

# Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan 2016 to 2031

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NOTE: the District Council has offered to help improve the clarity of maps in the final version, and this support is welcomed.

The Policy numbering will be reordered sequentially for the referendum version, following examination, but has been left as per the pre-submission draft to minimise confusion for the examination.



*Submission draft – March 2016*

*Produced by Piddle Valley Parish Council with the help of local residents*

## How this Plan came about

Back in 2012, the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Piddle Valley was discussed at the Parish Council meetings. A small working group was formed.

Having done some research and looked at other examples, the group wanted to be sure that there was enough support for a Neighbourhood Plan, as it was clear that producing a plan would take a lot of community time and effort. So the group put articles in the Piddle Valley News and Views to try to explain what a Neighbourhood Plan was, and what it could achieve, and organised presentations at the school in October that year. They gave local residents the chance to vote whether or not they wanted a Neighbourhood Plan. They explained that -

*If nothing is done, then future planning decisions that affect the Valley will be taken by the District Council as they see fit. If the Valley has its own Neighbourhood Plan, which sets out our wishes for things we both do and do not wish to see occur, then the District Council have to take those views into account in reaching their decision.*

*The Plan will take a lot of time and work to prepare, including further consultations, and must eventually be approved by a referendum of the Valley residents. It is important therefore for the Parish Council to know that there is support in principle for the work involved.*

Of the 113 voting slips returned (representing about 11% of the electorate), the majority were in favour (81 for, 31 against). There were also 37 offers of help. Based on this result, the Parish Council decided to go ahead with preparing a plan. Five focus groups were formed to look specifically at Transport, Landscape & Environment, Housing, Energy and Business. These were open to anyone with an interest in the Piddle Valley. Representatives from all the different parts of the Valley, and the lead person for each focus group, formed the main working group. Different people have come onto the working groups as more people learnt about the ideas, and some have left when they found they couldn't commit the time.

This Plan is the culmination of all the work and consultation that has taken place. It could not have been drafted without the help and support of the all the people on the working and focus groups, the volunteers that have helped distribute leaflets to all households, and the residents that attended the various meetings and events and gave their views on what they wanted or didn't want to see in the Plan.

We would like to take this opportunity to say **thank you** to everyone who has been involved, particularly members of the working and focus groups.



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## Introduction

### What a Neighbourhood Plan does

A Neighbourhood Plan is part of the development plan for the area and sits alongside the Local Plan. Together they describe what types of building work or other development will generally be allowed and under what circumstances. They also say what uses or places should be protected and why. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out over-arching requirements that both plans and development proposals need to follow.

Because there is national policy and guidance, and a Local Plan for the area, this Neighbourhood Plan doesn't need to cover those subject areas where it would have said the same thing these other documents say. So this is why the Neighbourhood Plan is much shorter, and focused on specific sites or issues for the Valley. The Neighbourhood Plan isn't legally allowed to cover county minerals or waste matters or national infrastructure projects.

The Neighbourhood Plan doesn't give planning permission. Any development that takes place will still need to go through the normal procedure of the developer putting in a planning application to West Dorset District Council, which local people and the Parish Council can comment on. But when the decision is taken, it will normally follow the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan, unless there are exceptional reasons to go against these policies. Where the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan say slightly different things, the Neighbourhood Plan will be used if it is more up to date.

Having a Neighbourhood Plan doesn't change the requirement to get Listed Building or other consents where these might apply. Also, it does not change permitted development rights, such as the right to build a small-scale extension on a house (though such rights are subject to meeting certain criteria).

### *Community projects*

This Plan mentions a number of possible **community projects**. These are ideas that have arisen from the issues and thoughts put forward by local people. If taken forward they could make a real difference. Some, such as forming a Community Land Trust, could help bring forward the proposals in this Plan. It is up to the community to take these projects forward, as the Neighbourhood Plan working group will no longer function once this Plan is adopted by West Dorset District Council.

### *What is meant by "development"*

Development is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as **"the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land"**

So development includes:

- erecting new buildings and structures
- making extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures, including the subdivision of a house into two homes
- demolishing a building
- engineering works such as building a new access road, or excavating out the ground
- changing the use of land or buildings

The following changes are specifically excluded by the Act, and therefore do not require planning consent (although they may require other forms of consent)

- changing the interior layout or appearance of a building
- the use of any buildings or land within the grounds of a house for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of that house
- the use of any land for the purposes of agriculture or forestry

## What this Plan does...

The Neighbourhood Plan doesn't cover every issue that could crop up as a planning consideration, but what it does do, is vary the approach taken in the Local Plan in some key areas that will make the planning system work better for the Piddle Valley. So we thought it would be useful to summarise, very briefly, what some of these key changes are, where we really expect our Neighbourhood Plan to make a difference...

### SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

The plan takes a completely different approach to the Local Plan, increasing the potential for growth but only in ways that are likely to be acceptable to the local community. The settlement boundaries do not work like the Local Plan's defined development boundaries. They show the broad areas where small-scale, infill development could happen, although subject to some very clear criteria. However larger development must be to deliver affordable housing as a rural exception site or potentially for a community or employment use. The plan identifies three such larger plots, and includes more specific guidance on these.

*See Policies 11-17 for more information*

### FLOODING

In response to the very clear community concerns about the existing problems with flooding and sewerage in the Valley, we have included a more rigorous approach in an attempt to stop further problems occurring, but also to make sure we take opportunities to make things better.

*See Policy 8 for more information*

### TRANSPORT

Local problems caused by speeding motorists and also on-street parking is another particular concern of local residents. So the Neighbourhood Plan tries to make sure that the problems are not made worse, and where possible, we take opportunities to make things better.

*See Policies 9 - 10 for more information*

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VALLEY

The Local Plan has general guidance on protecting local character – but as it is a broad policy it cannot list every feature that is important, and not all of these features are designated or mapped. So our Neighbourhood Plan picks out some of these key features, and maps them where possible – including local green spaces, important gaps between settlements and important views. It also describes the general character of each settlement, the importance of historic environment and features that support local wildlife, including the river corridor, and the importance of dark skies

*See Policies 1-6 and 21 - 22 for more information*

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The potential to protect community buildings or community spaces used and valued by local people was a key strand of the Localism Act. Our Plan identifies those places, so it is clear which assets should be protected. It also identifies a potential site for a new, larger community hall with sports facilities in Piddletrenthide.

*See Policies 7 and 16 for more information*

### EMPLOYMENT AND FARMING

Farming and the industries located at Enterprise and Bourne Park provide much of the Valley's employment, so the Plan tries to support these areas in a way which respects the concerns of local residents. It also considers the appropriate re-use of redundant agricultural buildings – including their conversion to new homes.

*See Policies 18 - 20 for more information*

### What area the Plan covers

This Plan and its policies relate to the Piddle Valley neighbourhood area, which covers the three parishes of Piddlehinton, Piddletrenthide and Alton Pancras.

### How the Plan is structured

This introduction tells the reader why and how the Plan was drafted, how long it will last and goes on to describe the Neighbourhood Plan area.

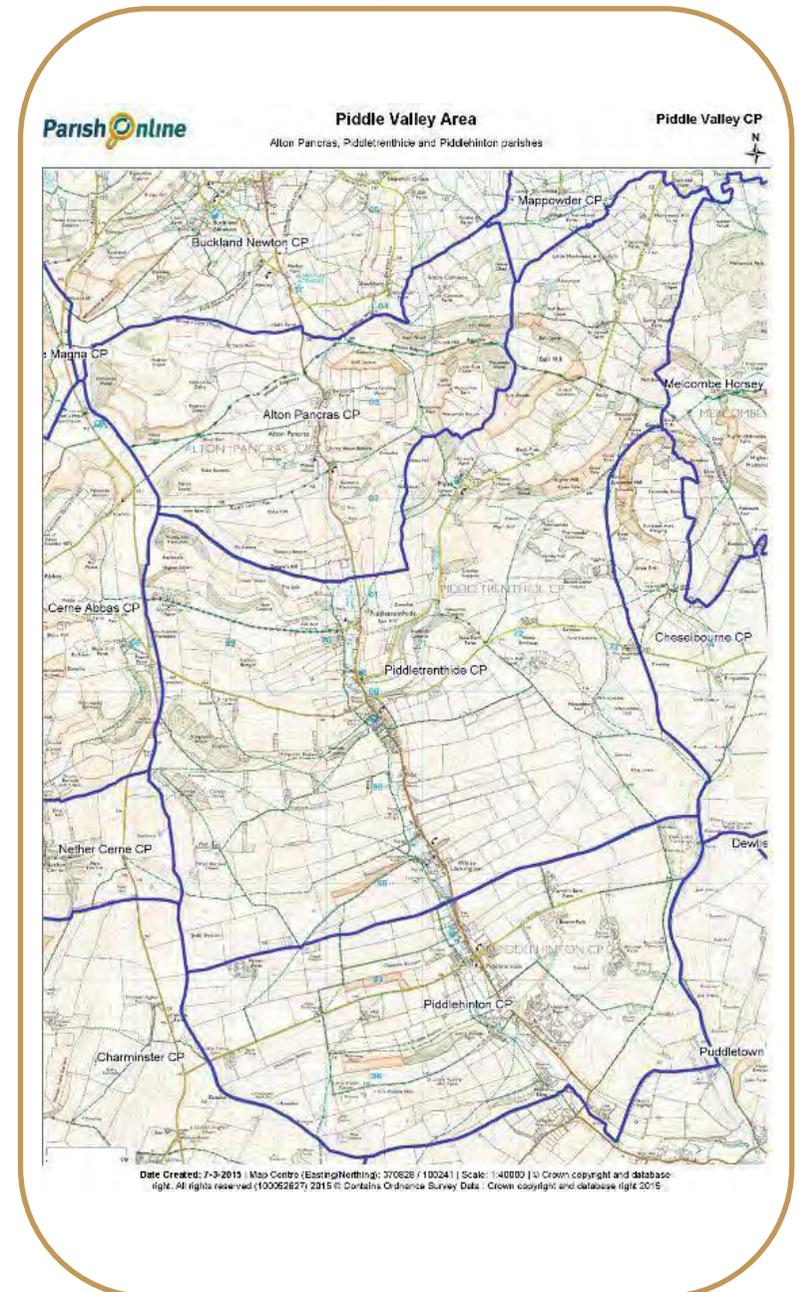
The next section sets out the main aims for the Plan. The following sections then set out the planning policies under these headings:

- Spaces and places protected from development
- Known issues that may prevent development
- Locations for new development
- Type and design of new development

Maps and photographs are included alongside the text, but there are also specific maps showing the Neighbourhood Plan proposals for each settlement in Appendix A.

### How long the Plan will remain in place

The Plan will last for 15 years from adoption. However, if it becomes clear to the Parish Council that changes need to be made, or additional policies added to the Plan, the Parish Council will consider reviewing the Plan earlier than 2031. Any review will follow a similar process to the one for producing this Plan.



## About the Piddle Valley area

This section describes the Valley and what makes it different from other places. This is because the Plan will be used not only by local people, but also by developers who are submitting planning applications and by members of West Dorset District Council when considering planning applications.

### Location

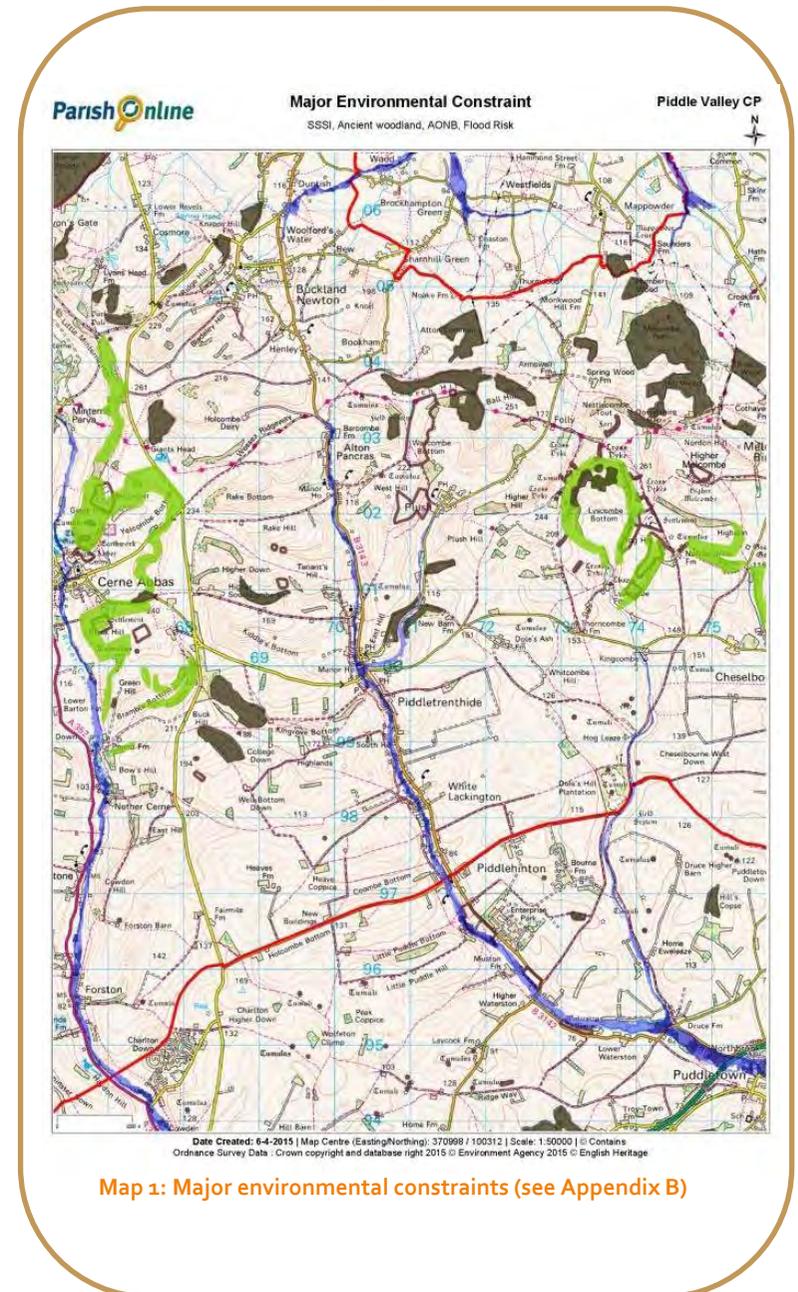
The Piddle Valley is a rural area in the heart of Dorset. It lies some 6 miles north of Dorchester and approximately 9 miles south of Sherborne. The main road through the Valley, the B3143, runs alongside the River Piddle through the settlements of Alton Pancras, southwards through Piddletrenthide, White Lackington and Piddlehinton. The small settlement of Plush lies to the northeast, on a tributary of the River Piddle.

### Environment

The area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan totals 4,450 hectares (11,000 acres). It is very rural in nature. Over 90% is farmland, 3.3% is woodland and the rest is built-up areas including the settlements and roads.

The landscape is dominated by open, chalk downland, with a linear settlement pattern along the valley floor. Most of the area is within the nationally important Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) apart from a small section in the southern part of the Valley. There are magnificent views from the escarpment to the north east of Alton Pancras and Piddletrenthide which encompass the Blackmore Vale as far as the Mendips. From the chalk hilltops there are sweeping views across the chalk downs and into the valley itself, and south across the Purbecks. Views from the villages to the surrounding chalk downland are limited. The river valley has a different, more intimate and enclosed character, with old water meadows along the floodplain, small scale pastoral fields lined by dense and tree-rich hedgerows and characteristic settlements of stone, brick and flint.

There are no nationally important wildlife sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) within the valley. There are some just outside. To the west in Cerne Abbas parish are the Giant Hill and Blackdown Hill SSSIs, which form part of the Cerne and Sydling Downs European Special Area of Conservation – an area of calcareous (chalk) grassland which is home to the marsh fritillary butterfly. To the east in Cheselbourne and Melcombe Horsey parishes is the Lyscombe and Highdon SSSI, which is another area of chalk downland mixed with some scrub and ancient woodland. Within the Valley there are 17 sites of local nature conservation interest (SNCIs),



mainly within or adjacent to woodland. Most of these sites are in fair to good condition but several have deteriorated due to lack of grazing livestock.

There are just over 80 Listed buildings or structures within the Valley, mainly in the settlements, with two Grade I churches (Church of All Saints in Church Lane, Piddletrenthide and Church of St Mary in Rectory Road, Piddlehinton), and three Grade II\* Listings (The Manor House in Piddletrenthide, The Manor House in Alton Pancras and the Parish Church of St Pancras in Alton Pancras). The remainder are all Grade II.

There are 24 scheduled monuments, mainly historic field systems, earthworks and enclosures, barrows and tumuli. These are found primarily on the valley sides and higher ground. There is a medieval settlement (of Little Piddle) across the B3143 from Enterprise Park, and one just outside the area slightly further south.

### Population

The 2011 Census shows there were 1,225 people living in the area. Compared to the South West average there is a notable lack of younger adults (with only 12% of the population aged between 15 to 29 years of age compared to 18% in the South West) and comparatively more people in late working age between 45 to 64 years old (36% compared to 27%). The other age ranges are broadly similar to the average seen across the South West.

The population is in generally good health, better than the national average (there are fewer people with long-term health problems or disabilities that limit their day-to-day activities).

People in the Valley relate very much to the settlement they live in first and foremost, rather than seeing themselves as part of single community that includes all the settlements in the Valley.

### Housing and Businesses

Over the past 50 years the number of homes built in the Valley averaged between four and five a year, with particular boom periods in the immediate post war years and in the 1980s. The amount of new housing has been much lower in the last 15 years with only 23 new homes built in that time.

The average house price in the Valley for the last 5 years was £363,000 (based on 92 recorded sales), with properties in Plush and Piddletrenthide being more expensive than Piddlehinton or Alton Pancras. This compares to average house prices in Dorset and (more locally) Dorchester of around £260,000.

over **90% farmland, 3.3% woodland**

**17** sites of local **nature conservation** interest

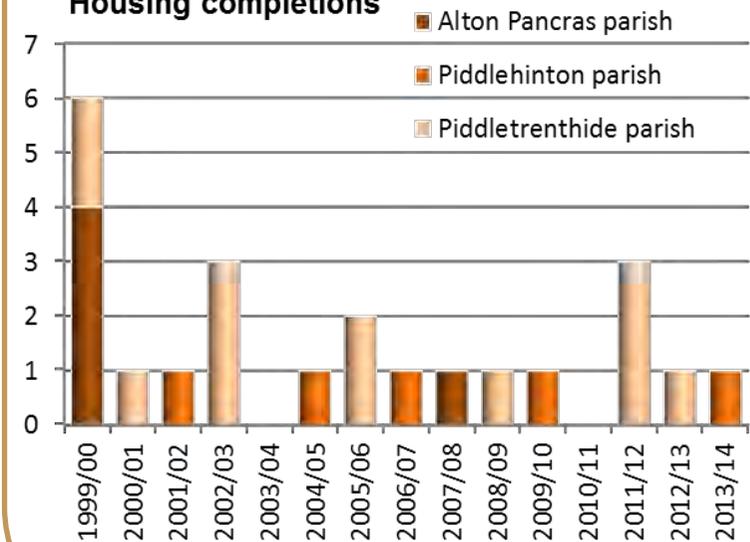
over **80 Listed buildings** or structures

**24** scheduled monuments

over **1,200 people** in the Valley

more people are aged **45 to 64 years** than between 15 to 29 years of age

**Housing completions**



The 2011 Census shows 8.0% of homes had no permanent occupants (they were vacant or second homes). This varies between the three parishes, being notably higher in Piddletrenthide (10.2%, which includes Plush which has approx. 40%) and lower in Alton Pancras (1.4%). Just over 5% of households present at the time of the Census had another home elsewhere in the UK.

House sizes are also larger than average, with comparatively more four and five bedroom homes, and fewer one and two bedroom properties. The parish plan results suggest that a mix of small single (1 bedroom) properties, small family and larger family homes are needed.

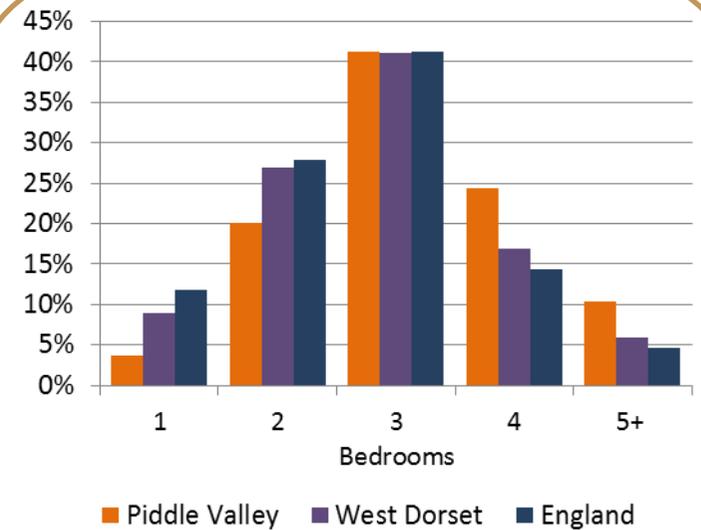
Arguably housing supply has not kept up with demand in recent years, particularly for smaller and more affordable housing. The area is generally noted as having a high comparative degree of need compared to other rural parishes in West Dorset. In June 2015 there were 23 households on the District Council’s housing register with a local connection to the Valley requiring housing. This figure is likely to be a significant under-estimate of need, as about half of all households that were previously on the housing register did not re-register under the new system in early 2015, but may well do so when they realise they have been omitted.

Over the past 20 years there has been an overall decline in the number of shops and small businesses operating in the Valley. In contrast, the tourism and leisure industry has grown, reflected in the increasing number of bed and breakfast and second homes in the Valley. Enterprise Park provides the largest cluster of employment with some 41 employment units (when surveyed in late 2012) and businesses employing over 200 people.

The 2011 Census shows about 12% of workers work at or mainly from home (much higher than the national average and slightly higher than the district average). Of those in work, most people work in wholesale and retail trade, including motor repairs, education and social work. This is not dissimilar to the national picture. Public administration is also a main source of employment (Dorchester is a major centre for this type of work), and also agriculture and forestry (accounting for 10% of those in employment).

**Broadband**

Work has recently been completed to provide superfast broadband to properties in Piddlehinton and Piddletrenthide, however there are several phases of work still planned for the area. These include providing service to the cabinet near Church Lane later this year, 2015, which should provide superfast to properties here and in Egypt. Alton Pancras is also connected to this cabinet, however as it is geographically a long way away, even when work is



houses prices nearly **40% higher** than Dorchester

**fewer shops**

more **holiday accommodation**

**1 in 8** people work from home

**public sector** and

**agriculture jobs**

higher than typical

**superfast broadband** is here...

complete, properties in Alton Pancras are unlikely to be able to receive fibre broadband service.

A contract has also been signed which should bring superfast to Plush and the Enterprise Park during 2017-2018, however detailed timescales for this work are not yet available.

**Traffic**

The main north-south transport route along the Valley (the B3143) is used for school runs, farm vehicles, shopping trips and business deliveries. Some traffic uses Piddlehinton as a short cut to and from the A35 to access Charlton Down and beyond, producing a significant amount of through traffic. The lack of pavements, poor visibility at many of the access points, the winding and limited width of the roads (sometimes constrained further by on-street parking) and the relatively high number of vehicles that have been caught speeding, all give rise to understandable local concerns about road safety, even though at the time of writing this is not reflected in recorded accidents.

Although there are community facilities and work opportunities within walking distance of some people in the Valley, most households use personal transport to work and travel outside the Valley. A school bus system is effective in getting children to schools, but public transport is not always convenient and is infrequent.

**Flooding**

Due to its geology and topography parts of the Piddle Valley are prone to flooding on occasions. The flooding is a result of run-off from the upper slopes and high groundwater levels during prolonged wet periods. Although a flood alleviation scheme was constructed in 2004 that now protects over 50 homes from flooding in Piddletrenthide, there are still properties at risk. The flooding problems are also currently exacerbated by sewage contamination when groundwater levels are high enough to seep into the sewer through cracks and openings in the sewer pipe walls and manhole covers. However, sealing works are being carried out by Wessex Water to mitigate this ground water ingress.



# What this Plan intends to achieve

## Aims

### Green spaces

To protect the gaps between the different settlements which help keep their separate identities

To look after the wider, open countryside, particularly the higher rolling landscapes which are largely undeveloped and offer important long distance views

New aim on heritage  
To protect the heritage of the area, which is so important to the character of the Valley

### Housing

To provide in perpetuity more low cost housing for local people within the valley. This will help local people stay or return to the valley who couldn't otherwise afford to buy or rent

To protect the important green open spaces and woodland within and around the settlements, and to protect important views and links to the wider countryside

### Rural character

To allow some open market housing, to provide opportunities for local people to down size, and to help bring in new people to the Valley to ensure a thriving community into the future

To protect dark skies and prohibit light pollution from new developments

To provide more opportunities for people to work locally, including working from home or new live-work units

To protect and enhance the animal and plant biodiversity within the Valley, including the Piddle River and its characteristic chalk river habitats

To keep, and if possible extend, the range of community venues that bring people together. These include the halls, churches, school, shops, pubs and sports and recreational facilities.

To avoid adding to the current groundwater problems and help provide solutions where possible for reducing surface water run-off from the surrounding slopes resulting in damage to properties

To support changes to farms that would reduce the amount of large farm vehicles and tractors driving along the roads through the valley

To ensure that, where building takes place, sewerage provisions are fit for purpose and that no buildings are constructed that would exacerbate existing problems until a solution exists

### Business and community

To support leading edge communication with underground connectivity

To avoid adding to the current traffic and parking problems and reduce the problems where possible

### Flooding problems

### Modern technology

To help make buildings environmentally sustainable and where possible use recycled materials

To ensure new buildings are located and designed to complement or add to the local character of the valley and the immediate surroundings

### Traffic problems

### Good design

## Vision

The Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect the characters of its settlements, the beauty, history and wildlife of the valley, and the quality of life for its residents while prioritising development of local housing for local people

## Spaces and places protected from development

There are various features in the Piddle Valley that are special to local people. There are local green spaces and views that have real meaning or significance to most people which in the Local Plan may not have a specific 'designation'. This Neighbourhood Plan identifies these spaces for protection, and recognises the importance of maintaining the open, undeveloped expanses of the chalk uplands and the gaps between the settlements. Some development that has taken place in these locations has detracted from the landscape. Other features, such as local wildlife areas and historic buildings, are generally well protected through the Local Plan policies, but this Plan highlights specific considerations relevant to this area.

Some community buildings or spaces are really important to the social cohesion of the settlements. The Piddle Valley works well as a community – people are rarely strangers as they meet in places like the school, the community halls, the village greens and recreation grounds or simply greeting each other on their way to and from their daily business. There are many activities going on where friends can be made. At least 30 clubs or groups run every year using the recreation grounds, pubs and village halls. Although some activities aren't necessarily tied to a particular building or space (for example, post office services can run from shops or pubs, play equipment can be moved from one site to another), they do need a suitable venue to survive. If there isn't a suitable venue in the local area where such activities can take place, then people will have to go much further afield or go without. This Plan lists those community facilities and current venues so that the impact of any change is fully considered when the long-term availability of such venues is threatened.

### Local green spaces and views

Within the Valley the variety of open spaces, both public and private, greatly enhance each settlement and contribute to their character. Some of these can be designated as local green spaces through the Neighbourhood Plan process. This designation gives a high degree of protection similar to green belts. It should only be used for spaces that are demonstrably special to the local community and hold a particular local significance. Each green space must be local in character and not extensive, and in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves. Their designation should last beyond the plan period but should not unduly limit future options for the settlement to grow. Thirteen such local green spaces (shown hatched green on Maps 2 - 5) have been identified in the Valley.

Settlement	Location	Space	View
<b>Alton Pancras</b>	Land east of The Old Rectory	✓	
	Area below the Millennium Seat	✓	✓
	Area south of Boldacre		✓
<b>Piddle- hinton</b>	Area around the church	✓	
	Land south of Mulletts		✓
	Millennium Green and fields	✓	✓
	Land around the war memorial	✓	
	Land around St Mary's Church	✓	
<b>Piddle- trenthide</b>	Land south of St Mary's Church		✓
	Land around All Saints Church	✓	
	Green area off Church Lane	✓	
	Land south of Southcombe Farm		✓
	Land opposite the Manor House	✓	✓
<b>Plush</b>	Piddle Valley Playing Field	✓	
	Land around former Church of St John the Baptist	✓	
	'Jock's Paddock' opposite the Brace of Pheasants	✓	
	Land opposite Lower Farm		✓
	Cricket grounds	✓	
<b>White Lackington</b>	Land around Jersey Farm House		✓
	Land opposite Banks Cottages		✓

See Appendix C for a more detailed description of the

**Policy 1. Local green spaces**

Local green spaces, as shown on the Proposals Maps, are to be protected from development that would detract from their green or open character or their purpose.

The uninterrupted panoramic views are a special quality noted about the Dorset AONB, and are therefore an important consideration. Views from within the built-up areas are also particularly noteworthy. These views, close to or within the more built up areas, are marked by the bright green dashes on the Maps 2 – 6 (with the open side indicating the view's direction). It is important that the scale and siting of new development in these areas does not spoil these views, which are generally extensive and undeveloped in character. Views of the river, which is so important to the form and character of the Valley, are limited and could be improved.

**Policy 2. Significant views from settlements**

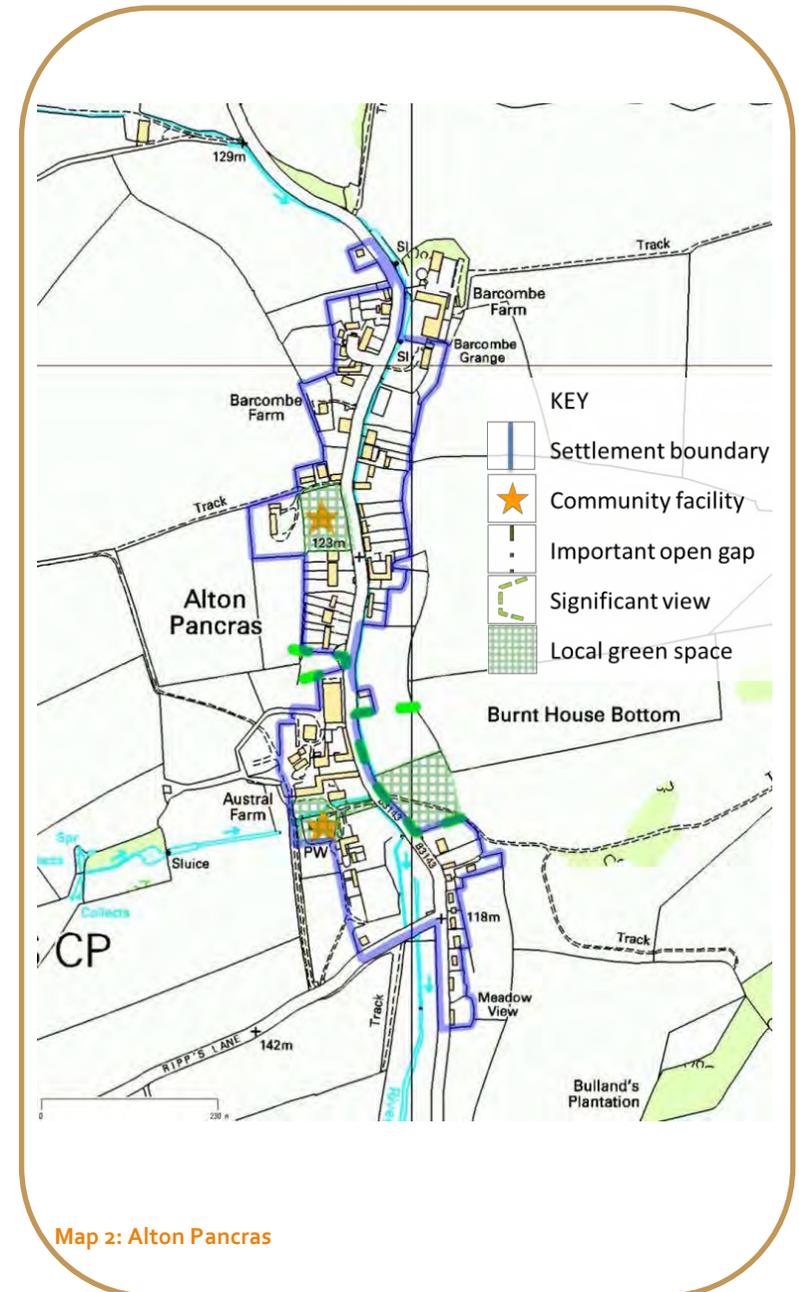
Development that would detract in any way from the character or enjoyment of significant views, as indicated on the Proposals Maps, will not be permitted.

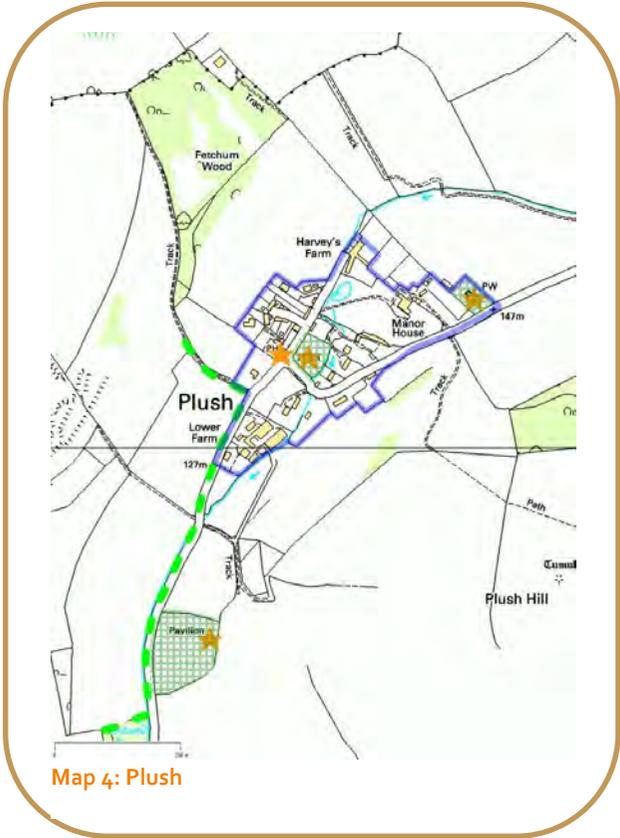
Opportunities should be taken to improve or create new views of the river Piddle (and its tributaries) from public rights of way, where this would not detract from local landscape character.

The chalk downlands are distinctive because of their open and undeveloped nature. Development on these downlands and the slopes leading up to them can be very intrusive. For this reason, development on the valley slopes and higher ground should be avoided as it significantly detracts from the landscape character of the area.

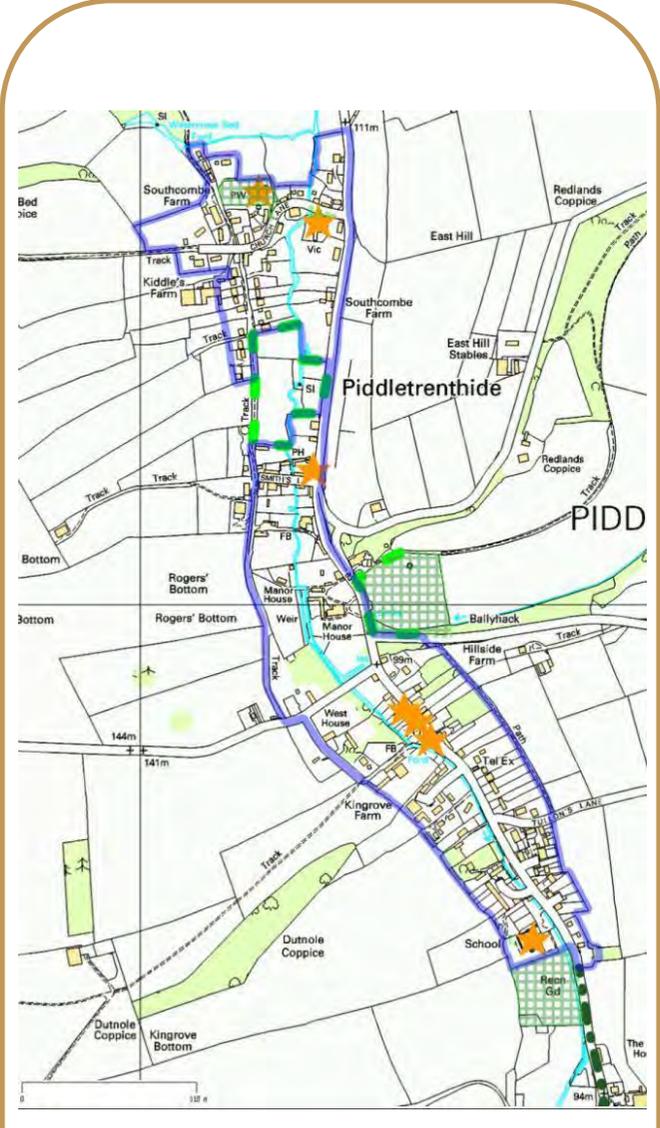
**Policy 3. The open and undeveloped chalk downlands**

Development on the valley slopes above the existing pattern of development, or on the open downlands, will not be permitted if it would be visibly prominent or incongruous.

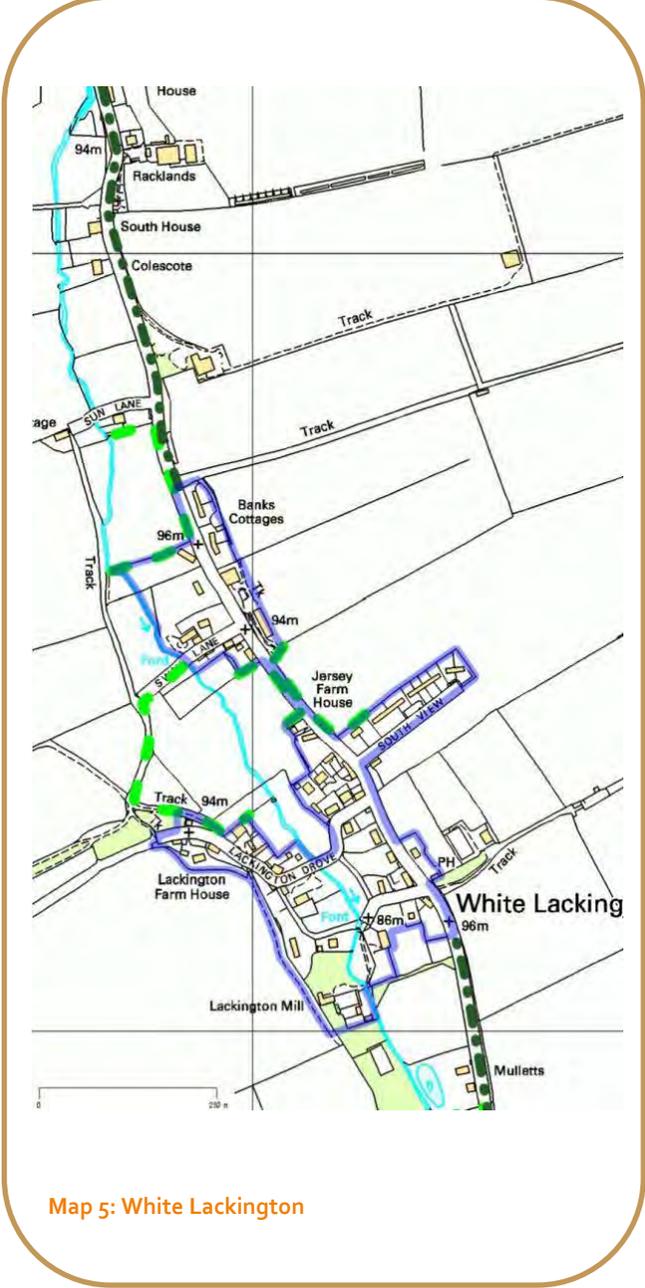




Map 4: Plush



Map 3: Piddletrenthide



Map 5: White Lackington

- KEY
-  Settlement boundary
  -  Community facility
  -  Important open gap
  -  Significant view
  -  Local green space

## Gaps between settlements

The Valley is not one continuous settlement, but rather a number of distinct settlements, each of which has its own history and community spirit. It is important that the gaps of countryside between each community are not destroyed through gradual development, to the extent where they lose their undeveloped rural character and it is difficult to distinguish one community from another. The gap between the settlement boundaries which defines the main built-up parts of Piddlehinton and White Lackington is very short, as is the gap between White Lackington and Piddletrenthide. Development will not be acceptable in these locations – either side of the dark green dashed line in Maps 4 - 6. Where possible the removal of existing, redundant structures in these gaps would help strengthen them.

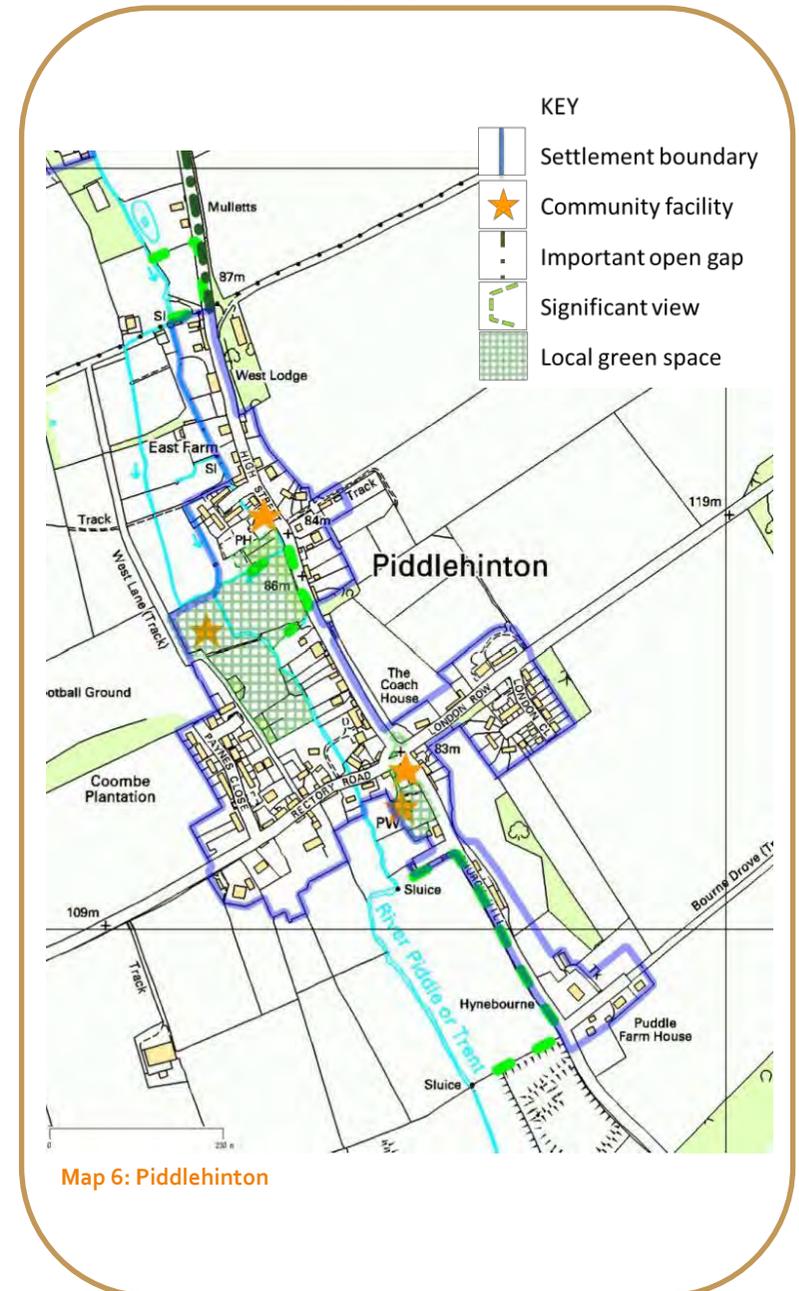
### Policy 4. Important gaps between settlements

Development that would reduce the openness of the gaps separating the settlements of Piddlehinton, White Lackington and Piddletrenthide (as shown on the Proposals Maps) will not be permitted. Development which adds to the openness of these gaps, for example through the removal of redundant buildings and structures which do not contribute to local character or heritage, will be considered favourably.

## Features of local wildlife or historic interest

The River Piddle is a natural chalk river which supports the most sensitive of aquatic communities and must be protected. The river rises at Alton Pancras and is augmented by springs. The River Piddle supports a diverse range of species: from large mammals and birds (such as otters, kingfishers and egrets) to smaller mammals (such as water voles), fish (including migratory eels) and invertebrates that feed the fish. The wildlife in this important habitat can be threatened by changes to the water quality (for example influences such as silt from highway and track runoff and nutrients from farming). The Dorset Wildlife Trust is working with some landowners to enhance biodiversity by improving the course of the river and bankside planting.

Woodlands are another important feature of both landscape and wildlife interest, and a **project** is outlined in a later section that may help ensure that these valued areas are actively maintained in the long term.



Map 6: Piddlehinton

As a matter of course all planning applications for development on sites over 0.1ha in size, or involving the conversion or demolition of rural barns / farm buildings or similar structures, must be accompanied by a biodiversity appraisal. We would also encourage this approach on smaller sites, particularly where development proposals could help bring about wider benefits to river or woodland habitats.

**Policy 5. Improving wildlife areas**

Development proposals should protect, and where appropriate enhance, the biodiversity of the countryside, the River Piddle and its tributaries. Wildlife corridors and buffer areas should be provided to protect habitats and where possible include new biodiversity features.

The richness of the Piddle Valley in terms of its historic buildings and other features underlies what makes it special to so many people. Heritage assets are not limited to Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments, but include any building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest, Development should be designed and located to respect and where possible enhance this heritage. The Conservation Area Appraisal for Piddletrethide and Piddlehinton ([www.dorsetforyou.com/conservation/west](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/conservation/west)) describes in some detail the historic characteristics of the core areas of these two settlements, and the Dorset Historic Environment Record (<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/her>) includes a database of more than 35,000 records with information about remains from the prehistoric period to the present day. Local characteristics, such as materials, styles, scale, are considered in the design policies later in the Plan, to make sure that new development complements the old, and the area continues to be locally distinctive.

**Policy 6. Features of historic interest**

Heritage assets of the Piddle Valley are important and must be protected for future generations, in line with national and adopted Local Plan policies.

Where heritage assets are within the same site as a development proposal, their repair (if needed) and retention should be secured.



## Important community facilities

As recently as 2011 the Valley’s village stores (and post office) was threatened with closure, but fortunately was saved by a local landowner. Its closure would be a very sad loss. Some community facilities have shut – for example the European Inn closed in February 2011 (although four pubs still remain in the Valley). The former church of St John the Baptist, at Plush, was declared redundant in 1988, but continues to be used as a concert venue. Community facilities rely on generating sufficient income from local people to sustain them.

Under the Community Right to Bid, the local community can nominate community buildings and facilities to be registered as an asset of community value. Once registered, the sale of a facility can be delayed to allow community groups to prepare a bid to buy and run that facility. Planning policies can work alongside this, by ensuring that a change of use is not permitted without due consideration. The fact that a community asset is listed as an asset of community value in itself can be a material planning consideration.

The list of community facilities in the box on the right (marked by stars in Maps 2 - 6) includes those that the Parish Council would be minded to nominate under the Community Right to Bid, if they were likely to come under threat. As such they should be given special protection through planning policies. These facilities will need to be able to adapt to remain fit for purpose for future generations, as needs and expectations change. For example, the Parish Plan has identified a need for better leisure facilities, especially for teenagers.

There may be circumstances during the lifetime of this plan when the community value placed on an asset has changed (for example, if a new facility has been provided in the interim, or the benefits of the proposed development is considered to outweigh its loss), and in such circumstances an application may be accompanied by evidence of the community’s support, and this will be tested further through the Parish Council’s and public consultation responses to the application.

### **Policy 7. Important community facilities**

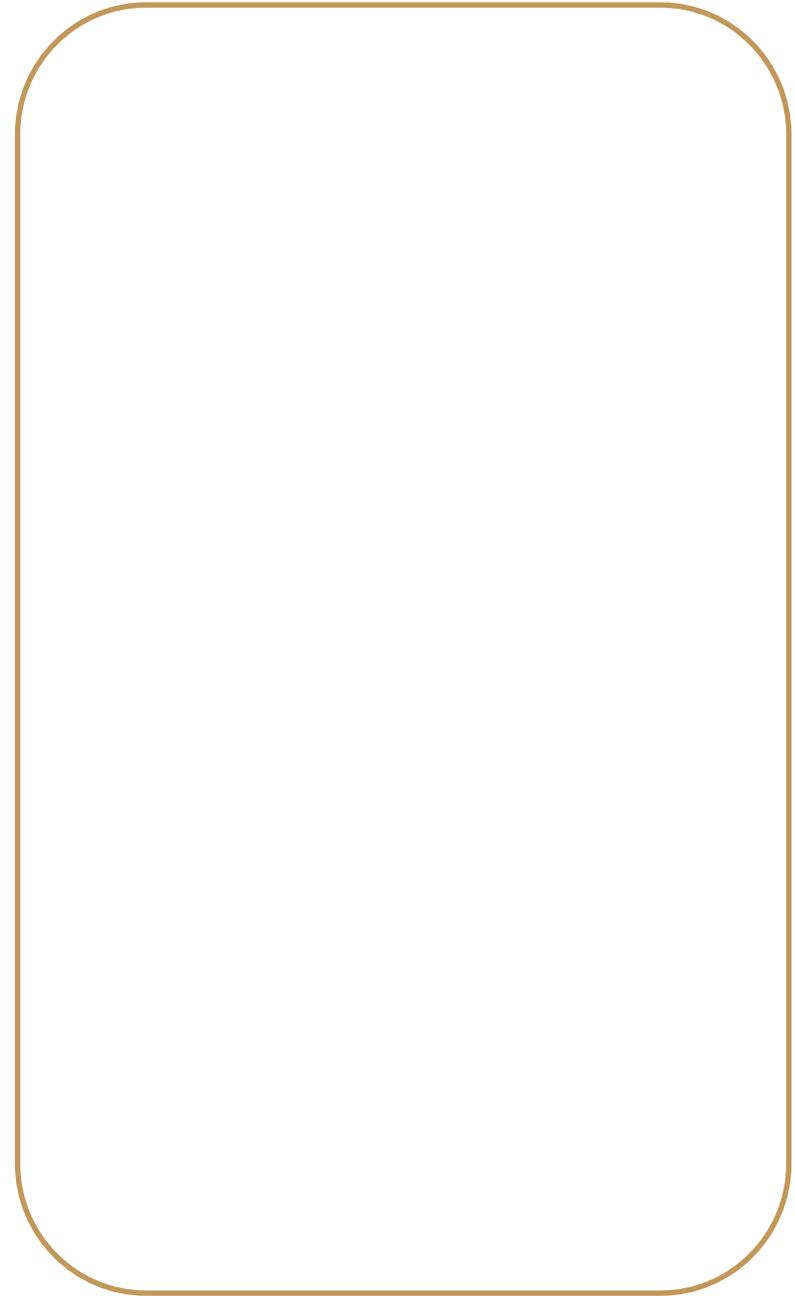
Community facilities are important to local residents and should be retained where possible. The loss of such facilities will only be considered if, having involved the local community in assessing potential solutions to retain the facility, it is clear that their retention would be unreasonable on the grounds of viability, or the change proposed has the community’s backing. Proposals will be supported that allow such facilities to be modernised and adapted for future needs.

### **Community Facilities**

<b>Alton Pancras</b>	Field east of The Old Rectory St Pancras Church
<b>Piddlehinton</b>	Millennium Green Piddlehinton Gym Piddlehinton Rugby club and pitch Piddlehinton Village Hall St Mary the Virgin Church Thimble Inn PH
<b>Piddletrenthide</b>	All Saints Church (including car park) Memorial Hall Piddle Inn PH Piddle Valley CE VA First School Football field, play area & tennis court Poachers Inn PH Village Shop and PO
<b>Plush</b>	Brace of Pheasants PH Former church of St John the Baptist Cricket ground Jock’s Paddock

The Parish Plan highlighted that there is an appetite for a large, modern community hall that could cater for larger events including sports and leisure uses (to complement and not necessarily replace the smaller village halls in each settlement). This would need to be taken forward as a **project** by the local community. A possible site at Piddletrenthide for such a facility has been identified in this plan, but its delivery will depend entirely on local community support for such a project, to develop the business case and raise the necessary funds (see Policy 16: Kingrove Farm, Piddletrenthide).

The wider network of public footpaths and bridleways is also a valued community facility allowing both local residents and visitors to the area to enjoy access to the countryside, and providing an off-road link between the settlements. This network of routes is protected in the Local Plan, which makes sure that the routes are not severed or made less attractive overall as a result of new development. Other legislation exists that makes sure these rights of way remain open and well maintained.



## Known issues that may prevent development

There are places where development would be difficult to contemplate, because of existing problems such as flooding or traffic. These issues are often the first ones raised when people comment on planning applications and these policies are covered in more detail in this section. Other common concerns, such as the impact on neighbours' living conditions (including noise, smells, privacy and daylight issues), are covered by the policies in the West Dorset District Council's Local Plan.

### Flooding and sewerage

The flooding and sewerage problems experienced in the Piddle Valley are a real concern for a significant number of residents and businesses. Development must not make this situation worse, and wherever possible, any potential to alleviate the current problems should be explored.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets strict tests to protect people and property from all forms of flood risk, whether this is from over-flowing rivers, directly from rainfall on the ground (surface water), rising groundwater, or overwhelmed sewers and drainage systems. It makes clear that we should not allow development (such as new homes) in areas at risk of flooding. It also considers the need to ensure development does not increase flood risk elsewhere, and talks about taking opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding where possible through new development.

The 2008 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for West Dorset recognises that the Piddle Valley is exposed to a number of flood risks, and this is confirmed by the Wessex Water Inflow Management Plan of 2013/14. The main policy for the Piddle Valley area in the 2012 Frome and Piddle Catchment Flood Management Plan issued by the Environment Agency is to take action to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits. The Environment Agency wants to work closely with all their partners to improve the co-ordination of flood risk activities and agree the most effective way to manage flood risk in the future. Dorset County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority, and as such is the statutory consultee for the consideration of surface water management, and responsible for investigating flooding events affecting people's homes. Wessex Water is responsible for the public water and sewerage services in the area and have advised that all development proposals should provide separate systems of drainage with any agreed flood

Ideas on how to reduce flood risk have been discussed with the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and the County Council to try to find the best solution in the short and long term.

## Ideas to reduce flooding problems...

- *improve ground / soil permeability* – for example by replacing non-porous surfacing with porous surfacing, or planting trees in locations where the roots help water penetrate the soil more easily
- *increase floodwater storage* – for example by installing different types of rainwater storage such as ponds and ditches, and by removing debris and silt from the river and other water courses
- *improve the sewerage network* – for example by replacing sections of sewer or by improving the lining of the existing pipes to reduce levels of ingress from other sources
- *reduce run-off from the surrounding hills* – for example by providing high level water diverts on tracks
- *improve water efficiency* – as less water will also mean less sewage volume.

risk measures approved by the Lead Local Flood Authority for disposal to land drainage systems. Surface water connections to foul drainage will not be allowed.

Options to reduce flood risk continue to be investigated, for example Wessex Water have scheduled work to complete the sealing of all serious ingress points in the Valley sewers during 2015 -2016.

This Neighbourhood Plan does not support any development within the known flood risk areas. It should also be noted that inclusion within the settlement boundary does not mean that development will be permitted if the development itself will be at risk from flooding or would increase flood risk elsewhere. In most cases where new development is proposed, further information will be required to assess the actual risks both on and off-site.

**Policy 8. Reducing Flood Risk and Sewage Inundation**

The need to avoid exacerbating current, or adding new, flood and sewerage problems is an over-riding objective for this Plan. Development will not be allowed where it is likely that it would be at risk from flooding, or cause an inundation of the sewerage system, or increase these risks to properties on that site or elsewhere.

All proposals for new buildings connecting to the public sewerage system will need to demonstrate that they provide appropriate measures to prevent any groundwater inundation leading into the sewers from that development.

Until such time that a groundwater management strategy has been agreed for the Valley, the appropriate level of mitigation will need to be demonstrated through an independent drainage plan for that site prepared by a suitably qualified drainage expert.

Any flood risk assessment or drainage plan, where required, should clearly assess the opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding below current levels, including:

- improvements to ground / soil permeability,
- increased floodwater storage,
- improvements to the sewerage network,
- alleviating run-off from hills, and
- incorporating higher levels of water efficiency

and where these are feasible, viable and appropriate, these opportunities should be taken.



## Traffic and road safety

Road safety was the main concern mentioned by two out of every three responses to the Parish Plan questionnaire in 2008. The 2013 School Travel Plan survey also found that many adults and children would prefer to walk or cycle to school but find this difficult due to the volume, speed and type of traffic that uses the local roads during peak times. Traffic surveys taken in Piddlehinton, Piddletrenthide and Alton Pancras in 2011 and 2013 back up these concerns, as they clearly show the extent of speeding and number of heavy vehicles on the Valley roads.

The Local Plan policy does not allow development that would have a significant detrimental effect on road safety. Development should not be permitted if there is no safe means of access or if it would increase the number of people walking along a particularly dangerous stretch of road where there is no pavement. Some types of development can bring increased lorry or other large-scale traffic, which although not necessarily giving rise to road safety issues does detract from the rural character of the roads and lanes in this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Much of the means for managing existing traffic, such as speed control and determining the choice of traffic routes taken by large delivery lorries through the Valley, lies outside the control of the Neighbourhood Plan. However there are several *projects* that have been identified to address some of these concerns, as outlined in the box on the right.

The following policy attempts to ensure that the decision makers understand the strength of the concerns held, and that, as a matter of course, consideration is given to reducing speed and improving road safety wherever opportunities may exist.

### **Policy 9. Road safety concerns**

Where development adjoins a public right of way, or includes a new access onto the highway network, the potential to improve road safety must be considered. Where reasonable and viable such improvements should be secured, for example, through

- the provision of safe and appropriate cycle and walking connections
- the design of development to encourage lower traffic speeds

On-street parking does cause congestion and potential hazards. In itself it can act as a speeding deterrent, but it adds to the road safety concerns where vehicles park dangerously or traffic continues to speed despite the limited visibility and narrowed nature of the road.

### **Traffic and road safety projects:**

#### *All-weather off-road pedestrian and cycle route along the Valley*

The idea with this project is to provide an alternative route to the first school and link with other community facilities – running from Piddlehinton to Piddletrenthide, with possible extension to Alton Pancras. Much of this route could be on the existing bridleway. This idea was supported by three-quarters of those responding to the parish plan questionnaire. The route would potentially be of a standard suitable for cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders and people with buggies, prams or wheelchairs (but not motor vehicles). If there is enough support, this project could be taken forward by local people.

#### *Community Speed Watch initiative*

This project is already underway, but will need continued volunteer support if it is to remain successful.

#### *Alternative route for HGVs-the C12 (the top Sherborne Road)*

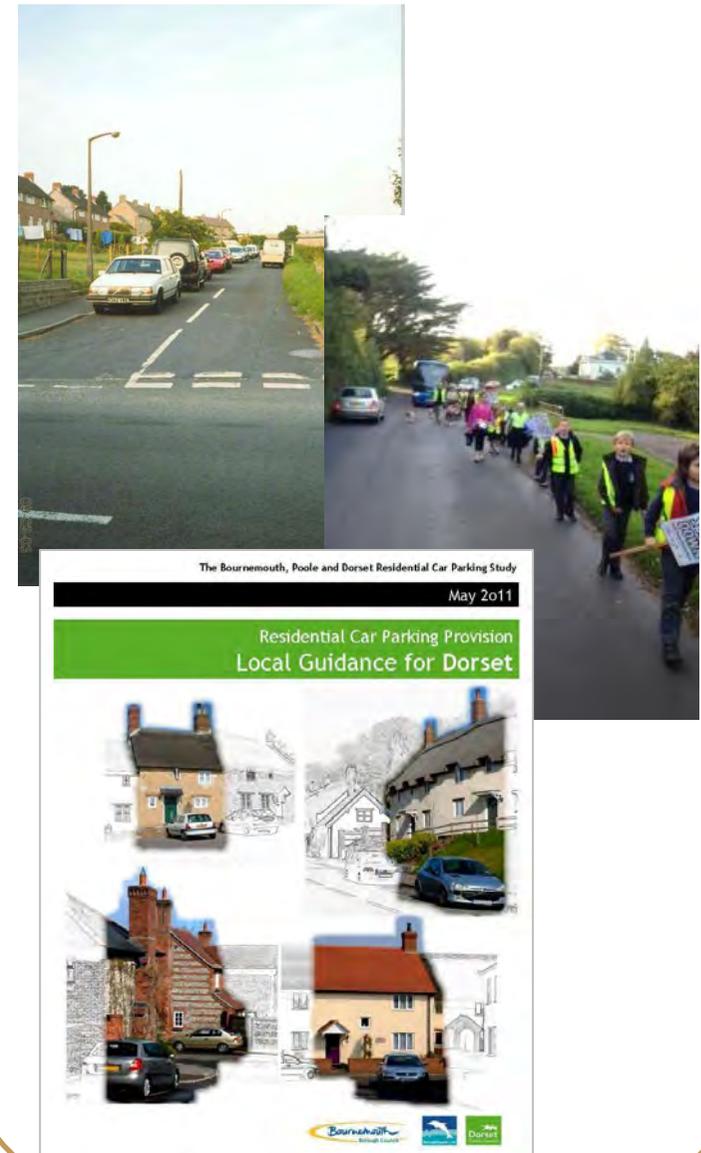
In the past the potential to upgrade the C12 to provide an alternative route has been looked into, but we know there are difficulties at the southern section and it therefore requires much more investigation and funding to achieve. If local people campaign for this route, then the County Council may look at this project again.

The latter is generally the case in the Piddle Valley, and causes problems to pedestrians walking along or trying to cross the road. It is important that sufficient parking provision is made on any development site, that is convenient and will be used in preference to possible on-street parking, to avoid exacerbating these local problems further.

The following parking policy builds on the guidelines in the County Council's 2011 residential car parking study, which sets out the space requirements for new homes. For residential development, this equates broadly to 2 or more parking spaces per home. The parking spaces should be provided on hard standing, or in a car ports or car barns, or as garaging with an internal dimension of greater than 6m by 3m (each garage space is counted as providing the equivalent of half a space because of the evidence showing low use of garages for parking).

**Policy 10. Car parking requirements**

Development will be expected to provide sufficient parking on-site. In locations where there is a lot of on-street parking causing local problems to pedestrians walking along or crossing the road, the parking for the site should be more convenient than parking on-street.



## Locations for new development

This Plan is about allowing acceptable development to take place. As part of the process of preparing this Plan, the working group considered and consulted the community on various sites to work out where development could take place. As a result of this consultation this Plan includes a policy covering small-scale infill development within the settlements, as well as specific policies on three larger sites in Alton Pancras and Piddletrenthide.

### Settlement boundaries

This Plan takes a different approach to the Local Plan. It does not include a defined development boundary as previously set in the Local Plan, which covered two very small parts of Piddletrenthide and had no bearing on what the community considered to be the Valley's settlements.

The approach this Neighbourhood Plan has taken, is to start by defining "settlement boundaries" around the main built areas of what the community considered to be the main settlements in the area - Alton Pancras, Plush, Piddletrenthide, White Lackington and Piddlehinton. These are shown by the dark blue lines in Maps 2 – 6 and Appendix A. These boundaries have been drawn along clear edges (made by tracks, field boundaries, woodland, rivers or other features) where the more built up areas of settlement gives way to the countryside.

Within these settlement boundaries is where the community think it makes sense to look for locations for new development, in what local people consider to be an already built-up part of the Valley, where much of the Valley's population already lives. However, just because a site is within the settlement boundary, does not mean it will be suitable for any development (which formed the basis for how the Local Plan's tighter boundaries were previously drawn). So these settlement boundaries are not to be considered the equivalent of the defined development boundaries in the Local Plan. They are, in a nutshell, an area of search for possible development sites, but whether development will be acceptable depends on a number of factors, not least of which is considering the rural and organic character of these settlements, and the suitability of the type of development proposed in meeting local needs. The previous section also sets out a number of issues that could rule out development.

So what type of development may be acceptable? Within these settlement boundaries, small-scale infill development on well-defined sites is likely to be supported. This type of

### *How many houses will be built in the Valley?*

The neighbourhood plan has increased the potential for new homes to be built, but it is hard to say exactly how many will be built. This very much depends on developers submitting applications that take on board the vision and aims of this plan, and that respect the unique character of this Valley. Large sites will be the exception, and must deliver a higher proportion of affordable housing as part of their justification.

We hope that the policies in this plan will deliver a suitable amount of affordable housing specifically for local people.

The Local Plan also allows new homes on farms and other rural-based businesses where there is a specific need for someone to live on that site. This policy still stands although the need for such housing in the valley has actually decreased in recent years, so it is unlikely many homes will be built specifically for this purpose.

### *Will many employment premises be built?*

It is difficult to work out how much demand there will be for new business premises. If anything, the trend has been towards more people working from home, and the policies in this plan allow this to continue. However in order to provide some flexibility the policies in this plan support new employment development in a number of ways:

- within a settlement,
- through the re-use or replacement of existing buildings, or
- through development at Enterprise Park
- as part of a farm diversification scheme or similar rural enterprise

development is more reflective of the how these villages have grown historically. But the acceptability of such development will still be subject to meeting the tests set out in the policy that follows. Initial site appraisals carried out while this Plan was being prepared showed there is scope for over 20 new homes to be built during the plan period on such small sites of under 0.2ha.

The open nature of many of the villages means that larger developments, particularly on undeveloped areas over 0.2ha in size, are likely to have an adverse impact on the rural village character, and therefore will not be supported even within the settlement boundary. However, as an exception to this policy approach, consideration will be given to affordable housing (as a rural exception site), employment and community uses. Three larger sites have been identified that, as rural exception sites, have the potential to provide affordable housing in a manner that is likely to be acceptable to the local community. Where larger scale development is proposed, this should be properly masterplanned.

#### ***Policy 11. Development within the settlement boundaries***

Sites within the settlement boundaries (as shown on the Proposals Maps in Appendix A), will be considered to meet the need for new homes, businesses or community uses. Development sites will be limited to small, well-defined plots of under 0.2ha, that would enable infill of up to three buildings, in a gap in a built-up frontage or in a manner otherwise well related to the street scene, or through the re-use of existing buildings.

Large sites with an undeveloped area of 0.2ha or greater in size may be considered only if brought forward as rural exception sites for local, affordable housing, or for employment or community uses. A masterplanned approach will be required, to make sure the proposals are comprehensive and provide an overall enhancement to the character of the area.

Any development within the settlement boundaries will need to be in accordance with all other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan, in particular:

- the protection of important local green spaces and significant views
- the avoidance of visually prominent development extending up the valley sides
- the protection of important wildlife habitats and corridors
- the protection of heritage assets (both designated and non-designated), including their setting
- the avoidance of areas subject to flooding or sewage problems, or where development

#### ***A masterplanned approach...***

A masterplan is more than just a phasing plan. It considers the opportunities to enhance the site in terms of access, flood risk, biodiversity potential, landscape and historic character and local community needs, and integrates these into the proposed mix, layout, design and phasing arrangements.

It ensures that a comprehensive, rather than piecemeal, approach is taken to a sites' redevelopment.



- would increase such risks to other properties
- the provision of safe access by car and sufficient off-road parking
- the existence or practicality of pedestrian access routes to the facilities in that settlement
- the protection of residential amenities
- the sympathetic design and layout in keeping with, or enhancing, the character of that settlement

Outside these settlement boundaries is clearly countryside, which is important to protect in terms of local character. Opportunities for new homes, businesses or community buildings will therefore be very limited, but can come forward through:

- the reuse or redevelopment of redundant rural buildings (in line with Policy 20),
- new buildings for agriculture or woodland management (in line with Policy 19),
- rural workers’ accommodation (in line with the relevant policy in the Local Plan for West Dorset),
- rural exception sites in line with the relevant policy in the Local Plan for West Dorset,
- employment at Enterprise or Bourne Park (in line with Policy 18)
- farm diversification scheme or similar rural enterprises (in line with the relevant policy in the Local Plan for West Dorset)

In addition, the provision of community facilities adjoining or well related to a settlement boundary may be favourably considered where there is no appropriate land within a settlement boundary. In such circumstances the application should be accompanied by evidence of the community’s support, and this will be tested further through the Parish Council’s and public consultation responses to the application.

If very exceptional circumstances are put forward to justify the provision of new buildings in the countryside that do not fall within the above categories, then the proposal should clearly demonstrate that there is a local need for the development that cannot be met through developing available sites within the settlement boundaries.

**Policy 12. Development outside the settlement boundaries**

Outside the settlement boundaries the policy approach is focused on the need to respect the undeveloped character of the countryside. Opportunities for new homes or businesses will therefore be limited to those cases where a rural location is essential, or where the proposal



is in relation to an existing developed site. The provision of community facilities adjoining or well related to a settlement boundary may be favourably considered if it is clear that the proposed use has the community's backing.

## Housing

The Local Plan sets out the requirement for affordable homes as part of open market housing sites, and this approach is to be applied to small sites in the Piddle Valley area. Larger sites (over 0.2ha) within the settlement boundary can only come forward as rural exception sites with at least 60% of the houses being affordable. Outside of the settlement boundary, rural exception sites must be in line with the Local Plan policies, providing 100% affordable housing. It is hoped that, with the mix of small infill and large exception sites, at least half of all new homes will potentially be local, affordable housing. The types and size of the affordable homes will be guided by the most recent information on local affordable housing needs.

Given that one of the key aims of the plan is to provide more low cost housing for local people, it is important that both the affordable housing that is built, and any funds that are collected to build more affordable housing, are linked to this area rather than to West Dorset or the wider housing market area covered by the Local Plan.

The Local Plan also includes a policy requiring that, wherever possible, housing developments should include a mix in the size, type and affordability of open market dwellings proposed, taking into account the current range of house types and sizes and likely demand in view of the changing demographics in that locality. This remains relevant to this area.

### *Policy 13. Housing*

The delivery of affordable housing for local people is a priority for the Plan. In line with the Local Plan, where open market housing is proposed, affordable housing will be sought. This should include the building of affordable unit/s on sites of three or more homes. It is expected that the allocation of these homes will prioritise eligible people with a local connection, followed by those with a connection to adjoining parishes. A financial contribution will be required on smaller sites, providing funds to deliver affordable homes on rural exception sites prioritised to sites within the neighbourhood plan area, followed by adjoining parishes.

Open market housing can come forward on small sites within the settlement boundaries in



### *Community Land Trust*

Another **project** is to set up a Trust so that the affordable housing is managed for and by local people in perpetuity. This Trust could also manage other community assets as opportunities arise.

line with Policy 11, or through the reuse or redevelopment of redundant rural buildings in line with Policy 20. Open market housing will only be supported on a large site of 0.2ha or more, in order to cross-subsidise the provision of affordable housing as a rural exception site, and provided the site has either been identified in this Plan as a rural exception site or the site is on previously developed land within a settlement boundary. In either case, the open market housing should comprise no more than 40% of the total dwellings, will need to demonstrate that no grant funding will be required to deliver the affordable homes, and the affordable housing must be built at the same time or before the open market housing is built. Restrictions must be included to ensure that the affordable housing remains affordable to local people in perpetuity.

### Rural exception sites

This Neighbourhood Plan identifies four locations as rural exception sites which, subject to there being demonstrable local need for affordable housing, will support the delivery of affordable homes for local people. Local employment and community uses may also be incorporated into these schemes. The level of open market housing should be no more than 40% of the total housing built on each site.

#### **Land at Austral Farm, Alton Pancras**

*Summary: There is potential to provide a mix of housing and small artisan / craft-type business units in this central site within Alton Pancras. The scheme should retain and reuse the attractive historic farm buildings that are a key characteristic of the village.*

Due to the size and development potential of the Austral Farm site it is being treated as a rural exception site to make sure any scheme is comprehensively considered and able to deliver some affordable housing in this location.

The site relates closely to a cluster of important Listed buildings (the Manor House, St Pancras Church and Austral Farm House) within the Conservation Area. The older farm buildings were part of a model farm dating back to 1861. Although the older farm buildings themselves are not Listed they are of local character and worthy of retention (and the Conservation team at the District Council consider that they may warrant an application for Listing). Any scheme should respond to the unique character and interest of this site and the adjoining Listed buildings. The site lends itself to a mix of small 'craft' or home business workshops and housing units, incorporating a mix of affordable and open market homes. Large scale

#### *Rural exception sites:*

Local affordable housing is housing for people with a local connection to the Neighbourhood Plan area (through their family, work or because they currently or have previously lived here), who cannot afford open market housing.

Rural exception sites are sites for local affordable housing in locations where open market housing would not normally be allowed under general planning policies. To justify making this exception, there must be a clearly identified local affordable housing requirement (up-to-date evidence on this will need to be submitted with the planning application). This housing may be provided as low cost housing for sale (where the re-sale price is kept below market value in perpetuity through a legal agreement), rented housing (where the rents are kept at least 20% below unrestricted market rents), shared equity properties (where people buy part and pay rent on part) as well as social rented housing managed by a housing association. The type of housing will depend on what the people in need require and can afford.

In all cases the affordable homes will be kept affordable, even if they are re-sold or re-let. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed where necessary, to help bring forward the scheme.

buildings (either in volume or of a height exceeding a modest two storeys) are unlikely to be acceptable. As well as the reuse of the characteristic farm buildings, the more modern structures on the northern part of the site could be replaced with more sensitive development, whilst maintaining and potentially strengthening the important undeveloped gap between the northern and southern parts of the village. The provision of some open market housing as part of a comprehensive scheme will help ensure that the standard of design is sufficient to enable a mixed use development to come forward in this sensitive location.

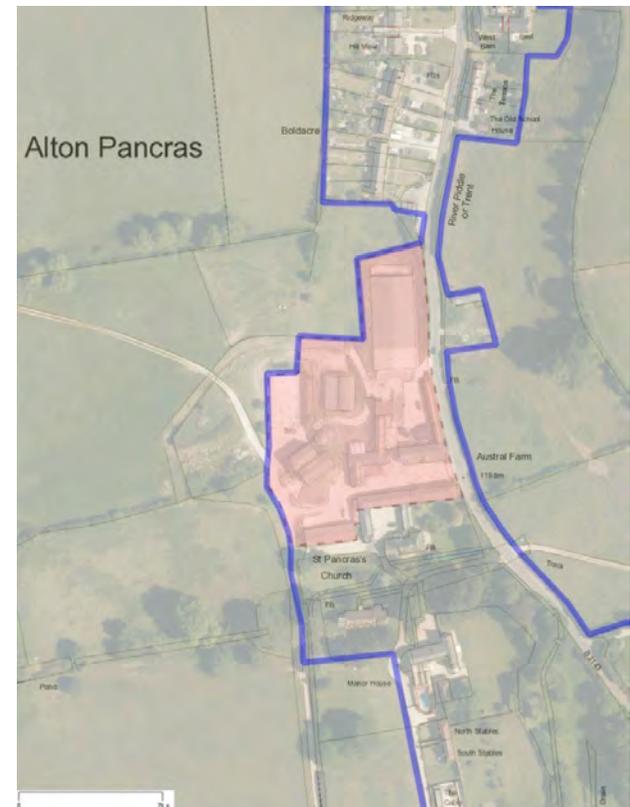
It is not anticipated that this site will have significant development – whatever comes forward needs to respect what is a very sensitive historic environment, and also any housing will not exceed what would be sufficient to meet local needs as a rural exception site. Development that would cause substantial harm to the heritage assets will not be permitted. The site is split between two prebends, which should remain distinct in recognition of the influence of such matters on the history of the area.

**Policy 14. Land at Austral Farm, Alton Pancras**

The site (as shown on the Proposals Maps) is identified as a potential rural exception site to provide a mix of affordable and open market homes and small business units (either stand-alone B1 office / workshops or as part of flexible live-work units).

The proposals should be heritage led, with the primary objective to preserve and enhance the heritage assets and their settings, including securing the long term retention and appropriate re-use of the model farm buildings and features, and the preservation of the historic green gap between the north and south parts of Alton Pancras. Any new buildings should be sensitively located (taking into account the history of the site) and modest in scale (volume and height) to, and not detract from, these heritage assets. The removal of the more modern and unsympathetic additions, including the large cattle shed to the north, should be included within the comprehensive scheme for this site. The design and layout will also need to be informed by a full flood risk appraisal and incorporate suitable measures to reduce the risk of flooding downstream.

The layout of any vehicular access or parking areas within the site should be rural in character. Street or security lighting would not be appropriate in this location.



Map 7: Austral Farm

### **Land at West Cottage, off Cerne Road, Piddletrenthide**

*Summary: there is scope to build a small amount of new homes of modest sized proportions in this location, to help provide affordable housing for local people. Some open market housing is likely to be needed to help fund access improvements, and improved landscaping.*

The land in the grounds of West Cottage to the rear of the house provides a possible site for future housing in Piddletrenthide. It lies within the Conservation Area. West Cottage itself is of local historic interest. The river runs further east in front of the existing cottage, and this part of the garden (east of the potential rural exception site) has historically been associated with the Manor House.

West Cottage is described in the conservation area appraisal as “an early C19 small country house with a plain tile roof, rendered walls and timber French windows in bays. Ornate grounds are enclosed within a high boundary wall”. The appraisal also notes the importance of the setting of such “larger, polite (clearly designed) houses set in landscaped grounds”. Any development would need to respect West Cottage and the rural character of this part of the Conservation Area and its association with the Manor House. It should not have a wider impact (for example on the setting of the Manor) as it is well contained by existing planting, which needs to be retained. The treed character of this site (with specimens characteristic of deliberately landscaped grounds) could usefully be reinforced, whilst respecting the glimpses of the Manor as seen from Kiddles Lane. Limiting any built development to no higher than 1½ storeys in height, in a low density layout, including robust tree planting, will help mitigate any adverse impact.

Creating safe access for vehicles and pedestrians to and from the site is difficult but essential. The existing access from West Cottage is dangerous, with no clear view up or down the road as the driver emerges from the property. The road has no pavement and there are a number of pinch points where the road is not wide enough for large vehicles to pass safely, and no easy refuge for pedestrians. This is also an issue at the junction with the B3143, where vehicles pass extremely close to the Listed building (Brook House) on the corner. A solution to these problems lies in creating a new vehicular access from the site north of the existing house, exiting where the bridleway track emerges onto Cerne Hill. The hedge embankment would need to be replanted back from the road (by about 3m) to provide clear visibility, whilst maintaining the rural character of the road as it descends into the settlement. The bridleway should be re-routed to run more directly through the site to emerge opposite the existing bridleway that goes past West House (which emerges onto the B3143 at the rear of the Piddle Inn) and would provide an alternative safe path for people walking to and from the shop and



Map 8: Land at West Cottage

other facilities in Piddletrenthide. This could potentially form part of the all-weather off-road pedestrian and cycle route along the Valley.

**Policy 15. Land at West Cottage, Piddletrenthide**

The site (as shown on the Proposals Maps, Appendix A) is identified as a potential rural exception site.

Vehicular access will be provided off the Cerne Road above and to the west of West Cottage. The hedge bank will be replanted to provide clear visibility whilst maintaining the rural character of this lane. The development will require the provision of a pedestrian crossing point aligned with the bridleway running beside West House, with a bridleway link through the site. These improvements will need to be in place before any new homes are occupied. The layout of any vehicular access or parking areas within the site should be rural in character. Street or security lighting would not be appropriate in this location.

The hedgerow boundaries and landscaping around the site will need to be retained wherever possible to protect the setting of West Cottage and other Listed buildings in the vicinity. The design and layout will be heritage led. Any building should be modest in size and be sympathetic in appearance and scale to West Cottage, and a landscape scheme should include robust tree planting with mature specimens appropriate to the character of the area.

**Land at Kingrove Farm, Piddletrenthide (rear of the Piddle Inn)**

*Summary: there is scope to build some new homes in this location to help provide affordable housing for local people. Some open market housing may be needed to help fund the new access and appropriate flood management measures. The farm buildings could be re-used (and the more modern buildings replaced) for employment or other community uses. The lower-lying land within the flood plain closer to the B3143 will remain undeveloped.*

In 2005 the Inspector for the 2006 Local Plan concluded that land at Kingrove Farm was an appropriate location for new development, given that it was within easy walking distance of the village centre, and not particularly prominent in wider views.

The existing access to the site (off the bridleway from the road to Cerne Abbas) is not particularly suitable for additional vehicular traffic and has a rural character that should not be lost. A potential solution to provide vehicular access to the site would be via Wightman's Orchard (which is in separate ownership and often full of parked cars). In this situation, the



developer should work closely with local residents, the housing association and the land owners, to deliver an appropriate solution for off-road parking as close as possible to their homes, to reduce the problems associated with the high level of on-street parking that would otherwise be exacerbated by the new development.

By creating this access, the site's wider potential is also unlocked. As well as affordable housing, the site has the potential to deliver a new, larger community hall with sports facilities and adequate parking. This may be an appropriate use for the large aisled C19 barn. Conditions would need to be applied to its hours of operation to ensure that nearby residents are not disturbed by late night noise.

The site is partly within the flood plain, and therefore any development will need to be guided by a detailed flood risk appraisal. Much of the site would remain open in character, and should continue to contribute to the open nature of the valley, its considerable visual interest and quality. Any new built development is likely to be limited to the south-eastern corner of the site on the rising land, clear of the flood risk area. Land closer to the river, could provide an opportunity for other purposes and be maintained for outdoor recreation and wildlife interest. Areas at risk of flooding should be retained as public open space or for communal use.

The layout and design of the site would need to consider any impact on the setting of the Listed buildings that are visible from the site (primarily along the main road). The height of the new development on the rising land will also need careful consideration to make sure it isn't unduly prominent, and the existing hedgerow boundary should be retained and strengthened with robust planting to create greater visual containment. The existing farm buildings - the large aisled C19 barn, the farm building on the south-west boundary and the other buildings attached to the barn on the north-east side are of local historic interest as undesignated heritage assets. The re-use of these historic farm buildings (and potential replacement of the more modern buildings), for workshop / studios or community uses (including a modern community hall), would provide a good mix of uses on this site, if done in a way that respects their heritage interest. A comprehensive, masterplanned approach is essential, particularly as the development of the site may need to be phased, and the retention and repair of the C19 barn and other significant buildings secured. Funding for the community facilities is likely to be reliant on fund-raising and should not delay the delivery of the affordable housing.



Map 9: Kingrove Farm



**Policy 16. Kingrove Farm, Piddletrenthide**

The site (as shown on the Proposals Maps, Appendix A) is identified as a potential rural exception site.

The reuse of the historic farm buildings will be secured, and may be considered for small-scale employment or community uses. As part of the masterplan, space should be reserved for the provision of a new community hall of a sufficient size to accommodate sporting activities such as badminton, with associated parking.

Should vehicular access to the site be provided via Wightman’s Orchard, then opportunities to relieve the on-street parking congestion in Wightman’s Orchard must be secured.

The design and layout will be informed by a flood risk appraisal, to avoid development in areas at risk from flooding and to incorporate measures to reduce the risk of flooding downstream. The potential impact on nearby historic buildings, local amenities, and the visibility of the development from the wider countryside, will also strongly influence the design, scale and layout of the development. Open spaces should be retained to provide wildlife habitats, flood management and, where appropriate, community recreational opportunities as part of the comprehensive design. Hedgerow boundaries and landscaping in and around the site should be retained and strengthened in order to visually contain development at this site from the surrounding countryside.

**Policy 17.**

**Large employment sites near Piddlehinton**

Piddlehinton Camp, a large site south of Piddlehinton, was built during the Second World War to house troops in the preparations for D-Day. It is of historic interest as it is one of less than 25 of an original 1,100 camps surviving from the Second World War. Much of the area is now known as Enterprise Park. This is the main area of employment land in the Valley, primarily for start-up businesses, and is a key employment site in the Local Plan for West Dorset. The business park contains units used for light industry and office based businesses. The wider area also includes land used by the Royal School of Signals for training, the Puddletown Rugby Club, and a permanent gypsy settlement of 14 dwellings established in 1973. To the



north-west lies Bourne Park, which was a farm that has become another employment site in this area.

There have been difficult choices in the past about whether retaining employment here is more important than the visual impact of the buildings and associated storage, particularly on the higher slopes that are clearly visible from surrounding areas. There are concerns about security, landscaping and general maintenance, and the impact of increased traffic, particularly the numbers of large lorries travelling along the Valley roads and the impact of traffic along London Row (which is narrow and steep-sided, with no pedestrian refuge). Due to the position of these employment areas outside the Dorset AONB, less emphasis has been placed on the landscape impact of proposals in this area. Although there is an existing landscape plan (dating back to the original planning consent in May 2000 that allows the reuse of the buildings), this may need to be updated particularly if development could have a notable impact on the wider landscape. The impact of security lighting and large-scale building on the upper slopes is clearly visible from some distance away and detracts from the AONB. The following policy provides clear guidance on the need to carefully balance the economic benefits of providing more modern employment buildings and facilities in this location, against the wider impact on the character of the Valley over time. The impact of proposed or future security lighting should be assessed under Policy 22.

**Policy 18. Enterprise Park and Bourne Park**

Enterprise Park will remain an important employment site in the Valley and surrounding area. The impact of development in this location must not further degrade the area's character, and therefore:

- should remain a site for small-scale businesses
- the improvement of existing buildings and external areas to enable employment uses will generally be supported.
- any new buildings and hardstandings should be limited to within the hatched area shown on the Proposals Maps (Appendix A) and deliver landscape and visual improvements, such as the removal of structures on the higher ground, and the removal of excessive security lighting
- the existing footprints and heights of buildings should not be significantly increased.
- the historic value of the remaining elements of the second world war camp should be respected
- no development will be permitted that would cumulatively generate an



Map 10: Enterprise and Bourne Parks

unacceptable level of large vehicle movements using the local highway network. Access to Enterprise Park must not be via London Row.

Bourne Park, located on the higher slopes, should not be expanded further, but improvements to existing buildings would be acceptable. Access to Bourne Park must not be via London Row.

## Farming in the Piddle Valley

The area of farmland in the Piddle Valley totals 4,000 hectares (10,000 acres). The geology, which determines soil type is:

*Upper Chalk in the south* - this land is mainly level or with gentle slopes and as such is well suited to arable farming, particularly cereals and other combinable crops.

*Upper Chalk to Middle and Lower Chalk with smaller areas of greensand and clay in the north* - a high proportion of moderate to steep slopes better suited to grassland and livestock farming.

Over the last 70 years farming has been subject to a continuing increase in farm size reflecting developments in mechanisation, improved crop and livestock yields and a steady decrease in the number of employees. There are now only 10 significant farm businesses in the Piddle Valley giving an average size of 400 hectares (1,000 acres) per farming business.

The large arable farms to the south of the Valley are well structured and should remain viable over the longer term. One of these farms also carries a large pig enterprise. The farms to the north are fairly large-scale dairy units, which offer long-term viability but are relatively fragmented in terms of land ownership due to the amalgamation of smaller units. This development has an impact on farm efficiency and results in a high level of tractor and other machinery movements on the narrow roads. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore aims to facilitate their consolidation, where possible, by supporting building developments, which increase efficiency and result in reduced machinery movements through the Valley. The fragmentation of farms to develop smaller farms or recreational units with associated buildings should be avoided as these can result in great damage to the landscape and offer little prospect of long-term viability. In all this, it is important to recognise that efficient farming businesses protect and enhance the countryside as we know and appreciate it.

Recent developments in building design and new materials together with discrete siting offer the prospect of greatly reduced impact on the landscape. Where possible, new buildings should be situated adjacent to existing buildings, with the emphasis given to landscape protection. In particular development on the higher landscapes should be avoided as this can

### *Agricultural permitted development rights:*

Permitted development rights mean that, if a farm is 5 hectares or more in size, the farmer generally has the right to erect, extend or alter an agricultural building provided that

- it is not within 25 metres of a road,
- the ground area does not exceed 465m<sup>2</sup>
- if it is within 400m of someone else's home, it will not be used for livestock or to store slurry or sewage sludge.

In certain cases, including the erection of new buildings or where significant changes are proposed, details of the buildings' design, materials and siting may need to be submitted for approval, so that the planning authority can consider the effect of the development upon the landscape, heritage and wildlife interests. They also need to have regard to the operational needs of agricultural businesses and the need to avoid imposing any unnecessary or excessively costly requirements on the farmer.

More limited rights, including extensions and alterations adding not more than 10% to the content of the original building, are available to smaller farms (those between 0.4 and 5 hectares in size).

Although permitted development rights introduced in 2014 allow the conversion of redundant farm buildings to housing (subject to specific criteria), these do not apply to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which covers much of this area.

greatly detract from long distance views. Evidence of long-term viability of any business should be a requirement when submitting planning applications.

**Policy 19. New farm buildings**

The provision of new agricultural buildings to reduce the number of farm vehicle movements along the adopted roads in the Valley and ideally improve the long-term viability of farms will be supported, subject to ensuring the siting and design do not lead to an unacceptable impact on landscape character, heritage, wildlife or residential amenity.

Where new agricultural buildings are proposed where there are redundant buildings within that farm holding (or the proposals will mean that existing buildings will become redundant), opportunities to remove those redundant units should be considered where such buildings are of no historic or architectural merit, and there is no reasonable prospect of their appropriate re-use.

**Redundant farm buildings outside a settlement boundary**

The potential for redundant farm buildings to be converted to other uses is another possible source of new housing and home-work units. In principle, the re-use of attractive rural buildings (such as old stone barns) that are genuinely redundant should be encouraged, provided that the building is not too isolated, or in an area which is otherwise protected. This includes the important open gaps and elevated, open ground where the addition of lights and residential garden would be clearly visible in wider views. Other issues relevant to new development (such as flooding, road safety etc) will also apply.

The reuse of redundant farm buildings for uses other than farming or forestry-related operations is not considered appropriate for buildings of no architectural merit. Examples of such buildings that clearly do not make a positive contribution to the local character, are those made of concrete block, steel-framed buildings and buildings with large corrugated roofs. The re-use of redundant farm buildings for community or business is covered by policies in the Local Plan for West Dorset.

Where the building is a designated heritage asset, a pragmatic approach may need to be taken to secure its long term future, in line with the Local Plan policies.

It should be noted that this policy does not remove any permitted development rights, and therefore can only be applied where planning consent is needed.



**What do we mean by too isolated?**

Generally speaking, a building would be considered to be in an isolated location if:

- it was more than 200m from one of the five main settlements in the Valley (unless it was well related to an existing cluster of housing) or
- it would require lengthy new connections to access roads or utility services

**Policy 20. Re-use of redundant farm buildings as dwellings**

The residential re-use of a redundant agricultural building outside a settlement boundary that makes a positive contribution to the local character will be supported, provided that all of the following criteria are met:

- the building is of permanent and substantial construction,
- the building would not need to be substantially rebuilt or extended,
- the building is not in an isolated location,
- the building is not in an important gap,
- the building is not in an elevated or open location where the addition of external lighting, garden, parking areas etc would be clearly visible,
- residential amenities of nearby occupants are protected
- the fabric and appearance of a building of architectural merit and its setting in the wider landscape should be respected.



## Type and design of new development

### Understanding the character of the main settlements in the Valley

The settlements of the Piddle Valley are different in character.

#### *Alton Pancras*

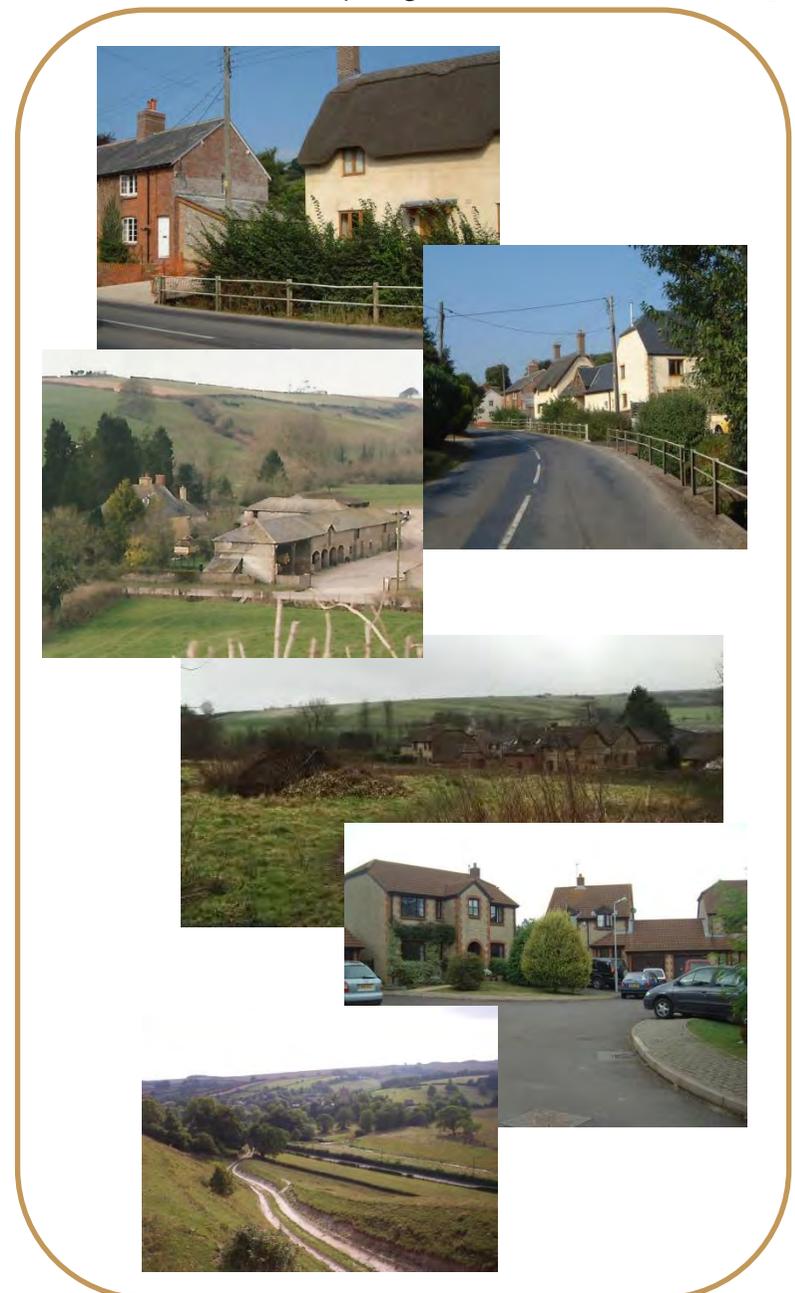
This linear village nestles on the valley floor of the River Piddle, which rises here and flows southwards through the Valley. Its housing is based on two early farm settlements, Barcombe to the north, Austral to the south, with an area of green open countryside dividing the two, most notable on its east side. It still retains the feel of a farming, working community, with the attractive 19th century brick and flint farm buildings forming part of the street scene.

There is a range of building styles spanning four centuries, from thatch to redbrick. A small 1990 development of 10 houses at the northern approach compares with a row of traditional-style thatched cottages from the south, some being modern replicas of their neighbouring originals. The middle of the village has a mix of housing styles. A row of three whitewashed dwellings with thatched roofs is aptly named The Terrace, while opposite is a row of eight substantial houses with large gardens built by Dorchester Rural District Council in 1956. To the north, four bungalows built in the 1960s, replaced four dilapidated thatched cottages.

Heading south, the church and the Manor House are next to each other on the west side of the B3143. Both are in spacious grounds, and are not prominent to passing traffic as they are set back from the road and partly screened by mature trees. These two buildings are important in the history and character of the settlement.

The road leading south leaves the village past one of the original thatched cottages and with open, undulating hills on both sides, heads for Piddletrenthide, past the former Domesday mill, now converted into two dwellings.

Development in the village should be of an interesting mix of individual or small groups relating to the main road, rather than residential estates. The future of the farm buildings, if they become redundant, provides an obvious opportunity for the village to grow. The gaps and green open spaces linking to the river should be retained as these provide important breathing spaces on the west side.



## Plush

Plush is a rural hamlet of about 30 houses situated a mile and a half northeast of Piddletrenthide at the base of a steep sided valley on a narrow unclassified road. A tributary of the River Piddle flows through the hamlet and into the river at Piddletrenthide.

Entering the village from the south the distinctive early mediaeval lynchets can be seen which hint at the settlement's ancient origins. Also on the south side of the hamlet lies Plush cricket ground, with its attractive pavilion. Spectators here have a fine view of the surrounding countryside

The settlement itself is largely hidden within a fold of the hills amongst areas of woodland and fine mature beech trees. The core of the hamlet is a central green space on the sharp bend where the famous hostelry, the Brace of Pheasants, welcomes the visitor. The pub overlooks this green, while the Plush Stream circles its far side before running down the valley to join the River Piddle. The dominant property is Plush Manor, set in spacious grounds below Plush Hill. The former church is home to the Plush Music Festival, which is held over several weekends throughout the summer and attracts visitors from far and wide.

Over half of the houses are listed as of historical or architectural interest. They are informally arranged along the rural lanes that twist through the settlement. The houses have large gardens and these together with the village green give the hamlet an open and loose-knit environment. Buildings are constructed of brick, brick and flint or rendered walls with roofs mainly of thatch or slate with a few tiled roofs. More recent development on the site of a former orchid nursery fully reflects the materials used in the older houses. They are attractively designed and sit easily with the more established houses in the hamlet. .

Until relatively recently the hamlet was surrounded by three dairy farms. These have now been absorbed by neighbouring farms to form viable units for the future. The attractive redundant farm buildings at Harveys Farm, directly adjacent to the hamlet, calls for a new use appropriate to its historic character, to ensure they are kept in a good state of repair.

Future development should be sensitive to the rural nature of the hamlet and reflect the materials used in existing buildings, the generally loose-knit character, and the notable presence of mature trees and hedges.



***Piddletrenthide***

Piddletrenthide is a long linear settlement divided into smaller clusters by open undeveloped areas that offer views of the river Piddle and the surrounding countryside. It is important that these open spaces are retained to preserve the character of the village and avoid continuous ribbon development through the valley.

The northern cluster marks the core of the old village around the beautiful All Saints church with its fine west tower. Church Lane leads from the valley road across the river to Egypt where there are several newer houses. There is a mix of styles of housing with both old and new but mostly with large gardens and an open feel.

Low density frontage development on the western side of the main road leads south to the junction with Smiths Lane where the Poachers Inn is situated. There are some older cottages running west from the valley road. The Manor House with its grounds forms a break in the development and there is a fine view opposite the house to the east. The former grounds are a locally important garden listed by the Dorset Gardens Trust.

The main part of the village has a higher density of development and consists of a mixture of older cottages (two dating back to the sixteenth century) 18th and 19th century housing, the former school and late 20th century cul de sac developments on either side of the road. The Post Office and the Piddle Inn are in this cluster and both are valuable assets to community life. There is a variety of building materials including brick and flint, cob and predominately rendering with tiled, slated and thatched roofs.

The modern first school is set back from the road and access is across the river via two arched bridges. There is a small children’s play area and the football field which gives an open aspect to this part of the village.

The Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton Conservation Area Appraisal produced by West Dorset District Council provides additional supporting information on the special interests of this specific area.

***White Lackington***

The settlement of White Lackington developed at the crossroads of an important east/west drove road and the valley road and is centred on the former Fleet Farm.

The settlement here contains a mixture of older housing, Lackington Mill, former farmhouses, the now converted 19th century European Inn and a number of more recently built houses.



The line of former local authority housing, South View, stretches east from the main road up a shallow combe. Development to the north and south has reduced the open space between the different settlements.

### ***Piddlehinton***

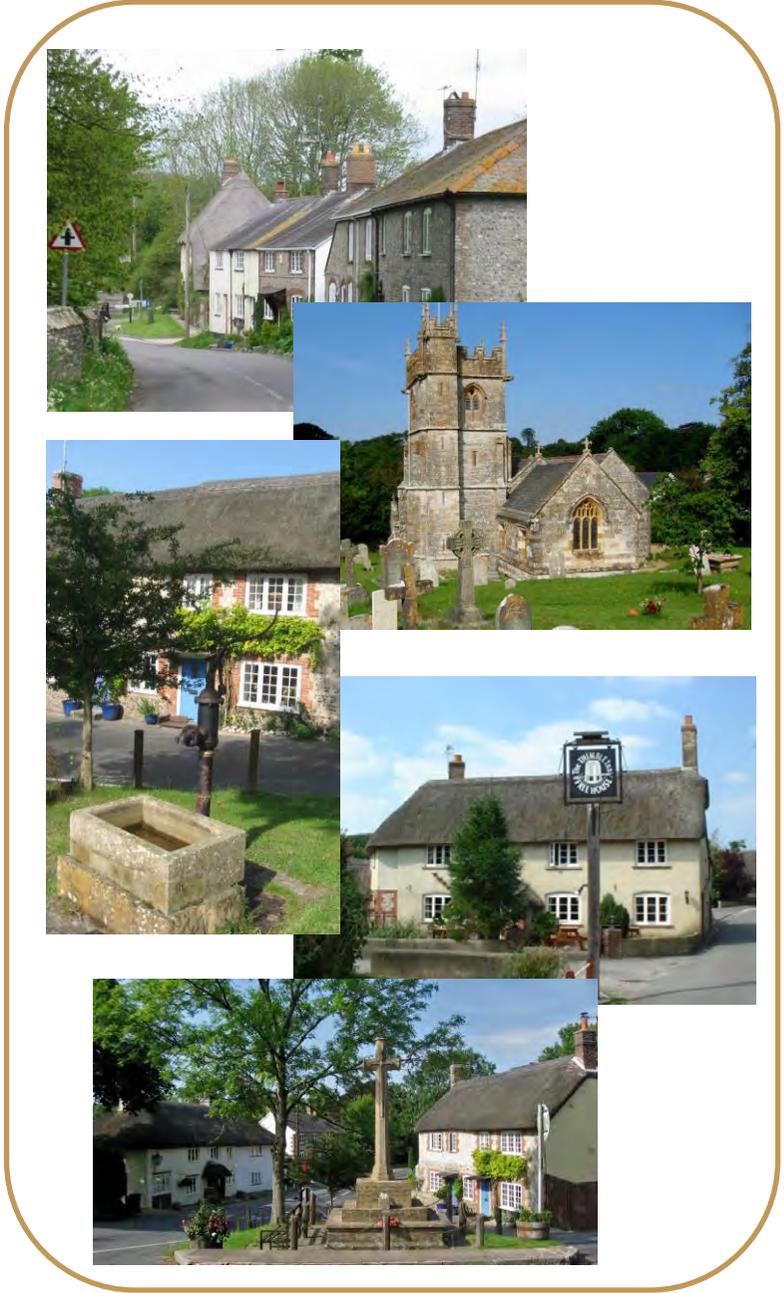
Piddlehinton is a long established settlement, which developed as a bridging point over the Piddle River. The main crossroads junction still forms the centre of the village. Close to the crossroads stands the War Memorial, together with a water pump and a commemorative tree.

The valley road north of the crossroads is known as High Street and contains a number of larger properties including the Thimble Inn, and a small modern cul-de-sac, White's Close, on the western side. The undeveloped open spaces along this road are important to the character of the village. London Row heads eastwards away from the crossroads up the chalk slopes; it is a characteristic narrow and high sided lane and these features should be maintained and not diminished. Higher up the slopes another modern cul-de-sac, London Close, branches off London Row and provides a range of affordable and owner occupied houses. Discretely positioned at the far end of London Row, renewable energy developments (comprising biodigester and photovoltaic systems), make Piddlehinton a net producer of electricity.

To the west of the crossroads, Rectory Road has a mixture of older cottages with more modern infill and the Old Rectory. This, with the beginnings of Church Hill to the south of the crossroads, forms the Conservation area, containing 10 listed buildings including St Mary's Church, with 13th century origins, and the Village Hall (unlisted). At the western end of the village a modern development, Payne's Close, extends northwards in a cul-de-sac. Alongside the Piddle River and to the south-west of the Thimble Inn, the Millennium Green forms a valuable recreational and natural open space. A bridleway, West Lane, extends from Rectory Road, alongside the Millennium Green, through White Lackington to Piddletrenthide, linking the settlements.

The River Piddle meanders through the village and although there is no longer a working mill there are egrets, herons, kingfishers, ducks, and the occasional otter on the water meadows, with buzzards soaring above. Sluice gates for flooding the meadows are still to be found at various points along the river. The agricultural use of the sloping hillsides around the village is mainly arable, but also includes beef cattle, sheep and two pig farms, plus grazing for horses.

The Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton Conservation Area Appraisal produced by West Dorset District Council provides additional supporting information on the special interests of this specific area.



### *Detailed design and building materials through the Valley*

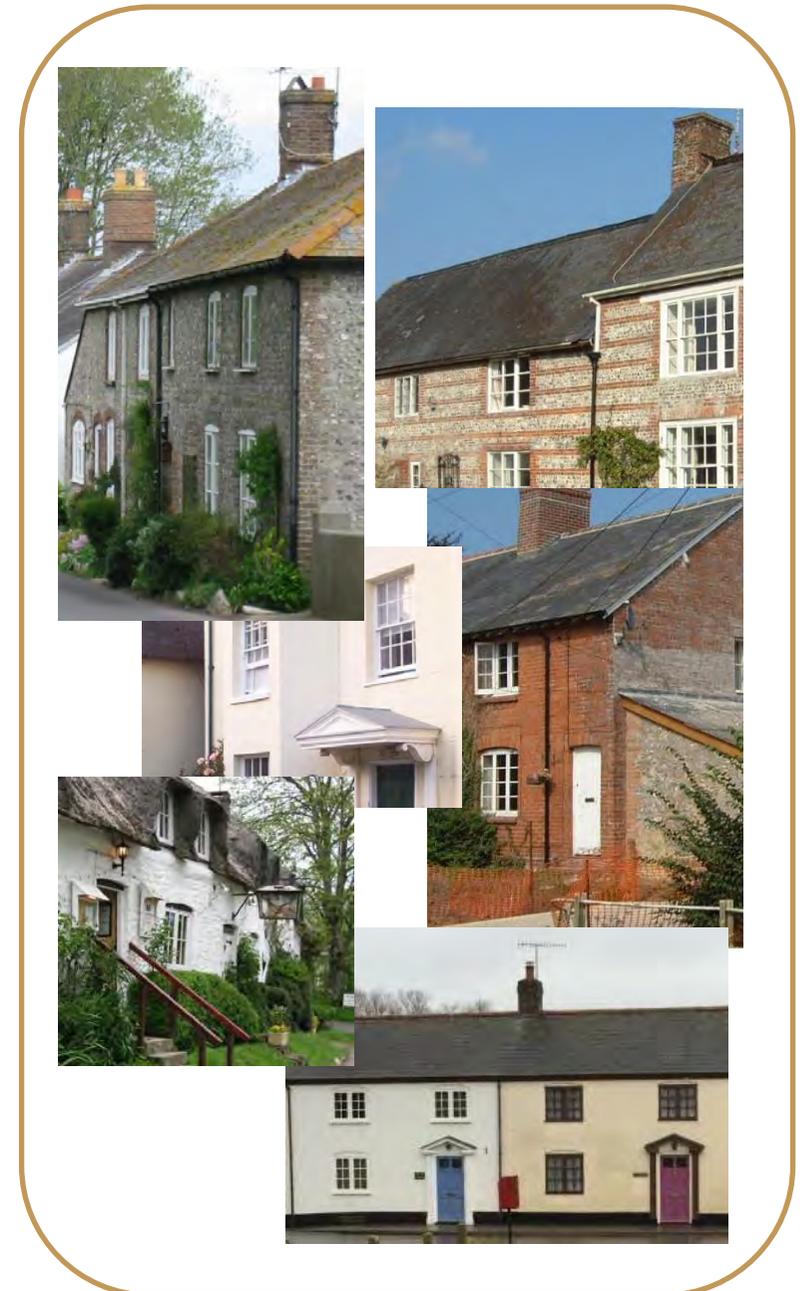
Chalk and clay have been used for some buildings to make cob for cottage and boundary walls, with flint and brick used for more significant buildings. Field stone was locally quarried for laying coursed or random rubble walls for larger houses while dressed stone, often banded with flint, as at Whites Dairy House in Piddlehinton, has been used for the Parish Churches and surrounding cottages in Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton. Mixtures of different materials have added a richness of variety, most commonly flint banded with red brick and ashlar or facing stone with brick and render. Examples are the former Village School and Pear Tree Cottage and Middle Thatch in Piddletrenthide.

Bricks were produced here from the early 18th century and were still locally available from Broadmayne until the 20th century. They can be recognised from their buff to red colour with carbon spots on the surface. From the early 19th century brick was often considered of inferior appearance and lime-washed or even rendered and incised with course lines to represent stone blocks. Unusual old purple brickwork with red dressings may be seen at Alton Pancras Manor House contrasted with yellow ashlar stonework.

The use of lime in building was universal until the early 20th century when production of cement (which is duller in appearance) became common. Lime lets materials breathe by absorbing and evaporating rainwater and allows movement without cracking in the heat and cold of the changing seasons, and is therefore more sustainable.

Structural timber framing is not common but green oak is often used for beams, lintels over openings and for external cladding.

In terms of roofing, Purbeck stone slates may still be seen at eaves and for wall cappings but the traditional straw thatch is evident everywhere, sometimes replaced in modern times with water reed. Thatch is relatively expensive with outer layers needing to be renewed every 25 years or so. Slate from Wales and Cornwall became common with the introduction of the railways in the 19th century. Clay tiles were used less commonly and cheaper, concrete versions were adopted during the 1960s and 70s. The latter has not blended in successfully with the local materials. Plain clay tiles and double pantiles can be seen in Piddlehinton. Other natural materials such as lead and zinc are also found in the Valley.



## Sustainable designs

The government is driving improvements to the energy efficiency of new buildings through changes to Building Regulations (rather than having different standards in different parts of the country).

Flexibility in designs is also a key consideration, to enable a building to readily adapt to the needs of its future occupiers as changes can be very costly if not considered in the initial design. Basic requirements are being delivered through changes to Building Regulations at a national level.

This drive for more sustainable designs ultimately make homes and businesses more affordable to run, and this Neighbourhood Plan encourages developers to go beyond the building regulations requirements.

### **Policy 21. The character and design of new development**

Development, including extensions and porches, should have regard to the character of the surrounding area to which it relates, in terms of the plot size, density, scale and massing, tree cover and landscaping (including boundary treatments). It should not significantly change the character, for example through over-intensive development.

The design should be sympathetic to the form, style and colour of nearby existing traditional buildings. It should respect but not necessarily copy the style of existing buildings. Imaginative designs using well-chosen materials that weather well will be supported.

Traditional building materials such as stone, flint, brick, slate, timber and lime mortar and render are appropriate. The use of modern materials may also be appropriate because of their character (in relation to contemporary building designs) and sustainability credentials.

The ability to adapt housing to allow people to work from home is important. Where possible, ducting (that can accept fibre optic cabling or its future equivalent) should be provided to the public highway or other suitable point of connection.

## External lighting

Lighting is often added to a building or area for security or recreational purposes. Although these are obvious benefits, such lighting diminishes the enjoyment of our 'dark skies' that are a valued feature of the Valley.

### Sustainable design projects that could be taken forward by local people

#### **Domestic Heating / Energy Reduction Project:**

establish a resource to advise on domestic energy saving based on reducing the energy required (e.g. by improving insulation), reducing energy consumption (e.g. by replacing inefficient heat sources) and by adopting renewable or low carbon energy sources

**Solar Panels Project:** produce guidance for residents and businesses on how to site solar panels on domestic and business properties so that they are discrete and sympathetic to their surroundings.

**Hydropower Project:** set up a River Piddle hydropower scheme to generate power for the Piddle Valley VE CA First School, in liaison with the Environment Agency.

**Woodland Fuel + Bi-products Project:** establish a co-operative scheme for existing woodland users (landowners / pheasant / game shoots) to manage currently unmanaged woodlands through a 7-10 year management cycle, allowing individual ownerships to remain in place, supporting local full time employment generation with reintroduction of coppicing and new planting for longer term sustainability, enabling fallen timber to be utilised for wood fuel with logs and bi-products available for purchase in the Valley and reuse of redundant storage facilities for products and equipment.

The cumulative impact of additional lighting schemes is a concern. Where external lighting is proposed, applicants will be expected to justify why it is necessary and how it minimises potential light pollution from glare and spillage. This approach also applies to the consideration of street lighting and lighting in parking courtyards, and such lighting should not be made a highways requirement.

**Policy 22. External lighting**

Approval for external lighting schemes, when required, will only be permitted where it is the minimum needed for security and operational purposes and does not give rise to unnecessary light pollution from glare and spillage. Where such schemes are likely to have a significant adverse impact on local landscape character, the benefits of the lighting scheme must be shown to outweigh any adverse effects.

Where development may give rise to pressure for external lighting, a planning condition will be necessary to ensure that the impact of such a scheme in future is properly considered.

***When does lighting require planning consent?***

Not all lighting proposals require planning consent, as the lighting itself does not constitute development, and the installation of light fittings does not in general alter a building's appearance to any significant extent.

However, planning conditions can be included to prevent such a change without permission.

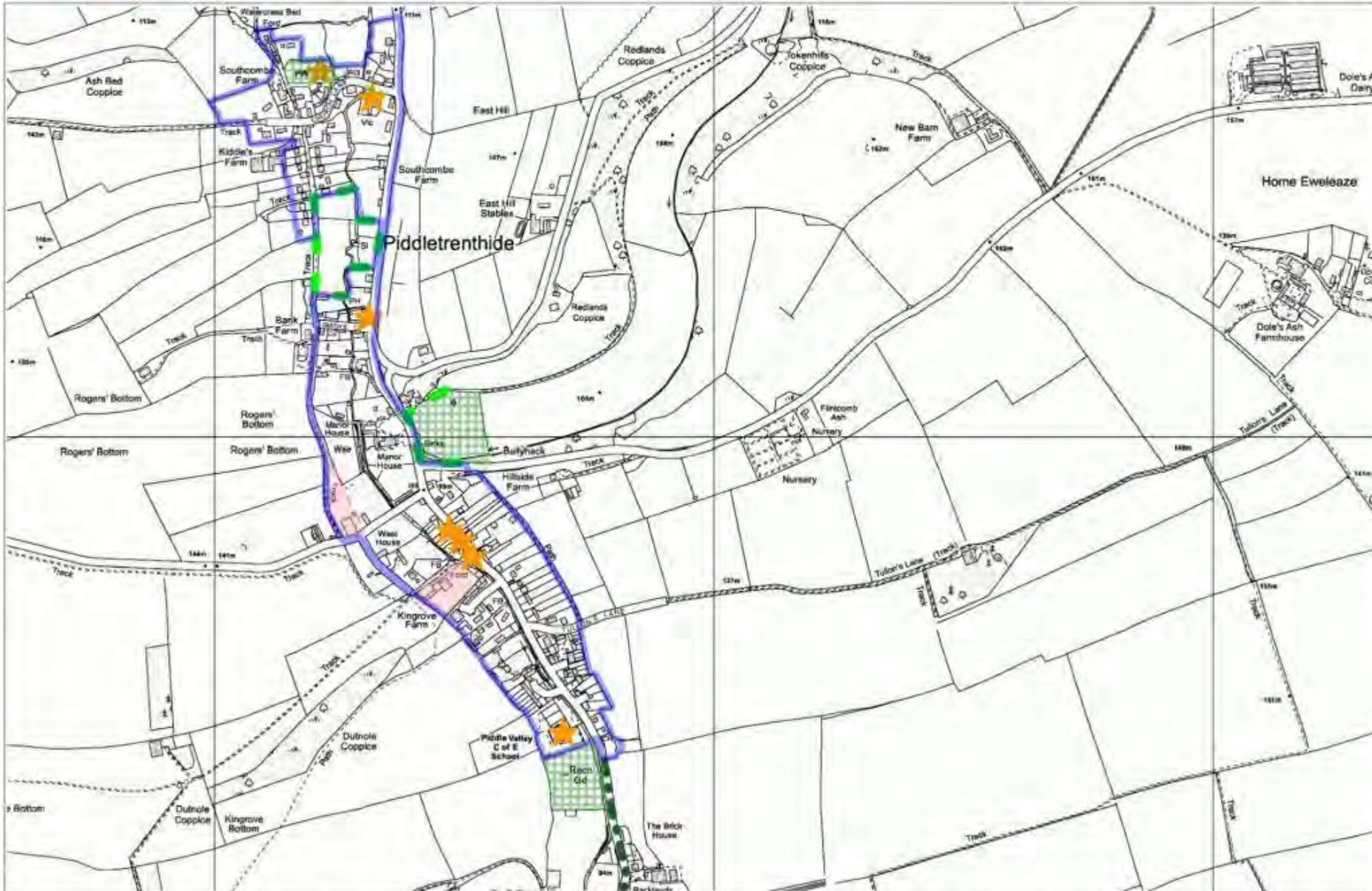
If the building is a Listed building, Listed building approval is always required.

Alton Pancras and Plush



- KEY
-  Settlement boundary
  -  Rural exception site
  -  Community facility
  -  Important open gap
  -  Significant view
  -  Local green space

Piddletrenthide

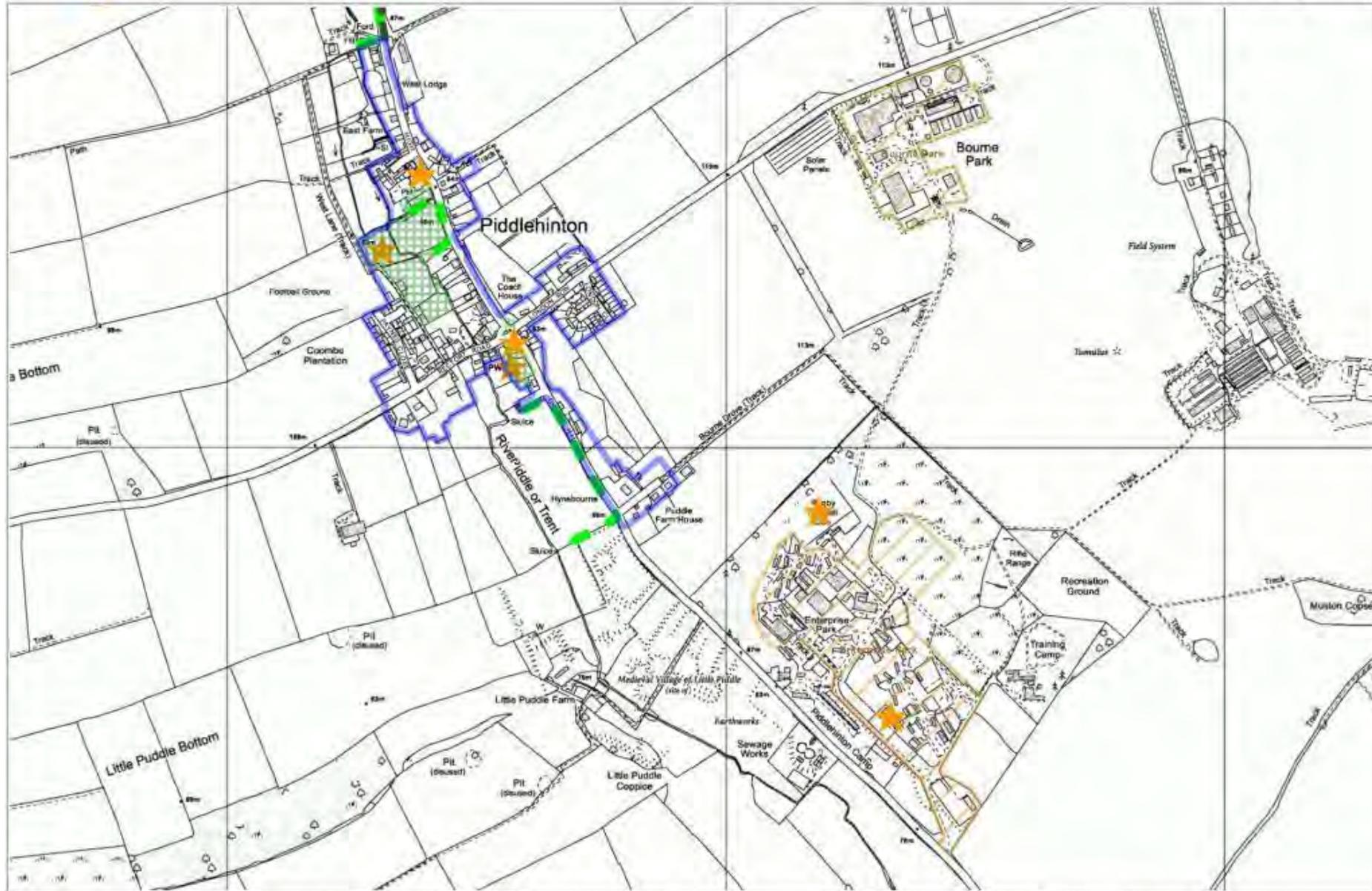


- KEY
-  Settlement boundary
  -  Rural exception site
  -  Community facility
  -  Important open gap
  -  Significant view
  -  Local green space

White Lackington

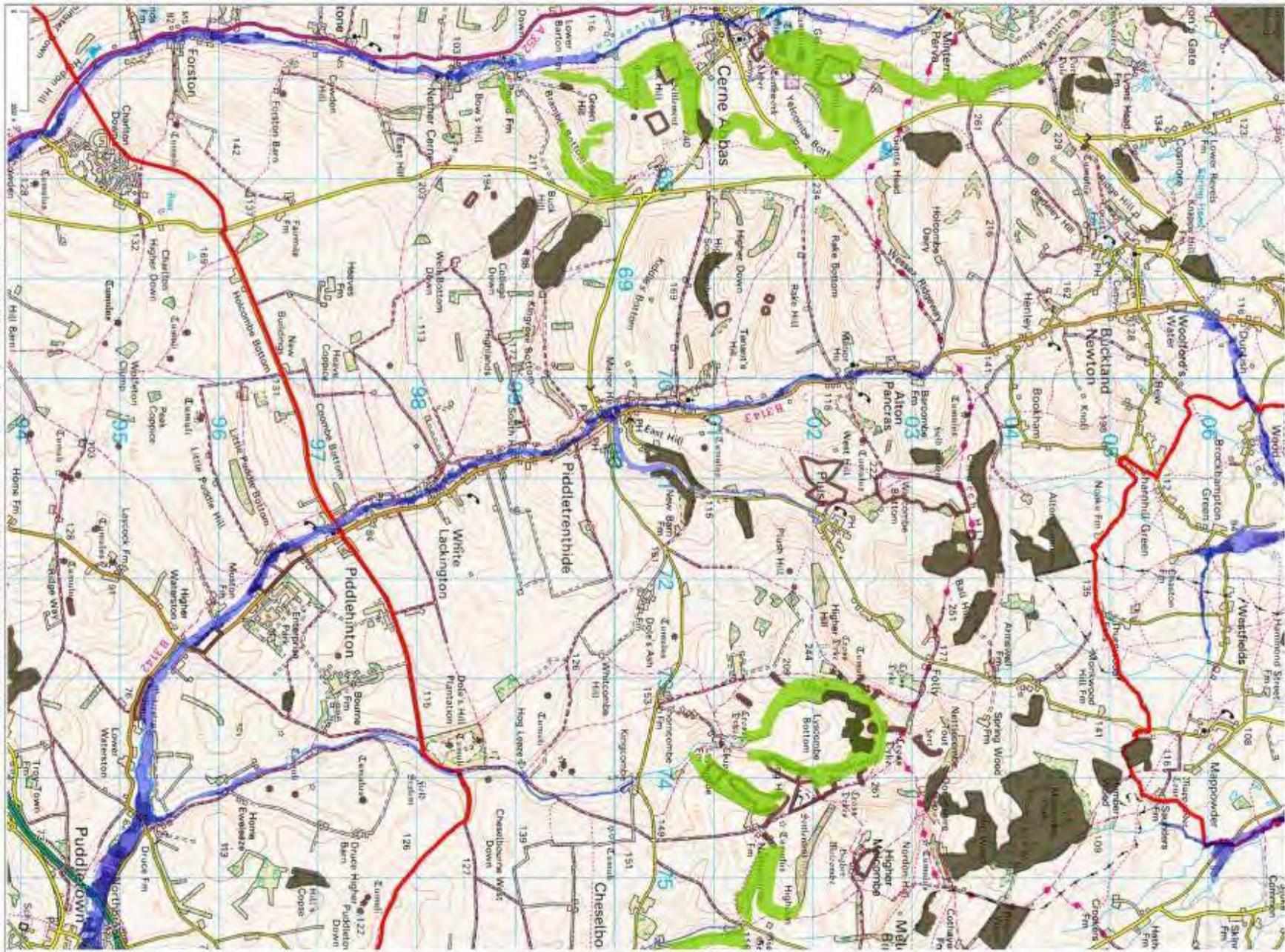


- KEY
-  Settlement boundary
  -  Rural exception site
  -  Community facility
  -  Important open gap
  -  Significant view
  -  Local green space



- KEY
-  Settlement boundary
  -  Rural exception site
  -  Community facility
  -  Important open gap
  -  Significant view
  -  Local green space
  -  Enterprise Park and Bourne Park

# Appendix B: Major Environmental Constraints



Parish Online

Major Environmental Constraint  
SSSI, Ancient woodland, AONB, Flood Risk

Piddle Valley CP

-  Dorset AONB boundary
-  Flood risk area
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest
-  Ancient woodland
-  Scheduled monument

Date Created: 6-4-2015 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 370898 / 100312 | Scale: 1:50000 | © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2015 © Environment Agency 2015 © English Heritage

## Appendix C: Local Green Spaces

Settlement	Location	Character	Purpose
<i>Alton Pancras</i>	Land east of The Old Rectory	Open green space in the heart of the village	Important green space adding to the character of the settlement and used for many local events by Alton Pancras residents and on occasions also for the wider Piddle Valley community
	Area below the Millennium Seat	Open down land with bridleway. Due its rising topography and tree-scape it offers fine views.	Protect views up to and from the Millennium Seat
	Area around St Pancras Church	Open grass verges on approach to church and the land surrounding the church forms the graveyard.	Protect setting of the historic church - St Pancras Church, a Grade 2* Listed Church
<i>Piddle- hinton</i>	Millennium Green and adjoining fields	Ancient water meadows with the River Piddle running through it. Includes children's play facilities, benches, picnic tables, BBQ's, and educational material about the local wild life. The fields adjoining the Green are of an open character allowing the countryside to penetrate into the heart of the village and up to the B3143.	The open character allows the countryside to penetrate into the heart of the village and up to the B3143, and make a significant contribution to the rural character of the village. In addition, the Millennium Green is managed by the Millennium Green Trust and is used for many local activities and events.
	Land around the war memorial	A small green triangle where the road from the west joins the B3143, forms an important site for the War Memorial and old village pump	Protect setting of the war memorial and focal point of this part of the village
	Land around St Mary's Church	Open field providing an attractive approach to the church and graveyard	Protect setting of the historic church – Grade I Listed
<i>Piddle- trenthide</i>	Land around All Saints Church	Green Space containing the approach to the church and graveyard	Protect setting of the historic church – Grade I Listed
	Green area off Church Lane	Green open space surrounding the Rectory and includes parking spaces for church visitors. Provides fine views of the church and surrounding properties from the B3143	Protect setting of bridge and cottages, and views of the church
	Land opposite the Manor House	Historic parkland lying in the base of a valley, surrounded by trees including a large number of fine beeches. The open aspect provides fine views from the B3143.	Protect view up the valley and historically important parkland setting to Manor House (which carries on up the valley and forms part of a Locally Listed Park and also contains a Listed Gazebo and a Listed Dovecote close to the northern boundary

Football Field	Grass playing field,	Used for recreation as the home ground of Piddletrethide Football Team, an important recreational facility for the Piddle Valley Primary School as well as being used by the wider community for a range of events
<i>Plush</i>	Land around former Church of St John the Baptist	Churchyard – although the church became redundant in 1987 (and is now used as the location for Music at Plush as a concert venue) the churchyard continues to be used as a graveyard
	'Jock's Paddock' opposite the Brace of Pheasants	Open green space in the heart of the village surrounded by a number of traditional Listed Buildings
		Used for many local events - the field a covenant that it must form a community green and remain undeveloped except for the possible provision of a small pavilion.
Cricket ground	Grassed area with trees, laid out for use as cricket pitch	Cricket pitch and pavilion used by local residents and visiting teams, and also used for local events