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*Congresbury
Neighbourhood
Development Plan
2019-2036*



Table of Contents

VOLUME 1

		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	4
	1.1 Aims of the Plan	4
	1.2 Legal Status of Neighbourhood Development Plans	4
	1.3 Congresbury	4
	1.4 History of the Parish	5
	1.5 Area Covered by Plan	6
	1.6 Consultation	7
	1.7 Duration of the Plan	7
	1.8 Topics	8
2	A VISION FOR CONGRESBURY	8
3	SUMMARY OF POLICIES AND COMMUNITY ACTIONS	9
4	NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES	11
	4.1 Housing	11
	Policy H1 – Sustainable Development Location Principles	14
	Policy H2 – Sustainable Development Site Principles	15
	Policy H3 – Housing Allocations	16
	Policy H4 – Affordable Housing Site	25
	4.2 Facilities	28
	Policy F1 – Protecting and Enhancing Community Services	29
	4.4 Environment and Heritage	29
	Policy EH1 – Enhance the Conservation Area	30
	Policy EH2 – Area of High Landscape Sensitivity	32
	Policy EH3 – Local Green Space Designation	34
	Policy EH4 – Landscape and Wildlife Preservation Measures	36
	Policy EH5 – Renewable Energy	36
	4.5 Employment	37
	Policy E1 – Retention of Business and Employment within the Parish	37
5	COMMUNITY ACTIONS	41
	5.1 Transport and Highways	41
	Community Action T1 – Strawberry Line	42
	Community Action T2 – Parking, Walking and Cycling Solutions	42
	Community Action T3 – Mitigating Traffic Problems and Enhancing Sustainable Travel	43
	5.2 Facilities	46
	Community Action F1 – Community Facilities	46
	5.2 Environment and Heritage	47
	Community Action EH1 – Conservation Area Character Appraisal	47
	Community Action EH2 – Community Led Renewable Energy Schemes	48
6	MEMBERS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP	49

Map		
1	Area Covered by the Plan	6
2	Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map	10
3	Housing Allocations	18
4	Housing Allocations Site A	19
5	Housing Allocations Site B	20
6	Housing Allocations Site C	21
7	Housing Allocations Site D	22
8	Identified Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Area	24
9	Housing Allocations Site E	26
10	Congresbury Conservation Area	30
11	Area of High Landscape Sensitivity	32
12	Local Green Space Designations	34
13	Employment and Community Use Allocation	39
14	Employment Allocation	40

VOLUME 2
APPENDICES

Appendix	SCHEDULE OF EVIDENCE
A	Consultation Report July 2018
B	The Community Report of Congresbury Parish Plan Steering Group
C	Postcard Survey
D	How Congresbury has grown - A report for Congresbury Parish Council Authors: Tom Leimdorfer, Stuart Sampson. Publication Date June 2015, Updated January 2018
E	Highways and Transport, Evidence Base Report. Technical Report 19709/1 - August 2017 Mark Baker Consulting Ltd
F	Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/W/15/3004788 Land off Brinsea Road, Congresbury
G	Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/W/16/3151600 Land off Wrington Lane, Congresbury, BS49 5BJ
H	Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/W/17/3176151 Land to the east of Brinsea Road, Congresbury BS49 5JJ
I	Site Allocation Surveys
J	Assessment of impact of proposed housing sites on surrounding heritage assets
k	Speed Watch data
L	Congresbury Listed Buildings
M	Employment Survey 2016

1 INTRODUCTION

The Neighbourhood Development Plan process, as set out in the Localism Act 2011, enables communities to better shape the place where they live and work, to inform how developments take place and help influence the type, quality and location of those developments, ensuring that change brings local benefit.

The Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) is based on extensive research and influenced by robust engagement with the local community. Once the Plan is 'made', it will have full weight in the determination of planning applications and provide details on how to prioritise the spending of any s106 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to ensure maximum benefit for the community.

1.1 Aims of the Plan

The Plan aims to ensure Congresbury remains a thriving and safe community in which to live now and for the future. It covers the period 2019 to 2036.

Congresbury parish has been subject to opportunistic developers and the Plan aims to ensure that the community has an influence over local decisions and to address challenges for its future.

1.2 Legal Status of Neighbourhood Development Plans

Neighbourhood Development Plans were established under the Localism Act. The Act, which became law in 2011, aims to give local people more say in the future of their community. To be granted legal status a Neighbourhood Plan has to be approved by a local referendum and formally adopted by the Local Authority. It then forms part of the Statutory Development Plan with the same legal status as the Local Plan and will be used to determine planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

The Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan will support local development needs set out in the emerging North Somerset Local Plan up to the year 2036 and become part of the Statutory Development Plan for North Somerset.

The Plan is in conformity with the strategic direction of the North Somerset Core Strategy. It allows the village to develop through steady but moderate growth, meeting the housing needs of the community while at the same time preserving the importance of the Green Belt, rural landscape and the conservation area and heritage assets. It also considers the infrastructure needed to support such growth.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan must have appropriate regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, related Planning Practice Guidance and North Somerset Council and Congresbury Parish Council planning policies as they currently stand. The Plan demonstrates how the sustainability objectives of the Government are implemented through local policies.

1.3 Congresbury

Congresbury is located approximately 11 miles to the south west of Bristol and approximately 8 miles to the north east of Weston-super-Mare. The village is split by the River Yeo. To the west the countryside is characterised by a network of rhynes and ditches across the low lying land. To the east the land is drier with a pattern of smaller fields and meadows. Congresbury benefits from Cadbury Hill, King's Wood and Urchin Wood to the North. King's Wood and Urchin Wood are in a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - they are nationally important as a North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation. The woodland is

renowned for its botanical interest and supports a particularly high diversity of vascular plants. Congresbury Moor has six fields – 10 Acre, New Croft, Meaker, Phippen, Norton and Footmead, which are now part of Biddle Street SSSI which was designated by English Nature in 1994. Cadbury Hill is a nationally important site for archaeology (the hillfort is a Scheduled Monument) and it is also a Local Nature Reserve.

The village itself is named after a Welsh missionary, St Congar, who is believed to have settled in the village in the 6th Century and is credited with performing a number of miracles in the area. He is believed to have built a church in the village and with others preached and ministered to the local population. Legend says that he planted his walking stick into the ground which took root and flourished into a tree providing shade in the churchyard.

1.4 History of the Parish

The first evidence of occupation is from the Neolithic period based on artefacts found on Cadbury Hill. Later during the Iron Age, a hillfort was constructed on the hill. There is also evidence of Roman activities within the area including temples on Cadbury Hill. When the Romans left the area in the 4th century AD the hillfort was reoccupied and again became a focal point of activity and commerce within the area. Evidence of early medieval and Saxon occupation is recorded at St Andrew's Church, Honey Hall, Iwood and Brinsea.

The remains of a Roman villa have been found along the river at Wemberham plus a number of Romano-British kiln sites have been located in and around the village. The number of kilns indicates a thriving pottery industry from circa 250 to, possibly, the middle of the 4th century. The pottery, known now as Congresbury Grey Ware, was traded over a wide area. One of these pottery kilns was found close to Venus Street in 2017, and was the first to be excavated in around 50 years.

Congresbury is mentioned in the Domesday Survey under the name of 'Congresberie' and was part of the lands held by William I. In 1086 it is listed as having two mills and a population of about 500 people, almost all of whom were involved in mixed farming, with grain production taking priority. Congresbury Manor, which included Wick St Lawrence, paid £28 15s [£28.75] annually in silver, a huge sum, to the King.

The present church, dedicated to St Andrew, was consecrated in 1215. It was originally a small simple building consisting primarily of a nave. A priest's house was built in 1446, now known as the Refectory. During the middle ages the church was a destination for pilgrims seeking a cure for various illnesses. Both buildings are Grade I listed.

In the 13th Century Broad Street became the commercial centre of the village and the site for regular markets and fairs. In the 1500s a market cross was erected at the top of Broad Street. It is a scheduled monument with Grade II* listing and one of a small number of medieval crosses still in their original position.

Congresbury has long suffered from poor drainage and floods. In 1607 a great part of Congresbury was hidden by the sea and in 1656 a surveyor complained of "*the muddy moist unhealthiness of the air and poverty or idleness or both of residents in improving drainage*". The moors were often covered by water for several months each year and not until the 1820s was anything major done to address the problem. In 1968, a combination of heavy rains and a high tide caused the River Yeo to burst its banks and flood much of the village to the south of the river. As a result of this the river banks were raised and reinforced to prevent this happening again.

From medieval times until the mid-1900's Congresbury had a number of water mills along the River Yeo which served the local farming community and also provided employment for local people. Congresbury was renowned for its extensive orchards, with buyers travelling all the way from Bristol to purchase fresh apples from the growers. Up until the 1950's agriculture and its support services provided the majority of employment in the village.

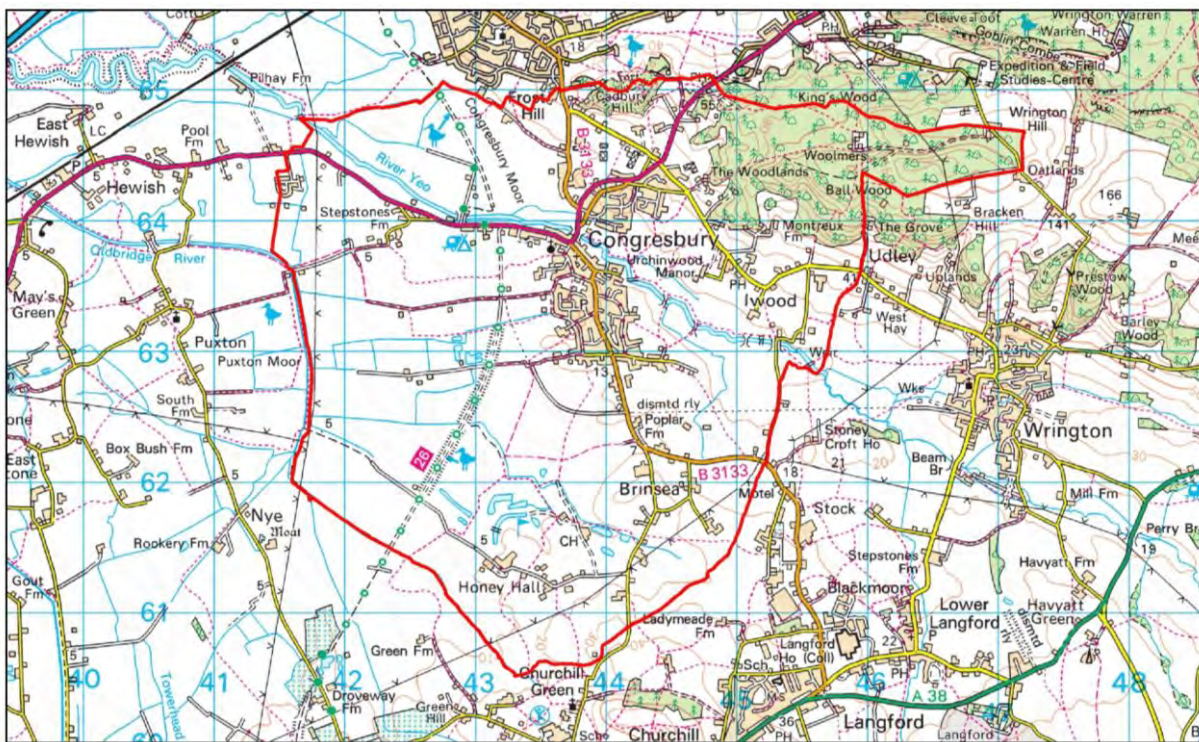
There were huge changes in the village between 1961 and 1971 when the population more than doubled. A new shopping precinct was built to provide facilities for the new housing estates south of the river. Also two new schools were built to replace the original one which was now too small. Direct employment within the village decreased as local businesses closed and the majority of residents now worked outside the village in Bristol or Weston-super-Mare. In the 1960's Congresbury lost its rail link to Bristol with the closure of the Strawberry Line, which is now an important cycling and walking route.

To celebrate the Millennium, seven acres of land was acquired for the establishment of a Millennium Green on either side of the River Yeo. To the south of the river a nature reserve was established with a community orchard planted with native fruit trees, including the Congresbury Beauty apple. To the north of the river an open space bordered by rhyes with dipping pools, copses of native trees planted by parishioners and play equipment for children was established. The footbridge over the river provided a safe route to schools and shops and physically linked the two parts of the village.

1.5 Area Covered by the Plan

The area covered by the Plan is the Parish of Congresbury, as shown in the following map:

Map 1 Neighbourhood Plan Area



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The application dated 6 July 2015 stated:

“The Parish Council considers that this is an appropriate area as the area is wholly administered by Congresbury Parish Council. Congresbury faces a number of challenges over the next 20 years from risk of flooding, pressures on infrastructure (such as congestion on the A370 and B3133 and an aging sewer system) as well as needing to carefully consider how it grows and develops sustainably to meet the needs and desire of current and future generations. The Neighbourhood Development Plan will further develop and build on the current Parish Plan that was produced in 2007 looking to further strengthen the local community.”

1.6 Consultation

Details of the consultation carried out up to July 2018 and how the results have been incorporated into the Plan are given in the Consultation Report (Appendix A). A full Consultation Statement has been submitted with the plan.

Following consultation with the community, Congresbury produced a Character Statement, which was adopted by North Somerset Council in 1998. The Character Statement outlined a series of recommendations and proposals on:

- Protecting the character of the village
- The landscape and countryside
- Built environment and
- Traffic and transport

Whilst much of the recommendations and proposals have been achieved including the development of the Millennium Green, redevelopment of the former library site for community use, provision of a community transport vehicle and a new footbridge over the river to link the northern and southern parts of the village, many of the issues and concerns raised then still remain.

Congresbury Parish Plan Steering Group produced a Community Report in September 2007 which aimed to review the 1998 Village Character Statement and to identify areas of concern for the future of Congresbury. A questionnaire was sent to all adult residents of the village with a response rate of over 50%. Other groups including local clubs and societies, local businesses and young persons were also surveyed. The findings of the questionnaires agreed on the weaknesses and threats to the village which included:

- traffic, making it difficult to move about the village safely;
- the vast majority wanted growth in housing to be community led, the ‘settlement boundary’ was seen as an important control measure; and
- many thought public services, transport, rubbish collection etc. could be better coordinated.

The Community Report was not formally adopted and is reproduced at Appendix B.

1.7 Duration of the Plan

The duration of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is up to 2036. It aligns with the emerging North Somerset Local Plan which covers the plan period 2019-2036. The strategic planning context is provided by the adopted North Somerset Core Strategy (2017).

1.8 Topics

The topics listed below were identified by the Steering Group following the ‘postcard survey’ carried out in 2016 when all residents were invited to share their views on Congresbury (Appendix C). Policies have been developed from those issues that were considered to be relevant and evidenced to the plan. The topics are:

- Housing
- Transport and Highways
- Facilities and services
- Environment/Heritage
- Employment

Details of the issues raised and resulting policies and community actions are given in the following sections.

2 A VISION FOR CONGRESBURY



View across the Millennium Footbridge

The vision for Congresbury:

- Congresbury will continue to be a welcoming, vibrant, independent village set in a rural landscape with a conservation area at its heart.
- The village will remain a place where small businesses can thrive and the residents can continue to benefit from a full range of quality services, amenities and facilities.
- The community will embrace the aspirations of all its members and promote an environment where these aspirations can be realised.
- All residents of our village will feel that they can fully participate in village life; that their wellbeing is seen to be important and feel a genuine sense of pride in where they live.
- Congresbury will continue to be a safe and pleasant place to live, and will aspire to achieving a sustainable infrastructure that minimises its carbon footprint and maximises the opportunity for recycling. The green spaces within the village will be made accessible and will be maintained for the benefit of all.
- Any future developments should be appropriate to the existing character and needs of the village.

3 SUMMARY OF POLICIES AND COMMUNITY ACTIONS

3.1 POLICIES

Housing

- H1 Sustainable development location principles
- H2 Sustainable development site principles
- H3 Housing Allocations
- H4 Affordable housing allocation

Facilities

- F1 Protecting and enhancing community services

Environment and Heritage

- EH1 Enhance the Conservation Area
- EH2 Area of High Landscape Sensitivity
- EH3 Local Green Space Designations
- EH4 Landscape and wildlife preservation measures
- EH5 Renewable Energy

Employment

- E1 Retention of business and employment within the Parish

3.2 COMMUNITY ACTIONS

Transport and Highways

- CA T1 Strawberry Line
- CA T2 Parking, Walking and Cycling Solutions
- CA T3 Mitigating Traffic Problems and Enhancing Sustainable Travel

Facilities

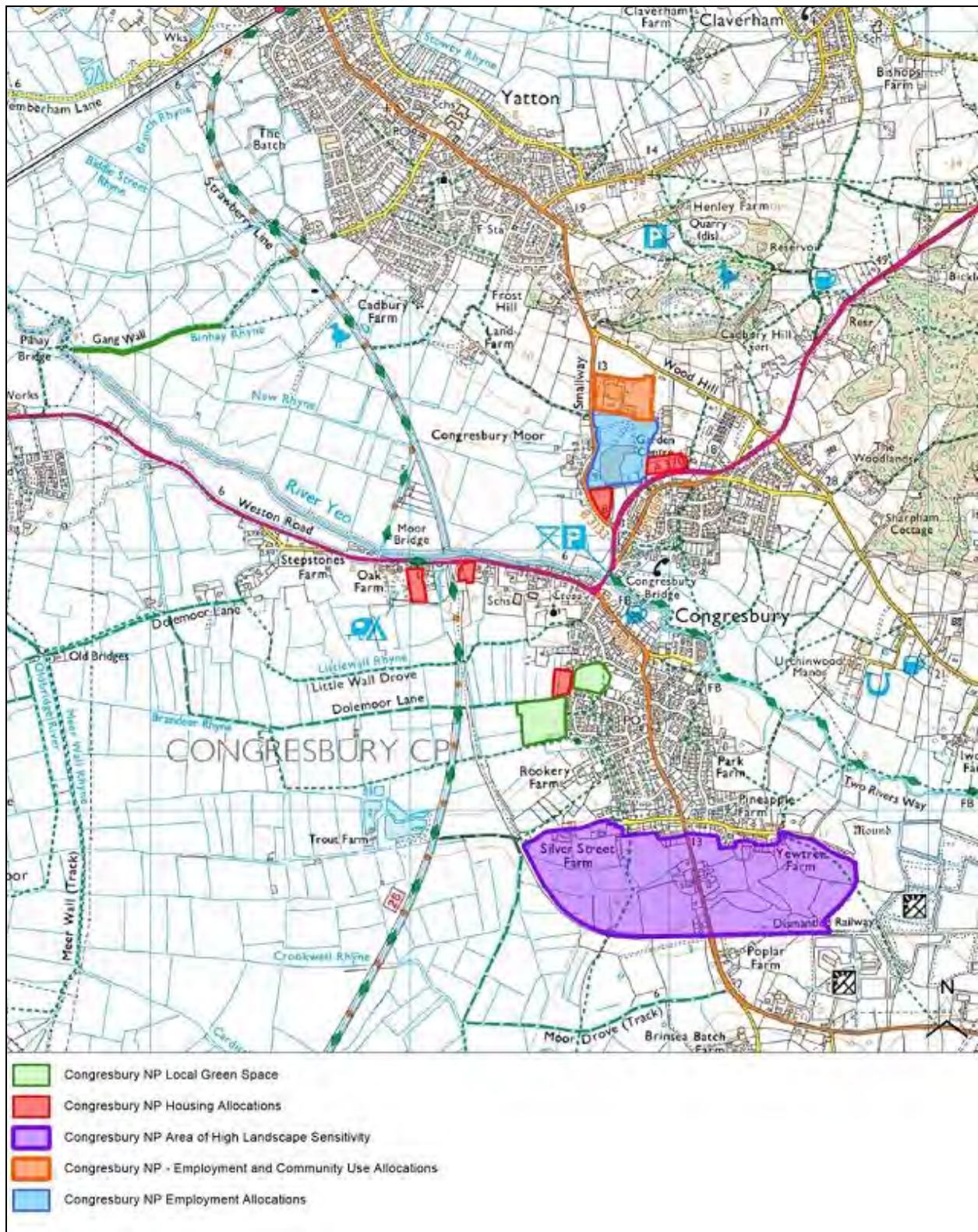
- CA F1 Community Facilities

Environment and Heritage

- CA EH1 Conservation Area Character Appraisal
- CA EH2 Community Led Renewable Energy Schemes

Map 2 Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

This map shows the allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan which are expanded on in the following sections of the Plan.



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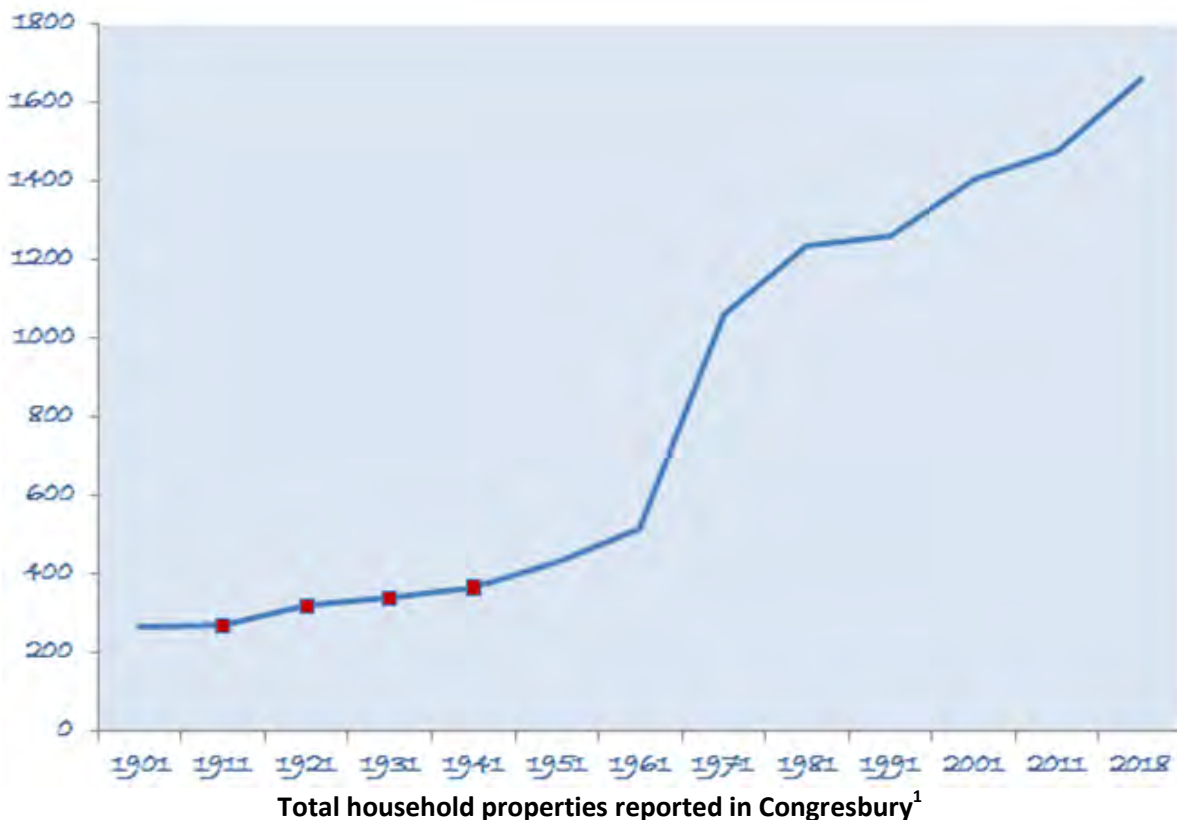
4 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

4.1 Housing

The population of Congresbury grew by just over 450 people between 1901 and 1961. During the 1960's the population of the village doubled to 3397 people as shown by the 1971 census. A large part of this growth was due to the action of Axbridge Rural District Council in the post-war years to build the Southlands council estate to ensure that local working people had homes in which they could afford to live. Also the addition of estates in Park Road, Stonewell, Silverstone Way, Yew Tree Park, Silver Street and north of the River Yeo in Cobthorn, Verlands, Weetwood and Wrington Mead.

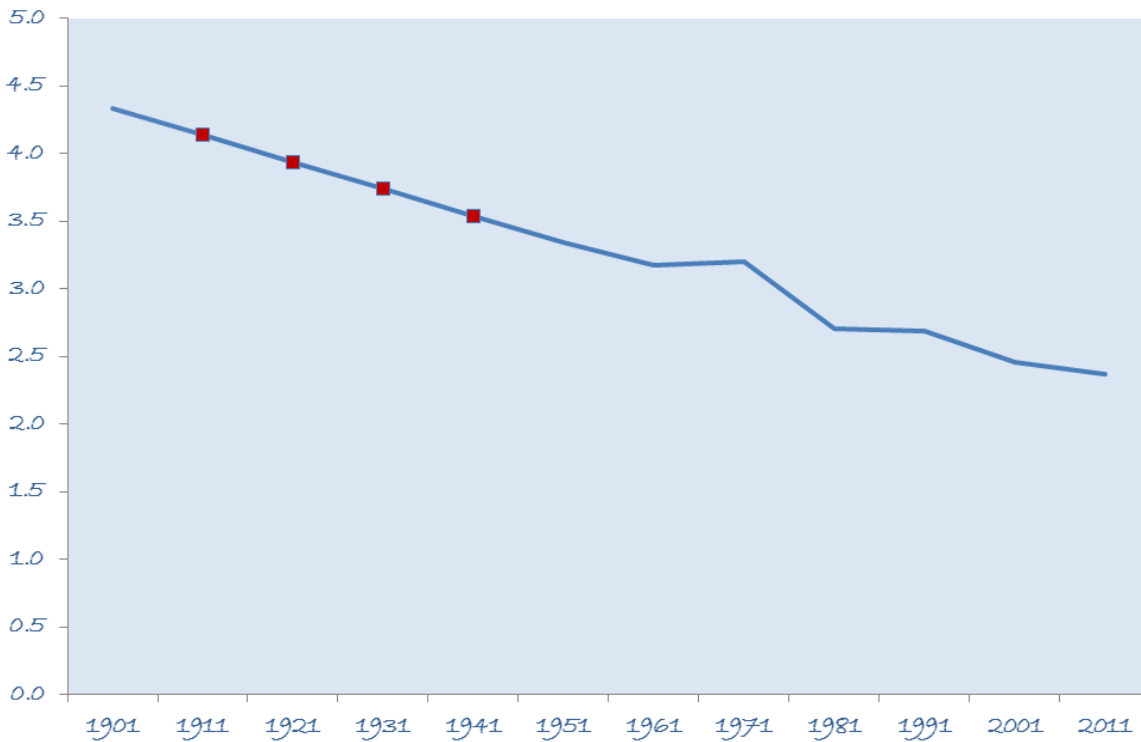
Sheltered housing for the elderly was built in Chestnut Close and Yeo Court and a number of smaller developments were all completed by the mid-1970's, Bramley Square and Cadbury Square (Redland Housing) completed by the end of the 1970's.

The 1980's saw little new housing in Congresbury except for small scale development like The Lyes, off Park Road, Silver Mead, and part of Well Park. The early 1990's saw the development of the Gypsy/Roma/Traveller site at Moorland Park, and the 'rural exception' affordable housing at Station Close and the Gooseham Mead development near the river.



There have been a number of developments over the past 20 years, but the population has barely grown. A reduction in household occupancy and change in demographics has been a key factor. The increase in house prices has led to market housing being unaffordable for many families.

¹ Source: Census and Hispop. The red dot represents estimated data.



Average number of people per household

Some 70 new dwellings were created between 2001 and 2011. Developments included Millennium Mews with 13 homes to rent (built adjacent to the settlement boundary) and Southlands Way with 7 properties a mix of one bed homes and live/work units. During the recent years, Congresbury has grown by 65 dwellings; significant developments include 10 properties at Kent Road, 29 adjoining Mill Lane and 14 dwellings on land north of Venus Street.

Apart from the 70 dwellings built and 119 consents during 2014-2018; approval has been given so far for 13 additional single dwellings either by way of agricultural or other ‘prior determination’ or acceptable ‘infill’. This means that completed and consented development in the past four years already exceeds the total for the previous 25 years. Appendix D “How Congresbury Has Grown” report contains further information.

Recent years have seen an increase in the number of applications submitted for development on sites outside the settlement boundary. The reason for this has been the uncertainty in planning policy created by the successful legal challenge to the North Somerset Core Strategy adopted in April 2012 and several key policies being remitted as a result. Following several stages of examination by the Planning Inspectorate, the modified Core Strategy was re-adopted in January 2017. However, the increase in the total housing requirement to 20,985 for the plan period 2006-2026 has resulted in a backlog and an inability for the North Somerset Council to demonstrate a five-year supply for housing development. As a consequence, a number of large scale developments outside settlement boundaries have been approved within North Somerset, contrary to policy, either by the Council or by the Planning Inspectorate at appeal.

A notable exception was dismissal of the appeal for development on land off Brinsea Road, south of Silver Street (Appendix F). The appeal for development on land south of Wrington Lane was also dismissed, although a duplicate application had already been granted by North Somerset Council (Appendix G). In

addition the appeal for up to 24 dwellings on land to the east of Brinsea Road was also dismissed in December 2017 for reasons that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and judged on the evidence, the appeal site would not provide an easily accessible location relative to local services and facilities and would not maximise opportunities to reduce the need to travel and encourage active travel modes and public transport (Appendix H).

4.1.1 Current and emerging policy context

(a) North Somerset Core Strategy (adopted January 2017)

Policies of most direct relevance:

- CS1 Addressing Climate Change and carbon reduction
- CS2 Delivering sustainable design and construction
- CS3 Environmental impacts and flood risk management
- CS4 Nature conservation
- CS5 Landscape and the historic environment
- CS6 Green Belt
- CS12 Achieving high quality design and place making
- CS13 Scale of new housing
- CS14 Distribution of new housing
- CS15 Mixed and balanced communities
- CS16 Affordable Housing
- CS17 Rural exception schemes
- CS19 Strategic gaps
- CS32 Service villages
- CS33 Smaller settlements and countryside

(b) Policy SA1 in the Site Allocations Plan (April 2018).

This policy has, in Schedule 1, identified sites within the village for residential development. These are:

- Land south of Cadbury Garden Centre – allocated for 21 dwellings
- Land off Cobthorn Way – outline planning consent for 38 dwellings
- Land off Wrington lane – outline planning consent for 50 dwellings
- Venus Street – Full planning permission for 14 dwellings. This site is now built out.

(c) Emerging West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP)

The submitted Joint Spatial Plan, which is at examination stage, proposes the need to identify additional capacity for up to 44,000 homes for the West of England in addition to the existing commitment of 61,500 for the sub-region. This requirement, following the outcome of the examination process, will inform the new North Somerset Local Plan for the period 2018-36. While there are no proposals for major expansion of Congresbury within the JSP, large scale ‘garden village’ developments are being considered at Banwell close to the M5 and at Churchill/Langford which would impact on Congresbury. These proposals are subject to Government Inspectors’ examination. At the same time, all towns and service villages are expected to bring forward proposals which help to meet the need for housing in the region (particularly more affordable housing) and enable the Council to reach the target for new dwellings in the current planning period.

Policy H1 – Sustainable Development Location Principles

- a) New developments will be supported where they are in locations where residents are able to walk safely and cycle reasonable distances to village facilities and services, have easy access to public transport and therefore minimising the use of private vehicles.
- b) Preference will be given to site locations which will not significantly increase the traffic on already congested narrow village roads and have the least impact on the two junctions of B3133 and A370 at Smallway and the High Street. New development will be supported where it can be satisfactorily and safely accommodated within the local highway network in general, and within the capacity of the two junctions of the B3133 and A370 at Smallway and the High Street in particular. Where appropriate proposed new development should incorporate mitigation measures to limit significant effects of development in the neighbourhood area.
- c) Infill development within the settlement boundary will be supported. Development in the village centre to higher densities to those which currently exist will be supported particularly where the redevelopment of existing buildings would provide flats or other smaller housing accommodation. In all cases, as appropriate to its location, new development within the settlement boundary should respect the amenities of existing residential development and conserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Justification for Policy H1

Policy H1 provides a strategic context for new development in the neighbourhood area up to 2036. It has two principal ambitions. The first is to promote sustainable development. The second is to ensure that the approach has regard to national policy and assists in delivering the ambitions of the North Somerset Core Strategy. In this context Congresbury is identified as one of a series of Service Villages.

Congresbury is a village with a distinctive character and a high degree of community cohesion. Any new development needs to respect and enhance the character of the village and to be in a sustainable location with good access to village amenities. Core Strategy policy CS32 allows sites of up to 25 dwellings to come forward adjacent to settlement boundaries in Service Villages. The neighbourhood plan has chosen to allocate additional housing sites to assist in meeting its housing needs.

Some of the new housing sites are outside the existing settlement boundary as defined through the Site Allocations Plan 2018. The Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan has therefore undertaken a comprehensive review of the settlement boundary of Congresbury to incorporate the new housing allocations.

The village is subject to constrictions on development such as the green belt to the north of the village, floodplain to the south and west of the settlement and landscape considerations to the south and the east of the village. Congresbury has a desire to maintain its character, protect the landscape and rural character and therefore wishes to resist uncontrolled development in the rest of the village.

Included in this is the strategic gap between Congresbury and Yatton which not only protects the sensitive moor environment for future generations but also prevents the merging of the two villages. The Plan seeks to safeguard the existing gap between Congresbury and Churchill/Langford to the south to maintain their village identities and characters.

The Highways and Transport Evidence Base Report (Appendix E) states that the two junctions of A370 / B3133 Smallway and A370 / B3133 High Street are operating over or close to capacity and therefore preferred developments will be in areas that will have the least impact on these junctions. Consideration is also needed with regard to traffic from surrounding villages such as Churchill and Langford. Approved and proposed developments in these locations will significantly increase the traffic along the B3133 thereby exacerbating congestion at the A370/B3133 junctions. The third part of Policy H1 provides a context within which any development proposals can be assessed within the context of the local highway network in general, and the abilities which may exist to mitigate their impacts in particular.

Policy H2 – Sustainable Development Site Principles

- a) Proposals for residential development of 10 or more dwellings should provide a minimum of 30% of the dwellings as affordable housing (for either rent or shared ownership).
- b) Consistent with Core Strategy policy CS15, new development should have regard to the needs of first-time buyers as well as the needs of elderly and disabled residents.
- c) Development proposals will be supported which minimise carbon footprint and energy requirements and aim for Passivhaus or 'Excellent' BREEAM rating level of construction.
- d) The fitting of photo-voltaic panels to domestic property will be supported where appropriate in terms of architecture and location. Subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan proposals for the development of new houses will be particularly supported where they are designed to generate some or all of their energy needs from renewable sources.

Justification for Policy H2

The recognised need for affordable housing is outlined in the North Somerset Core Strategy Policy CS16 and Affordable Housing Supplementary Housing Document. During the consultation for the Plan, local residents expressed a need for affordable housing to enable young persons to afford to stay in the village. The Plan is aiming to provide small sites for development and therefore it is essential that these have a minimum of 30% affordable housing. The exception to this could be self-build or co-housing schemes if justified by social and community benefit and viability considerations. The June 2015 Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the wider Bristol Housing Market Area (SHMA) (i.e. the NSC, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire council areas (available at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ED7-wider-Bristol-housing-market-area-report-2015.pdf>) identified that there was a need for 85,000 new dwellings in the period 2016–36. The SHMA indicated that the total affordable housing need for the same period is 29,000 homes across the Bristol Housing Market Area. The North Somerset HomeChoice Register (<http://www.homechoicemosersomerset.org.uk/>) records the number of eligible people needing affordable housing. In the last 12 months the number of new applicant households applying to join the register with at least one priority housing need was 928, which compares to an average 444 lettings per year.

North Somerset district is home to an above average proportion of older residents (North Somerset Housing Strategy 2016–21). The Strategy indicates that an additional 4,600 homes specifically for older people with varying levels of support, ranging from leasehold schemes for the elderly through to housing for people suffering from dementia, will be required over the period 2016 – 2036. Congresbury has a limited supply of bungalows and many are located at the fringes of the village, therefore any development with a proportion of suitable houses for older residents will be supported.

Proposals for new housing development will be supported which minimise carbon footprint and energy requirements and aim for Passivhaus or 'Excellent' BREEAM rating level of construction.

The fitting of photo-voltaic panels to domestic property will be encouraged where appropriate in terms of architecture and location.

Policy H3 –Housing Allocations

The following sites are allocated for residential use. Proposals for their development for residential purposes will be supported where they meet the following criteria;

Site A - Land to the South of Station Road, adjacent to Station Close

- their design integrates into the character of the village in terms of the scale of the buildings and the materials used;
- they respect the setting of heritage assets in the immediate locality;
- they take account of key views into the village;
- they provide for safe vehicular access to and from the site;
- they demonstrate how they would respect any archaeology in the immediate locality; and
- they do not adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. Where necessary appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated in accordance with the guidance set out in the North Somerset and Mendip Bat Special Area of Conservation Guidance on Development SPD or any successor document.

Site B - Land to the south of Station Road adjoining Church Farm

- they respect the wildlife and heritage of the Strawberry Line;
- they respect the remains of the Congresbury railway station and incorporate it into the proposed development where practicable;
- they provide for safe vehicular access to and from the site;
- they demonstrate how they would respect any archaeology in the immediate locality;
- they do not adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. Where necessary appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated in accordance with the guidance set out in the North Somerset and Mendip Bat Special Area of Conservation Guidance on Development SPD or any successor document.

Site C - Land to the north of Bristol Road

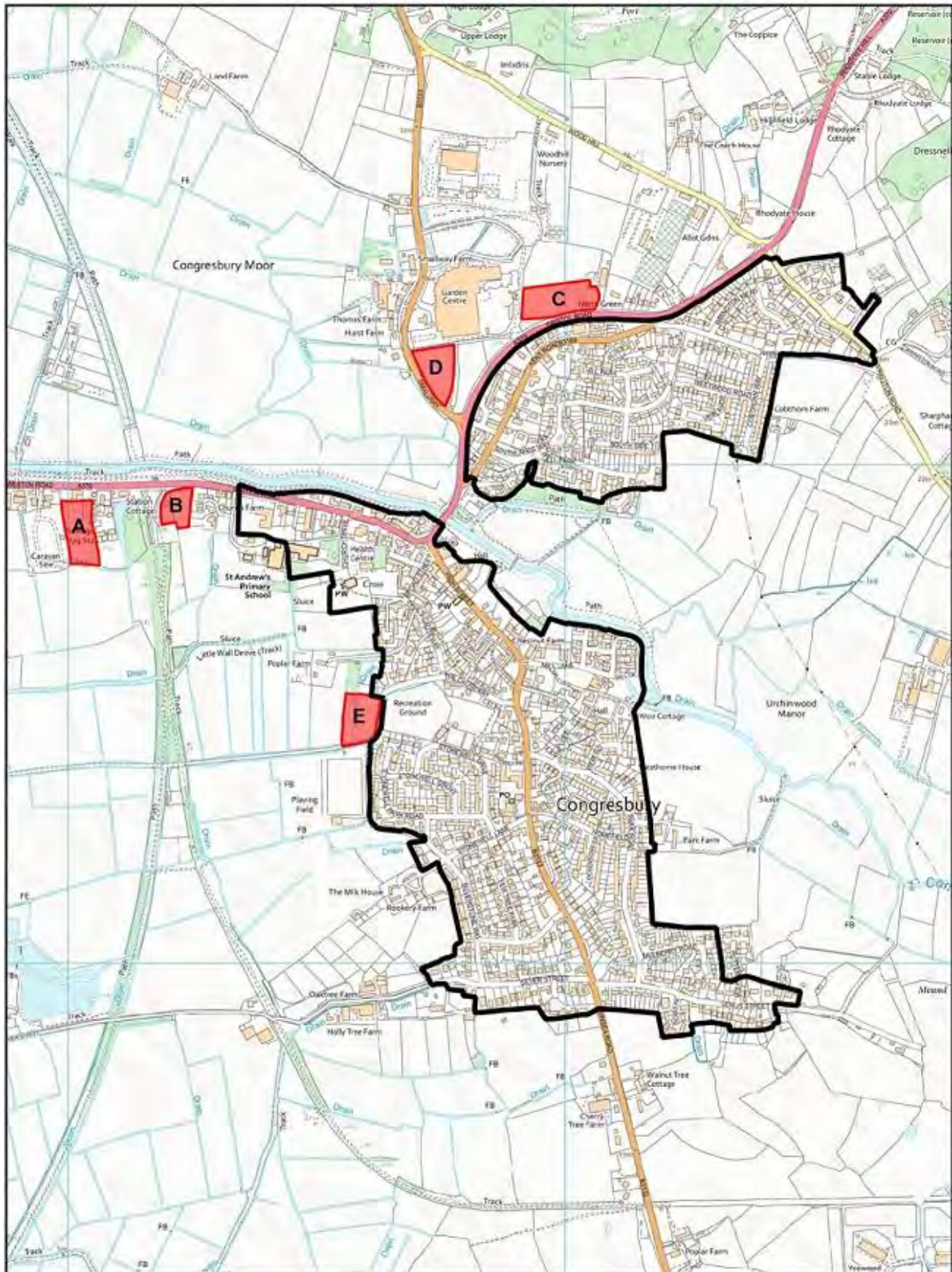
- they respect the setting of the Cadbury Hill ancient monument;
- they respect the setting of Clarence Court and Rhodyate House;
- their design integrates into the character of the village in terms of the scale of the buildings and the materials used;
- they provide for safe vehicular access to and from the site;
- the height of new buildings does not exceed three storeys;
- they demonstrate how they would respect any archaeology in the immediate locality; and
- they do not adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. Where necessary appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated in accordance with the guidance set out in the North Somerset and Mendip Bat Special Area of Conservation Guidance on Development SPD or any successor document.

Site D - Land off Smallway

- they provide for safe vehicular access to and from the site;

- they respect the setting of the Cadbury Hill ancient monument;
- they respect the setting of Clarence Court and the Congresbury Arms (listed buildings);
- their design integrates into the character of the village in terms of the scale of the buildings and the materials used;
- they demonstrate how they would respect any archaeology in the immediate locality; and
- they do not adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. Where necessary appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated in accordance with the guidance set out in the North Somerset and Mendip Bat Special Area of Conservation Guidance on Development SPD or any successor document.

Map 3 Housing Allocations



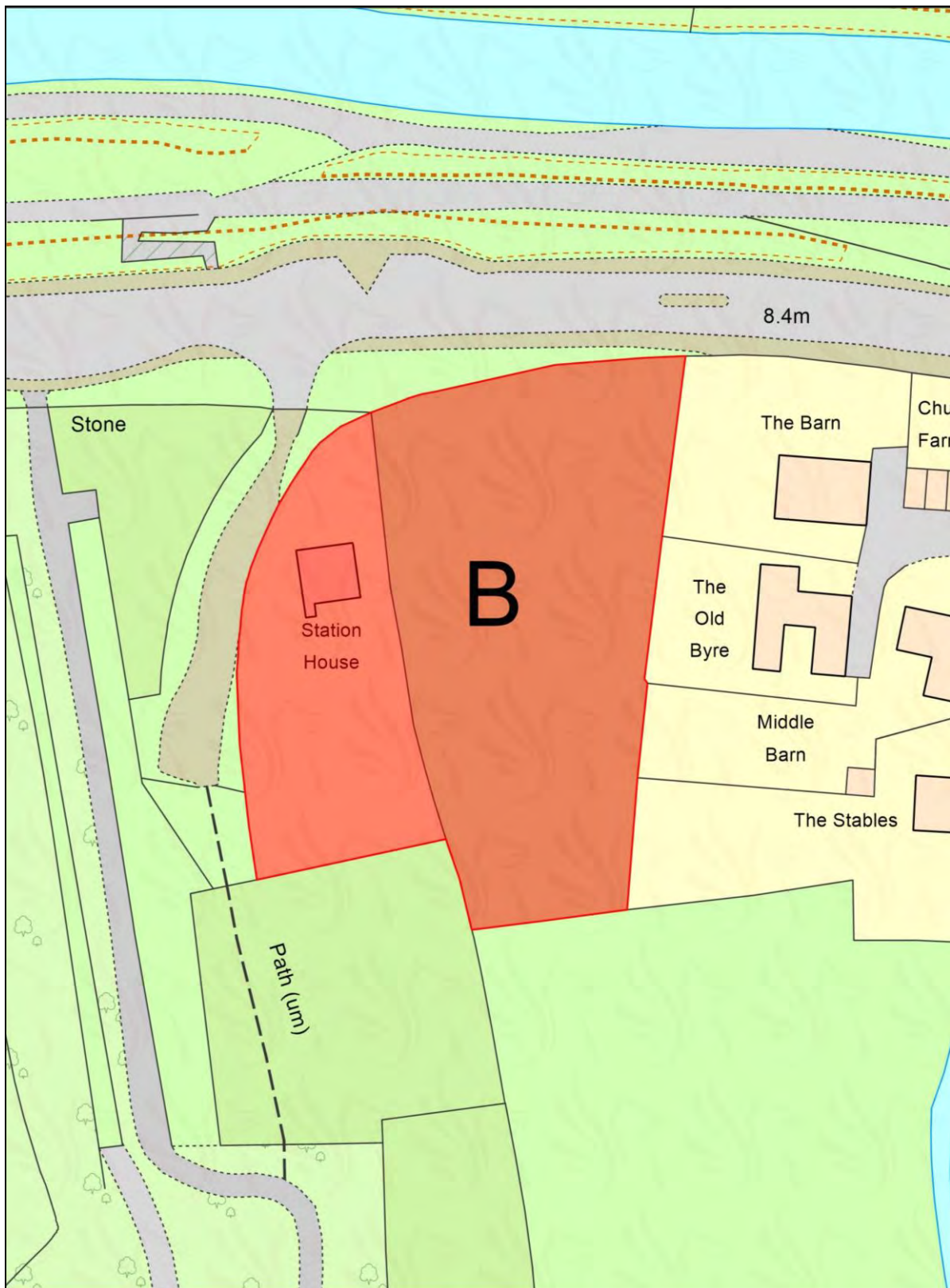
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Map 4 Housing Allocations Site A



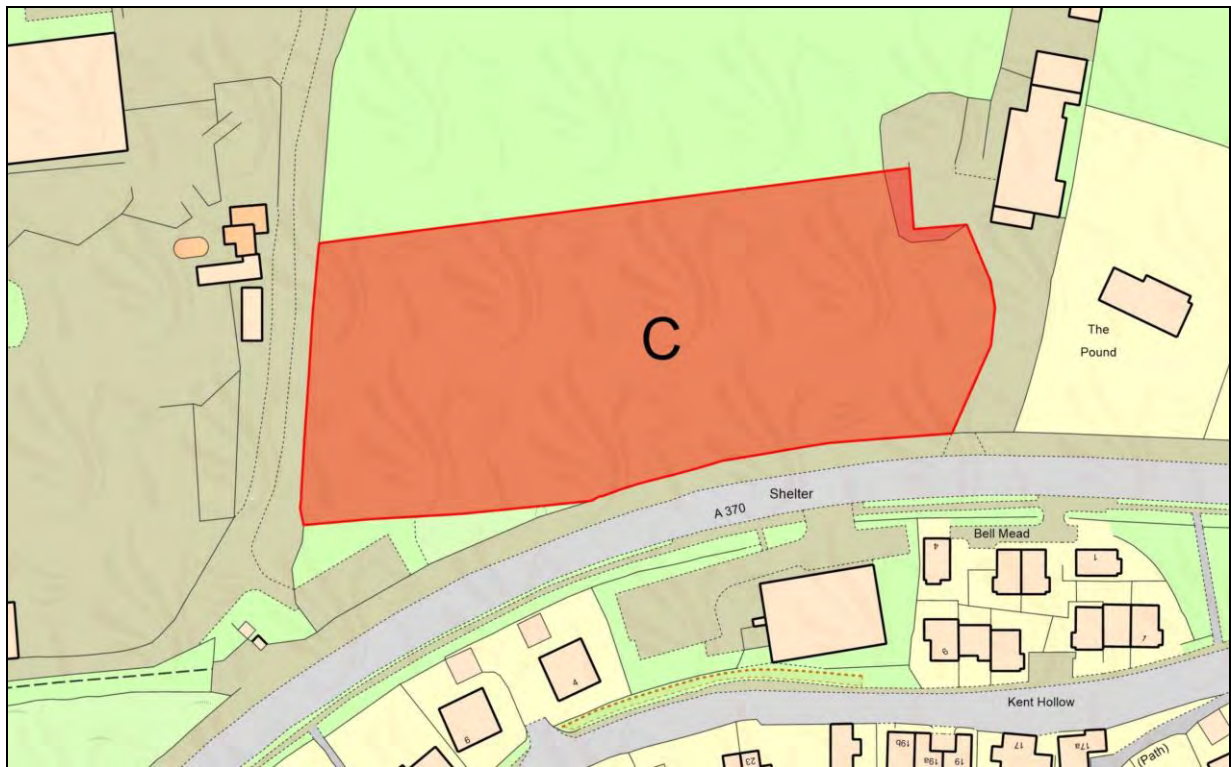
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Map 5 Housing Allocations Site B



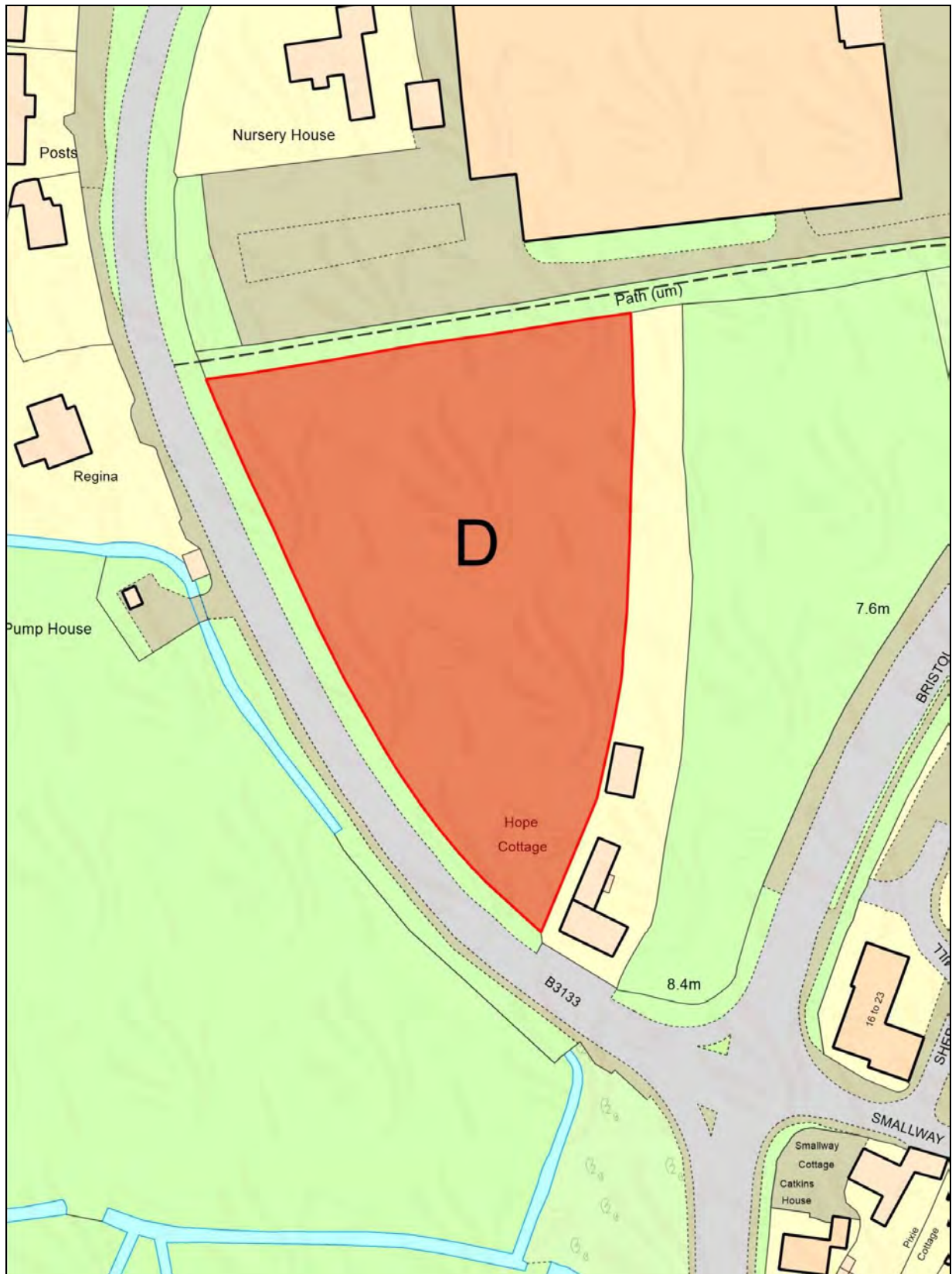
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Map 6 Housing Allocations Site C



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Map 7 Housing Allocations Site D



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Justification for Policy H3

The sites have been allocated as they are considered to be in sustainable locations.

Many areas of the village were considered for possible development and it was concluded that there is scope for development west of the village centre, along the A370. This area has good pedestrian access to the school and public services, easy access to bus services along the A370 towards Weston and Bristol as well as access to the Strawberry Line cycle route to Yatton Station. Drivers would also be able to access the A370 without putting greater pressure on the junctions and traffic heading towards the M5 would not have to travel through the village at all. Development towards the west (sites A and B) would also help to reduce the isolation of the rural exception social housing site at Station Close. The site behind the Mediterranean restaurant is part brownfield/ part greenfield. Access would be from Station Close. Development of this site would help community cohesion as Station Close is currently an isolated development. The site is sustainable with good access to village facilities and public transport. The site, east of the Strawberry line, is on land containing the derelict remains of the old Station Master's house plus the adjoining field. It is closer to village amenities than site A. Any development would need to respect the wildlife and heritage value of the Strawberry Line and the remains of the old Congresbury Railway Station.

Sites C and D (north of the village centre) are in a sustainable locations and development there could help provide a range of affordable and lower cost dwellings close to amenities and public transport. Site C has direct access onto the busy A370 and is close to a light controlled pedestrian crossing providing pedestrian access to the rest of the village. The site is currently in agricultural use. Development on a part of this site would provide up to 25 dwellings and would have a reasonably safe access onto the A370, with good sight lines. Site D will access onto the B3133 a busy and often congested road and could potentially aggravate existing highways problems at the B3133/A370 Smallway junction. This site is separated from a neighbouring site that has been identified in Schedule 1 of the Site Allocation Plan April 2018 by a long narrow strip of land, but access would be from the B3133.

It is considered that any development east of Park Road would harm the important landscape of the Yeo Valley. Access from Park Road would also be a problem and would affect the operation of the A370/B3133 High Street junction.

No development beyond the southern edge of the village (Silver Street and Venus Street) has been allocated as it is too remote from the village centre and would have significant negative impact on the open landscape and natural village boundary. As previously outlined this has been demonstrated by the following planning appeals: (1) Appeal Ref APP/D0121/W/15/3004788 (Appendix F) was dismissed in November 2015 for development on land off Brinsea Road (south of Silver Street; (2) Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/W/17/3176151 (Appendix G) for up to 24 dwellings on land to the east of Brinsea Road was also dismissed in December 2017 for reasons that the proposals would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and judged on the evidence, the appeal sites would not provide an easily accessible location relative to local services and facilities and would not maximise opportunities to reduce the need to travel and encourage active travel modes and public transport.

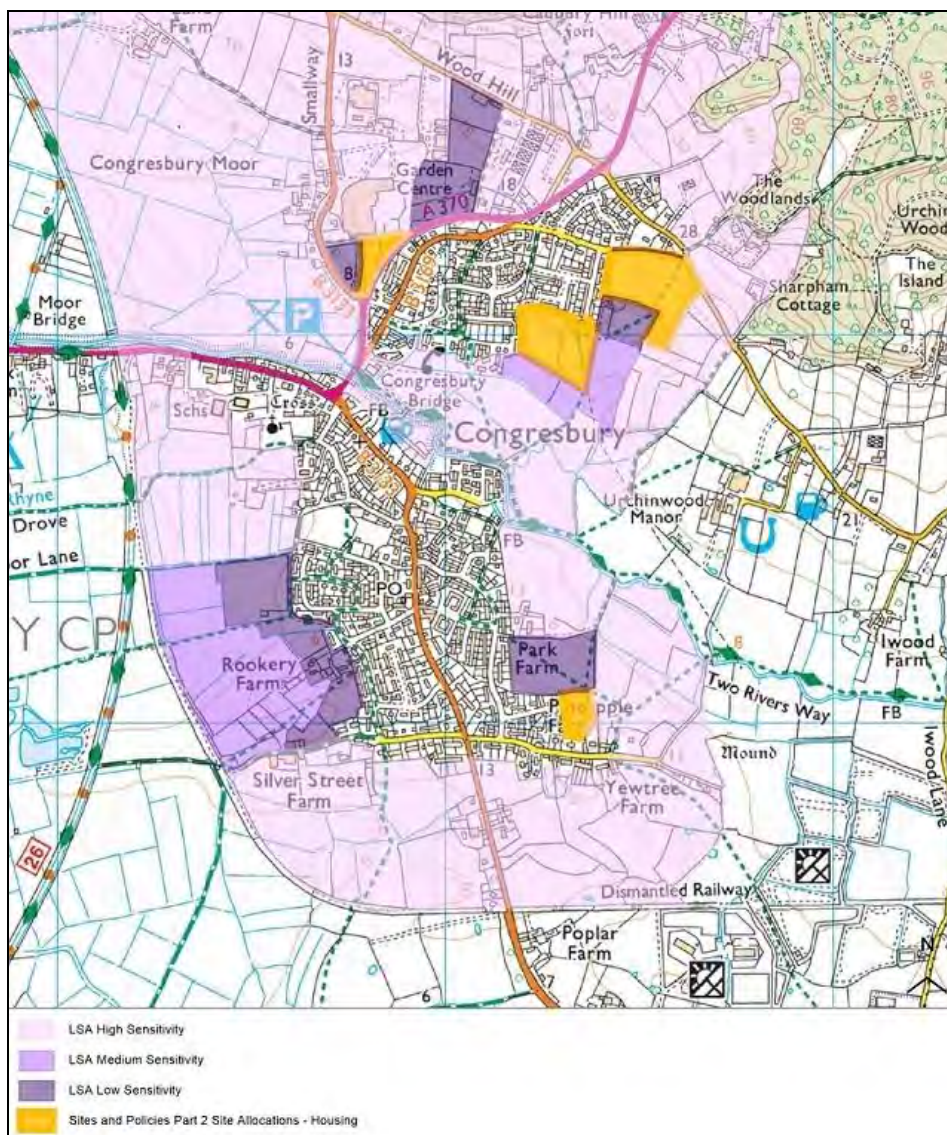
North Somerset Council commissioned a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment by Wardell Armstrong in March 2018. The assessment looked at the areas surrounding selected settlements within North Somerset which included Congresbury (available at <http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Landscape-Sensitivity-Assessment-2018.pdf>). The document provides part of an evidence base to support the preparation of the North Somerset Local Plan to 2036. The allocation of non-

strategic growth needs to be managed carefully as part of this process to ensure the important characteristics of the landscape are not unacceptably harmed.

The choice of site allocations has taken this report into consideration especially with regard to the protection of highly sensitive areas which are defined in the report as ‘High sensitivity land’ – This land generally has low capacity for housing development. If this land was developed for housing it could result in substantial harm to the landscape’. The conclusions are in the detailed Map 8 illustrating the areas of sensitivity reproduced below. The conclusions have been added into the site assessments in Appendix I.

All sites proposed for housing allocations are small sites accommodating 25 dwellings or less. This is a positive limitation on the size of developments to ensure that the character of the village is maintained, to ensure more effective assimilation into the village, to maintain the green belt to the north of the village and to maintain strategic gaps between settlements.

Map 8 Identified Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Areas (Wardell Armstrong – Landscape Sensitivity Assessment March 2018)



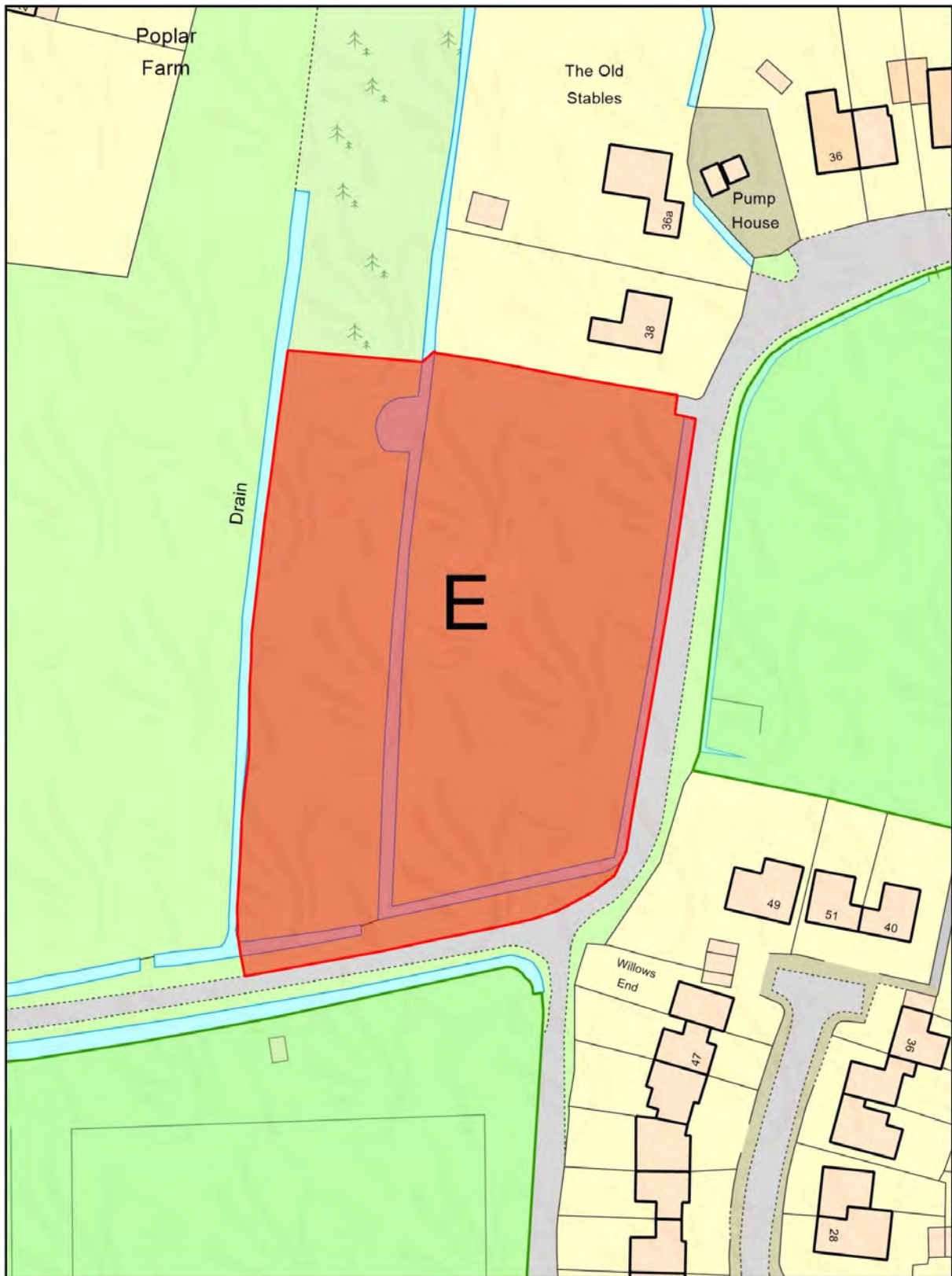
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Policy H4 – Affordable Housing Site

Land off The Causeway and at the corner of Dolemoor Lane (Site E) as shown on Map 9 is allocated for the provision of affordable housing.

- A local connection restriction will apply to the affordable housing units in perpetuity;
- The layout and design of the site should respect the urban grain of the village and the design of its housing stock;
- Development proposals on the site should demonstrate how they have assessed any archaeological remains within and around the site and taken them into account in its design and layout’;
- Development proposals should not adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. Where necessary appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated in accordance with the guidance set out in the North Somerset and Mendip Bat Special Area of Conservation Guidance on Development SPD or any successor document.

Map 9 Housing Allocations Site E



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Justification for Policy H4

Site E will be allocated as 100% affordable housing to meet local need. The properties would be available in the first instance for people with a local connection to Congresbury, if there are any unfilled properties these would be cascaded out to wider settlements in the locality and then lastly to those with a local connection to North Somerset. These two fields provide a sustainable location close to village amenities with access from the end of The Causeway. One of the fields is administered by the Parish Council on behalf of the Hannah Marshman Trust.

Houses within this scheme should be allocated based on the following criteria to ensure local need is met in the first instance:

- i) Applicants are approved by the Council as being in need of Affordable Housing; and
- ii) Are unable to afford to buy or rent appropriate property locally on the open market; and
- iii) In the opinion of the Council fall into one or other of the following categories (in order of priority):
 - a) Either the applicant or partner has continuously lived in Congresbury for a minimum of 3 years immediately preceding the date of bidding.
 - b) Either the applicant or partner has previously lived in Congresbury for 10 years continuously, not more than 5 years ago, immediately preceding the date of bidding.
 - c) Either the applicant or partner has continuously lived in Congresbury for between 12 months and 3 years immediately preceding the date of bidding.
 - d) Either the applicant or partner has been continuously employed in Congresbury for at least 12 months immediately preceding the date of bidding.
 - e) People dependent upon or giving support to a household in Congresbury.
 - f) Either the applicant or partner has a close relative living in Congresbury for at least 5 years immediately preceding the date of bidding.
 - g) Residents of adjacent parishes in North Somerset who fit the above criteria in the priority order listed.
 - h) After a rented property has remained void for 6 weeks occupancy will be allowed for other residents of North Somerset eligible for Affordable Housing.

Policy H4 also takes account of potential archaeology in the vicinity of the site and the importance of its sensitive incorporation into the overall design and character of the village.

There is a need for affordable housing in North Somerset as highlighted by the register below:

Total North Somerset housing register need as of 1st June 2018

Property Type Need						Band						
Age Group	Bed Need	A	B	C	D	Emergency	Grand Total					
General needs	1	35	134	707	253	1	1130					
	2	13	93	597	331		1034					
	3	9	57	298	142		506					
	4	4	13	58	22		97					

Sheltered need Aged 60+	1	16	82	291	163		552
	2	4	12	10	4		30
	Grand Total:	81	391	1961	915	1	3349

There are no exact figures of the need for affordable housing in Congresbury and the numbers which would have a local connection to Congresbury. However, North Somerset Council HomeChoice Register provides an indication. Of those registered on HomeChoice (an average of 3500 households) 620 households have selected Congresbury as an area of choice (and 19 of these applicants are living in Congresbury -June 2018 data). This is a reflection at the time of application; however an applicant's views can change over time. This data does not provide a complete record of applicants seeking affordable housing and does not include the need for other types of affordable housing including for example intermediate housing products such as shared ownership.

Over the last 18 months as stated in the HomeChoice Stock report 2016/17 out of 148 rented properties there have been only 5 vacant affordable homes in Congresbury, of which 1 was family vacancy (1 x1 bed), 4 non family (2x 2 bed only).

The initial postcard survey of local residents resulted in many respondents stating that the village requires more affordable housing to enable young people to remain in the village. See Appendix C for further detail.

4.2 Facilities

Congresbury has a number of venues for activities, these include; the Old School Rooms, Recreation Club, Memorial Hall and the Methodist Hall. There are numerous clubs and organisations that meet in these venues including art classes, Congresbury Singers, Keep Fit classes, History Group, Senior Citizens Lunch Club, Rascals, WI and Ladies Friendly, Badminton Club, Craft and book groups. They cover a range of interests and activities catering for all ages and tastes. The Old School Rooms is owned and managed by the Parish Council.

There is a thriving Scout and Guide group in the village and the Youth Partnership runs the youth club and outreach programmes which provides opportunities for young persons.

The King George V playing field was donated to the village in 1936; the playing fields are currently administered by the Recreation Club and the King George V Trustees. There is a cricket pitch and 3 tennis courts. The children's play area is managed and maintained by the Parish Council. The adjacent Broadstones field (owned by the Parish Council) provides football pitches with a separate changing facility for the players.

There is a well-used bowling green and Club off Mill Leg and the Parish Council provides a ball court next to the Youth Club by Bristol Road Car Park.

Each facility has its own management group responsible for maintaining and administering their existing buildings and premises to secure them for the future. If buildings cease to become functioning facilities in the future then, depending on their location, they could become suitable areas for infill development.

Policy F1 – Protecting and Enhancing Community Services

Existing community services and facilities such as the library, public houses, public conveniences, village halls and local village shops, churches, sporting facilities, youth club and youth services play important roles in maintaining a strong and vibrant community. In order to reinforce the important role that they play in the social well-being of the community:

- a) The loss of existing community facilities will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer viable or that the facility is no longer in active use and has no prospect of being brought back into use.
- b) Proposals which enhance and improve existing community facilities will be supported. New community facilities will be supported providing they are compatible with existing neighbouring uses.

Justification for Policy F1

The public conveniences which were transferred to the Parish Council in 2013 are well used by residents and visitors to the village. The cost of running the toilets is approximately £4,000 per annum; the toilets are opened and closed daily by volunteers due to the risk of vandalism and the resulting cost of repairs.

Congresbury Community Library opened on 1 July 2017 following a Community Access Review of services by North Somerset Council. The library is funded by the Parish Council and supported by North Somerset Council to provide a library service on behalf of the residents of the village and the wider community. The library is managed and manned by volunteers.

The Parish Council supports Congresbury Youth Partnership (CYP) which provides activities for young people in the age range 8 - 20 years. CYP's aim is to develop the physical, social and mental wellbeing of the young people in the village by helping each child to develop as an individual and become an active member of the community.

Other services and facilities including local shops, the doctor's surgery, church, sports facilities and meeting places need to be supported to ensure that the community is well served by a wide range of amenities.

4.3 Environment and Heritage

4.3.1 Heritage

The village grew around the Church and the historic core of the village is based around the churchyard, Broad Street, High Street and Mill Lane. This area was designated as a Conservation Area in 1990.



View of St Andrew's Church and churchyard

Congresbury has many listed assets which include St Andrew’s Church, the Refectory, the Court House, the Old Rectory, the Birches and the Congresbury Arms public house, as well as a number of important archaeological sites which provide evidence for the historic development of the village. The village (market) cross at the junction of Broad Street and High Street is a village landmark and is a designated Scheduled Monument. The full list of the listed buildings is contained in Appendix L

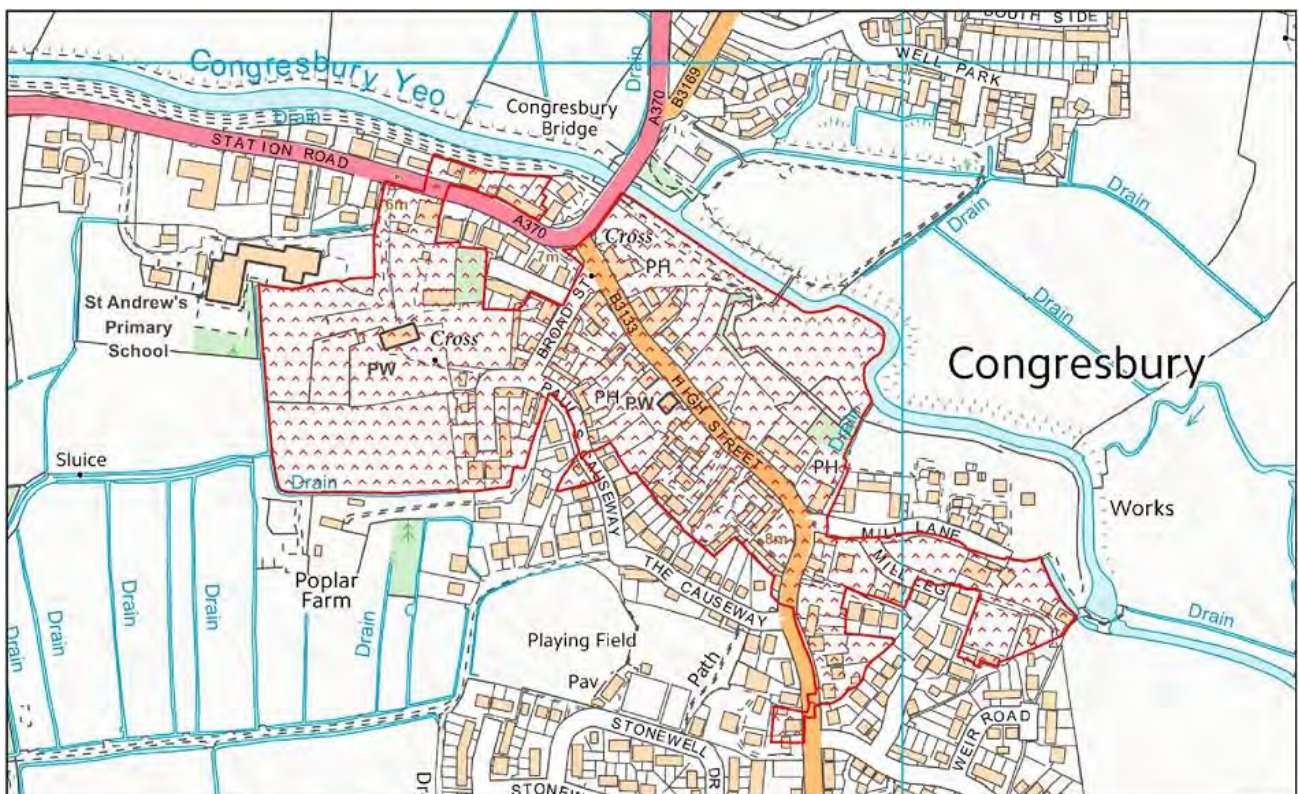
Policy EH1 – Enhance the Conservation Area

Development proposals should protect, and where practicable enhance, the character of listed buildings and locally important buildings and structures and archaeological sites.

In order to preserve and enhance the special character of the Conservation Area proposals for signage within the Conservation Area should comply with the following criteria:

- i) Modern shiny finishes such as acrylic and applied vinyl will not be supported. Timber and metal are the most appropriate material to use.
- ii) Colours and finishes appropriate to the host property and the wider conservation area will be supported.
- iii) Lettering and symbols should be sign written directly on to the sign in paint and should not use applied vinyl lettering.
- iv) Individual timber or metal lettering will be supported.
- v) Signage on the upper floors of buildings and the internal illumination of signs will not be supported.
- vi) The use of free standing ‘A’ boards will not be supported.

Map 10 Congresbury Conservation Area



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Justification for Policy EH1

Congresbury has an attractive conservation area, with its distinctive character and history. Unfortunately, the character and quality of the traditional shopping street has gradually been eroded by poor, careless and unsympathetic alterations to shop fronts. Widespread use of relatively cheap materials and standardised shop front designs has led to a loss of local distinctiveness. Inappropriate shop fronts and large attention grabbing signs dominate the street scene, and have a negative impact on historically important buildings, as well as the whole shopping street. The Parish Council is committed to reversing this trend and ensuring that alterations to shop fronts are well designed, and contribute positively to the surrounding area. This will not only help businesses, but will also improve the streetscape for all the people that use it. The detailed parts of the policy provide guidance on the design and type of shop fronts and signage that will be appropriate in the Plan period. Whilst the commercial use of A boards will not be supported they may be appropriate for short term use to advertise community events.

4.3.2 Environment

Congresbury lies in the North Somerset levels and Moors, an area known locally as the Northmarsh. It is a unique region of countryside north of the Mendip Hills which forms part of the wider Somerset Levels and Moors, being predominately low lying marsh and moorland. Congresbury itself nestles on the edge of the levels with the nearby wooded hills providing good vantage points. Congresbury Moor has six fields – 10 Acre, New Croft, Meaker, Phippen, Norton and Footmead, which are now part of Biddle Street Site of Special Scientific Interest which was designated by English Nature in 1994. There is a richness of wildlife in this area, including aquatic life in the rhynes and it is also home to nationally rare beetles and snails. Eels, amphibians and fish feed on the wealth of invertebrates, which are in turn prey for wildfowl and the frequently seen heron. The remaining areas of the village are also important and rich in wildlife and need to be protected. Birdlife is varied and plentiful; barn owls breed on Congresbury Moor.

King's Wood and Urchin Wood SSSI in the north east, designated in 1992, have ancient woodland of mixed deciduous trees and is a nationally important bat habitat. There are hibernating populations and maternity colonies of at least four different species, including the rare and endangered Greater Horseshoe Bat.

Congresbury as a settlement is split by the Congresbury Yeo, which used to be tidal as far as the village. The River Yeo and the Strawberry Line, as well as having recreational value, are green corridors and so important for wildlife.

Cadbury Hill is a small hill, mostly in the parish of Congresbury, overlooking the village of Yatton in North Somerset. On its summit stands an Iron Age hill fort, which is a Scheduled Monument. Cadbury Hill is managed jointly by Congresbury and Yatton Parish Councils. Also recorded on Cadbury Hill are Neolithic flints.

The remaining areas of the village are also important and rich in wildlife and need to be protected. The southern half, around Brinsea, has remnant orchards and ancient species rich hedgerows.

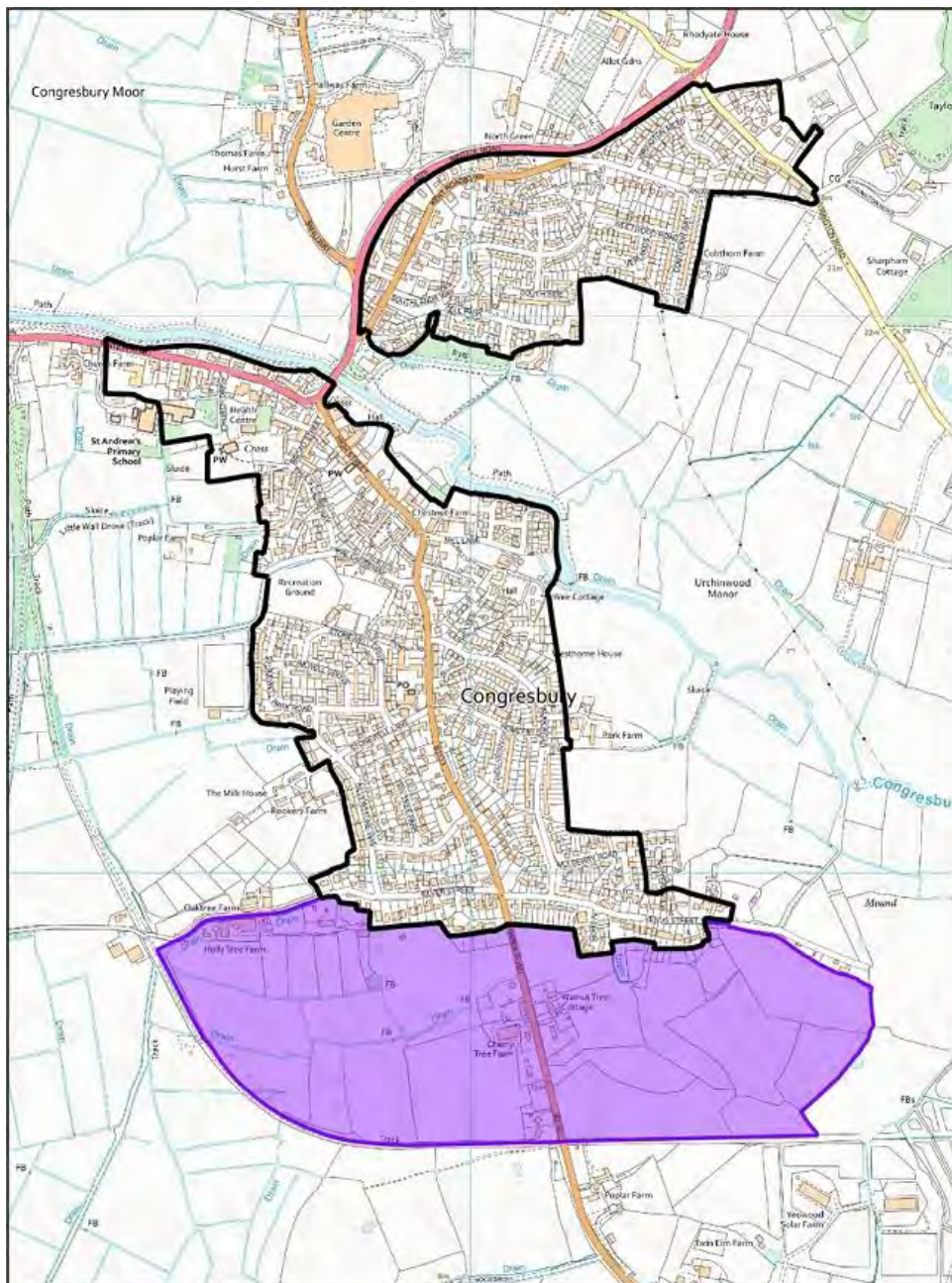
Policy EH2 – Area of High Landscape Sensitivity

Development proposals in the area of high landscape sensitivity as shown Map 11 below should respect the landscape and the way in which it provides a setting to the village.

Development proposals within the area of high landscape sensitivity will only be supported where:

- the character and integrity of the landscape would not be significantly adversely affected; and
- they incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate their impact within the landscaping in general, and through the use of native vegetation and landscaping in particular.

Map 11 Area of High Landscape Sensitivity



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Justification for Policy EH2

CS19 defines a strategic gap between Congresbury and Yatton to help retain the separate identity, character and/or landscape setting of settlements and distinct parts of settlements. The historic ridge of Silver Street and Venus Street forms the natural boundary of the settlement. To the south and west of this ridge is open countryside of the Levels, characterised by, often irregularly shaped, low lying pasture defined by historic ditches, hedges and mature trees. The North Somerset Council Landscape Sensitivity Assessment March 2018 concluded that ‘land to the south of Congresbury slopes to the east and there is a strong and vegetated urban edge. Development to the south of the village would affect the settlement form. Owing to the above, this land is of high sensitivity’. The report states that within the context of the study, high sensitivity land can be attributed to the following ‘This land has low capacity for housing development. If this land was developed for housing it could result in substantial harm to the landscape’.

Policy EH2 addresses this important matter. It identifies an area of high landscape sensitivity as outlined in the NSC Landscape Assessment. It requires that any development proposals which may arise within the Plan period should respect the landscape and the way in which it provides a setting to the village. It also identifies the circumstances where new development would be supported in this sensitive area.



Congresbury Millennium Green

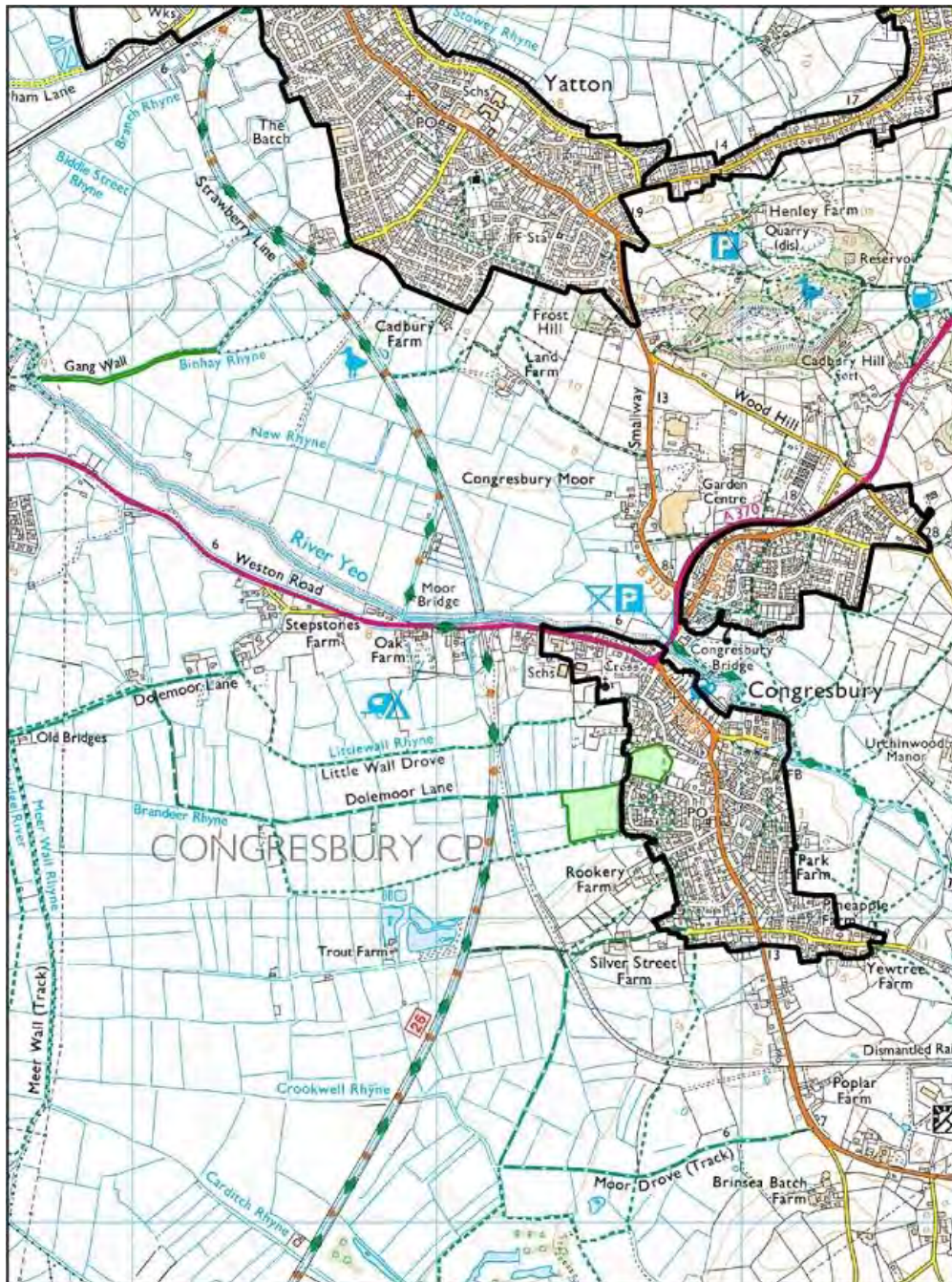
Policy EH3 – Local Green Space

The following parcels of land are designated as Local Green Spaces;

- a) The Gang Wall ancient sea defence and path
- b) King George V
- c) Broadstones

Development will not be supported on local green space except in very special circumstances.

Map 12 Local Green Space Designations



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Justification for Policy EH3

Congresbury currently has the Millennium Green and paddock, a recreation area adjoining King George V Jubilee playing field and the land at St Andrew's Church allocated as local green space in the Site Allocations Plan (April 2018).

'Millennium Green is outlined in Schedule 3 of the Site Allocations Plan 2018 as comprising; attractive grass spaces either side of the river. Larger northern area has some mature trees on boundary and includes public footpaths and play area. Used for informal recreation. Southern area includes community orchard. HER shows archaeological site: site of tannery east of the Ship and Castle, C18.'

The recreation area adjoining King George V Jubilee playing field is outlined in Schedule 3 of the Site Allocations Plan 2018 as comprising: *'Grass recreation area with play equipment'*.

'Land at St Andrew's Church, Congresbury outlined in Schedule 3 of the Site Allocations Plan 2018 as comprising; Attractive grass area with trees, and the adjoining historic church yard, adjacent to and important to the setting of the grade 1 listed church. While cemeteries are not normally appropriate for LGS designation, the historic importance of the site, with listed walls and monuments, together with its importance to the setting of the church, is considered to warrant an exception. Boundary amendment proposed to exclude church building itself.'

However, these are not the only areas that we believe need to be protected and provided with Local Green Space status. In accordance with guidance on Local Green Space is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraphs 77.

The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

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

Both Broadstones and King George V Playing Field are important as recreational areas and fit the designation characteristics. King George V Playing Field is supported by Fields in Trust and Broadstones, used as football pitches, is owned by the Parish Council.

The Gang Wall is a medieval drainage bank and associated ditches, constructed before 1382 to separate the drainage areas of Yatton Moor to its west, and Congresbury Moor to its east. The monument is virtually complete and is extremely unusual for such a bank in having no road along its surface. Associated with it is Rennie's siphon, a structure designed by Sir John Rennie, to take the New Rhyne, new drainage works for Congresbury Moor, under the Yeo to an outfall downriver in Wick St Lawrence, during works of 1819-1827. The association of the two is unique and therefore should be protected as special to the community.

Policy EH4 – Landscape and Wildlife Preservation Measures

- a) Development proposals should maintain and enhance the connectivity of all green corridors and not result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including local wildlife sites, aged or veteran trees and hedges. Development proposals for new dwellings should demonstrate how they have incorporated appropriate measures to ensure the connectivity of any green corridor and the freedom of movement for species on or through the site.
- b) As appropriate to their location and the scale development proposals should be designed to limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity and nature conservation.
- c) As appropriate to their location and the scale development proposals should include natural landscaping using native species and incorporate existing hedgerows, wetland areas and other wildlife features where it is practicable to do so.
- d) As appropriate to their location and scale development proposals should provide buffer zones to sites of special scientific interest, local nature reserves and local wildlife sites in general, and in relation to the Strawberry Line in particular where it is practicable to do so.
- e) Development proposals should take into consideration and provide where appropriate mitigating measures against the harmful impact of noise pollution on animal life.

Justification for Policy EH4

The North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC is designated under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, which is transposed into UK law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) ('Habitat Regulations'). This means that the populations of bats supported by this site are of international importance and therefore afforded high levels of protection, placing significant legal duties on decision-makers to prevent damage to bat roosts, feeding areas and the routes used by bats to travel between these locations. Any development must take into consideration the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance: Supplementary Planning Document (<http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/North-Somerset-and-Mendip-Bats-SAC-guidance-supplementary-planning-document.pdf> Adopted Jan 2018) to conserve and protect the vital habitats.

Artificial light offers valuable benefits to society. It is an essential aid to safety and facilitates a thriving night-time economy. However, if used incorrectly, artificial light can contribute to a range of problems, with the potential to become light pollution. Artificial light can not only be a source of annoyance to people, it can be harmful to wildlife, waste energy and detract from the enjoyment of the night sky. Any development must strive to protect wildlife and respect the rural environment with lighting that includes low level shielded lighting in wildlife corridors, and lighting curfews in industrial/commercial areas.

Policy EH5 – Renewable Energy

Proposals for community owned or led renewable energy schemes (including micro-hydro, photovoltaic or bio-mass projects) will be supported subject to the following criteria for the proposed development:

- The siting and scale is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and
- It does not give rise to unacceptable landscape or visual impact, either in isolation or cumulatively with other development; and
- It does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and
- It does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.

Justification for Policy EH5

Congresbury lies within an area offering good potential for renewable energy including: bio-mass, hydro, solar and wind power. A bio-mass scheme is already operating within Congresbury and housing associations and private residential dwellings are fitting their properties with domestic photo-voltaic panels. The parish has three solar farms that are operating within the area of the Neighbourhood Plan. They cover an area of over 40 hectares of agricultural land and supply enough electricity to meet the needs of approximately 1,000 homes, thus bringing the village close to self-sufficiency in terms of renewable energy. Support for further large schemes must be balanced against the cumulative impact on local amenity and landscape.

There is a wish to consider other sources of renewable energy. In particular, community led renewable energy projects are encouraged, which would benefit the whole community and act as a focal point for other low carbon and energy saving initiatives within the community.

The government is committed to reducing CO2 emissions by 80% by 2050 and the NPPF states that local planning authorities “should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable sources... They should support community led initiatives for renewable and low carbon initiatives.”

According to government statistics, around 11% of households in England are “fuel poor”. Rural communities are subject to higher incidences of fuel poverty due to more homes being hard to heat and off the gas grid. Community energy projects provide one way of helping to address these issues: they can reduce CO2 whilst generating revenue to utilise for local benefit, for example to fund advice services for those in fuel poverty (Source: Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report, 2018 (2016 data) England. Statistical Release: National Statistics <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics>). Such development would normally be conceived and/or promoted within the community within which the development will be undertaken and provide long term and inclusive socio-economic and/or environmental benefits which are accessible to all members of the community. Developments which are ‘led by’ or ‘meet the needs’ of local communities are defined by the outcomes achieved for the community, rather than number of people who support or oppose the scheme, and it should be recognised that 100% endorsement within the locality is unlikely.

4.4 Employment

There are very few employment opportunities in Congresbury with the majority of residents working elsewhere and commuting. 83 businesses located in and around Congresbury were surveyed in 2016 to provide a snapshot of employment opportunities within the area (see Appendix M).

Policy E1 – Retention of Business and Employment within the Parish

- a) Insofar as planning permission is required proposals for home working, including offices and craft work, will be supported where they would safeguard the amenities of any residential properties in the immediate locality.
- b) Proposals for the use of redundant farm buildings for employment use will be supported.
- c) The Old Green Holm Nursery site as shown on Map 13 is allocated for employment and community uses. Proposals for employment (B1, B2 and B8) or community uses will be supported.
- d) The Cadbury Garden Centre site as shown on Map 14 is allocated for employment uses. Proposals for employment (B1, B2 and B8) uses will be supported.



Congresbury Precinct

Justification for Policy E1

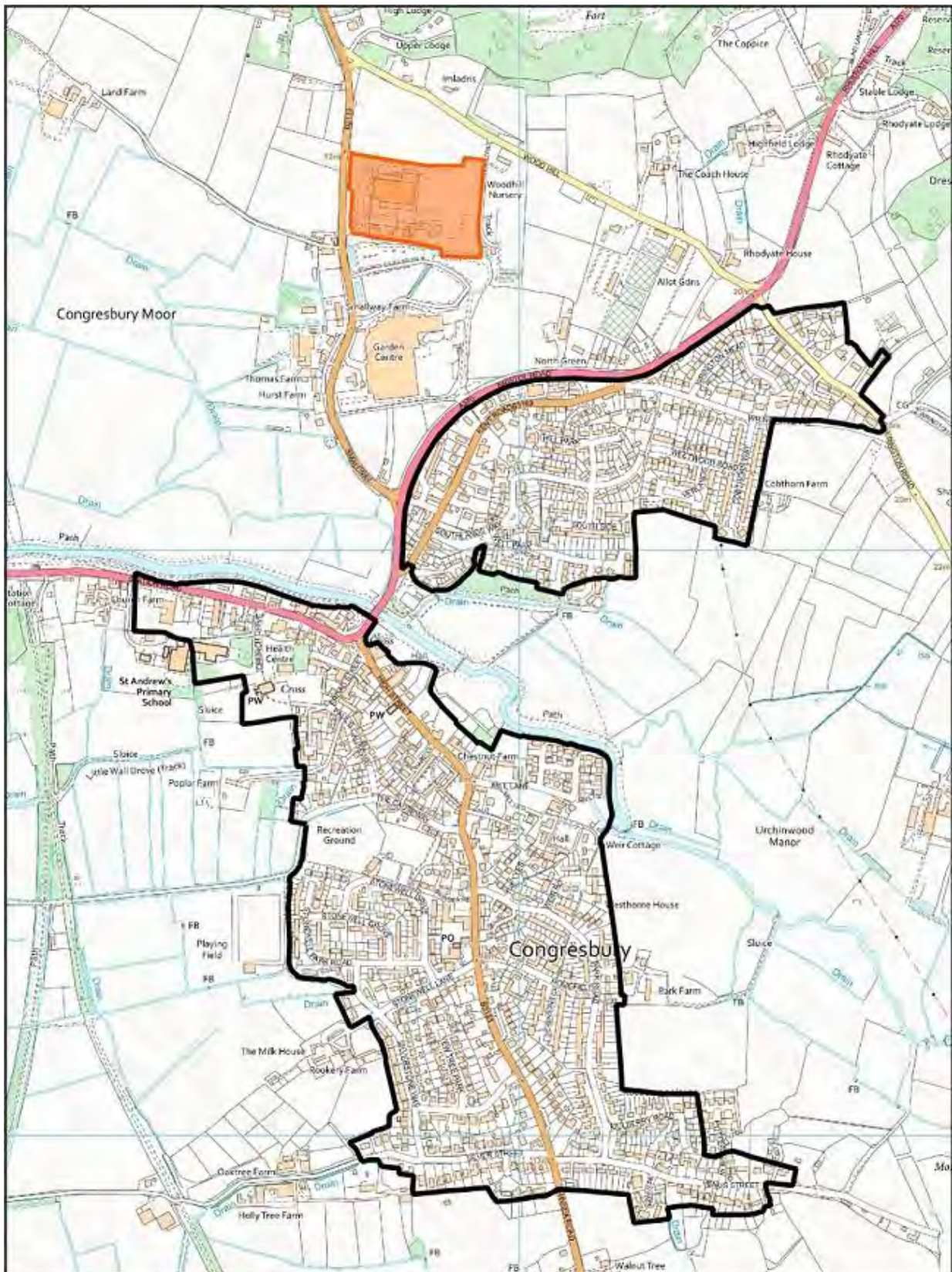
Congresbury is an out-commuting village with many residents working in Bristol and further afield. Retention and creation of jobs within the village is vital for community cohesion, reducing out commuting and sustainability.

Appendix M shows that of the 83 businesses surveyed only 4 were employing more than 21 people with the majority employing 5 or less. Also many businesses were operating from people's homes. They are all linked to the service industry including the largest employers Double Tree Cadbury Hotel and Spa and Cadbury (Wyevale) Garden Centre. A number of thriving businesses have been established in converted farm buildings on the edge of the village thereby providing employment opportunities and business for local shops etc.

Since completing this survey in the summer of 2016 a number of employers operating out of converted farm buildings have had to relocate from the area due to the loss of their business premises. The owners have had these units reclassified as residential properties. This has not only led to a loss of employment opportunities within the village but increases the number of residential properties in rural locations. Owners of such business units must inform the Parish Council of the marketing methods they have or intend using before a change to residential use can be allowed. A time limit will be set by the Parish Council.

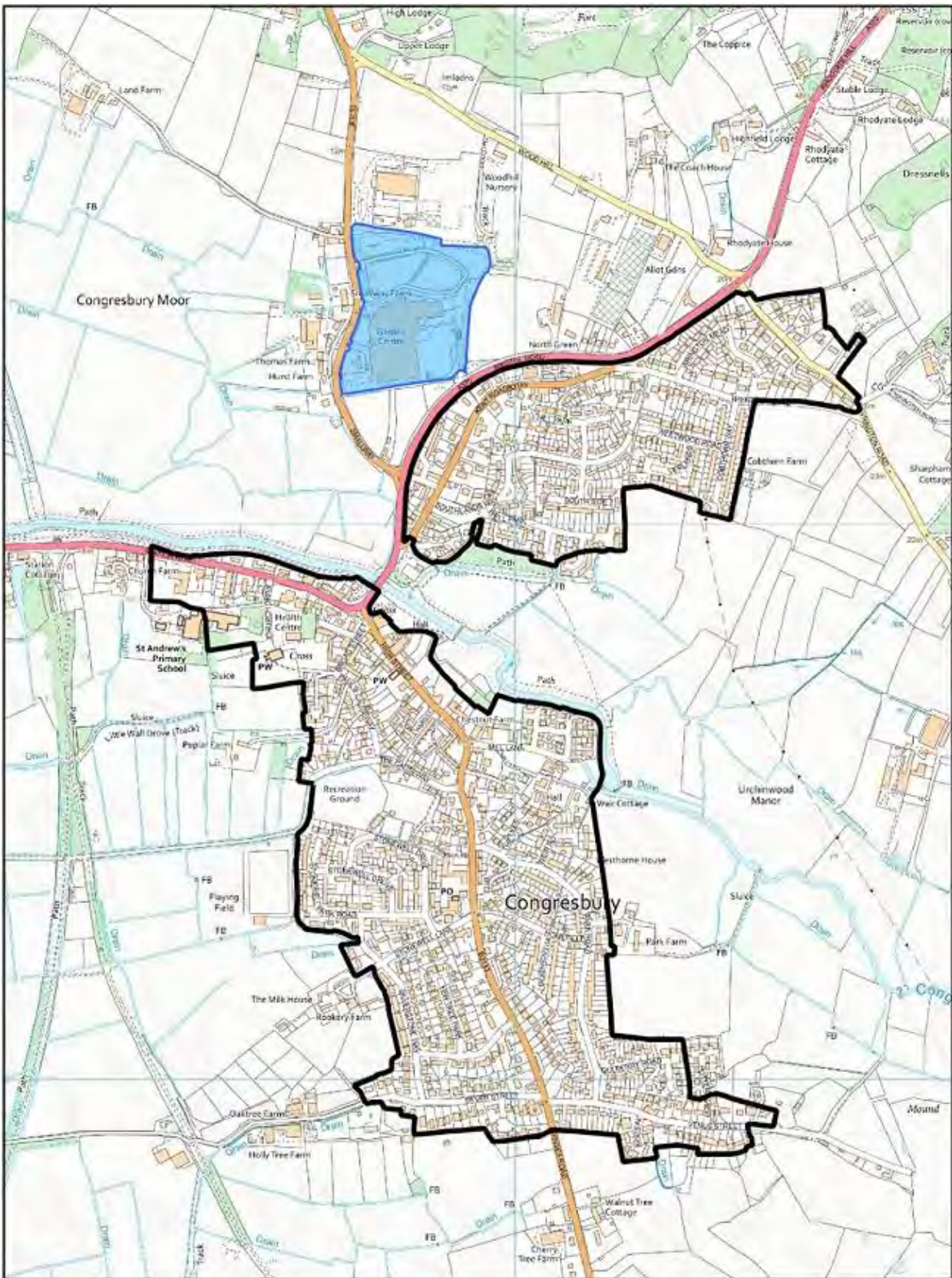
There is a need to retain employment sites within the village and therefore by designating the Cadbury Garden Centre as an employment site and the old Green Holm Nursery site as a site for employment/community use it is hoped to preserve these sites and provide employment and business opportunities for the local community. Designating the Green Holm Nursery site for Community Use in addition to employment would not prevent it from being a potential site for a medical centre or other community uses.

Map 13 Employment and Community Use Allocation (orange section)



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Map 14 Employment Allocation (blue section)



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5 COMMUNITY ACTIONS

The Neighbourhood Development Planning process has identified non-land use issues which are outside of the planning process but are important to the local community. These have been added into this section of Community Actions. Placing the Community Actions within the Neighbourhood Development Plan will provide a framework that the Parish Council and community can work towards completing within the timescale of the plan.

5.1 Transport and Highways

The village postcard survey (Appendix C) highlighted the residents concern over the volume of traffic, particularly the number of haulage vehicles that pass through the village. They felt vulnerable when walking on pavements and crossing roads. It also discouraged residents from using more sustainable forms of transport such as bicycles. The aim is to restore the balance and put the safety and needs of pedestrians and cyclists before vehicular movements.

Congresbury lies approximately 5 miles to the east of junction 21 on the M5 motorway. The village is dissected by two roads - the A370 and the B3133. The A370 links the village to Weston super Mare in the west and Bristol to the NE. The B3133 runs from Junction 20 of the M5 at Clevedon to Yatton and through the village to Churchill and the A38.

Congresbury has an excellent bus service along the A370 with regular daily services to Weston and Bristol. The X7 also provides a daily service between Bristol and Weston via Clevedon and Nailsea. The 135 and the 128 operate a limited service, along Brinsea Road to Nailsea and Clevedon. One operates on a Thursday, the other on a Friday with one service each day. There are two services accessing Bristol Airport, the A3 from Weston super Mare, which runs hourly and the A5 which has a limited daily service between the airport and Yatton via the A38. These services are available at the time of writing but they are frequently changed or cancelled depending upon usage.

The closest railway station is in Yatton, approximately 2 miles to the north, which can be accessed by road on the B3133 or by cycling or walking on the Strawberry Line.

Congresbury has a network of public footpaths including the 'Two Rivers Walk' and the 'Strawberry Line'. The Strawberry Line Society (SLS), formerly the Cheddar Valley Railway Walk Society, started in 1978 when North Somerset Council purchased much of the dismantled railway line between Yatton and Axbridge and leased it to the SLS as a walk and nature reserve. The SLS later became a registered charity and extended the railway path to Cheddar. The SLS has plans to extend and create a continuous 30 mile traffic-free path from Clevedon to Shepton Mallet which will provide a key section of the Somerset Circle. When complete the Somerset Circle will connect over 70,000 people across Somerset in a sustainable way. The Strawberry Line forms part of the (SUStainable TRANSport) SUSTRANS national cycle network.

Community Action T1 – Strawberry Line Improvements

Any funding from future North Somerset Community Infrastructure Levy, s106 contributions and other sources will be sought for providing safe routes from the village to the Strawberry Line including:

- a) Removal of the central hatching along the A370 from Moor Bridge to the Old School Rooms and widening of the adjacent footways on both sides of the road to allow for a cycleway combined with the pavement. The combined pavement and cycleway will provide safer access to and from the village for pedestrians and cyclists and also slow and calm traffic along the A370.
- b) Improvements to the access along Dolemoor Lane from Stonewell Estate and the Causeway and via Silver Street. This could be a simple strip wide enough for 2 cyclists or a cyclist and pedestrian to pass each other.
- c) An extension to connect the Strawberry Line to Churchill School.

Justification for Community Action T1

As North Somerset's roads become ever more congested and dangerous, the need for traffic-free routes grows ever more important. Not only would a safe and practical route from the village onto the Strawberry Line facilitate more active lifestyles it would also provide an economical and enjoyable commute to work and link to Yatton railway station. The current routes to the Strawberry Line are either along the A370, which is a very busy road and considered to be dangerous for all but the most experienced and confident cyclists, or via drove roads from Silver Street or Stonewell. The drove roads are used by tractors and other agriculture vehicles as well as horse riders. Over the years the surfaces of the drove roads have developed deep pot holes which make cycling difficult and unsafe. Improved access would also encourage visitors using the Strawberry Line to cycle in to the village and make use of the local shops, public houses and other amenities.

The removal of the central hatching on the A370 and the addition of a shared pavement and cycle path will provide a safer route for cyclists on the A370 onto the Strawberry Line. The narrowing of the road will also reduce the speed of traffic and help to calm traffic entering the village.

Providing a link from the Strawberry Line to Churchill School will offer a safe traffic-free route to school and will also encourage pupils to make healthier life choices.

Community Action T2 – Parking, Walking and Cycling Solutions

Funding from future North Somerset Community Infrastructure Levy, s106 contributions and other sources will be sought for providing traffic solutions in the village.

These solutions include:

- a) Any new development will be encouraged to have good pedestrian access and provide adequate cycle provision for residents and visitors. Adequate cycling provision must also be provided at all shopping areas, parks and other recreational sites.
- b) The provision of strategically located dropped kerbs is important to allow disabled access to all the village facilities.
- c) The provision of disabled parking bay(s) in Broad Street and in the precinct car park. It is especially important to have a disabled bay in front of the current pharmacy.
- d) Apply short-term parking restrictions to the parking bays in Broad Street to free parking spaces for customers using local shops and services.

- e) Encourage the installation of electric vehicle charging points within the Parish.
- f) Maintaining and wherever possible improving the network of public rights of way within the Parish.

Justification for Community Action T2

Provision of cycle racks would encourage residents to use sustainable means of transport to access village facilities and reduce the current reliance on private cars.

Broad Street currently has 11 marked parking bays with no time restrictions and no marked disabled spaces. These spaces are generally occupied by cars that have been parked there all day by drivers who either work in the local shops or use public transport to commute to work. This prevents customers from being able to park close to the shops and service providers. Of particular importance is a disabled space outside of the pharmacy. The Precinct car park does not have any marked disabled bays and would benefit from spaces allocated close to the entrance to the shops.

The Parish Council currently leases 7 spaces in the Congresbury Arms car park for village use. Greater use of these spaces should be encouraged.

The provision of electric vehicle charging points encourages the use of electric vehicles which, as a consequence, improves air quality and reduces carbon emissions.

Congresbury has a number of public rights of way within the Parish, including part of the Two Rivers Footpath. The maintenance of the footpaths, plus replacing stiles with metal gates, will make the paths more accessible for all ages including the less mobile.

Community Action T3 – Mitigating Traffic Problems and Enhancing Sustainable Travel

The perception of Congresbury residents is that traffic speeds through the village, the numbers of heavy goods vehicles are excessive making them feel unsafe and worried about environmental aspects. A series of measures to offset these effects and perceptions are outlined below:

- a) The introduction of village gateway features on all four approaches to Congresbury coupled with a reduction of the speed limits to 30mph would assist in reducing vehicular speeds on all four approaches, with reduced speeds through the village generally having safety and environmental benefits. The village gateways would include additional signage and road markings on the first entry to the village to reinforce the entry to a village environment, and once the speeds through the village are established to be constrained to the 30 mph speed limit.
- b) Apply a 20 mph speed limit on the B3133 from the Congresbury Arms to the Settlement Boundary and all residential roads off the A370, and the B3133, including Kent Road, to improve the environment of Congresbury. These residential roads create zones where the priority is on the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
- c) The speed limits may be usefully reinforced by appropriate traffic calming and speed reducing measures.
- d) Reduce the 50 mph speed limit to 40 mph over the Rhodyate Hill from Congresbury to Cleeve. This is especially important as there is a footpath which crosses the A370 at the top of Rhodyate Hill and would greatly improve the safety of those exiting the Star.

- e) Improvements at the A370 / B3133 junctions at both the Station Road / High Street, and at Smallway to assist the crossing of both junctions by pedestrians. Any improvements should consider improvements in capacity and safety.
- f) Improvements to the B3133 particularly to the south along Brinsea Road to increase footway widths, to provide traffic calming measures to reduce vehicular speeds entering the village along the B3133, and measures to mitigate the impact of HGVs acknowledging that the potential to reduce the number of HGVs may be very limited.
- g) We support the necessary means to improve pedestrian safety on the A370 near the entrance to Moorland Park, which may include a safe pedestrian crossing, reduction of speed limit or a combination of the two. This would not only provide safe access to the bus stop but also to the footpath that runs along the A370 into Congresbury.
- h) Traffic signs can clutter the highway network if used to excess. Traffic sign clutter is unattractive and is a potential distraction to road users; therefore current signage should be audited and excessive and unnecessary signage should be removed and any new signs be sympathetic to the location.

All of the above mitigation and enhancement measures will be subject to investigation & feasibility studies in agreement with North Somerset Council as the Highway Authority.

Justification for Community Action T3

The A370 / B3133 junctions are operating over or close to capacity, and any development will add to the congestion and queue lengths already experienced in the AM and PM peak hours. The High Street/Station Road junction is particularly difficult for large HGV's to negotiate; often vehicles need to mount the pavements to get through. Any development that impacts on this junction will need to provide some degree of offsetting improvements to the local highway network including the A370 / B3133 junctions.

An independent survey has been undertaken by a road traffic expert to identify potential solutions see Appendix E.

Improvements to the A370 / Smallway junction are required to facilitate easier pedestrian and cycle crossing of the junction to access facilities, and public transport services. There is no pedestrian stage at the junction and this compromises the safety of pedestrians. There should be a continuous pedestrian pathway along the north side of Smallway, dropped kerbs and tactile paving (where appropriate) should also be considered for disabled pedestrians and pushchairs. There is a need for a full review of the junction layout, which would improve safety for all users, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. This should consider all options including the possibility of a roundabout.

Brinsea Road is a local distributor which is generally of the order of 5.8m to 6.5m wide along its length with footway provision of variable width and street lighting. Junctions along Brinsea Road are simple priority junctions that do not have any ghosted right turn provision. The three junctions at Venus Street, Silver Street, and Yew Tree Park at the southern end of Brinsea Road all have poor visibility. Venus Street and Silver Street are the worst with restricted visibility in both directions; Yew Tree Park has limited visibility for traffic turning right towards Churchill. The junctions provide access to residential development on both sides of the road.

Entering the village from the south on the B3133 the road is only 6m wide with grass verges on either side. There are pavements on both sides of the road just after the 30 mph speed limit road sign. However they are narrow in places and pedestrians are forced to step into the road. Pedestrians and cyclists using this section of the road consider it an unsafe route into the village due to passing traffic.

Speed Watch surveys undertaken over a period of time indicate that non-compliance with the speed limit is a significant issue affecting both the B3133, and the A370. Data collected by Speed Watch along the A370 in the vicinity of Holders of Congresbury indicates that only 26% of vehicles recorded by the surveys were travelling at or below the posted 30mph speed limit with 74% above the speed limit. Their surveys also identified that the worst time for speeding was between 15:30 to 16:30 which coincides with the afternoon journey from school period when the pedestrian flows along the A370 may be at their highest. Speed Watch data for the A370 to the west of Kent Road outside Tesco Express showed a similar profile although only covered the morning peak period between 07:30 and 09:00 albeit on a total of 6 occasions. Similarly only 26% of vehicles were recorded at or below the speed limit. Speed Watch data is similar for the Brinsea Road / Venus Street location but the peak period of speeding is between 08.00 – 09.00. Although the speed limit along Brinsea Road within the “ built –up ” area is 30mph, and despite the presence of a speed actuated speed limit sign, there is regular speeding by all types of vehicles. (Appendix K contains Speed Watch data).

The traveller’s site has been operating since the early 1990’s and has developed close contact with various groups within the community. The majority of the children on the site attend the local preschool as well as St Andrew’s Primary School and mothers access courses at the Children’s Centre and the Youth Club. Older children who do not attend school use the Youth Club on a regular basis as well as the ball court. A number of the older children are accessing education through vocational courses at Weston College. To access these activities the travellers are reliant on using private transport or buses travelling along the busy A370. A light controlled crossing by the entrance to the site would provide a safe way to cross the road to access the bus service from Weston to Congresbury. Residents on the site regularly walk into the village to use the local shops along the footpath which is on the opposite side of the road to the site entrance.

The number of road signs at and near the A370 and B3133 (Smallway and High Street) junctions is excessive. The siting of some of the signs is such that the information being made available is too late for drivers to act safely upon. Many can cause confusion for drivers and are visually intrusive. The signs are not well maintained, cleaned or cleared of vegetation and some are close to the road and are hit by lorries and buses mounting the pavement to avoid other vehicles. The best option is to remove those signs that are not required and/or unnecessarily duplicated.

5.2 Facilities

Community Action F1 – Community Facilities

A contribution of any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions and s106 contributions from any future housing developments should be considered for the following:

- a) The Parish Council intends to continue to maintain and improve the Old School Rooms for the benefit of the community.
- b) The land used for allotments in Congresbury belongs to Queen Elizabeth’s Hospital (QEH). The land is leased by the Parish Council and managed for allotment use by the community. There are currently 70 plots available.
- c) An application to register the allotments as a community asset will be made to North Somerset Council as they are currently used to further the social well-being and interests of the local community.
- d) Support the proposal for a new community hall on the King George V playing fields as voted for in the village referendum in 2016. Any new building must be sustainable in the build design and materials used and must comply with all relevant energy standards. The building must support the current constituent sporting clubs and enhance and increase sporting and community activities for future generations.
- e) Proposal to look for a new area for a burial ground (possibility of a natural burial ground); to be considered at the application stage of any new development.

Justification for Community Action F1

The Parish Council owns and maintains the Old School Rooms for the use of the community. The Parish Council aims to cover the costs of maintaining the hall and administration costs and therefore the rental charges for rooms are very reasonable. The hall is used by the Parish Council and by many community groups for meetings and activities. The hall can be rented for community events and private functions.

Asset of Community Value gives communities a right to identify a building or other land that they believe to be of importance to their community’s social well-being. If the nominated asset meets the definition of an Asset of Community Value, the local authority will list it. If the asset comes up for sale the local community is given an opportunity to bid for it on the open market. The owner will have a right to an internal review by the local council, and a right of appeal to an independent tribunal against the result of the internal review. The allotments should be given Community Asset status.

A referendum for the Community Right to Build Order for a new village hall/community centre was held on 15 September 2016 resulting in a majority vote in favour of the Order. In accordance with the relevant Act and Regulations over 50% of those voting need to vote in favour of the Order. Out of a 38.14% turnout 69.9% of the votes cast were in favour of the Order proposals. Following the referendum, the Community Right to Build Order for the new community hall was submitted to North Somerset Council and the order was formally made on 8th November 2016. The order submission was a comprehensive document which considered many criteria which would affect the surrounding area and enable it to integrate sensitively. The building was designed in consultation with stakeholders and villagers to create a multi-use building to meet the present and future needs of the community.

The new development will replace the existing wooden structures of the Recreation Club and Tennis Club Pavilion with a modern building able to adapt to the future needs of a growing community with minimal impact on the surrounding residential areas.

The closed churchyard and burial ground are managed and maintained by the Parish Council. The Council recently restricted burials to current and prior residents of the parish. This decision was taken to ensure that the limited space (estimated at approximately 30 years supply) is available for those who have a connection with Congresbury rather than from neighbouring villages.

A location is sought for a natural burial ground which will enable more environmentally friendly funerals to take place, and the establishment of schemes that preserve and enhance biodiversity with a long-term sustainable future. Any potential land must be assessed with regard to constraints including risks to ground water and ensuring that the area has a sustainable transport policy, limits archaeological disturbance and has an ecological scoping survey completed.

5.3 Environment and Heritage

Community Action EH1 – Conservation Area Character Appraisal

The Parish Council will prepare a Conservation Area Character Appraisal and an associated management plan which includes a scheme to prevent further damage to the Village Cross. Its ambition is to both protect the cross and to improve the character of the conservation area.

Congresbury Conservation Group will be actively involved in the completion of the appraisal and management plan. Any funding from future North Somerset Community Infrastructure Levy and other sources will be sought for implementing the findings of the Management Plan.

Justification for Community Action EH1

There has been considerable development in the Conservation Area which appears to have no cohesion and there is little knowledge or appreciation of the area from local residents or businesses. An assessment is required to ensure that the Conservation Area is preserved and any development is considered to be an enhancement and is completed in a controlled and considered way.

A Management Plan will ensure that the heritage in Congresbury is conserved for both the present and future generations to experience and enjoy. It will mean that the Parish Council, owners of listed buildings, residents in the conservation area as well as village residents are better informed about their local heritage. A Maintenance Plan will enable informed decisions to be made. This plan led approach will ensure that the Conservation Area is enhanced in a more uniform way. An Article 4 Direction is desired but this would be under the control of North Somerset Council.

Congresbury Village Cross has always been at the centre of village life with photographic evidence showing it as the focus of the weekly market and the meeting place of the local hunt. It is a rare example of a 15th century village cross still in its original setting and in a good state of preservation. The Cross, which is designated as a listed building and a scheduled monument, is the property of the Parish Council which is legally obliged to both maintain and preserve the monument. CS5 has the policy aim of safeguarding the special architectural and historic interests of North Somerset from development. The Cross is adjacent to the B3133 and is in danger of being severely damaged by passing vehicles. A scheme to prevent this is essential if we want to preserve this important structure.

Community Action EH2 – Community Led Renewable Energy Schemes

Through the Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council wishes to encourage community led renewable energy schemes, and will support community based groups working with local energy users in seeking funding to establish the technical, financial and legal feasibility of appropriate schemes within the parish.

Justification for Community Action EH2

There is a wish to consider other sources of renewable energy. In particular, community led renewable energy projects are encouraged and will be supported, which would benefit the whole community and act as a focal point for other low carbon and energy saving initiatives within the community. See policy EH5 for further information.

6 MEMBERS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

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Liz Greaves	Stuart Sampson
Tom Leimdorfer	Sue Meyer
Dawn Harrison	Peter Hughes

Residents and Organisations that Contributed to the Neighbourhood Development Plan;

Congresbury Parish Council

Graham and Sue Lovesey

Yatton and Congresbury Wildlife Action Group (YACWAG)

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Stuart Watts (photos)