

Alvanley

Village Design Statement



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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the Alvanley Village Design Statement ?

The Alvanley Village Design Statement has been written by residents of the village, facilitated by Cheshire Landscape Trust, following a period of research and consultation with the local community. Its purpose is to give clear and simple guidance on design and environmental issues to anyone who wants to build, modify or extend property in the village of Alvanley, so that:

- developments are appropriate to their setting
- high standards are achieved in design and the use of materials
- the distinctive character of the village is maintained and, where possible, enhanced

The Design Statement is therefore relevant to architects, developers and builders, householders and statutory bodies, but it is also applicable to relatively modest alterations to property which would not normally require formal planning consent. In these circumstances it can be used as a reference point to provide information on what are considered to be appropriate modifications to, for example, boundaries (walls, fences, hedges), open spaces, footpaths and private gardens. It is often the cumulative impact of such modest alterations to properties that enhances – or can be detrimental to – the character of the village.

The Design Statement is not intended to limit architects and designers to reproducing the past. It cannot and will not stop development and change from taking place, and it does not offer a solution for each individual site in the village but it can be used to inform and influence how development is implemented.

2. The Planning Background

2.1 The Village Design Statement and Local Planning Policies

Having been approved and adopted by the local planning authority, the Village Design Statement is a Supplementary Planning Document (“SPD”) and is a material consideration for local planning officers and councillors when they are dealing with planning applications in the village so that the views of the village community can be taken into account when planning decisions are made. For this reason, anyone wishing to submit a planning application is advised to consult this document, including the checklists on pages 20 and 21, before they finalise their plans.

Guidance and advice, and details of how to make planning applications, can be found on the Cheshire West and Chester (CWC) website (www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk). The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for CWC also highlights how the community will be consulted on planning applications and on the preparation of other Local Development Framework (LDF) documents.

More detail about the status of this Design Statement and its links into the local planning framework are given in Appendix 1. Wherever the Statement refers to matters covered by specific local planning policies brief reference to that policy is quoted, for example “BE1”. There is a full list of all these policy references in Appendix 1, page 23.

2.2 Alvanley Conservation Area

A large part of the central spine of the village, stretching from Walnut Tree Farm on Helsby Road to Birches Farm on Manley Road, is a designated Conservation Area in which potential developments are already likely to have to meet criteria additional to those required for normal Planning Permission – see section 6.2 .

3. The Village Setting

3.1 History

There is evidence of prehistoric activity on the Sandstone Ridge, which was probably a long-distance route avoiding the densely-forested Cheshire Plain, and a Neolithic flint scraper of c2200 BC was found during excavations at Ash Cottage in 1980.

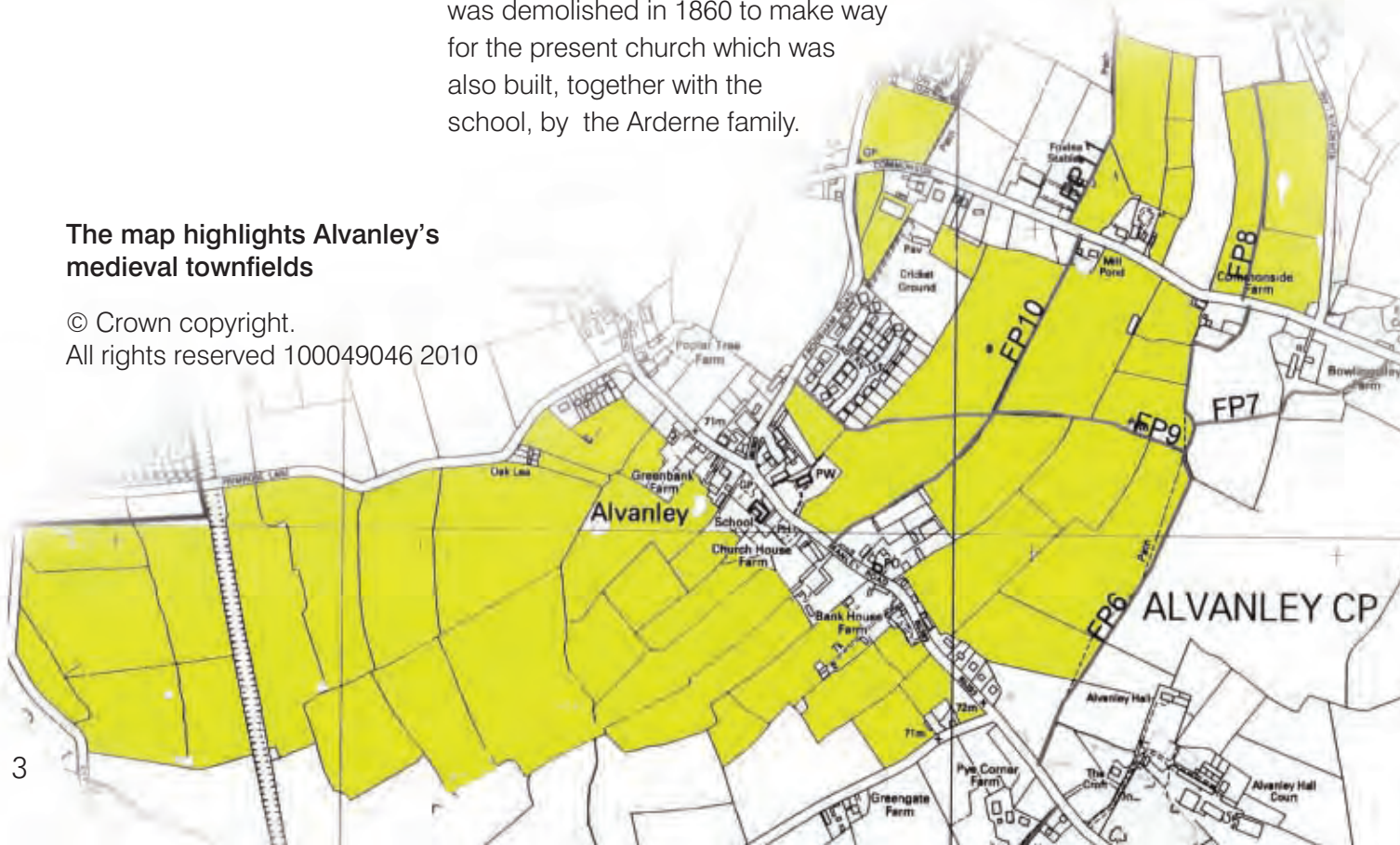
The name Alvanley in Anglo-Saxon means Aelfwald's meadow, suggesting a clearing in the forest, and we know that clearance of the surrounding woodland for agriculture had already begun by 1086, the time of the Domesday Book. Some of the fields adjoining the village – opposite Church House Farm, for example – still echo the pattern of the medieval fields. For over 600 years Alvanley and the surrounding land was owned by Arderne family. The family's control of the village continued until the 1920s when the estate was broken up and sold.

Until the land reforms of the 18th century Alvanley was an ecclesiastical parish, the landowners being obliged to pay a tithe to support the church. Each tenant farmer had to contribute his share of the tithe, which was stored in the tithe barn at Alvanley Hall Farm, now converted to a private house.

The first recorded church at Alvanley was an oratory founded by Catherine Arderne in 1446. This was replaced by a chapel built in 1540. After a chequered history including a period of 30 years in the 1700's when it fell into disuse, this chapel was demolished in 1860 to make way for the present church which was also built, together with the school, by the Arderne family.

The map highlights Alvanley's medieval townfields

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Until the late 20th century the village was largely self-supporting, the majority of the population being involved in farming, and supporting trades. Since the Second World War the growth in industry and commerce and the decline of farming has changed the character of the village. Many residents now commute to jobs outside the parish, and the rising population (2001 census: 485) has increased the demand for residential developments in the village. This led to the building of the Arderne Lea estate in the 1970s and a number of other infill developments since. Further large-scale developments have been prevented by planning restrictions and only farm-building conversions and new buildings on part of a former garage site have been permitted in recent years.

3.2 Geology

The village of Alvanley nestles on the slopes at the rear of one of the great sandstone ridges that bisect the Cheshire Plain. The land slopes westward from Alvanley Cliff (140 metres above sea level) and from Commonsides, at the east and north of the parish, down to around 20 metres in the valley of Peckmill Brook at the extreme south-west corner of the parish.

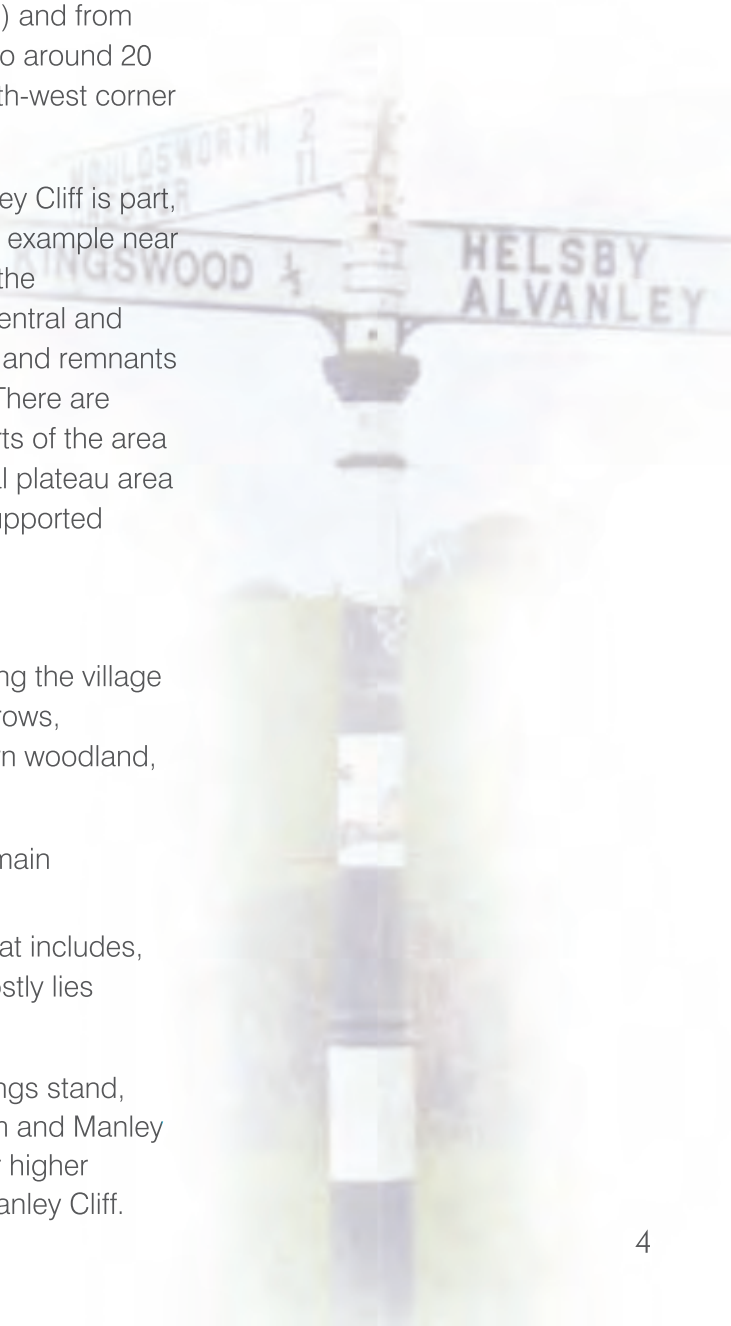
The scarp slope of the Sandstone Ridge, of which Alvanley Cliff is part, is cut in several places by deep and often dry valleys, for example near Yarrangall Green and Queen Charlotte's Wood. Most of the pastureland coincides with the boulder clay area in the central and western parts of the parish. Patches of wetlands, ponds and remnants of marl-pits are also found on these boulder clay areas. There are glacial and gravel deposits in the central and eastern parts of the area where there are Keuper Sandstone outcrops. The central plateau area of the parish lies on brown sands and has traditionally supported arable farming.

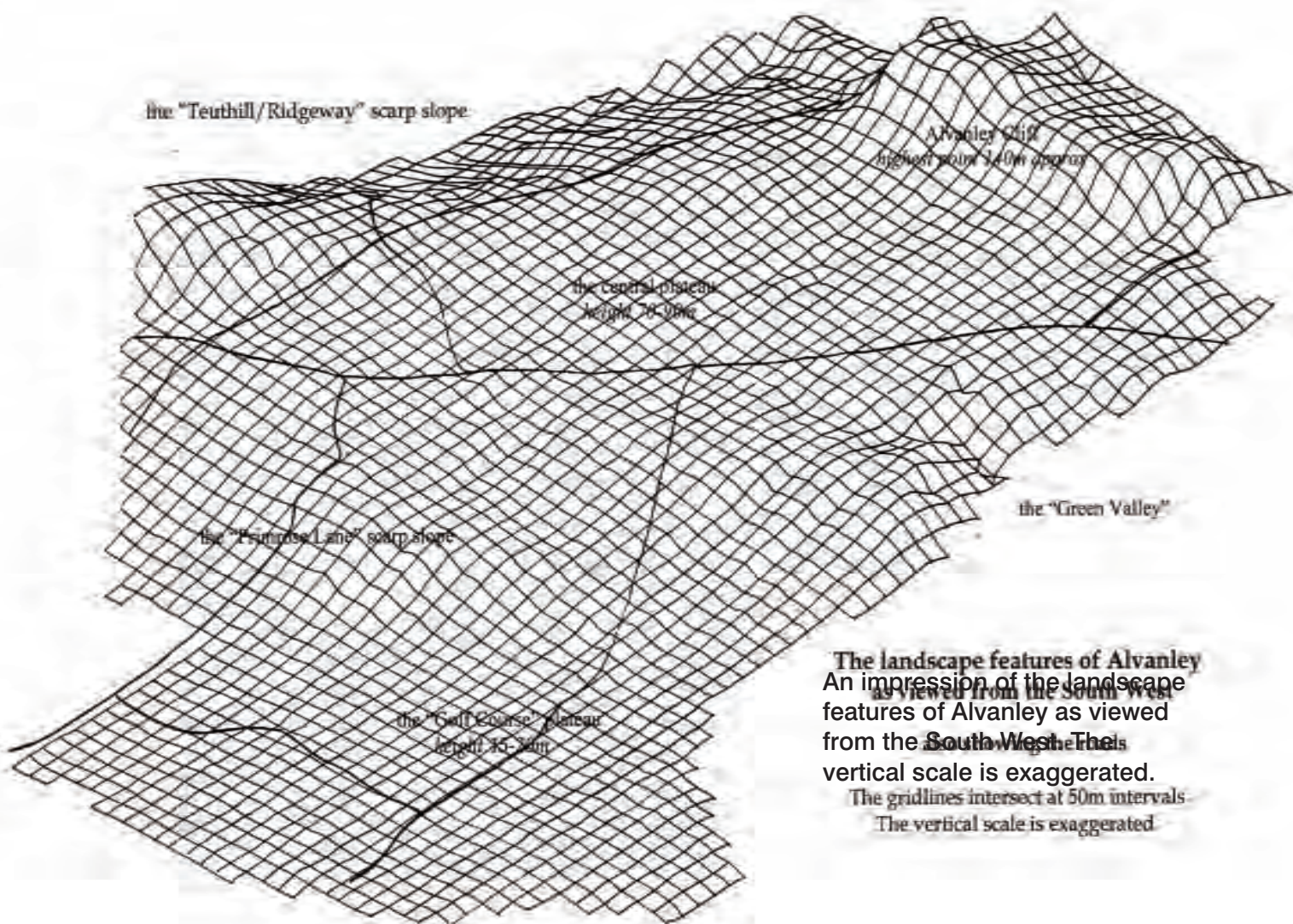
3.3 Landscape

The predominant impression of the landscape surrounding the village is of open, rolling farmland, broken up by ancient hedgerows, hedgerow trees and small patches of ancient and modern woodland, predominantly of oak and birch.

On closer examination, the parish can be divided into 3 main landscape types:

- The low-lying plain to the west of the old railway line that includes, for example, the bulk of the golf course, and which mostly lies between the 15 and 20 metre contour lines
- The central plateau on which most of the village buildings stand, and which is roughly bounded by the B5393 Frodsham and Manley Roads, Alvanley Cliff and Commonsides, and the rather higher plateau in the Wheeldon Copse area to the east of Alvanley Cliff.





At an altitude of between 70 and 90 metres above sea level, the central plateau provides some outstanding views to the north over the Mersey estuary through the Helsby/Frodsham gap, and southwards over the Cheshire plain to the Welsh mountains

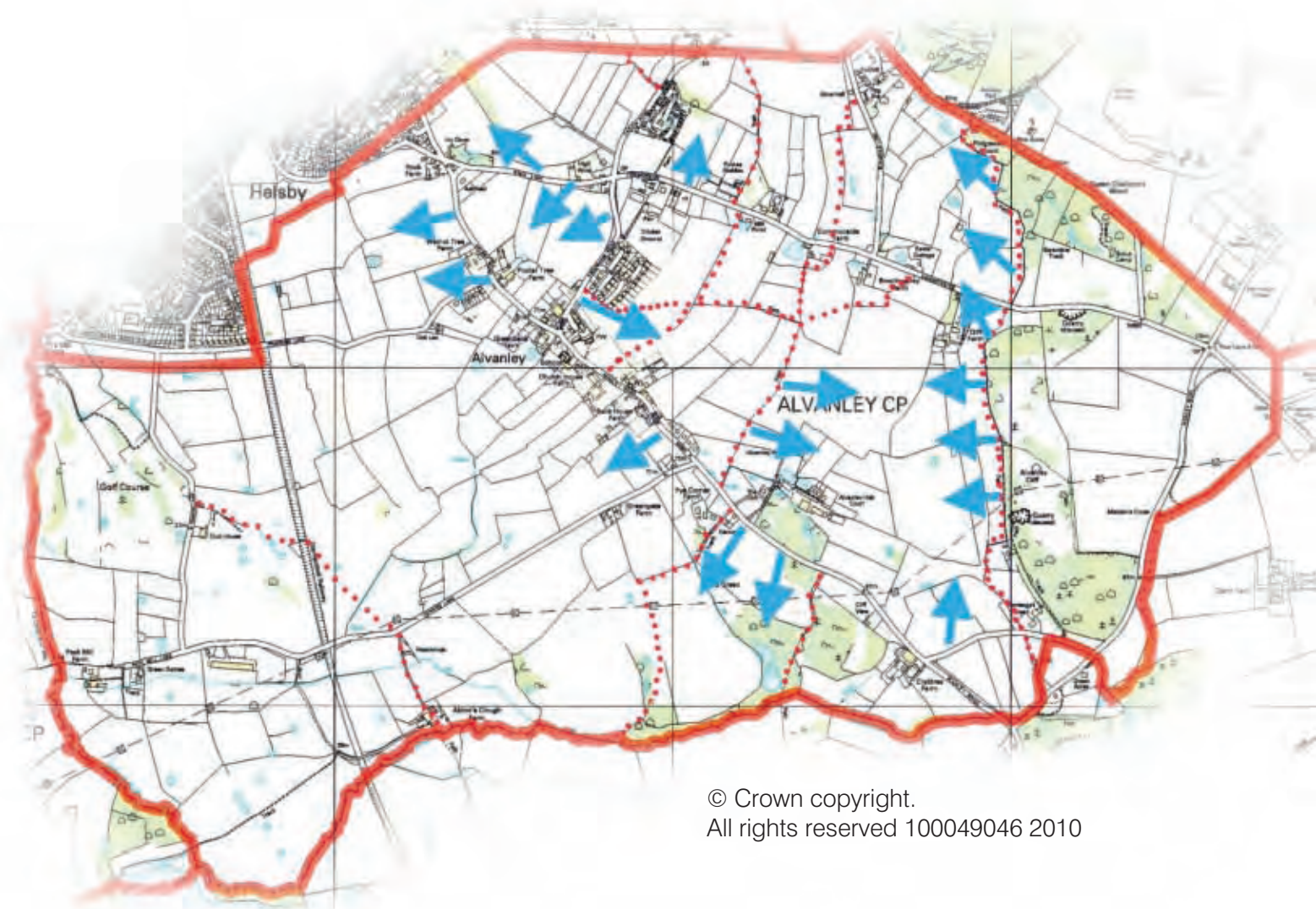
- The scarp slopes on either side of the central plateau which are easily recognised in the steep approach to the village up Primrose Lane, in the descent from Commonside towards the Ridgeway, and most conspicuously in the steep west face of Alvanley Cliff.

The narrow green valley running from The Green adjacent to Pye Corner Farm south-eastwards to the parish boundary at Moor's Brook also has a distinct character not met with elsewhere in the parish. This and the landscape areas referred to above are illustrated in Diagram 1

A special feature of Alvanley is the range of outstanding views from various points in the village, including:

- south-west over the Cheshire Plain to the Berwyn and Clwydian ranges, and south-east to Beeston Castle, from many parts of Back Lane, Helsby Road, Primrose Lane and Manley Road;
- north over the Mersey valley from Commonside
- north and north-east to Foxhill, Woodhouse Hill and over the Ridgeway to Snidley Moor from Commonside
- east over the fields to Alvanley Cliff from many parts of the village centre.

The map shows the viewpoints from which these views can be seen. In Section 7 we set out recommended guidelines which will help to ensure that the special character of the Alvanley landscape is maintained and enhanced. The red dotted lines show public footpaths



4. Buildings and Spaces in Alvanley

The nucleus of the Village, encompassing the school and church, the pub, the village hall, and two of the village's several farmsteads, is centred on the Frodsham Road/Helsby Road/Manley Road junction, but at least half of all the buildings in the village are outside this central group, forming small clusters separated by stretches of open fields. Typical of these clusters, which are mainly situated on road junctions, are those at:

- the Back Lane/Commonside/Frodsham Road junction;
- the Back Lane/Rock/Helsby Road junction;
- the Primrose Lane/Helsby Road junction;
- Ardern Lea

The gaps between these clusters, where fields immediately adjoin the road, reinforce the rural character of the village and also provide many of the outstanding viewpoints referred to above.

The farmhouses, farms and shippons such as at Walnut Tree Farm, Poplar Tree Farm, Greenbank Farm, Church House Farm, Crabtree Farm and (potentially) Bank House Farm, along with their farmyards, fields and orchards, maintain the rural character of the village.

No medieval buildings survive but Alvanley Hall, substantially rebuilt in 1622, contains medieval remains and is one of 24 “listed buildings” in the village. These buildings or structures, which are ‘listed’ by the Secretary of State as being of special architectural or historic interest, are subject to special protection and control. They are detailed at Appendix 2. Austerson Old Hall, a timber-framed building originating from Austerson near Nantwich was dismantled, removed and rebuilt at Yarrangall Green in the 1980’s. Church House Farm on Manley Road adjacent to the White Lion is a particularly striking Georgian building.

In addition to the 24 listed buildings, a further 22 buildings in the village are recognised by the local planning authority as being “locally important buildings” which because of their contribution to the distinctiveness of the rural character of the village or because they have interesting or unusual architectural detail, materials, construction or historic interest, are to be conserved wherever possible. We list these buildings at Appendix 3.

Apart from the farms and the White Lion public house there are no commercial or retail premises. The village hall and the cricket club are both substantially of wooden construction. The remaining buildings in and around the village are residential properties, the majority dating from the 19th and 20th centuries.



Poplar Tree Farm



Alvanley Hall



The White Lion



The Cricket Club

A wide range of styles of residential property can be seen in the village. Very few of the properties are terraced or semi-detached, and the general pattern is one of detached houses each of a unique appearance and each typical of its own period of construction. There are, of course a number of exceptions to this, with the large development of Ardern Lea being the most obvious example. However, there are also a number of smaller developments including those on the former Greenbank Garage site and on Church Way.

There are some notable groups of buildings, particularly:

- The Victorian church and school, with its clock tower and bell, together with Church House Farm and the White Lion);
- The 17th century group of Poplar Tree Farm (1684), Walnut Tree Farm (1686) and Clematis Cottage (1693);
- The group at the junction of Alvanley Road, Back Lane and The Rock

The oldest buildings are either of local Red Sandstone from the former Helsby or Alvanley Cliff quarries, or of brick. The timber-framed Austerson Old Hall, not being local in origin, is an exception to this rule. Some of the older buildings have been rendered, and these and many of the older brick buildings have been coated with a white or cream lime-wash or modern equivalent.

Predominantly the buildings in the village are of two storeys. There are a few modern bungalows, and the only three-storey buildings are those which were associated in former times with authority and status in the village: the Church, the Old Vicarage, Church House Farm, and Alvanley Hall.

A few thatched roofs survive, but in the main the older buildings are roofed in Welsh slate. Houses built in the 20th century were increasingly roofed with various man-made tiles in shades of grey, brown or terracotta.

Typically, property boundaries are either sandstone walls or hedges, or both – a dwarf stone wall with a hedge above. Many of the hedges are hawthorn, remnants of the original field boundaries existing before the ribbon development of the village, and they provide a pleasing link with the past. There are also many mature native trees in and around the village which soften the outline of the buildings and reinforce the perception that the village is part of the countryside.

Ardern Lea deserves special mention. The houses have a certain “colonial” style and are well-built, but the development is out of keeping with the general pattern of the village because the 25+ houses are of more or less identical appearance and detailing and lack the variety to be found elsewhere in Alvanley. The large garage doors are particularly dominant, and the whole group is built in a large block inside which there is no connection with the surrounding countryside.



Alvanley Primary School



The Church of St John the Evangelist



Birch Cottage, Back Lane



Ardern Lea

5. Highways and Traffic

5.1 Roads

The B5393 Frodsham to Tarvin road, the parish's only classified road, forms the spine of the village. Entering at Teuthill in the north west, it continues south east from the village centre as one of the village's two Manley Roads.

Between Ardern Lea and Yarrangall Green the B5393 has a pavement on at least one side, and to a limited extent in the centre of the village, on both sides. There is a pavement serving the houses at the upper end of Primrose Lane, but otherwise the remaining seven miles or so of roads in the parish are unclassified country lanes bounded for the most part by narrow grass verges and traditional hedgerows interspersed with oak trees.

5.2 Traffic

During commuting hours the B5393 carries a heavy flow of traffic (relative to the size of the village) owing to its convenience as a route between the dormitory villages of north-west Cheshire and the M56 at Hapsford. The popularity of the schools at Alvanley and Manley adds to the traffic during term time. Traffic flows are increased by the White Lion pub which is a "destination pub" rather than a "local", attracting the majority of its trade from outside the village, and therefore by car.

There are several livery stable establishments in the village as well as private horse-owners. Horses are frequently ridden along the village's roads, and the stabling of horses in the area generates traffic from feed, farriery and veterinary suppliers. In addition to the several working farms in the village some of the farmland in the parish is worked by owners or occupiers from outside the area, and together these farming operations involve a good deal of agricultural machinery traffic through the village, and cattle are regularly driven along the roads.

The village benefits from an occasional bus service running three times per week. The service is more popular during the summer months as it is used by walkers and hikers rather than as a sustainable method of accessing shopping centres in Frodsham or Chester.

Many walkers use the main road, particularly between the White Lion and the Sandstone Trail at Yarrangall Green (see Footpaths, section 5.4). Much of the network of footpaths around the Parish can only be accessed by walking along the roads, which are largely unlit and have poor visibility and limited clearance in many places. Small numbers of local children access the village school on foot.

As a result of the number of walkers and the amount of equestrian traffic in the Parish, the volume and speed of traffic running through the village is of concern to all of these groups whose welfare is clearly important to the residents of the Parish.



Commonsides



Primrose Lane



Sandstone Trail

5.3 Street Furniture

There is street lighting along the B5393 from the Back Lane/Commonsides junction as far as Alvanley Hall Cottages, and in the upper parts of Primrose Lane and Towers Lane. There are at least 8 different styles of lighting standard in place, five of these being represented in the few hundred yards of Manley Road between Box Cottage and Towers Lane. Road nameplates, seats and waste containers are also of a variety of styles and ages, reflecting the local authority designs prevalent at the time of installation.

Telephone and electricity services are generally carried above ground using pole mounted cables. Whilst such services are both cost effective and easy to repair in rural locations, this approach can be visually intrusive. The pole-mounted 11 kV electricity substation serving Ardern Lea is a particularly conspicuous example.

There is a large dark green cabinet containing mains gas equipment at the Manley Road/Towers Lane junction.

On the positive side, there are good examples of correctly-painted Cheshire railings at most of the road junctions outside the village centre, and there are several traditional Cheshire County Council cast-iron finger posts at the main road junctions. There is a cast iron mile post on Manley Road not far from Crabtree Farm. There are several traditional red cast iron letter boxes, and one red "K6" telephone kiosk in the village.

The remains of the medieval Maiden Cross, now reduced to a shapeless mass of red sandstone half buried in the verge, can be seen close to a field gate opposite Wheeldon Copse.

(PS1 , PPG15)

5.4 Footpaths

There are around 3.5 miles of recognised public rights of way in the parish, including parts of two long-distance paths, the Sandstone Trail and the Longster Trail. These paths are concentrated in the western half of the parish, and are shown on the map on page 6.

Apart from their amenity value to members of the village, the long-distance trails have economic value to the area through additional trade at the White Lion.

(T8, PPS7)

5.5 Litter

There is a significant litter problem in the parish, not just along the highways but also along the footpaths. Increasingly, this includes various items of agricultural waste such as the polythene wrapping of silage and hay bales.



Commonsides/Back Lane junction



Fingerpost at Commonsides/
Manley Road Junction



Mile post on Manley Road

6. Design Principles & Planning Guidelines

6.1 Introduction

Alvanley's history, important buildings, and close connections with the rural landscape and farming all combine to create the 'sense of place' that contributes to defining the community. The Design Statement is intended to reflect this sense of local distinctiveness and it recognises the variety of styles, ages and uses of buildings and landscapes within the Parish.

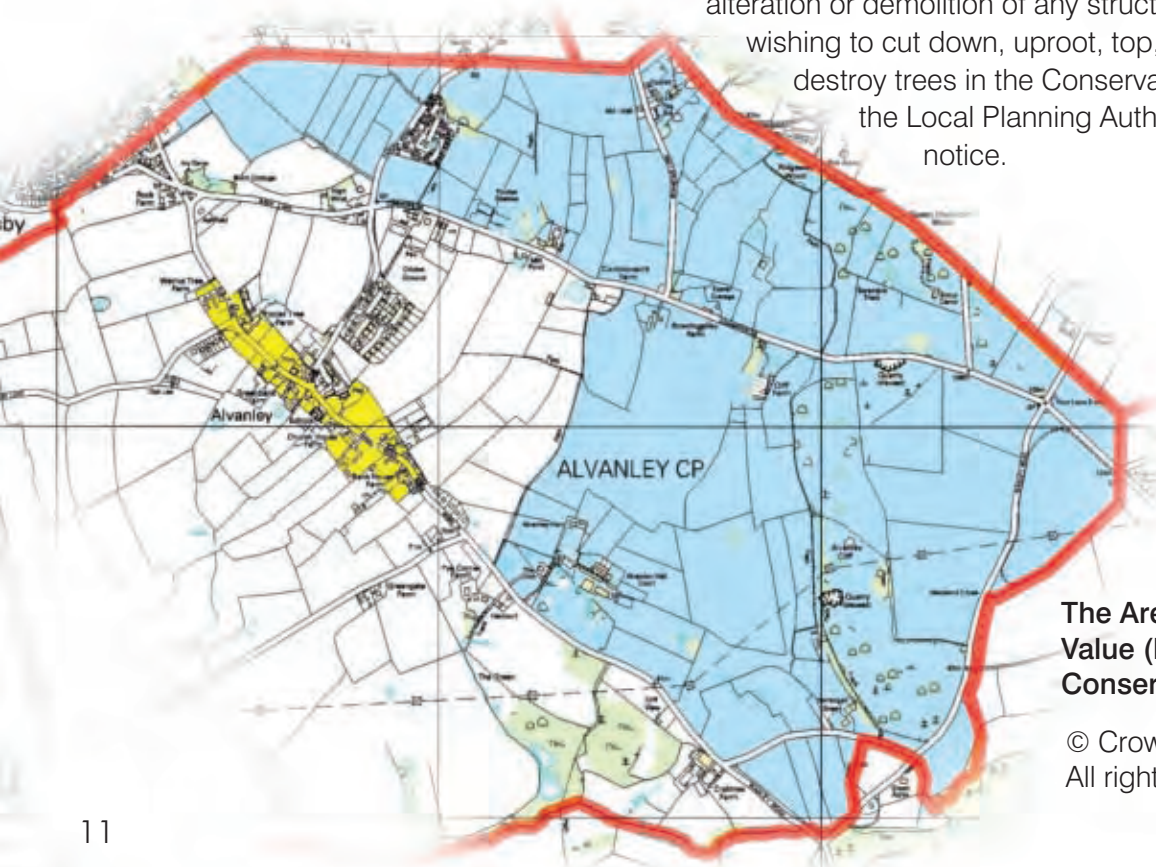
The following highlighted sections define key design principles that aim to ensure that future developments combine good design with appropriate materials and features so as to complement existing properties and blend into the rural environment. Other elements of planning policy and building regulations have also, of course, to be satisfied as necessary.

Alvanley is located in the North Cheshire Green Belt. Within the Green Belt planning permission will not be given for new buildings except in very special circumstances and for certain specified purposes.

(GS3, PPS7)

6.2 Alvanley Conservation Area and Area of Special County Value

The Alvanley Conservation Area is centred on St. John's Church. The designation means that special care is required to ensure a high standard of design in the area. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local authorities to ensure that any development preserves or enhances the Conservation Area. In addition, Conservation Area consent may be required for any alteration or demolition of any structure and anyone wishing to cut down, uproot, top, lop, or otherwise destroy trees in the Conservation Area must give the Local Planning Authority 6 weeks' prior notice.



The Area of Special County Value (blue) and the Alvanley Conservation Area (yellow)

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There is currently no Conservation Area Appraisal for the Alvanley Conservation Area. It is important that an Appraisal is carried out in order to reassess the designated area and to record and evaluate its special interest. This process should involve the local community.

(BE 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 23, PPG15)

The Area of Special County Value (ASCV), centred on the Ridgeway, has been designated because of its high landscape value. It may also be important for archaeological, historic or nature conservation reasons. Development which preserves or enhances the character or features for which the ASCV has been designated will be allowed subject to other policy considerations. Any proposal which may have more than a local impact within an ASCV may require an Environmental Assessment.

(NE11, PPS9, PPG15)

6.3 Domestic Dwellings

A variety of construction materials have been used in the village and surrounding areas. When considering new developments or alterations to existing properties, the over-riding features are good design and seeking to blend in with or complement existing construction materials. This is particularly important in the case of key historic buildings.

- The Village Design Statement, and the Conservation Area Appraisal where applicable, should be used to guide decision-making in respect of development proposals, large or small, in the village
- Developments comprising individual buildings fronting existing roads, or small courtyard developments mimicking the layout of agricultural buildings, are preferred
- Developments comprising blocks of similar buildings should be avoided. The development, at Ardern Lea should not be regarded as an acceptable precedent for any future development in the village
- There should be no infilling of the existing "gaps" where fields adjoin the roads through the village (see section 4)

(BE1, PPS3, PPS7)

6.3.1 Walls of Houses and other buildings

Walls are traditionally of Cheshire brick, sandstone, or both. In a number of cases walls are lime washed or painted in an equivalent modern finish.

- For existing properties, or developments where uniformity of style is required (e.g. on the Ardern Lea estate) care should be taken to match the colour and size of bricks wherever possible
- New walls should be of sandstone or Cheshire brick, dependent on their surroundings
- Brick walls can be painted white with limewash or an equivalent modern coating

(BE1, H8, PPS3, PPS7)

6.3.2 Roofing Materials

Roofing is traditionally Welsh slate or thatch, although on more recent buildings clay tiles have become more prevalent.

- For existing properties, or developments where uniformity of style is required, care should be taken to match the existing materials, colour and size of slates or tiles.

(BE1, H8, H10, PPS3, PPS7)

6.3.3 Windows, Doors and Porches

There is no one 'traditional' style of window, door or entrance porch prevalent in the locality.

- For older and historic buildings, doors and windows should be in like-for-like style and materials corresponding with the age and style of the building.
- For buildings that are not listed or are outside the Conservation Area, doors, windows and porches should be in keeping with the original style and design of existing dwellings, particularly in block developments such as Ardern Lea, Primrose Mews or Church Way where it is important to maintain uniformity of style in colour, type and design.
- PVCu is not an acceptable material on listed and locally-important buildings, or in the Conservation Area.
- For individual buildings on isolated plots, the design and materials for doors, windows and porches should be appropriate to the overall style of the building, whether traditional or modern.

(BE1, BE6, H8, H10, PPG15, PPS3)

6.3.4 Boards, Fascias and Metalwork

There is no particularly-favoured colour scheme for buildings in the village, other than the lime-wash walls noted in 6.3.1.

- Where uniformity of finish is desirable between neighbouring properties then colour schemes for boards, fascias and metalwork should be in keeping with the original finishes wherever possible.
- PVCu is not an acceptable material for soffits or other boarding on listed and locally-important buildings or in the Conservation Area

(BE1, PPS3)

6.4 Existing Agricultural Buildings

The existing agricultural buildings such as those adjacent to the road in the village centre make a significant contribution to the character of the village.

- Where practicable they should be kept in agricultural use
- Where this is not economically viable but other uses could ensure the maintenance of the buildings in good repair, the design of any conversions should respect the style and materials of the existing buildings, retain existing characteristic features and minimise the number of new openings.
- Ancillary features such as car-park areas, additional lighting, boundary treatment, refuse storage etc., should be sensitive to the character of the building and its setting.

(GS6, RE5, PPS7)

6.5 New Agricultural Buildings

New agricultural buildings may be required to ensure the viability of commercial activities within rural communities. New agricultural buildings could be needed for both traditional agricultural use and for newer activities such as stabling.

- New agricultural buildings should be appropriate in design and scale for the intended use
- Where they are extensions to existing farming operations, they should wherever practicable be located in or alongside existing groups of buildings
- Where practicable they should be screened from view by existing buildings or by suitable native species planting.

(RE3, NE8, PPS7, GS6)

In any new building development considerable care will need to be given to access routes, particularly as the vehicles accessing agricultural buildings may be relatively large. In order to ensure highway safety suitable visibility splays will need to be provided at any new entrance points.

- Where hedges have to be removed to accommodate new visibility splays, re-planting with suitable native species should be carried out.

(PPS7, PPS9, PPS3)

Where agricultural buildings will be in use outside normal daylight hours any lighting schemes proposed should limit the spread of light to public areas, highways and neighbouring properties.

- Lighting should be directional, shaded and provided with appropriate controls such as timers or movement detectors to ensure that lighting is switched off when it is not in use.

(P4, RE3, RE12, PPS7)

6.5.1 Steel Framed Barns

The general format for many new agricultural buildings is a steel frame clad with profiled steel sheeting similar to that found on urban industrial estates. The commercial benefits of such buildings are recognized and their construction should not be prevented.

- Careful screening is necessary to ensure that new steel-framed buildings are not unduly obtrusive within the landscape.
- Where the buildings cannot be screened, a combination of traditional materials with the more modular building construction methods that are now in widespread use should be encouraged e.g. dwarf brick walls with composite panels clad with wood and roofed with corrugated profile sheet in darker shades of green, brown or grey.

(RE3, PPS7)

6.5.2 Stable Blocks

Developments of a suitable type and scale for private use should be facilitated. However, the increase in the popularity of equestrian pursuits has meant that stable buildings have become of increasing concern in the Parish.

In general, stables tend to be less permanent structures than the barns considered in 6.5.1. The traditional method of construction for such buildings is wooden shiplap rather than brick, concrete panels or block. Suitable screening is particularly important if the proposal includes a manège with floodlighting which can be visually intrusive and a potential source of nuisance.

- Stables should predominantly be of suitably-treated wooden construction with mono- or dual-pitched roofs finished in grey or green.
- Where more than one stable is required, they should be built as a single block rather than separate buildings.
- In all cases, careful positioning and screening is required.
- Lighting (including floodlighting) should be directional, cowed and provided with appropriate controls such as timers or movement detectors to ensure that lighting is switched off when it is not in use. See also 7.2.4 below.
- Consent for the construction of stables should be conditional on their being removed when they are no longer required.

(RE9, RT1, PPS7)

6.6 Boundaries

- Where possible, developments or major changes should seek to establish more 'traditional' rural treatments of boundaries using a combination of sandstone walling, hedges or agricultural post-and-rail type fencing.
- Traditional black and white Cheshire railings should only be used at road junctions and not in other contexts.
- Wherever possible boundaries should be planted using native species to 'soften' the built area and integrate it into the rural environment.
- Planting should also be utilized in conjunction with careful building orientation to reduce the potential for adjacent properties to be over-looked and to maintain views through the landscape. Similar care should be taken to reduce the visibility from the road of vehicle parking areas and other hard standing.

(BE1, NE8, PPS7, PPS9)

6.7 Site access

- All developments should provide for adequate management of vehicles to limit the need to back vehicles out onto roads
- Visibility from the road of vehicle parking areas should be limited by suitable boundary treatments including vegetation.
- Access routes should be designed to allow for the classes of vehicle likely to use the development including e.g. waste and recycling vehicles.
- Where hedges have to be removed to accommodate visibility splays, re-planting with suitable native species should be carried out.
- Within the Conservation Area historic kerbing should be retained / reinstated to reinforce local identity
- Footpaths should be constructed from quality, natural materials to complement their surroundings in colour, material, size and laying pattern
- Where historic surfaces have been lost in areas that are important to the character of the village, they should be reinstated. Soft verges should be retained

(BE1, T1, N8, T8, PPS7, PPS9)

6.8 Street Furniture

Features such as the various stretches of Cheshire railings and the cast iron finger posts form part of the intrinsic character of the village.

- The K6 telephone kiosk in Church Way; cast iron letter-boxes, finger-posts and mile-post; and all the stretches of Cheshire railings, should be retained and conserved. Their siting and style can be used to inform but not necessarily replicate the design of new signage. New designs should be simple, elegant and appropriate to the rural context
- A more co-ordinated and consistent approach to the replacement of street furniture is required. The use of modern design and materials should not be excluded provided they are in keeping with the character and appearance of the area in which they are to be located.
- Litter bins, bollards and seats should be functional and robust, and should coordinate with the surrounding street elements in terms of colour, siting and materials. Ideally, they should be designed as part of a family of street furniture.
- Every opportunity should be taken to reduce the current proliferation of designs of street lighting. Light fixtures should be appropriate to their rural context in terms of material, scale, design and illumination.
- Traffic signs and road markings should be kept to a minimum to avoid "urbanising" the village. They should only be introduced where necessary, and in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- It is essential that action is taken to ensure the protection and preservation of Maiden Cross.

(BE1, T8, PPS7, PPG15)

6.9 Utilities

Much of the utility accommodation and equipment in the village is intrusive and not in keeping with its essentially rural character. Ground-level substations, pumping stations and other utilities installations need to be carefully planned to limit visual intrusion and the impact of noise.

- Statutory undertakers should be required to take visual amenity into account in addition to cost effectiveness and ease of repair
- Particular consideration should be given to undergrounding supplies
- Structures should be sympathetic to their surroundings and wherever possible adequately fenced or screened using vegetation
- Sound insulation, damping and screening should be used with the aim of avoiding single-frequency noise and intrusive night-time noise

(BE1, PS1, PPS7)

6.10 Environmental Concerns

The challenge of industrial pollution and climate change mean that all planning guidelines have to consider the environmental impact. Much of the guidance in this Design Statement is designed to challenge architects, agricultural developers, builders, planners and householders to consider environmental sustainability in the projects that they develop. Features of importance include:

- Use of recycled or recovered materials
- Designing for energy efficiency
- Considering transport and parking requirements, including vehicle sizes on small rural roads
- Providing adequate space for collecting and segregating waste and recycling
- Soft landscaping and planting schemes which use native species and provide wildlife habitats
- Noise
- Removal or in-situ remediation of contaminated ground
- Measures to ensure that the environmental impacts of construction are reduced to a minimum, including from noise, dust and vehicle movements.

(BE1, BE22, T1, NE8, P8, PPS7, PPS22)

- Developers should seek to minimise the carbon footprint of new developments, particularly by ensuring that new buildings are very energy-efficient
- Micro renewable energy generation equipment should be incorporated into developments in a way that does not detract visually from the local environment and character of individual historic buildings
- Where appropriate, bin and recycling facilities and cycle storage areas should be incorporated into new development

(BE6, BE21, BE22, T9, PPS22)

7. Landscape Management Guidelines

7.1 Overall objectives

There should be three overall management objectives for the landscape in the village:

- to conserve and enhance its rural character and local distinctiveness, with its strong field patterns, arable farming and woodland;
- to maintain the fine views within the Parish and out of it to the Sandstone Ridge, the Cheshire Plain, the Clwydian hills and the Mersey estuary.
- to seek to support the aims and objectives of the European Landscape Convention

7.2 Landscape Management Guidelines

These overall objectives can best be met if, whenever applicable, the following landscape management guidelines are adopted:

7.2.1 Boundaries & Field patterns

- Hedges should be managed to ensure the maintenance of an intact hedgerow network and to encourage a succession of young hedgerow trees to replace over-mature ones
- Sandstone walls, particularly where they bound fields or roads, are significant landscape features and should be conserved
- The several lengths of Cheshire railing at road junctions in the parish should be regularly maintained
- Other fencing such as post and rails should be in keeping with their location
- Ancient field patterns, particularly those dating from medieval times and which provide continuity in the landscape, should be conserved (see map on page 3)

(BE1, NE1, NE8, PPS9, PPS7)

7.2.2 Biodiversity

- The biodiversity of intensively-managed grass and arable land can be enhanced by the development and linking of buffer strips along hedgerows so as to create a network of wildlife corridors
 - Efforts should be made to conserve, and where practicable extend, the remnant fragments of unimproved or semi-improved acid grassland in Queen Charlotte's Wood, which is a County Site of Biological Importance, on the sandy soil which provides special habitats of nature conservation value
 - Ponds, brooks and streams are important for biodiversity as well as for variety in the landscape, and should actively be conserved and enhanced
 - Any protected species should be considered when making alterations to existing or when constructing new buildings
- (NE4, NE5, NE6, NE8, NE9, NE1, PPS9)

7.2.3 Woods & Trees

- Plans to enhance woodland cover should be encouraged but caution must be exercised to avoid obstructing the many fine views out of the parish. Small scattered woodland blocks, copses and planting adjacent to watercourses are the most appropriate forms of woodland in this area
 - Existing woodlands need to be managed to ensure a diversity of canopy structure and rich ground flora
 - Opportunities to restore or create orchards, once widespread in the parish, should be encouraged
 - Except as specimens in a genuine garden context, the planting of non-native trees should be discouraged
- (NE9, NE10, PPS9)

7.2.4 Recreational activities

- The sympathetic integration of riding schools, stables, and horse paddocks into the landscape should be encouraged by sensitive design and placing of fencing, tracks, jumps and ancillary buildings and lighting.
 - Careful planning and management of equestrian establishments are required to avoid the break-up of the traditional hedgerow boundaries and field patterns of the parish.
- (RE9, PPS7)

7.2.5 Views, the “sense of place” and local distinctiveness

The most important views from and within the village are identified on the map on page 6

- Developments and planting which prevent or diminish the important views within and out of the parish should be avoided
 - Opportunities for creating additional viewpoints should be encouraged
 - As far as practicable, street lighting and other furniture should be kept to a minimum and where unavoidable should be of a scale and in materials which are appropriate to the character of the area
 - The sense of peace and quiet away from the main road, and the rural character of the lanes, should be conserved.
 - Locally listed buildings often represent important examples of the local vernacular. Their retention and continued occupation / use is imperative to ensure that the local character and distinctiveness of the village is retained
- (BE1, BE22, PPG15)

8. Design Checklist

The following checklist which summarises the guidelines given in s. 6 can be used to form a quick assessment of the extent to which a proposed development accords with the design principles which are appropriate in Alvanley.

	YES	NO	N/A
	Tick ✓ as appropriate		
Is the development in the Alvanley Conservation Area? (see map on page 11) If so,			
does it preserve or enhance the Conservation Area?			
does it avoid the alteration or demolition of any structure?			
does it avoid the removal, destruction or alteration of any trees?			
Is the development in the Area of Special County Value ? (see map on page 11) If so,			
does it preserve or enhance the character of features of the ASCV?			
Does the development involve a Listed or Locally-important building? If so,			
does it preserve any features of special architectural or historic interest which the building possesses?			
does it preserve the setting of the building?			
are the detailing and construction materials sympathetic with the age and style of the building?			
Does the development involve a domestic dwelling? If so,			
does it comprise an individual building fronting an existing road ?			
does it comprise a small courtyard development mimicking the layout of traditional agricultural buildings ?			
if it is the development of an existing building, do the walls, roofing materials and windows, doors & porches match those of the original style and design of the building ?			
if it is the development of a building which is one of a number of similar buildings (e.g., in Ardern Lea) are the materials and design details in keeping with its neighbours ?			
if it is a new building on an isolated site, are the materials and design details amongst those traditional in the village ?			
Does the development involve an existing agricultural building ? If so,			
are existing characteristic features of the building to be retained ?			
are changes to the number and size of existing openings minimised?			
Does the development involve a new agricultural building ? If so,			
is the scale appropriate to the intended use of the building ?			

	YES	NO	N/A
	Tick ✓ as appropriate		
is the new building to be grouped with an existing cluster ?			
if modular building methods have to be used, are they combined sympathetically with traditional materials ?			
has care been taken to screen it from view by means of either existing buildings or mature planting ?			
in case of new access points from existing roads, are visibility splays adequate ?			
is any proposed lighting necessary, directional, shaded and suitably controlled?			
Does the development involve a stable building? If so,			
is it predominantly of wooden construction?			
with a pitched roof in a suitable finish?			
if more than one unit, are they linked in a single block?			
is there adequate screening?			
is any proposed lighting necessary, directional, shaded and suitably controlled?			
Are new site boundaries to be formed ? If so,			
do they involve traditional sandstone walls, hedges of native species and/or post and rail fences ?			
do they avoid the use of Cheshire railings other than at road junctions ?			
Environmental Considerations			
if it is a new development, has care been taken to minimise its carbon footprint ?			
has care been taken to ensure that any micro energy generation equipment does not detract visually from the local environment ?			
Utility installations and street furniture			
has visual amenity been taken into account in the positioning and/or screening of utility installations ?			
is sound insulation, damping and screening adequate to minimise single-frequency noise and night-time disturbance?			
are proposed additions to street furniture actually necessary?			
do the changes reduce the current proliferation of designs/styles?			

APPENDIX 1

The Village Design Statement and Local Planning Policies

This document was produced by the Alvanley community at a time when Vale Royal Borough Council was going through a period of re-organisation. Vale Royal was merged with Cheshire County Council, Chester City Council and Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council to form the Cheshire West and Chester authority. Planning powers transferred to the new “shadow” Cheshire West & Chester authority in November 2008, thus this document was approved for consultation purposes by Cheshire West & Chester (CWC). It was the intention of CWC that documents such as this one that were commenced by predecessor authorities would be completed and adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) by CWC.

This SPD forms part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Cheshire West & Chester. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted Vale Royal Borough Local Plan First Review Alteration 2016 as well as the emerging CWC Core Strategy, which when adopted replaced parts of the Vale Royal Local Plan. The Alvanley Village Design Statement will remain a part of the Cheshire West & Chester LDF after the Core Strategy is adopted and it will be reviewed on a regular basis through the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to ensure that it remains relevant and does not need updating.

Vale Royal Borough Council made a submission to the Secretary of State in December 2008 to save a vast majority of the Local Plan policies beyond June 2009. All policies, with the exception of GS1 and H1, have now been saved until such time as they are replaced by parts of the CWC LDF. This means that the policies on which this SPD is based will remain in force until they are formally replaced. When the CWC Core Strategy is adopted there will be a need to review this document to ensure that it reflects the policies that the Core Strategy contains.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) have been replaced by Planning Policy Statements (PPS), documents prepared by Central Government which are intended to provide guidance to local authorities on matters of planning policy. Local authorities must take their contents into account in preparing their development plan documents including Supplementary Planning Documents such as this Village Design Statement. Where relevant, PPG’s and PPS’s have been referred to in the text to indicate compliance with the relevant document.

Local Plan Policies referred to in the Village Design Statement

The Vale Royal Borough Local Plan First Review Alteration, adopted 16th June 2006:

BE1	Safeguarding and improving the quality of the environment
BE5	Historic environment – Listed Buildings
BE6	Alterations/extensions to Listed Buildings
BE7	Changes of use to Listed Buildings
BE8	Listed Buildings and archaeology
BE9	Demolition control of Listed Buildings
BE10	Historic Environment – Conservation Areas

BE11	Proposals for development on sites which lie outside the conservation area but which would affect its setting or views in or out of the area
BE14	Other sites of archaeological importance
BE16	Advertisements and signs
BE21	Renewable energy
BE22	Locally Important buildings
BE23	Conservation Area Appraisals
GS3	North Cheshire Green belt
GS6	Change of use, conversion of rural buildings
H8	Extensions/Alterations to dwellings
H9	Extensions to residential rural building conversions
H10	Rebuilding/replacement of dwellings
H11	Extensions to residential curtilages in the open countryside and in the Green Belt
NE1	Protection of the Nature Conservation Resource
NE4	Threatened and Priority habitats
NE5	Endangered species
NE6	Wildlife Corridors and Green Wedges
NE7	Protection and enhancement of landscape features
NE8	Provision and enhancement of landscape in new development
NE9	Trees and woodland
NE10	Trees and woodland
NE11	Areas of Special County Value
PS1	Public services development in the open countryside
P4	Light pollution
P8	Contaminated and Derelict land
RE3	New agricultural buildings
RE5	Change of use of agricultural and other rural buildings
RE9	Equestrian development
RE12	Farm diversification
RT1	General Requirements for Recreational / Tourism Development
T1	General requirements
T8	Pedestrians and Walking
T13	Car Parking
T19	Traffic calming

Planning Policy Guidance/ statements referred to in the Village Design Statement

PPS3	Housing
PPS7	Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPS9	Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
PPG15	Planning and the Historic Environment

APPENDIX 2
Listed buildings in the parish of Alvanley as at February 2009

		Grade	Group Value #
Back Lane	Birch Cottage	II	
	Meadowbank Cottage (formerly listed as Teuthill Cottage)	II	
	Commonside Farmhouse	II	
Commonside	Holly Tree Cottage	II	
	Guidepost at Four Lane Ends	II	
Four Lane Ends	Pear Tree Cottage	II	GV
Frodsham Road	Ash Cottage	II	GV
	Clematis Cottage	II	GV
	Greenbank Farmhouse	II	GV
	Shippon 10m W of Greenbank Farmhouse	II	GV
	Poplar Tree Farmhouse	II	GV
	Shippon, stable and cart shed 10m SE of Poplar Tree Farmhouse	II	GV
	Walnut Tree Farmhouse	II	GV
	Alvanley Hall	II*	
	Tithe Barn 180m SE of Alvanley Hall	II	GV
	Stables and cart shed on N side of Tithe Barn yard	II	GV
Helsby Road	Alvanley School and former Schoolmaster's house	II	GV
	Church House farmhouse and wall to front garden	II	GV
	Shippon 15m SW of Church House farmhouse	II	GV
	Church of St John	II	GV
	Griffith tomb 13m W of W end of S aisle of Church of St John	II	GV
Manley Road	Noden Tomb, 10m W of W end of S aisle of Church of St John	II	GV
	Maiden's Cross at NGR 5143 7357	II	
Yarangall Green	Austerson Old Hall	II	

When making a listing decision, the Secretary of State may take into account the extent to which the exterior contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part. This is generally known as “group value”.

APPENDIX 3

Locally Important buildings in the parish of Alvanley as at September 2008

Buildings formerly listed at grade III which are no longer on the statutory list

Commonside	Bowling Alley Farmhouse
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Buildings included in Vale Royal Borough Council Historic Buildings Survey 1977-79

Manley Road	The White Lion
	Rose Cottage
	Bank Farmhouse & Barn
	Homelea (formerly known as The Old Reading Room)
	Totternhoe
Frodsham Road	White Cottage
	Crabtree Farm
	Greenbank Villa
	Cottage, no. 4 Frodsham Road
	The Hollies
Commonside	Wheelwright's
	Cliff Farm
	Commonside House
Towers Lane	Vicarage
	Greengate Farm
	Peckmill Farm
Helsby Road	Former Chapel
	Paddock Hill

Non-listed red K6 telephone kiosk

Church Way

APPENDIX 4

Key Dates

18th April 2005	John Gittins of Cheshire Landscape Trust addressed the Parish Council about Village Design and Parish Landscape Statements. The Parish Council agreed to proceed and wrote to Jeremy Owens of Vale Royal Borough Council and John Gittins to this effect.
April 2005 to date	Regular reports on the progress of the Village Design Statement have been made to the Parish Council.
11th March 2006	11 residents attended a community workshop held in the village school, introduced by Christine Carruthers and facilitated by John Gittins. The working group was established at this Workshop.
March 2006 to date	Meetings of the Working Group, including two attended by officers of Vale Royal Borough Council.
May 2007	The draft VDS was uploaded to the Alvanley Village website.
September 29th 2007	Public consultation exhibition at the Village Hall including analysis of questionnaires completed by members of the local population.
September 6th 2008	Second public consultation exhibition at the Village Hall, focusing on the landscape aspects of the Design Statement.
December 17th 2009	Formal adoption of Alvanley Village Design Statement by Cheshire West and Chester Council

Credits

Those members of the village who have contributed to the Alvanley Village Design Statement at various stages include:

Steve Allen	Christine Carruthers
Brenda Crowe	Gervase Dodd
Jayne Gilbert	Bob Hughes
Virginia Knapp	Alistair Jenkins
Simon Rogers	Alison Woolf

We would like to thank John Gittins of Cheshire Landscape Trust for his guidance and support, and Cheshire West and Chester Council for financial assistance for the project and professional help from officers, in particular Phill Bamford and Peter Dutton.

APPENDIX 5

Glossary of terms used in the Village Design Statement

AMR - Annual Monitoring Report

A document to be produced each year by Cheshire West and Chester council showing progress in achieving both Local Plan policies and the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme and setting out revisions to the Local Development Scheme.

CWC – Cheshire West & Chester

LDF – Local Development Framework

The collective name given to all those policies and documents forming the planning framework for the district.

PPG – Planning Policy Guidance notes, and PPS – Planning Policy Statements

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), and their replacements Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), are prepared by the government after public consultation to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system.

SCI – Statement of Community Involvement

The document that sets out how the Local Planning Authority will involve and consult the public in the production of the Local Development Framework and on planning applications.

SPD – Supplementary Planning Document

A document which expands or supplements policy in development plan documents, for example design guidance, parking standards etc.

VDS – Village Design Statement

Document prepared by the local community setting out local aspirations for the future development and conservation of the village. This may include information on landscape character, protection of open spaces and important views.

For further information

The names of Parish Councillors and contact details for the Parish Clerk can be found at www.alvanleyvillage.org.uk

Further guidance and advice, and details of how to make planning applications, can be found on the Cheshire West and Chester (CWC) website (www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk).