# West Monkton & Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan

2017-2028



West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Councils

July 2017

# WEST MONKTON & CHEDDON FITZPAINE

# NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2017 - 2028

## Preface

A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) allows the community to grow whilst protecting existing community assets. It also identifies and makes provision for the realisation of community aspirations for the future.

The NP becomes part of the planning framework, influencing the form and content of any new development.

The advantages of having a NP are that community assets, such as conservation areas, remain protected and community aspirations, such as improved leisure access to parks, open spaces, sports areas and footpaths, become more achievable.

The aspiration for the NP area is that it becomes a place where families and people can grow and thrive in a sustainable and ecologically sensitive community.

The parishes of West Monkton (WM) and Cheddon Fitzpaine (CF) currently receive 15% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Once the NP is in place this will rise to 25%. The CIL money can be used for community projects, such as:

- The Country Park to be located from the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal north towards Hestercombe

- Improving surface water drainage locally.

In January 2017, Taunton was awarded Garden Town Status which will complement the various policies that have been developed by the NP Steering Group.

**Key Members of the NP Steering Group**

| | |
|---|---|
| Kelvin Tutill | Chairman NP Steering Group |
| Hazel Ellis | Chairman West Monkton Parish Council |
| Denise Webber | Chairman Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council |

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Neighbourhood Plan Definition

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced by Government under the Localism Act (2011). They are community led, locally specific planning policies which reflect priorities developed through community engagement, consultation and objective evidence. The NP policies, in combination with national policy guidance issued by the Secretary of State, and local planning policy, form the framework by which planning applications are assessed.

Neighbourhood Plans are shaped through the collection of robust, locally specific evidence including subjective evidence (such as community and stakeholder engagement) and objective evidence (such as technical studies and factual data).

When Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) produced the Local Plan (2004) the communities in West Monkton (WM) and Cheddon Fitzpaine (CF) were voicing concerns about the development plans for the area. Part of the proposed Taunton Urban Extension lies within the West Monkton (WM) Parish, whilst a further 600 houses were allocated to land in Cheddon Fitzpaine (CF) Parish. Further development was proposed in the Core Strategy (2011-2028). In the past, the parish councils worked closely with the Taunton Deane Local Planning Authority by means of the Community Engagement Panel 2006 – 2008. However, with the advent of the Localism Act it was considered that a Neighbourhood Plan would offer the means to work with the Local Planning Authority and the developers to ensure that sustainable development was delivered, whilst protecting the local green space and tourism assets such as Hestercombe and the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal. These views were strongly reflected in the responses to the residents' questionnaires in March 2016. *(See consultation statement.)*

The West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan (WM&CF NP) will deliver real benefits for the local community. As a Development Plan Document for the area, it will be used when determining planning applications. The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) covers the period 2017 to 2028 to be coterminous with the Core Strategy which (subject to review) also covers the period to 2028.

West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Councils have agreed to work together to develop a NP to cover both parish areas. The NP has been prepared by a Steering Group (formally established on 21st July 2015) which includes local councillors and local residents. The Steering Group will continue to work closely with


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the local community, including local businesses, to ensure that the NP accurately reflects local issues and priorities as described by the **Consultation Statement.** *(See supporting document.)*

Residents of the two local communities, including local businesses, received questionnaires designed to gauge opinion and gather evidence.

Additionally, a SWOT exercise (to canvas community opinion on perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was conducted with different groups of people, such as at coffee mornings, tea parties, village fetes and a sports event. There was also an exit poll of people collecting children from pre-school playgroup.


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## SWOT Analysis Diagram

| **Outcomes of the SWOT analysis**: carried out at local events with different audiences in both parishes, Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton between May and September 2016. (Responses have been summarised.) | |
|---|---|
| **STRENGTHS** | **WEAKNESSES** |
| Being close to the countryside | Lack of buses/inadequate bus shelters |
| Schools nearby | Lack of transport infrastructure especially regarding the Urban Extension |
| Good school provision: preschool, primary, secondary | Over stretched doctors' surgery, need for pharmacy and dentist |
| Canal towpath a useful route for footpath and cycleway | Not enough parking space on roads in the new estates |
| Lots of green space/public open space | Not building enough bungalows |
| Good community spirit | Will there be enough work for occupiers of new houses? |
| Village hall | Need more consideration of habitats for wildlife |
| Safe environment for children | Need more cycle ways and safe routes to school |
| Close to amenities such as Wellsprings fitness centre and Stoney Furlong football ground | Busy and congested roads, speeding traffic, not safe for children |
| Good communications by newsletter and website | No dog wardens |
| Friendly | Not a village anymore |
| Good doctors' surgery | Fly tipping |
| | Police not highly visible |
| | Youths misbehaving in public places |
| | Congestion at all schools, caused by pick-up and drop off |
| | Not enough local shops |
| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREATS** |
| Need for more bungalows to protect the views to the Quantocks and the Blackdowns | Over-development will cause concrete wasteland |
| Increase connectivity by more paths (cycleways and footpaths) | Bus gates/no busgates/loss of bus routes |
| Increase employment opportunities by providing more start up units | Insufficient preservation of hedgerows/green space/trees |
| Build in ways to clean streams and pathways regularly, construct wildlife corridors | More traffic, dangerous junctions |
| Maximise and increase local employment opportunities | More people – overstretching doctors' surgery and causing shortage of beds at Musgrove Park Hospital |


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| | |
|---|---|
| Increase provision of local stores/convenience store/pharmacy | Lack of community |
| Integrate new residents, build a community, make new friends | Lack of footpaths and cycleways |
| New intake for pre-school, new primary school building, new community hall | Increase in anti-social behaviour |
| Traffic calming by bus gates | |

Neighbourhood Plan policies must relate to the development and use of land. Furthermore, a NP must also meet a number of 'basic conditions' which include ensuring that it contributes to sustainable development and is in general conformity with both local planning policies adopted by Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and national planning policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Detailed confirmation that the WM&CF NP fully meets the 'basic conditions' is set out in the **Basic Conditions Statement.** *(See supporting document.)*

## Local and National Planning Policy

As the Local Planning Authority, Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) is responsible for the production of higher level Strategic Planning Policy and the adopted Core Strategy (CS) which covers the period up to 2028. The CS sets out a vision for Taunton Deane including strategic objectives, spatial strategy and policies for meeting that vision. The CS specifies the locations and quantity of growth to be accommodated within TDBC and identifies strategic site allocations, including mixed use Urban Extensions.

West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine are defined as 'villages' by CS Policy SP1 and as such will retain defined settlement boundaries and will have no further allocations made through the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP). There is however some scope for small scale proposals within settlement limits. Outside the settlement limits, development proposals will be treated as being within the 'Open Countryside' and will be limited to certain types of development which comply with the criteria listed by CS Policy DM2.

The WM&CF NP area contains a large part (57%) of the emerging Taunton Urban Extension (UE) as set out by CS Policies SS1 (Monkton Heathfield) and SS2 (Priorswood/Nerrols). The UE, when complete, will include in the region of 5,400 new homes (of which 25% will be affordable in line with CS Policy CP4), additional employment land (22.5 Ha), new primary and secondary schools, local shops and other community facilities and green space including a Green Park between Monkton


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Heathfield and Priorswood. Urban Initiatives produced a draft Masterplan and related Design Code in 2011 for the allocated Urban Extension.

A new Masterplan is currently being produced through a fully inclusive approach between TDBC, the housing developers, local Parish Councils and local people. The development of the WM&CF NP will be an integral part of this process to ensure that the NP works positively with the Masterplan to help deliver the best outcomes possible for the local community.

The Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) was adopted by TDBC in December 2016 and covers the period to 2028. This planning document sets out detailed policies for the allocation of land for housing, employment and other development proposals across Taunton Deane which are not already covered by the Core Strategy. It also includes detailed development management policies against which planning applications will be considered. The SADMP allocates 16 hectares of the former Priorswood landfill site for community woodland and other recreation uses (Policy TAU11) and 5.5 hectares of land east of the Crown Industrial Estate for employment purposes (Policy TAU10). (*See relevant NP Policy sections for maps which define these allocations.*)

National planning policy is set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was published by the Government in 2012 (the NPPF is currently under review). The NPPF makes a number of references in support of neighbourhood planning including that it *'gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need' (para.183).* However, neighbourhood plans *'should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para 184)'*.

**Ensuring Sustainable Development**

The WM&CF NP aspires to sustainable development and the Steering Group has been mindful of this requirement, which is a 'basic condition', throughout the NP development process. Sustainable development has three dimensions as defined by the NPPF. These dimensions are:

- **economic** - ensuring a strong local economy with the right mix of local jobs
- **social** - ensuring a healthy and vibrant community
- **environmental** - protecting and improving both the natural and historic built environment whilst also making the NP area more resilient to potential flooding.


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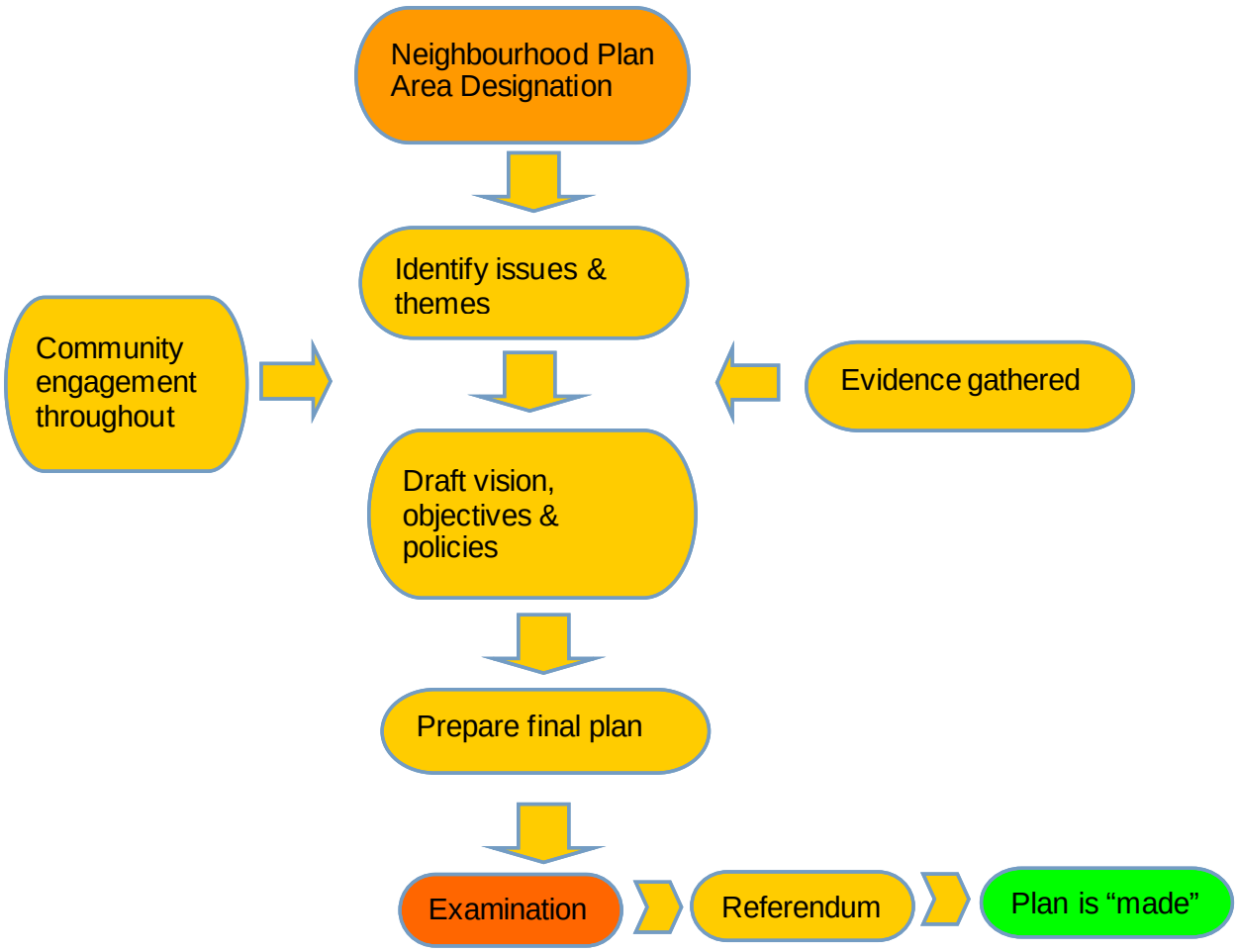
Proximity to Taunton and readily available public transport have the potential to exert a big influence on the economic, social, and cultural activity of the residents. The Neighbourhood Plan offers an opportunity to facilitate the aspirations and wishes of residents to use the car less and public transport more. At present, there is no service in the rural parts of the NP area, and services have been cut/reduced in Nerrols and Monkton Heathfield due to commercial considerations. It is hoped that by highlighting the need for better public transport infrastructure, systems may be included in development plans to reduce the use of private vehicles. Census 2011 data showed a high proportion of dwellings in the NP area had more than one vehicle. A regular and efficient bus service could offer a replacement to the use of private vehicles.

Existing economic, social and environmental assets within the NP area are described by the NP Area Profile section of this plan. The topic areas covered by the plan, and the relevant NP policies, have been subject to a **Sustainability Audit (SA)** to demonstrate that they do indeed contribute to sustainable development.

The plan is based on a number of consultation exercises including a comprehensive questionnaire sent to local households in 2016. The process required to make the plan is illustrated by the following flowchart. The public draft NP Consultation Regulation 14 was widely advertised and took place between 10 April and 27 May 2017. The plan was subject to submission consultation Regulation 16 between 3 August and 15 September 2017, Independent Examination between 17 November 2017 and 15 January 2018 and then a local referendum.


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## Neighbourhood Plan Development Process





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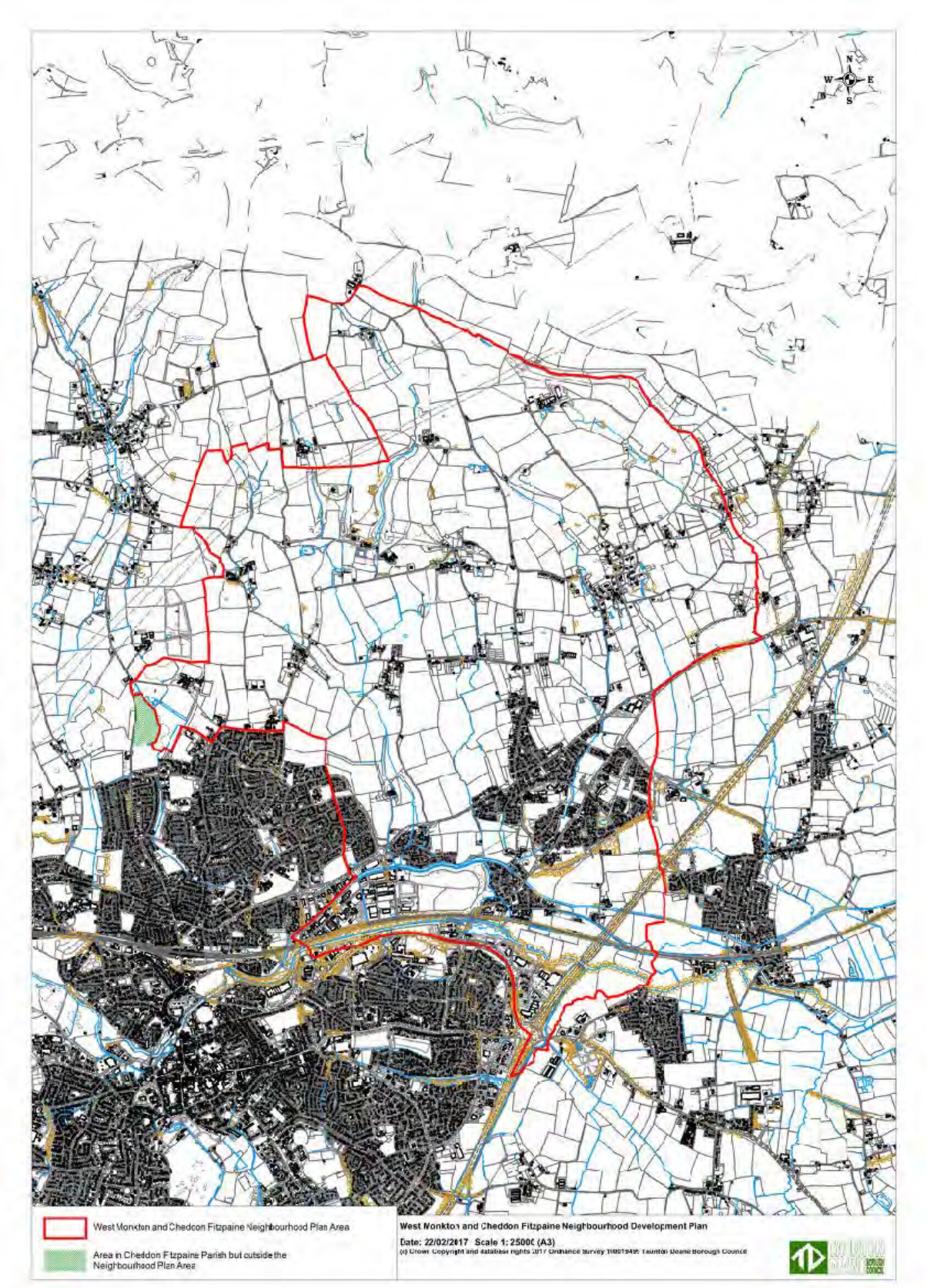
## Neighbourhood Plan Area

The NP area corresponds almost exactly with the West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine parish boundaries. Under Section 61G (meaning of 'neighbourhood area') the Local Authority has considered the Neighbourhood Area. The proposed Neighbourhood Area followed the joint parish boundaries. Consultation took place between 18th September and 30th October 2015. It was formally designated on 24th November 2015. Taunton Deane Borough Council has excluded an area which falls within the Staplegrove Urban Extension (also known as the North Taunton Development); this excluded area is shown in green on Map 1 on page 9.

Once the NP area was formally agreed, public exhibitions were held on 18th and 20th January 2016, at Cheddon Fitzpaine Memorial Hall and West Monkton Village Hall to show the Plan Area, features of the landscape, details of the topography, drainage systems, and development plans.


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## Map 1: WM&CF NP Exclusion Area (shown in green)





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## 2. AREA PROFILE

### Description of the Parishes

The parishes of West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine are two adjacent Civil Parishes in Somerset which lie to the north east of Taunton. They are part of a network of locally distinctive villages and hamlets surrounded by an ecologically rich and diverse farmed landscape with business areas and retail on the southern periphery (Hankridge Retail Park, Creech Castle Business Area, and Crown Industrial Estate). The historic and picturesque parishes include the villages and hamlets of Upper Cheddon, Rowford, Gotton, Goosenford, parts of Coombe, Burlinch, Overton, Cheddon, Bathpool, Monkton Heathfield and West Monkton.

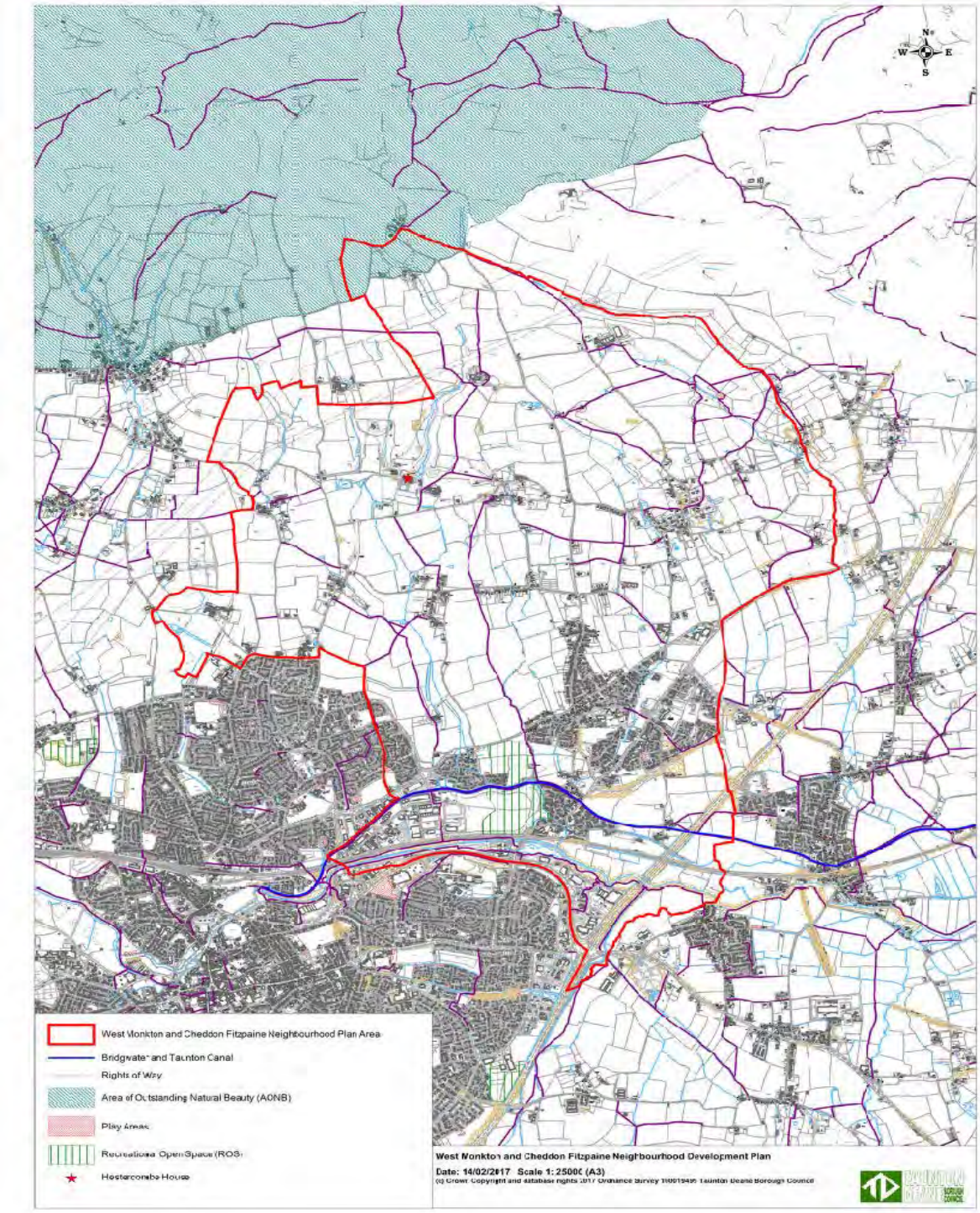
A small part to the northwest of the parish of West Monkton falls within the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A significant landowner in the NP area is the Crown Estate.

A map showing Listed Buildings, Quantock Hills AONB, Conservation Areas, and Rights of Way (ROW) can be found in the Recreation and Environment Policy section under 'Context' page 63.

The Neighbourhood Plan-making process bore in mind Somerset County Council's adopted minerals and waste plans: ref: www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/policies/minerals-and-waste/. From a waste perspective, SCC has a zone for strategic waste management in Taunton which also covers a significant part of the NP area (Priorswood Landfill).


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**Map 2: The WM&CF NP Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (as shown in blue)**





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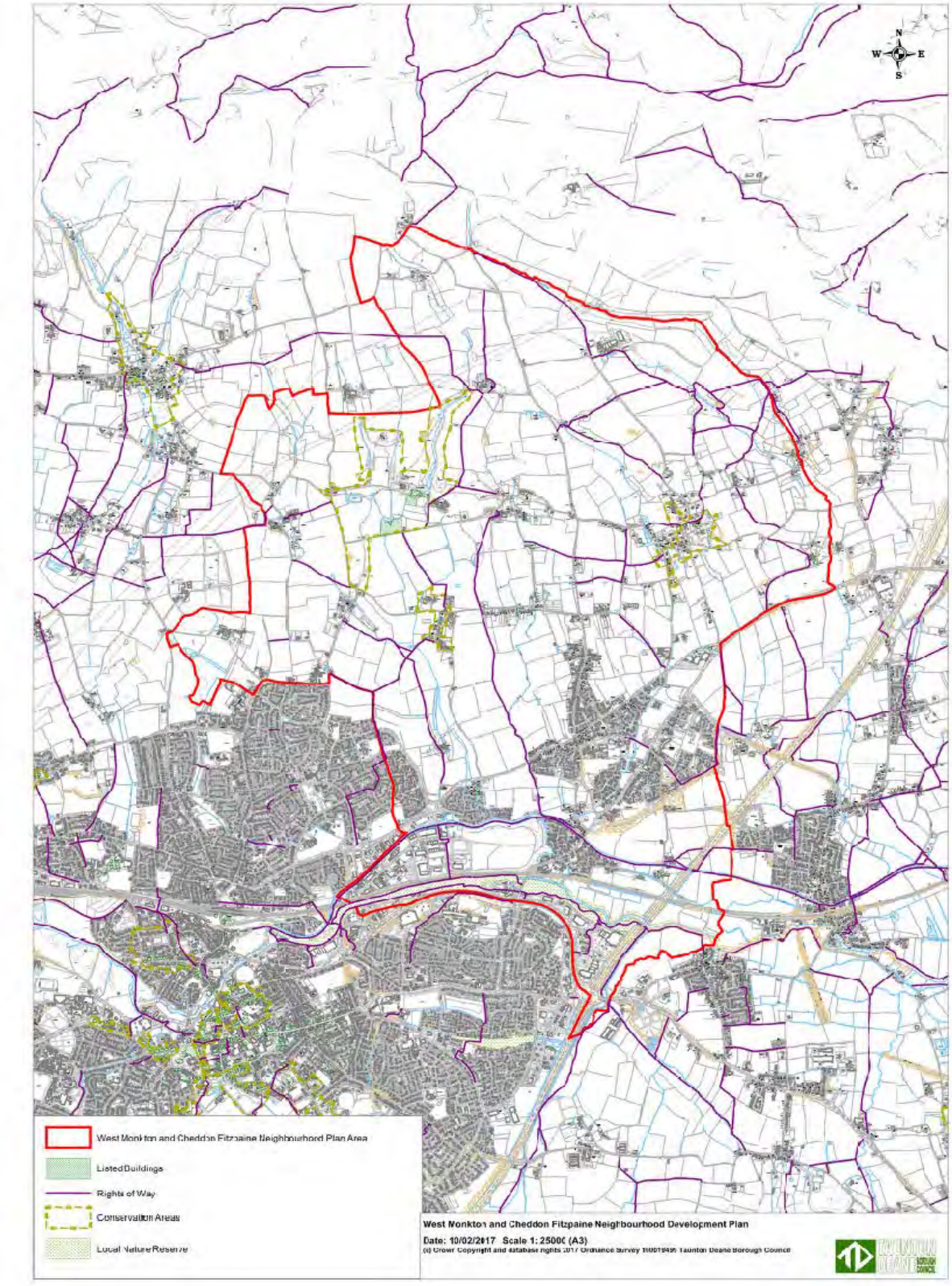
The villages of West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine are historic settlements originally laid out in a ribbon fashion. There have been some significant phases of development but, despite the growth of the villages, a semi-rural character and village-like feel remain. Although the villages historically orientate themselves towards the county town of Taunton, they also maintain a degree of independence with some employment opportunities including the availability of some local services and businesses. The parishes of Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton share a north-south boundary, although this is crossed by farming and other business enterprises. The two parishes share cultural and other activities.

The villages of Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton are Conservation Areas (as illustrated by the following maps) with Listed Buildings. All Listed Buildings within the NP area, along with other heritage and archaeological assets, are described in the Sustainability Audit. This document also describes in more detail the landscape, public Rights of Way (ROW), flooding, waste, air pollution and socio-economic characteristics of the NP area, with surrounding context where relevant.

The two conservation villages (WM and CF) found in the northern part of the NP area contain a mix of building styles. While many reflect their origins as housing for agricultural labourers, interspersed within these are numerous individual buildings of particular interest, importance and quality. Some are of late medieval origin, preserving a local vernacular *(see glossary);* and several more are architect designed set pieces. The building material used was largely 'Quantock Stone' of mid Devonian origin, mined out of small roadside quarries or on farms. The most significant commercial quarry was Triscombe Quarry which closed in 1999. (Triscombe Quarry Products Ltd, Triscombe.) There is an opportunity for opening small scale local quarries to provide local vernacular stone. These would be supported by the Parishes.

The buildings of historic interest are listed at www.historicengland.org.uk. The records indicate that the area is quite rich in designated heritage assets, having three Grade I, seven Grade II* and 59 Grade II Listed Buildings, and one Grade I listed park and garden. In addition, the Grade I St Augustine Church in West Monkton is on the National Heritage At Risk Register. These assets are significant and add to the NP area. *(Response from Historic England on the SEA Screening, see Other Evidence).*

## Map 3: WM&CF NP Showing Listed Buildings, Rights of Way, Conservation Areas and Local Nature Reserve

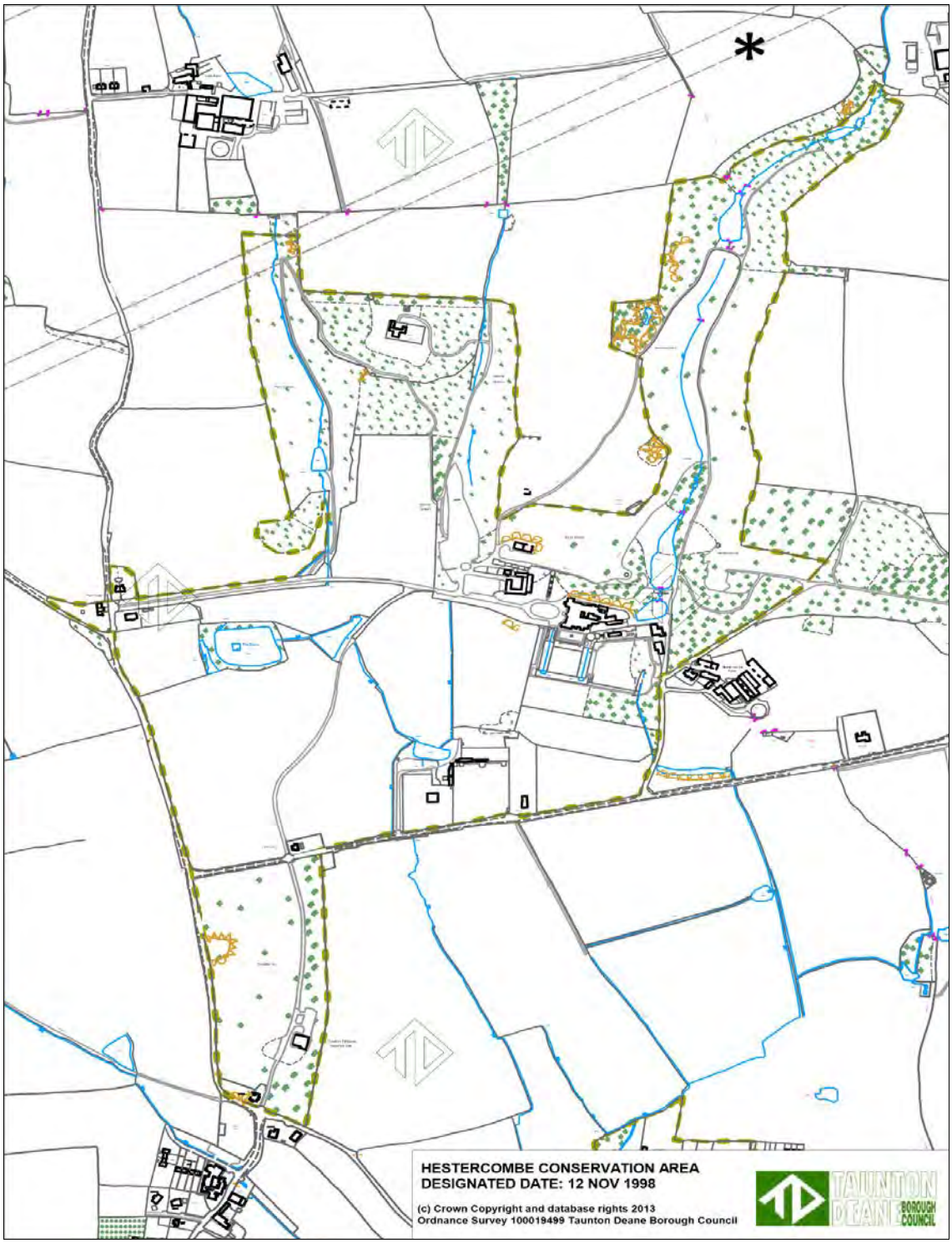




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## Conservation Maps

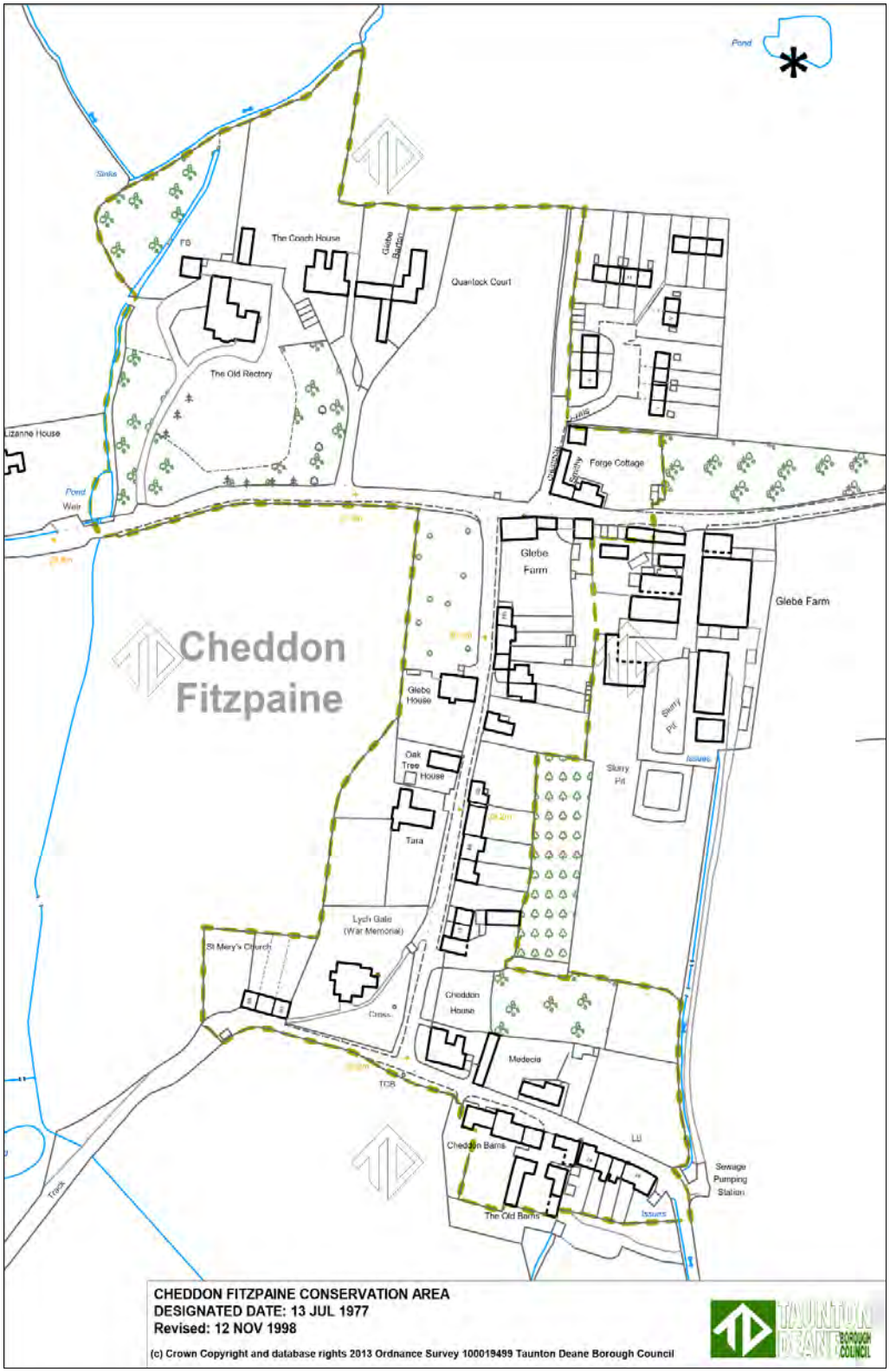
## Map 4: Hestercombe Conservation Area (Designated 1998)





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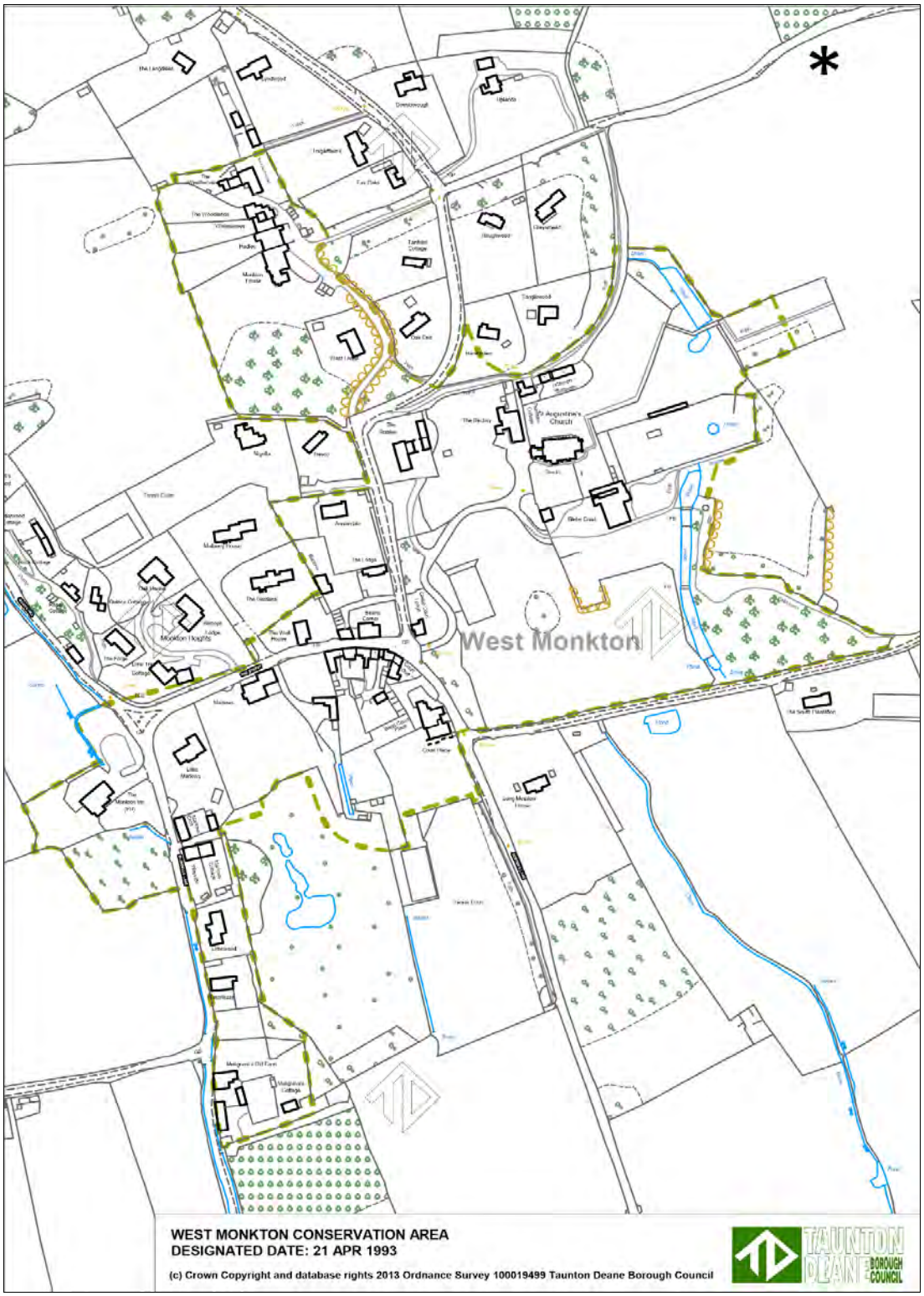
## Map 5: Cheddon Conservation Area (Designated 1977)





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## Map 6: West Monkton Conservation Area (Designated 1993)





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The following photographs are taken from the Taunton Deane Landscape Character Assessment document (adopted 2011) to illustrate character types found in the northern part of the NP area, including:

- Farmed and Settled Low Vale – Vale of Taunton Deane;
- Farmed and Settled High Vale – Quantock Fringes and West Vale;
- Hills and Fringes with Wooded Coombes – South East Quantock;

The southern part of the NP area includes:

- River Floodplain – The Tone.


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**Photos A–F: TDBC Landscape 7 Hills and Fringes with Wooded Combes**

## Landscape Type 7: Hills and Fringes with Wooded Combes



South facing sloping landform defined by a predominantly arable land use.



Narrow, wooded combes cut through the sloping agricultural land.



High walls (of sandstone and marlo slates) define property boundaries.



Short-flailed hedgerows.



Distinctive local vernacular.

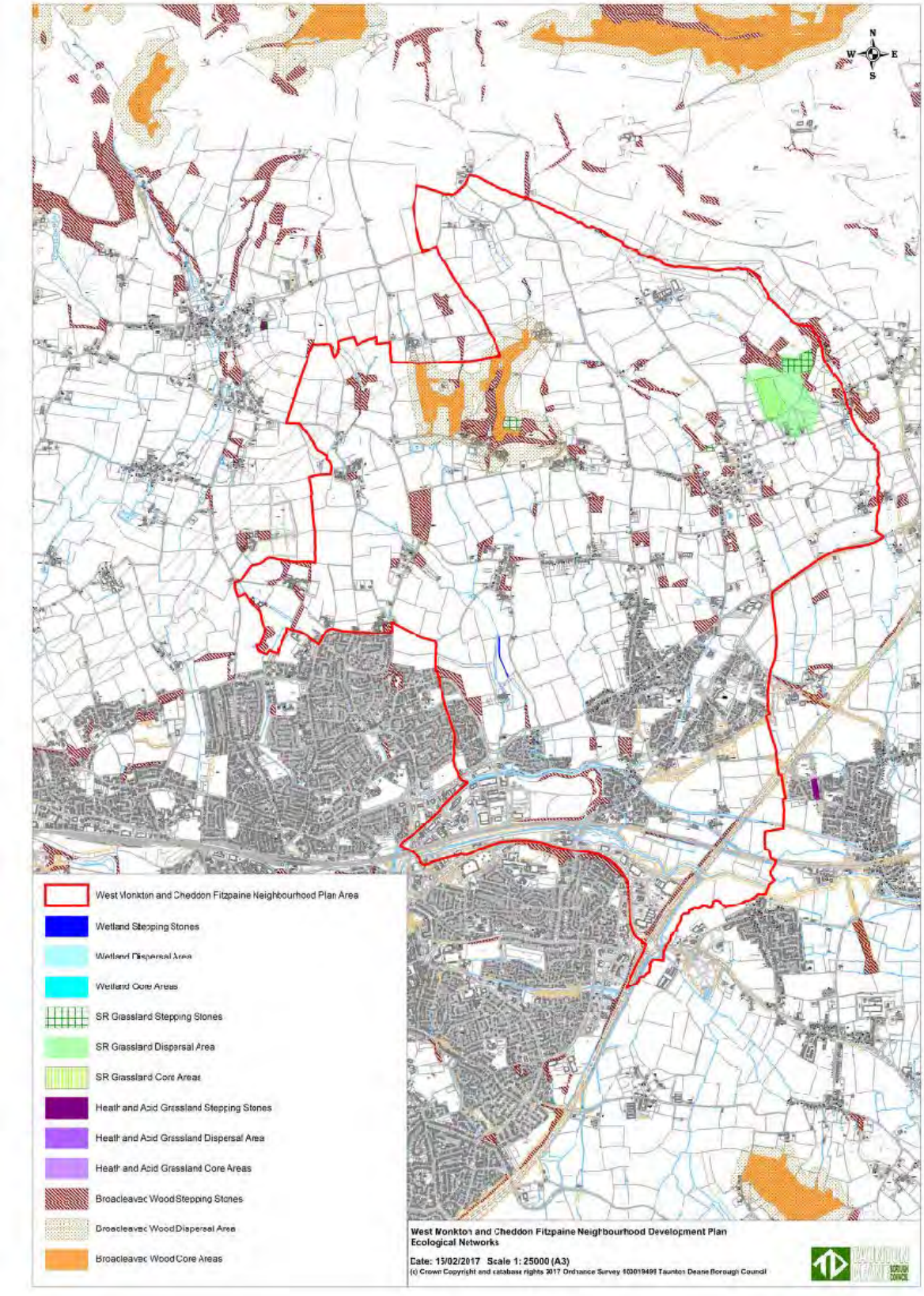


Higher ground marks the transition to hills and ridges lying further north.




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## Map 7: WM&CF NP Ecological Networks



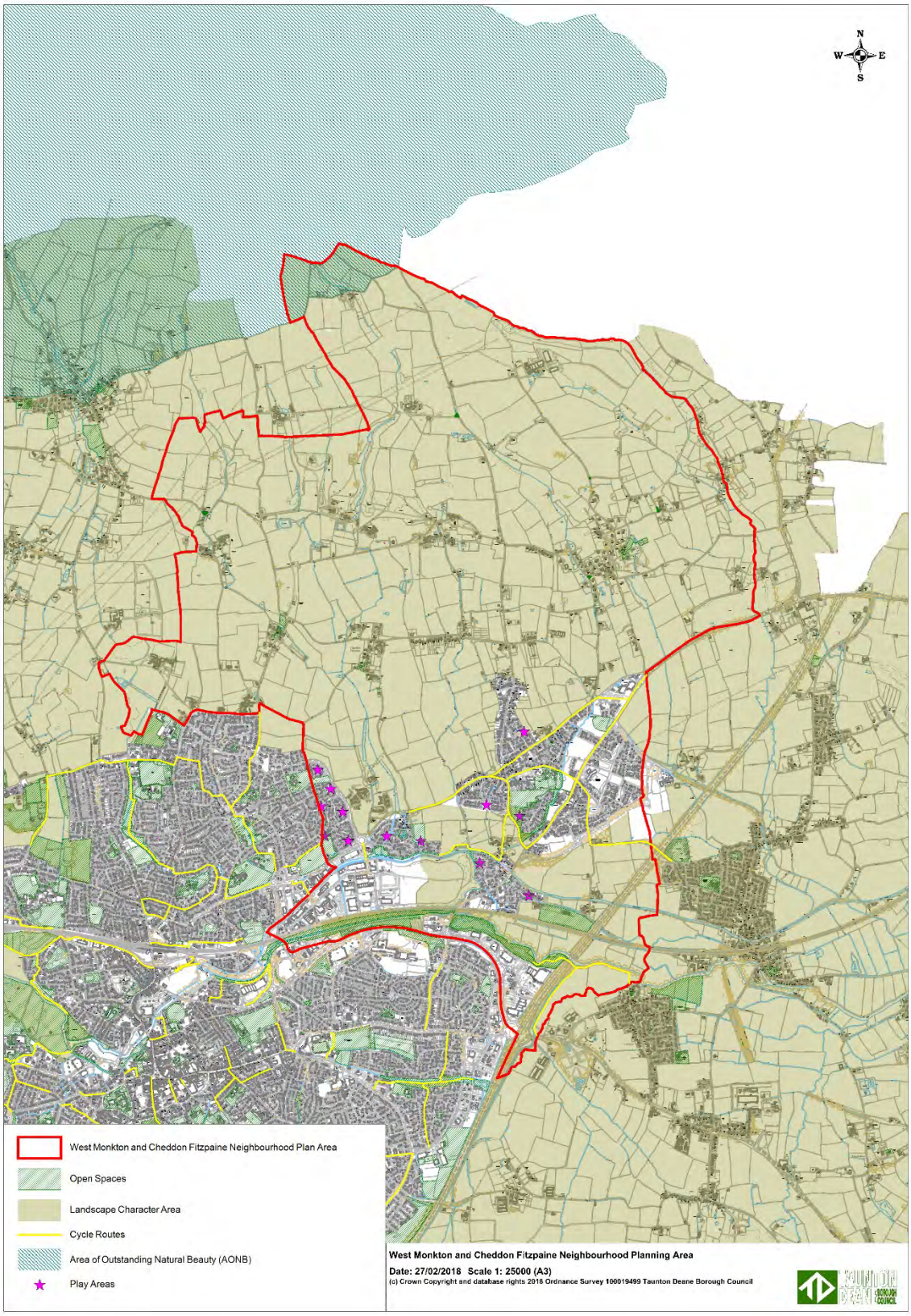
The southern part of the NP area is different. It is the location of Junction 25 of the M5 motorway and there is a nearby retail park and employment areas (at Hankridge). This part of the NP area is traversed by the railway line (mainline services to Paddington) and the now closed landfill site is in this location as well. The landfill site will need to be vented for a significant number of years before the land use can be changed, but lends itself for use as a wildlife area. (*See TDBC Site Allocation and Development Management Policy*.)

The historic and rural nature of the hamlets in the northern part, (e.g. Gotton, Goosenford, Coombe) means that the roads traversing the northern NP area are mostly narrow country lanes without pavements. However, in those areas to the south where houses have been built (e.g. Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension) and employment areas have been developed, (e.g. the Crown and Priorswood Industrial Estates) roads tend to be wider with pavements. Currently the NP area is crossed by the A3259 and the A38. The Urban Extension will be served by the Eastern Relief Road (ERR) and the Western Relief Road (WRR). The planned new developments reflect the Transport Policies of Somerset County Council (SCC) and TDBC insofar as footpath and cycle ways are being included, providing the opportunity to reduce reliance on cars and increase the use of sustainable transport modes. The Bridgwater & Taunton canal towpath is an important cycle and pedestrian route from the NP area into Taunton.

Both parishes offer good employment opportunities, including Hankridge Retail Park, Creech Castle Business Area, and Crown Industrial Estate. Planned new development offers the opportunity to provide additional local employment.
The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) area has a number of recreational facilities including: a rugby club, a cricket club, an arts and theatre centre (Tacchi-Morris Centre), Public Open Spaces (POS) with play areas, the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal, the River Tone, and a network of footpaths leading from Taunton and the railway line up to, and into, the Quantock Hills AONB. Development in the NP area will provide the opportunity to improve the range of open space, including the provision of allotments.


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## Map 8: WM&CF NP Showing Play Areas and Public Open Spaces (POS)





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The two parishes (WM and CF) offer a mix of services and facilities including shops, pubs, a village hall and a Memorial Hall, two primary schools, two churches, two chapels, a doctors' surgery and a pharmacy, which support residents and businesses across the NP area. Planned new development provides the opportunity to improve facilities for the community: the new community hall at Brittons Ash (Brittons Ash Community Hall, BACH) has been completed and is taking bookings, whilst the new 420 pupil primary school opened in October 2016. The primary school replaces an older smaller school next door to Heathfield School.

The need for more locally based pharmacies has been referred to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and fed into the Somerset Health and Well-being Strategy 2013-2018. *(See other evidence: Consultation Statement, Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment correspondence July/August 2016.).*

Hestercombe House and Gardens is a significant tourist attraction and cultural asset, with 100,000 visitors in 2016. The gardens are internationally recognized, whilst the house accommodates the Guild Hall School of Music, regular art exhibitions and visiting theatre companies.

There are reasonable transport links to the County Town of Taunton and community links to the wider South West.

**Socio-economic profile of the WM and CF parishes**

The following information has been drawn from the Census results of 2011. However, it is important to note that since 2011 the two parishes have grown significantly with the addition of more than 1000 houses forming part of the Urban Extension proposed in the TD Core Strategy. Growth in the Conservation Areas of Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton has been minimal, and there has been no growth in the Hestercombe Gardens Conservation Area other than development of the site as a tourist destination. However, significant housing estates have been built in the southern half of the NP area, from Pyrland in the west to Monkton Heathfield in the east.

The NP area will be subject to significant change over the period to 2028, and beyond, as a result of large scale developments, including the Urban Extension, as agreed through the CS and SADMP. This change will result in a significantly different NP area profile in terms of both socio-economic and environmental factors over the life-time of the plan. This dynamic is acknowledged by the NP process and will be monitored as part of the NP Action Plan over the plan period to ensure that the NP continues to contribute to sustainable development.


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## Population

The total population of the two parishes was 4,716 (2,787 in West Monkton and 1,929 in Cheddon) at the last census in 2011. This represents approximately 4.27% of the total population (110,200) of the Borough of Taunton Deane.

Baseline Office for National Statistics census data (ONS, 2011) shows the West Monkton (WM) population to be 2,787 and the Cheddon Fitzpaine (CF) population to be 1,929. TDBC (TDBC comments 16/2/2017) estimate that by the end of March 2016, based on housing completions data since 2011, there were an additional 1,462 persons in WM and 76 additional persons in CF.

Based on TDBC allocations, from the 2011 baseline it is estimated that by 2028 there will be an additional c.7,997 persons in WM and an additional c.1,510 persons in CF. These figures exclude 'windfall' sites and any general population flux.

This will result in a significant additional population from 2011 within the designated NP area estimated to be c.9,507 persons, largely due to the Urban Extension.

## Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Police reports of anti-social behaviour and crime rates show lower rates than in Somerset generally. Compared with the Somerset average a higher proportion (69%) of people in the area feel safe going out after dark. (*Partnership Intelligence Unit, SCC*)

## Health and Wellbeing

All-cause mortality rates for the under 75's is 266.5 in Taunton Deane compared with 258.5 in Somerset (rate per 100,000). Mortality rates for cancer are slightly below the Somerset average, at 101.8 per 100,000 compared with 104.0. (See *Partnership Intelligence Unit, SCC*)
In West Monkton 81% of residents and in Cheddon Fitzpaine 86% of residents are said to be in Good or Very Good Health: the figure for Taunton Deane is 47.1%. (*See Rural Services Network/Census, 2011*)

## Ethnicity

Within the Parish of Cheddon Fitzpaine 1,795 residents are 'White British' and 54 are 'Black and Minority Ethnic'. In the Parish of West Monkton there are 2,710 'White British' residents and 46 'Black and Minority Ethnic' residents. Somerset Intelligence Network shows that for the West Monkton ward (not coterminous with the NP area) the proportion of 'White British' residents is 95.8% compared with 93.5% in the Taunton Deane district. (See Census 2011.)


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## Housing

West Monkton Parish has 1178 dwellings (1,146 households) and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish has 750 dwellings (731 households; see Census 2011). These figures will increase significantly during the Neighbourhood Plan period as the Urban Extension is built out.

## Travel

Households in West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine both have a higher than average number of cars per household as shown in the Supporting Document 'Other Evidence' (Census 2011). This reflects the rurality of the northern half of the NP area and the fact that public transport provision currently does not adequately support the need for transportation to work and school. The evidence from the household questionnaire reflects the lack of current provision and a desire to use more sustainable means of transport than the car.

## Ecology and Conservation

The human population projections, plus local indigenous bat populations e.g. the Lesser Horseshoe bat, have a bearing on the recreation, wildlife and ecology provision in the NP area. Housing settlements have made allowances for bat roosting and foraging pathways, and will continue to do so, whilst the need to protect local wildlife has encouraged a robust position to be taken over the use of Public Open Space. This position is supported by the results of the residents' questionnaire. It is recognized, nationally and locally, that access to public open space, good recreation opportunities and dark skies encourage health and well-being essential for bats. *(See Council for the Protection of Rural England, CPRE.)* The Neighbourhood Plan has sought to encourage and protect the community's health and well-being.

## Summary

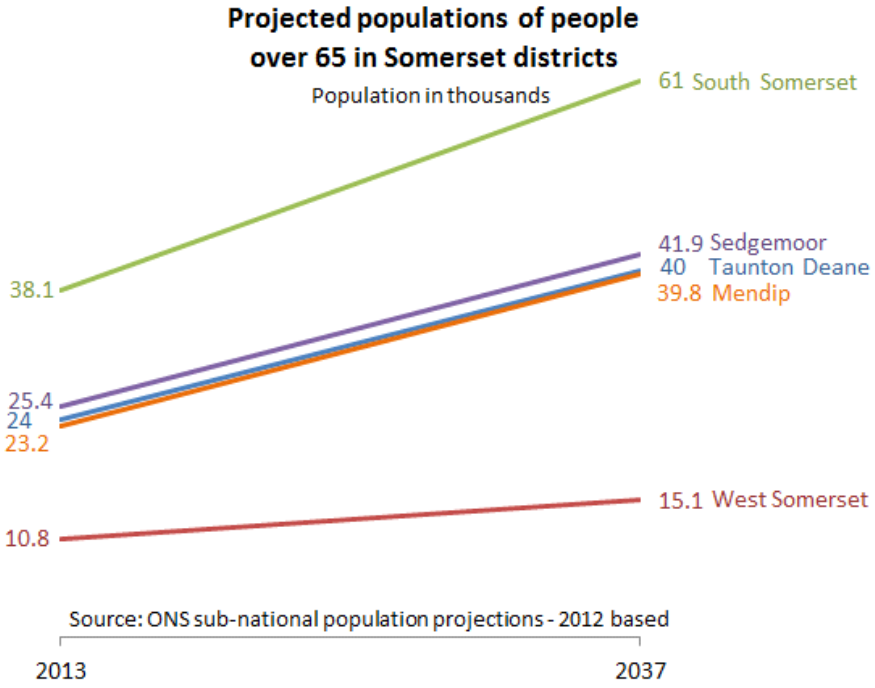
Although it is widely recognized that Somerset is a favoured retirement destination, it is important to appreciate that the WM and CF NP area is shown to be an area with a younger population, i.e. more of the population are economically active. Both the 2013 data and the projection to 2033 show that the NP area will have a population where the proportion aged 65 and over is less than 15%. *(See Somerset Intelligence Network: SINE 2011.)*

This demographic is important in the consideration of land use in the Neighbourhood Plan area with implications for the provision of schools, public open spaces, opportunities for sport and recreation, and the focus for health provision. The NP area does not have any areas of deprivation, although parts of Taunton, not far away, are classified as such. *(See Sustainability Audit for detail)*.


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The crime statistics reported for the Ward of West Monkton, which is not coterminous with the NP area (that includes part of CF Parish) show that for every 100,000 people the greatest crime rate is for anti-social behaviour (2.5k), followed by violence (1.5k), criminal damage (0.5k), theft (0.5k), burglary (0.25k), vehicle damage (0.75k) and drugs use (less than 0.25k). Figures are per 100,000 people. Each Somerset district can expect to see a significant increase in the numbers of people over 65 by 2037. The chart below shows the projected increase of over 65s between 2013 and 2037; in most cases, it is over 50%. *(See other evidence Somerset Demographics which puts the Neighbourhood Plan area into a context within Somerset.)*

**Projected populations of people over 65 in Somerset districts**




The population projections are significant to this Neighbourhood Plan. The responses to the housing provision questions in the household questionnaire and the population projections indicate two main trends in the sort of accommodation that will be required in the NP area: accommodation for downsizers/economically inactive on the one hand, and on the other – affordable accommodation for young families. The high proportion of part time workers in Somerset and average earnings in the area have encouraged the suggestion that as high a proportion of housing as is viable should be affordable housing or social housing. Whilst gated or sheltered communities for the older population were not favoured, there seemed to be support for apartments and one and two bedroomed houses. *(See results of supplementary questionnaire.)*

It is noteworthy that local indigenous bat populations have a bearing on housing and infrastructure development.


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# 3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

## Vision

**To successfully accommodate the significant growth planned for the area.**

**To ensure a high quality of design with the creation of sustainable places with excellent community facilities for local people to enjoy.**

**During this period of growth, the historic settlements and surrounding countryside will be protected to maintain and enhance the locally distinctive characteristics of the area for future generations.**

## Objectives

### (i) Housing Objective

The NP area will see significant housing growth over the plan period. This is an opportunity to provide a range of property types at affordable prices with a particular emphasis to meet the housing needs of young and older people. This housing provision should include both affordable and market housing to ensure inclusive communities and allow people with local connections to return or remain as part of a growing community.

This objective will promote the following:

- provision of a range of property types with a particular emphasis to meet the housing needs of young and older people;
- an increased proportion of 1 and 2 bed dwellings to allow first time buyers and downsizers to remain in the area;
- an increased proportion of single storey dwellings to give older residents the opportunity to downsize, thus releasing mid-range and larger properties onto the market;
- recognition that not everyone has the ability to buy their home at current price levels on the open market. Therefore, affordable housing must be provided in accordance with relevant Core Strategy Policies and Supplementary Planning Documents adopted by TDBC;
- the NP area includes good examples of locally distinctive design and external finishing materials which reflects the local architectural and historic heritage. New residential development design and materials should respect this context with the use of more traditional finishing materials on prominent buildings within the larger new residential areas planned for the NP area.


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**(ii) Transport Objective**

To provide sustainable transport infrastructure to meet the existing and future travel needs of local people. This will include a joined-up foot and cycle path network and improved public transport options to encourage bus and rail use.

This objective will seek to:

- encourage people to use public transport;
- encourage people to walk and cycle within the NP area and to destinations across Taunton, such as the town centre and railway station, by providing a well-connected and convenient foot and cycle path network;
- provide improved safe routes to existing and proposed schools and to local centres.

**(iii) Employment Objective**

To bring an economic advantage to the NP area by encouraging a broad range of local employment opportunities, at a scale appropriate to the planned population growth.

To create and maintain local jobs to allow residents to work as close as possible to where they live so as to encourage sustainable commuting, whilst at the same time preserving the rural character of the NP area.

This objective will help to:

- bring an economic advantage to the NP area;
- create a range of employment opportunities which are of a scale commensurate with local population growth;
- minimise commuting by encouraging local employment opportunities, either through expansion, relocation or start-up, allowing local residents to work near to where they live;
- maintain the rural character of the NP area by locating larger new employment initiatives within employment land allocations proposed by the Core Strategy (CS) and Site Allocations & Development Management Plan (SADMP), or on brownfield sites.

**(iv) Recreation and Environment Objective**

To successfully accommodate the significant growth planned for the NP area by ensuring that sustainable places are created to support the provision of excellent community facilities for local people to enjoy, benefitting their health and well-being. Future developments must provide a high-quality mix of private and open space uses which meet local needs, including children's play areas, sports pitches,

allotments, and amenity green spaces which safeguard and enhance the natural environment by promoting connectivity for people and wildlife. The creation of sustainable places must also include measures to attenuate extreme rainfall events (which often adversely impact the NP area due to its position at the foot of the Quantock Hills) by working closely with partner organisations to reduce the overall flow of upstream floodwater down into the NP area and further downstream.

This objective will seek to:

- encourage all relevant stakeholders to contribute to the development and delivery of the Green Wedge and Country Park to the north of the A3259 to ensure excellent access arrangements to a quality green space environment for people and wildlife;
- protect and enhance the NP area heritage, landscape and wildlife assets;
- increase the provision of outdoor and indoor recreation and community facilities to meet the needs of the local community through, for example, provision of a community cafe and toilets along the canal in the vicinity of the Swingbridge area to create a community meeting point;
- protect and enhance the dark skies quality of the area for the health and well-being of both people and wildlife;
- improve local green space infrastructure within existing and proposed green spaces with, for example, the provision of seating along public footpaths and canal side walkways;
- encourage all relevant stakeholders to make improvements of the surface water run-off systems to restrict flooding in the three main feeder brooks into the River Tone using recognised field work initiatives to restrict flows during periods of heavy rain;
- work with local upstream farming communities to help the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) implement field work initiatives to reduce peak water flows across farmland.

# 4. POLICIES

## Housing

### Context

The NP area housing stock comprises a wide range of housing including houses of traditional design within the historic villages of West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine (both designated Conservation Areas), more established suburban areas and extensive new housing developments which are part of Taunton's Urban Extension. Significant additional residential growth is planned for the NP area and it will therefore be important that this growth is properly integrated with existing settlements with respect to visual appearance and in terms of creating new communities which work well with existing communities and which provide for the housing needs of local people as well as for the wider Taunton housing market area.

Census 2011 parish summaries for West Monkton (WM) and Cheddon Fitzpaine (CF) as prepared by Somerset Intelligence show that there were 1,178 dwellings in WM (around 1,000 dwellings can be added to the WM total as a result of the Urban Extension build since 2011) and 750 dwellings in CF. In terms of house types WM has a higher percentage of detached houses and a lower percentage of smaller properties such as semi-detached, terraced and flats as compared to the rest of Somerset. This is also true for CF, except for terraced houses, as CF has a higher percentage of these property types compared to the rest of Somerset. The percentage of flats in CF is particularly low at just 2.4% compared to 13% in the rest of Somerset.

In terms of planned future housing growth, which is currently being built out, the relevant Core Strategy Policies are SS1 (*Monkton Heathfield*) and SS2 (*Priorswood/Nerrols*). The Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension is a key part of Taunton's planned growth strategy and will eventually deliver a self-contained settlement of around 4,500 new homes. The Priorswood/Nerrols development will create a new sustainable neighbourhood of around 900 new homes. Around 57% of the Monkton Heathfield site area and 75% of the Priorswood/Nerrols site area is within the NP area designated boundary.


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## National and Local Housing Policies

The NPPF advocates planning for 'a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community' (Paragraph 50).

The relevant Core Strategy (CS) Policies are CP4 (Housing) which promotes the delivery of the required mix of new housing types, sizes and tenures to meet the needs of the Taunton Deane area and CP5 (Inclusive Communities). Policy DM4 (Design) seeks to encourage a sense of place and high-quality building design. The Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) also has a range of detailed policies which are relevant to new housing development.

## Housing Policy H1: Housing Suitable for Older People

### Justification

The NP questionnaire conducted in early 2016 included "Housing Needs" questions. A number of respondents indicated that they were looking to move within the NP area and of those a significant number expressed a wish to stay within the NP area; most of those respondents said that they would like to live in bungalows. The questionnaire responses also indicated support for one, two and three bed houses. A further supplementary questionnaire confirmed that the sort of housing most wanted by the elderly was bungalows, followed by sheltered housing.

The elderly population within the NP area is expected to grow in line with both national and local trends. A proportion of the large number of new residents within the Urban Extension, and other new residential developments within the NP area will be elderly. The largest total change is expected to be in the number of people aged 55 and over, while the proportion of people aged 15-25 and 40-50 is unlikely to change significantly. (*See paragraph 3.5 - TDBC Locally Based Housing Projections 2008 - 2026: Fordham Research 2010*).

The term 'Older People' is therefore defined for the purposes of this NP Policy as referring to those who are aged 55 and above. This definition is in line with the 'Housing and Older People Study' also produced by Fordham Research in 2010. This study found that 35.9% of the total population of the Taunton Housing Market Area (HMA) were older people, larger than the regional and national average. This study also found that there was a preference for downsizing (in terms of number of bedrooms) and for sheltered housing. Older people would prefer to stay within their own homes for as long as possible. To do this the most common adaptions required were a downstairs toilet and handrails.

Core Strategy paragraph 3.78 in support of Policy CP5 states that, '*The population of the Borough is older than the national average which will require adaptability of homes, and a*

*range of specialist housing such as provision of Care and Residential institutions…*'
Furthermore, this paragraph goes on to state that '*It is important that the location of new accommodation is well related to community facilities'*.

The Census 2011 figures show that in WM older people (aged 65 and over) comprise 22.8% (636 people) of the parish population as compared to 21.1% in Somerset and 16.4% in England and Wales. In CF, just 7.9% (153) of the population were older people. The total number of older people is therefore significant across the NP area as a whole and their specific housing needs should be properly addressed now and in the future.

The proposed policy (H1) for the provision of 10% single storey dwellings, as clearly evidenced by the results of the questionnaire, and as a percentage of the private units only, equates to a minimum of seven to eight dwellings out of every 100 units built. This should not materially affect the viability of any scheme as the reduction in overall square footage should be offset by increased sales revenue per square foot, a decreased build cost, and a reduction in CIL payments.

Providing the developer is aware of the requirement to provide these units prior to land purchase the only loss, if indeed there is one, will be to the landowner. A wise developer will plot the bungalows in areas where the sales revenue can be maximised with the smaller ones closer to facilities. This would improve saleability, and be more convenient for the purchasers, who are more likely to be in the over 55 age bracket.

**Housing Policy H1: Housing Suitable for Older People**

Subject to a viability assessment, new major* residential developments of 10 or more net additional dwellings (or if the site area is more than 0.5 hectares if dwelling numbers are yet to be agreed) will provide not less than 10% of dwellings** to be sold on the open market, evidenced by local need, suitable for occupation by older people. Such accommodation shall fulfil all the following criteria:

- Be single storey and either 1,2 or 3 bed,
- Be situated within easy access of either existing or proposed local facilities and services.

* Major development for the purposes of this Policy is as defined by The Town and Country (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Part 1, paragraph 2(c)

** The current Urban Extension allocates 3500 new homes to the West Monkton

Creech St Michael Parish: Fifty-seven per cent of the emerging Urban Extension lies within the parish of West Monkton, giving a total of approximately 2000 dwellings gross, or 1500 private after the deduction of 25% social and affordable housing in line with current policy.

There have been very few bungalows built in the NP area over recent years and the Questionnaire returns, supported by current demographics and open market requirements, revealed that there was a need for this type of 1, 2, and 3 bedroomed properties.

The NP proposal of a minimum of 10% of private dwellings to be single storey properties would result in approximately 200 units being built over a probable 14-year period, equating to around 14 per year (or 7 per year per developer assuming the current 2 developers continued). It is felt that this is not unreasonable and will enable the Garden Town concept to give a greater feeling of space and community inclusion whilst providing for the proven need.

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

This NP Policy is considered to be in general conformity with CS Policies CP4 (*Housing*) and CP5 (*Inclusive Communities*) and the NPPF (paragraph 50).

**What difference will it make?**

This NP Policy will help to achieve the WM&CF NP Housing Objective by providing house types suitable for older people, enabling them to downsize and to remain independent and within their local community. These house types need not necessarily be in blocked compounds, but can be pepper-potted through the community. This will be of benefit to the older people concerned and their families, and will also support a diverse and cohesive community. This policy will also reduce the need to travel by car.

**Housing Policies H2 & H3: External Materials and Refuse Bin Storage**

**Justification**

Proposed development within the NP area is on a very large scale and therefore must be carefully planned and managed to achieve high quality design outcomes which do not swamp existing local settlements or threaten locally distinctive architectural and historic characteristics. Towards this end, TDBC commissioned the Taunton Urban Extension Masterplan and related Design Code for the Urban Extension in 2011. A new Masterplan is currently being produced and the parishes

will wish to continue their close involvement with its development to ensure, amongst other things, high quality design outcomes.

The NP questionnaire (2016) responses to question 6 confirmed a widely-held view by local people that there is enough existing and planned housing development in the NP area and that existing heritage assets, such as the historic villages and rural landscape, should be protected and enhanced. With respect to new residential developments, responses from the questionnaire indicate strong local support for the use of local red sandstone and other more traditional building materials typical of the NP area.

The use of local and traditional materials should be encouraged where they will make the greatest visual impact such as prominent entrance buildings to new residential areas and prominent buildings which turn corners.

The NPPF states that:

> *'…neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area'*.

Furthermore, developments should:

> *'respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials…."* and should *"…function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just in the short term but over the lifetime of the development.'* (NPFF, paragraph 58).

The relevant CS Policy is DM4 (Design) which states that a sense of place will be encouraged by addressing design at a range of scales, including village, neighbourhood, street and building.

The SADMP has a range of detailed design policies covering a number of issues including Policy D12 (Amenity Space). While this Policy does require safe, discreet and conveniently accessed storage of refuse and recycling off the public highway, NP Policy H2 seeks to bring added local design requirements to this issue. This is particularly important given the scale and density of planned residential developments within the NP area and the potential for extensive unsightly bin storage.

SADMP Policy D7 (Design Quality) requires that new housing and commercial developments create a high standard of design quality and sense of place by applying a number of criteria. The NP Parishes support these design principles which will work well with the added design requirements set out in NP Policies H2 and H3 and which seek to address more locally based design considerations.


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**Photos G – H: Buildings of local stone with slate roof tiles and clay pantiles**






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**Housing Policy H2: External Materials for Residential Development**

Residential developments must incorporate the use of appropriate local and traditional external building materials, such as red sandstone* (or suitable equivalent) and natural slate/natural clay roof tiles (or suitable equivalent), particularly with respect to the use of traditional materials on prominent entrance and corner buildings.

**Local quarries are closed, therefore limited natural stone is locally available*

**Housing Policy H3: Refuse Bin Storage for Residential Development**

Where there is no provision for direct access to the rear of a new dwelling, other than through the dwelling itself, a suitable refuse bin-store must be incorporated into the front of the dwelling/curtilage so that wheelie bins, or other containers for household refuse and recycling, can be stored in a concealed position.

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

These NP Policies are considered to be in general conformity with CS Policy DM4 (Design), SADMP Policy (Amenity Space) and the NPPF (paragraph 58).

**What difference will it make?**

These NP Policies will help to achieve the WM&CF NP Housing Objective by ensuring that new residential developments within the NP area achieve high quality design outcomes. These NP policies will also enhance the overall appearance of new residential developments and will help to maintain the local distinctiveness of the wider NP area.

**Housing Policy H4: Affordable Housing**

**Justification**

**Affordable Housing: demonstrated need**

Over recent decades there has been a significant shortfall in homes built in the UK to meet demand. According to the Government (Fixing the Foundations, July 2015) this harms productivity and restricts labour market flexibility as well as providing insufficient homes for individuals and families.

In 2014 building starts reached 136,000 in England, however, according to the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) we should be building at least 240,000


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new houses a year in England to 2031 (Planning for Housing Need, Savills, 2015). This ongoing shortfall has led to affordability and availability issues for people trying to find homes to meet their needs. This, in turn, has resulted in a variety of negative social and economic issues as described by the National Housing Federation (Home Truths, NHF, 2014/15).

House price affordability ratios in 2013 (prices as a multiple of earnings) were 8.77 to 10.6 within the Heart of the SW (HotSW) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area for Somerset and Devon. TDBC have advised they do not hold data on current house prices to earnings ratios. The Home Truths report (NHF 2016-17) comments that house prices are more than 10 times the average salary and households would need a pay rise of £33,600 to afford the average home.

Affordability ratios of seven or more are considered to be unaffordable. This disparity is shown even more starkly within the private rented sector with average rental costs of between 31% and 37% of the average gross salary across the HotSW. (Broken Market, Broken Dreams, NHF, 2015). (Home Truths NHF, 2014/15*).*
Home Truths 2016-17 reports that the average cost of renting is over £700 a month, swallowing up around 35% of local incomes.

**TDBC Affordable Housing policy**

Policy CP4 of the Core Strategy requires that all housing schemes of five or more net additional dwellings shall include 25% as affordable units. It is 10 units or more in urban areas. The detailed requirements of this Policy are set out in the TDBC Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adopted in May 2014. This SPD defines what is meant by affordable housing and how it will be delivered. The SPD also requires:

- A local connections clause in Section 106 agreements in relation to all schemes outside the Taunton and Wellington urban area to ensure that local people have priority access to affordable homes which can contribute to meeting the local housing needs. (Where a scheme provides 25 or more affordable homes on one site a local connection clause is not required).

- Design, quality and sustainability standards to include a requirement that affordable housing should not be visually distinguishable from the market housing on the site in terms of build quality, materials, architectural details, levels of amenity space, parking provision and privacy. Furthermore, affordable housing should meet the latest Homes and Communities Agency Design and Quality Standards. Note that SADMP D10 should now apply to all dwellings.

- That all types of residential development should be provided to meet local housing needs and that a developer *may* be required to undertake a local Housing Needs Survey in close liaison with the relevant parish. This approach should be followed for all allocated residential sites within the NP area to ensure that the right affordable housing mix is provided to help deliver the NP Housing Objective and Policies. This would include the right mix of affordable housing for families, young and older people to allow them to remain within the NP area whenever possible.

The SPD also defines the required affordable housing tenure split as follows:

> *'The Council will seek a tenure split of 60% social rented and 40% intermediate housing or Affordable Rented on affordable housing provision of 3 affordable dwellings or more.'*

Definitions of 'social rented', 'intermediate housing' and 'affordable rented' are provided by the SPD.

The Affordable Housing SPD is supported by the two parish councils and the delivery of affordable housing within the NP area will be closely monitored as part of the Neighbourhood Action Plan.

The two parishes do, however, wish to be more ambitious in addressing affordable housing needs within the NP area and this is set out in NP Policy H4 which seeks an 80% social rented to 20% intermediate housing tenure split with respect to affordable housing provided to meet CS Policy and SPD requirements.

The two parishes also wish to see a number of affordable self-build plots provided as part of NP Policy H4. This is justified in the following paragraph.

**Self-build homes**

Although responses to the NP questionnaire (question 4) did not prioritise self-build opportunities, other evidence in the form of the TDBC register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced self-build plots to build homes within the Borough does show some demand for this sort of development. At the time of writing, a relatively small number (25) were registered. However, the register has only recently been established following the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act (2015), therefore numbers are likely to grow as the register and associated opportunities for self-build as required by the 2015 Act increase. This form of housing provision is strongly supported by the Government as part of their overall strategy to deliver more housing. It is also supported locally by the WM and CF parishes, subject to further evidence of local need, as this new initiative grows and becomes more widely known over the NP period to 2028.

Teignbridge District Council was the first planning authority in England to produce and adopt (July 2016) a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on the topic of *'Custom and Self-Build Housing'.* This planning policy document sets out requirements for this type of housing delivery (both open market and affordable) and includes definitions of 'self-build' and 'affordable self-build' housing.

Self-build is defined in the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016). This definition includes both 'custom' and 'self-build' dwellings. 'Custom-build' is where an individual commissions a specialist developer to help deliver their home, whereas 'self-build' is when an individual is more directly involved in the construction process.
The 'affordable self-build' definition defines a range of detailed issues such as eligible households and how affordable self-build will be retained as affordable housing in perpetuity through Section 106 legal agreements.

With respect to WM&CF NP Policy H4 until such time as TDBC may produce an equivalent SPD and definitions, the NP defines that Self-build housing may be considered as affordable housing where affordable housing is only provided to eligible households (as determined by local incomes and house prices), that affordable housing remains affordable for future households and that it costs no more than 80% of market rates.

**Opportunities to meet local needs**

The Urban Extension and other large new developments planned within the NP area will provide opportunities to meet housing needs expressed by local people, now and in the future, in response to the NP questionnaire, and in compliance with CS Policy CP4 and the Affordable Housing SPD.

The NP questionnaire responses (2016) to Question 4 prioritised low cost-to-buy for local people, family homes, affordable-to-rent for local people and starter homes, in that order, as the types of housing most needed in the NP area.

The SPD definition of 'intermediate housing' can include shared-equity and other low-cost homes for sale and intermediate rent. Shared-equity and other low-cost homes require a deposit/mortgage which is often unaffordable for those in housing need. Therefore, the tenure split proposed by NP Policy H4 seeks to reduce the percentage of such homes as part of the overall affordable housing mix for future housing developments within the NP area. (*See other evidence: Gibbons Richards email dated 3/4/17)*

**Housing Policy H4: Affordable Housing**

Evidence of local and wider housing need should be used and a viability assessment should be carried out to determine an appropriate tenure split for affordable housing to be provided in line with Core Strategy Policy CP 4. A tenure split of 80% social rented and 20% intermediate housing or affordable rent on affordable housing provision of three affordable dwellings or more* is encouraged where there is evidence to support this and subject to viability considerations.

In addition, affordable self-build housing** to meet local demand is particularly encouraged and must be retained as affordable housing in perpetuity through legal agreement.

** Definitions of 'social rented', 'intermediate housing' and 'affordable rented' are provided by the TDBC Affordable Housing SDP*

*** Self-build housing may be considered as affordable housing where affordable housing is only provided to eligible households (as determined by local incomes and house prices), that affordable housing remains affordable for future households and that it costs no more than 80% of market rates*

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

This NP Policy is considered to be in general conformity with CS Policies CP4 (*Housing*) and CP5 (*Inclusive Communities*) and the NPPF (paragraph 50).

**What difference will it make?**

This NP Policy will help to achieve the WM&CF NP Housing Objective by providing more affordable housing opportunities for people to live in the NP area. This will be of benefit to the local economy, individuals and families and will help to maintain a diverse and cohesive community. This policy will also reduce the need to travel by car.


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## Transport

### Context

The NP area highway network forms an important, and at times congested, part of the wider Taunton area transport infrastructure. It includes busy main roads such as the A38 and A3259 which carry significant levels of local and through traffic into, and from, Taunton town centre. These through routes, and other parts of the NP area, are also at times adversely impacted by high levels of traffic when there are problems with the nearby M5 and Junction 25.

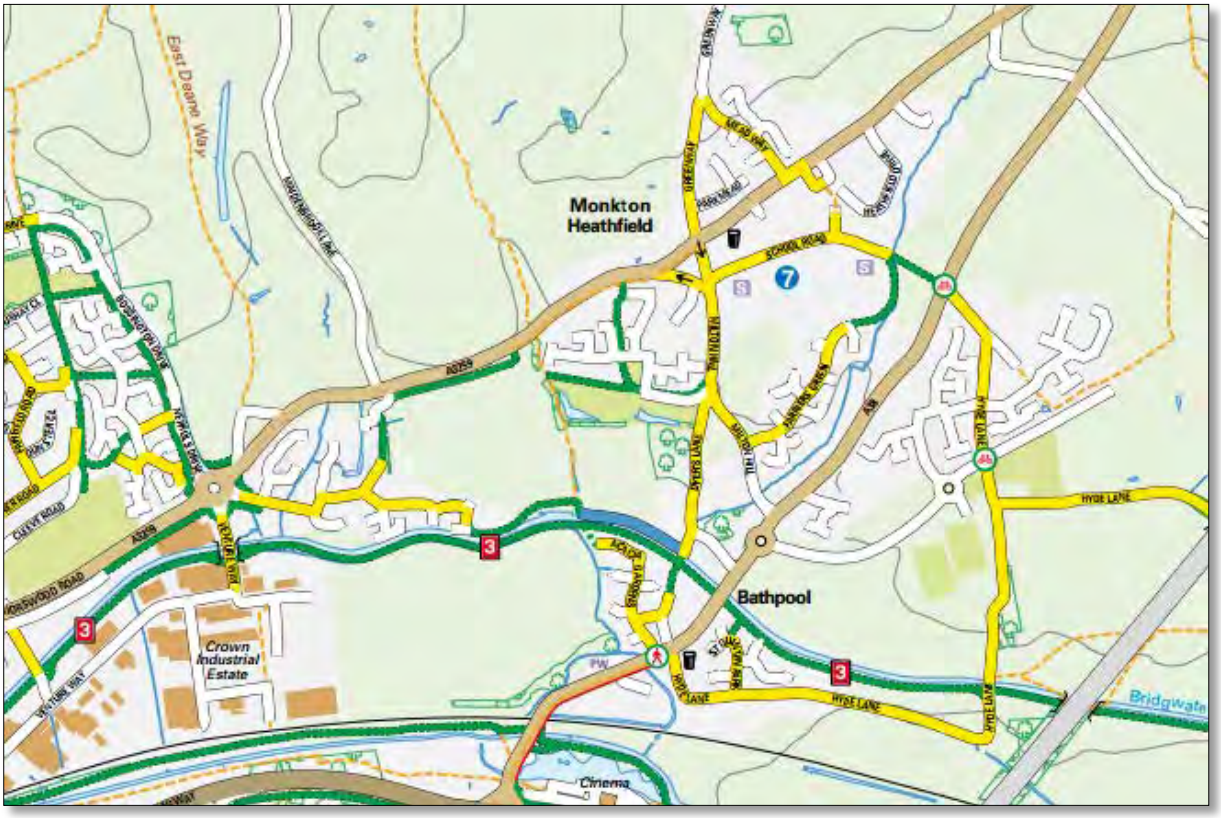
In contrast, other parts of the NP area are suburban or rural in character with both quiet residential roads and narrow country lanes. Some of these roads and lanes are used as “rat runs” by traffic looking for short cuts.

In view of the above, many of the NP area roads are not safe for walking, and/or cycling. This problem is compounded by high levels of construction traffic and road disruption associated with significant levels of new development, including the Urban Extension, which will take many years to complete. These new developments will include extensive new residential areas, new schools, local centres, employment areas and green space, which will generate additional movement challenges. These developments will provide opportunities to improve, by creating convenient high quality transport infrastructure for active and sustainable transport modes. The NP Action Plan undertakes to develop the Safe Routes to School network as the NP area is developed. (See Action Plan, page 143).

The NP seeks to make the most of these opportunities to shape and create the best sustainable transport infrastructure network possible for the NP area. The NP will help to add to the existing foot and cycle network, including National Cycleway NCN3. The plan below illustrates the existing foot and cycle network (shown in green) and the gaps which therefore need to be filled.


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**Map 9: The WM&CF NP area transport network with cycle paths in green (including National Cycleway NCN3)**




## Local issues

The NP questionnaire conducted in early 2016 included a number of "Highways and Transportation" questions and the responses to these questions demonstrated support for sustainable and active modes of transport as well as raising concerns about traffic congestion and highway safety.

A sizable minority of those who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they cycle frequently, mostly for pleasure, at least weekly or fortnightly. There was, however, limited cycling activity to work, into town and to schools. This would seem to reflect the overall feeling from residents that there is too much traffic on the roads in the NP area, specifically along the two main roads (A38 & A3259) and that vehicular traffic avoided congestion by 'rat running' through narrow back roads. This 'local knowledge' was reflected in responses to the NP Questionnaire of March 2016 from residents of both parishes.

In response to these concerns many suggestions and comments were made about encouraging cycling in the NP area including:


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- better/safer and dedicated cycle routes;
- safer cycling routes to Park & Ride (P & R) sites and schools;
- traffic and cycle segregation;
- restricting through traffic in the villages;
- more secure cycle parking in town;
- better surfaces and lighting, especially around schools;
- vehicle speed restrictions.

These responses suggest a demand for cycling if improvements are made to provide a more extensive cycleway network which is segregated from vehicular traffic as far as possible. This is confirmed by responses to Question 14 which confirms that providing new routes for cycle lanes, footpaths and bridleways is considered the single most important thing to encourage sustainable transport modes, closely followed by improved bus services.

The top three destinations for additional 'Safe Routes' are existing schools, proposed schools and local centres as prioritised by the questionnaire responses.

**National and local transport policies**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasizes:

> '*the important role that transport policies play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives'*. *(Paragraph 29).*

One of the NPPF 'core planning principles' is to:

> *'actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be sustainable'. (page 6, paragraph 17).*

The NPPF (paragraph 3) states that:

> *'plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods and people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to meet a number of criteria including:*
> - *to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities*
> - *to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones'.*


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The relevant Core Strategy (CS) Policy is CP6 (Transport & Accessibility). This policy requires that development should contribute to reducing the need to travel. This will be achieved by measures such as improving accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking to key destinations in Taunton; for example to Musgrove Park Hospital, *'especially from North Taunton and Taunton East'* It is intended that this policy will be delivered in partnership with Somerset County Council (SCC) which is the Local Transport Authority. Towards this end, SCC has produced a Future Transport Plan (FTP) for the period 2011-2026.

The SADMP has a number of detailed transport policies covering a range of issues including parking requirements (see standards in SADMP, Appendix E), developing the cycle network, protection of disused transport corridors (such as rail lines and canals) and accessibility of development.

SADMP Policy A3 (Cycle Network) seeks to promote a number of measures to improve the cycle network in new developments including:

- the provision of on and off-road cycleways;
- traffic calming;
- traffic management and junction re-design to benefit cyclists;
- convenient and secure cycle parking;
- provision of lighting on paths within, and where appropriate, between urban areas to enable cycling after dark;
- the implementation of cycle schemes identified in the FTP.

The supporting justification states that *'the proposed Urban Extensions around Taunton…provide good opportunities to extend the core cycle network'*. The issue of lighting to cycle paths is addressed in more detail by the NP within the Recreation and Environment Section.

The FTP seeks to '*support the provision of appropriate and well connected cycling facilities'* and '*will help people make more trips on foot and help people see the benefits of walking'*.

These objectives are supported by detailed Active Travel Strategies (2012) for walking, cycling and schools travel.

All relevant County Council transport policies are comprehensively listed by the Transport Policy Directory.


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**Transport Policy T1: Developing A Comprehensive and High Quality Cycle and Footpath Network**

**Justification**

As demonstrated by the questionnaire responses already described there is considerable local support for improvements and additions to the cycle and footpath network within the NP area. Furthermore, there is support for additional safe routes to existing schools, proposed schools and local centres.

If such routes are provided, cycling/walking to schools and local centres will be encouraged with associated benefits with respect to reducing traffic congestion/pollution and improvements to health, particularly for children. An improved cycle/footpath network should also encourage more adults to cycle/walk to work both within the NP area and into the wider Taunton area, including to the town's railway station. Finally, cycling for pleasure will also be encouraged, bringing further health benefits. These benefits are fully evidenced by Somerset County Council 'Cycling and Walking Strategies' (August 2012), which are part of the 'Active Travel Strategy' (2012) supporting the Future Travel Plan (FTP).

The Urban Extension and other large new developments within the NP area will provide opportunities to ensure that an excellent cycle and footpath network is provided in a timely manner for both existing and future residents. Given the very significant scale of new developments within the NP area (including several new schools) it will be essential that such a network is provided to ensure sustainable development and avoid further traffic congestion within the NP parishes and the wider Taunton area. It will also be essential that the cycle and footpath network is proactively promoted through an active Travel Plan (as required by SADMP Policy A2) to encourage more cycling and walking by both existing and future residents.

The following policy will ensure that new residential and employment developments make a positive and exemplary contribution to completing a comprehensive cycle and footpath network throughout the NP area which follows natural 'desire lines', avoids gaps and which is well connected into the wider Taunton area network. Where there are gaps in the network which this policy is unable to complete, consideration will be given to using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to complete missing cycle and foot path infrastructure.


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**Transport Policy T1: Developing a comprehensive and high-quality cycle and footpath network**

New residential and employment/commercial development must*:

- Provide safe and convenient public cycle and footpaths which connect with existing foot and cycle networks within the NP area and which also link into cycle and foot networks adjoining the NP area, particularly with respect to the Urban Extension and associated green space areas such as the green wedge and country park;

- Ensure that existing and proposed schools and local centres are provided with safe and convenient cycle and footpath connections from surrounding existing and proposed residential areas.

* *Major residential developments of 10 units or more; and employment/commercial developments of 1000m$^2$ or one Hectare*

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

NP Policy T1 is considered to be in general conformity with the FTP and Core Strategy Policies CP1 (*Climate Change*), CP6 (*Transport*) and CP7 (*Infrastructure*) and SADMP Policy A5 (*Accessibility of development*) and A3 (*Cycle network*). This Policy is also considered to be in general conformity with the NPPF. *(See paragraphs 28, 29 and 35).*

**What difference will it make?**

NP Policy T1 will help to achieve the WM&CF NP Transport Objective by delivering a high quality sustainable and comprehensive infrastructure network for walking, cycling and public transport to meet the needs of both existing and future residents of all ages within the NP area. Furthermore, this Policy adds to the requirements made by relevant CS and SADMP Policies and helps to shape and deliver those policies so as to meet particular local needs and circumstances unique to the NP area.


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## Employment

### Context and Area Profile

The current employment landscape within the NP area encompasses a wide variety of businesses. The major employment areas are:

- Hankridge Farm - primarily retail and leisure outlets, but with some hospitality facilities and offices;
- Crown Industrial Estate - a mix of light industrial premises, a recycling centre, medical centre, small scale public sector and some trade wholesale/retail businesses;
- Priorswood Industrial Estate - both light and heavier industrial premises, with a significant concentration of automotive-related retail units at the western end.

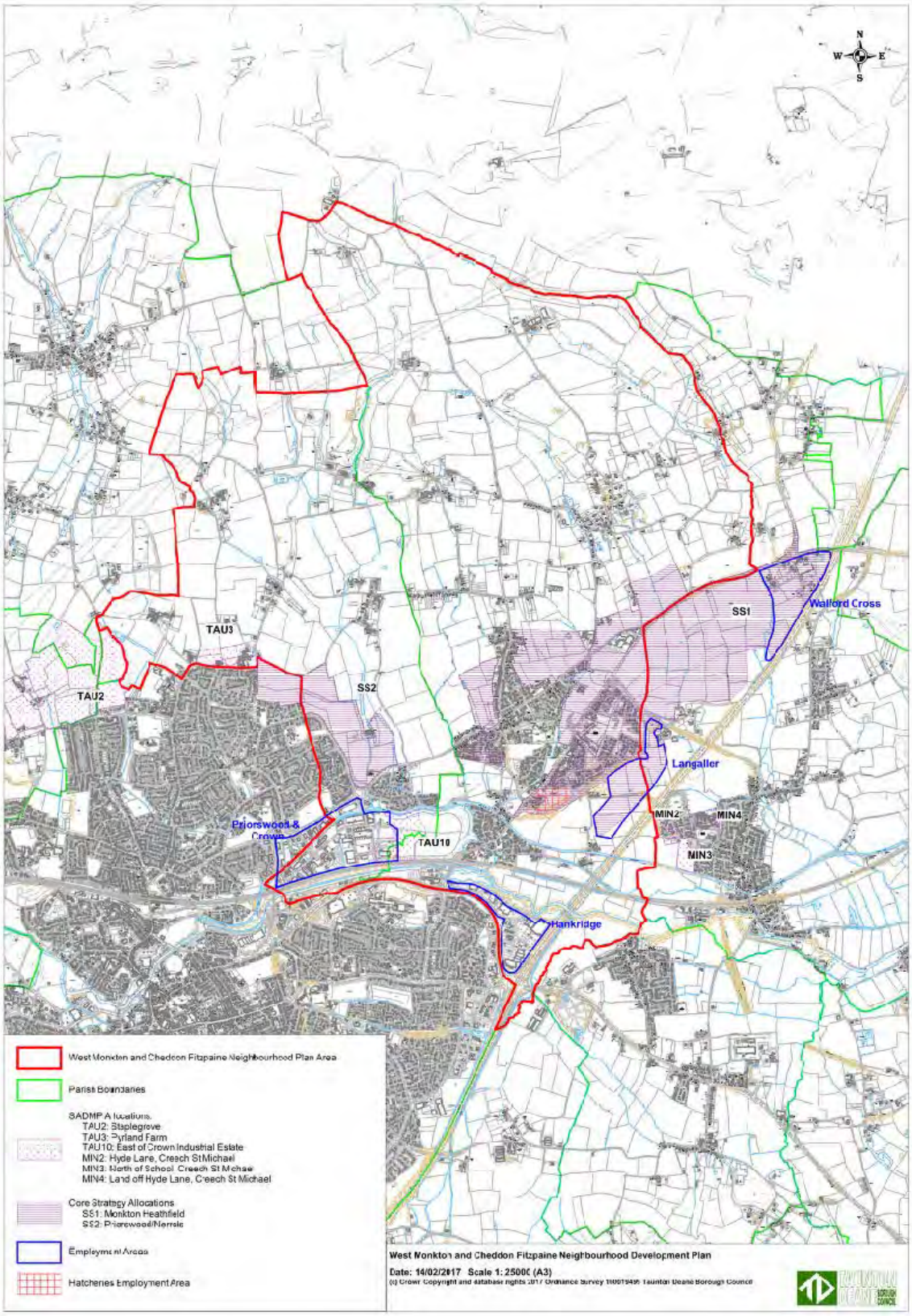
These larger existing employment areas are illustrated on Map 10 (below) relative to the NP designated area boundary.

Map 10 also illustrates future employment areas designated by the Core Strategy (CS) which will be a part of the Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension. The first phase includes 3 hectares adjacent to The Hatcheries and 19.5 hectares south of Langaller, with a later phase of 10 hectares reserved for longer term release around Walford Cross. As illustrated by the map, the Walford Cross site is outside the NP designated boundary, the Langaller site is partly within the NP boundary and The Hatcheries is within the NP boundary. These areas have been designated by CS Policy SS1 (*Monkton Heathfield*) which defines the proposed employment uses as research and development, light industrial, general industrial and storage and distribution.

A further employment land allocation has been made by the Site and Development Management Plan (SADMP) Policy TAU10 which allocates 5.5 hectares of land east of the Crown Industrial Estate for employment purposes, subject to a number of criteria. This allocation is also illustrated on the map.


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## Map 10: WM&CF NP Employment Sites





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Over the past three financial years there has been a consistent and strong level of demand for employment land and property within the Taunton Deane area as demonstrated by the TDBC Employment Site Enquiries Database (see 'Other Evidence') which shows a total of 36 enquiries over that period. This includes only enquiries for commercial land and/or property (rather than town centre or single unit requirements). The TDBC Business Development Manager observes that the enquiry database may not include direct approaches to commercial agents, so in fact the level of interest may be greater than the database suggests.

This evidence supports the employment land allocations made by the CS and SADMP within the NP area, driving the need for further employment land and for property more generally. The allocated employment land within the Urban Extension and elsewhere in the NP area will help to realise the aspiration to enable residents to live and work within the same community.

In addition to the larger employment areas described above, the NP area includes a range of other small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) distributed throughout the area as well as other employers such as the local schools.

**Workforce**

As at the last census (2011), economic activity within the parishes highlighted the following summary data of those aged 16-74[1] as compared to Somerset and the wider country. Although this shows a relatively healthy local economy compared with the rest of Somerset there is no room for complacency; there are still significant numbers of unemployed and economically inactive people within the NP designated area.

| Parish | West Monkton | Cheddon Fitzpaine | Somerset | England & Wales |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employed | 1324 (66.2%) | 1060 (76.0%) | 65.2% | 61.9% |
| Unemployed | 35 (1.7%) | 26 (1.9%) | 3.0% | 4.4% |
| Economically Inactive | 569 (28.4%) | 262 (18.8%) | 29.2% | 30.3% |

With the scale of residential development, both delivered and planned, it is anticipated that the figures above will have changed substantially by the next census in 2021.

[1] Derived from http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/files/Somerset%20Census%20Key%20Statistics%20-%20Summary%20Profiles.xls


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## Leisure and Tourism Opportunities

Tourism is a thriving and growing industry in the beautiful WM&CF area and wider Quantock Hills AONB. The plans at Hestercombe for the future growth and development by the Hestercombe Gardens Trust will inevitably bring demand for more accommodation and visitor facilities, thereby creating employment and housing opportunities. Future plans for Hestercombe Gardens Trust are in 'Other Evidence'. Whilst there are public houses in the villages of West Monkton, Monkton Heathfield and Bathpool, there are none in Cheddon Fitzpaine. However, facilities including public houses and retail shops are planned for the development at Nerrols and for Phase 2 of the development at Monkton Heathfield.

## Employment Provision in the Immediate Vicinity

Within the wider Taunton area, significant employment sites can be found in the healthcare, retail, education and public sectors. As befitting a county town, there are also other retail parks and business parks in addition to the town centre businesses.

At Blackbrook Business Park, which borders the NP area to the south, there is a concentration of office accommodation combined with premises serving the hospitality and leisure sectors. This area, in conjunction with some town-centre properties, currently addresses the needs of most professional organisations in Taunton.

Growth industries within the Taunton Deane Borough Council[2] area include health, ICT and creative industries. The construction of the new nuclear power plant at Hinckley Point will bring further economic growth benefits and opportunities to the Borough, including to the NP area. (See 'Consultation' and 'Other Evidence').

Land to the south-east of the M5 has also been earmarked for employment use as part of wider upgrade plans for Junction 25 and A358 improvements[3]. The Core Strategy policy CP2 sets out a vision for employment land use borough-wide.

## Perspective from Local Consultation

The desire to further improve the local economy is demonstrated by consultation within the NP area which has overwhelmingly supported encouraging local employment. In survey responses (2016 Residents' Questionnaire), residents placed particular emphasis on small businesses to create a sense of identity for the rapidly growing community whilst, at the same time, preserving the rural character of the

[2] Derived from http://www.taunton.uk.com/ relocate - growth sectors in late October 2016

[3] More details (as at March 2017) can be found at: http://www.taunton.uk.com/regeneration/j25-employment-site.htm


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area. Examples cited specifically were Monkton Elm Garden Centre and the units at Prockter's Farm.

The main employment challenges highlighted during consultation by both residents and businesses were:

- transport, particularly traffic levels and congestion;
- digital connectivity, primarily the restricted roll-out of high speed broadband;
- concerns about the number and range of local employment opportunities needed to support the growth in population within the NP area;
- barriers to entry for new businesses such as availability of affordable premises.

**National and Local Economic Planning Policy**

1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF outlines a number of roles the planning system must fulfill to ensure sustainable development, including an economic role. This economic role is described by paragraph 1 as follows:

> *'….contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure'.*

Furthermore, NPPF paragraph 17 sets out 12 core planning principles including to:

> *'proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs'.*

Section 1 of the NPPF includes a number of paragraphs relating to the building of a strong, competitive economy and Section 3 seeks to support a prosperous rural economy. To promote a strong rural economy, Section 3 (paragraph 28) sets out a number of measures which neighbourhood plans can support. These are referred to as appropriate later in this section.


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2. The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSW LEP) H5

The HotSW LEP covers both Somerset and Devon and has published a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) for the period 2014 to 2030. The SEP has three Core Aims for Growth which are:

i) Creating the conditions for growth;

- *infrastructure and services underpin growth (transport infrastructure, broadband, mobile connectivity, skills and infrastructure)*

ii) Maximising productivity and employment;

- *stimulating jobs and growth across the whole economy to benefit ALL sectors (including tourism, agriculture and food/drink)*

iii) Capitalising on our distinctive assets;

- *to create higher value growth and better jobs.*

These core aims are underpinned by cross cutting aims of environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

3. Core Strategy (CS) and Site Allocations and Management Plan (SADMP) H5

The CS includes Policy CP2 (Economy) which makes provision for additional land and commercial floorspace to create jobs and seeks to protect existing or identified business, industrial or warehousing from change of use to other uses.

The SADMP includes Policy EC1 (Other Uses in Employment Areas) which allows, under certain circumstances, employment uses other than traditional industrial and warehousing type uses within permitted employment areas.

These policies are supported by detailed justifications and a comprehensive evidence base which is used, where appropriate, to support the following NP employment policies.

**Consultation**

A Residents' Questionnaire (circulated to NP area households in March 2016) included an 'Employment' section (questions 27 to 33). Subsequently, in December 2016 a Business Survey was sent to 150 local businesses located within the NP area, with the circulation determined by an amalgamation of three sources:

- Royal Mail (PAF)
- Google
- The Office for National Statistics (ONS).


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These surveys are referenced within this section of the NP and the detailed results can be found within the Consultation Statement.

All these considerations informed the Employment Objective, and flowing from the objective, the formulation of specific employment Policies. In addition to the Policies, which are restricted to land-use considerations, consultation yielded other useful contributions in the employment area. These included stressing the value of apprenticeships as a sustainable programme of ongoing training offering up-skilling opportunities to local employees.

**Employment Policy E1: Starter Workshop Units**

**Justification**

There is local support for 'starter units' as demonstrated by the responses to the NP Residents' Questionnaire (Q32) and NP business survey (Q7).
There is also wider support for the NP to encourage local employment as demonstrated by responses to questions 27 and 30 in the Residents' Questionnaire. Question 27 asked whether the NP should encourage further business and commercial development in the area and there was a clear majority in favour of this suggestion. Question 30 asked whether the NP should encourage local employment and overwhelmingly the respondents said 'yes'. Furthermore, responses to question 32 indicated that there was a strong preference to see future employment provision provided within 'existing employment zones'.

The NPPF states that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity (paragraph 18) and that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth (paragraph 19).

NP Policy E1 seeks to ensure that there will be units of the right size, including B1a (office) in these smaller units, at the right cost for new start-up businesses and for those who wish to move from live/work units or home-working into larger premises, while continuing to live and work within the NP area.

This policy has received particular support from the TDBC Business Development Manager, citing a recently-commissioned demand-mapping study which concluded that there would probably be a strong demand for new, start-up office space in Taunton and the surrounding area. The limited supply of industrial start-up premises in the West Monkton vicinity, coupled with developer interest and the high level of demand for similar units marketed in an area to the south west of Taunton, all highlight the need for property of this type. *(See 'Other Evidence'.)*

The Taunton Deane Employment Land Supply Report 2012 (final, March 2013) was produced as evidence to support the SADMP. The overall conclusions at paragraph 8.20 raise a number of issues including:

> *'A wider choice of sites. The Urban Extension at Monkton Heathfield accounts for the bulk of committed land supply. The Site Allocation Plan will widen opportunities although the Council should continue to work with the development industry to identify appropriate short term opportunities.'*

NP Policy E1 will help to contribute to a wider choice of sites and accommodation particularly for smaller and start-up businesses.

**Employment Policy E1: Starter Workshop Units**

The construction of starter workshop units* for Class B1a (offices), Class B1b (research and development), Class B1c (light industrial), and other uses normally associated with an employment area, will be supported on land with an established or allocated employment use and/or brownfield land subject to the following:

- satisfactory parking and access arrangements** including for cyclists and pedestrians;
- a sustainable travel plan*** to encourage workers to walk, cycle and travel by public transport to and from work whenever possible.

* *defined as units with a floor area less than 200m$^2$ and outside the defined settlement limits as up to 500m$^2$ where CS Policy DM 2 will apply.*

** *as defined by SADMP Appendix E 'Non-residential parking standards' - Table 3*

*** *as defined by SADMP Policy A2 (Travel Planning)*

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

NP Policy E1 is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policy CP2 (Economy) which seeks to make provision for employment land and floorspace, and SADMP Policy A2 (Travel Planning).

NP Policy E1 is also considered to be in general conformity with NPPF paragraph 21 and paragraph 28 which set out how neighbourhood plans should support a prosperous rural community.


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**What difference will it make?**

This NP Policy will help to deliver the WM&CF NP Employment Objective by bringing an economic advantage to the area, providing a range of employment opportunities and by reducing the need to commute to work.

**Employment Policy E2: Sustainable Diversification of Rural Buildings for Other Employment Uses**

**Justification**

There is local support for the conversion of existing/disused rural buildings to commercial use as demonstrated by the residents' questionnaire responses (Q27, Q30, Q31 & Q32) and the business survey responses (Q8).

Good local examples of farm diversification include the converted barn units at Prockters Farm which provide a practical template for the sustainable diversification of farm buildings.

Core Strategy Policy DM2 (Development in the Countryside, paragraph 7)) allows for the conversion of 'existing buildings' in the open countryside and outside defined settlement limits to a number of specified uses in certain circumstances (and only to residential in exceptional circumstances). NP Policy E2 will bring added value to CS Policy DM2 (7) by specifically supporting the conversion of traditional, redundant farm buildings to other employment uses subject to a number of criteria unique to the NP.

The justification for CS Policy DM2 recognises that, *'the countryside is … characterised by low paying jobs and lack of access to work'. (See paragraph 6.11.)* This NP Policy will help to address this issue by supporting the provision of additional employment opportunities within the rural parts of the NP area.

Paragraph 8.11 of the Taunton Deane Employment Land Supply 2012 report states that:

> *'On the grounds of 'sustainability', further small-scale provision in the rural areas should still be encouraged and is allowed for in current policy…'* (i.e. CS Policy DM2).

NP Policy E2 will help to encourage further small-scale employment provision as recommended by the above-mentioned report.


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The owner of Prockters Farm Business Units, which include converted farm buildings, has provided the following quote which demonstrates ongoing demand for a variety of employment space within the local area, including the sort of space that could be provided by the diversification of farm buildings:

> *'In the last year, 2016 (I wasn't actually advertising for the full year so this is really without full advertising) and from only one online website called 'InstantOffices.com' we received approximately 30 enquiries of which:*
>
> - *six were for large space i.e. over ten desks (one of these was for 20);*
> - *nine were for small space i.e. three or less;*
> - *three or four were for studio space i.e. photography, upholstery;*
> - *three were for service sectors i.e. dog grooming, beauty, hairdressing;*
> - *five were medium size i.e. for eight or nine desks.*
>
> *In the past, we have also had enquiries for a children's nursery, a vet, a pet undertaker, and a couple of magazines'.*

**Employment Policy E2: Sustainable Diversification of Rural Buildings for other Employment Uses**

The diversification of traditional farm buildings to other employment uses will be supported where these provide additional employment opportunities.

Such diversification is supported subject to all the criteria listed below:

- The buildings must be traditional Somerset rural buildings constructed in local stone, brick, tile, slate and timber or be of historical or architectural merit;
- There should be minimal alteration of the building footprint and the existing structure, (re-building should be kept to a minimum);
- Alterations are unobtrusive, proportionate and sympathetic to both the original buildings and to the surrounding area.
- Satisfactory parking and access arrangements* including for cyclists and pedestrians;
- A sustainable travel plan** to encourage workers to walk, cycle and travel by public transport to and from work whenever possible;

***** *as defined by SADMP Appendix E 'Non-residential parking standards' – Table 3*

****** *as defined by SADMP Policy A2 (Travel Planning)*


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**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

NP Policy E2 is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP2 (*Economy*) which seeks to make provision for employment land and floorspace and DM2 (*Development in the Countryside*).

NP Policy E2 is also in general conformity with NPPF paragraph 28 which sets out how neighbourhood plans should support a prosperous rural community.

**What difference will it make?**

This NP Policy will help to deliver the WM&CF NP Employment Objective by bringing an economic advantage to the area, providing a range of employment opportunities, preserving the rural built and landscape character and by reducing the need to commute to work. It will allow furtherance of the tourism offering in the NP area, as a contribution to the local economy.

**Employment Policy E3: Retain Existing Employment Land/Buildings for Employment Usage**

**Justification**

The NP residents' questionnaire (2016) demonstrates strong local support for the retention of areas currently designated as employment land (Q29). Further responses demonstrate strong support to retain and support existing local businesses (Q3). There is further support for this in the business survey responses (Q10).

CS Policy CP2 includes the following statement:

> *'Proposals which lead to the loss of existing or identified business, industrial or warehousing land to other uses, including retail, will not be permitted unless the overall benefit of the proposal outweighs the disadvantages of the loss of employment or potential employment on the site.'*

NP Policy E3 will bring added value to CS Policy CP2 by specifically seeking to protect existing employment land and buildings from change of use to non-employment uses within the NP area unless it is demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable.

The supporting justification for this part of Policy CP2 makes it clear that an important part of the CS strategy:

*'….is to retain existing employment provision and allocations in the urban area to provide local opportunities for employment and economic growth and to react to changing economic requirements'.* (paragraph 3.34)

The following NP Policy seeks to support this CS objective for both the rural and significant existing and future urban parts of the NP area.

The Taunton Deane Employment Land Supply 2012 report states:

*'In order to retain opportunities for smaller companies on lesser quality sites it is considered important to retain existing employment estates in Class B (non-office) use in order to retain choice and opportunity, especially in the Taunton area. The Site Allocations Plan provides further opportunity to identify smaller site opportunities.'* (paragraph 8.8)

*'Although recent employment land losses in the Taunton area have been minimal, it is important to retain existing employment land from alternative uses to ensure a continuing range and choice of opportunities.'* (paragraph 8.20)

Over recent years, areas such as the Hatcheries in the vicinity of Canal View at Bathpool have seen employment land lost to residential development. The NP seeks to ensure that sufficient employment land and buildings will be retained in the face of ongoing pressures to build houses, and thereby ensure the right balance between homes and jobs.

**Employment Policy E3: Retain Existing Employment Land/Buildings for Employment Usage**

Change of use of land or buildings currently allocated or used for employment/commercial uses to non-employment uses (which include for the purposes of this policy main Taunton town centre uses such as retail and leisure) will not normally be supported (Permitted Development Rights notwithstanding*) unless considerable efforts have been made to market the land/buildings for employment purposes for at least two years or in line with a pre agreed marketing strategy that would avoid stagnation of key sites and buildings. Where such change of use is permitted, it must be justified by a viability assessment and marketing strategy which demonstrate that the existing/previous employment use is no longer viable.

In addition any development permitted must be appropriate for its location and ensure that it is compatible with existing and nearby land uses.

**Permitted Development Rights are a national grant of planning permission which allow certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application.*


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*Permitted Development Rights are subject to conditions and limitations to control impact and to protect local amenity (Gov.UK).*

*In respect of this policy, a planning application would therefore not be required for certain changes of use, such as B8 (Storage/distribution) to C3 (Dwelling-houses). Another example to which this policy would not apply are the Permitted Development Rights for change of use from A1 (Shops) or A2 (Financial/Professional Services) to D2 (Assembly and Leisure) e.g. Cinemas, Gymnasiums.*

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

NP Policy E3 is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policy CP2 (Economy) which seeks to make provision for employment land and floor-space.

NP Policy E3 is also considered to be in general conformity with SADMP Policy EC1 (Other Uses in Employment Areas). This policy allows for employment uses (except for main town centre uses such as retail, leisure and office) other than the traditional industry and warehousing employment type uses, acknowledging the changing nature of employment provision in the 21st century.

Finally, NP Policy E3 is also considered to be in general conformity with NPPF paragraphs 18 to 22. Paragraph 22 states that:

> *'Planning policies should avoid the long-term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose.'*

See also, paragraph 28 which sets out how neighbourhood plans should support a prosperous rural community.

**What difference will it make?**

This NP Policy will help to deliver the WM&CF NP Employment Objective by bringing an economic advantage to the area, providing a range of employment opportunities and by reducing the need to commute to work.

## Employment Policy E4: Social Care Employment Opportunities

### Justification

Demographic projections identified by the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis by Public Health at SCC[4] show that the average age of the population within Somerset, including the NP area, is increasing. This is likely to result in greater demand, over time, for residential and nursing home accommodation, with associated employment opportunities.

A growing elderly population is also confirmed by the TDBC Locally Based Housing Projections 2008 – 2026, referenced within the Housing Section to support Housing Policy H1. Furthermore 'Residential Institutions' are recognised as an employment sector within Table 3.1 to CS Policy CP2, which estimates the creation of 2,192 jobs in this sector across Taunton Deane, through development including "Urban Extensions".

This issue also attracted national attention with increased funding for social care announced in the March 2017 Budget. The following NP policy is therefore helping to address a well-established case for improved residential care facilities for older people, which will also create employment opportunities for local people.

**Employment Policy E4: Social Care Employment Opportunities**

Proposals which meet demand for residential, nursing home or sheltered housing accommodation for older people and thereby provide local employment opportunities within the NP area will be supported, provided the highway authority is satisfied with the access and parking arrangements, particularly for the emergency services.

### Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF

NP Policy E4 is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policy CP2 (Economy) and NPPF paragraphs 18 to 21 (Building a Strong, Competitive Economy).

### What difference will it make?

This policy will help to deliver the WM&CF NP Employment Objective by bringing jobs to the NP area and associated economic advantage.

[4] Derived from http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/jsna-key-issues.html


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**Employment Policy E5: Wider Roll out of Broadband Connectivity**

**Justification**

Core Strategy (CS) Policy DM1 (General Requirements, paragraph G) requires that:

> *'The site will be served by utility services necessary for the development proposed, including high speed broadband connectivity'.*

The supporting justification for this CS Policy states that:

> *'High speed broadband connectivity is required to facilitate the growth of home working, and assist sustainable travel demand'.*

The Parishes support the CS Policy DM1 (section G) requirement as poor broadband connectivity was highlighted as a barrier to existing businesses expanding, or people getting jobs locally. *(See responses to Q28 in the Residents' Questionnaire, 2016).*

There was also a comment from a respondent to the business survey (Q11), supporting the need for 'exceptional' broadband infrastructure in order to attract businesses to the area. The February 2016 agreement between Openreach and the House Builders Federation to support wider broadband roll-out demonstrates further progress on this topic. Developers should be encouraged to sign up to this.

The importance of improving broadband connectivity is recognised in 'Creating the Conditions For Growth' (Strategic Economic Plan, 2014). Evidence of the specific benefits to businesses can be found on the Connecting Devon and Somerset website, which highlights a number of case studies which clearly detail the advantages. Innovation Technical Solutions, based in the adjoining Parish of Creech St Michael, is one such business which makes the case for faster broadband connectivity as being essential to keep ahead of the competition.

Finally, paragraph 42 of the NPPF states that:

> *'Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services'*.

**Employment Policy E5: Wider Roll-out of Broadband Connectivity**

Open access broadband infrastructure will be supported throughout the NP area. All new development, be it residential or employment/commercial, must demonstrate how it supports this objective.

### Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF

NP Policy E5 is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP7 (Infrastructure) and DM1 (General Requirements, paragraph G) which requires that:

> *'The site will be served by utility services necessary for the development proposed, including high speed broadband connectivity'.*

NP Policy E5 is also considered to be in general conformity with NPPF paragraph 28, which sets out how neighbourhood plans should support a prosperous rural community, and paragraph 42, which supports the provision of high quality communications infrastructure.

### What difference will it make?

This NP Policy will help to deliver the WM&CF NP Employment Objective by bringing an economic advantage to the area, providing and retaining a range of employment opportunities and by reducing the need to commute to work.

## Recreation and Environment

### Objectives

To successfully accommodate the significant growth planned for the NP area by ensuring that sustainable places are created to support the provision of excellent community facilities for local people to enjoy, benefitting their health and well-being.

Future developments must provide a high-quality mix of private and open space uses which meet local needs, including children's play areas, sports pitches, allotments and amenity green spaces which safeguard and enhance the natural environment by promoting connectivity for people and wildlife.

Creating sustainable places must also include measures to attenuate extreme rainfall events which often adversely impact the NP area due to its position at the


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foot of the Quantock Hills by working closely with partner organisations to reduce the overall flow of upstream floodwater down into the NP area and further downstream.

This objective will seek to:

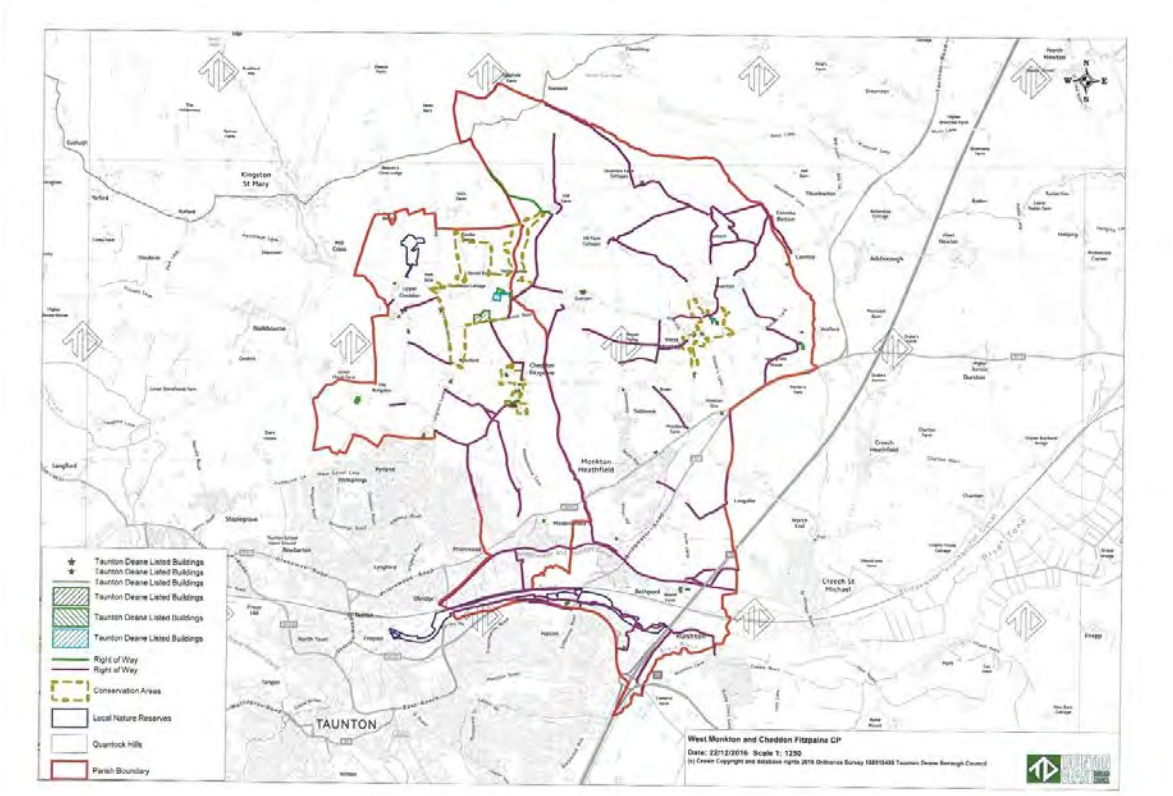
- encourage all relevant stakeholders to contribute to the development of the Green Wedge and Country Park to the north of the A3259 to ensure excellent access arrangements to a quality green space environment for people and wildlife;
- protect and enhance the NP area heritage, landscape and wildlife assets;
- increase the provision of outdoor and indoor recreation and community facilities to meet the needs of the local community through, for example, provision of a community cafe and toilets along the canal in the vicinity of the Swingbridge area to create a community meeting point;
- protect and enhance the dark skies quality of the area for the health and well-being of both people and wildlife;
- improve local green space infrastructure within existing and proposed green spaces with, for example, the provision of seating along public footpaths and canal side walkways;
- encourage all relevant stakeholders to make improvements of the surface water run-off systems to restrict flooding in the three main feeder brooks into the River Tone, using recognised field work initiatives to restrict flows during periods of heavy rain;
- work with local upstream farming communities to help the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) implement field work initiates to reduce peak water flows across farmland.

The Bridgwater & Taunton Canal traverses both parishes within the NP area. The waterway benefits described in the document, *"What your local waterway can do for your community"* are largely in agreement with the Objectives described above.

**Context**

The WM and CF NP area is largely rural to the north, whilst the majority of dwellings and employment areas are in the southern part. The southern limit of the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) fringes the northern part of the NP area and the historic Bridgwater & Taunton Canal runs through the southern part.

**Map 11: WM&CF NP Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Quantock Hills AONB and Rights of Way**

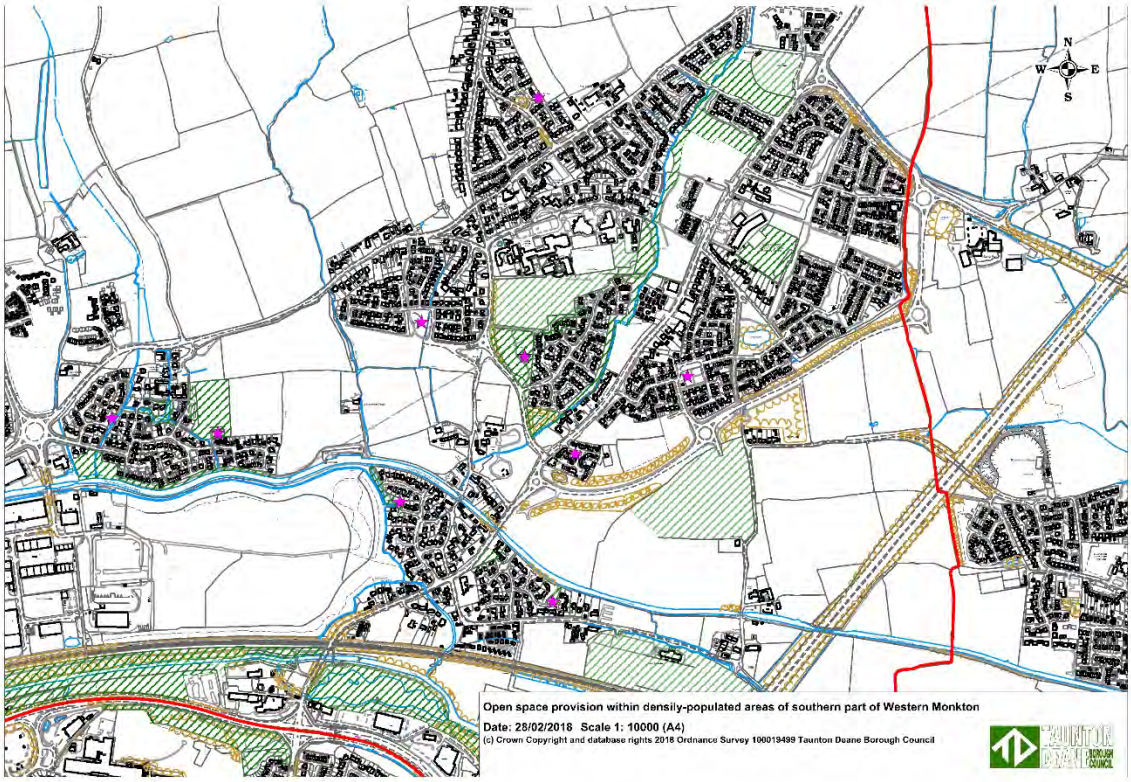



There are a number of recreational and wildlife features within the area including:

- two new football pitches and a club house newly laid out and under construction as part of phase one of the Monkton Heathfield Consortium development;
- Dyers Brook nature area being laid out by the MH Consortium to link the new and existing communities;
- Heathfield Community School playing fields;
- Kings Hall School playing fields;
- Cashford Gate playing field;
- Stoney Furlong public open spaces;
- New West Monkton Primary School;
- Cricket ground at Monkton Heathfield;
- Childrens play areas at various locations;
- Hankridge Riverside and Children's Wood local nature reserves;
- Gadds Valley local nature reserve;
- Taunton Rugby Club;
- Bridgwater & Taunton Canal.


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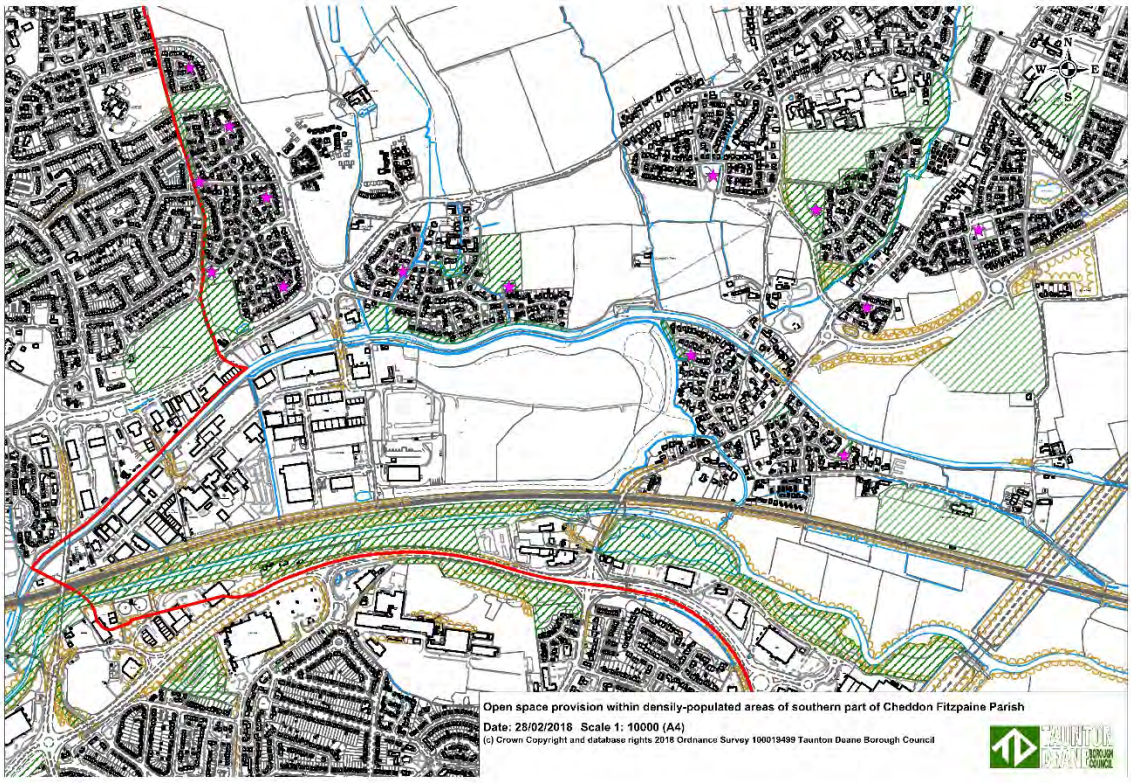
**Map 12a: Open space provision within the densely-populated areas of the southern part of West Monkton Parish**





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**Map 12b: Open space provision within the densely-populated areas of the southern part of Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish**





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**Recreational and Environmental Strengths and Weaknesses** of the area have been identified by the NP Steering Group, based on local knowledge, public consultation, wildlife consultants, and can be summarised as follows:

| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
|---|---|
| Quantock Hills AONB and its fringes has high quality landscape.<br><br>Historic Bridgwater &Taunton Canal and water courses which include parts of the River Tone linking the area to Taunton and the country side beyond.<br><br>Hestercombe House and Gardens which are Grade I listed including roost of Lesser Horseshoe Bats<br><br>Three conservation areas of Cheddon Fitzpaine, Hestercombe and West Monkton.<br><br>Seventy-four listed buildings.<br><br>A number of sports pitches.<br><br>Extensive hedgerow network. | A38 is a busy road which presently divides the built-up areas of Monkton Heathfield.<br><br>Noise from the M5 motorway<br><br>Commuter traffic passing through the area. |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| Given the level of new development proposed within the area there is considerable scope for providing new facilities.<br><br>The new housing areas will attract new people to the area with skills and expertise.<br><br>To attract new sporting activities such as the local baseball team.<br><br>To expand the community with a new influx of people.<br><br>Tree planting for bat mitigation.<br><br>Improve links between Green Wedges and Quantock Hills | With the high level of new development there is potential for pressure on the existing facilities unless the developers bring forward open space features.<br><br>The extensive new development has the potential to significantly reduce the dark skies quality of the area.<br><br>It would be easy for new people moving to the area to look to Taunton rather than the NP area for facilities and community and therefore create a ‘commuter’ community. |


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**National and Local Recreation and Environment Policies**

The NPPF states that access to high quality open spaces can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities (paragraph 73). Furthermore, the NPPF has extensive sections relating to conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environments (Sections 11 and 12) as well as a section covering climate change and flooding (Section 10). The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by measures including protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognizing the wider benefits of ecosystem services, minimizing impacts on biodiversity and by establishing coherent ecological networks. (*See Landscape Institutes Technical Information Note on 'Connectivity and Ecological Networks', January 2016*.)

Further planning guidance provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on the Natural Environment (January 2016) clearly defines 'Landscape', 'Biodiversity and Ecosystems' and 'Green Infrastructure' and their importance in designing new places.

Similarly, the planning system should plan positively for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets such as listed buildings and registered parks and gardens.

Core Strategy Policy CP8 (Environment) seeks to conserve the natural and historic environment. This policy states that a network of green infrastructure assets has been identified which should be retained and enhanced through the Taunton Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy. This includes the Green Wedge and Country Park between Monkton Heathfield and Nerrols and green links through to the Quantock Hills AONB. This policy also seeks to reduce flood risk through the adoption of multi-functional Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs).

Core Strategy Policy CP5 (Inclusive Communities) seeks to ensure that development proposals will make provision for all to access recreational space to improve health and interaction through provision of formal and informal green space, such as play spaces, allotments, playing pitches and sports facilities.

The Landscape Institute position statement on 'Public Health and Landscape' (2013) seeks to define five principles for creating healthy places. For example:

- healthy places improve air, water and soil quality, incorporating measures that help us adapt, and where possible mitigate, climate change;
- healthy places help overcome health inequalities and can promote healthy lifestyles;
- healthy places make people feel comfortable and at ease, increasing social interaction and reducing antisocial behaviour, isolation and stress;

- healthy places optimise opportunities for working, learning and development;
- healthy places are restorative, uplifting and healing for both physical and mental health conditions.

Urban Initiatives produced a draft masterplan for the Taunton Urban Extension in 2011. As part of the development, a ‘green necklace’ of open space and linked walkways and cycleways will encircle the new houses and link through the ‘Country Park’. (See Policy R2 Map 16 for concept plan.) TDBC have confirmed that a new Masterplan will be produced with a fully inclusive approach between TDBC (and all consultees) the developers, local parish councils and local people.

The Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) has a number of policies relating to the natural and historic environment. These include Policy ENV1, which seeks to protect trees, woodlands, orchards, hedgerows and historic parks and Policy ENV5, which seeks to control development in the vicinity of rivers and canals. Policy ENV2 seeks to promote tree planting within residential developments. With respect to recreation provision the SADMP includes detailed policies to provide recreational open space (Policy C2) and to protect recreational open space (Policy C3).

The SADMP makes one new land allocation relevant to this section which is Policy TAU11. This allocates 16 hectares of land at the former Priorswood landfill site for community woodland and other recreational uses. The allocation will positively add to the green open space network within the NP area with a linking bridge from the canal towpath and a ramped access to the A38. As such this plan is supported by the parishes. (*See policy extract and plan below.*)

The Parishes wish to see the construction of a foot and cycle bridge to cross the canal to the south of this allocation and thereby link the proposed public open space with the A38. The Parishes will therefore work with TDBC and relevant landowners/developers to achieve this objective through appropriate legal agreements and planning permissions. The provision of such a bridge will better connect the green open space network with surrounding communities.

The Neighbourhood Plan was considered to have the potential to affect a European and/or Ramsar site and therefore, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2010, a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) has been carried out and sent to Natural England. The NP was deemed to have the potential to affect the lesser horseshoe bat feature of the Hestercombe House Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Following a slight amendment to Policy R2, it is considered by WM and CF Parish Councils that its Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of the European site assessed.


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## Map 13: Priorswood SADMP Plan – Area Proposed for Community Woodland





### Policy TAU11: Former Priorswood Landfill

**A site of 16 hectares at the former Priorswood landfill site, as indicated on the Policies Map, is allocated for community woodland or other appropriate recreational uses.**

**Justification:**

2.2.65 The site extends to 16 hectares and forms the easternmost part of the former landfill site. The site is capped by only a foot of clay and soil, the putrescible tipped material beneath making development a very costly, if not wholly unrealistic proposition. However, the site is suitable for community woodland or other appropriate recreational uses, being flat and adequately settled. The site lies within the established Monkton Heathfield / Cheddon Fitzpaine green wedge and links to the Bridgwater and Taunton canal and by the public footpath network to the proposed country park to the north, required under the Core Strategy urban extension policies SS1 and SS2.

2.2.66 The proposal would enhance the green wedge and reinforce its functions, which include provision of a buffer separating Taunton from Monkton Heathfield and Bathpool; provision for informal recreation opportunities close to the town residents; provision of a wildlife corridor and protection and enhancement of areas of landscape importance.






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**Recreation and Environment Policy R1: Dark Skies**

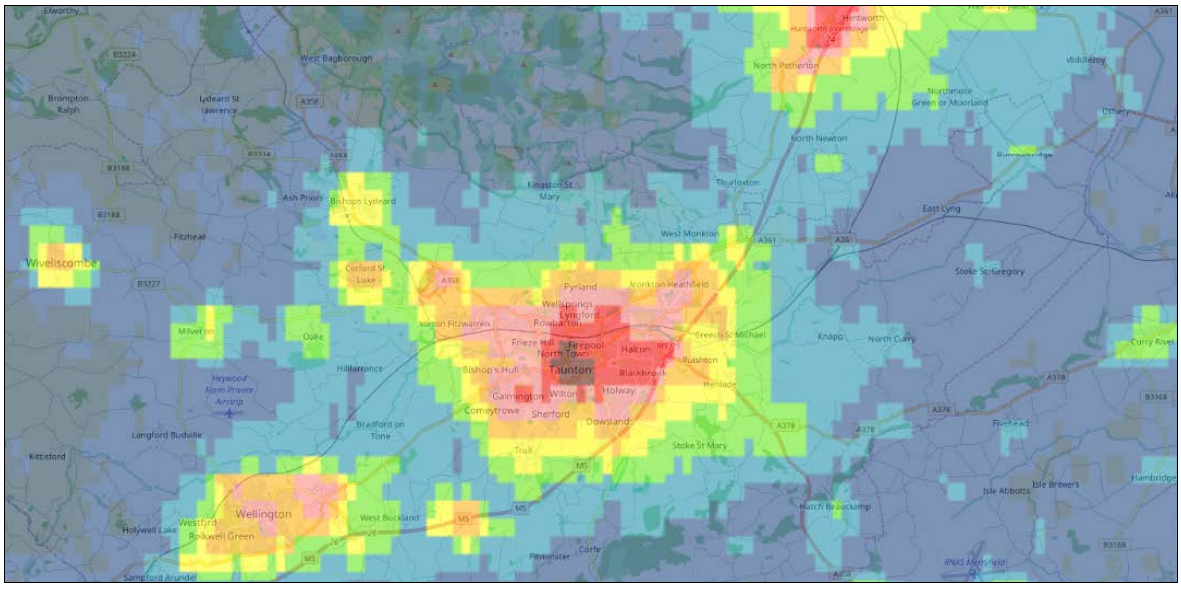
**Justification**

Darkness at night is one of the key characteristics of rural areas and it represents a major difference between what is rural and what is urban. Security lights, floodlights and streetlights all break into the darkness and create a veil of light across the night sky.

Some of this light is necessary: for example, the roads around the Hankridge Retail Park and Junction 25 of the M5 motorway. However, the NP seeks to ensure that lighting does not waste energy by shining upwards where it isn't needed, but is suitably directed and controlled so there is light only where and when necessary. This policy seeks to ensure that the most efficient lighting techniques are employed to ensure that new developments are lit appropriately and that areas of existing dark skies are protected.

The various degrees of light pollution in the NP area are shown in the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) map below. The dark blue of the northern part represents the NanoWatts/cm$^2$/sr <0.25 (darkest) becoming brighter towards Junction 25 of the M5 motorway where the area is rated 16-32 NanoWatts/cm$^2$/sr (one level short of the brightest category).

**Map 14: Extract from CPRE interactive map showing light pollution and dark skies in and around the Taunton, including the NP area**




Light pollution should be restricted, and dark skies promoted, within the existing and expanding urban parts of the NP area, in addition to the rural parts, because light pollution has been shown to negatively affect human beings and wildlife. The


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proposed policy will help to *'enhance the locally distinctive characteristics of the area for future generations' (*as described in the NP Vision) by maintaining the night time character and tranquillity of the NP rural areas, particularly in the foothills of the Quantocks, whilst seeking to ameliorate the effects of the necessary lighting of the Hankridge Retail Park, the Urban Extension and the local road infrastructure.

Light pollution is a particularly sensitive issue with respect to the conservation of bats. Within the NP area the Hestercombe House Special Area for Conservation (SAC) was specifically established to help conserve lesser horseshoe bats. This issue has been subject to an Appropriate Assessment as part of the Urban Extension proposals put forward by CS Policy SS1.

There is local support for restricting light pollution and promoting dark skies across the NP area as demonstrated by responses to the supplementary questionnaire conducted in October.

This local support for dark skies is backed up by the CPRE and their *"Night Blight"* interactive maps which illustrate England's light pollution and dark skies. (*See http://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/latest-news-releases/item/4314-new-interactive-maps-reveal-england-s-darkest-and-most-light-polluted-skies (June 2016.)*

Dark Skies are important for the NP area as a whole and particularly important for the Quantock Hills AONB as explained by Chris Edwards, the AONB Manager:

> *'This new definitive map that shows 95.5% of the Quantock Hills as dark skies will help to protect the essential element of the Quantocks…..The darkness of the skies in our wilder and more natural areas is so important to the important character we are trying to protect. Not only astronomers and stargazer groups appreciate this but it is crucial to much of our wildlife…' (AONB website post June 2016).*

Darker skies are also more widely important to the NP area as a whole with respect to human health and well-being as confirmed by the following studies:

- The CPRE found that light pollution can cause a great deal of distress to humans, including disrupted sleep and, in some cases, can result in people moving house to get away from light pollution. (Light Nuisance Survey 2009/10).
- The British Astronomical Association publication *'Blinded by the Light' (*Chapter 4) suggests that exposure to light at night can disrupt the body's production of melatonin, a brain hormone best known for its daily role in resetting the body's biological clock.

**Recreation and Environment Policy R1: Dark Skies**

Otherwise acceptable development proposals which include measures to maintain and enhance dark skies within the NP area will be supported. Applications for new development requiring a lighting scheme should show how dark skies will be protected, and must seek to minimise additional light pollution. Schemes such as dimming technology, running part-time lighting schemes (in consultation with the local community*) or replacing street lighting with new fixtures and fittings to meet or exceed current best practice will be supported, subject to meeting health and safety and crime prevention standards.

**relevant parish council*

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

This Policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policy DM1 (General Requirements) which includes criteria which seek to minimise light pollution and glare. This policy is also considered to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which states that:

> *'By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation'* (paragraph 125).

**What difference will it make?**

This policy will help to achieve the WM&CF NP Vision by limiting light spill from planned new developments and maintaining darker skies within the rural parts of the area. Furthermore, it will help to maintain the health and well-being of local people as well as an improving the health of the European protected Lesser Horseshoe Bats at Hestercombe (*see HRA*).

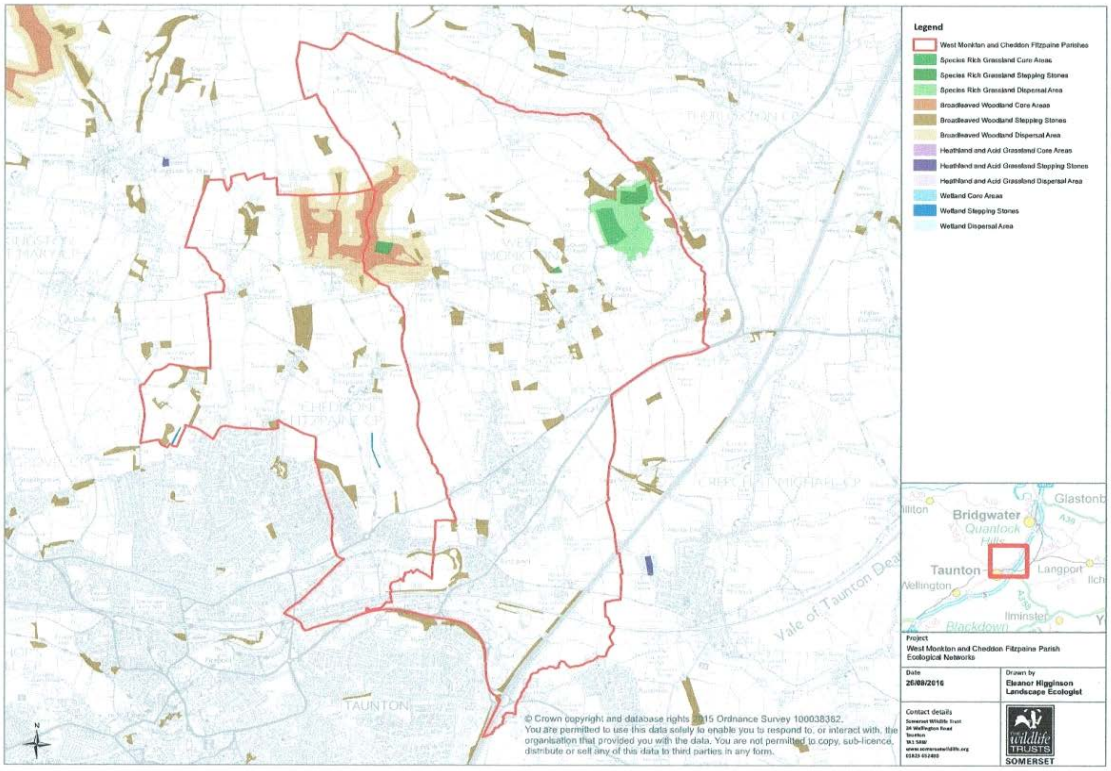
**Recreation and Environment Policy R2: Green Space and Wildlife**

**Justification**

The Sustainability Audit (SA) (*see supporting document*) provides an overview of the NP area with respect to its natural and historic environment. This includes reference to local nature reserves within the NP area and the Hestercombe House Special Area for Conservation (SAC). The Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan 2008-2018,

Taunton Deane Biodiversity Action Plan (2008) and Taunton Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) are also referenced. Furthermore, key environmental sustainability issues for local people as expressed through the residents' questionnaire and other consultation exercises are described.

**Map 15: Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) Ecological Networks within the NP area**



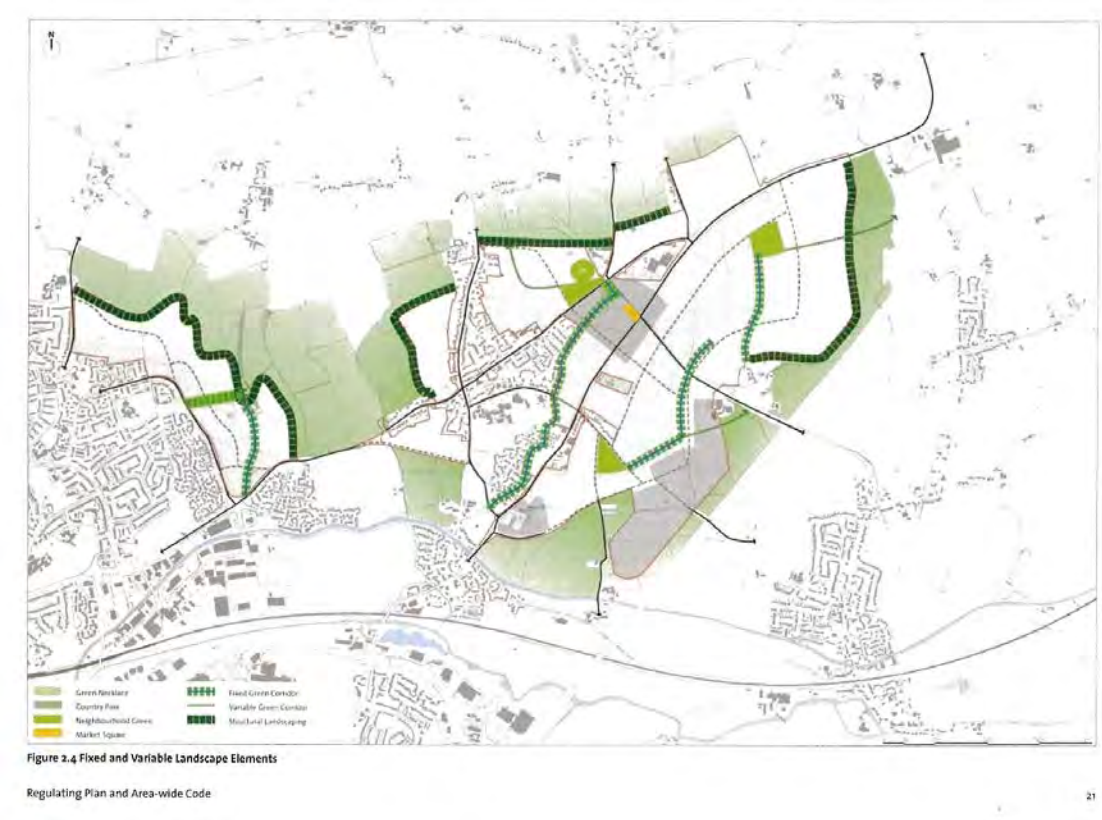

The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment through various measures (NPPF paragraph 109), including the establishment of coherent ecological networks. This NP Policy seeks to protect and enhance existing ecological networks as illustrated by the ecological networks plan above. Furthermore, there will be opportunities to create new ecological networks as a result of the considerable development proposed within the NP area which will, to some extent, compensate for the loss of habitat resulting from such development.

The many benefits of local access to quality green space and wildlife areas are now widely accepted and described in documents, such as the TDBC Green Infrastructure Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan. And also through local projects such as the '*Routes to the River Tone*' completed in the first half of 2017, which was a three year partnership led by Somerset Wildlife Trust that aimed to better connect local people with the wildlife of Taunton's waterways. These benefits include

improved health and well-being for local people, flood attenuation and support for ecosystem services which provide healthy soils and clean air/water.

The Urban Extension now being developed within the NP area is described in some detail elsewhere within this plan. A key part of this proposal, as set out by Core Strategy (CS) Policies SS1 and SS2, is the provision of a comprehensive network of green open spaces. A country park is proposed within the green wedge between Monkton Heathfield and Priorswood.

**Map 16: Plan showing 'green space proposals' associated with the Urban Extension**




A multi-purpose "*green necklace*" of landscape and public open space is also proposed to provide allotments, outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat. This will also include woodland planting associated with the Hestercombe Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a belt of landscaping between the motorway and the Urban Extension. Within the proposed residential development there should be well designed public open spaces and a well-defined green edge to the urban area that protects views to Hestercombe House and the Quantocks.

These green space proposals were developed further by Urban Initiatives in 2011 when they produced a masterplan for the Urban Extension. This is currently being revised and up-dated in consultation with WM and CF Parishes.


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Responses to the residents' questionnaire (March 2016) demonstrate strong support for:

- measures within development proposals to encourage wildlife such as 'nature buffer zones' around developments to protect/enhance wildlife;
- maintaining verges in the interests of wildlife (although maintenance/management considerations cannot be NP policies);
- defining wildlife areas in the NP area, with a number of locations suggested;
- the preservation or creation of traditional Somerset orchards in new developments.

Most responses considered the NP environment to be well looked after. Those that did not agree were concerned about litter, dog waste and overall maintenance. Concerns were also expressed about loss of open spaces and habitats due to development. The need for bird and bat boxes was also highlighted.

Strong demand was expressed for litter and dog waste bins and for seats. The importance of seats or benches for local communities is highlighted by the Young Foundation's Report 'Benches for Everyone' *(November 2015).*

There was also strong support for protecting locally 'important trees', ancient trees and hedgerows as well as for the use of native species in new tree planting. It is recommended that BS3998 (2010), (promotion of good arboricultural practice), is applied in reference to good maintenance and management practices.

A number of meetings have been held locally to discuss ways to improve features and facilities throughout the NP. *(See Consultation Statement.)*

**Recreation and Environment Policy R2: Green Space and Wildlife**

New major* residential developments of 10 or more net additional dwellings (or if the site area is more than 0.5 hectares if dwelling numbers are yet to be agreed) must provide new green space and wildlife areas to meet local needs and/or minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity wherever possible. In particular, every available opportunity will be taken to:

- Provide new wildlife habitats and networks which enhance and protect local watercourses for wildlife and flood attenuation purposes;

- Protect and create hedgerows, woodlands, individual specimen trees and orchards.

** Major development for the purposes of this Policy is as defined by The Town and Country (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Part 1, paragraph 2(c)*

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

This Policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP8 (*Environment*) which seeks to conserve the natural and historic environment; DM1 *(General Requirements)* paragraph c which protects wildlife species and their habitats (and also SADMP Policy ENV1 (*Protection of trees, woodlands, orchards and hedgerows*)) and finally CS Policies SS1&2. This NP Policy is also considered to be in general conformity with the NPPF, particularly Sections 10, 11 and 12 and paragraph 73.

**What difference will it make?**

The NP area is rich in landscape quality, heritage features and wildlife. Protection of these features and, where practical, their enhancement with improved access will add to the quality of life of local people and benefit their health and well-being.
The proposed policy will help to:

> *'successfully accommodate the significant growth planned for the area to ensure a high quality of design and that sustainable places are created with excellent community facilities for local people to enjoy'. (See NP Vision.)*

The vision is to provide quality green space that will help to improve the health and well-being of local people.

Furthermore, the proposed policy will help to deliver the recreation and environment objective by helping to provide a suitable mix of private and open space uses which meet local needs, including children's play areas, sports pitches, allotments and amenity green spaces and which safeguard and enhance the natural environment by promoting connectivity for people and wildlife.

**Recreation and Environment Policy R3: Flood Attenuation**

**Justification**

The underlying impermeable soils of the area lead to localised flooding which is exacerbated by reduced roadside ditch maintenance and management. Flooding seems to occur most often following exceptional rainfall rather than on a regular basis and the greatest impact was reported to be on local roads. The residents' questionnaire (March 2016) highlighted various locations within the NP area which are liable to be flooded and possible measures to improve drainage were described.


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The Parishes will pursue local solutions to improve ditch maintenance such as greater use of ‘Lengthsmen’ (i.e. local people employed, usually on a part time basis, to undertake routine outdoor maintenance jobs such as unblocking surface water drains and ditches).

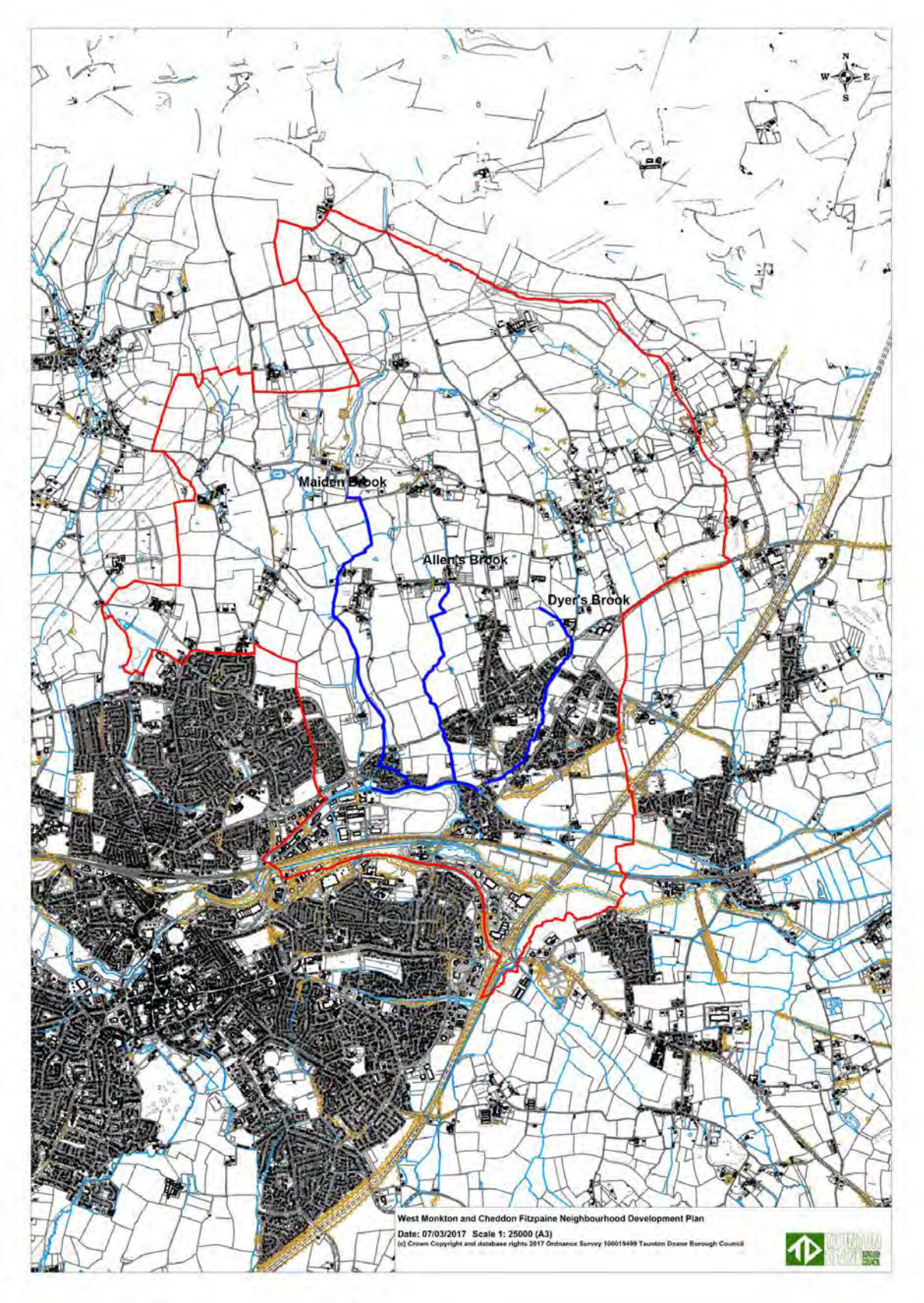
Development sites in Taunton require use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems measures e.g. semi-permeable drives. (See paragraph 6.2.6, Taunton Surface Water Management Plan, 2013.)

The following map identifies the three main watercourses in blue flowing from the north of the NP area in a southerly direction to the River Tone. These three streams pick up underground watercourses draining from the Quantocks.

Comments received 31 March 2017 from the Environment Agency Consultation on SEA Screening have been incorporated. (See Other Evidence.)


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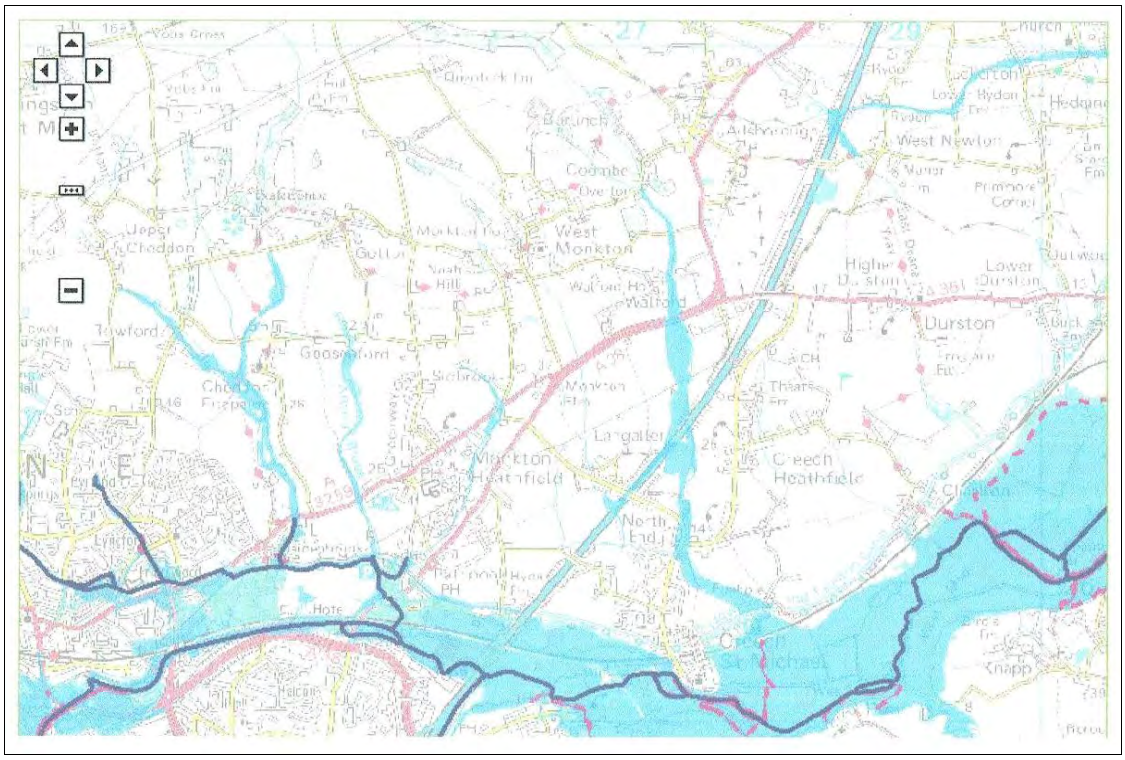
## Map 17: WM&CF NP Main Watercourses





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**Map 18: Plan showing floodable areas as identified by the EA within the NP area**




In response to Question 52 which asked what additional remedial action should be taken to prevent flooding a number of detailed comments were made by local residents including:

- the creation of attenuation ponds;
- improving water management;
- unblocking drains and better drain maintenance;
- ditch clearance;
- larger storm drains;
- keeping water courses clear;
- flood protection measures;
- ensuring good flows in the rivers Tone and Parrett.

Other relevant comments made included that:

- building on greenfield sites destroys habitats and recreation areas and increases surface water run-off (Q34);
- streams and brooks that feed the River Tone from the southern foothills of the Quantocks, and fields designated as flood plains, should be protected (Q45).


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The SADMP Proposals Map illustrates the extent of flood zones located within the NP area particularly in the vicinity of the River Tone.

The Taunton Deane Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA, 2011) and related studies provide more detail on flood risk and management, both within the Taunton rural area and surrounding rural areas.

Somerset County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and as such works closely with other key stakeholders including the Environment Agency (EA), TDBC, Internal Drainage Boards and relevant land owners.

The EA flood risk maps indicate flood risk zones associated with the brooks which flow down from the Quantocks, through the NP area, and into the River Tone, which also generates its own flood risk zone.

The Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) was launched in January 2015 as a response to the Somerset floods during winter 2013/14 as a key part of the Somerset Levels and Moors Flood Action Plan which was agreed in March 2014. The SRA's remit includes the whole of Somerset and its purpose is to deliver higher standards of flood protection than would be funded nationally, and to create better flood protection and resilience against further flooding by joint planning and delivery as far as possible.

The Flood Action Plan has a number of 'targets' including support to maximise the benefits from catchment sensitive farming, especially regarding run-off in the upper catchment.

As part of meeting this target, the Hills to Levels partnership was established in May 2015. This is a partnership between wildlife Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs), the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West (FWAG SW) and The Royal Bath & West of England Society.

The work of this partnership includes advising landowners on ways in which they can 'slow the flow' of run-off to help reduce flood peaks, improve water quality, decrease soil erosion and increase wildlife.

The Hill to Levels project has identified over 200 natural flood management features to install in the landscape including: leaky ponds, leaky woody dams, filter fences, filter dams, tree planting, new hedge banks, flow spreaders, soil bunds and check dams.

Other Flood Action Plan 'targets' relevant to this NP Policy include the following:


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- to manage urban runoff by ensuring best practice in planning and SUDS implementation. This will include the use of 'swales', which are shallow, broad and vegetated channels designed to store and/or convey run-off and remove pollutants. They can, for instance, be constructed to run parallel with roads, foot and cycle paths:
- to sustain and enhance business and community resilience;
- to ensure strong local leadership with full engagement of local partners and communities.

**Recreation and Environment Policy R3: Flood Attenuation**

New residential and commercial developments will only be supported if they include measures to reduce flooding. Specifically, developments which include the following will be supported:

- proposals which include swales, water butts and other rain water capture features such as ponds and wetland areas;

- up-stream flood attenuation* measures such as "weepy dams", hedge and tree planting to 'slow the flow' of water run-off to be co-ordinated with local partners.

**this may be outside the development area. Reference: Environment Agency Standing Advice*

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

This Policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP8 (Environment) which seeks to reduce flood risk through the adoption of SUDS and CP1 (Climate Change, paragraph f) which requires development to incorporate design and construction measures to reduce the effects of flooding. This Policy is also considered to be in general conformity with the NPPF Section 10 which comprehensively addresses issues of climate change and flooding, and paragraph 100 which specifically deals with flooding issues as they relate to planning.

**What difference will it make?**

This NP Policy will help to create 'sustainable places' by attenuating extreme rainfall events which are likely to become more frequent in the future due to climate change. The Policy will thereby help to reduce flooding both locally within the NP area and also in other areas of Somerset downstream of the NP area. The Policy will therefore contribute to the delivery of the overall objective for this section, particularly the last two bullet points which relate to flood attenuation.


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## Recreation and Environment Policy R4: Recreation & Community Facilities

### Justification

There is a very wide and diverse range of both formal and informal recreational facilities within the NP area as listed by Question 53 in the residents' questionnaire (March 2016). The Bridgwater & Taunton Canal is the most used on a daily and weekly basis by local residents. Hestercombe Gardens, the village/Memorial Hall, the rugby club, cricket club and Tacchi-Morris Centre are also well used, but generally on a less regular basis.

The use of outdoor recreational facilities is limited, as indicated by the residents' questionnaire responses, particularly teenage recreation areas, play areas and allotments. (This may, however, be due to the questionnaire being sent out in early March, which was a cold and wet period less favourable to these outdoor activities.) In terms of potential demand, respondents 'would like to use' allotments most, followed by the cricket ground and Hankridge Nature Reserve.

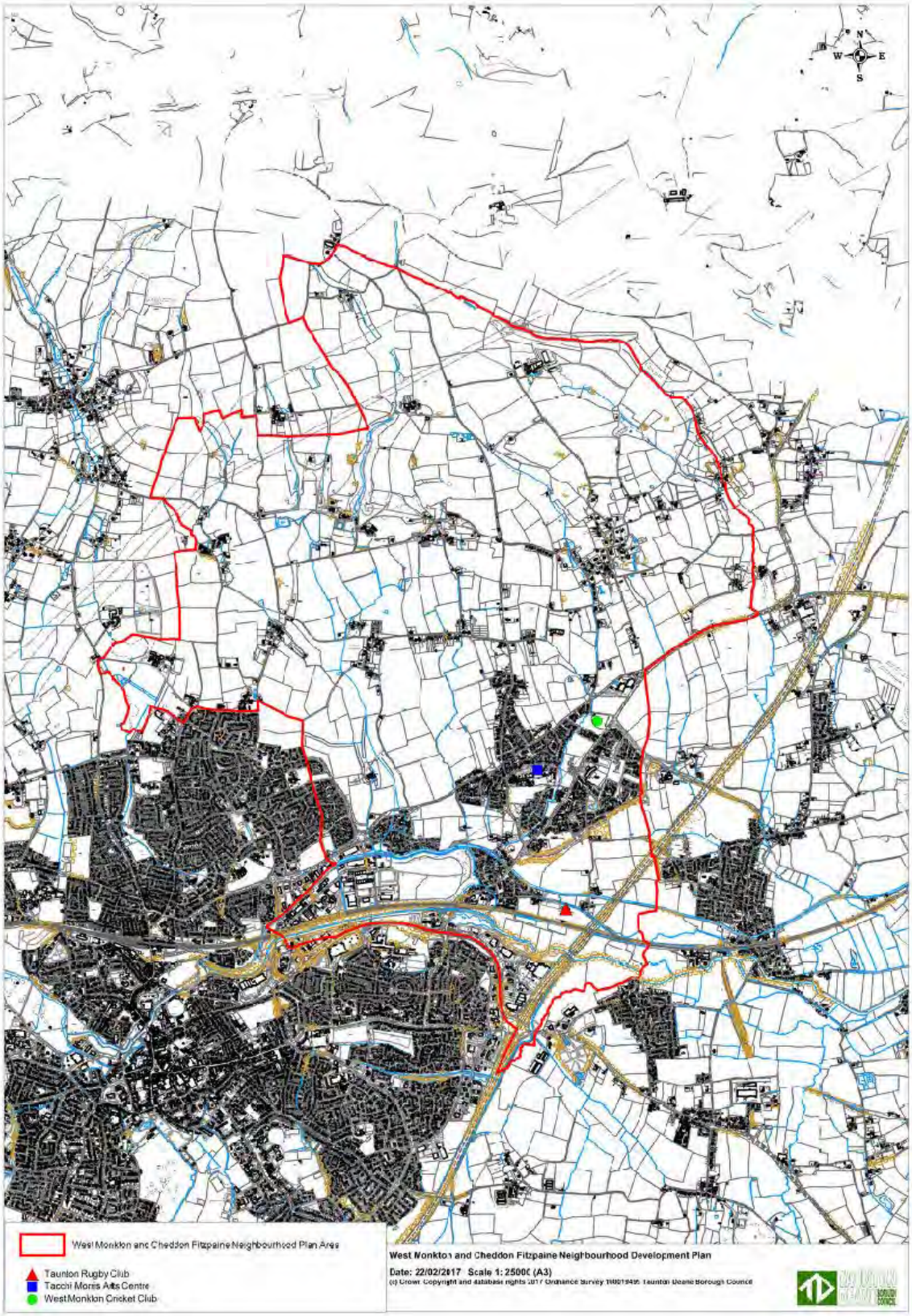
A range of barriers to greater use of the recreational facilities on offer were listed by residents, most of which could be addressed, particularly through better communication with respect to what is available and how to access it.

The residents' questionnaire responses indicate a strong desire to establish a youth club and related activities such as skate/bmx park, zip wire and a 5 a-side pitch. Other sports facilities were also requested, such as tennis courts, playing fields, play areas and an astro turf pitch.

There is a strong unmet demand, as demonstrated by the resident's questionnaire responses, for more retail and other commercial facilities within the NP area, particularly for a Post Office, small supermarket and a range of local convenience shops, a public house, a take-away and a cafe.


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## Map 19: WM&CF NP sport and art locations





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Core Strategy (CS) Policy CP5 (Inclusive Communities) seeks to promote sustainable development that creates socially cohesive and inclusive communities through a range of measures, including the requirement for development proposals to make provision for community accessible services and social facilities, including 'meeting spaces'.

A core NPPF planning principle is to:

> '*deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs*' *(paragraph 17).*

Furthermore, the NPPF states that neighbourhood plans should:

> '*promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship*' *(paragraph 28).*

In further justification of this NP Policy, other relevant extracts from the NPPF state that:

- *'planning policies should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments' (paragraph 70);*

- *'planning policies should encourage access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities' (paragraph 73).*

The developing Urban Extension includes a new mixed-use district centre as required by CS Policy SS1 *(Monkton Heathfield*). This will comprise a mix of new shops, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments and hot food take-away outlets. There will also be multi-functional community facilities around a village green, including land for a range of uses such as places of worship, community halls, health facilities and care and residential accommodation for the elderly.

CS Policies SS1 and SS2 (*Priorswood/Nerrols*) also require '*a multi-purpose 'green necklace' of landscape and public open space surrounding the settlement, providing allotments, outdoor recreation and wildlife habitats'.*

Policy SS2 requires a new mixed-use local centre for the Priorswood/Nerrols development which will include shops, restaurants/cafes, drinking establishments and other community facilities.

These recreation and community facility proposals were developed further by Urban Initiatives in 2011 when they produced a masterplan for the Urban Extension which is currently being revised and up-dated in consultation with the WM and CF parishes. Where allotments and other public open space is to be provided as part of new residential developments the parishes request that they should be given the opportunity to manage and maintain these areas in the future, subject to appropriate legal agreements and reasonable commuted sum payments.

CS Policy CP5 (Inclusive Communities) requires that development proposals make provision and access for all to:

- *'services, community and social facilities - providing a range of education, health, indoor sports, retail and meeting spaces';*

- *'recreational space - improving health and interaction through provision of formal and informal green space such as play areas, allotments, playing pitches, sports facilities as well as walking and cycling'.*

The CS evidence base includes a number of adopted TDBC strategies that are relevant to this NP Policy including 'The Playing Pitch, Sports Facilities and Green Space Strategies' (2010). Additionally, the 'Allotments Strategy' which was produced in 2010 and then revised in 2015, details the health, social and environmental benefits of providing allotments. This strategy also sets out standards for allotment provision, including that each allotment should be 290 metres square and within 1km of new homes.

SADMP Policy ENV5 (Development in the Vicinity of Rivers and Canals) requires that development near rivers and canals should improve public access to and along the waterway and improve the environmental quality of the waterway corridor.

SADMP Policies C2 to C5 are concerned with the provision and protection of both recreational open space and community facilities.


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**Recreation and Environment Policy R4: Recreation and Community Facilities**

Subject to a viability assessment new major* residential development of 10 or more net additional dwellings (or if the site area is more than 0.5 hectares if dwelling numbers are yet to be agreed) will only be supported if proposals for new recreation and, or, community facilities are included to meet demonstrated local needs. These might include the following:

- proposals which include the provision of new play areas, playing fields, baseball park, skate and bmx/cycle parks, tennis courts and all-weather 5 a-side pitches;
- proposals for new allotments in accordance with the TDBC Allotments Strategy to support food production that meets the needs of local people and markets;
- proposals for improvements along the line of the Bridgwater & Taunton canal, and within the NP area, such as meeting places (e.g. community cafe), toilets and new moorings in accordance with SADMP Policy ENV5 (A); **
- opportunities taken to create linkages between sites and address gaps in existing networks by the creation of new rights of way;
- improved rights of way networks, possibly by permissive paths, to encourage walking, cycling and riding through and between green space areas and including foot/cycle bridges, exercise and nature trails along with community facilities such as a cafes and toilets.

** Major development for the purposes of this Policy is as defined by The Town and Country (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Part 1, paragraph 2(c)*

*** https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/30984-planning-advice-note-inland-waterways.pdf*


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**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

This Policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP5 (Inclusive Communities) and SS 1and 2. It is also considered to be in general conformity with SADMP Policies ENV5 (Development in the Vicinity of Rivers and Canals) (A) and SADMP Policies C2 to C5. Finally, this NP Policy is considered to be in general conformity with the NPPF Section 8 (Promoting Healthy Communities) particularly paragraphs 17, 28, 70 and 73.

**What difference will it make?**

This policy will contribute to more healthy, inclusive and cohesive communities, whether they be established, emerging or proposed and as such will help to deliver the overall recreation and environment objective for this section.

The realisation of the objectives for the NP area should link in well with the Quantock Hills Landscape Partnership Scheme. (A bid to Heritage Lottery Fund will be submitted end of May 2017.) One or two fields in the northern most tip of the NP area lie within the Quantock Hills AONB.

**Recreation and Environment Policy R5: Local Green Spaces (LGS)**

**Context**

**Green Triangle Junctions**

In the rural lanes of the NP area there are a few ‘green triangle junctions’. These are often under threat from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and large agricultural machinery that cannot negotiate the junction without eroding the edges of the triangle. *(See pages 90-99 for further details and photographs.)*

Local residents indicate that a significant volume of traffic ‘takes to the back lanes’ whenever an element of the main road infrastructure (M5, A38 or A3259) is blocked. The residents’ questionnaire responses, combined with Census 2011 data, indicates a significant proportion of the local population use their vehicles to get to work (although the Transport Policies of this NP encourage other means of transport). The growth plans for Taunton, including the Urban Extension at Monkton Heathfield and the development at Nerrols, indicate that the use of the country lanes will continue to prove damaging to the ‘green triangle junctions’ unless they can be protected.

Evidence nationally suggests that some of these ‘green triangle junctions’ are very ancient. In some areas, they are known as ‘remnant greens’ (Tunbridge Wells BC 2004).


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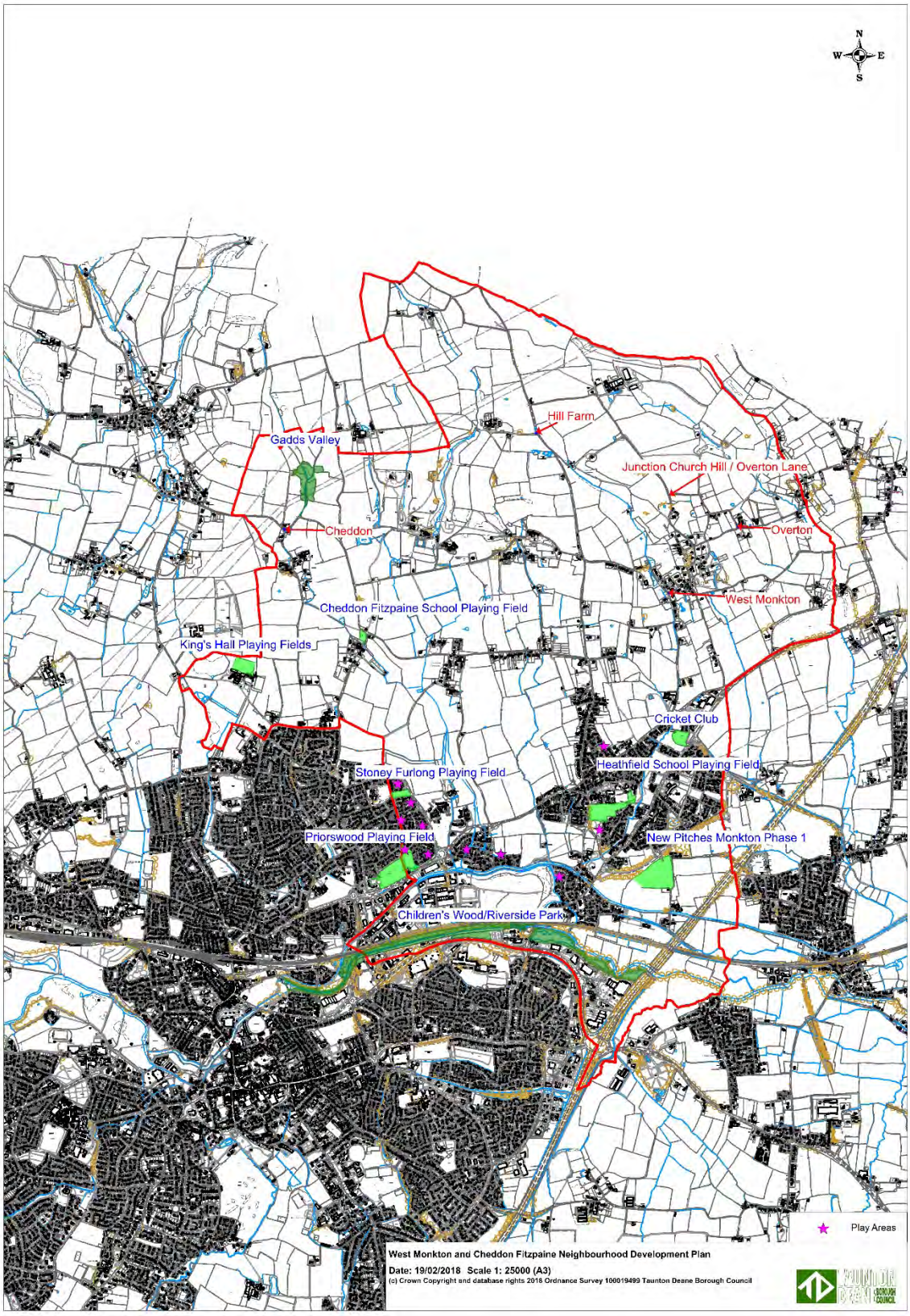
**Justification**

Five ‘green triangles junctions’ are to be designated as Local Green Spaces (LGSs) in the NP. The purpose of the designation is to protect them from erosion by traffic, to ensure that their vegetation is preserved and maintained, and to prevent them from being covered in tarmac. The green triangles are used by large HGVs for turning, as the lanes are not wide enough, which damages the edges. Some lanes are only accessible by HGVs in one direction, thereby necessitating the need to turn at the green triangles. None of the designated LGSs is large enough for development *per se*, but they need to be protected from the effects of other development and growth in the NP area. They are local landmarks reflecting the agricultural heritage of this part of the NP area, adding to its character. They are capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. The proposed policy will help to *‘enhance the locally distinctive characteristics of the area for future generations’* as described in the NP Vision.

The designated LGSs are shown in Map 20.


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## Map 20: WM&CF NP Local Green Spaces, Play Pitches and Highway Triangles





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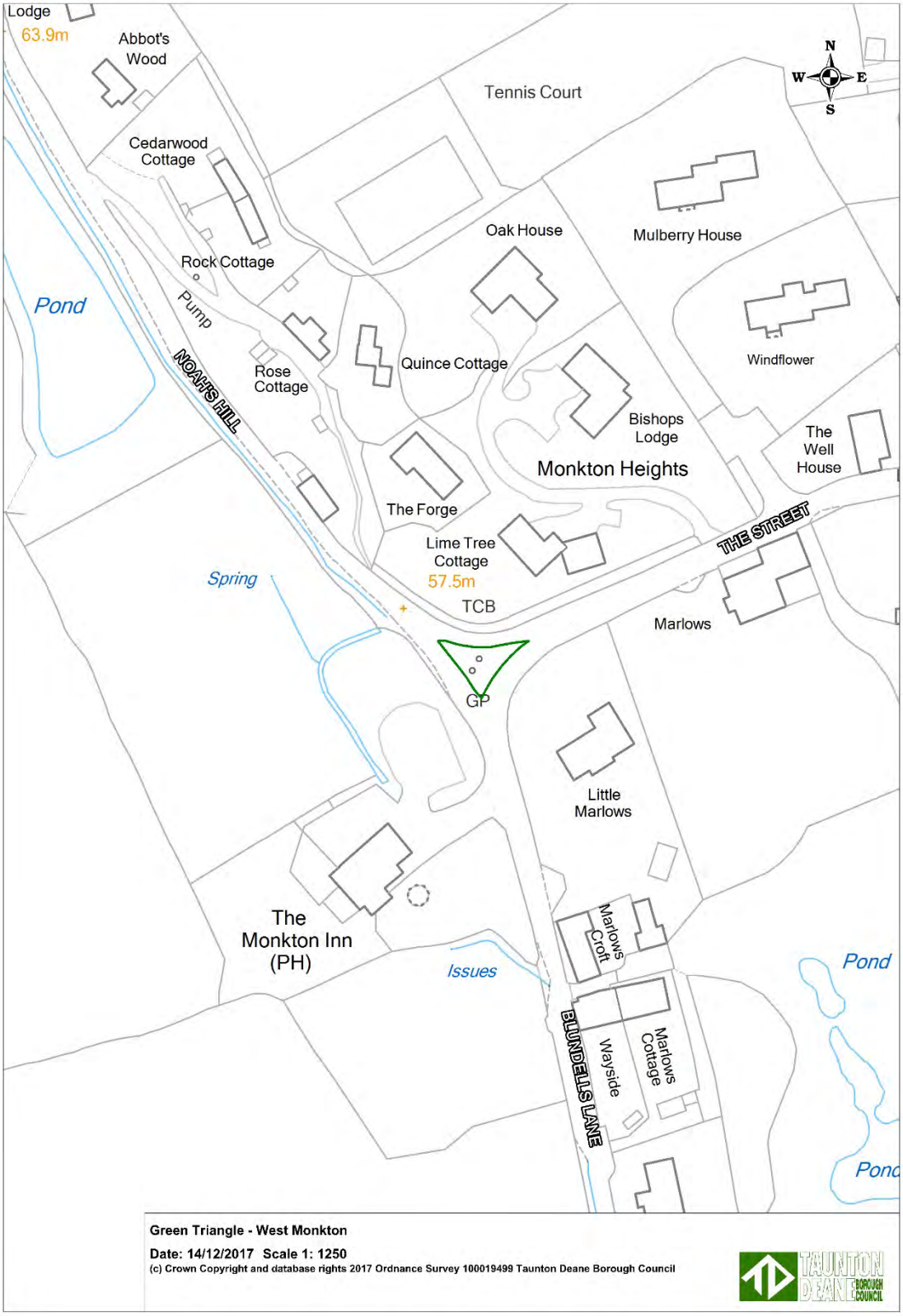
**Green Triangle at The Street, West Monkton**. This triangle has historical significance. It lies within the conservation village of West Monkton. It has on it a memorial seat, a converted phone box (red K6 type) converted into a book exchange, a litter bin and a finger post. The northerly edge is protected from traffic erosion by oak bollards. It is a significant feature of the centre of the village, marking one end of 'The Street', and the other end at 'Church Drive'. The seat and book exchange are much used by local residents. (The book exchange is also a geo-caching site.)



**Photo I: Green Triangle at The Street, West Monkton**


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## Map 21 - Green Triangle at The Street, West Monkton





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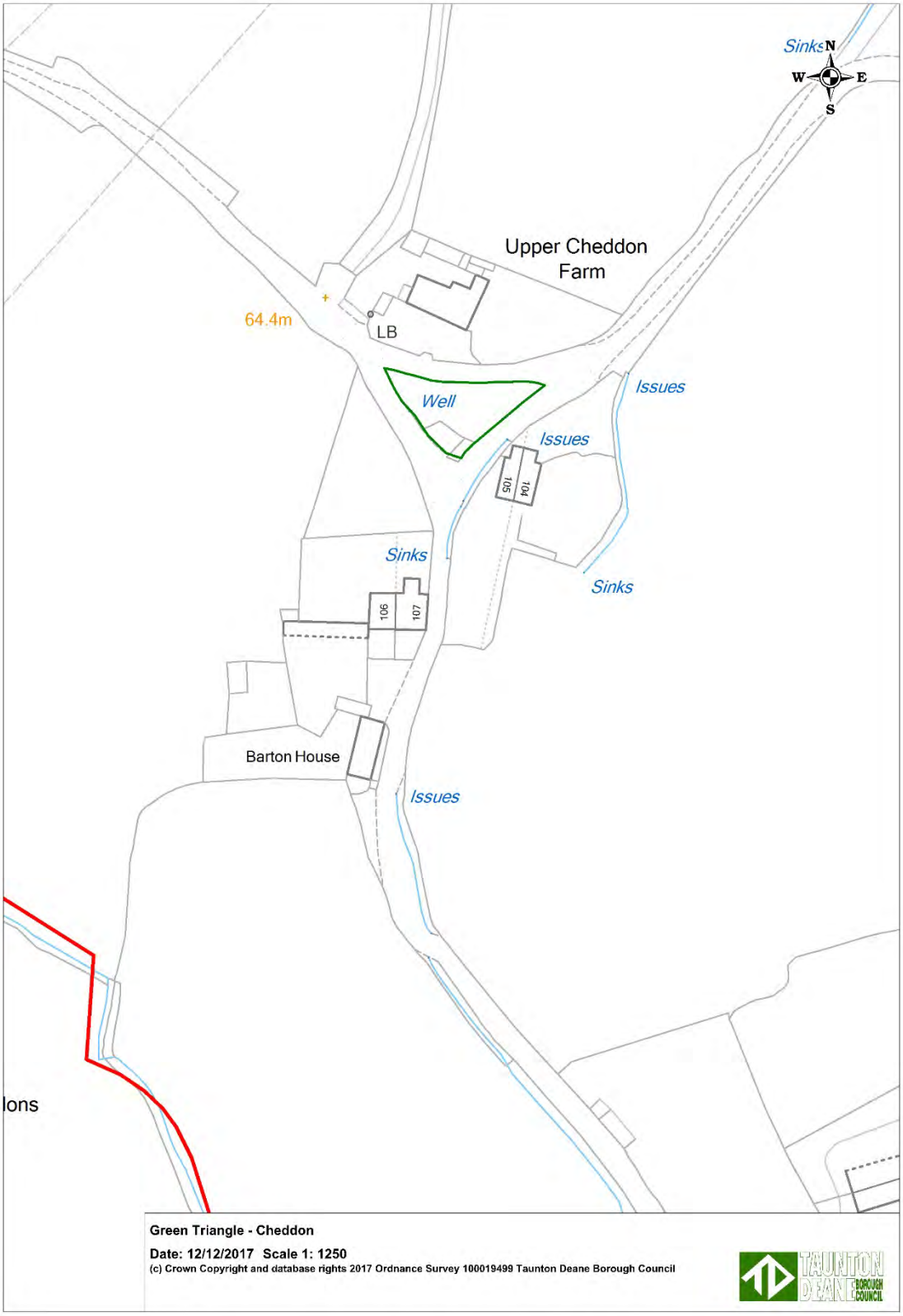
**Green Triangle at Upper Cheddon**. This triangle is maintained by the residents of the farmhouse which overlooks it. It is another example of a north south route joining an east west route, serving the historical agricultural needs of the small hamlet of Upper Cheddon. Accordingly, it is an attractive feature of the area.



**Photo J: Green Triangle at Upper Cheddon**.


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## Map 22 - Green Triangle at Upper Cheddon





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**Green Triangle at Hill Farm/Yalway Lane**. This triangle marks the junction of the old bridle way (running past Hill Farm and on to Volis Farm) with the main country lane (Yalway Lane) running north/south into the Quantocks. It has four large oak trees, centrally positioned, surrounded by grass. The edges are unprotected and subject to erosion by large vehicles associated with farm businesses in the area. It is of historical importance and local interest.



**Photo K: Green Triangle at Hill Farm/Yalway Lane**


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## Map 23 - Green Triangle at Hill Farm/Yalway Lane





OS Licence number 100057851

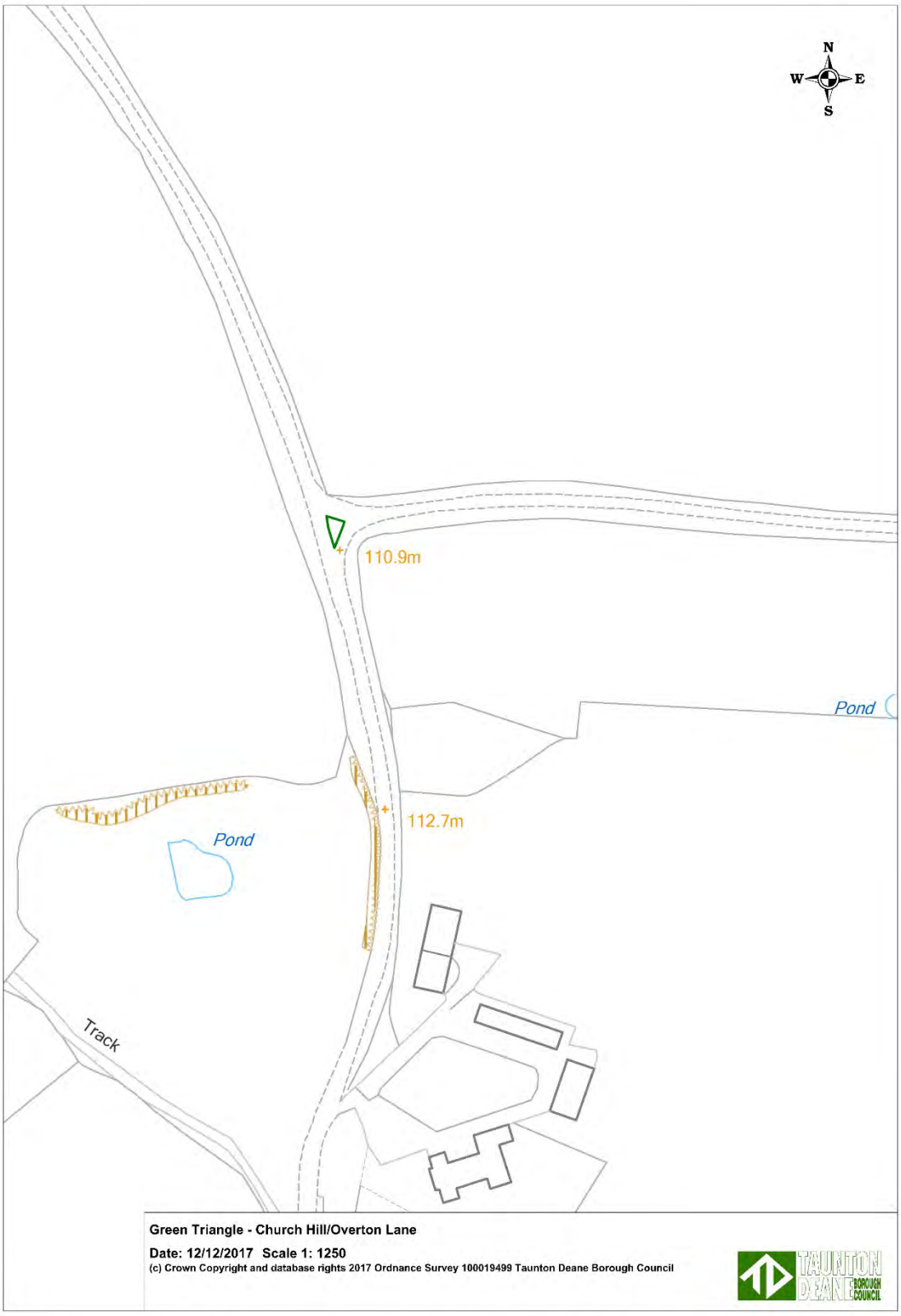
**Green Triangle at junction of Church Hill and Overton Lane**. This triangle lies just outside the village of West Monkton. It is under threat from traffic erosion, and has been repaired by SCC in the past for erosion of vegetation. Its significance is historical.



**Photo L: Green Triangle at junction of Church Hill and Overton Lane**


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## Map 24 - Green Triangle at junction of Church Hill and Overton Lane





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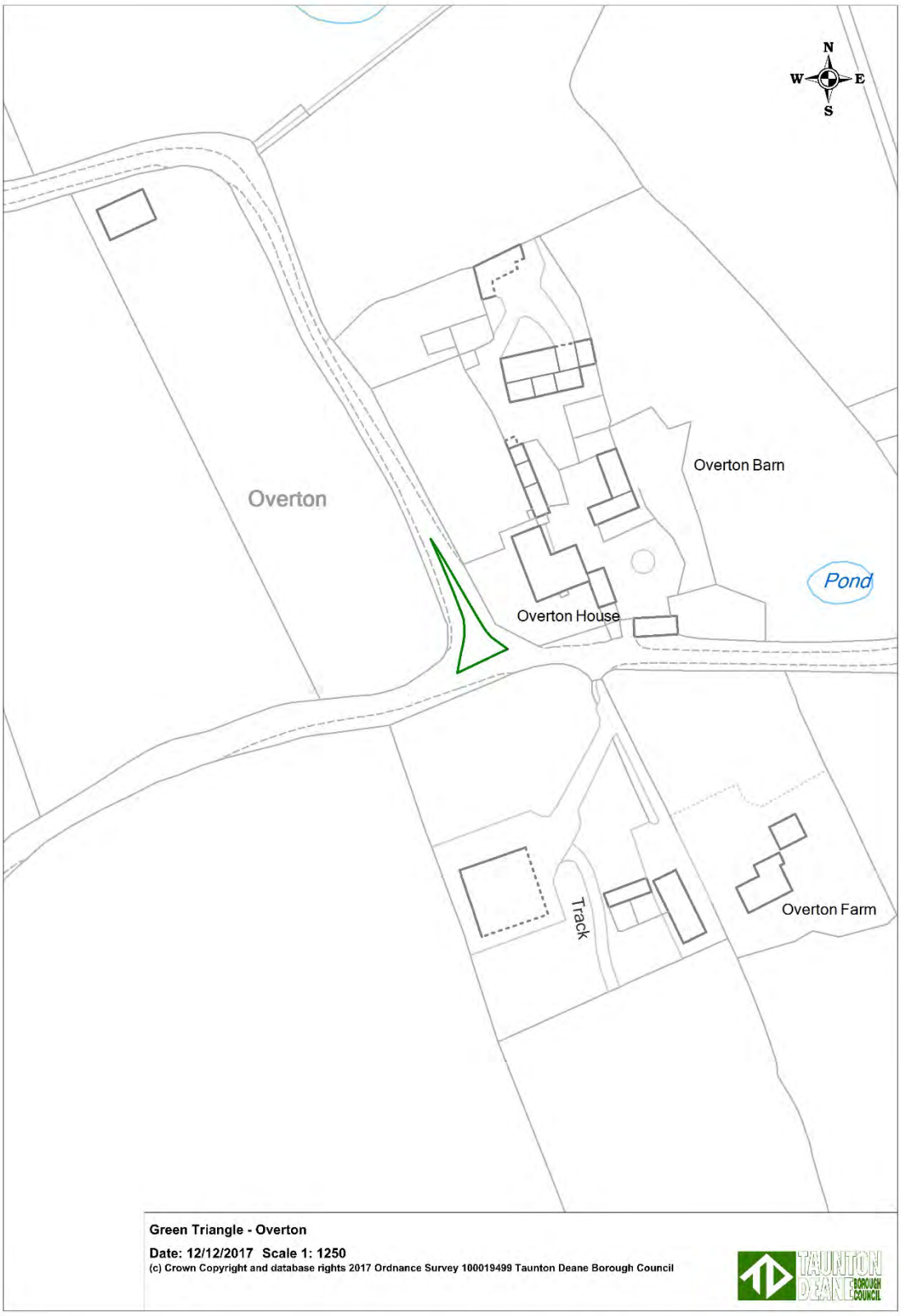
**Green Triangle at Overton**. This triangle lies just outside the village of West Monkton, but is also under threat from traffic erosion. Its significance is historical.



**Photo M: Green Triangle at Overton**


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## Map 25 - Green Triangle at Overton



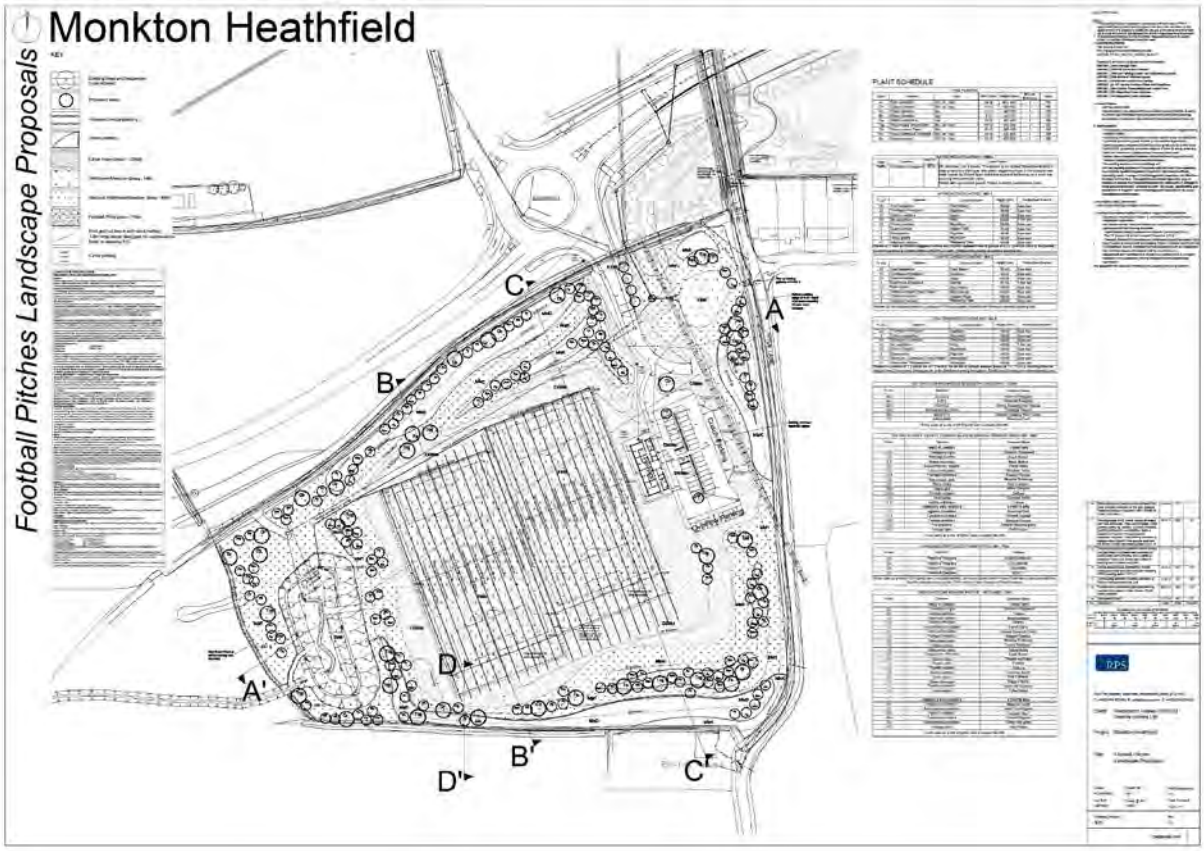


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**Recreational and other local green spaces**

These sites contribute to sustainable development and compliment investment in the community. They are capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. The sites that are playing fields have recreational value and are in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve. The sites that are wildlife/nature reserve areas are of particular local significance because of their beauty, tranquillity and the richness of their wildlife. *(NPPF paragraph 76-78.)*

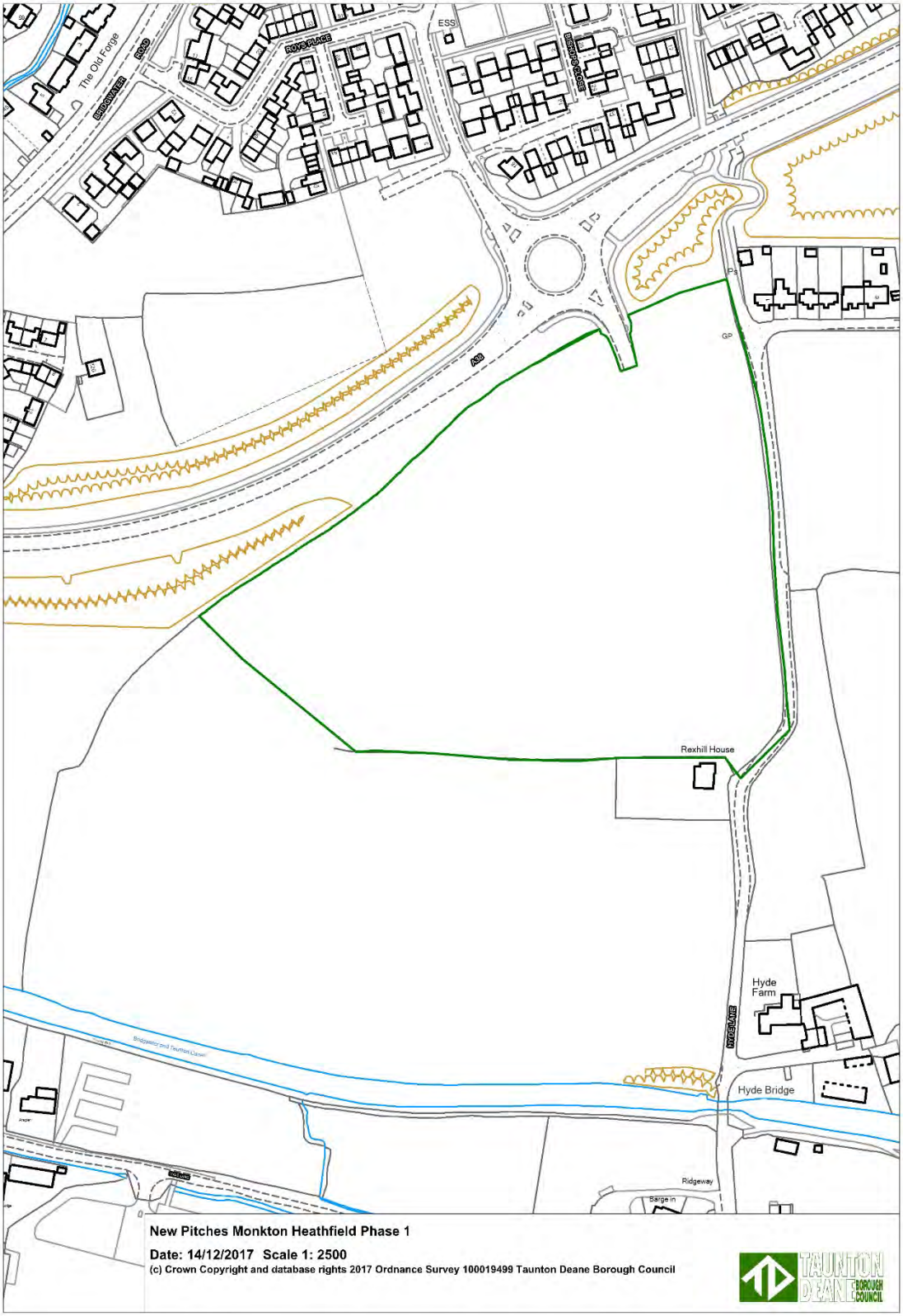
**Two new football pitches and club house phase I of the Monkton Heathfield Development**: the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves and will have particular significance as a playing field whilst the out-field area is much used by dog walkers and enjoyed for its tranquillity and wildlife diversity.




**Plan i - Two new football pitches and club house phase I of the Monkton Heathfield Development**


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## Map 26 - Two new football pitches and club house phase I of the Monkton Heathfield Development





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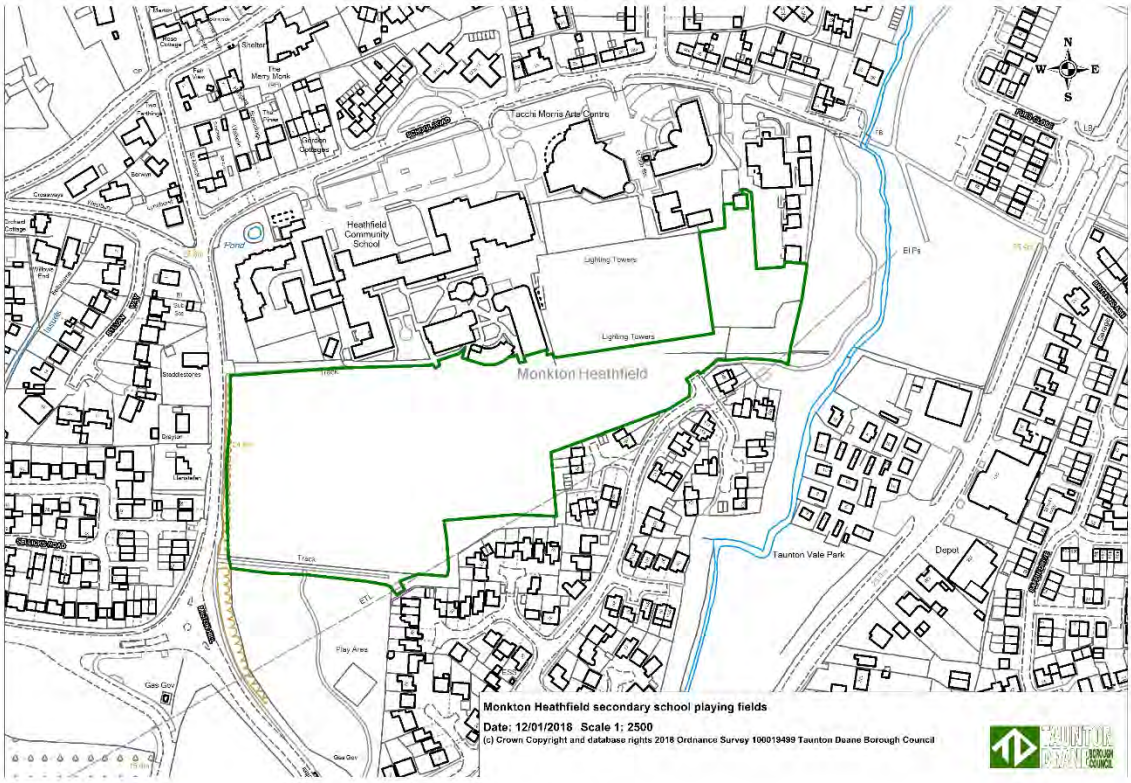
**Heathfield Community School playing fields** where the green area is demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular significance to local families as a playing field.



**Photo N - Heathfield Community School playing fields**


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## Map 27 - Heathfield Community School playing fields





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**Kings Hall playing fields**: part of Kings Hall Preparatory School, an Independent school providing playing fields for educational purposes. Historically part of the parkland associated with the listed building, and so has significance for its beauty, tranquillity, richness of its wildlife as well as a recreational area for the school community it serves.



**Photo O: Kings Hall playing fields**


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## Map 28 - Kings Hall playing fields





OS Licence number 100057851

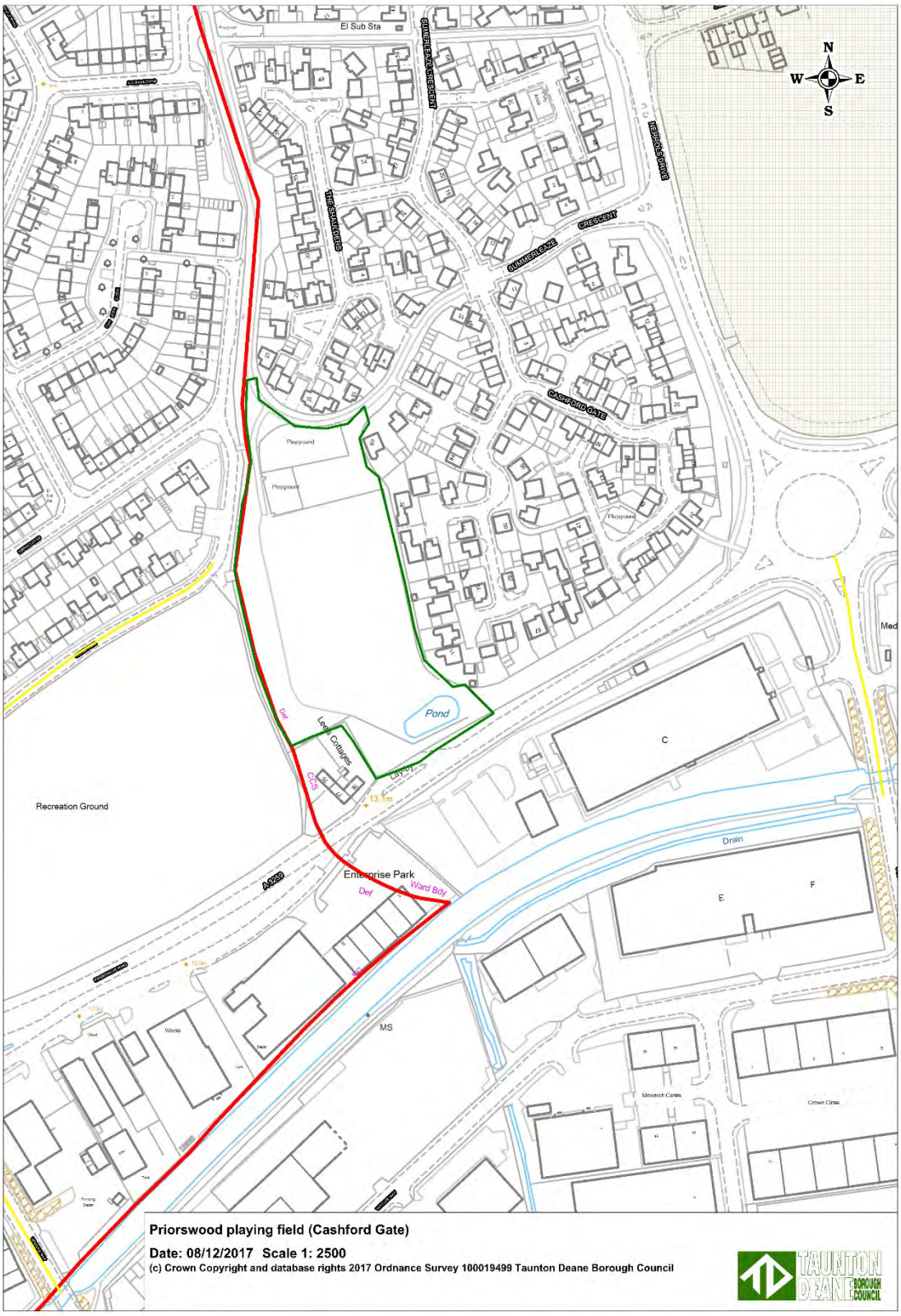
**Cashford Gate playing field**: this forms part of the leisure provision required by TDBC as a result of housing development.  The area is in close proximity to the communities it serves, and holds a specific recreational value.



**Photo P: Cashford Gate playing field**


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## Map 29 - Cashford Gate playing field





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**Stoney Furlong public open space**: form part of the Children's Play Areas for older Children required by TDBC as a result of housing development in the area. Stoney Furlong Public Open Space/Football Pitch and Cashford Gate Football Pitch site are sites adopted by Taunton Deane Borough Council and have value as playing fields used for recreational purposes (Waterleaze Public Open Space awaits formal adoption by TDBC – December 2017).



**Photo Q: Stoney Furlong public open space**


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## Map 30 - Stoney Furlong public open space





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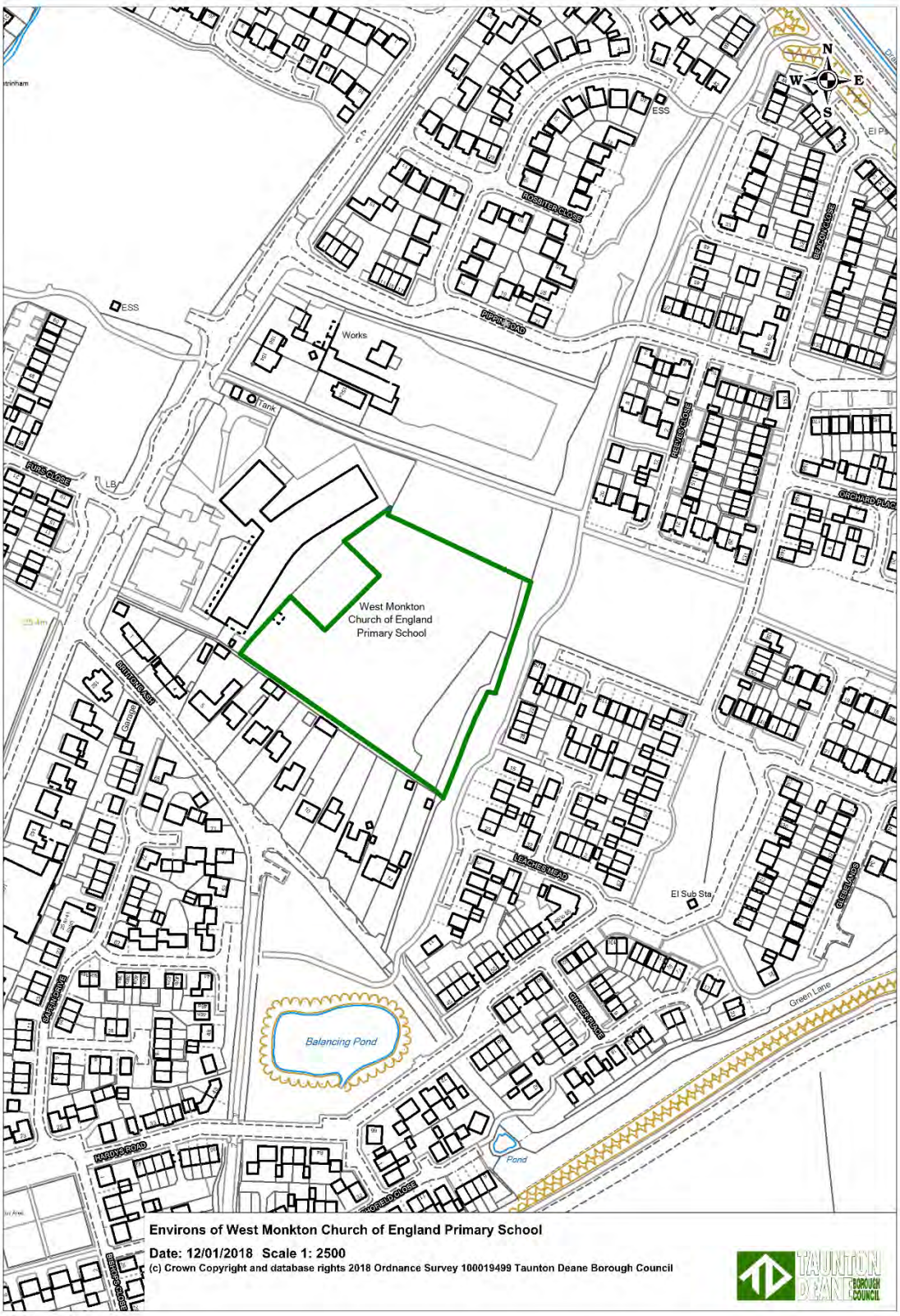
**Environs of West Monkton Church of England Primary School**: the school is surrounded by playing areas which are special to the local community for their recreational value and their historic significance to older residents.



**Photo R: Environs of West Monkton Church of England Primary School**


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## Map 31 - Environs of West Monkton Church of England Primary School





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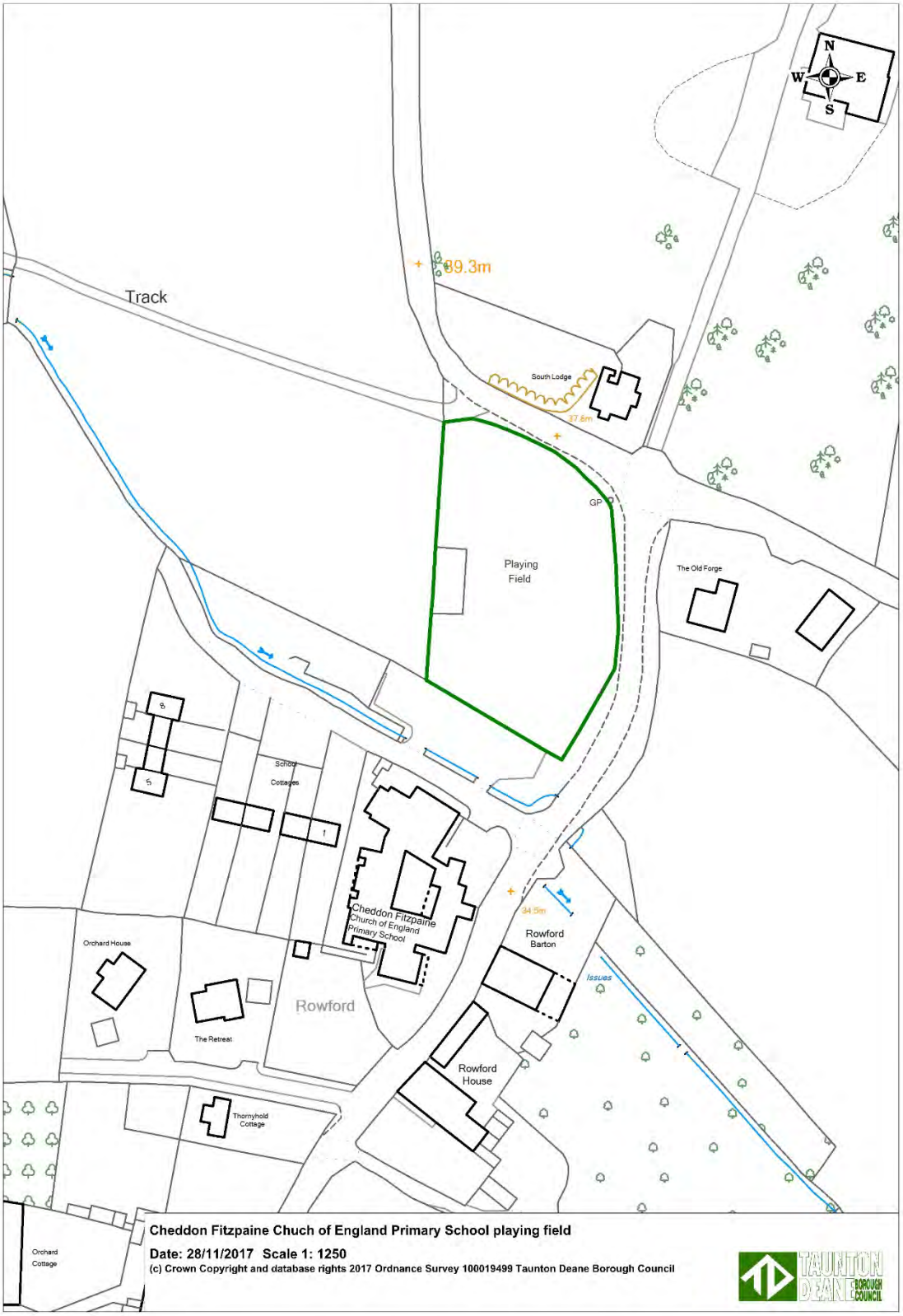
**Cheddon Fitzpaine Primary School Playing Field**: a Bath & Wells Multi-academy Trust School with playing field adjacent used for educational purposes by the local school community.



**Photo S: Cheddon Fitzpaine Primary School Playing Field**


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## Map 32 - Cheddon Fitzpaine Primary School Playing Field





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**Cricket Ground at Monkton Heathfield**: the green space is in close proximity to the community it serves. The green area is demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular historical significance, and recreational value. The green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.



**Photo T: Cricket Ground at Monkton Heathfield**


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## Map 33 - Cricket Ground at Monkton Heathfield





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**Children's Play Areas:** within Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish: Stoney Furlong, Standfast Place, Summerleaze Crescent (aka Warres Road), Summerleaze Crescent No.2, The Shaulders, Cashford Gate, Barbers Mead, and Maidenbrook (aka Waterleaze Play Area). These all have three or four pieces of equipment for the Under 5 age group, being close to the communities they serve and having recreational value. Within West Monkton Parish: at St Quintins, Acacia Gardens, Meadway, Farriers Green, Canal View, Roy's Place, Aginhills Drive, play areas have all been created as part of TDBC requirement for play provision associated with housing development. The areas are each in close proximity to the communities they serve, and hold a specific recreational value.


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**Photo U – Stoney Furlong Play Area**




**Photo V – Standfast Play Area**


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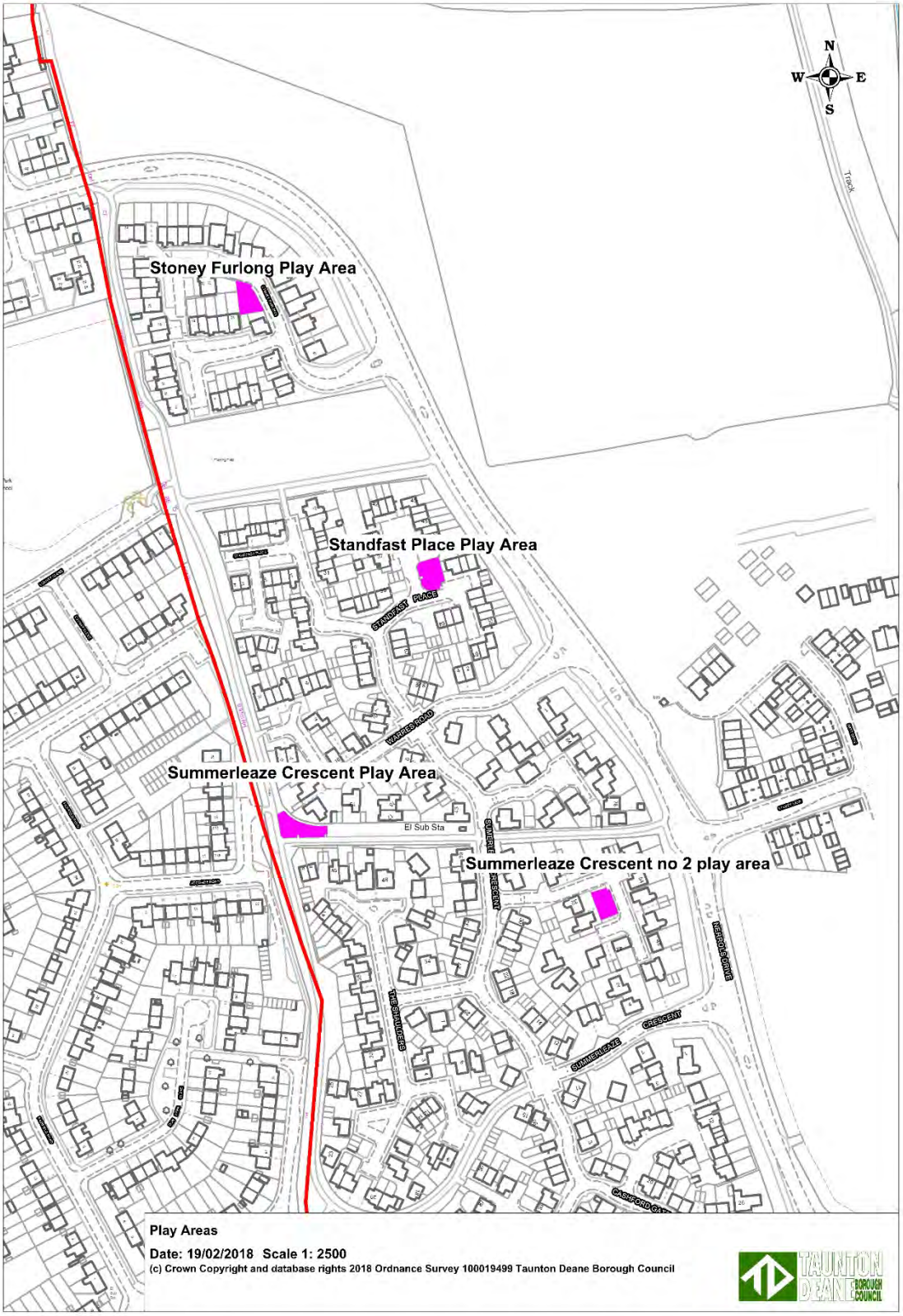
**Photo W – Summerleaze aka Warres Road**




**Photo X – Summerleaze Crescent No.2 Children's Play Area**


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## Map 34 – Stoney Furlong, Standfast Place, Summerleaze and Summerleaze No.2 Children's Play Area





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**Photo Y – Shaulders Children's Play Area**



**Photo Z – Cashford Gate Children's Play Area**


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## Map 35 – The Shaulders and Cashford Gate Children's Play Area





OS Licence number 100057851

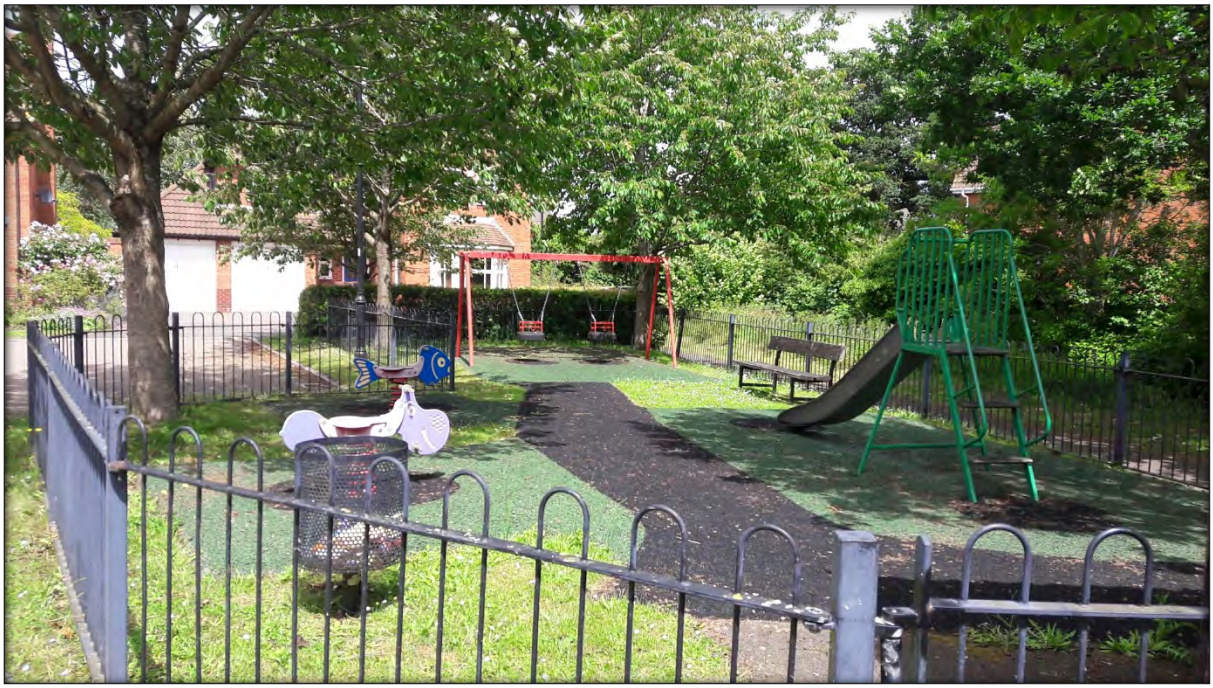


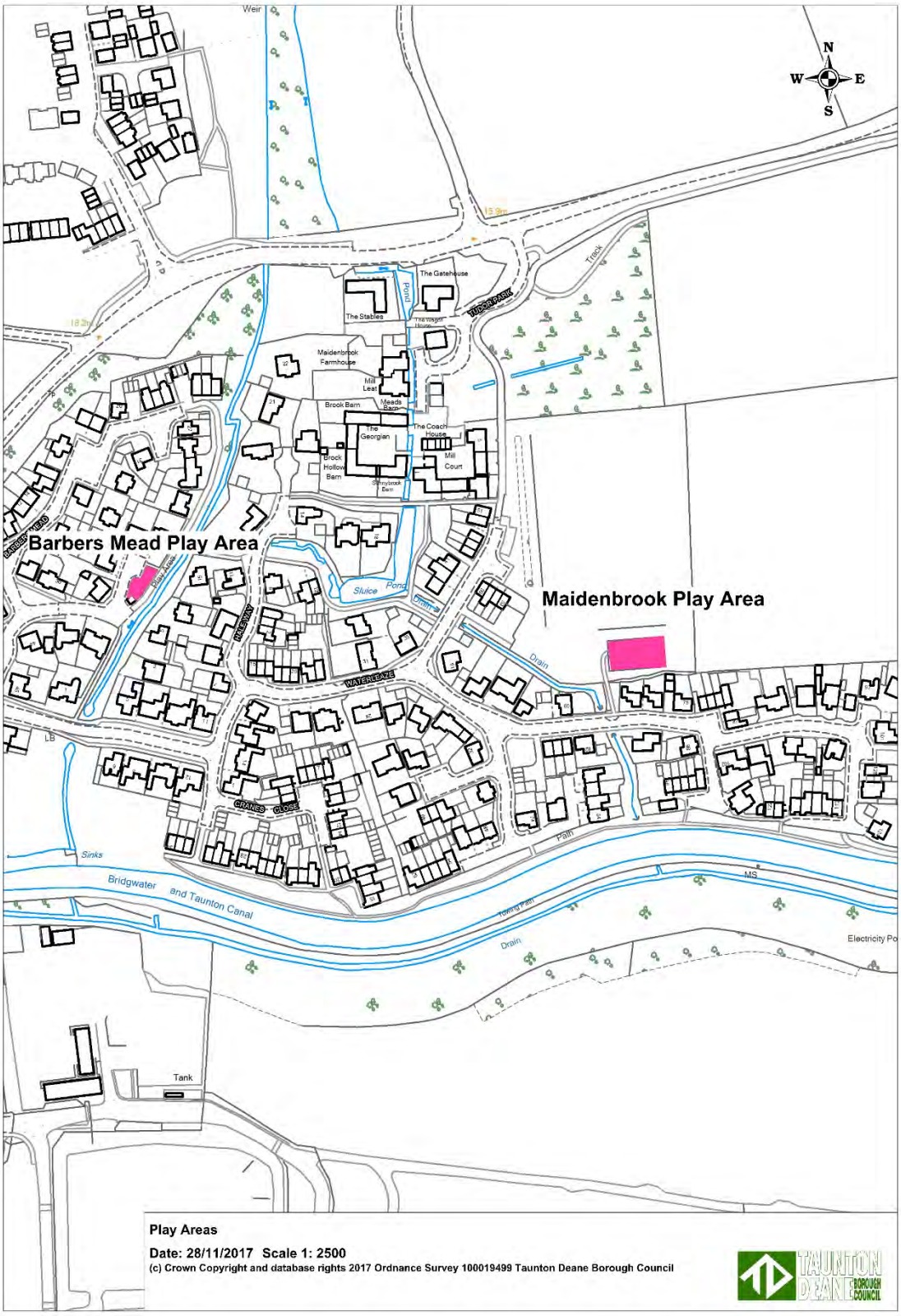
**Photo AA – Barbers Mead Children's Play Area**



**Photo BB – Maidenbrook (aka Waterleaze) Children's Play Area**


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## Map 36 – Barbers Mead and Maidenbrook Children's Play Area





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**Photo CC – St Quintins Children's Play Area**



**Photo DD – Acacia Gardens Children's Play Area**


OS Licence number 100057851

## Map 37 – St Quintins and Acacia Gardens Children's Play Area





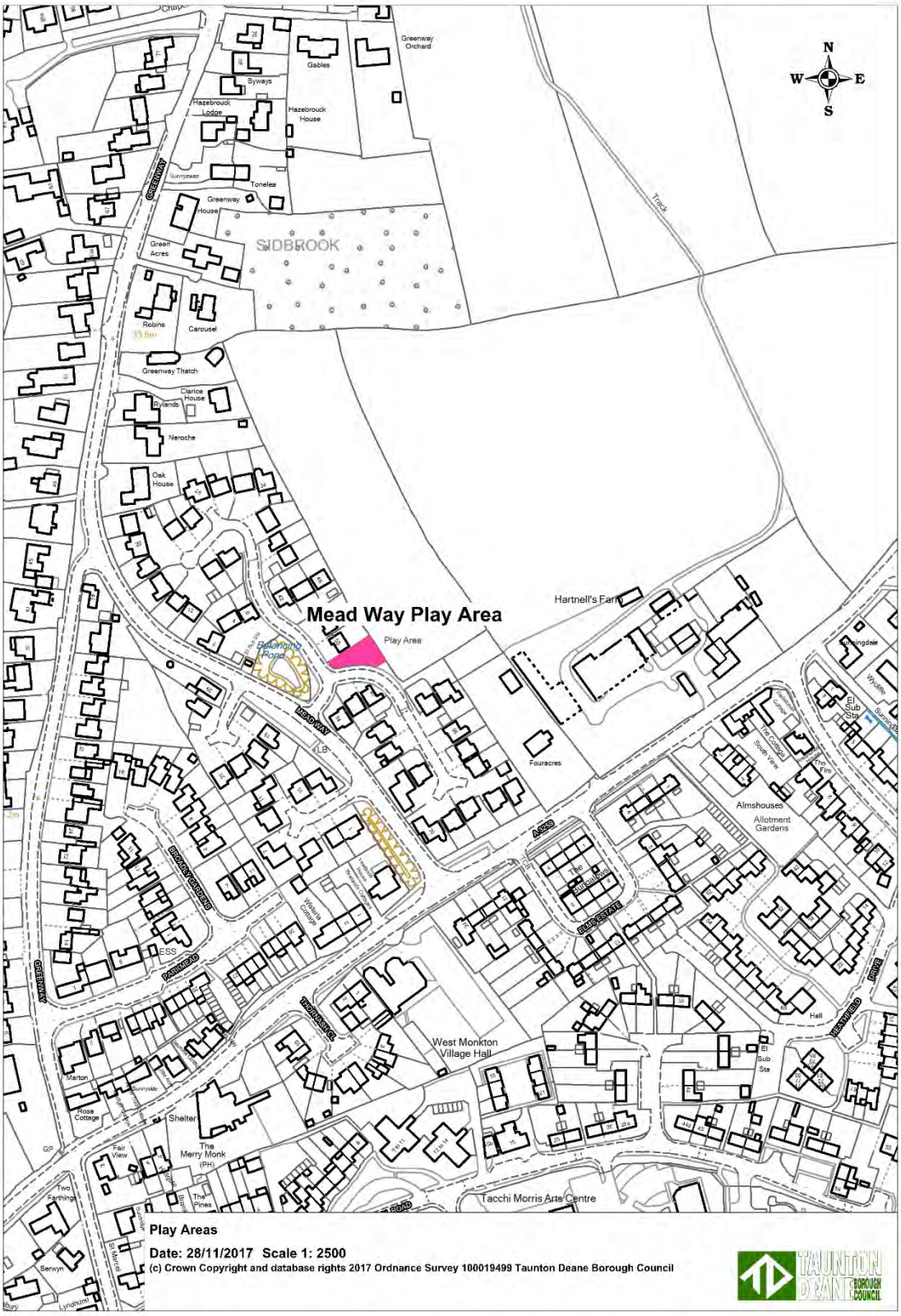
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**Photo EE – Meadway Children's Play Area**


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## Map 28 – Meadway Children's Play Area





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**Photo FF – Farriers Green Children's Play Area**



**Photo GG – Canal View Children's Play Area**


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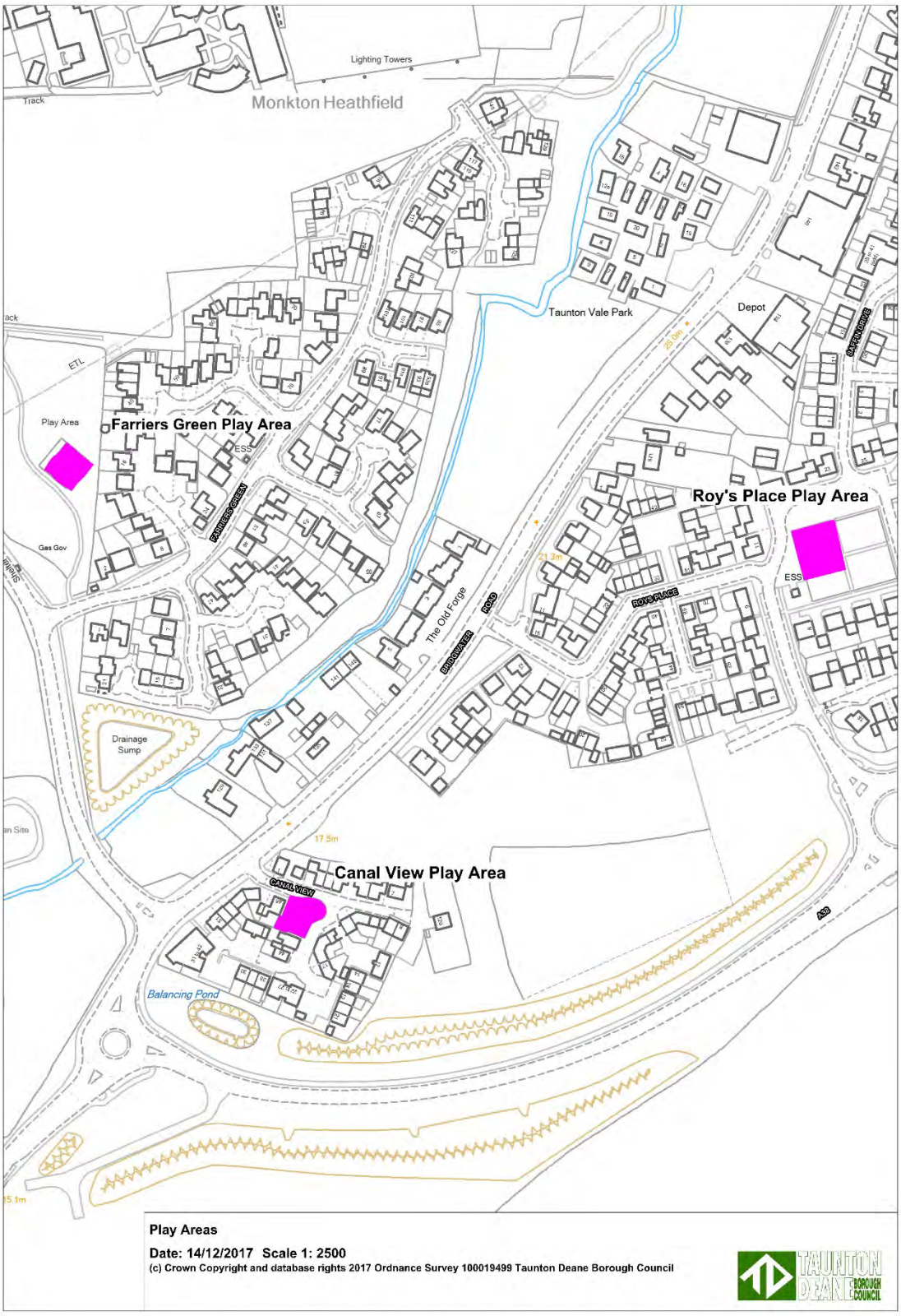
**Photo HH – Roys Place Children's Play Area (aka Community Square)**



**Photo II – Aginhills Drive Children's Play Area**


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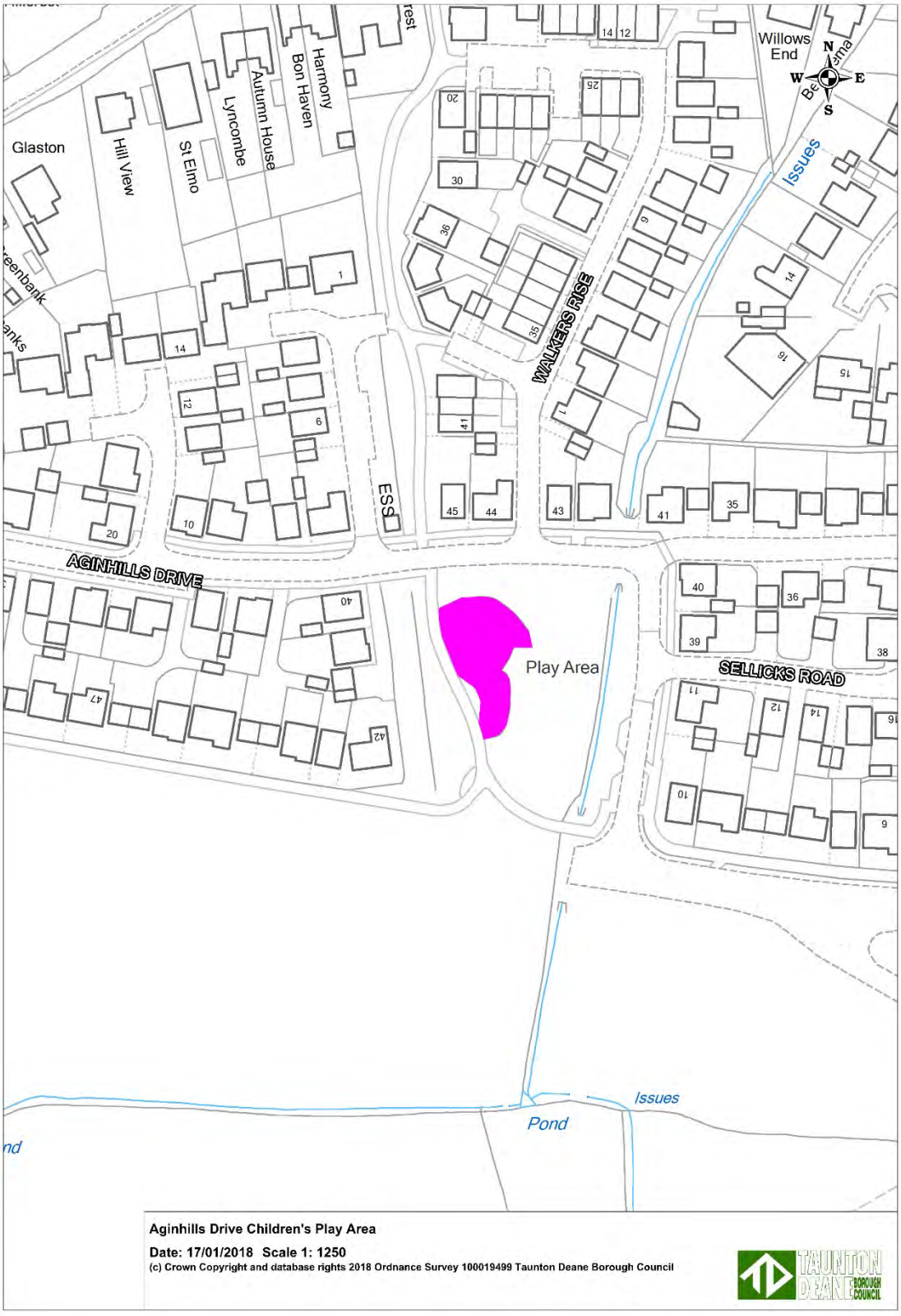
## Map 39 – Farriers Green, Canal View, and Roy's Place Children's Play Area





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## Map 40 – Aginhills Drive Children's Play Area





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**Dyers Brook local nature area:** being laid out by the Developer's Consortium, to link the new and existing communities which are in very close proximity to it. The wildlife corridor is demonstrably special to the local community, having historical significance and valued for its tranquillity and the richness of its wildlife.





**Photo's JJ and KK - Dyers Brook Nature Area, view west and east**


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## Map 41 – Dyers Brook Nature Area





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**Hankridge and Gadds Valley local nature reserves** (80% within the NDP Area): reasonably close to the communities they serve. The green areas are special to their local communities and hold a particular local significance, because of their beauty, tranquillity and richness of their wildlife. Gadds Valley is owned and managed by the Crown Estate at Upper Cheddon, and available for recreational walking.



**Photo LL: Hankridge Riverside and Children's Wood local nature reserve**

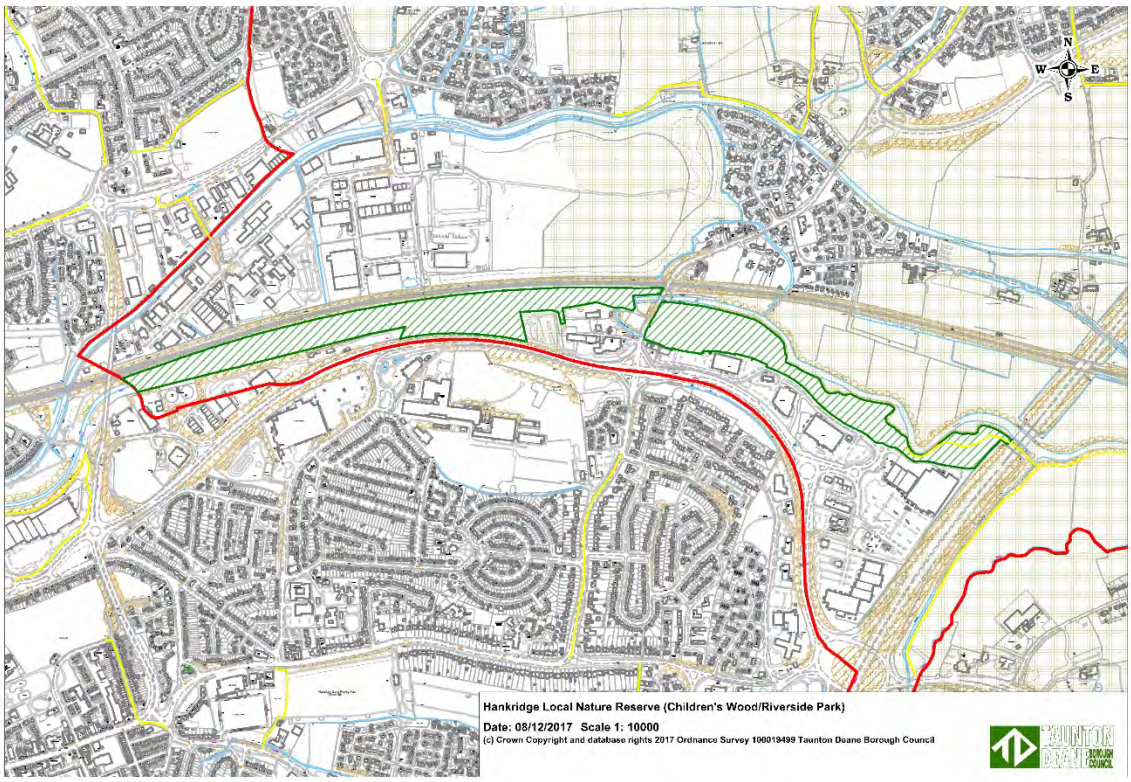

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**Photo MM: Hankridge Riverside and Children's Wood local nature reserve**


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## Map 42 - Hankridge Riverside and Children's Wood local nature reserve





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**Photo NN: Gadds Valley local nature reserve**


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**Photo OO: Gadds Valley local nature reserve**


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## Map 43: Gadds Valley local nature reserve





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**Recreation and Environment Policy R5: Local Green Spaces (Highway Triangles and Recreational Sites)**

The following areas, as shown broadly on Map 20 and in more detail on maps 21-43, are designated as Local Green Space:

**Highway triangles**

- Green Triangle at The Street, West Monkton (Map 21);
- Green Triangle at Upper Cheddon (Map 22);
- Green Triangle at Hill Farm/Yalway Hill (Map 23);
- Green Triangle at junction of Church Hill and Overton Lane (Map 24);
- Green Triangle at Overton (Map 25).

Development on these designated areas will not be permitted unless it preserves and enhances the existing use and local historic character of these green triangle areas.

**Recreational sites**

- Two new football pitches and club house, newly laid out and under construction as part of phase one of the Monkton Heathfield Consortium development (Map 26);
- Monkton Heathfield secondary school playing fields (Map 27);
- Kings Hall School playing fields (Map 28);
- Cashford Gate playing field (Map 29);
- Stoney Furlong public open space (Map 30);
- Environs of West Monkton Church of England Primary School (Map 31);
- Cheddon Fitzpaine Primary School Playing Field (Map 32);
- Cricket ground at Monkton Heathfield (Map 33);
- Children's play areas (Map's 34-40);
- Dyers Brook nature area, being laid out by the Consortium to link the new and existing communities (Map 41);
- Hankridge Riverside and Children's Wood local nature reserve (Map 42); and
- Gadds Valley local nature reserve (Map 43).

Development on the designated areas listed above will not be permitted unless it preserves and enhances the existing use and local historic character of the recreational spaces.

The Local Green Spaces will be subjected to regular review as part of the NP Action Plan of the Neighbourhood Plan area.


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| *Link between policy and local support/evidence?* | |
|---|---|
| Local support? | The residents' questionnaire has shown support for the Local Green Space policy (Q. 47: 71% in favour of LGS) |
| Evidence? | Dorset Rural Roads Policy (2008)<br>http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/assets/downloads/Rural_Roads_Protocol/RORH_55-108.pdf<br><br>Tunbridge Wells BC 2004<br><br>Suffolk CC 2003<br><br>NPPF:paragraph 76 to 78<br>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf |

**Conformity with Core Strategy & NPPF**

This policy is in line with the NPPF which states that:

> *'The NDP can designate Local Green Spaces (LGS's). LGS designations should not be extensive, land should be local in character and reasonably close to the community; and, where it is demonstrably special, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife'. (*paragraph 76-78)

This NP Policy is considered to be in general conformity with relevant Core Strategy Policies, particularly DM1 (*General Requirements*) DM2 (*Development in the Countryside*) and DM4 (*Design*). It is also considered to be in general conformity with relevant SADMP policies, particularly ENV1 (Protection of Trees, Woodlands, Orchards and Hedgerows).

**What difference will it make?**

The proposed policy will contribute to the health and well-being of the community by preserving local spaces of historical and local significance and preserving flora and fauna found in these LGSs.
The impact of the growth of the community and its associated transportation requirements will be minimised by preserving the designated Local Green Spaces.
This policy will help to deliver WM&CF NP Ecology Recreation and Environment objectives by seeking to protect environmental assets that are not currently protected through statutory or planning designations. The policy also seeks to maintain, manage and enhance the quality of environmental assets.


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# 5. ACTION PLAN

## Expectations

Proposals should be sustainable and deliverable. This will be achieved through ongoing liaison by the WM and CF Parish Councils with TDBC throughout the Masterplanning process for the Urban Extension. Owing to the land already allocated in the Core Strategy, there are no residential sites listed in the TDBC SADMP (approved Dec 2016) in the NP area. However, allocation of land for community woodland, recreation and employment has been made in the SADMP and included in the Recreation and Environment section, page 61.

If viability is disputed due to the affordable housing and other requirements necessary to create a satisfactory and sustainable form of development, the process detailed in paragraph 1.7 of the TDBC Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (May 2014) will be followed.

## Conclusion

A Neighbourhood Action Plan for each Parish will be developed in consultation with local people and regularly reviewed by each Parish Council to ensure that the NP policies are monitored and delivered.

The need to develop Safe Routes to School and High Quality Bus Infrastructure, as the Urban Extension and other building takes place, will be developed as a detailed part of the Action Plan and cross referenced to the Transport Policy section as appropriate. *(See Transport Policy section, page 40.)*

The Action Plan will also set out to monitor in more detail:

- how Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions will be allocated and aligned by each Parish Council to the priorities set out in Section 6 Appendices;

- a review of the Local Green Spaces (LGS) nominated in Policy R5.

This information will be used during the regular reviews of the NP and the CIL list by both WM and CF Parishes at Parish Council meetings.


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**Action Identified through the Neighbourhood Plan**

**Community Action Transport CA1: Developing High Quality Bus Infrastructure**

As described above, improving bus services is considered to be important by those who responded to the residents' questionnaire (217 responses to Question 14).

Furthermore, additional consultation indicates that the provision of quality bus infrastructure such as bus shelters will encourage bus usage. Bus services are particularly important to young people who study at Taunton colleges and are also important to both the young and to the elderly with respect to a number of other town centre destinations, including the hospital, bus and rail stations. The young and elderly population within the NP area is now increasing due to the expanding Urban Extension and other residential developments. Therefore good bus services/infrastructure will be important to these age groups. Good bus infrastructure will also help to achieve sustainable transport objectives. The increasing population density more generally within the NP area will help to make quality bus services with convenient and reasonable frequency more viable.

The social benefits of public transport, such as improved access to employment, education and health services, are systematically evidenced by the Department of Transport (Valuing the Social Impacts of Public Transport, March 2013).

The supplementary residents' questionnaire conducted in October 2016 indicates how residents would like to see local bus infrastructure improved to encourage more people to use existing and future bus services. The responses demonstrate strong support for the provision of bus shelters (72.7% of responses).

| **How can bus stops, planned as part of new developments, be improved to encourage more people to use existing and future bus services?** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Answer Options** | **Response Percent** | **Response Count** |
| bus stop | 3.0% | 2 |
| bus shelter | 72.7% | 48 |
| digital display | 1.5% | 1 |
| seat | 0.0% | 0 |
| Other (please specify) | 22.7% | 15 |

Supplementary Residents' Questionnaire - October 2016


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Good bus services/infrastructure will also be important to those who travel to work within the NP area, to surrounding commercial and industrial sites and into the town centre.

The Urban Extension will include a Park & Ride (P&R) scheme to serve those traveling to work from areas to the north of Taunton. This P&R scheme provides the opportunity to create a rapid transport link into town for those living in the NP area but working in and around the town centre, with conveniently sited bus stops along the A3259.

Development schemes which help to support and deliver this objective will be supported and the Parishes expect SCC and relevant land owners/developers to work together to secure any further land required to facilitate the rapid transport link/priority bus lane. This can be achieved through relevant legal agreements and/or planning permissions and is particularly relevant to a five metre wide strip of land immediately to the north of the A3259, and between Maidenbrook Lane and Yallands Hill. This is required to provide a widened and unbroken public highway for the rapid transport link/priority bus lane.

CS Policy CP6 (Transport & Accessibility) requires that development should contribute to reducing the need to travel by car through measures such as improving accessibility to public transport, cycling and walking. Furthermore, the supporting text states that the proposed employment development at Monkton Heathfield will be served by high quality bus routes along main road corridors.

SADMP Policy A5 (Accessibility of Development) requires that:

> '*residential development should be within walking distance of, or should have access by public transport to employment, convenience and comparison shopping, primary and secondary health care, leisure and other essential facilities'.*

In addition, the Policy states that:

> *'all major non-residential development should be accessible within walking distance or by public transport to a majority of potential users'.*


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**Community Action Transport CA1: Developing high quality bus infrastructure**

New residential and employment/commercial developments* will be encouraged to provide bus stops to meet bus service requirements and where bus stops are formed, bus shelters also. Other measures which contribute to physical improvements in the quality of bus services and/or support bus infrastructure improvements such as priority bus lanes, (Bus Rapid Transport), Park & Ride, seating and litter bins will be strongly supported.

** Major residential developments of 10 units or more, and employment/commercial developments of 1000m$^2$ or one Hectare*

**What difference will it make?**

This Community Action will help to achieve the WM&CF NP Transport Objective by encouraging the delivery of a high quality sustainable and comprehensive infrastructure network for walking, cycling and public transport to meet the particular local needs of both existing and future residents of all ages within the NP area.


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# 6. APPENDICES

## a) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spend Priorities

In an area with a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan, the community receives 25% of CIL receipts collected by the TDBC Local Planning Authority in its area. WM & CF Parish Councils used the NP process to engage and consult with the community to establish the types of projects on which each Parish will spend their meaningful proportion of the CIL.

For both parishes within the NP area the CIL lists were developed in 2016. See Parish Council minutes as follows:

- 8th Dec 2016 Cheddon Fitzpaine (PC paragraph 15)
- 8th February 2017 West Monkton (PC paragraph 22/17)

**CIL 123 Headings for Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council**

- Parish Regeneration: improvements to routes to school
- Transport: traffic and parking issues
- Community Development: gaps in footpaths and cycle way infrastructure
- Community Health & Well-Being: additional play equipment

**CIL 123 Headings for West Monkton Parish Council**

- Flooding and drainage
- Support for infrastructure required by the new development for the benefit of the Parish
    - Footpaths
    - Cycleways
    - Bus
- Green Infrastructure
    - Public Open Spaces
    - Footpaths
    - Watercourses/streams
- Health and Well-Being
    - Cycle paths
    - Tennis courts
- Youth support


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## b) Glossary of Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| **ANGSt** Natural England's Accessible Natural Green Space Standards | Natural England's Accessible Natural Green Space Standard (ANGSt) provides a set of benchmarks for ensuring access to places near to where people live. |
| **AHVS** Affordable Housing Viability Study | An assessment of the implications of affordable housing on the viability of development schemes. The AHVS broadly indicates the amount of affordable housing that could be provided without undermining viability. |
| **AONB** Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 for their outstanding landscape quality. There are 37 AONBs in England covering 15.6% of the land area and a wide range of landscape types. In Taunton Deane, there are two designated AONBs: Blackdown Hills and Quantock Hills. |
| **BCZ** Bat Consultation Zone | The Bat Consultation Zone marked on the Proposals Map are areas where protected Lesser Horseshoe Bats are known to be and barbastelle bats likely to be regularly using for commuting and/or foraging and in night roosting. The mapping is drawn from radio tracking studies and aerial photographic interpretation of habitat used by bats that are features of the SACs. |
| **BFA** Building for Life Assessment | Building for Life assessments score the design quality of planned or completed housing developments against the 20 Building for Life criteria. Anyone can do an informal assessment but formal assessments, now required by several agencies, can only be carried out by an accredited Building for Life assessor. |
| **BFL** Building for Life | Building for Life is the national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. |
| **BREEAM** Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method | The leading and most widely used environmental assessment method for buildings. It sets the standard for best practice in sustainable design and has become the de facto measure used to describe a building's environmental performance. |
| **BRT** Bus Rapid Transit | Bus rapid transit (BRT) is a term applied to a variety of public transportation systems using buses to provide faster, more efficient service than an ordinary bus line. Often this is achieved by making improvements to existing infrastructure, vehicles and scheduling. |
| **Census 2011** | provides data on local communities in 27 March 2011 |
| **CF** Carbon footprint | A measure of the amount of carbon dioxide produced by a person, organisation or state in a given time. |
| **CfSH** Code for Sustainable Homes | The Code for Sustainable Homes is an environmental impact rating system for housing in England & Wales, setting new standards for energy efficiency (above those in current building regulations) and sustainability which are not mandatory under current building regulations but represent important developments towards limiting the environmental impact of housing. |
| **CHSR** Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations (2010) | The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European sites', the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites. |
| **CCS** Community Council for Somerset | Community Council for Somerset: Supports community groups, organisations and individuals in Somerset's communities. |


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| **CIL** Community Infrastructure Levy | A mechanism by which councils can secure monies from development to help fund both strategic and local infrastructure needs. |
| **CP** Country Park | A designated area for people to visit and enjoy recreation in a countryside environment. |
| **CRPE** Campaign to Protect Rural England | National charity devoted to protecting and enhancing rural England. Encourages the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country. |
| **CS** Core Strategy | Taunton Deane Borough Council's Core Strategy: forward plan to 2028. |
| **(CSH)** Code for Sustainable Homes | The Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) is an environmental assessment method for rating and certifying the performance of new homes based on BRE Global's EcoHomes scheme. It is a Government owned national standard intended to encourage continuous improvement in sustainable home building. |
| **DC** District Centre | A large group of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library. |
| **DCLG** Department for Communities and Local Government | The Department for Communities and Local Government is the UK Government department for communities and local government in England which aims to foster prosperous and cohesive communities**,** offering a safe, healthy and sustainable environment for all. |
| **DPD** Development Plan Document | This includes adopted Local Plans and neighbourhood plans and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. |
| **EA** Environment Agency | A government advisor on the natural environment. Its aim, defined under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. |
| **Employment Land Monitoring** | Employment Land Monitoring – The TDBC Employment Land Report provides evidence on the level of Class B1 (Business), Class B2 (General Industrial), Class B8 (Storage and Distribution) and other appropriate uses within employment areas across the Borough. Data is collected on new sites granted permission and changes in floor space, the amount of employment land under construction and completions, and the percentages of these which are on brownfield land, employment land loss is also recorded. The monitor excludes office proposals under 100 sq.m. floor space and 0.20 ha of other employment land. It is published annually and covers the period 1 April to 31st March. |
| **EC Wild Birds Directive** (1979) European Commission for Wild Birds Directive | The European Union Directive aims to protect all European wild birds and the habitats of listed species, in particular through the designation of Special Protection Areas "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Protection_Area" often known by the acronym SPA. |
| **EDS** Economic Development Strategy | The Council's Economic Development Strategy is based on previous quantitative and qualitative research, refreshed with further analysis to capture changes within the local economy driven by the economic crisis, and further consultations with representatives of business, education, local government and regional agencies, and the local community. |


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| **Examination NP** | Neighbourhood Plan Examination is the process undertaken by an Examiner (independent from the LPA and QB) who is testing whether the plan meets the basic conditions and other relevant legal requirements. |
| **FTP** Future Transport Plan | A long-term strategy for getting the best from transport for the next 15year period. |
| **FWAG SW** Farming and Wildlive Advisory Group South West | Seeks to support, enthuse and inspire fellow farmers to value the environmental assets on their land and use them to secure sustainable and profitable businesses for the future. |
| **GI** Green Infrastructure | Strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens. |
| **HE** Highways England | Highways England is a government company responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads. It operates a variety of information services, liaises with other government agencies as well as providing traffic officers who patrol the motorways and deal with a range of incidents on their roads |
| **HCA** Homes and Communities Agency | The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is non-departmental public body which provides enabling support for Local Planning Authorities. |
| **HR Habitats Regulations** | The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994 (SI 1994 no. 2716) is the mechanism by which the UK Government has implemented the Habitats Directive in England, Scotland and Wales. |
| **HRA** Habitat Regulations Assessment | The application of HRA to land use plans is a requirement of the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 as amended. The process assesses the potential for a land use plan to affect the conservation objectives of any sites designated for their nature conservation importance as part of a system known collectively as the Natura 2000 network of European Sites. |
| **IDP** Infrastructure Delivery Plan | A plan which Identifies what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed, such as new roads, schools and open spaces, who will deliver this and when. |
| **IMD** Index of Multiple Deprivation | The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) combines a number of economic, social and housing issues into a single deprivation score for small areas known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA). This allows each area to be ranked relative to each other according to their level of deprivation. It should be noted that any comparison is measuring deprivation relative to other areas. |
| **JSNA** Joint Strategic Needs Assessment | The JSNA describes the current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of the local population. |
| **LBAP** Local Biodiversity Action Plan | The Local Biodiversity Action Plan seeks to turn national biodiversity targets into action along with meeting council biodiversity conservation priorities. The Action Plan includes a number of actions that relate to the protection of threatened species and habitats. |
| **LCA** Landscape Character Assessment | An assessment to identify different landscape areas which have a distinct character based on a recognisable pattern of elements, including combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. |


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| **LDF** Local **Development Framework** | The name for the portfolio of Local Development Documents. It consists of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports. Together these documents will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for a local authority area and may also include local development orders and simplified planning zones. |
| **LDS** Local Development Scheme | The local planning authority's time-scaled programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents that must be agreed with Government and reviewed every year. |
| **LEP** Local Enterprise Partnership | Local Enterprise Partnerships are locally-owned partnerships between local authorities and businesses. Local Enterprise Partnerships will play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs. |
| **LGS** Local Green Space(s) | The NPPF introduced a new concept of a Local Green Space designation (paragraph 76). It is a discretionary designation to be made by inclusion in a Neighbourhood Development Plan. |
| **LPA** Local Planning Authority | The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. |
| **LTP** Local Transport Plan | 5-year strategy prepared by each local authority for the development of local, integrated transport, supported by a programme of transport improvements. It is used to bid to Government for funding transport improvements. |
| **LWS** Local Wildlife Site | A site or area of land protected for its local wildlife and/or habitat value. |
| **LC** Local Centre | A range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. |
| **Masterplan** | A Masterplan is a framework which provides comprehensive guidance for a specific location where development and change is encouraged. |
| **Natura 2000 sites** | Wildlife sites of European importance. The Birds Directive requires the establishment of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds. The Habitats Directive similarly requires Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to be designated for species other than birds, and for habitats. Together, SPAs and SACs make up the Natura 2000 network of protected areas. |
| **NE** Natural England | Natural England is the non-departmental public body of the UK government responsible for ensuring that England's natural environment, including its land, flora and fauna, fresh water and marine environments, geology and soils, are protected and improved. It also has a responsibility to help people enjoy, understand and access the natural environment. |
| **NGO** Non Governmental Organisation | A not-for-profit organisation that is independent from state and international governmental organisations. |
| **NHB** New Homes Bonus | The New Homes Bonus commenced in April 2011, and will match fund the additional council tax raised for new homes and properties brought back into use, with an additional amount for affordable homes, for the following six years. |
| **NDP** Neighbourhood Development Plan | The NDP can set out policies and plans for that area, like a Development Plan Document but on a very local scale. |


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| **NP** Neighbourhood Plan | A planning document created by a Parish Council which sets out vision for the neighbourhood area and contains policies for the development and use of land in the area. |
| **NPPF** National Planning Policy Framework | Published in 2012, this sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. |
| **ONS** Office for National Statistics | The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority. It is charged with the collection and publication of statistics related to the economy, population and society of the United Kingdom at national and local levels. |
| **OS** Open Space | All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity. |
| **PCFMP** Parrett Catchment Flood Management Plan (2008) | The Catchment Flood Management Plan provides an overview of flood risk management in a particular catchment. |
| **PDR** Permitted Development Rights | Permitted Development Rights are a national grant of planning permission which allow certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application. Permitted development rights are subject to conditions and limitations to control impact and to protect local amenity. (Gov.UK) |
| **PPG** Planning Practice Guidance | A web-based resource which brings together English Planning Guidance linked to the National Planning Policy Framework |
| **PPS** Planning Policy Statement | These are issued by central Government and provide policies for local authorities on planning and the operation of the planning system. PPSs replace Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG). |
| **PCT** Primary Care Trust | An organisation legally established in the United Kingdom whose purpose is to develop health services for a particular community. |
| **QHLPS** Quantock Hills Landscape Partnership Scheme | A collection of projects to conserve and enhance the landscape and heritage of the Quantock Hills and Vale; within the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (AONB). |
| **ROW** Rights of Way | A Right of Way is a path that anyone has a legal right to use on foot. |
| **RS** Ramsar Sites | Wetland of international importance designated by the Government under the terms of the Ramsar Convention. |
| **RSN** Rural Services Network | Represents the interest of rural service providers and their rural communities in England. The newsletters provide latest news, comments and analysis. |
| **S106** Section 106 | Contributions secured by the Council to help provide or fund infrastructure items or services that will help make development acceptable in planning terms. |
| **SA** Sustainablility Appraisal | Tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors) and required in the Act to be undertaken for all local development documents. |


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| **SAC** Special Area of Conservation | A Special Area of Conservation recommended by the Government under the European Habitats Directive. An area considered important for its wildlife population and diversity. |
| **SBG** Somerset Bat Group | The Somerset Bat Group is a very active group making an important contribution to the conservation of bats across the county and nationally. Members conduct systematic recording and regular monitoring of a large number of roost sites across the county. Raising awareness about bats and aiding their conservation is an important part of the group's work. Trained and licensed volunteers visit home owners and give advice on bats in relation to conversions or home improvements. |
| **SAP** Standards Assessment Procedure | The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the UK Government's recommended method system for measuring the energy rating of residential dwellings. The first version was published in 1995, to be replaced by newer versions in 1998, 2001 and 2005. It calculates the typical annual energy costs for space and water heating, and, from 2005, lighting. The $CO_2$ emissions are also calculated. |
| **SCC** Somerset County Council | Somerset County Council – First tier authority |
| **SCI** Statement of Community Involvement | The SCI explains how the council will involve stakeholders and members of the public in devising planning policies and determining planning applications. |
| **SEA** Strategic Environmental Assessment | A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. |
| **SFRA** Strategic Flood Risk Assessment | An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered. |
| **SHLAA** Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment | The SHLAA is a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing. |
| **SINE** Somerset Intelligence Network | Somerset Intelligence Network: is a partnership linking different funding organisations to share data. |
| **SHNA** Strategic Housing Needs Assessment | An assessment of housing need and demand which informs the Borough's local development documents. |
| **SPA** Special Protection Area | Special Protection Area designated by the Government under the terms of the European Communities Council Directive 79/404/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds. A site of European importance for birds. |
| **SPD** Supplementary Planning Document | Provide supplementary information in respect of the policies in *Development Plan Documents*. They are not subject to an independent examination. |
| **SSSI** Sites of Special Scientific Interest | Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are the best examples of our natural heritage of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms. An SSSI is an area that has been notified as being of special interest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. |


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| **SUDS** Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems | Include a range of different drainage systems that are designed to promote the filtration and evaporation of water as close to the source as possible and to break down pollutants. SUDS are an alternative to drainage through pipes directly to a water course and will help enhance water quality and biodiversity, maintain groundwater levels and reduce the risk of flooding. |
| **SWT** Somerset Wildlife Trust | A non-profit organisation that protects wildlife in Somerset and preserves wild places. |
| **TA** Transport Assessment | A Transport Assessment is statutory document which accompanies a planning application, and is used by planning authorities and highways authorities (and if necessary Highways England) to determine whether the impact of a new development on the transport network is acceptable. |
| **TDBAP** Taunton Deane Biodiversity Action Plan | The Action Plan includes a number of actions that relate to the protection of threatened species and habitats and is designed to protect and restore biological systems, particularly in relation to development planning and policy. The BAP seeks to turn national biodiversity targets into action along with meeting council biodiversity conservation priorities. |
| **TDBC** Taunton Deane Borough Council | TDBC is the local planning authority. |
| **Teignbridge District Council** | TDC, Supplementary Planning Document on self-build policy www.teignbridge.gov.uk/selfbuild |
| **TUA** Taunton Urban Area | For the purposes of the Core Strategy, the definition of Taunton is taken to include the Taunton Urban Area as shown on the Proposals Map but also including the associated settlements of Bathpool, Bishops Hull, Monkton Heathfield, Norton Fitzwarren, Staplegrove, Staplehay and Trull. The TUA will provide the strategic focus for growth within the Borough. |
| **UE** Urban Extension | Involves the planned expansion of a city or town and can contribute to creating more sustainable patterns of development when located in the right place, with well-planned infrastructure including access to a range of facilities, and when developed at appropriate densities. |
| **Use class** | The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. For example, Class A1 are shops, Class B1a offices, Class B1c light industry and Class C3 dwelling houses |
| **Urban Initiatives** | Consultation company appointed briefly by TDBC looking at urban extensions especially Monkton Heathfield. |
| **Vernacular Architecture** | Vernacular Architecture is an architectural style that is designed based on local needs, availability of construction materials and reflecting local traditions. Originally, Vernacular Architecture did not use formally schooled architects, but relied on the design skills and tradition of local builders. |
| **WCA** Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 | The principle mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Part I gives protection to listed flora and fauna; Part II deals with the protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Part III deals with Public Rights of Way. |


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Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council

West Monkton Parish Council