
LODERS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



SUBMISSION DRAFT: June 2015

Produced for consultation by Loders Parish Council and
Loders Parish Neighbourhood Steering Group



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: VISION, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Loders Neighbourhood Plan will provide an important tool for residents to influence the future of the parish and what is built in the area in the period up to 2027.

The neighbourhood plan was prepared by a Steering Group (of residents) set up by Loders Parish Council. The Steering Group was open to any local resident who was interested in helping prepare the plan. The Parish Council considered all the comments made through the consultations, and made changes to the plan as a result. The submission draft was examined by an independent inspector appointed by the District Council [*insert here any relevant findings or changes*], following which a referendum on whether to adopt the plan was held. [*insert here results of referendum and date of adoption*].

The neighbourhood plan is in four parts

1. An Executive Summary
2. An overview of what makes the parish community and its settlements so distinctive – its special historic qualities and outstanding landscape – and its make up in terms of population, housing, community assets and local business.
3. The vision, objectives and planning policies for the future of the parish. These have been based on the results of the Parish Survey conducted in 2012 (to which there was an 81% response) and an analysis of facts and figures from a variety of sources such as the 2011 census and local knowledge. The planning policies have been drawn up to supplement, and in some cases modify, the West Dorset local plan policies.
4. A section on how the plan's successes (or failings) will be monitored, to help work out if the plan or specific issues need to be reviewed before 2027.

Our Vision Statement

Loders Parish is a thriving rural community with a wide range of activities for young and old. We also like living here because it is an attractive historic settlement set in beautiful unspoilt countryside. Over the next 10 to 15 years some building and change can be expected, to retain a good mix of housing, business and community uses. This should be organic and incremental so that any development and change is indiscernible, as building works will be in keeping with the historic character of the settlement, and unobtrusive in the wider countryside.

Our Objectives and Policies

ENVIRONMENT:

Objective: We place a high value on the special features of the countryside and buildings in the neighbourhood plan area. We want to make sure these remain for future generations to enjoy. This means careful stewardship of the farmland, hedgerows, trees, rivers and open amenity areas; protecting our wildlife habitats and the features in the landscape we value such as the strip lynchets and old trackways. We also want to make sure that the traditional form and style of buildings in the parish is kept and that any new building respects this.

Policies: The environment policies set the context for where development will take place, defining a development boundary around the village of Lodders, Yondover and Uploders where new buildings can happen, and encouraging the re-use of redundant farm buildings (whether within or outside the development boundary). Policies have been included that identify those environmental features that will be protected, including important gaps, views and local green spaces, features of historic interest and important wildlife habitats. There is also a policy on the design of new buildings and extensions and alterations to existing buildings, providing guidance on how development should be more in keeping with the area (unlike some of the developments that have happened in the past).

COMMUNITY:

Objective: We are proud of the fact that we have an active working community. Community activities flourish here, strongly supported by volunteers. It is important to us that these community facilities are kept and supported.

Policies: There is one community policy in the plan. This lists the important community assets (such as the school and village hall) and tries to make sure that these are retained and not developed for other uses. It also makes clear that proposals to improve these facilities will generally be supported.

HOUSING:

Objective: As a community we want to remain much as we are - whilst allowing for organic and incremental growth of housing that broadly reflects the past rate of growth and addresses our local needs for housing in the plan period to 2027. We want to ensure that this new or additional housing is of high quality design, small in scale for small family homes, starter homes and people wishing to downsize, and preferably provided by infill development (but not infilling the gaps and local green spaces identified in this plan).

Policies: The first of the two housing policies sets out the level of housing that will be supported within the development boundary of the main village. No specific sites have been allocated, but the development boundary takes into account the opportunities for incremental growth in this location, some of which may well come forward during the plan period. The second policy makes clear that most of the housing that is developed should be for small, two or three bedrooms homes.

BUSINESS:

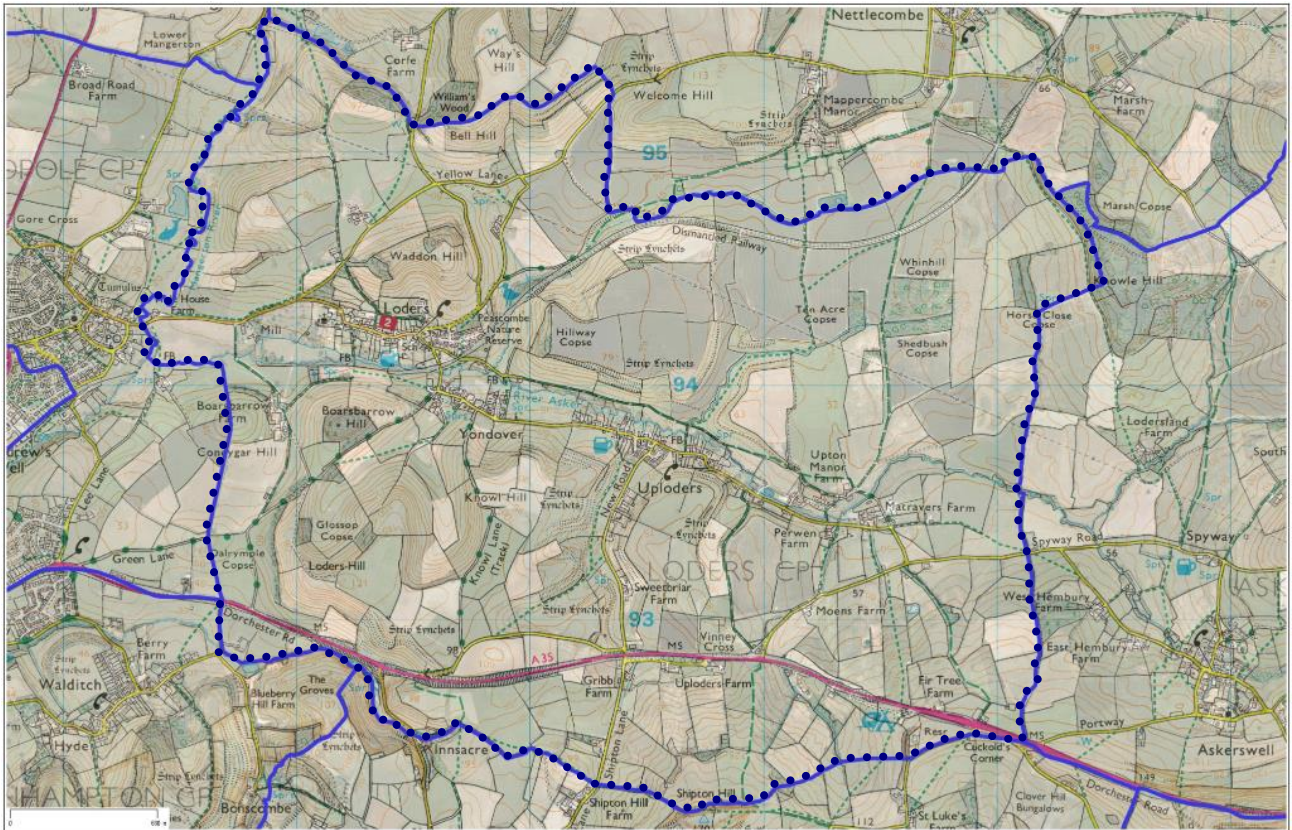
Objective: Businesses flourish from many places in the parish including homes, workshops and redundant farm buildings. It is important to us that we stay an active working community. We want to support locally-based businesses, including those in the parish who work (or want to work) locally and/or from home. This may be through improvements to working conditions, communications and services where these can be influenced by the neighbourhood plan and also supporting extensions to existing business where these will not cause traffic problems or noise and disturbance.

Policies: The business policy recognises that supporting businesses is important, but for this to be sustainable the effects of traffic, noise and other possible impacts need to be kept under control. It also highlights the opportunities that exist to convert or replace redundant rural buildings.

1 INTRODUCTION

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA: The Parish of Loders forms the boundary for the Loders Neighbourhood Plan (LNP). See Map 1. The parish lies within the West Dorset administrative district.

Map 1: Loders Neighbourhood Plan Area.



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PURPOSE: This document has been prepared by the LNP Steering Group, consisting of volunteers from the parish, in association with the Loders Parish Council and with advice of West Dorset District Council planning officers.

The Localism Act 2011 provides that planning policy developed by communities shall, if passed by an independent examination and a local referendum, be adopted by the Local Planning Authority. The policies of the Loders Neighbourhood Plan provide an important tool for residents to influence what is built in the parish in the plan period to 2027.

The aims and policies of the neighbourhood plan are based, amongst other things, on the Loders Parish Survey (2012) whose questionnaire circulated throughout the LNP area and was responded to by 81% of the population. Other key local documents on which the plan is based include *Loders & Uploders, Powerstock & Nettlecombe Conservation Area Appraisal (L&UP&NCAA)* together with extensions to the conservation areas, which was approved and adopted by West Dorset District Council in December 2007 and the *Village Design Statement (2000)* which was adopted by West Dorset District Council as Supplementary Guidance.

The Loders Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared within the context set by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the existing and emerging policies of the West Dorset District Local Plan. Together these will provide the development plan for the parish. The neighbourhood plan policies will work alongside and in compliance with those of the District Local Plan and, where appropriate, replace policies in the Local Plan where they overlap.

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS: in preparing the Loders Neighbourhood Plan, the following information has also been compiled:

- **Consultation Summary** documenting the consultation process, the work of the Steering Group and the key conclusions emerging from the Parish Survey.
- **Facts and Figures** setting out the key information about the parish and evidence on which the LNP policies are based.
- **Basic Conditions Statement** appraising the extent to which the Neighbourhood Plan Policies conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); the strategic policies of the Local Development Plan West Dorset District Plan and EU Guidance on Sustainability.
- **Sustainability Check** assessing the sustainability of the proposals in the plan and whether a more in-depth strategic environmental assessment is required.

THE LAYOUT OF THIS DOCUMENT: The Loders Neighbourhood Plan is organised as follows:

Following the above **INTRODUCTION**, section 2 headed **OVERVIEW** provides a qualitative and quantitative summary description of the principal characteristics of the neighbourhood plan area. This provides a context for Section 3 the **VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES** which reflect the sentiments of the Parish based on the survey results and public consultation, and covers Environment, Community, Housing and Business issues. Section 4 examines how the objectives and policies of the neighbourhood plan will be **MONITORED AND REVIEWED**.

2 OVERVIEW

2.1 Location and Description of the Loders Neighbourhood Plan area

The key settlements within the Loders Neighbourhood Plan area (LNP) are from west to east: Loders, Yondover, Uploders and Matravers and also include the outlying hamlets of Vinney Cross and Loders Cross (including Gribb Farm) which lie either side of the A35, and isolated farms surrounding Shipton Hill (such as Innsacre Farm). The Plan area has a population of 518 (2011 census).

The village settlements of Loders, Uploders and Matravers have developed along the waterline of the River Asker, a small affluent of the River Brit. They lie in the folds of the surrounding Powerstock Hills which has promoted its linear characteristics. The underlying geology and resultant topography have given the surrounding landscape its beautiful and distinct character. A single lane village road runs along the valley connecting the villages of Bradpole in the west and Askerswell in the east, both of which lie outside the parish boundary and the neighbourhood plan area.

The A35 from Dorchester to Honiton in Devon, passes through the neighbourhood plan area on its way to Bridport, skirting the main village settlements, identified above, which lie in the Asker Valley to the north. Bridport lies adjacent to the Plan area, about two miles (3.2 km) from Loders. Bradpole, the neighbouring village to the west of Loders falls within the designated town boundary of Bridport. Open countryside separates the two villages.

Bridport is an historic town market town with a strong Industrial heritage. The combination of soil type and climate in the Brit Valley has historically made for the growing of hemp and flax. These have underpinned Bridport's net and rope industry known to have been established in the town by the thirteenth century. As the industry flourished it became dependent on outworkers from the nearby villages for net making and there are a number of early twentieth century photographs of Loders and Uploders residents engaged in this occupation.



Figure 1: View of LODERS from Church to Yondover



Figure 2: View of New Road, UPLODERS looking south



Figure 4: View of UPLODERS from Shatcombe east to Eggardon Hill



Figure 3: view of the Parish looking west from the A35

HISTORY: The parish of Loders was first recorded in 1086 in the Domesday Book as Lodres and according to Hutchins' [History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset 1865] 'was surveyed in six parcels or manors' the principal of which was originally held by 'Earl Harold in the time of Edward the Confessor' and following the 'Conquest' was held by Richard de Redvers, Earl of Devon. In the twelfth century the land was given to the 'Benedictine Abbey of Montburgh in Normandy' and a small priory was known to have been established. Fourteenth century accounts indicate cider making orchards in the 'possessions of the Priory of Loders'.

The church of St Mary Magdalene, a grade I listed building, dates from the thirteenth century and is located at the west end of 'Lower Loders' and lies close to what was thought to be 'the priory house'.



Figure 5: St Mary Magdalene Parish Church

Tithe references are also made in early fourteenth century documents to manors and hamlets at 'Yandover' ('anciently a manor, now a farm' belonging to the priory), Loders Matravers and Up-Loders.

Whilst the recorded history of Loders parish can be dated back to the Norman Conquest, there are ancient archaeological sites within the parish dating from the Iron Age and a possible Roman road that passes through the Asker valley which indicate much earlier settlement in the parish. Medieval strip lynchets and 'greenways' around the settlements also add to the outstanding landscape character of the area. There are also two water mills and three lime kilns dating from the nineteenth century. Whether these are in the same location as the two water mills recorded in the Domesday record is not known.

The Village settlements of Loders, Uploders and Matravers developed along the waterline of the River Asker, in the folds of the surrounding hills which has promoted its linear characteristics. It has a significant



Figure 6: Pound Cottage, Loders

Figure 7: Strip lynchets to north of Loders



number of listed buildings and structures [46] together with many important unlisted buildings with the main concentration in Loders. The majority date from the eighteenth and nineteenth century built in local stone and thatch, as farms, ‘gentleman’s houses’ and tenant’s cottages: some



Figure 8: Strip lynchets - New Road looking south west

retain earlier elements from their fifteenth/sixteenth century origins [Loders Hall]. All these factors reflect its special historic and architectural character and appearance of the village.

Much of the parish lies within a designated Conservation Area. This means that development should not cause harm to the area’s special historic character.

LANDSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION: Loders Parish is situated in an area of outstanding, diverse and unspoiled countryside. The neighbourhood Plan area lies within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which as a national designation has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The underlying geology gives the neighbourhood plan area its distinct landscape. Bridport Sands, greensands and outcrops of limestone shape ‘rolling hills’ and a complex landscape of ‘small, conical hills with steep slopes and incised clay valleys’. Grazed pasture is found on the valley floors, large arable fields on the valley sides and ‘undulating’ hills of mixed woodland [WDDC Landscape Character Assessment 2009]. There are also ‘dense, species rich’ hedgerows along the valley bottoms with significant areas of wet pastures. This makes for important Sites of Nature Conservation Interest at Icen Farm, Peascombe, and Bell Hill. These are local, rather than national or European, wildlife designations, but nonetheless indicate sites of some ecological importance. In addition, records from the Dorset Environmental Records Centre show that the Loders Neighbourhood Plan contains European Protected Species, such as Otter, Bat, and Water Vole.

FLOODING: Loders Parish lies along the River Asker valley. Numerous springs feed the river even during extended dry periods. During wet periods the river is liable to flood, and there is also a risk from natural surface-water run-off from the surrounding hills in the event of heavy storms, causing flooding in properties outside the river flood plain.

Map 2: Main Designations and Constraints

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2.2 Summary of Key Social and Economic Characteristics

POPULATION: The total residential population of Loders Parish as given in the 2011 Census is 518 with 74 children under the age of 16 and some 136 residents over 65 years. There are 228 main residences and 44 second homes [2011 Electoral Roll and Council Tax Records].

Overall, the number of people living in the parish has remained relatively stable over the past four decades. Looking back over the last 3 census records, more people are now in the 45 to retirement age bracket, with fewer numbers in the under 18 years, 18 to 44 years or above retirement age brackets. This could be for a number of reasons, possibly to do with house prices, the rural nature of the parish and range of jobs and facilities in the local area. With this age profile it is perhaps not surprising that nearly half of the households are made up of couples with no dependent children.

There are currently nine households on the housing register with a 'local connection' to the neighbourhood plan area, mostly looking for affordable rented accommodation.

HOUSING: Housing in Loders tends to be larger than average, both in terms of the number of bedrooms and overall rooms. More than half of homes are detached (much higher than average), and this higher concentration of larger, detached homes also means that house prices are higher than average. There are comparatively few properties available for rent.



There have been no new homes built (other than one for one replacements) since 2006, when the development boundary was removed from the adopted local plan. Looking at the number of new homes built on average over the past 12 to 15 years, the average (gross) is just under one home a year (so about 10 homes to the end of the plan period). The average build rate was higher in the 1990s, when it included the development of the Highacres estate.



Figure 9: Cloverleaf Farm

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT: The defining nature of the parish historically has been agricultural. Even today, there are seven working farms in and around Loders. The majority of local businesses are in the service sector, particularly linked to professional, scientific and technical activities. Manufacturing also features in the parish together with tourism-based businesses (holiday lets and B&B's and food services). Unemployment is low at less than 2%.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES: St Mary Magdalene Church a grade I listed building dating back to the thirteenth century, lies at the eastern end of the village; there is also a Methodist Chapel, a village hall, a primary school and nearby small village playing field and two pubs and allotments. These important facilities underpin the health and vitality of the local community and which local people wish to see safeguarded.

SERVICES AND UTILITIES: The majority of properties in the parish are connected to mains sewers, water and electricity. There is no mains gas supply to most of the village. Renewable energy such as solar panels, photo-voltaic cells, bio-mass, ground or air sourced provision is a growing source of supplementary energy to individual properties in the parish. The 2012 parish survey showed that take-up of broadband is particularly high, with 84% (at least 4 in 5 households) connected on-line. Unfortunately the connection speeds are abysmal, and although high speed broadband is being rolled out to most rural areas in Dorset, there are no plans as of January 2015 for this to reach parts of the parish including Uploders and Vinney Cross. The area is also poorly served with mobile phone signal coverage, with most residents (76%) saying they have poor or no reception. Unless electronic communications can be improved this will inevitably mean that residents and businesses will be disadvantaged.

CRIME: The area is comparatively safe, with few reported incidents.




TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY: Most households run at least one car, with most working residents (90%) use their vehicles to get to and from work. Access to public transport within the village settlement is limited – there is a daily bus service which serves the village connecting to Bridport. Connection to the main public bus network (Axminster to Weymouth) can be made at Vinney Cross on the A35. Only 5% of parishioners regularly use the bus service.



Figure 11: Large lorries on rural lanes

The nature of the rural lanes, which are narrow and in places have limited visibility around sharp bends and significant on-street parking in the built-up areas mean that local people are worried about traffic problems and potential traffic accidents. The key areas highlighted in the Parish Survey were the A35 junction to Uploders, and the area outside the village school, and further along Main Street where parking causes congestion. Large lorries in particular create problems, and there are a number of sharp corners that are potentially dangerous.

Map 3: Traffic Issues

KEY		
		dangerous corner
		dangerous junction
		parking causing congestion

3 VISION, OBJECTIVES and POLICIES

The Neighbourhood Plan's Vision and Objectives have been distilled from the results of the Parish Survey (81% of households responded) and subsequent consultations reflecting the sentiments of the Parish Community. The key issues and themes emerging from consultation sought to maintain and enhance the rural character of the Parish; protect the countryside, its landscape character and the historic nature and appearance of its settlements; safeguard the vitality of the parish community, its village amenities and its continuance as a working community; facilitate incremental residential development as has occurred in the past with a focus on infill development to provide smaller homes to meet the wishes of the local community. There was some limited support for new small business development with no active encouragement to small industrial workshops or further tourism. [Source: Village Survey Findings].

3.1 Vision Statement

Loders Parish is a thriving rural community with a wide range of activities for young and old. We also like living here because it is an attractive historic settlement set in beautiful unspoilt countryside. Over the next 10 to 15 years some building and change can be expected, to retain a good mix of housing, business and community uses. This should be organic and incremental so that any development and change is indiscernible, as building works will be in keeping with the historic character of the settlement, and unobtrusive in the wider countryside.

3.2 ENVIRONMENT Objective and Policies

Parish and Planning Context:

As set out in the Overview (Section 2) above, the special qualities of the neighbourhood plan area, its historic settlements and outstanding landscape is of crucial importance to the parish residents. The response to the Loders Parish Survey reflected views and aspirations similar to those in the Loders Village Design Statement (LVDS 2000 updated 2014) and the detailed guidance provided in the Conservation Area Appraisal for Loders & Uploders (WDDC 2007).

The Village Design Statement (LVDS) and Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) place emphasis on the significant green open spaces, both within and between the principle settlement areas of Loders, Yondover, Uploders and Matravers. These undeveloped green spaces must be protected from development as they capture the character of the village and are important to its special character, setting and views in and out of the individual settlement areas. Within these areas infilling has been resisted.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) places emphasis on, amongst other things, the achievement of sustainable development, protecting the countryside, promoting healthy communities and conserving heritage assets. These provide an important context to the LNP policies below. Similarly the emerging West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (due to be adopted early 2015) is based on the principle of sustainable development and the strategic approach is to protect the environment whilst concentrating development in larger settlements where there are existing services and transport alternatives to use of the private car.

Environment Objective

We place a high value on the special features of the countryside and buildings in the neighbourhood plan area. We want to make sure these remain for future generations to enjoy. This means careful stewardship of the farmland, hedgerows, trees, rivers and open amenity areas; protecting our wildlife habitats and the features in the landscape we value such as the strip lynchets and old trackways. We also want to make sure that the traditional form and style of buildings in the parish is kept and that any new building respects this.

Important Gaps, Views and Local Green Spaces

Green areas surrounding and within the village, are essential to the rural character of the area. The open gaps between the main areas of settlement make sure that one settlement does not ‘run into’ the next, but each retain their own identity.

The linear layout of the village, punctuated by open spaces, was identified in the original Loders village design statement as one of its most precious features. These open spaces connect the community with the landscape beyond. “These green spaces are an essential feature...separating the elements of the village – but also help unite them as a distinctive whole. It is the existence of these open spaces which residents placed at the top of their list of 20 Themes that capture the character of Loders.” The Conservation Area Appraisal also recognises a number of these key rural views as adding to the character and enjoyment of the area. Sometimes these comprise ‘glimpses’ of the setting (and prominent hilltops) between buildings, and other times more extensive views of the river corridor, meadows, strip lynchets and surrounding hills. Finally, there are a number of distinct, discrete, green spaces that are particularly cherished for their local identity and the contribution they make to the history or character of the area. Even if their ownership or function were to change, their importance as a local green space would remain. These areas are designated as local green spaces and this designation should continue beyond the period of this neighbourhood plan.

The important gaps, open views and green spaces are listed in the following tables and shown in Map 4. Consideration was also given to the protection of the river corridor and strip lynchets as important green spaces, but their size rule them out as potential local green spaces. Both are of particular importance to the definition of the linear quality and setting of the village. They are protected in their own right as an important feature in the landscape under Policy E2.

Important open gaps

- The open land separating Bradpole and Loders
- The meadows either side of the bridge at Yondover, separating Loders and Yondover
- The farmland separating Yondover from Uploders
- The gap between Loders Cross and the start of the ribbon development on New Road, and the gap from the end of the ribbon development on New Road to Uploders
- The area of countryside between Uploders and Matravers, including the land around Upton Manor Farm and Perwen Farm
- The open land south of Matravers Farm forming the eastern approach to the village, as far as Vinney Cross and Folly Cottage

Important rural views

- Views of Boarsbarrow Hill glimpsed between buildings on the south side of Main Street through Loders, notably from
 - over the Court wall looking past the church
 - between Loders Hall and 31A Main Street
 - between 31B and 32 Main Street
 - the gaps on either side of the pub
 - the gap between the Barn House and the school
- Views east and west from the open stretch around Yonderover Bridge
- Views across Newhouse Farm to Boarsbarrow Hill
- Views of Waddon Hill glimpsed between buildings on the north side of Main Street through Loders, notably from
 - the gaps either side of Church House Farm and Hinkham
 - the gaps either side of 24A Main Street
 - the gap between 18 and 19 Main Street
- Views across the farmyard at Higher Yonderover Farm towards Waddon Hill
- Views from the western end of Shatcombe across farmland to Loders and Waddon Hill
- View of Waddon Hill across the rooftops from Purbeck Close in Uploders
- Views of the extensive area of strip lynchets on the west side of New Road, as seen from along the continuous length of New Road
- Views from the main lane across the gardens of Uploders Place to the open farmland beyond

Important local green spaces	Reason for their designation
The parkland at Loders Court from the Churchyard to Loders Mill	The monastic parkland between Loders Mill and Loders Court / St Mary Magdalen's Church, which can be glimpsed from the main road, provides an important setting to the key historic buildings, and a definite 'stop' or gateway at the western entrance to Loders.
Boarsbarrow Hill	The woodland located on top of Boarsbarrow Hill is a key feature in many views, and therefore an important local landmark. It is also an area which is rich in wildlife and includes a number of possible historic barrows.
Waddon Hill	The upper slopes of Waddon Hill, with their mix of woodland and strip lynchets, provide a backdrop to the settlement of Loders, and the woodland is also rich in wildlife.
The cemetery (including the allotments) at Highacres	The land has been consecrated providing a local cemetery dating back to the 1930s and will continue to provide cemetery space for generations to come.
Wooded area to the north of houses on Highacres	The wooded area lying adjacent to the cemetery is important in views from open farmland between Yonderover and Shatcombe; provides a wooded backdrop/screening to the housing at Highacres and is important to the biodiversity of the area.
Playing field adjoining Wellplot	This rather boggy area running down to the river is important because not only because it has been used for recreation by local residents over many years, but also because of its link to the river and views it provides from within the Conservation Area
Croads Farm	This is an important green "break" created by Croads Farm on both sides of the road in the otherwise linear development of Uploders, of historic and character value.

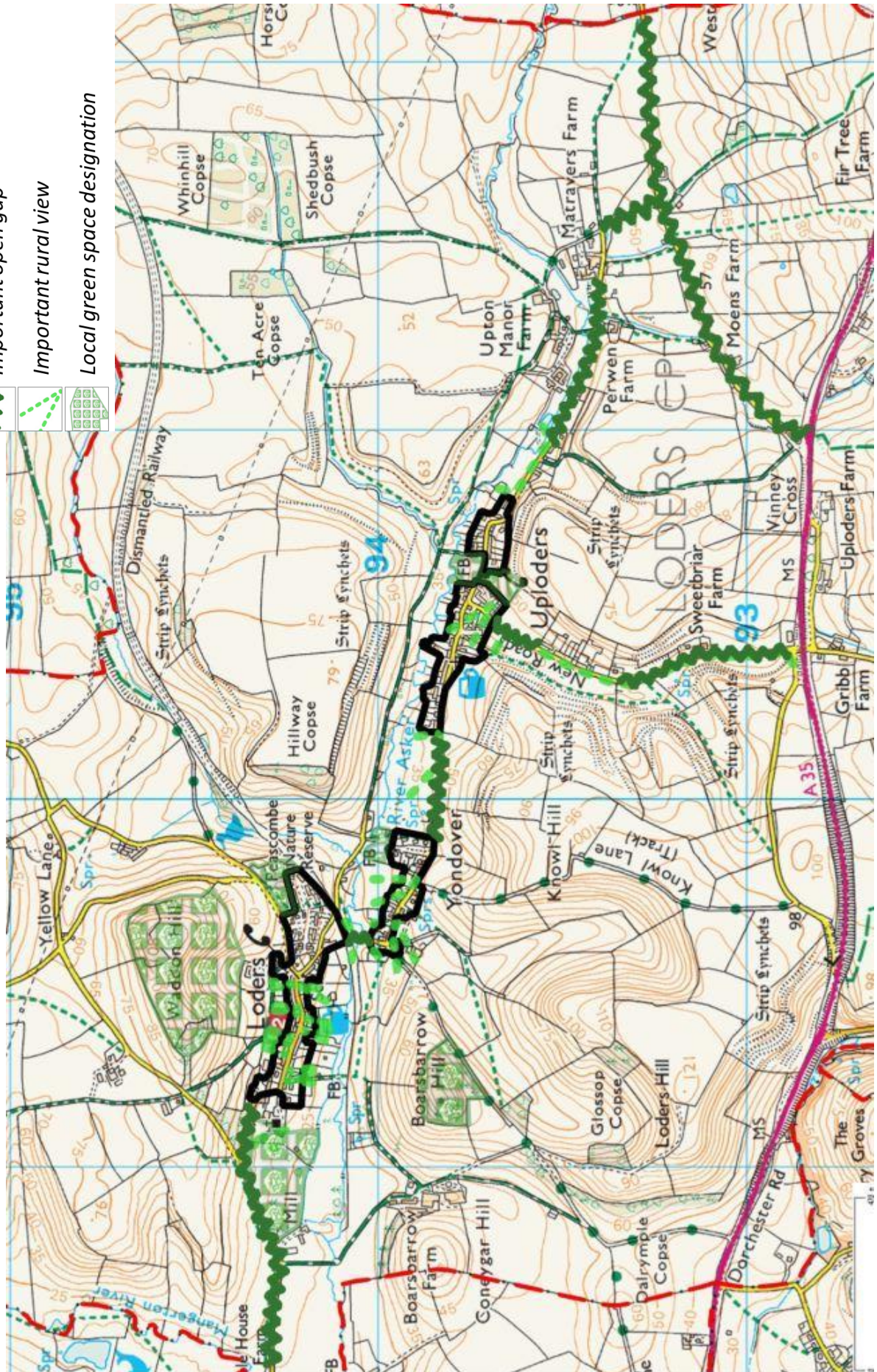
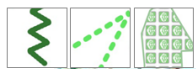
Map 4: Important Gaps, Rural Views and Local Green Spaces (larger insets see end of document)

KEY

Important open gap

Important rural view

Local green space designation



LNP Policy E1: Protection of Important Gaps, Rural Views and Local Green Spaces

The gaps along the road fronts between the built-up areas (as identified on map 4) are important in defining the distinctive character of each settlement, and the rural, non-built-up nature of these gaps will be supported.

Development will respect and not infringe upon the enjoyment of key rural views (as identified on map 4).

Local green spaces (as identified on map 4) have been identified as of particular local importance, to the extent that no development will be permitted within them that would harm their green character and reason for designation.

Special Landscape and Historic Features

A number of features in the wider area are considered to be particularly important in defining the special character of the area, and these features and their settings need to be properly considered when development is planned. Many of these have been identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal or the Landscape Character Assessment of this part of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and there is a duty on the planning authority to protect and enhance the special character of this area. Most can be seen from wider viewpoints, including the local network of bridleways, trackways and footpaths.

For example, landscape features including deep sandstone cuttings, extensive green 'tunnels' and open views to prominent 'sculptured' hills. There are distinctive ancient iron age forts and barrows atop of surrounding hills, medieval strip lynchets and the river valley. In all these cases the adjoining fields provide a rural, unspoilt setting. There are also ancient humped road bridges, disused railway line and winding narrow country lanes and tracks, all of which combine to provide an important context to the historic settlements.

The absence of modern design elements, such as street lighting, concrete kerbs and pavement, is considered to contribute to the traditional rural character of the area. The proliferation of poles and wires above ground has been noted in the Conservation Area appraisal as a detrimental feature.

LNP Policy E2: Protection of Special Landscape and Historic Features

In considering development proposals, the following features and their settings should be retained:

- the attractive river course with its mill leats and tributaries
- the distinctive hill tops of Boarsbarrow Hill, Waddon Hill and Shipton Hill
- the ancient field systems and medieval strip lynchets
- the Bronze and Iron Age earthworks
- the historic dry stone walls
- the historic gardens at Lodgers Court and Uploders Place
- the surviving lime kilns adjacent to former small quarries
- the network of rural paths and lanes, including ancient green lanes and drove roads, some in deep cuttings with hedgebanks
- the former railway line with its major cuttings, embankments and overbridges
- the mature trees in the larger gardens, the extensive groups of trees in the valley and well-established hedgerows (many of which are identified in the conservation area appraisal)
- the well-defined edges and entry points to the settlement areas

The benefits of removing detrimental features, such as modern out-of-character design elements and overhead wires, will be taken into account in assessing any development proposals.

Wildlife Areas

The area has many different wildlife and plant species, encouraged by the diverse environments such as springs & watercourses, trees following river valleys, steep open grazed slopes, extensive hedgerows, different soil types and distinct stands of trees. Although there are only three designated nature conservation sites in the plan area, it is important that consideration is given to the wider potential for wildlife and this policy is intended to help identify where further investigation may be appropriate.

Protected species recorded in the parish include many types of bat, farmland and woodland birds, moths, a range of mammals including river mammals (otters and water voles), important fish, (evidence of salmon and sea trout spawning sites), and different types of plant. The habitats that support these species include lowland calcareous (chalk) grassland, the arable field margins, deciduous woodlands, wet woodlands, river corridors and hedgerows. Even gardens can provide important habitats – for example compost heaps are used by slow worms, and redundant rural buildings and roof spaces make ideal roosts for bats and owls. The river corridor, hedgerows and arable margins are all important wildlife corridors, allowing animals to move through the area (for example, linking bat roosts to feeding areas).

As a matter of course the district council requires a biodiversity appraisal by a suitably qualified ecologist for all development on sites over 0.1ha in size, and for the conversion or demolition of rural barns / farm buildings and other derelict structures. However we would encourage developers to think about taking advice from a suitably qualified ecologist on sites below this threshold, where there is a reasonable possibility that there may be some biodiversity interest on or close to the site. This isn't intended to slow down development, as early knowledge of potential nature conservation interests can ensure that development proposals include suitable avoidance or mitigation measures, rather than having to revise plans because a protected species is first noticed when construction is about to start.

LNP Policy E3: Protection of Wildlife Habitats

On sites below the standard thresholds for a biodiversity appraisal, applicants are encouraged to submit (as a minimum) an initial scoping / feasibility appraisal that identifies ecological aspects or considerations, where the proposed development site includes or is adjoining

- a large, mature garden
- mature trees
- woodland
- field or roadside hedgerows
- river floodplain
- meadow / species-rich grassland
- orchard
- agricultural barns and similar rural buildings.

Development proposals should, where relevant, take opportunities to enhance biodiversity and contribute to wildlife and habitat connectivity in the wider area, through (for example) providing buffer areas to protected habitats and including new biodiversity features within the development such as the erection of barn and little owl/kestrel/bat and garden bird boxes in suitable locations.

Built Character

Design, including the scale and positioning of new buildings (and changes to existing buildings), materials and detailing, is key to making sure that development preserves and enhance the character, appearance and integrity of the area.

Much of the parish lies within a designated Conservation Area and many of the buildings/dwellings (46) in the main settlements are Listed as buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Under current Planning, Conservation Area and Listed Building legislation, works - including demolition, alterations and extensions - to Listed buildings and unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas are more tightly controlled.

The character and appearance of the area and its intrinsic qualities have been identified in the Lodors Village Design Statement [LVDS] and Conservation Area appraisals [Loders and Uploders, Powerstock and Nettlecombe Conservation Area Appraisal 2007 p 10-20]. These have remained largely unchanged. The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has provided the opportunity to review this supplementary guidance and enhance its status by including the main elements within the development plan policy framework. The key characteristics of the settlements drawn from the Conservation Appraisal and LVDS are set out below in LNP Policy E4.

The overriding intention of this policy is to ensure a high quality of design and appearance that integrates and enhances the existing character of the settlements or outlying parts. The majority of buildings in Lodors parish are historic; built during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by local craftsmen using local materials. This consistency underpins its special appearance, attractiveness and conservation area status. Unfortunately much of the twentieth century housing in the parish fails to achieve this quality of design and materials and spoils some local views. New development – including extensions and alterations to existing buildings –should therefore aim to enhance the character and appearance of Lodors parish; achieve high quality and sustainable design; minimise water use to prevent unnecessary waste of water and achieve high standards of environmental performance.

LNP Policy E4: To Protect and Enhance the Character and Appearance of the Area

All proposals for built development (including new buildings and extensions / alterations to existing buildings) should be in keeping with adjacent buildings and must achieve a high quality of design, use of materials and appropriate detailing which reflect local distinctiveness, the character of the Conservation Area and respects the rural character of Lodors Parish. In considering whether proposals achieve this requirement, particular regard should be paid to the key characteristics of the settlements set out below:

- the largely linear character of the historic settlement form, located close to the valley floor - development within the village tends to be single plot depth, set hard onto the street, with few front gardens and no kerbs or pavements,
- the lack of any real, distinct centre, set against the interest provided by key landmark buildings
- the wealth of listed and locally important unlisted buildings of different types and styles, and the understatement, informality, individuality and non-uniformity of many of the buildings,
- the presence of stone boundary walls, although most boundaries are concealed and softened by vegetation,
- the strong rural character provided by stone cottages and modest farm buildings. There are also a marked number of properties with gable ends at right angles to the road, associated with yards,
- typical roof pitch and spans, with spans in general of about 6 metres, and pitch of 37.5 – 47.5 degrees (or steeper on thatch),
- the predominant use of local Inferior Oolite limestone (a warm, honey-coloured sandy stone), thatch (West Dorset style), slate and clay tile roofs – and an overall unity to the settlements,
- the interesting details, including porches (in keeping with the style and proportion of the buildings), lintels and quoins, ironwork, signs and date stones, old-style wooden ‘finger posts’,
- the predominance of timber doors and wooden casement window (with panes of equal size and inset) or wooden sliding sash windows (with slender moulded glazing bars and well-

proportioned panes). Dormer windows are not in keeping with local character and should be avoided,

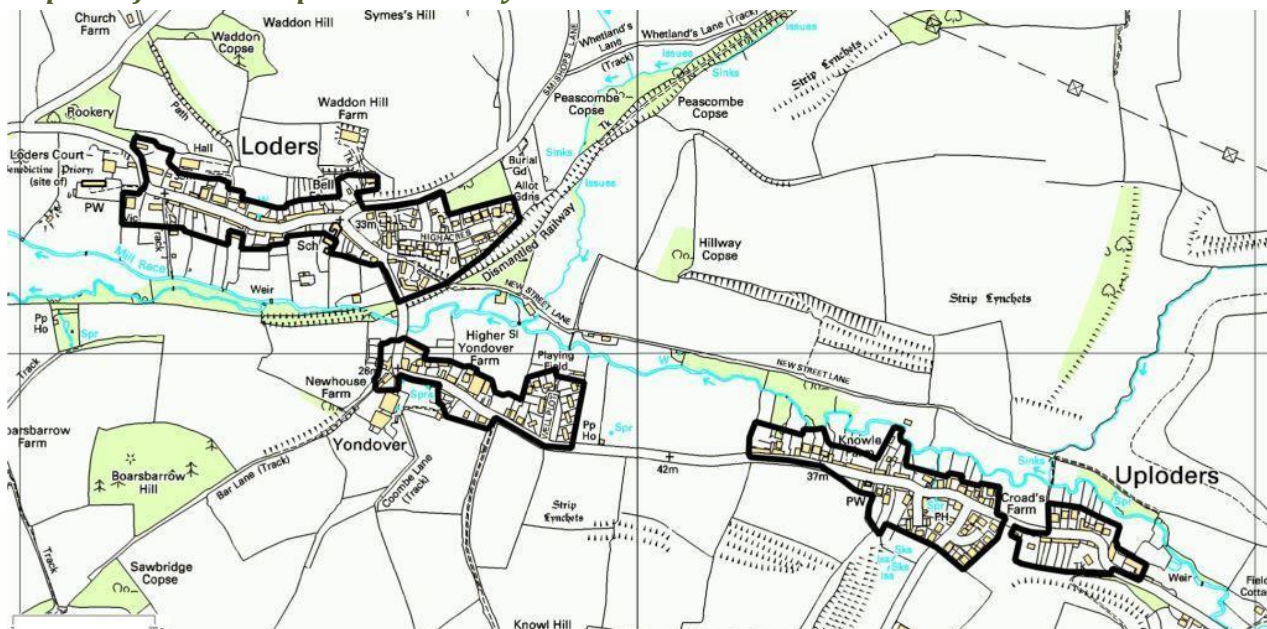
- the conventional, well-proportioned chimney stacks,
- the use of white-painted woodwork on nearly all houses (exceptions may be appropriate in the case of barn conversions),
- the use of 'soft, warm' colours on exterior wall rendering,
- the pointing of stone walling, which matches the colour of the stone and is rubbed flush or underflush.

Location of Development

New development should be located within or adjoining the existing settlement pattern, where organic growth would have occurred historically, and where the services and infrastructure already exist. Development in the open countryside is not as accessible and often detracts from the natural beauty and character of the area.

The local plan seeks to avoid isolated development in the countryside and protect the character of the area by identifying a **'defined development boundary'** where development may be acceptable. The development boundary for Loders was removed when the 2006 Local Plan was adopted. As part of preparing this neighbourhood plan, a defined development boundary has been re-introduced for the main settlement area in the parish, as shown in Map 5.

Map 5: Defined Development Boundary



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All plans are required to promote development and have a degree of flexibility in terms of the future use of land, to accommodate needs and circumstances that may not have been anticipated when the plan was written. There will therefore be exceptions where development may be permitted outside a defined development boundary, and a number of these are listed and explained in the over-arching local plan and will still apply in this neighbourhood plan area. In the Loders Parish area the most likely 'exception' to occur outside the defined development boundary relates to the provision of affordable housing on what is known as 'rural exception sites', new business development (provided that this would be acceptable in all other regards), and community uses – such as a new village hall, play area or the like. Development

necessary for the area's farming community, and also the potential to reuse existing buildings, provide examples of other changes that may be appropriate outside the defined development boundary.

LNP Policy E5: Location of Development in relation to the Defined Development Boundary (DDB)

A defined development boundary has been drawn around Lodors and Uploders (see map 5). Any development (other than for farming and other land-based rural businesses, or associated rural workers' housing) and associated land (such as gardens or parking areas) should be located within this development boundary. Where circumstances (as referred to above in the supporting text) justify development outside the defined development boundary (such as in the case of rural exception sites) any new buildings should be well-related to existing settlements / buildings and sensitively designed to respect and enhance the character of the local area.

The change of use of land to other forms of development such as caravan and camping sites, outdoor recreational or the provision of outdoor storage, that would have a noticeable detrimental impact on the attractive rural character of the countryside, will not be supported.

Re-use of Redundant Rural Buildings

There are relatively few potentially redundant rural buildings in the neighbourhood plan area but when one does become available for development it should be re-used in order to maintain the vitality of the community, particularly where the building makes a positive contribution to the area in terms of its local character. Use of redundant rural buildings for housing (either open market housing or affordable housing), small businesses (including tourism accommodation), or community facilities such as a farm shop is therefore encouraged, if the character and location of the redundant building is suitable and appropriate. Development would not be supported if it would cause a negative impact (such as traffic problems, damage to hedgerows, noise and disturbance) on the rural character of the area or the living conditions of nearby residents.

LNP Policy E6: Use of Redundant Rural Buildings

Where a redundant rural building makes a positive contribution to the local character, and is not in an isolated location where substantial new infrastructure would be required, its re-use for housing, community or business use, where appropriate, will be supported.

3.3 COMMUNITY Objective and Policies

Parish and Planning Context:

Loders Parish has a very active community life with well used community facilities in the main settlement of Loders and Uploders for a variety of informal and organised activities.

Planning Policy at national and local level promotes healthy communities and recognises the essential role of community facilities - including schools, meeting places, public houses and places of worship - in enhancing their sustainability. Access to high quality open spaces and playing fields, protection and enhancement of public rights of way, access and transport facilities is also recognised as underpinning the health of the community.

Community Objective

We are proud of the fact that we have an active working community. Community activities flourish here, strongly supported by volunteers. It is important to us that these community facilities are kept and supported.

Community Assets – Buildings, Land and Services

Past decades have seen a decline in a number of village services and the last of the village shops which included a post office closed in 1991. To some extent this is inevitable as major retail supermarkets appeared in and on the outskirts of Bridport making village shops unviable. However in a rural community if the village is to survive as more than just a dormitory settlement for surrounding towns, its community facilities and amenities which underpin its vitality must be protected and enhanced where the opportunity arises.

The provision of services such as the mobile library and the limited local bus service are important to the Parish community and are provided by other agencies. Similarly support to local businesses in the way of improved broadband access and mobile phone signals lie outside the ability of the neighbourhood plan to deliver, but the Parish Council will do all it can to secure improved service.

The Parish Plan (2013) identified various projects that could further add to the vitality and sustainability of the community:

- Village website
- Environmental projects
- Housing and development
- Footpath maintenance
- Village shop
- Finding out about renewable energy

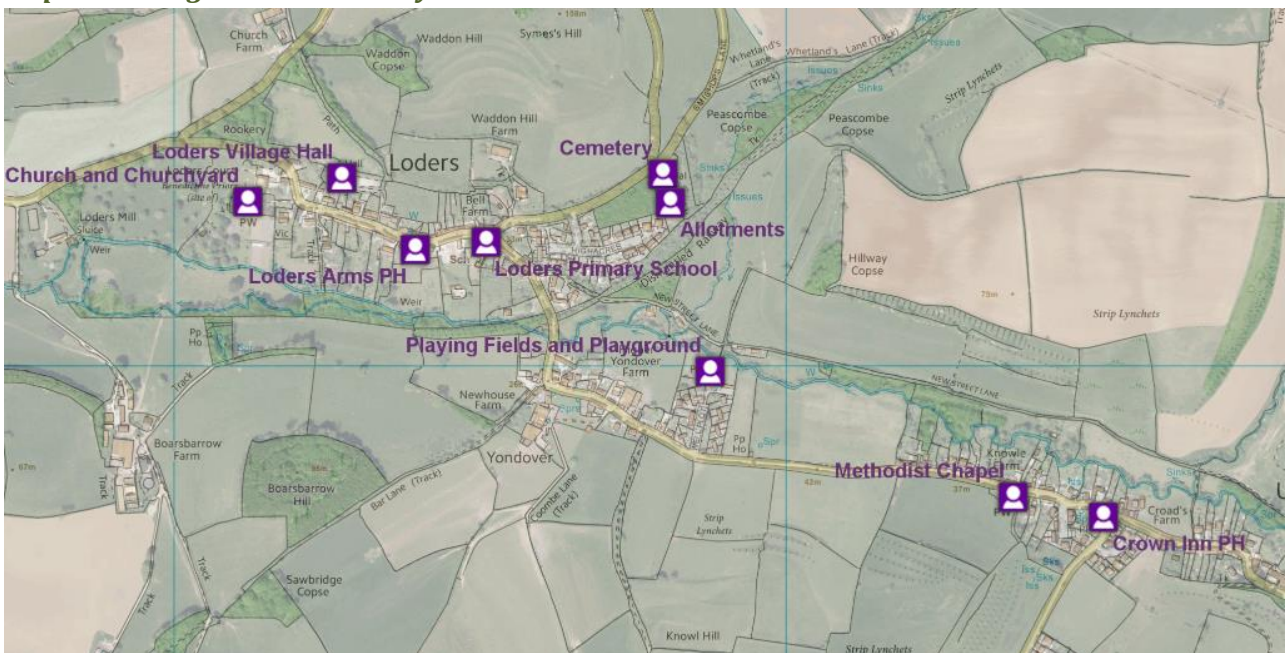
This policy is intended to ensure the protection of community assets which make an important contribution to the life and sustainability of the parish community and bring forward new facilities when the opportunity arises. The location of existing built community assets is shown in Map 6.

LNP Policy C1: Safeguarding Community Assets

Community assets (as listed below) should be retained where possible, and every effort should be made to work with the local community to investigate potential solutions to avoid any unnecessary loss of these valued facilities and services, and also to bring forward new assets such as a village shop. Proposals that would allow such facilities to modernise and adapt for future needs are encouraged.

- St Mary Magdalene Church and graveyard
- Loders Primary School
- Loders Village Hall and associated parking
- Loders Arms Public House and skittle alley
- The Crown Public House, Uploders
- Methodist Chapel, Uploders
- Playing fields and playground with access from Well Plot
- Parish cemetery
- Allotments

Map 6: Existing Built Community Assets



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3.4 HOUSING Objective and Policies

Parish and Planning Context:

The Parish Survey showed that the majority sentiment was for the community to grow incrementally with support for a rate of housing growth of ‘up to 10 houses’ over the plan period to 2027. The majority view was in favour of small dwellings for small family homes, starter homes and for people to downsize – preferably as infill development. Smaller homes would also provide a more balanced mix of available homes. Most people felt that the conversion of redundant farm buildings for housing would be acceptable.

Affordable housing was felt to be the biggest need and information from the Housing Register (December 2014) highlighted that there were nine households on the housing register with a local connection. The majority of these (7 households) require one or two bed homes, primarily for affordable rent. Affordable housing can be provided as an exception to normal development policies outside a defined development boundary. Local residents would prefer such sites to be located close to the village to benefit from and support community assets; to be in small groups (preferably of two to three small dwellings of two to three bedrooms), and that their design should be in accordance with the design policies in this plan. When affordable homes are provided, the landowner will be required to enter into a legal agreement to make sure that these remain affordable in perpetuity, and that they are offered to people with a local connection before they can be offered to others. This legal agreement will apply to any subsequent landowners if the land is sold.

Housing Objective

As a community we want to remain much as we are - whilst allowing for organic and incremental growth of housing that broadly reflects the past rate of growth and addresses our local needs for housing in the plan period to 2027. We want to ensure that this new or additional housing is of high quality design, small in scale for small family homes, starter homes and people wishing to downsize, and preferably provided by infill development (but not infilling the gaps and local green spaces identified in this plan).

Provision of New Homes

The parish is not an area that would be suitable for a significant level of growth because of its rural nature. There are many constraints, for example the historic features and their settings, flood risk areas, wildlife and landscape designations. Furthermore, large estate development would not be appropriate in character. And a significant level of growth would exacerbate the problems currently experienced on the rural roads, with more on-street parking and traffic movements.

However change can be positive, and the slow and piecemeal development of villages is one of the characteristics of rural Dorset. In the 2012 Loders Parish Survey the residents were asked their views on how the area should develop. The majority felt that up to 10 dwellings would be an appropriate level of growth over the next 15 years, which is higher than recent years and closer to the rate of growth experienced on average over the past 12 to 15 years.

In preparing the neighbourhood plan, studies were undertaken to examine the potential for housing development in the village and in peripheral areas of the parish. This showed that sufficient capacity existed in the village within the area of the proposed development boundary to meet residents’ aspirations for housing growth and accommodate this number of dwellings, having regard to the potential for change of use of, for example, redundant barns, holiday lettings and new infill development. The type of infill development considered to be appropriate was small-scale (i.e. one or two new homes) in an otherwise

built-up frontage, or set behind where this would be in keeping with local character (for example, to look like a row of modest agricultural outbuildings running at right-angles back from the lane / main building line).

Following consultation on options, the development boundary defined by LNP Policy E5 was agreed on the basis that there was potential for organic growth in keeping with the special historic and rural character and without overloading the infrastructure of the area. No specific sites have been identified in this plan, but the plan policies and development boundary are intended to facilitate the potential for new sites and opportunities to come forward.

LNP Policy H1: Provision of New Homes

Within the defined development boundary (DDB) new housing providing in the region of 10 new homes over the plan period will be supported, so long as the development is acceptable in all other respects.

Development of new housing within the development boundary should be provided through

- infill development within an existing continuous built up frontage,
- the change of use or subdivision of an existing building, or
- backland development where this is in keeping with the historic and local pattern of development.

Type and Size of Housing

The 2011 Census shows that homes in the area tend to be larger than average compared to West Dorset and England as a whole, with nearly three out of four homes having three or more bedrooms. Not surprisingly therefore, the results of the parish survey showed a preference for small family dwellings including affordable homes for people with a local connection.

In considering the appropriate type and size of housing provided, there is a strong preference for smaller family homes and starter homes, in order to provide a more balanced mix of available homes and assist in maintaining the vitality of this rural community.

LNP Policy H2: Type and Size of Housing

The type and size of new housing should reflect the need for small homes of two or three bedrooms suitable for couples and individuals looking to downsize or as starter homes suitable for individuals, couples and families, unless it is to provide for a known local affordable housing need.

The substantial enlargement of existing homes through combination or extension into adjoining dwellings, potentially reducing the stock of more affordable, small scale homes, will not be supported.

The quality of development in terms of design is covered under policy E4

3.5 BUSINESS Objective and Policies

Parish and Planning Context:

Whilst the defining nature of the area historically has been farming, this is changing. Agriculture is switching from dairy farming (now only one located in the village settlement) to the rearing of livestock – pigs and cattle mainly but with some of the surrounding fields also used for grazing sheep. This has resulted in the re-use of some outbuildings and barns for other business use such as net making, furniture making and novelty chinaware.

The results of the Parish Survey showed that nearly two thirds of the residents were of working age with a significant number working in small businesses locally or in surrounding villages. This includes farming, local workshops/crafts and working from home including visitor/tourist related activities such as bed and breakfasts, holiday lettings and our two pubs. Local employment adds to the sustainability as well as the economic health of the parish community.

However with many modern, larger businesses, including some tourist operations, increased vehicle activity and size of vehicles (particularly along narrow country lanes), noise and other disturbance is not compatible with the objectives of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and history of the area.

Business Objective

Businesses flourish from many places in the parish including homes, workshops and redundant farm buildings. It is important to us that we stay an active working community. We want to support locally-based businesses, including those in the parish who work (or want to work) locally and/or from home. This may be through improvements to working conditions, communications and services where these can be influenced by the neighbourhood plan and also supporting extensions to existing business where these will not cause traffic problems or noise and disturbance.

Support for local businesses

Local employment initiatives are an important factor in maintaining the life and vitality of the parish. The intention of this policy is to support extensions to existing small businesses and the re-use of redundant agricultural buildings for business purposes. Some business uses such as tourist activities and attractions can seriously harm the rural character of the area (eg permanent camping and caravan sites, caravan storage and off road activities such as motor bike and 4x4 scrambling) and are not considered to be appropriate.

LNP Policy B1: Local Employment and Business

The sustainable growth and expansion of new or existing local businesses will be supported where there is no requirement for road or junction alterations which will harm the distinctive rural character or amenities of the area.

Employment uses which are likely to increase vehicle activity or large lorry movements on the small country lanes (and taking into account the traffic issues such as those highlighted in the neighbourhood plan), harm the rural character of the area, or cause harm to the living conditions and amenities of residents, will not be supported.

Applications for change of use of redundant rural buildings or extensions to existing small businesses will be supported, subject to the above. Where existing buildings are modern or utilitarian in character (and do not make a positive contribution to local character), opportunities should be taken to improve the building's appearance.

4 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This neighbourhood plan is intended to provide a clear planning policy basis for decisions for the period up to 2027. However as other factors (such as national planning policy and the strategic policies of the local plan) may change over this period, and development takes place, it is important that the Parish Council keep the plan under review. This will help make sure that the neighbourhood plan policies remain appropriate and effective.

It is therefore proposed that an *UPDATE REPORT* is made to the Parish Council on a yearly basis, and that this is published on the Parish Council's website. This will include information on the following:

The Parish Council is consulted on all applications for development requiring planning permission and/or listed building consent. The annual report will therefore include *A RECORD OF ALL PLANNING DECISIONS MADE*, in particular noting whether the decisions are in accord with the Parish Council's views and the neighbourhood plan policies. This will help the Parish Council

- make sure the context of the neighbourhood plan is still relevant
- identify trends
- identify the need to re-assess and/or review the neighbourhood plan's objectives and policies

If the annual report shows that the *NUMBER OF HOMES BUILT* has reached the number proposed in LNP Policy H1: Provision of New Homes, the Parish Council will take this into account in responding to proposals for further housing.

If notified by local residents, the Parish Council will (as is current practice) continue to report *UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT* requiring planning permission or listed building consent to the district council's enforcement team. A record of any reports and action taken will be included in the annual report.

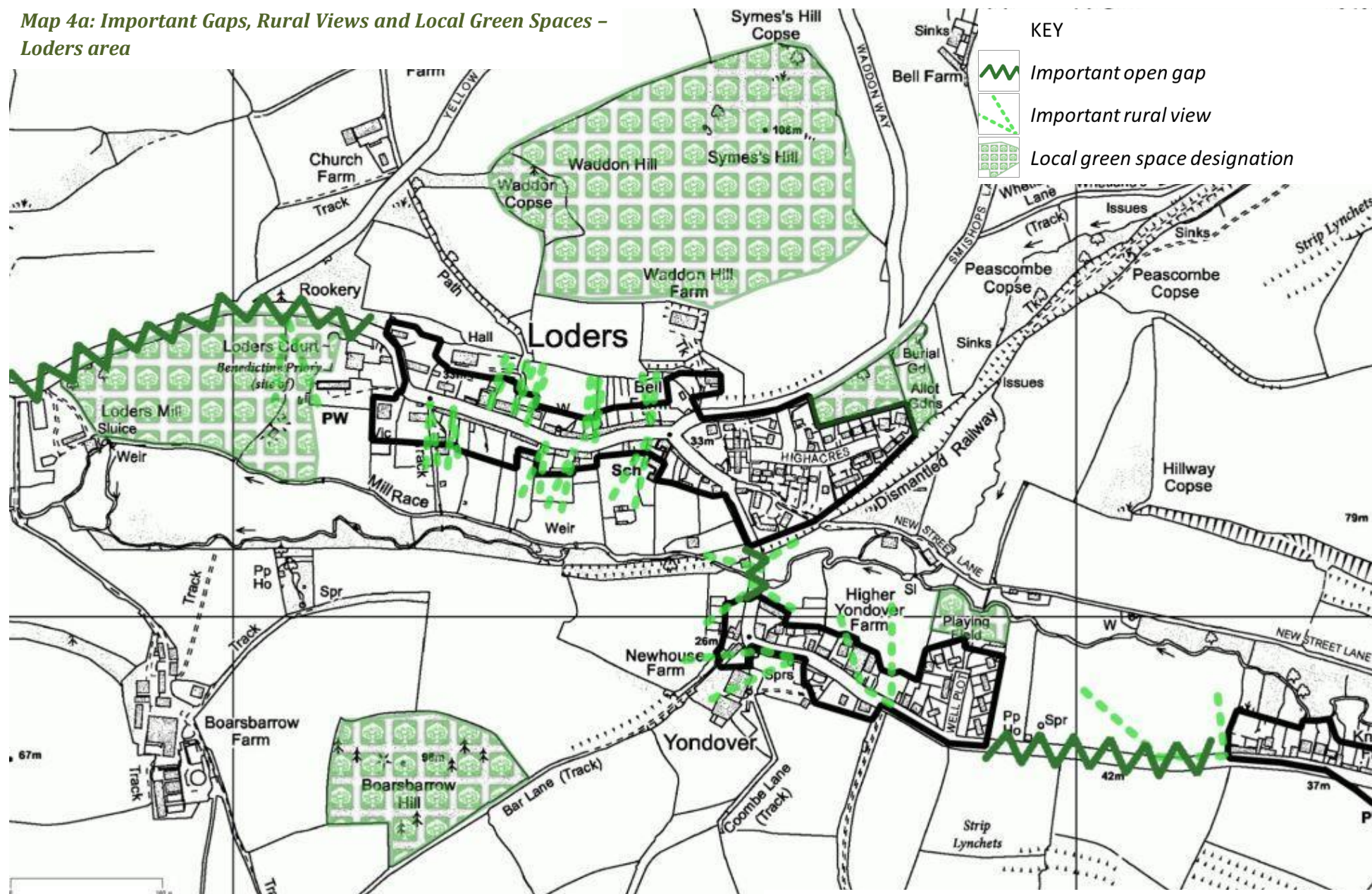
Where a planning application is submitted that affects a *PROTECTED COMMUNITY ASSET*, the annual report will record the efforts made by the landowner or developer to work with the Parish Council (or wider local community) to investigate potential solutions, and the extent to which this has been successful.

The Parish Council, if notified, will keep a record of concerns raised of potential *TRAFFIC ISSUES*, and bring these to the attention of the relevant highways authority. This will raise their awareness and enable them to take this into consideration in responding to future planning applications, and allow them to devise potential traffic solutions if appropriate. The issues raised and any responses from the highways authority will be included in the annual report.

The Parish Council will liaise with environmental organisations such as the Dorset Wildlife Trust and the Dorset AONB team to find out about potential projects and common issues associated with the *LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND HERITAGE* of the area. A summary of these points will be included in the annual report.

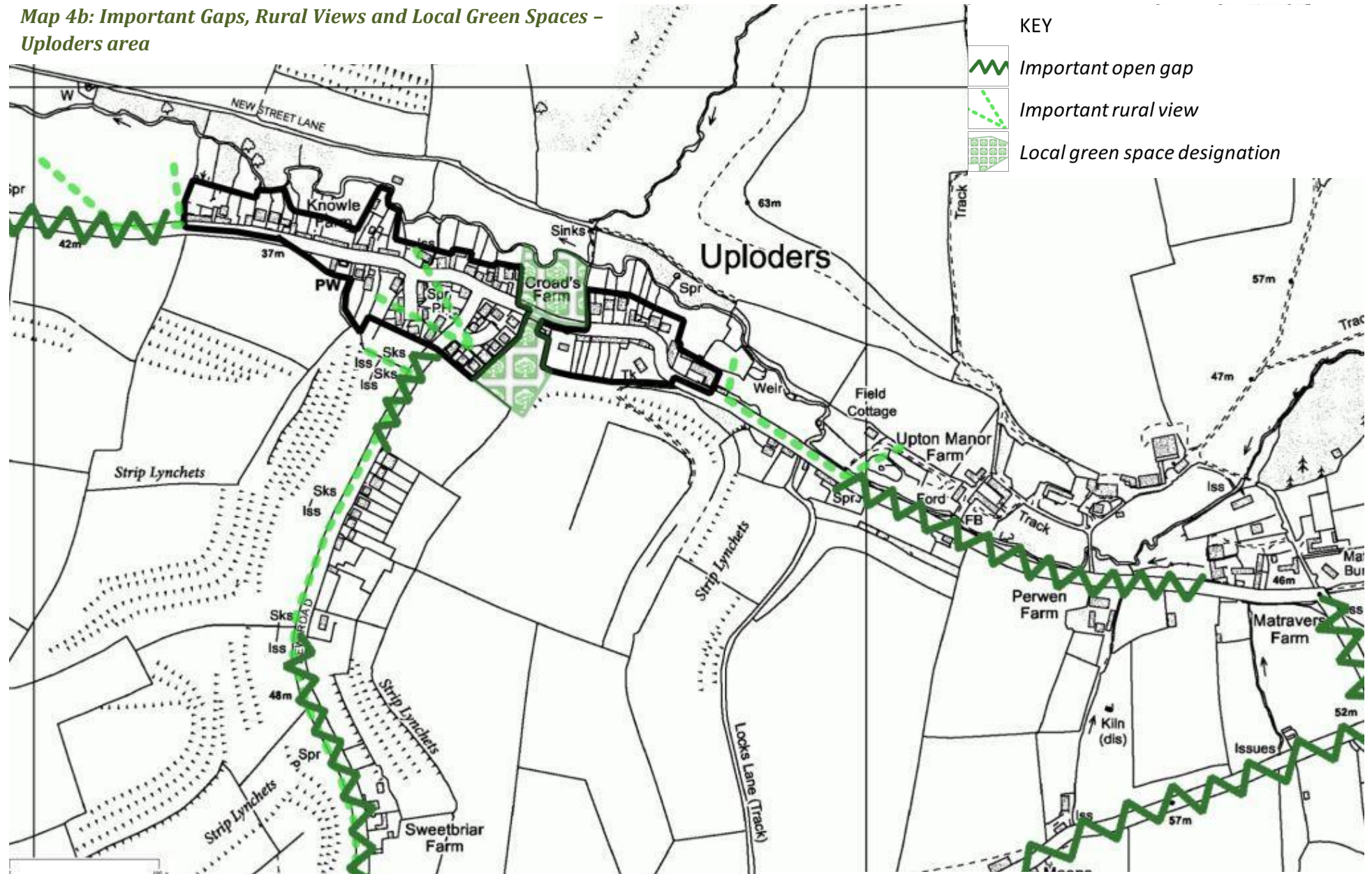
The Parish Council will also include information it has on any progress made on *PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PARISH PLAN*.

Map 4a: Important Gaps, Rural Views and Local Green Spaces – Loders area



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Map 4b: Important Gaps, Rural Views and Local Green Spaces – Uploders area



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