



# WEMBDON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Referendum Version

May 2019



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**Wembdon Neighbourhood Development Plan has been assessed in relation to the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 in accordance with the transitional arrangements set out within paragraph 214 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.**

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# 1.0 Foreword

Wembdon Parish Council, in conjunction with a steering group made up of Wembdon residents and Parish Councillors, has developed this Neighbourhood Development Plan (the NDP).

The contents of the NDP are based on the views of local residents which were obtained through public meetings, postal and on-line surveys and one to one conversations.

The NDP is our shared vision of the future. It is a structured framework which the Parish Council can use to preserve and improve the Parish as a place in which to live and work over the coming years.

It adds detail to Sedgemoor District Council planning policy and, following a successful referendum, will be used alongside the Sedgemoor Local Plan to help determine planning applications in the Parish.

The NDP aims to preserve and enhance the character of Wembdon, including the landscape, trees and green spaces. It addresses residents' concerns about traffic speed, volume and parking. If there is new development in the village, we want it to be designed to look and feel like Wembdon, with appropriate density of housing, good green spaces and adequate car parking. We also want it to contain enough affordable housing for Wembdon people who need it. Full details of the NDP policies appear later in this document, together with residents' views on how we could improve our community.

Once adopted the NDP will also enable the Parish Council to claim a larger percentage of any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money available to Sedgemoor District Council which it can then use on projects to benefit the community.

We are very grateful to all of the residents who have taken time and trouble to tell us how they want our Parish to be in the future. The Parish Council will seek to deliver this shared vision to the best of its abilities and to make Wembdon a thriving, sustainable, friendly and safe place for us to live in.

**Peter Reed, Chairman, Wembdon Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Councillor Mike Solomon, Chairman, Wembdon Parish Council**

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## 2.0 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The Wembdon Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a community-led framework that will guide and influence future development in the Parish for the period 2018 – 2032, with the end date reflecting the wider Sedgemoor Local Plan Review plan period.
- 2.1.2 The NDP is concerned with matters related to future development in the NDP Area, the extent of which is explained in Section 3. Its objectives and policies cannot be used to prevent development taking place. It is a tool that will help to ensure that development is shaped and directed to take into account the shared vision of the community.
- 2.1.3 The Wembdon NDP forms part of the statutory planning policy framework for the area and sits alongside the Sedgemoor Local Plan 2011-2032 prepared and adopted by the Local Planning Authority in February 2019. Decisions on planning applications will be made in accordance with the Local Plan and the Wembdon NDP, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.1.4 The following documents have been prepared in connection with this NDP:
- Basic Conditions Statement including an Environmental Report – provides an explanation of how the NDP meets the minimum legal requirements as set out paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) in relation to planning, the historic environment, EU obligations and sustainable development.
  - Consultation Statement – details the people and bodies consulted, the methods of consultation used during the preparation of this NDP, the main issues arising and how these issues have been considered and addressed within the NDP.
  - Parking Technical Note – prepared as part of the evidence base in connection with NDP Policy WB3
  - Locally Important Viewpoints Assessment – prepared as part of the evidence base in connection with NDP Policy WB2
- 2.1.5 The formal process for the designation of a NDP Area and preparation and adoption of a NDP is set out in full within the Consultation Statement.

### 2.2 Structure of the NDP

- 2.2.1 The NDP is structured as follows:

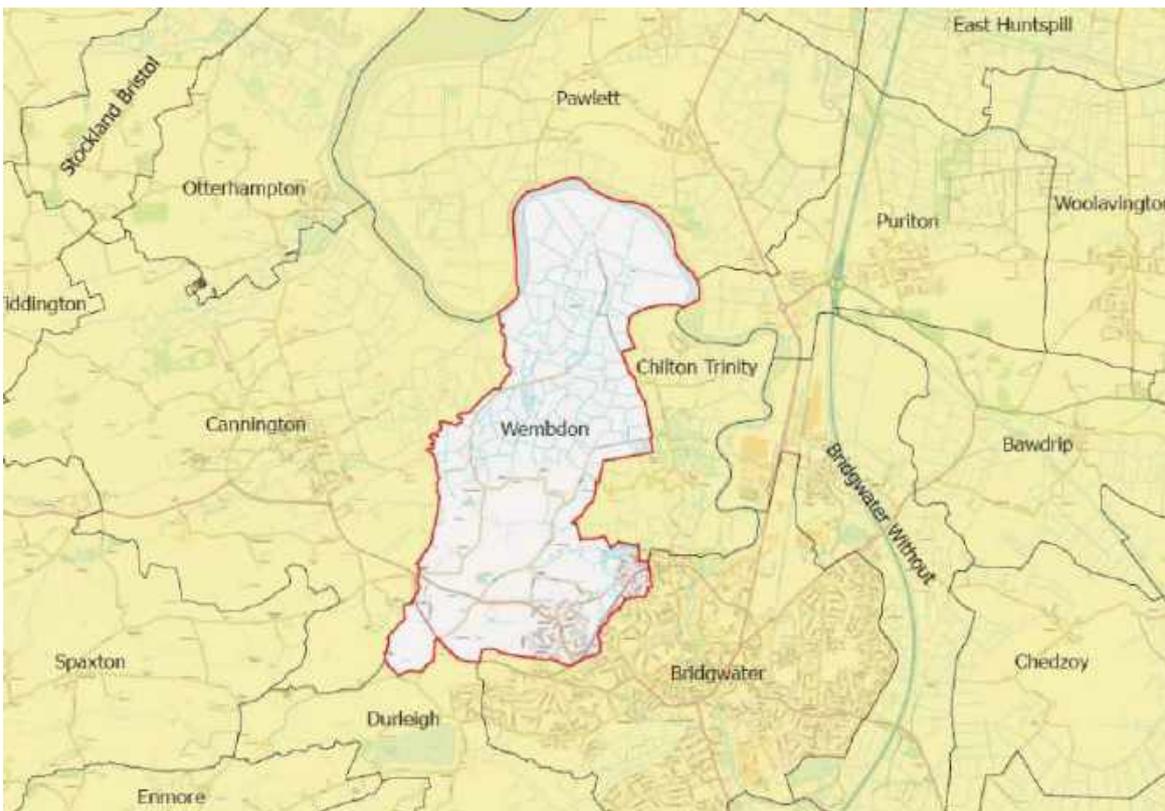
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- Section 3 provides a profile of the NDP area, identifying key features and characteristics of the area and also provides context for the NDP policies contained in Section 6.
  - Section 4 explains the wider national planning policies and context in relation to Sedgemoor's local planning policies, which includes proposals for a strategic residential-led allocation at Cokerhurst Farm which will be principally located in the NDP Area.
  - Section 5 sets out a long-term vision and objectives for the NDP.
  - Section 6 sets out the proposed NDP planning policies, the approach taken and wider justification for their inclusion.
  - Section 7 provides review mechanisms and outlines potential next steps to achieve the NDP vision and wider priorities for Wembdon

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## 3.0 A Snapshot of Wembdon

### 3.1 Location and Character

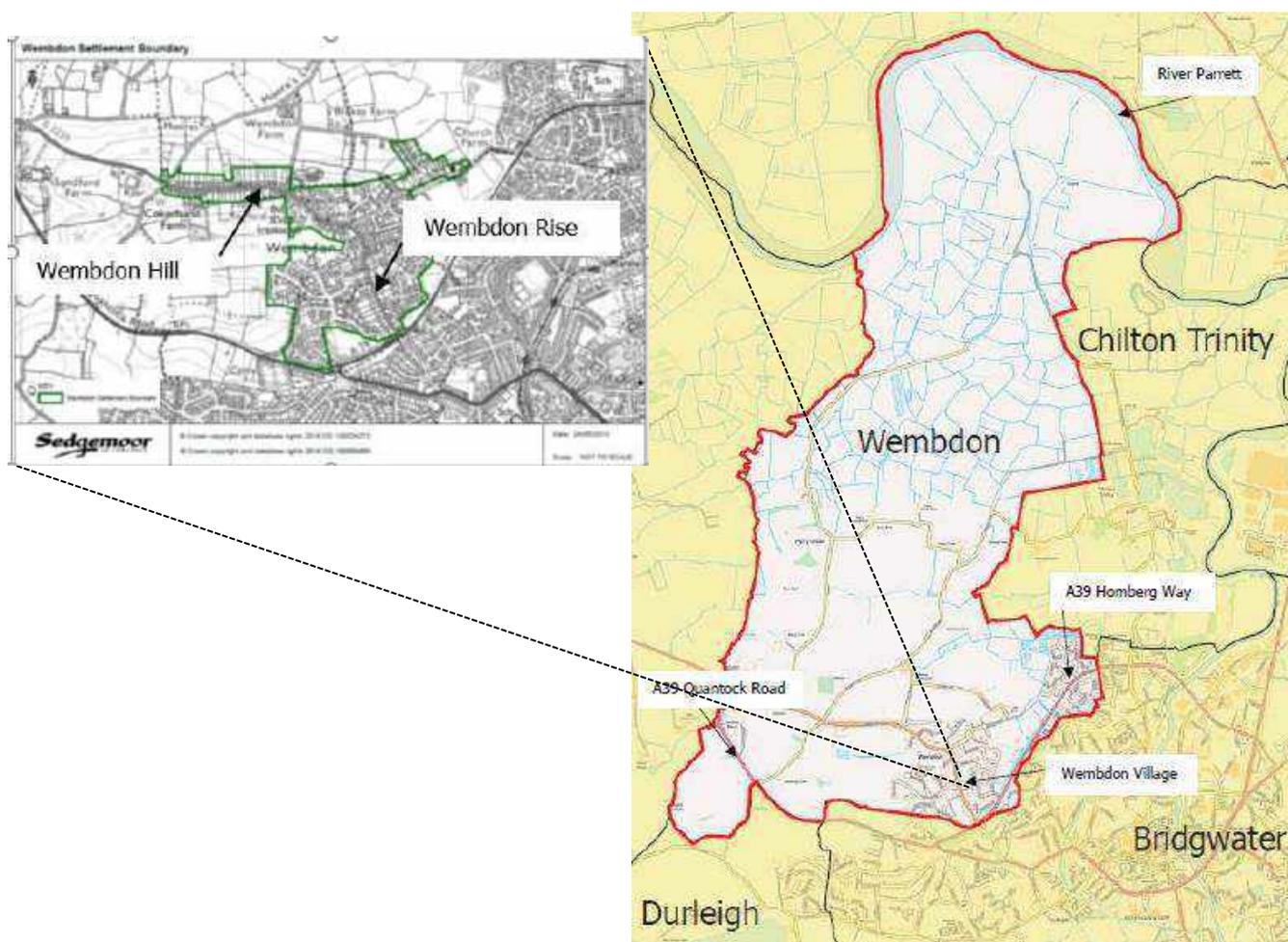
- 3.1.1 The extent of the NDP Area reflects the Parish of Wembdon. The ancient Parish is in Somerset, in the South West of England, one mile to the north west of Bridgwater. Wembdon Parish is located in the District of Sedgemoor, at the heart of Somerset with the A39 running through the south east and south west of the NDP Area along Wembdon Road, Quantock Road and Homberg Way.
- 3.1.2 The NDP Area includes Wembdon Village (defined on the enlarged plan at Figure 2) which is where the majority of residents live, community facilities are located, and events happen. More widely, the NDP area also comprises the scattered farmsteads of Perry Green in the north, Greenway Farm in the south and Sandford to the west, together with modern developments located directly off the A39 at Oak Apple Drive, Bonita Drive, Trinity Way, Reedmoor Gardens and Meadowlands. The NDP Area is outlined in red in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: The NDP Area**

- 3.1.3 The A39 provides the strategic road network from Bridgwater to Minehead and the villages to the west. Wembdon forms a rural gateway as people leave the urban town of Bridgwater and travel west to the Quantock Hills and the rural villages beyond.

- 3.1.4 Most people travelling within the NDP area will gain access from Wembdon Hill or Wembdon Rise from the A39 where the character of the surroundings changes quickly upon leaving the strategic route network and entering Wembdon village (defined edged in green on the enlarged plan at Figure 2 below).
- 3.1.5 Entering Wembdon Rise, visitors are met with set-back detached properties, an abundance of trees and greenery, and Red Sandstone boundary walls, which is a local material used throughout the village and surrounding area.
- 3.1.6 Wembdon Rise meets Wembdon Hill at the junction with Church Road and then climbs steeply to the top of Wembdon Ridge, where more rural lanes run northwards down to Perry Green. At the top of the ridge, particularly from the allotments, spectacular views of the countryside beyond are enjoyed at all times of the day and year.
- 3.1.7 North of Wembdon Ridge, vehicle access is more limited as the land plateaus out to the lowland “levels” landscape that is associated with the River Parrett which runs along the northern boundary of the NDP area. This flat, “levels” topography is typical to this part of Somerset. Within these “levels” can be found the scattered farmsteads at Perry Green.



**Figure 2: Wembdon Village**

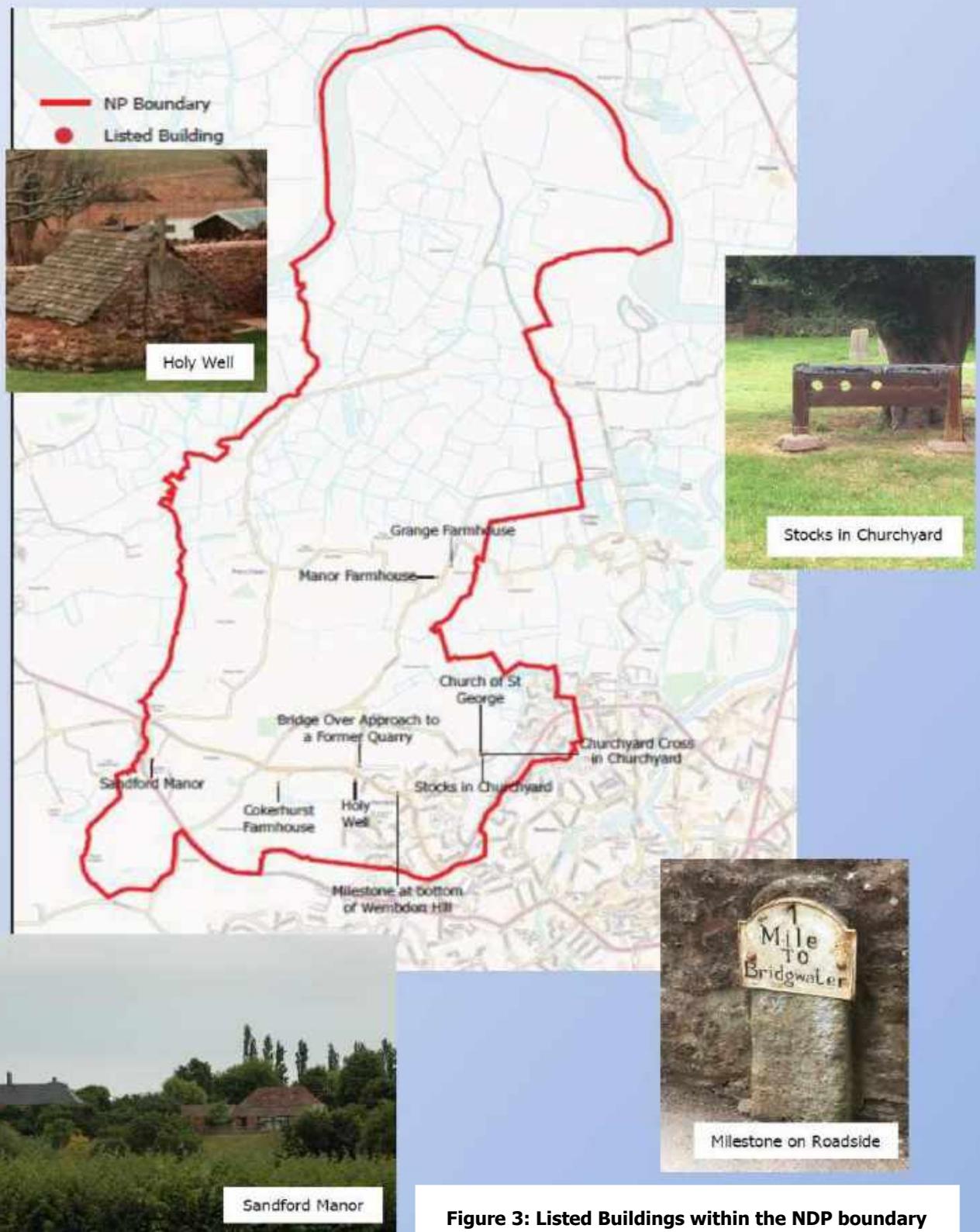
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## 3.2 History

- 3.2.1 The name Wembdon is derived from "The Hill of the Hunter" and the area was originally on the "Pilgrims Route", the main road from the town to Minehead and beyond. Wembdon Village (edged in green on the enlarged plan at Figure 2) extends across the Somerset wetlands to the Wembdon Ridge from which there are views across the moors to the Bristol Channel and westwards to the Quantock Hills.
- 3.2.2 Drainage of the lowland areas was commenced in Roman times to create farmland, and the upper part of the village is famous for its quarrying. Evidence of Roman settlements has been found to the north of the village, in a number of locations across Perry Moor. The triangular area bounded by Wembdon Hill, Moore's Lane and Hollow Lane may have been a Bronze Age defensive site. In 1984 an early medieval burial site (7th Century) was discovered during works on Wembdon Hill. Wembdon was listed in the Domesday Book of 1086 as having "5 villagers and 6 smallholders with four ploughs".
- 3.2.3 The village was small (population 244 in the 1801 census) with much of the area laid to orchards until the early 19th Century when building of houses along Wembdon Rise started. Indeed, up until as late as the latter half of the 20th century, Wembdon comprised mainly farmsteads and residential properties fronting Wembdon Rise, Wembdon Hill and Church Road up to St George's Church.
- 3.2.4 In 1922 the village was by-passed with the construction of the Quantock Road (A39) within the southwestern portion of the NDP Area. Small terraces of housing can be seen at Wares Lane and Orchard Lane. Later, more substantial housing estates at Inwood Road and off Church Road have sprung up from the main established routes.
- 3.2.5 In the early 2000's the local area saw huge change with the construction of the Bridgwater Northern Distributor Road (NDR) which lies partly within the NDP Area. It links the A38 to the A39 and was then later designated as part of the A39. The construction of the NDR enabled around 900 homes to be built on the north western side of Bridgwater, some of which are included within the NDP Area at Oak Apple Drive, Bonita Drive, Trinity Way, Reedmoor Gardens and Meadowlands.

## 3.3 Wembdon Today

- 3.3.1 Census 2011 data recorded 3,613 usual residents for the Parish of Wembdon within a total 1,472 households. Despite the strategic development ongoing within the west of Bridgwater, part of which is included within the NDP Area, Wembdon has retained its green and rural character. This is recognised within Sedgemoor's adopted Local Plan within which Wembdon is designated as a smaller, rural "Tier 3" settlement and this is discussed in more detail within Section 4.



3.3.2 Wembdon Village (edged in green on the enlarged plan at Figure 2) contains a number of local facilities including a post office and shop, a country pub “The Cottage Inn”, St George’s Church, a garage and

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MOT centre, allotments, Village Hall and Green, a pre-school, and a primary school. There are several Bed and Breakfasts and holiday lets within the NDP Area more widely. A secondary school is situated just outside of the NDP boundary. A swimming pool, gym and sports complex are also situated alongside the village boundary with Chilton Trinity just over a mile from the village centre. There are 10 Listed Buildings (some being structures rather than buildings) within the NDP Area as shown on Figure 3.

- 3.3.3 Whilst continuing its village role and function separate to the town of Bridgwater, Wembdon has embraced new communities, particularly within new development along the NDR which includes properties within the Parish. This is most notably demonstrated through the delivery of Wembdon's Village Hall which commenced construction in October 2014 and officially opened in July 2017. The Village Hall was first mooted through the Wembdon Parish Plan<sup>1</sup> on land donated by Wembdon Parish Council and Notaro Homes. Its location at the heart of the community provides an important link between the historic core of the village around St George's Church, and the modern NDR development to the east. New and improved footpaths have been put in place between Wembdon Rise and the Village Hall as part of a comprehensive community strategy to benefit all who live in the Parish.
- 3.3.4 Wembdon Village Hall provides a thriving focal point for the whole Parish and is busy inside and out on the adjacent Green at all times of the year. Work is still continuing to deliver facilities on the first storey of the building, specifically space for a youth centre which has been identified as needed through consultation for this NDP.



**Figure 4: Wembdon Village Hall opened in July 2017 and is very popular with local residents**

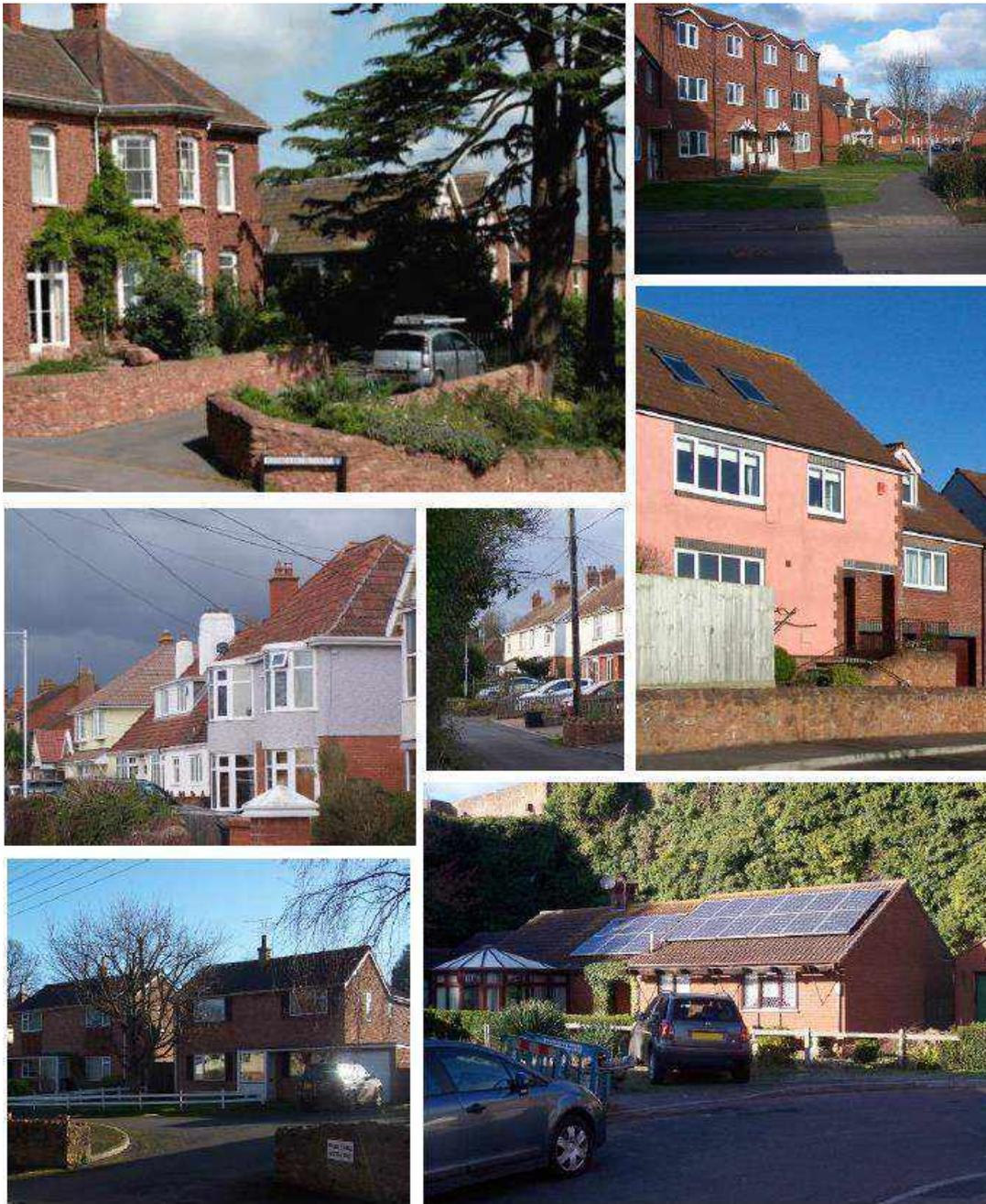
- 3.3.5 According to 2011 Census data, around 85% of the residents in Wembdon are 65 years and under, with just over 20% being under 16 years old. The community is therefore very much representative of all ages and has a wide variety of needs and interests across many generations.

<sup>1</sup>The Wembdon Parish Plan was published by the Parish Council in 2008 and provides a framework of local priorities for residents, planners, developers, builders and other public bodies for new development.

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- 3.3.6 Further to the north of the NDP Area, agricultural uses continue to prevail. However, diversification is occurring with a caravan park at Manor Farm, Moorhen Equestrian Centre, Wembdon Farm Bed and Breakfast, and holiday lettings being taken at Model Farm.
- 3.3.7 Further afield, approximately 9 miles west of the NDP Area, a Development Consent Order (DCO) was granted in March 2013 to build two new nuclear reactors at Hinkley Point C in West Somerset. Hinkley Point A and B already operate at the site, with Hinkley A in the process of being decommissioned. The new reactors would be the first in a new generation of nuclear power stations in the UK providing low-carbon electricity for around six million homes and creating over 25,000 new employment opportunities. This is discussed in more detail within Section 4.
- 3.3.8 More locally, in February 2018, planning permission was granted at Greenway Garage on Quantock Road for the redevelopment of the existing petrol filling station, including a sales building, forecourt, canopy and car wash and installation of new underground fuel tanks. This development has now commenced on site and it is expected to include a convenience store. The effects and opportunities associated with this proposal alongside the planned growth within the Cokerhurst Farm urban extension – discussed in more detail within Chapter 4 - will need to be taken into consideration within any NDP policies and strategies.

## **3.4 Housing**

- 3.4.1 The residential styles in Wembdon reflect its growth over the last few centuries with examples of red sandstone, detached properties set back from the road, low density 1960's bungalows, modern brick-built cul-de-sacs and everything in between. This is shown at Figure 5 below.



**Figure 5: There are a huge variety of architectural styles in the NDP Area reflecting different periods of growth**

3.4.2 Despite the breadth of architectural styles, there are key aspects that remain broadly consistent across the NDP Area in terms of design which have been highlighted as important to the community through consultation. These include: properties set back from the roadside with soft rather than hard landscaping, off-street parking and the use of local materials including red sandstone within external detailing. These features have a positive impact in determining Wembdon’s character and it is important that this is reflected within any future development.

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3.4.3 A Housing Needs Survey (HNS) carried out by Sedgemoor District Council in Spring 2018 indicated that there is a growing need for affordable homes for local people who would like to stay in Wembdon but do not have the financial means to do so. The HNS provides further information about this and is submitted with this NDP.

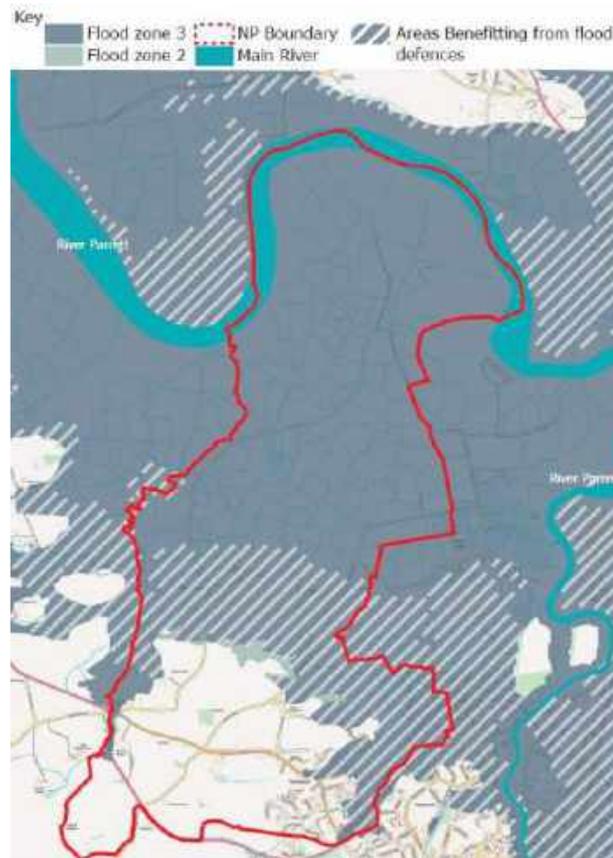
3.4.4 Broadly, the HNS identified a need for 30 affordable homes with a fairly even split between affordable rent and affordable home ownership as a preferred option for potential occupiers. There is no requirement to provide local affordable housing within the strategic residential allocation at Cokerhurst Farm because this development is anticipated to meet a wider, strategic housing need across the District and for Bridgwater in particular.

3.4.5 The provision of affordable housing for local people remains an important aspiration for the Parish. Whilst no policy is able to be included within the NDP at this stage, the following activities are being promoted by the NDP Steering Group:

- Agreement of a local lettings priority clause(s) to be included within a legal agreement to be attached in the event that planning permission is granted at Cokerhurst Farm.
- Monitoring of wider NDPs and case law in relation to the ability of a local lettings NP policy to be considered to be a land use issue, and therefore able to be included within any future NDP update.

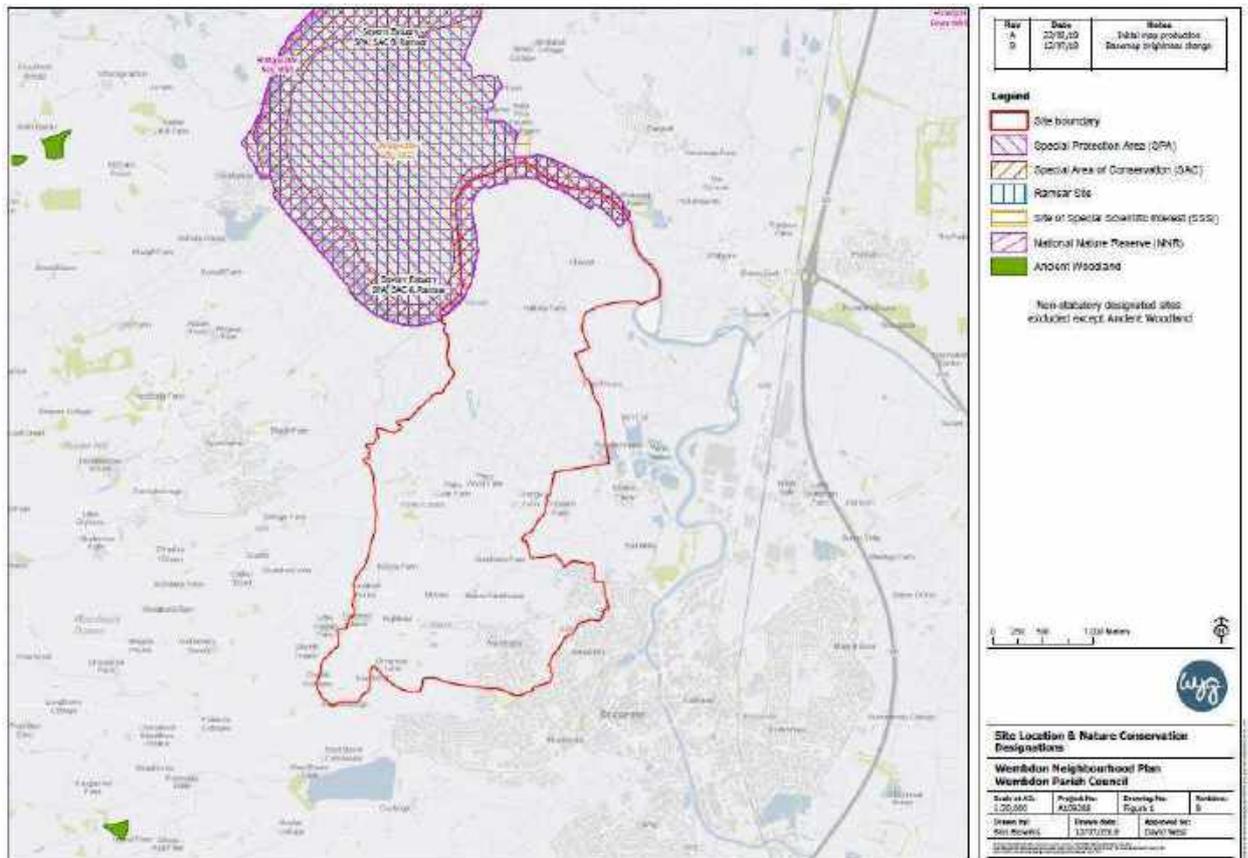
## **3.5 Environment and Biodiversity**

3.5.1 The majority of the NDP Area is located within Flood Zone 3, as can be seen in Figure 6 below. The land to the north forms part of the high risk tidal and fluvial floodplain of the River Parrett, which follows the northern edge of the NDP Area.



**Figure 6: Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning**

- 3.5.2 Despite the widespread nature of the Parrett floodplain with its associated hydrological network of connecting tributaries, development has taken place within the high-risk area within Bridgwater because of its role as the District's principal town where growth is concentrated. This is not the case for land to the north of Wembdon village and this is due in part to its important role in providing floodplain storage. This approach also recognises Wembdon's role as a rural settlement and reflects the importance of vistas across to the Quantock Hills and levels and moors.
- 3.5.3 The long-term strategy for management of flood risk for Bridgwater includes a tidal flood barrier upstream (east) of the NDP Area. This scheme will include works to the downstream banks of the river within the NDP Area over the next decade to improve storage of flood flows when the barrier is shut to prevent tidal flows coming inland.
- 3.5.4 The River Parrett also provides internationally designated ecological habitat and this is shown on Figure 7 below. Only a small part of the Special Protection Area/National Nature Reserve lies within the NDP area.



**Figure 7: Statutory ecological designations**

- 3.5.5 Despite the presence of the River Parrett and the rural nature of the NDP Area, no noteworthy ecological records can be found from recent planning application submissions between January 2016-June 2018, and therefore none have been able to be shown on Figure 7 above.
- 3.5.6 There is potential for protected species to be present on Cokerhurst Farm and this has been identified through Environmental Impact Assessment scoping carried out on behalf of the Developer Consortium. Badgers are also known to be present in other parts of the NDP Area although their exact location cannot be disclosed in the public domain, to retain their protection.

## 3.6 Transport

- 3.6.1 The NDP Area is rural, however it is located adjacent to the District's principal town Bridgwater to the east. It is also alongside the route of the A39 to the south which links the M5 motorway with key destinations including the Quantock Hills and West Somerset coastline. The A39 is under pressure to support strategic growth within Sedgemoor's Development Plan and nationally significant infrastructure at Hinkley and further detail about this planned development is provided at subsection 4.5.

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3.6.2 The level of influence the NDP and its policies is able to have on the effects of, and improvements associated with, new development and the A39 is limited. This is because only minor, broken stretches of the A39 are within the NDP Area. The main transport issue that will need to be considered through the NDP process is the potential indirect effect of pressure on the surrounding network serving the A39. In particular, Wembdon Rise and Wembdon Hill could be used as a rat run to avoid traffic on the A39, and both of these roads are located within the NDP Area.

### **3.7 Wembdon in the Future**

3.7.1 Future strategic growth priorities both nationally and at a District level will inevitably impact upon the NDP Area. This NDP seeks to ensure that new development contributes positively to the character of the NDP Area and mitigates impacts appropriately. These growth priorities include both the residential allocation at Cokerhurst Farm and the nuclear development at Hinkley Point C, which are explained in more detail at subsections 4.4 and 4.5 respectively. The likelihood is that the two will combine in terms of construction and operational outputs at the same time. The timing for the implementation of this NDP to identify local priorities and policies is therefore critical.

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## 4.0 Planning Policy Context

### 4.1 Neighbourhood Planning

- 4.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) subsequently confirms within paragraph 2, and specifically footnote 2, that the Development Plan should be considered to be both the Local Plan and the relevant Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.1.2 For the NDP Area, the Development Plan comprises the adopted Sedgemoor Local Plan (2011-2032). Once made, Wembdon NDP will form part of this adopted Development Plan and carry weight when determining future planning applications.
- 4.1.3 As set out within NPPF 2019 paragraph 30, once a NDP has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan where they are in conflict unless they are superseded by policies in a subsequently adopted Local Plan. Paragraph 14 includes a clear direction for determining planning applications where the presumption of sustainable development is triggered and a recently adopted NDP is in force, which gives significant weight to the harm that is likely to occur should a planning application be granted in conflict with NDP policies. The relationship between local plans and NDPs, and the specific role of NDPS within plan making is explained in more detail at Section 4.2 below.
- 4.1.4 Under Section 59(A) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) (as amended), the planning authority must pass a proportion of CIL receipts to the Parish Council within which any chargeable development is situated (known as relevant receipts). The proportion increases from 15% of relevant CIL receipts to 25% where a NDP has been adopted.

### 4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.2.1 In July 2018, the Government published the NPPF which replaced the previous NPPF published in 2012 (referred to as NPPF 2012). A further update to the NPPF 2018 was published in February 2019 (referred to in this NDP as NPPF 2019).
- 4.2.2 Whilst many of the provisions of NPPF 2019 came into force on the date that it was published, there are transitional arrangements set out within paragraph 214 which relate to NDPs. Specifically, where a NDP is submitted to the planning authority under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) on or before 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019, the policies in the previous Framework (i.e. NPPF 2012) will apply.

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- 4.2.3 Taking into account the above, the conformity of policies within this NDP with local strategic policies contained within Sedgemoor’s Development Plan has been assessed against NPPF 2012 as required by NPPF 2019 paragraph 214. This assessment has been carried out within the supporting text for each NDP policy and within the Basic Conditions Statement submitted with this NDP.
- 4.2.4 Notwithstanding the transitional arrangements for NDPs which in this case requires assessment against the NPPF 2012 policies, there are provisions within NPPF 2019 that are very much relevant to the role and consideration of the NDP when it is made.
- 4.2.5 Paragraph 13 of the NPPF 2019 sets out the role of the NDP which should be considered in the context of the wider objectives to deliver sustainable development. Paragraph 13 states that NDPs should:
- “...support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.”*
- 4.2.6 Section 3 of the NPPF 2019 sets out in detail the plan making process and places emphasis on the need to ensure that the planning system is genuinely plan-led. Local plans are prepared by the planning authority, or in some cases more than one planning authority, and must contain strategic policies which, under NPPF 2018 paragraph 21, should be limited to those policies necessary to address the strategic priorities of the area and any cross boundary issues.
- 4.2.7 Strategic policies are defined within NPPF 2019 paragraph 20 which states that they should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for housing, infrastructure, community facilities and conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment.
- 4.2.8 Local plans can also include non-strategic policies although NPPF 2018 paragraph 21 requires them to be explicit about which policies are strategic and which are non-strategic because this has a material impact on both the plan-making and decision making processes, including for NDPs.
- 4.2.9 NPPF 2019 paragraph 21 goes on to explain that strategic policies should not extend to detailed matters that are more appropriately dealt with through NDPs or other non-strategic policies.
- 4.2.10 Non-strategic policies, which by virtue of paragraph 21 include those contained within a NDP, are defined within paragraphs 28 and 29 of the NPPF 2019 as follows:
- “28. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and communities facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.”*

*29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies."*

### 4.3 Sedgemoor’s Development Plan

- 4.3.1 The Wembdon NDP Area falls within the jurisdiction of Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) and is therefore covered by planning policies contained within its statutory Development Plan which is the Sedgemoor Local Plan (2011-2032), adopted in February 2019.
- 4.3.2 Sedgemoor Local Plan (SLP) provides a vision for the District up until 2032 and policies which set out a spatial strategy along with housing and employment allocations, infrastructure provision and development management policies. SLP now replaces the previous Sedgemoor Core Strategy as SDC’s Development Plan having been adopted.
- 4.3.3 As per the transitional arrangements within NPPF 2019 paragraph 214, because the SLP was submitted for independent examination prior to 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019, it has been examined under the provisions of the previous NPPF 2012. This means that there is no requirement for the SLP to be explicit about which of its policies are strategic or non-strategic, although clarification has been provided within Sedgemoor’s Local Plan Strategic Policies Guidance published in March 2019.
- 4.3.4 Of particular reference to this NDP is SLP Policy B2, which allocates Land at West Bridgwater for residential development. A large proportion of this residential allocation lies within the NDP Area at Cokerhurst Farm, to the west of Wembdon Village.
- 4.3.5 The SLP policies listed within Figure 8 below are relevant to Wembdon’s NP:

Policy S1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	Policy D12: Residential Annexes
Policy S2: Spatial Strategy for Sedgemoor	Policy D13: Sustainable Transport and Movement
Policy S3: Infrastructure Delivery	Policy D14: Managing the Transport Impacts of Development
Policy S4: Sustainable Development Principles	Policy D15: Economic Prosperity
Policy S5: Mitigating the Causes and Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change	Policy D16: Safeguarding Existing Employment Land and Buildings
Policy T3a: Housing – Tier 3 Settlements	Policy D17: Tourism
Policy B2: Land at West Bridgwater	Policy D19: Landscape
Policy B7: Employment	Policy D20: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
	Policy D21: Ecological Networks

<p>Policy B14: Education</p> <p>Policy B15: Flood Defence</p> <p>Policy D1: Flood Risk and Surface Water Management</p> <p>Policy D2: Promoting High Quality and Inclusive Design</p> <p>Policy D3: Sustainability and Energy in Development</p> <p>Policy D4: Renewable or Low Carbon Energy and Heat Generation projects</p> <p>Policy D5: Housing Mix</p> <p>Policy D6: Affordable Housing</p> <p>Policy D9: Self-build and Custom Build Homes</p> <p>Policy D10: Rural Workers Dwellings</p> <p>Policy D11: Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside</p>	<p>Policy D22: Trees and Woodland</p> <p>Policy D24: Pollution Impacts of Development</p> <p>Policy D25: Protecting Residential Amenity</p> <p>Policy D26: Historic Environment</p> <p>Policy D27: Education Provision</p> <p>Policy D28: Health and Social Care</p> <p>Policy D29: Protection and Enhancement of Existing Green Infrastructure Resources</p> <p>Policy D30: Green Infrastructure Requirements in New Developments</p> <p>Policy D31: Countryside Around Settlements</p> <p>Policy D33: Protection of Existing Public Recreational Outdoor Space</p> <p>Policy D34: Outdoor Public Recreational Space and New Residential Areas</p> <p>Policy D35: Local Services</p>
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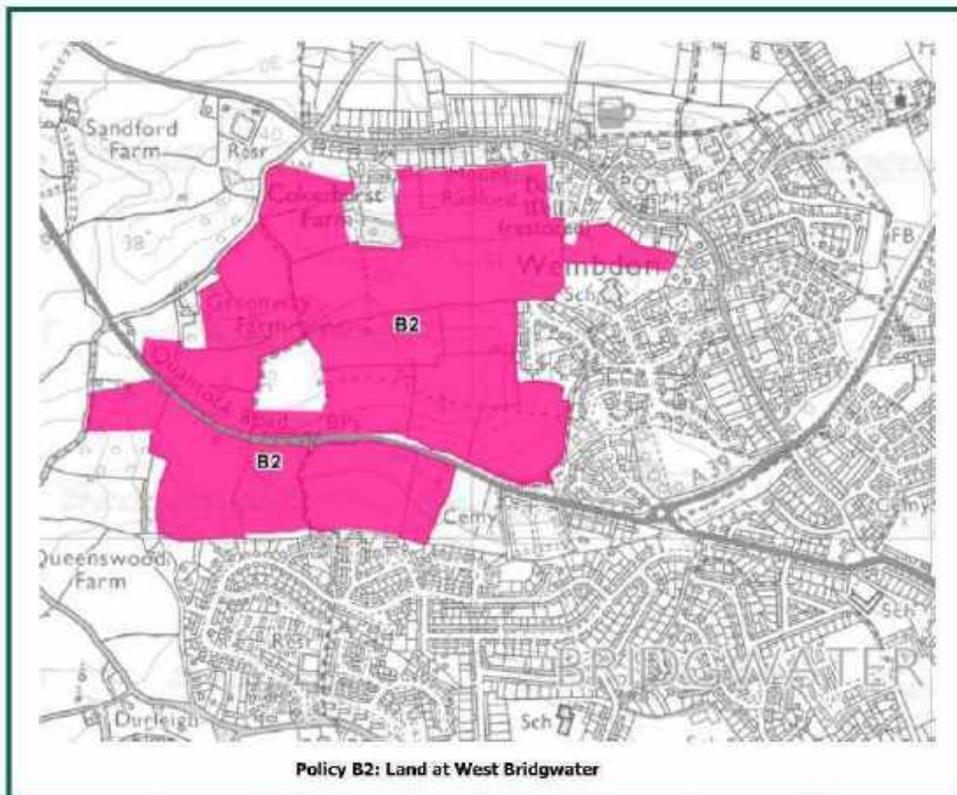
**Figure 8: Adopted Sedgemoor Local Plan Policies relevant to this NDP**

4.3.6 Wembdon is designated as a Tier 3 Settlement within the SLP in recognition of its role as a smaller more rural settlement with adequate but basic levels of key local services and facilities necessary to meet the needs of the community, as listed in paragraph 3.3.2.

4.3.7 The SLP’s focus for Tier 3 Settlements is very much on fulfilling any identified local housing need. However, due to the proximity of Bridgwater to Wembdon, a residential allocation of around 1200 dwellings and associated infrastructure to the west of Bridgwater is included within the SLP to deliver some of the strategic growth required for the District as a whole for the SLP plan period. Of this 1200, 900 dwellings will be within the NDP Area, mainly on land known as Cokerhurst Farm.

## **4.4 Residential Allocation at Cokerhurst Farm**

4.4.1 The adopted SLP includes Policy B2 which allocates land for residential development. The full text of Policy B2 and the associated policies map is included at Figure 9 overleaf:



Land at west Bridgwater (as defined on the Policies Map) is allocated for residential development. Development will provide (unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority):

- About 1,200 new homes of a mixed size and type appropriate to the area;
- Affordable housing in accordance with the Council's requirements;
- A new primary school and appropriate access to the Queenswood Farm school allocation site;
- A neighbourhood centre with appropriate facilities such as a convenience store, and community uses that might include health care if need is demonstrated in accordance with Policy D28: Health;
- Public open space, and formal and informal recreation;
- Comprehensive green infrastructure;
- Extensive structural landscaping on the western boundaries.

Development will be built in accordance with an approved development and design principles document including an infrastructure delivery plan and master plan.

The main access will be from a new roundabout or signalised junction on the A39 Quantock Road with secondary access also from Quantock Road. Potential bus only access to Inwood Road will be considered. All access points will need to be agreed to the satisfaction of Somerset County Council Highways Authority.

The access arrangements and/or internal road layout for the southern site will facilitate access to Queenswood Farm, allocated for education purposes.

A Transport Impact Assessment in accordance with Policy D14 will need to fully take into consideration the temporary Hinkley Point C construction traffic on the A39 and include an appropriate mitigation strategy where necessary.

A number of off-site highway works including junction improvements will be required to mitigate the impact of development. The full extent of works will be agreed with Somerset County Council Highways Authority.

The development will be expected to integrate with existing developments and the wider area through provision of public footpaths and cycle ways. This will be through a combination of new provision and enhancement of existing rights of way.

A Heritage Statement will need to be submitted to fully understand the impacts on identified designated Heritage Assets and development will need to sustain and enhance their setting, including through landscaped buffers as appropriate.

Development proposals that would compromise the delivery of an identified strategic growth location will not be supported.

**Figure 9: Policy wording (supporting text not included) for Cokerhurst Farm**

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- 4.4.2 Whilst not all of the residential allocation is located in the NDP Area, there will be a significant impact on Wembdon and its surrounding settlements in terms of character, transport and environment. The NDP process is a critical part of the work required, with SDC and the Developer Consortium delivering the residential allocation, to ensure that any major development proposals have a positive effect on the NDP area.
- 4.4.3 Vehicular access to the proposed development is to be located off the A39 along the site's southern boundary and no further primary vehicle routes are proposed at Wembdon Hill or Inwood Road. A connection will be made between the new dwellings and Inwood Road, but this will be limited to pedestrian, cycle and bus services only.

## 4.5 Cumulative Growth Priorities

- 4.5.1 Construction works associated with the DCO granted to build two new nuclear reactors at Hinkley Point C in West Somerset commenced in 2017. The new reactors are anticipated to become operational between 2025 and 2027.
- 4.5.2 Hinkley Point itself is located around 9 miles from the NDP Area and is within the jurisdiction of a different planning authority, Somerset West and Taunton Council (formerly West Somerset Council before merging with Taunton Deane Borough Council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019). Nonetheless, a lot of the associated development consented within the DCO is located in Sedgemoor District including the Cannington Bypass on the A39 to the west of the NDP Area, a wharf at Combwich to the north, and worker accommodation sites across the District, but principally focused in Bridgwater.
- 4.5.3 The impacts of construction works are already being felt and this is true of the NDP Area due to its location between Bridgwater and Hinkley along the A39. The need for accommodation for construction workers is increasing, and this has seen a rise in dwellings being converted to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Most smaller scale changes, i.e. those of 6 people or fewer, can be carried out without planning permission. A larger scheme at the former Chatham House Nursing Home on Wembdon Rise was granted permission in February 2018. Currently the proportion of properties that have no usual residents is low at 2.9% (Census 2011). A surge in rented and/or HMO schemes has the potential to create both negative and positive effects for the NDP Area in terms of housing needs, travel patterns and infrastructure requirements to support this growth.
- 4.5.4 The A39 has seen major improvements to the west of the NDP with a bypass of Cannington Village completed by the operators EDF Energy in 2016. A new roundabout has also been delivered at Sandford Corner, at the western extremity of the NDP area, to improve highway safety.
- 4.5.5 However, some local traffic continues to travel through Cannington itself because the original route is 1 mile shorter than the bypass. A comparable situation exists in Wembdon where increased traffic and delays along the A39 at peak times results in cars and commercial traffic travelling at speed from the

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Sandford Corner roundabout along Wembdon Hill and Wembdon Rise to join back on to the A39 creating a “rat-run”.

- 4.5.6 Alongside the Hinkley proposals, the residential allocation at Cokerhurst Farm is intended to be delivered to meet the housing need across the plan period. The Developer Consortium has submitted a hybrid application (part full, part outline) for the land within the NDP Area, although construction is not expected before 2020.
- 4.5.7 Impacts on traffic, both in terms of speed and volume, as a result of new development are therefore critical for the NDP Area and its associated policies. The NDP group will aim to ensure that policies reflect the specific local needs of Wembdon to protect its rural character and promote sustainable travel patterns including ensuring appropriate car parking and mitigation measures are secured where relevant.

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## 5.0 Vision and Objectives

### 5.1 Vision

5.1.1 The vision for Wembdon's NDP has been established through extensive consultation with key stakeholders and the public and is set out below:



***By 2032, Wembdon will have reinforced its long-standing role as a green gateway to the countryside by successfully integrating all new communities and development through high quality design and place-making. Green spaces and rural character will be safeguarded and the existing friendly community spirit will be enhanced through the provision of new and improved facilities which complement each other to deliver a comprehensive community strategy that is inclusive for all.***

### 5.2 Objectives

5.2.1 In order to deliver the long-term vision for the NDP Area, the following over-arching objectives have been identified for the NDP:

1. Ensure that new development reflects and contributes positively to the rural and green character of Wembdon

- 
2. Support the continued delivery of a comprehensive, forward-looking community strategy with facilities that are complementary to each other and provide access for all
  3. Promote cohesion and integration of new communities within the NDP Area
  4. Secure funding for local infrastructure to support the delivery of growth
  5. Encourage a reduction in traffic speeds, volumes and congestion to improve highway safety and in turn promote sustainable, appropriate travel patterns which reflect the local context
  6. Deliver affordable and other types of housing principally for local people

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## 6.0 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

### 6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section of the NDP sets out the local policies that apply to all new development proposals in the NDP Area. These policies will form part of the statutory development plan and as such will be a material consideration within the determination of planning applications.

### 6.2 Design

6.2.1 The overall character of Wembdon as a rural village is really important to the community. The extent of open countryside and location at the edge of the Quantock Foothills determines this role. However it is also strongly reinforced by the built form within the NDP Area and particularly Wembdon Village (shown edged in green on the enlarged plan at Figure 2) where properties are generally set back from the road with soft landscaping and space for parking.

6.2.2 A key objective for this NDP is to ensure that new development reflects the existing character found in Wembdon and Design Policy WB1 seeks to achieve this.

#### **Policy WB1: Design**

**New developments will need to demonstrate how any new proposed building(s) will contribute positively to the character of the existing built form and the atmosphere of the village, through use of the following where applicable:**

- 1. Ensure a mixed palette of locally distinctive external materials including where appropriate the use of locally sourced red sandstone (or suitable equivalent) within key views and frontages;**
- 2. Encourage soft, green landscaping in preference to concrete and tarmac where practicable;**
- 3. Appropriate densities to reflect the surrounding built form, setting and context;**
- 4. New and additional tree planting of appropriate species to reflect the existing street scene within the village; and**
- 5. Avoid the loss of sandstone boundary walls or, where this cannot be achieved, include proposals for re-use of the material on site.**

#### **Consistency with the NPPF and Sedgemoor Development Plan**

It is considered that Policy WB1 is consistent with the approach to design policies contained within section 7 of the NPPF 2012 and specifically Section 12 paragraphs 124-131. The locally distinctive design measures contained in Policy WB1 have sought to draw from priorities identified within consultation and a study tour

carried out by the NDP Group in April 2018, without being overly prescriptive. To do so would not reflect the requirements of NPPF 2012 paragraph 126.

Policy WB1 seeks to complement and draw upon the principles contained within adopted SLP Policy D2 by responding and reinforcing local context through the use of locally distinctive external materials and settlement patterns. Again, care has been taken to not be prescriptive in terms of these requirements so that innovative design is not stifled where it would otherwise be appropriate.

What difference will it make? New development will have a positive impact on the character of Wembdon and local distinctiveness will be encouraged.

## 6.3 Landscape and Visual

- 6.3.1 Another important element which has a significant influence on the character of Wembdon is views to, from and within the NDP Area. These include open views out to the countryside to the north and west, but also those along key street frontages and between buildings as identified in Policy WB2 below.
- 6.3.2 Specific objectives for each key viewpoint identified within Policy WB2 are contained within a Locally Important Viewpoints Assessment that has been prepared in connection with the policy.
- 6.3.3 The implementation of Policy WB2 will encourage new development proposals to consider the setting and context of new buildings, and overall ensure that growth will reflect the rural and green character of Wembdon.

### **Policy WB2: Locally Important Viewpoints**

**New development proposals should seek to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the objectives (contained within Appendix E) of the following Locally Important Viewpoints '(as defined in Appendix F):**

- 1. Views looking north from Wembdon Hill towards Perry Green and Chilton Trinity**
- 2. West Wembdon - Views to the west of Wembdon Village looking west towards the Quantock Hills and south towards the A39 Quantock Road including the A39 corridor**
- 3. Wembdon Village Hall and Church Road across the Green**

### Consistency with the NPPF and Sedgemoor Development Plan

The area of the above listed Locally Important Viewpoints and their associated objectives are defined within the Locally Important Viewpoints Assessment which has been prepared in connection with this NDP.

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Paragraph 109 of the NPPF 2012 requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the local environment by, amongst other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. In terms of design, neighbourhood plans should include robust policies to ensure that developments respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, whilst not discouraging innovative design. In the case of Wembdon, its rural character is defined in part by the key viewpoints listed above which are important landscape features. The approach taken is reflected within adopted SLP Policy D19 and it is considered that NDP Policy WB2 is in conformity with these national and local policies.

Wembdon Hill forms the primary historic route to and from Bridgwater and the west and is characterised by its elevated position looking out towards the rest of the village to the south and to the countryside to the north. Whilst views between Wembdon Rise and Wembdon Hill are in the main obscured by built development, there remains an important link from the countryside to the north looking back towards Wembdon Hill which should be recognised within development proposals.

Nowadays, the A39 provides the strategic road link between Bridgwater and the west. There is a distinct change in terms of landscape character as you leave Bridgwater and the 2-3 storey higher density modern development along the Northern Distributor Road and head into the NDP Area where views to the north of the A39 open out into a much more rural character, providing a role of rural gateway to the Quantock Foothills and beyond. It is critical that consideration of the role of views along the A39 corridor is given within new developments and for this reason this area is identified as a Locally Important Viewpoint to ensure that proposals for new development will have a positive impact on the character of Wembdon. This approach reflects the recommendations made in Sedgemoor's Design Principles Document which supports the delivery of the residential allocation at Cokerhurst Farm and specifically identifies the need for a strong and coherent frontage to reflect the A39's role as the western approach into Bridgwater.

The recent opening of Wembdon Village Hall and The Green has allowed community facilities to expand whilst retaining a connection to the historic community core at St Georges Church and the Parish Centre to the north. These existing facilities still play a vital role in community life by providing smaller rooms for local hobby groups and activities. It is important that the views, and therefore physical connections, between these facilities are retained and protected to continue this historic legacy and encourage their complementary roles into the future.

What difference will it make? New development will have a positive impact on the character of Wembdon.

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## 6.4 Sustainable Transport

- 6.4.1 Consultation responses received through the NDP process have overwhelmingly determined that traffic volume and speed is the biggest existing local concern and the biggest concern from new development for residents. On this basis it is considered that there is an important need to address these concerns within the Wembdon NDP.
- 6.4.2 Specific routes have been identified for improvement. It is important to note that vehicular access to the proposed strategic allocation at Cokerhurst Farm is to be located off the A39 along the site's southern boundary and that no further primary vehicle routes are proposed at Wembdon Hill or Inwood Road. A connection will be made between the new dwellings and Inwood Road but this will be limited to pedestrian, cycle and bus services only.
- 6.4.3 A lack of and inadequate parking was also highlighted as a local concern, particularly in respect to provision within new developments. Whilst the south-eastern end of the NDP Area is located adjacent to Bridgwater and around 1 mile from the town centre, there still remains a high level of car use and ownership in Wembdon which is more akin to a rural community than an urban one. This has been evidenced within the Wembdon Parking Technical Note which accompanies this NDP
- 6.4.4 The Wembdon Parking Technical Note concludes that Wembdon has a level of car ownership and use which is more akin to rural areas such as North Petherton and Cannington, where residents are more dependent on the use of a car than those in an urban area such as Bridgwater. Based on this, it is entirely inappropriate to require fewer car parking spaces within new developments in Wembdon compared to other rural villages because this approach does not reflect Wembdon's role and function as a Tier 3 rural village which is recognised in the adopted SLP.
- 6.4.5 There is limited evidence to suggest that parking provision alone has a significant effect on reducing car use and this has been noted in both national and local policies moving away from the previous "maximum" car parking standards for new development. In fact, such a policy could have the opposite effect, and actually promote car use when other vehicles are parked unsafely as a result of, in part, inadequate parking provision in new developments. Pedestrians and cyclists are discouraged from making journeys due to compromised highway safety and obstruction.
- 6.4.6 NDP Policy WB3 seeks to implement a local approach by encouraging parking provision within new developments that is in line with surrounding rural areas and reducing on-street parking in line with the over-arching NDP objectives.
- 6.4.7 The improvement of sustainable travel routes, consideration of highways safety and provision of locally appropriate parking provision within new developments are intended to operate in combination with the recommendations of the Wembdon Parking Technical Note to achieve the NDP objectives of supporting

the delivery of facilities with access for all and encouraging reduction in traffic speeds, volumes and congestion.

### **Policy WB3: Sustainable Transport and Parking Provision in New Developments**

**Major new development will be expected to incorporate new walking and cycling links, or improvements to existing, in relation to connections between one or more of the following locations within the development itself and/or by means of planning obligation where the statutory tests for such obligations are met:**

- 1. The residential allocation at Cokerhurst Farm, Wembdon Village and Wembdon Village Hall**
- 2. Wembdon Village and local education and employment facilities**
- 3. The A39 Cannington cycleway and Wembdon Village**

**Major new development will need to be supported by an appropriate Transport Statement or Assessment which identifies potential adverse impacts on traffic speeds and volumes along Wembdon Hill and Wembdon Rise as a result of the proposals. Where there is a potential for adverse impacts, appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures will need to be delivered through the new development and priority would be given to the above identified routes.**

**Development proposals which include measures to reduce the speed and volume of traffic within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be supported.**

**Other than on land shown on the adopted proposals map as allocated for residential development in accordance with Sedgemoor Local Plan Policy B2, development proposals shall provide for the following car parking provision per dwelling unless site-specific viability evidence demonstrates that this cannot be achieved or that there would be a demonstrated adverse effect on design and/or residential amenity:**

<b>1 bed</b>	<b>2 bed</b>	<b>3 bed</b>	<b>4+ bed</b>	<b>Visitors</b>
<b>1.5 spaces</b>	<b>2 spaces</b>	<b>2.5 spaces</b>	<b>3 spaces</b>	<b>0.2 spaces per dwelling</b>

#### Consistency with the NPPF and Sedgemoor Development Plan

The NPPF 2012 seeks to maximise the use of sustainable transport modes through new development, having regard to the specific location and surroundings of new proposals. Specifically, in relation to setting local parking standards, account must be taken as to the accessibility of the development, its type mix and use, the availability and opportunity for public transport, local car ownership levels and an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles. Policy WB3 has regard to this national policy, along with reflecting the national approach to community infrastructure planning contained in section 8 of the NPPF 2012 and in particular paragraphs 69, 70, 74 and 75.

The adopted SLP contains Policy D14 which references SCC's Parking Strategy. SCC's Strategy includes a zonal system with Zone A (urban) requiring the least parking and Zone C (rural) requiring the most. However, these are not maximum levels of parking per dwelling, recognising that over-provision of parking in itself is not likely to have a significant impact on car ownership or car use.

Wembdon and the proposed residential allocation at Cokerhurst Farm are located in Zone A according to SCC's Parking Strategy. It is considered that Policy D14 is a non-strategic policy and, on this basis, there is no

requirement to demonstrate general compliance. SLP Policy B2 is a strategic policy and makes reference to Policy D15, however this is only in the context of the requirement for a Transport Impact Assessment rather than parking standards.

The parking standards within Policy D14 and the associated SCC Parking Strategy are not maximum levels and this is highlighted within SCC's Regulation 14 response. Policy WB3 includes sufficient flexibility in terms of taking into account design and viability considerations to ensure that this NDP policy will support the delivery of strategic Policy B2. Taking this all into account, no conflict between local and neighbourhood policies is envisaged.

Policy WB3 seeks to encourage a local approach to car parking by requiring provision within new developments in line with Zone B for rural areas rather than Zone A. This would equate to an additional 0.5 car parking spaces per bedroom for new residential developments above the SCC Parking Strategy standards. It is considered that this approach better reflects car ownership levels of Wembdon and its role as a rural village. It will provide opportunities for parking provision to be balanced as a local infrastructure priority against other material planning considerations as appropriate.

It is considered that provision of additional off-street car parking is likely to reduce congestion and obstructions caused by on-street parking, potentially encouraging uptake of cycling and pedestrian journeys. Overall, and in the context of the wider provisions of the policy to improve and encourage existing and new footpath and cycleway links, it is not anticipated that the implementation of Policy WB3 would adversely impact modal shifts toward sustainable patterns of travel and is therefore consistent with local and national transport policies.

Any review of the Wembdon Parking Technical Note and changes to the parking provisions required for new developments will need to be supported by monitoring using Automatic Traffic Counters and be agreed in consultation with SCC and SDC. This approach to the review process is consistent with SCC's requirements for review of their wider Parking Strategy and is therefore appropriate.

As referenced within Section 6.4 above, the proposed, evidence based local parking standards are intended to operate in conjunction with other sustainable transport measures including improvements to walking and cycling routes, with the overall aim of making walking, cycling and public transport more desirable by reducing on-street parking which can introduce highway safety issues and negatively affect the street scene. In these respects, Policy WB3 reflects the principles of NPPF 2012 paragraphs 35, 39 and 40.

What difference will it make? Implementation of Policy WB3 will contribute towards achieving the NDP objectives of supporting the delivery of facilities with access for all and encouraging reduction in traffic speeds, volumes and congestion.

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## 6.5 Community Strategy and Infrastructure

- 6.5.1 As described in Section 3 of this NDP, Wembdon Village has had substantial recent investment which has seen the completion of the new Wembdon Village Hall, Green and footpath and cycleway improvements. It is intended that this positive community planning is continued through the NDP process and aligned with the SLP allocation at Cokerhurst Farm to maximise local benefits.
- 6.5.2 Following the delivery of major new facilities, the next step is for the Parish Council to develop a Community Strategy that supports the delivery of new recreation, sporting and community facilities. This process is intended to address matters outside of the planning process but will need to be supported by the Community Facilities and Infrastructure policies set out in this NDP by ensuring that new developments protect and encourage improvements to pedestrian and cycling links to ensure that both the NDP and Community Strategy promote access for all and includes suitable links between complementary community facilities across Wembdon.
- 6.5.3 The recently constructed Wembdon Village Hall is now open and is substantially completed. The first floor is yet to be fitted out and is intended to meet a need for facilities to serve older children, for example a location for a youth club.
- 6.5.4 The Village Hall has created a hub within the community by providing a large, flexible facility which can be used for a wide range of activities including dance classes, weddings and indeed NDP Group meetings. It is located on the opposite side of The Green to the Parish Centre which tends to cater for more Church-related activities and some long established village groups. Outside the Village Hall is The Green, used for sports, and this bridges a perceived gap between modern estates on the NDR and the historic village core.
- 6.5.5 It is the intention of the Parish Council to prepare a Community Strategy, separately to this NDP, that will build upon the progress already made to secure community facilities. The strategy will be able to take into account new facilities at Greenway Garage and the Neighbourhood Centre within the Cokerhurst Farm residential allocation to ensure that a comprehensive, inclusive suite of recreational facilities are delivered for the community in line with the over-arching objectives of this NDP.
- 6.5.6 Taking these objectives into account, Policy WB4 below is included to safeguard existing important community facilities that will be critical to the strategy and to prioritise future funding streams through CIL and S106.
- 6.5.7 Funding from new development proposals should be directed to deliver those priorities set out on the Local Infrastructure List (at Appendix B) which represents a list of community aspirations for local infrastructure improvements to be delivered either by the Parish Council through the Neighbourhood Fund or by Section 106 where the statutory tests are met.

**Policy WB4: Community Facilities**

Proposals to enhance, improve and extend community facilities will be supported where they complement existing facilities, and in particular at the following Important Community Facilities as identified on Plan 1 and the accompanying inset plans contained in Appendix A.



**Wembdon Locally Important Facilities**

- |   |   |                    |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1. St George's Church Ground and Parking Area | 4. The Cottage Inn                        | 7. Greenway Garage |
| 2. The Parish Centre                          | 5. Wembdon Village Hall and Village Green |                    |
| 3. St. Georges C of E Primary School          | 6. Village Shop and Post Office           |                    |

**Plan 1: Important Community Facilities**

Development proposals resulting in the loss of, or which compromise the viability of, facilities identified on Plan 1 will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the land and/or facility is no longer required for its sports, leisure or recreational use and that the proposed development provides recreational or community benefit equal to the long-term value of the sports, leisure or recreational facility that would be lost.

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Consistency with the NPPF and Sedgemoor Development Plan

Policy WB4 is intended to reflect the approach to community infrastructure planning contained in section 8 of the NPPF 2012 and in particular paragraphs 69, 70, 74 and 75. By positively planning for community facilities and safeguarding those that are important to the community, this policy is consistent with the NPPF 2012.

At a local level, this policy also reflects the aims of SLP Policies D34 and D35 to protect and improve recreational and community facilities. Policy WB4 therefore complements the SLP by using this approach at a local level and overall does not conflict with any other Development Plan policies.

What difference will it make? Policy WB4 will ensure that important community facilities are safeguarded and secures the longer-term delivery of a comprehensive Community Strategy which is to be prepared by the Parish Council to enhance local facilities as a separate process outside of the planning system.

**Policy WB5: Delivery of new retail and community facilities**

**The following additional retail and community uses will be permitted where they will contribute positively to existing facilities:-**

- 1. Restaurant/café**
- 2. Convenience store**
- 3. Pharmacy**
- 4. Doctor's surgery**
- 5. Children's play area**

**Regard should be had to the objectives of the Community Strategy once it is adopted.**

**Where there is potential to undermine the viability of an existing community facility, to which Policy WB4 applies, planning permission will be refused unless it is demonstrated that the benefit of the proposed retail or community facility would outweigh the loss of, or risk to the viability of, an existing facility.**

Consistency with the NPPF and Sedgemoor Development Plan

This policy is consistent with the NPPF 2012, specifically paragraphs 69 and 70, and is in general conformity with SLP Policy B2 which allocates land for residential development with associated infrastructure including a neighbourhood centre.

It is really important that any new uses within the Neighbourhood Centre at Cokerhurst Farm are delivered with both the existing and potential communities in mind, that they align with the priorities of the Community

Strategy and do not compete with existing facilities at The Green and Greenway Garage. This approach will ensure that the NDP objectives in relation to community cohesion are achieved.

The uses set out in Policy WB6 are not the only uses that could be acceptable, however they are uses that have been actively suggested by the community and are also considered not to compete with wider facilities in the area including at Greenway Garage, the local shop and the Village Hall, for example.

What difference will it make? Community cohesion between new and existing places will be encouraged through the delivery of complementary facilities aligned with the Community Strategy.

### **Policy WB6: Local Green Spaces**

**The following areas are to be designated as Local Green Space and are identified on Plan 2 and the accompanying inset plans contained within Appendix C:**



**Plan 2: Local Green Spaces**

### Consistency with the NPPF and Sedgemoor Development Plan

Policy WB6 is considered to be consistent with the approach required within NPPF 2012 paragraph 76 and the tests outlined in paragraph 77. Specifically, the facilities identified have been highlighted through consultation to be important to the community. The majority of the land and facilities are publicly owned and/or managed and in some cases have additional biodiversity and historic significance alongside popular recreation uses. In all cases, the land to be designated is local in character being within or adjacent to Wembdon Village (shown edged green in Figure 2) and not extensive tracts of private land. A green space assessment in line with the template used by SDC in connection with the SLP has been completed and is contained at Appendix D of this NDP.

This policy also reflects the aims of SLP Policies D34 and D35 to protect and improve recreational and community facilities. Policy WB4 therefore complements the SLP by using this approach at a local level and overall does not conflict with any other Development Plan policies.

Any proposed improvements to existing Local Green Spaces will be identified by amendment to the Local Infrastructure List. Any future extension to Local Green Space areas will be a matter for NDP review.

What difference will it make? Policy WB6 will ensure that important community facilities are safeguarded and secures the longer-term delivery of a comprehensive Community Strategy.

## 6.6 Rural Economy

6.6.1 Whilst much of the focus of this NDP is on Wembdon Village (shown edged green on the enlarged plan at Figure 2) where the vast majority of residents live, the important economic contribution that agricultural and rural employment activities make, along with their links to Wembdon's past as a farming community are recognised.

6.6.2 An objective of this NDP is to support employment where it will support existing agricultural businesses to continue and enhance vitality and enjoyment of the area. On this basis the following policy is included.

### **Policy WB7: Rural Diversification**

**New small-scale development to provide ancillary uses, including but not limited to the following buildings that are required to support the diversification of existing rural businesses, will be approved:**

- 1. Café or restaurant**
- 2. Farm shop**
- 3. Business start-up units**
- 4. Leisure**

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## 5. Holiday accommodation

### Consistency with the NPPF and Sedgemoor Development Plan

Supporting thriving rural communities is a core principle in the NPPF 2012 and this is reinforced through NPPF 2012 paragraph 28. In this respect Policy WB7 is consistent with national policy and will deliver its aims at a local level.

The approach taken reflects Sedgemoor's pro-growth agenda against its backdrop as a predominantly rural District and is compliant with SLP Policies D15 and D16 to promote and safeguard local employment.

With the population in Wembdon growing and the potential allocation of land at West Bridgwater, it is important that local businesses, which would provide much needed employment and reduce the need to travel, are encouraged where they do not compromise the wider aims of local planning policies contained in Sedgemoor's SLP and this NDP. This will help to deliver an inclusive community as highlighted in the NDP vision and reflecting the NPPF core principles.

What difference will it make? Local businesses will be supported into the future and the overall vitality of the NDP Area will be improved.

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## 7.0 Review and Future Priorities

### 7.1 Review of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 7.1.1 Within the core planning principles of the NPPF 2012 it is made clear that NDPs should be kept up to date and based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues and set out a positive vision for the future.
- 7.1.2 NPPF 2019 paragraphs 31-33 deal with appropriate measures for the review of local plans and development strategies but are silent on such requirements for NDPs.
- 7.1.3 As time progresses from the drafting and adoption of this NDP, planning policy and local circumstances will change. The basic conditions for a NDP require it to be consistent with national planning policies and generally compliant with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan. Therefore, it is proposed that this NDP is updated either partially or in full where these tests are no longer met, or within 5 years, whichever is the earlier.

### 7.2 Next Steps

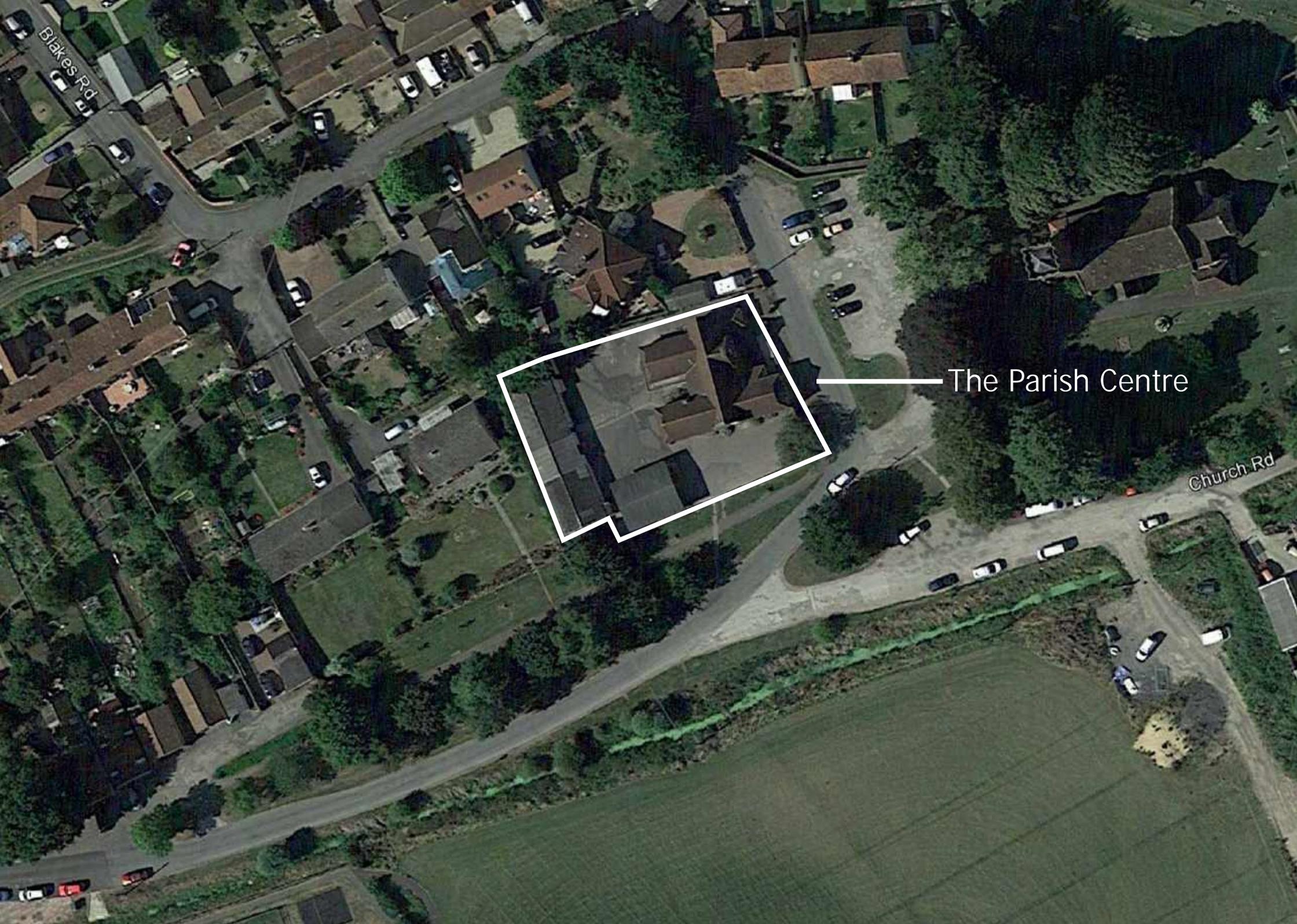
- 7.2.1 Building upon the success of Wembdon Village Hall and the stakeholder and public engagement undertaken for this NDP, it is the intention of the Parish Council to prepare a Community Strategy that will be able to take into account future community aspirations, the new facilities at Greenway Garage and the Neighbourhood Centre within the Cokerhurst Farm residential allocation. The Strategy is not intended to form part of the statutory Development Plan, but would be intended to guide the direction of future funding and infrastructure priorities for the Parish in the future.
- 7.2.2 The adoption of this NDP will secure an additional 10% (totalling 25%) of the CIL receipts from new development in the NDP Area. The Parish Council will seek to align these additional funds with the Local Infrastructure List (Appendix B) with support from the Community Strategy to maximise benefits for Wembdon and its residents.

**Appendix A:**  
Inset Plans – Important Community Facilities

An aerial photograph showing a church complex and its surrounding grounds. A white outline delineates the church's property, which includes a large central lawn, a parking lot with several cars, and a building with a brown roof. The church is situated on Church Rd, which is labeled at the bottom. To the left, there are residential houses, and to the right, there are large green fields. The text "St George's Church including grounds & parking" is centered within the white outline.

St George's Church  
including grounds & parking

Church Rd



The Parish Centre

Blakes Rd

Church Rd

St George's C of E Primary School



Inwood Rd

Brantwood Rd

Grasmere

The Laurels

Risedale Close



Hollow Lane

The Cottage Inn

Wembdon Hill

Keltings

Wemb



Wembdon Village Hall &  
Village Green

Outside NP Boundary

Florence Ct

Blakes Rd

Countess Ave

Duke St

Lords Way

Crossfield Close

Eight Acre Close

Crusader Close

Trinity Way

Crossacre

Rambler Way

Feverisham Ave

A39 Homberg Way

Griffin Close

Cavalier Close

Wordsworth

Church Meadow

Kendale Rd

Coleridge Rd

Whatham Ave

Four Acre Me



Downhall Drive

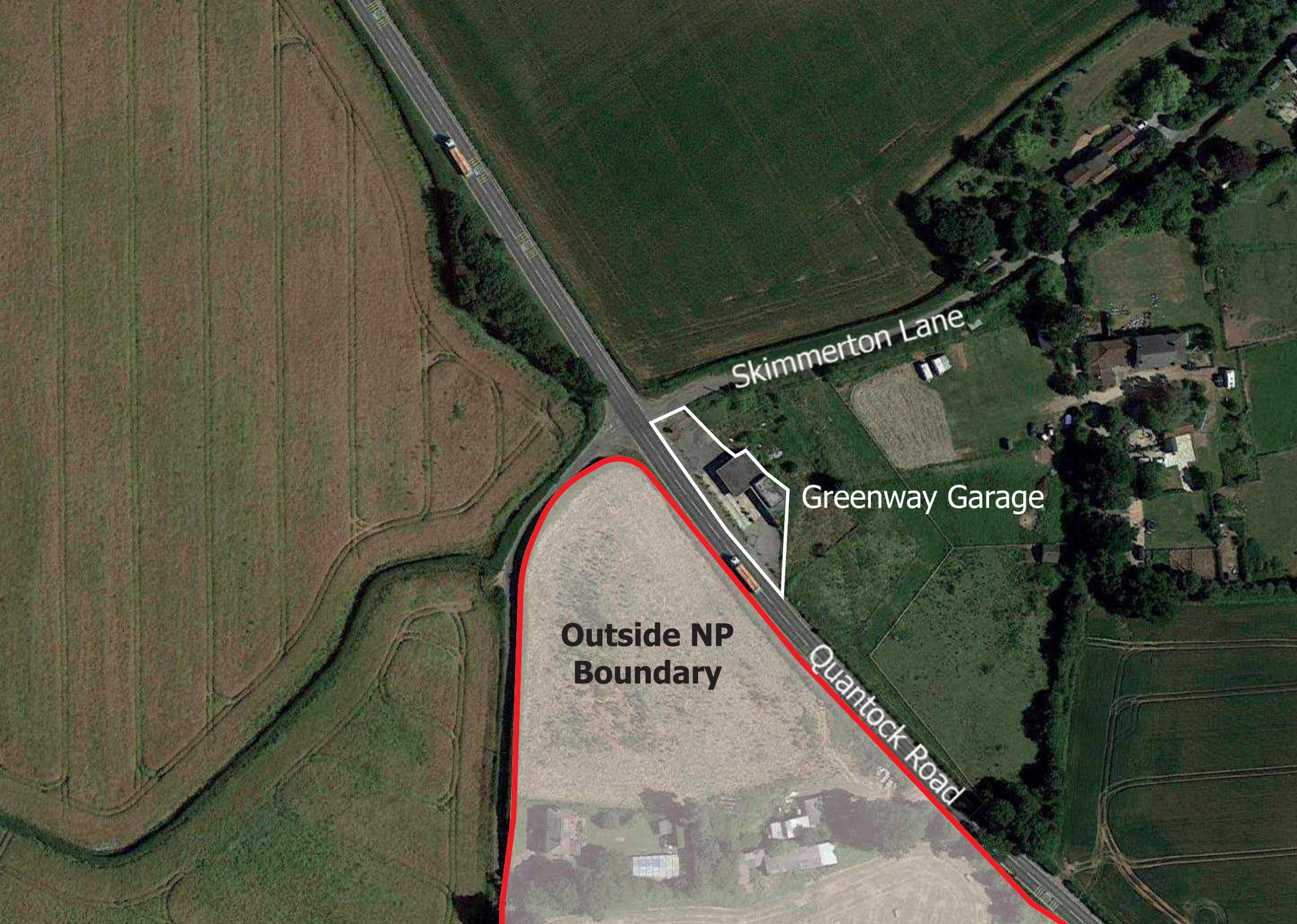
Keltings

Wembdon Hill

Church Road

Village shop & post office

Wembdon Rise



Skimmerton Lane

Greenway Garage

**Outside NP  
Boundary**

Quantock Road

## **Appendix B:** Local Infrastructure List

## **Local Infrastructure List**

The initial priority will be the completion of The Green in its entirety. This will include:

- The Access for All project – to provide fully accessible play equipment which requires footpaths, safe equipment, toilet facilities, CCTV, street and footpath lighting
- Upgrading of existing children's play equipment
- Purchase of the Liddall meadows (currently leased by the Parish Council)
- Development of Wembdon Parkland – improved footpaths, drainage, sensory gardens, seating areas, planting, insect areas, safe bird nesting areas
- Completion of the planting plans and surfacing of the car park at the village hall
- Completion of the upstairs multi-purpose room - to incorporate indoor meeting space for young people
- Multi-use Games Area and other sporting facilities including additional changing rooms
- Installation of solar panels

Other priorities identified by the Parish Council and community include:

- Improving traffic speed management on Wembdon Rise and Wembdon Hill
- Upgrading footpaths as necessary to ensure safe cycling routes through the whole parish – adjacent to NDR, Crowpill Lane, Gypsy Lane, NDR to St Georges School.
- New, natural and wilder play areas for older children within the Cokerhurst development
- Continuous safe walking, running path/circuit through Cokerhurst to Wembdon Village Hall within the existing green spaces where possible with outdoor exercise equipment
- Additional recycling facilities.

The Infrastructure List will be updated at least every five years and be subject to consultation with the local community, Parish Council and infrastructure delivery partners where applicable.

## **Appendix C:** Inset Plans – Local Green Spaces



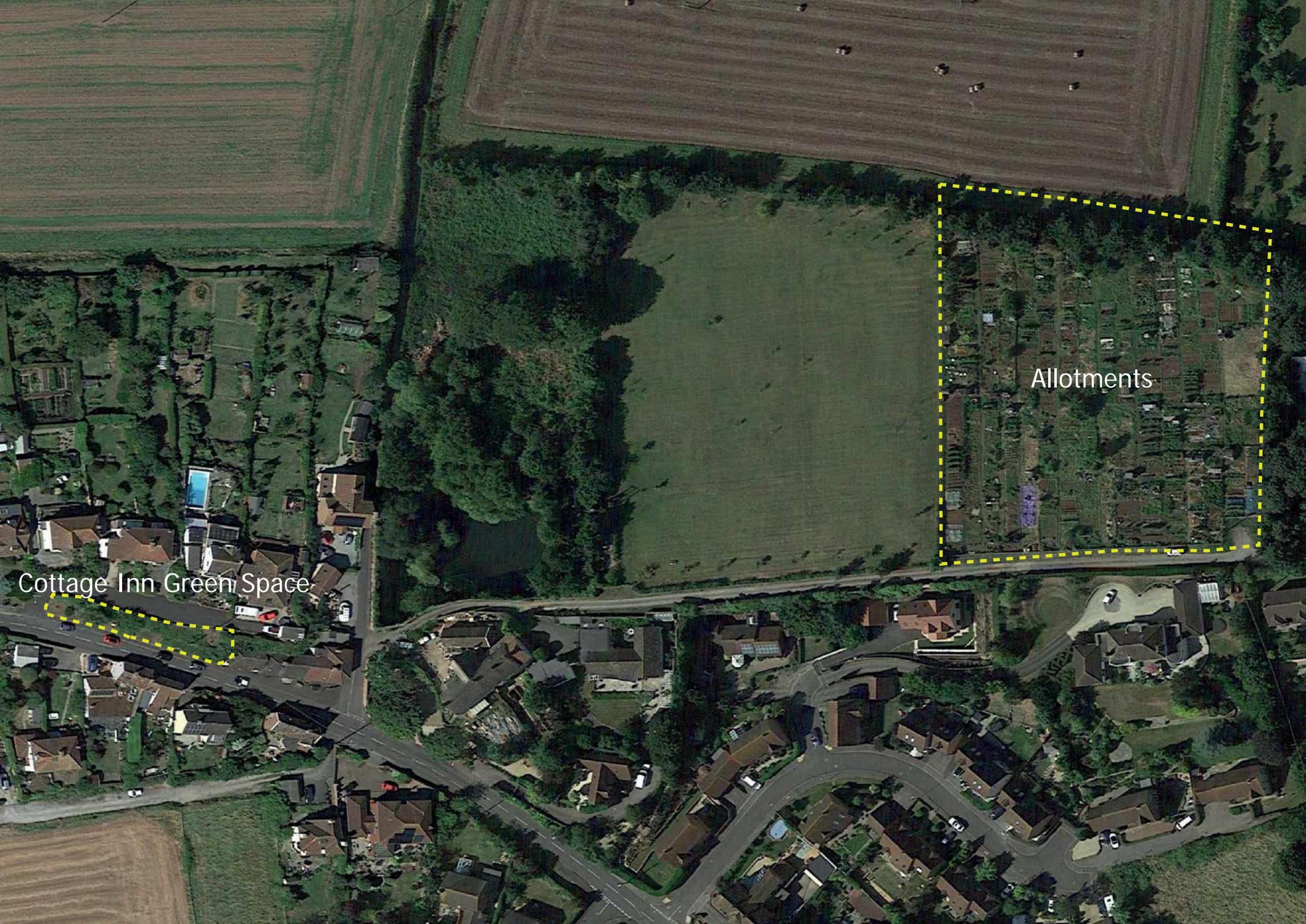
The Common

Village Green

Wembdon  
Parkland

Outside NP Boundary

3333



Allotments

Cottage Inn Green Space



School Playing Field

School Playing Field

Inwood Rd

Brantwood Rd

Grasmere

The Laurels

The Os



Orchard Lane Green Space

Outside NP Boundary

33339

Old Oaks Ct

Apple Dr

Vicars Ln

Orchard Ln

Wembdon Rise

Homberg Way



The Laurels

Mempton Rise

Grasmere

Brantwood Road

Inwood Road

Meadow Park

Lyndhurst Crescent



Inwood Road

Brantwood Road

Silverdale Close

Lyndhurst Crescent

Risedale Close



Silverdale Close

Brantwood Road

Grasmere

Inwood Road

Lyndhurst Crescent

Meadow Park



Silverdale Close

Inwood Road

Lyndhurst Crescent

Meadow Park

Templett Green

Quantock Meadow

Outside NP Boundary

# **Appendix D:** Local Green Space Assessment Matrix

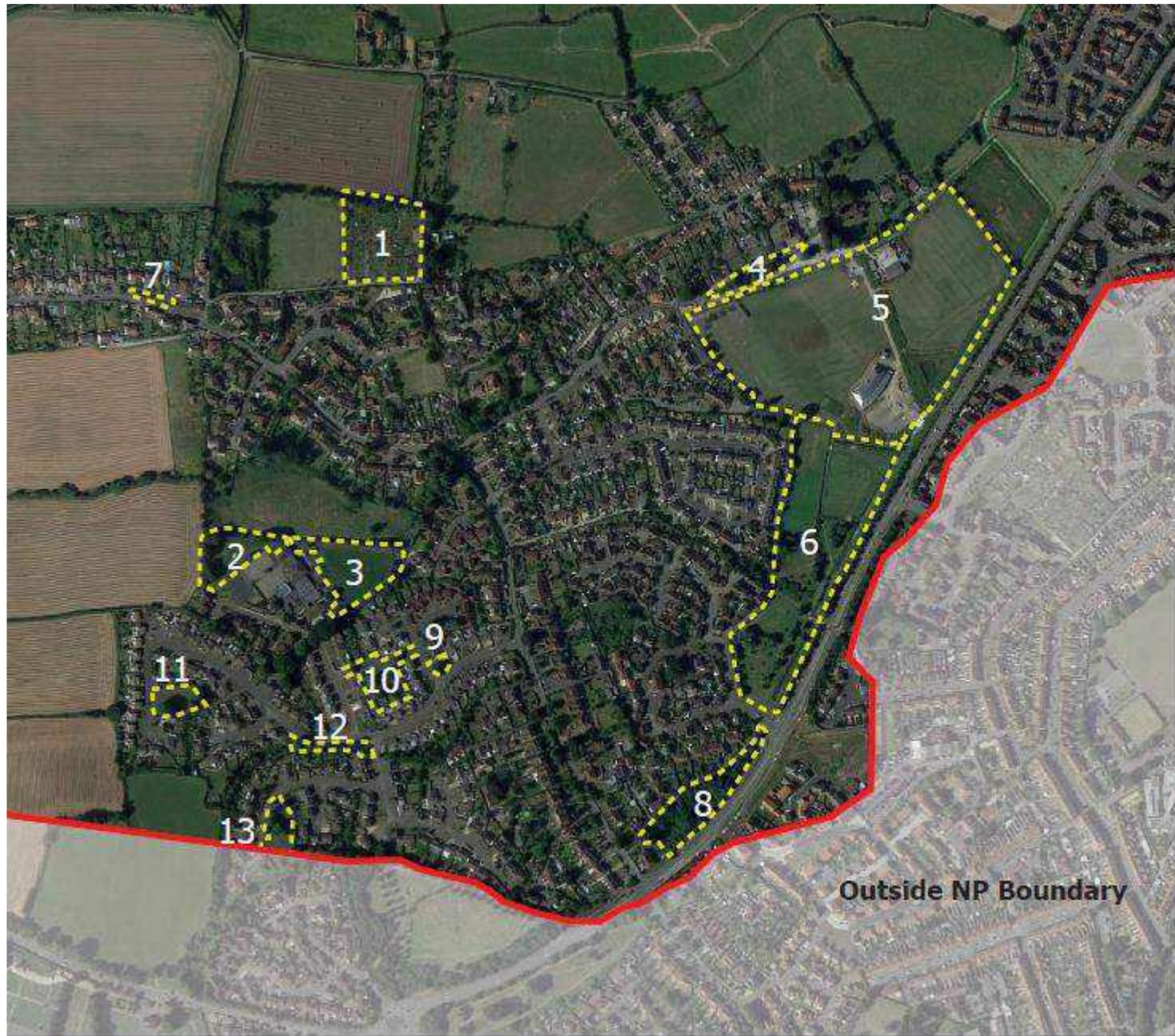
## Local Green Space Assessment

Site name please refer to Wembdon Green Spaces Plan overleaf):	Extensive tract of land?	Local in character?	Close proximity to community?	Reason for nomination (a min. of one to be provided)				
				Recreational value?	Beauty?	Historic?	Tranquility?	Wildlife richness?
Allotments (1)	No, 0.6ha	Yes	Yes	In active use by the community as allotments	Located next to a public right of way and provides vantage point for important views out to the north, as defined in the landscape statement		On the edge of the settlement providing a peaceful vantage point for important views out to the north, as defined in the landscape statement	
School Playing Fields (2 and 3)	No, 0.9ha	Yes	Yes	In active use by St Georges Primary School as playing fields				
The Common (4)	No, 0.17ha	Yes	Yes		Important element of the character and entrance to Wembdon's historic core	Important element of the character and entrance to Wembdon's historic core		

					at St Georges Church	at St Georges Church		
Village Green (5)	No, 5.5ha and tightly defined because it is owned by the Wembdon Village Hall and Playing Fields Trust established for the village's recreational needs	Yes	Yes	Currently used for sports and community events associated with Wembdon Village Hall		Forms an intrinsic view between the historic core and the new Village Hall as explained within the Landscape Statement		
Wembdon Parkland (6)	No, 2.6ha and tightly defined because it is owned by the Wembdon Village Hall and Playing Fields Trust established for the village's recreational needs	Yes	Yes	Highly valued by the community for informal recreation, and particularly dog walking – value demonstrated within the consultation statement		Informal recreational uses and low maintenance regime on publicly leased land has protected the tranquillity of this area		Informal recreational uses and low maintenance regime on publicly leased land offers potential for wildlife habitat and corridors
Cottage Inn green space (7)	No, 0.035ha	Yes	Yes	Street furniture and planting				

				provides opportunities for informal recreation				
Orchard Lane green space (8)	No, 0.5ha	Yes	Yes					Local records suggest presence of protected species
Grasmere, Risedale, Inwood and Lyndhurst green spaces (9-13)	No, cumulatively totalling 0.65ha	Yes	Yes	These areas provide important, accessible informal recreation opportunities for residents of the estates located to the west of Wembdon which are located furthest from other recreational facilities to the east of the village including the Village Hall				

[Solid blue bar]								



### Wembdon Green Spaces

- NP Boundary
- 1 - Allotments
- 2 - School Playing Field
- 3 - School Playing Field
- 4 - The Common
- 5 - Village Green
- 6 - Wembdon Parkland
- 7 - Cottage Inn green space
- 8 - Orchard Lane green space
- 9 - Grasmere green space 1
- 10 - Grasmere green space 2
- 11 - Risedale Close green space
- 12 - Inwood Road green space
- 13 - Lyndhurst Crescent green space

Outside NP Boundary

# **Appendix E:** Locally Important Viewpoint Objectives

## **Wembdon Locally Important Viewpoints Objectives**

In accordance with Wembdon Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Policy WB2, new development proposals should seek to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the following objectives of the identified Locally Important Viewpoints.

The location of the viewpoints and evidence base to support their designation is set out in full within the Locally Important Viewpoints Assessment submitted in connection with Wembdon NDP.

### **Viewpoint 1:** Views looking north from Wembdon Hill towards Perry Green and Chilton Trinity

- Encourage hedgerow management, especially of the elms within the hedgerows which are being affected by Dutch Elm Disease, to increase their amenity value and their habitat as important wildlife corridors.
- Encourage new tree planting and management of existing trees within hedgerows to increase their amenity and wildlife value.
- Encourage improved access to the area along the existing public footpath by replacing stiles with stock proof gates and better signage.
- Encourage appreciation of the qualities of the area by providing interpretation of the history of the landscape and its role in providing important wildlife habitats.
- Protect the important landscape features and characteristics of the area from inappropriate or unsympathetic development which could undermine its intrinsic landscape value.

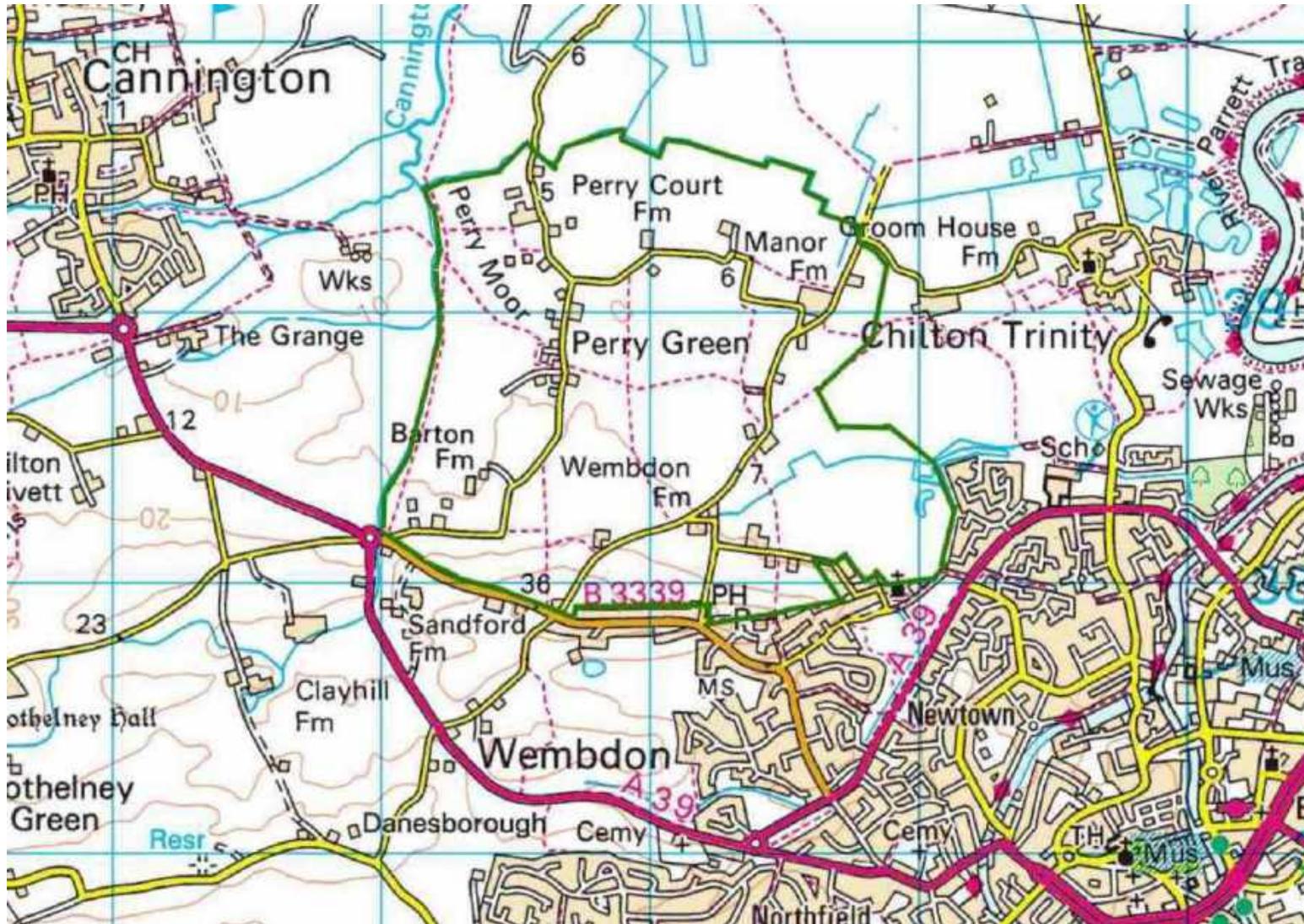
### **Viewpoint 2:** West Wembdon – views to the west of Wembdon village looking west towards the Quantock Hills and south towards the A39 Quantock Road including the A39 corridor

- Encourage hedgerow management, especially of the elms within the hedgerows which are being affected by Dutch Elm Disease, to increase their amenity value and their habitat as important wildlife corridors.
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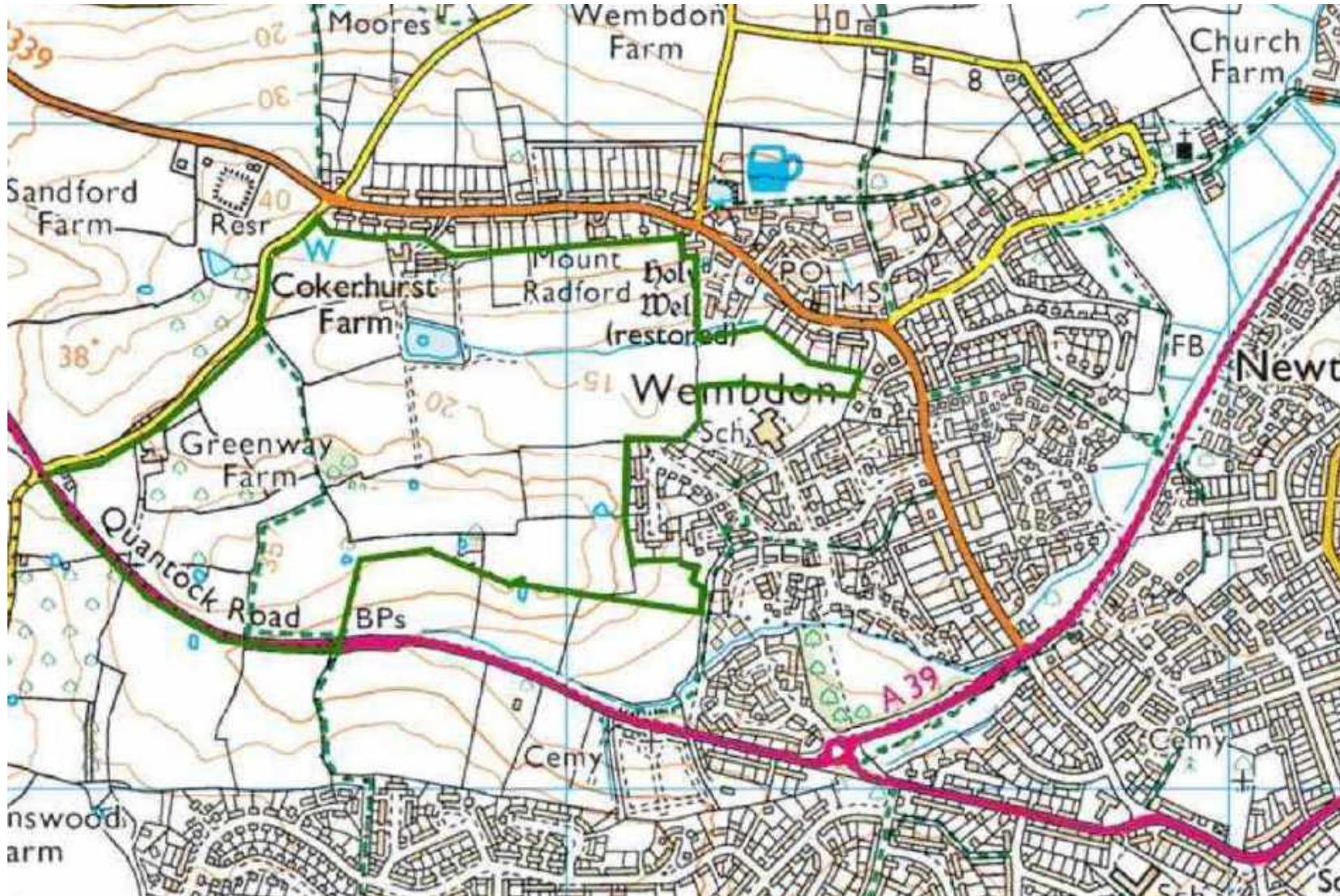
### **Viewpoint 3:** Wembdon Village Hall and Church Road across the Green

- Encourage management of existing trees and hedgerows within the area to increase their amenity value and habitat as important wildlife corridors.
- Plant new willow pollards along the northern boundary rhyne to increase its amenity value and important wildlife corridor.
- Encourage management of the churchyard trees to open up views of the historic church tower.
- Encourage appreciation of the qualities of the area by providing interpretation of the history of the landscape and its role in providing important wildlife habitats.
- Protect the important landscape features and characteristics of the area from inappropriate or unsympathetic development which could undermine its intrinsic landscape value.

## **Appendix F:** Locally Important Viewpoints Maps



**Viewpoint 1: Views looking north from Wembdon Hill towards Perry Green and Chilton Trinity as outlined in green**



**Viewpoint 2: West Wembdon – Views to the west of Wembdon village looking west towards the Quantock Hills and south towards the A39 Quantock Road including the A39 corridor as outlined in green**



**Viewpoint 3: Wembdon Village Hall and Church Road across the Green as outlined in green**

# **Appendix G:**

## Glossary

## Glossary

CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CS	Core Strategy – adopted in 2011 by SDC and is the current Development Plan upon which all planning applications in the District are assessed against
DCO	Development Consent Order
HNS	Housing Needs Survey
LPR	Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan Review – published by SDC in August 2017 and will supersede the CS if it is formally adopted
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NDR	Bridgwater's Northern Distributor Road – built to facilitate a strategic housing allocation to the west of Bridgwater
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework – the Government's national planning policies and a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications
SCC	Somerset County Council
SDC	Sedgemoor District Council
S106	Section 106 Agreement – a legal agreement which accompanies a planning permission to secure infrastructure either in kind or through financial contributions