



## **Churton Conservation Area Appraisal**

Churton Parish Council

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Fairfield, 16 Upton Park, Chester, Cheshire, England, CH2 1DG

Company No. 15287608 (Registered in England and Wales)

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Kirsty Henderson BSc Hons, PgDip, MRTPI, IHBC

## Executive Summary

This report is a Conservation Area Appraisal, commissioned by Churton Parish Council for Churton Conservation Area.

Churton Conservation Area was designated in 1973 and amended in 1996. Its boundaries have not changed since that date. The area has been subject to several changes since that date. Some changes are in the form of new development, while other changes are more incremental in nature. The conservation area remains an area of special architectural and historic interest.

Churton was developed largely by two principal landowners, the Barnston Estate, from the mid 14th century onwards and the Grosvenor Eaton Estate from at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The dominance of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate, with a select group of architects and agents, who each had considerable longevity of involvement with the northern part of Churton and indeed with all its estate in the locality including Aldford, Saighton, Eccleston and Buerton had the most significant impact on the character of the village as an Estate village. The Barnston Estate to the south, has influenced the architecture of buildings in the conservation area in a more organic way.

The area is compact and encompasses most of the built form within the village, centred around the historic streets of Chester Road, Pump Lane, Stannage Lane, Hob Lane, New Lane as seen in early 19<sup>th</sup> century maps. It includes Churton Hall, and Post Office Cottage, two Grade II listed timber framed buildings of different scale and size, a garden Grotto, and two walled gardens. It also includes clearly identifiable 19<sup>th</sup> century Estate buildings associated with Grosvenor Eaton Estate, and these are located to the north of the former administrative boundaries of Churton-by-Aldford and Churton-by-Farndon on Pump Lane. The collection of historic buildings contribute to the overall character and special interest of the area, and an understanding of the social history of the area.

This appraisal has assessed the significance of the conservation area, and those features that contribute to its special architectural or historic interest. It also identifies what features are important to preserve or enhance, and what features would benefit with improvement. This is in accordance with national and local planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework on the historic environment and the local plan. In order to further protect the area's special architectural or historic interest, recommendations to address issues and pressures within the Conservation Area are in Chapter 7.

## Summary of Special Interest

The special interest that justifies designation of Churton Conservation Area derives from the following features: -

- It is a rural village centred around key historic roads, and subdivided by two large Estates, The Grosvenor Eaton Estate to the north, and the Barnston Estate to the south.
- It has a small, compact, historic village core that includes a diverse tenure of housing of various social status, ranging from a former hall house, 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings, small 19<sup>th</sup> century country villas, historic walled gardens, Estate cottages and converted outbuildings.
- It has clusters of high quality townscape, which is largely domestic in terms of village character, albeit with some notable agricultural exceptions.
- An historic and hierarchical street layout that includes Chester Road, Pump Lane, Stannage Lane, New Lane, Hob Lane.
- There is a hierarchical housing layout, where the spatial character and development pattern is demonstrated in the size of private garden and the space around buildings, which in turn contributes to the landscape character of the area. This contributes to the relationship between built and landscape form within the village and the siting of buildings, outbuilding and spaces between buildings / building groups.
- Larger scaled 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century detached properties and plots tend to have a lower direct visual relationship with the road due to their front gardens and mature landscaping, and more modest detached, semi-detached, and terraced housing have a greater presence to the street scene frontage.
- It includes views focused and terminating on key historic buildings, such as Churton Hall from Pump Lane, which was probably deliberately located on the Estate boundary between the Grosvenor Eaton Estate and the Barnston Estate; and Churton Village Hall on Stannage Lane.
- It includes 'anchor' buildings that are locally distinctive, particularly Grosvenor Eaton Estate cottages on Chester Road and Pump Lane.
- It enjoys a leafy and dense concentration of mature trees on the approach road, Chester Road, within the village centre creating a sense of enclosure and curiosity, and an entrance to the village from the north.
- It has wide panoramic vistas to the open countryside, particularly on its western boundary looking east to Wales.
- It has funnelled views of countryside, from lanes and public footpaths within the village, created by solid boundaries of red sandstone walling and hedgerow, which is very much part of its sense of place.
- The surrounding countryside and views to hills to the west and east, forms part of its setting.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

This conservation area appraisal has been commissioned by Churton Parish Council and undertaken by Henderson Heritage Ltd. It follows guidance produced by Historic England on conservation area appraisal. The intention is to objectively record the existing character of the conservation area which is based on the area's special architectural and historic characteristics.

The area of study centres on the conservation area, its boundary and its immediate environs. It also includes areas recommended for alteration. This will be subject to public consultation.

### 1.2 Definition of a Conservation Area

Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities.

A conservation area is defined under S 69 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an area ***'of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'***

Under S 69 (2) of the same Act, the local planning authority has a duty to formulate and review the extent of designation and to designate further areas if appropriate. Section 71 of the Act imposes a duty on the local planning authority to formulate, communicate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

### 1.3 Adoption of the Churton Conservation Area Appraisal

An appraisal can assist in the understanding of what makes Churton unique or special, which in turn can play a role in the evaluation of proposed new development. An adopted conservation area appraisal is a material planning consideration to be used by the local planning authority to evaluate, determine and appeal decisions on planning applications within a conservation area, or within the setting of it.

#### 1.4 The Value of Conservation Area Appraisals

- Designation recognises the unique features that contributes to the distinctiveness of an area. This may also include its setting.
- The special interest and character of Conservation areas may be affected, both positively and negatively, by direct physical change or by changes in their setting.
- Identifying the conservation area's special architectural and historic interest is fundamental to understanding its locally distinctive character. Recording these features in an appraisal ensures that a common ground is established, and it is easily understood. It also identifies the capacity for future changes.
- An appraisal will lead to a better understanding of the conservation area's history, local distinctiveness, character, setting and condition, which together contribute to the place it is today. This will form part of the evidence base for positive management of the conservation area in which changes can be considered within a robust policy framework, including Neighbourhood Plan policies and other supplementary planning guidance.
- Once the appraisal is adopted by the local planning authority, it becomes a material consideration to use when making development and appeal decisions. It is also relevant to decisions made by the Secretary of State when considering urgent works to preserve an unlisted building in a conservation area.
- The characteristics of the conservation area defined by this document should be the starting point for further discussion with the local planning authority where alterations are being considered to or will affect a heritage asset(s).
- Development proposals will be judged on its own merits and on those positive elements which make the Churton Conservation Area significant.

## **2.0 Assessment of Special Interest**

### **2.1 Designation of Churton Conservation Area**

Churton Conservation Area was designated a Conservation Area in 1973 and amended in 1996.

### **2.2 Location, Setting and Character**

Churton is located to the east of the River Dee. It is a small village which is located around seven miles to the south of Chester, and between the villages of Aldford to the north and Farndon to the south. The western boundary of the village, also the English Welsh border, is the River Dee. The village was historically divided into two townships known as Churton-by-Aldford, which is the north side of the village, and Churton-by-Farndon, which is on the south side of the village. Churton-by-Aldford was, and is part of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate, and Churton-by-Farndon, part of the Barnston Estate. The historic boundary is along Pump Lane.

Churton Conservation Area has a very distinct character. Its layout and plan is influenced by the historic street pattern. The village is located near to a Triassic red sandstone plinth and viewed within a wider predominantly agricultural setting. The soil in the area is generally light and sandy, which are associated either with sandstone outcrops or where sandstone lies near to the soil's surface. These soils can be more easily ploughed than heavier clay soils and thus useful for arable cultivation.

The area is within the Dee Valley, in an important dairying area. It is close to the English – Welsh border. Churton lies within the administrative area of Cheshire West and Chester Council.

There is no village centre as such, as the main primary route through the village, Chester Road, runs through the centre of the village, but there are reasonably distinct character areas within the conservation area, that form part of a cohesive whole. The conservation area is relatively compact encompassing most of the village on either side of Chester Road, and including buildings on Stannage Lane, Pump Lane, Hob Lane and New Lane. Most of the village is included within the conservation area. The exception is modern agricultural buildings to the north of Stannage Lane, housing on the southern part of Stannage Lane, The Knowl, buildings on the eastern perimeters of Pump Lane, and parts of the site of Churton Hall Farm to its south and east. The topography is flat to most of the area, apart from Pump Lane, where there is a fall from west to east from the farm range at Churton Farm. Houses on the north side of Pump Lane are generally elevated from the road.

Overall, there is a solid and consistent building and street line. Despite the main road running through the village, the ambience of the village is largely rural and tranquil, of mostly residential properties, with farmsteads, both historic and current, to the west and south east, and a commercial property, The White Horse Pub, on Chester Road.

The form of the historic village is recognisable today from the nucleated settlement pattern of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The architecture is distinct and the character compact. Its townscape quality is moderate to high.

The setting of the village as viewed from the north from Aldford is defined by the neat hedgerow field boundaries of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate, with Grosvenor Eaton Estate cottages providing a distinctive entrance to the village centre along Chester Road.

The approach to the conservation area from the east along Pump Lane consists of different types of housing on the north side of the road, some clearly associated with the Grosvenor Eaton Estate. To the south of Pump Lane, and outside the conservation area, is the gently rolling agricultural land belonging to the Barnston Estate. The built-up area has a strong and varied architectural palate.

The southern entrance in to the conservation area, is from Chester Road. The conservation area boundary includes all the built form on the west side of the road. Churton Hall Farm forms part of the experience of the southern entrance, with the boundary defined by low red sandstone walls on the east side of the road, but it is not visible from here to any degree.

The western boundary is very distinct, particularly to the north on Stannage Lane, a country lane defined by neat, sandstone boundary walls, narrow grass verges, well managed hedgerows, a strong treescape and a funnelled view along the lane and a panoramic vista over the fields to North Wales.

The village has expanded in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and the development pattern and architectural style of the periods are clearly recognisable. The conservation area is small, but there is a diverse range of character, and distinct areas recognised that could be considered as sub-areas within the whole conservation area designation. These four areas are as follows: -

- 1. North Western quarter:** The north west of Chester Road and Stannage Lane.
- 2. North Eastern Quarter:** Churton Lodge and its garden and other residential buildings and structures.
- 3. Centre:** The middle of the village and Pump Lane
- 4. Churton Hall Farm:** Churton Hall and its farm buildings.

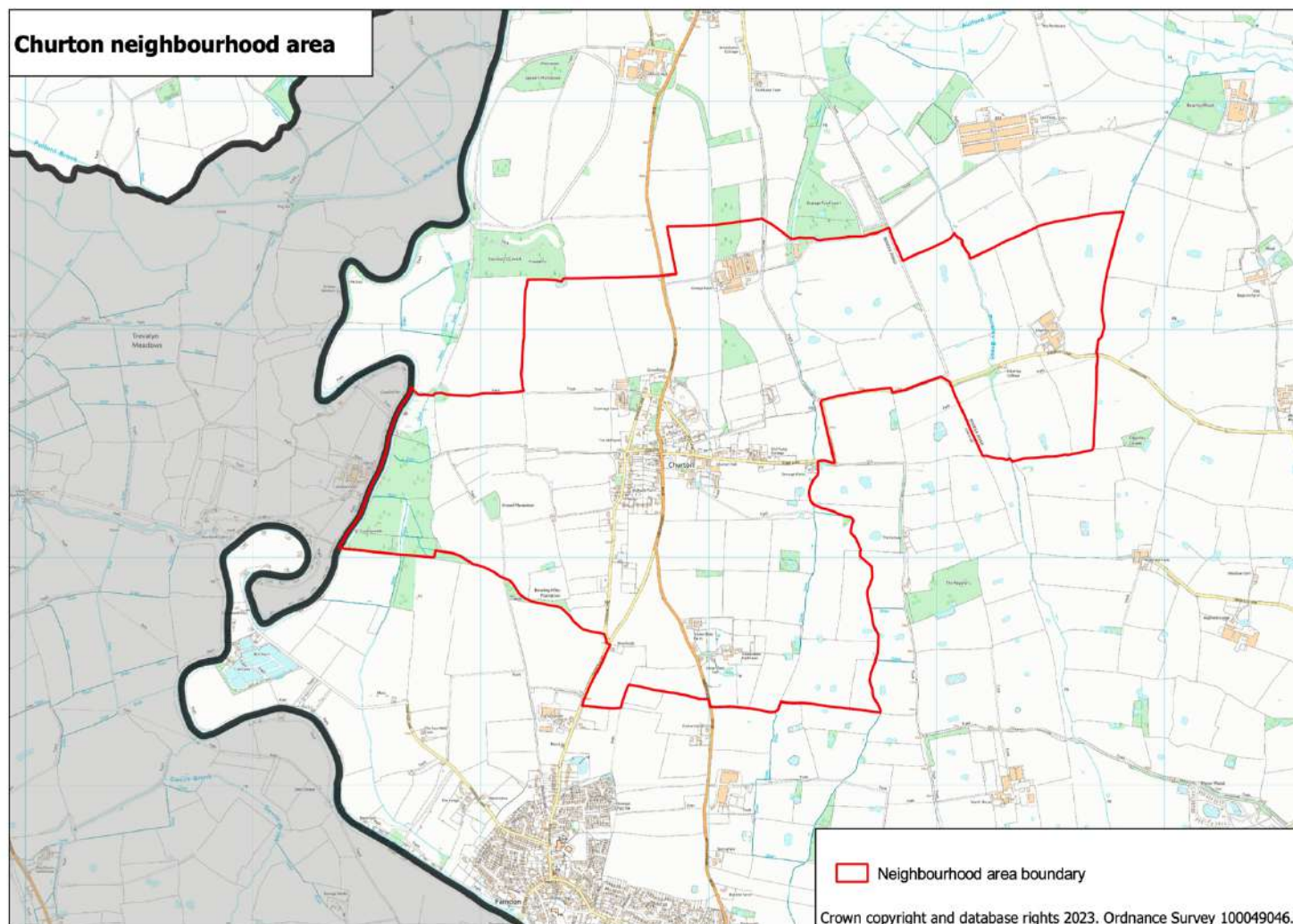


Fig 1. Churton Neighbourhood Area (Copyright: Churton Parish Council). The conservation area includes most of the built up village area.

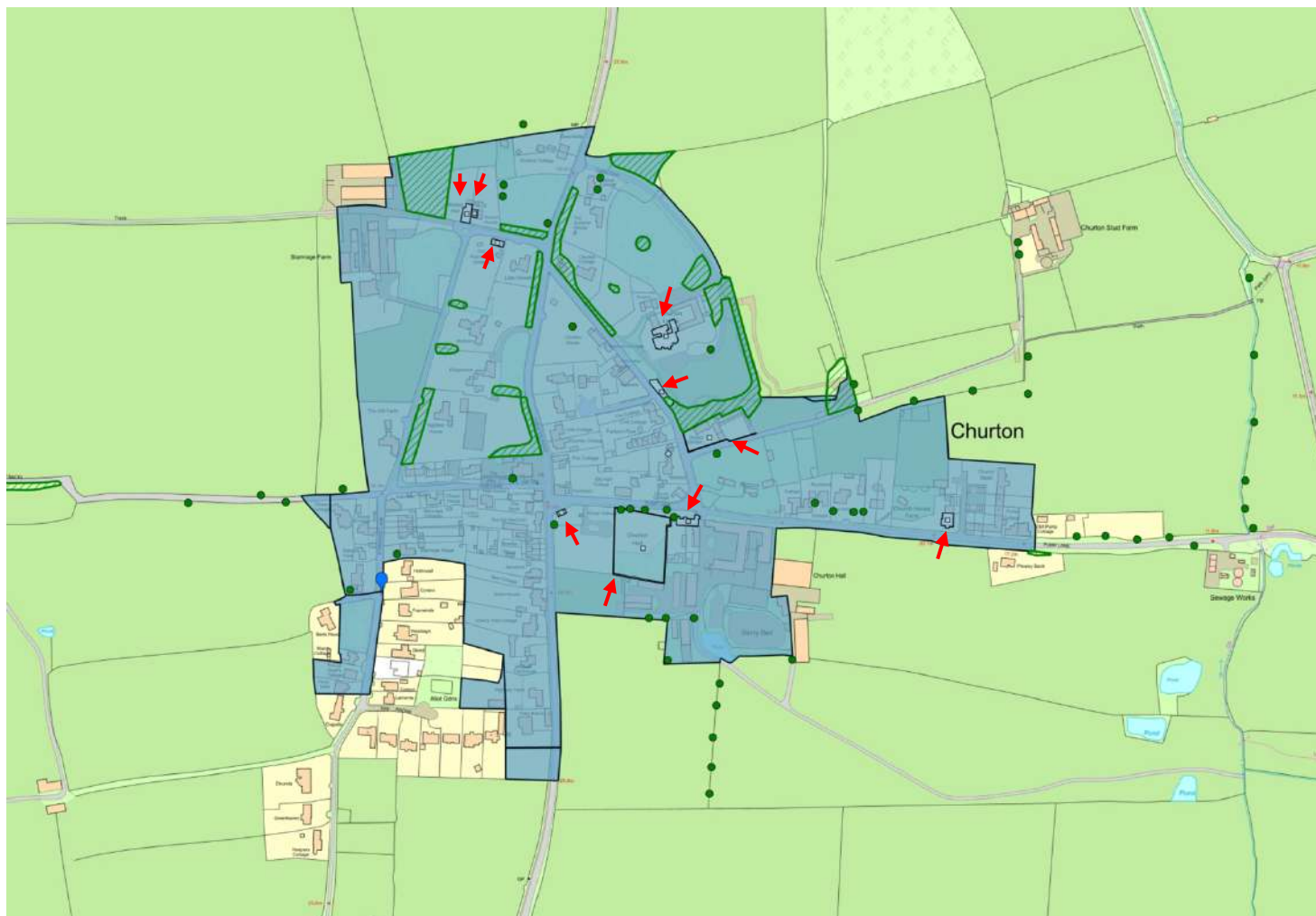


Fig 2. Churton Conservation Area. Listed buildings are arrowed in red. There are 10 in total. All the listed buildings in the conservation area are Grade II. (Copyright: Cheshire West and Chester Council). The listed buildings are described in each character area.

## 2.4 Historical Development

There are a variety of informative references on the history of Churton, two being 'Based in Churton' and Mike Royden's 'Royden History'.

Churton may date from the late Saxon / medieval period. It is said to have formed from a moiety of two townships that date from the 11<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> century, Churton-by-Aldford to the north, and Churton-by-Farndon to the south. The division was said to be on Pump Lane, an ecclesiastical boundary with Knowl Lane and Hob Lane. Churton-by-Aldford was a township in Aldford parish in the Broxton hundred. Churton-by-Farndon was a township in the Farndon ancient parish, in the Broxton hundred, and became a civil parish in 1866. Up until 2015 Churton was split into two townships, with Churton-by-Aldford to the north of Hob Lane and Pump Lane, and Churton-by-Farndon to the south of that line.

In 2015 the civil parishes of Churton-by-Aldford, Churton-by-Farndon and Edgerley were abolished and incorporated into Churton civil parish. This boundary on Pump Lane is the boundary between the Barnston Estate and the adjacent Grosvenor Eaton Estate. Churton-by-Aldford formed part of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate and Churton-by-Farndon formed part of the Barnston Estate. This has resulted in some distinct building types unique to each Estate.

The village centre is historic and compact. Several of the buildings in the conservation area on the Tithe Map. The Tithe Map shows the settlement in detail, with individual property boundaries. This provides important information about the development of the village, along with later Ordnance Survey maps. On the former Churton-by-Aldford side of the village to the north of Pump Lane, there are several Estate cottages and buildings with Grosvenor Eaton Estate plaques, showing the Talbot hounds, which were added to the Grosvenor coat of arms in the 17th century.

## Medieval Churton

The medieval bridge between Farndon, just under 2 miles to the south of Churton, and Holt, in Wrexham, meant that there was easy access across the River Dee to the south of Chester between England and Wales. It was constructed c1338 – 9. The bridge today is largely of 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century date. The route forms part of the B5130, and this runs through the centre of Churton, from Farndon to Aldford to Huntington, Chester. It is an historic route.

The Barnston family are believed to have owned the Churton Estate near Farndon since the mid 14th century, and the earliest surviving deed of the Churton Estate is dated 1393. The lineage is said to have begun with Hugh de Berneston of Barneston and Worleston, was 'lord of a moiety of Berneston' (Wirral), active in the reign of King Edward I. His grandson, Robert de Berneston of Barnston and Heswall had a younger son, Robert who settled at Churton. Robert de Berneston of Chirton (c.1380 - 1477) bequeathed the Churton lands to his son, Ralph Berneston of Churton (c.1404 – 1449). Ralph's daughter, Marjory inherited part of the land, but she died without issue, and it passed to her first cousin once removed, Robert Berneston, born in about 1477. His son, Thomas Berneston or Barnston, (1509 – 1562) lived at Churton with his wife and two children. His son William Barnston (1545-1620) and his wife, Elizabeth, have their initials and date on the front porch of Churton Hall. 'WB 1569 EB'. Evidence of three surviving cruck frames and a dendrochronology survey, suggests that the hall is earlier, and the house remodelled in 1569.

Churton Hall is the only surviving building of medieval origin in the village. This is said to date from c1569. Churton Hall is a multi-phased building. Recent removal of added plasterwork has led to the discovery that this building started life as a cruck framed building. A dendrochronology survey has determined that the felling dates of the crucks is c1461. A cruck framed building is an early form of timber framing. It is constructed using a single trunk into two symmetrical blades, which are joined together at the apex of a roof. These are located at regular intervals to form bays that support the roof. There are many examples in Wales and the Marches, and northern England.

It was built as a hall house, with a surviving timber cruck frame to the hall that runs parallel to Pump Lane. It appears that the dais end may have been to the west side, as the timbers look larger, more substantial and of better quality. There is evidence of where an arch brace would have been under the cruck to the west, and the better face faces west.

Churton Hall as seen today, represents the house remodelled by William Barnston (1545-1620) and his wife, Elizabeth, 'WB 1569 EB'. It was altered to create the timber box framed E plan form seen today facing Pump Lane, in c1569, with a later wing of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The building is now part of a redundant farmstead, part of an L-shaped courtyard built in two stages between the early and late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Fig 3. A drawing of Churton Hall dated 1793 by John Ingleby (1749-1808), a Welsh topographical artist from Halkyn, Flintshire, shows the building which in terms of form, looks very similar to as existing. It shows that the building was an E-plan, a central hall portion with two cross wings and a porch. There is a single storey projecting wing with a hexagonal lean-to roof to the north east. The drawing depicts mullioned windows to ground and first floor, and what appears to be a slate roof with finials to the projecting north gables.

The drawing shows that there are three chimneys, one offset forward from the roof apex to the hall area, off centre from the porch, the other two are lateral to the east gable end. There is also a possible bell tower above the porch to the north roof slope of the roof apex. The boundary wall around the north front is brick, as is the much taller garden wall to the west. The low roof structures to the rear of the house are also evident, possibly a separate kitchen. The wall next to the lateral chimney on its eastern gable can still be seen. There is a walled garden to the right, built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It also shows that the outbuildings attached to Churton Hall to the left, are not the same as the ones on site today.

(Image: National Library of Wales)

## 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century Churton

Churton is recorded on Christopher Saxton's Map of Cheshire of 1577, and on John Speed's map of Cheshire of 1610.

Little is known about Churton in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The village centre remained divided between the ownership of two Estates. – The Barnston Estate and The Grosvenor Eaton Estate.

William and Elizabeth Barnston's son, Thomas (1565-1646) inherited and lived in Churton Hall in 1620. Their son, William Barnston (1592-1664) inherited and lived at Churton Hall, and fought in the Civil War (1643) as a staunch Royalist. Following his imprisonment in London for his contribution to the Civil War, his lands were seized, he was fined and some of the properties on his Estate burnt. His Estate included Churton, Aldford, and Overmarsh.

The use of timber framing for vernacular cottages is evident, and this is seen to The Old Post Office Cottage, probably built in the mid 17th century, identified by small panel oak framing and a thatched roof, These types of buildings were once typical of the area.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, Church House was built on the north side of Pump Lane It was known as Churton House Farm. It was built in 1682, in local red brick in irregular English bond, with grey slate roofs and a three storey porch in the middle of its façade. A date stone to the second floor is carved JC/RSB/1682. It was originally occupied by Richard and Blanch Carden, of the Carden family, and later was acquired Hugh Webster of Churton and Whitchurch, before being later acquired by the Grosvenor Eaton Estate.

There is evidence of straight ridge and furrow field patterns within the village core to the west of Stannage Lane, to the east of Chester Road and west of Churton Hall Farm, and further east on the south side of Pump Lane. Ridge and furrow is an historic ploughing technique dating from pre-enclosure times.



Fig 4. Left: The original White Horse Pub on Chester Road, c17th century. Demolished c1900.  
Right: A 19<sup>th</sup> century postcard of The Old Post Office on Stannage Lane; the only surviving vernacular building of this period.



Fig 5. Left: The former Red Lion Inn, opposite Toll Bar Cottage (now Cross Cottage) on the junction of Chester Road and Pump Lane. It caught fire in the 1930's and is now remodelled.

Right: A box framed timber framed house and shop next to the former Red Lion in 1900-1909. A T-shaped plan, this has been demolished. (Source: Cheshire Archive).

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century Churton

William Barnston's grandson, Robert Barnston (1683-1753) was possibly the last Barnston to live at Churton Hall. A survey of his Estate at Churton Hall in 1742 included a manse house, gardens and yards, best garden, barn croft, orchard, and a new orchard or kitchen yard. This appears to corollate with the suggested dating of the walled garden on the west side of Churton Hall, which is described as 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier.

The best garden - the walled garden - was enclosed on all four sides by a brick wall between 2 and 3 metres high, of brown local brick with patching and pier at south-east corner of squared red sandstone rubble. It has a pair of square piers of brick with moulded stone caps located to the south of the house, and which was a former gateway to Hall. It is now blocked in brick.

An Estate Map of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate dated 1738 for Sir Robert Grosvenor Baronet (sic) (Cheshire Record Office D/7404/1) shows how the land to the north of Pump Lane is divided. It shows narrow linear field patterns to the east of housing on New Lane. Housing on New Lane and Pump Lane were in large plots. Buildings on these plots were located close to the road for easy access. It is evident that some of these buildings were large and assumed to be lived in by gentlemen or yeoman farmers. Open field enclosure in the area took place in the area after 1777, probably between 1777 and 1798. (Chester Record Office, Grosvenor Eaton Estate Plan 22). It records that Church House was in the ownership of Hugh Webster, a gentleman farmer, who owned and occupied 17 acres of land in Churton-by-Aldford, and nearby. He died in 1758, and the house was passed on to his nephew, Thomas Holt, then onto his son, Samuel Holt.

The road pattern is different, with a public open square on the junction of New Lane and Pump Lane, opposite Churton Hall, and a smaller area on the northern section of Chester Road. The area of Stannage Lane is much wider than today. New Lane is curved, rather than straight.

Development seems to be heavier to the southern and eastern side of the village. Houses generally are L-shaped or rectangular, with two exceptions, Churton Hall, an E-plan and the building opposite, an H-plan.



Fig 6. 1738 Estate Plan for Sir Robert Grosvenor, Baronet (Source: Cheshire Record Office Archives)

## 19<sup>th</sup> Century Churton

It was during this time that Churton Lodge was built, with its walled garden, furnace house and greenhouses, and its grotto. Samuel and Ann Holt lived at Church House. Samuel Holt died in 1811; his wife remained in the house until her death in 1834. By 1840 the house belonged to the Grosvenor Eaton Estate. Cross Cottage, on the junction of Pump Lane and Chester Road, Cottage, also dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century building.

The Tithe Map is particularly helpful in the recording of the village. It was surveyed in 1837 for Churton-by-Aldford and 1840 for Churton-by-Farndon. The Tithe Map also shows that New Lane has been realigned and relocated further to the west. It is now a straight line, rather than curved. It also shows a row of cottages on the north side of Stannage Lane, and the road appears to be wider than it is now.

Roger Harry Barnston (1802-1849) is recorded as the owner of several buildings and land on the Churton-by-Farndon side of Churton. He is the owner of Churton Hall on the 1840 Tithe Map for Churton-by-Farndon. He is described in the Post Office Directory of Cheshire of 1857 and Morris & Co's Directory of Cheshire 1864 as "Lord of the Manor" for Churton-by Farndon. The Tithe Map describes the occupier as Thomas Gaman. Plot 9 is described as house buildings and yards, gardens etc. This shows the house and the U shaped range of outbuildings to east of Churton Hall. Plot 8 to the east of Plot 9, shows the stone outbuilding to south east of the U shaped outbuildings. Gaman also leased Plots 1-24, but not Plots 7, 11, 18, 19. The farm was mostly arable. It was during the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century that the Hall's status as a hall house was changed to that of a farmhouse. Plot 10, the Walled Garden on west side of Churton Hall is described as a garden and leased by Gaman.

The surviving features include a brick wall that is greatly dilapidated, a dovecote to the south elevation that is in poor condition, and gate piers that denote the original entrance from the Hall, accessed from behind the hall to the east elevation. The brickwork is in Flemish bond brickwork with red sandstone moulded plinths and red sandstone moulded caps. There also exists a late 19<sup>th</sup> Victorian glasshouse to the north wall, which appears to have been heated.

Churton became part of the turnpike road between Chester and Worthenbury, between 1854-1876. A turnpike road required a good width, a hard surface and good drainage, as well as signposts and milestones. The Chester to Worthenbury turnpike followed the road from Boughton in Chester alongside the River Dee at Huntington, then south through Aldford and Churton then through Sibbersfield Lane to Worthenbury. The turnpike required authorising via an Act of Parliament, and this was under the Chester, Farndon and Worthenbury Turnpike Road Act 1854, "An Act for making a Turnpike Road from Chester, by Farndon, to Worthenbury, with a Branch therefrom to the Village of Farndon," which passed into law on 3rd July of that year. It was the last road in Cheshire to be turnpiked. Cross Cottage was used as a toll house for the turnpike road.



Fig 7. The Tithe Map for Aldford c1829 (Copyright: Cheshire Archives)



Fig 8. Mr. Barnston, Esq. with members of his family photographed with farm hands and milk maids outside the U shaped range of outbuildings. The photograph is taken in the courtyard towards the south east corner. Note the wider slatted shippon doors and circular hayloft pitch holes. The threshing barn is shown by the double doors to the right of the photograph – note the ventilation holes. A stable is adjacent to the right.

Bagshaw's History and Gazetteer of Cheshire 1850 described Churton as a township within the parish of Aldford. It was described as a small township and village, with 48 houses and 254 inhabitants. The Primitive Methodist Church had been erected on Hob Lane. The gazetteer records a beer house – The White Horse Pub, blacksmith, boot and shoemaker, joiner, two shopkeepers and farmers. The Marquis of Westminster was principal landowner.

By contrast, Churton-by-Farndon was described as a village principally consisting of a “straggling street” with many of the houses displaying “marks of considerable antiquity”. This part contained 28 houses and 132 inhabitants. Churton Hall is described as “undergoing a thorough renovation and occupied by a farmer, John Parker”. The gazetteer records the Red Lion, a boot and shoemaker, a joiner, tailors, a wheelwright and farmers. The same gazetteer states that “The manor which belonged to the Barnstons as early as the reign of Richard II is now vested in their lineal descendant R. H. Barnston Esq., which is the principal landowner.”

A schoolhouse and school masters house was built in 1864, at the expense of 2nd Marquis of Westminster on Stannage Lane. Parkers Row was built in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Old Post Office was The Post Office in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Fig 9. Left: Churton Ordnance Survey Map six inch to one mile, 1878. Note two quarries to the north and south of Stannage Lane.

Right: Churton Ordnance Survey Map six inch to one mile, 1899.

## 20<sup>th</sup> century Churton

The village is gradually expanding and increasing in density by 1911, with the introduction of No's 1-5 Rowley Place, on Chester Road, Stannage Cottages on Stannage Lane, and Kingsmead on Chester Road. During the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the conservation area was designated, and several buildings were listed.



Fig 10. Left: The view looking south down Chester Road 1910 – 1919 (Cheshire Image Bank).

Right: The newly built White Horse Pub in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

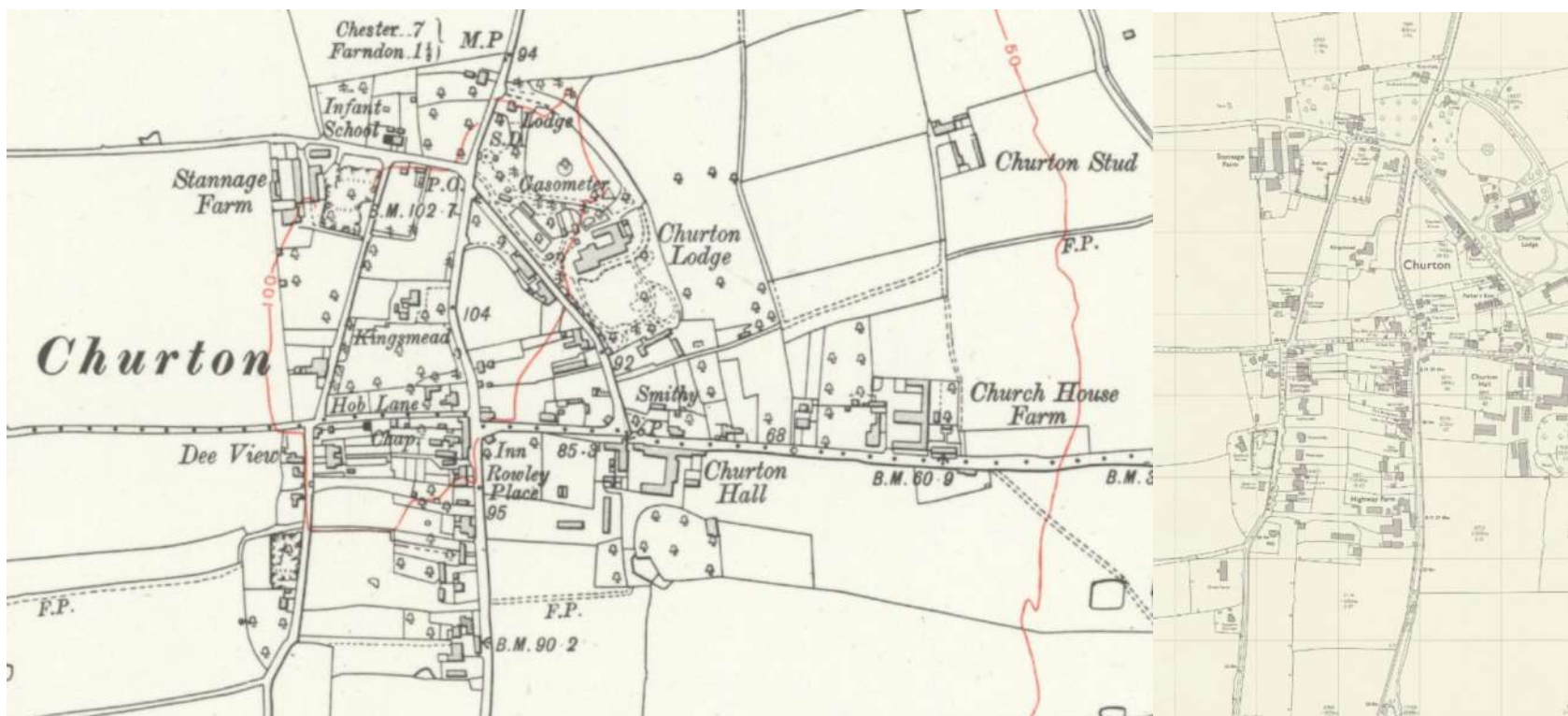


Fig 11. Left: Churton Ordnance Survey Map six inch to one mile, 1914.

Right. National Grid Map 1970 showing part of Churton.

## 21<sup>st</sup> century Churton

In 2018, a new war memorial was erected in Churton to commemorate those men who lost their lives from Churton during the First World War. The men were commemorated within the different parishes of Churton-by-Aldford and Churton-by-Farndon and named on the Aldford or Farndon War Memorials. This is located outside Churton Village Hall.



In 2024 a care farm, workspaces and conversion of barns to residential is planned for Churton Hall Farm. The planning application is presently being considered by Cheshire West and Chester Council.

## 2.5 Land Use

The land uses of the area is principally domestic and farming uses. Historically the land use has remained relatively constant, with public buildings, such as the Village Hall and The White Horse Pub, remaining as such. Even when the use has changed – for example from agricultural to residential, the built form has not significantly changed and remains legible.

The roads are of key importance and all interconnect with Chester Road, which provides a through route through the village from north to south.

Despite its size, Churton Conservation Area has a rich diversity and hierarchy of streets. They range from:

- Principal vehicular routes to the north and south of the conservation area – Chester Road.
- Secondary vehicular streets – Pump Lane
- Lanes – Stannage Lane, New Lane, Hob Lane

These tend to be straight, except for New Lane, which curves around the northern quarter of the village. They also offer key views and important pedestrian movement and activity. The street hierarchy adds to the village character and sense of place.

## 2.6 Views and Landmarks

**The roads and lanes within the conservation area provide important views** of buildings in the conservation area. The views tend to be inward looking in the village, although there are some good views of the surrounding countryside from the lanes and footpaths around the village. This is particularly pertinent from the public footpaths from New Lane, adjacent to Churton Lodge (Churton-by-Aldford FP7), and from Hob Lane to the River Dee (Churton-by-Aldford FP2).



View from Hob Lane (FP2) looking west.



Views along FP 7 off New Lane.

The **key landmark building** is Churton Hall, which is best appreciated in a stop view from New Lane, and kinetic views along Pump Lane. An unassuming view, but one that is important to understand its historic setting and context is from FP7, where there is a foreground view of an agricultural field, and view of the redundant smithy, with Churton Hall in the background. This view is pastoral within the village setting and is a view, with the exception of street signage, that probably hasn't changed for at least 150 years. This view changes seasonally because of the tree cover.



Left: The former Smithy; Centre: View of Churton Hall and the Smithy, with the field in the foreground; Right: The kinetic view.

The lanes provide a good view of the historic buildings, the view helped by strong street boundaries or vegetation. The lanes are much more permeable and easy to use on foot, for walks within the village or to nearby fields and public footpaths, where there is time to stop and observe the peace, tranquillity and viewpoints. Views tend to be funnelled along the road, the funnelling effect created by the red sandstone boundary walls and hedgerow. From Churton Hall Farm, there are views along the road from west to East on Pump Lane of the Cheshire Peckforton Hills.



View east along Pump Lane to the Peckforton Hills.

Travelling further east down Pump Lane there is a clear demarcation of the built up village boundary, demarked by red sandstone boundary walls, and the agricultural setting to the south, which is of hedgerow boundaries.

Junctions provide good views where there are buildings that have been deliberately sited to provide 'the view'. These junctions include Cross Cottage, on the junction of Pump Lane and Chester Road, which is appreciated from many angles. A view of the Village Hall looking north up Stannage Lane is also attractive, where the view terminates, and the view of Churton Hall south from New Lane. All these buildings are listed.



Left: Cross Cottage; the Village Hall and Old School Cottage; and Churton Hall. All are Grade II listed buildings.

Back on the north side of the village, there are kinetic views of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate cottages at the northern end of Chester Road, a strong visual expression of the well-mannered and highly decorative Estate buildings of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. They are difficult to view safely on the road because of the high level of traffic.

The view then changes and is funnelled by dense tree cover and sandstone boundary walls along Chester Road until The White Horse Pub, where the greenery largely disappears. The heavy vehicular movement on Chester Road has meant that the views along it are almost incidental, until one reaches The White Horse Pub. Kinetic views of The White Horse Pub occur along Chester Road and a front view from the junction of Chester Road and Pump Lane.



View looking south along Chester Road from the New Lane junction.

An unfurling and pleasing view of historic Churton occurs when approaching Stannage Lane from Chester Road, where a pastoral view of The Old Post Office is seen to the west, followed by longer distance views of the Village Hall, and the single oak tree at the road junction outside it. The view terminates on Moel Famau, part of the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Looking west along Stannage lane at sunset, when the silhouette of Moel Famau can be best appreciated.



An equally attractive and pastoral view can be seen from the west end of Stannage Lane, next to the Village Hall car park. It encompasses many of the historic and aesthetic natural and built features of the conservation area.

Along Stannage Lane on the western boundary of the conservation area is a significant panoramic view of the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Welsh countryside. This is not a deliberately created viewpoint but one that is very important, as the panorama can be appreciated, unimpeded, at street level.



Views looking west from Stannage Lane at sunset. This view includes Stannage Farmhouse (left), a Grosvenor Eaton Estate farmhouse.



Fig 12. Key views arrowed yellow. Terminating view – blue star. Landmark building – red star. Strong gateway– yellow circle.

## 2.7 Architectural Quality and Built Form

There are several historic architectural styles within the Conservation Area. Vernacular and timber framed buildings are evident but there are some simple cottages on Chester Road and Pump Lane, and a surprising number of Edwardian buildings along Chester Road, and some that have been altered in Stannage Lane. Most cottages are two storey in height, from 1-3 bays in width, and face the street. The exception to this is Parkers Row, hidden off New Lane. For most cottages, there is little embellishment that define the façade's character. Window and door design is therefore of key importance to their character.

The predominant building material is the local Cheshire brick for houses and red sandstone for boundary walls. Many brick-built houses have yellow buff sandstone detailing to the windows, many painted, and flat arched brick lintels. Many buildings have painted stone sills. There are a small number of timber framed buildings, of different style, scale and stature, oak framed with white rendered or painted brick infill panels. Bricks are generally mixed shades of red, typical of 'Cheshire' bricks, some Flemish Bond brickwork and some in an irregular English bond. There are, for the most part, grey slate roofs, although some are red tiled, and a thatched roof still exists to the former Post Office on Stannage Lane. Most chimneys are brick, apart from the lateral red sandstone chimney to Churton Hall. There are some buildings that have been built in squared snecked red sandstone, notably the Village Hall and School House on Stannage Lane, which were built at the same time and as one piece.

Windows are varied. Typical to the modest cottages are 2 paned, two or three light timber casement windows. There are exceptions, such as Gothic small paned cast iron casements. Some window examples include canted, hipped bay windows with small panes.

Timber for 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings is used selectively for decoration for example in the form of bargeboards, fascia's, projecting purlins under eaves. Red sandstone has been used for the domestic boundary walls, although older garden walls that formally enclose kitchen and former pleasure gardens, are of brick.

Embellishment to window openings are generally plain and include slightly cambered gauged brick heads and plain stone cills, or Tudor hoodmoulds.



Window styles in the conservation area. Windows that are characteristic to the conservation area are timber small paned casements, timber casements with horizontal glazing bars, or Edwardian windows with small panes to the top and large panes to the bottom. Some buildings have Gothic windows, with small, pointed arches within the casement. Some houses have dormer windows and / or projecting canted bay windows that create a pleasing townscape rhythm.



Door styles in the conservation area. Doors that are characteristic to the conservation area are solid panelled doors, painted, with open porches on plain or decorative brackets. Door furniture tends to be simple, with black or brass letter boxes and knockers, some of which are attached to the letter box. Georgian doors are panelled. Edwardian doors tend to have small lights to the upper third of the window. Where steps exist to the front door, they are typically of sandstone.



Building materials tend to be local dark red brick, some with Flemish Bond detailing, others in English Garden Wall Bond. Some buildings, such as The White Horse Pub, has used a hard pressed Ruabon Red engineering brick. Brick has also been used to provide additional detailing to buildings, such as for string courses between the ground and first floor, and under eaves. There are some buildings that are timber framed, and these indicate a vernacular character, of pre-18<sup>th</sup> century date. There are also later buildings that have timber decoration on them, such as the house, Mulberry. Also of note are sandstone buildings. Red sandstone can be carved, as can be seen to the Grosvenor Eaton Estate plaque of 1864, seen on the former school (now Village Hall) on Stannage Lane. Note also the coursing and the slim joints, using lime mortar, which allows moisture to evaporate.



The detailing of roofing varies according to the style of the house. Pre mid 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings tend to have mortared verges, with very slim eaves and tall brick chimneys. Some have a brick dentil course underneath. Later 19<sup>th</sup> century roofs tend to have deeper eaves with exposed purlin feet.

Roof finishes tend to be of slate or rosemary clay tiles, with the same colour of ridge tile, with the exception of the thatched Old Post Office..

Chimneys are a key features of all types of houses.



Walls in the conservation area.



Boundary treatment, typically coursed red sandstone boundary walls, are a key feature of the conservation area. These vary in style and character with different finishes, sneaked, ashlar or random rubble, all typically with coping stones, and can be of a different style to each side of the street. The different type of coping stone includes triangular stone copings, semi circular coping stones, cock and hen copings, flat copings. The uniformity of material and the enclosure of private gardens to the street create a strong street boundary and sense of place. Brick boundaries also add to the character of the area. It is assumed that the local quarry in Churton provided some of this stone. Many houses have stone or slate house names.



There are a variety of pedestrian and vehicular gates. Gates vary in style and character. Some are typical timber farm gates, wide enough to be suitable for vehicular access. These type of gates are appropriate to the rural setting. Also of note are the timber cross gates distinctive to the Grosvenor Eaton estate buildings (Top: far right). It has a cross to the upper two thirds, with small balusters underneath.

Low white painted pedestrian timber gates with vertical uprights are also a feature in the conservation area. Gates are typically attached to timber pointed posts or sandstone posts. Pedestrian gates that allow access through large stone walls, are of human height, painted and set into the wall.



There are number of buildings in agricultural use, others that are redundant and others that have been converted into domestic use, but still retain their character.



The two estates – Top: Grosvenor Eaton Estate signage seen to the north of the village on Stannage Lane and New Lane.

Bottom: The Barnston Estate crest, seen on Churton Hall.

### 3.0 Character areas

#### 3.1 Assessment

Churton Conservation Area has a very distinct character created by its distinctive geology, topography and nearby river setting. Its layout and plan is heavily influenced by the historic street pattern. The village is located near to a Triassic red sandstone plinth and viewed within a wider predominantly agricultural setting. The western boundary of the village, also the English Welsh border, is the River Dee. The street layout has changed very little since the Tithe Map.

Churton is a relatively compact conservation area. Within it, there are four distinct character areas: -

**1. North Western quarter:** - this includes the north west of Chester Road and Stannage Lane, and the trees and low boundary walls framing the road. This is primarily enclosed in character, with trees or boundary walls. Generally, this area has a loose grain, and many buildings are in large gardens set back from the road. This area has a strongly agricultural setting and panoramic views to North Wales.

**2. North Eastern Quarter:** – this area comprises Churton Lodge and its garden and other residential buildings and structures. The sites, buildings and structures are largely hidden from publicly accessible viewpoints, but of interest as a small complete villa with unique garden features.

**3. Centre:** - this area is quite densely developed. Key characteristics include typically narrow historic plots, a relatively dense urban grain, buildings that front the road or are in small gardens, a strong, sometimes staggered, building line of either boundary walls or buildings, which are generally two storeys, with minor anomalies of three storey or one and half storey.

**4. Churton Hall Farm:** - this area comprises Churton Hall and its farm buildings.

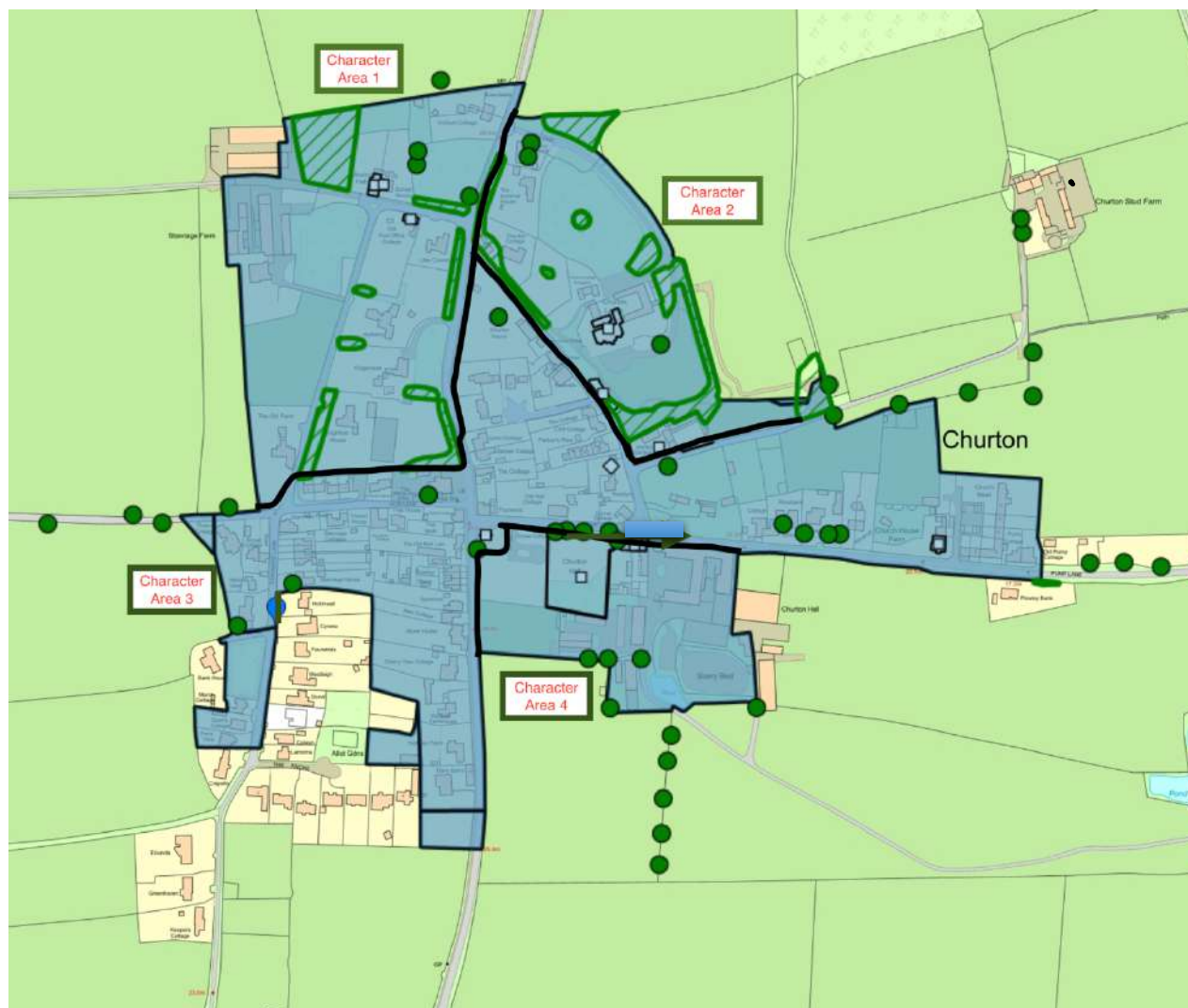


Fig 13. Map of Character Areas

### **Character Area 1: North Western Quarter**

This includes the north west of Chester Road and the northern part of Stannage Lane, and the trees and low boundary walls framing the road. This is primarily enclosed in character, with buildings principally located in large gardens away from the road. Trees, boundary walls and hedgerows contribute strongly to the sense of place and rural character. It includes three listed buildings.

The spatial character here is quite different to other character areas. The grain of the area is generous, with several buildings in good sized plots, and smaller villas dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This is also where the Grosvenor Eaton Estate buildings are well defined, not only in their built form, but in boundary walls, gates and plaques, that create a clear visual reference to the Estate land.

The entrance to the village as viewed from the north from Aldford is defined by the neat hedgerow field boundaries of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate, with Grosvenor Eaton Estate cottages providing a distinctive entrance to the village centre along Chester Road.

These buildings are a pair of semi-detached cottages, with some similarities to listed cottages in Middle Lane, Aldford, that were built c1875 by John Douglas for the First Duke of Westminster and described as an early example of 'Free Style dwellings. The brown brick, careful use of render, hipped red tiled roof and large central chimneys are of interest, but what is especially attractive is the gabled frontage with an arched oak porch under a catslide roof which breaks up the scale and massing. Small-paned windows also add character. They are set back from the road within generous front gardens, bounded by sandstone walls and Grosvenor Eaton Estate painted timber white gates. These buildings are very important to the character of the area.

Chester Road is tranquil and green, framed by trees and low coursed sandstone boundary walls, all capped, some with spaced cock and hen coping, and others with large rustic sandstone vertical V-shaped stones of tight cock and hen coping. There are no views of houses, but tantalising glimpses of entrances, such as to Kingsmead, which hides a large, detached Arts and Crafts Edwardian villa, built at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The road is tranquil and green, framed by trees and low sandstone boundary walls, with no views of houses until halfway down Chester Road, where the view widens to include two storey cottages of brick set close to the road. These are in Character Area 3.



The long funnelled view of Chester Road and its intimate, enclosed character does not change until halfway down Chester Road, where the view widens to include two storey cottages of brick set close to the road. These are described in Character Area 3. Centre.

Turning on Stannage Lane, a modern bungalow sits in a generous plot, well screened with a variety of trees and a boundary of red sandstone and brick with sandstone cock and hen coping. Because it is not seen, it is a neutral building in the conservation area. It is the boundaries that contribute to the character of the area.

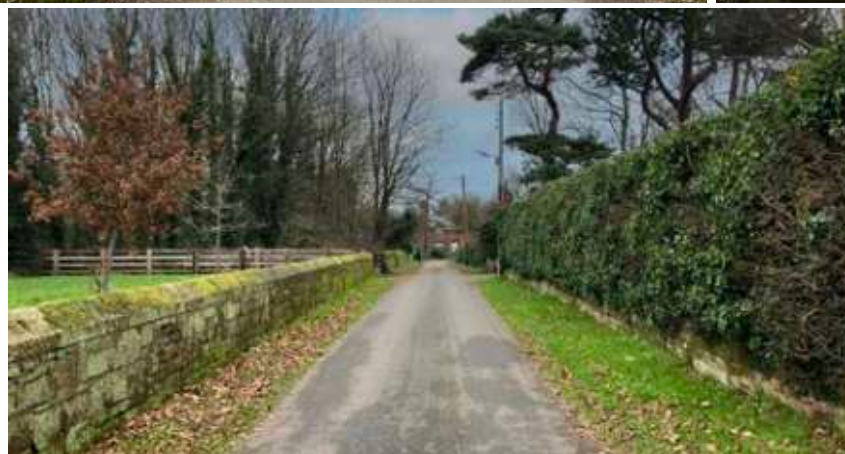
There are three buildings, all listed that are different in style, different in function, different in materiality, yet part of a cohesive and strong character of this part of the conservation area. These are The Old Post Office, a vernacular timber framed building, and the former school and school master's house dating from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of note are the generous plots, the boundary treatment of timber Estate gates, stone boundary walls and hedgerow and tree landscaping to boundaries.



Character Area 1. North Western Quarter: Former Schoolhouse, listed as Churton Mission Hall (Grade II) to the left and the School Master's House, listed as Old School Cottage (Grade II). Both were built in 1864 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquis of Westminster. Of note are the building materials of squared snecked red sandstone, the large chimneys, the mullioned and transomed windows to the school, the Tudor hood moulds and the characteristic red sandstone boundary walls and Estate gates. The school is now the Village Hall.



Character Area 1. North Western Quarter: The Old Post Office (Grade II), built in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century and altered in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, this vernacular cottage is a box timber framed building on a sandstone plinth, a thatched roof with 19<sup>th</sup> century cast iron casements and thatched roof with an eyebrow dormer. Set close to the road behind a sandstone boundary wall.



Top Left: Stannage Road looking west. Top right: Stannage Farm outbuildings.

Bottom Left: View looking north along Stannage Lane. Bottom Right: The Old Farm, Stannage Lane.



Stannage Lane is of particularly strong character within the conservation area, for its linear route, its panoramic views towards Wales and the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and localised views of historic farmhouses, low boundary walls and mature trees.

## Character Area 2. North Eastern Quarter

This area comprises the 19<sup>th</sup> century Churton Lodge and its garden structures. Churton Lodge and grounds are largely hidden from public view. They are of interest as a small complete villa with stable yard, walled pleasure garden etc, associated with the highly regarded Chester based architect, T. M. Lockwood (1830-1900), who remodelled the building.

Churton Lodge has a former Victorian gatehouse lodge to Chester Road, Walnut Lodge, which is opposite the Grosvenor Eaton Estate cottages on Chester Road. It has been remodelled in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its original character remains, and its appearance and location readily understood. This was built when the driveway was relocated from New Lane during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This change is shown on Ordnance Survey Maps of 1880, and the driveway shown as a tree lined avenue.

Originally, the grounds of Churton Lodge were larger than the current site boundary, and over the years, land within the site have been sold for new housing development. Its grounds today include land to the west of the access drive, which is a formal garden curtilage with parkland trees to the north, grass pasture and a formal lawn area.

The walled kitchen garden to the south of Churton Lodge, was once part of its curtilage. It is now in separate ownership and includes a modern house, of brown brick, slate roof and two storey. It looks modern, but its design has been carefully considered with decorative chimneys, dentilled eaves and a dormer window. It can be seen to some degree from New Lane, from its junction with Pump Lane. It is located behind the substantial sandstone boundary wall that forms part of the high walled garden to Churton Lodge, which abuts New Lane.

A Grotto exists inside and only visible from the private garden of Churton Lodge. It is located along the south-western boundary with New Lane. This is an artificial garden structure made of the local red sandstone, created in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, designed as a picturesque component to complement the Italianate house design by Lockwood, and is an important component of the garden at Churton Lodge. It is a Grade II listed structure and is an important and comparatively rare surviving garden feature. It is constructed of substantial pieces of red sandstone, built to form a bank four metres high. It forms a rocky, winding passage parallel to the wall with several openings. It was built in an era of the development of the private landscaped gardens, and its design would have been influenced by notable publications such as Edward Kemp's 'How to Lay Out a Garden' (1864). Kemp felt that picturesque elements should be obscured and happened upon by chance.



Character Area 2. North Eastern Quarter: Churton Lodge (Grade II) – largely hidden but of interest as a small complete villa with walled garden and pleasure garden, remodelled by an eminent architect, T. M. Lockwood. It is Italianate in style and has a formal garden setting, facing south east. It is built of grey sandstone ashlar with grey slate roofs. Symmetrical front: central portion of 3 storeys has canted corners with 3 windows to front and 1 to each oblique face. Recessed wing of 2 storeys to each side has a wide 2-storey canted bay window. Of note is its three Flemish inspired gables. A projecting porch has panelled oak door in round-arched opening under carved frieze and broken curved pediment (containing cartouche) on composite pilasters.



The Grotto at Churton Lodge (Grade II). A linear grotto which forms a rocky, winding passage parallel with its face to the garden, through which there are several openings. The west side of the grotto structure forms the boundary wall to New Lane.

Photographs and history of the house and grotto are copyright of Mel Morris Conservation.



Left: Wall at Churton Lodge Kitchen Garden (Grade II). Built of red sandstone squared rubble, and local brown brick. Flush stone coping. There is a furnace house and former greenhouses adjoining the north wall of garden. There are also purpose built kennels and stables dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. All these are largely hidden from public view. The wall has brick buttresses, rubble sandstone and a snecked dressed stone finish.

Right: The wall along the north side of New Lane. Note the huge cock and hen boulder coping stones.

### Character Area 3. Centre



This area is quite densely developed, and the road layout and lack of enclosure makes this area more open in character. There is a notable absence of trees and hedgerow, compared to the north of Chester Road, This gives the character of this area a very different feel, more urban and dense. The conservation area boundary includes all the built form on the west side of the road. Buildings are set close to the road, most in small gardens.

Chester Road comprises a ribbon development from The White Horse Pub to the end of the built up village boundary to the south, where development is exclusively to the western side of the road, the upper floors of these two storey buildings looking east towards Beeston and Peckforton.

The White Horse Pub is Edwardian exuberance with its canted double height bay windows, its front central balcony at first floor and its well defined front door. The recent redecoration is well considered, and its character is enhanced. Also of note is the large hanging sign with two white horses astride the top.

Edwardian terraced houses are on the south side of Chester Road and on the north side of Stannage Lane. A distinctive urban form of development in the village, notable in the use of materials not associated with the village, of red clay roof tiles, pebbledash render and brick, they enliven the townscape with a strong townscape rhythm associated with this type of housing. The distinctive canted bay windows, bracketed dormer windows punctuating the eaves line, rafter feet exposed below the gutter line, chimneys and small paned window casements create a uniform terrace that is a positive contributor to the character of the conservation area, and a key feature.



Left: Rowley Terrace, built c1898 – with good townscape rhythm. Centre: No. 5 Rowley Terrace. Right: Lime Cottage and Garden Cottage on Chester Road. These are two cottages, semi-detached, two story and built of brick in Flemish bond. They are buildings that are important to the character of the conservation area. Their character is amplified by small paned windows and timber boarded doors.



Three types of houses – all are cottages on Chester Road. The buildings left and centre are largely symmetrical and have a well-proportioned building frontage, with traditional casements. Note gable end chimneys. The cottage on the right has a timber cruck frame evident in its north gable end. Hedgerows, trees and sandstone boundary walls are a fundamental character of the conservation area. The hedgerows are evident as agricultural field boundaries and a key feature of small domestic gardens.

**Hob Lane** is narrow, a route from Chester Road to Stannage Lane. It can accommodate a car, but it is so narrow that the road markings seem somewhat pointless. There is a higher percentage of modern buildings to historic buildings on Hob Lane, and whilst some boundaries are strong and typical of the area, there is a more open view to some buildings – notably the modern bungalows, which have quite generous gardens. This would benefit from hedge planting to strengthen the boundary and street scene.



A converted former agricultural building and the former Methodist Church.

The south of **Stannage Lane** has some buildings of sandstone, brick and render, all two storey, all with the consistent street boundary of red sandstone walling, but the quality here is variable, with some buildings that have lost all their original building features. The road here is more urban, there is no grass verge to soften the street and there is a loss of vegetation, that is more noticeable as a feature elsewhere. The character is most striking and cohesive at the junction of Hob Lane and to the north of Stannage Lane. The cottages, below, are at this junction and contribute to the character of the conservation area.



Returning to the other side of Hob Lane to Chester Road. From the north, Chester Road curves slightly towards the junction with **Pump Lane**, where Cross Cottage is diagonally positioned so it faces Chester Road. Originally owned by the Barnston Estate, it has a classically derived appearance to the north west façade, all of which is in Flemish brick bond. It has the appearance of a lodge, used to house an Estate workers family. It has a distinct frontage with a plain arched recess and a simple red sandstone sill band, without any decorative detail apart from windows with the arch, and a later one to the side. Nonetheless it has a visually distinctive presence to the Barnston Estate land on the south side of Pump Lane. This may have been built at the same time as the forge and the additional connecting south range of the outbuildings to Churton Hall farm. It has been extended later, in English Garden Wall bond to the east, with the hipped roof elongated. It is flanked by red sandstone walls to either side.



Cross Cottage

Pump Lane is a key route into the village with a well-defined built form of townscape interest. Principal frontages of a small number of locally interesting buildings add interest to the landscape. The lane becomes more open in character further east of Churton Hall farm. It comprises a line of ribbon development on the northern side of Pump Lane. The buildings are on higher ground than the road.

Key characteristics include a strong back of pavement, staggered building line, created by either boundary walls or buildings. The buildings are generally of two storeys. The topography of this area creates a variety of scales provided by the road, low boundary walls, the hedgerows, and roofs, which overall creates a pleasing juxtaposition with each other.

The townscape and urban form along Pump Lane is similarly modest in scale, lined with boundary walls of red sandstone and hedgerow and two storey Estate cottages, the western part possibly part of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, pre John Douglas Grosvenor Eaton Estate.

The approach to the conservation area from the east along Pump Lane consists of housing on the northside of the road, some clearly associated with the later 19<sup>th</sup> century remodelling of the Grosvenor Eaton Estate. To the south of Pump Lane, and outside the conservation area, is the gently rolling agricultural land belonging to the Barnston Estate. The built-up area has a strong and varied architectural palate. Its townscape quality is moderate to high.

Most buildings are of brick, and whilst there are hedgerows, they are noticeably absent from many street boundaries. A pair of John Douglas style semi-detached Grosvenor Eaton Estate cottages are particularly distinctive with their barley sugar chimneys, brick mullioned windows, gabled front elevations and diaper brickwork.



The linear row of properties along **Pump Lane** has a largely uniform street line, created by coursed sandstone boundary walls and there is a strong street enclosure. There are varying degrees of heights, although most are two storey. The buildings are set well back from the road in raised gardens and the space around the buildings allow for a somewhat looser grain and looser development density. The generous front garden slopes towards the east of Pump Lane and become much closer to building frontages.



In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, Church House was built on the north side of Pump Lane. It was known as Churton House Farm. It was built in 1682, in local red brick in irregular English bond, with grey slate roofs and a three storey porch in the middle of its façade. A date stone to the second floor is carved JC/RSB/1682. It has Gothic iron casements to upper storeys of porch, a twelve-pane 19<sup>th</sup> century wood casement to each storey of each wing. Window openings have slightly cambered gauged brick heads and plain stone cills. In right end gable are a canted, hipped bay window with small panes to lower storey, a three-light leaded casement to upper storey and a two-light leaded casement to attic. It ceased to be a farm in 1982. It was listed in 1984. History courtesy of Melanie Backe-Hansen.

**New Lane** has a strong sense of enclosure created by a tight grain of development and linear back of pavement boundary line. It has a greater variety of building types and height, scale and enclosure to the road. The enclosure created by buildings along each side of the road is particularly strong to the north of New Lane, but the alterations to these buildings mean that the character of the building is slightly diluted.

To the south of New Lane, the boundary flounders a little as there are so many openings required for access to driveways and garaging. This is exacerbated by the removal of boundary walls, and unpainted timber gates along the street boundary line, which loses the character and solid lines created by sandstone boundary walls. There are houses and agricultural style buildings here, which demonstrate the historic agricultural dominated character of the village centre. There is limited rhythm and a slightly incoherent built form, but there is a consistency of scale and a similar palette of materials. This is probably the weaker part of the conservation area.



Simple terrace – Parkers Row. Note simple open bracket porch and timber casement windows, the timber boarded painted door, and the continuous shallow eaves line.



Ledt: Parker's Row. Centre and right: Looking north and south at the top of New Lane. A dense urban form, the building line at back of road, which makes the built form quite dominant and urban in character.



Left: The walled garden to Churton Lodge; Right: looking south from the north of New Lane.

#### Character Area 4. Churton Hall Farm

At the junction of Pump Lane and New Lane the view opens out to the impressive frontage of Churton Hall, its frontage running parallel to the street. The frontage is designed to be seen along New Lane and was perhaps built here to define the boundary to the Barnston Estate. The U shaped range of outbuildings lie to the east of the hall, the forge and north front providing a solid and high boundary to the road. The staggered slate roofline follows the topography, the red sandstone bedrock is evident beneath the brick walls. A red sandstone plinth defines the change in levels between Pump Lane and inside the Churton Hall Farm site.



Left: Churton Hall Farm: Churton Hall (Grade II). Note the raising of the roof, probably undertaken in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with 19<sup>th</sup> century casement windows; the smaller windows above the porch that replaced a dormer window; the off centre first floor window to the west wing; the central chimney stack is a late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century addition the right chimney has been altered. The lateral chimney stack to the east gable has been truncated. The north west projecting gable perhaps retains some 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular revival chevrons to the first floor.

Right: Churton Hall Farm outbuildings, seen looking west along Pump Lane, are curtilage listed buildings, a U-shaped range built in two phases.



Left: The east elevation of Churton Hall, 2023. Note the curved wall adjacent to the lateral chimney stack shown in the image of 1793. The centre photograph shows the jettied first floor and close studded timber framing, truncated by a coursed sandstone wall, part of the second lateral chimney stack – the earlier one is of stone.

Right: The east wing of the house, with a service wing to the rear. Note how this has changed since the 1793 drawing. There is a two storey wing, which appears to be one build and is early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This has metal small paned windows. There is a side entrance from the farmyard, which suggests that this became the primary entrance. It is a six panel raised and fielded Georgian front door, probably early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Internally there is a door of the same age leading to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century wing. The bay window to the left of the latticed entrance door is later 19<sup>th</sup> century, this room was the farm office.

The walled garden on the south side of the road is hidden behind a low Victorian sandstone wall and hedgerow. Churton Hall Farm forms part of the experience of Pump Lane and the southern part of Chester Road, with the boundary to Chester Road defined by red sandstone walls. The northern boundary of Churton Hall Farm is well defined. Structures inside the site are not visible from Chester Road to any significant degree.



Inside the site at Churton Hall Farm, showing from top: Left to right: The rear Victorian wing of the farmhouse, a washhouse, and the U-shaped range of outbuildings. The last two photographs show the walled garden with a hidden dovecot with steps. The walled garden and its features are to be restored.

**The site's contribution to the character of the conservation area: -**

- Churton Hall is in a prominent location on the junction of Pump Lane and New Lane, viewed most prominently from New Lane, and contributing to the character of this area.
- The north range of the U shaped range of outbuildings to the east of the Hall are highly prominent in Pump Lane and are seen within the view of Churton Hall.
- The way the views of the buildings are appreciated from Pump Lane means that there are a series of primary and secondary views of the buildings within the same view, created by the built form and appearance of the Hall, the dominant appearance of the north range of the U shaped range created by the high walls and staggered roof line, topography and visible bedrock of this part of the conservation area.
- The Giraffe House, walled garden and pigsties are appreciated from within the Churton Hall site, but not to any degree outside it.
- Churton Hall is a landmark in the conservation area. The outbuildings are of interest but do not have landmark quality. Nonetheless the north range of the U shaped range of outbuildings is prominent in the conservation area.
- The farmstead is associated with a designed landscape insofar that it has been designed to fulfil farming processes in the most efficient way.
- The site illustrates the development of the area from the medieval period onwards and is of critical character to the Churton Conservation Area.
- It contributes to the quality of recognisable spaces, but its condition needs to be urgently addressed.
- It has a significant historical association with the historic road layout.
- The hall and farmstead has historic associations with the Barnston Estate and has done so for centuries.

### 3.2 Landscape Character and Public Realm

The landscape character is critical to the character of the conservation area. The number and diversity of mature trees are extremely important, and it is no surprise that there are many that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Hedges are also important, and when they sit above low sandstone boundary walls, they create a screen that is both imposing and soft. Narrow grass verges are an important landscape feature to the character of the lanes.

In the 19th century there were many journals and books published on gardening and the main emphasis was on how the house and garden should be designed as a unity. The most influential books, that influenced the design and layout of the middle class garden, were: “The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion” J. C. Loudon (1838), “How to Lay out a Garden” Edward Kemp (1850), and “The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds of Small Extent” Frank Scott (1870). The importance of the small country house or villa and its aspect was of key importance. This type of layout and aspect is well established to all the larger houses in Churton, where they have tree lined street boundaries.

The pump on Pump Lane is of historical interest, and the setts around it suit the context. It is a lift type pump manufactured by G. Ingold of Bishop’s Stortford and probably of late 19<sup>th</sup> century origin. An almost identical one in Brewer Road, Pampishead, Cambridgeshire is listed at Grade II.

Also of importance are the avenue of trees that line Pump Lane along the Churton Hall Farm boundary, softening the huge scale and massing of the building, and creating a human scale between the building and road level.

Cast iron signage, to Grosvenor Eaton Estate buildings, containing the Talbot hound, and cast iron signposts and milestone markers are also important.

The former quarry on Stannage Lane provided the building material for the village and it is of historic interest, although not accessible to the public.

The public realm is generally neutral, with large amounts of tarmac. Of note are stone kerbs to Chester Road.



From left to right: Cast iron signage on Chester Road; the pump on Pump Lane; the listed pump at Pampishead, mature trees and boundary walls, milestone, the quarry on Stannage Lane.

### 3.3 Buildings and Structures of Townscape Merit

Several unlisted buildings were identified as having townscape value. These buildings are not significant enough to be listed through national and statutory designations, but local authorities may formally identify heritage assets that are important to the area, for example through local listing, as part of the plan making process or during the decision-making process. A local list recognises and identifies buildings, sites and spaces that help build a sense of local identity and distinctiveness, a sense of history place and belonging, but that are not statutory listed.

The following buildings and structures in the Conservation Area are an initial set of possible nominations for a future local list. These suggestions should not pre-judge the process for the creation of a local list as described in the management plan. However, they have been assessed using criteria from Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7 (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed) January 2021. They have been chosen for completeness of historic interest and aesthetic value.

They are as follows: -

- Chester Road:** Greenfields and Orchard Cottage, Walnut Cottage, Lime Cottage, Garden Cottage, The White Horse Pub, The Old Red Lion, No's 1-5 Rowley Place, Dairy Barns, Highway Farm, Wayside Farmhouse.
- Stannage Lane:** Stannage Farmhouse, The Old Farm, Stannage Point, Knowl Cottage, Quarry Cottage.
- Hob Lane:** Chapel House.
- New Lane:** Parkers Row.
- Pump Lane:** Old Hall Cottage, Village Pump, Giraffe House, Former stone barn, Stone Cottage, Minshull – pair of Douglas Estate cottages, Pump Cottages.

**Because of the variety and character of red sandstone boundary walls, it is deemed that all these walls are of townscape merit, contributing strongly to the character of the conservation area.**

**Please note that brick boundary walls are important as they demonstrate the boundary between public and private ownership.**

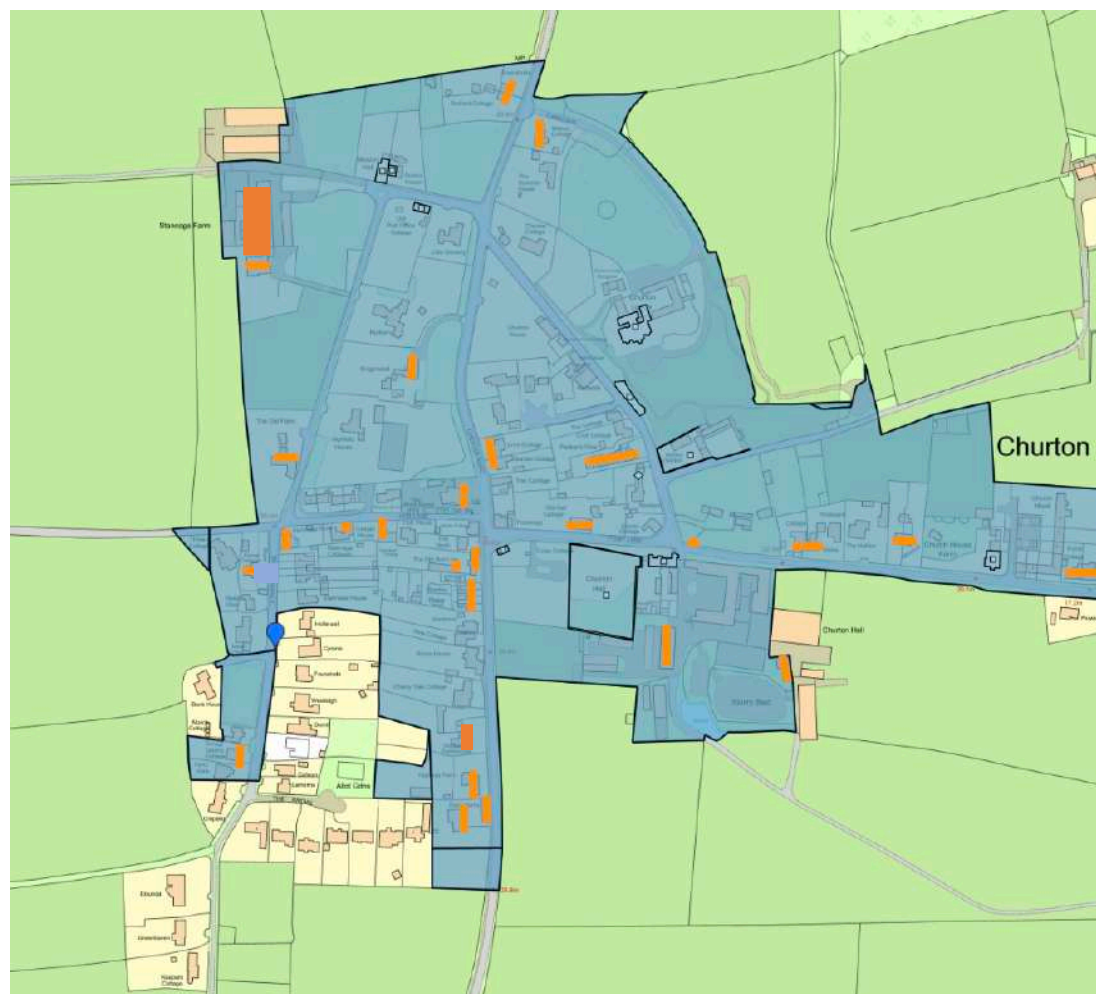


Fig 14. Proposed buildings of townscape merit (orange). Please note that boundary walls have not been added to the map, because of their high number.



**Chester Road** – from top: left to right: Greenfields and Orchard Cottage, Walnut Cottage, Lime Cottage, Garden Cottage.

Bottom from left to right: The White Horse Pub, The Old Red Lion, No's 1-5 Rowley Place.



**Chester Road.** Left to right: Dairy Barns, Highway Farm, Wayside Farmhouse.



**Stannage Lane.** Top from left to right: Stannage Farmhouse and farm buildings, The Old Farm, Stannage Point.

Bottom from left to right: Knowl Cottage, Quarry Cottage.



**Hob Lane:** Chapel House.



**New Lane:** Parkers Row



**Pump Lane** – Top from left to right: Old Hall Cottage, Village Pump, Former stone barn.

Bottom from left to right: Giraffe House, Stone Cottage and Minshull – pair of Douglas Estate cottages, Pump Cottages.

## 4.0 Assessment of Condition

### 4.1 General Condition

The general condition of the existing Conservation Area is very good. Conservation policy works well to some degree, but inappropriate alterations let the area down. Most of the buildings are domestic and therefore enjoy permitted development rights. Planning permission should therefore be sought for changes that would result in a material change in the appearance.

### 4.2 Key Detractors

1. Modern replacement windows.
2. The use of non-traditional materials, which are at odds with the host building, such as uPVC.
3. Close board fencing to boundaries on the road.
4. Lack of landscaping to the car park boundary to The White Horse Pub.
5. Solar panels, whilst necessary, need to be carefully sited.
6. The loss of landscaping to boundary frontages.

### 4.3 Capacity for Change

1. Reinstating traditional or timber windows and doors and removing uPVC and / or modern timber opening replacements. This would be particularly beneficial when properties form part of a group. Appropriate styles within the Conservation Area are side opening casement windows.
2. Retaining traditional building materials appropriate to the building age, style and character - cast iron guttering, slate or red tile, timber windows and removing features and extensions that are clearly unsuited to the building.
3. The opportunity should be taken to enhance the public realm and pedestrian environment to key pedestrian routes, including to the River Dee extending directly from Hob Lane.
4. Protecting and enhancing boundaries using stone walls and soft landscaping.

## 5.0 Boundary Changes

The Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF and best practice guidance produced by Historic England all state that the boundaries of existing conservation areas should be kept under review. Parts which are no longer special should be excluded. Where drawn too tightly, the Conservation Area should be extended to include more recent phases or plots associated with buildings of historic interest.

It is now recognised that conservation area boundaries need to be seen within a wider context. Designated areas should provide protection to buildings that were perhaps not previously considered to be of architectural merit and to the spaces between buildings, that can reasonably be seen to form part of a cohesive whole with each other and that preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. It is also the case that further information can come to light about the historic importance of buildings and spaces.

It is proposed that there is an addition to the northern boundary to better reflect the present boundary of Character Area 2. Churton Lodge. This boundary has a physical boundary that better reflects the present situation on the ground, in relation to the boundary at Churton Lodge. It should therefore be included within the Conservation Area boundary.





Aerial View: Google 2025. Proposed extension in red, the approximate present boundary in blue.

## 6.0 Summary – Character Assessment

The overall character of Churton conservation area remains strong. The historic core retains its special architectural and historic interest and its character and appearance remains significant, with a unique sense of place. It is in good condition, but improvements can be made to strengthen and enhance its character and better reveal its significance.

<b>Critical</b>	– of key importance, defining the distinct character of the conservation area
<b>Positive</b>	– contributes strongly and positively to the character of the conservation area
<b>Neutral</b>	– neither positive nor negative features that contribute to the conservation area
<b>Negative</b>	– detracting from the character of the conservation area

In terms of significance, it can be defined as follows: -

**1. North Western quarter: - Critical.** This includes the north west of Chester Road and Stannage Lane, and the trees and low boundary walls framing the road. This is primarily enclosed in character, with trees or boundary walls. Generally, this area has a loose grain, and many buildings are in large gardens set back from the road. This area has a strongly agricultural setting and panoramic views to North Wales.

**2. North Eastern Quarter: – Positive.** This area comprises Churton Lodge and its garden and other residential buildings and structures. The sites, buildings and structures are largely hidden from publicly accessible viewpoints, but of interest as a small complete villa with unique garden features.

**3. Centre: - Positive with some neutral aspects.** This area is quite densely developed. Key characteristics include typically narrow historic plots, a relatively dense urban grain, buildings that front the road or are in small gardens, a strong, sometimes staggered, building line of either boundary walls or buildings, which are generally two storeys, with minor anomalies of three storey or one and half storey.

**4. Churton Hall Farm: - Positive.** This area comprises Churton Hall and its farm buildings.

## 7.0 Management and Policy Recommendations

These are recommendations to address issues and pressures within the Conservation Area, in order to protect its special architectural and historic interest.

- Ensure that any new development within the Conservation Area or the within the setting of the Conservation Area preserves and enhances the character of the Conservation Area.
- Ensure that any new development ties in with the Churton Design Code and Churton Conservation Area Character Areas in this appraisal.
- The replacement of windows, doors, roofing materials and decorative details should conform to traditional designs and materials found within the conservation area and be appropriate to the character of the building. The diversity of the different character areas should be respected.
- Where solar panels or solar slates are proposed they should be located to the rear or side elevations (aside from those that are street facing) and be set flush with the roof slope. If this is not possible, planning permission will be required to ensure a balanced approach to heritage conservation and climate change mitigation is taken.
- Front gardens should remain green, flower filled spaces and any change in surfaces should be permeable, traditional in style and character and retain a landscaped character. Non-permeable surfaces require planning permission.
- The total removal of boundary treatments have a detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area, and these should require further protection.
- Consider the protection all the red sandstone boundary walls in the village, by the introduction of an Article 4 Direction.
- Consider introducing an Article Four Direction for other changes to dwelling houses, such as for windows and doors, gates, guttering.
- Create a two-yearly photographic record to manage change in the conservation area.
- Trees contribute greatly to the appearance of the Conservation Area and are considered to make a significant contribution to the conservation area's character. Unnecessary removal or works that may be considered detrimental should be resisted. Where removal is essential then an appropriate replanting scheme will be encouraged to mitigate any detrimental effects on the character of the Conservation Area.
- Highway and public realm works should be undertaken as part of a wider public realm strategy.

## Appendices

### Methodology

The content of this report has been based on fieldwork analysis, which has been summarised in this document.

A key aspect of the survey work was to record buildings of local interest and townscape merit. These are buildings that are not listed, nor are they likely to be, but are sufficiently important to reflect the distinct character of the area.

The appraisal summarises the area and has sub categorised it according to the contribution that the characteristics make to the overall townscape value and character of the conservation area. These areas have been defined as: -

- **Critical** – of key importance, defining the distinct character of the conservation area
- **Positive** – contributes strongly and positively to the character of the conservation area
- **Neutral** – neither positive nor negative features that contribute to the conservation area
- **Negative** – detracting from the character of the conservation area

### Scope of the appraisal

This document is not intended to be comprehensive in its scope and content. It may not include every feature or aspect located in or adjoining to the Conservation Area, but it may well be of significance as evidence emerges.

Such information will be considered in conjunction with the appraisal during decision making by the local planning authority.

The recommendation in the appraisal identifies actions that will be supported in the Conservation Area Management Plan. Some of this will be through the Development Management process. A review of existing boundaries has also been undertaken to determine if areas should be included or removed from the designation.

## Legislative and Planning Policy Context

### Legislative Context

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the legislative and national policy framework for Conservation Area appraisals and management plans.

Under Section 66 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, when assessing planning applications, there is a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings or their settings. Section 72(1) of the same Act, states that the local planning authority must pay special attention ‘to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.’

### National Planning Policy Guidance

Policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (*December 2024*), set out national planning policy in respect to the conservation of the historic environment.

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states that “Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.”

A conservation area is a heritage asset. A **heritage asset** is described in the glossary of the NPPF (Annex 2) as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).” (*Annex 2: Glossary, [National Planning Policy Framework](#), Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, December 2024*).

**Designated heritage assets** as those designated under legislation. These are a “World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area”. (*Annex 2: Glossary, [National Planning Policy Framework](#), Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, December 2024*).

Paragraph 204 states that: “When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest”.

**Non-Designated Heritage Assets** are described in the NPPF as heritage assets. They are defined on the Government’s website as “buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.” (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>).

The definition of **significance** in relation to heritage policy is defined in the glossary of the NPPF as “The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.” (*Annex 2: Glossary, [National Planning Policy Framework](#), Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, December 2024*).

The **setting** of a heritage asset is defined 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 is not a heritage designation. Case law has determined that preserve means to not cause harm to the setting, rather than to not change the setting. If there is harm, whatever magnitude, then the harm, must be evaluated in terms of assessing and mitigating positive and negative impacts in a holistic and balanced manner. This is to establish an overall conclusion on the level of harm, the weight that could be attributed to each element, seasonal effects and non-visual impacts and mitigating measures, including public benefit.

## Local Planning Policy Context

Policies in local development plans, including neighbourhood plans, set out national and local planning policy in respect to the conservation of the historic environment.

Relevant local plan policies are in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan: Part 1 and Part 2.

Part 1:

- ENV5 Historic Environment
- ENV6 High quality design and sustainable construction.

Part 2:

- DM 3 - Design, character and visual amenity
- DM 46 - Development in conservation areas
- DM 47 – Listed buildings
- DM 48 – Non-designated Heritage Assets.
- DM 50 - Archaeology

These policies reflect national planning policy in the preservation and enhancement of the building environment.

Neighbourhood Plans can also set out planning policies in relation to conservation area protection and management. The Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and, as part of this process, has commissioned a review of Churton Conservation Area.

## Historic England Policy Guidance

The following **Historic England documents** were consulted as part of this appraisal: -

- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008)
- Historic England *2017 Understanding Place, Historic Area Assessments*
- Historic England *2017 The Setting of Heritage Assets, Second Edition, Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3*
- Historic England *2018 Streets for All, Historic England Advice Note 1*
- Historic England *2019 Statement of Heritage Significance, Historic England Advice Note 12*
- Historic England *2019 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Second edition, Historic England Advice Note 1*
- Historic England *2022 Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment, Historic England Advice Note 11*

**Identifying significance is contained in the** Historic England document Conservation Principles, (2008). Four heritage values are assigned through which a site or place can be interpreted: evidential, historical, communal and aesthetic.

**Ways to write the assessment** is contained in the Historic England suite of documents Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments; as well as Heritage Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management 2019.

**Public consultation** will be undertaken on the appraisal and its contents.

### What Does Conservation Area Designation, and the legislation and planning policy context, mean in practice?

- **Determining applications for development** – that preserve or enhance the conservation area.
- **Demolition** - Planning permission is usually required to totally or substantially demolish unlisted buildings or structures within a conservation area.
- **Permitted development** - The extent of 'permitted' development is reduced, such as cladding, extensions to the side of the original dwelling or the installation of satellite dishes.
- **Pruning or felling trees** – A Section 211 Notice is required to the local planning authority for such works to trees in the conservation area, which are over 75mm in trunk diameter, and higher than 1.5 meters above ground level. This is different to works to trees protected separately under a **Tree Preservation Order (TPO)** where the written consent of the Local Planning Authority is required. Should a tree be felled, a replacement is usually required.
- **Advertisements** - Restrictions apply regarding the type and size of advertisements that can be erected without advertisement consent.

#### Other permissions

The Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO) sets out **permitted development rights** for certain minor forms of development - i.e., development that may be legitimately undertaken without the need for planning permission.

A local planning authority can remove permitted development rights to positively enhance the special interest of a conservation area, under an Article 4 direction. **This allows certain types of small-scale development to take place with the benefit of further discussion and if required, with planning permission.**

It is designed to further consider the impact of incremental changes to features such as windows, doors, chimneys boundary walls and gate posts and certain types of extensions, before they are undertaken. It also allows for time to provide an agreed design solution that suits both the applicant and the special character of the conservation area.

### **What is an Article 4(2) Direction?**

The buildings within Churton Conservation Area are locally acknowledged for their quality, character and appearance and their contribution to the character of the conservation area. Most buildings are residential, and those buildings, unless they are listed buildings, enjoy several permitted development rights.

Several conservation areas in Cheshire West and Chester, and indeed in other local authorities, have introduced Article 4 (2) Directions.

This affects dwelling houses in the conservation area, which would otherwise have permitted development rights. The Article 4 (2) Direction does not affect flats, houses in multiple occupation and commercial properties, as they do not enjoy any permitted development rights.

Subject to certain conditions, the introduction of an Article 4 (2) Direction brings under the control of the planning authority piecemeal works that could otherwise erode the character of the conservation areas, such as changes to boundaries, roof materials, alterations to proportions and materials of windows and doors, or the removal of chimneys. This means that planning permission could be required for the following alterations: -

- The enlargement of dwelling houses including the erection of structures or laying of hard surfaces within their curtilages.
- Change of materials to external walls of dwelling houses including external doors, windows, window frames, rainwater goods and other external items.
- Painting of those items (other than re-painting in the same colour).
- Any other alterations to the fenestration and external doors of dwelling houses.
- Any other alterations to the roofs including chimneys of dwelling houses (including provision of rooflights).
- Installation of satellite antennae on dwelling houses or within their curtilages.
- Alterations to, or the demolition of, boundary walls or other means of enclosure, insofar as the development would front onto a highway, waterway or open space.

The purpose is not to prevent development, but to discuss with the local planning authority first.

Alterations to listed buildings, both internally and externally, and to structures within its curtilage that were built before 1 July 1948, will usually always require an application for listed building consent. Please speak to your local planning authority for further advice.

Commercial properties do not have permitted development rights. Therefore, the only works that may be carried out without Planning Permission are works of repair and maintenance and internal alterations, provided the building is not a Listed Building.

## Further reading

Cheshire Archives and Local Studies.  
Cheshire Historic Environment Record

- <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/traditional-windows-care-repair-upgrading/heag039-traditional-windows-revfeb17/>
- <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/heag-268-conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management/>
- <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/>
- <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/>
- <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/streets-for-all/heag149-sfa-national/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/permitted-development-rights-for-householders-technical-guidance>