

Oath to Burrowbridge Pioneer Dredging

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Introduction

These boards provide information about proposals to dredge a 2.2km (1.4 mile) stretch of the River Parrett, from Stathe down to the confluence of the Rivers Parrett and Tone at Burrowbridge.

The proposals are put forward by the Parrett Internal Drainage Board on behalf of the Somerset Rivers Authority using Growth Deal funding from the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership.

If the proposals are approved, dredging will be done between September and November 2019.

Overview of the scheme

The proposed works and associated activities are:

- Dredging 2.2km of the River Parrett and removing 22,000m³ of sediment
- Vegetation management and habitat restoration and enhancement to enable dredging works
- Access for, and movement of, a limited number of vehicles / equipment to enable dredging works
- Placing and re-using dredged sediment to reinforce the outer river banks and restore to grassland
- Ecological and environmental monitoring and management to ensure no long-term negative effects

Upon completion this dredging will positively contribute to:

- Relieving existing flood extents and durations on Aller Moor, King's Sedgemoor, Moorlinch, Muchelney Level, Huish Level, Wet Moor, King's Moor, and Witcombe Bottom
- Reducing the duration of flooding affecting the surrounding road network
- Reducing the impacts of flooding on businesses and the wider community
- Reducing the impact of flooding on properties and their ground in Flood Zone 3
- Any reduction in benefits on Currymoor will be mitigated in the short term by additional pumping or other works

Please respond by

June

1

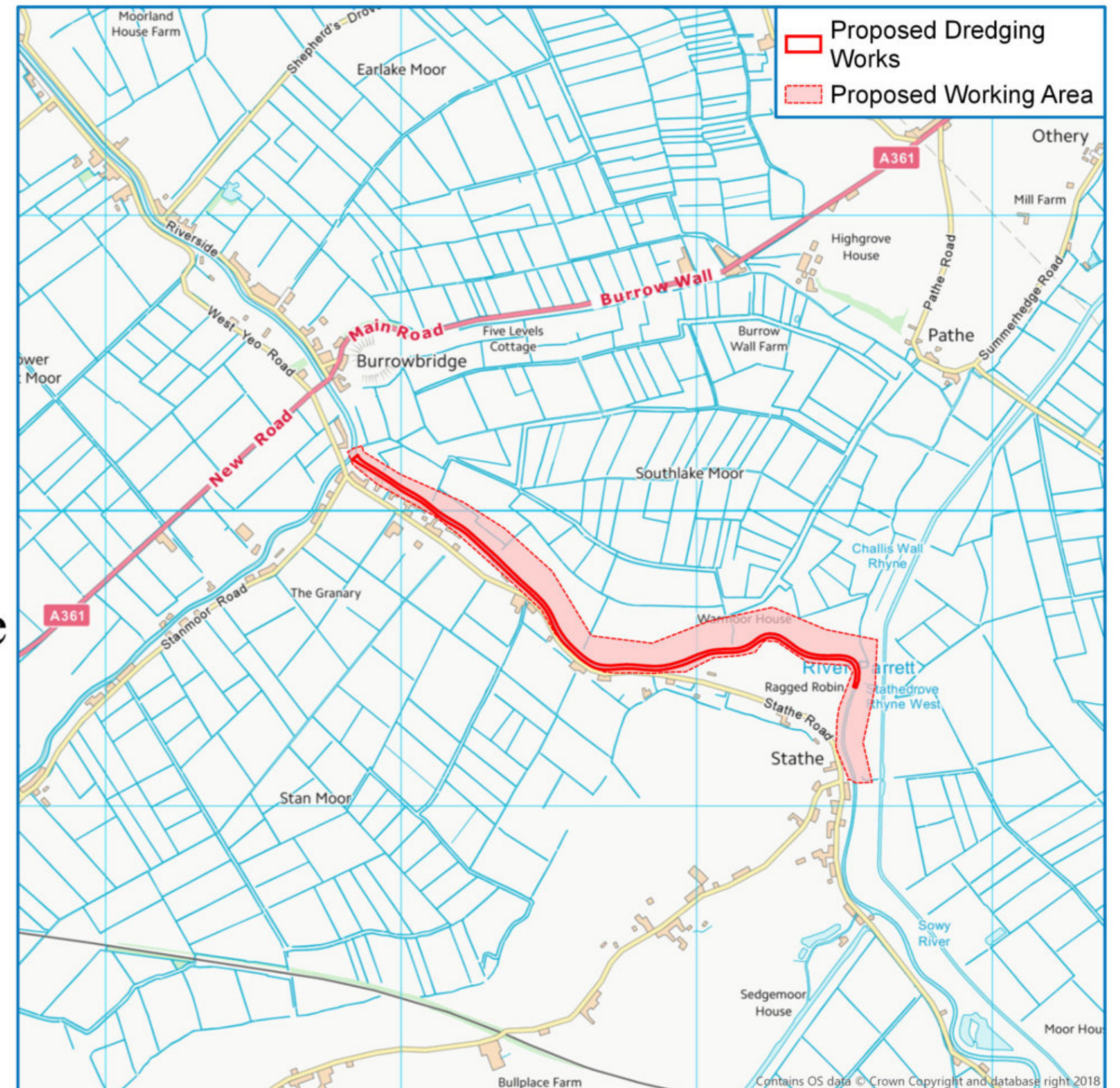
Consultation and engagement

Following extensive discussions with project partners we now want to hear your views. We are consulting from:

1st May 2019 until 1st June 2019

We would appreciate your feedback on:

- The details of the proposals for both the dredging and associated activities
- How you think the proposals may affect you, your land, or your business



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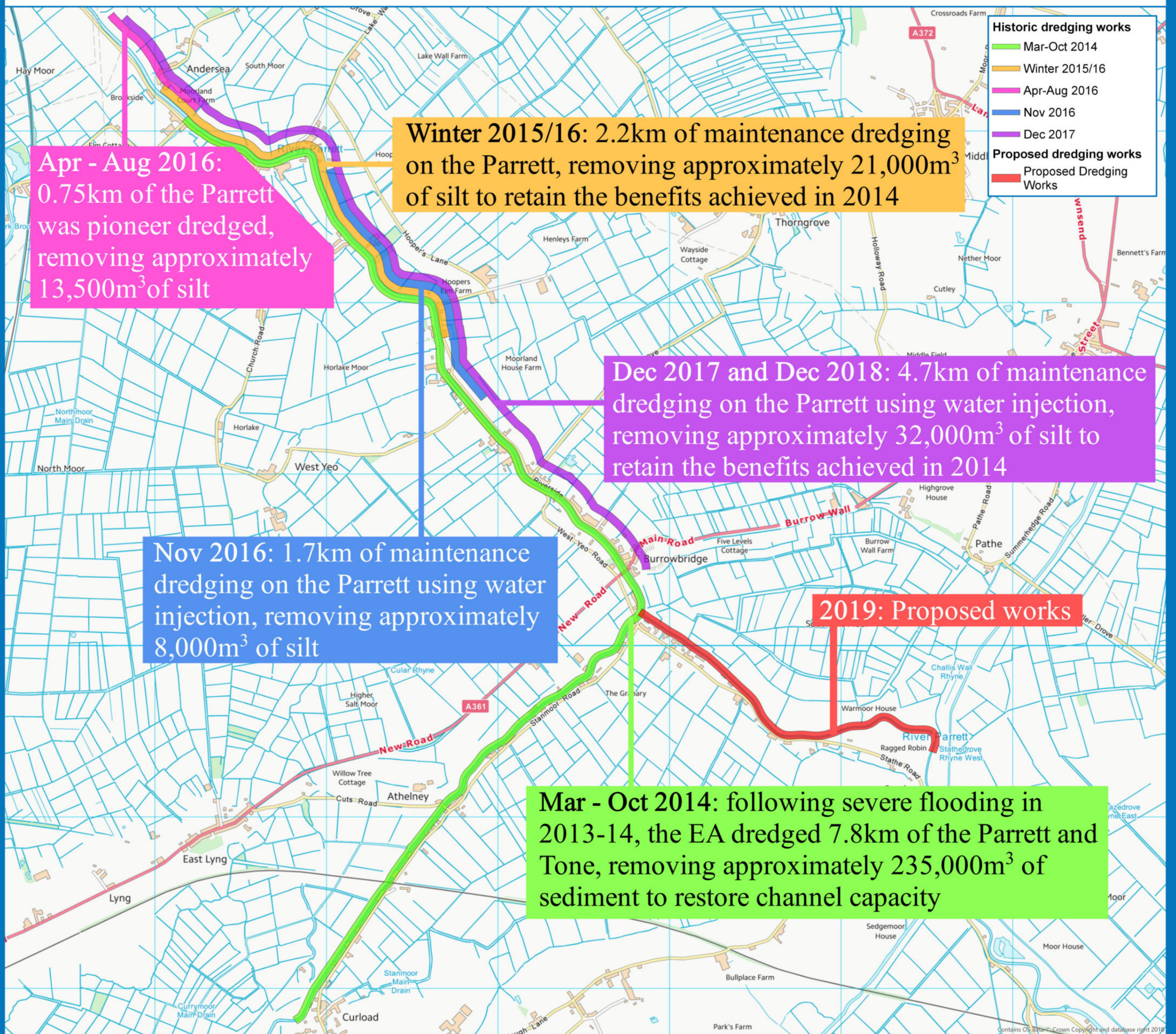
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Strategic context

During the severe floods of 2013-14, a 20 Year Flood Action Plan for Somerset was produced. The Plan is overseen by the SRA. The Plan's main objective is to reduce the frequency, depth and duration of flooding. It also aims to increase Somerset's resilience to flooding, to maintain access and ensure strategic road and rail connectivity.

Dredging is part of the Plan. The pioneer dredging of 2014 and 2016 significantly cut the risk of flooding to more than 125 properties, and to the A361. Maintenance dredging has helped to preserve these benefits. The scheme now proposed is designed to help Somerset make further 20 Year Flood Action Plan progress.



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Location of works

The proposed works stretch along 2.2km (1.4 miles) of the River Parrett between Beazley's Spillway and the confluence with the River Tone at Burrowbridge. Surveys and assessments of the environment, engineering and safety risks have informed the proposed working area.

No dredging is proposed between Oath Lock and Beazley's spillway within this project.

Timing of works

If these proposed works are approved, the Parrett Internal Drainage Board hopes to start on-site preparations in August, then begin dredging in September. Works are expected to take no more than 10 weeks.

Further activities to finalise bank profiles, restore and manage vegetation, make wider ecological enhancements and monitor the effects of the work will be done in 2019-20.

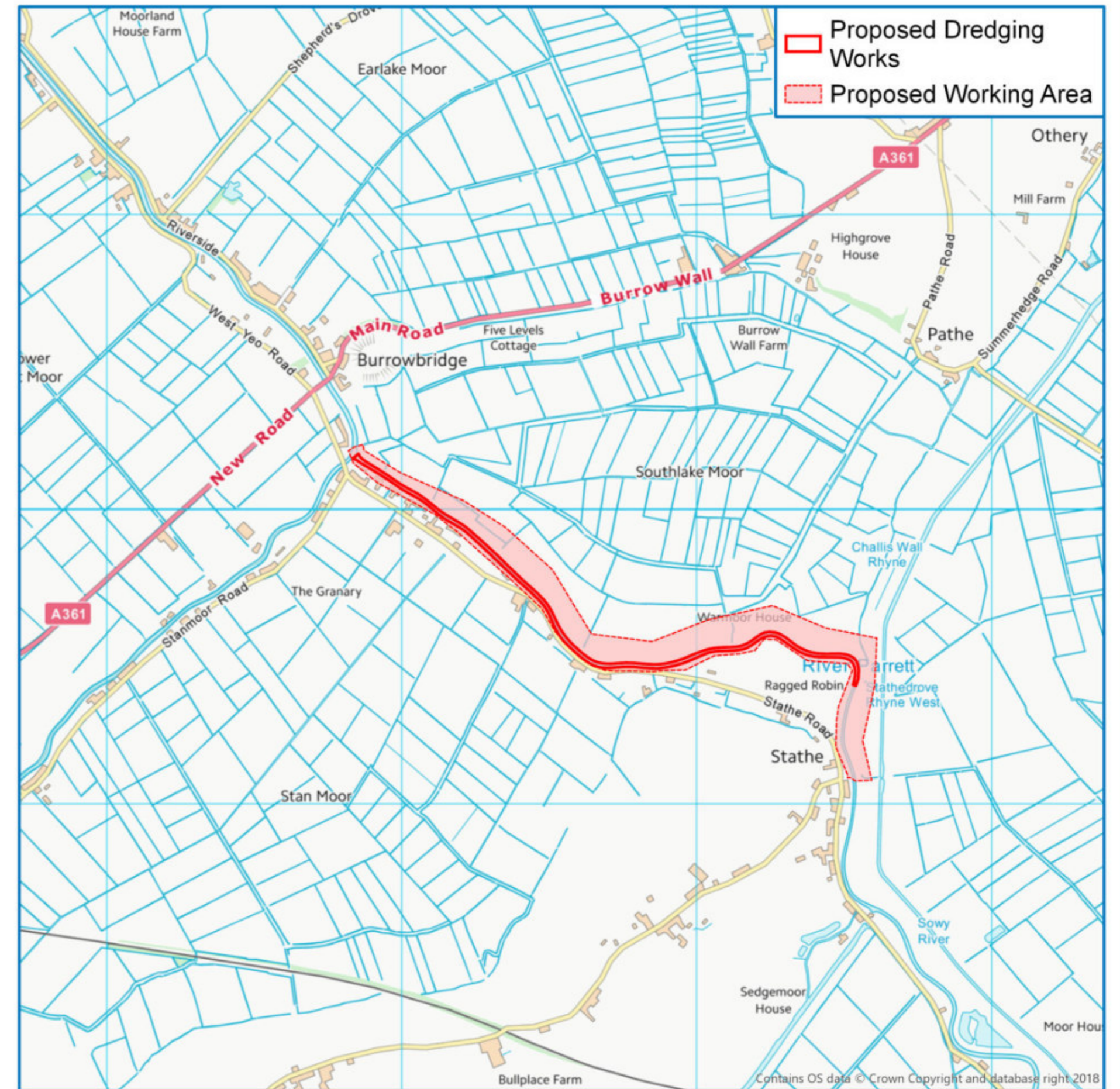
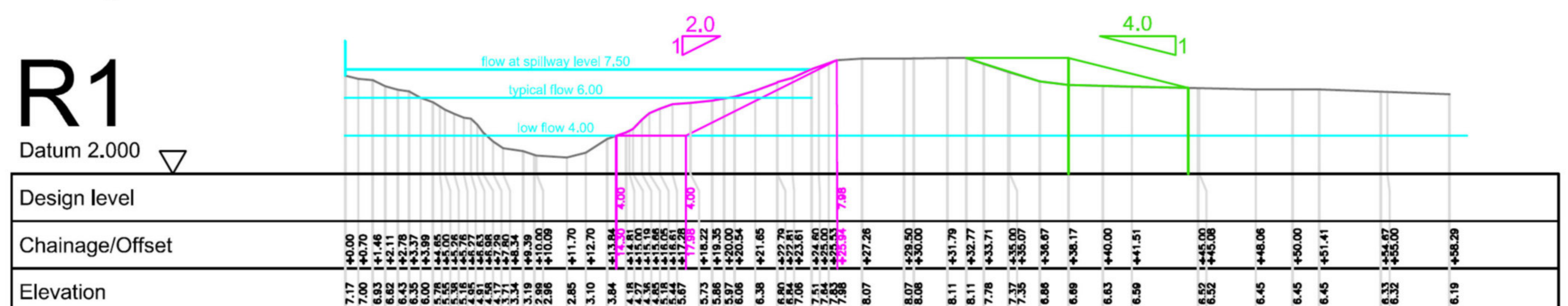
Carrying out the works

The works will aim to remove 22,000m³ of sediment from 2.2km (1.4 miles) of the Parrett which should result in 3-4 cubic metres per second of additional flood water conveyance at low tide in the Parrett at Burrowbridge.

The works will be carried out by long reach excavators working from, or near, the bank crest of the right bank (as facing downstream). Sediment removed from the banks will be deposited on the landward side of the right flood bank (as facing downstream) which will also strengthen its function as a reservoir dam wall. The level of the bank crest will not be raised above existing levels.

In some areas, this will create two-stage channels with marginal berms and areas of shallow water. These improvements have the potential to substantially increase habitat diversity for water vole, otter, fish, birds and invertebrates. A reedy fringe of marginal vegetation 1-2m wide will remain along the left-hand bank, and up to 1km of the right-hand bank to ensure critical habitat is retained at all times.

A sample cross-section of the works is shown below:



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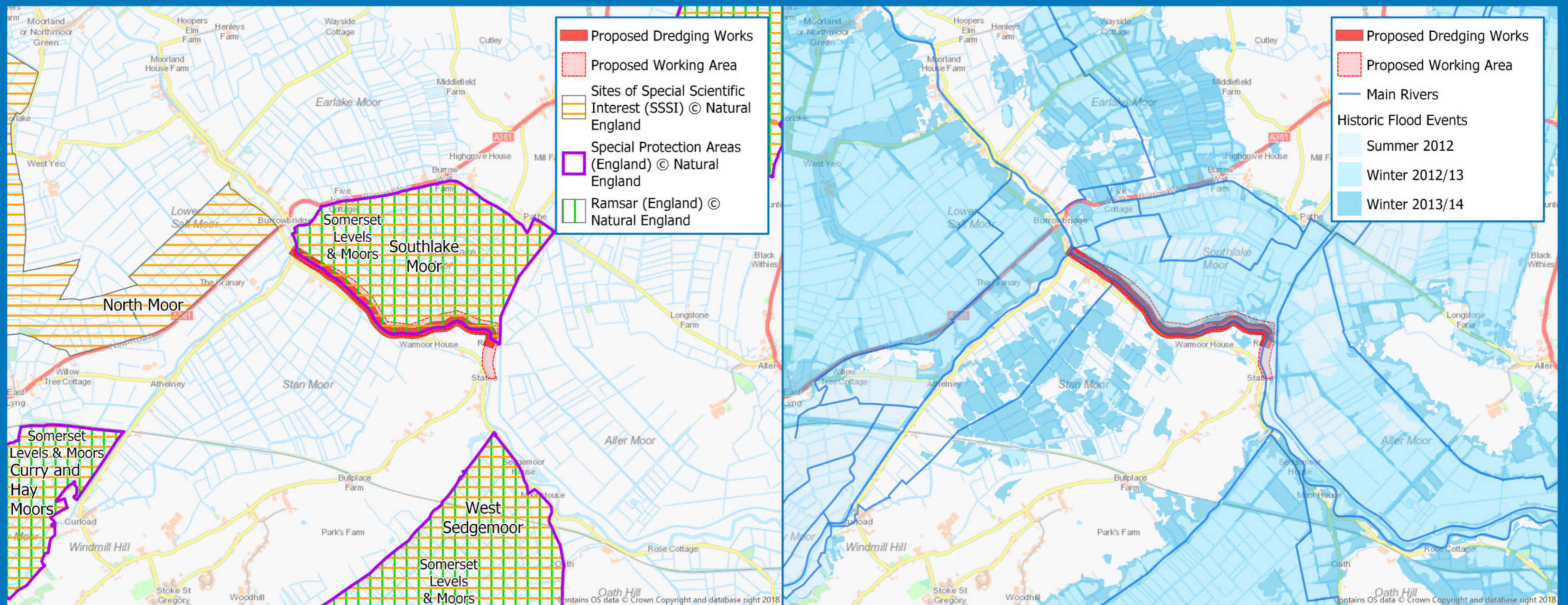
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Regulatory framework

This proposed dredging is considered in law to be a development activity. If approved it will be carried out by the Parrett Internal Drainage Board (PIDB) using powers delegated by the Environment Agency through a Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PSCA).

While the works are considered to be permitted development under Class D of Part 13 (water and sewerage) of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, the PIDB also has to satisfy the formal process of examining the project in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an impartial and systematic process that ensures that the environmental effects of proposed development are fully considered before it proceeds. It draws on a detailed understanding of the current environmental conditions (the baseline), the potential effects of development and consultation with key stakeholders.

This allows adverse effects to be 'designed out' of the proposed development and, where this is not possible, for suitable mitigation measures to be included. Once suitable mitigation measures have been agreed the design is 'frozen' and an assessment of likely significant effects is carried out. The findings of the EIA process are reported in a document called an Environmental Statement (ES).

The ES has to meet certain legal standards. These broadly set the main headings, outline topics to be considered, which stakeholders to consult, as well as how to detail the timescales of the development and any proposed mitigation.

The final design of the proposal will be informed by the conclusions of the ES, a Water Framework Directive Compliance Assessment, an Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2 Habitats Regulations Assessment) as required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and the requirements of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010.

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Scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment

A detailed report (called a 'scoping report') has been prepared to identify the content of the ES and the potential effects from the proposal. The final scope of the assessment will be determined following feedback from project partners, key stakeholders and responses received through this consultation. It will also take on board further information received during the course of the EIA process.

Scoped in

At this stage the scope of the assessment considers potential effects on the following:

- Local communities
- Local businesses
- Transport network
- Biodiversity
- Surface water environment

Scoped out

The proposals are not considered to have the potential to significantly affect:

- ✗ Landscape and visual amenity
- ✗ Noise
- ✗ Air quality
- ✗ Archaeology and cultural heritage
- ✗ Land quality
- ✗ Traffic and transport
- ✗ Waste

Supporting assessments

A number of detailed supporting assessments have been completed to define the current baseline environmental conditions as they relate to: habitats and species of plants and animals, hydrological modelling and flood conditions, sediment quality and condition, geotechnical and engineering conditions, archaeological features, and recreational, transport, community and business assets.

Initial consultation and exchange of information has been completed with key project partners and stakeholders. Further consultation is on-going and will inform the evolution of the project, the scope of any further assessment and the final design of the proposals.

A wide range of design, mitigation and enhancement measures have already been identified and will be further developed during the course of the EIA. These, and any further measures identified through the Water Framework Directive Assessment and the Appropriate Assessment, will be incorporated into the final design and reported in the ES. The need for ongoing maintenance in the context of

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Let us know what you think

We are consulting from: **1st May 2019 - 1st June 2019**

We are very keen to hear your views on the proposals and would appreciate your feedback on:

- The details of the proposals for both the dredging and associated activities
- How you think the proposals may affect you, your land, or your business

You can let us know what you think by filling out a feedback form today, using our online survey, or by downloading an electronic feedback form and returning it by post or email to the address below.

Online Survey123 Form:

<https://arcg.is/1PjGbT>



Electronic Form

<http://somersestdrainageboards.gov.uk/operations/projects>

<https://www.somersestriversauthority.org.uk/news>

Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium

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33-34 Market Street

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Somerset

TA9 3BW

Email: admin@somersestdbs.co.uk

What comes next?

Following the completion of this consultation period, we will consider all feedback received and produce a consultation report. This report will provide a summary of key issues and how the proposals have taken feedback into account (where feasible), it will also document any changes to the proposals. This, alongside other information, will be taken into account in the EIA and final proposal design. Once the final ES has been published a further period of consultation will commence to inform the PIDB's determination of the dredging proposals.

Initial consultation
on proposed
works

1st May - 1st June

Analyse feedback
and produce
Consultation Report

June

Formal consultation
on Environmental
Statement

July

PIDB determines
whether to proceed
with proposed works

August

Begin work on site

**August or
September**