



Milton Abbas Neighbourhood  
Development Plan  
2019 - 2031  
SUBMISSION PLAN

# Foreword

This Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) sets out to define how the shape of the Parish of Milton Abbas should evolve over the period 2019 to 2031. It has been developed on behalf of the local community through input from and consultation with the community and seeks to reflect a consensus view on the evolution of the Parish with particular emphasis on the construction of new housing within the village boundary. The Plan expands on the following Vision statement that has been developed and refined through the consultation process.

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*Milton Abbas is one of England's most famous Parishes, situated in a Capability Brown landscape and steeped in history. Our Vision is to meet the local housing needs of Milton Abbas in a positive way that is appreciative of our unique landscape, heritage, distinctive rural features and residents.*

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Milton Abbas is a Parish of unique character and history that is reflected in and has influenced the development of this Plan. The village was created in the 1770's when the owner of Milton Abbey House, Joseph Damer, 1st Earl of Dorchester, felt the existing village of Middleton, with all its noise and smells, was disturbing his rural idyll. So, a new village was created involving the design skills of Capability Brown, and the original village of Middleton was razed to the ground or flooded by the present lake. The new village of Milton Abbas had 36 almost identical cottages the majority of which have survived and have created the iconic streetscape that attracts tourists. As a result, a large part of the area is also of national importance for its cultural heritage. More modern development has created an extension to the original village where the bulk of the villagers now reside. The Parish houses a vibrant community who appreciate the calm and tranquillity of its archetypal English village, with its small village shop-cum-Post Office cum Shop, the Hambro Arms pub, St James' Church, Milton Abbas Surgery, The Tea Clipper Rooms, Steeptonbill Farm Shop, the children's Play Park, open community BBQ band stand and green space, Community Orchard and Community Gardens.

The majority of Milton Abbas Parish and all development sites under consideration are within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Dorset AONB is a landscape of national significance. It is a landscape rich in natural beauty which has been shaped by millennia of human occupation. Natural beauty and landscape quality go beyond the look of the landscape: it includes the elements which comprise the view (topography, geology, hydrology, wildlife, archaeology and other built heritage and the cultural heritage made in response to it). This geographical context has been an important factor in developing the Plan which recognises and seeks to minimise the visual impact of potential new development on such an important landscape.

Finally, it is important to recognise that the Plan is a snapshot in time and cannot predict future requirements. Therefore, a caveat is inserted that to be truly 'sustainable' this Plan must be reviewed on a regular basis to take into account change in circumstance, policy or needs.

# Executive Summary

The purpose of the executive summary is to outline the key information contained within the Plan. The full Plan then provides further details in relation to the context and evidence used to support the policies.

*Our Vision is to meet the local housing needs of Milton Abbas in a positive way that is appreciative of our unique landscape, heritage, distinctive rural features and residents.*

There are 5 Objectives of the Plan:

**Objective 1: Integrated Housing Location & Density**

To ensure that any new development is integrated with existing development and mirrors the low density of housing that is a defining feature throughout the Parish, whilst minimising the impact on existing residents and the landscape.

**Objective 2: Meet Local Housing Needs**

To ensure housing meets the needs of local people and supports the aim of maintaining a sustainable community for the long term.

**Objective 3: In Keeping Design Style**

To ensure that new development within the village is aesthetically sympathetic to the Parish's heritage assets and complements the environment.

**Objective 4: Supporting Service and Infrastructure**

To minimise the negative impact of new development on the existing local infrastructure and where possible seek opportunities to make enhancements.

**Objective 5: Protects and Enhances Locally Important Features**

Local features that are important to the community are protected in policy and that any development helps to enhance sustainability in the local community.

The Plan includes a range of policies on matters such as design guidance, parking requirements, the protection of our important views and local green spaces. It also sets out the strategy for how much and where new housing should be built.

The Housing Needs Assessment identified a target of 20 new dwellings to be constructed over the Plan period. 16 sites were put forward during the call for sites period – the map showing these sites is included in Appendix A. Each site was assessed to determine its suitability by independent national expert consultants AECOM. They identified the constraints and issues pertaining to each site and scored the sites as red (unlikely to be appropriate for allocation due to constraints), amber (potentially suitable if the identified constraints could be addressed) or green (most appropriate for allocation).

The village was consulted on the potentially suitable and most appropriate sites. A weighted score was used to ensure both positive and negative views of each site were considered to identify the general consensus of resident's opinions. Dorset Planning Consultant Limited undertook a strategic environmental assessment to ensure that the decision on the sites (and other policies in the Plan) considered environmental, social and economic issues. Table 4 in Appendix A summarises the key findings of the reports used to inform the site selections included within this Plan.

As a result of all this work, three housing sites have been allocated through this Plan: land at Catherines Well (west of the Community Gardens); land at Langham Farm (north of the Community Gardens); and a single plot to the east of Catherines Well (adjoining Hill House Bungalows).

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document is the Submission Draft of the Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). It presents the Vision and Objectives for Milton Abbas over the NDP period to 2031 and presents planning policies which seek to deliver them. The production of this Plan has been sponsored and approved by the Milton Abbas Parish Council.
- 1.2 Neighbourhood Planning builds on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the North Dorset Local Plan, to give an extra level of detail at the local level. The Milton Abbas NDP has been developed to ensure that future growth and development throughout the Parish is guided by the local community.
- 1.3 Milton Abbas NDP runs in tandem with the Local Plan, which runs to 2031. It is appropriate that it should have the same end period and therefore it will be reviewed and updated by 2031. The Parish Council may however deem it necessary to update the NDP at an earlier date if circumstances warrant it.
- 1.4 Milton Abbas NDP applies to the area covered by the Milton Abbas Parish Council, shown as the Parish Boundary in Figure 1. This area was designated as the Neighbourhood Plan Area on the 19th September 2015. Milton Abbas is situated in Dorset in the former district of North Dorset. The North Dorset Local Plan Policy 2: Core spatial strategy specifies Milton Abbas as one of the eighteen larger villages where local needs can be met through development.
- 1.5 The planning policies presented in this NDP seek to plan positively for the future of Milton Abbas and to be used and acted upon by Dorset Council's Planning Officers, local landowners and developers; providing clarity on the community's needs and aspirations. This document is supported by a number of other documents and background information which are referred to throughout. These supporting documents can be accessed at <http://www.miltonabbaspc.org.uk/ndp/>. A Glossary and Abbreviations section is included at the back of this document for reference (Section 8 - Glossary & Abbreviations).

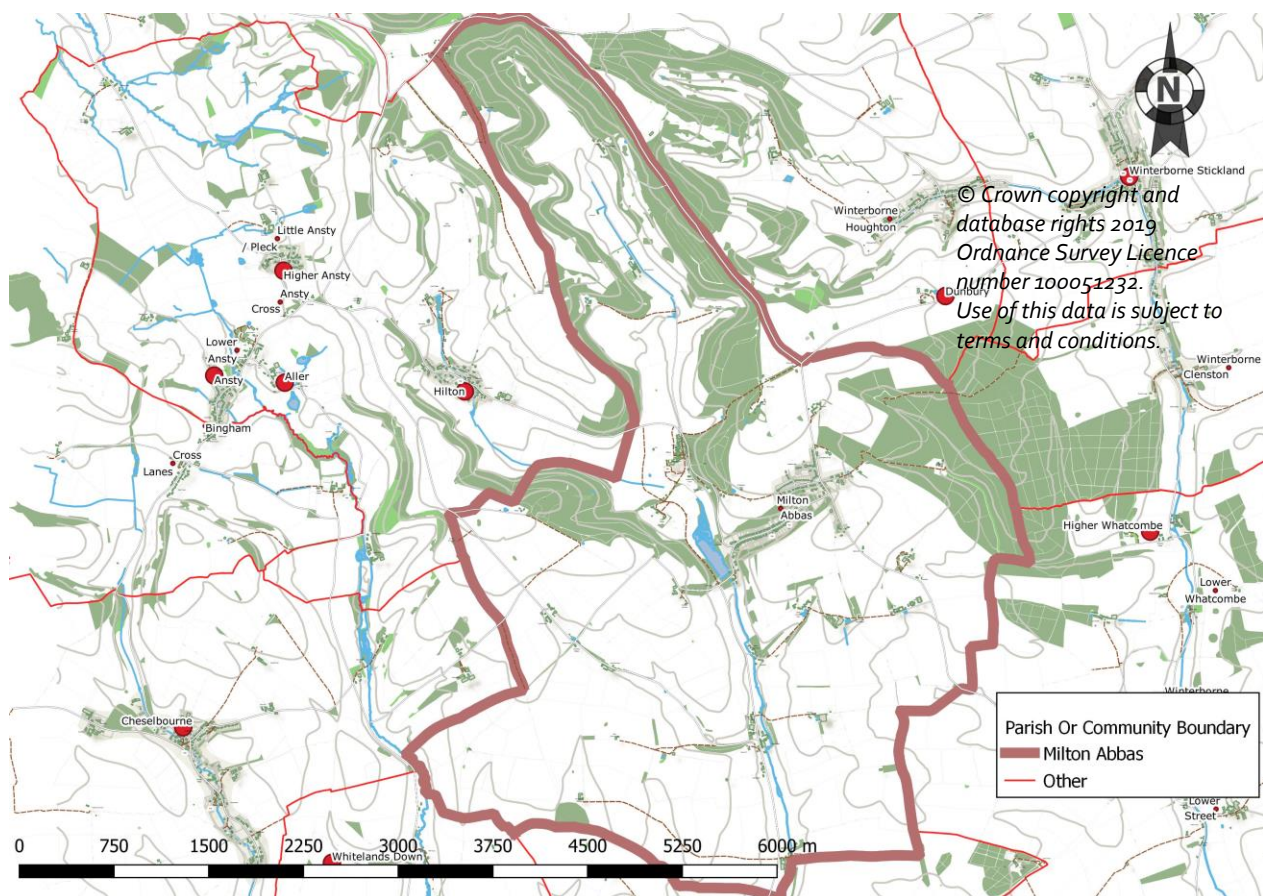


Figure 1: Map showing the designated NDP area which is defined by the Parish Boundary

## 2 Milton Abbas: Background

2.1 Milton Abbas is a unique village and with its 1,100 year story, the Milton Abbas Local History Group aptly describes it as “a small village with a big history”. It is the intention of this background section to outline key elements of Milton Abbas’ history in order to put policies influencing development proposals into a wider perspective.

2.2 The Milton Abbas Local History group website (<https://miltonabbashistorygroup.com/>) details that Milton Abbas is exemplar of:

- a monastery foundation of 934 by the first Anglo-Saxon King of England.
- a major surviving Capability Brown landscape, one of his late works and in the top five of his designs.
- a rare example of a neo-Gothic mansion house by Sir William Chambers, the leading British designer of the 18th century.
- the largest known example of a town removed by the Lord of the Manor.
- a fine example of model village mostly intact since 1780 – open to the public.
- a rare surviving and consecrated Abbey in a rural setting and open to the public, also has a rare and important Augustus Pugin “Jessie Tree” window.
- a complete and unspoilt Abbots Hall of 1498 of national significance.
- 100 listed buildings which can be seen.

2.3 To underline the importance of Milton Abbas today, on the flyleaf of Michael Hill’s 2018 book ‘The Buildings of England: Dorset’, Milton Abbas is mentioned three times, more than any other location in Dorset. It is noted for its Abbey, its Abbey House and its model village.

2.4 There are many valuable and useful resources that provide a much fuller history and context. A number of useful references are listed below:

Milton Abbas Community Website	⇒ <a href="http://www.miltonabbas.org.uk">www.miltonabbas.org.uk</a>
Milton Abbas Conservation Appraisal (2014)	⇒ <a href="https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-constraints/conservation-areas/north-dorset/pdfs/milton-abbas-conservation-area-appraisal.pdf">https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-constraints/conservation-areas/north-dorset/pdfs/milton-abbas-conservation-area-appraisal.pdf</a>
Milton Abbas Local History Group	⇒ <a href="https://miltonabbashistorygroup.com">https://miltonabbashistorygroup.com</a>
Milton Abbas Street Fair	⇒ <a href="http://www.miltonabbasstreetfair.co.uk">www.miltonabbasstreetfair.co.uk</a>
Milton Abbas as described in Wikipedia	⇒ <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milton_Abbas">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milton_Abbas</a>
Milton Abbas as described in British History Online	⇒ <a href="https://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol3/pp182-200">https://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol3/pp182-200</a>
Milton Abbas Visitor Information	⇒ <a href="https://www.visit-dorset.com/explore/villages/milton-abbas">https://www.visit-dorset.com/explore/villages/milton-abbas</a>
The Dorset Historic Towns Project report on Milton Abbas (February 2011)	⇒ <a href="https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/libraries-history-culture/local-history-heritage/historic-towns/historic-towns.aspx">https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/libraries-history-culture/local-history-heritage/historic-towns/historic-towns.aspx</a>

## 3 The Preparation Process

### 3.1 *Getting this far*

- 3.2 The preparation of the NDP has been led by the Milton Abbas NDP Steering Group. Group members include James Bickerton, Jacqui Cooper, James Farnham, Thomas Ives (Parish Council representative), Peter Litchfield, Michael Moorsom, Ellie Payne, Chris Skinner, and Susan Woodhouse (Lead). The Group provides a good geographical spread across the village, with residents from the bottom, middle and top of The Street, the road to Milton Manor, Catherines Well, Damer Close and Athelstan Way. Jo Witherden MRTPI of Dorset Planning Consultant Limited provided professional planning advice and support.
- 3.3 Others contributed in creating sections, evidence with consultations and getting the area designated. In particular, thanks go to Jennifer Harrison, Sam Holland, Colin Joyce, Bob Pay and Rowan Woodhouse. We appreciate the earlier contributions from Kate Chastey and Jill Cocking in getting the area designated and managing our first consultation.
- 3.4 Parish Council members have proof read the Plan and provided comments on earlier drafts, and thanks to Freddy Robinson for the final proof read, and Michael Moorsom who took the photos.
- 3.5 Thank you to the community for actively engaging to ensure we have a community-led Plan. The preparation of this NDP has been informed throughout by a comprehensive programme of consultation. Consultations have been taking place over the last three years. These are detailed within section 4.15.

### 3.6 *What Next?*

- 3.7 The Pre-submission Draft Plan has been revised based on the feedback received during our public consultation to create this version (the submission draft).
- 3.8 The Submission Draft Plan will then be submitted to Dorset Council for their consideration. It will be consulted on before being sent to an independent examiner (mutually agreed by Dorset Council and the Milton Abbas NDP Steering Group representing the Parish Council) who will check the NDP to ensure it conforms with legislation, policies, designations and any other relevant documents. At that stage, the independent examiner may recommend that the NDP is amended before continuing to the referendum stage.
- 3.9 The NDP will finally be subject to a referendum, in order to determine community support. The NDP will only be adopted by Dorset Council if the majority of those voting in the referendum support it.
- 3.10 Once adopted, the policies contained within the Milton Abbas NDP will have to be taken into consideration when Planning Officers determine future planning applications.

## 4 Supporting Documentation

- 4.1 The Milton Abbas NDP is supported by a variety of other documents and information, which are often referred to in this document.
- 4.2 All supporting documents and the evidence base are available at <http://www.miltonabbaspc.org.uk/ndp/>. Alternatively, hard copies can be requested from the Milton Abbas Parish Clerk on 01258 880383.

### 4.3 **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

- 4.4 In order to ensure that the Plan considers environmental, social and economic issues, the Milton Abbas NDP Steering Group commissioned a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which was carried out by Dorset Planning Consultant Limited. The SEA was based on the pre-submission draft plan, and considered the Milton Abbas NDP's Vision, Objectives and policies against sustainability objectives identified through the SEA process relating to:
1. Soil, Water, Air and Climatic Factors
  2. Biodiversity
  3. Landscape
  4. Cultural Heritage
  5. Material Assets, Population and Human Health
- 4.5 The SEA presented a valuable opportunity to identify chances to mitigate against any potential negative impacts and to enhance positive outcomes for Milton Abbas. It was consulted on alongside the draft NDP. The SEA document can be found alongside other supporting information at <http://www.miltonabbaspc.org.uk/ndp/>.

### 4.6 **Housing Needs Assessment**

- 4.7 In order to establish how much housing is required in Milton Abbas Parish in the period 2019-2031 and to identify what type of housing is required, an assessment of housing need for Milton Abbas Parish was undertaken.
- 4.8 The Housing Needs Assessment was carried out by the Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Plan Group. It has been advised and improved by Jo Witherden of Dorset Planning Consultants Limited and supported by North Dorset District Council. The Housing Needs Assessment document forms part of the evidence base of the Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Development Plan and can be found alongside other supporting information at <http://www.miltonabbaspc.org.uk/ndp/>.
- 4.9 The Housing Needs Assessment showed that a 'fair share' minimum housing requirement for Milton Abbas Parish from the adopted Local Plan was 11 new dwellings between 2018 and 2031. The National Planning Policy Guidance standard method was calculated at 17 new dwellings between 2018 and 2031. Based on the additional housing needs factors, this figure was uplifted by 15% to provide a target of 20 new dwellings to be constructed over the Plan period.
- 4.10 The Planning Policy team of North Dorset District Council in December 2018 provided the following supportive statement to the Milton Abbas Housing Needs Assessment:

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*"the overall target of 20 homes as set out in the report's recommendations is accepted in principle as being a realistic amount to deliver over the Plan period. Taking into account a number of factors including the various housing need projections and public opinion, the target appears to offer a reasonable balance without compromising the stance of adopted policy."*

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## 4.11 *Site Assessment*

- 4.12 Following a call for sites in October 2018, each site was assessed to determine its suitability. Jo Witherden of Dorset Planning Consultant Limited explained the need to avoid conflicts of interest, and was present in all our Steering Group feedback meetings. The Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Report was produced by independent national expert consultants AECOM. They identified the constraints and issues pertaining to each site and scored the sites as red (unlikely to be appropriate for allocation due to constraints), amber (potentially suitable if the identified constraints could be addressed) or green (most appropriate for allocating). 16 sites were considered, with 3 sites rated as 'green' and a further 5 as 'amber'. In addition, 6 sites were considered as potentially suitable for conversions / windfall development.
- 4.13 It is important to note that within the parish is the Grade II\* listed park and garden of Milton Abbey and the Milton Abbas Conservation Area. Furthermore, the majority of Milton Abbas Parish and all development sites under consideration are within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). These constraints were given very careful consideration as part of the process.
- 4.14 Both amber and green-rated sites were considered in detail during the February 2019 site selection consultation process, and checks made that the decision to reject the red-rated sites was correct. Feedback from the consultation, including points made about local knowledge of flooding (not reflected in the national flood risk maps) and similarities between amber and green sites, were considered as part of the site selection process.

## 4.15 *Consultation*

- 4.16 The NDP sets out the community's views on the development and use of land in their neighbourhood, so consultation with the community at all stages has been a vital part of the process.
- 4.17 The preparation of this NDP has been informed throughout by a comprehensive programme of consultation during the last three years. The following have been major consultation exercises:
- Initial scoping consultation June/July 2016 which received 35 questionnaire responses. The results were presented on 24 August 2016 in a village meeting attended by over 60 people, who voted enthusiastically and by overwhelming majority to support the progression of the NDP.
  - A Phase 2 Consultation July-August 2018 outlining early policy and development site ideas, which generated 140 responses, the results of which were presented to a village meeting of over 70 people 2 September 2018 – see: [http://wordpress-138321-400696.cloudwaysapps.com/wpcontent/uploads/2018/09/NDP\\_Update\\_and\\_Consultation\\_Feedback\\_20180902.pdf](http://wordpress-138321-400696.cloudwaysapps.com/wpcontent/uploads/2018/09/NDP_Update_and_Consultation_Feedback_20180902.pdf)
  - An options consultation for policy ideas and development sites held in February 2019, from which 72 completed questionnaires were received
  - A consultation in June 2019 on Green Spaces and Important Views which received 28 questionnaire responses
  - The pre-submission consultation on the draft NDP, which ran for six weeks from 8 July – 18 August 2019, which received 36 survey responses from local residents / organisations, two responses from agents representing landowners, and 7 responses from statutory consultees, such as Dorset Council, Natural England and Wessex Water.
- 4.18 The major consultations above have been supported throughout the last three years with community engagement and project updates via the following:
- Regular articles and reports in The Bulletin, a free monthly magazine available to everyone in the parish and hand delivered
  - Ongoing updates via the NDP website at [www.miltonabbaspc.org.uk/ndp](http://www.miltonabbaspc.org.uk/ndp)

- Regular updates at Parish Council (PC) meetings where the NDP has been a standing Agenda item and regularly discussed in the Report or Open Forum section of the meeting, and included in the PC minutes
- Village drop-in sessions (e.g. 34 people attended the drop-in sessions on 9 and 13 February 2019) and attendance at general village meetings (e.g. an NDP information desk held 18 May 2018)
- Replying to correspondence via [ndp@miltonabbaspc.org.uk](mailto:ndp@miltonabbaspc.org.uk) and personal visits and discussions by the team with people who have raised specific NDP issues

4.19 Posters and information at the recognised distribution points in the community (the Post Office, the Surgery and Steeptonbill Farm Shop). Also, Facebook messaging for key events. The consultations have informed the contents and direction of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

## 4.20 ***NDP Assessments and Legacy Documents***

4.21 The following assessments were undertaken by the NDP group to inform the policies:

- Housing Density Assessment
- Important Views Assessment
- Local Green Spaces Assessment

Previous legacy documents e.g.:

- Milton Abbas Village Appraisal 1996
- Milton Abbas Conservation Area Appraisal January 2001
- Milton Abbas Consultation Findings 2001
- Milton Abbas Parish Plan 2003
- Milton Abbas Conservation Area Appraisal March 2014

## 5 The Vision and Objectives

- 5.1 The policies outlined later in this Plan are all designed to help achieve a 'Vision' for Milton Abbas by 2031. The Vision for Milton Abbas is as follows:

### VISION STATEMENT

Our Vision is to meet the local housing needs of Milton Abbas in a positive way that is appreciative of our unique landscape, heritage, distinctive rural features and residents.

- 5.2 Five main Objectives flow from our Vision statement

### OBJECTIVES

#### **Objective 1: Integrated Housing Location & Density**

To ensure that any new development is integrated with existing development and mirrors the low density of housing that is a defining feature throughout the Parish, whilst minimising the impact on existing residents and the landscape.

#### **Objective 2: Meet Local Housing Needs**

To ensure housing meets the needs of local people and supports the aim of maintaining a sustainable community for the long term.

#### **Objective 3: In Keeping Design Style**

To ensure that new development within the village is aesthetically sympathetic to the Parish's heritage assets and complements the environment.

#### **Objective 4: Supporting Service and Infrastructure**

To minimise the negative impact of new development on the existing local infrastructure and where possible seek opportunities to make enhancements.

#### **Objective 5: Protects and Enhances Locally Important Features**

Local features that are important to the community are protected in policy and that any development helps to enhance sustainability in the local community.

- 5.3 The above Vision and Objectives formed a major part of our February 2019 options consultation and achieved very high levels of endorsement from the 72 respondents to the survey.



## 6 Milton Abbas Policies

*Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Development Plan policies have been developed to meet our Plan Objectives in line with national and local planning policies. The table in 8.1 (Policy Terms) provides clarification of the terminology used within the policies.*

### 6.1 **Spatial Strategy**

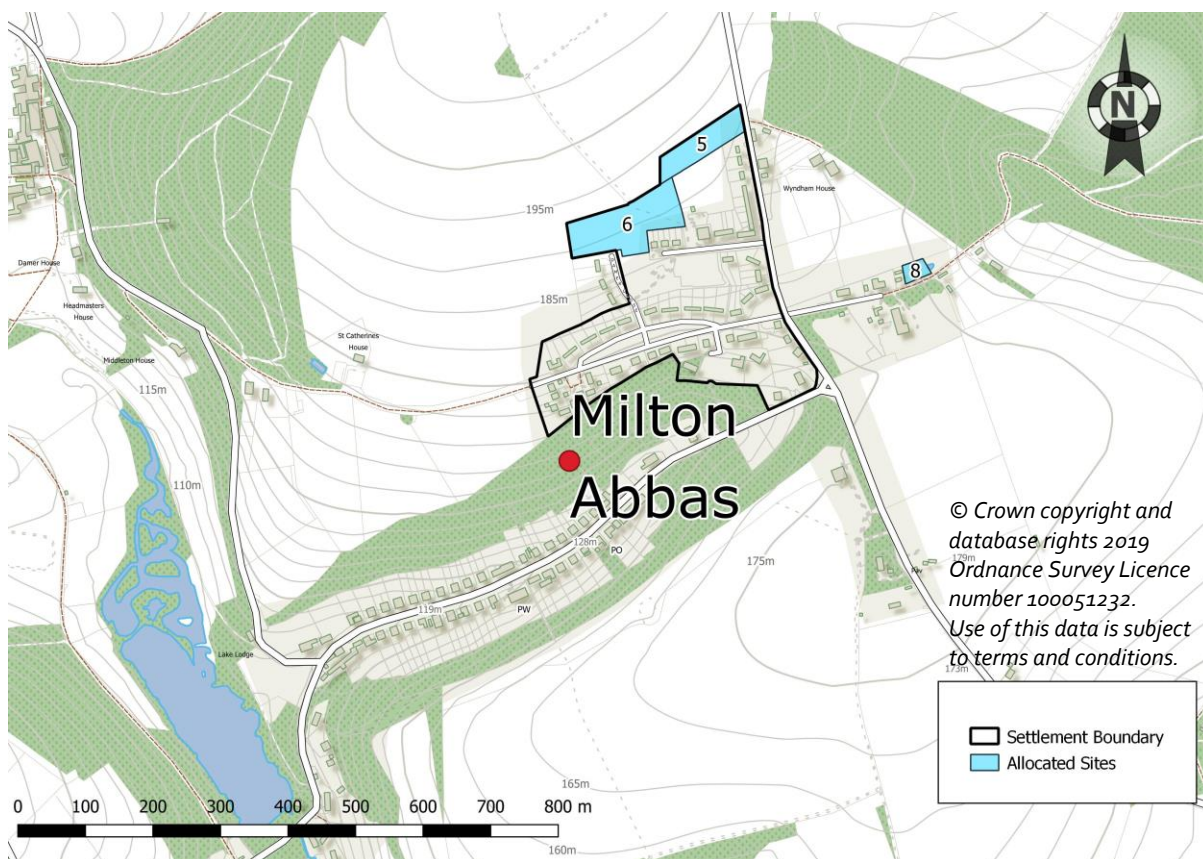
- 6.2 North Dorset's Local Plan Policy 2 'Core spatial strategy' identifies Milton Abbas as one of the larger villages for 'the focus of growth to meet the local needs outside the four main towns'. North Dorset's Local Plan Policy 6 'Housing distribution' apportions at least 825 dwellings to be delivered in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages).
- 6.3 Milton Abbas is the smallest of the 18 villages (in terms of number of dwellings) expected to share some of this growth. Taking into account previous developments, updated population projections, evidence of local need and national policies to boost housing, the Milton Abbas Housing Needs Assessment determined a housing target of 20 new homes for the Plan period 2019-2031.
- 6.4 Some 16 potential sites were submitted following a call for sites in October 2018. Altogether these could accommodate more than 150 dwellings (at a density of 15 dwellings per hectare), far in excess of what is needed and would be appropriate to the scale and character of the village.
- 6.5 AECOM was commissioned to conduct a detailed and independent assessment of the 16 sites using their standard methodology, which identifies the social, economic and environmental issues relating to each site to produce a rating either of 'red' (unlikely to be appropriate for allocation due to constraints), 'amber' (potentially suitable if the identified constraints can be addressed) or 'green' (considered suitable in whole or part for development). Their February 2019 report concluded that for 4 of the 16 sites it was not appropriate to provide a single green / amber / red rating for the whole site and instead they split these 4 sites into two separate colour ratings. Consequently, the AECOM report consisted of 20 separate site ratings (3 green, 5 amber, 6 red and 6 sites that were not rated as red, amber or green, but as suitable for 'conversion' or 'windfall' development).
- 6.6 In reviewing AECOM's report, the NDP group decided that a comprehensive local consultation was required to understand the community's views about AECOM's site assessments. AECOM's 'amber' site 11 ('Land north of The Street') was excluded from the consultation because it had recently been granted planning permission at the time of the survey. The resulting options consultation survey was completed in March 2019 and invited respondents to:
- make any comments / objections to the suggestion that AECOM's red sites be excluded from the NDP
  - answer a yes / no question on whether the NDP should include AECOM's recommended conversion / windfall sites in the Plan
  - rate all green and amber sites on a five-point scale from 'highly suitable' to 'highly unsuitable' to help inform the decision on which sites to include in the Plan
- 6.7 The options survey was completed by 72 respondents. In relation to AECOM's red sites, the vast majority of respondents made no objection to them being excluded from consideration. There were two requests to include/reconsider a site (site 4) and one statement that too many excluded sites would be open to challenge. The appraisal of site 4 was re-checked and included clear reasons for the site's rejection related to strong landscape and heritage concerns.
- 6.8 In relation to AECOM's recommended conversion / windfall sites, over two-thirds (69%) of respondents supported their inclusion in the Plan.
- 6.9 The survey results for the green and amber sites are detailed in Appendix A of the Consultation Statement, along with the methodology used to arrive at the community's preference scores.

- 6.10 In deciding which sites to include in the Pre-Submission Plan, the NDP group agreed the following decision making criteria for the NDP's site selection process:
- that the Housing Needs Assessment was paramount, and that therefore sites should be selected in order of preference until the required number of houses (20) was met or slightly exceeded (to allow some flexibility if the estimated site capacities were not met)
  - that the order of preference for sites be based on the consideration of four factors: a) AECOM's conclusions b) the level of community support for sites c) the Strategic Environmental Assessment conclusions and d) any additional benefits pertaining to sites (e.g. employment opportunities)
  - that the conflict of interest policy included in the Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018 was followed precisely (which included the requirement that anyone with a perceived or actual conflict of interest in site selection had to abstain from any decision making on the site concerned)
- 6.11 The above criteria were applied rigorously throughout the process of drafting the policies. Therefore, the sites included in the Plan have been selected via a positive process of including sites in order of preference rather than a negative one of excluding sites.
- 6.12 Following consultation feedback the landowner of site 10 confirmed that their site should be withdrawn from the plan. A number of changes were also made to sites 5 and 6 in response to comments from the Dorset AONB team.
- 6.13 Within the sites assessed were 5 sites (Sites 1 and 2: at Delcombe Farm; Site 3: at Greenhill Down; Site 15: at Long Close Farm; and Site 16: at Milton Mills) containing buildings that could potentially be converted for residential use. The adopted Local Plan already allows for conversions and that Local Plan policy (Policy 29) does not need to be duplicated in this Plan. A conservative estimate of 4 dwellings is estimated to come forward from these sites, in recognition that some conversions may not meet all the criteria in the Local Plan policy and/or may conflict with the Local Plan policies that seek to protect existing employment sites.
- 6.14 Three sites (5, 6 and 8) have therefore been specifically included in the plan. These were considered suitable in whole or part for development, scoring well in terms of the independent site assessments, and were also well supported by local residents in the consultation (all enjoyed a level of community support in excess of 75% of responses). Site 6 is mainly owned by the Parish Council who have also agreed to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing than the Local Plan requirement, together with additional parking for the Community Gardens, Surgery, Play Park / Recreation Ground, providing further benefits than would normally be possible. A small section of the site is owned by Sovereign, a Housing Association.
- 6.15 As a result of the pre-submission consultation the capacity estimate for this site was adjusted from 12 to 15 dwellings. Altogether, the site allocations and windfall allowance should support sufficient housing to more than meet the identified target of 20 dwellings. The development sites are summarised in the following table:

Preferred Development Sites	Estimated number of dwellings
Conversions of existing buildings	Estimated 4 dwellings (5 potential sites identified with confirmed landowner interest)
Site 5: Land at Langham Farm (north of the Community Gardens)	6 dwellings (including a financial contribution towards affordable housing)
Site 6: Land at Catherines Well (west of the Community Gardens)	Up to 15 dwellings (including 65% as affordable dwellings)
Site 8: Land at Catherines Well (east of Hill House Bungalows)	1 dwelling
Site 11: Land north of The Street (consented under 2/2018/1365/FUL)	Permission to erect 2 dwellings (demolish existing) granted – i.e. 1 additional dwelling created
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Approximately 27 dwellings</b>

Table 1: Development site summary

6.16 The future development of any site included within a Development Plan is subject to the individual landowners (who put their sites forward for consideration and therefore clearly wish to develop them) and the NDP cannot mandate development timescales. It is expected that these sites will be developed within the Plan period (to 2031) and the 30% increase in site allocations above the target housing will help provide some flexibility if there is a delay in bringing forward one or more sites. The rate of development will be monitored and if necessary, an early review of the plan



could be scheduled if there were any concerns over delivery timescales.

Figure 2: Map showing the allocated NDP sites and revised settlement boundary

6.17 This level of development in these locations should not adversely impact any of the environmental designations such as the quality of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the historic importance of the Conservation Area, Registered Parkland and many Listed Buildings. The Dorset AONB Team raised concerns about site 5 and whether it would fail to conserve the pattern of tight knit villages and views of key landmarks (contrary to the landscape character guidance for the area <https://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/resource/upper-milborne-valley/>). Whilst the site would extend beyond the existing area of settlement, changes have been made to the policy to ensure that the northward extension to the settlement is kept to a minimum, and further guidance included on the appropriate scale of development and landscaping of the site.

6.18 One additional point to note is that most of the village lies in the catchment of the Bere Stream and therefore Poole Harbour, so any residential development needs to be nitrogen neutral (which in most cases will mean making a financial contribution under the Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)).

6.19 The settlement boundary in the adopted Local Plan does not cover the whole settlement as it is centred on St Catherine's Well and excludes The Street. The only change to the boundary is to include Sites 5 and 6, as shown on Figure 2, which immediately abuts this area. It would not make sense to include Site 8 within its own settlement boundary, or to extend the settlement boundary arbitrarily to link to it, but its allocation should not be seen as conflicting with the general 'countryside' policies that would otherwise apply to this area.

## POLICY MA1. SPATIAL STRATEGY

Provision is made to achieve at least 20 additional homes in Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Plan Area between 2019 and 2031, which will meet the projected local needs of the community.

Sites are allocated in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which together with the potential for limited infill within the settlement boundary and the conversion of existing rural buildings allowed under the Local Plan policy, should meet and potentially exceed this projected need by a small margin.

The allocated sites are Site 5: Land at Langham Farm (north of the Community Gardens), Site 6: Land at Catherines Well (west of the Community Gardens) and Site 8: Land at Catherines Well (east of Hill House Bungalows).

Any net new residential development (including holiday lets) will need to avoid giving rise to any adverse impacts on the integrity of Poole Harbour European site. This can be achieved by adhering to the Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD.

The release of unallocated greenfield sites outside the settlement boundary for open market housing should therefore be resisted.

## 6.20 *Low Housing Density*

6.21 Housing density was identified as an important factor early within the Plan development. The July 2018 consultation identified housing density as an important consideration. In our February 2019 survey 72% of respondents agreed with the statement 'that any new development is fully integrated with existing development and mirrors the low density of housing that is a defining feature throughout the Parish currently'.

6.22 The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) states that Plans

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*"should support development that makes efficient use of land" but recognises that this should take into account "the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens)" It goes on to say that low densities should be avoided "where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs".*

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6.23 North Dorset's Local Plan Policy 7 'Delivering Homes' section on rural density states

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*"The design and layout of any development with a housing element should seek to achieve a residential density that:*

- (a) makes effective use of the site; and*
- (b) respects the character and distinctiveness of the locality; and*
- (c) is acceptable in terms of design and amenity, both for the intended occupants of the new development and the occupants of existing development in the vicinity."*

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6.24 Milton Abbas has a low density character. The Dorset Historic Towns Project report on Milton Abbas (February 2011) states that, within The Street, 'The wide verges and spacing of the houses are probably a consequence of the village being part of the designed parkland landscape'. Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan Policy C4.h states "Avoid large scale and/or high density housing and employment development at settlement edges where such development weakens the character and appearance of the countryside." And their landscape guidelines for this particular area (<https://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/resource/upper-milborne->

[valley/](#) refer to ensuring that “new housing development is complimentary to settlement scale, form and density”

- 6.25 A Housing Density Assessment was undertaken and shows that the current density within the defined settlement boundary (focused on Catherines Well) is 13 dwellings per hectare. If you also include the surrounding residential areas within the village (such as along The Street) this value decreases further – and reinforce the point that standard densities of 20 - 30 dwellings per hectare that may be appropriate elsewhere would be out of character here in Milton Abbas.
- 6.26 If the open amenity spaces are excluded from the assessment of density, the density is just below 15 dwellings/ha. Although there are small pockets of land within Milton Abbas that have a density greater than 15 dwellings/ha, these tend to be incongruous and out of keeping with the areas that have developed at the more typical, lower, densities.
- 6.27 A maximum of 15 dwellings/ha has therefore been adopted to ensure that the historic, rural character of the area is maintained in any future developments specified for allocated sites. This density standard should be applied across the whole site (and potentially taking into account the land immediately surrounding the site) to provide an appropriate measure of density, rather than to each individual plot.
- 6.28 There is no anticipated shortage of land either for the Plan period or beyond. Therefore, setting a low density requirement for housing is appropriate and justified in this particular context, as it maintains the essential character of the area which is dependent on the space around houses in the landscape that is an integral part of ‘Capability’ Brown’s landscape design.

## POLICY MA2. LOW HOUSING DENSITY

To preserve the rural, open and green character of the village, building densities should be of low density. Whilst densities may vary across the site, the average density across the whole site (including open space, roads and parking areas) should not exceed 15 dwellings per hectare.

## 6.29 *Parking*

- 6.30 On street parking in the village is a notable problem for both The Street and Catherines Well areas. Parking issues were raised in the July 2018 consultation and the need for a bespoke parking policy endorsed in the February 2019 consultation.
- 6.31 Although on-street parking can sometimes slow traffic down, parked cars too close to junctions and on both sides of the road can create safety issues, block access for emergency vehicles, tractors and deliveries/collections. Parked cars on pavements can force pedestrians into the road and front gardens turned into parking areas can be a detriment to the rural local character of the area. Pressure on local parking spaces on local roads is also increased due to the popularity of tourists visiting the Capability Brown landscape, patients attending the Surgery and families using the Play Park.





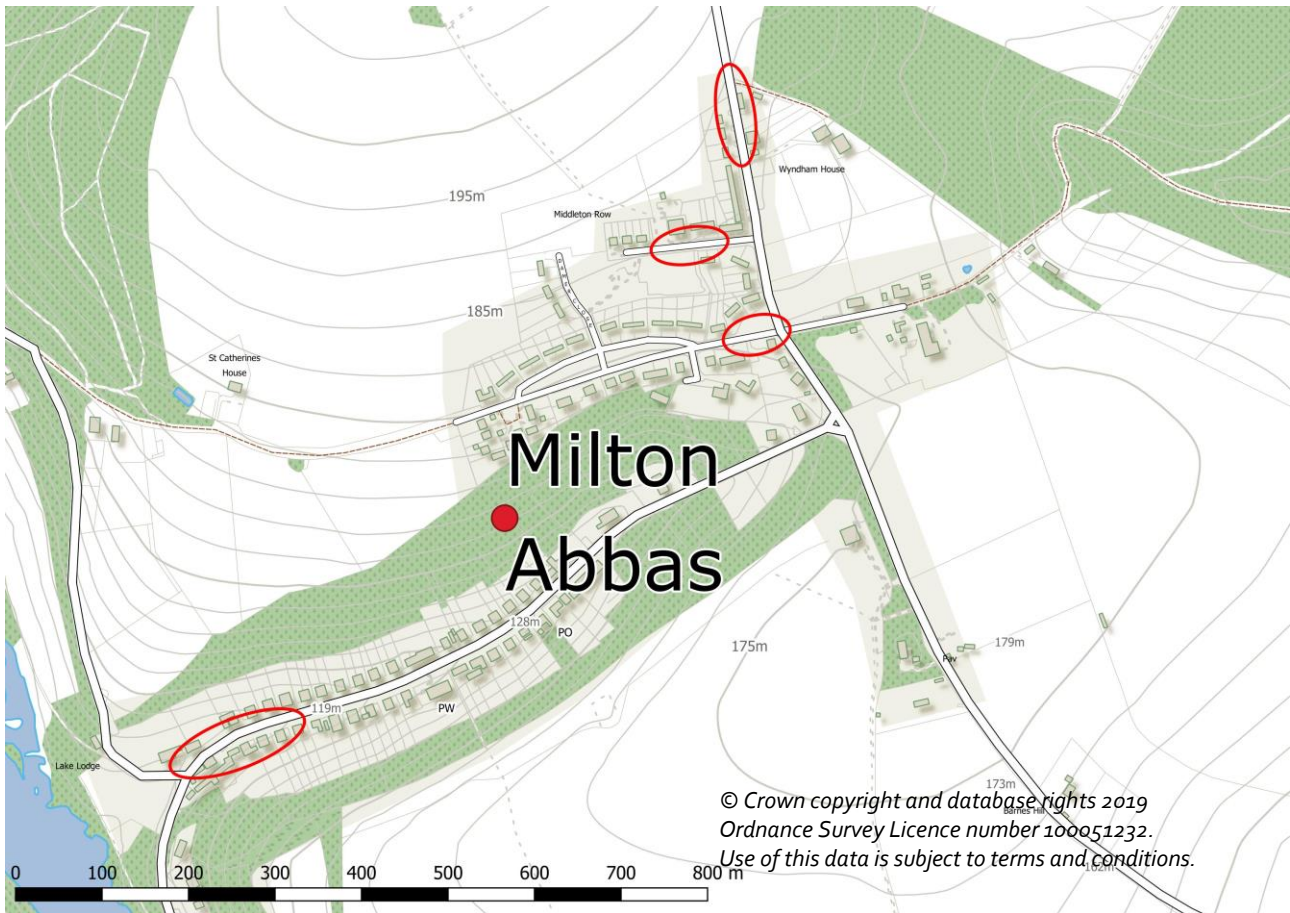


Figure 3: Image showing tractor navigating parked cars

- 6.32 The image above shows four particularly sensitive parking locations along the C classified road and close to the Surgery and Play Park.
- 6.33 Milton Abbas has a high car or van ownership level. In 2011 57.7% of households in Milton Abbas had 2 or more cars (this is compared to 30.3% in North Dorset (ONS 2011 Census KS404EW)). Milton Abbas does not have access to public transport, other than the daily service subsidised by the Local Education Authority so that children can get to and from school.
- 6.34 The proposed parking requirements should provide marginally more parking spaces than the County standard, to better reflect the real-life situation of the village of high car ownership levels and to hopefully reduce problems that arise from people parking their cars on pavements or verges when there is insufficient provision for their needs. Care will need to be taken in designing parking into schemes to avoid large, unbroken expanses of tarmac.

**POLICY MA3: PARKING**

All development should include sufficient off-road parking to meet anticipated need with new dwellings normally being required to provide a minimum of 2 car parking spaces within their grounds and 1 visitor space per 2 dwellings. There must be adequate turning to allow forward entry onto any C classified road.

The design of parking provision will need to respect the character of the area, use permeable surfacing materials, and avoid large areas of hard standing that would be visible from the highway or other public areas. Garage blocks (i.e. multi-dwelling garaging concentrated in stand-alone blocks) are not considered in keeping with the village look and feel and will be resisted.

## 6.35 *The Pattern of Development and Street scape*

- 6.36 The following section and policy are about how development design should aim to respect and enhance Milton Abbas' distinctive character.
- 6.37 This was identified as an important issue for the community during the July 2018 consultation where 38% of respondents spontaneously made comments relating to the need for development to consider sympathetic character, minimal visual impact and taking opportunities to enhance the area. In our 2019 survey, 72% of respondents agreed with the objective that any new development should be aesthetically sympathetic to the Parish's heritage assets and environment.
- 6.38 The current scale and massing of building and the open spaces of verges and space between buildings helps define the distinctive low density appearance that is an important distinctive feature. The Dorset Historic Towns Project report on Milton Abbas (February 2011) provides a useful review of each area of the village and important characteristics. It describes The Street (pictured below on the left) as follows:

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*"There is a single slightly sinuous street rising up to the east, with wide grass verges on both sides. The majority of the houses are identical paired cottages set in identically sized plots along a common building line, forming a harmonious picturesque street scape framed by the steep wooded slopes behind. The wide verges and spacing of the houses are probably a consequence of the village being part of the designed parkland landscape."*

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- 6.39 The description of the area around Catherines Well (pictured above right) includes the following:

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*"The settlement pattern is low density housing with the houses primarily aligned along the streets, set back behind front gardens and with relatively wide grass verges." "The original 1950's housing development is built on a crescent with wide green verges." "The roads have a semi-rural aspect with good views onto the surrounding countryside."*

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- 6.40 The topography of the area has very much influenced the street layout and it would be appropriate for this to continue. The low density of development and woodland areas also mean that the countryside penetrates into the very heart of the village, and it will be important that existing native tree specimens and native hedgerow boundaries are retained (or replaced) in order that new development retains this rural character.

- 6.41 It should be noted that this policy would not preclude outbuildings or extensions to existing dwellings, either to the rear or to the side, provided that they are of a scale that would be subordinate to the existing dwelling and that, if positioned to the side, not substantially close the gaps between buildings.

#### **POLICY MA4. THE PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT AND STREET SCAPE**

To ensure that any new development respects the rural character and historic distinctiveness of Milton Abbas within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- a) The design should have regard to the local prevailing scale, massing and spacing and be appropriate to ensure that the rural and village character of Milton Abbas is preserved and allows for views and access to the countryside beyond
- b) Views along the streets and roadways should be carefully considered and designed as they will be a vital and distinctive feature in Milton Abbas
- c) The layout of new development should reflect the gently curved and generally set-back nature of building lines, using the site's natural topography where possible.
- d) There should be no back-garden development that would be overbearing on the principal buildings that form the street scape or that would significantly affect the massing of, and open space between, buildings
- e) The layout design should avoid adverse impacts to neighbouring properties of loss of privacy or being overlooked.
- f) Native trees and other natural features within the site should be retained where practicable.

#### **6.42 Building Design**

- 6.43 The dominant building materials are described in the Historic Town Survey as follows:

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*"Cob and thatch are the dominant building materials of the late 18th century. The cottages, the Hambro Arms and parts of the former brewery have plastered cob walls and thatched roofs. Part of the brewery is weather boarded. The old brewery barn is of brick and flint with tiled roof. The church is of Greensand ashlar with dressings of Ham Hill stone and roofed with slate and tile. Most of the other buildings are of brick and flint, including the Almshouse, school and New Lodge. Roofs are of slate or tile. The 20th Century buildings are of brick with tile roofs"*

*"The 1950's housing is of red brick or painted brick with tile roofs. The later housing is of red, brown and yellowish brick with tile or slate roofs. New Close cottages are rendered with tiled roofs. Some of the houses on Athelstan Way are partially rendered."*

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- 6.44 Buildings are generally two storeys, with many pairs of dwellings and some terraces, and some single storey and one-and-a-half storey houses. However the height of buildings is also influenced by the roof pitch and the local landform. For example, the relatively recent homes built at Damer Close, at between 8.5m to 9.5m to the ridge, appear overly tall (compared to surrounding development) because of their more elevated position, the storey heights and how the land was built up (rather than dug into) in response to the slope. It is therefore proposed that building heights are carefully examined particularly in relation to those of existing dwellings in the surrounding area and whether they may have an undue visual impact.
- 6.45 Some of the designs reflect the historic use, for example as lodge houses, almshouses, estate-workers cottages, school buildings, ecclesiastical buildings, brewery and maltings.

- 6.46 There are often two distinct views on design. On one hand, using traditional designs to reflect the historic character of places such as Milton Abbas (but certainly not allowing poor imitations) whilst, on the other hand, allowing new and innovative design to emerge that may become the 'period housing' of the future.
- 6.47 Notwithstanding, there was a desire to ensure that the character of Milton Abbas was not adversely affected by inappropriately designed new development. There was an acceptance that new development must take place and design allowed to evolve but this needs to be balanced carefully against protecting the existing rural village character and its surrounding picturesque countryside. This was reflected in both the July 2018 and February 2019 consultation responses. In our 2019 survey, 72% of respondents agreed with the objective that any new development should be aesthetically sympathetic to the Parish's heritage assets and environment.
- 6.48 What was also clear is that, when we talk about good design in relation to buildings and spaces, it is important that we should also put people first and the likely needs of the prospective occupiers must be provided for. This means considering the likely end users over the lifetime of that development and how the home might be adapted to meet their needs – are they likely to have mobility restrictions and may need to use a wheelchair, have young children at home who will want to play outside or other similar qualities?

#### **POLICY MA5. BUILDING DESIGN**

New construction should be of a rural village character in terms of scale, form and materials and celebrate Milton Abbas' heritage.

The choice of materials should help a new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings but does not have to exactly match in terms of colour, texture, grain and reflectivity. Materials should be sympathetic to the local character and history of the area, visually attractive, durable and affordable to maintain.

New homes in Milton Abbas should not generally exceed two storeys and the ridge heights should be harmonious with and not notably exceed those within the Milton Abbas Settlement Boundary and in the immediate area of the planned development.

The likely needs of the prospective occupiers (depending on house type and size) in terms of adequate storage and drying space, wheelchair / pushchair access, temporary live-in care requirements, access to fresh air and daylight and outdoor play, must be considered and where practical provided for in the design.

The design and access statement shall identify the design principles employed and identify how specific features within the design relate to considerations for the prospective occupiers.

#### **6.49 *Important Views***

- 6.50 There are a significant number of views across the countryside around Milton Abbas, all within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, and it would be impossible to list all of them. However, the following have been identified as particularly valued, either because they reinforce the rural setting of the village (which is an integral part of its character), or provide key views of Milton Abbey and the 18th century 'Model Village' which are central to the character of the village and are established visitor attractions. It is important that these views to and from the village are respected in decisions about future development. So, for example, any new developments or modifications to existing properties should not obscure these views or detract from their enjoyment by introducing incongruous structures in clear view.

- 6.51 In May / June 2019 we consulted the local community on a number of potential views from public vantage points that had been initially identified by the Steering Group, to establish whether these views were valued and if any other views should be added to this list. The resulting views are included in Table 2 below.
- 6.52 The Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Development Plan Important View Assessment 2019 provides the methodology and reasons for including the listed views. It is recognised that views 1-4 are only a sample of significant views from within the Milton Abbey Registered Parks and Gardens and many others were proposed in consultation responses and would be relevant to protect given the particular designation. As such, their exclusion should not be read as implying that those other views are not of value.

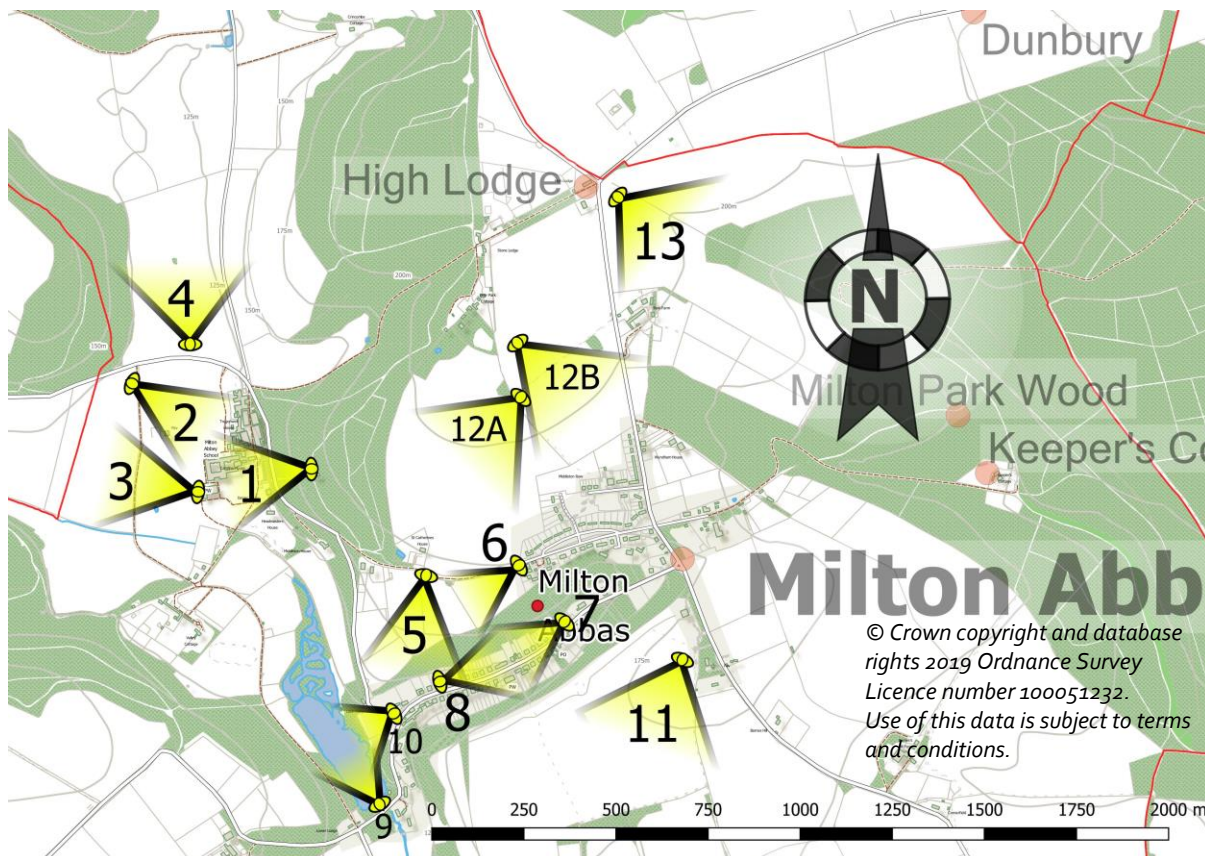


Figure 4: Map of views

Ref no.	Grid ref.	Description of view
1	E380110 N102335	Looking west from St Catherine's Chapel to Milton Abbey and across the valley to the wooded Melmoth's Hill beyond.
2	E379636 N102636	When travelling from Hilton towards Milton Abbas this view is the first sighting of Milton Abbey and the adjacent 18 <sup>th</sup> century house, and shows them perfectly in the setting of Capability Brown's landscape.
3	E379797 N102270	Looking west from Milton Abbey towards Hilton and Melmoth's Hill showing Capability Brown's landscape.
4	E379769 N102658	The view from Abbey Gates looking north showing the Capability Brown landscape of Delcombe Valley.
5	E380438 N102041	From the track near St Catherine's House, looking south across fields to the woods above The Street, and beyond in a wide, far-reaching vista to the Purbeck Hills and Dorset coastline.
6	E380660 N102089	Looking west from the path to Jane's Wood across pasture towards Melmoth's Hill.
7	E380754 N101868	From the high end of The Street showing the 18 <sup>th</sup> century thatched cottages, St James' Church, the Almshouse and Reading Rooms, looking towards the lake and wooded hillside beyond.

8	E380403 N101735	From the bottom of The Street looking uphill this view shows the thatched cottages of the 18 <sup>th</sup> century 'Model Village' with the Almshouse and church set in a gently curving wooded valley.
9	E380285 N101414	From the road at the south end of the lake, tantalising glimpses of this iconic Capability Brown landscaping feature can be seen.
10	E380347 N101680	Looking south west from the road junction at the bottom of The Street towards the lake and the wooded hillside beyond. In winter this offers a view of the lake and its surroundings.
11	E381150 N101863	Looking south and south west from the bridleway and footpath at Windmill Clump on Hoggen Down across farmland and Dorset countryside to coastal hills.
12a	E380655 N102550	From the bridleway going north from Catherines Well towards Deer Park, this site offers wide, panoramic views across Dorset countryside from the Purbeck Hills in the south to the coastal hills and Hardy's Monument in the west.
12b	E380624 N102641	From the bridleway going north from Catherines Well towards Deer Park, this site offers wide panoramic views across Dorset countryside looking south east towards Isle of Wight, Poole Harbour and the Purbeck Hills.
13	E380900 N103140	At the junction of the bridleway with the C31 road at High Lodge there are panoramic views across farmland and forestry to the Isle of Wight, Poole Harbour and the Purbeck Hills.

Table 2: Important Views

## POLICY MA6. IMPORTANT VIEWS

Local Important Views (listed in Table 2) have been identified as valued by the local community and should be respected. Development that would significantly intrude and impact on their enjoyment, by virtue of scale, massing, design or location, will be resisted.



Above: examples of the views (left – View 3 from Milton Abbey, right – View 9 from the road at the south end of the lake)

## 6.53 Local Green Spaces

6.54 The countryside around Milton Abbas is highly valued by residents. Much of it is already protected under existing policies relating to the relevant designations (e.g. AONB, Conservation Area, designated wildlife sites etc.). However, there are a number of local green spaces that hold a particular local value, which merit strong protection against development. To qualify as a Local Green Space, areas must be:

- reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

- 6.55 Land which may need to be released for housing, employment or community buildings / infrastructure in the longer term should not be designated as a Local Green Space as the designation is intended to last beyond the end of the Plan.
- 6.56 In identifying possible Local Green Spaces, the Steering Group reviewed those spaces given a similar designation (Important Open and Wooded Areas) in the saved policies of the 2003 North Dorset Local Plan. However as this designation was only applied to sites within a settlement boundary, other green spaces outside the settlement boundary were also considered.
- 6.57 Table 3 lists the green spaces that are identified as particularly important to the local community, for the reasons identified for protection. As with the important views, these were consulted on in May / June 2019 to check that the community was in agreement that the right spaces had been identified.

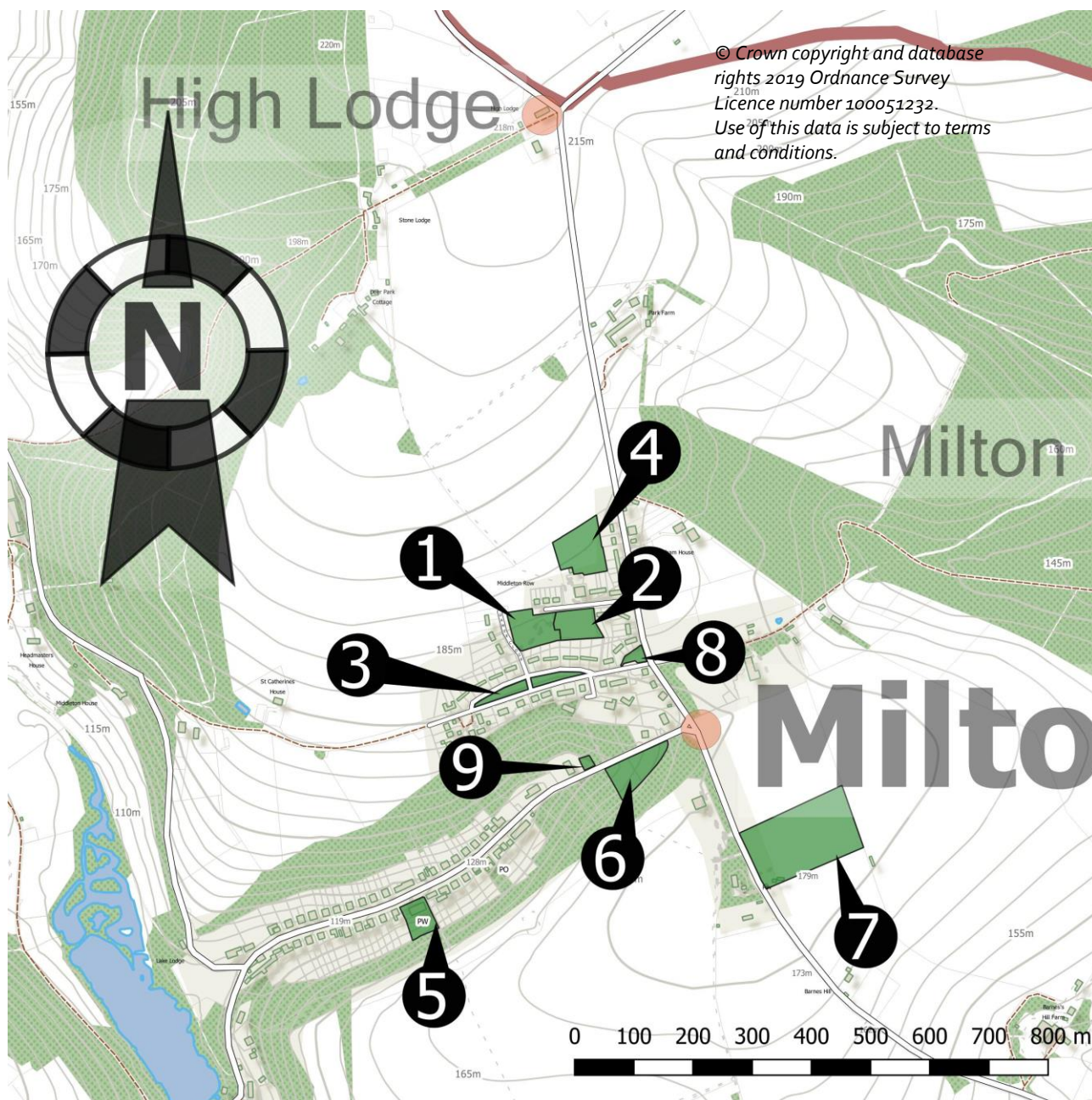


Figure 5: Map of local green spaces

Site name	Grid ref.	Statutory Designations	Description and purpose
<b>1 Millennium Green</b>	E380826 N102250	AONB	An open space with a small 'band stand', barbecue, benches, trees and shrubs and an all-weather pathway linking the upper and

			lower parts of Catherines Well. Used for recreation and occasional village events.
<b>2 Play Park</b>	E380862 N102271	AONB	Adjacent to the Millennium Green is a newly equipped and well used play park.
<b>3 Catherines Well 'D'</b>	E380826 N102158	AONB	A grassed open space between the access roads in the lower part of Catherines Well with several mature trees and shrubs. Used as a play area.
<b>4 Community Gardens</b>	E380927 N102381	AONB	Community Gardens tended by an active village gardening community.
<b>5 Churchyard</b>	E280650 N101770	Conservation Area, AONB	Surrounding St James's Church with well-tended graves in the lower section and a wildlife area at the top.
<b>6 Cemetery</b>	E380994 N102010	Conservation Area, AONB	A well-tended and well-frequented cemetery
<b>7 Sports Field</b>	E381299 N101897	AONB	A playing field with pavilion and changing facilities at the top of the village.
<b>8 Bus Stop</b>	E381017 N102210	AONB	A green area next to the bus stop in Catherines Well which children use as a play area while waiting for the school bus.
<b>9 Picnic Area / Old Village Hall Site</b>	E380944 N102037	Conservation Area, AONB	A picnic area with tables towards the top of The Street.

Table 3: Local Green Spaces

## POLICY MA7: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

Local Green Spaces (listed in Table 3) have been identified as important to the local community. Other than in very special circumstances, no development may take place which would harm the enjoyment of these spaces or would undermine their importance



Above: examples of the Local Green Spaces (left – LGS2 The Play Park, right – LGS9 The Picnic Area)

## 6.58 *Dark Skies*

6.59 Dark Skies are an important feature of Milton Abbas, contributing hugely to its character and atmosphere and are a privilege to residents present and new. Dark Skies allow views of the stars, the Milky Way and promote a wonderful atmosphere of being off the beaten city track shrouded in electric light all night. Dark Skies also partner perfectly with the extremely low sound levels experienced by the village.

6.60 Excessive light in the night sky from outdoor lighting can cause intrusive and unnecessary pollution in rural areas by:



- affecting the character or appearance of the area beyond the development area
- creating a nuisance to nearby residents and/or road users in terms of glare
- creating light spillage or unnecessarily high levels of light which can impede views of the night sky and prevent people from sleeping
- disturbing wildlife
- additionally, excessive light is a significant waste of energy.

- 6.61 Therefore, it is important in the interests of visual amenity and energy conservation that light pollution be prevented. Currently, there are no streetlights anywhere in the village and villagers are used to using torches when dark.
- 6.62 Key Objectives in the Neighbourhood Development Plan are 'In keeping design style' and 'protects and enhances locally important features'. The dark skies policy is fundamental to ensure that new development within the village is aesthetically sympathetic to the Parish's heritage assets and complements the environment.
- 6.63 The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty guidance appropriate for Milton Abbas states to "Reduce the impact of associated features, including lighting".
- 6.64 In the February 2018 Options Consultation, 84% of respondents (the highest positive score in the entire survey) endorsed the importance of protecting and enhancing the intrinsic quality of our dark night skies.

#### **POLICY MA8: DARK SKIES**

Development should be designed to conserve and enhance the intrinsic quality of the dark night skies. The use of street lighting will not be supported. External lighting schemes will not be supported unless absolutely necessary for health and safety reasons, in which case they should be designed to meet or exceed the level of protection appropriate to environmental zone 1 (as defined by the Institute of Lighting Professionals).

### **6.65 *Affordable and Local Housing***

- 6.66 The national definition of affordable housing within the National Planning Policy Framework includes a broad range of possible housing solutions, including rented accommodation kept at affordable values, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and shared ownership homes types. The full definition is repeated in the Glossary at the back of this document.
- 6.67 The threshold for when affordable homes will be required as part of any new housing development depends on the size of the site and its location. In general, national policy expects all major sites (of 10 or more homes or that would create a floor area of over 1,000m<sup>2</sup>) to have some affordable housing, including an element of affordable home ownership. This threshold can be reduced to 5 or more dwellings in AONBs. Rural exception sites are another way to bring forward affordable housing-led sites, which can include a small element of open market housing to make them viable.

- 6.68 In our initial community engagement survey in 2016, a fifth of respondents spontaneously mentioned that one of the things that needed to change in Milton Abbas was increased availability of affordable or sheltered housing. In our July 2018 survey 29% of our 140 respondents spontaneously said that the most important thing that housing development should consider was issues relating to affordable housing for locals, first time buyers and to rent. In our 2019 survey 72% of respondents endorsed the proposal: That a mix of dwelling type is included in any new development in order to meet the needs of local people and to support the aim of maintaining a sustainable community for the long term. There was also clear support for having at least half of the new homes to be delivered and controlled by a Milton Abbas Community Land Trust, or equivalent body that would enable an appropriate lettings policy to be agreed between the Trust and Dorset Council.
- 6.69 Within the 2019 survey there were several comments about doing more to provide local and community housing. However, there were also concerns raised that Milton Abbas has limited transport options and with no public transport serving the village may therefore not be the best place for affordable housing.
- 6.70 The evidence within the Housing Needs Assessment indicates that, based on the information available at the time of writing, 25% of all new housing should be suitable for older people (such as bungalows for independent living) and that 1-2-bedroom homes would be appropriate for the majority of affordable dwellings built. The March 2019 consultation included a comment on the need for 3-bedroom houses for families to address local needs; however there is no evidence base to support this opinion. It is important that the dwellings meet the most-up-to-date information on local need, but also that it helps create a mixed, balanced community. Recognising these points, and that needs change over time, the type of affordable housing has not been specified in this Plan.
- 6.71 There is an opportunity to establish a body known as a Community Land Trust for the management of the affordable houses built for local people. This would include specifying rent and specifying local ties for people to be eligible to rent or part-buy the properties. Our local Alms House Trust is one example of a similar body operating in this area.

Community Land Trusts are a form of community-led housing, set up and run by local people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. There are now almost 290 Community Land Trusts in England and Wales. The Community Land Trust acts as the long-term steward of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier. The homes built with this control will ensure that there will be an enduring supply of social rented homes available to meet some of the affordable housing needs of the village's own households throughout the Plan period and beyond.

#### **POLICY MA9: AFFORDABLE AND LOCAL HOUSING**

The provision of affordable homes above the level set in the Local Plan is encouraged. Housing sites of 6 or more dwellings will be expected to include bungalows or similar property types designed specifically with older people's needs in mind, as well as making provision for affordable housing. Legal restrictions such as Section 106 will be included to ensure that any affordable housing provided is prioritised and remains affordable to local people (with a connection to the Parish) in perpetuity. A minimum of 50% of the total number of affordable homes on each housing site should in the first instance be offered to be controlled by a Milton Abbas Community Land Trust (if one exists), or equivalent body, for which an appropriate lettings policy will be agreed between the Trust and Dorset Council

## 6.72 Site Allocation Policies

6.73 Site allocation policies have been specified to cover local issues in relation to the sites raised through the site assessment process and during the consultations. These should be read in conjunction with the other policies (for example, those relating to building design and local and affordable housing). For safe road access the requirement is covered within National Planning Policy (February 2019) paragraph 108 which specifies "safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users".

### Site 5: Land at Langham Farm (north of the Community Gardens)

6.74 This site is predominantly flat farmland located close to local services and facilities. It is not particularly constrained by ecological or heritage considerations. Although the site is within the boundaries of the Dorset AONB; the site is adjacent to an existing residential area and views into and out of the site are screened by the hedgerows/trees located along the site boundaries. Milton Abbey Registered Park and Garden and a bridleway lie to the west. Provided the site does not extend close to the bridleway to the west, it is not expected that new development would significantly change the character of the surrounding landscape.



Figure 6: shows proposed extent of development site. The western boundary has been drawn to exclude the area closest to the Registered Parkland and bridleway

6.75 An important view, 12B, looks across this site and over the existing properties towards the Isle of Wight, Poole Harbour and the Purbeck Hills. Whilst development of the eastern part of the site is not likely to impact on this view (as it has Milton Park Wood as its backdrop), it will be important that the scale of development across site 5 allows the view to be seen (which should be possible given that it is at a lower elevation than the bridleway). Given that the eastern end of the site is also slightly elevated in relation to the road, it will also be important that the overall height of dwellings is not particularly tall in this location. As such, the site is likely to lend itself to single storey dwellings or possibly one-and-a-half storey cottages. The ridge heights of Nos 1 and 2 New

Close Cottages and Stonecroft (as measured AOD) provide useful guidelines in this context. A landscape scheme will also be needed to provide a soft edge to the new settlement boundary, that reflects the character provided by the hedgerows and woodland areas within the area.

- 6.76 New residential properties at this location would extend the settlement further north than it is at present. The Dorset AONB team have advised that care should be taken in this respect, and as such the decision has been taken to orientate the development to run westward from the road (mirroring the pattern of development established at Catherines Well), and ensure that as much of the existing roadside hedge is retained (or new hedging planted along the roadside) as far as practical. There is the potential to create a new access into the eastern section of the site from the main road, and pedestrian links into the village and facilities that will provide an off-road alternative to using the main road (which does not have a pavement at this point). The design of the path should take into account the need for the connection to feel safe and attractive, through suitable overlooking and landscaping.
- 6.77 There is local knowledge of surface water runoff that drains from the rural fields through this site and onto the road, which are not currently identified on the national flood risk maps but should nevertheless be considered in the site's design. The site is also within the consultation zone identified by Wessex Water to minimise risk of development contributing to groundwater inundation of sewers.

#### **POLICY MA10: SITE 5: LAND AT LANGHAM FARM (NORTH OF THE COMMUNITY GARDENS)**

Development of 6 dwelling will be supported, with at least 40% provided as affordable housing (or an equivalent financial contribution).

There should be a single point of access from the main Blandford road, with the line of development to run in a westerly direction away from the Blandford Road (and allowing for the potential to link into Catherines Well to the south)

The existing roadside hedgerow should be retained as far as practical, with its removal limited to that required to provide the necessary visual splays (with replacement hedgerow planting set back from the created verge). A soft landscape planting scheme will be required along the northern and western sides to soften the visual impact of development from the bridleway (E15/1) and provide an overall biodiversity enhancement.

As a minimum, an all-weather public footpath should link from the access road into Site 6 / the Community Gardens to enable access public access through the site to the GP Surgery and Play Park.

The ridge height of the properties (as measured AOD) should not significantly exceed that of Nos 1 and 2 New Close Cottages and Stonecroft.

A detailed flood risk assessment will be required to ensure the new properties are not at risk from surface-water run-off from the adjoining fields, and that the development does not increase flood-risk from run-off from the site or contribute to groundwater inundation of sewers.

#### **Site 6: Land at Catherines Well (west of the Community Gardens)**

- 6.78 This is a small greenfield site on the edge of the village within proximity to local services and facilities including a GP surgery, Play Park and Community Gardens. Access into the southern section of the site is possible from the existing road network, via Damer Close, Catherines Well (by the surgery), or potentially through Site 5.

- 6.79 The site abuts the Milton Abbey Registered Park and Garden (to the north and west) and, therefore, development could impact upon the setting of this significant heritage asset – although the existing trees and planting along these boundaries could be reinforced to minimise any such impacts. Because it is on rising ground, there are long views from the site across the village (particularly from the northern half of the site). There are also direct views into the site from the Community Gardens to the east, and also from residential properties located adjacent to the south of the site. There is a public bridleway which passes directly through the site which would need to be retained and enhanced (where appropriate) through development, although it could be realigned within the site if this would make sense. There are also a few clumps of trees (planted by the Parish Council) scattered around the site, which it may be possible to retain within any proposed development but are not particularly significant from a landscape or ecological perspective.
- 6.80 The impact of development on the public bridleway, the mature vegetation within and around the site, and the setting of the Milton Abbey Registered Park and Garden will need to be carefully considered in the design and layout of development.
- 6.81 There are no known local flood risk issues for the site. A flood risk assessment will be required in line with National Planning Policy due to the 1 Ha size of the site. The site does fall within a Wessex Water Groundwater zone which identifies areas of high groundwater. Additional criteria for the sewerage design may be required to ensure groundwater cannot enter into the sewers from the new development. This will need to be considered within a flood risk assessment for the site.

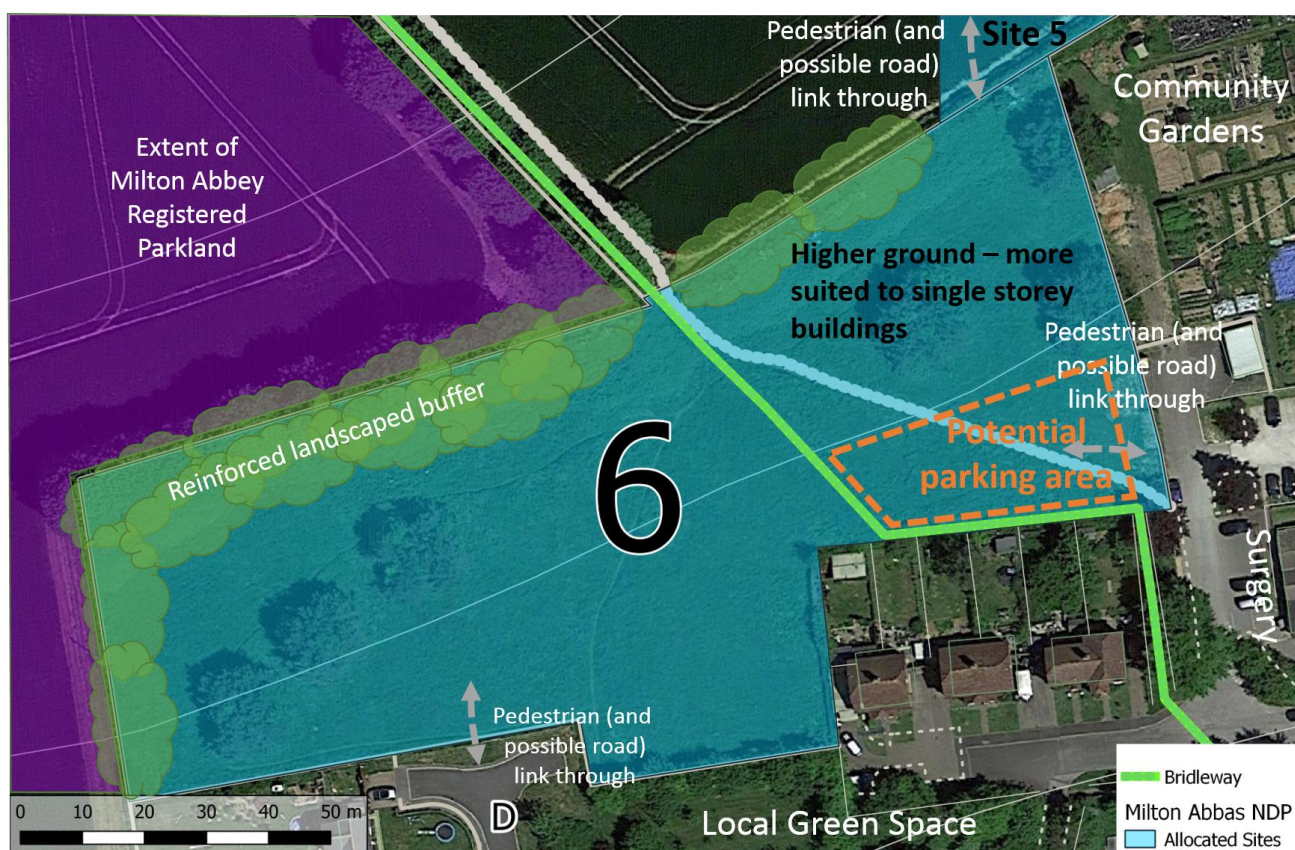


Figure 7: shows proposed extent of development site. The area outlined in orange is where additional parking could be provided. The area north of the parking and west of the Community Gardens would be suited for bungalows. The area to the west would provide an extension to the housing in Damer Close. The landscaped edge alongside the Registered Parkland will need to be reinforced with further planting.

- 6.82 The site (together with Community Gardens and access to the west) is currently owned by Milton Abbas Parish Council (and a small part by Sovereign, a Housing Association, who have said that they would want to be involved in the development and the provision of affordable housing on the site). The Parish Council has made clear that it is prepared to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing there, than the standard 40%, as well as providing additional parking to ease

localised parking problems. The spaces are intended to be publicly available so that they can be used by people using the Surgery, Community Gardens or the Play Park. The site layout should also make provision to link with the all-weather public footpath provided as part of the development of Site 5.

**POLICY MA11: SITE 6: LAND AT CATHERINES WELL (WEST OF THE COMMUNITY GARDENS)**

Development of up to 15 dwellings will be supported, with at least 65% as affordable housing and at least 25% as bungalows or similar accommodation suited to the needs of the elderly.

The layout should retain the boundary trees and hedgerow along the northern edge of the site, and reinforce the landscaping along the edge adjoining the Milton Abbey Registered Park and Garden. The amount and scale of building on the northern part of the site should avoid the development from being visually prominent in wider views.

The public bridleway crossing the site should be retained (either on its existing or an alternative alignment), and landscaped appropriately to provide an attractive route through the site linking with the countryside. Provision should also be made to allow the all-weather public footpath access to connect through this site from Site 5 to ensure easy access to the Surgery and Play Park.

Additional visitor / public parking spaces (minimum 10) should be provided in the area near to the Surgery and Play Park.

A detailed flood risk assessment will be required to ensure that the development does not increase flood-risk from run-off from the site or contribute to groundwater inundation of sewers.

**Site 8: Land at Catherines Well (east of Hill House Bungalows)**

6.83 This is a small, flat site that is currently occupied by sheds, boats and informal allotments / open spaces. The site is not particularly constrained and would form a natural eastern extension to the incremental development that has taken place along the track to Milton Park Wood (which also serves as a public bridleway). Buildings are set back from the track by at least 5m, which allows planting along this edge to reinforce the rural character of the track.



Figure 8: shows proposed extent of development site. The relationship with the track (and Conservation Area) to the south will need careful consideration and a 5m buffer containing suitable landscaping would be appropriate solution along this edge.

- 6.84 The Transport Development Management Team at Dorset Council has advised that the junction onto the C31 Blandford Road is currently substandard in relation to visibility splays for a 30mph speed limit area. It will therefore be important that the splay is improved as necessary (which may require the cooperation of adjoining landowners), taking into account the typical vehicle speeds along this section of road.
- 6.85 The eastern boundary of the site borders the Clenston / Milton Park Wood (ancient and semi-natural woodland), and land directly to the south of the site is within the boundaries of the Milton Abbas Conservation Area and also forms part of the grounds of Milton Manor (a Grade II listed building). The site benefits from screening by the surrounding hedgerows / trees, and it is not anticipated that an allocation at this site would significantly change the character of the villagescape.
- 6.86 As such, the site is considered suitable for small scale development with a high-quality design which respects its setting within the AONB and its proximity to neighbouring residential properties and heritage assets.

*Figure 9: shows proposed extent of development site. The relationship with the track (and Conservation Area) to the south will need careful consideration and a 5m buffer containing suitable landscaping would be appropriate solution along this edge.*

**POLICY MA12: SITE 8: LAND AT CATHERINES WELL (EAST OF HILL HOUSE BUNGALOWS)**

Development for 1 dwelling will be supported.

The layout should retain the boundary trees around the site and leave a minimum 5m gap to the track and adjoining properties.

The visibility splay at the junction with the C31 is improved as necessary to ensure safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved.

## 7 Matters outside the scope of this Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 7.1 Planning policies within our Neighbourhood Development Plan cannot cover all the community aspirations raised during the consultations. This section is to highlight some of the common issues detailed and clarify why these are not included as policies.
- 7.2 Unlike the Parish Plan, the Neighbourhood Development Plan can only deal with planning matters relating to the use or development of land. Some matters are outside the scope of Planning Policy and therefore outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Development Plan policies. To make it more confusing, there are some issues that are 'sometimes' relevant to planning and sometimes not.
- 7.3 During the development of the Plan the Group has researched many areas looking at all the Dorset made plans, neighbourhoodplanning.org and using google searches for specific subjects to try and identify a suitable way forward.

### Traffic management and public transport

- 7.4 Traffic management and public transport were issues raised by a large number of residents in our various consultations. For example, in the 2018 survey 27% of respondents spontaneously mentioned traffic related concerns as something future development should consider. In the same survey, the highest scoring reason for saying 'no' to development on site 7 was traffic related concern (39% of people responding to this question). With regard to public transport 37% of respondents cited the lack of public transport or its decrease as a pressure on the community in our 2016 survey and 9% of respondents in our 2018 survey spontaneously mentioned public transport issues. From the March 2019 consultation traffic management and public transport remains a key issue with requests for further work on policies with 8 independent comments on the traffic management.
- 7.5 Walking, cycling and public transport accessibility continue to be themes running through the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019), requiring priority to be given to pedestrian and cycle movements, as well as access to high quality public transport. The concept that rural locations should be treated differently to urban locations in sustainable transport terms is recognised. Paragraph 84 specifies that in rural areas, sites to meet local needs may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, in locations not well served by public transport. In these circumstances, it should be ensured that: 'development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport)'.
- 7.6 For transport we can specify parking requirements for new development, and we can consider the impact of traffic arising from new development which can influence whether a site is likely to be suitable or not. Most other requests on transport improvements would need a much greater scale of development within Milton Abbas to deliver through Neighbourhood Planning policies, so need to be addressed in a different way (see future projects section below). This includes changes to traffic management (such as speed, traffic calming measures) on existing transport networks and public transport facilities.

### Future projects

- 7.7 Where requests fall outside the legislation limits and scope of the Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Development Plan policies, they may still be taken forward by the Parish Council or Volunteers in a different way. The strategic issues and proposals include delivering traffic management solutions, better broadband and mobile telecommunications, supporting existing community facilities, local housing supply project and teenage recreation facilities.



## 8 Glossary & Abbreviations

<b>AONB</b>	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<b>NDP</b>	Neighbourhood Development Plan
<b>NPPF</b>	National Planning Policy Framework
<b>Local Plan</b>	North Dorset Local Plan: Strategic Policies Development Plan Document
<b>SPD</b>	Supplementary Planning Document
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment

### 8.1 Policy Terms

Term	Clarification
<b>Must, required, shall</b>	The definition is an absolute requirement of the specification
<b>Must not, shall not</b>	The definition is an absolute prohibition of the specification
<b>Should, recommended</b>	This means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to ignore a particular item, but the full implications must be understood and carefully weighed up before choosing a different course.
<b>Should not, not recommended</b>	This means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances when the particular item is acceptable or even useful, but the full implications should be understood, and the case carefully weighed up before implementing any item described with this label
<b>May, optional</b>	This means that an item is truly optional

### 8.2 Affordable Housing

This definition has been extracted from the National Planning Policy Framework:

*Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:*

*a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).*

*b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.*

*c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.*

*d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.*

# Appendix A

Table 4: summary of site evidence

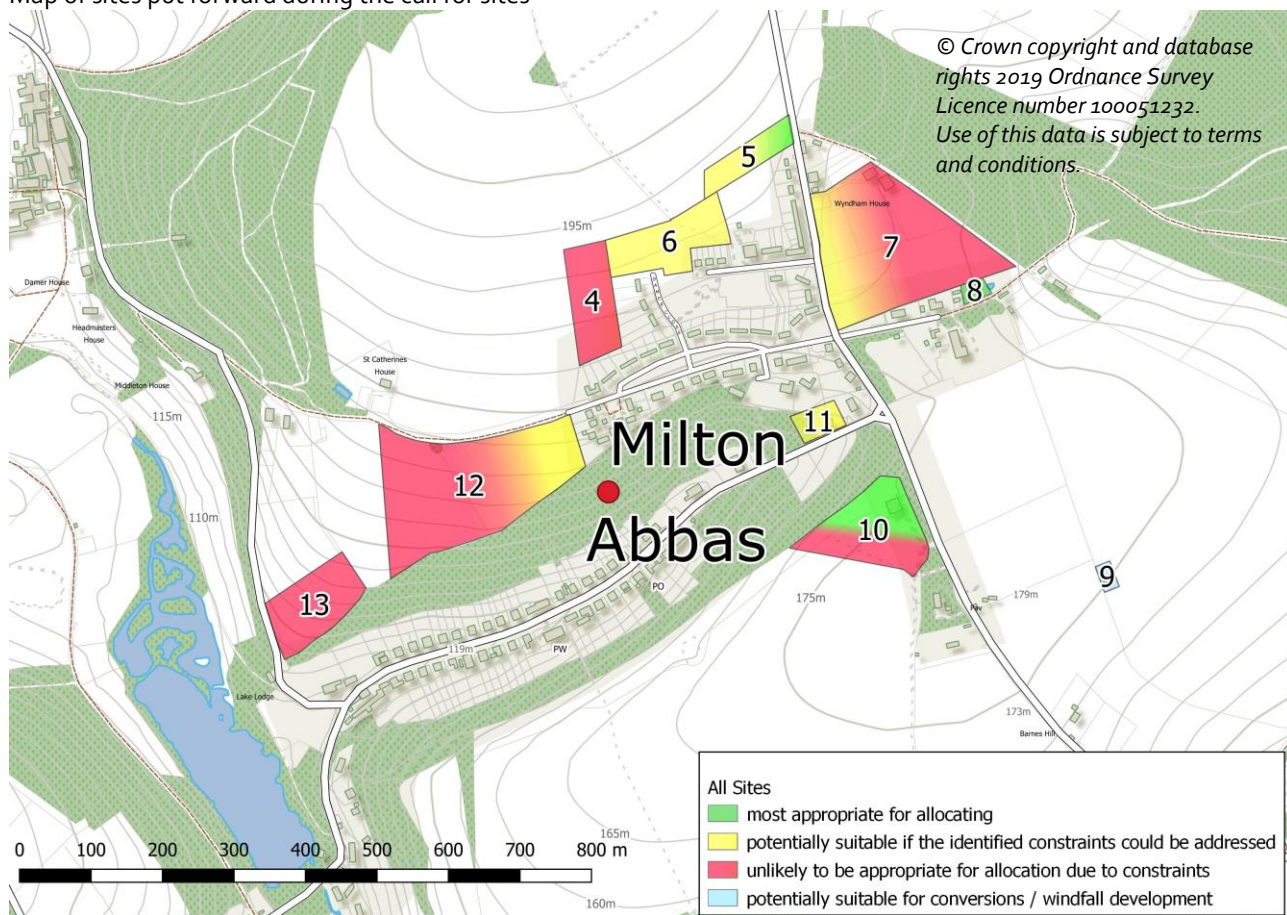
Site Name	Independent AECOM assessment conclusion on site suitability	Public Consultation Weighted Support (higher value = more supported)	Dorset Planning Consultant Strategic Environment Assessment						
			Biodiversity, fauna & flora	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Climate change, flood risk	Soil, water & air pollution	Meeting local needs	Safe and accessible
Land at Delcombe Farm 1	Conversion / Windfall								
Land at Delcombe Farm 2	Conversion / Windfall								
Site 3: Land at Greenhill Down	Conversion / Windfall								
Site 4: Land at Langham Farm 1	No								
Site 5: Land at Langham Farm 2	5A Eastern section: Yes	1.08	x/-	-	-	x/-	-	✓/✓✓	x/-
	5B Western section: Potentially	0.33							
Site 6: Land at Catherines Well 1	Potentially	0.93	x/-	x/-	x/-	x/-	-	✓✓	✓
Site 7: Land at Catherines Well 2	Western section: Potentially (Eastern No)	0.73	x/-	x/-	x/-	-	-	✓✓	x/-
Site 8: Land at Catherines Well 3	Yes	0.96	x/-	-	x/-	-	-	✓	x/-
Site 9: Land at Hoggen Down	Conversion / Windfall								
Site 10: Land at Windmill Clump	Northern section Yes (Southern section No)	0.75	x/-	x/-	x/-	-	-	✓✓	x/-
Site 11: Land N of The Street	Potentially	Planning permission granted							
Site 12: Land at Catherines Well 4	Eastern section Potentially (Western No)	-0.53	x/-	x/-	xx/x	-	-	✓/✓✓	x/-
Site 13: Land at Steeptonbill Farm	No								
Site 14: Land at Fishmore Hill Farm	No								
Site 15: Land at Long Close Farm	Conversion / Windfall								
Site 16: Land at Milton Mills	Conversion / Windfall								

**Key:**

✓✓	significant positive impact likely	xx	significant adverse impact likely
✓	positive impact likely	x	adverse impact likely
-	neutral impact likely		

NB SEA assessment excluded those sections assessed as having no potential. Intermediate levels where the scoring lies in the range between, is indicated in the scoring as 2 symbols (eg x/- or ✓/✓✓) where appropriate

Map of sites put forward during the call for sites



The site assessments undertaken by AECOM followed a robust method by which all potential housing sites within the Neighbourhood Plan Area were assessed on the basis of their social, economic and environmental constraints which will determine their suitability for development. Screening Criteria Methodology: Sites were scored against each criterion using a traffic light system, with green indicating no conflicts, amber indicating some or minor issues (that could be overcome or mitigated) and red indicating direct conflict (unlikely or more difficult to mitigate against). The criteria are not 'weighted'. Sites that are 'ranked' as either 'yes' or 'potentially' were put forward to be voted on.

Within the consultation we stated 'We have not included any of the red sites from the AECOM report, so please comment here if you have strong objections to this approach'. The vast majority of respondents made no objections. There were two requests to include / reconsider a site (site 4) and 1 statement that too many excluded sites would be open to challenge. The appraisal of site 4 was re-checked and included clear reasons for the site's rejection related to strong landscape and heritage concerns.

For the inclusion of windfalls/conversions 69% selected yes, 17% selected no and 10% were undecided. In comparison the percentage of resident supporting specific sites (shown in the table below). The 69% support for windfalls/conversions is at top end.

Development site	Supporting = Highly suitable + Suitable
5A	75%
5B	41%
6	68%
7	65%
8	68%
10	62%
12	28%

Table 5: development site and supporting percentage

A weighted scale was applied between -2 through 2 to the factor of each option. By applying both negative and positive values to the answer of this question it allows both the positive and negative views of each site to be attributed.

Highly suitable	2
Suitable	1
Neutral	0
Unsuitable	-1
Highly unsuitable	-2
Don't know the site well enough	0

Table 6: Weighted scale applied

An example calculation for site 5A

$$5A \text{ weighted calculation} = 2 * 0.49 + 1 * .26 + .07 * 0 + .1 * -1 + .03 * -2 + .04 * 0 = 1.08$$

Development site	Highly suitable	Suitable	Neutral	Unsuitable	Highly unsuitable	Do not know the site well enough	Weighted calculation
5A	49%	26%	7%	10%	3%	4%	1.08
5B	19%	22%	29%	19%	4%	4%	0.33
6	49%	19%	8%	18%	3%	1%	0.93
7	40%	25%	7%	18%	7%	4%	0.73
8	40%	28%	15%	4%	4%	7%	0.96
10	36%	26%	11%	21%	1%	3%	0.75
12	11%	17%	15%	14%	39%	3%	-0.53

Table 7: Site opinion survey responses and weighted calculation

The least popular sites 5B and 12 were ruled out of further consideration. In terms of spread of sites opinion was polarised with 39% supporting several smaller sites and 38% supporting one or two larger sites and 13% undecided. As views are polarised the best way forward was determined to follow the weighted order of sites for the required number of dwellings.

Site	Weighted calculation	Number of dwellings	Cumulative number of dwellings	Addition benefits
<b>Conversions</b>		4	4	
5A	1.08	6	10	
8	0.96	1	11	
6	0.93	15	26	65% affordable ,10 car parking space
10	0.75	3	29	Employment site
7	0.73	12	41	40% affordable homes

Table 8: Site weighting, support, number of dwellings and additional benefits

In terms of numbers for each site it is preferable to have higher numbers to support affordable housing. In the north Dorset Local Plan sites of more than 6 would require a contribution to affordable homes and sites of 11 or more would be required to specify a minimum of 40% affordable homes.

It was decided to include Site 10 was included within the preferred options for the Pre-submission Plan as it was the only site that offered employment potential. This site was subsequently withdrawn by the landowner following the pre-submission consultation to allow more time to research its feasibility.

The Milton Abbas NDP has identified preferred development sites sufficient to deliver 26 dwellings in the period 2019-2031 (in addition to the site already consented for an additional dwelling north of The Street). This is 30% higher than the already uplifted target of 20 dwellings.