

STOKE GABRIEL

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

PLAN

WORKING DRAFT

FEBRUARY 2020

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Section 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

In April 2012, the Localism Act 2011 amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 introducing new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development and conservation in their community by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (The Plan) which then becomes part of the statutory planning process. The Plan allows communities to establish general planning policies for the sustainable development and use of land within the area of the Plan.

This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Localism Act.

1.2 What area does the Plan cover?

The Stoke Gabriel Parish Council applied to SHDC in October 2014 for the approval of the designated area of the Plan to be the whole parish of Stoke Gabriel, including the hamlets of Aish and Wadderton. This was approved by South Hams District Council (SHDC) on 11th December 2014. A map showing the designated areas is shown below.



1.3 How will the Plan be used?

When the Plan has been “made” it will become part of the development plan for the Parish. This will mean that it will be used alongside other local and national planning policies to help make planning decisions and to guide and manage future development in the Parish.

The Plan will be used by SHDC to help guide its planning decisions

The Plan will be used by the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State in relation to planning appeals in the Parish.

1.4 Where does the Plan fit in the planning process?

The Plan forms the third tier of national planning policy.

The Plan must be in accordance with higher planning policy, specifically:

- 1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012)
- 2 Local Plans – the South Hams Local Development Framework (LDF) which will be replaced by the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP)
- 3 The Stoke Gabriel Neighbourhood Development Plan

The National Planning Policy Framework retains the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” embracing three critical roles:

- An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

These roles are mutually dependant and in order to achieve sustainable development there needs to be positive improvements in the quality of the natural built and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life. Any plan and decisions must therefore take local circumstances into account.

1.5 What time period does it cover?

In common with the Joint local Plan the Neighbourhood Plan covers the period until 2024 in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (paragraph 47)

1.6 How will it be used and by whom?

The Plan is for everyone with an interest on the Parish of Stoke Gabriel. It will be used to:

- Guide new development
- Promote investment
- Protect valuable assets
- Give a voice to the community
- Provide a better quality of life for the current and future generations

1.7 Who has led in the preparation of the Plan?

Stoke Gabriel Parish Council is the qualifying body as defined in the Localism Act. A steering committee was formed with representatives of the Parish Council and volunteers from the local community.

The Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the residents and business users in the Parish including public workshops, meetings, questionnaires and surveys together people's views and opinions. Leaflets have been delivered to every household and a web site created to make sure everyone has been included and had the chance to participate if they wanted to

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ABOUT STOKE GABRIEL

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Stoke Gabriel – a little history

Given its unique waterside setting and the highly unusual variety of its underlying geology there should be no surprise that Stoke Gabriel has a rich and interesting history. As is commonly the case, there is precious little evidence to go on until late medieval times and there is no single scholastic work to draw upon. But from various sources we can adduce the following.

The earliest enduring evidence of settlement in the parish is a group of low stone walls and ditches on a limestone outcrop to the east of Lower Well farmhouse. This dates from the 2nd century AD and is the remains of a Romano-British fortified farmstead, probably housing an extended family. The site is well chosen, with commanding views all round and a permanent spring nearby. Pottery shards indicate that the Celtic residents had trading contact with Roman merchants in the more substantially occupied areas of Devon to the east. But this rare survival should not be taken to mean that the area was very sparsely populated because dwellings were normally constructed of timber, generally coppice wood. Fast forward a moment to 1086, the year of the Domesday survey, and we see that the area of Devon covered by woodland (including wood pasture) was a mere four per cent (Rackham, 1986, p. 78). It is inconceivable that between the Roman occupation and the Norman conquest vast areas of woodland were cleared in Stoke Gabriel parish by the native British or later the Anglo Saxons. More likely, most of the parish was already pasture or cultivated land, enough to support a population in the low hundreds during the period of the Roman occupation. Much of the patchwork of field boundaries that we see today, formed by hedges and stone-faced banks, has ancient origins.

South Devon was the last area of the county to be brought under Saxon control in the early eighth century (Hoskins, 2003). There are hints of a small Saxon church on the site of the present building and we can assume there was a settlement around it as well as minor outlying settlements in the parish. In early medieval times there would surely have been a more substantial community based on farming, fishing and quarrying, large enough to create the earliest stone church of which the late Norman tower survives. From this period we have two other pieces of notable heritage. At the southern end of the parish, near Waddeton Quarries, there are the remains of early medieval fish traps, the result of a gift of land and fishing rights to the Canons of Torre Abbey by Lady Isabella de Wadestone. The quarries themselves have an important history, reputedly the source of the Permian red sandstone used for the tower of St Mary's Church, Totnes in the 15th century¹. At first sight this seems implausible since the current exposed faces of the quarries are all of earlier Devonian limestone. However, there are other sites within Stoke Gabriel parish (Hoyle Copse and Lembury) where pockets of red sandstone existed and were exploited for building stone, some of it for the parish church.

More outstanding is the Mill Pool, contained by a stone-faced rubble dam and supporting two tidal corn mills for many centuries. There was a tide mill in Dartmouth (on the site of the current Foss Street) before 1243 and, given the more favourable site and much larger catchment area at Stoke Gabriel, it is highly likely that the dam and its two mills at Stoke

were built at around the same time or even earlier¹. The dam and Mill Pool were never owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, which has owned the foreshore and fundus outside the dam since 1337, according to the head of the Duchy legal department. The Mill Pool dam is thus an important part of the parish's early heritage and the two corn mills on it would have supported a substantial area of farmland and dependant population.

Although the Norman conquest and its aftermath led to the spread of substantial stone buildings where timber construction had been universal, perhaps a greater change in the parish was in the pattern of land holding. The Saxons had established a pattern of villages with extensively cultivated "infield" and communally-held pasture and open fields, the "outfield". (Place names and early maps suggest there were at least two such open fields in the parish, near Lower Well farm and near Waddeton.) Much of this was disrupted after the Norman conquest, with the Crown and the Church controlling most of the land area, the former by gifts to loyal henchmen and the latter in the form of the manor of Paignton within the see of Exeter. The Waddeton and Sandridge estates have survived from this early medieval period, but the bulk of the parish came within the manor of Paignton, controlled by the Earls of Pembroke after the dissolution of the monasteries.

As we have seen, most of the parish was under agriculture, not ancient woodland, from early times and the mix between arable and pasture probably changed little over many hundreds of years, being the consequence of the different types of land. The construction of the tide mills was an important innovation that would support arable farming and a modest increase in population, but there were few technological innovations with a great impact in farming practices until the 18th century. A small exception was the introduction of the purposeful flooding of meadows by the building of temporary dams. This brought fresh silt to the "water meadows" and an early crop of lush grass. The derelict stone pillars of such a construction can be seen at Portbridge, just upstream of Pords Bridge itself. These are thought to be late Tudor, the start of the English Agricultural Revolution.

Besides those mentioned above, plus the Church House Inn (16th century) and including the greatly restored church in the 15th century, there are few surviving buildings in the parish until we come to the 17th century, most of the earlier dwellings being of timber or cob construction and less durable than stone. A row of cob and thatch cottages, probably of 16th or 17th century origin was demolished as recently as the 1960s to make way for Mill Hill Court. The adjacent Laurel Cottage is the sole survivor of this group and is listed by English Heritage as 17th century. Other surviving dwellings of that period include Sles, Mill House, Middle Well, King's Cottage, Wayside Cottage and Yarde (all listed Grade II). Of course, at this time there will have been many dwellings of earlier construction that have not survived and some that have survived to this day that have not been listed.

The nine listed buildings from the 18th century are mostly of rubble stone (mostly Devonian limestone quarried locally) but the grander ones include dressed limestone ashlar (Stoke Gabriel House, called Maisonet originally) and Stoke House. The village was clearly prospering and by the end of the 18th century the parish had over 500 inhabitants. The 1801 Census (the first comprehensive one since the Domesday Book) recorded the population as

¹ This view is supported by Risdon,

531, distributed among 96 families in 90 dwellings. Some 38% were recorded as employed in agriculture, considerably fewer than the average for Devon parishes, reflecting the variety of economic opportunities afforded by the parish's geology and its waterside location. Indeed, the 1815 census of property values for each household shows that Stoke Gabriel was the 81st most wealthy of the 475 parishes in Devon, putting it in the top 17%.

By the early 19th century prosperity had risen with the help of an improvement in the parish's roads. The turnpike road from Galmpton to Berry Pomeroy (via Waddeton Road, Lembury Road, Aish and Parliament Hill) would have improved the earlier parish-maintained road. (Sadly the Turnpike Trust records are lost, but the 1840 tithe map confirms that this route was a turnpike, as do the granite milestones along it.) Paignton Road was also a main highway to a substantial market for agricultural and horticultural produce, Paignton having a population of over 1500 in 1801. The foot ferry (abandoned after WWII) from Ashprington Point to Duncannon also provided a route for produce from further afield in the South Hams.

From 1801 to 1831 the parish population grew by 35% to 718. A few years later Parliament introduced the Tithe Commutation Act, forcing landowners to get their tenants to pay them in cash rather than kind (produce or services). This led to the surveying and recording of every single plot of land in the country and a systematic record of its acreage, ownership, name and usage. From this we have a detailed picture of Stoke Gabriel parish in 1840, from which the following table can be drawn.

Land use and ownership, 1840		
Land use	Percentage of land area:	Percentage of plots
Arable	43.8	
Pasture	26.1	
Meadow	2.0	
Orchard	5.3	
House and garden	1.2	
Firs and furze	2.5	
Quarry and waste	3.2	
Road	1.8	
Timber and wood	5.8	
River and beach	9.1	
Owner occupiers	19	22
Tennants	81	78

Land ownership	Acres	Plots
Parish total	2605	799
Largest private owners:		
Henry Studdy	641	187
John Jackson	345	137
Lord Cranston	250	42
Dymond Churchward	168	56
John Churchward	131	43
Sarah Douglas	103	29
Sir Robert Newman	94	17
William Colston	90	27
Richard Adams	89	31
The Church? Rev. Belfield, lessee, glebe land, of which:	337	46
River	140	1
Beach	96	1
Road	44	15
Agric. land	61	29

¹ Historic England, webpage on St Mary's, Totnes. See also WG Hoskins, Devon, p. 263.

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VISION AND OBJECTIVES

WORKING DRAFT

FEBRUARY 2020

The Vision Statement

To provide for the needs of the Parish of Stoke Gabriel over the next 20 years in a sustainable manner

Objectives for Stoke Gabriel Neighbourhood plan

To preserve unique identity of Stoke Gabriel through identification and preservation of green spaces and riverside setting in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

To identify preferred sites for development within allocated Local Plan housing numbers and types of housing required to support local need

Through local consultation, to prioritize areas of requirement for funding and enhancement including leisure, retail, transport facilities through any M106 or other grant or government monies

To develop environmental, transport, communication and other policies to ensure Stoke Gabriel remains a sustainable community both for residents and continuing local employment and businesses.

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POLICIES

WORKING DRAFT

FEBRUARY 2020

PARISH SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

The Parish Settlement Boundary (PSB) will need to be redrawn so that it now reflects the recent developments at Rows Farm and Kings Orchard. This is a logical extension which respects the character and built form of the current village settlement of Stoke Gabriel.

The variations to the boundary are illustrated on Plan XXX.

Need to review how we deal with the consent at Four Cross

Planning policy recognises that in some situations, residential development can be allowed in exceptional circumstances, outside the PSB to reflect and respond to local housing needs particularly for affordable housing.

These are generally known as “exception sites” and the NPPF allows for “the possibility of incorporating some market housing on the sites to facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs”

If a development site arises that is outside the PSB this will only be permitted if it fulfils the aims of the SGCLT to provide affordable houses for residents within the Parish

DEVELOPMENT AND HOMES

What is the policy seeking to achieve?

The objectives of this policy are:

- To provide new housing to meet local needs and to people with a strong local connection with Stoke Gabriel
- To promote high quality and sustainable design
- To limit the number of second homes within the Parish
- To support the Stoke Gabriel Community Land Trust to develop a site within the Parish

Stoke Gabriel has been subject to major residential development over the last 15 years which due to its picturesque village location is popular for those seeking to buy for owner occupation or a second home. Consequently existing residents who have family ties to the village or those working within the local or wider area of the South Hams find it increasingly difficult to purchase an affordable property for their family needs within the built up area of the village.

A key aim for the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore to ensure that future development meets local needs within the built up boundary of the village but still protecting the special landscaped setting of the village which is valued by residents and visitors alike.

In the 2011 census the usually resident population of Stoke Gabriel was recorded at 1254 in 618 households. The census also records that there were 53 dwellings which were empty properties, second homes or holiday lets.

What is the evidence behind this policy?

The last South Hams Local Development Plan and the subsequent Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) identified 3 major sites in Stoke Gabriel for residential development:

- 1 Paignton Road – 53 Units
- 2 Coombe Shute – 10 Units
- 3 Rowes Farm – 43 Units

The number of units allocated to Stoke Gabriel was far in excess of any other rural parish of comparable size and as such the village has been the focus and developed more extensively than others within the South Hams.

During the preparation of the Joint Local Plan for South Hams, Plymouth and South Devon (JLP), which was adopted by South Hams District Council on 21st March 2019, 2 other large sites came forward for development:

- 1 Land at Four Cross – 9 Units
- 2 Development of the Gabriel Court Hotel – 13 Units

Since the adoption of the new JLP a smaller site in Vicarage Road for the development of 4 dwellings has also received planning consent.

In the light of these developments it is necessary to review the current position of the Parish Settlement Boundary and deal with any inconsistencies.

DELIVERING HOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

The perceived need for future residential development within the built up boundary of Stoke Gabriel was confirmed by the Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council and carried out by Devon Communities Together on behalf of The Devon Rural Housing partnership in 2015. This identified that;

- 1 17 Households were in housing need who could not afford to buy in the open market.
- 2 2 could afford to rent in the open market
- 3 3 additional replies from Devon Home Choice households indicating they were eligible for affordable housing in the village.

The Section 106 Agreements relating to the major housing developments where Affordable Housing was provided as part of the overall planning consent for the respective developments delivered the following mixture of properties:

- 1 Rows Farm, Aish Road – 21 dwellings – 14 Rental Units and 7 Shared Ownership Units
- 2 Kings Orchard, Paignton Road - 15 dwellings – 10 Affordable Housing Rental Units and 5 Affordable Housing Intermediate Units

Although the S106 Agreements had a local qualifying requirement for those who could be considered for a tenancy in one of the properties, those requiring housing had to be within bands A to D of the Housing Needs Scale. The majority of those within the village who require housing as identified in the Housing Needs survey are classified in Band E and therefore not eligible for consideration albeit that they have existing family ties to the village and would qualify under the local family links and occupational conditions.

As a consequence these developments have not removed locally qualified people off the housing waiting list and their need for affordable accommodation is still a priority for any future development within the Parish.

STOKE GABRIEL COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

In order to try and progress the aim of providing affordable housing within the village, the Stoke Gabriel Community Land Trust (SGCLT) was formed in X by a group of residents who fall into the gap between being able to afford to buy on the open market and being eligible for housing association properties.

The SGNP supports this groups aims as the housing need of its members also relate to the findings of the Housing Need Survey.

The topography of the village, located as it is on the banks of the River Dart effectively limits any development inland to only 50% of the possible developable area around the village. This has obviously restricted the SGCLT seeking suitable opportunities to locate sites for development.

The SGNP will support the development of any site that does meet all the criteria for being developed by the SGCLT as this meets the overall housing policy of providing dwellings for those either on the housing waiting list or in Band E

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

It is the intention of the SGNP not to allocate sites but to have a development management policy which allows housing in areas either within the Parish Settlement Boundary or on the edge of the Parish Settlement Boundary where new housing would not have otherwise be acceptable and which specifically allows development that must be shown to be meeting local needs through a local connection policy, not just in terms of social housing but in terms of market housing.

However the acceptability of any site will require it to be well related to the existing form of development in the immediate area so that it is a natural extension to the existing pattern of development as well as not having a detrimental effect on the landscape setting of the village.

A full Landscape Impact Assessment will be required which demonstrates how the proposed development will comply with this policy

PARKING

Stoke Gabriel, like many rural villages, as a limited service of public transport and as such all residents are dependent on having one or more cars to travel for employment or leisure purposes.

NPPF (para 39) says, "If setting local parking standards for residential and non –residential development, local authorities should take into account:

- The accessibility of the development;
- The type, mix and use of the development;
- The availability of and opportunities for public transport;
- Local car ownership levels; and
- An overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles."

Recent developments within the village have failed to provide sufficient parking to meet the basic needs of the housing occupiers with the consequence that cars and vehicles used by residents for employment purposes are parked in dangerous locations, half on and half off pavements or on grass verges fronting properties. This also produces a poor visual environment and practical difficulties for many drivers. The number of spaces provided is also insufficient to meet daily demands of trades people or

visitors coming to the dwellings for either business or pleasure.

Proposals for any new housing development will require to meet the following standards:

1 Bedroom dwelling	2 off street parking spaces
2 Bedroom dwelling	2 off street parking spaces
3 Bedroom dwelling	3 off street parking spaces
4+ Bedroom dwelling	4 off street parking spaces

A garage can count as an off street parking space but only if the internal dimensions are:

Single garage: 3.0 metres wide x 6.0 metres deep

Double garage: 5.7 metres wide x 6.0 metres deep

Any off street parking in front of a dwelling must have sufficient space so that no part of any vehicle overhangs the pavement and thus causes an obstruction to pedestrians.

These numbers also provide for the increase in car numbers which comes from young family members that live at home but have passed their driving test and use a car. For young people a car is often a necessity to get to college due to a lack of public transport and those who have left school often require one for employment.

Visitor parking within any new residential development should provide adequate designated additional parking at a minimum of 1 space per two dwellings. This can be either off-street or on-street.

All new developments should promote sustainable modes of travel and therefore ensure that the electricity infrastructure for individual dwellings is sufficient to provide adequate supply for electric vehicle charging.

Separate and detached parking areas at the rear of properties will not be permitted as apart from these being a source of unneighbourly behaviour and a security risk to any parked vehicle, they do not offer the opportunity for either residents or visitors to charge their vehicles

Policy X: Landscape character

1) What is the policy seeking to achieve?

Stoke Gabriel Parish has a rich and valued landscape, the majority of which is nationally protected as part of the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Landscape character is a key contributor to the Parish's local distinctiveness and sense of place and is highly valued by residents and visitors alike.

A key aim for the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore to conserve and enhance landscape character and protect key views in the Parish.

2) What is the evidence behind the policy?

The landscape character of Stoke Gabriel Parish is of outstanding quality and distinctiveness. An overview of the key landscape designations, characteristics and views in the Parish is presented below.

South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Approximately 70% of Stoke Gabriel Parish is covered by the nationally designated South Devon AONB. The coverage of the Parish with the AONB is highlighted in the map below.

To include map of coverage of the AONB.

AONBs were initially established by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The law for AONBs was subsequently updated and enhanced by Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Act. An AONB designation protects land of nationally important landscape quality, with the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape.

The South Devon AONB Partnership is required to prepare and keep up to date a Management Plan¹ for the AONB. This should define the 'Special Qualities' of the AONB, which summarise the unique natural beauty for which the AONB is designated as a nationally important protected landscape.

The ten Special Qualities for the South Devon AONB are set out below. The landscape of Stoke Gabriel Parish encompasses at least eight of these special qualities:

- Fine, undeveloped, wild and rugged coastline
- Ria estuaries (drowned river valleys), steep combes and a network of associated watercourses
- Deeply rural rolling patchwork agricultural landscape
- Deeply incised landscape that is intimate, hidden and secretive away from the plateau tops
- Iconic wide, unspoilt and expansive panoramic views
- A landscape with a rich time depth and a wealth of historic features and cultural associations
- A breadth and depth of significant habitats, species and associated natural events
- An ancient and intricate network of winding lanes, paths and recreational routes
- Areas of high tranquillity, natural nightscapes, distinctive natural soundscapes and visible movement
- A variety in the setting to the AONB formed by the marine environment, Plymouth City, Torbay, market and coastal towns, rural South Hams and southern Dartmoor

¹ South Devon AONB (April 2019) South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019 - 2024

Landscape character types

In 2017 a Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken for the South Hams and West Devon.² This identified 23 Landscape Character Types (LCTs), with 18 identified in the South Hams.

Four of these LCTs cover Stoke Gabriel Parish. These are set out below, with a summary of the LCT and an overview of the overall landscape strategy for the landscape as proposed in the Landscape Character Assessment.

To include map of LCTs in the Parish.

Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes

Which area in the Parish does the LCT cover? Most of Stoke Gabriel village and the eastern part of the Parish, including Waddeton.

Summary of LCT: Elevated undulating valley slopes and rolling hills with a well wooded character cut by steep sided stream valleys.

Overall landscape strategy for the LCT: Protect the strong field patterns of this landscape, including the rich network of well-managed Devon hedgebanks. Manage the farmed landscape to enhance wildlife interest and local diversity restoring areas of relict traditional orchards. Protect the wooded character of the landscape, utilising new woodland planting to filter views of development. Maintain the sparse settlement pattern and avoiding a spread of suburban influences from larger settlements adjacent to the LCT.

River valley slopes and combes

Which area in the Parish does the LCT cover? The edge of the River Dart southwards from the Millpool

Summary of LCT: Rounded hills and steep undulating slopes overlooking the river valleys.

Overall landscape strategy for the LCT: To protect and enhance the peaceful character of the valley slopes, fringed by well-managed woodlands and fields enclosed by an intact network of species-rich Devon banks. Opportunities are sought to restore conifer plantations to broadleaves and other semi-natural habitats, creating a climate-resilient green network. New recreational spaces and infrastructure links are provided to nearby settlements

Estuaries

Which area in the Parish does the LCT cover? The River Dart and the Millpool

Summary of LCT: Dynamic landscapes which change often with tides and weather conditions. Strongly naturalistic and tranquil with semi-natural habitats that are highly important for biodiversity. Settlements are often associated with the estuaries and they form a popular destination for both land and water based activity.

Overall landscape strategy for the LCT: To protect the open character and expansive views to and from the estuary, ensuring new development on its fringes is incorporated into its landscape setting. The cultural heritage and natural evolution of the estuary is conveyed through sensitive interpretation, and local communities are involved in planning for future landscape change as a result of sea level rise and changes in coastal erosion patterns. Recreational pressure and in particular water-based activity is sensitively managed to retain the secret, tranquil character of inland creeks

² LUC (2017) A Landscape Character Assessment for South Hams and West Devon

Upper farmed and wooded valley slopes

Which area in the Parish does the LCT cover? Aish and the northern part of the Parish

Summary of LCT: Elevated undulating valley slopes and rolling hills with a well wooded character cut by steep sided stream valleys.

Overall landscape strategy for the LCT: Protect the strong field patterns of this landscape, including the rich network of well-managed Devon hedgebanks. Manage the farmed landscape to enhance wildlife interest and local diversity restoring areas of relict tradition orchards. Protect the wooded character of the landscape, utilising new woodland planting to filter views of development. Maintain the sparse settlement pattern and avoiding a spread of suburban influences from larger settlements adjacent to the LCT.

Key views in the Parish

An assessment of key views in the Parish was undertaken in **late 2019**. The purpose of this exercise was to identify those views which are integral to enjoyment of landscape character in the Parish, and as such should be protected.

To identify views worthy of protection several assessment criteria were used, taking into account accessibility from a Public Right of Way, the view showing a range of features rather than one particular object, and the view possessing at least one of the following values - aesthetic, historical, recreational, biodiversity, or tranquillity.

The selection of key views has been informed by the Assessment of Key Views in Stoke Gabriel Parish (2019) which forms part of the Evidence Base. It has drawn on earlier analysis in the Stoke Gabriel Design Statement (201X) and feedback from parishioners gained during Neighbourhood Plan consultation events.

Maps **X** and **X** below highlight the identified key views in the Parish.

To include map of key views in the Parish.

3) *What does the community say?*

Community consultation undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan to date has highlighted the importance of the Parish's landscape character for both residents and visitors alike.

The landscape character of the area was identified as a central component of what makes the Parish special, with local character acting as a central draw for those living in the Parish.

A significant number of those responding to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire highlighted the need to conserve landscape character. This was linked to significant concern amongst residents that key views were being affected by incremental and uncontrolled development, leading to a loss of a sense of place and local distinctiveness.

The River Dart, the Mill Pond, woodland and the Byter Mill valley were identified by many of those responding to the questionnaire as key landscapes. Trees, hedgerows, Devon Banks and verges were identified as key parts of the Parish's landscape and villagescape which should be protected. Traditional orchards were also highlighted as a key component of local distinctiveness. This was accompanied by a desire within the community for continued and enhanced access to the landscape, and for views to the landscape to be protected from Public Rights of Way in the villages.

In terms of key views in the Parish, the community were asked to identify what they considered to be the key views to protect in the village. This process has been discussed in *Assessment of Key Views in Stoke Gabriel Parish (2019)* accompanying the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Further elements which have been identified as central to residents' sense of place include tranquillity and dark night skies. In this respect a lack of streetlights and low levels of light pollution was highlighted by a significant number of respondents as an important part of the Parish's local distinctiveness which should be conserved.

4) Policy SGX: Landscape character policy

South Devon AONB

Major development³ within the South Devon AONB will not be supported except in exceptional circumstances where it is specifically designed to meet the identified local needs of the Parish and is designed to ensure that development will not cause undue harm to the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.

Development within the South Devon AONB will be expected to conserve and enhance the AONB's Special Qualities. Any developments should have regard to the South Devon AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024 or its subsequent replacement.

Landscape character

Development proposals will be supported where it is shown by assessment that they do not have a significant detrimental effect on the characteristic landscapes of Stoke Gabriel Parish, the setting and significance of heritage assets, or on key viewpoints or vistas from and within the Parish's settlements. Development should reflect the distinctive characteristics of the Landscape Character Type within which it sits, and demonstrate how the proposal relates to its location in terms of landscape character, setting and visual effects.

To support villagescape character, development will be expected to support the provisions of Neighbourhood Plan Policy SGX (Design)

For major development* in the Parish, development proposals will be expected to be accompanied by an detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. This will clearly set out and demonstrate how the proposal:

- i. Avoids the widening and/or straightening of characteristic narrow, winding lanes (or demonstrates how such modification is required for road safety purposes and can be accommodated with minimal damage to landscape character)
- ii. Retains the field pattern of Devon banks and hedges and minimises damage to trees, bushes, historic features and gateposts within them
- iii. Repairs/replaces any characteristic landscape features that are affected, taking into account the local character, having carried out a survey of all existing trees, Devon banks and hedgerows.
- iv. Retains, where present, traditional orchards
- v. Is in harmony with the undulating character of the landscape
- vi. Is appropriate to the small scale and intimacy of the landscape and preserves the sense of place
- vii. Effectively screens or blends new buildings into the shape and colour of the landscape, so as to reduce the visibility of houses from other areas of Stoke Gabriel Parish, the AONB and neighbouring parishes and provides suitable strategies for avoiding or minimising their visual impact
- viii. Outlines the use of existing and proposed landscaping and how the landscaping may look in 10 years' time.

³ As defined in the NPPF (2019)

Key views

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of Key Views on plans X and X above. Development proposals that are located within or immediately adjoining a Key View will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that the key elements of the view can continue to be enjoyed, including key features contributing to landscape and villagescape character. Proposals will not be supported which comprise buildings or other structures where the height and/or mass obstructs or undermines a Key View.

Proposals which rise significantly above the average roof height of surrounding development, or are proposed on previously undeveloped areas on the settlement edges should set out a description of the views and vistas crossing and into the site and describe the nature of the impact or harm to the view from the proposals. This will consider the cumulative impact on the view from any existing unimplemented development proposals and identify any mitigating measures to be incorporated into the development as necessary.

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Policy X: Biodiversity and geodiversity

1) What is the policy seeking to achieve?

Stoke Gabriel Parish has a rich biodiversity resource. A key aim for the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore to protect and enhance biodiversity habitats in the Parish, and enhance local and sub-regional ecological networks. The Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to establish a premise of biodiversity 'net gain' to augment future development in the Parish.

2) What is the evidence behind the policy?

Stoke Gabriel Parish has a rich biodiversity resource, comprising a range of habitats and ecosystems which support a significant number of species, including protected species. Habitats are varied and include gardens, farmland, woodland, streams and the tidal River Dart. These varied habitats support a great diversity of plants, birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates. The Parish's biodiversity resource is a key component in its distinctive character and comprises an important element of local and sub-regional ecological networks in south Devon.

The Parish also has a rich geodiversity resource. This is a key determinant to the distribution of habitats and species, and has a close influence on landscape character, the historic environment and local distinctiveness.

An overview of the key designations and features of biodiversity and geodiversity interest in the Parish is presented below.

County Wildlife Sites

Six County Wildlife Sites are present in the Parish. County Wildlife Sites are sites locally designated for biodiversity, designated due to the presence of particular habitats and species. They are designated using a strict set of criteria and each site is assessed against these criteria by a panel of experts. Whilst they are not legally protected, they comprise a network of non-statutory wildlife sites which form key parts of Devon's ecological networks. The County Wildlife Sites in the Parish are as follows:

- Ham Copse
- Broadleigh Farm Orchard
- Byter Mill Copse
- The Mill Pool
- South Downs & Great Woods
- The Cliffs

County Geological Sites

County Geological Sites are locally designated geological sites that are considered to be especially important for the geodiversity they exhibit. There is one County Geological Site located in the Parish, at Waddeton Quarry. The site has been designated for its exposures of a wide range of lithological & structural features associated with the Torquay limestone, which can be seen at both the quarry and the foreshore at this location.

Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats and ancient woodland

UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats cover a wide range of semi-natural habitat types, and were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

are areas within 4km of the designated roosts which have been determined to potentially include critical foraging habitat and commuting routes.

In addition, there are a number of strategic Greater Horseshoe Bat flyways in the Parish. These include along the banks of the River Dart, and from the River Dart along the Mill Pool/ Byter Mill Copse valley towards Yalberton.

The extent of the Greater Horseshoe Bat sustenance zones and the flyways within the Parish is highlighted in the map below.

To include map of Greater Horseshoe Bat sustenance zones and the flyways

Species

To include an overview of the key species present in the Parish

3) What does the community say?

Community consultation undertaken on the Neighbourhood Plan to date has highlighted the importance of habitats and species as a key part of the Parish's character and local distinctiveness. In this context the biodiversity of the Parish was identified as a central component of what makes the Parish special for both residents and visitors alike.

A significant number of those responding to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire highlighted the need to protect biodiversity in the Parish, and secure environmental enhancements which would support wildlife. Trees, hedgerows and verges were identified as key parts of the Parish's landscape and villagescape which should be protected. Protection of areas of biodiversity sensitivity, such as the River Dart, orchards, woodland, the Mill Pond and the Byter Mill valley were also identified by many of those responding to the questionnaire as key priorities. This was accompanied by a desire within the community for continued and enhanced access to these assets, alongside their protection.

4) Policy SGX: Biodiversity and geodiversity policy

Biodiversity sites

In considering development proposals, full account will be given to any potential adverse impacts on designated biodiversity sites, including, in the Parish, County Wildlife Sites. Development should not take place which will lead to the loss of areas of Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat or ancient woodland.

New development will also be expected to ensure that any potential adverse effects on the integrity of the Dart Estuary MCZ are avoided or mitigated.

On-site biodiversity assets and biodiversity net gain

Development proposals should maintain and enhance existing on-site biodiversity assets, delivering 'net environmental gain' in line with national policy, the JLP, and provide for wildlife needs on site, where possible. For smaller sites, a contribution to biodiversity enhancement elsewhere in the Parish may be made. Developers should seek to ensure habitats for wildlife are enhanced and left in a measurably better state than they were pre-development.

On-site biodiversity enhancements such as new roosting features for bats, nesting features for birds or boxes and bricks for invertebrates should be incorporated into the fabric of the development. Native hedges and flower rich meadows should be incorporated within new development.

Ecological networks

A significant number of priority habitats are present in the Parish, including deciduous woodland, traditional orchard, good quality semi-improved grassland and mudflats.

There are also a number of areas of ancient woodland (woodland that has existed since 1600AD) in the Parish. Comprising some of the richest land-based habitat for wildlife, these include Ham Copse, Great Wood and Tors/Barn Woods.

Strategic Nature Areas

Recognising the Parish's importance as an integral part of local and sub-regional ecological networks, a significant part of the Parish is within a Strategic Nature Area. Strategic Nature Areas (SNAs) are landscape scale areas of land that have been selected by Biodiversity South West as being important areas for the conservation and expansion of particular habitat types in Devon. They are areas of Devon's countryside which contain higher than average concentrations of existing biodiversity habitats. The SNAs present in the Parish include: Woodland SNA, which covers the banks of the river Dart, extending over much of Stoke Gabriel village, the Mill Pool/Byter Mill valley, and towards Aish; and Mudflats SNA, which covers the River Dart.

Figure X highlights the key biodiversity and geodiversity sites in the Parish.

To include map of biodiversity and geodiversity assets in the Parish.

The Dart Estuary Marine Conservation Zone

The Dart Estuary Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) was designated in May 2019. The MCZ is an inshore site that covers an area of approximately 5 km² and encompasses the upper part of the Dart estuary down to Anchor Stone, south of Dittisham. It covers the whole of the River Dart in the Parish, excluding the Mill Pool.

The site supports a diverse array of habitats and species, including a number of rare species. The estuary has an important role as a nursery ground for juvenile fish, and large areas of the site consist of intertidal mud, which is a highly productive habitat and provides feeding and resting grounds for wading and migratory birds. The site is also an important habitat for the tentacled lagoon worm (*Alkmaria romijni*), which is scarce throughout the UK and lives within a tube made of mud in sheltered lagoons and estuaries. They are particularly vulnerable to changes to their habitat.

South Hams SAC and Greater Horseshoe Bats

Whilst no internationally designated sites (such as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Ramsar Sites) or nationally designated sites (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest) are present within the Parish, the Parish contains key habitats and species which are central to the integrity of these sites.

The Greater Horseshoe Bat is one of Britain's largest and rarest bats, with a total population of about 5,500 individuals. A significant proportion of this population is found in South Devon. Greater Horseshoe Bats use the wider countryside of South Devon for the majority of their activities, including commuting, foraging, roosting, and mating. Linked to this, the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has been designated by Natural England to help protect a population of over 2,000 Greater Horseshoe Bats.

To facilitate effective decision making associated with the South Hams SAC, important strategic flyways and key foraging/ sustenance zones for Greater Horseshoe Bats in South Devon have been identified using the best available scientific knowledge.

The eastern half of the parish, including Waddeton and approximately half of the village of Stoke Gabriel, is within the South Hams SAC Berry Head Greater Horseshoe Bat Sustenance Zone. These

Proposals for new development should provide wildlife corridors that allow wildlife to move from one area of habitat to another. Development proposals which link up existing areas of biodiversity interest will be considered favourably.

Green space and landscape buffers in development should provide new habitats through development and related planting schemes. Where ecologically relevant, fences and walls should be designed to incorporate features that allow dispersal of wildlife through areas of green space and gardens.

Where appropriate, new development should be undertaken in association with the landscape-scale enhancements proposed through, for example, the Strategic Nature Area network or in association with the national-level Nature Recovery Network.

The South Hams SAC and Greater Horseshoe Bats

Development proposals should seek to support the integrity of the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Where development proposals are located within the established South Hams SAC Berry Head Greater Horseshoe Bat Sustenance Zone and/or within strategic Greater Horseshoe Bat flyways, the following provisions should apply:

- Commuting routes and foraging areas should be retained where they can be effectively protected and appropriately managed for bats.
- Early engagement of an ecological consultant, followed by early consultation with South Hams District Council, Devon County Council and Natural England should be undertaken to assess the site and advise on the scope of survey and mitigation that will be required.
- Mitigation proposals should be developed in close consultation with other professionals such as highways/lighting engineers, landscape architects and designers to ensure that they are realistic, achievable and deliverable, and can be maintained in the long-term without creating conflicts with the needs or aspirations of highways users and local residents.

A Mitigation Strategy should be submitted with the planning application, which sets out how potential impacts will be avoided as part of the application. The scope of this document will be dependent on the nature and scale of the anticipated impacts, but will need to include full details of any replacement roosts (including location and detailed design), and new connective habitat. In terms of lighting, dark corridors must be maintained around roosts, foraging areas and commuting corridors with no net increase in light levels as a result of the development in areas used by bats.

Geodiversity

Where relevant, development proposals should:

- Make a positive contribution to the protection and enhancement of geodiversity in the Parish.
- Protect County Geological Sites.

Business and employment, Draft document

1) What is the policy seeking to achieve?

Stoke Gabriel has a broad variety of businesses located or registered in the parish. They contribute greatly to the sustainability of the community and provide essential services for residents as well as employment opportunities.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that businesses key to the vitality of the Parish continue and that opportunity is provided for new businesses and employment in a way which does not impact on the rural character of the Parish.

2) What is behind the policy

Changing demographics of the 20th and 21st centuries along with the significant number of new homes in the parish have led to growth of small service businesses, often home based in addition to smaller businesses typically employing less than 3 people.

Traditional small scale commercial fishing on the River Dart ceased some time ago while agriculture remains significant in the Parish.

The variety of businesses is broad and they provide essential services to residents as well as to the greater community. They include pubs/ shops/ restaurants/ farms/ cider makers/ education/ caravan parks/ holiday accommodation/ agricultural businesses/ architects/ entertainers/ kennels/ builders/ stonemasons/carpenters/ roofers/ graphic designers/ IT support/ various home services/ engineering/ electricians/ plumbers/ hairdressers/ decorators/ Marine Services/ therapeutic services/ tree surgeons/ garages and vehicle maintenance. – See appendix

The shops pubs and restaurants in the village itself provide employment and valued services as well as opportunities to socialise and interact in the community. As in other communities the number of shops has greatly reduced over the past 3 decades due to the growth and the proximity of local supermarkets. The number of pubs has reduced from 3 to 2 as drinking habits have changed while one establishment was converted to 4 rarely used dwellings.

The 3 popular caravan/camping parks are all located to the immediate north-east of the village (Additionally there is a large site within 200 yards of these in Torbay) and provide pitches for 327 caravans or motor homes (in addition to some static homes) as well as caravan storage associated with two of the sites. These provide

seasonal employment as well as a vital source of visitors to local businesses.

3) What does the community say

In the survey carried out in 2016 pubs and restaurants occupied 3 of the top 4 rankings of importance to the community. The Post Office which was ranked number 1 has since closed and has been incorporated in the remaining village general store. The long term survival of this is seen as extremely important to the sustainability of the community, There were proposals that this and at least one of the Village Pubs should be protected as an 'Asset of Community Value', which is covered by Policy Dev 18 in the JLP.???

The survey also confirmed that effective mobile and broadband and mobile communications were lacking and paramount. These have been addressed by 2 mobile providers and broadband has significantly improved however it remains incomplete on both counts.

54 respondents ran their business from home and said that they would not need new premises during the life of the neighbourhood plan. However 12 said that they might need different premises and nine had a potential need. 70% of these said that it was unlikely that they would find new premises within the Parish citing difficulty in finding suitable space at an affordable price.

A telephone survey of 25 businesses was carried out from September 2018 and generated the following comments:

- *Parking in the village is an issue, and the village shop would welcome positioning of the village bus stop to create more parking spaces. It was recognized that there are very limited options to create more central village parking spaces; use of school field was suggested and /or compulsory purchase of land by the parish council of any appropriate land available in a central village location. Holiday parks mentioned not being able to park in the village as a key frustration with elderly visitors.*
- *A 'test pontoon' (positioned by Dart Harbour at the entrance to the creek to provide accessibility from the river at all states of tide) has been well received bringing business to the village. The possibility of having a pontoon which allows larger ferry boats to call in and*

start connecting Stoke Gabriel with Totnes and Dartmouth was also suggested.

- *Public transport was recognized as poor to the village, and access routes in the village as not good. Road widening for caravan access and traffic would be welcomed.*
- *Several local business suggested that there should be improved signage with a large attractive sign at the millpond and top of the village outlining what shops/pubs/restaurants are sited in the village and improved signage outside holiday camps; it is felt some visitors drive straight to the millpond down school hill and then straight out without being aware of what is available*
- *Many local businesses cited poor mobile phone signal – some saying it was a big problem and was affecting their business; holiday parks/B&Bs saying it was difficult for visitors staying in the village /some businesses still needing to go into the garden to receive calls*
- *There were no major changes of premises being planned for/cited as needed from the business respondents. The only requirement for new premises was from sole trader therapists looking to use a local therapy room and/or room for group sessions.*

From the initial 2016 survey almost 60% of respondents felt that specific types of business should be encouraged. These were agricultural, tourism (which is seen as important to the village economy), professional and educational, but not manufacturing or construction.

4. Policy ... Business premises.

- a) New business premises, storage facilities, units or yards will be supported providing that they have no negative effect on local character and are in conjunction with the other policies of this Neighbourhood Plan This is to include expansion of existing businesses.
- b) In particular businesses which provide agricultural diversification will be supported.
- c) Any proposed expansion of existing mobile and static caravan/mobile home parks and storage should be scrutinised to ensure that it would not be to the detriment of the rural nature of the parish.

- d) New employment premises or expansion of existing premises must provide adequate parking for employees, visitors and customers.
- e) Businesses run from home and home working are supported. They must be in keeping with the locality and must cause neither nuisance to neighbours or detriment to the locality.
- f) Change of use from residential to business will be accepted outside Stoke Gabriel Village providing they provide employment opportunities and do not cause detriment to the rural setting.
- g) The plan will not support change of use of existing static caravan/mobile home parks and storage to residential development sites.

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STOKE GABRIEL

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

PLAN

MONITORING AND REVIEW

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FEBRUARY 2020

STOKE GABRIEL

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PLAN

APPENDICES

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