



LOXLEY PARISH

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

— COMMUNITY GUIDING GROWTH —

2011 - 2031

Referendum Version

December 2019

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced under the Localism Act 2011. This became law in April 2012 and aims to give local people more say in the future of where they live.
- 1.2 Once approved under a local referendum, this Neighbourhood Development Plan will, after independent scrutiny, be adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) as part of the Development Plan to be used when determining planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.3 The Neighbourhood Development Plan will become part of the statutory Development Plan alongside SDC's Core Strategy.
- 1.4 For Loxley, this is a great opportunity for people living in the village to decide how the village should evolve in the years up to 2031. The Plan contains the vision for Loxley that was developed through consultation with the local community and key stakeholders, and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.
- 1.5 This Plan is in general conformity with the strategic direction of the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011 to 2031 which was adopted on 11 July 2016.
- 1.6 Policies within this Plan will allow the village to develop through small scale organic growth, meeting the housing needs of the community while at the same time preserving the importance of the open countryside, rural landscape and numerous heritage assets. It also considers the infrastructure needed to support such growth.
- 1.7 A Neighbourhood Development Plan must have appropriate regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and related Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This Plan will demonstrate how the sustainability objectives of the Government are implemented through local policies.
- 1.8 The Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide and the Landscape Sensitivity Study 2011 also provide essential guidance along with the evidence base supporting the Core Strategy.
- 1.9 On 18 February 2016, SDC approved Loxley Parish Council as an appropriate 'qualifying body' to submit a Neighbourhood Development Plan. It also approved the Neighbourhood Area which our Plan will cover.
- 1.10 The boundary of the Neighbourhood Area is contiguous with that of Loxley Parish (Figure 1).

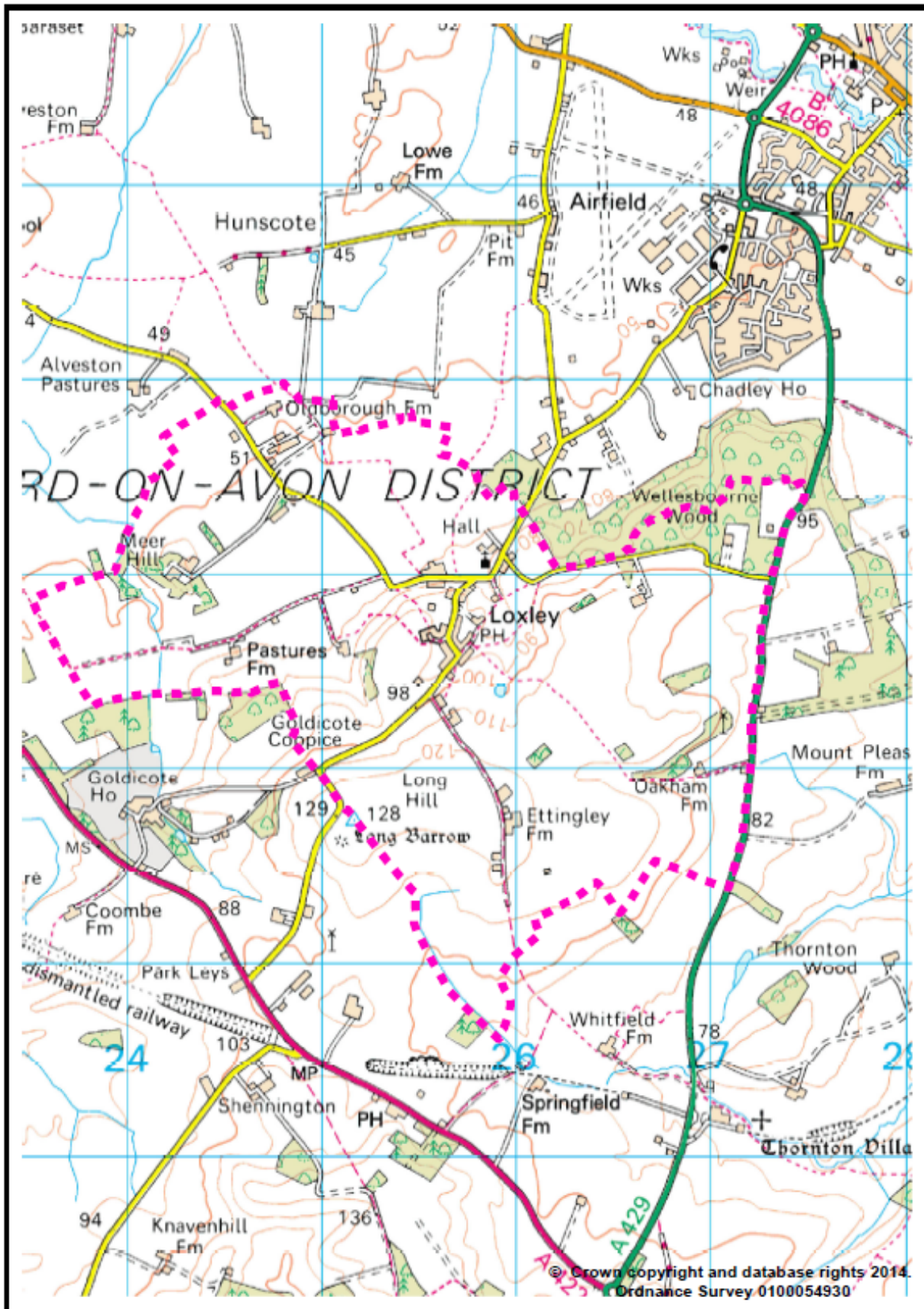


Figure 1 - The Neighbourhood Plan Area

2.0 Loxley's Heritage & Development Context

- 2.1 This section sets out the history of Loxley to the present day. In drawing on the evidence base and community views developed as part of the NDP process, including a detailed community survey, it aims to clearly identify the key social, economic and environmental issues.

These issues underpin the vision, goals, objectives and actions detailed in the following sections of this Plan. Delivering the actions identified will be key to addressing the issues highlighted.

The built and natural environment - preserving valued characteristics

- 2.2 This section begins by examining *what is it about the environment of Loxley that makes it special* and that the Plan should seek to protect.

Built environment - ancient origins

- 2.3 Loxley is an ancient settlement whose origins can be dated back to the Roman occupation. It became more permanently settled in medieval times and the village is recorded in the Domesday Book. Evidence from this period can still be seen in the landscape today, in the distinctive ridge and furrow patterns in some fields, as well as the built environment. The oldest structure remaining in the village is St Nicholas Church, which includes evidence of Saxon work from around the 8th century and other features dating from the 13th century. Loxley Farm is also of medieval origin, retaining its thatch it is one of three listed buildings in the village. While the village is not unique, this legacy does make it 'special'.

Natural environment – quality and setting

- 2.4 The sensitivity of the development context is heightened by its topography. While much of the medieval village in the valley was abandoned, new houses were built on higher ground. Today, much of the present day village is built on a hill which affords extensive views over the surrounding countryside and is readily visible for many miles. The quality of the environment has been recognised in national designations through listed building status and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Furthermore, a significant part of the Parish falls within a Special Landscape Area (SLA) designated in Stratford District Council's Core Strategy (Figures 2 and 3).

Community perspectives and priorities

- 2.5 The community survey indicates just how highly valued the environment is by local residents, with 97% of respondents indicating that they value both the rural environment and access to the countryside as important or quite important.

- 2.6 In summary, the history, topography and quality of environmental assets combine to provide Loxley's special character which is highly valued by the community and provides a highly sensitive context in which to consider future development. A key priority for the Plan is to ensure that these valued characteristics are preserved.

The present day community of Loxley – addressing challenges and opportunities

- 2.7 Below we highlight the *key socio-economic challenges and opportunities facing Loxley* that the Plan should seek to address.

Viability of local facilities

- 2.8 Most of the key facilities – the pub and the school – are Victorian. At this time, most inhabitants were employed in agriculture and the population peaked at 396 in 1871. The pub dates back to the early nineteenth century and possibly before. In 1874 a new larger school was built in the centre of the village and is still occupied by the primary school.
- 2.9 During the last century the community has continued to evolve and the pace of change has accelerated in recent years. Rising car ownership has brought an increase in mobility, reducing reliance on – and viability of - local facilities. For example:
- the local shop and post office closed many years ago;
 - with fewer children in the village the school has been threatened with closure, but has managed to survive through federation ;
 - Church attendance has fallen to very low levels; and
 - the pub has closed several times and its future is uncertain.
- 2.10 While an increase in housing and population will help to contribute to the viability of local facilities, in relation to the school the presence of more local children of school age would also be of benefit; currently just four children from Loxley attend the school. While parental preferences play a role, local demand could be assisted by increasing the number of new homes that are affordable to young families (discussed further below).
- 2.11 The Community Survey underlined the extent to which the community value local facilities – the pub, church and school. In each case 70%+ respondents indicated these facilities were important or quite important.

Mismatch in housing supply and household size

- 2.12 There have also been more subtle social changes. The decline in employment available locally, the attractive features of the village, combined with the proximity to other nearby major employment centres has made Loxley an attractive location to live. This has resulted in strong demand for local housing from relatively affluent commuters.

- 2.13 The market has responded to this demand, and in recent times the village has seen the loss of several smaller cottages and the development of larger executive homes. In the late 1990s, around twelve larger 'executive' homes were built and several smaller, older cottages were redeveloped into larger properties. Loxley Park, developed at the turn of the millennium, provided an estate of thirty large executive homes. This trend to developing larger executive homes and loss of smaller cottages has continued to the present day, albeit the pace has somewhat slowed.
- 2.14 While the overall population of the parish at 399 has now returned to the peak of 1871, there have been significant changes to the stock of housing available. The stock is now significantly skewed toward larger homes in contrast to the small size of most households.
- Housing stock – the majority of the stock (87%) comprises 3+ bedroom properties. 3 bedroom homes comprise 25% of the stock; 4 bedroom 29% and 5+ bedroom 33%.
 - Household size – averages 2.56 persons per household (pph), the majority of households comprise 2 pph in stark contrast to the number of 2 bedroom properties available (which account for just 8% of the stock).
- 2.15 This is a mismatch in the housing stock available in the village relative to the small size of most households. This not only restricts the availability of more affordable housing for younger families, the limited choice also prevents downsizing opportunities for older residents looking to move but remain within the village.
- 2.16 This is reflected in the findings of the Community Survey with a largest proportion of respondents (47%) indicating the need for more low cost / affordable housing and more generally the need for greater choice (social housing, bungalows, family housing and retirement homes). Just over 90% of respondents indicated that there was no need for any more luxury housing.

Balanced population and community

- 2.17 The focus on developing larger and more expensive homes has contributed to an unbalanced population. The development of larger and more expensive homes has skewed the housing mix available and priced out many younger people and families. As a consequence, Loxley has a demographic structure that is skewed to older age groups (60-74), with far fewer younger people (0-34) relative to the national average.

Traffic related issues

- 2.18 The increase in car ownership, commuter traffic movements and the increase in traffic through the village - as the local service centre of Wellesbourne has grown in size - has brought with it more traffic and parking related issues. The Community Survey provides a clear indication of this with over 50% of

respondents identifying the volume and speed of traffic as a major issue and just shy of the remaining 50% identifying it as an issue.

Implications for the Plan

2.19 This baseline assessment provides a clear focus for the Plan. It highlights:

- the overwhelming value local residents place on the landscape
- national and local designations underline the sensitivity of the development context
- The vast majority of residents (81% of respondents to the Community Survey) are supportive of housing development, to increase the choice of stock available, including lower cost housing
- Equally, the vast majority oppose the development of more luxury homes.

These principles are articulated in the following section which sets out the vision for Loxley.

3.0 The Future: A Vision for Loxley

Vision

- 3.1 The Loxley NDP will create a more socially mixed and vibrant village that has evolved and grown to meet local housing needs and secure the long term viability of local facilities. The village will be an attractive place, to live, work and visit having retained its unique and distinctive character providing an outstanding quality of life, which is highly valued by residents, for the benefit of future generations.
- 3.2 The Parish Council will do this by:
- Encouraging a thriving, vibrant and viable community that delivers a high quality of life for all of its residents
 - Supporting measured, proportionate, timely and sustainable housing development which will also assist in meeting local requirements
 - Maintaining a high quality natural environment that preserves and enhances biodiversity
 - Recognising and protecting the character and history of the plan area
 - Endorsing policies that have a positive effect on the environment, including those that minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change and minimise pedestrian / vehicle conflicts.

Goals

- 3.3 To realise the vision, the following goals are set out to inform and frame the objectives and detailed planning policies that are set out in the following sections.
- Promote high quality sustainable new build homes which increase housing choices and are tailored to the needs and context of Loxley
 - Ensure sensitive development which protects and enriches the landscape and built setting
 - Sustain and improve local facilities for existing and new residents, including support for the development of viable new community facilities to promote sustainable living
 - Provide a safe environment for road users and pedestrians

- Prioritise local distinctiveness in every element of change and growth
- Protect green space, the landscape and support nature conservation
- Involve local people on an on-going basis in the process of plan-making, monitoring, delivery and development.

The Neighbourhood Plan Strategy - Sustainable Development for the Whole Community

- 3.4 Sustainable development is about positive growth – delivering economic, social and environmental progress for current and future generations. These dimensions constitute sustainability in planning terms.
- 3.5 **Economic** – contributing to a strong local economy
- 3.6 **Social** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities
- 3.7 **Environmental** – contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 3.8 To address the challenges facing the community and to achieve the vision set out previously, the Plan needs to acknowledge all of these aspects, the inter-dependencies between them and the way they combine uniquely locally.
- 3.9 **Environmentally**, Loxley is distinguished by its small size, rural aspect and elevated position. The built and natural environment incorporate recognised national and local designations eg. listed buildings, SSSI and SLA (see Figure 2). The environment is attractive, sensitive and valued by residents.
- 3.10 **Social** life is focused on the church, school and pub. The community is small and well networked, but over time there has been a decline in the number of informal social activities and organisations.
- 3.11 The small scale of the community is a challenge to the **economic** viability of these facilities, with a small housing stock providing limited choices in terms of size, type and tenure.
- 3.12 Moreover, recent trends have tended to undermine the community vitality. Affordable public and private rental properties have been sold to owner occupiers. And the market has focused on building larger executive homes, in some cases through the redevelopment of smaller cottages.
- 3.13 The focus on the development of larger homes is reflected in an unbalanced population and limited mix of housing, creating a mismatch between average household size (2.56 persons per household) and the available housing stock (which is mostly larger three bed+ homes).

- 3.14 Our vision is grounded in an understanding of these interlocking economic, social and environmental realities and recognition that the key to addressing the challenges outlined is through the housing market, allied to the principles of sustainable development.
- 3.15 This is critical to ensuring that: the development that is required addresses wider community needs, provides for a greater housing choice in locations that minimise environmental impact and delivers greater intergenerational equity. These are the keys to delivering the community vision.
- 3.16 The Plan is not therefore antidevelopment, but recognises the contribution proportionate new housing development, sensitively designed and located, can make to the character of the village. The key objective is to ensure development increases choice of homes to meet the needs of all sections of the community in a manner which respects the character of the village and the wider parish.
- 3.17 The following sections take forward the vision and goals above and set out a series of supporting policies in relation to the following policy areas:
- Housing and the built environment
 - Natural environment
 - Local community
 - Traffic and transport

4.0 Housing and the Built Environment

Strategic Objective

- 4.1 To meet principally local, but also district sustainable housing needs, through moderate, small-scale and modest developments. Such development will encourage a socially mixed community to ensure the long-term sustainability of the village. New housing should increase the housing choice including the provision of affordable homes. All new development will preserve and be sensitive to the unique and distinctive character of the village.

Policy H1 - Housing Growth

1. Village Boundary

The built up area of Loxley is defined by the Development Boundary (see Figure 2). New infill housing development within the Development Boundary will be supported provided they accord with the principles and parameters set out in the Village Design Statement (see Appendix 1).

All areas outside of the Development Boundary are classed as countryside. Support for development proposals for new housing in the countryside will be limited to dwellings for rural workers, replacement dwellings, the appropriate conversion of existing buildings and new dwellings (in accordance with Policy H2), as well as dwellings of exceptional design (paragraph 79 of the NPPF and Policy AS.10 part E and J from the Core Strategy).

2. Housing Allocations

The following sites, as outlined in Figure 2, are allocated for small scale housing development.

- a) Site A - Land adjacent to Clematis Cottage, Stratford Road
(allocated for approximately* 2-3 dwellings)
- b) Site B - Land between Loxley Fields and Loxley House
(allocated for approximately* 4-5 dwellings)
- c) Site C - Land adjacent to the recreation ground, Goldicote Road
(allocated for approximately* 4-5 dwellings)

To be supported, development proposals must have regard to the Village Design Statement in Appendix 1.

* Note: Housing numbers are indicative only. Higher densities may be appropriate (for example, in order to achieve viability).

A public footpath runs along the western boundary of site A.

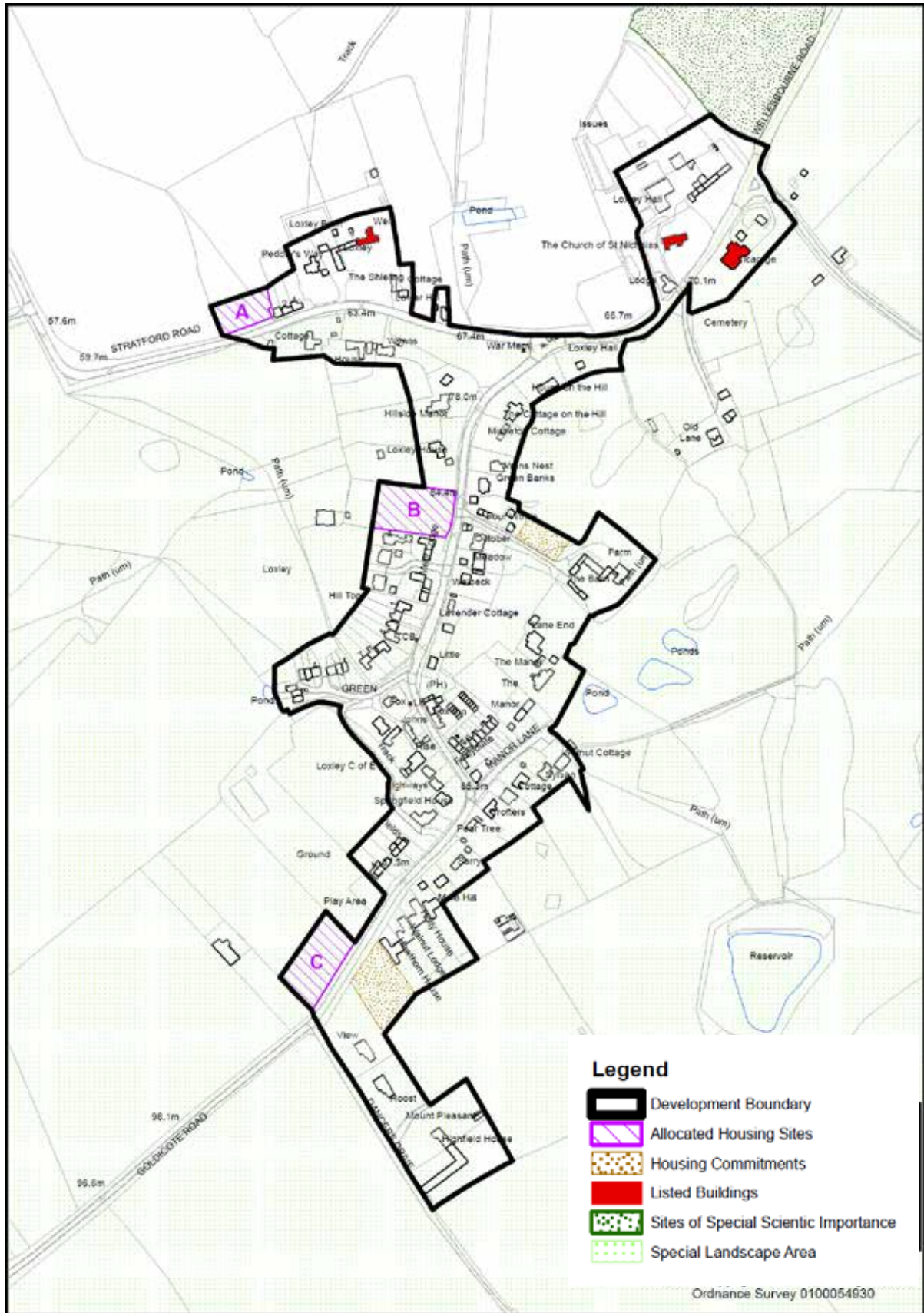


Figure 2 – Development Boundary and Site Allocations

Explanation

- 4.2 The Core Strategy currently identifies Loxley as a Category 4 Local Service Village (LSV) which is the lower tier of settlement.¹ Consequently, this Plan seeks a positive approach to housing growth through natural organic limited infilling within the development boundary and three allocations as shown on Figure 2.
- 4.3 The selection of these sites was informed by a technical assessment prepared by an independent consultant, drawing on comments from Warwickshire County Highways. The sites selected were shortlisted from this assessment which reviewed all possible development sites located in the village. Each site assessment considered a number of technical issues including: the status of the land, highway safety, topography, impact on landscape setting, flooding and drainage, accessibility to local services, and impact on natural and built heritage assets. The assessment process highlighted the challenging development context with no sites scoring strongly on all criteria.
- 4.4 The selection process has also been informed by a community survey (April 2016), and local consultations. The local community expressed a strong preference for development on individual plots or small scale developments, with strong opposition to one large development. There was also preference for sites on the village periphery and infill sites, with a slightly negative net balance in relation to development behind existing houses.
- 4.5 In the selection of these sites, the Plan has sought to continue the guiding principles in the Loxley Village Design Statement which was formally adopted by Stratford District Council on the 27 March 2007 and has since been updated and incorporated into this Plan (Appendix 1).
- 4.6 Since 2011, the following four sites have received planning permission (see table below) and – with the exception of the Home Farm site – have all been developed.

Housing Commitments Since 2011	Reference	Market Homes	Affordable Homes
Tanglewood Cottages, Manor Road*	12/01592/FUL	-1	0
Home Farm (not yet developed)	14/02224/FUL	1	0
Land Off Goldicote Road	16/03659/FUL	3	0
Loxley Farm, Stratford Road	17/00763/FUL	1	0
Total number of dwellings		4	0

Note : * 12/01592/FUL created one house from two cottages.

¹ Note: LSV designations can be changed depending on new development and facilities over the plan period, with potential implications for housing requirements.

- 4.7 This policy supports the notion of limited infill development within the defined Development Boundary where there is no adverse impact on the character of the area and where the development is sympathetic to its surroundings including neighbouring dwellings. It also seeks to resist other forms of inappropriate development in the countryside as detailed in the Village Design Statement (Appendix 1).
- 4.8 The Development Boundary is defined as being the limits of existing, non-agricultural, buildings of a permanent nature and their immediate surroundings, including identified sites with development potential. The Development Boundary therefore excludes:
- Individual buildings and groups of dispersed or intermittent buildings that are clearly detached from the continuous built-up areas of the village;
 - Large gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land in the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where they provide a transition between the surrounding countryside and the built-up areas of the village;
 - Agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the Village;
 - Outdoor sports and recreation facilities and other formal open spaces on the edge of the Village.
- 4.9 Policy H1 defines “limited infill” as developments to be allowed only within the Development Area Boundary.
- 4.10 Future housing development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will need to be continuous but controlled in order to achieve steady and moderate growth.
- 4.11 The allocations of sites B and C will ideally accommodate small developments which could include a mix of smaller/modest, lower cost homes. This would assist existing residents to downsize from larger homes which in turn would free these homes up for families to move into and contribute to the strategic objective of promoting small scale and modest developments.
- 4.12 Further details about the site allocation process, including all the sites which were appraised and the assessment matrix prepared by the independent consultant, are detailed at: www.loxleyvillage.com.

Policy H2 - Local Housing Needs

Affordable housing development as defined in the NPPF, will be supported on rural exception sites beyond, but reasonably adjacent to, the Development Boundary of Loxley where the following is demonstrated:

- a) There is a proven and as yet unmet local need, having regard to the most recent Housing Needs Survey;**
- b) The type, size and tenure of homes proposed, and their accessibility, reflect the identified local need; and**
- c) Secure arrangements through Section 106 agreements exist to ensure the housing will remain affordable and available to meet the continuing needs of local people.**

Where viability for 100% affordable housing provision cannot be achieved, an element of market housing may be included within a rural exception scheme, to provide sufficient cross-subsidy to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes. In such cases, applicants will be required to provide additional supporting evidence in the form of an open book development appraisal for the proposal.

While preference should be given to allocating affordable housing provision to people with a local connection via a Section 106 agreement, some flexibility may be required where there is no/insufficient demand from those with a qualifying local connection.

Explanation

- 4.13 Affordable housing is defined as: 'housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more' of the definitions outlined in the NPPF, Annex 2 for affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership.²
- 4.14 The NPPF allows for the provision of affordable housing through rural exception sites. These are additional housing sites that are used to meet defined affordable housing needs in rural areas where up-to-date survey evidence shows that local need exists. This enables small sites to be used specifically for affordable housing in small rural communities that would not normally be considered because, for example, they fall outside local plan development boundaries.
- 4.15 One of the ways local needs can be demonstrated is through a housing need survey or up-to-date evidence of local housing need. In addition Core Strategy

² The full definition of affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership can be found in NPPF, Annex 2.

Policy CS.15 allows local needs schemes within and adjacent to settlements including small-scale community-led schemes to meet a need identified by that community.

- 4.16 The 2014 Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council through Warwickshire Rural Community Council concluded that there were 3 specific housing needs; 1 two-bedroom home for rent; 1 two-bedroom house for shared ownership; and 1 two-bedroom house or bungalow for local market ownership.
- 4.17 For the purposes of local needs housing for Policy H2 this will be based on a local connection with the Parish. A local connection will be defined by reference to a standard set of criteria currently based on at least one household member satisfying any one or more of the following:
- Birth;
 - Current residency;
 - Previous residency;
 - Current work;
 - Current residency of close family members

Policy H3 - Design and Character

To be supported, the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all development proposals, including alterations to existing buildings, must sustain and enhance the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

To be supported, development proposals must comply with the following guiding principles based on the Loxley Village Design Statement presented in Appendix 1:

- a) be compatible with the distinctive character of the area, respecting the local settlement pattern which is predominantly ribbon development, building styles and materials whilst taking a positive approach to innovative, contemporary designs that are sensitive to their setting;**
- b) retain gaps between buildings and spaces behind buildings where they contribute to the open aspect of the village and retain links with the countryside beyond;**
- c) retain existing open green spaces within Loxley where they make an important contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the area and/or contribute to reducing the likelihood of surface water flooding;**
- d) be of a density and scale that is in keeping with the character of the surrounding development and landscape;**

- e) conserve or enhance heritage assets including listed buildings and their settings, balancing the significance of the asset and extent of any harm vis-à-vis any other public benefits of development;**
- f) protect, or enhance landscape and biodiversity by incorporating landscaping consistent with Warwickshire County Council Landscape Guidelines;**
- g) have regard to the impact on tranquility, including dark skies; and**
- h) not exacerbate foul drainage capacity problems.³**

Explanation

- 4.19 The purpose of this policy is to manage development so that the most appropriate design is found for the site having regard to local character to ensure that all developments are of high quality and preserve and where appropriate enhance the character of the areas around them in spatial layout, scale, materials, design and landscape terms.
- 4.20 New developments which protect the character of the historic built environment and improve the quality of life through good design which is in sympathy with the special character of the area will be looked upon favourably.
- 4.21 The preservation of local distinctiveness and character requires that the appropriate density for new housing should in every case result in a development that is in character with the local surrounding area. It is also important that future development should ensure that the mass of building relates proportionally to the plot size.
- 4.22 Noise and activity arising from developments in the countryside together with lighting can have an adverse effect on tranquillity and dark skies. CPRE has issued a Statement on Tranquillity and Dark Skies with the objective of maintaining or improving the existing level of tranquillity. The recommendations within this statement are endorsed by this Plan.
- 4.23 This policy is not intended to impose a particular architectural style or stifle innovation, originality or innovative design through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.
- 4.24 A major part of the distinctive character of Loxley is the strong visual connectivity between the village and the rural landscape. The village has a mostly linear structure meaning that the majority of houses front, in single row, onto a street and have direct rural views to the rear.

³ This includes adherence to requirements set out in the NPPF, the relevant paragraphs (030-032) of the Planning Practice Guidance and DEFRA's non-technical standards for sustainable drainage.

- 4.25 The greenfield areas encircling the village are sensitive to change which would alter the landscape and the essential character of the village as well as views across the countryside both from and into the village.
- 4.26 One of the guiding principles in the Loxley Village Design Statement which is incorporated into this Plan (Appendix 1) is the fact that ‘the rural character of Loxley should be preserved and (sub)urbanisation avoided’ and that ‘sufficient gaps should be left between and behind buildings to preserve the ‘open aspect’ of the village and retain links with the countryside beyond’. Retaining open green spaces is also important given that areas of Loxley are at medium-high risk of surface water flooding.
- 4.27 The results of the 2016 Community Survey showed that the two aspects that residents valued most about living in Loxley were firstly its rural environment, and secondly, access to the countryside.
- 4.28 Good examples of new development in the village which has not created a detrimental erosion of space between and behind buildings can be found along the southern side of Goldicote Road as well as on the eastern side of the main thoroughfare through the village. In these examples open rural views to the rear have been maintained.

Policy H4 - Re-use of Rural Buildings

The conversion of redundant buildings built of traditional materials or of historical or architectural merit to housing, permanent business space or residential tourist accommodation will be supported provided development:

- a) does not have a significant adverse impact on the visual and landscape amenity of the area;**
- b) does not have a significant adverse impact on neighbours’ amenity;**
- c) does not cause harm to nature conservation interests;**
- d) benefits from a safe and convenient access to the site or a satisfactory access can be created; and**
- e) ancillary and/or outbuildings and boundary treatments are in keeping with the character and setting of the original building.**

Explanation

- 4.29 This policy is designed to facilitate the re-use of the existing buildings with appropriate conversions. If sensitively converted the reuse of redundant buildings can have a positive impact on the amenity of the area and create a sustainable form of development without any additional harm to the landscape.

- 4.30 The reuse of redundant agricultural buildings can also be of benefit to the sustainability of farms and other rural businesses particularly when creating ongoing revenue through holiday lettings.

Policy H5 - Replacement Dwellings

To be supported, proposals for replacement dwellings must respect the character and appearance of their setting including being within the Special Landscape Area or affecting the setting of listed buildings. All proposals for replacement dwellings should :

- a) not be significantly larger than the original dwelling, and retain a sufficient proportion of the plot 'not built on', so as to reflect the character of adjacent development, and so as not to significantly harm the landscape setting;**
- b) Be of an appropriate scale so as not to be too dominant or adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring uses; and**
- c) Demonstrate that protected species will not be harmed as a result of the proposals.**

This policy will only apply to lawful dwellings and does not apply to caravans or mobile homes.

Explanation

- 4.31 This policy is designed to facilitate the renewal of the existing housing stock with appropriate replacements. It is not intended to overtly restrict people's freedom of expression of interest in design and layout.
- 4.32 The Plan recognises that historically many of the smaller properties in the village have either been considerably enlarged or have been demolished in order to build substantially larger properties. As a result the village has a significant imbalance of larger properties to smaller ones which has had a negative impact on the social mix of the community and also created an imbalance in the demography. In the last 20 years 10 smaller properties in the centre of the village have either been rebuilt or significantly enlarged.

5.0 Natural Environment

Strategic Objective

- 5.1 The rural character of Loxley should be preserved by ensuring that any new development is sensitive to and protects the landscape and built setting. Such development should protect green spaces, minimise, and where appropriate, mitigate its impact on the existing landscape and be supportive of nature conservation. Furthermore, new development should endorse policies that have a positive effect on the environment and protect and enrich the landscape and built setting.

Policy NE1 - Protection of Special Landscape Area and Valued Landscapes

1. Special Landscape Area (SLA)

To be supported, all development must conserve or enhance the high landscape quality of the Special Landscape Area identified on Figure 3 below.

Proposals which would have a harmful effect on the distinctive character and appearance of the Special Landscape Area will not be supported unless sufficient mitigation measures are put in place.

2. Valued Landscapes

Development proposals will not be supported where they have a significant adverse impact on:

- **views across valued landscapes where seen from locations to which the general public have unrestricted access (identified in Figure 4); or**
- **views within Loxley Village of: the Village Green and War Memorial; Loxley SSSI; The Rectory; the Church; the Manor; or along Hillside where seen from locations to which the general public have unrestricted access (identified in Figure 5)**

Explanation

- 5.2 It is important to protect the open and rural character of the landscape surrounding the built up areas of the village to ensure the separate identity of the settlement and in order that its distinctive features - including valued / designated landscapes - are retained.
- 5.3 The character of the landscape is derived from 'natural' factors, its geology topography and geographic location.

5.4 All development proposals must ensure that views across and within valued landscapes are maintained. Given its location on a hill and designation of much of the village as an SLA (see Figure 3), Loxley benefits from a significant number of important views across valued landscapes throughout the Plan and immediately adjacent areas. Given the sheer number of valued landscapes, only a selection of the most outstanding of these views have been selected. Key views across valued landscapes are illustrated in Figure 4 below and they are also referenced further in the Design Statement.

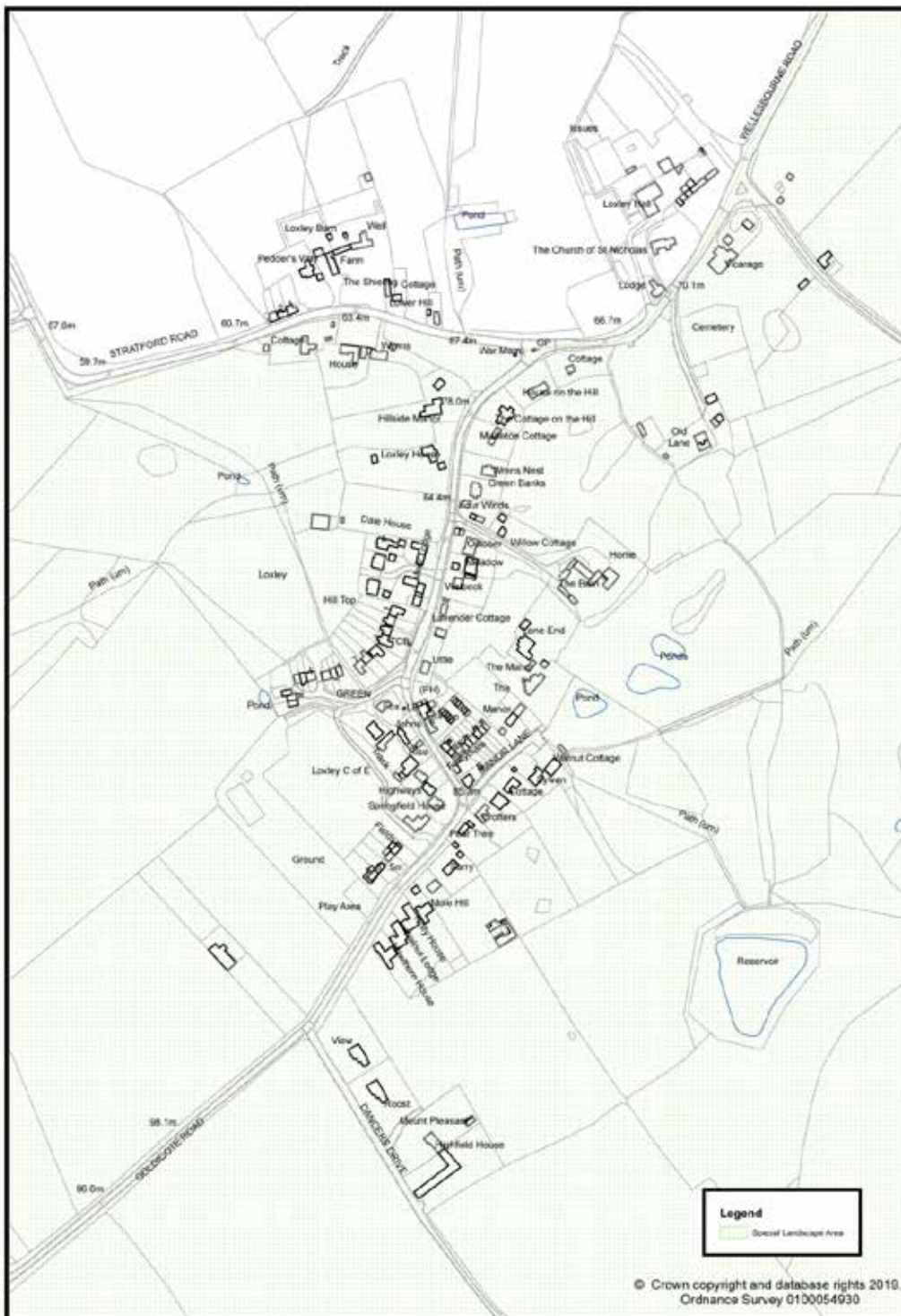


Figure 3 – Special Landscape Area

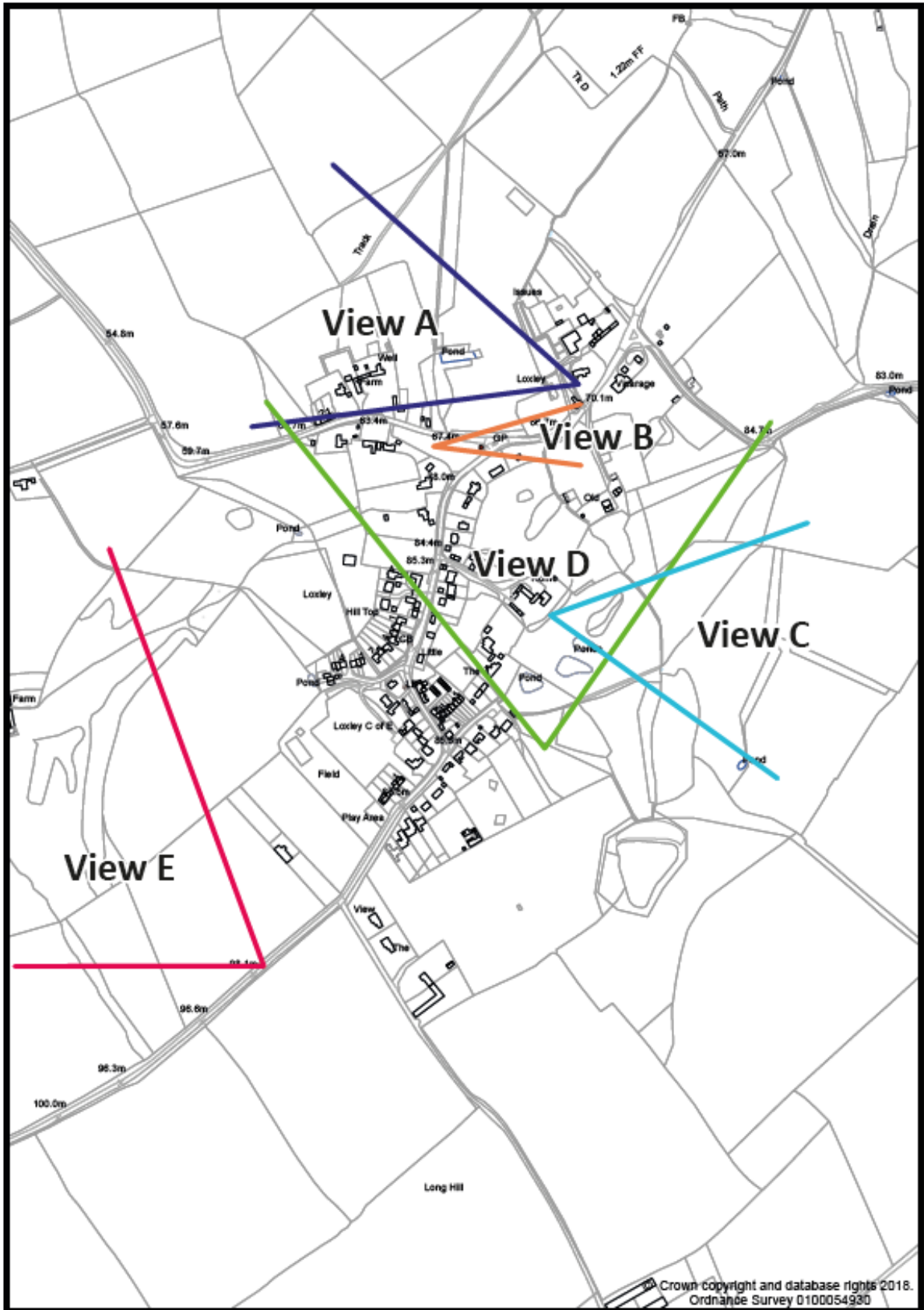


Figure 4 - Valued Landscapes

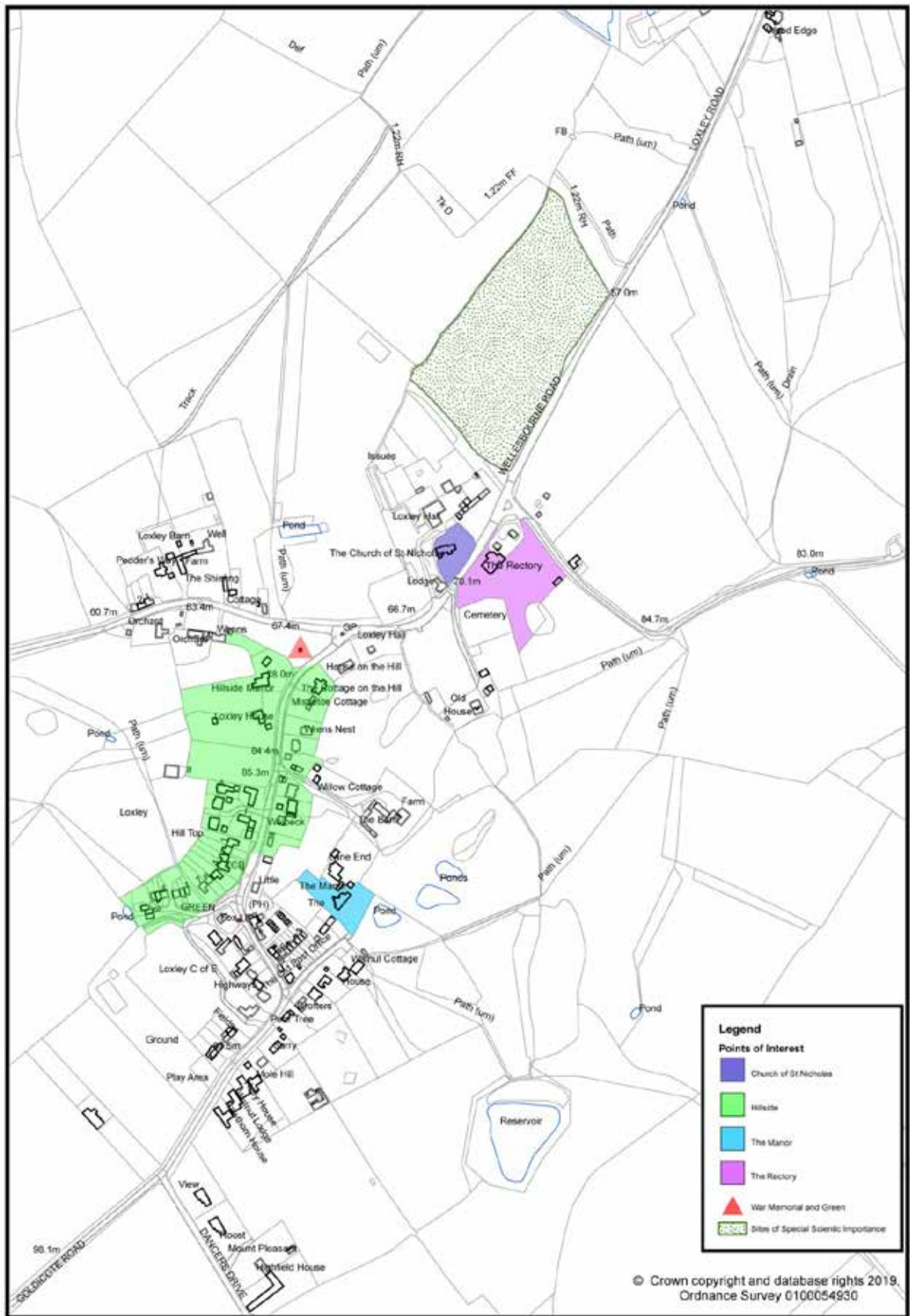


Figure 5 – Views within Loxley Village

Landscape A: churchyard looking WNW across the River Avon valley to the Welcombe Hills in the distance

- 5.5 The parkland in the foreground is particularly beautiful with the main features being two outstanding cedar trees in the centre. The church is regularly used by those attending services, with a bench in the churchyard used by both parishioners and domestic and overseas visitors to the church.



Landscape B: from the western side of the Village Green looking east across the lower half of the green towards the Church and Loxley Hall

- 5.6 The Village Green adjacent to the Stratford Road, is ancient common land and is an oasis of green in the lower half of the village. In the springtime it is ablaze with daffodils which were planted by villagers in 2009. The Green has a bench - regularly used by cyclists and walkers – from which there are panoramic views across towards Stratford.



Landscape C: from the public footpath behind Home Farm looking east over rolling countryside

- 5.7 It is agricultural land often grazed by sheep and forms part of the SLA. The small pond in the foreground is one of a series in this area which form part of the land drainage system for Goldicote Road and Manor Lane. The area is criss-crossed with public footpaths frequently used by walkers.



Landscape D: view from the public footpath as it climbs away from the built-up area towards the Reservoir and Oakham Farm.

- 5.8 The Manor and Home Farm are in the foreground with central village properties behind. The pond in front of The Manor is one of the land drainage ponds and is the habitat for water birds and pond life. The view is enjoyed by local walkers using the footpath.



Landscape E : view from Goldicote Road as it rises out of the village towards the Banbury Road

- 5.9 An outstanding panoramic view looking north across the River Avon flood plain with the Welcombe Hills in the distance which is seen by all those travelling by car or walking to/from Loxley.



Policy NE2 - Biodiversity

To be supported, development proposals must not harm biodiversity, and must provide net gains for biodiversity through provision of new or improved green infrastructure unless it can be demonstrated this is not possible or is not viable.

New developments that open up any existing culverts on a site providing more open space / green infrastructure for greater amenity, biodiversity and reduced flood risk will be supported; and the creation of new culverts will not be supported unless they are demonstrated to be essential.

Existing ecological habitats (eg Loxley Meadow SSSI, designated Local Wildlife Sites) and networks should be retained and the creation of new ecological habitats and networks will be supported.

To be supported, development proposals adjacent to waterbodies must incorporate buffer margins to protect waterbodies from development, and to promote habitat connectivity within the wider landscape for both people and wildlife to use.

Measures to improve landscape quality, scenic beauty and tranquility and to reduce light pollution will be supported.

Explanation

- 5.10 Green infrastructure and the provision of green space have the potential to deliver multiple benefits for both people and wildlife, including opportunities for recreation, biodiversity enhancement and access to nature.
- 5.11 The protection of the rural character of Loxley needs to be ensured through the maintenance and enhancement of important landscape features such as trees, hedges and woodland, including the continuing protection of the Loxley Church Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located within plan area to the north-east of Loxley Village.
- 5.12 Streams and ponds are significant landscape and ecological features. These need to be safeguarded for their importance for biodiversity (biodiversity goals are also detailed in the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy and the NPPF), for amenity and for water resources that we need. Water quality needs to be maintained or improved in accordance with Water Framework Directive requirements⁴.

Community Aspiration

- 5.13 A Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) could provide a neighbourhood level response to the Government's National Action Plans for threatened habitats species and would sit alongside Warwickshire County Council's LBAP, which is currently under review.
- 5.14 A LBAP would contribute to national targets wherever these are relevant to the neighbourhood area but also could set local targets.
- 5.15 This plan supports the formulation of a LBAP in consultation with the relevant authorities and amenity bodies including the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

Policy NE3 - Trees and Hedgerows

To be supported, development proposals must retain and protect existing trees and hedgerows which are important for their historic, visual or biodiversity value unless the need for, and the benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh any loss.

Where it is not possible or feasible to retain such trees or hedgerows, replacement trees or hedgerows must be planted in an appropriate location on the site.

All development proposals must include new native hedge and tree planting as part of an integrated landscape scheme unless it is demonstrated this is not practicable or viable.

Explanation

⁴ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy.

- 5.16 New developments must not cramp the root run of established trees or require lopping to a degree that would materially hinder the future growth of the tree. Established native hedgerows should be preserved unless there are exceptional reasons justifying their removal.
- 5.17 Hedgerows still exist within or close to the settlement which should be protected and enhanced to preserve biodiversity in the village. Hedgerows are important wildlife corridors connecting pastures around the settlement. They are significant features in the landscape, an important element in views largely unaltered for centuries.

Policy NE4 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Development proposals relating to the production of renewable energy will be supported where there are no significant adverse landscape or other visual impacts.

Proposals which fail to preserve or enhance the established character of the Neighbourhood Area will not be supported, apart from where there are exceptional circumstances and/or it is in the interests of national needs.

Explanation

- 5.18 The benefits of creating a low carbon neighbourhood include:
- To improve health, e.g. by improving air quality and cycling and walking infrastructure; improving the energy efficiency of homes
 - To empower the community: e.g. by building community owned renewable energy projects that generate funds for the community
 - To improve quality of life: e.g. improving public spaces and safeguarding green spaces
 - To benefit the local economy: e.g. reducing flows of money out of the area through energy bills
 - To improve resilience: e.g. through reduced exposure to rising energy prices and better preparedness for flooding (through for example sustainable drainage and prioritizing the design of SuDS into future developments) and heatwaves
 - To address climate change: meeting ethical responsibilities and legal duties
 - To reduce energy bills: e.g. through more energy efficient homes
- 5.19 We are all charged by our future generations to work towards a more sustainable future and recognise the importance of mitigating climate change. The Plan recognises the need and promotes actions to reduce carbon

emissions and the use of fossil fuels and support developments that contribute to green energy production, as long as their scale and appearance does not cause significant adverse landscape or other visual impacts.

Policy NE5 – Flooding

Development proposals will be supported where they utilise infiltration and above ground sustainable drainage systems including swales, ponds, and other water-based ecological systems, and demonstrate they will not result in on-site or off-site flooding. Underground storage of water will only be supported where it is demonstrated this is necessary on grounds of viability or practicality.

Explanation

- 5.20 There is a need to ensure development does not increase the likelihood of surface water flooding. This is an important issue locally given that areas of Loxley are at medium to high risk of surface water flooding, with several properties in the village known to be at risk.

6.0 Local Community

Strategic Objective

- 6.1 To ensure that existing community facilities are maintained and where possible enhanced to promote sustainable living.
- 6.2 To support the development of new community facilities in response to need in order to improve the quality of life in Loxley.

Policy LC1 - Community Assets

Development, which requires permission, that results in the change of use or loss of a designated community asset, as listed below and shown on Figure 6, will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the use of the building and ancillary land is no longer viable or that the community asset will be replaced with an equal or improved facility in no less convenient location for users:

- 1) Loxley Primary School
- 2) St Nicholas's Church
- 3) The Fox Public House

Proposals to improve the viability of an established community use of the buildings and ancillary land by way of its extension or partial redevelopment will be supported, provided the design of the scheme and the resulting increase in use are appropriate in design terms and will not harm the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

Explanation

- 6.3 Whilst in some instances planning permission is not required for a change of use, where permission is required the loss of an identified community asset (as shown of Figure 6), will not be supported having regard to the exceptions in the policy. These assets and facilities are imperative in maintaining and supporting a strong, healthy, vibrant and cohesive community. Community facilities play a particularly important role in bringing together the community and preventing social isolation. This is especially important in vulnerable groups such as the elderly. Such assets will be protected from inappropriate forms of development which may cause harm either directly or indirectly through new development, redevelopment or changes of use.
- 6.4 This policy supports development proposals intended to secure the long term benefit of a range of facilities that are important to the local community. In some cases, remaining viable will require investment in updating and/or increasing the size of the facility to support new uses. However, the policy

requires that proposals avoid increasing the use of community facilities to the extent that they may harm the amenities of adjoining residential properties, for example through traffic movements, on-street car parking and noise or light pollution.

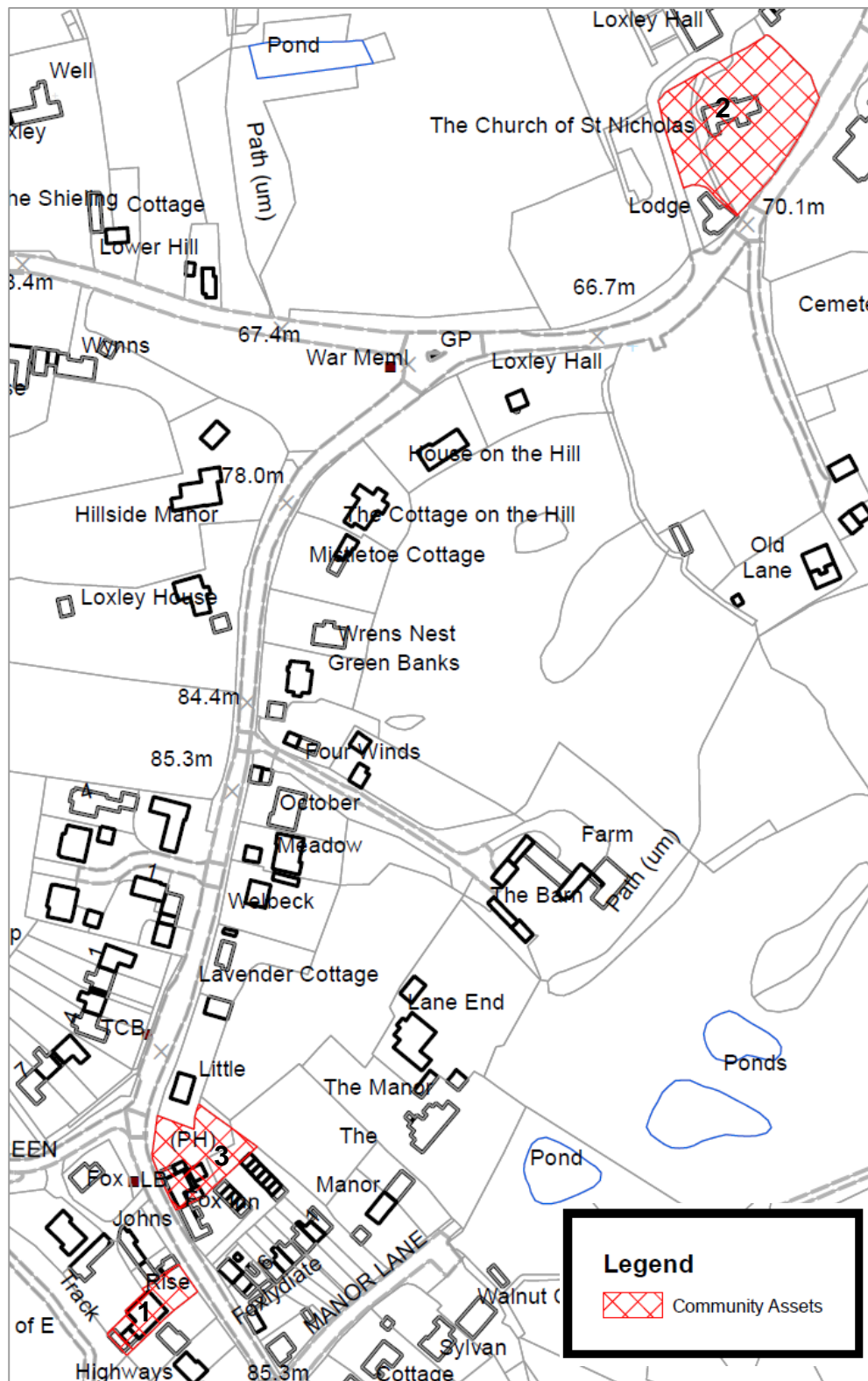


Figure 6 - Community Assets

Policy LC2 - Designated Local Green Spaces

This Plan designates the following areas of Local Green Space, as defined in Figure 7, at the following locations:

- 1) Recreation Ground**
- 2) Village Green**
- 3) Pub Field**

Development that would harm the openness or special character of a Local Green Space or its significance and value to the local community will not be supported unless there are very special circumstances which outweigh the harm to the Local Green Space.

The locally determined element of expenditure of developer contributions will be used to enhance designations in public ownership to ensure a suitable quantum and quality of recreational and amenity space is available for the Neighbourhood Area.

Explanation

- 6.5 This policy identifies several important green open spaces in the parish which are to be protected from development through designation as Local Green Spaces in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 6.6 In accordance with (paragraph 99-101) the NPPF, local communities through their neighbourhood plans can identify for special protection green areas of particular importance. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.
- 6.7 In each case, the Local Green Spaces are an integral part of the village character and are therefore regarded as special to the local community. In the public consultation carried out in November/December 2017, 32 out of the 35 responses received were in favour of the three sites being designated.
- 6.8 The Local Green Spaces will be protected and, where possible enhanced, in order to ensure a suitable quantity and quality of recreational and incidental space is available for the residents of, and visitors to, the Neighbourhood Area. The policy will resist all proposals for development.
- 6.9 The minimum ratio of green space to population as set out in the Core Strategy (Policy CS.25) should be applied to all new developments in such a way as to correct any shortfall across the parish within the next 10 years, and to comply with Natural England's Greenspace Standard recommendations.

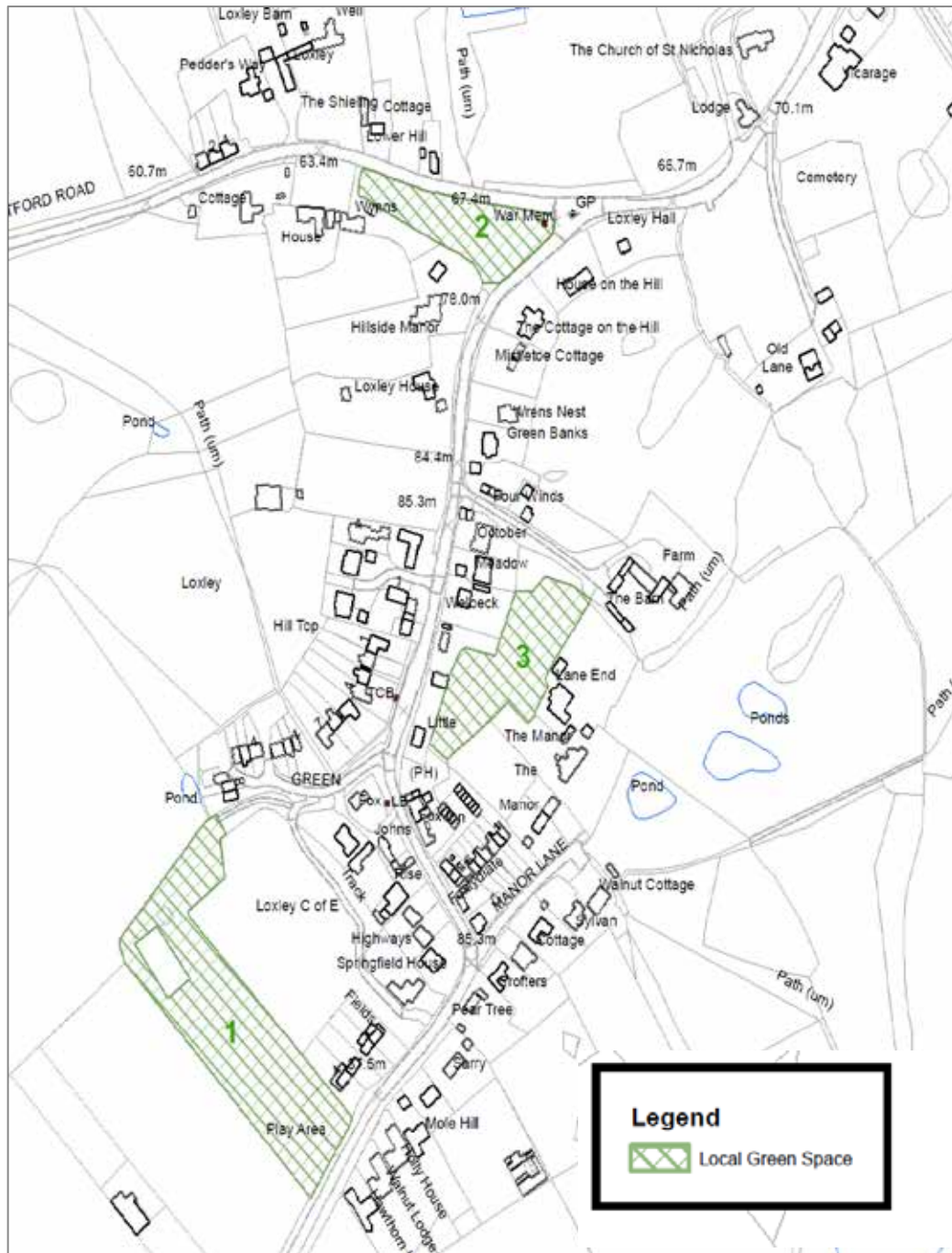


Figure 7 Local Green Spaces

Policy LC3 - Encouraging the Use of Public Routes

To be supported, development proposals must not adversely affect any pedestrian or cycle route, including those leading to the village centre and village school. To be supported, development proposals must demonstrate that opportunities to enhance the active travel network have been taken.

Explanation

- 6.10 In order to encourage walking and cycling, new development must play its part in creating new recreational paths and safe cycle routes. Paths and routes should be direct, functional and link to the existing extensive network of rights of way within the Neighbourhood Area. This Plan is fully supportive of the work of Sustrans within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 6.11 Public routes include roads, footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways. Public routes are an intrinsic component of what defines sustainable development.
- 6.12 Public routes should be protected and where possible enhanced and improved. Special consideration should be given to the principal road through the village which is part of a popular national cycle route and is also regularly used by horse traffic.
- 6.13 New development should demonstrate how it utilises public routes to achieve sustainability. No new development should reduce the amenity currently enjoyed by the 'public route users' either physically or visually.

7.0 Traffic and Transport

Strategic Objective

- 7.1 To provide a safe environment for drivers, pedestrians, schoolchildren and all residents travelling in and through Loxley.
- 7.2 To provide adequate parking in non-obstructive/ dangerous areas for local residents without their own parking provision and for village visitors.

Policy TT1 - Local Parking Standard

To be supported, development proposals must demonstrate, through reference to the latest version of the Development Requirements Supplementary Planning Document, that they will not result in on-road parking. Additionally, proposals must provide secure cycle parking facilities.

Explanation

- 7.3 Loxley is a car-dependent community. Public transport is inadequate and has been reduced. There is infrequent public transport access to local supermarkets in Wellesbourne and Stratford. Data from the 2016 Community Survey shows that car ownership averages 2.2 per household. The majority of residents travel to work outside the village by car.
- 7.4 Parking problems came 4th (50% of residents) in the list of things residents said they disliked about living in Loxley. Parking on the main thoroughfare in the village and some smaller roads like Manor Road reduce them to single-lane for much or all of their length. The danger this presents to both vehicle drivers and pedestrians is increased by the blind bends in the road. In particular, parking outside Loxley Primary School at pick up and drop off times causes congestion, blocks roads and affects pedestrian movements. Measures to reduce this and to improve pedestrian access to the village are essential.

Policy TT2 - Highway Safety

To be supported development proposals must demonstrate:

- a) the safety of all road users will not be compromised;
- b) there will be no severe adverse impact on the capacity and operation of the local highway network; and
- c) there is safe access to and from the development with appropriate visibility at any road junctions.

Explanation

- 7.5 The 2016 Community Survey revealed that the two main dislikes of residents are traffic speeding (over 90% of residents) and the increasing volume of traffic (90% of residents).
- 7.6 Loxley has for many years been impacted by an increasing volume of commuter traffic as well as HGV and agricultural traffic using the main road through the village as a short-cut between the Stratford Road and the Banbury Road. Many of the latter vehicles use this route despite them exceeding the weight limit of 7.5 tons on the road. The volume of traffic using the road through the village as a 'rat-run' is set to increase as a consequence of the significant amount of new housing development in neighbouring Wellesbourne and surrounding villages.
- 7.7 A further concern is the danger presented by traffic speeding through the village despite clear speed limit warning signs. The narrow, right angled bend at the top of Manor Lane has been identified as a particular accident 'black spot'. There has been a history of a number of serious accidents (4 since 2006) occurring on this bend as a result of speeding which have also resulted in serious damage to property on the bend despite the installation of speed signs, road signs, chevrons etc. There is no street lighting in the village.
- 7.8 Traffic problems are further exacerbated by substantial on-street parking by residents and visitors. There is little or no off street parking and there is limited opportunity to create new additional spaces away from the village streets. The width of the roads in the village centre with on-street parking already creates issues for vehicles both delivering and passing through. This problem is exacerbated by the number of parents parking on the main road during school drop-off and pick-up times.
- 7.9 Any new development should recognise the increase in vehicles attempting to negotiate the narrow restricted current road infrastructure. Routes to and from the primary school(s) require improved road infrastructure and provision should be required for adequate footpaths and cycle ways.
- 7.10 The interpretation of congestion is found in the DCLG 'Guidance on Transport Assessments 2007'.