locality
the power of community

AECOM

Weston & Crewe Green

Design Guidance and Codes

December 2024

Delivering a better world

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Davide Colombo **Consultant Urban Designer**	Michael Holt **Associate Director**	Ben Castell **Technical Director**
John-Michael Chidwick **Graduate Urban Designer**		

Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
1	7 Nov 2024	First draft for review	Michael Holt	**Associate Director**
	25 Nov 2024	Comments	John Cornell	**Group Chair**
2	4 Dec 2024	Final draft for review	Michael Holt	**Associate Director**
	5 Dec 2024	Comments	John Cornell	**Group Chair**
3	6 Dec 2024	Final draft for approval	Michael Holt	**Associate Director**
		Final Report	Michael Holt	**Associate Director**

Contents

Introduction

01

A view along Engelsea Brook Lane

1. Introduction

This document aims to empower the local community to influence the design and character of their neighbourhood, and deliver attractive, sustainable development that meets the needs of local people.

1.1 Background

Through the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been appointed to provide design support to the Weston and Crewe Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) by preparing this Design Guidance and Codes document.

This document covers the Weston and Crewe Green Neighbourhood Area (NA), an area equivalent to the parish. The NPSG seek to establish a design guide including design codes to influence the design of future development across the entire NA.

The parish of Weston and Crewe Green was formed in 2023, merging the parishes of Weston and Basford and Crewe Green. The parish is overseen by Cheshire East Unitary Authority as the Local Planning Authority. There are four allocated sites that are within or partially within the NA, totaling 1,500 homes. The sites are either underway or consented therefore the housing need is considered to be met and as such the sites are not a feature for this design code. Those sites include:

Site LPS 2: Basford East - 850 homes, 24 ha office space, local centre including a primary school, retail, restaurant and community facility.

Site LPS 3: Basford West - 370 homes, 22.16 ha employment uses, local centre including retail, restaurant, hotel. Protection of existing residential amenity.

Site LPS 6: Crewe Green - 150 homes, open space provision including play space/multi-use games area, and highway improvements.

Site LPS 8: South Cheshire Growth Village - 650 homes, mixed-use local centre, open space including sports pitches, outdoor gym, play space, and wildlife habitats for protected species.

This document seeks to provide important guidance and clarity for ongoing speculative development and any additional growth which may come about through the Neighbourhood Plan or Local Plan review.

The document sets out codes and guidance that meet the aspirations of local stakeholders and support the delivery of high-quality, sustainable development.

1.2 Design coding

Design codes and guidance aim to raise the quality of new development by providing a clear framework for creating healthy, safe, green, sustainable, and distinctive places.

Design codes are a set of concise, often illustrated, design requirements for how to develop a housing site, or housing generally within an area. They can provide greater assurance for communities and clarity for developers about the design of new development.

1.2.1 The purpose of Neighbourhood Plan design guidance and codes

At a localised level, design codes offer detailed guidance tailored to specific neighbourhoods or development sites. In the case of Bulmer, this document is relevant to all new residential developments within the Neighbourhood Area which require planning permission, including extensions to existing buildings.

Neighbourhood Plan design codes should (where these exist) build upon the standards outlined in an Authority Wide Design Code (AWDC). Where an AWDC is not in place, a discussion with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) should be undertaken to determine the likely priorities and coding to come forward in a future AWDC.

The overarching aim of Neighbourhood Plan design guidance and codes is to:

- positively influence the character and design of new development within the Neighbourhood Area (NA);
- set out clear analysis of the local context, focusing on topics where improvement is most needed;
- benchmark how these opportunities should be delivered, such that they are factored into considerations at site procurement, and the downstream design response.

Note: the terminology used in this document (i.e. area types) are aligned to the National Model Design Code and National Design Guide. It is important that any Authority-wide Design Code refers to the same terminologies.

Please note:

Both design codes and guidelines exist within this document. The difference between codes and guidelines is summarised below:

Design codes: Design codes are mandatory requirements for design issues and are expressed with the word **MUST**.

Guidelines: Guidelines set out aspirations for design that is expected to be delivered and are expressed with one of two words:

- **SHOULD** reflects design principles that are strongly encouraged.
- **COULD** reflects design principles that are suggestions.

1.2.2 Process

This document has resulted from a collaborative effort between the Bulmer Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) and AECOM, reflecting the priorities of local residents. The design coding process includes the following steps (see adjacent).

1.2.3 Comply and justify

If a planning application deviates from the requirements of Bulmer's design code - as set out in this document - applicants should submit factual evidence to support their proposed variations; they should demonstrate that the built result will be visually coherent and of the highest quality consistent with goals of this design code.

Proposals that do not adhere to this guidance, and that do not furnish strong rationales, supporting documentation and comprehensive examination of available solutions, may be refused.

Figure 01: A brief chronological breakdown of the key elements and milestones used throughout the duration of the production of this document.

1.3 Who should use the guidance and codes

This document will be used differently by different people in the planning and development process, as summarised in the adjacent table.

A valuable way codes and guidance can be used is as part of a process of co-design and involvement that seeks to understand and takes account of local preferences for design quality. As such the codes and guidance can help to facilitate conversations to help align expectations, aid understanding, and identify key local issues. The resulting design codes and guidance can then set out how to adequately respond to these issues in future development.

Design codes and guidance alone will not automatically secure quality design outcomes, but they will help to prevent poor outcomes by creating a rigorous process that establishes expectations for design quality.

Potential users	How they will use the design guidance and codes
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the codes and guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local planning authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The design codes and guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the design codes and guidelines are complied with.
Community groups & local residents	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Table 01: User groups and how they will use the guidance and codes.

1.4 Neighbourhood Plan vision and community objectives

The overarching aim of this document is to protect and enhance the character of Weston and Crewe Green in line with the Neighbourhood Plan vision and objectives. The adopted Neighbourhood Plan (2024) describes the adjacent vision for the previous Neighbourhood Area Weston and Basford.

The group is now working on a new Neighbourhood Plan for the Weston and Crewe Green NA, and thus the following vision may be subject to change.

"In 2030 Weston and Basford and all the existing and future communities which make up the Parish will maintain their individual characters as a vibrant rural area with a strong sense of community. It will continue to be an area of mixed age groups, where local people can live, work and play enjoying a high quality of life. The unique character of each of the 7 individual settlements within the plan area will be retained and enhanced. It will provide outdoor recreation and open space, rich in wildlife and natural beauty for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike. The current green belt and strategic green gaps will be retained along with the addition of two "local green gaps" to provide a buffer between the settlements in order to retain the open countryside and rural character of the area."

This statement relates to the original vision in the (currently approved) Neighbourhood Plan for Weston & Basford. The NPSG noted that the independent Inspector deleted both proposed Local Green Gaps.

1.5 Study area

The Parish of Crewe Green neighbourhood area is located in Cheshire East. The area includes 7 settlements: Weston Village, Crewe Green, Englesea Brook, Basford, Stowford, Wychwood Village and Gorsty. Weston, the largest settlement, is located 4km southeast of Crewe town centre and 4.5km west of the M6 motorway. The neighbourhood area has been recently updated to include the village of Crewe Green.

The area includes the Weston Conservation Area, the Englesea Brook Conservation Area, the Crewe Green Conservation Area and 27 listed buildings.

Weston Village serves the local community with Crewe Nature Kindergarten Nursery, Weston Village Primary School, the White Lion Restaurant and Hotel, and the All Saints' Church. Additional amenities in the neighbourhood area are Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum, Gorsty Hall Fishing Lakes, Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa, St Michael and All Angels Church, Totally Aktive gym and Weston Cricket Club.

There is green belt land to the east of the neighbourhood area and Crewe Hall's registered park and garden to the north. The area to the north of Weston and Basford has also been designated as a Strategic Green gap by Cheshire East Council. There are also areas of deciduous woodland across the area as well as watercourses, including Basford Brook, Valley Brook, and Englesea Brook.

The National Cycle Network Route 551 runs east to west through the neighbourhood area passing through Basford and Weston and then extending to Englesea Brook along Snape Lane. The Two Saints Way, an important 92 mile pilgrimage route between the cathedrals of Chester and Lichfield, runs through Weston and other parts of the neighbourhood area, as well as the South Cheshire Way, the Crewe and Nantwich Circular Walk.

The surrounding countryside has a history of agricultural use, and several working farms continue to operate today.

Development pressure and opportunities

Central Government's revision of the calculation of housing need means that in the case of Cheshire East the annual increase of housing Borough wide, will be in the region of 250% (977to 2530 homes per year).

This combined with the review of the Cheshire East Local Plan post 2030, which is already underway, will undoubtedly put pressure for additional land release with potential ramifications for the Parish of Weston & Crewe Green.

In addition, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council have recently published proposals for the release of a large area of Green Belt around Junction 16 of the M6 as part of their Local Plan growth strategy.

This allocation together with the Strategic Allocations of Basford East and West along with the South Cheshire Growth Village in the current Cheshire East Local Plan all impact heavily on the neighbourhood Plan Area

1.6 Site visits and engagement

This document has resulted from a collaborative effort between the Weston and Crewe Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) and AECOM, reflecting the priorities of local residents. The design coding process includes the following steps (see below).

A one-day site visit took place on Wednesday 7th August 2024, commencing with a tour of the Neighbourhood Area (NA), via car and on foot. This was followed by an in-person meeting between AECOM and representatives of the Weston with Crewe Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) to explore the group's key aims and objectives and to address any initial concerns or queries.

This activity allowed consultants to appraise local character and the features informing its sense of place, such as heritage and landscape features. The exercise also provided valuable local insight into the area's pertinent design issues and opportunities, good and bad practice, as well the overall context for which the evidence-base of the Neighbourhood Plan will reflect.

The NPSG were also asked for feedback on the priorities for the Weston with Crewe Green Design Code. A questionnaire was issued to the NPSG and the findings are summarised on the following page.

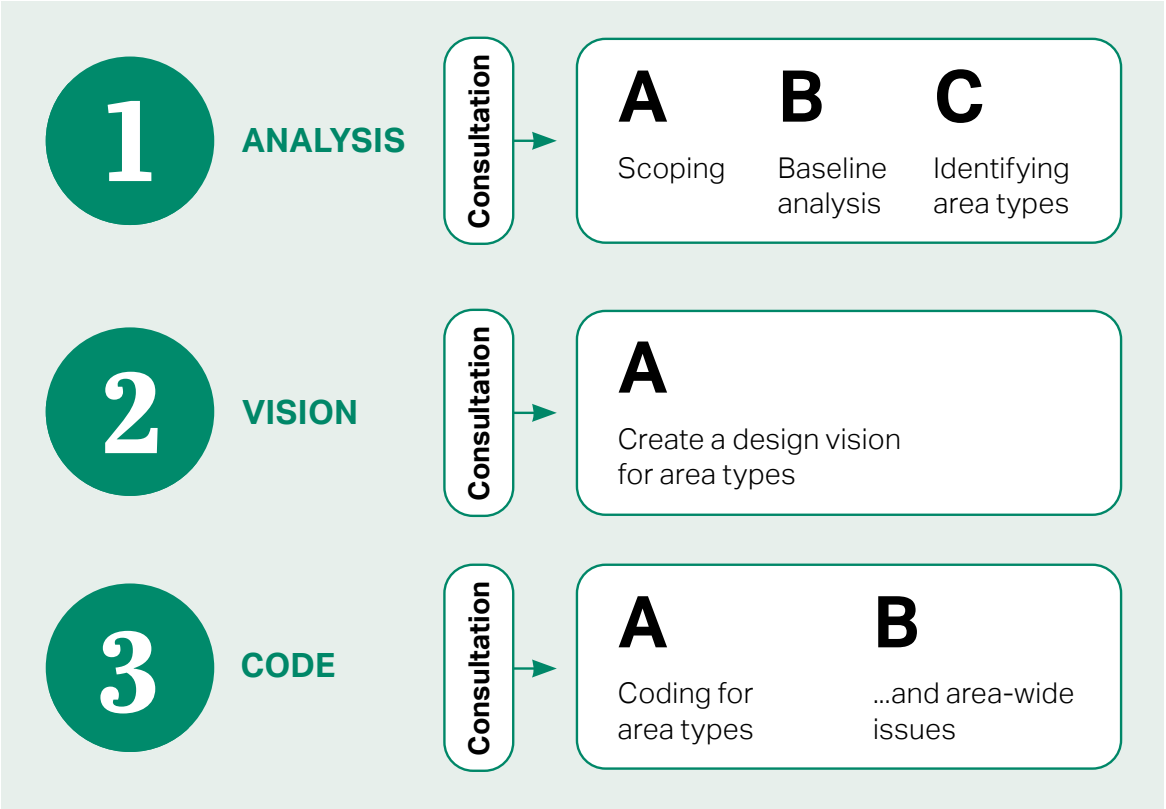


Figure 02: Diagram highlighting the design code process.

1.7 Identifying Key Issues

Discussions with the NPSG identified several key issues. Alongside this, AECOM produced a desktop study that helped identify additional issues or verify those raised by the group. Site visits confirmed the issues and enabled the development of focus topics to be addressed by design codes, which were:

Connections:

Sensitive peripheral development

Green streets and parking solutions

Built form:

Scale and massing

Materials and design

Building line and set-backs

Heritage preservation

Nature:

Protecting views, stepped roof lines

Hedges, street trees

Open space

Activity:

Housing mix and density.

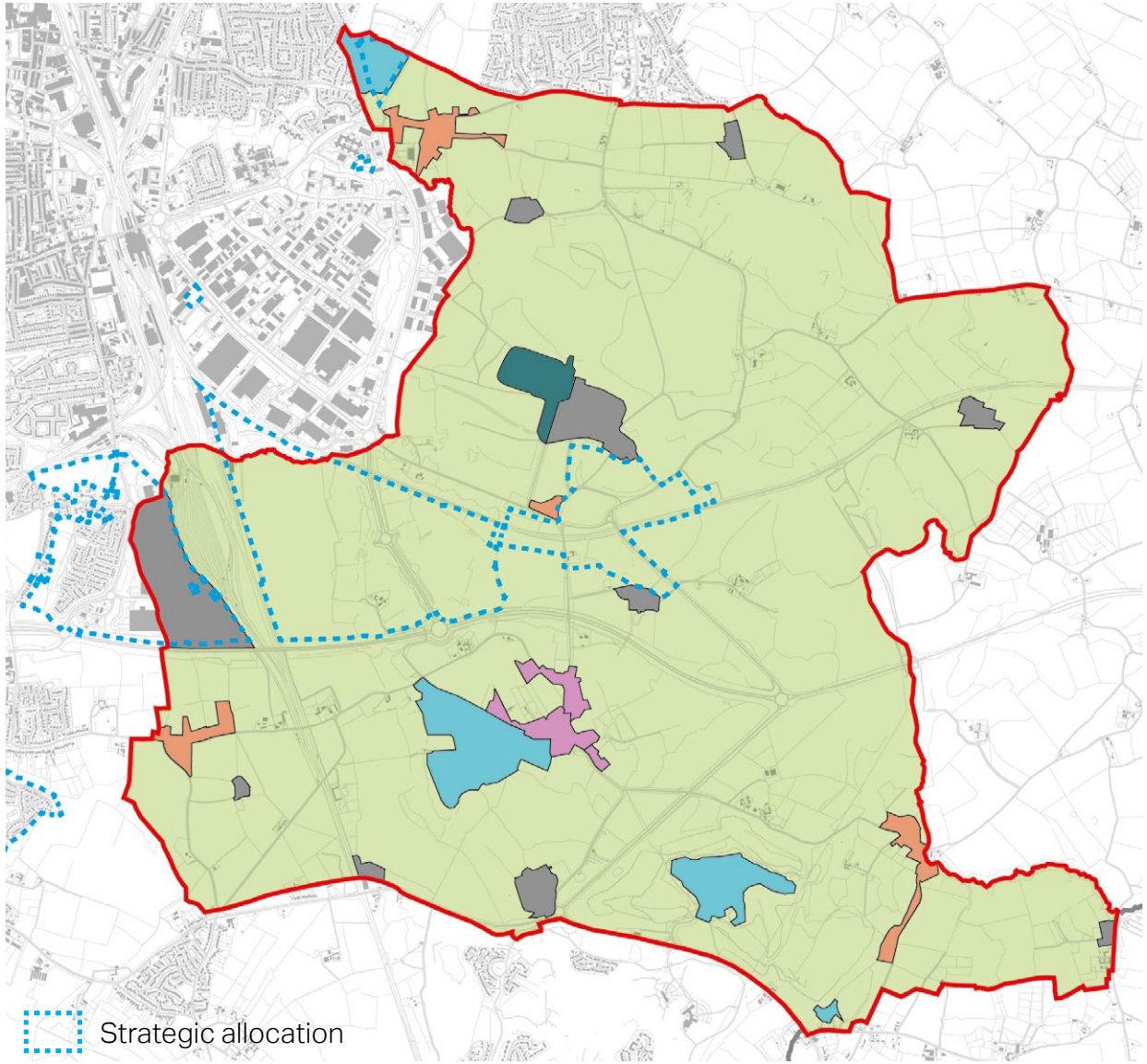


Figure 03: Neighbourhood Area showing area types and strategic allocations. This code does not provide guidance for the allocated sites as they are consented or under construction but will provide guidance when the development is complete. Refer to Section 2

Place analysis

02

Looking at The White Lion public house

2. Place analysis

This chapter presents a place analysis of the Weston and Crewe Green Neighbourhood Area (NA), setting out eight area types. This helps to inform a series of design guidelines that are both sensitive and responsive to local context, landscape setting, and character.

2.1 Understanding place

Achieving quality development starts with a comprehensive understanding of place. Places have a clear and strong identity and character. They are a combination of their physical form, their activities and their meaning to people. The adjacent diagram shows how these factors come together to create a successful place.

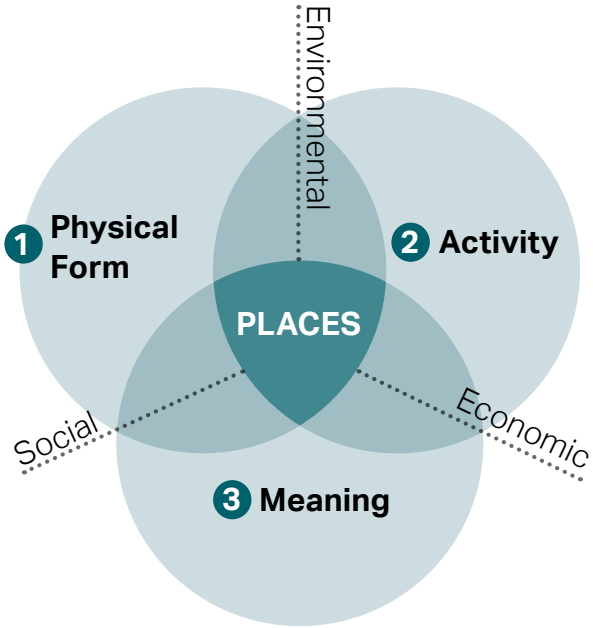
To create Area Types, AECOM undertook a series of analysis including a desktop study, historical analysis, site visit and photo study, mapping exercises, and through conversations with the group.

The settings for each of the Area Types is based on an analysis of the existing character of the existing settlements and an exercise to identify the codes required to enable and guide future development.

For the purposes of this document, the analysis contained within Section 2 helps to illustrate the variation in character, and the sense of place across the Weston and Crewe Green NA.

The categorising of places into separate Area Types is not about separating places or splitting up areas, it is a means of analysis to enable AECOM to get a fuller picture of the entire Neighbourhood Area.

By analysing each place through a lens of function and performance, it was possible to then devise the codes that would be used in each settlement or across the whole Neighbourhood Area.



1. Physical conditions of existing built development including layout, form, scale, appearance, landscape character, waterways and flood risk.
2. Use, vitality and diversity, including community facilities and local services.
3. How a place is perceived, including local heritage, views inwards and outwards and social histories.

Figure 04: A diagram showing how different factors come to form a sense of place.

2.2 Weston & Crewe Green's area types

The National Model Design Code outlines the use of Area Types as a means of grouping places that share similar character, key features or distinctive attributes across the Neighbourhood Area.

What are Area Types?

Area types are broad categories that group together areas with similar characteristics. These can include residential, commercial, industrial, or mixed-use areas. Area Types seek to provide guidance and codes to enable and support future development and ensure it is of sufficient quality.

Through a series desktop studies, site visits, observations, analysis and mapping exercises, area types were devised and a design vision of what each area type needs to be was created.

This vision enabled the identification of appropriate design codes.

Area Types in Weston & Crewe Green

For the purposes of this Design Code, Weston & Crewe Green has been divided into six area types. These include three Settlement Focus Areas (SFAs).

As any new residential development is expected to be contained within or adjacent to existing settlements in the area, the place analysis is focused on the SFAs. Each SFA has its own analysis and concludes with a 'design vision' that outlines how the area's characteristics and distinctive features can be enhanced or maintained as development occurs in the future.

Proponents must adhere to all guidance in Section 3 and any applicable codes or guidance in the specific area type where the proposal is located. Proponents should consider neighbouring area types when developing proposals.

Step 1. The Neighbourhood Area (NA) is divided up into area types

Step 2. Settlement Focus Areas (SFAs) are identified.

Step 3. A place analysis is undertaken for each Settlement Focus Area (SFA), and area-type specific codes are provided.

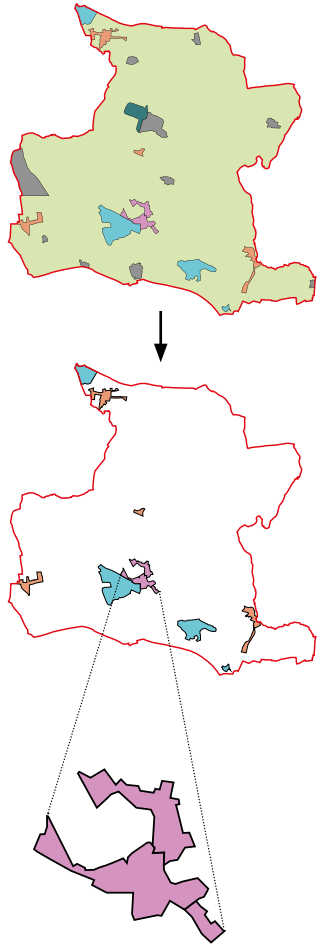


Figure 05: The process of area type application, and the how the focus of the place analysis was defined.

Weston and Crewe Green Area Types::

Settlement Focus Areas

1. **Local centre**
2. **Linear settlements**
3. **Informal settlements**
4. **Countryside**
5. **Estate villages**
6. **Farms, industrial and business parks**

Area Types are not intended as character assessments, they are not there to solely document existing features but to study the urban grain and pattern of places - how they function rather than how it looks and feels. Area Types provide a way to bring together similarities in places.

Figure 06: Diagram showing Weston and Crewe Green's area types.

An overview of what Area Types are included are described below::

Local centres

Local centres are typically clustered around a central point, such as a church or village green. They are often historic cores with an organic and irregular layout and several roads radiating from the centre. They have a mix of uses. Corners and focal points are occupied by notable buildings. Local centres are in a rural setting with a fine grain pattern.

Linear settlements

Sparsely populated, linear settlements developed along a transport route such as a road or river, with buildings in an informal layout fronting the road. They often have urban edges to larger settlements with a distinctive, agricultural character and rural setting, sometimes responding more to topography and landscape features. Important buildings, such as churches and chapels, are characteristic but not central to the area type.

Informal settlements

Informal settlements have strong links to the open countryside. They can have a local hub, landmarks, green spaces, road or rail infrastructure but the settlements don't necessarily flank these. Layouts are accessed directly from a main road on to a series of cul-de-sacs and loop roads. They are typically residential settlements with limited services or amenities close by. Homes range in housing mix and architectural style.

Estate villages

Estate villages are set within a rural context with a Listed building or mansion house and the remains of a landscaped park and gardens. Estate villages have a distinctive architectural character and identity. The main buildings are large and impressive brick buildings with stone details in a Jacobian style. There are several lodges in vernacular style with decorative timber framing.

Countryside

Countryside is a rural context a with scenic quality where land not in centres, settlements, or villages is either used for farming or left in its natural condition. The countryside is sparsely populated, with isolated clusters of farmsteads or dwellings set amongst a patchwork of field boundaries. The countryside may also include woodlands, nature reserves, and scheduled monuments.

Farm, industrial and business parks

Working farms are spread across the area. Industrial areas are predominantly allocated for general industry, or other equivalent uses, to accommodate all forms of industry including manufacturing and related processing but excludes noxious or hazardous risk activity. Business parks are located at the edge of settlements within proximity to towns or larger settlements.

1 Local centre

Local centre	Calculations
Indicative Dwellings per Hectare (DpH)	8 - 12 DpH
Typical plot size range	5m (W) x 20m (D) 30m (W) x 45m (D)
Typical block size range	40m (W) x 25m (D) 140m (W) x 50m (D)

Table 02: A guide to density, plot and block sizes. Density refers to net densities.

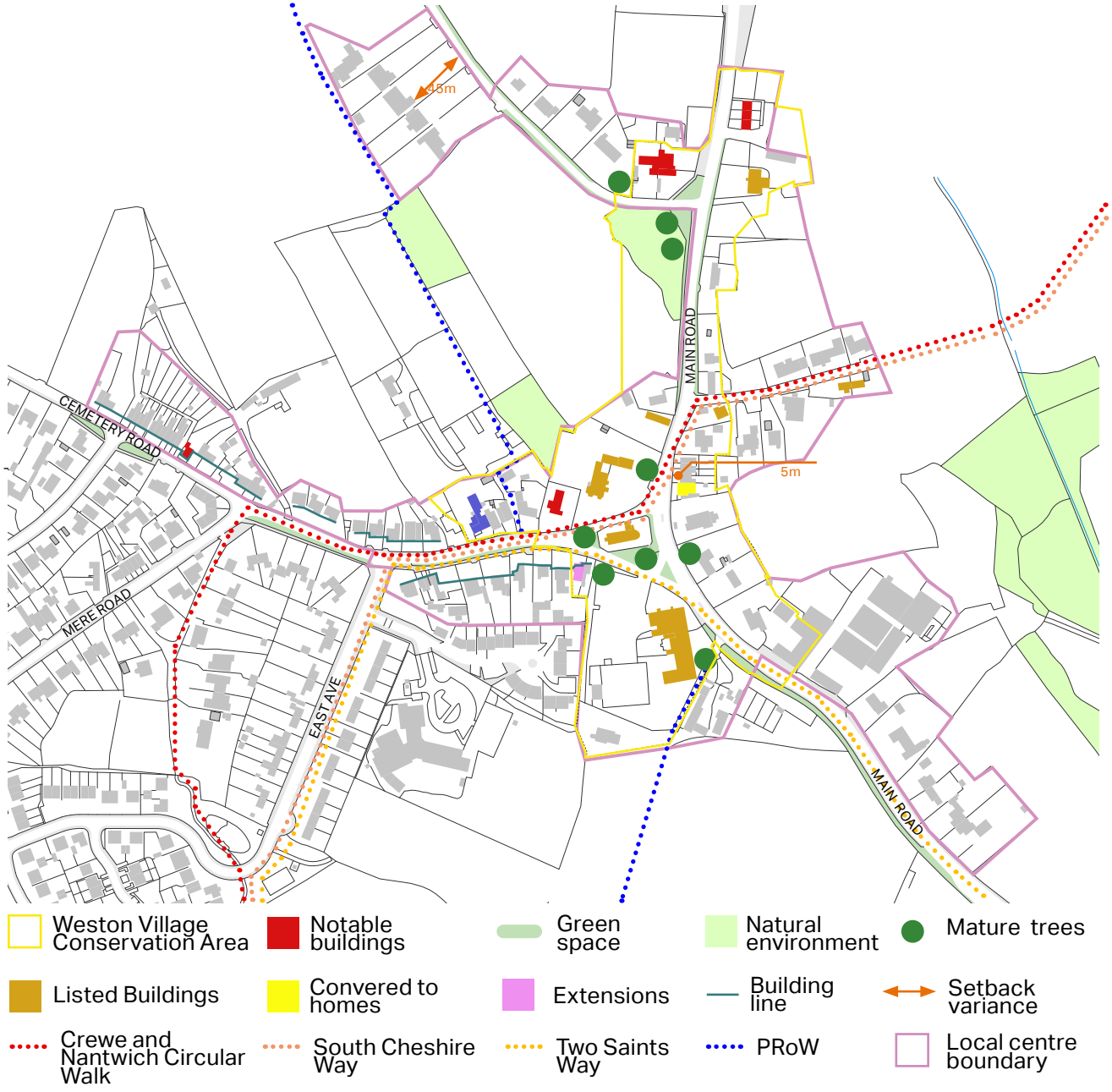


Figure 07: Figure ground illustrating the local centre of Weston Village.

Topic	Written analysis
Connections	Cemetery Road and Main Road converge at the centre of the area type. The main route in this area type is Main Road, which connects the area to Crewe, the A531 and the A500. The bus line 85 connects the area to Crewe and Newcastle under Lyme. Pavements are on one side of Cemetery Road and on both sides of Main Road. Smithy Lane has no pavements. Whites Lane has one small, inadequately-sized pavement and becomes a rural lane. Footpaths and PRoWs connect the area type to surrounding countryside.
Built form	Layout in the area is generally organic. Most buildings front the road but some are perpendicular, notably on Main Road. Homes or buildings do not go beyond one plot in depth from the streets and green gaps are a feature.
	Blocks range from 40m x 25m to 140m x 50m, while plots can be narrow and deep (terraces on Main Road, 5m x 25m) or wide and more regular (30m x 45m).
	Boundary treatments are hedges or low brick/stone walls with hedges and fences. Sometimes there are no boundary treatments on recent development. Low stone walls and picket fencing is characteristic, notably at The White Lion pub. Setbacks and building line vary, ranging from 5m to 45m.
	Homes are largely 1-2.5 storeys often with gable fronts or dormer windows. Red brick is most common, painted lintels are a feature for Victorian style homes, and white render or painted surfaces are also notable. There are detached, semi detached and terraced homes. Architectural styles vary between Victorian and late 20th century. Terraces at the northern end of Main Road have distinctive painted red doors, indicating the Duchy estate. A working farm flanks Main Road. Extensions are well considered on Cemetery Road, in-keeping with scale and materiality. Parking is typically on-plot, sometimes in integrated garages or front of house.
Nature	The area is generally leafy and green with mature trees creating a sense of scale and presence at the central point of the area at All Saint's Church. Grass verges are present on all roads. Larger detached homes and bungalows are well set back from Whites Lane and often screened by mature vegetation. All Saint's Church is located on a green space with established vegetation. Hedges and mature, on-plot trees contribute to the feel of the area. A line of trees can be found on Cemetery Road.
Activity	Mostly residential area, with All Saints' Church, All Saint's Church Hall, The White Lion and school are landmarks. . A converted shop abuts a row of terraces, indicating that the area once had local retail amenity.

Table 03: Outlining characteristics of the area.

2.3 Local centre guidance and codes

2.3.1 Streetscape

The streetscape is characterised by its mature trees and greenery with several landmark buildings flanking the street but they are not terminating views or aligned to the street.

Streets often have verges and footpaths and the enclosure is often characterised by mature foliage, found within property boundaries.

Streetscapes are open in the area, ranging from 1:2.5 to 1:6 on Cemetery Road to 1:3.5 on Main Road. Pavements are mostly on both sides of the road. Hedgerows are the predominant boundary treatment.

Figure 08: Main Road.

1. Pavements are located on both sides. One green verge can be found on one side of the road.
2. Hedges and trees are a notable boundary treatment.
3. Primary frontages face the road, contributing to the streetscape.

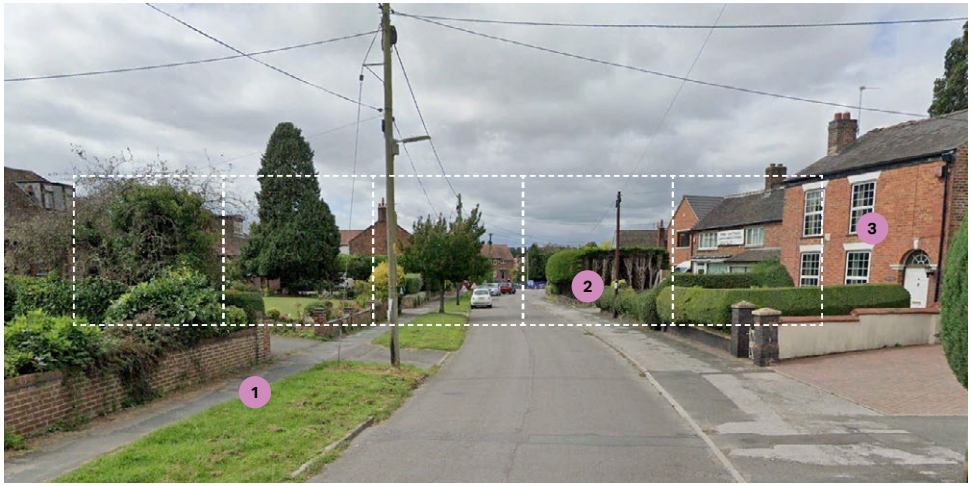


Figure 09: Cemetery Road.

1. Pavements are located on both sides. Green verges and street trees noted on one side of the road.
2. Hedges and low walls are notable boundary treatments.
3. Primary frontages face the road, contributing to the streetscape.

2.3.2 Built form and materials

The area has different styles from different periods. Homes and buildings range from Jacobean/Tudor, Victorian/Edwardian to more contemporary, 20th century developments. There is an array homes, shops, religious and community assets.

Built form varies between 1 to 2.5 storeys, most buildings are 2 storeys. There is a relatively active, primary frontage along the main streets with a sense of enclosure resulting from mature trees. It is a relatively dense area with a variety of housing types.

The material palette has a clear identity. Red brick is predominant for all buildings with slate tiles used for roofs. Exceptions exist, such as render, hanging tiles and timber (black and white fascias) for elevations and Rosemary tiles for roofs.

Details include entablature/banding, casement windows, and muntins and mullions. Red painted doors are notable on farmsteads and churches.

Figure 10: Selection of images showing shingle cladding (1), black and white timber cladding (2), sympathetic extensions (3), farmsteads and red painted doors (4), dormer windows and terraced houses (5), and notable landmark buildings (6).

2.3.3 Design vision

Local centres will enhance a sense of place and identity through sympathetic, small scale development that has a good relationship to the street and greenery.

Design principles to achieve the vision:

1. **Layout** - Maintain an organic layout and enclosure ratio between 1:2 and 1:3.5.
2. **Orientation** - Allow homes to face the street or be perpendicular**.**
3. **Density** - Prioritise the visual quality of the landscape with lower density.
4. **Building types** - Allow a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced homes at 1-2.5 storeys.
5. **Architectural features** - Sympathetic and consistent material palette, no pastiche.
6. **Streetscene** - Retain or enhance focal features - e.g. prominent buildings or trees.
7. **Rooflines** - Align to neighbouring rooflines were possible, use dormers and gables for features.
8. **Extensions/conversions** - Complement the existing building and setback from building line.
9. **Connections** - Ensure adequately sized pavements flank both sides of the road
10. **Building line and setback -** Strengthen building lines and provide front gardens.

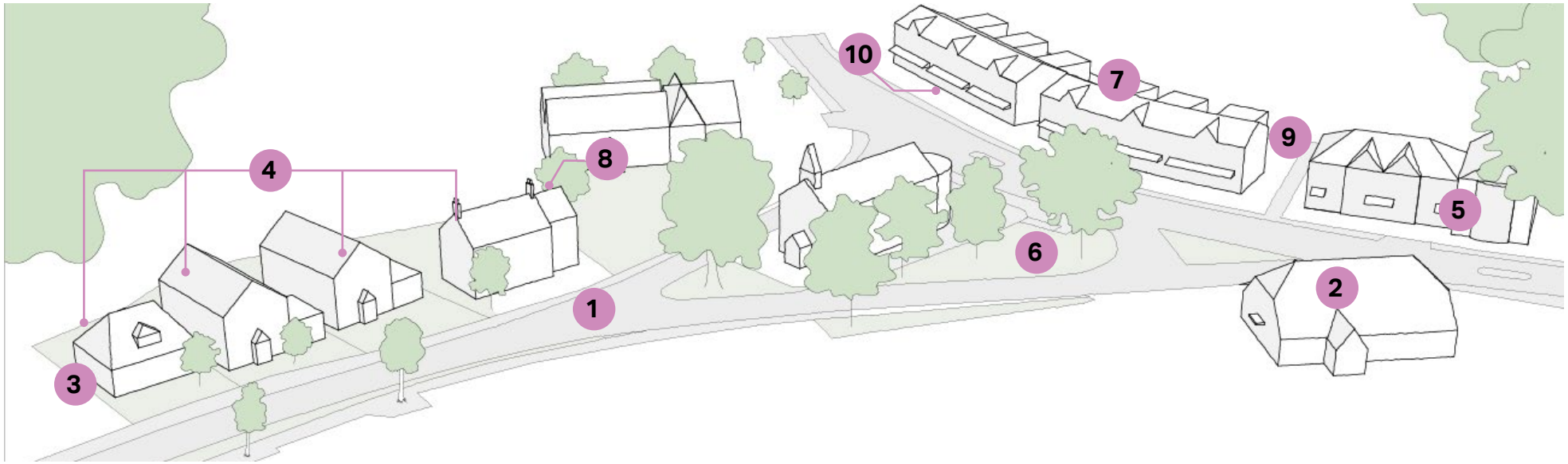


Figure 11: An annotated illustration creating a design vision for the area type based on site visits, analysis, and co-design processes with the NPSG. **Note:** this is not an existing streetscene. The highlighted items shown here have codes on the following page.

2.3.4 Design codes - Local centre

In conjunction with the area-wide codes set out in Section 3, where relevant all development **must**:

Layout - respect and respond to positive elements of the existing layout and built form as set out in the illustration on pages 22-23.

Orientation - Ensure new homes are orientated outwards and avoid rear boundaries facing the landscape.

Density - be responsive to the immediate context and enhance the wider character of 8-12 DpH.

Building types - Development should not exceed the height of predominant building forms to preserve visual harmony and scale. Materials and details include red brick, white render, grey slate, chimney stacks, timber fascia, dormers, red painted doors.

Green space - Preserve or improve existing verges (as well as create new ones where possible), mature trees and green spaces. Retain trees contributing to streetscene.

Rooflines - Provide variation with dormers and street-facing gables. A variable eave line and ridge line is encouraged to create interest but variation between adjacent buildings should be a maximum of 0.5 storeys. Dormers to front elevations must have pitched or hipped roofs, set down from the ridge line by at least 200mm.

Extensions/conversions - single and two storey side extensions should be set back from the main building line (front of the dwelling) and complement the original building.

Connections - Provide a clear pavement of 2m minimum width. Where pavements are narrower, it must not continue for <6m.

Building line - Create consistent building line. Setbacks should be no smaller than 5m with front gardens. Boundary treatments: verges, trees, hedges, low walls.

Parking - Include on-plot parking behind the building line, in a driveway or in garages.

For infill, refer to pages 46-47.

Figure 12: Sympathetic development must integrate with the historic context and greenery. Maintain gaps between buildings and views of surroundings.

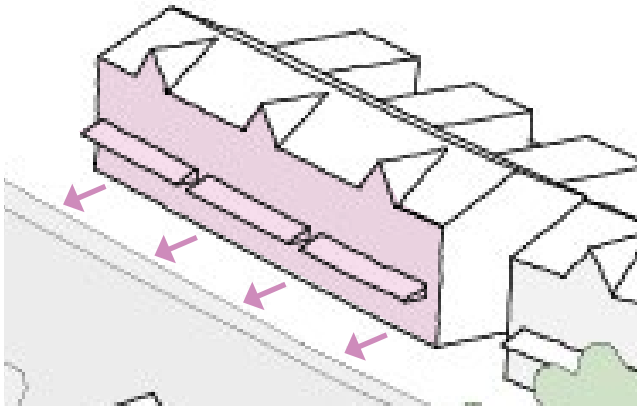


Figure 13: Building lines must be consistent and should face the street where possible. Architectural features should be retained, such as dormers and gable fronts.

2 Linear settlements

Settlement	Calculations
Indicative Dwellings per Hectare (DpH)	6 - 10 DpH
Typical plot size range	5m (W) x 20m (D) 30m (W) x 45m (D)
Typical block size range	70m (W) x 65m (D) 80m (W) x 440m (D)

Table 04: A guide to density, plot and block sizes. Density refers to net densities.

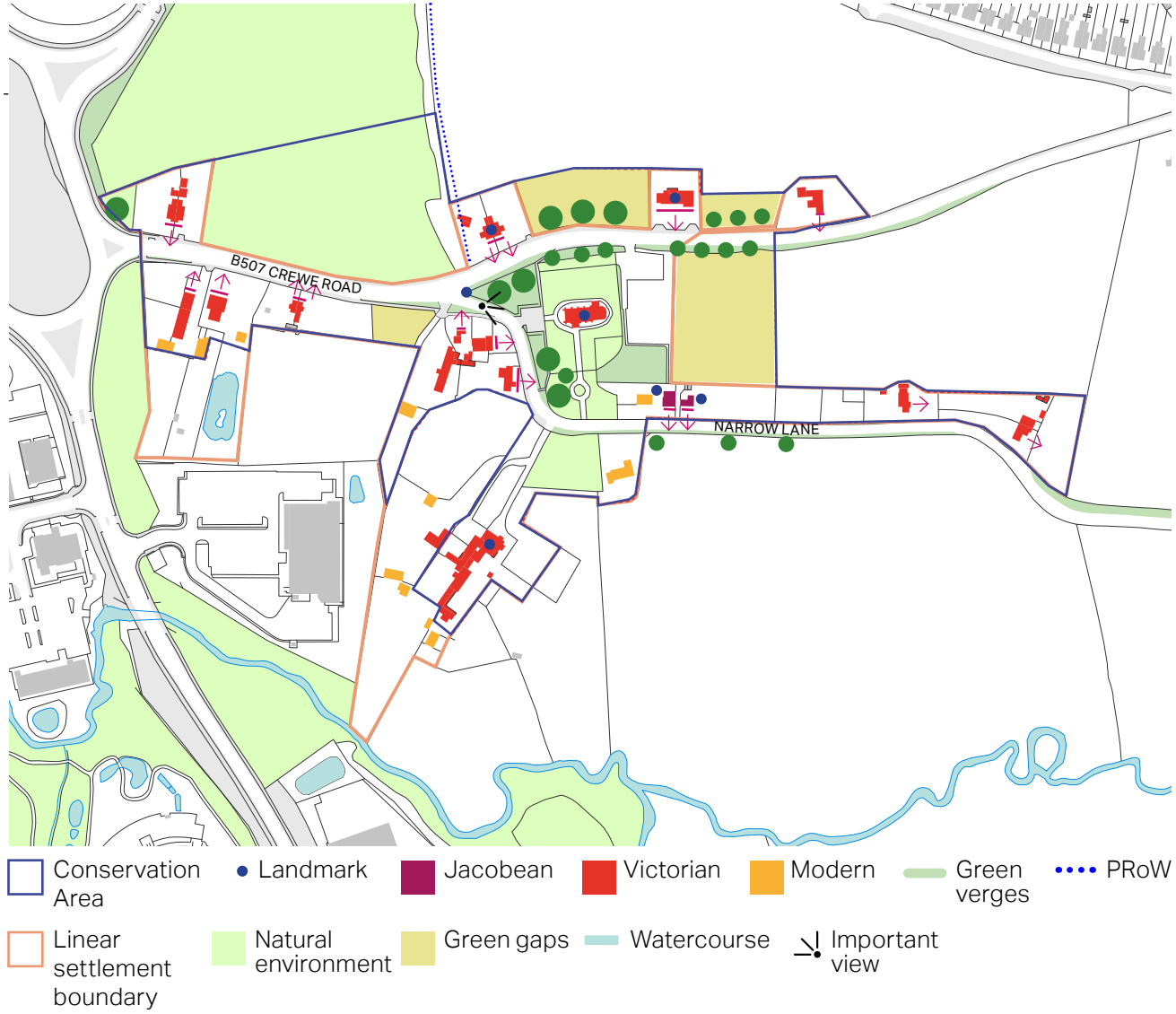


Figure 14: Diagram illustrating the key features in this area type - Crewe Green shown.

Topic	Written analysis
Connections	Located on connecting or main roads such Englesea Brook Lane, Weston Road, Crewe Road, and Narrow Lane. They often have bus services (37, 38 and 103). Often roads branch from the main road. Most roads have single-sided pavements, on branching rural lanes, such as Snape Lane, there are no pavements. Pavements are often inadequately sized. There are several PRoWs and bridleways providing access to the countryside.
Built form	Homes generally face the street in an organic layout, typically in a linear fashion. Homes are sometimes clustered around intersections, such as Snape Lane and Englesea Brook Lane. Topographical changes are characteristic, notably the undulating Englesea Brook Lane - homes flank the road on the hill side or the brook side. While homes may face the street they are sometimes accessed from the side of property. Homes are arranged densely on Holly Mount with small front yards.
	Blocks are typically irregular and shaped by the curvilinear streets and only go one plot back from the street. Plots are typically 5-8m wide, with some exceptions up to 25m; they are 25-40m deep.
	Homes are generally well set back (5-20m) from the road and often screened and with grass verges with mature trees. Boundary treatments include Cheshire/picket fencing, low brick walls, hedges.
	Buildings range between 1-2.5 storeys, with many at 1.5 storeys with dormers. Often homes look like detached buildings but are semi-detached, such as Hollybush Cottage. Homes generally have architectural detailing: dormers/bay windows, shingle tiles, curved lintels, catslide or hipped roofs, sash windows, decorative doorways, chimney stacks, red painted doors, painted/stone quoins, horizontal brick banding, and red brick or render. Model Farm and Church Cottage are examples of Victorian architectural style. In Englesea Brook there are pockets of new/infill development or extensions/ renovations, which have dormers and gable fronts but are not characterful. Homes are often accessed via driveways with integrated or side/rear garages. Along Larch Avenue on-street parking is cluttered on verges or front of property.
Nature	Streets are defined by green verges. Hedges and mature trees flank the road, often out of plot, contributing to the rural feel of the area and sense of enclosure. There are green gaps.
Activity	The area is mostly residential, with notable landmarks such as Englesea Brook Chapel & Museum of Primitive Methodism, Malt Kiln, and St Michael and All Angels Church. House types range from detached, semi-detached, terraced houses and bungalows.

Table 05: Outlining characteristics of the area.

2.4 Linear settlements guidance and codes

2.4.1 Streetscape

Streets are often flanked by mature trees and hedges with narrow footpaths either on one or both sides of the street. Verges are common and sometimes expansive, especially on curved segments of the street.

Buildings face the street and have a strong relationship with the street's linearity, often defining the edge. Sometimes buildings address the street directly, such as on Snape Lane (Englesea Brook), which has an enclosure ratio of 1:0.67.

Note: Street enclsoure is the measurement of the width of the street relative to the height of buildings. Enclosure ratios give a sense of how the street feels in regard to the buildings. In urban contexts, enclosure ratios are smaller; while in suburban contexts they are much larger. It is interesting to see a smaller ratio along Snape Lane given its rural context.

Hedges and brick walls are the predominant boundary treatment, and buildings have minimal contribution to the streetscape.

Figure 15: Narrow Lane

1. Sylvan setting with mature foliage creating green edge to countryside.
2. Timber fences are a traditional boundary treatment.
3. Pavement segments are narrow.

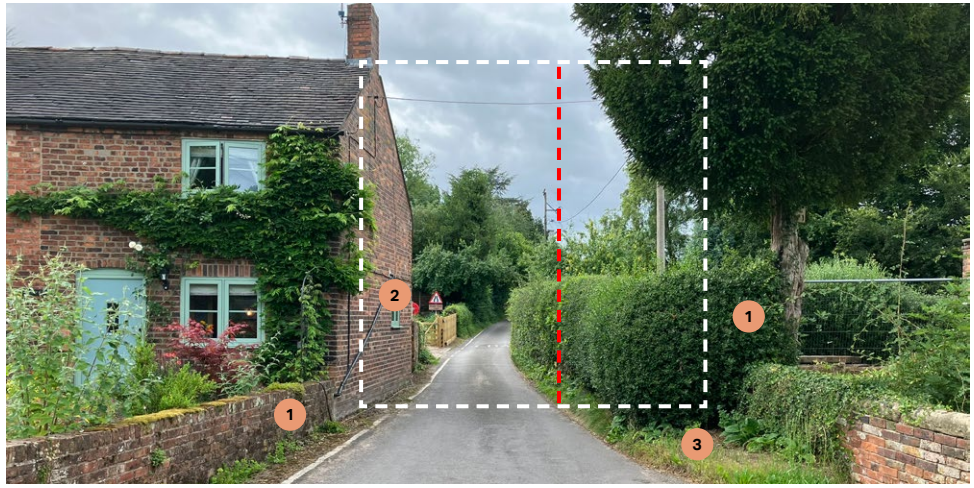


Figure 16: Snape Lane

1. Hedges and red brick walls are typical boundary treatments.
2. The building has no setback and defines the streetscape.
3. Narrow green verges can be found to the side of the street.

2.4.2 Built form and materials

The area includes several Victorian and Georgian buildings, which enrich the quality of the area with characteristic architectural details, such as architraves, lintels, floor and roof fascias, dentillation, dormers, door porches and bay windows, quoins, gablets, and decorative brickwork. Black and white gables are a distinctive feature of Crewe Green.

Material palettes are traditional including red brick, slate, Rosemary tiles, and black and white timber cladding. Boundary treatments are predominantly hedges and fences, however decorative walls are notable.

Boundary treatments include picket fencing, Cheshire fencing, low brick walls, and hedges.

Figure 17: Selection of images showing black and white timber cladding (1), brick quoins and white render (2), farmsteads and painted lintels (3), intricate detailing on gable fronts (4), detailed boundary treatments (5), and the side access of properties (6).

2.4.3 Design vision

Linear settlements will preserve their local character and greenness, capitalising on their heritage, landscape setting and access to countryside.

Design principles to achieve the vision:

Layout - Ensure layouts follow curvilinear streets and topography in an organic layout.

Density - Be of a low density with buildings interspersed with tree planting.

Infill or backland – Enable small scale development without impacting existing homes

Boundaries – Ensure homes are screened from the street with native trees, hedges, Cheshire fencing or picket fences.

Materials and details – Maintain traditional material palettes without pastiche.

Green gaps - Maintain breaks in development for views to countryside.

Landscape setting – Soften the boundary between built form and the landscape.

Views - Retain and frame views of Listed or important buildings.

Built form – Ensure detailing is in-keeping with traditional materials and is of high design quality to address local character.

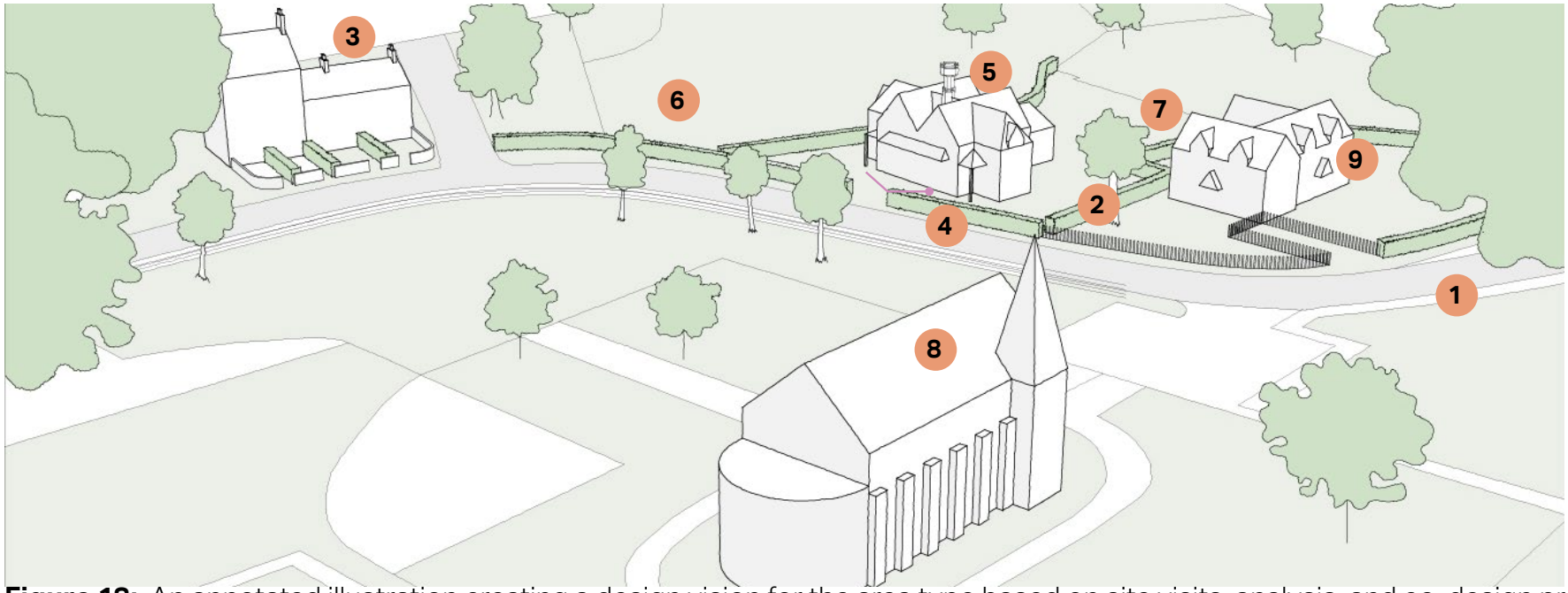


Figure 18: An annotated illustration creating a design vision for the area type based on site visits, analysis, and co-design processes with the NPSG. **Note:** this is not an existing streetscene. The highlighted items shown here have codes on the following page.

2.4.4 Design codes - Linear settlements

In conjunction with the area-wide codes set out in Section 3, where relevant all development must:

Layout - Respect and respond to positive elements of the existing layout and built form as set out in the illustration on page 24-25.

Density - Be responsive to the immediate context and enhance the wider character of 6-10 DpH.

Infill or backland - Be contained to no more than 4 units on a plot.

Materials and details – include red brick, render, chimney stacks, timber fascia, dormers, red painted doors.

Boundaries - Be a maximum total height for hedges or walls of 1.8m to maintain privacy. Where walls are used to link two buildings, a maximum total height of 1.5m is acceptable. Where hedgerows are broken this **should** be for a maximum gap of 5m and the hedgerow to either side must be maintained at a height of >2m.

Green gaps - Maintain breaks in development for views to countryside, enhancing settlement edge. Encourage hedgerow, wildflower, and tree planting.

Landscape setting - Demonstrate how existing boundaries and structural landscape are used to frame the edge of development.

Views - Not obstruct key views looking both inwards and outwards of the area. Retain and frame views of Listed or important buildings.

Built form - Consider detailing. Chimneys must match the primary elevation material and be symmetrical to the ridgeline. They **should** rise well above the roof, a maximum of 1.5m. Open chimneys are discouraged unless addressing local character. External doors and windows must be made of timber and either hardwood or softwood, painted or natural finish. High gloss UPVC is not permitted. If sash windows are used, they must be a double-hung type and not spring balance. Top-hung vents are not allowed.

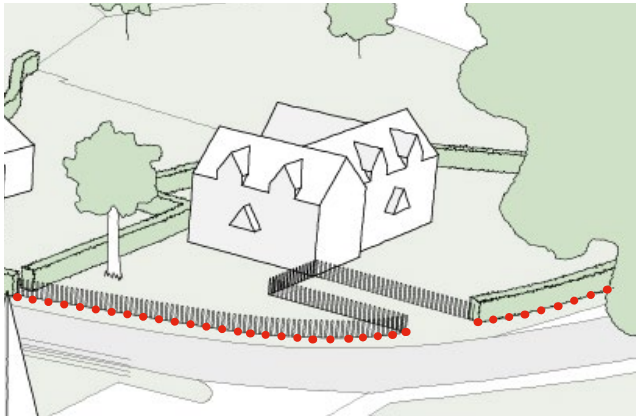


Figure 19: Boundary treatments must provide visual interest and privacy for homes, using hedges, fences or low walls with hedges. Native trees can help to screen properties from the street.

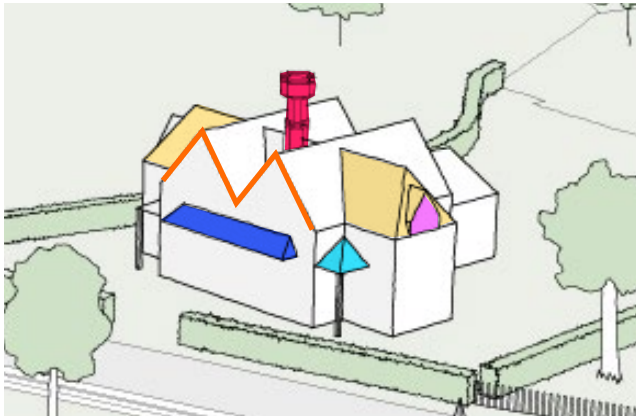
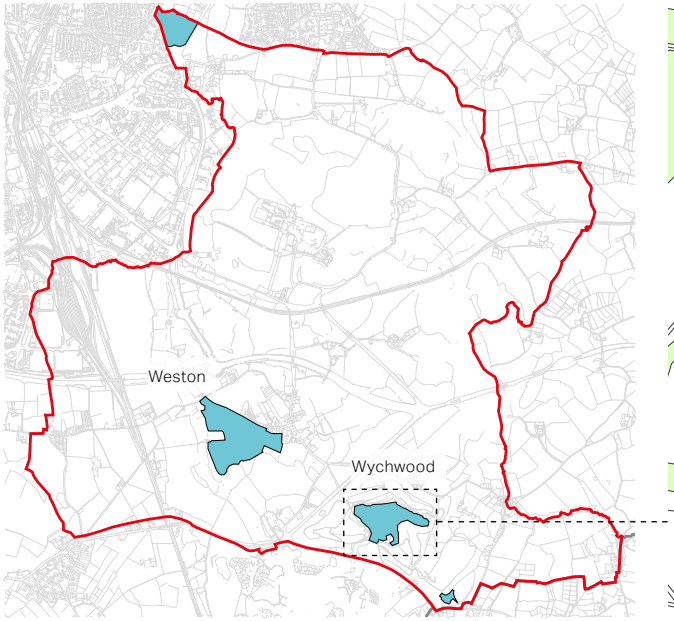


Figure 20: Traditional building features can be replicated without resorting to pastiche. Hipped or skirt roofs, porches, dormer windows, decorative gable fronts and ornate chimney stacks are all distinctive features adding to local character.

3 Informal settlements



Settlement	Calculations
Indicative Dwellings per Hectare (DpH)	23 - 37 DpH
Typical plot size range	4m (W) x 25m (D) 22m (W) x 45m (D)
Typical block size range	50m (W) x 60m (D) 170m (W) x 170m (D)

Table 06: A guide to density, plot and block sizes. Density refers to net densities.

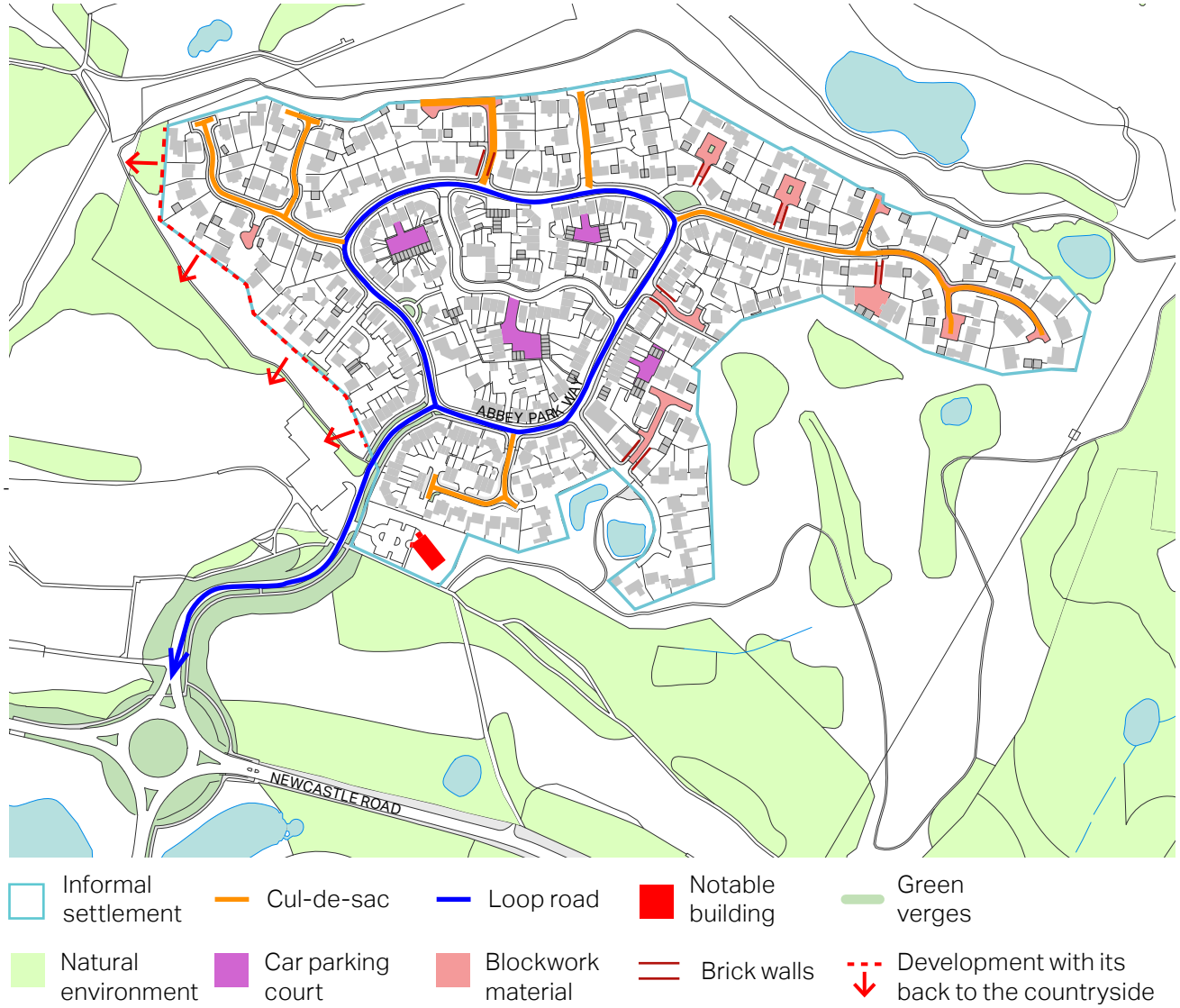


Figure 21: Diagram illustrating the key features in this area type - Wychwood shown.

Topic	Written analysis
Connections	Settlements typically have connecting road with cul-de-sacs or loop roads, (e.g. Abbey Park West/Newcastle Road). Roads are sometimes narrow with a single-sided pavement (e.g. Cemetery Road). Criota Avenue connects to Milbeck Close with a footpath, however, high hedges limit passive surveillance. Sometimes developments are not connected.
Built form	Layouts are informal and arranged along the curvilinear streets. Homes generally follow the curvilinear streets and are consistent to the building line. Homes typically face the street. While there are exceptions (notably Cemetery Road and St Andrews Close), most homes have a rear boundary facing the countryside. Homes turn the corner, notably at Mere Road/Cemetery Road or Maureen Campbell Drive/Abbey Park Way.
	Blocks have irregular shapes, reflecting curvilinear streets, ranging between 50m-170m (W) and 60m-170m (D). Plots vary between 4-25m (W) and 22-45m (D). Plots are tightly packed for townhouses where gaps to countryside are limited.
	Setbacks are generally consistent on each street, creating a consistent building line. Setbacks range from 5m-20m. Along East Avenue, bungalows are notably setback (~12m) from the street. Setbacks in Wychwood can be as little as ~1m. Street trees are present along Abbey Park Way - trees screen townhouses. Boundary treatments are mixed, including low red/yellow brick walls, Cheshire fencing and hedges. Sometimes there are no boundary walls or small shrubbery, such as along Milbeck Close. Tall walls in Weston and Wychwood for rear gardens create a harsh edge.
	Buildings 1 – 3 storeys, housing mix is apparent in Weston but more mixed in Wychwood. In Wychwood, scale and massing is mixed with 3-storey townhouses and 2.5 storey semis with high pitched roofs. House types include detached, semi-detached, townhouses, apartments and bungalows. Parking is in integrated garages, side parking, or parking courts. Rooflines vary greatly, contributing to the streetscene. New detached 2-storey homes along Milbeck Close have high-pitched roofs (sometimes catslide) and skirt roofs while on Mere Road there are hipped roofs. Along East Avenue there is a mix of styles, bay fronts and gables, brick patterns, small dormers and porches - there is a lack of design quality. In Wychwood, Juliette balconies, porches and curved lintels are features. Chimneys are not a feature.
Nature	Natural features: verges and hedgerows, on edge of settlement streets and at intersections (Meadow Avenue/Mere Road). Pockets of green space with trees. Wychwood is surrounded by a countryside park and a former golf course.
Activity	The area is mostly residential with limited services. Settlements include Weston Village Primary School, Weston Cemetery and Wychwood Village Hall. Apartments noted on Chesterton Way.

Table 07: Outlining characteristics of the area.

2.5 Informal settlements guidance and codes

2.5.1 Streetscape

Roads in these settlements are typified by either large setbacks in 20th century developments in Weston or small setbacks in recent development in Wychwood.

There is a greater sense of enclosure in newer development when the scale and massing of the buildings compared to the street width gives a ration of 1:3, notable along Abbey Park Way. This is a more urban feel to the built environment. In areas such as Mere Road, the ratio is much more expansive at 1:6, providing a more suburban feel.

On-street parking impedes the footway in Wychwood, while in Weston the pavement is too narrow for ease of use by pedestrians.

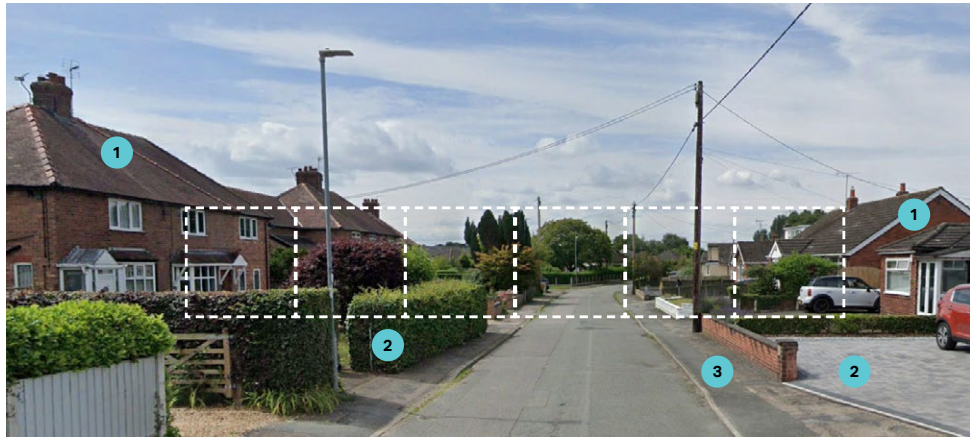


Figure 22: Mere Road, Weston

1. Semi-detached homes with hipped roofs with bungalows and pitched roofs
2. Hedges, low brick walls or open boundary treatments.
3. Pavements on both sides of the road.

Figure 23: Abbey Park Way, Wychwood

1. Housing mix (2 and 3 storey buildings) create a sense of enclosure.
2. Tight to edge with limited/no garden, sometimes with hedges.
3. On-street parking reduces pavement widths.

2.5.2 Built form and materials

Most informal settlements were developed in the 20th/21st century. The historic parts are dated earlier. There is a mix of architectural style.

In both Weston and Wychwood, homes turn the corner with a chamfered condition to the street edge, enabling a consistent building line and frontage. This form is accented by gable fronts, rendered portions or curved lintels.

Carriageway material changes show a shift from road to access lane in cul-de-sacs. Often these areas do not have pavements and gardens spill out to the street. Parking courts are notable in Wychwood, with entrances bisecting the mass of buildings.

Despite some variety in style and house types, architectural features can be narrowed down to lintels, street-facing gables, roof fascias, dormers, and gibbs surrounds or porches.

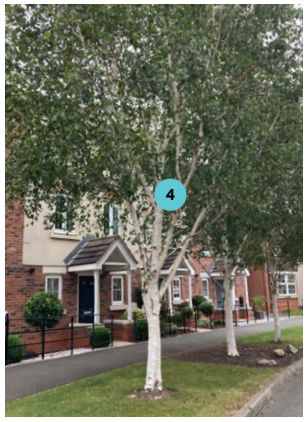


Figure 24: Selection of images showing road treatments changes (1), chamfered corners (2), gable fronts and dormer windows (5), parking court access (3), street trees (4), scale and massing variance, and hipped roofs with brown material choice (6).

2.5.3 Design vision

Informal settlements will preserve their local character and greenness, capitalising on their heritage, landscape setting and access to countryside.

Design principles to achieve the vision:

Design quality – Ensure development is produced to the highest design quality.

Layout - Enable residents or users to easily find their way around the neighbourhood.

Orientation - Provide homes with the appropriate views, vistas and outlook.

Materials - Propose material change in different roads to improve safety.

Corners - Present homes to the street corner and make sure there are no blank facades.

Housing mix - Offer a range of house types, scale and massing as well as nearby amenities.

Roofscape - Create variety with differing roof forms in-keeping with local character.

Parking - Deliver solutions to remove vehicles from on-street parking.

Figure 25: An annotated illustration creating a design vision for the area type based on site visits, analysis, and co-design processes with the NPSG. **Note:** this is not an existing streetscene. The highlighted items shown here have codes on the following page.

2.5.4 Design codes - Informal settlements

In conjunction with the area-wide codes set out in Section 3, where relevant all development **must**:

Design quality - Include features/ finishes consistent with the area.

Layout - Enhance street enclosure through the use of trees and hedges.

Avoid cul-de-sac solutions and provide a connected movement network - refer to the Healthy Streets checklist (May 2024)

Naturally screen homes with trees and planting. Front gardens must be a minimum of 1.5m in depth and include planting to at least 50% of the area.

Orientation - Streets terminated by views of the surrounding countryside. Ensure dwelling frontages are orientated outwards and avoid rear boundaries facing the landscape.

Materials – include red brick, white render, and dormer windows. Side roads must use blockwork or permeable paving rather than tarmac.

Corners - Include hard and soft landscaped verges, feature buildings or groups of buildings with strong architectural features, detailing, roof type and materiality. Buildings must turn the corner and address the street

Housing mix - Have a mix of house types: detached, semi-detached, terraced, townhouses, and corner houses. Apartments can be included but must comply with building heights. A mix of tenures is encouraged.

Roofscapes - Consider variable eave and ridge lines between adjacent buildings to create visual interest. Variation will be a maximum of 1 storey.

Parking - Include:

- on plot vehicle parking with side or rear of property garages accessed via a driveway;
- on plot parking at front of homes;
- on street parallel parking for cars.

On-plot parking must avoid being visually intrusive, especially if located at the front of plot. This can be achieved by screening parking areas with trees or planting.

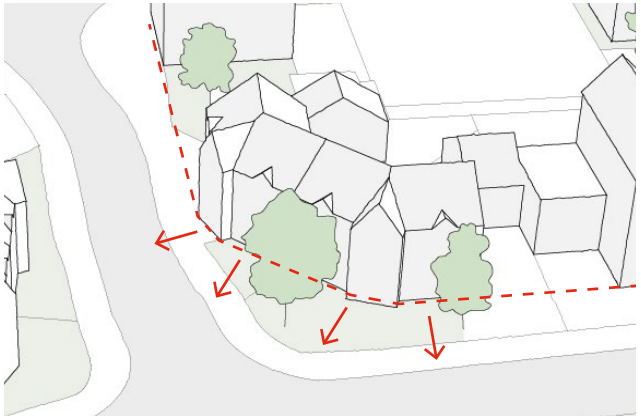


Figure 26: Homes turn the corner and address the street, ensuring no blank facades or tall boundary walls negatively impact on the street experience. Homes can also face the countryside where possible.

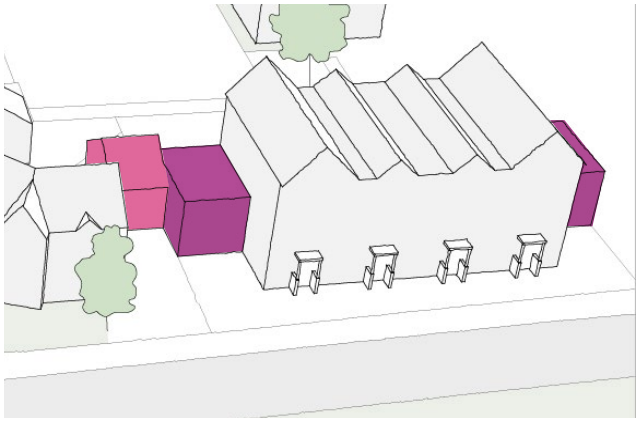


Figure 27: Housing mix - apartments, townhouses, detached, semi-detached, and bungalows - should be supported by offering affordable homes. Sufficient parking solutions are imperative. Amenities are required for new development.

4 Countryside

Further information found in Policy PG6 - Open Countryside as part of the Cheshire East Local Plan

2.6 Countryside

Area type 4: Countryside, is the widest of the area and is the setting of all its settlements. It defines the character of the NA overall, making it rural and green. Weston and Crewe Green are part of the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character Area, which is characterised by flat or gently rolling pastoral farmland, including woodland patches and flood plains. The area is natural, however, active farms are still found.

Figure 28: View of Crewe Hall park towards Stowford from Randolph Road

Figure 29: Open landscape seen from Snape Lane: long-distance views are available through the area

Figure 30: Deciduous woodland (Old Park Road)

Figure 31: Countryside seen from Narrow Lane (Crewe Green).

5 Estate village

2.7 Estate villages

This area type includes Crewe Hall, a large Jacobean mansion built between 1615 and 1636 which is a hotel, restaurant, and health club today. The hall was extended in the 18th century, altered by Edward Blore in the Victorian era, and restored by E. M. Barry after a fire in 1866. The hall includes a park with formal gardens added in the 19th century.

This mansion includes distinctive architectural features that are reflected on a minor scale in Crewe Green and Stowford. In particular, the brickwork is a fundamental feature that gives quality to the building and is considered distinctive where present in the NA.

Figure 32: A large service wing was added to the west end c1800 in a similar style.

Figure 33: The building was said to have 'brought London into Cheshire'.

Figure 34: The main approach to the Hall is up a straight, 500m long drive

Area-wide design codes and guidance

03

A view of an characteristic garden and home

3. Area-wide design codes and guidance

This chapter presents a series of area-wide design codes, applicable to future development within the Weston and Crewe Green Neighbourhood Area (NA). These design codes should be considered in conjunction with the area type specific design guidelines in Section 2.

Introduction

This section supports developers and other applicants when producing or reviewing planning applications within the Weston and Crewe Green NA. The featured guidelines and codes apply to the whole Neighbourhood Area, including any future allocated sites, infill development, and windfall development. There is a focus on residential development.

It is acknowledged that there is not always agreement on aesthetic issues and architectural tastes may vary. The following guidance therefore allows for flexibility and design innovation, whilst ensuring that any new development is appropriate and complementary to the surrounding context.

The guidance in this section is focused on topics that help designers and decision makers respond appropriately to context. To enable a clear design process, new development proposals must use the guidance to ensure that development proposals enhance the setting and sustainability of the Neighbourhood Area, while not detracting from its context, local character, and sense of place.

The goal of this document is to promote the delivery of the best possible range of residential development, which will support sustainable and contextually appropriate development.

Codes and Guidance are arranged under the following overarching headings:

A **Connections** Streetscene, Design speed, Footways, Parking solutions, and Cycle parking

B **Built Form** Design response, Layout and density, Infill and backland, Responding to heritage, Boundaries, Building lines, Rooflines, Chimney stacks, Dormer windows, Extensions and alterations.

C **Nature** Settlement edge, Open space, Hedges and trees, Energy solutions, and Sustainable Drainage.

Please note:

Both design codes and guidelines are contained within this document, highlighted within green boxes as shown here. The difference between codes and guidelines is noted below:

Codes are mandatory requirements for design issues and are expressed with the word **MUST**.

Guidelines set out aspirations and expectations for design, which are expressed with one of two words:

SHOULD reflects design principles that are strongly encouraged.

COULD reflects design principles that are suggestions.

Reference to existing policy:

Where there is already reference to a topic in existing local policy or guidance, this has been highlighted alongside the below icon.

For example... For district level guidance on trees and hedgerows - please refer to Cheshire East Local Plan

A Connections

Streetscene

Streets and roads make up three-quarters of all public space (NMDC, 2021), and their design can therefore have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of local residents. Street design considerations include design speeds, space to move and rest, and legibility

The following design codes and guidelines aim to enhance the quality of the movement network within Weston and Crewe Green, ensuring routes are welcoming, legible, and safe for pedestrians.

Further guidance on Street Design can be found in The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p34-39 and p52.

3.1 Streetscene

Development proposals that propose or alter streets **must**:

Reflect the green character of existing streets via the placement of trees within adequate verges alongside carriageways, on plot, or open spaces.

Retain good quality trees wherever possible, especially those which contribute to the streetscene. Tree surveys and impact assessments will be required if removing trees.

Enhance the sense of enclosure on the street by including natural elements such as trees or hedges.

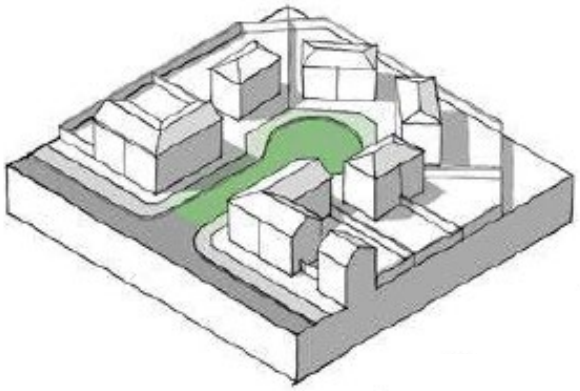
Native UK trees and planting should be preferred or non-native trees where a specific reason exists.

Avoid using cul-de-sac solutions to promote a connected movement network that does not impede pedestrians and cyclists

Where applicable and practical, speed limits should be 20mph with low traffic volumes and low speed and include design elements for traffic calming e.g. minimising the corner kerb radius.

Figure 36: Englesea Brook Lane includes green verges, mature trees and hedges.

Figure 35: A sketch showing a road with on-street parking and chicanes. New development should consider integrating traffic calming measures such as these to help reduce traffic speeds without the need for speed bumps.



3.1.1 Design Speed

Appropriate measures to reduce speed and increase areas for non-car uses **must** be sought via the following methods:

- road alignment;
- staggered junctions;
- road surfaces closely aligned with materials used in footways;
- reducing carriageway widths; and
- incorporating non-typical highway uses - e.g. planting, sculpture etc.

Speed restraint features **must** be provided on roads with design speed <30mph at 60-100m separation.

3.1.2 Footways

Footways **must** be designed to be comfortable, durable, accessible, safe, and direct in order to encourage use:

Provide a clear footway zone of 2m minimum width. Where the footway is narrower, it must not be continued for more than 6m in length.

A detectable kerb of at least 100mm upstand must be provided between footway and carriageway on primary and secondary streets.

Tactile paving must be provided at all side-road junctions and crossings.

In high pedestrian flow areas, where access is required across the footway, pre-cast kerb units with an 'integrated drop' must be used.

3.2 Parking solutions

All parking bays **must** be a minimum of 2.5m x 5m unless in front of a garage, in which case they **must** be at least 2.5m x 6m, however, the dimensions of bays for electric vehicle (EV) charging takes precedence and must be a minimum of 2.8m wide and **must** take account of the minimum space requirements set out for EV charge points in Building Regulations Part S, which vary depending on whether they are free standing, or wall mounted.

The width of parent and child parking bays **should** be at least 3.6m and a length at least 6.6m.

On-street, parallel bays **must** be marked out to ensure parking does not impact footways. Parallel parking bays **must** at least 6m long and 2m wide.

When needed, residential car parking can be translated into a mix of on-plot side, front, and garage, complemented by courtyard parking (see diagram).

Porous surface and green parking spaces, e.g. grass-crete are preferable to impermeable surfaces.

Parking areas and driveways **should** consider impervious surfaces, e.g. permeable paving.

Garages must be at least 5m (wide) and 9m (deep).

1 bedroom dwellings will provide at least 1 on-plot parking space; 2 - 3 bedroom dwellings will provide 2 on-plot parking spaces; and 4 - 5 bedroom dwellings will provide 3 on-plot parking spaces.

3.2.1 Electric Vehicle charging

Design issues to address for public parking:

- Provision of adequate new charging points and spaces and retrofitting existing parking areas.
- Integrating charging infrastructure sensitively within streets and spaces.

Design issues to address for parking at the home:

- Convenient on plot parking and charging points close to homes.
- Potential to incorporate charging points under cover within car ports and garages.

3.2.2 Cycle parking

For residential units, where there is no on-plot garage, covered and secured cycle parking **should** be provided within the domestic curtilage.

Cycle storage **must** be provided at a convenient location with an easy access.

Where possible, cycle parking **should** be accessed from the front of the building either in a specially constructed enclosure or easily accessible garage.

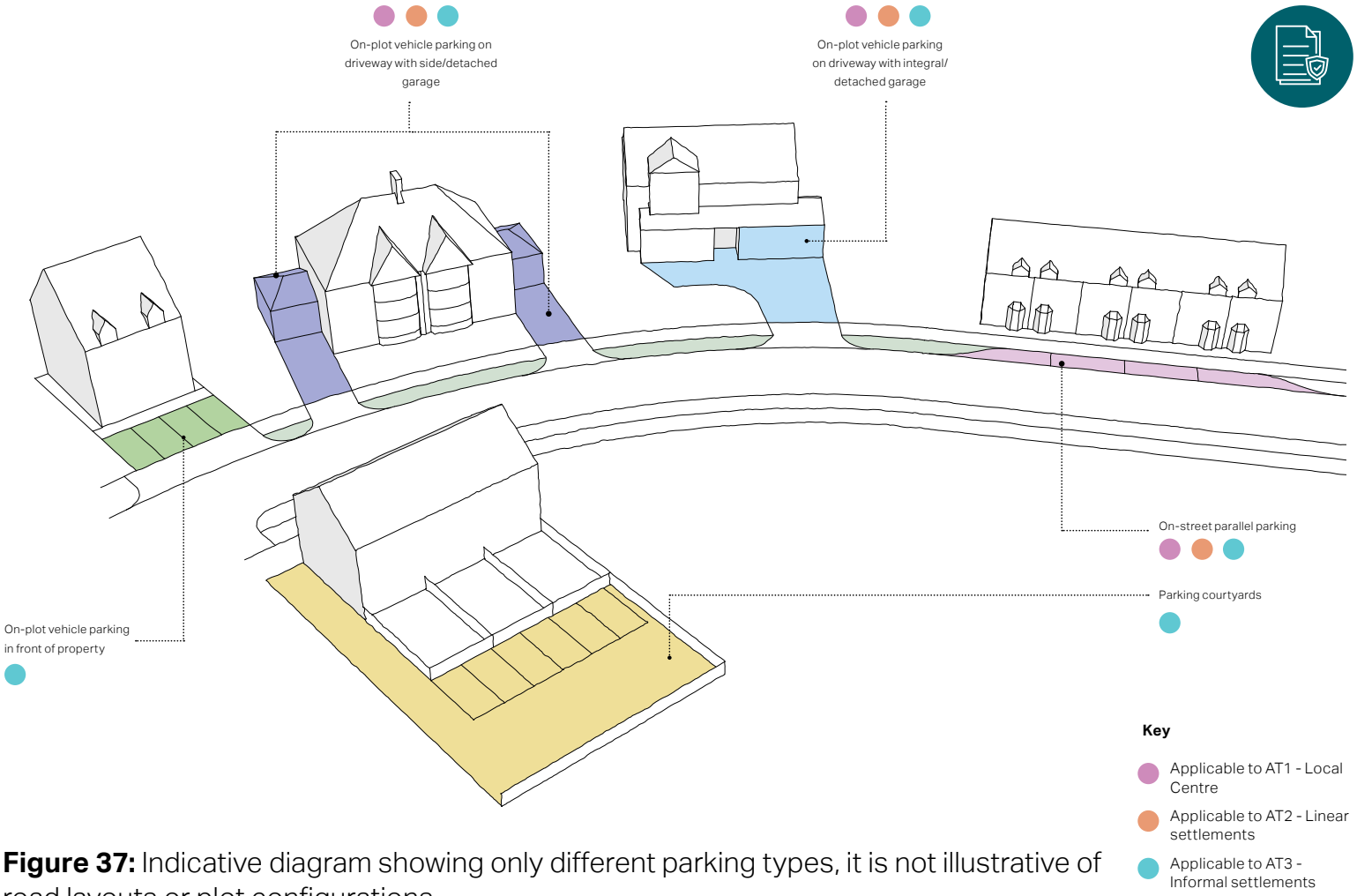


Figure 37: Indicative diagram showing only different parking types, it is not illustrative of road layouts or plot configurations

Further guidance on Parking can be found in The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p23-27.

Note: Building Regulations Part S is a requirement for new and existing homes undergoing large renovations to have facilities electric vehicle charging. Further guidance can be found via Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Approved Documents.

Further guidance on Cycle Infrastructure Design see The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p40 and Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 2/08

B Built form

Built Form

Covering density, layout, building lines, and heights - built form refers to the three dimensional arrangement of buildings, blocks and spaces. These elements are crucial in shaping the overall look and feel of a neighbourhood.

Weston and Crewe Green's buildings are some of the most defining features within the Neighbourhood Area. They act as important links to the village's history. Any new development should be in-keeping with these buildings to maintain a sense of place.

Although built form varies by area type (as set out in Section 2), there are some commonalities across the Neighbourhood Area. All new development must adhere to the following codes and guidance, as well as referring to the area type specific guidelines in Section 2. Some of the following guidance is directed at development on existing plots, such as extensions and alterations, though many of the suggested principles can be applied across all forms of new development.

3.3 Design response

Designers **must** respond to the character of the Neighbourhood Area with one of the following three approaches, considered in the following order:

Harmonise - clearly respond to existing characteristics within the Neighbourhood Area, street and site, including scale, form, and appearance.

Complement - doing something slightly different that adds to the overall character and quality in a way that is nonetheless fitting, for example, additional high quality materials but harmonising in scale, form and positioning.

Innovate - doing something of high design quality that is different but adds positively to the built-form and character and is considered an exemplar approach for others to follow. For example, developing innovative building form and use low embodied energy and high quality materials that add to the overall design quality, sustainability and richness of the area.

Exceptions - Deviations from this code are permissible but should be justified and align with the intent of this Design Code. The code is designed to support, not restrict, creative and outstanding design solutions that either match or complement the historical character of the village, enhance sustainability, or meet local housing needs (such as affordable housing provision, or homes for younger or elder residents).

Figure 38: Organic blocks flank the curvilinear street.

Figure 39: Linear blocks flank the street, only one plot depth.

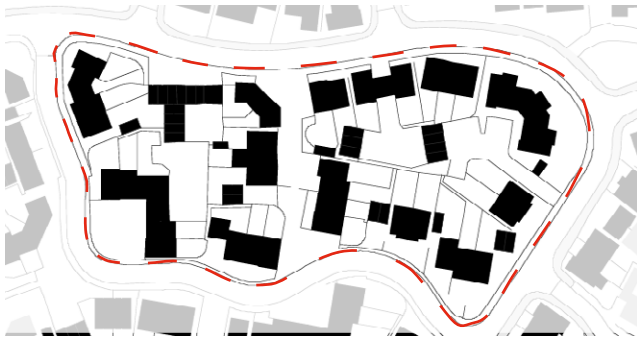


Figure 40: Informal blocks in postwar or recent development.

3.3.1 Block size

New development **must** respect the traditional patterns of growth that have come before, but **must** also consider the needs of the current and future generations.

As we seek to become less reliant on cars, smaller blocks can promote walkability and pedestrian-friendly environments, as they provide more frequent intersections and a greater concentration of destinations.

They can also facilitate a more diverse mix of uses and support smaller businesses.

Typical block sizes are:

AT1 - Local Centre context:
40-140m (long) x 25-50m (wide).
Within the street pattern, there are often snickets which allow for access and permeability.

AT2 - Linear settlements context: 70-80m (wide) x 65-440m (long).
Within the street pattern, there are often alleyways for private access or through-roads.

AT3 - Informal settlements context: 50-170m (wide) and 60-170 (long).

3.3.2 Layout and density

Development within Weston and Crewe Green **must**:

Not exceed a density of more than 37DpH in new development. Consulting the Place Type will determine the density range appropriate to the context.

Development should be considered strategically at the settlement level and should not be considered in isolation

The scale and massing of adjacent blocks must be respected, such that blocks are no more than 25% larger than the adjacent block.

Respect and respond to the immediate context in terms of built form and layout - including plot sizes and formal/ informal building layouts.

Not orient the rear of homes facing the street. Where possible, orient frontage to face open countryside.

Further guidance on Layout can be found in The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p21.

Infill and backland development

New development will likely come forward via applications in the form of infill or backland development of generally fewer than 10 homes. In the context of Weston and Crewe Green, infill and backland can be defined as:

Infill development: New development that is located in-between two existing properties.

Backland development: refers to the development of land set back behind existing properties, on allocated or non-allocated sites.

The overarching aim of these design guidelines is to promote context-sensitive infill housing of a high quality. This **should** help reinforce local character and create sustainable growth in Weston and Crewe Green.

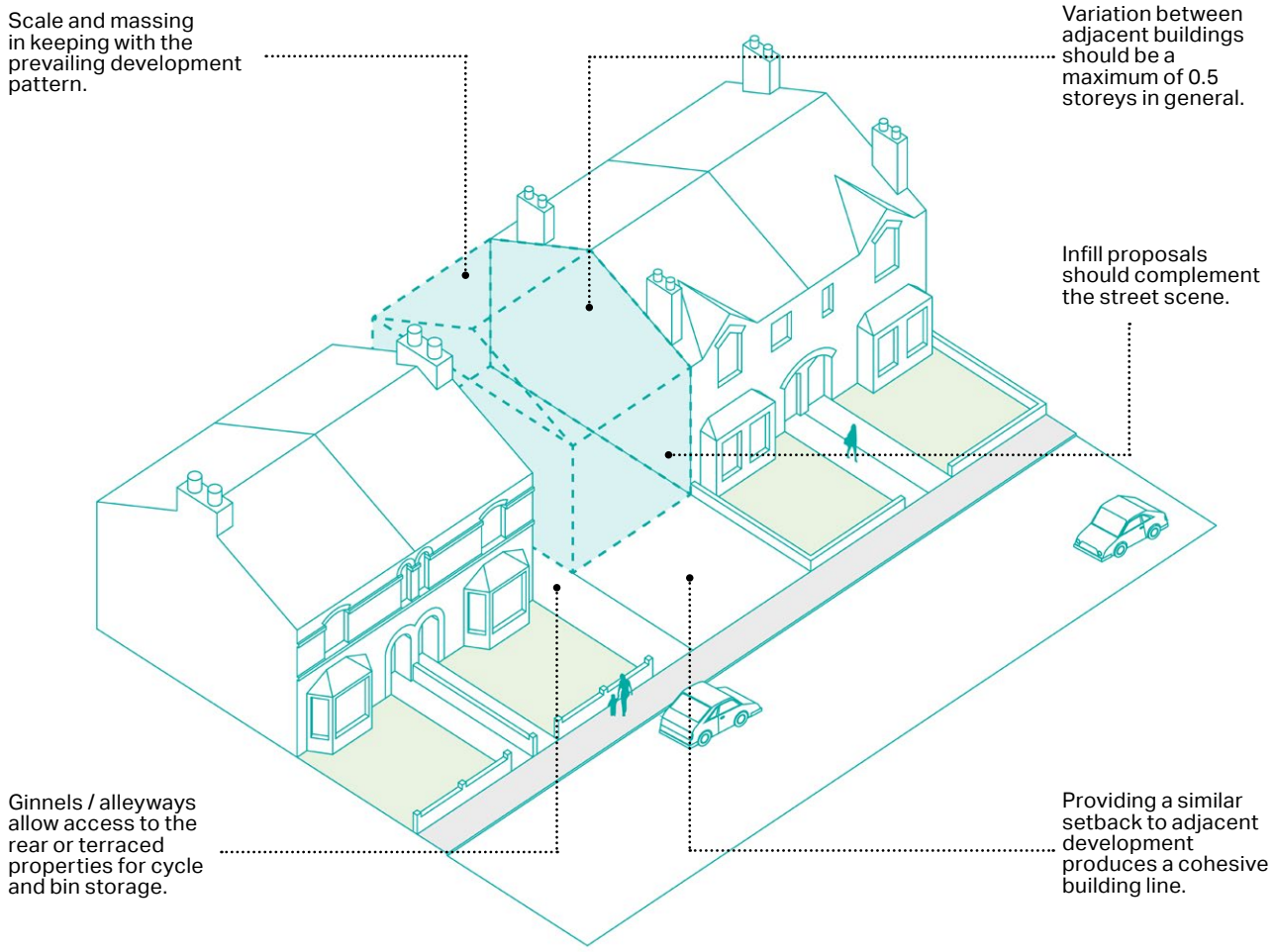


Figure 41: Diagram illustrating infill development

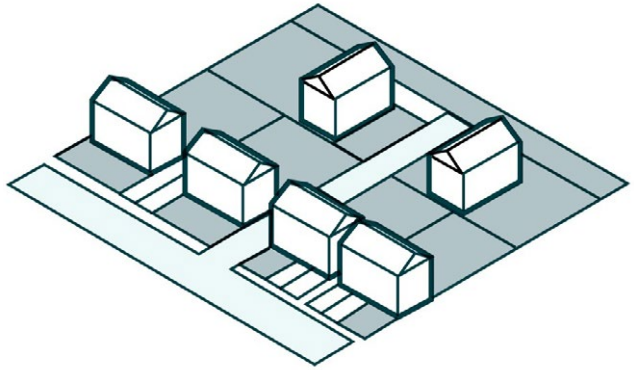


Figure 42: A good example of backland development, which reflects the scale of the existing dwellings. Main facades face a different direction to existing development, protecting privacy. Good access is also provided.

3.4 Infill and backland development

Infill development proposals **must**:

Be in keeping with the scale and massing found within the prevailing development pattern. Views must not be compromised.

Where there is an existing strong building line, the building line of new development should reflect the street and be set back no more than a maximum of 1.5m from adjacent buildings (unless additional landscaping or tree planting is being introduced to the street scene).

Where buildings are set back from the pavement, boundary features should define the plot and link up to the adjacent buildings (for example, low hedgerows or red brick walls).

Building entrances should address the street with their main facade. Corner buildings should address both streets with fenestration but the main entrance could be on either, subject to access requirements.

Building fenestration and facade design should be in keeping with the predominant positive building character on the street, or harmonise with adjacent buildings.

Building heights should vary from 1.5-3 storeys depending on adjacent plots. A variable eave line and ridge line is allowed to create interest, but variation between adjacent buildings should be a maximum of 0.5 storeys in general.

Backland development proposals **must**:

Ensure that the density, scale and appearance reflect the context (i.e. the original or adjacent buildings). Backland development should not be larger in height, massing or scale than dwellings in the immediate context. Only on exceptionally large plots would it be acceptable for any backland proposal to be larger or vary in character.

Protect the privacy, integrity and amenity of dwellings within the immediate context.

Backland access should minimise the removal or alteration of existing boundary treatments within the original plot where feasible.

3.5 Responding to heritage

Development proposals within proximity to a Listed asset or positive buildings including alterations and extensions **must**:

- Respect the historic layout and pattern, responding to positive characteristics in terms of street pattern, density and layout, plot series and boundary treatments - as set out in Section 02.
- Respond appropriately by respecting scale, massing, and height, especially where visible from public routes and spaces.
- Retain and frame key views of Listed assets and positive buildings.

Any development within a conservation area or close to a Listed building will respect the character of the surrounding built form in terms of design, scale, massing, material and height.

Proposals involving the substantial harm to (or significant loss of) Listed Buildings including demolition will not be permitted unless public benefit is demonstrable.

Materials and architectural styles applied by any developments **must** respect the Listed Building, including minimising any work that may affect the heritage assets located near to any development.

New development and any associated landscaping within the curtilage of a non-designated heritage asset, or in close proximity to, **should** ensure that the setting is not compromised. Any loss of the whole or part of such an asset will require clear and convincing justification.

Development within the setting of a non-designated heritage asset will be required to give due consideration to its significance and ensure that the setting is protected or enhanced where possible.

Buildings **should** be orientated to maintain existing key views or to create new views or vistas which will contribute to local wayfinding. Views of landmark buildings (such as the Church of All Saints) and landscape features should be utilised to promote legibility across the NA. Such views also contribute to the character and overall attractiveness of the NA and **should** therefore be considered within proposals.

Further guidance on key views, see Weston and Basford Neighbourhood Plan, Appendix 11.8, map on p56 and images thereafter.

Figure 43: Images on pages 48-49 demonstrate a selection of views from across the Neighbourhood Area showing Listed or positive buildings or views.

3.6 Boundary treatments

- Front gardens **must** be between 1.5m - 5m in depth from back of pavement to dwelling. All gardens **must** include planting to at least 50% of the area.
- Edge developments have more generous gardens with an average width of 16-25m for front and back gardens, respectively.
- Back gardens **should** be a minimum depth of 10m and provide a minimum area of 50m2 of usable amenity space.
- Boundary treatments, matched with verges or other soft landscaping, **should** clearly separate public and private land.
- Access and storage for bins **should** be designed to accommodate 4 wheelie bins and be located at the rear of dwellings or in a dedicated enclosure to reduce the detrimental impact on the streetscape.

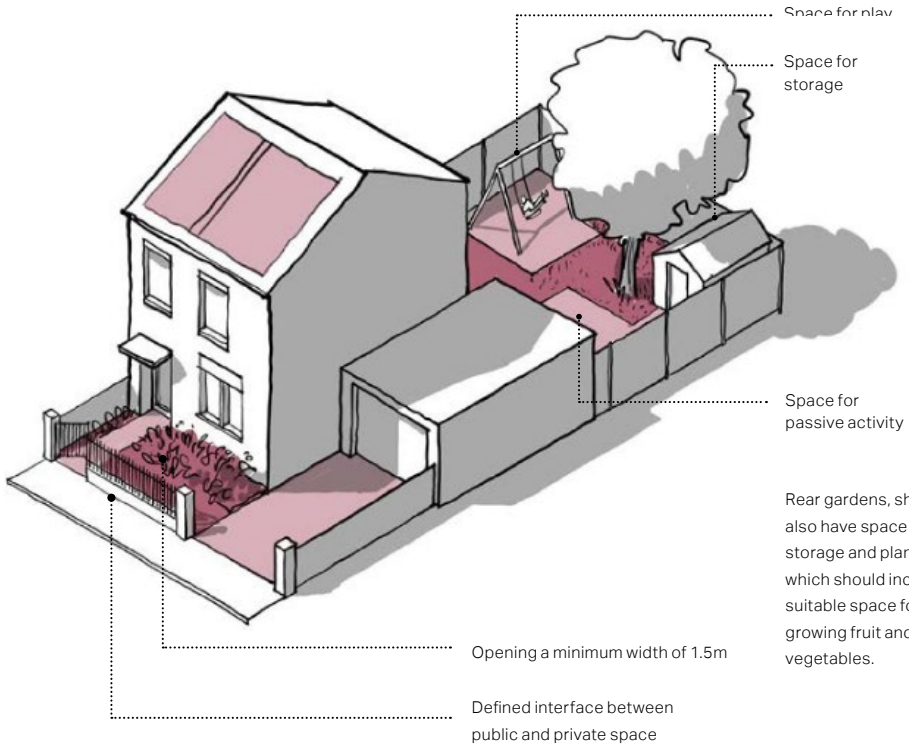


Figure 44: Front and back gardens. Diagram from the National Model Design Code.

Figure 45: Consistent building line in Weston village

Figure 46: Red brick wall defining public and private land in Weston village

3.6.1 Building lines

The building line **should** reflect the street and be set back no more than a maximum of 1.5m from adjacent buildings unless additional landscaping or tree planting is introduced to the street scene.

- Variation in building line **should** be encouraged. However, building lines and set-backs **should** reflect the predominant character of the street or area type.
- Informal building lines can be applied within lower density developments.
- Facade projections such as porches or gables **could** also help to create variation in building line.
- Corner buildings **should** address both streets with fenestration but the main entrance could be on either subject to access requirements.

Figure 47: Figure ground highlighting primary frontages and a loose-knit building line. Varied building lines are characteristic of the Neighbourhood Area and help to create unique front gardens and a visually interesting streetscene.

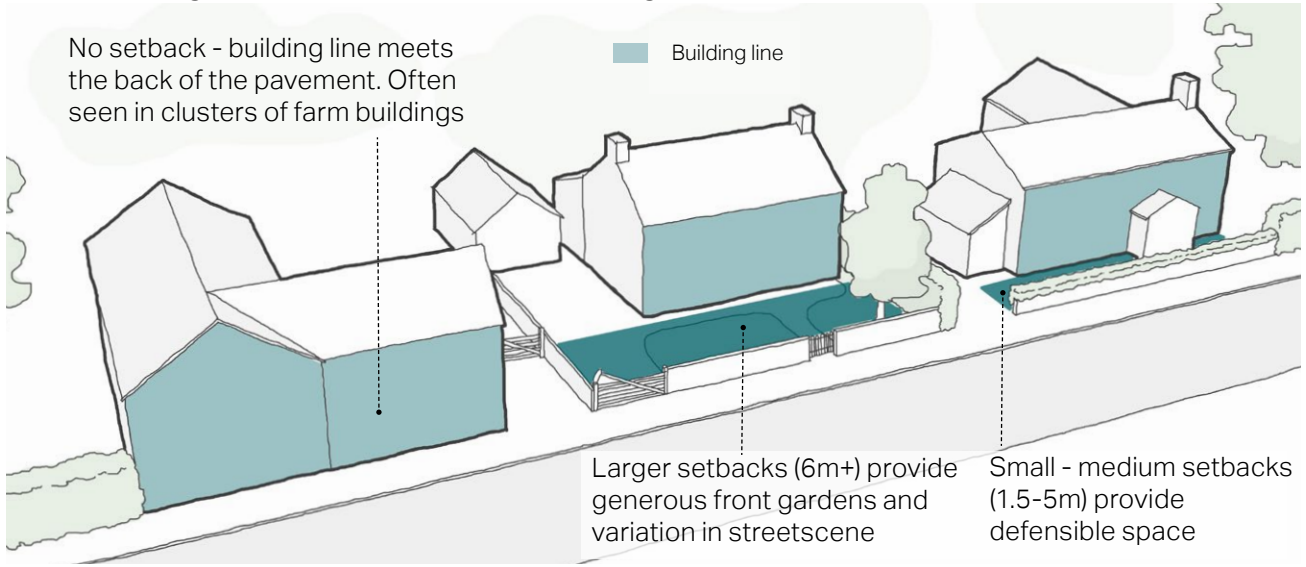


Figure 48: An example of what variation in building line may look like in a low-density settlement. Gaps between buildings and greenery create a 'loose-knit' streetscene where building line is not as dominant as it would be within more urban areas.

Roofline

The settlements across Weston and Crewe Green have an array of differing built form and architectural features. The undulating topography sometimes creates variance in roof planes. Similarly the gaps between buildings can create variety in roofline.

The use of hipped roofs, dormers, gables and decorative features provide a unique roofscape.

Uniform roofline can be applied to terraced properties or areas of greater density. 2 storey buildings with the same roof height can have a uniform roofline.

Where the development meets the countryside's edge, rooflines can be less uniform.

Key

- Pitched roof
- Hipped roof
- Gable front
- Dormer
- Chimney stacks
- Skirt roof
- Porches/ projections

Further guidance on Rooflines can be found in The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p22.

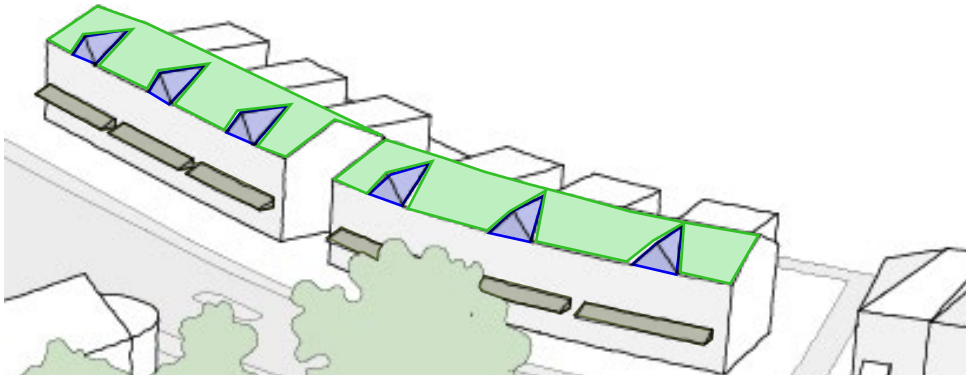


Figure 49: Uniform roofscapes are notable on terraced properties in AT1 - Local centre. This creates a consistent edge and strong relationship to the street.

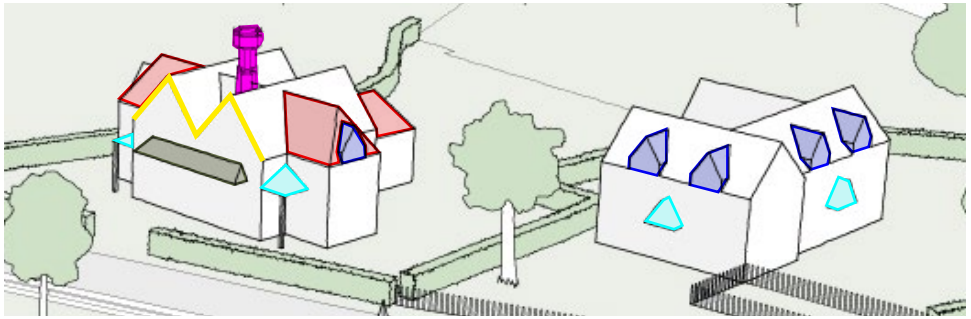


Figure 50: Different roof forms and types are notable with dormers, hipped roofs, gables, skirt roofs, and projections a common feature in AT2 - Linear settlements.

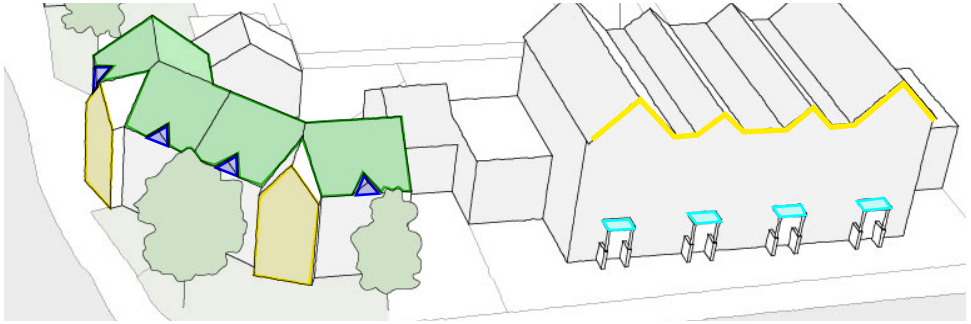


Figure 51: In AT3 - Informal settlements, there is a variety of roof types and levels.

3.7 Chimney stacks

Built form details **must** respond to the place specific context.

Roofs **must** be between 40-50 degrees to allow adaptation of roof space.

Where ridge heights are limited, this pitch is achieved by narrowing the plan depth. Ensure either a gable or the ridgeline addresses the street.

Chimneys **must**:
– Match the primary elevation material.
– Be placed symmetrically to the ridge-line.
– Rise well above the roof, a maximum of 1m.

Chimney guidance:

– Open chimneys are discouraged as they are not compatible with air tightness and low carbon design so **should** be avoided. Where there is an exceptional reason for including chimneys, they **must**:
– Only be incorporated where they serve a function, this can include addressing local character where this is a predominant feature.

3.7.1 Dormer windows

The size of any dormer **must** ensure the primary roof remains dominant and that there is not an excessive increase in overall scale i.e.. not greater than 33% of the roof elevation fronting the street.
– Dormers to front elevations **must** have pitched or hipped roofs, set down from the ridge line by at least 200mm.
– Where the height of the dormer is less than 200mm from the ridge, the width of the dormer **must** not extend the full width of property.

EXCEPTION:
- Roof lights may be more appropriate than dormers in historic areas, where dormers are
not appropriate. In conservation areas, these **must** be the smaller flush fitting conservation type with a central glazing bar.
- Where used on buildings of multiple dwellings e.g. apartments, the number of dormers may be
increased with appropriate justification.

Extensions and alterations

In addition to the likelihood of infill and backland development as set out previously, development is also likely to come forward via applications in the form of extensions and alterations.

Although some residential extensions and alterations do not require planning permission, the following design codes can still act as best-practice design guidelines for Weston and Crewe Green.

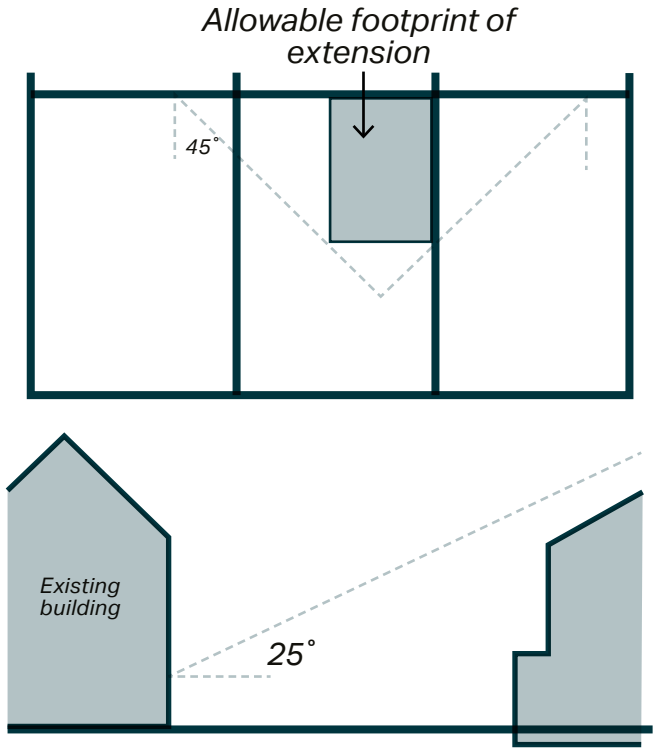


Figure 52: 25˚ / 45˚ rule

3.8 Extensions and alterations

Extensions:

Extensions to existing properties **must** be subservient or of an appropriate scale in relation to the original building.

Extensions to historic buildings (or within the setting of listed assets) **should** be sympathetic and respond sensitively to the original character of the building or nearby listed assets.

Material palettes and the style of the extension **should** be carefully chosen to respond sensitively to the form and features of the original building.

Alterations:

Wherever possible, alterations **should** reuse existing materials on site so to harmonise with the original structure.

Alterations **should** seek to restore original features such as windows, chimneys, and brickwork.

Within the conversion of buildings, any new openings **should** complement the original character.

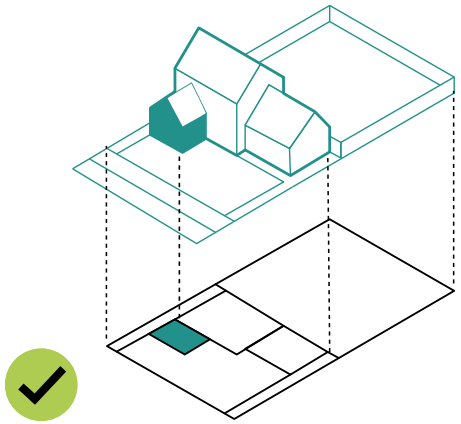


Figure 53: An acceptable example of a front extension which is smaller in scale than the existing building, mirrors the roof pitch, and covers less than 50% of the front elevation.

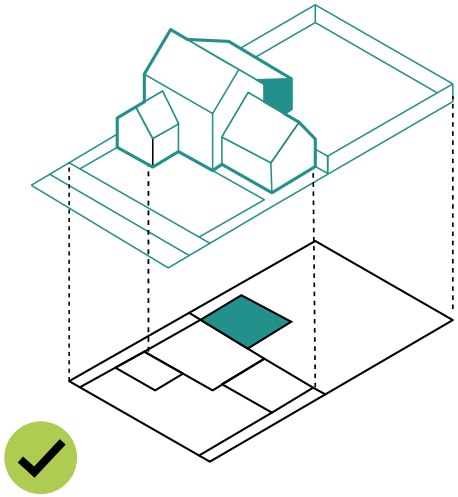


Figure 54: An acceptable example of a rear extension with a roof form and pitch which sits below the main ridge line of the original building.

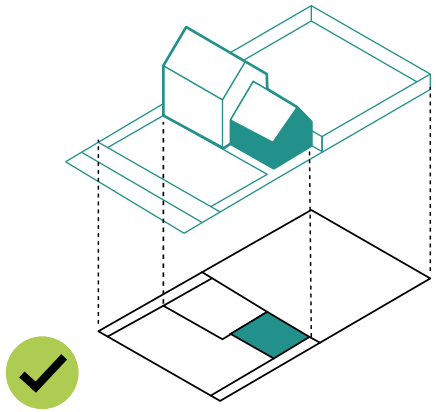


Figure 55: An acceptable example of a side extension which is single storey and set back from the main building line, with a roof form that responds to the original building.

Figure 56: Side extensions to existing property.

Front extensions should generally be avoided. If proposed, they **should** have a ridge which is below the existing ridge height, and cover less than 50% of the front elevation.

Rear extensions: Single storey rear extensions will be set below first-floor windows. Rear extensions **should** also be designed to minimise any effects on neighbouring properties. In the occasion the size, style and setting of a dwelling allows for a two storey extension, special consideration **should** be given to how the building might impact neighbouring properties.

Side extensions: Poorly designed side extensions can negatively impact on the streetscene, disrupting existing building lines or the rhythm of spaces between buildings. As such, both single and two storey side extensions **should** be set back from the main building line (at the front of the dwelling) and complement the materials and detailing of the original building.

C Nature

Green infrastructure

It is now widely acknowledged that access to nature and green space has an extremely therapeutic effect on the mind. The National Model Design Code recognises this in paragraph 57:

"Nature is good for health and wellbeing, for biodiversity, shading and cooling, noise mitigation, air quality and mitigating flood risk as well as contributing to tackling the climate emergency. Nature is also central to the creation of beautiful places."

Specific opportunities to protect and improve the existing green infrastructure network within Weston and Crewe Green should be a key driver for all new development.

3.9 Green infrastructure network

Development proposals within Weston and Crewe Green **must**:

Maintain Weston and Crewe Green's 'green' identity by protecting important and valued existing open spaces, identified as Local Green Spaces or Protected Open Spaces.

Development **should** contribute to a multi-functional green infrastructure network made up of a variety of elements: including private gardens, tree planting, grass verges, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), amenity green space, the cemetery, and surrounding countryside.

An arboricultural report **must** record trees with a stem diameter of 75mm or above, measured at 1.5m above ground level. Any trees shown in this report which are removed, **must** be replaced on a 1:2 basis within the first 3 years of development commencing. At least 75% of new trees **must** be provided within the public realm to ensure retention and management.

Meet the National Urban Greening Factors of at least 0.4 for residential development and 0.5 for residential greenfield development.

Verges play an important part of local character. They often planted with native trees, however, they are managed to a clear stem for visibility.

Any development **should** enhance biodiversity and landscape characteristics wherever possible. This will involve restoring and increasing the total area of natural habitats and landscape features, and provision of a clear landscaping scheme to demonstrate how new development will create positive green linkages and contribute to these assets.

New developments **should** strengthen biodiversity and the natural environment. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) **should** be adopted as a requirement for all relevant development.

Further guidance on Green infrastructure, see The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p57-64.

Landscape setting and settlement edge

As Weston and Crewe Green is surrounded by open countryside, the settlement edge is a key design consideration.

Further guidance on Settlement edge can be found in The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p22.

A sensitive response to the settlement edge

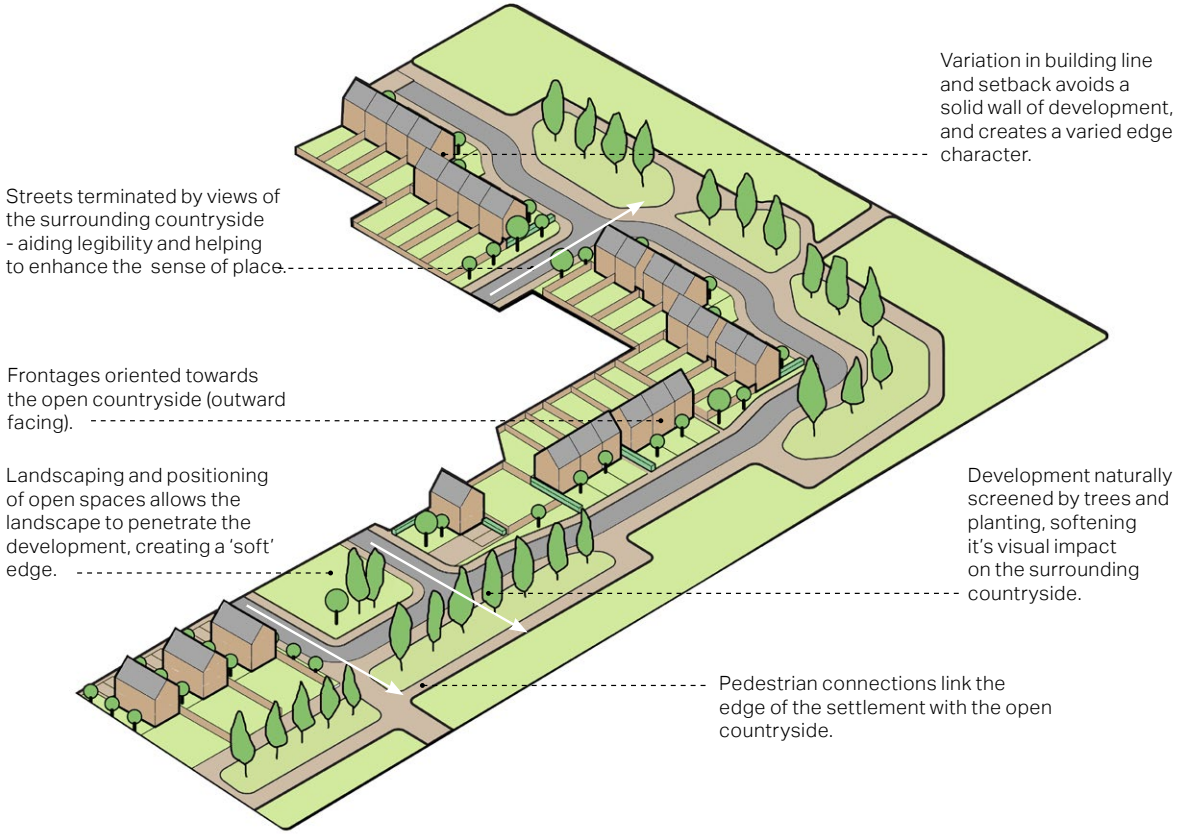


Figure 57: A sensitive response to the settlement edge is required. Indicative edge lane development model example (built form facing surrounding landscape), including trees and hedgerows that soften views to development.

3.9.1 Landscape setting and the settlement edge

Development proposals that are located on the settlement edge **must**:

Integrate development sensitively with the surrounding landscape, particularly on the periphery.

Ensure dwelling frontages are orientated outwards and avoid rear boundaries facing the landscape.

Create 'soft' boundaries between built form and the wider landscape by encouraging soft landscape planting such as hedgerow, wildflower, and tree planting.

Retain the visual quality of the landscape by prioritising lower density development. Buildings should not exceed 2 storeys.

Not obstruct key views looking both inwards and outwards of the settlement. Significant sized developments must undertake a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to ensure the impact on views is minimised and mitigation measures are implemented successfully.

Open spaces

The design of open spaces can have a significant positive impact on places, as they contribute to bringing people together and creating strong local communities. The following codes provide guidance to create safe and attractive open spaces.

Further guidance on Open space can be found in The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p65-66.

Further guidance on Materials for hard surfaces, see The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, p76.

Green belt preservation – covered by Policy PG3 of the Cheshire East Local Plan

Open space protection – open space protection covered by policy RE1 of Cheshire East Local Plan.

Strategic green gaps – covered by PG 12 of Cheshire East Local Plan.

3.9.2 Open spaces

- Have benches every 100m in parks, play areas and civic space, in all other spaces this can be up to 300m: unless specifically stated.
- Use footpath widths as noted in code 3.1.2; any gates to comply with BS5709. Minimise gradients to less than 1:20; steeper level changes managed with longer gently sloping routes.
- Developments adjoining public open spaces should arrange main building facades and entrances to face the open space.
- Green areas and open spaces should be integrated as part of an overarching green and blue strategy, allowing for easy access to public open space to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- Accessibility for wheelchairs, bicycles, and pedestrians is a priority. Avoid hardstand materials such as tarmac. Include greenery, such as trees, planting, and flower beds.

Hedges and street trees

The Neighbourhood Area's intrinsic connection to the surrounding countryside, along with its established natural environment, are typical of rural Cheshire East.

It is important to nurture the natural environment by maintaining a robust system of grass verges, hedges and street trees and ensuring that any new development incorporates these features as a priority.

The following codes set out how to consider the retention, provision, amount, type and locations for trees and other planting as a critical part of new developments.

Figure 58: Hedgerows are an integral part of the landscape character in Weston and Crewe Green.

3.9.3 Woodland, Trees and Hedgerows

- Mature and well-maintained hedges are an important part of the local character and **should** be incorporated to emphasise gardens and soften buildings, particularly at settlement edge.
- Native species **should** be encouraged such as hawthorn, hazel, purple or copper beech, blackthorn, dogwood, box hedge, holly and hornbeam.
- According to the Hedgerow Regulation 1997, any good quality hedgerows classified as important **should** be protected and enhanced where necessary. This is known as 'Important Hedgerow'.
- The loss of better quality / higher valuable trees within a site which would fail to enhance the green infrastructure and biodiversity should be minimised.
- Tree planting **should** be considered everywhere across Weston and Crewe Green to connect residents with the natural environment.

3.9.4 Tree placements

The landscape and planting strategy **should** be designed in combination with the street hierarchy as landscape is a defining character of any street. How appropriate a tree is for any given location **must** also be determined based on space requirements.

This may be stated as:

- small to medium trees for small spaces such as front gardens and narrower streets;
- larger trees for avenues and more open environments such as parks, grass verges and landscaped areas; and
- other native or suitable planting to soften the appearance of plots and buildings.

The climate emergency is the biggest challenge for species selection as the extent of this is unknown. It is safe to assume there will be greater variance with hot and dry summers and wet and windy winters.

Weather extremes tend to push native trees to the limit of what they can cope with genetically. As such, trees **should** be incorporated that are more suitable to northern and central Europe.

A significant challenge is finding species that provide similar habitats for native birds, bats and insects.

- For now, native UK trees should be preferred or non-native trees where a specific reason exists.
- Native UK trees are preferred but non-native types could be incorporated which are suitable for the biodiversity of our native species. The climate emergency will change the environment over the next 50-100 years and we may need further qualities of resilience that our native trees cannot provide.

Ensure street trees and other planting provide for a range of functions and benefits and are sufficient to help improve air quality and reduce noise from the street network.

Coordinating tree planting with utilities providers and service ducts early in the lifetime of a scheme can ensure that trees do not interfere with underground services.

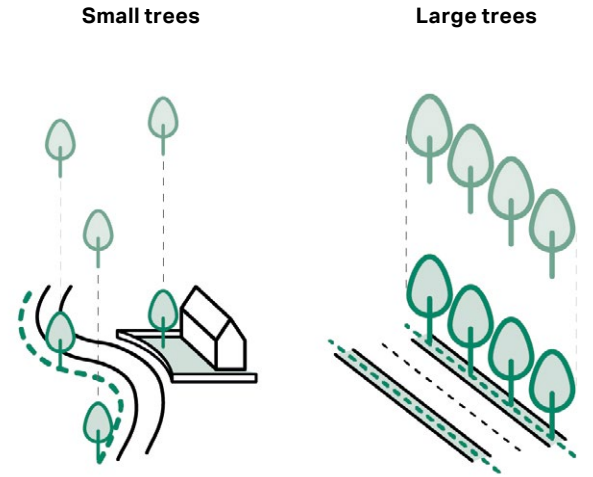


Figure 59: Infographic about tree positioning depending on size.

Figure 60: Mature trees and hedges on Cemetery Road, Weston village

3.9.5 Retain, replace, improve

The National Design Guide and National Planning Policy Framework put emphasis on tree-lined streets and integrated natural environment design to provide 'green islands' and connected corridors which contribute to localised cooling and provide habitats and public amenity.

Retain:

- Tree surveys and arboricultural reports must be provided which highlight the trees on a site which are to be retained and those which are to be removed. It is recommended that trees are retained wherever possible, unless there is justification for removal.
- Where significant trees are located on site, independent surveys to assess the development impact must be completed. This should inform the local community and could lead to objections where significant trees are impacted.

Replace:

- A tree removal and replacement strategy must be provided. Ensuring trees removed from development land are proportionately replaced is important to maintaining current levels of canopy cover and green areas. A common misconception is that replacing on a 1-for-1 basis is proportional. This is not necessarily the case. 1-for-1 replacement can reduce canopy cover, natural habitats and public amenity.
- Where trees are to be replaced, planning policy for the replacement of trees must be followed.

Improve:

- To just replace removed trees or do nothing if trees are not removed is commonly misunderstood to be acceptable. However, the NPPF requires 'improvement', 'enhancement' and 'net gain'. These are not words that aim to maintain a status quo on trees.

For larger scale development sites, an area of development land **could** be dedicated for tree planting in the form of a multi-functional community woodland. Relative population density and designated land use types put pressure on a greater density of development and often results in side-lining tree planting and biodiverse natural environment design.

Figure 61: Larch Avenue, a tree-lined street in Basford

3.10 Water sensitive urban design

The following design guidance applies to new development:

- Avoid siting homes in high risk flood areas and seek to adopt the use of permeable paving in hard landscape areas.
- Integrate SuDS into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices.
- Reduce runoff rates by facilitating infiltration into the ground or by providing attenuation that stores water to help slow its flow down so that it does not overwhelm water courses or the sewer network.
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area. When integrated into the landscape, they can also provide biodiversity and amenity benefits.
- Natural barriers (e.g. planting) and appropriate side slopes **should** be introduced to help manage perceived safety risks.

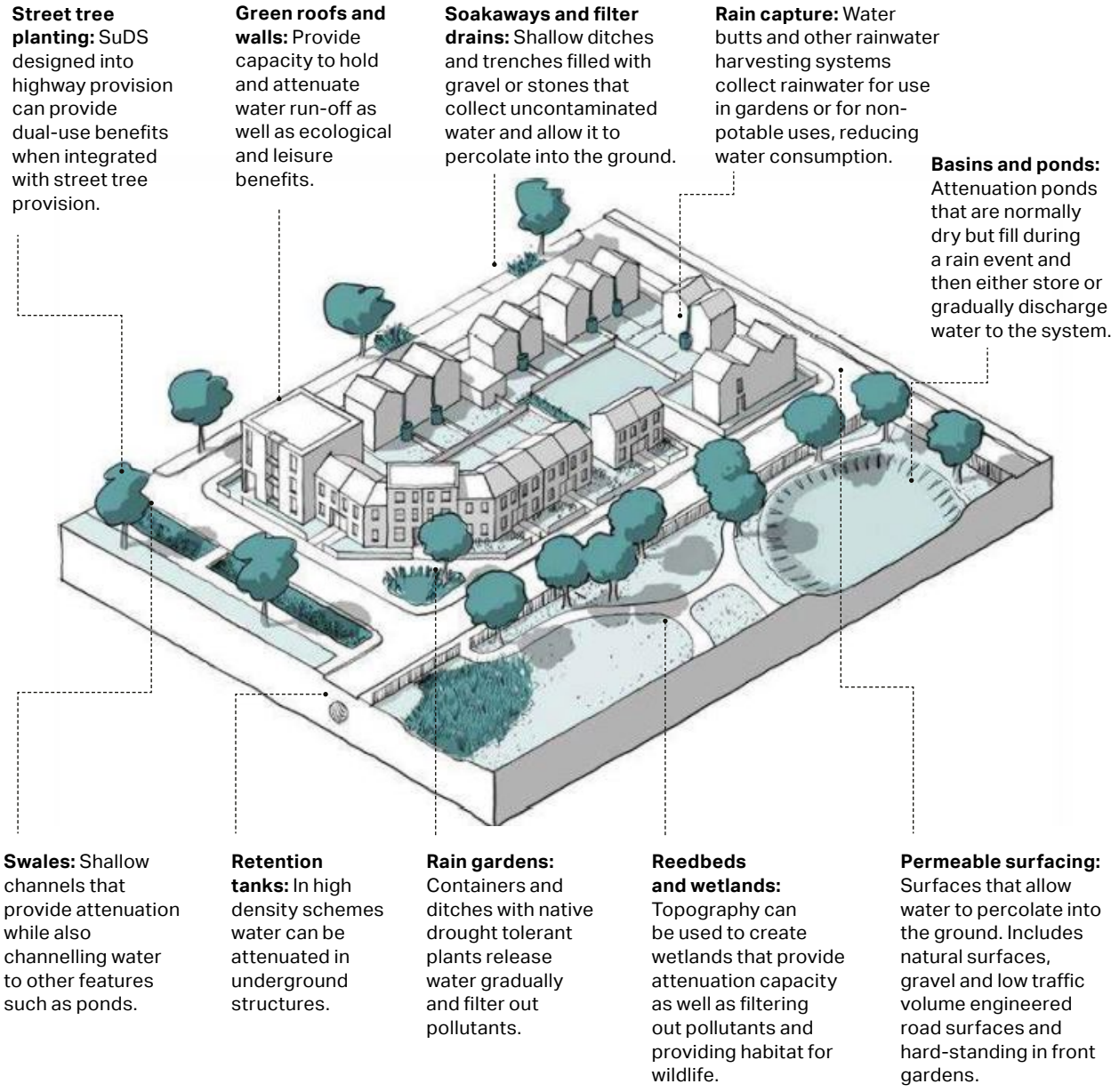


Figure 62: Sustainable drainage system design as set out in the National Model Design Code (NMDC).

3.10.1 Sustainable drainage

The term SuDS stands for Sustainable Drainage Systems. It covers a range of approaches to managing surface water in a more sustainable way to reduce flood risk and improve water quality whilst improving amenity benefits.

- Form a 'SuDS train' of two or three different surface water management approaches;
- Integrate into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices;
- SuDS are often as important in areas that are not directly in an area of flood risk themselves, as they can help reduce downstream flood risk by storing water upstream;
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area; and
- The location of SuDS features will respond to the topography on site.

Figure 64: Roadside SuDS

Figure 63: Drainage pond in Weston Woods development, Weston village

Energy efficiency measures

Existing homes

1. Insulation
2. Double or triple glazing with shading
3. Low-carbon heating
4. Draught proofing
5. Highly energy- efficient appliances
6. Highly water- efficient devices
7. Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)
8. Flood resilience and resistance

Additional measures in new build homes

- A High levels of airtightness
- B More fresh air
- C Triple glazed windows and external shading
- D Low-carbon heating
- E Water management and cooling
- F Flood resilience and resistance
- H Construction and site planning
- I Solar panels
- J Electric car charging point

Further guidance on Sustainable Design, see The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, Vol 2, Section 5.

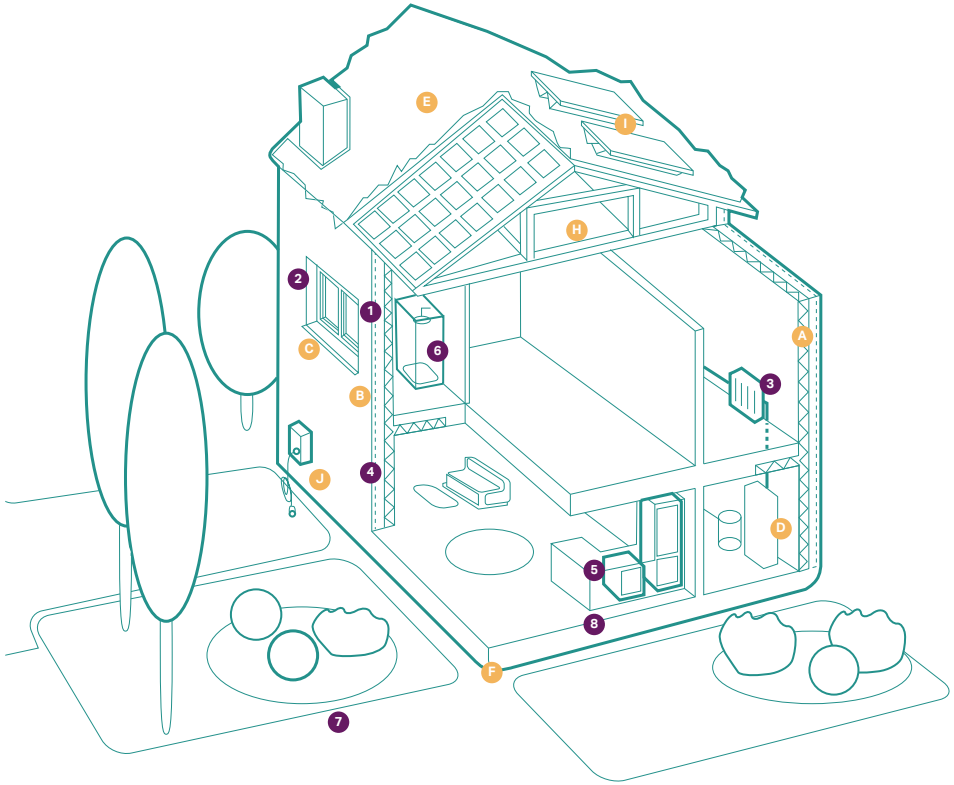


Figure 65: Cut-through diagram of an energy efficient home and its features.

3.11 Energy efficiency measures

Key considerations in the assessment of renewable energy sources for development to be net zero for power generation may include (but are not limited to):

- Maximising on-site renewable energy generation where appropriate.
- Considering a heat network for any new development.
- Ground conditions to accommodate loops for ground source heat and space for air source heat pump units.
- Opportunities to create links to local estates for sustainable coppicing, harvesting or recycling of biomass fuels.
- Collaborating with utilities, highway authorities, telecoms companies and other stakeholders when designing and delivering projects to minimise energy usage and disruption during the construction stage and reinforcement of the electricity grid for additional electric vehicles and renewables.

Building fabric

Thermal mass

Thermal mass describes the ability of a material to absorb, store and release heat energy. Thermal mass can be used to even out variations in internal and external conditions, absorbing heat as temperatures rise and releasing it as they fall. Thermal mass can be used to store high thermal loads by absorbing heat introduced by external conditions, such as solar radiation, or by internal sources such as appliances and lighting, to be released when conditions are cooler. This can be beneficial both during the summer and the winter.

Thermal storage in construction elements can be provided, such as a trombe wall placed in front of a south facing window or concrete floor slabs that will absorb solar radiation and then slowly re-release it into the enclosed space. Mass can be combined with suitable ventilation strategies.

Insulation

Thermal insulation can be provided for any wall or roof on the exterior of a building to prevent heat loss. Particular attention **should** be paid to heat bridges around corners and openings at the design stage.

Provide acoustic insulation to prevent the transmission of sound between active (i.e. living room) and passive spaces (i.e. bedroom). Provide insulation and electrical insulation to prevent the passage of fire between spaces or components and to contain and separate electrical conductors.

Airtightness

Airtight constructions help reduce heat loss, improving comfort and protecting the building fabric. Airtightness is achieved by sealing a building to reduce infiltration- which is sometimes called uncontrolled ventilation. Simplicity is key for airtight design. The fewer junctions the simpler and more efficient the airtightness design will be.

An airtight layer **should** be formed in the floor, walls and roof. Doors, windows and roof lights to the adjacent walls or roof should be sealed. Interfaces between walls and floor and between walls and roof, including around the perimeter of any intermediate floor **should** be linked. Water pipes and soil pipes, ventilation ducts, incoming water, gas, oil, electricity, data and district heating, chimneys and flues, including air supplies to wood burning stoves, connections to external services, such as entry phones, outside lights, external taps and sockets, security cameras and satellite dishes should be considered.

The opposite diagram illustrates some of the key considerations.

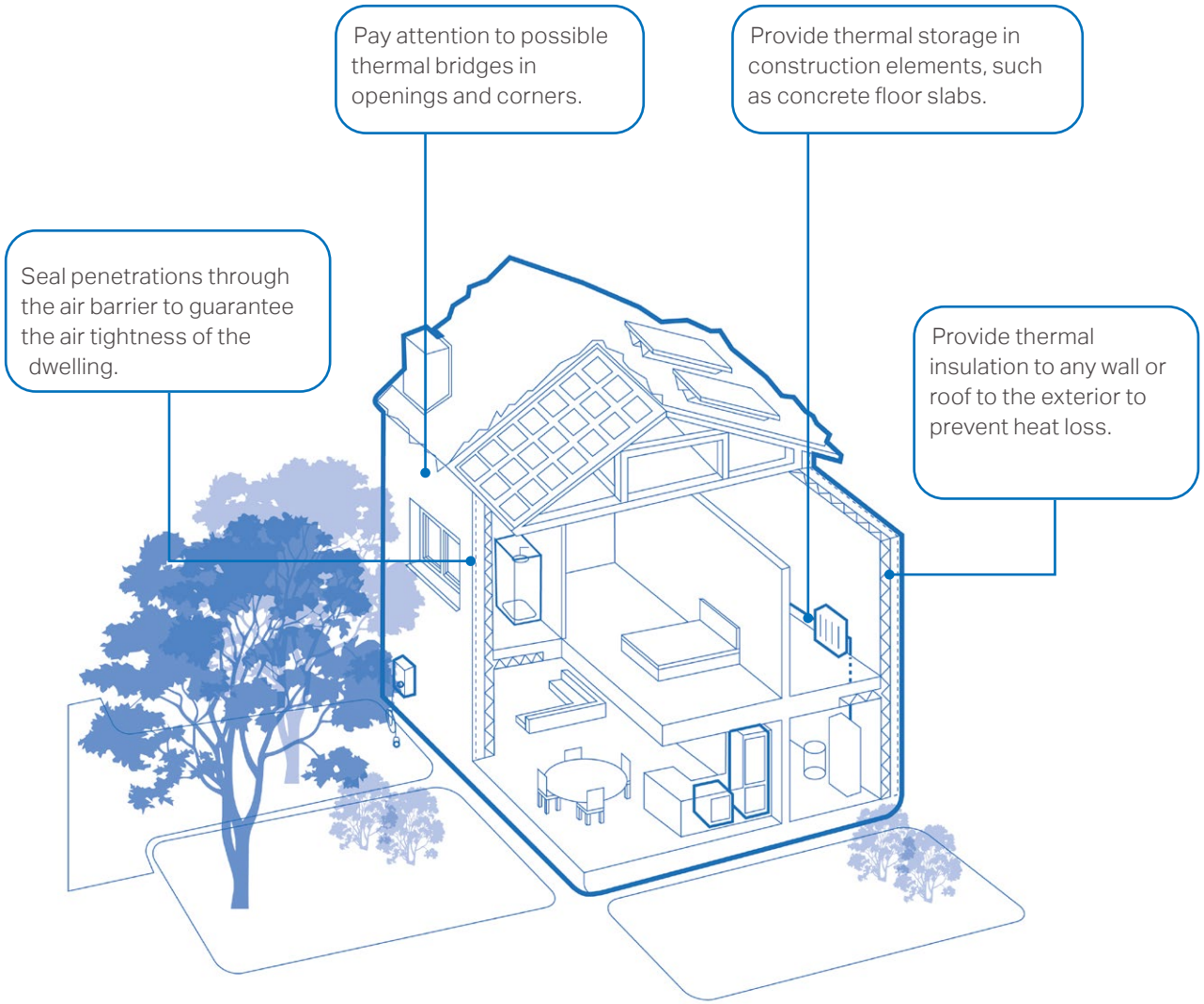


Figure 66: Diagram illustrating aspects of the building fabric to be considered.

3.11.1 Assessing Alternative Energy Sources

Key considerations in the assessment of alternative energy sources for development may include (but are not limited to):

- Optimise solar orientation of buildings. Aim to increase the number of buildings on site that are oriented within 30' of the south (both main fenestration and roof plane) for solar gain, solar energy (solar panels) and natural daylighting;
- Ground conditions to accommodate loops for ground source heat and space for air source heat pump units;
- Links to local estates for sustainable coppicing, harvesting or recycling of biomass fuels; and
- Local wind speed and direction in Weston and Crewe Green for micro-generation wind turbines.

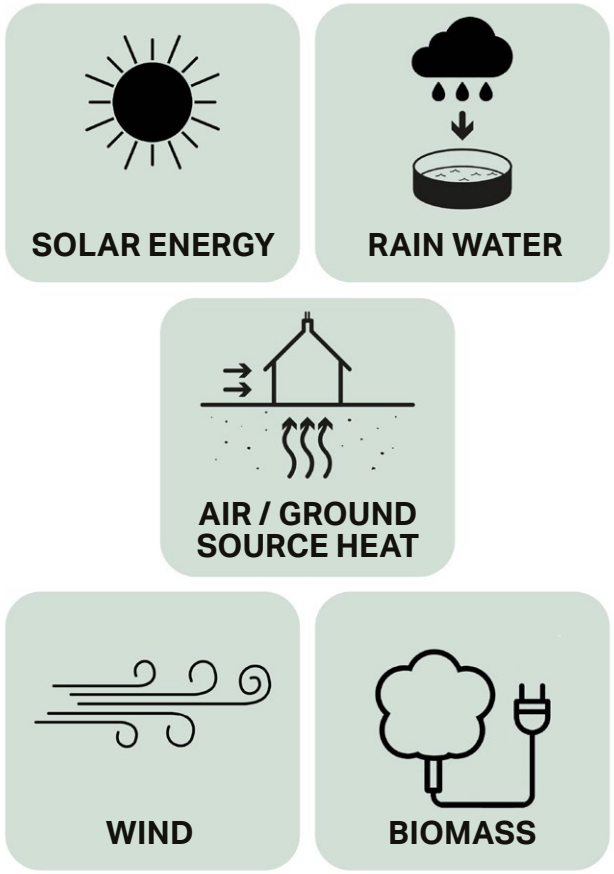


Figure 68: Key alternative natural energy sources

Figure 67: Micro-generation wind turbines can be discreetly applied on top of roofs

Appendix

A view of a narrow lane

Appendix A - Desktop Study

Appendix A contains a 'desktop study' which outlines the context, landscape character, built heritage, and connectivity of the village and the wider Neighbourhood Area (NA).

Completed in advance of the site visit, the intention of the desktop study is to provide an initial baseline analysis for the Neighbourhood Area (NA).

This allows consultants to gain an understanding of the place, its opportunities and its constraints in advance of the site visit. At the end of the desktop study, a series of area types were proposed for initial comment. These have since been amended following discussions with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG).

This desktop study helps to initially identify the variation in character across the NA, which in turn informs the route traveled around the area on the day of the site visit. This ensures that all key areas of character are visited and documented within the site visit.

The desktop study identified key issues that were used to generate a Code Plan. This Code Plan was discussed, refined and greed by the NPSG prior to the final document production.

The desktop study was issued to the group in advance of the site visit, for their review and comment. The site visit has then been used to cross check the initial information provided, and area types proposed within the desktop study, as well as providing a point of discussion for the group.

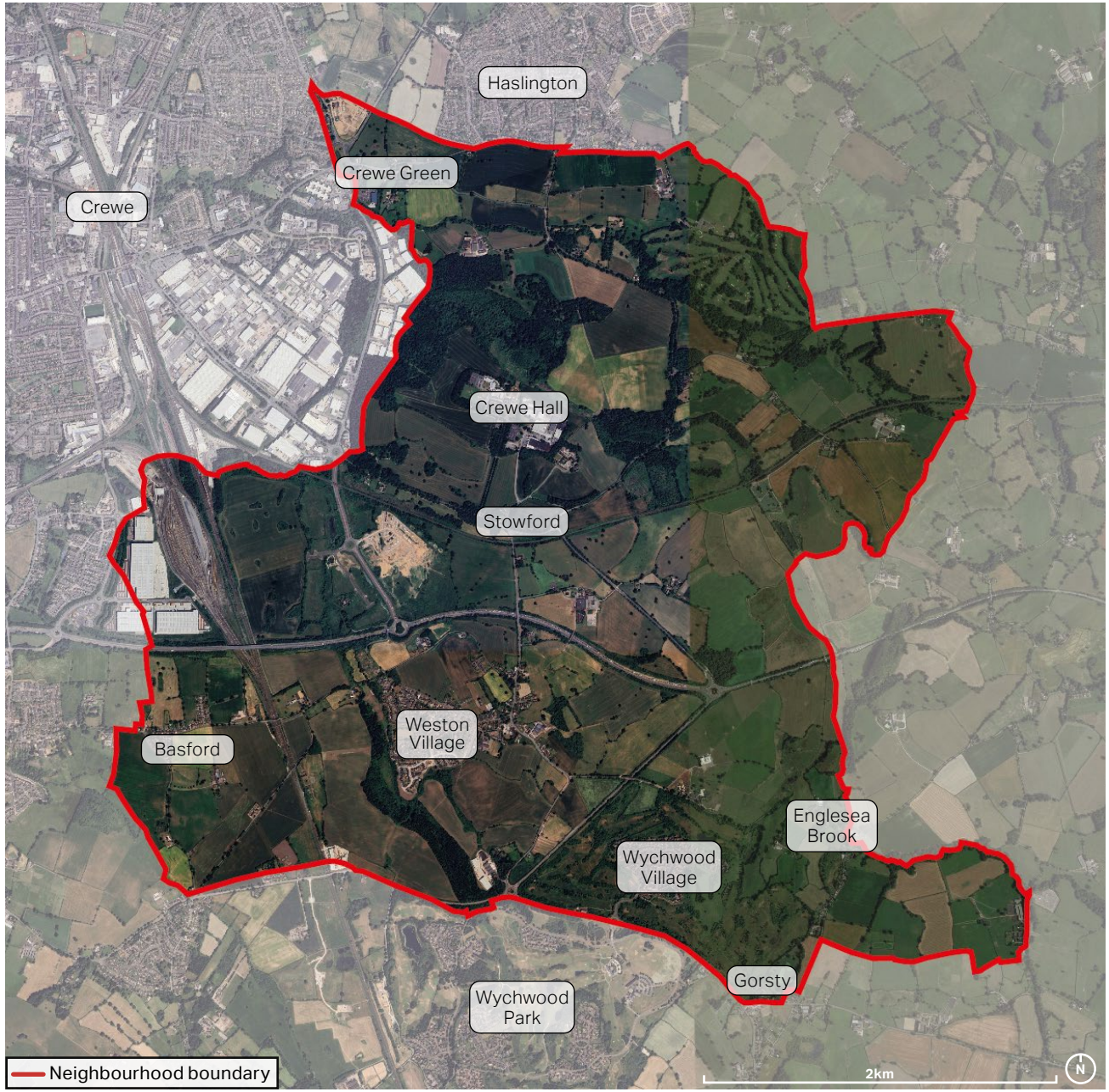
Following the site visit and receipt of the groups comments, the desktop study was updated to ensure it accurately reflected factual information, area types, and the groups key priorities. This baseline information was then used to inform the more in depth place analysis undertaken within Section 2.

The desktop study was a working document, superseded by the Design Code.

Figure 01: With much of the NA being rural in character, connections to surrounding countryside is a key benefit for residents.

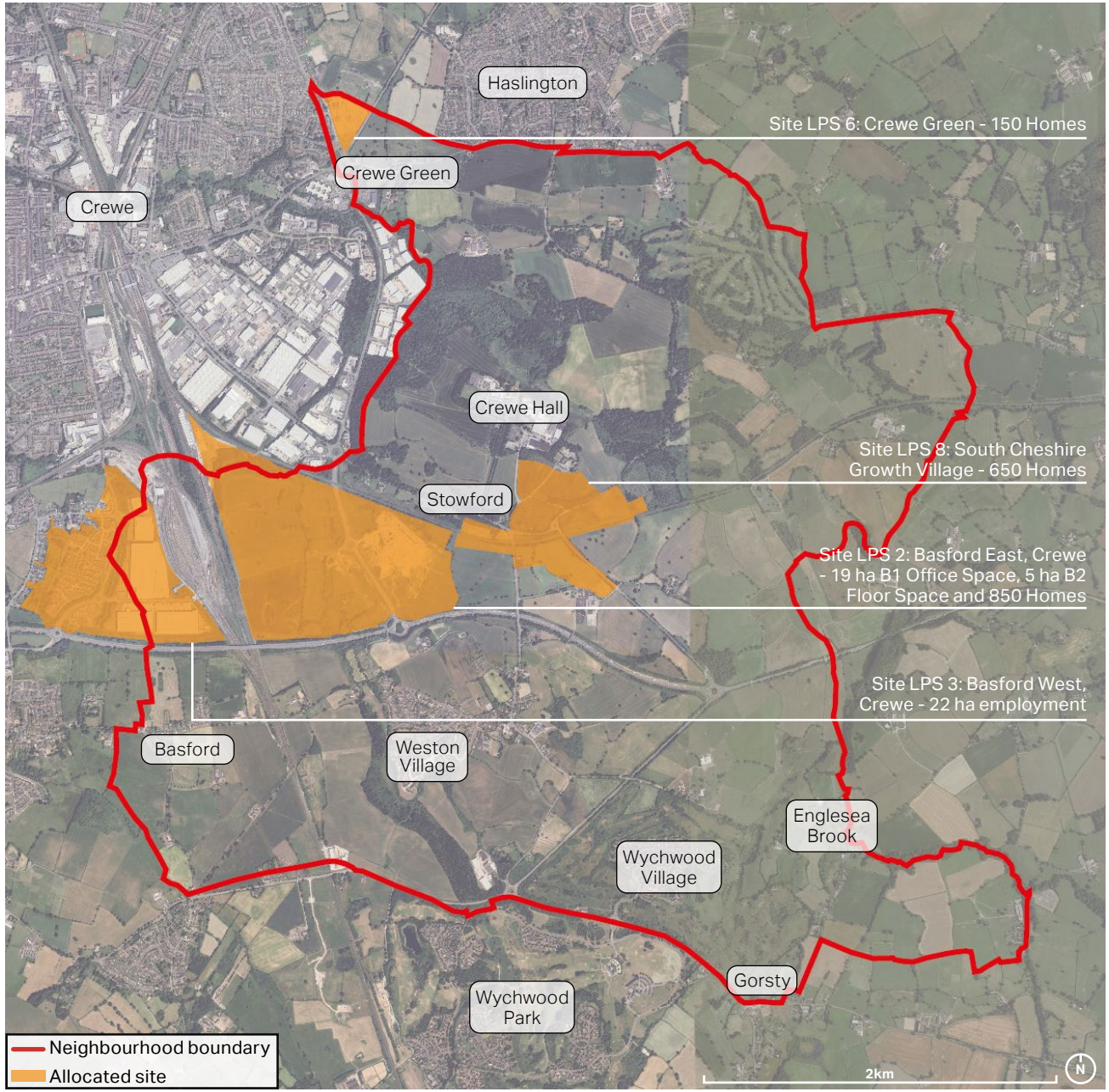
Context

- The parish of Weston and Crewe Green was formed in 2023 as a merger between the parish of Weston and Basford and the parish of Crewe Green.
- Weston and Crewe Green falls within the unitary authority of Cheshire East in the historic county of Cheshire in North West England.
- The neighbourhood area covers an area of approximately 1,500 hectares and forms the south eastern hinterland of Crewe, a major transport hub.
- There are seven disparate settlements within the neighbourhood area.
- Weston Village is the primary settlement containing most of the neighbourhood area's amenities including All Saints Church and the White Lion pub.
- Basford is a small linear community.
- Englesea Brook, Crewe Green and Stowford are historic hamlets.
- The settlement of Gorsty falls partially within the neighbourhood area.



Allocated Sites

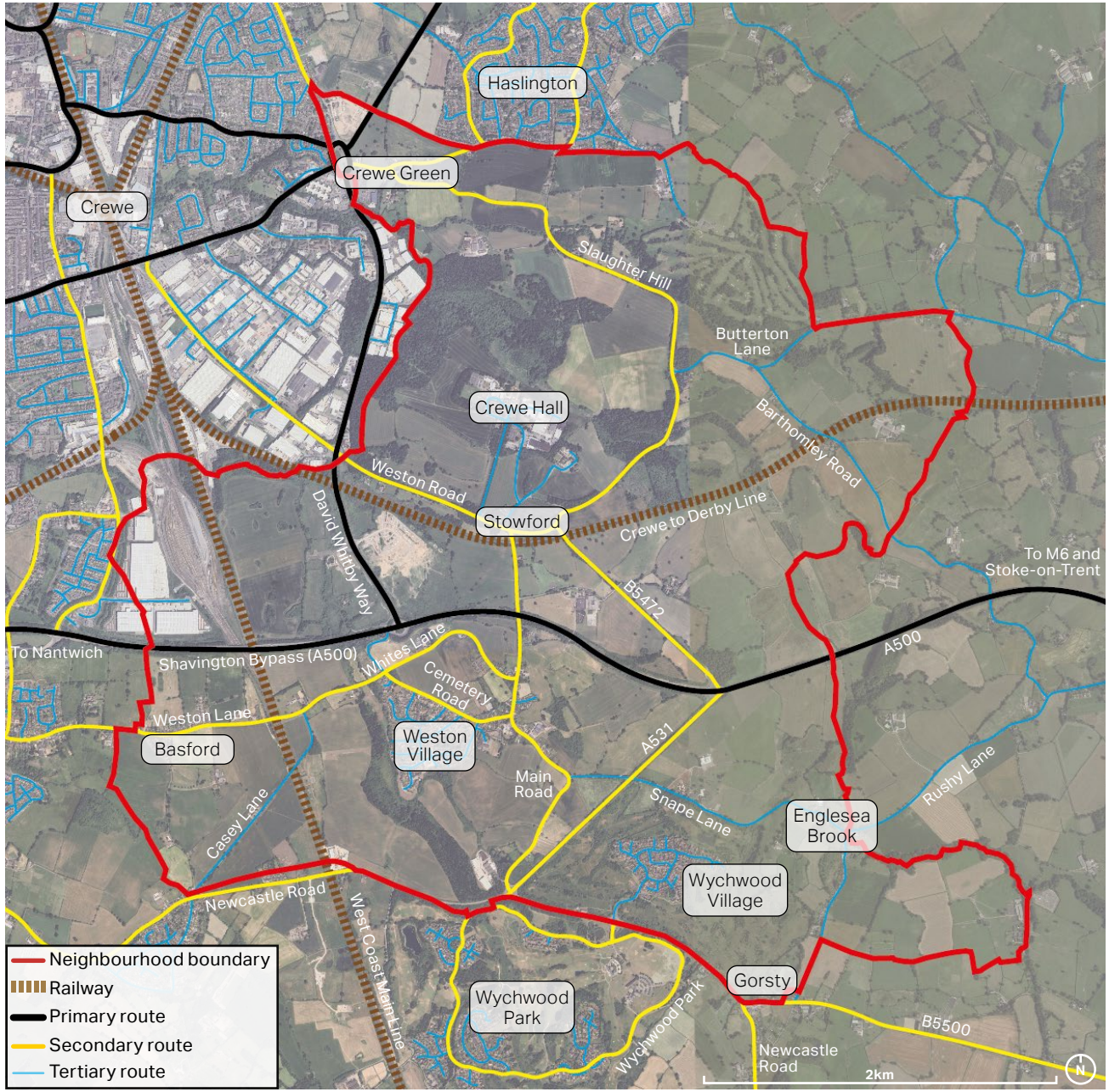
- There are four strategic development areas within, or partially within, the Neighbourhood Area (NA). The number of proposed homes has the potential to double the parish's population size.
- Site LPS 2: Basford East, Crewe - 850 homes. 24 ha of office space. A new local centre including a primary school, retail, restaurant and community facility. Detailed planning approval other than in relation to the retention of existing farm buildings (Crotia Mill).
- Site LPS 3: Basford West - 22.16 ha employment uses; other uses outside the NA. Detailed planning approval.
- Site LPS 6: Crewe Green - 150 homes. Open space provision including play space / multi-use games area. Highway improvements at Crewe Green Roundabout. Detailed planning approval.
- Site LPS 8: South Cheshire Growth Village - 650 homes. New mixed-use local village centre. Open space including sports pitches, outdoor gym, children's' play areas. Wildlife habitats for protected species. This has an outline planning permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement.



Connections

Routes

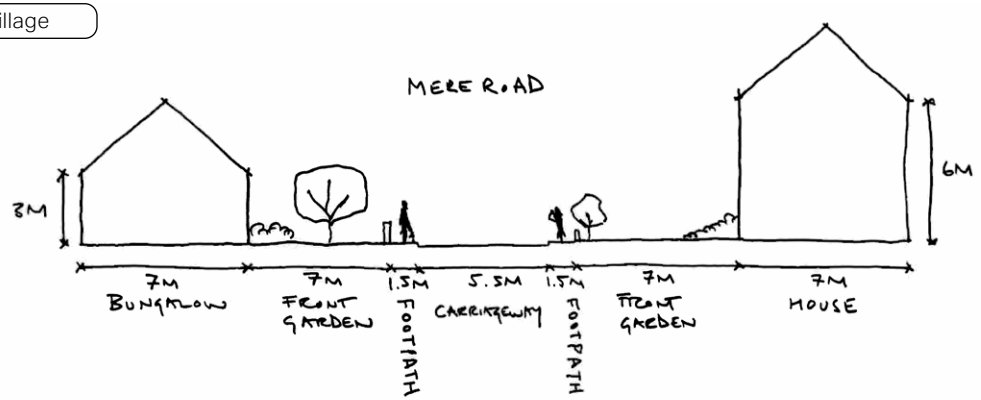
- The A500 runs through the neighbourhood area from east to west connecting Nantwich and Stoke-on-Trent and also providing access to the M6 motorway which links Manchester and Birmingham.
- Most other roads are rural in nature connecting the individual settlements.
- The neighbourhood area is in very close proximity to Crewe Railway Station which is one of the UK's most important railway stations and a major junction on the West Coast Main Line providing direct connections to London Euston, Manchester Piccadilly, Liverpool Lime Street, Birmingham New Street and Cardiff Central (amongst others).
- The West Coast Main Line divides the southwest of the neighbourhood area north-south but there are crossings at the A500, Weston Lane and Casey Lane.
- The Crewe to Derby Line divides the neighbourhood area east-west but there are crossings at David Whitby Way, Main Road, the B5472 and Barthomley Road.



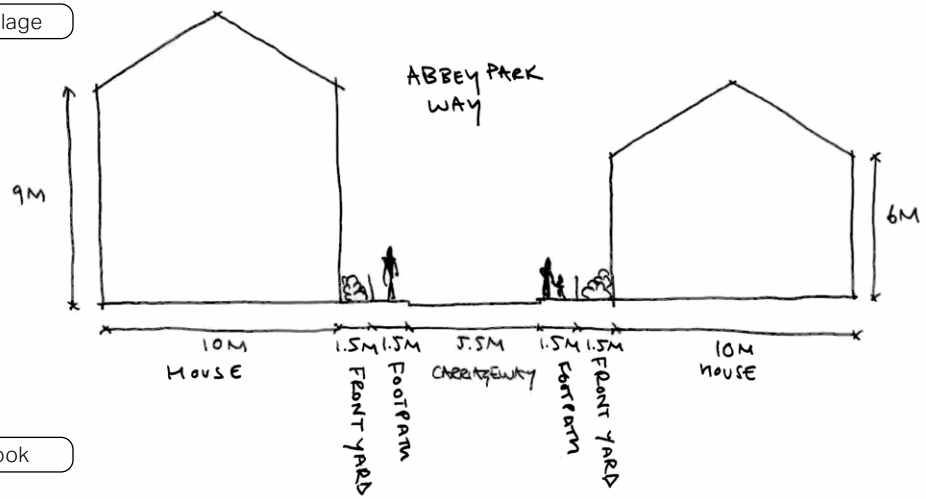
Cross Sections

- The cross sections on this page give an indication of common street dimensions in the neighbourhood area.
- The cross section for Weston Village could also apply to Basford, both of which are defined by 20th Century housing with large front gardens and carriageways with pavements on both sides.
- The cross section for Wychwood Village highlights the higher density of the planned community including taller houses (up to three storeys) and small front yards which means that the enclosure is higher than other areas.
- The cross section for Englesea Brook could also apply to Crewe Green and Stowford which predominantly consist of informally laid out cottages and farmsteads with large front gardens and usually facing onto open countryside.
- Street design is covered in Policy CO1 of the Cheshire East Local Plan and Manual for Streets. Road design and materials are detailed pages 45-51 of the Cheshire East Borough Design Guide. Therefore we will not cover these design issues in the codes.

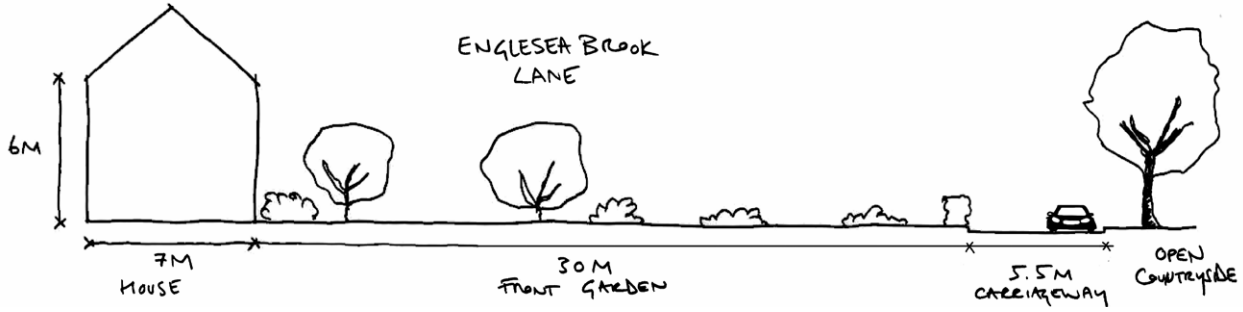
Weston Village



Wychwood Village



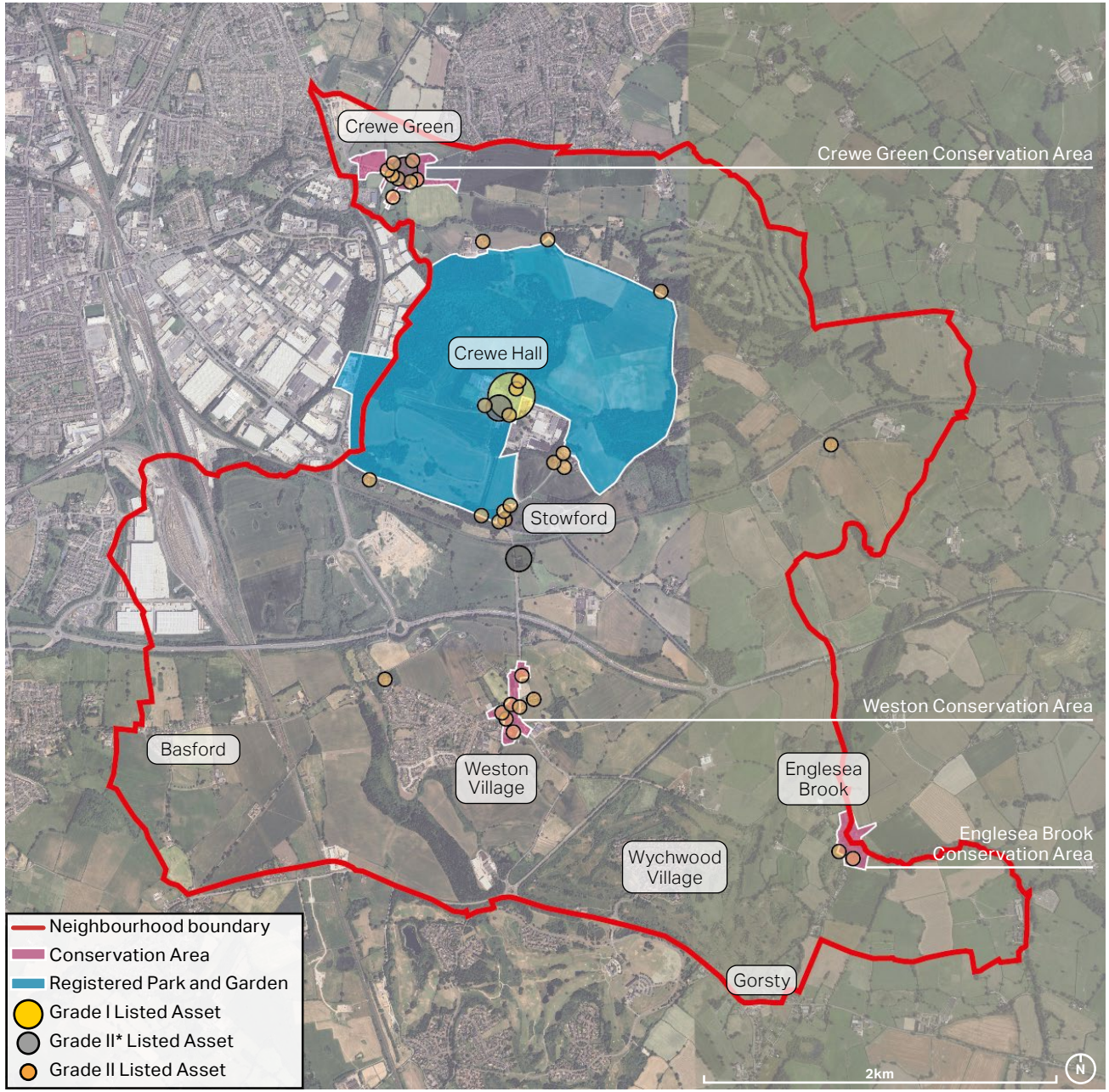
Englesea Brook



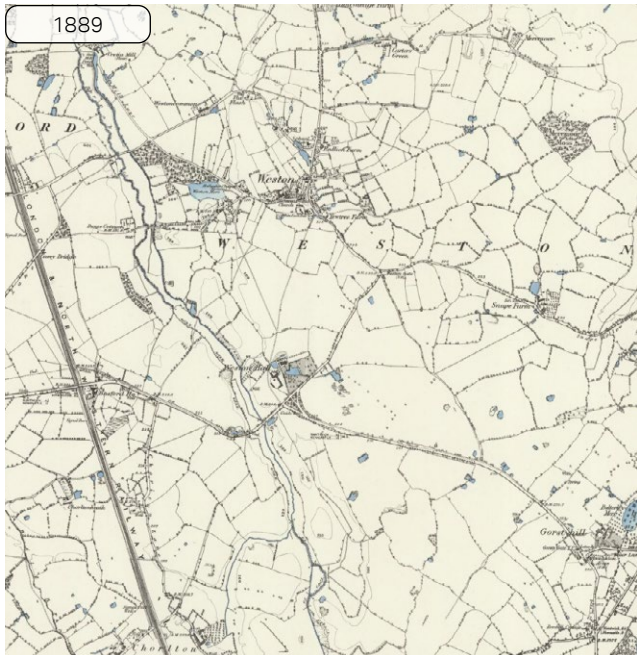
Heritage

- There are three conservation areas falling within, or partially within, the neighbourhood area. They are located at Crewe Green, Weston Village and Englesea Brook.
- Crewe Hall is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden surrounding the Grade I Listed Jacobean mansion at Crewe Hall.
- There are 39 listed assets in the neighbourhood area. Most of these are clustered in and around Weston Village, Englesea Brook, Crewe Green and Crewe Hall.
- Most of the assets are Grade II Listed apart from the Church of St Michael in Crewe Green, Hollyhedge Farmhouse and the former stables at Crewe Hall which are Grade II* Listed, and Crewe Hall is Grade I Listed.

Policy SE7 of the local plan sets out general requirements for preservation of historic character. The codes therefore will focus on specific issues for the NP area including the conservation area, and re-development of non-designated heritage assets to support Policy HE1 and HE2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

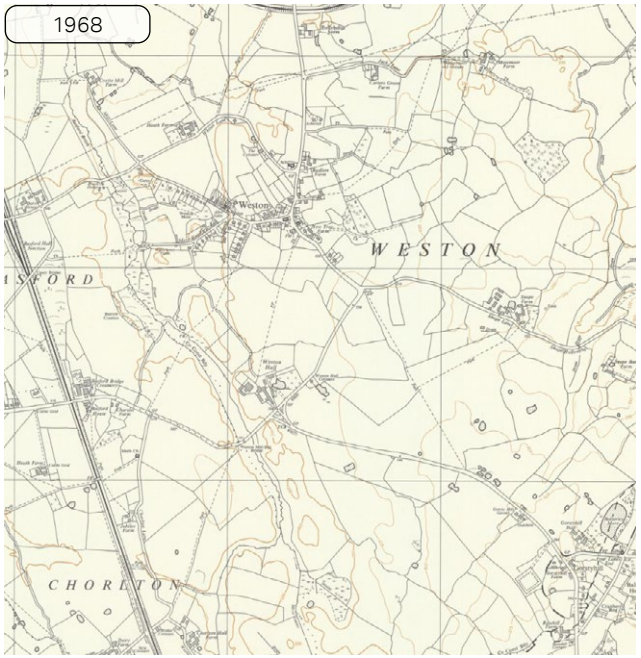


Historical Development



Weston is a small community clustered to the north of the Church of All Saints and surrounded by agricultural fields and meadows. The London and North Western Railway is already in place. The other settlements are small hamlets or clusters of farmsteads.

Weston remains small, a combination of cottages and farmsteads. Several open spaces are defined including Weston Heath and Weston Mere which will soon be built over. The town of Crewe has expanded significantly due to its important railway station.



Weston has expanded, in particular to the west along Cemetery Road, Mere Road and East Avenue where new houses occupy former green spaces. The housing supply will significantly increase from the 1960s to the 2000s (including the construction of Wychwood Village).

Note: these diagrams show development up until the time where the area expanded, mostly during the middle of the 20th century onwards.

Built Form

- Crewe Green and Stowford contain a cluster of detached and semi-detached houses in a mock-Tudor arts and crafts style defined by timber framing, and decorative gables.
- Weston Village contains a range of historic houses in the Conservation Area on an informal agricultural formation along with linear 20th Century detached and semi-detached houses to the west.
- Basford contains a mix of bungalows and two-storey semi-detached houses, mainly built in the 20th Century along with some Edwardian villas and townhouses.
- Crewe Hall is a large Jacobean mansion.
- Wychwood Village contains a mix of two and three storey semi-detached and terraced houses built between the late 1990s and early 2000s.
- Englesea Brook contains a historic mix of farmsteads, cottages and townhouses.
- Gorsty contains a planned development of large detached houses built in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Nature

Large open spaces such as Crewe Golf Club and the area around Wychwood Village. Smaller green spaces in Weston Village.

Existing open space protection is covered by **Policy REC 1** Cheshire East Local Plan. Therefore, it will not be covered in the codes.

Crewe Hall is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden.

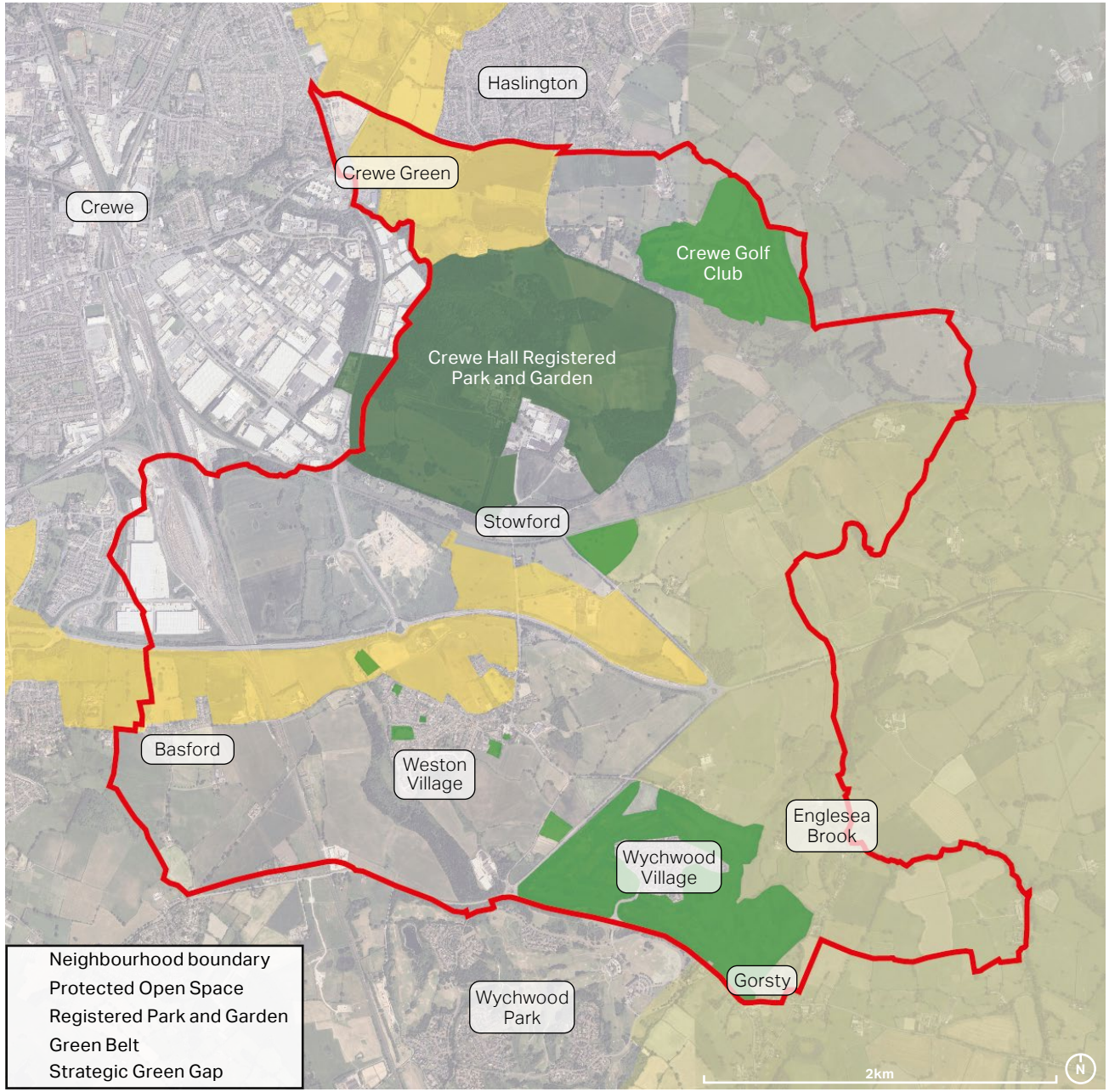
A large area to the east of the neighbourhood area (including Englesea Brook and Gorsty) fall within a green belt.

Green belt protection is covered by **Policy PG 3** of the Cheshire East Local Plan so we will not cover this in the codes.

There is a strategic green gap adjacent to Basford, Weston Village and Stowford and another adjacent to Crewe Green.

Strategic green gaps are covered by **Policy PG 12** of the Cheshire East Local Plan so we will not cover this in the codes.

Biodiversity is covered by **Policy SE3** of Cheshire East Local and **Policy E2** of the Neighbourhood Plan. Sustainable drainage systems are covered by **Policy SE 13** of Cheshire East Local Plan. A SuDS Manual is being prepared by the Borough Council.



Activity

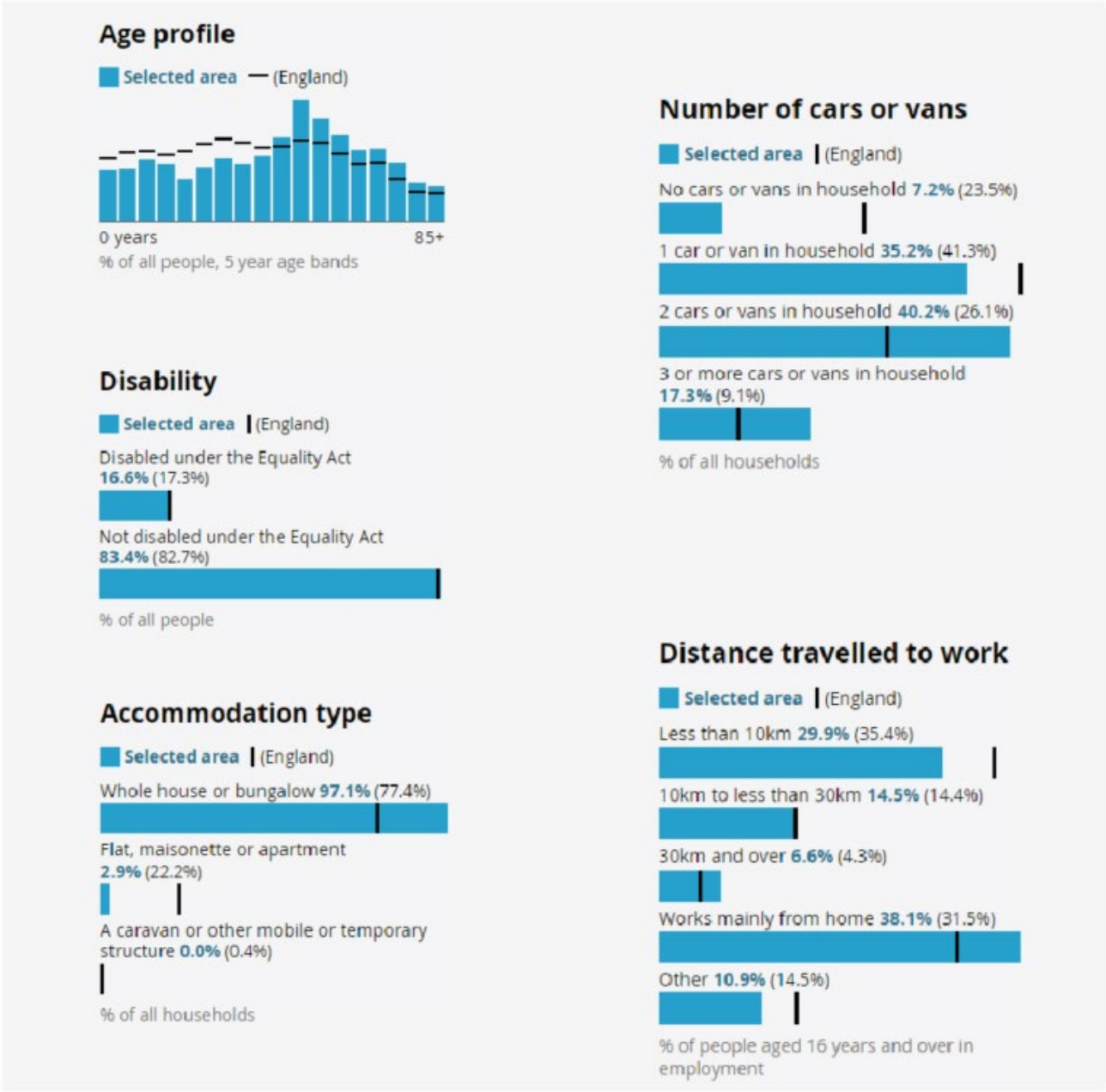
Key Economic and Social Characteristics

Weston and Crewe Green is the gateway to the North West.

It is an important commuter belt for Crewe, Stoke-on-Trent and further afield due to Crewe's excellent transport connections by rail and proximity to the M6 motorway.

The information on this page is based on 2021 census data comprised from former parish boundaries so may not represent the most recent accurate data.

General requirements for housing mix in new developments is set out in **Policy HOU1** of the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document**.** Affordable homes requirement is set out in **Policy SC4** of the Local Plan. Therefore we will not cover these topics in the codes and instead focus specific housing mix for the NP area based on local needs and local context/character.



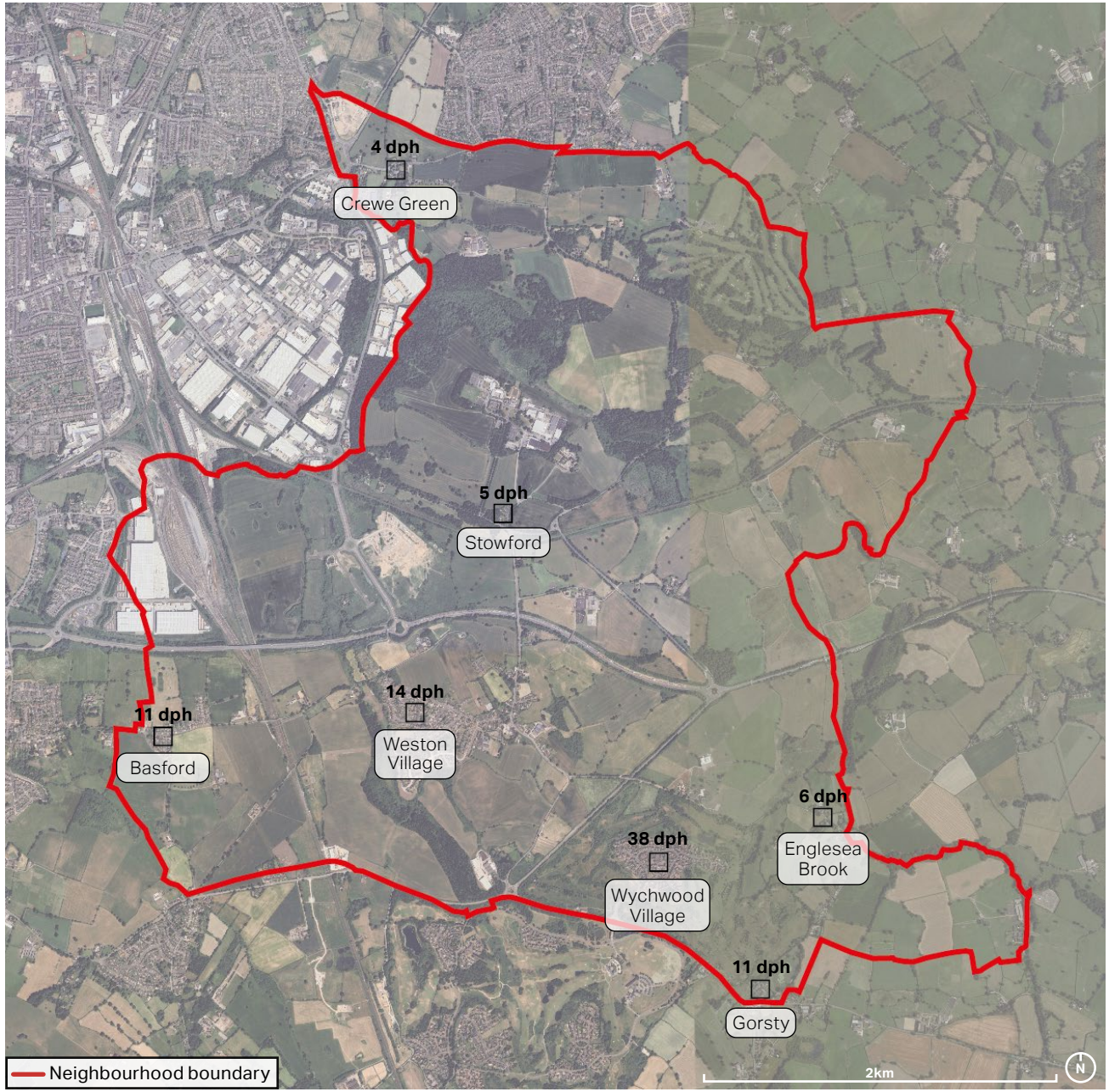
Density

The highest density housing (at approximately 38 dph) can be found at Wychwood Village which contains a mix of two and three storey buildings with small front yards and strong enclosure.

The second highest density housing (at approximately 14 dph) can be found at the primary settlement of Weston Village.

Basford and Gorsty are slightly less dense than Weston Village (at approximately 11 dph) due to a larger concentration of bungalows and detached houses.

The lowest densities can be found in the hamlets of Crewe Green (at approximately 4 dph), Stowford (at approximately 5 dph) and Englesea Brook (at approximately 6 dph) representing the neighbourhood area's agricultural origins.



Identifying Key Issues

From this initial desktop study, what are some potential topics which could be addressed by design codes and guidelines?

Connections:

Road layouts, design and materials (to not be included in codes as covered by existing policy)

Sensitive peripheral development

Green streets

Car parking solutions

Built form:

Scale and massing

Materials and design

Building line and set-backs

Heritage preservation

Nature:

Protecting views, stepped rooflines

Hedges, street trees

Open spaces

Green belt preservation (to not be included in codes as covered by existing policy)

Biodiversity (to not be included in codes as covered by existing policy)

Sustainability - sustainable drainage systems (to not be included in codes as covered by existing policy) and eco-design features

Activity:

Housing mix

Density

Reflecting on the above points and analysis, is there any other specific guidance which should be included in the Weston and Crewe Green Design Code?

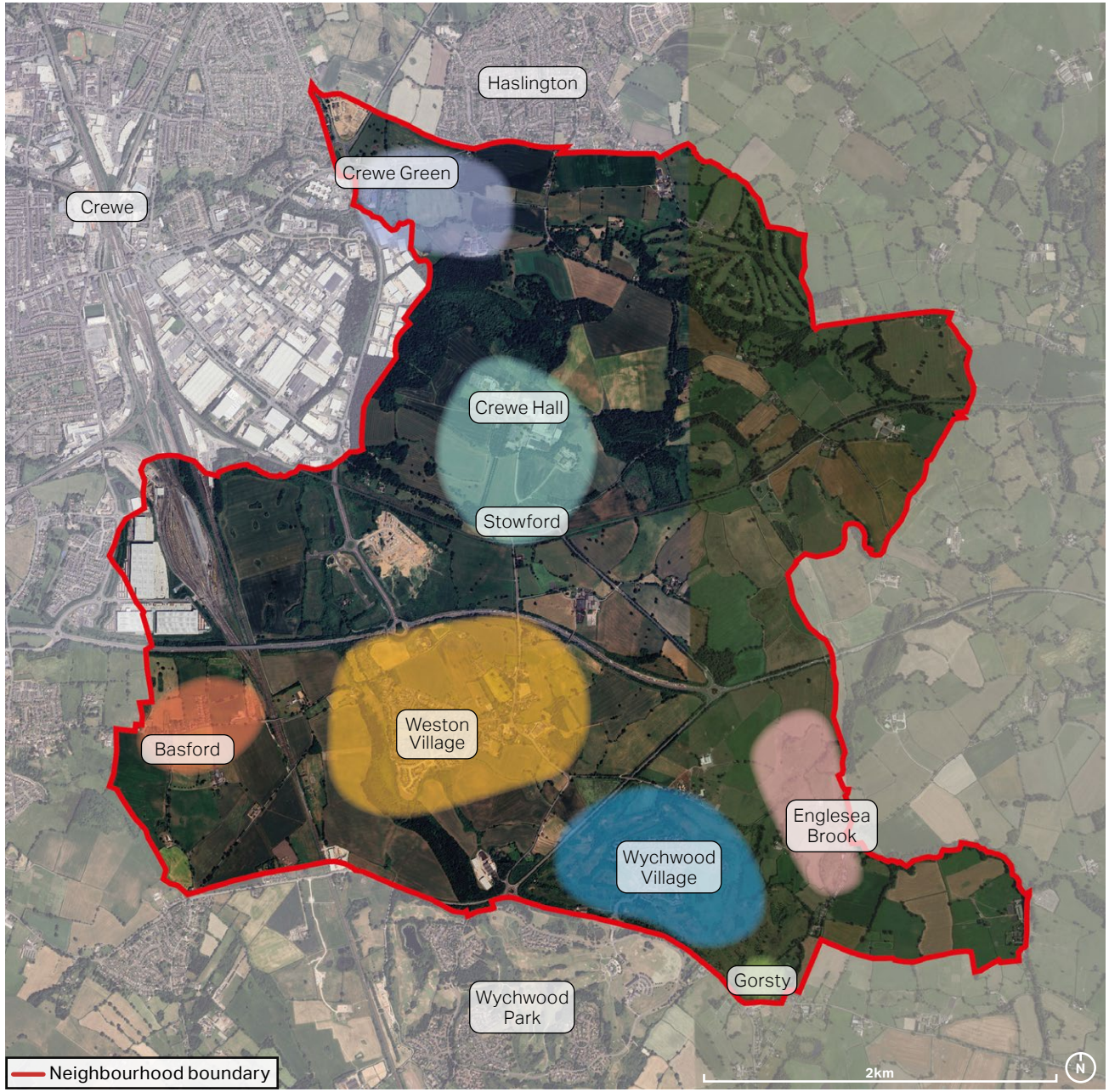
How Does This Translate Into Area Types?

As the Weston and Crewe Green Design Code will apply to the whole of the neighbourhood area, our analysis will allow us to divide the neighbourhood area into 'area types'.

Area types are based on context-specific shared common features and characteristics such as architectural features, scale and massing, density, green infrastructure, history and route types. Character may also vary within an area type.

It is intended that different design codes and guidelines will be applicable across the different area types. The map on this page gives a general indication of where the area types could be located but this will depend on the deeper analysis to be conducted during this project.

In addition, there will be neighbourhood-wide design codes and guidelines that apply across the neighbourhood area.

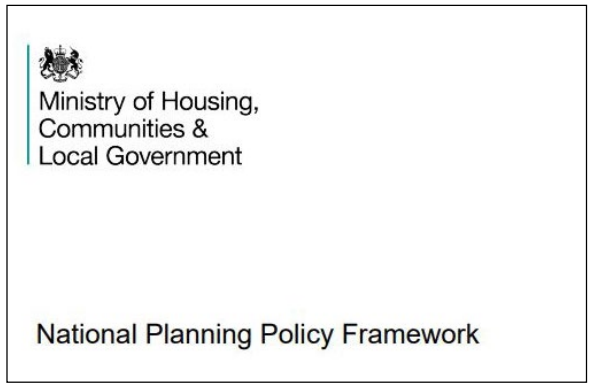


Appendix B - Policy Context

Appendix B outlines the national and local planning policy and guidance documents that have influenced the development of this document.

It is recommended that future development refers to the following policy and guidance, and subsequent updates, to supplement and support guidance described in this design codes and guidance document. The following text identifies relevant planning policies and guidance at both the national and local level.

3.11.2 National Planning Policy Framework & other guidance



National Planning Policy & Guidance (revised December 2023)

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the Government's overarching economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England. The policies within the NPPF apply to the preparation of Local and Neighbourhood Plan areas, and act as a framework against which decisions are made on planning applications.

The NPPF states that a key objective of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which will be achieved with reference to three overarching objectives.

The sections of the NPPF that are of particular relevance to this Design Code are:

Part 2: Achieving sustainable development;

Part 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes;

Part 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities;

Part 12: Achieving well-designed places, emphasises the need to create high-quality buildings and places as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It sets out a number of principles that planning policies and decisions should consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality;

Part 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and

Part 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

The NPPF notes that, 'development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes'.

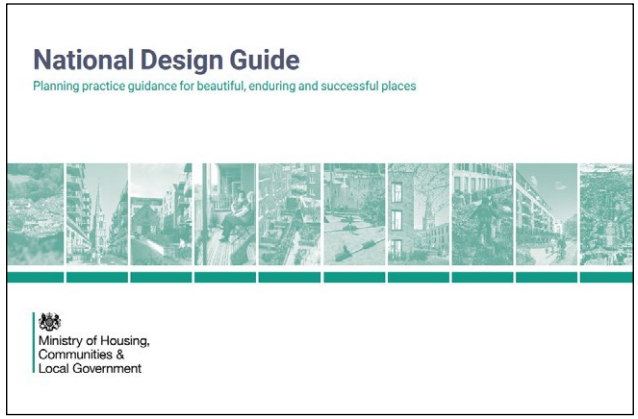
The NPPF can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policyframework--2

National Model Design Code (2021)

MHCLG

The National Model Design Code (NMDC) sets a baseline standard of quality and practice. The NMDC provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes and the outlining of character areas. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the NDG.

The NMDC and NDG are companion documents setting out characteristics of well-designed places. The guides are expected to be used by local authorities, applicants and local communities to establish further design codes and guidance (such as this document) that can deliver in line with local objectives.



National Design Guide (updated January 2021)

MHCLG

The National Design Guide (NDG) sets the 10 characteristics of a well-designed place and demonstrates what good design is in practice. It supports the ambitions of the NPPF to utilise the planning and development process in the creation of high-quality places.

The NDG should be used as an overarching reference for new development where topics are not covered in local guidance. The NDG characteristics were used in the initial analysis to understand local demands and challenges. The NDG notes that a well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings.

Building for a Healthy Life (2020)

Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The name reflects the key role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing.

The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments. It also provides useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

Manual for Streets (2007)

Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets (MfS), the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

Future Homes Standard (2025)

MHCLG

The Future Homes Standard will require new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency; it will be introduced by 2025. All homes will be 'zero carbon ready', becoming zero carbon homes over time as the electricity grid decarbonises, without the need for further costly retrofitting work.

From 2025, new homes built to the Future Homes Standard should have carbon dioxide emissions at least 75% lower than those built to current Building Regulations standards. The Future Homes Standard is yet to become effective into law, but once adopted - any new development will be expected to comply with (or exceed) the standards set out.

3.11.3 Local planning policy & guidance

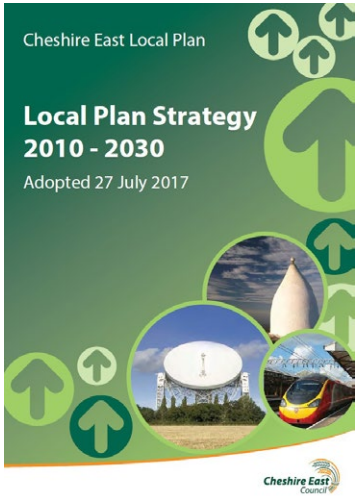
Weston and Crewe Green is a Neighbourhood Area, overseen by Cheshire East Borough Council. The following planning and design documents were reviewed to understand the policy context under which this document has been produced. These include key documents such as the area's Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

Planning policy and design guidance		Notes	Adoption date
Cheshire East Council (CEC)	Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030	New Local Plan at early stages	January 2021
	Site Allocations and Development Policies Document		September 2020
	The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide		May 2017
	Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment (Land Use Consultants for CEC)		May 2018
	Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain SPD		July 2024
	Environmental Protection SPD		March 2024
	Developer Contributions SPD		March 2024
	SuDS SPD		February 2024
	Housing SPD		July 2022
	Local List of Historic Buildings SPD		October 2010
	Development on Backland and Gardens SPD	Former Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Borough	July 2008
	Extensions and Householder Development SPD		July 2008
Weston and Crewe Green Parish Council	Weston & Basford Neighbourhood Plan	Currently under review to reflect updated NA boundary	May 2024

Table 08: Summary of local planning policy and design guidance

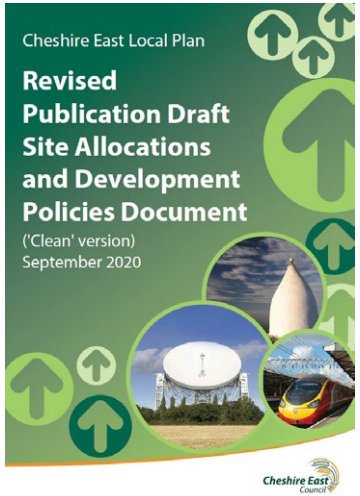
Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030

The Local Plan Strategy is the first part of the new Local Plan for Cheshire East, and it was adopted on the 27th of July 2017. This document sets out the overall vision and planning strategy for development in the borough and contains planning policies to ensure that new development addresses the economic, environmental and social needs of the area. It also identifies strategic sites and strategic locations that will accommodate most of the new development needed. At the time of writing Cheshire East are undertaking a five year review of the Strategic Plan to decide if updates are required.



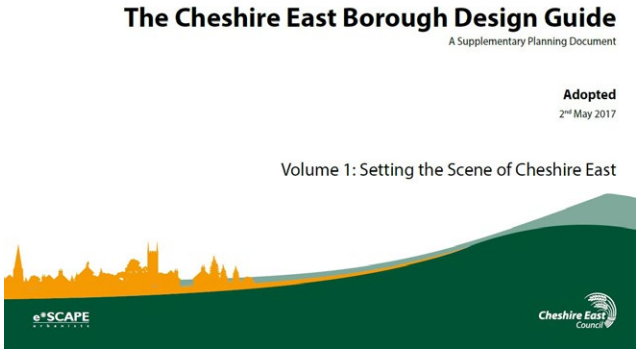
Site Allocations and Development Policies Document

This is the latest available version of the SADPD (September 2020), and was submitted to the Secretary of State on 29 April 2021. The SADPD, sets non-strategic and detailed planning policies to guide planning decisions and allocate additional sites for development, where necessary, to assist in meeting the overall development requirements set out in the LPS. It has been prepared to support the policies and proposals of the LPS by providing additional policy detail.



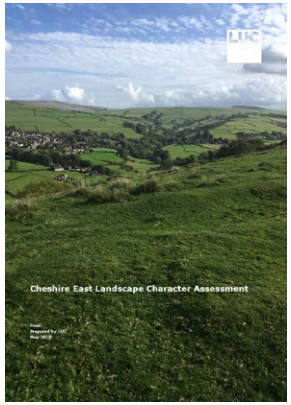
The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide

The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide (CEC, 2017) consists of two volumes. Volume 1, Setting the Scene of Cheshire East, identifies five Settlement Character Areas (SCA) within the borough: North Cheshire Fringe, Gritstone Edge, Silk, Cotton & Market Towns, Salt & Engineering Towns, and Market Towns & Estate Villages. Weston and Crewe Green is part of the Market Towns & Estate Villages. Volume 2, Residential Guidance – Creating Quality, offers practical guidance on implementing best practices in development. Although high-level and authority-wide, it serves as a foundation for more specific design codes.



Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment

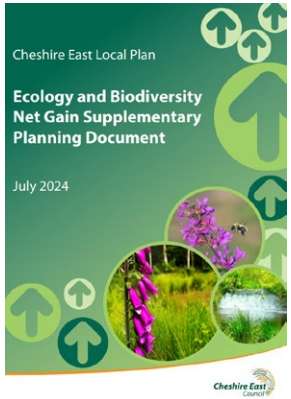
This document was produced by Land Use Consultants (LUC) for Cheshire East Borough Council and was issued in May 2018. The Landscape Character Assessment provides an evidence base to inform policies and proposals in the new Local Plan, providing an objective description of the local landscape and a strategy to guide the landscapes of Cheshire East and their future changes. The document defines a Landscape Character classification according to which different Landscape areas are identified in the Borough Council. Weston and Crewe Green falls within character area LCA 7f. Weston and Stowford are not characterised in the assessment.



Supplementary Planning Documents

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain SPD

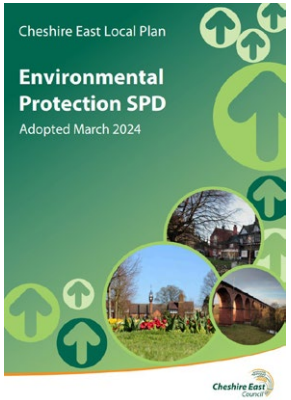
The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for Cheshire East offers detailed guidance on meeting statutory BNG requirements. While SPDs do not form part of the official development plan, they serve as material considerations in planning decisions. This specific SPD supports the implementation of existing policies within the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2017) and the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (2022). It focuses on protecting the natural environment, promoting ecological enhancements, and ensuring developments achieve measurable biodiversity net gains.



Supplementary Planning Documents

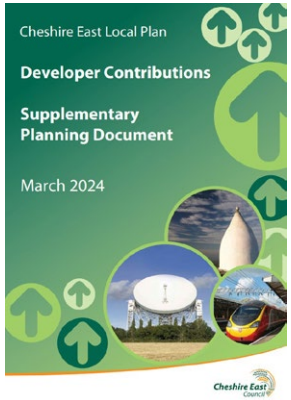
Environmental Protection SPD

The Environmental Protection Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides detailed guidance on environmental protection issues related to development in Cheshire East, building on policies from the Local Plan Strategy (2017), Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (2022), and existing minerals and waste plans. It focuses on areas under the remit of the council's Environmental Protection Team, addressing air quality (including dust), contaminated land, noise, light pollution, and odour pollution, and offers guidance for assessing these factors in planning applications.



Developer Contributions SPD

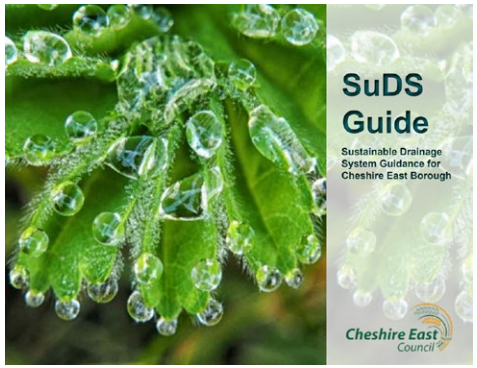
The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) outlines the requirements for infrastructure provision and developer contributions in Cheshire East, consolidating the council's approach to planning obligations in a single document. It provides guidance on when and how financial or infrastructure contributions will be sought from developments, based on local needs and aimed at mitigating the impact of new developments. The SPD is designed to offer clarity and transparency for developers and stakeholders, reducing uncertainty in the planning process and ensuring a consistent approach to negotiating obligations.



Supplementary Planning Documents

SuDS SPD

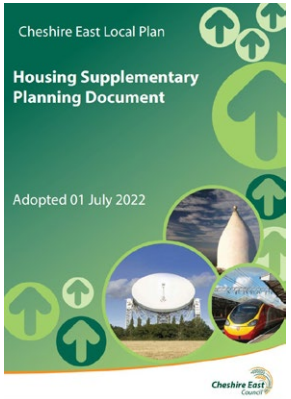
The Sustainable Drainage Systems Supplementary Planning Document (SuDS SPD), produced by Cheshire East Council, provides guidance for planning applicants to comply with water-management policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and Cheshire East Local Plan. SuDS use naturalistic systems to manage surface water, reducing runoff and improving water quality, while offering environmental and social benefits like enhanced biodiversity and landscape character. The SPD emphasizes best practices for integrating SuDS into development, discouraging hard engineering solutions unless proven necessary, and stresses that failure to adopt sustainable water-management strategies may result in planning refusal.



Supplementary Planning Documents

Housing SPD

The Cheshire East Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), adopted in July 2022, provides guidance on implementing housing policies from the Local Plan. It focuses on key areas such as affordable housing, housing mix, environmental sustainability, self-build, and specialist housing (including for older people). It outlines policies for ensuring sustainable development, reducing environmental impacts, and improving housing quality. The document also covers planning procedures, infrastructure contributions, and the role of registered providers in managing affordable housing, ensuring a balanced and inclusive approach to housing needs in Cheshire East.



Weston & Basford Neighbourhood Plan

AECOM produced a Design Code for the former Weston & Basford Neighbourhood Area in 2023. The area has been updated to include Crewe Green on the 8th of March 2024. The former Design Code has been considered in the production of this report as a reference for the analysis of the place.

About AECOM

AECOM is the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, delivering professional services throughout the project lifecycle — from planning, design and engineering to program and construction management. On projects spanning transportation, buildings, water, new energy and the environment, our public- and private-sector clients trust us to solve their most complex challenges. Our teams are driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world through our unrivalled technical expertise and innovation, a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities. AECOM is a Fortune 500 firm and its Professional Services business had revenue of $13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020. See how we are delivering sustainable legacies for generations to come at aecom.com and @AECOM.

aecom.com