

MOSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2018-2030



Contents

1. FOREWORD.....	5
2. BACKGROUND	9
3. KEY THEMES.....	11
4. CONSULTATION.....	12
5. VISION AND OBJECTIVES	14
6. LOCAL GREEN GAP POLICY	15
7. HOUSING AND DESIGN POLICIES	19
8. LOCAL CHARACTER AND DESIGN POLICIES.....	22
9. INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES.....	29
10. LOCAL GREEN SPACE POLICY.....	31
11. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT POLICIES	36
12. RECREATION AND LEISURE POLICIES	47
13. RURAL ECONOMY POLICIES	53
14. HERITAGE POLICY	58
APPENDIX 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire.....	65
APPENDIX 2 – Information on Moston’s Public Rights of Way.....	65
APPENDIX 3 – Information on the Proposed new Public Rights of Way.....	69
APPENDIX 4 – National Cycle Route 5	70
APPENDIX 5 - The Story of the Dragon of Moston	71
APPENDIX 6 - The first Cheshire Police Officer to be killed on duty	73
APPENDIX 7 – Background to the Gravestone at Moston Manor	74

Figures

[Figure A: Moston Parish Interpretation Board](#)

[Figure B: Map of Designated Area](#)

[Figure C: Moston in the Context of the Cheshire East Local Plan](#)

[Figure D: Swot Analysis \(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats\)](#)

[Figure E: Map of Local Green Gaps](#)

[Figure F: Map of Local Green Gap 1 and 2](#)

[Figure G: Map of Street Lights in Moston Parish](#)

[Figure H: Table of Local Green Spaces](#)

[Figure I: Map of Moston Green Local Green Space](#)

[Figure J: Aerial Photograph of Moston Green Local Green Space](#)

[Figure K: Photograph of Moston Green Local Green Space](#)

[Figure L: Map of Dragon's Corner Local Green Space](#)

[Figure M: Aerial Photograph of Dragon's Corner Local Green Space](#)

[Figure N: Photograph of Dragon's Local Green Space](#)

[Figure O: Map highlighting the current lack of Open Spaces within Moston Parish](#)

[Figure P: Map of Ecological Network](#)

[Figure Q: Map of Wildlife Distinctiveness](#)

[Figure R: Map of Indicative Wildlife Corridors](#)

[Figure S: Map of Moston's Nature Conservation Interests](#)

[Figure T: Map of Moston's Public Rights of Way](#)

[Figure U: Map of Employment Sites](#)

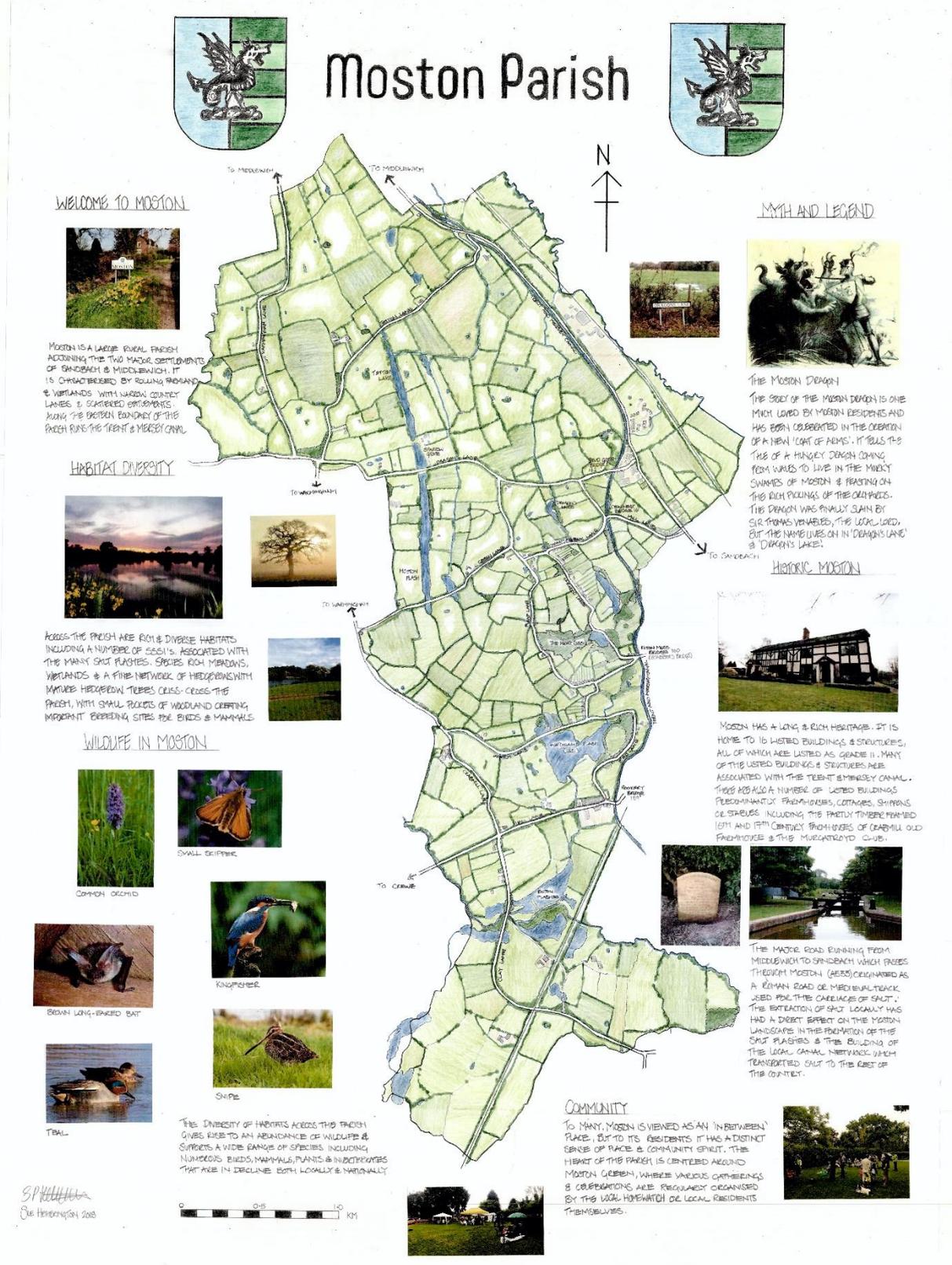
[Figure V: Map of Hall Lane Employment Site](#)

[Figure W: Map of Booth Lane Employment Site](#)

[Figure X: Map of Dragon's Wharf Employment Site](#)

[Figure Y: Map of Moston's Historical Assets](#)

Figure A – Moston Parish Interpretation Board



With thanks to local resident Sue Hetherington

1. FOREWORD

1.1 What is neighbourhood planning?

1.2 Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to set out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people. They can put in place planning policies that will help deliver that vision or grant planning permission for the development they want to see.

1.3 A neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development.

1.4 A neighbourhood plan can be used to address the development and use of land but wider community aspirations can be included in a neighbourhood plan. Actions dealing with non land use matters should be clearly identifiable.

1.5 Cheshire East has recently adopted the first part of a new Local Plan which sets out the strategic planning framework for the Borough, including Moston, to 2030. The Local Plan is being prepared in two stages with the part two plan, the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document, currently being prepared and anticipated to be completed early in 2019. Moston's position in terms of the Local Plan Strategy is highlighted in Figure C.

1.6 The first part of the Local Plan, the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS), identifies a need to plan for a minimum of 36,000 homes across the borough and 380 hectares of employment land to 2030 and does so through the distribution of development across a settlement hierarchy with four tiers, these tiers are the Principal Towns, Key Service Centres, Local Service Centres and Rural and other Villages. Moston falls into the category of Rural and Other Villages. Specific development targets have been identified to be met across the settlement hierarchy:

	Housing (numbers of dwellings)	Employment (ha)
Principal Towns	12511	85
Key Service Centres	18547	225.07
Local Service Centres	3749	7
Rural and Other Villages	3378	69.13
Total	38185	386.21

1.7 Importantly, to ensure there is flexibility of provision for sites within the plan a 10% flexibility factor is included meaning that seeking to allocate more land than the minimum of 36000 homes and 386ha employment land required. These figures and targets are set out in the table above.

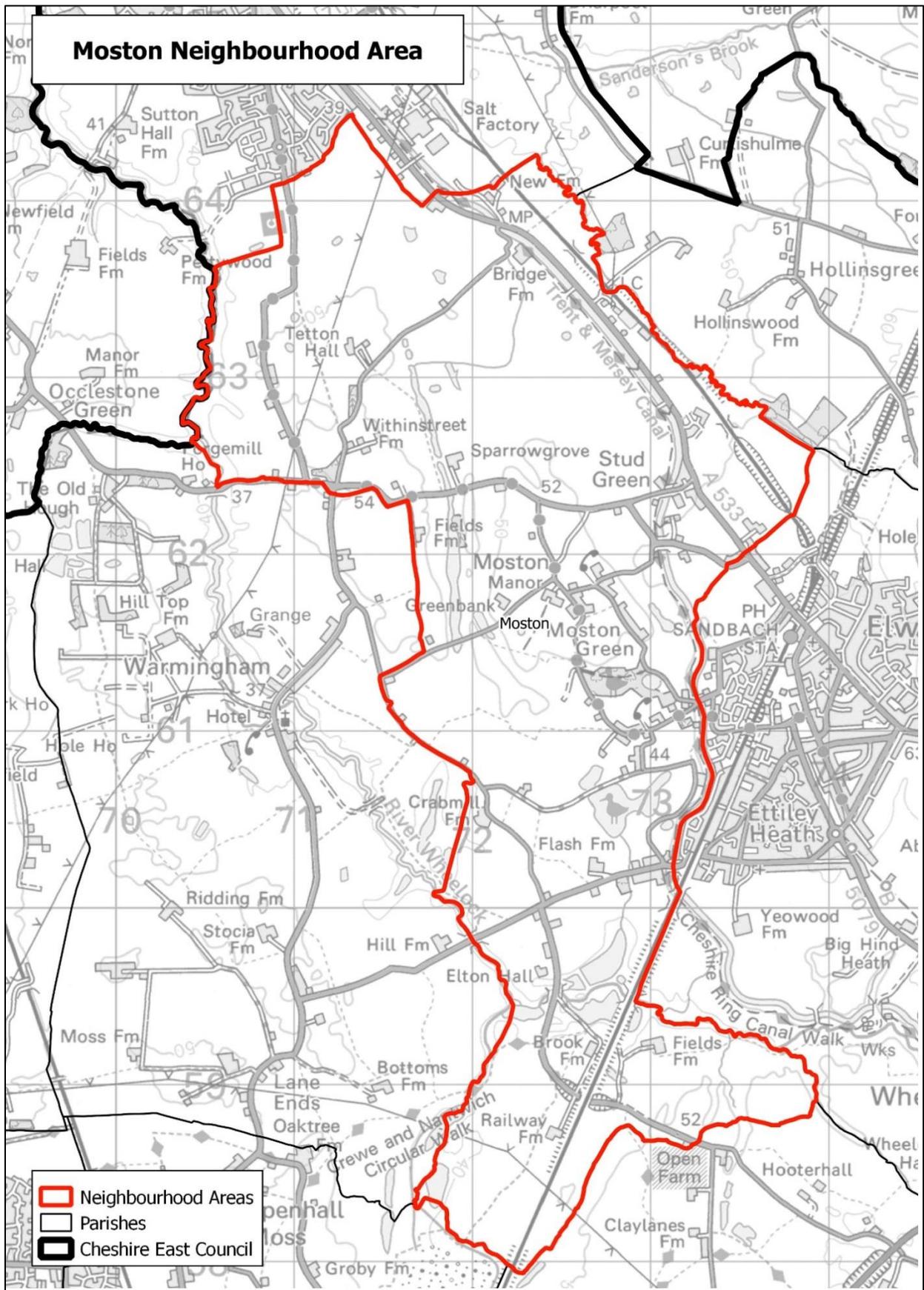
1.8 Most development is focused in the top two tiers of the settlement hierarchy and the CELPS allocates specific sites to meet development need here. The Local Services Centres

and Rural and Other Villages will be the subject of plan making during the part two plan where sites may be allocated to meet development need.

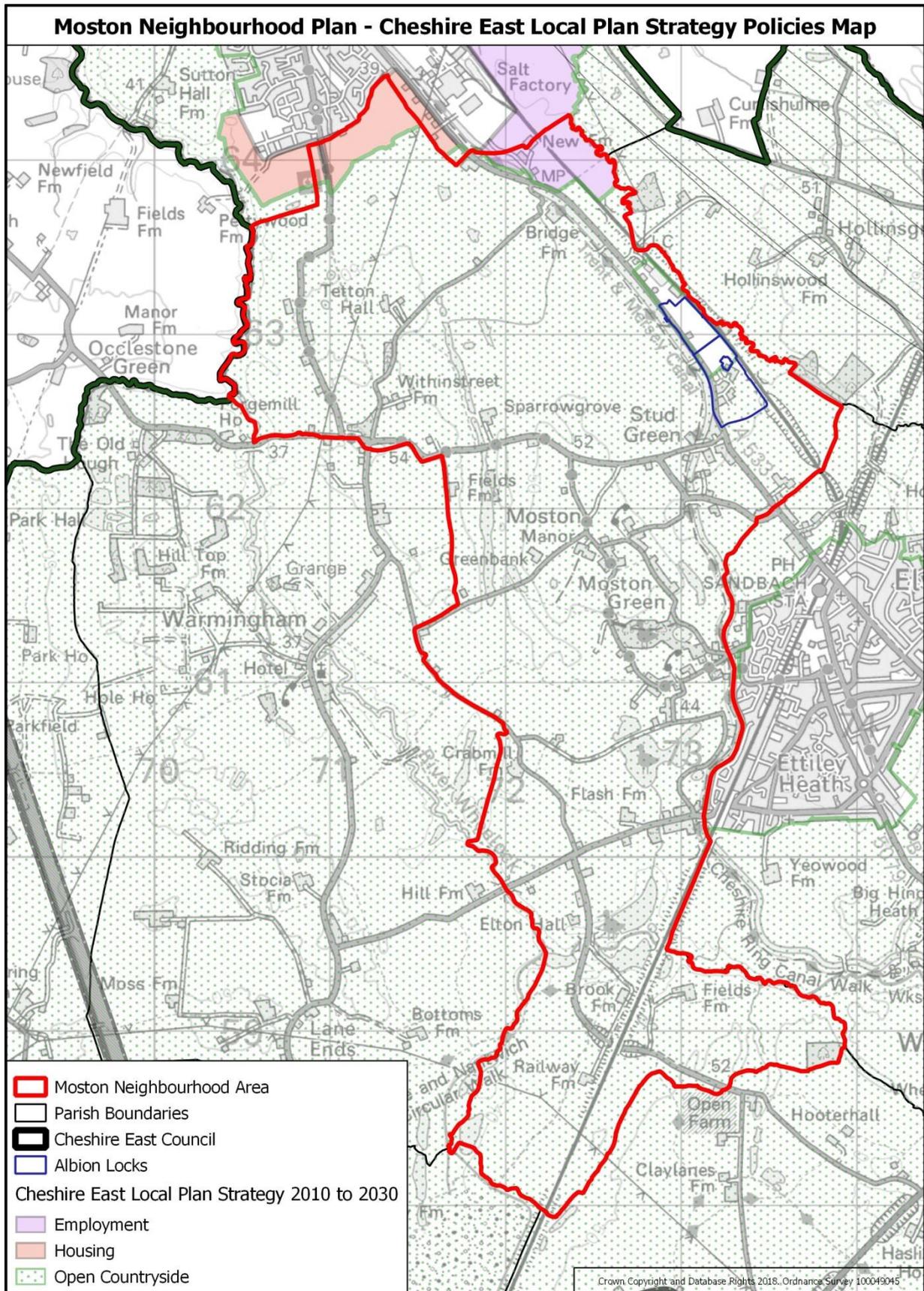
1.9 Neighbourhood plans are designed to promote and define what sustainable development means in a community and are required to conform to the strategic policies set down in the Local Plan, they therefore have an important role to play in how and where development should be delivered at the most local level.

1.10 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan was produced by the Parish Council and members of the community following a Parish Council Meeting on 2nd May 2017. A steering group was formed who consulted and listened to the community on a range of issues that influence the well-being, sustainability and long term preservation of Moston's rural community. Every effort has been made to ensure that the vision, aims, objectives and policies of the Moston Neighbourhood Plan reflect the views of the majority of Moston residents, whilst having regard to local and national policies. The designated Neighbourhood Plan area is shown in Figure B.

1.11 Figure B – Map of Designated Area



1.12 Figure C - Moston in the context of the Cheshire East Local Plan



2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Moston is steeped in myths and folklore, particularly regarding the ‘Moston Dragon’ who legend has it lived in a swamp in Moston in the twelfth century. The dragon attacked and ate the local population until Sir Thomas Venables, a cousin of William the Conqueror, shot the dragon through the eye with an arrow and killed it with his sword. (The full story is detailed in Appendix 5). A road now runs through this area called Dragon’s Lane.

2.2 One of our numerous canal bridges, Elton Moss Bridge, has the unenviable distinction of being the scene of where the first Cheshire Police Officer was killed whilst on duty. (The full story is detailed in Appendix 6).

2.3 Moston has clear arrival points into the parish with its visually attractive dragon standing out on the welcoming boundary signs. It is a very large parish covering some 1052 hectares and adjoining two major settlements, Sandbach and Middlewich. The southern part of the parish is also in proximity to the largest town in Cheshire East, Crewe. The parish contains a varied landscape of wetlands and elevated farmland and is traversed north to south by some of the boroughs key transport infrastructure – the main Manchester to Crewe rail lines, the Trent and Mersey Canal and the main road between Sandbach and Middlewich, the A533. The country lanes that intersect the parish are also important east west links in the highways network between the A534 and A530.

2.4 As well as being home to some 405 residents, the area is well used for recreation by the nearby populations and beyond for fishing, cycling (National Cycle Route 5 (appendix 4), bird watching, walking and horse riding. The public rights of way network is well used, generally clearly marked and accessible (Figure X). The area is a very green area with local areas of protected green space, as highlighted on Figure U.

2.5 The parish is also host to a diverse and nationally important series of wetlands and habitats. Multiple Sites of Special Scientific Interest are located here supporting many important plant and animal species. The wetlands themselves create important visual markers in the landscape and define in large part how the place looks and what it is used for. The central area is marked by both extensive and smaller wetlands.

2.6 Moston was a township in Warmingham ancient parish of Northwich hundred (a geographical division of Cheshire) which became a civil parish in 1866. The civil parish was abolished in 1936 to become part of Tetton with minor boundary alterations which saw the parish gain part of Kinderton but losing part of Middlewich. In 1970 Moston was recreated by uniting Elton with Tetton and incorporating Needham’s Bank and Stud Green and becoming part of the Congleton Rural District which latterly became encompassed by Cheshire East from 2009 onwards.

2.7 There are a number of notable heritage assets which include timber framed buildings and important features of the canal network. Our major land use is agricultural however there are some areas of industry within the parish, notably chemical and engineering works at the south east of the parish on Hall Lane whilst on the north easterly edge around Booths

Lane and Dragons Lane we have a Resin Floor manufacturer, other light industry an office complex, further chemical works and haulage depots.

2.8 In many ways the parish might be considered an 'in-between' place to anyone who doesn't live here, the bit between Middlewich and Sandbach. But to visit the heart of the parish around Moston Green you'd soon see that there is a distinct community and a distinct sense of place, in part created by the unique rolling topography and the sharp demarcation created by the canal, marking the end of Sandbach and the start of something different, something more rural and self contained as a space. One of the most valued aspects of living in the parish is the area's connectivity across diverse landscape of waterways, fields and woods to services and industry provided by nearby Sandbach, Middlewich and Crewe.

2.9 The parish has a core residential area with dispersed farmsteads and homes across a much wider area. Whilst the community here is distinctly separate from that of the nearby larger settlements, it is very much physically, and often visually connected to our neighbours – with the community sourcing most services and practical day to day needs from the nearby larger settlements (there are no services within Moston, and the area remains off grid for mains gas with sewage reliant on septic tanks) and the proximity to the mainline rail station and to shops in Elworth and Sandbach make this area a well connected retreat hosting the best of a rural offer within a special and unique local landscape.

2.10 Broadly our population live in detached and semi-detached brick built homes, are getting older and increasingly retired. Those that are in work tend to travel long distances for employment. The parish is also host to a significant Gypsy and Traveller community which was initially centred in Middlewich but has grown in the past few decades, with a number of permanent and temporary sites located within the rural areas of Moston closer to established rural properties.

2.11 Over the past ten years most planning applications have been for small scale alterations to existing buildings and for new small scale residential development, the recent exception being the former Chemical works on Booth Lane where planning has been granted for 371 houses There are also examples of applications to support the operation of farms and increasingly for equestrian activity. Notably, many of the smaller dwellings in the parish, including bungalows, are increasingly the subject of planning applications to accommodate the addition of a second floor, usually through alterations to the pitch of the roof and addition of dormer windows. There is concern in the Parish over plans for a bypass, and the impact that this may have on small, narrow, rural lanes which are often used for equestrian purposes, and which may consequently be used as a short cut despite being considered to be unsuitable for an increase in traffic.

2.12 There is a requirement to accommodate growth in the rural areas themselves and as Middlewich and Sandbach grow, it's increasingly important to recognise the pressures this creates on Moston Parish, and to understand how we can best retain the special characteristics of our community whilst balancing the demand of growth and change. This neighbourhood plan sets out how we will seek to achieve this as a community by planning to retain and enhance the best features of our place defining what sustainable development means to us.

3. KEY THEMES

3.1 In order to help to determine what policies may be necessary for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan, a SWOT analysis was undertaken by the Cheshire East Neighbourhood Plan team and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, using local knowledge and the results of the initial questionnaire. The results are highlighted in the table below. A SWOT analysis is a strategic technique used in planning to help identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats related to an area or project.

3.2 Figure D – SWOT Analysis

Strengths of the Parish	Weaknesses of the Parish
Rural, open countryside Community spirit Events – neighbourhood watch, litter picking, fireworks on the field; queens jubilee on the green (party!) Waterways and wildlife Footpaths; canal; cycle ways (national cycle way) Outdoor recreational area Horsey culture/equestrian use Quiet, safe Village green – to be taken on by Parish Council Ecological hotspot Good connectivity to services in Sandbach/Middlewich/Crewe and on the train to Manchester (walking to the station) Dark skies – a little idyll	Rat running/single track roads used as two way causing deterioration and mud being forced into drainage ditches, subsequently flooding fields Fly tipping HGV – limitation on weights/low bridges (exercise on mapping routes/approved routes and key problem areas) Vehicles travelling too fast for rural conditions on lanes frequented by cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders. Poor areas of the local Public Rights Of Way (for existing and new residents)
Opportunities for the Parish	Threats to the Parish
Improve community relations Improvements to the canal towpaths Cycle network and physical improvements Bridleways – map and protect Establishing and protecting wildlife corridors and buffer zones Community broadband Footpath connections to train station No commercial interests arising from HS2 for Moston Rural economy and business opportunities based on existing facilities Consider how to address threats and worst aspects (rat running, drainage etc.)	Changes to agriculture and small holding – contractors working the land and renting out. Workers on farms no longer live in the area High levels of Traveller sites and visual impact on landscape/character. Temporary Traveller sites becoming permanent Encroachment from larger settlements – (impacts on habitats, population, sense of place) Overall housing supply and potential for unwanted/off plan development – including traveller supply as well as market housing Middlewich eastern bypass – impact on through traffic and lanes, visual impact, impact on habitats and SSSIs HS2 – population increase and pressure on housing development / rolling stock yard Infrastructure – drainage, sewerage (no mains)

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan is a community plan and must derive its vision, objectives and policies from the community. From the outset the Parish Council were determined that the residents should be kept informed and given every opportunity to inform the Steering Group of their views. Communication and consultation, in various forms, have played a major role in formulating the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.2 It was therefore considered important to -

- Promote a high degree of awareness of the project
- Form a steering group that contained both Parish Council members and volunteers from the local community
- Encourage everyone to contribute to the development of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Promote consultation events and provide regular updates on the status of the Neighbourhood Plan and its development

4.3 Key to this programme was publicity to gain residents engagement. This was gained via public meetings, postal information, and electronic media via the Parish Council website, and emails from Moston Home and Neighbourhood Watch to all members within the Parish (70+ households).

4.4 Further information on consultation methods and the results from the consultations can be found in more detail in the Consultation Statement that accompanies the Moston Neighbourhood Plan (www.mostonparishcouncil.org)

4.5 The proposed Neighbourhood Area for the Moston Neighbourhood Plan was formally designated on 4th May 2017.

4.6 A presentation on Neighbourhood Plans was held at the Annual Parish Meeting on 21st March 2017 when the public were invited to attend and ask questions from a guest speaker with experience in preparing Neighbourhood Plans from Cheshire Community Action. Following the meeting, a steering group was formed which included members of the Parish Council and volunteers from the local community.

4.7 An initial questionnaire was delivered to every household in the parish in early May 2017 to be completed by the end of May. The questionnaire was used as a basis on which to develop the objective, visions and policies. (The questionnaire can be seen at appendix 1 and on the parish council website www.mostonparishcouncil.org). 60 responses were received, a response rate of 29%. The questionnaire asked a number of questions, such as whether Moston should have a Neighbourhood Plan; what was is that the respondents liked and disliked about where they live; how they would like to see Moston in the future; and whether there were any views or local green spaces that should be particularly protected.

4.8 When asked what residents like about living in Moston the most popular answers were the community spirit and the natural environment. Words such as coming together, green aspects of fields, a little piece of paradise, friendly, quietness, a lovely area, a little

heaven, lovely neighbours and a very special area for wildlife were also used when completing the questionnaire.

4.9 When asked what they didn't like about living in the parish, the largest response was the state of the roads and verges, the busyness of the roads, and the predominance of Gypsy and Traveller sites.

4.10 Respondents were asked to score, on a scale of 1-10, how important certain issues were to them. The issues were ranked in the following order –

- The historic/traditional environment
- The natural environment
- Community facilities and infrastructure
- Jobs
- Housing to meet local needs

4.11 The Neighbourhood Plan Manager from Cheshire East Council spent a valuable week in August 2017 helping members of the Neighbourhood Plan steering group prepare the introductory sections of the Plan, the Vision and Objectives, and main policy themes.

4.12 Once an initial vision and objectives had been drafted, and draft policy headings drawn up, a drop in event was held on Saturday 11th November 2017 at St. Peter's Church Hall to show the community the results from the questionnaire, and ask their views on the draft vision, objectives and policy ideas.

4.13 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to the list of statutory and other bodies provided by Cheshire East Council as required under Regulation 14, Town and Country Planning, England Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (General) 2012. There were a total of 18 respondents, making very useful comments, which led to a number of changes to the policies and text of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the addition of 2 new policies, on Local Green Gaps and Surface Water Drainage. The comments and responses can be viewed in the Consultation Statement at www.mostonparishcouncil.org

5. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

5.1 The vision and objectives are based on the key issues raised by local people during the initial stages of the consultation process. They have been summarised and refined by the Steering Group and discussed at a drop in event with the community to form the basis of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.2 The vision for Moston is:

VISION

By 2030 Moston will continue to be a rural idyll with a strong community spirit, attractive to both residents and visitors alike. Moston's valued and special ecology will be preserved, protected and enhanced to include wildlife corridors and buffers. Whilst new housing developments will have been built at the outer edges of the parish, elsewhere any new development will meet local needs and be well designed, appropriately situated and small scale, reflecting Moston's character and location within the open countryside. The Gypsy and Traveller community will continue to be recognised and integrated within the parish without sites dominating the area.

5.3 Following on from the vision, the following objectives have been identified, and the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver these objectives:

OBJECTIVES

- To protect the natural environment from harm, preserve special habitats and seek opportunities to increase biodiversity.
- To improve access to and enjoyment of the countryside for visitors and residents alike.
- To deliver high quality sustainable homes that meet the needs of the parish.
- To protect those characteristics of the landscape and built environment that are most special to the community and positively contribute to quality of place in Moston.
- To successfully accommodate new development that integrates positively with its landscape setting.
- To support and grow the local economy.
- To deliver improvements to local infrastructure that improve the experience of living in and visiting Moston.

6. LOCAL GREEN GAP POLICY

6.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objectives:

- To protect those characteristics of the landscape and built environment that are most special to the community and positively contribute to quality of place in Moston.

POLICY LGG1 – LOCAL GREEN GAPS

In order to maintain the established character and identity of Moston, and to prevent coalescence with Sandbach and Middlewich, the local green gaps shown in Figures E and F will be preserved as open countryside and coalescence of the built form avoided.

6.2 Evidence and Justification

6.3 Whilst Moston is a small rural settlement in the open countryside, and identified as such in the Cheshire East Local Plan, its location close to the edge of the towns of Sandbach and Middlewich, and outside of the Green Belt, make it susceptible to high development pressure. 371 new houses have been built or have permission at the former Albion Chemicals Works, now known as Albion Lock with a planning application pending for a further 122 which whilst counting towards the housing figures for Sandbach, are within the parish of Moston. Therefore, during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, it was mentioned by residents and suggested by Cheshire East Council that there would be merit in exploring whether a local green gap should be implemented to preserve the character of Moston's main settlement, and prevent its coalescence with Sandbach and Middlewich.

6.4 Throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, consultations have highlighted the importance that local residents place on living in a rural area surrounded by open countryside. Local green gaps can be applied where the distance between settlements forms an important feature of their character, where there is a risk of settlement's coalescing, and where a significant degree of development pressure can be expected to arise in the future. It is recognised that Moston's position between the Key Service Centres of Middlewich and Sandbach make the village particularly vulnerable to development pressure, both now and in the future.

6.5 The three local green gaps have been designated following guidance on local green gaps prepared by Cheshire East Council for Neighbourhood Plan groups, and are considered to align to the approach underpinning Cheshire East's green gap policy. They will :-

- Provide long term protection against coalescence
- Protect the setting and separate identity of the settlement
- Retain the existing settlement pattern by maintaining the openness of land

6.6 **Local Green Gap 1** Figure F is land on the South West of Booth Lane Moston (A533) between Mill Lane and the property known as The Cedars on Booth Lane. It will prevent the coalescence of Elworth (Sandbach) and Moston and retain the open setting and rural character of the parish. The views of this land from Mill Lane are cherished by many and

should be retained. This section of land has previously been under threat with a refused planning application for industry in 2000.

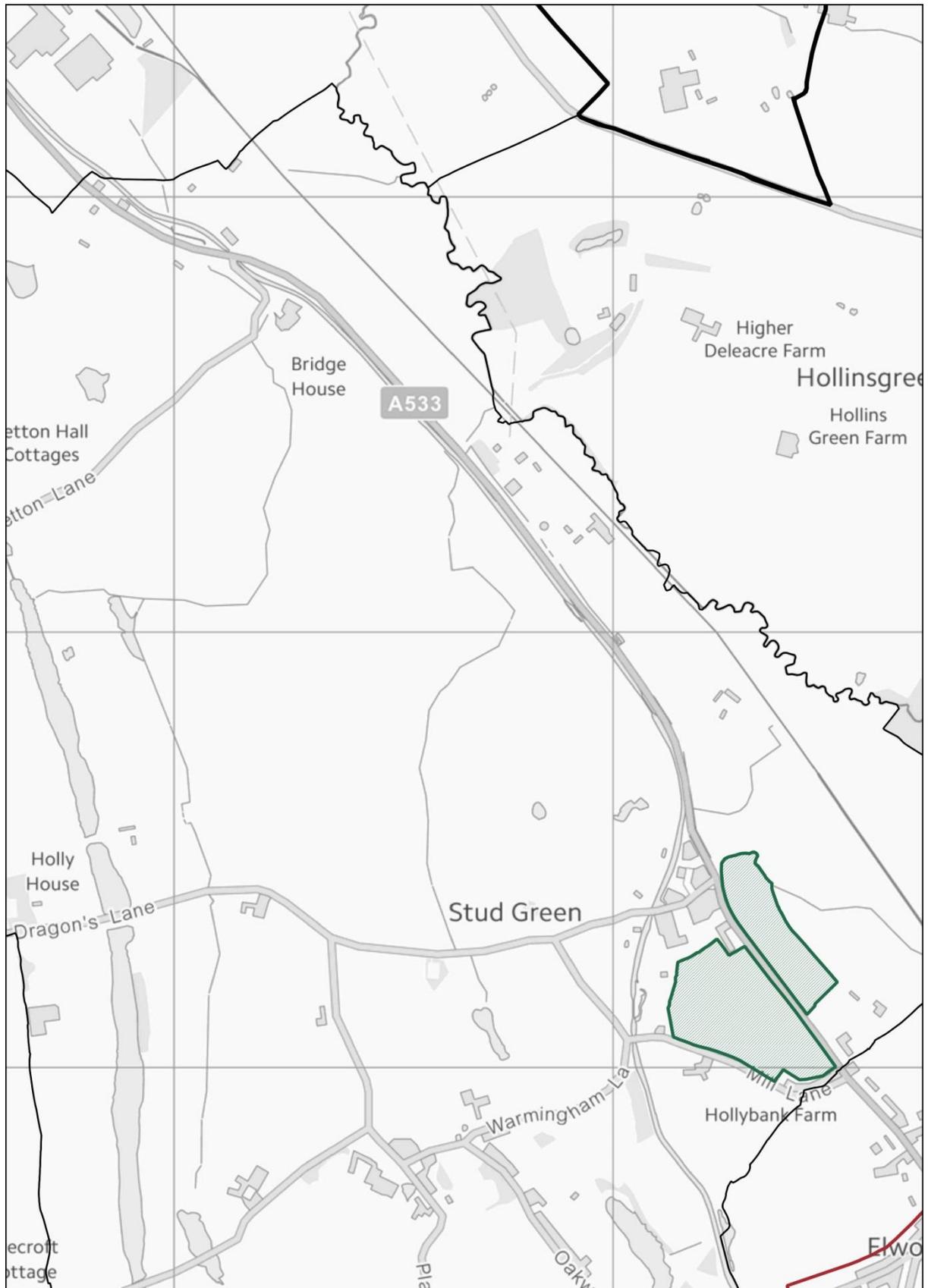
6.7 Local Green Gap 2 Figure F is land on the North East side of Booth Lane, Moston (A533) between land immediately after the driveway leading to Holly Bank Farm and the track adjacent to the Albion Lock development. This will prevent the coalescence of Elworth (Sandbach) and Moston and maintain the open setting and rural character of the parish. This is the only piece of land on the North East side of Booth Lane/London Road and Middlewich Road from Sandbach Town Centre to Bradwall Road which has not been subject to housing and industrial development allowing Moston to maintain its own identity as a rural parish.

6.8 Maintaining and enhancing the character and separate identities of the borough's towns and villages is a key priority of the Local Plan Strategy. The NPPF makes no direct reference to green gaps, but its core principles recognise the importance of the countryside, the natural environment and the character of different areas, which are supported by the application of green gap policy.

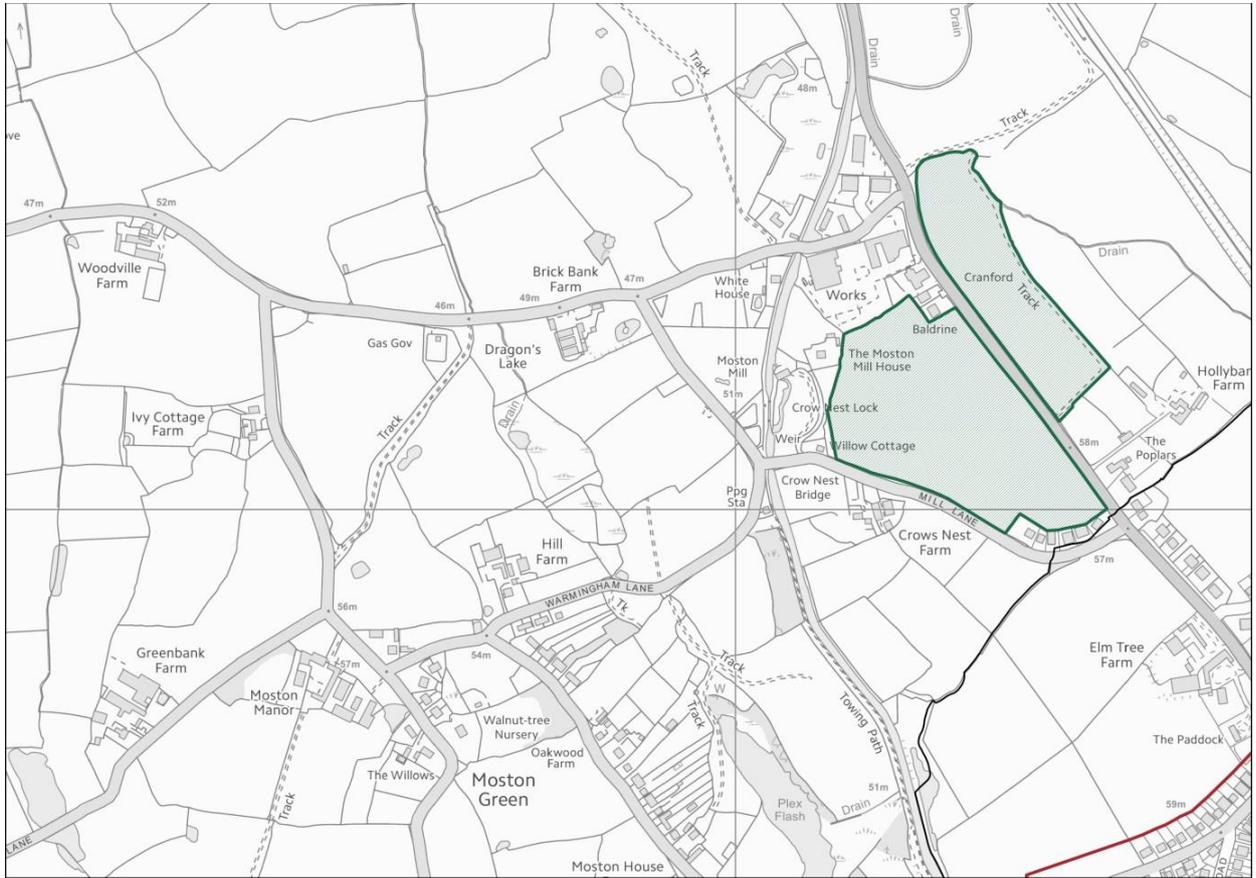


Local Green Gap looking from Mill Lane towards Booth Lane showing the open countryside which typifies Moston

6.9 Figure E – Map of Local Green Gaps



6.10 Figure F - land on the North East side of Booth Lane, Moston (A533) between land immediately after the paddock adjoining Holly Bank Farm and the track adjacent to the Albion Lock development.



7. HOUSING AND DESIGN POLICIES

7.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objectives:

- To deliver high quality sustainable homes that meet the needs of the parish.

POLICY HOU1 – LOCATION OF NEW HOMES

In order to meet local housing needs, and to remain on a scale appropriate to the existing character of Moston, support will be given for small scale residential exception developments which are well designed, have access to services, comply with policy PG 6 of the CELPS and meet all other relevant policies within this Plan.

In the case of residential conversions or residential development on brownfield sites, dwellings should not be materially larger than the buildings they replace. Where the impact of new development is not significantly more harmful to the character of the location than that of existing development on site, the number of new dwellings created through residential conversions or on brownfield sites may be greater than the original number of dwellings on site.

7.2 Evidence and Justification

7.3 Moston is a rural settlement. No strategic need has been identified to deliver housing beyond local needs in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy. This Neighbourhood Plan recognises that in order to maintain a sustainable and flourishing community, some housing development will be appropriate to meet local housing needs. However, one of the main responses from the consultations was that people value the open countryside setting of Moston, and it is the aim of the Neighbourhood Plan that new housing development will remain of a scale and in locations appropriate to the rural location.

7.4 Development in Moston has historically been at a slow and steady rate. The rural feel and open countryside are greatly valued by the local community, and large scale development at the heart of the parish would be out of character with the village. A number of larger housing sites have had permission on the periphery of the parish, but are more closely aligned with Sandbach and Middlewich, and indeed are counted towards the housing figures for those two larger key settlements, rather than the rural area or Moston Parish.

7.5 In the Cheshire East Local Plan, the village is defined as being outside settlement limits and in open countryside, where new housing is normally only permitted through conversions or replacement dwellings; limited infilling; limited affordable housing through rural exception sites; or where the dwelling is exceptional in design and sustainable development terms. The protection of the open countryside from urbanising development is a principal objective of the Local Plan Strategy. Indeed, one of the policy principles underpinning the Local Plan vision is to develop brownfield sites, where possible, to minimise the use of greenfield and the open countryside.

7.6 Cheshire East Council have produced a Housing Advice Note for Moston www.mostonparishcouncil.org which has indicated the likely housing need for the parish and helped inform the Neighbourhood Plan policies. The Housing Advice Note was prepared in November 2017, using methodology endorsed by Planning Practice Guidance and best practice. The Advice Note looked at evidence such as household projections, census data, dwelling completion rates and the emerging local plan strategy to give an appropriate quantum of housing for Moston, along with characteristics of the housing need.

7.7 The Housing Advice Note indicates that the range of potential housing range for Moston could be 20-60 dwellings (2010-2030), but highlights that with the recent delivery of 7 units over the past 7 years projected forward, it is reasonable to assume that 20 dwellings could be delivered in the plan period. The range is comprised of the following:-

- Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy proportionate figure: 28 (There are 20,656 households in the rural area of Cheshire East, and 174 households in Moston – 0.84% of total households in the rural area. If the parishes were to take a proportion of the proposed 2950 dwellings to be delivered in the rural area over the plan period, this would equate to 28 dwellings).
- DCLG Household Projections: 22 (It is projected that by 2030 Cheshire East households will increase to 180 000 from 159 000 in 2010 – an average increase of 1050 households per annum. Moston has a 0.1 % share of all households in Cheshire East, projected forward this gives a figure of 196 households by 2030. With a ratio of 0.97 households per dwelling, this equates to 22 dwellings over the plan period).
- Dwelling completion rate: 60 (Between 2001-2011 there was an increase of 30 dwellings in Moston, or 3 dwellings per annum. Projecting forward to 2030, a figure of 60 dwellings would be arrived at if this rate continued over the plan period). However, from April 2010 to March 2017 there have been 7 residential completions. There are 5 dwellings committed, taking the completions and commitments up to March 31st 2107 to 12. If the delivery over the past 7 years is projected forward at one dwelling per year, the housing advice note states that it would be reasonable to assume that 20 dwellings could be delivered in the plan period. The completions and commitment figure of 12 can be deducted from the potential range of 20-60 units, making a requirement for between 8-48 dwellings for the remainder of the plan period (up to 2030).

7.8 It is not therefore considered necessary to allocate further sites for residential development. The housing policies will allow for appropriate small scale windfall developments or rural exception sites to meet the identified need as has historically been the case in Moston. Any new housing development should be limited in scale in order to remain in keeping with the character of Moston.

7.9 Housing Mix and Type

POLICY HOU2 – HOUSING MIX AND TYPE

New housing in Moston should seek to redress the imbalance of the existing housing stock and provide smaller dwellings. Unless viability or other material considerations demonstrate a robust justification for a different mix the development should provide one-third detached properties, the rest being bungalows, terraced or semi-detached properties suitable for first time buyers or those wishing to downsize.

7.10 Evidence and Justification

7.11 The Housing Advice Note for Moston www.mostonparishcouncil.org prepared by Cheshire East Council, details that Moston's housing stock is dominated by detached housing, accounting for 57% of household accommodation, which is significantly more than the Cheshire East and national averages. There are also considerably fewer smaller terraced and semi-detached properties. This lack of smaller market homes limits the opportunities for first time buyers to either locate or remain in the parish, compounding the demographic profile of an ageing population and lower proportions of younger age groups. It also does not give much opportunity for people to downsize, freeing up family homes. The Housing Advice Note recommends that developments should provide for a range of housing types, tenures and sizes, with a particular emphasis on smaller market housing to balance the housing stock profile, which would provide more opportunities for younger residents including first time buyers as well as some downsizing opportunities.

7.12 The Housing Advice Note highlights that the proportion of the very elderly population is significantly greater than the Cheshire East average and that there are a large proportion of households who will become very elderly over the plan period. However, it is recognised that whilst there is a need to consider carefully the provision of specialist housing for the elderly, the viability of such provision and the need to ensure that sheltered/retirement provision is close to services and facilities, may lead to such accommodation being better provided for in larger settlements. Again, smaller properties available for downsizing and for residents to maintain their independence for longer would be a way of helping to address this issue.

7.13 This policy reflects the outcome of the Housing Advice Note, and is also in line with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 50 which strives to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, identifying the size, type, tenure and range of housing required in particular locations to reflect local demand, and Policy SC4 (Residential Mix) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy.

8. LOCAL CHARACTER AND DESIGN POLICIES

8.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objectives:

- To protect those characteristics of the landscape and built environment that are most special to the community and positively contribute to quality of place in Moston.
- To successfully accommodate new development that integrates positively with its landscape setting.

POLICY LCD1: DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

To ensure that buildings, characteristic features and materials are representative of the local character of Moston, the design and layout of all new developments, both temporary and permanent, should demonstrate consideration of the Cheshire East Design Guide (2016) or any updated version. New development should take the following into account, where appropriate and viable:

- A. Traditional materials and detailing should be included in new designs.
- B. New development should complement its' immediate surroundings, in terms of both the natural landscape and the built environment.
- C. Development adjoining open countryside and at the edge of the Parish should provide a sympathetic transition between the urban landscape and the countryside.
- D. Development should be bordered by boundary treatments appropriate to its location, with hedgerows and low rise brick walls being preferable. Existing hedgerow boundaries should be protected wherever possible and maintained as a feature of new development.
- E. Development should not have a significant negative impact upon, nor inappropriately urbanise the rural country lanes.
- F. New housing should be positioned such that it does not prejudice the amenity of future occupiers or the occupiers of adjacent property by reason of overshadowing, overlooking, visual intrusion, noise and disturbance, odour, or in any other way.
- G. The orientation of new buildings should be arranged to maintain as far as is possible the views from existing buildings.
- H. In the case of conversions, where possible, reclaimed brick must be used, in keeping with the brick of surrounding buildings. Roofing must be of materials that complement and are in sympathy with the roofing materials of surrounding buildings, and in the case of barn conversions wherever possible, be of the same materials as the accompanying farmhouse.
- I. Hard and soft landscaping must complement and be in keeping with and sympathetic to, the existing neighbouring landscape, using local materials and species, taking into account the rural nature of the parish and the number of SSSIs within the parish boundary.
- J. Hard and soft landscaping must not disturb or encroach on existing wildlife habitats, both flora and fauna.
- K. Existing landscape features such as trees, water courses, ditches and ponds should be retained and incorporated into the overall design of the scheme to enhance local biodiversity and preserve the landscape character, and ensure their continued survival.
- L. New development should incorporate features beneficial to wildlife.
- M. The Parish Council will support the return of sites with temporary planning consents in open countryside to agriculture.

8.2 Evidence and Justification

8.3 It is important that any new development is of high quality design, enhancing the local character of the parish. Moston has a dispersed character with attractive buildings within a rural landscape, and with views of the open countryside abounding. Every effort needs to be adopted to ensure new developments respect this.

8.4 Cheshire East Council has recently prepared a design guide that has been out for consultation

http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/supplementary_plan_documents/design-guide-supplementary-planning-document.aspx The guide highlights that the character and attractiveness of Cheshire East underpins the quality of life enjoyed by the Borough and its residents.

8.5 Moston falls within ‘Salt and Engineering Towns’, which covers the central area of Cheshire East. It consists of not only large scale urban areas of Crewe and Middlewich, but also of more rural areas linked by a network of winding lanes. The Design Guide gives Design Cues for Salt and Engineering Towns. Those relevant to Moston include:

- Brick of various shades and textures in the main building material
- All eras of architecture are found within the character area
- Boundary walls often constructed from same material as the main property
- Long views to the Pennines (north east) and Sandstone Ridge (south west) are a key feature of many settlements
- Flashes and ponds dominate and influence the countryside and settlements of this character area
- Existing landscape features should be retained on site to preserve the landscape character

8.6 In order to reflect and enhance the character of Moston, the design guide should be consulted on all new development proposals.

8.7 Additionally, it should be noted that the character of the village has developed over many years. The heart of the parish is dominated by the highest concentration of residential dwellings in the parish in a compact linear form dispersed over a series of country lanes and interspersed with rolling open fields and small areas of woodland. Most properties are a modest size with large garden plots (particularly to the rear), incorporate front gardens, with a mixture of boundary treatments with multiple examples of low rise brick wall and well managed hedges. Every effort needs to be adopted to ensure new developments reflect these principles. Traditional materials such as old Cheshire brick, stone, slate and clay tiles are apparent throughout the parish, and should be included in new designs where appropriate.

8.8 Small pockets of housing are centred mainly around Moston Green, Plant Lane, Oakwood Lane, Watch Lane and Red Lane. Moston is fairly unusual in that the majority of housing consists mainly of bungalows, with some houses, centred round Moston Green and Needhams Bank. Both bungalows and houses are largely built brick with tiled roofs, fronting

the road.



8.9 There are a number of cottages that are brick built with again tile or slate roofs, many of the cottages are also rendered. The rest of the housing within the parish consists of farms and their associated buildings and barn conversions. These too are brick built with tiles or slate roofs.





8.10 All housing has direct access to the local road network, and all are fronted either by low walls or hedges, and back directly onto fields or open ground. As such, it is important that new development follows these principles, and should be bordered by boundary treatments appropriate to its location, with hedgerows and low rise brick walls being preferable, and existing hedgerow boundaries should be protected and maintained as a feature of new development. One of the most noticeable elements of the parishes is their narrow, winding, country lanes, which often have no footpath or pavement. Subject to highway safety issues, it is important that in order to maintain the local character of the parish that development does not lead to the rural road network becoming inappropriately urbanised.



8.11 Moston is also characterised by the large number of flashes and ponds, some of

which are designated SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest). The majority of the parish comprises open fields bounded by hedges and trees. Lines of oak trees were generally used to designate the major boundaries between farms, being more permanent than hedges. The Parish is crisscrossed by declassified roads and lanes, all of which have wide grass verges which contain a wide variety of plant and animal life.

8.12 It was apparent from the survey results that local wildlife is important to the community. The Cheshire Wildlife Trust report “Protecting and Enhancing Moston’s Natural Environment” which was published in February 2018 and can be found at www.mostonparishcouncil.org highlights that in order to support local wildlife, new development should support features within their design that are beneficial to wildlife such as installing bat/otter sensitive lighting schemes, installing durable bat/bird boxes and hedgehog-friendly fencing and ensuring surface water is directed away from sensitive areas and into SUDS schemes.

8.13 Planning conditions for temporary permissions for Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Parish have stated that the temporary uses shall be discontinued and the land restored to its former condition (14/3086C and 17/5170C)

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/...a_planning.../view_a_planning_application.aspx The Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Site Identification Study www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/PDF/20140401_GTS_site_study_Rev_4_FINAL.pdf highlights that the temporary site at Thimswarra Farm is not suitable for permanent planning permission as it would have an unacceptable impact on the landscape of Moston, and that the site is recognisable as an isolated and non-vernacular intrusion in the rural area. In order to protect and enhance the landscape character of the parish, it should be ensured therefore that all temporary uses of whatever type that have an adverse impact on the surrounding landscape and environment must restore land to its original use, once the permission expires.

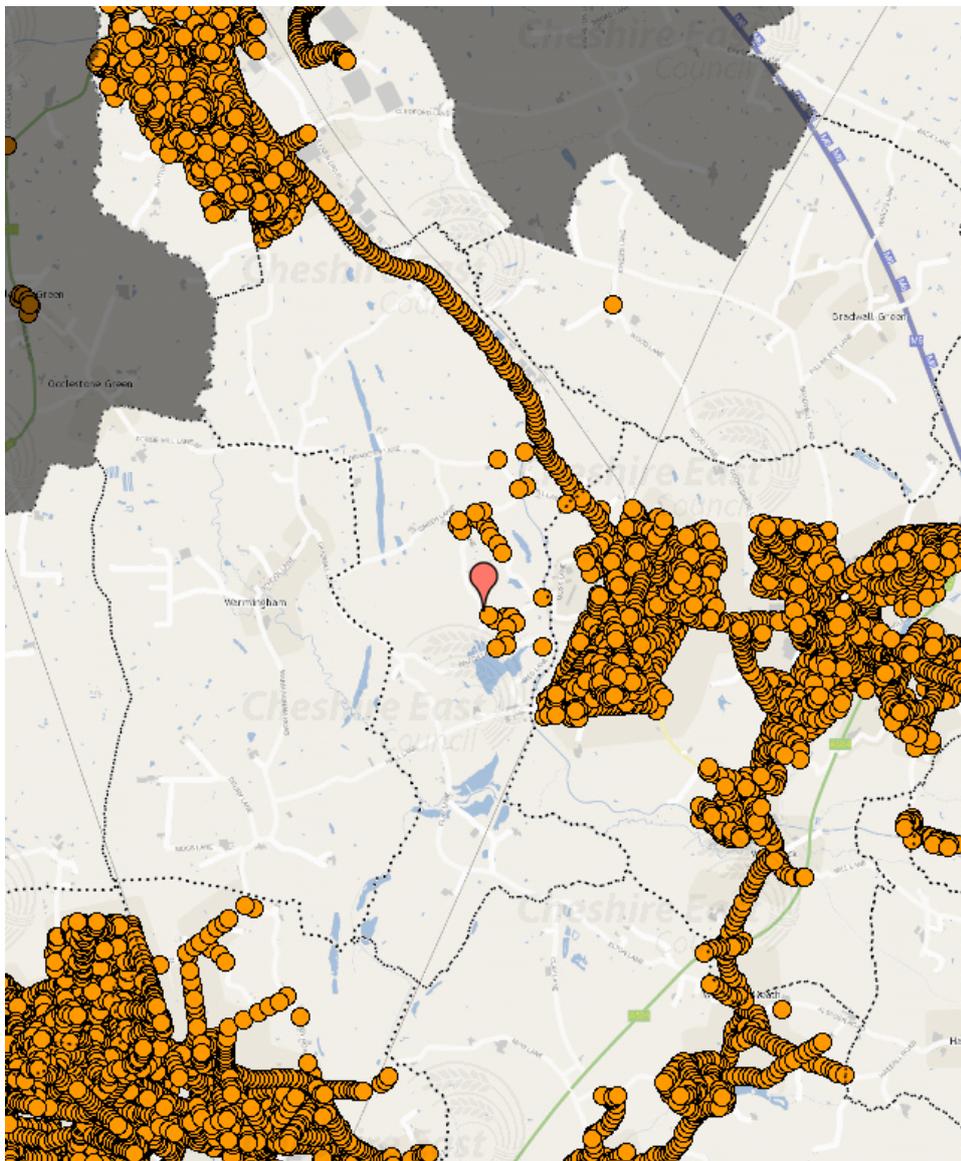
8.14 One of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Para 58 states that neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area, that developments should establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. Developments should respond to local character and history, reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Para 61 states planning policies and decisions should address the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

8.15 Dark Skies

POLICY LCD2 – DARK SKIES

Whilst ensuring that new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over street lights. Any future outdoor lighting systems should have a minimum impact on the environment, minimising light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife subject to highway safety, the needs of particular individuals or groups, and security. Schemes should reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the nighttime skies dark and reducing glare.

8.16 Figure G – Map of Street Lighting in Moston Parish



8.17 Figure G shows the low number of street lights in the Parish (away from the A533) particularly compared to nearby Sandbach. This lack of street lighting and resultant dark skies, add to the rural character and sense of place of Moston. Additionally, the Cheshire Wildlife Trust report “Protecting and Enhancing Moston’s Natural Environment” www.mostonparishcouncil.org stresses the importance of installing bat/otter sensitive lighting schemes in order to limit the negative potential impacts on wildlife.

8.18 Paragraph 125 of the NPPF states that ‘By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.’ Paragraph 13.133 of the Cheshire East Local plan states that the council is aware of the increasing issues arising from artificial lighting, which can often impact upon residential amenity, the character and appearance of an area (particularly rural locations) and the environment. Aspects such as poor design, location, the expulsion of unnecessarily high levels of light can have a harmful impact. The council will, where appropriate, seek to influence light pollution that would have a harmful impact upon the natural/built environment and amenity.

9. INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES

9.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objective:-

- To deliver improvements to local infrastructure that improve the experience of living in and visiting Moston.

POLICY INF1 – UTILITIES

Where development significantly harms existing services, utilities or infrastructure, mitigation measures must be implemented as a condition of planning permission. If significant harm cannot be mitigated against, permission should not be granted.

9.2 Evidence and Justification

9.3 Throughout the consultation process, comments were received about the need to improve access to facilities and services, and ensure that any new developments do not have an unacceptable negative impact on existing infrastructure.

9.4 One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy framework (Para 17) is that planning should deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Policy SD2 –Sustainable Development Principles – of the draft Cheshire East Local Plan (2016) stresses that all development will be expected to provide or contribute towards identified infrastructure, services or facilities.

9.5 Broadband

POLICY INF2 – BROADBAND

The development of advanced high quality communications infrastructure, including high speed broadband, will be supported, subject to:

- a) Development being kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network.
- b) Any development being sympathetic to its surroundings and camouflaged where appropriate.

9.6 Evidence and Justification

9.7 Moston is in an isolated location and covers a large rural area, with no defined centre point or amenities, such as shops, schools or pubs. Although relatively close to public transport, accessing public transport at a necessary or convenient time is not always achievable, and this can be a real problem for people without the use of a car. Data from the Department for Transport indicates that Moston is 8km from a job centre, with the average distance in England being 4.6km. The nearest secondary school is 3.9k from Moston, with the average in England being 2.1km. The nearest GP surgery is 3.9k, compared

to the England average of 1.2km, and it is 3.6km to the nearest post office from Moston, which compares unfavourably to the England average of 1km.

9.8 It is therefore considered important that Moston has high quality communications infrastructure, and is an essential element of the ambitions for the parish. Superfast broadband is encouraged so that everyone, particularly the elderly and people with disabilities, can have greater access to opportunities and services which are available on the world wide web.

9.9 Additionally, a larger than average percentage of Moston residents work from home. The 2011 census information indicates that 7.4% of 16-74 year olds work from home, which is higher than the average in England of 3.5%. Having a high quality communications infrastructure is therefore important to help sustain and develop the businesses of these residents.

9.10 One of the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework is to support high quality communications infrastructure. Paragraph 42 highlights that supporting high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth, and that the development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

9.11 Surface Water Management

POLICY INF3 – SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT

New development should be designed to maximise the retention of surface water on the development site and to minimise runoff. The approach to surface water drainage should be considered in liaison with the LLFA, the public sewerage undertaker and where appropriate the Environment Agency”.

Surface water should be discharged in the following order of priority:

- An adequate soakaway or some other form of infiltration system.
- An attenuated discharge to watercourse or other water body.
- An attenuated discharge to public surface water sewer.
- An attenuated discharge to public combined sewer.

9.12 Evidence and Justification

9.13 This policy aims to reduce the risk of flooding whilst also improving the water quality of the Parishes watercourses and ponds, helping to create havens for wildlife.

9.14 One of the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework is to meet the challenge of climate change and flooding. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change.

10. LOCAL GREEN SPACE POLICY

10.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objectives:

- To protect the natural environment from harm, preserve special habitats and seek opportunities to increase biodiversity.
- To improve access to and enjoyment of the countryside for visitors and residents alike.

POLICY LGS1 – LOCAL GREEN SPACE

The areas listed below and shown on Figures J and M are designated as ‘Local Green Space’ which is protected from new development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated, or where development supports the role and function of the Local Green Space.

a) Moston Green

b) Triangle on the corner of Plant and Dragons Lane

10.2 Evidence and Justification

10.3 The National Planning Policy Framework highlights that local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.

10.4 Local Green Space designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

10.5 Whilst Moston is a green and rural parish, Figure O, provided by Cheshire East Council, shows the open spaces in Moston Parish and highlights the lack of officially designated open spaces (there is only one – the golf driving range). This lack of provision makes the three Local Green Space designations even more valuable to the community.

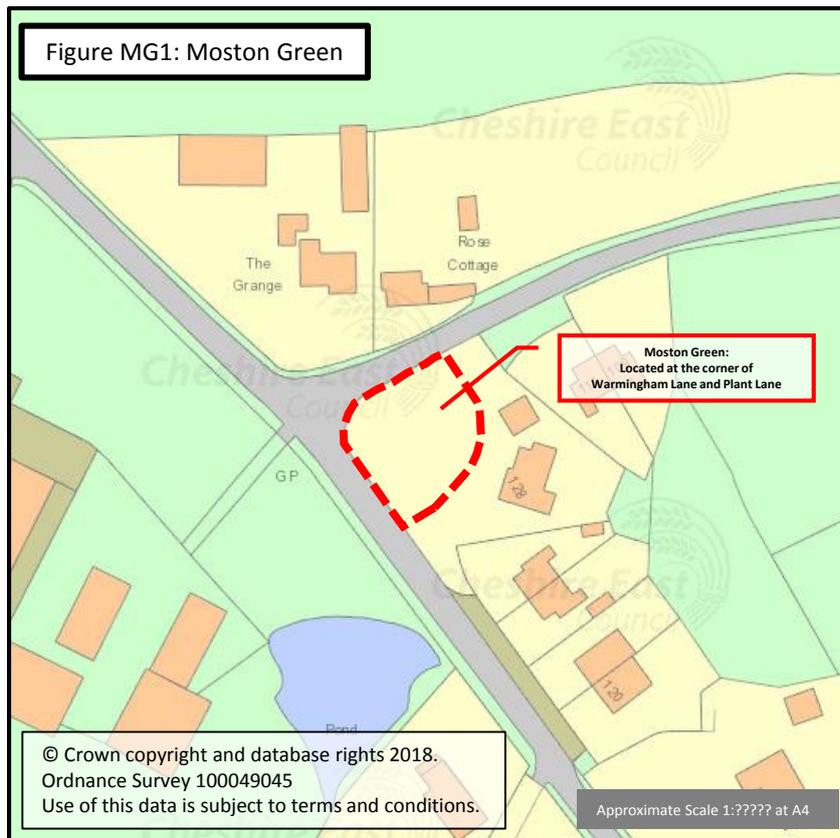
10.6 Development proposals on, or likely to have an impact on the sites will only be supported in very special circumstances, for example:

- i) where they maintain or enhance the existing use and amenity value of the site;
- ii) where they enhance the access to and the use of the site for recreational purposes.

10.7 Figure H– Local Green Space Table

Local Green Space	Size (m²)	Proximity to the Community	Demonstration of Special Value to the Local Community	Ownership
Moston Green	380m ²	Moston parish is spread across a large area, with the main settled area being denoted by the Green.	This is seen by the community as the ‘unofficial centre’ of the Parish. It is frequently used as a communal meeting point and is valued by local people for its sense of rural character and for its recreational value as somewhere to relax, exercise and play. Community events are held here such as summer barbeques, and it is a rest stop and meeting point for cyclists using the national cycle route that passes adjacent to the Green. During 2018 ownership will transfer from Cheshire East Council to Moston Parish Council, with the clear objective to preserve and enhance the Green for the community, for present and future generations.	During 2018 ownership will transfer from Cheshire East Council to Moston Parish Council.
Triangle on the corner of Plant and Dragons Lane (Dragon’s Corner)	205m ²	This is located 0.5km north of Moston Green at the corner of Plant Lane and Dragons Lane.	This site is a piece of land that typifies Moston, with its lush grass and beautiful seasonal display of flowers. It is another frequently used communal meeting point for cyclists, walkers and horse riders alike, who use the peaceful and tranquil site to seek refuge from the traffic on the adjacent busy road of Dragons Lane.	Cheshire East Council

10.8 Figure I –Moston Green Local Green Space



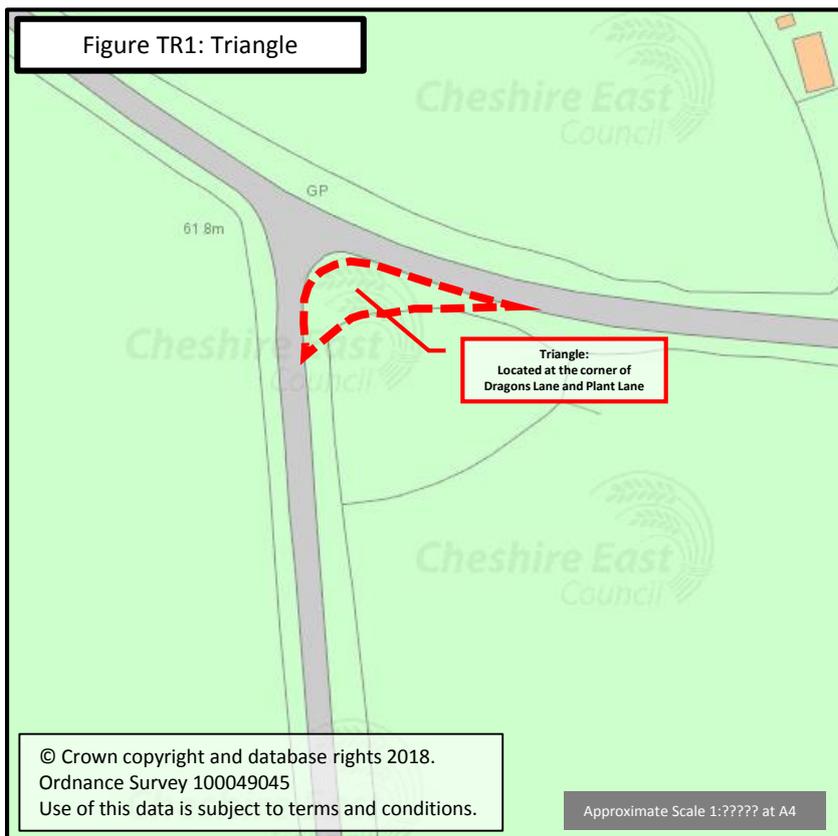
10.9 Figure J – Aerial Photograph of Moston Green Local Green Space



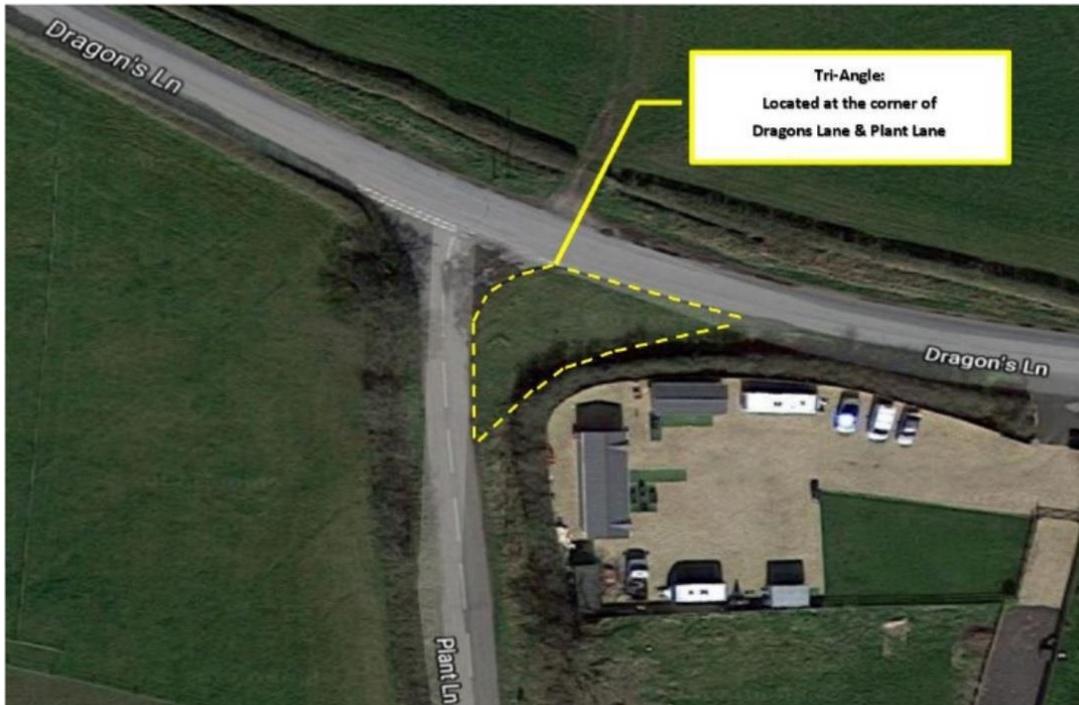
10.10 Figure K – Photograph of Moston Green Local Green Space



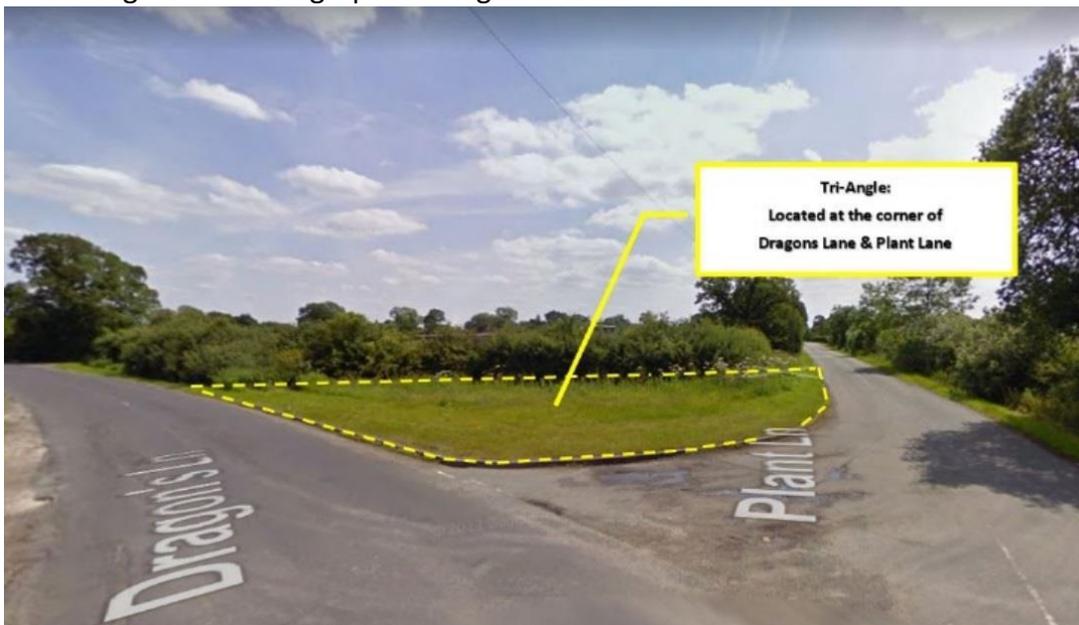
10.11 Figure L –Dragon’s Corner (Triangle)



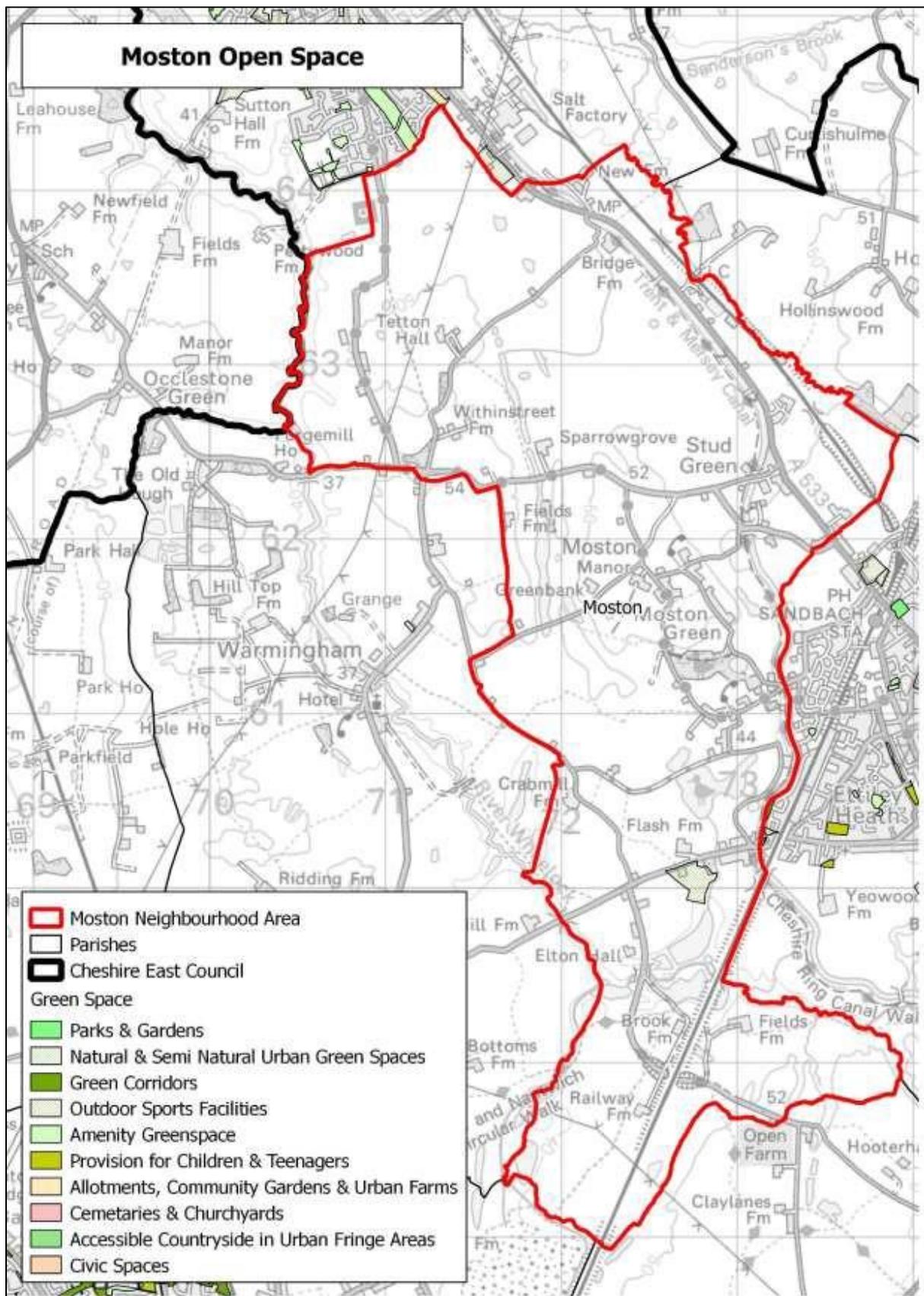
10.12 Figure M - Aerial Photograph of Dragon’s Corner Triangle on the corner of Plant and Dragons Lane Local Green Space



10.13 Figure N - Photograph of Dragon's Corner



10.14 Figure O - Map highlighting the current lack of Open Spaces within Moston Parish



11. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

11.1 Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objectives

- To protect the natural environment from harm, preserve special habitats and seek opportunities to increase biodiversity.
- To protect those characteristics of the landscape and built environment that are most special to the community and positively contribute to quality of place in Moston.
- To successfully accommodate new development that integrates positively with its landscape setting.

POLICY ENV1 – WILDLIFE HABITATS, WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND BIODIVERSITY

Areas identified on Figure Q as supporting high distinctiveness habitat shall be protected by at least a 15m buffer zone.

Areas identified on Figure Q as supporting medium distinctiveness habitat will require a comprehensive ecological evaluation if they are put forward for development.

In other areas of open countryside, applications for new development of a scale or type which is likely to impact on habitats should be informed by a Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

The habitats and the wildlife corridor network shown on Figures Q and R shall be protected from new development unless the benefits of development clearly outweigh the impact it is likely to have on the site and the wider network of sites can be demonstrated. The wildlife corridor network shall also be protected by a 15m non-developable buffer zone.

New developments must not create divisions between existing wildlife corridors (Figure R) and where possible should contribute to the creation of new or improved links.

If new areas of high distinctiveness habitat and associated wildlife corridors are identified in the future following a comprehensive habitat survey these should also be protected by a 15m non-developable buffer zone.

Development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity shall be permitted.

New developments shall demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity using appropriate evaluation methodologies and avoidance/mitigation strategies. Compensatory measures (for example biodiversity offsetting) will be required if a net loss of biodiversity is likely.

11. 2 Evidence and Justification

11.3 The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is one of the core objectives of the planning system. The residents of Moston are keen to protect wildlife and nature conservation interests. Knowing the importance of the countryside to local residents, the Neighbourhood Plan steering group commissioned Cheshire Wildlife Trust to produce a report “Protecting and Enhancing Moston’s Natural Environment” which was published in February 2018 with an addendum (July 2018) www.mostonparishcouncil.org

11.4 The whole area covered by the Moston Neighbourhood Plan has been identified as a “core area for wildlife” by EConet (Integrated Vision of the Cheshire County Ecological Network). Core areas are identified by EConet as fundamental components of the country wide ecological network. The high numbers of sites of wildlife distinctiveness is highlighted on Figure Q.

11.5 Wildlife corridors are a key component of wider ecological networks as they provide connectivity between core areas of high wildlife value/distinctiveness enabling species to move between them to feed, disperse, migrate or reproduce. The Cheshire Wildlife Trust study has identified a wildlife corridor network (shown on Figure R) with ecological connectivity within and beyond the Moston Neighbourhood Planning area.

11.6 The corridor network closely follows the River Wheelock, the smaller watercourses and incorporates the flashes, woodlands, peatlands, higher value hedgerows and sections of the canal. It has good ecological connectivity along most of its length apart from where it passes over minor roads, however the maximum gap is less than 30 metres which will allow more mobile species to cross.

11.7 Moston has many SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) which would be highly vulnerable to any changes caused by developments. (Figure S). Some SSSIs are in a poor condition and may require restorative work. The policy will help to preserve and possibly increase biodiversity in these and surrounding areas. Additionally, the Moston area supports pockets of species-rich and marshy grassland, the fastest disappearing habitats in the UK. Areas of species-rich or marshy grassland will support populations of declining pollinators including moths, specialist grassland butterflies such as small skipper or common blue and solitary bees and hoverflies. These marshy grassland areas also support uncommon flora such as bog-bean, cowbane, common orchids, wood small-reed and greater burnet and declining bird species such as snipe and teal. Where species-rich grasslands are located close to waterbodies dragonflies and damselflies are likely to be present as these feed on other invertebrates but require waterbodies to breed.

11.8 The Cheshire Wildlife Trust report recognized the whole of Moston Parish as an important wildlife area and identified the core, high ecological value sites (high distinctiveness) for nature conservation in the parish, which are recommended for protection, and medium value sites (semi natural habitat) which should be considered as biodiversity opportunity areas and which should be subject to a full evaluation should they be proposed for future development. Figure P shows the Ecological Network Mapping.

11.9 Most notably the study has highlighted a ‘wildlife corridor network’ (Figure R) which provides ecological connectivity between the most important areas within and beyond the Neighbourhood Planning area. The wildlife corridor network is likely to support a wide range of species including numerous birds, mammals, plants and invertebrates that are in decline both locally and nationally. Some of the most notable are the waders associated with the flashes such as curlew, lapwing, snipe, wigeon and teal. Also important are the red listed farmland birds such as tree sparrow, yellowhammer and linnet and the declining bat species including the brown long-eared bat and the noctule bat. All of these species depend on the semi-natural habitats highlighted in the report and the most threatened species tend to be

associated with the habitats that are disappearing fastest such as the peatlands and the species-rich grasslands with their suite of invertebrates. Established natural corridors used by wildlife such as those highlighted in the report would also be highly vulnerable to changes caused by development in the area.

11.10 Moston is particularly important for its areas of fen and ancient peat deposits. The peat soils developed from the rotting fen vegetation present in shallow lakes in depressions in the glacial sands after the last ice age. The local names of Moston and Elton Moss indicate that the accumulation of peat eventually led to the formation of a sphagnum moss bog. These habitats are extremely rare across Europe as a whole and although there is no evidence today of the sphagnum moss, it is likely that some of the wetland species still present in the area are species particularly associated with mosslands. The relict peatland deposits are extensive stretching from Dragon's Lake southwards to Watch Lane Flash. Peat soils contain the highest amount of stored carbon compared to other soil types and are therefore particularly important in providing ecosystem services. Removal of the peat or exposure to air, for example if the area is developed for housing or ploughed for agriculture, will result in oxidation of the carbon deposits and its subsequent release into the atmosphere.

11.11 Moston parish has a scattering of field ponds with the highest density in the centre and north of the parish. These ponds significantly contribute to the permeability of the landscape for wildlife. Ponds have been highlighted as habitat of medium distinctiveness in Figure U and should be retained where possible when land is developed. Where ponds are stocked with high numbers of fish the wildlife value is decreased. This is because introduced fish (such as bottom feeding non-native carp) can deplete the pond of invertebrate larvae and amphibian eggs/larvae as well as water plants. Despite this, even low value ponds can help increase landscape permeability for species such as birds and terrestrial invertebrates.

11.12 The semi-natural woodland in Moston may support roosts of UK priority bat species which will forage for insect prey along the woodland edges, hedgerows and watercourses. Uncommon and declining brown long-eared bats have been recently recorded foraging in the Green Lane and Dragon's Lane areas. This species is likely to roost in old buildings, especially in barns. Other bat species recorded in the area include soprano and common pipistrelle, noctule and myotis species. All bats are European Protected Species (EPS) and many are also UK species of Principal Importance (S41 species).

11.13 The network of field boundary hedgerows provides habitat connectivity between high distinctiveness areas, which would otherwise be separated by extensive areas of land predominantly of low habitat distinctiveness with restricted potential for wildlife to disperse. These hedgerows provide linear connectivity through the neighbourhood and beyond.

11.14 The Cheshire Wildlife Trust report stresses that "future development of Moston should respect the natural environment. The most intact landscapes, in terms of biodiversity, landform and historical/cultural associations should be valued highly when planning

decisions are made. Protection and enhancement of Moston’s natural assets is of crucial importance for nature conservation and ecosystem services but it is also important for the enjoyment of future generations”

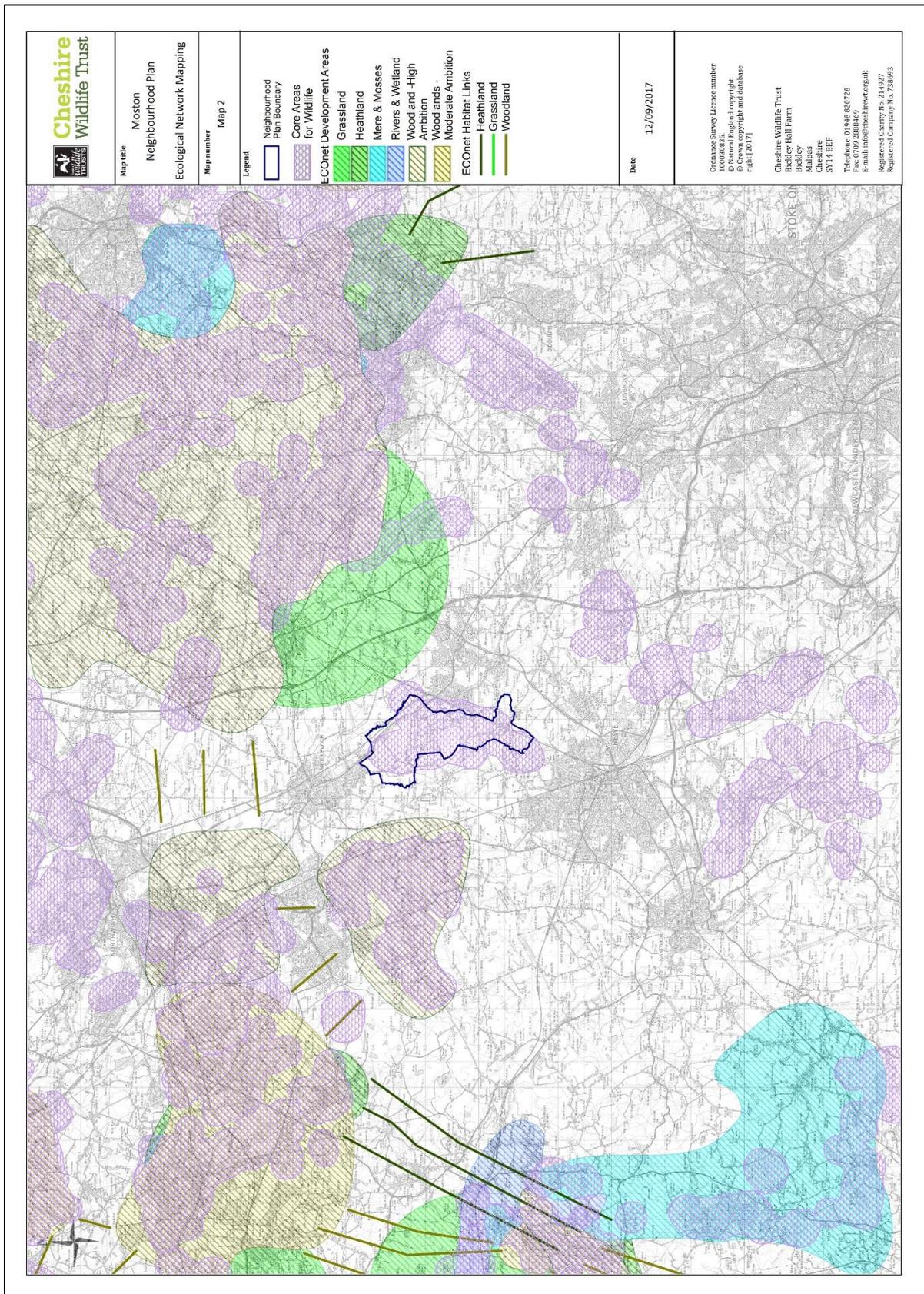
11.15 The creation of buffer zones, as indicated in the Cheshire Wildlife Trust report, is necessary to help protect vulnerable habitat from factors such as light pollution, ground water pollution, predation by domestic pets and invasive garden species if adjacent land is developed.

11.16 Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is central to the National Planning Policy Framework. Indeed, biodiversity is mentioned fifteen times in the NPPF with protection and improvement of the natural environment as core objectives of the planning system. The community in Moston is keen to protect wildlife and one of the key ways to achieve this is to ensure that new developments are appropriately located and do not cause a net loss of biodiversity. The NPPF states that planning policies should identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation.

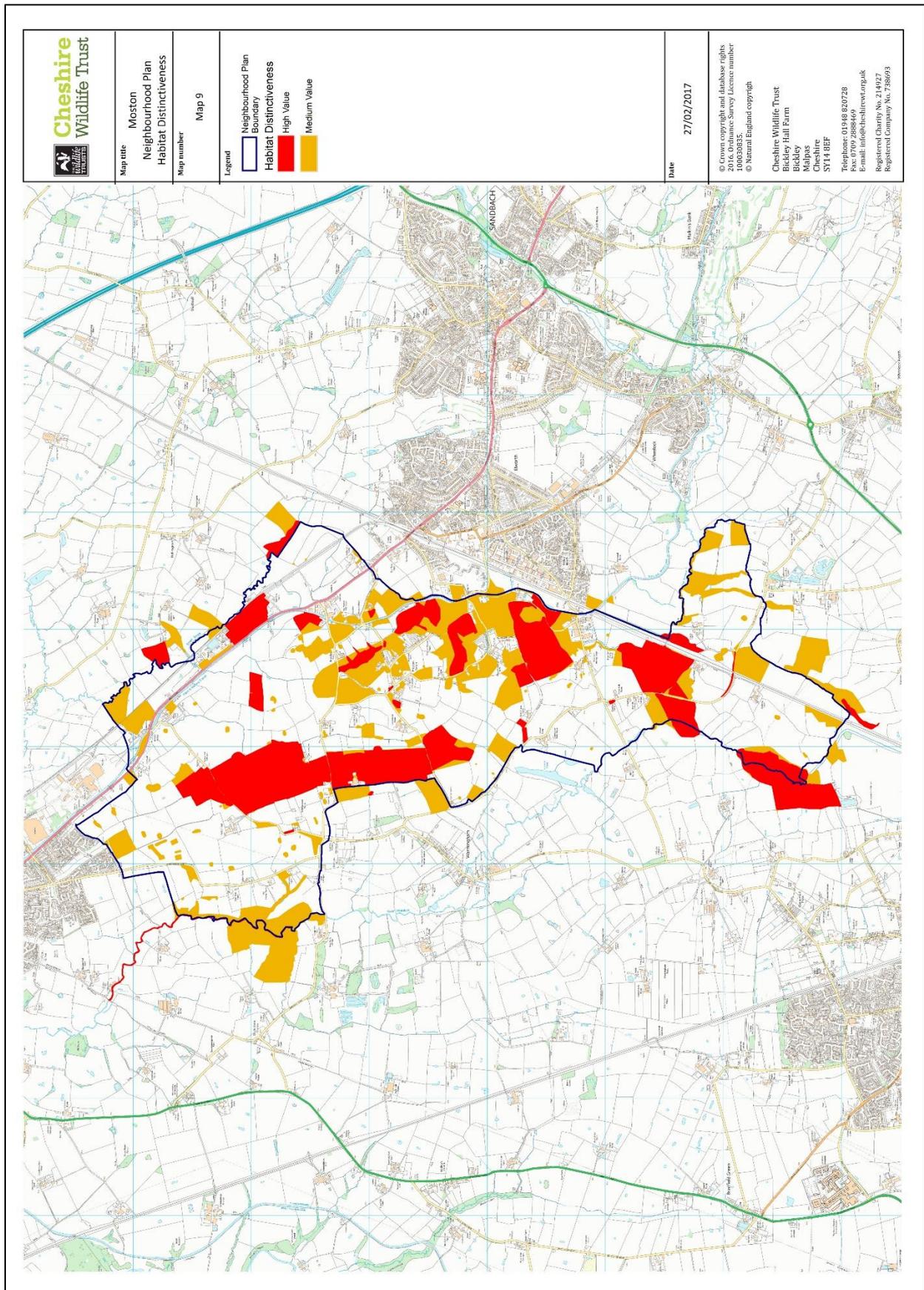
11.17 Policy SE4 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy seeks to ensure that all development should conserve the landscape character and quality and should, where possible, enhance and effectively manage the historic, natural and man-made features that contribute to local distinctiveness of rural and urban landscapes. Development should preserve local distinctiveness and avoid the loss of habitats of significant landscape importance. Policy SE3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, part 4, highlights that development proposals which are likely to have a significant adverse impact on habitats, species or on sites including Local Nature Reserves; Sites of Biological Importance (SBI), Local Wildlife Sites; Designated Wildlife Corridors; Areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland; and Nature Improvement Areas will not be permitted except where the reasons for or benefits of the proposed development outweigh the impact of the development.



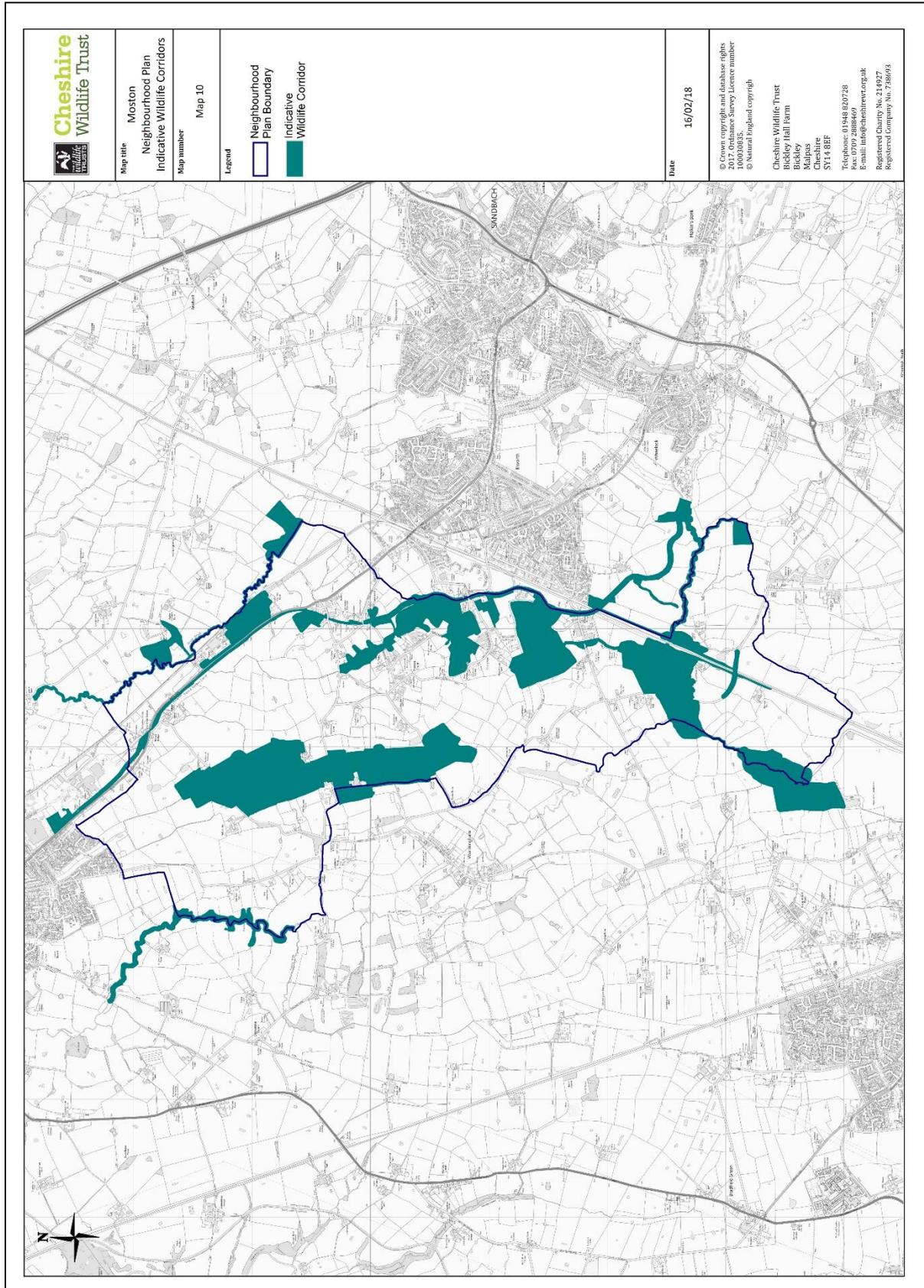
11.18 Figure P– Ecological Network Mapping



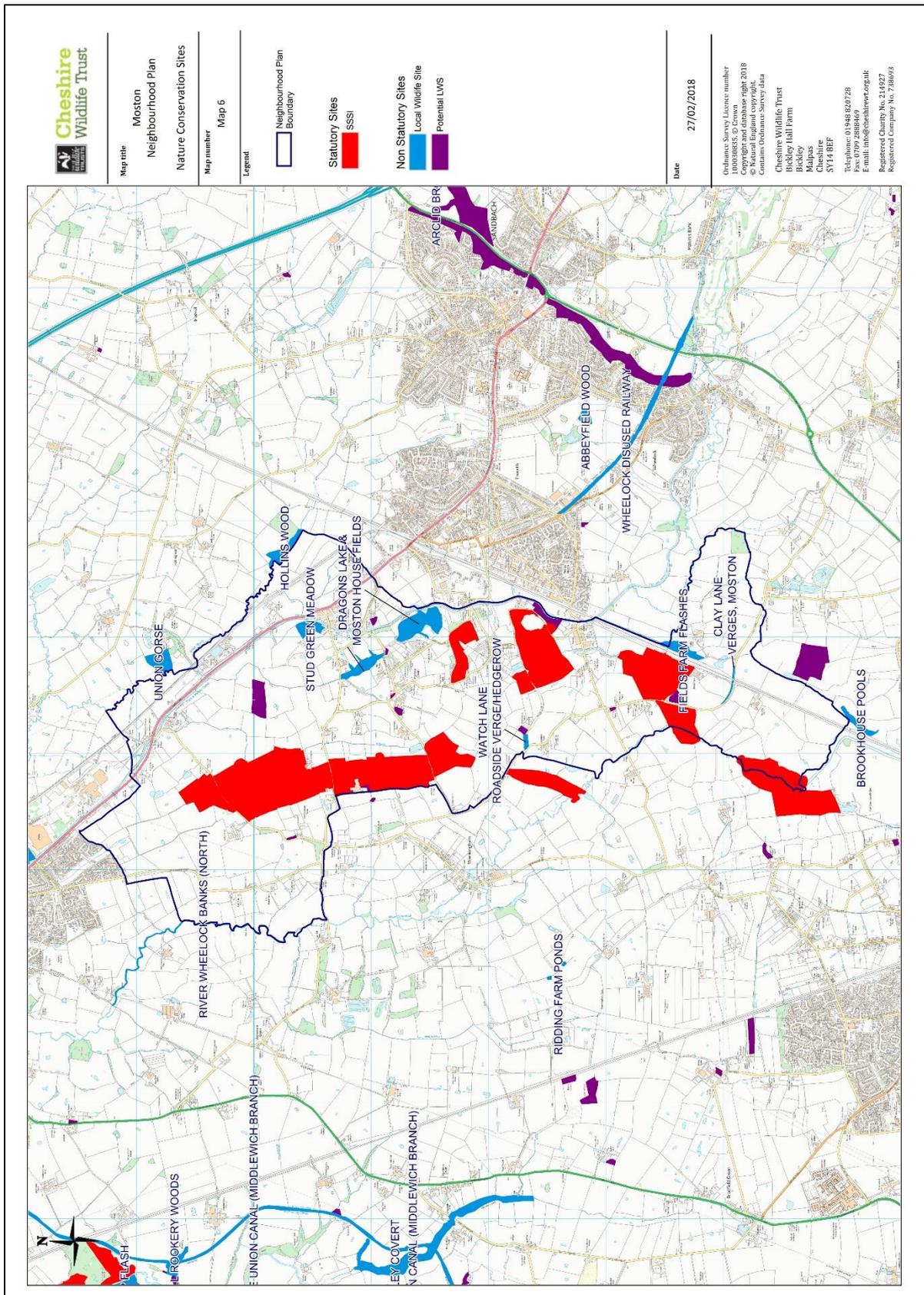
11.19 Figure Q - Map of Habitat Distinctiveness



11.20 Figure R – Map of Indicative Wildlife Corridors



11.21 Figure S - Moston's Natural Conservation Interests



11.22 Trees and Hedgerows

POLICY ENV2 – TREES, HEDGEROWS AND WATERCOURSES

Any development that would result in the loss of, or the deterioration in the quality of an important natural feature, including trees and hedgerows and watercourses will not normally be permitted. In exceptional circumstances where the benefit of development is considered to outweigh the benefit of preserving natural features, developments may be permitted subject to adequate compensatory provision being made. The retention of trees, hedgerows and other natural features in situ will always be preferable. Where the loss of such features is unavoidable, replacement provision must be of an equivalent or a greater amount to that which is lost. Appropriate landscaping schemes to show how the rural feel to the area will be maintained or any negative impacts will be mitigated against will be required.

11.23 Evidence and Justification

11.24 The Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment 2008 classifies Moston as lying within the East Lowland Plain Landscape Character Type. One of the key characteristics of this character type includes hawthorn hedges, hedgerow trees, mixed species hedgerows, species rich grasslands, and riparian ancient woodlands and field sized coverts.

11.25 One issue affecting this landscape character type is the decline in traditional woodland management practices leading to a general deterioration of farm woodlands, coverts and copses. Many hedgerow trees over mature and are in decline.

11.26 There are, however, a high number of trees and hedgerows apparent in the parish, which are a valued local characteristic, adding much to the rural feel of the parish, and which should be protected and enhanced. The Cheshire Wildlife Trust report “Protecting and Enhancing Moston’s Natural Environment” which was published in February 2018 and can be found at www.mostonparishcouncil.org highlights that the network of field boundary hedgerows provides habitat connectivity between high distinctiveness areas, which would otherwise be separated by extensive areas of land predominantly of low habitat distinctiveness with restricted potential for wildlife to disperse. Not all the hedgerows are identified as key components of the Moston ecological network, however collectively these hedgerows provide linear connectivity through the neighbourhood and beyond. In addition to their intrinsic ecological value a good hedgerow network also adds to the landscape character value.

11.27 The Cheshire Wildlife Trust report highlights that there are notable parcels of woodland in the Parish, including the area to the south and west of The Moat (Foden’s Flash). Although not ancient woodland this is an important priority habitat which lies within the designated SSSI. The area is important for summer warblers and there are past records for breeding willow tit, a county rarity. There is also a rookery in the woodland and locally scarce wood small-reed is present, along with an exceptional lichen assemblage. Hollin’s wood is an area of ancient woodland located on the neighbourhood planning boundary on the banks of Small Brook. Ancient woodlands are considered irreplaceable habitats due to

time taken for them to acquire their flora and fauna.

11.28 The Cheshire Wildlife Trust report indicates that traditional orchards, such as those present at Withinstreet Farm, Crow's Nest Farm, Watch Lane Farm, Field's Farm and Moston Manor are considered to be Priority habitats as they may contain highly localised cultivars of fruit trees and also provide numerous microhabitats which can be hotspots for biodiversity. Windfall fruit is an important food source for wintering birds such as fieldfare and redwing. The presence of dead wood is particularly important as it may support rare species of saproxylic invertebrates, fungi, bryophytes and lichens. The flowering trees provide an important source of pollen and nectar for numerous species of declining pollinators including bees, hoverflies and moths.

11.29 Scattered farmland trees together with the hedgerow network are also fundamental to landscape permeability and provide habitat for numerous species including declining farmland bird populations such as red listed thrushes and yellowhammer. Many invertebrates and small mammals also inhabit hedgerows. Small mammal populations are prey for birds such as amber listed kestrel which consequently do best in areas where the traditional farmland landscape is intact; this species has been recorded in the local area in recent years.

11.30 The best hedgerow network in the Moston area is probably to the east of the River Wheelock in the vicinity of Horseshoe Farm, The Home Farm and Oak Tree Farm. This area is likely to be especially good for farmland birds, invertebrates and small mammals. Other localities with a good hedgerow network include an area to the west of Dragon's Lake, an area to the north-east of Sparrowgrove and the area surrounding Withinstreet Farm.

11.31 The benefits of preserving trees and hedgerows in the parish are therefore numerous, for example they: -

- Provide habitats for wildlife
- Provide pleasant scenery for walking and outdoor activities which help reduce stress.
- Produce oxygen and reduce carbon dioxide.
- Are essential to maintain the rural feel to the parish
- Help reduce traffic noise and dust.
- Help to reduce surface water run off from roadways and buildings

11.32 This policy helps to deliver one of the key aims of the NPPF of conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The NPPF states that planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

12. RECREATION AND LEISURE POLICIES

12.1 Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objectives

- To improve access to and enjoyment of the countryside for visitors and residents alike.
- To protect those characteristics of the landscape and built environment that are most special to the community and positively contribute to quality of place in Moston.

POLICY REC1 - FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS, CYCLEWAYS AND THE CANAL TOWPATH

- Access to the countryside will be promoted through protection and maintenance of the existing Public Right of Way (PROW) network, cycleways and the canal towpath (see Figure T -map of existing PROW), their enhancement where possible, and the safety of users of rural roads and lanes. The construction and appearance of any new tracks, paths or links between existing footpaths must be appropriate and sensitive to the character of the locality and the surrounding area.
- Any development that leads to the loss or degradation of any PROW, cycleway or the canal towpath will not be permitted in other than very special circumstances, and then only if a suitable alternative can be provided. Proposals to divert PROWs or cycleways should provide clear and demonstrable benefits for the wider community.
- Any new development must provide easy, accessible traffic-free routes for non-motorised users (to include pedestrians, disabled people, people with prams or baby-buggies, cyclists and where appropriate equestrians) to the nearby countryside. The provision of any such additional routes will be supported.
- The needs of non-motorised users (as described above) must be taken into account in all traffic planning, but especially in relation to rural lanes and roads. Hazards arising from an increase in vehicle numbers where agricultural buildings are converted to residential or commercial use will need to be taken into consideration. Measures to be taken to ensure this may include, for example, separation of pedestrians/cyclists from vehicular traffic where possible or, improvements to signage.

12.2 Justification /Explanation

12.3 The results of consultations throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process highlighted how popular the Public Rights of Way in Moston Parish are. The paths are regularly used by horse riders, and this is likely to increase with the new Livery Centre on Dragons Lane. The most popular and well used footpaths are Moston Footpath 1 and Tetton Footpath 2, both of which run through farm land. Possibly, however, the most frequented is The Trent and Mersey Canal Towpath, particularly between Mill Lane and beyond Hall Lane, much of which has recently had the benefit of the surface being upgraded as a result of a Section 106 agreement. A major increase in the use of the canal towpath has come about with the

building of five hundred new houses adjacent to the canal. These new residents, whilst residing just outside Moston, are fortunate to enjoy easy access to the towpath and lanes in Moston Parish, which are now often used for circular walks. The Public Rights of Way are shown on Figure T.

12.4 Additionally, there has been an increase in cyclists, both in terms of cyclists travelling through Moston on Route 5 of The National Cycle Route which runs from Holyhead to Reading, and those who arrive in the parish by car, and unload their cycles to enjoy exploring the local lanes and the canal towpath by bike. Information on the Public Rights of Way can be found in Appendix 2

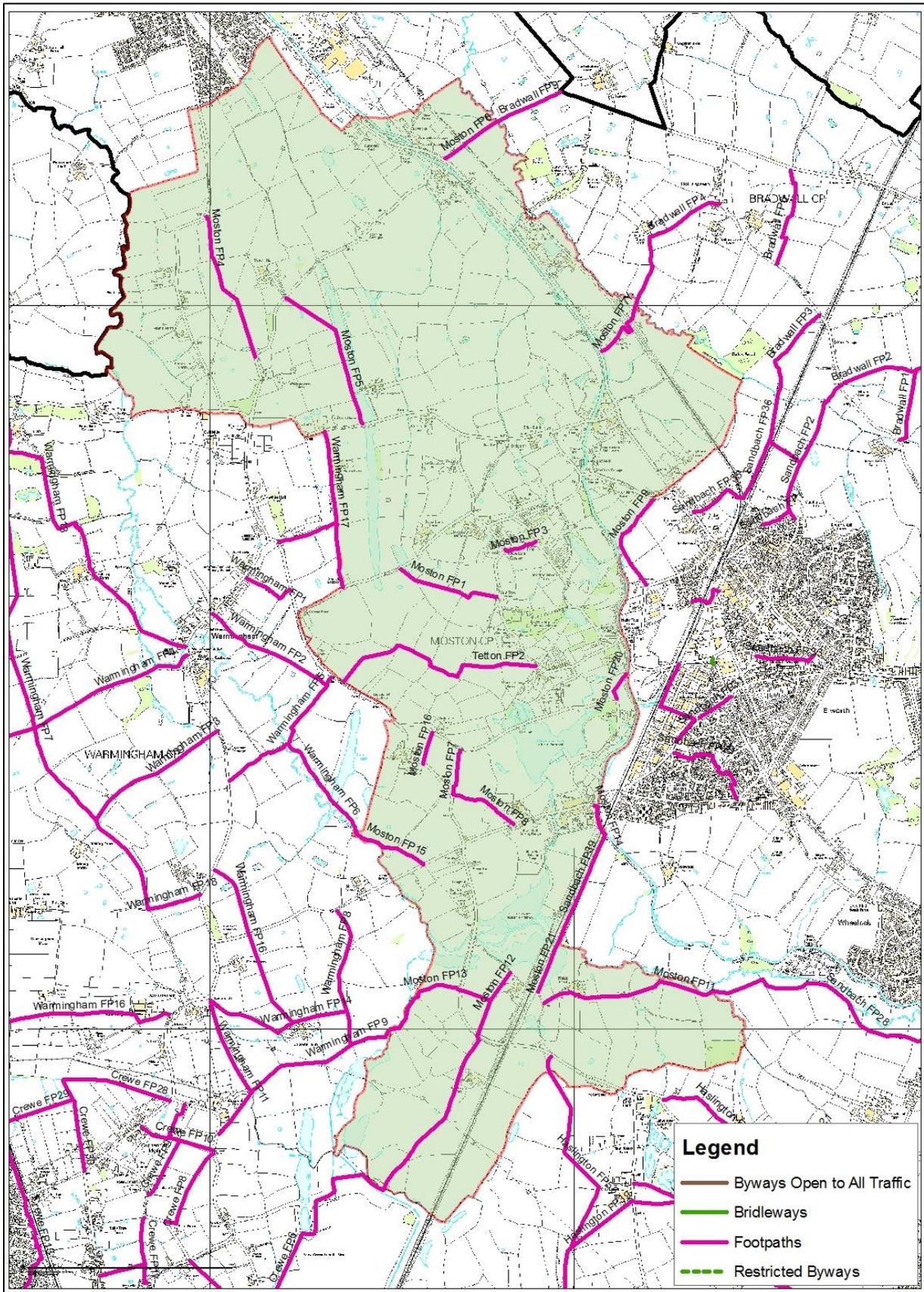
12.5 Furthermore, at the time of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, there are currently two applications for Bridleways within Moston to be added to the designated map. These are being decided currently by the Cheshire East Public Rights of Way team. Further details can be found in Appendix 3

12.6 The policy seeks to deliver one of the NPPF's key planning aims of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and also of promoting healthy communities. Para 75 of the NPPF indicates that policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and that opportunities should be sought to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing public rights of way networks.

12.7 The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy policy 'SE6 Green Infrastructure' highlights that Cheshire East aims to deliver a good quality, and accessible network of green spaces for people to enjoy, and development should contribute to the creation of a good quality, integrated and accessible multi-functional network of green spaces.



12.8 Figure T - Map of Public Rights of Way in Moston Parish



12.9 Motocross

POLICY REC2 – MOTOCROSS

Improvements to the motor cycling scrambling track at Warmingham Lane will be supported where they do not have a significantly harmful impact on the amenity of nearby residents or the surrounding landscape, or levels of air and noise pollution.

12.10 Evidence and Justification

12.11 The permitted usage at the Motocross Track at Warmingham Lane, of approximately 15 events per year with no practice days, does not presently cause undue disturbance. The importance of all leisure activities within the community is recognised, along with the need to balance activities with minimising pollution.

12.12 Noisy sports, such as motor cycling, are becoming more popular, both in terms of formal organised activities and informal users. Agricultural diversification has also resulted in farmers and landowners seeking other means of income and considering the use of their land for these types of activities. These sports often occur in inappropriate locations, for example close to residential areas, public rights of way, and on playing fields, and can cause environmental problems through noise, dust and physical erosion. With increasing participation, the potential for nuisance will intensify and there is a need to ensure that sites develop sensitively. The track at Warmingham Lane was previously agricultural land and when established was not close to many residential properties. With increased participation and development the potential for nuisance could intensify, particularly if house building in Middlewich continues to develop in the direction of the track.

12.13 One of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework is to contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Paragraph 109 highlights that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Policy SE12 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy highlights that development is located and designed so as not to result in pollution which would unacceptably affect the natural and built environment, or detrimentally affect amenity or cause harm.

12.14 Countryside Pursuits

POLICY REC 3 – LEISURE AND COUNTRYSIDE PURSUITS

The enhancement, protection and development of leisure and countryside pursuits in Moston Parish will be supported in appropriate locations where there is no significantly harmful impact on the surrounding landscape. In particular, the enhancement of waterways, flashes, lakes and ponds for angling and bird watching; bridlepaths for equestrian users; and the golf driving range on Hall Lane will be supported, and development which would lead to their loss or degradation will not be supported.

12.15 Evidence and Justification

12.16 The natural environment and accessible countryside features were outlined by residents during consultations as being an intrinsic part of the parish, valued for their attractive visual impact and used by many.

12.17 Horse riding takes place in the unadopted section of Watch Lane, the track from Plant Lane to Dragons Lane and also on Plant Lane, Warmingham Lane, Oakwood Lane and Tetton Lane. Angling is a very popular activity in the parish, with a number of fishing clubs using the waters of Moston, including Elworth Anglers, Middlewich Joint Anglers and Prince Albert and Wheelock Anglers. Fishing takes place at Big Moor on Red Lane and Watch Lane, the man-made lakes on Watch Lane, at Moston Flash, Tetton Flash, and The Plex and The Moat on Oakwood Lane, as well as the waters off Clay Lane near to Fields Farm. The whole length of the Trent and Mersey Canal which passes through the parish is well fished, with licences obtained from the Canal and Rivers Trust for a number of angling clubs. Additionally, less organised fishing is done in the small pond off the bridle path known as Gypsy Cow Lane, and other small lakes, ponds and flashes scattered around the parish.

12.18 Many of these waters are Sites of Special Scientific Interest set in beautiful and peaceful surroundings, which add much to the character of Moston and are protected by statute.

12.19 The unique area of Clay Lane, close to Elton Hall where there are flashes on either side of the road (Elton Hall Flash and Pump House Flash) is frequented every day of the year by bird watchers, both individuals and members of South Cheshire Ornithological Society, a thriving group whose members spend many hours with cameras and binoculars looking for rare feathered visitors on these wet lands. Another popular spot is close to the Moat on Oakwood Lane.

12.20 These areas make an important contribution to the valued character of Moston, through their visual contribution, their amenity value and their wildlife habitats, and as such it is considered important that they are protected, enhanced, and sensitively developed where appropriate. The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 73, highlights that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well being of communities.



Big Moor taken in the early 1950s with Palmer Mann Salt Works in the background. Big Moor is now part of a large angling complex.

13. RURAL ECONOMY POLICIES

13.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objective:

- To support and grow the local economy

POLICY LE1 - RURAL EMPLOYMENT

Subject to respecting Moston's built and landscape character, and environmental and residential amenity impacts being acceptable, support will be given to the development of small businesses and the expansion of existing businesses which complement and enhance the rural landscape by the nature of their enterprise, for example:

Equestrian enterprises; Liveries, Saddleries, Riding School.

Horticulture; Plant nurseries, tree nurseries, florists.

Agriculture; Farms, small holdings, fruit growers, agricultural related businesses.

Green technology enterprises.

Support will also be given to businesses that wish to locate / relocate to redundant agricultural premises or are part of a farm diversification scheme.

Proposals that promote or provide facilities for home working and business operating from home will be supported.

Tourism facilities in the open countryside will be supported if they are linked to a farm diversification scheme, and would not have an unacceptable negative impact on the amenity of nearby residents or the surrounding landscape and ecology.

13.2 Evidence/ Justification

13.3 This policy recognises the dispersed nature of businesses in Moston, balanced against the need for sustainable development and protection for the landscape.

13.4 Moston has a higher than average proportion of people aged 16-74 who work from home (7.4% compared to the average in England of 3.5%); who work more than 49 hours a week (20% compared to the England average of 13.3%) and/or who are self-employed (18% compared to the England average of 9.8%) (2011 Census). Additionally, only 2.5% of working residents use public transport to get to work, and only 6.4% of people travel less than 2km to work, compared to the average in England of 20%. The rural economy and existing small businesses are a vital part of village life, and any opportunities to develop either existing businesses, or that would enable the start-up of new small businesses appropriate to the rural area would be supported.

13.5 Additionally, there are multiple farmsteads in the rural area of Moston which offer an opportunity for rural economic development, should they choose to diversify.

13.6 The above policy will help to ensure that Moston's rural economy can grow sustainability over the Plan period and beyond, and that support can be given for both existing businesses and for new businesses and enterprises within the parish.

13.7 One of the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework is to support a prosperous rural economy. Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. The Designated Neighbourhood Area includes a number of farms and the National Planning Policy Framework supports the reuse of existing rural buildings, particularly for economic purposes, and promotes the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

13.8 Non Rural Employment

POLICY LE2 - NON RURAL EMPLOYMENT

Within the boundaries identified as V, W and X, B2 (General industrial) uses and other non rural enterprise uses will be supported at the following existing employment areas as highlighted on Figure U, as long as they do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents or the surrounding landscape and ecology, or lead to significantly harmful levels of air and noise pollution.

1. Hall Lane
2. Booth Lane (a mixed development with residential)
3. Dragons Wharf (small industrial units)

13.9 Evidence and Justification

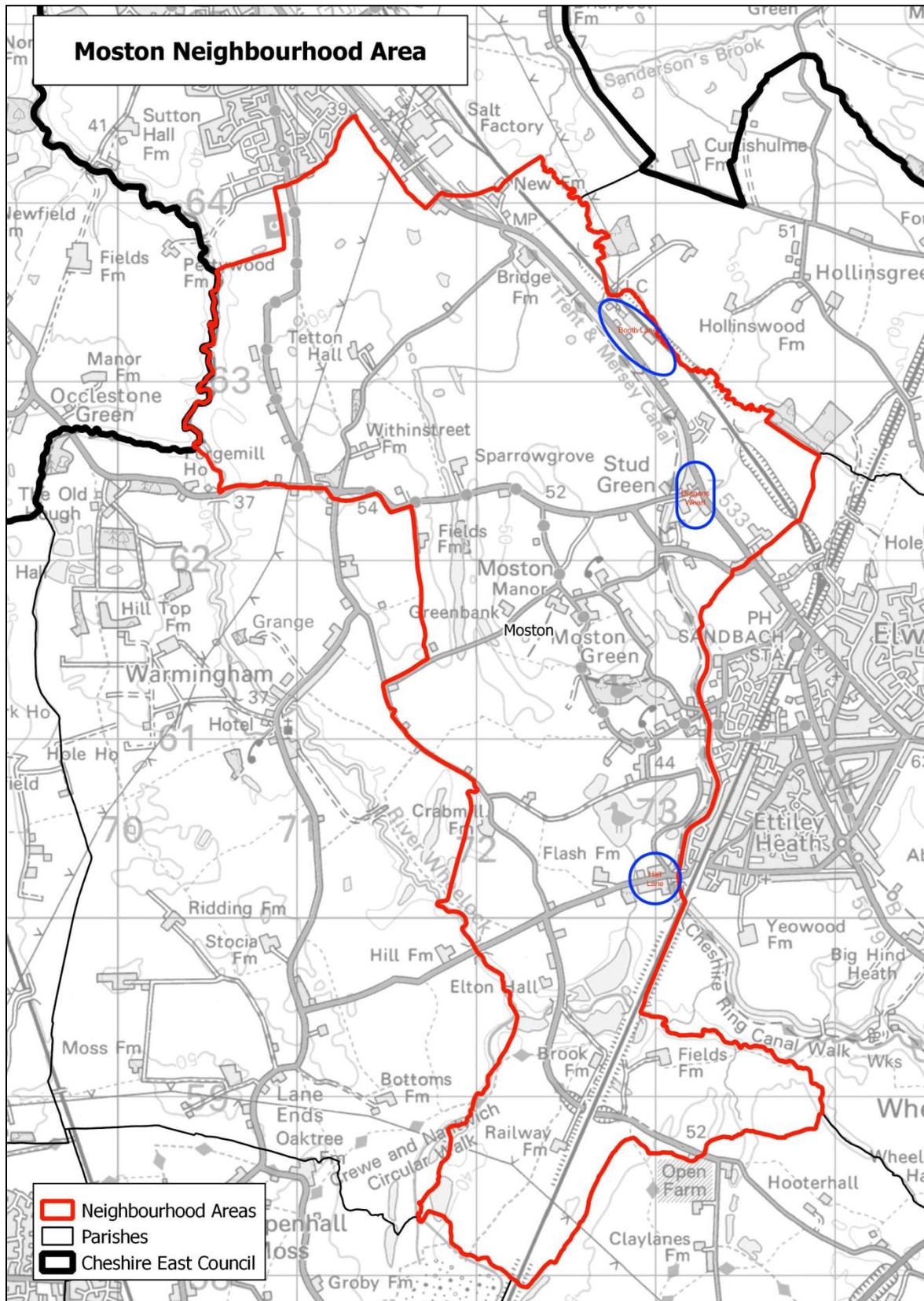
13.10 Although Moston is a distinctly rural area, nevertheless there are three distinct non rural employment areas. Two of these are close to the edge of the parish and the third borders the Middlewich / Sandbach Road (Booth Lane). See Figure U. In order to respect the rural character, any new industrial or other non-rural enterprises will be more appropriately directed to these existing employment areas rather than within the rural remainder of the Parish.

13.11 This policy seeks to ensure that the rural nature of Moston Parish is retained and enhanced over the coming years and that any development within the parish boundaries will only be permitted where it is of a scale commensurate with the function and character of the parish.

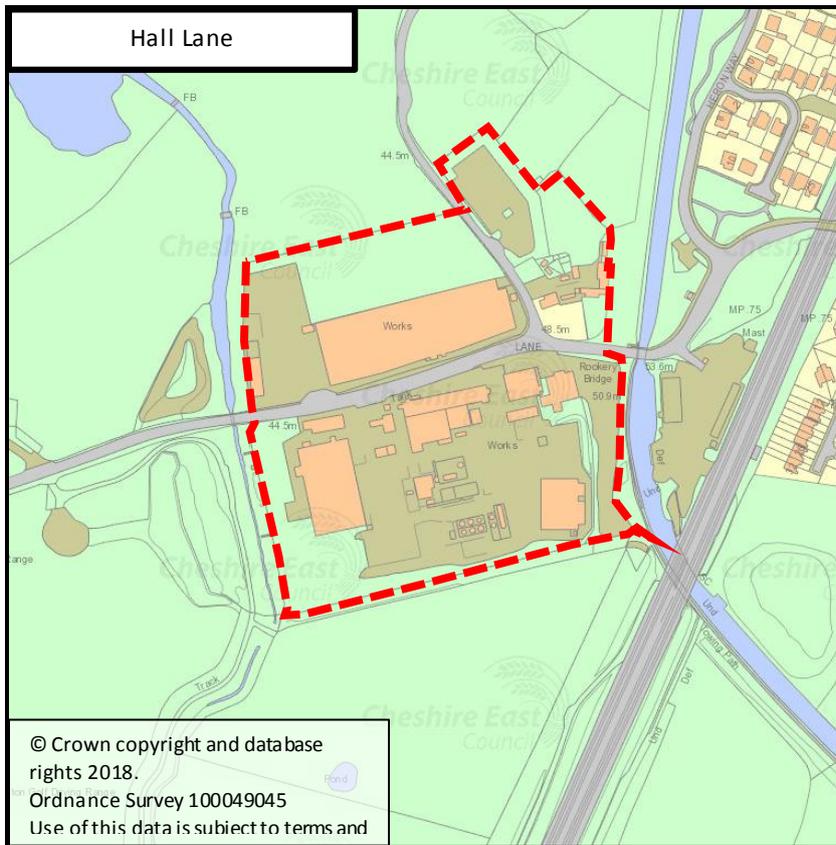
13.12 Policy EG2 (Rural Economy) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy highlights that appropriate employment development in the rural areas will be supported where it is consistent in scale with its location and does not adversely affect nearby buildings and the surrounding area or detract from residential amenity, and is well sited and designed in order to conserve and where possible enhance the character and quality of the landscape and built form. This Neighbourhood Plan policy helps with the Cheshire East Strategy of ensuring that growth and development is appropriate to the scale of each area and that it

has a positive impact upon biodiversity, geodiversity, the landscape and the historic environment.

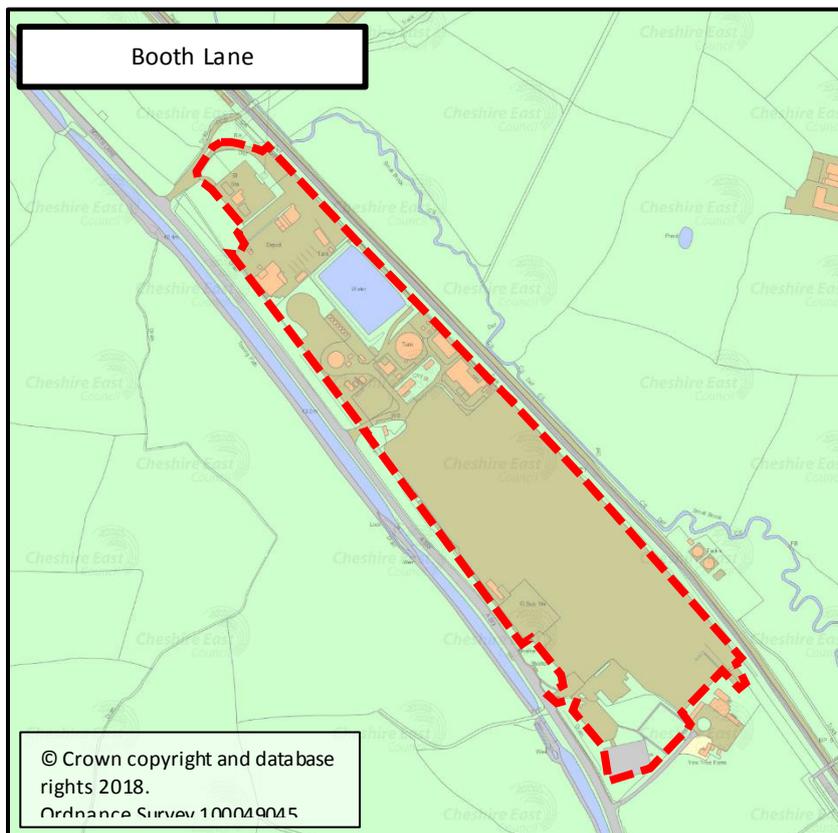
12.13 Figure U – Moston Employment Sites



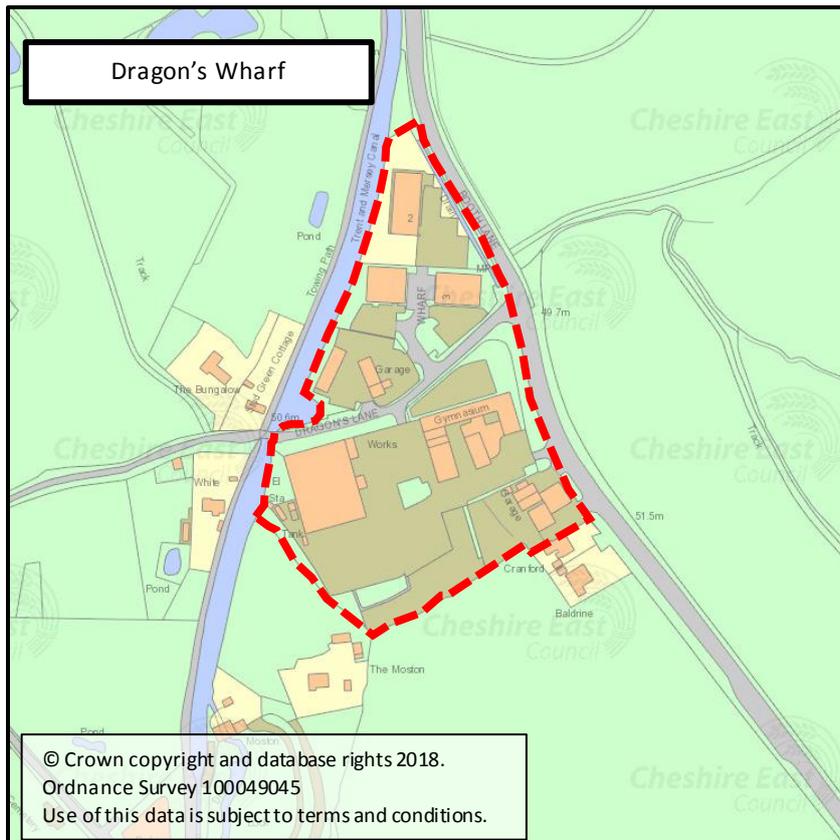
13.14 Figure V – Hall Lane Employment Site



13.15 Figure W - Booth Lane Mixed Use Development Site



13.16 Figure X - Dragon's Wharf Employment Site



14. HERITAGE POLICY

14.1 The Moston Neighbourhood Plan has the following objective:

- To protect those characteristics of the landscape and built environment that are most special to the community and positively contribute to quality of place in Moston.

POLICY HER1 – HERITAGE

Proposals which conserve and enhance Moston's historic assets and their setting will be supported, particularly if the proposals would help retain the assets in active use. Proposals for development must take into account the scale of any possible harm or loss and the significance of any heritage assets and will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that substantial benefits will be achieved when weighed against the harm or loss. Measures should be put in place to avoid or minimise impact or mitigate damage.

Enabling development will be only permitted where:

1. It would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, the benefits of which would outweigh the disbenefits arising from any conflict between the enabling development and local and national planning policy;
2. The enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the future conservation of the heritage asset and it is designed in a way that minimises its disbenefits;
3. The integrity and sustainability of the heritage asset is not materially compromised; and
4. It represents the only possible solution, following a full evaluation of all potential options including those that could result in fewer disbenefits.

14.2 Evidence and Justification

14.3 Moston has a long and rich heritage, and legend has it that it was the home to the last dragon ever seen in England. Sir Thomas Venables, from a local family, slew the dragon that was devouring the residents of Moston. The family changed their coat of arms to depict a dragon, with an arrow in its eye, about to eat a boy. The scene was carved in oak and can be seen in the church of St Michael and All Angels in Middlewich.

14.4 Moston is home to 16 Listed Buildings and structures, all of which are at Grade II – a sizeable amount for such a small and sparsely populated parish. Many of the Listed Buildings and structures are associated with the Trent and Mersey Canal which runs through the parish, including bridges, locks and mileposts. The Bridges and Locks date from 1777 and the Mile Posts date from 1819. The Mersey to the Trent (The Grand Trunk) was designed by canal engineer James Brindley and authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1766 with the first sod being cut by Josiah Wedgwood in July 1766, being completed in 1777.

14.5 Additionally, there are seven Listed Buildings in Moston largely linked to the principal historically economic farming activity. These buildings are predominantly Farm Houses, Cottages, Shippens and Stables, with the earliest being the Murgatroyd Club, which

is timber framed and dates back to the late 16th Century. The Murgatroyd Club originated as Yew Tree Farmhouse, and was used as part of the club on the chemical works, which later became Hays Chemicals and before closing down became Albion Chemicals (hence the name for the new residential development of 371 homes on part of the site in Booth Lane, Moston). A Section 106 agreement exists to relocate the building and restore to a different location on the site, possibly for use as a community room for the residents.

14.6 Seventeenth century Listed Buildings include partly timber framed Crabmill Old Farmhouse; The Willows, a timber framed cottage and the barn, stables and shippon at Moston Manor Farm. Eighteenth century Ivy Cottage, a brick farmhouse, and the shippon and stable at Ivy cottage are Listed, as is Moston Manor Farmhouse, dating from 1830. Moston's historical assets are highlighted on Figure cc.

14.7 The major road (A533) running from Middlewich to Sandbach which passes through Moston originated as either a Roman Road or Medieval Track used for the carriage of salt. The extraction of salt has resulted in the formation of flashes within Moston which form an interesting part of the landscape. These started forming in the 1930's following subsidence due to brine extraction.

14.8 These heritage assets are part of Moston's character and are valued by the community with the canal in particular being an important asset for leisure, recreation and tourism. It is important that they are protected from inappropriate development and, where possible, enhanced. One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework, detailed in Para 17, is to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. Examples of Moston's Listed Buildings:



Bridge No. 162 (1777)



Lock 67 (1777)

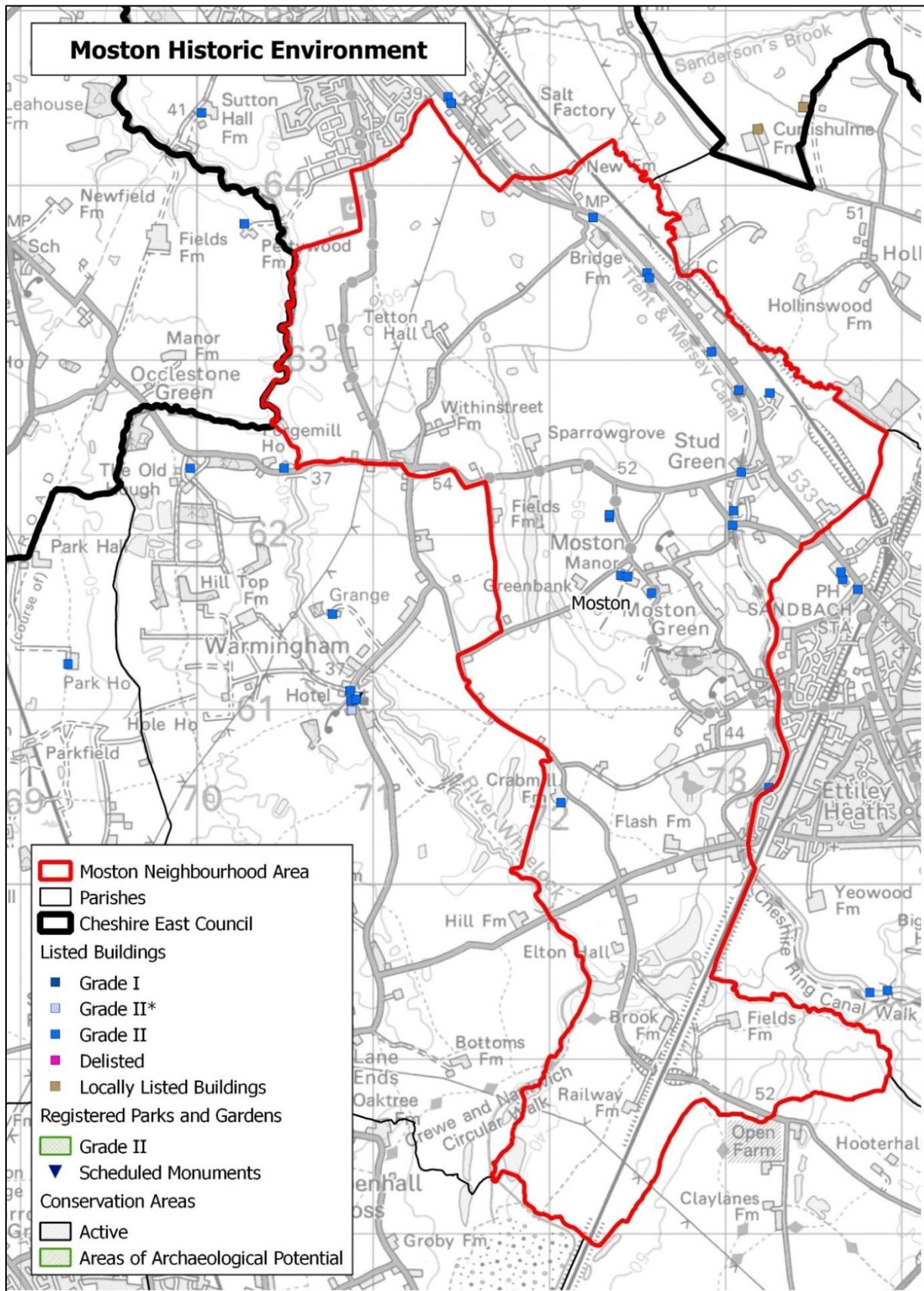


Lock 68 and attached bridge (1777)



Lock 69 (1777)

14.9 Figure Y – Moston’s Historic Environment





Bridge 164 (1777)



Canal Milestone (1819)



Yew Tree Farmhouse (Murgatroyds Club)



Crabmill Old Farmhouse, Crabmill Lane



1914 Foden trucks produced for the War Department, in convoy at Booth Lane, Moston



Plant Lane Bungalows in 1953



The Gravestone in a field belonging to Moston Manor commemorating the death of 76 cattle which died from Rinderpest in February and March of 1866 (see Appendix 7)

APPENDIX 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire

1. Do you wish Moston to have a Neighbourhood Plan (answer Yes or No)?

2. What do you like or dislike most about Moston as it is today?

.....

3. Your Vision - How would you like to see Moston in the future?

.....

.....

4. On a scale of 1-10 (low to high) how important are the following issues to you?

Housing to meet local needs

Jobs

Community Facilities and Infrastructure.....

The natural environment

The historic/traditional environment

5. Are there any views or local green spaces that you think should be particularly protected?

.....

6. If you wish to help us with the Neighbourhood Plan, then please provide your details below.

Name:

Address:

Email contact:

APPENDIX 2 – Information on Moston’s Public Rights of Way

Footpaths

There are a number of public rights of way in Moston, apart from the obvious footpaths along the lanes we have a length of tow path alongside the Trent and Mersey Canal from Lock 70 to Bridge 158C and footpaths which cross through land owned by individuals. Most of these paths are defined on The Cheshire East Council Definitive map. Preparation of the Definitive Map started in the early 1950s, following the passing of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Initial surveys were carried out by town/parish councils

and walking groups. A lengthy consultation process involving landowners and path users eventually led to the publication of the Definitive Maps for most of Cheshire, in the years between 1966 and 1974.

The appearance of a path on the Definitive Map is conclusive proof of its existence in law. However the reverse is not true. The fact that a right of way is not recorded on the Map, along a particular route, is not evidence that there is no Public Right of Way along that route.

Most of our footpaths and bridle ways are on the definitive map, two recognised paths not on the definitive map are going through the lengthy process of being added to it (see Appendix 2). They are a section of Watch Lane which became unadopted in the fifties and the path known locally as Gypsy Lane or Gypsy Cow Lane which runs from Plant Lane to Dragons Lane. Both of these paths are shown on a map dated 1836, as is the path from near to Yew Tree Farm on Plant Lane to The Moat on Oakwood Lane.

The paths on the definitive map are designated with the name of the parish and then a number such as Moston Footpath 1. Some of our paths still have the designation Tetton, some may continue to an adjacent parish or even go through an adjacent parish and return to Moston. The path numbers don't seem to have a logical sequence but we will start with Moston Footpath 1.

Moston Footpath 1 - Plant Lane opposite Yew Tree Farm up the steps and through a gate. Follow the path close to the hedge line over a stile into the next field , continue whilst passing the large black water trough on the right until reaching the corner of the field where there is a double stile with a plank bridge. Head to the right passing the small flash on the right until reaching a stile onto Green Lane. Dog friendly, although often cattle grazing.

Turn to the left along Green Lane , just past Rycroft, on the right hand side is **Warmingham Footpath 17** .There is a stile adjacent to a field gate. Continue along this path, in a while to the left is **Warmingham Footpath 12** which goes to Crabmill Lane. Disregard the path to the left and continue along path 17, passing Field Farm on the right until Dragons Lane is reached., here turn right until just before the flash. Once again a dog friendly path.

On the left is **Moston Footpath 5** which continues through a kissing gate with the flash on the right passing over 2 stiles and gradually moving away from the flash bearing slightly left until Tetton Lane is reached over a third stile.. This is **Not** Dog friendly with the two stiles before Tetton Lane having sheep wire to ground level. Two options here, Turn to the left along Tetton Lane until **Moston FP 4** is reached on the right. This path passes Tetton Hall on the right and joins Warmingham Lane or turn to the right along Tetton Lane to Booth Lane, cross the canal and main road, walk to the right a short distance and on the left is **Moston FP 6** The path has a hard surface for well over a 100 metres before reaching a nicely constructed wooden kissing gate which allows access over the railway line with a similar one on the other side where the path continues on grass and in a short distance becomes **Bradwall Footpath 9** which eventually reaches Wood Lane Instead of entering **Moston FP 5** continue along Booth Lane towards Sandbach until **Moston Footpath 7** is found on the left. This is close to the entrance of what is now known as Albion Lock,

formerly Murgatroyds Chemical Works The path has a diversion at the moment whilst the 371 houses are being constructed. The entrance to the path is clear on the opposite side of the road. The diversion route, all though not very clear, is pinned to a fence just through the gap at the beginning of the path. A newly created pond is on the right, in about 25 metres the footpath continues to the left with temporary wire mesh fencing on either side. Slightly confusing, it just shows a building site pedestrian access type sign instead of the usual footpath sign. The diversionary route passes the 16th century listed building Yew Tree Farm House which is in a bad state of repair but will be re-located and restored within the Albion Lock complex. The path surface around this area is poor and liable to flooding, within a short distance a potentially busy site roadway has to be crossed, again not well signed. Once the roadway has been crossed the temporary path continues with wire mesh fencing on either side until the railway line crossing is reached when the original route across the fields is followed until eventually the path becomes **Bradwall FP 4** and also reaches Wood Lane.

Tetton Footpath 2 Enter by climbing a stile on Plant Lane opposite Cherry Farm, the path crosses a field diagonally to a double stile and plank bridge, pass through the next field to another double stile, turn left along the hedge line to single stile, turn to the right along the hedge line to the next field, turn to the right and then to the left once more along the hedge line to a double stile with a plank bridge. Turn to the left, in 50 yards another double stile with a plank bridge over the stiles and walk over the field slightly to the right to the next stile crossing a small croft to a stile next to a gate and onto Crabmill Lane. A little awkward for dogs but is manageable. Turning to the right in a short distance are **Warmingham Footpaths 2 and 5** to the left.

Moston Footpath 3 a short path from Walnut Tree Farm on Plant Lane to Oakwood Lane opposite Oakwood Farm. This path by-passes Moston Green and has a stile at either end Dogs can just squeeze through the stile, often sheep grazing.

Moston Footpath 20. This is a short path, the entrance to which is fairly steep off the canal towpath between Elton Moss (Stabbers Bridge) and Rookery Bridge, it cuts across a field which often has cattle in and reaches Red Lane. There a stile at either end, neither of which are very dog friendly with wire to ground level but just manageable.

Moston Footpath 14 This path starts by Rookery Bridge. When coming from Red Lane, cross Hall Lane toward UPL and walk towards the canal, there is a small sign indicating a path within 20 metres on the right, step down the path onto the canal towpath and walk to the right, within about 100 metres having walked under the 2 railway bridges is a footpath sign, the path then continues as **Sandbach FP 39** until it crosses the river Wheelock and a flash appears on the left when it then becomes **Moston FP 21**. The footpath ends in a small car park some 1000 metres or so from the canal and is dog friendly. Out of the car park onto a farm track with the flash on the left continue a short distance along the farm track to **Moston FP 11** which continues along the river Wheelock and eventually becomes **Sandbach FP 28** arriving at Crewe Road in Wheelock.

Moston Footpath 12 This path starts through a new kissing gate on Brook Lane which is accessed from Clay Lane and crossing over the old River Wheelock bridge. It continues over a grass field, often with grazing cattle in a more or less straight line, about halfway through

the field a footpath turns to the right and is **Moston Footpath 13** heading towards Clay Lane. Disregarding this path to the right and leaving Brook Farm on the left the path arrived at Clay Lane with a new kissing gate and steps down to the roadway. Crossing the road, slightly to the left more steps and another kissing gate before entering the next field. The path continues behind Railway Farm running more or less parallel with the railway line and eventually ends at the edge of Maw Green Tip.

Back to **Moston Footpath 13** and Clay Lane. This footpath crosses the lane with smart new Bristol Gates either side of the road, these are field gates with a small pedestrian entry within the gate. Having passed through the Bristol Gate the path continues over a number of field before reaching **Warmingham FP 9**, follow for a while and turn into **Warmingham FP 8** to the right which after crossing a number of fields arrives at Hall Lane. Heading along Hall Lane back into Moston over the river Wheelock further along the lane and to the left is **Moston Footpath 15**. This continues over one field and then passes a Motor Cross Track on the right before merging into **Warmingham FP 6** bearing to the right into **Warmingham FP 5** and Hall Lane, a few metres to the right and on the left is

Tetton Footpath 2

Moston Footpath 22 This path starts from Clay Lane, 50 metres on the Crewe side of the railway bridge, no stile just a field gate on the right hand side when facing towards Crewe, crossing a grass field before becoming **Haslington 55**.

APPENDIX 3 – Information on the Proposed new Public Rights of Way

Applications were forwarded to Cheshire East Public Rights of Way in 2014 to have two paths in Moston, both well used by walkers and riders, added the Definitive Map as Bridleways, an extremely long process as outlined below. At this time we have reached step 3, on the waiting list for investigation.

Further information can be gleaned from Cheshire East Council website.

The process

Members of the public may submit applications for changes to the Definitive Map where they have gathered either user or historical evidence, or both, which they believe supports a change. Applications involve completing a number of forms and serving notice on the landowners and can be rejected if not complete. A register of applications is held and applications are investigated according to a prioritisation system.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 dictates legal tests which must be met when the Council makes and confirms an order, specifically that the Public Right of Way is considered on the balance of probabilities to subsist.

As there are a number of steps in the process, some with set durations, it can take a long time for a case to be determined once investigation has been started. Also, there is no certainty that an application will result in a modification order being made to the Definitive Map and Statement, or, if an order is made, that it reflects the applicant's original claim exactly. There are opportunities for people to object within the process on certain grounds.

The process for Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) is summarised below:

1. Applicant gathers user and/or historic evidence and notifies landowner of claim
2. Application submitted and registered
3. Application prioritised on waiting list for investigation
4. Investigation
5. Consultation
6. Public Rights of Way Committee decision
7. If approved, order is made and advertised
8. Objection period
9. Unopposed orders confirmed and advertised, opposed orders sent to Secretary of State for determination

Claimed Bridleway between Plant Lane and Dragons Lane, Moston CW113DP Application CO/8/39

Date Registered 15th July 2014

Current status as at 11th December 2017, 11th on waiting list of applications

Claimed Bridleway, the unadopted section of Watch Lane, Moston CW113QS Application CO/8/41

Date Registered 14th November 2014

Current status as of 11th December 2017, 7th on waiting list of applications

APPENDIX 4 – National Cycle Route 5

National Cycle Route 5 is a long distance cycle which connects Reading and Holyhead via Oxford, Banbury, Stratford-upon-Avon, Redditch, Bromsgrove, Birmingham, Walsall, Stafford, Stoke on Trent, Chester, Colwyn Bay and Bangor.

Moston is in Section 5 of the route and connects Kidsgrove to Chester with Winsford, Northwich and Frodsham on road and traffic free sections.

All of Plant Lane, a section of Dragons Lane, and all of Warmingham Lane is used.

APPENDIX 5 - The Story of the Dragon of Moston

Well, if you were to go looking for Moston, you'd find it betwixt Sandbach and Middlewich. It is only a little place now with a few folk living there, and when you hear this you'll see why that may be. Now, the people of Moston were a happy and jolly lot who made most of their living from the fine apple trees in their orchard. They bore the largest and juiciest apples in all of Cheshire, and in truth the rest of the county were more than a little jealous of this.

The apples of Moston were bigger than even your head. And a fine head it is you have sir. The people of the village didn't know why it was that their apples grew so large, but I do, and I'll tell you.

The apples grew in an orchard which was beside a boggy marsh, full of dark, dank swamp water. The trees reached out their roots through the soil and into that marsh and drew the water up along the roots, rising through the trunk, along the branches and caused those apples to swell. The people of Moston looked forward to those days at the end of summer with autumn beginning to make itself felt in the air, the days when the apples would be ripening and ready for the harvest and they eagerly awaited the day to go picking, dreaming of the juice trickling down chins, or the warm smell of the apples baking. And now the day was here!

Each of the Moston folk headed out to whichever tree in the orchard which was their own, carrying baskets and buckets ready to be filled. There was laughter and singing as the apples were gathered in. And then someone shouted out, "Look, up there!" And the crowd looked up through the leaves to see something flying high in the sky. It was higher than any bird they knew, it didn't move like a bird and wasn't shaped like anything they'd seen before.

The excitement grew until it turned to horror when the people of Moston realised it was a dragon flying above them. This dragon had flown out from Wales, you could tell because it was red, and was looking for a new home. Now, you may have heard that dragons like to live in caves. Well, that is true, but it's not their first choice. Or perhaps you've heard that dragons like to live in burial mounds of an ancient king surrounded by treasure? Well, that's true as well, but still not their preference. Where dragons like to live, if they can really find it, is in a slimy, smelly swamp. And the boggy marsh beside the orchard at Moston was the perfect place.

The dragon circled around for a while, then settled down in the middle of the swamp beside the orchard. The people of Moston weren't fools. They knew that if they ventured close to the dragon they would likely be eaten. But then they looked at the trees, and saw their finest apples beside the marsh.

So one brave chap came up with a plan. He would make his way to the apple trees, keeping his eye on the dragon all the while and should the dragon make the slightest move, he would be off! He walked through the trees and set down his basket beside the apple tree closest to the boggy field, making sure to keep his eyes fixed on the dragon. He took one apple from

the tree, then another, but then the next apples were higher, he looked up to the branches for a moment and then... The dragon was upon him. It opened its mouth and breathed upon the brave fellow. Not fire as you might think, but the foulest, stinkiest breath you'd probably rather not imagine. The poor chap was overcome and fell to the ground. The dragon pulled him by the feet into the swamp where he lay asleep until the evening, when he awoke. Just in time for dragon supper time and being eaten in one gulp!

This happened again, and again. And again. Until half of the people of Moston had been eaten by the dragon. As you'd imagine, those that were left went from being a happy and jolly bunch to being a sad and miserable lot. Then one day, the local lord of the manor, Sir Thomas Venables was making his way around all of his lands to inspect them and came to the village of Moston. "What's happened here?" said Sir Thomas, "Has there been a war? For there are less of you than before, and you look miserable, and your fine trees have been left to wither."

The people of Moston explained how the dragon had come and, one by one, taken many of the folk from the village. And what was worse, just this morning a young boy had been taken by the dragon, his poor mother had already lost her husband and was grieving for her son now sleeping in the swamp awaiting his fate at the dragon's supper time.

Well, Sir Thomas, being a bold and brave knight, swore he would slay the dragon and save the boy. Thinking to catch the dragon whilst it slept, he quickly put on his finest armour, took up his sword and dashed off through the orchard toward the marsh. But the clanking and clattering of his armour awoke the dragon which began to make its way towards the knight. Sir Thomas fled. But you must not think him a coward. No, Sir Thomas had a plan.

In the days before he was a knight in his armour, he had been an archer, and being from Cheshire that made him one of the famed and feared Cheshire Archers, the finest bowmen in the land, better even than Robin Hood himself. In fact, because of their skills with the bow, people round here say "Robin Hood? More like Robin No-Good!"

Sir Thomas made his way back to the orchard where he could just see the dragon in the marsh, snoring once more, and with the young boy asleep next to him. Sir Thomas drew back his bowstring, then let loose his arrow which whistled through the air and found its target -right in the dragon's eye! The dragon roared and flew at Sir Thomas before he could ready another arrow. But the arrow in its eye had so wounded and winded the dragon that it could not muster up its foul breath. Sir Thomas did not waste a moment and struck the beast over the head a dozen times. Just to be sure he cut off the head. With the young boy under one arm and a dragon's head under the other, Sir Thomas returned to the village of Moston.

The people of the village were thrilled. They insisted that this brave deed should be remembered for ever more, and that the Venables family should change their coat of arms to depict a dragon, with an arrow in its eye, about to eat a boy. And so that is just what was done. They even carved the scene in oak and set it on show in the church of St Michael and All Angels in Middlewich, where you can still see it today.

And that is the tale of the Dragon of Moston, the last dragon to be seen in England, so folks say, and here it was in our own fair county of Cheshire.

APPENDIX 6 - The first Cheshire Police Officer to be killed on duty

On 24 Feb 1873 PC James Green was murdered while on duty and his body was dumped in the Trent and Mersey Canal near Elton Moss Bridge which later became known colloquially as "STABBERS BRIDGE" Although the bridge was rebuilt in the early 1970's, on occasions it's still referred to as STABBERS BRIDGE.

The account of the incident gleaned from local newspapers is this. James Green was born in Handbridge, Chester had been in the Cheshire Police Force for 6 years and was stationed at Bradwall near Sandbach. It was whilst he was on plain clothes duty observing a James Buckley, a farm worker, known larcenist and petty pilferer of Moss Green near Elworth that PC Green was attacked and dumped in the canal at Elton Moss Bridge.

Buckley was arrested by Superintendent Rowbottom who found him working on his farm with a bruised forehead, face, a lacerated nose and two black eyes which the criminal put down to a branch falling on him while he was pruning the tree.

At his trial evidence of tools including a garden fork were presented with blood stains on them which specialists were unable to say had human blood on them and Buckley said they were in fact pig's blood.

After a 10 minute deliberation the jury acquitted Buckley of the murder, a clear case of injustice when a guilty man is set free due to a lack of evidence. Forensics at the time were not being sufficiently advanced to secure a conviction even when the probable murder weapon was found.

James Green, the first Cheshire Police Officer to be killed on duty is now buried at St Peter's Church, Elworth along with his wife Ann.

APPENDIX 7 – Background to the Gravestone at Moston Manor

There is a gravestone in a field belonging to Moston Manor commemorating the death of 76 cattle which died from Rinderpest in February and March of 1866

Rinderpest swept through Britain in 1865-7. It is thought cattle carrying the highly infectious viral disease were shipped from the Baltic port of Revel, on the steamship 'Toning', and landed at Hull .

The plague quickly spread, farmers and smallholders tried desperately, but in vain, to stop the cattle dying by relying on ineffective 'medical' cures

Cheshire was affected more than any other county with the loss of over 84,000 cattle, well over 60% of the estimated stock.

This was a particularly sad time in Moston as local newspapers show that the then owner of Moston Manor, Mr. John Percival Sutton was widowed only 2 or 3 months before his cattle were wiped out. His wife was only 33 and he was left with at least 4 children.

Rinderpest (a German word for Cattle Plague) was an infectious viral disease of cattle and many other species of even-toed ungulates.

The disease was characterized by fever, oral erosions and diarrhea with a very high mortality rate mainly transmitted by direct contact and contaminated water although it could be transmitted by air. After a global eradication campaign the last confirmed case of Rinderpest was diagnosed in 2004 and in 2011 The United Nations confirmed the disease was eradicated.

Stocks of the virus are still maintained in highly specialized laboratories and Rinderpest is of concern as a biological weapon.