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Site Assessment Report

Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan Review

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Site Assessment Report (SAR) has been prepared to support the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan Review (LNPR). Its purpose is to produce a clear and evidence-based assessment as to whether the sites under consideration are appropriate for allocation in the LNPR. This is to ensure that the process is transparent, objective and robust with each site assessed on an equal basis.

1.3 The housing allocation in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan was a minimum of 60 dwellings. The Plan allocated 2 no. sites for housing. Land at Nursery Green (Policy 5) was allocated for 43 homes. This has been completed. Land at Farm Close (Policy 4) was granted planning permission but was not implemented. Other sites have been granted planning permission and/or built out since the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, totalling 112 no. dwellings (Hollyview: 50 dwellings; Woolspinners: 4 dwellings; Guildford Road: 2 dwellings; The Mellow: 5 dwellings; Blackhall: 27 dwellings; Land South of Loxwood Farm Place: 24 dwellings).

1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan Review commenced in 2019 following the publication of the revised Chichester Local Plan which identified a need for additional housing in the village. Work on the review commenced but was then paused while the Local Plan progressed and while issues around water neutrality were resolved. The updated Chichester Local Plan has recently been adopted. It makes provision for 11,484 dwellings over the plan period 2021 to 2039 with Loxwood identified as a 'strategic location' for housing allocated a total of 220 dwellings.

1.5 As the primary purpose of the LNPR was to update the plan to align with the adopted CDC Local Plan housing allocation for the village, a detailed site assessment process took place. Sites were identified through a call for sites process and through the Chichester District Council's Land Availability Assessment. These were assessed against site assessment criteria which take into account a range of social, environmental and economic factors, national and local planning policy and guidance. The assessment comprises a desktop analysis of each site, local knowledge and public consultation feedback. Further details of the site assessment process and methodology is contained in Chapter 4 below.

1.6 The findings of this report have informed the selection of sites in the LNPR.

2. Loxwood

2.1 Loxwood is a rural parish in West Sussex, within Chichester District. The parish is characterised by a compact village settlement set within an attractive countryside setting.

2.2 Loxwood parish lies to the north of the South Downs National Park in a Low Weald landscape. It falls within the following three landscape character areas, as defined in the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2003):

- LW 2 - North Western Low Weald
- LW 3 - Upper Arun Valley
- LW 4 - Low Weald Hill

2.3 It is located within a sensitive rural environment. The Chichester Landscape Capacity Study (2019) identifies three sub areas covering the parish (Sub Area 158 - Loxwood Western Low Weald; Sub Area 159 - Loxwood Eastern Low Weald; and Sub Area 160 - Ifold Eastern Low Weald). It also assesses the sub areas in terms of the capacity for new development. It identifies the area to the east of the village (Sub Area 159) as having 'low' capacity for landscape change, the area to the west (Sub Area 158) as having a 'medium/low' capacity for landscape change and the area to the south west (Sub Area 160) as having a 'low' capacity for landscape change.

2.4 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 (approximately 4.5km from the parish boundary) and The Mens SAC (approximately 1.5km from the parish boundary). The western part of the parish lies within the 6.5km 'Key Conservation Area' for Ebernoe Common where the impact on bat populations must be considered. The remainder of the parish is within the 12km 'Wider Conservation Area' where significant impacts on flight lines of bats need to be considered. The majority of the parish lies within the 6.5km 'Key Conservation Area' for The Mens SAC. The northern tip of the parish lies within the 12km 'Wider Conservation Area'.

2.5 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, approximately 1.5km from the parish boundary, Chiddingfold Forest which spans across Alfold CP, Dunsfold CP and Plaistow CP which is approximately 500m from the parish boundary.

2.6 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

2.7 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

2.8 There are extensive areas of Ancient Woodland within Loxwood, particularly in the east of the parish.

2.9 Loxwood Parish comprises predominantly Grade 3 (moderate quality) and Grade 4 (lower quality) agricultural land. Loxwood parish is located in the "Low Weald" and is characterised by a mix of pasture and medium to small-scale arable land.

2.10 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. A significant amount of the parish, particularly to the south of the village, lies within flood zones. There are also areas at risk of flooding along the eastern edge of the parish. There are also areas at risk of surface water and groundwater flooding.

2.11 There are no Conservation Areas within the parish. There are 58 no. listed buildings within the parish, a number of which are located on the High Street running through the village. There are also a number of non-designated heritage assets.

2.12 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.

2.13 Loxwood is classified as a 'service village' in the CDC Local Plan. The village is relatively well served by shops, services and facilities. It has a primary school, village shop, two churches, medical practice, two pubs, a village hall, sports club and various shops and small businesses, including a butchers, hairdressers and

garage. Public transport services in the village are very limited. There are three bus services that provides infrequent services to nearby towns of Billingshurst and Horsham (Route 64) and Pullborough, Arundel and Worthing (Route 42). There is also a Book-a-Bus service which provides flexible on-demand pick-up and drop-off services. Most residents are reliant on private transportation.

3. Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that the "purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner" (paragraph 7). It continues that, for plan making, this means "all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects" (paragraph 11).

3.2 The NPPF sets out how this relates to neighbourhood plans: "Policies to address non-strategic matters should be included in…neighbourhood plans that contain just non-strategic policies" (paragraph 18). It explains that the purpose of Neighbourhood planning is to give "communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies" (paragraph 30).

3.3 The NPPF sets out its approach to delivering a sufficient supply of homes:

> "To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community" (paragraph 61).

3.4 It then sets out how housing requirements should be calculated:

> "To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice guidance…" (paragraph 62).

3.5 The NPPF explains how housing targets for neighbourhood areas should be calculated:

> "…strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need re-testing at the

neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement" (paragraph 69).

3.6 It also explains that "small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area" (paragraph 73) and that "Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 73a) suitable for housing in their area" (paragraph 74).

3.7 The NPPF also recognises that the supply of homes "can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes)" (paragraph 77).

3.8 The NPPF also recognises that housing is needed in rural areas which "should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services" (paragraph 83).

3.9 Section 8 of the NPPF sets out policies to promote healthy and safe communities, section 9 requires new development to promote sustainable transport, section 11 requires new development to make efficient use of land, while section 12 seeks to ensure that new development is well-designed. Section 14 stresses the importance of meeting the challenges of climate change and flood risk. Sections 15 and 16 look to ensure the natural and built environment are conserved.

Chichester District Local Plan (2025)

3.10 Policy S1: Spatial Development Strategy of the Local Plan sets the spatial strategy for the district. It seeks to disperse development across the district, including "Supporting the villages and rural communities in the North of the Plan Area". It also identified Loxwood as a "strategic development location".

3.11 Policy S2: Settlement Hierarchy sets out the framework for achieving the Local Plan vision and identifies Loxwood as a "service village". It also seeks to direct development to within the district's settlement boundaries.

3.12 Policy NE11: Development in the countryside sees to restrict new development outside the district's settlement boundaries.

3.13 Policy H1: Meeting housing needs sets a housing requirement of "11,484" dwellings over the plan period (2021/22 – 2038-39). This equates to 575 dpa for the years 2021/22 to 2029/30 and 701 dpa for the years 2030/31 to 2038/39.

3.14 Policy H2: Strategic locations / allocations 2021-2039 identifies a housing requirement of “220” for Loxwood to be delivered through the Neighbourhood Plan (minus extant permissions for 5 dwellings or more within the parish since 1 April 2021).

3.15 Policy H4: Affordable housing sets an affordable housing requirement for the “North of the Plan Area” of 40% on greenfield sites, 30% on previously developed land and sets out a tenure split of 25% first homes, 35% social rent, 22% affordable rent and 8% shared ownership.

3.16 Policy H5: Housing requires new development to deliver “an appropriate type and size, consistent with the most up to date HEDNA or a parish local housing need study, to address identified local needs and market demand”.

3.17 Policy A15: Loxwood sets out how the housing target will be delivered in Loxwood through the Neighbourhood Plan and sets various requirements for the development.

3.18 There are other relevant policies to the site assessment process including relating to the natural landscape and environment (Policy NE2, NE3, P14), biodiversity (Policy NE4, NE5, NE6, NE7, NE9), design (Policy P1, P2, P4, P5, P6), historic environment (Policy P9, P10, P11, P12), flood risk (Policy NE16), community infrastructure (Policy P15, P17), employment (Policy E1, E2, E7), transport (Policy T1, T2, T3, T4) and infrastructure (Policy I1).

3.19 The Local Plan evidence base has also been considered as part of the site assessment process.

4. Site Selection Process and Methodology

Site identification

4.1 When work first started on the Revised Neighbourhood Plan in 2019, a "call for sites" was undertaken in December 2019 – January 2020. 10 sites were put forward by Landowners and developers. Chichester District Council's Land Availability Assessment was also reviewed. These sites were assessed using a rigorous assessment procedure. Local residents were then consulted on the sites that had been found suitable through the site assessment process. Those sites that scored best through the site assessment process and were favoured by local residents were put forward through the Neighbourhood Plan which was then subject to a formal consultation and submitted to Chichester District Council for examination. At this point, the Neighbourhood Plan did not proceed any further due to uncertainty over the Chichester Local Plan and water neutrality issues.

4.2 The process started again in 2024. A "call for sites" was undertaken in June - July 2024. A total of 14 sites were put forward. Chichester District Council's Land Availability Assessment was also reviewed. Those sites that passed an initial screening process were again assessed using a rigorous site assessment procedure. Local residents were then consulted on 9 sites that had been found as suitable through the site assessment process. Over 300 responses were received.

4.3 A Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) has also been undertaken which has formed an important part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base. The SA/SEA assessed the 9 sites that had been subject to public consultation and the site assessment process. It also considered different options for meeting the parish housing target, including through a range of smaller sites, through one larger site, or a combination of these options.

4.4 The sites that received the most positive feedback through the public consultation, and which scored best through the site assessment process and SA/SEA, were Loxwood House, Hawthorn Cottage and Land at Loxwood Place. Given the size of the site, Land at Loxwood Place could deliver the parish housing target on its own. It could also deliver various benefits that other sites in isolation were unlikely to be able to deliver, including a significant amount of affordable housing, public open space, employment and community facilities.

Gathering site information

4.5 A site assessment criteria framework (below) was produced to provide a consistent approach to assessing the sites. The framework was based on the Government's

Planning Practice Guidance (Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment[1]) and Neighbourhood Planning[2]) and Locality's Neighbourhood Planning Site Assessment Toolkit[3]. These all follow an approach of assessing sites for development based on whether the site is suitable, available, and achievable.

Site assessment criteria framework
Site Location
Size of site (hectares)
No of dwellings proposed by promoter
Potential number of dwellings
Is the site available, i.e. is the landowner willing to release the site?
Deliverability - are there any legal or ownership problems such as unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners?
Context
Development uses proposed
Current and previous uses
Relevant recent planning history
Surrounding land uses
Proximity to existing urban area
Is the size of the site and the scale of development proposed large enough to significantly change the size and character of the existing settlement?
Would development of the site significantly increase the likelihood of neighbouring settlements merging into one another?
Site boundary - existing screening where site borders open countryside
Landscape sensitivity - low/medium/high
Housing
Able to accommodate affordable housing (40% on greenfield sites/30% on PDL sites - 10+ dwellings)

[1] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment
[2] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2
[3] https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/

Able to provide a range of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet local needs
Community Facilities and Access to Services
Loss / gain of community/recreation/cultural facilities
Opportunity to provide open space/ recreation/ community facilities
Proximity and accessibility of facilities - Primary School
Proximity and accessibility of facilities – Shops
Proximity and accessibility of facilities - Health centre
Biodiversity
Tree Preservation Order (within site/on boundary)
Ancient woodland
Impact on biodiversity sites and protected species
Heritage
Proximity to Listed Buildings
Archaeological Areas
Transport
Access to highway
Site potential to generate significant additional traffic/congestion
Pedestrian access
Public rights of way (PROW) present
Flooding
Within Flood zone 1, 2 or 3
Surface water flooding issues
Other sources of flood risk
Environmental Quality
Agricultural land classification
Deliverability

Is the site subject to any abnormal costs that could affect viability, such as demolition, land remediation or relocating utilities
Appraisal framework:
Red: Significant detrimental impact likely, e.g. directly affects Listed Building with no mitigation.
Pink: Some detrimental impact likely
Amber: Possible detrimental impact, e.g. adjacent to Listed Building, or unlikely to contribute positively towards achieving NP objective
Light green: Some positive impact likely or some positive contribution towards achieving NP objective.
Dark green: Significant positive impact likely.
White: No issue/neutral impact

4.3 The site assessment process included a desktop assessment as well as site surveys to understand the site context and the impact of development on the village and surrounding countryside.

4.4 The sites are assessed on the basis of the number of units put forward by the site promoter and a theoretical number of units based on an expected density of 25-35 dwellings per hectare. The Chichester District Local Plan does not set density target for new development but a density of 25-35 dph is considered appropriate given the village context and the density of recent developments. This has been used to allow a consistent approach to site assessment process. It does not indicate the number of units that the site could accommodate if allocated for development. Consideration has also been given as to whether there are any site constraints that would impact on the number of units a site could accommodate.

4.5 For each criteria a rating is given which gives an indication of its suitability. An overall rating is given for each site which indicates whether the site is suitable, available and achievable.

- Red: Significant detrimental impact likely, e.g. directly affects Listed Building with no mitigation.
- Pink: Some detrimental impact likely
- Amber: Possible detrimental impact, e.g. adjacent to Listed Building, or unlikely to contribute positively towards achieving NP objective
- Light green: Some positive impact likely or some positive contribution towards achieving NP objective.
- Dark green: Significant positive impact likely.

- White: No issue/neutral impact

4.6 The full and detailed site assessments are provided in Appendix 2. A summary is provided in the next chapter.

5. Public consultation

5.1 As explained above, a total of 13 sites were identified through the call for sites. Three were screened out with the remaining nine sites presented to Loxwood Residents for consultation on their preferences for development sites.

5.2 Two public meetings were held in North Hall in January 2024 where the various sites were presented to the village residents – about 80 attended each meeting. A questionnaire was sent to all Loxwood Parish residents, a total of about 660, requesting feedback on residents development sites preferences.

5.3 Residents were asked to rank the 9 sites under consideration. They were asked to enter '1' for their first choice down to '9' for their least preferred site. The number of residents choosing each site as first choice is shown in the table below in the column headed '1'. With second choices in column '2' and so on down to ninth in column '9'. Some residents returned rankings for less than all nine (i.e. 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices only) and these 'null' returns are included in the column headed '10'. Overall 308 questionnaires were returned.

5.4 To score the results nine points were allocated to each first choice down to one point for the ninth choice and zero where no preference was made. This gives the score for each site. The table below summarises the results.

	Site	Homes	Score	Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	Headfoldswood Farm	>188	1639	**3**	125	7	19	11	13	8	12	19	88	6
B	Loxwood House	35	2049	**2**	30	124	62	24	11	22	9	16	7	3
C	Hawthorn Cottage	19	2050	**1**	64	62	82	30	19	14	16	7	11	3
D	The Wharf	20	1237	**7**	3	12	19	55	58	36	30	47	33	15
E	Little Farm	35	1498	**4**	8	30	49	63	33	33	21	43	19	9
F	NE of Mellow	8	1444	**5**	17	9	36	46	65	49	36	24	14	12
G	S of Loxwood Road Nth	20	1249	**6**	14	19	18	15	47	53	70	38	22	12
H	S of Loxwood Road Sth	55	1145	**8**	15	23	12	21	20	43	61	61	39	13
I	Pawlies Farm	40	1088	**9**	27	17	4	27	27	31	33	32	97	13

5.5 Site B (Loxwood House), Site C (Hawthorn Cottage) and Site A (Headfoldswood Farm) were the most preferred sites.

5.6 An alternative view of the responses is to only consider first, second and third choices. This was not how the assessment was intended but it does clarify which sites residents prefer.

	First three only													
	Site	**Homes**	**Score**	**Rank**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
A	Headfoldswood Farm	>188	**408**	**1**	125	7	19	11	13	8	12	19	88	6
B	Loxwood House	35	**400**	**2**	30	124	62	24	11	22	9	16	7	3
C	Hawthorn Cottage	19	**398**	**3**	64	62	82	30	19	14	16	7	11	3
D	The Wharf	20	**52**	**9**	3	12	19	55	58	36	30	47	33	15
E	Little Farm	35	**133**	**4**	8	30	49	63	33	33	21	43	19	9
F	NE of Mellow	8	**105**	**6**	17	9	36	46	65	49	36	24	14	12
G	S of Loxwood Road Nth	20	**98**	**8**	14	19	18	15	47	53	70	38	22	12
H	S of Loxwood Road Sth	55	**103**	**7**	15	23	12	21	20	43	61	61	39	13
I	Pawlies Farm	40	**119**	**5**	27	17	4	27	27	31	33	32	97	13

6. Site Assessment

6.1 The sites identified through the call for sites and initially screened out can be seen in the table below. A map of these sites can be found in Appendix 1.

Site ref	Site name	Source
Site 1	Brewhurst Field 1	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX0807A)
Site 2	Brewhurst Field 2	Call for sites
Site 3	Land off Brewhurst Lane	Call for sites
Site 4	The Wharf	Call for sites
Site 5	Land at Headfoldswood Farm (Loxwood Place)	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX0016)
Site 6	Loxwood House	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX004)
Site 7	Hawthorn Cottage	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX003)
Site 8	Land at Little Farm	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX003a)
Site 9	Pawlies Farm	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX003a)
Site 10a	Land North East of Mellow	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX006)
Site 10b	Land North East of Mellow - Extended	Call for sites HELAA (Ref: HLX006)
Site 11	Land South of Loxwood Road - North	Call for sites
Site 12	Land South of Loxwood Road - South	Call for sites
Site 13	Plot Opposite Loxwood Hall	Call for sites

6.1 Four of the sites (Site 1: Brewhurst Field 1; Site 2: Brewhurst Field 2; Site 3: Land off Brewhurst Lane; and Site 13: Plot Opposite Loxwood Hall) were filtered out due to their remoteness from the village settlement boundary. The remainder of the sites have been assessed against the site assessment criteria framework. A summary of each site is set out below.

Site 4 - The Wharf

6.2 The site is being proposed for 21 dwellings, and so could deliver some affordable housing. It is a greenfield site currently in use as a paddock/equestrian land. The site is adjacent to the village settlement boundary. There is some screening to the site but is within an area identified as having 'medium-low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and would be visible from public rights of way. It is close to some village services. There are some constraints to development including TPOs, listed buildings and some flood risk to the south of the site but these could likely be mitigated. Safe pedestrian and vehicle access would need to be achieved.

Suitability - the site is potentially suitable for development.
Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 5 - Land at Headfoldswood Farm (Loxwood Place)

6.3 The site is being proposed for 220 dwellings, community uses, public open space and a nursery (previously an autism supported living centre was proposed but the developer has since confirmed a nursery). There is currently an outline planning application under consideration for 223 dwellings (25/01686/OUT). It is a greenfield site currently in agricultural use. The site is partly adjacent to the village settlement boundary. It is a large site (57ha) that will have a significant impact on the character of the village, although development is contained to the east adjacent to the village and new developments/developments currently under construction. It is within an area identified as having 'medium-low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and would be visible from public rights of way but would be well screened to the south west and new development to the east. The site could deliver a significant amount of affordable housing, public open space, community facilities, allotments, play space, improvements to the bridleway and significant amounts of BNG. It is well-related to the village and close to some village services. There are some constraints to development including ancient woodland to the south and some flood risk but these could likely be mitigated. Given the scale of the site, there is significant potential to create significant additional traffic and congestion which would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority.

6.4 This site scored well through the public consultation.

Suitability - the site is significant in scale and so will have a significant impact on the village character and potentially on the local highway network. Nonetheless, it will deliver significant affordable housing, infrastructure, public open space and

community facilities that outweigh the potential harm. It is potentially suitable for development, subject to mitigation. This site scored well through the public consultation.
Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 6 – Loxwood House

6.4 The site is being proposed for 35-40 dwellings, and so could deliver some affordable housing. It comprises a residential plot and surrounding nursery. The site is adjacent to the village settlement boundary. It is within an area identified as having 'medium-low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and would be visible from public rights of way. However, the site is screened by boundary trees and planting and well-connected to the village built up area. It is close to some village services. There are few constraints to development other than existing trees and habitats on the site. There is an existing access to Nursery Green, although this is through an existing 'parking court' where children frequently play with no pavement in front of the houses.

Suitability - the site is suitable for development. This site scored well through the public consultation.
Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 7 – Hawthorn Cottage

6.5 The site is being proposed for 19 dwellings, and so could deliver some affordable housing. Having said that, recent planning applications at the site have not proposed any on-site affordable housing. It comprises a residential plot and surrounding stables and paddock. The site is adjacent to the village settlement boundary. It is within an area identified as having 'medium-low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and would be visible from public rights of way. However, the site is enclosed by existing development and boundary trees and planting. It is close to some village services. There are few constraints to development other than existing trees and habitats on the site (the site has a known bat corridor). There is an existing access to Guildford Road.

Suitability - the site is suitable for development. This site scored well through the public consultation.

Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 8 – Land at Little Farm

6.6 The site is being proposed for 35 dwellings, and so could deliver some affordable housing. It comprises agricultural land. The site is adjacent to the village settlement boundary. It is within an area identified as having 'medium-low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and is visible from public rights of way. However, the site is enclosed by existing development to the south and east and boundary trees and planting, particularly to the east and north. The site is at the northern end of the village and so is not within easy walking distance of some key village services. There are a number of TPOs within the centre of the site that would constrain development and there is some flood risk which would need to be mitigated. Access to the highway is not thought to be an issue.

Suitability - the site is relatively poorly located in comparison to other sites and there are some constraints that would need to be mitigated.
Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 9 – Pawlies Farm

6.7 The site is being proposed for 40 dwellings, and so could deliver some affordable housing. It comprises agricultural land. The site is disconnected from the village built form and the settlement boundary. It is within an area identified as having 'medium-low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and is visible from public rights of way. The site is exposed and open to the west and north with no landscape screening. The site is at the northern end of the village and so is not within easy walking distance of some key village services. There is ancient woodland to the south that would constrain development and push development further from the village. There are also nearby listed buildings and some areas of flood risk that could constrain development or would need to be mitigated. Access to the highway is unknown and it would need to be demonstrated that safe access could be achieved. not thought to be an issue.

Suitability - the site is sensitively located in the landscape and poorly related to the village. Not suitable for development.
Availability – available

Achievability - achievable.

Site 10a – Land North East of Mellow

6.8 The site is being proposed for 5 dwellings, and so would not deliver affordable housing. The site is adjacent to the village settlement boundary and surrounded by development. It is within an area identified as having 'low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study but is enclosed by development and boundary trees and planting. It is close to some village services. The site is near to listed buildings and there are trees on the boundary of the site which could constrain development and would need to be mitigated. Access is thought to be achievable.

Suitability - the site is suitable for development.
Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 10b - Land North East of Mellow (Extended)

6.9 The site is being proposed for 8 dwellings, and so would not deliver affordable housing. The site is adjacent to the village settlement boundary and surrounded by development. It is within an area identified as having 'low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study but is enclosed by development and boundary trees and planting. It is close to some village services. The site is near to listed buildings and there are trees on the boundary of the site which could constrain development and would need to be mitigated. Access is thought to be achievable.

Suitability - the site is suitable for development.
Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 11 – Land South of Loxwood Road (North)

6.10 The site is being proposed for 15 dwellings (although could deliver more), and so could deliver some affordable housing. It comprises open pasture land. The site is disconnected from the village built form and the settlement boundary. It is open countryside within an area identified as having 'low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and would be visible from public rights of way. The site is screened to the east, south and west but is more exposed to the open countryside to the north. The site is relatively isolated from the village but there are

some village services within walking distance. There are nearby listed buildings which may constrain development and require mitigation. The southern and eastern parts of the site are within Flood Zone 2 and 3a and suffer from surface water flood risk. It is not known whether safe access could be achieved from Loxwood Road.

Suitability - the site is sensitively located in the landscape and relatively isolated from the village. Site is subject to flood risk. Not suitable for development.
Availability – available
Achievability - achievable.

Site 12 – Land South of Loxwood Road (South)

6.11 The site is being proposed for 51 dwellings and so could deliver affordable housing. It comprises open pasture land. The site is disconnected from the village built form and the settlement boundary. It is open countryside within an area identified as having 'low' capacity for change in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study and would be visible from public rights of way. The site is screened to the east, north and west with the canal to the south. The site is relatively isolated from the village and some concerns over whether convenient pedestrian access to the village can be achieved. There are nearby listed buildings which may constrain development and require mitigation. Parts of the site are within Flood Zone 2 and 3a and large parts suffer from surface water flood risk. Not known if access is achievable.

Suitability - the site is sensitively located in the landscape and relatively isolated from the village. Site is subject to flood risk. Not suitable for development.
Availability – available
Achievability – not known if access is achievable.

7. Summary and conclusions

7.1 This Site Assessment Report has considered the potential of a number of sites for the allocation of housing in the Neighbourhood Plan Review. These sites have been assessed against a site assessment criteria framework. Consideration has also been given to feedback from public consultation and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

7.2 The assessment finds that the following sites are potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.

- Site 4 - The Wharf
- Site 5 - Land at Headfoldswood Farm (Loxwood Place)
- Site 6 – Loxwood House
- Site 7 – Hawthorn Cottage
- Site 10a – Land North East of Mellow
- Site 10b - Land North East of Mellow (Extended)

7.2 As set out in Chapter 3, the Chichester District Local Plan (Policy H2) establishes a requirement for 220 new dwellings within the parish. Policy A15 confirms this target and clarifies that extant permissions for sites of five or more dwellings granted since 1 April 2021 contribute towards this requirement. Since that date, planning permission has been granted for 32 dwellings, all of which have been completed. This results in a residual requirement of 188 dwellings. While national and local planning policy emphasises that housing requirements should not be treated as ceilings, the scale of the residual requirement remains an important consideration in the site selection process.

7.3 The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has appraised the social, economic and environmental effects of alternative approaches to meeting this requirement. It identifies that, whilst the allocation of a number of smaller sites may help to disperse development and limit localised impacts, a single strategic allocation has the potential to deliver greater social and economic benefits, albeit with a higher risk of environmental effects if not appropriately mitigated.

7.4 In reaching its conclusion, the Steering Group has had regard to the findings of the SEA alongside evidence from the call for sites process and feedback from the local community. Having balanced these considerations, it has concluded that the allocation of a single site represents the most appropriate strategy to meet the parish's housing requirement. The site identified for allocation is Land at Loxwood Place.

7.5 The option of allocating a number of smaller sites, including some that were best received through the public consultation (Site 6 – Loxwood House & Site 7 – Hawthorn Cottage) would offer some advantages, including the dispersal of development

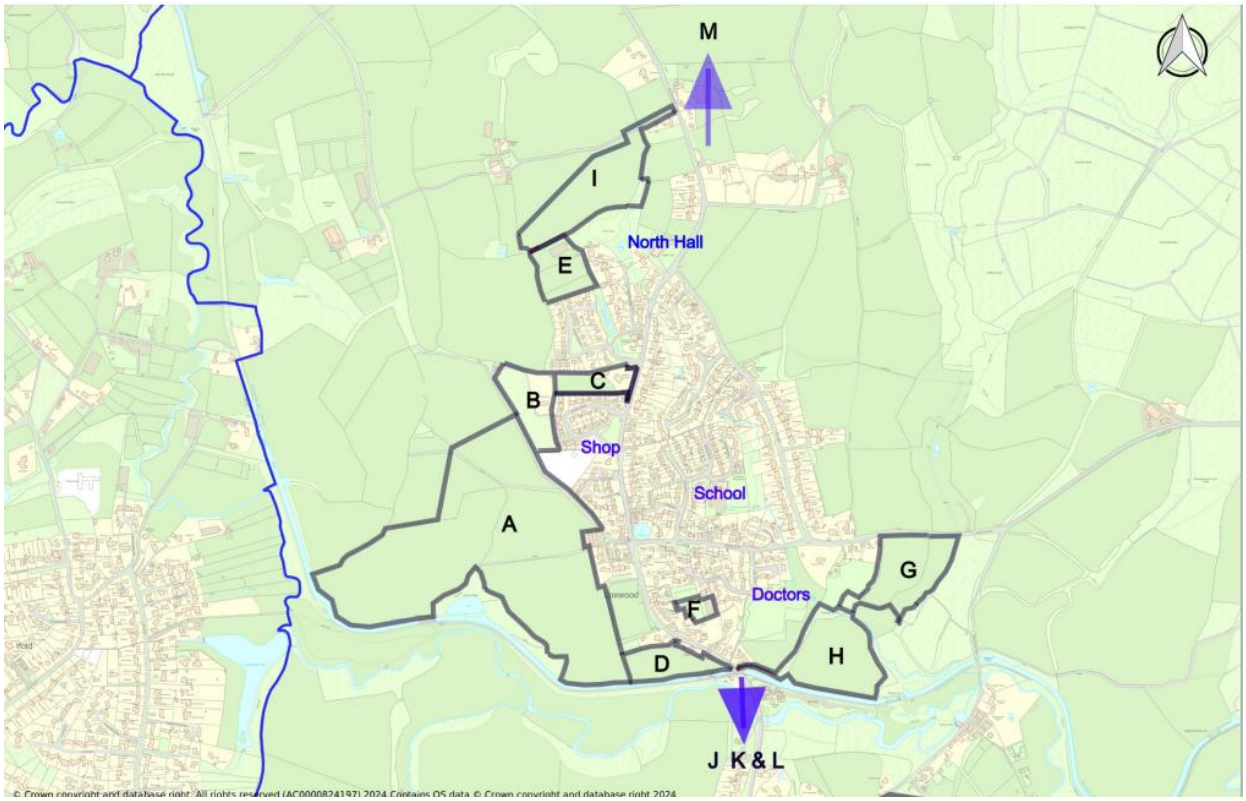
including on sites that are well contained within the existing village envelope (such as Hawthorn Cottage etc). However, such sites are typically limited in their ability to deliver policy-compliant levels of affordable housing, as well as new employment opportunities and community infrastructure. Furthermore, the pool of suitable smaller sites, based on their estimated capacity, would not be sufficient to meet the residual housing requirement without reliance on Land at Loxwood Place or the inclusion of non-suitable sites or sites that did not score well through the public consultation.

7.6 It is also a material consideration that a planning application for approximately 188 dwellings at Land at Loxwood Place is currently under consideration. Should permission be granted, as anticipated, then the number of units delivered at the site would significantly exceed the number required to meet the remaining housing target, albeit it is recognised that this would provide flexibility and further contribute to the overall housing supply in the parish.

7.7 The Steering Group recognises that the allocation of a strategic site raises concerns, particularly in relation to the impact on the village's rural character and has the potential to create significant additional traffic and congestion but this is equally true whether the required level of housing is delivered on one site or a number of smaller sites around the village. However, it is considered that these impacts can be appropriately mitigated through the requirements set out in the Neighbourhood Plan, including comprehensive landscape proposals, the delivery of measurable biodiversity net gain, highway improvements, and investment in sustainable transport measures.

7.8 Importantly, a site of this scale provides the opportunity to secure significant benefits that would not be achievable through smaller-scale development. These include the delivery of a substantial proportion of affordable housing, as well as new employment opportunities, community facilities and publicly accessible open space. These benefits weigh significantly in favour of the chosen strategy and underpin the allocation of Land at Loxwood Place as the most appropriate means of meeting the parish's housing requirement.

Appendix 1 – Map of Sites



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Appendix 2 – Site Assessment Spreadsheet