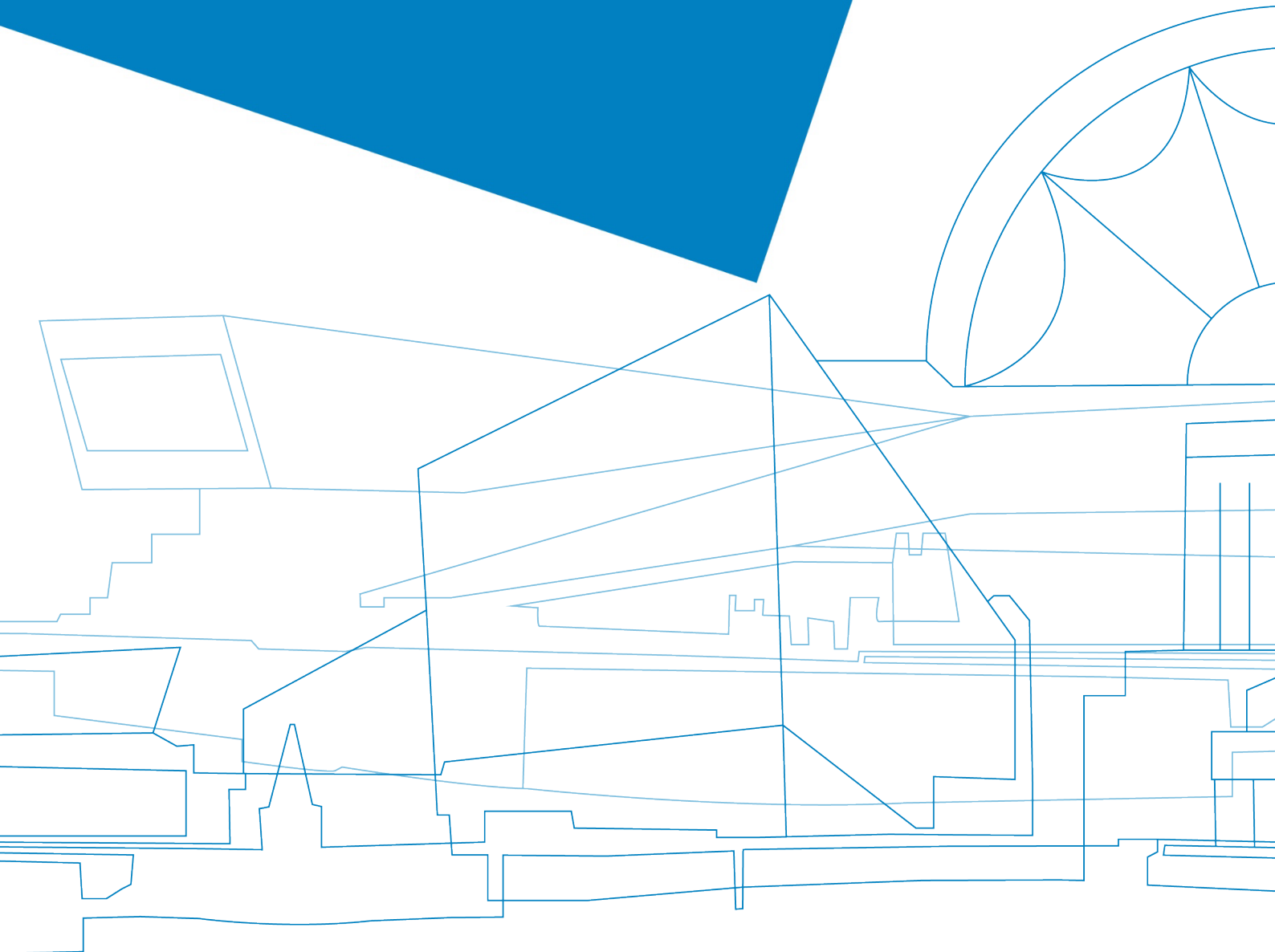




**Strategic Environmental Assessment
Scoping Report V1.3
Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan
August 2026**



Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Purpose of the Scoping Report	4
1.2 Background	4
1.3 The Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan	4
1.4 Basic Conditions and Legal Requirements for Neighbourhood Plans	5
1.5 The SEA Process	7
1.6 Scoping Report Structure	8
2. SEA Framework	9
2.1 Methodology	9
3. Natural Environment and Biodiversity	14
3.1 Natural Environment Theme	14
3.2 Legislative and Policy Context	14
3.3 Baseline Summary	17
3.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Natural Environment)	24
3.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Natural Environment)	25
4. Carbon Use	26
4.1 Carbon Use Theme	26
4.2 Legislative and Policy Context	26
4.3 Baseline Summary	29
4.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Carbon Use)	32
4.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Carbon Use)	33
5. Climate Change and Flooding	34
5.1 Climate Change Theme	34
5.2 Legislative and Policy context	34
5.3 Baseline Summary	36
5.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Climate Change & Flooding)	39
5.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Climate Change)	42
6. Historic Environment	43
6.1 Historic Environment Theme	43
6.2 Legislative and Policy context	43
6.3 Baseline Summary	45
6.4 Key Sustainability Issues	47

6.5	SEA Objectives and Questions (Historic Environment)	49
7.	Use of Land	50
7.1	Use of Land Theme	50
7.2	Legislative and Policy context	50
7.3	Baseline Summary	52
7.4	Key Sustainability Issues (Use of Land)	54
8.	Community Needs	56
8.1	Community Theme	56
8.2	Legislative and Policy context	56
8.3	Baseline Summary	58
8.4	Key Sustainability Issues	60
8.5	SEA Objectives and Questions (Community)	61
9.	Health and Wellbeing	62
9.1	Health Theme	62
9.2	Legislative and Policy context	62
9.3	Baseline Summary	65
9.4	Key Sustainability Issues (Health and Wellbeing)	67
10.	Air, Water and Soil	69
10.1	Air, water and soil Theme	69
10.2	Legislative and Policy context	69
10.3	Baseline Summary	72
10.4	Key Sustainability Issues (Air, Water & Soil)	75
10.5	SEA Objectives and Questions (Air, Water, Soil)	76
11.	Contact	77

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Scoping Report

This is a scoping report, prepared as part of the process of undertaking an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in respect of the emerging Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan. It has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) which transposed European Directive 2001/42/EC into UK law.

1.2 Background

A previous SEA was prepared, in relation to a previous version of the Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan. This version of the Neighbourhood Plan was not taken forward due to errors in the statutory process, and to allow housing site allocations to be reviewed. Also, the previous SEA was undertaken in 2018, so is now quite dated.

This latest version of the Neighbourhood Plan includes different housing site allocations. Following discussion with the Local Planning Authority, the need for a completely new SEA was identified.

1.3 The Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan

The Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended, and associated regulations, policy and guidance. The Neighbourhood Plan will meet the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements set out in primary and secondary legislation. This includes a requirement to help achieve sustainable development.

Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan. The Plan relates to the use and development of land and contains planning policies and site allocations.

The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by Dunsfold Parish Council, the qualifying body. The Dunsfold Neighbourhood Area was designated in August 2017 and includes the whole parish area. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period to the end of December 2032.

The Local Planning Authority is Waverley Borough Council.

This report relates to Version 3.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.4 Basic Conditions and Legal Requirements for Neighbourhood Plans

The Basic Conditions and legal requirements that neighbourhood plans must meet have changed since the original neighbourhood plan, and are summarised as follows:

- must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- must have regard to national policy and guidance;
- must not deliver less housing development;
- must be compatible with EU obligations.

Regulations specify an additional basic condition that a plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitat sites.

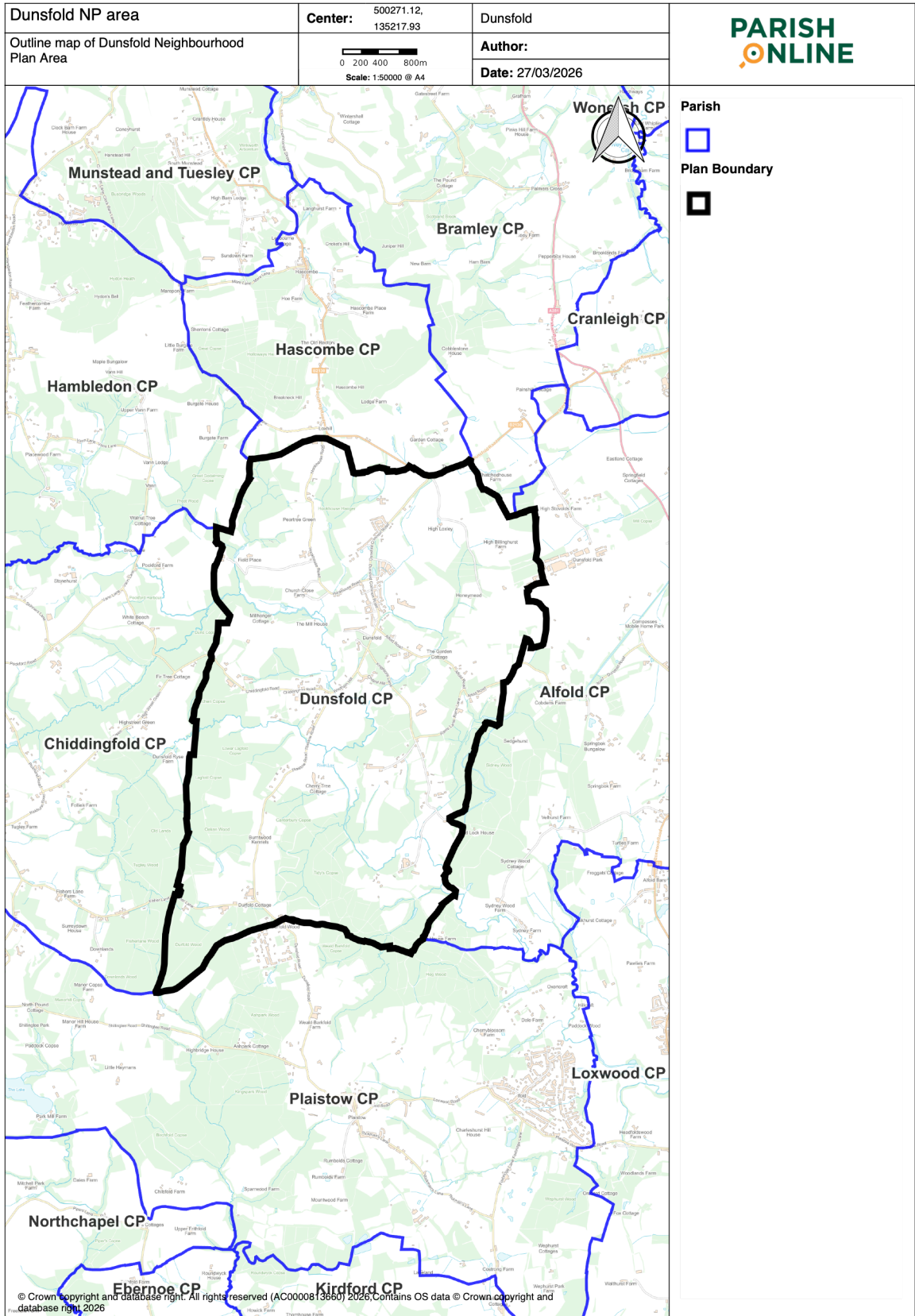
In addition, the plan:

- must meet requirements of human rights law;
- address climate change and mitigation;
- take account of any Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The previous requirement to be in general conformity with strategic local policies no longer applies.

This SEA is required to meet the Basic Conditions relating to environment and habitats.

Consideration of national policy includes the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024, amended in February 2025. A consultation on a new NPPF closed earlier in 2026 and the next version is expected after the summer recess. If this is issued, it will be referenced in the Environmental Report.



1.5 The SEA Process

1.5.1 Need for SEA

The original Neighbourhood Plan was screened by Waverley Borough Council and determined to have significant environmental impact, so requiring full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

SEA takes place under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). The SEA is concerned with likely significant effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan and considers the potential options or alternatives relating to key environmental issues and avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts.

1.5.2 Consultation

The Regulations require consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues on the scope and level of detail of the information being considered. This Scoping Report includes a suggested scope for the SEA, and will be subject to consultation with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

In addition, an Environmental Report (which will follow this report) must be published for consultation (with the emerging Neighbourhood Plan) setting out the outcomes from the environmental assessment.

1.5.3 Scoping Stage

The preparation of this report involves:

- Identification of relevant policies;
- Compilation of baseline information;
- Identification of sustainability objectives and issues;
- Formulation of an environmental assessment framework;
- Preparation of a draft scoping report;
- Consultation with national bodies;
- Finalisation of the scoping report.

1.4.4 Later Stage (Environmental Report)

The following stage involves preparation of the Environmental Report, and this comprises:

- Testing the Plan against the assessment framework;
- Evaluating effects and considering alternatives;
- Consideration of mitigation of adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects;
- Formulating measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Preparing the Environmental Report, based on the above;
- Subjecting the Report to consultation with environmental bodies and the public;
- Making any necessary amendments and finalising the Environmental Report.

1.6 Scoping Report Structure

Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and Annex 1(f) of the SEA Directive (directive 2001/42/EC) specify the environmental topics for consideration, including biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and their interrelationships.

The SEA Framework (SEA objectives and questions) is included in Chapter2.

The following chapters are then structured around the SEA objectives:

- Enhance the natural environment and biodiversity and protect landscapes, habitats and ecology;
- Reduce carbon use and support sustainable development;
- Support climate change resilience, including flooding;
- Support the efficient and effective use of land;
- Preserve or enhance Historic Environment (including architectural, cultural and archaeological);
- Meet the needs of current and future residents, including diverse sections of the community;
- Improve health and wellbeing of people living and working in the area.
- Protect air, water and soil quality.

2. SEA Framework

2.1 Methodology

The following table comprises a framework to assess SEA Objectives against relevant questions.

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?
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 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?
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?
Support the efficient and effective use of land.	Make effective use of previously developed land and promote the re-use of buildings where appropriate? Minimise the unnecessary loss of greenfield and agricultural land, particularly any identified as being BMV agricultural land? Protect the character and function of the open countryside? Safeguarded mineral resources? Support development that respects the existing settlement pattern and makes the efficient use of land?
Meet the diverse needs of the community (current and future residents).	Support the delivery of housing that reflects identified local needs, including an appropriate mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures? Contribute to the provision of affordable housing where appropriate? Protect and enhance existing community facilities and services? Support the timely provision of infrastructure required to accommodate planned growth? Improve access to community facilities, healthcare, education, recreation and local services by sustainable modes of transport? Promote healthy, inclusive and socially cohesive communities? Ensure that new development is integrated with existing communities

	and contributes positively to local character and quality of life?
Improve health and wellbeing of people living and working in the area.	Improve access to healthcare, community facilities, recreation and local services? Support opportunities for physical activity, walking and cycling? Protect and enhance access to green infrastructure and the countryside? Promote development that supports social interaction and community cohesion? Address the needs of an ageing population and vulnerable groups? Ensure that new development is supported by appropriate infrastructure? Create safe, attractive and inclusive places that contribute positively to mental and physical wellbeing?
Protect air, water and soil quality.	Avoid development that would result in unacceptable impacts on air quality? Protect water resources (minimise water consumption) and prevent deterioration of water quality? Ensure adequate wastewater and drainage infrastructure is available? Minimise impacts on soils, including the loss of agricultural land and soil functions? Avoid or remediate land contamination where relevant? Promote sustainable drainage and

	nature-based solutions to manage water? Reduce the need to travel and promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including public transport and active travel?
--	--

3. Natural Environment and Biodiversity

3.1 Natural Environment and Biodiversity Theme

The theme is:

Enhance the natural environment, biodiversity and protect landscapes, habitats and ecology.

This includes consideration of:

- nationally and locally designated landscapes;
- landscape character;
- priority habitats and species;
- biodiversity;
- green and blue infrastructure networks.

3.2 Legislative and Policy Context

3.2.1 Legal and Policy Framework

The Natural Environment theme is shaped by national legislation, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles for protecting landscape character, habitats, species and biodiversity, and green and blue infrastructure networks, in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

3.2.2 Environment Act 2021¹

The Act establishes a strengthened framework for environmental protection and nature recovery in England. It introduced mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for qualifying development, requiring these proposals to deliver at least a 10% measurable increase in biodiversity compared to the pre-development baseline. The Act also provides for the preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) which identify priorities and opportunities for habitat creation, restoration and ecological connectivity. These measures reinforce the role of the planning system in protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

¹ Environment Act 2021: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents>

3.2.3 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations)²

The Regulations require that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a National Site Network site must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. This stage of Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is only required where preliminary screening cannot rule out likely significant effects. A HRA screening determination for the Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan was carried out by Base Planning and Design Ltd in August 2021 on behalf of Waverley Borough Council. It concluded that an Appropriate Assessment was not required. Nevertheless, the Regulations remain an important part of the policy context for protecting internationally designated sites and species.

3.2.4 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act)³

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of Habitats and Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. These habitats and species are a material consideration in plan-making and development management and provide an important baseline for the assessment of biodiversity effects.

3.2.5 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

The Regulations transpose Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) into UK law and require assessment of likely significant effects on biodiversity, landscape, soil, water, air quality and climatic factors. A Strategic Environmental Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans is required where significant environmental effects might arise.

3.2.5 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)⁵

This provides statutory protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), protected species and certain priority habitats.

² Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations): <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/contents>

³ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act): <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

⁴ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents>

⁵ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended): <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>

3.2.6 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024⁶

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 natural environment theme, including:

- conserving and enhancing biodiversity, geodiversity and soils;
- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now designated as National Landscapes);
- achieving measurable biodiversity net gain;
- safeguarding the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- managing flood risk, water quality, and water resources;
- supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation, including nature-based solutions;
- protecting dark skies, tranquillity and natural capital assets.

3.2.7 Planning Practice Guidance⁷

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on the protection and enhancement of the natural environment through the planning system. It explains how planning policies and decisions should consider biodiversity, ecological networks, protected sites, landscapes, green infrastructure and the conservation of habitats and species. The guidance supports an evidence-based approach to understanding the environmental value of places and ensuring that development avoids, mitigates and where appropriate provides compensation for impacts on the natural environment.

3.2.8 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Parts 1 (February 2018) and Part 2 (March 2023)⁸

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the natural environment theme include RE3 (Landscape Character), NE1 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation), NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), DM1 (Environmental Implications of Development) and DM11 (Trees, Woodland, Hedgerows and Landscaping).

⁶ National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁷ Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁸ Waverley Local Plan: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan>

3.2.9 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

This is a material consideration in assessing the natural environment effects of development. It ensures the Neighbourhood Plan follows recognised best practice in protecting biodiversity, landscape character and ecological networks. These documents support, but do not replace, the requirements of the Waverley Local Plan.

- **Waverley Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan 2026⁹**

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

- **Surrey Hills National Landscape Management Plan (2025-2030)¹⁰**

The plan sets out strict design and environmental boundaries for areas in or bordering the designated National Landscape (formerly AONB). It seeks to restore habitats, safeguard ecosystems and mandates that all developments must legally conserve and enhance local natural beauty and biodiversity.

- **Surrey Nature Partnership¹¹**

The Surrey Nature Partnership provides guidance on ecological networks, priority habitats and nature recovery strategies.

3.3 Baseline Summary

3.3.1 Local Context

The natural environment baseline of Dunsfold includes a combination of nationally and locally designated landscapes, a diverse mosaic of priority habitat and species and an interconnected network of green and blue infrastructure. It sits in a sensitive rural landscape characterised by historic field patterns, extensive woodland and open agricultural land.

3.3.2 International and European Designations

There are no European or internationally designated sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites) in or immediately adjacent to

⁹ 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>

¹⁰ Surrey Hills National Landscape Management Plan (2025-2030): https://surreyhills.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/management_plan_A4_final_spreads.pdf

¹¹ Surrey Nature Partnership website: <https://surreynaturepartnership.org/>

the Neighbourhood Plan area. The nearest European site is the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA located several kilometres to the west. While this is outside the typical zone of influence for neighbourhood-scale development, its presence reinforces the need to consider potential cumulative effects on the wider ecological network where relevant.

3.2.3 National Designations

Chiddingfold Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest¹²

Approximately 542.5 hectares of the Chiddingfold Forest complex is formally designated as a SSSI. Part of this lies in the western part of the Neighbourhood Plan area. It comprises an extensive network of semi-natural broadleaved woodland designated for its ancient woodland habitats, nationally important breeding bird assemblages, bat populations and rare invertebrates¹³.

The entire Neighbourhood Plan area is inside the SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) defined by Natural England. The IRZ identifies where development may pose risks to the SSSI's interest features. As such, the SEA framework should consider the potential for indirect effects arising from future growth including recreational pressure, changes to hydrology, air quality impacts and habitat fragmentation.

Surrey Hills National Landscape¹⁴

The northern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area borders the Surrey Hills National Landscape (Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), which carries the highest level of landscape protection in England. Public bodies have a statutory duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of this nationally important landscape. Any future policies or site allocations in this area must safeguard its defining characteristics including rural tranquillity, dark night skies, scenic qualities and key views into and out of the National Landscape. Development proposals must also have regard to the Surrey Hills National Landscape Management Plan and its objectives for conserving and enhancing landscape character.

A process is currently underway to extend Surrey Hills AONB, including a substantial part of Dunsfold Parish.

¹² Natural England Designated Sites View for Chiddingfold Forest SSSI:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1005561&SiteName=Chiddingfold%20forest&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

¹³ Forestry Commission, Chiddingfold Forest Plan:

https://www.forestryengland.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Chiddingfold%20Forest%20Forest%20Plan_0.pdf

¹⁴ Surrey Hills National Landscape: <https://surreyhills.org/>

3.3.4 Local Designations

Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs)

Dunsfold contains several SNCIs which are locally designated, non-statutory sites that form an important part of the parish's ecological network. Collectively these sites contribute to habitat connectivity, ecological resilience and biodiversity across the parish. They include:

- Botany Bay to Dursfold Wood;
- Burnwood Copse;
- Dunsfold Common and Green;
- Furnace Bridge Copse;
- Furtherfits;
- Hog Wood;
- Honeymead Copse;
- Hurlands Copse and Ireland Copse;
- Sayers Land, Jewings Hurst and Benbow Rew;
- Third's Copse and Merrow Farm Copse;
- Upper Ifold Farm Wood;
- Wrotham Great Copse.

3.3.5 Priority Habitats and Species

The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a diverse mosaic of woodland habitats, including Habitats of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (the NERC Act)¹⁵. The DEFRA Magic Map¹⁶ records areas of Deciduous Woodland, Wood Pasture and Parkland, and Ancient Woodland. This is closely linked to the nationally designated Chiddingfold Forest¹⁷, with the wider forest complex containing significant areas of broadleaf woodland including Oak, Birch, Ash, together with Conifer species such as Corsican Pine, Norway Spruce and Western Hemlock. The diverse habitats in the forest support numerous Species of Principal Importance listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act, together with a range of nationally important butterflies, moths, breeding birds and bats¹⁸. It is the only known location for Beton Casebearer (*Coleophora wockeella*) in the UK and the last stronghold for the Wood White butterfly (*Leptidea sinapis*) in east England, and supports rare and declining bird species such as the Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*). A wide variety of bat species have been recorded including barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) and Bechstein's bat (*Myotis*

¹⁵ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act):

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

¹⁶ Defra MAGIC Map (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside): <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

¹⁷ Forestry Commission, Chiddingfold Forest Plan:

https://www.forestryengland.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Chiddingfold%20Forest%20Forest%20Plan_0.pdf

¹⁸ Defra MAGIC Map (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside): <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

bechsteinii). The Dunsfold Amphibian Rescue Team are very active in saving and recording amphibians.

Other Section 41 habitats present in the Neighbourhood Plan area include Wet Woodland, Wood Pasture and Parkland, Traditional Orchards and an extensive network of Hedgerows. Their presence is evidenced through the Surrey Nature Partnership's Biodiversity Opportunity Area profile for the Chiddingfold & West Weald Woodlands¹⁹, which explicitly includes Dunsfold and Alfold. This identifies orchard remnants, veteran trees, ancient hedgerows, riparian alder stands, and woodland-associated species such as Barbastelle and Bechstein's bats. The DEFRA Magic Map²⁰ also identifies areas to the east and west of the Neighbourhood Plan area as Countryside Stewardship targeting zones for the Brown Hairstreak butterfly (*Thecla betulae*), reflecting opportunities to conserve and enhance habitat for this priority species.

Dunsfold's woodland habitats are ecologically sensitive, interconnected and of high conservation value. The conservation, enhancement and connectivity of these habitats and associated species are important considerations in the assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policies and any proposed site allocations, and in relation to potential impacts from recreational pressure, habitat fragmentation and changes in land management.

3.2.6 Future Baseline

Dunsfold's natural environment will be subject to a range of ongoing pressures associated with climate change, changes in land management and land use, recreational activity and development in the wider area. These pressures have the potential to affect biodiversity, the condition and connectivity of priority habitats and landscape character. Nationally and locally designated sites, including the Chiddingfold Forest SSSI, the Surrey Hills National Landscape and the parish's SNCIs will continue to benefit from existing statutory and policy protections. However, these designations may still be vulnerable to indirect and cumulative effects from development and changing patterns of land management.

Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, including periods of drought, heavy rainfall and higher average temperatures. These changes may alter habitat condition, affect species distributions, increase pressure from invasive non-native species and place additional stress on woodland, wetland and freshwater habitats.

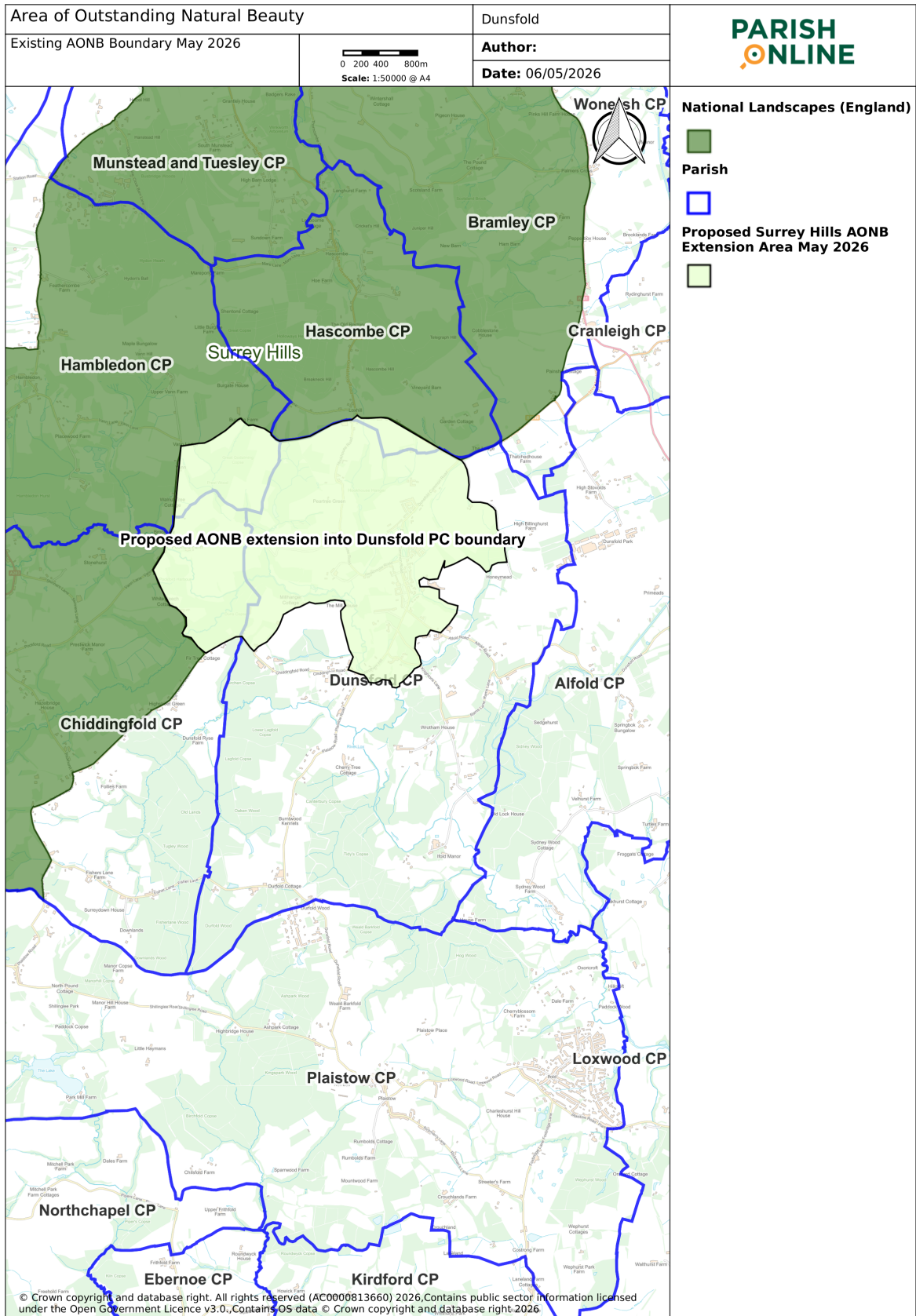
Habitat fragmentation and reduced ecological connectivity may also arise from incremental development unless opportunities for habitat enhancement are secured

¹⁹ Surrey Nature Partnership Biodiversity Opportunity Area profile, Chiddingfold & West Weald Woodlands: https://surreynaturepartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/appendix-8_low-weald-biodiversity-opportunity-area-policy-statements.pdf

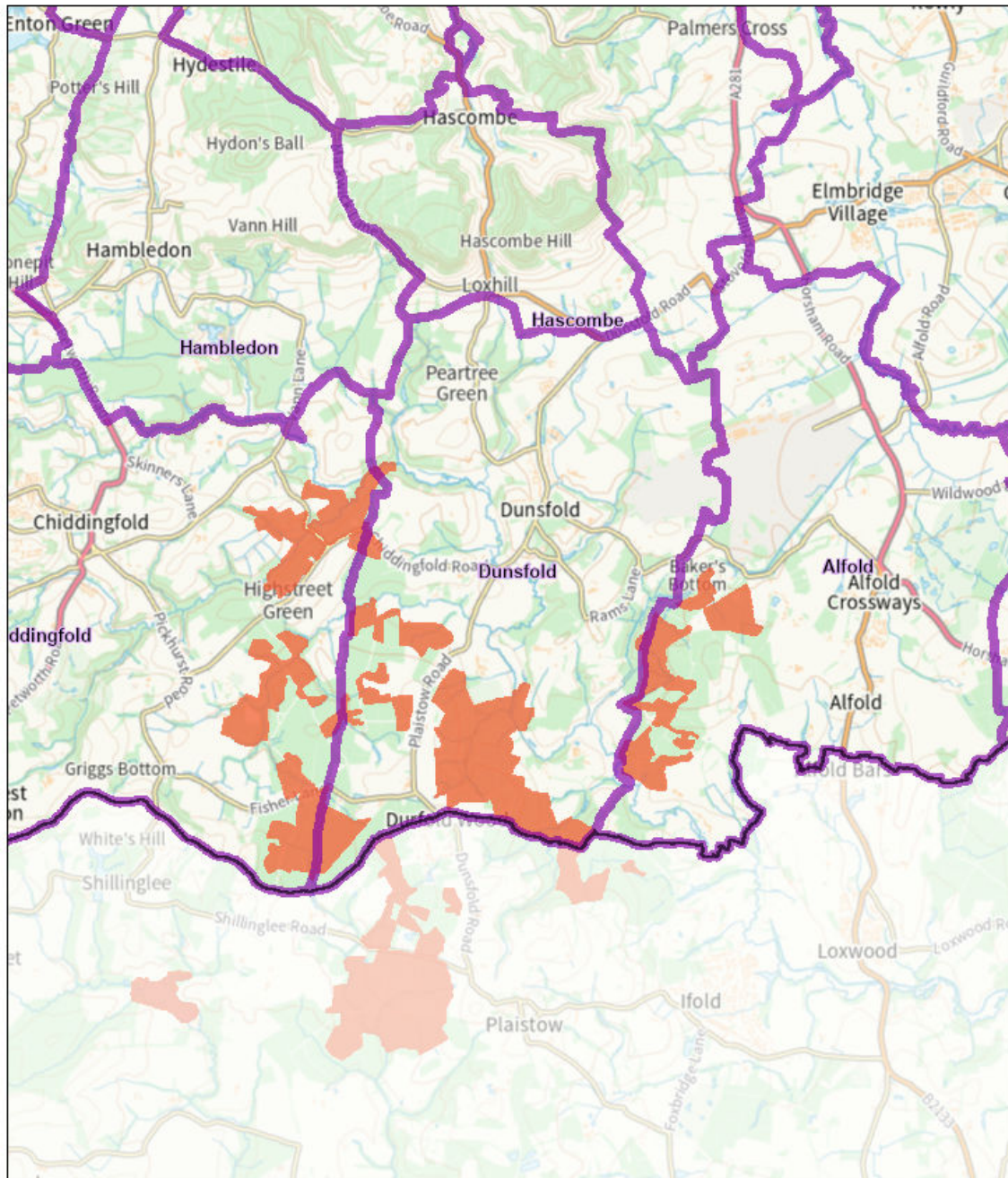
²⁰ Defra MAGIC Map (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside): <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

and qualifying development delivers biodiversity net gain.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to strengthen the protection and enhancement of Dunsfold's natural environment by supporting habitat conservation and restoration, reinforcing ecological networks, safeguarding landscape character and promoting biodiversity net gain where appropriate.



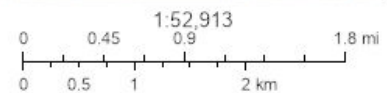
Surrey Interactive Map



06/05/2026, 14:04:34

 Boundary - Parish

 Environment - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)



© Crown copyright and database rights OS 100019613. You are granted a non-exclusive, royalty free, revocable licence solely to view the Licensed Data for non-commercial purposes for the period

SCC

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 Park²¹.

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 2024²³

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 Guidance²⁴

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 2022²⁶

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 CO₂e 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 CO₂e) exceeded the national average by over 50%, and household heating emissions (9.69 tonnes of CO₂e) 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% nationally³⁴. 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 fuels³⁶. The 2021 Census central heating data, summarised in the House of Commons Library briefing on off-grid households³⁷, 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 Research³⁸ 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 statistics³⁹.

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 Park⁴⁰. 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 Challenge⁴² 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 2010⁴⁴

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 2024⁴⁶

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 Guidance⁴⁷

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 2026⁴⁹

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 2022⁵⁰

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 flooding⁵¹.

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 Park⁵³, 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.

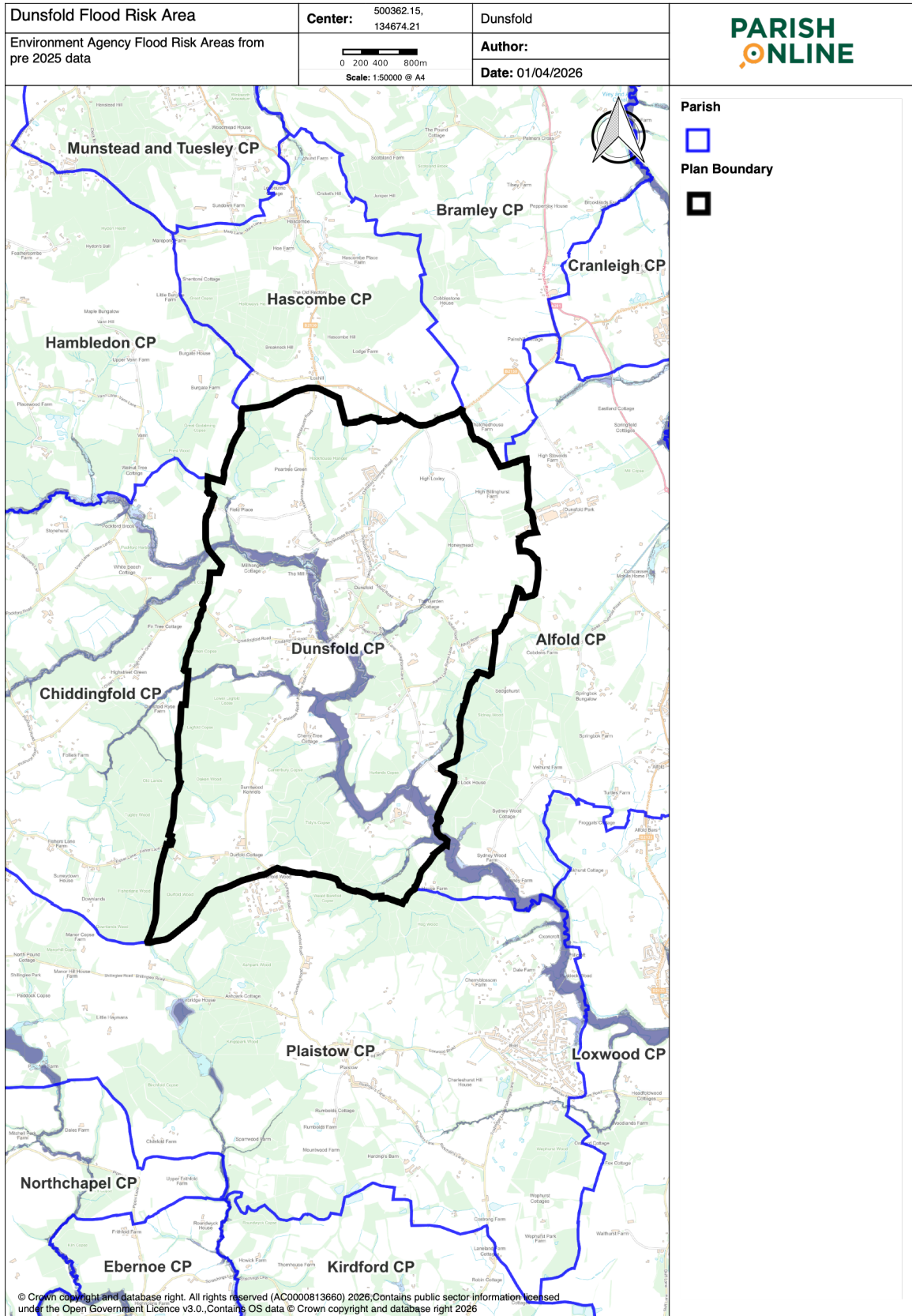
5.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Climate Change & Flooding)

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 Park⁵⁴, 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>



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 1990⁵⁵

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 2024⁵⁶

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 Guidance⁵⁷

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 Appraisals⁵⁹

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 Buildings⁶¹. The Heritage at Risk Register shows that none of the Listed Buildings are identified as being at risk⁶². 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 Park⁶³ 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>

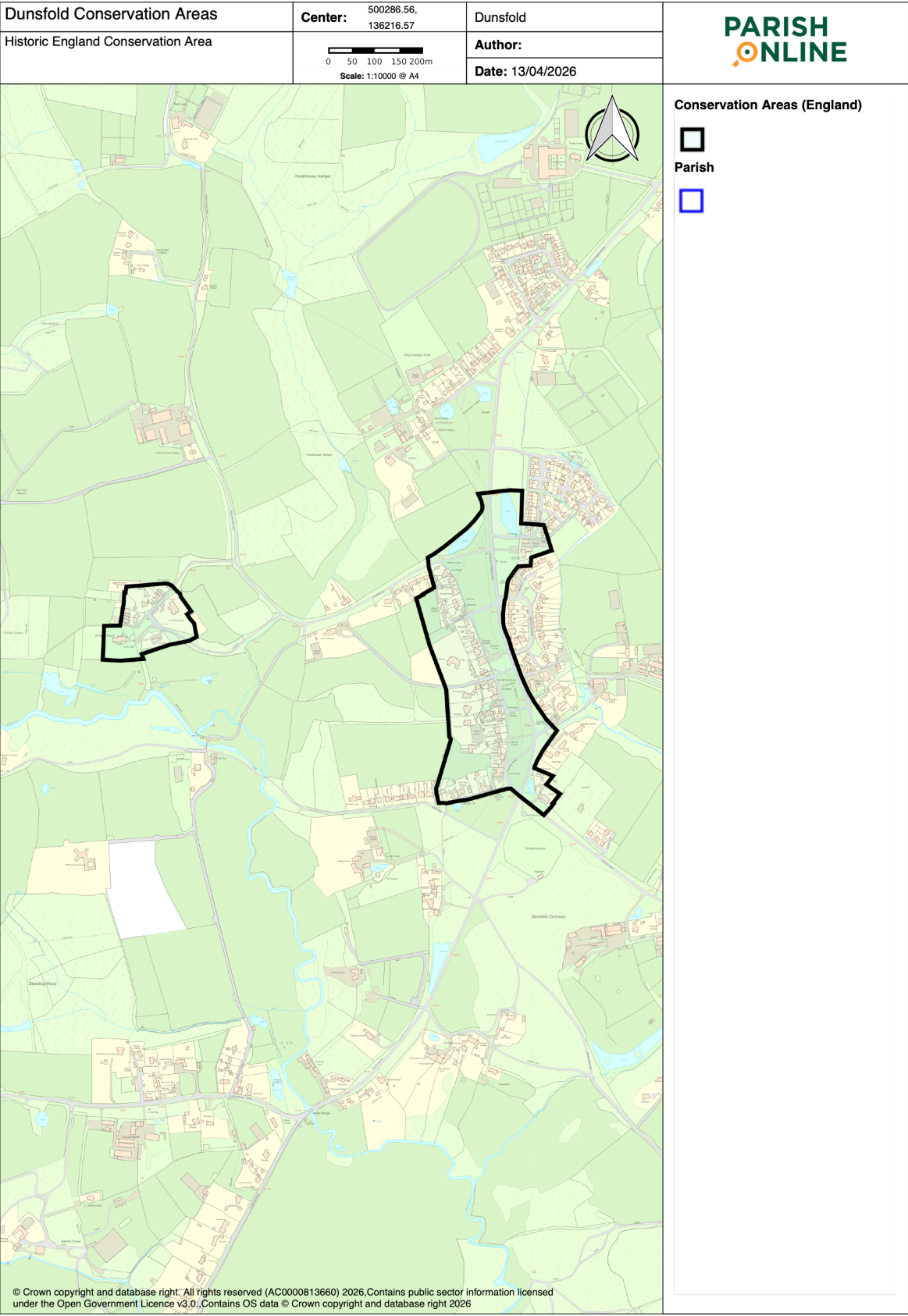
landscape character over time, despite the continued protection afforded through national legislation and local planning policy.

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.



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?

7. Use of Land

7.1 Use of Land Theme

The theme is:

Support the efficient and effective use of land.

This includes consideration of:

- reuse of buildings;
- development of brownfield land;
- best and most versatile agricultural land.

7.2 Legislative and Policy context

7.2.1 Legal and Policy Framework

The sustainable use of land is supported through national legislation, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles for seeking to encourage the efficient use of land whilst protecting environmental assets and the intrinsic character of the countryside, in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

7.2.2 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)⁶⁴

The Act establishes the statutory framework for preparing development plans that contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

7.2.3 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024⁶⁵

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 land use, including:

- promoting the effective use of land by encouraging the re-use of previously developed land where appropriate;

⁶⁴ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

⁶⁵ National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- making efficient use of land while responding to local character;
- recognising the economic and environmental value of BMV agricultural land;
- safeguarding mineral resources of local and national importance.

7.2.4 Planning Practice Guidance⁶⁶

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on the effective use of land and the preparation of evidence to support plan-making. It explains the importance of making efficient use of land, assessing land availability and suitability and identifying opportunities for development that meet identified needs while considering environmental constraints. The guidance supports a proportionate, evidence-based approach to decisions on the location, scale and type of development, taking account of factors such as infrastructure capacity, landscape character, biodiversity, agricultural land quality and flood risk.

7.2.5 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 1 (2018) and Part 2 (2023)⁶⁷

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the use of land theme include SP2 (Spatial Strategy), RE1 (Countryside Beyond the Green Belt), RE3 (Landscape Character), SS7 (New Settlement at Dunsfold Aerodrome), SS7A (Dunsfold Aerodrome Design Strategy), DM1 (Environmental Implications of Development) and DM15 (Development in rural areas).

7.2.6 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

The County council is responsible for preparing planning policy relating to mineral resources and waste management. The Surrey Minerals Plan and supplementary development plan documents form part of the statutory development plan and guide decisions on mineral extraction and the safeguarding of mineral resources, ensuring that development takes account of existing and potential mineral extraction.

- **Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011)⁶⁸**

The plan provides a framework for meeting the need for minerals while being prudent in the use of natural resources and addressing other mineral development issues, and reconciling economic demands with the social and environmental implications of mineral extraction. It contains strategic policies and site-specific

⁶⁶ Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁶⁷ Waverley Local Plan: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan>

⁶⁸ Surrey Minerals Plan: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/81439/Adopted-Core-Strategy-Development-Plan-Document.pdf

proposals for the period to 2026 supplemented by two development plan documents, a Primary Aggregates DPD and an Aggregates Recycling DPD.

- **Surrey Minerals Plan Primary Aggregates Joint Development Plan Document (2011)**⁶⁹

This identifies preferred areas for mineral extraction to meet need for primary aggregates (sharp sand and gravel and soft sand) in Surrey and includes policies relevant to primary aggregate extraction.

- **Surrey Aggregates Recycling Joint Development Plan Document (2011)**⁷⁰

The Plan forms part of the Surrey Minerals and Waste Development Framework. It sets out proposals for the provision of aggregates recycling facilities across Surrey for the period to 2026 and allocates sites for the location of aggregates recycling facilities.

7.3 Baseline Summary

7.3.1 Local Context

Land use in Dunsfold is characterised by a predominantly rural landscape comprising agricultural land, woodland, common land and dispersed settlement. The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a mixture of previously developed land associated with Dunsfold Aerodrome (Dunsfold Park⁷¹) and extensive areas of undeveloped countryside.

7.3.2 Agricultural Land

Much of the parish is in agricultural use, comprising a mixture of pasture, grazing land and smaller arable fields typical of the Low Weald. Agricultural land supports the local rural economy and contributes to the landscape character of the parish. The Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map for England (DEFRA, 2024)⁷² indicates that the Neighbourhood Plan area comprises Grade 3b agricultural land which is not classed as being the Best and Most Versatile. However, the predictive

⁶⁹ Surrey Minerals Plan Primary Aggregates Joint Development Plan Document: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/minerals-and-waste/minerals-core-strategy-development-plan/adopted-primary-aggregates-development-plan>

⁷⁰ Surrey Minerals Plan Aggregates Recycling Joint Development Plan Document: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/minerals-and-waste/minerals-core-strategy-development-plan/aggregates-recycling-joint-development-plan>

⁷¹ Dunsfold Park Garden Village: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village>

⁷² Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map for England (DEFRA, 2024): <https://environment.data.gov.uk/explore/a817d96f-271d-487b-89ad-48d271f931aa>

dataset provides a strategic indication, and definitive classification can only be established through a site-specific Agricultural Land Classification survey undertaken in accordance with the Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Guidelines for grading the quality of agricultural land (Defra and Welsh Government, 2025)⁷³.

7.3.3 Previously Developed Land

The main area of previously developed land in the parish is Dunsfold Park, the former aerodrome and industrial estate, which has been identified through the Local Plan as a strategic development location. Elsewhere there are relatively few brownfield development opportunities.

7.3.4 Mineral Resources

Parts of the parish lie in a Mineral Safeguarding Area for silica sand, a nationally important mineral resource recognised within the Surrey Minerals Plan. New non-mineral development in these areas may require consideration of mineral safeguarding requirements to avoid unnecessary sterilisation of economically valuable resources.

7.3.5 Settlement Pattern

The Neighbourhood Plan area is characterised by dispersed rural development centred on the historic village and common, together with isolated farmsteads and hamlets. This settlement pattern contributes strongly to the local distinctiveness of Dunsfold and limits opportunities for large-scale development outside planned Waverley Local Plan allocations.

7.3.6 Future Baseline

Land use in Dunsfold is likely to continue to evolve in response to strategic growth, changing agricultural practices and wider environmental pressures.

The delivery of the strategic allocation at Dunsfold Park, together with other development proposals, will increase demand for land for housing, employment, community facilities and supporting infrastructure. Future development is also likely to result in the permanent loss of some greenfield land, and changes in agricultural practices, land management and environmental policy will influence the use and management of farmland across the parish.

⁷³ Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Guidelines for grading the quality of agricultural land (Defra and Welsh Government, 2025): <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6257050620264448>

Parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area lie in a Mineral Safeguarding Area for silica sand. Safeguarding this resource will need to be balanced against the need for sustainable growth.

Future development will continue to be guided by national planning policy and the Waverley Local Plan, with continued emphasis likely to be placed on the redevelopment and efficient use of previously developed land. This will help to reduce pressure for development on open countryside in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Nonetheless, there is still likely to be incremental pressure on undeveloped land and the rural setting of the parish. The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to promote the efficient use of previously developed land, safeguard greenfield and BMV agricultural land (if identified), and protect the parish's rural character.

7.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Use of Land)

Key sustainability issues (use of land) are:

- Development has the potential to permanently reduce the extent of agricultural land, including BMV land. Once developed, this resource cannot readily be restored, highlighting the importance of directing development to the most appropriate locations and making the efficient use of previously developed land.
- The allocation and delivery of Dunsfold Park will result in significant changes to land use in the parish. Ensuring that development is well integrated with surrounding countryside and protects environmental assets will be an important consideration.
- Changes in land use can affect the integrity of the parish's network of fields, hedgerows, woodland and other green infrastructure. Retaining and enhancing these features will be important for biodiversity, landscape character and climate resilience.
- National planning policy seeks to make the effective use of land by prioritising previously developed land where appropriate and encouraging higher quality, well-designed development that minimises unnecessary land use while respecting local character.
- The Neighbourhood Plan will need to balance the demand for housing, employment, infrastructure, recreation, agriculture and nature conservation. Decisions on future land use should support sustainable development and safeguard the environmental qualities that define Dunsfold.

7.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Use of Land)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Support the efficient and effective use of land.	Make effective use of previously developed land and promote the re-use of buildings where appropriate? Minimise the unnecessary loss of greenfield and agricultural land, particularly any identified as being BMV agricultural land? Protect the character and function of the open countryside? Safeguarded mineral resources? Support development that respects the existing settlement pattern and makes the efficient use of land?

8. Community Needs

8.1 Community Theme

The theme is:

Meet the diverse needs of the community (current and future residents).

This includes consideration of:

- community facilities in the area;
- types and sizes of residential accommodation;
- housing to meet specialist needs;
- housing in sustainable locations, with access to local facilities and services.

8.2 Legislative and Policy context

8.2.1 Legal and Policy Framework

The Community needs theme is informed through national legislation, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles for supporting healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities by meeting identified housing needs, providing sufficient community infrastructure and enabling access to services and facilities, in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

8.2.2 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)⁷⁴

The Act establishes the statutory framework for preparing development plans that contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

8.2.3 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024⁷⁵

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 community needs, including:

- supporting the delivery of sufficient homes to meet identified needs;

⁷⁴ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

⁷⁵ National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- providing an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures reflecting local circumstances;
- identifying and addressing the housing needs of different groups, including older people, people with disabilities and those requiring affordable housing.
- supporting the provision of community facilities and services;
- ensuring that development is supported by the necessary infrastructure.

8.2.4 Planning Practice Guidance⁷⁶

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on assessing housing need, planning for different groups in the community and ensuring that infrastructure is planned alongside development. It also advises that Neighbourhood Plans should be informed by proportionate and up to date evidence reflecting local circumstances.

8.2.5 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 1 (2018) and Part 2 (2023)⁷⁷

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the community theme include ST1 (Sustainable Development), ALH1 (The Amount and Location of Housing), AHN1 (Affordable Housing on Development Sites), AHN2 (Rural Exception Sites), ICS1 (Infrastructure and Community Facilities), LRC1 (Leisure and Recreation Facilities), EE1 (New Economic Development), NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), DM1 (Environmental Implications of Development) and DM4 (Quality Places through design).

8.2.6 Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan: Infrastructure Delivery Schedule Update October 2024⁷⁸

The Plan identifies existing infrastructure provision, capacity constraints and future infrastructure requirements associated with planned growth across the borough. It considers education, healthcare, transport, utilities, green infrastructure and sports and community facilities.

⁷⁶ Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁷⁷ Waverley Local Plan: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan>

⁷⁸ Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan: Infrastructure Delivery Schedule Update October 2024: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/cil-s106-and-planning-obligations/bidding-for-cil-money>

8.2.7 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

Surrey County Council is responsible for planning and delivering a range of strategic infrastructure and services that support community needs including education, highways and transport.

- **Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 (LTP4)**⁷⁹

LTP4 sets out the strategic framework for transport in Surrey, seeking to improve accessibility to employment, education, healthcare and community facilities through a safe, sustainable and integrated transport network.

- **Surrey Infrastructure Plan (2020)**⁸⁰

The Plan provides a strategic framework for identifying and prioritising infrastructure investment across Surrey to support sustainable growth. It complements district and borough Infrastructure Delivery Plans by considering infrastructure needs at the county level.

8.3 Baseline Summary

8.3.1 Local Context

Dunsfold is a rural parish with a dispersed settlement pattern centred on the historic village and the strategic allocation at Dunsfold Park. Community needs are influenced by the availability of housing, access to services and facilities, transport connectivity and the capacity of local infrastructure. National Census data and the Waverley evidence base indicate an ageing population, changing household characteristics and continuing demand for a range of housing types and community facilities.

8.3.2 Housing Need and Population

The 2021 Census recorded a resident population in Dunsfold Parish of 1,129 people. The parish has an older age profile than England as a whole, with approximately 24% of residents aged 65 years and over⁸¹ compared with 18.6% nationally⁸². This, together with national demographic trends showing an increase in the number of

⁷⁹ Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 (LTP4): <https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/commonplace-customer-assets/surreyltp4/Surrey%20Transport%20Plan.pdf>

⁸⁰ Surrey Infrastructure Plan 2020: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/development/surrey-future/surrey-infrastructure-study>

⁸¹ Nomis ONS Census 2021 Parish Profile: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021_pp

⁸² Office for National Statistics, Population and household estimates, England and Wales Statistical bulletins: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/previousreleases>

one-person households and changing household structures, is influencing the type and size of homes and community services required in the parish. The 2021 Census recorded that 30.2% of households in England and Wales were one-person households, highlighting the importance of considering a range of housing to meet changing needs.

Dunsfold is a predominantly rural parish with a dispersed settlement pattern and a mix of dwelling types and tenures. The Waverley Local Plan⁸³ recognises the need to provide an appropriate mix of housing, including affordable housing, to meet the needs of different groups in the community. The Local Plan is supported by a range of evidence base documents, including the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015)⁸⁴, that informed the Borough's assessment of housing need and housing mix.

The strategic allocation at Dunsfold Park⁸⁵ will deliver a substantial proportion of the borough's future housing supply, significantly increasing the local population over the plan period. This growth will alter demand for services, facilities and infrastructure in Dunsfold parish and the surrounding area.

8.3.3 Community Infrastructure and Services

Dunsfold benefits from a range of local community assets. However, the rural nature of the parish means that many higher-order services, jobs and healthcare facilities are accessed in nearby settlements including Cranleigh, Godalming and Guildford.

The Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan⁸⁶ identifies that planned growth across the borough will require ongoing investment in transport, education, healthcare, utilities, green infrastructure and community facilities to ensure that infrastructure capacity keeps pace with development. Infrastructure planning therefore remains an important consideration in accommodating future growth. The dispersed settlement pattern also means that many residents remain reliant on private vehicles to access employment, healthcare and other essential services, although opportunities exist to improve walking, cycling and public transport connectivity where feasible.

⁸³ Waverley Local Plan: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan>

⁸⁴ West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015) and other Waverley Local Plan Evidence Documents: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan/evidence-and-supporting-documents>

⁸⁵ Dunsfold Park Garden Village: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village>

⁸⁶ Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan: Infrastructure Delivery Schedule Update October 2024: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/cil-s106-and-planning-obligations/bidding-for-cil-money>

8.3.4 Future Baseline

Without appropriate planning and infrastructure investment, continued population growth and demographic change will increase pressure on housing, community facilities and local infrastructure.

An ageing population and the changing pattern of household formation is likely to increase demand for a wider range of housing types, including smaller homes, accessible housing and affordable housing. Failure to respond to these needs could reduce housing choice and affordability. Population growth associated with strategic development is also likely to increase demand for education, healthcare, recreation, utilities and community facilities. Without timely infrastructure delivery, existing services may experience capacity constraints.

The parish's rural location means maintaining access to essential services and improving sustainable transport options, to reducing reliance on private car travel and support social inclusion, will be challenging.

The delivery of significant new housing will alter the demographic profile of the Neighbourhood Plan area, increasing demand for community facilities, public open space, leisure opportunities and social infrastructure. The effective integration of new and existing communities will become increasingly important.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to secure housing, community facilities and local infrastructure that meets the specific needs of Dunsfold.

8.4 Key Sustainability Issues

Key sustainability issues (community needs) are:

- Ensuring that the type, size and tenure of new housing respond to identified local needs.
- Maintaining the affordability of housing for existing and future residents.
- Ensuring that community infrastructure, including education, healthcare, recreation and utilities, keeps pace with planned growth.
- Protecting and enhancing valued community facilities and local services. Improving accessibility to services, employment and facilities, particularly through sustainable transport options.
- Supporting the successful integration of new development with the existing community while maintaining Dunsfold's rural character.

8.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Community)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Meet the diverse needs of the community (current and future residents).	Support the delivery of housing that reflects identified local needs, including an appropriate mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures? Contribute to the provision of affordable housing where appropriate? Protect and enhance existing community facilities and services? Support the timely provision of infrastructure required to accommodate planned growth? Improve access to community facilities, healthcare, education, recreation and local services by sustainable modes of transport? Promote healthy, inclusive and socially cohesive communities? Ensure that new development is integrated with existing communities and contributes positively to local character and quality of life?

9. Health and Wellbeing

9.1 Health Theme

The theme is:

Improve health and wellbeing of people living and working in the area.

This includes consideration of:

- access to healthcare, community facilities and services;
- opportunities for physical activity, recreation and active travel;
- access to green infrastructure and the natural environment;
- the design and quality of the built environment;
- social inclusion and community cohesion;
- the needs of vulnerable and ageing populations;
- the relationship between development, environmental quality and health outcomes.

9.2 Legislative and Policy context

9.2.1 legal and Policy Framework

The Health and Wellbeing theme is informed through national legislation, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles for ensuring that the built environment, access to services, opportunities for physical activity and the quality of green infrastructure, all contribute towards the achievement of healthy outcomes in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

9.2.2 Health and Social Care Act 2012⁸⁷

Under the Act, Local Authorities gained responsibility for public health. This requires them to improve local population health and, through Health and Wellbeing Boards, produce Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies to guide local priorities and commissioning.

⁸⁷ Health and Social Care Act 2012: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents>

9.2.3 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024⁸⁸

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 health and wellbeing, including:

- promoting healthy and safe communities;
- identifying the importance of access to community facilities, opportunities for social interaction, safe and accessible green spaces and the provision of infrastructure required to support healthy lifestyles;
- promoting well-designed places that support the health and wellbeing of communities through measures such as high-quality public spaces, sustainable transport opportunities and access to green infrastructure.

9.2.4 Planning Practice Guidance⁸⁹

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on how the planning system can promote healthy and safe communities. It highlights the role of planning in creating environments that support healthier lifestyles, including through access to green infrastructure, open space, recreation facilities, active travel opportunities and high-quality design.

9.2.6 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 1 (2018) and Part 2 (2023)⁹⁰

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the health theme include SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), ICS1 (Infrastructure and Community Facilities), LRC1 (Leisure, Recreation and Culture), TD1 (Townscape and Design), DM1 (Environmental implications of Development), DM4 (Quality Places Through Design), DM5 (Safeguarding Amenity), and DM15 (Development in rural areas).

⁸⁸ National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁸⁹ Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁹⁰ Waverley Local Plan: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan>

9.2.7 Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan: Infrastructure Delivery Schedule Update October 2024⁹¹

The plan identifies existing infrastructure provision, capacity constraints and future infrastructure requirements associated with planned growth across the borough. It considers education, healthcare, transport, utilities, green infrastructure and sports and community facilities.

9.2.8 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

Surrey County Council has statutory responsibilities for public health, social care, education, highways and other services that contribute to community wellbeing. Through its public health function, the Council works to reduce inequalities and support healthier communities. It provides information on local health needs and priorities that can inform planning decisions and the assessment of development on health and wellbeing.

- **Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2026 to 2030)⁹²**

This guidance sets out strategic policies for improving health and wellbeing across the county.

- **Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), last updated January 2025⁹³**

The JSNA provides the evidence base on local health needs and inequalities to inform service planning and decision-making.

- **Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 (LTP4)⁹⁴**

LTP4 sets out the strategic framework for transport in Surrey, promoting walking, cycling and public transport alongside improved accessibility to employment, education, healthcare and community facilities. These measures support healthier lifestyles, reduce transport inequalities and contribute to improved health and wellbeing.

⁹¹ Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan: Infrastructure Delivery Schedule Update October 2024: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/cil-s106-and-planning-obligations/bidding-for-cil-money>

⁹² Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy: <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/about/strategy/surrey-health-and-well-being-strategy>

⁹³ Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/professionals/information-and-resources/commissioning-strategies/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

⁹⁴ Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 (LTP4): <https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/commonplace-customer-assets/surreyltp4/Surrey%20Transport%20Plan.pdf>

9.3 Baseline Summary

9.3.1 Local Context

Health and wellbeing outcomes are influenced by access to services, opportunities for recreation and physical activity, transport connections, housing quality and the quality of the natural environment. As a rural community, Dunsfold benefits from extensive access to countryside, public rights of way, woodland and open landscapes which provide opportunities for recreation and contribute to mental wellbeing. However, the dispersed settlement pattern means that access to healthcare, employment, retail and specialist services often requires travel to larger nearby settlements. The health and wellbeing baseline considers the factors that influence the quality of life of existing and future residents including access to services and facilities, community infrastructure, opportunities for recreation and active lifestyles, and the characteristics of the local population.

9.3.2 Access to Healthcare and Essential Services

Access to healthcare infrastructure is a key component of creating sustainable and resilient communities. Dunsfold is a rural parish where access to services is shaped by its dispersed settlement pattern and reliance on nearby settlements. Following the closure of the Dunsfold branch surgery in 2023, residents primarily access GP services at Chiddingfold Surgery and other nearby practices. Access to healthcare and wider community services is dependent on the availability of private vehicles, public transport and community transport options for some residents.

The Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2024⁹⁵ identifies healthcare provision as a critical element of planned growth and emphasises the need for continued collaboration between local planning authorities, NHS bodies and infrastructure providers to ensure that services can meet future demand. More broadly, the availability of healthcare, education, community facilities and local services plays an essential role in supporting the health, wellbeing and long-term resilience of the parish.

9.3.3 Ageing Population and Changing Health Needs

Like many rural areas, Dunsfold has an ageing population profile. Approximately 24% of residents are 65 years and over⁹⁶ compared with 18.6% nationally⁹⁷. This

⁹⁵ Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan: Infrastructure Delivery Schedule Update October 2024: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/cil-s106-and-planning-obligations/bidding-for-cil-money>

⁹⁶ Nomis ONS Census 2021 Parish Profile: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021_pp

⁹⁷ Office for National Statistics, Population and household estimates, England and Wales Statistical bulletins: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/previousreleases>

increases the importance of accessible housing, opportunities for social interaction, and accessible transport and community facilities, that enable people to remain independent. Local community facilities, including village halls, recreation facilities and community groups, are vital and provide important opportunities for social interaction and community cohesion.

9.3.4 Access to Green Infrastructure and Recreation

The Neighbourhood Plan area benefits from extensive countryside, woodland, public rights of way and informal recreation opportunities. These provide opportunities for walking, recreation and contact with nature, contributing to both physical and mental wellbeing.

9.3.5 Active Travel and Rural Accessibility

The rural nature of Dunsfold means that many journeys are undertaken by private car due to distances between homes, services and employment. Opportunities for walking and cycling are influenced by the availability, safety and connectivity of routes.

9.3.6 Future Baseline

Without appropriate planning and investment, demographic change and future development pressures could increase challenges associated with health and wellbeing. An ageing population and population growth will increase demand for healthcare, community facilities, recreation and accessible places. Growth associated with Dunsfold Park⁹⁸ and wider housing delivery may increase demand for existing facilities unless infrastructure is delivered alongside development.

Poorly designed development could reduce access to green infrastructure, recreation facilities and walking routes, limiting opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. Without improvements to sustainable transport options, rural isolation and reliance on private vehicles may also continue to limit access to services and opportunities for active travel.

Increasing temperatures, extreme weather events and environmental pressures may affect vulnerable groups and increase the importance of climate-resilient buildings, green infrastructure and accessible public spaces.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to address these challenges by supporting an appropriate mix of housing to meet local needs, protecting and

⁹⁸ Dunsfold Park Garden Village: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/strategic-and-waverley-owned-developments/dunsfold-park-garden-village>

enhancing community facilities and infrastructure, promoting active travel and access to open space, and encouraging high-quality and accessible development and climate resilient buildings.

9.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Health and Wellbeing)

Key sustainability issues (health and wellbeing) are:

- Ensuring that future development supports healthy, inclusive and socially connected communities.
- Improving access to healthcare, services and facilities for residents of a rural parish.
- Providing housing and environments that respond to an ageing population and changing health needs.
- Protecting and enhancing access to green infrastructure, recreation and public rights of way.
- Supporting walking, cycling and sustainable transport opportunities.
- Ensuring infrastructure provision keeps pace with population growth.

9.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Health)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Improve health and wellbeing of people living and working in the area.	Improve access to healthcare, community facilities, recreation and local services? Support opportunities for physical activity, walking and cycling? Protect and enhance access to green infrastructure and the countryside? Promote development that supports social interaction and community cohesion? Address the needs of an ageing population and vulnerable groups? Ensure that new development is supported by appropriate infrastructure? Create safe, attractive and inclusive places that contribute positively to mental and physical wellbeing?

10. Air, Water and Soil

10.1 Air, water and soil Theme

The theme is:

Protect air, water and soil quality.

This includes consideration of:

- Reducing need to travel;
- impacts on water, air and soil quality;
- water consumption.

10.2 Legislative and Policy context

10.2.1 Legal and Policy Framework

The protection and enhancement of air, water and soil resources is informed through national legislation, national planning policy and the local development plan. Together these establish the principles to minimise pollution, protect natural resources, ensure sustainable water management and safeguard soils that support biodiversity, agriculture and ecosystems, in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

10.2.2 Environment Act 2021⁹⁹

The Act establishes a framework for improving environmental quality through legally binding targets and measures for nature recovery, with implications for how development considers impacts on natural resources and ecosystems.

10.2.3 The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017¹⁰⁰

The Regulations establish the framework for protecting and improving the water environment, requiring the prevention of deterioration of water bodies and the achievement of good ecological status.

⁹⁹ Environment Act 2021: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents>

¹⁰⁰ The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/407>

10.2.4 Environmental Protection Act 1990¹⁰¹

The Act provides the framework for controlling pollution and managing contaminated land, including responsibilities relating to land contamination and pollution risks.

10.2.5 National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024¹⁰²

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 air, water and soil, including:

- requiring development to avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from pollution, while ensuring that water quality and resources are protected;
- recognising the importance of protecting soils, including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

10.2.6 Planning Practice Guidance¹⁰³

The PPG supports the implementation of the NPPF by providing detailed guidance on how planning can manage environmental impacts associated with air, water and soil. It explains how planning decisions should consider pollution risks, air quality impacts, water efficiency, flood risk, land contamination and the sustainable management of land and natural resources. The guidance supports an evidence-based approach to identifying environmental constraints and ensuring that development avoids or mitigates adverse impacts.

10.2.8 Waverley Borough Local Plan, Part 1 (2018) and Part 2 (2023)¹⁰⁴

The Local Plan provides the strategic planning framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared. Policies relevant to the air, water and soil theme include NE1 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation), NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), CC2 (Sustainable Construction and Design), Policies CC4 (Flood Risk Management), DM1 (Environmental Implications of Development) and DM11 (Trees, Woodland, Hedgerows and Landscaping).

¹⁰¹ Environment Protection Act 1990: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>

¹⁰² National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

¹⁰³ Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

¹⁰⁴ Waverley Local Plan: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/existing-local-plan>

10.2.9 Surrey County Council Policy and Guidance

Surrey County Council has a key role in managing environmental matters relevant to the air, water and soil theme. As the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) it is responsible for managing local flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses through the Surrey Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. It is also the minerals and waste planning authority, with responsibilities for ensuring the sustainable management of mineral resources, waste and land restoration. Through its transport functions, including preparation of the Surrey Local Transport Plan, the County Council also has a role in supporting measures that can influence air quality, such as reducing emissions from transport and encouraging more sustainable travel.

- **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 Transport Plan 2022-2032 (LTP4)**

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

- **Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011)¹⁰⁵**

The plan provides a framework for meeting the need for minerals while being prudent in the use of natural resources and addressing other mineral development issues, and reconciling economic demands with the social and environmental implications of mineral extraction. It contains strategic policies and site-specific proposals for the period to 2026 supplemented by two development plan documents, a Primary Aggregates DPD and an Aggregates Recycling DPD.

- **Surrey Minerals Plan Primary Aggregates Joint Development Plan Document (2011)¹⁰⁶**

This identifies preferred areas for mineral extraction to meet need for primary aggregates (sharp sand and gravel and soft sand) in Surrey and includes policies relevant to primary aggregate extraction.

¹⁰⁵ Surrey Minerals Plan: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/81439/Adopted-Core-Strategy-Development-Plan-Document.pdf

¹⁰⁶ Surrey Minerals Plan Primary Aggregates Joint Development Plan Document: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/minerals-and-waste/minerals-core-strategy-development-plan/adopted-primary-aggregates-development-plan>

- **Surrey Aggregates Recycling Joint Development Plan Document (2011)**¹⁰⁷

The Plan forms part of the Surrey Minerals and Waste Development Framework. It sets out proposals for the provision of aggregates recycling facilities across Surrey for the period to 2026 and allocates sites for the location of aggregates recycling facilities.

10.3 Baseline Summary

10.3.1 Local Context

Dunsfold is located within the Low Weald, an area characterised by clay soils, extensive woodland, agricultural land and a network of watercourses and drainage features. The quality of air, water and soils within the Neighbourhood Plan area is influenced by its rural character, dispersed settlement pattern, agricultural activity, transport routes and the underlying geology.

National data on off-grid properties indicates very limited mains-gas coverage across Waverley with 85-95% of homes off the gas grid, meaning most dwellings rely on alternative heating fuels¹⁰⁸. The 2021 Census central heating data, summarised in the House of Commons Library briefing on off-grid households, shows that rural off-grid households are significantly more likely to rely on other forms of heating including solid fuels¹⁰⁹.

10.3.2 Air Quality

The air quality in Dunsfold parish is generally good, reflecting its rural location and distance from major emission sources. DEFRA's 2021-based background maps¹¹⁰ show low concentrations of NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} across Waverley, including Dunsfold, with levels well below national air quality objectives. Waverley Borough Council's 2025 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)¹¹¹ confirms that there is no Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

¹⁰⁷ Surrey Minerals Plan Aggregates Recycling Joint Development Plan Document: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/minerals-and-waste/minerals-core-strategy-development-plan/aggregates-recycling-joint-development-plan>

¹⁰⁸ 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=>

¹⁰⁹ 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>

¹¹⁰ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), UK Air Background Mapping data for local authorities: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/laqm-background-home>¹¹⁰

¹¹¹ Waverley Borough council 2025 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR), July 2025: <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/portals/0/documents/services/environmental-concerns/pollution-control/air%20quality/2025%20air%20quality%20status%20report.pdf>

Dunsfold parish contains no A-roads or major traffic generators. The B2130, which runs along the northern part of the parish, is not identified as a significant pollution source in the ASR and borough-wide evidence shows that air quality issues are concentrated in urban centres and major road corridors rather than rural villages.

The ASR notes that domestic combustion, including wood-burning, contributes to particulate emissions in rural areas. This is consistent with DEFRA background modelling which incorporates domestic heating as a source of PM_{2.5}.

There are no monitoring stations in Dunsfold parish. Borough-wide monitoring shows continued compliance with national air quality objectives and gradual improvement in background pollutant levels.

The rural location and extensive woodland provide carbon storage and natural air quality benefits.

10.3.3 Water

The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a network of watercourses, drainage ditches and ponds, including the River Lox and the wider Wey catchment. These water features are important for biodiversity, landscape character and local drainage. Water quality can be affected by agricultural runoff, surface water drainage, wastewater infrastructure pressures and pollution incidents. The impermeable Weald Clay geology limits infiltration, increasing surface runoff and the potential for pollutants to be transported into watercourses during heavy rainfall events.

Wastewater infrastructure is an important consideration due to the rural nature of the parish, with some properties relying on private drainage systems.

10.3.4 Soils and Land Quality

Dunsfold is predominantly underlain by Weald Clay resulting in heavy, poorly drained soils that influence agriculture, biodiversity and flood risk. The protection of soil resources is important due to their role in supporting agriculture, biodiversity, carbon storage, water regulation and landscape character.

10.3.5 Future Baseline

Pressures on air quality, water resources and soil health are likely to increase because of climate change, development growth and rising demands on infrastructure. More frequent periods of drought and intense rainfall are expected to

affect water availability, runoff patterns and water quality, consistent with projections from the UK Climate Change Committee¹¹².

The continued loss of soil resources through new development and impermeable surfaces may reduce the ability of soils to support agriculture, biodiversity, carbon storage and natural water management, potentially increasing surface water runoff and pressure on drainage systems.

Increased traffic associated with development growth could contribute to localised increases in vehicle emissions if not appropriately managed, although overall air quality in rural Waverley is expected to remain good based on current DEFRA background mapping and Waverley Borough Council's ASR.

A significant proportion of housing in the parish is older and not connected to the mains gas network. These homes are generally more difficult and costly to retrofit to modern low-carbon heating systems. Without targeted local measures, uptake of low-carbon heating, 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 less polluting forms of heating may be gradual, and reliance on solid-fuel heating may persist in some properties.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to protect and enhance environmental quality by promoting development that does not adversely affect wastewater capacity or water quality, incorporates sustainable drainage, protects important soils and water features, supports sustainable transport, accelerates the shift towards cleaner heating, low carbon technologies and energy efficient buildings, and ensures development is located and designed to minimise pollution risks.

¹¹² Climate Change Committee, a Well-Adapted UK: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/a-well-adapted-uk/>

10.4 Key Sustainability Issues (Air, Water & Soil)

Key sustainability issues (natural environment) are:

- Maintaining the generally good air quality within the parish and minimising emissions from transport and domestic heating.
- Protecting water resources and water quality from pollution.
- Managing surface water runoff in response to the impermeable Weald Clay geology through sustainable drainage and natural water management measures.
- Ensuring wastewater infrastructure has sufficient capacity to accommodate future development without adversely affecting the water environment.
- Protecting soil resources.
- Avoiding pollution, land contamination and the unnecessary loss of permeable land and soil through inappropriate development.
- Supporting the transition to cleaner heating, improved energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies in areas with a high proportion of off-gas-grid properties.

10.5 SEA Objectives and Questions (Air, Water, Soil)

SEA Objective	Questions for assessment
Protect air, water and soil quality.	Avoid development that would result in unacceptable impacts on air quality? Protect water resources (minimise water consumption) and prevent deterioration of water quality? Ensure adequate wastewater and drainage infrastructure is available? Minimise impacts on soils, including the loss of agricultural land and soil functions? Avoid or remediate land contamination where relevant? Promote sustainable drainage and nature-based solutions to manage water? Reduce the need to travel and promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including public transport and active travel?

11. Contact



Urban Vision Enterprise

uvecic.co.uk

info@uvecic.co.uk

01538 386221 (Leek Office)

Midlands Office:

Foxlowe Arts Centre (1st Floor), Stockwell Street, Leek, Staffs, ST13 6AD

Northwest Office:

Suite 15 Oriel Chambers, 14 Water Street, Liverpool, L2 8TD



Urban Vision Enterprise comprises UVE Planning Limited (Company Number 15166024) and Urban Vision Enterprise CIC (Company No. 7690116). Registered address: Foxlowe Arts Centre (1st Floor), Stockwell Street, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 6AD