LITTLE MILTON

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2018 – 2033

PLAN MADE – NOVEMBER 2018

Little Milton Parish Council
August 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following summarises the Neighbourhood Plan for the busy reader.

1. This Neighbourhood Plan covers the parish of Little Milton and sets development policies for the period 2018-2033.

2. It builds on policies laid down in South Oxfordshire District Council's (SODC's) Development Plan, and responds to the need for more houses, particularly as defined in the emerging Local Plan to 2033.

3. Little Milton is classified by SODC as a Smaller Village. The emerging Local Plan looks for growth in smaller villages of 5-10% (10-20 houses pro-rata for Little Milton), to be realised through infill or developments on suitable sites. As a smaller village, Little Milton is a less sustainable location for significant growth than other settlements in South Oxfordshire.

4. This Neighbourhood Plan does not identify sites for development but rather sets out policies against which proposals for new development, alterations and extensions can be assessed in the future.

5. In formulating this Plan, the Steering Group has consulted widely, including holding events at which villagers' views were sought and by conducting a village survey in 2016. The work also builds on the Little Milton Village Plan 2014 and the wide-ranging village survey of 2013. The Steering Group has also consulted other relevant authorities such as OCC Highways, Thames Water, BBOWT, etc.

6. In addition, a wide range of evidence to support the Plan has been gathered together and has been published in four Appendices to the Plan and in seven Background Evidence Studies.

7. The Plan recognises certain key policies set at local authority or national level, all of which apply to Little Milton, and which cover development. The following are of particular note:

    1. Oxford Green Belt
    2. Areas of medium to high flood risk
    3. Little Milton Conservation Area
    4. Areas of high grade agricultural land
    5. Locations close to high voltage power lines

8. Census data (2001 and 2011) and locally-conducted village surveys indicate that the younger adult population of the village has declined over the last 17 years. This Plan encourages the building of homes which people can afford to buy or rent and which are better suited to younger adults and their families.

9. The Plan also identifies a need for a small number of affordable houses in the village for those with a local connection.

10. Villagers have placed a high priority on reducing through traffic volumes in the village and reducing the number of HGVs. Therefore, as well as addressing future housing needs, the Plan also considers Roads and Traffic in some detail. However the scope of what can be achieved to mitigate the effects of traffic within a Neighbourhood Plan is limited.

11. The Plan sets policies which define the overall Spatial strategy and development pattern, including:

    1. Spatial Strategy and Development Pattern
    2. Mitigation of Flood Risk
    3. High Grade Agricultural Land

12. The land covered by the Oxford Green Belt is identified.

13. The Plan seeks to maintain the atmosphere and sense of community of the village and conserve its historic and rural character, and sets policies covering:

    1. Conservation of Heritage Assets
    2. Design and Character

14. The Plan also seeks to conserve the local landscape and environment and to minimise the impact of development on the surrounding countryside, landscape and ecosystems, and sets policies covering:

    1. Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridors
    2. Local Green Spaces.
    3. BBOWT Wells Farm Nature Reserve
    4. Protection of Views

15. The Plan aims to ensure that future development is within the capacity of the local infrastructure and facilities and sets policies covering:

    1. Community Facilities
    2. Residential Parking
    3. Waste Water (Sewerage) System

16. The current housing stock in the village and the housing need are covered in detail and the Plan sets a policy covering Dwelling Mix, particularly the size and type of houses to be built.

17. The Plan addresses Roads and Transport, particularly the potential impact of new strategic settlements (particularly Chalgrove Airfield), the planned new bridge over the River Thames near Culham and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway. A policy is set covering Road Developments.

18. The Plan aims to maintain a sensible balance in the parish between housing, employment, health and well-being, community facilities, open spaces, roads, agriculture, wildlife habitats and water courses. A specific policy is set covering Employment and Commercial Development.

19. A Neighbourhood Plan can only be about land use and policies covering development which themselves require planning permission. However, so as to paint a complete picture of the community, a number of aspirations are also documented, largely based on the Little Milton Village Plan 2014, covering such subjects as HGV weight limits, speed limits, bus services, etc. However no specific policies are set covering these topics as they are outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

FOREWORD

This Neighbourhood Plan covers the parish of Little Milton. Neighbourhood Planning allows a community to have a strong voice in how development ie. the use of land, should be shaped in their town or village in the future. The Plan must be firmly based on national and local authority policies, but also considers how those policies should be applied specifically in the parish of Little Milton and expands on those policies with local detail where appropriate.

The Parish Council wishes to thank members of the Steering Group who produced the Plan, the many outside organisations who have given invaluable assistance and, most particularly, to all the villagers who have contributed to the production of the Plan.

TERMINOLOGY

The following terminology is used extensively throughout this document:

National Policy - Refers to policy set at Government level, and will therefore normally refer to policy specified in the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012). Note that as this Neighbourhood Plan was undergoing formal Examination, the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework. (July 2018).

Development Plan – Refers to the Local Development Plan as published by the current Local Planning Authority, South Oxfordshire District Council. This currently consists of Saved Policies from the Local Plan 2011, the Core Strategy adopted December 2012 and Adopted Neighbourhood Plans. At the time of preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan, SODC were drafting the emerging Local Plan to 2033.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used extensively throughout this document:

BBOWT	Bucks, Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SODC	South Oxfordshire District Council
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TVERC	Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre

MAPS

Most of the maps in this Plan have been produced using the Getmapping GIS Parish Online facility using OS OpenData datasets which are: © *Crown copyright and database right (2018)*

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SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Neighbourhood Plan covers the parish of Little Milton. It sets out policies against which, in conjunction with higher level policies determined at district or national levels, proposals for development within the parish will be assessed in the future. The Plan contains certain policies which are specific to Little Milton and which are designed to shape development in accordance with the wishes of the community. The plan also contains a policy concerning potential road developments in the parish.

1.2. The local planning authority is currently South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC). This Neighbourhood Plan is written on the foundations of SODC's adopted Development Plan comprising the Core Strategy 2012 and the saved policies of the Local Plan 2011 (and Adopted Neighbourhood Plans). However it also recognises that SODC's emerging Local Plan 2033 provides, amongst other things, the most recent evidence of the housing need and the way that need will be met. The NPPG highlights that neighbourhood plans are not tested against the policies in emerging Local Plans, but that the reasoning and evidence informing the emerging Local Plan may be relevant.

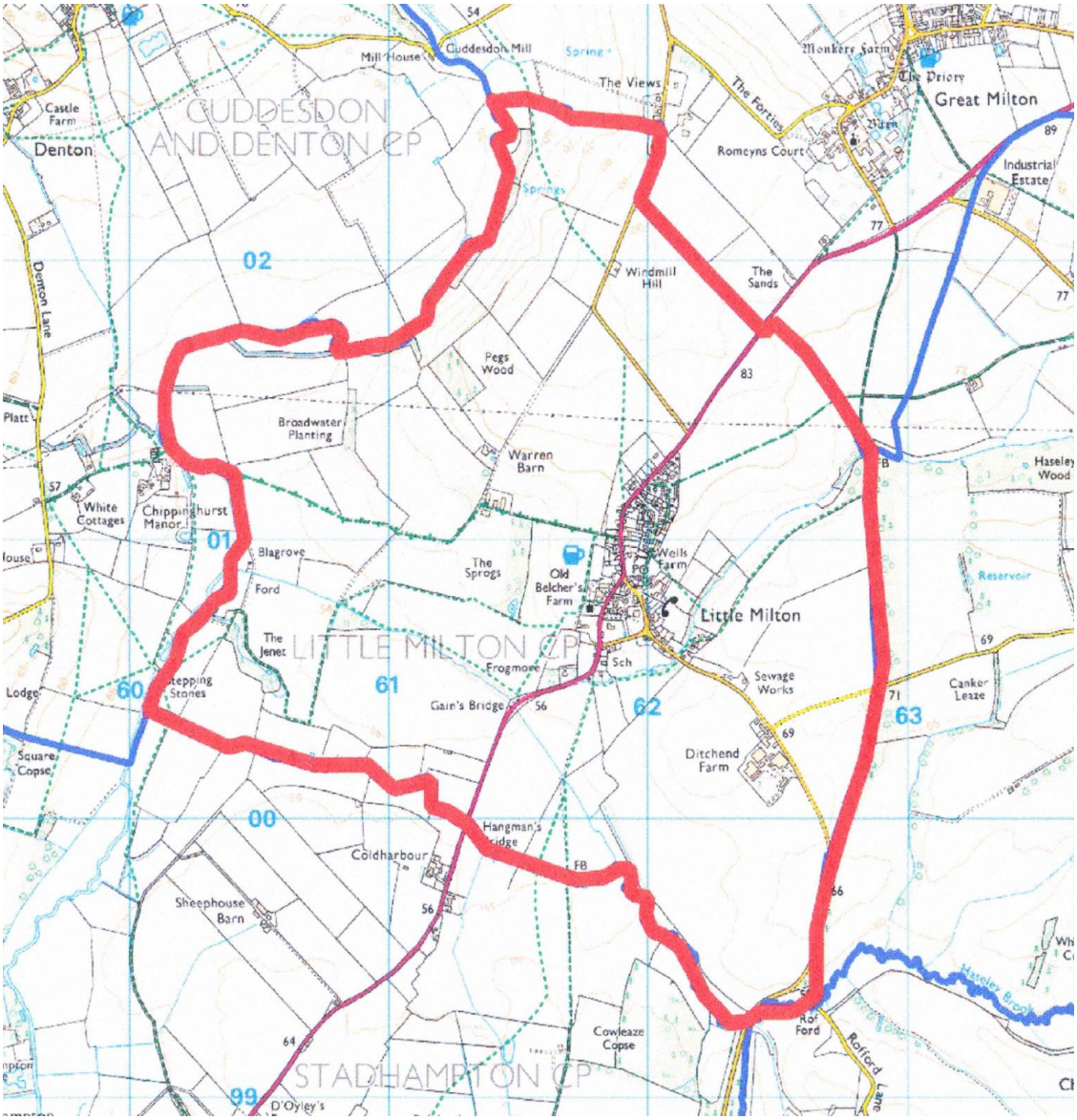
1.3. The qualifying body for the Neighbourhood Plan and lead organisation is Little Milton Parish Council.

1.4. This version of the plan is the **Plan Made – November 2018.**

1.5. The Neighbourhood Plan area, as approved by SODC, covers the parish of Little Milton as outlined in red:

MAP 1 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

North



Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan Area
(equals parish boundary)

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. The first step in the evolution of the Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan was to bring together information about the village and the parish which is relevant to determining future plans. The starting point was to understand what is already in place in terms of village size, population, housing stock, facilities and amenities, roads, public transport, etc. For a small village, Little Milton parish is a relatively complex area in planning terms, involving the Oxford Green Belt, a Conservation Area, flood risk areas, a Nature Reserve and areas of high grade agricultural land, which are all factors to be taken into account when assessing the suitability of land for development.

2.2. The many factors which need to be considered have been researched in detail, including the local environment, assessments of the village's character and also the character and capacity of the local landscape. A village survey has been completed. Open spaces have been reviewed and proposals have been formulated for the protection of important views in the parish. The complex issues which may affect roads and traffic in the parish have been researched.

2.3. All this work forms an evidence base which has itself drawn heavily on other published sources such as census data, SODC's own wide range of evidence studies, Ordnance Survey maps, Environment Agency data, Natural England studies, etc. Also the advice of outside agencies, such as the Highways Authority, Thames Water, etc has been invaluable in this process.

'I've found out all sorts of things about the village I never knew before'

2.4. Sustainability runs as a thread through the whole Neighbourhood Plan process. As part of the research, infrastructure and capacity issues as they apply to Little Milton have been assessed, drawing heavily on two studies carried out in the last 7 years by SODC (*SODC Settlement Assessments 2011 and 2016*).

2.5. Across the nation, there is a need for more housing. Little Milton's Neighbourhood Plan aims to respond positively to that need. In order to do so, it is necessary to understand the specific need in the parish and this is determined through the Housing Needs Assessment. This draws heavily on work done at both county and district level and also a housing needs survey carried out across the whole village in November 2016.

2.6. This Plan does <u>not identify individual sites</u> for development. The emerging Local Plan states that smaller villages such as Little Milton should consider development between 5%-10% of current (2011 census) size in terms of number of dwellings. The 5-10% figure represents around 10-20 new homes over the Plan period or about 1 dwelling unit per year for Little Milton. This is not a large number and it could potentially be delivered through minor development such as conversions, infill or plot subdivision.

2.7. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2018-2033 and:

Sets the framework and policies within which individual proposals for development that come forward within the next 15 years can be assessed.

Supporting Documents

2.8. If all the detail of the above information and supporting evidence were to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan itself, the document would be very large and unwieldy, full of footnotes and cross-references, and laborious to read. Instead, the detailed information and evidence has been compiled into Appendices to the Neighbourhood Plan and Background Evidence Studies.

APPENDICES			
Appendix	**Title**	**Content**	**Updated**
A	Village Character Assessment	Village character and how the village has evolved	May 2017
B	Open Spaces	Open Spaces review; Sites assessed for designation as Local Green Spaces	Feb 2018
C	Protection of Views	Assesses and defines protected views in the parish of Little Milton	May 2017
D	Housing Needs Assessment	SHMA; SODC Development Plan; impact for Little Milton; housing mix; social housing; house prices and affordability; need identified in the village survey; numbers and types of houses required	May 2017

2.9. Most of the Background Evidence Studies were completed initially in May 2017. However SODC published a considerable body of their own evidence in mid-2017 in support of the emerging Local Plan. As a result the Background Evidence Studies in the list below were updated in late 2017 or early 2018 with the most recent information.

BACKGROUND EVIDENCE STUDIES			
Part		**Content**	**Updated**
1	Baseline Information	Village population; population trends; current housing numbers and types; current and proposed local planning policies; affordable housing definition	May 2017
2	Planning Factors	Green Belt; Conservation area; Flood Risk areas; safe access to main roads	Apr 2017
3	Environmental Factors	Nature of the village; landscape & topography; environment; agricultural land classification, soil types; Wells Farm BBOWT; population; health; fresh water, sewerage & drainage systems; climate; air quality, pollution & CO2 emissions; power lines; biodiversity, fauna & flora and nature reserves; water courses; conservation area, listed buildings and historic interest buildings; sites of archaeological interest; environmental priorities	Oct 2017
4	Biodiversity and Habitats	Protected and Notable Species; Designated Wildlife Sites; s41 Habitats	Apr 2018
5	Landscape Character and Capacity	Landscape character; landscape capacity assessment	Nov 2017

	Assessment		
6	Infrastructure and Capacity	SODC Settlement Assessment 2011; SODC Settlement Assessment 2016; sustainability issues for Little Milton; capacity issues for Little Milton; key issues	Feb 2018
7	Roads	New Strategic Settlements; Strategic Road Developments; Potential Impact for Little Milton	July 2017

South Oxfordshire District Council's Development Plan

2.10. As previously stated, the Neighbourhood Plan has been developed on the basis of SODC's adopted Development Plan comprising the Core Strategy 2012 and the saved policies of the Local Plan 2011 but also draws on the emerging Local Plan 2033. Within SODC's hierarchy of settlements, Little Milton is classed as a **smaller village**. This classification is important as certain of SODC's policies are specific to smaller villages.

2.11. Development planning is a dynamic process. During the 15 year life span of the NP, it is anticipated that the Development Plan will be subject to revision and updating. In setting policies in this NP, they have been worded wherever possible so as to be responsive to any subsequent changes in the Development Plan or in national policy without the Neighbourhood Plan itself having to be re-written. Nevertheless, as the situation demands, or at the latest no more than 5 years after adoption, the Neighbourhood Plan will be formally reviewed by the Parish Council.

2.12. The need for the local planning authority to develop much of the future housing in partnership with local people, chiefly in coordination with Neighbourhood Plans, is recognised in the *Joint Housing Delivery Strategy for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse 2018-2033.*

Roads and Traffic

2.13. Notwithstanding the already high volumes of traffic, the potential impact of additional traffic is of major concern to the village. Traffic is forecast to increase in any event as a result of development already in the pipeline, as shown, for example, in the *South Oxfordshire Sustainable Transport Study for New Developments July 2017*. If certain options for new Strategic Settlements in the district go ahead within the time scale of this NP, further significant increases in traffic are forecast. Of particular note are proposals for large housing developments at Chalgrove Airfield, Berinsfield and Culham, plus possibly also the Harrington site (J7 of M40) and/or Grenoble Road.

2.14. Also strategic road developments, particularly the new Thames crossing at Long Wittenham / Culham and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, could result in increased traffic flows through the parish. These developments may lead to:

a) Improvements to existing roads, or
b) A bypass round the village as an adjunct to the existing roads, or
c) A new strategic road running through the parish, or
d) A new strategic road which runs outside the parish and which could take traffic away from parish roads.

2.16. This Plan takes into account the need to mitigate the effects of increased traffic flows through the village.

Policy Setting

2.17. A Neighbourhood Plan cannot set policies which override national or local authority planning policies. However background knowledge of some key national or local authority policies is essential to the process of understanding planning policy as it applies to Little

Milton. Therefore, for completeness and ease of reference, and where appropriate, this Plan simply summarises those key national or local authority policies so as to provide context for Little Milton Policies.

Consultation

2.18. The Plan belongs to the community and local residents and village organisations have been consulted widely during its preparation. It also draws on work done previously in the preparation of the Little Milton Village Plan 2014, which was itself based on a wide-ranging village survey conducted in 2013. Consultations in support of the NP process include:

a) September 2016 – Village meeting to seek endorsement of proposal to draft the NP and to seek initial views
b) September to November 2016 – one-to-one discussions with key village organisations eg. the school, estate agents and also certain outside authorities eg. Thames Water, BBOWT
c) November 2016 – Village survey which achieved a 73 % response rate
d) April 2017 – 2 x evening meetings to advise the village of progress and seek endorsement of the proposed vision and aims of the NP and the draft policies
e) June 2017 – small scale consultation through a stall at the village fete, where people were asked for their priorities for improvements in the village over the next 15 years
f) June 2017 – follow-up discussions with SODC officers and BBOWT.
g) July 2017 – a panel of 7 associate members of the Steering Group was asked to read and comment on the working draft of the NP
h) Jan-Feb 2018 – Formal consultation with all interested parties (Reg 14)

2.19. In addition, various statutory bodies have had a big part to play in assisting with the formulation of the Plan and their advice has been invaluable. Community First Oxfordshire have acted in a consultancy role and their advice has been of great assistance.

The Neighbourhood Development Planning Process

2.20. The Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Little Milton Parish Council as the Qualifying Body. As previously mentioned, the NP process followed on naturally from work done on the Little Milton Village Plan 2014 and then subsequent background work carried out by a working group within the Parish Council. In the late summer of 2016, a small Steering Group was established, comprising parish councillors, the parish clerk and village residents, working to Terms of Reference agreed with the Parish Council.

2.21. Development of the NP involves:

- The gathering of evidence from a wide range of sources
- Initial consultation with residents of the village, conducted through a village meeting and a wide-ranging village survey
- Consultation with other organisations, ranging from utility providers to the village school and shop
- Compiling the evidence and background information
- The setting of aims and objectives
- A dialogue with SODC planning staff, Community First Oxfordshire and other experts in the field
- Discussion within the Steering Group
- Further consultations with residents of the village

- Review of the various draft versions of SODC's Local Plan
- Drafting the NP
- Formal consultation with villagers, statutory consultees and SODC
- Responding to comments received and re-drafting the NP as necessary
- A statutory process whereby the plan is submitted for examination by an Independent Examiner
- Final submission to the village for approval through a referendum

3. THE PARISH OF LITTLE MILTON

3.1. Little Milton is a small village of just over 200 dwellings and with a population of just under 500. The village lies about 7 miles south-east of Oxford and sits astride the main A329 road on a low ridge overlooking open farmland. It is what is known as a nucleated village in which the older houses and historic farmhouses and buildings cluster around a central focus.

3.2. The village today divides into four distinct areas:

a) The historic core of the village forms the nucleated village clustered around the original farm buildings and contains many listed building or buildings of historic interest, some dating back to the 16th century. This area has been designated as a Conservation Area. The older houses are largely built in stone and many are thatched. Embedded within the historic village are some more modern houses, built before the Conservation Area was designated in 1984 which have had some impact on the character of the area.

b) At the north end of the village, Cremar Cottages, Old Field, Warren View and Thame Road which comprises mainly post-war development of social housing and housing for older people, and which is predominantly built in brick.

c) Chiltern View, an early 1980s open market development with common design features and materials across all 43 houses.

d) The community facilities at the recreation ground, namely the village hall, shop, post office & cafe and pre-school, which together are unique in the village, being built in a wooden log cabin style.

3.3. Only 9 dwellings in the parish lie outside the core village. 8 of those are associated with farms; 1 is on the site of what was once a windmill.

3.4. There are no buildings or plots of land within the village lying derelict and thus constituting previously developed sites that could potentially be suitable for development. However, some of the Ditchend Farm buildings, which lie half a mile east of the village, are currently in a poor state of repair. There is also one disused barn close to the River Thame in the west of the parish.

3.5. There is one small light industrial site created from converted farm buildings lying about half a mile west of the village at Warren Barn Farm. Otherwise the parish land surrounding the village is largely open country comprising agricultural land. Land to the north-east of the village, whilst actively farmed, also comprises the BBOWT Nature Reserve. Views from the village to the east look across 7 miles of open country to the Chiltern Hills; views to the west look across the valley of the River Thame, which forms the western boundary of the parish, to hill-top villages beyond.

3.6. Village facilities include the church, primary school, pre-school, pub, community shop, village hall, recreation ground with a multi-use games area and a children's play area. High speed broadband is available in the village; the system has been upgraded to Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC). There is no mains gas in the village.

3.7. There are numerous public footpaths running from the village. In addition, permissive access, which includes nature trails, is available across the BBOWT Nature Reserve.

3.8. Residents have described the village in the following terms:

- A place where people like to live and choose to stay a long time;
- A rural location, with good local footpaths and a nature reserve right next door;
- Picturesque houses and historic buildings, with much of the village being in a Conservation Area;
- Excellent facilities and amenities within the village, including the school, pre-school, pub, village hall, shop, post office, church, games area and play area;
- A strong sense of community

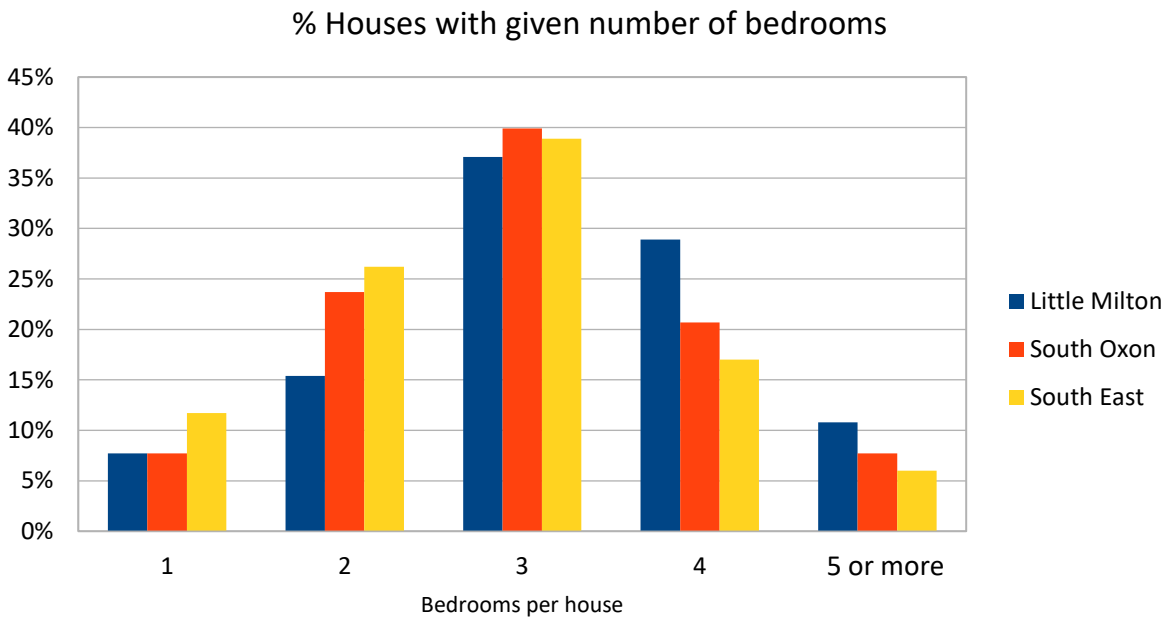
3.9. The one thing that spoils the village is traffic. The A329 carries over 9,000 vehicles per day in the centre of the village, with over 1000 vehicles per hour at peak times. 12% of that traffic is goods vehicles. The main road through the village is ill-suited to HGVs, having a number of blind corners, one of which gives on to a narrowing of the road between walls where 2 HGVs cannot pass and where minor collisions are common. Little Milton Village Plan 2014 placed the highest priority on reducing HGV traffic volumes through the village.

3.10. The Village Plan also highlighted the excessive speed and volume of traffic through the village.

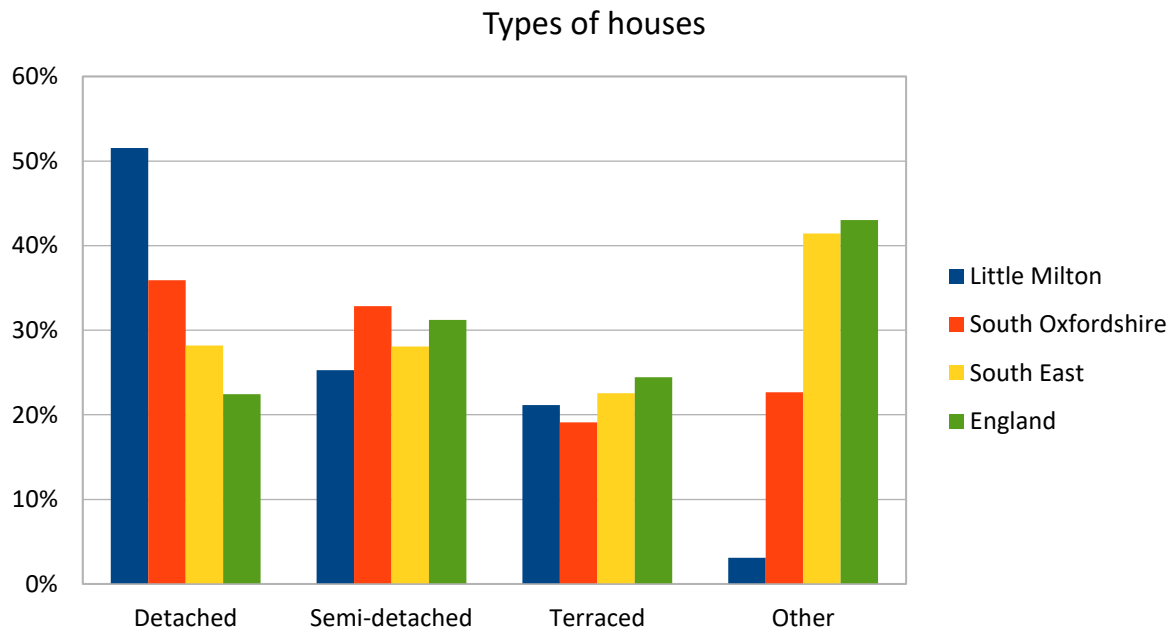
3.11. The village used to have several buses per day to Oxford and a weekly bus on market day to Thame. However these services were subsidised by the County Council who finally withdrew all rural bus subsidies in mid-2016. A trial period of running a reduced service to Oxford on a commercial basis was not viable. At the time of formulation of this plan, the village has no regular bus service out of the village. This factor has an impact on the sustainability of the village.

Current Housing

3.12. There are 204 houses in the parish. The mix of the current housing stock and a comparison with district and regional data is shown on the following graph:



3.13. The types of houses in the village are as follows:



3.14. Social housing represents about 18% of the housing stock of the village. The village currently has a slightly above-average number of social houses when compared with the District, County and Area, but an average number when compared with England as a whole.

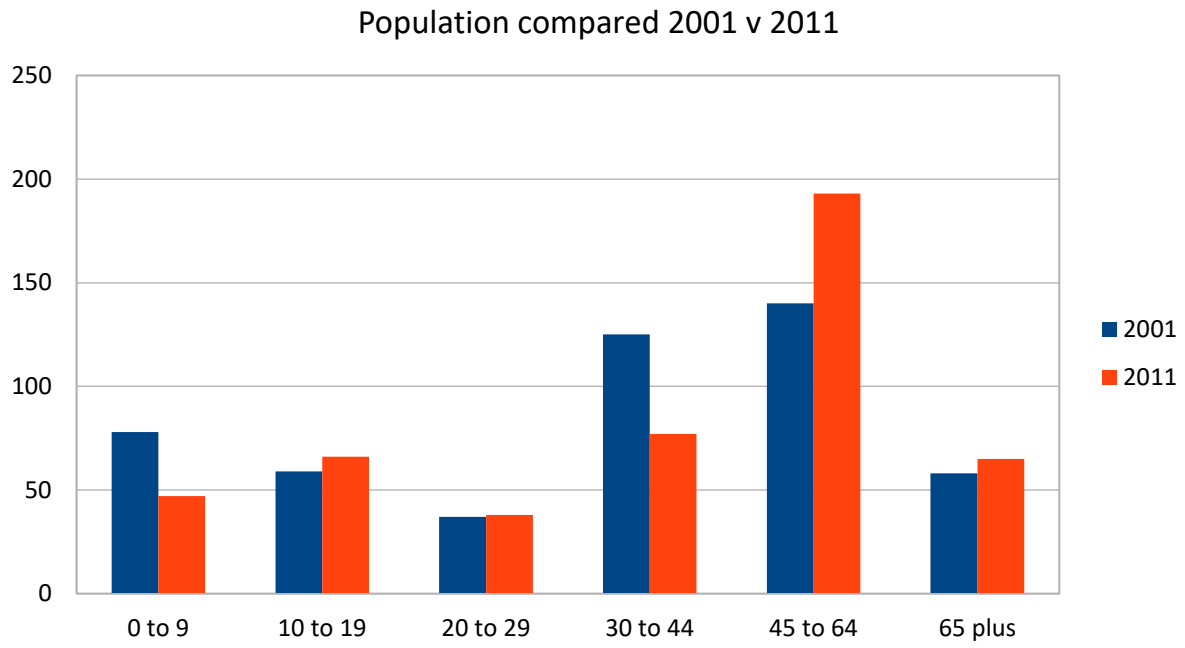
3.15. The number of 1, 3 and 5 or more bedroom houses in the village compares well with the average for South Oxfordshire and the South-East. The number of 2-bedroomed houses is below the district and regional average; the number of 4-bedroomed houses is above average.

3.16. The village has an average percentage of semi-detached or terraced houses, an above-average number of detached houses but virtually no flats, maisonettes or apartments

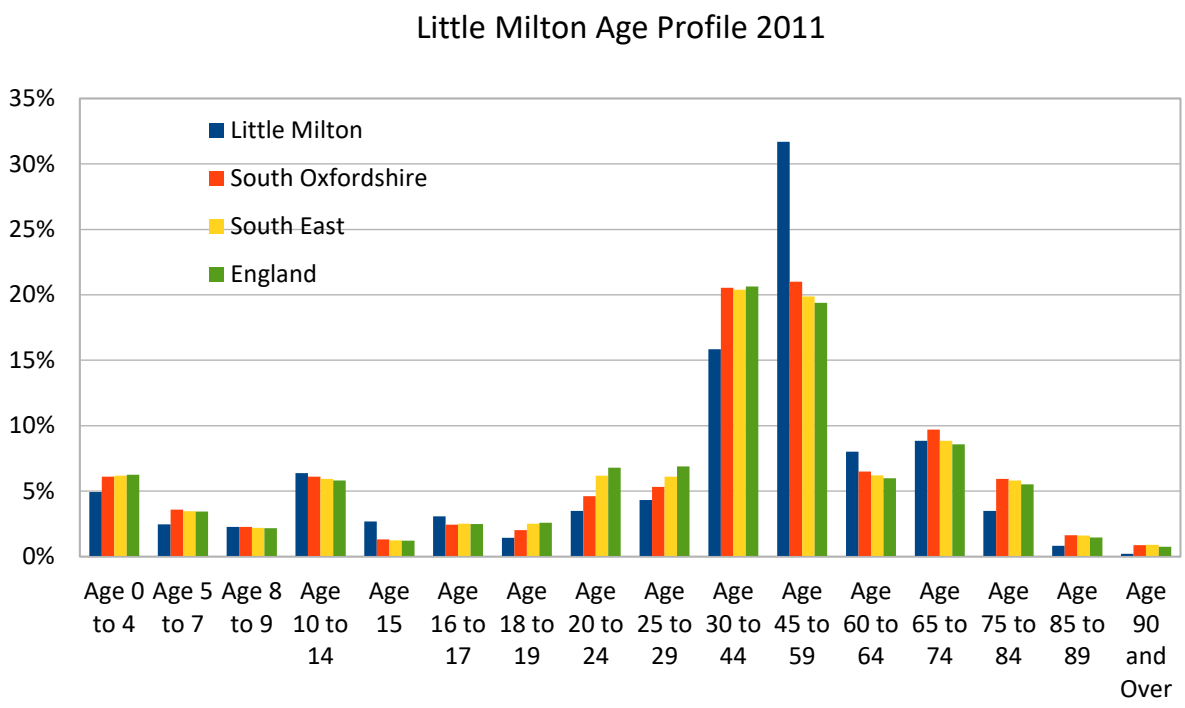
Village Population

3.17. The 2011 Census data indicated a population of 486, compared with 493 in 2001. This census data represents a 1.4% decline in population, against an 8% increase on Oxfordshire as a whole. However, in 2013 the Village Plan survey derived an extrapolated total population of the village of 496. Caution should be exercised when comparing different data sources.

3.18. The age profiles of residents compare as follows:



3.19. The age profiles of the village compare with district, region and national averages as follows:



3.20. There are clear trends in the village towards a higher number of people than average aged 45-59 and lower than average aged 18-44.

Key Challenges

3.21. Although a full Sustainability Appraisal is not a pre-requisite of this Neighbourhood Plan, sustainability is a key thread which must run throughout the Plan. The overall objective is to support sustainable development.

3.22. When drawing up development proposals for Little Milton, there are many inter-related factors to consider. The following challenges have been identified as being particularly relevant:

- Further decline in the population of the village should be discouraged; a modest increase in the population of the village is desirable.
- At the same time, a re-balancing of the population so as to increase the number of young families in the village is also desirable
- A re-balancing of the housing stock more towards SHMA targets would be beneficial. This means building more 2 and 3-bedroom houses in preference to larger houses.
- Residents are highly dependent on cars as the primary means of transport.
- In terms of policies which aim to increase the number of houses and thus the population, the capacity of the sewerage system is a key consideration.
- In addition, the capacity of the primary school could be a limiting factor for any significant development, if such development is:
  - either in excess of 5-10% growth and/or
  - if the number of primary school pupils per new household is well above the OCC planning standard of 0.25 primary school places per household. (Background Evidence Study Part 6).

4. VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1. Before identifying specific aims and objectives, it is helpful to describe what we are trying to achieve in drafting a Neighbourhood Plan in plain language as follows:

a) Little Milton is a small rural nucleated settlement where the historic core of the village was originally built around a cluster of farm houses and their associated buildings. That historic core has largely been preserved apart from some limited infill development. More modern expansion to the north of the historic village is relatively compact and ribbon development has been avoided. We wish to conserve the nucleated nature and the historic character of the village whilst supporting development which is in keeping with and enhances the character of both the surrounding built environment and the adjacent rural landscape.

b) The village sits in open landscape of largely high grade agricultural land and a significant proportion of that land is given over to a Nature Reserve. We wish to conserve that natural environment around our village.

c) Little Milton is a desirable place to live and we want that to continue. We want to maintain a strong sense of place and conserve the village as a visually attractive and sought-after place to live, work and visit. We want to maintain a sensible balance in the parish between housing, employment, open spaces, roads, agriculture, wildlife habitats and water courses.

d) The age profile of the parish population is weighted towards those aged 45 and over and the number of young adults and their families in the village has declined. We wish to contribute to supporting and enabling younger people to move to the village by encouraging development which best meets their needs in terms of size of house, price and tenure.

e) We are concerned that the steadily increasing amount of HGV traffic coming through our village at all times and the volume of commuter traffic at rush hours is having a detrimental impact on the village. We are further concerned that new development in South Oxfordshire as a whole, along with strategic road developments such as the new Thames crossing at Culham, could increase traffic beyond the reasonable capacity of the village's roads. Therefore our Plan supports proposals for any new road developments which are designed to alleviate the village's current traffic problems and mitigate the impact of future increases.

f) As a smaller village with limited facilities, the Development Plan identifies Little Milton as a sustainable location for a small amount of growth. We believe the current infrastructure and facilities of the village can sustain a 5-10% increase in housing, with one vital exception. The sewerage system in the village is likely to need upgrading before any significant development takes place. In addition, any significant development, particularly if aimed at younger families, could be limited by the capacity of the village primary school.

Our vision is to maintain Little Milton parish as a desirable place to live for people at all stages of their lives and to conserve the village as a visually attractive and comfortable place to live, work or visit whilst responding positively to the national need for sustainable development.

Aims	Objectives
1. To maintain the atmosphere and sense of community of the village and conserve its historic and rural character.	1. Retain the overall character of the village and conserve the historic core of the village most particularly. 2. Set design, materials and housing density criteria which maintain or enhance the character of the village. 3. Ensure that new development is of high quality design, is built to high sustainability standards and complements local distinctiveness. 4. Conserve open spaces and designate sites for protection where appropriate.
2. To conserve the local landscape and environment and to minimise the impact of development on the surrounding countryside, landscape and ecosystems.	1. Majority of development to be within the village or immediately adjacent to it. 2. Conserve the local environment and its flora and fauna. 3. Conserve the BBOWT nature reserve. 4. Protect iconic views both into and out from the village and also historic views within the village.
3. To ensure that future development is within the capacity of the local infrastructure and facilities and that, where necessary, provision is made for improvements in advance of development commencing.	1. Ensure that the sewerage system for foul water has sufficient capacity. 2. Ensure adequate parking provision in any new development. 3. Support the village church, pre-school, school, pub, shop and any development required to sustain capacity.
4. Within the capacity of the parish, to promote sustainable development and to respond positively to the national and local need for more houses.	1. Support sustainable development which is in keeping with and enhances the character of both the surrounding built environment and the adjacent open rural landscape and which best meets the housing need. 2. Encourage development which provides houses which meet the needs of younger adults and their families at prices they can afford. 3. Support the local need for more affordable houses, particularly for people with a local connection.
5. To work with the Highways Authority to mitigate as much as is practicable the impact of local development and/or strategic road developments on the volume and weight of traffic using village	1. Respond positively to road improvement proposals which will have the effect of reducing overall traffic volumes within the village. 2. Respond positively to road improvement proposals which will have the effect of reducing

roads and, where possible, reduce those volumes.	HGV traffic volumes within the village. 3. Ensure that any proposals for new roads do not just move the problems of noise, vibration and pollution from the centre of the village to the fringes but rather take the problems away from the village.
6. To maintain a sensible balance in the parish between housing, employment, health & well-being, community facilities, open spaces, roads, agriculture, wildlife habitats and water courses.	1. Encourage a balanced mix of housing development in terms of type and size that best meets the needs of current and future households. 2. Support proposals for appropriate employment development within the parish. 3. Ensure development does not increase the risk of flooding from local watercourses.

4.2. In producing this Neighbourhood Plan, we have considered the long-term needs of the whole parish, looking at the existing infrastructure, housing need, village character and taking into account the policy context.

4.3. As stated above, in the current South Oxfordshire Development Plan identifies Little Milton as a smaller village where development is less sustainable than in the larger villages and towns. The emerging Local Plan proposes that smaller villages such as Little Milton should consider development around 5%-10% of current (census 2011) size in terms of number of dwellings. This figure can only be a broad guide as much will depend on the particular needs, characteristics and constraints on bringing forward land for development in the village.

4.4. In the Settlement Assessment Update published by SODC in October 2017, Little Milton was shown to lack certain key facilities eg. supermarket, doctors' surgery, which are characteristic of the larger villages and towns. In addition, the village scored zero for proximity to a town, larger village or centre of employment and also scored zero for public transport availability following the withdrawal of the local bus service in 2016.

4.5. This assessment placed Little Milton at the lower end of the settlement hierarchy (total score 22 in the smaller village scoring bracket of 16-79). As a smaller village, Little Milton therefore has a limited capacity for development but, looking to the future, can accept the level of development (around 5-10%) proposed in the emerging Local Plan.

4.6. The adopted Development Plan does not require smaller villages to make site allocations and recognises that limited development can be achieved as above. Consequently no sites are identified in this Neighbourhood Plan. Instead policies are included that encourage appropriate development within or immediately adjacent to the built up area.

5. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

5.1. The following Development Plan Strategies and Policies are of particular importance to the community of Little Milton and help achieve Aims and Objectives as indicated:

a) Supporting smaller villages by allowing for limited amounts of housing and employment to help secure the provision and retention of services (Aims 4 & 6 and Objective 4.1).

b) Proposals for new development should demonstrate clearly how the proposed scheme reflects the special character as well as the distinct character of the local area (Aim 1 and Objective 1.1).

c) Protecting and enhancing the countryside and particularly those areas within the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Oxford Green Belt by ensuring that in areas outside towns and villages only appropriate development is permitted. (Aim 2 and Objective 2.2).

d) The District's landscape, countryside and rural areas will be protected against inappropriate development and where possible enhanced (Aim 2).

e) The emerging Local Plan calls for a minimum of 500 new homes to be delivered in the smaller villages through Neighbourhood Plans, infill development, and/or small suitable sites. (Aim 4 and Objective 4.1).

f) New development must be served and supported by appropriate on-site and off-site infrastructure and services. Planning permission will be granted for development where the infrastructure and services needed to meet the needs of the new development is already in place or will be provided to an agreed time scale. (Aim 3).

g) Ensure that the impacts of new development on the strategic and local road network are adequately mitigated (Aim 5).

h) Conserve and enhance our rich and varied historic assets and their settings (Aim 1 and Objective 1).

i) Seek to ensure that the right balance is maintained between economic, social and environmental factors in order to achieve sustainable development. Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.(Aim 6 and Objectives 6.1 & 6.2).

5.2. There are many more detailed policies laid down in the Development Plan which help meet the Aims and Objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan. These will be considered in more detail in the following sections.

6. SPATIAL STRATEGY

Spatial Strategy and Development in General

6.1. The first step in designating policies for development in Little Milton is to define an overall policy for all development. This should define where development is or is not appropriate and the scope and nature of that development. This policy then forms the foundation upon which all other policies are built and adds local detail to broader development policies set at national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and at district level through South Oxfordshire District Council's Development Plan.

6.2. The current development plan consists of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and the saved policies of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. Policy CSR1 of the Core Strategy (and its Appendix 4) identifies Little Milton as one of a series of smaller villages in which housing allocations are not required. In such villages new residential development will be supported through infill development and on rural exception sites. At the time that the Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for its examination, the Local Plan 2011-2033 was emerging. Little Milton continues to be identified as a smaller village. Policy H8 of the emerging Local Plan sets out a requirement for the delivery of 500 new homes in the smaller villages. That policy comments that this will be achieved through Neighbourhood Development Plans which allocate sites for at least a 5% increase in dwelling numbers above those recorded in the 2011 Census. In smaller villages where there is no Neighbourhood Development Plan a 5-10% increase in dwelling numbers will be achieved through the development of suitable sites and through infill development.

6.3. In this context, Policy LM1A sets out the Neighbourhood Plan's overall spatial strategy. It has been designed to be future-proofed when the emerging Local Plan has been adopted. The Neighbourhood Plan could be reviewed at that point in the event that LM1A was not in general conformity with the rural housing policies within the adopted Local Plan.

6.4. The community accepts that a modest increase in the number of houses may be achieved through infill or by building on small suitable sites immediately adjacent to the current built-up area of the village. The overall aim is to consolidate the compact form of the village, based on the historic nucleated nature of the settlement. Thus linear development along roads leading out of the village is not appropriate. Only certain types of development would be appropriate for areas outside the built-up area or immediately adjacent to it and these need to be defined in the overall development policy.

6.5. The Village Character Assessment (Appendix A) demonstrates that although the village has grown steadily since 1881, the built up area has remained largely within its 19th Century envelope. This has led to a compact and definable village form which is intrinsic to its character value. As such, and in keeping with wider strategic housing policy, it is necessary to ensure that new development, particularly residential development, respects the historic development pattern. For this reason, it is preferable for new development to be located either within the current envelope, or immediately adjacent to it, so that the compact development pattern will be maintained.

6.6. Any new development should be well connected to the existing built form of the village. This requires that new development should not occur on land separated from the main settlement by open areas such as large gardens, paddocks or other features, and that it

should also not follow linear patterns following the course of local roads. This also requires that no significant development occurs in the open countryside or around existing agricultural holdings because these development types would also diverge from the current historic development pattern.

6.7. Agricultural development or development that does not conflict with the open feeling of the land surrounding the developed area will not adversely affect the character of Little Milton. Little Milton is fortunate in being surrounded by open land which is crossed by a network of footpaths and benefits from the BBOWT Nature Reserve. The ready availability of access to open land is a very important characteristic of the village.

6.8. The policy below does not define a settlement boundary on a plan but rather is descriptive. It also does not restrict development on the edge of the built up area if this is on suitable sites and is in keeping with the village character. The policy also makes it clear that infill development within the built-up area should not normally be an issue provided it conforms to other policies in the Plan. The overall aim also is to encourage small scale development that does not extend development into the open countryside in a manner or form that will compromise the village's setting in the open countryside.

6.9. Certain types of development are appropriate for sites away from the village and these are defined in the policy. However, any development which would have the effect of creating a detached community away from the core village would be inappropriate and would compromise the nature of the surrounding landscape.

Policy LM1 – Spatial Strategy and Development Pattern

A. Housing development in the Plan period will be supported where it is consistent with development plan policies for smaller villages within the District and with Sections B, C and D of this policy.

B. Infill development as defined in the current Development Plan within the existing built-up area will be supported subject to other Plan policies.

C. Development adjacent to the built-up area will be supported subject to other Plan policies provided that:

1. **The site is immediately adjacent to the built-up area and is well-connected to the current built form of the village; and**
2. **The site is not separated from the built-up area by farmland, paddock land, large gardens or other land with an open and undeveloped character; and**
3. **The development, individually or cumulatively, would not result in a linear form of development along a geographical feature, such as a road or watercourse, that would be out of keeping with the historic compact development form of the village and;**

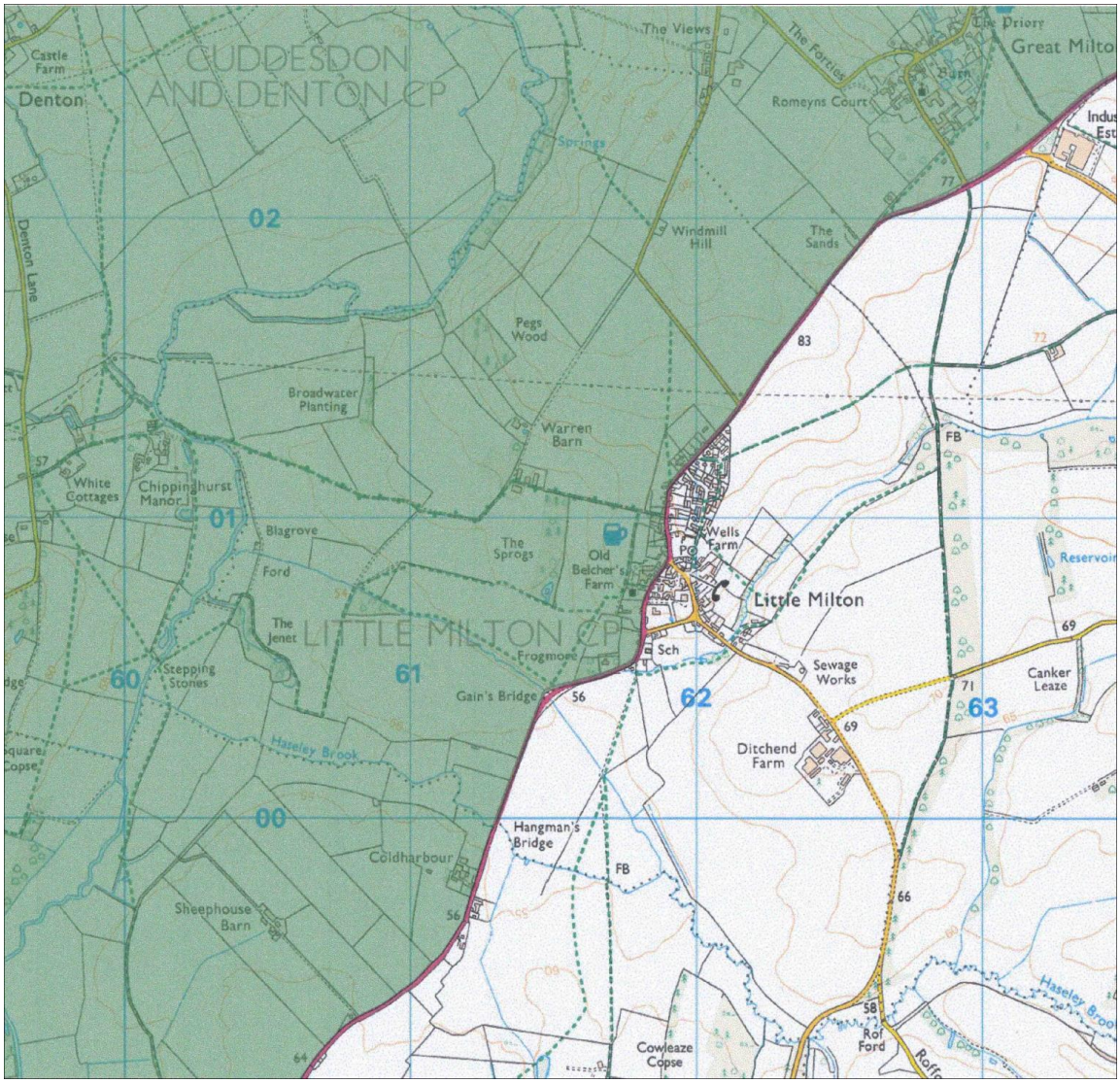
D. Development proposals that are not within or immediately adjacent to the current built-up area or are not well-connected to the current built form of the village will only be supported if they are necessary or suited to a countryside location and they are consistent with local Development Plan policies on local landscape protection and the protection of the natural environment.

Green Belt

6.10. All land in the parish west of the A329 is Oxford Green Belt (see Map 2) which is protected by policies at national and Development Plan level. Development on Green Belt land is only permitted in exceptional circumstances. One such exception applicable to Little Milton is the development of affordable housing for people with a local connection on rural exception sites within the Green Belt.

MAP 2 - OXFORD GREEN BELT

North

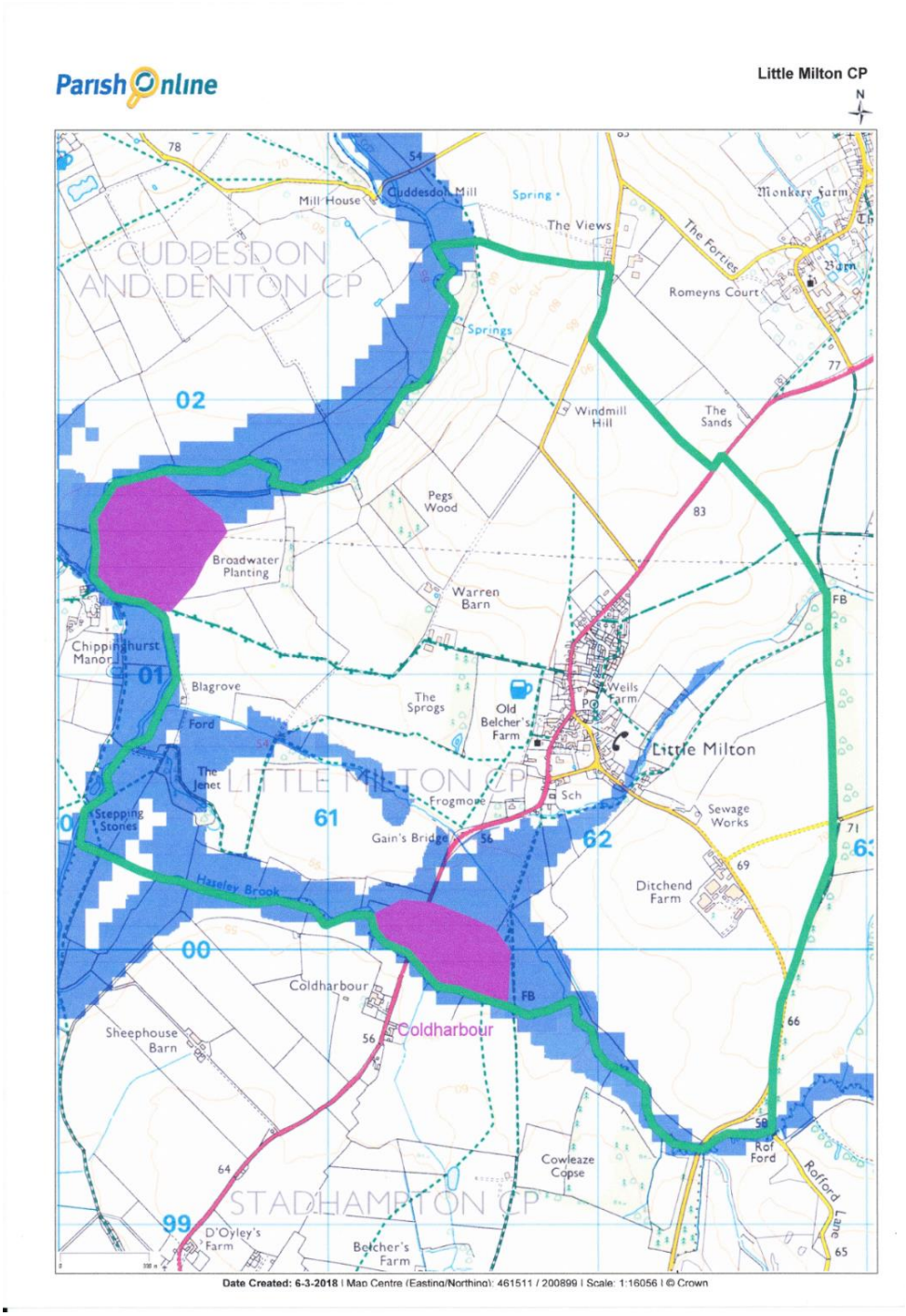


Green Belt shaded in Green

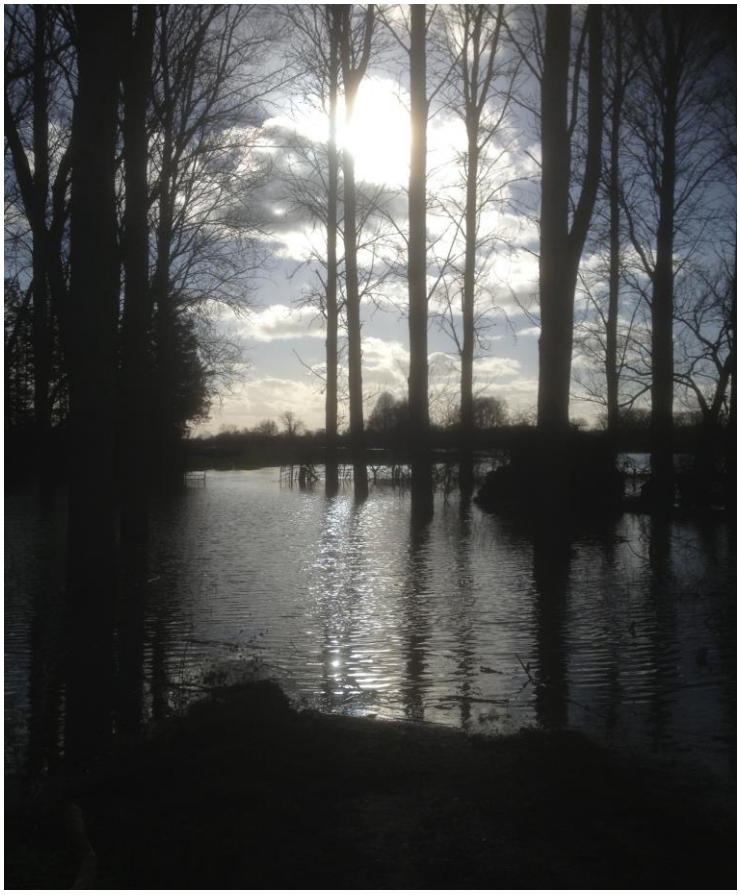
Flood Risk Areas

6.11. Much of the land in the parish immediately adjacent to local watercourses is deemed to lie in areas of medium to high flood risk (Flood Zones 2 & 3) – see Map 3. National and local policy states that inappropriate development in such risk areas should be avoided except where necessary. Applying the flood risk Sequential Test, there is sufficient land on higher ground in the parish and outside the flood risk areas to avoid the necessity to build in areas of significant flood risk.

MAP 3 - FLOOD RISK AREAS



Green = Parish boundary
Blue = Medium to High Flood Risk (Flood Zones 2 & 3)
Purple = Areas of regular seasonal winter flooding



Winter flooding in the vicinity of the River Thame Feb 2014

6.12. Flooding of the River Thame and the smaller local watercourses occurs most winters. This is accepted as the norm and such seasonal flooding occurs across meadowland and is containable. Roads and dwellings are not normally threatened. However, any development which either increases the water flowing into the local watercourses or restricts the channels could upset this delicate balance and cause more widespread flooding in winter, with an increased risk to roads or dwellings. (Objective 6.3) Local knowledge identifies the area shown in purple north-east of Coldharbour on Map 3 as being of particular concern as an increase in flooding here would threaten the main A329. At present, flooding normally runs across the fields in this area but stays below the level of the road. Very occasional flooding of the road may occur.

Policy LM2: Mitigation of Flood Risk

The risk and impact of flooding should be minimised through:

a) directing new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding;

b) ensuring that all new development addresses the effective management of all sources of flood risk, and

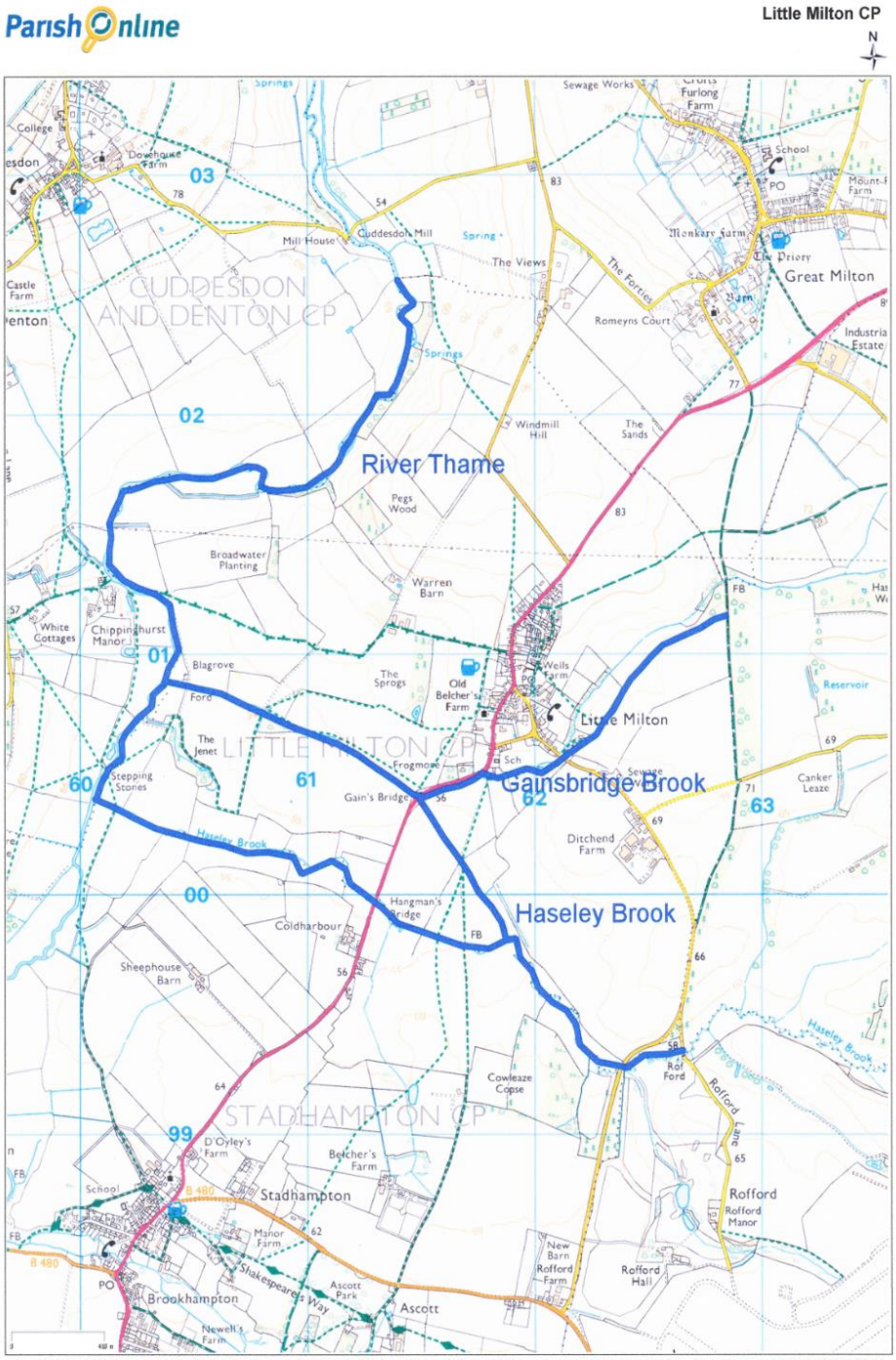
c) ensuring that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, particularly by either increasing the volume of water upstream of an area of flood risk or by constricting the flow downstream of an area of flood risk.

These policies apply particularly to proposed new developments which are adjacent to or which drain directly to the River Thame, the Haseley Brook and also the stream which runs close to the eastern boundary of the village and thence to Gains Bridge which is unnamed on maps but has become known locally as the Gains Bridge Brook. See Map 4 below.

6.13. It is particularly important that new development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere by either:

a) Increasing the volume of water upstream which then flows to an area of flood risk
b) Constricting the flow downstream of an area of flood risk

MAP 4 – WATERCOURSES WITHIN THE PARISH BOUNDARY



High Grade Agricultural Land

6.14. Agricultural Land Classifications are published by Natural England. Much of the open land in the parish which lies outside the flood plain is High Grade Agricultural Land. Such land is assessed as Excellent (Grade 1) or Very Good (Grade 2) – see Map 5. The parish of Little Milton lies within one of only two significant areas of Excellent Grade 1 agricultural land in South Oxfordshire.

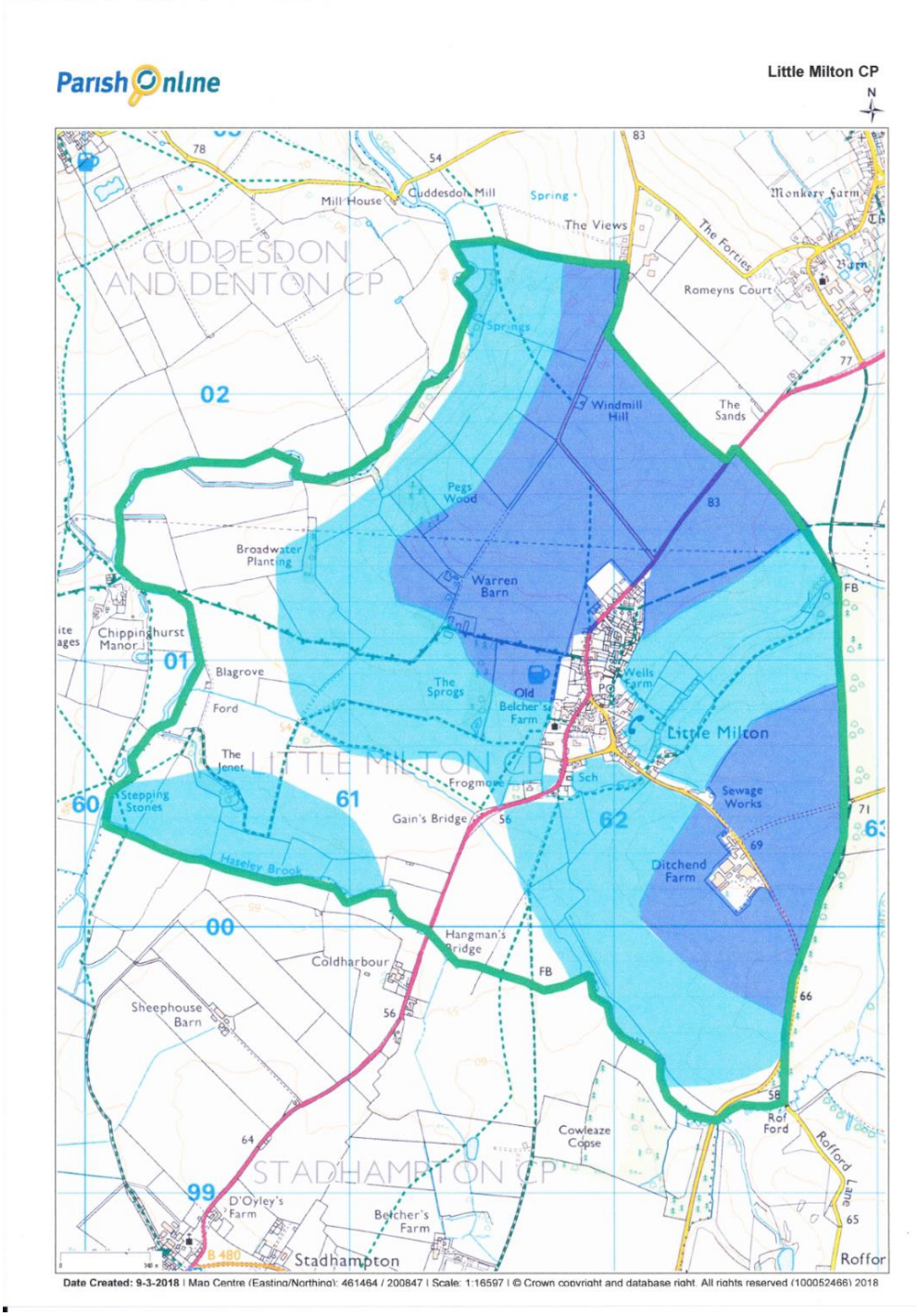
6.15. National policy (NPPF, para 112) requires local planning authorities to take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality. This is reinforced by the Development Plan which requires new development to make provision for the effective use of natural resources where applicable, including avoiding the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless it is demonstrated to be the most sustainable choice from reasonable alternatives, by first using areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.

6.16. This Plan includes a policy to safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land in the parish. This approach has regard to both national planning policy (NPPF, para 112) and the Development Plan. Its effect will be to safeguard an important and non-renewable land resource and to assist in agricultural related employment opportunities.

LM3 – High Grade Agricultural Land

Proposals for development on land outside the built-up part of the Plan area in the areas shown as Excellent and Very Good on Map 5 will not be supported, unless the development is necessary or suitable for a countryside location and complies with Green Belt restrictions, where appropriate.

MAP 5 – High Grade Agricultural Land



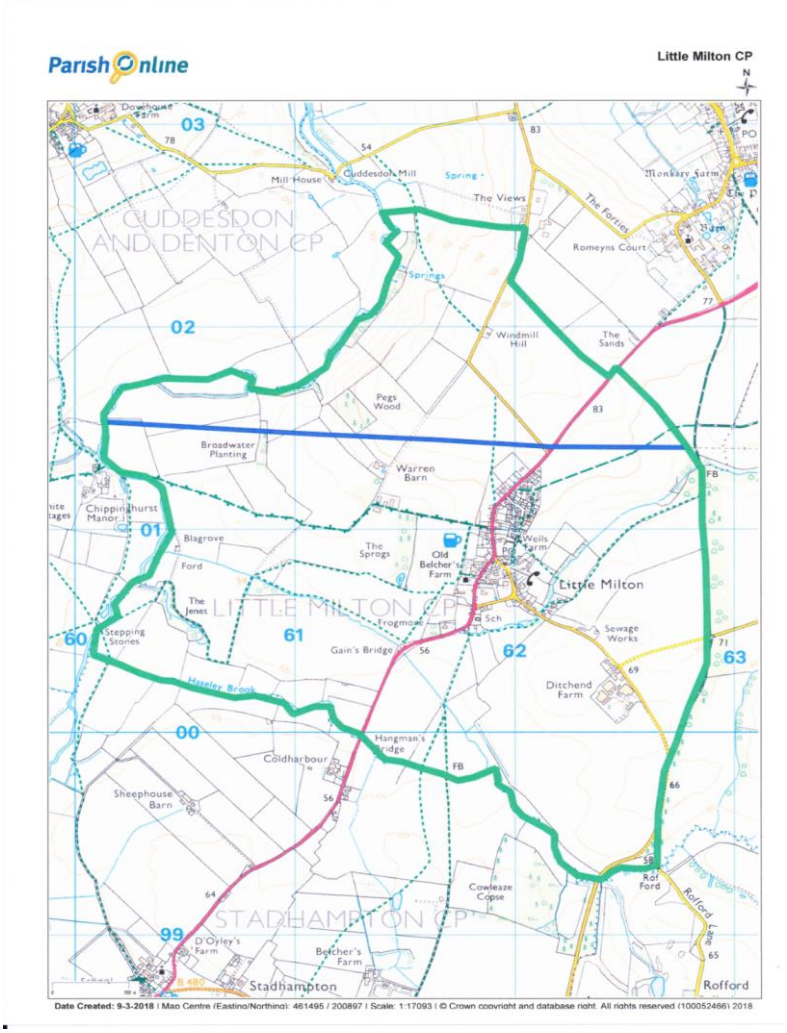
= Excellent (Grade 1) Agricultural Land
= Very Good (Grade 2) Agricultural Land

Power Lines

6.17. High voltage power lines run east-west just to the north of the village – see Map 6. There is no statutory minimum buffer zone between power lines and dwellings. Certain safety clearance distances are laid down in National Grid publications. However good design practice suggests building immediately under power lines represents poor design. In addition, such houses may be unattractive to potential buyers. In Didcot for example, where power lines run through the heart of the Ladygrove Estate built some 20 years ago, the closest point of any dwelling to the centreline of the power lines is of the order of 22-24m.

6.18. National Grid will support policies in development plan documents which seek to control, on amenity grounds, built development under and immediately adjacent to power lines.

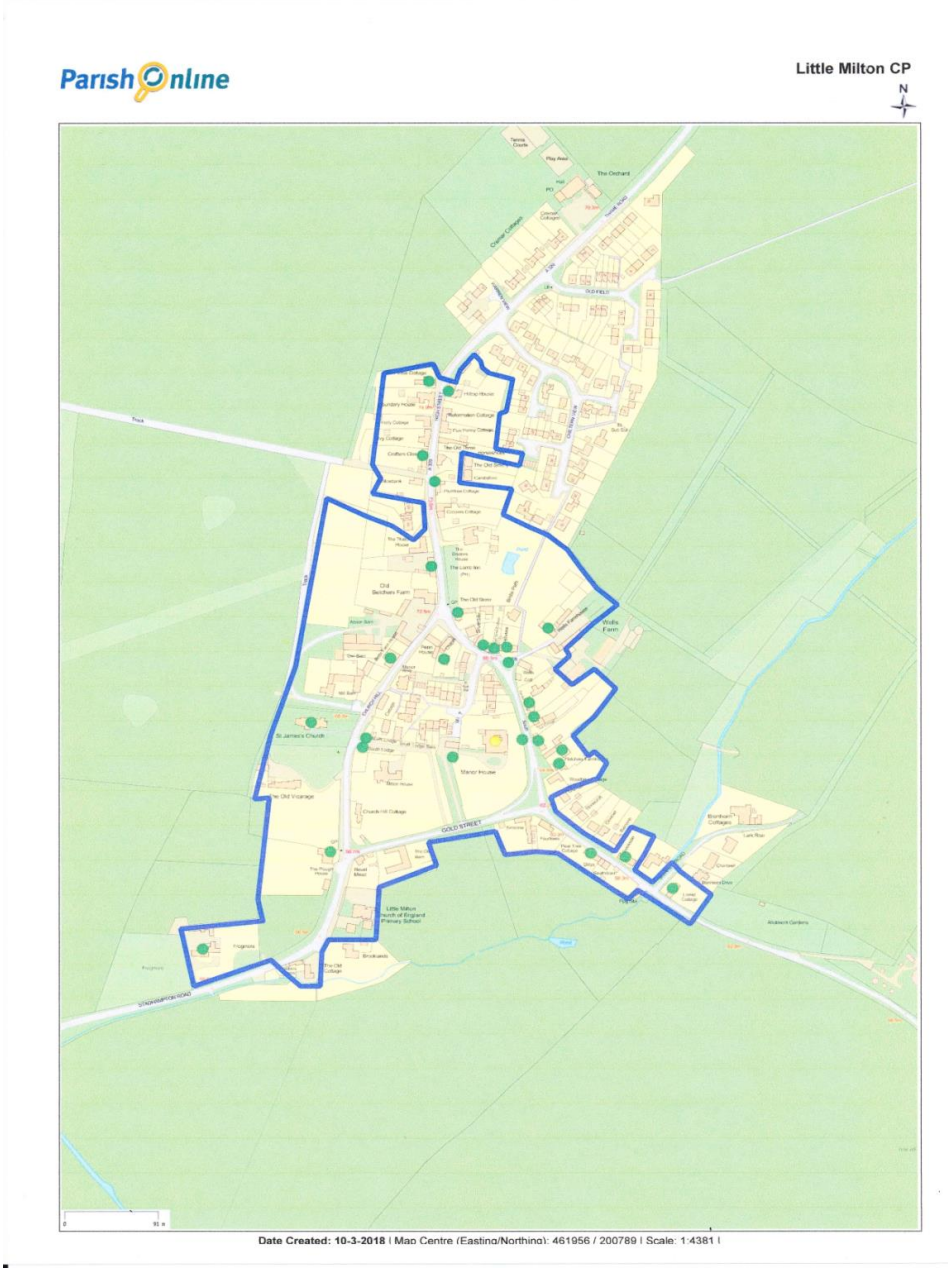
MAP 6 - HIGH VOLTAGE POWER LINES
(Shown in Blue)



7. VILLAGE CHARACTER

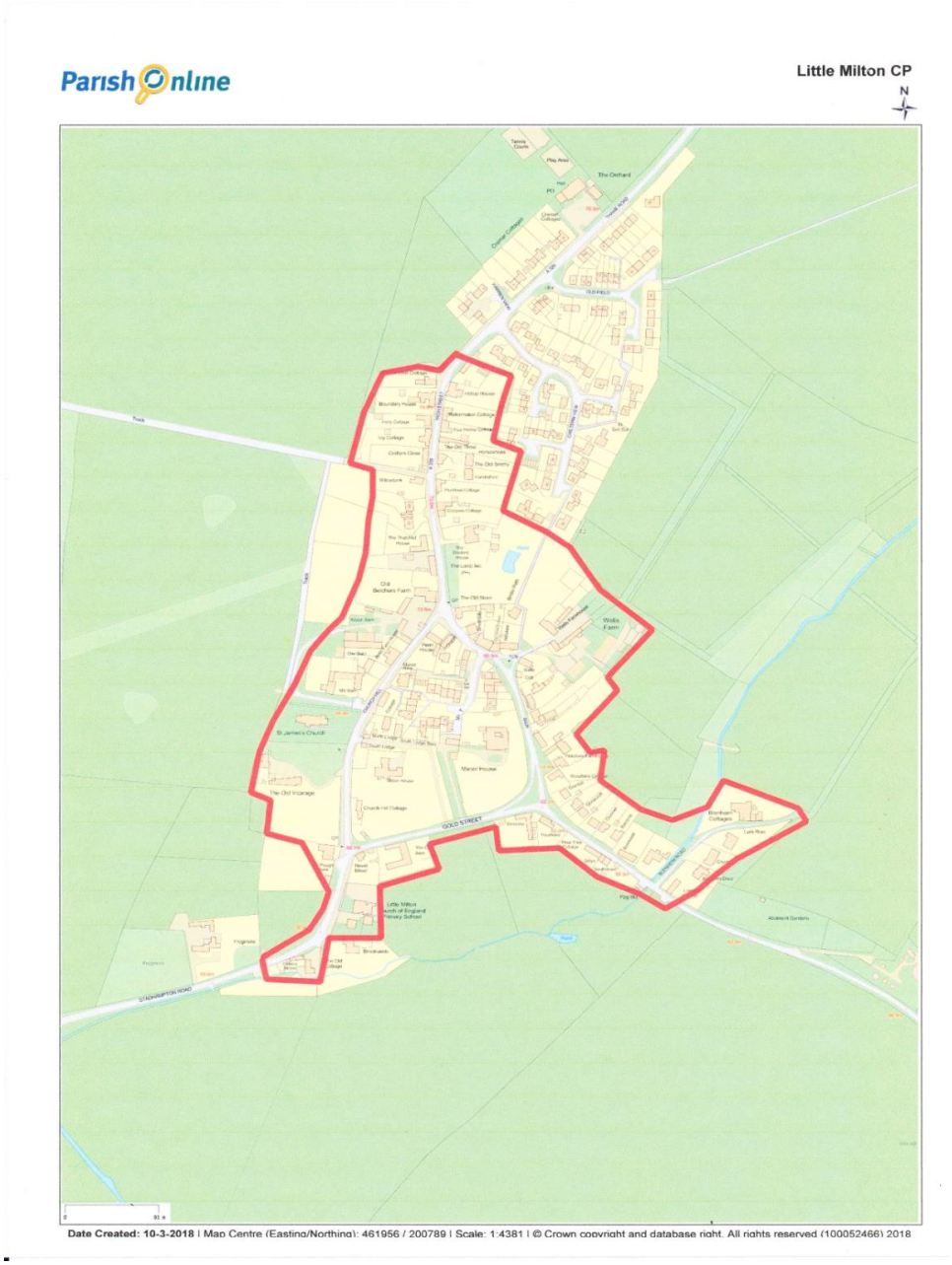
Aim 1: To maintain the atmosphere and sense of community of the village and conserve its historic and rural character.

MAP 7 – LITTLE MILTON CONSERVATION AREA



Blue = Boundary of Conservation Area
Green Dots = Listed Buildings

MAP 8 – HISTORIC CORE OF THE VILLAGE
(Outlined in Red)



Conserving our Heritage

7.1. A fuller description of the heritage assets of the village is contained in the Village Character Assessment (Appendix A). The maps above show the boundaries of the Little Milton Conservation Area (designated in 1984), the historic core of the village and the location of listed buildings.

7.2. In village surveys and in the 2014 Village Plan, the community of Little Milton placed a high priority on maintaining the atmosphere and sense of community of the current village and conserving its historic and rural character. In particular, the Conservation Area

(Map 7), and the land immediately adjacent to it, should be protected from inappropriate development.

7.3. There are 29 listed buildings in the village, of which 24 are houses. In addition, 16 houses are of historic interest. Thus 19.5% of the housing stock of the village is either listed or of historic interest, and these listed or historic buildings should be conserved. Such protection is afforded by policies laid down in the Development Plan which contribute to achieving Aim 1.

7.4. The Development Plan contains policies which protect the historical environment, conservation areas and archaeology. However there are certain features of the historic core of the village which are special to the area:

a) A wide variety of dwellings in terms of style, design, materials and layout but, at the same time, no glaring clashes of style.
b) No building stands out from others in terms of size; even the Manor is not particularly conspicuous.
c) Colour schemes are subdued.
d) Houses are built in varying densities and are not all clustered closely together.
e) Apart from where it adjoins Chiltern View, the boundary of the historic core of the village gives on to open country.
f) The layout of roads and paths away from the main road has evolved over time and has an informality about it. Along much of Haseley Road and Gold Street, pedestrians and vehicles share the road.
g) Apart from one light at a pedestrian crossing on the main road, there are no street lights in the historic core of the village (and only 3 in the whole village), and villagers prefer it that way.

7.5. The Village Character Assessment (Appendix A) has highlighted the importance of retaining the overall character of the village, not just within the Conservation Area but within the village as a whole. Within the historic core of the village, it is important to maintain the character of that area by:

a) maintaining a variety of styles and materials but in keeping with the area
b) ensuring that new development does not stand out unnecessarily amongst surrounding established buildings
c) ensuring colour schemes are in keeping with surrounding buildings
d) maintaining a variety of housing density and ensuring that new development is not tight up against old
e) ensuring that any new roads within the historic core are not four-square pavemented roads but rather are less rigid in plan and in keeping with existing back roads and lanes

Policy LM4: Conservation of Heritage Assets

A. Development that conserves and enhances Little Milton's heritage assets will be supported. Planning proposals should address the issues and aspirations of the Village Character Assessment and should provide sympathetic solutions in keeping with the Input to Planning Policies section of that Assessment. Part A of this policy applies to:

- **The Little Milton Conservation Area (Map 7),**
- **Developments affecting the setting of the Conservation Area,**
- **Listed Buildings and Buildings of Historic Interest and the settings of such buildings (including maintaining settlement separation), and**
- **Archaeological sites.**

B. Development in the Historic Core (Map 8) will be supported where it addresses all relevant issues raised in the Village Character Assessment, and in particular should:

- **Maintain the variety of styles, design, materials and layout characteristic of the historic core area, and**
- **Be in harmony with other buildings in the immediate locality**
- **Continue the pattern of subdued colour schemes in keeping with the surrounding dwellings, and**
- **Maintain the variation in housing density and not impact detrimentally on surrounding buildings, and**
- **Maintain the relatively informal layout of roads, lanes and paths away from the main road.**

Design and Character

7.6. The community feels that it is important that within the historic core of the village, the design and materials used should complement what is already in place. Throughout the whole village, it is also important that the scale of building reflects neighbouring properties. Policy LM5 sets out the Plan's approach to this important issue. It operates in parallel with Policy LM1. Policy LM1 identifies appropriate locations where new development can take place. Policy LM5 addresses the design and character of that development.

7.7. The Development Plan policies call for development that is of high quality design, is built to high sustainability standards and complements local distinctiveness. To this end, SODC has published a Design Guide. The Development Plan policies and the Design Guide contribute towards achieving Objectives 1.2 and 1.3. but an additional local policy helps define what is required of good design within the village of Little Milton.

7.8. The Village Character Assessment (Appendix A) identifies what is important about Little Milton, both in terms of its setting and individual character areas within the village. The character assessment fully documents the existing character, including the prevalence of 2 storey dwellings and the natural rhythm of front gardens and curtilages. This Plan seeks to retain these features in any new development.

7.9. It is important to recognise that a part of what makes Little Milton a strong community is its village identity. That identity is in part created by the community itself but also by the shape and form of the village, its resources and infrastructure. An important part of this character is the way the village has evolved over time to create a place which has several

different and distinctive architectural styles, historic buildings and public and private spaces. These combine to create a unique character.

7.10. Some types of housing development would be out of place in a village where the character is one of diverse architectural styles. The policy aim is to ensure that landowners and developers agree with the Parish Council and the community what might be appropriate.

7.11. Any new development, whether this is a 10-house development or a small infill plot, needs to respect the heritage of the village and reflect its rural character. The Village Character Assessment documents the existing shape and character of the village including the mix of building size, style and materials, gardens and spaces between buildings as well as back lanes, the open countryside setting and views.

7.12. A policy on design is considered essential to manage any proposal including redevelopment of a single house on a large plot into multiple housing. This policy is not intended to create a copybook approach to design or limit innovation in the type or range of development. Innovative design, where appropriate, is not precluded. Any departure from the traditional approach where this is identified as important within a character area will need to demonstrate why this should be set aside.

7.13. The policy recognises the value of the SODC Design Guide and supports its approach to quality at every scale. However such design guidance is more easily applied to larger sites but development that impacts on the street scene is very important locally. The aim is not to constrain development or innovative design but to reflect the best in design and not the lowest common denominator.

7.14. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the Development Plan in ensuring that development proposals within or next to the Conservation Area or listed buildings must ensure that the overall character of the area is enhanced or preserved. Inappropriate development can cause irreparable damage to the sensitive historic environment.

7.15. Ideally, access to new development should not generate a significant increase in traffic on village back roads which are unsuitable for high volumes of traffic. Direct access to and from the main village roads is much preferred.

Policy LM5 - Design and Character

A. Development proposals should reflect the character of Little Milton. Proposals will be supported where they meet all the following criteria:

1. **The form and scale of the buildings should reflect the near-by street scene;**
2. **Visual interest should be created by setting buildings back from the street and varying both the positioning of buildings and the building line;**
3. **Boundary treatments to the front of properties should be soft (lawn, hedges, trees, planting) and/or low stone/brick walls;**
4. **The design of on-plot residential parking spaces and materials used should reflect the local character and not detract from the street scene**

B. Adequate storage space should be provided for bins and the design of the storage should not detract from the street scene.

C. Connectivity to the centre of the village should, where practicable, include safe walking routes.

D. All proposals for new development should include a contextual analysis that demonstrates how the design:

1. **Has been informed by and responds positively to the site and its surroundings; and**
2. **Reinforces place-identity by enhancing local character, and**
3. **Incorporates the positive features identified in the Little Milton Village Character Assessment (Appendix A) into the design of the development.**

8. CONSERVING THE LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT

Aim 2: To conserve the local landscape and environment and to minimise the impact of development on the surrounding countryside, landscape and ecosystems.

8.1. The Development Plan places a high priority on protecting the local environment (Objective 1.2) and new buildings or structures will only be permitted in the countryside and rural areas where there is a demonstrable need for the building and structure and, wherever possible or acceptable, such building or structure should be located close to existing buildings rather than in open countryside. This Development Plan policy contributes to the achievement of Objective 2.1.

8.2. The villagers support this policy – the village survey showed a preference for any new development to be either within the village or adjacent to it. In addition, the community places a high priority on retaining the character of the open landscape and preserving local flora and fauna. (Objective 2.1)

Wildlife and Biodiversity

8.3. The village sits in an area of open farmland and is fortunate to have the BBOWT Wells Farm Nature Reserve immediately adjacent to the village on the north-eastern side. See paras 8.13-8.19.

8.4. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41 (s41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) Biodiversity Report - Little Milton - April 2018 (see Background Evidence Study Part 4) has identified the following s41 Protected or Notable species as being reported in the parish:

Amphibians	Common Toad
Birds	Mallard, Grey Partridge, Quail, Red Kite, Kestrel, Merlin, Hobby, Lapwing, Snipe, Curlew, Lesser Black-Backed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-Backed Gull, Black-headed Gull, Stick Dove, Barn Owl, Swift, Green Woodpecker, Willow Warbler, Skylark, Swallow, House Martin, Meadow Pipit, Yellow Wagtail, Grey Wagtail, Dunnock, Whinchat, Wheatear, Fieldfare, Song Thrush, Redwing, Mistle Thrush, Spotted Flycatcher, Whitethroat, March Tit, Starling, House Sparrow, Linnet, Brambling, Bullfinch, Yellowhammer, Reed Bunting, Corn Bunting,
Fish – Boney	Bullhead
Flowering Plants	Prickle Poppy, Wild Strawberry, Hoary Plantain, Greater Yellow Rattle, Corn Spurrey, Wild Pansy, Pansy, Treacle-mustard, Cornflower, Corn Chamomile, Field Scabious
Invertebrates - Ants, Bees, Sawflies & Wasps	Red-tailed Mason Bee, Yellow-shouldered Nomad Bee
Invertebrates - Beetles	Flax Flea Beetle
Invertebrates - Moth	White Ermine, Cinnabar, Rustic, Large Nutmeg, Small Squarespot

Invertebrates - True Flies	Hornet Robberfly
Mammals - Terrestrial (bats)	Noctule Bat, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano, Pipistrelle,
Mammals - Terrestrial (excl. bats)	Hedgehog, Otter, Badger, Water Vole, Harvest Mouse, Brown Hare,
Reptiles	Grass Snake

8.5. The parish has no SSSIs or European sites designated for wildlife interest. The TVERC Biodiversity Report identifies a small number of s41 habitats in the parish which merit conservation under NERC:

Arable and horticulture	Traditional orchards
Grassland	Possible Grassland Sites**
River	

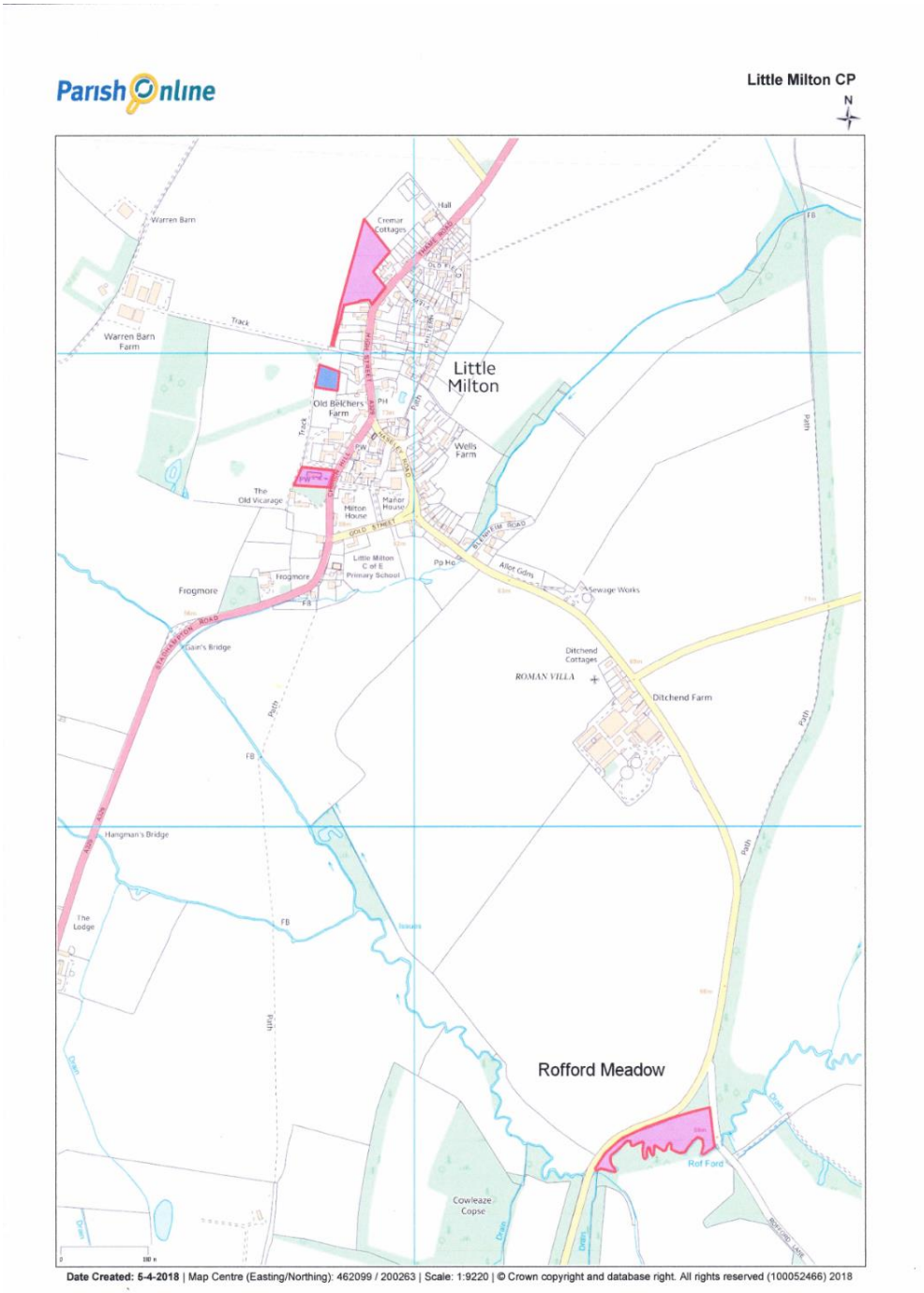
** 'Possible Grassland Sites' are those who have been identified as possibly meeting the criteria for a Section 41 habitat, in this case probably Lowland Calcareous Grassland, but which cannot as of yet be conformed without further on-site investigation.

8.6. The following specific habitats or possible habitats have been identified in the parish:

Table of Non-River Habitats (See Maps 9 & 10)

Site	Habitat	Description
X	Possible Priority Grassland	Single plot and access route designated as 'Land adjoining Hill View Cottage' Title No ON 208725. Currently lying fallow – grass and shrubs
Y	Traditional Orchard	Part of Old Belcher's Farm garden – orchard and grass
Z	Possible Priority Grassland	St James' Churchyard – mown grass, headstones and monuments
Rofford Meadow	Possible Priority Grassland	Triangle of land at junction of Rofford Lane. Grass bordered by hedge or stream

MAP 9 – S41 HABITATS WITHIN LITTLE MILTON PARISH



= Possible Priority Grassland
= Traditional Orchard

MAP 10 – S41 HABITATS ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE

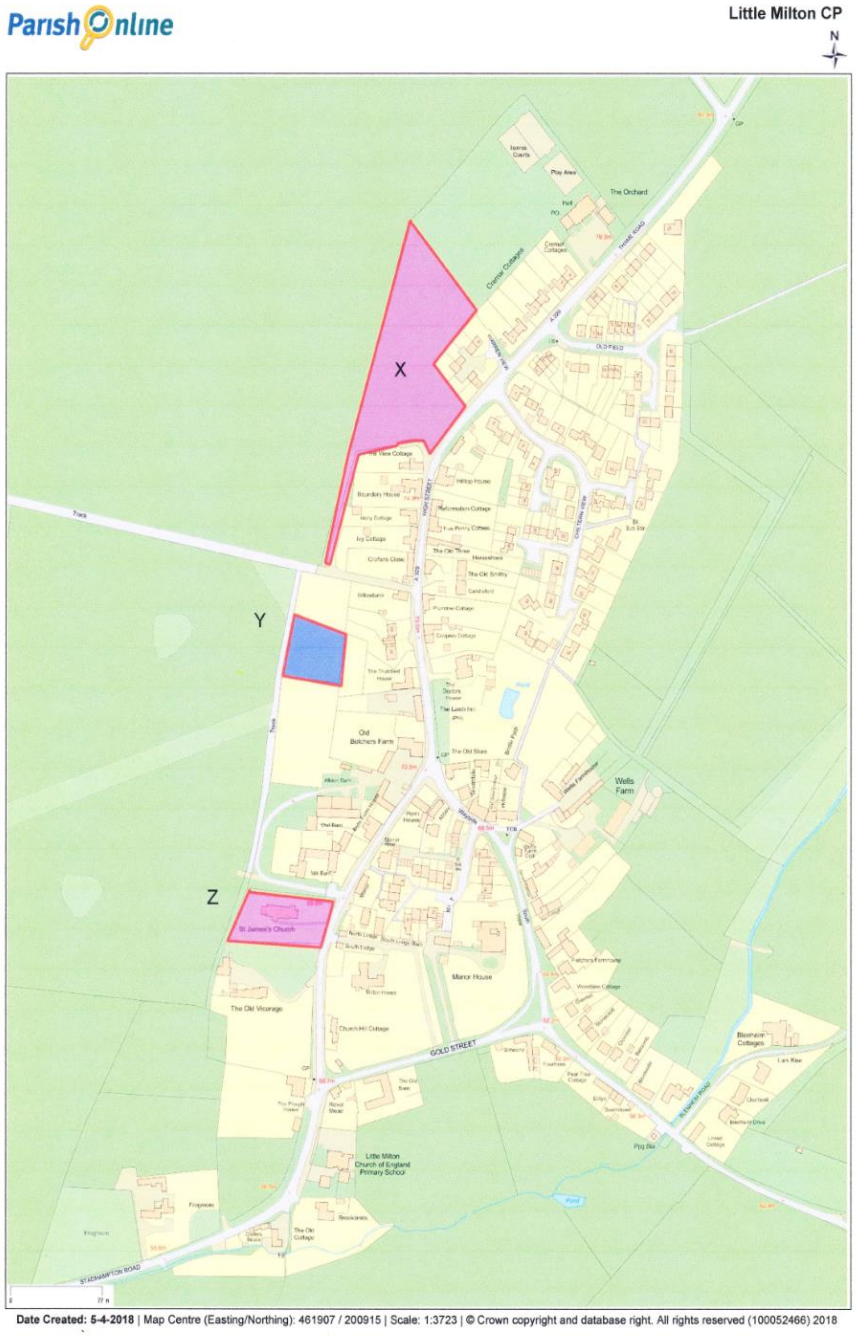


Table of River Habitats (as previously shown in Map 4)

River	River Thame
Watercourses	Haseley Brook; Gainsbridge Brook

8.7. Watercourses are vital to biodiversity, provide a unique range of habitats, act as wildlife corridors, and form an important element of South Oxfordshire's ecological network. They make a significant contribution towards the character of our landscape and form an important part of green infrastructure. They provide vital ecosystem services, help improve water quality, provide drainage and flood management and provide green space for informal recreation

8.8. Some of the larger gardens in the village, several of which also have ponds, are also important but informal non-specific wildlife sites. Dry stone walls, hedges, lines of trees, gardens and paths link different parts of the village and form wildlife corridors.

8.9. This Plan recognises Little Milton's biodiversity assets. As any new development takes place, the Plan policy seeks to expand the ecological network such that wildlife has the opportunity to thrive and people have the opportunity to enjoy it. The plan aims to ensure that any new development is permeable to wildlife, connecting up green spaces where possible, creating space for nature and enabling it to move around. The Plan policies will:

a) Protect existing assets, particularly trees, hedges and associated margins
b) Influence the location and type of green space secured through development
c) Require developers to build biodiversity enhancements into their developments

8.10. Policy LM6 sets out the Plan's approach to these important matters. In the first part of the policy, biodiversity net gain should be assessed using a recognised assessment method such as the DEFRA biodiversity offsetting metric.

LM6 Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridors

1. Development proposals should maintain and enhance existing on-site biodiversity assets, delivering biodiversity 'net gain' in line with the Development Plan and provide for wildlife needs on site where possible. Where appropriate, on site biodiversity enhancements such as new roosting features for bats or nesting features for birds should be incorporated into the fabric of the development.

2. Where site circumstances make such an approach appropriate, proposals for new residential development should provide wildlife corridors that allow wildlife to move from one area of habitat to another and should not obstruct existing corridors. Where ecologically relevant, fences, walls or hedges should be designed to incorporate features that allow dispersal of wildlife through areas of green space and gardens.

Local Green Spaces

8.11. Both within and adjacent to the village are a number of open spaces which the community wishes to preserve. The Development Plan also seeks to protect, maintain and where possible enhance existing open spaces. A local review of Open Spaces has been carried out – see Appendix B. National policy (NPPF, para 76-78) permits local communities through neighbourhood plans to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space, local communities are able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances**.**

8.12. This review concluded that two sites (Map 11) currently forming part of the land leased to BBOWT should be specifically protected and therefore should be designated as Local Green Spaces. Local Green Spaces are afforded similar protection to Green Belt land and development on such sites will only be permitted if such development would also be consistent with Development Plan Policies for the Oxford Green Belt.

8.13. These two sites were selected as meeting key criteria:

a) Barn Field and Spinney, Wells Farm
b) The Allotments, Wells Farm

8.14. These two sites meet the following key criteria

a) They are in close proximity to Little Milton and are regularly used by the community.

b) Each site has been demonstrated to be special to the local community and holding a particular local significance, for example, because of:

- its beauty,
- historic significance,
- recreational value (including as a playing field),
- tranquillity or
- richness of its wildlife; and
- they are local in character and do not comprise extensive tracts of land.

Policy LM7 – Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following as Local Green Spaces:

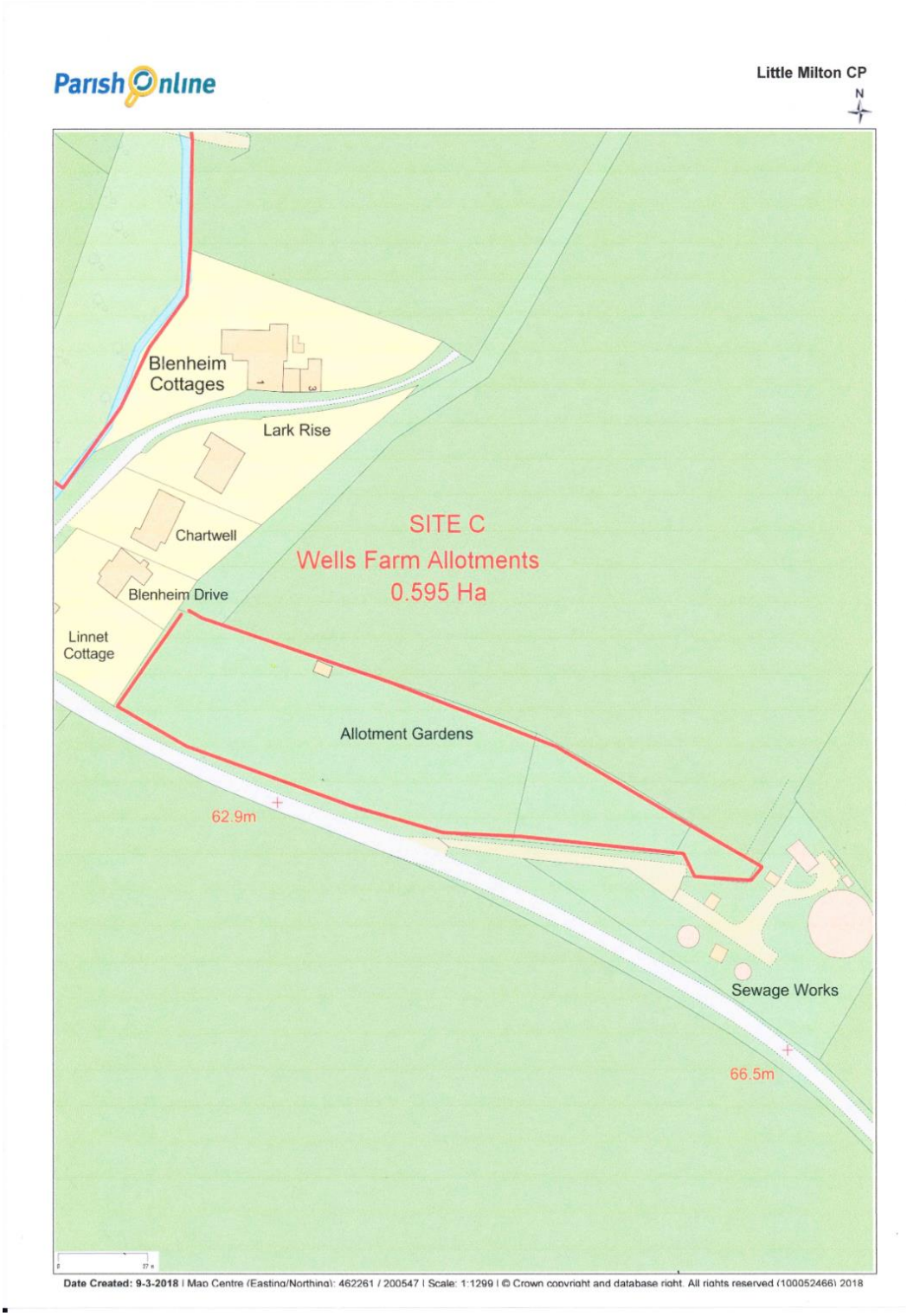
1. **Barn Field and Spinney, Wells Farm – Site B (Map 12)**
2. **The Allotments, Wells Farm – Site C (Map 13)**

New development will not be permitted on Little Milton's Local Green Spaces except in very special circumstances.

MAP 11 - LOCAL GREEN SPACES – SITES B & C

MAP 12 - LOCAL GREEN SPACES – SITE B
BARN FIELD & SPINNEY

MAP 13 - LOCAL GREEN SPACES – SITE C
WELLS FARM ALLOTMENTS



BBOWT Wells Farm Nature Reserve

8.15. Land to the north east of the village (Map 14) is held by the Berks, Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) on a 999 year lease as a Nature Reserve. The conditions of the lease require the tenant to use the property for agricultural purposes consistent with supporting the charitable purposes of the tenant and to ensure that the property is used in a manner which is sympathetic to the needs of wildlife. The lease also stipulates that no building may be erected on the property except in the farmyard.

8.16. The Nature Reserve exemplifies the nature of the area in terms of biodiversity, flora and fauna. The Nature Reserve is a working farm run in harmony with wildlife and is home to a variety of lowland farmland birds including nesting skylarks, grey partridge, kingfishers, barn owls, corn bunting and yellowhammer. BBOWT strikes a balance between farming wheat and barley and creating a thriving habitat for wildlife. Deer, badgers, foxes, polecats, bats, red kites, buzzards, sparrowhawks, barn owls, little & tawny owls, and kingfishers are regularly seen in the area. The Nature Reserve is also home to rare prickly poppies and pyramidal orchids, along with a wide range of butterflies and moths.

8.17. The Nature Reserve is criss-crossed by paths which make it accessible to all and the land is used regularly by a majority of villagers for walking and exercise.

8.18. The local community places a high priority on the conservation of this important Nature Reserve. It forms an important element of the South Oxfordshire Accessible Countryside and is one of the few such sites in the district lying outside the Chiltern Hills AONB. Surprisingly, the Nature Reserve is not listed by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre as a Local Wildlife Site.

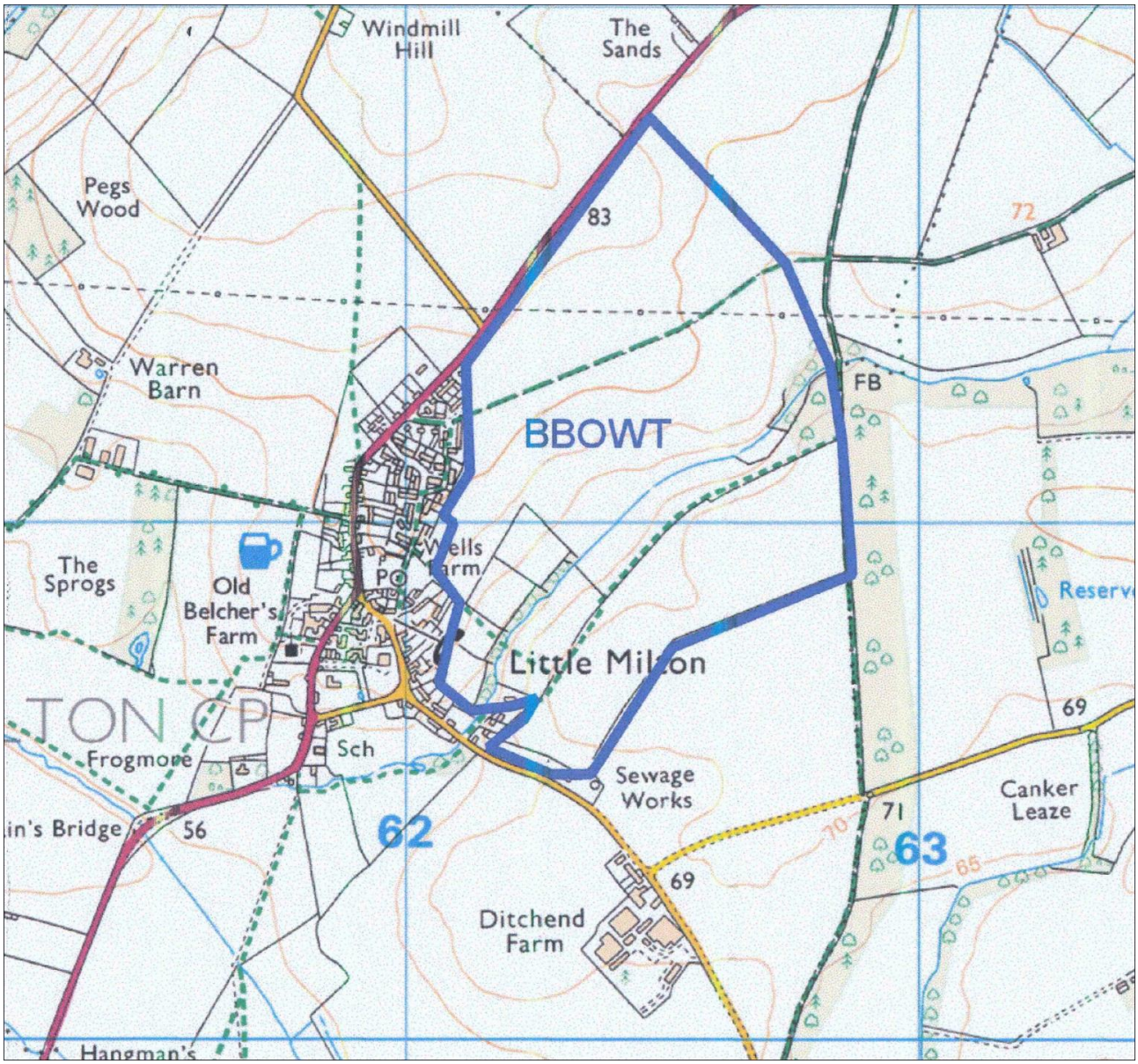
8.19. Local policies only allow development which will lead to the loss, deterioration or harm to such Nature Reserves in exceptional circumstances. (Objective 1.3). Policy LM6 provides further protection of the BBOWT Nature Reserve which is important not only to the local community but also the wider population of South Oxfordshire. The policy identifies a limited set of circumstances where development would be supported on the site. In making an assessment of the three circumstances highlighted, a developer will be expected to address the effects of the proposed development on each of the following matters:

a) Local flora and fauna
b) Bird nesting sites
c) Special habitats for wildlife
d) Water courses and ponds
e) Access routes for both wildlife and humans
f) Hedges and boundaries.

On a case by case basis, other factors may need to be considered insofar as they are material to the development proposed.

MAP 14 – BBOWT LAND

North



Boundary of BBOWT Wells Farm Nature Reserve in Blue

Policy LM8: BBOWT Wells Farm Nature Reserve

A. Development likely to result, either directly or indirectly to the loss, deterioration or harm to the BBOWT Wells Farm Nature Reserve will only be supported if:

1. The need for, and benefits of, the development in the proposed location outweighs the adverse effect on the Nature Reserve; and

2. It can be demonstrated that it could not reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to the Nature Reserve; and

3. Measures will be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements), that would avoid, mitigate or as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects resulting from development.

8.20. The policy is designed to cover new buildings on sites close to the Nature Reserve but does not prevent permitted development or alterations or extensions to existing buildings adjacent to the Nature Reserve.

8.21. Developers considering a proposal under this policy are encouraged to enter into a dialogue with BBOWT to assist with assessing the potential impact.

Protection of Views

8.22. Certain views both into the village from outside and to iconic landmarks from inside the village are very important to the community. Conservation of such views is an important element of preserving the character of the village and the surrounding landscape. Development which would obstruct such a view or which would lead to a detrimental impact on the view should not be permitted.

8.23. Appendix C discusses the importance of key views into and out of the village.

8.24. Open views across the landscape are characteristic of the area surrounding the village. Views of key landmarks within the parish, principally the church, can be had from several vantage points. Views across open land to Wittenham Clumps and the Sinodun Hills or to the Great Haseley Windmill may also be seen from key points around the parish.

8.25. The policy serves to conserve the character of the village and the open country around the village. Views across that open country either from or towards the village are an important part of the character of the village. If that character is to be conserved, then those views also should be preserved. The number of views given specific protection under the above policy is small, but those views are of particular significance to the community.

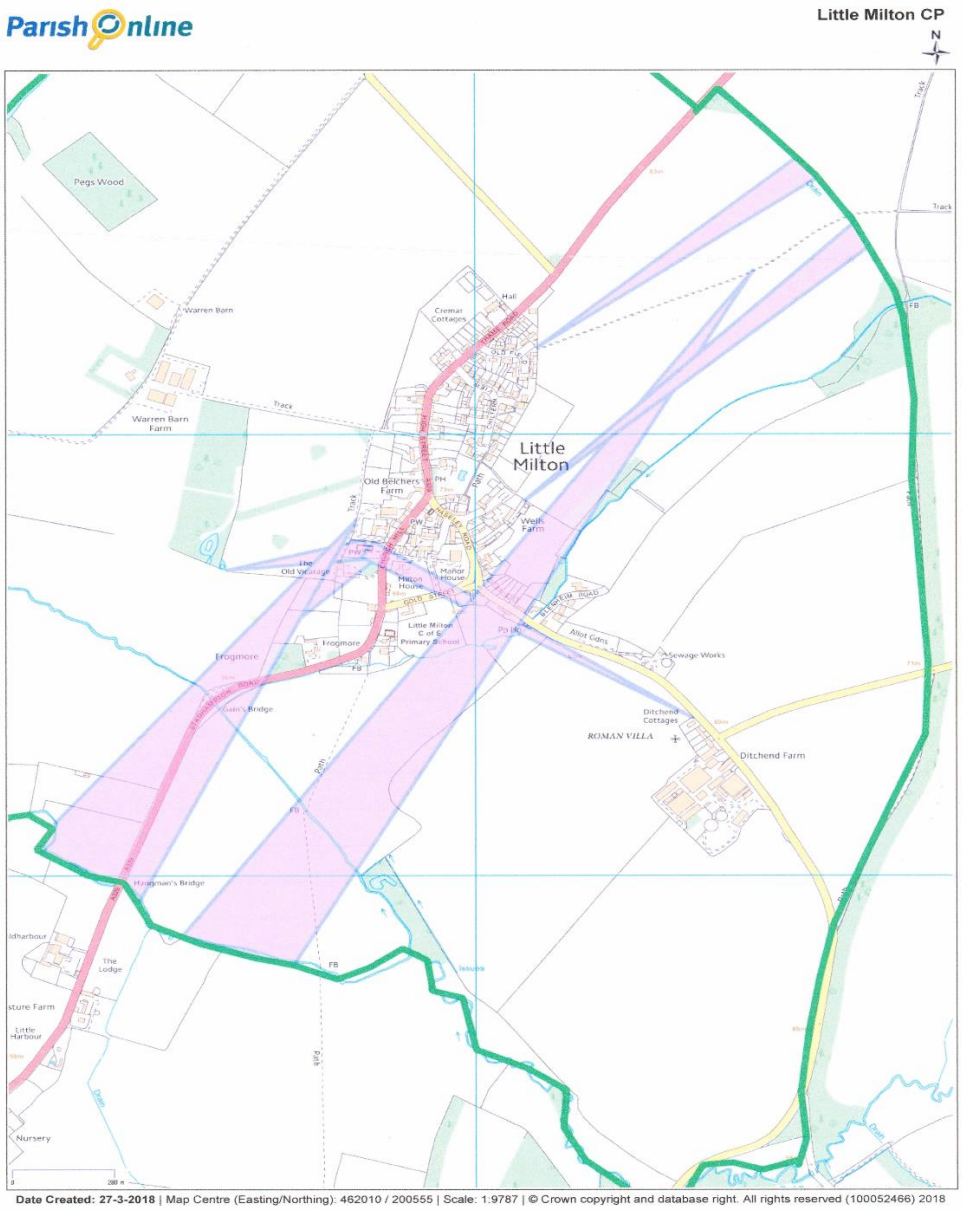
Policy LM9: Protection of Views

A. Development should preserve or enhance the local character of the landscape and not have a significant adverse impact on the following important views as shown on Map 15:

1. Little Milton Parish Church from the South
2. Little Milton Parish Church from the West
3. Little Milton Parish Church from Ditchend
4. Wittenham Clumps and the Sinodun Hills from the field gate at the rear of Belcher's Farm
5. Great Haseley Windmill from the back of Wells Farm House
6. Great Haseley Windmill from the Bridle Path
7. Wittenham Clumps and the Sinodun Hills from the Bridle Path

MAP 15 – PROTECTED VIEWS

Areas shaded in pink are potentially affected by a protected view.
Appendix C should be consulted for details of individual views.



9. INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

Aim 3: To ensure that future development is within the capacity of the local infrastructure and facilities and that, where necessary, provision is made for improvements in advance of development commencing

Community Facilities

9.1. As a smaller village, Little Milton has a limited capacity to absorb future development. The village currently enjoys the following Community Facilities:

a) Church
b) Primary School
c) Pre-school
d) Pub
e) Village Hall
f) Village shop (limited range of items), Post Office and Coffee Shop
g) Recreation Ground, including Children's Play Area, Multi-Use Games Area and Tennis Court

9.2. It is important that these amenities are sustained and development proposals for such amenities, particularly those which will enhance capacity or sustainability, and which meet the policies laid in this Neighbourhood Plan, should be supported (Objective 3.3). Policy LM10E identifies the current facilities as set out in the previous paragraph as those to which the policy applies. Nevertheless, this approach is not intended to be exclusive. Any additional community facilities which are established in the neighbourhood area either generally or as a direct result of the supportive approach included in Policy LM10A will also be covered by the policy.

9.3. Key amenities which can only be accessed by travelling outside the village include:

a) Secondary school
b) Supermarket
c) Doctors' surgery
d) Pharmacy
e) Bank (some facilities available from the village post office)

9.4. None of the village Community Facilities have been formally designated as Assets of Community Value. The pub was considered for such designation but, in accordance with the wishes of the owners, the process did not proceed to designation.

9.5. In order to maintain a balanced and sustainable community and provide amenities and facilities commensurate with the size of the village, it is important that:

a) None of these important facilities are lost to development.

b) Any reasonable proposals to enhance a facility are supported

c) Any development which would result in a significant increase in the village population must consider whether or not the village facilities have the capacity to absorb the additional residents. 10 or more new dwellings is considered a significant increase in this context. Consultation with the Parish Council is required and agreement

necessary as to how facilities would be enhanced where needed. In this context, the Community Facility which is currently the most limited in terms of capacity is the primary school.

d) The capacity of the GP practice which serves the village (Morland House), and which is located in Wheatley, 3.8 miles from Little Milton, must be taken into account before approving significant development. Whilst the practice can absorb the additional patients resulting from moderate development in an individual village, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has advised (*Oxon CCG response to Reg 14 consultation 10 Jan 2018*) that the practice may not be able to absorb the cumulative effect of development taking place across the range of 20 settlements served by the practice. SODC's *Infrastructure Delivery Schedule* identifies a need to expand or reconfigure Morland House Surgery to cope with currently-planned cumulative development. CIL or s106 funding may be required.

Policy LM10 – Community Facilities

A. Development proposals for the provision of new or extended community facilities and services will be supported, particularly where:

1. They are located within or adjacent to the built-up area of the village;

2. They would clearly meet an identified local need; and

3. They are accessible for all members of the community and promote social inclusion;

4. The design of the scheme and the resulting increase in use are appropriate in design terms and will not harm the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

B. Proposals that result in the loss of an essential community facility or service, through change of use or redevelopment, will not be permitted unless:

1. It would lead to the significant improvement of an existing facility or the replacement of an existing facility equally convenient to the local community it serves and with equivalent or improved facilities;

2. It has been determined that the community facility is no longer needed; or

3. In the case of commercial services, it is not economically viable.

C. Planning permission will be granted for developments where the community facilities needed to meet the needs of the new development are already in place or will be provided to an agreed time scale

D. New residential development will be required to provide or contribute towards accessible community facilities, in line with the most up to date Development Plan strategy. Where a facility is, or facilities are, deemed to have insufficient capacity due to proposed development, mitigation or contributions will be required to address identified shortfalls.

E. The Community Facilities affected by this policy are :

1. **Church (also listed building)**
2. **Primary school**
3. **Pre-school**
4. **Pub (also listed building)**
5. **Village Hall**
6. **Community Shop, Post Office & Coffee Shop**
7. **Recreation Ground, including children's play area, multi-use games area and tennis court**

Parking Provision

9.6. Following the withdrawal of subsidies by the County Council in 2016, the village has no bus service. Therefore most of the population are very reliant on car transport. Thus the ability to park cars is very important to the community and is vital to a village with limited amenities and with the car being the primary means of transport out of the village. Houses which were built either before the era of the motor car or without parking provision now need such provision. 50% of households in the village own 2 cars; 18.3% own 3 or more. In 2011, only 10 households did not own a car.

9.7. On-street parking on the main road is not possible, except where a parking bay has been created outside houses on Thame Road. On-street parking is becoming more of a problem at the top of Haseley Road and in Milton Manor Drive. It is important that any future development includes adequate provision for parking.

9.8. In a community that is now very dependent on the car, the provision of adequate parking provision in any development is essential. The character of an area is frequently determined not by the design of the houses but by the vehicle parking. Little Milton is fortunate in that, despite both the older houses and the social housing having little provision for parking, the situation is currently largely under reasonable control. The community wishes this to continue. Unneighbourly or inconsiderate parking includes:

a) Parking part way on pavements, thus restricting pedestrian access
b) Blocking driveways or restricting space opposite driveways
c) Not allowing sufficient space for large vehicles, particularly emergency services, to pass

Policy LM11 - Residential Parking

A. New residential development (including extensions) that gives rise to the need for additional parking will be supported only where adequate parking provision is made in line with the parking standards set out in the Development Plan.

B. In order to achieve this:

1. **Priority should be given to the provision of on-plot parking solutions that adequately meet current and likely future needs.**

2. **Where on-plot parking solutions are not practicable or are inappropriate, planning proposals should set out reasonable alternative provision. These might include communal parking areas, garage blocks or parking bays.**

3. **Proposals should also address the need for parking solutions for visitors.**

Waste Water (Sewerage) System

9.9. The village population has declined in the last 10-15 years, which is considered an undesirable trend and the community feels that a modest increase in the population would be desirable. However any increase in the housing stock to support this objective should be commensurate with the capacity of the local infrastructure. To this end, the capacity of the sewerage system has been found to be a key factor.

9.10. The capacity of the sewerage system has been of concern to the village for a number of years. Problems with sewage flooding outside the school have occurred. During periods of heavy rain, tankers have had to be deployed to deal with excessive flows. In the winter of 2014, tankers were deployed at the pumping station for up to 24 hours per day over a period of 3 months. Consequently, early in the process of drafting the Neighbourhood Plan, Thames Water were requested to advise on 4 possible scenarios – development of up to 10 houses; development up to 50 houses; each option at the north or south end of the village. The advice received was that Little Milton Waste Water Treatment Works has sufficient capacity. However the Waste Water Network capacity in the village is unlikely to be able to support the demand anticipated. Therefore upgrades to the existing drainage infrastructure are likely to be required to ensure sufficient capacity is brought forward ahead of the development.

9.11. The *SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan* published in Oct 2017 stated against Little Milton Sewage Treatment Works that infrastructure and/or treatment work upgrades are required to support proposed growth. Thames Water have recommended that the Local Planning Authority should seek to ensure that there is adequate water and waste water infrastructure to serve all new developments. Developers are encouraged to contact Thames Water as early as possible to discuss their development proposals and intended delivery programme to assist with identifying any potential water and waste water network reinforcement requirements. Where there is a capacity constraint, the Local Planning Authority will, where appropriate, apply phasing conditions to any approval to ensure that any necessary upgrades are delivered ahead of the occupation of the relevant phase of the development. Such a strategy will help achieve Objective 3.1

9.12. SODC's *Infrastructure Delivery Plan* has identified that infrastructure and/or treatment work upgrades are required to serve proposed growth, but no significant constraints to the provision of this infrastructure have been identified.

9.13. It is important in assessing the capacity of the system to take into account all development which has taken place since 2018 as the cumulative effect of a number of small developments would have as much impact on the system as a single larger development.

9.14. Another factor to take into consideration is that the waste water from the near-by Great and Little Haseleys is piped across the fields between the villages and joins Little Milton's sewerage system at the pumping station on the Haseley Road. Whilst outside the immediate scope of this Neighbourhood Plan, any significant development in the Haseleys could cause problems as far as sewerage system capacity is concerned in Little Milton.

Policy LM12: Waste Water System

Proposals for development will be supported if it can be demonstrated that, in consultation with Thames Water, the waste water network and treatment works either already have sufficient capacity or will be upgraded to provide sufficient capacity before any new development is occupied.

Water Supply

9.15. Thames Water have advised that they do not have concerns in terms of water supply due to the proposed scale of growth (1-20 houses). However the area may require a detailed modelling and investigations to understand if the current network could cope with development on a larger scale.

10. HOUSING

Aim 4: Within the capacity of the parish, to promote sustainable development and to respond positively to the national and local need for more houses.

10.1. Overall, this Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable development which is in keeping and character with the surrounding built environment and the adjacent open rural landscape and which best meets the housing need. (Objective 4.1)

Housing Numbers

10.2. The emerging Local Policy for the smaller villages of South Oxfordshire, of which Little Milton is one, calls for a minimum of 500 new homes delivered through:

- Neighbourhood Plans,
- Infill development and/or
- Development on suitable sites.

10.3. The emerging Local Plan seeks growth of 5-10% in the smaller villages or a fair share for Little Milton of some 10-20 new homes. In the Nov 2016 village survey, of the residents who responded (73% of households), 81% were comfortable with growth up to 10 new houses; 49% were comfortable with growth up to 20 houses.

10.4. It is not intended to select sites for development within this Neighbourhood Plan. The expectation is that growth will be delivered by suitable infill development or on suitable sites adjacent to the current built-up area.

10.5. Infill development would represent, by definition, development within the village. Other sites suitable for development should either be developed within the village or immediately adjacent to it.

Housing Mix

10.6. As shown in para 3.12, the current housing stock, when compared with the district, county and nationally is skewed towards 4-bedroom houses or larger, with a lower than average number of 1- or 2-bedroom homes. This fact, coupled with the decline in younger adults and their families, points to a need for more 2- and 3-bedroom homes. In the November 2016 village survey, residents agreed that the focus of future development should be on 2- and 3-bedroom homes (69% and 77% support respectively). The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment also points to a need for houses of this size.

10.7. Thus this Neighbourhood Plan encourages the building of more 2- and 3-bedroom homes in the village and discourages new 4- or more bedroom houses.

10.8. In common with many other villages in Oxfordshire, there is a desire to make houses, whether market housing or 'affordable housing', less expensive particularly for younger people. The pricing of houses is beyond our control but we would encourage measures which seek to limit the price of houses whilst also achieving good standards of design and materials. (Objective 4.2)

10.9. The community also wishes to promote a mix of house types in any new development – detached, semi-detached and terraced.

10.10. It is important that a better balance of the mix of houses be achieved over time and that new development does not further skew the housing balance of the village away from smaller houses suitable for both young adults or older people down-sizing and towards larger houses which are currently over-represented in the village.

Affordable Housing

10.11. Affordable housing is defined as 'Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.'

10.12. In the context of Little Milton, Green Belt policy is important as national policies allows 'limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Development Plan'. Such housing may be built on Rural Exception Sites, defined as 'Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable dwellings without grant funding'.

10.13. The Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix D) which forms part of the evidence base for this Neighbourhood Plan, and which included a survey which went to every household in the parish, concluded that there is a need for a development of up to 6 affordable houses as social housing, either for rent or shared ownership. (Objective 4.3)

Policy LM13 - Dwelling Mix

A. Proposals for new residential development will be required to demonstrate a mix of dwelling types and sizes which:

1. **Meet the needs of current and future households, and**
2. **Address the district wide shortage of smaller houses, and**
3. **Are appropriate to the site in terms of style and design,**

B. Proposals that recognise the need for smaller dwellings and comprise single houses, terraced cottages or groups of small detached or semi-detached houses with a maximum of 3 bedrooms will be particularly supported.

C. Development on rural exception sites that are conformity with the Development Plan will be supported.

Development of existing dwellings

10.14. Much of the housing stock of the village has been converted or extended over the years. Development Plan policies continue to permit, where appropriate, the following:

- Sub-division and conversion of dwellings to multiple occupation
- Replacement of dwellings
- Extension of dwellings

Many proposals for the extension of dwellings are likely to be permitted development and therefore not need planning permission.

Safe Access to and from New Developments

10.15. There are a number of locations in the village where the provision of safe access to and from a particular site is problematical, usually due to blind corners and limited sight lines. Development Plan policies require that all types of development provide for a safe and convenient access for all users to the highway network.

11. ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Aim 5: To work with the Highways Authority to mitigate as much as is practicable the impact of local development and/or strategic road developments on the volume and weight of traffic using village roads and, where possible, reduce those volumes

Note: Many of the factors influencing traffic which runs through our village, now and in the future, lie outside the parish of Little Milton. A Neighbourhood Plan can only set policies for development:

- which lies within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and
- which requires planning consent

Many road maintenance and improvement schemes are classed as Permitted Development and thus do not require planning consent. Similarly schemes such as speed limits or weight restrictions are not planning matters and thus cannot be the subject of a Neighbourhood Plan policy. However some new road developments which are not part of housing or commercial development schemes do require planning permission – a recent district example was the Harwell Link Road.

Emerging Concerns for Little Milton

11.1. The village is already subject to high volumes of traffic, particularly during morning and evening rush hours, on the main A329 road through the centre of the village. Of particular concern is the volume of HGVs, for which the centre of the village is ill-suited and where minor skirmishes between lorries frequently occur. Night-time HGV traffic is also a concern as it disturbs sleep. The Little Milton Village Plan 2014 placed high priorities on measures which would reduce the volume of traffic, particularly HGVs, and the amount of speeding through the village. Various initiatives such as setting up a volunteer Speedwatch group were successful, whilst others such as trying to persuade the County Council to impose a weight limit on the A329 between J7 M40 and Stadhampton have, so far, been unsuccessful. The challenge is also one of finding suitable alternative routes for HGVs, of which there are few. There is no easy answer to this problem which has had a major impact on the village for many years.

11.2. In addition, there is concern about the volume and speed of traffic using the Haseley Road as a route from the B480 at Chalgrove to the A329 and onwards to north or east Oxford, the M40 northbound or Thame and beyond. This road is narrow in places and has no pavements. The junction with the A329 in the centre of the village is a problem area.

11.3. Against a background of long-standing concerns about current traffic, the village is also now very uneasy about the potential impact of increased traffic flows engendered by proposed new strategic settlements, that at Chalgrove Airfield being of particular concern. In addition, development at Berinsfield may adversely affect traffic flows. Future longer-term possibilities at Harrington and/or Grenoble Road could also have an adverse impact.

11.4. In the context of the potential Chalgrove Airfield development, the possibilities of significantly increased traffic flow on both the main A329 and along the Haseley Road are of great concern to the village.

11.5. Also an increase in traffic resulting from major road developments which are in the pipeline is another concern. In the context, the following are relevant - see Map 16:

a) New Thames crossing at Culham, along with the Clifton Hampden bypass, which could increase flows from traffic using the new bridge as a route to the M40 and beyond

b) The Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, which, despite its name, is likely to start on the A34 north of Abingdon and could then swing south east of Oxford to J7 or J8 of the M40. Route options will be the subject of detailed consideration for a number of years from 2018 onwards.

11.6. The Oxford-Cambridge Expressway is a national programme. At the time of formulating this Plan, it is still at the planning stage but the possibility that the road may start on the A34 north of Abingdon and then be routed south-east of Oxford to J7 or J8 of the M40 is of particular importance. Map studies have indicated that such a route option could run close to, or possibly within, the western part of the parish of Little Milton.

11.7. Such a road is designed to have a significant impact on long-distance traffic and could draw traffic, particularly lorries, away from the A329. The completion of such a road could also have a major impact on local traffic flows, which would depend very much on whether or not there are junctions with the key local roads (A4074, B480). Junctions appropriately located could lead to a reduction of traffic on the A329 through Little Milton. However certain junction configurations could draw even more traffic onto the A329, as such traffic makes its way to the Expressway.

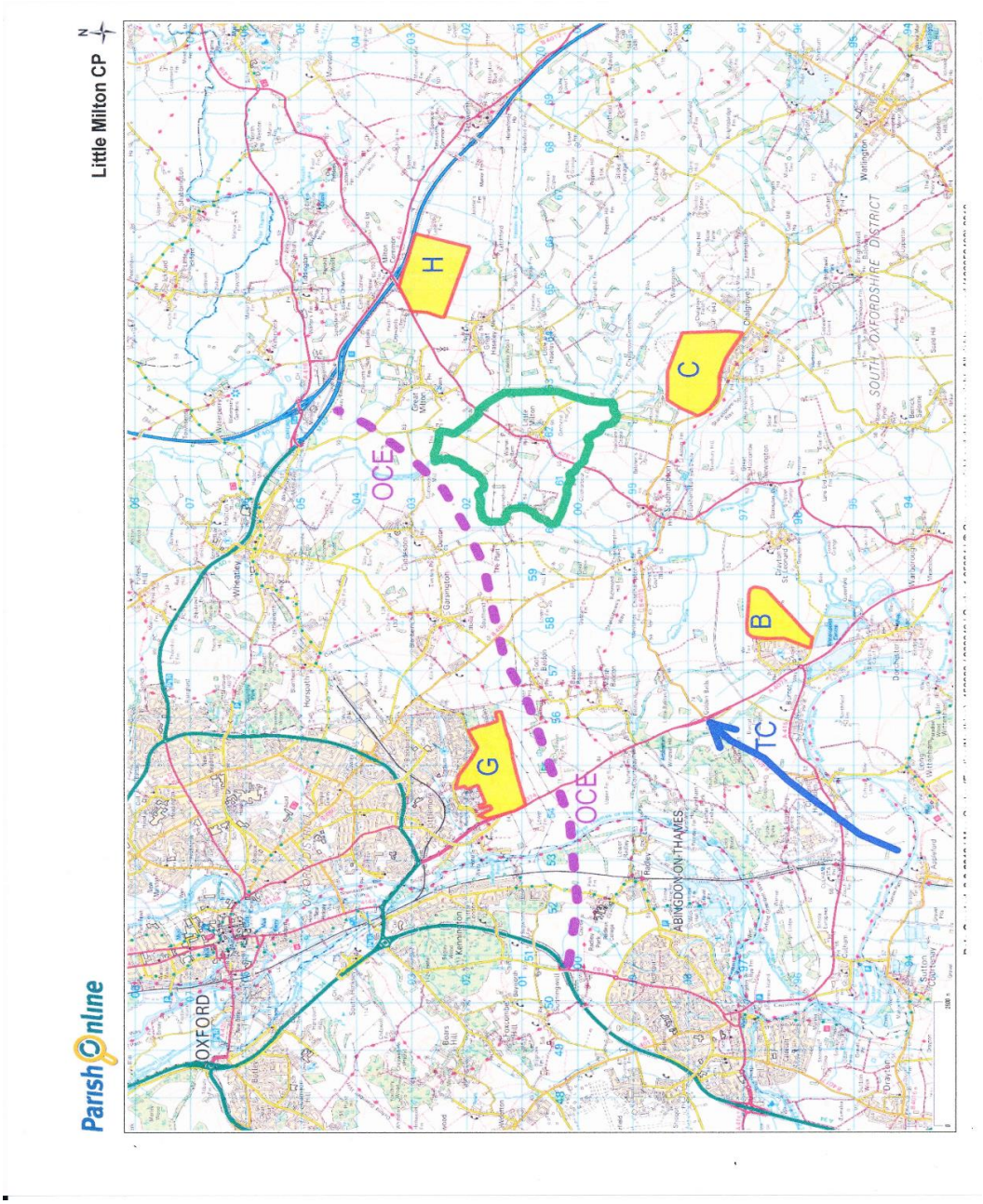
11.8. Plans for the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway will become clearer during the time span of this Neighbourhood Plan and its impact, if any, on the village will become apparent as the programme matures.

11.9. Since the demise of bus services in the village, dependence on the car has become an ever more important aspect of village life. However some households in the village do not own a car (5.3% in 2011) or only own one car (26.3%) and in some households the lack of rural transport is keenly felt. SODC's Development Plan already encourages initiatives which would improve rural transport.

11.10. Air quality is of concern to the village, particularly NO2 generated by traffic. The centre of the village is an Oxfordshire Air Quality monitoring site. SODC's Development Plan Sustainability Appraisal in Sep 2017 identified Little Milton as one of only four air quality hot spots in the district, the others being Thame, Didcot and Stadhampton. The most recently-published results (2016) show air quality average readings to be just within statutory limits ie. 36 against an annual mean limit of 40).

11.11. There are major concerns that increasing traffic will have an adverse impact on air quality. This is of particular importance at the primary school, which lies on the main road through the village. Development Plan policies state that development must be compliant with the measures laid out in SODC's Developer Guidance Document and the associated Air Quality Action Plan, as well as the national air quality guidance and any local transport plans

MAP 16 – ROADS AND TRANSPORT



Little Milton Parish outlined in Green
B = potential strategic development site at Berinsfield
C = potential strategic development site at Chalgrove Airfield
H = potential strategic development site at Harrington
G = potential strategic development at Grenoble Road
OCE = route possibility for Oxford-Cambridge Expressway
TC = Route of new Thames Crossing at Culham
[Smaller road schemes eg. possible Stadhampton bypass, have been omitted.]

Mitigating the Impact of Increasing Traffic

11.12. There are some priorities such as HGV weight limits or speed limits which are not planning matters and therefore cannot be addressed in a Neighbourhood Plan but are instead issues for the County Council's Local Transport Plan. Much of what the village wishes to achieve in terms of road and transport is already covered by policies in SODC's emerging Local Plan. These include:

a) Supporting all reasonable measures to ensure that there is an adequate road network to carry the increased traffic from development.

b) Supporting the continuing development of an understanding of the impact and implications of the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.

c) Rural transport initiatives that enable improvements to access services and employment will be encouraged

d) Supporting the promotion of improvements to the transport network which improve air quality standards.

e) Setting policies designed to maintain and improve air quality standards and promote sustainable travel.

11.13. Most importantly for the village, the Development Plan supports all reasonable measures designed to mitigate the increased traffic due to development. This is the essence of what the community wants and such a policy has strong support throughout the village.

11.14. Rush hour traffic through the village already exceeds 1000 vehicles per hour. The majority of that traffic uses the A329. However the possibility of increased traffic flows along the Haseley Road is of major concern to the community. Reasonable road developments or improvements which were aimed at mitigating the effects of increased traffic due to development in the local area would be welcomed.

Policy LM14: Road Developments

Road development or improvement proposals within the parish which require planning consent, where the benefit outweighs the environmental impact and which are designed to mitigate the impact of increased traffic flows through the village, will be supported.

Bypass

11.15. A bypass for the village has been discussed many times over the years, and particularly since the M40 opened as far as Oxford in 1974 when the main road through the village (which runs to J7 of the M40) was upgraded to an A road from its previous status as a B road. In this context, a bypass for the A329, running west of the village, has always been the option considered. However, if development at Chalgrove Airfield goes ahead and traffic via the Haseley Road reaches unsustainable levels, there could be a need for alternative bypass options or alternative traffic control measures.

11.16. Oxfordshire County Council had advised that there are currently no proposals for a

bypass and that if a proposal did come forward, the project would be complex and expensive. The County Council does not currently have funding for such a project.

11.17. The key factors which could determine the need for a bypass at some point in the future are:

a) The capacity of the village roads to absorb increased traffic flows

b) Mean annual NO2 levels within the village exceeding statutory limits (The fact that Little Milton is already one of only four air quality hot spots in the district is a major consideration.)

11.18. The need, if at all, for a bypass will also be influenced very heavily by the eventual outcome of the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway project.

11.19. The village was last asked for views on a bypass option as part of the 2013 Village Plan survey. 49% were in favour; 51% against.

11.20. How roads and traffic flows will develop in the area is currently impossible to forecast. Therefore at this point the community wishes merely to support the option of a bypass in principle

11.21. A similar project for another village has been estimated at approximately £20 million. As stated earlier, OCC does not have the funding available and therefore funding would have to come from contributions from development, either through CIL funding, s106 agreements or similar contributory schemes.

11.22. It is important that a bypass, if ever built, achieves the objective of not only routeing traffic out of the centre of the village but also removing the noise, vibration, dust and air pollution from the built-up area, and most particularly reducing NO2 levels. Thus an edge street, as has been proposed in other locations in the district, is not deemed a suitable solution for Little Milton.

Statement 1: Bypass

A. Any development proposal for a bypass must demonstrate that it will:

1. **Reduce the volume of traffic running through the heart of the village, and**
2. **Reduce noise, vibration, dust and air pollution, most particularly NO2 levels, in the built-up area of the village.**

B. In the context of (A2), an edge street, ie. a road which runs closely around the edge of the built-up area, would not be considered to meet these objectives.

12. THE BALANCED COMMUNITY

Aim 6: To maintain a sensible balance in the parish between housing, employment, health and well-being, community facilities, open spaces, roads, agriculture, wildlife habitats and water courses

Housing Mix

12.1. A balanced community is one where, firstly, the population demographics cover all age ranges. Secondly the mix of housing should reflect the needs of the population in terms of house size and type of tenure.

12.2. The proportion of affordable housing should be in balance with the rest of the community. Little Milton already has its fair share of affordable housing with 18% of housing being affordable against the 2011 census local district average of 11%. The plan outlines its support for the provision of affordable housing through exception sites.

12.3. Policies in Section 9 seek to redress the balance between the larger 4 or more bedroom houses and the smaller 2- and 3-bedroom homes by encouraging the building of more of the latter. It is also hoped that by doing so the decline in the number of younger adults and their children in the village can be reversed and a more balanced population achieved. This will contribute to the achievement of Objective 6.1

Employment and Commercial Development

12.4. A balanced community should also offer employment. Although employment opportunities in the parish are limited, the community supports the existing employment opportunities within the parish and also supports working from home. The neighbourhood plan area already contains a number of business premises, including:

a) Use of space within existing buildings
b) Conversion of existing buildings into business premises eg. art gallery
c) 10 light industrial units at Warren Barn Farm

12.5. The Development Plan provides support for sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.

12.6. The community's preference is for any such appropriate development to be within the parish (71% in favour) but not in the village itself (only 46% in favour). The first preference is for any such employment development to be for offices or professional services. Tourism, small research or light industrial units or business centres were not preferred and 67% voted against the least popular option - storage/warehouse facilities.

12.7. The scale of premises envisaged as being in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood plan area include:

a) Conversion of barns or other existing buildings into offices and/or small workshops, offering no more than 4 units
b) New buildings on a similar scale to (a)

12.8. Larger scale premises such as business centres ie. a place where businesses can rent rooms as offices, meeting rooms or event locations, and which comprise 5 or more units are considered out of scale for the neighbourhood plan area. Most particularly, any development whose operations would bring additional heavy goods traffic to the village roads would not be supported.

Policy LM15: Employment and Commercial Development

A. Commercial development which supports sustainable economic growth will be supported where there would be no significant adverse impact on the local area.

B. Proposals for the alteration or expansion of existing premises or the change of use of existing premises to employment or commercial use will be particularly supported. Well-designed new development which is located outside the built-up area of the village and which is proportionate in scale and is in character with any adjoining buildings and with the character of the local landscape will also be supported.

C. Proposals which promote the sustainable development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses will be supported, subject to there being no adverse impact on historical assets.

Health and Well-being

12.9. A balanced community makes provision for healthy living and supports the well-being of its residents. Many of the steps that can be taken lie outside the planning system as such but the following measures within this Neighbourhood Plan support healthy living and the well-being of residents:

a) Maintenance of the rural character of the village
b) Conservation of open spaces, local green spaces (including allotments), local footpaths, the BBOWT nature reserve and the local environment
c) Sustaining and developing key community facilities, including provision of local shopping, sport, play and leisure activities, and opportunities for social interaction
d) The provision of smaller houses suitable for either younger families or older people wishing to downsize
e) Support for a small development of affordable houses
f) Maintenance of an adequate waste water system
g) Opportunities for local employment

12.10. The reduction of traffic levels is an aspiration which would lead to reduced pollution, noise, disturbance of sleep and would, most importantly, contribute to a reduction of NO2 levels in the centre of the village.

Community Facilities

12.11. Community Facilities are an important element of the balanced community and have been considered in Section 9 .

Open Spaces, Roads & Transport, Wildlife and Water Courses

12.12. Open spaces are important to the community and are addressed in earlier policies and at Appendix B. Roads and transport have been considered at length in Section 11. Wildlife habitats have been addressed, as have water courses and the risks of flooding.

Agriculture

12.13. The other aspect of this balanced community is agriculture, the landscape of which surrounds the village on all sides. The farm houses, barns and outbuildings within the village have largely been converted to residential use. Tractors and farm machinery no longer ply the village streets in any volume. Just a handful of people in the village now work in agriculture. Nevertheless, the parish is a significant area of high grade agricultural land. In order to maintain a balanced community, the continuance of the local pattern of agriculture is important.

13. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) PRIORITIES

13.1. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force in April 2010. It allows local authorities in England and Wales to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development.

13.2. The charging authority sets out its levy rates in a charging schedule. Levy rates are expressed as pounds per square metre. These figures are applied to the gross internal floorspace of the net additional development liable for the levy. Liable development is the type of development specified in the charging schedule as incurring a particular levy charge.

13.3. SODC has set rates (from 1 April 2016) for residential development at £150 per sqm, rising to £170.73 in 2018. The average 3-bedroom house is 110-120 sqm. These rates may change within the life time of this Plan.

13.4. 25% of the Levy comes to the Parish Council if there is a Neighbourhood Plan in place; otherwise 15%. For example, a 9 house development at 100sqm each might raise £38400 for the Parish Council.

13.5. Local authorities are required to spend the levy's funds on the infrastructure needed to support the development of their area and they will decide what infrastructure is needed. The levy is intended to focus on the provision of new infrastructure and should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in infrastructure provision unless those deficiencies will be made more severe by development. The levy can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure, if that is necessary to support development.

13.6. The Planning Act 2008 provides a wide definition** of the infrastructure which can be funded by the levy, including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social care facilities. This definition allows the levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, district heating schemes and police stations and other community safety facilities. This gives local communities flexibility to choose what infrastructure they need to deliver their development plan.

** The Act defines infrastructure as:

...roads and other transport facilities, flood defences, schools and other educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities, open spaces, and affordable housing.

13.7. The money available at any one time is impossible to predict. The Levy raised on a single house development would be relatively small. However developments of up to 9 houses may take place within the lifetime of this NP. Thus no hard and fast policy for the total investment of the Levy can be decided in advance.

13.8. The money raised from development in Little Milton might, for example, be spent on improvements to the recreation ground, adding to the village green facilities, extending parking, or any other local community improvement. Priorities will change over time. Therefore it is appropriate that the Parish Council maintains a 'live' list of projects for consideration. Such a list has been published and will be reviewed and updated annually.

Statement 2: Community Infrastructure Levy

Community Infrastructure Levy contributions from development will be used for the benefit of the community, the priorities for spending on projects to be determined by Little Milton Parish Council. The Parish Council will publish a list of projects and estimated costs, such list to be reviewed annually.

14. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Implementation

14.1. Implementation of the Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan will be ongoing. Responsibility for determining planning applications rests with the South Oxfordshire District Council (or any subsequent planning authority). However, when consulted on planning applications within the parish, the Parish Council will use the NP policies to assist in determining the Council's response to applications. It is planned that the NP Steering Group will continue in being and will advise the Parish Council as appropriate.

Monitoring

14.2. Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed one year after its adoption at community referendum by the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, and annually thereafter. The purpose of review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the Neighbourhood Plan objectives have been implemented in practice, and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting the Neighbourhood Plan objectives; and secondly, to identify any errors and omissions.

Five Year Review

14.3. Policies in a Neighbourhood Plan may become out of date, for example if they conflict with policies in a Development Plan that is adopted after the making of the neighbourhood plan. In such cases, the more recent plan policy takes precedence. In addition, where a policy has been in force for a period of time, other material considerations may be given greater weight in planning decisions as the evidence base for the plan policy becomes less robust. Therefore, as the situation demands, or at the latest no more than five years after adoption, Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan will be formally reviewed, such review to be led by Little Milton Parish Council.

End of Plan Period Review

14.4. At least two years prior to the expiry of Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan, a full review will be undertaken to gauge the success of the Plan in meeting its objectives and to put in place a succession plan.

Updating the Evidence Base

14.5. The evidence base is an important element of the Neighbourhood Planning process. Thus, as well as monitoring and reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan itself as outlined above, the evidence base should also be included in the process.

15. ASPIRATIONS

15.1. The Little Milton Village Plan 2014 (click here to view) covers a wide range of topics, some of which are now reflected in policies which have been set in this Neighbourhood Plan.

15.2. Many aspects of the Village Plan do not involve land use and are thus not appropriate for inclusion in this Neighbourhood Plan. However, in order to paint a complete picture, the following should be noted from the Village Plan Summary Action List, along with the status of each action as of May 2017:

	2014 Action	2018 Status
Roads & Traffic	To reduce damage to properties and on safety & environmental grounds, the Parish Council should request Oxfordshire County Council impose a **weight limit** on the main road through the village	Not achieved. May come eventually as a result of road developments
	Volunteers should be found for a new **speedwatch group** to be set up with the assistance of the police in order to discourage speeding through the village	Achieved
	A similar w**eight monitoring group** should be formed to reduce the number of HGVs breaking weight limits on roads in our village	Achieved
	If **20mph limits** come to be widely applied across the county, the Parish Council should request that village roads be included.	Not Achieved. May come eventually as a result of road developments
	The Parish Council should continue to work with Oxfordshire's Highways Department to develop more measures to **improve road safety** in the village**.**	Not Achieved due to funding constraints. **Relevant to NP** if road safety improvements require planning consent. Also for use of CIL funding.
Sewerage and Flooding	The Parish Council should continue to work with Thames Water to stop sewage discharges and reduce flooding from over-burdened drains in the village.	Satisfactory progress. **Relevant to NP**
Faster Broadband	The Parish Council should monitor the national/county OxOnline programme to try and ensure that Little Milton continues to be included in the upgrade programme.	Achieved
Bus Services	A new Public Transport Group should be formed and facilitated by the Parish Council, firstly, to try and ensure continuation of the current 103/104 services. Also to look at ways to improve evening and weekend bus services between Oxford and the village, or ways to connect with other services (101 at Stadhampton; 280 at Wheatley).	Not Achieved due to withdrawal of Oxfordshire County Council subsidies. **Relevant to NP = Sustainability factor**
Green Energy	The Parish Council should support house and premises owners should they wish to install solar panels or heat pumps; however wind turbines on buildings in the village should be opposed.	On-going.

Cycle Paths:	A new Cycle Path Working Group should be established in order to set up cycle paths, initially between Little Milton, Great Milton and the Haseleys, and later, if feasible, with Wheatley.	Would be **Relevant to NP** if practicable but detailed investigation by a working group 2014-15 was unsuccessful in finding a way forward

16. STEERING GROUP MEMBERS & CONSULTANTS

Steering Group Members

Barry Coward (Chairman)	Parish Councillor
Raymond Fergusson (Secretary & Treasurer)	Parish Clerk
Kate Daunt	Parish Councillor
Elizabeth Swabey-Collison	Parish Councillor
Robert Bright	Parish Councillor
Ian Dennis	Resident
Michael Holifield	Resident

Consultants

- Simon Purfield, Performance, Consultation & Insight Manager, Executive Directors' Unit, Stratford on Avon District Council, Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6HX (Village Survey only)

- Community First Oxfordshire, South Stables, Worton Rectory Farm, Worton, Oxfordshire, OX29 4SU