Cheshire East:

Local Landscape Designations

Draft Report
Prepared by LUC
May 2013
**Project Title:** Cheshire East: Local Landscape Designations

**Client:** Cheshire East Council

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<th>Date</th>
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<th>Checked by</th>
<th>Approved by Principal</th>
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Cheshire East: Local Landscape Designations

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   - Rostherne /Tatton Park  
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1 Introduction

1.1 LUC was commissioned by Cheshire East Council to gather additional information on the existing local landscape designations - previously Areas of Special County Value (ASCVs) - in Cheshire East. The work aims to identify the special character and qualities of these areas to augment information in the landscape character assessment.

1.2 The purpose of this study is to provide further information on the special qualities of locally designated landscapes in Cheshire East. It does not review the existing ASCV boundaries.

1.3 Local landscape designations can play an important role in protecting and enhancing landscapes which are of particular value in the context of the local authority area. Information on the local landscape designations may therefore be useful for a number of purposes:

- as a means of assessing the impact of a proposed development on the landscape by comparing the characteristics of the proposal against the area’s special qualities;
- to inform decisions on the sensitive siting and design of new development both in development control and for prospective developers;
- to communicate the distinctive characteristics of Cheshire East as part of baseline data for future landscape studies;
- to inform policies for the future development and management of Cheshire East.

Natural and Cultural Heritage Designations

1.4 Local landscape designations are a material consideration in development control. Many of the areas identified as local landscape designations also contain other statutory and non statutory designations which often contribute to the special landscape quality of the area: examples of these are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Natural/ Cultural Heritage Designations in Cheshire East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy/ Status</th>
<th>Natural Heritage</th>
<th>Cultural Heritage</th>
<th>Landscape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>Ramsar site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>National Nature Reserve (NNR)</td>
<td>Scheduled Monument</td>
<td>National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</td>
<td>Listed Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ancient Woodland</td>
<td>Registered Park and Garden (RP&amp;G)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Site of Biological Interest (SBI)</td>
<td>Conservation Area</td>
<td>Local Landscape Designation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Nature Reserve (LNR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cheshire East’s Valued Landscapes

1.6 The landscape character and value of all Cheshire’s landscapes is described in the Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment¹ which divides Cheshire into a number of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and within these, more detailed descriptions of Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). This approach recognises that all landscape has character and is of value.

1.7 The primarily rural landscapes of Cheshire East are characterised by the contrast between the extensive flat lowland plain and gently rolling farmland bordered to the west of the borough by the distinctive sandstone ridge and to the east by the rising Pennine foothills. The landscape is characterised by glacial deposits, river valleys with wooded cloughs, relict unimproved features including mosses, heaths and meres and a number of designed parkland estates.

ASCVs

1.8 All of Cheshire East’s landscapes are of value. Some landscapes are also recognised as being of particular importance and for this reason Cheshire Council identified some areas of Cheshire (including what is now the borough of Cheshire East) as Areas of Special County Value (ASCVs). The ASCVs – now called local landscape designations – sit within the framework of the Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment.

1.9 Reasons for the designation of Cheshire’s ASCVs are referred to in Cheshire’s historic and current policy documents. Policy R2 of Cheshire’s Structure Plan² states that ASCVs were designated “because of their landscape quality or their archaeological, historic or nature conservation importance”, and Cheshire’s Landscape Character Assessment states: the ASCVS “were designated in the mid-seventies for their aesthetic value, i.e. they are regarded as the most attractive areas of the Cheshire countryside³”. Policy 14 of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan states: “The areas were assessed by a team who considered each square kilometre against a scoring system which included the landscape value, setting, ecological interest, archaeological interest and historic landscape value⁴.”

1.10 Though evidence for why the ASCV boundaries were drawn as they are is not available, the areas nevertheless show continuity with the LCTs in Cheshire East’s Landscape Character Assessment which shows a reasoned justification for their designation, and a strong basis for going on to define their special qualities.

Local Landscape Designations and Policy

1.11 The European Landscape Convention recognises that all landscapes are of value whether they are designated or not. It also states the importance of Landscape Protection, which it defines as:

“measures to preserve the present character and quality of a landscape which is greatly valued on account of its distinctive natural or cultural configuration. Such protection must be active and involve upkeep measures to preserve significant features of a landscape”.

1.12 The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by “protecting and enhancing valued landscapes”. Paragraph 113 of the NPPF says that “local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged”.

1.13 Cheshire East’s Local Plan is currently being developed. Until the new Local Plan is adopted, planning policies for local landscape designations (ASCVs) consist of saved policies from the previous Cheshire Council strategic plans and previous local district plans. These include:

- The Cheshire Replacement Minerals Local Plan (Adopted 1999)

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¹ Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment, Consultation Draft, 2008. Cheshire County Council
² Cheshire 2016: Structure Plan Alteration, 2006 (no longer current)
³ Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment, Consultation Draft, 2008. Cheshire County Council (p.7)
⁴ The Cheshire Replacement Minerals Local Plan (Adopted 1999)
The plans contain consistent areas and references to ASCVs. A summary of the existing information available for each district area now contained within Cheshire East is provided in Table 2 alongside the landscape character context for each area. This information is primarily based on the Cheshire Cheshire 2016: Structure Plan Alteration (2006) Areas of Special County Value: Policy R2.

**Table 2: Local Landscape Designations (formerly ASCVs) in Cheshire East**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Landscape Type</th>
<th>Relevant Landscape Character Types (from Cheshire LCA)</th>
<th>Name of Local Landscape Designation (formerly ASCV)</th>
<th>Previous Local Plan area</th>
<th>Information in the previous Local Plan area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upland Areas</td>
<td>Sandstone Ridge, Sandstone Fringe</td>
<td>Beeston/ Peckforton/ Bolesworth/ Bickerton Hills</td>
<td>Crewe/ Nantwich</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland Footslopes</td>
<td>Congleton Cloud/ Timbersbrook/ Roe Park/ Mow Cop*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Congleton</td>
<td>an upland area characterised by small to medium-scale farmland with large blocks of woodland. It contains a variety of features unusual to Cheshire including moorland heather, dry stone walls, old rocky outcrops and long views out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland Footslopes</td>
<td>Peak Park Fringe</td>
<td>Macclesfield</td>
<td></td>
<td>Within the Peak Park Fringe area, particular care will be taken to ensure that any developments do not adversely affect the purposes of the National Park or are harmful to its valued characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Areas</td>
<td>River Valley</td>
<td>Bollin Valley*</td>
<td>Macclesfield</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>River Valley</td>
<td>Dane Valley</td>
<td>Congleton</td>
<td>characterised by wide river meanders and meadows contained by steeply wooded buff slopes along with older river banks and slopes of cleared woodland. Within the context of Cheshire, this part of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the River Dane has made more of an impact on the Cheshire Plain than other rivers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parkland Areas</th>
<th>Estate, Woodland &amp; Meres</th>
<th>River Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher Farms &amp; Woods</td>
<td>Weaver Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>River Valley</td>
<td>Crewe/ Nantwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parkland Areas</th>
<th>Estate, Woodland &amp; Meres</th>
<th>River Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cholmondeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Crewe/ Nantwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parkland Areas</th>
<th>Estate, Woodland &amp; Meres</th>
<th>River Valley</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rostherne/Tatton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Macclesfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parkland Areas</th>
<th>Estate, Woodland &amp; Meres</th>
<th>River Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wirswall/ Marbury / Combermere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Crewe/ Nantwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parkland Areas</th>
<th>Estate, Woodland &amp; Meres</th>
<th>River Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tabley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Macclesfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Congleton Cloud/ Timbersbrook/ Roe Park/ Mow Cop is now amalgamated with the Peak Park Fringe and Alderley Edge/ Birtles/ Henbury/ Capesthorne has been joined with Bollin Valley, now called Bollin Valley and Parklands.

1.15 These nine local landscape designations in Cheshire East are illustrated on Figure 1 and shown in the context of Cheshire’s Landscape Character Types in Figure 2. They are:

- Beeston/ Peckforton/ Bolesworth/ Pickerton Hills
- Bollin Valley and Parklands
- Cholmondeley Estate
- Dane Valley
- Peak Park Fringe
- Rostherne/ Tatton Park
- Tabley Hall
- Weaver Valley
- Wirswall/ Marbury/ Combermere
2 Methodology

2.1 The study of Cheshire East’s local landscape designations has been undertaken with reference to published guidance. This includes:


2.2 A set of criteria was developed to bring together key information for each of the local landscape designations, in order to set out what is important and why. The criteria are listed in Table 3. The evidence base for the information gathered is listed alongside the criteria, and includes the Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), the Cheshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment (HLCA) and OS maps, supported by field survey.

**Table 3: Criteria for defining the special qualities of the local landscape designations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria and rationale</th>
<th>Factors to consider</th>
<th>Evidence base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinctiveness</strong></td>
<td>Coherent landscape character conferring a recognisable sense of place</td>
<td>LCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinct landform or topography forming a discrete and recognisable area</td>
<td>Field survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rare/ unique landscape type or landscape features/ elements in the local context</td>
<td>Heritage designations (e.g. Conservation Areas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typicality - characteristics or landscape elements are strongly representative or distinctive of Cheshire East’s landscape</td>
<td>HLCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong character linked to particular natural/ cultural associations e.g. art/ literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptual character</strong></td>
<td>Tranquillity, relative remoteness and lack of intrusion</td>
<td>LCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong sensory impacts including movement, colour and texture</td>
<td>Field survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special perceptual qualities may be the result of e.g. the level of enclosure/ scale, combinations of elements or contrasts of features</td>
<td>OS maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape and scenic quality</strong></td>
<td>Strong visual character with memorable, important or distinctive views</td>
<td>LCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An intact landscape with characteristic elements in good condition</td>
<td>Field survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absence of incongruous elements or incongruous features not visually intrusive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dramatic features, visual contrasts or a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical state and condition of the landscape | special combination or pattern of landscape elements/ features that create high aesthetic quality or sense of place

**Natural character**
Special natural characteristics/ designations which add value to the landscape
- Strong character linked to natural factors
- Strong degree of naturalness contributing to landscape quality - habitats/land cover
- Natural heritage/wildlife designations (e.g. SSSI, RIGS, SBI)
- Field survey

**Cultural character**
Special cultural characteristics/ designations which add value to the landscape
- Strong character linked to cultural factors – which contribute to understanding of its historic character and wider cultural record e.g. archaeology, built heritage
- A landscape with particular associations for example with representation in art, music, literature, language or folklore
- HLCA
- Cultural heritage designations (e.g. Conservation Area, listed buildings)
- Field survey
- Register of Parks and Gardens

**Function**
Particular or special role of the area in the local landscape context
- Special function as a setting to designated landscapes or cultural/ natural features
- Visual backdrop
- Open gap
- Aspects of the landscape which hold particularly special value for recreation and amenity
- LCA
- Field survey
- OS maps
- HLCA

2.3 The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment sets out the character of the borough, which forms a context and background as to why some landscapes may have particular value attached to them and acts as the basis for assessing the rarity/ typicality of landscape areas. It is the framework within which the local landscape designations sit.

2.4 Special qualities of each of the local landscape designations were drawn out using the criteria in Table 3 and developed through visiting each area and undertaking a structured field survey. The Special Qualities for each area are set out in the following pages, with further information provided in a supporting table for each area. The local landscape designations are illustrated on Figure 1 and are overlaid on the landscape character information in Figure 2.
Local Landscape Designations Within Cheshire East

1: Beeston/Peckforton/Bolesworth/Bickerton Hills
2: Bollin Valley and Parklands
3: Cholmondeley Estate
4: Dane Valley
5: Peak Park Fringe
6: Rostherne/Tatton Park
7: Tabley Hall
8: Weaver Valley
9: Wirswall/Marbury/Combermere
3  Local Landscape Designations: Descriptions

3.1  Descriptions of each of the local landscape designations are set out in the following pages. Each local landscape designation is accompanied by a map showing the boundary of the local landscape designation, illustrative photographs, a statement of significance and a table of supporting information relating to the criteria in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beeston/ Peckforton/ Bolesworth/ Pickerton Hills</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bollin Valley and Parklands</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholmondeley Estate</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dane Valley</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak Park Fringe</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rostherne / Tatton Park</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabley Hall</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver Valley</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirswall/ Marbury/ Combermere</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The distinctive skyline of Peckforton Hills and Peckforton Castle

A rural landscape of open fields, hedgerows and wooded slopes forms a backdrop to views

Listed timber framed farm buildings on Stone House Lane in the local style contribute to character and sense of place
Statement of Significance

A dramatic wooded sandstone ridge forms the Beeston/Peckforton/Bolesworth/Bickerton Hills, protruding abruptly from the surrounding flat expanse of the Cheshire lowland plain. The distinctive landform is visible from long distances in the surrounding landscape creating rich texture and character, with its wooded slopes and skyline and Peckforton Castle. The area is also rich in natural and cultural heritage including large areas of ancient woodland, SSSIs and a Scheduled Monument.

Special Qualities of the Beeston/ Peckforton/ Bolesworth/ Bickerton Hills

- The dramatic landform which rises abruptly out of the surrounding flat farmland.
- Distinctive ridgeline and peaks of the sandstone ridge form a recognisable landmark skyline with the simple outline of Grade I listed Peckforton Castle. The ridge forms a distinctive backdrop to views from the east and west in the lowland plain.
- The densely wooded slopes create strong contrasts in the context of the predominantly flat and open plain. Large areas of ancient woodland and woodland designated as SBI provide natural heritage value and landscape character on the tops and upper slopes of the Peckforton Hills.
- Sparsely arranged individual dwellings and farmsteads of relatively small scale, historic architecture and many of which are constructed of local sandstone reflecting the local geology.
- Panoramic long distance views from the ridgeline summits over the Cheshire Plain and beyond provide a rare opportunity to appreciate the surrounding landscape of this part of Cheshire East. Views extend to the surrounding high ground of North Wales, the Peak District and Shropshire to the south.
- Popular trails and walking routes including the Sandstone Trail provide recreational amenity.
- Natural heritage value of ancient woodland and geological sites including Bickerton Hill and Peckforton Woods SSSI and SBI, Bulkeley Hill SBI and Maiden Castle Scheduled Monument.
## Extent of area

The sandstone ridge and its eastern slopes, with the villages of Bickerton, Gallantry Bank, Bulkeley and Peckforton. It is defined by the borough boundary with Cheshire West and Chester to the west, the steep slopes north of Peckforton Castle in the north, and Bickerton Hill in the south.

## Description

A distinctive wooded sandstone rock outcrop which curves in a northeast-southeast orientation along the line of the borough boundary. Sharply rising steep slopes reach a high point of 200-230m AOD along the ridge. The wooded hills create a strong contrast with the predominantly flat and sparsely vegetated surroundings of the Cheshire Plain. Farmed slopes, detached dwellings and the small picturesque villages of Bulkeley and Peckforton on the lower slopes and base of the hills add interest and smaller scale to the landscape.

## Landscape character context

(Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment)

- LCT 2: Sandstone Ridge (includes LCA SR3: Peckforton and SR4: Maiden Castle)
- LCT 3: Sandstone Fringe (includes LCA SF2: Beeston- Duckington)

## Criteria

### Summary description

**Distinctiveness**

Distinctive sandstone ridge outcrop is a local landmark in views. The steep wooded slopes form a stark contrast with the surrounding Cheshire Plain and are strongly characteristic features of Cheshire East.

**Perceptual character**

Contrast of the sense of enclosure created by the dense woodland and the open panoramic views from the hill summits.

**Landscape and scenic quality**

Panoramic views from the ridgeline, simple rolling outline of the wooded hills add texture, variety and interest to the landscape.

**Natural character**

- The large expanse of Peckforton Woods ancient woodland and SBI and Bulkeley Hill ancient woodland and SBI
- Peckforton, Bickerton and Raw Head SSSI
- Heathland e.g. Bickerton Hill

**Cultural character**

- Peckforton Castle Grade I listed
- Peckforton Conservation Area
- Maiden Castle Scheduled Monument
- Mad Allen’s Hole, a possible prehistoric cave shelter and former home of an 18th century recluse

**Function**

Public rights of way including the Sandstone Trail. A backdrop and landmark for much of the district.
Bollin Valley and Parklands
The River Bollin at Quarry Bank Mill

The river provides recreational amenity value for people living in nearby urban areas such as Wilmslow.

Woodland cover and some areas of steeper topography add texture to the landscape near Alderley Edge.
Statement of Significance

An intact and high quality rural landscape of rich and varied natural, historic and cultural interest consisting of the River Bollin to the north and a parkland landscape of historic estates to the south. The historic estate parklands feature typical 18th century parklands with mansion houses and woodlands, elsewhere listed farmhouses, historic mill buildings, barns and cottages enhance local character and sense of place. A broadly undulating landscape contains focal points of wooded backdrops and locally varied topography of steeper valley slopes and the dramatic wooded sandstone escarpment of Alderley Edge, also valuable for its natural and cultural heritage. The small and intimate scale of the landscape surrounding the River Bollin is more remote and tranquil.

Special Qualities of Bollin Valley and Parklands

- Intact rural landscape with few detracting elements. A rich variety of woodland cover and a lack of intrusion from major infrastructure and development contribute to a sense of enclosure and tranquility.
- Cohesiveness of the estate landscape, consisting of a collection of historic estates, many of which are listed buildings (including Birtles, Alderley Park) and some of which are also open to the public (including Capesthorne and Hare Hill) set within an undulating and wooded landscape of fields, dispersed dwellings and quiet country lanes.
- Rich textures and mosaic of the natural and human environment including the River Bollin and tributary streams e.g. Snape Brook, woodland, historic estates with landscape parks, historic halls and country mansions.
- The valley landscape of the River Bollin, including its distinct pastoral and parkland character and small, intimate scale enclosed by steep topography of the valley.
- Mature trees and woodland blocks – some of which are relatively large and designated as SBIs and ancient woodland.
- High recreational amenity and open space value e.g. open access land, Alderley Edge, The Carrs, Riverside Park and Styal Country Park in proximity to the urban areas of Wilmslow, Manchester, Alderley Edge and Macclesfield.
- Alderley Edge dramatic and distinctive sandstone escarpment. Views of the wooded landform and extensive views from the top enable important visual links from different parts of the Cheshire East landscape.
- The historic, architectural and historic interest of Styal Conservation Area.
## Summary information for Bollin Valley and Parklands

### Extent of area
The River Bollin corridor stretching from Little Bollington in the west to Wilmslow, and the estate landscape between Alderley Edge/ A34 and Macclesfield. To the south the area extends to Siddington and the edge of Gawsworth. It also includes Macclesfield Riverside Park and Hall Wood Reservoirs.

### Description
A rural landscape including the River Bollin valley and the collection of historic estates set within undulating fields and woodland and Alderley Edge, a prominent wooded sandstone outcrop.

### Landscape character context
(Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment)
- LCT 9 Estate, Woodland and Meres (EWM2 Capesthorne)
- LCT 10 Lower Farms and Woods (LFW1 Marthall; LFW3 Arley; LFW5 Chonar; LFW6 Ashley)
- LCT 13 River Valley (R8 Lower Bollin; R8 Upper Bollin)
- LCT 16 Higher Farms and Woods (HFW1 Gawsworth; HFW3 Poynton)
- LCT 1 Sandy Woods (SW3 Withington)

### Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Summary description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinctiveness</td>
<td>A large area containing many landscape features typical to Cheshire East: rolling/ undulating fields, historic estate parkland, intimate and remote river valley landscapes and the distinctive wooded sandstone outcrop of Alderley Edge. Wooded slopes and mature trees also give this area a sense of enclosure and sense of place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual character</td>
<td>Tranquil, wooded and enclosed/ insular in places (e.g. the steeper slopes near Styal Country Park), woodland slopes often provide a backdrop to views e.g. around Wilmslow and views to Alderley Edge, creating a textured and rich landscape. Verdant and picturesque character e.g. lower Bollin where the river meanders through grassy fields with mature trees – parkland atmosphere. Lack of intrusion from major infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and scenic quality</td>
<td>An intact rural landscape in generally good condition with few detracting elements. Rolling fields, woodland, river meanders and floodplain combine to form a small/ medium scale picturesque landscape. The river retains a rural feel even near Wilmslow. The distinctive wooded high ground of Alderley Edge is a local landmark and offers expansive views.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Natural character         | - A strong sense of rurality and naturalness, particularly important in areas near to urban areas e.g. Wilmslow Carrs.  
- Ancient woodland and woodland designated as SBI, many of which are associated with the River Bollin and the historic estates e.g. Styal Woods, Beech Woods SBI and ancient woodland at Alderley Park, Highlees Wood and Pasture SBI.  
- Water designations: part of the Bollin is designated as SBI from Wilmslow to Mottram Bridge, many more SBIs including Bollin Oxbows SBIs, Capesthorne Meres SBIs, Riverside Park.  
- Alderley Edge SSSI (originally a bronze age burial mound). |
| Cultural character        | - A concentration of historic estates and mansion houses, ornamental formal gardens, landscape parks and former deer parks e.g. Alderley Park, Capesthorne Hall  
- A number of listed halls, farms, barns, cottages. Grade II* listed buildings include Quarry Bank Mill, Mottram Old Hall, 16th century mill at Nether Alderley; Conservation Areas include Styal, which grew to house workers in the nearby Quarry Bank Mill. |
| Function                  | A valuable open space for nearby settlements (Wilmslow and Macclesfield). National Trust open access land at Alderley Edge, picnic facilities and walks along the river at Wilmslow; recreational amenity value of Styal Country Park in the north of the area, and the visual backdrop of Alderley Edge sandstone escarpment. |
View towards Shingles Cottage, a listed building associated with the old Cholmondeley Estate

A glimpsed view of Cholmondeley Castle from the Bickerton Road

Moss Wood
Statement of Significance

Cholmondeley Estate primarily comprises the Cholmondeley Castle Grade II Registered Park and Garden and its setting, comprising 18th century parkland and ornamental gardens surrounding an early 19th century gothic-style mansion. Some features within the romantic and ornate pleasure gardens date back to the 1700s. The landscape of the Cholmondeley Estate is secluded and hidden away from the surrounding Cheshire Plain by large woodland plantations, though inside the boundary is a grand and picturesque scene of rich colour and texture including tree-lined avenues, ornamental lakes and specimen trees and shrubs.

Special Qualities of Cholmondeley Estate

- The romantic and ornate gardens and sweeping landscaped 18th century parkland (described in more detail in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens) includes features such as listed bridges and temples, specimen trees and ponds. Notable landscape designers associated with Cholmondeley include William Emes, George London and John Webb. The grounds and gardens also provide a setting to the Grade II listed gothic-style mansion of Cholmondeley Castle.
- The distinctive and intact estate parkland character. This is expressed through the designed and integrated arrangement of landscape features and built structures including lodges, estate farms and tree-lined avenues.
- Mixed woodland blocks e.g. Moss Wood are relatively rare in the context of Cheshire East, and create a sense of seclusion, screening views of much of the area from the surrounding landscape. The woodland also provides contrast and texture against the surrounding more open Cheshire plain.
- The large meres – Chapel Mere and Deer Park Mere are of natural heritage value designated as SSSI and SBI respectively. Chapel Mere is also part of the wider Ramsar site ‘Midland Meres and Mosses’ a nationally important series of open water and peatland sites. The glacial meres also represent typical landscape features of the wider Cheshire East borough.
- A story of successive generations of Cholmondeley family have added to the designed landscape through history. Historic remains are still visible in the grounds, some of which have been extended (e.g. Cholmondeley Castle), partially or wholly demolished and rebuilt e.g. Old Hall by different generations.
- Panoramic views across the lawns and lakes from within the grounds.
## Summary information for Cholmondeley Estate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of area</th>
<th>Cholmondeley Park Registered Park and Garden (RP&amp;G) near Cholmondeley and its immediate setting. The area is bordered to the south and west by Bickerton Road, to the east by the A49 and to the north by field edges and footpaths.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Estate parkland and mature trees and woodland blocks (e.g. Moss Wood). Flat to gently undulating topography, meres and estate farms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Landscape character context (Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment) | LCT 9 Estate, Wood and Mere (EWM1 Norbury, Marbury and Combermere)  
LCT 5 Rolling Farmland (very small amount in the top north east corner) – RF4 Faddiley |

### Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Distinctive estate parkland character, including lodges, drives, pleasure grounds, landscaped parkland and features such as a ha-ha, ponds and temples. Cholmondeley Estate contains a relatively large proportion of woodland which is rare in the context of the wider borough.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual character</td>
<td>Enclosure provided by dense woodland plantation provides a sense of intimacy. Tall plantation trees and large buildings create a sense of scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and scenic quality</td>
<td>High scenic quality of the designed Cholmondeley Castle gardens including ornamental features such as ponds and listed structures such as bridges. Well managed, neat hedgerows and mown grass.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Natural character | - Chapel Mere SSSI and part of the Midland Meres and Mosses Ramsar site and Deer Park Mere SBI – extensive bird and waterfowl population.  
- Moss Wood. |
| Cultural character | - Cholmondeley Castle Grade II Registered Park and Garden (RP&G), including the 18th century landscaped park and mainly 20th century formal gardens which include date to 1700 AD and Cholmondeley Castle (early 19th century) and Hampton Old Hall Grade II* listed buildings and a number of other listed structures.  
- Notable landscape designers associated with Cholmondeley include William Emes, George London and John Webb; artists and craftsmen associated with designed features include Robert Bakewell who designed some gates and railings. |
| Function | The gardens are a popular visitor attraction. The woodland is widely visible from the surrounding Cheshire plain. |
Valley farmland pastures with the River Dane in the background. View from a minor country lane south of Swettenham.

Ribbons of woodland follow the sinuous River Dane. Expansive views can be gained from some locations such as this viewpoint in the Quinta Arboretum.

Typical red Cheshire brick building with slate roof near to the village of Swettenham.
Statement of Significance

The meandering upper section of the River Dane winds through a flat and gently undulating floodplain of grazed pastures and meadow fields contained by sometimes steeply wooded slopes to make a distinctive textured mark on the surrounding more open Cheshire landscape. A high proportion of ancient woodland and other natural designations including SBIs and an SSSI reflect the strong natural qualities of the landscape, punctuated by a few buildings and historic halls well integrated into the landscape with local materials and mature vegetation.

Special Qualities of Dane Valley

- A sense of remoteness and tranquillity despite its proximity to Congleton and main transport routes.
- A rich and intimate landscape. An intactness and sense of balance partially relating to the lack of intrusions such as roads, the integration of human and natural influences in the landscape including grazing sheep, pasture fields, buildings of local brick and visible river meanders. Textures and colours from mature vegetation.
- Strong natural qualities and features including the meandering river, mature vegetation - individual trees and woodland associated with the river or tributary banks in addition to the active presence of wildlife such as birds.
- Mature woodland and vegetation adds character, texture, richness and enclosure and supports a rich diversity of wildlife. Trees such as mature limes and oaks, willow and alder add ribbon-like patterns along the river banks and particularly on steeper slopes e.g. near Swettenham.
- Strong sense of place associated with the River Dane – both in term of the distinctive landform and vegetation which stands out in the flatter and more open surroundings, enhanced by occasional buildings constructed of local materials such as Cheshire red brick with slate/ clay tile roofs, halls and farmhouses well integrated into the landscape by mature vegetation.
- A natural and relatively undeveloped landscape which provides a buffer to the River Dane and nature designations including the River Terraces SSSI, River Dane SBI and a number of other SBIs for woodland and water.
Summary information for Dane Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of area</th>
<th>Dane Valley comprises the upper section of the River Dane from the outer edge of Holmes Chapel at its western end to Congleton at its eastern end. The northern and southern boundaries are defined by field boundaries outside the river corridor.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>The upper section of the meandering River Dane, its floodplain and woodland corridors along its banks create a distinct and recognisable feature in the surrounding landscape of Cheshire’s lowland plain.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Landscape character context (Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment) | LCT 13 River Valley (R5 Upper Dane)  
LCT 10 Lower Farms and Woods (LFW 2 Brereton Heath) – small parts  
LCT 16 Higher Farms and Woods (HFW 1 Gawsworth)- small parts |
| Criteria | Summary description |
| Distinctiveness | The distinctive and coherent incised river valley character forms a contrast with the surrounding flat/ gently rolling open fields of the Lower Farms and Woods character type (LCT). Its more undulating landform with some steeper slopes and the river corridor and densely wooded character (including some ancient woodland) gives a sense of remoteness and strong sense of place. |
| Perceptual character | Deeply remote, inward looking and peaceful with a distinct lack of major roads and few minor roads. Very quiet, tranquil and harmonious. There is a sense of space and solitude and contrasts of enclosure within wooded country lanes and expansive views out over the river banks. Sense of naturalness and sound of birdsong. |
| Landscape and scenic quality | An intact, rural and richly natural landscape in good condition, lend high aesthetic quality and sense of place. Mature trees, intact river valley character, and the river terraces SSSI. Buildings constructed of local materials create a sense of place in the village of Swettenham. |
| Natural character | • Rich natural heritage value in the meandering river, mature vegetation and trees – both individual mature trees and woodlands blocks along the river banks, many of which are ancient woodland.  
• Woodland, including a large proportion of ancient woodland (e.g. Ryecroft Wood) is an important defining characteristic, creating ribbon-like patterns along the river banks.  
• River Dane SBI has high ornithological interest and importance for insects and mammals; also designated SSSI for its meanders and terraces. A number of other SBIs for woodland and water. |
| Cultural character | • Occasional farm buildings and narrow winding country lanes add further texture and colour to the natural landscape. Individual buildings (e.g. farmsteads and barns) constructed of local materials are well integrated into the landscape e.g. red Cheshire brick with slate/ clay tile roofs, including the listed Swettenham Arms (Grade II) and Church of St Peter (Grade II*). |
| Function | • The largely undeveloped landscape provides a buffer and setting to the River Dane. |
Tegg’s Nose

Houses in Kerridge

Ridgegate Reservoir, Macclesfield Forest
Statement of Significance

A transitional landscape adjacent to the Peak District National Park, this area also represents many of the special qualities associated with the National Park. Undulating wooded ground rises to form the footslopes and upland area of the South West Peak to the east. The Peak Park Fringe is a distinctive landscape of stone walls, steep slopes and recognisable skylines including Mow Cop, Tegg’s Nose and the Kerridge Ridge. Panoramic views from high ground extend to the west over the Cheshire Plain to distant hills as far as Wales, whilst views to the east take in the wilder and more dramatic slopes of the Peak District National Park.

Special Qualities of Peak Park Fringe

- Scenic beauty of the naturally varied undulating landform, low ridges and upland inclines which have been shaped by erosion of the underlying folded layers of Millstone Grit. This is enhanced by the more open, broad, rolling hill summits.
- Distinctive ridges, hills and outcrops form local landmarks and act as panoramic viewpoints, for example the Cloud, Kerridge Hill, Tegg’s Nose and Cheshire’s Close.
- Woodland blocks, scattered trees and tree clusters along cloughs and slopes creates a wooded mosaic of texture and habitats which is rare in the context of the National Park.
- A strong rural sense of place and pastoral character derived from the distinctive character of hamlets and villages – where buildings of local materials add sense of place - stone walls, dispersed settlements, farms, and narrow winding lanes.
- Sense of escape and remoteness.
- Contrasts between openness of the upland rock outcrops and enclosure of the wooded slopes and cloughs, and juxtaposition of scale with small scale human elements such as stone walls and isolated stone buildings, on a backdrop of larger scale rolling hills and woodland, much of which is ancient woodland.
- Harmonious balance between humans and the landscape – human elements reflect and enhance the landscape whilst not detracting from sense of scale. Vernacular building materials and sensitively designed features that reflect local context.
- Views – including panoramic views from high ground extend to the west over the Cheshire Plain to distant hills as far as Wales, whilst views to the east take in the wilder and more dramatic slopes of the Peak District National Park.
- Proximity to settlement and ease of access for recreation and walking trails including the South Cheshire Way and Staffordshire Gritstone Trail.
- The landscape provides a buffer between urban areas (including Macclesfield and Congleton), and the Peak District National Park.

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1 See the Peak District National Park Management Plan [http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/microsites/nmp]
### Summary information for Peak Park Fringe

#### Extent of area
The Peak Park Fringe lies to the west of Peak District National Park and is defined by the town of Disley to the north and the settlements of Mow Cop, The Bank and Scholar Green to the south. The western boundary largely follows the Macclesfield Canal and the edge of the steeper slopes which become gentler to the west.

#### Description
The upland and footslopes which lie to the west of the South West Peak. The Peak Park Fringe contains wooded slopes and more exposed uplands, dispersed settlement and farming. It forms the transition between the lower slopes which become the Cheshire Plain to the west and the higher upland and moors of the Peak District National Park to the east.

#### Landscape character context (Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment)
- LCT 18 Upland Footslopes (UFS1 Mow Cop; UFS3 Higher Disley; UFS5 Langley; UFS6 Kerridge)
- LCT 19 Upland Fringe (UF1 Sutton Common; UF2 Teggs Nose – Whaley Moor; UF3 Macclesfield Forest – small part to the east)
- LCT 17 Upland Estate (UE1 Lyme Park) – very small part to the north
- LCT 16 Higher Farms and Woods (HFW1 Gawsworth; HFW2 Little Moreton; HFW3 Poynton; HFW4 Buglawton)
- LCT 20 Moorland Plateau (MP2 Shutlingsloe – small part to the east).

#### Criteria Summary description

**Distinctiveness**
Upland hills and ridges form very distinctive skyline features in the local landscape as well as more distant views especially from the flatter Cheshire plains to the west. Ridges and features include the Cloud, Kerridge Hill, Tegg’s Nose, Croker Hill, Sutton Common and follies at Mow Cop and White Nancy.

**Perceptual character**
Rural and farmed landscape – including undulating hills with sheep grazing, stone walls. A strong sense of escape and remoteness and large expansive scale of the landscape. An intact varied landscape character derived from the interaction of different landscape character types – ‘Upland Footslopes’, ‘Higher Farms & Woods’ and outcrops of ‘Upland Fringe’ at Sutton Common, Tegg’s Nose and Black Hill. Stone walls emphasise the gradient of hill slopes and grazing sheep add life and movement.

**Landscape and scenic quality**
A strong visual character from the transition and contrast of rising ground from west to east - from undulating, smaller scale, enclosed and wooded lower slopes on the edge of settlements (e.g. Poynton, Bollington, Macclesfield, Congleton) and the steeper, larger scale, more open slopes forming the gateway to the Peak District National Park. A contrast of landscape elements with human scale features such as stone walls, trees/ woodland, hedgerows and individual stone farmhouses lying within larger scale hills. Scenic beauty derives from steep partially wooded slopes, natural landform of rounded grassy hills. Distant/ panoramic views – west over the Cheshire Plain and the hills beyond within Wales - and views to the National Park.

**Natural character**
- Sense of naturalness and harmonious balance of man and landscape.
- Strong sense of natural heritage and biodiversity, A large number of designations for SSSI, SBI, ancient woodland and geological features – RIGS
- Woodland, some of which is ancient woodland, patches of acid grassland and heathland areas.

**Cultural character**
- Buildings reflect the local context, sensitively designed and fit well with their surroundings e.g. by use of natural materials and not detracting from the large scale landscape. Distinctive
| Character, scattered farms – dispersed settlement pattern |
| Some surviving mills, quarries incorporated into the landscape |
| Conservation Areas of Macclesfield Canal, Kerridge and Bollington |

**Function**

A buffer between the urban areas of Macclesfield, Congleton and the National Park. Popular for walking, cycling – easy access for outdoor recreation. Viewpoints include the Cloud, Kerridge Hill, Tegg’s Nose and Cheshire’s Close. Tegg’s Nose Country Park in the former gritstone quarry. Trails include South Cheshire Way and Staffordshire Gritstone Trail. An area valued in its own right and as a setting to the National Park.
Rostherne/ Tatton Park

Cheshire East Local Landscape Designations

Peak District National Park

Cheshire East
Rostherne Mere and Church

Estate cottages in Rostherne

Tatton Hall
Statement of Significance

Tatton Park Grade II*Registered Park and Garden is a fine example of an historic estate, including 18th century designed landscape and gardens and extensive landscape park, 15th century Tudor Old Hall (Grade II*listed) and Tatton Hall (Grade I listed). Rostherne is a tranquil village; the mere and surrounding landscape represent a coherent historic estate character, with well managed landscape features, long vistas to the lake and sweeping grassland.

Special Qualities of Rostherne/ Tatton Park

- High aesthetic quality and picturesque views of and within the Grade II* Park and Garden described on the English Heritage Register which form the grounds of Tatton’s historic Old Hall and neo-classical mansion in the historic Tatton Estate.
- The historic record expressed in the 18th century Parkland landscape, bearing the marks of some of the most famous designers in English landscape history and displaying a highly regarded representation of the English Landscape style. Designers associated with Tatton include Humphrey Repton, John Webb, Lewis Wyatt and Joseph Paxton. The deer park dates from 1290 AD.
- Sense of grandeur both within the estate and without, expressed in large scale features such as the long sweeping driveways in the park, large deer enclosures, majestic oaks and large agricultural fields outside of the estate grounds.
- A coherent and well managed high quality landscape with strong visual character both within and outside the park, including trimmed hedges and formal gardens. The influence of the estate spreads into the surrounding landscape, with farmsteads and lodges outside the grounds.
- Sense of tranquillity and remoteness from the woodland boundary to the park and a lack of impact from major roads/infrastructure and other settlements. Strong rural character – with local building vernacular and narrow winding lanes.
- Historic and cultural character including the Scheduled Monument, 15th Century Tudor Old Hall and a catalogue of listed buildings and structures which is remarkably historically complete.
- The natural character of the meres and woodlands including Rostherne Mere National Nature Reserve, Tatton Mere and The Mere SSSI.
- The Conservation Area of Rostherne, including its historic architecture resembling past/present associations with the Tatton estate.
Summary information for Rostherne/ Tatton Park

**Extent of area**
The area covers Tatton Park Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (RP&G), the village of Rostherne, Rostherne Mere and surrounding farmland. The area is bordered to the west by the A556 and Mereheath Lane, to the south by the outer edge of Knutsford, to the east by Broadoak Lane and to the north by the edge of the village of Ashley.

**Description**
A historic estate and village of Rostherne, rural character and sweeping/ undulating topography with a range of habitats, historical and cultural features.

**Landscape character context**
LCT 9 Estate, Woodland and Meres (EWM 4 Tatton and Rostherne)
LCT 10 Lower Farms and Woods (LFW 6 Ashley)

**Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Summary description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinctiveness</strong></td>
<td>Tatton Park is a fine example of an historic estate, the influence of which spreads into the surrounding landscape, in a coherent style of farmsteads and lodges outside the grounds. It is remarkably historically complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptual character</strong></td>
<td>A sense of grandeur in the large scale fields and sweeping undulations, large meres and mature oaks with open views. Tranquil and a sense of escape, with a lack of impact from major roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape and scenic quality</strong></td>
<td>A coherent landscape, very well managed and picturesque. The estate influence extends to the village of Rostherne, with intact character and strong sense of place.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Natural character**         | • Rostherne Mere National Nature Reserve is also part of the Midland Meres and Mosses Ramsar site with particular importance as a habitat for birds; Knutsford Moor Nature Reserve – large area of fen and reedswamp and valuable bird habitat.  
• Tatton Meres and The Mere SSSIs are valued particularly for aquatic flora.  
• Ancient broadleaved woodlands around Rostherne Mere and Arden House in the north of the area.  
• SBIs include lakes e.g. Mill Pool, Cicely Pool; and a number of woodlands including Witchcote Wood and Dog Wood. SBIs also include Long Hay Meadow and Old Deer Enclosure (an extensive area of acid unimproved grassland). |
| **Cultural character**        | • The distinctive influence of the estate throughout the area creates a strong sense of place and landscape character.  
• The gardens likewise reflect many styles of English garden design since they were laid out in 1715 and include Italianate gardens, herbaceous borders, walled gardens, a rose garden and a Japanese garden.  
• The Scheduled Monument of Tatton medieval settlement includes prehistoric settlement remains, the buried remains of Tatton Old Hall and mill dam.  
• Rostherne Conservation Area contains a number of listed buildings including the church. |
| **Function**                  | Much of the Tatton Estate is open access land and is a very popular tourist destination. It also provides a tranquil, rural enclave and recreation value for surrounding urban areas e.g. Knutsford. |
Tabley Hall

Parkland surrounding Tabley Hall

Formal gardens of Tabley Hall
Statement of Significance

Tabley Hall is an 18th century landscape park which is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. It is the setting for the Grade I listed Tabley House, Grade I listed church and the Scheduled Monument remains of Tabley Old Hall and contains sweeping vistas of grass parkland, the large and picturesque Tabley Mere, tree-lined avenues, clumps of parkland trees and perimeter woodland belt some of which is designated ancient woodland. The dense woodland boundary creates a sense of Tabley being hidden from the modern influences and business of major roads such as the A5033 and A556.

Special Qualities of Tabley Hall

- The Grade II Registered Park and Garden as described in the English Heritage Register. This is a classic example of an 18th century landscape park and 19th century garden which focusses around the large Tabley Mere. The vista from the house toward the lake is enhanced by the backdrop of Royd Wood. The park also features a double tree-lined avenue, a flat square formal lawn, kitchen garden and listed sundial.
- Tabley House is the only 18th century Palladian country house in Cheshire. The other listed built elements of Tabley include the Grade I listed church built from the remains of the original 14th century chapel, as well as the folly tower and gatehouse lodges visible from the A5033 and A556.
- Cultural associations of the estate include paintings by JMW turner of Tabley House from the mere.
- Landscape features reflect time depth of the area, including the Scheduled Monument remains of Tabley Old Hall (c. 1380) on the island of Nether Tabley Mere.
- The contrasts created by the high scenic quality and open classic vistas within the grounds and the surrounding dense woodland – some of which is designated as ancient broadleaved woodland – which creates a sense of seclusion and a sense of Tabley being hidden from the modern influences and business of major roads such as the A5033 and A556.
- The sense of rurality despite its proximity to major roads (e.g. the M6 motorway and Chester Road) and settlements e.g. Knutsford.
- The natural value of Tabley Mere SSSI.
Summary information for Tabley Hall

| Extent of area | The designation mostly follows the boundary of Tabley House Registered Park and Garden (RP&G), bordered to the west by the A556 Chester Road, to the north by the 5033 Northwich Road and the M6 motorway and Sudlow Lane to the east. To the south the designation also includes Smoker Brook and tributary stream and adjacent woodland and public footpaths. |
| Description | Tabley Hall estate contains an 18th century landscape park which is a Grade II RP&G, Grade I listed Tabley House, Grade I listed church and the Scheduled Monument remains of Tabley Old Hall. The grounds are surrounded by woodland belts some of which is ancient woodland. |
| Landscape character context (Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment) | LCT 9 Estate, Woodland and Meres (EWM 5: Tabley Character Area) LCT 10 Lower Farms and Woods (LFW 3 Arley) – very small portion in south west corner |

| Criteria | Summary description |
| Distinctiveness | A coherent landscape, with historic character mainly consisting of post medieval ornamental parkland. |
| Perceptual character | Grand scale, classic vistas from the house and in the grounds. Enclosed by woodland belt, creating a sense of seclusion. |
| Landscape and scenic quality | Historic designed park and garden, landscape park 18th century style, attractive meres, very well managed, mature trees. Scenic and woodland views inside the grounds but enclosed and cut off from the outside by woodland belts. |
| Natural character | • Tabley Mere SSSI – particularly valued for submerged plants and acidic marshy grassland on its banks. • Round and Rinks Wood ancient and semi-natural woodland. The woodland also provides a backdrop to the mere and creates a sense of separation and seclusion for the grounds of Tabley from the busy outside. |
| Cultural character | • Grade II RP&G – an 18th century landscape park and 19th century grounds associated with the 18th century house. Tabley Mere is the park’s main feature, enlarged and deepened in the late 18th century in designs by John Webb. • Views from the mere and parkland up to the house are the subject of paintings by JMW Turner, commissioned by the owner in the 1800s. • Tabley House – Grade I listed, late 18th century mansion in the Palladian style. • The remains of Tabley Old Hall (c. 1380) are a Scheduled Monument, located on an island on Nether Tabley Mere. The adjacent chapel was rebuilt and is the existing Grade I listed Church of St Peter. Both former buildings were subject to subsidence. |
| Function | Proximity to motorway and Knutsford. The area provides a scenic enclave of designed landscape in close proximity to urban influences. |
Meandering tributary valley cuts through undulating fields, a view from the Crewe and Nantwich Circular Walk next to the Shropshire Union Canal.

The church and black and white timber framed buildings in Church Minshull Conservation Area.

River bank willows on the River Weaver, looking north from the bridge at Cross Lane with Grade II* listed Mill House in the background.
Statement of Significance

Weaver Valley is a picturesque rural river landscape of rolling fields and pockets of bankside woodland. The historic village of Church Minshull provides the focal point, located in a meander of the River Weaver. The 16th century timber framed buildings set behind hedges create a strong sense of place.

Special Qualities of Weaver Valley

- A picturesque and well-managed rural landscape, with rich textures of woodland and vegetation.
- A strong sense of place influenced by the black and white timber framed buildings, many of which are listed and typical of Cheshire East, particularly within the Church Minshull Conservation Area, and the river valley landscape.
- Peaceful and tranquil character with a sense of rurality. Dispersed buildings, hedgerows, trees and views of the river, streams or canal create a human-scale landscape with a sense of intimacy and enclosure.
- Variation between enclosure and openness which creates glimpses of the river winding through the undulating fields. Gaps in hedges/ trees create framed views some of which are open and distant over the distinctive river valley landscape of undulating fields.
- Woodland blocks and trees, bankside clusters and mature oaks, and hedgerows. These create rich textures in the landscape, and contrast with the surrounding regular fields.
- The coherent river valley landscape and views of the River Weaver and Shropshire Union Canal from higher points such as Nanney’s Bridge and the Crewe and Nantwich Circular Walk.
## Summary information for Weaver Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of area</th>
<th>The upper section of the River Weaver, the area is defined in the north by the borough boundary, to the east by the Shropshire Union Canal and to the south and west by field boundaries.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>A rural river valley landscape of the upper section of the River Weaver which meanders through undulating fields. A relatively open landscape with bank side trees and individual mature oaks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Landscape character context (Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment) | LCT 13 River Weaver (R3 Upper Weaver Character Area)  
LCT 7 East Lowland Plain (ELP 3 Cholmondeston; ELP5 Wimboldsley) – small parts |

### Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Coherent river valley landscape, including the river and canal, and undulating wooded banks and grazed fields.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual character</td>
<td>Very rural character, tranquil, small scale, intimate and enclosed landscape. Glimpses to the river valley – and tributaries can be seen winding through green fields. Rich textures including trees such as weeping willows on river banks contrast with the surrounding regular fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and scenic quality</td>
<td>Compact nucleated village of Church Minshull. Well managed, scenic landscape in good condition. Glimpses of the sinuous meandering river and tributaries and open views of rolling fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural character</td>
<td>• Woodland and ancient woodlands including Weaver Wood Rookery, Polestead Wood Sandicroft Wood, Minshull Hall Farm Wood.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Cultural character | • Historical architecture, Church Minshull is characterised by black and white timber framed buildings typical to Cheshire East.  
• Church Minshull Conservation Area contains a number of listed buildings including the Grade II* listed Church of St Bartholomew and Grade II listed Badger Inn.  
• Other listed buildings and structures include halls, farmhouses and canal bridges. |
| Function | Public rights of way including the Crewe and Nantwich Circular Walk, canal boating on the Shropshire Union Canal. |
Distant views north over Cheshire East, from Wirswall

St Michael’s Church, Marbury and Marbury Mere

Timber framed buildings in Marbury Conservation Area
Statement of Significance

Wirswall/ Marbury/ Combermere includes the 18th century landscape park of Combermere Abbey (Grade II Registered Park and Garden and Combermere Abbey Grade I listed building dating from 1133. The picturesque villages of Marbury and Wirswall are set within rolling and undulating hills with some distant views and classic vistas to historic churches and meres. Overall, the deeply rural landscape of narrow winding country lanes creates a sense of tranquillity and remoteness. It is a traditional and distinctive Cheshire landscape.

Special Qualities of Wirswall/ Marbury/ Combermere

- Landscape park and gardens of Grade II Combermere Abbey described within the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens.
- Sense of tranquillity and remoteness created by the lack of intrusion from major roads and infrastructure, and enhanced by the narrow, sunken and winding country lanes bordered by neatly trimmed high hedges, which whirl across a rolling and undulating topography.
- A coherent and typical classic Cheshire picturesque landscape of small and intimate scale, narrow country lanes, individual mature oak trees, sheep grazing on rolling green fields, historic churches and buildings integrated into the landscape with local materials and native trees and vegetation.
- Predominantly open landscape of rolling topography creates glimpses of classic picturesque scenes of meres and historic churches as well as sheep and farming.
- Distinctive historic village of Marbury, with timber framed buildings adding character, colour and texture to the landscape. Attention to detail in architecture and buildings that respond to each other.
- Views and vistas from some areas of higher ground e.g. Wirswall, and glimpsed or framed views over rural countryside when travelling through the rolling topography.
- Natural value of meres and woodland e.g. Quoisley Meres SSSI which is part of the wider Ramsar site ‘Midland Meres and Mosses’ a nationally important series of open water and peatland sites.
- Cultural character of the remnant estate present in landscape features such as historic buildings, hedges and long drives which forms a setting to the Registered Park and Garden.
### Summary information for Wirswall/ Marbury/ Combermere

#### Extent of area
The area is located in the south of Cheshire East, bordered by the borough boundary to the south, the edge of Combermere Abbey Registered Park and Garden (RP&G) to the east and field boundaries to the north and west.

#### Description
Combermere Abbey Grade II RP&G including Grade I listed Abbey and other listed cottages and outbuildings, Comber Mere and surrounding woodland; the villages of Wirswall and Marbury, and Marbury Big Mere and Little Mere, Quoisley Big Mere and Little Mere.

#### Landscape character context
**LCT 9: Estate, Woodland & Meres (EWM1: Cholmondeley Character Area)**

#### Criteria
**Summary description**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Coherent landscape character which confers a distinct sense of place and reflects the wider typical Cheshire landscape. Features including rolling topography, grazed fields, churches, historic villages and meres are intact.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual character</td>
<td>Small scale, intimate landscape with a sense of rurality and remoteness. A lack of intrusions. Sense of typical Englishness – expressed through framed views of meres, churches and mature oaks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and scenic quality</td>
<td>Picturesque rural landscape of narrow winding, sometimes sunken lanes and trimmed hedges. Attractive and historic villages – e.g. Marbury with historic church and village green. Undulating and rolling topography creates glimpsed views to villages, meres and farmland. More distant views are available from some higher ground, especially in Wirswall. Well managed and in good condition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Natural character        | • Natural value of the many meres including Quoisley Meres SSSI, also part of the Midland Meres & Mosses Ramsar site; Marbury Big Mere and Little Mere SBIs and Comber SSSI.  
                          • Comber Mere SSSI supports swamp and fen vegetation, wintering wildfowl and a large heronry.  
                          • Combermere Big Wood SBI. |
| Cultural character       | • Remnants of the historic estate character are present in historic buildings at the end of long drives, and listed historic buildings (e.g. farmhouses, barns and Marbury Church).  
                          • Combermere Abbey Grade II RP&G, including 18th century landscape park and Comber Mere, a natural mere adapted as an ornamental lake and incorporated into the landscape.  
                          • Combermere Abbey Grade I listed building dating from 1133 as a Cistercian monastery.  
                          • Marbury Conservation Area |
| Function                 | Setting to the Combermere Abbey RP&G and Marbury Conservation Area. |