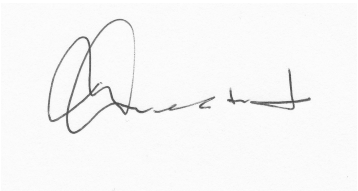
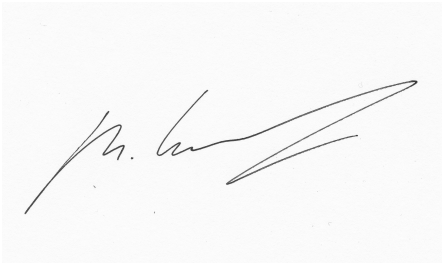
LITTLE MILTON VILLAGE PLAN 2014

The Village Plan aims to list a set of outcomes we would like to achieve over the next 5-10 years, building on what we already have in the village, and outlines how these outcomes might be achieved. The success of the Plan depends very much on people in the village being willing to take forward individual parts of the Plan.

Part 1 contains the key information for the busy reader

Part 2 contains the details





Jeremy Quested
Chairman, Village Plan
Steering Group

Barry Coward
Chairman, Little Milton
Parish Council

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PART 1

Introduction

Why does the village need a Community Led Plan?

Community Led Plans were introduced nationally by the government as a way for towns and parishes to have more say in how their community should develop in the future. The process is supported by Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council and a lot of helpful advice is also available from the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC).

A Community Led Plan allows us the opportunity to review the current situation in the village, identify good and not so good things about our community, and decide priorities for the future. The Plan also proposes ways in which those priorities might be achieved. The process involves consulting everyone in the village and using the information gathered to put together a plan.

How the Plan has been produced

The process started in early 2012 when an information gathering event was held at the Pine Lodge. Lots of ideas came forward. Most importantly, enough people volunteered to form a Steering Group to take the process forward. Further information was gathered at village events across the summer of 2012, including the Jubilee celebrations and the Fete.

This allowed the Steering Group to identify key topics which were of concern to the village. The information was then used to compile a Village Survey questionnaire which went to every household in the village in spring 2013. The answers received were then analysed and the results used to agree priorities and to write the Village Plan. This was a time-consuming process, but the Steering Group members feel that the time spent has allowed them to consider each aspect of the Plan from all angles.

Overview

Our Village Plan is relatively modest in scope. What became clear as the Plan was developed, and we compared it with the plans of other villages, was that we had already achieved a lot before we even thought about a formal plan. So there are no Eureka moments, no grandiose schemes, but we will simply build on what is so good about our village already.

During the process, many ideas were put forward by individuals. But they were just that – one person's ideas. The Plan takes forward only those topics which were common themes throughout the process, and for which it is clear there is majority support within the village.

What You Thought Was Important

The Village Survey stage generated a lot of comments. In particular, people were asked to identify the one thing that would make the most difference to them. It is clear that the majority of the village feel that the Plan would be a success if we could address just 5 key issues:

- **Traffic: reduce the weight and speed of vehicles through the village. Achieving an HGV weight limit on the A329 stands out as the highest priority action.**
- **Maintain the excellent facilities, amenities and organisations that already exist in the village.**
- **Maintain the existing infrastructure e.g. drains, pavements, and improve it where necessary.**
- **Improve broadband speed.**
- **Introduce public transport in the evenings.**

Structure of the Plan

The Plan has been broken down as follows:

- **Traffic.** Without a doubt, traffic is the major concern in the village. This became very clear during both the information gathering phase and from the Village Survey. Many issues around traffic were identified, from general safety walking around the village to physical damage caused to properties. Traffic affects people differently, depending on where in the village they live.
- **Housing**. Although housing was not raised as a major concern amongst villagers, it is an essential part of the Plan. Some questions about housing were included in the Village Survey. Recent changes to the planning rules also mean that there are advantages to be gained in including guidance on housing within the Plan. This should be based on the District Council's Core Strategy and the views of the villagers.
- **Areas where the village would like to see improvements, but where solutions are already in hand**. In a number of areas, the villagers made it clear that they would welcome some improvements. However many of these are already well known to the responsible organisations and are being addressed.
- **Some new ideas which a majority think would be of benefit.** It was clear from the information gathering and the Village Survey that a number of new ideas have majority support eg. cycle paths.
- **An acknowledgement that some desires cannot currently be met.** A number of issues were raised but, on further examination, it became clear that progress is not currently feasible.

We already have many active organisations run by volunteers. A great deal has been achieved in the village in the past by dedicated people. To all those people the village owes a big vote of thanks. There is a lot more that we now want to achieve. But we also need now to pass the baton to the next generation and ask new people to come forward to pick up some of the ideas in this Plan.

In addition, many organisations depend on support from villagers. Quiz nights at the Pine Lodge, the village fete, the shop and post office, the church, and many other village organisations and events, can only survive if they have the continuing support of people from the village. The people of Little Milton have always been generous in their support, and long may this continue.

Summary Action List

The following summarises the list of actions and which organisations should be responsible for taking them forward. Some actions need new groups to be set up if they are to be achieved. Further detail is contained in Part 2

1. Traffic:

There are five recommendations:

- To reduce damage to properties and on safety & environmental grounds, the Parish Council should request Oxfordshire County Council impose a **weight limit** on the main road through the village.
- Volunteers should be found for a new **speedwatch group** to be set up with the assistance of the police in order to discourage speeding through the village.
- A similar w**eight monitoring group** should be formed to reduce the number of HGVs breaking weight limits on roads in our village.
- If **20mph limits** come to be widely applied across the county, the Parish Council should request that village roads be included.
- The Parish Council should continue to work with Oxfordshire's Highways Department to develop more measures to **improve road safety** in the village**.**

2. Housing guidance is needed to help the Parish Council respond to planning applications and inform South Oxfordshire District Council's planning department:

- The Guidance is published as an Annex to the Village Plan.

3. Improvements may be needed but solutions are already in hand:

- **Sewerage and Flooding:** The Parish Council should continue to work with Thames Water to stop sewage discharges and reduce flooding from over-burdened drains in the village.
- **Faster Broadband:** The Parish Council should monitor the national/county OxOnline programme to try and ensure that Little Milton continues to be included in the upgrade programme.
- **Maintenance & Litter:** The Parish Council should improve their services where some weaknesses were highlighted by the village, namely litter collection and maintenance of the village green.
- **Village Hall:** Where they identify the need and have funds available, the Village Hall Management Committee should continue to consider improvements to the Pine Lodge, where feasible, particularly in lighting, heating & ventilation, and acoustics.
- **Village Shop & Post Office:** The shop committee should continue to keep the Shop and the Post Office open. In conjunction with the Volunteer Working Group, they should aim to recruit 10 additional volunteers and develop a plan to retain all volunteers.

4. New Ideas:

- **Bus Services:** A new Public Transport Group should be formed and facilitated by the Parish Council, firstly, to try and ensure continuation of the current 103/104 services. Also to look at ways to improve evening and weekend bus services between Oxford and the village, or ways to connect with other services (101 at Stadhampton; 280 at Wheatley).
- **Young People:** A Youth Working Group should be established to determine what facilities would be beneficial for the young people of the village and propose methods of putting those facilities in place.
- **Green Energy:** The Parish Council should support house and premises owners should they wish to install solar panels or heat pumps; however wind turbines on buildings in the village should be opposed.
- **Carbon Capture:** Carbon capture schemes, primarily tree and hedge planting around the parish, and their preservation, should be encouraged and supported.
- **Cycle Paths:** A new Cycle Path Working Group should be established in order to set up cycle paths, initially between Little Milton, Great Milton and the Haseleys, and later, if feasible, with Wheatley.
- **New Activities:** Provision of these by existing organisations; professionals; new groups; interested individuals should be encouraged where there is sufficient support.
- **Volunteers:** A Volunteer Working Group should be established to ensure there are sufficient volunteers to help run village organisations.
- **Dog Fouling:** To ensure a safe environment, particularly for children, villagers believe dog owners should pick up excrement. The Parish Council should also put in measures to try and reduce the problem.

5. Things that will not be taken forward

- **Council tax:** The Parish Council should note that in 2013 a narrow majority (53%) did not wish Council Tax to rise in order to fund new initiatives in this Plan.
- **Mains Gas:** Unless costs can be reduced substantially at some point in the future, a mains gas supply to the village will not be pursued as there are insufficient households in the village willing to pay for installation.
- **Bypass:** In the current financial climate, the concept of a bypass for the village will not be pursued.

PART 2



Village History (Author: Bruce Shelton)

Set on a gentle hill among the rolling fields to the west of the Chiltern Hills, Little Milton is a picturesque village situated 8 miles to the south-east of Oxford. It rises to around 220 feet above sea level at its highest point.

The village, or at least the area where it stands, has been inhabited in some form for possibly more than two millennia. Archaeological studies by the University of Cambridge discovered a Roman villa in Little Milton that dates from the third or fourth century AD. There is, however, some evidence that this villa may have been built on the site of an even earlier Ancient British settlement.

Following the Roman departure from Britain and the Saxon invasion, the village we today call Little Milton, was part of Middleton, which would later become known as Great Milton. The estate of Middleton was a Saxon estate divided into three main settlements, Great Middleton, Little Middleton and Ascot. Peasants farmed the land in peace until the arrival

of the Normans in 1066. Middleton, which features in the Domesday Book, was given by William the Conqueror to the Bishop of Lincoln. In the centuries following, ownership of the land changed hands numerous times, but the village grew.

Despite the fact that the landscape surrounding the Milton area was noticeably devoid of trees, unlike much of England at the time, most of the earlier buildings in the village were still made of timber. However, an abundance of good Portland Stone was discovered. For this reason, two quarries were started, one on either side of the village. These quarries meant an infrastructure was developed attracting quarry workers and masons. This enabled villagers to build houses from stone, unlike the timber framed houses originally built in most of the country which sadly no longer exist. The result of their stone construction means that many houses in the village date back to the 17th century, with a few, including part of the Manor, being much older. The quarries continued to produce stone for repairing the buildings of Oxford and other places until the 1930s.

The Industrial Revolution was an important time for Little Milton. In 1830 Wells' Farm was the site of a Luddite attack by labourers from the hamlets which surround the village. James Wells, the farmer, was assaulted and his new threshing machines were destroyed. In support of the Lord of the Manor, one hundred and thirty six villagers were deputised into service. These Special Constables arrested the six ringleaders and they were sentenced to seven years transportation to the colonies.

As the Industrial Revolution started to have an impact on the village way of life, the Enclosure Act forced more people off the land. In 1839, Little Milton was enclosed and two thirds of the land was given to Walter Long, Lord of the Manor. What had previously been largely open fields farmed by the common people of the village was transformed into the hedge-rowed patchwork farmland seen surrounding the village today.

Following the construction of St James' Church in 1844, Little Milton became an ecclesiastical parish and a village in its own right. This gave Little Milton its own identity, separating it from Great Milton, and allowing the community to start to develop into the village we see today.

By the middle of the 19th Century a lot of the fields around the village were devoted to farming sheep because of the markedly rich quality of the grazing land in the area and the high price of wool. In the 1860s and 1870s both Little Milton and Great Milton experienced the full brunt of the agricultural depression which caused huge unemployment. A sizeable number of villagers, who were by then living in complete poverty, were supported by the Poor Fund and left the village for new lives, mainly in Canada. Some villagers were lost to the big towns and cities in the hope of finding work in the factories.

While there have been schools in Little Milton since 1818, with the help of the church, the present school was built in 1861 to cater to the need for education especially among the poorer villagers.

Like the large towns and cities of Britain, Little Milton did not escape the effects of the First and Second World Wars, with several villagers killed in action, but the 1950s and 1960s saw new development and prosperity for the village. New houses were built in the village on the Thame Road and at Old Field and Milton Manor Drive. Chiltern View was completed at the beginning of the 1980s, and Little Milton took the shape it still has to this day.

In the new Millennium, the village continued to see growth and development. The community joined together and, with many villagers' efforts, raised the funds for the construction of the Pine Lodge Village Hall. This replaced the rather dilapidated hall which had been in existence since just after the Second World War. A couple of years later, with the same spirit, the Little Milton community managed to raise the funds to build the Community Shop and Post Office.

Little Milton has seen many changes since its first inhabitants built their houses and lived their lives. The village has grown, and in recent years experienced a change in its residents. Throughout its history, most villagers worked on farms in the surrounding fields, but the last 50 years have seen many people moving to Little Milton to commute to work in larger cities like Oxford and London. More recently, some villagers have started to work from home, choosing the charming surroundings of the village over the hustle and bustle of cities and towns.

A longer history of the village will be available on the village website in due course. Bruce Shelton would be pleased to hear from anyone who has additional information to add to his research.

Our Village Today

Little Milton sits in an ideal rural location, surrounded by open high-quality farmland. The village sits astride a main road, which gives us quick and easy travel to the M40 motorway, Thame, Oxford and beyond. Commuting to major centres of employment, including into London, is feasible.

Our village was originally a farming community, but we are now a mixed community of commuters, workers from home, young people at school, and retired people. For the most part, our primary residences are in the village.

We have a wide mix of housing. Many of the older houses are listed buildings. We also have an above-average number of affordable houses. Over the last 20 years, little new building has taken place, apart from replacing some of the affordable housing** when 6 old houses were demolished and replaced with 13 new builds.

> **affordable housing is housing offered to people on the housing register at less than market rent. The construction of such housing is subsidised by the government.

Within the last 20 years we have:

- Prevented the school from being under threat of closure to now being a successful part of the community, with redevelopment plans approved and now awaiting funding;
- Developed a lively pre-school, with its own log cabin style premises;
- Seen one pub close, but the remaining pub (The Lamb) reinvigorated under new ownership;
- Demolished our old village hall and built an impressive replacement;
- Redeveloped the recreation ground with a big children's play area, floodlit multi-use games area, tennis courts, and an open space which is now kept mown and maintained;
- Campaigned successfully for build-outs to be installed at the main road entrances to the village to calm traffic, and two pelican crossings as part of the safe route to school programme;
- Re-opened our post office after its original closure, and later built a new shop to which the post office moved;
- Improved the housing stock in the village, largely through extension and modification rather than new build;
- Seen more people working from home.

However, nothing stands still – the village has changed and will continue to evolve . This Plan gives us the opportunity to influence the direction of change.

Good Things about the Village

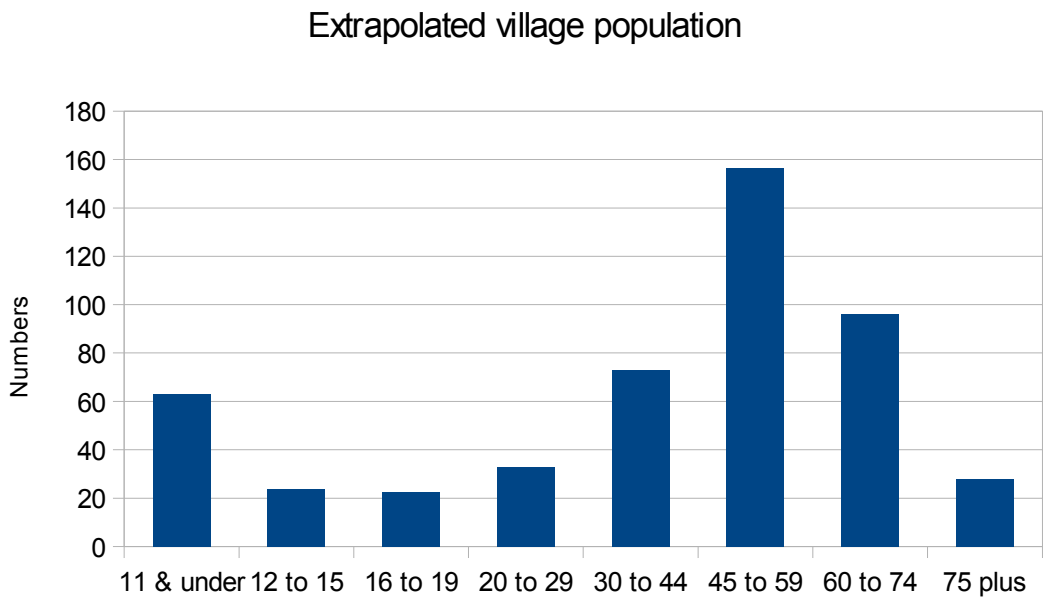
It was obvious when villagers were consulted that we already have much to celebrate in our village. The following is what people said they liked most about the village:

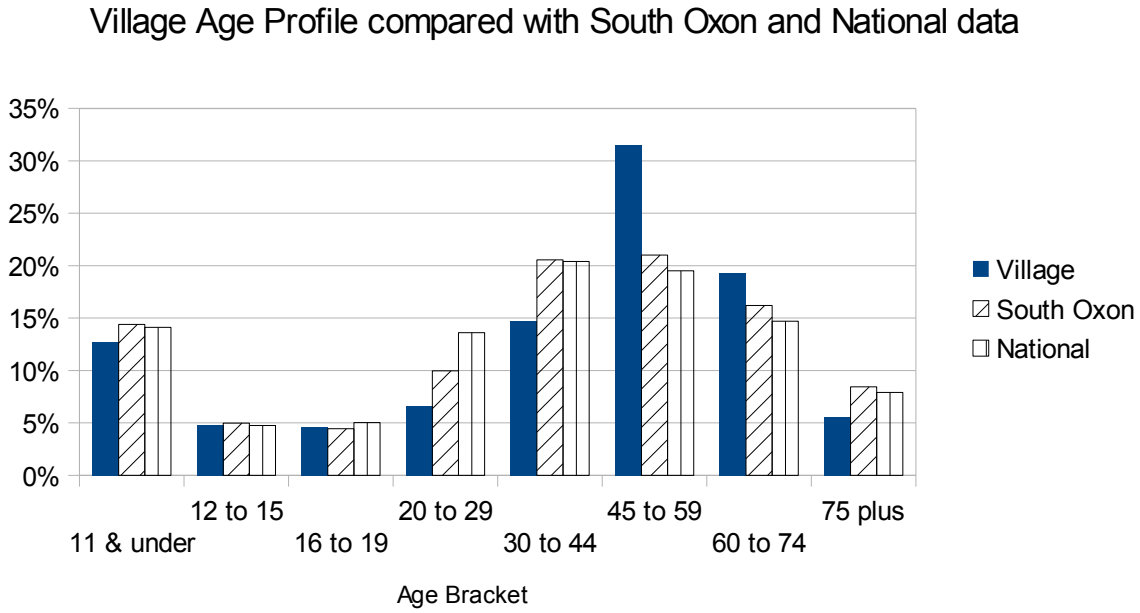
- A place where people like to live and choose to stay a long time;
- A rural location, with good local footpaths and a nature reserve right next door;
- Picturesque houses and historic buildings, with much of the village being in a Conservation Area;
- Excellent facilities and amenities within the village,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

Demographics

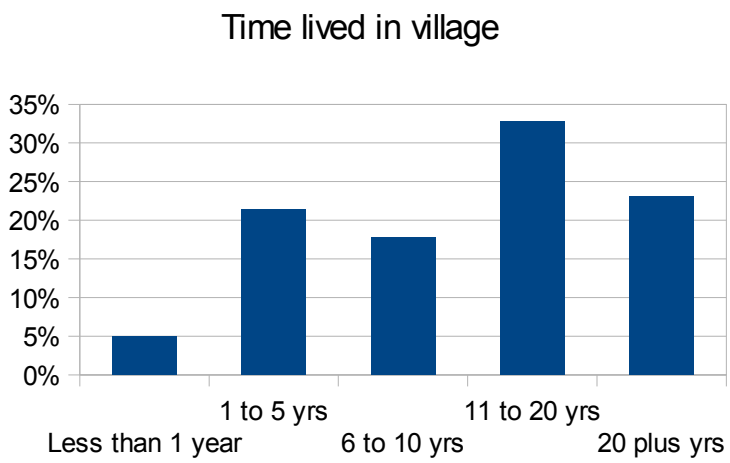
The following information was derived from the 2013 village survey results.

The village has an estimated population of about 500. The age profile is:

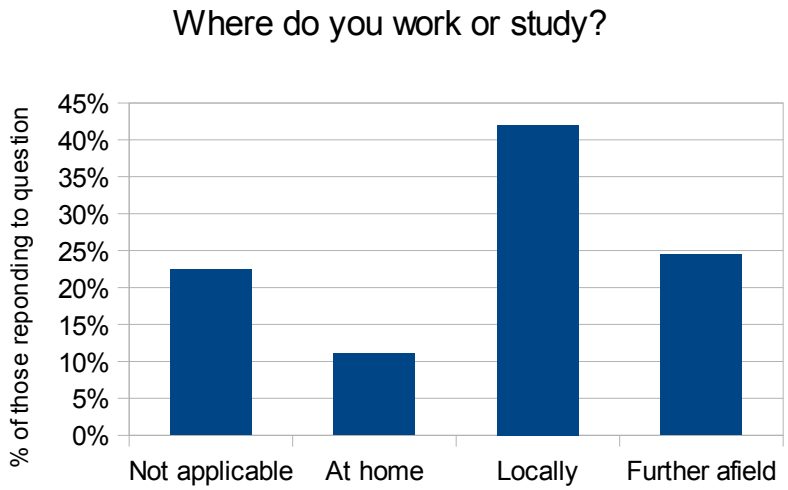




Many people have lived in the village for a long time. About 60% have lived in the village over 10 years:



Over 60% of the people in the village travel outside the village to work or study:



Past achievements and learning from prior successes

Past achievements give us lessons for what we now want to achieve as part of the Village Plan:

- The ability to raise funds is vital, through either successful grant applications, loans from the parish council, or good old-fashioned fund raising.
- The village can be very generous when raising funds, but can only support one major project at a time
- A strong management team is required to see a project through but it does not have to be large. That group, having 'done its bit', may then hand over to others to run the new facility when it is completed.
- It is easy to forget, in the enthusiasm of achieving something new, that downstream there may be on-going maintenance and repair costs, which will all have to be paid for out of income.

Keeping going what we have already

The excellent facilities, amenities and organisations which we enjoy in this village are kept going by willing volunteers, who work extremely hard to keep the show on the road. They share an ongoing concern that they do not yet see the next generation coming forward, ready to take over in due course. Without enough volunteers, we may not be able to sustain what we have, let alone take on new things. Not everyone can offer their services as volunteers but the continuing support of events is equally important. Without support, these village events will fade and die.

Promoting our village

The population of the village is not large enough to sustain the school, pre-school, pub, village hall, shop, etc. Therefore we must attract people from outside the village and welcome them using (and paying for) our facilities. There are inevitably some disadvantages, such as car parking, noise, etc.

Village Map

See Inside Front Cover

Also http://www.littlemilton.org.uk/sites/default/files/MapofVillage.pdf

Funding

Funding will be a major consideration in implementing many aspects of the Plan. Nowadays local authorities are having to manage the essential services within much reduced budgets, and the effects can be seen in areas such as road maintenance.

In addition, in the 21013 Village Survey a narrow majority (53.7%) of households in the village did not wish the Parish Council to raise the precept in order to fund proposals forming part of the Village Plan.

Therefore, in taking any of the following proposals forward, it may first be necessary to raise the required funds. This could be achieved through:

- Parish Council, if within existing budget
- Local authorities, if within existing budgets
- Grants, if there are any suitable sources of grant funding covering the desired proposal (OCC, SODC, ORCC can advise)
- Fund-raising
- Donations

Little Milton has always been generous in its support of fund-raising for village projects, the new village hall and the shop being recent successful examples. Experience has shown that a village of our size can only really support one major fund raising venture at a time. Therefore priorities may have to be decided when taking forward some of the ideas developed in this Plan.

Village Survey

As part of the process which led to the development of this Plan, a comprehensive Village Survey was carried out in 2013. The full results of the survey are on the village website at:

http://www.littlemilton.org.uk/sites/default/files/VillageSurveyResults.pdf

The questionnaire used is available to view at:

http://www.littlemilton.org.uk/sites/default/files/CLPQuestionnaireV3.7.pdf

A summary of the results, which was previously published in the village newsletter, is included as Annex B of this Plan.

The detailed results of the survey will help to develop solutions to the various plan objectives.

The responses to the survey also served to reassure existing organisations that what they are doing already is much appreciated e.g. the village newsletter is widely read, the majority of people think that the village hall is fine as it is, most people are happy with the services provided by the shop, etc.

Responsible Organisations, Volunteers and Working Groups

Much of what is achieved already in the village depends on volunteers. We are fortunate to have so many people who give so much of their time to run the various facets of our community.

Each proposal in the Plan that follows requires an organisation to be responsible for taking that proposal forward. In many cases, those organisations already exist within the village.

However in a number of cases, if the proposal is to be implemented, new working groups will be necessary to develop the proposal further, determine its feasibility, raise any necessary funds, and see that aspect of the Plan through to fruition.

Thus an important part of the Plan itself consists of asking people to step forward to assist in new areas which interest them. This commitment may only be for a limited duration; however, in some cases, a working group may develop into a more permanent organisation within the village.

It is particularly desirable that young people have an input to areas which affect them, such as youth activities and public transport. Also many of the proposals have been under active discussion by the Village Plan Steering Group for nearly two years, and the inclusion of a link person from the Steering Group in any new working group would be beneficial.

Also many of our objectives can only be achieved through working closely with either the District or County Councils and liaising closely with the appropriate officers within those organisations.

THE PLAN



Traffic

Traffic Management	Parish Council
Reducing HGV traffic was the highest priority action item from all consultations in the village and would, if achieved, have a major impact on the quality of life of not only those who live on or near the A329, but also the whole village. Large HGVs cause damage to property, make houses shake, create noise, dust & pollution, and disturb sleep. Frequent minor collisions occur at the top of Church Hill; often HGVs have to mount the pavement to pass each other at this point. Dave Clack – the Highways Area Steward for South Oxfordshire – indicated in Feb 2014 that he happy to meet with members of the Parish Council to discuss traffic measures further.	
Objectives: Reduction in damage to properties near the road. Reduction in the collisions and near misses at the top of Church Hill. Less noise, dust & pollution. Safer roads through the village. Improved quality of life in the village.	
Action T1: Oxfordshire County Council should be requested to impose a 7.5 tonne weight limit on the A329 between J7 M40 and Stadhampton.	
Time scale: The initial submission was made to Oxfordshire County Council in Dec 2013	

Traffic Management	Parish Council/Speedwatch Group
Villagers see traffic speeding through the village as a major problem and a hazard to villagers. There was strong support for setting up a Speedwatch Group within the village. Volunteers have already come forward, interested in forming such a group, and Julia Harrison at Brookside Cottage, Haseley Road (jsharrison58@gmail.com) has taken the lead. She is in contact with our local PCSO who will assist in training the group and carrying out speed monitoring. Anyone wishing to volunteer to assist can contact Julia direct.	
Objectives: Reduction in the speed and discouragement of speeding on the roads through the village.	
Action T2: Under the auspices of the Parish Council, and with the assistance of Community Police Support Officers, a Community Speedwatch Group should be established with the purpose of monitoring the speed of traffic through the village and warning offenders	
Time scale: By 30 Apr 2014 (subject to PCSOs being suitably trained)	

Traffic Management	Parish Council/Weight Monitoring Group
There was strong support for a vehicle weight monitoring group within the village. Villagers see HGVs taking weight-limited routes through the village as a major problem and a hazard to villagers. Volunteers have already come forward, interested in forming such a group, and Kate Daunt of Pear Tree Cottage, Haseley Road (katedaunt@live.com) has taken the lead and has established contact with Trading Standards. She can advise volunteers of the procedures to be used. Anyone wishing to volunteer to assist can contact Kate direct.	
Objectives: A reduction in the number of HGVs illegally using weight-limited roads, thereby reducing damage to property. Also reduction in noise, dust & pollution. Improved safety on roads in the village.	
Action T3: Under the auspices of the Parish Council, and with the assistance of Trading Standards, a Weight Monitoring Group should be established with the purpose of monitoring and reporting HGVs which appear to be exceeding weight limits within the village.	
Time scale: By 31 March 2014	

Traffic Management	Parish Council
There was strong support for a lower speed limit in the village. 76% of people want speed limited to 20mph, at least in the vicinity of the school and pre-school. A smaller number support a blanket 20mph limit throughout the village.	
Objectives: A reduction in the speed of traffic through the village and a consequent improvement in road safety.	
Action T4: If Oxfordshire County Council ultimately decides that 20mph speed limits will be implemented more widely in the county, the Parish Council should seek to have such a limit placed on all roads in the village.	
Time scale: Unknown (awaiting a decision on County policy)	

Traffic Management	Parish Council plus co-opted volunteers
The following additional measures had majority support within the village: **A329** • improved HGV signage for alternative routes; • repairing holes and bumps in road; • closure of the lay-by at the south end of the village; • improvements to pavements. **Haseley Road** • notwithstanding existing weight limit, also install 'Unsuitable for HGVs' signs. Other suitable and practicable measures should also be considered. Weight limits and speed limits under T1-T4 are the major priorities.	
Objectives: Further reduction in the impact of HGVs and further improvements in road safety through the village.	
ActionT5: The Parish Council should, in consultation with the Highways Department, develop a further package of traffic management proposals, in addition to T1 – T4, in order to improve road safety.	
Time scale: Autumn 2014, but not before the outcome of T1 is known	

Housing

Housing Guidance	Parish Council
Interpretation of South Oxfordshire District Council's Core Strategy as it applies to Little Milton is an important part of the overall plan for the village. Whilst the Parish Council can only make recommendations with regard to planning matters, and it is SODC who make the decisions, the formulation of a housing guidance document as part of the Village Plan can be helpful in influencing planning decisions. The Village Plan, which was produced through the Community Led Plan process, represents the aspirations of the community, and as such, can be a material consideration in the planning application process. However, the Village Plan is not a statutory planning document and does not carry the same material weight as an adopted Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan. It will be taken into consideration by the planning authority (South Oxfordshire District Council) along with all other material considerations and relevant policies in arriving at any decision. The Guidance was formulated with the assistance and advice of the planning policy team at South Oxfordshire District Council..	
Objective: An agreed housing guidance document which the Parish Council can use as a basis for responding to planning applications and which can inform the Planning Authority (SODC).	
Action H1: The Housing Guidance recently developed by the Parish Council should be published as part of the Village Plan. (See Annex A)	
Time scale: Guidance adopted by Parish Council Feb 2014	

Areas where the village would like to see improvements but where solutions are already in hand



Drains and Sewers	Parish Council/Land Owners
The wet winter of 2012/13 resulted in several instances of raw sewage being discharged, primarily outside the school. Localised flooding occurred in the same area and also in the low point of the Haseley Road. The arrangement of drains in the village is complex, relying on two pumping stations (by the school and by the Haseley Road bridge). Our sewage farm also serves Great & Little Haseley through a main drain which runs across the fields between the villages. A majority of the village think that Thames Water should provide a better service. The Parish Council has already (summer 2013) established good working relationships with officers from Thames Water, OCC, SODC and the Environment Agency. Some improvements have already been achieved, primarily in preventing sewage discharge outside the school. This liaison needs to continue. Any future house building in the village	

or the Haseleys needs to take into account the fact that the current drainage system is working close to maximum capacity in heavy rainfall. Land owners should be encouraged to maintain their watercourses and ditches in order to reduce the risk of flooding in the lower parts of the village.
Objectives: No instances of raw sewage being discharged, and fewer instances of flooding from over-burdened drains around the village.
Action S1: The Parish Council should continue to work with the local authorities and Thames Water with a view to preventing any discharge of raw sewage and localised flooding due to over-burdened drains within the village.
Time scale: Ongoing

Broadband	Parish Council
The Village Survey indicated that very few houses in the village have broadband speeds above 4Mb/s; many hover in the 1-2 Mb/s range. Faster broadband is now seen as essential for rural communities and many households place faster broadband as a high priority. The award of the OxOnline contract to BT was announced in mid 2013, and it is anticipated that broadband services to Little Milton will be upgraded as part of this programme, hopefully to deliver up to 24Mb/s at the premises by the end of 2015. The coverage map published in Aug 2013 showed Little Milton village within the upgrade area, although the outlying dwellings within the parish may not be included. Oxfordshire County Council advised in early 2014 that the village is well served by the Better Broadband for Oxfordshire programme. The following link http://www.betterbroadbandoxfordshire.org.uk will provide information of use to the community. OCC has estimated that around 200 premises will be provided with the means of buying broadband services at >24Mb/s. The roll-out for this area is scheduled for phase 4 (out of 6 phases due for completion by Dec 2015). More precise information will become available when the detailed ground surveys are conducted later in 2014, but interested parties are encouraged to visit the broadband website.	
Objective: Faster broadband.	
Action S2: The Parish Council should monitor the national/county OxOnline programme to try and ensure that Little Milton continues to be included in the upgrade programme.	
Time scale: End of 2015	

Parish Council	Parish Council
Whereas most people in the Village Survey thought the Parish Council does a good job, litter collection and maintenance of the village green were highlighted, albeit by a minority, as areas where the Parish Council could do better. More frequent litter blitzes were advocated. The Parish Council already has it in mind to carry out twice-yearly litter blitzes, but success depends upon having enough volunteers to assist. Currently a very small number of people (less than 10) carry out the annual litter blitz. Action has already been taken to improve the appearance and maintenance of the village green.	
Objectives: Less litter around the village. Improved maintenance of the village green.	
Action S3: The Parish Council should improve their services where some weaknesses were highlighted by the village, namely litter collection and maintenance of the village green.	
Time scale: Ongoing	



Village Hall (Pine Lodge)	Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC)
The main areas of concern in the village hall are currently lighting, heating & ventilation, and acoustics. Other minor suggestions for items such as a stage, a patio, etc. were also received from the Village Survey. The VHMC was already well aware of many of these issues, but welcomed the feedback from the village. A lot of research has already been done by the VHMC into possible solutions. The problems are being addressed as and when feasible and, most particularly, when funding is available.	
Objectives: To carry out those improvements to the Pine Lodge which are necessary, feasible and cost-effective in the medium term. The funds need to be available before the work starts.	
Action S4: The Village Hall Management Committee should continue to consider improvements to the Pine Lodge, where feasible, particularly in lighting, heating & ventilation, and acoustics	
Time scale: Ongoing	

Village Shop and Post Office	Shop Management Committee plus The Whole Village
The Shop and Post Office are considered important by over 80% of the village. A minority of people would like to see the hours extended and suggestions were also made to broaden some of the services provided. Many of these have been considered by the shop committee already and their response was published in the survey results. The hours that the shop can open are critically dependent upon the number of volunteers; so far there have never been enough. Keeping the shop open seems a modest aim, but it runs on a knife-edge for much of the time. Only if enough people offer their services, even just for a few hours each week, will we keep the Shop open.	
Objectives: Keep the Shop and the Post Office open. In-conjunction with the Volunteer working group, recruit 10 additional volunteers and develop a plan to retain all volunteers.	
S5: The Shop and Post Office should continue to provide a service in the village.	
Time scale: On-going	

New ideas which a majority think would be of benefit

Dog Fouling	Dog owners. Parish Council
65% of villagers think that dog fouling is a problem in parts of the village. Some of the narrower paths seem to be particularly affected and the recreation ground was also highlighted as a problem area, particularly as it is used by the school.. About a quarter of households in the village own dogs. Education of owners to pick up was seen as the primary need. The provision of more dog bins at key locations and consideration of banning dogs on the playing fields are measures also supported by the village.	
Objectives: Less dog fouling around the village. A safer environment, particularly for children.	
Action N1: Dog owners should pick up. The Parish Council should also put in place measures to try and reduce the amount of dog fouling around the village.	
Time scale: By 31 Dec 2014	

Public Transport	Public Transport Group facilitated by Parish Council
Public transport, in the form of the 103/104 bus services to Oxford, only runs Mon-Sat during the day. There are currently no evening services, but the village survey gave an indication of the demand for such services. For a small number of village residents, the bus service is vital. An evening service would also be helpful and, in particular, reduce the need for parents to transport children to and fro. Two recent local initiatives – the GoRide 101 service from Watlington through Chalgrove, and GoRide 125 service between Thame, Little Milton, Watlington & Wallingford – are examples of what can be done. The 101 service is subsidised by the relevant parish councils. The Parish Council is consulted by the relevant bodies on bus services and has lobbied to maintain the current services. The Council would welcome a new group which could determine the feasibility of providing evening services, consulting organisations such as GoRide.	

Objectives: Continuance of the current 103/104 services. An evening bus service to and from the village, either direct to Oxford, or connecting with other services to Oxford
Action N2: A newly-formed Public Transport Group should look at ways of improving evening and weekend bus services between Oxford and the village, or ways to connect with other services (101 at Stadhampton; 280 at Wheatley)
Time scale: 31/12/14

Youth Facilities & Activities	Youth Working Group
Both young people and adults would like to see more facilities for young people in the village. However it is far from clear what those facilities should be. Is it better transport? Is it better broadband? Is it a skateboard park? Thus the first step in the process is to consult the young people of the village and find out what they want. A new group needs to consider how this might be achieved. Advice is available from the Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action group (OCVA). OCVA could firstly help set up a group. OCVA could also explore funding options with the group as part of the process and help identify what, if any, additional facilities are needed for young people in the village. More information can be found at http://www.ocva.org.uk/funding and the contact at OCVA is david.bates@ocva.org.uk 01865 258912. SODC also have a Young People's Co-ordinator, currently Karen Tolley, who can help with youth facilities and provide general advice and guidance. karen.tolley@southandvale.gov.uk 01491 823041. SODC's Participation Team can support setting up activities for young people. The contact is Nicola Meurer at nicola.meurer@southandvale.gov.uk 01491 823431.	
Objective: Better facilities in the village for young people.	
Action N3 - A newly-formed working group should be established to determine what facilities would be beneficial for the young people of the village and propose methods of putting them in place.	
Time scale: 31/12/15	

Renewable Energy	House & Public Building Owners; Parish Council
The village is evenly divided on the matter of solar panels. 53% support solar panels on public buildings; 49% support solar panels (or heat pumps) on residential buildings. It is purely up to the owner to decide if an installation is cost-effective. Solar panels do not need planning permission, except on listed buildings or, in some circumstances, in a conservation area.	
Objectives: Acceptance of solar panel installations or heat pumps on public and private buildings.	
Action N4: House and premises owners should be encouraged should they wish to install solar panels or heat pumps.	
Time scale: Ongoing	

Carbon Capture	Landowners
90% of the village is in favour of carbon capture schemes. The only practicable schemes within the parish are hedge and tree planting, and it is mainly up to individual land owners if they wish to go ahead. Grants may be available. Any land owner that does wish to plant will have the support of the village. There is no publicly-owned land suitable for mass tree planting. However the Parish Council is in the process of planting additional hedging at the recreation ground. BBOWT has also been active in hedge planting in recent years. Any other initiatives to plant trees or hedges would be welcome. At a time of changing climate, trees also provide shade, capture rain water, provide a habitat for wildlife and act as wind breaks.	
Objective: More tree and hedge planting around the parish.	
Action N5: Carbon capture schemes, primarily hedge and tree planting and preservation, should be supported.	
Time scale: Ongoing	

Cycle Paths	Cycle Path Working Group
Of all the amenities we could share with neighbouring villages, cycle paths had the most support, with 185 people voting in favour. There are very few safe cycle routes around the village and many people would welcome the opportunity to cycle across country in safety to our neighbouring villages. However to achieve this is a significant undertaking and will not be done overnight. A new Working Group is needed who are willing to consider the feasibility, talk to landowners, explore sources of funding, seek the necessary permissions and get the job done. The Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan, which was published for consultation in early 2014, is relevant to the work of this group https://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/draft_CAMP/consultationHome	
Objectives: Cycle paths joining Little Milton with Great Milton, the Haseleys and, eventually, Wheatley	
Action N6 – A newly-formed Cycle Path Working Group should be established in order to set up cycle paths, initially between Little Milton, Great Milton and the Haseleys, and later, if feasible, with Wheatley	
Time scale: 5 years	

New Village Activities	Existing organisations; professionals; new groups; interested individuals
A number of new village activities were suggested in the Village Survey. Those with 20+ votes were: choir, book club, village picnic, charity jumble sale/Freecycle, bingo, village family sports day, outdoor concert and barn dance. Residents very much appreciate what is being done already to run village activities. All such events need organisers and supporters. Without sufficient support, a lot of hard work setting up a new event may be for naught. The Village Hall Management Committee has reviewed the list and has commented that some suggestions e.g. barn dance, have been tried in the past, with mixed success. Other ideas have been taken on board by the committee as possibilities for the future. Such events could be run either by an existing village organisation, or professionally e.g. fitness classes, etc. However there is nothing to stop new people or groups coming forward to run new activities and these are to be encouraged. Some events may only be viable if they attract people from outside the village to attend.	
Objectives: New village activities where there will be enough support.	

Action N7: New village activities should be encouraged where there is sufficient support.
Time scale: Ongoing

Volunteers	Volunteer Working Group
Many facilities and amenities only keep running through the hard work and dedication of groups of volunteers. There are 18 such organisations in the village. Up until now, each organisation has sought its own helpers. As part of the village survey, people were asked to put their names forward to assist an organisation, or organisations, of their choice. 10% of the village put their names forward. There are many obstacles which prevent people becoming volunteer helpers – work or family pressures being the main ones. Some commitments may be once a year e.g. helping with the fete; some may be much more frequent – helping in the shop for instance. Involvement needs to be encouraged, even if someone can only spare a short time each week. Volunteering is an ideal way to be part of the village, meet new people and contribute to the community. Ways and means need to be investigated to help and encourage more people to step forward. Advice is available from the Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action group (OCVA). Val Ireland from OCVA's Volunteer centre is available to talk with the Volunteer Working Group to assist them in the identified priority of finding more volunteers to help run village organisations. OCVA also have a range of information sheets on their site to help groups in attracting, managing and retaining volunteers. See also the helpful advice available at http://www.ocva.org.uk/need-volunteers Help is also available from david.bates@ocva.org.uk 01865 258912.	
Objective: More volunteers.	
Action N8 – More volunteers are needed to help run village organisations.	
Time scale: Ongoing	

Topics not currently being taken forward

A number of other ideas were considered and the views of the village sought. After due consideration, the conclusion was that some topics would not be taken forward.

Council Tax	Parish Council
One potential source of funding for new initiatives identified in the plan is the Parish Council. The Parish Council has a budget of about £20k per annum, of which just over half comes from the Parish Precept. The Precept forms part of the total Council Tax bill for each household. In the 2013 Village Survey, a narrow majority of households (53%) indicated that they did not wish to see Council Tax rise in order to fund new initiatives.	
Objective: Respond to the wishes of the village when considering how new initiatives in this Plan might be financed.	
Action: Z1 – The Parish Council should note that in 2013 a narrow majority (53%) did not wish Council Tax to rise in order to fund new initiatives in this Plan.	
Time scale: Ongoing	

Gas Supply	Nil
Many houses would like mains gas, but British Gas have advised that to bring a gas supply to the village would be expensive, and would therefore require a significant number of houses in the village willing to pay several thousand pounds each for such a supply, plus individual connection charges, costs of changing boilers, etc. The Village Survey showed that not enough households in the village were willing to finance the project.	
Objective: Unless costs can be reduced substantially at some point in the future, a mains gas supply to the village will not be pursued.	
Action Z2 – There are insufficient houses in the village willing to pay for a mains gas installation.	
Time scale:	Not applicable

Bypass	Parish Council
Views as to whether a bypass would be a solution for the village's traffic problems were finely divided (48% support the concept: 52% against). The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2030 makes no provision for bypasses anywhere in the county and no funding is currently available. Fund-raising for a bypass would be beyond the capacity of the village.	
Action Z3 – In the current financial climate, the concept of a bypass for the village will not be pursued.	
Time scale: Not applicable	

The Future

Many changes which we cannot currently predict will affect our village in the future. The population of the village has changed over time, and will change again. Over the time scale of this Plan, it is likely that the village will continue to have an above average number of people aged 45-59 and below average 20-44.

Next Steps

The Steering Group has done its work. It seems to have taken rather a long time (about 2 years), but when the work is being done by a group of volunteers, just getting a reasonable number of people together for a meeting has been a challenge.

Existing organisations in the village will take forward many aspects of the Plan and the Parish Council also has an important role to play.

However some of the new proposals in the Plan require new groups to be formed to take them forward.

The Plan should not sit and gather dust. It should be a living document. Progress by the various groups and organisations should be reported from time to time in the village newsletter and on the village website. The Parish Council will wish to review progress on a regular basis. Indeed, their role is important as the Council is the one organisation in the village which can maintain an overview. In addition, it is suggested that the Annual Parish Meeting be used as an opportunity to review progress against the Plan in a more formal way.

As time passes, it may become apparent that this first edition of the Village Plan needs updating. Things will change, both locally and nationally. This Plan may hold good for only 5 years; it may last 10. But at some point it will be appropriate to revisit the Plan, seek the view of the villagers once again, and update our aspirations for the future.

Additional Information

Steering Group Members

Jeremy Quested (Chairman)
Barry Coward (Secretary)
Paul Jeffery (Treasurer)
Kate Daunt
Neil Fisher
Paul Harrison
Bruce Shelton

Other organisations consulted

Little Milton Parish Council

Village Hall Management Committee

Shop Committee

The Villagers of Little Milton

South Oxfordshire District Council

Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

Methods of distribution of the Village Plan

A printed copy of the Plan have gone to every household in the village.

The Plan is also available on the village website at http://www.littlemilton.org.uk/

Supporting Organisations

The costs of researching and producing the Village Survey and the Village Plan were generously supported through an Active Communities Grant of £1500 made by Oxfordshire County Council.

The Steering Group wish to thank:

- Oxfordshire County Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

for their help and advice in the development of the Village Plan.

Illustrations

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Front inside cover map courtesy of South Oxfordshire District Council

ANNEX A

Summary of the Parish Council's Housing Guidance

NOTE: Full Housing Guidance document is attached below

LITTLE MILTON PARISH COUNCIL

LITTLE MILTON HOUSING GUIDANCE 2013 TO 2027

INTRODUCTION

The following summarises the Parish Council's Housing Guidance which forms part of the Little Milton Village Plan (published on the village website at www.littlemilton.org.uk). The following is, as the title suggests, for guidance only and cannot cover all eventualities. The Parish Council will continue to consider any planning applications on their individual merits.

Little Milton is a community of some 195 houses and 490 people. The village has a relatively large number of older houses, mostly dating from its origins as an agricultural community, and many of which are of substantial size and/or are located on large plots. Some are listed as of historic interest. A number of post-war developments have substantially increased the size of the village, as well as altering the mix of development types.

The core of the village is a Conservation Area. In addition, all land to the west of the main road through the village is Green Belt. Much of the land to the east of the village is a nature reserve owned by BBOWT.

The village community benefits from a church, primary school, pre-school, village hall, recreation ground, village shop/post office, and an estate agent. There are a small number of light industrial units on Warren Barn Farm, an art gallery and offices on Old Belcher's Farm, and in addition a number of residents have home offices or work from home.

The Parish Council desires that Little Milton continues to thrive as a successful community and that it maintains or increases the amenities from which villagers benefit. In considering planning applications, the Parish Council will need to give consideration to any impact on the character and appearance of the village, to the conservation area, to the green belt, to existing village amenities to any additional amenity value brought by the proposed development.

The Village Plan, which was produced through the Community Led Plan process, represents the aspirations of the community, and as such, can be a material consideration in the planning application process. However, it is not a statutory planning document and does not carry the same material weight as an adopted Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan. It will be taken into consideration by the planning authority (South Oxfordshire District Council) along with all other material considerations and relevant policies in arriving at any

decision, and this Guidance was formulated with the assistance and advice of the planning policy team at South Oxfordshire District Council..

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S CORE STRATEGY FOR LITTLE MILTON

In summary, **Policy CSR1** within the District Council's Core Strategy states:

1	No specific allocation of houses to Little Milton
2	Infill allowed – 5-6 houses on sites up to 0.2ha (approx 45m x 45m)
3	Affordable housing may be built on small rural exception sites, but only for those people with a local connection and if a need is identified

Listed Buildings and Conservation Area

The Parish Council will seek to preserve the Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area.

Green Belt

The Parish Council has noted that in the 2013 Village Survey 63% of villagers expressed a wish that there should be no development within the Green Belt. The Parish Council has also noted that the national planning rules for development in the Green Belt nevertheless allow limited infill development and exception sites for affordable housing within the Green Belt.

Allocation of Housing

The Parish Council supports the Core Strategy in that there should be no allocation of housing within the time frame of that Strategy. The Parish Council is not seeking any new development of market housing within or adjacent to the village.

Infill

Infill development is defined in the District Council's Core Strategy as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. Such sites are defined as not exceeding 0.2 Ha. Infill is allowed within the village on Green Belt land.

The Parish Council is not actively seeking any infill sites for development within the village.

The Parish Council will respond to any future planning applications for infill sites, but would anticipate that any such proposals must firstly meet the criteria within the definition of infill, should be for sites not exceeding 0.2 ha, and must meet the housing density criteria, defined in the Core Strategy as 25 dwellings per hectare.

Affordable Housing

The Parish Council will keep under review the need for affordable housing, and whether feasible solutions are available to meet any such identified need. This can be achieved in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council through a Housing Needs Survey.

Extensions

The Parish Council will continue to support the extension and alteration of existing properties where such proposals are proportionate, well-designed, and, where appropriate, compatible with either listed building status, the preservation of the conservation area or preserving the character of the Green Belt.

Solar Panels

The majority of solar panel installations on residential buildings do not require planning permission. However the Parish Council will not support applications for listed buildings or installations in the conservation area which are not proportionate or compatible with either listed building status,the preservation of the conservation area, or the Green Belt.

Infrastructure

The Parish Council is of the view that any proposal for new building in the village should also address the impact of the development on the sewerage and drainage systems, and would expect any application to demonstrate that it will be either have no impact or a positive impact on the existing infrastructure.

Flexibility

No guidance document can cover all eventualities and take into account every single factor, and individual planning proposals or applications will still need to be considered on their merits.

ANNEX B

Summary of Village Survey Results

- The overall response rate from households was 83.5%, which is a very good response rate
- The village population is estimated at 496. We have an above-average number aged 45-59 and below average 20-44. We have an average number of children
- Over half the village population have lived here 10 years of more
- Traffic was the major concern with strong support for the following:
  - Weight limit on A329 (70% support)
  - Enforcing existing speed limit (volunteer Speedwatch scheme) and introducing a 20mph limit through village
  - Enforcing existing weight limits (Haseley Road)
- Dog fouling is perceived as a problem around the village (65%)
- Most households supported solar panels on buildings, but not wind turbines
- Carbon capture schemes have strong support (89%)
- The village newsletter is read, at least in part, by 88% of villagers
- The shop and post office are important to villagers (85%) and only 5% of villagers do not use the shop and post office at all
- 49% of young people under 19 think there should be more activities for young people
- 78% of villagers think the church is important for various reasons
- About 15 children currently living in the village will be starting at the village school in the next 5 years
- 66% of villagers read the parish council notes in the newsletter
- 19% of villagers think the parish council should do more to collect litter in the village; 15% think the village green should be better maintained
- 67% of villagers think Trading Standards should do more to enforce HGV weight limits; 51% think Thames Water's service needs improving
- 53% do not want any more houses in the village; 40% would accept infill up to about 10 houses; 7% would accept more than 10 houses
- 63% do not want houses built on the Green Belt
- For 90% of villagers, car is the main means of transport out of the village; for 5% the bus service is vital
- If bus services were improved in the evenings and at weekends, a small number of people would use them
- 35% of broadband users do not know the speed of their connection; only 7% of households report a service faster than 4Mbs
- 70% think the broadband service is not good enough
- Over half the houses in the village use BT as their Internet Service Provider
- 57% of households are willing to wait for the national/county programme to deliver faster broadband (it has since been announced that Little Milton will be included in the upgrade programme over the next 2 years)
- 100 households (50% of village) would like mains gas; however, only 13 are prepared to pay the current costs to obtain such a service
- Mobile phone coverage in houses is patchy, with only 33% reporting an OK or good service

- No one mobile phone network stands out as giving better coverage in the village than any other
- 53% of households do not want Council Tax to rise to fund any improvements mentioned in the survey questionnaire
- Many people (110) are interested in volunteering to help run village organisations and activities, but feel they have too many family or work commitments
- 52 volunteers came forward as a result of the survey

LITTLE MILTON PARISH COUNCIL

LITTLE MILTON HOUSING GUIDANCE 2013 TO 2027

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Flexibility

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ANNEX

SUPPORTING PAPER

This Supporting Paper contains the background information and history which the Parish Council, now and in the future, needs to consider when dealing with planning matters within the parish. Where any views are expressed in the paper, they are the views of the Council as it stood in January 2014. Those views may not necessarily be binding on any future village administration.

Reference should also be made to the various plans mentioned in this paper.

INTRODUCTION

South Oxfordshire District Council is the local planning authority. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee and is given the opportunity to comment on all planning applications in the parish. In the past, the tendency has been just to respond to such planning applications when received, and to comment on their individual merits or otherwise. However, there is now greater encouragement for local communities to play a more pro-active role in developing plans for land usage well in advance of any planning applications being made.

To this end, a Neighbourhood Plan may be developed. This is a very structured process, requiring a lot of time and effort, formal external examination, and culminates in a local referendum to approve the plan or otherwise. It is a process which is being piloted across the country. A local example of such a pilot is Thame[1], where the Neighbourhood Plan was approved by referendum in 2013. What is clear already is that development of a Neighbourhood Plan is a major undertaking and is also an expensive process. The advantage of such a Plan is that, once approved, it has statutory authority.

Housing may also be addressed in a Community Led Plan[2]. This is a far less formal process. It is much cheaper to do, but lacks statutory authority. However many smaller villages that are not earmarked for significant development consider that a Community Led Plan is a more appropriate way to proceed. District Council planning officers will take note of any housing policy contained within a Community Led Plan, but are not bound by it.

An agreed guidance document would also have the advantage of recording the previous history of individual sites within the village.

KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

1. How does South Oxfordshire District Council's Core Strategy to 2027 affect Little Milton?
2. Is there a need for further house building in the village?
3. Are there any suitable and unused infill sites in the village?

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1 http://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/index.php?Itemid=148&catid=3&option=com_jdownloads&view=viewcategory

2 *www.clp-se.org.uk/*

4. What guidance should be adopted with regard to any building on the Green Belt?
5. Is there a need for more affordable housing for people with local connections?
6. What is the guidance on extensions to houses?
7. What is the guidance on the installation of solar panels on roofs?

AIM

The aim of this supporting paper is to assist in formulating housing guidance for Little Milton to 2027, based on South Oxford District Council's Core Strategy[3] and taking into account the wishes of the local community, as expressed through the Community Led Planning process.

This paper may ultimately form a stepping stone on the way to a formal Neighbourhood Plan, should such a process be deemed appropriate for smaller parishes in due course.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S CORE STRATEGY FOR LITTLE MILTON

1	No specific allocation of houses to Little Milton
2	Infill allowed – 5-6 houses on sites up to 0.2ha
3	Affordable housing may be built on small rural exception sites, but only for those people with a local connection and if a need is identified

South Oxfordshire District Council's Core Strategy to 2027, and in particular policy CSR1, identifies Little Milton as a 'Smaller Village'. In the overall plan for housing allocations within the district, the Strategy allocates no houses to Smaller Villages. Infill is allowed on sites up to 0.2ha (45m x 45m), equivalent to 5-6 houses.

Rural exceptions are allowed if a need is shown; rural exceptions are small sites primarily for affordable housing, within or adjacent to villages where market housing would not normally be permitted (eg. on Green Belt). SODC's detailed policy for rural exception sites has yet to be published, but national guidance indicates:

> Rural exception sites should only be used for affordable housing in perpetuity. A Rural Exception Site policy should seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection, whilst also ensuring that rural areas continue to develop as sustainable, mixed, inclusive communities. However the National Planning policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities should now consider allowing some market housing on rural exception sites to facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.

The minimum housing density within the Core Strategy is 25 dwelling per hectare. (Note: Chiltern View, built in easier times, is about 20-21 dwellings per hectare.)

3 http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/core-strategy/adopted-core-strategy

The village cannot choose to do less in terms of housing than the Core Strategy requires. The village can do more if the community so wishes.

BACKGROUND

Little Milton now consists of about 196 dwellings, some of which date back to the 16th century. Up to about 1960, the village comprised approximately 125 dwellings. Since then, houses have been added along the High Street and Haseley Road, and developments at Milton Manor Drive, Chiltern View and Warren View have increased the housing stock by about 60%.

Only 8 dwellings in the parish lie outside the core village - Ditch End (4), Orchard House (1), Views Farm Cottages (2), Warren Barn (1).

The historical core of the village is a Conservation Area[4] (see Plan A).

All land in the village lying west of Thame Road is Green Belt (Plan B).

Most of the land immediately to the east of the village is a nature reserve owned by BBOWT[5] (see Plan C). The village also lies in the South Oxfordshire Area of Great Landscape Value[6].

Of the current houses in the village, 36 (18%) are classed as social housing, administered by SOHA[7] (most of Old Field and 4 houses in Thame Road) or Sovereign Housing (Warren View) on behalf of the District Council. SODC currently (2014) require new development to provide 40% affordable housing on sites where there is a net gain of three or more dwellings.

The stock of social housing has increased as follows:

		Total
Up to mid 1990s		**23**
Mid 1990s	Add 6 at Warren View	**29**
2003	Demolish 6 in Old Field/Thame Road and erect 13	**36**

Conservation Area (Plan A)

As mentioned above and shown in Plan A, the core of Little Milton is now a Conservation Area. A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance[8] (Section 69 of The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act). Note that Conservation Areas were only starting to be established in 1967. Little Milton's Conservation Area was

4 Little Milton Conservation Area Designated 11 December 1984
5 Bucks, Berks & Oxon Wildlife Trust
6 South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment, adopted as SPG in July 2003, by Atlantic Consultants
7 South Oxfordshire Housing Association
8 http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/conservation-and-design/conservation-areas/what-are-they-a

not established until 1984, and Milton Manor Drive, for example, was approved for development in 1964[9]. Only one new house (Holly Cottage) has been built in the Conservation Area since it was established.

The main attributes that define the special character of a conservation area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the conservation area may differ. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials and styles may contribute to its special character.

National Policy

National Policy is now laid down in a relatively short document, the National Planning Policy Framework[10] (NPPF). The key policies which should be noted are:

1. The presumption should be in favour of sustainable development
2. The process should approve development proposals that accord with development plans (ie. District Council's Core Strategy)
3. Neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in the Core Strategy
4. Local planning development should reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate
5. If a village lies in the Green Belt, limited infilling within the village is still permitted, and limited affordable housing for local community needs may be built within the Green Belt

Sustainability

“Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.“[11]

An important factor in determining housing policy is the need to ensure communities are sustainable. There is some evidence that with the decline in agricultural labour after the Second World War, Little Milton might not have remained a thriving community without the building of new houses, and we might now view our forbears as far-sighted in this respect.

The village now enjoys excellent facilities – school, pre-school, village hall, shop, pub - but all of them depend on outsiders using them. They are not sustained by the village alone. That said, to make all those facilities self-supporting entirely from the village population would probably call for an increase in that population of three- or four-fold.

However the current village population generates sufficient people with the right skills to run all those facilities effectively, and make them attractive to outsiders. In addition, many

9 SODC Planning Decision P64/M0297
10 National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 Dept for Communities and Local Government
11 UK Government 2003 Sustainable Communities Plan

activities take place in the village and it is a busy community. Many would argue that the village is very sustainable in its current form.

The current Council Tax base is sufficient to generate adequate income for the Parish Council to maintain the amenities and services for which it is responsible.

Community Led Plan

In 2012 an information gathering exercise was carried out in support of the Little Milton Community Led Plan. Housing was hardly raised by villagers as an issue at this stage.

In 2013, as part of the Community Led Planning process, a questionnaire was circulated to all villagers seeking their views on a wide range of matters, including housing policy. Feedback from this Village Survey has been used as an input to the development of this policy paper.

The response rate for the survey was high at 83.5%. Three specific questions were asked in the Village Survey concerning housing:

1. Do you think more houses should be built in the village?
2. If there were to be new housing development in the village, what types of new housing do you think should be included (multi-choice)
3. The land to the west of the A329, which is the side of the Lamb pub and the village hall is Green Belt land. Do you want any houses built on this land?

The questionnaire used in the survey and the analysed results have been published on the village website at www.littlemilton.org.uk.

Green Belt

As stated earlier, all land to the west of the main road (A329) through the village lies in the Green Belt. This is a somewhat unusual situation in that half the parish lies in Green Belt, half does not, and the dividing line is the main road through the village.

The views of the community as regards building on Green Belt land in 2013 were as follows:

- No building on Green Belt 64%
- Infill only on Green Belt 22%
- Affordable housing only on Green Belt 6%
- Any type of housing on Green Belt 4%
- No view expressed 4%

Nevertheless national guidance states that if a village lies in the Green Belt, limited infilling within the village is still permitted, and limited affordable housing for local community needs may be built within the Green Belt. This is consistent with what has been allowed in the past. One house was built as Infill and on Green Belt land in the High Street about 20 years ago. 6 houses (Warren View) were built in the 1990s as affordable housing on Green Belt land within the curtilage of the village.

District Council planning officers have also advised that that building may take place on Green Belt land within the curtilage of the village.

Constraints on Building

As has been outlined above, there are significant constraints on new building in many parts of Little Milton:

1. Conservation Area
2. Green Belt
3. BBOWT land

NEW HOUSING

The Core Strategy does not make any allocation of new housing to the village. The overwhelming view of the community is that no large housing development is required. Voting in the Community Led Plan questionnaire was as follows (rounded figures):

- No more houses should be built 52%
- Infill up to about 10 properties should be allowed 40%
- There should be a new development up to about 50 houses 7%
- There should be a new development in excess of 50 houses 0.5%

There is clearly no wish within the community for the village to be enlarged, and the Core Strategy does not call for any enlargement of the village. District Council planning officers have advised that any proposal to enlarge the curtilage of the village would be against Policy CSR1 and is unlikely to be approved. In 2013 a planning application[12] for a single dwelling on land just outside the curtilage of the village was refused as it did not accord with Policy CSR1. (See more detailed discussion below.)

Whilst the Core Strategy does not call for an allocation of housing in the village, for the record, if there were to be any new housing development in the village, the views of the residents concerning the types of housing were as follows:

- Social/affordable housing for rent 23%
- Social/affordable housing only for people with local connections 41%
- Market housing 27%
- Retirement housing 20%
- None of the above 25%

Note: this was a multi-choice question, therefore % do not add up to 100.

If there were ever to be any further large development in the village, say another 50 houses, then such a development would have to contain a mix of affordable housing (40%). Any development where the net gain is three or more dwellings now has to include 40% affordable housing. Also, as part of the new allocations policy adopted by SODC in December 2013, 20% of all new builds will be allocated to people with a strong local connection to the parish. However this will only be on first lettings only.

12 P13/S1941/FUL

INFILL

Infill development is defined as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings[13].

District Council planning officers have confirmed that this is the correct interpretation of infill, and that sites larger than 0.2 hectares will not normally be permitted. Also any infill development must meet the housing density requirement of 25 dwellings per hectare, or about 5-6 on any one infill site. Also larger sites cannot be divided into smaller 0.2Ha plots in order to claim that they meet infill criteria.

The village has been subject to significant infill building within the curtilage of the village since the 1960s, much of it on a very much larger scale than envisaged in the current Core Strategy:

1. Approx 20 houses in Milton Manor Drive, built right in the heart of the village on land previously occupied by a farm yard
2. 6 houses along the Haseley Road
3. 5 houses along the High Street in various gaps
4. 6 affordable houses at Warren View
5. 43 houses in Chiltern View, linking the old part of the village with more modern houses to the north

Just 2 remaining sites have been identified in the past as possible infill opportunities within the village.

The old allotments on Thame Road between Hill View and Warren View.

This site is registered at the Land Registry as:

Title Number: ON208725
Land adjoining Hill View Cottage, Thame Road, Little Milton OX44 7PZ
Purchased in 2008

Conservation Area: No Green Belt: Yes

See Plan D.

Planning applications for housing on this site were first rejected in the 1960s. More importantly, an application in 2003[14] by the then owners was rejected on the grounds that:

- it could not be classed as an infill site, being too large a gap in existing housing
- it is in the Green Belt

13 South Oxon Core Strategy P93 CSR1
14 P03/N0060

- it is desirable to maintain a gap between the older houses of the Conservation Area and the more modern houses along Thame Road

The refusal stated, inter alia:

> The proposal is not a limited infill development but an in-depth scheme for eight substantial houses, some in a backland location. It is considered that this amount of development will be visually intrusive in the street scene, will destroy the unspoilt rural character of the site and detract from the character of this part of the village. Furthermore, the proposal does not provide for a mix of dwellings in terms of size and no affordable housing has been included.

See Appendix 1 for a full copy of the planning application refusal. Note that the refusal was upheld on appeal.

Nevertheless, in 2009 this site was proposed by the new landowner for inclusion in SODC's Site Allocations Development Plan[15]., although as of early 2014, this plan was in abeyance. The proposal was for 10 or more dwellings, with a mix of market and affordable housing. The proposal also suggested that safe access could be obtained off the main road, and noted that access to the site already exists along a track running behind existing houses.

An alternative would be to consider developing only part of the site as shown on Plan E. This is approximately 0.24ha and thus might just be considered small enough to be an infill site. However development of this site would still fill the gap between the Conservation Area and the more modern houses of Thame Road, which, as previously stated, has been deemed undesirable in the past. Most particularly, safe access to the houses on this limited site directly off Thame Road would not be possible. The corner at Hilltop House is busy and completely blind, and any vehicle access giving directly onto the main road within 60m of that corner would be hazardous.

There are two other potential access routes to the back of this site as shown on Plan D.

- Via the unsurfaced restricted byway off the High Street by Crofter's Close and then along behind the houses (A to B on the plan) on the 12ft(3.6m) [currently] unmade track
- Via the access on the north east side of Warren View (marked C on Plan D), which on the original plans for Warren View is marked as a field access with a minimum width of 4.9m (16ft)

Whilst both these access routes are suitable for pedestrian or occasional farm vehicle access, neither is considered suitable as the primary vehicular access routes to a small development of houses. If such access routes were, nevertheless, to be considered, it would also mean building the houses 'the wrong way round' ie. with their backs to the main road, which would have a detrimental visual impact when viewed from the main road.

15 Site reference 227 Savill's letter 200209 ID 2900

The land opposite the school between Frogmore and The Plough

This site is registered at the Land Registry as:

Title Number: ON73093
Land on the west side of Church Hill, Little Milton
Purchased in 2003

Conservation Area: Yes Green Belt: Yes

See Plans F, G & G1

A planning application was made in 1993[16] to build three houses on this site. The application was refused, and that refusal was supported on appeal.

This site is 0.407ha, which is too big to be considered an Infill site under the Core Strategy. The Inspector's report[17] was similarly of the view that this could not be considered as Infill site. The Inspector was also of the view that:

1. The proposed development should not be considered as within the curtilage of the village, despite the presence of Frogmore to the west of the site, and thus 'wash over' of the Green Belt should not be permitted. In other words, the application constituted a request to build on 'open' Green Belt
2. The development would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area
3. The impact on the adjacent listed buildings (Frogmore and Plough Inn) would be significant

Access to this site has always been problematic, and many objections to the 1993 proposal were raised on access grounds. Since then, in 2004 an application to improve the access purely for agricultural use was approved. This comprised cutting back the bank to improve sight lines on the main road and installing a gateway, both of which have been done. The result is that the sight lines have been improved, but the access gate is acknowledged to be in the wrong place.

A further application[18] was made for a single dwelling on this site in 2013. The Parish Council recommended refusal, and the application was refused by SODC. The reasons given for refusal were:

> Planning permission is refused because the site lies within the Oxford Green Belt on the edge of the built up limits of the village and does not fall within the definition of

16 P93/N0511
17 Planning Inspectorate T/APP/Q3115/A/94/435476/P5 dated 20 Jul 1994
18 P13/S3125/FUL

infill development. It would not be considered as an appropriate location for new residential development. The provision of a new dwelling on this site would extend the built up limits of the village and would have a greater impact on openness than the current use. Development of this nature would detract from the landscape setting of Little Milton and the openness of the Green Belt which would be inappropriate development as defined in the National Planning Policy framework. In addition the scale and size of the proposed dwelling is at odds with the character of the surrounding area which would detract from the setting of adjoining listed buildings, the landscape setting of the village and the character and appearance of the conservation area.[19]

See also Appendix 2 for further detail.

Infill – Other Sites

No other vacant sites in the village have been identified as possible Infill.

OTHER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The land opposite the school between Frogmore and The Plough

In 2012, and again in 2013, the current owners of this land, advised the Parish Council in open forum that they were considering making an application for the erection of a single dwelling on this land. The Parish Council noted their remarks, but did not comment on the merits or otherwise of this proposal.

As already mentioned, a formal application for a single dwelling (Plan G1) was made in 2013 and was refused.

Notwithstanding that this site cannot be considered as Infill, as discussed above, this plot of land is problematic in the context of the village as a whole. It is a rather scruffy piece of land which is too small to be used effectively for agricultural use. Therefore it tends just to lie fallow. It lies within both the Green Belt and Conservation Area. For several reasons, as outlined above, an application for three houses on the site was turned down in 1993 and for a single dwelling in 2013.

The Parish Council believes that a single dwelling on this site would not accord with CSR1 as it would:

- Increase the curtilage of the village
- Be building on Green Belt land outside the curtilage of the village
- Not meet housing density criteria

19 SODC P13/S3125/FUL Delegated Report Dec 2013

Land at Manor Farm, Haseley Road

This site is registered at the Land Registry as:

Title Number: ON252552
Land at Manor Farm, Haseley Road, Little Milton
Purchased in 2011

Conservation Area: No Green Belt: No

See Plans J & L

This site lies outside the curtilage of the village and therefore cannot be classed as an Infill site.

The Oxfordshire 100 year flood risk map[20] (Plan J) indicates that approximately half this site is at risk of flooding. It would seem to be unwise to build on land with such a risk factor attached to it.

In July 2013, a formal planning application[21] for a single 6-bedroom dwelling was submitted.

The Parish Council recommended refusal of the 2013 planning application on the following grounds:

1. The application does not comply with Policy CSR1 of the SODC Core strategy. The Council did not accept the statement in the planning application's Design and Access document that states “the policy does not define ’infill’” when clearly it does, and the Parish Council did not accept that the site was an infill site as defined by the Core Strategy.
2. In addition, the site does not lie within the curtilage of the village.
3. The location of the site was considered to be in the flood plain and that goes against the National Planning Policy Framework.
4. The Parish Council considered that the overall site size was in excess of the 0.2 hectares that the Core Strategy allows for infilling and therefore by defining the site for development was 0.2 hectares was not a correct interpretation of the Core Strategy. The site could accommodate further development on that principle in the future which would be unacceptable.
5. The proposed dwelling, although not in the conservation area, was surrounded buildings that were, and was not in keeping with it.

20 Oxfordshire Local View – Environmental Data – 100 year flood extent map
21 P13/S1941/FUL

6. The Parish Council understands that there should be a buffer between the Conservation Area and any new development.
7. Concerns were expressed about the access to the site which is at the narrowest point on the road.

The District Council refused the application. The reasons for refusal demonstrate clearly how the District Council interprets its Core Strategy regarding new development within the village[22]:

> The Development Plan identifies appropriate locations for new development. Planning permission for new houses will not be granted unless the development falls within strictly defined criteria. Within the settlement planning permission will only be granted for new housing on infill or redevelopment sites within the existing built up limits. Whilst the site is within the parish of Little Milton, it is on the edge of the built up limits of the village. In this case the site is not an infill or redevelopment site. The development would extend the village in the countryside. As such, the proposal is unacceptable in principle contrary to policy CSR1 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027, Policies C4 and G4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.
>
> The site adjoins the Little Milton Conservation Area. It is an open agricultural field and contributes to the rural character and appearance of the entrance to the village and provides for a setting to the conservation area. The development of the field with the erection of a two storey house and associated domestic paraphernalia will significantly alter the character of the area and detract from the setting of the Little Milton Conservation Area contrary to Policy CSEN3

Land between The Orchard Pre-School and Wheatley Road

Title Number: ON131812
Land on the western side of Thame Road, Little Milton
Bought in 2006

This land, of approximately 1.4 Ha (3.5 acres), is Green Belt. It lies outside the curtilage of the village. It currently lies fallow and has not been used for agricultural purposes in recent years.

This site has national grid power cables running across it. Whilst there are no statutory restrictions preventing building close to power lines, good development practice now advises a buffer zone[23] Applying buffer zones from the centreline of the power cables reduces the land available as follows (see also Plan K):

Buffer zone from centreline of power cables	Approx % of plot remaining

22 Decision Notice Planning Application P13/S1941/FUL
23 National Grid "A Sense of Place" - Design guidelines for development near high voltage power lines

30m	50%
40m	40%
50m	30%

In each case, the plot remaining is triangular and does not lend itself readily to development.

The site was proposed[24] in 2008 for the development of 40 houses. This proposal failed to acknowledge that this is Green Belt land, lies outside the curtilage of the village, and the housing layout that was suggested failed to recognise the presence of power lines across the site.

This land is also subject to rather complex legal constraints outside the scope of this paper.

RURAL EXCEPTIONS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

If further affordable housing were even to be considered in the village, four key questions would need Yes answers:

1. Is there a demonstrated need, ascertained through a formal Housing Needs Survey, for further affordable housing for people with a parish connection?
2. Are there any suitable sites where such housing could be built? (Note that a Housing Needs Survey allows residents to suggest sites which may not have been otherwise considered.)
3. Could any of the suitable sites be acquired at a price which would allow for the building of affordable housing
4. Would a grant be available for such a scheme or, if not, can the necessary cross-subsidy funding be raised by other means? (In 2014, no government grant funding was available for such schemes.)

The issue of affordable housing in the village is important as, notwithstanding all the previous discussions above, affordable housing can:

- Be built outside the curtilage of the village
- Be built on Green Belt land

However, for such affordable housing to be approved at all, a need for such housing for people who have a connection with the parish must be demonstrated through a formal needs survey.

As stated earlier, on the need for affordable housing, the villagers supported proposals as follows:

- Social/affordable housing for rent 23%
- Social/affordable housing only for people with local connections 41%

24 R Towers letter to SODC dated 10 Mar 2008.

The survey question which produced these answers was multiple choice, so the two figures should not be added together. In reality, only a minority in the village would support the building of more social housing.

To put this view into context, the village already has 36 houses administered as social housing. This represents 18% of the houses in the village. Data from the 2011 census[25] indicates that the average amount of social rented housing against total housing is as follows:

Area	**% Social Rented Housing**
England	17.69%
South East England	13.71%
Oxfordshire	14.23%
South Oxfordshire	11.39%
Little Milton	18.00%

This data does indicate that for a rural village in South Oxfordshire, the current percentage of social housing is above average, and this would be taken into account if there was a desire to build more affordable housing.

Such houses are allocated on the basis of applicants having the most points or the highest level of need on the housing register. The size of the housing register well exceeds the number of properties available in South Oxfordshire.

Of those 36 affordable houses in the village, 9 are already subject to so-called s106 agreements, giving priority in perpetuity to those with a village connection.

The criteria for a parish connection ensure that applicants with a strong local connection have first priority for the properties. Firstly an applicant must be on the housing register – therefore meet all the criteria for that register in the first place

Then they might be required to meet additional criteria. A Joint Allocations Policy was adopted on 16th December 2013 by SODC with a strong local connection criterion for rural exception site defined as follows:

- Where applicant(s) have lived in the parish for 5 out of the last 8 and are currently resident there
- Where the applicant(s) had previously lived in the parish for at least 5 years and their parents or children still live there and have done for at least 10 years.

Different criteria may be required by local authorities, or may be defined in the original planning consent, usually in the form of a s106 agreement.

Note:

1. Warren View was built as the then equivalent of a rural exception site, on the joint application of Little Milton Parish Council and The English Village Housing

25 ONS 2011 Census housing data

Association[26]. A s106 agreement applies in that local people have priority for allocations for all of the 6 houses[27]. However Sovereign Housing, who administer Warren View, have advised that problems arise when tenants agree Mutual Exchanges, as the incoming tenant who swaps their house does not have to meet the criteria as a local person. This then dilutes the purpose of the original development.

2. 3 SOHA houses on Thame Road are also subject to a s106 agreement, again giving priority to local people[28]

If there are no bidders for a property who meet the parish level criteria, applicants can then be considered who meet similar criteria, firstly from adjoining parishes, and then from the whole district. Thus houses built for villagers can, it seems, very easily become just houses for the locality or district.

As outlined above, the case for a further Rural Exception Site can only be made if supported by a Housing Needs Survey, and this has been confirmed by District Council planning officers. ORCC (Jill Brooks) can advise on this process, and there is an Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership already in place to help manage the steps required. Before even considering carrying out a Housing Needs Survey, the opinion of villagers needed to be sought through the Community Plan questionnaire stage. As stated above, a minority (41%) of the village saw a need for more affordable housing for local people.

The relationship between the various organisations involved in the process is shown below:

26 P94/N0068

27 Deed dated 9 Jan 1995 between The English Village Housing Association and SODC

28 Deed dated 16 May 2003 between SOHA and SODC

ORHP

Who Does What?

Parish Council
- Represents the views of the community
- Provides valuable local information about development
- Understands local feeling about development
- Encourages interested applicants to register with District Council

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) Rural Housing Enabler (RHE)
- The Parish Council point of contact with the ORHP
- Provides information to Parish Council and community about affordable housing
- Undertakes Parish Housing Need Survey

District Council
- Advises on the housing mix following housing need survey
- Monitors housing need across the whole district
- Maintains the Housing Register of interested applicants
- Works with the Homes and Communities Agency
- Makes the decision on planning permission

Homes and Communities Agency
- Negotiates a funding programme with Housing Associations
- Agrees priorities with the District Council

Housing Association (development)
- Negotiates site purchase with landowners
- Designs scheme
- Liaises with planning authority to gain planning consent
- Negotiates a funding package
- Appoints the contractor

Contractor
- Investigates site infrastructure (services)
- Builds the homes

Housing Association (Management)
- Explains to residents before moving in so that they understand tenancy rights and responsibilities
- Helps residents settle in to new homes
- Manages the properties including rent collection and any issues with the scheme

There are currently considerable difficulties generating the funds required for rural affordable housing[29]. Government grant funding has been reduced, making it difficult for any proposed scheme to demonstrate financial viability, particularly if land has to be acquired at market values. Some form of 'cross subsidy' is needed, which may be in the form of:

1. Making use of any land owned by the Parish Council. In Little Milton, only the recreation ground, car park and the small village green are owned by the Council
2. Allowing a mixture of affordable and market housing within any one development. Hence the NPPF allowing for some market housing to be considered on rural exception sites to act as subsidy and to help bring forward sites.
3. An increase in the parish precept to contribute to affordable housing

Parish Councils can also own and manage their own affordable housing or set up a Community Land Trust to do this. In the 2013 Village Survey, the majority of respondents did not wish to see any increase in the precept in order to fund future projects. The Parish Council does not have enough resources to take on such a project, and was of the view in early 2014 that an increase in the parish precept to support such a project would not be supported by the villagers.

The feedback from villagers indicated that, for any type of housing, no more than infill should be allowed, but if houses were to be built at all, a majority favoured affordable housing for those with local connections. As noted above, no further suitable infill sites exist in the village.

So, if a Housing Needs Survey were to be carried out, are there any sites upon which affordable housing could be built?

Only 3 possibilities have been identified:

1. The old allotments on Thame Road between Hill View and Warren View.
2. Land behind Warren View
3. Land between The Orchard Pre-School and Wheatley Road

Sites (1) and (2) are owned by the same people. It is considered unlikely that the owners would wish to sell the land for housing for anything less than the market price. Site (3) is subject to a complex ownership arrangement and any subsequent sale of the land, if achievable at all, would almost certainly seek a market price

All these sites have been discussed in great detail earlier in this paper. Notwithstanding that affordable housing can be built on rural exception sites in the Green Belt, each of these sites has other significant negative factors.

29 Society of Local Council Clerks Journal Article 2013 – Jo Lavis & James Shorten

The current status of the decision matrix is as follows:

Is there a demonstrated need for further affordable housing for people with a parish connection?	Not yet ascertained
Are there any suitable sites where such housing could be built?	No
Could any of the suitable sites be acquired at a price which would allow for the building of affordable housing	No
Would a grant be available for such a scheme or, if not, can the necessary cross-subsidy funding be raised by other means?	Not yet ascertained

The Parish Council was of the view in early 2014 that:

1. The village already has a higher than average number of affordable houses
2. The recent village survey did not demonstrate a high demand for further affordable housing
3. There are currently no sites within or adjacent to the village that are suitable for further affordable housing
4. The Parish Council does not own any land which might be used for affordable housing
5. The Parish Council does not have the resources to manage an affordable housing project or to set up a Community Land Trust
6. The village would not support an increase in the precept to assist in funding an affordable housing project

INFRASTRUCTURE

The various phases of building in the village, particularly at the north-eastern end, have put a strain on sewage and drainage systems. In the winter of 2012/13, the drainage system was shown to have insufficient capacity during heavy rainfall. Any new building would, in the view of the villagers, place an unacceptable burden on the system. The Parish Council is of the view that new building in the village should only be approved if a major upgrade of the sewage and drainage systems is scheduled before any building took place, or if the new houses are not to be connected to mains drainage. A similar constraint on new building should be placed on Great Haseley as well, as the sewage farm in Little Milton serves them as well.

However, ultimately it is for the infrastructure owner, namely Thames Water, to advise the District Council on the capacity of the drains and sewage systems.

Safe access onto the main road has always been an issue for several of the sites under consideration.

Should any further house building take place in the village, it should ideally be conditional

on s106 agreements between the local planning authority and the developers to ensure that the necessary supporting infrastructure development forms part of the development scheme, and is fully funded by the developer.

Similarly, future new housing development will be required to contribute via the Community Infrastructure Levy, which will be administered by the District Council.

EXTENSIONS

Many houses in the village have been extended over the years. Depending on the volume of an extension, planning permission may or may not be required. Those extensions for which planning permission is not required are known as permitted development The rules[30], nevertheless, are complex, but the basics for permitted development are:

Single story extension	**Two-storey extensions**
	In a conservation area, need planning permission, whatever the size
Must not exceed 50% of the curtilage of the property excluding the original dwelling house (as built or as it was 1 July 1948)	Must not exceed 50% of the curtilage of a property excluding the original dwelling house(as built or as it was 1 July 1948)
There are restrictions as to dimensions in certain directions relative to the original house, and also restrictions in height	There are restrictions as to dimensions in certain directions relative to the original house, and also restrictions in height
Similar materials to the original building to be used	Similar materials to the original building to be used

What constitutes Permitted Development will always depend on the circumstances of each property.

Even if a given extension would otherwise be permitted development, additional consents may still be required for a listed building.

Over the last 30 years in particular, the housing capacity of the village has been significantly enlarged by the extension of many of the existing houses, and the Parish Council has historically usually supported planning applications for well-designed extensions.

SOLAR PANELS

Installing solar panels on buildings is a relatively new development, and some houses in the village now have roof installations. Most solar panel installations on the roof of a house are classed as permitted development, and do not need planning permission. However planning permission is required to fit panels to a listed building, or to the front or side elevation walls of houses in conservation areas.

In the 2013 village survey, support for installing solar panels on buildings as a renewable

30 http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/miniguides/extensions/Extensions.pdf

energy sources was as follows:

On public buildings	54%
On residential buildings	49%

Such installations are not usually compatible with listed buildings or conservation areas . Thus any planning applications for solar panels on buildings, where such permission is needed, would need to be proportionate and compatible with either listed building status or the preservation of the conservation area and the Green Belt.

Final – 9 January 2014

APPENDIX 1

PLANNING DECISION P03/N0060
Land adjoining Hill View Cottage, Thame Road, Little Milton OX44 7PZ

That the proposal would be contrary to policy G4 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan, policy GB2 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan, policy GB2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 First Deposit Draft 2002 and Government advice in PPG 2 - Green Belts. The site lies within the Oxford Green Belt wherein there is a presumption against new development apart from that which is essentially required for the purposes of agriculture or forestry, facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, limited extensions to existing dwellings, limited infilling within villages which have an adequate range of services and facilities and limited affordable housing schemes. The site does not constitute an infill plot, that is a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage, and the proposal therefore is an inappropriate form of development that is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and would detract from its open rural character.

That the proposal would be contrary to policies G1, G2, EN1, EN4 and H1 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan, policies G1, G3, G8, H5 and C3 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan and policies G1, G2, G3, C1, C4, H5, H7 and H9 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 First Deposit Draft 2002. The proposal is not a limited infill development but an in-depth scheme for eight substantial houses some in a backland location. It is considered that this amount of development will be visually intrusive in the street scene, will destroy the unspoilt rural character of the site and detract from the character of this part of the village. Furthermore, the proposal does not provide for a mix of dwellings in terms of size and no affordable housing has been included.

That the proposal would be contrary to policies CON7, CON8 and CON15 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan, policies CON7, CON8 and CON11 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 First Deposit Draft 2002 and Government advice in PPG 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment. The site lies immediately adjacent to the boundary of the Little Milton Conservation Area and also Hill View Cottage and Hilltop House are Grade II Listed Buildings. It is considered that the proposal will result in the loss of an important gap that acts as a buffer between the older part of the village and the more modern housing to the north east. This open rural gap is essential to preserving the setting and character of Little Milton village and the Conservation Area generally. The proposal would also detract from the setting of the two listed buildings referred to above and neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

APPENDIX 2 – P13/S3125/FUL – SODC REASONS FOR REFUSAL

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main issues in this case are;

- Whether the principle of residential development is acceptable
- Green Belt issues
- H4 criteria issues
- Housing supply.

Principle

Little Milton is one of the smaller (Green Belt) villages in the district where infill development may be acceptable on appropriate sites (Policy CSR1 – using H4 criteria). The question of whether the principle of development is acceptable revolves around whether this is an infill site.

The site is on the edge of the village, in my view the property to the west (Frogmore) is not within the built up limits of Little Milton. The site is 0.36 hectares in size and is not closely surrounded by other buildings due to the spacious settings of The Plough and Frogmore. Development on this site would consolidate lose knit development on the edge of the village and is unacceptable in principle contrary to Policy CSR1 of SOCS and H4 of SOLP.

Green Belt

The NPPF attaches great importance to Green belts. The fundamental aim serves the following purposes:

- to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open – the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness.
- Green Belt check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

It is important to note that whilst the Green Belt contains areas of attractive landscape, the quality of the landscape is not relevant to the inclusion of land in the Green Belt or its continued protection. It is the openness of land that is important. To protect openness there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

New buildings in the Green Belt are not appropriate unless for the following purposes:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in

disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

In this case, the site is not an infill site, is not previously developed and any new building on the site would have a greater impact on openness than the current use. Development here would extend the built up limits of Little Milton and remove openness. In the circumstances the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt contrary to CSEN3 of SOCS and GB4 and H4 of SOLP.

H4 Criteria issues (Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt)

Whilst H4 is not strictly speaking relevant because the site is not infill in my view I have considered the proposal against the H4 criteria for completeness.

i. That an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost;

The site is a prominent open corner plot on the edge of the village It forms an open space between the listed buildings at Plough House and Frogmore as often happens in low-density rural villages and the openness contributes to the character of the conservation area and the landscape setting of the village. Development on the site would harm the landscape setting of the village and the conservation area contrary to Policy CSEN3 of SOCS and C4 and H4 of SOLP.

ii. Design, height and bulk in keeping with the surroundings;

The character of the older dwellings in Little Milton is generally of modest two storey dwellings and attics. The design and proportions of the proposed detached dwelling are substantial and high status and would be out of keeping with the design, detailing and scale of surrounding properties. The proposed dwelling is not locally distinctive and would detract from the character of the area

iii. That the character of the area is not adversely affected

;

The site lies within the Little Milton Conservation area and is an important open space between the listed buildings at Plough House and Frogmore as often happens in low-density rural villages and the openness contributes to the character of the conservation area. Development on the site would harm the character of the conservation area, the landscape setting of the village and the setting of the adjacent listed buildings.