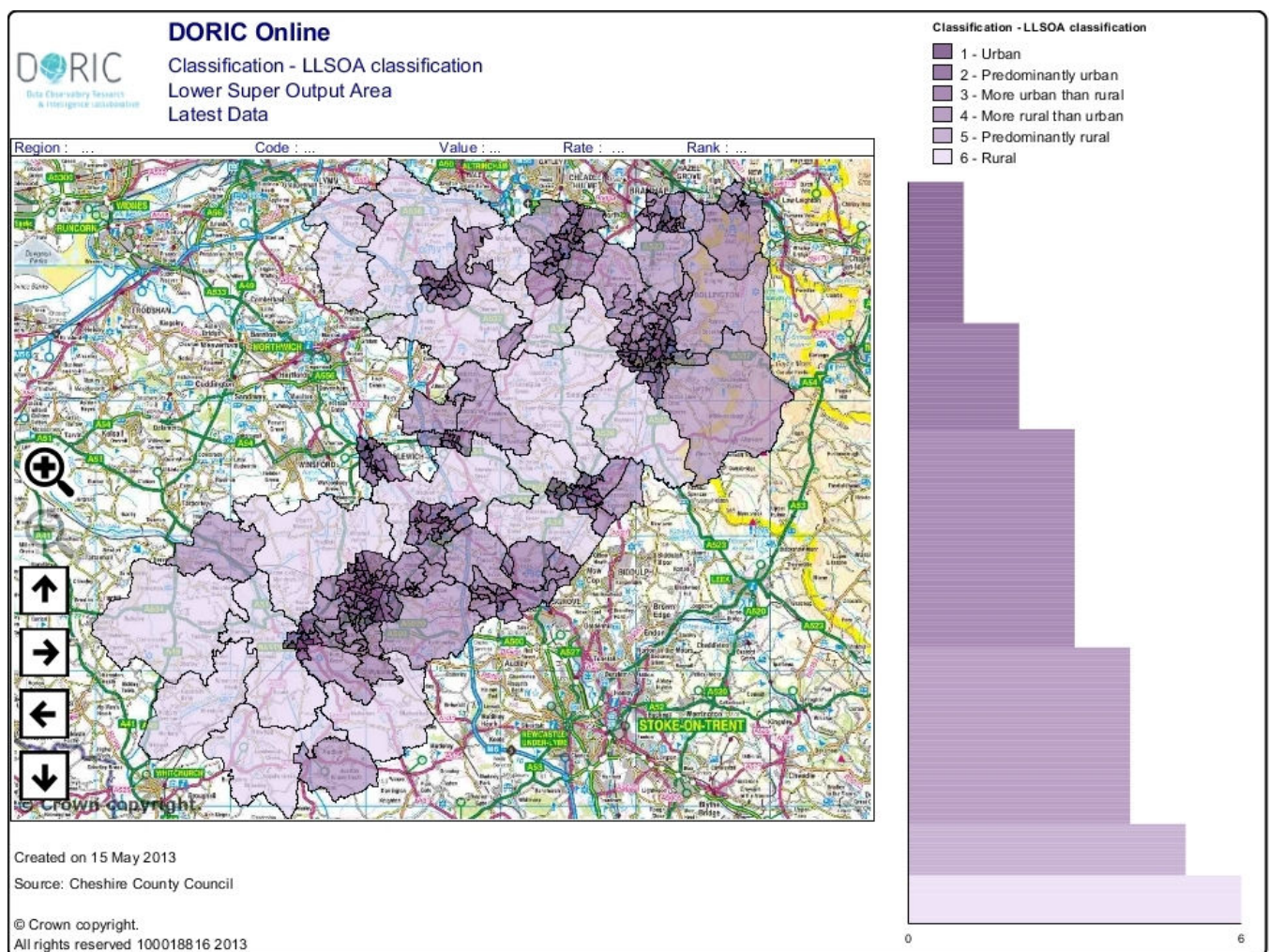# Appendix 1
Cheshire East's Rural Proofing Checklist

Our rural areas are an asset to Cheshire East – they contribute massively to the quality of life of residents and contain important industries that contribute heavily to Cheshire East's economy. However, economic, geographic and demographic factors, all influence the state of our rural areas, and issues such as distance, population sparsity, ageing, social isolation and market structure can significantly influence the lives of people who live in these places, and the longs term survival of rural areas and communities.

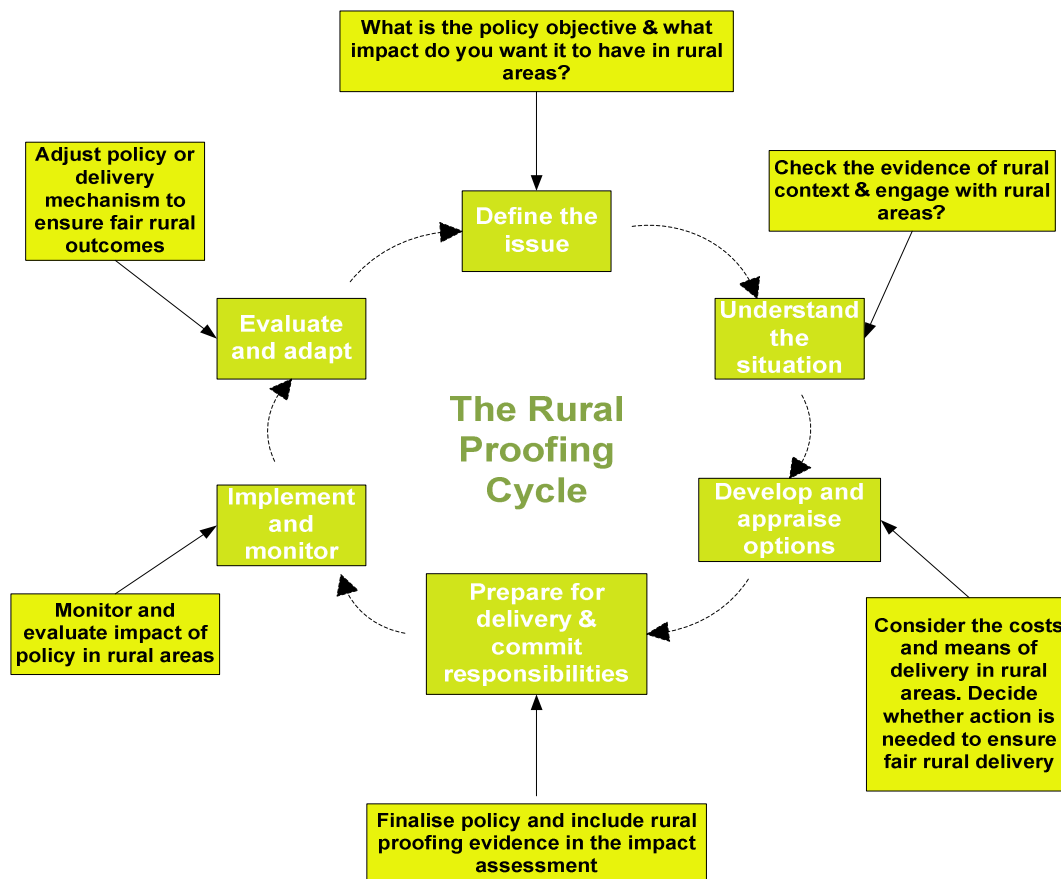*The map below shows the six different area definitions as outlined by DEFRA across Cheshire East.*

The purpose of Rural Proofing is to assist Cheshire East staff (Members and Officers) in assessing how projects, funding proposals and other key decisions made by Cheshire East Council will affect rural areas and rural communities. It is important that rural proofing is not merely a list, but a thought process that takes place continually throughout working processes. This document is designed to aid thought processes to ensure that debate, discussion, research and evaluation is undertaken to ensure that Cheshire East's rural areas and rural communities are considered, valued, included and provided for in everything Cheshire East Council does.

Appendix 1
Cheshire East's Rural Proofing Checklist

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has produced National Rural Proofing Guidelines.

The diagram below, taken from the national guidelines, provides an overview of the Rural Proofing process.

The process and checklist below will enable decision makers to work through Policies, Projects and Funding Allocations (referred to in the checklist as a 'proposal') to ensure that all decisions have considered the possible effects on Cheshire East's rural areas and rural communities and what, if any, alterations need to be made to ensure that rural areas get a fair, proportionate and value for money deal out of Cheshire East Council's actions.

Appendix 1
Cheshire East's Rural Proofing Checklist

Rural Proofing Pre-Policy Development: Impact Assessment

PLEASE NOTE ALL BOXES CAN EXPAND AS YOU FILL THEM IN.

Service Area:	
Policy/Project/Funding allocation/ Area of work being rural proofed:	
Key Contact:	

Objectives and Current Situation:

1. What are the key objectives of the policy/project/funding allocation (*proposal*) being considered?
2. What impact will it have in rural areas?
Which areas specifically?:
3. What is the current situation in these rural areas?
a) What data/information have you analysed?   **b) Did you consult rural stakeholders?**

Other Services in Rural Areas:

4. Will your proposal affect any other services in rural areas?	**Yes/ No**
Which services, which areas (eg. Cheshire East wide, or a specific location) and how will it affect them?	
5. Could you deliver it through existing service outlets?	**Yes/ No**
If not, why not, and if so, which outlets?:	

Appendix 1
Cheshire East's Rural Proofing Checklist

Sparsity Factor/Disproportionate Effect:

6. Have you considered the impact of the sparsity factor in rural areas (geographic distance from service outputs), and what implications this may have for your proposal?	Yes/ No
In what way?:	

7. Have you accounted for the potential disproportionate effect it may have on rural areas owing to population distribution?	Yes/ No
In what way?:	

8. Will there be an extra cost to delivering to rural areas?	Yes/ No
How much and where would this money come from?:	

9. Does your proposal rely on an infrastructure that may put rural communities at a disadvantage?	Yes/ No
What type of infrastructure, and is this infrastructure already established in rural areas? If not, how do you intend to overcome this?:	

10. Will it affect travel needs or the cost of travel for rural communities?	Yes/ No
In what way?:	

Communication and Delivery:

11. How will you communicate with residents about your proposal?	
Will communities in rural areas be able to access this information and how?:	

12. Does it rely on local partner organisations/ a third party for delivery?	Yes/ No
What type of organisations, what is their role and are they on board?:	

Appendix 1
Cheshire East's Rural Proofing Checklist

Rural Economy:

13. Will your proposal have an impact on rural businesses and the economy?	Yes/ No
In what way?:	

14. Will it impact on natural capital (for example, the stocks of forest, rivers, land and minerals) ?	Yes/ No
In what way?:	

15. Will it particularly affect those on low wages or in part-time or seasonal employment?	Yes/ No
In what way?:	

Natural and Heritage Assets:

16. What implications does your proposal have for the natural environment in Cheshire East's rural areas?

17. Is it likely to be restricted in its implementation or delivery by landscape or heritage protection in the countryside?	Yes/ No
In what way?	

18. Will it impact on people wishing to reach and use rural areas for recreation?	Yes/ No
How?	

19. Will it affect heritage assets in Cheshire East's rural areas?	Yes/ No
In what way?	

Appendix 1
Cheshire East's Rural Proofing Checklist

Social/Community Value:

20. Will your proposal target disadvantaged people?	Yes/ No
Who & how?	

21. How will it help to develop strong and resilient communities?
Think in particular about issues of isolation often experienced in remote rural locations:

Conclusions:

Based on your answers above, are there any changes that you could make to your policy, key decision or target?:
Based on your answers, do you need to consider using a Sparsity Factor in your formula for funding? (Guidance on Sparsity Factors is available from the Partnerships Team)
If there are significant factors preventing the implementation of the recommended changes to your policy please outline these here:
If you do not intend to change your policy, outline how you intend to overcome significant factors mentioned above that may prevent its implementation:

Please make use of this template every time you consider new policy developments to ensure that Cheshire East's rural areas are considered, valued, included and provided for in everything Cheshire East Council does.