

# **SOUTH MILTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2019-34**



## **PARISH VISION**

**We would like South Milton to be an even better place in which to live and work, with a strong sense of identity and community spirit. Our ambition is to protect and enhance our coastline, and the rural nature of the parish.**



## Foreword by the Chairman of South Milton Parish Council

South Milton Neighbourhood Plan has been written to reflect how the residents wish the area to look, what it will be like to live and work in and to visit for the next 15 years or so. The adoption of the Plan means that our planning authority – South Hams District Council (SHDC) – must take account of policies in the Plan when considering any planning application and, therefore, it will give South Milton a more significant voice in such decisions.

The process of creating the South Milton Plan has been determined by the Localism Act (2011) and has been substantially funded by the Government.

South Milton Parish Council has overseen the development of the Plan and delegated the work to a Steering Group of six, including three parish councillors. The draft Plan was the result of detailed public consultation through the initial public meeting, answers to a Questionnaire and residents' feedback. Since then, a public housing exhibition has been held in the village hall, the draft regional Joint Local Plan has been published and later adopted in March 2019, the National Planning Policy Framework has been revised (February 2019) and a Strategic Environmental Assessment published and subsequently updated in November 2018. All this activity, together with comments received from parishioners has

required some revision of the draft Plan which has now been modified into the Neighbourhood Plan for South Milton.

The Parish Vision drives the Plan. This document includes a large number of policies (highlighted in green) and also proposes some local projects.

The policies set out in the Plan are designed to conserve and enhance the best aspects of the parish in its wider environmental context. This Plan proposes a small housing development (with some affordable housing) to provide for future generations, which would be linked to some considerable community benefits.

Please read on. I hope you enjoy it and that you feel it reflects your hopes, aspirations and love of South Milton.

**Cllr Marion Brice**  
**April 2019**

**The South Milton Neighbourhood Plan was revised to add a principal residency requirement policy for new open market housing to ensure the Plan's objectives are achieved.**

**Cllr Paul Booker**  
**January 2023**

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## 1 Description of South Milton Parish

1.1 South Milton is a small village in the rural South Hams of Devon. The parish includes the hamlets of Sutton and Upton and it extends to the coast at South Milton Sands. The parish covers 1,556 acres (630 hectares) with six farms located within its boundaries.

1.2 South Milton parish is shown on the map, Figure 1.1. The parish is afforded the highest status of protection because it lies wholly within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and partially within a defined Heritage Coast area. South Milton Ley is a reed bed of 50 acres (20 hectares) and it is protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

1.3 The 2011 census recorded a population of 385 (408 in 2001). Thirty-one per cent were above 65 years of age and 17 per cent were below the age of 19. In 2011 there were 247 dwellings (221 in 2001, of which 51 were second/holiday homes).

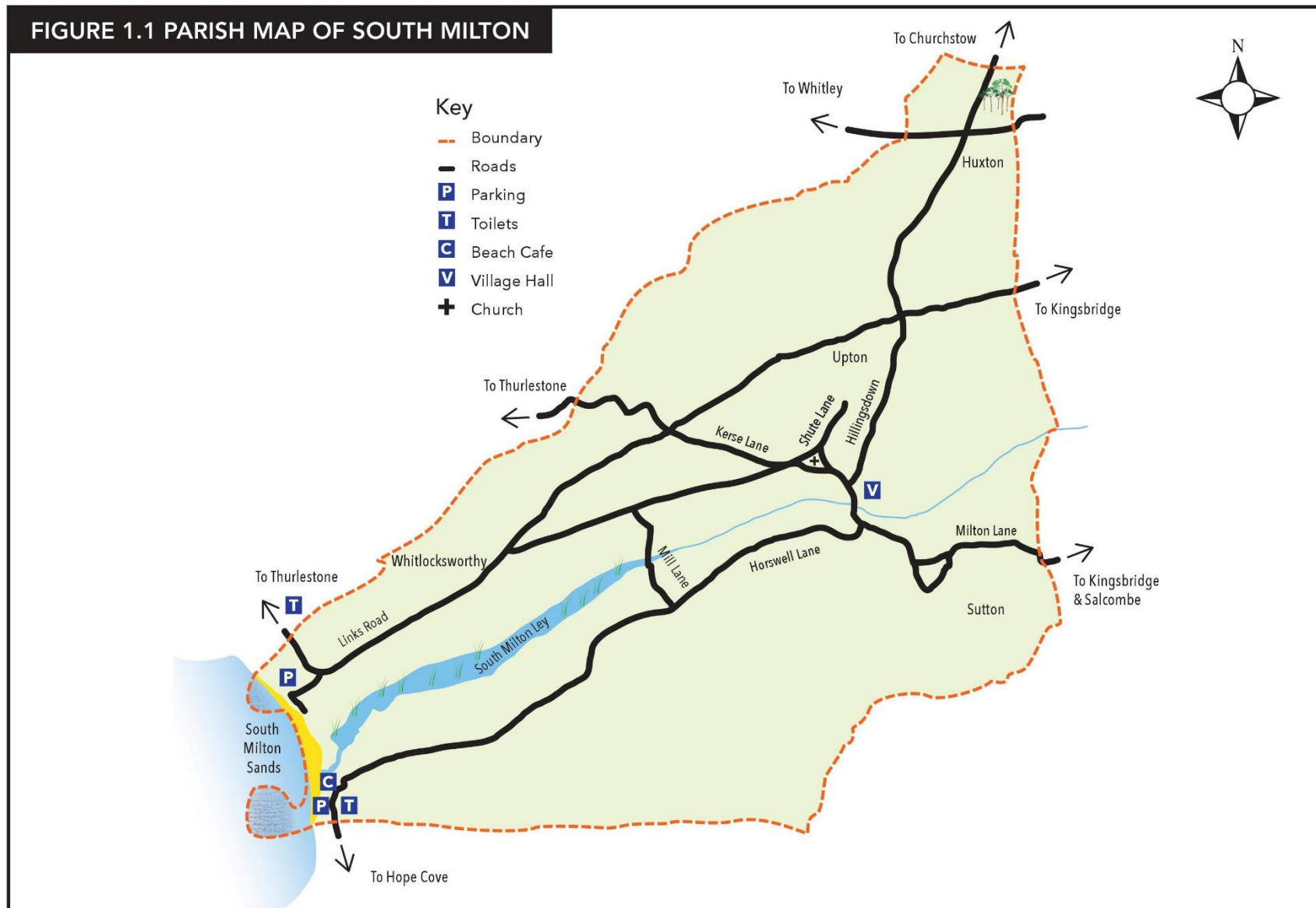
1.4 There are 35 buildings in the parish listed for their historical interest.

1.5 There is no shop, pub, public open space or school in the village.

1.6 The main facilities and services are as follows:

- A parish church (dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century) and cemetery
- A village hall, which is regularly used by various clubs and groups
- The beach at South Milton Sands, largely owned and maintained by the National Trust
- A National Trust beach café
- A public toilet block currently maintained by SHDC
- A stretch of national coast path and numerous footpaths and green lanes
- A daily bus service provided by Devon County Council (DCC)
- A stretch of National Cycle Network Route 28 which passes through the parish
- A water treatment works owned and managed by South West Water (SWW)
- A telephone exchange

**FIGURE 1.1 PARISH MAP OF SOUTH MILTON**



## 2 Historical Background

2.1 There has been a coastal settlement at South Milton for more than one thousand years, when it was known as Mideltone. Three thousand years earlier the land was thought to have been heavily wooded.

2.2 South Milton Sands is the site of an ancient peat bed, which is exposed at very low tides. After the storms of 2013-14 it was examined by members of the Geography Department (Earth and Environmental Sciences) at Plymouth University, who took samples and measurements. They explained that the peat bed was first recorded around 1860, then again in 1923 when some Mesolithic (Stone Age) archaeology was recovered from the site. It was last fully surveyed in 1998 by Exeter Archaeology and an academic paper was produced.

2.3 The scientists are particularly interested in how the beds provide evidence of sea level changes. It is believed that when sea levels were lower the site of the peat bed would have been a freshwater lake/marsh surrounded by trees. Carbon dating of the preserved logs shows them to be at least 3,500 years old, i.e. Bronze Age. The logs are oak and well preserved as shown

in Photograph 2.1. Paleoenvironmental samples have shown insects and pollen grains.



*2.1 Petrified tree trunks revealed on South Milton Sands*

2.4 In the Domesday survey of 1086 the number of households was 15. The occupants of eight of those households were known as villagers, six were peasants or smallholders, and one was a slave.

2.5 There were five plough teams, each working eight oxen, and six acres of meadow. The land yielded two units of tax, implying that it was quite a small area. Nothing of today's village can be traced back to the time of the Domesday Book, although it has been suggested that there was a farm at Whitlocksworthy.

2.6 The tenant-in-chief was Alfred the Breton. He had come to this country from Brittany with Count Alain Le Roux, thought to be his father, who himself was the son of the Duke of Brittany, to take part in the invasion of England. Alfred held 22 lordships, mostly in Devon.

2.7 Hamlets either side of Mideltone were called Southton, now known as Sutton, and Upperton, today's Upton.

2.8 The oldest building in the parish is All Saints' Church, the south doorway and the font being from the twelfth century. It is thought the church was built on the site of a chapel constructed of rough cob or wattle and daub. Bishop Bronescombe of Exeter granted a licence for a chapel in 1269. At the end of the thirteenth century the chancel was extended eastwards and the transept added. The tower and the north aisle were built in the fourteenth century.

2.9 The church and the village hall, which was built in 1911 as a men's institute, are the only meeting places in the parish. The only public house, the New Inn, closed in 1874 to make way for a village school. This, in turn, shut 100 years later, to be followed in a further 25 years by the last shop and post office.

2.10 Collacott, on which there is a plaque bearing the date 1382, is the oldest house in the parish. The four Feoffee cottages in Shute Lane are believed to be early to mid-sixteenth century and were originally a Church House.

2.11 With the exception of All Saints' Church, which is Grade I, all the listed buildings are Grade II. Four of the structures are farm buildings. There are also two groups of chest tombs and headstones in the churchyard which are Grade II listed. Only six of these buildings are outside of the two conservation areas.

2.12 The population of South Milton grew, albeit slowly. Between 1686 and 1812 there were 604 baptisms and approximately 420 burials, the population in 1801 being 302, as shown in Figure 2.1. In 1841, the national census recorded the names of the inhabitants for the first time, and the enumerator listed 424. Ten years later the figure was 415. There were further decreases in 1861 (397) and 1871 (360). This drift away



from the village had been prompted by a lack of employment opportunities, and some residents headed off to the colonies, including Australia. There is a published account of how members of one farming family left the parish to seek their fortune panning for gold in the harsh environment of the Outback.

2.13 The number of residents fluctuated during the remaining years of the nineteenth century with the census in 1881 recording 372 inhabitants, before the lowest figure (335) since census records began was revealed in 1891. A growth spurt saw the number increase to 408 in 1901, and in 1911, the latest census to be made public, the number was 385.

2.14 Kelly's Directory recorded the parish population in 1931 as 378. Thirty years later it had decreased by 50, before climbing again to 388 (1971) and 403 (1981). The most recent published figures have been 408 in 2001 and 385 in 2011 - coincidentally the same numbers from 100 years earlier.

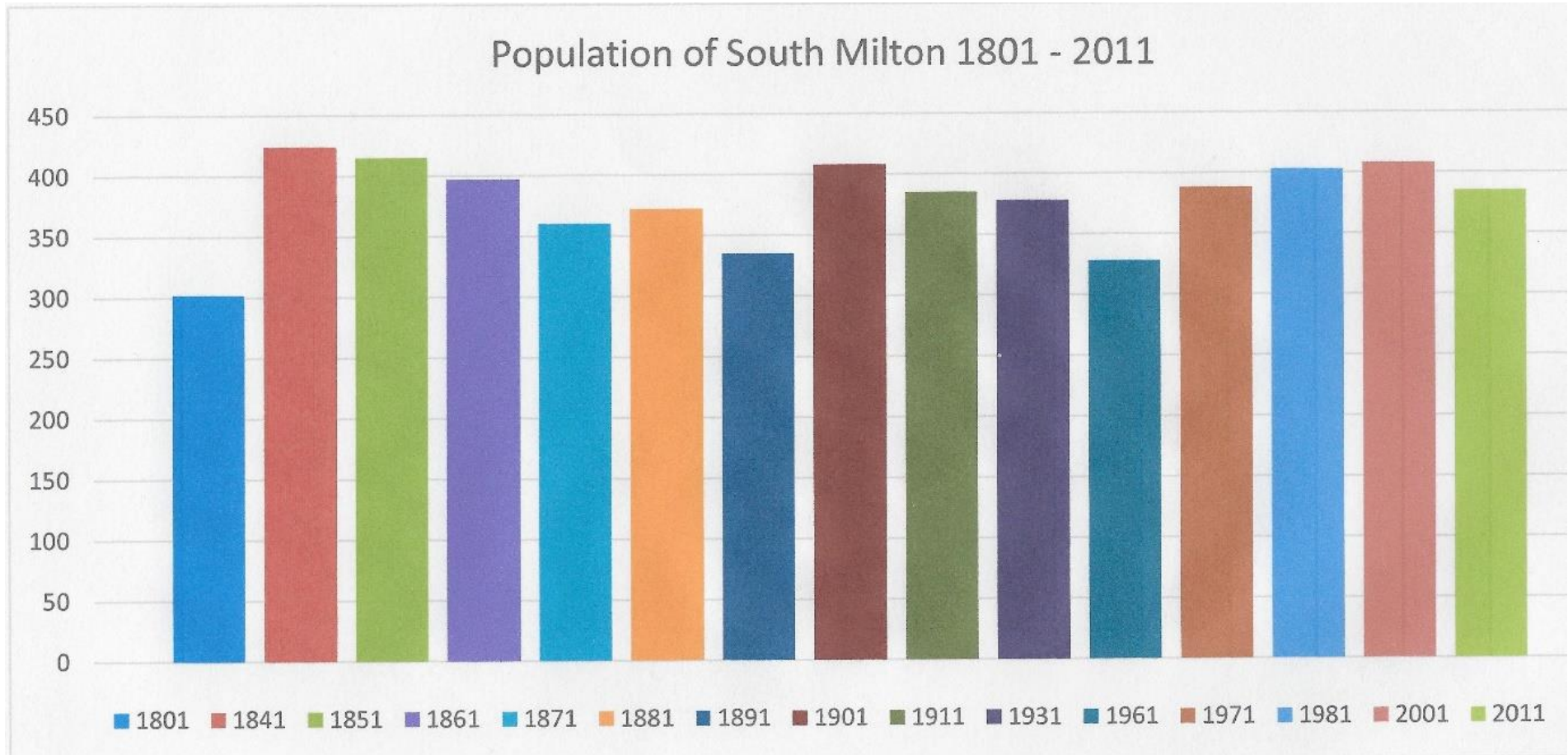
2.15 Farming has been the predominant occupation in the village from the time of the Domesday survey. In the middle of the nineteenth century there were more than a dozen farms. Today there are six, with other land held by farmers from

neighbouring parishes. However, this does not mean a diminution in acreage and all the land is farmed.

2.16 Since the Second World War there have been two housing developments built in the village. Eight semi-detached council houses were built at Sunnyside in the 1940s and Backshay Close, a mixed development of 20 properties, was built in the 1970s.

2.17 The biggest employer in the parish is the Beachhouse café, a National Trust franchise at South Milton Sands. The Trust has owned the largest portion of this popular beach since the early 1980s, and it now attracts upwards of 80,000 visitors each year. There has been a refreshment outlet there since the 1930s.

Figure 2.1 Population of South Milton 1801 - 2011



### 3 The Development of the Plan

3.1 This South Milton Neighbourhood Plan has been compiled by local residents and the Parish Council. It establishes a vision for the evolution of South Milton parish over the next 15 years or so and its long-term sustainability.

3.2 Neighbourhood planning builds on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and gives an extra tier of detail at a local level. The South Milton Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to ensure that future growth and development in the parish is shaped by local people. It seeks to protect its unique character as a coastal and rural community, and that further development will contribute towards creating a stable and more sustainable community attractive to both residents and visitors.

3.3 At the start of the process an open village meeting was held in September 2014. The meeting was very well attended, and it informed the development of the Questionnaire and the Vision for the Parish. The Questionnaire was sent out to all registered electors and each holiday home in the autumn of 2015. The total number of Questionnaires distributed was 399.

A total of 190 (47 per cent) responses were received. Public meetings have been held to discuss the Plan and the Steering Group has regularly kept parishioners informed of progress through the village newsletter and website, while at the same time gathering feedback from residents. Professional advice has been received throughout the process from South Hams District Council Development Management Department.

3.4 The responses to the Questionnaire were analysed in detail, and following numerous meetings during 2015 and 2016, the Steering Group produced a draft South Milton Neighbourhood Plan for consultation in November 2016. The purpose of the draft Plan was to:

1. Record the historical and existing status and nature of the community and its environment.
2. Set a framework for the Plan based on the analysis of the responses to the Questionnaire.
3. Propose a set of policies to guide residents, local authorities and developers on how the community wishes to manage and control future development in South Milton parish over the next 15 years or so.

4. Propose a series of projects to address local concerns.
5. Explain how progress on implementing the Plan will be monitored.

3.5 The most important outcome for the village in the draft Plan was to allocate a site for a small housing development (including some affordable housing) linked with the provision of significant community benefits. The site was chosen from a list of nine sites offered by local landowners through an objective evaluation process. This process was advised and supported by planning officers from SHDC Management Development Department.

3.6 In November 2016 the draft South Milton Plan was published and the views of all parishioners and interested parties were sought. An exhibition about the housing proposals in the Plan was held over two days in April 2017 in the village hall and provided information on the nine sites offered for a small housing development, and demonstrated how the decision had been reached to take one of the sites, The Dairy, forward.

3.7 Forty-three written comments on the draft Plan were made by individuals and organisations and 65 comments returned by visitors to the housing exhibition. All these comments were responded to in writing by the Steering Group. All the comments and responses were made available on the village website. The Steering Group took account of these comments and responses in writing the final Plan.

3.8 In March 2019 the Joint Local Plan (JLP) was adopted covering Plymouth and South West Devon. The Steering Group has updated the local policies in the Plan to take account of those set out in the JLP.

3.9 In March 2017 SHDC also advised that a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) was required. This was conducted by a Government-appointed consultant and completed in June 2017. Following comments received from the Examiner, the SEA was updated and this was published in November 2018. The Steering Group took account of the findings in completing the Plan.

### 3.10 The South Milton Neighbourhood Plan:

1. Identifies the main community issues and objectives and sets out a vision for South Milton parish.
2. Takes account of national and regional guidance and policies in setting out the community's policies for the management of development.
3. Makes proposals for the development and use of land and allocates land for specific purposes.
4. Identifies a series of local projects, to be overseen by the Parish Council, that will improve the facilities and the environment in the parish.
5. Documents the mechanisms for monitoring and the timescales for delivering the Plan and its proposals.

## 4 Key Issues, Objectives and Vision for the Parish

4.1 The views received from the local village community have formed the basis of all the discussions by the Steering Group. Many of these views are referenced in the later sections of the Plan. These are the recurring issues for most parishioners:

### Key Issues for Parishioners

1. Residents enjoy living in the village as South Milton is a quiet, beautiful and green parish with good access to the beach, has a strong community spirit and an extremely low crime rate. There is a very strong feeling that these qualities should not be jeopardised by any development in the future.
2. There is support for some improvement in village facilities, especially the provision of a Village Hall car park and a children's play space.
3. There is support for some modest housing development, particularly if it provides some affordable housing and it is in keeping with the character of the village.

4.2 From all the consultation and feedback received the Steering Group set itself the following four objectives to be realised through the policies set out in the Plan:

### The Plan's Objectives

1. To retain and enhance the beauty and special qualities of this rural parish.
2. To ensure our coastline and beach remain unspoilt.
3. To restrict housing development to a single agreed site (while acknowledging that infilling will occur) and link the development of the agreed site with the provision of some desired community facilities.
4. To continue to promote the parish as a very good place in which to live and work.



*4.1 South Milton Sands: a winter's day*

4.3 Our parish's Vision Statement was initially drafted at the first public meeting. It was later refined by the Steering Group following consultation through the draft Plan.

### **PARISH VISION**

**We would like South Milton to be an even better place in which to live and work, with a strong sense of identity and community spirit. Our ambition is to protect and enhance our coastline, and the rural nature of the parish.**

## 5 Policy Framework and Local Projects

5.1 The Steering Group recognised the need to align the Plan's policies with those set out in the NPPF and the JLP. Table 5.1 shows the relationship.

5.2 Appendix 1 provides the Plan's policies and Appendix 2 gives a list of local projects designed to meet local needs. **Table 5.1 The relationship of the Plan's objectives and associated policies at three levels**

	Neighbourhood Plan policies			JLP policies (March 2019)		NPPF policies (Feb 2019) [paragraphs]
<b>Objective 1</b> To retain and enhance the beauty and special qualities of this rural parish.	Policy E&CM1 Policy E&CM2 Policy E&CM3 Policy E&CM4	Policy H4 Policy H5	Policy EMP 1	DEV20 DEV21 DEV23 DEV25 DEV28	SO10	170-177
<b>Objective 2</b> To ensure our coastline and beach remain unspoilt.	Policy E&CM1 Policy E&CM2	Policy H4 Policy H5		DEV23 DEV24 DEV25 DEV27 DEV28	SPT11	148-154, 166-169
<b>Objective 3</b> To restrict housing development to a single agreed site (while acknowledging that infilling will occur) and link the development of the agreed site with the provision of some desired community facilities.	Policy E&CM3	Policy H1 Policy H4 Policy H5		DEV8 DEV9 DEV20 DEV32 SO8 SO9	SO8 SO9 TTV29	59-66, 77-79
<b>Objective 4</b> To continue to promote the parish as a very good place in which to live and work.	Policy E&CM1 Policy E&CM2 Policy E&CM3 Policy E&CM4	Policy H1 Policy H2 Policy H3 Policy H4 Policy H5	Policy EMP1	DEV3 DEV15 DEV29 DEV30 DEV36	SO8 SPT2	184-202



## 6 Environment and Coastal Management

### Background and Evidence Base

6.1 South Milton parish is recognised by parishioners for its beautiful green countryside, wonderful sheltered beach and dramatic coastline, and working farms (all ranked in the top third of 20 reasons why South Milton is an enjoyable place to live). The beach is visited frequently by parishioners with only two respondents saying they never used it. The beach and coastline attract many tourists throughout the year, with the National Trust reporting more than 80,000 people visit South Milton Sands annually.

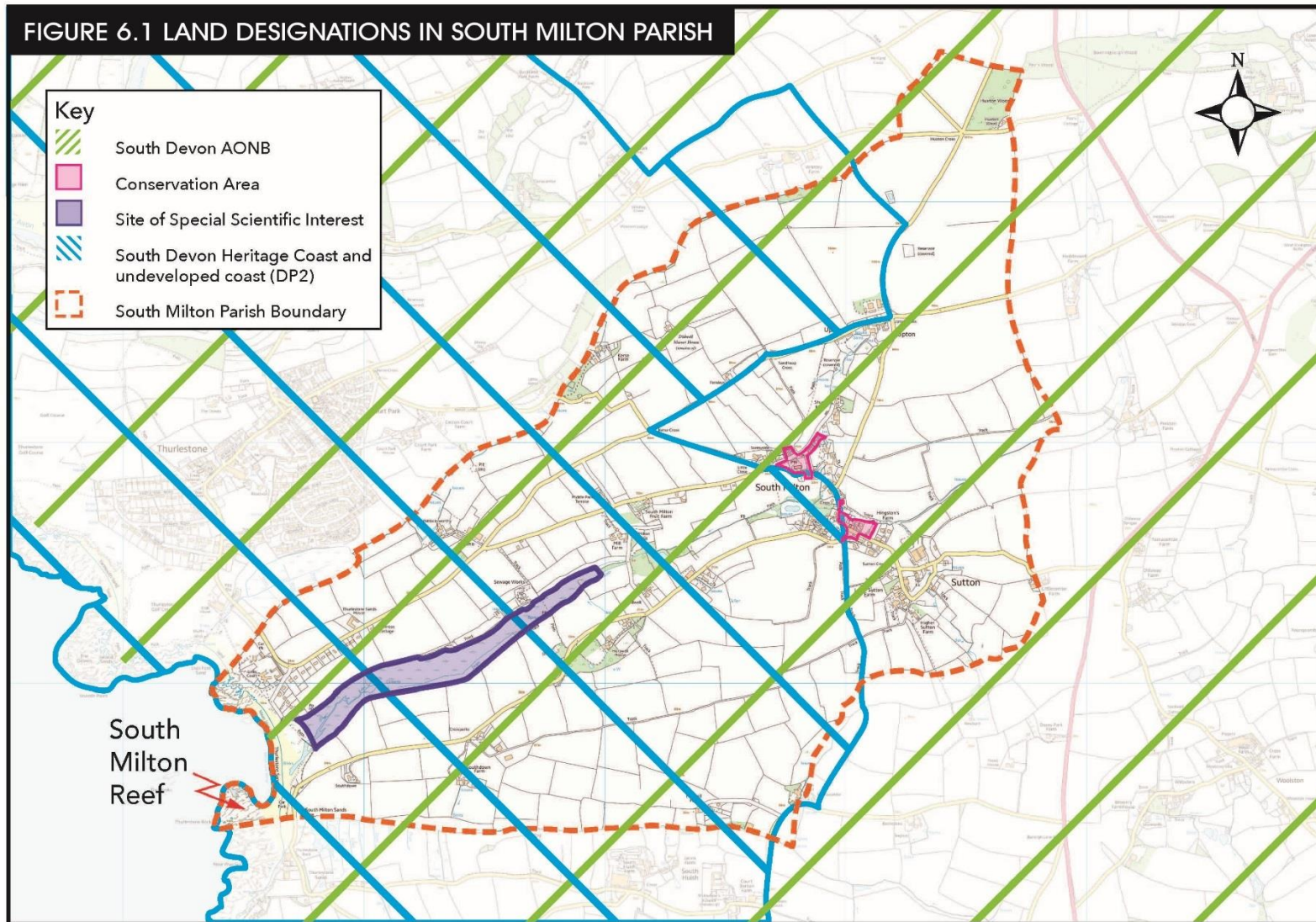
6.2 Two nationally important pieces of leisure infrastructure run through the parish:

- The South West Coast Path along the cliffs and dunes.
- National Cycle Route No 28 along Hillingsdown Lane, through the village and along Horswell Lane.

6.3 The parish is covered by a number of designations, policy statements and adopted plans as listed below and shown on Figure 6.1.

- The entire parish lies within the South Devon AONB.
- The land on the seaward side of the village lies within the area defined as Heritage Coast.
- The land on the seaward side of the village is also designated Undeveloped Coast.
- South Milton Ley includes about 20 hectares of reed bed, between South Milton Sands and Mill Lane, and this area was designated a SSSI in 1984.
- Most of the land on the north side of South Milton Ley, between the coast and Kerse Lane, is a Non-Statutory Designated Nature Area.
- Most of the habitat in the parish is defined as important for wintering and potentially breeding of the red-listed (globally threatened) Cirl Bunting.
- The South Milton Reef, surrounding Thurlestone Rock, is designated a County Geological Site for its ancient peat bed.

FIGURE 6.1 LAND DESIGNATIONS IN SOUTH MILTON PARISH



6.4 The vision statement in the South Devon AONB Management Plan 2014-19 succinctly summarises the special quality of our landscape:

*Our vision for the AONB is a place valued, recognised and treasured forever for its nationally important natural beauty and distinctive character:*

- *Its rugged, undeveloped coastline with wooded estuaries, secluded river valleys, rolling hills, abundant wildlife and rich natural environment.*
- *Its distinctive historic landscape character including its patchwork fields, Devon banks and hedges, green lanes, historic settlements and archaeological remains shaped by centuries of human activity and maritime and farming traditions.*
- *Its rural tranquility, dark skies, fresh air, clean water, fertile soils and mild climate.*
- *Its living, working countryside where community and economic activity sustain the landscape and bring prosperity and social well-being to ensure a good quality of life for its residents.*

6.5 It is quite clear from all this that the coastline and rural nature of our parish is highly valued by both residents and visitors. Furthermore, South Milton's special landscape, coastline and heritage are the basis of its economy and future. In addition, the legislative, regulatory and planning framework are designed to conserve and enhance the coastline, the hinterland and heritage within the parish. Parishioners are overwhelmingly aligned with this framework.

6.6 It is therefore vital that the Neighbourhood Plan sets out the expectations of the parishioners and the local special factors that developers and planners must take into account in any future development. The Plan will achieve this by defining South Milton's most valued characteristics, setting policies and identifying projects for its:

- Landscape
- Coastline
- Farmland
- Wildlife habitats
- Historical and listed buildings and conservation areas
- Drainage and flood control
- Renewable energy vision

## Landscape

6.7 South Milton Parish lies wholly within the South Devon AONB and as such, under NPPF paragraph 172, is afforded the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, where great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing these important national assets. More specifically, the JLP Policy DEV25 requires the Local Planning Authority to protect the South Devon AONB, including its setting, from potentially damaging or inappropriate development, giving great weight to conserving the landscape and natural beauty. The guidance provided by the South Devon AONB Management Plan on how to conserve and enhance the special qualities and key features of the South Devon AONB is supported in full by the South Milton Neighbourhood Plan.

6.8 The special qualities and key features of South Milton parish and matters that must be taken account of in assessing any development proposals are:

- The South Milton valley (and adjacent South Huish valley) provide a rural backdrop to the South West Coast Path between the coastal developments of Hope Cove and Thurlestone, as shown in Photographs 6.1a. The rural setting of South Milton is shown in the views

taken from the ridges to north and south of the village as shown in Photographs 6.1b.

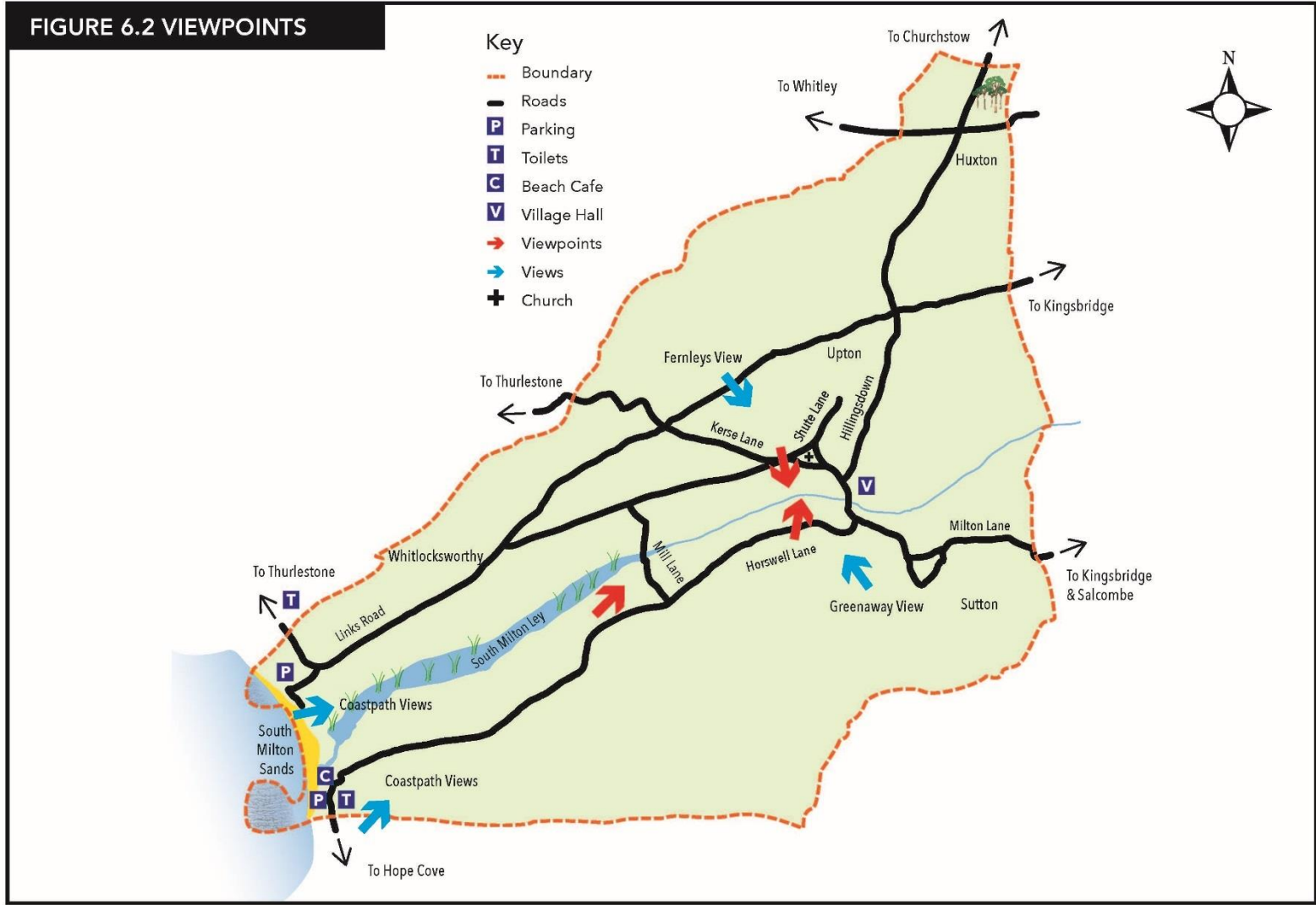
- There are clear demarcations between the countryside and built environment along Kerse Lane and Horswell Lane at Collacott which effectively ‘bookend’ the seaward boundary of South Milton village. Primrose Cottage similarly ‘bookends’ the ribbon development along Links Road.
- Devon lanes, Devon banks and green lanes are a distinctive feature of the landscape.
- Devon lanes and banks restrict views along the highways and footpaths. Gateways and other openings are therefore important viewpoints and the most important are shown on Figure 6.2 and views shown in Photographs 6.2a and b.
- Light pollution is minimal. There are few street lights within the parish and at the initial consultation meeting there were strong objections to a suggestion that more be installed within the village.
- There has been a case in recent years where development has been permitted to proceed on the basis that adverse impacts will be screened by planting. Some four years later, it is evident that the plants have failed to become established, as predicted by those with local knowledge, and the landscape has consequently been blighted.



*6.1a Views showing the rural backdrop to the coastline from the coast path*



*6.1b Views showing the rural setting of South Milton from Fernleys to the north and from Greenaway to the south*





*6.2a Views from Horswell Lane viewpoints*



*6.2b Views from junction of Links Road / Kerse lane viewpoint*



### **Policy E&CM1: Landscape Policy**

Development proposals should seek to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB, all in accordance with the provisions of the South Devon AONB Management Plan. Specific requirements for South Milton parish are:

- a) The landscape along Links Road between Primrose Cottage and Kerse Lane, between Collacott and the coast along Horswell Lane, and above Three Corners along Kerse Lane shall be conserved and enhanced.
- b) Views from the important viewpoints shown on Figure 6.2 shall be conserved and enhanced.
- c) Devon lanes, banks and green lanes should be retained wherever possible and, if lost, such loss must be suitably compensated for elsewhere.
- d) Development shall be designed to avoid increasing light pollution.
- e) For developments that rely on screen planting to mitigate unacceptable impacts, the screen should be established as early as is reasonably practicable before or during the construction process.

6.9 The purpose of these policies is to ensure that the special qualities and key features of South Milton parish are recognised and not compromised by any proposed developments. These policies are consistent with the intent of the NPPF and JLP for areas designated AONB, the expectations expressed by respondents to the South Milton Questionnaire and the objectives set for this Plan.

### **Coastline**

6.10 The land between the coastline and village is not only designated AONB but also designated as Undeveloped/Heritage Coast and covered under NPPF paragraph 173. More specifically, the JLP Policy DEV24 states that development which would have a detrimental effect on the undeveloped and unspoilt character, appearance or tranquility of the Undeveloped Coast, estuaries and the Heritage Coast will not be permitted except under exceptional circumstances.

6.11 The coastline is affected by climatic and weather events which cause erosion and deposition resulting in shifting sands along the beaches and cliff falls. The scale and timescale of such events is indeterminate and most have only a small impact on the coastline with beaches soon restoring themselves and



repairs made to local infrastructure, for example following the succession of major storms in February 2014. Within the timescale of this Neighbourhood Plan (to 2034) the risk of a catastrophic event is small. It is noted that current policy (2019) is that there should be no active intervention to hold the coastline but maintaining or replacing existing defences will be allowed if funding is available to reduce the risk of erosion and maintain visitor access (Shoreline Management Plan Review (SMP2)). No attempt has been made within this Plan to anticipate the effects of, or plan for, a catastrophic event other than to recognise that the coastline and beaches will be affected. The existing infrastructure will have to be adapted to take account of the new land form. The National Trust proposal to write a management plan for South Milton Sands based on favouring adaptive responses to coastal change management and working with natural processes is welcomed. When this Neighbourhood Plan is reviewed, the conclusions of the National Trust management plan will be taken into account and policies modified as required.

6.12 Parishioners and visitors have been attracted to South Milton Sands for generations. The South West Coast Path is the longest and most popular of the UK's 15 National Trails. The

café at the beach is shown in Photograph 6.3 and has always been well patronised. The current franchisee (2019) keeps the café open all year and has extended service hours into most evenings.



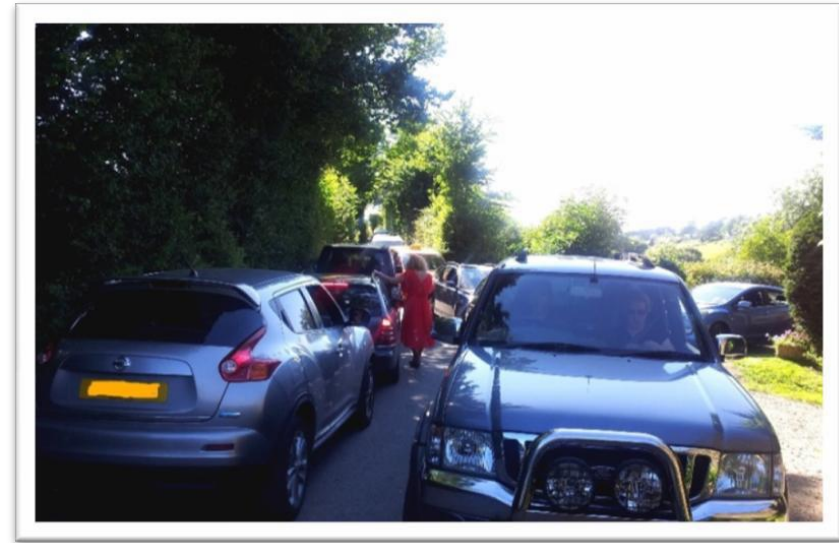
6.3 *The Beachhouse Café at South Milton Sands*

6.13 Since July 2016 a Gastrobus has been operating at the car park next to Links Court during the busiest summer months. There is a SHDC public toilet block adjacent to the café which is used by patrons of the café as well as beachgoers and walkers. The toilets have no electricity so there is neither lighting nor hot water and they are considered not fit for purpose by the Parish Council.

6.14 Road access to the coastline and these facilities is via Links Road to the north of South Milton Ley and via Horswell Lane to South Milton Sands and the café. Both highways are single lane with passing bays. Links Road is the wider of the two highways and, with regular passing bays, has sufficient capacity to cope with the traffic throughout the year. Horswell Lane is narrow with irregular passing bays and is prone to gridlock in peak holiday seasons, a concern that was raised by many respondents to the Questionnaire and in comments on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The traffic situation during peak periods is illustrated in Photographs 6.4a and 6.4b, at the beach and Collacott respectively.



*6.4a Gridlock at the beach end of Horswell Lane*



*6.4b Gridlock at Collacott in Horswell Lane*

6.15 Horswell Lane is linked by an unsurfaced track behind South Milton Sands to lanes leading to South Huish, Galmpton and Malborough. This track is owned and maintained by the National Trust, and also provides access to the National Trust car park for the beach and café. Part of this track was washed away during major storms in February 2014 but was restored a few weeks later on a new alignment slightly further inland. This track is a vital link for farmers who otherwise are forced to detour via the Kingsbridge to Salcombe Road (A381) to drive between their farms in South Milton and South Huish – a long and inconvenient detour for them and other road users. The track also provides an essential alternative access to South

Milton Sands, when Horswell Lane is busy or gridlocked.

6.16 The National Trust manages the car park behind South Milton Sands that serves the beach and café. A van providing water sports equipment for hire is located in the car park in the summer season. The car park has a capacity for about 100 cars. During peak periods the National Trust can open an overflow car park in a field behind the café which increases the capacity to some 700 cars – this overflow car park can be operated for a maximum of 28 days per year. The car park next to Links Court has recently passed into new ownership and there are currently (2019) charges to park only when the Gastrobus is open. There is capacity for about 100 cars. There is also public car park at the Thurlestone Golf Club for about 100 cars.

6.17 The section of the South West Coast Path through the parish is generally kept in good order by Devon County Council supported by the South West Coast Path Association. Following a recommendation in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, Devon County Council improved a short section to the south of the bridge over the Ley which used to become overgrown during the summer and was also narrower and rougher than the remainder. Walkers (particularly the less agile and those with child buggies) have welcomed this improvement which

makes the whole length of the South West Coast Path within the parish easy to negotiate.

6.18 Access to the South Milton Sands beach from the National Trust car park is via timber boarded ramps that are maintained by the National Trust. Access to the beach from the Links Court car park is via a set of concrete steps. These run over private land and although it is not known who built them, they were last repaired by a now defunct organisation, the Coast and Countryside Service. Recent efforts have failed to establish who should carry out much needed repairs of these steps on what is effectively a public right of way.

6.19 An extensive network of footpaths and green lanes provides green corridors linking most parts of the parish which are key components of the green infrastructure, as shown on Figure 6.3. None of the footpaths however extends as far as the coast. Walkers are therefore forced to walk on either Horswell Lane or Links Road to reach the South West Coast Path. If such a path were provided it would open up opportunities for circular walks from the Coast Path. It would also enable those living and holidaying in South Milton to access the coast without walking along the roads, an attractive option for those with children or dogs.

**FIGURE 6.3 FOOTPATHS & GREEN LANES**



6.20 The response to the Questionnaire showed that parishioners rarely use the café, primarily because it is considered to be expensive. Several expressed strong opposition to expansion of the café, a view that was also voiced by parish councillors when considering planning applications for the café. The relevant responses to the Questionnaire and associated comments were passed to the National Trust for consideration in future plans for the café.

6.21 The beach is shown in Photograph 6.5 and is a dog friendly beach, enjoyed all year round by dogs and their owners. During the summer season the beach benefits from the presence of RNLI lifeguards. The privately-operated Hope Cove Lifeboat provides cover. The service provided by the RNLI lifeguards at South Milton Sands is funded by SHDC. This service is appreciated and strongly supported by parishioners and visitors, and SHDC is urged to continue funding the cover.

6.22 In conclusion, the coastal attractions (beach/coast path/café) and support infrastructure facilities (lanes and car parks) meet parishioners' needs but they are often stretched to full capacity. At peak times the lane to the beach can become gridlocked which causes frustration to visitors and

parishioners alike and can spoil the enjoyment of the coast. This problem potentially puts people at risk as, at the busiest times, emergency services cannot always gain access.



6.5 *South Milton Sands in August, when the beach is very popular with families*

### **Policy E&CM2: Coastal Environment Policy**

Specific requirements for conserving and enhancing the South Milton parish coastline are:

- a) Any development within the area defined as Undeveloped/Heritage Coast shall be designed to avoid expanding or adversely impacting existing infrastructure (such as lanes and car parks).
- b) Further commercialisation of the coastline will not be supported without overriding justification. It should not have a detrimental impact on the unspoilt character, appearance or tranquility of the coastline within the parish.
- c) The landscape viewed from the coast path shall be conserved and enhanced.
- d) The car parks at South Milton Sands, Links Court and Thurlstone Golf Club shall be retained at their present capacity and form, including the overflow car park at South Milton Sands (to be open for a maximum of 28 days per year).

6.23 The purpose of these policies is to maintain the unspoilt character of the coastline and avoid degradation of the enjoyment of the beach through overcrowding and over commercialisation. These policies are consistent with the intent of the NPPF for areas designated as Undeveloped/Heritage Coast, the JLP, expectations expressed by respondents to the South Milton Questionnaire and the objectives set for this Plan.

#### ***Local Projects: Environmental and Coastal Management***

6.24 To improve enjoyment and public access to the Heritage Coast the following projects are proposed:

- Parishioners and visitors would benefit from the creation of a new footpath parallel to Horswell Lane, between the end of the green lane at Cross Parks and the coast. This would avoid the necessity of walking on this section of Horswell Lane. Such a project would improve public access to and enjoyment of the coast.
- Parishioners and visitors would benefit from repairs being carried out to the concrete steps leading down to the beach from the Links Court car park. Such a

project would improve public access to the beach and make it safer.

- South Milton parish has an extensive network of footpaths and green lanes but these are not widely publicised. Two information boards are proposed, one at Backshay Close and the other at South Milton Sands.
- The passing bays along Horswell Lane are irregular and some are too small to allow larger vehicles to pass. Improving some of the passing bays and possibly adding new ones at critical locations might reduce the frequency of gridlock.
- The toilet facilities and waste disposal facilities at South Milton Sands are not fit for purpose and should be upgraded.

6.25 The Parish Council will investigate and manage implementation of these projects during the next five years.

### **Farmland**

6.26 Most of South Milton parish is covered by a patchwork of fields, separated by Devon banks, hedgerows, stone walls and fences. The farmers have created this attractive landscape over hundreds of years and working farms were highly rated in

why people enjoy living in South Milton (rated seventh out of 20 in the Questionnaire). There was also strong support for agricultural/horticultural businesses (90 per cent).

6.27 Most of the land is classified as good to moderate with around 10 per cent classified as very good. This high quality land is put to wide use with dairy, beef and sheep farming, arable farming and market gardening. Regular rotation of crops adds to the diversity, giving the parish an interesting and ever-changing landscape.

6.28 In addition to farm shops, a successful rape seed oil processing business has been established at Upton Barton Farm.

6.29 Fields adjacent to Links Road are used for camping and caravans in the main holiday season. The JLP Policy DEV15 sub-clause 7 states that new/changes to camping and caravan sites will not be supported at locations within the Undeveloped Coast, a policy that is supported by the South Milton Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Policy E&CM3: Farmland Policy**

Planning applications that support the local agricultural industry and the production of local food will be supported provided they comply with other relevant policies in this Neighbourhood Plan. Where the visual impact is minimal, these may include the erection of small scale greenhouses and polytunnels or the erection of new temporary buildings or re-use of existing buildings to enable farm-gate sales.

6.30 The parish is dependent on the land being actively farmed both as the mainstay of its economy and in making the landscape attractive to parishioners and visitors. The purpose of this policy is to preserve the character of the landscape while recognising that farming must remain economically sustainable. This policy is consistent with the expectations expressed by respondents to the South Milton Questionnaire and the objectives set for this Plan.

### **Wildlife Habitats**

6.31 Bigbury Bay and hinterland, including South Milton parish, is rich in wildlife with more than 230 species of bird recorded in the last ten years (see website [thurlestonebaybirds.co.uk](http://thurlestonebaybirds.co.uk)). It is also rich in flora with uncommon species such as Carrot Broomrape and Pyramidal Orchid recorded.

6.32 South Milton Ley reserve covers about 20 hectares and its importance as the key biodiversity feature in the parish is reflected in its national designation as a SSSI in 1984. It includes the second largest reed bed in Devon (shown in Photograph 6.6) as well as managed meadows and hedgerows around the fringes of the reed bed. It is particularly valuable for its breeding bird community, including Cetti's Warbler, and for the variety of birds using the site on migration, including the red-listed Aquatic and Grasshopper Warblers. Recent surveys indicate that there are likely to be more than 100 species of moth on the reserve, including the nationally scarce Cream Bordered Green Pea. Otters and Harvest Mice are also present on the site. When last reviewed by Natural England in 2010, the SSSI was assessed as 'Unfavourable - recovering'. The site is managed by Devon Birds to achieve favourable conservation



status for all land within the reserve. The South Huish meadowlands are also managed by Devon Birds under a lease from the National Trust to achieve favourable conservation status for all the land within the meadowlands. Although the bulk of the meadowlands lies within South Huish parish, the fringes and field to the north lie within South Milton parish and are an integral part of the ecosystem that makes this such a valued and well watched wildlife site.

6.33 The South Huish meadowlands and South Milton Ley reserve are important refuges for seabirds sheltering from storms.

6.34 The extensive hedgerows and small areas of woodland in the parish are also critical feeding and sheltering areas for wildlife. These must be conserved and preferably extended and managed to maximise the benefit to wildlife.

6.35 The Cirl Bunting is also red-listed and used to be common in South Milton parish but then disappeared. Sightings over recent years suggest that they are becoming re-established and breeding has taken place in recent years in the adjacent Thurlestone parish.

6.36 During harsh winters, the parish becomes a haven for wildlife, particularly birds, due to the relatively mild climate. The parish is one of the few locations in Britain where Chiffchaffs remain throughout the winter.



6.6 *South Milton Ley reed bed, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest*

6.37 The statutory and non-statutory land designations that define wildlife areas of special significance and powers to conserve wildlife are supported under the South Milton Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Policy E&CM4: Biodiversity Policy**

Development proposals should seek to support the parish's ecological networks, including through the provision of new biodiversity habitats and the enhancements of linkages between existing habitats.

6.38 The purpose of this policy is to increase biodiversity in the parish and so also increase enjoyment of the countryside for parishioners and visitors.

### **Historical and Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas**

6.39 In addition to the two conservation areas shown on Figure 6.4, South Milton parish has 35 listed buildings, all Grade II except the church which is Grade I. There are also a number of historical buildings such as the Village Hall, as well as historical features such as the restored village pump on Luggers Hill and the refurbished War Memorial. These buildings and features enhance the character of the village.

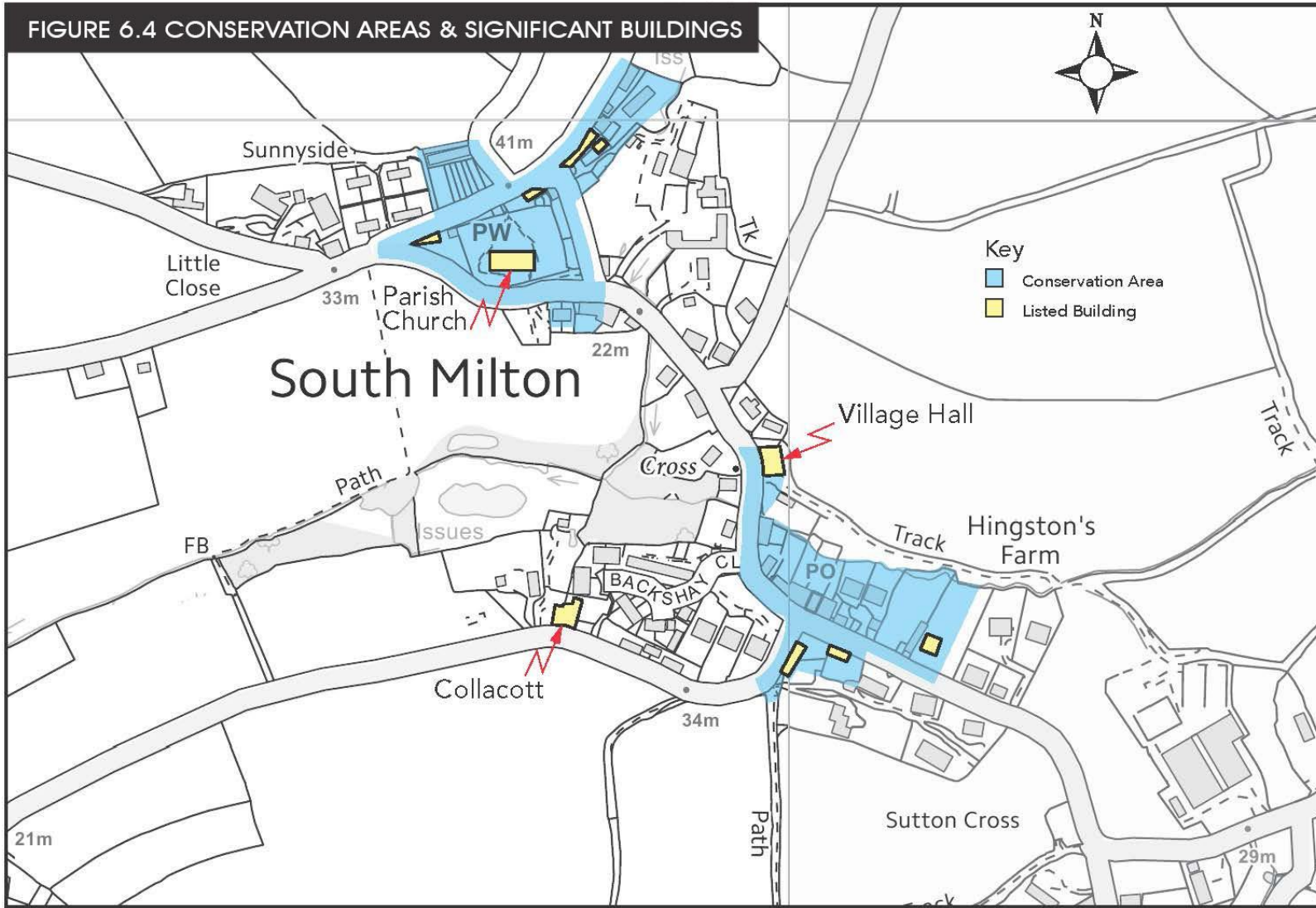
6.40 Three buildings are particularly significant to parishioners:

- The Parish Church, dating back to the 12th century, dominates the views to the north side of the village and is clearly visible from the South West Coast Path.
- Collacott, a former farmhouse with parts dating back to the 14th century, symbolises the farming roots of the village and dominates the views to the south.
- The Village Hall, a former men's institute built in 1911, is shown in Photograph 6.7 and lies at the geographical centre of the village and is the hub for most community activities.



6.7 *The Village Hall: the centre of most village activities*

FIGURE 6.4 CONSERVATION AREAS & SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS



### **Local Project: Historical and Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas**

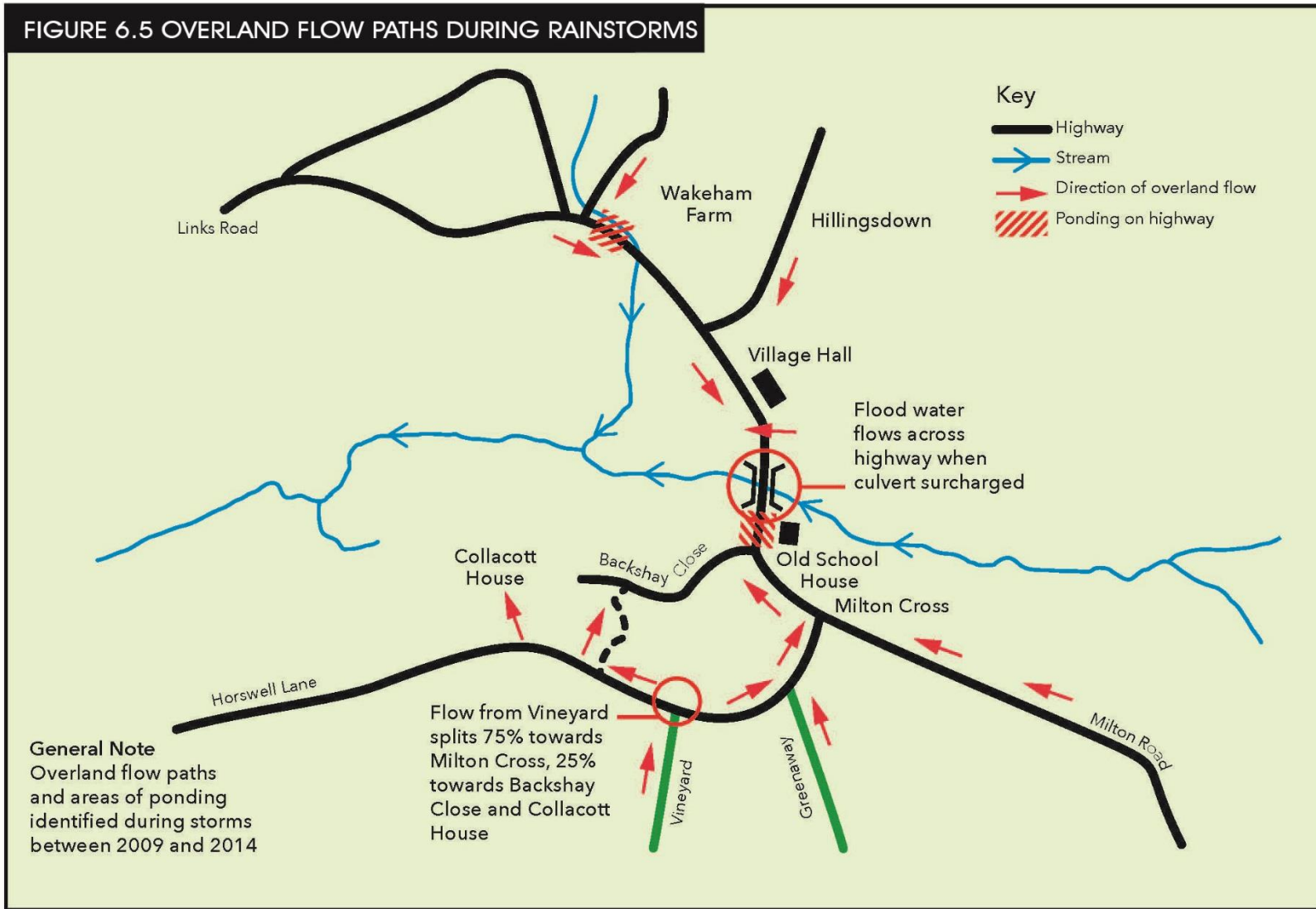
6.41 No Appraisals or Management Plans have been prepared for the South Milton Conservation Areas. Such documents would provide an appropriate basis for the protection and enhancement of the conservation areas and should be completed as soon as possible. The Parish Council will urge SHDC to carry out the necessary appraisals and prepare a Conservation Area Management Plan for the two conservation areas in the parish.

### **Drainage and Flood Control**

6.42 The parish is drained by a network of small watercourses which converge in and around the village, pass through South Milton Ley reserve and over the beach into Bigbury Bay. The water level in the ley is controlled by the level of the sandbank at the beach. When the sandbar is high, the water level in the ley can pond as far upstream as the boardwalk, about halfway up the reserve. The flood water does not extend beyond the reserve and no properties are at risk.

6.43 The watercourses in the parish generally have the capacity to take flood flows with limited encroachment on to adjacent land. The culvert on the main watercourse by the Village Hall has limited capacity and, during severe rainstorms, this culvert chokes and water overflows the highway before finding its way back into the watercourse immediately downstream. Some of the highways in the village have a piped drainage system but this has limited capacity, particularly as the gullies and pipes are easily blocked by silt, gravel and leaves. During storms, much of the runoff from the roads and surrounding fields runs down the highways. The overland flow paths during rain storms are shown on Figure 6.5.

**FIGURE 6.5 OVERLAND FLOW PATHS DURING RAINSTORMS**



6.44 The Parish Council has a flood mitigation plan and organises an annual clearance of the watercourses, gullies and piped drains in the autumn for preventative maintenance. A working party is mobilised when the amber rain warning is issued by the Met Office. The working party is tasked with keeping the gullies and drains clear, as well as placing sandbags to mitigate the impact of any floods. These arrangements and actions have proved effective over the last few years. The greatest risk to their effectiveness will be a change in farming practices that either increases runoff or changes flow paths – there have been several examples of the latter in recent years. Prevention of flooding is therefore largely dependent on maintaining a constructive dialogue with farmers, and their co-operation in mitigating the effects of any changes to farming the land.

6.45 Development in the parish also has the potential to increase the risk of flooding in the village. The potential impacts and mitigation can be addressed during the planning process. The most critical issues are:

- Runoff from any development site must not be increased.
- The peak flow at the culvert in the main watercourse by the Village Hall must not be increased.
- The flow paths upstream of the culvert in the main watercourse by the Village Hall must not be altered unless it is demonstrated that the alteration will reduce the peak flow at this culvert.
- The highway level on the Village Hall side of the main watercourse culvert must not be raised or it will increase the risk of flooding properties upstream when the culvert becomes choked.
- Erosion must be controlled during construction to prevent silt being washed off the site and into the drains and watercourses

6.46 These issues must be addressed for both the completed development and during the construction period.

## Renewable Energy

6.47 A total of 76 per cent of the responses to the questions in the Questionnaire covering non-domestic solar panels and wind turbines were against any being allowed in the parish. There were also 49 comments on these issues which again showed disapproval in almost exactly the same proportion. There was some support for household-only installations and the Neighbourhood Plan supports domestic renewable energy installations for the South Milton Conservation Areas. Such documents would provide an appropriate basis for the protection and enhancement of the conservation areas and should be completed as soon as possible. The Parish Council will urge SHDC to carry out the necessary appraisals and prepare a Conservation Area Management Plan for the two conservation areas in the parish.



*6.8 A summer scene in the village*

## 7 Housing

### Background and Evidence Base

7.1 The overwhelming response to the Questionnaire, and from all the subsequent consultation, was that parishioners want to retain the special rural character of the parish, underpinned by its AONB and related designations. The policies set out below build on the findings from the Questionnaire and other evidence of housing need in the parish and wider area.

7.2 Most parishioners acknowledged that some modest development is required in order to meet local needs but not to provide second homes. In its early deliberations the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group determined that the number of new homes required by 2034 could be met through infill development, as it has been for the last 30 years. The Steering Group concluded, however, that such an approach would not provide the type of housing needed to meet two of the strong messages from the community, namely that the village remained vibrant with a mixed-age community and some affordable housing (as defined in the footnote at the end of this Chapter) be made available.

7.3 The Steering Group then agreed that a search should be made for a suitable development site and, if such a site could also provide a significant community benefit, then a modest housing development to meet local needs could be justified within the AONB. A full analysis of the Questionnaire, identification of possible sites and subsequent procedures to assess the sites offered is set out in the Consultation Statement, its Appendices and the 2018 Housing Site Assessment Paper.

7.4 Thus in developing appropriate housing policies, the Steering Group took into account the Questionnaire responses, the first stage assessment of the offered sites carried out by a SHDC planning officer, the second stage assessment carried out by the Steering Group, comments and objections from the Regulation 14 draft plan and responses to the public exhibition of possible housing sites in April 2017 (see the Consultation Statement and Housing Site Assessment Paper for full details), as well as the strategic policy context.

7.5 In 2017 a draft Joint Local Plan (JLP) was published to cover the South Hams and two other local authority areas. After public consultation and an enquiry, the Plan was adopted in 2019 and sets out strategic policies which will be applied in development management, and on which this Neighbourhood



Plan is based. Special attention has been paid to development in villages and small settlements located in sensitive locations such as the South Devon AONB. The alignment between policies in this Plan, the JLP and NPPF (February 2019) is set out in Table 5.1.

### **Demographic and Housing Data**

7.6 The population of the parish of South Milton has remained at around 400 at least since 1841. Between 2001 and 2011 it declined by 23 people while the number of dwellings increased by 26. Table 7.1 demonstrates that between the Census of 2001 and 2011 the proportion of the population aged 60 or over increased by 15 per cent and that between 0 and 19 declined by 30 per cent. Based on local knowledge of property transactions since 2011, a number of younger families have moved into the parish indicating that there may now be a more even distribution of age groups.

7.7 Research by the Parish Council indicates that 36 additional dwellings have been constructed or converted between 1980 and 2016, compared with an increase of 26 between 2001 and 2011 as recorded in the Census. Approximately 11 of the 36 are used as second homes, six have

remained unoccupied apart from a few months since 2002, three have planning restrictions for agricultural use only while 13 resulted from the conversion of the Holiday Fellowship Hotel into holiday apartments. A survey conducted by the Parish Council in 2015 estimated that the total number of second or holiday homes was 77 (31 per cent of total number of dwellings). This is an increase from 51 second or holiday homes (23 per cent) in the 2001 Census; an increase of 50 per cent in 14 years. Thirty-four of these 77 homes are the result of conversion of two former hotels (Links Court and the Holiday Fellowship Hotel) and if these are excluded the proportion of second homes is 17 per cent of the total number of dwellings. There are no more opportunities for conversion of hotels. A majority of second or holiday homes in the parish are located outside the main village of South Milton and are near the coastal area.

7.8 These figures of 17 per cent second homes and holiday lets (or 31 per cent if two hotel conversions are included) compare with a figure of 10 per cent identified by consultants in the 2017 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA vol. 1 Peter Brett, 2017; vol. 2 HDH Planning & Development Ltd, 2017). The same document also includes the South Milton postcode

(TQ7) in the second highest house price category. These percentages provide further evidence of the need for affordable housing if any new developments are proposed in South Milton parish.

**Table 7.1: Changes in population and dwellings in South Milton Parish between 2001 and 2011.**

<b>Population</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percentage change</b>
Male	198	189	-9	-4.5
Female	210	196	-14	-6.6
Population total	408	385	-23	-5.6
Population aged 0-19	95 (23%)	66 (17%)	-29	-30.5
Aged 20-59	175 (43%)	160 (41.5%)	-15	-8.5
60 and over	138 (34%)	159 (41.5%) [65+ 30.9%]	21	+15.2
<b>Dwellings</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percentage change</b>
Households	167	175	8	+4.7
Dwellings	221	247	26	+11.7*
Of which second homes or 'no usual residents'	51	72	21	+41**
Average household size	2.4	2.2	-0.2	-8.3
Average number of bedrooms per household	-	3.3		

Source: ONS Census data

\*If the hotel conversion is excluded the change is 6%

\*\*If the hotel conversion is excluded (13 dwellings), the change is 16%

## Housing Demand

7.9 In recent years the only new housing has been created by the occasional infill and conversion of property. In the responses to the Questionnaire more than half the respondents thought there was a need for additional housing in the parish, preferably in a small development and within the existing development boundary.

7.10 The Questionnaire responses also show that there was very strong support for imposing strict conditions for any new housing. For instance, 97 per cent considered new housing should not exceed two storeys in height and 98 per cent considered all new housing should be provided with off-street parking. Furthermore, 93 per cent of respondents favoured development constructed in a well designed, traditional local style. Other stipulations for a development that would fulfill the wishes of local people and follow good practice are:

- It should meet, and if possible exceed, current energy conservation standards.
- It should be well designed and well built.
- It should preserve and enhance the two Conservation Areas and listed buildings.

- It should include provision for landscaping.

And

- If open-market housing is permitted, conditions should be added to ensure the house is used as a sole or principal residence.

7.11 The majority of respondents (77 per cent) also wanted to see more affordable housing to be available for people with local connections (92 per cent). This concern about the affordability of local housing is borne out by the SHMA volumes 1 & 2 (2017) that indicate that on the open market rents and house prices remain significantly out of reach of those on average incomes. The SHMA and Housing Topic Paper (2017) also provides evidence that in the South Hams area there is a continuing need for affordable homes either to rent or on a shared ownership arrangement. It also shows there is a continuing upward pressure on the housing market from those seeking holiday and second homes. In South Milton the data shows that the proportion of second or holiday homes is increasing and clearly this is having an impact on the ability of local residents, their relatives and those with other local connections to rent or buy in the parish.

7.12 Although the proportion of residents aged 65 or over has increased, there is currently no provision for sheltered housing or an old persons' home in the parish, although six bungalows in Backshay Close are allocated to elderly people by a housing association. In the Questionnaire, 64 per cent of respondents felt that there was a need for accommodation for the elderly in the parish. This Plan supports the provision of further accommodation for the elderly should a suitable building(s) become available.

7.13 The parish lies within the South Devon AONB and has no large sites suitable for housing development within the existing village boundary. However, evidence from the Questionnaire suggested that there was a need for provision of more housing, particularly to meet local needs. On the basis of this evidence and as detailed in the 2018 Housing Site Assessment Paper, the Steering Group agreed that:

- 15-20 homes should be provided in the Plan period;
- The selected site(s) should be of sufficient size to enable a significant proportion of affordable housing;

- Any development should have a minimal (or no) environmental impact on the AONB or heritage assets.

The SEA (November 2018, p.14) notes that between 1980 and 2016 36 new housing units were added to the parish giving an average of just over one per year. After public consultation, it was agreed to extrapolate this trend for the Plan period. The draft JLP initially identified South Milton as a 'sustainable village' that could accommodate around ten new dwellings. During the enquiry process this policy was modified to exclude all villages in the AONB, however paragraph 5.165 was inserted which states that 'neighbourhood plans may wish to bring forward positive allocations to meet local housing need where justified by an appropriate evidence base'. Policy DEV25 sets out the policy approach when considering development proposals in AONBs. This also follows guidance in the NPPF on promoting sustainable development in rural areas that supports the designation of 'sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this' (NPPF, paras 77 to 79).

## Considerations for a New Development Site

7.14 The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) covers in some detail the process employed to identify and evaluate alternative sites. A first consideration was where, in broad terms, to facilitate new housing provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area. As the SEA records: 'To support decision-making on this element, the SEA process undertook an appraisal of three different alternative approaches linked to where, in relation to the existing built up areas of the parish, new housing should be delivered. In this context there are currently two 'built-up' areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area. South Milton village and Sutton comprise the main settlement in the Neighbourhood Plan area. An additional built-up area is the coastal part of the parish close to South Milton Sands:

The three options considered were as follows:

Option 1: Focus new housing provision within the coastal part of the parish.

Option 2: Focus new housing provision in the areas covered by South Milton village and Sutton.

Option 3: Facilitate new housing provision in both of these locations.

(South Milton SEA, November 2018, pp. 14-18)

7.15 The SEA concluded that Option 2 above offered the best outcomes. 'This reflects a desire to support the vitality of South Milton village/Sutton, which is the main settlement in the parish, and to deliver housing in the village which would meet local needs. It was also recognised that, if appropriately located, high quality development had the potential to support enhancements to the built environment and facilitate new community infrastructure in the village. A further key consideration was that such an approach would help limit potential effects on the sensitive landscape and ecological value of the coastal parts of the parish'. (p.18)

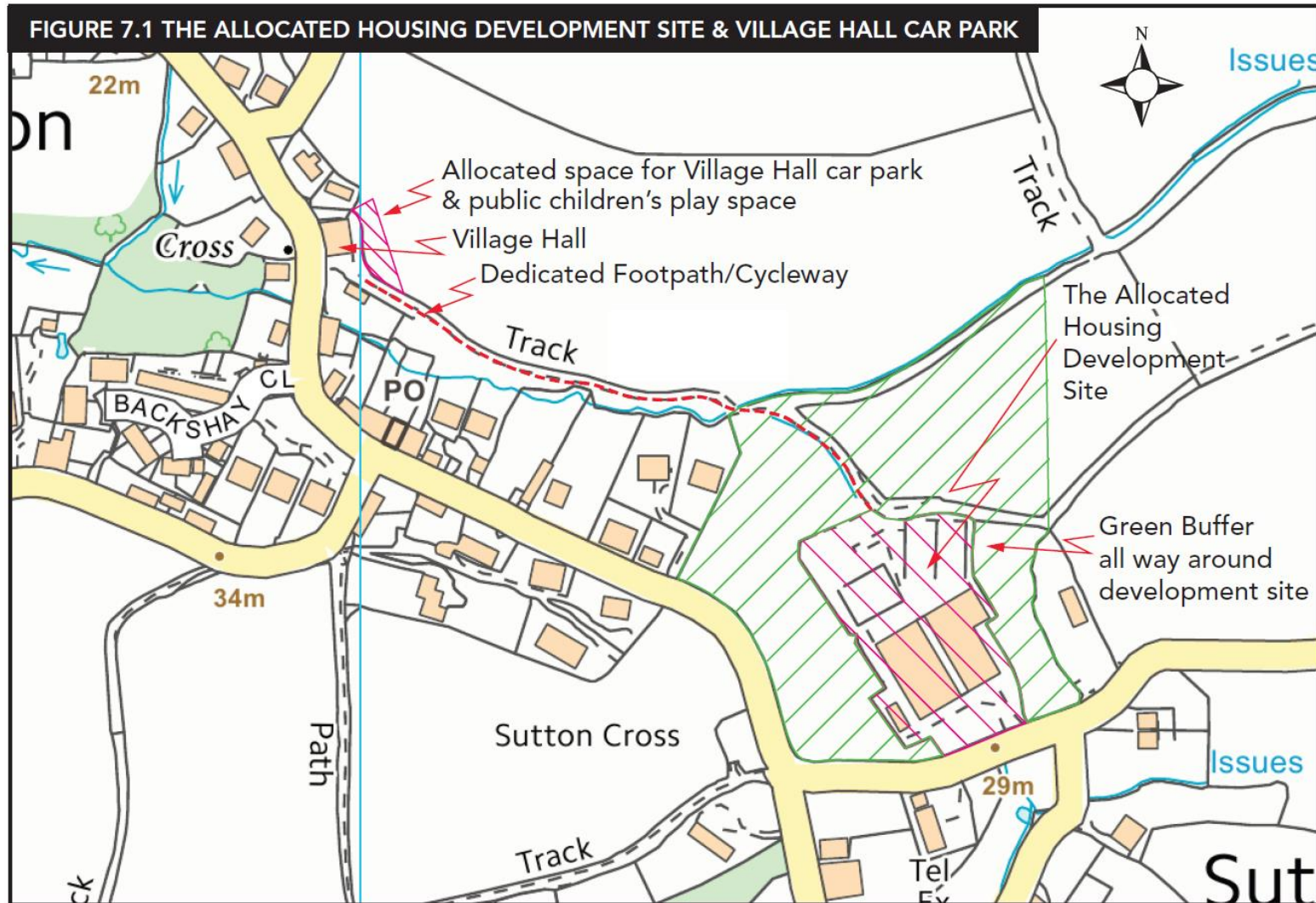
7.16 In April 2016 the Plan Steering Group decided on the advice of SHDC officers to invite landowners in the parish, through the Newsletter, the parish website and local newspaper, to offer sites for a housing development to see if a suitable site could be identified. A panel, led by a SHDC Planning Officer with contributions from experts and the Steering Group, then carried out a rigorous evaluation of the

nine sites submitted based on a set of agreed criteria after which each site was given a red or amber final assessment. Three sites were short-listed for more detailed evaluation by the Steering Group on behalf of the Parish Council. This clearly showed that only one of these sites most closely met the selection criteria. Only this one would accommodate the desired type and amount of housing with the least environmental impact and offer significant community benefits. A summary of these Assessments was made available during the Regulation 14 consultation. A full description of the assessment processes can be found in the 2018 Housing Site Assessment Paper.

7.17 A two-day public exhibition of all nine sites was arranged in April 2017 and of those attending 63 out of 65 recorded their support for allocation of The Dairy site for development, referred to from here on as the selected site (see Consultation Statement and Appendix 8 for a full discussion of the exhibition and public feedback). The SEA also carried out a separate assessment of the nine sites and drew a similar conclusion (see SEA pp. 21-28). Thus it was concluded that the selected site (known as The Dairy site, see Figure 7.1) met the requirements of the JLP and was also large enough to enable a

mix of open market, self-build and affordable housing to be developed and to include other community benefits.

**Figure 7.1: The Preferred Housing Development Site with Associated Community Benefits: The Dairy, Milton Lane, Sutton**





*Photograph 7.1 The Dairy site, Milton Lane, Sutton*



*Photograph 7.2 Access road to The Dairy site from Milton Lane*

### **Rationale for site allocations for housing and community benefits**

7.18 The rationale for the allocation of The Dairy site for housing is that it is a brownfield site used for agricultural purposes but soon to be surplus to the owner's requirements. It is in a natural depression in the landscape and would have a limited visual impact on the AONB. The site is largely covered by a concrete slab, a slurry pit and two large barns which the landowner will dismantle and reuse outside the parish. It is located on the eastern side of South Milton village and is easily accessible from Milton Lane which is on the local bus route. The existing farmyard access will have to be modified to meet the requirements of Devon Highways. It is also within walking distance to the village hall if a new footpath is created at the rear of the site following a wooded stream.

The rationale for the selection of the area behind the village hall for a car park and children's play space is that the hall is the centre of community activities. The rationale for the selection of the route of the footpath/cycleway is that it provides the most direct link between the new development and the village hall, and takes pedestrian traffic off the lane between Sutton and the centre of the village. All the land included in this



allocation policy is in single ownership and the landowner has agreed to provide:

- a development on the site allocated for housing at The Dairy;
- a footpath/cycleway linking the development with the village hall;
- a car park behind the village hall;
- The land, by way of a gift, for a children's play space also behind the village hall.

The landowner has agreed to keep the fields surrounding the development site as a 'buffer area' of agricultural land free from any further development. There is a written agreement between the landowner and the Parish Council covering these points and they will be incorporated in a Section 106 agreement at the planning stage.

7.19 The allocated housing development site is large enough to accommodate 18 houses with at least a third being designated as affordable. It is also intended that a further third will be self- built houses since there is a known demand for this kind of property in the South Hams area and evidence suggests

that those occupying this kind of property often become long-term occupants with strong local attachments.

#### **Policy H1: Land allocation policy for housing**

The selected site known as The Dairy, Milton Lane, is allocated for a maximum of 18 houses or flats during the plan period to meet local needs. The development of The Dairy shall meet the following criteria:

1. The development of this site shall be for housing and carried out in accordance with strategic policies:
  - There shall be an appropriate mix including one and two bedroom units as well as larger three or four bedroom homes with 20 per cent of the total number of units designed for disabled access;
  - The development shall be well designed and built in accordance with Strategic Policy and NPPF guidance, be no more than two storeys in height, use traditional materials (such as brick, timber and stone), incorporate energy efficiency measures (insulation, secondary glazing and preferably renewable energy sources) and complement the character and sense of place of the parish;

- The layout and design shall minimise the impact on the surrounding landscape, should fully respect existing heritage assets, and should include appropriate tree planting and landscaping;
- Applications for development shall be supported by a comprehensive appraisal of heritage impacts.

2. The following community benefits are necessary to make the development acceptable:

- A third of units shall be affordable and rented to people with local connections by a housing association using Devon Home Choice criteria;
- A third of plots shall be made available to individual purchasers wishing to self-build (including custom housebuilding) their own homes;
- A planning obligation will be expected to be submitted or completed which will ensure the open market and self-build houses are occupied as 'sole' or principal residences as set out in Policy H5;
- The existing trees and hedges shall be protected, where practicable, and extended where necessary in order to limit the visual impact of the development from Milton Lane;
- A planning obligation shall be included that confirms the fields on three sides immediately adjacent to the site continue to be used for

agricultural purposes (i.e. for grazing or the production of other crops), thus acting as a 'buffer' to further development (as indicated on Figure 7.1);

- Confirmation as part of a legal agreement that the existing barn buildings on the site are relocated outside the current owner's landholding in South Milton parish;
- The development of the site may be phased over a number of years so long as the community benefits are implemented to an agreed schedule;
- The provision of car parking and a footpath/cycleway as set out in policy H2 below.

### **Allocation**

For the affordable housing the Parish Council requires written confirmation that the Devon Home Choice local connection criteria for rural areas are being strictly applied to the affordable housing: Residence in the parish for three out of five preceding years; lived in parish for six out of 12 months preceding allocation; immediate family have lived in the parish for five years; permanent employment in the parish.

The Parish Council welcomes full consultation with applicants considering submitting a planning application which meets this policy.

## Community Benefits Linked to Housing Development

7.20 The parish Questionnaire identified a great need for improvements to the village hall and in particular the provision of dedicated parking space as near as possible to it. When major events take place in the hall cars are often parked on both sides of the road thus restricting the flow of traffic. A site has therefore been allocated for a car park for about 15 vehicles immediately behind the village hall. An access way is already available from the road which could be widened and resurfaced. Devon Highways have agreed that the existing field access, although not ideal, can be engineered to form an acceptable access to the village hall car park. Detailed aspects will be resolved at the pre-application stage. The land behind the village hall is in the same ownership as The Dairy site and should be incorporated in the Section 106 legal agreement. The landowner has agreed in principle to complete the community benefits as part of the housing development.

### **Policy H2: Land allocation policy for village hall car parking and footpath/cycleway**

The land shown on Figure 7.1 is allocated for a new village hall car park (to provide spaces for 15 cars and attractive landscaping), and a footpath/cycleway to link The Dairy site and Milton Lane with the new car park, as shown on the Figure.

The development of the site shall meet the following criteria:

- The village hall car park shall provide spaces for 15 vehicles and be well landscaped;
- The dedicated footpath/cycleway shall link The Dairy site and Milton Lane to the village hall car park.

The Village Hall Committee will take over and manage the car park.

7.21 An additional area has also been allocated for a children's play space in the area behind the village hall, which may be gifted by the landowner. Funding and construction of the children's play space will be the responsibility of others.

**Policy H3: Land allocation policy for a public children's play space at the rear of the village hall**

The land shown on Figure 7.1 adjoining the proposed car park at the rear of the village hall is allocated for a 200m<sup>2</sup> public children's play space.

The Village Hall committee will take responsibility for designing, equipping and managing the play space and raising additional funding as necessary. The play space will meet the following:

- It will have suitable play equipment for children in the age range 3 – 10;
- It will be landscaped with appropriate tree planting as part of a co-ordinated landscape plan for this area and adjoining the car park;

- A suitable access way will be determined as part of the design process and after discussion with stakeholders.

7.22 The rationale for the provision of additional car parking space behind the village hall (policy H2) is that it will reduce on-street parking outside the hall which often causes congestion on an otherwise narrow street. The justification for the children's play space is that there is a growing population of young children in the parish and there is currently no dedicated play or open space provision for this age group.

**General Policies for Housing Development**

7.23 Planning policy in the JLP enables Neighbourhood Plans to identify possible sites for housing development where there is evidence of local need. In this case, the preferred site allocation, set out above in H1, will deliver the housing needs identified for the parish to 2034 and beyond. In addition, substantial community benefits will be secured. The Plan recognises that there may be applications for infill development and these will be considered as 'windfall sites' by both the South Milton Neighbourhood Plan and the JLP.

7.24 Applications for development other than at the designated Dairy Site will be assessed against the criteria set out in policy H4 and H5 below. Since the parish is entirely located in the AONB, the presumption in both the NPPF and the JLP is against further development on greenfield sites since the overriding priority is to conserve or enhance the special quality of the village in its wider environmental context.

#### **Policy H4. General Housing Policy**

An application for development will be supported only where it fully meets the following criteria:

- It fully respects the cultural and environmental heritage of the parish, particularly where development takes place within or adjacent to listed buildings, Conservation Areas, and other environmental designations;
- It respects existing entry points to the village and does not adversely affect protected views to and from the village, particularly on the seaward side, as set out in policies E&CM1 and 2;
- It is well designed and constructed to reflect, and where possible make a positive contribution to, the character and appearance of the parish in terms of

scale, height, materials and layout, and to reinforce a strong sense of place;

- It complies with Policy H5.

For developments of five or more housing units the following additional criteria will apply:

- It should provide a mix of homes taking into account objectively identified housing needs, and includes an element of affordable and elderly housing as specified in the JLP. It is subject to a S106 legal agreement or suitable planning conditions, ensuring that it will remain an affordable dwelling(s) for local people in perpetuity. For rented affordable housing Devon Home Choice criteria should apply;
- Where applicable, it should include other benefits to the wider community, such as community facilities, car parking, play space, appropriate landscaping and open space.

### **Policy H5. Principal Residency Requirement**

1. Proposals for open market housing (excluding one for one replacement dwellings) will be supported where there is a planning obligation to ensure occupancy as a principal residence. A principal residence is defined as a dwelling occupied as the resident's sole or main residence, where the resident spends the majority of their time when not working away from home. Proof of principal residence includes, but is not limited to, being registered on the local electoral roll, at the local school or for local healthcare.
2. Proposals for open market housing (excluding one for one replacement dwellings) without a requirement to ensure occupancy as a principal residence will not be supported.
3. Where proposals for the replacement or conversion of existing dwellings by more than the number of existing dwellings is approved, the additional properties will be subject to a planning obligation to ensure occupancy as a principal residence.

Potential applicants are strongly advised to consult South Milton Parish Council before submitting a planning application.

### **Reasoned Justification for Housing Policies**

7.25 The Questionnaire found that 54 per cent wished to see more housing provided in the plan period, and 78 per cent favoured development within the range of one to three units. The majority (65 per cent) also wanted more affordable housing, either within the existing development boundary (54 per cent) or 37 per cent anywhere suitable. Only 24 per cent sought an increase in open market housing in the parish.

7.26 The majority of respondents strongly opposed any further development of second homes or holiday lets and wanted to see a mix of sizes and tenures to meet local need. Council tax records for South Hams District Council indicate that 10 per cent of properties are second homes whereas Census data records a vacancy rate of 14.8 per cent, which includes both vacant property and second homes or holiday lets (Peter Brett Associates, SHMA Part 1 Tables 7 & 9, p.26, 2017). As noted above, the survey conducted by the Parish Council in 2015 estimated that the total number of second homes and holiday lets was 77 or 31 per cent of the total housing stock – three times the proportion of the district as a whole – and an increase of 26 since the 2001 Census. This Plan emphasises the need for affordable housing because of high house prices, a shortage of

suitable accommodation for those on average incomes or below and the high proportion of second homes.

7.27 Evidence suggests that average house prices in Devon exceed the national average and that the South Hams is a relatively high value area. Thus residents have great difficulty in securing mortgages. The South Hams Area Profile for 2014 (Devon County Council, 2014) shows that both workplace and resident earnings at £20,301 were lower than the national average. In 2015 average full-time earnings in Devon remained consistently below the regional and national average, with average earnings of £24,742 compared with £26,518 in the South West, and £27,869 in England (<http://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/jsna/overview/jsna-2016/economy/income/>). *Rightmove* records average house prices in Devon in November 2018 as:

*Most of the sales in Devon over the past year were terraced properties which on average sold for £205,563. Detached properties had an average sold price of £383,674 and semi-detached properties averaged at £240,206.*

*Devon, with an overall average price of £260,430, was similar in terms of sold prices to nearby Cornwall (£260,414), but was cheaper*

*than Somerset (£290,959) and Dorset (£323,516). The most expensive area within Devon was Bigbury-on-Sea (£1,071,900) and the cheapest was Ilfracombe (£156,228).*

<https://www.rightmove.co.uk/house-prices-in-Devon.html>

The Government's UK House Price Index recorded the average house price in South Hams DC in 2018 as £298,016 compared with £249,408 for England as a whole (UK Price Index England, September 2018).

7.28 The Halifax (Press release, July 2017) assessed the average house price in the South West in July 2017 as £202,700 and the average deposit required as £35,655 or 18 per cent of the purchase price. These figures will be significantly higher in areas near the coast and in the AONB. Thus the average house price in the South West is at least eight times the average income in the South Hams.

7.29 There is additional evidence of housing need from SHDC's housing waiting list; at least 59 households in the TQ7 3 postcode area were registered in May 2017 as seeking affordable housing to rent with between one and three bedrooms of which six are in the parish of South Milton. The responses to the Questionnaire showed that there was a

requirement for ten affordable housing units. Full details are set out in the Basic Conditions Statement (para 8.21).

7.30 There is therefore a strong case, taking into account the evidence base, for providing affordable housing and in applying a condition to planning permissions for new open market housing to restrict these to occupation as a sole or principal residence. This should be evidenced through, for example, entry on the electoral register and, where relevant, having children at a local school or having members of the household working locally and would be enforceable by the local planning authority.

7.31 There is evidence that the South Hams and South Milton parish have a proportion of elderly residents above the national average. Table 7.1 illustrates that South Milton had 41.5 per cent of residents over the age of 60 in 2011 and that this had increased by 15 per cent since 2001. South Milton has an above average proportion of residents over 65. In 2011 30.9 per cent of South Milton's population was in this category. In 2014 24.2 per cent were aged 65+ in the South West and 17 per cent in the UK as a whole.

7.32 In summary, the local housing needs for South Milton

parish up to 2034 and beyond will be met by the allocation of the preferred site as set out in H1 above, in order to maintain a viable and sustainable community. The environmental quality of South Milton parish requires great sensitivity in integrating new housing development. Two Conservation Areas and 35 listed buildings lie within the parish. It is also located within the South Devon AONB and part lies in the Undeveloped Heritage Coast designation. High quality design and layout of new development, combined with sympathetic landscaping, is therefore of paramount importance in order to complement the existing built form and to reduce the impact on the wider environment to the absolute minimum.

#### **Footnote**

**Affordable housing** - Housing, whether for rent, shared ownership or outright purchase, provided at a cost considered affordable in relation to incomes that are average or below average, or in relation to the price of general market housing.



## 8 Economy and Wellbeing

8.1 An extremely important element of the Plan is to ensure its residents enjoy living in the parish of South Milton both now, and in the future. Because of this, a section of the Questionnaire was dedicated to obtaining the views of its current residents and property owners on any issues and ideas they may have to maintain and continually improve our parish life.

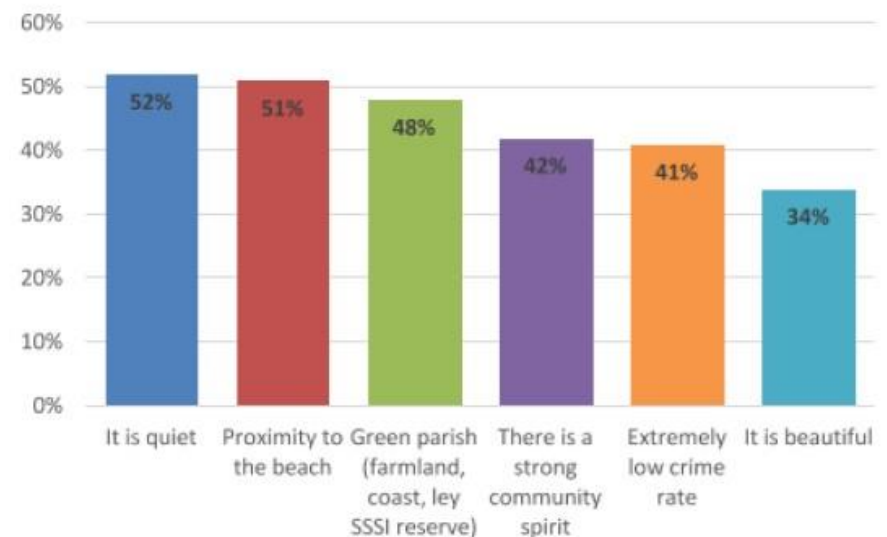
### Background and Evidence Base

8.2 The Questionnaire revealed a high level of satisfaction and sense of wellbeing among residents living in South Milton.

8.3 The top six reasons (of 20) why residents enjoy living in the village are (in order of popularity): it is quiet; its proximity to the beach; it is a green parish; it has a strong community spirit; it has an extremely low crime rate; and it is beautiful because of its location in the AONB and by the sea, as shown on Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1. Top six reasons why residents enjoy living in South Milton

(Percentage refers to population of respondents that selected attribute)



8.4 South Milton currently enjoys an active community within the village, which tends to be centred on the Village Hall, since the parish no longer possesses a pub, shop, public open space or primary school. The Questionnaire revealed strong support (77 per cent) for the development of a Village Hall car park, as there is currently a high demand for improved parking provision near the Village Hall. There was support for future development of the hall, as long as the current façade and character were retained. Parishioners would like to see even more activities taking place within the hall, and all suggestions given in response to the Questionnaire have already been forwarded for action to the Village Hall committee.

8.5 According to the Questionnaire results, most villagers (90 per cent) usually obtain their information about parish activities from the village newsletter which is distributed bi-monthly. Other popular ways of communication are by word of mouth, via the village website, and through the Kingsbridge & Salcombe Gazette. The Questionnaire also revealed that most people (82 per cent) feel included and informed about village activities. A substantial number of people felt they had a say in decisions which affect the parish, but felt this could be improved.

8.6 When asked about future provision, many residents (56 per cent) said they would like to see more open spaces designated for leisure activities within the parish, with a number of residents (47 per cent) supporting a designated play area/meeting place/communal area/village green for children and residents. Some residents (45 per cent) would like to see more sport taking place in the parish and thought the Plan should include provision for more public open spaces in the future. As a local project, the Parish Council will explore the possibility of creating an open public space with local landowners.

8.7 There was generally a high level of satisfaction with medical services, but a small number of residents expressed concern about the difficulty of accessing medical facilities, e.g. a doctor, or the minor injuries hospital in Kingsbridge, particularly in emergencies. Local schools which serve the parish are generally considered to be of a high standard.

### **The Economy of the Parish**

8.8 The majority of respondents to the Questionnaire are retired (51 per cent), the second largest group of residents work outside the parish (30 per cent), and the third largest group

work from home (20 per cent).

8.9 Apart from the six farms, there are a number of significant businesses in the parish such as the Beachhouse café at South Milton Sands, The Barn wedding venue and Hosking's sawmill. Also, there are several small businesses related to the tourist trade and numerous home based businesses providing a range of services and trades.

8.10 The messages from the Questionnaire in relation to the parish economy were that residents would like to see agriculture and horticulture encouraged, and they support working from home and the development of small businesses, such as tourism-related services. Residents supported the concept of expanding existing businesses in the parish to maintain economic growth, and were in favour of diversification of farms and farmland. However, this Plan does not anticipate any major expansion of economic activity in the parish as it would be contrary to the aim of preserving it as an AONB and contrary to the aims of the Undeveloped Coast designation.

8.11 The parish has a large number of small home-based businesses which rely heavily on internet access. Current

internet access is not consistent throughout the parish, with some businesses and homeowners struggling with very slow speeds, thus making home working difficult. This is caused by the outdated and poorly maintained copper cables used to supply telephone lines to homes within the parish. The Questionnaire revealed that 64 per cent of parishioners thought that internet access needed to be improved.

### **Wellbeing**

8.12 Most people have private means of transport. However, to increase the mobility of those without a car or other means of transport, or who have disabilities, the parish will continue to press the DCC and service providers to improve the frequency of bus services to and from the parish.

8.13 In common with many small South Hams villages the parking of residents' and visitors' cars presents difficulties in some parts of the village. The recent addition of 'warning of obstruction' signs by Devon Highways has helped. The Parish Council regularly advises parishioners, through the village newsletter, to park safely especially near road junctions. The proposed new Village Hall car park will help to remove parked cars from the lanes at certain times. A requirement of the

proposed new housing development at The Dairy is the provision of adequate off-street parking for residents.



*8.1a Villagers enjoying the annual midsummer walk*

8.14 There is an extensive network of footpaths in the parish and, in order to promote healthy lifestyles, the Plan supports the maintenance and increased provision of footpaths and cycleways throughout the parish (see Chapters 6 and 7).

8.15 Through the Questionnaire views were also sought concerning the activities in the Village Hall, and these were aired at the Annual General Meeting of the committee in 2016. They ranged from organising new events, such as keep fit and

adult learning classes to new leisure clubs. The hall committee welcomed the parishioners' interest, and after review invited the parishioners to make the first move and present specific proposals. It was underlined that existing clubs and organisations performed a vital role in the parish, but that there was room for more if there was a need.

8.16 Among other issues raised in answer to the Questionnaire were dog fouling, speeding vehicles and litter. These matters have been raised with the Parish Council for follow-up as local projects during the Plan period.



*8.1b The annual village sports day*

### **Policy EMP1: Employment Policy**

- a) The Plan supports the development of small businesses and working from home (where building extensions are required and/or change of use is needed) provided they meet the criteria below. The criteria are:
  - i. The provision should bring social and/or economic benefits to the parish without having an unacceptable impact on the unspoilt character, appearance and tranquility of the parish.
  - ii. The proposals should not have unacceptably harmful impacts on the amenities of residents and other neighbouring uses through, for example, noise, deliveries or increased traffic generation.
- b) The diversification of employment opportunities will be supported as long as any changes meet the following criteria:
  - i. They can be accommodated as part of home-working or live/work units and/or they make use of barns or outbuildings which would otherwise be redundant.
  - ii. They do not create unacceptable noise, emissions, disturbance or traffic generation.

8.16 These policies in EMP 1 have been included as an additional level of safeguarding to those in the JLP as South Milton parish is entirely covered by AONB and the village wishes to have these safeguards made explicit.

8.17 In summary, residents of the parish currently possess a generally high level of health and wellbeing as revealed in the Questionnaire but there is scope to extend and develop leisure opportunities particularly those focussed on the Village Hall. Employment levels are high although a small minority have difficulty in accessing services and facilities outside the parish because of immobility. Further diversification of employment opportunities should primarily benefit local residents but without sacrificing local amenity. Improvements in the economy and wellbeing in the parish will be sought through the implementation of the policies in this Plan and the local projects mentioned in the Appendix 2.

## 9 Conclusion and Way Forward

9.1 Residents recognise that they are fortunate to live in such a beautiful village with a strong community spirit. Many do not want to see much change. However, most recognise that improvements can be made and if the village is to remain vibrant, some development will be needed over the next 15 years or so. Naturally any development needs to be balanced against the need to preserve the special qualities of South Milton parish.

### Way Forward

9.2 This version of the South Milton Neighbourhood Plan has been produced following study of all the comments made during the consultation on the draft Plan (November 2016), the publication of the draft JLP (March 2017), adoption of the JLP (March 2019); the production of an SEA (June 2017); a revision to the SEA (November 2018) and the report of an independent Examiner (May 2018).

9.3 The Plan will now be put to a referendum of all those on the Parish Electoral Register.

9.4 In order that the policies and proposals in this Plan are actioned the Parish Council will:

- a) Work with the landowner and the developer of The Dairy site to plan and design an appropriate housing development ensuring it meets the policies set out in Policies H1, H4 and H5.
- b) Work with the landowner and the developer of The Dairy site to plan and design a car park behind the Village Hall and a footpath/cycleway linking the housing development site and Village Hall as set out in Policy H2.
- c) Ensure the policies as set out in the Plan are adhered to.
- d) Seek grants and donations to create a children's play space adjacent to the car park on land gifted by the landowner of The Dairy site as set out in Policy H3.
- e) Investigate the feasibility and manage the implementation of the desired local projects listed in this Plan in Appendix 2.
- f) Carry out an annual review of progress on implementing this Plan and make a report to the South Milton Annual Parish Public Meeting.

## Appendix 1: Plan Policies

### Policy E&CM1: Landscape Policy

Development proposals should seek to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB, all in accordance with the provisions of the South Devon AONB Management Plan.

Specific requirements for South Milton parish are:

- a) The landscape along Links Road between Primrose Cottage and Kerse Lane, between Collacott and the coast along Horswell Lane, and above Three Corners along Kerse Lane shall be conserved and enhanced.
- b) Views from the important viewpoints shown on Figure 6.2 shall be conserved and enhanced.
- c) Devon lanes, banks and green lanes should be retained wherever possible and, if lost, such loss must be suitably compensated for elsewhere.
- d) Development shall be designed to avoid increasing light pollution.
- e) For developments that rely on screen planting to mitigate unacceptable impacts, the screen should be

established as early as is reasonably practicable before or during the construction process.

### Policy E&CM2: Coastal Environment Policy

Specific requirements for conserving and enhancing the South Milton parish coastline are:

- a) Any development within the area defined as Undeveloped/Heritage Coast shall be designed to avoid expanding or adversely impacting existing infrastructure (such as lanes and car parks).
- b) Further commercialisation of the coastline will not be supported without overriding justification. It should not have a detrimental impact on the unspoilt character, appearance or tranquility of the coastline within the parish.
- c) The landscape viewed from the coast path shall be conserved and enhanced.
- d) The car parks at South Milton Sands, Links Court and Thurlestone Golf Club shall be retained at their present capacity and form, including the overflow car park at South Milton Sands (to be open for a maximum

of 28 days per year).

### **Policy E&CM3: Farmland Policy**

Planning applications that support the local agricultural industry and the production of local food will be supported provided they comply with other relevant policies in this Neighbourhood Plan. Where the visual impact is minimal, these may include the erection of small scale greenhouses and polytunnels or the erection of new temporary buildings or re-use of existing buildings to enable farm-gate sales.

### **Policy E&CM4: Biodiversity Policy**

Development proposals should seek to support the parish's ecological networks, including through the provision of new biodiversity habitats and the enhancements of linkages between existing habitats.

### **Policy H1: Land allocation policy for housing**

The selected site known as The Dairy, Milton Lane, is allocated for a maximum of 18 houses or flats during the plan period to meet local needs. The development of The Dairy shall meet the following criteria:

1. The development of this site shall be for housing and carried out in accordance with strategic policies:
  - There shall be an appropriate mix including one and two bedroom units as well as larger three or four bedroom homes with 20 per cent of the total number of units designed for disabled access;
  - The development shall be well designed and built in accordance with Strategic Policy and NPPF guidance, be no more than two storeys in height, use traditional materials (such as brick, timber and stone), incorporate energy efficiency measures (insulation, secondary glazing and preferably renewable energy sources) and complement the character and sense of place of the parish;
  - The layout and design shall minimise the impact on the surrounding landscape, should fully respect existing heritage assets, and should include appropriate tree planting and landscaping;
  - Applications for development shall be supported by a comprehensive appraisal of heritage impacts.



2. The following community benefits are necessary to make the development acceptable:

- A third of units shall be affordable and rented to people with local connections by a housing association using Devon Home Choice criteria;
- A third of plots shall be made available to individual purchasers wishing to self-build (including custom housebuilding) their own homes;
- A planning obligation will be expected to be submitted or completed which will ensure the open market and self-build houses are occupied as 'sole' or principal residences as set out in Policy H5;
- The existing trees and hedges shall be protected, where practicable, and extended where necessary in order to limit the visual impact of the development from Milton Lane;
- A planning obligation shall be included that confirms the fields on three sides immediately adjacent to the site continue to be used for agricultural purposes (i.e. for grazing or the production of other crops), thus

acting as a 'buffer' to further development (as indicated on Figure 7.1);

- Confirmation as part of a legal agreement that the existing barn buildings on the site are relocated outside the current owner's landholding in South Milton parish;
- The development of the site may be phased over a number of years so long as the community benefits are implemented to an agreed schedule;
- The provision of car parking and a footpath/cycleway as set out in policy H2 below.

### **Allocation**

For the affordable housing the Parish Council requires written confirmation that the Devon Home Choice local connection criteria for rural areas are being strictly applied to the affordable housing: Residence in the parish for three out of five preceding years; lived in parish for six out of 12 months preceding allocation; immediate family have lived in the parish for five years; permanent employment in the parish.



## **Policy H2: Land allocation policy for village hall car parking and footpath/cycleway**

The land shown on Figure 7.1 is allocated for a new village hall car park (to provide spaces for 15 cars and attractive landscaping), and a footpath/cycleway to link The Dairy site and Milton Lane with the new car park, as shown on the Figure.

The development of the site shall meet the following criteria:

- The village hall car park shall provide spaces for 15 vehicles and be well landscaped;
- The dedicated footpath/cycle way shall link The Dairy site and Milton Lane to the village hall car park.

## **Policy H3: Land allocation policy for a public children's play space at the rear of the village hall**

The land shown on Figure 7.1 adjoining the proposed car park at the rear of the village hall is allocated for a 200m<sup>2</sup> public children's play space.

## **Policy H4: General Housing Policy**

An application for development will be supported only where

it fully meets the following criteria:

- It fully respects the cultural and environmental heritage of the parish, particularly where development takes place within or adjacent to listed buildings, Conservation Areas, and other environmental designations;
- It respects existing entry points to the village and does not adversely affect protected views to and from the village, particularly on the seaward side, as set out in policies E&CM1 and 2;
- It is well designed and constructed to reflect, and where possible make a positive contribution to, the character and appearance of the parish in terms of scale, height, materials and layout, and to reinforce a strong sense of place.
- It complies with Policy H5.

For developments of five or more housing units the following additional criteria will apply:

- It should provide a mix of homes taking into account

objectively identified housing needs, and includes an element of affordable and elderly housing as specified in the JLP. It is subject to a S106 legal agreement or suitable planning conditions, ensuring that it will remain an affordable dwelling(s) for local people in perpetuity. For rented affordable housing Devon Home Choice criteria should apply;

- Where applicable, it should include other benefits to the wider community, such as community facilities, car parking, play space, appropriate landscaping and open space.

#### **Policy H5. Principal Residency Requirement**

1. Proposals for open market housing (excluding one for one replacement dwellings) will be supported where there is a planning obligation to ensure occupancy as a principal residence. A principal residence is defined as a dwelling occupied as the resident's sole or main residence, where the resident spends the majority of their time when not working away from home. Proof of principal residence includes, but is not limited to, being registered on the local electoral roll, at the local school or for local healthcare.

2. Proposals for open market housing (excluding one for one replacement dwellings) without a requirement to ensure occupancy as a principal residence will not be supported.

3. Where proposals for the replacement or conversion of existing dwellings by more than the number of existing dwellings is approved, the additional properties will be subject to a planning obligation to ensure occupancy as a principal residence.

#### **Policy EMP1: Employment Policy**

a) The Plan supports the development of small businesses and working from home (where building extensions are required and/or change of use is needed) provided they meet the criteria below. The criteria are:

- i. The provision should bring social and/or economic benefits to the parish without having an unacceptable impact on the unspoilt character, appearance and tranquility of the parish.
- ii. The proposals should not have unacceptably harmful impacts on the amenities of residents and other neighbouring uses through, for example, noise,

deliveries or increased traffic generation.

b) The diversification of employment opportunities will be supported as long as any changes meet the following criteria:

- i. They can be accommodated as part of home-working or live/work units and/or they make use of barns or outbuildings which would otherwise be redundant.
- ii. They do not create unacceptable noise, emissions, disturbance or traffic generation.

## Appendix 2: List of Local Projects

Over the next five years the Parish Council will investigate the feasibility, and manage the implementation, of a list of projects with the following aims. This will involve working with other agencies where appropriate.

### Environment and Coastal Management

- The creation of a new footpath parallel to Horswell Lane, between the end of the green lane at Cross Parks and the coast.
- The improvement to the pedestrian access to the north end of the beach below Links Court car park.
- The provision of footpath information boards.
- An improvement to the existing passing places along the length of Horswell Lane.
- The upgrading of the toilets and waste disposal facilities at South Milton Sands.
- The preparation of a Conservation Area Management Plan for the two conservation areas in the parish.

### Economy and Wellbeing

- The extension of superfast broadband internet access throughout the parish.
- The provision of an open space for public use.
- The education of dog owners to reduce dog fouling throughout the parish.
- The reduction in the amount of litter in the village and at South Milton Sands.
- Action to reduce the number of speeding vehicles through the village.
- The improvement of the frequency of public transport services to and from the parish.