

**SECTION 1 – ITEM 8**

<b>Application No:</b>	17/P/5592/FUL	<b>Target date:</b>	02.05.2018
<b>Case officer:</b>	David Tate	<b>Extended date:</b>	14.05.2018
<b>Parish/Ward:</b>	Congresbury Congresbury and Puxton	<b>Ward Councillors:</b>	Councillor Tom Leimdorfer
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr David Clark, Mendip Vale Medical Practice.		
<b>Proposal:</b>	Erection of a two-storey building to be used as a medical centre		
<b>Site address:</b>	Land opposite Bird of Prey Centre, Smallway, Congresbury, North Somerset		

**REFERRED BY COUNCILLOR LEIMDORFER**

**Summary of recommendation**

It is recommended that the application be **APPROVED** subject to conditions. The full recommendation is set out at the end of this report.

**Background**

The application has been amended since it was originally submitted

The amended plans are now out to consultation and any further comments will be reported at Committee. The revised plans include:

- Relocating the building into the southern corner of the site,
- Revising the access arrangements,
- Placing the footprint of the building lower into the ground,
- Revising the design of the building to reflect the character of the landscape,
- Deleting reference to mobile MRI unit bay
- Revised landscaping arrangements

**The Site**

The site comprises 0.8ha of part of a single agricultural field currently used for grazing horses and located to the west of Smallway (B3133), which is the main vehicular route between Congresbury and Yatton.

The land is opposite the existing Roundtree and Cadbury Garden Centres.

The site and land immediately around the site to the north, west and south consists of grazed pastureland. Further south is a small group of detached and semi-detached properties of between one and two storeys on either side of PROW

## **The Application**

This full application involves the construction of 2-storey health centre with ancillary pharmacy, associated access, vehicle parking, bin and cycle storage, landscaping and drainage works. The current health practices cater for approximately 12,500 patients between Congresbury and Yatton. This co-location health centre is considered integral to the future of the health service in the district, as part of the NHS's objective to provide increased health facilities to patients in the community.

The proposed pharmacy is intended to be ancillary to the health centre. In addition, the surgery is intended provide flexible meeting spaces that can be used by the local community for group sessions or community meetings.

The proposed footprint of the building is 1,277m<sup>2</sup> (including pharmacy of 120m<sup>2</sup>)

The proposal (now revised) is for a medical centre up to 8.4 m high from finished floor level and alongside this would be a total of 85 car parking spaces, plus 6 disabled bays and 1 ambulance bay. The specific services that will be provided on site are:

- 20 Consulting rooms and clinical space;
- Staff and meeting rooms
- Clean and dirty utility areas;
- Ancillary pharmacy;
- Staff welfare areas and terrace;
- Reception and administrative space.

## **Relevant Planning History**

There is no relevant planning history of the site

## **Policy Framework**

The site is affected by the following constraints:

- The site is outside the settlement boundaries of Congresbury and Yatton

## **The Development Plan**

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

The following policies are particularly relevant to this proposal:

<b>Policy Ref</b>	<b>Policy heading</b>
CS1	Addressing climate change and carbon reduction
CS2	Delivering sustainable design and construction
CS3	Environmental impacts and flood risk management
CS4	Nature Conservation
CS5	Landscape and the historic environment
CS6	North Somerset's Green Belt
CS9	Green infrastructure
CS10	Transport and movement
CS11	Parking
CS12	Achieving high quality design and place making

CS19	Strategic gaps
CS20	Supporting a successful economy
CS21	Retail hierarchy and provision
CS27	Sport, recreation and community facilities
CS32	Service Villages
CS34	Infrastructure delivery and Development Contributions

Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (adopted 19 July 2016)

The following policies are particularly relevant to this proposal:

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Policy heading</b>
DM1	Flooding and drainage
DM2	Renewable and low carbon energy
DM6	Archaeology
DM7	Non-designated heritage assets
DM8	Nature Conservation
DM9	Trees
DM10	Landscape
DM24	Safety, traffic and provision of infrastructure etc associated with development
DM25	Public rights of way, pedestrian and cycle access
DM26	Travel plans
DM27	Bus accessibility criteria
DM28	Parking standards
DM32	High quality design and place making
DM33	Inclusive access into non-residential buildings and spaces
DM67	Retail proposals outside or not adjacent to town, district or local centres
DM69	Location of sporting, cultural and community facilities
DM70	Development infrastructure
DM71	Development contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy and viability

Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (adopted 10 April 2018)

The following policies are particularly relevant to this proposal:

SA7	Strategic Gaps
-----	----------------

**Other material policy guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2018)

The following is particularly relevant to this proposal:

Section No	Section heading
2	Achieving sustainable development
7	Requiring good design
8	Promoting healthy and safe communities

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 9  | Promoting sustainable transport                                      |
| 11 | Making effective use of land   |
| 12 | Achieving well-designed places                                       |
| 14 | Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change |
| 15 | Conserving and enhancing the natural environment                     |

### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- North Somerset Parking Standards SPD (adopted November 2013)
- North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment SPD (adopted December 2005)
- Biodiversity and Trees SPD (adopted December 2005)
- Creating sustainable buildings and places SPD (adopted March 2015)
- Travel Plans SPD (adopted November 2010)

### Emerging Plan

Congresbury Neighbourhood Plan. (Regulation 14 stage)

### Consultations

Copies of representations received can be viewed on the council's website. This report contains summaries only.

### **Third Parties**

In response to the application as originally submitted, 9 letters of objection were received. The principal planning points made were as follows:

- Inadequate access, parking and links to public transport
- Problems from the increase of traffic on Smallway
- The building is in an unsustainable and isolated location with poor pedestrian access.
- The height, design, scale of the building is inappropriate for the location.
- Development in the strategic gap is contrary to the Local Plan
- The building is out of character and a better location can be found
- Concerns about flooding
- The development will impact on ecology
- There is a need for a pedestrian crossing
- The patient consultation on potential site locations was not satisfactory

2 letters of support were received. The principal planning points made were as follows:

- Improved health facilities are needed
- Existing facilities are scarcely fit for purpose
- Public benefit outweighs the loss of a small field
- The existing pavement will need to be improved.

In response to the revised scheme, 4 letters of objection and one letter of support have been received which reiterate points previously made.

**Congresbury Parish Council:** (original submission)

Congresbury Parish Council is sympathetic to the requirements and need to provide a new facility for Yatton and Congresbury to ensure clinical and administrative needs are met for both communities now and in the future. However, the Parish Council feels that the application should be REFUSED for the reasons set out in Appendix A at the end of this report.

**Yatton Parish Council:** (original submission)

Councillors recommend NOT supporting application 18/P/5592/FUL for the following reasons:

- The Parish Council wish to express that they are not rejecting the concept of a new medical practice; it is a facility that would be most welcome for Yatton and Congresbury. However, the concerns are in the selection of the proposed site and the flawed consultation process leading to that choice. Councillors felt that full and transparent consideration of all the site options were not made available for consultation allowing residents to express their views. The inclusion of both Parish Council's and their District Councillors on discussions for future infrastructure improvements on Smallway would be welcomed; to work in a proactive way with North Somerset Council to provide a workable solution of particular benefit to both communities but also to the wider district.
- The proposal was an unacceptable intrusion into the strategic gap between the two villages. The building would significantly and adversely affect the open countryside and rural setting of the strategic gap and was therefore contrary to policies CS19 and SA7. It was also of concern that it may set a precedent for infill development and village sprawl between Yatton and Congresbury causing the loss of individual character and identity of the two settlements.
- The new medical centre planning application provides no evidence of any infrastructure improvements or mitigation. These were deemed essential and should be implemented before building commences should approval be granted. A continuous pavement should be provided from both villages and controlled crossings to link up places where this may be difficult to achieve. The existing pavement was very narrow in parts especially for pushchairs and disabled buggies to pass each other so this would require upgrading. In light of historic queuing to the Smallway lights road marking to facilitate easier access particularly turning right on exiting the site should also form part of the necessary highways improvements. One measure worthy of consideration was to introduce a roundabout to facilitate the access and reduce speed at the location.
- Whilst the Parish Council welcomes any initiatives to reduce the use of the car it was envisaged that it would not be easy for many patients to access the facility without one due to the distances, poor public transport links, ill health or poor mobility. The provision of community transport has been mentioned in the planning application, but concern was raised regarding the reliability of this into the future.
- The Parish Council commend the comments submitted by YACWAG regarding the ecological and environmental impacts and mitigations for the site. It urges North Somerset Council to take full consideration of YACWAG's expertise, local knowledge and suggestions for improvements when considering this aspect of the application.
- The design of the building was not in keeping with the rural setting and open farmland aspect at that location. It was disappointing that more thought had not been given to creating a design that was more natural and blended more cohesively into the landscape and surrounding area.

**Other Comments Received:**

Environment Agency: No objections.

Natural England: No Comments.

Crime Prevention: No objection.

**Principal Planning Issues**

The principal planning issues in this case are: (1) the principle of development in this location, (2) the need for a medical centre, (3) highway and access considerations, (4) impact on neighbours, (5) archaeology, (6) ecology and (7) drainage.

**Issue 1: The principle of development in this location**

The site is outside the settlement limits of both Yatton and Congresbury, and within the Strategic Gap between these two settlements, as set out in the adopted Site Allocations Plan (SAP) particularly policy SA7. Policies CS19 and CS33 of the Core Strategy also apply.

Policy CS19 states that the Council will protect strategic gaps to help retain the separate identity, character and/or landscape setting of settlements and distinct parts of settlements. The supporting text indicates that identification of strategic gaps helps to prevent their erosion by incremental development, which would be detrimental to the settlements' separate identities, individual character and/or landscape setting.

Policy SA7 states that development within Strategic Gaps will only be permitted where the open and undeveloped character of the gap would not be significantly adversely affected, the separate identity and character of the settlements would not be harmed and the landscape of the settlement would not be harmed.

The gap designation is supported in the emerging Congresbury Neighborhood Plan which does not allocate the site for development.

The proposal is to build a two-storey medical centre with car park on an open field on the west side of Smallway and this will be visible from the highway (Smallway) and through a field gateway from the public footpath adjoining the site. The proposal would impact on the open and undeveloped character of the strategic gap.

Criterion 2 of policy SA7 highlights the need to retain the separate identity and character of settlements as required by policy CS19. The Strategic Gap, measured between the settlement limits of Yatton and Congresbury, is over 1km wide, but the sense of the gap in relation to these settlements can still be appreciated, notably from the above public footpath across the gap. The application site is at the southern end of a relatively narrow section of the strategic gap between the settlement limits of Yatton and development either side of Smallway with existing houses on the west side and nursery/garden centre developments on the east side. Protection of the part of the strategic gap between that development and Yatton, including the application site, is therefore particularly important.

While the nursery development on the east side of Smallway extends as far north as the application site, protection of the latter is still important, because its loss to development would reduce this important part of the strategic gap, mar attractive views across the wider strategic gap to the west and give the perception of a closing of the gap between the settlements.

The applicant originally proposed that the surgery building be higher in the gently sloping field, further from existing development, and thus more centrally located in this important narrow part of the strategic gap. In an effort to reduce impact on the strategic gap, the applicant now proposes a revised siting and design, locating the building in the lower south west corner of the field, with the car parking to the east, close to existing development (Corner Cottage). The revised design includes placing the footprint of the building lower into the ground and designing the building to better reflect the character of the landscape, with revised landscaping arrangements.

The full list of amendments has:

- Located the building into the southern corner of the site,
- Revised the access,
- Placed the footprint of the building lower into the ground,
- Revised the design of the building to better reflect the character of the landscape,
- Proposed planting around the sub-station, cycle store and chiller to help integrate them into the landscape,
- Proposed some enhancement to the grass areas, retaining some long grass meadow areas,
- Improved lighting design to ensure safety to users without impacting significantly on the countryside and wildlife,
- Proposed detailed landscaping and field boundaries

Notwithstanding the fact that these elements are an improvement on the original, the proposal would still have an adverse impact on the strategic gap. It would adversely affect the open or undeveloped character of the gap. The proposed medical centre building in particular would still be visible from Smallway and affect attractive views across the strategic gap from that road, from the nursery area to the east, and the public footpath (through the gateway) adjoining the site.

Therefore, it is concluded that the proposal would be contrary to policies CS19 and SA7 on strategic gaps, particularly with regard to significant adverse effect on the open or undeveloped character of the gap, and harm to the landscape setting of the settlements.

It is therefore necessary to assess any other material considerations to determine whether they outweigh the impact on the gap. In this respect, policy CS33 is also relevant. It states that “where the need for community facilities cannot be met within or adjacent to settlement boundaries consideration will be given to sites outside settlement boundaries where they are well related to the community which they are intended to serve” The locational strategy and need for community facilities is addressed below.

## **Issue: 2 The need for a Medical Centre**

Since the proposal is for a Medical Centre, and defined as a community facility, Policy DM69 of the adopted Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 applies. Policy DM69 states that

proposals for sporting, cultural or community facilities within settlement boundaries will be permitted provided:

1. the site is well related to the community it is intended to serve; and
2. the site is in a sustainable location, genuinely accessible by a choice of transport modes and to disabled people; and
3. the layout and design include features to facilitate combining other community needs within the same site unless this is agreed to be inappropriate; and
4. the proposal would not prejudice the living conditions of neighbouring properties.

Facilities will only be permitted outside settlement boundaries where it is demonstrated that the scale, character or potential impact of the facility would be appropriate taking into account the above principles. In addition, Policy CS33 requires that proposals within the rural areas outside the Service Villages will be strictly controlled in order to protect and prevent unsustainable development. The site is outside the settlement boundaries of both villages of Congresbury and Yatton so the applicant would need to demonstrate in terms of this policy that the scale, character or potential impact of the proposal would be appropriate. Policy CS33 also suggests that where the need for community facilities cannot be met within settlement boundaries consideration will be given to sites where they are well related to the community which they are intended to serve.

In terms of site selection, twelve possible sites were shortlisted included a scoring matrix for sites in and around Yatton, Congresbury and Claverham. The site scoring matrix was used to consider and compare these possible sites. The method allowed the sites to be sorted on the basis of a total score. This exercise produces a priority of the sites that may have been suitable for development for this healthcare facility. The site search was undertaken on a desktop basis using existing knowledge of the area, planning policy, supporting evidence, landscape impact and sites that were well related to the community, sustainably located and deliverable.

The application site received the highest score when assessed against the scoring criteria. The site was chosen as the preferred site, being centrally located within the catchment, adjacent to other built development, and along a public transport route. Additionally, the site was known to be available and affordable.

Whilst it is not included in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, the chosen location of the new building is intended to replace the health centres at Yatton and Congresbury, so could serve communities at both settlements. The site is reasonably well related to the communities it is intended to serve although is not ideal in terms of accessibility by pedestrians. Nevertheless, the route benefits from existing pedestrian footways sufficient to allow those walking to utilise footways between the site and the wider Congresbury/Yatton, recognising that the application site roughly lies between both settlements.

In addition to Policy CS69, Policy CS26 entitled 'Supporting healthy living and the provision of health care facilities' states that the planning process will support programmes and strategies which increase and improve health services throughout the district. The policy adds that new health facilities will primarily be delivered in areas of housing growth to meet the needs of new communities. The policy adds that new health facilities will primarily be delivered in areas of housing growth to meet the needs of new communities. In addition, the policy will promote healthier lifestyles that aim to reduce health inequalities, addressing existing deficiencies in provision and will support facilities which are located

within towns or service villages that are easily accessible by sustainable modes of transport or travel. Both the Yatton and Congresbury sites cater for approximately 12,500 patients in total. Since there are plans to develop additional housing in the Congresbury and Yatton areas it is envisaged these new households will increase the patient list size to approximately 15,000 patients.

There are a number of challenges with the existing surgeries. In Yatton the premises operate at full capacity, with little scope to increase patient numbers or provide additional services. The site has inadequate parking facilities for staff and patients and is some distance from a main bus route. In Congresbury the surgery is also operating at full capacity with little scope to increase patient numbers and provide additional services. The parking is sub-standard and because of its location the practice is unable to obtain flood insurance. Both premises were constructed in the 1970's, in a domestic style, and although the Yatton premises have been extended three times and the Congresbury premises extended once, both premises are no longer fit for purpose and are unable to support further growth and enhancement.

The applicant has suggested that the proposed development will provide improved facilities and access to quality services and sufficient space for staff to work and deliver better outcomes and offer value for money. The new facilities will also improve access to services during the evenings and at weekends, reducing the number of patients who go to emergency departments outside of core hours, and meeting the increasing demand from an ageing and growing population.

In terms of capacity the applicant has added that the existing practices are unable to offer any more placements due to space limitations, but intends, through this development, to expand placements with 2 GPs currently undertaking a programme to become accredited GP trainers. Additionally, in the last few years, the demand for appointments has steadily increased and the practice has found it difficult to match supply with demand.

Concern has been expressed about the impact of the pharmacy element. It is necessary to assess whether the development would be contrary to Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy through causing adverse impacts on the vitality and viability of Congresbury and Yatton village centres and resulting in inadequate retail provision in the two villages. In connection with the proposed pharmacy, given the nature of the 'in-house' pharmacy proposed and limited range of goods and services it would provide it is considered that the retail impact on the two villages would be limited. It would be difficult to justify a conclusion that the proposed dispensing pharmacy would result in the total loss of pharmacy provision in the adjoining villages to the detriment of the vitality and viability of these centres that would support a refusal reason based on this element of the application.

However, it is therefore considered justified to restrict the use of the pharmacy by condition such that it remains an ancillary element rather than establishing a significant retailing area. This will tie the opening hours to the operation of the medical centre and the retail area. It is considered that this would ensure that the pharmacy would serve the local need generated by the medical centre without significant detriment to the vitality and viability of village retail activity.

### Issue: 3 Highways and Access

Policies CS32 of the Core Strategy and DM24 of the Sites and Policies Plan provide the framework where development will only be permitted if it would not prejudice highways safety and the site can be readily integrated with public transport, cycleway and footpath links. Development giving rise to a significant number of travel movements will only be refused on transport grounds if it is likely to have severe residual cumulative impact on traffic congestion or on the character of the surrounding area.

The proposed access will be formed by a new priority junction with Smallway and has demonstrated that visibility of 120 metres is achievable in either direction, measured at a point 2.4 metres back from the stop line. This is considered appropriate for the road speeds in this instance. The applicant has provided swept path analysis using both a waste refuse vehicle, and an articulated vehicle. The analysis demonstrates that a waste refuse vehicle can safely navigate the junction without issue.

The site is predicted to generate 77 trips in the morning peak and 80 trips in the evening peak. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been produced as part of access location process and has recommended that a 3m wide ghost island right turning lane be provided and pedestrian crossing facilities including dropped kerbs and tactile paving are provided at the site access.

The council's document "Reviewing the sustainability and settlement hierarchy of settlements in North Somerset" indicates that acceptable walking distance (for those without a mobility impairment) for a facility like a health centre is 800m. The choice of Smallway, as a location, suggests that only relatively small parts of Yatton and Congresbury would be within this distance. It is however recognised that it would be impossible to find a location which is within 800m by footway of all dwellings in both settlements, and that having one medical centre for both settlements, rather than one in each, it is inevitable that accessibility by foot will be compromised.

Smallway is on a bus route and a trip to and from the proposed medical centre by bus would be likely to require crossing the highway, (there is only a footway on the west side of Smallway), and walking (or travelling by wheelchair or disability scooter) over 250m to/from a bus stop might be a deterrent. The route benefits from existing pedestrian footways and the provision of a new pedestrian crossing will allow those walking to utilise footways between the site and the wider Congresbury/Yatton areas. Although there are existing footways on the west side of Smallway the quality of the pedestrian routes is sub-standard and requires improvement.

Smallway also benefits from existing public transport provision with both north and southbound bus stops provided less than a three-minute walk distance from the proposed site. There are, however, no pedestrian crossing facilities provided at the Smallway/A370 Bristol Road junction. The applicant has suggested that given the limited number of pedestrian movements associated with the proposed medical practice and the layout of the existing junction it is not considered necessary to provide a pedestrian crossing facility. Nevertheless, there will be patients and staff living in the Yatton area that will travel to the surgery by bus and should be encouraged to do so. The provision of a simple pedestrian refuge island crossing near the existing bus stop (in front of Cadbury Garden Centre) will provide the required safe access. In addition, the provision of tactile paving and any further

design work associated with this could be dealt with by way of an appropriately worded planning condition.

Overall, there is no highway objection in principle to the proposed development, as submitted, subject to the highway conditions proposed and it is considered to comply with Core Strategy Policy CS10, CS11 and DM24.

#### **Issue: 4 Living conditions of neighbouring properties**

The design of the proposals directly responds to the site context and avoiding impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring properties. As set out within the Design and Access Statement, alternative site layouts have been considered through the design process. Landscaping provides a buffer between the proposed development and existing properties.

#### **Issue: 5 Archaeology**

Archaeological investigations have been taken undertaken prior to the application being submitted and did not identify any archaeological remains. It is possible that the limited nature of those preliminary investigations could mean that any potential archaeological remains were not encountered in those locations. Therefore, a further watching brief will be required during groundworks should this application be approved.

#### **Issue: 6 Ecology**

The application site is within close proximity to the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC of which Kings Wood is a component part. Policies CS4 of the Core Strategy, and DM8 of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 seek to protect priority habitats and development that could directly or indirectly harm protected species will not be permitted unless the harm can be avoided or mitigated.

The application is supported by a comprehensive ecological survey including bat surveys which meet the recommendations in the *North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation Guidance on Development: Supplementary Planning Document* (Adopted January 2018). The surveys found a low number of horseshoe bat passes with less than 2 passes per night on average of lesser and greater horseshoe bats. It is accepted that the site is likely to be a commuting route used by horseshoe bats but not a key corridor or regularly-used foraging area. The detailed impact assessment is welcomed as is the principle for mitigation. Compensatory habitat following Habitat Evaluation Procedures (HEP) and recommendations in the SPD has been provided.

Nevertheless, the proposal will result in the loss of cattle and sheep grazed improved pasture and the site is located with greater horseshoe bat density zone A. The proposal will therefore result in a loss of horseshoe bat habitat foraging resource. Hence, it is essential that all opportunities within the landscape planting and design are optimised to offset this loss of a foraging resource within a key zone. Thus, mitigation will need to include the planting of hedgerows but also provision of flower rich meadow habitat and a formal planting scheme that comprises food plants and nectar-rich varieties known to support insect pollinators, but notably moth species.

The lighting, in and on building, needs to consider wildlife habitats and it needs to be demonstrated that the northern boundary hedgerow will remain dark at night (including when light spill from windows is considered) from April to October to ensure that compensatory mitigation is functional. A horseshoe bat night roosting feature should also be provided, as well as provision for bird nesting through a provision of nesting features with the landscaping. A simple interpretation board to describe the wildlife features and management of the landscaping is also requested to ensure future appropriate management is implemented and to inform people using the site as to the reasons why tall grass is likely present over extensive areas. These provisions will be controlled by condition.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will need to be completed for the site by NSC, in agreement with Natural England as the site is within 1km from King's Wood and Urchin Wood SSSI, a component unit of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. The HRA must be completed to assess compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Sufficient information needs to be provided to demonstrate that there will be no negative impacts on the SAC. These matters of detail will be controlled by condition.

### **Issue 7: Drainage**

The development indicates an increase in impermeable areas because of the building footprint and parking spaces which will generate an increase in surface water runoff. This has the potential to increase flood risk to adjacent land or the highway if not adequately controlled. The applicant has indicated that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and proposed attenuating pond will be used for the capture and removal of surface water from the impermeable areas sufficient to control runoff from all of these surfaces. A condition can be applied to secure these details.

When submitting detailed drainage plans, the applicant will need to include evidence that the revised location of the building will not impact adversely on existing surface water and groundwater flows and will not result in an increase in surface water runoff to any neighbouring sites and must not result in any new point sources of runoff. Before development commences written confirmation and a plan showing the location of an agreed outfall for surface water will be required which should include information on any third-party agreement which might be required.

The proposed outfall, which is a culvert beneath the adjoining track will need agreement with the land owner. The drainage details will also need to demonstrate how to deal with water quality resulting from the SSSI downstream.

There is no objection in principle to the proposed development, as submitted, subject to the drainage conditions proposed and it is considered to comply with Core Strategy Policy CS3 and DM1.

### **Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006**

As set out in the report.

## **The Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

The proposed development will not have a material detrimental impact upon crime and disorder.

### **Conclusion and planning balance**

Overall, the demonstrated need for new medical services for Congresbury and Yatton, in this location, has been established. Although the proposal is outside the settlement limits of both Yatton and Congresbury and in the countryside, there is no policy objection in principle, as set out in policy DM69, to the provision of new community health facility adjoining Congresbury that is intended to increase and improve health services in this part of the district. It is accepted that new surgery facility will enable the local health needs to be addressed and improve access to primary care for the good of the surrounding and growing community.

It is accepted the applicant has found it difficult to find a suitable location to serve both Congresbury and Yatton and the proposed location at Smallway is relatively well related to the wider community it is intended to serve. Whilst the proposed location is subject of local objections, the evidence presented in the application supports the need for a new facility that will help to overcome the condition and suitability issues experienced within the existing surgeries.

The proposed development will result in the loss of green space and have some impact to ecology and biodiversity, however, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions to mitigate against the impact, this is considered not to be of such significance to render the development unacceptable.

Subject to resolving concerns over access visibility, pedestrian links into the site, pedestrian crossing, it is considered that the highway arrangements will be satisfactory to serve the development in accordance with Policy DM24 of the Sites and Policies Plan DPD.

The proposal would not give rise to the serious risk of flooding and the proposal would also have a broadly neutral effect on protected species and on heritage assets, including potential archaeological interests. The proposal would not have a significantly harmful effect on the living conditions of nearby residential occupiers. These are all neutral factors in the consideration of the scheme.

Notwithstanding improvements to the siting and design of the building since it was originally submitted, the proposal would still have significant adverse impacts on the strategic gap and would be contrary to policies CS19 and SA7. In normal circumstances that would be likely to make a proposal unacceptable. That would certainly be likely to be the case with a proposal for other forms of development, such as housing.

However, in this case the proposal is for a much-needed community use, for which finding a site has been difficult. It is acknowledged that the applicant has gone to some effort to try to reduce the landscape impact of the proposal and, taking account of the positive aspects of the proposal, on balance these considerations outweigh the adverse effect on the open or undeveloped character of the gap, and harm to the landscape setting of the settlements as set out in Issue1 above. The application is recommended for approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Subject to (a) approval of external lighting arrangements and completion of a satisfactory Habitats Regulation Assessment; (b) approval of the on-site vehicle tracking plan; (c) details of pedestrian crossing, and (d) details of drainage outfall, the application be **APPROVED** (for the reasons stated in the report above) subject to the following draft conditions and any other additional or amended conditions or variations to the coverage of the conditions as may be required in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman and local member:

### Standard

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiry of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents and plans: (To be inserted)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

### Access

3. The premises shall not be occupied until the public accesses have been made suitable for use by disabled people in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that there is safe, convenient and attractive access to the medical centre for people with physical and sensory disabilities and in accordance with policy CS12 of the North Somerset Core Strategy and policy DM33 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1).

### Lighting

4. No development shall be commenced until internal and external lighting has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall, thereafter, be installed and operated so that the level of illumination, when measured in the horizontal plain, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority do not exceed the 0.5 lux levels.

Reason: In order to ensure that lighting does not adversely impact local residents in the area and to protect the interests of wildlife/biodiversity in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS4 and Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 development management policies Policy DM8.

### Highways

5. Prior to the commencement of the development, the sight lines at the proposed site access shall be set out to accord with the splays shown on plan ref: *(to be*

*inserted*). These splays shall thereafter be maintained clear of obstruction in perpetuity and no vegetation within the proposed splays shall exceed a height of 600mm.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring that the development does not result in inadequate parking and traffic problems on surrounding roads, in accordance with policy DM24 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

6. Prior to the first use of the medical facility a scheme showing how the design of signage, lighting and access alignment shall make the proposed site entrance legible and visible shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The approved arrangements shall thereafter be permanently retained at all times.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring that the proposed access is clear to drivers in accordance with policy DM24 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

7. Except where breached for the new access, the existing boundary wall on Smallway shall be retained at its existing height and in the existing materials.

Reason: To contribute towards maintaining the character and appearance of the area in accordance with policies CS5 and CS12 of the North Somerset Core Strategy.

## **Parking**

8. The approved car park shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plans with each space clearly line-marked and available for use on or prior to first occupation of the building hereby approved. Furthermore, the use of the parking spaces shall be restricted to users of the medical facility only.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring that the development does not result in inadequate parking and traffic problems on surrounding roads, in accordance with policy DM24 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

9. The use hereby permitted shall not be commenced until secure covered parking facilities for bicycles have been provided in accordance with details to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall thereafter be permanently retained and kept available for the parking of bicycles at all times.

Reason: To ensure that secure cycle parking facilities are provided in order to encourage the use of more sustainable transport choices and in accordance with policies CS1 and CS11 of the North Somerset Core Strategy, policy DM28 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1) and the North Somerset Parking Standards SPD.

### **Footpath works and Pedestrian Crossing**

10. The development shall not be brought into use until the Local Planning Authority has first approved in writing a scheme of works under a Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 comprising a new pedestrian crossing on Smallway, tactile paving and renovated public footways into the site. These works shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and be certified in writing as complete by or on behalf of the Local Planning Authority prior to the first occupation of the medical facility.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with policy DM24 of the North Somerset sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

### **Travel Plan**

11. The development shall not be brought into use until a full Travel Plan based on the Interim Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The use of the premises shall thereafter be operated in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: In accordance with Policy DM26 of the Sites and Policies Plan part 1 Development Management policies and the Travel plans SPD.

### **Archaeology**

12. No development shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme of archaeological work should provide a controlled watching brief during groundworks on the site, with provision for excavation of any significant deposits or features encountered and shall be carried out by a competent person or persons and completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

Reason: To ensure that archaeological interests are properly dealt with in accordance with section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, policy CS5 of the North Somerset Core Strategy and policy DM6 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1 – Development Management Policies). An agreed programme of archaeological work is required before any other development commences on site in order to set out and approve the method statement and ensure appropriate mitigation and contingency strategies are provided should significant remains be encountered during the watching brief.

### **Drainage and Flood Risk**

13. The surface water drainage installation works shall not take place until full details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details need to include a plan showing the location of an agreed outfall for surface water and this should include information on any third-party agreement which might be required. Before these details are submitted, an assessment shall

be carried out of the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system in accordance with the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, associated Planning Practice Guidance and the non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems, and the results of the assessment provided to the local planning authority. Where a sustainable drainage scheme is to be provided, the system shall be designed such that there is no surcharging for a 1 in 30-year event and no internal property flooding for a 1 in 100-year event + 40% allowance for climate change. The submitted details shall:

1. i) Provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site to greenfield run off rates and volumes, taking into account long-term storage, and urban creep and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters; and
2. ii) Include a timetable for its implementation.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the development from surface water/watercourses, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2018, policy CS3 of the North Somerset Core Strategy policy and policy DM1 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (Development Management Policies). The information is required before works start on site because it is necessary to understand whether the discharge rates and volumes are appropriate prior to any initial construction works which may prejudice the surface water drainage strategy.

14. Installation of the sustainable drainage scheme shall not take place until details of its implementation, maintenance and management have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

The details to be submitted shall include:

1. a) A timetable for its implementation and maintenance during construction and handover; and
2. b) A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include details of land ownership; maintenance responsibilities/arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable urban drainage scheme throughout its lifetime; together with a description of the system, the identification of individual assets, services and access requirements and details of routine and periodic maintenance activities.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the development from surface water/watercourses, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2018, policy CS3 of the North Somerset Core Strategy policy and policy DM1 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (Development Management Policies). The information is required before works start on site because it is necessary to understand whether the discharge rates and volumes are appropriate prior to any initial construction works which may prejudice the

surface water drainage strategy.

15. Finished ground floor and ground levels should be set as shown on drawing 505D dated 18 July 2018.

Reason: To provide a sequential approach to the layout of the development in accordance with policy CS12 of the North Somerset Strategy and policy DM 32 of the Development Management Sites and Policies Plan.

## Landscape

16. No development shall take place until a detailed landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In accordance with Policy DM10 and 32 of the of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

17. All works comprised in the landscaping scheme to be approved shall be implemented during the months of October and March inclusive following the commencement of development.

Reason: In accordance with Policy DM10 and 32 of the of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

18. Trees, hedges and plants in any development phase shown in the landscaping scheme to be retained or planted, which during the development works or during a period of ten years following implementation of the landscaping scheme in that development parcel, which are removed without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority or which die, become seriously diseased or damaged, shall be replaced in the first available planting season with other such species and size as are to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In accordance with Policy DM10 and 32 of the of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

## Ecology

19. No development shall be commenced until an ecological protection and enhancement plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include provision for:
- (a) resourcing and management of small areas of grassland to promote a species rich grassland.
  - (b) measures including contingencies, to secure managed grass cutting over the whole site to promote late summer invertebrate prey species for horseshoe bats. education/ interpretation signage to inform visitors of the wildlife enhancements and the importance of the area to local bat species.
  - (c) A detailed biodiversity management plan to establish site objectives and management prescriptions to deliver the mitigation and enhancement measures
  - (d) A bat and habitat monitoring programme to assess the effectiveness of the biodiversity management plan, with monitoring commencing pre and post construction.

(e) Consultation with the local wildlife groups and other interested parties to ensure local biodiversity matters within the control of the applicant are managed in a way that is consistent with nature conservation objectives in the wider local area. Once approved the works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timing of the works unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that ecological mitigation and enhancement is carried out to an acceptable methodology and standard, in accordance with Policy ECH/11 of the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan and in accordance with DM8 and DM32 of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Publication Version 2015.

20. Prior to the commencement of development, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing full details of bird boxes to be provided around the site and bat roosting features to be provided within the design of the building. The approved details shall thereafter be provided prior to occupation of the building.

Reason: To ensure that bird and bat nesting and roosting places are provided in accordance with Policy ECH/11 of the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan and in accordance with DM8 and DM32 of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Publication Version 2015.

### **Construction Management**

21. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) or Construction Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before works commence. This shall include: details of enabling works; how the adjacent adopted carriageway will be kept free of mud and debris, method of works including: construction operation hours, construction delivery hours, vehicle parking for contractors, locations for storage and measures for the disposal of waste; measures for avoidance of harm to ecological features and trees. Works shall be implemented in strict accordance to the approved methodology.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring that the proposed development construction process is in accordance with Policy DM24 and DM8 of the of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies and Core Strategy Policy CS4.

### **Materials**

22. The proposed external materials to be used in the development hereby approved, including all external hard surfaced areas, shall unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing, comprise the materials shown on the approved plans, and as described in the submitted application supporting documentation, samples of which shall first have been provided and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Should any other material, or change of colour be proposed, then no further development, on that relevant part, shall take place until a sample or samples of any proposed change of material has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing.

Reason: In the interests of securing scheme that is sensitive to this rural location, in accordance with policy DM32 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development management policies.

### **Medical Use**

23. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Use Classes Order 1987(As amended) and the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), or any Order amending or revoking and re-enacting that Order, the use of the building hereby permitted shall be restricted to a medical facility serving the patients of Congresbury and Yatton and for no other use unless otherwise agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority wish to retain control over the use of this development on this sensitive site in accordance with policy CS19 of the North Somerset Core Strategy and policy SA7 of the Site Allocation Plan.

24. The pharmacy and ancillary retail sales area hereby approved shall be limited to a pharmacy and for no other retail use within use class A1 of the Use Classes Order 1995 (as amended).

Reason: To ensure that the pharmacy meets the need identified and to safeguard the vitality and viability of the adjoining village centres in accordance with policy CS21 of the Core Strategy and policy DM62 of the Development Management Sites and Policies Plan.

25. The pharmacy and retail sales/waiting area hereby approved shall be limited to 120m<sup>2</sup> on the ground floor.

Reason: To ensure that the pharmacy meets the need identified and to safeguard the vitality and viability of the of the adjoining village centres in accordance with policy CS21 of the Core Strategy and policy DM62 of the Development Management Sites and Policies Plan.

26. With the exception of out of hours emergency dispensing, the opening hours of the pharmacy hereby approved shall be limited to the opening hours of the medical centre. There shall be no retail sales outside these hours.

Reason: To ensure that the pharmacy meets the need identified and to safeguard the vitality and viability of the of the adjoining village centres in accordance with policy CS21 of the Core Strategy and policy DM62 of the Development Management Sites and Policies Plan.

### **Crime prevention and Security**

27. The building shall not be brought into use until a crime prevention and security statement and strategy has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In accordance with policy DM32 of the Sites and Policies Plan part 1 Development Management policies and Policy CS12 of the Core |Strategy.

## Energy

28. The building hereby approved shall not be occupied until measures to generate 15% of the on-going energy requirements of the use (unless a different standard is agreed) through micro renewable or low-carbon technologies have been installed and are fully operational in accordance with the approved details that have been first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the approved technologies shall be permanently retained.

Reason: In order to secure a high level of energy saving by reducing carbon emissions generated by the use of the building in accordance with policy DM32 of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 and Policies CS1 and CS2 of the North Somerset Core Strategy.

29. The building shall not be occupied until space and facilities for the storage and collection of waste and recycling materials have been provided for it in accordance with the approved plans and specifications. The said space and facilities shall thereafter shall be made permanently available for the storage and collection of waste and recycling materials.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority wishes to encourage sustainable recycling initiatives in the interests of local amenity and sustainable waste management and in accordance with policies CS1, CS3 and CS7 of the North Somerset Core Strategy and policy DM32 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1).

## Informatives:

1. Section 278  
The applicant/developer is advised that works within the highway in association with this development will require the developer to enter into a S278 Agreement (Highways Act 1980). The developer is advised to make early contact with the highways officer (Mr W Hole 01934 426707) so that the processing of the order does not impede the implementation of planning consent. The developer will be required to agree to the specification of the works, meet the Council's costs in the drawing up of the order, provide a bond or cash equivalent and meet the Council's inspection charges.
2. Traffic Management Act 2004  
The applicant/developer is advised that any works which affect the traffic capacity of the highway are subject to the Traffic Management Act 2004. This Act places an obligation upon local authorities to coordinate and manage the road network to ease congestion and delay. As the works in this approval are likely to require a part of the highway to be closed, approval for the closure will be subject to the provisions of the Act. The developer is urged to make early contact with the Council's Streets & Open Spaces Highway Maintenance Team (01275 888802) to 'book' any required road closure.

## APPENDIX A

### Congresbury Parish Council objection to planning application 17/P/5592/F

Objection to planning application 17/P/5592/FUL –

Erection of a two-storey building to be used as a Medical Centre - Land Opposite Bird Of Prey Centre Smallway Congresbury North Somerset.

Congresbury Parish Council **recommends refusal** of planning application 17/P/5592/FUL

Applicant: Mendip Vale Medical Practice

Position agreed at Congresbury Parish Council Planning Committee on 26th March 2018.

Objection

Congresbury Parish Council is sympathetic to the requirements and need to provide a new facility for Yatton and Congresbury to ensure clinical and administrative needs are met for both communities now and in the future. However, the Parish Council feels that the application should be refused for the following reasons:

- The Parish Council believes that effective consultation did not take place with regard to the application. Three meetings were held, one in Yatton and two in Churchill in 2016. Given that the application is to replace the surgeries in Yatton and Congresbury, it is believed that a consultation meeting should have been held in Congresbury to provide an opportunity for residents to attend. Therefore, the consultation failed as it was not inclusive and did not adequately provide an opportunity for Congresbury residents to express their opinions on a facility that affects them all.
- The site falls within the strategic gap between Yatton and Congresbury as identified in the Core Strategy. This strategic gap is essential in maintaining the local character and separate identities of the villages. It is feared that this breach of the Strategic Gap could lead to further development along this road and further into the area which would eventually destroy the strategic gap with detrimental consequences for Congresbury.
- The proposal, by virtue of its scale on the rising land to the north of Congresbury, is likely to be particularly apparent from Smallway and the largely open landscape of Congresbury Moor to the west. The building is proposed to be sited on the highest part of the site and as a consequence is also a long way into the Strategic Gap and will be visually very obtrusive. If the site has to be used, the building must be relocated so it is less obtrusive and more sympathetic to the current landscape and rural environment.
- The proposed application for the site does not adequately address safe and suitable access to the site and sustainable modes of transport including;
- There is no safe crossing for pedestrians at the Smallway/A370 junction. This junction is currently used by pedestrians trying to get to services but this is an unsafe practice as the junction is an accident hotspot and there is not a dedicated pedestrian crossing cycle. It is human nature that pedestrians will attempt to cross at this junction rather than use the crossing further up the A370 towards Bristol, adjacent Tesco's, or the crossings at the main junction of the A370/B3133 at Station Road and the High Street.
- There is no continuous footpath on the north eastern side of Smallway which is unacceptable especially without suitable light controlled pedestrian crossings.

- The gap in the footpath north of the site opposite Cadbury House is also unacceptable given the amount of traffic using the hotel and spa and the 40 mph speed limit. It is believed that a light-controlled crossing would also be required at this point to provide a safe pedestrian route that is an upgrade of the current pedestrian refuge island and dropped kerbs.
- It appears that the application does not provide for any additional safe cycling provision.
- The road is very busy and fast moving in places. The current speed limit is 40 mph. It is imperative that the speed limit is reduced to 30mph, especially given the large number of exits and junctions off the B3133 leading to private residences and services providers.
- The application plan seems to rely on public transport. Even though the proposed site is on a key road between Yatton and Congresbury, there is currently no effective bus service without patients walking from the main A370. This walk would be uphill from Congresbury and not an easy route for those who have mobility problem, have prams, pushchairs or toddlers as the road is very busy or those that are generally unwell and not able to over exert themselves. There are also very few buses that take residents or patients from the train station in Yatton; again the location means that very few would be able to walk from the train station to the proposed site of the medical centre.
- Therefore, it is considered that the medical centre is not in a sustainable location and the only feasible option for most patients would be to drive their private cars. As the train station is too far away and that the bus service is infrequent and the regular bus service only stops on the A370 a considerable distance from the proposed centre. The site cannot be safely accessed by foot or by bicycle unless considerable investment is put into infrastructure including pedestrian crossings and cycle lanes. The only alternative would be for the practice to provide private transport that would frequently pick up and drop off patients to the proposed medical centre from all local villages for all appointments in addition to the Practice electric car where it is understood that the driver picks up and drops off patients for urgent appointments.
- The location has been shown to be unsustainable in that the vast majority of patients and staff would drive their private cars as there is no other viable alternative. The proposed medical centre has been placed between Yatton and Congresbury as this is on a main road between the two settlements and would be perceived as not favouring one village over another. However, this site prevents any sustainable means of transport; this would not be the case if a suitable location was chosen in either Congresbury or Yatton. If this were the case the location would be within safe walking or cycling distance for either Congresbury or Yatton residents. 3 Congresbury Parish Council objection to planning application 17/P/5592/F
- The Parish Council is very disappointed that the plans for the medical centre include the provision of a pharmacy. This was adamantly resisted in the consultation by the Parish Council and some local residents. The Parish Council understands why a pharmacy is required in centres where a local service is not provided. However, both Congresbury and Yatton have their own village pharmacies. These would be at severe risk of closing or would definitely close if a pharmacy was in the centre as it is understood that the vast majority of income for Day Lewis is through prescriptions. Congresbury is fortunate in having an established pharmacy where the residents have been able to build up a trust with the staff formed from a continuity of service.

- The Parish Council notes that the proposed building includes flexible meeting spaces that can be used by the local community for group sessions or community meetings. This does not appear to be a good use of space especially as the building is considered to be large. Meeting rooms are already provided in many community buildings in both Yatton and Congresbury and additional meeting spaces would be in direct competition with these spaces and community assets.
- In conclusion Congresbury Parish Council objects to the current application. Congresbury has had two recent planning appeals dismissed where significant weight was given to the fact that the sites were not appropriate with regard to accessibility to local services and facilities from the site by means other than the private car. The Parish Council feels that this is the same for the proposed site for the medical centre. Currently there is no other option for patients apart from their private car especially if they are disabled, vulnerable or have any issues that prevent them walking a considerable distance.
- The planning appeals were also dismissed on landscape grounds even though the locations of the proposed developments on the southern edge of Congresbury are not protected by any formally designated protection. This is not the case for the proposed site of the medical practice which is clearly in the protected Strategic Gap which aims to safeguard the individuality and character of the settlements and also in this case protects against the loss of openness and rurality within the landscape.