buildings and structures within the Borough, whilst not of national listed building status, are valued either for their contribution to the local scene or as good examples of local architectural styles or for their historical association.</p> <p>Development proposals involving such buildings and structures will only be allowed if the Borough Council is satisfied that the architectural and historic character is conserved and demolition and damage is avoided.</p>

<p>ENV17 Sites of Special Archaeological Interest</p>	<p>Proposals for development which would adversely affect the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monuments or other monument of national importance will be refused.</p> <p>The Borough Council will seek to protect non-scheduled sites of Archaeological Importance and their settings. Proposals affecting these and other sites of suspected archaeological interest must be accompanied with an archaeological assessment. This will determine the nature, extent and significance of the remains and the effect that the proposed development would have on them.</p> <p>Where planning permission is granted for development affecting a site of Archaeological Importance, the permission will, depending on the importance of the site and opportunities for preservation, be subject to conditions or a legal agreement to ensure the in-situ preservation of the remains. If in-situ preservation is not justified, then a programme of excavation and recording of remains must be agreed.</p>
---	--

Appendix 3

Why is a review of local landscape designations in CWaC needed?

Preliminary evidence gathering and considerations influencing the approach to this paper.

1. Current local landscape designations

There is currently a wide range of statutory and non-statutory environmental designations within the borough, some as a legacy from previous authorities (retained policies) prior to local government reorganisation. These are shown in **Table A1**:

Table A1: Hierarchy/status of current environmental designation in CWaC

Hierarchy/ Status	Natural Heritage	Cultural Heritage	Landscape/ Environmental
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramsar site • Special Protection Area (SPA) & candidate SPA • Special Area of Conservation (SAC) & candidate SAC 		
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Nature Reserve (NNR) • Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) • Ancient Woodland • UK BAP priority habitats and species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled Monument • Listed Building • Historic Park and Garden & Historic Battlefield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Belt

Regional/Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNCV/SNCI & Local Wildlife Site • Strategic Wildlife Corridors • Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site (RIGGS) • Local Nature Reserve (LNN) • Nature Improvement Area (NIA) • Cheshire BAP priority habitats and species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area • Local Register of Important Historic Sites / Sites of Special Archaeological Interest • Locally important non-listed building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of Special County Value (ASCV) • Area of Significant Local Environmental Value (ASLEV) • River & Canal Corridors • Dane Valley • River Weaver Valley Corridor • Coastal Zones • Mersey Estuary Zone • Strategic Open Space • Green Network
----------------	---	---	---

These designations often overlap both in terms of spatial application and policy purpose. Rationalisation across CWaC is therefore considered appropriate based upon the following considerations:

- Despite the wide range of environmental designations there is no national landscape designation within;
- The high quality of CWaCs landscape and environment is recognised as a key asset and is highly valued by residents, workers and visitors;
- Local landscape designations can play an important part in protecting and enhancing landscapes with special qualities which are recognised as being of particular value and merit special attention;
- ASCVs were identified in the previous Cheshire Structure Plan, Chester District Local Plan, Ellesmere Port and Neston Local Plan & Vale Royal Local Plan because of their landscape quality, archaeological, historic or nature conservation importance. However there is lack of transparency / justification for designation of some specific areas;
- ASLEVs were identified only within the previous Vale Royal Local Plan resulting in inconsistency of designation across Cheshire West and Chester Borough;
- ASLEVs were identified as areas having a special value to Vale Royal Borough because of the contribution they made to the character of the district and the towns and villages within it. However there is lack of transparency / justification for designation of some specific areas where the primary reason appears to have been to maintain a gap between settlements by preventing coalescence;
- In this way ASLEV and Green Belt policy would appear to overlap;
- Inconsistency with NPPF (with existing local landscape designations given little weight at appeal because they are not based on criteria-based policy);

- Recognition within NPPF that plans and decisions should take into account the different roles and character of different areas and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside to ensure that development is suitable for the local context, as a core planning principle (para 17); that valued landscapes are protected and enhanced (para 109); and that criteria based policies should be used to judge development proposals on or affecting landscape areas (para 113);
- Recognition that Local designations can contribute to wider policies (spatial strategy in particular) within the emerging CWaC LP (Part Two) for guiding urban expansion on the edge of the main urban areas and other key service centres by identifying and safeguarding areas of landscape importance to maintain the character, individuality and local distinctiveness of the settlements and their settings;
- As a means to identify policy priorities and the wider approach to local landscape designations within the emerging CWaC LP (Part Two);
- Requirement within the recently approved CWaC Local Plan (Part One) to identify key gaps between settlements outside the Green Belt;
- To inform the Landscape Strategy and Sensitivity Study.

2. Our approach to reviewing local landscape designations in CWaC

- Review current ASCVs** (mostly desk based with some field work but not detailed boundary review) to identify special landscape character qualities and values that merit special attention and a retained level of local landscape designation (to replace ASCV), in accordance with locally appropriate criteria recognising an 'all-landscapes' approach such as:
 - **Distinctiveness** i.e. importance of landscape character in contributing to sense of place; rarity/uniqueness; typicality, etc.
 - **Perceptual character** i.e. special experiential qualities; tranquillity; naturalness/lack of intrusion, etc.
 - **Landscape & scenic quality** i.e. particular visual/scenic/aesthetic qualities; physical state and condition, etc.
 - **Natural character** i.e. special natural characteristics/designations that add value to the landscape, etc.
 - **Cultural character** i.e. special cultural /historic characteristics / designations / associations that add value to the landscape, etc.
 - **Key function(s)** i.e. particular or special role(s) of the area in the local context including recreation/amenity; setting, etc.

Table A2 summarises for each ASCV the relevant policy, reason for designation, relevant landscape character type and landscape character area, other relevant designations and other considerations.

Table A3 summarises the special landscape qualities/values of existing ASCVs in CWaC following the desk study review.

- b. **Review current ASLEVs** (including detailed boundary review) to identify key gaps between settlements outside the Green Belt, and identify new candidate key gaps of landscape importance to maintain the character, individuality and local distinctiveness of the main urban areas and other key service centre settlements (to replace ASLEV designation), by using primary and secondary assessment criteria in accordance with methodology set out in our tender submission (this assumes ASLEVs within the GB can be successfully protected by GB policy).

Table A4 summarises for each ASLEV the relevant policy, reason for designation, relevant landscape character type and landscape character area, other relevant designations and other considerations.

Table A5 summarises the key landscape characteristics of existing ASCVs in CWaC following the desk study review.

- c. **Draft local landscape designation policy** (this paper) **and Key Settlement Gap Policy** (Part 2) for application to areas identified within the above spatial assessment/proposed designations.

Table A2: Areas of Special County Value (ASCV) within CWaC

ASCV	Previous LPA / Policy	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Landscape Classification	Other Considerations
The Dee Coastal Area	Ellesmere Port & Neston Policy ENV6 (2002 LP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special / distinctive landscape character • Features of landscape importance • Quality of landscape and habitat features • Open countryside overlooking the Dee Estuary • Important views over the Dee Estuary and North Wales • Area around Burton represents traditional Wirral landscape in terms of landscape features and patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Belt • LWSs • Burton CA • Coastal Zone 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LT5: Rolling Farmland • RF6: Wirral & RF10: Neston 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actually 3 separate areas to north, south & west of Neston • Referred to in the policy as '<u>ASCV for Landscape</u>' • Represents the only coastal ASCV in Cheshire • Cross boundary considerations - northern area abuts Wirral Council & southern area abuts Cheshire District (Shotwick Slopes LCA)

ASCV	Previous LPA / Policy	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Landscape Classification	Other Considerations
Eaton Estate / Dee Valley	Chester City Council Policy ENV25 (2006 LP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As identified in the County Structure Plan for combined significance of features of historic, landscape, archaeological & nature conservation value Best examples across the County Offer opportunity for quiet recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partly Green Belt Features of Local Importance (ANCV, SNCV & LWS) Sites of National & County Archaeological Importance Eaton Hall Listed Building and Historic Park & Garden 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT6: West Lowland Plain WLP3: Tattenhall & WLP4: Shocklach LT8: Lowland Estate LE1: Eaton LT13: River Valleys R7: River Dee <p>Chester District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eaton Estate LCA and Dee Valley LCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross boundary consideration with Wrexham Council
Beeston / Peckforton / Bolesworth	Chester City Council Policy ENV25 (2006 LP)	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of Local Importance (ANCV, SNCV & LWS) Sites of National & County Archaeological Importance SSSI 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT2: Sandstone Ridge SR3: Peckforton & SR4: Maiden Castle LT3: Sandstone Fringe SF2: Beeston-Duckington <p>Chester District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandstone Ridge LCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross boundary consideration with Cheshire East Council ('Beeston/Peckforton/Bolesworth/Pickerton Hills' ASCV)

ASCV	Previous LPA / Policy	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Landscape Classification	Other Considerations
Wych Brook Valley	Chester City Council Policy ENV25 (2006 LP)	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of Local Importance (ANCV, SNCV & LWS) Site of National Archaeological Importance 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT13: River Valleys R6: Wych Brook Chester District: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wych Valley LCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross boundary consideration with Wrexham Council
Willington	Chester City Council Policy ENV25 (2006 LP)	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of Local Nature Conservation Importance (ANCV) Tirley Garth Listed Building and Historic Park & Garden 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT2: Sandstone Ridge SR2: Eddisbury LT3: Sandstone Fringe SF1: Kelsall Chester District: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandstone Ridge LCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjoins Delamere / Utkinton ASCV (Vale Royal Borough designation) Area around Willington is referred to in the Vale Royal SPD5 description of character area 2b: Southern Sandstone Ridge

ASCV	Previous LPA / Policy	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Landscape Classification	Other Considerations
Weaver Valley	Vale Royal Borough Council Policy NE11 (2006 LP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As identified in the County Structure Plan for combined significance of features of historic, landscape, archaeological & nature conservation value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt (northern area only) SSSI & LWS Aston Hall Historic Park & Garden 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT5: Rolling Farmland RF1: Norley & RF3: Aston LT13: River Valley R1 Lower Weaver & R2: Mid Weaver & R3: Upper Weaver <p>Vale Royal Borough LCAs: 4b, 4d, 5a, 8a, 8b & 8c</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actually 3 separate areas along the upper, middle and lower Weaver valleys Previous ASCV in the Upper Weaver river valley, south of Winsford (extending into what is now Cheshire East Council area as 'Weaver Valley' ASCV) appears to be no longer designated in the Vale Royal Borough LP First Review Alteration 2006 – WHY NOT? possibly an omission from the LP Proposals Map as no apparent reason for its deletion

ASCV	Previous LPA / Policy	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Landscape Classification	Other Considerations
Helsby & Frodsham Hills	Vale Royal Borough Council Policy NE11 (2006 LP)	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt SSSI & LWS Scheduled Monuments Area between Frodsham and Helsby is also ASLEV 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT1: Sandy Woods SW1: Delamere Forest LT2: Sandstone Ridge SR1: Frodsham LT3: Sandstone Fringe SF1: Kelsall Vale Royal Borough LCAs: 1a, 2a, 2b & 2c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary between Helsby & Frodsham Hills ASCV & Delamere / Utkinton ASCV uncertain (assumed to be the A556)
Delamere / Utkinton	Vale Royal Borough Council Policy NE11 (2006 LP)	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt (northern area of Delamere Forest only) Scheduled Monuments Delamere Forest 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT1: Sandy Woods SW1: Delamere Forest LT2: Sandstone Fringe SR2: Eddisbury Vale Royal Borough LCAs: 2b, 3a & 3b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary between Helsby & Frodsham Hills ASCV & Delamere / Utkinton ASCV uncertain (assumed to be the A556)

ASCV	Previous LPA / Policy	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Landscape Classification	Other Considerations
Cholmondeley Estate (within Cheshire East but extends to CWaC boundary)	Included within Cheshire East emerging local plan	Following Cheshire East Local Landscape Designations report, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cholmondeley Castle Historic Park & Garden (other designations within Cheshire East unknown) 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT9: Estate, Woodland & Mere EWM1: Cholmondeley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This ASCV within Cheshire East extends south of the Historic Park & Garden boundary (along Bickerton Road) to the boundary with CWaC cutting through Moss Wood. Should the ASCV southern boundary extend within CWaC?

Table A3: Special Landscape Qualities/Values of Existing ASCVs within CWaC from Desk Study Review

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
The Dee Coastal Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodlands and intact hedgerows especially north of Burton • Reduced landscape scale by enclosure north of Burton • Expansive views westwards across the Dee Estuary to the Clwydian Hills in Wales • Historic Parks and Gardens at Ness Botanic Gardens and Burton Manor • Popular footpath follows the shore line • LWS/Local Wildlife Sites 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENV2: National SNCIs - SSSI • ENV3: Regional/District LWS • ENV4: Local SNCVs • ENV12: Coastal Zones – strong natural, historical and recreational associations with the Dee coast • ENV13: Development in Conservation Areas – Burton • ENV17: Sites of Special Archaeological Interest – Earthwork at Burton Point & Icehouse at Burton Manor • REC7: Recreational 	N/A

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
			Routeways – Dee Coastal Path	
Eaton Estate / Dee Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eaton Estate, including Eaton Hall and the Historic Park and Garden • Well managed estate villages and model farms with buildings in the “estate style” linked by country lanes with estate-managed hedges • Well wooded including conspicuous linear mixed woodland avenues and blocks along approaches to the Hall • High density of tree cover provides enclosure and contrast with the lowland plain • River Dee SSSI/LWSs/Local Wildlife Sites / ponds / wet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large blocks of woodland, predominantly oak with more ornamental species around Eaton Hall • Wooded blocks create impressive approaches and enclosed landscape • Field ponds of high conservation value • Gently rolling landscape • Hawthorn hedges with a high proportion of oak 	N/A	N/A

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grasslands Rich historic heritage including Roman road and settlement site, Motte & Bailey and medieval moats Aldford Brook runs into the meandering tree-lined River Dee Recreational use and access along the river valley Iron Bridge, Victorian Clock Tower at Eaton Hall and Heron Bridge are local landmarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trees Distinctive high quality buildings, many designed by John Douglas Prominent views to high points such as Eaton Clock Tower, church spires, the sandstone ridge and Welsh hills Unobtrusive green lane road network Good examples of ridge and furrow in the north 		
Beeston / Peckforton / Bolesworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prominent upland ridges of steep-sided wooded hills contrasting with the flat open lowland plain A534 passes through a strip of lowland between two 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandstone scarp and dip slope rising above the Cheshire Plain and Malpas Heavily wooded 	N/A	N/A

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>steep-sided sandstone ridges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undulating sandstone fringe farmland is a contrasting transitional landscape • Elevated viewpoints provide spectacular distant views in all directions • Peckforton Castle lies along the boundary with Cheshire East and overlooks Beeston Castle at the northern tip, with Maiden Castle (National Trust) at the southern tip • Ancient Woodland • Birch/heathland is distinctive • Steeper slopes and higher ridge is sparsely settled • Small nucleated villages and Bolesworth Estate and Castle on the sandstone 	<p>with broadleaves (mostly birch & oak) and coniferous plantations (mostly Scots pine) species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland increases the height of the ridge increasing its dramatic appearance • Hawthorn hedges and a greater proportion of sandstone walls and fencing than in other character areas • Estate managed woodlands and nucleated estate villages of Harthill 		

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>fringe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rawhead escarpment rises to 227m, the area retaining a distinctive regular field pattern SSSIs & LWSs including Ancient Woodland RIGGS Numerous archaeological and historic sites, including a Scheduled Monument, caves and Iron Age hill-fort Long distance Sandstone Trail and National Cycle Network route pass through the area Popular visitor destination 	<p>and Brown Knowl in the style of the Bolesworth Estate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contrasting feelings of exposure due to long views and enclosure amongst woodland Dispersed settlements across the ridge Buildings constructed in a simple design from a mixture of red/orange brick, local sandstone, blue tiles and slate Recreational use Mixture of pastoral and 		

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arable use • Areas of heathland designated SSSI • Regular field patterns of varying sizes • Relatively quiet unobtrusive green lanes 		
Wych Brook Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In parts a steep-sided, deeply incised river valley • Fast moving, meandering, shallow watercourse • Intimate, small scale landscape with very small field enclosures • Mostly well wooded, either broadleaves or mixed, with ancient oaks on the slopes, willow and alder lower down, scrub and high hedges • A number of narrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A low lying intricate valley landform • Incised river valley system with Grindley Brook meeting Bradley Brook at Lower Wych in a distinctive tree forked shape to continue as Wych Brook • Brooks running 	N/A	N/A

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>tributary valleys flow into the Wych Brook from the north creating a complex topography and contributing to the strong sense of enclosure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tranquil and remote rural character • A number of minor bridging points emphasised by attractive but discrete vernacular buildings in local stone and brick • Former mill buildings such as Dymock's Mill with mill pond and sluice gates • Linear mosaic of SSSI/LWS and other habitats including ancient woodland, coppice understorey, wet grassland and rich ground flora with rare and uncommon species in Cheshire 	<p>along bottom of the valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed space with limited views confined to the valley sides • Peaceful remote nature with the appearance of relatively little human intervention • SSSIs and ancient woodland supporting important lichen species • Important species-rich grassland of high wildlife value • Dominant wooded character with blocks of 		

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	(dormouse has been successfully re-introduced into some of the woods)	<p>broadleaf species around one hectare in size</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawthorn hedgerows with a high proportion of trees • Land predominantly used for pasture • Unimproved grassland of great conservation value • Isolated small scale discrete farmsteads and unobtrusive hamlets of Lower Wych and Higher Wych • Small scale buildings constructed in red 		

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
		brick with some surviving timber framed buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unobtrusive buildings set back into the landscape • Minor roads and green lanes cross the valley, often hidden from view by hedgerows 		
Willington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Hall at Tirley Garth (Grade II* Listed Building) constructed in the 20th century and reflects the Arts and Crafts style of the time • Tirley Garth Historic Park and Garden • Ancient Woodland at Tirley Garth and Willington Corner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lies within the Chester District LCA: 'Sandstone Ridge' but the ASCV or the area around Willington is not specifically referred to. Some of the characteristics of the Sandstone Ridge as 	N/A	Referred to in the Vale Royal SPD5 description of the adjacent landscape character area 2b: Southern Sandstone Ridge as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchards are features around Kelsall/Willington • The Sandstone Trail runs along part of the ridge before descending the ridge at The Willingtons

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
		described under the Beeston / Peckforton / Bolesworth ASCV above may also be applicable to Willington ASCV		
Weaver Valley	<p>Lower Weaver Valley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly an intimate, sinuous valley with a strong sense of enclosure due to steeply sloping, wooded valley sides and tree lined tops • Steep sided clough tributaries feed into the valley • Occasional pools, ox-bow lakes, raised bunds and other features as a result of canalisation at the northern end (to improve navigation for salt transportation) • Trent and Mersey Canal runs through the valley 	N/A	N/A	<p>Lower Weaver Valley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinct valley with a flat open floodplain and steep, wooded valley sides • Contains the course of the River Weaver and Weaver Navigation with many artificial channels ('cuts'), remnant meanders, locks and sluices • Trent and Mersey Canal (Conservation Area with many structures and artefacts) follows the northern bank • Steep valley sides and series of steep sided tributary valleys support distinctive clough woodland, much of which is ancient • Small/medium scale mixed fields and

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>between Barnton and Dutton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sections are straighter, broader and slower moving • Wide shallow flood plain with gentle slopes and medium-large arable fields at the northern end • The west coast main line railway crosses on a high red brick viaduct which is an impressive landmark feature • Nearby lock complex provides an attractive point of interest • A49 crosses the river at Acton bridge by means of a steel girder swing bridge • Wide open floodplain with medium-large arable fields and hedgerow boundaries at the southern end 			<p>low gappy hedgerows on the valley sides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent pasture including unimproved wet grassland on the valley floor • Recreational opportunities provided by riverside paths including Delamere Way and Cheshire Ring Canal Walk long distance route • Views typically restricted to within the valley • Generally a quiet, tranquil landscape with low settlement density • Steel bridges contribute to the industrial heritage of the valley • Railways cross the valley on dramatic brick viaducts (listed structures) • Industry has had a great influence on the valley with old lagoons and deposit grounds now forming rich wildlife habitats • Large scale gently undulating enclosed farmland to the south of

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dense woodland on steep northern/eastern valley slopes limit views Southern/western valley slopes are gentler allowing views to an elevated skyline with prominent farmsteads, isolated woodland blocks and the urban edge of Weaverham and Northwich Particularly rich in Ancient Woodland such as around the former Aston Hall and Blackamoor Wood with coppice and mixed species in steep cloughs Other semi-natural clough woodland SSSIs including nationally rare stands of ash and small-leaved lime LWSs including species-rich aquatic and marginal habitat at Sutton Bridge and unimproved meadows 			<p>the Weaver Valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An 'island' of heathy, open, large scale farmland and woodland to the north around Aston Heath, drained towards the Weaver by a series of brooks often in steep wooded valleys Large areas of ancient deciduous woodland on ridge slopes and along Longacre Brook provide enclosure Designed parkland around the former Aston Hall (now demolished) Sparse settlement of scattered farms and rural hamlets linked by narrow lanes and tracks in the farmland north and south of the river The Sutton Weaver / Aston Heath farmland is a peaceful 'island' within a busy context of roads, motorway, railway, industry and other built development <p>Mid Weaver Valley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinct valley with a relatively

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>at Acton Bridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of orchards within the rolling farmland within the wider Weaver Valley, e.g. at Bradley make a significant contribution to the character of the area • More open, larger scale, gently undulating landscape of post medieval enclosure with large regularly shaped fields around Sutton Weaver and Aston Heath, with enclosed medieval deer park • Scheduled monument at Middleton Grange with medieval moated hall and chapel; Iron Age promontory fort at Bradley • Sutton Hall is a listed medieval timber-framed building • Extensive public access 			<p>narrow, flat floodplain and steep, wooded valley sides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containing the course of the Weaver Navigation with artificial channels ('cuts'), locks and bridges including Vale Royal Locks • Steep sided valley sides and series of steep sided tributary valleys support distinctive clough woodland, much of which is ancient • Waterlogged valley floor supports permanent pasture including unimproved wet species rich grassland • Public footpaths and the river itself provide recreation • Views typically restricted to within the valley where valley tops form the skyline • Generally quiet and tranquil but with some industrial intrusion • Low settlement density • Railway viaduct and steel bridges e.g. Hartford Bridge provide

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>along a network of tracks & paths including the North Cheshire Way, Cheshire Ring Canal Walk, National Cycle Network Route No5</p> <p>Mid Weaver Valley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly an intimate, sinuous valley with a strong sense of enclosure due to steeply sloping, wooded valley sides and tree lined tops • Particularly rich in Ancient Woodland designated LWS • South of the A556 the valley is verdant and tranquil, narrow in places defined by steep wooded slopes. • Secondary brooks with dense marginal vegetation • Picturesque and tranquil Vale Royal Locks lie amongst woodland at the junction of a number of 			<p>industrial character</p> <p>Upper Weaver Valley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively shallow valley containing the naturally meandering course of the river • Large flashes (due to subsidence from brine pumping) in the valley floor • Steeper valley sides and series of steep sided tributary valleys support distinctive clough woodland, much of which is ancient • Less steep sides support small / medium scale arable and pastoral fields, bounded by low gappy hedges • Waterlogged valley floor supports permanent pasture including unimproved wet species rich grassland • Mainly inaccessible to the public, and a generally quiet, tranquil landscape with low settlement density

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>side valleys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impressive railway viaduct • Scheduled Monument at Vale Royal Abbey; listed buildings including Hartford Hall Hotel a former manor house with timber frame and welsh slate roof <p>Upper Weaver Valley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The flashes (Top Flash and Bottom Flash) waterbodies are distinctive features in the bottom of the valley and valuable bird habitat • The flashes are important for recreation e.g. angling and sailing • Locally complex topography with steep slopes and incised river meanders become shallower, flatter and more uniform to the south 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views typically restricted to within the valley where valley tops form the skyline

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sinuous blocks of bank-side trees emphasise the meandering river in contrast to surrounding medium-sized regular shaped fields • Woodland, some ancient and some SSSI, mainly on the steeper slopes are conspicuous features in contrast to the lowland plain • Very rural character with absence of settlement 			
Helsby & Frodsham Hills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An area of varying scales, with many large scale open landscapes of elevated and undulating topography • Many vantage points with extensive panoramic views to the north, east and west • Strong sense of enclosure with woodland on much of the visually important high 	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcrops of Triassic sandstone form a prominent ridge reaching over 150m at Beacon Hill and Birch Hill and 176m at Pale Heights • Distinctive cliff profile at Helsby Hill (reaching 141m) • Steep sandstone cliffs to the north and west support dense woodland including ancient oak woodland e.g. Alvanley Cliff Wood. Helsby Hill used

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>ground and intact hedgerows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intimate small scale enclosures in the valley bottoms • Impression of a densely wooded landscape, including Delamere Forest as a prominent edge in the south, and steep sided wooded slopes to the west with broadleaf and mixed woodland including ancient woodland e.g. Alvanley Cliff Woodland • Substantial open areas dominated by bracken with a heath flora • Regular rectangular fields (up to 8ha) with straight hawthorn hedges created by Parliamentary enclosures, formerly the Royal Forest of Mara 			<p>for rock climbing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandstone outcrops and cliffs are features e.g. 'Old Man of Helsby' • Dry gorges are features of the northern and western edges of the ridge • Brown sandy soils on steeper slopes support permanent grassland/pasture, dwarf shrub heath, bracken and gorse scrub e.g. Frodsham and Overton Woods • Groups of Scots pine form distinctive skyline features • Arable farmland on less steep slopes • Regular rectangular fields of 18th century Parliamentary enclosure dominate the ridge • New Pale is a 17th century deer park landscape feature with prominent boundaries • Low density of dispersed farms and hamlets • Most farm buildings are sandstone (quarried from the ridge) with Welsh

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>(Delamere) and an area of heath and common grazing land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlement comprises isolated farms and dispersed houses • New Pale is a 17th century deer park whose distinctive boundaries are a prominent landscape feature • Numerous prehistoric monuments e.g. Bronze Age barrow at Castle Cobb and Iron Age hill fort at Woodhouses utilising the steep slopes for defence • War memorial provides a distinctive landmark at the northern tip • Helsby Hill is a sandstone outcrop topographically separate from the main ridge and a visually prominent distinctive 			<p>slate roofs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No main roads, with sunken lanes providing access over the ridge responding to landform • Helsby Hill, Eddisbury Hill and Woodhouse Hill fort SMs and former Roman camp SM at Birch Hill at defensive locations • War memorial on Frodsham Hill is a landscape feature with views over the Mersey Estuary • Long distance footpaths along the length of the ridge, including The Longster Trail over Helsby Hill, with many spectacular panoramic views • Delamere Forest plantation woodland lies on peatland heath / former glacial sand and gravel deposits within a hollow created where glacial meltwaters forced their way through the sandstone ridge at the 'Mouldsworth Gap' • Open water bodies and reclaimed wetland habitat of meres and

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	<p>feature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delamere Forest is a significant feature, largely comprising planted conifers creating strong visual enclosure. Dark greens of conifers contrast in colour with lighter greens of deciduous woodland Within Delamere Forest the restrictive enclosure of narrow rides contrast with more open woodland heath Extensive water bodies Areas of heathland Recreational facilities provided by the Forestry Commission at Delamere Forest Telecommunications mast at Pale Heights near Eddisbury Hill is very dominant Public Access at Eddisbury 			<p>mosses occupy former kettle holes e.g. Blakemere Moss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delamere Forest managed for recreation

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	Hill provides extensive views <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orchards and fruit farming 			
Delamere / Utkinton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significantly undulating topography Sequence of changing views from the major routes traversing the area Deep meandering dry gorges at Primrose Hill designated as 'Urchin's Kitchen' RIGS Hedgerows in generally good condition, combining with trees and rolling landform to influence landscape scale and interrupt views In more elevated locations isolated trees and woodland create an open landscape with extensive views Extensive golfing complex 	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcrops of Triassic sandstone form a prominent ridge reaching 149m north of Tarporley Steep sandstone cliffs and dry gorges support dense woodland, including ancient oak woodland Brown sandy soils on steeper slopes support permanent grassland and woodland, including Primrosehill Wood plantation Groups of Scots pine form distinctive skyline features Less steep slopes support cereals, potatoes and fruit farming. Orchards are features around Kelsall/Willington Small/medium sized enclosed fields bordered by straight sided thick hedgerows, some atop low sandstone walls Low density of dispersed farms -

ASCV	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Chester District Landscape Assessment and Guidelines, August 1998	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, Adopted 2002 (no landscape character assessment undertaken)	Special Landscape Qualities/Value from Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character, Sept. 2007
	on the former landscape park at Arderne Hall to the north-east of Tarporley has created a distinct local character with intensively managed grounds and ornamental trees on east facing slopes contrasting with surrounding farmland			<p>most farm buildings are sandstone (quarried from the ridge) with Welsh slate roofs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A49 & A54 cross the ridge in cutting, with sunken lanes providing access over the ridge responding to landform • Kelsborrow Castle hill fort SM occupies a defensive location • Location of Cheshire's only Roman Villa at Eaton • The 'Sandstone Trail' long distance footpath runs along the western side of the ridge before descending at The Willingtons • Panoramic views from the ridge

Table A4: Review of Existing ASLEVs in CWaC

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
1.The Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The only significant open area between the heavy industry of Ellesmere Port and Halton Provide a setting to the settlements of Frodsham and Helsby and to the Frodsham and Helsby Hills Important distinctive landscape feature International importance to migrating and wading birds, and bird breeding Important as deposit ground for The Manchester Ship Canal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt SINC SPA LWS Mersey Estuary Zone 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT4: Drained Marsh & DM1: Frodsham Marsh LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT11: Reclaimed Saltmarsh & LCA11a: Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy NE18: Mersey Estuary Zone protects the open landscape, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities of the area Whether other existing designations and policy provide adequate protection without ASLEV designation.
2.Open land between Frodsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important gap to maintain the identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt ASCV 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT5: Rolling Farmland & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General reason for designation is to prevent coalescence and

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
and Helsby	and integrity of the villages		RF8: Woodhouse LCA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vale Royal: • LT3: Sandstone Fringe & LCA3a: Alvanley Sandstone Fringe 	maintain the gap between settlements. Consider whether Green Belt policy alone provide this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider whether ASCV designation provide the necessary protection to maintain the environmental buffer
3.Open land between Northwich and Lostock Gralam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between settlements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocated Sports Facilities and Open Space? 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Vale Royal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCT6: East Cheshire Plain & LCA 6c: Lostock Plain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General reason for designation is to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between settlements. Green Belt policy alone should provide this. • Whether ASCV designation provide the necessary protection to maintain the environmental buffer. • Very small gap only one field wide to south of Manchester Road – Green Belt protects the gap to north of the road. Review GB boundary to include this area (railway offers a strong physical

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
				boundary) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether sport/open space allocation provide the necessary protection
4.Open land between Northwich and Winnington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between settlements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allotments on small area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively small gap providing local green space (parkland / mown grass / mature trees) within the built up area – whether an open space (e.g. ENV17)/ Local Green Space designation (a la NPPF) be more appropriate.
5.Open land between Hartford and Weaverham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above To resist the continued outward growth of Northwich 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt SSSI / LWS 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT5: Rolling Farmland & RF1: Norley LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LT8: River Valleys & LCA8a: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General reason for designation is to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between settlements. Green Belt policy alone should provide this. Residential development at Weaverham Grange and the adjacent school lie within the Green Belt.

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
			Lower Weaver Valley	
6.Open land between Hartford and Cuddington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above To resist the considerable pressure for development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt Sandiway CA 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT5: Rolling Farmland & RF1: Norley LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCT1: Woodland, Heaths, Meres and Mosses & LCA1a: Delamere & LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General reason for designation is to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between settlements. Green Belt policy alone should provide this.
7.Open land between Hartford and Leftwich Grange/Kinsmead (Weaver Valley)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between expanding settlements (especially housing) To maintain views across the River Weaver valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSSI / LWS 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT13: River Valleys & R2: Mid Weaver LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCT8: River Valleys & LCA 8b: Mid Weaver Valley & LCT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4b: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside the Green Belt so designation and policy needed to prevent coalescence and maintain views Application for residential development - approved at Appeal (11/05805/OUT & 14/03306/DIS)

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
			Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland	
8.Open land between Leftwich and Rudheath (Dane Valley)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between settlements To resist the considerable pressure for development and maintain the environmental buffer To provide vital open space and a recreational function along the River Dane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT13: River Valleys & R4: Lower Dane LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCT8: River Valleys & LCA8e: Dane Valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for residential development - approved (13/03676/OUT) Application for residential development - refused (14/04082/OUT & 15/01318/OUT)
9.Open land between Davenham and Moulton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily to prevent coalescence and maintain the remaining small gap between settlements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT7: East Lowland Plain & ELP5: Wimboldsley LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very small gap (occupied by one property in mature grounds) at its narrowest point, with clear views between the settlements Application for residential development - approved at Appeal (Beehive Lane, Moulton 12/05668)

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for residential development (Jack Lane, Davenham 13/05408/FUL) - Decision not known Application for residential development - at appeal (Fountain Lane, Davenham 14/02130/OUT)
10.Open land between Davenham and Leftwich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily to prevent coalescence and maintain the environmental buffer /green wedge between settlements / A556 Davenham Bypass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT13: River Valleys & R4: Lower Dane LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A556 Davenham Bypass has left a relatively small gap to south of the road between Leftwich and Davenham Whether some development be acceptable if the road corridor was protected (e.g. Strategic Open Space/Green Network/Strategic Wildlife Corridor).
11.Open land between Cuddington and Delamere Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily to prevent coalescence and maintain the separate identity of the settlements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt Cuddington CA 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT5: Rolling Farmland & RF1: Norley LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4a: Norley Undulating Enclosed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively small gap occupied by a brook. General reason for designation is to prevent coalescence and maintain the gap between settlements. Green Belt policy alone should provide this.

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
			Farmland & LCA4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland	
12.Open land between Cuddington and Weaverham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect views down from Cuddington to Weaverham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT5: Rolling Farmland & RF1: Norley LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively large gap occupied by built development, transport infrastructure including roads and railways, electricity lines and pylons, and a brook Consider whether Green Belt policy protect views.
13.Open land between Davenham Village and Leftwich Grange (Kingsmead)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily to provide an environmental buffer /green wedge between development at Leftwich Grange / A556 Davenham Bypass and Davenham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT13: River Valleys & R2: Mid Weaver LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A556 Davenham Bypass has left a relatively small gap to south of the road between Leftwich and Davenham, with only the road corridor maintaining the gap at its western end. Continuation of the gap between Davenham and Leftwich protected by ASLEV No.10 above Whether some development

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
				<p>would be acceptable if the road corridor was protected (e.g. Strategic Open Space/Green Network/Strategic Wildlife Corridor)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for residential development - approved • Application for residential development (14/03801/OUT) - Decision not known • Application for residential development (14/04524/FUL) - Decision not known
14.Open land between Winsford and Moulton Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain the separate identities of the village of Moulton and the industrial town of Winsford to the south 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<p>Cheshire County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LT7: East Lowland Plain & ELP5: Wimboldsley LCA <p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for residential development - approved (14/00499/OUT)
15.Sensitive area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive area that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a separate approach to

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
within Frodsham: Howey Lane	<p>contributes significantly to the character and setting of the historic settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes many trees, some with TPOs Adjacent to LWS (Grade B) 			<p>protection of locally valued landscape / landscape features <i>within</i> a settlement (where prevention of coalescence and maintenance of a gap to protect identity and integrity of settlements is not the primary reason for designation)</p>
16.Sensitive area within Frodsham: Top Road / Manley Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitive area that contributes significantly to the character and setting of the historic settlement Includes roadside hedgerows and trees mostly covered by TPOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a separate approach to protection of locally valued landscape / landscape features <i>within</i> a settlement (where prevention of coalescence and maintenance of a gap to protect identity and integrity of settlements is not the primary reason for designation)
17.Sensitive area within Helsby: Chester Road / Vicarage Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitive area that contributes significantly to the character and setting of the historic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a separate approach to protection of locally valued landscape / landscape features <i>within</i> a settlement (where prevention of coalescence and

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
	settlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes a dense coverage of trees mostly covered by TPOs Low density residential properties set in large grounds 			maintenance of a gap to protect identity and integrity of settlements is not the primary reason for designation)
18.Sensitive area within Helsby: Alvanley Road / Old Chester Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitive area that contributes significantly to the character and setting of the historic settlement Well wooded with many TPOs Large detached dwellings and the listed buildings of St. Paul's Church and Alvanley Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LNR / Riggs Site TPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a separate approach to protection of locally valued landscape / landscape features <i>within</i> a settlement (where prevention of coalescence and maintenance of a gap to protect identity and integrity of settlements is not the primary reason for designation)
19.Historic Orchards in the Parishes of Acton Bridge and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect the further decline and loss of numbers and variety of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	Cheshire County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT5: Rolling Farmland & RF1: Norley LCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a separate approach to protection of locally valued landscape / landscape features

ASLEV	Reason for Designation	Other Designations / Policies	Cheshire County & Vale Royal Landscape Classifications	Considerations
Kingsley	<p>orchards which make a significant contribution to the character of the settlements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect the further decline and loss of traditional crafts, wildlife heavens and attractive landscapes 		<p>Vale Royal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT4: Undulating Enclosed Farmland & LCA4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland 	<p><i>within</i> a settlement (where prevention of coalescence and maintenance of a gap to protect identity and integrity of settlements is not the primary reason for designation).</p>

Table A5: Landscape Characteristics of Existing ASLEVs within CWaC from Desk Study Review

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
1.The Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes	1055 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharp contrast between the edge of the sandstone ridge and low lying marshes provide a local setting to the settlements of Frodsham and Helsby A distinctive area of open land contrasting with and offering relief from the 'urban' nature of the Mersey Estuary including the heavy industry of surrounding Ellesmere Port and Halton International importance for migrating and wintering birds Ince Banks is an example of scarce estuary marsh, flooded by Spring tides and used for seasonal grazing of cattle and horses, with a 	LCA11a: Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visually sensitive, flat, low lying, isolated, bleak and open landscape of reclaimed mudflats and saltmarsh alongside the Mersey Estuary Distinctive pattern of straight drainage ditches delineating the field pattern of planned 19th century enclosure Important wetland habitats of ditches and pools containing aquatic species Incomplete hedgerows provide partial enclosure along some field boundaries 	Drained Marsh 1: Frodsham Marsh Character Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settlement restricted to a few isolated farms A system of surfaced tracks and bridleways, including National Cycle Route 5 Large, regular shaped fields with sparse vegetation Expansive views across the flat, open landscape Numerous hawthorn hedges in poor condition where they occur, with overgrown hedges and elder scrub Flat pasture with small scale features such as reed beds, ponds and small

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>very open aspect with no trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAMSAR and LWSs designated for ornithological importance and habitat diversity • Good views from Frodsham and Helsby and from the sandstone ridge across the flat expanse • Deposit grounds important for the regular maintenance of the Manchester Ship Canal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixture of pasture and arable use south of Lordship Lane • Deposit grounds for dredgings from the Manchester Ship Canal with wetland habitats to north of Lordship Lane • Wintering ground for waders and raptors • Settlement limited to isolated farms linked by rough tracks between ditches • Walkers and joggers use the public rights of way network across the marsh • Long views including clear views to and from Helsby Hill, Northern Sandstone Fringe and the Frodsham Sandstone Fringe in particular from the War 	<p>copses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High embankment of the canal forms a low horizon and boundary to dredging grounds to the north • Urban fringe character strongly influenced by adjacent industrial development, including the conspicuous and dominant Quinn Glass and the Norsk Hydra site • M56 and overhead power lines are major visual intrusions • The impressive Helsby and Frodsham Hills are dominant in views to the south, with the villages seen on the lower slopes and dense woodland on the higher ground and skyline • Long distance panoramic

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
			Memorial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M56 and power lines are dominant features through the flat landscape • Industrial works at Ince Marshes, Halton and Rocksavage form a backdrop 	views from the canal-side bunds in all directions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting aquatic flora in some ditches • Wintering ground for wading birds, with wildfowl and birds of prey
2.Open land between Frodsham and Helsby	76ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally important gap between Frodsham and Helsby • Fields bounded by hedgerows, many with hedgerow trees, and small wooded areas many with TPOs • Tree cover limits views from the ground but sloping aspect and medium-sized field pattern allows good views over the area from the A56 	This ASLEV occupies the northern end of LCA3a: Alvanley Sandstone Fringe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of key characteristics refers to the transitional zone between the Northern Sandstone Ridge and the Manley Plain to the west (whereas this ASLEV lies between the sandstone ridge and the marshes and Estuary to the north as described in the County LCA) 	Rolling Farmland 8: Woodhouse (Helsby to Frodsham) Character Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently undulating slope below the steep wooded sandstone ridge and overlooking the drained marsh and Mersey Estuary • A56, M56, the railway and industrial complexes to the north are visually prominent • Regular enclosed arable fields • Views to the south and

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
				east are terminated by the densely wooded skyline, whereas there are distant views to the north over the marshes and estuary
3.Open land between Northwich and Lostock Gralam	9ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important, relatively small gap to maintain the separate identities and integrity of Northwich and Lostock Gralam • Views are limited but due to the openness and flat topography there are views from residential properties on Station Road • Considered that the Open Countryside policy is not adequate to protect the integrity of the area, especially as it is a narrow gap 	<p>This ASLEV occupies a very small part of LCA 6c: Lostock Plain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of key characteristics refers to the distinct area of East Cheshire Plain located to the east of Northwich and defined by its function as a brine field and influenced by structures associated with brine extraction and underground ethylene/gas storage (which is not relevant to the ASLEV) 	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area and adjacent to an 'industrial' area as identified in the County LCA (no description of key characteristics)
4.Open land between Northwich and	8ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of public and other open space locally important 	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the Vale Royal Borough SPD (no description of key	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the County LCA (no description of key

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
Winnington		<p>as a break in the surrounding built up areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable broadleaved tree cover • Gently undulating, with views across the site including from nearby residential properties 	characteristics)	characteristics)
5.Open land between Hartford and Weaverham	118 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important gap to prevent the coalescence of Northwich, Weaverham and Hartford • Hedgerow trees, individual field trees and wooded areas including Beach-Hill Wood LWS and ancient woodland with numerous springs, and TPOs • Field ponds and listed buildings • Relatively flat, medium scale landscape with views across the site including from 	<p>This ASLEV occupies a very small part of LCA 4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland and LCA 8c: Lower Weaver Valley at the eastern end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The descriptions of key characteristics refer to the wider LCAs which are not directly relevant to the ASLEV 	<p>This ASLEV occupies a very small part of LCA Rolling Farmland 1: Norley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of key characteristics refers to the wider LCA which are not directly relevant to the ASLEV

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>nearby residential properties in Hartford and Weaverham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lies within the Green Belt where appropriate development could adversely affect the character of the area 		
6.Open land between Hartford and Cuddington	143 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open area particularly sensitive to change in an area of considerable development pressure To maintain the separate identities and integrity of Hartford and Cuddington/Sandiway Undulating topography allows open views east-west across the landscape Relatively small scale landscape, with frequent hedgerows, hedgerow trees, individual field trees and 	<p>Almost the entire ASLEV lies within a very small part of LCA 1a: Delamere Forest with the eastern and western ends falling within a very small part of LCA 4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main, central section of the ASLEV lies within the Delamere Forest LCA characterised as a gently undulating landscape of woodland, farmland and heathland overlying sand and gravel glacio-fluvial drift material 	<p>This ASLEV occupies a very small part of LCA Rolling Farmland 1: Norley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of key characteristics refers to the wider LCA which are not considered to be directly relevant to the ASLEV

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>wooded areas, some protected by TPO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large field pond, listed buildings and part of the Sandiway Conservation Area • Lies within the Green Belt where appropriate development could adversely affect the character of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An organic mosaic of meres, mosses, swamp, fen, woodland and heathland forming part of the ancient Forest of Mara and Mondrem, interspersed with plantations, quarries and straight sided fields 	
7.Open land between Hartford and Leftwich Grange/Kingsmead (Weaver Valley)	40ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important gap to prevent the coalescence of Hartford and Leftwich in an area under particular pressure for further housing development • Topographical interest and variety, with sloping ground towards the river and general lack of trees enabling important views across the River Weaver Valley 	<p>The majority of the ASLEV lies within LCA 8b: Mid Weaver Valley, with the western edge abutting Hartford located in LCA4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland.</p> <p>The key characteristics of LCA4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland applicable to this ASLEV are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinct valley with a relatively narrow, flat floodplain • Recreational opportunities 	<p>The ASLEV lies at the northern end of the River Valley 2: Mid Weaver LCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intimate valley with a strong sense of enclosure and little intervisibility with adjacent character areas • The top of the valley side slopes form the skyline • Woodland aligns sections of the Weaver and its tributaries, typically on the

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riverbank important for recreation by walkers and anglers Weaver Valley LWS is characterised by a flat valley bottom with wet/dry grassland areas, floristically rich and important for birds, insects and mammals 	<p>provided by public footpaths alongside the river and the river itself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views typically restricted to within the valley to the top of the valley sides which form the skyline Generally a quiet, tranquil landscape with a low settlement density Steel bridges such as Hartford Bridge contribute to the industrial character of the valley 	<p>west bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> South of Northwich the Weaver Valley opens out to encompass riverside meadows on the west bank and the water body of Marshall's Arm The high tree cover at this location effectively screens the adjoining urban development but a number of properties are visible along the elevated skyline The busy A556 passes high over the river on a utilitarian steel girder bridge, with the associated intrusion of traffic
8.Open land between Leftwich and Rudheath (Dane Valley)	132 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flat floodplain of the River Dane with steep sloping banks up to the settlements of Leftwich and Rudheath 	<p>The ASLEV lies at the northern end of LCA 8e: Dane Valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shallow valley with low, steep sides containing the natural meandering course 	<p>The ASLEV lies at the northern end of the River Valley 4: Lower Dane LCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very gently rolling, low-lying shallow open

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topography enables views across the valley from both sides • Meandering river with oxbow lakes, riverside trees and further trees along the western slopes • Provides an environmental buffer / green wedge within an attractive area of countryside where the river valley defines the urban edge and provides topographical interest and variety • Provides vital open space and a recreational function along the river valley • To resist the continued expansion of Northwich and retain the individual identities of settlements within 'Greater Northwich' by preserving gaps between 	<p>of the River Dane</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fields tend to be relatively large on the floodplain with smaller fields on the valley sides • Willows and riverine vegetation border the river, marking its meandering course • A notable absence of settlement/development – forms a 'green lung' entering Northwich • Highly tranquil landscape due to lack of settlement, natural meandering river course, woodland, pasture and riverside vegetation • Views generally restricted to within the valley 	<p>agricultural landscape of medium sized fields many under arable crops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features such as floodplain, meanders, oxbow lakes and pools • The river is often only evident by a line of trees within the wider field system • In the north the character area is bounded by development at Northwich and Rudheath but still retains a rural character as the urban edge is considerably softened by woodland • Large buildings at Rudheath storage depot are visible above tree tops • Davenham Church spire provides a conspicuous landmark beyond the

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered that the Open Countryside policy is not adequate to protect the integrity of the area 		character area
9.Open land between Davenham and Moulton	114 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past development has left only a very narrow gap between the settlements which is very sensitive as further development would lead to coalescence and loss of separate identity and integrity of the two villages Provides an important environmental buffer Fields bounded by hedgerows, some with hedgerow trees, with TPOs on trees adjacent to Jack Lane and small clusters of trees around field ponds Gently undulating, small-medium scale field pattern 	<p>The ASLEV lies towards the northern end of LCA 4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A gently undulating lush landscape Boulder clay deposits mask underlying mudstones giving rise to a predominance of slowly permeable clay soils that support a lush pastoral landscape with some arable crops Small scale irregular ancient enclosures and larger late post medieval enclosures are bounded by hedgerows with hedgerow 	<p>The ASLEV lies at the northern end of the East Lowland Plain 5 : Wimboldsley LCA which is extensive and continues southwards beyond the CWaC boundary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly flat, small to medium regular fields Low woodland cover creates an open landscape with long views to a distant skyline A more remote rural area with a perceived tranquillity Hamlets and isolated farms are linked by footpaths and minor roads

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>allows views across the area over hedges and between trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of footpaths cross the area • Recreational play area in the south • To resist the continued expansion of Northwich and retain the individual identities of settlements within 'Greater Northwich' by preserving gaps between them • Considered that the Open Countryside policy is not adequate to protect the integrity of the area 	<p>trees and drainage ditches forming a strong field pattern and sense of enclosure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional field ponds are a feature • Public footpaths provide access to the countryside • Significant 20th century residential development on the southern outskirts of Northwich (Leftwich, Davenham, Mere Heath, Moulton) 	
10.Open land between Davenham and Leftwich	21ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an environmental buffer / green wedge between Leftwich / A556 Davenham Bypass and Davenham 	<p>The ASLEV lies at the northern end of LCA 4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of key characteristics refer to the 	<p>The ASLEV lies towards the northern end of the River Valley 4: Lower Dane LCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of key characteristics refer to the

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small fields bounded by hedgerows with some trees; wooded area adjacent to the A556 roundabout has a TPO • Sloping topography down to the A556 allows views across the area • Scope for sensitive woodland tree planting alongside the A556 (in-keeping with the planted buffer on the north side of the bypass where the County High School also provides an open buffer) • Important to the setting of St. Wilfred's Church and Davenham Conservation Area • Considered that the Open Countryside policy is not adequate to protect the integrity of the area 	wider LCA which are not directly relevant to this ASLEV	wider LCA which are not directly relevant to this ASLEV

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
11. Open land between Cuddington and Delamere Park	38ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic gap / green wedge protecting the identity and integrity of Cuddington and Delamere Park and preventing their coalescence • Undulating, small scale farmland with complex system of small scale physical features such as gullies and eroded banks, contrasts with open water bodies • Frequent hedgerows with trees, and woodlands on steeper slopes with TPOs along Cuddington Brook • Field ponds and footpaths cross the area • Important to the setting of The Old Mill House (a listed building) and Cuddington Conservation Area in the north 	<p>Almost the entire ASLEV lies within a small part of LCA 4a: Norley Undulating Enclosed Farmland, with the eastern end falling within a very small part of LCA 4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly undulating farmland • Steep wooded valleys incise the hills, containing small brooks that drain towards the Weaver. Gorse occupies steep slopes • Mixture of dairying and arable crops • Small scale fields bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow trees in a mix of irregular and planned enclosures • Woodland on sheltered valleys and steeper slopes 	<p>Rolling Farmland 1: Norley LCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small to medium scale landscape where areas of more complex topography combine with a locally intact hedgerow system to create a strong sense of enclosure • This is especially the case where narrow sunken lanes traverse a strongly undulating ground comprising small locally prominent ridges and hidden valleys, overlain by high hedges and abundant trees • Woodland on most skylines and views filtered by hedges or mature trees • Generally quiet and rural • Settlement pattern includes a number of ancient settlements in

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views across the western area from Delamere Park Lies within the Green Belt where appropriate development could adversely affect the character of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contribute to an enclosed, intimate landscape Passive recreation in the form of public footpaths A network of small sunken lanes link scattered farms and hamlets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> origin with modern development such as Cuddington and Delamere Park Scattered isolated farms and halls
12.Open land between Cuddington and Weaverham	227 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental buffer between Cuddington and Weaverham where there is pressure for development at settlement edges which would erode the ASLEV Typical Cheshire Plain characteristics (but neither of the two LCAs put the area in the plain) of medium to large scale, predominantly pasture fields with hedgerows and hedgerow trees, isolated field trees and tree clusters around scattered field ponds and also concentrated around 	LCA 4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large scale gently undulating farmland Boulder clay deposits mask underlying mudstones giving rise to a predominance of slowly permeable clay soils that support dairying and some arable crops Small scale fields with a mixture of irregular and regular enclosures bounded by hedgerows with trees and drainage 	Rolling Farmland 1: Norley LCA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of key characteristics refers to the wider LCA stretching between Frodsham and Hartford which are not considered to be directly relevant to the ASLEV

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>Gorstage, some with TPO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat to gently undulating topography sloping down from Cuddington to Weaverham offers views across the landscape of topographical interest and variety • Scattered farms and minor roads • Botanically diverse small meadow LWS with marsh, water and scattered scrub • A number of listed buildings • Lies within the Green Belt where appropriate development could adversely affect the character of the area 	<p>ditches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively low woodland cover limited to small farm woodlands and coverts • Field ponds • Public footpaths provide passive recreation • Settlement pattern of scattered farms, hamlets and halls linked by a network of rural lanes • Railway lines, including the disused mineral line, pylons and main A49 border the area contributing to the sense of noise and movement (although they are well screened by trees and hedges and are relatively inconspicuous in this comparatively low lying landscape) 	

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
13. Open land between Davenham Village and Leftwich Grange (Kingsmead)	8ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an open environmental buffer / green wedge between Leftwich Grange (Kingsmead) / A556 Davenham Bypass and Davenham Boundary hedges and trees generally prevent views from the A556 and Davenham Considered that the Open Countryside policy is not adequate to protect the integrity of the area 	<p>The ASLEV lies at the northern end of LCA 4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of key characteristics refer to the wider LCA which are not directly relevant to this ASLEV 	<p>The ASLEV lies towards the northern end of the River Valley 2: Mid Weaver LCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of key characteristics refer to the wider LCA which are not directly relevant to this ASLEV
14. Open land between Winsford and Moulton Village	96ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important gap to maintain the separate identities and integrity of Moulton and the industrial town of Winsford Medium scale mixed farmland with hedgerow field boundaries and mature oak trees, small copses and 	<p>LCA 4e: East Winsford Undulating Enclosed Farmland with typical characteristics described above for ASLEV 9 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The A533, mainline railway and power line cut across the landscape, eroding tranquillity locally 	<p>East Lowland Plain 5 : Wimboldsley LCA with typical characteristics described above for ASLEV 9</p>

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>linear belts alongside the railway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species-rich grassland LWS to the south and field ponds Gently undulating topography offers views across the site from Moulton where not obscured by hedges and trees Considered that the Open Countryside policy is not adequate to protect the integrity of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The skyline is punctuated by hedgerow trees, farm buildings, pylons and industrial buildings at Wharton 	
15.Sensitive area within Frodsham: Howey Lane	7ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitive low density urban area with large detached dwellings in a wooded setting covered by TPOs making a significant contribution to the character and setting of the historic settlement of Frodsham 	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the Vale Royal Borough SPD (no description of key characteristics)	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the County LCA (no description of key characteristics)

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
16.Sensitive area within Frodsham: Top Road / Manley Road	7ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive urban area with mostly large detached dwellings, with roadside hedges and mature deciduous trees covered by TPOs making a significant contribution to the character and setting of Frodsham • Elevated position of Top Road with good views to the east 	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the Vale Royal Borough SPD (no description of key characteristics)	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the County LCA (no description of key characteristics)
17.Sensitive area within Helsby: Chester Road / Vicarage Lane	8ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive low density urban area with detached dwellings in large grounds giving a wooded setting covered by TPOs and making a significant contribution to the character and setting of the historic settlement of Helsby • Centred on St. Paul's Church and Vicarage Lane, the area is distinct to other 	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the Vale Royal Borough SPD (no description of key characteristics)	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the County LCA (no description of key characteristics)

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
		<p>residential areas of Helsby</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the transition from the lower slopes of Helsby Hill to the railway 		
18.Sensitive area within Helsby: Alvanley Road / Old Chester Road	11ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitive low density urban area with large detached dwellings in a wooded setting covered by TPOs making a significant contribution to the character and setting of this part of Helsby on the lower slopes of Helsby Hill Contains some of the oldest properties in Helsby including listed buildings such as the Church of St. Paul and Alvanley House Eastern part of the area also lies within an ASCV on the sandstone ridge which also covers the disused Helsby quarry now popular for informal recreation 	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the Vale Royal Borough SPD (no description of key characteristics)	This ASLEV lies within the 'urban' area as identified in the County LCA (no description of key characteristics)

ASLEV	Area (ha)	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPG5: ASLEV – Character Appraisal' 1998 & Vale Royal Local Plan 2006, Policy NE12	Key Landscape Characteristics from 'Vale Royal Borough SPD5: Landscape Character', Sept. 2007	Key Landscape Characteristics from Cheshire County Landscape Character Assessment, November 2008
19.Historic Orchards in the Parishes of Acton Bridge and Kingsley	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number and variety of orchards in Acton Bridge and Kingsley, to the west of Northwich, make a significant contribution to the character and setting of the villages Lie within the Green Belt where appropriate development could result in their further decline. 	<p>This ASLEV lies within LCA 4b: Frodsham to Northwich Undulating Enclosed Farmland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key characteristics include historic orchards which are described as important features of a landscape with relatively low woodland cover 	<p>Rolling Farmland 1: Norley LCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number and variety of orchards within the character area is recognised as making a significant contribution to the character of the landscape. They range in size from a number of trees in rows to small groups that are often the remains of larger orchards. These were predominantly small domestic orchards attached to farms