

Dunkeswell Neighbourhood Plan

2014 to 2031

Made 9th December 2017



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Foreword

Dunkeswell Neighbourhood Plan builds on the comprehensive Parish Planning work carried out over many years in our parish, and by the extensive environmental and planning design documents produced by the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty team.

This grounding of very current wider community consultation and vast resource of environmental information has helped us immensely throughout the process, as has the advent and progression of new technology. Our Steering Group was made far wider reaching, larger and more inclusive, by being predominantly an email based group, with meetings being kept far more focused as a result. The Parish Council launched a new website, Facebook page and Twitter account during the process which again has helped the reach of consultation and helped us gauge opinion on so many topics.

We shared our journey from the outset with ten surrounding parishes within the AONB landscape to offer each other support and share resources through the Neighbourhood Planning process, and found many common outcomes.

Our thanks go to our Consultants and also East Devon District Council Planning Policy team who have supported us through this process amid finalising their own Local Plan. It should be noted that our process purposefully paused for almost a year to ensure our Plan was in line with the final outcome of the EDDC Local Plan Inspection, then resumed, with outcomes reaffirmed, prior to this final Plan being produced.

Credit must go to all those who have helped produce this plan of course, but also to everyone who worked on the several Dunkeswell Parish Plans over the preceding two decades and even the 1990's 'Planning For Real' exercise that was the first advent of encouraging the community to shape the future of the parish. This strong history of community engagement in our parish has proved the importance of recording a clear vision of what our small rural community wants and needs, and indeed what they might, or might not, be prepared to relinquish in exchange.

We are now proud to be able to combine the work of the AONB and the aspirations of our community into a document that carries planning weight and hope that this will inspire the ongoing process for generations to come.

Dedicated to GN Sworder who inspired our community planning.

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Acknowledgements

This Plan is the product of many months of community consultation. We therefore thank the community for all their time spent answering endless questions, surveys and attending events and workshops; the tireless efforts of the Steering Group members and 'virtual' Steering Group members; the Parish Council for their support and time given to the production of the Plan; the Parish Magazine for extending deadlines and especially all the local groups and organisations who welcomed us and provided tea, biscuits, cakes and spaces for our consultations.

Our thanks are also given for the support, guidance and other inputs of officers at the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty office, East Devon District Council, Devon County Council, the Community Council of Devon and of course our trusty planning consultants.

Special credit is due to all members of 'Parish Plan' Teams of past years who have provided such a comprehensive long term evidence base for this Plan, and especially to Deborah Barker for the beautiful images contained in the Plan, which capture the essence of Dunkeswell and bring the text to life.

Dunkeswell produced the Plan working alongside nine other East Devon Parishes, all of which share our glorious location within the Blackdown Hills. Without this alliance our plans would not have been financially possible and the process would have seemed far more daunting, so our thanks to the surrounding Parishes for working together. The group has proved strong and supportive and we hope it will continue to go from strength to strength.

If anyone has been omitted by error, we thank you heartily for being part of a document that we hope will inspire and accommodate positive local change.

1. Introduction

The Community's Plan

- 1.1 This Neighbourhood Plan is *the community's Plan*. It represents the community's Vision and priorities for how they would like to see the local area change in the coming years and in doing so it sets out our local planning policies which will be taken into account as and when any proposals for development come forward in the Parish. The Plan cannot deal with every issue identified as being important to the community: it has a focus on responding to proposals for development and the appropriate use of land. However, the Plan does highlight those other issues which are important to the community and which cannot be dealt with directly by neighbourhood plan policies.
- 1.2 The Plan puts us, as a community, in the driving seat when it comes to having a say over what, how and where development should take place where it requires planning permission. The Plan and its policies reflect our Parish's own characteristics while recognising that it has a lot in common with other rural Parishes in East Devon which share the landscape of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Plan covers the period between 2014 and 2031, and is therefore in sync with the Local Plan produced by the District Council as the local planning authority.

The Plan Area

- 1.3 Dunkeswell is a rural Devon Parish to the north of Honiton and situated in the south western part of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) on a high plateau 240 metres above sea level that falls steeply on its northern edges and slopes more gently on its south side down to valleys, dotted with dwellings and smallholdings, carved by rivers and streams. The Parish has a long agricultural history and the charming field patterns that can be seen today are the result of centuries of management. The distinctive 'Blackdowns' hedgerows (also known as Devon banks) are a fundamental feature of the local landscape as well as being vital for wildlife.



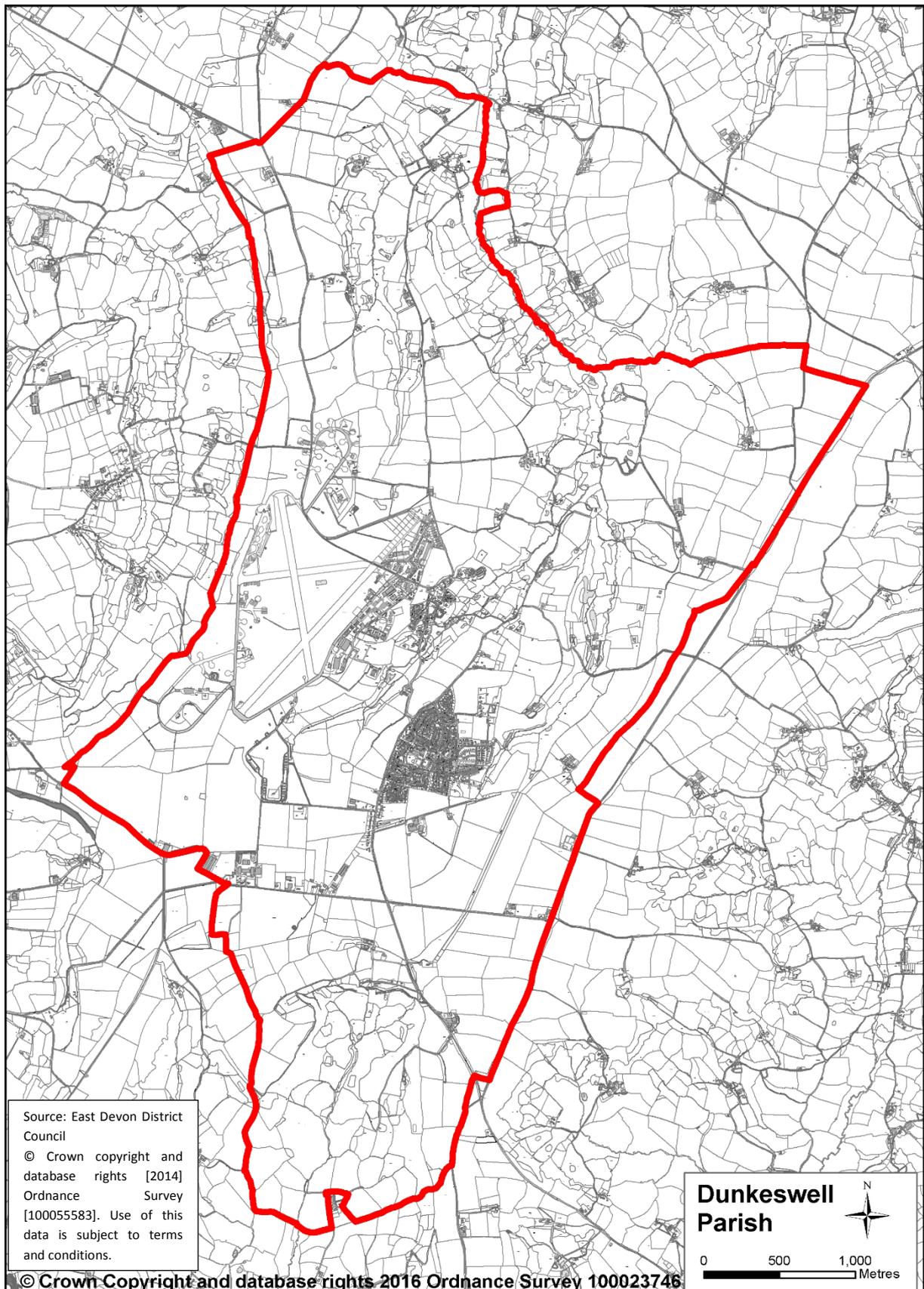
- 1.4 The main parts of Dunkeswell can be said to be the 'old' village centred around the church of St Nicholas, the Methodist Chapel and the Village Hall; Highfield estate located at the southern end of the village; and, the historic World War II airfield (which remains in use today for light

aircraft) and industrial estate where the wartime airfield was sited. The population grew significantly in the mid to late 1980s with a 550 dwelling development taking place in the village and the population of the Parish as a whole was 1,584 in 2011 across 764 households¹. The outlying areas of Dunkeswell are a series of 'units' which consist of large farms and significant historical developments such as Stentwood, built by Victorian squire John Eccles in 1881/2, the Wolford area – home to the Simcoe family and their workers and servants for many years – and Dunkeswell Abbey, originally the home of the Cistercian abbey built in 1201.

- 1.5 The Neighbourhood Plan area (the whole Parish) was approved by East Devon District Council following consultation. Figure 1 shows the extent of the area.

¹ According to the 2011 Census – see the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Neighbourhood Statistics website, www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/

Figure 1 – The Plan Area – Dunkeswell Parish



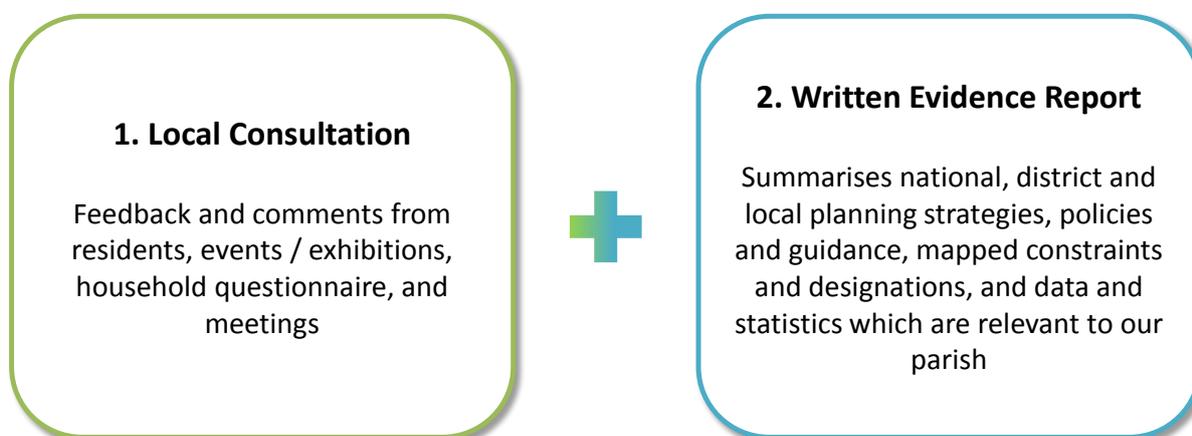
How have we got here?

- 1.6 The development of the Plan has been driven by a steering group, comprised of residents and Parish Councillors. It was recognised at an early stage that for the Plan to be truly representative of the planning issues of relevance in the Parish and to be *the community's Plan*, we would need to conduct thorough engagement with those who live and work in the Parish. We also recognised that the Plan could not be properly developed without the input of organisations and agencies with a district, county, sub-regional or national remit.
- 1.7 The process and types of consultation and discussion that we have gone through is documented in detail in our Consultation Statement which was submitted for Examination alongside the Plan. However, the key methods we have used have included:
- Public exhibitions, meetings and events;
 - Social media;
 - A community questionnaire sent to all households;
 - A business survey sent to all businesses;
 - A young people's event;
 - Directly contacting wider-than-local organisations and agencies (strategic stakeholders) which have an interest in planning issues in the Parish; and,
 - Consultation 'windows' during which comments have been invited on draft documents.
- 1.8 Our development of the Plan was based on a desire to be open and encouraging comments and contributions from all quarters with the aim being to achieve consensus, but also to have debates about issues where the community was divided in its views.
- 1.9 Having developed the Plan through this iterative approach, we consulted on a first draft version of the Plan in February 2015 and on a pre-submission version in late 2016, before submitting this Plan to East Devon District Council in February 2017 for the required independent Examination. The Examiner's report, which recommended some changes, was received in July 2017. These recommendations have been taken into account in this version of the Plan, which can now proceed to a public referendum where residents on the electoral register will be asked if they support the final Plan. If the referendum answer is a "yes" from a majority of voters turning out on the day, the Plan will be "made" (or adopted) by the local authority.

Our Evidence Base

1.10 To inform the content of the Plan, we have developed our evidence base so that our policies are underpinned by clear reasoning and justification. We have done this in two ways. Firstly, we have undertaken local consultation (documented fully in our Consultation and Engagement Plan and the Consultation Statement which will be submitted alongside this Plan for Examination) and secondly we have gathered together our understanding of the written evidence that already exists into a summary report. We have used these two approaches to help identify our Plan’s Aims, Objectives, Vision and its policies. Figure 2 illustrates these methods.

Figure 2 – Composition of Our Evidence Base



Sustainability Appraisal

1.11 The Plan is subject to testing as it is developed to help determine its positive or negative impact on the social, environmental and economic character of the Parish. This has been done through a sustainability appraisal (SA), the report of which accompanied the Submission version of the Plan for Examination. The aim of the SA is to identify impacts and then propose possible amendments to policies to lessen any potential negative impacts which could arise as a result of the Plan’s policies and / or proposals.

The Plan’s Status

1.12 This Neighbourhood Plan, once made, will be part of the statutory development plan. That means that its policies will have significant weight (importance) when it comes to being used by the local authority to help determine proposals for development submitted through planning applications. It will form the local tier of planning policy in our Parish. It sits with the district-wide Local Plan, produced by East Devon District Council (also part of the statutory development plan) and underneath the umbrella of national planning policy in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), as the main planning policy documents relevant to our area. However, this

Neighbourhood Plan should not be treated as a blueprint and the Plan’s policies cannot guarantee that a proposal will be refused nor permitted.

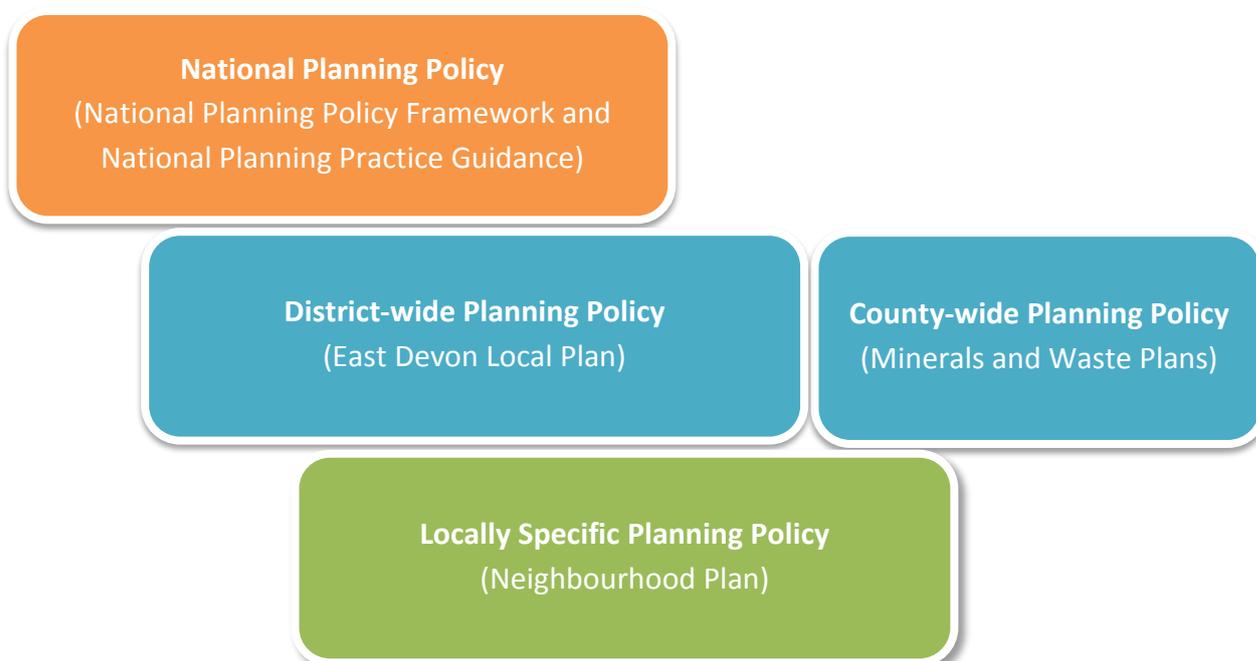
1.13 Other important planning documents which govern specific issues are the Minerals and Waste Plans produced at the county-wide level.

1.14 The policies set out by the Blackdown Hills AONB in its Management Plan and other guidance documents (which are advisory rather than carrying statutory weight in the planning system) add a further layer of policies which are particularly important in Dunkeswell.



1.15 The relationship between our Neighbourhood Plan and other planning policy documents which carry statutory weight in the planning system is shown below.

Figure 3 – Planning Documents with Statutory Weight



1.16 It is important to remember that our policies do not seek simply to repeat planning policy and guidance at the national or district-wide levels, nor the policies of the Blackdown Hills AONB. In some cases our policies may appear to be seeking similar or the same outcomes as other policies at these levels, but importantly, where this is the case our Neighbourhood Plan policies provide our community the opportunity to add a local dimension or detail to those more strategic policies and to reinforce them on the basis that it is these matters which are of most importance to us in Dunkeswell.

Sustainable Development

- 1.17 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) set out the Government’s planning policy to which all plans and proposals for development should comply. The NPPF includes, at its heart, a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. It is important to understand what that means for our Plan as it sets the parameters within which we can make proposals and set policies.
- 1.18 When taking decisions on proposals for development this means that proposals should be approved where they accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted. Translating this to what it means for our Neighbourhood Plan, it states that neighbourhood plans should “...support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development...” and “...plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan”. The NPPF goes on to say that “The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.” We are also advised that neighbourhood plans should reflect these Local Plan policies and plan positively to support them, while not promoting less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermining its strategic policies. Outside of strategic policies, we are encouraged to shape and direct sustainable development in our area through our Neighbourhood Plan. Our Basic Conditions Statement and Sustainability Appraisal (submitted for Examination alongside the Submission version of the Plan) demonstrated how our Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development and how it meets sustainability tests.

The Structure of Our Plan

- 1.19 Our Plan sets out the Vision, Aims and Objectives for our area, which have been developed based on our extensive dialogue with the community and shaped by existing planning policies, plans and contributions of key organisations and agencies.
- 1.20 Having explained our rationale for these, the Plan sets out our local planning policies on a topic by topic basis. Our topics have been derived by pulling together common Aims and common key issues arising from consultation.
- 1.21 Within each topic we set out which Aims and Objectives the topic’s policies are seeking to respond to and a summary of the characteristics of that topic and the key issues which have arisen. Then, for each policy we set out our justification for why we need the policy and the policy itself.

- 1.22 It is important to note that, while we have packaged policies under topic headings, when development proposals are being assessed, *the whole Plan (i.e. all policies) should be considered* as policies in one topic may apply to proposals which naturally fit under another.
- 1.23 Our Plan finishes with an explanation of how we will monitor and review the Plan.

Delivering Our Aims, Objectives and Policies

1.24 The Aims and Objectives of this Plan will be delivered in two main ways: through its policies and through its identified actions (some of which are related to actions which cannot be implemented by this Plan itself as a document relating only to land-use).

1.25 The Plan’s policies are designed to provide a framework which will be used by local authority development management officers and Councillors (elected Members) when considering planning applications for development. The policies provide a set of parameters which will be applied to proposals for development and are therefore largely used in response to such proposals.

1.26 A number of issues arose during consultation on our Plan which cannot be dealt with through the planning system which is designed to deal with issues related to development issues and land use. However, we have developed a number of actions which sit outside of this Plan which will help achieve some of the aims and objectives the Plan sets out. These actions are often projects or programmes and may fall to the Parish Council to lead or the community or partners such as local authorities or statutory agencies. They also provide an indication, in some cases, of what local infrastructure in Dunkeswell we see as a priority (and therefore how any proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy or section 106 planning obligation receipts received as a result of new development could be beneficially used). These actions are set out in another document, the “Neighbourhood Plan Community Action Plan” and can be updated and reviewed periodically as actions are taken. Where relevant, we reference these actions in the text of the Plan so that we can connect planning actions with our policies.



1.27 In addition to the scope and remit of the Plan in terms of actions and delivery, National Planning Practice Guidance reminds us that public bodies need to have regard to the purposes

of the designation of the Parish as part of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

“Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires that ‘in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land’ in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, relevant authorities ‘shall have regard’ to their purposes. A list of the public bodies and persons covered under “relevant authorities” is found in Defra guidance on the ‘have regard’ duty. Natural England has published good practice guidance on the ‘have regard’ duty.

This duty is particularly important to the delivery of the statutory purposes of protected areas. The duty applies to all local planning authorities, not just national park authorities. The duty is relevant in considering development proposals that are situated outside National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty boundaries, but which might have an impact on the setting of, and implementation of, the statutory purposes of these protected areas.”²

- 1.28 The duty applies to all decisions and activities that may affect land within an AONB and not just to those that relate to planning, countryside and related environmental issues. Natural England’s good practice guidance considers that in the application of the duty, it is good practice that a public body *“considers the duty of regard at several points in any decision-making process or activities, including during initial thinking, at more detailed planning stages, and at implementation; and provides written evidence that they have had regard and considered whether it is or is not relevant.”³*
- 1.29 In practice, the “having regard to” duty means that *“Decisions and actions taken by relevant authorities will invariably require a wide range of factors and issues to be taken into account. The duty requires that this process should include consideration of potential impacts on AONB/National Park purposes – with the expectation that adverse impacts will be avoided or mitigated where possible. Provided this is done, the duty has been met, irrespective of whether or not the decision ultimately taken conflicts with AONB/National Park purposes.”⁴* Our Plan therefore also helps to inform the local planning authority’s duty to “have regard to” the purposes of the AONB.
- 1.30 Sitting alongside this Plan and the East Devon Local Plan, is the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, a statutory plan required by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, but which has no statutory status in the planning system. The Management Plan has been an important reference point and part of our evidence informing the development of the Plan and its policies. National Planning Practice Guidance affirms the importance of using the Management Plan in this way and also its role in delivery and considering future development.

“Planning policies and decisions should be based on up-to-date information about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area. As part of this, local planning authorities and neighbourhood planning bodies should have regard to management plans for National

² Paragraph 003 (Landscape), National Planning Practice Guidance, Department for Communities and Local Government

³ p.6, England’s Statutory Landscape Designations: a practical guide to your duty of regard, Natural England

⁴ p.6, England’s Statutory Landscape Designations: a practical guide to your duty of regard, Natural England

Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as these documents underpin partnership working and delivery of designation objectives. The management plans highlight the value and special qualities of these designations to society and show communities and partners how their activity contributes to protected landscape purposes. ... Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty management plans do not form part of the statutory development plan, but may contribute to setting the strategic context for development by providing evidence and principles, which should be taken into account in the local planning authorities' Local Plans and any neighbourhood plans in these areas. ... Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty management plans may also be material considerations in making decisions on individual planning applications, where they raise relevant issues.”⁵

⁵ Paragraph 004 (Landscape), National Planning Practice Guidance, Department for Communities and Local Government

2. Vision, Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 Our Vision for the Parish represents our view of what we would like the Parish to be like in the future by the time that the Plan reaches its end date. The Vision is a representation of the Aims of our Plan, the things we would like to achieve, which have been derived from local community consultation and other evidence.

Dunkeswell Neighbourhood Plan Vision Statement

A vibrant, resilient and sustainable community that enables all generations to flourish in work and leisure, committed to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Our Aims

- 2.2 The Aims of our Plan have been set following extensive community consultation and discussion. They are set out under a set of topic areas. These topics are:
- Natural Environment;
 - Built Environment;
 - Housing;
 - Community Facilities and Services;
 - Transport and Accessibility;
 - Local Economy;
 - Energy and Low Carbon; and,
 - Recycling.
- 2.3 Our Objectives (how we are going to achieve the Aims) are set out in each topic section in the Plan and it is from these Objectives that our policies and community actions have been developed.
- 2.4 After these topics based policies, we have also set out a policy which focuses on delivery of projects identified through community actions in our separate community actions document.

Natural Environment

- Aim 1 Protect and enhance our unique and special landscape.
- Aim 2 Recognize we are a living working landscape.
- Aim 3 Development should be in character and scale.

Built Environment

- Aim 4 Preserve the overall character of our settlements within the AONB and ensure the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
- Aim 5 Value the assets of the historic airfield while avoiding significant increases in noise or congestion.

Housing

- Aim 6 Limit housing developments in appropriate location to meet proven local need.
- Aim 7 Improve flexibility of local supply to meet the needs of local community.
- Aim 8 Housing developments should meet standard in terms of space and parking whilst not conflicting with local environment.

Community Facilities and Services

- Aim 9 Protect and develop community facilities and services.
- Aim 10 Develop local infrastructure that promotes sustainability and community wellbeing.

Transport and Accessibility

- Aim 11 Maximize accessibility and encourage low carbon options.
- Aim 12 Improve road safety and minimize intrusion.

Local Economy

- Aim 13 Promote a sustainable diverse and vibrant local economy.
- Aim 14 Improve broadband and connectivity.
- Aim 15 Encourage and support local enterprise.

Energy and Low Carbon

- Aim 16 Actively encourage a low carbon community.

Recycling

- Aim 17 Increase recycling levels.

3. Natural Environment

Aims	Objectives
<p>1. Protect and enhance our unique and special landscape and its tranquillity.</p>	1a) Ensure new agricultural buildings are suitably designed, use appropriate materials and are placed sympathetically in the landscape.
	1b) Conserve and enhance our bio-diversity.
	1c) Encourage and enforce tree planting schemes.
	1d) Protect archaeological sites.
	1e) Accept no increase in local pollution levels of sound, noise, light, air or water quality and resist any development that increases pollution levels as well as place conditions on any application where there may be a threat of pollution (e.g. operating hours, lighting hours etc).
<p>2. Recognize we are a living working landscape.</p>	2a) Allow changes that are needed which support traditional farming approaches.
	2b) Resist factory farming whilst encouraging the continuation or re-introduction of local and traditional farming methods.
	2c) Support initiatives for the production, marketing and retailing of local food.
<p>3. Development should be in character and scale.</p>	<p>3a) Any new development should use natural materials wherever possible and should be of an appropriate design and scale so as not to detract from or intrude on the natural beauty of the area.</p>

Introduction

3.1 Dunkeswell Parish lies within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, forming an integral part of the area's complex and beautiful visual mosaic. The Parish is wholly within the Blackdown Hills Landscape Character Area and the majority of the area is part of a high plateau that falls steeply on its northern edges and slopes more gently on its south side down to valleys, carved by rivers and streams. The Parish has a long agricultural history and the charming field patterns that we see today are the result of centuries of management. The distinctive 'Blackdowns' hedgerows (also known as Devon banks) are a fundamental feature of the local landscape as well as being vital for wildlife.

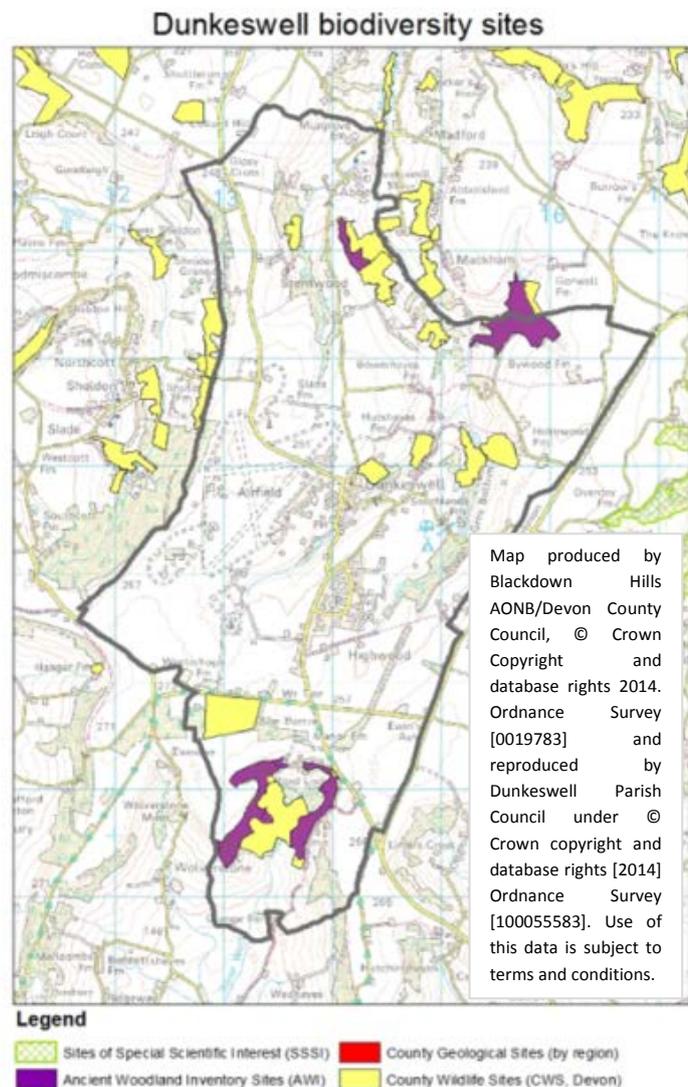
3.2 As well as the intrinsic beauty of the landscape and AONB designation, our Parish also has many designated County Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland Sites.

3.3 This distinctive quality of the Parish is a characteristic highly valued

by the people who live here and is one of the reasons that we choose to live here, both those of us who have moved into the Parish and those who have grown up here and stayed (or moved away for a time and then returned). The well documented characteristics and the value of our natural environment as an asset to people, wildlife and biodiversity has been supported by the responses to our Neighbourhood Plan local consultation and community questionnaire.

3.4 The NPPF (para. 109) states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *“protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*



- *recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
- *minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- *preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability;*
- *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”*

3.5 It is also clear that in AONBs *“great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty”* (paragraph 115) given their highest status of protection in relation to the landscape and scenic beauty.

Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish

3.6 We have already identified the importance of the high quality of the landscape, and of the biodiversity in the Parish as part of that landscape, to both the people who live in Dunkeswell and the wildlife which inhabits the natural environment. It is critical, therefore, that our natural environment is retained, conserved and enhanced where necessary now and in the future.

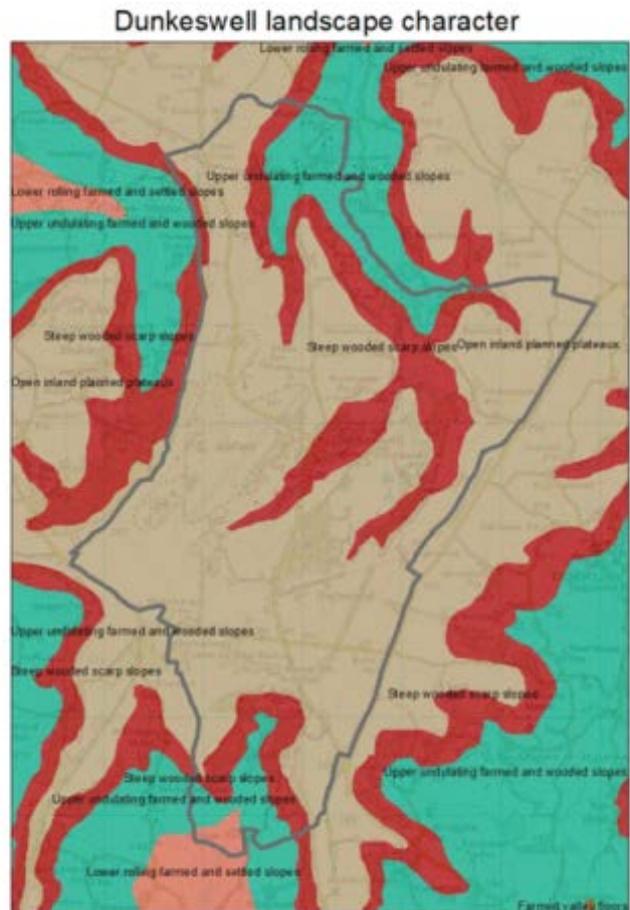
3.7 While there are other policies at national and district levels which afford some protection of our natural environment (see the related policies box below), there are a number of locally specific issues which we deem of sufficient importance to the community to require additional policy protection and guidance. We are also aware that while the approved AONB Management Plan provides principles which should be applied to the natural environment in Dunkeswell, they do not have statutory weight in the decision making process even though they should be considered as a “material consideration” when planning proposals are considered by the local planning authority. We feel a strong sense of need for our Plan to reinforce adequately some of the overarching principles of protection for the environment to give us both the certainty that such policy coverage will remain and also to ensure that our Plan represents fully the weight of the issues raised by our community. In doing so, it can fulfil its Aims and Objectives without relying solely on other policy set out elsewhere. Our Aims and Objectives, identified as important by the community, also show synergy with many of the agreed AONB Management Plan principles and policies.

3.8 We are clear that it is not the role of the Neighbourhood Plan to prevent development from taking place. However, we are equally clear that any development which is proposed within the Parish, as part of the AONB, requires special consideration to ensure that its impact does not have adverse or negative impacts on our valued natural environment.

3.9 We therefore require development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have any adverse impact on the existing state of the natural environment. Proposals for development should be designed so that they utilise ‘natural’ building materials and are in-keeping within the surrounding landscape. Our policy below should be read in conjunction with Policy BE1: Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design.

3.10 Our concern about potential adverse impact (and therefore our policy) extends to three specific issues, raised as particularly important by the community during consultation and supported by other evidence: a desire to see new development incorporate landscaping proposals (including planting if necessary); a desire to encourage the use of native trees and other plants⁶ and enforce their planting; and, the need to protect our traditional hedges.

3.11 To address these concerns, our preference is for appropriate development to be designed and located to fit within the landscape without having adverse impacts on its surroundings and the natural and built character of the area within which the proposal is located. In some cases, it may be acceptable for appropriate landscaping to play a role to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the setting of the proposal and where it will contribute to enhancing local character. Where the use of planting is considered to be an appropriate part of the proposal, native species of plants should be used.



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⁶ Such as, but not limited to fruit and nut trees, hawthorn, blackthorn, ash, oak or beech, subject to the need for disease control of specific species.

3.12 Devon hedges (commonly also referred to as “Devon banks”) are a common feature of the landscape in Dunkeswell. They are usually formed of an earth bank which is faced with either stone or turf and is often topped with bushes or shrubs. They are often very old, rich in biodiversity and very attractive, host a wide variety of wildlife, and play an important role as stock-proof barriers and shelter for livestock and crops. We are aware of the threat of gradual erosion of such hedgebanks in the Parish as a result of development and access proposals. Our farming community and other local landowners have a key role in maintaining the integrity of these important features and the Parish Council will work with them to encourage positive management, but this Plan can help play a role in ensuring that erosion is not considered as acceptable and measures are taken to prevent their loss. The successful conservation of these hedges is critical to maintaining the special character of Dunkeswell’s natural and farmed landscape and the Parish Council will work with the community, farmers and other landowners to identify Devon banks at risk.

3.13 Proposals relating to the highway could have an impact on Devon banks. Therefore, where development could have an impact on Devon banks forming the edge of roads or access to the highway, applicants should take fully into account the Devon County Council Highways Protocol for Protected Landscapes (or the most up-to-date guidance and standards relating to impact on hedgerows).

3.14 Policies D2: Landscape Requirements and D3: Trees and Development Sites of the Local Plan provide significant planning policy protection for and provision of trees (which includes protection of Ancient Woodland). Our native species of tree and fruit and nut trees which can enrich biodiversity are also important to us locally. The use of such trees is important not just from a landscape perspective, but also for local biodiversity and the role they can play in reducing surface water run-off from land. To reflect this, our objective also focuses on action which can be taken outside of the planning system to identify trees at risk, enhance our tree cover in the Parish with a focus on working with others to encourage more planting and to work with the local authority to help ensure that enforcement action is taken where trees have been illegally removed and to enforce planting schemes which are a condition of planning consents / permission.



3.15 Our policy NE1 below seeks to address these issues as far as the Plan is able (within the context of the planning system) and needs to (within the context of the Local Plan policies) in order to retain, conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Parish.

3.16 While our consultation with the community has identified a desire to protect archaeological sites (hence our objective related to this), we consider that national planning policy, national

designations and the policy in the Local Plan (Strategy 49) provides sufficient protection for such assets. Strategy 49 states that: “The physical and cultural heritage of the district, including archaeological assets and historic landscape character, will be conserved and enhanced and the contribution that historic places make to the economic and social well-being of the population will be recognised, evaluated and promoted. We will work with our partners and local communities to produce or update conservation area appraisals and conservation area management plans.” We consider other historic and heritage assets further in the section of this Plan which focuses on the Built Environment.

Policy NE1 – Retaining, Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish

Proposals for development should demonstrate that there would be no significant adverse impacts on the natural environment (landscape and biodiversity) and its tranquillity, or any significant adverse impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. Applicants are encouraged to enhance the natural environment where there is the opportunity to do so.

Where mitigating measures are unavoidably required for development to be acceptable within its landscape setting, appropriate landscaping should be employed that is compatible with local landscape character. Such measures should include the use of appropriate planting which can enrich the biodiversity of the area such as native fruit and nut trees and hedges.

Proposals for development which affect traditional Devon hedges should demonstrate that:

- i) Alternative options are impractical and the proposal is the least damaging option (to the hedgerow / bank, setting in the landscape, biodiversity and habitats); and,**
- ii) They have taken into account the most up-to-date Highways Authority standards and guidance relating to changes to hedgerows.**

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014; Dunkeswell Parish Plan, Dunkeswell Parish Council, 2011. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: East Devon Local Plan Policies EN14, EN15; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19– Policies LC 3/B, PD5/A; Blackdown Hills AONB Position Statement on Noise, September 2008.

Retaining the Quality of Environmental Health and Amenity

3.17 Consultation with our local community has identified a desire to ensure that the ‘environmental health’ and amenity of our Parish is not impacted upon in a negative way as a result of development. In particular, this relates to concerns about increasing noise and light, and changes to air and water quality as a result of pollution. However, we consider that the policies in the Local Plan (policies EN14: Control of Pollution and EN15: Environmental Impacts, Nuisance and Detriment to Health) adequately deal with the potential environmental

impacts of proposals in Dunkeswell, particularly when set alongside the controls placed upon development proposals in the AONB contained in the Local Plan and this Neighbourhood Plan.

Traditional Farming

3.18 Farming has described and defined the character of the natural and local environment of our Parish for centuries. We support fully our farming community; farming is crucial to our local economy and our farmers play a key role as stewards of the AONB landscape. National planning policy is clear in its support of agriculture and of rural diversification. We support the National Farmers Union (NFU) in its vision for our area for a sustainable rural community underpinned by an innovative rural economy and thriving farming and food industry which is both profitable and viable and which enhances the area's environmental assets. This all clearly puts protection and enhancement of our high quality rural environment at the heart of a strong agricultural economy.

3.19 The community has made it clear during consultation that it supports measures to up-hold "traditional" farming methods. In our local context, this means respecting our special environment which fosters outdoor rearing of livestock, protecting Devon banks and hedgerows, supporting small scale coppicing and protecting wildlife and its habitat, and preventing adverse impacts associated with larger scale, more intensive, farming methods including impact of HGV traffic on the roads and impact of large industrial buildings on the landscape.

3.20 Changes in farming methods such as (but not limited to) intensification through large scale factory farming or industrial buildings should not put the special and unique character of the AONB at risk. We do not believe that modernising agriculture and improving efficiency or productivity has to equate to compromising the quality of the environment



through development of large scale farm buildings. Therefore, where proposed development for agricultural uses is not enabled by "permitted development rights", we will resist developments on and changes to farmland that are likely to have an adverse effect on the established AONB rural landscape and which do not support the more traditional agricultural practices.

3.21 Should new development be deemed necessary, it should meet the requirements of the East Devon Local Plan policies EN13 and D7, and Policy LE3 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 3.22 Within this context, our policy NE2 below requires proposers of development on working farms to demonstrate how the proposal will protect and / or enhance traditional farming practices and rural characteristics of the area.

Policy NE2 – Development on Farmland for Agricultural Purposes

Proposals for the development of new agricultural buildings on working farmland which require planning permission should be of a scale and form :

- i) Which do not compromise or have adverse impacts on the quality of the environment and the special landscape character of the AONB;**
- ii) Which do not result in the loss of and help to retain and reinforce local agricultural practices traditional to the Parish and AONB, such as:**
 - a. the protection of Devon banks and hedgerows, small areas of coppice and wildlife corridors;**
 - b. the provision of buildings related to support livestock principally to be kept outside; and,**
- iii) Where any increase in traffic movement including HGVs can be safely accommodated on the rural road network and, where necessary, provide solutions to mitigate increases in traffic caused by the development.**

Farmers, land owners and developers are encouraged to engage with the local community and Parish Council at the earliest opportunity.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014; Dunkeswell Parish Plan, Dunkeswell Parish Council, 2011. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraphs 109, 112 and 115; East Devon Local Plan Policies EN13, D7

4. Built Environment

Aims	Objectives
<p>4. Preserve the overall character of our settlements within the AONB and ensure the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.</p>	<p>4a) Limit the height of new buildings where appropriate to minimise impact on landscape character.</p>
	<p>4b) Maintain historic character of the AONB by using local materials whenever possible or it is important to do so - bad design should not be replicated in areas of new development.</p>
	<p>4c) Ensure signage and street furniture is appropriate to the AONB with regard to scale, colour and cumulative impact.</p>
<p>5. Value the assets of the historic airfield while avoiding significant increases in noise or congestion.</p>	<p>5a) Support use of historic airfield and leisure opportunities in employment, without significantly increasing noise, traffic and pollution.</p>

Introduction

4.1 The built character of much of Dunkeswell such as the old village and the historic airfield contributes significantly to the sense of place and the Parish’s identity. The village in particular has a history which has shaped the look and feel of where we live today. This is coupled with more modern developments which have not necessarily been as well-received as they might have been given their very different design compared to the old village. Evidence from local consultation and our records of designated and important sites and buildings suggest that there are significant historic and heritage assets⁷ and valued structures and buildings of local importance. The landscape setting of our village is as important as the built form as it is the special landscape of the AONB which frames where we live and work. These factors all come together to make up the character of our Parish.



⁷ The National Planning Policy Framework defines a “heritage asset” as “A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).” (Annex 2, p.52)

- 4.2 National and district policies and designations afford significant degrees of protection of existing built heritage and historic assets such as listed buildings and conservation areas. The AONB Management Plan, although advisory in terms of planning policy, also sets out objectives and policies relating to the importance of ensuring that any new development is of high quality design and conserves the historic character of the AONB, stating that, *“All development in the AONB is of the highest quality, is in keeping with the landscape and conserves its wildlife, historic character and other special qualities.”*⁸
- 4.3 Within this context, our local evidence suggests a need to introduce more local, specific policies, to reflect local distinctiveness and ensure that any development proposals respect the importance of our local historic and heritage assets and the traditional built form of the old village and settlements outside the Parish and within the AONB. Importantly, our policies are intended to help guide development proposals on how best to integrate new development into our existing built and natural environments, steering away from blandness in design and towards innovation and respect.

Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design

- 4.4 Given the quality of our built environment in some parts of the Parish and the varied quality elsewhere, alongside the need for existing and any future development that respects the beauty of our natural landscape in the AONB, we consider it important to protect and conserve the character of our existing built environment, while recognising that where change does take place, it does so in a way sympathetic and sensitive to our Parish and its setting within the AONB landscape. Therefore the design and materials of any new development should take this into account. Above all, we are keen to ensure that perceived ‘design mistakes’ of ‘modern’ developments are not repeated.
- 4.5 The Blackdown Hills AONB has developed design guidance for housing and we endorse its content and advice through this Plan. The Design Guide for Houses is reproduced in full as an appendix to this Plan and should be taken into account in addition to the local character and setting of the proposed development site when making proposals for development in Dunkeswell. The Parish Council will also encourage use of the Design Guide for residential development which does not require planning applications (which is instead subject to Permitted Development Rights).
- 4.6 Our policy below also provides guidelines relating to signage where required as part of a development. For signage not requiring planning permission, the Parish Council will encourage the provision of any new or replacement street furniture and signs to be in-keeping with the surrounding built and / or natural environment.

⁸ p.56, Objective PD1, Blackdown Hills Management Plan, Blackdown Hills AONB, 2013

4.7 The guidance sets out a number of general design principles⁹ which are:

- Whether new build or alterations, good detailing, appropriate materials and sensitive treatment of the spaces around buildings are essential elements in achieving a successful and sympathetic scheme.
- Locations for new buildings and development should follow the traditional settlement pattern and respect the integrity of historical settlement forms.
- Layouts for new development sites should reflect the road patterns and plot forms of the surrounding traditional settlement. It is important to create the same sense of enclosure, traditional proportions and massing of buildings, for example continuing a distinct building line along a street.
- Building forms and materials should reflect the local traditions.
- New extensions and additions to traditional buildings should respect the character and setting of the original building. Where new buildings are adjacent to traditional ones, consider the group as a whole, using scale, form, colour and materials to link new and old.
- Sensitive design of the spaces around buildings is essential to preserve local character. The most harmoniously designed building can look 'out of place' if it is not properly integrated into its setting.
- Contemporary design should draw on the qualities of landscape, historic features and buildings to reinforce local distinctiveness.

Policy BE1 – Maintaining the Built Character through High Quality Design

To ensure that development is of high quality design and is sympathetic to the traditional built character of the Parish, development proposals should:

- i) Ensure that the size, scale and location of the development is appropriate to the form, scale and setting of the surrounding built environment;**
- ii) Ensure that materials and design of the development are in-keeping with the character of the surrounding built environment;**
- iii) Ensure that it is designed in such a way as to minimise its impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape, on views of the proposed development and on the natural environment; and,**
- iv) Include the use of appropriate sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) and other measures to reduce surface water run-off.**

Development proposals which include street furniture and / or signage requiring permission should be in-keeping with the character of the surrounding built and / or natural environment. Signage and street furniture should be of appropriate scale and colour to its setting and not cause or contribute to a cumulative adverse visual impact.

Proposals for residential development should take into account the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Design Guide for Houses.

⁹ p.12, Blackdown Hills AONB Design Guide for Houses, 2012

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: *Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19; Design Guide for Houses, Blackdown Hills AONB; “What makes a view?”, Blackdown Hills AONB, 2013. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.*

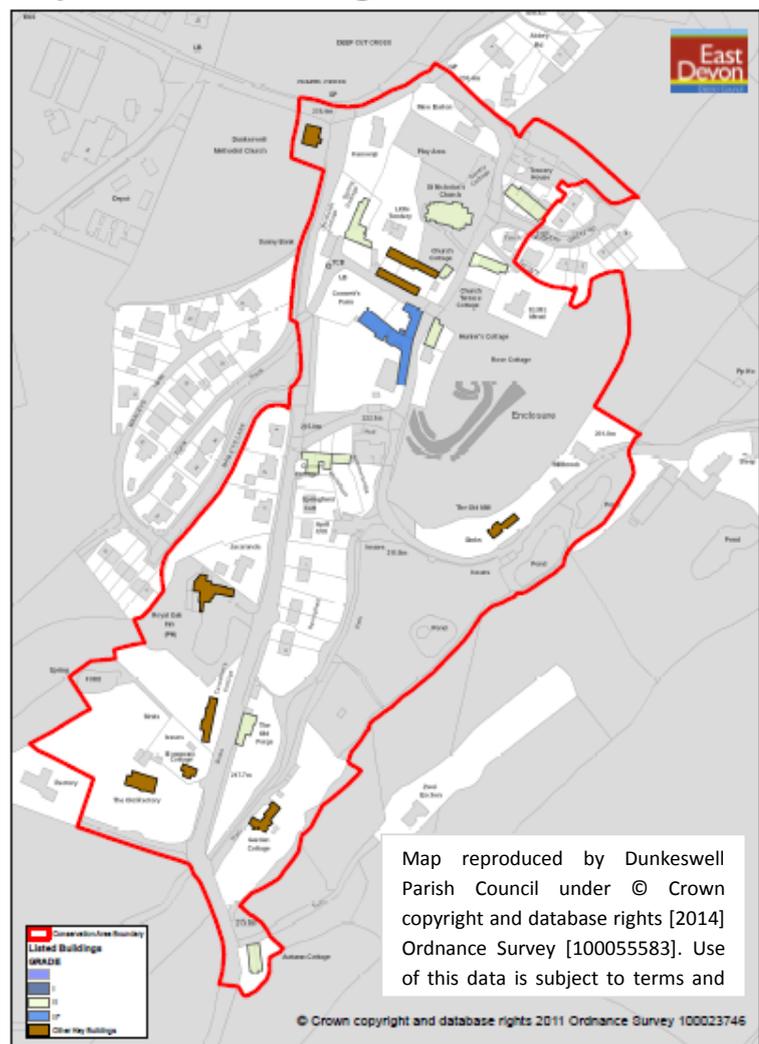
Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: *National Planning Policy Framework – Paragraphs 9, 17, 58, 115, 125; East Devon Local Plan Policies D1, EN1, EN9-12, H10, H11, S4, S5, Strategy 48; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 1/C, PD 2/A; Blackdown Hills AONB Position Statement on Noise, September 2008*

Protecting Our Valued Historic and Heritage Assets in Dunkeswell Parish

4.8 There are a number of features of special importance in the Parish including the remains of the Dunkeswell Abbey 2 miles to the north of the village (which is on English Heritage’s “Heritage at Risk Register”), a Bronze Age barrow within the old village (a Scheduled Monument), 15 listed buildings in the old village, the Church of St Nicholas and the historic airfield (defined on Map BE2). The maps relating to Dunkeswell old village’s significant heritage assets and features are reproduced in Appendix 1 from the Conservation Area Appraisal (2012), a status and document which we endorse.

4.9 The Dunkeswell old village has been described as having a dense historic village centre. The Conservation Area Appraisal states that *“The special interest of the historic village is partially defined by its topographical situation within a tight wooded valley surrounding by the plateau of the Blackdown Hills. The village is quite cohesive in its vernacular architecture and forms a tight-knit urban grain. The prominence of the roofscape when viewed from the west is a particular character feature.... The historic village is no larger than a large hamlet with a dense concentration of*

Map 1 Historic Building Character



*vernacular buildings south of the church. The setting of the village is rural with farmland on the lower valley bottom to the east. The buildings are grouped centrally around Connett's Farm with the rebuilt church set separately to the north. Properties and associated agricultural buildings are set either against or slightly set back from the narrow lanes that serve the village.*¹⁰



4.10 It has been recommended that there is sufficient policy protection in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan to protect our heritage assets in the Parish. Notwithstanding this, we strongly encourage proposers of development which may have an impact on heritage assets to engage with the local community and Parish Council at the earliest opportunity to help ensure that proposals do not harm heritage assets from our local perspective.

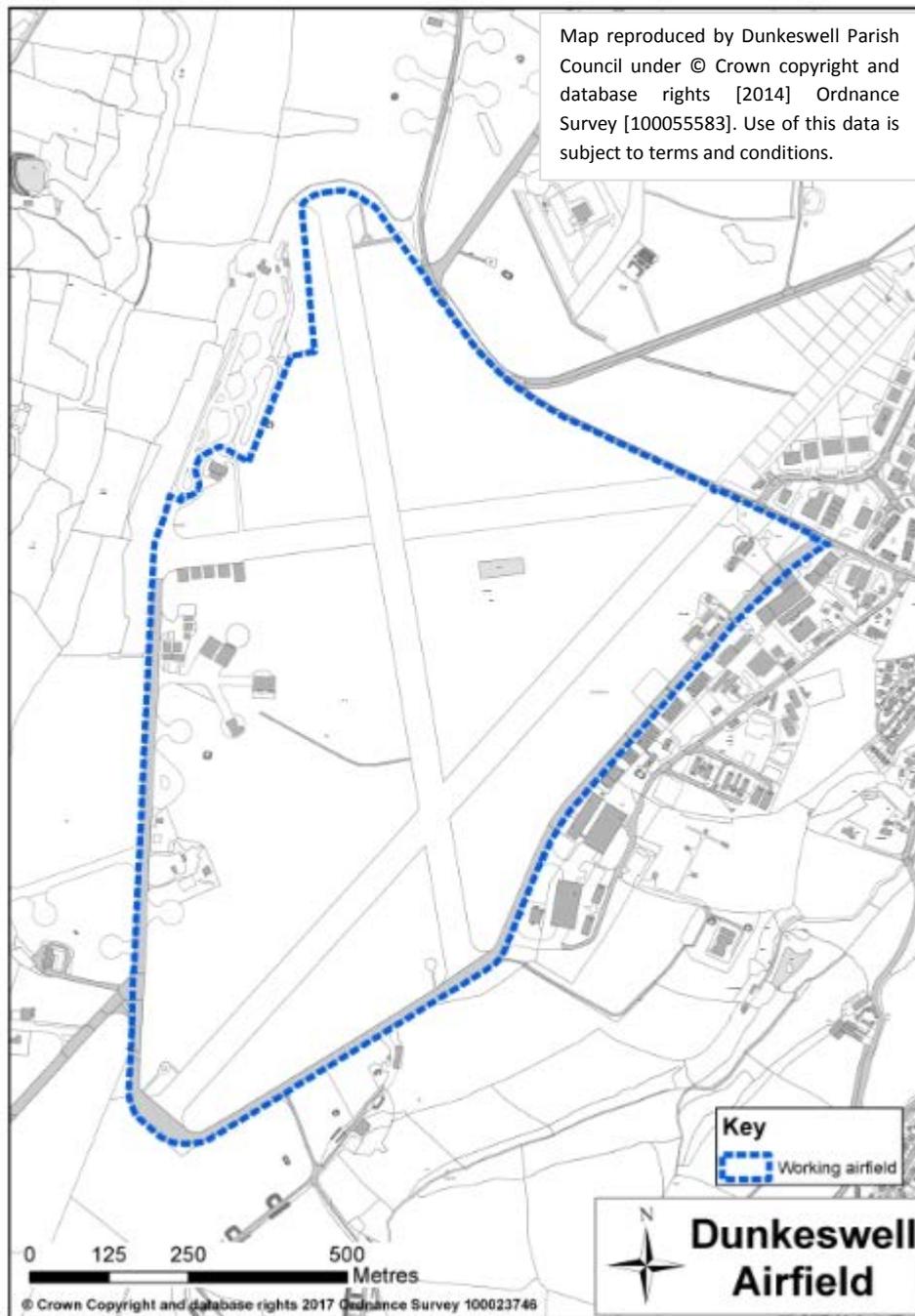
4.11 Of particular importance to us is making sure that we have a balance between the appropriate and active use of the airfield as an airfield, its industrial estate as a focus for employment, the site's historical interest and the need for the site to respect the natural environment and landscape within which it is set. Almost 85% of respondents to our community survey in 2014 said that the historic airfield is important to preserve (the extent of which we have defined on Map BE2).



4.12 While there could be opportunities for the airfield site, we need to ensure that the right parameters are set to ensure that any development that takes place on or adjacent to the airfield site respects its location and setting in its form, use, scale, character and the historic value of the site. Policy BE2 focuses on these important issues.

¹⁰ p. 2-3, Dunkeswell Conservation Area Appraisal, East Devon District Council, 2012

Map BE2: The Historic Airfield



- 4.13 Across the rest of the Parish there are other potentially important archaeological, heritage and historic assets and with this position in mind, the Parish Council will work with the community to identify, protect and enhance such assets with the aim of seeing them recognised on East Devon District Council's "local list" of heritage assets. This is relevant to this section's aims and objectives and also to Objective 1d: Protect archaeological sites, identified in the Natural Environment section.

Policy BE2 – Supporting the Use of the Historic Dunkeswell Airfield

Proposals for development at the historic Dunkeswell airfield (defined on Map BE2) should demonstrate that:

- i) They are complimentary / compatible with the existing uses of the site (employment, leisure and light aviation); and,**
- ii) They do not compromise the historic value of the airfield or its buildings; and,**
- iii) They do not increase existing levels of noise, air and light pollution or otherwise harm the amenity of existing nearby residents; and,**
- iv) Any additional traffic generated by the proposal can be accommodated by the local highway network and will not compromise safety; and,**
- v) Their character, scale and location do not have an adverse impact on the site or its setting in the landscape.**

Developers are encouraged to engage with the local community and Parish Council at the earliest opportunity.

Key supporting evidence for these policies include the following: Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014; Dunkeswell Conservation Area Appraisal, East Devon District Council, 2012; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19; Heritage at Risk Register, English Heritage, 2014. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework – Sections 7 and 12; National Planning Practice Guidance – Paragraph 007; East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2006 – Policies EN8-11; East Devon Local Plan – Policies EN1, EN9-12, Strategy 49; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 – Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 1/C, PD 2/A; Blackdown Hills AONB Position Statement on Noise, September 2008.

5. Housing

Aim	Objectives
6. Limit housing developments in appropriate locations to meet proven local need.	6a) Exert significant influence over local housing policy and the development and allocation of new housing.
	6b) Support the development of a retirement 'courtyard' with properties available to local people both to rent and purchase.
7. Improve flexibility of local supply to meet the needs of local community.	7a) Support the conversion of existing properties to provide additional dwelling spaces especially for small households.
	7b) Support appropriate and sustainable conversion of barns and traditional redundant rural buildings to accommodation.
8. Housing developments should meet standard in terms of space and parking whilst not conflicting with local environment.	8a) Wherever possible, ensure sufficient space is provided around new and existing dwellings for household use (including the provision of adequate off-road parking spaces wherever buildings are being extended or adapted).

Please note that Aim 8 and Objective 8a are dealt with through Policy BE1: "Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design" and through "Policy TA3: Off-road Parking" in the Built Environment and Transport and Accessibility sections of Plan respectively.

Introduction

- 5.1 National planning policy advises that it is important to recognise the particular issues facing rural areas in terms of housing supply and affordability, and the role of housing in supporting the broader sustainability and vitality of villages and smaller settlements. It suggests that a thriving rural community in a living, working countryside depends, in part, on retaining local services and community facilities such as schools, local shops, cultural venues, public houses and places of worship, and that rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities. It also states that assessing housing need and allocating sites should be considered at a strategic level and through the Local Plan and/or Neighbourhood Plan process. Current adopted local planning policy requires special care to be taken when development takes place within the AONB, as do AONB policies, and the Local Plan takes a similar stance as set out in earlier sections of this Plan, with development proposals being required to conserve or enhance the character of the landscape and protect the traditional local built form.
- 5.2 Dunkeswell village is the main settlement in the Parish. The modern Dunkeswell estate (Highfield, comprising approximately 550 dwellings constructed in the 1980s) does not contain any historic buildings and has a fairly uniform appearance. There is a small shopping centre, post office and a doctors' surgery and the new village is separated from the old village by a narrow road which is not paved for most of its length. The old village contains the church and

village hall and, as already described earlier in this Plan, its character is defined by the dense historic village centre and its topographical situation within a tight wooded valley surrounded by the plateau of the Blackdown Hills. The old village is quite cohesive in its vernacular architecture and forms a tight-knit urban grain with a Conservation Area covering much of the centre. To the west of the old village is the airfield and industrial estate which is a significant employment area within the AONB.

5.3 In policy terms, the adopted East Devon Local Plan designates the whole Parish as countryside, with protection policies set to restrict development significantly, particularly given the Parish's status within the AONB. To receive support and be in accordance with the Local Plan's policies, any proposed new housing development will have to meet the requirements set by Strategy 35 – "Exception Mixed Market and Affordable Housing At Villages, Small Towns and Outside Built-up Area Boundaries" which allows certain types of housing in countryside as an exception to normal restrictions where they respond to local housing needs.

Parish Dwelling & Household Composition

- *Population = 1,584*
- *289 detached houses*
- *311 semi-detached houses*
- *171 terraced houses*
- *19 flats*
- *2 caravans/temporary accommodation units*
- *649 owner-occupied, 55 private rented and 60 social rented / 'other' rented accommodation.*
- *Affordability ratio (i.e. ratio between earnings and house price) is 18.1 (with the England average being 15.4).*
- *Majority of households in the Parish are single person households (255 in number / 33.4%) and married couples with no dependent children (278 in number / 36.4%).*
- *16.6% of the population is aged 17 or under with 32.3% of the population in the 30 – 59 age group and 34.2% over 64.*

(data from 2011 census)

5.4 We do not wish to identify sites for housing development in this Neighbourhood Plan and we support the application of the exceptions policy in the Local Plan, alongside other development plan policies, to determine the suitability or not of any housing proposal put forward in the Plan period. Our overall response from the community during consultation supports this position with consistent support for sheltered housing, shared ownership housing for young people and housing suitable for families wishing to remain in the Parish where provided as a direct response to accommodating local needs. If opportunities arose and schemes were viable, we would also support this type of provision where the proposal re-uses existing structures such as barns. The structure of our local economy and role and function of Dunkeswell village as a small rural employment centre also lends itself to support for small scale employment provision and to that end we support the principle of live-work units as set out in our section on the Local Economy.

5.5 To support the practical implementation of our policy below, the Parish Council will work with partners to develop and keep up-to-date an understanding of affordable housing needs in the Parish.

- 5.6 Our policies are designed to respond to aims 6 and 7 of our Plan, with aim 8 and its objective being dealt with through Policy BE1: Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design and through Policy TA3: Off-road Parking in the Built Environment and Transport and Accessibility sections of this Plan respectively.

Responding to Local Housing Needs

- 5.7 Local Plan policies have established a strategy for the District which focuses most development in the more sustainable locations in East Devon. We support this approach in principle and accept the identification of Dunkeswell village in the Local Plan as being a location which could accommodate some small scale growth during the lifetime of the Plan. However, as a community, we are also aware of the village having accommodated a significant scale of growth over the last 30 years for a settlement of its size and given its location in the AONB.

- 5.8 The 2011 Parish Plan indicated a strong feeling from the community that there should be no further housing development in the village of Dunkeswell, of any type, although of those who responded favourably, 27% were in favour of some limited development at Highfield. Only 30% of respondents supported more affordable housing. According to East Devon District Council data, at the time of our community neighbourhood plan survey (undertaken in 2014) there had been 55 completed new dwellings in the preceding 7 years, with the annual number of dwellings being built being 5.5 on

average during the preceding 15 years. Responses to our community survey suggested that almost 30% of 298 respondents (19% of the population) supported future development to take place at a similar rate to this while almost 14% wanted to see more than this rate, 39% wanted to see less and 18% none at all. There were 26 dwellings with existing permission



which had yet to be built at 31st March 2014. Updated figures provided by East Devon District Council (to October 2016) now suggest that the average annual completion rate over the last 15 years (since 2001) has been 6.7 dwellings per annum, not a dissimilar rate to that seen in 2014. There are now 18 dwellings with permission yet to be completed.

- 5.9 In recent times we believe that sufficient numbers of affordable social (subsidised) rented housing has been delivered to meet the needs of local people requiring that tenure. In 2014, evidence from our Shared Ownership Housing Assessment report suggests that our need for shared ownership dwellings (and not other affordable needs tenures) arising from our existing population is for at least 3 shared ownership homes responding to needs for 1 / 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings. Of the 298 respondents to our community survey undertaken for the neighbourhood plan in 2014, we received 100 responses in favour of community owned affordable housing, 98 responses in favour of Housing Association affordable housing and 132 responses in favour of shared ownership housing. We have also had feedback which suggests

that there is support for development which meets the needs of retired and elderly people and the need for the housing stock to be able to meet the needs of an ageing population, where those resident in the Parish would wish to stay here but may not have an option to do that within the current stock and types of dwellings available. We therefore consider that our real housing needs locally are focused less on affordable social housing but for tenures including shared ownership, private rent for young and retired people and sheltered housing for the elderly (for the time being at least) and for dwelling types suitable to meet those needs. These types of tenure should remain as such in perpetuity to retain the appropriate stock and supply of tenure types to meet the needs of the local community.

- 5.10 However, despite this data we do not have a comprehensive up-to-date housing market and needs survey to quantify readily the scale of local needs and appropriate tenures and types of dwelling within that. We will, therefore work with partners to develop an up-to-date understanding of need in the Parish and have identified a community action in light of this outside of this Plan. In the absence of an up-to-date assessment, proposers of development should provide evidence as part of a planning application of how their proposal responds positively to local needs by establishing an up-to-date understanding of local need following the latest national guidance or accepted methodology for undertaking such work.

Policy HP1 – Responding to Demonstrable Local Housing Need

Proposals for the development of new dwellings should demonstrate how the proposal responds positively to identified local housing market needs, and the needs of local residents, in terms of the housing type and tenure to be accommodated on the site.

This should be based upon an up-to-date housing needs assessment or survey. In the absence of this, an independent assessment of need should be produced to justify proposals. Developers are encouraged to have a dialogue with the local planning authority, local housing associations (registered providers), local community and Parish Council at the earliest opportunity.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014; Dunkeswell Parish Plan, Dunkeswell Parish Council, 2011. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraphs 54 and 55; East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2006 – Policies H4; East Devon Local Plan - Strategy 4, Strategy 34, Strategy 35, Strategy 36; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 1/C, PD 4/A

6. Community Facilities and Services

Aims	Objectives
9. Protect and develop community facilities and services.	9a) Support community-based initiatives to protect existing or develop new community facilities and services (and bring these into community ownership).
	9b) Facilitate new recreational facilities and opportunities that meet local demands.
	9c) Support existing facilities such as the shop, places of worship and preschool, as well as groups and organisations to remain at the heart of the community.
10. Develop local infrastructure that promotes sustainability and community wellbeing.	10a) Support appropriate improvements to the play park and other community facilities where needed.
	10b) Increase the number of bus shelters.
	10c) Develop an integrated system of community and public transport services to enable local people to use their cars less (for example to increase opportunities to cycle and walk safely).
	10d) Encourage and support community networks.

Introduction

- 6.1 Facilities that enable a wide range of community activities to take place in and around Dunkeswell are already in place. As the number of dwellings and residents in the Parish has grown so have the facilities available. The latest addition to the community buildings and spaces is Throgmorton Hall on Highfield estate.
- 6.2 The community survey undertaken for the latest version of the Parish Plan (2011) showed there was a relatively high satisfaction level with the facilities we have and confirmed that our facilities are much valued. This was echoed in the Community Survey 2014, which was undertaken specifically for the Neighbourhood Plan. The response suggests that there is broad support for the enhancement and expansion of local facilities. The loss of the pub in 2011 is still regretted by many.
- 6.3 The population of the Parish will increase over the next 15 years. The demand for community facilities and activities will likely increase too. We wish to encourage community-based activity in the interests of community wellbeing and healthy living. We want to ensure that the facilities, services and open space used for recreation, which are available locally, are sufficient in scale and scope and suitable to meet future demands. Our policies reflect our

intent to protect and enhance what we have and to support the provision of new opportunities for play, leisure and recreation purposes.

Preventing the Loss of Local Community Facilities, Services and Recreational Open Space

6.4 Successive Parish plans for Dunkeswell have made plain that the local community and recreation facilities are well regarded and important to the well-being of the community. We shall protect what we have and ensure that they remain fit for purpose. Given our relative isolation it is important that we protect and enhance what we have so as not to undermine our sustainability as a community.



6.5 Paragraph 28 of the NPPF recognises the value of local facilities and states that neighbourhood plans should “*promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages....*”. This is echoed in the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 which also advocates “*support the retention or enhancement of community facilities, services and amenities where compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and the special qualities of the AONB*” (Policy CC4/A).

6.6 The Parish Council intends to encourage the users to take more of a role in caring for facilities and, if thought appropriate, we shall support initiatives to bring facilities at risk in to community ownership. To help protect our open space for leisure and recreation purposes we shall maintain a register of ‘locally valued open space used for recreation/leisure’ which will also feed in to the East Devon District Council’s Green Infrastructure strategy work. There are no facilities or buildings presently (July 2016) on the East Devon List of Assets of Community Value. Dunkeswell Parish Council is mindful of the opportunity to nominate land or buildings that serve the social wellbeing or cultural, recreational or sporting interests of the local community such as village shop, pub, community centre, recreation ground, library for inclusion on this List¹¹.

¹¹ Also known as the ‘Community Right to Buy Scheme’. If an asset is included on the List, local groups will be given time to come up with a bid for the asset when it is sold.

Policy CFS1 – Preventing the Loss of Local Community Facilities, Services and Open Spaces used for Recreation.

Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of locally valued community facilities and open spaces should demonstrate that:

- i) There is no reasonable prospect of a viable continued use of the existing building or facility which will benefit the local community;**
- ii) There is a need for the proposed development;**
- iii) There would be no significant adverse impact on the special character of the area’s natural and built environment.**

In all circumstances involving the change of use or possible loss of community facilities, prospective developers are encouraged to engage with the local community at the earliest opportunity.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2004, 2007 and 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 70; East Devon Local Plan Policies E14, RC6, RC7, Strategy 27; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies PD 1/A, CC 4/A; Dunkeswell Parish Plan 2011, Action Plan pages 11, 12

Access to Play and Recreation Facilities

6.7 A call for better and additional recreation facilities is apparent in the response to the community surveys that were carried out in 2011 and 2014. There is no single new facility that falls into the ‘must have’ category, although a swimming pool and multi-games area were nominated by many people as being needed.

6.8 We recognise that demands will change over time as the population grows and its age-profile changes and as leisure interests and the popularity of different sports and recreational activities change. We are supportive of changes in the interests of better quality facilities or to meet the changing recreation demands of the community, as long as they do not constitute an unacceptable nuisance or are in conflict with other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.9 The availability of safe, stimulating play space for the very young is important. We will support the creation of new play areas for young children in proximity to the residential areas.

6.10 The East Devon Audit of Open Space 2014, showed that the Parish was under-provided with outdoor sports pitches and amenity space. It also assessed that many of our open spaces were

in need of better maintenance or up-dating. The East Devon Playing Pitch Strategy of 2015 recorded the Dunkeswell football pitch as being of poor quality.

- 6.11 Provision for public open space and play areas for young people should be made in accordance with the standards set in the East Devon Local Plan. The Local Plan (Strategy 43) signposts the Open Space Study of 2012 as the document which sets out these standards. In short, the standard in relation to play areas is that all children and young people (youth) should live no further than 11-15 minutes' walk (600m) away from play areas and 0.5m² of space should be provided per person.
- 6.12 Our policy CFS2 supports development to improve or extend play and recreation facilities so local people can continue to enjoy access to good quality amenity space and high quality play areas and recreation facilities in the local neighbourhood area.

Policy CFS2 – Access to Play and Recreation Facilities

Proposals for development which improve facilities and amenities on, and accessibility to, existing play and recreation areas will be supported and where they do not have significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents in terms of noise, light and visual appearance.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 28; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policy CC4/A; East Devon Local Plan– Strategy 43, RC1, RC2

7. Transport and Accessibility

Aims	Objectives
10. Develop local infrastructure that promotes sustainability and community wellbeing.	10e) Establish a footpath from old Dunkeswell to the estate for walk to work.
11. Maximize accessibility and encourage low carbon options.	11a) Support initiatives to improve Footpaths, Bridleways, and safe cycle ways, horse riding and walking routes.
	11b) Support car sharing and other initiatives to provide alternatives to the private motor car.
12. Improve road safety and minimize intrusion.	12a) Visibility splays and access and egress arrangements to be decided locally on their own merit.
	12b) Encourage safe parking, the provision of more off-street parking and sufficient off-street parking for all development.
	12c) Minimise the negative impact of HGV's on the environment and road safety.

Introduction

7.1 Dunkeswell Parish is some way off the main road network and is accessible only by rural roads. The sense of remoteness is accentuated by the fact that the Parish is served only by the number 20 bus service which provides some five journeys a day or more from Taunton to Honiton. As per many other Parishes in the Blackdown Hills, car dependency and multiple car-ownership amongst households is high; yet 10% of households don't have regular access to a car. Dunkeswell is fortunate to be served by a ring and ride community transport service for the less mobile.

7.2 The historic Dunkeswell aerodrome means that we are very well connected by light aircraft. However, the aerodrome and its industrial estate are also major reasons why we



have as many traffic and transport issues. There are a lot of complaints about the impact of heavy goods vehicles on the Parish and on the residential areas in particular. They also contribute to the concern amongst many residents about pedestrian safety where we lack proper footpaths and serve as a deterrent to walking and cycling for many residents.

Rights of Way (Public Footpaths, Pavements, Bridleways and Cycleways)

7.3 The messages from our consultations are clear. As a community we would like to walk more. But we need a better and safer set of walking routes around the Parish, which, combined with restrictions on traffic speeds, would make walking around the Parish a lot pleasanter and much safer. We would like to see an increase in the number of off-road footpaths, bridleways and cycling routes. Many people commented in the Community Survey 2014 about the great value that such a motor vehicle-free route-way connecting Highfield, the Old Village and the airfield would have. The Local Plan Policy TC4 Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways: encourages footways and routes within and through new development schemes. Wherever possible the opportunity should be taken to join, upgrade and extend existing or proposed networks.



7.4 The Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan has a number of policies under the heading of 'Access and Enjoyment' that seek to extend the footpath network (Policy AE 1/A) and ensure there is a wide range of sensitive and sustainable access opportunities for users of all abilities to enjoy the special qualities of the AONB (Policy AE 1/C)

7.5 Our Neighbourhood Plan policy TA1 is aimed at realising the AONB policies by supporting proposals that improve and extend the network and linkages and increase and serve to improve public access to the countryside in the interests of peaceful enjoyment of the natural environment in safety and free from interference or disturbance from motor vehicles.

Policy TA1 - Rights of Way (Public Footpaths, Pavements, Bridleways and Cycleways)

The improvement and enhancement of public rights of way will be supported.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 35; East Devon Local Plan Policy TC4; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies AE/1A, AE/1B, AE/1C

New Walking and Cycle Route Links in Dunkeswell

7.6 The roads linking the main settlement areas and the airfield are often busy, particularly at the times when people are going to work and coming home. Walking on these roads, where footpaths don't exist is hazardous; for many, cycling is considered to be equally so. There has long been a hope that a dedicated footpath could be established that linked the Highfield area with the Old Village and on to the airfield. *"Villagers of Dunkeswell have consistently voted for a footpath connection between the old and new parts of the village and a positive decision on this is long overdue."* (2011 Parish Plan)

7.7 With the growth both in housing in Dunkeswell and job opportunities on the industrial estate, the value of such a link will be heightened. The Business Survey 2014 showed that local businesses were strongly in favour of a safe footpath link between the industrial estate and the residential areas. The Parish Council intends to be pro-active on this matter. It will consult widely and discuss the possibility of extending the footpath network with landowners.

7.8 We fully support the stated intention of the AONB Partnership *"to work with highways authorities to implement agreed traffic management techniques to reduce traffic volume and speed on minor roads to provide a safer environment for walking, cycling and horse riding"* (Policy TH 3/A). This is no substitute, however, for a dedicated traffic free route-way for everybody to enjoy.



Policy TA2 – New Walking and Cycle Route Links in Dunkeswell

Proposals to establish a walking and cycle route that links Highfield and the old part of the village with the industrial estate will be supported.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2004, 2007, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 35; East Devon Local Plan Policy TC4; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies AE/1A, AE/1B, AE/1C

Off-road Parking

- 7.9 Many of the roads and lanes of the Parish would be safer and visually more appealing if there were less cars parked on them. Multi-car ownership has been on the increase. We would support the provision of additional off-road parking where it can be done without adversely affecting the local environment.
- 7.10 All new dwellings should have sufficient off-road parking spaces provided. Any new development will need to conform to parking standards of Local Plan Policy TC9, Parking Provision in New Development, in the Local Plan.
- 7.11 We are also concerned that on-street parking could increase where off-road parking space (dedicated layby, driveway and garage space) is lost through the extension of existing dwellings buildings. Our policy TA3 is therefore designed to prevent the loss of existing off-road parking space as a result of development where that loss may have an impact on the safety of road users in the vicinity.

Policy TA3 – Off-road Parking

Proposals to provide off-road parking spaces should not have an adverse impact on:

- i) The character of the local built environment;**
- ii) The quality of the surrounding natural environment;**
- iii) The visual amenity of the area; and**
- iv) Surface water flooding.**

Where development (including extension) of existing dwellings will occupy existing parking space(s) and reduce the number of parking spaces available to accommodate vehicles used by residents of the dwelling to a standard below that suggested for new dwellings in the Local Plan, proposals will need to demonstrate that there is adequate alternative parking provision to serve the dwelling, so that road and pedestrian safety will not be compromised.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: East Devon Local Plan Policy TC9

Vehicular Access and Egress Arrangements

7.12 Our Objective 12a expresses a desire to decide access and egress arrangements locally and on their own merits. We will continue to seek this power, with decisions on such matters currently made by the local authorities (the District Council as the local planning authority and Devon County Council as Highways Authority). Meeting the standard requirements of the Highways Authority for visibility splays can cause substantial damage to the character of our historic settlements and to our special local environment. Rigidly conforming to the standard requirements can also give the motor vehicle predominance, which is contrary to our aims and objectives. Furthermore, in some cases, strict adherence to the requirements may prevent an otherwise acceptable development from taking place.



7.13 The 2011 “Highway Management in Devon’s Protected Landscapes: Protocol”, which has been adopted by the County Council and endorsed by Devon’s protected landscape management bodies including the Blackdown Hills AONB, along with its companion document “Highway Management in Devon’s Protected Landscapes: Guidance”, provides some flexibility in highway design in order to protect the local setting and distinctiveness of the rural environment particularly in the AONBs.

7.14 In response to concerns that were expressed clearly in our community survey, we are prepared to consider the suitability of the vehicular access and egress proposals for any new development or the improvement of existing vehicular access and/or egress on a case by case basis, so as to minimise the potential loss of precious historic banks and hedgerows, in accordance with Policy NE1 of this Neighbourhood Plan. However, safety will remain an over-riding concern.

Policy TA4 - Vehicular Access and Egress Arrangements

Proposals for the development of new or improved vehicular access and egress will be supported where:

- i) It takes the safety of pedestrians and other road users fully into account; and,**
- ii) The proposal demonstrates that all options have been considered to avoid adverse impact on the landscape and setting of the proposed access.**

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council,

August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 39; East Devon Local Plan Policy TA9

Reducing Traffic Impact

7.15 As far back as 2003, when the first Dunkeswell Parish Plan was prepared, the amount of traffic passing through the village was recognised as an issue. In the 2003 version of the Parish Plan there was a hope that traffic would eventually be diverted from the village by a bypass. Nothing materialised. A community survey in 2011 confirmed again that most local people remained in favour of a bypass so that heavy goods vehicles, in particular, would not need to go through the village to gain access to the airfield. Many respondents wanted to see a tonnage limit imposed on traffic traversing the village. The Community Survey 2014 confirmed that concerns about heavy goods vehicles still persist. Around half of the respondents said they would walk more if traffic speeds were less and heavy goods vehicles were fewer. The Business Survey 2014 showed that local businesses were also unhappy with the current road system and its adequacy to serve their various needs.

7.16 Paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that developments should be located and designed where practical *“to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones”*. Our policy TA5 is aimed at facilitating any opportunity to steer traffic, and heavy goods vehicles in particular, away from existing residential areas.

7.17 In accordance with the AONB Management Plan, the Parish Council will also work with the highways authorities *“to implement agreed traffic management techniques to reduced traffic volume and speed on minor roads to provide a safer environment for walking, cycling and horse riding”* (Policy TH3A). The Parish Council will also encourage and support local initiatives aimed at offering alternative travel arrangements to the private motor vehicle or reducing the incidence of single person car journeys.

Policy TA5 – Reducing Traffic Impact

Proposals which help minimise the impact of non-local traffic, and HGVs in particular, on the existing residential areas of the Parish will be supported.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2004, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 35; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policy TH3A

8. Local Economy

Aims	Objectives
<p>13. Promote a sustainable diverse and vibrant local economy.</p>	<p>13a) Encourage suitable forms of small-scale tourism development, particularly yurts shepherds' huts and camping.</p>
	<p>13b) Support the provision of work-live and other forms of flexible/adaptable work spaces.</p>
	<p>13c) Support the sympathetic regeneration of the industrial estate in the interests of improved security and to improve and enhance the visual appearance of the site.</p>
	<p>13d) Sympathetic to farm diversification where it is in the interest of overall viability of the farming business and not in conflict with the aims of the AONB and its community.</p>
<p>14. Improve broadband and connectivity.</p>	<p>14a) Introduce super-fast broadband across the whole Parish as soon as possible.</p>
	<p>14b) Ensure the area remains as well connected as is necessary for businesses to function properly and meet the many and varied needs of the local population.</p>
<p>15. Encourage and support local enterprise.</p>	<p>15a) Strengthen links amongst local businesses and between businesses and the local community.</p>
	<p>15b) Assist and encourage new developments and initiatives that will benefit, in particular, home working, women returning to work and young people to stay in the Parish to find employment or start businesses, with a strong emphasis on encouraging Parishioners to live and work within the Parish.</p>
	<p>15c) Develop a 'pride of place' in and about Dunkeswell as well as cohesive residential and business community.</p>

Introduction

8.1 Dunkeswell is a local employment centre and will remain so. Most of the local business activity takes place at the industrial estate at the airfield. However, despite Dunkeswell being the major business and employment centre of the Blackdown Hills, we have a higher percentage of unemployed residents than most other Parishes in the Blackdown Hills area.

8.2 Ensuring we retain a thriving, sustainable local economy, in a time when working practices and traditional ways of working are changing is a challenge. Our local economy also needs to meet the needs of young people trying to enter the employment market.



8.3 The Neighbourhood Plan can play a part by helping to ensure that there is an adequate supply of the types of business premises that are required. In addition to the existing stock of premises centred around the airfield, we support the principle of people working from home and living and working on the same site. This fits with our overall desire to protect the natural quality of the AONB while also seeking to provide local employment opportunities for young people and start-up businesses. It also aligns with Local Plan, Strategy 31, Future Job and Employment Land Provision, which supports home working and requires contributions to be made from new residential development towards the provision of small employment workspace locally.

8.4 The Parish Plan in 2011 made it plain that people did not want to see the neighbourhood area become more commercialised or industrialised to the detriment of its rural setting. Local people said in 2011 that they wanted to see the existing industrial area redeveloped but with no overall increase in floor area and with restrictions on the kind of industry, to ensure no increase in heavy industrial traffic. In accordance with the response to the Community Survey 2014, our neighbourhood plan policies therefore focus on making the best use of what we have with the least negative impact possible.

Live-work Workspace

8.5 Mindful of the beneficial effect of facilitating flexible working practices in the interests of building a stronger local economy, we support development proposals that provide small live-scale work spaces in circumstances where there is no adverse effect on the day to day living environment and which do not impose an unacceptable loss of existing supply of employment

space. The NPPF (para. 28) says that we should “*support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings*”.

- 8.6 We already have over a dozen live-work units located on the industrial estate and we support the principle of this type of space being provided on the industrial estate. However, such provision should still meet criteria to ensure that development proposals are appropriate to the location.
- 8.7 Our policy LE1 is designed to facilitate the appropriate development of live-work space, principally, but not exclusively, on the existing industrial estate employment area. We would like to see opportunities to improve the quality of the industrial estate come forward and to that end our policy seeks to be positive enough to help enable that to happen rather than be overly restrictive on the site. The policy is also consistent with the AONB Management Plan which encourages “*the development of sustainable employment opportunities that... encourage people to continue to live and work within their communities*” (Policy RET 1/B).
- 8.8 We consider that for conversion of existing employment space to form a live-work unit not to be to the detriment of the local economy, proposals should seek to minimise any negative impact on it. This is difficult to demonstrate as space is not necessarily an indicator of how an employment use either benefits or impacts negatively on the economy, while jobs, profit of a company or turnover (which are not necessarily considered as material to a planning application) might. We would suggest, however, that a business owner should be able to live comfortably in the live-work unit and that, depending on the size of the unit in question may equate to 30% – 40% of the internal floorspace area. Another indicator that an applicant might use would be the degree of change in employment space that will be introduced by the proposal and how a proposed business type might outweigh the loss of space in a rural area which needs to retain a core of its employment uses to help maintain the rural sustainability of our village.

Policy LE1 – Live-work Workspace

A. Proposals for development to enable or facilitate working or living in the same building or site should demonstrate that:

- i) The proposed units would be well-related to the uses of the surrounding land and buildings (preferably located on the existing industrial estate);**
- ii) The employment floorspace would be equal or greater than that of the residential living space;**
- iii) The proposed uses would not cause unacceptable nuisance to and would be compatible with neighbouring premises / properties;**
- iv) The proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupants; and,**
- v) There would be no adverse impact on:**
 - a) the character of the built environment;**
 - b) the character of the natural environment and setting;**
 - c) residential amenity;**
 - d) traffic conditions;**

- e) noise; and,
- f) light pollution.

B. Proposals which seek the change of use of existing employment space to form a live-work unit must demonstrate that such changes:

- i) Retain existing ground floor employment space; and,
- ii) The occupancy of the living space is restricted to a person directly involved with the business being operated.

C. Applications to change a live-work unit to wholly residential use must demonstrate that the unit has been actively marketed for live-work for two years; that no demand exists for its continued use for live-work; and the proposed change of use would be well-related to the uses of surrounding land and buildings.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014; Dunkeswell Parish Neighbourhood Plan Business Survey Report, October 2014; Blackdown Hills AONB Position Statement on Noise, September 2008. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 25; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policy RET 1/B

Industrial Estate

8.9 It is the view of the local community, as expressed in the 2011 version of the Parish Plan that the industrial areas of the airfield detract from the overall visual appearance of the neighbourhood area and are at odds with the aims associated with protecting and enhancing the special environment of the Blackdown Hills. Whilst acknowledging that areas of business and commercial activity will contrast with the character of the surrounding natural and rural environment, we feel that every effort should be made to improve the visual appearance of the industrial estate and also ensure that the historic character of the airfield area is not lost. Two thirds of the respondents to the Business Survey 2014 were concerned about the security of the industrial estate.

8.10 Policy E5 of the Local Plan is supportive of Small Scale Economic Development in Rural Areas provided that “*all new buildings shall be designed to blend into their location and shall meet sustainable construction....*” We wish to extend this approach by encouraging and supporting measures that will improve the visual appearance of the main employment area of Dunkeswell. The Parish Council will encourage local businesses to improve the quality and appearance of their site boundaries.

8.11 As we have acknowledged above, we are supportive of the employment opportunities that the industrial estate provides and wish to retain the site for the existing employment uses, including live-work units. We have set out, in the section on “Traditional Farming” how we value the benefits that traditional, rather than industrial or intensive farming practices provide

to the Parish. To this end, for the benefit of our current agricultural practices and landscape they inhabit, local amenity, traffic volumes on local roads, the structure of our local economy and existing employment on the industrial estate, we would not wish to see the existing employment uses on the industrial estate replaced by intensive or industrial scale farming practices (such as, but not limited to, the rearing of livestock).

- 8.12 Our approach and our policy LE2 is consistent too with the AONB Management Plan which encourages *“the development of sustainable employment opportunities that are compatible with conserving and enhancing natural beauty and the special qualities of the AONB, and encourage people to continue to live and work within their communities”* (Policy RET 1/B).

Policy LE2 – Industrial Estate

Proposals to improve security and/or improve the visual appearance of the industrial estate should be appropriate in terms of scale and design so as not to harm the overall character and appearance of the estate or the local landscape.

The industrial estate will be protected for B1, B2 and B8 uses and live-work units. Proposals for the change of use from these uses or the development of other uses on the industrial estate should not cause unacceptable nuisance to neighbouring premises / properties and there is no adverse impact on:

- i) The character of the built environment;**
- ii) The character of the natural environment and setting;**
- iii) Residential amenity;**
- iv) Traffic generation. Where there would be an increase in traffic movements, including HGVs, that cannot be safely accommodated on the rural road network, the proposal should include mitigation measures;**
- v) Noise; and,**
- vi) Light pollution.**

Proposals for change of use of existing business or industrial premises in the industrial estate should provide evidence that there is insufficient demand for the existing use.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: Dunkeswell Parish Neighbourhood Plan Business Survey Report, October 2014; East Devon Local Plan Policy E5; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policy RET 1/B

Conversion of Agricultural Buildings

- 8.13 Farming is a vital component of our Parish and its economy. We will help ensure that farming businesses can remain viable by supporting business diversification and the conversion or redevelopment of existing farm buildings where it can be shown that it will make a difference to the viability of the main business but have little or no impact on the character of its surroundings.
- 8.14 The NPPF (paragraph 28) calls for policies that support a prosperous rural economy. It states that planning policies should “*support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings*”. Local Plan Policy D8 – Re-use of Rural Buildings Outside of Settlements is permissive of the conversion of rural buildings.
- 8.15 Within the AONB however we feel that we should be cognisant of the AONB Management Plan which recognises the value of “rural diversification”, but not at the cost of compromising the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and the special qualities of the AONB (Policy RET 1/A). In the spirit of the national policy we will not oppose the careful and sensitive conversion and alteration of existing agricultural buildings for business-related purposes.
- 8.16 Our policy LE3 supports the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings in the interests of increasing the viability of the farm business, for example to B1 (offices), B2 (light industrial), B8 (storage) use or other diversification such as holiday accommodation, whilst ensuring the conversion and reuse is compatible with its setting and the special character of the AONB. Thereby it complies with the AONB Management Plan by encouraging the development of sustainable employment opportunities (Policy RET 1/B).

Policy LE3 – Conversion of Agricultural Buildings

When considering proposals for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings for business or business-related purposes, regard will be had to any impact on local character, residential amenity, and highway safety; and whether the conversion would require substantial rebuilding or result in disproportionate extension.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 28; East Devon Local Plan Policies D8, E16; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 – Policies RET/1B and PD/1C

Tourism and Small Scale Camp Sites

- 8.17 The Community Survey 2014 confirmed that local people are supportive of small scale tourism supported in the Parish. A majority of people who responded to the survey support small scale tourism-related development such as pubs and catering establishments, hotel/guest house accommodation, small camp sites (including traditional camping, and yurts and shepherd huts, etc.) and self-catering accommodation. The NPPF (para. 28) says that we should *“support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside”*.



- 8.18 There needs to be a delicate balance between encouraging such small scale tourism based development to help improve our local economy and protecting the quality of the landscape. We are prepared to see small scale camp sites (including yurts, shepherds’ huts, and so on) established within the countryside around Dunkeswell as long as they meet these requirements, are non-intrusive and do not compromise the special qualities of the AONB landscape.
- 8.19 To encourage small scale tourism in Dunkeswell within the context of the attraction of the AONB, our policy LE4 is aimed at facilitating the provision of new small camp sites (where a site requires planning permission) in countryside locations within the Parish.
- 8.20 Local Plan Policy E19 - Holiday Accommodation Parks permits the development of new ‘holiday accommodation’ sites outside of designated landscape areas such as the Blackdown Hills AONB, where they meet criteria relating to harmony and compatibility. It is also permissive of existing holiday accommodation parks within the AONB where they meet the same criteria in full and provide no new permanent structures or are replacement structures designed to blend into their surroundings. Our policy LE4 is specifically designed to add a local ‘layer’ to Local Plan Policy E19, with its focus on small scale camp site proposals (for around 5 units, to avoid cumulative impact of larger sites) and criteria which we feel should be amplified in the local context.

Policy LE4 –Small Scale Camping Sites

Proposals for the provision of small-scale camp sites (including yurts, shepherds’ huts and traditional camping) which require planning permission will be supported provided the following criteria are met in full:

- i) The scale, level and intensity of development on the site is compatible with the character of the area;**
- ii) The proposal does not adversely affect the visual amenity of the area;**
- iii) On-site access, servicing and parking facilities are provided commensurate with the level and intensity of the proposed use;**
- iv) The proposal does not cause nuisance and does not adversely impact on residential amenity (for example unacceptable noise or light pollution) and satisfactory arrangements are put in place to minimise and control noise, air, water and light pollution.**

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 28; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policy RET 1/C

Superfast Connectivity

8.21 Regular use of the internet and social media is important if we are to maintain or improve our quality of life. The NPPF (para. 42) says “*advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth*”. Fast and reliable connection is essential for running successful businesses, accessing services and assistance, furthering education and creating a breadth of opportunities for personal growth and development. The Business Survey of 2014 highlighted the frustration felt by local businesses over the lack of a reliable fast broadband service.

8.22 We are intent on establishing and maintaining a level of connectivity commensurate with the best in East Devon. While the main driver for our policy is to help sustain and improve the local economy, the need for improved provision extends beyond the traditional business premises as many people are now working from home or running a business from home which would benefit from a reliable, high speed broadband connectivity. Naturally, there are positive spin-offs for local households, as the use of the internet for social interaction, education and access to essential services increases with time. The NPPF (para. 42) says “*the development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.*”

8.23 However, this cannot be done at all costs. Our policy is set in the context of the special quality of our natural and built environment. It seeks to minimise the visual impact of new

connectivity infrastructure such as cabling or telecoms boxes or hubs for super-fast fibre broadband, such infrastructure should be appropriately sited, sympathetically designed and camouflaged so that it is in-keeping with its setting and surroundings. However, we recognise the limitations of this policy with many types of telecoms infrastructure not being subject to planning permission.

Policy LE5 – Superfast Connectivity

The development of superfast broadband infrastructure serving the area (where it requires planning permission) will be supported where it is sensitively sited and sympathetically designed.

Where practical, all new residential, educational and business premises will be required to make provision for the latest high-speed broadband and other communication networks.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Dunkeswell Parish Council, August 2014; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014; Dunkeswell Parish Neighbourhood Plan Business Survey Report, October 2014. Further relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraphs 42-43; East Devon Local Plan Strategy 27 and Policy RC6

9. Energy and Low Carbon

Aim	Objectives
16. Support small scale, unobtrusive renewable or low carbon energy schemes providing they are sensitively sited and screened (appropriately landscaped).	16a) Ensure that Dunkeswell is ready and able to accommodate advances in technology.
	16b) Encourage the use of solar technology on farm building, domestic and industrial buildings.
	16c) Investigate the potential and promote the installation of hydro power and emerging renewable solutions which fit with the aims of the AONB.
	16d) Encourage the use small to medium non-obtrusive wind turbines, in suitable locations.
	16e) Resist industrial scale renewable energy development on any agricultural land, common land and open spaces.

Introduction

9.1 We recognise the importance and value that renewable and low carbon energy schemes, and improvements to energy efficiency of buildings, when done sensitively, can have to help provide alternatives to fossil based fuels and therefore:

- help reduce carbon dioxide emissions,
- improve the security of energy supply,
- reduce households bills for energy,
- generate an income for community organisations and businesses, and,
- reduce the cost of supply of energy.

9.2 The Parish Council is supportive of micro-energy generation including the use of small scale solar technology on farm, domestic and industrial buildings. We are also interested in working with partners and the community to investigate the potential for hydro power in the Parish and other small scale and / or community renewable energy installations.

9.3 However, we do recognise that both, in practical terms and intrusion, different types of renewable and low carbon energy installations may, or may not be, suitable in different built and natural landscapes. We have already set out how we value our natural landscape in Dunkeswell within the context of the Blackdown Hills AONB and the policies we have developed our energy proposals reflect this position.

Small and Large Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes

- 9.4 Evidence we have gathered¹², together with the views of our local community, has identified a general support for smaller scale renewable and low carbon energy schemes which respect the qualities of the landscape and natural environment as a whole and do not have an adverse impact on the beauty of and biodiversity within our Parish. The NPPF (para. 97) says that we should design policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts.
- 9.5 Local Plan Strategy 39 supports renewable or low-carbon energy projects in either domestic or commercial development in principle subject to them *“following current best practice guidance and the adverse impacts on features of environmental and heritage sensitivity, including any cumulative landscape and visual impacts, being satisfactorily addressed”*.
- 9.6 The Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan is supportive of appropriate, small-scale renewable energy schemes that *“help achieve carbon reduction and energy security that do not conflict with the special qualities of the AONB or the conservation of natural beauty”* (Policy PD 2/B). In supporting renewable or low-carbon energy projects, we have taken our guidance from the “Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills” report, which assessed the suitability in broad terms, in the AONB, of different types and scales of renewable and low carbon energy solutions.
- 9.7 Table 1 below, reproduced from the “Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills” report¹³, sets out this position and also helpfully confirms what we mean in our policies by “small scale” and “large scale” renewable energy installations. In accordance with table 1, the only larger-scale installations that may be acceptable in the AONB are solar PV farms, which are considered to have very limited suitability, and small to medium size wind turbines.

¹² Such as the Blackdown Hills Management Plan, 2014; the Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report, 2010; and, the Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in the Devon Landscape: Advice Note, 2013.

¹³ p.9, Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report, Land Use Consultants in association with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2010

Table 1

TYPE	TECHNOLOGY	SUITABILITY
Biomass	Large-scale 10-40MW electricity generation plant	Red
	Small Combined Heat and Power plant	Green
	Business / domestic biomass boilers	Green
	Business / domestic biomass stoves	Green
Anaerobic digestion	Centralised anaerobic digestion (AD) plant	Red
	AD serving a group of farms	Yellow
	AD serving a single farm	Green
Waste to energy scheme		Red
Micro-hydro	Micro-hydro	Green
	Restoration of traditional mill sites	Green
Photovoltaics	Building associated PV systems	Green
	Solar PV farms	v. limited
Solar hot water		Green
Ground, air and water source heat pumps		Green
Community heating	Small-scale or micro community heating	Green
Wind	Large-scale turbines (90m – 135m)	Red
	Medium-scale turbines (25m – 90m)	v. limited
	Small-scale turbines (12m – 25m height)	Yellow
	Micro turbines (<11m)	Green

Source: p.9, Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report, Land Use Consultants in association with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2010. Green shaded cells means acceptable in principle, orange means possibly acceptable and red means not acceptable.

- 9.8 Any proposals which come forward for wind turbines in the parish should be mindful of the Government’s Written Ministerial Statement published on Wind Energy Development on 18th June 2015 (HCWS42) which requires any proposals for wind energy to be located within suitable areas identified in the development plan policies map, and to demonstrate that the schemes have the backing of the local community. This plan does not identify any such areas suitable for wind turbine development.¹⁴
- 9.9 Our policy ELC1 is generally supportive of micro-generation and small-scale development for renewable or low carbon energy schemes as long as they do not have an adverse impact on our special environment.

¹⁴ HCWS42 can be viewed here <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-vote-office/June%202015/18%20June/1-DCLG-Planning.pdf> .

Policy ELC1 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes

To protect Dunkeswell's and the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty's landscape, biodiversity, tranquillity and wildlife habitats, proposals for renewable or low carbon energy schemes will be supported only where they:

- i) Are of appropriate scale;**
- ii) Are sensitively sited and where necessary appropriately landscaped;**
- iii) Protect the historic environment; and,**
- iv) Do not put at risk the safe use of the Dunkeswell aerodrome/airfield.**

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan; Devon Landscape Character Assessment, Devon County Council; Natural England National Character Areas, Blackdowns NCA 147, Statements SEO2, 3 and 4; Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report; Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in the Devon Landscape: Advice Note. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: National Planning Policy Framework – Paragraphs 97, 115-118; East Devon Local Plan Strategy 39, Strategy 41; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 2/B, CC 4/B

10. Recycling

Aim	Objectives
17. Increase recycling levels.	17a) Encourage community based recycling schemes.
	17b) Facilitate the extension of recycling to include other and new forms of waste such a plastic.

Minimising Waste in Dunkeswell

- 10.1 The response from consultation with our community in 2011 suggested that support for recycling in the Parish was increasing. While the implementation and achievement of this rests largely in the hands of others with a wider than Parish remit, the Parish Council is keen to encourage and facilitate greater reducing, re-using and recycling of waste by the local community.
- 10.2 In accordance with the Blackdown Hills Management Plan Policy CC4/B we will “*support community-based initiatives that promote sustainable measures and lifestyles to minimise waste and use of water, and promote reuse, recycling, composting.... where these are compatible with the purpose of the AONB and its special qualities*”. The Blackdown Hills Management Plan states that PD 3/A we should “*reduce the production of waste and ensure that waste management does not conflict with conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the AONB*” (Policy PD3/A).
- 10.3 Our policy W1 supports development proposals that facilitate recycling where they are of a scale and location which is compatible with the status of the AONB and of the landscape within which they are sited.

Policy W1 – Minimising Waste in Dunkeswell

Proposals for development that help minimise household and employment premises’ waste and use of water, and promote reuse, recycling and composting, will be supported where these are compatible with the purpose of the AONB and its special qualities.

Key supporting evidence for this policy includes the following: Dunkeswell Parish Plan, 2011; Dunkeswell Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014; Devon Waste Plan, 2013; Devon Waste Management Strategy, 2013. More relevant evidence is summarised in the Dunkeswell Parish Written Evidence Report.

Key supportive national, district and AONB policies include the following: East Devon Local Plan Strategy 3; Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 – Policy PD 3/A

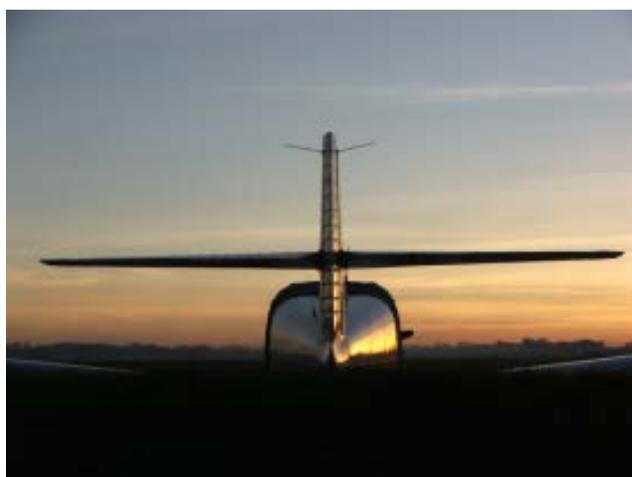
11. Delivering Priorities

- 11.1 Consultation on our Plan identified a number of actions which we will look to pursue. Some of these are likely to be projects which could draw on funding made available as a result of any development that occurs during the Plan period, for example through section 106 planning obligations and / or Community Infrastructure Levy set by the local planning authority. These priorities are set out in the Neighbourhood Plan Community Action Plan. This document is separate to this Neighbourhood Plan and will be reviewed and updated periodically during the Plan period.

12. Monitoring and Review

- 12.1 While there is no statutory requirement for the impact of this Plan and its policies to be monitored, the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will periodically monitor the impact of policies on change in the Parish by considering the policies' effectiveness in the planning application decision making process.

- 12.2 A full or partial review of this Plan is unlikely to be considered necessary during its lifetime unless triggered by changes to legislation, changes to national or District-wide planning policies or significant planning issues being raised by the local community which cannot be dealt with effectively by a combination of national, district and / or existing neighbourhood plan policies.

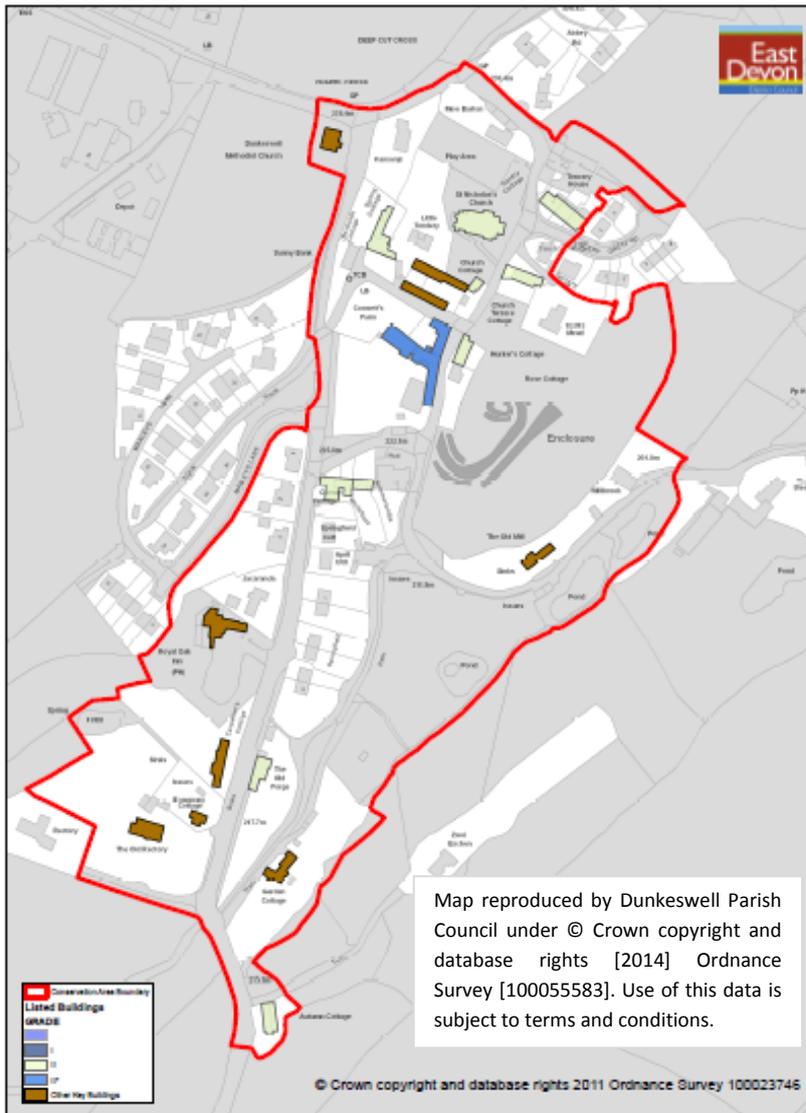


Appendix 1

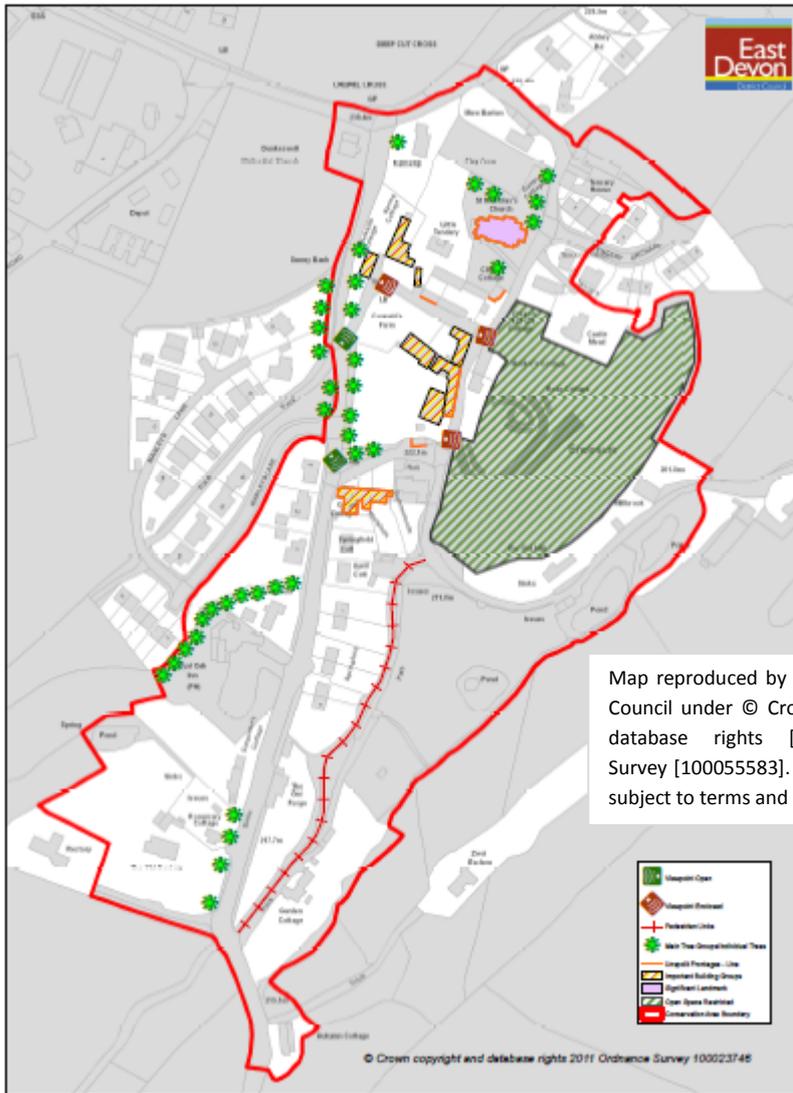
Maps relating to the Historic Character of Dunkeswell

(reproduced from Dunkeswell Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan)

Map 1 Historic Building Character

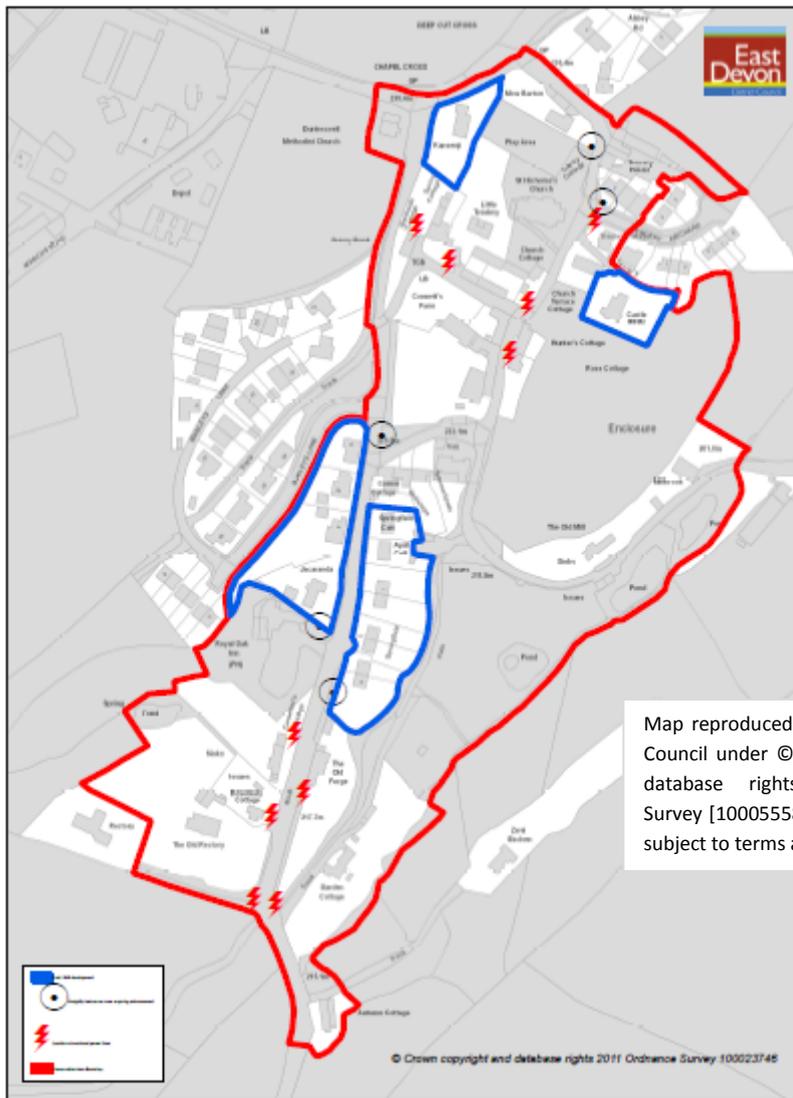


Map 2 Important Features



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Map 3 Detracting Features



Appendix 2

AONB Design Guide for Houses

Please see separate electronic file to access the Design Guide (for e-versions of this Plan) or follow this weblink http://www.blackdownhillsaonb.org.uk/modules/documents/documents/BHAONBHousing-Design-Guide_publishedMarch2012.pdf .

