3.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Natural Environment)

Key sustainability issues (natural environment) are:

- Protecting and enhancing the nationally important habitats and species associated with Chiddingfold Forest SSSI and avoiding adverse indirect effects from development.
- Conserving and enhancing the landscape character, tranquillity and scenic quality of the Surrey Hills National Landscape and its setting.
- Protecting and restoring Habitats of Principal Importance, including ancient woodland, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses, and maintaining ecological connectivity across the parish.
- Conserving veteran and ancient trees and protecting irreplaceable habitats from direct and indirect impacts.
- Supporting biodiversity recovery through habitat enhancement, biodiversity net gain and strengthened green and blue infrastructure networks.
- Managing recreational pressure and cumulative effects on designated sites and sensitive habitats arising from new development.
- Protecting the character of the rural landscape while accommodating planned growth, including development associated with Dunsfold Park[21].

[21] Dunsfold Park Garden Village: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village

3.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Natural Environment)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Enhance the natural environment and biodiversity and protect landscapes, habitats and ecology.	Protect/enhance nationally designated landscapes? Protect/enhance locally designated landscapes? Protect/enhance landscape character and key landscape features? Protect/enhance priority habitats and species? Protect and enhance biodiversity and contribute to biodiversity net gain? Protect/enhance green and blue infrastructure networks? Protect soil resources including the best and most versatile agricultural land where appropriate?

4. Carbon Use

4.1 Carbon Use Theme

The theme is:

Reduce carbon use and support climate change mitigation.

This includes consideration of:

- green and sustainable design in development;
- maintaining and creating walkable neighbourhoods (mixed use and with good permeability/connectivity);
- materials and sustainable construction;
- energy consumption and local energy;
- sustainable modes of transport and active travel.

4.2 Legislative and Policy Context

4.2.1 Legal and Policy Framework

The Carbon Use theme is shaped by statutory climate change legislation, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting active travel, improving domestic energy efficiency and transitioning to low-carbon energy systems, in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

4.2.2 The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended)[22]

The core statutory driver is the UK's legally binding target to achieve a 100% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (Net Zero) by 2050. All local planning policies and neighbourhood development allocations must actively demonstrate alignment with this decarbonisation trajectory.

[22] The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended): https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents

4.2.3 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024[23]

The NPPF sets out the government's economic, environmental and social policies for land use and development. It sets out national policy principles relevant to the carbon use theme, including:

- a presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- climate change mitigation and adaptation, including nature-based solutions;
- renewable and low carbon energy;
- energy efficiency;
- promoting active travel and the use of public transport to reduce car dependency.

4.2.4 Planning Practice Guidance[24]

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on how the planning system can support the transition to a low-carbon future and help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change. It explains how planning can reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the location and design of development, improving energy efficiency, promoting sustainable transport, supporting renewable and low-carbon energy, and ensuring that climate risks are considered in plan-making and decision-making.

4.2.5 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 1 (February 2018) and Part 2 (March 2023)[25]

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the carbon use theme include ST1 (Sustainable Design), CC1 (Climate Change) and CC2 (Sustainable Construction and Design).

4.2.6 Waverley Climate Change and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), 18th October 2022 [26]

The SPD does not form part of the statutory Local Plan (development plan) but is a material consideration in planning decisions. It establishes concrete benchmarks for development, demanding a "fabric-first" approach to building performance, rigid

[23] National Planning Policy Framework: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
[24] Planning Practice Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance
[25] Waverley Local Plan: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan
[26] Waverley Climate Change and Sustainability SPD: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/spds-spgs-and-other-guidance/climate-change-and-sustainability-spd

water efficiency limits and the mandatory submission of a Climate Change Sustainability Checklist for all planning applications.

4.2.7 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

This is a material consideration in assessing the carbon emitting effects of development. These documents support, but do not replace, the requirements of the Waverley Local Plan.

- **Surrey's climate change adaptation and resilience strategy 2023-2028**[27]

This is the County Council's framework, developed in partnership, to prepare infrastructure ecosystems and communities to adapt to a world 2°C warmer and preparing for scenarios up to +4°C. It sets out Surrey's response to the hazards, risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities posed by the impacts of climate change.

- **Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 (LTP4)**[28]

LTP4 sets out the strategic framework for transport in Surrey, promoting sustainable travel and reduced transport-related carbon emissions. It supports the transition to a net zero transport system.

4.2.8 Local Environmental Designations and Strategies

These reinforce the need for Neighbourhood Plan policies to support a reduction in carbon emissions and promote sustainable development.

- **Waverley Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan 2026**[29]

This strategic framework co-ordinates the borough's joint response to the climate and ecological emergencies.

- **Surrey Hills National Landscape Management Plan (2025-2030)**[30]

The plan sets out strict design and environmental boundaries for areas in or bordering the National Landscape (formerly AONB). It requires that climate

[27] Surrey's climate change adaptation and resilience strategy 2023-2028: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/community/climate-change/what-are-we-doing/adaptation-and-resilience/adaptation-strategy
[28] Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 (LTP4): https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/commonplace-customer-assets/surreyltp4/Surrey%20Transport%20Plan.pdf
[29] Waverley Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/environmental-concerns/sustainability-and-conservation/climate-and-nature-strategy-and-action-plan
[30] Surrey Hills National Landscape Management Plan: https://surreyhills.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/management_plan_A4_final_spreads.pdf

adaptation measures do not degrade the exceptional visual and landscape qualities of the region.

4.3 Baseline Summary

4.3.1 Local Context

Dunsfold's baseline carbon use is significantly higher than the national average, shaped by its rural characteristics. Local data from the Impact Community Carbon Calculator (2021 baseline)[31], developed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy and the University of Exeter, demonstrated that Dunsfold had a consumption-based carbon footprint of 22.6 tonnes of CO_2e per household which was 70% higher than the national average.

The Impact Community Carbon Calculator showed that household travel emissions in Dunsfold (4.59 tonnes of CO_2e) exceeded the national average by over 50%, and household heating emissions (9.69 tonnes of CO_2e) were nearly three times the national average (3.36 tonnes). This trend is mirrored at the Borough level by broader Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) Local Authority and Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Statistics (published in June 2026 but covering the period from 2005 to 2024)[32]. Transport remains the single largest emitting sector in Waverley accounting for approximately 45% of Waverley's total greenhouse gas emissions, a figure significantly higher than the UK national local authority average of 32%. This is heavily compounded by domestic energy which accounts for approximately 38% of emissions compared to 22% nationally.

4.3.2 Transport

Public transport provision in Dunsfold parish is limited, limiting opportunities for car-free accessibility. The parish is served primarily by the No. 42 bus route, operated by Compass Travel on behalf of Surrey County Council. This service connects to Cranleigh, Godalming and Guildford but operates at low frequency with limited services. There are no railway stations in the parish. As a result, car ownership levels are significantly above national averages with approximately 94%[33] of households in Dunsfold Parish owning one or more vehicles compared to 76.5% nationally[34]. This high level of car dependency contributes to elevated

[31] Impact Community Carbon Calculator (2021 baseline), developed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy and the University of Exeter: https://www.cse.org.uk/my-community/community-engagement/impact-community-carbon-calculator/

[32] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) Local Authority and Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Statistics, 25th June 2026: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics

[33] Nomis ONS Census 2021 Parish Profile: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021_pp

[34] Office for National Statistics, Car or Van Availability: https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS045/editions/2021/versions/4

transport-related emissions in the borough and limits opportunities for a modal shift to sustainable transport.

The parish contains an extensive network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) including footpaths and bridleways. Key assets include the Wey South Path which follows the restored Wey and Arun Canal through the eastern part of the parish, and woodland trails within Sidney Wood and Fir Tree Copse Nature Reserve. This network provides strong recreational value for walkers, runners and equestrians but its function as a commuting network is limited. Many routes are unsurfaced and cross agricultural fields and woodland. The paths are sensitive to seasonal weather conditions and can become muddy or waterlogged in winter months or periods of sustained rainfall. This reduces year-round accessibility and limits their role in supporting active travel.

4.3.3 Domestic Carbon Use

Dunsfold parish exhibits a domestic energy profile characteristic of rural, off-grid settlements in the south east of England. National datasets published by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)[35] show that rural areas have significantly higher proportions of homes not connected to the mains gas network, with off-grid properties concentrated in villages and dispersed rural settlements.

This pattern is reflected locally. National data on off-grid properties identifies large rural areas of Waverley as having 85-95% of homes off the gas grid, meaning most dwellings rely on alternative heating fuels[36]. The 2021 Census central heating data, summarised in the House of Commons Library briefing on off-grid households[37], also identifies rural districts as having the highest prevalence of solid fuel, oil and LPG heating nationally alongside elevated use of electric storage heaters in older properties. The carbon intensity of these fuels is well established with, for example, Forest Research[38] identifying solid fuels, oil and LPG as being among the highest-carbon domestic heating fuels.

Related carbon emissions are further exacerbated by the parish's traditional housing stock. Older dwellings, particularly pre-1945 cottages and mid-20th-century rural housing, typically have lower thermal performance and higher heating demand, as documented in DEFRA's rural housing energy statistics[39].

[35] National datasets published by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ): https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-national-estimates-of-households-not-connected-to-the-gas-network
[36] The non gas map, created by Kiln for Affordable Warmth Solutions in conjunction with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: https://www.nongasmap.org.uk/search?q=
[37] Households off the gas-grid and prices for alternative fuel (House of Commons Library Research Briefing): https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9838/CBP-9838.pdf
[38] Forest Research data: https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/biomass-energy-resources/reference-biomass/facts-figures/carbon-emissions-of-different-fuels/
[39] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Energy Statistics for Rural England: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-statistics-for-rural-england

Taken together, these datasets establish a robust baseline. Domestic carbon emissions in Dunsfold are significantly above the national average, driven by off-grid heating systems, older housing stock with lower thermal efficiency and limited uptake of renewable or low-carbon technologies.

4.3.4 Embodied Carbon

Embodied carbon is an important consideration for all future construction, but it is particularly relevant for the Neighbourhood Plan because of the planned development at Dunsfold Park[40]. Large volumes of new construction and infrastructure may generate significant upfront emissions. National evidence from the UK Green Building Council's Whole Life Carbon Roadmap (2021)[41] shows that embodied carbon from the construction and refurbishment of buildings makes up 20% of built environment emissions, with the trajectory results indicating that embodied carbon will form over half of built environment emissions by 2035. RIBA's 2030 Climate Challenge[42] and LETI's Embodied Carbon Primer (2020)[43] emphasise the importance of material specification, re-use and low-carbon construction methods in reducing these impacts.

4.3.5 Future Baseline

Carbon emissions in Dunsfold are likely to remain relatively high compared to national averages reflecting the parish's rural character, dispersed settlement pattern and reliance on private vehicles for access to employment, services and public transport. Whilst national decarbonisation policies are expected to reduce emissions over time, opportunities for significant modal shift are likely to remain constrained by limited public transport provision, the absence of rail services in the parish and the restricted role of the Public Rights of Way network in supporting everyday journeys.

Domestic carbon emissions are also likely to remain above average. The parish contains a significant proportion of older housing and off-grid properties that are generally more difficult and costly to retrofit to modern energy-efficiency standards. In the absence of targeted local measures, the uptake of low-carbon heating systems, renewable energy technologies and energy-efficiency improvements is likely to be driven primarily by national policy, market conditions and household investment decisions. As a result, progress towards decarbonisation may be gradual.

Future development in and around the Neighbourhood Plan area has the potential to

[40] Dunsfold Park Garden Village: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village

[41] UK Green Building Council's Whole Life Carbon Roadmap (2021): https://ukgbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UKGBC-Whole-Life-Carbon-Roadmap-A-Pathway-to-Net-Zero.pdf

[42] RIBA's 2030 Climate Challenge: https://www.riba.org/campaigns/climate-action/2030-climate-challenge/

[43] LETI's Embodied Carbon Primer: https://www.leti.uk/ecp

increase energy demand and transport movements. However, it also provides opportunities to improve energy efficiency, incorporate renewable and low-carbon technologies and support more sustainable patterns of movement through design and layout.

Built environment emissions from embodied carbon are likely to increase unless the policy framework guiding future development requires the use of low-carbon materials as part of a fabric-first approach.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to support the transition to a low-carbon future by encouraging energy-efficient development, promoting active travel, supporting appropriate renewable and low-carbon energy technologies and reducing reliance on private vehicle use where practicable.

4.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Carbon Use)

Key sustainability issues (carbon use) are:

- High levels of car dependency and transport-related greenhouse gas emissions
- Limited opportunities for modal shift due to constrained public transport and active travel infrastructure.
- High domestic energy demand associated with older housing stock and off-grid heating systems.
- Supporting energy-efficient development and sustainable design to minimise operational carbon emissions.
- Supporting renewable and low-carbon energy technologies where compatible with landscape, heritage and biodiversity objectives.
- Reducing the need to travel and encouraging sustainable travel patterns through the location and design of development.
- Balancing the transition to a low-carbon future with the protection of the parish's valued environmental and landscape assets.
- Managing embodied carbon associated with future development through material selection, the re-use of existing structures and low-carbon construction methods.

4.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Carbon Use)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Reduce carbon use and support sustainable development.	Support low-carbon and sustainable design in new development? Maintaining and creating walkable neighbourhoods (mixed use and with good permeability/connectivity)? Reduce energy consumption and promote local energy? Reduce the need to travel or the number of journeys made? Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and active travel?
Support renewable and low carbon energy generation where appropriate.	Support appropriate micro-generation or community renewable energy schemes? Support community-led renewable energy initiatives without compromising sensitive landscape features or biodiversity assets? Does the Plan promote high standards of energy efficiency and sustainable design (such as low-carbon heating systems)?

5. Climate Change and Flooding

5.1 Climate Change Theme

The theme is:

Support climate change resilience, including flooding

This includes consideration of:

- areas at risk from flooding;
- surface water run off;
- location and design of development;
- green and blue infrastructure networks;
- reuse and recycling.

5.2 Legislative and Policy context

5.2.1 Legal and Policy Framework

The Climate Change and Flooding theme is governed by national statutory obligations, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles for avoiding development in high flood-risk areas, managing surface water sustainably and designing new developments to be resilient to the projected impacts of a warming climate, in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

5.2.2 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010[44]

The Act establishes the framework for managing flood risk and safeguarding water quality, defining the roles of Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) in managing local flood risks (surface water, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses).

5.2.3 The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended)[45]

This mandates national adaptation planning through statutory Climate Change Risk Assessments (CCRA) and the National Adaptation Programme (NAP) to prepare infrastructure and communities for extreme weather.

[44] The Flood and Water Management Act 2010: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents
[45] The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended): https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents

5.2.4 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024[46]

The NPPF sets out the government's economic, environmental and social policies for land use and development. It sets out national policy principles relevant to the climate change theme, including:

- a presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation, including nature-based solutions;
- advocating for the integration of green infrastructure and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water.

5.2.5 Planning Practice Guidance[47]

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on the application of the sequential and exception tests, the preparation of site-specific Flood Risk Assessments and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). It also promotes a risk-based approach to development, ensuring that flood risk is considered throughout the plan-making process and that new development is appropriately located and designed to remain safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

5.2.7 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 1 (2018) and Part 2 (2023)[48]

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the climate change theme include CC1 (Climate Change), CC4 (Flood Risk Management), NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) and DM1 (Environmental Implications of Development).

5.2.8 Waverley Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan 2026[49]

This strategic framework coordinates the borough's joint response to the climate and ecological emergencies.

[46] National Planning Policy Framework: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
[47] Planning Practice Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance
[48] Waverley Local Plan: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan
[49] Waverley Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan 2026: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/environmental-concerns/sustainability-and-conservation/climate-and-nature-strategy-and-action-plan

5.2.9 Waverley Climate Change and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), 18 October 2022[50]

The SPD does not form part of the statutory Local Plan (development plan) but is a material consideration in planning decisions. It sets out detailed requirements for water efficiency, climate adaptation and the design of sustainable drainage systems, prioritising nature-based solutions.

5.2.10 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

This is a material consideration in assessing the climate change mitigation, adaptation and flood risk management effects of development. It ensures the Neighbourhood Plan follows recognised best practice in supporting climate change resilience, including flooding. These documents support, but do not replace, the requirements of the Waverley Local Plan.

- **Surrey Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS), Updated 2025**

Produced by Surrey County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), this strategy coordinates local flood risk management and outlines measures to reduce surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourse flooding across the county.

- **Surrey's climate change adaptation and resilience strategy 2023-2028**

This is the County Council's framework, developed in partnership, to prepare infrastructure ecosystems and communities to adapt to a world 2°C warmer and preparing for scenarios up to +4°C. It sets out Surrey's response to the hazards, risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities posed by the impacts of climate change.

5.3 Baseline Summary

5.3.1 Local Context

Dunsfold is a rural parish characterised by extensive woodland, agricultural land, watercourses and a dispersed settlement pattern. It contains a network of green and blue infrastructure that contributes to carbon storage, natural flood management and climate regulation. Much of the parish lies within Flood Zone 1, although areas associated with the River Lox and its tributaries are affected by fluvial flood risk. The underlying Weald Clay geology limits the infiltration of rainfall, increasing the potential for surface water runoff and localised flooding. The dispersed nature of development also means that parts of the parish rely on private drainage systems,

[50] Waverley Climate Change and Sustainability SPD: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/spds-spgs-and-other-guidance/climate-change-and-sustainability-spd

making the capacity and resilience of wastewater infrastructure an important consideration.

5.3.2 Flood risk

While a significant part of the Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan area is situated in Flood Zone 1 (low probability of fluvial flooding), localised areas of acute flood risk exist driven by the parish's unique geology and hydrology. The primary watercourse in the parish is the River Lox (also known as the Loxwood Stream) and its associated tributaries. Environment Agency Flood Zones 2 and 3 (medium and high fluvial flood risk) are largely confined to the River Lox corridor and associated tributaries, directly affecting adjacent agricultural land and low-lying rural properties.

Surface water flooding is a recognised source of flood risk in parts of the parish, reflecting the limited permeability of the underlying Weald Clay geology and the rural drainage network. In periods of prolonged or intense rainfall, roadside ditches and culverts can become overwhelmed leading to localised highway flooding.

Dunsfold and the wider Low Weald catchment have a documented history of significant flooding. Major regional events occurred in 1968, 1990 and most notably during the exceptionally wet winter of 2013/ 2014 when sustained rainfall saturated the Weald Clay causing widespread surface water ponding, highway closures and localised property flooding[51].

5.3.3 Wastewater and Sewer Infrastructure Constraints

The dispersed settlement pattern in the Neighbourhood Plan area means some properties rely on private drainage systems while others are connected to the public foul sewer network. The capacity and operation of wastewater infrastructure are important considerations for new development to ensure that wastewater can be managed effectively and that the quality of the water environment is protected.

5.3.4 Green and Blue Infrastructure

Dunsfold has an extensive network of green and blue infrastructure (GBI). The protection and enhancement of these assets, that play a critical role in local climate change adaptation and flood mitigation, is vitally important.

Green infrastructure assets comprise significant woodland cover including the ancient semi-natural woodland within the Chiddingfold Forest SSSI, Sidney Wood

[51] Waverley Borough Council Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment August 2016 (Updated December 2016) available at: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/portals/0/documents/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/sfra%20level%202.pdf

and Fir Tree Copse, alongside local commons, hedgerows and agricultural fields. These help to intercept rainfall, slow the transit of surface water and help moderate local temperatures through shading and evapotranspiration. They also serve as vital carbon sinks, contributing to climate change mitigation.

Blue infrastructure assets include the River Lox, the historically restored Wey and Arun Canal corridor, agricultural drainage ditch networks and numerous historic clay-pit ponds scattered across the parish. These waterbodies provide crucial local water storage, attenuate peak flows and act as natural pathways for surface water management.

5.3.5 Future Baseline

Dunsfold is likely to experience increasing pressures associated with climate change and future development. UK Climate Projections (UKCP18)[52] indicate that the south east of England is expected to experience warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers with an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events. These changes are likely to increase flood risk, place greater pressure on water resources and require communities and infrastructure to become more resilient to the effects of climate change.

The parish's underlying Weald Clay geology limits the natural infiltration of rainfall. As a result, more frequent and intense rainfall events are likely to increase surface water runoff and overland flow, particularly where drainage capacity is constrained. This may increase the frequency of localised flooding on roads, agricultural land and low-lying areas adjacent to the River Lox and its tributaries, unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

Climate change is also likely to place increasing pressure on wastewater infrastructure. Higher rainfall may increase the risk of surface water entering foul sewer systems, potentially contributing to sewer surcharging and increased demands on wastewater treatment infrastructure. At the same time, hotter, drier summers may place additional pressure on water resources, affect soil moisture conditions and increase the vulnerability of habitats, particularly woodland, wetland and freshwater environments.

Future development, including the strategic allocation at Dunsfold Park[53], has the potential to increase impermeable surfaces and surface water runoff if not supported by appropriately designed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and wider green infrastructure. Given the limited infiltration capacity of the underlying clay soils, future development is likely to require a greater reliance on above-ground

[52] Met Office UK Climate Change Projections (UKCP18): https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp

[53] Dunsfold Park Garden Village: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village

attenuation features and other sustainable drainage measures to ensure runoff is managed effectively and flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to strengthen climate resilience by promoting sustainable patterns of development, supporting the use of multifunctional green and blue infrastructure, encouraging sustainable drainage, safeguarding areas at risk of flooding and ensuring that new development is appropriately located and designed to adapt to future climate conditions.

5.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Climate Change & Flooding)

Key sustainability issues (climate change and flooding) are:

- Managing flood risk by directing development away from areas at risk of fluvial flooding associated with the River Lox and its tributaries and ensuring that new development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

- Reducing surface water runoff in response to the limited permeability of the underlying Weald Clay geology, which increases the potential for surface water flooding during periods of prolonged or intense rainfall.

- Supporting sustainable drainage using appropriately designed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and natural flood management measures that reflect local ground conditions and contribute to wider green and blue infrastructure.

- Protecting and enhancing green and blue infrastructure, including woodland, hedgerows, watercourses, ponds and other natural features that contribute to climate change adaptation, flood attenuation, biodiversity and ecological resilience.

- Supporting resilient wastewater infrastructure by ensuring that future development does not place unacceptable pressure on sewerage and drainage networks and is supported by appropriate wastewater capacity.

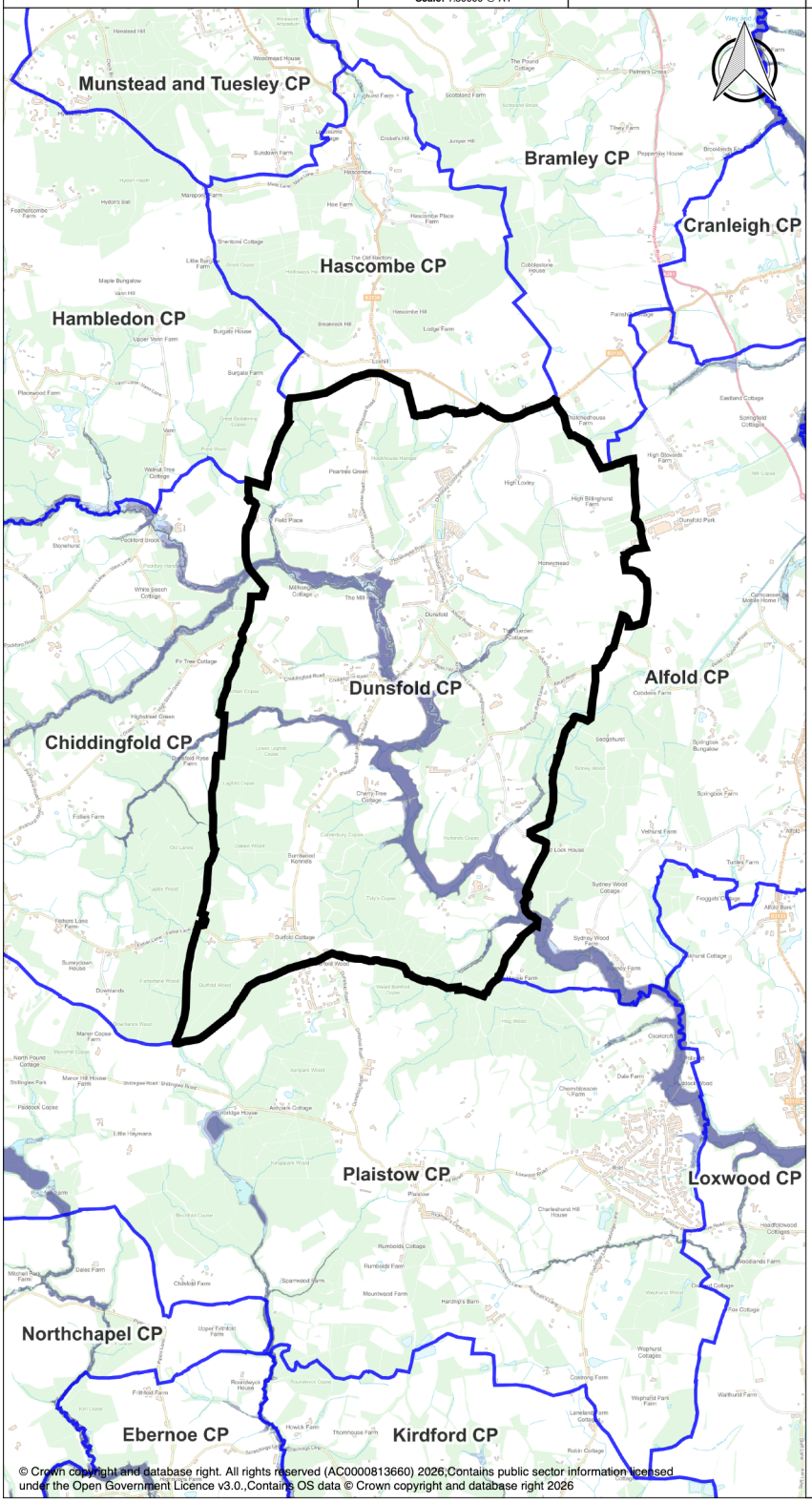
- Improving climate resilience by encouraging development that is well designed, adaptable to future climate conditions and capable of responding to increased flood risk, higher temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events.

- Promoting water efficiency and sustainable resource use to help address increasing pressure on water resources associated with projected hotter, drier summers.

- Ensuring that strategic growth, including development at Dunsfold Park[54], is accompanied by appropriate flood risk management, sustainable drainage and green infrastructure measures to minimise adverse effects on the wider catchment.

[54] Dunsfold Park Garden Village: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village

Dunsfold Flood Risk Area	Center: 500362.15, 134674.21	Dunsfold
Environment Agency Flood Risk Areas from pre 2025 data	0 200 400 800m Scale: 1:50000 @ A4	Author: Date: 01/04/2026



Parish

Plan Boundary

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5.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Climate Change)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Support climate change resilience, including flooding.	Avoiding development in areas identified as being at risk from flooding, now and in the future? Avoiding adverse impacts on surrounding land from surface water run off? Protect/ Improve/enhance green and blue infrastructure networks? Considering potential risks associated with climate change in the location and design of development? Ensuring that development is well-designed, against the context of climate change and climate resilience? Encourage use of local, recycled and low-embodied energy materials and sustainable construction? Support the minimisation, reuse and recycling of waste?

6. Historic Environment

6.1 Historic Environment Theme

The theme is:

> **Preserve or enhance the Historic Environment (including architectural, cultural and archaeological).**

This includes consideration of:

- designated heritage assets, including listed buildings and conservation areas;
- non-designated heritage assets;
- local character;
- productive and sustainable use of heritage assets.

6.2 Legislative and Policy context

6.2.1 Legislative and Policy Framework

The protection and enhancement of the historic environment is supported through national legislation, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles for conserving the significance of heritage assets while ensuring that new development respects local character, distinctiveness and historic setting, in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

6.2.2 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990[55]

The Act requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings, and to pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

6.2.3 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024[56]

The NPPF sets out the government's economic, environmental and social policies for land use and development. It sets out national policy principles relevant to the historic environment theme, including:

[55] Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents
[56] National Planning Policy Framework: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

- recognising heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance;

- ensuring planning decisions assess the impact of development on designated and non-designated heritage assets, giving great weight to their conservation and recognising that any harm requires clear justification.

6.2.4 Planning Practice Guidance[57]

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on the implementation of national planning policy for heritage assets. It explains the importance of understanding the significance of heritage assets, including their archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest, and the contribution made by their settings. The guidance supports a proportionate, evidence-based approach to assessing the potential impacts of development on heritage assets and informs how plans and development proposals should conserve and enhance the historic environment.

6.2.5 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Parts 1 (2018) and 2 (2023)[58]

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the historic environment theme include HA1 (Protection of Heritage Assets) and DM1 (Environmental Implications of Development).

6.2.6 Waverley Borough Conservation Area Appraisals[59]

These provide detailed assessments of the special architectural and historic interest of the borough's Conservation Areas and are material considerations in determining planning applications. There are two designated Conservation Area in the Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan area, Dunsfold Conservation Area and Dunsfold Church Conservation Area.

6.2.7 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

The County council maintains the Surrey Historic Environment Record (HER) and provides specialist archaeological advice to local planning authorities.

[57] Planning Practice Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance
[58] Waverley Local Plan: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan
[59] Conservation Areas: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/heritage-trees-and-design/conservation-areas

- **Surrey Historic Environment Record (HER)[60]**

The HER provides comprehensive information on Surrey's archaeological sites, historic buildings, historic landscapes and other heritage assets. It supports the identification, conservation and management of the county's historic environment.

6.3 Baseline Summary

6.3.1 Local Context

Dunsfold possesses a well-preserved historic environment reflecting its medieval origins and agricultural heritage. The parish contains two Conservation Areas, numerous listed buildings and a historic landscape of commons, ponds, hedgerows, ancient routeways and woodland that together contribute to its distinctive rural character.

6.3.2 National Designations: Listed Buildings

Historic England's National Heritage List for England shows that the Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan area contains 53 Listed Buildings[61]. The Heritage at Risk Register shows that none of the Listed Buildings are identified as being at risk[62]. The buildings are largely in the Dunsfold and Dunsfold Church Conservation Areas and are all Grade II, except for the Church of St Mary and All Saints which dates principally from the late thirteenth century and is Grade I Listed. Some Grade II listed farmhouses, cottages, barns and ancillary buildings reflect the area's traditional Wealden vernacular architecture and incorporate timber framing, Bargate stone, brick and Horsham stone roofing.

6.3.3 Local Designations: Conservation Areas

Dunsfold has two designated Conservation Areas. Dunsfold Conservation Area encompasses the historic village common and surrounding development between Oak Tree Lane and Mill Lane, including the War Memorial, Winn Hall and historic buildings around Elms Corner. The Conservation Area is characterised by its linear settlement pattern, open common, mature trees, ponds and important views across the surrounding countryside. Dunsfold Church Conservation Area protects the historic setting of the Church of St Mary and All Saints and the medieval ecclesiastical core of the parish.

[60] Surrey Historic Environment Record: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/heritage-and-planning/historic-environment-record
[61] Historic England's National Heritage List for England: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/
[62] Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/heritage-at-risk/search-register/

6.3.4 Historic Landscape and Non-designated Heritage Assets

The wider historic environment includes Dunsfold Common, historic ponds associated with the parish's former clay extraction and brick and tile making, ancient field boundaries, historic lanes, hedgerows and woodland. These features contribute to the significance and setting of designated heritage assets and reinforce the parish's historic rural character.

6.3.5 Future Baseline

The historic environment of Dunsfold is likely to experience increasing pressure from development, climate change and incremental alterations to the built and historic landscape. Whilst designated heritage assets are afforded statutory protection through national legislation and planning policy, their significance and settings may be affected if future development is not sensitively designed and located.

Planned growth in the borough, including the strategic allocation at Dunsfold Park[63] and other development proposals, has the potential to alter the rural setting of heritage assets particularly where development affects important views, settlement character or the transition between the built environment and surrounding countryside.

Small-scale alterations, such as replacement windows and doors, extensions, boundary treatments, highway works, lighting and signage, can cumulatively erode the special architectural and historic character of Conservation Areas and the wider historic landscape if not carefully managed.

Historic ponds, hedgerows, field boundaries and other non-designated heritage assets may be vulnerable to gradual loss or alteration through changes in land management, development and infrastructure improvements. Although these features may not benefit from statutory protection, they can contribute to the significance and setting of designated heritage assets and to the distinctiveness of the parish.

More frequent periods of drought, intense rainfall and temperature extremes are expected to increase pressures on the historic environment. Buildings founded on shrinkable Weald Clay may become more susceptible to ground movement during prolonged dry periods, while more intense rainfall may accelerate weathering of traditional building materials and increase the need for maintenance.

There is potential for gradual erosion of Dunsfold's historic significance and

[63] Dunsfold Park Garden Village: https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village

landscape character over time, despite the continued protection afforded through national legislation and local planning policy.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to reinforce the protection of heritage assets and local character.

6.4 Key Sustainability Issues

Key sustainability issues (historic environment) are:

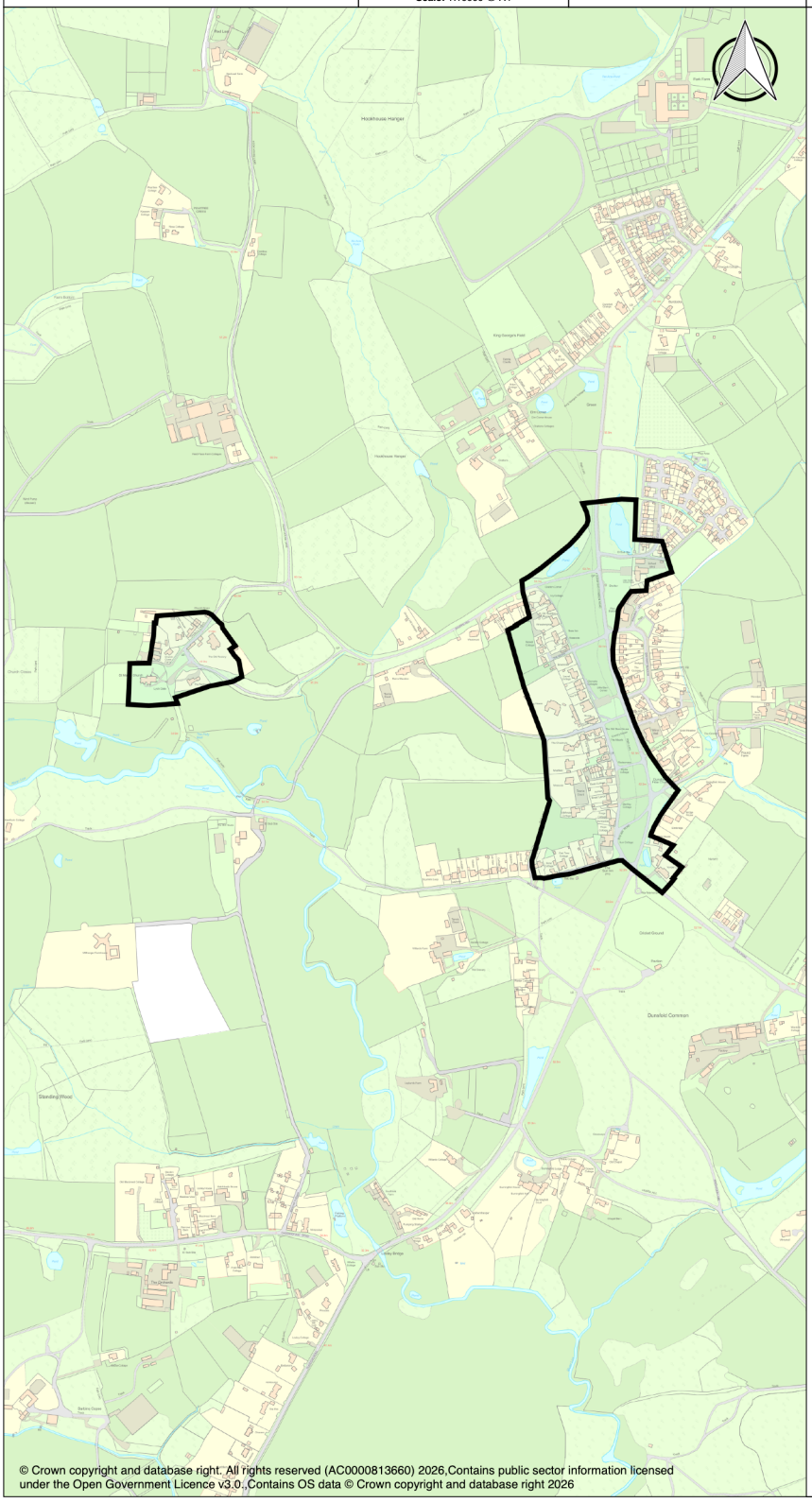
- Future development, including strategic growth at Dunsfold Park, has the potential to affect the setting, character and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets if not sensitively designed.

- Projected increases in drought and more extreme weather may increase the risk of ground movement associated with shrinkable Weald Clay, potentially affecting historic buildings with shallow foundations and traditional construction methods.

- Incremental change, including insensitive infill development, highway alterations, signage and lighting, could erode the distinctive character of Dunsfold Common and the wider historic settlement pattern.

- Historic landscape features, including ponds, field boundaries, hedgerows, historic lanes and traditional rural buildings, remain vulnerable to incremental loss or alteration where they lack statutory protection.

Dunsfold Conservation Areas	Center: 500286.56, 136216.57	Dunsfold	PARISH ONLINE
Historic England Conservation Area	0 50 100 150 200m Scale: 1:10000 @ A4	Author:	
		Date: 13/04/2026	



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6.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Historic Environment)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Preserve or enhance the Historic Environment (including architectural, cultural and archaeological).	Conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Dunsfold and Dunsfold Church Conservation Areas? Protect the significance and setting of the Grade I listed Church of St Mary and All Saints and other listed buildings? Conserve non-designated heritage assets and the wider historic landscape? Respect local distinctiveness through high-quality design and the use of materials appropriate to the Wealden vernacular? Conserve the historic character of Dunsfold Common and important views within and from the Conservation Areas? Support the productive and sustainable use of heritage assets, to create a sustainable future?