

Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment
Scoping Report

December 2021

Quality information

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Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| AQMA | Air Quality Management Area |
| ASR | Air Status Report |
| DEFRA | Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs |
| DPD | Development Plan Document |
| EA | Environment Agency |
| FNPP | The draft Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan |
| FTC | Frodsham Town Council |
| IMD | Index of Multiple Deprivation |
| LEP | Local Economic Partnership |
| LNR | Local Nature Reserves |
| LPP1 | Cheshire West & Chester Local Plan Part 1 (adopted 2015) |
| LPP2 | Cheshire West & Chester Local Plan Part 2 (adopted 2019) |
| LTP | Local Transport Plan |
| MHCLG | Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government |
| NDP | Neighbourhood Development Plan |
| NNR | National Nature Reserve |
| NPPF | National Planning Policy Framework |
| NWMP | North West Marine Plan |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |
| SEA | Strategic Environmental Assessment |

1. Introduction

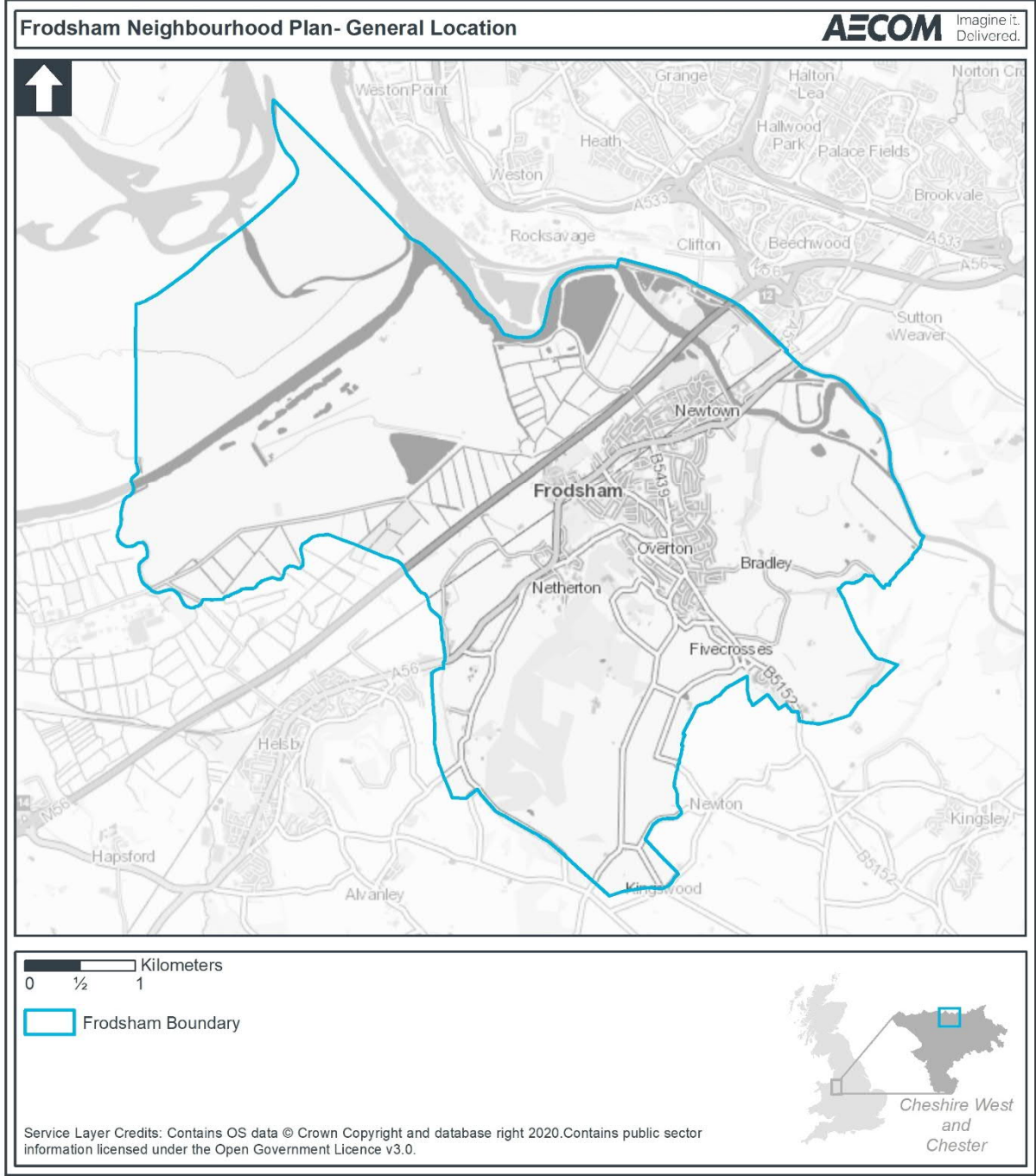
Background

- 1.1 Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, on behalf of Frodsham Town Council is in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the sustainable future growth of the Town. AECOM has been commissioned to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of Frodsham NDP on behalf of the Town Council.
- 1.2 The NDP is being prepared in the context of the adopted Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 1 and Part 2 (LPP1 and LPP2, respectively). The NDP will form part of the development plan for Frodsham, alongside the Local Plan (parts 1 and 2).
- 1.3 NDPs are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Cheshire West and Chester, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the Neighbourhood Planning process where appropriate.
- 1.4 The Key information relating to the Frodsham, NDP is presented in the table below (Table 1-1).

Table 1-1. Key facts relating to the NDP for Frodsham

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Name of Responsible Authority | Frodsham Town Council |
| Title of Plan | Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan |
| Subject | Neighbourhood Planning |
| Purpose | <p>The Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan will be in general conformity with the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Parts 1 and 2.</p> <p>Once 'made' the Frodsham NDP will be used to guide and shape development within the Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> |
| Timescale | To 2030 |
| Area covered by the plan | <p>The Neighbourhood Plan area comprises the Civil Parish of Frodsham. It is located approximately 3 miles south of Runcorn, 16 miles (26 km) south of Liverpool, and 28 miles (45 km) southwest of Manchester. The River Weaver runs to its northeast and on the west it overlooks the estuary of the River Mersey. The A56 road and the Chester–Manchester railway line pass through the town, and the M56 motorway passes to the northwest. Frodsham is an electrical ward in the Cheshire West and Chester unitary authority (LPA).</p> |
| Summary of content | <p>The Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy and a range of policies including allocation of sites for housing development within the Neighbourhood Plan area</p> |
| Plan contact point | Gill Hesketh; frodshamplan@gmail.com |

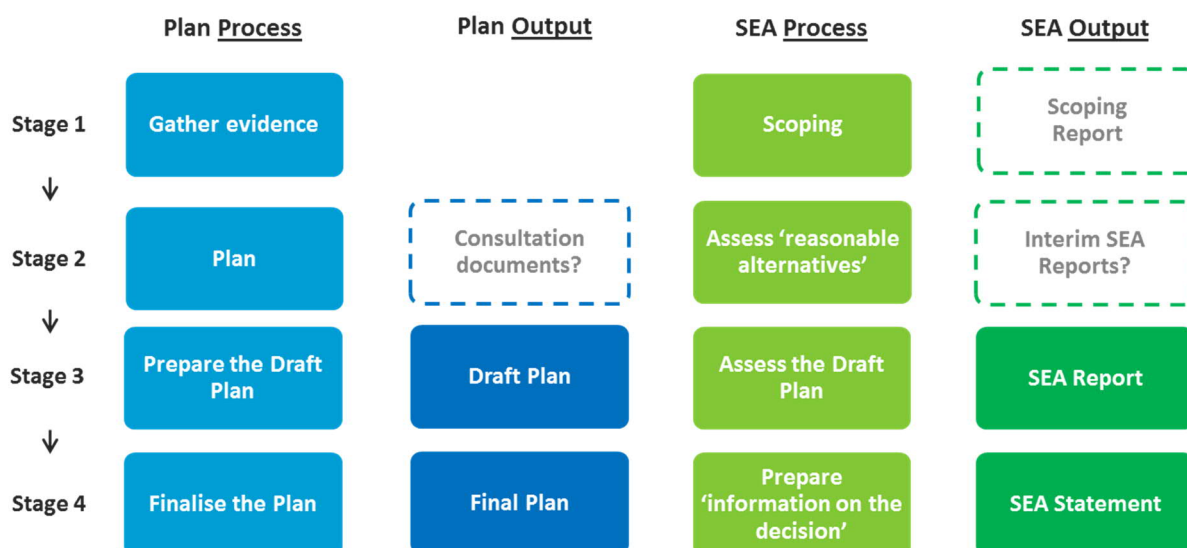
Figure 1-1 Frodsham NP Area Location



SEA explained

- 1.5 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects.
- 1.6 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (otherwise known as the SEA Regulations) require an environmental assessment to be carried out on certain plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment. This plan has been determined to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment by Cheshire West and Cheshire Council. To meet this requirement, the plan is undergoing a SEA process which incorporates satisfies the requirements of the SEA Regulations.
- 1.7 SEA can be viewed as a four-stage process that produces a number of statutory and non-statutory outputs. As illustrated in Figure 1.2 below, 'Scoping' is a mandatory process under the SEA Regulations, but the publication of a scoping report is a voluntary (but useful) output. This is the stage of SEA that is covered in the Scoping Report.

Figure 1-2: SEA as a four step process



Introduction to scoping

- 1.8 One of the first stages in the SEA process is to establish the key issues that the appraisal should focus on and to set out appraisal methods. This is called 'scoping', and involves a review of relevant policies, plans and programmes (a 'contextual review') and information about the current and future state of the environment, economy and social factors (the 'baseline'). This information is then used to set out a framework for undertaking strategic environmental assessments as the plan is developed.
- 1.9 The Regulations¹ require that certain statutory bodies are consulted on the scope of a SEA. This can be done in a number of ways, but most often a Scoping Report is produced that presents the key information and a methodology for how future appraisals will be undertaken. Statutory Consultees have 5 weeks to comment on the scope of the appraisal. In England, the statutory consultees are Natural England, The Environment Agency and Historic England.
- 1.10 Developing the draft scope for the SEA as presented in this report has involved the following steps:
- Defining the broader context for the Frodsham NDP and associated SEA (i.e. EU, UK Government and local policy and commitments), to summarise the regulatory and legislative landscape;
 - Establishing the baseline for the SEA, (i.e. the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Frodsham NDP) to help identify the plan's likely significant effects;
 - Identifying particular problems or opportunities ('issues') that should be a focus of the SEA; and
 - Developing a SEA Framework comprising objectives and appraisal questions based on these issues, which can then be used to appraise the draft plan.

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Scoping outcomes

- 1.11 The SEA Regulations and guidance document (the NPPG for example) encourage proportionate assessment and therefore it is important to scope out issues where it is apparent that the Plan could not affect the topic area in a significant way. In order to do this, an initial scoping sifting exercise has been undertaken.
- 1.12 As a result, a number of SEA topic areas have been scoped-out early without the need to establish a more detailed baseline position. For other topics, further detail was gathered through the scoping process, which led to additional topics being SCOPED OUT.
- 1.13 **Air Quality, Biodiversity, Climatic Factors (adaptation), Historic Environment, Landscape, Population and Housing and Transportation** have been identified for further assessment at the next stages of the SEA process.
- 1.14 The relevant SEA topic areas and the reasons for the scoping decisions are set out in Table 1-2 below.

Table 1-2: Scoping outcomes

| SEA topic area | Scoping Outcomes |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Air Quality | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process, and subsequently SCOPED IN . There is an AQMA in the NP area and the FNP can potentially have effects (positive or negative) on air quality |
| Biodiversity | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently SCOPED IN . There are numerous sites of biodiversity importance within the NP area and the NP can potentially impact these. |
| Climatic factors | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently climate change mitigation SCOPED OUT as the FNP is limited in its scope to influence mitigation. Climate change adaptation has been SCOPED IN as the Plan can impact resilience and adaptation (e.g. flood risk) |
| Historic Environment | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently SCOPED IN . There are numerous heritage assets and a conservation area which can be impacted by the FNP. |
| Landscape | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently SCOPED IN . There are sensitive landscapes in the FNP area and the FNP can potentially have effects (positive or negative) on these. |
| Waste | The Plan is unable to influence this to a significant extent and therefore this topic area can be SCOPED OUT . Key issues relating to waste will be to ensure adequate access for waste collection, and storage that does not affect the street scene. |
| Minerals | The plan does not pose any sterilisation risk to mineral resources. Therefore, this topic area can be SCOPED OUT . |
| Land, Soil and Water Resources | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process, but subsequently SCOPED OUT |
| Population and Housing | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently SCOPED IN . |
| Health and Wellbeing | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently SCOPED IN as the FNP can potentially contribute to increased Health and Wellbeing. |
| Transportation | Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently SCOPED IN . FNP policies have the potential to engender effects (positive or negative) on this topic. |

Structure of this Scoping Report

1.15 The outcomes of the scoping exercise for the topic areas further considered in the scoping process (following the initial sift) have been presented as follows:

- Chapter 2: Air Quality;
- Chapter 3: Biodiversity;
- Chapter 4: Climatic factors (Flood Risk and Climate Change);
- Chapter 5: Historic Environment;
- Chapter 6: Landscape;
- Chapter 7: Land, Soil and Water Resources;
- Chapter 8: Population and Housing;
- Chapter 9: Health and Wellbeing; and
- Chapter 10: Transportation.

1.16 In accordance with the SEA Directive, the final chapters of the report summarise the overarching sustainability issues, set out the SEA Framework and outline the next stages in the process. To demonstrate a clear trail of how the SEA objectives have been identified, each topic Chapter (which is scoped into the SEA) concludes with suggested objectives and supporting criteria for inclusion in the SEA Framework. A site assessment framework is included is set out in Appendix A. This will be used to appraise the development sites allocated in the FNP.

2. Air Quality

2.1 This theme focuses on air pollution, in particular; air quality hotspots and areas known to exceed objectives for air quality.

Policy context

2.2 Table 2-1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 2-1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to air quality

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|---|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| The Clean Air Strategy | 2019 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019 |
| UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations | 2017 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633269/air-quality-plan-overview.pdf |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf |
| The North West Marine Plan | 2021 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1004490/FINAL_North_West_Marine_Plan_1_.pdf |
| The Cheshire West and Chester Low Emission Strategy (2018 – 2021) | 2018 | https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/pests-pollution-food-safety/pollution-and-air-quality/low-emission-strategy-180219.pdf |
| Cheshire West and Chester Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) | 2011 | https://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/policies_plans_and_strategies/local_transport_plan_20112026#:~:text=Cheshire%20West%20and%20Chester%20Council%27s%20Local%20Transport%20Plan,the%20local%20area%20in%20the%20years%20to%20come. |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 1 | 2019 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ |

2.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks early planning to reduce/ mitigate air quality impacts in development and to take advantage of opportunities to improve air quality. Measures to improve air quality include traffic and travel management and green

infrastructure provision. Strategic development is expected to be focused in locations that have or will be provided with high levels of accessibility; supporting both a reduced need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Smaller-scale development should consider the potential for cumulative effects in relation to air quality.

- Marine planning ensures that the right activities happen in the right place, at the right time and in the right way in marine areas. Marine plans provide guidance on things to promote or avoid in certain marine locations. The Marine Plan relevant to The FNP is the North West Marine Plan (NWMP). It is a legal requirement for marine plans to be considered in all decisions that affect England's marine area, now and into the future. Section 58(3) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act requires that public authorities must have regard to marine plans when taking any decisions which relate to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the UK marine area. This can include decision making relating to Neighbourhood Plans. The policies set out in marine plans apply only in their area (i.e. up to the mean high- water springs mark – which includes the tidal extent of any rivers), but if a proposed activity is likely to affect the plan area, this should be acknowledged and considered. The FNP includes the intertidal area forming part of the Mersey Estuary and therefore also covers part of the North West Marine Plan area. The FNP falls within the North West Marine Plan area and is therefore required to comply with its policies. Of particular relevance here is Policy NW-Air-1 which stipulates that proposals must assess their impacts on local air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. Proposals likely to increase air pollution and/or emissions must demonstrate that they will; in order of preference: avoid, minimise, mitigate air pollution and/ or greenhouse gas emissions in line with current national and local air quality objectives and legal requirements. Proposals that cannot avoid, minimise or mitigate air pollution and or greenhouse gas must not be supported.
- The FNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Local Plans covering the FNP area. The CWCC LPP1 policy SOC5 (Health and well-being) and CWCC LPP2 policy DM31 (Air quality) seek to protect residents from the effects of air pollution by disallowing development that gives rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life due to air pollution for example (SOC5). DM31 requires that development near AQMAs be designed to mitigate the impact of poor air quality. It also requires an air quality assessment for developments likely to significantly impact air quality. Where such an assessment identifies unacceptable impacts, appropriate mitigation must be submitted ensuring that new development is appropriate or the location and unacceptable risks are avoided.
- Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to publish annual Air Quality Annual Status Reports (ASRs) to discharge their monitoring obligations under Part IV of the Environment Act (1995). LPAs are required to review air quality in their area and designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary. Where an AQMA is designated, an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) must then be put in place. Frodsham has one AQMA, designated in 2015 due to exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ objective which is related to road traffic in this location.
- To improve air quality across the UK, national strategies have in the last few decades focused on regulatory frameworks, investment by industry in cleaner processes and a shift in the fuel mix towards cleaner forms of

energy (largely at point sources). Whilst there are dedicated strategies to reducing roadside emissions (as a significant source of nitrogen dioxide emissions), recent objectives outlined in the Clean Air Strategy seek to recognise wider sources (including smaller contributors and diffuse sources) that contribute to poor air quality. This includes; power generation, heating our homes, producing food, manufacturing consumer goods and powering transport.

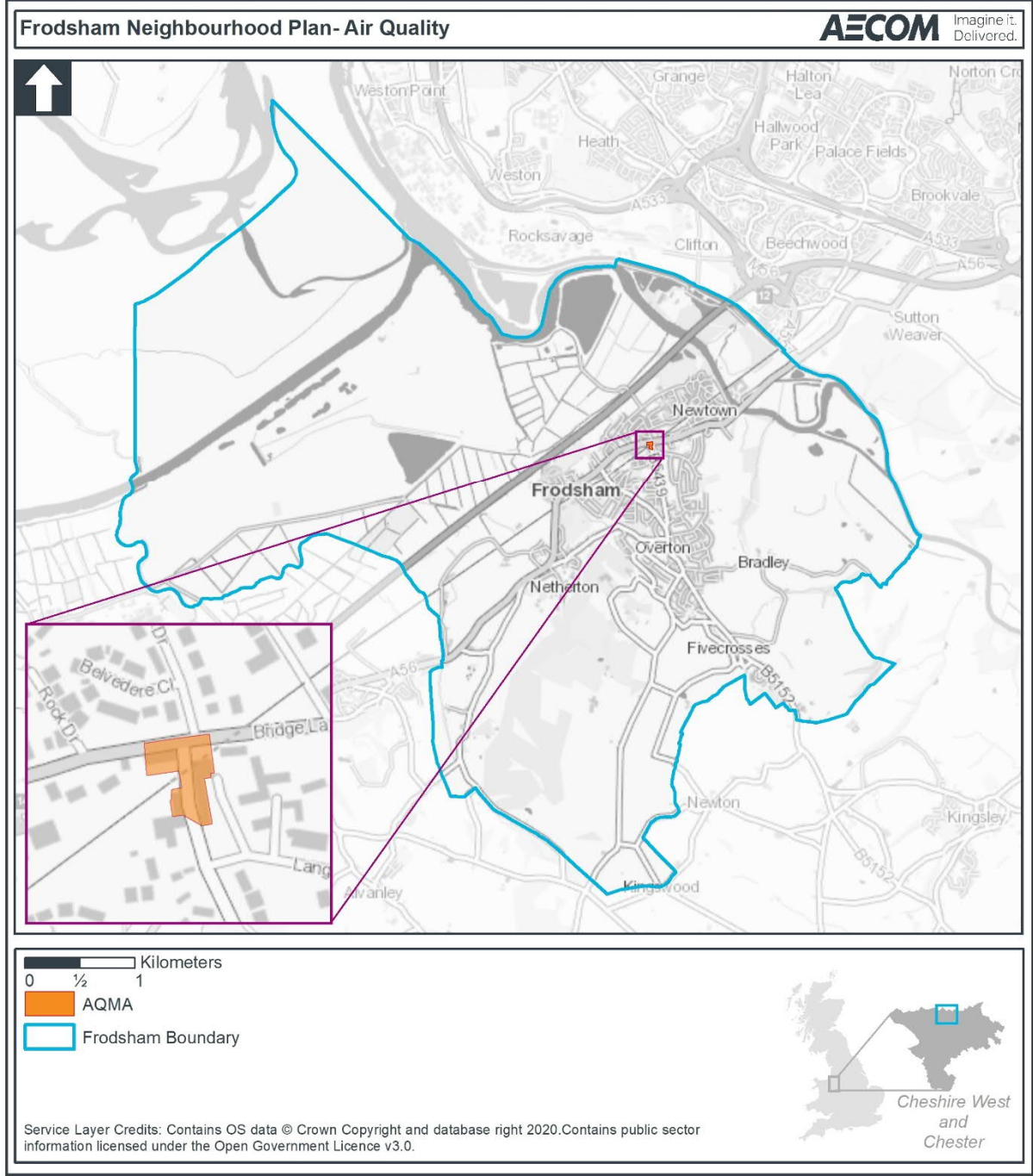
- The Cheshire West and Chester Low Emission Strategy (2018 – 2021) (LES) and the CWCC Local Transport Plan seek to address health impacts of air pollutants such as NO₂ and Particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and indirectly tailpipe hydrocarbon emissions. This is to be achieved through various means including; modal shift to public transport, cycling, and walking, reducing kilometres driven and adoption of low emission vehicles (LEVs).

Baseline Summary

- 2.4 CWCC's Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)² states that there is currently one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Frodsham. The designated area (See Figure 2-1) incorporates Fluin Lane (Nos 2, 4, 6 and 8), High Street (Nos 70, 70a, 72, 72a, 74, 76 and 78), Manor Farm, Bridge Lane and Manor Farm Court (Nos 7, 8, 9 10, 11 and 12).
- 2.5 The AQMA was designated in 2015 due to exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ objective which is related to road traffic in this location. However, data from 2018 indicated that the NO₂ objective was not exceeded at residential properties in Frodsham.
- 2.6 No exceedance of the PM₁₀ (particulates less than 10 micrometres in diameter) national objectives has been recorded in the AQMA. Similarly, 2.5 micron particulate (PM_{2.5}) monitoring shows that background levels well below EU limit levels. The report states that; *'there is a discernible downwards trend in NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations over time'*.
- 2.7 CWCC is pursuing a number of measures to deliver improvements in air quality through its Low Emissions Strategy (LES). These include a focus on modal shift to encourage low emissions/ sustainable transport, improving the provision of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and reducing emissions from public transport/ licences vehicles. The Council anticipates that the LES will deliver significant improvements in local air quality over time. The Council is also continuing with the introduction of 20mph speed zones (started in 2016) which can help reduce NO_x and PM₁₀ emissions.

² Cheshire West and Chester Council 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report (June 2019); <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/pests-pollution-food-safety/pollution-and-air-quality/air-quality-review-and-assessment/reports/air-quality-annual-status-report-2019.pdf>

Figure 2-1 Location of Frodsham AQMA



Summary of future baseline

- 2.8 Exceedance of national NO₂ levels was observed at the AQMA in Frodsham in 2015. However, no exceedance has been recorded since 2015 and the latest ASR states that emissions are on a downward trend.
- 2.9 New employment and / or housing provision within the NDP area can potentially have adverse effects on air quality through increased traffic flows and associated vehicular pollutants such as NO₂. In the absence of the NDP, the amount of growth anticipated is not expected to lead to significant changes to the baseline position.
- 2.10 CWCC's LES initiative along with improvements and growth in low emissions vehicles and EVs is likely to lead to a reduction in transport related emissions in the long term and could offset increases associated with traffic from new development.
- 2.11 The implementation of the CWCC Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2026, which aims to reduce transport related emissions and encourage sustainable transport, is likely to lead to a reduction in transport related emissions.

Key issues

- 2.12 The key issues are as follows:
- There is one Air Quality Management Area within the NP. No exceedance of national emissions limits has been observed in this AQMA since 2015 and the emissions recorded are on a downward trend.
 - Traffic and congestion have the potential to increase vehicular emissions and reduce air quality in the area though low emissions vehicles could offset this to an extent.

Scoping outcome

- 2.13 New development proposed within the FNP is likely to lead to increased vehicular traffic. Whilst no exceedance of monitored pollutants has been observed at the AMQA since 2015 and the levels are declining, the additional traffic generated by new development could adversely impact the air quality at the AQMA. The Plan can potentially contribute to air quality improvements. This is evident from the Plan aims and objectives seeking to achieve environmental improvements. Therefore, air quality has been **SCOPED IN** of the SEA.

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Biodiversity SEA theme?

- 2.14 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the Sea should include the following objective:

Table 2-2 SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Air quality

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|--|---|
| Improve air quality within and surrounding the Neighbourhood Plan area and minimise all sources of environmental pollution | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and encourage more sustainable transport options? • Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements? • Encourage development which reduces the need to travel outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area? • Locate and design development so that current and future residents will not regularly be exposed to poor air quality? • Implement measures (such as appropriate planting and provision of green infrastructure) which will help support good air quality in an around the Neighbourhood Plan area? • Ensure development connects to the existing road network, promoting ease of access and suitably mitigating any potential increases in local congestion? |

3. Biodiversity

- 3.1 This theme focuses on nature conservation designations, habitats and species within and surrounding the FNP area.

Policy Context

- 3.2 Table 3-1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 3-1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to biodiversity

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|--|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| The 25 Year Environment Plan The Environment Bill | 2018 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf |
| The Cheshire region Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) | 2007 | https://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-06/BAP%20list%20-%20updated%20April%202011.pdf |
| North West Marine Plan | 2021 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1004490/FINAL_North_West_Marine_Plan_1_.pdf |
| The Mersey Forest Plan | 2014 | https://www.merseyforest.org.uk/The_Mersey_Forest_Plan_web_version_single_new.pdf |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ |

- 3.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with NPPF, which places significant emphasis on improving biodiversity and securing measurable net gains in development, alongside protection and conservation of designated
- sites and important species and habitats. This includes utilising a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure at the wider catchment or landscape scale. Support is given to establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures, particularly in consideration of climate change.
- Over the past decade, policy (e.g. The Natural Environment White Paper and Biodiversity 2020) has demonstrated a move away from the traditional approach of protecting biodiversity, to a wider landscape approach to enhancing biodiversity, as part of the overall aims to halt biodiversity loss. The 25 Year Environment Plan places emphasis on improvements to the natural environment; identifying the need to “replenish depleted soil, plant

trees, support wetlands and peatlands, rid seas and rivers of rubbish, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, cleanse the air of pollutants, develop cleaner, sustainable energy and protect threatened species and habitats.” Working at a landscape scale transformation is expected to connect habitats into larger corridors for wildlife.

- The emerging Environment Bill will provide further provisions in relation to biodiversity when granted royal assent. The Bill will set parameters for biodiversity gain as a condition of planning permission, as well as biodiversity gain site registers and biodiversity credits. The Bill identifies a general duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, including through biodiversity reports and local nature recovery strategies. Local nature recovery strategies will identify biodiversity priorities for the strategy area as well as a local habitat map. Furthermore, habitat maps are expected to include recovery and enhancement areas which are or could become of importance for biodiversity.
- The Cheshire region Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) offers a series of specific plans for each of the threatened species and/or habitats within the area with the intention to protect their levels within the Cheshire region.
- The FNP is required to be in conformity with the North West Marine Plan (NWMP). Of particular relevance are policies NW-BIO-1, NW-BIO-2. These support proposals that enhance the distribution of priority habitats and species and require potential adverse effects be avoided, minimised or mitigated. Proposals that cannot avoid, minimise and mitigate or, as a last resort compensate for, significant adverse impacts will not be supported. Policy NW-BIO-3 seeks to support proposals that conserve, restore or enhance coastal habitats requiring proposals to take account of the space needed for coastal habitats. Proposals are required to demonstrate that they will (in order of preference) avoid, minimise, mitigate or compensate for net habitat loss.
- The Mersey Forest covers more than 500 square miles in Merseyside and North Cheshire and was chosen as one of 12 areas of England to be the focus of a long-term tree planting programme to improve the local environment for the benefit of people, wildlife and the economy. Over nine million trees have been planted thus far (which absorbed over half a million tonnes of carbon dioxide) and created over 3,000 hectares of woodland. The Mersey Forest Plan is a long term strategic guide to the work of The Mersey Forest team and partners. It is accompanied by a Delivery Plan which sets out monitoring and shorter-term activities, covers a five year period and is reviewed annually.
- The FNP is required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan Parts 1 and 2. With respect to biodiversity; the CWCC LPP1 policy ENV4 (Biodiversity and geodiversity) and CWCC LPP2 policy DM44 (protecting and enhancing the natural environment) seek to safeguard and enhance biodiversity through identification and protection of sites of international, national, and local importance. The policies stipulate that development should not result in any net loss of natural assets and should seek to provide net gains. Where loss/damage to habitats is unavoidable because of exceptional overriding circumstances, mitigation and compensation would be required to ensure there is no net loss of environmental value. Development likely to have an impact on protected sites must be

accompanied by an Ecological Assessment that meets a set of criteria set out in the policy. CWCC LPP2 policy DM45 supports development that conserves, manages and enhances (where possible) existing trees, woodlands, orchards and hedgerows. Where this is demonstrated as being not possible proposals must include replacement trees, woodlands and hedgerows within the site or offsite (if not practicable) at a ratio of at least two new trees for each tree lost. Development affecting existing and new woodlands should support the aims and policies of the Mersey Forest Plan where relevant.

Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

- 3.4 Cheshire has a range of wildlife species and habitats³. A number of these are protected sites; the designation of which helps to preserve the biodiversity and the character of the areas. Nature designations within Frodsham are presented in the following table (Table 3-2) and illustrated in Figure 3-1.

Table 3-2 Nature Designations within Frodsham

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Special Protection Areas (SPA) | Mersey Estuary SPA |
| Ramsar Sites | Mersey Estuary Ramsar |
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | Mersey Estuary |
| | Beechmill Wood & Pasture |
| | Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings |
| | Dunsdale Hollow |
| Local Wildlife Sites | Frodsham and Overton Wood |
| | East Clifton Tip |
| | Sutton Bridge lagoon |
| | Frodsham Marshes |
| | Hob Hey Wood |
| Community Forest | Mersey Forest |

International

- 3.5 A major aim of the Birds Directive is to conserve the habitats of qualifying wild birds in order to ensure their survival and reproduction. The Special Areas of Protection Designation is a key mechanism in achieving this. The Mersey Estuary SPA provides important habitats such as intertidal mud and sandflats, areas of rocky shore and areas of saltmarsh. These habitats support

³ These are considered in greater detail in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the FNP (AECOM report Oct. 2021).

internationally important populations of Black-tailed godwit, Dunlin, Golden Plover, Pintail, Redshank, Shelduck, Teal and waterbird assemblage. The SPA overlaps the Mersey Estuary Ramsar and SSSI discussed below.

- 3.6 In addition to the SEA, the FNP has undergone a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Its objective is to identify if any particular site allocation proposed in the FNP has the potential to cause an adverse effect on the integrity of European designated sites (Special Areas of Conservation, SACs, Special Protection Areas, SPAs, and Ramsar sites designated under the Ramsar convention), either in isolation or in combination with other plans and projects, and to determine whether site-specific or policy mitigation measures are required. The HRA is a separate process from the SEA.
- 3.7 Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. It aims to protect and conserve rare wetland habitats for their importance in conserving biological diversity. The Mersey Estuary Ramsar, also a SSSI a SPA, is an internationally important site for wildfowl and consists of large areas of intertidal sand and mudflats. The site also includes an area of reclaimed marshland, salt-marshes, brackish marshes and boulder clay cliffs with freshwater seepages. The area includes important roosting sites for wildfowl and waders at high tide. Throughout the winter the estuary supports large numbers of wildfowl and waders. The birds feed on the rich invertebrate fauna of the intertidal sediments as well as plants and seeds from the salt-marsh and adjacent agricultural land. The estuary is also a valuable staging post for migrating birds in spring and autumn.⁴ Good water quality and sediment quality are particularly important for this SSSI. The birds using the area as roosting and feeding grounds are vulnerable to disturbance from human activities such as bait digging, dog walking and wildfowling. Natural England's views about management (VAM) state that It is important to create space to enable landward roll-back to take place in response to sea-level rise, and to allow the system to be dynamic and retain the flexibility to respond to associated changes such as the movement of physical features within the system, e.g. migrating subtidal sandbanks. The habitats within this site are highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides.

National

- 3.8 There are over 4,100 Sites of Specific Scientific Importance (SSSI) in England, which cover around 8% of the country's land area. SSSIs are recognised as amongst the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. There are several, overlapping, SSSI designated sites within the NP area (Figures 3.1 and 3.2) including; the Mersey Estuary (discussed above), Beechmill Wood and Pasture, Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings SSSI and Dunsdale Hollow SSSI.

⁴ Natural England Designated Sites View available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1001398&SiteName=mersey&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&unitId=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

- 3.9 The Beechmill Wood and Pasture SSSI covers an area of 6.2 ha at the eastern boundary of the NP area. Beechmill Wood is a small clough (steep valleys) woodland on the south side of the River Weaver. The mix of soil types and variation in drainage result in increased diversity adding to the wildlife value of the woodland. The main habitats are broadleaved, mixed and Yew woodland (lowland) and neutral grassland (lowland). Much of the woodland is dominated by ash and wych elm forming a nationally rare woodland type. The side valley running north-south is dominated by pedunculate oak and because ash is not present it is an uncommon woodland type in Cheshire cloughs⁵. The site also includes an unimproved field which is very rich with plant species and grasses. Natural England (NE) states that deer management and protection from rabbits and livestock is important here. Careful management of surface drainage is also essential to prevent adverse changes in plant species composition. All the habitats here are highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides. Access to site and recreational activities may also need to be controlled.
- 3.10 Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings SSSI is a natural inland geological site comprising a sequence of sandstone exposures representing part of the Triassic Helsby Sandstone Formation. Sedimentary structures have been formed in large dome-shaped and transverse desert dunes. At Pinmill Brow the desert dunes are overlain by the Tarporley Siltstone Formation which had a very different origin, being laid down by either marine intertidal or fluvial deposition⁶. The VAM for this SSSI states that it is important to maintain the rock exposures free of vegetation. Threats include collection of geological specimens which needs to be carefully managed to ensure geological resource is conserved. Developments and tree planting that obscure rock exposures are considered main threats to such sites.
- 3.11 Dunsdale Hollow SSSI is on a steep north-west facing escarpment of Upper Mottled and Keuper Sandstone. It is an acidic lowland birch and sessile oak woodland⁷. This type of woodland is often found in the uplands but its occurrence in a lowland landscape is very unusual and it is found on only one other site in Cheshire on the Peckforton Hills. The ground flora which is composed of wavy hair-grass, broad buckler-fern, bluebell and bramble. On the steep banks of the sandstone outcrops there are good stands of great wood-rush, an uncommon plant in Cheshire. An open glade leading to the bottom of the slope is dominated by bracken. Threats to the status of the SSSI include unmanaged deer, rabbits and livestock, and invasive species.

⁵ Natural England Designated Sites View at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1001736&SiteName=beechmill&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

⁶ Natural England Designated Sites View at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1002577&SiteName=frodsham%20rail&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

⁷ Natural England Designated Sites View at [occurs on a steep north-west facing escarpment of Upper Mottled and](#)

- 3.12 Natural England collects data on the condition of SSSIs and Table 3-3 below sets out the condition of the local SSSIs;

Table 3-3 SSSI Conditions⁸

| SSSI Site | % area Favourable | % area Unfavourable Recovering | % area Unfavourable No change |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mersey Estuary | 29.3% | 26.4% | 44.3% |
| Beechmill Wood and Pasture | 69.2% | 30.8% | 0.0% |
| Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings | 100% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Dunsdale | 100% | 0.0% | 0.0% |

- 3.13 SSSI Impact Risk Zones, map zones around each SSSI according to the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is designated. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location. Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. The majority of the NP area falls within SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the Mersey Estuary SSSI and the Beechmill Wood and Pasture SSSI (figure 3.1). Activities such as residential development (depending on scale and proximity to SSSI), infrastructure, commercial and industrial development and associated externalities such as waste and air pollution can potentially have detrimental impact on SSSIs.

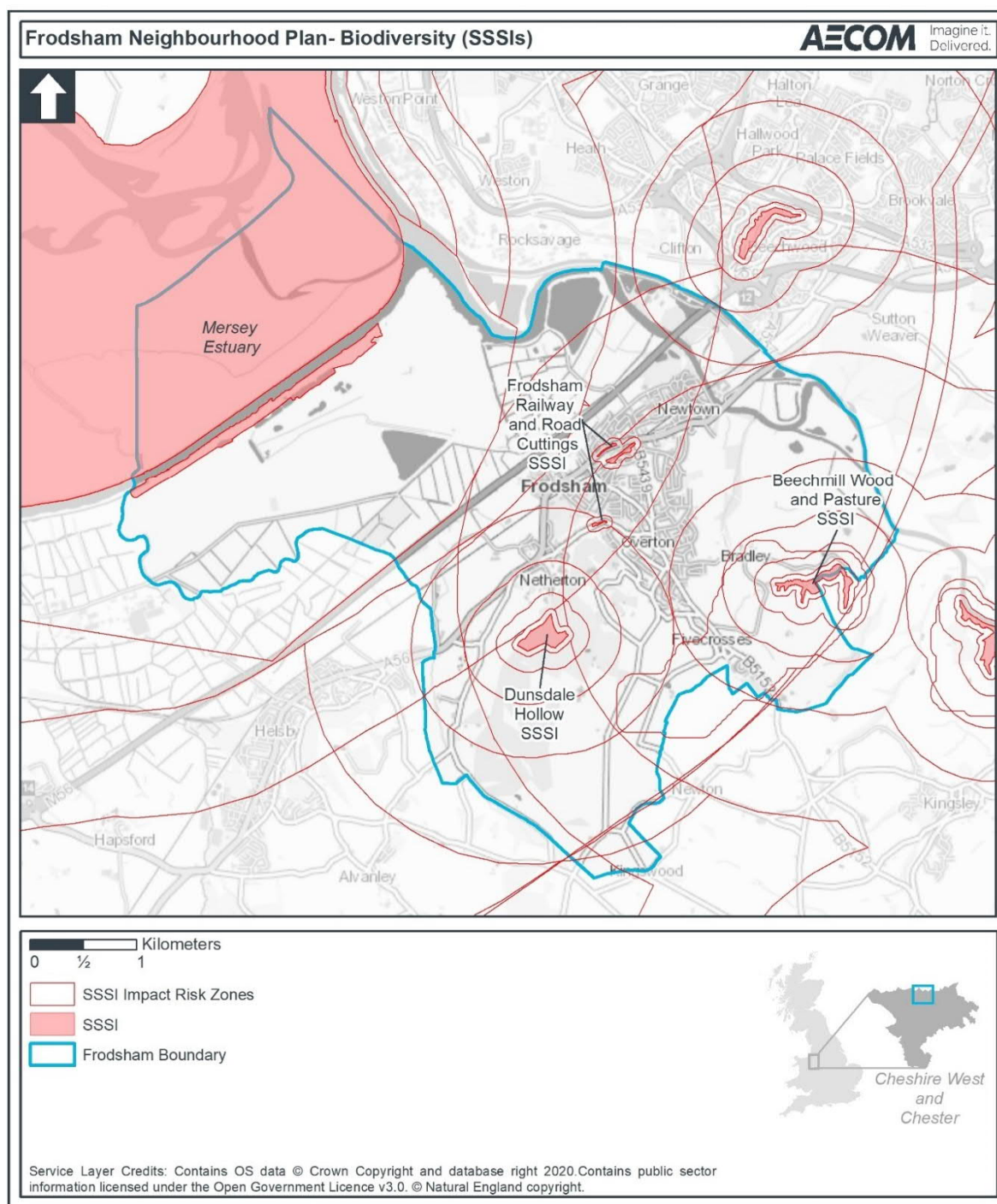
Local

- 3.14 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are areas of land that are especially important for their wildlife. They provide corridors for wildlife, forming key components of ecological networks. The Wildlife Trusts work with local authorities, statutory agencies, landowners and other local partners to establish effective systems for identifying, managing and monitoring Local Wildlife Sites. Local Wildlife Sites are identified and selected locally using scientifically-determined criteria and ecological surveys. The CWCC website lists numerous local wildlife sites including five in the NDP area such as Frodsham and Overton Woods and Frodsham Marshes (table 3-1).

⁸ Natural England (2021)

- 3.15 The Mersey Forest area overlaps the majority of the NDP area. In urban areas the Mersey Forest Plan aims to plant individual trees, groups of trees and small woodlands on appropriate and available urban areas, settlements and employment sites, such as school playing fields, open spaces, streets, highway verges, in the grounds of large institutions, derelict land, and development sites. The plan targets planting to meet identified green infrastructure needs.
- 3.16 Within Frodsham urban areas the indicative woodland cover target is 10% which compares to just 2% in 2012. In the west and north west of the NDP area; namely the areas comprising, drained marshes, mudflats and saltmarshes of Frodsham Marsh, no change in net woodland cover is required (2% in 2012) as woodland planting is deemed inappropriate here. It is important to maintain the open nature of these designated areas.
- 3.17 A target of 30% woodland cover is assigned to Frodsham Ancient Woodlands Forest Park (from 10% in 2012). The plan involves establishing a woodland framework around Frodsham and Helsby, linking to the Sandstone Ridge and long distance trail, and into the Weaver Valley (excluding the sandstone escarpment ridge line). A woodland buffer will be created on suitable land between the settlements and the motorway⁹.
- 3.18 The FNP includes the intertidal area forming part of the Mersey Estuary which overlaps part of the North West Marine Plan area. The NWMP¹⁰ sets out priorities and directions for future development within the plan area, informs sustainable use of marine resources and helps marine users understand the best locations for their activities, including where new developments may be appropriate. The plan also provides guidance on things to promote or avoid for some locations. The north west inshore marine plan area stretches from the Solway Firth border with Scotland and the River Dee border with Wales, taking in a total of approximately 4,900 square kilometres of sea. It includes: any area submerged at mean high water spring tide and the waters of any estuary, river or channel, so far as the tide flows at mean high water spring tide. The Plan areas are very busy, with a large variety of existing activities competing for limited space. There are low-lying coastlines and diverse marine environments that share the space with the numerous activities. The coastal area is home to a range of communities, with urban centres found in the southern part of the inshore marine plan area and predominantly rural communities to the north. The north west marine plan areas are of particular importance to several bird species, reflected in the number of statutory and non-statutory designated sites. Coastal areas are characterised by estuaries in the north and south with Morecambe Bay, the largest area of continuous intertidal mudflats and sandflats in the United Kingdom. The offshore marine plan area is characterised by muds, sands and gravels, which support a variety of benthic species and provide important spawning, nursery and feeding grounds for fish species. Marine plan areas are sensitive to recreational pressures and disturbance as well as water pollution from surface water runoff and wastewater.

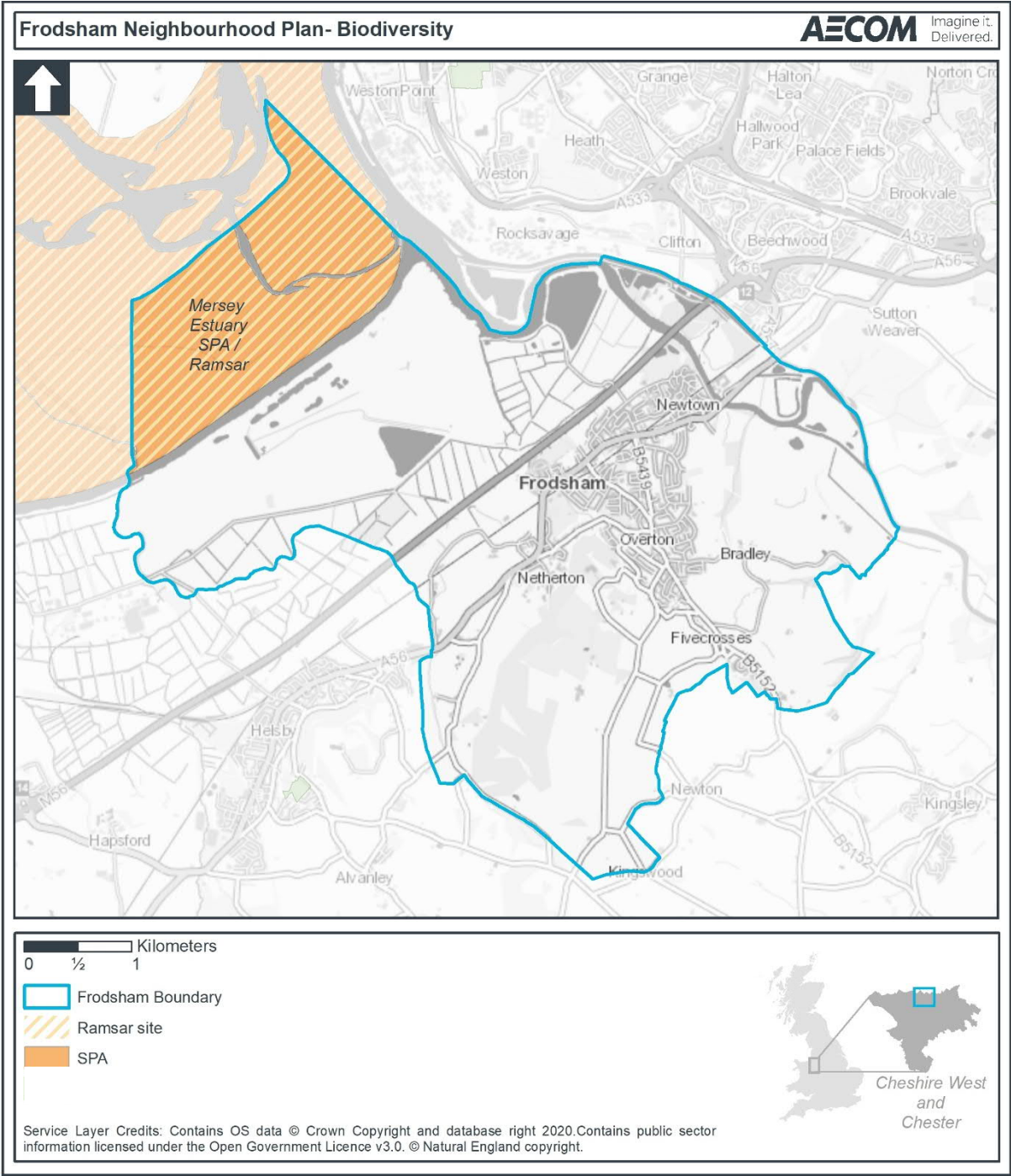
Figure 3-1 Biodiversity Designations & IRZs in Frodsham



⁹ Source: The Mersey Forest Plan at <https://www.merseyforest.org.uk/about/plan/#policy>

¹⁰ Marin Management Organisation (Jan 2020) North West Inshore and North West Offshore Marine Plan Draft for consultation at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/857301/DRAFT_NW_Marine_Plan.pdf

Figure 3-2 Mersey Estuary SPA/ Ramsar



Future Baseline

- 3.19 A number of factors threaten protected and priority species and habitats within Frodsham. Notably recreational pressures, climate change, unsuitable land management and invasive species.
- 3.20 Development within the NDP area could encroach on certain habitats, threaten local species, and impact biodiversity networks in the absence of effective mitigation measures.
- 3.21 Increased development in the NDP area will place increased pressure on areas of biodiversity value and on marine plan areas due to land take for development and an increase in population. An increase in population is likely to lead to an increase in leisure and recreational pressure and increased demand for natural resources such as water. New development may lead to an increase in disturbance through human activity, loss of habitat, increased predation (e.g. from domestic pets), atmospheric, light, land and water pollution.
- 3.22 Habitats and species are likely to continue to be afforded protection through higher level planning policy (including LPP1 and LPP2) and whilst these areas face increasing pressures from future development, planning policy should safeguard the most valued areas and protect ecological networks.

Key headline issues

- 3.23 There are several sites of high biodiversity importance within the NDP area. These include the Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar/SSSI, the Beechmill wood and pasture, Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings and Dunsdale Hollow SSSIs. The risk impact zones associated with these SSSIs extend and overlap with all of the NP area.
- 3.24 The Mersey Forest plan area covers the majority of the NDP area and aims to significantly increase woodland cover in the area.
- 3.25 The FNP overlaps part of the North West Marine Plan area. Development in the NDP area could place increased pressures on areas of biodiversity value due disturbance and polluted water runoff (or wastewater discharge)

Scoping outcome

- 3.26 The SEA topic 'Biodiversity' has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA. There is potential for localised effects at sites that could be identified for development, as well as increased recreational pressure.
- 3.27 It will also be important to ensure that there are no significant adverse effects upon the North West Marine Plan areas and the numerous important biodiversity designated sites in the NDP area such as, the Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar/SSSI, the Beechmill wood and pasture, Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings and Dunsdale Hollow SSSIs.
- 3.28 There may also be opportunities to enhance ecological networks and achieve net biodiversity gains through targeted local policies

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Biodiversity SEA theme?

- 3.29 The SEA topic 'Biodiversity' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 3-4 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 3-4 SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Biodiversity

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|---|--|
| Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks. | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support connections between habitats in the Plan area? • Avoid significant impacts on designated sites within the NP area including; the Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar/SSSI, Beechmill wood and pasture, Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings and Dunsdale Hollow SSSIs? • Avoid significant impacts from air pollution, urban water drainage and surface water runoff, on the designated biodiversity sites and areas forming part of the North West Marine Plan. • Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change? |

4. Climatic Factors (flood risk and climate change)

- 4.1 This theme focuses on activities contributing to climate change, climate change mitigation and adaptation to the effects of climate change including flood risk.

Policy Context

- 4.2 Table 4.1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 4-1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to climate change

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|--|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| Clean Air Strategy | 2019 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019 |
| Clean Growth Strategy | 2017 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy |
| The 25 Year Environment Plan | 2018 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf |
| Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge | 2020 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf |
| UK (second) National Adaptation Programme 2018 to 2023 | 2018 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/climate-change-second-national-adaptation-programme-2018-to-2023 |
| Draft Flood Risk Management Plans | 2021 | https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/fcrm/flood-risk-management-plans-information-page/ |
| North West Marine Plan | 2021 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1004490/FINAL_North_West_Marine_Plan_1_.pdf |
| CWCC 'climate emergency' declaration | 2019 | The Climate Emergency (cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwcc/ldf/adopted-cwac-lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwcc/ldf/cw-lp-part-two/ |

4.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The FNP is required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks proactive planning approach to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies are expected to improve the resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, avoid inappropriate development in the flood plain, and support the move to a low carbon economy. The NPPF recognises the potential for planning to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and deliver long-term resilience; including through reuse, regeneration and conversion.
- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy and the 25-year Environment Plan are a suite of documents which seek to progress the government's commitment under the UK Climate Change Act to becoming net zero by 2050. The documents set out detailed proposals on how the government will tackle all sources of air pollution, whilst maintaining an affordable energy supply and increasing economic growth. This parallels with the 25-year Environment Plan, which further seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect people with the environment. The documents also interlink with the government's commitment to decarbonising transport, a recognised challenge that needs more work in a timely manner if government are to achieve net zero targets. Furthermore, the decarbonisation plan recognises the twinned need to undertake action to adapt the transport sector and increase resilience to climate change risks; and this challenge is more directly addressed through the UK's National Adaptation Programme.
- The draft flood risk management plans (FRMPs) for England cover the period from 2021 – 2027. They include measures for the flood risk areas identified in 2017 for surface water flooding and in 2018 for main river and sea flooding. The EA worked with Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and risk management authorities (RMAs) to produce the FRMPs which are undergoing public consultation at time of writing). These strategic plans focus on areas at nationally significant area of flood risk or FRAs. The FRMP will also contribute to the delivery of the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (FCERM). The latter sets out a long term approach to resilience and adaptation.
- The FNP is required to comply with the requirements of the NWMP. Of particular relevance are policies NW-CC-1, NW-CC-2 and NW-CC-3. Policy NW-CC-1 supports proposals that conserve, restore or enhance habitats that provide flood defences or carbon capture. Proposals likely to have significant adverse impacts on such habitats must demonstrate that they will follow the mitigation hierarchy, otherwise they will not be supported. Policy NW-CC-2 requires proposals to demonstrate, for the lifetime of the projects, that they are resilient to the impacts of climate change. Policy NW-CC-3 stipulates that proposals likely to have significant adverse impacts on coastal change or on climate change adaptation, inside or outside of proposed project areas, should only be supported if they demonstrate that they will follow the mitigation hierarchy.

- CWCC declared a 'climate emergency' in May 2019 and has been engaging with a range of partners, climate experts, community groups to understand the challenges and opportunities the Climate Emergency presents for Borough. Two plans have been produced setting out these challenges and the actions that will be taken to achieve carbon neutrality in the borough. The first is the Climate Emergency Response Plan which focuses on the borough wide response to the climate crisis. The second is the Carbon Management Plan which sets out the actions the Council needs to take to be carbon neutral by 2030. The plan provides an overview of the Council's current position in relation to carbon emissions and outlines the targets to reduce emissions throughout Council services over the next ten years.
- The LLP1, policy ENV1, the LPP2 policies DM40 and DM41 address flood risk and water management. They seek to reduce flood risk by requiring 'all development must follow the sequential approach to determining the suitability of land for development, directing new development to areas at the lowest risk of flooding and where necessary apply the exception test'. Developers will be required to demonstrate, provide a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) at the planning application stage (where necessary). Development proposals are required not to increase flood risk on site or elsewhere. New development will be required to include or contribute to flood mitigation, compensation and/or protection measures, where necessary, to manage flood risk associated with or caused by the development. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) implementation would be required for new development (where feasible). The LPP1 policy ENV 3 'Green Infrastructure' (GI) supports the creation, enhancement, protection and management of a network of high quality multi-functional Green Infrastructure. This will be achieved by incorporating new and/ or enhanced GI into development or contributing to its provision. The policy also supports Increased planting of trees and woodlands, particularly in urban areas and the urban fringe.

Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Greenhouse gas emissions

- 4.4 The total per capita emissions figures for Cheshire West and Chester Borough (table 4.2) are double the corresponding figures for the North West region and England as a whole. The commercial and Industrial sector is the biggest contributor, making up nearly 60% of per capita emissions in the borough. This is largely due to emissions arising from the borough's industrial corridor situated to the north of Chester. This includes the Stanlow Oil Refinery (Ellesmere Port) which is the largest individual emitter.
- 4.5 The overall trend shows declining emissions with levels in 2018 around 40% down on 2005 levels. This is similar to the levels of reductions observed for the wider region and nationally.
- 4.6 The transport sector is the second largest contributor to per capita emissions in the borough, with levels around 47% higher than those observed for the North West region and England. Again, this is likely to be associated with the substantial industrial sector in the borough.

Table 4.2: Per capita local CO₂ emission estimates; industry, domestic and transport sectors (kt CO₂)¹¹

| | 2005 | 2007 | 2009 | 2011 | 2013 | 2015 | 2017 | 2018 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Cheshire West & Chester | | | | | | | | |
| Industrial & Commercial | 12.0 | 11.9 | 10.8 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 7.1 | 7.7 | 6.3 |
| Domestic | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.6 |
| Transport | 3.1 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| Total per capita | 17.8 | 17.5 | 16.0 | 14.0 | 14.1 | 11.7 | 12.1 | 10.6 |
| North West | | | | | | | | |
| Industrial & Commercial | 3.9 | 3.7 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.9 |
| Domestic | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Transport | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Total per capita | 8.7 | 8.3 | 7.3 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 5.9 | 5.4 | 5.3 |
| England | | | | | | | | |
| Industrial & Commercial | 3.79 | 3.61 | 2.96 | 2.73 | 2.80 | 2.27 | 1.85 | 1.80 |
| Domestic | 2.49 | 2.37 | 2.13 | 1.96 | 2.03 | 1.63 | 1.43 | 1.42 |
| Transport | 2.27 | 2.23 | 2.03 | 1.95 | 1.88 | 1.92 | 1.93 | 1.88 |
| Total per capita | 8.49 | 8.14 | 7.04 | 6.55 | 6.62 | 5.72 | 5.12 | 5.00 |

¹¹ National Statistics UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

Effects of climate change and adaptation

- 4.7 Climate change projections for the United Kingdom published as part of the UKCP18¹² programme provide detailed probabilistic projections of climate change. Although there is uncertainty in climate change predictions; the projected general trend is a move towards warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. However, natural variations mean that some cold winters, some dry winters, some cool summers and some wet summers will still occur. The following changes are likely to have taken place by 2070s. The changes mentioned below relate to an area in central England based on the 10-90th percentile range (low to high emissions) of emission scenario¹³:
- In UKCP18, the probabilistic projections provide local low, central and high changes across the UK, corresponding to 10%, 50% and 90% probability levels. These local values can be averaged over the UK to give a range of average warming between the 10% and 90% probability levels. By 2070, in the high emission scenario, this range amounts to 0.7°C to 4.2°C in winter, and 0.9°C to 5.4°C, in summer. For precipitation, corresponding ranges of UK average changes are -1% to +35% for winter, and -47% to +2% for summer, where positive values indicate more precipitation and negative values indicate reduced precipitation (drier summers).
 - Hot summers are predicted to become more common, with the probability of a hot summer rising from the current 20-25% to up to 50% by the middle of the century.
- 4.8 Based on the above; in the future Frodsham is likely to experience, a warmer climate, with drier summers and potentially wetter winters, which means that extreme events such as floods and droughts are likely to become less predictable and possibly more frequent.

Flood risk

- 4.9 A level 1 strategic flood assessment¹⁴ was completed in 2016 for Cheshire West and Chester and looked at areas that would be at risk of pluvial flooding (surface water flooding), rivers/sea (fluvial/tidal), groundwater flooding, sewers and artificial sources such as such as reservoirs and canals. This helped to identify areas at particular risk of flooding in the borough.

¹² Further information on the UKCP18 programme is available from:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/index>

¹³ Projections from UKCP18 Climate Change Over Land, which correspond to two emissions scenarios (Low and High). The medium emissions scenario - describes a world that has rapid economic growth, quick spreading of new and efficient technologies, and a global population that reaches 9 billion mid-century and then gradually declines. It also relies on a balance between different energy sources. The high emissions Scenario is characterised by similar economic and population trends as the medium emission scenario but with more reliance on power generation from fossil fuels. The low emissions scenario represents a more integrated ecologically friendly world, characterised by clean and resource efficient technologies, and lower global greenhouse gas emissions.

¹⁴ Cheshire West & Chester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) available at http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ev_base/sfra2016

- 4.10 The assessment included potential development sites within the borough and made recommendations pertaining to their suitability. The assessment makes two broad sets of recommendations A,B,C and D.
- 4.11 Recommendation A 'Consider withdrawal of site' lists potential development sites with 10% or greater proportion of their area in Flood Zone 3b. Flood Zone 3b refers to areas of functional floodplain (excluding developed sites protected by flood defences) these are at greater risk of flooding with a flood risk frequency of 1 in 20 or 1 in 25 years. No Frodsham sites are included in the Recommendation A list.
- 4.12 Recommendation B 'Exception Test'; applies to sites where the exception test would be required¹⁵. Such sites would need a more in-depth assessment (level 2 SFRA). Developers (and LPA) are advised to try and avoid the risk areas where possible. Recommendation B applies to sites where 10% or more of the site is within flood Zone 3a. The following Recommendation B sites are within the NDP area;

Table 4-3 Recommendation B 'Exception Test' sites in the NDP area¹⁶

| SFRA Level 1 Site Reference | Site description-Location |
|--|---|
| JBA1427 | Chapelfields, Frodsham |
| JBA2097 | Land to north of Sutton Causeway, south-west of Weaver Navigation, Frodsham |
| JBA2098 | Land south-east of Sutton Causeway, north of Frodsham Bridge, Frodsham |

¹⁵ NPPF Para. 158/160; refers to a method used to demonstrate that flood risk to development will be managed satisfactorily allowing necessary development to proceed in situations where suitable sites at lower risk of flooding are not available.

¹⁶ Source: Cheshire West and Chester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Final Report March 2016 available at http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ev_base/sfra2016?tab=files

- 4.13 The SFRA also categorises some sites as Recommendation C 'Consider site layout and design'; it recommends that these should undergo a review of site layout and / or design at the development planning stage in order for development to proceed. A Level 2 SFRA or site-specific FRA would also be required. These sites contain less than 10% within flood Zone 3 (3a or 3b). This list includes one site within the NDP area namely, the Land east of Weaver Lane, Ship Street, Frodsham (SFRA reference JBA1570). The remaining sites that are within Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 1, are listed under Recommendation D 'Development permitted subject to FRA'. These are considered to be at lower risk of flooding and development could be permitted, provided a site-specific FRA shows they can be safe and the sites can be shown to be sequentially preferable.
- 4.14 Figure 4.1 indicates the location of flood risk zones 2 and 3 in Frodsham. There is a band of Flood Zone 3 along the length of the M56 running through the NDP area. There is also a Flood Zone 3 area along the coastal area north west of the NDP area and the River Weaver.

Climate change adaptation

- 4.15 There is no baseline information or data relating specifically to climate change adaptation. However, there is a range of green infrastructure that will benefit communities in terms of flood risk, hotter summers and wetter winters. The borough includes international and national, natural environmental designated sites, marshes and forests. The Cheshire green belt covers 42% of the borough's land area. The borough also benefits from blue infrastructure, such as rivers, other water bodies and the sea.
- 4.16 CWCC's open space study (2016-2030) assessed the existing provision of open space within the borough. The assessment states that Frodsham has a total provision of around 122 ha of open space which includes; allotments, amenity green space, parks, recreation grounds, play space, natural green space, education, churchyards and cemeteries (Table 4.3). The assessment developed an open space standard against which it assessed provision in Frodsham. The study concluded that there is an undersupply of all types of open space in Frodsham with the exception of parks and recreation grounds. The total shortfall for each types of open space is reproduced in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4-4 Open space provision in Frodsham¹⁷

| Type | Existing Provision |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Allotments | 1.23 |
| Amenity Green Space | 3.44 |
| Park and Recreation Ground | 12.44 |
| Play Space (children) | 0.39 |
| Play Space (youth) | 0.14 |
| Natural Green Space | 98.83 |

Table 4-5 Open space shortfall in Frodsham

| Type | Shortfall (Ha) |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Allotments | -0.13 |
| Amenity Green Space | -2.01 |
| Play Space (children) | -0.06 |
| Play Space (youth) | -0.13 |
| Total shortfall | -2.33 Ha |

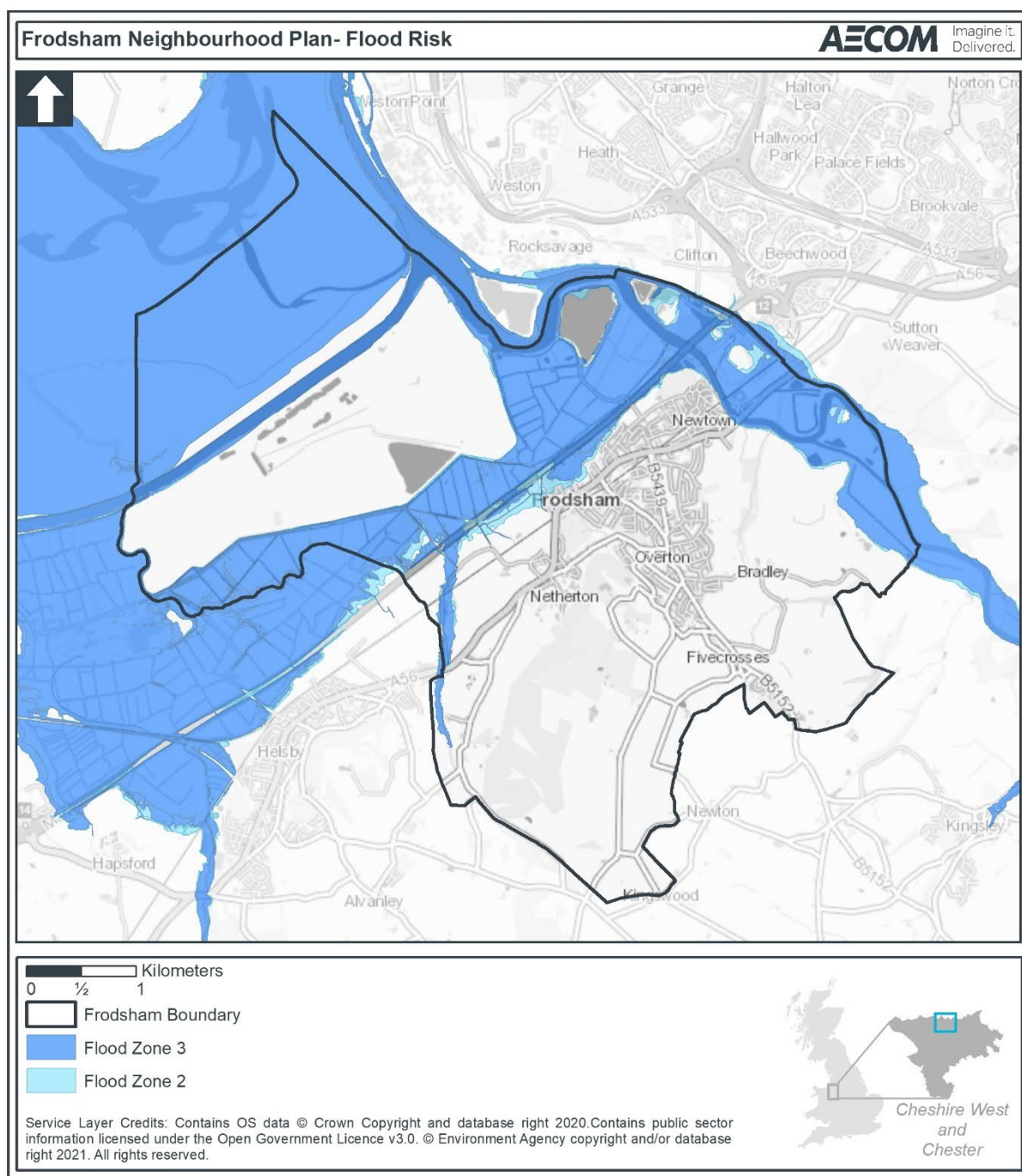
- 4.17 The CWCC Open Space Study also assessed accessibility of the existing open space within the borough. The findings for Frodsham are reproduced in table 4-6.

¹⁷ Source: Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study 2016-2030 available at https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ev_base/oss_pps?tab=files

Table 4-6 Summary of open space access issues

| Type | Current Access |
|---|---|
| Allotments | Small gaps are present within the south of Frodsham. |
| Amenity Green Space | Access generally good with a small gap in the south and west. |
| Parks and Recreation Grounds | Access good throughout Frodsham. |
| Play Space (Children) | Thin strip with no access to provision within the north east and south. |
| Play Space (Youth) | No access to Play spaces (Youth) along the east of Frodsham. |
| Natural Green Space | Access is generally good. |
| Natural Greenspace, green corridors and Rights of Way | Frodsham has a good network of ROW, linking with natural space. |

Figure 4-1 Fluvial Flood Risk in the NDP area



Summary of future baseline

- 4.18 There is potential for climate change to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the NDP area. Such weather events are likely to increase the risks associated with climate change (including fluvial flooding) with an increased need for resilience and adaptation.
- 4.19 In terms of climate change, GHG emissions could decrease through the adoption of energy efficient measures and cleaner energy (especially in Industry and transport sectors, key contributors in the NDP area). However, increases in population could counteract this.
- 4.20 Flood risk at any specific location may be influenced by local factors such as existing formal or informal flood defences and the capacity of existing drainage systems or road/rail culverts. The adoption of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDs) and introduction of Green Infrastructure within development schemes may reduce the speed of surface water run-off and have positive effects in terms of mitigating flood risk.
- 4.21 Development in any instance has the potential to exacerbate flood risk within and in the vicinity of the NDP area by increasing the volume of surface water run-off, or by introducing areas of hard standing which could increase the speed of surface water run-off. The risk would be greatest if development were to take place in proximity of Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3 areas.
- 4.22 In the absence of the Plan, there will still be a need to satisfy policy measures relating to flood management.

Key headline issues

- 4.23 The key issues are as follows:
- Average per capita CO₂ emissions are substantially higher in the borough compared to the rest of the North West and England.
 - Total greenhouse gas emissions are on a downward trend.
 - The NDP area falls predominantly within Flood Zone 1, although there are stretches of Flood Zone 2 and 3 running along the Mersey Estuary, the River Weaver and a band along the M56.
 - There is potential for surface water flooding to occur across the NDP area, although areas susceptible to this are scattered amongst areas with lower risk of fluvial flooding.
 - The likelihood of flooding from fluvial and non-fluvial sources could be exacerbated by development in the NDP area. However, opportunities for mitigation exist in sustainable design and Sustainable Urban Drainage.

Scoping outcome

- 4.24 With regards to climate change mitigation, the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on carbon emissions. It is limited in the ability to implement higher standards of energy efficiency, and there are no plans in the scope of the Plan to identify areas of potential for renewable energy schemes. The scale of growth will not lead to significant emissions beyond what might be otherwise experienced in the absence of the Plan (likewise, any reduction is not likely to be significant). Therefore, this factor has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA process.
- 4.25 Resilience to climate change and flood risk has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA. There is the potential to explore how resilience to climate change can be enhanced as well as contributing towards flood risk mitigation. Flood risk could also be an important factor in terms of the site selection process.

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Climatic Factors SEA theme?

- 4.26 The SEA topic 'Climatic Factors' has been scoped in to the SEA, with a focus on resilience and adaptation. Table 4-7 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 4-7: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Climatic Factors

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|--|--|
| Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change. | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Ensure flood risk and erosion is not increased and where possible reduced • Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Avoid placing development in areas that are at the greatest risk of flooding? |

5. Historic Environment

5.1 This theme focuses on designated and non-designated heritage assets (including archaeology) and their setting.

Policy Context

5.2 Table 5-1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 5-1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the historic environment

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|--|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| The 25 Year Environment Plan | 2018 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf |
| The National Design Guide | 2019 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide |
| Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management | 2019 | https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/ |
| Historic England Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets | 2017 | https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/ |
| Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) | 2016 | https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/ |
| Historic England Advice Note 11: Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment | 2018 | https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/neighbourhood-planning-and-the-historic-environment/ |
| North West Marine Plan | 2021 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1004490/FINAL_North_West_Marine_Plan_1_.pdf |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ |

5.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The key high-level principles for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are as follows:
 - Heritage assets should be recognised as an ‘irreplaceable resource’ that should be conserved in a ‘manner appropriate to their significance’, taking account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of conservation.
 - The importance of protecting the historic environment, in order to maximise the economic and social impact of heritage and to ensure that everyone can enjoy and benefit from it.
 - The significance of places is the key element which underpins the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is a collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, be it a building an archaeological site or a larger historic area such as a whole village or landscape.
 - With regards to Conservation Areas (CA); recognising the value of implementing controls through the appraisal and/or management plans which positively contribute to the significance and value of CAs.
- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which ultimately seeks to conserve and enhance historic environment assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The NPPF seeks planning policies and decisions which are sympathetic to local character and history without preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Planning Practice Guidance expands on the NPPF recognising the proactive rather than passive nature of conservation.
- The Historic environment plays an important role; contributing to healthy and thriving ecosystems, landscapes and cultural values, including settlement identity, is reiterated through the key messages of the 25 Year Environment Plan and National Design Guide.
- Historic England’s Advice Notes provide further guidance in relation to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Of particular relevance for the FNP is the emphasis on the importance of:
 - Understanding the different types of special architectural and historic interest which underpin designations, as well as how settings and / or views contribute to the significance of heritage assets;
 - Recognising the value of implementing controls through neighbourhood plans, conservation area appraisals and management plans; and
 - Appropriate evidence gathering, including clearly identifying those issues that threaten an area or assets character or appearance and that merit the introduction of management measures.
- The FNP is required to conform with the NWMP and policy NW-HER-1 is of particular relevance here as it seeks to conserve and enhance marine and coastal heritage assets. Proposals that may cause harm to the significance of heritage assets must demonstrate that they will follow the mitigation

hierarchy. Where it is not possible to mitigate then public benefits for proceeding with the proposal must outweigh the harm to the significance of the heritage assets.

- The FNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Local Plans covering the FNP area which contain policies directly relating to the historic environment. The LPP1 policy ENV5 seeks to protect heritage assets requiring that development safeguard and enhance designated and on-designated heritage assets and their settings. Development would be required to positively respond to such assets and their settings, avoiding loss or harm to their significance. The policy also supports the viable re-use of heritage-at-risk assets.
- In addition to conserving the historic environment, the FNP should seek to identify opportunities to enhance the fabric and setting of the historic environment. It should also seek to rejuvenate features and areas which are at risk of neglect and decay. Development likely to have significant, unavoidable, adverse impacts will not be permitted. The policy is further reinforced by LPP2 policy DM46 which pertains to the protection of Conservation Areas.

Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Designated Heritage Assets

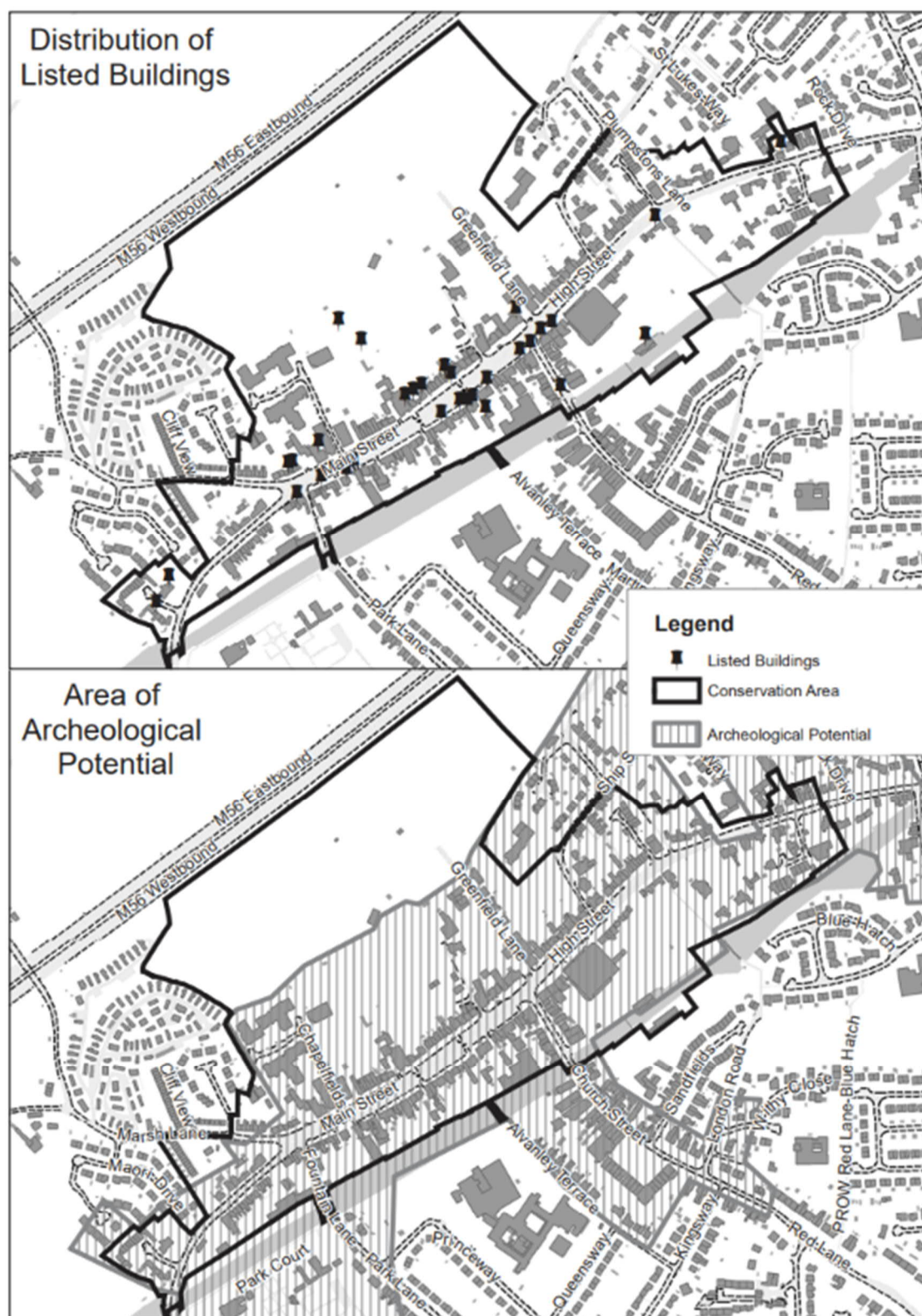
- 5.4 The NDP area contains a Conservation Area (CA) and numerous heritage assets (see figure 5-1) including 62 listed buildings, a registered Park and Gardens and a Scheduled Monument (Table 5-1). These heritage assets have been designated by Historic England as being of special interest by way of their historic and architectural value. However, there are likely to be numerous other, non-designated buildings or features, within the area that have local historic or architectural merit.

- 5.5 Frodsham (Town) Conservation Area sits astride a long established highway (figure 5-1). The part of the town that forms this conservation area is constrained between more recent parallel-aligned transport links, a railway and a motorway. It is essentially linear in urban form and character. Properties survive from the medieval period. Timber-framed and thatched cottages sit next to red brick and slate dwellings and more substantial and formal Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian structures. There are numerous listed and locally important buildings, including some unique structures¹⁸. The CA area appraisal notes there has been some inappropriate alterations (e.g. shop fronts and fascias). Threats to the CA character include disrepair and residential development of contrasting, often inappropriate, design and scale. Examples include; inappropriate materials such as uPVC windows and doors. Through traffic, background noise from the M56 and parking on the main street are cited as creating further adverse impacts such as hazard, noise and smell.
- 5.6 Scheduled Monuments are nationally important archaeological sites. Permission to alter scheduled monuments is required from the Secretary of State. The NP area has one Scheduled Monument in the form of a Hillfort on the crest of the sandstone ridge at Woodhouse Hill. The fort is one of a number of hillforts on the sandstone outcrop which bisects the county from the Mersey estuary to the Welsh border near Wrexham.¹⁹

¹⁸ Source: Frodsham (Town) Conservation Area Appraisal (August 2006) available at [https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-consultancy/total-environment/conservation-and-design/conservation-area-appraisals/Frodsham\(Town\)conservationareaappraisal_part1.pdf](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-consultancy/total-environment/conservation-and-design/conservation-area-appraisals/Frodsham(Town)conservationareaappraisal_part1.pdf)

¹⁹ Heritage Gateway, List Entry Summary available at https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=1013297&resourceID=5

Figure 5-1 Frodsham Conservation Area



Source: Frodsham (Town) Conservation Area Appraisal

Table 5-2 Frodsham Heritage Assets

Designations

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Grade I | 1 |
| Grade II* | 1 |
| Grade II | 62 |
| Scheduled Monuments | 1 (hillfort, woodhouse hill) |
| Registered Parks and Gardens | 1 (Castle Park) |

Heritage at Risk

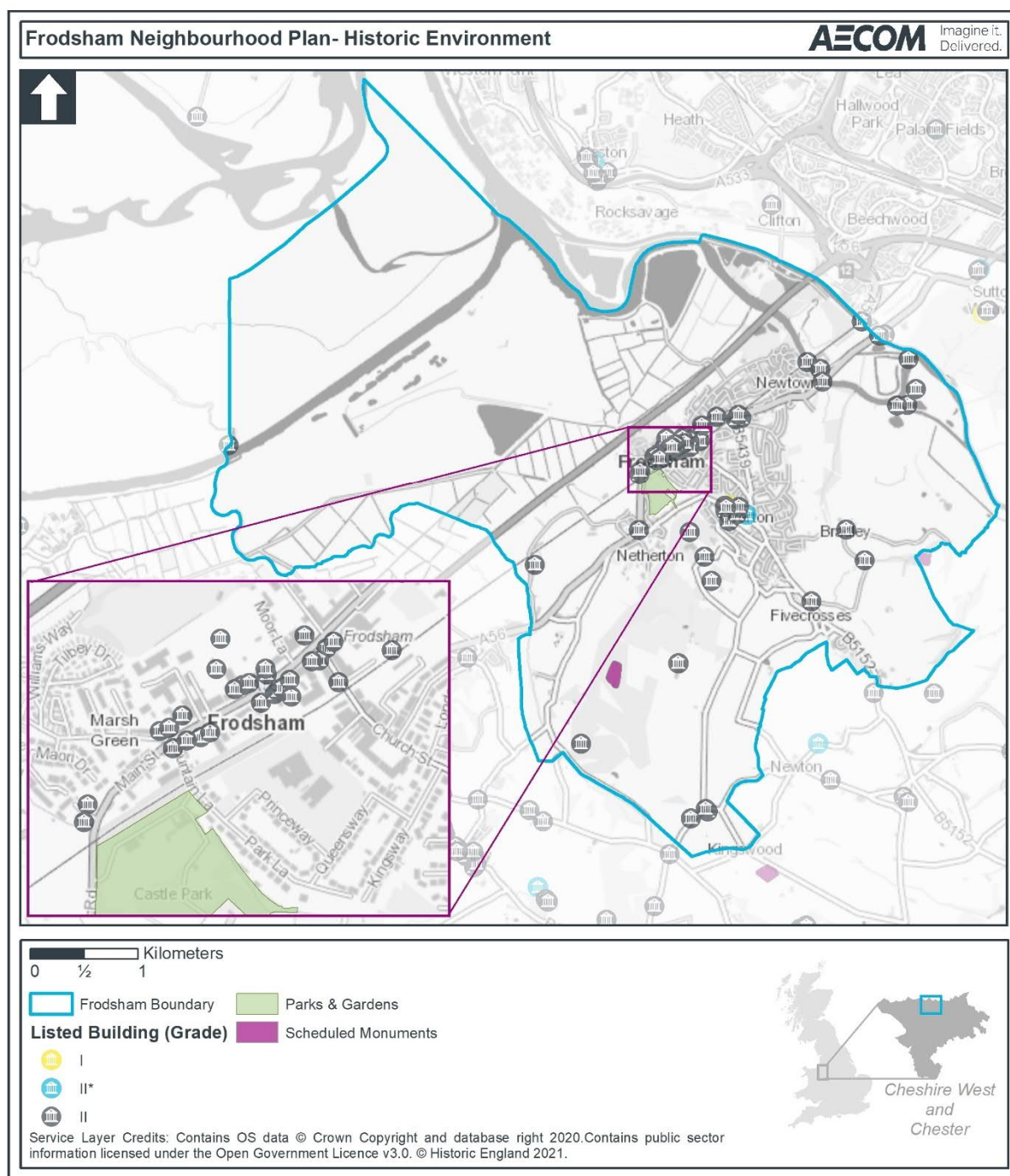
- 5.7 Since 2008, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights some of the Grade I, Grade II (within London) and Grade II* listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, wreck sites and registered parks and gardens in England deemed to be 'at risk'. There are currently no heritage at risk entries on the Register for Frodsham.

Locally important features

- 5.8 In addition to designated heritage assets, the NP area is likely to contain many non-designated buildings and sites that contribute to the historic environment. The Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER) currently lists 93 entries for Frodsham. These are mainly buildings But also include other assets of historic interest such as, an Anti-Aircraft Battery (at Overton), boundary stones, wells, Radio Station (Frodsham Hill), Fish Ponds, Mills etc.
- 5.9 There are around 400²⁰ sites of archaeological interest within the NDP area. The majority being Medieval, Roman, Bronze Age, Neolithic and Anglo-Saxon.

²⁰ ARCHI UK https://www.archiuk.com/cgi-bin/archi_new_search_engine.pl?search_location=SJ%2052%2077&search_type=archi_town_search&pwd=freesearch@freesearch.com&TownName=FRODSHAM&county=Cheshire&search_range=10000&period=&font_size=&placename=Frodsham&info2search4=archi_town_search&keywords=

Figure 5-2 Heritage designations in Frodsham



Summary of future baseline

- 5.10 The numerous heritage assets in the NP area render the area sensitive to change. Heritage assets are significant not only due to their physical presence but also due to their setting. The NPPF defines setting as “the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.” Setting includes, for example, key views of the asset in its wider context. Development pressures and poor management of heritage assets may lead to the gradual degradation and erosion of the historic environment in the FNP area.
- 5.11 Development in the NDP area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets and upon the character of the townscape. This may lead to negative effects, such as the delivery of unsympathetic design and material use. Conversely, it could lead to positive effects through redevelopment of derelict and underused land and buildings. In the absence of a plan, there is less strategic direction for Frodsham though; meaning that negative effects may be more likely to occur.
- 5.12 It should be noted that historic environment designations and the historic environment related policies within the Local Plan (Parts 1 and 2) would offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings regardless.

Key headline issues

- 5.13 The key issues are as follows:
- The NDP area contains numerous heritage assets including a Scheduled Monument, Listed Buildings and a registered Park and Gardens, which could be affected by policies and proposals within the plan (either positively or negatively). Furthermore, there are numerous non-designated heritage assets in the NP area which are particularly vulnerable to change, and these must be similarly protected by assessing the impacts of policies / proposals on their significance and contribution to the historic environment. Assessment of the significance of affected heritage assets (a statement of heritage significance) must stem from the interest(s) of the heritage asset (archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic)²¹.

²¹ Historic England Advice Note 12 “Statements of Heritage Significance: “Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets”

Scoping outcome

- 5.14 Historic Environment has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as there is potential for significant effects upon heritage assets and their settings. It is also important to ensure that the wider character of the built and natural environment is protected and enhanced.

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Historic Environment SEA theme?

- 5.15 The SEA topic 'Historic Environment' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 5-3 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 5-3 SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Historic Environment

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|---|---|
| Protect, enhance and manage the integrity, distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the wider historic environment. | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, better reveal the significance, and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment? • Contribute to better management of heritage assets? • Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment? • Consider the impact on setting in a manner proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected. • Promote heritage-led regeneration? • Lead to the repair and adaptive re-use of a heritage asset and encourage high quality design? |

6. Landscape

- 6.1 This theme focuses on designated and protected landscapes within or near to the FNP area, as well as landscape character, landscape quality and visual amenity.

Policy Context

- 6.2 Table 6-1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 6-1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to landscape

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|---|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| The 25 Year Environment Plan | 2018 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf |
| The National Design Guide | 2019 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide |
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/policies_plans_and_strategies/planning_policy/local_plan/local_plan_part_two |
| Frodsham Design Code | 2019 | AECOM report commissioned by the FNP Steering Group |

- 6.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:
- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF which gives great weight to FNP conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, as well as landscape character and scenic beauty. The NPPF recognises the role of green infrastructure in landscape settings, as well as the importance of designated biodiversity sites, habitats, woodland, historic features, agricultural land and cultural landscapes. The positive contribution that land remediation can make in terms of addressing despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land is also recognised.
 - The 25-year Environment Plan and National Design Guide complement each other with their aims for a cleaner, greener country which puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and

habitats. Design is focused on beautiful, enduring and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality green open spaces.

- The FNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan policies covering the FNP area. The CWCC LPP2 policy ENV2 (Landscape) seeks to protect and enhance landscape character and local distinctiveness by identifying key gaps in LP land allocations and between settlements in the greenbelt and protecting these by maintaining their character, supporting designation of Local Green Space and protecting the borough's estuaries and undeveloped coast. Policy DM49 (Registered parks and gardens) seeks to protect landscapes registered as Historic Parks and Gardens by ensuring great weight is given to the assets' conservation and significance.
- The FNP Steering group commissioned AECOM to produce a Design Code for Frodsham with the aim of providing design principles and codes for all development in Frodsham Parish, which can be applied to potential development sites. A series of design codes have been produced to provide guidance for developments in Frodsham. Of particular relevance to landscape and townscape are:
 - Key Views and Vistas (KVV) requires development to be planned to respond to existing view corridors and reinforce views of existing landmarks. The spacing of development should allow for long distance views of Frodsham Hill or open countryside. Key vistas should be protected by controlling development densities and building heights, particularly when in the sight lines of local landmarks.
 - Environmental Designations (GI-ED) includes the requirement that development enhance biodiversity and geodiversity wherever possible. This will involve restoring and increasing the total area of natural habitats and landscape features.
 - Open Space (GI-OS) requires residential development to provide appropriate quantity and quality of outdoor private amenity space. Development adjoining public open spaces should enhance the character of the space helping create a sense of place.
 - Woodland, Tress and Hedgerows (GI-WTH) requires schemes to replace trees, hedgerows and woodland lost through new development. The spacing of development should reflect the rural character and allow for long distance views of the countryside from the public realm. Trees and landscaping should be incorporated in the design. Within the countryside, frontage areas should preserve the rural character of the roads by retaining grass verges, hedgerows and trees.

Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

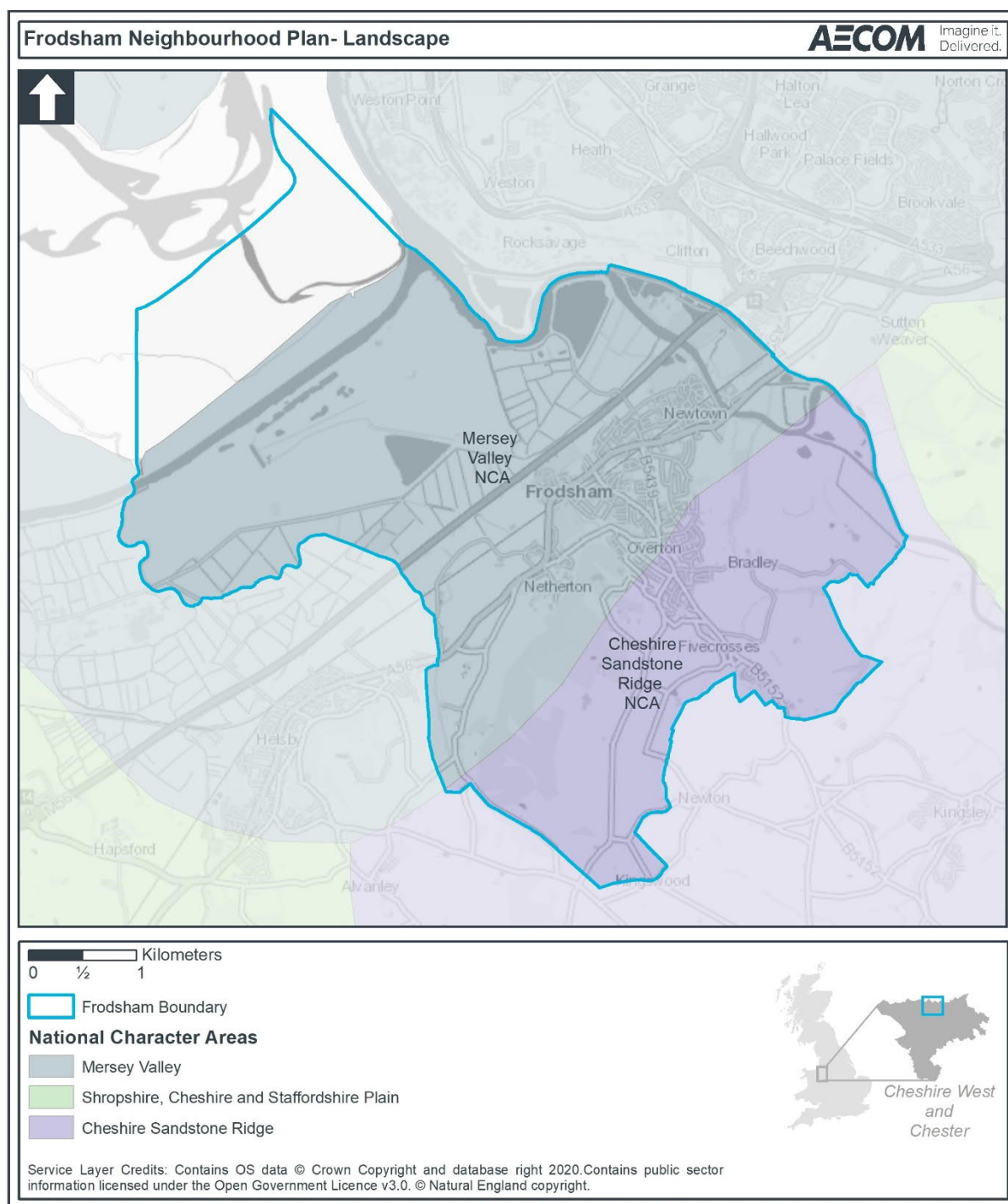
- 6.4 National Character Areas (NCAs) are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment. In this regard, the Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan area falls within two NCAs: the 'Mersey Valley' NCA and the 'Cheshire Sandstone Ridge' NCA (Figure 6-1).
- 6.5 The Mersey Valley NCA consists of a wide, low-lying river valley landscape focusing on the River Mersey, its estuary, associated tributaries and waterways. Farmland in the north of the Mersey Valley NCA is predominantly arable, while in the south there is a mix of arable and pasture. Urban and industrial developments line the banks of the River Mersey. Industrial infrastructure is often prominent, with large-scale, highly visible development including chemical works and oil refineries.²²
- 6.6 A number of Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) have been prepared for the Mersey Valley NCA which highlight areas that could be enhanced and/or protected by development brought through the Plan. These are detailed below:
- SEO 1: Conserve and enhance the Mersey Valley's rivers, tributaries and estuary, improving the ability of the fluvial and estuarine systems to adapt to climate change and mitigate flood risk while also enhancing habitats for wildlife and for people's enjoyment of the landscape.
 - SEO 2: Promote the Mersey Valley's historic environment and landscape character and positively integrate the environmental resource with industry and development, providing greenspace within existing and new development, to further the benefits provided by a healthy natural environment, as a framework for habitat restoration and for public amenity.
 - SEO 3: Manage the arable and mixed farmland along the broad linear Mersey Valley, and create semi-natural habitats, woodlands and ecological networks, to protect soils and water, enhance biodiversity, increase connectivity and improve the character of the landscape, while enabling sustainable food production.
 - SEO 4: Manage and enhance the mossland landscape in the east, safeguarding wetlands including the internationally important lowland raised bogs, to conserve peat soils, protect and enhance biodiversity, conserve archaeological deposits, contribute to landscape character and store carbon.

²² Natural England (2013): '60 Mersley Valley' [online] available at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6387892108656640?category=587130>

- 6.7 The Cheshire Sandstone Ridge NCA is situated between Malpas and Frodsham. Compared with the surrounding plain, the NCA has a strong mosaic of broadleaved mixed woodland comprising ancient woodland and some post-medieval conifer plantations, with large blocks of commercially managed conifers to the east. A thick layer of glacial till covers the lower slopes of the ridge and the surrounding plain is punctuated by numerous ponds and meres. Lowland heath was once more widespread, but now consists solely in discrete areas.²³ The NCA has been shortlisted for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation. The AONB designation offers protection under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). It protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.
- 6.8 A number of Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) have been prepared for the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge NCA, which highlight areas that could be enhanced and/or protected by development brought through the Plan. These are detailed below:
- SEO 1: Manage and enhance the rivers, streams and wetland habitats, including flood plain grazing marsh and wet woodland, protecting them from diffuse pollution and maintaining the integrity and unique conditions for the preservation of the lakes and standing waters of internationally important sites.
 - SEO 2: Manage and expand areas of semi-natural woodland, restore and reinstate hedgerows and hedgerow trees, protect and restore ancient woodland, for example in the Delamere Forest Park and throughout the Mersey Forest, thus reducing habitat fragmentation to benefit landscape character, biodiversity, resource protection and climate regulation while enhancing the recreational, educational and experiential qualities of the NCA.
 - SEO 3: Protect and manage the geological sites, with an emphasis on demonstrating the strong link between geology and its influence on landscape and industrial development, and promoting greater understanding of the link between wildlife and geodiversity, particularly in the distribution of habitats and species, recognising the importance of former extraction sites for both geodiversity and biodiversity.
 - SEO 4: Manage and, where appropriate, expand areas of characteristic heathland and other priority habitats, including lowland meadows and lowland grassland, thus reducing habitat fragmentation to benefit landscape character, sense of place, biodiversity and resource protection while enhancing the recreational and experiential qualities of the NCA.

²³ Natural England (2014): '62 Cheshire Sandstone Ridge' [online] available at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5655719219036160?category=587130>

Figure 6-1 Frodsham National Character Areas



- 6.9 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is an assessment of the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular landscape. The Chester and Cheshire West LCA details 16 separate landscape types and 53 separate landscape areas within the authority. The main settlement area of Frodsham is identified as an 'Urban area'. However, the north westernmost part of the Plan area falls within the 'Drained Marsh' LCT and, beneath this, the Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes LCA.²⁴
- 6.10 The Drained Marsh LCT is located on former saltmarsh or mudflats adjacent to the Dee and Mersey estuaries. It is drained by inter-connecting networks of drainage channels arranged in a regular, often linear pattern, and this gives the impression of an open unenclosed landscape. The former marsh resulted from the marine and alluvial deposits of clay, salt and silt deposited under tidal and estuarine influence. This overlies Kinnerton Sandstone, Chester Pebble Beds and Wilmslow Sandstone. Soils comprise humic and alluvial gleys on the improved reclaimed coastal floodplain. Small patches of scrub are common, with few trees. Where there are hedgerows they are mostly grown out and in poor condition. Reeds and other aquatic or emergent plants are mainly restricted to ditches. The drained marsh has ornithological interest as a wintering ground for wading birds and wildfowl as well as birds of prey. Marshland is an unappealing location for settlement and as such these areas have remained largely unsettled, restricted to a few isolated farms.²⁵
- 6.11 The Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes LCA (shown in Figure 6-2) underlies the north westernmost part of the Plan area. Key characteristics of this landscape include²⁶:
- A flat, low lying landscape of former mudflats and saltmarsh alongside the Mersey Estuary, contrasting with surrounding built development (previously designated as an Area of Significant Local Environmental Value).
 - Strong interconnection and intervisibility with LCT 16 Mudflats and Saltmarsh to the north.
 - A landscape etched with a distinctive pattern of straight drainage ditches which delineates the field pattern of planned 19th century enclosure.
 - Incomplete hedgerow boundaries provide partial enclosure along some field boundaries.
 - Canal dredging grounds defined by high earth embankments.
 - An isolated, bleak and open landscape, where settlement is limited to isolated farms linked by rough tracks between ditches.

²⁴ Cheshire West and Chester Gov (n.d.): 'LCT 4: Drained Marsh' [online] available at: https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-consultancy/total-environment/landscape-assessment/LCT4_Drained_Marsh.pdf

²⁵ Cheshire West and Chester Gov (n.d.): 'LCT 4: Drained Marsh' [online] available at: https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-consultancy/total-environment/landscape-assessment/LCT4_Drained_Marsh.pdf

²⁶ Cheshire West and Chester Gov (n.d.): 'LCT 4: Drained Marsh' [online] available at: https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-consultancy/total-environment/landscape-assessment/LCT4_Drained_Marsh.pdf

- Although much of the LCA is actively farmed, the degraded hedgerows and broken fencing shows this to be a landscape in need of improved management. Some land to north of Lordship Lane remains in use for canal dredgings and has undergone change as a result of the preliminary works for the permitted windfarm.
- Wet grassland species have been lost and ditches are eutrophic as a result of the intensive agricultural use of the land.

6.12 The Cheshire West and Chester Local Authority indicate that the overall management strategy for this landscape should be to enhance and restore the condition of habitats and features of the marshes whilst safeguarding its open character, through measures such as²⁷:

- Encouraging recreational development as a means of managing some of the more derelict and degraded areas of the landscape.
- Maintaining the distinctive field pattern that reveals the planned 19th century enclosure of the marsh.
- Seeking to restore thorn hedgerows that are falling into decline.
- Considering opportunities to create views across the Mersey Estuary.
- Conserving the 'remote' character of the marshes away from the main transport corridor of the M56.
- Consider views to and from the Frodsham Sandstone Ridge and Helsby Hill when planning any change.

²⁷ Cheshire West and Chester Gov (n.d.): 'LCT 4: Drained Marsh' [online] available at: https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-consultancy/total-environment/landscape-assessment/LCT4_Drained_Marsh.pdf

Figure 6-2 The Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes²⁸



²⁸ Cheshire West and Chester Gov (n.d.): 'LCT 4: Drained Marsh' [online] available at: https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-consultancy/total-environment/landscape-assessment/LCT4_Drained_Marsh.pdf

6.13 At the parish level, Frodsham Town Council conducted a review of landscape and townscape types within the local area. Seven landscape types were identified, listed below²⁹:

- LCT 1: Estuary.
- LCT 2: Reclaimed Saltmarsh.
- LCT 3: Floodplain.
- LCT 4: Valley-side.
- LCT 5: Scarp Foot.
- LCT 6: Wooded Escarpment.
- LCT 7: Undulating Elevated Land.

6.14 With regards to townscape, fifteen townscape areas were identified within the town, these are shown in Figure 6-3 and detailed in Table 6-1.

²⁹ K Gee (2008) Landscape Character Assessment of Frodsham Civil Parish UNPUBLISHED.

Table 6-2 Townscape areas, Frodsham³⁰

| Townscape area | Key characteristics | Extent |
|---|--|--|
| Townscape Area 01: Marsh Lane | The area is predominantly residential. Many properties are brick built with pitched slate or tile roofs. | The Marsh Lane Townscape Area comprises properties on the northwestern edge of the town and is bounded by the embankment of the Chester to Warrington railway line in the southeast. |
| Townscape Area 02: Motorway Buffer Zone | The area is predominantly green infrastructure comprising a mixture of recreational open space and wildlife habitat that has developed from agricultural land since the Preston Brook to Hapsford section of the M56 was opened in 1971. | The Motorway Buffer Zone is an area of Green Belt land between the Town Policy Boundary and the M56. |
| Townscape Area 03: Commercial Core | The public face of the Commercial Core is a diverse mix of buildings mostly with domestic origins. The character of the core owes much to its surviving historic buildings and their use of contrasting building materials and styles. | The area is located between Castle Park and Marsh Lane Townscape Areas in the west and the Frodsham Bridge Townscape Area to the east. |
| Townscape Area 04: Ashton Drive | The area has grown in discrete phases since the mid-20th century and each development retains much of its original character, e.g. among the older developments are the tile hung 'Cornish' houses on Ship Street and Hayes Crescent. | The Ashton Drive area lies on the northern edge of Frodsham and is bisected by the railway line: the larger part, north of the railway, has vehicular access from Ship Street and St Hilda's Drive; whilst the southern part is reached from Volunteer Street. |

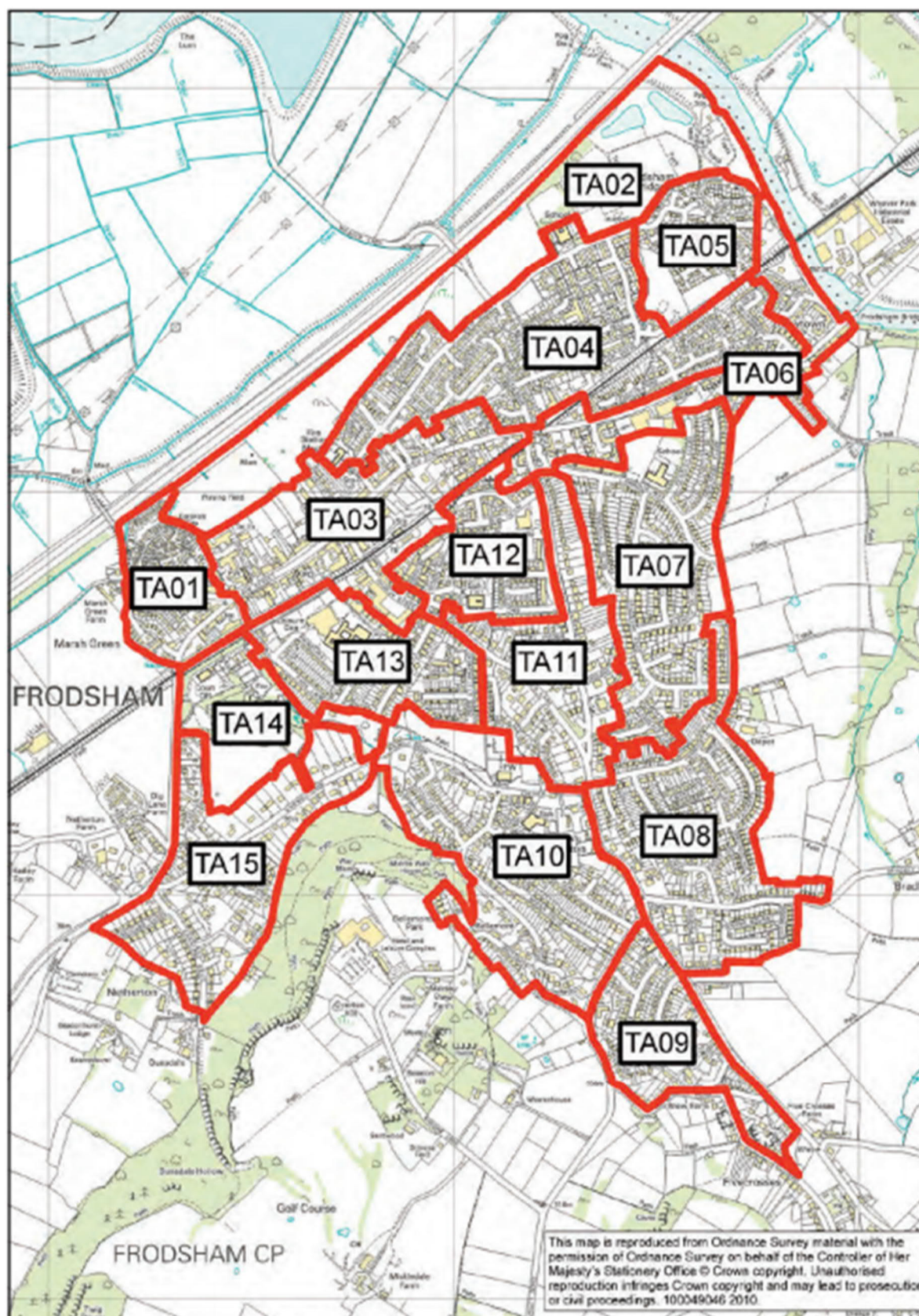
³⁰ Frodsham Town Council (2010): 'Frodsham Design Statement' [online] available at: <http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreprs/Town%20Design%20Statement%20-%20Frodsham%20-%20July%202010.pdf>

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Townscape Area 05: Saltworks Farm | Detached houses in a variety of styles predominate along the curving principal road with semi-detached and terraced properties common on the cul-de-sac spurs. | This townscape area is located in the northeast of Frodsham, in the residential hub at Saltworks Farm. |
| Townscape Area 06: Frodsham Bridge | Frodsham Bridge Townscape Area is characterised by its domestic / commercial mix concentrated along the south side of Bridge Lane. | Frodsham Bridge Townscape Area reaches the Town Policy Boundary at the river's edge in the east and the Green Belt/Town Policy Boundary in the south. The area extends westwards along Bridge Lane to its junction with Fluin Lane. |
| Townscape Area 07: The Lakes | Properties vary in size and type: they are mostly 2-storey detached houses and dormer bungalows, e.g. Penrith Close and Borrowdale Close, with semi-detached houses in Silverdale Close and Thirlmere Close, and semi-detached bungalows in Keswick Drive. Building materials are predominantly brick with tiled roofs in a variety of modern styles. | The area is on the eastern side of town on land that rises to the south and east. The medieval salt route / hollow way, leading to Bridge Lane and the former river port, marks the area's eastern edge and the Town Policy Boundary. |
| Townscape Area 08: Doric Avenue | The Doric Avenue Townscape Area is predominantly residential and reflects development that has taken place since pre-Victorian times to the late 20 th century resulting in a wide variety of property types and styles. | Doric Avenue is central to this townscape area and links two busy access routes: Townfield Lane and Bradley Lane. |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Townscape Area 09: Five Crosses | Five Crosses Townscape Area is almost entirely residential, but includes former sandstone quarries, now wildlife habitat, on the west side of Kingsley Road. The area reflects development has taken place since the Victorian era to the late 20 th century, resulting in a large range of architecture. | The area lies on the southern edge of town, between Kingsley Road and Manley Road, on land that rises to the southwest below the wooded slopes of Beacon Hill. |
| Townscape Area 10: Overton | Overton Townscape Area is mainly residential but includes a core of small businesses and community facilities centred on School Lane and the northern ends of Hillside Road and Bellemonte Road. | The area is situated at Overton in the south west of Frodsham. |
| Townscape Area 11: Fluin Lane | The Fluin Lane Townscape Area is entirely residential and development ranges from Victorian to 21 st century in age. | The Fluin Lane Townscape Area extends southwards from the western end of Langdale Way and rises steadily to Townfield Lane. |
| Townscape Area 12: Community Centre | A large amount of 1960s development surrounds older property in this area. Specific design features that contribute to local distinctiveness include decorative brickwork detail on eaves, gable ends and chimneys, terracotta roof ridge tiles, doorways and front wall detail in Sandfields. | The Community Centre Townscape Area lies between Church Street and Fluin Lane with railway property forming its northern boundary. |
| Townscape Area 13: Kingsway | The Kingsway Townscape Area is predominantly residential and properties demonstrate a diversity of styles with ages ranging from Victorian to 21 st century. Most are medium sized semi-detached houses with a few bungalows and some larger properties interspersed. | The Kingsway Townscape Area is bounded by the railway embankment to the northwest and by the extensive green wedge of Castle Park and Churchfields to the south. |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Townscape Area 14: Castle Park | Castle Park Townscape Area forms the major part of the Frodsham (Castle Park) Conservation Area; most of the park is a Registered Historic Park and Garden, the lower park is part of the Frodsham Area of Archaeological Potential, and all of it is part of the green infrastructure. | The Castle Park area is situated at the site of the fortified manorhouse / “castle” in late medieval times in the west of Frodsham. |
| Townscape Area 15: Howey Lane | The Howey Lane Townscape Area is characterised by its verdant appearance and is a valuable component of the town’s green infrastructure. The area extends out to the Green Belt on three sides, and to Castle Park in the north. | The area is located in the south west of Frodsham and extends out to the Green Belt / Town Policy Boundary on three sides, and to Castle Park in the north. |

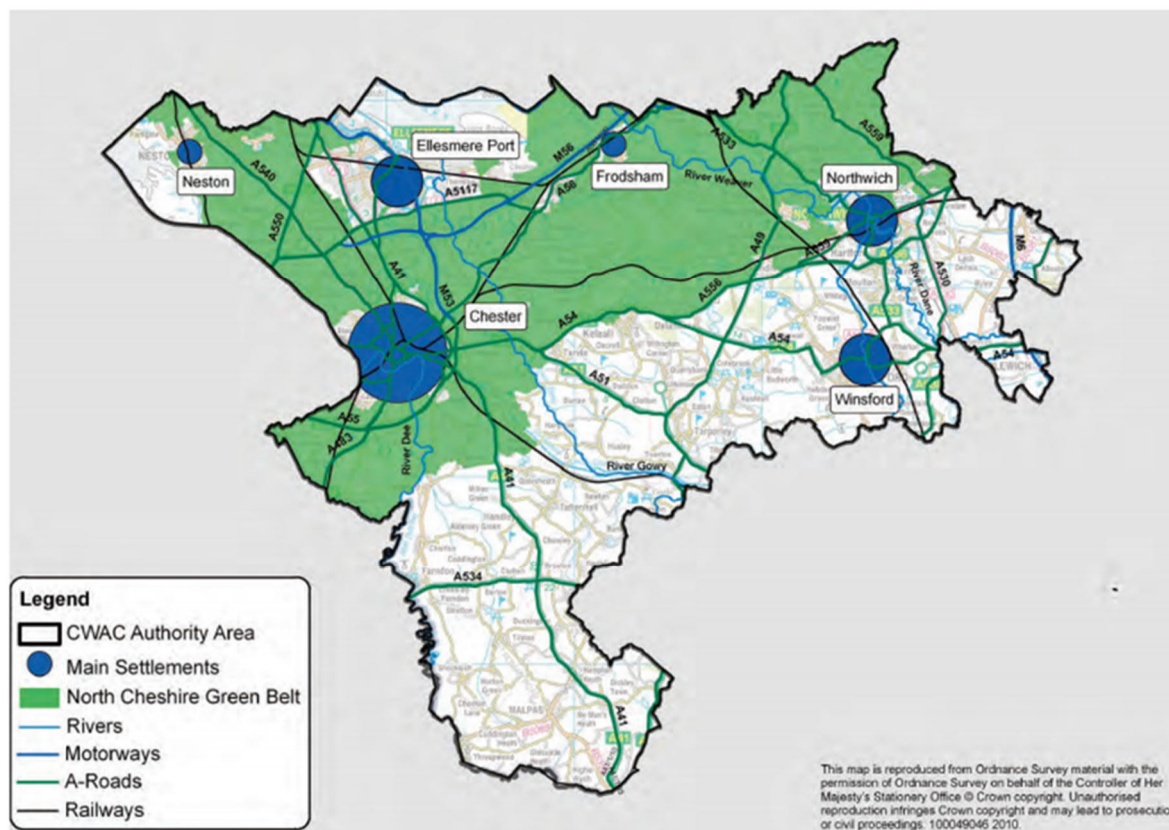
Figure 6-3 Frodsham Townscape Areas³¹



³¹ Frodsham Town Council (2010): 'Frodsham Design Statement' [online] available at: <http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreps/Town%20Design%20Statement%20-%20Frodsham%20-%20July%202010.pdf>

- 6.15 Green belts act as important mechanism to prevent urban sprawl/extensive urbanisation within an area, and protect the countryside. The North Cheshire Green Belt covers the entirety of the Plan area (shown in Figure 6-4, below).

Figure 6-4 North Cheshire Green Belt³²



Summary of future baseline

- 6.16 Several policies noted within the adopted local plan provide some protection to current landscape features in Frodsham, including STRAT 9 (Green belt and countryside), ENV2 (Landscape) and STRAT 8 (Rural Area).
- 6.17 However, depending on the scale of development, a lack of overall vision and framework could result in the delivery of less sympathetic development styles, layouts and material choice. This could have a disruptive impact on the landscape through the lack of cohesive development. Insensitive development could also result in the loss of landscape features and adverse visual impact. Conversely, sensitive development presents an opportunity to enhance the existing townscape character of Frodsham whilst respecting the key characteristics of the landscape.

³² Frodsham Town Council (2010): 'Frodsham Design Statement' [online] available at: <http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreps/Town%20Design%20Statement%20-%20Frodsham%20-%20July%202010.pdf>

Key headline issues

6.18 The key issues are as follows:

- There are valuable landscapes in the NP area that make a significant contribution to the character of the area. These comprise the Drained Marsh LCT and its corresponding LCAs.
- The North Cheshire green belt, which encompasses the majority of the Plan area will require protection in line with Policy STRAT 19 of the Local Plan.
- Frodsham Town Council have noted fifteen townscape areas, each with their own unique characteristics that contribute to the sense of place of the Plan area. Development brought forward through the plan will need to take into account the style, layout and massing of current features of notable landscape value within these areas.
- The Local Plan's policies offer a degree of protection to landscape assets and their settings, but insensitive development could have a disruptive impact on landscape

Scoping outcome

6.19 Landscape has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as there is potential for significant effects upon the character of landscapes. The FNP allocates sites for housing which can potentially have impacts (positive and negative) on landscape.

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Landscape SEA theme?

6.20 The SEA topic 'Landscape' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 6-3 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 6-3: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Landscape

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|---|--|
| Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes. | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance landscape assets? • Contribute to better management of landscape assets? • Identify and protect/enhance features of local importance? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the surrounding landscape? • Improve linkages to open space and the countryside? • Preserve and enhance the North Cheshire Green Belt? |

7. Land, Soil and Water Resources

7.1 This theme focuses on the quality of soil resources, the extent of mineral resources, water supply resources and water quality in the FNP area.

Policy Context

7.2 Table 7-1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 7-1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to land, soil and water resources

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|---|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| The 25 Year Environment Plan | 2018 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf |
| Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England | 2009 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-our-soils-a-strategy-for-england |
| Future Water: The government's water strategy for England | 2011 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-water-the-government-s-water-strategy-for-england |
| Water for Life | 2011 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228861/8230.pdf |
| United Utilities' Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) | 2019 | https://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/water-resources/water-resources-management-plan/ |
| North West River Basin District Management Plan | 2015 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718335/North West RBD Part 1 river basin management plan.pdf |
| Cheshire Replacement Minerals Local Plan | 2019 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc/ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?pointId=1419339111281 |

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|---|---------------------|---|
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc/ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/policies_plans_and_strategies/planning_policy/local_plan/local_plan_part_two |
| Cheshire Waterways Strategy | 2016 | http://chester.westcheshiregrowth.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/01/Chester-Waterways-Strategy-FINAL.pdf#:~:text=Main%20focus%20of%20Chester%E2%80%99s%20Waterways%20Strategy%20is%20on,through%20Chester%20to%20the%20Welsh%20border%20at%20Saltney. |

7.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to protect high quality soil resources, and improve the water environment; recognising the wider benefits of natural capital and derived from ecosystem services. Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the need to take account of the long-term implications of climate change and build resilience in this respect. The NPPF encourages efficient land use, utilising brownfield land opportunities and land remediation schemes where appropriate and delivering environmental gains.
- The 25-year Environment Plan presents a focus for environmental improvement in the next couple decades, with aims to achieve clean air, clean and plentiful water, and reduced risk from environmental hazards. This includes measures to improve soil quality, restore and protect peatlands, use water more sustainably, reduce pollution, maximise resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts. This leads on from and supports the soil strategy for England (Safeguarding our soils) which seeks to ensure that all England's soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully by 2030, as well as the national water strategies which seek to secure sustainable and resilient water resources and improve the quality of waterbodies, and the national waste plan which seeks to identify measures being taken to move towards a zero waste economy.
- The United Utilities WRMP further highlights the acute stresses that the catchment faces in the coming years and the challenges faced by the council in terms of securing water resources into the future in one of the driest regions in England. The Plan sets out how the organisation will ensure the sufficient supply of water over a 25-year period (2020-2045). The plan objective is to manage demand, offsetting future demand pressures through leakage reductions (20% by 2025 and over 40% by 2045) and increased resilience.

- The FNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Cheshire Replacement Minerals Local Plan, which form part of the Local Development Frameworks for each county. These plans identify and safeguard sites and resources important to the continued sustainable management of mineral extractions and waste arisings.
- Furthermore, the FNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Local Plans covering the FNP area, which contain policies specifically relating to efficient land use, the sustainable use of resources, soil protection, the efficient use of water, and protection for water quality.
- Additionally, the Cheshire Waterways Strategy (2016) presents opportunities to enhance and improve waterways systems in Cheshire.

Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Soil resources

- 7.4 The Agricultural Land Classification categorises land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are the 'best and most versatile' land (BVM) and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. Figure 7-1 shows that a large portion of the Plan area is underlain by Grade 3 quality land, according to the pre-1988 assessment. Though it is not possible to ascertain whether this land is Grade 3a or 3b, the 'Predictive BMV Land Assessment' for the North West indicates a high likelihood of BMV land in Frodsham, in particular, in the north west of the Plan area (>60% likelihood). Additionally, there are some smaller areas of Grade 2 quality land at localized spots outside the main town of Frodsham.
- 7.5 Further, as illustrated in Figure 7-2, a more detailed assessment conducted post-1988 indicates that part of the Plan area is underlain by Grade 2 ('very good quality' land) and 3a ('good quality' agricultural land). Some of this area lies adjacent to Frodsham town, the main developed part of Frodsham.
- 7.6 With regards to minerals, the NDP overlaps a relatively small mineral safeguarding area (MSA) at the north eastern tip of the NDP, an area lying between the M56 and the A56 just before Junction 12 of the M56. However, it should be noted that the quality of the map in the assessment is not sufficiently clear to rule out other MSAs in the area.³³ It is recommended that this is evaluated by the council at a later stage of the planning process.

³³ Cheshire West and Cheshire (2019): 'Local Aggregate Assessment' [online] available at: https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/minerals_and_waste/laa?tab=files

Figure 7-1 Indicative Agricultural Land Classification

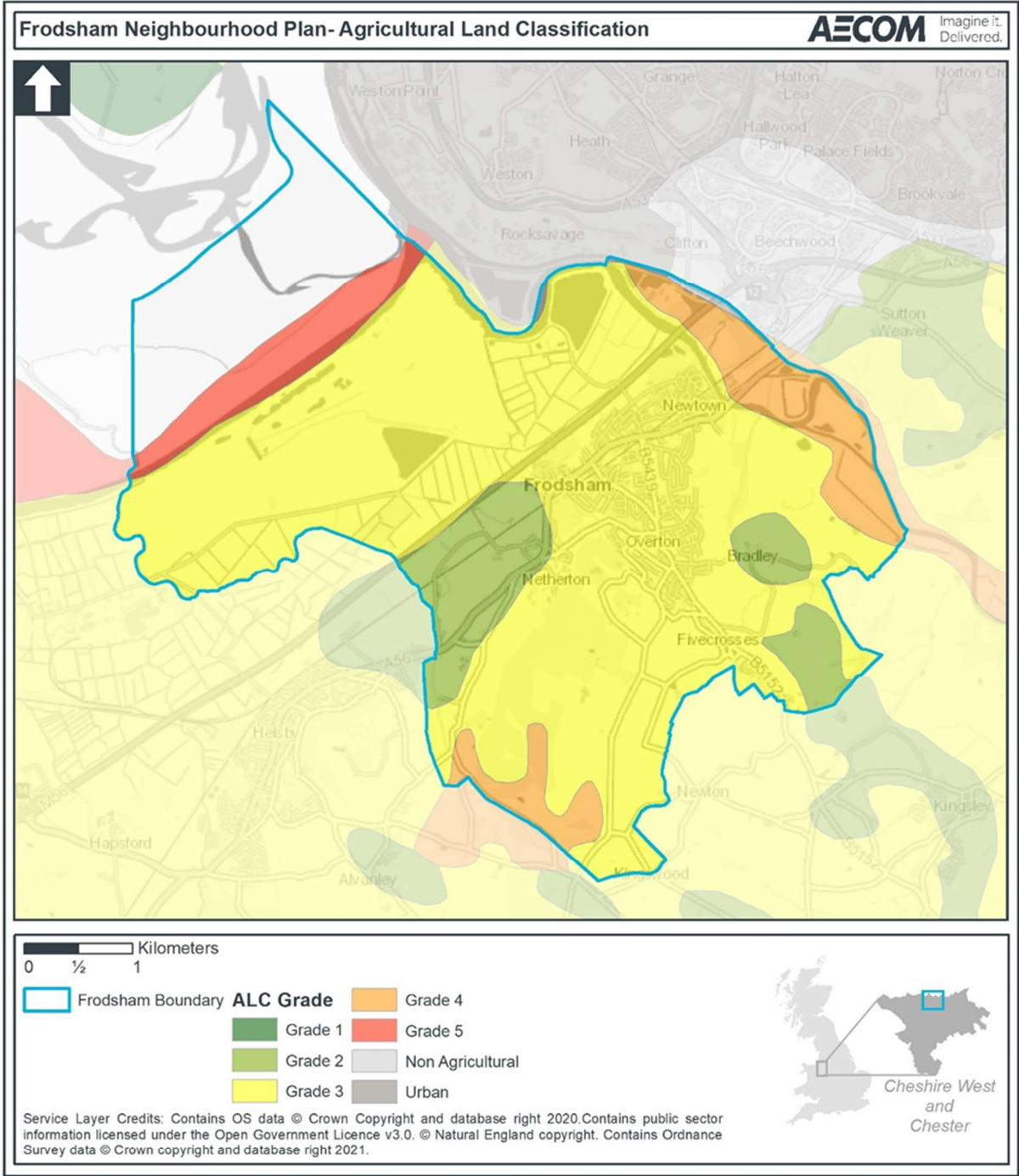
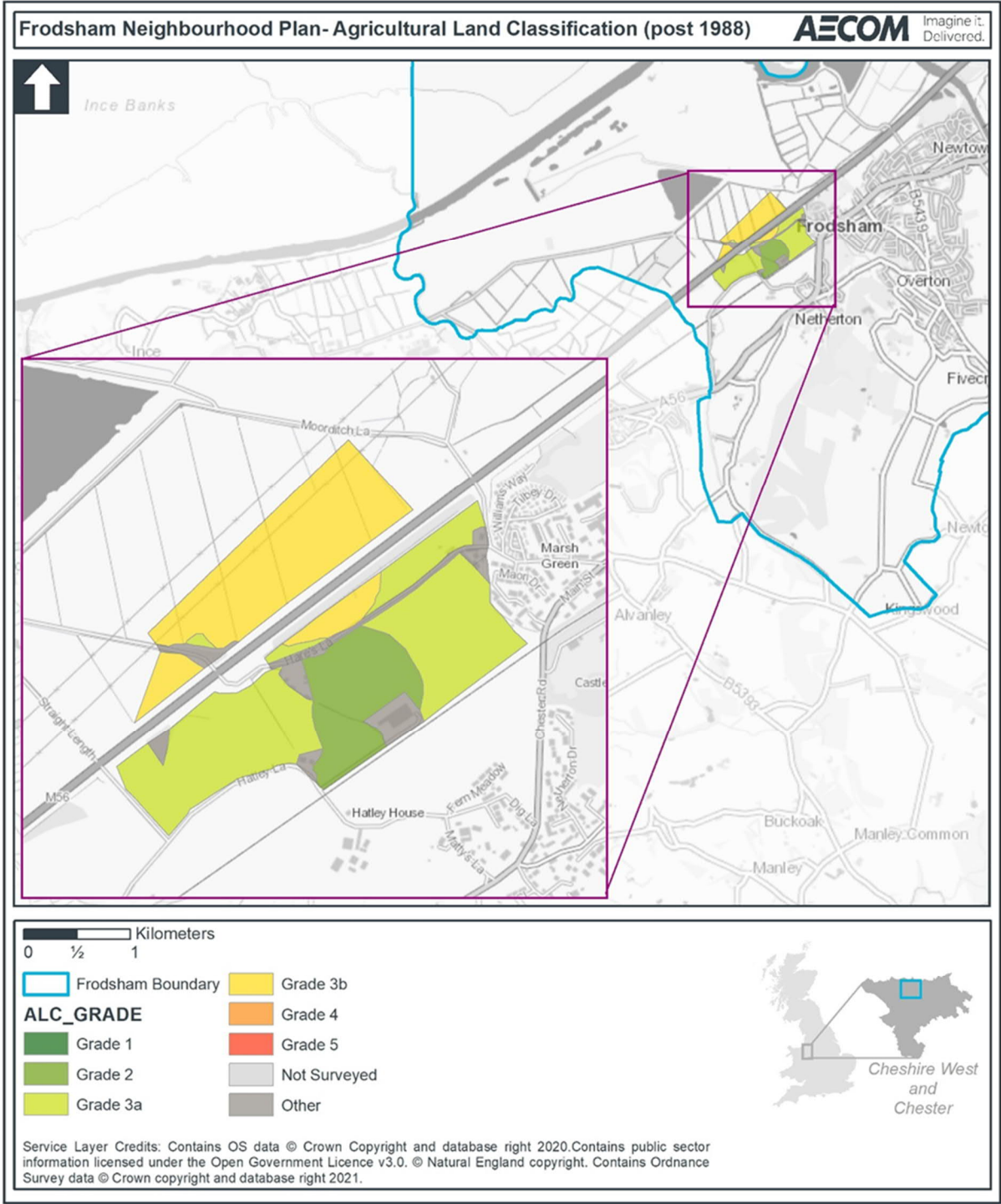


Figure 7-2 Agricultural Land Classification (Post 1988)



Watercourses and water quality

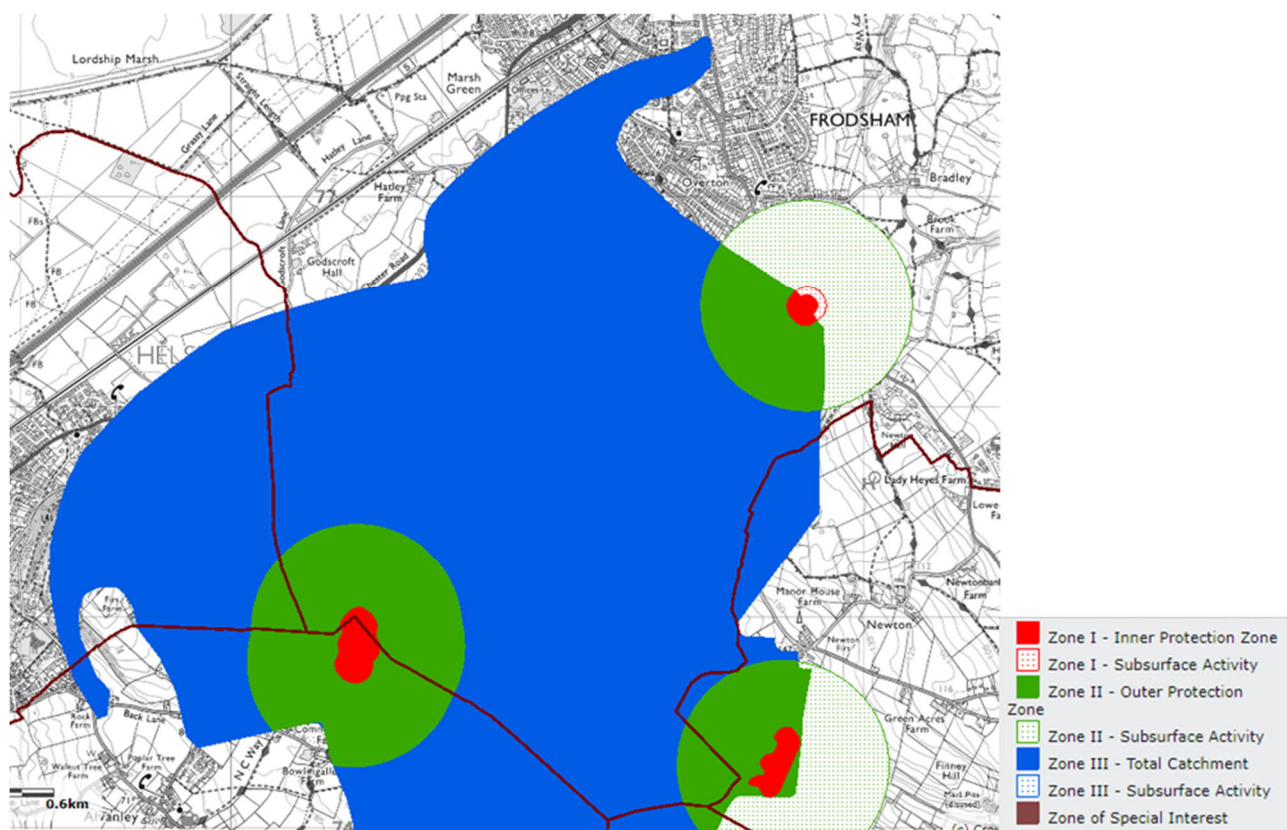
- 7.7 The Frodsham Plan area falls within the North West River Basin District, Weaver Gower Management Catchment and Weaver Lower Operational Catchment. The Weaver Lower Operational Catchment is located in north Cheshire and the main river in the catchment is the river weaver. Ultimately, the catchment drains into the Mersey Estuary, joining the Manchester Ship Canal at Runcorn. Around 80% of the river basin district is rural, with the majority of land being used for agriculture.³⁴
- 7.8 The River Weaver runs through the north east side of the Plan area. The Environment Agency (EA) measures the quality of England's rivers in two ways. An ecological measure examines the diversity and health of its wildlife, while a chemical measure assesses whether rivers contain too much sewage, phosphate or other harmful substances. As of 2019, the ecological status of the river is 'moderate', whilst the river failed to meet standards for good chemical status. The main reasons for not meeting the required chemical status included poor livestock management, urbanisation, sewage discharge, and poor soil and nutrient management.³⁵
- 7.9 Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been designated by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. In this regard, there is one SPZ within Frodsham, which covers the westernmost extent of the Plan area, shown in Figure 7.3.
- 7.10 The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwaters have nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or are thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwaters are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which, Member States are required to establish Action Programmes in order to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination. The majority of the Plan area falls within a Surfacewater NVZ: Peckmill Brook, Hoolpool Gutter at Ince Marshes.³⁶

³⁴ Environment Agency (2015): 'North West river basin district management plan' [online] available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718335/North_West_RBD_P art_1_river_basin_management_plan.pdf

³⁵ Environment Agency (2019): 'Catchment Explorer' [online] available at: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/OperationalCatchment/3524>

³⁶ Environment Agency (2019): 'Peckmill Brook NVZ' [online] available at: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/ReasonsForNotAchievingGood/489518>

Figure 7-3 Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) in the NA



7.11 The water suppliers for the Frodsham area are United Utilities (UU). UU's water resources management plan states that over 50% of the region's water comes from resources in Cumbria and Wales. The water travels through an extensive network of pipes known as large diameter trunk mains and huge, gravity-fed aqueducts bringing water from Cumbria. The geographical area that relies on these water sources is home to over seven million people.³⁷

Summary of future baseline

7.12 In terms of water quality; requirements set out in the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area. However, water quality could be affected by pollution incidents in the area, increased consumption, diffuse pollution, waste-water discharges, water run-off, modification, and the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies.

7.13 Development which requires sewage treatment may, if not designed correctly or located appropriately, result in an increased risk of pollution to groundwater and surface water. Development will therefore need to have due consideration to the capacity of sewage works.

³⁷ United Utilities (2019) Water Resources Management Plan. Available at: <https://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/water-resources/water-resources-management-plan/>

- 7.14 There is potential for amounts of agricultural land to be lost to development, as future development is likely to fall within or adjacent to the built area of Frodsham, which had been predicted to be predominantly underlain by Grade 3 quality land (>60% likelihood).

Key headline issues

- 7.15 The key issues are as follows:
- The NDP area mainly consists of non-agricultural land and Grade 3 agricultural land. Some of this is likely to be best and most versatile land. Development should seek to avoid the loss of high quality land wherever possible by prioritising development on pre-existing brownfield sites.
 - There are Surfacewater NVZs and Groundwater Source Protection Zones in the NDP area, which present potential constraints to development. Additionally, development could affect water quality, but effects could be avoided. Consequently, it will be important for future development to avoid any detrimental impacts on water quality both on and off-site.
 - The FNP could also seek to support extended measures to improve the resilience of water supplies, including through local water recycling schemes and opportunities to increase efficiency in water use.

Scoping outcome

- 7.16 The topic of 'Land, Soil and Water Resources' has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA, as the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on land and water quality.
- 7.17 There are important soil resources in the NDP area that ought to be avoided. However, the limited scale of development proposed in the NDP is unlikely to allocate sites exceeding 10 ha in total, and so a significant effect upon soil resources is considered unlikely in any event. For this reason, soil is scoped out of the SEA. This does not mean that higher quality agricultural land should not be protected.

- 7.18 Whilst the NDP area does overlap a SPZ and a NVZ (adverse impacts are primarily associated with agricultural land use), it is considered unlikely that significant effects upon water quality would occur as a result of the NDP. However, it is important that areas within Zones 1 and 2 SPZ are avoided when allocating sites for development. The potential development sites being considered in the draft NP do not overlap Zone I or Zone II³⁸. In terms of potential effects on European sites, produced by increased surface water runoff, the Mersey Estuary is over 50km² and drains an extensive area of north-west England. Therefore, surface water runoff from the development proposed in the FNP is unlikely to produce significant effects. Moreover, all the FNP allocated sites are on the opposite side of the M56 from the SPA/Ramsar site and are separated from it by both Frodsham Marsh and the Manchester Ship Canal. Impacts associated water quality due to surface water runoff have therefore been **SCOPED OUT**.
- 7.19 In terms of wastewater treatment; United Utilities (the wastewater utility for the NP area) is set to invest in wastewater treatment and sustainability and have the capacity to accommodate the additional allocated sites and housing numbers proposed within the FNP³⁹. Changes in water quality as a result of the discharge of sewage effluent have therefore been **SCOPED OUT**.

³⁸ One site assessed falls within a Zone II (subsurface) but this was rejected in the site assessment process as it falls within the green belt.

³⁹ United Utilities (2019) Water Resources Management Plan. Available at: <https://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/water-resources/water-resources-management-plan/>

8. Population and Housing

Focus of theme:

- 8.1 The theme focuses on population demographics and housing delivery and affordability in the FNP area.

Policy Context

- 8.2 Table 8.1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 8-1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the population and housing

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|--|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 2017 | 2017 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/land/helaa2017?tab=files |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| The CWCC Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ |

- 8.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which on the whole seeks to retain and enhance access to community services and facilities, including health facilities, educational facilities and open space. The NPPF recognises the benefits of a range of local provisions supporting community needs, including in rural areas. The framework seeks to protect settlement and community identities, including through the protection and retention of Green Belt land. Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the benefits of creating cohesive communities, in safe environments where crime and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life of residents. It also requires the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and reflected in planning policies. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required and expect it to be met on-site where possible.
- The FNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan which contains policies specifically relating to housing, community services and facilities, accessibility and infrastructure requirements.

- The CWCC Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 2017 (HELAA) informed the preparation of the CWCC LPP2. It identifies sites and broad locations (including in the FNP area) for housing and employment land available to meet the future needs for housing and employment land. The assessment concluded that the total potential capacity meets and significantly exceeds the minimum Local Plan requirement.
- Meeting objectively assessed future housing needs in the borough is one of the main objectives of the CWCC LPP1. Policy STRAT 2 Strategic Development, identifies a requirement for at least 22,000 (or 1,100 net new dwellings per annum) new dwellings for the period up to 2030. Policies STRAT 2 to STRAT 8 (LPP1) seek to ensure that new development in the Borough is brought forward in line with identified needs, focusing the majority of new development within or on the edge of the main urban centres. The plan also makes provision for a specific level of development to be brought forward in Frodsham, identified as one of ten Key Service Centres. The Plan allocates 250 dwellings in Frodsham (Policy STRAT8). Policy ECON2 seeks to maintain the important role of Frodsham's town centre as a retail and service centre. Policies SOC3 and SOC5 (LPP1) support mixed, balanced, sustainable communities through the provision of market and affordable housing that meets identified future needs.
- The LPP1 policy SOC1 seeks affordable housing (AH) provision in rural areas (which include Frodsham) on all new residential development (subject to viability) of three or more dwellings or those with a plot area of 0.1 ha and more.

Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

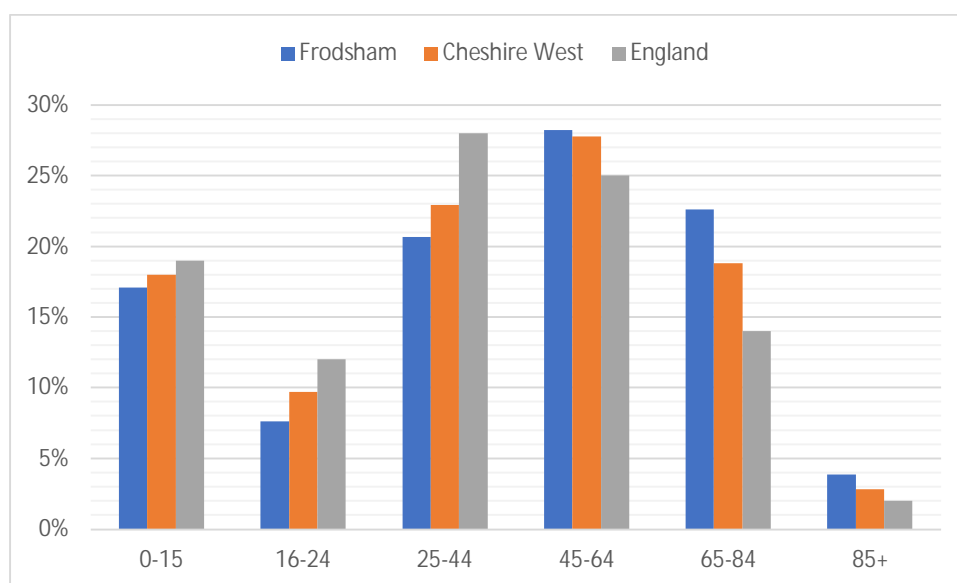
Age Structure

- 8.4 In 2019, the population of Frodsham was estimated to be 9,171 (ONS Parish population estimates) having increased by around 1% since 2011. In comparison, Cheshire West and Chester has seen a 4% increase in population since 2011.
- 8.5 Table 8-2 and figure 8-1 show the age structure of the local population in comparison to that of the rest of Borough and England. It is apparent that Frodsham has a lower proportion of residents in the 0-15, 16-24 and 25-44 age groups compared to the wider Borough and England as whole. The trend is reversed for the 65 and over age groups with Frodsham showing a higher proportion of residents in these age groups compared to West Cheshire and Chester and England. Both Frodsham and Cheshire West have a slightly higher proportion of residents in the 45-64 cohort compared to England.

Table 8-2 Age Structure in 2019 (ONS)

| | Frodsham | Cheshire West & Chester | England |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 0-15 | 17% | 18% | 19% |
| 16-24 | 8% | 10% | 12% |
| 25-44 | 21% | 23% | 28% |
| 45-64 | 28% | 28% | 25% |
| 65-84 | 23% | 19% | 14% |
| 85+ | 4% | 3% | 2% |
| Total population | 9,171 | 343,071 | 56,287,00 |

Figure 8-1 Population distribution by age group in 2019



Housing Delivery and Tenure

- 8.6 With regards to housing delivery, Table 8-3 shows that over the last 5 years 2,066 dwellings were completed, per annum, on average; which is considerably higher than the target set in the emerging local plan (1,100 dpa). A total of 14,993 net completions have been achieved in the Borough over the period 2011 to 2020 or 1,666 dpa.

Table 8-3 Net Housing Completions in Cheshire West & Chester⁴⁰

| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Completions (net) | 1,769 | 2,017 | 2,542 | 2,152 | 1,849 |
| Housing target | 1,100 dpa | | | | |

- 8.7 With regards to housing tenure, data from the 2011 census shows that the proportion of owner occupation in the NDP area is substantially higher than in the wider region and England as a whole (Table 8.3). Conversely, the proportion of rented accommodation (private and social rents) is smaller in the NDP area compared regional and national levels. A small proportion of tenures are shared ownership tenures which is line with the rest of the region and England. The social rented sector is notably lower in Frodsham (10%) compared to the corresponding levels for the North West (15%) and England (18%).

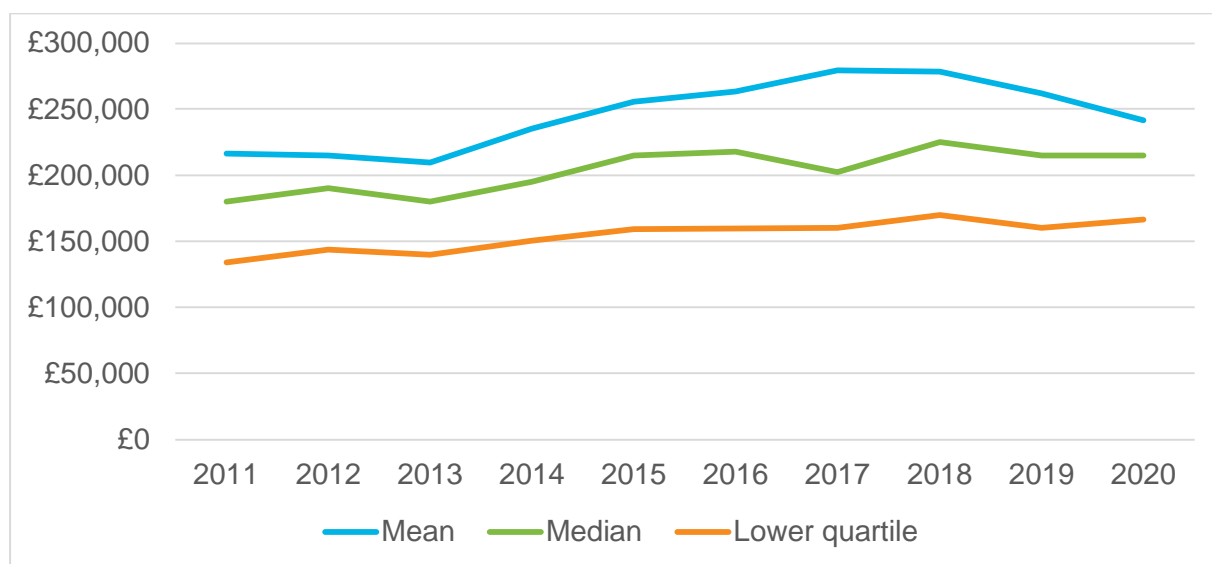
Table 8-4 Housing Tenure in 2011 (ONS Housing Tenure)

| | Frodsham | The North West | England |
|------------------|----------|----------------|---------|
| Owned (Total) | 77% | 65% | 63% |
| Shared Ownership | 0.8% | 1% | 0.8% |
| Socially Rented | 10% | 18% | 18% |
| Private Rented | 11% | 15% | 17% |
| Living Rent Free | 1% | 1% | 1.2% |

⁴⁰ Source: CWCC Local Plan annual monitoring report 2020 available at: http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/mon/

- 8.8 The average house price in Frodsham in 2020 was £241,556⁴¹ around 3.3% lower than the average property price for England as a whole (£249,402). Figure 8-2 shows property price trends in the NDP area over the past 10 years. This shows that prices have fluctuated over the past 10 years, but the overall trend shows increasing prices over this period. The average property price increased by just under 12% in the past ten years in Frodsham.

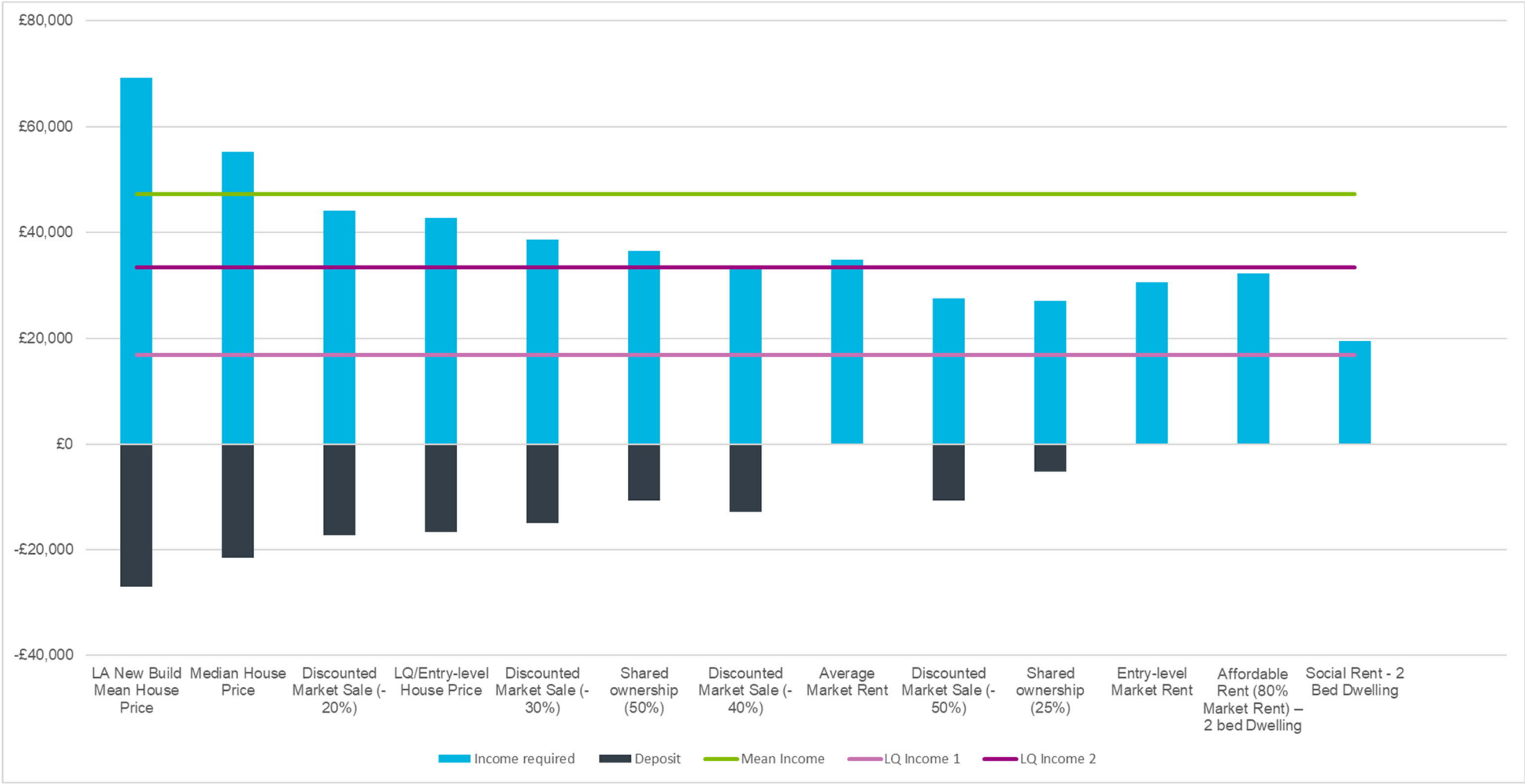
Figure 8-2 House prices in Frodsham 2011-2020



- 8.9 The average household income in the NDP area is around £47,300 and lower quartile income is around £16,777 (or £33,554 for double earning LQ households). Preliminary affordability thresholds calculations carried out by AECOM (Figure 8.3) indicate that average price market homes and average new builds are unaffordable to average income households in Frodsham. Potential affordable tenures for such households include entry-level homes, discounted market homes and shared ownership tenures. For double earning LQ households the only affordable ownership options would be heavily discounted (40-50%) market homes and shared ownership homes. Notably none of the ownership or rental options are affordable for single earning LQ households.

⁴¹ Source: Land Registry PPD and AECOM calculations

Figure 8-3 Affordability thresholds in Frodsham



Summary of future baseline

- 8.10 Population in the NDP area grew by 1% since 2011. The largest age group is the 45-64 (28%) and smallest is the 16-24 group (8%). The older age groups (65 plus) constitute around 27% of the resident population. Given the large proportion of 45 plus cohort (55%) and the relatively small proportion of 16-24% cohort, the population may flatline or decline overtime.
- 8.11 Over the past five years the rate of delivery of new housing in the borough has consistently exceeded annual targets set in the local plan. The borough has a demonstrable land supply, in excess of that required for the housing allocated in the adopted Local Plan. Therefore, the delivery rate of new housing is likely to continue to meet annual targets.
- 8.12 The Local Plan sets allocates 250 dwellings for the NDP area (to 2030) or 12.5 dpa on average over the local plan period. The latest CWCC annual monitoring report⁴² shows that 180 new dwellings have been completed since 2010 (an average of 18dpa) and a further 29 have extant planning permissions, leaving a residual 41 units to 2030. The sites allocated for housing in the draft FNP add up to around 116 new dwellings which is 33% above the Local Plan housing requirement for Frodsham (once completions and commitments are taken into account).
- 8.13 The NDP area has a high level of home ownership (77%) substantially exceeding the corresponding figure for the wider region and England. This combined with the low levels of shared ownership and rental tenures (private and social) may serve to make ownership increasingly unaffordable in Frodsham.
- 8.14 Average house prices in Frodsham are slightly lower than the average for England. However, the affordability thresholds calculation shows that the income required to buy an average market home for sale is higher than the average household income in Frodsham. Discounted homes (e.g. through the recently introduced First Homes initiative) offer potential ownership options to average income households, whilst for households on double lower quartile incomes more heavily discounted options (45-50%) and shared ownership tenures are likely to be affordable. Importantly none of the ownership or rental tenures are currently affordable to single earning lower quartile income households. In the long term house prices are likely to continue to increase, though prices may fluctuate in the interim.
- 8.15 Social and economic changes as a result of COVID-19 may affect housing including but not limited to, housing need, affordable housing need, the type of housing required locally and house prices. However, the long term impact of COVID-19 is uncertain at this stage.

⁴² Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2020 available at <http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/file/5765218>

Key headline issues

8.16 The key issues are as follows:

- The NDP area has an increasingly ageing population profile.
- Net housing completions trend in Cheshire West and Cheshire currently exceed targets set in the local plan.
- Average market housing is unaffordable to average income households in the NDP area. Other routes to ownership such as First Homes, shared ownership and rent-to-buy potentially offer a route to ownership in the NA. However, substantial discounts on market homes (40-50%) would be required for households on double LQ income to enable them to access ownership tenures.
- None of the ownership or rental tenures are affordable to those households likely to be in the most acute need such as single earning LQ households.
- The recently introduced First Homes scheme, offering discounted market homes, may offer residents a step onto the property ladder. Analysis carried out herein suggests that higher discounts (40%-50%) may be more appropriate than the nominal 30% First Homes discount to benefit the widest group of residents in the NA.
- It is likely that COVID-19 will have an effect on housing factors, but these are uncertain at this stage.

Scoping outcome

- 8.17 The SEA topic 'Population and Housing' has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA. The NDP intends to allocate sites for housing delivery. It includes policies pertaining to affordable housing which will influence the nature of housing delivered within the Plan area, associated infrastructure and services required to support sustainable communities.

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Population and Housing SEA theme?

- 8.18 The SEA topic 'Population and Housing' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 8-5 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 8-5: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Population and Housing

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|---|--|
| Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life. | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes targeted at aligning the housing stock with local needs? • Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality and affordable housing? • Create sustainable communities with good access to a range of local services and facilities? |

9. Health and Wellbeing

- 9.1 This theme focuses on health indicators and deprivation, healthcare provision in the FNP area and influences on residents' health and wellbeing, including access to open space and the countryside.

Policy Context

- 9.2 Table 9-1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 9-1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to health and wellbeing

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|--|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf |
| The 25 Year Environment Plan | 2018 | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf |
| Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On | 2020 | https://www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on |
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/policies_plans_and_strategies/planning_policy/local_plan/local_plan_part_two |
| Cheshire West and Chester Health Improvement Strategy | 2018 | file:///C:/Users/lauren.egan/Downloads/health%20improvement%20strategy%202018-2022.pdf |
| Cheshire West and Chester Playing Pitch Strategy (updated) | 2018 | https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ev_base/oss_pps |

9.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to enable and support healthy lifestyles through provision of appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities, including; green infrastructure, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling. The NPPF recognises the role of development plans in helping to deliver access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity which contribute to the health and wellbeing of communities. The health benefits of access to nature, green spaces and green infrastructure is further reiterated through the 25-year Environment Plan.
- The 2020 Health Equity in England report identifies that the health gap between less and more deprived areas has grown in the last decade, where more people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health, and where improvements to life expectancy have stalled, or even declined for the poorest 10% of women.
- The FNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Local Plans covering the area, which contain policies directly relating to access to healthcare, green infrastructure and open spaces, and design that supports active travel opportunities.
- The Cheshire West and Chester Health Improvement Strategy identifies local health challenges and sets out how, over the next four years, the council will support residents to live and enjoy healthy lifestyles.
- The Cheshire West and Chester Playing Pitch Strategy (2018) has been developed from research and analysis of playing pitch provision and usage within Cheshire West and Chester to inform local planning policy.

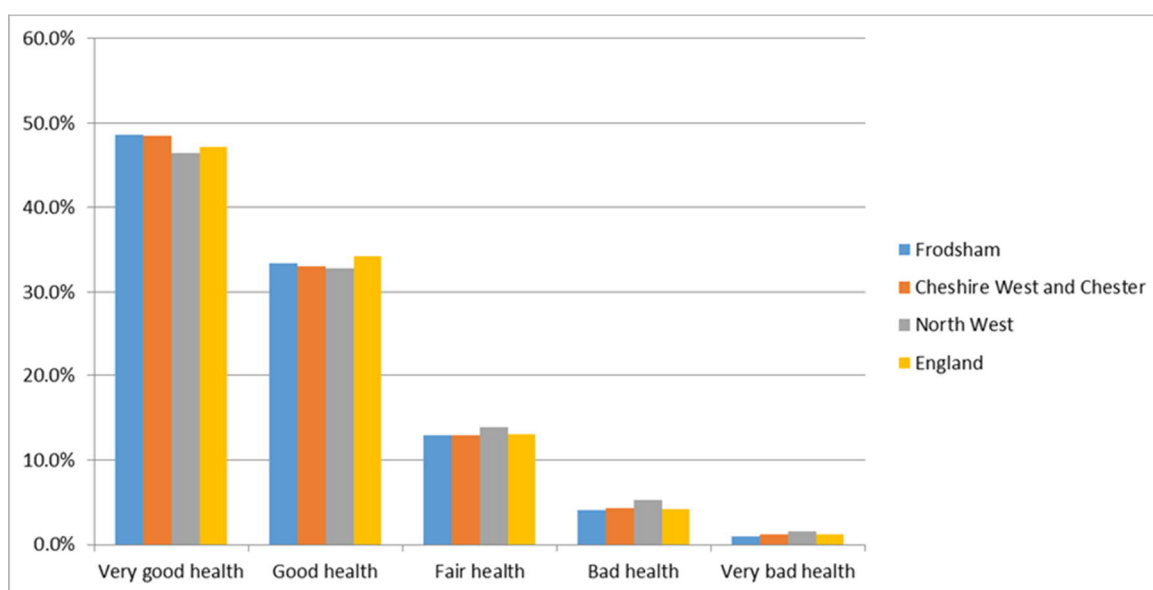
Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Health indicators

- 9.4 General health in Frodsham (shown in Figure 9-1) is good. 89.1% of residents report at least 'good' if not 'excellent' health as per the 2011 Census, compared to 81.5% at the district level, 79.3% at the regional level and 81.4% nationally. A very low proportion of residents have 'very bad' health (0.98%).

Figure 9-9-2 Residents General Health (Census 2011: KS301EW)



- 9.5 With regards to long term health conditions, a large proportion of the population are not limited by their long-term health conditions (81.3%), in line with figures for Cheshire West and Chester (81.4%).
- 9.6 Information from the Cheshire West and Chester Health Improvement Strategy presents data from 2017 regarding the health and wellbeing of the district/unitary authority population.⁴³ Key issues include:
- Breastfeeding initiation is 68.9% in the area compared to the England average of 74.3%.
 - At six to eight weeks after birth, 35.4 per cent of mothers are still breastfeeding compared with the England average of 43.8 per cent.
 - Almost one fifth of children in their school reception year are either overweight or obese (23.1%), slightly higher than the England average of 21.9%.
 - A third of children aged 10-11 are either overweight or obese (33.6%), similar to the England average of 34.2%.

⁴³ Cheshire West and Chester Council (2018): 'Health Improvement Strategy' [online] available at: <file:///C:/Users/lauren.egan/Downloads/health%20improvement%20strategy%202018-2022.pdf>

- 176,970 adults (64.2%) are overweight or obese, similar to the England average of 64.8 per cent 69,860 adults (25.5%) are obese.
- 24.2% of adults are inactive (i.e. do less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week).
- 23.8% of people are using outdoor space for exercise/health reasons.
- 923 deaths per year are attributed to physical inactivity and the annual cost to the local authority is £17.3 million.
- On average, local residents spend seven hours per day in sedentary positions. The most sedentary age group is 14-18 year olds, with lack of time and motivation being the most frequently cited reasons.

9.7 Local Health Profiles provide an overview of health for each local authority in England. The local authority health profile⁴⁴ for Cheshire West and Chester notes the following key indicators:

Table 9 2 Local Authority health profile, Cheshire West & Chester (2017-19)

| | Life expectancy at birth (male) | Life expectancy at birth (female) | Under 75 mortality rate from all causes | Under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases | Under 75 mortality rate from cancer | Suicide rate |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| CW&C | 80.1 | 83.3 | 324 | 68.3 | 133.0 | 8.4 |
| North West | 78.4 | 82.1 | 383 | 86.1 | 142.4 | 10.6 |
| England | 79.8 | 83.4 | 326 | 70.4 | 129.2 | 10.1 |

Health services

9.8 The nearest hospital services are located at Halton (Halton General Hospital), 4km from the centre of the Plan area. The Frodsham Health Centre at Princeway offers GP Services through the Knoll Centre, which is accessible by a 10-minute walk for most residents in the catchment area.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Public Health England Frodsham Local Authority Health Profile [online] available at: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/ati/202/are/E06000009>

⁴⁵ Active Cheshire (2018): 'Active Design Summary' [online] available at: [http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreprs/Active%20Design%20Ready%20Assessment%20Summary%20Frodsham%2017.5.18%20\(1\)DRAFT.pdf](http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreprs/Active%20Design%20Ready%20Assessment%20Summary%20Frodsham%2017.5.18%20(1)DRAFT.pdf)

Deprivation

9.9 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD) is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights, as described below. The seven deprivation domains are as follows:

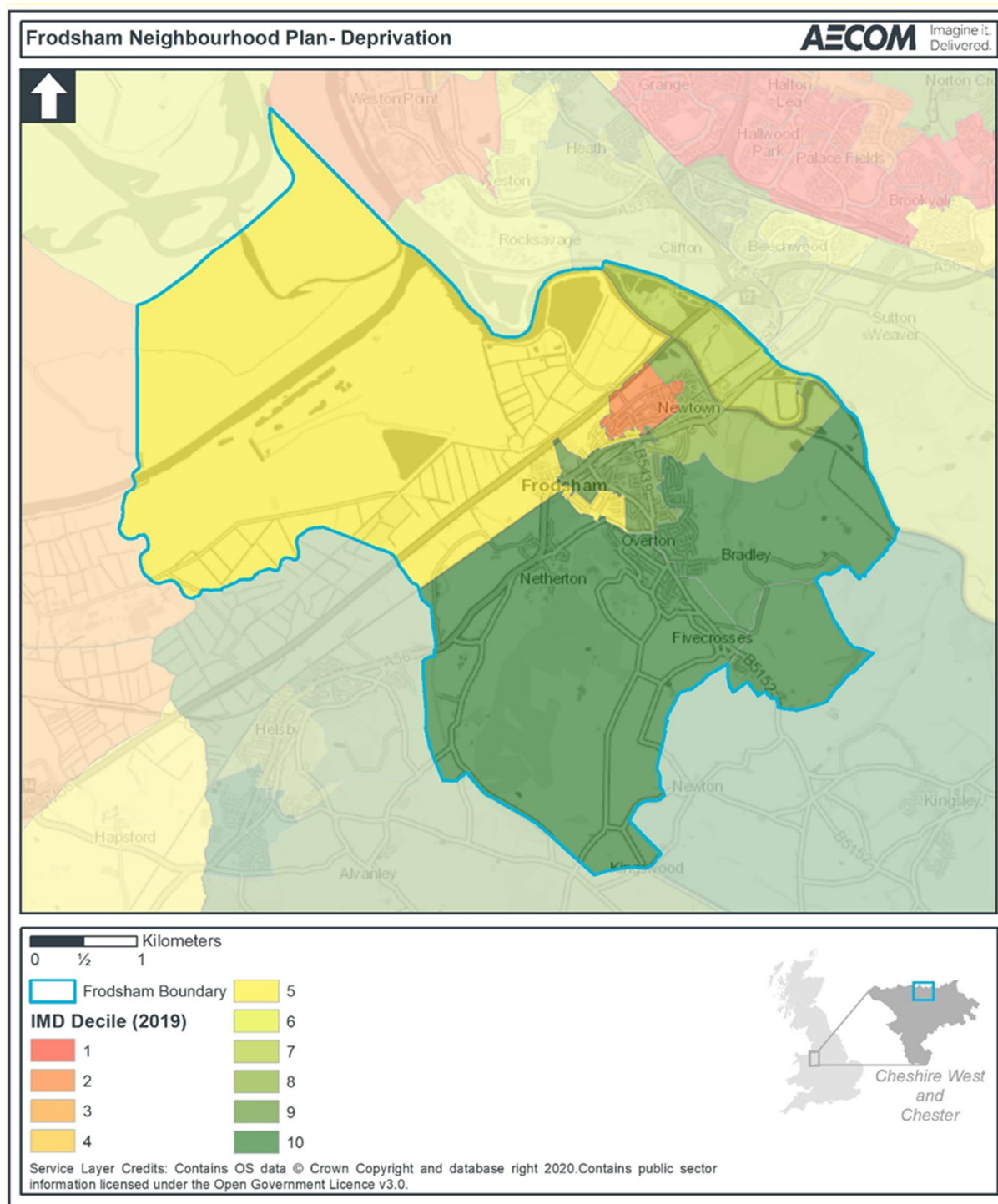
- Income: The proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income, including those individuals that are out-of-work and those that are in work.
- Employment: The proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness / disability, or caring responsibilities.
- Education, Skills and Training: The lack of attainment and skills in the population.
- Health Deprivation and Disability: The risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. Morbidity, disability and premature mortality are also considered.
- Crime: The risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.
- Barriers to Housing and Services: The physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services.
- Living Environment: The quality of the local environment, including the quality of housing stock, air quality and road traffic incidents.

Two indices, subsets of the Income deprivation domain, are also included:

- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index: The proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.
- Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index: The proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation.

9.10 As illustrated in Figure 9-2, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019) data for the NDP area show that the north westernmost part of the Plan area falls within decile 5 (50% least deprived areas in England), and the south easternmost part of the Plan area falls with decile 10 (10% least deprived areas in England). A small part of the area, at Newtown, falls within a highly deprived area (one of the 20% most deprived area).

Figure 9-2 Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 in and around the NDP area



Open greenspace and sport/play facilities

- 9.11 The Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study (2019)⁴⁶ identified provision for areas of open greenspace and recreation (such as parks), and areas of deficit. Table 9-3 shows that there is a deficit of allotments, amenity greenspace and play spaces in Frodsham.

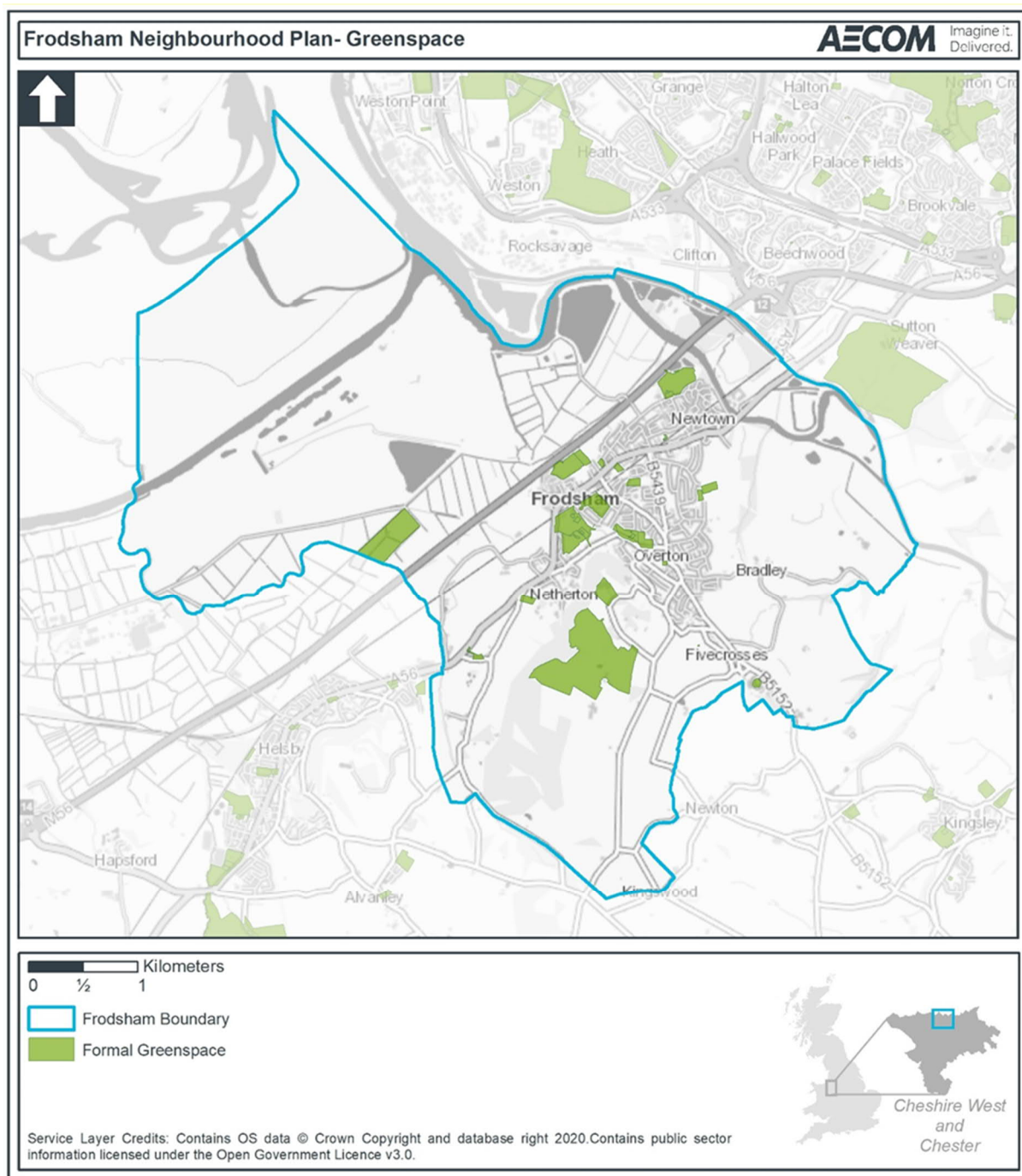
Table 9-3 Existing provision and deficit of open space (ha) in Frodsham

| | Allotment | Amenity greenspace | Park and recreation ground | Play space (children) | Play Space (youths) | Natural green space |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Provision | 1.23 | 3.44 | 12.44 | 0.39 | 0.14 | 98.83 |
| Supply/ deficit | -0.13 | -2.01 | 7.9 | -0.06 | -0.13 | n/a |

- 9.12 Greenspaces are shown in Figure 9-3, below. Greenspace is mostly located in the centre of Frodsham, as well as some parts of the south west.

⁴⁶ Cheshire West and Cheshire Council (2017): 'Open Space Study' [online] available at: https://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/cw_lp_part_two/ev_base/oss_pps

Figure 9-3 Greenspace in Frodsham



Summary of future baseline

- 9.13 Frodsham is a generally healthy community with an ageing population. The accessibility of development will be particularly important in terms of supporting resident health and wellbeing. The importance of local services and facilities, and access to open green spaces and recreational areas has been further highlighted through the ongoing pandemic. Furthermore, as a rural area, residents are more susceptible to social isolation. These factors are more likely to be appropriately considered and addressed through planned development rather than unplanned development.
- 9.14 There is a deficit of play spaces for both children and youth in Frodsham as well as amenity greenspace. The NDP area can benefit from improving access to current provision as well as enhancing sites which better appeal to the expectations and demands of users from a broad range of age and mobility.

Key headline issues

- 9.15 The key issues are as follows:
- Frodsham has a broadly healthy population, with good access to medical services in the town centre. However, the ageing population is likely to place additional pressures on health and social services.
 - The majority of the NDP area is within the 50% least deprived category with only small pockets of deprivation.
 - There are several health and recreational facilities within the NDP area, though there is a deficit in play spaces and amenity greenspace.

Scoping outcome

- 9.16 Whilst the scale of development proposed is unlikely to produce significant effects on health and wellbeing. The Plan has the potential to engender effects on health and wellbeing. For example, the plan can help improve open/ green space provision. With this in mind the SEA topic 'Health and Wellbeing' has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA.

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Health and Wellbeing SEA theme?

- 9.17 The SEA topic 'Health and wellbeing' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 9.4 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 9-4: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Health & Wellbeing

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|--|--|
| Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the FNP area. | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups? • Provide and enhance community access to open green spaces? • Promote the use of healthier modes of travel, including active travel networks? • Improve access to the countryside for recreational use? • Avoid negative impacts to the quality and/ or extent of existing recreational assets, including formal and informal footpaths? • Contribute to reducing social isolation? |

10. Transportation

10.1 This theme focuses on transport infrastructure, transport usage, traffic flows and congestion, and accessibility levels in the FNP area.

Policy Context

10.2 Table 10-1 presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the FNP SEA.

Table 10-1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to transportation and movement

| Document Title | Year of publication | Weblink |
|--|---------------------|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2019 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2 |
| The Transport Investment Strategy – Moving Britain Ahead | 2017 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-investment-strategy |
| The Department for Transport's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy | 2016 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy-active-travel-investment-models |
| Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge | 2020 | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creating-the-transport-decarbonisation-plan |
| Cheshire West and Chester Transport Strategy | 2017 | https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/public-transport/transport-strategy/transport-strategy.aspx |
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 1 | 2015 | http://consult.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/portal/cwc_ldf/adopted_cwac_lp/lp_1_adopted?tab=files |
| Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part 2 | 2019 | https://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/policies_plans_and_strategies/planning_policy/local_plan/local_plan_part_two |

10.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks the consideration of transport issues from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals to address any known issues and maximise opportunities to increase accessibility, particularly by walking, cycling and public transport. Larger developments are expected to be delivered in areas which are or can be made sustainable by limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However,

it is recognised that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural environments.

- National transport strategies set out investment priorities which ultimately all seek to improve the connectivity, effectiveness and reliability of transport networks, whilst reducing impacts on the natural environment (including through decarbonisation). Furthermore, they place great emphasis on making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey. This includes investment in new and upgraded infrastructure, changing perceptions and increasing safety.
- The Cheshire West and Chester Transport Plan identifies the transport investment priorities and policies at a more localised scale, but ultimately complement the aims of the national strategies discussed above. Alongside the transport and access policies of the Local Plan, the FNP will be required to be in general conformity with the strategic policy aims.

Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Modes of travel

- 10.4 According to Census data (shown in Figure 10-1), a large proportion of residents travel to work by car (47.1%), higher than figures for Cheshire West and Chester (45.0%), the North West (39.0%), England (37.0%). Additionally, a low proportion of residents travel to work via public transport in Frodsham (3.3%), and travel to work via foot or bicycle (3.1%).

- 10.5 Car ownership in the Plan area, (shown in Figure 10-2) is high (84.1%), higher than Cheshire West and Chester (81.4%), the North West (72.0%) and England as a whole (74.0%).

Figure 10-1 Methods of Travel to Work

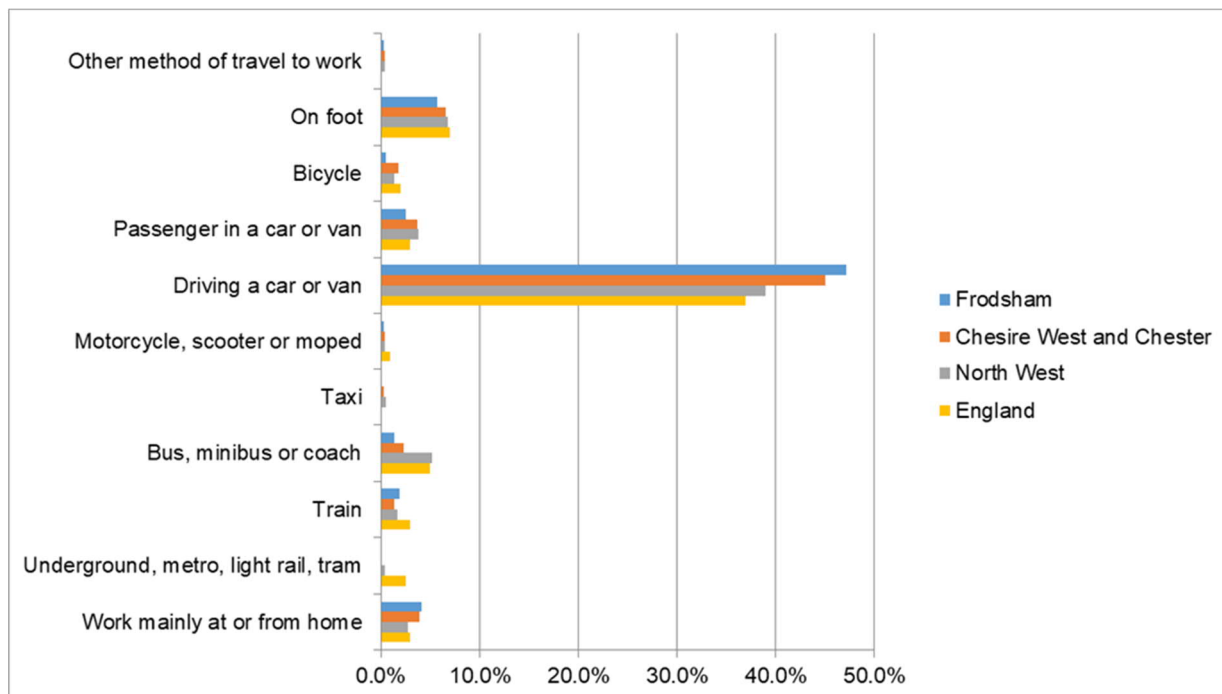
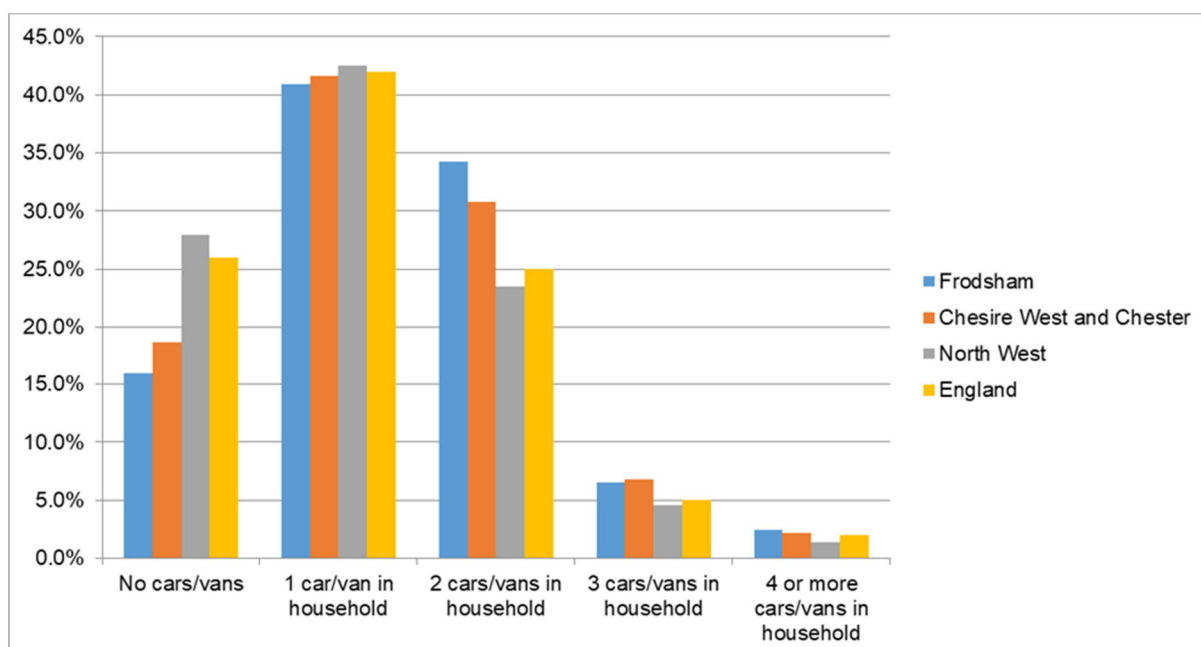


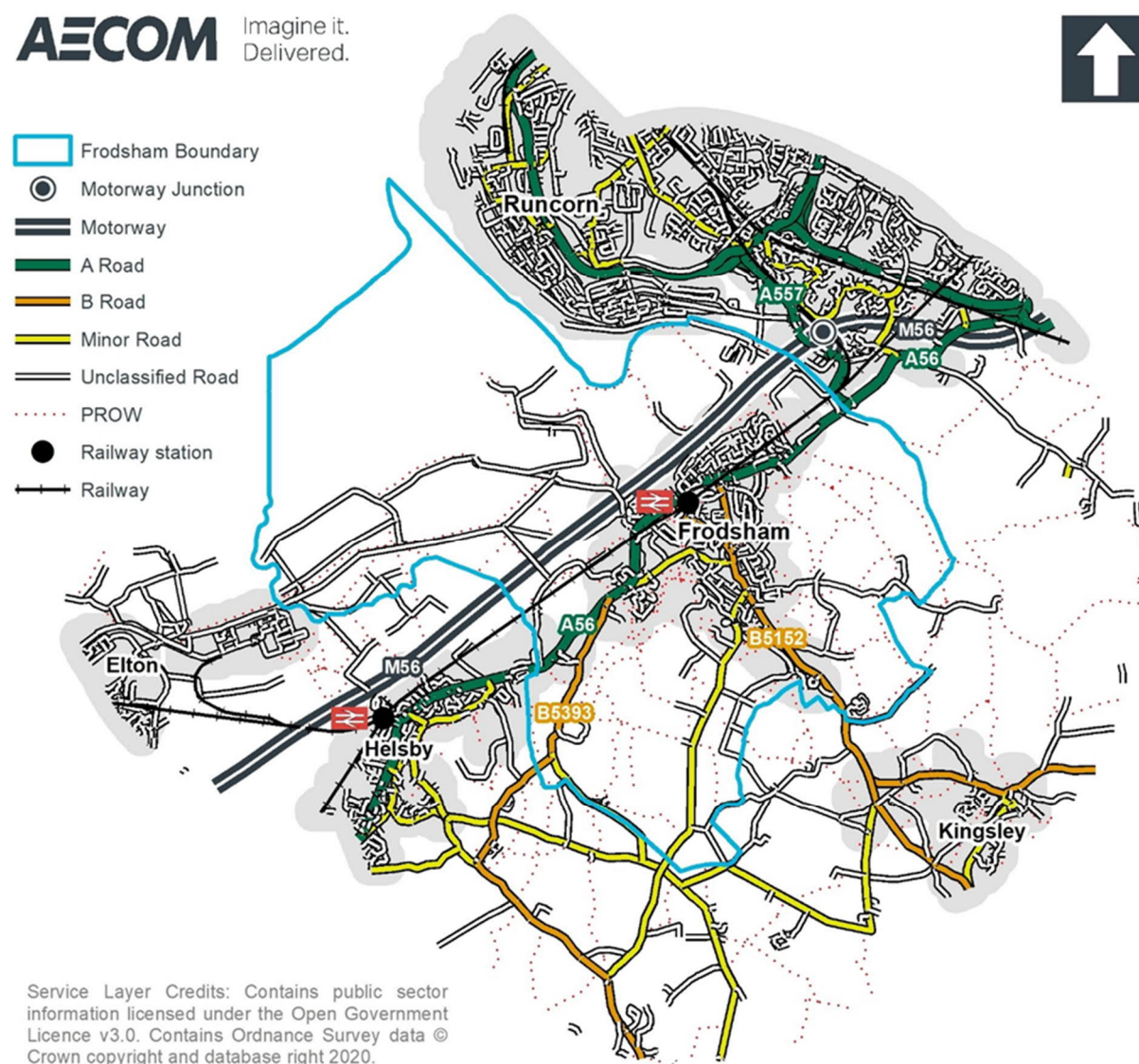
Figure 10-2 Car/ Van Ownership



Wider transport network

- 10.6 The West Cheshire Borough possesses extensive motorway, trunk road and rail networks which carry a significant amount of local, regional and national traffic. Traffic patterns are also influenced by the nearby conurbations of Merseyside and Greater Manchester and there are also strong commuter links with North East Wales.
- 10.7 With regards to the local road network, the M56 passes through the centre of the Plan area and connects Frodsham to Manchester and the smaller towns of Warrington, Runcorn to the east and Ellesmere Port in the west. The A56 Chester to Warrington road is routes along Main Street and High Street. In addition, there are several smaller B roads (B593 and B5152) which provide access to the more rural parts of Frodsham to the south beyond the main settlement.

Figure 10-3 Road network in Frodsham



Traffic and congestion

- 10.8 The Frodsham residents' survey highlighted resident's concerns surrounding traffic and congestion in the area.⁴⁷ Traffic and congestion on the A56 has increased noticeably with the expansion of the Frodsham settlement boundaries, especially during busy periods of the day.
- 10.9 With the exception of Main Street, residential roads carry little traffic but on-street parking contributes to traffic congestion in Marsh Lane and there is intrusive background noise from the M56 throughout the area. Several roads are busy at peak periods especially near the school and local businesses, and on-street parking can inhibit free traffic flow.⁴⁸

Rail and bus network

- 10.10 Frodsham rail station is situated in the centre of the settlement. The station is operated by Transport for Wales, which provide services to Manchester and Liverpool Lime Street every half hour, Monday through to Sunday. Frodsham is also served by a less frequent Northern rail service which runs Monday-Friday from Leeds to Ellesmere Port.
- 10.11 With regards to the bus network, there are four bus routes serving Frodsham. The 48 and 48A run between Frodsham and Northwich, with the two other services terminating in Chester.
- 48 - Frodsham, High Street, Morrisons to Northwich, Watling Street (via Acton Bridge).
 - 48A - Frodsham, High Street, Morrisons to Northwich, Watling Street (via Delamere).
 - 2 - Chester Bus Interchange – Runcorn, a bus service operated by Stagecoach Merseyside and South Lancashire.
 - X30 - Chester Bus Interchange - Warrington Bus Interchange, a bus service operated by Arriva North West.

Pedestrian and cycle routes

- 10.12 National cycle route number 5 passes through the centre of the Plan area runs through Chester to North Wales.

⁴⁷Frodsham plan group (2017): 'Frodsham Residents Survey 2017' [online] available at: <http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreps/CWaC-YourVoiceMatters-FinalStatsFeb2018.pdf>

⁴⁸ Frodsham Town Council (2010): 'Frodsham Design Statement' [online] available at: <http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreps/Town%20Design%20Statement%20-%20Frodsham%20-%20July%202010.pdf>

- 10.13 Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) shown in Figure 10-3, are expansive along the southern part of the Plan area and provide connections to more rural locations and their specialist services, such as farms. The town centre of Frodsham is described as ‘very walkable’ and this is reflected with the presence of frequent pedestrian cut-throughs that significantly reduce journey distance, compared to the normal road routes. The residents of Frodsham have suggested that the quality of pavements could be improved to increase the likelihood of them walking more often in the town.⁴⁹

Summary of future baseline

- 10.14 In the absence of strategic transport interventions, growth in the Plan area is likely to continue trends which favour the private vehicle as the primary mode of transport. New development therefore has the potential to increase traffic and lead to additional localised congestion issues which in turn may reduce road safety.
- 10.15 A greater local population through the delivery of Local Plan housing allocations and other developments and subsequent demand for public transport could provide opportunities to increase bus provision. However, Frodsham is unlikely to experience the scale of growth that would be likely to add significant congestion to the local road network or make major improvements to public transport viable.
- 10.16 Though PRoWs in the area are expansive, resident surveys have indicated there is potential to improve the quality of pavements and walkways in Frodsham, which could be implemented as part of the planning process.

Key headline issues

- 10.17 The key issues are as follows:
- The Neighbourhood Plan area is well served by the highway network, and benefits from good railway and bus connectivity. However, development could potentially lead to increased traffic and improve the viability of public transport.
 - The majority of residents are likely to travel to work by car/ van, but it is likely that trends could change as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic, and the changing role of town centres, indicated by a relatively high proportion of residents who choose to work from home.
 - Accessibility by PRoWs in the Plan area is good, and plan making offers the opportunity to improve existing pathways to increase access to key services in Frodsham.

⁴⁹ Active Cheshire (2018): ‘Active Design Summary’ [online] available at: [http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreps/Active%20Design%20Ready%20Assessment%20Summary%20Frodsham%2017.5.18%20\(1\)DRAFT.pdf](http://frodshamplan.org.uk/images/docsandreps/Active%20Design%20Ready%20Assessment%20Summary%20Frodsham%2017.5.18%20(1)DRAFT.pdf)

Scoping outcome

10.18 Whilst the level of growth proposed is unlikely to produce transport infrastructure improvements, the FNP can potentially have effects, positive or negative, on the level of traffic in the NP area. With this in mind the SEA topic 'Transportation' has been **SCOPED IN** of the SEA.

What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Transportation SEA theme?

10.19 The SEA topic 'Transportation' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 10-3 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 10-3: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Transportation

| SEA Objective | Supporting Questions |
|--|--|
| Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel. | <p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage more use of sustainable transport modes? • Encourage the uptake of active travel opportunities? • Extend or improve active travel networks? • Enable sustainable transport infrastructure improvements? • Ensure sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development? • Facilitate on-going high levels of home and remote working? • Improve road safety? • Reduce impacts on residents from the road network? • Improve parking facilities? |

11. The SEA Framework and Methodologies

The SEA Framework

- 11.1 The SEA framework has been established through the identification of key issues as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been prepared for a range of SEA topics (as set out in Chapters 2-10).
- 11.2 The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and ancillary questions, which will be used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Development Plan Document (and any reasonable alternatives).
- 11.3 Table 11.1 below outlines the full SEA Framework, which brings together the objectives and questions that have been set out at the end of each SEA topic chapter. The Framework focuses on those issues that have been identified as the most important to consider in the preparation of the Plan; but acknowledging the limited influence that the Plan can have in some areas.

Table 11-1 The SEA Framework

| SEA Objective | Supporting questions (will the option/ proposal help to...?) |
|--|---|
| Improve air quality within and surrounding the Neighbourhood Plan area and minimise all sources of environmental pollution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and encourage more sustainable transport options? • Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements? • Encourage development which reduces the need to travel outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area? • Locate and design development so that current and future residents will not regularly be exposed to poor air quality? • Implement measures (such as appropriate planting and provision of green infrastructure) which will help support good air quality in an around the Neighbourhood Plan area? • Ensure development connects to the existing road network, promoting ease of access and suitably mitigating any potential increases in local congestion? |
| Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support connections between habitats in the Plan area? • Avoid significant impacts on designated sites within the NP area including; the Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar/SSSI, Beechmill wood and pasture, Frodsham Railway and Road Cuttings and Dunsdale Hollow SSSIs? • Avoid significant impacts from air pollution, urban water drainage and surface water runoff, on the designated biodiversity sites and areas forming part of the North West Marine Plan. • Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change? |
| Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Ensure flood risk and erosion is not increased and where possible reduced |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Avoid placing development in areas that are at the greatest risk of flooding? |
| Protect, enhance and manage the integrity, distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the wider historic environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, better reveal the significance, and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment? • Contribute to better management of heritage assets? • Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment? • Consider the impact on setting in a manner proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected. • Promote heritage-led regeneration? • Lead to the repair and adaptive re-use of a heritage asset and encourage high quality design? |
| Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance landscape assets? • Contribute to better management of landscape assets? • Identify and protect/enhance features of local importance? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the surrounding landscape? • Improve linkages to open space and the countryside? • Preserve and enhance the North Cheshire Green Belt? |
| Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupants throughout their life. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes targeted at aligning the housing stock with local needs? • Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality and affordable housing? • Create sustainable communities with good access to a range of local services and facilities? |
| Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the FNP area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups? |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and enhance community access to open green spaces? • Promote the use of healthier modes of travel, including active travel networks? • Improve access to the countryside for recreational use? • Avoid negative impacts to the quality and/ or extent of existing recreational assets, including formal and informal footpaths? • Contribute to reducing social isolation? |
| Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage more use of sustainable transport modes? • Encourage the uptake of active travel opportunities? • Extend or improve active travel networks? • Enable sustainable transport infrastructure improvements? • Ensure sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development? • Facilitate on-going high levels of home and remote working? • Improve road safety? • Reduce impacts on residents from the road network? • Improve parking facilities? |

12. Next Steps

Subsequent stages for the SEA process

12.1 Scoping (the current stage) is the second stage in a six-stage SEA process:

- Screening (NPPG Stage A)
- Scoping (NPPG Stage B)
- Assess reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan (NPPG Stage C)
- Assess the draft plan and prepare the Environmental Report with a view to informing consultation and plan finalisation (NPPG Stage D/E)
- Publish a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption in order to 'tell the story' of plan-making/SEA (and present 'measures decided concerning monitoring') (NPPG Stage F)

12.1.1 The next stage will involve establishing and appraising reasonable alternatives for the Plan. This will involve consideration of strategic issues such as the growth and distribution of housing, and site options. The findings of the appraisal of these alternatives will be fed back so that they can be considered when preparing the draft plan.

Consultation on the Scoping Report

12.1.2 Involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies. The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Scoping Report has been released to these three statutory consultees.

12.1.3 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this Scoping Report, in particular the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues and the proposed SEA Framework.

12.1.4 Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to the below contacts;

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Omar Ezzet, | AECOM | omar.ezzet@aecom.com |
| Gill Hesketh | Frodsham NP Group | frodshamplan@gmail.com |

12.1.5 All comments received on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.

13. Glossary

Agricultural Land - Agricultural land is classified into five grades. Grade one is best quality and grade five is poorest quality. A number of consistent criteria are used for assessment which include climate (temperature, rainfall, aspect, exposure, frost risk), site (gradient, micro-relief, flood risk) and soil (depth, texture, stoniness).

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) – This is a measure of deprivation in England, for every local authority and super output area seven domains of deprivation are measured: (Income, Employment, Health deprivation and Disability, Education Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, Crime the Living Environment). This allows all 32,482 SOAs to be ranked according to how deprived they are relative to each other. This information is then brought together into one overall Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004.

LNR – Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.

NNR - Many of the finest sites in England for wildlife and geology are National Nature Reserves (NNR). There are currently 224 across the country and almost all are accessible and provide great opportunities for people to experience nature.

Objective – A statement of what is intended, specifying the desired direction of change in trends Option For the purposes of this guidance option is synonymous with 'alternative' in the SEA Directive Plan For the purposes of the SEA Directive this is used to refer to all of the documents to which this guidance applies, including Development Plan Documents. Supplementary Planning Documents are not part of the statutory Development Plan but are required to have a sustainability appraisal.

RAMSAR – Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

Locally Important Geological Sites – LIGs are designated by locally developed criteria and are currently the most important designated sites for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected areas such as SSSIs.

SAC – Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. Article 3 of the Habitats Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive

Scheduled Monument - A 'nationally important' archaeological site or historic building, which is given protection against unauthorised change.

Scoping – The process of deciding the scope and level of detail of a Sustainability Appraisal.

Screening – The process of deciding whether a document requires a SA.

SEA Directive – European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

SEA Regulations – The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (which transposed the SEA Directive into law).

SPA – Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds (as listed on Annex I of the Directive), and for regularly occurring migratory species.

SSSI – SSSIs are the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. They include some of our most spectacular and beautiful habitats - large wetlands teeming with waders and waterfowl, winding chalk rivers, gorse and heather-clad heathlands, flower-rich meadows, windswept shingle beaches and remote uplands moorland and peat bog.

Super Output Area (SOA) – SOAs are a new geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. Three layers of SOA have been devised: Lower Layer - Minimum population 1000; mean 1500. Built from groups of SOAs (typically 4 to 6) and constrained by the boundaries of the Standard Table (ST) wards used for 2001 Census outputs. Middle Layer - Minimum population 5000; mean 7200. Built from groups of Lower Layer SOAs and constrained by the 2003 local authority boundaries used for 2001 Census outputs. Upper Layer - To be determined; minimum size c.25, 000.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Generic term used internationally to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. In the UK, SEA is increasingly used to refer to an environmental assessment in compliance with the 'SEA Directive'

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – Generic term used to describe a form of assessment which considers the economic, social and environmental effects of an initiative. SA, as applied to Local Development Documents, incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.

Sustainability Issues – The full cross-section of sustainability issues, including social, environmental and economic factors.

Appendix A Site Assessment Framework

Context

| | |
|---|--|
| Is the site: | Greenfield |
| Greenfield: land (farmland, or open space, that has not previously been developed) | Brownfield |
| Brownfield: Previously developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated infrastructure. | Mixture |
| | Unknown |
| Biodiversity Considerations | Yes, Significant negative effects |
| Is the site within or adjacent to the following policy or environmental designations? What impact would development have on the site's habitats and biodiversity? : | Yes, Potential for negative effects |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Belt Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) National Park European nature site SSSI Impact Risk Zone Site of Importance for Nature Conservation Site of Geological Importance | No/ Neutral effects |
| Climatic Factors | Yes, Significant overlap |
| Is the site within or adjacent to | Yes, partial overlap |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood Zones 2 or 3 | No/ Neutral effects |
| Ecological value? | Yes |
| Could the site be home to protected species such as bats, great crested newts, badgers etc.? | Unknown |
| | No |

Context

| | |
|--|--|
| Landscape | High sensitivity |
| Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of landscape? | Medium sensitivity |
| Low sensitivity: site not visible or less visible, existing landscape is poor quality, existing features could be retained | Low sensitivity |
| Medium sensitivity: Development would have only moderate impact on landscape character | |
| High sensitivity: Development would significantly detract from the landscape and important features unlikely to be retained- mitigation not possible | |
| Agricultural Land | Significant loss |
| Loss of high quality agricultural land (Grades 1,2 or 3a) | Moderate loss |
| | No loss |
| Historic Environment | |
| Is the site within or adjacent to, or likely to have significant effects on, the setting of heritage assets, associated one or more of the following heritage designations or assets? | Yes; Potential for significant negative effects |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation area Scheduled monument Registered Park and Garden Registered Battlefield Listed building Known archaeology Locally listed building | Yes; Potential for minor negative effects Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation |
| Health and Wellbeing | Poorly located |
| Is the site, in general terms, close/accessible to local amenities such as (but not limited to): Town centre/local centre/shop | Moderately located |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment location Public transport School(s) Open space/recreation/ leisure facilities Health facilities Cycle route(s) | Favourably located |
| Where a site is poorly located if > 800m, moderately located if 400m to 800m, and favourably located < 400m from services. | |

Context

Other key considerations

Yes

Are there any Tree preservation Orders on site?

Unknown

Public Right of Way

No

Existing social of community value

Appendix B Post Consultation modifications

The initial draft of the SEA scoping report was sent to the Statutory Consultees⁵⁰ and CWCC on the 3rd of August 2021. Following a 5 week consultation period, several representations/ comments were received. These are addressed in this revised scoping report. The revisions/ modifications are summarised in (Table B-1).

Table AB1 – Summary of consultation responses and revisions made.

| Consultee responses | Response |
|---|---|
| <p>Natural England</p> <p>provided a formal response to the consultation requesting that:</p> <p>The impacts of air quality on biodiversity be included in the assessment and,</p> <p><i>‘the Strategic Environmental Assessment has not referred to the need for a HRA screening. Natural England advise that the HRA is carried out at an early stage along-side the SEA.’</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality is now scoped into the SEA • The impacts of air pollution on biodiversity now specifically mentioned in the SEA framework (Table 3-4 third bullet). • An HRA has been undertaken in parallel to the SEA. This is now discussed in paragraph 3.6. |
| <p>The Environment Agency</p> <p>Provided a formal response. It requested that:</p> <p>Effects to habitats and biodiversity of key water features, such as ponds, ditches and water courses be considered (e.g. the River Weaver) by adding a supporting question to Table 3-4 to address this.</p> <p>The response also highlighted the need for all new development to ensure 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) from c 2023.</p> <p>The EA suggested reference should be made to other flood related plan such as Flood Risk Management Plans (currently being updated), surface Water Management Plans. Adding that any sites allocated to development in flood risk zones 2 and 3 should be subject to the sequential test. And except test (where necessary). Flood risk assessments should use the up to date sources for flood risk tests. <i>‘If development not already allocated through the Local Plan is identified for location in flood zone 2 and/or</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional bullet added to Table 3-4 regarding ‘protection and improvement of key water features’ • BNG is discussed in chapter 3 and included in the supporting questions in Table 3.4 • Updated section 4.3 to include other flood risk management plan. • Added bullet (2) to the supporting questions in Table 4-7 |

⁵⁰ The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.

3, then a requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to look in to updating the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment outputs that cover the Neighbourhood Plan area or individual site specific flood risk assessment(s) might be required.'

The EA suggested the inclusion of an additional supporting question in Table 4-7 to ensure flood risk from all sources is addressed.

| Historic England | |
|---|--|
| <p>Provided a formal response. It pointed to advise notes HEAN3 and HEAN8 as these provide guidance for the assessment. The response goes on to highlight the importance of addressing the historic environment's significance, condition, sensitivity and capacity to accommodate change and likely effects o alternatives.</p> <p>HE noted that the Heritage at Risk register does not include Grade II listed buildings outside London requesting this be clarified in para. 5.7</p> <p>HE recommended that the Site Assessment Framework in Appendix A should fully acknowledge the setting of heritage assets.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HEAN3 and HEAN8 are referenced in the Historic Environment chapter. The guidance and the response comments will be taken into consideration when appraising alternatives in the SEA environmental report. • Amended para. 5.7 to clarify this issue. • Historic environment section of the Site Assessment Framework has now been expanded to include explicit reference to effects on the setting of heritage assets. |
| CWCC | |
| <p>CWCC provided a detailed response which is summarised below</p> <p>Air quality should be scoped in.</p> <p>Relevant policies from the North West Marine Plan should be referred to in the report.</p> <p>HRA- to be mentioned in report clarifying that this is a separate process to SEA.</p> <p>Chapter 6 (Landscape) should mention the fact that the Sandstone ridge is being considered as a future AONB. Also Design Code to be referenced in this chapter.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality has been scoped into the scope of the SEA • NWMP policies are now discussed in greater detail with reference made to the relevant policies. • This is now clarified in para. 3.6 • The proposal to designate the Sandstone Ridge as an AONB is now mentioned in para. 6.7 • Design Code is now discussed under para.6.3 |

Water resources –impacts of development on water resources should be scoped in.

Population and housing (Ch.8) – Clarification required as to what is meant by ‘responsive range of housing etc.’ in the SEA framework section (Table 8.5).

Ch.9 Health and Wellbeing, specifically Open Space should be scoped into the SEA.

Ch.10 Transportation to be scoped into the SEA.

- This and the EA response have been considered. Clarification as to why water resources has been scoped out is now included in further detail in chapter 7 under the scoping outcome section. The effects of the NP on quality of water bodies (in terms of biodiversity) is included in the SEA framework section for biodiversity (Ch.2).
- Table 8.5 amended to provide more clarity.
- The Health and Wellbeing topic (including Open Space) is now scoped into the SEA.
- Transportation is now scoped into the SEA

