



Your Upton NEIGHBOURHOOD Plan



Upton-by-Chester & District Neighbourhood Plan

Upton-by-Chester, Bache and Moston
2020-2030

*A clean, green,
caring community*

HOUSING

SHOPS

BUSINESSES

GREEN SPACES

SUSTAINABILITY



Upton-by-Chester & District Parish Council

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1. What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

Neighbourhood Planning came about as a result of the Localism Act 2011, with the aim of giving more power and a bigger voice in planning matters to local communities.

This is the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Upton-by-Chester & District. It is facilitated and led by the Upton-by-Chester & District Parish Council, covering the three Parishes of Bache, Moston and Upton-by-Chester.

It is a community project, and residents are vital to the process. At the outset in 2014, the Parish Council established a Steering Group which consisted of both Parish Councillors and local residents. This group has worked together to carry out consultations across the community and to develop the Plan. The members of the Steering Group are listed at Appendix 5.

Once a Neighbourhood Development Plan is completed, it is subject to an independent examination process to assess whether it meets certain 'basic conditions' in accordance with the requirements in the regulations. These include the need to have regard to national policies and advice, to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. If the basic conditions are met, a public referendum can then be held. If it is supported by residents, the plan is then 'made'. It becomes a legal policy document that must be taken into consideration by the planning authority for all planning applications in the area (with the exception of mineral extraction applications).

This NDP will have full effect from the date on which it is made until 2030. During its preparation it will be afforded more weight in planning decisions as it progresses through its development.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan can be about the following:

- Improving the area, or protecting what is there already
- Proposals to provide new facilities
- Allocating key sites for specific development
- Housing, Heritage, Employment
- Sustainability, open spaces
- Pedestrian and cycling links, street improvement, car parking
- Design of new developments
- Planning conditions, e.g. retain trees, limit usage to daylight hours
- Planning obligations, e.g. affordable housing

It cannot be about the following:

- Use of land for farming/forestry
- Minerals, waste
- Areas subject to national and strategic local policies, e.g. unconventional gas extraction (fracking)
- Less development than in the Local Development Plan for the area, e.g. new housing allocation
- Traffic management, e.g. existing speed limits
- Public transport provision, e.g. trains, buses
- Compelling the local authority to exercise particular powers
- 'Permitted' development, e.g. small scale house extensions
- Activities only affecting the inside of buildings

In considering whether the Neighbourhood Development Plan is in conformity with the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Parts 1 and 2), the Local Plan must be read as a whole and a number of different policies may apply to any given proposal. The same consideration applies to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

1.1 The Neighbourhood Development Plan area

The area covered by this Neighbourhood Development Plan is that within the boundary of Upton-by-Chester and District Parish Council. This consists of the civil parishes of Upton-by-Chester, Bache and Moston. The map (*Fig 1.1*) shows the designated Neighbourhood Area defined on 16th January 2015, which is the area covered by the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

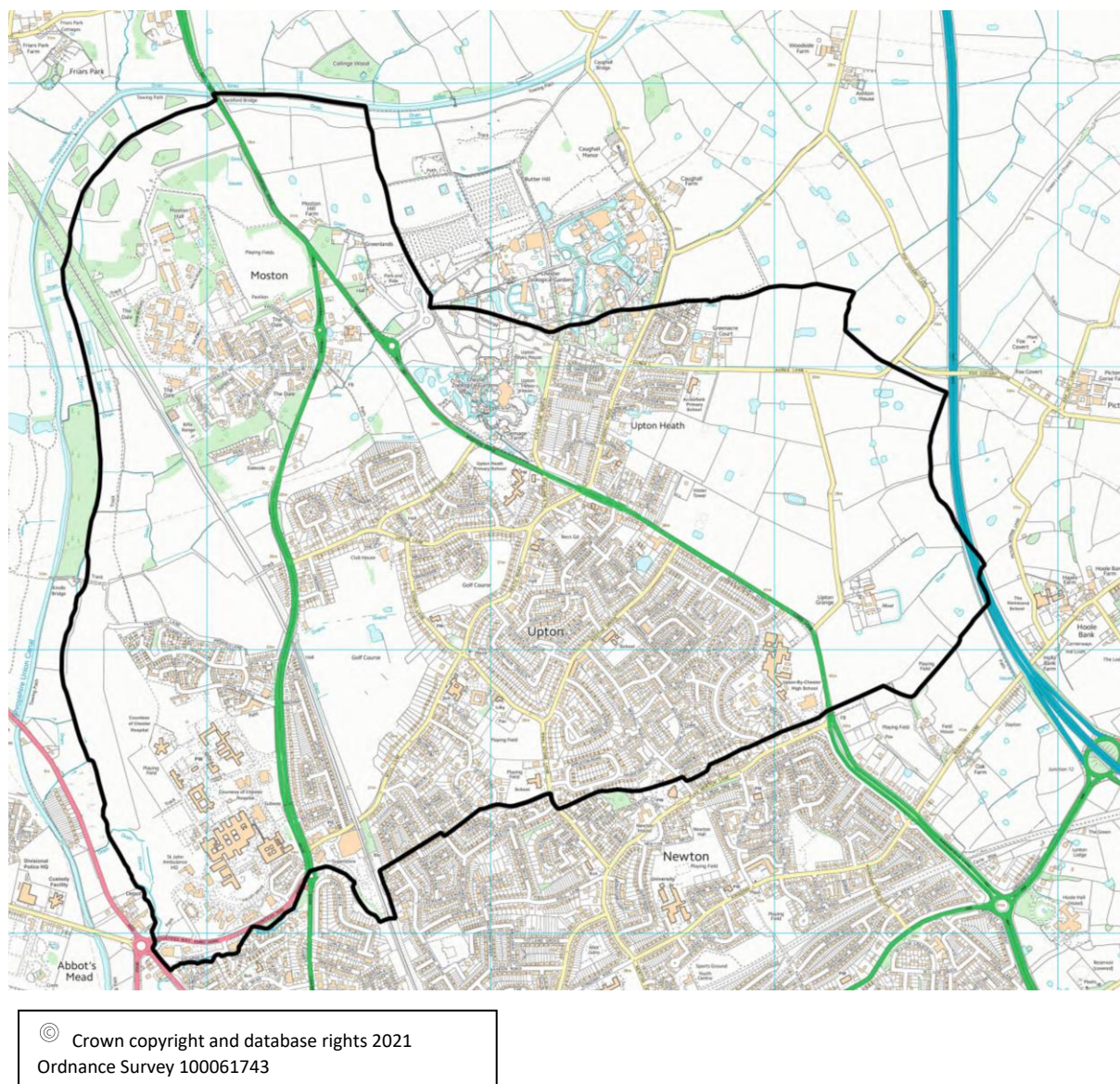


Figure 1.1: The area covered by this Neighbourhood Development Plan

1.2 The role of the Parish Council

Parish Councils, which in larger urban areas are called Town Councils, are the lowest tier of local government in England. They have limited statutory powers but they are an important community voice within the local government system. Unlike principal councils, such as Cheshire West and Chester, their members are entirely unpaid and they generally have few paid members of staff. In planning matters their role was limited to that of a statutory consultee when the local planning authority (in our case Cheshire West and Chester Council) was considering planning applications or local planning policies.

The Localism Act 2011, aimed to give more power and a bigger voice in planning matters to local communities by allowing the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) by Town and Parish Councils. Such plans have to have regard to national policies and advice and be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the principal council's Local Plan. Once these plans are completed their policies must be taken into consideration by the planning authority for all planning applications in the area.

Preparing the Neighbourhood Development Plan

In areas which have a Parish Council, the process of developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan has to be led by the Parish Council. In 2014, Upton-by-Chester and District Parish Council established a Steering Group which consists of both Parish Councillors and local residents. This group has worked together to carry out consultations across the community and to develop the Plan. The costs involved in carrying out consultations and providing evidence to support the plan policies have been partly met from the Parish Council's budget but mainly through grants obtained from central government agencies. The administration of the Examination of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the final referendum of Upton residents will be carried out by Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council (CW&CC).

Implementing, monitoring and updating

The only parts of the Neighbourhood Development Plan which have statutory force are the specific policies contained within it. These only have effect when an application for planning permission is made, they cannot be used to require changes to existing buildings or land uses.

Because the Parish Council is not a planning authority, decisions on planning applications are made by Cheshire West and Cheshire Council. Refusal of (but not permission for) an application can only be overturned by an appeal to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The policies in the Upton NDP will have to be taken into account when decisions are made on planning applications in the Parish Council area.

In its role as a statutory consultee, the Parish Council will act to advise the Local Planning Authority (CW&CC) where it considers that planning proposals would contravene the provisions of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Enforcement of the NDP policies is the role of CW&CC but the Parish Council will advise the Local Planning Authority of any breaches so that enforcement action may be taken.

At its meeting on 18th January 2021, Upton Parish Council agreed to set up a Parish Council committee to manage the policies set out in the approved NDP against any future planning and development in the parish. The NDP will need to be updated at intervals, ideally at least every five years, to take account of changes in national and local planning policies.

At the meeting on 15th November 2021 the Parish Council agreed a draft set of Parish Council Actions and an Environment Policy.

Once the NDP is in force, the Parish Council will monitor the implementation of these policies and advise the Local Planning Authority so that enforcement action may be taken against any breaches. It will regularly monitor the effectiveness of these policies in achieving the objectives and review them as necessary

For significant developments, the Parish Council will liaise with the Local Planning Authority and seek to be involved in discussions with potential developers and applicants from an early stage and before submission of planning proposals. It will seek engagement in the preparation of any impact assessment to ensure that the impact on the local community is clearly described and understood.

The Parish Council will seek to ensure that the NDP is updated over time as required to take account of any changes to the CW&CC Local Plan or other policies.

As part of the NDP process, particularly the consultations with residents, proposals for actions which the Parish Council and other agencies could take to improve the quality of life in the area and support the vision, objectives and policies in the NDP have been made. Because these are not part of the statutory planning process they cannot be included as policies in the NDP. These Suggested Actions for the Parish Council will be considered by the Council.



A clean, green, caring community

2. Vision and Objectives

2.1 Development of the vision and objectives

At the start of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) process in 2015, a questionnaire was sent to all households in Upton to explore what was important to residents, under 16 headings that covered relevant themes. Copies were also available at the library, local shops and a local pub. A total of 217 forms were returned.

Local businesses and schools were also consulted through meetings. (*See Consultation Statement*)

The responses to these initial consultations and their extensive local knowledge informed members of the Steering Group in developing a vision for how Upton should be in the year 2030.

As further consultations have taken place and the NDP has evolved, the vision statement has been updated but it has remained fundamentally consistent throughout the process.

The objectives of the plan were developed from the vision and the continuing consultation with residents and others. They are outcomes which could be achieved within the limited legitimate scope of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (*see Section 1*) and the relevant timescale. Again, they have been amended and updated as the plan has evolved.

The Vision and Objectives were publicised on the Parish Council website during the process of developing the plan, as well as via the updates in the quarterly Parish Council newsletters, with feedback invited throughout.

2.2 A plan centred on sustainability

The generally accepted (United Nations) definition of *sustainable development* is:

‘Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs¹’.

¹ United Nations (Brundtland Commission): ‘Our Common Future’, Oxford University Press, 1987

In accordance with the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan² and other non-statutory development plans for the borough³, this Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the Upton community seeks to enable development that improves and meets the economic, social and environmental objectives of the area.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of both plan making and decision-taking, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁴.

Achieving sustainable development in NPPF terms means that the planning system has three overarching and interdependent objectives:

- An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.
- An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

This NDP seeks to reinforce these objectives taking account of local needs and opportunities within the Upton community. The vital importance of ensuring that development is sustainable has informed the plan from its earliest stages. It is the thread that runs through the agreed Vision and Objectives.

As such, the NDP incorporates, under each topic heading, specific planning policies designed to enable sustainable development, taking account of local social, economic and environmental circumstances. The plan also includes Sustainability as a specific topic heading, where policies relating to the sustainable design of new developments and renewable energy generation are described.

² Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan; Part 1 (adopted January 2015); Part 2 (adopted July 2019)

³ 'Altogether Better: An interim partnership plan, July 2012' and 'Altogether Better: the Council Plan, 2020-24'.

⁴ National Planning Policy Framework: Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by Command of Her Majesty. First published on 27 March 2012 and updated on 24 July 2018, 19 February 2019 and 20 July 2021

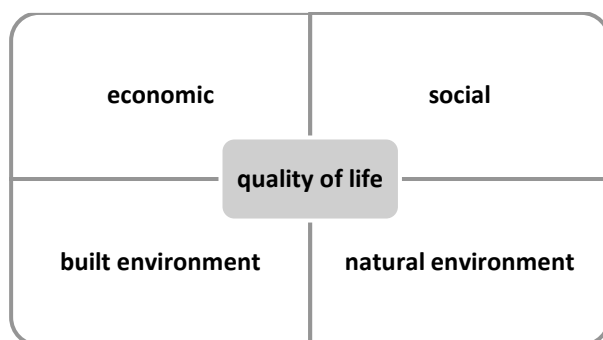
2.3 Promoting resilience and legacy

As well as developing specific planning policies, the production of the NDP has provided an opportunity to review some of the wider sustainability-related issues which underpin the resilience of the community and the quality of the legacy being left behind for future generations.

Resilient communities⁵ benefit from:

- reduced exposure to risks from hazards and threats.
- a greater capacity and motivation for collective action.
- a greater sense of community, with greater inclusivity and cohesion.
- reduced social, financial and health impacts from hazards and threats.
- increased confidence to take positive action to prepare, respond and recover from hazards and threats.
- the ability to adapt to risks, both proactively and in response, and take advantage of opportunities that longer-term changes present.
- stronger relationships with government and responders resulting in mutual trust and influence.

The production of the NDP is seen as an opportunity to draw together other complementary proposals which the Parish Council and others can pursue in safeguarding and enhancing local quality of life, signposting and empowering positive change.



As such, alongside the planning policies, the NDP incorporates, under specific topic headings, a series of proposed actions designed to improve the economic and social wellbeing⁶ of the community while both managing the built environment and caring for the natural environment as effectively as possible (“Suggested actions for the Parish Council”).

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-resilience-framework-for-practitioners/the-context-for-community-resilience>

⁶ Wellbeing, put simply, is about ‘how we are doing’ as individuals, communities and as a nation and how sustainable this is for the future – (as defined by the What Works Centre for Wellbeing building on the work of the UK Office for National Statistics) - <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/about/what-is-wellbeing/>

In this respect, it is envisaged that Upton should be a community which is:

- Improving rather than declining.
- Enterprising not dependent.
- Cohesive not fragmented.
- Generating as well as consuming.
- Capable of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the wellbeing of future generations.



Your Upton NEIGHBOURHOOD Plan

3. Our Vision

In 2030, Upton will be:

- A pleasant, predominantly residential, area that provides a secure and sustainable environment for its inhabitants.
- Part of the wider urban area of Chester but with a distinctive character as a former village settlement, protected by Green Belt, with local access to open spaces and countryside.
- A coherent yet diverse community which takes pride in and protects its appearance and its physical and cultural heritage.
- A place where people of all ages and incomes can find high quality, well designed, sustainable housing and the community services and facilities they need, particularly health services and a range of good schools for all ages and abilities.
- A healthy community with protected open spaces providing good facilities for physical exercise and enjoyment.
- A community where local shopping hubs at Bache, Long Lane and Weston Grove will provide a range of retail provision to serve local needs.
- Linked by sustainable transport to employment and leisure provision with roads that are safe for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities.
- Home to one of the world's leading zoos, which as a conservation and education charity will increasingly develop as a positive influence on the local community and environment.
- The centre of hospital services for the wider Chester area with access arrangements for patients, staff and visitors that reduce negative impacts on residents.
- Continuing its long association with the army, the Dale Barracks increasingly being integrated into the local community. If Upton's long association with the army has ended, the Dale Barracks site will have developed for mixed residential and employment use on "zero-carbon " principles.
- A community which is adapted to be resilient to the impact of climate change, working towards a "zero-carbon " impact on the earth's resources through sustainable community energy projects and conservation measures.



Your Upton NEIGHBOURHOOD Plan

4. Objectives

The objectives of **Your Upton 2030** are:

- To ensure that any future development or redevelopment is sustainable, of high design quality and is fully integrated with the Upton community.
- To encourage individual and community scale renewable energy generation.
- To protect and enhance the distinctive physical and cultural heritage of Upton ensuring that new development is sensitive and enriches the landscape and built environment.
- To protect and enhance greenspace, public open spaces and access to countryside.
- To ensure that housing developments and conversions are appropriate to the housing needs of the local community, particularly young families and older people.
- To seek continued improvement to sustainable means of transport and the reduction of our carbon footprint.
- To ensure that Upton is a place where people of all ages and incomes can access the community services and facilities they need.
- To strengthen and support local economic activity, including Chester Zoo and the Countess of Chester Hospital, and to retain varied local retail provision.

5. Upton today

5.1 Character and location

Upton-by-Chester today is principally a pleasant residential suburb of the city of Chester. However, it retains significant elements of village character from its origins as an agricultural settlement. Its southern boundary, along the largely hidden line of the Bache Brook, is with suburban areas of Chester, while the areas to the north, east and west are largely rural.

5.2 Green Belt

The North Cheshire Green Belt covers these rural areas and runs into the parish on its eastern, northern and western sides (see map *Figure 5.1*).

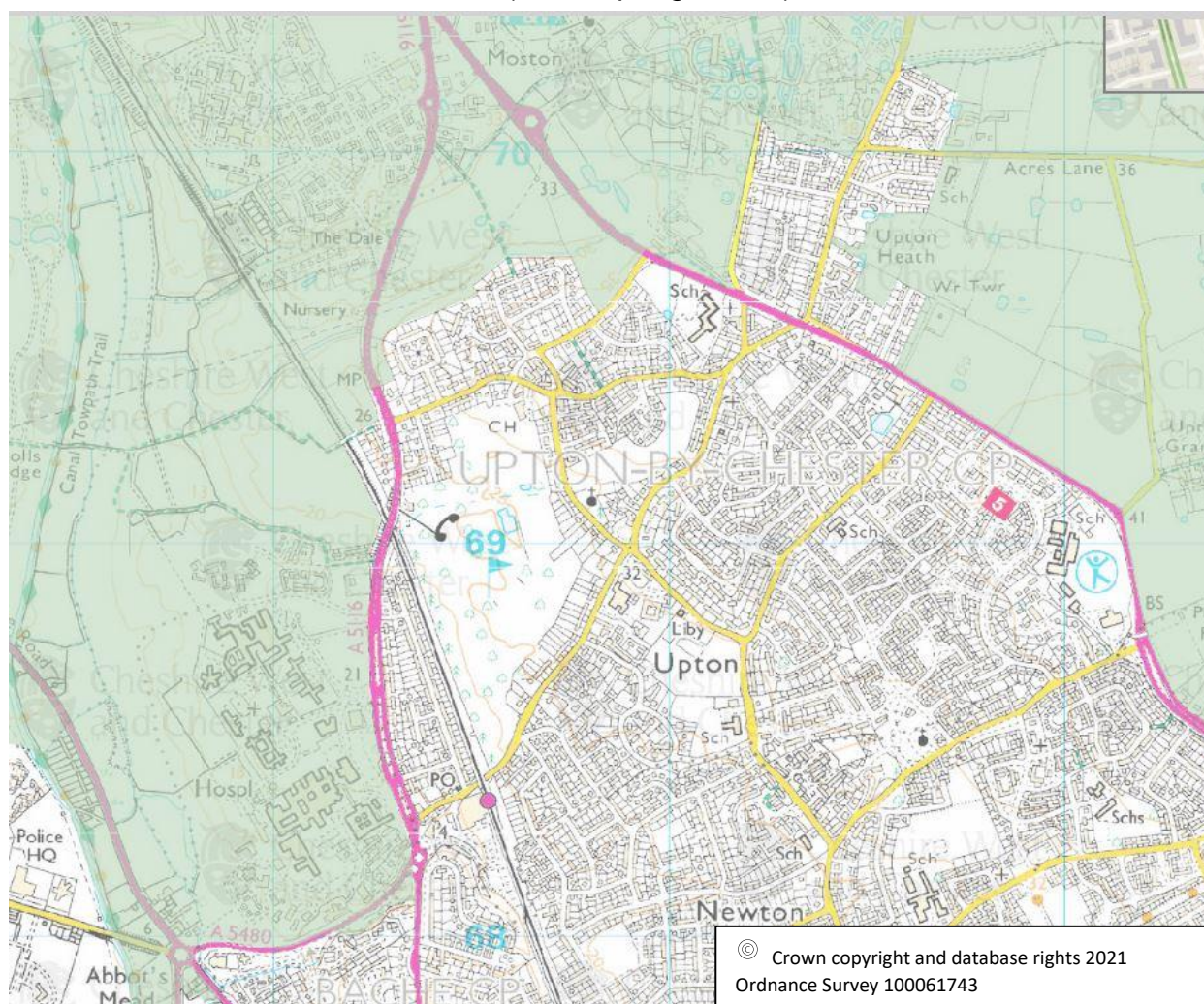


Figure 5.1: The Green Belt boundary

There are three significant developed sites in the green belt:

- **The Countess of Chester Health Park**, part of which has been redeveloped for residential purposes.
- **Chester Zoo**, a conservation and education charity and tourist attraction of international importance.
- **The Dale Barracks**, an army base whose long-term future is currently uncertain.

Within the Green Belt part of the neighbourhood area, inappropriate development will not be approved except in very special circumstances.

5.3 Heritage and conservation

There is one designated Conservation Area based around the 19th century residential development of Upton Park, and the recently designated Chester Canal Conservation Area runs adjacent to the parish, entering it briefly at one point. Six buildings and three other structures are listed at Grade II and there are four Scheduled Ancient Monuments (Appendix 1). A Local Heritage List is currently in preparation. (Appendix 2)

5.4 People and population

At the time of the 2011 Census the population of Upton was 8,905 and the estimate for 2017 was 9,400, showing modest growth. 51.6% are female and 48.4% male.

In 2017, 20.7% of the population were aged 0-15 and 21.0% were 65 or over; both of these slightly above the averages for Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) and for England as a whole. There were 400 residents over the age of 85 (3.9%), above the level of 2.7% for Cheshire West and Chester.

Minority ethnic groups made up 8.4% of the population at the time of the 2011 Census, somewhat above the Cheshire West and Chester average (5.3%) but less than half the overall percentage (20.2%) for England.

The health of the population is generally good, with just 4.6% reporting themselves to be in either “Very Bad” or “Bad” health in the 2011 census (CW&C and England 5.5%). 17.6% of residents reported that long term health problems or disability limited their day-to-day activities (CW&C 18.5% and England 17.6%).

However, life expectancy at birth is less than the average for either CW&C or England at 78.2 years for men and 82.6 years for women.

Educational attainment is significantly above the CW&C mean, with 69.4% of pupils obtaining 5 GCSE passes at A*-C including English and Maths in 2016-17 (CW&C 62.5%, source Pupil Level Annual Census Data). In the 2011 census 36% of adult Upton residents had a degree or equivalent qualification (CW&C 29%; England 27%) and just 19% had no qualifications (CW&C 21%; England 22%).

5.5 Economic activity

Levels of economic activity in the population reported in the 2011 census are in line with CW&C and national figures with 69.9% of people aged 16-74 active and 30.1% inactive. Based on claimant count in 2017, unemployment was below both local and national levels at 1.0% (CW&C 1.5%; England 1.9%)

Average household incomes in 2017 were above national and local norms, the median household income being £30,200 with the lower quartile at £20,100. This may reflect the high proportion of residents who were in professional occupations, 24% compared with 18% in CW&C and England.

In the Index of Multiple Deprivation, no part of Upton is classified as Q1, most deprived and around 75% of residents live in areas classified as Q4 and Q5, the least deprived categories (2019 data, MHCLG).

No suitable sites for large-scale renewable energy generation have so far been identified or proposed in Upton. An application was made for exploratory drilling for Unconventional Gas Extraction on Green Belt land adjacent to Upton in 2015, but it was not followed through. There was overwhelming local opposition to the proposal.

5.6 Community

Levels of reported crime for 2016-17 (police.uk website) are generally low. Perhaps surprisingly, almost half of the incidents reported were of “violent crime” but this statistic may be distorted by the presence in the area of the main Accident and Emergency Department for West Cheshire.

Levels of anti-social behaviour were significantly less than those reported for the CW&C area as a whole.

In the Residents’ Survey carried out by Cheshire West and Chester Council in 2017, 87.1% of Chester residents reported themselves as “Satisfied with their local area” compared with 84.0% borough-wide.



6. Main Policy Areas

At an early stage in the process of consultation with residents it became clear that community concerns which might be addressed in the context of a Neighbourhood Development Plan could be grouped into a number of key areas.

In general, respondents considered Upton a pleasant place to live and wanted to preserve its existing character. They were supportive of appropriate development, as long as it was environmentally sustainable, helped to meet local housing needs and did not lead to loss of local green spaces, encroachment into Green Belt or increased traffic on local roads. They valued having local shops and services available and recognised the importance of local employment sites.

The potential for development of the Dale Barracks site was recognised in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan and appeared to merit special consideration.

These areas of concern have been used to structure this plan.

- **Sustainability**
- **Physical character**
- **Housing**
- **Local services and facilities**
- **Transport and communications**
- **Economic activity**
- **The Dale Barracks**

7. Sustainability

7.1 Objectives

- To seek reductions in the carbon footprint of Upton through continued improvements to sustainable and active means of transport and through requiring high levels of energy efficiency in new development
- To encourage individual and community scale renewable energy generation

7.2 Key issues and proposals

Key concerns of the local community are:

- To seek continued improvement to sustainable means of transport to, from and within Upton.
- That new housing and other developments should be highly energy and water efficient.
- That renewable energy generation should be developed where it is practicable, where it does not cause unacceptable nuisance to the community, and where it does not contravene other policies within the neighbourhood development plan or the Local Plan.

7.3 Context

The world is currently seeing runaway carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels: the highest *ever* recorded CO₂ level was on 10 Feb 2020: 416.08 ppm, at the Mauna Loa Observatory, Hawaii. In Britain, the 10 warmest years since 1884 have occurred since 2002.

Historically, a temperature increase of 2°C has been seen as a benchmark to prevent climate catastrophe. However, the 2018 IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report revealed the true dangers of a global temperature rise of 2°C, which are considerably worse than thought. It was estimated that there are only 12 years left to keep global warming below 1.5°C, the level beyond which the risk of extreme effects on the climate and human wellbeing will be significantly increased.

Following the IPCC report, in 2019 the UK government set legally binding targets to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and 57% reduction below 1990 levels by 2030.

In 2019 there were 892 excess deaths in UK attributable to heat, and there were 3,400 over the last 4 years.

In May 2019¹, Cheshire West and Chester Council (CW&CC) declared a Climate Emergency, and subsequently directed the Chief Executive to determine the earliest date by which the Council and the Borough as a whole can be carbon neutral, and to revise its targets to meet that date. The Council has set a target date of 2030 to achieve

carbon neutrality for the Council's own emissions and the ambition is for the Borough to reach carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier.

Alongside this, the Council commissioned Anthesis to review the actions needed to achieve the carbon reductions required, which included new builds to Passive House or equivalent standard by 2025.

A scrutiny task group was set up in 2020 to consider the process, evidence base and resources for conducting a review of the Local Plan, with particular reference to the impact of climate change. The scrutiny task group have now made a series of recommendations, including some relating to climate change. The Council's Climate Emergency Response Plan was also approved at a Cabinet meeting on 10 February 2021 and a Carbon Management Plan was adopted.

On 9 February 2022³ the Climate Emergency Response Plan was updated by Cheshire West and Chester Council. This includes (Section 6.5) the following action: "The Council will review options and costs for low-carbon housing in Council-led schemes, in order to deliver the commitment set by Cabinet to seek to ensure that all new builds (Council and private developments) are built to a higher standard such as the Passive House standard, renewable energy and electric vehicle charging points, and access to a high standard of broadband infrastructure". This will be incorporated into the Action Plan for the reviewed Local Plan.

At the end of 2018², it was projected that at the rate of decrease in carbon emissions achieved on average between 2005 and 2018 in the UK, net zero emissions would only be achieved by 2038. Therefore, an accelerated rate of decrease is needed to achieve net zero by 2030.

In mid-2020 the UK Committee of Climate Change reported to Parliament on progress during the previous year, including advice to UK government on securing a green and resilient recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. It recommended five investment priorities:

- Low carbon retrofits and buildings fit for the future.
- Strengthening energy networks.
- Making it easy to walk, cycle and work remotely
- Tree planting and green infrastructure.
- Moving towards a circular economy.

1 <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/the-climate-emergency.aspx>

2 Data source:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/894787/2005-18-uk-local-regional-co2-emissions.xlsx

3 <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/documents/climate-emergency-response-plan.pdf>

An application was made for exploratory drilling for unconventional oil and gas extraction (UGE, fracking) on Green Belt land adjacent to Upton in 2015, and the local community were strongly opposed to such drilling taking place. In the event the application was not followed through and government policy has changed in the interim. The discussions around UGE in 2015 and subsequently in Upton have shown that there is high support in the community for moving to less reliance on fossil fuels and towards sustainability and renewable energy generation. So far, no community-led proposals for renewable energy generation have come forward.

In this Neighbourhood Development Plan, policies relating to walking and cycling are included in the Transport section below, and tree planting and green infrastructure in the Physical Character and The Dale Barracks sections. In the current section, policies relating to new buildings and energy generation are described.

7.4 Local Plan – relevant provisions

Sustainable housing

The Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan includes the following policies related to sustainable housing:

Local Plan (Part One)

- ***Policy ENV 6: High Quality Design and Sustainable Construction***
- ***Policy ENV 7: Alternative Energy Supplies***

Local Plan (Part Two)

- ***Policy DM 4 - Sustainable construction***
- ***Policy DM 41: Sustainable Drainage Systems***

Renewable energy

The Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan includes the following policies related to energy generation.

Local Plan (Part One)

- ***Policy ENV 7: Alternative Energy Supplies***

Local Plan (Part Two)

- ***Policy DM 51: Wind energy***
- ***Policy DM 52: Solar energy***

7.5 Policies

Sustainable development

Policy **10.4** in the CW&CC Local Plan (Part Two) was written before the declaration of the climate emergency, and the Neighbourhood Development Plan provides an opportunity to go further than the Local Plan to help to achieve carbon neutral development. The Policy in the Local Plan seeks the highest levels of energy efficiency, beyond building regulations, but developers are not required to quantify carbon emissions, and compliant developments could still be carbon emitting. CW&CC have, however, recently ratified their Climate Emergency Response Plan, which includes a draft requirement that all new builds are built 'at least to a higher standard such as the Passivhaus standard' would be incorporated into the Action Plan for the revised Local Plan. This has therefore been incorporated into the Upton Neighbourhood Development Plan which requires development proposals to be zero carbon, by incorporating sustainable design features such as a reduction in space heating demand by meeting Passivhaus standards. The sustainability of the main building materials should be demonstrated by life cycle assessment.

Policy S1: Sustainable construction

- All development must support the Neighbourhood Development Plan objective of seeking reductions in carbon emissions from within the Upton NDP area and mitigating the impacts of climate change. Developments should be zero carbon, with residential developments meeting Passivhaus standards, and should be designed to minimise non-renewable energy consumption, including the use of sustainable main materials, high energy efficiency levels, the incorporation of renewable energy initiatives and the efficient design of the building, except where there is clear evidence that it is impractical and/or non-viable. The sustainability of main building materials should be demonstrated by life cycle assessment.
- Major developments are required to support sustainable living and utilise best practice in the use of sustainable resources and green technologies such as renewable energy and storage, decentralised heating systems, heat from waste systems and rainwater harvesting.
- All development proposals (including changes of use) will be expected to achieve the highest levels of energy and water efficiency, except where there is clear evidence that it is impractical and/or non-viable.
- All development proposals (including changes of use) will be expected to demonstrate that they have examined and maximised opportunities to incorporate sustainable design features.

- Developments which would lead to improved energy and water efficiency in existing buildings and which do not negatively impact the character of the building or surrounding area will be supported.

Renewable energy

It is considered that the **Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Local Plan (Part Two) policies relating to energy generation largely meet the needs of the local community**. Renewable energy proposals that are either '*led by*', or '*meet the needs of*' the local community will be supported subject to the criteria outlined in the Local Plan and subject to considerations elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, for example in the Physical Characteristics policies.

Definition of '*Led by*' local community

The proposed development has community involvement at the heart of the project's development process. Examples include:

- Proposals which are conceived in partnership between a community organisation and a developer (commercial or non-profit), or another party.
- Proposals which are supported or promoted by a community at the planning or pre-planning stage.

Definition of '*Meets the needs of*' local community

The proposal is capable of producing social, economic or environmental benefits which are inclusive and accessible to all within the local community over the lifetime of the project. Examples of such benefits include:

- Community ownership and control over renewable energy assets (and their energy and financial outputs).
- The generation of surpluses which can be spent by the local community.
- Cheaper and more secure local energy supply (which could be achieved through measures such as deployment of smart energy management technologies, energy storage and through community-controlled energy supply).
- Benefits to the local environment which are identified and desired by the local community.

Policy S2: Renewable energy generation

Support will be given to renewable and low carbon energy generation developments. In particular, support will be given to developments that:

- are led by, and/or meet the needs of the local community; and/or
- create opportunities for co-location of energy producers with energy users, in particular heat, and/or facilitate renewable and low carbon energy innovation.

When considering such proposals, regard will be given to the wider benefits of providing energy from renewable sources, as well as the potential effects on the local environment and residential amenity, including any cumulative impact of these proposals.

7.6 Evidence

Review of local consultation

Details of the methodology and the full results of all local consultation carried out in the development of the NDP, including the Regulation 14 Consultation, are given in Appendix 9: Consultation Statement.

Community consultation 2015

The priorities perceived by 217 residents responding to this survey were:

- integrate renewable energy in new developments 44%
- no fracking, develop renewable energy 86%

Upton High School consultation July 2018

When asked what they 'Don't want to happen in Upton in the future', 27% of the 81 high school students who responded mentioned concerns related to sustainability, particularly fracking.

Business survey Feb-Nov 2018

The idea of local low carbon energy generation in Upton was generally supported by the local employers, with one larger employer specifically mentioning the possibility of installing solar panels on suitable land, and biomass energy generation. There was also support for sustainability in general.

Consultation at Upton Fun Day 2019

There was 100% agreement amongst the 20 residents who completed the questionnaire with the statement that:

“A priority for new housing should be to make it eco-friendly, with ways to save energy and water”

There was also a discussion with some residents attending the stall concerning potential renewable energy generation in Upton. Residents were in favour of such initiatives, providing they did not create nuisance or have a negative impact on the environment.

Consultation conducted by CW&CC Nov 2020-Jan 2021

CW&CC consulted with residents and organisations across the borough in connection with its Climate Emergency Response Plan. A key element in responses related to housing was “Support to the principle of developing net zero carbon homes – building right the first time, rather than requiring costly retrofits in future years”.

Regulation 14 consultation

There was strong support expressed for the draft Sustainability policies. In numbers of cases the comments were that the policies *did not go far enough*, particularly in setting specific standards to be met for new construction, such as zero carbon and Passivhaus (S1).

It was also commented that the sustainability of building materials should be demonstrated by life cycle assessment, and that, if a proposed development would not meet the highest standards of energy and water efficiency, clear evidence of these standards being impractical and/or non-viable should be provided. Furthermore, there was a desire to address the issue of carbon emissions from existing properties.

There were also comments with regard to clarifying the wording of policies.

Changes were made to Policies S1 and S2 following the feedback, to strengthen and clarify the requirements, and to add in a clause to S1 relating to existing buildings.

Anthesis report

The Anthesis consultancy was commissioned by CW&C Council to provide an evidence base to inform the Council's planning in response to the Climate Emergency Declaration (21st May 2019). In their report, Anthesis stated that residential buildings accounted for 14% of direct and indirect carbon emissions within CW&C (excluding agriculture, forestry and land use).

To meet the targeted emissions reduction by 2030 of 68% reduction against 2017 levels, it was proposed in the report that all new domestic building should be to Passivhaus or equivalent standard. The report may be accessed on the CW&C Climate Emergency webpage, Documents and Resources.

Design standards

The Design Code for Upton produced by AECOM in March 2020 references the *National Design Guide (2019)*, the *Future Homes Standards (2025)*, and the *Building for Life 12 Assessment (3rd Ed. 2015)*.

The *National Design Guide (2019)* includes Resources as a characteristic, and for all development proposals it is expected that this topic will be, or have been, taken into account within the design process.

The *Future Homes Standard (2025)*, currently under consultation by UK government, will require new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency. It will be introduced by 2025.

The *Building for Life 12 Assessment*, now replaced by *Building for a Healthy Life 2020*, is a tool for assessing the design quality of homes and neighbourhoods in England and has Sustainability as a criterion. Features that reduce environmental impact are considered essential.

On 31 December 2020 Regulation 25B of the Building Regulations 2010 came into force. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government issued a Circular on 10 February 2021 clarifying the requirements for Reg 25B, which stated that “Where a building is erected, it must be a nearly zero-energy building”. It clarified as follows:

Compliance with this requirement is achieved by both:

- a. meeting the Target Emission Rate required under Regulation 26 and
- b. undertaking an analysis of the technical, environmental and economic feasibility of using high-efficiency alternative systems, which include decentralised energy supply systems based on energy from renewable sources and taking this analysis into account as required by Regulation 25A

8. Physical Character

8.1 Objectives

- To protect and enhance the distinctive physical and cultural heritage of Upton.
- To ensure that new development is sensitive and enriches the landscape and built environment.
- To protect and enhance greenspace, public open spaces and access to countryside.

8.2 Key issues and proposals

The following are the key issues for the physical character of Upton:

- Conserving and enhancing the significant number of heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, in the parish.
- Maintaining and, where appropriate, enhancing the existing character and local distinctiveness of the various areas of the parish.
- Protecting the Green Belt around Upton in accordance with the NPPF and Local Plan policies.
- Ensuring that existing open spaces in and around Upton are protected from development other than to enhance their functions for recreation, leisure or landscape value.

8.3 Context

Conservation of heritage assets

Whilst Upton developed during the last century into a suburban community, significant traces of its rural village origins remain. These include some remaining grand houses, community buildings such as churches, halls and schools, surviving farmhouses and workshops, gardens and historic structures such as the village pump and war memorial.

A broad range of 'Heritage Assets' can still be viewed. Full details of these may be found in the Cheshire Historic Environment Record, which is maintained by the Archaeology Planning Advisory Service at Cheshire West and Chester Council. These are valued by local people for the insight they provide into the origins and heritage of the community.

There is a designated Conservation Area within the parish covering Upton Park.

The Chester Canal Conservation Area runs along the western and northern boundaries of the Parish.

In addition to a number of nationally listed structures and Scheduled Monuments (Appendix 1), a list of particular heritage assets in Upton has been drawn up by a group of local people and, with the support of the Parish Council, submitted to Cheshire West and

Chester Council for inclusion in a Local Heritage List. (Appendix 2). Policy 1 seeks to ensure their conservation for future generations.

The location of the Listed Buildings is mapped at:

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/upton-by-chester-cheshire-west-and-chester#.YPmPh-hKiUk>

and

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/wales/moston-cheshire-west-and-chester#.YPmQ1-hKiUk>

A map of the Scheduled Monuments is included at Appendix 1.

Local character and distinctiveness

The character and local distinctiveness of Upton is due as much to the overall character of particular areas as it is to individual historic assets (See Appendix 3).

The physical character of different areas varies considerably, generally reflecting the styles prevalent in the period during which they were developed. It is important that the design of any infill development respects the context of the overall character area in which it sits, the uniformity and commonality which makes the area more than a collection of individual buildings. Similarly, the cumulative impact of small-scale development, such as extensions, window replacement, etc. must be considered. The Neighbourhood Development Plan recognises the contribution that small elements make to the character of the area and seeks to protect them.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan also seeks to protect landscape character, including trees, boundaries (e.g. hedges, sandstone walls, Cheshire railings etc) and to put in place measures to avoid or minimise impact or mitigate damage.

Green spaces

Upton's green spaces are highly regarded by residents. The 2017 Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study highlighted, however, that there are shortfalls in the provision of allotments, amenity green spaces, parks and recreation grounds, and play spaces for children and young people. Their conservation and enhancement are seen as an essential element of the physical character of the area as well as an important contribution to the health and well-being of local people.

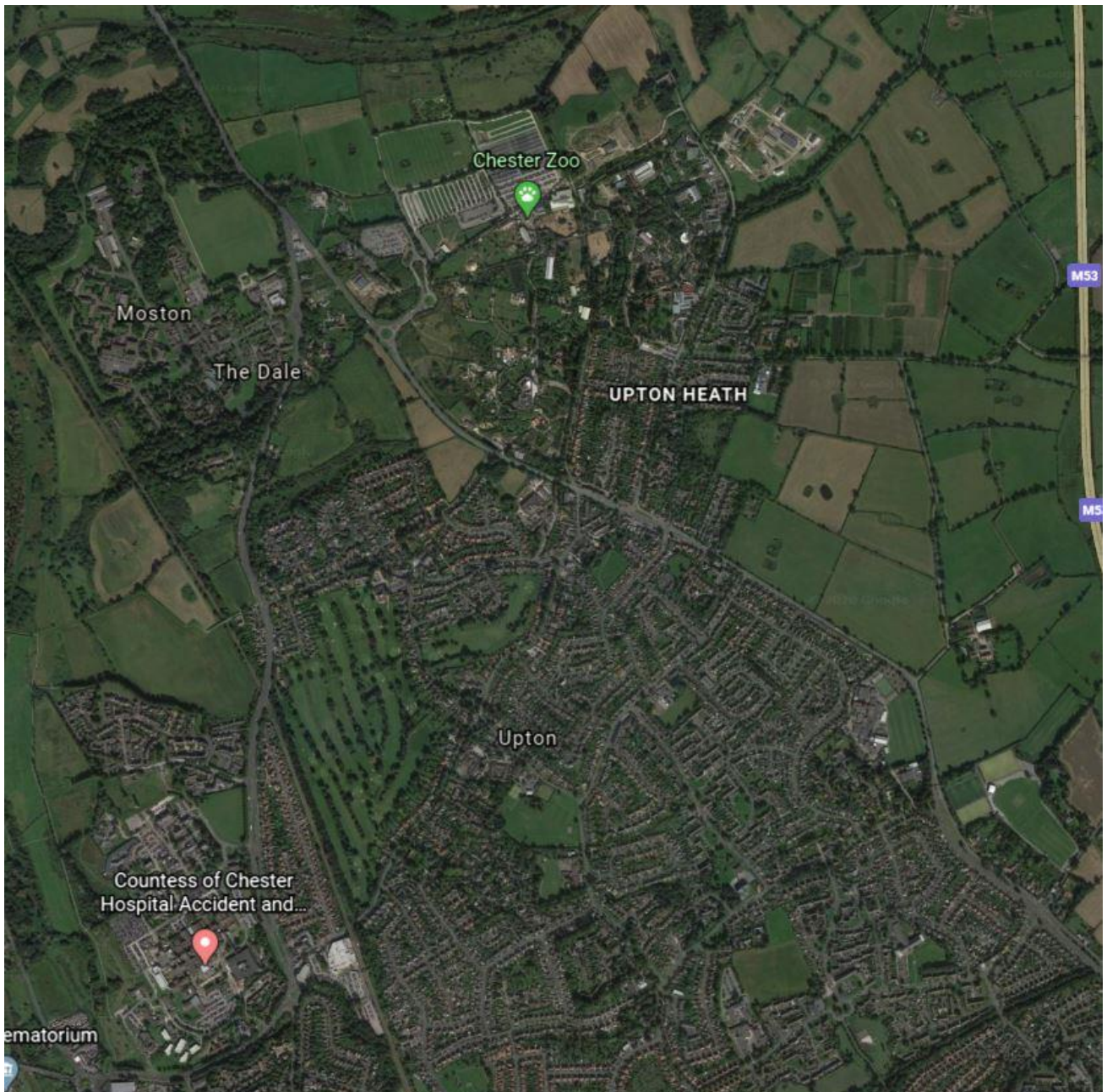
An aerial photograph of the area (*Figure 8.1*) clearly shows the extent to which green spaces both surround the settlements, so that residents have easy access to open countryside, and permeate the built-up area, defining a major element of its character. Any discussion of the physical character of Upton must encompass the role of green spaces.

There are areas of open countryside within the parish including the fields to the north-east of Long Lane, those to the north of Damage Lane and Daleside (between Upton and Moston), those north of Parson's Lane and north of the Zoo entrance leading to the

Chester canal. There are also open and wooded areas within the curtilage of the Dale Barracks.

There are also more formal open spaces for recreational and leisure purposes. These include the QEII Playing Fields, the Country Park adjacent to the Countess of Chester Hospital, the Playing Fields at the Dale Barracks, the “Chemistry Pits” field, Marl Heys, playing fields at all the local schools and Upton Golf Club. The school playing fields and

Figure 8.1: Aerial view of Upton (Google Earth)



other private sites such as Upton Golf Club are not available for general recreation and leisure purposes but are valued for their specific contribution to the community as well as their landscape value.

There are also numerous areas of “amenity land”, largely created during the development of public and private estates, which form an important part of the character of those areas and are highly valued by local residents.

During the Regulation 14 consultation of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan, residents suggested there was a need for a policy on trees and hedgerows which make a large contribution to the character of the Parish. The benefits of preserving and planting trees and hedgerows are numerous. They provide habitats for wildlife; provide pleasant scenery for walking and outdoor activities, reducing stress; produce oxygen and reduce carbon dioxide; help reduce traffic noise and dust; and help to reduce surface water runoff from roadways and buildings.

An Environmental Management Strategy, including a Play Strategy, a Parks and Greenspace Strategy and a Wildflower and Grassland Strategy was agreed by Cheshire West and Chester Council in June 2021.

8.4 Local Plan – relevant provisions

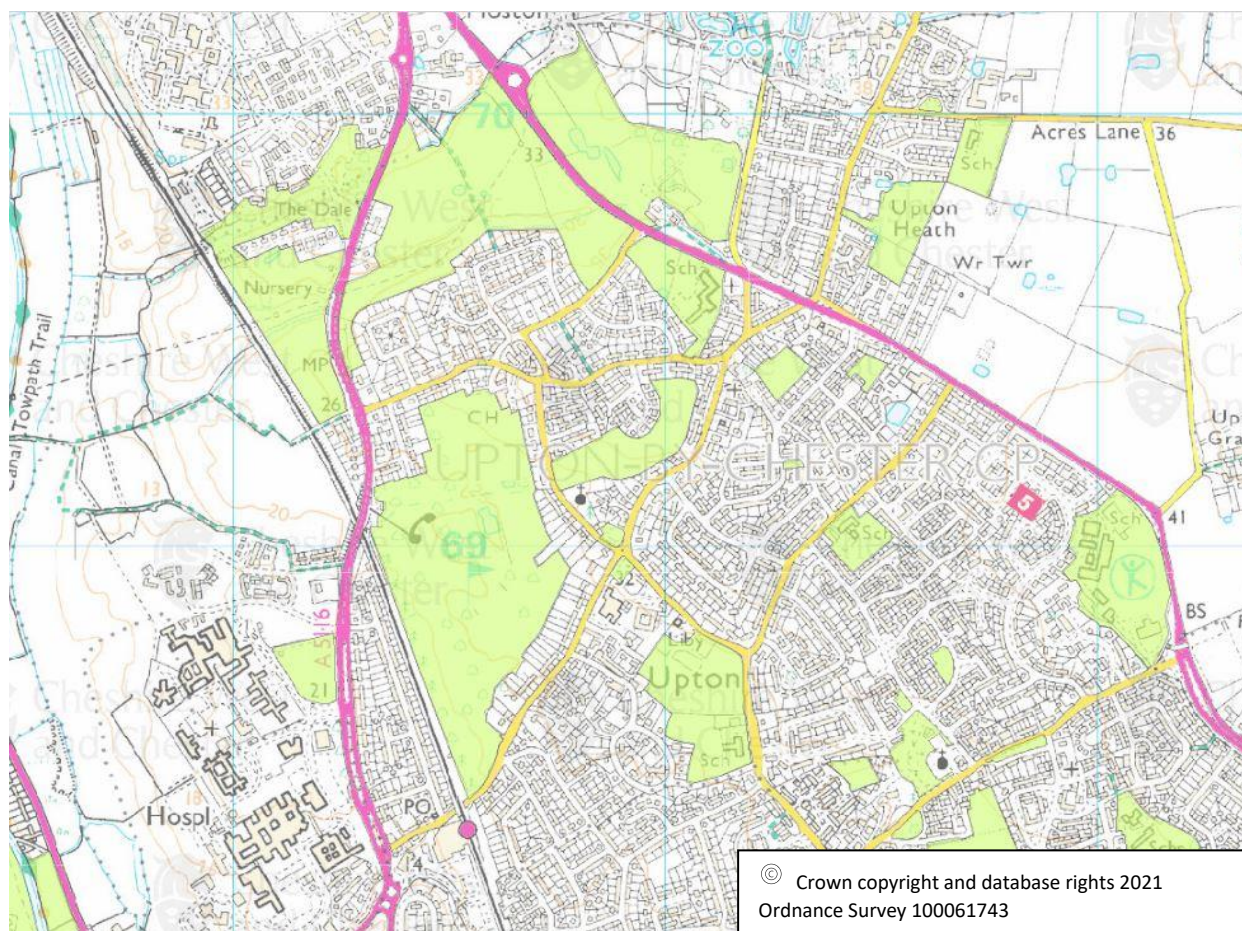
The conservation of heritage assets is covered by Policy **ENV 5** of the Local Plan (Part One) and by Policies **DM46**, **DM47** and **DM48** of the Local Plan (Part Two), reflecting the guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

Local character and distinctiveness are largely dealt with in Policy **DM3** of the Local Plan (Part Two), particularly sections 1 – 5, and also in Paragraph 10.1 of the preamble to Section 10 on Development Management.

Green infrastructure and biodiversity are dealt with in Policies **DM44** and **DM45** of the Local Plan (Part Two).

Policy **SOC6** of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan – Part 1 designates the following areas of open space (see map *Figure 8.2*):

Figure 8.2: Map of areas designated as Open Space in Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan – Part 1



- The QEII Playing Fields.
- The Playing Fields at the Dale Barracks.
- Upton Golf Club.
- Chemistry Pits Playing Field.
- Marl Heys Field.
- School Playing Fields at Upton High School, Acresfield Academy, Mill View School, Upton Heath School and Westlea School.
- Land between the settlements of Upton and Moston.
- The Cockpit and Lodge Gardens at Upton Cross.
- The former cricket pitch in front of the 1829 building at the Countess of Chester Health Park.
- Amenity areas at the junction of Cotebrook Drive and Rushton Drive; Bolesworth Road; north and south of Handford Road.

The land designated as Open Space to the north-east of the A41 on the above map includes areas of Chester Zoo where planning permission for developments has subsequently been granted, superseding the Open Space definition.

8.5 Policies

Policy PC1: Preserving and enhancing heritage assets

Designated and non-designated heritage assets enhance local distinctiveness and should be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Development should preserve and, where possible, enhance, both designated and non-designated heritage assets and historic landscape character, and include measures to avoid or, where necessary, minimise impact and mitigate adverse effects.

In particular, any development must:

- Preserve or enhance the character and setting of the 12 listed buildings in the study area, all are Grade II. Newton Hall which is in proximity to the study boundary is Grade II* listed (*See Appendix 1*).
- Preserve or enhance the setting of the six Roman camps designated as Scheduled Monuments in the east of the Neighbourhood Development Plan area (*See Appendix 1*).
- Preserve or enhance the setting and the different characters of the Conservation Areas: Upton Park Conservation Area and Chester Canal Conservation Area.
- Preserve or enhance the character and setting of the Upton Cross area, including the Cockpit, as a Key Node with historic character.
- Preserve or enhance the appearance and setting of landmarks, listed buildings and marker buildings (undesigned heritage assets) that aid legibility and contribute to the character, image and identity of the area.

Development which would remove, harm or undermine the significance of such non-designated heritage assets, or their contribution to the character of a place, will only be permitted where the benefits of the development outweigh the harm having regard to the scale of the harm and significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

Prior to the loss of the non-designated heritage asset, an appropriate level of survey and recording will be expected including where appropriate archaeological investigation, the results of which should be deposited on the Historic Environment Record. It is expected that any application will be supported by a desk-based assessment which defines the significance of the assets and considers the development's effect on the asset and its setting and measures to avoid, minimise or mitigate any adverse impacts.

This policy is in accordance with the guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) and Policy

DM48 (Non-Designated Heritage Assets) in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan – Part 2.

There is a high concentration of heritage assets in the area around Upton Cross which could justify its designation as a Conservation Area. (See *Appendices 1 and 2*)

Policy PC 2: Conserving local character and distinctiveness

Development will be supported which conserves and enhances the beauty and character of the area, as defined in the relevant section of the Upton Characterisation Study (Section 3 of the Upton Neighbourhood Development Plan Design Code – Appendix 8).

Where appropriate an application for development must set out a clear response to the character area/s in which it is sited or adjacent to (*see Figure 8.3*), including landscape character areas.

The character response should be clearly outlined in terms of appearance, means of access, landscaping, layout and scale. The design must respond to the character area through one or more of the following approaches:

Harmonise – clearly respond to existing characteristics within the character area, street and site across the categories of appearance, means of access, landscaping, layout and scale.

Complement - doing something slightly different that adds to the overall character and quality in a way that is nonetheless fitting in terms of appearance, means of access, landscaping, layout and scale.

Contrast – doing something of high design quality that is different but adds positively to the built-form and character and is considered an exemplar approach for others to follow.

Development should preserve and enhance locally distinctive boundaries (such as sandstone walls or “Cheshire” railings) and any proposals which would result in loss of these features would be resisted.

Original architectural details such as cornices, fenestration, architraves, etc. are important to the character of the area and conservation or restoration of these features will be encouraged.

Alterations and extensions to existing buildings must be carefully designed and implemented to ensure that the character of the building, and its contribution to the character of the wider area, is not harmed and that its impact on heritage assets and their setting is avoided or, if this is not possible, minimised.

This policy is in accordance with Policy **DM3** (Design, Character and Visual Amenity) in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan – Part 2.

Policy PC3: Landscape and recreational Spaces

Development will be supported which protects and enhances a multi-functional network of open spaces and associated leisure and recreation facilities including:

- Amenity spaces.
- Sports fields.
- Parks.
- Sports clubs (including the Upton-by-Chester Golf Club).
- Recreation grounds.

New housing development must provide high quality open space and recreational facilities of at least the standards in Policies DM 35 and DM 36 of Part Two of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan. Any suitable proposals to increase recreational / amenity green space or to enhance existing space will be welcomed. Proposals for new green spaces, recreation and play areas, their enhancement, or connectivity between them will be supported where access is easy and safe.

The following sites designated on the map at *Figure 8.4* should be designated as Local Green Spaces:

1. Countess of Chester Country Park adjacent to the Countess of Chester Hospital.
2. Land at Upton Cross (the junction of Mill Lane, Church Lane, Heath Road and Wealstone Lane) comprising the Cockpit, War Memorial and Lodge Gardens.
3. The Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field on Wealstone Lane.
4. The Chemistry Pits Playing Field to the rear of Marina Drive, Longfield Avenue and Heath Road.

Further detail of these sites and justification for their designation is provided at *Appendix 4*.

Development of Local Green Space is not permitted except in very special circumstances. The identified Local Green Space sites are of particular importance to the local community due to their beauty, historic significance, recreational value and / or biodiversity and because they are easily accessible for Upton residents.

Figure 8.3: Character Areas in Upton.

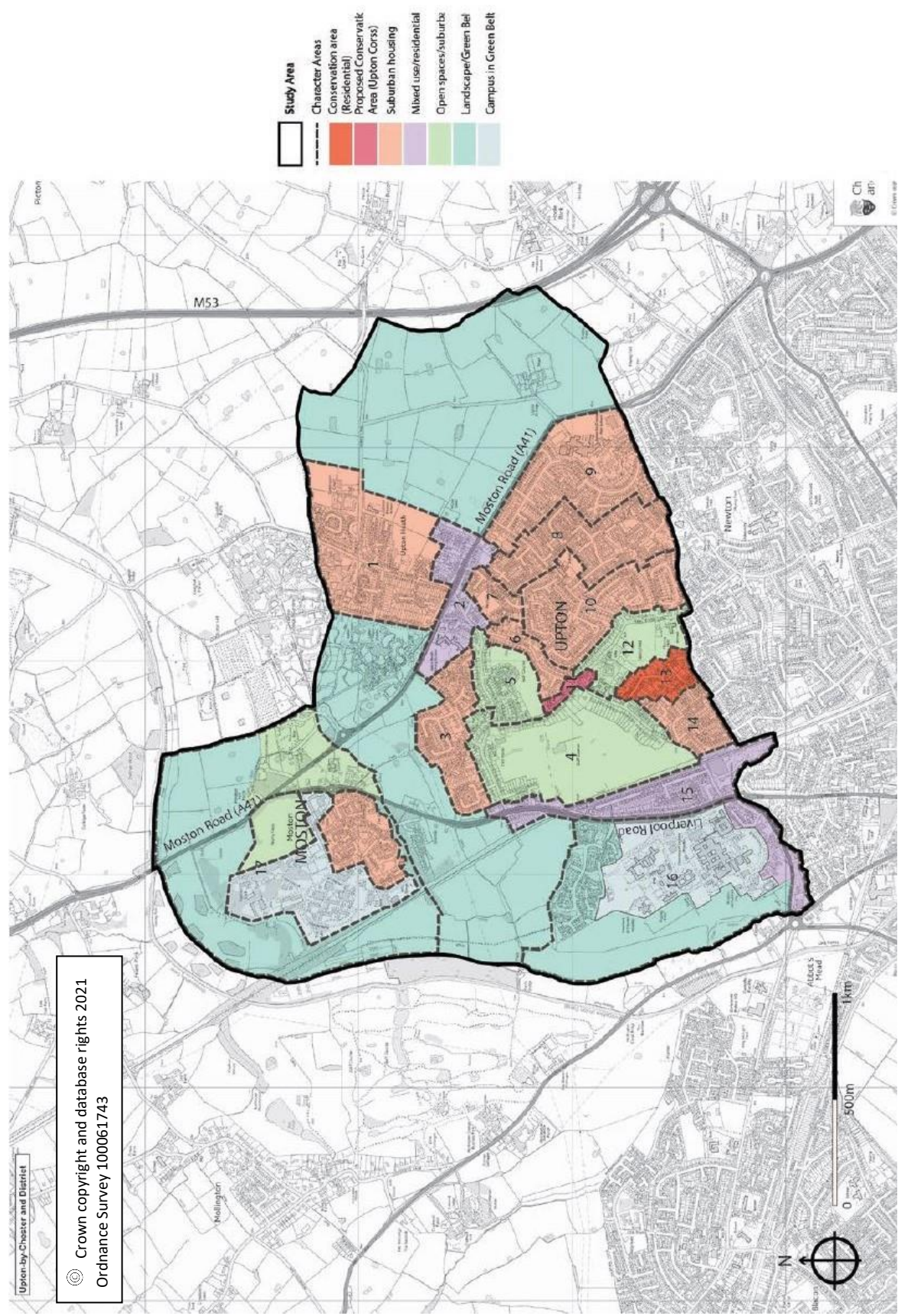
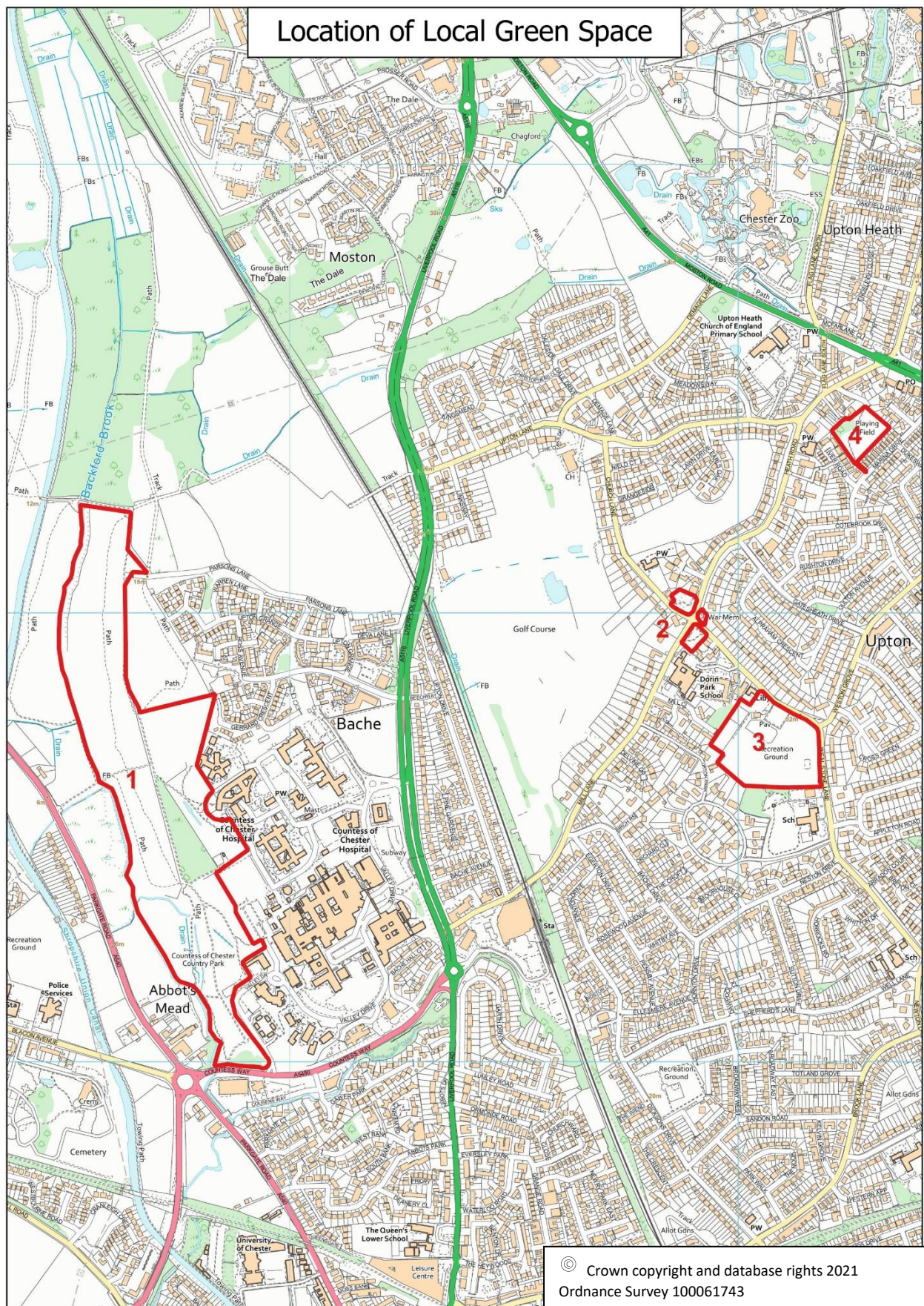


Figure 8.4: Location of proposed Local Green Space



Policy PC4: Protecting trees and hedgerows

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.

Where it is demonstrated that integration of these features into the development is not possible and the assets would be lost, developments may be permitted in line with the requirements of Local Plan (Part Two) policy DM45.

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 a ratio of at least two new trees for each tree which is lost.

New tree planting will be supported within new developments.

8.6 Evidence

Review of local consultation

A consistent theme from all our consultation with residents has been that they have generally positive views about the physical character of the area and do not wish it to change significantly. Heritage structures and locally distinctive features are regarded as important aspects of this character.

The open aspect of the surrounding countryside and the open spaces within Upton are highly valued and people wish them to be protected.

Meetings have taken place with Conservation Officers at Cheshire West and Cheshire Council who have advised on aspects of the proposed policies.

Community consultation 2015

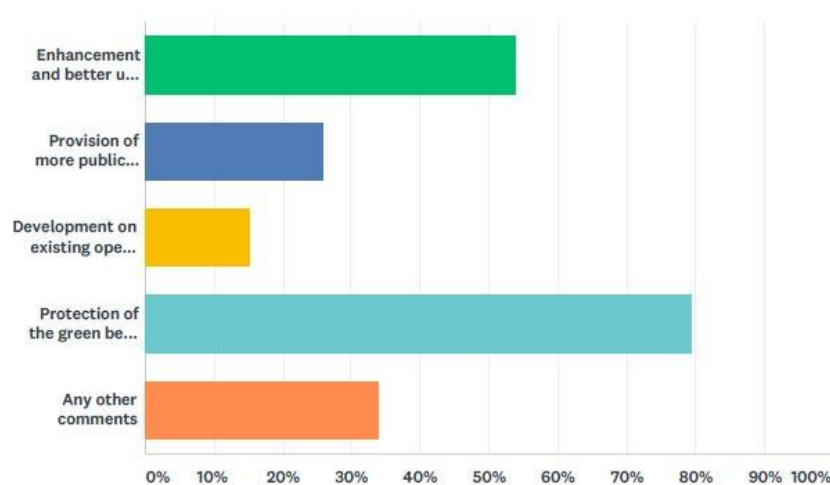
When residents were asked about their priorities in terms of open space there was strong support for the retention and improvement of existing open space

Community consultation 2018

Potential loss of green spaces was one of the major concerns expressed by residents in this survey. Many of the positive comments made in this survey related to the generally pleasant character of the area and the importance of its green spaces.

Q8 Public Open Spaces and Green Belt.

Answered: 209 Skipped: 8

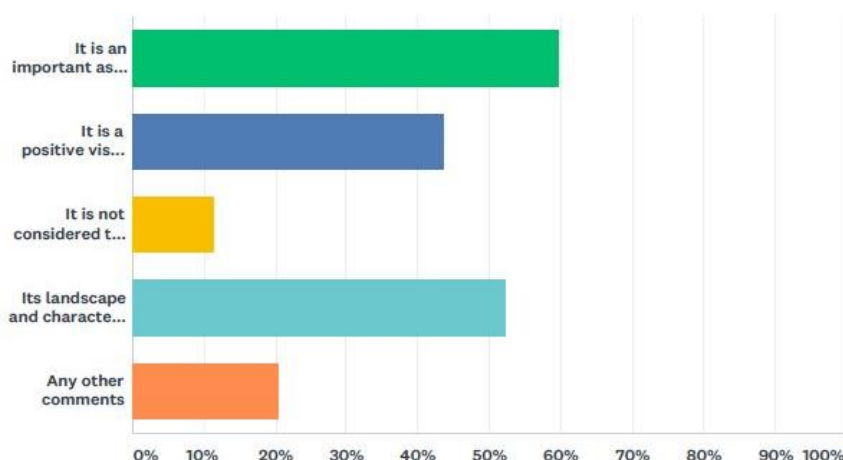


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Enhancement and better use of existing open spaces.	54.07%	113
Provision of more public open space.	25.84%	54
Development on existing open space.	15.31%	32
Protection of the green belt, agricultural and open land by designating and protecting areas.	79.43%	166
Any other comments	33.97%	71
Total Respondents: 209		

There was also a strong recognition that Upton Golf Course is an important recreational asset but also a significant landscape and visual amenity.

Q10 Upton Golf Course

Answered: 199 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
It is an important asset to Upton.	59.80%	119
It is a positive visual amenity.	43.72%	87
It is not considered to be important to Upton.	11.56%	23
Its landscape and character is valued by local residents.	52.26%	104
Any other comments	20.60%	41
Total Respondents: 199		

Reg 14 consultation Feb-March 2021

There was strong support for all the draft policies on physical character.

Regarding heritage assets (policy PC1), it was commented that the policy should consider the situation where designated and non-designated heritage assets cannot be retained, and that in such cases the tests of paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework should be applied.

There was strong support for policy PC3 relating to the protection of existing open space, but it was commented that opportunities for new greenspace provision should also be considered. The parish has shortfalls for open space provision, with particular shortfalls in parks and recreation, amenity greenspace and allotments. It was also noted that the protection of existing small amenity spaces had not been included in the policy..

In addition to support for preserving green spaces in Upton, there was specific mention of the mature trees and hedgerows across Upton and the importance of preserving significant trees in the landscape and streetscape. In particular the line of trees along the A5116 bordering the land in front of 1829 Building, Countess of Chester Health Park was mentioned, as well as the line of trees bordering Upton Golf Club, adjacent to the railway line.

Changes were made to Policies PC1, PC2 and PC3 following the feedback. A new Policy (PC4) was added on Trees, Hedgerows & Watercourses.

Character assessment and Design Code

To provide a basis for judging the character of different areas within Upton, a Characterisation Study has been undertaken which has provided the basis for the production by AECOM of a Design Code for the Parish (*Appendix 8*).

Design Code

The Design Code prepared by AECOM (*Appendix 8*) emphasises the importance of open spaces and recreational areas in defining the essential character of the Neighbourhood Development Plan area.

Local green space

An assessment of the areas proposed for this designation is attached at *Appendix 4*.

9. Housing

9.1 Objective

- To ensure that housing developments and conversions are appropriate to the housing needs of the local community, particularly young families and older people

9.2 Key issues and proposals

The key concerns of the local community in terms of housing development are:

- That large-scale development of new housing in Upton would be inappropriate except on the Dale Barracks site. The Dale Barracks is identified as a developed site within Green Belt in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) Policy GBC 1.
- That the demand for existing social housing in the area is high and that there is a need for more affordable housing.
- That the provision of suitable “starter homes” and houses suitable for older people wishing to “downsize” should be enhanced.
- That existing green spaces and amenity areas within Upton should not be developed for housing.
- That any infill development should not be detrimental to the overall character and amenity of the area.
- That new housing and other developments should be highly energy and water efficient.

9.3 Context

The vast majority of Upton’s housing was built over 40 years ago and only one significant site in the parish has been developed in recent years. This is the “Upton Dene” development of 200 homes including a retirement and care home with a public house and Scout Centre. It was built on land surplus to health requirements within the footprint of the former psychiatric hospital site in the green belt to the north of the Countess of Chester Health Park and a further 74 homes are in the process of being built. Other new homes have largely been built on small-scale “windfall sites” such as the former Corporation Yard on Moston Road or land to the rear of Dukesway.

Most housing has been built at low densities and consists mainly of detached (26.3%) and semi-detached (43.1%) houses and bungalows, usually with substantial gardens. Only 17% of properties are terraced and 13.5% are flats or maisonettes. There are no “high-rise” residential blocks. (*UK Census 2011*)

3,638 households were identified in Upton in the 2011 census and almost a third of these (1,176) had one or more dependent children. In line with the national average,

mean household size is 2.4 people. However, the average Upton home has 6.0 rooms and 3.0 bedrooms, larger than local or national averages, though the occupancy rating classifies 5.7% of homes as overcrowded. Single-person households make up 27.4 % of the total (30.2% nationally) but over half these are people over 65, 15.1% compared with the national average of 12.4%. In 2011, only 5 households were identified as consisting entirely of students.

Three quarters of Upton residences are owner-occupied and more than half of these are owned outright. House prices in the area are high, particularly for the North of England, with an average selling price of £293,894 in 2018/19. This was 22.6% above the CW&C average.

Social rented housing comprises 12% of the stock. This is mostly located in two areas of housing built by the former Chester RDC. The larger area is roughly bounded by Weston Grove, Newhall Road, St James' Avenue and the parish boundary and there is a smaller group comprising Greenfields, the east side of Caughall Road and the north side of Acres Lane. Many of these residences have been purchased under the "right to buy"; those that remain as social housing are in the control of the Sanctuary Housing Association. Your Housing have a small number of properties within the Upton Dene development.

There is a high demand for social housing in the area , with 71 eligible applicants (ie with a local connection to Upton) on the CW&C Housing Register in March 2019. Of these 31 (44%) were registered as having a high need of housing.

The supply of land suitable for housing development in Upton is limited. The area is bounded on three sides by Green Belt and on the other by the existing built-up area of Chester. Further detail on housing in Upton is available in the Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix 7).

9.4 Local Plan – relevant provisions

Upton falls within the Chester spatial area as identified in the Local Plan (Part One) and on the policies map. As such, figures have been set for Chester as a whole (5,200 dwellings during the plan period), but no specific figures have been identified for specific neighbourhoods within this.

Five potential sites for housing were identified in the 2017 **Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment** or **HELAA** (*Cheshire West and Chester Council, February 2017*). These are at Site References UPT/0002; UPT/0010; UPT 0011; UPT/0025; UPT 0047. However, they would largely be precluded from development by other Local Plan policies, particularly **SOC 6**.

Outside of the Green Belt there is a limited number of previously developed sites that might become available for redevelopment within the plan period. Only two sites in Upton are currently identified on the Cheshire West and Chester Brownfield Land Register:

UPT/0005(a) "Former The Gamekeeper PH, (Plush Spice) Newhall Road, Upton, Chester, CH2 1TB"

UPT/0047 "UPTON DENE (Phase 3): Land off Upton Grange, Liverpool Road, Chester"

These both have current planning permission and are currently under development

The only location where large-scale housing development is feasible is the Dale Barracks, which is within Green Belt and is dealt with in a separate policy section.

Para 12.2 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) states that:

"...there is a need to provide homes for first time buyers, and housing that is suitable for people wishing to downsize from larger houses"

Para 12.3 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) notes that there is a demand across the borough for:

"...housing to support elderly residents, whilst encouraging independent living through offering a range of age and care related products in addition to nursing and care homes."

Policy **DM20** of the Local Plan (Part Two) attempts to address these needs.

Policy **DM19** of the Local Plan (Part Two) states that:

"The creation of new dwellings on garden land in identified settlements will only be supported where this does not result in a disproportionate loss of garden land or cause unacceptable harm to the character of the surrounding area."

9.5 Policies

Policy H1: Scale of housing development

Large-scale housing development (10 or more dwellings or an area of 0.3HA or more) would be supported only on the site of the Dale Barracks, should this become available during the plan period, or in exceptional cases, to meet an identified community need.

Small-scale housing development will be supported in principle, provided that it is environmentally sustainable and not located in the Green Belt.

Policy H2: Mix of housing types

In accordance with Policy **SOC3** of the Local Plan (Part 1) and Policy **DM 20** of the Local Plan (Part 2), sites which are developed for housing during the plan period should provide an appropriate mix of housing types.

In particular they should include affordable housing and properties that meet the needs of first-time buyers and people wishing to downsize from larger homes and/or support elderly residents, whilst encouraging independent living.

All relevant new residential dwellings should meet the requirements set out in the Building Regulations Approved Document M, section M4(1) Category 1 – visitable

dwellings. The requirements set out in M4(2) – accessible and adaptable dwellings should be met for all new residential dwellings and the requirements set out in M4(3) – wheelchair users should also be met for a proportion of new residential dwellings. The requirements relating to M4(2) and M4(3) should be met where reasonably practicable and financially viable.

9.6 Evidence

Review of local consultation

Community consultation 2015

The priorities perceived by 217 residents responding to this survey were:

- More accommodation with care facilities (44%)
- More affordable housing (41%)
- Housing for the elderly (39%)

Community consultation March 2018

Around half of the 29 respondents would support development of Affordable homes (55%), Starter homes (48%) and Retirement bungalows / Sheltered housing (45%). There was far less support for the development of 3/4 bed Family Houses (24%)

In terms of Affordable home development, there were similar levels of support for both social housing (Council/Housing Association) and shared ownership and discounted sale schemes, with a slight preference for the latter.

Housing development was more likely to be supported in terms of infill only, rather than larger developments. The main suggested location for larger developments was Dale Barracks.

Upton High School consultation March – July 2018

The main support from this group was for more affordable housing, principally through shared ownership schemes and social housing. Family homes and starter homes were favoured more than retirement or sheltered housing.

Evidence from our surveys suggests that any loss of green space would be very unpopular locally.

Housing Needs Assessment

A Housing Needs Assessment was carried out on behalf of the Neighbourhood Development Plan group by Cheshire Community Action and produced in December 2019 (*Appendix 7*).

Its conclusions were that:

- Upton's popularity with families has helped it retain a fairly stable age structure i.e. it is not ageing as rapidly as the rest of the Borough.

- Population, household and dwelling growth have all risen broadly in line with each other since 2010, so there are no major concerns about the demographic balance and broad sustainability of the population that are distinct to the neighbourhood area.
- The lower proportion of single households compared to Chester Locality is most likely also due to its popularity with families but average household size is estimated to have dropped broadly in line with the Borough trends, so it is likely that there has been a recent increase in smaller household sizes from singles.
- Upton's attractiveness to families in terms of facilities, services, accessible location and Chester's relatively prosperous economy, means that dwelling prices are high in comparison to the Borough and have contributed to its relative unaffordability – putting it in the top quartile of the most unaffordable wards in the Borough, meaning that there is a strong case for more affordable housing.
- With 74% of households owning their homes outright or with a mortgage, there is also a case to look at the tenure mix of new stock to meet needs.
- 59% of eligible housing register applicants are under 55's needing 1-2 bed accommodation so this should be taken into account on future developments.

Policy H3: Design of housing development

All new housing developments will be expected to be of a high quality of design having demonstrable regard to the Upton-by-Chester Neighbourhood Development Plan Design Code (Appendix 8) which will:

- Be of an appropriate size, height, scale, mass and density which respects existing development in the area.
- Complement and enhance where appropriate the skyline, materials, layout of and access to existing development in the area including where appropriate the provision of chimneys and other features.
- Not unacceptably affect the amenities of neighbouring dwellings through overlooking, loss of light, over-dominance or general disturbance.
- Where landscaping outside the curtilage of dwellings is characteristic of the area, developments should provide landscaping which complements and enhances the character of the local area.
- Provide garden space commensurate with the size of the proposed dwelling, the prevailing pattern of development in the locality, and the likely needs of the prospective occupiers
- Have appropriate parking provision that does not detract from the visual amenity of the area, particularly at the front of properties.

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 lead Local Flood Agency, 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.

Proposals that include surface water discharge to a public sewer will need to submit clear evidence demonstrating why alternative options are not available.

9.7 Evidence

Review of local consultation

Housing consultation, questionnaire at Upton Fun Day, Sept 2018

There was a high (92%) agreement with the statement:

“Any new housing should blend in with the character of the surrounding area”

(Appendix 9, Consultation Statement)

Design & Design Codes study, April 2020

In the study undertaken by AECOM on behalf of the NDP Steering Group, the character of different areas of Upton was defined, and informed the development of Design Codes. The codes “Uniquely Upton-by-Chester” include Overarching Codes, Character Codes and Spatial Codes.

(Appendix 8, Design Code)

Regulation 14 consultation

There was strong support for all the draft policies. It was commented that the policies should be strengthened regarding the provision of affordable and social housing development within the current built-up area where feasible.

It was also suggested that the design of external areas should incorporate permeable surfaces for rainwater, and not cause runoff to be funnelled into the drainage system, which can add to the flood risk.

Clarification on wording regarding some of the design elements was also suggested.

Changes were made to Policies H1, H2 and H3 following the feedback, including a new clause added to H3 on minimising rainwater runoff.

10. Local Services and Facilities

10.1 Objective

To ensure that Upton is a place where people of all ages and incomes can find the community services and facilities they need.

10.2 Key issues and proposals

Building upon our analysis of local services and facilities in Upton, the following statements are presented as a summary of the key issues for the local community:

- Reinforcing Local Plan provisions, it is vitally important that services and facilities, especially health and wellbeing services, are maintained and protected. Policies are required to ensure that the current levels of services enjoyed by the community are retained and where appropriate, new services and facilities can be added in the future.
- Reflecting the continuing need for better youth facilities, developers need to understand the needs of young people within the community, provide services for them, and ensure their views are heard and needs addressed as far as possible.
- With an ageing population, and the risk of social exclusion and widening health inequalities, all sectors of the community need to be catered for and offered every opportunity to get involved in the activities of the community.
- Given the potential pressure to expand services provided by the Upton Village Surgery in response to possible residential development at Dale Barracks, future location options for GP and integrated health services should be reviewed proactively to avoid disruption.
- Facilities such as schools, the village surgery and key community buildings (such as the Village Hall) must be supported and retained.
- In the absence of a single 'village centre', co-location of complementary local services and facilities as part of the evolving community hub at Wealstone Lane should be promoted and reinforced where possible.
- Ensuring that any future development or redevelopment, e.g. at the Dale Barracks site, is fully integrated within the Upton community is a key objective. Developers must be able to explain what that impact will be and how facilities can be enhanced to meet proposed growth.
- Developers need to engage with the voluntary and community sectors to improve access to services and facilities for the community.

10.3 Context

In terms of Services and Facilities for local people, Upton is characterised by the wealth of 'community valued assets' and the range and depth of local activities they support. With three separate shopping hubs at Weston Grove, Long Lane and Bache, the relatively

dispersed location of local facilities across the community accentuates the absence of a single 'village centre'. There is, however, a growing consolidation of community facilities and recreational activity in and around the Parish Council pavilion site on Wealstone Lane providing a recognisable community focal point. This evolving hub incorporates the local Library, Upton Village Surgery and Well Pharmacy, The Pavilion, Tennis Courts, playground areas and the QE2 playing fields.

Across the community there are high quality education and children's day-care facilities on one Secondary, four Primary, one Special School and two dedicated Nursery sites. Each one is rated good or outstanding in latest Ofsted reports.

Table 10.1: Upton Schools and Day-care: Ofsted record

		Full Inspection	Short Inspection / comment
Dorin Park School & Specialist SEN College	Wealstone Lane 132 places	GOOD July 2014	GOOD September 2018
Mill View Primary (Academy)	Wealstone Lane 210 Primary places	OUTSTANDING June 2013	Converted to Academy (Cheshire Academies Trust) January 2015
Upton Westlea Primary	Weston Grove 215 Primary places	GOOD November 2017	-
Acresfield Community Primary	Acres Lane 210 Primary places	OUTSTANDING September 2015	-
Upton Heath C of E Primary	Upton Lane 445 Primary places	GOOD June 2013	Converted to Academy (Samara Trust) March 2018
Upton-by-Chester High	St James Avenue 1670 places capacity 1460 actual	GOOD June 2015	-
Headstart Upton Childcare Nursery	Heath Lane 100 places	GOOD June 2017	-
Bright Horizons Countess of Chester Childcare Nursery	Liverpool Road 60 places	OUTSTANDING February 2017	-

Source: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Overall, there is relative ease of access and parking for the majority of local assets with the exception of (i) the evolving community hub at Wealstone Lane during the peak surgery and play/sport visiting times and (ii) congestion adjacent to schools during peak drop-off and pick-up periods.

The Parish Council is committed to developing a place where people of all ages and incomes can find the community services and facilities they need. In this respect, the community faces challenges in provision against a backdrop of higher than average populations in both 0-15 and 60+ age bands. This is illustrated in *Table 10.2* below showing the respective population bands for each statistical unit⁷ (Lower Layer Super Output Area or LSOA) across the community.

⁷ There are 6 Lower Layer Super Output areas (LSOA) across the Upton community as listed in Table 10.2

Table 10.2: Population Age Groups 0-15 and 60+

Statistical Unit (LSOA)		Total Population	0-15 / %	60+ / %
E01018378 / Upton & Westlea L3	Dukesway / Weston Grove / Cornwall Road	1254	265 / 21	285 / 23
E01018380 / Upton & Westlea L5	Halton Road / St James Road	1184	192 / 16	382 / 32
E01018379 / Upton & Westlea L4	Gatesheath Drive / Cotebrook Drive / Appleton Road / Cross Green	1366	221 / 16	487 / 36
E01018374 / Upton Grange & Newton L3	Mill Lane / Upton Park	1904	332 / 17	492 / 26
E01018377 / Upton Grange & Newton L6	Upton Lane / Demage Lane / Church Lane	1894	414 / 22	439 / 23
Upton Grange & Newton L5	Caughall Road / Oakfield Drive / Acres Lane	1626	335 / 21	496 / 31
TOTAL UPTON UNITS		9228	1759 / 19	2581 / 28
Chester %			16	23

Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/> Mid-Year Estimates 2015 (Upton) and 2017 (Chester)

The absence of dedicated facilities for young people out of school hours constitutes a persistent need, especially given the associated potential for social isolation linked to increased use of digital media. Also, the growing proportion of older people within an ageing community indicates an associated need for high quality, locally accessible services, particularly health and wellbeing services.

In relation to local health services, capacity constraints on the Upton Village Surgery site at Wealstone Lane may present some difficulty in potential expansion to provide GP and integrated health services in the event of any significant increase in population. This is likely to be an issue in the event of further large-scale development in the community.

Regardless of the nature and location of health services and facilities now and in the future, there remain persistent health inequalities within and across the community.

This is illustrated in Table 10.3 below which summarises latest deprivation data comparing statistical units in Upton nationally:

- One LSOA⁸ is consistently among the 20% worst (most deprived) areas across England and Wales. By contrast 3 of the remaining 5 areas are consistently among the 20% best (least deprived) areas; and
- Local health profiles⁹ compiled by Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council showing Upton ward to be amongst the worst 20% of wards in England for hospital admissions for 0-4 year-olds and new cases for certain cancers.

Table 10.3: Upton – Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015

Statistical Unit (LSOA)		Ranked worst 20% in UK for:	Ranked best 20% in UK for:
E01018378 / Upton & Westlea L3	Dukesway / Weston Grove / Cornwall Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income • Employment • Education, skills, training • Health and disability • Income deprivation affecting children 	-
E01018380 / Upton & Westlea L5	Halton Road / St James Road	-	-
E01018379 / Upton & Westlea L4	Gatesheath Drive / Cotebrook Drive / Appleton Road / Cross Green	-	-
E01018374 / Upton Grange & Newton L3	Mill Lane / Upton Park	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall ranking • Income • Employment • Education, skills, training • Income deprivation affecting children • Income deprivation affecting older people
E01018377 / Upton Grange & Newton L6	Upton Lane / Demage Lane / Church Lane	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall ranking • Income • Education, skills, training • Housing and Services • Living Environment • Income deprivation affecting children • Income deprivation affecting older people
Upton Grange & Newton L5	Caughall Road / Oakfield Drive / Acres Lane	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall ranking • Education, skills, training • Crime • Housing and Services

Source: IMD 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics>

⁸ There are 32844 LSOAs in all across England and Wales

⁹ Source: http://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/health_of_the_population

Although not strictly speaking 'local' facilities, the Upton area contains (parts of) two of the Borough's strategic assets:

- The Countess of Chester Hospital and Health Park (COCH), on the western boundary of the area.
- Chester Zoo, on the north-eastern boundary of the area.

Each of these facilities has a continuing significant impact upon the community in terms of the services and facilities available to Upton residents.

Table 10.4 below lists some of the key facilities in the area.

Table 10.4: Local Facilities in Upton

Parish Church of the Holy Ascension	Arkell Community Centre	2 children's Nurseries
United Reformed Church	Arkell Scout Hall	4 Primary Schools
Baptist Church	Tennis Courts	Dorin Park School / SEN College
St Columba's Church	QE2 Playing Fields/ Playgrounds	Upton High School, County Sports Centre
Upton Village Hall	Chemistry Pits Play Area	Bache Post Office, Long Lane Post Office
Royal British Legion Hall	Upton Library	Public Houses: Wheatsheaf, The Countess, The Oak Tree, The Mill@Upton, Little Owl
Upton Community Pavilion	Upton Village Surgery and Well Pharmacy	Upton Golf Club
Guide Hut		

10.4 Local Plan – relevant provisions

Against this background the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan sets out key objectives and policies. The NDP will seek to build upon these¹⁰.

In Part One of the Local Plan Objectives **SO8** and **SO11** and **Para 2.3** of the Vision are particularly relevant.

Relevant policies in Part One of the Local Plan are: **STRAT 11** – Infrastructure and **SOC 5** – Health and Well Being

Key relevant provisions in Part 2 of the Local Plan¹¹ include **DM 29** - Health impacts of new development and **DM 39** - Culture and community facilities.

10.5 Policies

There is a need for local facilities and services to be protected wherever possible to ensure that the needs of the existing and future population of the community and surrounding areas are met. Future provision of services and facilities in Upton must take the above issues and proposals into consideration and be subject to consultation with the community when significant and where appropriate. Reasonably, developers should be required to identify the impact of any new development on local services and facilities.

Policy LSF1 - Provision of services and facilities:

The provision of new facilities for community services within the defined plan boundary will be supported subject to any new development:

- Respecting local residential amenity, particularly in terms of noise and traffic generation, and
- Preserving local character and distinctiveness as in Policy PC2.

Policy LSF2: Change of use or redevelopment of facilities for community services

Change of use or redevelopment of existing community facilities for alternative uses will only be supported where it can be clearly demonstrated **either**:

- That the public and community services provided at that facility are no longer needed

or:

¹⁰ Part One (Strategic Policies) – January 2015

¹¹ Submitted by Borough Council for Ministerial approval (March 2018)

- That they include alternative provision, in a suitable location to serve the local Upton community, of equivalent or enhanced facilities which are safely accessible to all by a range of transport modes, including walking and cycling, and have adequate car parking.

10.6 Evidence

Review of local consultation

Community Consultation Nov 2015

- Respondents showed a strong desire to retain, and where possible improve local public buildings.
In the responses from 217 residents, the following statements had high levels of agreement in terms of 'Matters to you the most':

- improve usefulness	79%
- retain and protect	66%
- Sufficient primary health care was also cited as being very important:

- Health Care – more doctors and medical services	85%
---	-----

Community consultation March 2018¹²:

- Respondents have a strong positive identification with both green spaces and local services (specifically schools, library, village surgery) in Upton.
- No respondents saw local services / facilities as a weakness in Upton.

Upton High School consultation March – July 2018¹³:

- Young people responding had a generally positive identification with local services but said they would like to see more youth groups and leisure activities for their age group.
- Responding to the question about how Upton could be better, the largest majority wanted to see more youth groups and entertainment for young people, this being seen as one of the two most significant weaknesses within the community (along with transport);
- In response to hypothetical availability of Community Infrastructure Funds, the largest majority wanted to see it spent on improving local services.

¹² 35 respondents

¹³ 81 respondents

Regulation 14 consultation

There was strong support for all the draft policies.

In particular the maintenance and enhanced provision of youth facilities was seen as a high priority. It was noted that the former Youth Club building was being marketed for sale at the time of the consultation, and that the Neighbourhood Development Plan policy LSF2 should be strengthened with regard to the test for supporting change of use or redevelopment, so that a lack of services currently being provided would not be seen as evidence that they are not needed.

Changes were made to Policy LSF2 following the feedback.

11. Transport and Communications

11.1 Objectives

- To seek continued improvement to sustainable means of transport and the reduction of our carbon footprint.
- To ensure that Upton is a place where people of all ages and incomes can access the community services and facilities they need.

11.2 Key issues and proposals

The following statements are presented as a summary of the key issues for the local community:

- Reinforcing Local Plan provisions, it is vitally important to seek continued improvement to sustainable means of transport to, from and within Upton and wherever possible to continue to reduce the community's carbon footprint accordingly. Looking to any future large-scale development or redevelopment, it is vital also that this is fully integrated within the Upton community. As such, applicants for new development must realistically identify and demonstrate the additional level of traffic they will generate, how it will be managed. The needs of pedestrians and cyclists must be catered for in all applications.
- There is a need to work with landowners, users and other key stakeholders to address the issue of parking shortfalls notably at Weston Grove shops, the evolving community hub at Wealstone Lane, Bache Rail Station and in association with local schools at peak vehicle usage times.
- Identification and improvement of dedicated cycling routes
 - To, from and between key destinations throughout Upton
 - Connecting to wider cycle route networksis a priority both environmentally and in terms of the safety and potential health / wellbeing of local residents.
- There is a need to improve telecommunications infrastructure, particularly Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) provision, to enable increased home working, education and access to services across the community.

11.3 Context

Transport and Communications encompasses the road traffic network, walking and cycling routes linked directly or indirectly to this vehicle network, public transport services and telecommunications / broadband services.

Compared with many similar areas, Upton is relatively well served by both road links and public transport. The M53 motorway and the A55 expressway run close to the edge

of the parish and both can be accessed from the Hoole roundabout giving links to North Wales and to the national motorway network. The other major road arteries are:

- the A41 (*Long Lane and Moston Road*), now detrunked, which links south to Shropshire and the Welsh Marches and north to the Wirral and Birkenhead. It also provides the main access for traffic to Chester Zoo.
- the A5116 (*Liverpool Road*), which links the A41 near Moston south to Chester city centre and serves the main entrance to the Countess of Chester Health Park.
- The A5480 (*Deva Link*), which joins Liverpool Road at the Bache roundabout to *Parkgate Road* and *Sealand Road*, serving the retail and commercial centres in the Sealand basin. This is projected to become part of a “Chester Western Relief Road” linking to the A55 south of the city at some unspecified time in the future.

All these routes carry high volumes of traffic and can become congested at peak times, especially with vehicles travelling to or from the Countess of Chester Health Park and Chester Zoo.

The local road network has two main east-west routes between the A41 and the A5116, *Heath Road / Mill Lane* and *Heath Road/Upton Lane*. Both of these have narrow sections where there is a pedestrian footpath only on one side and the former route has traffic calming measures for the most of its length. There is a more northerly, narrower route via *Demage Lane* and *Demage Lane South* which links the A41 to Upton Lane. Further south, *Weston Grove* runs between the A41 and *Wealstone Lane* which, together with *Church Lane*, forms a north-south link.

The provision of dedicated walking and cycling routes across the community is limited with little effective segregation between vehicles and either cyclists or pedestrians. The limited stretches of shared cycle routes which exist, for example along parts of the A41, tend to suffer from lack of maintenance, particularly hedgerow encroachment. In the context of the Government's ambition to make cycling and walking the natural choices for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey¹⁴, the situation in Upton falls far short.

The Government wants walking and cycling to be a normal part of everyday life for journeys such as going to school, college or work, travelling to the station, and for simple enjoyment. The aspiration is for more people to have access to safe, attractive routes for cycling and walking by 2040. This aspiration is set against a relatively poor infrastructure provision throughout Upton and as revealed in consultation with local schools, very low levels of cycle usage amongst pupils for school journeys. The Parish Council sees the creation of greater incentives to walking and cycling as a potentially

¹⁴ Walking and Cycling Investment Strategy, Department of Transport, 2017

significant opportunity to improve and safeguard local health and wellbeing¹⁵ as well as its beneficial effect in response to the climate emergency by replacing some car journeys

Upton is well served by the Chester to Liverpool (Wirral Line) train service which stops at Bache Rail Station. Trains run generally 4 times an hour during the day and twice an hour during the evening. At peak times, there are regularly parking capacity issues at the station car park leading to potential nuisance from overspill into the surrounding residential areas.

In terms of buses, Upton is served by several routes:

- No 51: Chester / Dicksons Drive / Weston Grove / Plas Newton
- No 26: Ellesmere Port / Chester /Upton / Boughton / Guilden Sutton
- Nos 1 / X1: Chester to Liverpool
- No 1: Chester / Railway Station / Business Park
- Nos 2 / X2: Runcorn via Ellesmere Port
- PR1: Park and Ride / Chester Zoo / Countess of Chester / Chester / Wrexham Road

Looking at cycle routes in more detail, three of the established Chester Cycle Routes pass through Upton Parish (*Figure 11.1*):

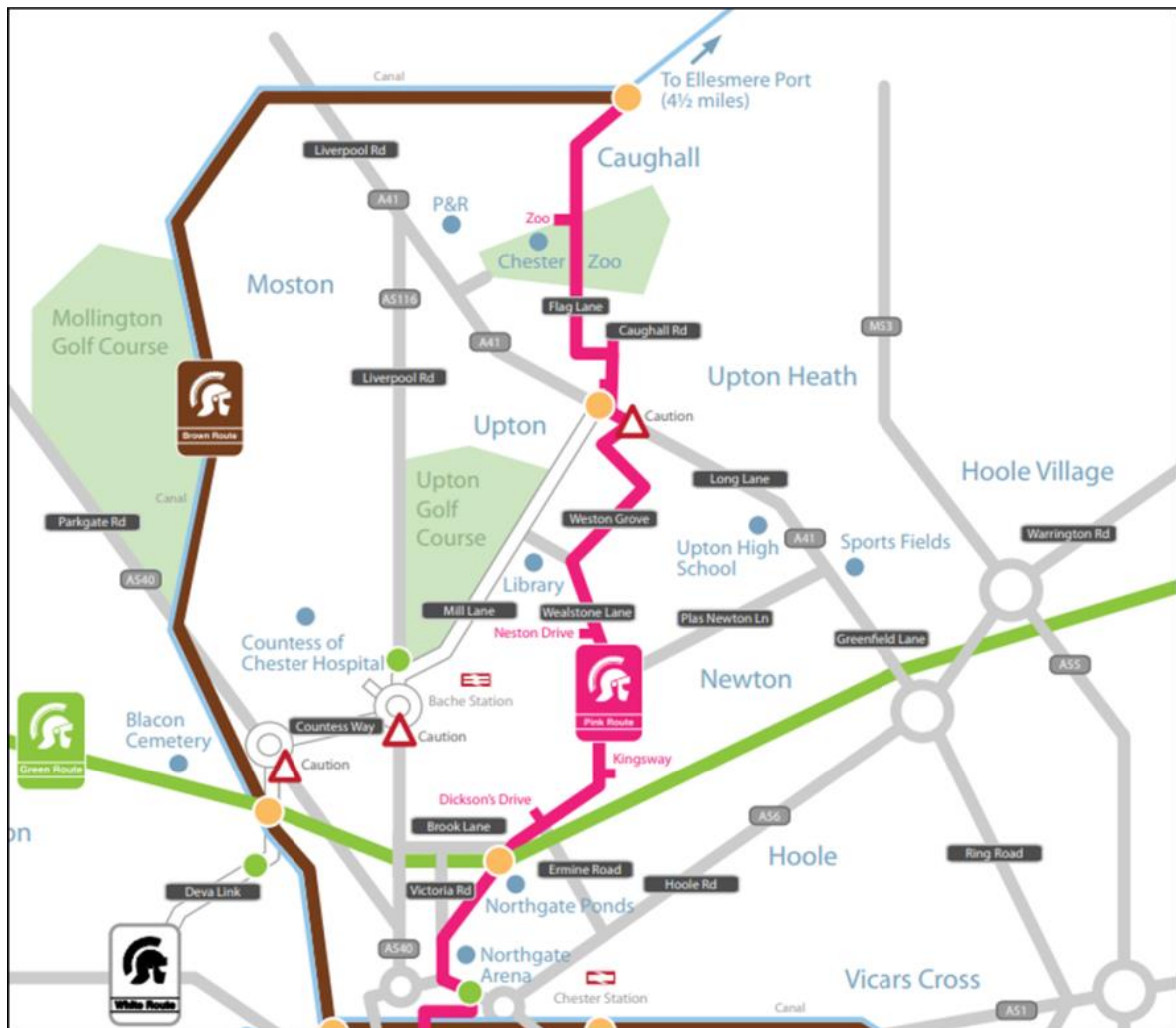
- the 'Brown Route' which follows the canalside between Caughall Bridge, the City Centre and Waverton (8 miles);
- the 'White Route' between Sealand Road retail/business parks and the Heath Road/Long Lane junction (2.5 miles);
- the 'Pink Route' running between the City Centre and Caughall Bridge (3.5 miles).

Parts of the Brown and Pink routes double as National Routes 5 (between Reading and Holyhead) and 56 (between Chester and Liverpool). These National Routes also incorporate the A41 (Long Lane/Moston Road) and parts of the A5116 (Liverpool Road) through the area.

- The Brown Route which runs along the canal towpath is continuous and traffic free. Of the remaining 8 miles or so of designated routes through Upton:only the half mile stretch of the Pink (National 56) Route to the north of Flag Lane is traffic free;
- the A41 route is a alternately a narrow on-road strip marked with a broken white line and a combined off-road cycle /footpath;
- all other routes are on-road and unmarked.

¹⁵ In response to general 'sustainability' aspirations and particular 'health inequality' issues

(Cheshire West and Chester Council)



Building upon our conversation with the Chester Cycling Campaign and the idea of the ‘fear factor’ for cyclists, the attached map (*Figure 11.2*) and table (*Table 11.1*) shows the cycle routes through the area with 11 distinct sections identified.

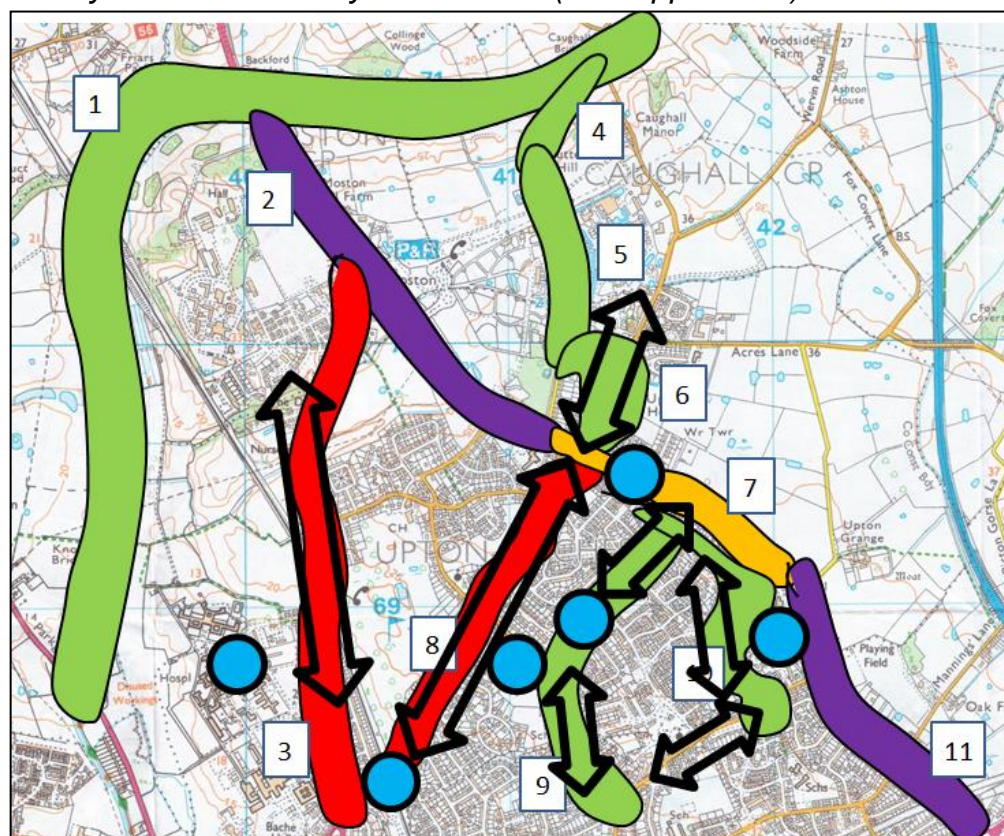
The “fear factor” for each section as assessed notionally against two criteria (speed limit and traffic volume) is coded from the lowest level, green, rising through amber and then red, with purple symbolising the highest ‘fear factor’. (*Appendix 6*)

The blue circles show key destinations that cyclists are likely to wish to access, namely (from left to right):

- The Countess of Chester Hospital
- Shops and supermarket at the Bache
- The “Community Hub” at the Pavilion on Wealstone Lane
- The shops at Weston Grove
- The shops at Long Lane, Upton Heath
- Upton High School.

Double-headed black arrows show the routes along which the demand for cycle travel is likely to be greatest.

Figure 11.2: Cycle routes and key destinations (See Appendix 6)



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Table 11.1: Assessment of cycle routes in the NDP area (See Appendix 6)

Map Ref	Description	Speed Limit (VH/H/M/L)	Traffic Vol (VH/H/M/L)	Other issues	Relative traffic related fear factor
1.	Brown Route between Caughall Bridge and Parkgate Road – off-road and traffic free	n/a	n/a		Low
2.	A41/Moston Road between Backford Bridge and Flag Lane – combined off-road cycle /footpath	50	VH	Clearway / incline to Backford Bridge	Highest
3.	A5116/Liverpool Road – on-road and unmarked	40	H		High
4.	Pink Route south of Caughall Bridge – quiet country lane	n/a	L		Low
5.	Pink Route north of Flag lane - off-road and traffic free	n/a	n/a		Low
6.	Pink Route through Caughall Road / Flag Lane – unmarked / quiet residential streets	30	L		Low
7.	A41/Long Lane between Flag Lane and Weston Grove – periodic narrow on-road strip	30	VH		Medium
8.	Mill Lane/Heath Road – on-road and unmarked	30	H	Narrow lanes and pavements / calming	High
9.	Weston Grove / Wealstone Lane - unmarked / quiet residential streets	20	M		Low
10.	Pink Route / National Route 56 - unmarked / quiet residential streets	20	L		Low
11.	A41/Long Lane between Weston Grove and Plas Newton Lane – narrow on-road strip	50	VH		Highest

This assessment underpins the Neighbourhood Development Plan policies set out below and will prompt separate action by the Parish Council and community groups to seek improvements to local cycling infrastructure and facilitate usage over the next few years. However, it is acknowledged that, for the foreseeable future, Liverpool Road and Mill Lane / Heath Road are likely to remain as key local pressure points and that, given that the current speed limits on the A41 are unlikely to be reduced, the relative ‘fear factor’ on this route will remain high.

Looking at local telecommunications and the availability of broadband, all of the 8 exchanges owned and maintained by Openreach within a 5-mile radius of Upton are fibre enabled, offering a choice of fibre broadband providers to local residents. The maximum average speed available locally is potentially in excess of 300Mbps. This compares to a typical medium use household requirement of between 38 and 76Mbps.¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://www.broadband.co.uk/guides/>

However, response to the Section 14 consultation showed that many local residents were, in reality, experiencing broadband speeds that were well below this level. This was proving particularly problematic in light of the large numbers of people who were “working from home” during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is likely that future work patterns will retain significant elements of remote working, so improving the broadband infrastructure in the area is a priority. The essential problem is that the optic fibre connection ends at the Openreach cabinet and connection to homes is via copper cables, with a concomitant loss of signal strength, largely proportional to the distance from the cabinet to the premises. In the spring of 2021 a rollout of fibre connection from cabinets to premises was started by City Fibre, expected to be completed in August 2021. This would provide the possibility of full ‘fibre to the premises’ broadband for many (but not all) properties in Upton, provided the individual customer takes out a contract with one of a set of specific broadband providers.

Looking overall at Transport and Communications, the Parish Council is committed, as part of its future vision and plan objectives, to seeking continued improvement to sustainable means of transport linking employment and leisure provision with roads that are safe for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities. The Parish Council is also committed to the reduction of the community’s carbon footprint.

11.4 Local Plan – relevant provisions

In terms of Transport and Communications, the NDP will seek to build upon key Strategic Objectives as set out in Part 1 of the Local Plan (LP1) covering:

- The provision and development of reliable, efficient transport networks that support sustainable growth and improve accessibility to jobs and services (**SO4**);
- The creation of stronger, safer and healthier communities by enabling access to leisure, recreational and community facilities and promoting walking and cycling (**SO8**).

The NDP seeks to support and develop the Local Plan Policies **STRAT 10** - Transport and Accessibility, **STRAT 11** - Infrastructure and **SOC 5** Health and Well Being.

11.5 Policies

The Parish Council recognises that there is a need for the quality of local transport systems to be safeguarded and improved in sustaining the safety, health and wellbeing of local residents and the environment alike. Future transport systems must be sustainable and take the above issues and proposals into consideration and be subject to consultation with the community when significant and where appropriate. Reasonably, developers should be required to identify the impact of any new development on local transport systems.

Following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a renewed impetus in national transport policy to encourage the development and improvement of cycling and walking, and particularly the provision of safe cycle and pedestrian routes, preferably

segregated from other vehicular traffic. Cycle routes should be designed in accordance with **Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design**, (DfT July 2020).

Concerns about infection risk have led to a recent steep decline in the use of public transport. If this is to be reversed it will be necessary to ensure that public transport facilities are widely and easily accessible.

The growing demand for electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles necessitates the increased provision of appropriate charging points.

Policy T1 – Sustainable transport:

Development that reduces car usage and congestion on the local road network will be supported. Any development that results in a significant increase in congestion or risks to road safety will not be supported.

In order to improve the sustainability of travel, transport and road safety, all developments that are likely to generate significant amounts of movement shall be accompanied by a Transport Assessment. This should include an assessment of the impact that any increase in traffic would have on the roads in the Neighbourhood Development Plan area, especially at peak times for journeys to and from school and work. The assessment should incorporate steps to mitigate any harmful effects and the timetable to deliver that mitigation and, where appropriate, a Travel Plan consistent with the provisions of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

Proposals for development that meet the sustainable transport needs of those with disabilities or of elderly persons and provide appropriate facilities for them within the transport infrastructure will be supported.

Proposals that promote better integration between different modes of transport including links to local facilities and to the railway station, and / or to improve bus routes, services and passenger facilities will be supported.

Policy T2 - Pedestrians and cyclists:

Where necessary and proportionate to the scale and impact of development, new development must include provision or commit funding towards the provision, of safe, wide, well lit, smooth surfaced and direct footpaths and cycle routes between the development, local retail / activity centres and local schools.

Whenever possible, new cycle routes and footpaths should link with the existing network of cycle routes, canal towpaths and public footpaths which should be enhanced by the developer to provide safe passage.

Funds raised by the Parish Council from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be considered for putting towards the costs of maintaining and improving the network of footpaths canal towpaths and cycle paths, with priority given to those routes with the highest relative traffic related fear factor as listed in Table 11.1 above. Developer

contributions towards those costs will be sought in appropriate cases. The existing Public Right of Way (PROW) network will be protected and maintained. Improvements to PROW will be supported, and any development that leads to the loss of any PROW, or any cycleway, will only be supported if a suitable and appropriate alternative can be provided. Proposals to divert PROWs or cycleways should provide clear and demonstrable benefits for the wider community.

Policy T3 - Parking:

Development that would reduce, or not exacerbate, existing parking problems in the parish, subject to Policy T1 above, will be supported.

Further provision for off-road car parking in the parish will be supported, in line with relevant Conservation Area guidance, national Green Belt policies and other policies within the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Existing residential areas and new residential, retail, commercial and business developments must have adequate parking facilities to avoid or minimise 'on street' parking with due regard to the number of spaces defined in the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

The loss of existing parking provision for shops and businesses will not be permitted, unless it is no longer required or adequate replacement provision is made.

Policy T4 - Provision of electric charging points:

All new dwellings where dedicated parking per house is provided will be required to have appropriately located radial circuits or charging points for all electric vehicles.

Where general parking areas are included in housing developments, these are required to provide radial circuits or charging points.

New employment, leisure or retail developments are encouraged to provide radial circuits or electric charging points for staff and/or users. Initiatives to provide radial circuits or charging points in existing housing developments and public car parks will be supported.

The best practice guidelines and standards for the provision of all electric vehicle charging infrastructure detailed in the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document should be adhered to.

Policy T5 – Cycle parking:

Cycle storage and cycling parking provision should be of at least the standard required in the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

There must be two covered and secure cycle parking spaces per house and one covered and secure space per flat, apartment or maisonette. The cycle storage unit assigned to each dwelling is to be in or immediately adjacent to the property, fully-enclosed, secure and at ground-level.

Flats and other apartment buildings should also have provision for a communal cycle maintenance area with lighting, power and water.

The provision of cycle parking and parking for mobility scooters at existing residential, leisure, retail, transport and employment developments and at existing car parks will be supported.



Policy T6 – Communications infrastructure

The development of advanced high quality communications infrastructure, including high speed broadband and improved mobile network coverage, will be supported, subject to:

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

In areas where there is existing Fibre to the Street provision, new developments should ensure that residential and business properties have Fibre to the Premises broadband connectivity.

Major developments should ensure that Fibre to the Premises broadband connectivity is provided to all new properties.

Developments that will lead to improvements to Fibre to the Street broadband provision for existing properties will be supported.

11.6 Evidence

The government has produced guidance on the appropriate design of cycling infrastructure, **Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design**, (DfT July 2020).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906344/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf

Review of local consultation

Community consultation November 2015

From a survey completed by 217 respondents from across the community, the following statements received a high 'Matters to you the most' response:

Speed limits on local roads	57%
Address congestion and traffic hazards at school drop off and collection times	53%
Improving conditions of paths and bridleways	65%
Footways/bridlepaths/canal: Improving safety - such as additional lighting	52%
Countess of Chester Hospital – traffic and car parking	67%

Community consultation March 2018¹⁷:

- Respondents had a strong negative identification with aspects of the transport systems, largely related to parking issues, traffic and speeding. They would also like to see more buses serving Upton.
- Around half would support investment in walking and cycleways.
- The majority of those responding saw transport as the greatest weakness within the community.

Upton High School consultation March – July 2018¹⁸:

¹⁷ 35 respondents

¹⁸ 81 respondents

- Respondents saw transport as the greatest dislike within the community, particularly the heavy traffic in some roads, and were concerned about safety for themselves and others when walking and cycling.
- Many commented that they would like to see improvements in walkways and cycleways.
- Responding to the question about how Upton could be better, a large majority mentioned transport, this being seen as one of the two most significant weaknesses within the community (along with local facilities).

Local business interview surveys (2018/19) and local retailers meeting (January 2019):

- Parking difficulties, especially at and around the Weston Grove shops is a persistent theme.

Meeting with Chester Cycling Campaign (December 2018):

- there is very little opportunity to create full-blown separated cycle routes within or around Upton. Realistically, opportunities will be confined to the creation of shared routes and even then, road width and kerbside obstacles (including lampposts) are likely to be persistent constraints.
- more could be done to improve the visibility of / incentivise cycling by ensuring that key local destinations (shops / village surgery / zoo / hospital etc.) are better equipped with prominent and secure cycle stands.
- maximising local access to strategic networks would be a positive step, for example, consolidating and upgrading the shared A41 / Long Lane route and facilitating connections to the canal route including upgrading the Liverpool Road underpass at Countess of Chester Hospital.
- perceived risk (the notional 'fear factor') is seen as a much more significant disincentive to cycling than any objective measure, for example, accident records.

Survey of existing cycle routes

See Appendix 6.

CW&CC Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Cheshire West And Chester' Council's "Walk. Ride. Thrive" Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2020-2030 was approved in July 2020. This did not set out priority proposals related to Upton, but the following were cited as potential longer-term schemes for future review:

Cycling Proposals

Canal tow paths (in general);

Safer cycle access: Countess of Chester Hospital; Chester - Upton – Zoo

A41 corridor; A5116 corridor

Walking Proposals

Improve routes in Upton

Regulation 14 consultation

There was moderate support for all the draft policies.

Some wanted the policies to go further in terms of sustainability and encouraging active transport, i.e. walking and cycling. Others disagreed with having a focus on improving walking/cycling infrastructure and commented that the use of cars was an imperative for numbers of people in the community. The existing low provision of bus services was noted in this context, as well as the poor condition of existing roads and footpaths.

There was comment that the provision of new footpaths needs to include a requirement for good lighting at night, and also that protection for existing Public Rights of Way should be included. Only a very small section of the canal is within the designated NDP area, but it was commented that towpaths provide a useful amenity for walkers and cyclists and should therefore be included in policy T2.

There was also comment regarding the requirement for the provision of electric vehicle charging points in new housing developments (T4), including the alternative of radial circuits, and being consistent with the Local Plan standards for the number of charging points in new employment, leisure or retail developments.

It was noted that the requirement for adequate cycle parking provision (T5) should include mobility scooters/cycles. It was also commented that cycle storage and cycling parking provision should be of at least the standard required in the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document, including two covered and secure cycle parking spaces per house and one covered and secure space per flat, apartment or maisonette.

Regarding communications infrastructure, there was feedback that numbers of residents and businesses were experiencing inadequate broadband provision at the time of the consultation, and there was a recommendation that all new development be served with high speed broadband, with full fibre to the premises (FTTP). It would also be beneficial if such provision might benefit existing properties, if possible.

Changes were made to Policies T2, T4 and T5 following the feedback. A new Policy (T6) was added on Communications Infrastructure

12. Economic Activity

12.1 Objective

To strengthen and support local economic activity including Chester Zoo and the Countess of Chester Hospital and to retain varied local retail provision

12.2 Key issues and proposals

The following are the key issues for economic activity in Upton:

- Preserving and enhancing each of the three Local Retail Centres to meet the everyday needs of the communities they serve.
- Protecting and promoting local employment opportunities at Chester Zoo.
- Protecting and promoting local employment opportunities at the Countess of Chester Hospital (COCH).
- Maintaining the quiet residential nature of Upton by not supporting any land development for industrial purposes, other than small-scale developments for office or light industrial business not causing noise, air pollution or other nuisance.

12.3 Context

There are two major centres of employment in Upton, namely the Countess of Chester Hospital (COCH) which employs over 5000 people, and Chester Zoo which employs over 800 at peak times.

The Dale Barracks is situated at Moston and is occupied by the armed services.

In addition to these larger centres of employment, there are three medium sized employers, namely Upton High School (230 staff), Morrisons supermarket (over 180 staff), and a new Aldi supermarket.

There are also smaller employers, including Upton Village GP Surgery (25 staff), four Primary Schools, a Specialised School, a private Nursery, Spar and Tesco Express supermarkets, a hotel, public houses and restaurants/cafes, a betting shop, public Library, private Golf Club, garages, small shops and a range of personal services including hairdressing, cosmetic dentistry and chiropody. Upton also has three privately-run residential care facilities catering for the elderly/infirm and employing numbers of care and other staff.

There are additionally small businesses run by individuals from their own homes.

There are currently no heavy industrial businesses with premises in Upton or adjacent to it.

The breakdown of employers with premises in Upton, by sector and number of employees, is shown in Figures 12.1 and 12.2. These data have been obtained from the NDP Business Survey carried out in 2018, with actual numbers included for the

employers who responded to the survey, together with estimated numbers where an employer did not respond to the survey.

Figure 12.1: Employees by size of organisation

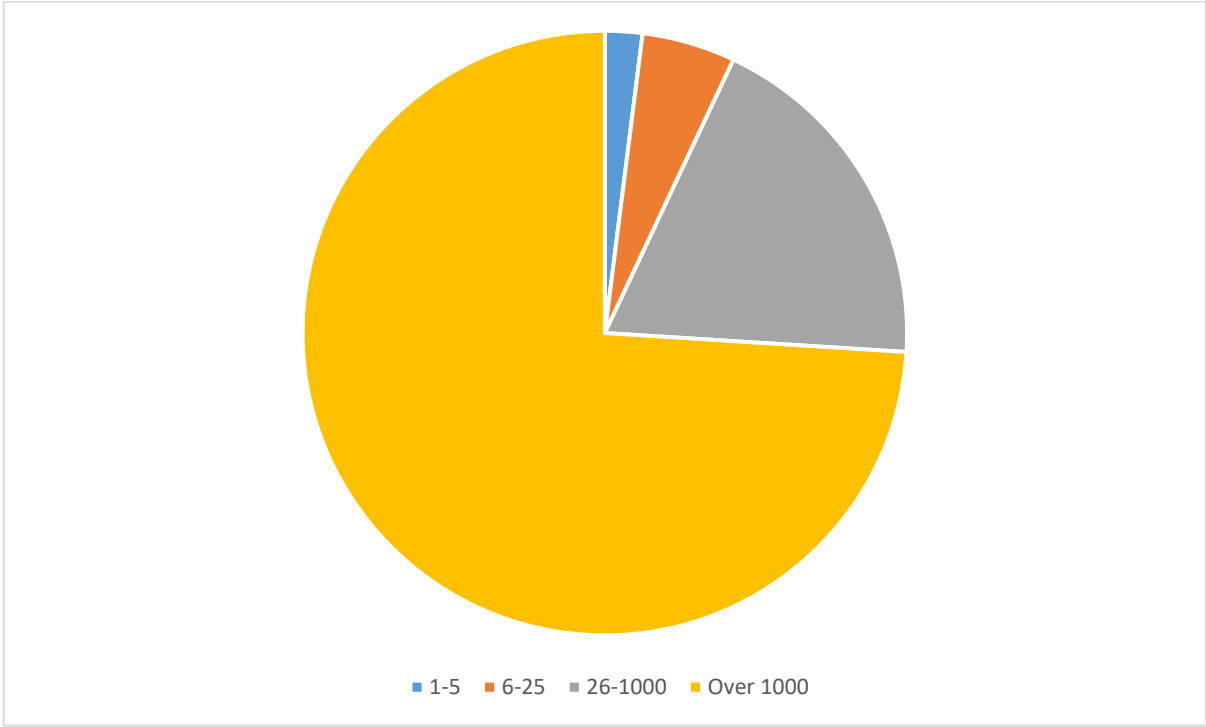
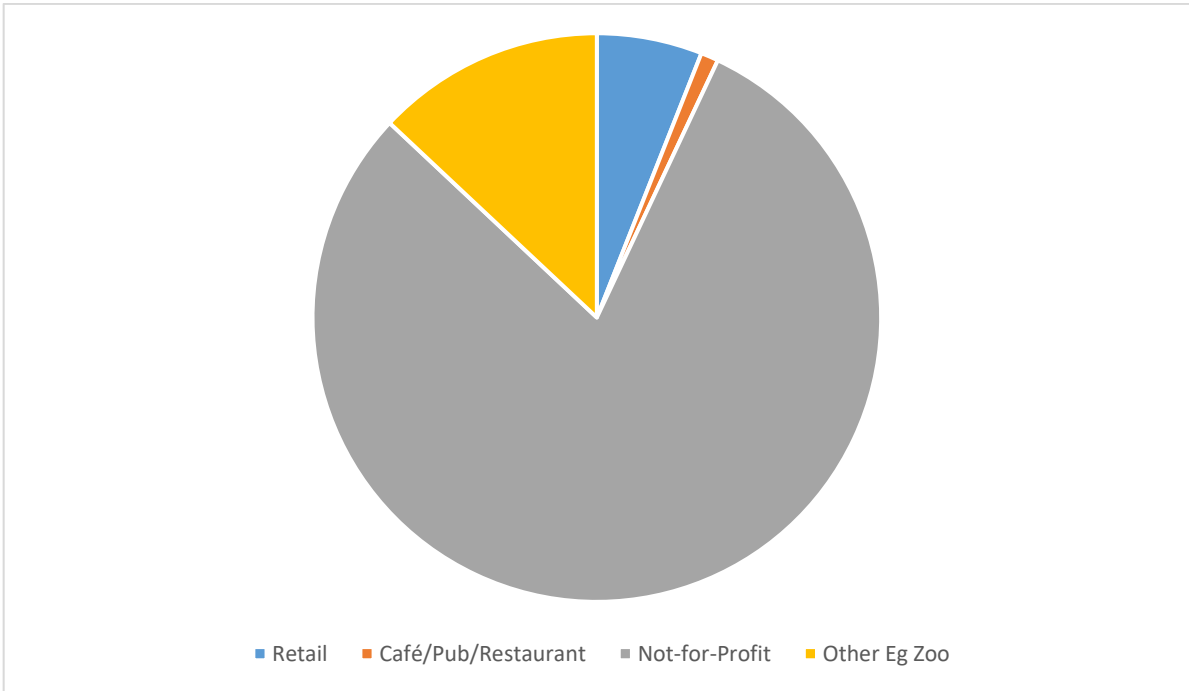


Figure 12.2: Employees by sector



Retail shops are located in three main areas spread across Upton, namely Weston Grove (12 business units), Long Lane (12 business units), and Bache (12 business units). The businesses at Long Lane benefit from passing traffic on the A41, and those at Bache from proximity to the Countess of Chester Hospital and the A5116. Car parking for customers and staff of the smaller businesses is very limited in all those locations.

Weston Grove, Long Lane and Bache have been identified as defined Local Retail Centres in the *Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two)*. They offer convenience for residents and are important for the day-to-day needs of the local catchment they serve, reducing the need to travel and hence contributing to protecting the environment and air quality in Upton (sustainability and health). They also contribute to encouraging active travel (walking and cycling) and community interaction and identity.

There are valued Post Office branches at each of Long Lane and Bache, but not at Weston Grove: the previous Post Office closed a number of years ago.

There has been a change in recent years in the mix of businesses, with a gradual decline in traditional shops such as individual butchers, bakers and greengrocers, and an increase at Weston Grove particularly in takeaway hot food restaurants. Table 12.1 shows the mix of businesses at each of the 3 retail centres in each of 2010, 2015 and 2019, demonstrating the shift at Weston Grove that occurred between 2010 and 2015, alongside new units being built there at the site of the previous petrol filling station.

These data have been taken from the CW&C Local Retail Centres Survey 2015, together with information from Planning Applications 2010-2014, and an NDP survey in early 2019.

The change in the mix of shops has been driven by changes in consumer demand, including a trend towards shopping at small, local supermarkets such as the Tesco Express and the Spar, and an increase in demand for hot takeaway food. (*Cheshire West and Chester Retail Survey 2015*).

A further trend has been to supplement retail offerings by incorporating new services such as drop-off and pick-up for goods ordered online, and home delivery of hot food which has been intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic

The NDP recognises that it is important to maintain local employment opportunities in Upton, in particular to enable shorter and more sustainable journeys to work.

Table 12.1: Businesses at Upton Local Retail Centre Number of businesses

		2010	2015	Mar 2019
WESTON GROVE	Retail shops	4	5	4
	Hot Food Takeaways	1	4	4
	Other*	5	4	4
	TOTAL	10	13	12
LONG LANE	Retail shops	6	6	7
	Hot Food Takeaways	1	1	1
	Other*	3	3	4
	TOTAL	10	10	12
BACHE	Retail shops	8	8	8
	Hot Food Takeaways	1	1	1
	Other*	4	3	3
	TOTAL	13	12	12

* **Other:** Financial & Professional Services, Restaurants/cafes, Pubs/Drinking Establishments, Sui Generis, Hotels, Vacant.

Countess of Chester Hospital and Chester Zoo

The largest employers in Upton are the CoCH and the Zoo. If either were to change in such a way as to reduce their number of employees, this would have an adverse effect on local employment. In its turn, unless replaced by other sources of employment locally, this would increase the number of longer (and hence less sustainable) journeys to work. In 2018 it was found that 243 residents of Upton were employed at the Countess of Chester Hospital, and 66 were employed at the Zoo.

Development that protects and promotes employment opportunities at these sites would therefore be positive in terms of local employment and sustainability.

Both the Countess of Chester Hospital and the Zoo are in the Green Belt. The *Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part Two (2017)*, within its policies related to the Green Belt, specifically supports the principle of development of the Countess of Chester Hospital for medical and associated purposes, and the Zoo for zoological purposes, subject to various criteria. Policies **GBC 1.A** and **1.B** give the criteria, and these appear adequately to cover potential concerns of residents.

Because it is considered that Policies **GBC 1.A** and **1.B** support the principles of relevant development at the Countess of Chester Hospital and the Zoo and cover the concerns of residents relating to impact on the surrounding area, the NDP does not therefore propose specific policies relating to the Countess of Chester Hospital or the Zoo.

12.4 Local Plan – relevant provisions

Upton has three local retail centres as defined in the *Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan – Part 2, Section 11.53*. These are **Bache**, **Long Lane** and **Weston Grove**. The Bache centre is adjacent to the large Morrisons supermarket. At Long Lane (Spar) and at Weston Grove (Tesco) there are small supermarkets mainly selling food and drink.

In recent years there has been a loss of retail shops from all three areas. The Local Plan – Part 2 (Section 11.58) notes that:

Excessive concentration of non A1 retail uses (i.e. uses other than shops) will change the overall retail function of the centre, reducing the ability to meet the everyday needs of the communities they serve. This can vary between centres, depending on the size and role. It would be expected to retain the overall retail function of a centre, over half the units should be retail in nature and there is not a concentrated area that is non A1 retail uses, which will reduce the size and role of the retail centre.

Section 11.60 states that:

Local retail policies may be updated and amended in future s.

Both the Countess of Chester Hospital and the Zoo are in the Green Belt. The *Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan – Part 2*, (2017), within its policies related to the Green Belt, specifically supports the principle of development of the Countess of Chester Hospital for medical and associated purposes, and the Zoo for zoological purposes, subject to criteria given in Policies **GBC 1.A** and **GBC 1.B**.

12.5 Policies

Policy E1: Limit the occupancy by fast food takeaways within each of the three main shopping areas
Proposals for retail shop usage in each of the Local Retail Centres will be supported. Development that supports local traders and provides a mix of retail and community uses would be welcomed.
Proposals for change of use which will lead to usage of premises by hot food takeaway businesses in excess of 33% in total at Weston Grove, and 10% at each of Bache and Long Lane will not be supported.

12.6 Evidence

There are currently only two vacant business units across the three main shopping areas, indicating that the local economy is relatively healthy at present. In addition, one previously vacant unit (half of a double unit) has recently been occupied by a new

business. There has been moderate turnover in recent years, and two currently occupied units are on the market (May 2021).

The NDP offers a route to encourage the continuation of a good mix both to serve the local community in terms of shopping, and to provide local employment.

In the Weston Grove shopping area of Upton, the recent rapid increase in hot food takeaway and delivery usage (Table 12.1 above) has led to a percentage loss of retail shop use from 40% to 33% in the period 2010 to 2019. Therefore, retail shop businesses are now in a minority at that centre. In Bache and Long Lane this shift has not (yet) happened, and the proportions of retail businesses at those centres are currently 67% and 58% respectively.

As noted above, the Local Plan – Part 2 (Section 11.58) says that it would be expected that over half of the units should be retail in nature. Because of the relatively small numbers of businesses at Bache and Long Lane (12 in each), even the shift of one or two further retail shop businesses to other use would bring the proportions of retail shops down to a half or below.

It should be noted that since the **Weston Grove** retail centre is directly off the A41, the location is attractive to those seeking to open hot food takeaway and delivery businesses, since it is easily accessed by car from other parts of Chester, in addition to its use by Upton residents. This broader customer base increases the level of traffic in the area, puts additional pressure on the limited parking available next to the Local Retail Centre (LRC), and increases the volume of kerbside waiting, disrupting traffic flow and creating potential safety hazards for pedestrians crossing the road.

An additional impact of the change in usage towards hot food delivery/takeaway has been added pressure on the limited parking facilities from delivery vehicles operating from those businesses.

Fig 12.3: Kerbside parking adjacent to the limited dedicated parking at Weston Grove LRC in March 2019



At **Bache** there is also limited parking, and a particular potential issue with any increase in kerbside waiting, as the LRC is adjacent to the road narrowing under the Mill Lane railway bridge. Any increase in hot food takeaway usage could lead to further disruption to traffic flow in this area and should therefore be resisted.

Long Lane is clearly attractive as a potential location for those seeking to open A5 businesses, given its location on the A41 and the passing traffic from the Zoo. This should be resisted both in terms of loss of amenity (retail shop businesses) and the limited parking available.

There is also concern in terms of the health impact, particularly obesity, from takeaway fast-food outlets. There is reference to these health concerns in the *Cheshire West and Chester Local Retail Study 2016*, section EB059.

In accordance with Local Plan (Part 2) Policy **DM15**, and for the reasons above (loss of amenity, increase in traffic, pressure on parking, and health concerns), it is therefore proposed that there be *no further loss of retail shops to hot food takeaway usage* within each of the three main shopping areas.

It is therefore proposed that the current hot food takeaway usage (Table 1 above) is maintained as a maximum in each centre, with a maximum of 33% such usage at Weston Grove, and 10% at each of Bache and Long Lane.

Policy E2: Development for business purposes

Applications for development including office and light industrial businesses will be supported, provided that they fulfil *all* of the following criteria:

- They demonstrate that they will not unacceptably harm the residential amenity of an area.
- They do not cause unacceptable noise, air pollution or other nuisance.
- They do not lead to a loss of residential property.
- They do not have significant negative impact on the environment or significantly increase traffic levels.
- They do not lead to a decrease in retail shop usage at the Local Retail Centres.
- They provide adequate parking in line with Cheshire West and Chester Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

Development of land for general industrial uses will not be supported.

12.7 Evidence

Any usage of land in Upton for industrial purposes would detract from the quiet residential nature of the area. The only exception would be office and light industrial businesses, which do not detract from the amenity of an area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash dust or grit. Such businesses have the potential to increase local employment.

Review of local consultation

Residents have said that they value having a range of shops and services locally that meet their needs. They have also said that they are concerned by the increase in the number of fast-food takeaways in recent years, notably in Weston Grove, and the decrease in retail shops.

A number of residents commented that Upton has no single 'centre' or community meeting place, and that they would value this if it were possible in the future.

A full description of the findings from local consultations is given in Appendix 9: Consultation Statement, and some specific data relating to views on Economic Activity are shown in *Tables 12.2 – 12.4* below.

Table 12.2: Community Issues & Opportunities Survey, 2015

% respondents, N=216

"Topics which matter to you the most" (% Agree)	
A good range and provision of local shops	60%
Sufficient provision of public houses, hotels and guest houses	61%
Increase employment opportunities	46%

Table 12.3: Community Surveys, Mar and Nov 2018

% responses

	Agreement with statements (% Agree)	
March 2018 survey (N=35 responses)	I use the local shops	85%
Nov 2018 survey (N=40 responses)	In our local shopping areas, we need to keep a variety of shops	97%
	Upton already has enough hot food takeaways, and we don't need any more	92%

As noted earlier, there is currently no use of land for heavy industrial purposes in Upton. Any future such development is NOT supported by residents, unless it is small scale in nature and does not cause noise, air pollution or other nuisance.

Table 12.4: Community Survey, Nov 2018

% responses, N=40

Agreement with statement	
Industrial businesses should NOT be built on land in Upton or next to it	82%
Specific comments: "Should be a healthy mix. More 'grow' space to involve community" "Depends on their line of business. Dirty No! Innovative and beneficial Yes!"	

Consultation was offered individually to employers with premises in Upton, but relatively few responded (9 out of 63). Respondents included all the large employers, but only a few of the smaller businesses.

The three smaller (all non-A5) business owners interviewed at Weston Grove and Bache would like to see an increase in A1 retail outlets at those locations, to encourage daytime footfall. They supported the ideas of new business in the area of health amongst others, and businesses catering to the elderly and to children.

All the employers interviewed were generally positive about Upton, with the major issue they all mentioned being limited parking for shoppers and staff close to the Local Retail Centres.

It was noted that some visitors for the Countess of Chester Hospital still park on the roads near the Bache shopping centre, in spite of the efforts reported by Countess of Chester Hospital to encourage the use of public transport.

Another issue mentioned was fly tipping around their businesses' refuse bins, and they would like to see more public recycling bins around Upton. They generally felt safe, however, as business owners in Upton.

Regulation 14 consultation

There was moderately high support for both the draft policies. There were differences of opinion on whether it was desirable to limit the number of fast food takeaways (E1), with some believing that these were an important amenity and better than having unused premises, whereas others wanted to limit their number and encourage a broader range of local retail outlet. It was noted that to encourage business development (E2) it was important to have adequate telecommunications infrastructure.

13. The Dale Barracks

13.1 Objective

To ensure that any future large-scale development or redevelopment is sustainable, of high design quality and is fully integrated with the Upton community.

13.2 Key issues and proposals

The key concerns of the Upton community in terms of the Dale Barracks are:

- For many people, a wish to maintain the existing military use of the site as almost the last vestige of Chester's long military history.
- A desire to ensure that, if the site is developed for other purposes, it will have a minimal carbon footprint and be built to high standards of design and energy efficiency.
- That development on the site will enhance, rather than compromise, the biodiversity of the site and the open aspect of the Green Belt.
- That those living on the site will have access to appropriate local facilities and that residents will be fully integrated into the Upton community.
- That sustainable transport links, notably off-road footpaths and cycle paths, are provided to link the site with facilities in Upton and Chester generally.

The policies in **GBC 1C** of the Local Plan provide a basis for guiding any development but they do not entirely address the concerns listed above.

The possible development of the site was a major focus for the Design Guide produced for the NDP Steering Group by AECOM (Appendix 8). Based on their work and the concerns of residents, a vision and design aims for the future of the site were developed.

The 2030 Vision

If redevelopment takes place, Dale Barracks will be a compact neighbourhood in a parkland setting. Its development and continuing operation will have a carbon neutral or carbon negative footprint and will enhance the overall environment of the area. The neighbourhood will expand holistically from the existing housing with redevelopment focussing on the brownfield land. This will increase permeability to the parkland to the north. The site frontage will be upgraded and the development will be outward facing with well-defined public spaces and private plots.

Community facilities and services that were previously on site will be retained in some form and former barracks buildings could be re-purposed to house these amongst high-quality housing.

The architecture will be distinctively local and should be of its time (not pastiche), making the best of the latest building technology to minimise resource use and

making a positive addition to local character. The area will have a very legible plan with direct, convenient walking routes to the local centre. This will be formed around an attractive public realm, together acting as a focus for the identity of this neighbourhood which forms a part of the wider former village suburb.

Dale Barracks will be integrated closely with the wider area by walking routes, across the Dale (which itself will be retained as a landscape corridor for wildlife) and via the canal towpath to the north. Sustainable transport will link residents with the schools and centres of Upton and Chester.

Design Aims

To create a compact sustainable neighbourhood at Dale Barracks the following design aims apply:

- A defined centre/ hub.
- Walkable and cycle-able.
- Connected and integrated.
- Mixed use (land and buildings).
- Mixed housing types and tenures.
- Innovative architecture and design.
- Strong neighbourhood structure.
- Higher than average density in the built-up areas.
- Smart bus transportation.
- Zero-carbon pioneers.

13.3 Context

The Dale Barracks site is a developed site within the green belt area and is therefore suitable for specific redevelopment (see Local Plan policy GBC 1.C). The boundary of the developed site is shown in Figure 13.1.

The Dale Barracks is currently an operational military base. However, the Ministry of Defence is reviewing its national land and property portfolio. *A Better Defence Estate* (2016) identified sites that would become surplus to military requirements and therefore likely to be disposed of. The Dale Barracks site, Chester was included within the announcement as a potential site for future disposal. The Fox Barracks (Chester Army Reserve Centre) does not form part of the announcement and some military use is expected to continue on this part of the site.

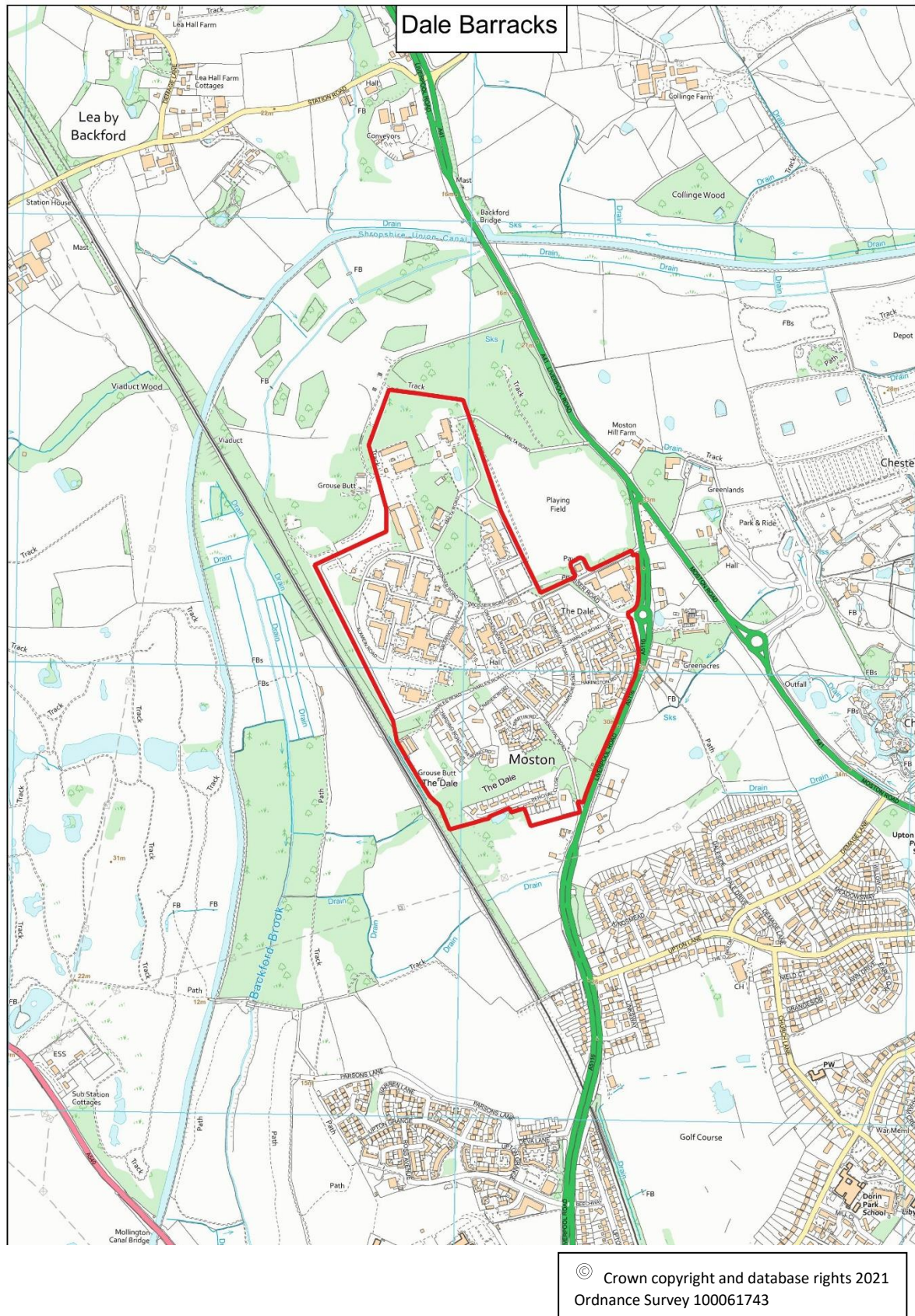


Figure 13.1: The boundary of the site allocation within the green belt

The site is situated in the grounds of Moston Hall (built 1789) and some of the associated parkland/gardens remains. There is also extensive landscaping and open space within the site. There are a wide range of buildings and facilities within and around the site including medical and dental facilities, sports facilities, community centre and welfare areas and local shops. Outside the operational boundary there are residential properties, some 40 of which are privately owned, with the remainder being occupied by service personnel and families. There is a sports pitch to the east of the site that is currently used and highly valued by local community groups.

The Shropshire Union canal is a strong defining linear boundary and movement corridor to the north of Moston and the Dale Barracks site. Although Moston is a point of convergence for the A5116 Liverpool Road and A41 Moston Road the wide roads and lack of built form create an anonymous identity that could be anywhere. Moston services heads this junction but is not an adequate built-form landmark and has scope for further development as long as this does not conflict with Green Belt policy.

The site is bounded by the Shropshire Union Canal (conservation area) and Backford Brook corridors and areas adjacent to them need to be protected from urban development / sprawl.

The Green Belt between the sub-settlements of Moston and Upton is important to their identity and also as a corridor for wildlife; retaining this spatial separation and thereby preventing coalescence must be observed.

However, this physical separation hinders the integration of development on this site with the wider community of Upton which will necessitate the improvement of sustainable links between them through public transport, pedestrian and cycle routes.

There are frequent bus services to Chester and Ellesmere Port along the A5116 past the entrance to the site. Park and Ride services from Chester Zoo to the city centre and Wrexham Road also pass the site entrance but do not stop. There are also frequent services to Chester, Ellesmere Port and Liverpool along the A41 which runs close to the site. There may be scope for some services to be diverted along the internal roads of the site to improve access to public transport. The Liverpool – Chester railway line runs adjacent to the site but it is unlikely that any development could warrant the provision of a station.

The A5116 is dual carriageway within the NDP area and, despite a 40 mph speed limit, would not be perceived as a pleasant or safe route for walking or cycling at present. However, there is potential to make use of wide verges on its western side to create new pedestrian/cycle paths and to improve links to the traffic-free routes through the Countess of Chester Country Park and along the canal towpath.

The A41 between Moston and Upton Heath is single carriageway with a 50mph limit decreasing to 30 mph as it approaches the residential area, and provides access to Chester Zoo via a roundabout. There are off-road combined cycle and foot paths along this section, which provide access to Upton Heath and Acresfield Primary Schools and, via the “Pink” cycle route to Upton High School.

There is a public footpath from the A5116 near the site entrance across the Dale to Daleside in Upton.

13.4 Local Plan – relevant provisions

Dale Barracks is identified as a developed site within Green Belt in the *Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two)* policy **GBC 1**. In addition to the general policies for such sites, Policy **GBC 1C** sets out the following specific policies applied to Dale Barracks:

Policy GBC 1.C Dale Barracks

Development proposals in connection with the operational use of the site as a military base will be supported where they are in line with Local Plan (Part Two) policy **GBC 1**. In addition, in the event of any part of the land becoming surplus to military activities, partial or complete redevelopment proposals should be comprehensively planned in line with an agreed development brief which meets all of the following:

1. Is compatible with any retained military uses within or adjacent the site.
2. Sets out the appropriate scale, layout, type of uses and phasing of development within the site including the buildings for retention or redevelopment.
3. Retains existing residential properties and is compatible with residential amenity.
4. Any new residential development includes a mix of housing types, tenure and sizes, including affordable housing.
5. Retains existing community facilities and uses within the site where appropriate.
6. Retains and where necessary enhances open space, sport and recreation facilities in line with Local Plan (Part Two) policies **DM 35** and **DM 36**.
7. Retains and where possible enhances landscaping within the site taking account of site topography and landscape character of the site and its surroundings.
8. Is in line with policy **DM 48**.
9. Maintains and enhances links to surrounding ecological networks and green infrastructure.
10. Considers potential transport impacts in combination with surrounding developments and makes provision for suitable highways/access arrangements.
11. Makes appropriate infrastructure provision, including water supply and capacity and drainage.

13.5 Policies

Policy D1: Dale Barracks development

Any redevelopment of the Dale Barracks site shall conform with Policy **GBC 1C** of the Local Plan and will be supported provided that:

- Consultation with the community and regular communication and liaison with community groups has formed a key part of the design process from an early stage through to submission of any planning applications for redevelopment.
- A Building for a Healthy Life 2020 Assessment, or any subsequent industry standard for the design of new housing development, is undertaken and updated through all stages of the planning and delivery of the project.
- A statement is provided to show how each of the National Design Guide and Upton Design Guide topics has or will be taken into account within the design process at each stage.
- Development is in keeping with local housing requirements as set out in the draft Housing Needs Assessment (2019) or the latest available assessment of housing needs, including at least the maximum provision of affordable housing in line with policy SOC1 of Chester West and Chester Council Local Plan Part 1, homes for the elderly and smaller homes for first time buyers, young families and for down-sizing. Community led housing initiatives and self-build plots will be supported.
- Existing residential properties are retained and enhanced where needed or alternative accommodation is provided in the same development area.
- There is no physical segregation or barrier to movement between phases of development and existing housing.
- All properties within the development have access to safe, well lit and comfortable walking and cycling routes linked to the wider walking and cycling network.
- Future development retains, and where possible enhances, all of the existing sports pitches on the site.
- Sport England Active Design Guidance should inform the comprehensive development brief and be followed in all stages of the planning process
- Development incorporates features beneficial to wildlife.

13.6 Evidence

Design Code

The **Design Code** (*Appendix 8*) produced for the NDP Steering Group by AECOM contains detailed guidance on appropriate design criteria for the site.

Community use of sports facilities

Upton Junior Football Club has used the existing sports pitches, car parking and changing room building (the Pavilion) at the Dale Barracks for 20 years and would strongly wish to continue to make use of those existing facilities in the long term for the benefit of the existing and future residents of the Upton area. There are shortfalls in the provision of sports pitches in the parish, as highlighted in the CW&C 2017 Open Space Study. The existing sports pitches, car parking and Pavilion building for the provision of sports including junior and adult football must be retained for the benefit of the local community. Any subsequent Development Brief or planning application should ensure that the continued sports use of the existing sports pitches is incorporated therein.

The CW&C Green Infrastructure Officer has identified that the CW&C Planning Pitch Strategy is currently being updated, but indications are that the Chester locality will still have shortfalls for grass football, rugby and cricket. As such, any development at the Dale Barracks is likely to require the pitch to be retained plus any additional pitch needs that might be triggered by new housing development.

Review of local consultation

Nov 2015 consultation survey

Of the 217 residents who responded to this survey, 68% agreed that they were concerned about planning for future re-use of the Dale Barracks site, 53% with safeguarding the environmental and landscape assets, and 41% with its continued community use, ie the Playing Fields.

March 2018 consultation survey

When asked about future housing development in Upton in this community survey, there was more support for Infill only, rather than larger developments (15 out of 25 residents supporting Infill only, 4 supporting larger developments). The main suggested location for larger developments was The Dale Barracks site.

September 2018 questionnaire at Upton Fun Day

A total of 39 residents attending a community event contributed their views on future housing development in Upton. It was agreed by 36% that some positive 'brown field' development might be acceptable, and the Dale Barracks site was suggested as a possible location for larger developments by 4 residents.

September 2019 questionnaire at Upton Fun Day

When asked about future development at the Dale Barracks site, 50% of the 20 residents who contributed their views were in favour of new housing being developed there. Of the rest, 40% disagreed and 10% were not sure. Some welcomed the opportunity for new housing, with provision for the elderly specifically mentioned in some cases, whereas others thought that the existing green space should be protected. It was pointed out to residents that it is already a policy in the Local Plan for new housing to be developed at the site, should it become available in the future. This was not generally known.

There was a high (75%) level of agreement with making any new housing at the Dale a proper community with its own facilities, and 85% agreed that it was a priority to provide safe footpaths and cycle ways.

There was 100% agreement with the statement that a priority for new housing should be to make it eco-friendly, with ways to save energy and water.

There was a discussion with some residents attending the stall concerning potential renewable energy generation in Upton. Residents were in favour of such initiatives, providing they did not create nuisance or have a negative impact on the environment.

August 2020 consultation questionnaire to Dale residents

A consultation survey was carried out with the 28 households in private housing adjacent to the Dale site, and 7 (25%) responded.

There was a difference of opinion about whether new housing should be built at the Dale Barracks site, with only 2 residents agreeing, and the rest either disagreeing or not being sure. Where a reason was given for disagreeing or not being sure, this was that existing housing on the site should be renovated rather than building new housing, and that sufficient green space would need to be set aside for new builds, so as not to put a strain on what currently exists.

There was clear agreement on providing safe and comfortable footpaths and cycle ways for people to use, and for it being a priority to make future builds or renovations eco-friendly, with ways to save energy and water.

People were split on whether or not the whole community (ie new plus existing housing) should become a proper community with its own facilities, with only 2 residents agreeing. Comments from those who either disagreed or weren't sure included comments that no further retail/shops were required.

There was a similar majority level of disagreement/not sure on any new housing to include 30% Affordable housing, with only 2 residents agreeing. There was only one comment relating to the reason for this, with that resident saying that the Dale is already affordable housing, and that "any further cheap houses might create a ghetto".

There was also a split on there being no segregation or barriers to movement between phases of housing and existing development. Again only 2 residents agreed. Reasons given for disagreement or not being sure were either that there should be a clear barrier between existing housing and new development, or that they would need to know how new boundaries would affect the existing residents.

A number of the residents raised further concerns, including:

- that new development should not affect the rural feel of the area,
- that a wildlife survey should be carried out to ensure that no endangered species would be affected by any potential development, with the presence of natterjack toads in a local pond being cited,

- that the woods surrounding the barracks and the recreation areas should be protected,
- that residents want to be informed of all phases of the development and see plans and road markings, as well as access routes, prior to commencement,
- the implications for the private road behind Percival Close properties, and the monthly maintenance charges.

Regulation 14 consultation

There was strong support for this policy, and in particular for retaining the current sports facilities and pitch provision for the benefit of the local community, and in particular for young people (Upton Junior Football Club). It was also commented that there should be specific inclusion in policy D1 of the requirements for a mix of housing types (as in policy H2), and for affordable housing, as well as any development to minimise environmental impact and preserve green space and wildlife habitats.

Changes were made to Policy D1 following the feedback.

Appendix 1: Nationally Listed Structures

Name of building / structure	Address / Location	OS Grid Reference	Reasons
Church of the Holy Ascension	Church Lane	SJ 4080 6911	Grade II. Church 1852-54
Rose Cottage	43, Upton Lane	SJ 4069 6940	Grade II – 18 th Century house
Upton Mill	Old Mill Court	SJ 4082 6875	Grade II - former windmill, now house
Oakfield	Chester Zoo	SJ 4139 7015	Grade II. Large House c 1885
Former stables at Oakfield	Chester Zoo	SJ 4141 7023	Grade II. Former stables, later Lion House, c.1886. Listed for group value only
1829 Building	Countess of Chester Hospital	SJ 4007 6865	Grade II. Original County Lunatic Asylum 1827-29 – historic and architectural value
Church	Countess of Chester Hospital	SJ 3995 6858	Grade II. Former asylum chapel 1856 - historic and architectural value
Bache Hall	Countess Way	SJ 4022 6811	Grade II. Small Country House c 1720
Parish Boundary Stone	25 Metres North of footbridge over Long Lane	SJ 4220 6879	Grade II. Dated 1781 - Red sandstone rectangular block
Parish Boundary Stone	Grounds of Chester Zoo	SJ 4078 7020	Grade II. Late 18 th / Early 19 th C. Red sandstone block
Footpath Guidepost	North West corner of the garden of 'Longlands', Moston Road	SJ 4041 7001	Grade II. Cast iron guidepost c1885 erected by Wirral Footpath Society
War Memorial	Junction of Wealstone Lane and Heath Road		Grade II

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

1. Roman camp

300m west of Upton Grange Farm, Upton-by-Chester.

2. Roman camp at Upton Heath

beside the water tower north of Long Lane, Upton-by-Chester.

3. Roman camp at Upton

400m east of the water tower north of Long Lane, Upton-by-Chester.

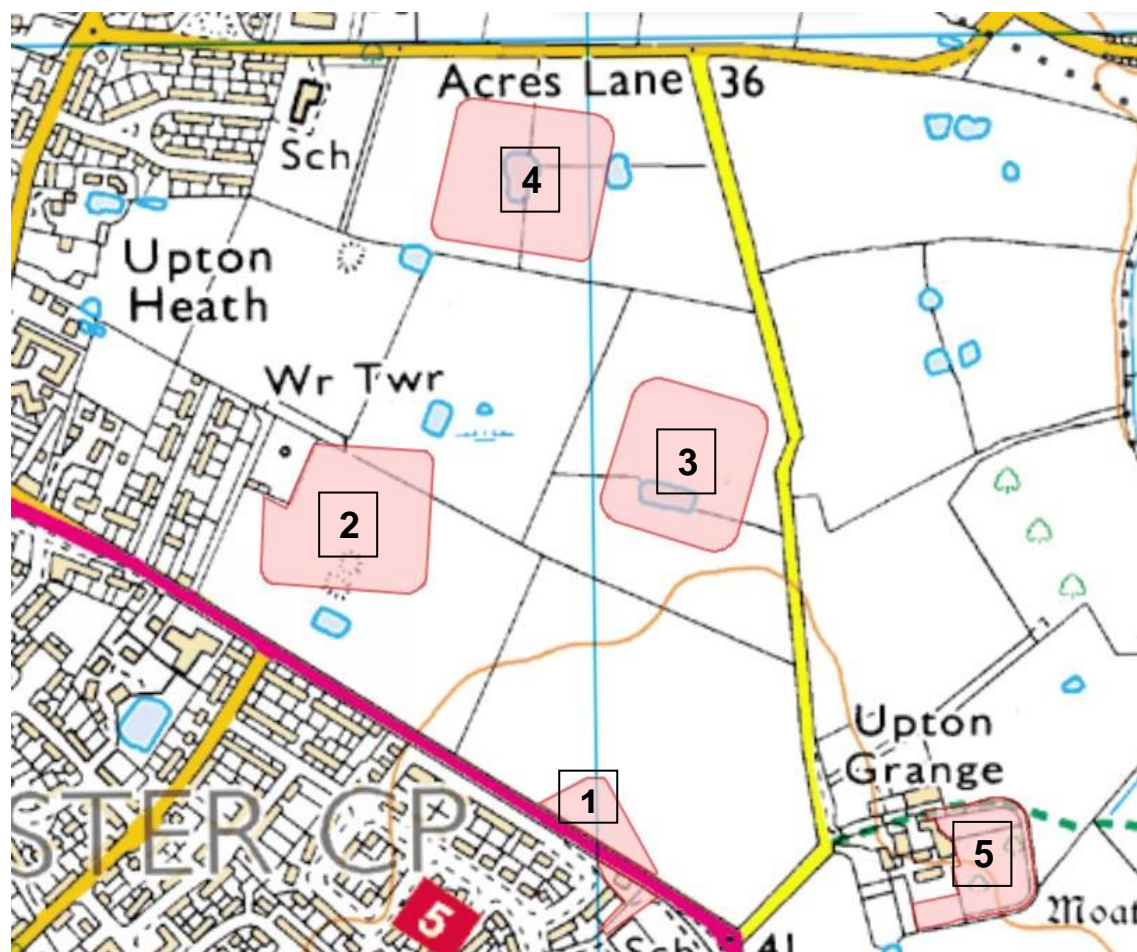
4. Roman camp at Upton,

350m north east of the water tower north of Long Lane, Upton-by-Chester.

5. Moated site at Upton Grange

Dutton's Lane, Upton-by-Chester.

Location of Scheduled Ancient Monuments



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Ordnance Survey 100061743

Appendix 2: Structures proposed for local listing

Bache

Building / structure	Address / Location	Reasons
“The Mill at Upton”, formerly “Egerton Arms”	Liverpool Road	Age; Social and Communal value; Aesthetic value. Long history as public house. Though much modified retains Edwardian features, including “Art Nouveau” sign panels (currently covered).
“The Jugglers”	Roundabout – Junction of Liverpool Road / Countess Way	Landmark status; Aesthetic value. Stainless steel sculpture by David Annand.
Water Tower, former Deva Hospital	Countess of Chester Health Park	Landmark status; Aesthetic value. One of the few remaining structures of the original hospital complex, its Italianate style and its place a local landmark and skyline feature. Curtilage listed building

Upton

Building / structure	Address / Location	Reasons
The Avenue	Entrance to Upton Park from Wealstone Lane	Designed Landscape. A tree lined avenue brings you into the village within a village. Part of Upton Park Conservation Area.
Wealstone Cottage	53 Wealstone Lane	Age; Architectural value.
Upton Cross House	1, Heath Road	Age; Social and Communal value; Aesthetic value. c1790 Formerly the Victoria Hotel in prominent location at Upton Cross
The Cockpit	Heath Road / Church Lane	Historic Association; Social and Communal Value; Aesthetic value; Designed Landscape interest. Possibly an old sandpit, formerly the Victoria Hotel tea garden. Given to the people of Upton.
Upton Lodge	Wealstone Lane	Age; Historic Association. Large house c 1848. Formed part of the Government House complex and was residence for GOCs including Generals Butler, Elliot, Horrocks, Templer. Later local doctor’s residence and surgery.

Building / structure	Address / Location	Reasons
Upton Lodge Gardens	Mill Lane / Wealstone Lane	Designed landscape; Social and communal value. Formerly kitchen gardens of Upton Lodge.
Section of "Cheshire Fencing",	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Wealstone Lane	Rarity. Plenty of examples in Cheshire but how many within suburbia?
The "Weal Stone"	Holy Ascension Church	Age; Social and Communal value. Once thought to be a medieval "plague stone", most likely to be the base of Upton Cross. (may be included in listing of Church)
The Oaks	Oak Drive, Upton Lane	Age; Aesthetic value; Social and Communal value. Early 19 th C Regency style house, formerly 'Upton Bank'. Now Upton Golf Club clubhouse.
Lodge to the former Upton Lawn	Upton Lane	Age; Historic Association. All that remains of 1850s estate, later home to Sir John Frost. Visited by Earl Haig who planted an acorn from Verdun - the "Earl's Oak".
Upton Farm	Upton Lane	Age; Social and Communal value; Aesthetic Interest. Late 17 th – early 18 th C. Much altered but with many features restored. The only former farm within the heart of the village still standing
St Mary's School – now Headstart nursery	Heath Road	Age; Aesthetic value; Social and Communal value. Victorian village school (1885) largely unmodified externally including head teacher's house. Many local people educated here.
Heath Row Cottages	Heath Road	Age; Rarity; Social and Communal value; Aesthetic and group value. C1850. Only "on the street terrace in Upton. Heritage of Upton Heath as a working community.
Former Congregational Chapel	100 Heath Road	Age; Rarity; Aesthetic interest; Social and Community Value. Original Congregational Church c1860. Later Post Office and Shop, now returned to original form as residence. Still retains much of its original character.
Former Upton Heath Men's Institute – now Upton Guide Headquarters	Moston Road / Caughall Road junction	Social and Community Value. Originally a Reading Room and Club on site donated by Sir John Frost.

Building / structure	Address / Location	Reasons
Former Cobbler's shop	Demage Lane	Rarity; Aesthetic Value; Social and Communal Value. No other old 'trade' building still in largely original form.
Former Children's cottage home	Long Lane	Age; Aesthetic value; Social and Communal value. 1900, former "Children's Cottage Home" with distinctive round gable ends – one of six in Chester area.
The Wheatsheaf	Heath Road	Age; Social and Communal value; Aesthetic interest. Long history as public house since 1867.
The Village Pump	Heath Road	Age; Landmark status; Social and Communal value. Probably early 19 th C. Traditional feature maintained by volunteer local residents.
Upton Heyes	Flag Lane North	Historic Association. Large house c 1900. Since 1947, Judges Lodgings visited by (inter alia) Lord Chief Justice Goddard.
Section of "Cheshire Fencing"	Demage Lane / Moston Road (A41)	Rarity. Plenty of examples in Cheshire but how many within suburbia?

Moston

Name of building / structure	Address / Location	Reasons
Moston Hall	The Dale Barracks, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 4BD	Age, Historical association. The present building, extended and modified, dates from c1820. It was the main residence of the Moston Estate. It is now the Officers' Mess for Dale Barracks
Moston Hill Farm	On A41, at the top of Moston Hill	Age; Aesthetic value. Built in 1882, a typical brick and "black and white" farmhouse of the period

Cheshire West and Chester Council is in process of compiling a Local Heritage List for the former Chester City Council area, which includes Upton. A group of local residents, under the auspices of Chester Civic Trust, assessed and designated local buildings, engaged in public consultation and submitted them to the Conservation Team at Cheshire West and Chester Council. The buildings which appear in the summary tables above are those which the Conservation Team considered suitable for inclusion on the Local Heritage List.

Appendix 3: Upton: a thumbnail portrait:

Phil Pearn in consultation with around twenty local residents representing a good cross-section of the various communities within Upton (March 2018)

In the footnote references, Page or Chapter numbers refer to the book 'Upton-by-Chester: A People's History', ISBN 0-9548854-0-6

Today Upton is a residential suburb of Chester seamlessly joined (contiguous) to other residential suburbs and on into the city centre. It has close proximity to the city centre and to countryside on about half its boundary¹. This containment of urban sprawl is due to the land used by the army, farmland now under the protection of the zoo and latterly to the Upton Dene housing development (ex-hospital land) which saw the creation of the country park. With a railway station², regular bus services and nearby motorway spurs it has good travel links - even by air – two international airports are within 40 minutes drive.

Until the mid-1800s, Upton was a rural community (then known as 'The Township of Upton'³) of two village centres – Upton Heath and Upton Village⁴ and also The Bache⁵. These were mostly farmhouse complexes and associated rural trade buildings (blacksmiths etc) with a few buildings on link roads (ribbon development). Very few of these buildings still survive – the blade-less windmill⁶, now residential, being the best known. However, some properties⁷ in these three centres do survive as reminders of Upton's past.

The arrival of the railway (and its network links) led to the creation of several gentleman's 'country estates'⁸. The employment they created started the move away from traditional rural crafts. Some of these houses still exist where organisations have taken them on (eg Golf Club & Zoo). Others have largely been cleared for housing development – although the large mature trees⁹ and boundary walls act as 'reminders' of the past grandeur¹⁰. One pioneering residential development (Upton Park¹¹) in the mid-1800s broke away from the usual ribbon development – but others did not follow until the 'between the wars' period¹². Upton Park is the only Conservation Area in Upton – defined as 'having an almost rural feel'¹³.

- 1 The 'Chester Cross one mile' post on Liverpool Road lies just outside Upton's boundary.
- 2 Bache station – with its carpark – Merseyrail - regular trains to Chester and up the Wirral to Liverpool.
- 3 Long established Upton is in the Domesday book and Upton Township minutes from the 1800s are held in the Cheshire Records Office.
- 4 Upton Village centred on the Church Lane / Upton Lane junction – with farms (the farmhouse 'Upton Farm' remains as a residential property), a pub, cobblers and several cottages.
- 5 The former watermill and area around Bache Pool)
- 6 A working flour mill – Dean's Bakery in its latter days. Page 46
- 7 Page 61 - Golf Clubhouse, Rose Cottage, Upton Farm and cobblers in Upton Village. Various cottages in Upton Heath. The public house at The Bache. etc
- 8 Ch.6 pages 63-76
- 9 Today many of these trees have TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders) but clearly the decision to retain them during housing development was taken well before this era.
- 10 Walls surround the former Government House on Wealstone Lane. Wall and large Cedars(?) from the former 'Firs'.
- 11 Page 83. Also 'Upton Park Chester – A community for 150 years' ISBN 1-901253-25-2.
- 12 Kingsmead P100 and Oakfield estate P101.
- 13 Appraised by Chester City Council 2008.

Pre-WW2 housing development was partly prevented by the successful Dicksons nursery business¹⁴ which occupied much of the central and southern parts of Upton. This was despite the 1899 housing development¹⁵ proposals by the Lord of the Manor (Egerton) who owned 50% of the land in Upton. Post-WW2 the demise of Dicksons and retiring farmers coincided with the demand of a national building boom. Throughout the second half of the 20th century Upton was gradually filled with residential property – except for its preserved green areas – and became a Chester suburb¹⁶. Because of this history Upton has no definite commonly recognised centre.

Geographically, the ‘centre’ would appear to be Upton Cross¹⁷ – three of the four quadrants being small green public areas with seating. The base of the Saxon cross still exists¹⁸ and this is where Upton’s war memorial¹⁹ is sited – the only Chester suburban stand-alone memorial. A further shopping cluster was added in the 1960s at Weston Grove but in the following decades the area around the Wealstone Lane Playing Fields (now QE2 Playing Fields) evolved into the ‘social centre’ of Upton with its Library, Pavilion, Surgery, children’s play area and various sporting facilities²⁰ – making it the ‘natural base’ for large-scale Upton community events.

Most activity venues have specific activities at specific times – but this area with its library and snack-selling pavilion offers the opportunity of ‘just drop in’.

Seen from the air Upton is very green – the Golf Course being the emerald jewel in its crown – with a good number of established large mature trees throughout. This is not so apparent from ground level, the bulk of the golf course boundary having houses backing onto it. ²¹ The next major green space, the Wealstone Lane (now QE2) playing field is, however, visible on nearly half its boundary and is fully open to the public. While not all Upton’s residential roads could be classed as ‘leafy suburbs’, most roads are lined with homes on both sides having front gardens. These contain trees, hedges and shrubs creating a typical English desirable suburban look. Again, most houses have either garages or drives which helps to keep roads fairly clear of parked cars.

14 P152

15 P 86-87

16 The annual Upton Agricultural Show & Gymkhana though lasted into the immediate post-WW2 period while Upton was under the Chester Rural District Council until re-organisation in 1974.

17 P54

18 P56

19 P110

20 Tennis courts, bowling green, fitness trail as well as the field for football and other games.

21 P92. The ‘Upton Trust’ restrictive covenant.

The slight elevation of Upton means that several residents have views over Chester and on to the Welsh hills. Marl pits²² as well as sand and clay pits were common in rural days but these have largely been filled in for urbanisation, though some survive as ponds. Flooding was a problem²³ but much improved drainage over recent decades has virtually removed the problem. One aspect of 'bringing the rural into the urban' is the existence of several runs of traditional 'Cheshire iron fencing' bordering fields.

For residents of working age, Upton today is largely a commuter suburb. The two nearest centres of employment are the hospital and the zoo but the bulk of working people commute. Some travel well outside Upton's boundary – and even beyond Cheshire and the Wirral. There are a number of locally based tradesmen covering the day-to-day tasks most households need. Within Upton there is a good range of catering facilities from 'fast food' take-aways, through pub 'bar snacks' to a number of good restaurants offering à la carte meals in a pleasant setting.

For residents' leisure activities access to Chester city centre and other entertainment locations is readily available. However, for a suburb, Upton is blessed with an extensive range of offerings for all ages at a number of venues²⁴ within Upton – but these also attract and serve many people from outside Upton. In the same way many Upton residents use facilities in other parts of Chester and beyond.

Although many of these activities are commercial with paid instructors/tutors, nevertheless Upton is rich in community organisations run by local volunteers²⁵. These include established national movements like Scout & Guides²⁶, Women's Institute (WI) and Royal British Legion as well as numerous sporting and craft opportunities, amateur dramatics and horticultural activities²⁷. Along with the churches²⁸ and various Council and NHS offerings, Upton has strong community social and supportive networks for those wanting to partake.

For walking and cycling – Upton has a good boundary track with canal towpath and the Greenway³⁰ – with some development a total circular route could be established. The bridle path through the zoo is extensively used.

22 P21 see also P 78-79, 90,127

23 dig out refs such as Upton Heath mtg

24 Arkell Scouting & Community Centre, Baptist Church Hall, County Sports, Golf Clubhouse, Holy Ascension Community Hall, Pavilion, St.Columba's Church Hall, UR Church Hall, Village Hall.

25 Many of the venues are managed by volunteers which all adds to the community vibrancy

26 Some of these 'troops' have their own premises – the Scouts at the new Arkell Centre Upton Dene – the Guides at the former Men's Institute. Others meet at St.Columba's.

27 A Horticultural Society with three annual Shows and a Flower Club – but Upton no longer has allotments (these exist at Brook Lane and in Hoole)

28 Anglican *Holy Ascension*, United Reformed, Catholic *St.Columba's*, Baptist.

29 This is the former railway line passing through Newton – for walking and cycling.

Key to the social life within Upton is the feeling that it is safe – not only ‘going about’ during daytime but also after dark - whether out jogging or returning from an evening out at friends or at one of the many venues.

For retail provision, Upton has a supermarket (probably the commonest place to bump into local neighbours and acquaintances) and three clusters of shops (PO’s, grocery, take-aways, hairdresser etc). However, Upton’s shoppers also venture beyond Upton’s boundaries with significant nearby retail offers in Chester city centre, Sealand Road and Cheshire Oaks.

Upton has had military connections for a century³¹ with the former Government House for GOC Western Command, military hospitals and extensive scattered billeting during WW2. The Dale Barracks opened in 1939 and is currently used by the Mercian regiment, so military personnel in ‘civvys’ make frequent use of Upton’s facilities and rifle practice is heard on occasions.

For schooling³² Upton is well served with options for pre-school and primary school³³ and also has a high school and a special needs school³⁴ within its boundary. Many other options for schooling lie within a few miles.

Housing varies from three-story apartment blocks and small bungalows to large, detached family houses. These are ‘well mixed’ and that pattern has been retained (or even bettered) recently in the new Upton Dene development³⁵. Similarly, there seems to be a good mix of ages amongst residents³⁶ but ethnic diversity is only slowly growing³⁷.

There is a good proportion of retired ‘sheltered’/‘care home’ accommodation³⁸ as well as social housing although most of Upton is ‘owner occupied’ Much of the previously council property is now privately owned.

31 Ch.8 P105-116

32 OFSTED ratings fluctuate but generally the Upton postcode is seen as good for school options. See the government website, GIAS ‘Get Information About Schools’: <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

33 Acresfield Academy, Upton Westlea Primary School (State Controlled), Upton Heath C of E Primary School and Millview Primary School (Academy)

34 Dorin Park School & Specialist S.E.N. College

35 The former Asylum site between Liverpool Road and the canal – still under development but nearing completion by Morris Homes.

36 Probably low on single young adults – Upton offers very little rental flats/rooms and property prices are high.

37 Hopefully this not ‘too sensitive’ to mention.

38 Arderne House, Mallard Court etc. See also P119 para2 – The RDC built suitable housing for the elderly in the early 1960s. Most recently Upton Dene.

Appendix 4: Local Green Space

- **Countess of Chester Country Park**
- **The Cockpit, Lodge Gardens and War Memorial at Upton Cross**
- **The Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields, Wealstone Lane**
- **The “Chemistry Pits” Playing Field**

Designation of Local Greenspace:

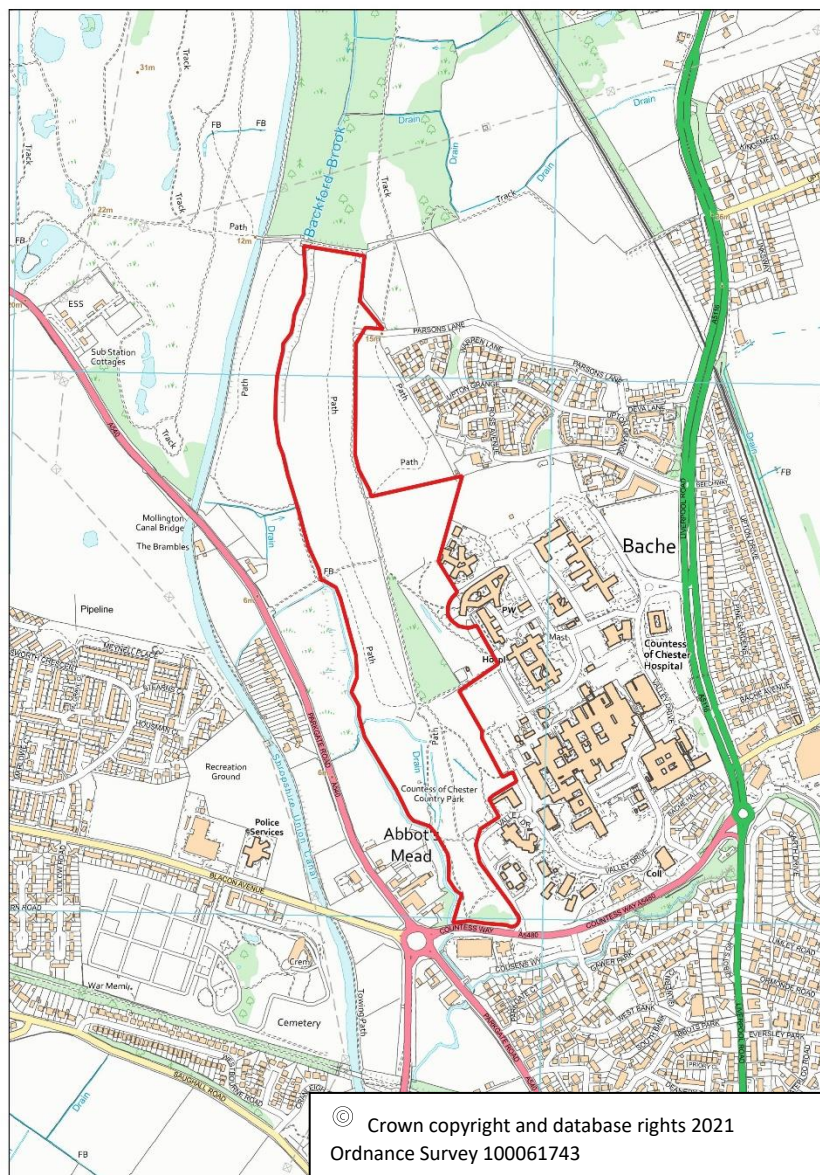
Countess of Chester Country Park

Location

The Countess of Chester Country Park was officially opened by the Duchess of Cornwall in September 2014. It occupies a 19 hectare site in Green Belt between Valley Drive and the Deva Link Road to the south and the Knoll's Bridge bridleway to the north. It borders the Shropshire Union Canal to the west and the Countess of Chester Hospital to the east.

The site is immediately adjacent to the housing development of Upton Dene and approximately 0.8 miles from Upton Cross so it is easily accessible to Upton residents.

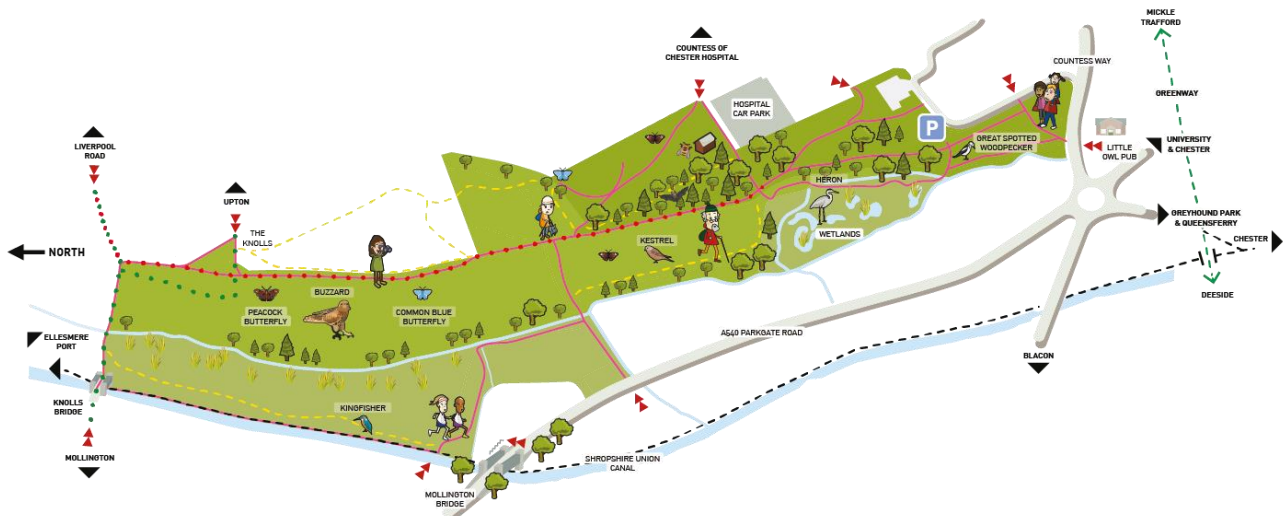
It is directly linked to the cycle and walking route along the towpath of the Shropshire Union Canal (a National Cycle Route) and can be accessed on foot through the Upton Dene estate and the Countess of Chester Hospital campus, as well as from Valley Drive where there is also a small car park.



Development

Much of the park is located on a former landfill site. This closed in the 1970s when it was made safe, capped with soil and grassed over. Thirty years later the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) took ownership of the site, allocated some of the land for housing development and gave 19-hectares to the Land Trust to develop a country park. The area of the park is clearly demarcated from surrounding fields and is actively managed as a recreational and wildlife conservation area.

Sketch Plan of the Country Park



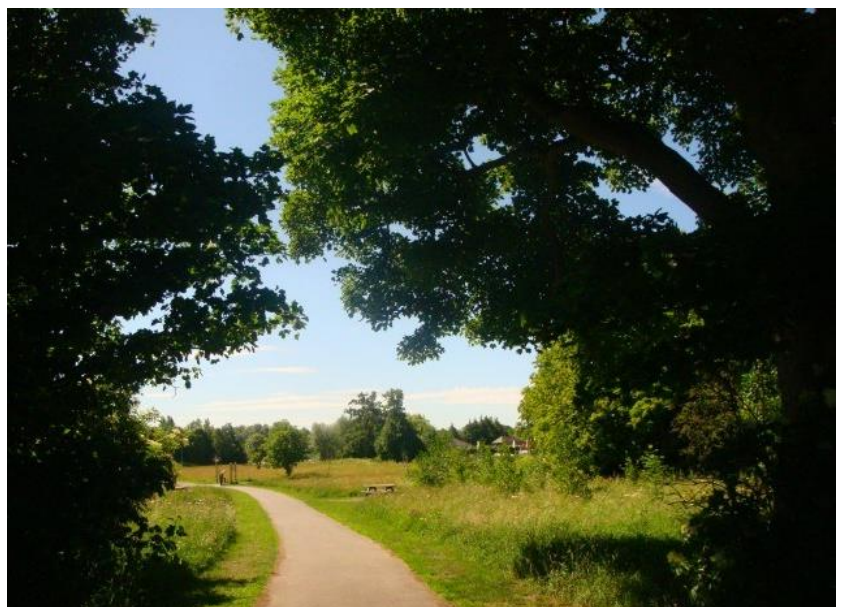
The Land Trust, as principal owner, is working in partnership with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) to manage the park for local communities.

To create the park, a series of pathways and trails for walkers and cyclists were constructed, connecting to local footpaths and the canal towpath. Hedge laying and localised tree planting, the creation of a nature reserve and the planting of a community orchard have helped to enhance and conserve the site's ecological interest, open views and existing features.

Work has been undertaken by the Environment Agency to create a reed bed, while drainage improvements have been carried out at Finchetts Gutter. The park has also been registered as a NHS Forest site and a Jubilee Wood, as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. More recently trees were planted to form part of the Queen's Commonwealth Canopy.

Recreational Value

The Land Trust works with other adjoining landowners, including the NHS Trusts, to secure the future of the open space as a community health and well-being park. An important motivation for its development was to provide the health benefits of outdoor activity to patients at the adjacent hospital and to the community at large. All of the site is freely accessible and open to the public from 7.30 am to 6.00 pm daily.



The park's all-weather paths are wide enough to be shared by walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users and children's buggies. The paths offer a choice of routes and distances and the opportunity to be more active, within a safe and pleasant environment. The paths also connect with other routes, allowing exploration of the local area.

The park hosts a varied programme of events which includes activities that improve people's health, deliver education and training as well providing opportunities for volunteering. The park is the location for the 5km Chester parkrun, which normally takes place every Saturday at 9am. Regular Health Walks are also organised. There is a measured distance route for runners. Together with the parkrun route, there are three more measured distance trail routes to walk, jog or run, giving a choice from 0.5 miles to 3 miles. Visitors can also use the Cultural Trail route to explore the many art and heritage sites in and around the park. The Fallen for the Fallen Poppy Trail route enters via a bridleway to the north and finishes in the centre of the park.

However, it is principally used by local residents for informal recreation, walking, cycling and playing whilst enjoying tranquil natural surroundings. The park attracted well over 30,000 visitors in 2019, many of whom are staff and patients from the hospital, local dog walkers, families, school children and university students. It is greatly valued by local people for this purpose and was particularly appreciated during the recent Covid-19 lockdown. A café and toilets are normally available in the hospital five minutes' walk away.

Wildlife

The area to the west of the site between Finchett's Gutter / Backford Brook and the canal is identified as a Local Wildlife Site under Policy ENV4 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One).

The park has a variety of wetland and meadowland habitats as well as woodland areas that are being enhanced by new planting. There is a new Nature Reserve which is part of Chester Zoo's Wildlife Connections project. Various sites within the park have wildflower meadows created with the help of local schools and other visitors & volunteers.

Regular wildlife surveys take place within the park and the number of birds, butterflies etc has increased significantly since it opened. The current wetland is home to many animals & plants, in particular, toads which are now an endangered species. Overhead a family of buzzards entertain visitors and 2018 saw fantastic aerial murmurations by starlings.

Plans are currently being put into place to create a wetland meadow to the north of the site. This is now becoming a rare habitat and will be a joint venture with Cheshire West & Chester Council and the Environment Agency with the support of other partners. The hope is that this will create yet another biodiverse habitat within the park.

Community significance

The park is a focus for a variety of community activity. It provides the terminal point for the Upton poppy trail, part of the **Fallen for the Fallen** project, created by the Friends of the Countess of Chester Country Park and local councillor Jill Houlbrook, to help people

remember the 27 men named on the Upton-by-Chester War Memorial who died during World War One.

This three kilometre trail, guided by carved poppies, runs through the streets of Upton and then across fields into the park. The poppies bear the names of those who gave their lives and are remembered on the Upton war memorial.

The end of the 'Poppy Trail' in the park is a memorial bench and a painted red poppy which help people to focus and reflect on all those affected in so many ways by the events of 1914-18.



The park is also the location of the **Chester Life for a Life Memorial Forest** which was opened in July 2015. The aim of the memorial woodland is to help enhance the biodiversity of the park so that eventually it will become a popular woodland walk surrounded by pastoral meadows. The site will accommodate approximately 700 memorial trees, and will be a mix of English oak *Quercus Robur*, Silver Birch *Betula Pendula*, Mountain Ash *Sorbus aucuparia* and Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*. The grass will be cut on a differential regime so that a balance can be struck between providing access to memorial trees and the need to protect vital wildlife habitats. There will be an opportunity for those wishing to plant wildflowers to do so.

The Life for a Life scheme allows people to plant trees in memory of loved ones, helping to create a beautiful forest that everyone can enjoy.

There is a very active Friends of the Park group of local volunteers who help to maintain and improve the space.

Awards

This site has received the following awards:

- Green Flag status
- Best Community health Initiative at the Horticulture Week Custodian Awards.
- Highly Commended NGO (Non-governmental organisation) Impact prize at the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).
- Chester Civic Trust award for benefiting the built environment.
- *Community Space of the Year* at the Land Trust Awards 2019
- *Project of the Year* at the Land Trust Awards 2019 for the *Fallen for the Fallen* poppy trail

Sources

The Land Trust (n.d.), *Countess of Chester Country Park*,
<https://thelandtrust.org.uk/space/countess-of-chester-country-park/>, Accessed 08/07/2020

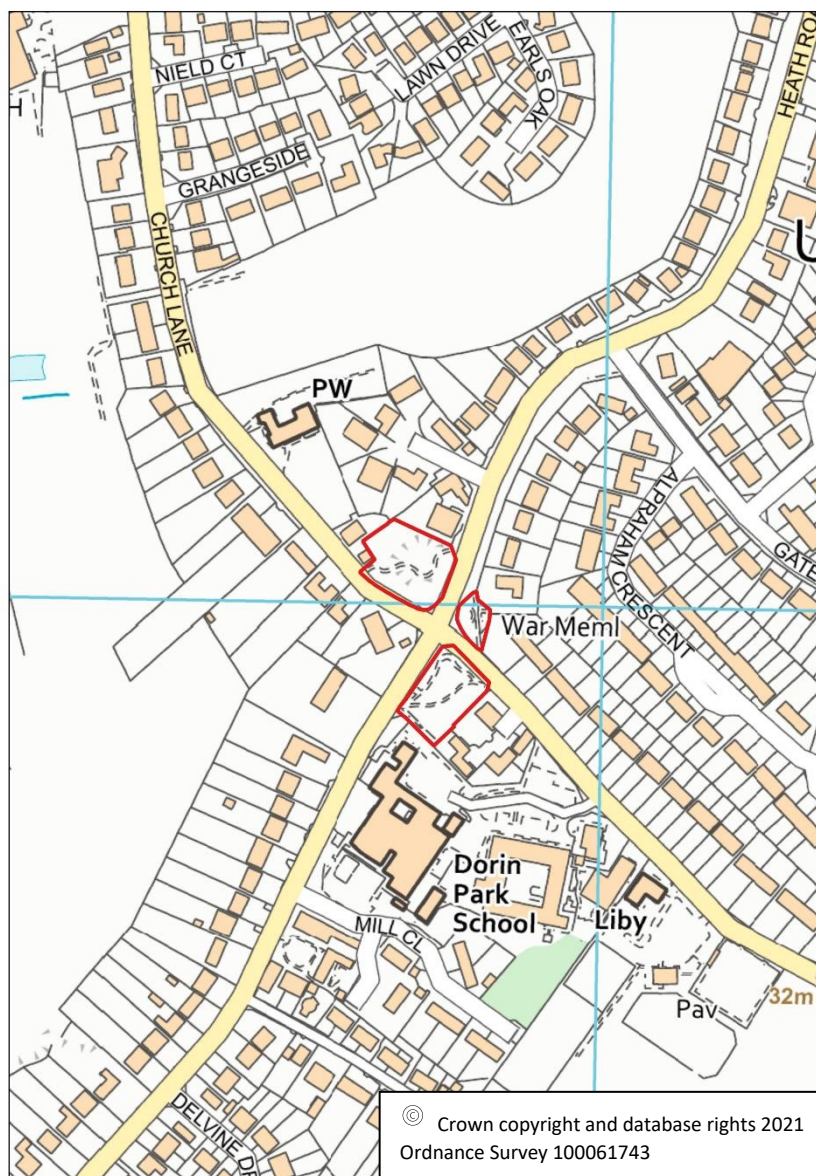
Designation of Local Greenspace:

The Cockpit, War Memorial and Lodge Gardens at Upton Cross

Location

The designation covers three areas of open space around the junction of Mill Lane, Church Lane, Heath Road and Wealstone Lane, known as Upton Cross. These areas, defined on the map below, are the Cockpit, (on the NW of the junction) the land around Upton War Memorial (on the NE of the junction) and the Lodge Gardens (on the SE of the junction).

Location Map



These three areas collectively form a central focus of open space at one of the historic centres of Upton and play an important part in its community identity.

Historical Significance

War Memorial

The War Memorial is a Grade II Listed Structure (List Entry No: 1458142). It was conceived as a permanent testament to the sacrifice made by 27 members of the local community who lost their lives in the First World War and was unveiled on 13 February 1921 by Sir Philip B Grey Egerton. He had provided the land on which the memorial is built, in memory of his two sons who both died in the First World War.

Designed by Cheshire architect Mr RH Lockwood, it is made of Darley Vale stone. The plain, tapering, cross-shaft supports a wheel-head cross decorated with Celtic knot work carved in low relief, with a pedestal, square on plan, standing on a three-stepped square base. The cross stands on a raised paved area, approached by two steps to the front.



It was renovated in 2018 with a grant from the War Memorials Trust

The Saxon Cross

During the excavations for the War Memorial foundations a large stone with a central rectangular hole was discovered. This was originally believed to be a 17C Plague Stone and its discovery led to one of the roads at the Cross being re-named Wealstone Lane. It has since been established that the stone (which currently resides against the wall of the nearby Parish Church) is the base of a Saxon Cross, which presumably originally marked this crossroads as a significant landmark. Bryant's map of 1831 marks the site of an ancient cross at the junction.

The "Cockpit"

This community garden was formerly the garden of the adjacent Upton Cross House. In the mid-19th century the house was licensed as the Victoria Hotel and the area was used as a pleasure garden.

It appears to have originally been a sand and marl pit, a common feature of the area, part of a larger plot of land called 'Sandhole Croft'.



There is no clear evidence about the origins of its name. Its shape is similar to that of surviving cockpits elsewhere but this could also apply to any sand or marl pit. Cock fighting was often associated with public houses but it was banned by a series of Acts of Parliament between 1835 and 1849 and the Victoria Hotel was not established until the 1850s. It is unlikely that such illegal activity would have taken place in a location as public as the crossroads

at Upton after 1835.

The garden was given to the people of Upton by its then owner, Canon Harvey, in the 1960s. It has been proposed to Cheshire West and Chester Council for inclusion on the Local Heritage List.

Lodge Gardens

This small public park was formerly the kitchen garden of the adjacent Upton Lodge. This was purchased by the War department in 1927 to form part of the Government House complex, which was the official residence of the Chief of Staff, Western Command. It has been proposed to Cheshire West and Chester Council for inclusion on the Local Heritage List.

Landscape and Recreational Value

Taken together, the three areas form a significant public open space at the historic crossroads. Both the Cockpit and Lodge Gardens are well provided with mature trees. Lodge Gardens is surrounded by a low sandstone wall in a style characteristic of the area.

All three areas are easily accessible by surfaced footpaths from the adjacent roads, though the sunken central part of the Cockpit is not accessible by wheelchair. They are all provided with seating and the Cockpit has picnic tables.

These areas are well used by local people for informal recreation and resting places on local walks.

In 2014 the Cockpit was remodelled into its present form with a through pathway and steps in order to enhance public access and usage. The work was funded by Cheshire West and Chester Council through the discretionary funding allocated to the local Upton members.



The Cockpit



Lodge Gardens

Community significance

The War Memorial Garden, in particular, is a focus of community activity, being the point at which the annual Remembrance Day commemoration takes place, together with a service in the Parish Church nearby.

It provides the starting point for the Upton Poppy Trail, part of the **Fallen for the Fallen** project to help people remember those who died during World War One.

This three kilometre trail, guided by carved poppies, runs through the streets of Upton and then across fields into the Countess of Chester Country Park where it ends at a memorial bench. The poppies bear the names of the 27 men who gave their lives and are remembered on the Upton war memorial.



Sources

Pearn, P. Roberts, K. and Smith, B. (2005), *Upton-by-Chester: A People's History*, Upton-by-Chester Local History Group

Imperial War Museum (n.d.), *War Memorials Register*, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/9881>, Accessed 08/07/2020

Historic England, (n.d.), *Upton and District War Memorial Cross*, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1458142>, Accessed 08/07/2020

Designation of Local Greenspace:

Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields, Wealstone Lane

Location

The Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields occupy a five acre site fronting on to Wealstone Lane close to the centre of the Parish and within walking distance of most residents. Local buses run within a few hundred metres in each direction of the fields. There is a car park which serves the recreational facilities and is also used by visitors to the adjacent doctor's surgery and branch library. They are owned, operated and maintained by Upton by Chester and District Parish Council, principally for the benefit of residents

of the Parish but these facilities are also used by residents, schools and organisations in neighbouring areas.



Development

The Playing Fields were established on former agricultural land in the mid-1960s as the area to the north and east was being developed as the “Upton Cross Estate”. They included football pitches, putting green, bowls, tennis courts and children’s play area. A small pavilion provided changing facilities. A branch library was built on land adjacent to the playing fields in 1969.

The pavilion was rebuilt in 2015 to provide a greater range of fully accessible facilities.

Location Map



Landscape and Recreational Value



The fields provide a significant open space in an otherwise “built-up” area. The land gently slopes towards the south-east, making possible the key view from Weston Grove towards the centre of Chester which is designated in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan. The traditional “Cheshire Railings” along the Wealstone Lane boundary are unusual in a suburban setting and have been proposed for local listing. There are mature trees near the Pavilion and around the edges of the site.



The Queen Elizabeth II playing fields were designated as such to commemorate the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee; they are now for recreational use in perpetuity.

The playing field includes two football pitches, two all-weather surface tennis courts, a well maintained bowling green, outdoor gym equipment, a teen shelter and a multi-use playing surface. There is a children’s playground which is used all year round.

The Parish Council maintains the playing field and the equipment.

The children’s play area is a very popular attraction for local families and is being upgraded to be more inclusive.

Community significance



The Pavilion is a staffed community building with a function room (including a kitchen) and a meeting room for hire (previously a storage room converted to meet increased demand for space). Toilets are available for all users of the pavilion and playing fields during opening hours. Changing rooms and

showers are available for use by sports teams with an additional separate toilet and changing facility. The pavilion is hired for parties and events, as well as regular bookings by small businesses and other group. The Parish Council operates a small shop within the pavilion, the staff are first aid trained and there is a defibrillator available.

The playing fields and the Pavilion are interdependent and a focal point for residents of and visitors to Upton. These facilities are used to hold a variety of community events including an annual “Fun Day”, Carol Singing and Christmas Market.

The Parish Council works closely with the neighbouring doctors’ surgery and the facilities are used to improve the health and wellbeing of people in the community. They also help to promote the idea of ‘self-care’ and ‘social prescribing’, and combat social isolation.

In addition, the Parish Council works in partnership with local police, with the pavilion and the playing fields being used as an area hub to encourage community liaison. Our local PCSO regularly organises out of school activities for young people including a climbing wall, panna cage football, movie nights and gaming.

Local schools take advantage of the playing fields and tennis courts. The Parish Council offers a reliable facility in a safe space with staff on site who actively foster good working relationships across all age groups.

Local residents recognise the QE2 playing fields as focal point for outdoor activities including many who walk their dogs or bring their children and grandchildren to enjoy the open space which is readily accessible in the centre of Upton.

Wildlife

The playing fields are susceptible in places to flooding in heavy rain and consequently currently the Parish Council is investigating the feasibility of harnessing the rainwater to create a pond which can be used as an educational opportunity and will encourage wildlife flora and fauna into the area.

Sources

Pearn, P. Roberts, K. and Smith, B. (2005), *Upton-by-Chester: A People’s History*, Upton-by-Chester Local History Group.

Designation of Local Greenspace:

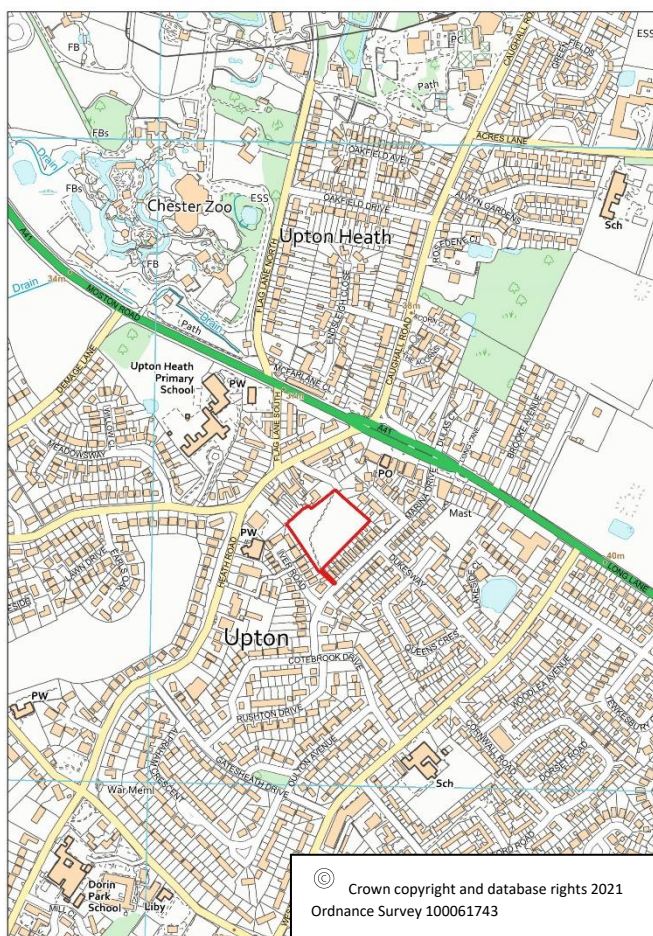
“Chemistry Pits” Playing Fields, off Marina Drive

Location and Access

The “Chemistry Pits” Playing Fields occupy a site which is secluded by the houses and gardens of Marina Drive, Longfield Avenue, Heath Road and Iver Road. This is close to the local retail centre on Long Lane and within walking distance of most residents. There is no dedicated car parking but local buses serve stops on Heath Road and Long Lane within a few hundred metres of the fields. The fields are owned, operated and maintained by Upton by Chester and District Parish Council, principally for the benefit of residents of the Parish.



Location Map



There is level pedestrian access from Marina Drive and from Heath Road. A level gravelled path suitable for use by wheelchairs and prams has been constructed across the field which can provide a convenient pedestrian route between the two roads. The field is locked at night but is otherwise freely accessible to the public.

Development and Historical Significance



The origins of this site as a recreational amenity date from the late 1920s, when it was proposed to create a ring road by-passing Upton by linking Long Lane to Moston. The new road would pass through a field which had been made available as a children's play area by a prominent local landowner (several times Mayor of Chester) Sir John Meadows Frost. Sir John agreed to sell the land for the amount needed to purchase a new play area. It took many years before a suitable alternative site was agreed upon but in 1931 the current site was passed to the Parish "for the use of Children of School Age only". The original plaque recording the gift has disappeared and a replacement was erected in May 2005 (see above).

The somewhat strange and off-putting name for the fields arose because it was "by the Chemistry Pits". The Chemistry Pit was a large pool, long since drained, lying just south of where Heath Row Cottages now stand.

Landscape and Recreational Value

The fields provide a significant open space in an otherwise "built-up" area which is appreciated by residents whose homes overlook the site.

An area at the western corner of the site has been designated as a Community Wildlife Area and trees and shrubs are being allowed to grow.

The recreational use of the site is principally for informal play. There is a "kickabout" football area with undersized goalposts.



General view of the field looking North from Marina Drive entrance.

Community significance

The field is much valued by the local community. In the late 1990s, a proposal by the Parish Council to use part of the field for sheltered housing for disabled people led to much protest from local residents concerned at the loss of open space and the plans were dropped.

As noted above, a section of the field was turned into a Community Wildlife Area by volunteers from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers with the assistance of children from Upton Heath Primary School and Dorin Park School. There is an explanatory board on the site.



Sources

Pearn, P. Roberts, K. and Smith, B. (2005), *Upton-by-Chester: A People's History*, Upton-by-Chester Local History Group.

Appendix 5: Members of the Steering Group

Parish Council Members

Name	Dates of Membership
Jean Evans (Chair)	2014 - present
Pat Lott	2014 - 2015
Alison Bennion	2014 - 2019
Jill Houlbrook	2015 - present
Brenda Southward	2015 - 2018
Teresa Bartliffe	2015 - 2016
David Ford	2015 - 2016
Adrian Walmsley	2016 - 2019
Tom Egerton-Parry	2019 - present
Jakub Schmidt	2019 - present
Peter Greenhalgh	2019 - present

Community Members

Name	Dates of Membership
James Cameron	2014 – 2016
Phil Coombe	2014 - 2016
Jackie Coombe	2014 - 2016
Lorraine Mellor	2014 - 2016
Mike Worden	2014 - present
David Evans	2014 - present
Pat Lott	2015 - 2016
Alan Lingard	2017 - 2019
Sue Stanley	2017 - present
John Every	2017 - 2019

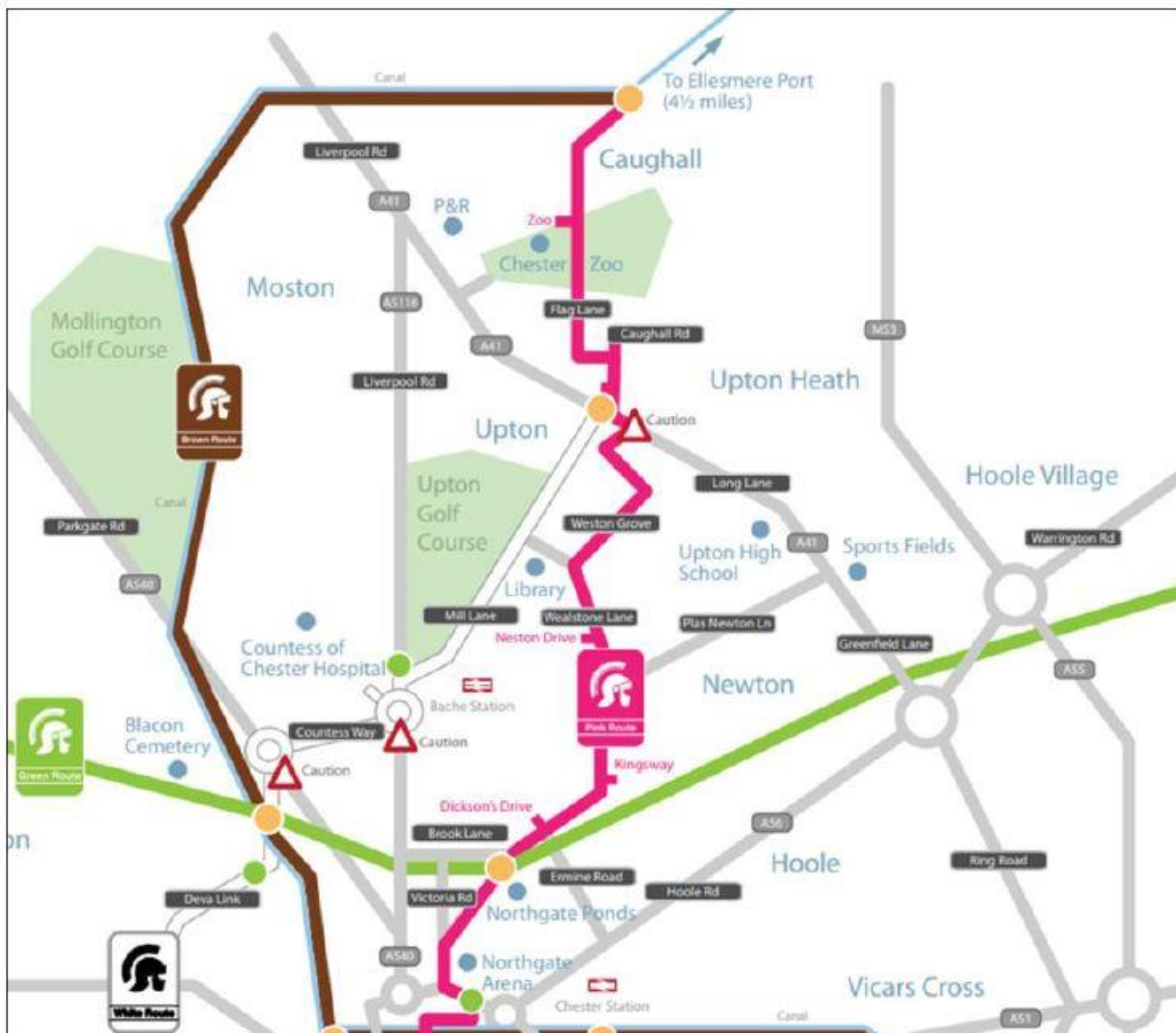
Appendix 6: Review of cycle routes in Upton

April 2019, Updated January 2020

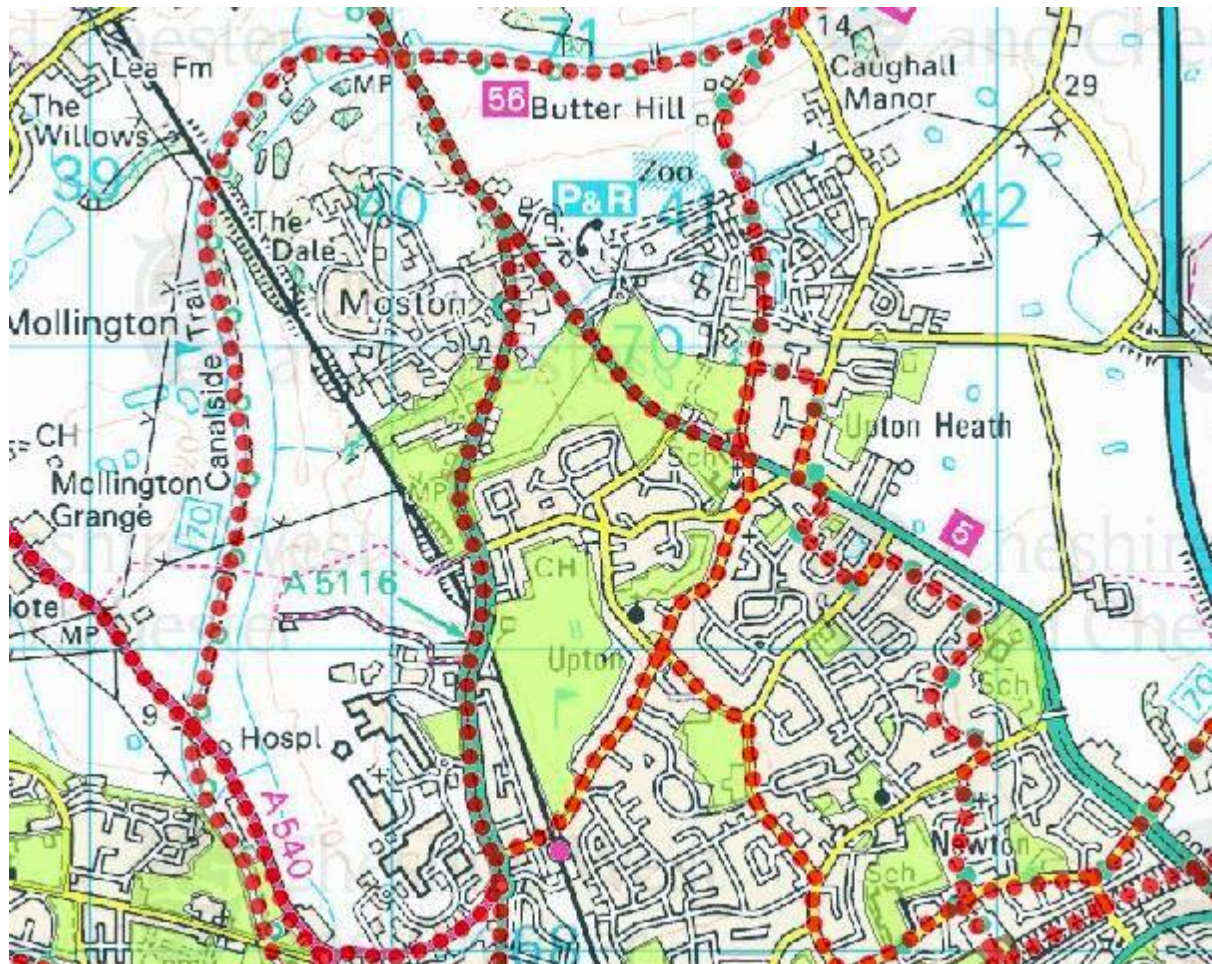
1. Current Routes

Three of the established Chester Cycle Routes pass through Upton Parish:

- the 'Brown Route' which follows the canalside between Caughall Bridge, the City Centre and Waverton (8 miles);
- the 'White Route' between Sealand Road retail/business parks and the Heath Road/Long Lane junction (2.5 miles);
- the 'Pink Route' running between the City Centre and Caughall Bridge (3.5 miles).



Parts of the Brown and Pink routes double as National Routes 5 (between Reading and Holyhead) and 56 (between Chester and Liverpool). These National Routes also incorporate the A41 (Long Lane/Moston Road) and parts of the A5116 (Liverpool Road) through the area.



Cycle network

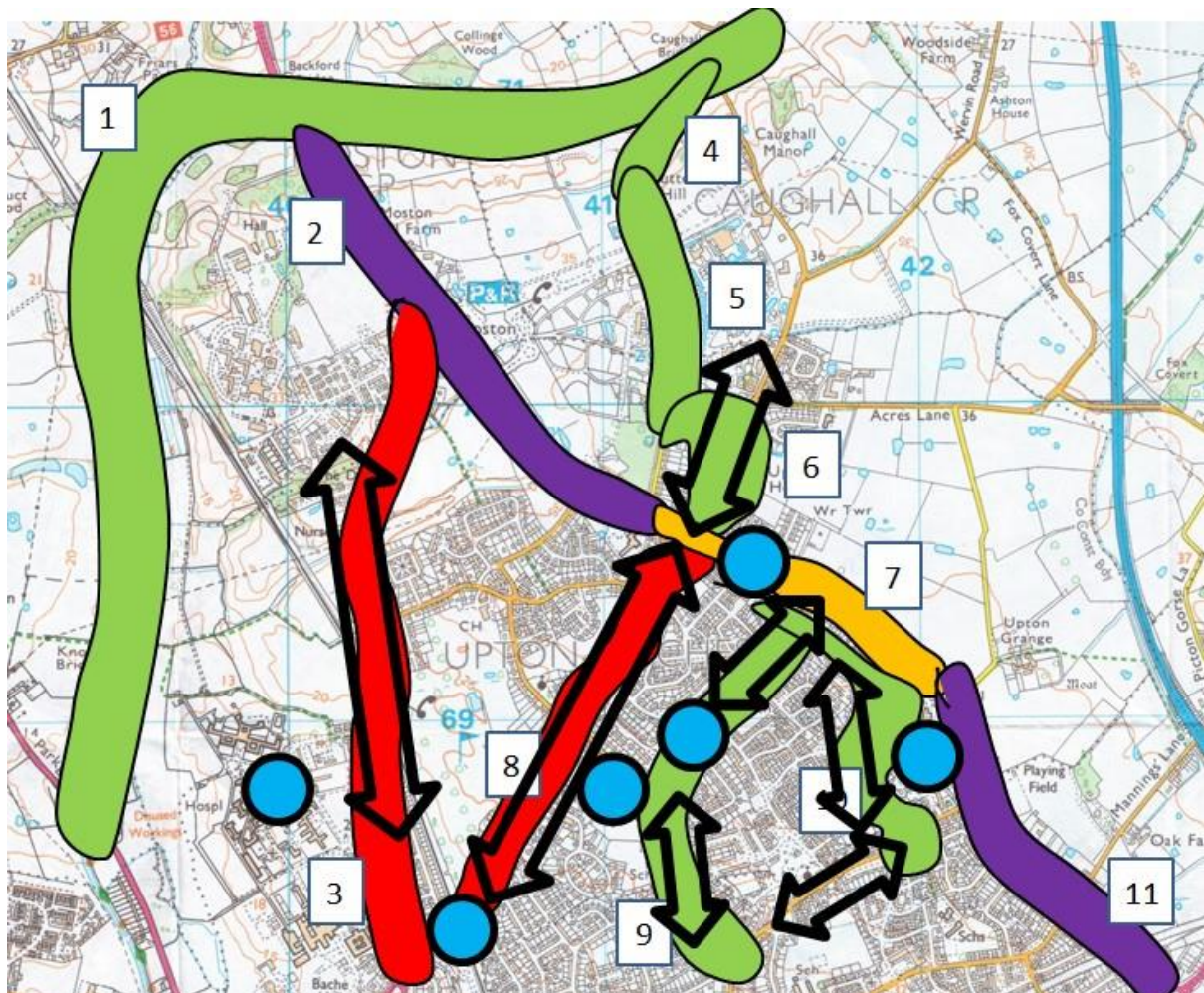
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Ordnance Survey 100061743

2. Route Assessment

The Brown Route which runs along the canal towpath is continuous and traffic free. Of the remaining 8 miles or so of designated routes through Upton:

- only the half mile stretch of the Pink (National 56) Route to the north of Flag Lane is traffic free;
- the A41 route is alternately a narrow on-road strip marked with a broken white line and a combined off-road cycle /footpath;
- all other routes are on-road and unmarked.

Map Ref	Description	Speed Limit (VH/H/M/L)	Traffic Vol (VH/H/M/L)	Other issues	Relative traffic related fear factor
1.	Brown Route between Caughall Bridge and Parkgate Road – off-road and traffic free	n/a	n/a		
2.	A41/Moston Road between Backford Bridge and Flag Lane – combined off-road cycle /footpath	50	VH	Clearway / incline to Backford Bridge	
3.	A5116/Liverpool Road – on-road and unmarked	40	H		
4.	Pink Route south of Caughall Bridge – quiet country lane	n/a	L		
5.	Pink Route north of Flag lane - off-road and traffic free	n/a	n/a		
6.	Pink Route through Caughall Road / Flag Lane – unmarked / quiet residential streets	30	L		
7.	A41/Long Lane between Flag Lane and Weston Grove – periodic narrow on-road strip	30	VH		
8.	Mill Lane/Heath Road – on-road and unmarked	30	H	Narrow lanes and pavements / calming	
9.	Westin Grove / Wealstone Lane - unmarked / quiet residential streets	20	M		
10.	Pink Route / National Route 56 - unmarked / quiet residential streets	20	L		
11.	A41/Long Lane between Weston Grove and Plas Newton Lane – narrow on-road strip	50	VH		





A41/Long Lane westwards
from Flag Lane



A41/Long Lane eastwards
from Weston Grove



Pavement route markings at Zoo entrance
from A41/Long Lane



A41/Moston Road southwards
From Backford Bridge



Signage at Upton Dene
west side of A5116/Liverpool Road



Subway crossing to Hospital
east side of A5116/Liverpool Road

	
<p>White route signage west side of Mill Lane outside Bache station</p>	<p>Traffic free section of Pink Route north of Flag lane through the Zoo</p>
	
<p>Pavement route markings at A41 crossing to east of Long Lane shops</p>	<p>Pavement route markings at A41 crossing across from Long Lane shops</p>
	
<p>Pink Route (and Bache) signage at junction of Weston Grove and Wealstone lane</p>	<p>Pink Route and Brown Route canalside signage at Caughall Bridge</p>

Liverpool Road and Mill Lane / Heath Road are key pressure points

Implications /opportunity in relation to any Dale development as part of NDP (Section 106/CIL)

Limited opportunities though for Mill Lane / Heath Road short of new circulatory system.

Tie in with Cheshire West and Chester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

Appendix 7: Housing Needs Assessment

Please see separate document

Appendix 8: Design Code

Please see separate document



If you need further information:

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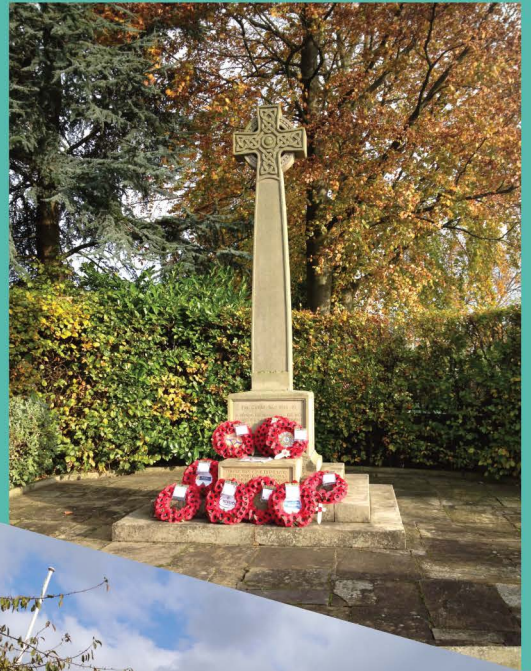
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Facebook: Your Upton 2030

Upton-by-Chester & District Parish Council



Your Upton NEIGHBOURHOOD Plan



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