



Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan

Sustainability Appraisal Assessment (incorporating Strategic Environment)

May 2020

Prepared on behalf of the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group by
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan, which guides development in the parish up until 2027, was adopted by Chichester District Council on 14 July 2015, bringing the plan into legal force and forming part of the statutory development plan for the district. The Neighbourhood Plan was prepared in accordance with the Chichester District Local Plan First Review (1999) as well as in alignment with the then emerging Chichester District Local Plan which was similarly adopted by the Council on 14 July 2015. The Local Plan was adopted subject to a 5 year review clause to allow further consideration of housing and infrastructure matters. Chichester District Council are currently in the process of preparing their Local Plan which will set a new context for the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan and so the Parish Council is now starting the process of reviewing their Neighbourhood Plan to align with the emerging Local Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.2 Neighbourhood Plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and are also required to comply with relevant EU legislation (including the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).
- 1.3 A Strategic Environmental Assessment is a process to ensure that full consideration is given to the potential environmental effects during the plan making process whereas a Sustainability Appraisal takes a wider view of social and economic effects also. The two are typically combined and together promotes sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, helps to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.
- 1.4 This process is an opportunity to consider ways by which the plan can contribute to improvements in environmental, social and economic conditions, as well as a means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse effects that the plan might otherwise have. By doing so, it can help make sure that the proposals in the plan are appropriate given the reasonable alternatives.
- 1.5 Therefore, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) will be prepared to inform the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan, incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan (2015)

- 1.6 The Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan was initially subject to an independent examination in March 2014, following which the Plan proceeded to a referendum on 24 July 2014. Chichester District Council subsequently received a legal challenge on its decision to proceed to a referendum on the basis that it had failed to carry out a legally compliant screening opinion to determine whether a SEA was required for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.7 In order to correct this procedural error, Chichester District Council carried out a formal screening opinion that was published on 14 October 2014 and which found that the Loxwood

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Neighbourhood Plan did not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. A second independent examination (March 2015) was then undertaken followed by a further referendum (25 June 2015). The Neighbourhood Plan was then made by Chichester District Council on 14 July 2015.

Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan Review (2020)

- 1.8 Loxwood Parish Council are reviewing their Neighbourhood Plan to align with the emerging Chichester District Local Plan. Given the Neighbourhood Plan is being reviewed in full, potentially with new sites being included within the Neighbourhood Plan, and following the recent high court judgement which has changed the circumstances around which a SEA is required (People over Wind), Chichester District Council has advised that a SEA is required to comply with EU obligations.
- 1.9 The Scoping Report is the first stage of the SA/SEA process which compiles background information, establishes the scope of sustainability issues relevant to the parish and identifies the sustainability framework which will form the basis of the SA/SEA process.
- 1.10 Following this, the SA/SEA Report will assess policy options considered through the Neighbourhood Plan review (known as reasonable alternatives) which will, in turn, influence the selection of policies in the Neighbourhood Plan itself. Finally, the SA/SEA will then appraise the final policies to determine what impact the plan would have on the environment and whether it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 1.11 This Scoping Report will now be consulted on with the statutory environmental bodies – Historic England, Environment Agency and Natural England.

2 Policy Context

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the aim of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development. This has been carried through in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, which requires neighbourhood development plans to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Although not a statutory requirement, a sustainability appraisal of a Neighbourhood Development Plan is a positive step to meeting this basic condition¹.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Plans are also required to demonstrate that they are legally compliant and are compatible with EU obligations (as incorporated into UK law). An important component of this is compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (transposed into English Law through the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations²) by considering whether there are likely to be any significant environmental effects as a result of implementing the plan. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is not a legal requirement, however, Local Planning Authorities are required to determine whether Neighbourhood Plans are likely to have significant environmental effects, a process known as screening. Chichester District Council has advised that a SEA is required for the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan and so a SEA process will be undertaken to inform the Plan and ensure that it contributes towards sustainable development.
- 2.3 The first stage of the SA/SEA process is the scoping stage as set out in Regulation (12) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations which states that “when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency) for a period of 5 weeks. Whilst not required by law, the Scoping Report is a useful way of presenting information at the scoping stage and helps to ensure the SA/SEA process is proportionate and relevant to the plan being assessed. National Planning Practice Guidance further advises that the Scoping Report should set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives.

¹ Neighbourhood plans are required to meet a number of basic conditions - <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/the-basic-conditions-that-a-draft-neighbourhood-plan-or-order-must-meet-if-it-is-to-proceed-to-referendum/>

² Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

3. Parish Portrait

General

- 3.1 The Parish of Loxwood is located in the north of Chichester District, adjacent to the border with Surrey, and is located approximately 25 miles north east of Chichester. The parish is located to the north (but entirely outside) the South Downs National Park and comprises the village of Loxwood together with the hamlets of Alfold Bars to the North and Roundstreet Common to the South.
- 3.2 The parish is predominately rural with the main settlement being the village of Loxwood which is thought to date back to the Anglo-Saxon times. There are only limited services within the parish including an infant and junior school, a medical practice, village shop and post office, two pubs, a church as well as a small number of other shops. Otherwise, local residents have to travel significant distances to access shops, employment and leisure facilities.

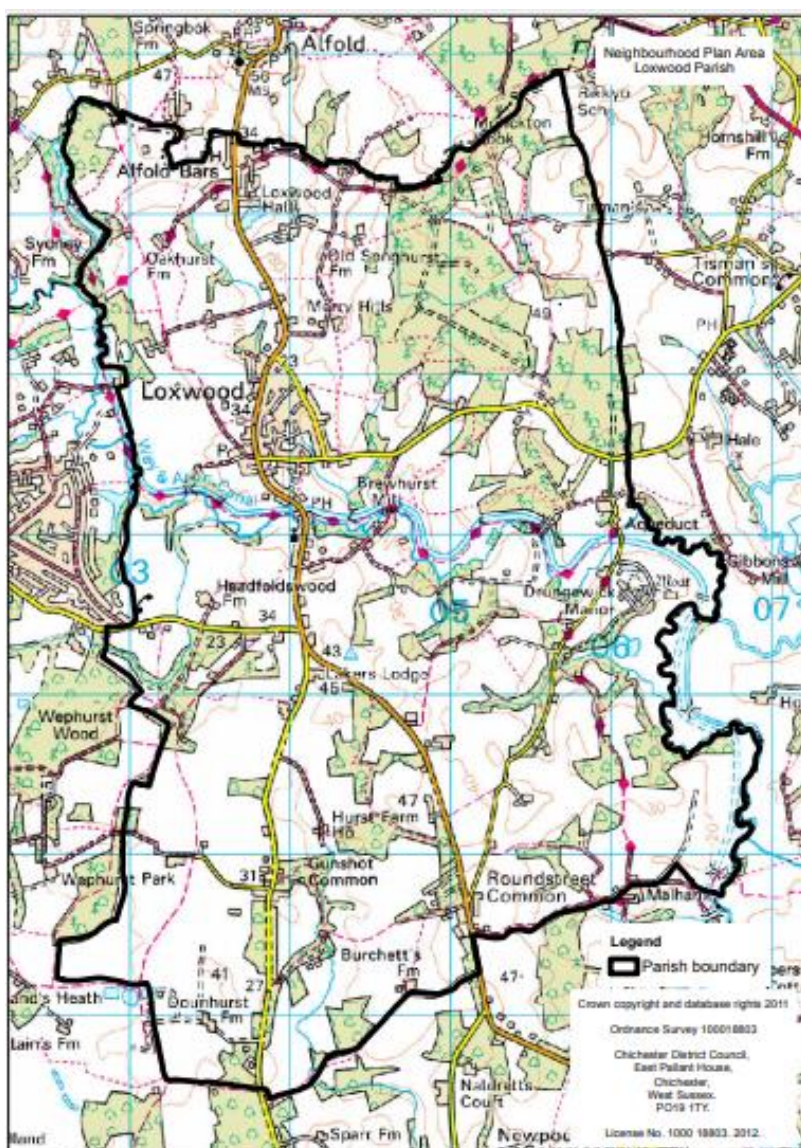


Figure 1 - Loxwood Parish Map

Social

- 3.3 The following statistics and evidence are primarily drawn from parish level Census data (2011). These are used to provide an overview of the current status of the community. Other sources of data or information are acknowledged where applicable.

Demographics

- 3.4 There are 608 households in the parish with the average size being 2.4 people.
- 3.5 The 2011 Census³ recorded the parish population as 1,480 (722 Male: 758 Female), an increase of 10% from the 2001 Census (1,341). At the district level, the population of Chichester district has increased by 16% between 1991 and 2016, with an annual growth of 0.6%. Currently, there are 1,321 adults in the parish on the electoral register.
- 3.6 The mean age of parish residents is 43.7 which, broadly speaking, equates to the borough average (44.5) but is far higher than England (39.3). The parish breakdown between age groups can be found in Table 1 below. Notably, Loxwood has significantly lower proportions of residents in the age groups between 18 and 44 and a significantly higher proportion of residents in the age groups between 45 and 89.

Table 1 - Age Structure of Parish

Age	Loxwood		Chichester
	Number	Percentage %	Percentage %
All usual residents	1,480	100.0	100.0
Age 0 to 4	81	5.5	6.3
Age 5 to 7	56	3.8	3.4
Age 8 to 9	45	3.0	2.2
Age 10 to 14	86	5.8	5.8
Age 15	17	1.1	1.2
Age 16 to 17	38	2.6	2.5
Age 18 to 19	21	1.4	2.6
Age 20 to 24	45	3.0	6.8
Age 25 to 29	33	2.2	6.9
Age 30 to 44	255	17.2	20.6
Age 45 to 59	358	24.2	19.4
Age 60 to 64	128	8.6	6.0

³ It is noted that the demographic figures differ from those referenced in the adopted Loxwood Plan which referenced the Census data published at that time. The reasons for the disparity are unknown but to avoid confusion, this Scoping Report references the most recently published Census data.

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Age 65 to 74	191	12.9	8.6
Age 75 to 84	95	6.4	5.5
Age 85 to 89	27	1.8	1.5
Age 90 and over	4	0.3	0.8

Household Size

- 3.7 The average household size is 2.4. A high proportion of parish households (64%) are 1-2 persons, which is slightly lower than the district average (70%). The proportion of 5+ person households is low (6.6%).

Table 2 – Household Size

	Loxwood	Chichester
1-2 person	63.6%	69.8%
3-4 person	29.8%	24.8%
5+ person household	6.6%	5.3%
Total	608 (100%)	49,848 (100%)

Health

- 3.8 Chichester residents have a good life expectancy, being 85 years for women and 81 years for men.
- 3.9 Healthcare provision within the Parish is limited to the village medical practice with four doctors and its own dispensary providing a range of medical facilities for the surrounding parishes. Beyond this, residents are required to travel by car to access other primary healthcare services outside of the parish. The Chichester Infrastructure Delivery Plan notes that on-going and potential new developments in Waverley and Guildford will impact on primary healthcare services in Loxwood, particularly as the Cranleigh Medical Centre is at capacity.
- 3.10 Generally speaking, the parish is a healthy community with 87.5% describing themselves as either in 'very good health' (54.5%) or 'Good Health' (33.0%).

Table 3 - Health of the Parish

disability/health/care	Loxwood	
	Number	Percentage %
Very good health	807	54.5
Good health	489	33.0
Fair health	140	9.5
Bad health	35	2.4
Very bad health	9	0.6

Education

- 3.11 The village has an Infant and Junior School consisting of 7 classes for age ranges 4 to 11 years, with a net capacity of 175 students. The current school is already overcrowded, with the occupancy level for the year 2012/13 being 99%, and the core structure of the school is out of date. The nearest secondary school is in Billingshurst, some 7 miles away, and the nearest sixth form and further education facilities are similarly located outside of the parish.
- 3.12 The Chichester Infrastructure Delivery Plan acknowledges that there is a shortfall of 25 early years and childcare places.

Community Facilities, Play space and Open Space

- 3.13 Loxwood village is relatively well served by community facilities, used by a variety of clubs and organisations. This includes the Village Hall (North Hall), 2 public houses, a car servicing garage, a church (St John the Baptist, Church of England) and chapel (Society of Dependents), infant and junior School, medical practice, sports club and playing fields (Loxwood Sports Association – cricket pitch, football pitches, changing rooms, squash court), village shop and post office, butchers and hairdressers.
- 3.14 Furthermore, the parish benefits from extensive amounts of publicly accessible greenspace providing informal recreation space.

Deprivation

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- 3.15 Indices of Multiple Deprivation⁴ - The 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation show that the Loxwood Electoral Ward is in the top 10% least deprived wards in Britain. However, some rural communities are deprived in terms of barriers to housing (for example affordability) and access to local services such as supermarkets, secondary schools, libraries, health services and banks.

Transport

- 3.16 The local road network comprises largely unimproved rural B-class roads and unclassified country lanes; there are no main or A-class roads. The B2133 runs through the village.
- 3.17 The Wey and Arun canal runs through the village and was built following an Act of Parliament in 1813 backed by the 3rd Earl of Egremont of Petworth House. The canal joined the rivers Wey and Arun making it possible to travel by boat from Littlehampton all the way to London.
- 3.18 Public transport services in the parish are limited to two routes, connecting to Guildford and Horsham, with the services being extremely infrequent. These services are nonetheless essential for the economic well-being and sustainability of the parish, especially as 6% of households had no car or van (2011 Census).
- 3.19 A high percentage of parish residents travel to work by car (68%, as seen in the table below).

Table 4

Travel to Work	Loxwood	
	Number	Percentage %
Car or van	613	68
Train	47	5
Passenger in car or van	24	3
Pedestrian	33	4
Work from home	142	16
Not in employment	42	4

Car Ownership

- 3.20 As public transport services are limited, it is not surprising that the car ownership in the parish is high, as seen in Table 5 below.

⁴ The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) covers a broad range of issues and refers to unmet needs caused by a lack of resources of all kinds and not just financial. There are seven key domains used to measure deprivation and each domain represents a specific form of deprivation experienced by people and each can be measured individually using a number of indicators. The seven distinct domains identified in the English Indices of Deprivation are Income Deprivation, Employment Deprivation, Health Deprivation and Disability, Education Skills and Training Deprivation, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment Deprivation, and Crime.

Table 5

Cars	Loxwood	
	Number	Percentage %
No cars or vans in household	37	6.1
1 car or van in household	156	25.7
2 cars or vans in household	277	45.6
3 cars or vans in household	93	15.3
4 or more cars or vans in household	45	7.4
sum of all cars or vans in the area	1,184	-

Housing - Dwelling Type and Size

- 3.21 As seen in Table 6 below, there is a shortage of 1 bedroom dwellings (5%) in the parish with the majority of dwelling being 2 bedroom (21%), 3 bedroom (31%) and 4 bedroom (29%).
- 3.22 2011 Census⁵ dwelling type data can be seen in Table 7 below. It is evident that a large proportion of the housing stock is detached (57%) or semi-detached (24%), with only a small number of flats within the parish (9%).

Table 6 – Number of bedrooms

Dwelling Type	Loxwood	
	Number	Percentage %
No bedrooms	0	0
1 bedroom	31	5%

⁵ It is noted that the dwelling type figures differ from those referenced in the adopted Loxwood Plan which referenced the Census data published at that time. The reasons for the disparity are unknown but to avoid confusion, this Scoping Report references the most recently published Census data.

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2 bedroom	127	21%
3 bedrooms	186	31%
4 bedrooms	176	29%
5 bedrooms or more	88	14%

Table 7 – Dwelling Type

	Loxwood	
Dwelling Type	Number	Percentage %
Detached	359	57.2
Semi-detached	148	23.6
Terraced (including end-terrace)	60	9.6
Flat, maisonette or apartment: Purpose-built block of flats or tenement	46	7.3
Flat, maisonette or apartment: Part of a converted or shared house (including bed-sits)	8	1.3
Flat, maisonette or apartment: In a commercial building	4	0.6
Caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	3	0.5

**A dwelling is a unit of accommodation with all rooms, including kitchen, bathroom and toilet behind a door that only that household can use. As defined by ONS.*

Household Tenure

3.23 2011 Census data⁶ for household tenure is set out in Table 8 below. A high proportion of the parish's households (dwellings) are owner occupied (81%) which is higher than the district

⁶ It is noted that the dwelling type figures differ from those referenced in the adopted Loxwood Plan which referenced the Census data published at that time. The reasons for the disparity are unknown but to avoid confusion, this Scoping Report references the most recently published Census data.

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average (67%). The table below also demonstrates that the parish has low levels of private and social rented accommodation.

Table 8 – Household Tenure

Tenure	Loxwood		Chichester
	Number	Percentage %	Percentage %
All households	608	100.00	100.00
Owned	495	81.4	67.2
Owned outright	265	43.6	40.5
Owned with a mortgage or loan	230	37.8	26.6
Shared ownership (part-owned and part rented)	1	0.2	0.9
Social rented	62	10.2	14.9
Rented from council (Local Authority)	6	1.0	2.2
Other	56	9.2	12.7
Private rented	35	5.8	14.9
Private landlord or letting agency	31	5.1	12.8
Other	4	0.7	2.1
Living rent free	15	2.5	2.2

* Tenure provides information about whether a household rents or owns the accommodation that it occupies and, if rented, combines this with information about the type of landlord who owns or manages the accommodation (NOMIS, 2018)

*A household is defined as one person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room, sitting room or dining area. As defined by Office for National Statistics (NOMIS, 2018).

Occupancy

- 3.24 Table 9 below shows that Loxwood dwellings are significantly under-occupied. This compares unfavorably to the Chichester average and is, in part, influenced by the high proportion of larger homes (4+ bedrooms) and an ageing population.

Table 9 - Occupancy rating (by bedroom measure)

	Loxwood	Chichester
+2 or more bedrooms	75.8%	59.6%
+1 bedrooms	13%	20.1%
0 bedrooms	9.2%	15.2%
-1 or fewer bedrooms	2.0%	4.2%
-2 or fewer bedrooms	0%	0.9%

House Prices

- 3.25 Chichester District is a desirable place in which to live and this is demonstrated by the fact that average house prices in Chichester are far higher than the South East and national average, as seen in Table 10 below:

Table 10

Chichester Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment – Average house prices 2016			
	Median	Mean	Lower Quartile
Chichester	£335,000	439,162	£243,875
South East	£290,000	£372,322	£210,300
England & Wales	£212,950	£304,992	£130,000

- 3.26 Further to this, Right Move data suggests that mean house prices in Loxwood are substantially higher than the District average - £640,247, although this is most likely because the parish has a higher proportion of high value detached dwellings and a lower number of flats than the district average. The HEDNA also recognises that house prices in the rural north of the district are higher than the urban south.

3.27 Whilst no parish-level data is available, the HEDNA also makes the following conclusions:

- Lower quartile house prices (£243,875 - 2016) and first-time buyer (£271,026 – 2016) mean house prices are significantly higher than surrounding areas (in the housing market area), the south east and national averages.
- Average detached house prices (£515,000 – 2016) are significantly higher than surrounding areas (in the housing market area), the south east and national averages.
- Mean average private rents (£975 p.c.m - 2016) are slightly below the regional average (£984 p.c.m - 2016) but notably higher than the national average (£839 p.c.m – 2016).

Affordability

3.28 House price affordability reflects the relationship between house prices and income levels. For 2016, the HEDNA identifies the lower quarter affordability ratio as 11.6, dropping from a 2007 high of 12.5, which is one of the highest ratios in the country. This illustrates the notable affordability pressures at the lower end of the market. The HEDNA identifies the 2016 median affordability ratio as 11.1 which is also significantly higher than the regional (9.43) and national average (7.58) and most other areas in the housing market area. As the lower quartile affordability ratio is higher than the median figure, this suggests that affordability is particularly an issue for the lower end of the market and impacts the ability for locals and first time buyers to access the housing market.

Economy

3.29 The parish of Loxwood is predominantly rural and has no large or medium scale industry other than farming. The majority of residents travel outside of the parish to access employment as indicated through the community survey undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan (14 % worked in Loxwood, 28% worked over 10 miles away from their home with 19% working within West Sussex). However, there are a number of businesses in the village which meet the day to day needs of parish residents, including the following:

- Village convenience store
- post office
- Butchers
- Public houses
- Hairdresser
- Beautician and sports injuries clinic
- Vehicle repair and servicing garage
- Car sales business
- Tree surgery
- Furniture design

3.30 The parish's largest employer is Scandia Hus and there are other relatively small manufacturing businesses and an important number of home-based businesses including physiotherapists, musicians, accountants etc.

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- 3.31 The parish has a highly qualified resident population with 33% of residents aged 16 and over holding Level 4 qualifications and above which is slightly higher than the district average (32.4%).
- 3.32 At the district level, Chichester District Residents in full-time employment earn a median gross annual pay (2016) of just over £30,000 which is slightly higher than the West Sussex (£29,000) and England (£28,500) average.

Unemployment

- 3.33 The unemployment rate is defined as the 'unemployed' as a percentage of the economically active population. Table 11, below, shows that the unemployment rate for the parish (2%) is lower than the district average (2.8%). The table below also highlights the high proportion of self-employed (20%) as well as the high proportion of 'economically inactive' residents (29.7%), especially the 'retired' (19.6%), in comparison to the district average.

Table 11

Economic Activity	Loxwood		Chichester
	Number	Percentage %	Percentage %
All usual residents aged 16 to 74	1,069	100.0	N/A
Economically active	752	70.3	69.2
In employment	710	66.4	62.9
Employee: Part-time	148	13.8	14.0
Employee: Full-time	347	32.5	34.4
Self-employed	215	20.1	14.5
Unemployed	23	2.2	2.8
Full-time student	19	1.8	3.5
Economically Inactive	317	29.7	30.8
Retired	210	19.6	18.2
Student (including full-time students)	37	3.5	4.4
Looking after home or family	52	4.9	4.2
Long-term sick or disabled	9	0.8	2.4
Other	9	0.8	1.5

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Unemployed: Age 16 to 24	8	0.7	0.8
Unemployed: Age 50 to 74	5	0.5	0.7
Unemployed: Never worked	3	0.3	0.2
Long-term unemployed	8	0.7	1.1

*Economic activity relates to whether or not a person who was working or looking for work in the week before census. Rather than a simple indicator of whether or not someone was currently in employment, it provides a measure of whether or not a person was an active participant in the labour market. A person's economic activity is derived from their 'Activity last week'. This is an indicator of their status or availability for employment - whether employed, actively looking for work, waiting to start a new job, available to start a new job, or their status if not employed or not seeking employment. Additional information included in the economic activity classification is also derived from information about the number of hours a person works and their type of employment - whether employed or self-employed (NOMIS, 2018).

Industry

3.34 Table 12, below, is a breakdown of industry type in which a person works and shows Loxwood parish to be broadly equivalent to the wider district. Table 13 (below) also shows the parish to have high proportions of highly skilled workers in management, professional and technical occupations.

Table 12

Geography	Loxwood		Chichester
Industry	Number	Percentage %	Percentage %
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	17	2.3	2.1
Manufacturing	47	6.5	7.3
Construction	62	8.5	7.8
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	109	15	15.2
Transport and storage	32	4.1	2.2
Accommodation and food service activities	30	4.1	6.4
Information and communication	38	5.2	3.9
Financial and insurance activities	52	4.8	3.1
Real Estate	15	2.1	2.0

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Professional, scientific and technical activities	78	10.7	7.3
Administrative and support service activities	42	5.8	5.1
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	20	2.8	6.1
Education	75	10.3	10.2
Human health and social work activities	63	8.7	13.3
R Other	55	7.6	5.9

* Industry is defined as the industry in which a person works relates to their main job, and is derived from information provided on the main activity of their employer or business. This is used to assign responses to an industry code based on the Standard Industrial Classification 2007 (NOMIS, 2018)

Table 13

Geography	Loxwood		Chichester
measures	Number	Percentage %	Percentage %
Occupation			
All categories: Occupation	727	100.0	N/A
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	149	20.5	14.2
2. Professional occupations	116	16.0	18.8
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	97	13.3	13.1
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	85	11.7	9.8
5. Skilled trades occupations	103	14.2	12.9
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	61	8.4	9.7
7. Sales and customer service occupations	37	5.1	7.0
8. Process plant and machine operatives	22	3.0	4.6
9. Elementary occupations	57	7.8	10.0

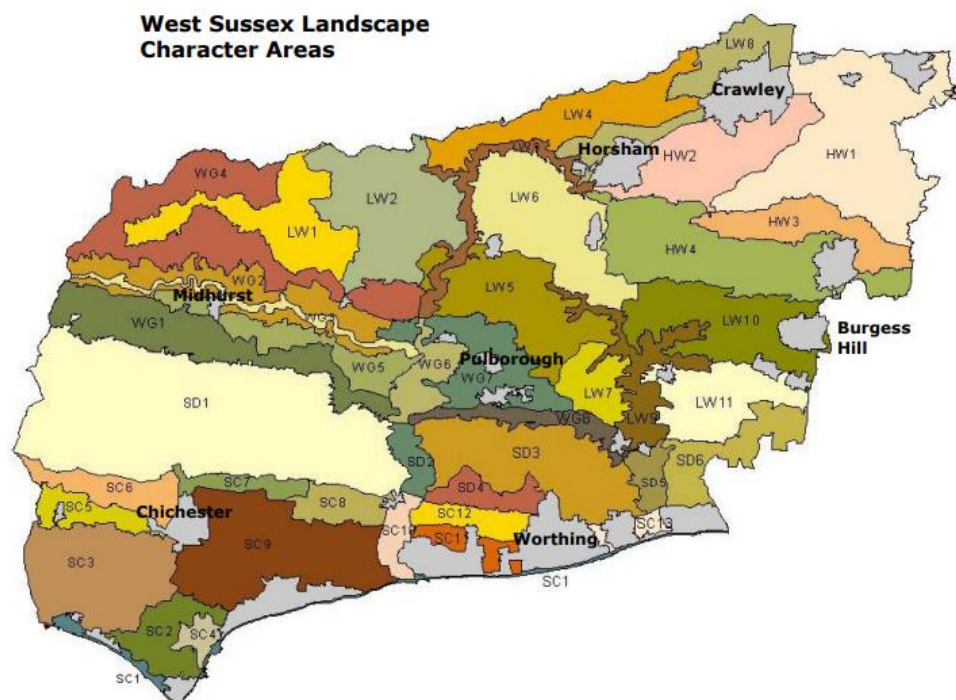
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* Occupation is defined as a person's occupation relates to their main job and is derived from either their job title or details of the activities involved in their job. This is used to assign responses to an occupation code based on the Standard Occupational Classification 2010 (SOC2010) (NOMIS, 2018).

Natural Environment

- 3.35 Loxwood parish lies to the north of the South Downs National Park in a Low Weald landscape. The soil is of Wealden clay being.
- 3.36 The West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2003) identifies 42 distinct landscape areas (Figure 2 below) and assesses the key landscape characteristics, sensitivities and management guidelines. Loxwood falls within 3 of these areas:
- LW 2 - North Western Low Weald
 - LW 3 - Upper Arun Valley
 - LW 4 - Low Weald Hill

Figure 2



LW 2 - North Western Low Weald

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3.37 Landscape characteristics:

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- Two fine examples of Wealden ancient woodland at Ebernoe Common and The Mens, both Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden villages, some centred on village greens, scattered farmsteads and cottages.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half timber.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms

3.38 Key issues:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features

3.39 Land Management Guidelines:

- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.
- Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse grazing. Encourage the planting of tree belts and hedgerows around paddocks.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance conservation value.

LW 3 - Upper Arun Valley

3.40 Landscape characteristics:

- Mostly narrow valleys with undulating valley sides.
- Lush valley bottoms with small, drained, irregularly shaped pastures.
- Occasional curving strips of woodland on valley sides.
- Tightly meandering and steeply banked river and stream courses.
- A few widely dispersed small farms on elevated valley sides.
- The Wey and Arun Junction Canal which is currently being restored.
- Mostly rural unspoilt character
- Distinctive stone and brick bridges

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- Ancient woodlands.
- Small valley side broadleaved woodlands.

3.41 Key issues:

- Loss of hedgerows and woodland on valley sides.
- Decline in traditional land management.
- Localised visual impact of horse paddocks.
- Pressure for further urban development
- Small scale incremental changes eroding rural character
- Maintenance of historic character made up of dispersed historic farm and manor buildings, stone bridges and small irregular fields.

3.42 Land Management Guidelines:

- Ensure any development on the valley sides respects historic settlement pattern, form and building materials
- Conserve and manage valley side woodland and hedgerows.
- Promote the use of pollarding of wetland trees and shrubs as a management technique.
- Seek to reduce the intensity, extent and visual impact of horse grazing.
- Conserve historic stone and brick bridges.
- Conserve and extend existing grassland, managing for species richness.

LW 4 - Low Weald Hill

3.43 Landscape characteristics:

- Undulating, low and densely wooded ridges running mostly east-west.
- Blocks and strips of interconnecting woodland, including a large number of blocks of ancient woodland. Western area characterised by woodland of some size.
- Mostly rural character
- Strong pattern of shaws and hedgerows enclosing fields with mature single oaks in hedgerows and fields.
- Network of narrow lanes, sometimes sunken, cross the area with strong definition north-south.
- Dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farms, cottages, hamlets and linear villages. Farm cottages dispersed along lanes. Some suburban development on village edges.
- Strong historic vernacular of sandstone, half timber and plaster/brick, tile hanging and weatherboarding.
- Extensive semi-natural broad-leaved woodlands linked by hedgerows and shaws
- Many ancient semi-natural woodlands

3.44 Key issues:

- Localised development pressures for urban development.
- Localised intrusion from suburban features.
- Localised loss of hedgerows and shaws.
- Expansion of horse paddocks.
- Increasing development on narrow historic lanes.
- Poor woodland and hedgerow/shaw management.

3.45 Land Management Guidelines:

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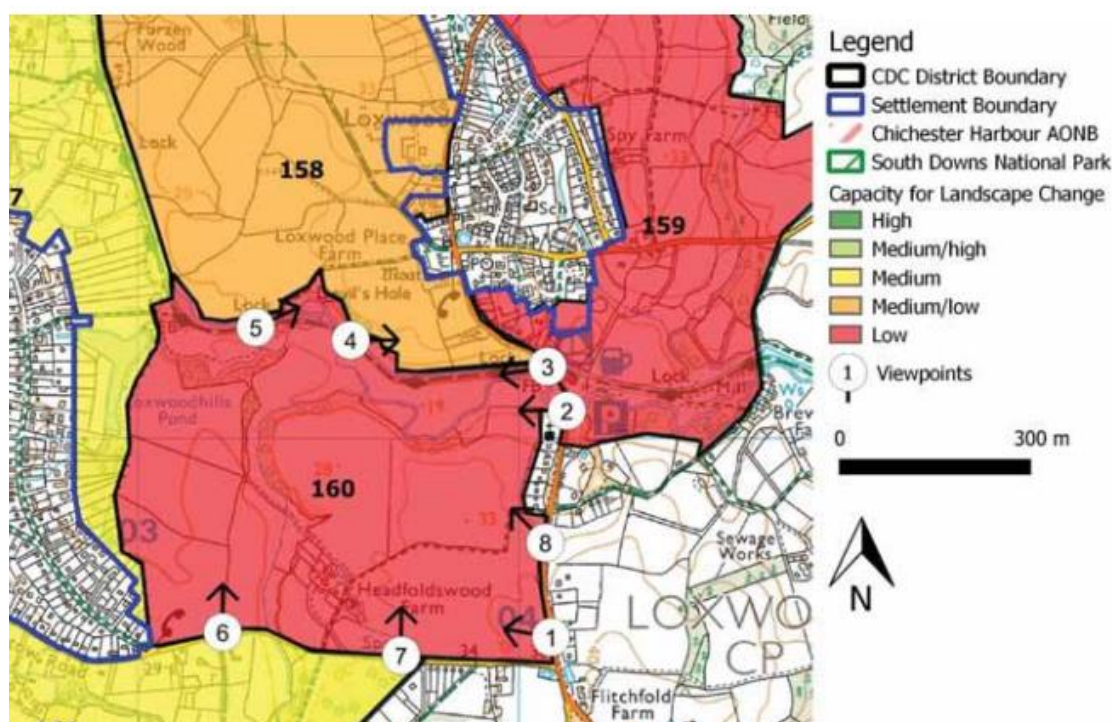
- Conserve and enhance rural wooded character
- Maintain and strengthen the interlinking network of hedgerows, woodland and shaws.
- Ensure any development respects historic settlement pattern, form, and building materials.
- Conserve and enhance the historic character of small scale field patterns, scattered development, and moated sites.
- Respect the historic character of rural roads and lanes notably those with sunken profiles.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land-use change, and avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Avoid skyline development and ensure new development is well integrated into the wider landscape.
- Plant new woodland and hedgerows around village Promote the planting of amenity trees throughout new housing development.

Chichester Landscape Capacity Study (2019)

3.46 The Landscape Capacity Study assesses areas around the district's settlements in terms of the capacity for new development. The Landscape Capacity Study identifies 3 sub areas around Loxwood (Figure 3 below).

- Sub Area 158 - Loxwood Western Low Weald
- Sub Area 159 - Loxwood Eastern Low Weald
- Sub Area 160 - Ifold Eastern Low Weald

Figure 3



Sub Area 158 - Loxwood Western Low Weald

- 3.47 The Landscape Character Assessment describes Sub-area 158 as a localised river-cut escarpment following the Rover Lox valley bottom. The south boundary follows the River Lox and Wey & Arun canal corridor. The eastern boundary includes the western edge of the settlement. The area is predominantly rural containing extensive gardens, paddocks and arable fields with hedges and trees, heathland, scrubland, furze, copses and wood meadow (SNCI). Sparsely-settled away from Loxwood village, the area is crossed by farm tracks leading to isolated farmsteads.
- 3.48 **Landscape Capacity** - Medium / low capacity, constrained by its strong rural character, distinctive plateau topography and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement

Sub Area 159 - Ifold Eastern Low Weald

- 3.49 The Landscape Character Assessment describes Sub-area 159 as comprising of a long, narrow rolling ridgeline running north-south through its centre with the B2133 and settlement edge forming the western boundary. Extensive areas of woodland and wooded stream valley border the eastern boundary. The area is predominantly rural, arable and pastures fields with scattered isolated farmsteads and occasional individual dwellings.
- 3.50 **Landscape Capacity** – Low, constrained by its strong rural character, distinctive topography and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement.

Sub Area 160 - Ifold Eastern Low Weald

- 3.51 The Landscape Character Assessment describes Sub-area 160 as predominantly arable landscape that lies between the historic village of Loxwood and Ifold, both settlements of very individual and distinct identity. Comprising of gently undulating land, gently rising to a high point at the junction between Plaistow Road and B2133 into Loxwood. The area is predominantly rural and very sparsely-settled with an isolated farmstead and ribbon development.
- 3.52 **Landscape Capacity** - Low capacity, constrained by its strong rural and riparian character and its designated sites.

Biodiversity

- 3.53 There are no internationally important ecological sites - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) or Ramsar sites - within Loxwood, with the closest being:
- Ebernoe Common (SAC)
 - The Mens (SAC)
- 3.54 There are various other European protected sites within Chichester District that are considered through the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the emerging Chichester Local Plan, albeit these are not as close to Loxwood parish in proximity:
- Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar sites;
 - Pagham Harbour SPA and Ramsar sites;
 - Solent Maritime SAC;
 - Solent and Dorset Coast potential SPA

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- Duncton to Bignor Escarpment SAC
- Butser Hill SAC;
- Woolmer Forest SAC/Wealden Heaths Phase 2 SPA

3.55 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the parish but there are various designated within proximity to the parish, including Coppedhall Hangar SSSI in Billingshurst CP, Chiddingfold Forest which spans across Alfold CP, Dunsfold CP and Plaistow CP.

3.56 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) are designations used by local authorities in the United Kingdom for sites of substantive local nature conservation and geological value. There are 3 SNCIs in the parish (some of which are partly within the parish):

- Dunhurst and Northup Copses (largely within Wisborough Green parish)
- Headfoldswood Meadow
- Barberry Bridge Pasture

Priority Habitat

3.57 UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats cover a wide range of semi-natural habitat types and were those identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The following priority habitats are identified within Loxwood:

- Semi-improved grassland
- Deciduous woodland
- Ancient woodland (Ancient and semi-natural woodland and Ancient replanted woodland)
- Traditional orchards
- Woodpasture and parkland

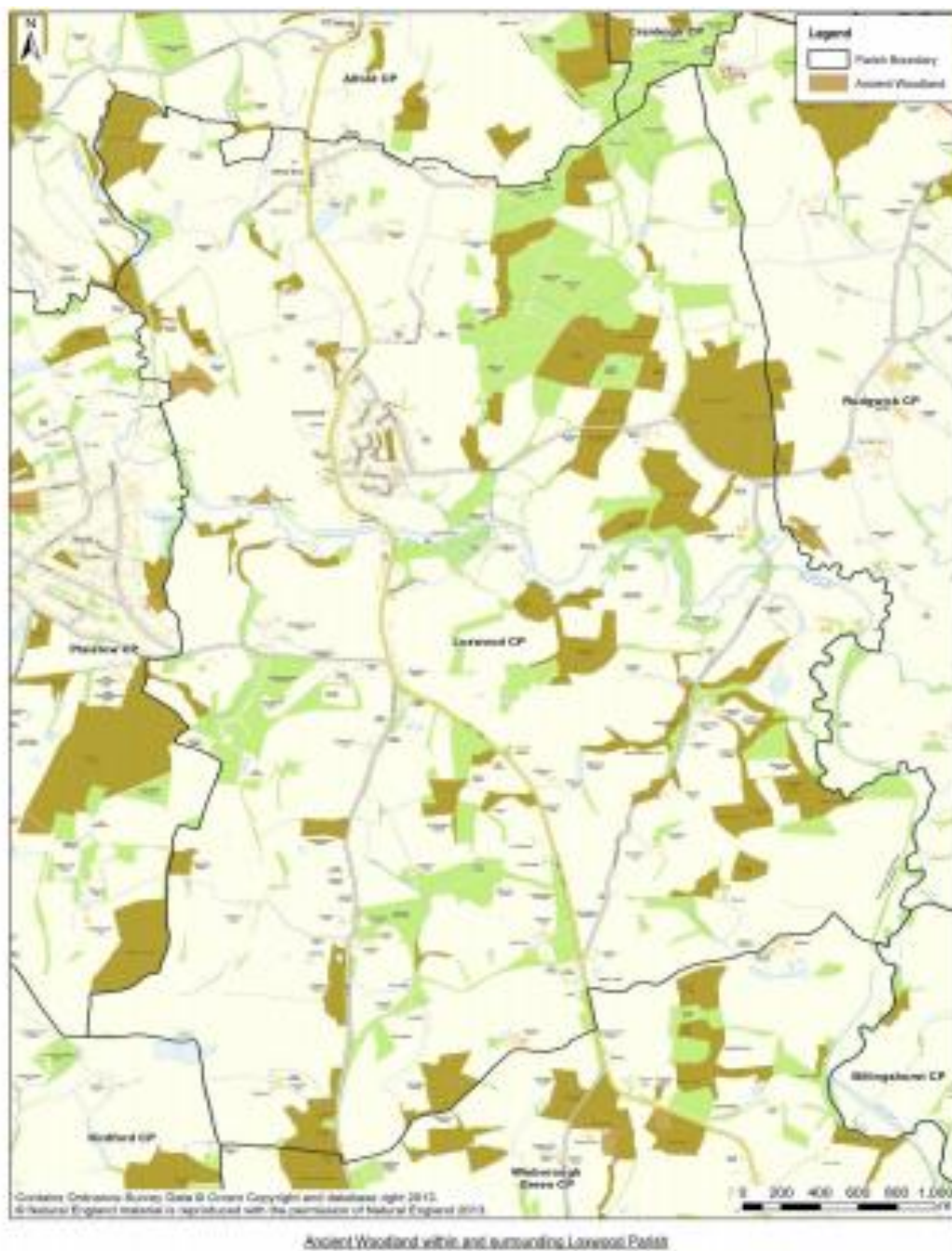
Priority Species

3.58 Large sections of the parish are identified as priority areas for countryside stewardship measures addressing Turtle Dove and Lapwing habitat issues.

Ancient Woodland

3.59 Ancient Woodland is defined by Natural England as having had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD and is an irreplaceable wildlife rich habitat. There is a significant amount of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland as well as Ancient Replanted Woodland scattered around the parish, particularly in the east. This can be seen on Figure 4 below.

Figure 4

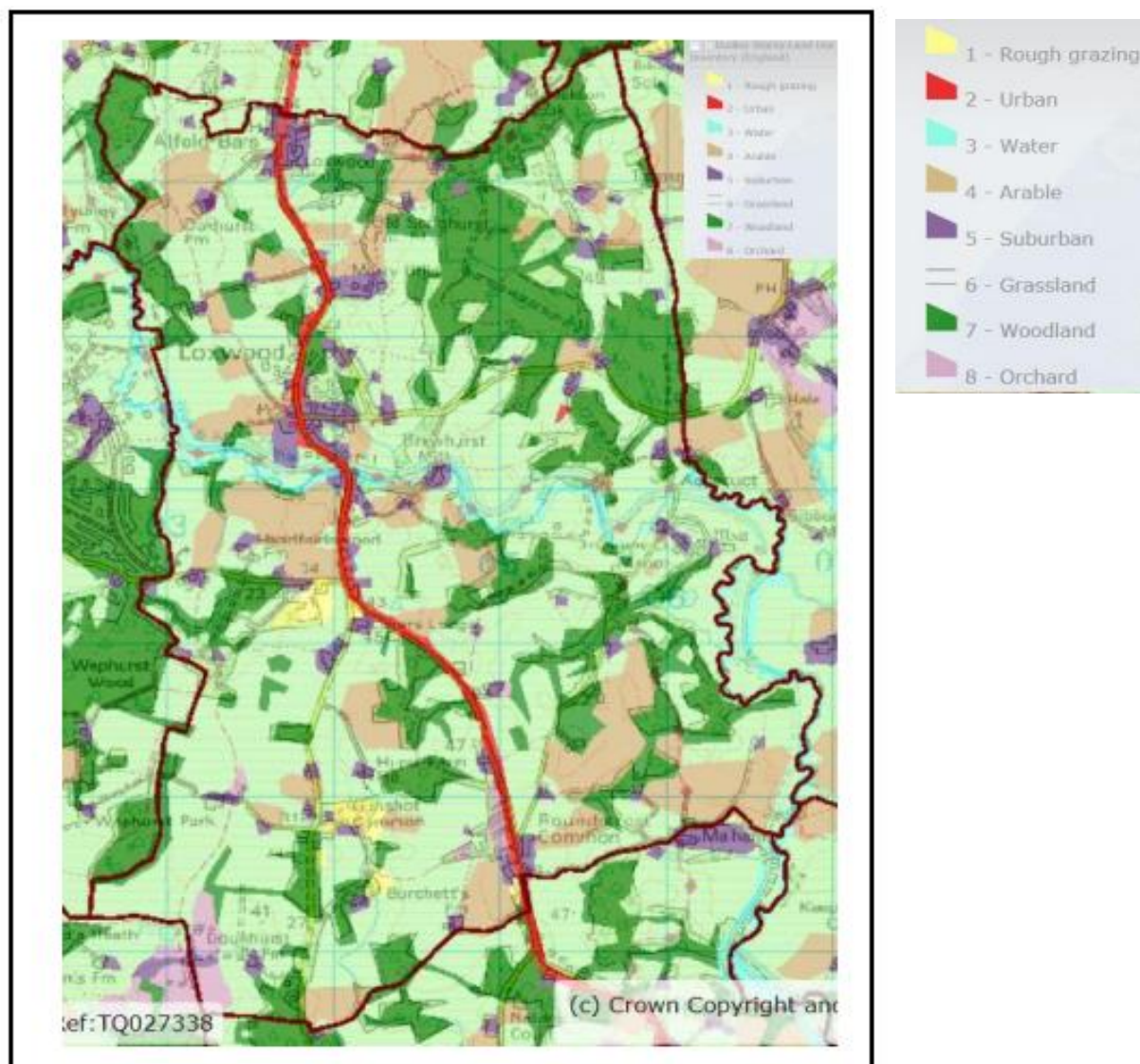


Agricultural Land

- 3.60 Loxwood parish is located in the “Low Weald” and is characterised by a mix of pasture and medium to small-scale arable land. Figure 4 below shows the agricultural land across the parish.

Figure 4

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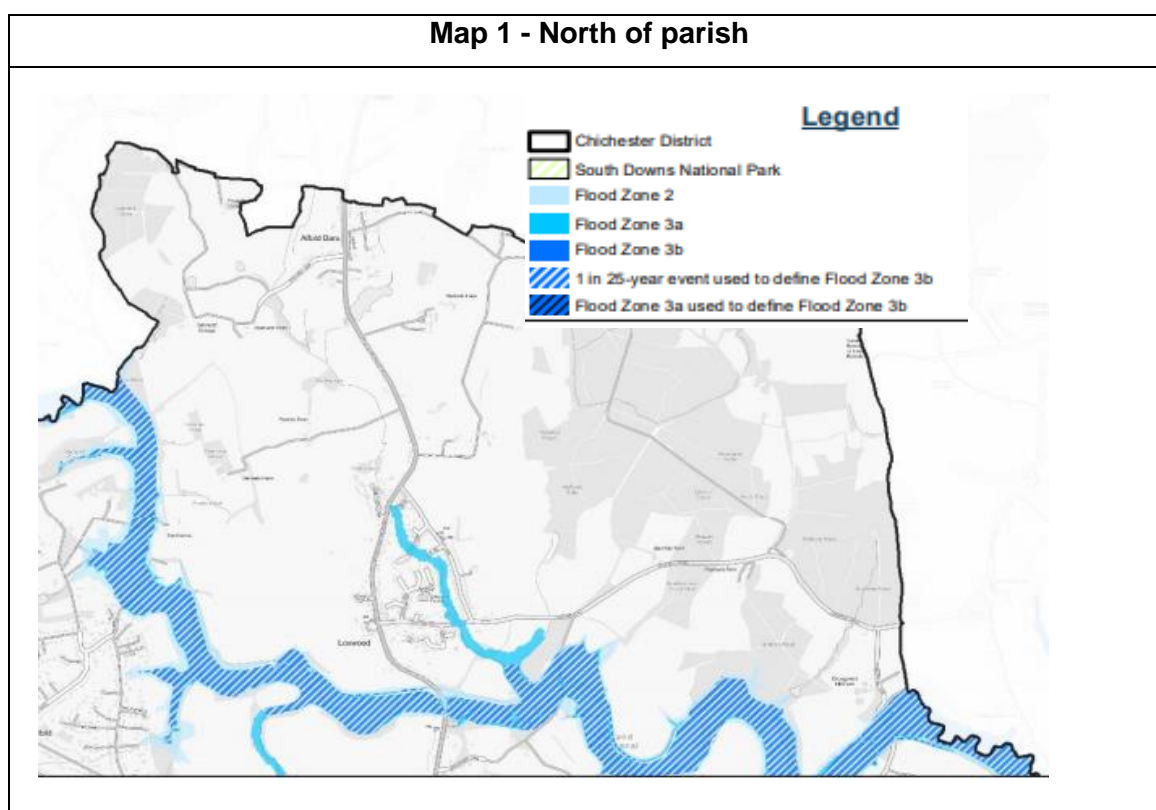
Climate Change and Air Quality

- 3.61 The Government has set a target under the Climate Change Act 2008 to reduce CO₂ emissions by 80% by 2050, with a reduction of at least 26% by 2020, both against a 1990 baseline.
- 3.62 Chichester District has published a Climate Change Strategy (2016 – 2020). The objectives of the strategy are:
- 1) to reduce carbon emissions from domestic housing and households;
 - 2) reduce emissions from CDC's Corporate Energy Use;
 - 3) reduce emissions from Business and Industry;
 - 4) reduce emissions through planning and
 - 5) adapt to a changing climate.

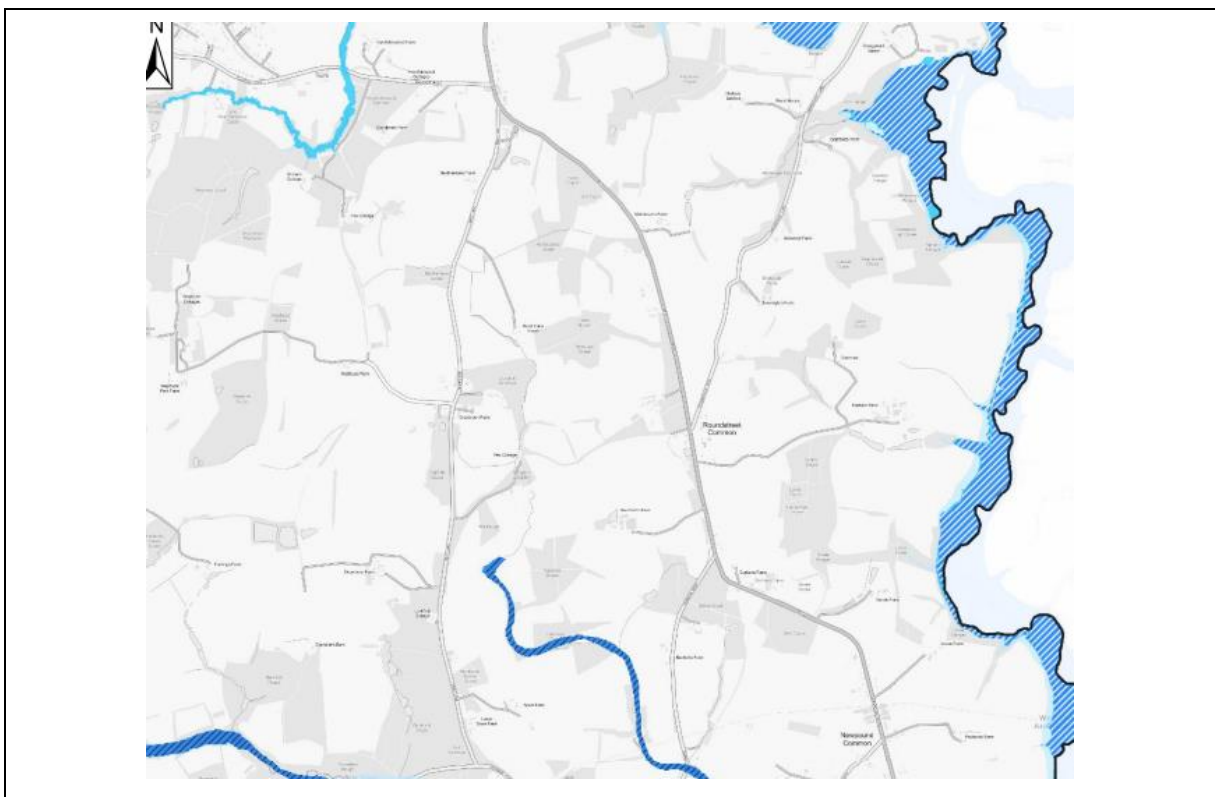
- 3.63 Three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared in Chichester after failing to meet the UK air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide. At the local level, air quality throughout the Parish is generally good and typical for a rural and heavily wooded area in the south of England.

Flood Risk - River (fluvial) Flood Risk

- 3.64 The River Lox runs south of the village in a west to east direction with further tributaries running north through the village. The Wey and Arun Canal runs to the north of the River Lox, south of the village. The River Arun runs along the eastern edge of the parish as identified on Map 2.
- 3.65 A significant amount of the parish is prone to flood risk. This can be seen on Map 1 below which shows that the watercourses that run south of the village (River Lox and Wey and Arun Canal) are identified as Flood Zone 2, Flood zone 3a (land assessed as having a greater than 1 in 100 annual probability of river flooding) and Flood Zone 3b (land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood – functional floodplain) whilst the tributaries running north through the village are Flood Zone 3a.
- 3.66 In the north of the parish, Map 2 shows the areas of Flood Zone 2, 3a and 3b running along the eastern edge of the parish.



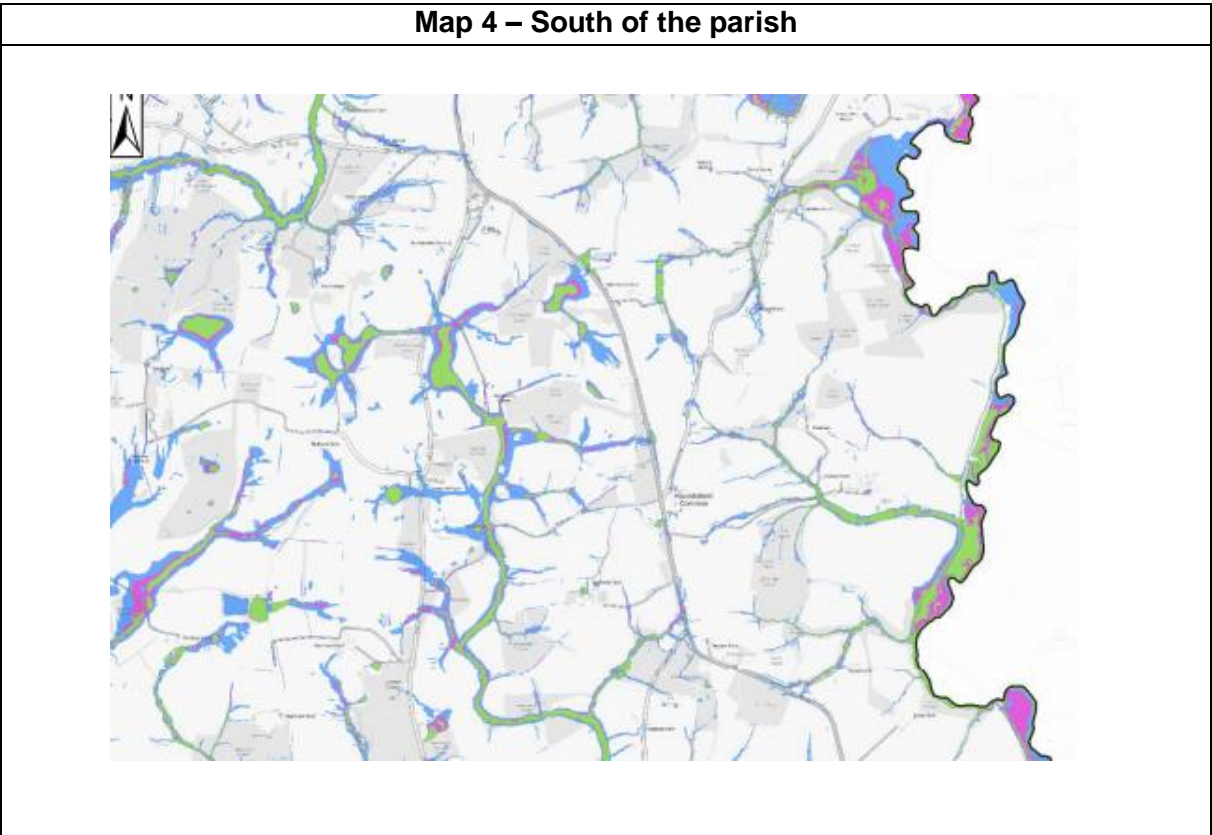
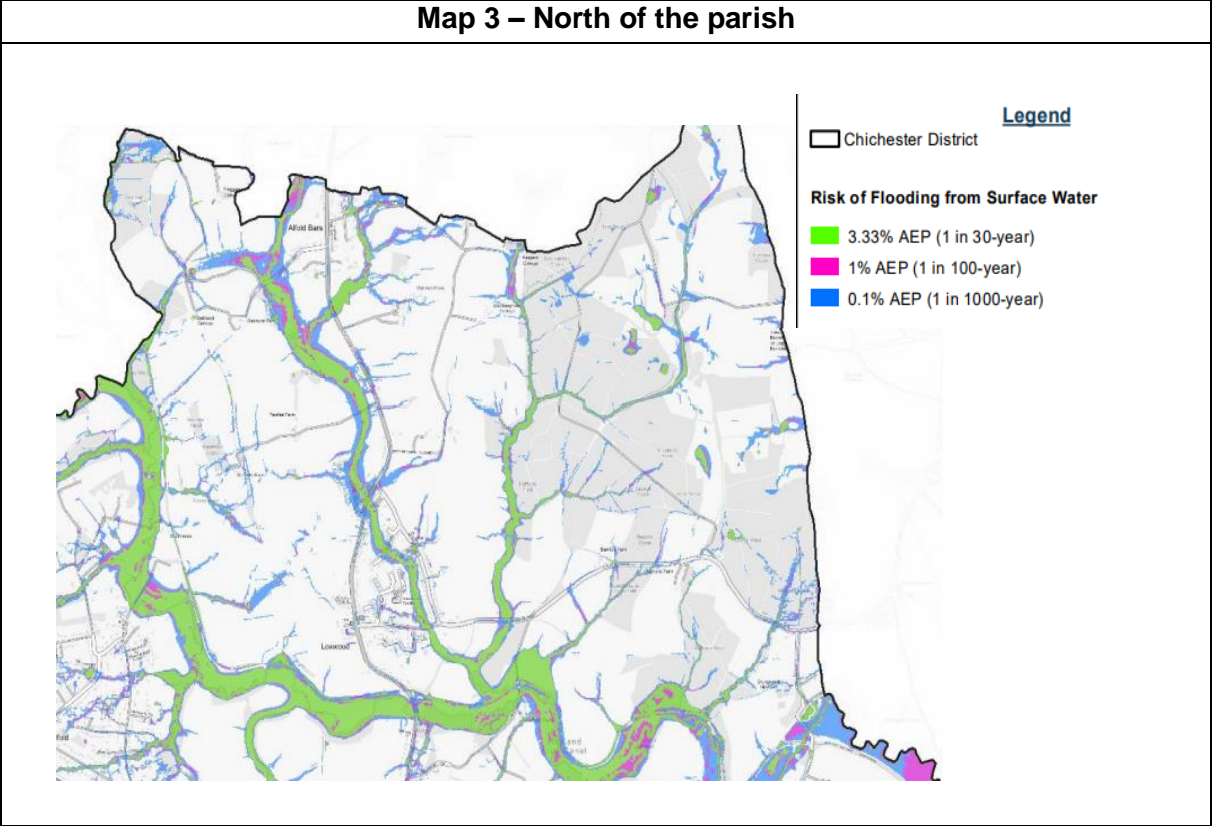
Map 2 - South of parish



- 3.67 Loxwood is protected by fluvial flood defences (in the form of high ground) alongside the River Kird and the Wey and Arun Canal, providing protection at a standard against a 4% AEP event.
- 3.68 Chichester District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies historic flood events in the parish.

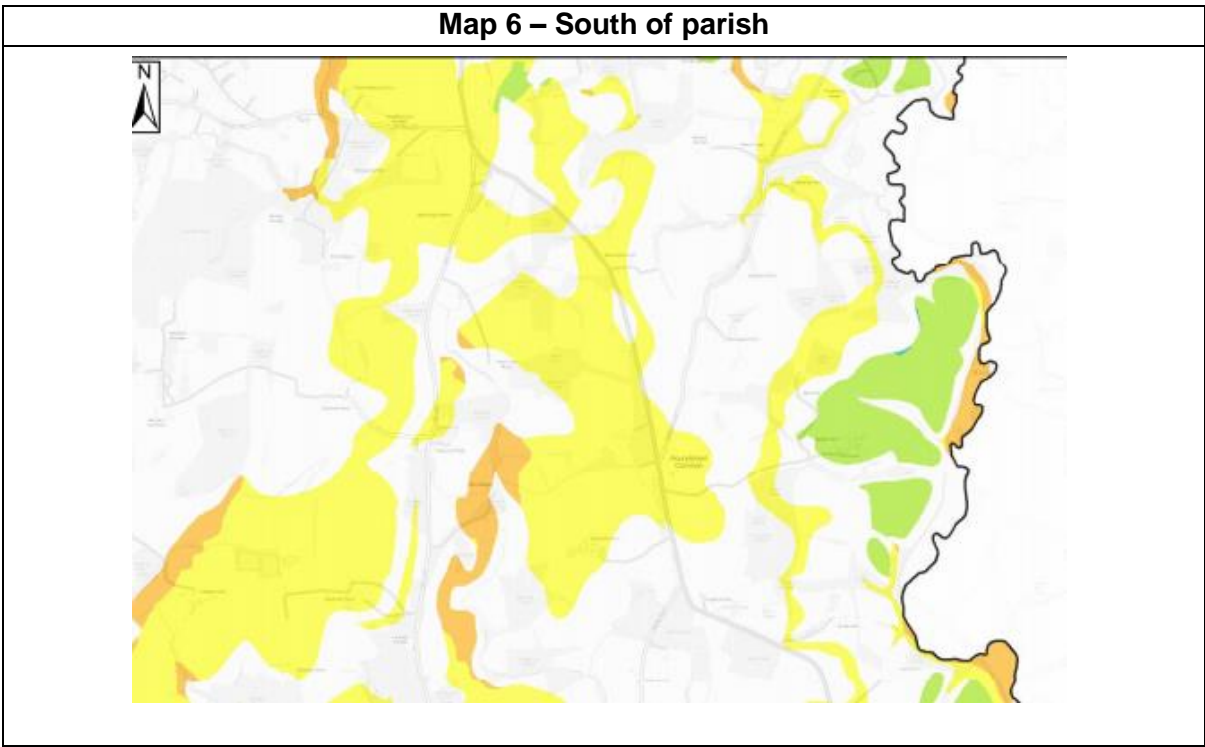
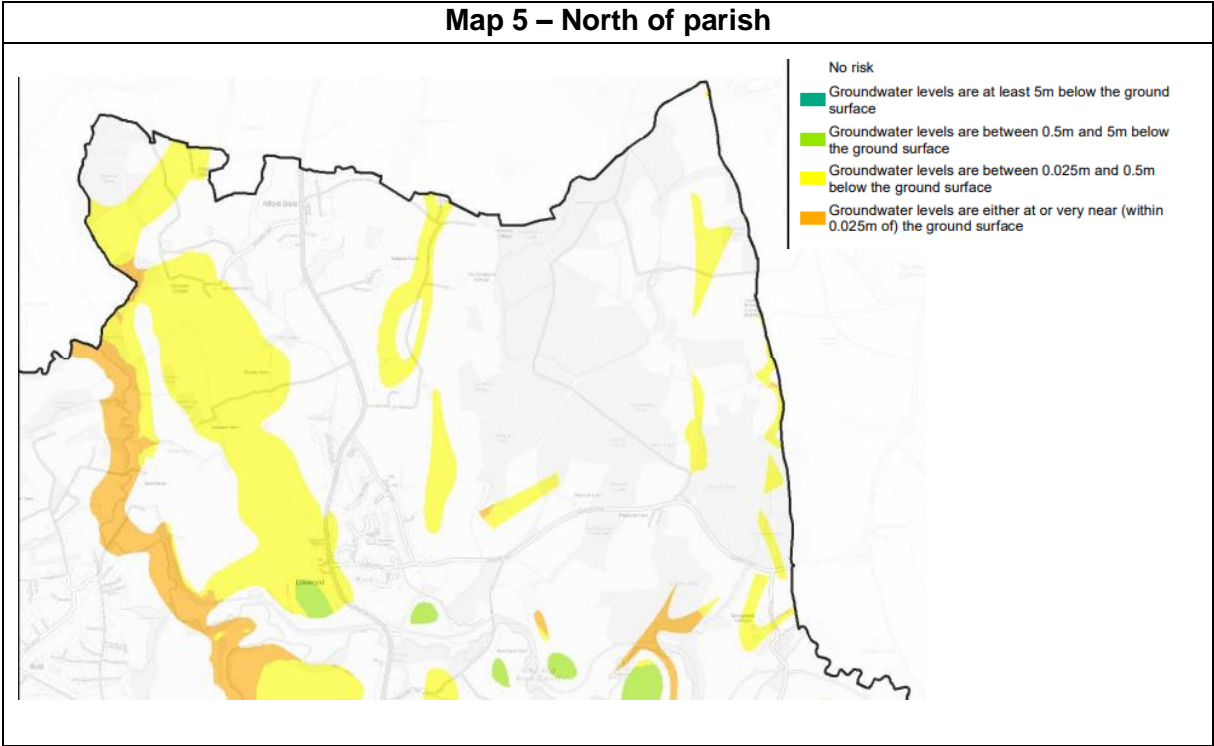
Surface Water Flood Risk

- 3.69 The parish suffers from surface water flood risk and has a number of areas identified as being at moderate or high risk (more susceptible) of such flooding (1 in 30 (~3% AEP) and 1 in 100 (1% AEP) year probability rainfall events), as seen on Map 3 below.



Groundwater Flood Risk

3.70 The flood maps below from Chichester’s SFRA show large parts of the parish are at risk of groundwater flood risk.

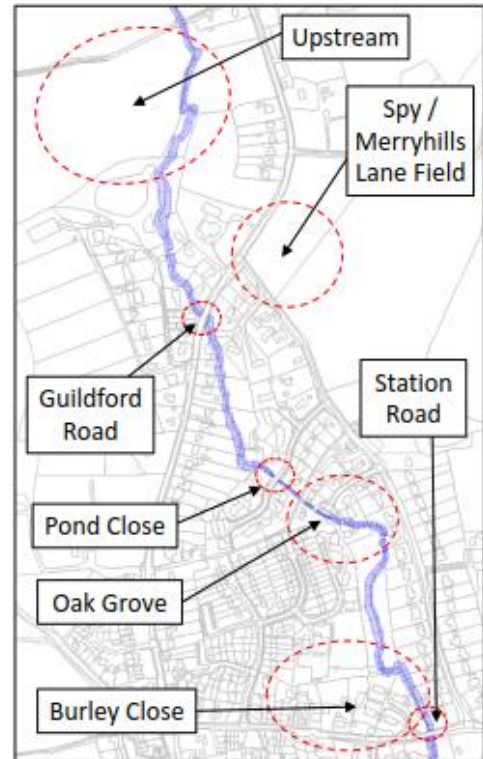


Further Detailed Flood Modelling

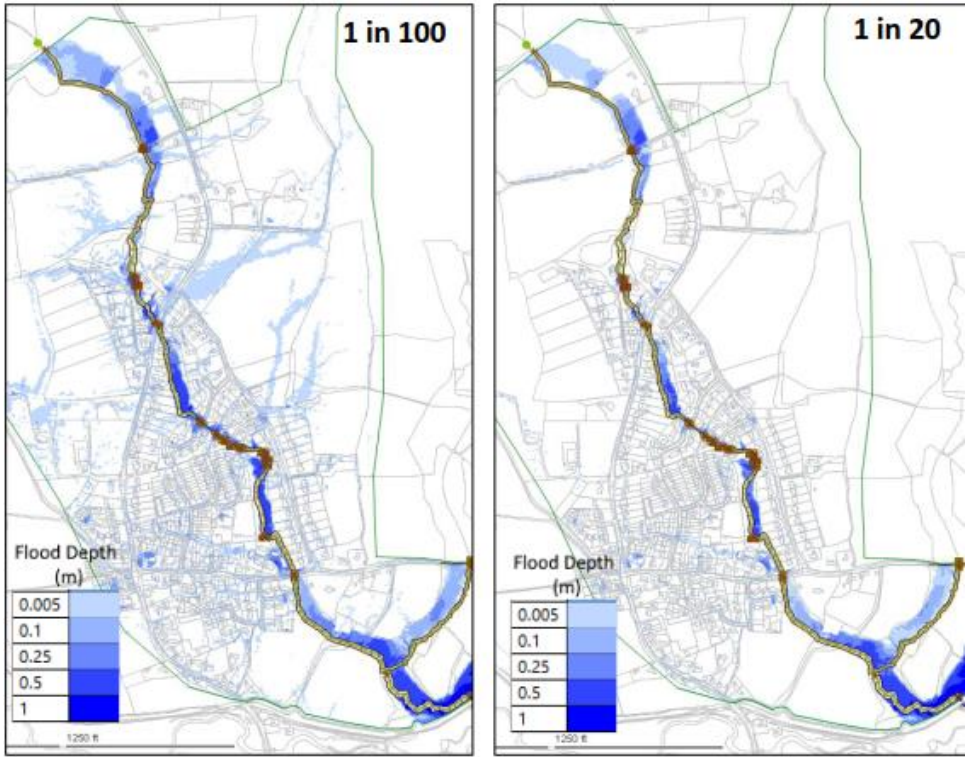
3.71 Further to the above, the village has been subject to repeated flood events in recent years, the worst event being in the winter of 2013 when approximately 17 homes were flooded. In response to these recent events, the Parish Council, in conjunction with West Sussex County Council commissioned detailed hydraulic modelling for the village (Loxwood Flood Alleviation Options Appraisal) which undertook baseline modelling of flood levels as well as 1 in 20 and 1 in 100 flood events. The Report identifies that excess surface water flow routes combining with river flows (Loxwood Stream), particularly affecting the following areas:

- Guildford Road
- Pond Close
- Oak Grove
- Burley Close

3.72 The report identifies various mitigation options (primarily based on 1 in 100 flood event data) to alleviate flood risk and reduce flood levels including upstream alleviation ponds and site-specific downstream mitigation measures including widening of culverts and other flood defences. The report, which is still ongoing, will assess the impact of these options (in isolation and in combination) on flood levels before making overall recommendations on the most effective and viable flood protection measures for the parish.

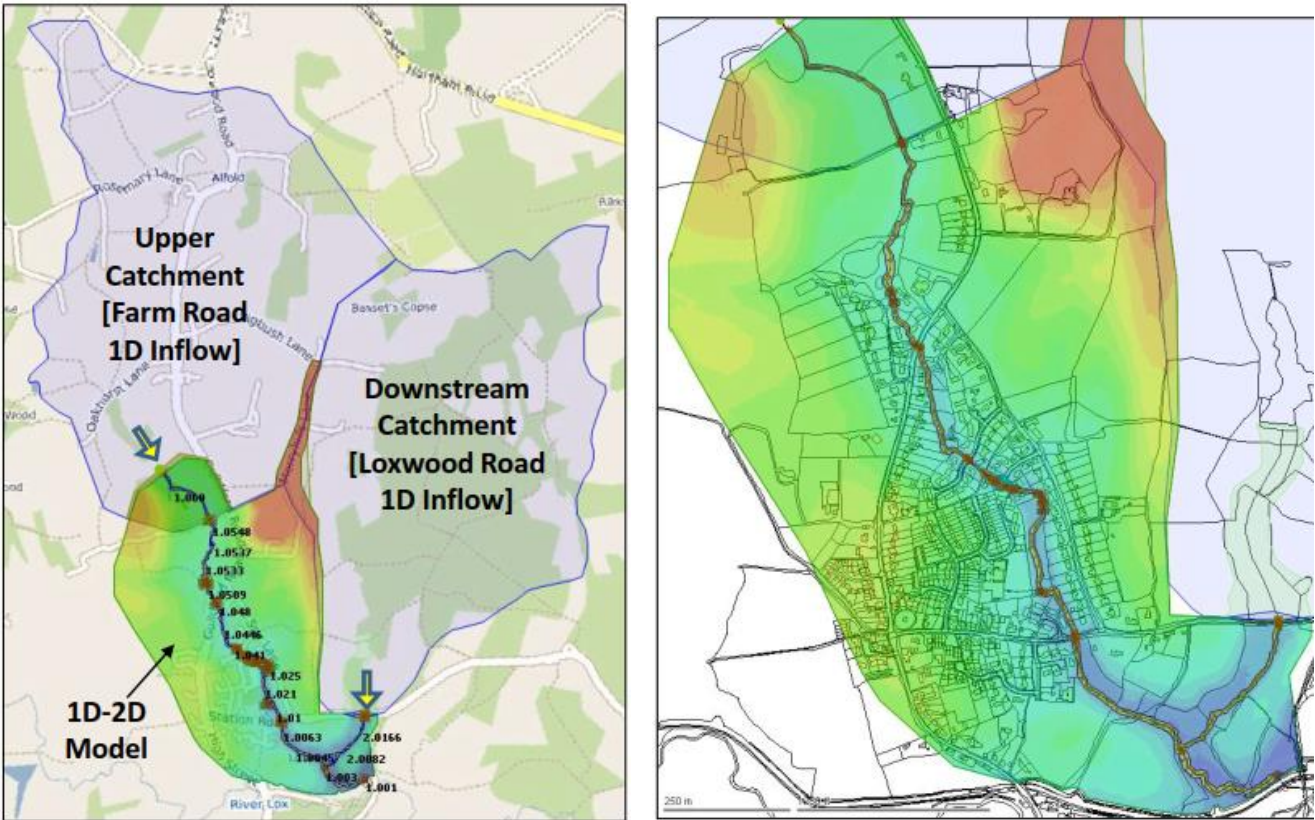


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1 in 100 Flood Levels

1 in 20 Flood Levels



Sewerage

- 3.73 In terms of sewerage, the parish is served by the wastewater network serving Alfold and Loxwood which connects to a terminal wastewater pumping station (WPS) adjacent to Onslow Arms PH, at Loxwood and is then pumped to Loxwood Wastewater Treatment Works (WTW). A second branch of the wastewater network, serving Plaistow and Ifold, connects at Onslow Arms WPS, where there is an EA consented Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO), that discharges excess storm related wastewater into the adjacent River Lox.
- 3.74 Loxwood WTW, which serves Alfold, Loxwood, Plaistow and Ifold, was originally designed for a population equivalent of 3300 in the mid 1960's and significant development within the last 20 years has increased the total catchment population to around 4500 resulting in waste water capacity and administrative/operational issues for the catchment area which is split between Southern Water (Loxwood, Plaistow and Ifold) and Thames Water (Alfold).
- 3.75 Sewers throughout the whole catchment area suffer high levels of *direct surface water inflow* and *infiltration*, particularly during wet winter periods. This is exacerbated by the catchment's soil type, typically Wealden Clay, which when saturated by persistent rainfall, exhibits downward percolation causing external groundwater pressure on joints in drainage pipes and manhole chambers, resulting in *rainfall induced infiltration* into all private and public wastewater systems and it is the dominant factor in causing hydraulic overloading of the Alfold and Loxwood wastewater network.
- 3.76 A number of properties in Loxwood (as well as other areas in the catchment area) have suffered internal flooding as well as sewerage flooding to gardens and sewage backing up and preventing use of downstairs shower/toilet facilities.
- 3.77 To date, the network operator Southern Water has not committed the capital expenditure necessary to alleviate hydraulic overloading of the wastewater network. Further development in the parish (and wider catchment area) is likely to progressively exacerbate overloading of the wastewater network with no guarantee that the Water Companies will provide funding to resolve issues relating to any deterioration in wastewater performance.

Water Stress

- 3.78 The entire South East of England is identified as a water stressed area.

Built Environment

Conservation Areas

- 3.79 There are no conservation areas in the parish.

Listed Buildings

- 3.80 There are 57 no. listed buildings within the parish, a number of which are located on the High Street running through the village.

Other

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- 3.81 There is one Scheduled Ancient Monuments located in the eastern part of the parish (Drungewick Manor moated site). There are no Registered Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens or archaeological notification areas within the parish.

4. Planning Context

- 4.1 Neighbourhood plans are influenced by various higher-level plans, policies and guidance. These various publications have informed the Scoping Report and will also inform the SEA Report.

Localism Act (2011)

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014-)

Chichester Local Plan Key Policies 2014 – 2029

Chichester Site Allocations Plan

Chichester Local Plan Review Preferred Approach 2016 - 2035 (2018)

West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)

Chichester Local Plan Review Landscape Capacity Study - Revised (2019)

Chichester Habitat Regulations Assessment – Local Plan Review (2018)

Chichester Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (2018)

Chichester Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2018)

Chichester Open Space, Sport Facilities, Recreation Study and Playing Pitch Strategy (2018)

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Chichester Playing Pitch Strategy (2018)

Chichester Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2018)

Chichester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2018)

Chichester Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal (2018) and Scoping Report (2017)

Transport Study of Strategic Development Options and Sustainable Transport Measures (2018)

Chichester Water Quality Assessment (2018)

Coastal West Sussex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2018/19)

Chichester Historic Environment Strategy and Action Plan (2017)

Chichester Employment Land Review (2009 & 2013)

West Sussex Transport Plan (2011)

Chichester Local Plan Review Background Papers (2018-19)

Chichester Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012)

Chichester Strategic Growth Study – Waste Water Treatment Options (2010)

Chichester Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2013)

Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018)

West Sussex Transport Plan (2011)

5. Sustainability Issues

5.1 The overview of the parish character identified a number of issues which have informed the preparation of the sustainability framework in Section 6 below. The main issues collected are listed below and are divided up into the three strands of sustainability, social, economic and environmental issues.

Social

- The parish has a healthy but ageing population and meeting the needs of all sectors of the community poses challenges with regard to housing, employment, community facilities and services.
- House prices in the parish are high and the district's high housing affordability ratio poses significant challenges, particularly for first time buyers.
- There is a need to provide affordable homes and housing suitable for smaller households and an ageing population.
- The parish has a high proportion of 1-2 person households and a high proportion of under-occupied homes
- The parish has a high proportion of owner-occupation and a high proportion of large (4+ bedrooms) detached homes. Conversely, the parish has a low proportion of rented accommodation and a low proportion of flats and terraces.
- Public transport provision in the parish is relatively poor and car ownership is high.

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- Some parish services, facilities and infrastructure are under pressure which will increase with any new development (medical and educational facilities, water and sewerage infrastructure)

Economy

- The parish has a small number of local businesses
- The parish has a high proportion of home working
- The parish has a well-educated population with low unemployment

Environment

- The parish has a high-quality natural environment and its valued landscapes, wildlife and habitats, in particular those of biodiversity and nature conservation value, face pressures and threats.
- The parish has a significant number of designated heritage assets and other historic assets which face pressure from new development
- Flooding presents a clear risk to many parts of the parish.
- Waste water capacity and infrastructure constraints
- The parish is located in an identified water stress area.
- The UK and Chichester District Council are required to meet stringent climate change targets and Neighbourhood Plans can make an important contribution in meeting these targets

6. Sustainability Framework

- 6.1 This Sustainability Appraisal seeks to test the contribution that Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan will make towards achieving sustainable development. The first part of this process is to identify sustainability objectives and indicators, presented below in the Sustainability Framework.
- 6.2 These objectives and questions will be used to inform the Neighbourhood Plan by assessing the sustainability impacts of the options considered and policies taken forward in the plan. The objectives are based on the three strands of sustainability - environmental, social and economic. The questions have been chosen to quantify and measure the degree to which each objective has been achieved or will be achieved, although additional considerations and further details have been taken into account where necessary. The Sustainability Framework has emerged through careful appraisal of higher-level plans, the collection of baseline data and local knowledge of sustainability challenges faced in the Parish.

Sustainability Framework

Objective	Questions to consider
<u>Social</u>	
Soc/1. To ensure the delivery of affordable and sustainable homes that meet specified local needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the Neighbourhood Plan improve the availability of affordable housing to meet specified local needs? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan ensure the right type of development is brought forward to meet the needs of all residents, in particular older residents? - Does the Neighbourhood Plan encourage high quality and sustainable development? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan prioritise the use of vacant and previously developed land/brownfield land?
Soc/2. Retain and enhance existing community facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the Neighbourhood Plan retain and enhance the provision of community services and facilities or put further pressure on them? - Will accessibility to new and/or existing facilities be improved? - Can any new development be accommodated by existing infrastructure (such as community facilities, services and other infrastructure)?
Soc/3. Promote walking and cycling and other forms of sustainable transport with the aim of reducing the need to travel by car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the Neighbourhood Plan promote sustainable forms of transport and encourage walking and cycling to shops, facilities and services? - Does the Neighbourhood Plan encourage the linking to/extension of existing access networks? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan benefit the health of the community?
<u>Economic</u>	
Eco/1. Support the growth of the local economy and meet the needs of local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the Neighbourhood Plan support existing shops and businesses? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan align with the long term plans of key businesses in the parish? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan support and provide for new businesses over the plan period?
<u>Environmental</u>	

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Env/1. Ensure the protection, preservation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the Neighbourhood Plan preserve and enhance biodiversity and ensure there are no adverse impacts on locally and nationally important biodiversity designations (SSSIs, SNCIs, LNRs etc)? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan safeguard and ensure there are no adverse impacts on the parish's ancient woodland?
Env/2. Protect the character, qualities and identity of the parish's natural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there likely to be any harmful impacts to the character and/or valued natural landscape of the parish? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan ensure that any landscape impact is minimised and that landscaping mitigation is sympathetic to the existing character of the parish?
Env/3. Protect the character and significance of the parish's heritage assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the Neighbourhood Plan ensure that development respects the historic character of the parish and minimises any detrimental impacts? - Will development impact on designated heritage assets (including listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments)? - Will development impact on locally designated heritage assets?
Env/4. To ensure that development does not increase the risk of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the Neighbourhood Plan reduce the risk of flooding? - Is the site within an area of flood risk? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan ensure removal of surface water by sustainable methods? - Will development of the site / the Neighbourhood Plan improve or exacerbate waste water capacity constraints?
Env/5. To reduce the parish's use of resources and impact on climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the Neighbourhood Plan promote energy efficiency and the use of renewables within the parish? - Will the Neighbourhood Plan encourage a reduction in water consumption?

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 Following consultation with the Consultation Bodies, changes will be made to the information included in this report, including the sustainability objectives and indicators, where appropriate. Following this, a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a SEA) will be prepared to test the various policy and site options being considered through the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. These options will be tested against the sustainability framework to assess the potential impacts and to consider ways of mitigating the potential adverse impacts of these policies and maximising beneficial effects. This process will inform the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan which will subsequently be consulted upon.